

6 Landscape Character Area profiles



6 Landscape Character Area profiles

Overview of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment results

- 6.1 **Table 6.1** provides a summary of the overall judgement scores for each of the LCAs by the two development scenarios (housing and commercial (light industrial)). These are also shown in mapped format at **Figures 6.1** and **6.2**, followed by the individual LCA assessment profiles.

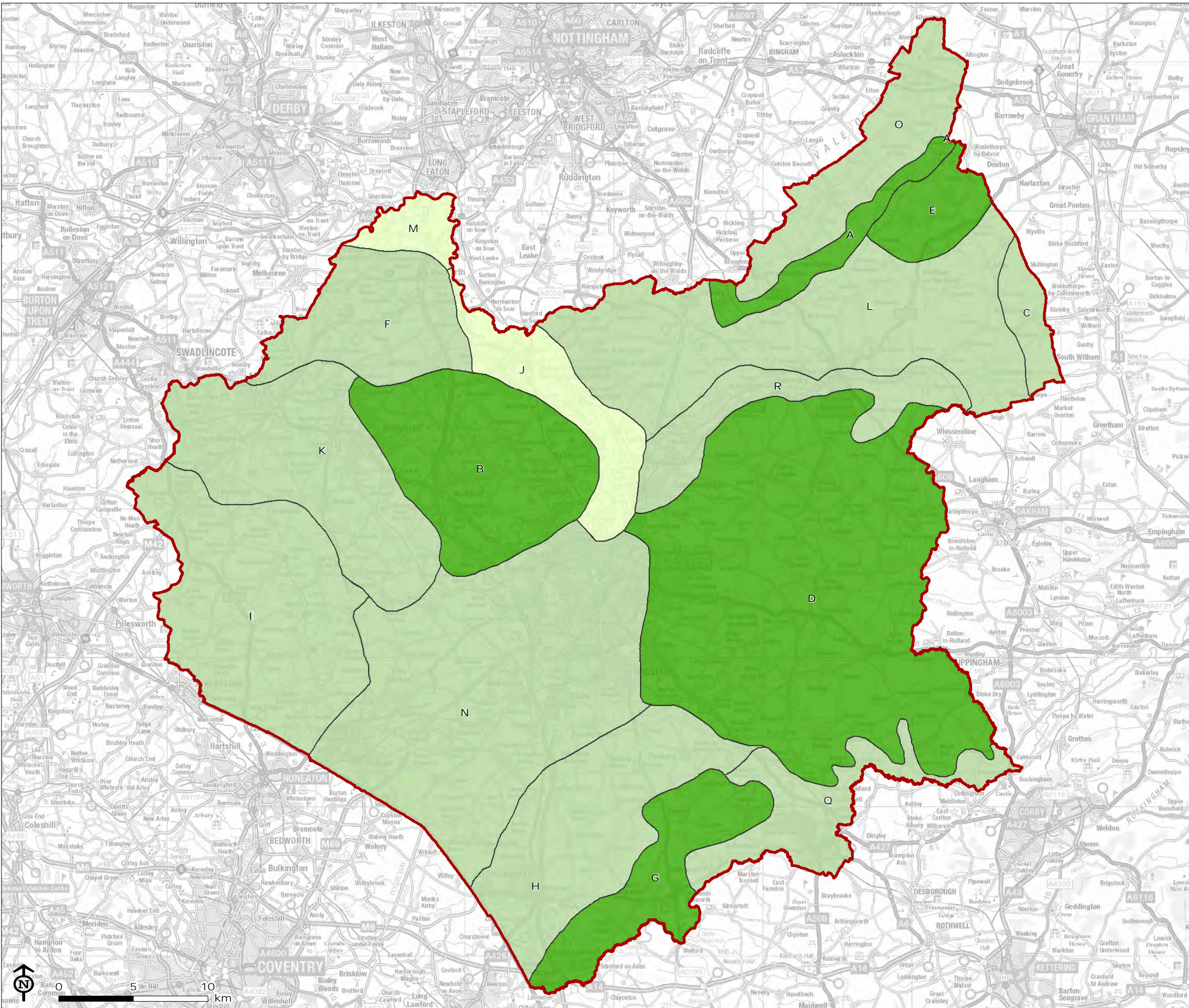
Table 6.1: Overall landscape sensitivity judgements for each LCA

Landscape Character Area (click to jump to profile)	Development Scenario	
	Residential development (2-3 storeys)	Commercial development (light industrial units)
Belvoir Scarp (page 103)	M-H	H
Charnwood Forest (page 107)	M-H	M-H
Cottesmore Plateau (page 112)	M	M
High Leicestershire (page 116)	M-H	M-H
Knipton Bowl (page 121)	M-H	H
Langley Lowlands (page 125)	M	M
Laughton Hills (page 130)	M-H	M-H
Lutterworth Lowlands (page 135)	M	M
Mease/Sence Lowlands (page 140)	M	M
Soar Valley (page 145)	L-M	L-M
The Coalfield (page 149)	M	M
The Wolds ²⁴ (page 154)	M	M
Trent Valley (page 159)	L-M	L-M
Upper Soar (page 163)	M	M
Vale of Belvoir (page 168)	M	M-H
Welland Valley (page 172)	M	M-H
Wreake Valley (page 177)	M	M

²⁴ Please note: For the purposes of this study a small part of the Vale of Catmose LCA has been merged with The Wolds LCA (the majority of the Vale of Catmose LCA is found within the county of Rutland). This is for the purposes of this assessment only and does not have further implications on policy.

Content of each assessment profile

- 6.2 Each LCA assessment profile is structured as follows:
- Overview of LCA location and overall character
 - Description and judgement of landscape sensitivity by assessment criteria
 - Evaluation of criteria and (overall) landscape sensitivity judgement – using the five point scale for each development scenario, with supporting explanatory text
 - Summary of key landscape sensitivities to development
 - Integrated landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities to consider in relation to any new development
 - Reference to further local-level landscape evidence
- 6.3 The LCA profiles are arranged in alphabetical order, starting with Belvoir Scarp.



Leicester and Leicestershire
Landscape Sensitivity and
Green Infrastructure Study

Figure 6.1: Landscape Character Area (LCA) Sensitivity: Residential Development (2-3 storeys) Scenario

Study area

Sensitivity rating

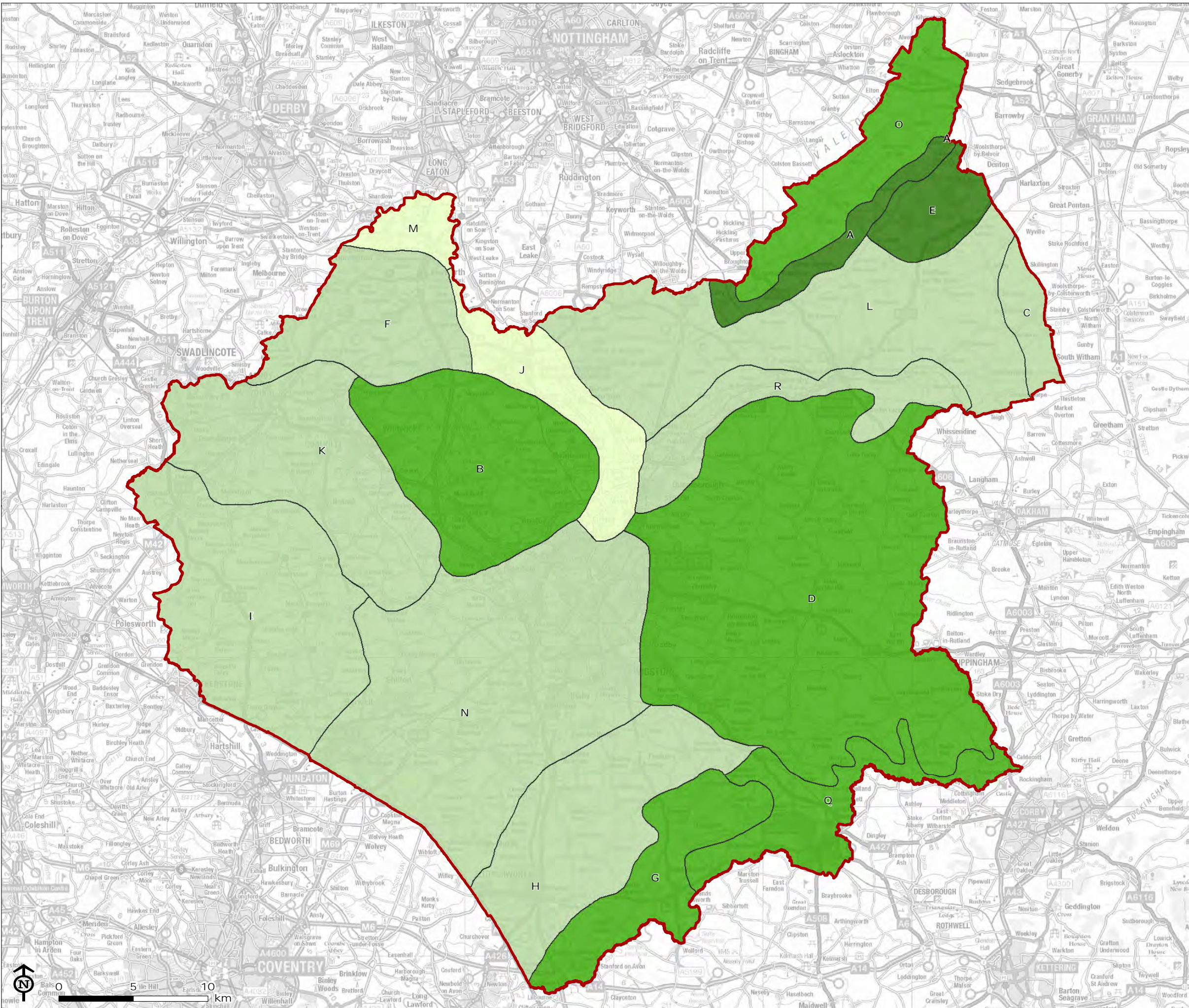
- High
- Moderate - High
- Moderate
- Low - Moderate
- Low

LCA

- A: Belvoir Scarp
- B: Charnwood Forest
- C: Cottesmore Plateau
- D: High Leicestershire
- E: Knipton Bowl
- F: Langley Lowlands
- G: Laughton Hills
- H: Lutterworth Lowlands
- I: Mease/Sence Lowlands
- J: Soar Valley
- K: The Coalfield
- L: The Wolds
- M: Trent Valley
- N: Upper Soar
- O: Vale of Belvoir
- Q: Welland Valley
- R: Wreake Valley

Map Scale @A3: 1:250,000





Leicester and Leicestershire Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study

Figure 6.2: Landscape Character Area (LCA) Sensitivity: Commercial Development (light industry) Scenario

Study area

Sensitivity rating

- High
- Moderate - High
- Moderate
- Low - Moderate
- Low

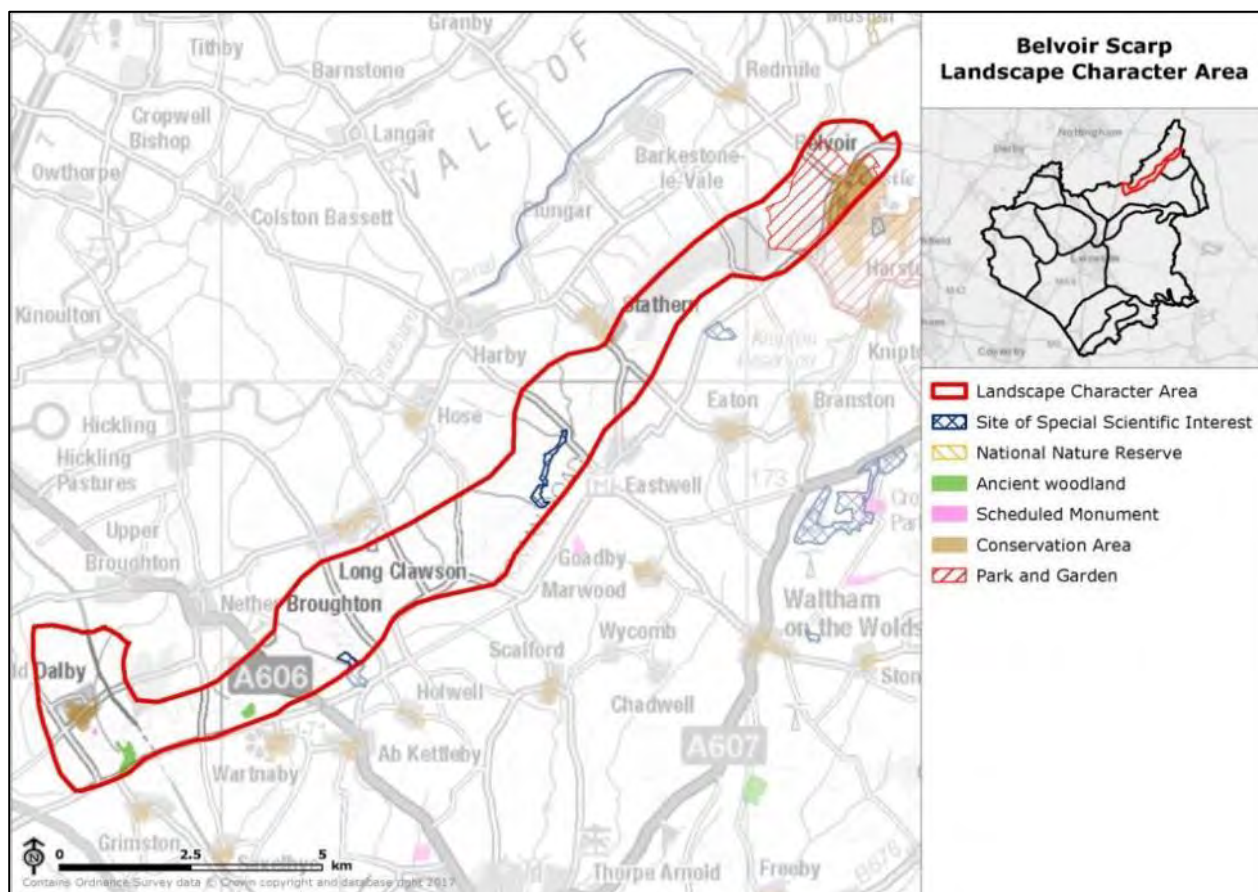
LCA

- A: Belvoir Scarp
- B: Charnwood Forest
- C: Cottesmore Plateau
- D: High Leicestershire
- E: Knipton Bowl
- F: Langley Lowlands
- G: Laughton Hills
- H: Lutterworth Lowlands
- I: Mease/Sence Lowlands
- J: Soar Valley
- K: The Coalfield
- L: The Wolds
- M: Trent Valley
- N: Upper Soar
- O: Vale of Belvoir
- Q: Welland Valley
- R: Wreake Valley

Map Scale @A3: 1:250,000



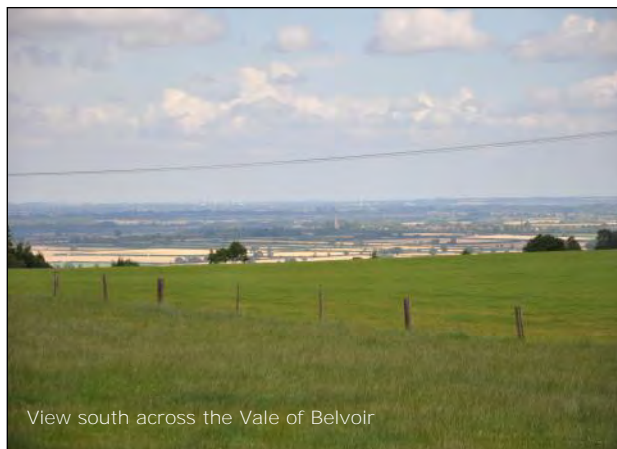
Belvoir Scarp (Melton)



Summary of landscape character

This area comprises a steep and prominent escarpment which rises to the south of the Vale of Belvoir. Land cover is a mixture of broadleaved and coniferous woodland and medium-large scale farmland enclosed by hedgerows. The prominent landmark of Belvoir Castle and its associated historic estate is located in the north east of the character area. Ridge and furrow is visible in some pasture fields. Settlement is sparse, with scattered farms and the edges of vernacular settlements including Old Dalby and Stathern. Roads are mostly narrow, crossing straight over the escarpment.

Representative photographs

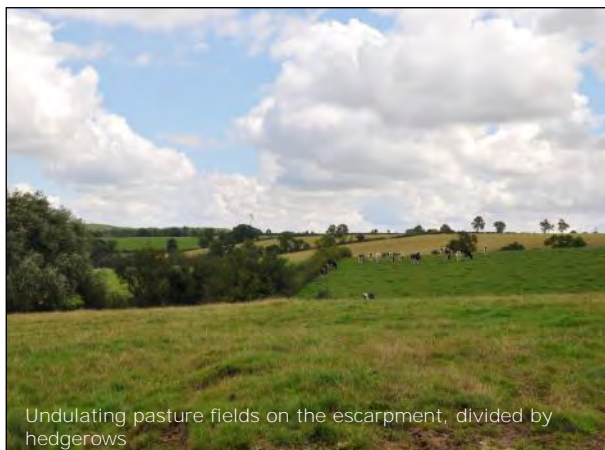


Belvoir Scarp (Melton)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	This area comprises a steep, distinctive escarpment running in a south-west to north-east direction and raising to a maximum of 173 metres AOD. Occasional hills are located along the escarpment, including Clawson Hill and Broughton Hill. Fields are medium to large scale and regular in shape, although there are some smaller fields located close to settlements. Frequent trees and woodlands are small scale features within the landscape, including distinctive lines of poplars.	H
Natural character	The farmland on the scarp is used for a mixture of intensive arable cropping and pasture (mainly for dairy cattle). A well wooded landscape, with a mixture of woodland (including some areas of ancient woodland), scattered trees, avenues, scrub and hedgerow trees. Many of the woodlands are designated as Local Wildlife sites. Holwell Mouth and Harby Hill Wood are nationally designated as SSSIs. Lowland meadows are occasionally found on steeper ground.	M-H
Historic landscape character	The prominent landmark of Belvoir Castle (Grade I listed) is located in the north eastern part of the area, within a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and Conservation Area. Many of the other estate buildings are also listed. The landscape also forms part of the setting to adjacent Conservation Areas including Old Dalby, Stathern and Long Clawson. Field patterns are generally large and modern in origin, with some piecemeal enclosure located adjacent to the villages.	M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	Settlement is limited due to the steep landform of the area and primarily consists of scattered farms with a redbrick vernacular. The edges of Old Dalby and Stathern (designated as Conservation Areas), fall within this character area. Parts of Old Dalby Business Park (which is also located within the Vale of Belvoir character area) are located to the east of Old Dalby and introduce limited urbanising features including fencing and barbed wire. The southern edge of Old Dalby is contained by wooded parkland, with the open areas that surround the village noted as important to its setting in the Conservation Area Appraisal. The northern edge contains more modern development. Open areas are noted as important to the setting of Stathern. The escarpment forms a distinctive wider setting to the settlement within the landscape.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	There are extensive views from higher ground which are generally focused across the Vale of Belvoir to the north. The scarp is widely visible from adjacent areas, with prominent wooded skylines. The distinctive form of Belvoir Castle is also a skyline feature. Pylons rise above the trees, as do occasional farm-scale wind turbines.	H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	The area is highly tranquil, with only small areas of settlement and roads mostly limited to narrow lanes. The prominent form of the escarpment contrasts with the adjacent flat landscape of the Vale of Belvoir. Long distance footpaths cross the escarpment, providing opportunities for people to experience the visually attractive landscape.	M-H

Belvoir Scarp (Melton)



Undulating pasture fields on the escarpment, divided by hedgerows



The wooded skyline of the escarpment above Stathern



Houses on the northern edge of Old Dalby



View along the Cross Britain Way which runs along the scarp

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate-high** sensitivity to residential development and **high** sensitivity to commercial development due to the prominent landform, well-wooded character with frequent naturalistic features, high levels of tranquillity and general absence of modern development. There are long views and high levels of intervisibility with adjacent landscapes, with distinctive skyline features including Belvoir Castle. Historic nucleated villages are well integrated into the landscape although small areas of modern industrial development east of Old Dalby reduce sensitivity locally.

Away from the edges of existing development at Old Dalby, the landscape would be highly sensitive to developments larger in scale than one or two properties.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Visual prominence and distinctive profile of the escarpment, with long, panoramic views from higher ground and wooded skylines.
- Nationally valued semi-natural habitats, including large areas of nationally/locally designated

Belvoir Scarp (Melton)

woodland.

- Areas of historic parkland, including the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Belvoir Castle.
- The setting provided to historic rural settlements including Conservation Areas at Old Dalby and Stathern.
- The lack of development within the landscape, with settlement limited to occasional farms and the edges of Old Dalby.
- High levels of tranquillity and strong rural character due to limited modern development in the area.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

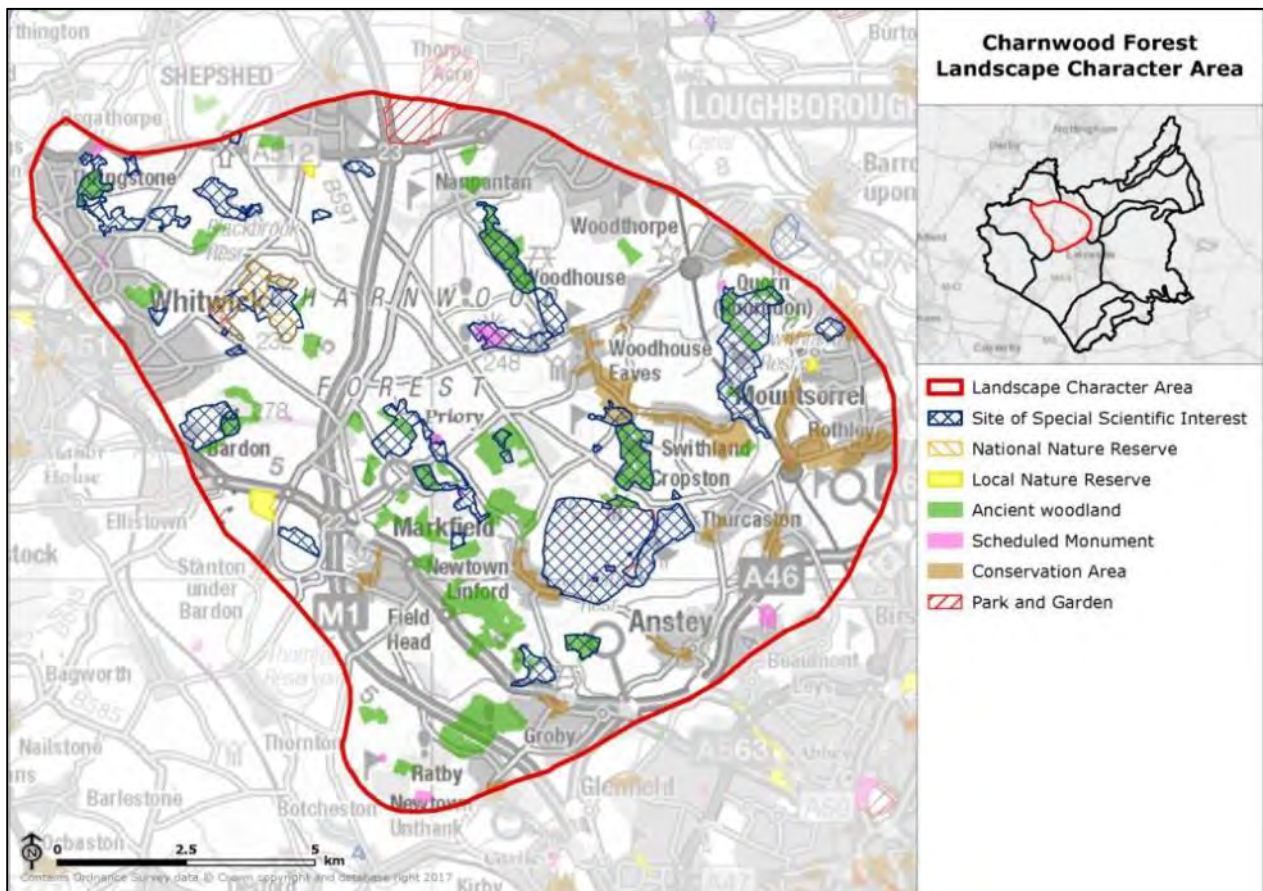
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid locations on higher ground, which would be visible from a wide area and may detract from distinctive skyline features.
- Retain valued semi-natural habitats, including the vast areas of woodland, hedgerows and semi-natural grasslands.
- Protect the setting and respect the form of historic nucleated villages at Old Dalby and Stathern.
- Respect the setting of nationally important heritage features including Belvoir Castle (Grade I listed) and its associated estate parkland.
- Ensure development does not degrade or destroy the valued rural and tranquil characteristics of the area.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of local materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place where possible.
- Seek to conserve and create linkages between areas of woodland to improve habitat connectivity, particularly along the Jubilee Way/Cross Britain Way/Midshires Way.
- Enhance signage/interpretation and improve accessibility along the Jubilee Way/Cross Britain Way/ Midshires Way. The dismantled railway provides a potential opportunity for a multi-use trail to provide further access to the countryside.
- Ensure habitats are managed to ensure increased resilience to issues including climate change and tree disease.
- Promote and seek to enhance National Cycle Route 48, which crosses through the area.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDs to address any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased pollution from agricultural run-off) which may be associated with new development.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update (2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (2015)
- Melton Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)

Charnwood Forest (North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and City of Leicester)



Summary of landscape character

Charnwood Forest is a distinctive upland landscape punctuated by rocky outcrops and fast flowing streams. A well wooded landscape including large tracts of ancient woodland. Fields are mostly parliamentary enclosure, with some enlargement of fields following introduction of arable crops. Local stone vernacular is visible in buildings and walls. Many sites of nationally and locally valued ecological importance, including former quarries, woodland and heath grasslands. Historic estate parklands add time-depth to the landscape. Long panoramic views are possible from numerous parts of the area.

Representative photographs



Charnwood Forest (North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and City of Leicester)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Distinctive rugged upland landscape with rocky outcrops and carved by small streams within intricate valleys. Rivers drain eastwards towards the River Soar. Land is divided into a small to medium scale rectilinear field pattern of parliamentary enclosures which are enclosed by stone walls and hedgerows. The frequent trees and hedgerows also contribute to the small-scale of the landscape.	M-H
Natural character	This is a farmed landscape, with a mix of arable, pasture and meadows. Charnwood Forest contains a high density of valued semi-natural habitats (nationally and locally designated), including heathland, wetland habitats and woodland. Charnwood Lodge is a National Nature Reserve and includes acid grassland, heathland and wetland habitats including reservoir and ponds. Trees are a characteristic feature of the area and the landscape is part of the National Forest, with large tracts of ancient woodland. There are also areas of young woodland, planted as part of the National Forest initiative. This LCA also contains Charnwood Forest Regional Park. Wetlands within disused quarries and at Cropston, Swithland and Blackbrook Reservoirs (all SSSIs) are particularly important for birdlife. Fields are divided by species-rich hedgerows which also contribute to natural character.	M-H
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that many of the fields originate from Parliamentary era enclosures. Many of the rural villages have Conservation Areas at their core. A number of historic parks and gardens are located within Charnwood Forest, including Bradgate Country Park, Garendon Park (both Grade II), Ulverscroft Priory and Beaumanor Hall. Industrial heritage is also important within the landscape, with the Great Central Railway now used as a heritage steam railway. Scheduled Monuments within the landscape include medieval fish ponds and hillforts.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Traditional settlements within the landscape tend to be linear in their form, with a distinctive vernacular of local stone including Swithland slate and Mountsorrel pink granite. Some have expanded significantly beyond their historic core. In the rural areas, isolated traditional farmsteads are frequent, although some conversions and extensions have altered the historic character of the buildings. The character area also contains the edges of larger urban settlements including Loughborough, Shepshed, Groby and Anstey, with some hard urban edges associated with areas of more recent expansion. Charnwood Forest provides a picturesque, wooded setting to settlements and screens/softens the edges of development. Near urban edges, the landscape performs a settlement separation function, particularly where there has been significant 20 th century growth.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	Long distance panoramic views are enabled by the elevated landform, with notable viewpoints from hills including Beacon Hill and Old John Tower. Rocky outcrops and wooded ridgelines are visible on the skylines and have an influence on adjacent lower lying landscapes. Masts, farm scale turbines and pylons also form occasional features on the skyline, though these are not frequent.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Charnwood Forest is an attractive, well treed, scenic landscape which forms a recreational destination for local people and visitors. Elevated parts of the landscape can have an exposed feel, which contrasts with the enclosure afforded by the densely wooded areas. Adjacent to larger settlements including Shepshed, Loughborough, Groby and Anstey, there are some urban fringe influences which lower sensitivity locally. The M1 motorway crosses through the area and can be audibly and visually detracting from the rural character experienced throughout Charnwood Forest. Active quarries can also produce noise. In some areas, restoration and planting as part of the National Forest project	M-H

Charnwood Forest (North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and City of Leicester)

results in a changing landscape. This area is less intensively farmed than many other areas in Leicestershire with cattle and sheep grazing creating a pastoral character. Dark night skies are noted as a valued characteristic of this area.



Long views north over the county from Charley Road



Mixed farmland with mature hedgerow trees near Woodhouse Eaves



The Soar Valley viewed from Wood Lane near Quorndon



Avenue of mature trees along Swithland Lane near Rothley



View of a hill within Bradgate Park, an 800-year old medieval deer park



View towards Loughborough from Woodhouse Road

Charnwood Forest (North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and City of Leicester)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate-high** sensitivity to residential development and sensitivity to commercial development, due to the elevated landform (with long views across the county from some vantage points), distinctive rocky outcrops on the skyline, well-wooded character, valued semi-natural habitats including wetlands, historic estate landscapes, distinctive villages and attractive, rural perceptual qualities throughout much of the area.

Some of the urban fringe areas are of lower sensitivity, although such areas often perform an important settlement separation function, where settlements have grown significantly during the 20th and 21st centuries. The M1 motorway and active quarries can also reduce landscape sensitivity.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The elevated, upland landscape, with distinctive rocky outcrops which are visible from long distances.
- Nationally and locally valued semi-natural habitats including heathland and wetland habitat.
- Well-wooded character, with large tracts of ancient woodland.
- The setting and integrity of historic estate parkland landscapes including Bradgate Park and Garendon Park (both Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens).
- Nationally important heritage features including hillforts and medieval fish ponds.
- Traditional nucleated settlements constructed of distinctive local stone.
- Long distance panoramic views, overlooking lower lying adjacent landscapes.
- The attractive, scenic qualities of the landscape, which make it a popular destination for recreation.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Conserve the outline of wooded hills, distinctive rocky outcrops and ridgelines by avoiding locating large buildings and other structures in visually prominent locations.
- Conserve and enhance dry stone wall field boundaries which are an unusual feature within Leicestershire.
- Protect and enhance the valued semi-natural habitats, including nationally designated heath, woodland and wetland areas. Where possible, expand these areas to reinforce natural character, natural capital and sense of place in the landscape.
- Enhance the existing woodland resource through improved woodland management and restoration. Conserve and create linkages between areas of woodland to improve habitat connectivity.
- Conserve and respect historic field patterns and ensure any new built development is well-

Charnwood Forest (North West Leicestershire, Charnwood, Hinckley & Bosworth and City of Leicester)

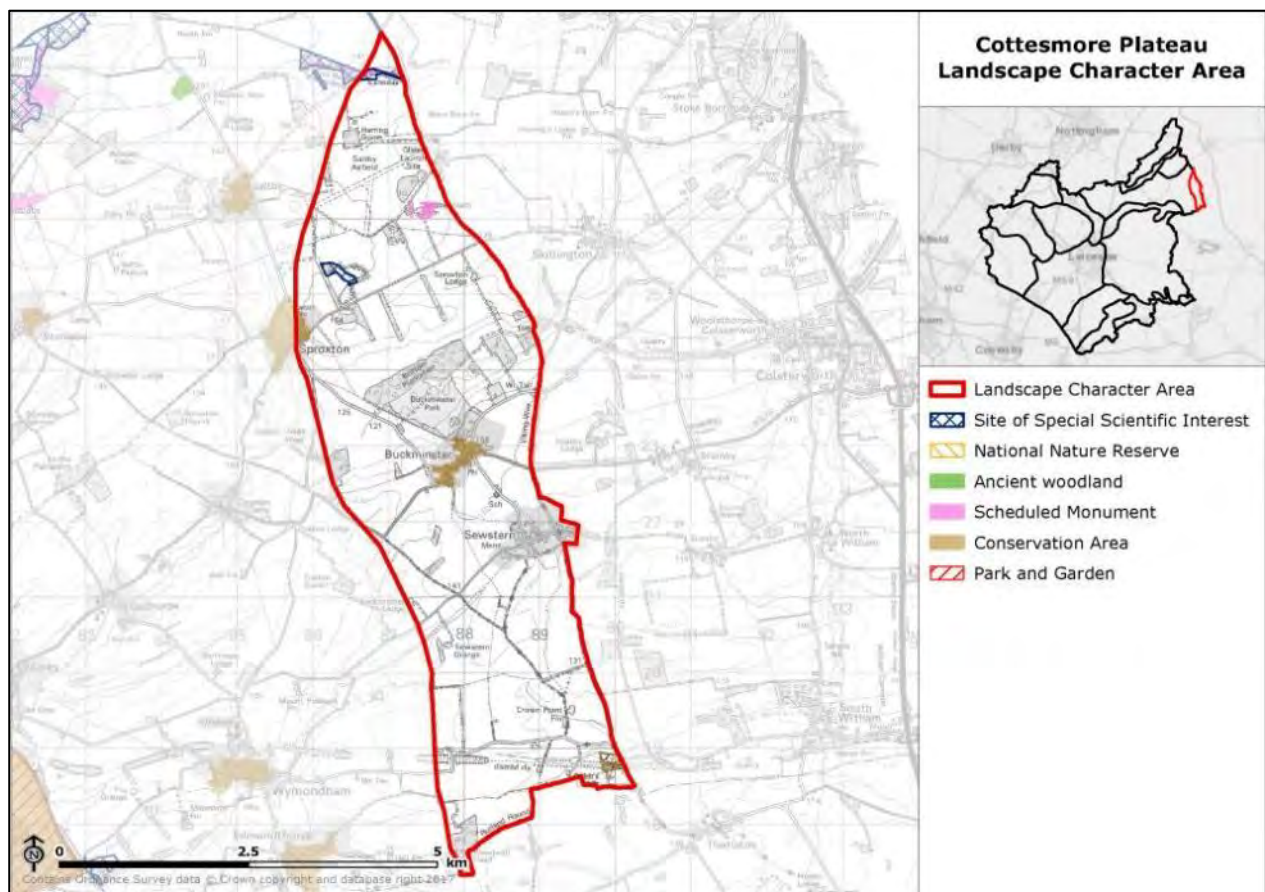
integrated into the landscape.

- Respect the setting and integrity of historic estate parkland landscapes and important heritage features within the landscape including manor houses and medieval monastic buildings. Promote access and interpretation where it is compatible with conservation.
- Conserve the character of Charnwood Forest villages by respecting the distinctive style and using local materials of the Charnwood Forest and manage the built form development in rural locations so that it is compatible with the intimate scale and character of the Charnwood Forest landscape.
- Retain gaps between existing settlements which provide a rural setting and preserve the identity/prevent merging of settlements. Seek to improve any hard urban edges to improve **settlements' integration into the landscape.**
- Conserve open views of the countryside from vantage points such as Beacon Hill and Bradgate Park.
- Protect the naturalistic, scenic character and tranquil qualities of the landscape which make it a popular destination for local people and tourists. Avoid over-engineering of roads, to maintain the rural and tranquil character and minimise urbanising influences.
- Manage and promote the unique natural and cultural heritage features of the area in line with the vision and objectives of the Charnwood Forest Regional Park initiative. Explore opportunities to deliver Green Infrastructure opportunities through the initiative.
- Support the enhancement of the network of existing public rights of way particularly where it allows movement across the Forest, where it is compatible with the tranquil character and its ecological sensitivity. Promote and link up existing rights of way, including the Long Distance Paths of Ivanhoe Way, National Forest Way and the Leicestershire Round and National Cycle Route 63.
- Create and promote sustainable transport methods to the numerous Country Parks in the area which attract many visitors from nearby urban areas. Manage access to prevent damage to the landscape, vulnerable ecological areas and the verges of narrow country lanes, especially at popular visitor sites.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchment areas of the reservoirs within the LCA and Rothley Brook should be considered in particular.
- Promote initiatives to restore quarries for the benefit of biodiversity and recreation once they are no longer used for industrial production.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2008)
- Landscape Character Assessment: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough (2006)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth (2008)
- North West Leicestershire Ecological Networks (2015)

Cottesmore Plateau (Melton)



Summary of landscape character

Cottesmore Plateau is generally a flat, open landscape ranging between approximately 120 and 150 metres AOD, with the plateau continuing into Rutland County in the south. A small stream valley is associated with Cringle Brook north of Buckminster village. Fields are large and regular in shape, divided by low hedges and predominantly used for arable growing. Blocks of mixed woodland are located in the north of the area, with picturesque tree-lined lanes and Buckminster Park also contributing to the wooded character of the landscape.

Representative photographs



Cottesmore Plateau (Melton)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	A gently undulating, open plateau landscape, divided into large-scale, regular fields which are mostly used as arable farmland. North of Buckminster is a steam valley associated with Cringle Brook which is steep and distinct from the wider plateau. Small scale features within the landscape (in the form of trees, hedgerows and existing buildings) are most frequent around Buckminster. Fields in this area are also smaller than those on the rest of the plateau.	M
Natural character	The plateau is mostly under arable production, with some pastures next to settlements. This is a well-wooded landscape, with frequent blocks of plantation woodland and avenues of mature horse chestnut, oak and sycamore trees along a number of roads including Sproxton Road, Stainby Road and School Lane. Estate woodland and veteran trees are characteristic features within Buckminster Park. Strips of woodland are also a frequent along field boundaries. Pockets of semi-improved grassland are found amongst the primarily arable farmland . Cribb's Meadow is nationally designated as National Nature Reserve/SSSI.	M-H
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that fields on the plateau are mostly planned parliamentary enclosures and large amalgamated fields. Strip fields are located to the south of Sewstern. There are localised areas of piecemeal enclosure around Cribb's Meadow . The settlement of Buckminster is designated as a Conservation Area, and contains the Grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist. The landscape also provides a direct setting to the eastern edges of Sproxton (also a Conservation Area). A designed estate character is evident at Buckminster Park. There are two Scheduled Monuments within the area ; 'King Lud's Entrenchments' and a medieval monastic grange. Saltby Airfield is located in the north of the character area and was used by British and United States forces during the Second World War.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Settlement on the plateau is sparse, with two main settlements at Buckminster and Sewstern. Both settlements are small and compact with houses constructed of local stone. An attractive treed setting is provided by the avenues of mature trees and estate parkland surrounding Buckminster Hall. Isolated farms are scattered throughout the landscape. The estate character at Buckminster Park is a key part of the setting to the rest of the village. Throughout the rest of the area, the landscape provides a rural, arable setting.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	Long views, particularly from more elevated points and where woodland is less frequent. There is a mixture of undeveloped and wooded skylines. The spire of the Church of St John the Baptist in Buckminster is a prominent vertical feature. The Ashes water tower is also a distinct feature.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	The plateau has an exposed feel on higher elevations, particularly where tree cover is less frequent. The stream valley associated with Cringle Brook has a more enclosed feel due to topography and greater levels of tree cover. The landscape is rural, with a lack of significant modern development, although it is intensively farmed. Traffic on busy roads including the B676 can impact on tranquillity.	M-H

Cottesmore Plateau (Melton)



Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate** sensitivity to residential and commercial development. Sensitive features include the well-wooded character of the landscape, historic estate influences around Buckminster Park, the sparse settlement pattern, long views across adjacent landscapes, undeveloped, open skylines and strong rural qualities. Less sensitive attributes include the simple plateau landform, modern and large-scale field pattern.

Buckminster and the surrounding area tend to have a greater concentration of sensitive landscape features and attributes than the rest of the plateau.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Cottesmore Plateau (Melton)

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The slopes adjacent to Cringle Brook, which carve into the large scale plateau landscape.
- Well-wooded character of the landscape, including picturesque avenues of mature trees along roads.
- Valued semi-natural habitats, including nationally important species rich grasslands.
- The historic estate parkland associated with Buckminster Hall and the setting this provides to the adjacent settlement (designated as a Conservation Area).
- The sparse settlement pattern of historic small villages and isolated farms.
- The sense of exposure on higher ground and rural character throughout.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

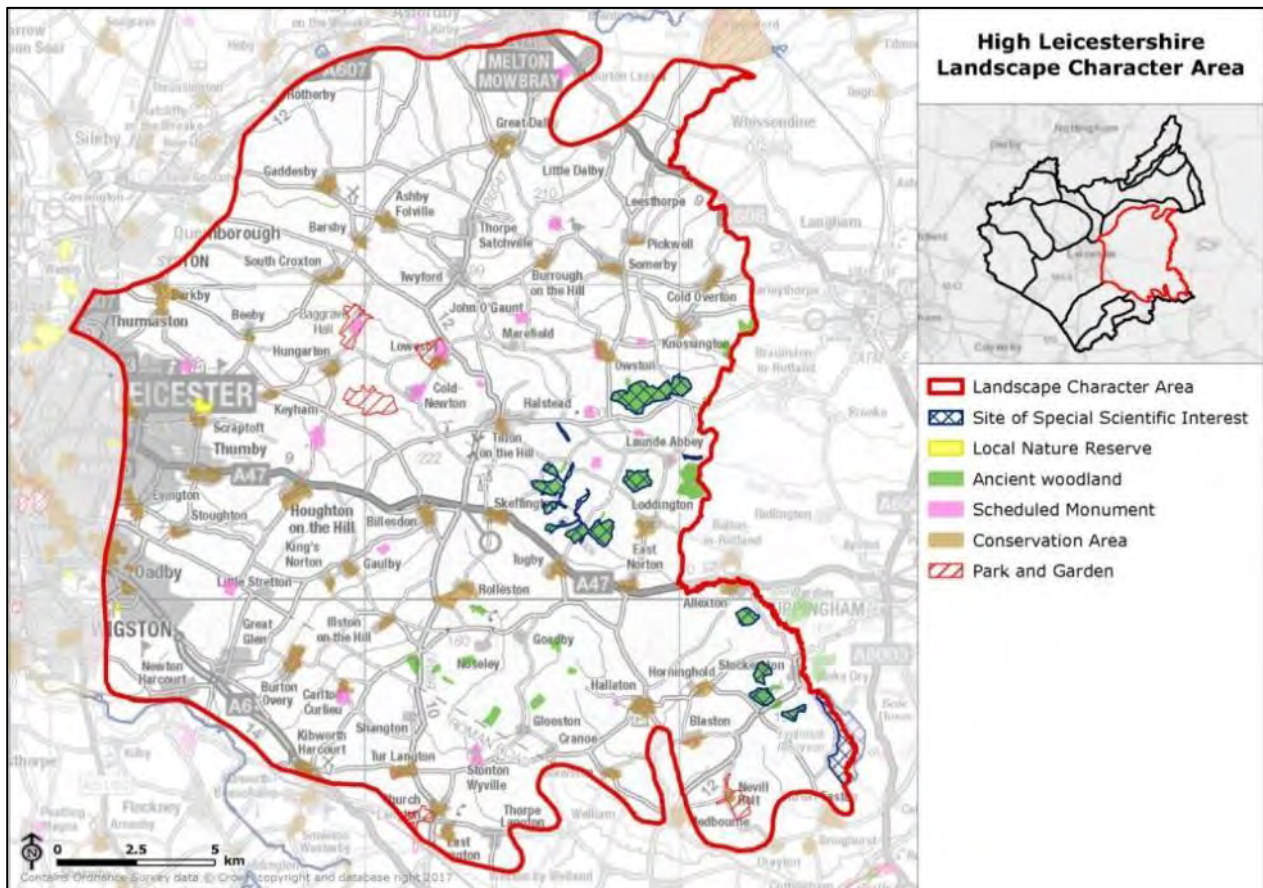
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid development on steeper, more prominent areas of landform.
- Retain the avenues of mature trees which are a distinctive feature along roads.
- Retain areas of valued semi-natural habitat amongst the intensively farmed landscape, linking habitats where possible.
- Protect the historic estate parkland and the setting that this provides to Buckminster Conservation Area.
- Ensure development is in keeping with the existing sparse settlement pattern on the plateau.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Promote new planting of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, as there have been past losses due to agricultural intensification.
- Retain small pockets of species-rich limestone grassland on road verges.
- Ensure that hedgerows are managed, and remove any inappropriate planting within hedgerows or roadside verges.
- Promote and enhance the Viking Way and Mowbray Way long distance routes.
- Introduce better promotion/interpretation/access of nature reserves, where this is compatible with their ecological objectives.
- Seek opportunities for new uses of disused infrastructure including the railway and airfield to provide a recreational resource within the landscape.
- Explore opportunities to improve access and interpretation at Buckminster Park.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (March 2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011 (February 2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (September 2015)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough (November 2011)

High Leicestershire (Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Oadby & Wigston and City of Leicester)



Summary of landscape character

The High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area (LCA) consists of a hilly plateau dissected by radiating watercourses which form the source of major rivers flowing from the landscape (in adjacent LCAs). The predominantly rural landscape comprises undulating fields with a mix of pasture on the higher sloping land and arable farming on the lower, flatter land. Fields are divided by well-established hedgerows, linking to copses and significant areas of nationally important ancient woodland. Extensive views from the higher ground reveal a pattern of small attractive villages, hamlets and farm buildings set within an agricultural landscape with traditional churches acting as distinctive landmarks.

Representative photographs



High Leicestershire (Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Oadby & Wigston and City of Leicester)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	A hilly plateau dissected by radiating watercourses which have formed moderate to steep sided valleys separated by broad ridges. The central part of the area includes a series of hills of over 210m, including Wharborough Hill (230m AOD). The landscape is often open and on a large scale, overlain by small thickets, copses and woodlands and a small-medium field pattern. Field ponds, hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees, scattered settlements and farms are further small-scale features.	M-H
Natural character	A predominantly rural landscape with mix of pasture on the higher sloping land and arable farming on the flatter land. Woodland is significant, including large SSSI-designated ancient woodland sites representing the former Leighfield Forest including Owston Woods. Natural character is also provided by mature and ancient hedgerows, wetlands associated with numerous streams and brooks (including Chater Valley SSSI), semi-improved grasslands, meadows, ponds and linear habitats along dismantled railway lines. On the border with Rutland, Eye Brook Reservoir SSSI is one of the more important wintering wildfowl sites in the East Midlands.	M-H
Historic landscape character	<p>Early archaeological remains include the scheduled Iron Age Burrough Hill Fort occupying a prominent hilltop position in Melton (also a Country Park) and Gartree Roman road, associated with a number of Romano-British settlements and villa sites. There are numerous nationally important deserted or shrunken medieval settlements with associated ridge and furrow earthworks. Registered parkland landscapes and features also contribute to local character, with traditionally grazed wood pasture. Away from the influence of Leicester in the west, the majority of the landscape's villages retain their historic character and form, reflected in Conservation Area designations and concentrations of Listed Buildings.</p> <p>Re-organised piecemeal enclosures comprise over a quarter of field patterns, with irregular boundaries and fields of varying shapes and sizes. Small planned fields with ridge and furrow often characterise historic settlement edges, of high sensitivity to change/loss. Large post-war fields are associated with flatter intensively farmed land.</p>	M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	<p>The west of the LCA is strongly influenced by urban, industrial and infrastructure developments on the fringes of Leicester and its outlying suburbs including Wigston, Oadby, Thurnby, Bushby, Scraptoft and Thurmaston. This LCA provides an immediate rural setting and backdrop to development, softening it into the landscape through woodland/hedgerow cover and rolling topography.</p> <p>Elsewhere small, dispersed nucleated villages are closely associated with their medieval origins and distinctive farmed and wooded context, some with 20th century development within or on their fringes. These are either nestled within valleys or on flat, elevated hill summits with green lanes and trees/woodland within and surrounding the built form. Occasional glimpses of red brick and white painted buildings are afforded through gaps in tree cover. Other parts of the landscape are unsettled with occasional isolated farms (sometimes with modern agricultural buildings) or hamlets linked by winding rural lanes with wide flower-rich verges.</p>	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>The landscape's high dissected plateau and steep sided valley slopes form distinctive, rural skylines and a setting for many villages. Historic church towers/spires act as local landmarks on the approaches to each village. The open, elevated character of many parts of the LCA affords extensive views, including to Melton Mowbray from the northern hills.</p> <p>Powerlines run north to south through the heart of the area and are</p>	M-H

High Leicestershire (Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Oadby & Wigston and City of Leicester)

	present in some views, along with telecommunications masts in elevated positions.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>The dense development and urban/suburban land uses in the west contrast greatly with the highly rural and tranquil qualities of the remainder of the character area, with a sense of timelessness and few modernising influences.</p> <p>The only major roads within the area are the A47 running east to west and the A6003 running north to south towards the LCA's eastern extremity, neither of which is particularly intrusive upon the landscape.</p>	



The landscape in the south of the LCA near Medbourne



Dismantled railway line at Oxeys Cross Roads



Landmark church at Somerby



Mixed agricultural landscape around Noseley



Eyebrook Reservoir



Hallaton village

High Leicestershire (Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Oadby & Wigston and City of Leicester)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This landscape has an overall sensitivity rating of **moderate-high** for both housing and commercial (light industrial) development. The more rural, undeveloped parts of the LCA away from the **influence of Leicester's urban fringes** in the west would be highly sensitive to both development scenarios, with only limited housing developments within existing settlement curtilages likely to be appropriate, providing the guidance below is followed.

Sensitivity is presented by the highly rural and tranquil qualities of much of the landscape, with its distinctive elevated topography providing a backdrop to settlement and historic villages with distinctive local vernacular nestled into the landform and its wooded context. Valued tracts of semi-natural habitat, including wetlands and surviving swathes of ancient woodland; along with historic land uses including parkland estates, create further sensitivities.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)				M-H	
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)				M-H	

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The distinctive topography of elevated hills, ridges and steep valley slopes which form a rural setting and backdrop to the area – including eastern Leicester and Melton Mowbray.
- Nationally important ancient woodland sites and other valued habitats including hedgerows, copses, wetlands (e.g. Chater Valley and Eye Brook Reservoir SSSIs), semi-improved grasslands, meadows, ponds and linear habitats along watercourses and dismantled railway lines.
- Nationally designated deserted and shrunken medieval settlements, surviving ridge and furrow, distinctive medieval field patterns around villages and the prominent Burrough Hill Fort.
- Registered parkland estate landscapes, traditionally grazed wood pasture and distinctive gated roads linking small farms and isolated hamlets.
- The compact and historic nature **of the landscape's medieval villages** with strong ironstone, thatch and red brick vernacular, nestled into the landform surrounded by trees and farmland.
- Historic landmarks and focal points formed by historic church towers and spires peeping above wooded skylines.
- The deeply rural and historic qualities of the landscape, with many areas free from modern development or disturbance. Quiet, winding lanes with wide flower-rich verges.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Utilise the strongly rolling topography and dips in the landform to integrate new development into the landscape (avoiding steeper, more prominent slopes and overlooked locations).
- Ensure any new development in the west is contiguous and connected to the existing urban area, with natural and visual envelopes maintained and built influence beyond (into the surrounding rural areas) avoided.
- **Maintain the compact, historic form of the LCA's small villages** – with any new development limited to infill within existing settlement envelopes, sympathetic to local vernacular styles and

High Leicestershire (Harborough, Charnwood, Melton, Oadby & Wigston and City of Leicester)

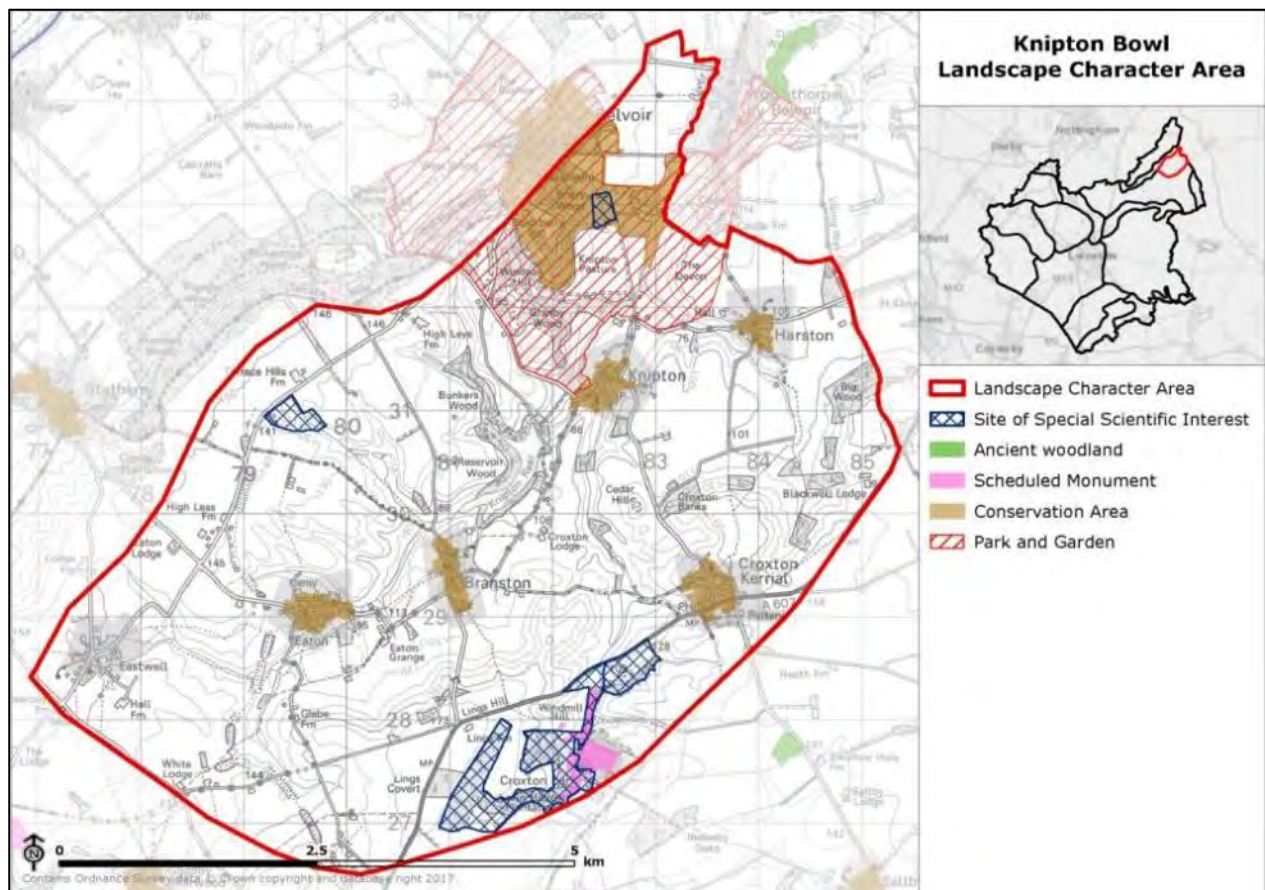
materials.

- Take advantage of the screening effects of existing woodland and hedgerows, protecting existing features and enhancing ecological connections within and around any new development (i.e. through new hedgerow and tree planting using locally prevalent, climate resilient species).
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats, including SSSI-designated ancient woodlands, copses, hedgerows, semi-improved grasslands, wood pasture, wetlands (e.g. Chater Valley and Eye Brook Reservoir SSSIs), ponds and ecological networks associated with dismantled railway lines.
- Conserve the character of the rural road network by retaining the undefined carriageway edge, with their grassy, flower-rich verges and roadside hedges with trees, minimising any street lighting or signage and avoiding unnecessary road/junction widening.
- **Protect the character, setting and integrity of the landscape's ornamental parklands**, including those on the edges of settlements (e.g. Church Langtor, Nevil Holt, Lowesby) which contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- Protect above and below-ground archaeological features of significance, including deserted and shrunken medieval settlements.
- Capitalise on the landscape and GI enhancement opportunities arising from the forthcoming North East of Leicester Sustainable Urban Extension scheme in Charnwood Borough (fringes of Hamilton and Thurmaston) – which will include new open spaces, cycle/walking routes, habitat creation and landscape enhancements.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The high hills are the source of a number of major rivers in the county, including the Welland, Sence and Wreake. Eye Brook also feeds the reservoir of the same name.
- Protect the strongly rural, wooded and agricultural setting the landscape provides to development, both within and beyond the LCA – including eastern Leicester and Melton Mowbray. Ensure development does not affect the appreciation of church towers/spires on skylines.
- Conserve highly rural areas free from disturbance with locally important levels of tranquillity.
- Explore the further potential of Burrough Hill Country Park as a strategic destination for tourism and recreation, promoting sustainable transport options to and from the site, including from Melton Mowbray. It is already served by the Jubilee Way, Leicestershire Round and a byway linking to Cycle Route 64.
- Pursue opportunities to improve access and recreational opportunities to Eye Brook Reservoir (currently only served by a car park and informal access tracks in Rutland). This could include new multi-user routes around the reservoir linking to the Rutland Round and potentially a new connection to the Jurassic Way via Great Easton on the Harborough side.
- Explore opportunities to create new multi-user trails on sections of dismantled railway, parts of which are already crossed by rights of way including the Leicestershire Round and Midshires Way.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence:

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Lutterworth and Eastern Growth Corridor Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zones (LUC, 2017)
- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
- Oadby and Wigston Landscape Character Assessment (2005)
- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment (2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update (2011)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough (2011)

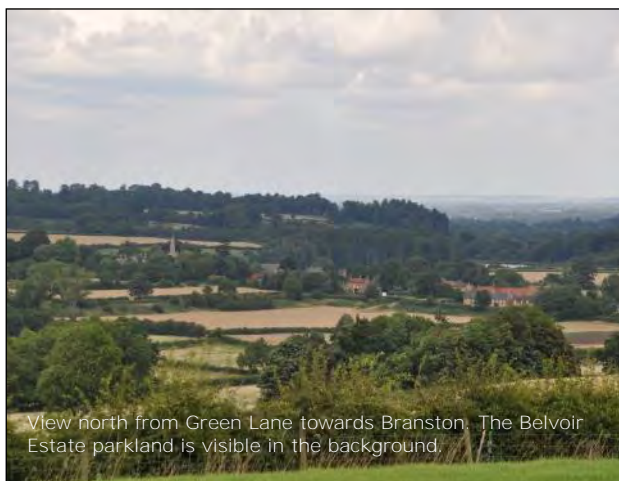
Knpton Bowl (Melton)



Summary of landscape character

Complex, intricate landscape centred around Knpton Reservoir and carved by numerous steep and narrow stream valleys. A mix of arable and unimproved pasture land is divided by hedgerows into a varied field pattern which tends to be smaller in scale on the valley slopes with occasional preserved medieval field systems. The landscape has a well-wooded character, with broadleaved woodland located on slopes. Compact, nucleated historic villages of local stone are located next to streams. Strong rural qualities, with estate parkland influences from Croxton Park and Belvoir Estate. Belvoir Castle is visible on the skyline to the north. Church spires at Eaton and Branston are prominent.

Representative photographs



Knpton Bowl (Melton)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Complex and intricate landform which is carved by small scale stream valleys with steep slopes and punctuated by small hills. The overlying field pattern is varied and tends to be smaller scale and more intricate around settlements. Trees, hedgerows and stone walls are frequent small scale features found throughout the area, along with a number of villages.	M-H
Natural character	The landscape has a well-wooded character, with frequent areas of mature, deciduous woodland found on slopes. Significant veteran trees are associated with estate parkland at Croxton and Belvoir. Unimproved pastures, including calcareous grassland are found amongst the arable farmland and are of value to wildlife. Wet grassland/fen habitat is located in the valleys, adjacent to streams. Numerous woodland and grassland habitats are nationally or locally designated for nature conservation.	M-H
Historic landscape character	Knpton Bowl contains a number of villages designated as Conservation Areas, including Knpton, Harston, Croxton Karrial, Branston and Eaton. Within the farmed landscape, there is time-depth resulting from remnant medieval field systems. Croxton Park and parts of the Belvoir Castle estate introduce an estate parkland character into the landscape. Historic churches are a characteristic feature of the villages. Croxton Abbey is designated as a Scheduled Monument.	M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	Settlement consists of small, nucleated villages, with a distinctive vernacular of local ironstone and red brick. The form of settlements is influenced by the underlying landform and they tend to be well integrated into the surrounding landscape as they have not expanded significantly in the past century. Many are designated as Conservation Areas, with trees and woodland noted as providing a picturesque setting for settlements. Isolated farms are located on higher ground. The agricultural land surrounding the villages provides a strong rural setting to the villages, with the small-scale intricate and varying landform giving a strong sense of place to and enclosing the settlements.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	Knpton Bowl is overlooked from the adjacent scarp slope. Views vary depending on topography and woodland cover. Belvoir Castle forms a distinctive feature on the skyline (located in the adjacent Belvoir Scarp character area). Church spires within Eaton and Branston are also prominent skyline features.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Varying perceptual qualities, ranging from an enclosed and intimate feel in the stream valleys, to more exposed on higher ground. A strong rural character is experienced throughout the landscape due to a lack of modern development. The historic stone villages set into the landscape are scenic and picturesque. Some larger roads, including the A607 can be busy and introduce traffic noise.	M-H

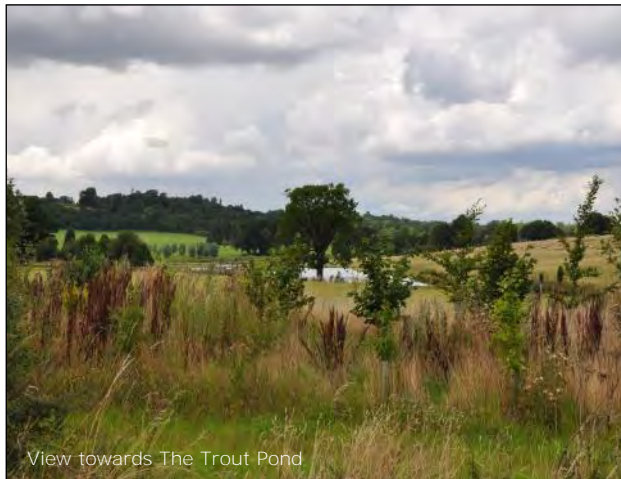
Knipton Bowl (Melton)



View of Main Street in Knipton



View to Big Wood from Croxton Lane



View towards The Trout Pond



Ironstone vernacular at Hartson Village



Red brick and ironstone vernacular visible in the village of Branston



View of 'the Carrier', a brook which flows through Knipton

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate-high** sensitivity to residential and **high** sensitivity to commercial development due to the strongly undulating landform with many small scale valleys, a well-wooded character, semi-natural grassland habitat, historic nucleated villages constructed of local stone, estate parkland landscapes and highly tranquil and rural character, with few detractors.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Knippton Bowl (Melton)

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The strongly undulating landform, with small incised valleys forming steep slopes.
- Well-wooded character of the landscape, with frequent areas of mature, deciduous woodland.
- Nationally and locally valued semi-natural habitats including woodland, grassland and wetlands.
- The historic estate parkland landscapes associated with the Belvoir Estate and Croxton Park.
- The distinctive local ironstone and redbrick vernacular of the historic villages, which have not expanded significantly beyond their historic cores.
- Expansive views from higher ground and high levels of intervisibility with the adjacent escarpment.
- The strong rural and highly tranquil character of the area, with few intrusive features.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

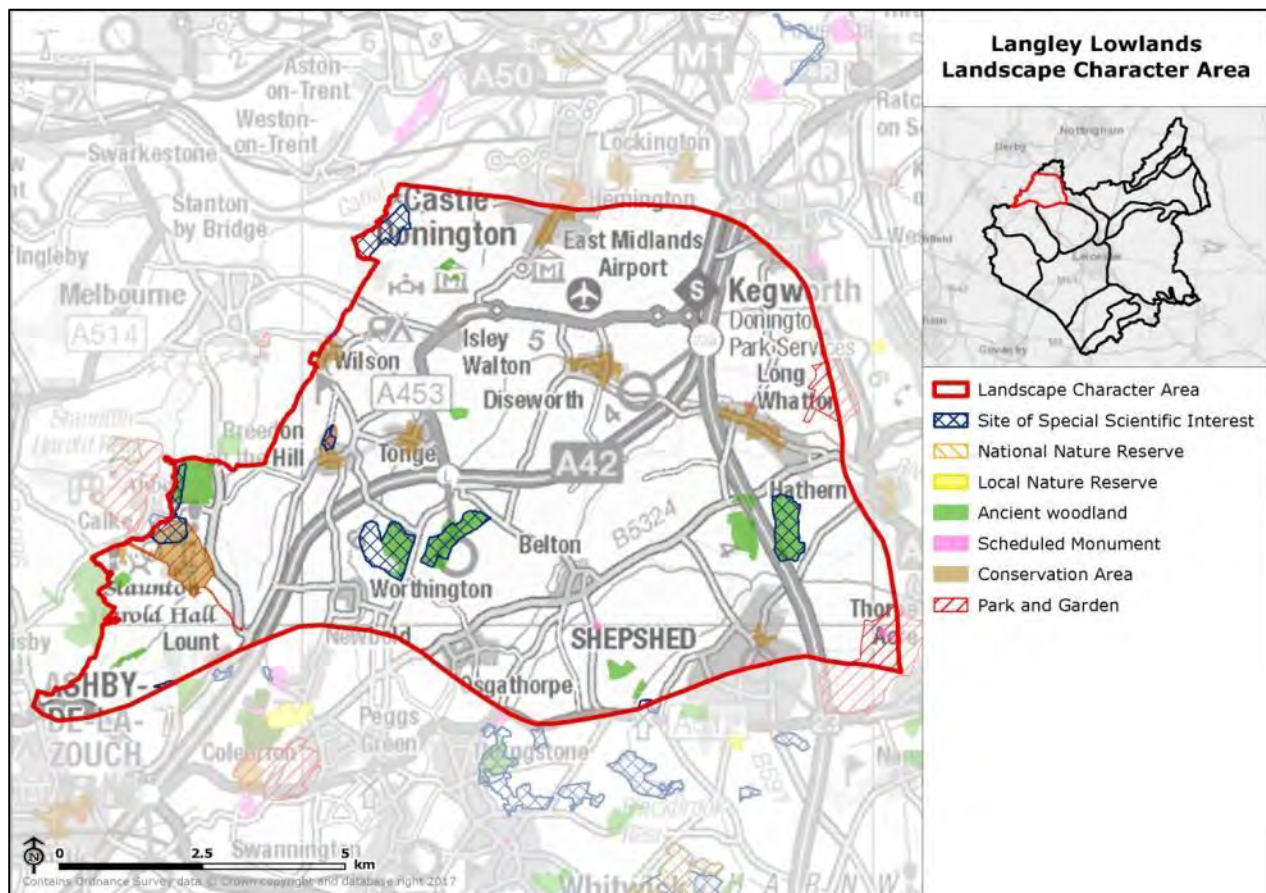
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid siting development on the steep slopes of the stream valleys or in highly prominent locations.
- Retain the large areas of mature, broadleaved woodland which characterise the landscape, including estate woodland.
- Protect and enhance valued semi-natural habitats, seeking to create linkages where appropriate.
- Protect the setting the landscape provided to historic villages including the nucleated villages (often designated as Conservation Areas) and historic estate parklands of the Belvoir Estate and Croxton Park.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Retain the strong rural character of the landscape and high levels of tranquillity.
- Establish new public rights of way to parts of the landscape which are not well served by the existing network. Dismantled railways are existing linear features in the landscape which could host multi-use trails and provide linkages between existing recreation routes.
- Seek to plant new hedgerows and woodlands where past losses have occurred, and ensure that existing hedgerows/woodlands are appropriately managed.
- Many of the characteristic waterbodies in the Belvoir Estate (including Knippton Reservoir and Belvoir Lakes) are not accessible to the public. Explore opportunities to enhance public access and recreational resource at these locations.
- Promote and enhance existing recreational routes including National Cycle Route 64 and Jubilee Way.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (March 2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011 (February 2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (September 2015)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough (November 2011)

Langley Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Charnwood)



Summary of landscape character

Gently rolling landform incised by small streams flowing towards the Trent and Soar valleys. Varied field pattern, with a contrast of large post-war arable fields and smaller piecemeal enclosure associated with villages. Well-treed with ancient woodlands and frequent hedgerow trees. A number of historic parkland estates occur throughout the landscape. Settlement comprises small nucleated villages and the edges of larger settlements at Castle Donington and Shepshed. Quarries at Breedon Hill and Breedon Cloud and major transport infrastructure have an influence on the landscape, particularly East Midlands Airport and the M1/A42.

Representative photographs



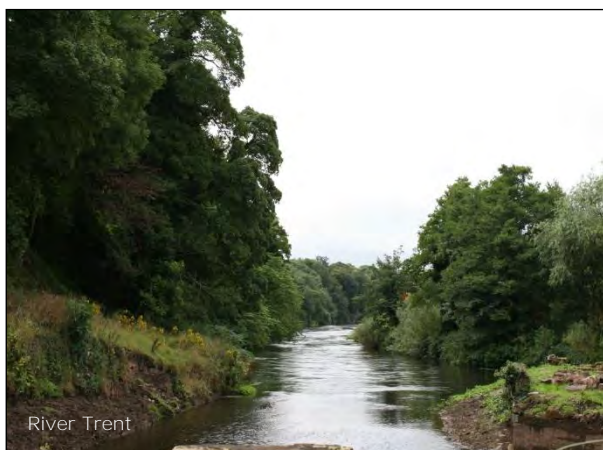
Langley Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Charnwood)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Rolling landform dissected by minor watercourses draining northwards towards the Trent or eastwards to the Soar. There are some areas with a steeper landform including the river valley sides and Breedon Hill, which are often prominent within the landscape. The land is overlain by a varied field pattern, with some areas of large-scale arable cultivation and pockets of smaller scale piecemeal enclosure which tend to be located close to villages. Trees, hedgerows and villages/farms are small-scale features which are frequent within the landscape.	M
Natural character	<p>The farmed landscape is mixture of arable and pasture cultivation, with pastures mostly associated with smaller fields closer to settlements. Streams and hedgerows with frequent trees provide natural features throughout the landscape. There are also a number of important wetland habitats including parts of Staunton Harold Reservoir (on the border with South Derbyshire District) and part of the River Trent.</p> <p>The landscape has a strong wooded character and forms part of the National Forest. There are notable ancient woodland sites at Cloud Wood, Pasture Wood and Oakley Wood (all of which are also SSSI). The historic estate parklands within the landscape also contain veteran trees which contribute to the natural character. Donington Park is nationally designated as a SSSI for its ancient oaks, mature lime and sycamore.</p>	M-H
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that field are of mixed origin, with large-scale amalgamated post war fields, planned enclosure and historic strip fields which are associated with the edges of settlements. Much of the area is strongly influenced by historic estates including Staunton Harold Hall and Whatton House (Grade II* and Grade II Registered Park and Garden) and non-registered estates including Donington Park and Langley Priory. Strong sense of time-depth. There are several Scheduled Monuments including earthworks and the remains of a Cistercian abbey and mansion. A number of the villages are designated as Conservation Areas, with many Listed Buildings. Historic churches are usually a focal point within these villages.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<p>Settlements within the landscape primarily consist of small, characterful villages (including some Conservation Areas) and farms. Long Whatton has a distinctive linear form which follows the valley of Long Whatton Brook. The edges of larger urban settlements including Castle Donington, Kegworth and Shepshed are also located within this character area. Although these settlements have expanded significantly in the last century, they are generally well integrated into the landscape due to the landform and tree cover.</p> <p>Much of the existing development is concreted in the north and east of the area. In the west, settlement is very sparse and mostly consists of occasional farmsteads.</p>	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	The rocky outcrop of Carboniferous Limestone at Breedon Hill is widely visible; with the Grade I listed Church of St Mary and St Hardulph forming a focal point. Trees on ridges and higher ground create wooded skylines, while some areas are visually enclosed by the woodland. Pylon lines cross the skyline in places, and a communications mast and tower are visible at East Midlands Airport. From higher ground in the north of the LCA, there are long views over the Trent Valley into Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, including the prominent cooling	M

Langley Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Charnwood)

	towers of Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station.	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Although this landscape retains many rural qualities, there are land uses which can detract from this, including active quarries at Breedon Hill and Breedon Cloud, a motor racing circuit, East Midlands Airport and the A42/M42 roads. The area around the airport has a very open, exposed character in comparison with the rest of the landscape. There is strong juxtaposition between the industrial areas/transport infrastructure and the many historic parkland influences on the landscape, as these areas tend to have a highly tranquil, naturalistic character. Some areas are intensively farmed, whilst others have a more tranquil, pastoral quality.	M



Langley Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Charnwood)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate** sensitivity to residential development and **moderate-high** sensitivity to commercial development (light industry) due to the strongly wooded character, valued semi-natural habitats (including ancient woodlands) historic estate influences on the landscape, small villages with historic churches and rural, naturalistic qualities of the landscape.

The undulating landform and thick hedgerows/trees effectively screen existing urban development, however, the sensitivity of the landscape is reduced by noise and movement associated with the presence of major roads including the M1 and A42 and other major transport infrastructure including East Midlands Airport.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Small streams and brooks which cross the landscape, creating localised areas of steep landform.
- Well-wooded character with a number of nationally designated habitats including blocks of ancient woodland and Blackbrook Reservoir.
- Distinctive skyline features including the Grade I listed church tower at Breedon on the Hill.
- Historic estate landscapes including Castle Donington, Garendon Park and Staunton Harold Hall, which give the landscape a strong sense of time-depth.
- Sparse settlement pattern with scattered farms and small nucleated villages, including a number designated as Conservation Areas.
- Valued heritage features including a number of Scheduled Monuments from various eras of history.
- Long views across adjacent landscapes from higher ground.
- Highly tranquil and rural qualities experienced in parts of the landscape, particularly around the historic estates.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid siting development on areas of steep landform or where it will be widely prominent within the landscape. Utilise the undulating topography and existing woodland and mature hedgerows to effectively screen development.
- **Protect the character, setting and integrity of the landscape's ornamental parkland, including Staunton Harold Hall and Whatton House (Grade II* and Grade II Registered Park and Garden) and non-registered estates including Donington Park and Langley Priory which create a sense of time-depth and contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Seek to improve public access and interpretation of these landscapes.**
- Conserve areas free from disturbance with locally important levels of tranquillity, particularly in the sparsely settled western part of the landscape.
- Maintain gaps between settlements where there has been recent expansion, to preserve the

Langley Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Charnwood)

setting the landscape provides to the settlements and their distinct identities.

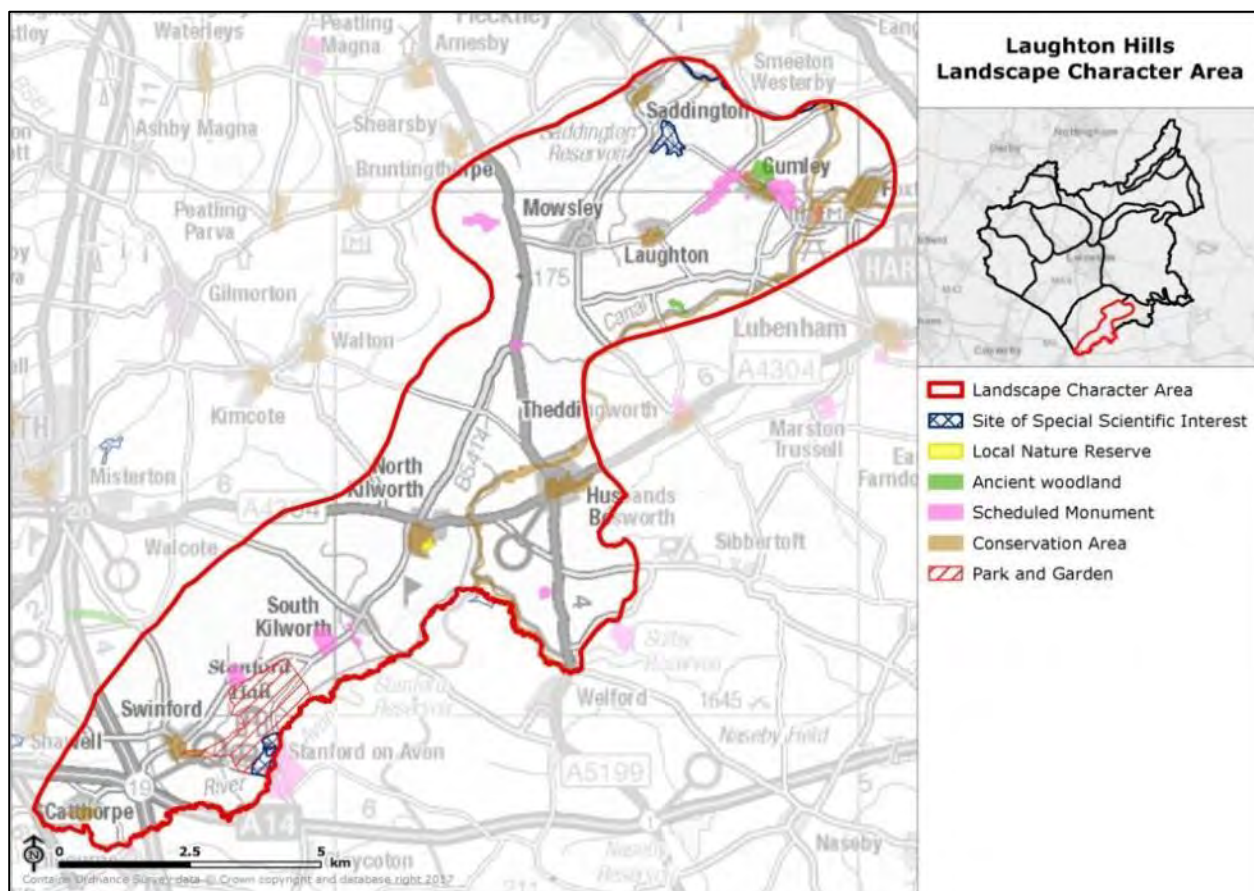
- Respect the pattern and vernacular of existing development and the setting of the numerous Conservation Areas within the landscape.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows and wetlands. Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Cloud Wood, Pasture Wood and Oakley Wood. Create linkages between habitats where appropriate.
- Respect the setting and integrity of important heritage features within the landscape, including Scheduled Monuments. Introduce interpretation of these features where compatible with conservation measures.
- Retain distinctive small-scale historic field patterns where they remain on the edges of settlements.
- Seek to promote and improve existing trails and cycle routes including the Ivanhoe Way/National Forest Way, National Cycle Routes 6 and 52 and the Cloud Trail. Link up existing routes where possible and improve off-road routes between the villages, to promote sustainable travel options.
- Much of the LCA forms part of the National Forest; seek to undertake new woodland planting where opportunities arise.
- Seek to improve and create links with the Trent River across the County Boundary for the benefit of habitat connectivity and recreation.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchment areas of the numerous streams which flow through the area should be considered in particular.



References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (2010)
- North West Leicestershire: Ecological Network (2015)
- Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment (2008)

Laughton Hills (Harborough District)



Summary of landscape character

This LCA represents the northern end of an upland character area which extends south-westwards into Northamptonshire. It consists mainly of high hills predominantly used for grazing, which flatten out to arable areas towards the south. Medium sized fields are divided by mature hedgerows with frequent boundary trees. Areas of woodland linking to the hedgerow network contribute to a well-treed character. There are several established villages that have grown significantly in recent times, such as Husbands Bosworth. Overall the landscape is sparsely settled with strong rural qualities; medieval villages, historic buildings and parkland estates including Stanford Park providing a sense of time depth.

Representative photographs



Laughton Hills (Harborough District)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	This is high rolling area with steep slopes associated with the Mowsley Laughton Hills ridgelines, overlooking the Upper Welland Valley and Grand Union Canal. It reaches a maximum elevation of 174m AOD, becoming lower and more gently undulating in the centre of the LCA (e.g. along the A5199 and fringing the Grand Union Canal) where larger scale, arable fields dominate. Fields are mainly of medium scale, bounded by hedgerows with frequent boundary and in-field trees providing small-scale landscape context.	M-H
Natural character	This is a predominantly pastoral landscape (with some valued areas of semi-improved grassland and wood pasture) with pockets of intensive arable cultivation in flatter areas. Natural character is provided by the frequent tree cover, with interlinking hedgerows, deciduous woodlands, estate plantings and in-field / parkland trees. Tree/woodland cover is notable along the line of the Laughton Hills and around Gumley. Habitats associated with the Grand Union Canal and associated disused railway line are locally valued, with nationally designated sites found at Stanford Park, Saddington Reservoir and Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSIs.	M
Historic landscape character	There are a number of Scheduled Monuments including Knaptoft and Gumley medieval settlements, Stormsworth deserted medieval village, and Old Sudbury and Stanford villages (just over the county boundary). The Grade I Listed Stanford Hall is surrounded by Grade II registered parkland, with ornamental trees forming distinctive landscape features. Six of the LCA's settlements include Conservation Areas, with clusters of Listed Buildings. The Grand Union Canal is a Conservation Area along its length, with a number of associated Listed Buildings, including bridges and mileposts. Regular parliamentary enclosures are the dominant field pattern. Larger post-war fields and re-organised piecemeal enclosures of various shapes and sizes are also found across the landscape, with small-scale planned field patterns often associated with the fringes of historic villages. Well preserved ridge and furrow remains are a feature in places, indicating medieval farming activity (e.g. around Gumley).	M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	In the north of the area are the small medieval villages of Laughton, Mowsley, Saddington and Gumley - compact in form with mature hedgerow trees, clumps and small woodlands within and surrounding the villages softly integrating the built form into the landscape with occasional glimpses of red brick and white painted buildings through gaps. Gumley's historic wooded setting is particularly distinctive. Their positions nestled within the intricate landform also minimises their visibility in the wider landscape and enhances their rural sense of place. The larger villages in the south - Husbands Bosworth, North Kilworth, South Kilworth and Swinford have experienced more recent growth into the adjoining more open countryside, including cul-de-sacs of modern housing and light industrial units. Gumley, Swinford and Husbands Bosworth are fringed by parkland estate landscapes which contribute to character and sense of place.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	The rolling topography of the Mowley and Laughton Hills forms a rural pastoral backdrop to settlement, frequently marked by trees, woodland and hedgerows which limit the length and range of views. The flatter arable-dominated landscapes have more expansive views and open skylines (e.g. between Skilworth and Swinford and north of Husbands Bosworth), with wind turbines featuring to the south-west of South Kilworth. Important historic features marking skylines include the North and South Kilworth church spires (both Grade II * Listed Buildings). The red brick tower (with flag flying) of the Grade II listed 18 th century Hall	M-H

Laughton Hills (Harborough District)

	Farm stables in Gumley rises above the trees as a local landmark.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Overall this is a strongly rural, sparsely settled landscape with historic villages set within rolling pastures, woodland and estate parkland. Perceptions of tranquillity lessen in the more developed southern half, including in association with the junction of the M1 and M6 motorways. Busy roads crossing through the landscape, including the A5199 Leicester Road and A4304 Lutterworth Road impact on local levels of tranquillity. The large golf course south of North Kilworth and disused airfield to the south-east of Husbands Bosworth also detract from traditional rural qualities.	



Laughton Hills (Harborough District)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This Landscape Character Area is judged to be of **moderate-high** overall sensitivity to both housing and commercial (light industrial) developments. Landscape sensitivity is presented by the strong rural and undisturbed qualities of large parts of the landscape, the compact historic character of its villages, presence of valued historic land uses and features including historic parkland, undeveloped wooded skylines and important naturalistic features and habitats.

Sensitivity to both development scenarios is slightly lower in the more developed, less undulating and intensively farmed parts of the landscape (in the southern half of the LCA), providing the guidance below is followed.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)				M-H	
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)				M-H	

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The distinctive strongly undulating topography and visible slopes of the Mowsley and Laughton Hills.
- Valued areas and features of natural character, including semi-improved grasslands, individual trees (including wood pasture), woodlands and wetlands. Nationally important habitats at Stanford Park, Saddington Reservoir and Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSIs.
- Valued historic landscapes and heritage features, including medieval settlements, surviving ridge and furrow and small planned fields, and the Grade II Stanford Park estate.
- Historic villages with strong local vernacular - many with Conservation Areas, clusters of Listed Buildings and ornamental parkland settings.
- The compact nature of the landscape's villages, integrated into folds in the landform with mature hedgerows, trees and woodlands filtering views of development.
- Important historic features breaking wooded skylines, including the spires of the Grade II * churches at North and South Kilworth and the tower of Gumley Hall stables.
- The strong rural qualities of the landscape, with many areas free from development or disturbance.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Utilise the strongly rolling topography and dips in the landform to integrate new development into the landscape (avoiding steeper, more prominent slopes).
- **Maintain the compact, historic form of the LCA's small villages** – with any new development limited to infill within existing settlement envelopes, sympathetic to local vernacular styles and materials.
- Take advantage of the screening effects of existing woodland and hedgerows, protecting existing features and enhancing ecological connections within and around any new development (i.e. through new hedgerow and tree planting using locally prevalent, climate resilient species).
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including semi-improved grasslands, wood pasture, species-rich hedgerows and wetlands. Avoid development which could

Laughton Hills (Harborough District)

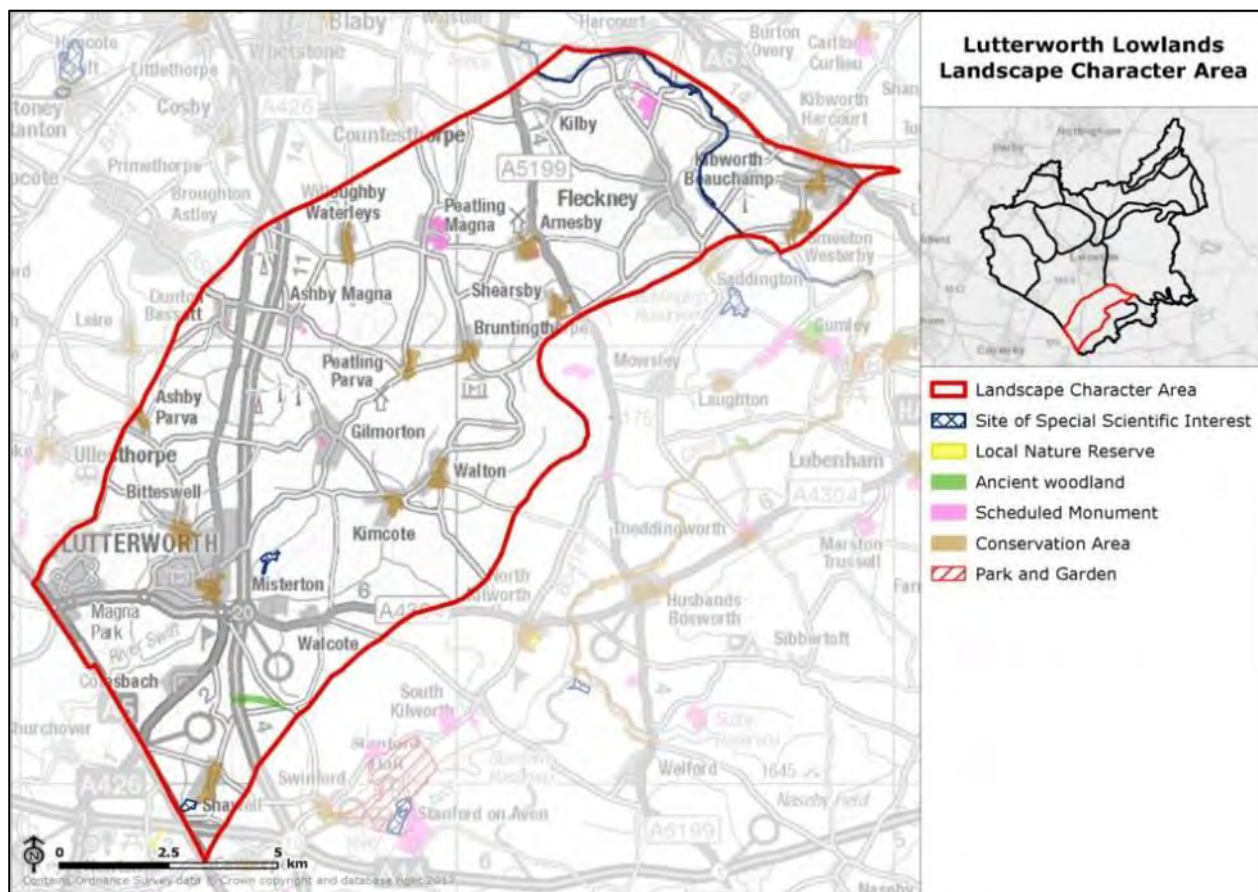
impact upon the SSSIs at Stanford Park, Saddington Reservoir and Kilby-Foxton Canal.

- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchment areas of the reservoirs within and on the boundary of this LCA, the River Avon and the Grand Union Canal should be considered in particular.
- Protect the strongly rural, wooded and agricultural setting the landscape provides to development. Avoid siting development where ridge and furrow is evident, and protect heritage assets from any impacts, including deserted medieval villages.
- Conserve undeveloped wooded skylines and ensure new development does not affect the appreciation of historic features on skylines, including the church spires at North and South Kilworth (both Grade II*) and landmark tower of Hall Farm stables in Gumley.
- **Protect the character, setting and integrity of the landscape's ornamental parkland, including the** Grade II registered Stanford Park and areas found on the edges of settlements (e.g. Gumley, Swinford and Husbands Bosworth) which contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- Conserve areas free from disturbance with locally important levels of tranquillity, particularly in the northern half of the LCA away from busy roads.
- Explore the further potential of Foxton Locks as a strategic destination for tourism and recreation, promoting and improving sustainable transport options to and from the site – including via the Leicestershire Round Long Distance Path and National Cycle Route 6.
- Pursue opportunities to enhance access and recreational opportunities to Saddington Reservoir, including through new or improved right of way connections to the Leicestershire Round Long Distance Path and National Cycle Route 6.
- Improve opportunities to access and enjoy the heritage and natural features of the Grand Union Canal, creating new rights of way entry points and connections wherever possible, including from the nearby settlements of Husbands Bosworth and North Kilworth.

References for further local-level evidence:

- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
- Harborough Rural Centres Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2014)

Lutterworth Lowlands (Harborough and Blaby)



Summary of landscape character

The Lutterworth Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) is a predominantly open, gently rolling pastoral landscape. Regular, medium sized fields are divided by mature hedgerows linking to bands and blocks of woodland and tree avenues. Parkland estates provide a sense of time depth and setting to historic villages. Lutterworth, in the south of the area, is the main town with the expanding villages of Fleckney and Kibworth found towards the north east of the LCA.

Representative photographs



Landscape south-east of Bruntingthorpe



The Sence floodplain viewed from Wistow

Lutterworth Lowlands (Harborough and Blaby)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	The gently rolling land undulates between 105 metres AOD along the river valleys to over 135 metres AOD at various high points. Some steep slopes are found on the boundary with the Laughton Hills LCA and on valley sides, including the River Swift. Medium sized fields are divided by mature hedgerows, with individual trees and woodland forming small scale landscape elements. Tree cover is particularly dense in association with parkland estates around Wistow, Misterton and Cotesbach.	M
Natural character	This is a predominantly pastoral landscape, with some smaller areas of mixed farming and traditionally grazed wood pasture. Naturalistic character is provided by the network of mature hedgerows, in-field and boundary trees, spinneys, estate plantings and scattered bands of deciduous woodland (including around Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome) and scattered ponds/wetlands, including Misterton Marshes and Cave's Inn Pits SSSIs . The Kilby-Foxton Canal is also designated as SSSI. Other land uses include sand and gravel extraction around Dunton Bassett and large-scale quarrying near Shawell.	M
Historic landscape character	Many of the villages are Conservation Areas, with clusters of Listed Buildings, including vernacular farmhouses. Lutterworth has Saxon origins; a number of Listed Buildings also within its Conservation Area. Scheduled moated sites of 13 th or 14 th century origins are a feature of the landscape, often attached to the edges of settlements or former settlements. Nationally important medieval settlement remains are found at Wistow Hall and Peatling Magna. Industrial heritage features include the Grand Union Canal (a Conservation Area); dismantled railways and former pits are found around Lutterworth and Shawell. Estate landscapes contribute to local sense of place and settlement setting at Misterton, Cotesbach, Shawell, Foston and Wistow. Regular parliamentary enclosures are the dominant field pattern, some containing extant ridge and furrow remains. Piecemeal enclosures of various shapes and sizes are also found across the landscape. Some areas of small-scale strip fields remain on the fringes of villages.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	There is an even spread of established villages and farms throughout, largely nucleated and compact in form, reflecting historic origins. The larger villages of Kibworth, Fleckney and Gilmorton have experienced significant 20 th century growth, including housing and light industrial estates on their peripheries. In the south-west, Lutterworth lies adjacent to the M1 and A426 corridors, flanked to the east by large industrial warehousing and commercial units. In the west, Magna Park is well screened by woodland – large warehousing only perceived when in the immediate vicinity (including associated noise). The dense woodland surrounding Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome again conceals their presence. Some large-scale agricultural sheds are present, but generally located on lower slopes with localised visual impacts. Overall this is a strongly rural, working farmed landscape with relict historic landscapes and estate plantings (spinneys, game coverts) contributing to the sense of place and setting of existing development. Tree-line roads, avenues and green lanes link settlements and help screen views of development, which immediately transitions to open countryside.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	While the gently undulating nature of the land presents an open landscape, views are often limited – particularly owing to hedgerow, woodland and tree cover (including along roads). Traditional church spires/ towers form important historic landmarks, including the spire of the Grade II* All Saints Church in Gilmorton and tower of St Mary's Church in Lutterworth (Grade I) . Wind turbines at Low Spinney Wind Farm near Gilmorton form notable moving features on the low open	M

Lutterworth Lowlands (Harborough and Blaby)

	skyline in this locality. Recent housing on the edges of Kibworth stands out on the flat farmed horizon that characterises the north of the town.	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	This is a landscape of contrasts; with busy infrastructure and dense development in and around Lutterworth, Kibworth and Fleckney; busy roads crossing through the rural landscape including the A5199 and A5; and the presence of industrial land uses and developments. However, the defining impression is of a rural scene of rolling farmland, hedgerows and woodlands interspersed by intact medieval villages, historic estates and scattered vernacular farmsteads. Overall it is a landscape of strong naturalistic and historic qualities.	M-H



Traditionally grazed wood pasture & parkland at Wistow



The Grand Union Canal at Kibworth Bridge



New housing development on the edge of Kibworth Harcourt



Large agricultural building near Bruntingthorpe



Wind farm west of Gilmorton



Gilmorton, with landmark church spire

Lutterworth Lowlands (Harborough and Blaby)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This Landscape Character Area is judged to be of **moderate** overall sensitivity to housing development and commercial (light industrial) developments. Landscape sensitivity is greater in the more rural parts of the LCA, away from the larger villages, the town of Lutterworth and existing industrial land uses. The features and attributes of particular sensitivity include localised high points and steep, visible slopes, undeveloped wooded skylines with landmark historic features, valued natural and historic features and **land uses (including estate parkland), and the landscape's small vernacular villages set within peaceful countryside.**

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)			M		
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)			M		

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Localised high points and visible steep slopes within the landscape, including the valley sides of the River Swift and the fringes of the Laughton Hills to the south.
- Valued areas and features of natural character, including hedgerows, woodlands and wetlands. These include the SSSIs at Misterton Marshes, Caves Inn Pits and Kilby-Foxton Canal.
- Landscape and features of historic importance, including medieval settlements, moated sites and manorial remains, surviving ridge and furrow and strip fields.
- **The compact and historic nature of the landscape's small medieval villages (many with Conservation Areas).**
- Development largely contained by woodland, roads and topography; tree avenues along approach roads into many settlements reflecting wider estate character.
- Open wooded skylines and the prominent historic landmarks formed by historic church towers/spires, **including Lutterworth's St Mary's church tower (Grade I).**
- The sparsely settled, rural and working agricultural landscape outside the main settlements – with important relative levels of tranquillity and role as an immediate setting to development.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Ensure development is in line with the Council's Preliminary Landscape Assessment of Alternative Strategic Development Areas²⁵.
- Any new development at Lutterworth, Fleckney and Kibworth should be sited within or adjacent to their current urban envelopes, avoiding visible slopes and locations that might be overlooked from surrounding rural areas.
- **Maintain the compact, historic form of the LCA's small villages** – with any new development limited to infill within existing settlement envelopes, sympathetic to local vernacular styles and materials.
- Take advantage of the screening effects of existing woodland and hedgerows, protecting existing features and enhancing ecological connections within and around any new development (i.e.

²⁵ https://www.harborough.gov.uk/directory_record/458/areas_of_separation_review

Lutterworth Lowlands (Harborough and Blaby)

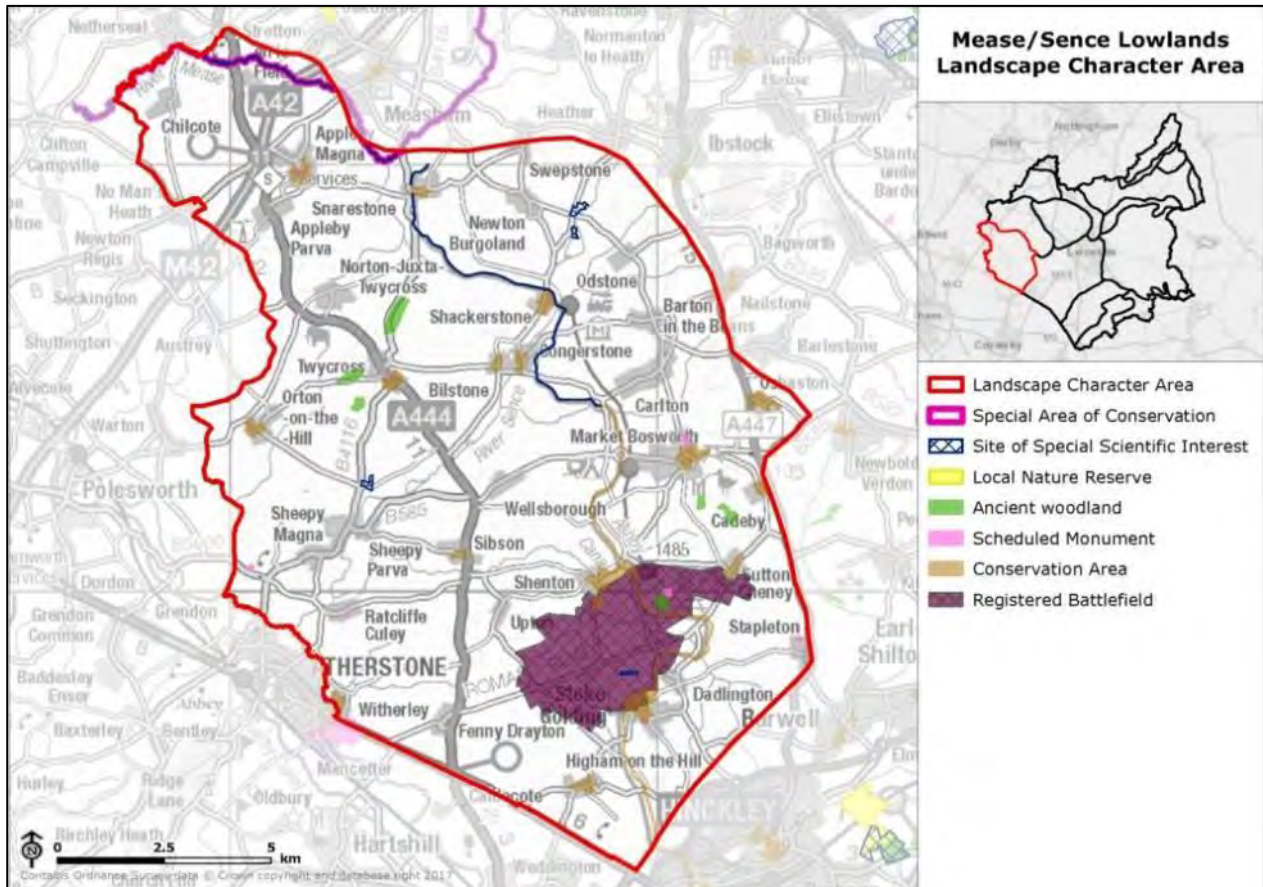
through new hedgerow and tree planting using locally prevalent, climate resilient species).

- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including wood pasture, woodlands, species-rich hedgerows and wetlands. Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Misterton Marshes, Caves Inn Pits and Kilby-Foxton Canal.
- Protect the strongly rural, wooded and working agricultural setting the landscape provides to development. Avoid siting development where ridge and furrow and small-scale strip fields remain.
- Conserve open wooded skylines and ensure new development does not affect the appreciation of historic features on skylines, including the church spires at Misterton, Bitteswell, Gilmorton (Grade II*) and landmark tower of Lutterworth's Grade I listed St Mary's church.
- Protect the character and integrity of the landscape's ornamental parkland estates, including those that form part of the setting of historic villages. Protect distinctive tree avenues along roads which reinforce estate character (including approach roads into settlements).
- **Protect the landscape's valued historic assets from the impacts of development, including** medieval settlements, moated sites and manorial remains.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchments of the Sense, Swift and Avon rivers and Grand Union Canal are within this LCA.
- Protect important perceptions of tranquillity away from settlements, industrial activity and busy transport infrastructure.
- Improve opportunities to access and enjoy the heritage and natural features of the Grand Union Canal, creating new rights of way entry points and connections wherever possible, including from Fleckney and Kibworth and via the Leicestershire Round Long Distance Path.
- Explore including more **of the LCA's quiet** green lanes as part of a promoted and integrated cycle network, **linking to the area's settlements and existing lengths of National Cycle Routes 50 and 6.**

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence:

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Lutterworth and Eastern Gateway Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zones (LUC, 2017)
- Lutterworth and Broughton Astley Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Capacity Study (2011)
- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
- Blaby District Character Assessment (2008)

Mease/Sence Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)



Summary of landscape character

Undulating landform, with frequent small streams feeding into the larger water courses of the Mease and Sence Rivers which characterise the area. Fields are a mixed of arable and pasture, and generally medium-large in size. Fields are bound by hedgerows with frequent trees (mature oaks), while willows are found adjacent to streams and field ponds. Settlement is comprised of small villages, which are often located on higher ground. Sites of ecological value include the rivers, marshes, Ashby Canal and areas of unimproved grassland. Bosworth Battlefield is a notable historic landscape occupying a significant part of the southern LCA.

Representative photographs



Mease/Sence Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Gently undulating landform created by the small stream valleys which feed into the Mease and Sence Rivers. Elevated, gently rolling hills in the north west of the area are distinct. This is generally a large scale landscape, owing to landform and field scale. The landscape tends to be flatter in the south-western parts of the LCA where it is overlain by large-scale arable fields. Smaller field patterns are associated with the outskirts of historic villages.	M
Natural character	Land is divided into a mixture of arable and pasture fields, bounded by species-rich hedgerows, streams and ditches. Tree cover provides naturalistic character, characterised by small woodland clumps, frequent roadside and hedgerow trees (often mature oaks), along with occasional pockets of ancient woodland. Willows are associated with watercourses and are often found within villages. There are numerous mature parkland specimens and estate plantings associated with ornamental landscapes at Gopsall and Bosworth Parks. Ashby Canal, Sheepy Fields and Kendall's Meadow are nationally designated as SSSIs for their important aquatic plant and grassland communities. The northern part of the LCA includes part of the River Mease SAC; numerous ponds and former quarries/pits also form valued wetland sites across the landscape.	M
Historic landscape character	Bosworth Battlefield is the site of a nationally significant 15 th century battle - a notable historic landscape and tourism destination located to the north of Stoke Golding (also a Country Park). A number of Scheduled Monuments are found across the landscape, including moated sites, medieval villages and Roman remains. Settlement within the area mostly comprises small historic villages, often designated at Conservation Areas which have not expanded significantly beyond their original extent. The length of the Ashby Canal is designated as a Conservation Area. A historic estate character is evident within and around former parklands including Gopsall Park and Market Bosworth Country Park, providing a strong sense of time-depth to the locality. The rural landscape is of mixed origins, with parliamentary enclosures, large amalgamated fields and 16 th /17 th century piecemeal enclosures around settlements.	M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	Settlement is generally sparse, with small vernacular villages and individual farms scattered throughout this rural area. Settlement tends to occur on the higher points of the landscape overlooking the floodplains, but well screened by tree/woodland cover often surrounding and within the built form. Market Bosworth is the largest settlement in the area, its historic core located on a ridgetop. The town's parkland and wooded setting limits its wider visibility and enhances local distinctiveness. On the southern boundary of the LCA lies the MIRA Technology Park and proving ground test track facilities, adjacent to the busy A5. These are generally well screened from view by topography and tree planting.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	Wide, panoramic views are afforded across the flat floodplain landscape, although views are occasionally enclosed by woodland copses and hedgerow vegetation. Existing large farm buildings can be prominent in views. Churches within the villages form important skyline features, including the spires of the Church of St Margaret in Stoke and St Edith's in Orton-on-the-Hill, located on hill-top positions (both Grade I listed). Occasional wind turbines form moving vertical structures visible in some views. Elevated land in the west affords expansive views beyond the county boundary.	M-H

Mease/Sence Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

Perceptual and experiential qualities	In areas where arable intensification has occurred, the loss of hedgerows and trees results in an open and exposed character. This is generally a rural, quiet and tranquil area, with urbanising influences limited to pylons, masts and occasional wind turbines. Traffic on the busy M/A42, A5, A444 and A447 can detract from tranquillity locally.	M
---------------------------------------	---	----------



Ashby Canal near Shenton



Market Bosworth Country Park



Sutton Cheney



Dismantled railway line (used for farm access) near Odstone



Battle of Bosworth Country Park and visitor attraction



Gypsy cobs traditionally grazing grass verges near Shenton

Mease/Sence Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This Landscape Character Area is judged to be of **moderate** overall sensitivity to housing development and commercial (light industrial) developments. This is due to the ability of the **landscape's topography and woodland/tree cover to help incorporate development, and the presence** of busy roads and existing modern development within some of the larger villages. However, the strongly rural qualities of many parts of the LCA, open and elevated areas with important uninterrupted views across and beyond the landscape, historic vernacular villages, valued naturalistic habitats and historic land uses (e.g. parkland) and undeveloped wooded skylines present sensitivities.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)			M		
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)			M		

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Elevated hills in the north-west with expansive views across this landscape and beyond (including beyond the county boundary). The flat floodplain also affords panoramic views.
- Important naturalistic features within the often intensively farmed landscape including pockets of ancient woodland, wood pasture, streams, ponds, species-rich grassland and thick hedgerows.
- SSSI-designated habitats at **Ashby Canal, Sheepy Fields and Kendall's Meadow** and an SAC designated length of the River Mease in the north of the LCA.
- Nationally significant heritage features including moated sites, medieval villages, Roman remains and the nationally registered Bosworth Battlefield.
- Sparse settlement pattern, with many historic villages with strong local vernacular (often designated as Conservation Areas) nestled onto wooded hilltops and ridges.
- Historic church spires on the mostly undeveloped, wooded skylines.
- The parkland estates of Gopsall and Bosworth, the latter forming part of the wooded setting of the historic market town of Market Bosworth.
- Rural, quiet and tranquil perceptual qualities of the landscape, with limited urbanising influences.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Conserve the open rural views featuring wooded skylines where possible, paying particular regard to views to church spires in their rural setting. Maintain open, uninterrupted views from the hills in the north-west across the LCA and beyond.
- Take advantage of the screening effects of existing woodland and hedgerows, protecting existing features and enhancing ecological connections within and around any new development (i.e. through new hedgerow and tree planting using locally prevalent (e.g. willow), climate resilient species).
- Protect and where possible enhance (including through new ecological connections) valued habitats in the farmed context, including ancient woodland, wood pasture, streams, species-rich grassland and thick hedgerows.

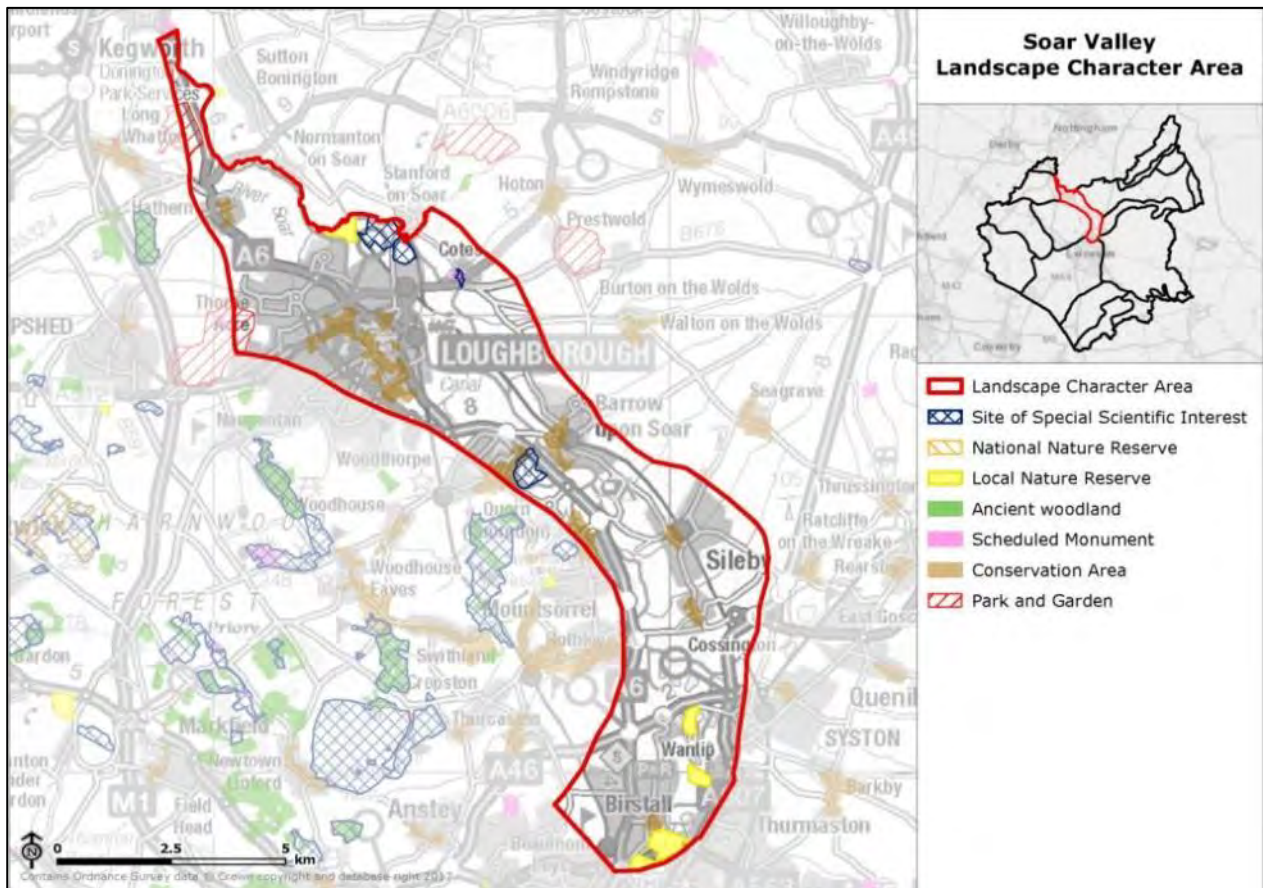
Mease/Sence Lowlands (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

- Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Ashby Canal, Sheepy Fields and Kendall's Meadow.
- Conserve the character of the rural road network by retaining the undefined carriageway edge, with their grassy verges and roadside hedges with trees, minimising any street lighting or signage and avoiding unnecessary road/junction widening.
- Conserve the setting and integrity of valued heritage assets including ornamental parkland (important to the setting of Market Bosworth), the Battle of Bosworth Registered Battlefield as well as historic buildings within Conservation Areas.
- Protect the farmed, woodland setting the landscape provides to development. Avoid siting development on the more visible slopes or open floodplain areas.
- Respect and enhance the strong character of the rural villages, limiting any new development to within their existing settlement envelopes wherever possible, complementing existing context with regards to scale, form, materials and boundary features.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The northern part of the LCA is within the catchment area of the River Mease SAC which flows along the northern boundary; the Sence and Anker and their tributaries drain from and flow through the landscape; and the Ashby Canal crosses the length of the LCA.
- Numerous ponds and former pits are also valued open water/wetland habitats which could be vulnerable to changes in hydrology and increased agricultural run-off as a result of new development.
- Explore further opportunities to open up former quarries and pits as safe and sustainable recreation/tourism destinations (like the Bosworth Water Trust site), particularly those in close proximity to settlements.
- Explore opportunities to strengthen and increase the public rights of way network, potentially opening up lengths of dismantled railway line as a multi-user trail and including more green lanes as part of a promoted cycle network (e.g. linking to National Cycle Route 52 which runs the length of the LCA).
- Increase opportunities to access and explore along the Ashby Canal as a strategic linear recreational route crossing through the landscape.
- The Country Parks at Market Bosworth and Battle of Bosworth are already well served by rights of way including Long Distance Paths and heritage railway (in the case of the latter) – promote these as part of the wider 'offer' of these strategic destinations.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence:

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Southern Gateway Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zone (LUC, 2017)
- Landscape Character Assessment: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough (July 2006)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth (October 2008)
- North West Leicestershire: Ecological Networks (May 2015)

Soar Valley (Charnwood, North West Leicestershire and City of Leicester)



Summary of landscape character & key environmental constraints

The elongated and broad valley of the River Soar has a mix of pasture fields on the floodplain and arable fields on the valley sides. Flood meadow habitat is important for breeding birds. Woodland is limited and mostly consists of willows along watercourses. Watermead Country Park is popular for recreation. A settled landscape containing parts of Loughborough, parts of the City of Leicester and numerous large villages. Industry and transport infrastructure are features, with gravel extraction, the A6, mainline railway and pylons. There are views to the wooded landscape of Charnwood Forest.

Representative photographs



Soar Valley (Charnwood, North West Leicestershire and City of Leicester)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Low lying, elongated flood plain of the River Soar. Some steeper slopes are located on the eastern side of the valley (where the valley rises to the higher landscape of the Wolds). Field sizes are variable, tending to be smaller along the valley floor and larger on valley sides where land is used for arable crops. The expansiveness of the landscape results in a large-scale character although there are small-scale landscape features in the form of trees and buildings within villages. A number of large-scale warehouses are located close to Loughborough and Syston.	L-M
Natural character	Fields are used for a mixture of arable growing and pasture land, with flood plain meadows along the valley floor and arable fields on the valley sides. Numerous important wetland habitats occur along the Soar Valley, including flood plain meadows and former gravel pits, which support important bird populations (Barrow Gravel Pits is nationally designated as a SSSI). Loughborough Meadows SSSI comprises unimproved alluvial flood meadow, which is infrequent in the Leicestershire area. Woodland is generally limited within the landscape, although willows are common along watercourses and occasional lines of poplar can be found. Fields are divided by hedgerows and ditches which also provide some wildlife interest.	M-H
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that fields are of mixed origin, primarily 18 th and 19 th century planned enclosure and areas where fields have been amalgamated into larger enclosures. A number of Conservation Areas are located within the Soar Valley, including Syston, Sileby, Rothley, Mountsorrel, Quorn and Hathern and the village core and canal side at Barrow-upon-Soar. The grounds of Whatton House (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) introduce a localised historic estate character in the north of the area. A deserted medieval village at Cotes is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Medieval open field systems at Loughborough Meadow and Bishop Meadow are vulnerable to loss from development. Industrial heritage is also evident within the landscape, with the Grand Union Canal a notable feature now used for recreation.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	This landscape is densely settled, with a number of large and small villages located along the valley sides above the floodplain. Parts of Loughborough are located in the north of the area, while Birstall (on the edge of Leicester city) is located in the south. Industrial and employment development is commonly found on the edges of settlements. Many Conservation Areas are found at the core of settlements although most have grown beyond their original extent. This expansion had led to a reduction in distance between settlements, with a risk of coalescence in some areas. Modern additions to the settlements tend to be less integrated into the landscape. Some small farms are located in the rural parts of the valley. Settlements are often well screened by trees, although parts of Barrow-upon-Soar and Sileby are prominent on the slopes. The valley forms a distinctive setting to the settlements and provides a strong sense of place.	L-M
Views and visual character including skylines	This area is generally not prominent within the wider landscape due to low lying topography, although there are long views funnelled along the valley due to the lack of woodland cover. The valley is overlooked by the wooded skylines of Charnwood Forest located to the west. Pylons follow the course of the valley and form significant skyline features visible throughout the area.	L-M

Soar Valley (Charnwood, North West Leicestershire and City of Leicester)

Perceptual and experiential qualities	The landscape is highly influenced by urban and industrial influences. Extractive industry has had a historic influence on the landscape, with disused workings transformed into wetlands for wildlife or recreation. The natural corridor formed by the valley has resulted in transport and energy infrastructure following its course, including the A6 and mainline railway. A sense of tranquillity is experienced in the more semi-natural areas of the landscape. The farmed landscape is not as intensively farmed as many other areas of Leicestershire and has a pastoral character due to its location on the floodplain.	L-M
---------------------------------------	--	------------



Line of poplars within the farmed landscape



Semi-natural habitats at Watermead Country Park

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **low-moderate** sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the flat, simple landform, areas of large-scale arable production, limited views out of the valley and strong influences of existing urban and large-scale industrial development which characterise the landscape, including the A6 dual carriageway, mainline railway and pylon lines.

Features and characteristics of the landscape which have higher levels of sensitivity to development include the steeper slopes on the sides of the valley, small-scale planned enclosure on the valley floor, valued semi-natural habitats (particularly wetlands), heritage features including estate parklands, a medieval village and historic village cores, valued gaps between settlements and pastoral character along the valley floor.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Areas of steep landform, where the valley slopes up toward the Wolds in the east and Charnwood Forest to the west.
- Small-scale planned enclosures, particularly along the valley floor.
- Nationally and locally important semi-natural habitats, including floodplain marsh and lowland fens and meadows.
- Valued heritage features including the medieval village at Cotes and the Grade II Registered Park

Soar Valley (Charnwood, North West Leicestershire and City of Leicester)

and Garden at Whatton House.

- The setting the valley provides to historic villages and the valued gaps between settlements which retain their separate identities and prevent coalescence.
- Views funnelled along the valley and to the wooded skylines of Charnwood Forest which overlook the valley.
- Pockets of tranquillity and pastoral character which are valued within the busy landscape of the valley.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

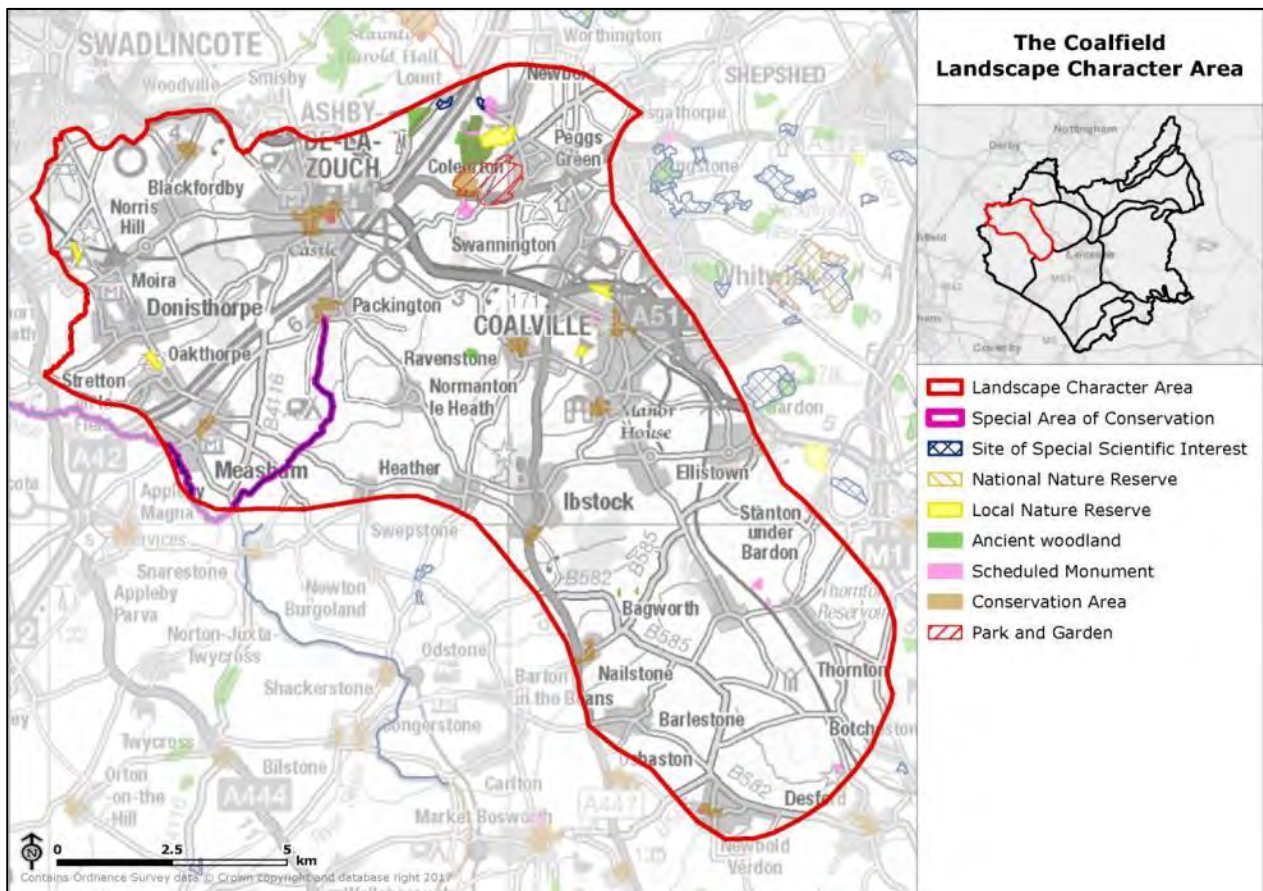
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid locating development on steep, visually prominent valley slopes, and ensure that any development on slopes is integrated into the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Retain valued semi-natural habitats, particularly wetlands. Restore and enhance these habitats where appropriate and seek to create linkages to improve habitat connectivity, particularly where this will strengthen the floodplain character of the Soar Valley landscape.
- Retain historic field patterns and reinstate hedgerows and ditches where they have been lost or fragmented to enhance field patterns.
- Protect the integrity and setting of valued heritage features and historic settlements within the landscape.
- Protect localised areas that retain a naturalistic character and conserve and enhance the pastoral landscape of the floodplain.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). This is particularly important for development on slopes above areas sensitive to flooding.
- Seek opportunities for natural water management and storage within the floodplain particularly where this can also benefit the landscape character and biodiversity of the Soar Valley.
- Implement Green Infrastructure to screen existing development in the open valley landscape, particularly where urban edges are prominent/not well integrated into the landscape.
- Retain Green Wedges which create a setting to and sense of separation between the built up areas.
- Encourage and link up public access routes along the length and across the width of the river corridor where it is compatible with the tranquil and pastoral quality of the Soar Valley landscape.
- The restoration of sand and gravel extraction pits to provide opportunities to deliver recreation will be supported where landscape and biodiversity objectives can be achieved. Carefully manage new leisure developments and recreational facilities to minimise the impact on the landscape in terms of built development and infrastructure such as lighting
- Promote and seek opportunities to enhance the Leicestershire Round long distance route and National Cycle Routes 6 and 48, which cross through the area.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (July 2012)
- Charnwood Borough Council: Green Wedges, Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones and Areas of Local Separation (March 2016)
- North West Leicestershire: Ecological Network (May 2015)

The Coalfield (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)



Summary of landscape character & key environmental constraints

Gently undulating landform, overlain by mixed farmland divided into medium sized fields. The Coalfield forms part of the National Forest although it is less wooded than the adjacent area of Charnwood Forest. Woodland is frequent in the west of the area and includes occasional pockets of ancient woodland. There are also significant areas of new planting which will alter the landscape as they mature. The River Mease is internationally designated as a Special Area of Conservation. A distinctive small-scale mining landscape occurs around Coleorton. Historically, the landscape has been influenced by coal and clay workings, with some mines and quarries still in use. Settlement mostly consists of former mining towns and villages with significant 20th century expansion.

Representative photographs



The Coalfield (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	The Coalfield is a gently undulating landform, which rises to the east where it meets the Charnwood Forest. Some steeper slopes are associated with streams which cross the landscape. Fields are mostly medium scale and bound by low hedgerows and fences. The landscape is well-wooded, with trees forming frequent small-scale features within the landscape. There is a distinctive intricate landscape of small, irregular fields located around Coleorton as a result of small-scale medieval coal mining. A number of large scale warehouses are located near Coalville.	M
Natural character	<p>The farmed landscape is a mixture of pasture and arable cultivation, with many hedgerows forming linear habitats and connectivity between areas of woodland.</p> <p>The well-wooded landscape of Coalfield forms part of the National Forest, with many former industrial areas undergoing regeneration with numerous large areas of new woodland and restored grassland. There are occasional pockets of ancient woodland. Former colliery sites, spoil heaps and railway lines which are now ecologically significant following the reestablishment of heathland vegetation and acid and neutral grassland. The River Mease is internationally/nationally designated as an SAC/SSSI. Thornton Reservoir and Bagworth Heath are also of ecological importance.</p>	M-H
Historic landscape character	<p>The HLC indicates that the enclosures are of mixed origin, with small-scale historic strip fields are associated with the edges of settlements, planned enclosures and field amalgamated in the 20th century. The landscape is strongly influenced by industrial heritage, particularly relating to past and present coal and clay extraction. A number of the medieval mining remains around Coleorton are designated as Scheduled Monuments. A medieval castle at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and a number of moated sites are also designated as Scheduled Monuments.</p> <p>Many of the villages have Conservation Areas (with numerous Listed Buildings) at their core. Coleorton Hall Registered Park and Garden (Grade II*) introduces an estate character into the landscape.</p>	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<p>The landscape is densely settled, with Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Coalville forming the largest settlements within the area. Most settlements originated as mining villages and are often linear in their form, although most have extended significantly beyond their traditional boundaries in the 20th century. Despite their size, woodland provides effective screening and softening of the edges of both residential and industrial development.</p> <p>Away from the settlements, farms are scattered throughout the landscape and the countryside provides a rural setting to the towns and villages within the area.</p>	M
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>Openness and visibility varies throughout the landscape according to changes in topography and vegetation cover. There are often wooded skylines created by the frequent blocks of woodland and hedgerow/in-field trees. In areas with large areas of new woodland planting, views and visual character are likely to change over a relatively short time period. Wind turbines and pylons rise above the wooded skylines in places. From higher ground and where woodland cover allows there are long views to distinctive rocky outcrops on the skyline in the adjacent Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Area.</p> <p>Some large scale warehouses on located on ridgelines are visible on the skyline e.g. the Amazon distribution centre near Coalville.</p>	M

The Coalfield (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

<p>Perceptual and experiential qualities</p>	<p>This is a predominantly rural landscape although influenced by industrial development associated with the edges of urban areas and traffic noise from the A551 and A42 roads. Some areas are under intensive arable cultivation, whilst others are more pastoral such as the area around Coleorton. It is also a changing landscape, becoming more naturalistic and wooded as a result of habitat restoration on industrial sites and increased leisure and recreation opportunities. The steady maturation of newly planted woodland will change the perceptual qualities in some locations, with an increase in naturalistic character and sense of enclosure. Renewable energy infrastructure in the form of wind turbines and solar farms is also evident in the landscape.</p>	<p>M</p>
--	--	-----------------



The Coalfield (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate** sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the undulating landform, thick hedgerows and well-wooded character which provide visual containment to help integrate development into the landscape, existing levels of urban and industrial development and major roads.

Features within the landscape which are likely to be sensitive to development include valued habitats (e.g. the internationally designated River Mease SAC), areas of steep landform associated with stream valleys, the distinctive historic mining landscape around Coleorton and long views towards the adjacent Charnwood Forest.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attribute and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Steep areas of landform associated with streams.
- Valued habitats, including the River Mease which is internationally designated as a Special Area of Conservation and areas of heathland and wetland.
- Well-wooded character, with numerous areas of new planting as part of the National Forest initiative e.g. the 186-hectare Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood west of Coalville.
- Respect the form and vernacular of existing settlements within the landscape, including the setting of Conservation Areas.
- The valued heritage features within the landscape including Scheduled Monuments which protect a variety of features relating to mining heritage, a medieval castle and moated sites.
- Distinctive small-scale irregular field pattern around Coleorton and the historic estate landscape.
- Long views from higher ground to the distinctive rocky outcrops within the adjacent Charnwood Forest landscape.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Protect the integrity and setting of valued heritage assets including Ashby-de-la-Zouch castle, moated sites and mining remains. Promote access and interpretation of these features where it will not adversely affect their management and conservation.
- Retain historic field patterns including strip fields associated with the edges of settlements and the distinctive small-scale fields at Coleorton.
- Retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and incorporate further buffer planting to major transport corridors.
- Utilise the dense woodland cover to effectively screen development and integrate it into the landscape. Seek to conserve and create linkages between areas of woodland to improve habitat connectivity.
- Explore what scale of new woodland planting would be appropriate within the landscape as part of

The Coalfield (North West Leicestershire and Hinckley & Bosworth)

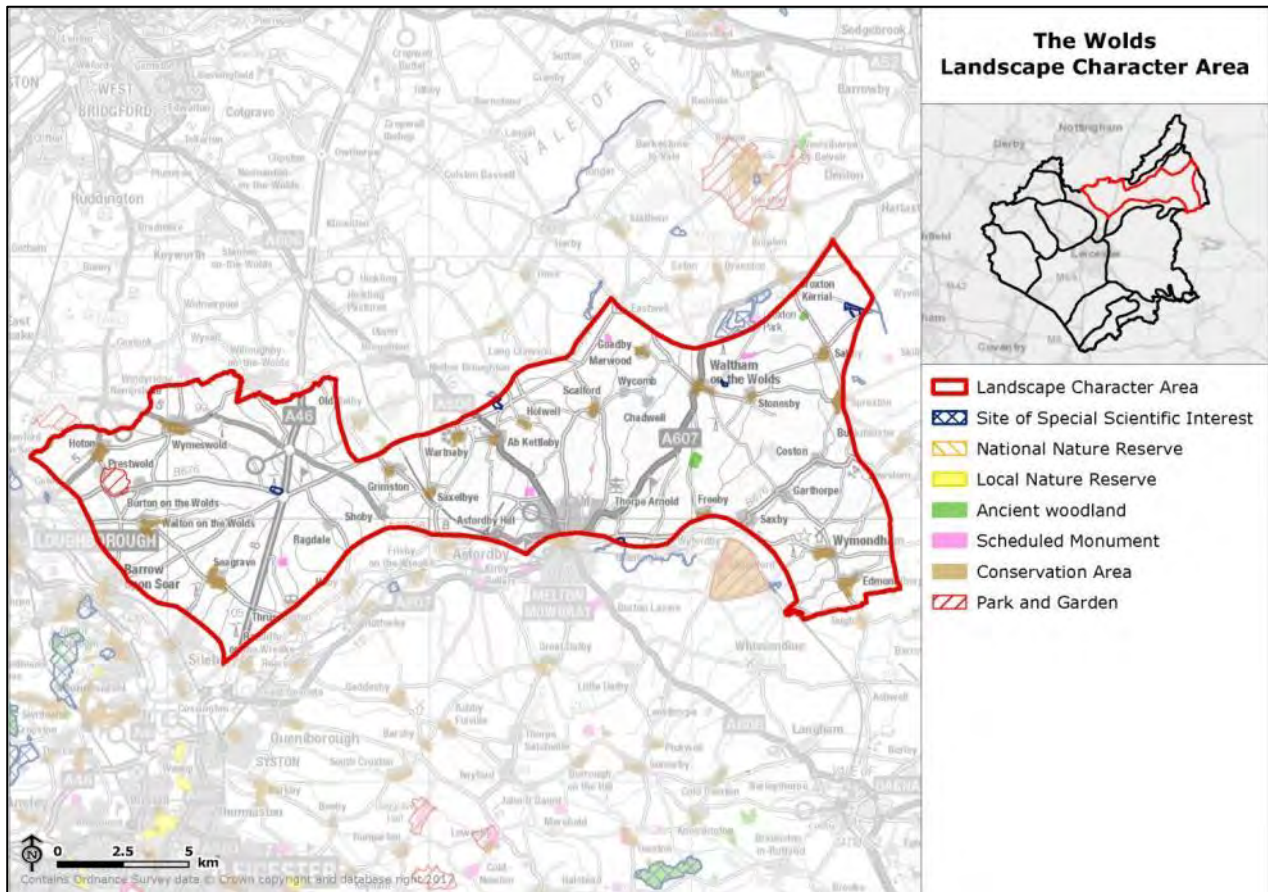
the National Forest Initiative.

- Protect valued semi-natural habitats including the internationally designated River Mease. Manage the river and surrounding land to improve its currently unfavourable condition (due to pollution from agricultural run-off, physical modification and over abstraction of water). Seek to create linkages between existing habitats to improve connectivity.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Protect the historic estate character within the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden at Coleorton. Explore further opportunities for interpretation and recreation where compatible with conservation of the landscape.
- Seek opportunities for natural water management storage within the watercourses and their floodplains particularly where this can also benefit the landscape character of the Coalfield and biodiversity.
- Protect and manage the industrial/mining heritage of the coalfield and wider historic landscape; balance the needs of forestry, commercial, industrial, residential and agricultural growth with the developing visitor economy and maintain a high level of public access.
- Protect localised areas that retain a naturalistic and tranquil character.
- Seek to link up and improve existing access routes including the National Forest Way, Ivanhoe Way, Leicestershire Round and National Cycle Routes 52 and 63. Promote sustainable transport routes to destinations within the area including Conkers Discovery Centre, Sense Valley Forest Park, Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre and Bagworth Heath Woods.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchment areas of the reservoirs and the River Mease should be considered in particular.
- Seek opportunities to restore former industrial areas to semi-natural habitats for the benefit of biodiversity, geodiversity and recreation.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (August 2010)
- North West Leicestershire: Ecological Networks (May 2015)
- Landscape Character Assessment: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough (July 2006)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth (October 2008)

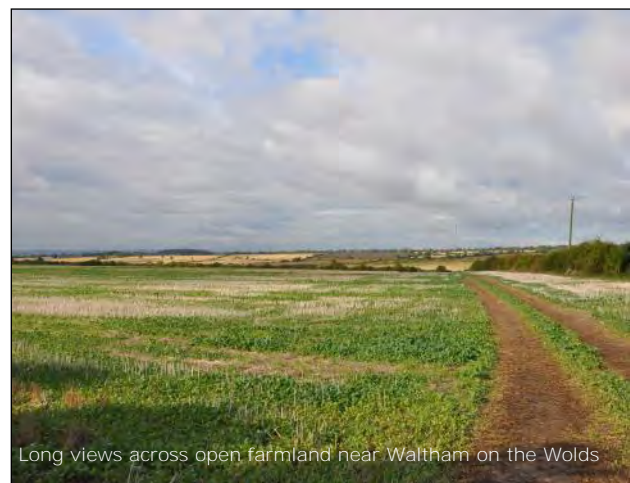
The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)



Summary of landscape character²⁶

A strongly rolling landscape carved by intricate valleys containing streams flowing into the River Wreake/Eye. Overlain by a mixed field pattern, with large-scale arable fields on ridge tops and small-scale pastures on steeper valley sides. Trees are limited to small woodlands and hedgerow trees. Settlement comprises small nucleated villages. Varied visual/perceptual qualities depending on topography, tree cover and proximity to development. Deeply rural with remote qualities, although urban influences are introduced to the north of Melton Mowbray.

Representative photographs



²⁶ Please note, for the purposes of this assessment the character area has been extended to the county boundary to include the small part of the Vale of Catmose character area which falls within Melton District. This is for the purpose of this assessment only and does not have policy implications.

The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Medium-scale gently rolling landscape overlain by a mixed field pattern, with large scale arable fields located on open ridgetops and smaller pastures on the steeper slopes. Fields are divided by low hedges with ash and oak trees which provide small scale features, along with small copses of mixed woodland. More intricate and dramatic landforms are associated with the streams which flow towards the Rivers Wreake/Eye to the south.	M
Natural character	This is a strongly agricultural landscape with large swathes of intensively cultivated land. Trees are generally found in pockets of mixed woodland, with a number designated as Local Wildlife Sites. Some of these areas are also identified as ancient woodland. There are also several areas of limestone/acidic grassland which are nationally designated as SSSIs. Hedgerow trees are valued natural features within the farmed landscape. The small streams which cross the landscape provide ecological corridors and are often fringed by wet grassland habitats.	M
Historic landscape character	Field origins are mostly planned parliamentary enclosures, re-organised piecemeal enclosure and amalgamated large post-war fields. A number of the small nucleated villages are designated as Conservation Areas, with clusters of Listed Buildings often centred around historic churches. Prestwold Hall is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden, with localised estate influences within the landscape. Scheduled Monuments occur in various places and include moated sites, granges and the shrunken medieval village at Bescaby. Dismantled railway lines provide visible evidence of the landscape's industrial past.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Numerous small villages are nestled into the landscape, often at the heads of valleys or on lower valley slopes and focused around historic churches. The villages have a compact form, and a vernacular of local stone – often limestone and ironstone. Scattered individual farms are located throughout the countryside. The northern part of Melton Mowbray falls within this character area, with associated industrial land uses located around its urban fringe. Trees within and surrounding settlements and other land uses (e.g. industry, solar farms) help integrate them into the open landscape. The undulating landform of the Wolds forms a strongly rural setting to the settlements, with the countryside maintaining a sense of separation and distinct identity between them. The Belvoir Scarp forms a dramatic backdrop to the central part of the LCA.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	Views are variable due to the strongly rolling landscape. A sense of enclosure in the stream valleys contrasts with the more exposed ridgelines, where there are long views across the landscape and beyond. The television transmitter to the south of Waltham-on-the-Wolds is a prominent landmark on an elevated open ridgeline; whilst wind turbines and pylons feature in locations near Melton and Six Hills. Church spires and towers within the villages form important historic landmarks and reference points.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Overall, the Wolds are strongly rural with valued local levels of tranquillity and traditional character associated with the historic villages. Localised detractors from these qualities include several busy A-roads, pylon lines and the localised impacts of industrial land uses.	M

The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)



Recent solar farm development near Melton



Countryside north of Wymondham



Church of St Peter (Grade I), Wymondham



Traditional village of Sproxton



Arable landscape west of Six Hills



Prominent landmark of the Waltham TV transmitter

The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **moderate** sensitivity to residential and commercial (light industrial) developments. Sensitivity is lessened by existing urban influences and busy roads impacting on the landscape, as well as the ability of topography and woodland/tree cover to help screen and integrate development. However, sensitive characteristics include the elevated horizons and long views, the importance of the rural landscape in providing a setting to historic Wolds villages, valued semi-natural habitats and heritage assets and areas of relative tranquillity (particularly in the eastern part of the LCA beyond the influences of Melton Mowbray and the A607).

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M		H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Elevated, open ridgelines with expansive views carved by small-scale, more intimate valleys.
- Valued semi-natural habitats including ancient woodlands, streams and limestone/acidic grasslands, with SSSIs at Twenty Acre Piece, Holwell Mouth, Stonesby Quarry and King Lud's Entrenchment & The Drift.
- Heritage features within the landscape, including medieval moated sites, granges and the shrunken medieval village at Bescaby.
- The Grade II registered parkland surrounding Prestwold Hall.
- Small nucleated villages which are nestled into the landscape, often designated as Conservation Areas with numerous Listed Buildings, including prominent churches.
- Strong rural and traditional characteristics associated with the farmland and villages away from development and busy roads.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Protect the mixture of open gently rolling farmland with expansive views and enclosed areas through the appropriate siting of new woodland, tree and hedgerow planting associated with any development.
- Conserve the open rural views, paying particular regard to views to church spires and towers in their rural setting.
- Protect and where possible enhance (including through new ecological connections) locally and nationally valued habitats, including ancient woodlands, streams and limestone/acidic grasslands.
- Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Twenty Acre Piece, Holwell Mouth, Stonesby Quarry and King Lud's Entrenchment & The Drift.
- Conserve the setting and integrity of valued heritage assets, as well as historic buildings within Conservation Areas.
- Protect the rural working agricultural setting the landscape provides to development. Avoid siting development on the more open, visible slopes.
- Ensure any new development is sensitively sited, aiming to avoid significantly affecting areas of

The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)

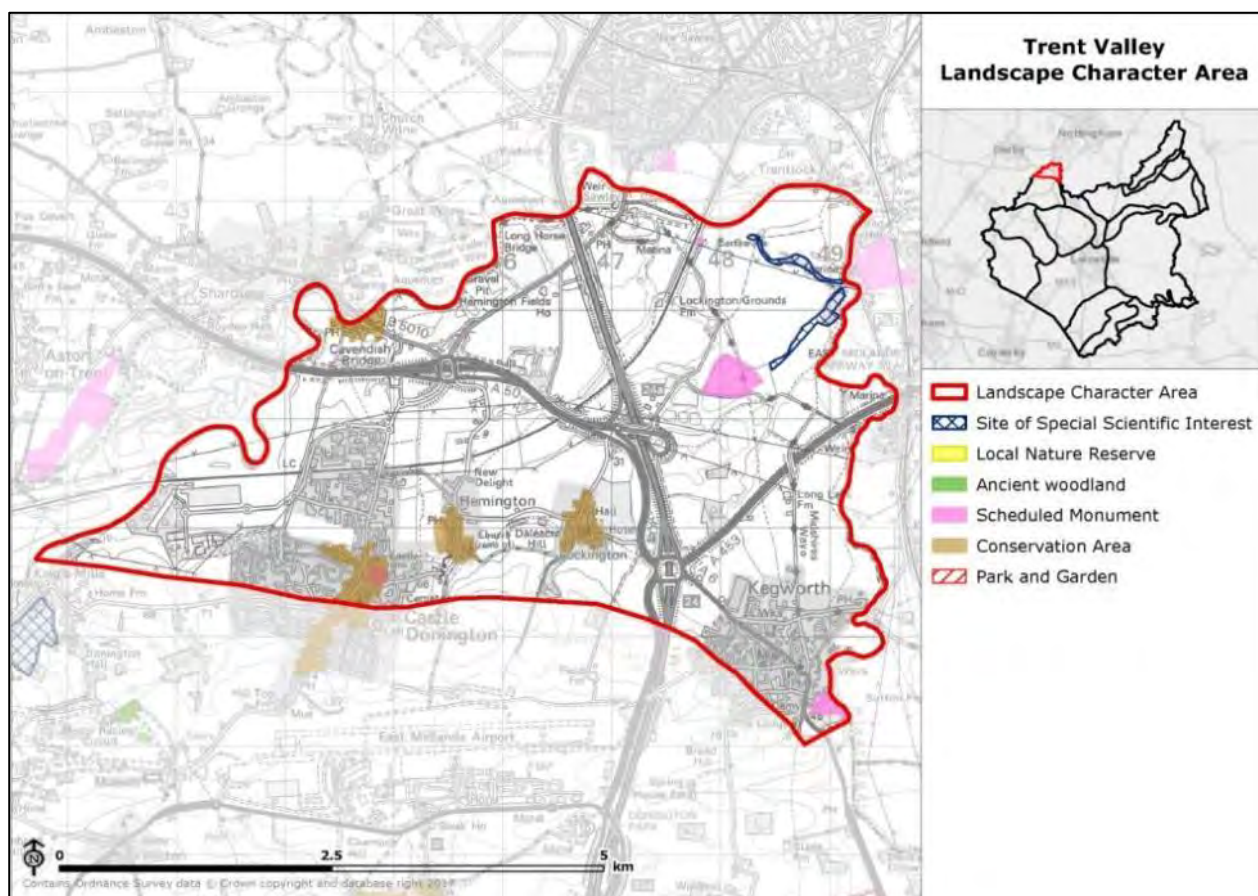
rural character with locally important levels of tranquillity – particularly those locations away from main roads and the influence of Melton Mowbray (and Loughborough beyond to the west).

- Respect and enhance the strong character of the rural villages, ensuring new development complements existing context with regards to scale, form, materials and boundary features.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The LCA includes source tributaries of the Soar and Wreake which flow to the west and south respectively.
- Protect valued open spaces within and on the edge of settlements, and improve links into the wider countryside including via existing Long Distance Paths such as the Jubilee Way, Mowbray Way and Midshires Way.
- Explore opening up lengths of dismantled railway line as multi-user trails and including more green lanes as part of a promoted cycle network connecting to settlements within and beyond the LCA (e.g. linking to National Cycle Route 64 in/out of Melton).
- Explore the potential for increased access opportunities within the Prestwold Hall estate, including potential rights of way links to/from Loughborough via the Soar Valley.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence (where available)

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Melton Mowbray Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zone (LUC, 2017)
- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (July 2012)
- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (March 2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update (February 2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (September 2015)

The Wolds (Charnwood and Melton Districts)



Summary of landscape character

The Trent Valley is a flat, open floodplain which begins to rise up in the south of the character area. The floodplain comprises a mixture of arable and pastoral farmland, with significant areas of wetland habitat. Woodland is sparse, with tree cover limited to hedgerow trees and small copses. Major transport infrastructure and quarrying for sand and gravel are dominant features within the landscape. Settlement is concentrated in the south of the landscape in Kegworth and Castle Donington, with smaller villages at Hemington and Lockington. The adjacent power station in Ratcliffe-on-Soar is prominent in views.

Representative photographs



Trent Valley (North West Leicestershire)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	This area is mostly flat, low lying land adjacent to the River Trent. The land slopes up to the south around Castle Donington. Fields are generally large, although there are pockets of smaller-scale piecemeal enclosure around Hemington and Lockington. The scale of features within the landscape is varied; smaller scale hedgerows and trees enclosing the fields contrast with large scale industrial buildings (particularly to the north of Castle Donington) and numerous large (50 metre) pylons. Overall, this is a large scale landscape.	L-M
Natural character	Land use is a mix of arable cropping and wet pasture land, with hedgerows and dykes forming field boundaries. Wetland habitats including floodplain marsh and lowland fens (both of which are Priority habitats) are a frequent feature along the floodplain. These include a number of quarries that have been restored to a semi-natural habitat. Lockington Marshes is nationally designated as a SSSI. Woodland is relatively sparse and is limited to hedgerow trees and small copses. Willows are a common feature along ditches and watercourses.	M
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that the majority of the fields within the character area are large amalgamated fields. Small-scale piecemeal enclosure, likely dating from the 16 th and 17 th centuries is a feature around Hemington and Lockington. Several nationally important heritage features are scattered throughout the landscape including the remains of an enclosure castle at Castle Donington and a medieval settlement at Kegworth which are recognised as Scheduled Monuments. Castle Donington, Cavendish Bridge, Hemington and Lockington are designated as Conservation Areas.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Much of the settlement within the character area is located within the settlements of Castle Donington and Kegworth, which have expanded significantly in the last century, creating some hard urban edges. Settlement is concentrated in the south of the area where it slopes up towards the Langley Lowlands and there is lower flood risk. A large area of industrial development at Willow Farm Industrial Park is located north Castle Donington. The smaller settlements of Hemington and Lockington have not expanded significantly beyond their original extent and as such have retained their historic identity and are well integrated into the landscape. Mature woodland and parkland is a localised feature on the edges of the villages. The open countryside forms valued gaps between settlements which have increased in size in the past century, maintaining their separate identities.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	Long views across the landscape are enabled by the flat topography and lack of significant tree cover. The higher ground to the south overlooks the flood plain and beyond to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. There are prominent views to the cooling towers of Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station, located in Rushcliffe District, and numerous associated power lines cross the skyline of the character area, creating a wirescape. Other skyline features include church spires in Castle Donington and Kegworth.	L-M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Overall, the Trent Valley is an active landscape. There are localised naturalistic qualities close to the river and wetland habitats and a remnant rural character close to Lockington and Hemington. Levels of tranquillity are eroded by noise associated with significant transport infrastructure including the M1/A50, Derby-London railway line and East Midlands Airport. Large amounts of industrial development/quarrying also detract from the remnant rural qualities of the landscape.	L-M

Trent Valley (North West Leicestershire)



Street scene at Lockington



Semi-natural grassland next to Warren Lane



Active quarry at Warren Lane



Large scale meadows near Lockington



Traditional thatched cottages in Lockington



Young orchard near Hemington

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **low-moderate** sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the strong influences of existing development and infrastructure, including large scale industrial development, multiple pylon lines, transport infrastructure including the M1 motorway and East Midlands Airport and prominent views to the large cooling towers at Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station.

Features in the landscape which are more sensitive to development include the historic villages (with associated historic piecemeal field enclosures), valued semi-natural wetland habitats, parkland and nationally important heritage features including the enclosure castle at Castle Donington and a medieval settlement.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Trent Valley (North West Leicestershire)

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Areas of small-scale piecemeal field enclosures associated with the edges of villages.
- Wetland habitats, with priority habitats including floodplain marsh and lowland fen. Lockington Marshes is nationally designated as a SSSI.
- Nationally valued heritage features, including the enclosure castle at Castle Donington and medieval village at Kegworth.
- The small historic settlements of Hemington and Lockington which have not extended significantly in the last century and are designated as Conservation Areas.
- Pockets of land which retain a rural, tranquil and/or naturalistic character despite the close proximity of significant transport/industrial infrastructure.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

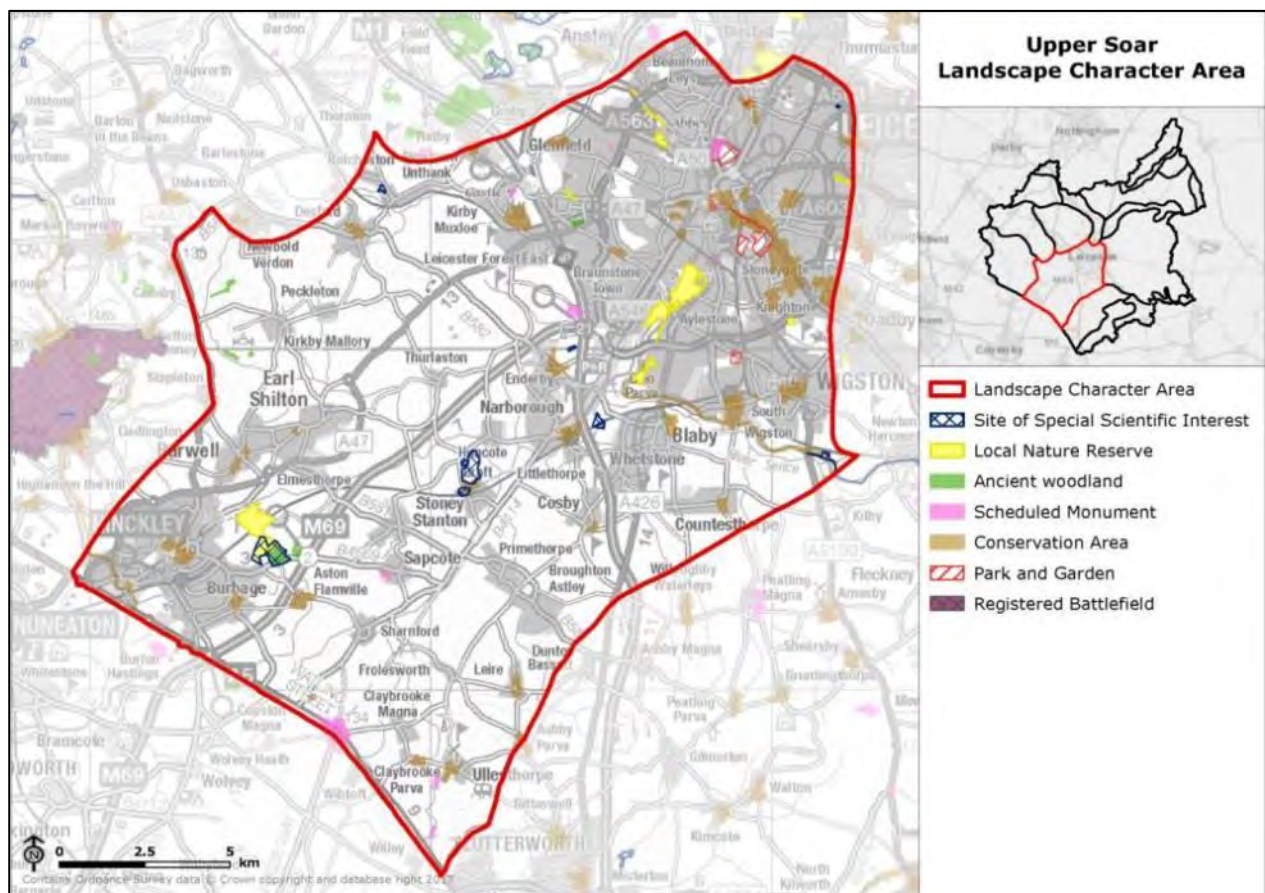
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Retain areas where there are remnant historic field patterns, particularly around the historic villages, including an estate parkland character associated with Lockington Hall.
- Protect valued semi-natural habitats, including wetland habitats such as floodplain marsh and lowland fen. Seek to create linkages between habitats where appropriate.
- Ensure that development does not damage or degrade valued heritage features within the landscape.
- Ensure that areas of separation between settlements are maintained to preserve their distinct identities and that the setting the landscape provides to historic villages is retained.
- Protect localised areas that retain a naturalistic character.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place. Include planting to screen large-scale buildings and roads to reduce noise and visual impact.
- Retain hedges and hedgerow trees, which have already seen losses in the landscape. Restore these features where possible.
- Retain small streams and open drainage ditches, which have been lost/culverted in the past. Restore these features where possible.
- The character area encompasses a flood plain, and has an important role in water management. The landscape should be managed in order to enhance/improve the flood defence function of the landscape.
- Improve off-road access provision, since many roads are unsuitable for pedestrians/cyclists.
- Seek to create and enhance strategic level habitat/access links with GI assets within Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire, particularly wetlands.
- The landscape is under pressure from further road, industrial and extractive development and expansion of marina development. These developments provide opportunities to improve existing GI resource and introduce new GI where appropriate.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment (August 2010)
- North West Leicestershire: Ecological Network (May 2015)

Upper Soar (Harborough, Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, Charnwood, City of Leicester and Charnwood)



Summary of landscape character

The Upper Soar is an area of mixed urban and rural landscapes. Leicester and its adjoining settlements lie at its north-eastern end. At its south-western end, around Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton, the character area is also predominantly urban. Elsewhere intensive agriculture is the main land use interspersed by some remnant semi-natural habitats including woodlands and wetlands – including former quarry pits.

Representative photographs



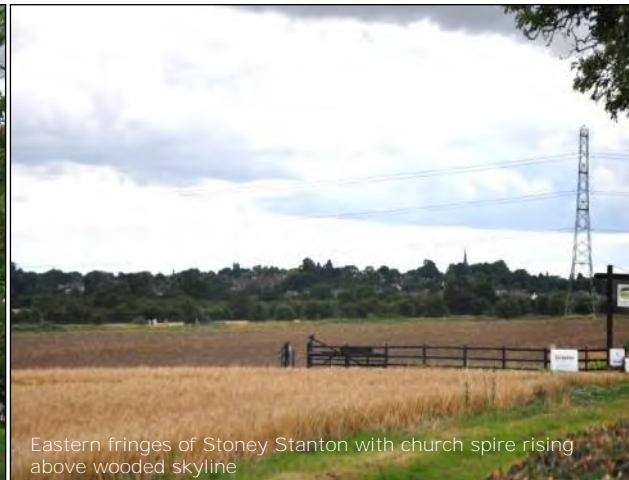
Upper Soar (Harborough, Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, Charnwood, City of Leicester and Charnwood)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	The Upper Soar is a large elongated basin, running south-west to north-east. Its south-western end is dissected by a series of ridges which run broadly south-west to north-east (reaching 145m AOD at Ashby Parva). The landscape is generally open and gently rolling, with small-scale features including low-cut hedges, hedgerow trees, woodland and individual farms. Fields are medium to large in scale.	M
Natural character	Around and between areas of extensive urban development is mixed, often intensive agricultural land, with natural features including the Soar and its tributaries, low-cut hedges, hedgerow trees, bands of riparian woodland, other scattered ancient and broadleaved woodlands (including along disused railway lines in the south-east), meadows, semi-improved grasslands and localised heath-grassland habitats. The northern fringes of the LCA fall within the National Forest and Charnwood Forest, and part of the Grand Union Canal flows through the eastern LCA. SSSIs are found at Narborough Bog, Croft Pasture, Burbage Wood & Aston Firs and the Kilby-Foxton Canal. Former quarries and pits create important woodland and wetland habitats. These include the large SSSI at Croft and Huncote Quarry.	M
Historic landscape character	Despite the strong urban influences across much of the area there are some important historic landscapes and heritage assets. These include a number of Scheduled medieval settlement remains (e.g. Bittesby, Lubbesthorpe) and moated sites (e.g. north of Thurlaston and the 13 th century Sapcote Castle), the Roman town at High Cross, and an early Iron Age enclosure on sloping land to the north of Thurlaston. The Fosse Way Roman road is followed by the modern B4114. The historic cores of many of the LCA's settlements are Conservation Areas with clusters of Listed Buildings and visible evidence of past industry. Agricultural land (which comprises just over half of the LCA) is a mixture of very large post-war fields and piecemeal enclosures of various shapes. Remnant ridge and furrow is evident in some places.	L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development	The LCA is strongly influenced by urban, industrial and infrastructure developments, particularly related to the city of Leicester and its outlying suburbs in the east and Hinckley and East Shilton in the west. Many of the villages have seen significant 20 th century expansion of both residential and light industrial land uses. The Caterpillar works to the south of Desford are extensive but unobtrusive due to topography and woodland screening. The visibility of Croft Quarry (worked for granite) is generally mitigated against by topography and tree cover. The surrounding landscape forms a rural, agricultural setting to development and provides a separation function in a landscape that has seen much 20 th century coalescence of historically discrete outlying villages on the fringes of the main towns. Settlements are often set within a well-wooded context, with mature hedgerows and trees within and surrounding development; low skylines characterised by the outlines of trees, including tall poplar stands, with red-brick housing peeping through gaps and church spires punctuating the horizons.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	The elevated ridges in the south-west often provide long views over the LCA and beyond –themselves forming prominent landform features rising above the generally flat and open landscape. Localised outcrops of intrusive igneous rocks (formerly quarried and now often well-wooded) and village church towers/spires also form distinctive skyline features. Elsewhere, horizons are often defined by trees (mature hedgerows and bands of woodland). In the east of the LCA, the adjacent Magna Park (in the Lutterworth Lowlands) represents a significant area of warehouse and storage units. It is more visible from	M

Upper Soar (Harborough, Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, Charnwood, City of Leicester and Charnwood)

	this LCA due to topography. Powerlines and pylons are a noticeable feature throughout the area.	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>There are overriding urban influences across much of the area, along with movement and noise associated with major transport infrastructure and industrial land uses. Both the M1 and M69 motorways are well screened and - along with the Mallory Park racing circuit - impacts are generally localised.</p> <p>Pockets of relative tranquillity and rural character are associated with the Soar river corridor and its tributaries, the rolling farmland surrounding settlements, and locally valued woodlands and open water/wetlands associated with former quarries.</p>	M



Upper Soar (Harborough, Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, Charnwood, City of Leicester and Charnwood)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This Landscape Character Area is judged to be of **moderate** overall sensitivity to housing development and commercial (light industrial) developments. Sensitivity is lessened by existing urban influences and busy infrastructure characterising large parts of the landscape, as well as the ability of topography and woodland/tree cover to help screen and integrate development. However, sensitive characteristics include the elevated horizons and long views, the importance of the rural/wooded landscape in separating individual settlements, valued semi-natural habitats and heritage assets and pockets of relative tranquillity on the doorstep of urban communities.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)			M		
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)			M		

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The visually prominent elevated ridgelines in the south-west, along with distinctive outcrops of granite, often clothed in woodland.
- Nationally and locally valued natural habitats and features particularly valued in the urban context, including the River Soar and its tributaries, woodlands, meadows, semi-improved grasslands and former quarries.
- SSSI-designated habitats at Narborough Bog, Croft Pasture, Croft & Huncote Quarry, Burbage Wood & Aston Firs and the Kilby-Foxton Canal.
- The historic cores of settlements (many with Conservation Areas and landmark church towers/spires) along with nationally valued archaeological sites and features, including medieval settlement remains, moated sites and the Roman town at High Cross.
- Fields containing surviving ridge and furrow.
- Wide horizons often marked by trees (including distinctive poplar), hedgerows and bands of woodland which help screen views of development.
- Pockets of relative tranquillity associated with the Soar river corridor and its tributaries, the rolling farmland surrounding settlements, woodlands and open water/wetlands.
- The function of the remaining rural, agricultural land in providing a setting to existing development and preventing further coalescence of settlements.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Protect the mixture of open gently rolling farmland with expansive views and enclosed areas through the appropriate siting of new woodland, tree and hedgerow planting associated with any development.
- Prevent the further coalescence of settlements, ensuring those that remain separate retain their own identities and landscape settings.
- Conserve the open rural views featuring wooded skylines where possible, paying particular regard to views to church spires and towers in their rural setting.

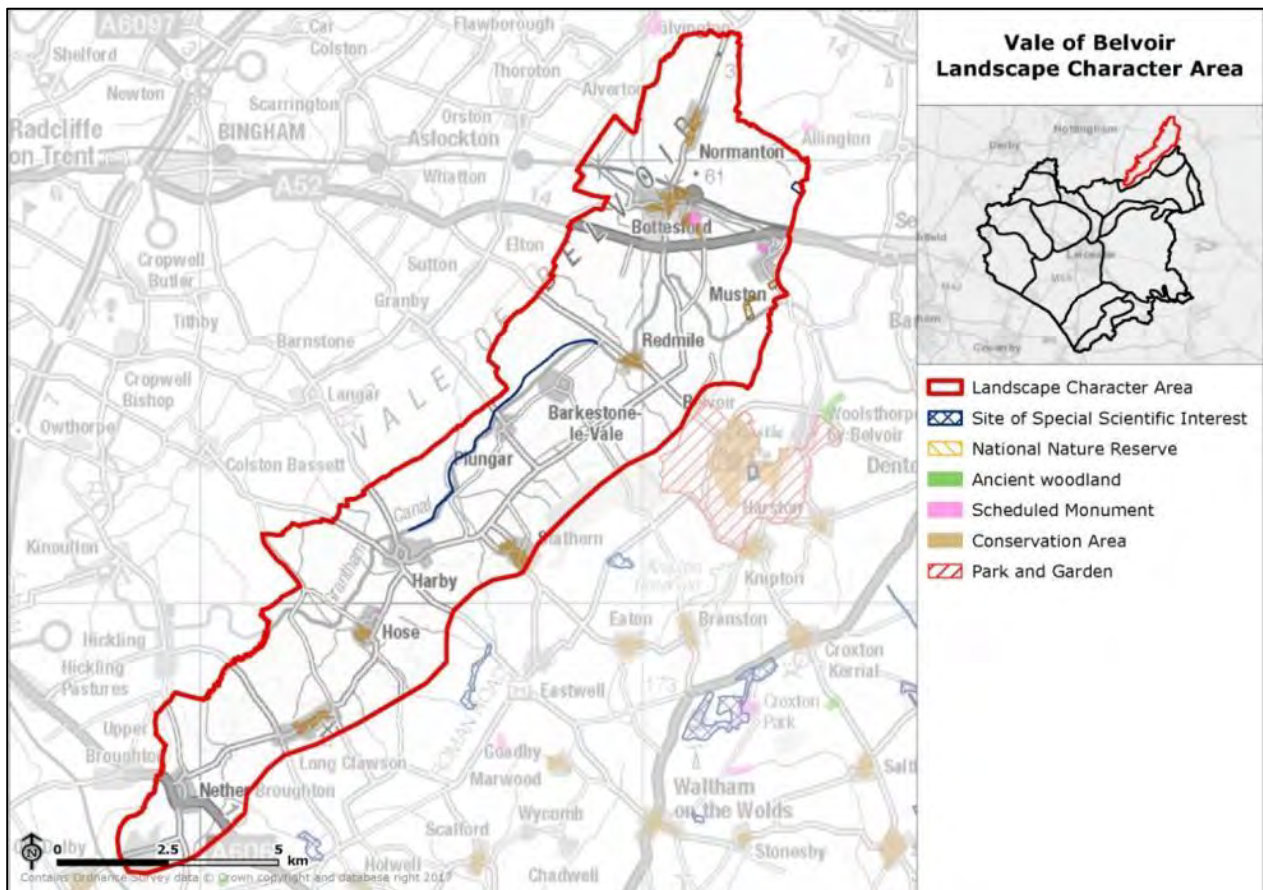
Upper Soar (Harborough, Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, Charnwood, City of Leicester and Charnwood)

- Protect and where possible enhance (including through new ecological connections) locally and nationally valued habitats, including the River Soar and its tributaries, woodlands, meadows, semi-improved grasslands and former quarries.
- Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Narborough Bog, Croft Pasture, Croft & Huncote Quarry, Burbage Wood & Aston Firs and the Kilby-Foxton Canal.
- Conserve the setting and integrity of valued heritage assets, as well as historic buildings within Conservation Areas.
- Protect the rural working agricultural setting the landscape provides to development. Avoid siting development on the more open, visible slopes and where ridge and furrow is evident.
- Ensure any new development is sensitively sited, aiming to avoid significantly affecting areas of rural character with locally important levels of tranquillity.
- Respect and enhance the strong character of the rural villages, ensuring new development complements existing context with regards to scale, form, materials and boundary features.
- Capitalise on the landscape and GI enhancement opportunities arising from forthcoming Sustainable Urban Extensions in Lubbethorpe (Blaby), Barwell and Earl Shilton (Hinckley & Bosworth), which include proposals for new green spaces, cycle/pedestrian routes, landscape enhancements and habitat creation.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The LCA includes the Soar and Sence flowing through urban landscapes, along with their tributaries and a SSSI-designated length of the Grand Union Canal on the Leicester fringes.
- Seek opportunities for natural water management and storage within the floodplain particularly where this can also benefit the landscape character and biodiversity. In particular, development in the upper parts of the catchment management area should be sensitive to any impacts downstream.
- Numerous ponds and former pits are also valued open water/wetland habitats and recreational destinations which could be vulnerable to changes in hydrology and increased agricultural run-off.
- Explore further opportunities to open up former quarries and pits as safe and sustainable recreation/tourism destinations, particularly those in close proximity to urban populations.
- Protect valued open spaces within and on the edge of settlements, and improve linear access **along the LCA's main watercourses** with improved multi-user links via rights of way.
- Explore opportunities to strengthen and increase the public rights of way network, potentially opening up lengths of dismantled railway line as multi-user trails and including more green lanes as part of a promoted cycle network (e.g. linking to National Cycle Routes 6 and 63 in/out of Leicester).
- Improve connections to existing sections of Long Distance Path (Leicestershire Round) from the **landscape's settlements, linking to strategic recreation** destinations such as Burbage Common and Woods Country Park.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence:

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Southern Gateway and Eastern Growth Corridor Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zones (LUC, 2017)
- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
- Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017, update)
- Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth (2008)
- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012)
- Blaby District Character Assessment (2008)

Vale of Belvoir (Melton)



Summary of landscape character

This area is situated in the northern part of Melton District, forming part of a larger vale that continues to the north into Nottinghamshire. This is a flat, expansive landscape, divided into rectangular fields bound by hedges which are under a mixture of pastoral and arable use. Trees are generally sparse and are found in hedgerows and along the Grantham Canal winds through the vale. Nucleated villages occur throughout the vale with vernacular buildings constructed of local stone. Roads are generally straight and narrow, excepting the A52 which crosses the area near Bottesford. The topography and limited tree cover enable long views, particularly to the adjacent Belvoir escarpment which forms a focal point to the south. Church spires in the villages are prominent and distinctive skyline features, providing a sense of orientation within the landscape.

Representative photographs



Vale of Belvoir (Melton)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	Predominantly flat and expansive low lying landform with very gentle undulations and punctuated by occasional hills including Beacon Hill (61 metres) and Slyborough Hill (106 metres). The vale is contained by the Belvoir escarpment to the south. Fields are rectangular and vary in size, tending to be smaller when located close to settlements and enclosed by low hedgerows with occasional trees. Canals, becks and dykes lined by trees (mostly willows), cross the landscape.	M
Natural character	Areas of semi-natural grassland (including some which designated as Local Wildlife Sites) are scattered amongst the more intensively used arable farmland. Small areas of pasture occur close to settlement. There are occasional small blocks of woodland, including fox coverts. Grantham Canal is lined with trees and forms a distinctive linear feature in the character area, and is important for habitat connectivity. The canal is nationally designated as a SSSI. Muston Meadows is a National Nature Reserve recognised for its lowland meadow habitat. Thick hedgerows and wide grass verges amongst the farmed landscape also offer wildlife interest.	M
Historic landscape character	Field patterns are generally modern in origin, although evidence of ridge and furrow is visible in places. A number of moated sites are designated as Scheduled Monuments. Grantham Canal was important for the transportation of coal during the industrial period. The stone constructed nucleated villages include Conservation Areas at Long Clawson, Redmile, Bottesford, Stathern and Hose. The churches within these villages are also often of historic significance, with many designated as Grade I or II* Listed Buildings.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Small, nucleated villages of a redbrick, ironstone and whitewash vernacular are scattered throughout the area, with isolated farms found along the straight lanes which traverse the area. The villages are well integrated into the landscape and have not expanded significantly in the last century, although some areas of more recent addition to settlement create hard urban edges, including linear development in the east of Bottesford and south of Long Clawson. The flat landscape of the vale provides a rural, agricultural setting to the settlements, with the adjacent Belvoir Scarp also providing a setting and sense of place.	M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	Church spires in the villages form prominent vertical features on the mostly undeveloped skyline. The flat landform and limited tree cover enable long views across the open landscape of the vale. Where hedgerows and trees are more frequent, views are limited. There are good levels of intervisibility with the Belvoir escarpment, which forms a wooded skyline with the distinctive form of Belvoir Castle also visible across much of the area. In places, there are long views across the countryside into Nottinghamshire (to the north). Pylon lines cross the landscape near Stathern and Bottesford.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	A tranquil, rural character can be experienced throughout the landscape, although noise from the railway, the A52 and other busy roads can detract from tranquillity locally. The landscape is intensively farmed, and where hedgerows have been lost, there is a localised sense of exposure. In the south west of the landscape, an MOD Site and Old Dalby business park introduce large gates, fencing and barbed wire which can detract from the rural qualities of the vale.	M

Vale of Belvoir (Melton)



Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have **moderate** sensitivity to residential development and **moderate-high** sensitivity to commercial development due to the historic settlement pattern of the nucleated stone villages, the open character of the vale, with church spires forming distinctive skyline features, the intervisibility of the landscape with the adjacent Belvoir escarpment and the rural character of the area. The landscape is more sensitive to larger scale commercial development which is likely to be intrusive in the open, flat character of the vale.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- Valued semi-natural habitats, including areas of semi-natural grassland and the important linear feature of Grantham Canal.
- Nucleated villages (often within Conservation Areas) constructed of local stone. Well integrated into the landscape with surrounding woodland.
- Remnant areas of ridge and furrow within the intensively farmed landscape.

Vale of Belvoir (Melton)

- Notable views towards Belvoir Castle and the Belvoir escarpment to the south.
- The expansive character of the vale, with the spires of historic churches forming prominent skyline features.
- High levels of tranquillity and strong rural character.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

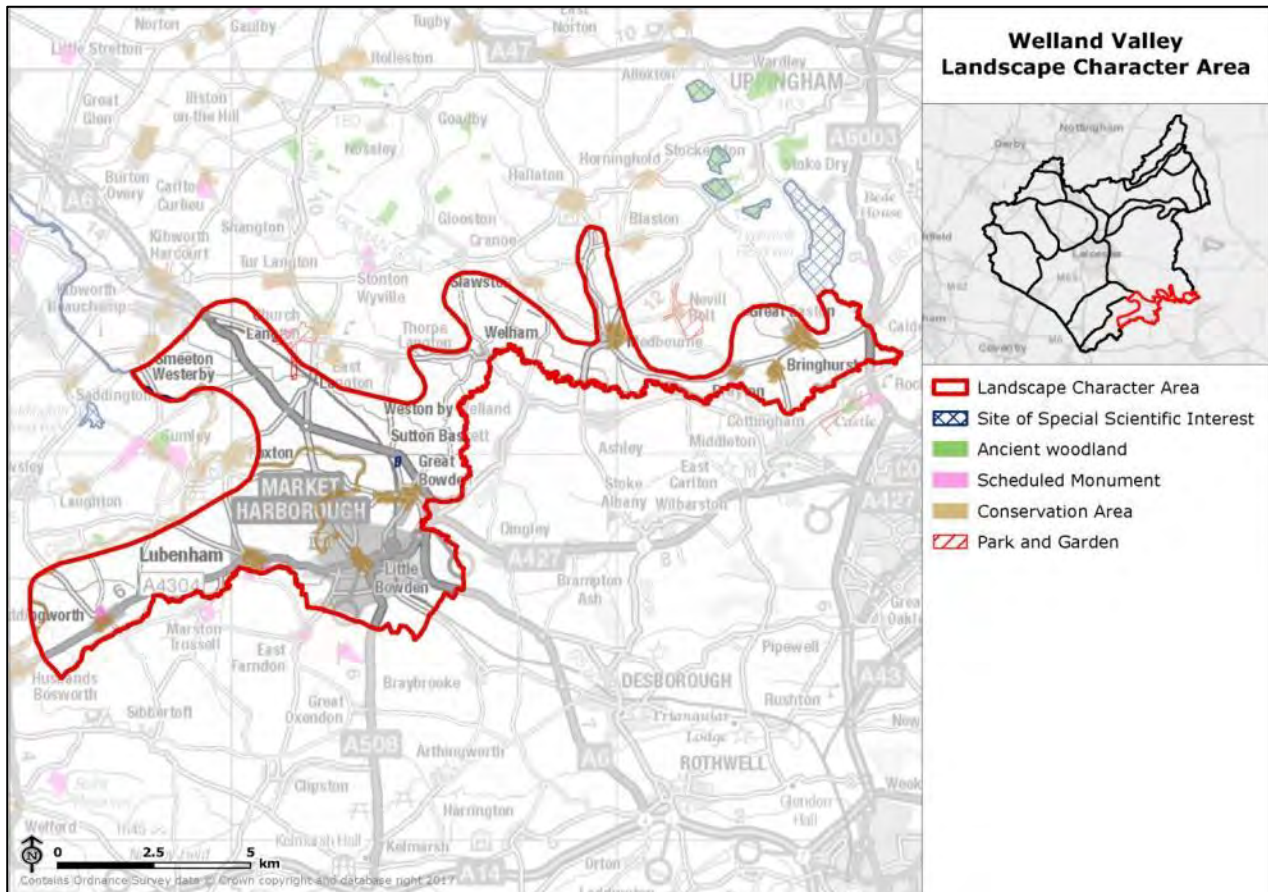
The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Retain valued areas of semi-natural habitat which occur amongst the intensively farmed land, and create linkages where appropriate. Maximise the use of sustainable agricultural practices that protect and enhance ecological networks.
- Ensure that development does not detract from the setting of historic buildings and settlements. Ensure materials complement the existing vernacular.
- Ensure that development does not detract from or interrupt views to and from the adjacent Belvoir escarpment.
- Avoid siting new development in areas where it would be widely visible within the open character of the vale.
- Retain the valued rural character of the vale and avoid urbanising influences.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place. Promote better integration of existing settlement edges into the landscape.
- Plant hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small woodlands to improve habitat connectivity and replace those lost to past intensification/development. Ensure existing hedgerows are managed appropriately.
- Improve habitat and access linkages with Grantham Canal (a priority GI enhancement area and SSSI) which forms an important linear GI feature crossing the vale. Seek to improve the biological condition of the canal.
- Establish access routes along the length of the Grantham Canal as some areas are inaccessible. Disused railways within the landscape could be cleared and multi-use trails created to supplement access to the Canal.
- Promote and seek opportunities to enhance the Cross Britain Way and National Cycle Route 15, which cross through the area.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (March 2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011 (February 2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (September 2015)
- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough (November 2011)

Welland Valley (Harborough)



Summary of landscape character

This Landscape Character Area (LCA) follows the wide shallow valley of the River Welland, which flows from west to east through Market Harborough and forms the southern boundary of much of the LCA (as well as the county boundary with Northamptonshire). To the north rising ground defines the boundary between the Welland Valley and the adjoining High Leicestershire and Laughton Hills LCAs. Land use is mainly agricultural, with mixed arable and pasture. In the south-west of the area, the urban area of Market Harborough, including Great Bowden and Lubenham, has a strong influence on character.

Representative photographs



Welland Valley (Harborough)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	A wide river valley landscape with sloping, shallow valley sides stretching to the steeper ridges to the north, reaching approximately 70m AOD. The western half of the LCA is more undulating than the east, which comprises an expansive floodplain landscape. Fields are generally medium-large in scale enclosed by a network of often mature mixed hedges. Copses, old willow pollards, hedgerow trees and bands of woodland form small-scale features in an otherwise open landscape.	M
Natural character	Scattered copses, trees and old willow pollards follow the river and disused railway lines, combining with the Grand Union Canal to form locally valued linear networks. Great Bowden Borrowpit SSSI is notable for its fen plant community which is uncommon in the Midlands. Part of the Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSI also clips the western edge of the LCA. The floodplain supports intensive arable farming and grazing with some limited areas of marsh and semi-improved grassland remaining. Mature hedgerows and tree avenues provide important ecological networks.	M
Historic landscape character	The Welland Valley is made up of a number of villages which have their origins in agricultural activity from the medieval period, the majority with Conservation Areas and concentrations of Listed Buildings. In turn, many of the LCA's Scheduled Monuments relate to deserted or shrunken medieval settlements, often with related ridge and furrow earthworks remaining on sloping valley sides. The Grand Union Canal branchline into Market Harborough is a Conservation Area along its length. Dismantled railway lines are also evidence of the landscape's industrial past. Much of the landscape is regular, planned Parliamentary enclosures with straight boundaries, often created as a result of land drainage schemes.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Market Harborough dominates the Welland Valley as a district centre, its historic core retaining traditional character but with significant expansion of more recent residential, office and retail developments on its outskirts. Great Bowden has seen linear development spread to the south to coalesce with the north-eastern fringes of the town. Although locally dominant, the location of this development in the valley below local ridgelines means that it is generally well contained. Tree-lined avenues along roads into settlements, as well as frequent trees (including willow) within the built form also provide effective screening and landscape integration. Historic villages across the remainder of the landscape have largely retained their compact character, strong local vernacular and rural setting, with some limited linear development spread along main roads. Often situated on pockets of higher ground above the floodplain, they are effectively concealed from most views by tree cover and owing to topography (i.e. with limited spread onto sloping land below).	M
Views and visual character including skylines	Longer views beyond the valley are restricted by the ridges of higher forming the transition to the adjoining Laughton Hills, High Leicestershire, and Northamptonshire character areas (including the wooded Rockingham Forest ridgeline). These create a scenic backdrop as well as a sense of visual containment within the valley – they also provide elevated vantage points with views over and across the LCA. Occasional elevated points within the LCA (e.g. Theddingworth) afford longer distance views, including beyond the county boundary. Undeveloped skylines are characterised by mature hedgerows, trees and bands of woodland. Theddingworth church spire (Grade I) is a prominent and historically significant local landmark.	M-H
Perceptual and experiential	Despite the presence of some busy roads (e.g. A4304 and A6), intensive farming and the hub of development and activity associated	M-H

Welland Valley (Harborough)

qualities	with Market Harborough, this landscape is defined by its highly rural qualities and strong historic sense of place.	
-----------	---	--



The Grand Union Canal



View south of Drayton Road



Strong local vernacular at Brighthurst Conservation Area



New development replicating local vernacular styles in Great Easton



Trees, including willow, form characteristic features within settlements (e.g. Great Bowden)



The straight Wellham Road plunging into the valley from the High Leicestershire LCA

Welland Valley (Harborough)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

This Landscape Character Area is judged to be of **moderate** overall sensitivity to housing development and **moderate-high** sensitivity to commercial (light industrial) developments. The aspects which present sensitivity to development include the **landscape's strong rural qualities**, compact form and historic character of the villages, levels of intervisibility with adjacent landscapes, long rural views from high vantage points, valued naturalistic land cover and heritage assets, and undeveloped, open and wooded skylines.

Sensitivity to the commercial development (light industrial) scenario is slightly lower in the immediate landscape surrounding Market Harborough, providing the guidance below is followed.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)			M		
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)				M-H	

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The open floodplain landscape overlooked by rising ridges and hills either side, providing a sense of containment and wooded/pastoral backdrop.
- Linear ecological networks associated with the Welland and its tributaries, Grand Union Canal, disused railway line and the hedgerow framework.
- Scattered trees/copses including old willow pollards, semi-improved grasslands and marsh, and nationally important wetland habitats at Great Bowden Borrowpit and the Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSIs.
- The hedgerow network linking to bands of woodland and tree avenues – particularly valued in intensively farmed locations.
- The historic cores of settlements (many with Conservation Areas and strong local vernacular) along with nationally valued archaeological sites and features, including medieval settlement remains and surviving ridge and furrow earthworks on sloping valley sides.
- Industrial heritage features including the Grand Union Canal – a Conservation Area – and lengths of dismantled railway line.
- Distinctive landmarks in views, including church towers and spires such as Theddingworth (Grade I) and the wooded Rockingham escarpment (Northamptonshire).
- Long views along the valley and beyond from high vantage points including within settlements such as Theddingworth.
- The farmed landscape context of the settlements with trees within and along approach roads.
- Important levels of tranquillity and rural character away from the hub of activity associated with Market Harborough.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid more open floodplain areas where development would be overlooked from the surrounding ridges and visible in long open views along the valley.
- Within the areas immediately surrounding Market Harborough, new development should be

Welland Valley (Harborough)

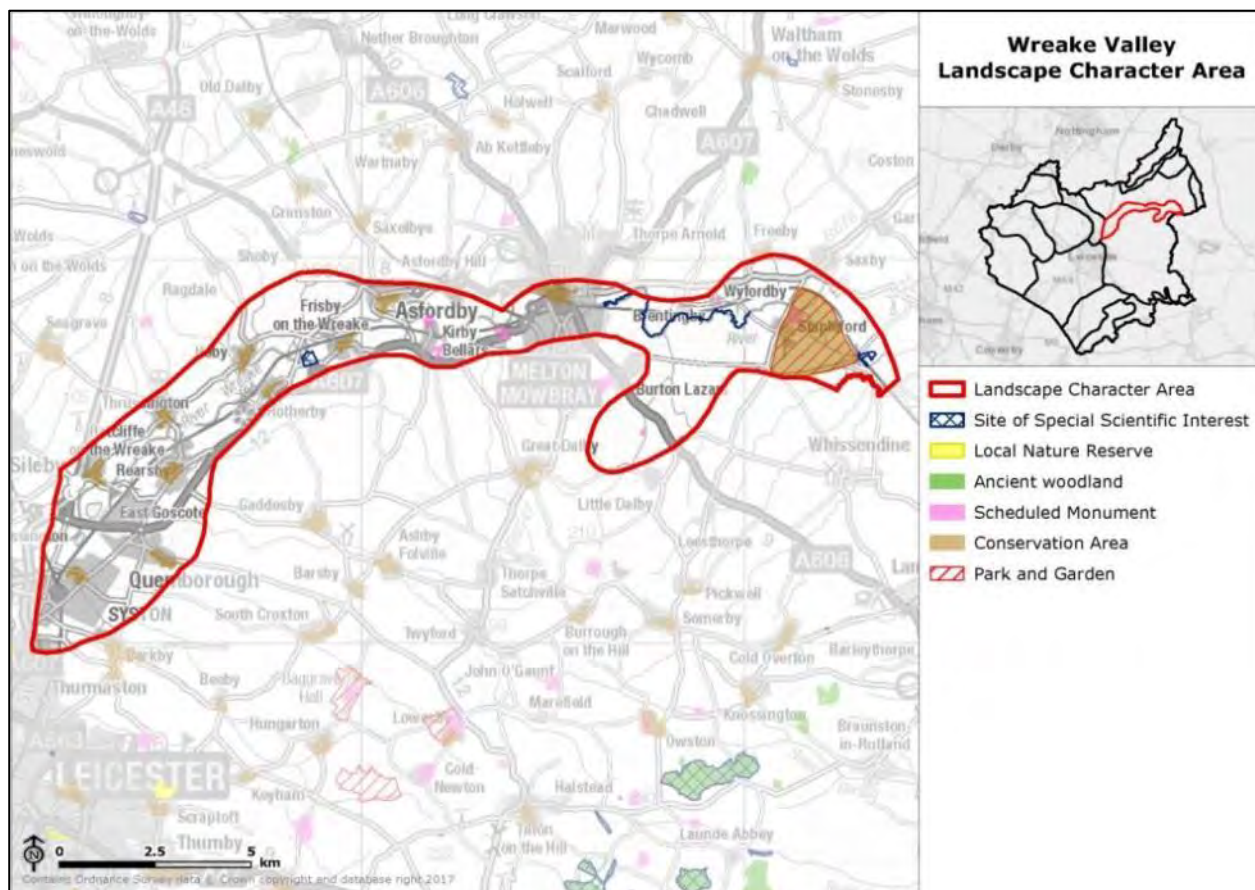
carefully sited and designed, taking into account natural extents and envelope – i.e. avoiding spreading up the ridgeline where it would be visually prominent.

- **Maintain the compact, historic form of the LCA's small villages** – with any new development limited to infill within existing curtilages (not extending down slopes); sympathetic to local vernacular styles and materials and including tree planting within development and along roads (in keeping with character).
- Include appropriate edge and boundary treatments to ensure development is well integrated into the rural landscape, conserving/reinforcing the existing field boundary network and undertaking new tree planting with locally prevalent (e.g. willow) and climate resilient species.
- Ensure any new development is sensitively sited, aiming to avoid significantly affecting areas of rural character with locally important levels of tranquillity.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including hedgerows, tree avenues, old willow pollards, semi-improved grasslands and marsh. Avoid development which could impact upon the nationally important wetland habitats at Great Bowden Borrowpit and the Kilby-Foxton Canal SSSIs, as well as the adjacent Eye Brook Reservoir SSSI.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology that could impact on flows and pollution reaching the River Welland (including potential knock-on effects from agricultural run-off).
- Seek opportunities for natural water management and flood storage within the floodplain particularly where this can also bring landscape and biodiversity benefits.
- **Protect the landscape's heritage assets and historic landscapes from the impacts of development**, including avoiding locations of ridge and furrow on sloping valley sides.
- Conserve undeveloped wooded skylines and ensure new development does not affect the appreciation of historic landmark features, including the spire of All Saints Church in Theddingworth.
- Preserve important long views from high vantage points, including beyond the county into Northamptonshire (e.g. Rockingham Forest) and intervisibility with the Laughton Hills and High Leicestershire LCAs.
- Explore opportunities to strengthen and increase the public rights of way network, potentially opening up lengths of dismantled railway line as multi-user trails and including more green lanes as part of a promoted cycle network (e.g. linking to National Cycle Route 64 and 6).
- Improve connections to existing sections of Long Distance Path (Leicestershire Round, Midshires **Way, Jurassic Way**) from the landscape's settlements.
- Explore opportunities to create further entry points and connections to the Grand Union Canal from Market Harborough for a range of recreational users.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence:

- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
- Market Harborough Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2009)
- Harborough Rural Centres Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2014)

Wreake Valley (Melton and Charnwood)



Summary of landscape character

Flat bottomed valley of the River Wreake and River Eye, with gently sloping sides divided into a varied field pattern with a mixture of larger scale arable and smaller scale pastoral enclosures. Woodland is limited to hedgerow trees and small copses. Wetland habitats along the valley are of nature conservation interest. A string of villages are located along the valley sides and the mainline railway follows the course of the valley. Urban influences around larger settlements contrast with a strong rural character away from urban areas.

Representative photographs



Wreake Valley (Melton and Charnwood)

Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character (including topography and scale)	The character area comprises the flat bottomed valley of the River Wreake and River Eye, with sloping sides where the valley rises towards the Wolds and High Leicestershire. The valley is overlain by a mixed of small scale pastoral fields and larger arable fields which are mostly located on the valley sides. Fields are divided by low hedgerows, with trees along field boundaries and watercourses adding a human scale to the landscape.	L-M
Natural character	The fields within the valley are primarily under intensive arable cultivation, with wet pasture mostly limited to the valley floor. Wetland habitats are frequent along the valley floor, including nationally designated marshland at Frisby Marsh (SSSI). The length of the River Eye is also designated as a SSSI. Although blocks of woodland within the landscape are limited, the landscape has a well-wooded character as a result of the frequent poplars and willows adjacent to the river and estate woodland associated with historic houses.	M-H
Historic landscape character	The HLC indicates that many of the fields are modern in origin, although there are fields containing evidence of ridge and furrow, particularly around Rotherby. A number of Scheduled Monuments are located to the west of Melton Mowbray including moated sites and a medieval settlement. Several of the villages are designated as Conservation Areas, often containing historic churches at their core. Stapleford Hall Registered Park and Garden (Grade II) is a distinctive feature in the east of the area and provides a setting to the Grade I Listed Buildings of Stapleford Hall and Church of St Mary Magdalen.	M
Form, density and setting of existing development	Melton Mowbray is a significant market town located on the River Wreake and contains the majority of the settlement within the valley. The historic core of Melton Mowbray is adjacent to the river, although it has expanded significantly in the 20 th century resulting in some hard urban edges. Large industrial buildings are a common feature on the outskirts of larger settlements. A string of historic villages are located along the river valley. To the west of Melton Mowbray settlements tend to be larger, including Syston and East Goswote, with the former associated with the wider Leicester urban area. To the east of Melton Mowbray, settlement is less frequent and consists of historic hamlets and isolated farms. Settlements tend to be well integrated into the landscape by mature woodland, while the valley provides a distinctive setting to existing development.	M
Views and visual character including skylines	Whilst the landscape is not prominent, it is overlooked from adjacent landscapes to the north and south of the valley. Views are funnelled as a result of the landform and limited woodland cover. Pylons crossing the valley north-south are a feature on the skyline in several places. Church spires and towers in villages can be prominent, rising above the trees.	L-M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Perceptual qualities vary throughout the landscape, with naturalistic qualities adjacent to the river contrasting with urban fringe influences, particularly close to Melton Mowbray, Syston and the city of Leicester. In the east of the LCA there is frequent industrial activity including gravel workings. There is a strong rural character away from the larger settlements and in particular a feeling of remoteness to the east of Melton Mowbray where settlement and urban influences are less frequent. The A607 and Derby to London mainline railway route follow the valley floor, with associated noise periodically detracting from tranquillity.	M

Wreake Valley (Melton and Charnwood)



Wreake Valley (Melton and Charnwood)

Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **low-moderate** sensitivity to residential development and **moderate** sensitivity to commercial development due to the valley landform, areas of large-scale intensive arable cultivation, urban fringe influences adjacent to larger settlements (particularly in the east of the LCA) and influence of transport routes including the A607 and mainline railway. The frequent trees and hedgerows would enable development to be effectively screened within the landscape, particularly small-scale residential development.

Features which would be more sensitive to development include the steeper, visually prominent valley slopes, nationally important wetland habitats, valued heritage features and the sparse settlement and undeveloped character, particularly to the east of Melton Mowbray. The guidance below should be followed to ensure that development does not adversely affect these valued attributes of the landscape.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing (2-3 storeys)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development (Use classes B1 and B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

Key landscape sensitivities to development within the area

The following attributes and features of the landscape would be particularly sensitive to development:

- The steeply sloping valley sides, with intervisibility between the north and the south valley slopes where woodland allows.
- Nationally important marsh and river habitats including the River Eye SSSI.
- Remnant ridge and furrow visible within some fields, particularly around Rotherby.
- Important heritage features including moated sites, medieval settlement and the Grade II Registered estate parkland of Stapleford Hall.
- The sparse settlement pattern, particularly to the east of Melton Mowbray.
- The strong naturalistic and rural qualities of the landscape.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities

The following guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character and Green Infrastructure should be considered within this Landscape Character Area:

- Avoid locating development on the steeply sloping parts of the valley and in visually prominent locations, including areas where development may be strongly overlooked from higher ground.
- **Protect the character, setting and integrity of the landscape's ornamental parkland, including the Grade II registered Stapleford Park** which contributes to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- Protect and where possible enhance semi-natural habitats and networks, including semi-improved grasslands, marsh and riparian habitats. Avoid development which could impact upon the SSSIs at Frisby Marsh and the River Eye.
- Retain trees within hedgerows and along watercourses which provide localised visual enclosure and connectivity between habitats.
- Respect the form and vernacular of existing settlement including the setting of numerous Conservation Areas within the character area.
- Preserve the undeveloped and highly tranquil character of the landscape, particularly to the east of the Melton Mowbray.
- Protect the setting and integrity of valued heritage features, including Scheduled Monuments at

Wreake Valley (Melton and Charnwood)

Kirby Bellars Priory, Stapleford medieval village and various moated sites.

- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Retain remnant historic field patterns on the valley slopes, including distinctive areas of ridge and furrow near Rotherby.
- Capitalise on the landscape and GI enhancement opportunities arising from the forthcoming North East of Leicester Sustainable Urban Extension scheme in Charnwood Borough – which will include new open spaces, cycle/walking routes, habitat creation and landscape enhancements.
- Pursue opportunities to enhance access and recreational opportunities along the River through new or improved right of way connections to the Leicestershire Round/Jubilee Way Long Distance Paths and National Cycle Route 48.
- Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off). The catchment areas of the River Eye/Wreake and the associated tributaries should be considered in particular.
- Development in the upper parts of the catchment management area should be sensitive to impacts downstream. Seek opportunities for natural water management and flood storage within the floodplain particularly where this can also bring landscape and biodiversity benefits.

References for further local-level landscape and GI evidence

- The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunities Assessment for the Melton Mowbray Strategic Opportunity Assessment Zone (LUC, 2017)
- Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (July 2012)
- Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report (March 2006)
- Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011 (February 2011)
- Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study (September 2015)

7

Summary of GI opportunities and generic guidance for Leicestershire



7 Summary of GI opportunities and next steps





















Introduction




























- 7.1 This final section sets out recommendations to support the Leicestershire authorities in the next steps for GI planning and implementation. This section covers:
- The key GI opportunities identified and the potential functions they could deliver;
 - The recommended approach to embedding GI within the local plans;
 - Principles for GI delivery through future development;
 - Delivery options for proposed GI features; and
 - Suggested next steps.



















GI opportunities and potential functions delivered




















- 7.2 **Chapter 5** of this report and its associated figures identify a range of GI opportunities associated with each of the six SOAZs. These are summarised in **Table 7.1** below, with opportunities which include a new or enhanced Strategic Recreation Asset indicated by an icon in the left hand column. This table is indicative – the ability of each opportunity to deliver the number of functions highlighted below is dependent on effective planning, siting and design. This table should be used to support prioritisation of projects for delivery as funding becomes available, or as an initial reference point for further feasibility and masterplanning work. It could also be used in negotiations with developers.



















Table 7.1: Summary of key GI opportunities and function delivery, by SOAZ

















No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
SOAZ 1: MELTON									
1	Melton Country Park Green Way	Create and enhance off-road pedestrian/cycle links from existing and new communities to Thorpe Arnold village and the countryside beyond, including linkages to Melton Country Park.							
2	 Create Strategic Recreation Asset: River Wreake and Eye Strategic River Corridor	Follow Natural England's Strategic Restoration Plan to improve biodiversity and water quality and deliver the River Wreake and River Eye Strategic River Corridor (See Melton GI Strategy) as an active transport route.							
3	Melton Ecological Network Enhancement	Protect and enhance ecological corridors through woodland and wetland creation and strengthening of the hedgerow network.							
4	Pedestrian/cycle bridge for Melton	Any new development in this area would need to be delivered alongside new pedestrian/cycle access over the railway line.							
























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
5 	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: Eye River Park	Create a semi-natural river park to provide recreation and access to nature for existing and new communities.							
6	Jubilee Way access enhancement	Enhance access and signage along Jubilee Way to connect communities to nearby countryside.							
7	Green Way east from Diseworth over M1	Ensure pedestrian/cycle access over the M1 is enhanced in association with any future development.							
SOAZ 2: NORTHERN GATEWAY									
8	Shepshed to Loughborough Green Way	Create and enhance off-road pedestrian/cycle links over the M1, providing appropriate access to locations including Loughborough, historic villages and Garendon Park.							
9	Soar River Corridor Restoration and Green Way	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the Soar tributaries, and ensure access is enhanced, particularly along the Black Brook and create							




























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
		attractive pedestrian/cycle from Shepshed to Belton and beyond.							
10	Soar River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the Soar tributaries.							
11	North Leicestershire Ecological Network Enhancement	Join up patches of woodland and connect with larger woodland assets outside the SOAZ for recreation and ecological connectivity.							
12	Langley Priory public access project	Promote interpretation of the Langley Priory Estate landscape and explore opportunities for further access as a recreational destination.							
13	Shepshed – Thringstone Ecological Corridor	Create new areas of woodland, connecting the existing woods and copses, linking to the National Forest/Charnwood Forest.							
14	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: Blackbrook Access and Recreation	Enhance access and interpretation to create a new high quality semi-natural open							

























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
	Project	space/destination at Blackbrook Reservoir with new multi-user rights of way from Shepshed.							
SOAZ 3: SOUTHERN GATEWAY									
15	Enhance Strategic Recreation Asset: Ashby Canal	The Ashby Canal is a strategic GI asset connecting Hinckley to the countryside, enhanced in terms of access to the towpath and consistent signposting.							
16	Hinckley – Nuneaton Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route between communities in Hinckley and Nuneaton.							
17	Hinckley Disused Railway Ecological Corridor Enhancement	Join up patches of woodland and wetland habitats via the disused railway corridor to create ecological corridors in an area with very few semi-natural habitats.							
18	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: River Tweed Ecological Corridor and Green Way	Maintain and enhance the River Tweed as a biodiversity corridor, for flood attenuation and as a route for informal							
























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
		recreation. Link to the Environment Agency's Natural Flood Management projects in headwater catchments of the River Sence.							
19	Hinckley – Barwell Green Way	Deliver high quality greenway between Hinckley and Barwell.							
20 	Enhance Strategic Recreation Asset: Burbage Common and Woods	Potential to enhance the visitor amenities and GI functions at Burbage Common, and improve pedestrian and cycle access from Hinckley. This could also help to address current lack of accessible natural greenspaces here.							
21	Hinckley Woods and Grassland Ecological Corridor	Improve networks and corridors of key habitats (including broadleaf woodland, meadows and acid grassland) between the SSSI and the edges of Hinckley.							
22	Elmesthorpe Soar River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the Soar.							
























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
23	Pedestrian/cycle bridge for Hinckley	Consider new pedestrian access over the M69 in association with any new development east/south of the motorway.							
24	Access and heritage trails linking Roman remains	New development in this part of the SOAZ should link to the existing rights of way network and contribute to enhancing existing heritage assets, e.g. Fosse Way.							
25	Sharnford Soar River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the Soar. Join up patches of woodland and wetland along the Soar Brook to create ecological corridors in an area with very few semi-natural habitats.							
SOAZ 4: LUTTERWORTH									
26	Magna Park - Lutterworth Green Way	Enhance existing footpaths to deliver a high quality green way between Lutterworth, Bitteswell and Magna Park.							























No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
27 	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: Bitteswell Brook River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the Bitteswell Brook river corridor, and create off road pedestrian and cycle access linking west Lutterworth to Bitteswell, and the countryside beyond.							
28	Lutterworth Green Way	Deliver high quality green way between Lutterworth centre and the countryside to the north.							
29	Lutterworth M1 Ecological Corridor	Connect and enhance linear habitats along the M1 to create ecological corridors and noise buffers.							
30	Pedestrian/cycle bridge for Lutterworth East	New development east of the M1 should be delivered alongside new pedestrian/cycle access over the M1, and a creation of a strategic green space.							
31	Lutterworth – Misterton Ecological Corridor	Protect and enhance ecological corridors through woodland and wetland creation. Manage Misterton							

No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
		Marshes SSSI so that its condition continues to improve.							
32 	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: Swift Valley Community Park	Create a river park running along the River Swift, including high quality accessible green space and restoration of river valley habitats.							
33	Lutterworth – Misterton Ecological Corridor	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the floodplain of the river corridor, and create off road pedestrian and cycle access linking south Lutterworth to Walcote via Misterton Estate.							
SOAZ 5: EASTERN GROWTH CORRIDOR (N)									
34	Watermead Country Park Green Way	Create a new high quality green way linking the existing and new communities at Thurmaston and Watermead Country Park							
35	Barkby Brook Green Way and River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along Barkby Brook.							

No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
36	Beeby Woodlands Ecological Corridor	Join up patches of woodland to connect with larger woodland assets such as Barkby Wood using new planting and connections via the hedgerow network.							
37	Hamilton Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route to and along Melton Brook via Hamilton Medieval Village.							
38	Scraptoft Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route through Scraptoft urban extension, to Keyham and beyond.							
39	Scraptoft Woodlands Ecological Corridor	Join up patches of woodland to create ecological corridors in an area with very few semi-natural habitats.							
40	Old Ingarsby Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route from East Leicester to Old Ingarsby Medieval village along the old disused railway route.							

No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
41	Stoughton Woodlands Ecological Corridor	Join up patches of woodland and an intact hedgerow network to create ecological corridors in an area with very few semi-natural habitats.							
42	Great Stretton Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route to historic villages and heritage features.							
SOAZ 5: EASTERN GROWTH CORRIDOR (S)									
43 	Create Strategic Recreation Asset: Wigston Green Wedge access project	Enhance GI assets within Green Wedge for access to nature and ecological connectivity. Explore potential to create a new destination for outdoor recreation.							
44	Oadby and Wigston Green Way	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route from the city towards Brocks Hill Country Park and beyond.							
45	Sence River Corridor Restoration	Reinstate grazing marsh and fens along the Sence flood plain.							

No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
46 	Enhance Strategic Recreation Asset: Grand Union Cana.	Improve access infrastructure and signage connecting communities to the Grand Union Canal. Enhance facilities to support recreational use of the canal, in consultation with local water sports groups.							
47	Whetstone Brook ecological corridor and access link	Create an attractive accessible pedestrian/cycle route from Blaby along the Whetstone Brook and south the join the Leicester Round footpath at Willoughby Waterleys.							
SOAZ 6: SIX HILLS									
48	Six Hills Ecological Buffer	Create and enhance woodland and hedges to buffer noise from the adjacent road and provide some ecological connectivity with Twenty Acre Piece SSSI.							
49	Six Hills – Old Dalby - The Wolds Green Way	Deliver high quality green way between any new development at Six Hills and Old Dalby and the Wolds.							

No.	Name	Description	Water	Biodiversity	Landscape	Heritage	Active Transport	Recreation and play	Health and equality
50	Six Hills recreation and play facilities	Create high quality semi-natural open space and play facilities as part of any new development.							
51	Six Hills Ecological Network	Retain valued features including trees, hedgerows, in-field ponds, streams and lakes.							
52	Six Hills – Loughborough Green Way	Deliver high quality green way between any new development at Six Hills and Loughborough.							
53	Six Hills Church Community Hub	Retain the Victorian church located in the south west of the site for a suitable community use.							
54	Six Hills – Melton Green Way	Deliver high quality green way between any new development at Six Hills and Melton Mowbray via Ragdale and the Wreake Valley.							

Embedding GI in Local Plans

- 7.3 This study has highlighted a number of social and environmental issues within Leicestershire. Some of these are location-specific, whilst others are more widely applicable, and the partner authorities should continue to work together to address county-wide challenges. These are detailed in **Section 4** of this report, however, the headline issues include:
- Hotspots across the county where areas of significant deprivation also have less than 10% GI coverage. These exist across all local authorities (see **Figure 4.9**), however, the most significant deficiency is within Leicester itself.
 - Deficiencies in strategic recreational assets in south and east Leicestershire.
 - Opportunities to make Green Wedges and Areas of Local Separation (ALS) 'work harder' by delivering a range of GI benefits to the neighbouring communities.
 - An extensive public rights of way network, including many Long Distance Routes, which would be better utilised through addressing specific barriers to access, including signage, unappealing entrances and neighbouring land uses.
 - The potential to increase the popularity of active transport modes, particularly cycling, by creating off-road routes.
 - An extensive river network, which presents a wealth of opportunities for biodiversity, recreation and access to nature, but also presents flood risk challenges, which must be managed.
 - Some excellent heritage features and historic landscapes, with considerable potential to increase local awareness and public accessibility.
 - The potential to improve poor health and living environment such as those highlighted in **Figure 4.8 and 4.9**, by enhancing GI and access to nature for those communities.
- 7.4 GI forms part of the overall mitigation for new development and associated population increases, which will result from planned future growth across Leicestershire. Local authorities have a duty to promote sustainable development under the Local Government Act, and the GI enhancements proposed in this report will help achieve this aim. Local authorities are also required to deliver a **'net gain' for biodiversity, in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**. Effective delivery of high quality GI alongside proposed growth can help Leicestershire achieve these legal duties, and will also make the area a more attractive place to live and work, and therefore to invest.

GI policy in Local Plans

- 7.5 To ensure that appropriate, multi-functional GI is incorporated within planned development, the Leicestershire authorities should incorporate strong policies within their Local Plans, particularly in relation to any locations of significant new housing development. These will need to specify:
- what type of GI is required;
 - how much should be provided and where (in line with the priorities in this report); and
 - the micro-GI features which are expected to be integrated within new development.
- 7.6 It is advised that, if possible, a Leicestershire-wide approach to these policies is agreed, as this will help to add weight to the policies and help deliver consistent high quality, cross-boundary GI networks.
- 7.7 The GI policies adopted by local authorities should be overarching, cross-referencing to more specific policies on related topics such as biodiversity, landscape and flooding. This would give them additional weight and clearly demonstrate the need for the cross-boundary GI opportunities highlighted in this study.

Key Diagram and Proposals Map

- 7.8 The existing GI network should be clearly defined in each Local Plan to ensure that these GI features are protected and integrated within future development. It is recommended that the key sites within the existing GI network are included in the Key Diagram.
- 7.9 It is also recommended that, when future housing and employment sites are confirmed, the relevant GI opportunities identified in relation to each SOAZ are included in the Proposals Map in **the relevant Local Plan. This will ensure they are considered at the earliest stage, as a 'green print' around which future development should fit, and be delivered** alongside other infrastructure and development. When these locations for future growth are agreed, further work will be required to explore the feasibility issues associated with each opportunity, including land ownership, exact locations for proposals, and timescales.

Development principles

- 7.10 **Chapter 5** of this report sets out the SOAZ-specific opportunities and constraints relevant to each of the GI themes. A number of key issues and opportunities emerged from that analysis, and these are presented below as a suite of GI principles. These should be considered when informing new development in the county, and should also inform development guidance which each local authority could adopt as a requirement of all future development. This could be through the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document, or through detailed development management policies within the Local Plan. The principles are included below:

Water

- Contribute to the creation and improvement of access to water spaces and waterway infrastructure, creating appealing waterside destinations for access to nature and water activities.
- Explore opportunities to provide additional flood storage attenuation. Implement sustainable drainage and source control measures, retaining rainfall on site and reducing run-off.
- Contribute to the creation of semi-natural green spaces along river corridors.
- Development in the upper parts of the catchment should be sensitive to impacts downstream.

Biodiversity

- Retain natural features, such as hedgerows, trees, woodland and streams, and integrate new features within development design to deliver connected ecological networks.
- Create buffers around existing designated wildlife sites and priority habitats to deliver a net gain for biodiversity.
- Manage increased visitor pressures upon sensitive habitats that result from development.

Landscape

- GI should contribute to the management, conservation and enhancement of the local landscape, with new development respecting (and where possible enhancing) landscape character and quality. This theme is addressed through the linked Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.

Please refer to the 'Landscape Guidance' sections for design principles proposed with regards to landscape.

Heritage

- Conserve and enhance the setting of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, including through the retention and enhancement of trees, hedgerows and green infrastructure.
- Explore the opportunities to provide connections between and interpretation of heritage assets, such as through the creation of joint heritage and wildlife trails.
- Incorporate art features and information to better promote and celebrate the heritage of the borough.

Active transport and connectivity

- Enable both on and off road sustainable transport routes and provide safe crossing points on roads.
- Protect, enhance and create access and connectivity between existing and future urban areas, employment centres and parks, green corridors and GI assets.
- Contribute to the creation of joint heritage and wildlife trails.

Recreation and Play

- Contribute to open space, green space and recreational feature provision, notably in areas of the borough where there are deficiencies, as well as access to and between these.
- Protect sufficient areas of land to provide for recreational and play needs, including strategic areas of local separation and Green Wedges.
- Contribute to the promotion and enhancements of canal and river corridors and their recreational opportunities, including increased facilities to support recreation such as rowing, canoeing and fishing.

Health, Wellbeing and Equality

- Contribute to open space provision, as well as access to and between these, particularly in areas of deficiency.
- Prioritise green infrastructure interventions within the more deprived areas.
- Incorporate trees, hedgerows and pocket parks in development design to ameliorate poor air quality and contribute to the alleviation of urban heat island effects.

Delivery options

Securing funding through new development

- 7.11 There are two planning tools for securing financial contributions to GI through proposed new developments. Section 106 (of the Town and Country Planning Act) is used when it can be reasonably demonstrated that a development directly affects a community or GI feature, therefore investment in GI is needed as part of the mitigation package. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced through the Planning Act (2008) as a capital cost payable by developers towards the cost of local and sub-regional infrastructure to support development. This can apply to strategic-scale projects, and does not need to be directly related to the proposed development.

Section 106

- 7.12 Those GI opportunities within Leicestershire which are located in proximity to a significant development proposal should be secured through a Section 106 agreement as part of the planning conditions. This will help to ensure a focus on the largest developments where new GI features are most needed. It will also help to mitigate the challenge that local authorities have in promoting the need for GI, which may be in competition for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding against core social infrastructure such as schools and surgeries. Development should be required to deliver GI features on site wherever possible.
- 7.13 There are three legal tests which must be met, in order for a Section 106 agreement to be appropriate:
- Must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - Must be directly related to the development; and
 - Must be reasonably related in scale and kind to the development

- 7.14 The limitation of Section 106 is that contributions cannot be pooled (beyond 5 developments) to invest in a strategic site. So whilst Section 106 could deliver specific strategic GI opportunities, it could not be used to enhance the Leicestershire-wide GI network beyond these strategic sites.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.15 The CIL was introduced through the Planning Act (2008) as a capital cost payable by developers towards the cost of local and sub-regional infrastructure to support development. GI is included in the types of infrastructure that are eligible for CIL funding. The NPPF states that the CIL should **'support and incentivise new development' and encourages local authorities to test the feasibility** of proposed CIL charges alongside the Local Plan. As stated in the national Planning Practice Guidance:

"The levy can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or to repair failing existing infrastructure, if that is necessary to support development."

- 7.16 In parallel, the local authorities may seek to fund some of the GI opportunities through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This is a district/borough-wide tariff which applies to all new development within agreed categories, and will help to ensure that the wider GI network can be enhanced, connected and promoted, beyond the doorstep of new development. This approach would fit with the proposals of the Housing White Paper²⁷, which suggests that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be replaced by a Local Infrastructure Tariff (LIT), a streamlined low-level tariff which would be supplemented by Section 106 contribution for larger developments.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.17 Without mitigation, new development is likely to have an adverse effect on ecology. A **'biodiversity net gain' policy seeks to create a net gain for biodiversity of around 10%, through** the creation of new habitats either on or off site. The biodiversity net gain principle is a hierarchal approach that requires negative impacts to biodiversity:
- To be firstly avoided;
 - Then reduced or mitigated;
 - Finally reduced through compensation (offsetting) and should only be considered if avoidance and mitigation measures have been applied to development proposals²⁸.
- 7.18 Offsetting works through using a quantitative metric to calculate the biodiversity of a site before and after development. If biodiversity loss is calculated after development, and avoidance and mitigation have been considered, there may be opportunities to compensate for the loss through habitat creation/restoration projects offsite in strategic areas to be managed in the long term and funded by the developer²⁹.
- 7.19 Biodiversity net gain is applicable to Leicestershire, where much of the residential development is likely to occur on rural greenfield sites with possible impacts on biodiversity. Where the first two options of the mitigation hierarchy cannot be applied, there may be opportunities for biodiversity gains to be made off site or through the developer contributing to GI opportunities identified through this study.

Payments for Ecosystem Services

- 7.20 The Leicestershire authorities should engage with the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and others, to explore the potential to alleviate existing, and future, flood risk problems through natural flood management schemes. The Environment Agency already have initiatives in place, and the emerging Leicestershire Flood Risk Strategy identifies the specific catchments which would benefit from investment in natural flood management via the reinstatement of semi-natural habitats. Local authorities who engage in natural flood management and flood plain restoration

²⁷ DCLG (2017) DCLG (2017) *Fixing Our Broken Housing Market*

²⁸ Biodiversity Net Gain – A new role for infrastructure and development in improving Britain's wildlife (2016) WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff

²⁹ For example, see Warwickshire County Council (2014) Guide to Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Biodiversity Offsetting Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator v18

should also explore the potential for securing funding for this through Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), where water utility companies, developers, and other local businesses contribute to the delivery of natural flood management based on the valuable benefits they will accrue as a result of its installation.

Next steps

- 7.21 The Leicestershire authorities have taken a very positive first step in ensuring an effective and coordinated approach to GI delivery in the county. This partnership approach should help to ensure a more integrated cross-boundary GI network, and a better evidence base to support negotiations regarding the delivery of high quality GI through development. To capitalise on this positive first step, the below is a summary of recommendations to take this work forward:
- **Embed GI in Local Plans in a coordinated way:** The Leicestershire authorities should capitalise on the partnership they have created. If possible, the eight authorities should adopt a coordinated approach to GI delivery, and complementary policies which require development to integrate high quality GI consistently across the county. Strong planning policy will have a critical role to play in delivering this high quality cross-boundary GI network. Each authority should incorporate GI into strategic policies, the Key Diagram and Proposals Map, and outline the specific requirements of new development in Development Management policies. The potential for a Leicestershire-wide SPD, which could be prepared in partnership and adopted by each local authority, should also be explored.
 - **Use the mapped GI assets and opportunities to guide future development:** The GI assets, constraints and opportunities highlighted in **Chapters 4 and 5** of this report should be used to inform future locations for strategic development. The current GI assets should be viewed as a 'green print', around which new development should be planned, and the GI opportunities should be integrated into planned growth locations, to ensure high quality healthy places are created for Leicestershire's future residents.
 - **Explore funding options and payments for ecosystem services:** Once the Leicestershire authorities have decided on where they plan to locate future growth and which of the GI opportunities they will deliver alongside this growth, potential partners should be engaged. Whilst some opportunities will be delivered through and funded by development, there is potential to achieve a more extensive and multifunctional GI network through partnership with a range of organisations, as listed above. The scope to deliver ecosystem services through high quality GI, particularly water management, sustainable forestry and biomass production should be explored, and payments for ecosystem services should be secured.

Appendix 1

Bibliography and data list

Bibliography

The 6Cs Partnership

The 6Cs Partnership (2010) Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Blaby District Council

Blaby District Council (2013) Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document.

Blaby District Council (2016) Blaby District Council Strategic Green Wedge Assessment.

TEP (2008) Blaby District Character Assessment: Understating the characteristics of towns, villages and countryside within Blaby. For Blaby District Council.

Charnwood Borough Council

Arup (2016) Charnwood Borough Council Green Wedges, Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones and Areas of Local Separation: Methodology and Assessment - Findings Report. For Charnwood Borough Council.

Charnwood Borough Council (2012) Charnwood Local Plan: Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment.

Charnwood Borough Council (2015) Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028: Core Strategy.

Charnwood Forest

TEP (2008) Charnwood Forest Landscape and Settlements Character Assessment. For Leicestershire County Council.

East Midlands

LDA Design (2010) East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment Incorporating The Peak District National Park and Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. For East Midlands Landscape Partnership.

Leicester City Council

Environment Agency (2016) Leicester Integrated Flood Risk Management Strategy - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report: A Summary of Consultation Responses.

Leicester City Council (2015) Leicester Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Leicester City Council; Alan Baxter and Associates LLP; and GL Hearn (2015) Leicester Waterside: Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). For Leicester City Council.

Leicestershire County Council

Defra; Environment Agency; Westcountry Rivers Trust (2016) Local Action Project.

Defra; Trent Rivers Trust; Environment Agency; Leicester City Council; Westcountry Rivers Trust (2016) Local Action Project: Leicester Evidence Review.

Leicestershire County Council (2001) Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy.

Leicestershire County Council (2006) Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy: Addendum.

Leicestershire County Council (2015) Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

Leicestershire County Council (2016) Space for Wildlife: Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026. 2nd Edition.

The River Soar and Grand Union Canal Partnership (2016) The River Soar and Grand Union Canal Partnership 2016/2019 Action Plan.

The Stepping Stones Project (2008) Creating a Green and Prosperous Future: A Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the Stepping Stones Project - Delivery Plan.

The Stepping Stones Project (2008) Creating a Green and Prosperous Future: A Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the Stepping Stones Project - Action Plan.

Harborough District Council

Atkins (2007) Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment. For Harborough District Council and the Countryside Agency.

Harborough District Council (2011) Area of Separation Review.

Harborough District Council (2011) Green Wedge Review.

Harborough District Council (2015) Green Wedge Review: Draft Technical Update 2015.

The Landscape Partnership (2009) Leicester PUA - Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study: Executive Summary. For Harborough District Council.

The Landscape Partnership (2009) Market Harborough - Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study. For Harborough District Council.

The Landscape Partnership (2011) Lutterworth and Broughton Astley - Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study. For Harborough District Council.

The Landscape Partnership (2014) Harborough Rural Centre - Haughton on the Hill: Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study. For Harborough District Council.

The Landscape Partnership (2014) Harborough Rural Centres - Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study. For Harborough District Council.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (2011) Green Wedge Review.

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (2012) Areas of Separation Review.

TEP (2008) A Green Infrastructure for Hinckley & Bosworth. For Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

Melton Borough Council

ADAS (2006) Melton Borough Landscape & Historic Urban Character Assessment Report. For Melton Borough Council.

ADAS (2011) Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011. For Melton Borough Council.

Influence (2015) Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study. For Melton Borough Council.

Land Use Consultants (LUC) (2014) Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study: Wind Energy Development. For Melton Borough Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Melton Borough Council (2015) Melton Borough Council Local Plan: Assessing Large Scale Development Site Options.

Royal Haskoning DHV (2015) River Eye SSSI: Strategic Restoration Plan. For Natural England.

Royal Haskoning DHV (2015) River Eye SSSI: Strategic Restoration Plan - Technical Report. For Natural England.

TEP (2011) A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Melton Borough. For Melton Borough Council.

The National Forest

The National Forest (2009) The National Forest Delivery Plan 2009-2014.

The National Forest (2011) The National Forest BAP. 3rd Edition.

The National Forest (2014) Strategy 2014-2024.

North West Leicestershire District Council

North West Leicestershire District Council (2010) North West Leicestershire Settlement Fringe Assessment.

North West Leicestershire District Council (2015) DRAFT North West Leicestershire: Ecological Networks.

TEP (2010) North West Leicestershire Landscape Character Assessment. For North West Leicestershire District Council.

Natural England

Land Use Consultants (LUC) (2009) Green Infrastructure Guide. For Natural England.

Natural England (2013) National Character Area Profiles for: 48: Trent and Belvoir Vales; 69: Trent Valley Washlands; 73: Charnwood; 93: High Leicestershire.

Natural England (2014) National Character Area Profiles for: 71: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield; 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds; 75: Kesteven Uplands; 89: Northamptonshire Vales; 94: Leicestershire Vales; 95: Northamptonshire Uplands.

Natural England (2015) National Character Area Profiles for: 70: Melbourne Parklands; 72: Mease/Sence Lowlands.

Oadby & Wigston

David Tyldesley & Associates (2005) Oadby & Wigston Landscape Character Assessment. For Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

Data list

Source	Data
Blaby District Council	Area of separation
	Green wedge
	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
	Landscape Character Type (LCT)
	Air quality
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Open Space
Charnwood Borough Council	Area of separation
	Charnwood Forest
	Charnwood Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones (GIEZ)
	Green wedge
	Valued landscape High Leicestershire
	Valued landscape The Wolds
	Valued landscape Soar Valley
	Valued landscape Langley Lowlands
	Valued landscape the Wreake Valley
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Site allocations
Environment Agency	Flood zone 2
	Flood zone 3
Forestry Commission	National Forestry Inventory
Harborough District Council	Area of separation
	Green wedge
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Open Space
	Site allocations
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Area of separation
	Green wedge
	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
	Sensitivity area
	County ecology sites
	Biodiversity assets
	Biodiversity improvement areas
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Open Space
	Site allocations
	Area potential Local Wildlife Sites
	Linear potential Local Wildlife Sites
	Wildlife corridors
	Phase 1 habitats
	North Eastern Green Infrastructure zone
	Southern Green Infrastructure zone
	Western Green Infrastructure zone
Historic England	Listed Buildings
	Scheduled monuments
	Parks and gardens
	Registered battlefields
Leicester City Council	Waterside boundary

Source	Data
	Air quality
	Green wedge
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Open Space
	Public Rights of Way
	Habitat data
	Site allocations
Leicestershire County Council	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
	Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment area
	Historic Landscape Characterisation
	Public Rights of Way
Melton Borough Council	Area of separation
	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
	Protected open areas and local green spaces
	Air quality
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Open Space
	Priority green infrastructure enhancement areas
	Secondary green infrastructure enhancement areas
	Ecological network
	Landscape character zones
	Primary green infrastructure
	Site allocations
	Strategic access network enhancement
National Forest	National Forest schemes
	National Forest Way
Natural England	The National Forest
	Special Area of Conservation
	National Nature Reserve
	Ancient woodland
	Site of Special Scientific Interest
	Local Nature Reserve
	Priority Habitat Inventory
	National Character Area (NCA)
	CRow access
North West Leicestershire	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
	Landscape Character Type (LCT)
	Settlements (fringes divided into parcel for assessment)
	Area of separation
	Air quality
	Conservation Areas
	Local Wildlife Sites/Site of Importance for Nature Conservation/Site of Nature Conservation Importance
	Green wedges
	Open Space
	Biodiversity data
	Site allocations
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	Landscape zones/ sub Landscape Character Areas
	Green wedges
	Conservation Areas
	Open Space
Ordnance Survey	Ordnance Survey 1: 50k
	Ordnance Survey 1: 25k
	Ordnance Survey 1: 10k
Sustrans	National and regional cycle routes

