

Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership



Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan
Publication Stage Representation Form

Ref:
(For official use only)

Please return by 5pm Monday 16th December 2024

You are advised to read the associated Guidance Notes

Part A – Your contact details (need only be completed once)

Personal Details

Agent's Details (if applicable)

Title	<input type="text"/>	Mr
First Name	<input type="text"/>	Mark
Last Name	<input type="text"/>	Flatman
Job Title (where relevant)	<input type="text"/>	Managing Director
Organisation (where relevant)	Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd	iPlan Solutions Ltd
Address	C/O Agent	<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E-mail Address	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Which council area(s) do you live in and/or have an interest in? Please tick.

- Broxtowe
- Gedling
- Nottingham City
- Rushcliffe



Part B – Your representation(s)

(Please use a separate form for each policy/site you are commenting on)
(You are advised to read the Guidance Notes)

1) To which part of the Strategic Plan does this representation relate?

Policy

Policy 22

Paragraph

3.22.6

Other

2) Do you consider the Strategic Plan:

a) is legally compliant

Yes

No

b) is sound

Yes

No

c) complies with the
Duty to Co-operate

Yes

No

3) Please give details of why you consider the Strategic Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Strategic Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please use this box to set out your comments.

Please see attached.

See also submitted FPCR Green Belt Landscape and Visual Appraisal

(Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary)

4) What changes do you suggest to make the Strategic Plan legally compliant, sound or meet the duty to co-operate? Please be as precise as possible.

Please see attached.

(Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary)

Please note: In your representation you should succinctly provide all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions. **After this stage, further submissions may only be made if invited by the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he or she identifies for examination.**

5) If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in the examination hearing session(s)?



No, I do not wish to participate in the hearing session(s)



Yes, I wish to participate in the hearing session(s)

6) If you have answered **Yes**, why do you feel it is necessary to participate in the examination hearing session(s)?

N/A

(Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary)

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate in hearing session(s). You may be asked to confirm your wish to participate when the Inspector has identified the matters and issues for examination.

7) Please tick here if you do **not** wish to be notified about the submission for independent examination, the publication of the Planning Inspectorate's

recommendations and the adoption of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan:

Please return completed forms by 5pm on Monday 16th December 2024:

By email: contact@gnplan.org.uk

By post:

Planning Policy and Research Team,
Nottingham City Council, Loxley
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For assistance or more information:

Visit our website:

<https://www.gnplan.org.uk/consultations/>

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Nottingham City Council: 0115 876 4594
Rushcliffe Borough Council: 0115 981 9911

Data Protection

The comments you submit will be used to inform the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan process and will be held for the lifetime of the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan. Please note that your comments will not be treated as confidential and will be made available for public inspection. However, contact details will not be made public and will not be passed to external parties, apart from the Inspector, without permission.

Please tick to confirm you are happy for your comments to be made public

✓

Privacy Notice

By responding to the consultation, you will be added onto our joint consultation database and we will notify you when there is an update to the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan. The council(s) that you have selected will also notify you when they are consulting on their own planning policy documents. Further details are provided in our privacy policy which is available at www.gedling.gov.uk/jointprivacynotice

Please tick to confirm you have read and understood the privacy notice

✓

Comments that are submitted without the above boxes being ticked will be treated anonymously and not added to our database

Response to Regulation 19 Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Consultation 2024

Submitted on Behalf of Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

Objection to Policy 22, Paragraph 3.22.6

Reason for Plan Unsoundness

1. Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd is pleased to note and supports that its 1.97ha of previously developed land immediately adjacent to the A6096, Gin Close Way, Awsworth is included within the red-edged site boundary that is subject to proposed Policy 22: Strategic Allocation Former Bennerley Coal Disposal Point. It supports the overall proposal of Policy 22.
2. However, it notes that;
 - i) **Policy 22 (2) A.1** allocates some **61 ha of logistics development** within class B8 storage and distribution use is proposed with a minimum unit size of 9000 m².
 - ii) **The area subject to this proposed logistics development allocation is shaded blue on the “Figure 22.1 Bennerley – Indicative Plan.”**
 - iii) **Justification Text Paragraph 3.22.6** states that **“the allocation includes 61ha of land being removed from the Green Belt.”**
3. The implication arising from this combined juxtaposition is that the 61ha of land to be removed from the Green Belt is also the same 61ha of land that is proposed for logistics development and shaded blue within the Figure 22.1 indicative plan.
4. The 1.97ha area of land owned by Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd is currently designated as Green Belt and is shown shaded white within Figure 22.1. The consequential interpretation would appear to be that Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (GNPP) is not proposing to remove the Green Belt designation from the land owned by Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd. Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd objects most strenuously to its land remaining in Green Belt and submit that its land should also be expressly removed from the Green Belt and this be made unambiguous and unequivocal within the plan.
5. The Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd land in its entirety has been in continuous employment use since 1946. It is all in current employment generating use with 3 businesses and associated buildings situated upon it. This land It is effectively sandwiched between the proposed Policy 22 logistics development site that is to be removed from the Green Belt, the A6096 and further employment generating uses on the

opposite southern side of Gin Close Way which are themselves not located within the Green Belt.

6. The aerial photograph at Figure 1, confirms the developed state of the Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments land.



Fig 1: Aerial Photograph of Land owned by Foulds Investments Ltd

7. Within the 2019 adopted Broxtowe LP Pt2, both the Foulds Investment Ltd land and that on the opposite eastern side of the A6096 are both designated under Policy 9 as *“Retention of Good Quality Existing Employment Sites”*, see extract below from the LP Proposals Map:

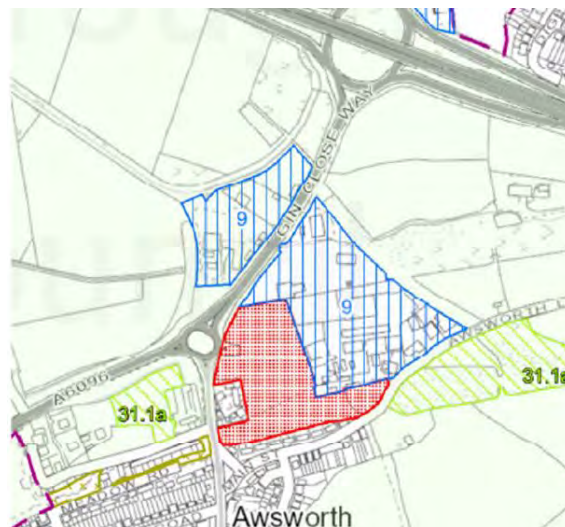


Fig 2: Extract from 2019 Adopted Broxtowe Pt 2 LP Proposals Map

8. The substantive planning policy difference between these 2 parcels of existing good quality employment land allocated within the LP, however, is that the land on the southern side of Gin Close Way is not designated as Green Belt whereas the land owned by Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd on the north side of Gin Close Way is subject to a Green Belt designation and the constraints that this imposes.
9. This Green Belt designation severely inhibits the range of potential employment generating uses and potential building heights that could be achieved on the land and is a significant planning impediment to maximising the development potential of this previously developed land.
10. The Greater Nottingham Planning Partnership (GNPP) is now proposing to remove 61Ha of adjoining land from the Green Belt situated immediately to the west and north of the Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments Land.
11. Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments support the development of the rail-connected logistics site in principle, but are most concerned because the wording of the Policy 22 2.A.1 and Justification Text at paragraph 3.22.6, as currently written, ambiguously implies in combination that the land owned by Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments would nevertheless continue to remain subject to Green Belt designation.
12. Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments Ltd submits that this literal interpretation of Policy 22 2.A.1, when considered in combination with the paragraph 3.22.6 Justification Text and Indicative Plan at Figure 22.1 creates a wholly illogical, unsound and unjustified planning position for the Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments land.
13. The Green Belt Assessment prepared by FPCR in 2010, and which has been submitted to Broxtowe BC in response to numerous planning policy consultations and planning application in the intervening years confirms that the Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments land serves absolutely no Green Belt function whatsoever, see paragraph 5.11. **For completeness, a further copy of this Green Belt Assessment is submitted with this Regulation 19 consultation response**, but of course those findings confirming no Green Belt justification are now further magnified in the context of the adjacent proposed Policy 22 rail-connected logistics site.
14. The anomalous existing position of the Whitehead (Concrete) and Foulds Investments land in not fulfilling any of the Green Belt functions will be further acutely highlighted once the adjoining land to the north and west is released from the Green Belt as proposed at paragraph 3.22.6 of the Justifications Text to enable that land to fulfil the Policy 22 proposal designation.

Requested Change to the Plan Text

15. To avoid potential ambiguity, and for the purpose of clarity in order to make the plan “Sound”, it is requested that amendment be made to the Justification Text of paragraph 3.22.6 to unambiguously expressly clarify that the parcel of land owned by the Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd shown on Figure 22.1 coloured white is also removed from Green Belt designation.

16. It is requested that paragraph 3.22.6 be amended to read as follows;

“The allocation includes 61ha of land for logistics development together with additional adjacent land that is currently subject to existing development within the red edged site boundary being removed from the Green Belt. Exceptional circumstances apply to justify the changes to the Green Belt boundaries. A significant need for logistics development, together with complementary last mile distribution facilities for sub-regional and local distribution has been identified and this need cannot be met through a site outside of the Green Belt. The site includes areas of previously-developed land and has a rail connection. It is therefore considered preferable to other Green Belt sites. The site has been selected following joint evidence and collaborative work with adjoining authorities.”

17. Given the small 1.97ha size of the Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments Ltd site, it is submitted that it not appropriate that it form part of the blue-coloured Logistics Development site itself and be subject to those associated minimum unit size provisions from Policy 22. Consequently, it is requested that the land should continue to be shaded white within Figure 22.1 and remain located within the red edged site boundary as currently shown on the Indicative Plan. It is intended by the owners that it be redeveloped to serve smaller scale last mile distribution facilities for sub-regional and local distribution in order to provide facilities complementary to the primary rail connected logistics development proposal.

Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd and Foulds Investments
Ltd



LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

April 2010

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 FPCR Ltd was commissioned in March 2010 to carry out a landscape and visual assessment of land at Gin Close Way, Awsworth. The main objective of the study was to assess the contribution of the site in its current use to the Green Belt and the comparative impact of the employment use to the Green Belt. As part of the study the openness and amenity value of the site in relation to the objectives of a Green Belt designation as set out in PPG2 is considered.

1.2 The site lies at the northern edge of Awsworth and has operated as a concrete manufacturing works since 1949 (see Figure 1 Location Plan). The site contains a number of industrial buildings and storage areas for the manufactured products and for palette storage (see Figure 2 Site Plan). It is understood that the site has a manufacturing history that dates back to 1927.

1.3 FPCR Ltd is a multi disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 50 years experience of architecture, landscape, ecology, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

Methodology

1.4 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the site has been conducted, encompassing the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002, and "Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Scotland" (LCA) published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002.

1.5 The approach combines information and desktop reviews with on-site surveys and appraisals. The report provides an assessment of the principle landscape and visual issues, relating to the site and has been based on a combination of site based assessment and information review. The area has been assessed in terms of landscape character and sensitivity and visual amenity and sensitivity.

1.6 The assessment considers the potential for future development within the site and the likely resultant landscape and visual effects. As part of the assessment

current published Landscape Character Assessment documents and landscape related Planning Policy applicable to the site has also been reviewed.

1.7 At this stage, the desktop reviews have considered the following studies and documents:

- **Countryside Agency – Character Map of England.**
- **The East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment, consultation draft August 2009**
- **Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment, June 2009**
- **Planning Policy Guidance Note 2, Green Belts**
- **The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8), published March 2009**
- **6Cs Growth Point Green Infrastructure Strategy Consultation Draft, Autumn 2009**
- **Nottingham-Derby Green Belt Review, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Council, August 2006**
- **Greater Nottingham, Aligned Core Strategies, Option for Consultation 2010**
- **The Broxtowe Local Plan, 2004**

The relevant Countryside Agency and Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment landscape character information is included at Appendix A.

1.8 At this stage, the study only takes into account the information made available or sourced through the desk based review from a landscape and visual perspective. It does not include consideration of any other designated environmental areas and features or of any other potentially relevant environmental constraints such as flood risk, archaeology or ecology.

Landscape and Visual Assessment

1.9 All landscape and visual assessments are based upon a clearly defined purpose. This influences the scale and detail of the assessment and the types of judgements that are needed to inform decisions. The process comprises two key distinct stages:

- **Existing characteristics and sensitivity – which is concerned with identifying, classifying and describing areas of similar character and sensitivity.**
- **Making judgements – to inform particular decisions, which may use one or a combination of approaches; depending upon the purpose of the exercise.**

- 1.10 The site based assessment involves the recording of both objective descriptions and subjective impressions of the landscape, as well as details of the existing landscape condition and the most appropriate management strategy to be adopted. The latter recognises that some areas are worthy of conservation and maintenance of existing landscape character, whereas others would benefit from some enhancement measures or a more significant restoration strategy.
- 1.11 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) states;
“Landscape impact assessments, in common with any assessment of environmental effects, include a combination of objective and subjective judgements, and it is therefore important that a structured and consistent approach is used. It is necessary to differentiate between judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (as in the assessment of landscape value) from those that are normally more objective and quantifiable”
- 1.12 The GLVIA also states;
“Landscape and visual assessments are separate, although linked, procedures. The landscape baseline, its analysis and the assessment of landscape effects all contribute to the baseline for visual assessment studies. The assessment of the potential effect on the landscape is carried out as an effect on an environmental resource, i.e. the landscape. Visual effects are assessed as one of the interrelated effects on population”.
- 1.13 Landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape. The description and analysis of effects on a landscape resource relies on the adoption of certain basic principles about the positive (or beneficial) and negative (or adverse) effects of change in the landscape. Due to the inherently dynamic nature of the landscape, change arising from a development may not necessarily be significant.
- 1.14 Landscape Assessments are used to aid decisions about the ability of an area to accommodate change, often through the introduction of new development but also through other land use and land cover changes including woodland planting. It is in these circumstances that judgements should be based upon an understanding of the ability of the landscape to accommodate this change without unnecessary significant effects. Creation of new landscape character may also be appropriate in some circumstances.

1.15 Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity. The extent to which the site is visible from the surrounding area has been broadly determined in conjunction with the level or number of receptors (properties, public footpaths, roads etc) with views to parts or all of the site area.

2.0 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

2.1 The combining facets of a landscape set one area apart from those adjacent to it and make its character unique to the people who both live in or visit the area. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a process of characterising a landscape, and the consideration of effects on landscape character. Published landscape character assessments have been prepared at a National, Regional and County scale, the relevance of these documents to the site and its landscape context is reviewed below. Relevant extracts of these documents are included at Appendix A.

Countryside Agency Character Map of England

2.2 The Countryside Character Initiative, led by the former Countryside Agency, mapped England into 159 separate, distinctive character areas on a regional scale. The site falls within the 'Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield' Character Area (No.38), and this describes the very broad landscape context and character of the wide geographic area within which Awsworth and its surroundings falls.

This is a large landscape area which embraces the major industrial towns and cities as well as a substantial slice of countryside and the villages of the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfields. It is generally defined by shallow Coal Measures as the underlying bedrock and is bounded by the Peak District and the woollen towns of the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe to the west, by the Pennine Dales Fringe to the north and by the Southern Magnesian Limestone escarpment to the east.

2.3 The key characteristics of the character area are;

- *Widespread evidence of industrial activity including mine buildings, former spoil tips and iron and steel plants.*
- *Complex mix of built-up areas, industrial land, dereliction and farmed open country.*
- *Many areas affected by urban fringe pressures creating fragmented and downgraded landscapes.*
- *Substantial areas of intact agricultural land in both arable and pastoral use.*
- *Small, fragmented remnants of pre-industrial landscape and semi-natural vegetation, including many areas of woodland, river valley habitats, subsidence flashes and other relict habitats.*
- *Ever-present urban influences from major cities, smaller industrial towns and mining villages.*
- *Widespread influence of transport routes, including canal, road (M1, M62) and rail, with ribbon developments emphasising the urban influence in the landscape.*
- *Rolling landforms with hills, escarpments and broad valleys.*
- *Local variation in landscape character reflecting variations in underlying geology.*

- *Strong cultural identity arising from history of coal mining and other heavy industry.*

2.4 Under the heading 'The Changing Countryside' the following of relevance to the site is described for this character area;

- *...Large-scale programmes of reclamation of coal spoil heaps and other industrial dereliction has created a greener appearance and clear evidence of a new generation of reclaimed landscapes. Many areas of woodland have, for example, been planted in the past ten years. Through a heightened awareness of the value of woodlands in the landscape and the commitment of Government and a wide range of groups and agencies, this trend is accelerating in areas such as the South Yorkshire Forest, between Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley, and the Greenwood Community Forest around Nottingham.*
- *As a densely settled landscape, including a number of major towns and cities, there are continuing pressures for development of housing, commerce and industry. The transport network has also been developed and improved over the years including the construction of several major motorways and trunk roads through the area. Improvements in transport networks continue and new or improved roads themselves generate further demand for development especially at main junctions. All the development has led to a significant loss of tranquillity throughout the area and the development pressure will undoubtedly continue.*
- *There are significant urban fringe pressures affecting the countryside around towns and cities. This, along with fragmentation of viable holdings, makes farming difficult and the pressures are evident in occasional poor standards of maintenance, for example of field boundaries, and poor quality pasture used for horse grazing. Demands for recreation and access are high which can create opportunities but may also bring additional problems for farmers. Some rural buildings are being sold off, usually for conversion to residential use, which results in a degree of suburbanisation of the countryside.*

2.5 The following recommendations are made by the former Countryside Agency under the heading 'Shaping the Future';

- *Reclamation of derelict sites will continue and provides significant opportunities for enhancing or creating both landscape and wildlife habitats. Care is needed to ensure that the wealth of natural regeneration that has spontaneously developed on many post-industrial sites, often over a varied topography of intimate scale and with rich historical associations, is fully appreciated and enhanced rather than erased by reclamation.*
- *The enormous potential for enhancing this landscape by, for example, significant woodland planting has already been recognised and there are established Community Forest initiatives near Sheffield and Nottingham and similar programmes around Leeds and in east Derbyshire and Sherwood. In the Community Forests a rich mosaic of land uses will be created, restoring dereliction and creating sites for sport and recreation, habitats for wildlife and opportunities for outdoor education to improve the quality of life for all. There may be opportunities for this sort of approach to be applied in other parts of the area.*
- *Recreation offers scope to enhance the landscape and to bring degraded land back into positive management. Creation of new, formal, access opportunities, nature conservation features and facilities such as golf courses and other visitor attractions can assist in renewing the landscape in appropriate locations.*

- *A number of major initiatives are already underway in the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Yorkshire Coalfield landscape aimed at environmental improvement and enhanced opportunities for enjoyment. These build on the environmental work of the local authorities over the past 20 years or so. In addition to the activity in the Community Forests referred to above, examples include Groundwork initiatives and the East Derbyshire Woodlands Project. Greater co-ordination between different schemes and the economic and social development process may assist the process of renewal in the future...*

2.6 Given that the Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) assessment covers an extensive area stretching from the north western edge of Nottingham in the south to just beyond Leeds in the north, the description and details contained therein only describes the very broad landscape context for Awsworth. There are no points or details included within this assessment that relate more specifically to the more immediate landscape context of Awsworth or to the site itself.

The East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment, consultation draft August 2009

2.7 Explanatory text on the Natural England website describes the purpose of this study;

The aim of the East Midlands Region Landscape Character Assessment (EMRLCA) is to increase understanding of the region's varied landscape, by identifying distinctive, rare or special characteristics.

EMRLCA presents objective, non-technical descriptions of each of the 31 regional landscape character types. It also reviews the forces currently acting to change the landscape; the implications of these changes and provides guidance to counter adverse impacts and promote positive change.

The innovative approach to this study has pioneered new methods of assessment and has been undertaken in line with the most up-to-date guidance and methodologies. The report and accompanying illustrations are intended to provide an accessible overview of the region's diverse landscape, as well as to inform strategic initiatives and decision making which may have an impact on the character and identity of our landscape. The assessment is anticipated to act as a stimulus for a range of exciting initiatives and to raise awareness of environmental issues, helping decision-makers and stakeholders to demand higher standards of design and development across the region in the future.

2.8 In this Landscape Character Assessment the site lies within Group 9: Coalfields and 9a: Settled Coalfield Farmland. The key characteristics for this area are:

- *Undulating landform of low hills and ridges, and shallow valleys with local variations reflecting the differing characteristics of the underlying Coal Measures geology;*

- Evidence of past and present exploitation of area with former mine sites, prominent pit heaps, clay pits, disused railway lines, tramways, canals and opencast coal and clay working areas;
- Substantial areas of intact agricultural land with mixed farming predominating, varied field sizes and hedgerows but with localised areas of small fields and dense hedgerows;
- Generally low woodland cover with scattered, small broadleaved woodlands, copses and linear tree-belts and some relict ancient semi-natural woodlands;
- Heathy vegetation associated with steeper slopes and uncultivated land;
- Small towns, villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads constructed from local Coal Measures sandstone, with some villages expanded as sprawling mining settlements with red brick former mining terraces and ribbon development;
- Network of narrow winding lanes between urban areas;
- Areas of juvenile and emerging landscape structure with new landforms and immature woodlands and plantations associated with the restoration of former mining areas; and
- Strong cultural identity and industrial archaeological interest associated with history of coal mining.

2.9 Within the document the following applicable observations and recommendations made for the character area are of relevance to the site and its landscape context;

Built Development

Forces for Change - The Settled Coalfield Farmlands is a densely settled landscape, with many of its cities and towns rapidly expanding during industrial expansion in the 19th century. Development pressure continues today, with demand for housing, commerce and industry on the fringes of larger towns, creating visual intrusion and resulting in the loss of remaining rural areas. Modern development is also affecting smaller settlements, with new residential development on the village margins, creating a new urban edge to the countryside. There is also proliferation of smaller, residential development along arterial roads, reducing the sense.

Shaping the Future Landscape - The aim should be to manage growth, ensuring development is appropriate in terms of type, scale and location and considers the visual impact of any new development. Innovative architectural solutions that take inspiration from local distinctiveness and character whilst utilising ecofriendly and high quality design, and planting of new trees around settlement fringes should also be encouraged, helping to integrate new development into the landscape. In more urban areas, planning guidance to resist settlement coalescence may be appropriate, ensuring strategic gaps between main towns and satellite settlements are maintained. In more rural areas, Village Design Statements may be appropriate, ensuring appropriate use of vernacular styles and building materials.

Forestry and Woodland

Forces for Change - Woodland forms a significant component of this landscape, with large and medium woodlands associated and large-scale reclamation programmes of former coalfields. Indeed, the southern Settled Coalfield Farmlands, around Swadlincote, has seen a significant increase in woodland coverage as a consequence of the National Forest programme. New woodland

planting would therefore be appropriate, helping to increase the overall woodland coverage in the region and restore derelict and contaminated land.

Shaping the Future Landscape - The aim should be to plan new woodland around key settlements and other suitable locations, creating sites for recreation, education, and nature conservation. The National Forest programme will continue to guide afforestation across the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield. Consideration should also be given to the management of existing trees and woodland, encouraging new planting to ensure a varied age structure and to create woodland edge habitats, which along with the restoration of hedgerows, will help create a mixed pattern of land use and enhance biodiversity.

- 2.10 The East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment remains broad brush. A further published Landscape Character Assessment applicable to the site has been prepared at County level and provides a finer grain of detail;

Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment, June 2009

- 2.11 The first paragraph within the Executive Summary states *“This study has looked at the landscape of Greater Nottingham and will provide part of the evidence base for the local authorities Local Development Frameworks (LDF). It will be used by the planning authorities to aid development control decisions on planning applications and to guide landscape enhancement where funding and opportunities allow”.*

- 2.12 The site lies at the north western corner of the Draft Policy Zone (DPZ) NC02: Babbington Rolling Farmland, and adjacent to DPZ NC01: Erewash River Corridor. The characteristic features of NC02, below, are more applicable to the higher land east and south of Awsworth and the site;

Characteristic Features

- *landform is varied with areas of strongly undulating to gently rolling landscape*
- *The disused Nottingham Canal to the west of the area forms a principal watercourse. Although no longer navigable, the watercourse is used as recreational resource with opportunities for fishing, walking and experiencing wildlife.*
- *There are several small brooks and ditches within the area which drain towards the Nottingham Canal and the River Erewash*
- *The area has a predominantly rural character*
- *Fields are predominantly medium sized arable fields. The historic field pattern has mostly been modified or modernised in this area, although there are some pockets of fields with historic characteristics still evident around Cossall*
- *Smaller fields can be found clustered around traditional settlements such as Cossall and Babbington; these tend to be more frequently used for grazing of livestock including horses*
- *Fields are generally regular in shape but there are occurrences of irregular boundaries particularly along the watercourses where these become more sinuous*

- Arable fields are bounded by generally well maintained hedgerows although fragmentation has occurred within the larger fields to the south. Some areas used for horse grazing have been fenced
- The area has the perception of being well wooded due to the presence of blocks of woodland, smaller copses and a high number of hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- There are areas of historic woodland such as Grange Wood and Oldmoor Wood
- A network of narrow winding lanes bordered by intact hedgerows remains; these are remnants of the historic more dispersed rural settlement pattern
- Small isolated settlements such as Cossall have retained their original rural settlement pattern with distinctive centres, brick built farmsteads and traditional churches
- The central area of the DPZ is largely undeveloped rolling farmland characterised by large isolated farmsteads. Farmsteads are characterised by large outbuildings
- There are long open views over the rolling landscape to wooded horizons, however in some areas views are enclosed by these woodlands. Views to the west of the area are across the Erewash valley towards the adjacent settlement of Ilkeston where the church tower is prominent
- The M1 motorway is an urbanising feature which cuts northeast to southwest across the character area. Often sat within a cutting, views of it are limited to a few locations where the carriageway is visible. Noise from the motorway is apparent.

2.13 For DPZ NC02 the following observations and recommendations are made within the report;

The condition of the landscape is MODERATE. The landscape is well managed through agricultural practices although there are isolated areas where agricultural management has resulted in the loss of landscape features such as hedgerows. The woodland blocks are distinctive features and are well managed. The former Nottingham Canal is closed to boating traffic but is managed as a nature reserve and linear recreational facility.

The DPZ has long views over the rolling farmland landscape to wooded horizons. Views from the east of the area are over the Erewash valley towards the settlement of Ilkeston which rises on the valley slopes. Views to the west are towards the urban edge of Nottingham. Glimpses of the M1 can be seen throughout the DPZ where the road emerges from the cutting and has limited woodland screening. Views into the area can be seen from adjacent urban settlements. The strength of the character is considered to be STRONG. The canal, areas of historic woodland and rural settlements of Cossall and Babbington are strong features. The agricultural landscape is a common feature across the area and, the woodland blocks add interest and strengthen the sense of place. Overall there are several features which make the area distinctive, however, the M1 interrupts the overall traditional pattern of the landscape cutting across fields and woodlands. Although generally well screened there are areas where it is visible and the noise of the traffic can be clearly heard.

Landscape actions

Landscape features

- *Conserve and enhance the historic woodland through management to retain its landscape value*

- *Enhance the field pattern of the areas of large scale agriculture by replacing areas of lost hedgerow and new hedgerow trees*
- *Enhance screening of the M1 by planting woodland belts to reduce views of the motorway*
- *Establish a programme of replacement and management of hedgerow trees*
- *Conserve areas of old enclosure such as those around Cossall*
Built form
- *Conserve the historic character of the traditional rural settlements and isolated farmsteads*
- *New large agricultural barns should be minimised; proposals should include planting to reduce their scale prominence in the landscape*
- *Protect the rural character of the area by minimising the visual effect of urban expansion from surrounding settlements including Nottingham City by replicating traditional dispersed edges of rural settlements Cossall, undertaking planting on the urban boundary and including retention or creation of traditional pastoral fields close to settlements*
Other development/ structures in the landscape
- *Minimise the effect of any further widening activities along the M1 by small scale planting of woodlands*

2.14 The characteristic features of the adjacent DPZ NC01, which covers the area west of the site appear to be more applicable to the immediate landscape context of the site;

- *Narrow low alluvial floodplain lying in a broad valley*
- *The underlying geology comprises shales and layers of sandstone alternating with seams of coal. The river is set within a relatively deep cut valley along the crest of a local anticline in the underlying coal measures which exposed coal seams along the valley sides. The profitable nature of these seams resulted in significant mining activity in the area*
- *The meandering river channel of the Erewash is not visually prominent although the effects of its presence are clearly seen in the landscape e.g. wetland habitats and marginal bank side vegetation*
- *Subsidence from coal has led to the formation of several shallow lakes along the river corridor which are largely open although scrub woodland is beginning to establish along the banks*
- *The Erewash Canal is parallel to the western boundary of the DPZ, originally created to give access to wider markets for coal and textiles*
- *Urban fringe character which is strongly influenced by surrounding built and industrial development along the valley sides. In certain locations, the river is heavily enclosed by urban development*
- *Low lying floodplain pasture is frequently used as grazing meadow primarily for horses and cattle*
- *Arable farming is evident on the valley slopes. Where field boundaries are present these are mainly formed by well managed hedgerows. Field boundaries are often irregular due to influence from the meandering river corridor*
- *Typical wetland habitats such as reeds, rushes, ponds and open water are characteristic features*
- *Native woodland dominated by wet woodland species such as alder and willow is characteristic of the area. Young regeneration scrub is also common*
- *Belts of linear woodland are often used on the valley sides and along the railway corridor to screen and filter views of transport infrastructure, industry, large warehouses and residential expansion*

- A railway line runs along the length of the river corridor on a raised embankment
- There are several sewage treatment plants situated within the DPZ which are visible above boundary vegetation
- A large viaduct to the west of Awsworth along the line of a disused railway line provides a historic remnant of the area's industrial past and is prominent in the DPZ

2.15 For character area DPZ NC01 the following observations and recommendations are made within the report;

The landscape condition is MODERATE. There is evidence of management of the landscape with consideration towards the sensitive ecological habitats which have a naturalistic appearance. The various urban influences surrounding and within the river corridor e.g. sewage treatment works also have an effect on the overall perception of the landscape.

The strength of character of this landscape area is STRONG. This DPZ is a narrow alluvial floodplain lying in a broader valley associated with the River Erewash. The sloping sides of the valley and enclosed nature of views are strong characterising features. Woodland filters views along the valley floor. Views to the surrounding urban areas are visible from the valley, these settlements also provide views into the area from towns such as Ilkeston situated on the valley sides. There are views into the area from the elevated Nottingham Canal. Further glimpses can also be seen when crossing over bridges spanning the valley. The wetland habitats and scrub woodland are distinctive features of the valley floor. Features associated with former industrial use, such as the viaduct, also give a strong sense of place.

Landscape Actions

Landscape features

- *Conserve the distinctive flood plain character of the river valley*
- *Conserve and enhance the enclosed feel of the river corridor along the valley sides*
- *Conserve the predominantly pasture grazing on the valley floor*
- *Conserve and enhance the long views along the valley by managing the distribution of woodland to ensure views are not obscured*
- *Conserve and enhance the diversity of wetland habitats which add visual interest to the area*
- *Conserve and enhance the areas of linear woodland and riparian vegetation along the river corridor*

Built form

- *Ensure that further built development does not affect the character of the valley and suitable mitigations measures are put in place for larger developments, such as woodland planting to soften and screen it*
- *Other development/ structures in the landscape*
- *Conserve historic features associated with the former use of the area such as the viaduct railway bridge near Awsworth.*

2.16 The overall strategy for both DPZ's is to 'Conserve and Enhance'.

2.17 Although the assessment of Nottinghamshire's Landscape Character provides a further and relatively more detailed tier of assessment to that contained within

the Natural England Character Assessments, it still remains broad and most applicable to the wider landscape context of Awsworth.

Local Landscape Character

2.18 A preliminary assessment of local landscape character has been carried out, using field evaluation and analysis of maps and other published data based on guidance by Natural England. Local landscape character is described below and should be read in conjunction with the Aerial Photograph (Figure 3) and the Landscape and Visual Appraisal Plan (Figure 4). This provides a finer level of assessment than those included within the Character Map of England and the Nottinghamshire Landscape Character Assessment.

2.19 The site is located at the northern edge of Awsworth, adjacent to the A6096 and just to the south of the roundabout connection with the A610. There are a number of settlements within the surrounding area. Kimberley and Eastwood lie to the north of the A610 and Ilkeston lies some distance to the southwest. The Erewash Valley and the A610 physically separate the settlements, with the landscape between containing a good network of tall hedgerows, small woodland blocks and tree belts. Physically the site forms part of the settlement of Awsworth and is separated from the adjacent Erewash Valley landscape by woodland and tree belts. The industrial buildings on the site, combined with the petrol station and industry across the road, form the gateway to Awsworth to traffic arriving from the A610.

2.20 The wider landscape context of the site can be divided into two landscape character areas;

1. The Erewash Valley – this comprises a flat area of land, which includes various sized arable fields enclosed by a network of tall neatly cut hedgerows, tree belts and woodland. Several industrial areas (including the site) are largely contained by woodland and trees at the edge of this landscape, and at the edges of this area the settlements of Kimberley, Eastwood, Ilkeston and Awsworth are located on rising land. A large scale sewage works lies centrally within this area, it is partially contained by woodland planting, however the large structures protrude above the woodland and form a dominant feature within the landscape. To the south the viaduct between Ilkeston and Awsworth provides another landscape feature. The disused Nottingham Canal is a discrete feature adjacent to the

A6096 to the south of the site. There is a network of public rights of way and some urban fringe recreational uses but no discernible residential settlement.

2. Babbington Undulating Farmland – away from the River Erewash, land begins to rise through Awsworth and continues rising beyond to the east across open farmland. Within this landscape there are increasingly elevated views across the valley from predominantly pastoral fields, which are contained by a network of predominantly tall and wide overgrown hedged fields with linked woodland blocks and copses. The small settlement of Babbington lies within this rural landscape and is largely contained by small woodland areas and tree belts. A network of rights of way cross this landscape. There are a number of farmsteads within this landscape.

2.21 These character areas have been assessed as **moderate landscape sensitivity**. They contain a good and intact network of hedgerows and woodland within relatively rural settings, however both landscapes lie within the context of urban settlement areas and the presence of these has a bearing on the character of these areas.

2.22 The character of the site itself is industrial. There are a number of industrial buildings on the site ranging in size from small buildings to large warehouses. The topographical survey indicates that these buildings are between three and six metres high (see Figure 2 Site Plan). The two largest buildings are approximately five and six metres high respectively. The remainder of the site comprises hard standing used for storage of manufactured goods and palettes. There are a number of low concrete walls on the site which may be foundations of older buildings. There are several areas of naturally regenerated woodland within the site; the topographical survey indicates that these are between 8 and 17metres high. The site is enclosed by perimeter palisade fencing, and along the northern boundary there is a substantial tree belt (indicated as around 15metres high), Gilt Brook and a track (public footpath). The site is clearly visible from the adjacent main road, separated from the Erewash Valley by trees and woodland it is readily perceived as part of the Awsworth settlement area. The site has been assessed as **low landscape sensitivity**.

Topography

- 2.23 The River Erewash flows from north to south, and is located over 1km to the west of the site. A fairly broad flat floodplain follows the course of the river. At its nearest point to the site the river lies at around 50metres AOD. Land rises gradually from here to around 60-65metres within the site. Generally beyond the 60metre line the landform steepens both to the east and west of the river, rising to around 135m above Babbington to the east and a similar level to the northeast above Kimberley. To the north the settled slopes of Eastwood rise to around 110m AOD and to the west of the Erewash, residential areas of Cotmanay (Ilkeston) rise to around 90metres AOD.
- 2.24 The topography of the site itself is very flat, lying between around 60 and 61metres AOD (as illustrated at Figure 2 the Site Plan). The Gilt Brook follows the northern boundary within a shallow but wide open ditch. A second ditch, also identified as the Gilt Brook on the OS plan, appears to pass under the site within culvert from the opposite side of the main road, adjacent to the petrol station, reappearing to the west of the site and draining towards the River Erewash.

3.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

3.1 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the site. This assessment has sought to establish the visibility of the site from surrounding receptors and locations and has been undertaken during the winter months in order to assess the site when it is potentially most visible. A baseline analysis of the available views is set out below and is supported by a series of photo viewpoints (Figure 5). An assessment of the potential visual effects of development is considered in Section 5.0.

3.2 Viewpoints 1 - 3

These photographs are taken from within the site. They illustrate the current use of the site, with numerous buildings and large areas of hard standing used for storage. The site is well contained by peripheral trees and maturing colonised areas of scrub and trees within the site. There are gaps within the peripheral vegetation where properties on the nearby hillside at Kimberley are visible to the north and more distantly to the south properties can be seen on the hillside at Ilkeston over a kilometre away. Industrial buildings within Awsworth, and the petrol station are also visible adjacent to the site. Ikea at Giltbrook is just discernible through the winter vegetation.

3.3 Viewpoint 4:

The Gilt Brook adjacent to the site forms part of the strategic Green Infrastructure (GI) within the area, the photograph shows the security fencing around the site adjacent to the Brook and the existing public access provision from the northern edge of Awsworth.

3.4 Viewpoint 5:

Taken from the A6096 this viewpoint illustrates the current gateway view to Awsworth when approaching from the A610 and settlements to the north. The industrial buildings and storage areas of the site are clearly visible beyond security fencing. Combined with the industry and the petrol station across the road the area is clearly urban in character.

3.5 Viewpoint 6:

In views from the southern edge of the site at the roundabout on the A6096 the site is well screened by trees, buildings on the site are just visible through the

winter vegetation. The retail park at Giltbrook, the sewage works and distant settlement at Ilkeston are visible within the wider landscape, filtered by trees.

3.6 **Viewpoint 7:**

Taken from the elevated dismantled rail line at the north eastern edge of Awsworth, there is an elevated view across the industrial areas of northern Awsworth. Buildings within the site are just visible to the right of the conifer tree belt and form part of the larger group of industrial buildings. Beyond, trees and woodland provide separation from the edge of Giltbrook.

3.7 **Viewpoint 8:**

From the elevated rural landscape to the south east the site and Awsworth are screened from view as a result of the landform and woodland cover. The adjacent settlement areas of Kimberley and Giltbrook lie on the opposite hillside.

3.8 **Viewpoint 9:**

On the lower slopes of the open landscape east of Awsworth there are views across parts of Awsworth. The winter tree and woodland cover screens and softens much of the industrial area at the north of Awsworth and separates it from the settlement of Giltbrook to the north. Buildings within the site are just discernible right of the conifer belt with taller industrial buildings adjacent within the foreground.

3.9 **Viewpoint 10:**

From the public footpath within the landscape south of the site, views towards the site are screened by substantial intervening hedgerows.

3.10 **Viewpoint 11:**

This view from between properties in Kimberley shows buildings on the site heavily filtered by the intervening trees in winter form, in summer they are likely to be screened from view. Properties within Awsworth on the slopes of the opposite hillside are visible.

Summary

3.11 The site appears to be well contained by trees and woodland, where it is visible it is observed as part of the adjacent industrial area of Awsworth. The photographs demonstrate that during the winter months trees and woodland within the site and its context provide a good level of screening and separation

from the wider countryside and nearby settlements, this benefit will increase further when vegetation is in leaf. Potential visual receptors include peripheral rights of way and scattered farmsteads within the elevated landscape to the east of Awsworth, properties on the facing slopes within Awsworth, Kimberley and over 1km away at Ilkeston, adjacent industry and the A6096.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 This section identifies the current relevant planning and legislative framework in the context of the landscape and visual issues. Not all policies are referred or listed in full but those of greatest landscape and visual relevance to the site are included.

National Context

4.2 National planning policy contains a number of relevant general policy references within the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG's) and Planning Policy Statement (PPS's) documents. The most relevant to landscape and visual issues are:

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belt

4.3 The site currently lies within Green Belt; however it is a historically developed site with such activity pre-dating green belt designation. Existing buildings and storage areas separate and distinguish it from the adjacent landscape and it has predominantly been utilised for concrete manufacturing since 1949. Therefore the site appears to be curiously at odds with the key aims and purposes of Green Belts as defined in PPG2;

Intentions of policy

1.4 The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. Green Belts can shape patterns of urban development at sub-regional and regional scale, and help to ensure that development occurs in locations allocated in development plans. They help to protect the countryside, be it in agricultural, forestry or other use. They can assist in moving towards more sustainable patterns of urban development...

Purposes of including land in Green Belts

1.5 There are five purposes of including land in Green Belts:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;*
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

4.4 The PPG sets out objectives for the role of land within Green Belts. The site is currently developed and arguably it does not fulfil any of these roles. Removal of the site from the Green Belt and redevelopment of it could assist in achieving a more effective economic use of this previously developed land.

4.5 As part of the LDF process the existing Green Belt is subject to review as set out within RSS Policy Three Cities SRS2. An initial Green Belt Review has been undertaken and is considered later within this chapter. Draft Policy 2(5) of the emerging greater Nottingham Core Strategy Option for Consultation requires more detailed Green Belt boundary reviews to form an integral component of the underlying assessment for the preparation of the Site Specific Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

4.6 The site has been assessed in landscape terms as being largely contained by woodland and visually forms part of the urban area of Awsworth. It is not perceived as part of the adjacent open countryside. Visually, the land does not appear 'open'.

4.7 The visual amenity of the Green Belt is specifically referenced at paragraph 3.15 of the PPG along with reference to community forest at paragraph 3.16;

3.15 The visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be injured by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt which, although they would not prejudice the purposes of including land in Green Belts, might be visually detrimental by reason of their siting, materials or design.

3.16 Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. An approved Community Forest plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies controlling development in Green Belts, and should respect the woodland setting.

4.8 The visual assessment illustrates that the site is well contained; from the limited number of viewpoints identified within this study, where existing buildings in the site are discernible they are already viewed as part of the Awsworth urban area. It is considered that redevelopment of the site would likely result in little discernible change to the visual amenities of the adjacent Green Belt. The site lies within the Greenwood Community Forest, opportunities for new peripheral planting could help assist to deliver the community forest objectives.

Regional Context

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8), published March 2009

4.9 The Regional Plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands for the period up to 2026. It replaces all policies in adopted Structure Plans. The Strategy states that the protection and enhancement of the region's

environment is vital to achieving sustainable development and ensuring a better quality of life for everyone. The 11 Core Objectives of the Regional Plan are set out in Policy 1. The Strategy includes policies on Environmental and Green Infrastructure (Policy 28), Regional Priorities for managing and increasing woodland cover (Policy 30) and Priorities for the Management and Enhancement of the Region's Landscape (Policy 31). Landscape character assessment is specifically referred to in policy 31;

Where not already in place, Local Authorities should prepare Landscape Character Assessments to inform the preparation of Local Development Frameworks. These can also be used to develop Supplementary Planning Documents.

4.10 A Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared for Nottinghamshire (2009) and is considered in Section 2.0 of this report.

4.11 With regard to the Nottingham Green Belt the Regional Plan recommends the following;

*Policy Three Cities SRS 2: Sub-Regional Priorities for Green Belt Areas
The principle of the Nottingham-Derby and Burton-Swadlincote Green Belts will be retained. However a comprehensive review of the most sustainable locations for growth within the Nottingham Core HMA and Hucknall will be required **urgently** to consider how to accommodate future growth requirements over at least the next 25 years. As this may include considering locations within the Green Belt, when implementing this review through their Local Development Documents, local planning authorities will have regard to:*

- *the level of growth proposed in Policy 13a and in Three Cities SRS Policy 3 identifying the locations for future development;*
- *sustainable development principles;*
- *the principles and purposes of including land in Green Belt set out in PPG2; and*
- *where changes to the Green Belt are proposed, the retention of existing, or creation of new, defensible boundaries based on natural features or other barriers such as major roads.*

This review will need to be done as part of the evidence base underpinning the next RSS review (my emphasis).

The Nottingham-Derby Green Belt Review, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils (August 2006)

4.12 Within the context of the site this review refers to the importance of the Green Belt within the Broxtowe area in preventing coalescence of the settlements, with particular reference to Eastwood and Kimberley, it is noted that *“the A610 forms a strong defensible green belt boundary to the south of these settlements”* and that *“the A610, Erewash Canal and River Erewash separates Eastwood from*

Heanor/Langley Mill in Amber Valley Borough". The following comments were also made within the report;

The green belt around Kimberley and Eastwood is considered to be important to prevent the coalescence of these settlements. It is also arguably important in protecting the special character of DH Lawrence country at Eastwood and the surrounding area at Awsworth and Cossall. Broxtowe Borough Council was not successful in expanding Watnall to the north at the last review and the inspector was also supportive of maintaining the green belt gap between these settlements and Awsworth to the south...

Although well located and not fundamentally constrained on the northern sides, it is likely to be difficult to change green belt boundaries in this area with implications for how much development can in future be accommodated...

The strategies do not rule out the possibility of needing to release green belt land in Broxtowe, Erewash and Gedling even though the green belt review indicates that the green belt is particularly important in these areas. Recognition of the importance of the green belt is however reflected in the relatively low housing provision levels in these areas.

Six C's Green Infrastructure Strategy, Baseline Information Review and Strategic GI Audit, June 2009

4.13 A Regional Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy document has been prepared for the 3 cities (Nottingham, Leicester and Derby) and their counties. This document makes the following recommendations for preparation of Core Strategies;

To support the priorities and strategic aspirations for the District/Borough set out in the proposed 6Cs GI Strategy, it is recommended that the vision, objectives, policies and key diagram within a Core Strategy should reflect the following requirements:

- *Make reference to the vision for GI in the 6Cs Growth Point within the Core Strategy vision.*
- *Include specific reference to securing a net gain in GI as a key objective of the Core Spatial Strategy.*
- *Identify Sub Regional GI Corridors, Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones and City-Scale GI Corridors on the key diagram.*
- *Include a specific GI policy that seeks to safeguard and enhance the role of Sub Regional GI Corridors, Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones and City-Scale GI Corridors in connecting locations of natural and cultural heritage, green spaces, biodiversity or other environmental interest in urban and countryside areas through:*
 - *not permitting development that compromises their integrity and therefore that of the overall GI Network*
 - *using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to their quality and robustness*
 - *investing in enhancement and restoration where the opportunities exist, and the creation of new resources where necessary.*
- *Include supporting text to the GI policy that highlights the opportunities provided by proposed growth to plan for a GI network, explaining that new development located within the Sub Regional Scale GI Network (the Sub Regional GI Corridors and the Urban Fringe GI Enhancement Zones) is expected to contribute towards enhancing it.*

- *Include reference in policy for Sustainable Urban Extensions to the need for masterplans to make provision for a network of green spaces linking the area to the wider GI Network.*

4.14 The report identifies the '*Erewash Strategic River Corridor*', adjacent to the site, and the '*Greenwood Community Forest*' covering the site as '*Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Corridors*' at Figure 4.1 of the document. These are described in the report as the backbone of the Strategic GI Network. The site also lies within an '*Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone*'; these zones have been defined in recognition of their strategic importance for the delivery of GI from a sub-regional perspective. A '*City-scale GI Corridor*' is defined for the area adjacent to the site and appears to follow the course of the Gilt Brook. Linked woodland is identified within the area as '*Combined Existing Strategic Green Infrastructure Assets*'.

County and Local Context

The Greater Nottingham Aligned Core Strategies, Option for Consultation 2010

4.15 The following policy is proposed for the Green Belt;

POLICY 2 THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

Development in Greater Nottingham will be located in accordance with the spatial strategy set out below, as illustrated on the key diagram...(the Key diagram is included at Figure 6)

5) The principle of the Green Belt will be retained, but its inner boundaries will be recast to accommodate the Sustainable Urban Extensions. More detailed Green Belt boundary review to allow for smaller scale development of towns and villages will follow in Site Specific Development Plan Documents.

Justification - 3.2.11 The Regional Plan enshrines the continuing principle of Green Belt, however, it also accepts that the existing tight boundaries need to change to accommodate major growth. Where land is currently excluded from the Green Belt to accommodate future growth, but is not required for development at this time, it will remain as 'white land'. In line with Planning Policy Guidance Note 2, only appropriate development will be permitted in the Green Belt.

4.16 Policies are proposed for Landscape Character and Green Infrastructure;

POLICY 17 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

New development should take account of landscape character. Where appropriate, planning applications should set out how the development responds to landscape features as set out in both the Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment and the Landscape Character of Derbyshire.

POLICY 15 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, PARKS & OPEN SPACE

1. A strategic approach to the delivery, protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure will be taken, through the establishment of a network of regional and sub-regional Green Infrastructure corridors and assets (as shown on the key diagram), particularly focusing on links between Greater Nottingham and Derby, together with corridors and assets of a more local level.

2. The approach will require that: -

a) Existing Green Infrastructure corridors and assets are protected and enhanced. Priority for the location of new or enhanced strategic green infrastructure will be given to locations for major residential development identified in Policy 2, the Strategic River Corridors of the Trent, Erewash, Soar and Leen rivers, canal corridors, the Greenwood Community Forest, and Urban Fringe areas.

b) Where new development has an adverse impact on Green Infrastructure corridors or assets, the need for and benefit of the development will be weighed against the harm caused. Alternative scheme designs that have no or little impact should be considered before mitigation is provided (either on site or off site as appropriate).

c) Major new developments should enhance the Strategic Green Infrastructure network (either onsite or off site or through contributions as appropriate).

d) Links to and between the Green Infrastructure network will be promoted to increase access, especially in areas of identified deficit, for recreational and non-motorised commuting purposes, and to allow for the migration of species.

3. New or enhanced Green Infrastructure corridors and assets should be multifunctional by requiring their design to take into account primary and secondary functions as follows:

a) Accessibility to Green Infrastructure corridors or assets and the countryside

b) Physical activity and well-being opportunities for local residents

c) Educational resource for local residents

d) Biodiversity opportunities

e) Tackling and adapting to climate change

4. Parks and Open Space will be protected from development. Exceptions may be made if the park or open space is shown to be underused or undervalued, the development is small part of the Green Infrastructure network and will not be detrimental to its function or the development is a use associated with parks and open spaces. Alternative scheme designs that have no or little impact should be considered before mitigation is provided (either onsite or off site or through contributions as appropriate).

4.17 With regard to Strategic Green Infrastructure, the site lies adjacent to the Erewash Strategic River sub-regional Green Infrastructure Corridor and within the Greenwood Community Forest GI area, in accordance with the 6Cs Regional GI document.

4.18 In summary, in terms of planning policy the following existing and emerging policies and strategies of relevance to the site and its context;

- The Nottingham Green Belt is currently under review as part of the LDF preparation process, with potential for boundaries to be redrawn;
- Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy has been incorporated within the proposed Core Strategy and identifies areas of strategic GI importance within

the site context, these strategic GI connections have the potential to be enhanced through redevelopment of the site;

- The site lies within the Greenwood Community Forest, any landscaping proposals for redevelopment of the site should take account of this;
- The proposed Core Strategy policy requires that development proposals should consider the Landscape Character Assessments published for the Region and for Greater Nottingham;

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 This section provides an analysis of the desktop landscape character and planning policy / strategy review undertaken alongside the site based assessment findings in order to consider the appropriateness of the site for redevelopment in landscape and visual terms. Particular reference is made to the implications and appropriateness of the current Green Belt designation.

5.2 The site itself comprises brownfield land, it has been utilised since 1949 as a concrete manufacturing works, and we are advised has been in industrial use since 1927. A number of industrial buildings of various sizes up to six metres in height occupy the site, along with extensive areas of concrete hard standing used for storage. The site is enclosed by perimeter security fencing and is visually open to the adjacent main road (A6096), together with industrial buildings across the road and a petrol station, it provides the gateway to Awsworth to traffic approaching from the north. The site lies at the northern edge of Awsworth and is readily perceived as visually forming part of the settlement. Perimeter vegetation provides visual and physical separation from the open Green Belt land to the west, and indeed there are very few locations from where the existing buildings on the site are visible.

Landscape

5.3 The background landscape character assessment documents describe the landscape context of the site as settled coalfield with extensive areas of settlement, industry and roads, interspersed with farmland. They acknowledge the development pressures on this land and the potential for reclamation, redevelopment and woodland planting within the Community Forests. The East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment recommends high quality, innovative and locally distinctive architectural solutions to new development and the planting of new trees around settlement fringes along with the retention of strategic gaps to avoid coalescence. The Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment is more specific to the site and recommends conserving and enhancing the rural features and utilising urban edge tree planting to minimise the effects of further development. The site already benefits substantially from this.

5.4 In terms of local landscape character the site forms part of the urban area of Awsworth and has been assessed as low sensitivity, due to its industrial,

brownfield character and lack of landscape features. Although there are areas of scrub and trees on the periphery of the site that do have some intrinsic value and could be retained if the site is redeveloped.

- 5.5 The open landscape to the west of the site and east of Awsworth, although influenced by surrounding urban areas and urban fringe uses, is of relatively moderate sensitivity due to its good landscape structure. The surrounding landscape is physically and visually well separated from the site, the current buildings on the site have no discernible influence on the setting of these areas, particularly given the wider urban context and it therefore follows that an appropriate well designed redevelopment of the site would not have any discernible impact.

Visual

- 5.6 In visual terms the photographs within this report illustrate that the site and buildings within are not widely visible. From the few viewpoints identified where the buildings on the site are visible, they are already perceived as part of the adjacent industrial area of Awsworth, and visually separated from nearby settlement areas by intervening trees and woodland. The combination of landform with intervening taller industrial buildings and the peripheral vegetation cover provide a good level of visual containment, the significant tree and woodland areas around the site provide a good level of screening even during winter months as demonstrated by the photographs that accompany this report.

- 5.7 Redevelopment of the site with new buildings of a suitable height and scale, appropriate to the adjacent urban context, within the retained landscape framework should not result in any significant visual effects on the potential receptors identified by the visual analysis.

Planning Policy and Strategies

- 5.8 In terms of Green Belt policy it is questionable whether the site should lie within designated Green Belt, as it is perceived as part of the Awsworth settlement area, separated from the adjacent open countryside by the tree lined Gilt Brook, and being already developed does not contribute to the openness of the Green Belt nor assist in preventing coalescence. The five purposes of including land in Green Belts as defined in PPG2 are;

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;*

- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

In landscape and visual terms the site does not currently fulfil any of these purposes and designating the site as Green Belt contradicts the latter as it potentially denies any opportunity to regenerate this urban brownfield site.

5.9 In considering coalescence the nearest settlements of Giltbrook and Kimberley lie to the north and are physically separated by the A610 dual carriageway. These settlements are elevated and as such the remaining open landscape between these settlements and Awsworth already allows inter-visibility between the settlements. Re-development of the site, with buildings of an appropriate height should not result in any perceptible change in the current level of openness between the settlements. Therefore such development would not injure the visual amenity of the adjoining Green Belt.

5.10 Redevelopment of the site, with a well considered Masterplan has the potential to bring local landscape enhancements and Green Infrastructure benefits in line with current and emerging policies and strategy. A landscaping scheme to accompany new development on the site could easily accommodate and reinforce the existing robust vegetation framework around the site. Tree planting using locally occurring, native species would compliment the objectives of the Greenwood Community Forest, Green Infrastructure Strategy and Landscape Character Assessment recommendations.

Conclusion

5.11 To conclude, in landscape and visual terms it is considered that well considered redevelopment of the site, with appropriately sized, good quality buildings and landscaping would not result in any significant detrimental landscape or visual effects on the site or its landscape context. In particular it is of paramount importance to appreciate that redevelopment of the site would not have any perceived effect on the function of the Green Belt within this area. In fact as suggested in paragraph 5.10 above, redevelopment of the site can deliver landscape enhancement through regeneration of the gateway to Awsworth, and has the potential to bring local benefits to the wider Green Infrastructure strategy, recreational and Greenwood Community Forest aims without any perceived impact on the openness and function of the wider Green Belt. The site itself together with the existing building cover does not effectively fulfil any of the

objectives set out at paragraph 1.5 of PPG2 for inclusion of the land within Green Belt and it is considered that the designation should be removed.



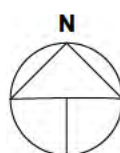
Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

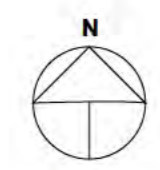
Land at Gin Close Way, Awsworth

LOCATION PLAN

Figure 1

No Scale. April 2010





Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd
Land at Gin Close Way, Awworth

SITE PLAN

Figure 2

No Scale. April 2010



Aerial photograph from Google Earth



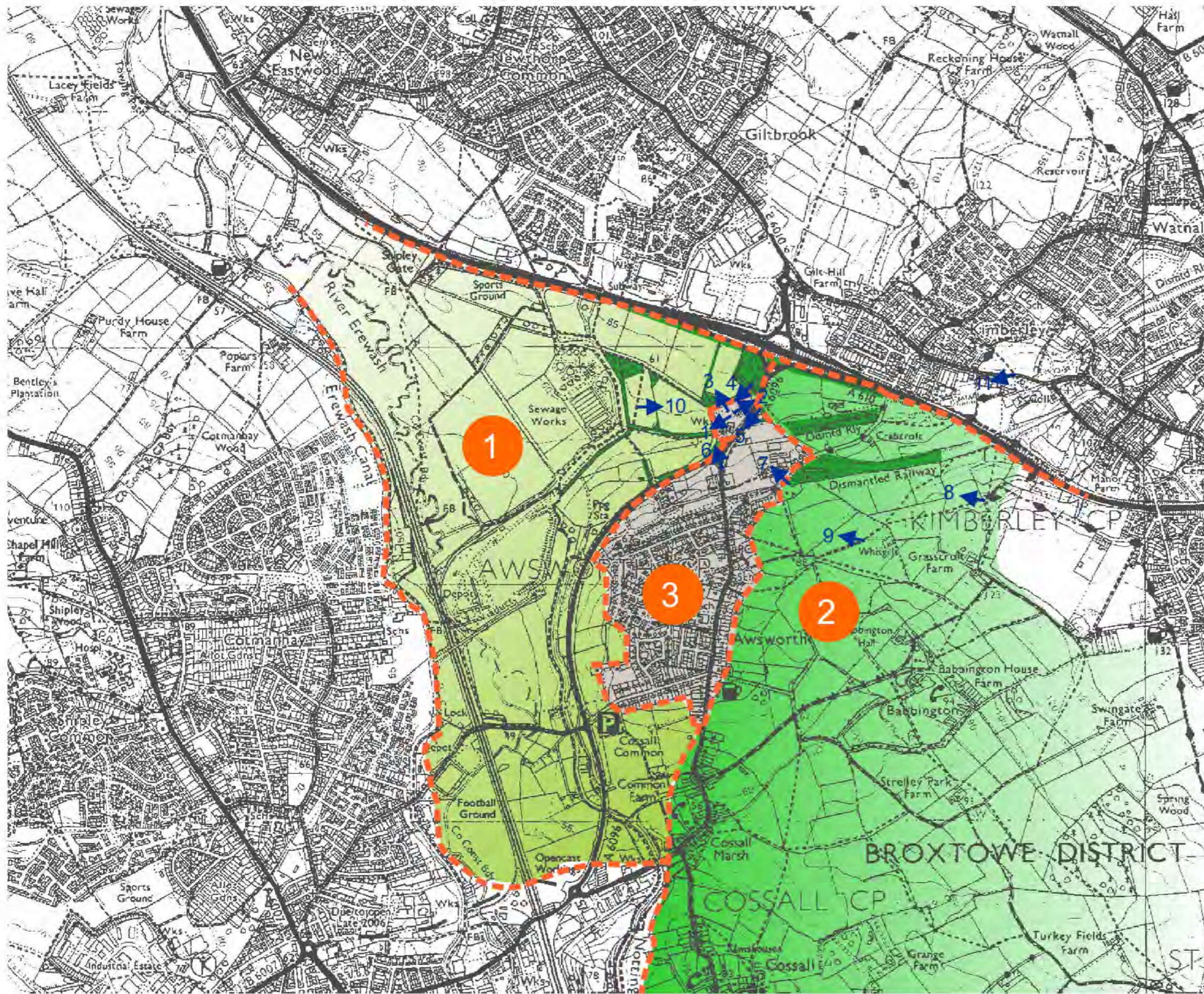
Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd







Land at Gin Close Way, Awsworth

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Figure 3

No Scale. April 2010



-  Local Character areas:
-  1 The Erewash Valley
-  2 Babbington Rolling Farmland
-  3 Awworth Urban Area
-  Visually significant vegetation
-  1 Photo viewpoint



Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

Land at Gin Close Way, Awworth

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

Figure 4

No Scale. April 2010



Photograph 1: view south from within the site



Photograph 2: view north east from within the site



Photograph 3: view north west from within the site



Photograph 4: view south from the north western edge of the site

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Land at Gin Close Way, Awworth

PHOTOGRAPHS 1-4

Figure 5

No Scale. April 2010



Photograph 5: view of site from A6096



Photograph 6: view north towards the site from the roundabout on the A6096



Photograph 7: view north west towards the site from the elevated dismantled rail line



Photograph 8: view north west towards the site from the elevated public right of way north of

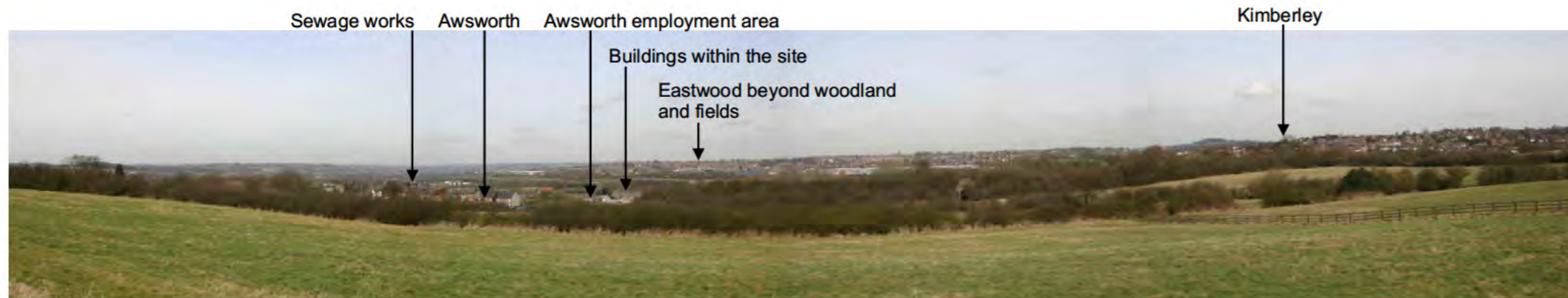
Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

Land at Gin Close Way, Awwsworth

PHOTOGRAPHS 5-8

Figure 5

No Scale. April 2010



Photograph 9: view from public right of way within landscape east of Awsworth



Photograph 10: view from public right of way just to the west of the site



Photograph 11: view south west from elevated residential area of Kimberley

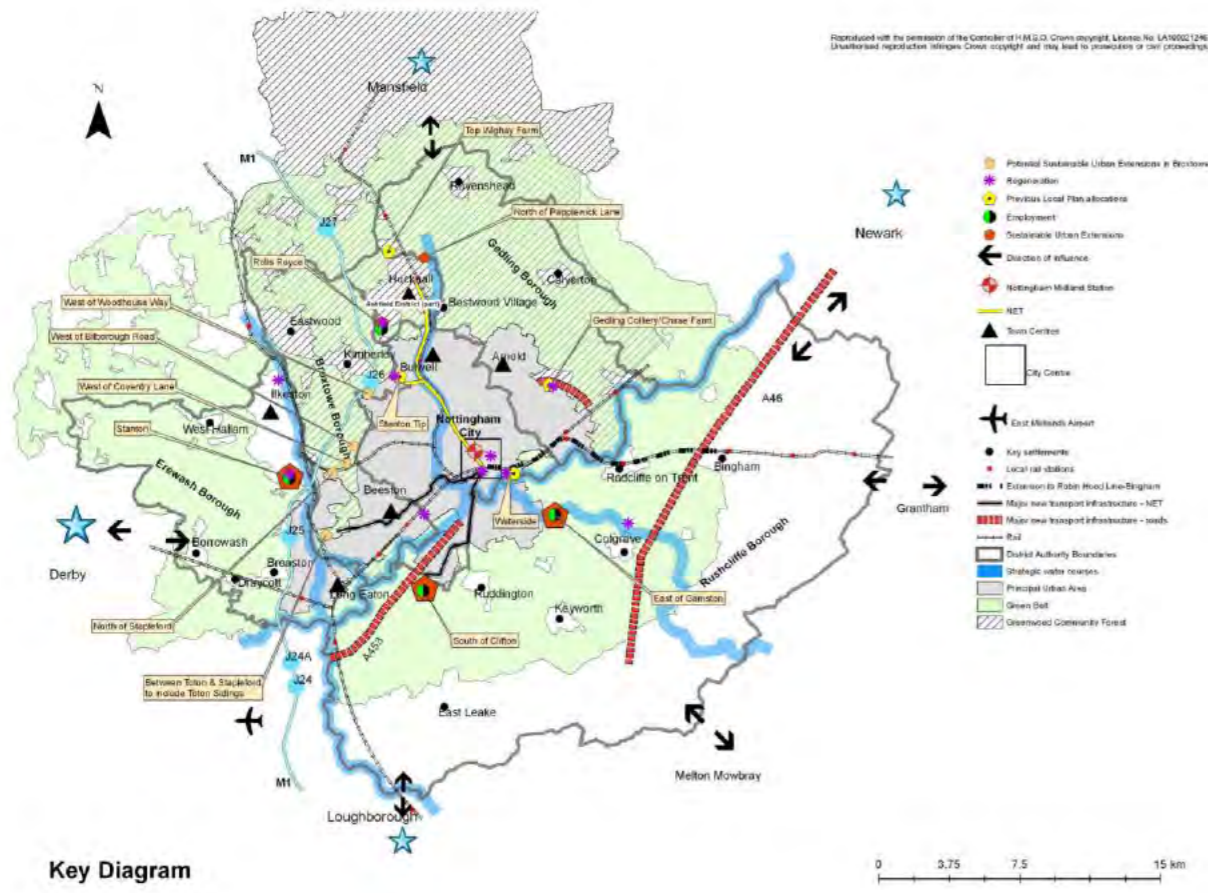
Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

Land at Gin Close Way, Awsworth

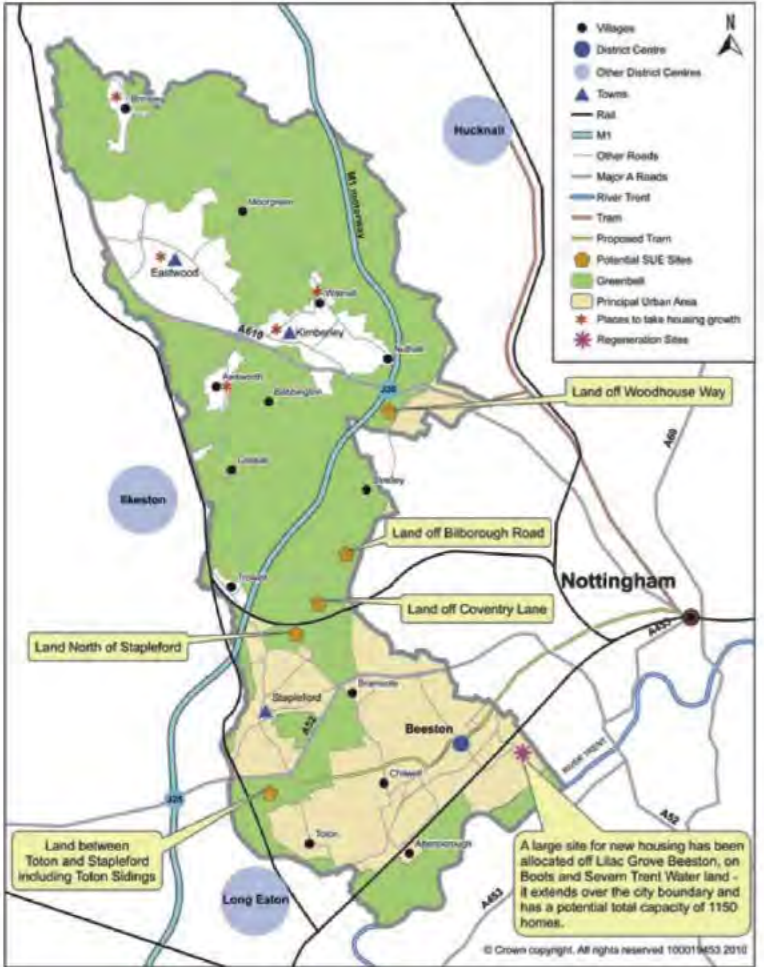
PHOTOGRAPHS 9-11

Figure 5

No Scale. April 2010

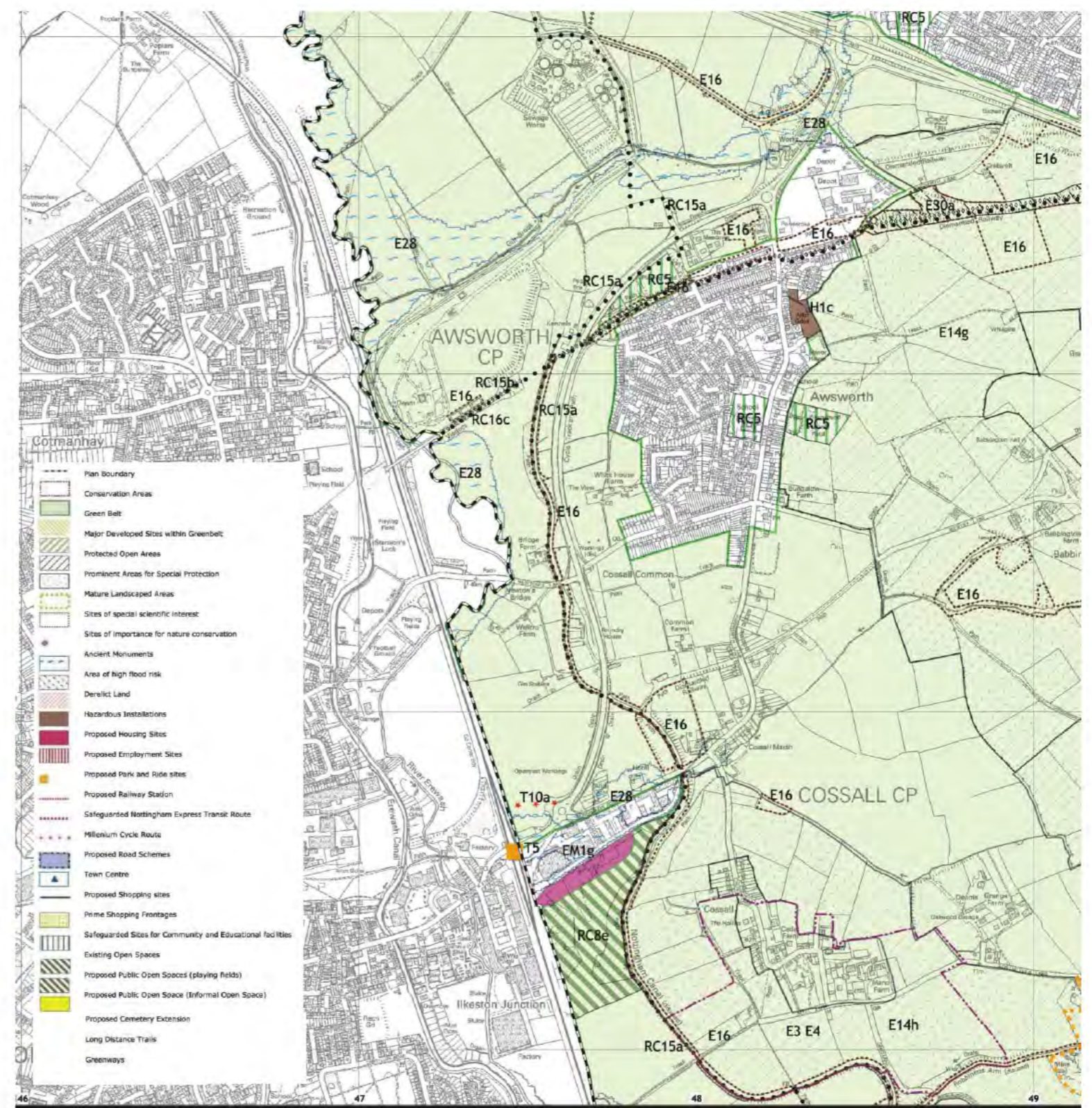


Key Diagram

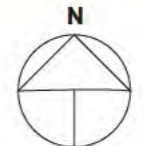


Greater Nottingham, Aligned Core Strategies, Option for Consultation, 2010

Key Diagram and Awsworth Diagram



Adopted Broxtowe Local Plan 2004, Proposals Map



Whitehead (Concrete) Ltd & Foulds Investments Ltd

Land at Gin Close Way, Awsworth

PLANNING POLICY PLAN EXTRACTS

Figure 6

No Scale. April 2010

Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Yorkshire Coalfield

Character Area
38



Key Characteristics

- Widespread evidence of industrial activity including mine buildings, former spoil tips and iron and steel plants.
- Complex mix of built-up areas, industrial land, dereliction and farmed open country.
- Many areas affected by urban fringe pressures creating fragmented and downgraded landscapes.
- Substantial areas of intact agricultural land in both arable and pastoral use.
- Small, fragmented remnants of pre-industrial landscape and semi-natural vegetation, including many areas of woodland, river valley habitats, subsidence flashes and other relict habitats.
- Ever-present urban influences from major cities, smaller industrial towns and mining villages.
- Widespread influence of transport routes, including canal, road (M1, M62) and rail, with ribbon developments emphasising the urban influence in the landscape.
- Rolling landforms with hills, escarpments and broad valleys.
- Local variation in landscape character reflecting variations in underlying geology.
- Strong cultural identity arising from history of coal mining and other heavy industry.

Landscape Character

This is a large landscape area which embraces the major industrial towns and cities as well as a substantial slice of countryside and the villages of the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfields. It is generally defined by shallow Coal Measures as the underlying bedrock and is bounded by the Peak District and the woollen towns of the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe to the west, by the Pennine Dales Fringe to the north and by the Southern Magnesian Limestone escarpment to the east.



JOHN MORRISON/COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

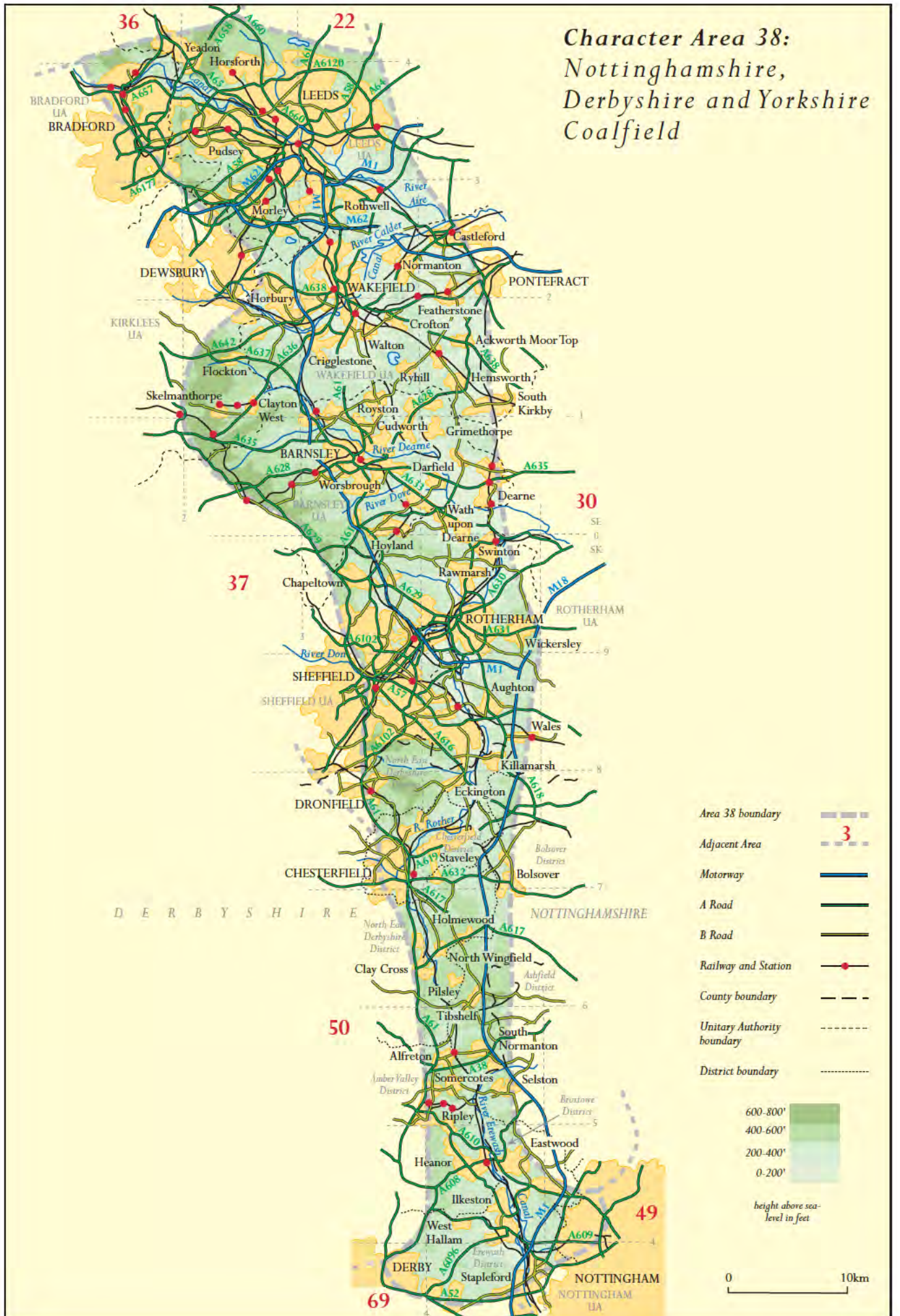
As the coalfields adjust to the decline of traditional heavy industries, there is considerable demand for new industrial and commercial premises, such as these being built at Hanging Heaton. Good location and design of new buildings could make a positive contribution to enhancing the environment of the area.

The landscape is underpinned by generally low and undramatic but variable hills, escarpments and broad valleys. It is dominated everywhere by extensive urban influences and industry. There has been constant change and development since the era of the industrial revolution, when there was rapid expansion of housing, transport networks and industry of many types. The result is a complex intermingling of rural and urban areas and of modern commerce and industrial dereliction, the whole creating a mosaic of disparate land uses and land cover.

The landform is characterised by generally north-west/south-east ridges formed by the alternate banding of wet shales and dry sandstones, although locally this can be confused by faulting and folding. The different rates by which these bands weather away give rise to the undulating waves of the landform. The natural west to east flow of the rivers, from the Pennines to the North Sea, is almost at right angles to the ridges. In practice this creates a very characteristic pattern in the river valleys which flow north or south along the shale/mudstone troughs between the ridges until a weak spot in the softer sandstone is encountered, for example, at a fault. Here the stream or river will abruptly change course almost at



Character Area 38: Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield



right angles to its previous course until it hits another ridge line. This characteristic step wise flow and valley/ridge structure results from the underlying Coal Measures geology. Towards the west of the area there is a distinct drop from the Pennine uplands to the lower-lying east. Further local variation in the topography arises from glacial deposits and alluvium or as the result of recent human activity in the form of subsidence flashes and reclaimed colliery spoil heaps.

Industrial activity has resulted in a diversity of building types and styles extending out from village centres. Many of the rural areas suffer from urban fringe problems around the main towns and some are fragmented and down-graded, creating a landscape of neglect. There are, however, stretches of relatively unspoilt agricultural land which give rise to some quite intact farmed landscapes, for example the area west of Barnsley and the Moss Valley between Sheffield and Chesterfield. Semi-natural habitats, including woodland and river valley habitats, are fragmented and scattered but they assume a greater significance, surrounded as they are by urbanisation and dereliction. In some areas the broadleaved woodlands form green, calm backdrops to the mix of uncoordinated development. In Derbyshire remnants of enclosure and other pre-industrial landscapes jostle cheek by jowl with the industrial heritage. The effect of ribbon development is such that it exacerbates the predominance of the urban influence. At the same time, extensive land renewal projects are creating new landscapes particularly along the river valleys.

Much of the landscape is dominated by the extensive urban areas and by industrial activity. Mills and factories tended to follow water courses along the valleys whilst the underlying coal gave rise to a very active mining industry. Many of the mines have now closed but the remains of collieries and extensive spoil tips are still clearly visible in many villages and small towns in the eastern half of the area. More recent developments for engineering, manufacturing and light industrial uses, as well as for commercial and retail development, have extended out from urban areas. They often follow the main road corridors adding ribbon development and its impact on the landscape to the complex mosaic of land uses. The ensuing dense network of roads, along with major transport routes such as the M1, M62 and the main railways, all compound the urbanisation of the area.

Several major rivers cross the area, including the Aire, Calder, Dearne, Rother, Don and Erewash, but their courses tend to be obscured by the industrial development that has grown up around them. Subsidence flashes and lagoons create valuable wildlife habitats in these valleys but they are often surrounded by mines, tips and industrial works. Often only the general valley form distinguishes these areas.



SIMON WARNER/COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

Many urban settlements of the coalfields are set within a rolling arable landscape. Settlement edges are often hard, with new housing and industrial development clearly visible over long distances. The landscape is quite open, tree cover is fairly sparse and hedges are cut low, are gappy and are often poorly maintained. The urban fringe of Wakefield is typical of many settlements in the coalfields.

Physical Influence

The area is underlain by Coal Measures which consist mainly of mudstone with beds of sandstone and many seams of coal. Like the Millstone Grit of the Pennine uplands to the west, the sandstones resist erosion and form a recurring pattern of escarpments that stand proud of shallow, mudstone-floored valleys. The sandstone beds of the Coal Measures are rather thinner than those of the Millstone Grit, however, and hence the escarpments they form are less dramatic, lower and more rounded. Major rivers crossing the area have carved broad valleys floored by fertile alluvial deposits and glaciation has contributed to the shaping of some valleys such as the Aire Valley near Leeds.

It is, however, the working of coal by deep mining and later by open-casting, together with resources of stone, fireclay, ironstone and soft water, which have had the greatest effect in shaping the landscape and which triggered the industrial growth which has been so dominant in its effect on the area.

Historical and Cultural Influences

The early history of the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Yorkshire Coalfield landscape was similar to that of the surrounding areas. Clearance of the original forests eventually led, by medieval times, to a landscape of villages, hamlets and individual farms. Well-developed open field systems were common in the east but small, irregularly hedged and walled fields prevailed further west. Hunting forests and deer parks were established and the open fields and commons were gradually enclosed, privately initially, and then by Parliamentary Enclosure Acts.

The medieval manorial parks were mostly deer parks by the 17th century. These were often landscaped in the 18th century usually retaining their herds of deer. Holly trees were grown as winter fodder for deer, cattle and sheep, either within the remaining ancient broadleaved woods or as 'holly hags', ie separate holly wood enclosures. The presence today of holly as a major component in many of the older hedgerows may reflect this history.

Much of the evidence of activity by earlier generations has, however, been lost to the widespread urbanisation that took place from the 18th century onwards due to large-scale industrialisation and the rapid increase in population. The making of iron and steel is documented from the early part of the 17th century and local resources of iron ore resulted in the development of the iron and steel industry. A specialist cutlery industry developed around Sheffield. In the early part of the 17th century the industry would have relied on charcoal from local woods but this was subsequently replaced by coke. Rich local sources of coal meant that the conditions were right for a massive expansion into the large-scale steel industry, with the development of steam power, in the 18th and 19th centuries. The coal mining industry also developed dramatically, relying initially on canals and roads, and then on the expanding railway system for transport.

The landscape is rich in industrial archaeology, including features such as bell-pits, mills and goits, tips, old railways and tramways, canals and bridges. Many of the woodlands also have strong industrial links with oak having been managed for pit-props or bark for the tanning industry, and with sycamore to provide bobbins.

With the combination of natural resources and good quality agricultural land, wealth was rapidly accumulated from the 17th century onwards. Wealthy industrialists created a number of large country houses, parks and estates in the area in the 18th and 19th centuries, many of which still contribute to the character of the landscape today.



JOHN MORRISON/COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

The Coal Measures give rise mainly to poor soils, which have traditionally supported pasture. Today, however, the pattern is more variable with the balance shifting towards arable farming, as seen here near Jaw Hill.

Although coal mining, steel making and heavy manufacturing are now in decline, new industrial activity is evident with the expansion of light industry, technology and related industries such as ceramics and specialised engineering. The disturbed landscape of sprawling conurbations, with their intermingled housing, roads, railways, industrial buildings, dereliction, redevelopment and remnant rural areas, continues to evolve.

Buildings and Settlement

Older traditional villages in the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Yorkshire Coalfield area were built of local stone, generally sandstones and Millstone Grit, and the core of these areas often survives today. The majority of settlements were, however, subject to rapid, industrial expansion in the 19th century and completely new mining villages were also built. Brick and slate, often transported by rail, quickly replaced stone as the local building material and many of the brick-built mining villages and towns built in that period still survive today. Expansion has continued and these settlements, with the remains of the mining industry, dominate the landscape over wide areas.

Many of the main cities and towns have striking urban centres, dominated by grandiose 19th century architecture, despite the high level of rebuilding in the 20th century. Industrial benefactors were responsible for many notable 19th century town and civic halls, schools, museums and art galleries in several town centres, all constructed from the Millstone Grit. Similarly the large gritstone factories and mills dominate the valleys to the west.

Sheffield developed as a major industrial conurbation because of the combined resources of fast-flowing water, coal and iron and was noted for its manufacture of items of high quality steel, in particular cutlery. Small-scale workshops gave way to enormous blank-faced steel rolling mills and forges. Although many of these are now being demolished, manufacturing is still an important industry especially in the Rother valley.

Historic buildings, especially old churches, country houses and follies associated with country estates are important features and landmarks. Wealthy industrialists built imposing country houses in the area, well away from the industrialised towns. These houses and their associated parks occur throughout the area and include the ring of parks around Leeds, notably Roundhay, and the large estates overlooking the Doe Lee in north Derbyshire, for example, Hardwick Hall, South Wingfield and Bolsover Castle.

Development continues throughout the area, with new housing, commerce and industry steadily encroaching into the remaining rural areas.

Land Cover

The Coal Measures give rise mainly to poor soils which have traditionally supported pasture. Today the pattern is more variable and the balance is shifting towards arable farming. To the east especially, and on lower ground, the land is of relatively good agricultural quality and is used for arable crops or improved grassland. Permanent pasture is dominant to the west, on higher ground with greater rainfall, and dairy farms generally predominate here. Vegetable growing is significant in some areas.

Tree cover is variable but generally low. In areas where the field pattern is intact there are sometimes thick hedgerows with oak and ash as hedgerow trees. Elsewhere this pattern has broken down and trees are sparse. Urban fringe influences are widespread, with small fields of often degraded pasture, vegetable crops and cereals, gappy low cut hedges, broken fences, horse grazing and varied urban fringe activities. Semi-natural habitats include open water, wetlands (including subsidence flashes), grassland, remnant heaths and woodland and these are all of great importance for nature conservation. Many occur within the urban areas or in green corridors leading into them. On poorer soils or steeper slopes there are pockets of broadleaved woodland which, together with the farmland, help to contain the urban development. Relatively low rainfall makes this an area of slow tree growth and so forestry has never been a feature. Nevertheless in some areas, such as west of Barnsley and the Moss Valley, there is a pleasing combination of farmland interspersed with small broadleaved and conifer plantations.

Field size and pattern is highly variable and field boundaries also vary. They range from thick, well-maintained hedges to close-cropped or neglected hawthorn hedges and also include post and wire or post and rail fences.

The Changing Countryside

- The decline of the deep coal-mining industry, and of other traditional heavy industries in the area, has left a legacy of dereliction. There has also been change through the removal of formerly widespread structures like pit-head winding gear. Mines continue to be pumped and in some areas provide important sources of drinking water and river compensating flow. Nevertheless there are still risks of pollution from closed mines and pressures for coal extraction by open-cast methods still continue along with the demand for after use of these sites for waste disposal.
- Large-scale programmes of reclamation of coal spoil heaps and other industrial dereliction has created a greener appearance and clear evidence of a new generation of reclaimed landscapes. Many areas of woodland have, for example, been planted in the past ten years. Through a heightened awareness of the value of woodlands in the

landscape and the commitment of Government and a wide range of groups and agencies, this trend is accelerating in areas such as the South Yorkshire Forest, between Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley, and the Greenwood Community Forest around Nottingham.



JOHN MORRISON/COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

Several major rivers cross the area, including the Aire, Dearne, Rother, Don, Erewash, and, as seen here, the Calder. Their courses are sometimes obscured by the industrial and housing development that has grown up around them, so that their presence in the landscape can be negligible. However, they can form important foci for environmental enhancement.

- As a densely settled landscape, including a number of major towns and cities, there are continuing pressures for development of housing, commerce and industry. The transport network has also been developed and improved over the years including the construction of several major motorways and trunk roads through the area. Improvements in transport networks continue and new or improved roads themselves generate further demand for development especially at main junctions. All the development has led to a significant loss of tranquillity throughout the area and the development pressure will undoubtedly continue.
- There are significant urban fringe pressures affecting the countryside around towns and cities. This, along with fragmentation of viable holdings, makes farming difficult and the pressures are evident in occasional poor standards of maintenance, for example of field boundaries, and poor quality pasture used for horse grazing. Demands for recreation and access are high which can create opportunities but may also bring additional problems for farmers. Some rural buildings are being sold off, usually for conversion to residential use, which results in a degree of suburbanisation of the countryside.

Shaping the Future

- Reclamation of derelict sites will continue and provides significant opportunities for enhancing or creating both landscape and wildlife habitats. Care is needed to ensure

that the wealth of natural regeneration that has spontaneously developed on many post-industrial sites, often over a varied topography of intimate scale and with rich historical associations, is fully appreciated and enhanced rather than erased by reclamation.

- The enormous potential for enhancing this landscape by, for example, significant woodland planting has already been recognised and there are established Community Forest initiatives near Sheffield and Nottingham and similar programmes around Leeds and in east Derbyshire and Sherwood. In the Community Forests a rich mosaic of land uses will be created, restoring dereliction and creating sites for sport and recreation, habitats for wildlife and opportunities for outdoor education to improve the quality of life for all. There may be opportunities for this sort of approach to be applied in other parts of the area.
- Recreation offers scope to enhance the landscape and to bring degraded land back into positive management. Creation of new, formal, access opportunities, nature-conservation features and facilities such as golf courses and other visitor attractions can assist in renewing the landscape in appropriate locations.
- A number of major initiatives are already underway in the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Yorkshire Coalfield landscape aimed at environmental improvement and enhanced opportunities for enjoyment. These build on the environmental work of the local authorities over the past 20 years or so. In addition to the activity in the Community Forests referred to above, examples include Groundwork initiatives and the East Derbyshire Woodlands Project. Greater co-ordination between different schemes and the economic and social development process may assist the process of renewal in the future.
- Where hedges and hedgerow trees have declined, hedgerow restoration and replanting will improve wildlife habitats and strengthen landscape structure. In sustainable farming areas it may be appropriate to restore field patterns.

Selected References

Land Use Consultants (1994), *Leeds Landscape Assessment*, unpublished report for Leeds City Council and the Countryside Commission.

Pevsner, N revised by Radcliffe, E (1967), *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire - The West Riding*, Penguin Books.

Slack, M (1984) *Portrait of West Yorkshire*, Robert Hale, London.

South Yorkshire Forest (1993) *Forest Plan - Consultation Draft Summary*. Countryside Commission.

Glossary

flash: a water body caused by mining subsidence

goit: local term for a mill-race

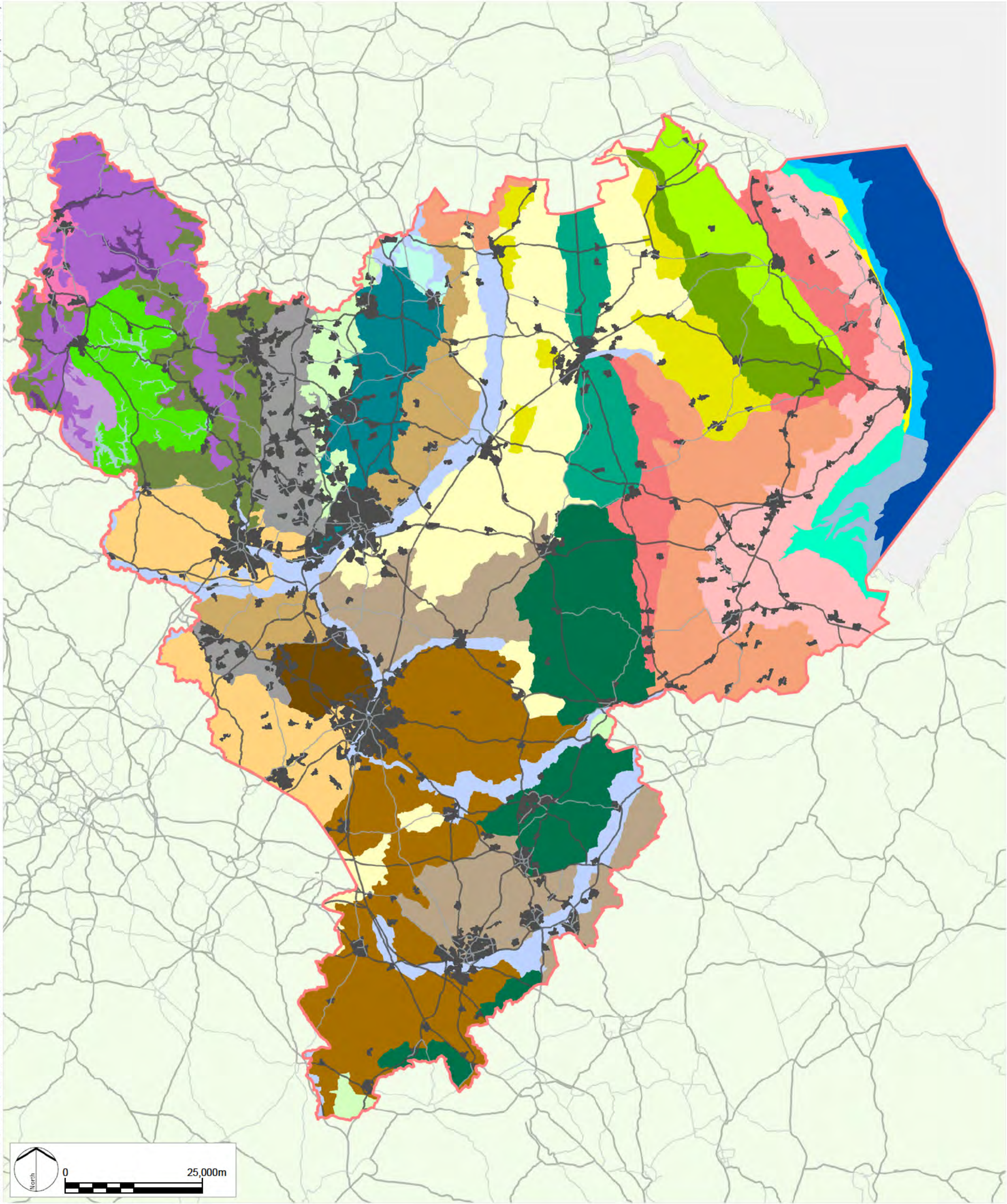


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Tree cover is variable, but generally low. In areas where the field pattern is intact there are sometimes thick hedgerows with oak and ash as hedgerow trees. There are also areas of coniferous or mixed plantations such as here at Nether End. This is a landscape with considerable potential for enhancement through tree planting, as recognised by the presence of two Community Forests and several other woodland initiatives within the area.

No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing. All dimensions are to be checked on site. Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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East Midlands Regional
Landscape Character Assessment
Incorporating the Peak District
National Park and Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

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LDADESIGN

Figure 17
Regional Landscape Character Types

DATE	July 2009	DRAWN	DL
SCALE	1:650,000 at A3	CHECKED	IH
STATUS	Final Draft	APPROVED	SC


DWG.NO. **2757/Figure 17**
Source: Ordnance Survey


East Midlands Regional
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Figure 17:
Regional Landscape Character Types


Plan illustrates distribution of Regional Landscape Character Types.

Legend

 Study Area Boundary


 Built Up Area

Group 1: Coast and Sea

 1a: Coastal Saltmarshes and Mudflats

 1b: Coastal Dunes, Beach and Intertidal Sand Flats


 1c: Shallow Coastal Waters

 1d: Shallow Inlet Bay

 1e: Offshore Industries, Fisheries and Navigations


Group 2: Fenland and Fenland Margins

 2a: Settled Fens and Marshes

 2b: Planned and Drained Fens and Carrlands


 2c: Fen and Marsh Margin Farmlands


Group 3: River Valley Floodplains

 3a: Floodplain Valleys


 3b: Sandland Farmlands


Group 4: Lowland Vales

 4a: Unwooded Vales

 4b: Wooded Vales


Group 5: Village Farmlands


 5a: Village Farmlands

 5b: Wooded Village Farmlands

 5c: Undulating Mixed Farmlands

Group 6: Limestone Farmlands


 6a: Limestone Scarps and Dipslopes


 6b: Upland Limestone Pastures

 6c: Limestone Dales

 6d: Limestone Farmlands

Group 7: Chalk Wolds


 7a: Chalk Wolds

 7b: Wolds Scarps, Ridges and Valleys

Group 8: Clay Wolds


 8a: Clay Wolds


Group 9: Coalfields


 9a: Settled Coalfield Farmlands

Group 10: Woods and Forests

 10a: Forest Hills and Ridges

 10b: Sandstone Forests and Heaths


 10c: Wooded Slopes and Valleys

 10d: Forested Ancient Hills

Group 11: Gritstone Moors and Fringes

 11a: Open Moors and Inbye Land

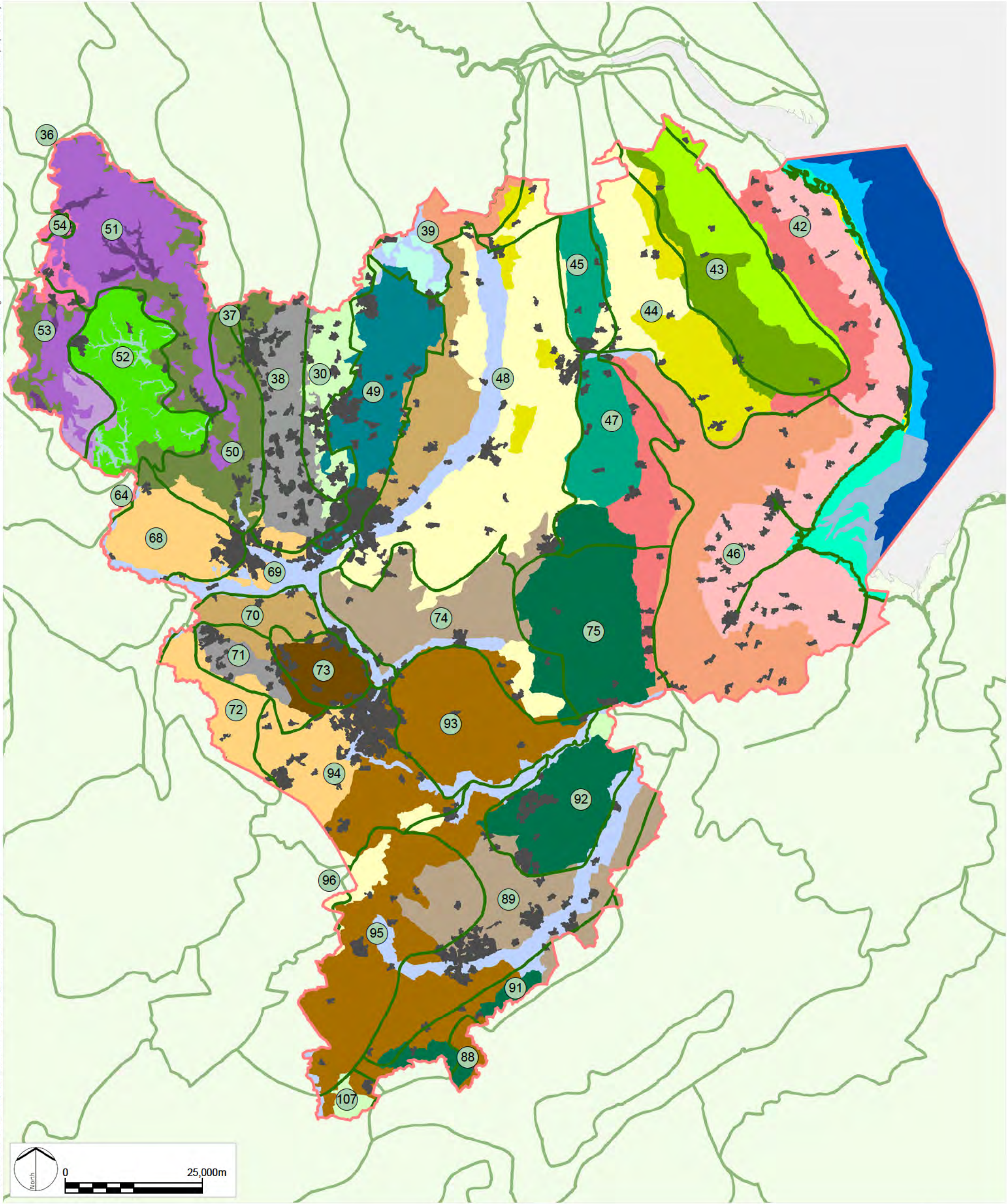
 11b: Moorland Valleys

 11c: Settled Valleys and Enclosed Gritstone Uplands

 11d: Upland Pastoral Hills and Valleys

No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing. All dimensions are to be checked on site. Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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East Midlands Regional
Landscape Character Assessment
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LDADESIGN

Figure 18
National Character Areas
and
Regional Landscape Character Types

DATE	July 2009	DRAWN	DL
SCALE	1:650,000 at A3	CHECKED	IH
STATUS	Final Draft	APPROVED	SC

DWG.NO. **2757/Figure 18**
Source: Ordnance Survey





East Midlands Regional
Landscape Character Assessment
Incorporating the Peak District
National Park and Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

Figure 18:

National Character Areas and
Regional Landscape Character Types

Plan illustrates Natural England's National Character Areas and Regional Landscape Character Types

Legend

-  Study Area Boundary
-  Built Up Area
-  National Character Area Boundary
-  National Character Area Number

- 30 - Southern Magnesian Limestone
- 36 - Southern Pennines
- 37 - Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe
- 38 - Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield
- 39 - Humberhead Levels
- 42 - Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes
- 43 - Lincolnshire Wolds
- 44 - Central Lincolnshire Vale
- 45 - Northern Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands
- 46 - The Fens
- 47 - Southern Lincolnshire Edge
- 48 - Trent and Belvoir Vales
- 49 - Sherwood
- 50 - Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent
- 51 - Dark Peak
- 52 - White Peak
- 53 - South West Peak
- 54 - Manchester Pennine Fringe
- 64 - Potteries and Churnet Valley
- 68 - Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands
- 69 - Trent Valley Washlands
- 70 - Melbourne Parklands
- 71 - Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield
- 72 - Mease/Sence Lowlands
- 73 - Charnwood
- 74 - Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds
- 75 - Kesteven Uplands
- 88 - Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands
- 89 - Northamptonshire Vales
- 91 - Yardley - Whittlewood Ridge
- 92 - Rockingham Forest
- 93 - High Leicestershire
- 94 - Leicestershire Vales
- 95 - Northamptonshire Uplands
- 96 - Dunsmore and Feldon
- 107 - Cotswolds

- Group 1: Coast and Sea**
 -  1a: Coastal Saltmarshes and Mudflats
 -  1b: Coastal Dunes, Beach and Intertidal Sand Flats
 -  1c: Shallow Coastal Waters
 -  1d: Shallow Inlet Bay
 -  1e: Offshore Industries, Fisheries and Navigations
- Group 2: Fenland and Fenland Margins**
 -  2a: Settled Fens and Marshes
 -  2b: Planned and Drained Fens and Carlands
 -  2c: Fen and Marsh Margin Farmlands
- Group 3: River Valley Floodplains**
 -  3a: Floodplain Valleys
 -  3b: Sandland Farmlands
- Group 4: Lowland Vales**
 -  4a: Unwooded Vales
 -  4b: Wooded Vales
- Group 5: Village Farmlands**
 -  5a: Village Farmlands
 -  5b: Wooded Village Farmlands
 -  5c: Undulating Mixed Farmlands
- Group 6: Limestone Farmlands**
 -  6a: Limestone Scarps and Dipslopes
 -  6b: Upland Limestone Pastures
 -  6c: Limestone Dales
 -  6d: Limestone Farmlands
- Group 7: Chalk Wolds**
 -  7a: Chalk Wolds
 -  7b: Wolds Scarps, Ridges and Valleys
- Group 8: Clay Wolds**
 -  8a: Clay Wolds
- Group 9: Coalfields**
 -  9a: Settled Coalfield Farmlands
- Group 10: Woods and Forests**
 -  10a: Forest Hills and Ridges
 -  10b: Sandstone Forests and Heaths
 -  10c: Wooded Slopes and Valleys
 -  10d: Forested Ancient Hills
- Group 11: Gritstone Moors and Fringes**
 -  11a: Open Moors and Inbye Land
 -  11b: Moorland Valleys
 -  11c: Settled Valleys and Enclosed Gritstone Uplands
 -  11d: Upland Pastoral Hills and Valleys

NC01 Erewash River Corridor



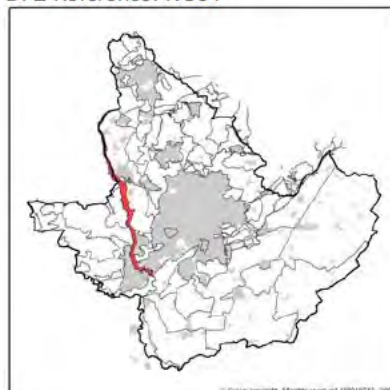
CONTEXT

Regional Character Area: Nottinghamshire

Coalfield

LDU Reference: 30, 63 & 64

DPZ Reference: NC01



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Narrow low alluvial floodplain lying in a broad valley
- The underlying geology comprises shales and layers of sandstone alternating with seams of coal. The river is set within a relatively deep cut valley along the crest of a local anticline in the underlying coal measures which exposed coal seams along the valley sides. The profitable nature of these seams resulted in significant mining activity in the area
- The meandering river channel of the Erewash is not visually prominent although the effects of its presence are clearly seen in the landscape e.g. wetland habitats and marginal bank side vegetation
- Subsidence from coal has led to the formation of several shallow lakes along the river corridor which are largely open although scrub woodland is beginning to establish along the banks
- The Erewash Canal is parallel to the western boundary of the DPZ, originally created to give access to wider markets for coal and textiles
- Urban fringe character which is strongly influenced by surrounding built and industrial development along the valley sides. In certain locations, the river is heavily enclosed by urban development
- Low lying floodplain pasture is frequently used as grazing meadow primarily for horses and cattle
- Arable farming is evident on the valley slopes. Where field boundaries are present these are mainly formed by well managed hedgerows. Field boundaries are often irregular due to influence from the meandering river corridor
- Typical wetland habitats such as reeds, rushes, ponds and open water are characteristic features
- Native woodland dominated by wet woodland species such as alder and willow is characteristic of the area. Young regeneration scrub is also common
- Belts of linear woodland are often used on the valley sides and along the railway corridor to screen and filter views of transport infrastructure, industry, large warehouses and residential expansion
- A railway line runs along the length of the river corridor on a raised embankment
- There are several sewage treatment plants situated within the DPZ which are visible above boundary vegetation
- A large viaduct to the west of Awsworth along the line of a disused railway line provides a historic remnant of the area's industrial past and is prominent in the DPZ



LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

A narrow low lying alluvial floodplain heavily enclosed by urban and industrial development and transportation routes. The broad valley sides rising from the valley floor are characterised by pockets of arable farmland, recreational open space and large scale industry and residential settlement. Remnant features of its industrial heritage such as the railway bridge near Awsworth are prominent in the landscape.

The valley floor is frequently used as grazing meadow for horses and cattle which provides a contrast to the surrounding urban setting. Wet woodland habitats along the river valley filter views. Valuable wetland habitats such as reed beds, ponds and open water are frequently distributed along the length of the river forming a valuable ecological resource. The valley channel becomes strongly meandering in places such as at Ilkeston

The area was subject to rapid urban development from the 1830s when the coal industry began a dramatic expansion resulting in a large influx of population, a mass house building programme and the development of ancillary services such as rail routes. The railway today runs along the length of the valley raised in most instances on an embankment making it a prominent feature within the landscape. In particular the large railway sidings at Toton are visible landscape features although screened to some degree by their enclosure by embankments. The river itself is low-lying and not visually prominent.

The landscape condition is **MODERATE**. There is evidence of management of the landscape with consideration towards the sensitive ecological habitats which have a naturalistic appearance. The various urban influences surrounding and within the river corridor e.g. sewage treatment works also have an effect on the overall perception of the landscape.



Landscape Strength

The strength of character of this landscape area is **STRONG**. This DPZ is a narrow alluvial floodplain lying in a broader valley associated with the River Erewash. The sloping sides of the valley and enclosed nature of views are strong characterising features. Woodland filters views along the valley floor. Views to the surrounding urban areas are visible from the valley, these settlements also provide views into the area from towns such as Ilkeston situated on the valley sides. There are views into the area from the elevated Nottingham Canal. Further glimpses can also be seen when crossing over bridges spanning the valley.

The wetland habitats and scrub woodland are distinctive features of the valley floor. Features associated with former industrial use, such as the viaduct, also give a strong sense of place.

Landscape Condition	Good	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>	MODERATE - GOOD <i>Conserve and Enhance</i>	GOOD <i>Conserve</i>
	Moderate	POOR - MODERATE <i>Enhance and Restore</i>	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>	MODERATE - GOOD <i>Conserve and Enhance</i>
	Poor	POOR <i>Restore/Create</i>	POOR - MODERATE <i>Enhance and Restore</i>	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>
		Weak	Moderate	Strong

Landscape strength

The overall landscape strategy is to **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE**

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

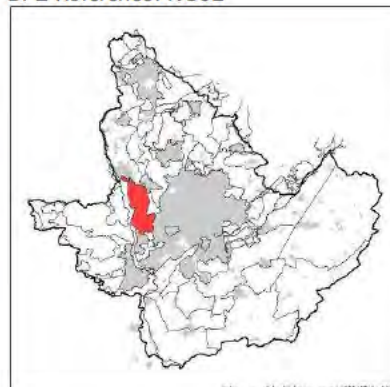
- Landscape features*
- Conserve the distinctive flood plain character of the river valley
 - Conserve and enhance the enclosed feel of the river corridor along the valley sides
 - Conserve the predominantly pasture grazing on the valley floor
 - Conserve and enhance the long views along the valley by managing the distribution of woodland to ensure views are not obscured
 - Conserve and enhance the diversity of wetland habitats which add visual interest to the area
 - Conserve and enhance the areas of linear woodland and riparian vegetation along the river corridor
- Built form*
- Ensure that further built development does not affect the character of the valley and suitable mitigations measures are put in place for larger developments, such as woodland planting to soften and screen it
- Other development/ structures in the landscape*
- Conserve historic features associated with the former use of the area such as the viaduct railway bridge near Awsworth.

NC02 Babbington Rolling Farmlands



CONTEXT

Regional Character Area:
Nottinghamshire Coalfield
LDU Reference: 277
DPZ Reference: NC02



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- landform is varied with areas of strongly undulating to gently rolling landscape
- The disused Nottingham Canal to the west of the area forms a principal watercourse. Although no longer navigable, the watercourse is used as recreational resource with opportunities for fishing, walking and experiencing wildlife.
- There are several small brooks and ditches within the area which drain towards the Nottingham Canal and the River Erewash
- The area has a predominantly rural character
- Fields are predominantly medium sized arable fields. The historic field pattern has mostly been modified or modernised in this area, although there are some pockets of fields with historic characteristics still evident around Cossall
- Smaller fields can be found clustered around traditional settlements such as Cossall and Babbington; these tend to be more frequently used for grazing of livestock including horses
- Fields are generally regular in shape but there are occurrences of irregular boundaries particularly along the watercourses where these become more sinuous
- Arable fields are bounded by generally well maintained hedgerows although fragmentation has occurred within the larger fields to the south. Some areas used for horse grazing have been fenced
- The area has the perception of being well wooded due to the presence of blocks of woodland, smaller copses and a high number of hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- There are areas of historic woodland such as Grange Wood and Oldmoor Wood
- A network of narrow winding lanes bordered by intact hedgerows remains; these are remnants of the historic more dispersed rural settlement pattern
- Small isolated settlements such as Cossall have retained their original rural settlement pattern with distinctive centres, brick built farmsteads and traditional churches
- The central area of the DPZ is largely undeveloped rolling farmland characterised by large isolated farmsteads. Farmsteads are characterised by large outbuildings
- There are long open views over the rolling landscape to wooded horizons, however in some areas views are enclosed by these woodlands. Views to the west of the area are across the Erewash valley towards the adjacent settlement of Ilkeston where the church tower is prominent
- The M1 motorway is an urbanising feature which cuts northeast to southwest across the character area. Often sat within a cutting, views of it are limited to a few locations where the carriageway is visible. Noise from the motorway is apparent.



LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

This is a strongly undulating to gently rolling landscape. It either contains or has views to two prominent water features along its eastern boundary namely: the Nottingham Canal; and River Erewash. It has a rural character and retains some traditional rural settlements in the form of Cossall and Babbington. Isolated farmsteads are common comprising traditional vernacular red brick buildings. In some instances the character of these farmsteads has been affected by expansion of large scale modern agricultural out-houses.

The land use is predominantly agricultural, with medium sized regular fields. Smaller pastoral fields are characteristic of the land use surrounding settlements. Fields are bordered by well maintained hedgerows, however in places these have been fragmented where larger scale agriculture has occurred. As a consequence of dense hedgerows and hedgerow trees the DPZ has a perception of being well wooded. A number of large woodland blocks including areas of historic woodland at Grange Wood and Oldmoor Wood further contribute to the wooded character.

The condition of the landscape is **MODERATE**. The landscape is well managed through agricultural practices although there are isolated areas where agricultural management has resulted in the loss of landscape features such as hedgerows. The woodland blocks are distinctive features and are well managed. The former Nottingham Canal is closed to boating traffic but is managed as a nature reserve and linear recreational facility.



Landscape Strength

The DPZ has long views over the rolling farmland landscape to wooded horizons. Views from the east of the area are over the Erewash valley towards the settlement of Ilkeston which rises on the valley slopes. Views to the west are towards the urban edge of Nottingham. Glimpses of the M1 can be seen throughout the DPZ where the road emerges from the cutting and has limited woodland screening. Views into the area can be seen from adjacent urban settlements.

The strength of the character is considered to be **STRONG**. The canal, areas of historic woodland and rural settlements of Cossall and Babbington are strong features. The agricultural landscape is a common feature across the area and, the woodland blocks add interest and strengthen the sense of place. Overall there are several features which make the area distinctive however, the M1 interrupts the overall traditional pattern of the landscape cutting across fields and woodlands. Although generally well screened there are areas where it is visible and the noise of the traffic can be clearly heard.

Landscape Condition	Good	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>	MODERATE - GOOD <i>Conserve and Enhance</i>	GOOD <i>Conserve</i>
	Moderate	POOR - MODERATE <i>Enhance and Restore</i>	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>	MODERATE - GOOD <i>Conserve and Enhance</i>
	Poor	POOR <i>Restore/Create</i>	POOR - MODERATE <i>Enhance and Restore</i>	MODERATE <i>Enhance</i>
		Weak	Moderate	Strong
Landscape strength				

The overall landscape strategy is to **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE**

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Landscape features

- Conserve and enhance the historic woodland through management to retain its landscape value
- Enhance the field pattern of the areas of large scale agriculture by replacing areas of lost hedgerow and planting new hedgerow trees
- Enhance screening of the M1 by planting woodland belts to reduce views of the motorway
- Establish a programme of replacement and management of hedgerow trees
- Conserve areas of old enclosure such as those around Cossall

Built form

- Conserve the historic character of the traditional rural settlements and isolated farmsteads
- New large agricultural barns should be minimised; proposals should include planting to reduce their scale and prominence in the landscape
- Protect the rural character of the area by minimising the visual effect of urban expansion from surrounding settlements including Nottingham City by replicating traditional dispersed edges of rural settlements such as Cossall, undertaking planting on the urban boundary and including retention or creation of traditional smaller pastoral fields close to settlements

Other development/ structures in the landscape

- Minimise the effect of any further widening activities along the M1 by small scale planting of woodlands