

# Landscape Visual Impact Assessment

*Burton Green, Nr. Coventry, CV4*



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)

This LVIA was commissioned by David Wilson Homes (Mercia) to examine the significance of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed residential development.

The proposal site lies to the south west of Coventry beyond the City boundary, north of Burton Green and to the south of an existing development which is within the Coventry City boundary at Westwood Heath.

This LVIA is a tool to identify the effects of change resulting from the development. A vital element of the study is to assess the significance of the effects. The study distinguishes between the effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right and the effect on specific views and general visual amenity experienced by people. The methodology of the study is detailed later.

The scoping considered both landscape and visual effects separately. Scoping included:

- the extent of the study area
- sources of information
- possible effects
- main receptors to be considered
- the extent and appropriate level of detail for the baseline studies
- method to be used in assessing significance
- the approach to assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects.

## 1.2 The Development

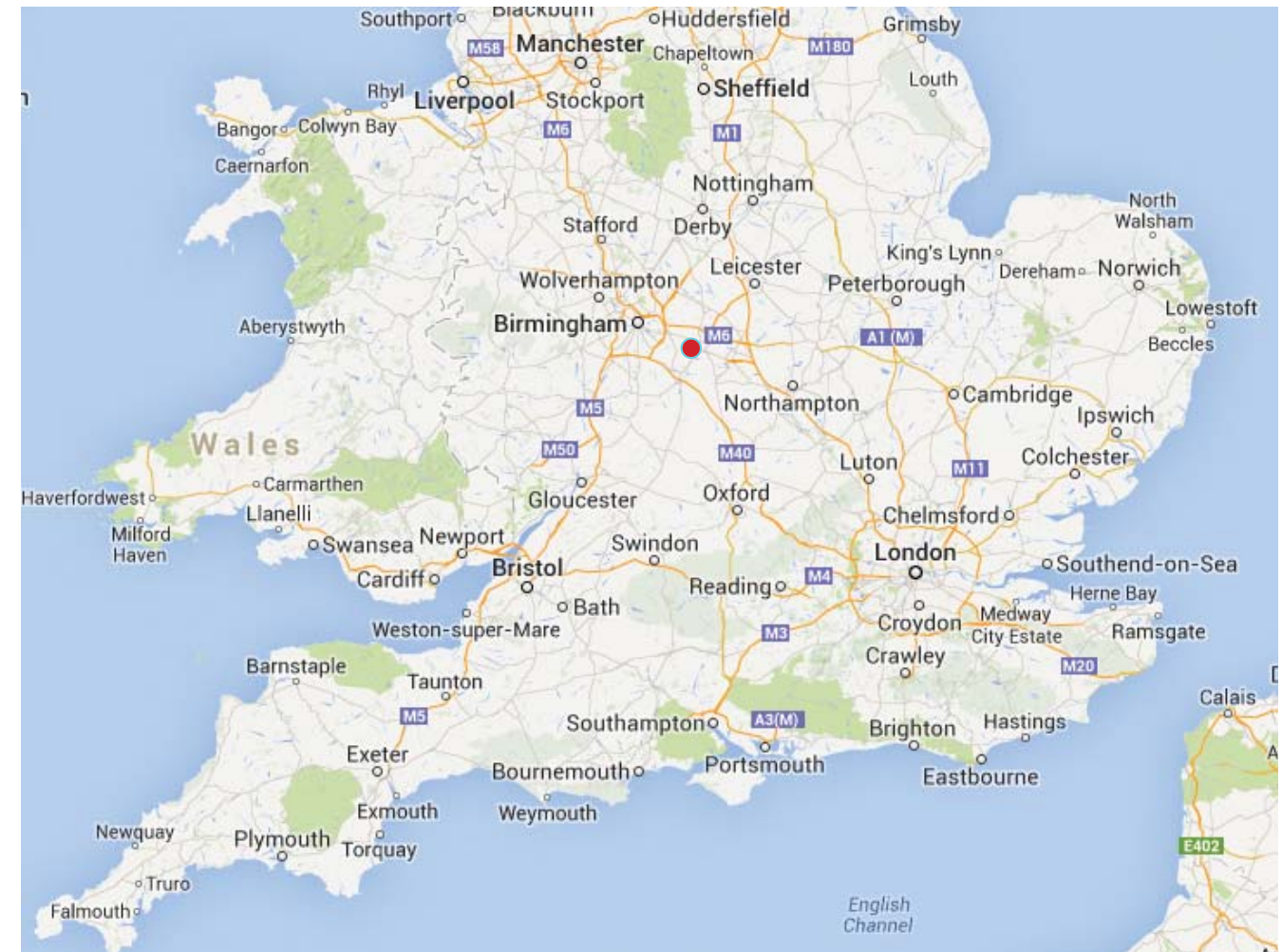
The development comprises residential properties and associated road and infrastructure. The intention is to include extensive landscape planting to the boundaries and within the site to enhance the quality of the space and to blend the development into its natural setting.

There are 3 potential sites within the proposed development area, totalling 19.2 acres:

- A: The largest of the 3 with access to Cromwell Lane, footpath to the south-east perimeters and southerly views of open fields and woodland - 9.2 acres
- B: The second largest site, with footpath access from Westwood Heath Road - 7 acres
- C: The strip of land abutting Lodge Farm House and Old Lodge Farm sharing footpath access with A - 3 acres

This LVIA will consider the landscape and visual effects of the proposed site as one potential development.

## SITE LOCATION



● SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4

### 1.3 The Site

The proposal site lies to the south-west of Coventry across Westwood Heath Road on the outskirts of Burton Green. There are existing residential properties and a footpath to the north and east perimeter of the site and an established residential development across Westwood Heath Road to the north.

The site is bounded by existing residential properties on Westwood Heath Road to the North and Cromwell Lane to the West. Lodge Farm House and Old Lodge Farm lies to the south-east of the site. There are southerly views of open fields and woodland towards Burton Green.

### 1.4 Site context

The site sits to the west of Coventry and its City boundary, within the Warwick District and in the county of Warwickshire.

With Kenilworth to the south and Solihull and Birmingham to the west, the site is within easy access of M42, M6 and M40 and is near to mainline rail.

The proposed HS2 route runs within the study area, through Burton Green.

### 1.5 Methodology

The Landscape Visual Impact assessment was carried out in accordance with the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition" (GLVIA3) by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013).

The study seeks to measure the effect of the development on the landscape and visual amenity and how significant it is likely to be.

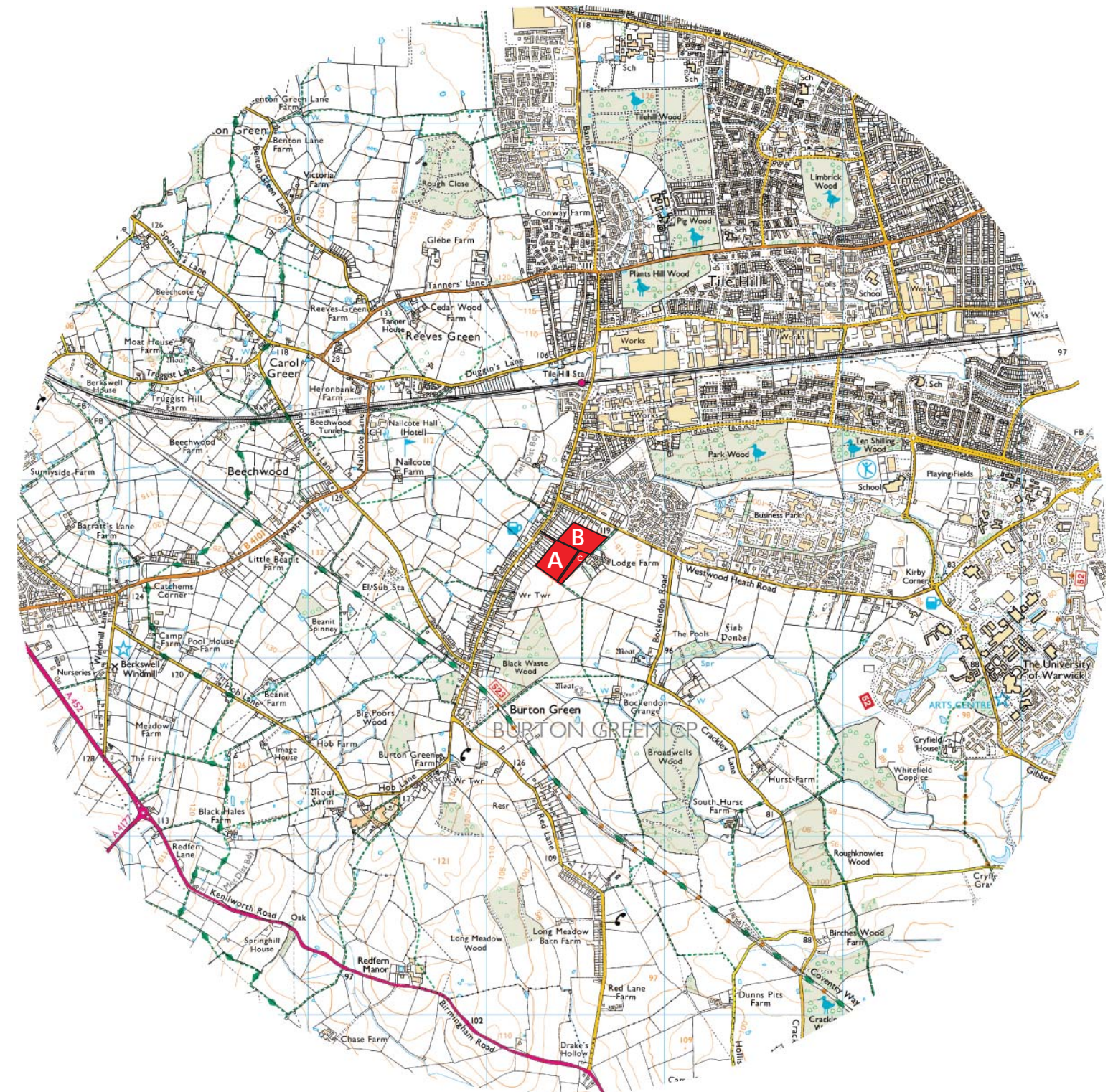
This study will draw a distinction between landscape effect and visual effect.

Landscape effects will deal with changes to the landscape as a resource which is a key issue of environmental interest, along with biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Landscape effects relate to protected landscapes and the contribution of landscape character to the sense of place and quality of life. It is concerned with how changes may affect:

- individual components of the landscape
- aesthetic or perceptual qualities
- the character of the landscape in different areas

### STUDY AREA



**SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4**

Visual effects consider how people will be affected by changes in views or visual amenity at different places.

This will include consideration of:

- the different groups of people who may experience views
- from which points they will be affected
- the nature of the views and visual amenity at those points
- changes in specific view points

A crucial element of LVIA is the importance of significance. Assessment should involve clear judgement and transparency, distinguishing significant from non-significant elements and emphasising well-argued narrative text to make clear what the significance issues and effects are.

This study will consider:

- Landscape Receptors: The effect on the landscape as a resource by looking at constituent elements of the landscape, its specific aesthetic or perceptual qualities and character of the landscape in different areas
- Visual Receptors: The visual effect on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

The study seeks to link judgement about the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the effects to arrive at significance.

This LVIA includes a desktop review, field study, photographic imagery and mitigation proposals which are integral to the landscape design proposals.

## 2 Baseline Study

### 2.1 Planning Policy

The LVIA has been conducted in accordance with current planning policy within the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011 and the proposed planning policy, currently under consultation, for the Warwickshire Local Development Framework.

Consideration has also been given to the Coventry Joint Green Belt Study and Supplementary Planning Guidance relating to new residential developments and their impact on the immediate landscape.

The Warwick District Local Plan sets out its objectives relating to the natural environment and new development proposals. New developments:

- will only be permitted which protect important natural features and positively contribute to the character and quality of its natural and historic environment through good habitat/landscape design and management.
- will be expected to demonstrate that they:-
  - a) protect and/or enhance local ecology, including existing site features of nature conservation value;
  - b) protect and/or enhance features of historical, archaeological, geological and geomorphological significance;
  - c) protect and enhance the landscape character of the area, particularly respecting its historic character;
  - d) provide appropriate levels of amenity space which incorporate suitable habitat features and hard and soft landscaping;
  - e) integrate the amenity space and proposed landscaping into the overall development;
  - f) secure the long term management and maintenance of habitat/landscape features; and
  - g) protect best and most versatile agricultural land

Development proposals which have a significant impact upon the character and appearance of an area will be required to demonstrate how they comply with this policy by way of a Nature Conservation and Landscape Analysis. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, the Council may consider possible mitigation measures to reduce any harm caused by these adverse impacts. Where mitigation measures are not possible, compensation measures may be appropriate.

### 2.2 Introduction to the Baseline Study

When viewed alongside the description of the proposed development, the baseline study will form the basis for the identification of the changes that will result in the landscape and visual effects.

Landscape Baseline aims to provide an understanding of the landscape in the area that may be affected by the development. This is done by examining the constituent elements which make up the landscape, such as its character, its spatial distribution, its geographical extent, its history (which may require separate study) and its condition.

Visual Baseline aims to establish the area in which the development may be visible, the different groups of people who may experience views of the development, the places where they will be affected and the nature of the views and visual amenity at those points.

This baseline study will consider the landscape character, footpaths, water bodies, transport, leisure and designations within the study area.

## 2.3 Landscape Character - National

### 2.3.1 Natural England Landscape Character Types

Natural England have mapped and described 159 national broad character areas - National Character Areas (NCA) (previously known as Joint Character Areas - JCAs).

Landscape character is a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one place different from another, rather than better or worse.

These profiles are currently under revision and are expected to be published by April 2014.

Although no individually specific designation is given for this area, the Development is positioned within the Natural Character Area 97 - Arden.

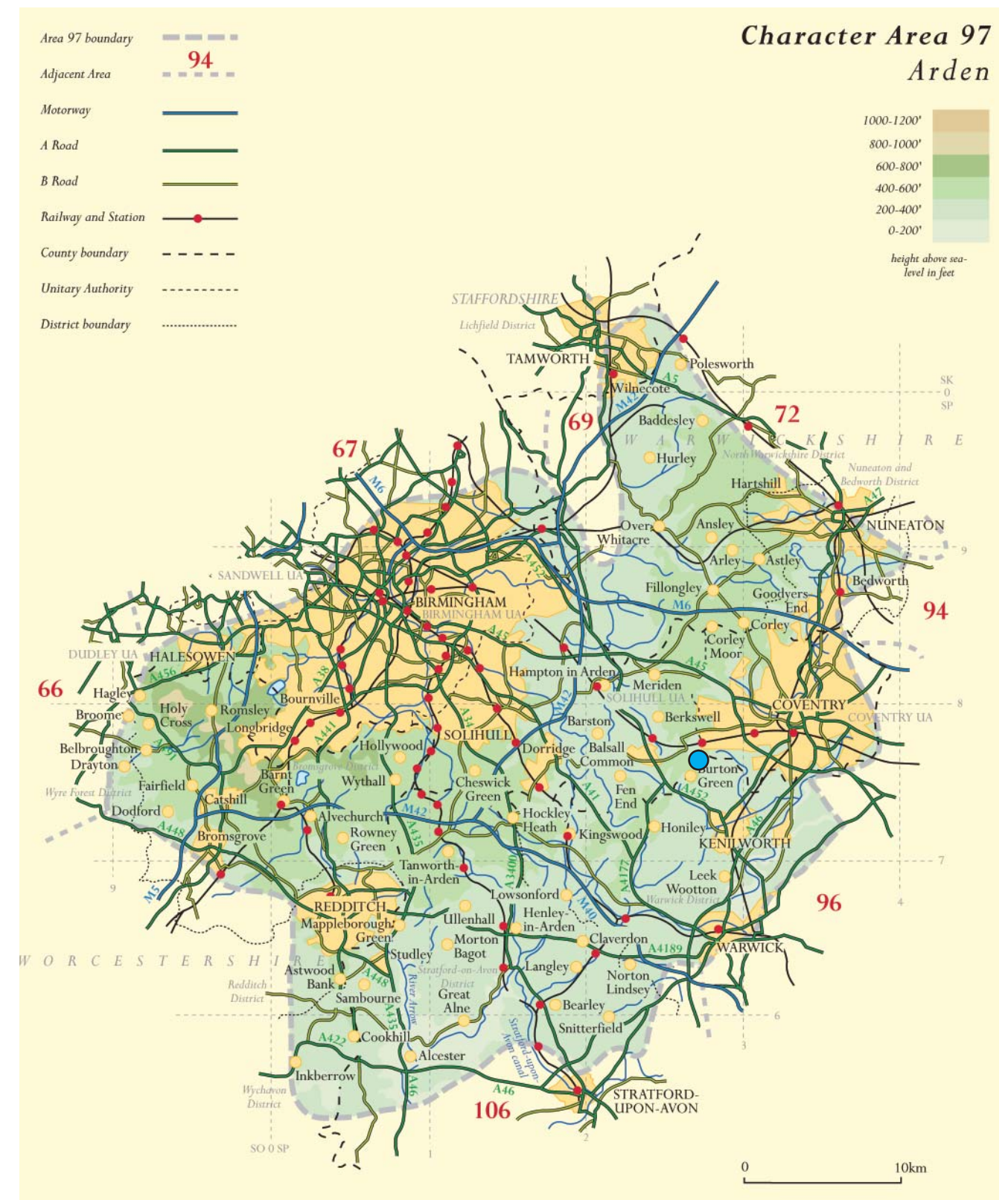
In addition, The Warwickshire Landscape Project was set up in 1987 by Warwickshire County Council and The Countryside Commission to "provide a set of guidelines designed to offer advice on maintaining diversity and beauty, to conserve the landscapes for future generations."

### 2.3.2 Key Characteristics: NCA97 Arden

The key characteristics for the NCA 97 Arden are:

- Well-wooded farmland landscape with rolling landform - geologically diverse.
- Mature oaks, mostly found within hedgerows, with ancient woodlands and historic coppices bounded by woodbanks.
- Narrow, meandering clay river valleys with long river meadows
- Numerous areas of former wood-pasture with large, old, oak trees often associated with isolated remnants of more extensive heathlands.
- Diverse field patterns, ranging from well-hedged, irregular fields and small woodlands that contrast with larger semi-regular fields
- Complex and contrasting settlement pattern, some densely populated.
- The North western area dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscapes: managed green space (e.g. allotments, gardens, parks, golf courses and public open spaces(e.g. playing fields, churchyards, cemeteries and institutional grounds).
- Transport infrastructure, the M42, M40, M6 and M5 are major transport corridors that sit within the landscape of this NCA.

## NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 97 - ARDEN



● SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4

### 2.3.3 PHYSICAL FEATURES

Within the overall character, there is wide variation which ranges from the enclosed river valleys, through the undulating wooded landscape and small hedged fields of the main plateau, to the remains of the coal industry in the north-east.

There are varied field patterns with smaller scale irregular fields derived from medieval woodlands clearance to be found close to some of the high density dispersed settlements.

The largest fields can be found in the broad river valleys and in the south which is dominated by big estates from Warwick to the east of Birmingham.

### 2.3.4 LAND FORM AND USE

Arden is a well wooded landscape with a rolling landform. The Northern and Central parts of the area lie across the eastern part of the Birmingham plateau, the south Staffordshire Coalfield and the Warwickshire Coalfields. The central area is lower lying than adjacent areas and is largely underlain by Mercia Mudstones and covered by glacial sands, gravels or till.

The southern part of the area is underlain by Mercia Mudstones, with outcrops of Arden Sandstone forming prominent escarpments.

An ancient landscape pattern of hedgerows form the traditional field boundaries. Within hedgerows, mature hedgerow oaks often form distinctive features.

The dominant land use is grass, uncropped land and arable farming.

### 2.3.5 VEGETATION

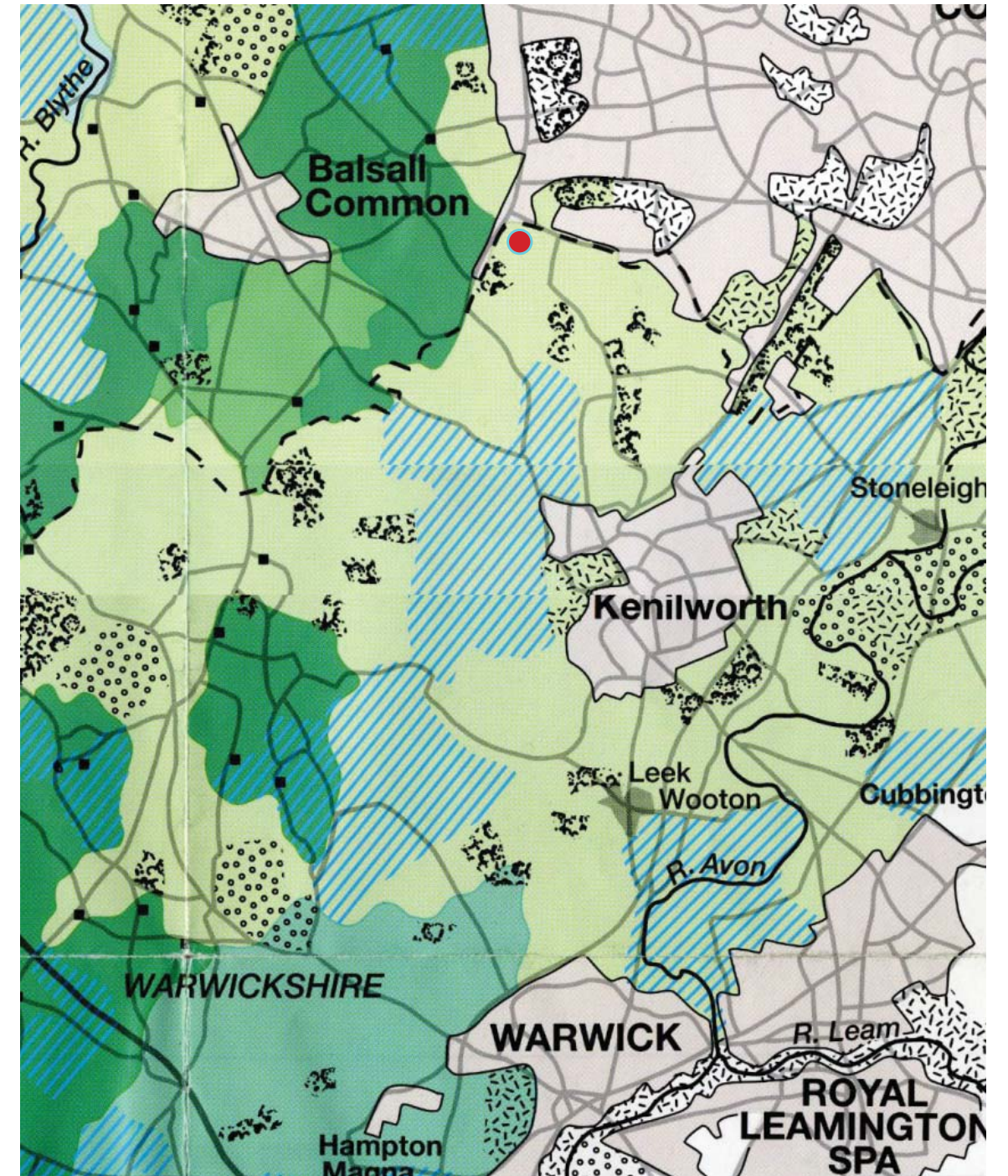
Arden is the most densely wooded part of Warwickshire with a high proportion of ancient woodland sites within the NCA.

Mature hedgerow oaks are the dominant species and scatter the area along with small ancient and plantation woodland sites. Manorial deer parks such as Stoneleigh Abbey and Packington Hall and Maxstoke park contain significant areas of wood pasture.

### 2.3.6 SETTLEMENT PATTERN

In contrast to the rest of Warwickshire, Arden is characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and hamlets, often no more than

## LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA - ARDEN PARKLANDS



● SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4

- ARDEN PARKLANDS
- ANCIENT ARDEN
- ARDEN PASTURES

## ROADWAYS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

a handful of cottages together. Ribbon and infill development has eroded this pattern over recent years.

Almost a third of the NCA is urban. Birmingham dominates the north west and the north east is an industrial area with concentric development and a range of suburban types. The north east is an industrial area with distinctive colliery settlements. Elsewhere the pattern of settlement is scattered and dispersed.

Major settlement populations can be found in the south east of the area around Coventry, Kenilworth and Warwick and in the west, Redditch, Bromsgrove and Halesowen.

Brick and timber is the material of many of the older buildings.

### 2.4 Landscape Character - Local

The "Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines" (November 2005) finds the proposed development to lie in the Arden Parklands local landscape type.

A landscape assessment has also been prepared in 2012 by the Department of Transport for the HS2 Route which is planned to run through this local landscape. This assessment defines the area within which the proposed site location stands as with "Coventry Rural Fringe Landscape Character".

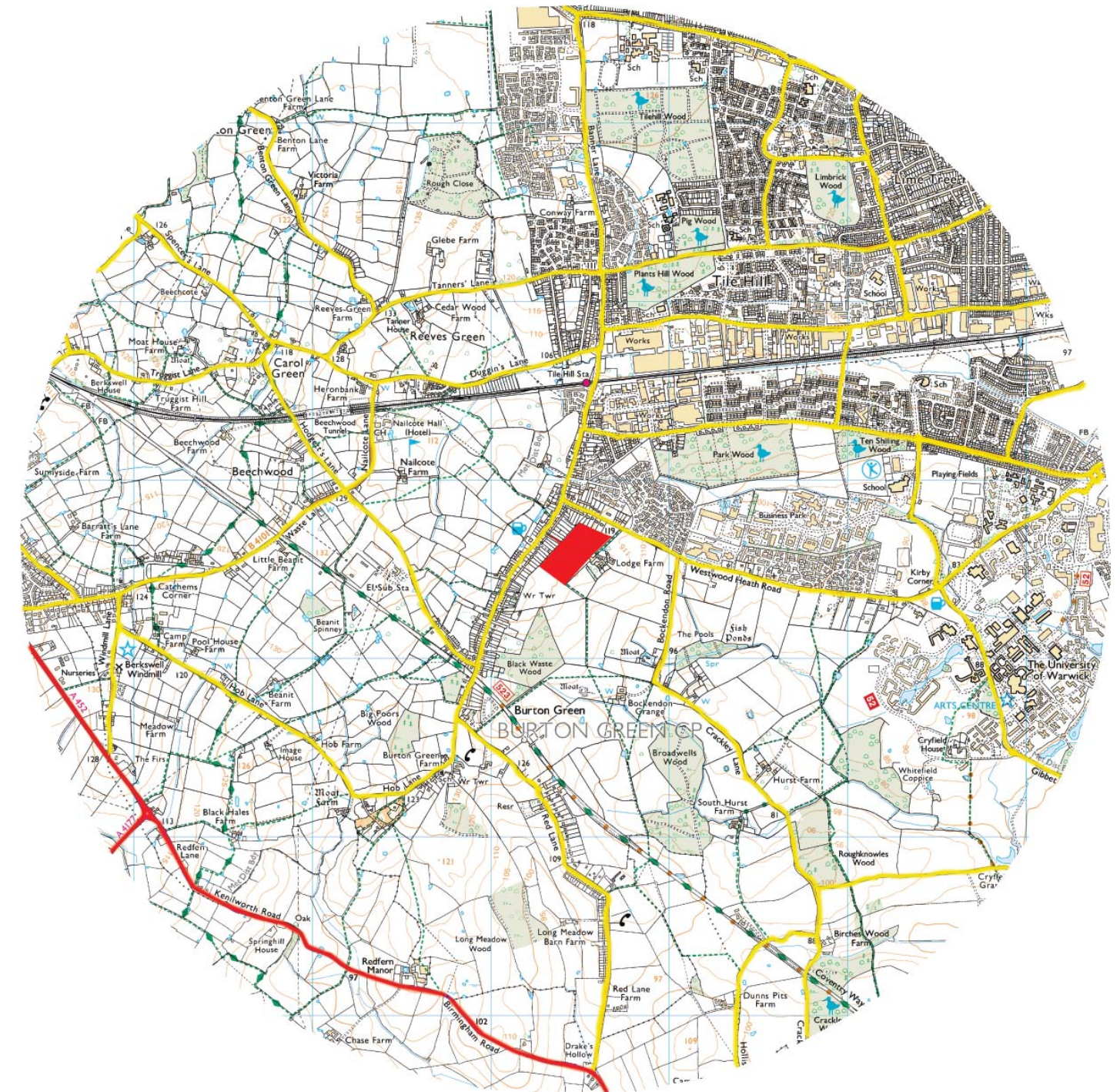
This assessment also concludes that the local landscape character also shows characteristics from the Ancient Arden and Arden Pastures landscape character types.

The site location lies with the Green Belt. The New Local Plan for Warwick District (November 2013) is under consultation at present and has provided an assessment of the proposed site locations.

#### 2.4.1 Key Characteristics - Arden Parklands

The Arden Parklands sub-region as identified in the Warwickshire Landscapes Project shows the following key characteristics:

- An enclosed, gently rolling landscape defined by woodland edges, parkland and belts of trees
- Middle distance views enclosed by woodland edges
- Belts of mature trees associated with estatelands
- Many ancient woodlands, often with irregular outlines
- Large country houses set in mature parkland
- Remnant deerparks with ancient pollard oaks
- Thick roadside hedgerows, often with bracken



**SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4**



**MAJOR ROADS**



**MINOR ROADS**



## FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND LONG DISTANCE TRAILS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

The Coventry Rural Fringe Landscape Character exhibits key characteristics as follows:

- Fields in close proximity to the urban fringe of Coventry.
- The presence of remnant agricultural land, isolated industrial land parcels, the National Grid Berkswell sub-station and National Grid overhead power lines.
- Rural lanes appear to exhibit heavy commuter use from the residential areas.
- Horse grazing is present in some of the smaller fields close to housing.
- The areas of open farmland and hedgerows appear well managed and typical of the wider area.

### 2.4.2 Physical Features

Arden Parklands is characterised by large arable fields, often poorly defined by low cut and gappy hedgerows.

Fields are in close proximity to the urban fringe of Coventry with the presence of remnant agricultural land, isolated industrial land parcels, the National Grid Berkswell sub-station and National Grid overhead power lines.

A disused water tower is one of two in the area considered local landmarks..

### 2.4.3 Land Use and Enclosure

The enclosed, gently rolling landscape is punctuated by woodland edges, hedgerow and belts of mature trees. With an irregular pattern of fields and narrow winding lanes, there is often small-scale farmed landscape with a varied landform.

The landscape is often broken by suburban influences.

### 2.4.4 Vegetation





Woodland is present but not a prominent or characteristic element apart from locally such as Big Pours and Little Pours Woods to the north of Cromwell Lane.

Small fields are typically bordered by mature hedgerow trees.

### 2.4.5 Settlement and buildings

Brick and timber is the material of many of the older buildings, particularly farmsteads and country houses which date from the 16th and 17th centuries. The area is characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and hamlets.



-  SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4
-  FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
-  + NATIONAL TRAIL/RECREATIONAL ROUTE
-  + TRAFFIC-FREE CYCLE ROUTE

## 2.4.6 Transport and Access

With Kenilworth to the south and Solihull and Birmingham to the west, the site is within easy access of M42, M6 and M40 and is near to mainline rail.

There is a national trail that runs through the study area which is also currently part of the National Cycle Network (523).

The proposed HS2 route would run within the study area (following the national trail route), through Burton Green.

## 2.4.7 Landscape Forces for Change

The dispersed settlement pattern is a key characteristic of much of the area. Development guidelines and village strategies, including specific design guidelines, should be used to safeguard this.

The retention of hedges and hedgerow trees should be addressed, especially in the north-eastern part of the area.

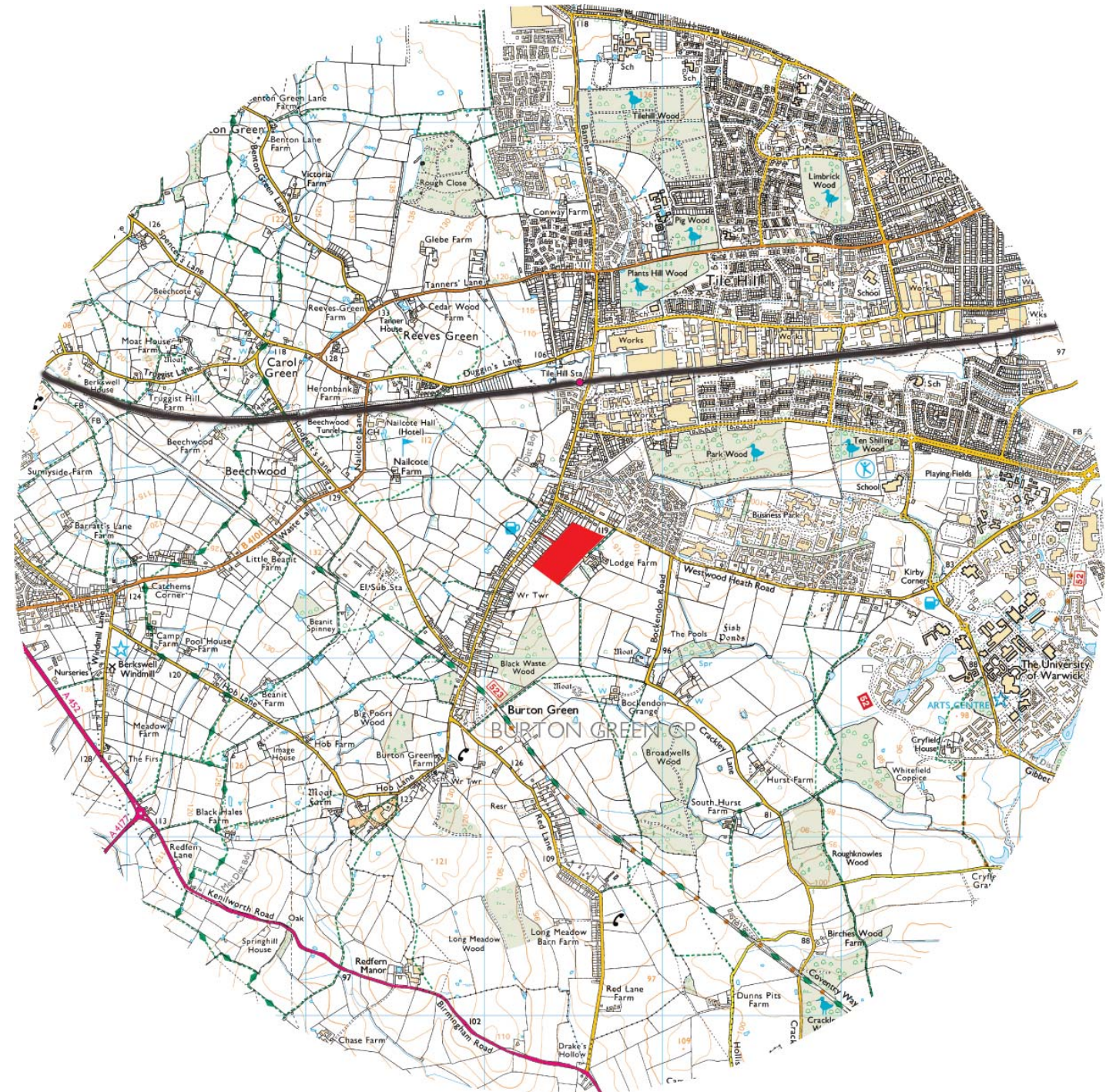
Planting schemes using native tree species are appropriate for screening urban edges and new residential developments.

There is scope for the restoration of heathland, especially on roadside verges, and for the active management (notably bracken and scrub clearance) of existing heathlands.

The restoration of mineral extraction sites is an opportunity to absorb these areas back to the character of the surrounding landscape and to create habitats of wildlife interest.

There is scope for the restoration and appropriate management of riverside wetland and the conservation of the natural river course and the distinctive floodplain hedge and tree pattern.

## RAILWAYS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA



SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4



SINGLE AND MULTIPLE TRACK RAIL LINE

# 3 Designations

## 3.1 Local Nature Reserves

### PARK WOOD and TEN SHILLING WOOD

The ancient woodlands of Park Wood and Ten Shilling Wood, both situated in Canley appear relatively unchanged for at least 200 years.

They are at present under the control of Coventry City Council. Ten Shilling Wood covers 12 acres and Park Wood covers an area of 48 acres.

They both provide an urban refuge for plants and wildlife and are important in maintaining the local rural character.

### TILE HILL WOOD (SEE 3c SSSI)

### PLANTS HILL WOOD

This wood stands alongside Tile Hill Lane and slopes greatly from North to South with a steeper incline to the West side. It is a mixed wood of 22 acres containing Pedunculate Oak approximately 160 years of age and a number of Sessile Oak with some 180 year old Beech trees.

Lime, many Scots Pine, European Larch, Norway Spruce and one solitary Crack Willow (a species that favours moist ground) is located in the West corner where a shallow pool forms in very wet weather when water seeps down the steep incline.

### PIG WOOD

Pig Wood is a small 14 acre mixed deciduous and coniferous wood with a canopy of Pedunculate Oak, Lime, Beech, Scots Pine, European Larch, Norway Spruce, Silver Birch, Ash, Sweet Chestnut, Rowan, Holly, Whitebeam and Aspen. There is also some evidence of planting within the last twenty years of Oak, Hornbeam and a few Ash.

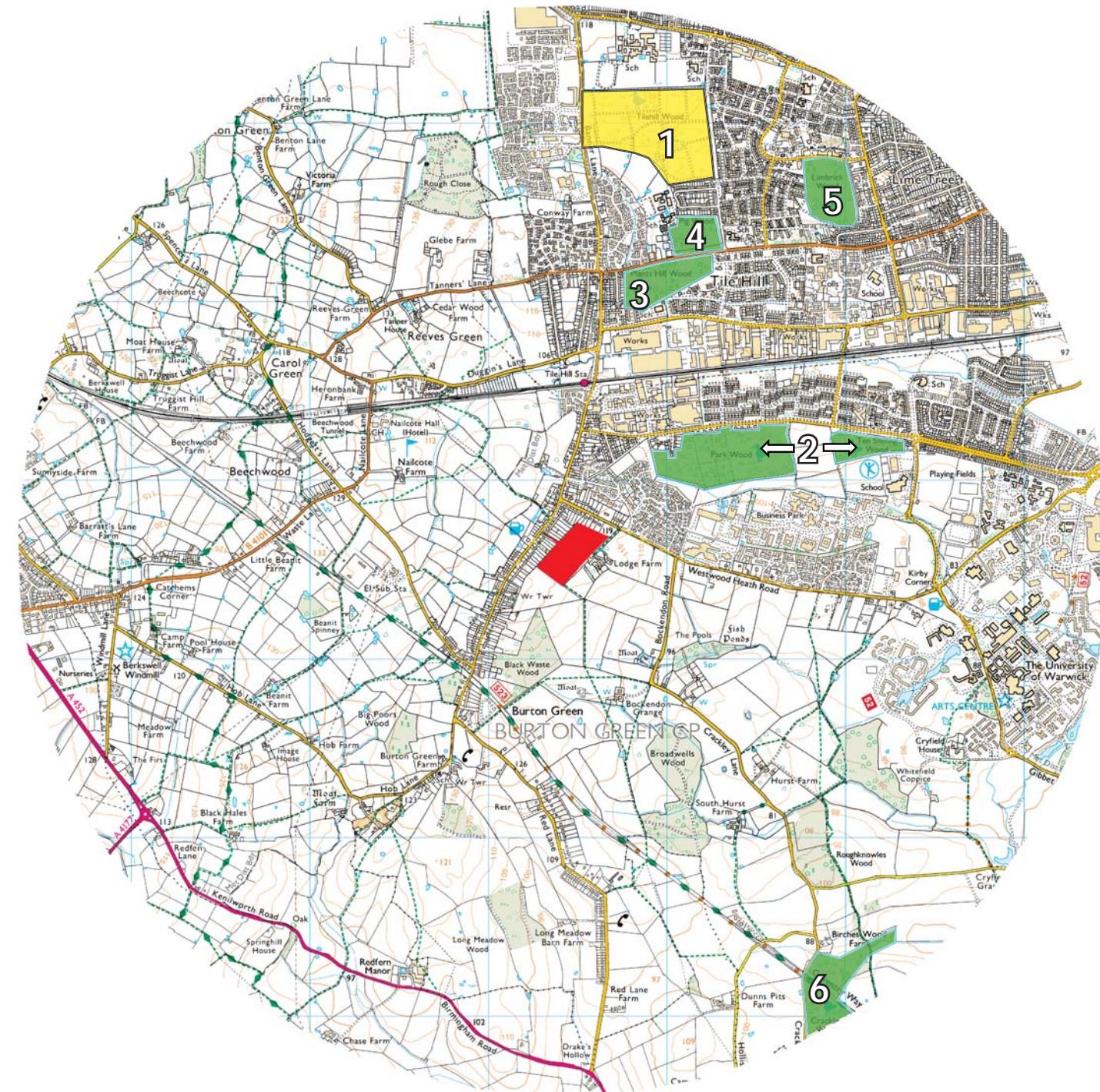
The pond to the north of the wood was reinstated in 1996 and a path providing access for people with disabilities was constructed in 1997.




### LIMBRICK WOOD

The wood is approximately 23 acres and is located South of the Jardine Crescent Shopping Precinct. It is a mixed wood of broadleaves and conifers and the site is more or less level at 122 ft above sea level.

There are many examples of 50 year-old Rowan planted historically for its berries and some of the Oak is of a coppice origin.

## LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, ANCIENT WOODLAND AND SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI) WITHIN THE STUDY AREA



-  SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4
-  LOCAL NATURE RESERVES & ANCIENT WOODLANDS
-  + SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
- 1 Tile Hill Wood
- 2 Park Wood & Ten Shilling Wood
- 3 Plants Hill Wood
- 4 Pig Wood
- 5 Limbrook Wood
- 6 Crackley Wood

### CRACKLEY WOOD

An ancient semi-natural woodland just north of Kenilworth, once part of the Forest of Arden, Crackley Wood is managed traditionally as high forest with a coppice understorey. It is under the stewardship of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

The wood provides tall trees of oak, birch and sweet chestnut with a lower shrub layer of hazel and holly. It has an impressive display of bluebells around May time.

## 3.2 Green Belt

The New Local Plan for Warwick District (November 2013) is under consultation at present and has provided an assessment of the proposed site locations within its Village Housing Options. The proposed site at Burton Green has been discounted as an option for development within this Local Plan draft, favouring an alternative site at Baginton Nurseries.

The assessment states that discounting this site adheres to current Green Belt policy appears, arresting the urban sprawl.

## 3.3 National Trail and Cycle Network 523

Route 523 runs from the outskirts of Kenilworth to Burton Green. This traffic-free walking and cycling route provides an essential link between local villages, the University of Warwick, Tile Hill railway station and Kenilworth town centre. The route connects with Route 52 which links Kenilworth and Coventry.

This is also part of the proposed route for phase one of the new London-West Midlands HS2 rail line.

## 3.4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSi)

### TILE HILL WOOD

Tile Hill Wood is a wood between Hawthorn Lane and Banner Lane designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1952 and a Local Nature Reserve in 1930.

Under the stewardship of the Coventry and District Natural History and Scientific Society, it covers 70 acres (28 hectares) and is a mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland. The woodland has examples of Norway Spruce, European Larch and Hazel coppice, together with Sycamore, Oak, Spruce, Birch, Chestnut, Ash and Pine. Holly has been gradually destroying the hazel under-canopy and is beginning to prevent the regeneration of oaks and hazels.

The paths are under very heavy usage and there are specially-built paths suitable for people with disabilities.

## LISTED BUILDINGS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA



**SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4**



### Listed buildings, numbered

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1:ARNOLDS FARMHOUSE             | 14:BERKSWELL WINDMILL          |
| 2:142 CROMWELL LANE             | 15:BARRATTS LANE FARM          |
| 3:92 CROMWELL LANE              | 16:NORTH CHASE BARNS           |
| 4:CROMWELL COTTAGE              | 17:REDFERN MANOR               |
| 5:21 DUGGINS LANE               | 18:CRABMILLS FARMHOUSE         |
| 6:NAILCOTE HALL                 | 19:HOLLY HOUSE                 |
| 7:WEST LODGE & COTTAGE          | 20:CANTERBURY HOUSE            |
| 8:CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST | 21:BERKSWELL GRANGE            |
| 9:CRYFIELD HOUSE FARM           | 22:MOAT HOUSE FARM             |
| 10:CRYFIELD GRANGE FARM         | 23:WOODLANDS SCHOOL            |
| 11:SOUTH HURST FARM             | 24:LIMBRICK WOOD SCHOOL        |
| 12:MOAT FARM & BARN             | 25:CONWAYS FARMHOUSE & BARN    |
| 13:IMAGE HOUSE & BARN           | 26:TANYARD FARMHOUSE & GRANARY |
|                                 | 27:THE COTTAGE                 |

### 3.5 Listed Buildings

The listed buildings within the study area cross over Coventry, Kenilworth, Berkswell, Burton Green and Solihull boundaries. Those with the proximity within the study area are:

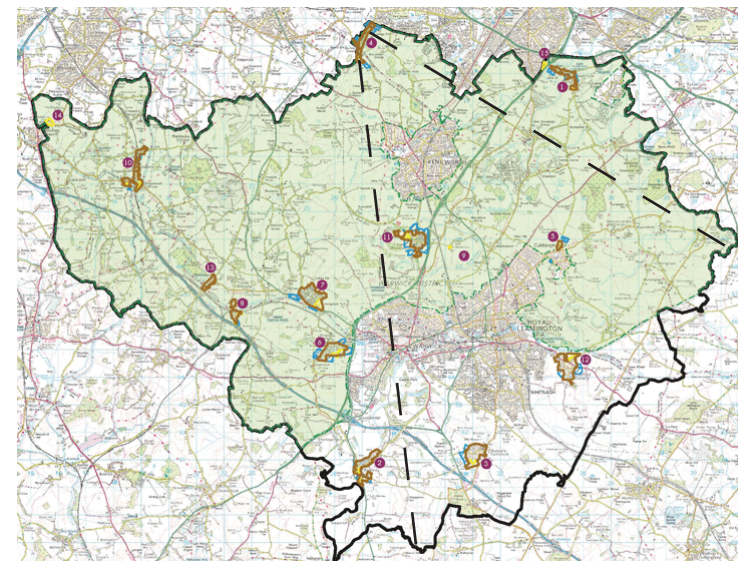
- Arnolds Farmhouse
- 92 and 142 Cromwell Lane
- Cromwell Cottage
- 21 Duggins Lane
- The Church of St John the Baptist
- Conways Farmhouse and Barn
- Tanyard Farmhouse and Granary
- Cryfield House Farmhouse
- Cryfield Grange Farmhouse
- Long Meadow Farm
- Redfern Manor
- North Chase Barns
- Moat Farm and Barn
- Image House and Barn
- Berkswell Windmill
- Barratts Lane Farm
- Nailcote Hall
- West Lodge
- Ram Hall and Barn
- Moat House Farm
- Berkswell Grange
- Crabmills Farmhouse
- Canterbury House
- Holly House
- Wests Cottage
- Woodlands School
- Limbrick Wood School

### 3.6 Other Designations

There are no areas categorised under any of the following designations within the study area:

- Areas of great landscape value
- Areas of outstanding natural beauty
- Historic parks and gardens
- Battlefields

### GREEN BELT LAND AROUND STUDY AREA AND VILLAGE OPTIONS FROM WARWICK LOCAL PLAN (NOVEMBER 2013)



- Site Location
- ▨ Discounted option in Warwick Local Plan
- ▨ Preferred option in Warwick Local Plan
- Green Belt
- Village boundaries

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# 4 Assessing the effects

The impact of the development will be gauged by consideration of:

- Landscape Effects on the study area
- Visual Effects on the study area

## 4.1 Introduction to Landscape Effects

The assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource.

### *EFFECTS*

A range of landscape effects will be considered. These include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape.
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape.
- The combined effects of these changes.

The magnitude of each effect is referred to in terms of size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and permanence.

As regards size and scale, the judgment takes account of the existing landscape elements, their extents, whether they will be lost or changed and the degree of change to aesthetic, perceptual or key characteristics.

The geographical extent of the effect is described by reference to the site, its immediate context and wider landscape character areas.

These effects can be direct, indirect, secondary, cumulative, short-term, medium-term, long-term, permanent, temporary, positive and negative.

Effects are considered during the lifetime of the development as well as during the construction or implementation phase.

### *RECEPTORS*

In order to assess the landscape as a resource and its susceptibility to change, a value has to be placed on the landscape. The initial consideration of the value of the landscape makes reference to:

- Information about areas recognized by statute e.g National Parks, National Scenic Area etc.

- Information about Heritage Coasts.
- Local planning documents, including local designations.
- Information on the status of individual groups of features, e.g conservation areas, listed buildings etc.
- Art and literature.
- Materials on landscapes of local interest.

Where there is no existing evidence of landscape value, an assessment can be made in line with the guidance in GLVIA3. This would include:

- Landscape quality or conditions
- Scenic quality
- Rarity
- Representativeness
- Conservation interest
- Recreation value
- Perceptual aspects
- Associations

Through the scoping and baseline studies, a number of landscape effects have been identified as likely to occur and others which are unlikely to occur and will not be considered.

Some effects have been reduced due to design mitigation steps and their impact will be considered post mitigation. As noted earlier, the study seeks to identify the range of Landscape receptors and their sensitivity to the effects of the development.

A full definition of all degrees of Landscape Effect is included in Appendix 1.

The landscape resources which have the potential to be affected by the proposal in the study area are:

- The Landscape Character
- HS2 - Coventry Rural Fringe
- Burton Green Settlement Edge
- Green Belt
- The Site
- Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodlands and SSSI

### *4.1.1 Landscape Character*

#### *NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER*

Due to its scale and diversity, the Arden National Character area shows "Medium" sensitivity to landscape change. The proposed site exhibits few of the characteristics which are typical of the Arden National Character Area.

The site is made up of three irregular shaped fields which show some resemblance

to the field pattern found within the character area. However, there are few other features of the Arden National Character Area within the site. As any change to the site will have little impact on the landscape character, the magnitude of the effect is likely to be “Low” and the significance “Moderate”.

### *LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER*

The Arden Parklands sub-region, as identified in the Warwickshire Landscapes Project, includes the key characteristics of:

- Enclosed, gently rolling landscapes defined by woodland edges, parkland and belts of trees
- Middle distance views enclosed by woodland edges
- Thick roadside hedgerows, often with bracken.

Closer to the Coventry Rural Fringe, the landscape includes:

- The presence of remnant agricultural land, isolated industrial land parcels, the National Grid Berkswell sub station and National Grid overhead power lines
- Rural lanes appearing to exhibit heavy commuter use from residential areas
- Horse grazing present in some of the smaller fields close to housing.

The mix of restricted views due to terrain and vegetation, together with the industrial and commuter influences, afford a “Medium” sensitivity to any landscape effects resulting from the proposed development. The magnitude of the effect of proposed housing is likely to be “Low” in view of the associated landscape proposals.

These mitigating measures to the eastern and southern boundaries reinforce the existing screening flora with species typical of the local vernacular. The significance of the landscape effect is considered “Moderate”.

#### *4.1.2 HS2 Coventry Rural Fringe*

The November 2013 report for the HS2 – London to West Midlands Environmental statement (Volume 5) has been commissioned by the Department of Transport. Within its Technical Appendices, there is a section on the Coventry Rural Fringe which included the study area of Burton Green. The statement indicated that due to the good condition, medium tranquillity and value at a local level, the landscape character assessment is categorised as being of “Medium” sensitivity.

In view of the nature and scale of the proposals, the magnitude of the landscape effect is considered “Low” and the significance of the effects are considered as “Moderate”.

#### *4.1.3 Burton Green Settlement Edge*

Warwickshire County Council is currently preparing its new local plan. The supporting evidence includes two documents which are relevant to this LVIA. Appendix 7 is a Landscape Sensitivity and Ecological & Geological Study and Appendix 8 is a Green Belt and Green Field Review.

The Landscape Sensitivity and Ecological & Geological Study employs a series of Land Cover Parcels (LCP) to describe and classify the sensitivity of the landscape. The proposed site lies in the northern extreme of the LCP/Zone BG\_01 within the settlement Burton Green. The site abuts the rear of properties on Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road.

The study describes the zone as “high sensitivity to housing development”. The landscape character of this part of Burton Green settlement edge is described as having a geometric pattern of medium/large scale mixed farmland.

Much of the description concentrates on the 10% or so of the LCP/Zone BG\_01 occupied by the proposed site. There are numerous references to elements which afford a more developed character than a zone which the study suggests has no relationship to the adjacent settlement, i.e.:

- Large gardens/grounds and strong treed boundaries back onto the zone with the disused water tower presenting a striking feature in the landscape.
- The settlement edge is blurred by mature vegetation within the long back gardens with only occasional glimpses of individual properties providing a semi-rural character.
- Field boundaries have been replaced by post and wire fencing with relic hedgerow reverting to scrub.
- There are goal posts within one of the fields suggesting that it is, or was in the past, used for recreation at some point in the year.

In terms of sensitivity, the proposed site lies within a portion of the BG\_01 zone which has a different landscape character to the remainder. The proximity of housing on the western and northern boundaries and the deciduous and coniferous planting on the boundary with Lodge Farm to the east, provides a significant degree of enclosure. Views out of the site to the east are filtered by the presence of the semi-mature and mature boundary trees.

Whilst the remainder of the zone may have rural characteristics typical of Arden Parklands, the characteristics of the proposed site distinguish it as a location with a landscape character less sensitive to residential development.

Views into the proposed site from the north and west are truncated by adjacent housing. The site is potentially visible from a number of locations to the south and east. The 125m contour runs through the site with terrain sloping away to the east across a rural landscape until reaching The University of Warwick and associated buildings approximately 2km away on the 90m contour. Land sloping to the east is truncated by the Kenilworth Greenway and associated vegetation approximately 1.5km away.

Views from the public domain within this area include:

- Pedestrians and road users on Bockendon Road
- Pedestrians and road users on Westwood Heath Road
- Walkers using public footpaths between the Kenilworth Greenway and Brockendon Road and Cromwell Lane.
- Walkers using the footpaths from Featherbed Lane to Crackley Lane.

Views towards the proposed site are filtered by mature boundary vegetation and the buildings of Lodge Farm. The outline of a number of properties can be made out on the skyline when viewed from Bockendon Road, however the presence of the water tower and redbrick housing on Westwood Heath Lane are the dominant features on the horizon.

Beyond Bockendon Road to the east, views are distant and often obscured by blocks of woodland. There was little evidence of a view adjacent to Heronbank apartments at Warwick University, the closest point to the proposed site on the University campus.

Distant views towards the site from the south are from footpaths between Black Waste Wood and Broadwells Wood. Views are largely glimpse in nature due to the undulating terrain and the extensive natural vegetation. The presence of the water tower and red brick frontages on Westwood Heath Road remain the dominant man-made features.

Although the report suggests the zone as a whole may be visible from distances as far away as the University of Warwick and edge of Coventry, the proposed site location is unlikely to be visible at such distances.

Whilst the statement that "The zone is on higher ground and as such is extremely visible from the surrounding area and therefore unsuitable for development." may be true of development in certain parts of the zone, it is unlikely to be true of the proposed site which is not visible from much of the surrounding area.

The sensitivity of the landscape receptor is considered "Medium". The development proposals, which include mitigating landscape proposals to enhance the boundary vegetation on the eastern and southern boundaries, are considered to have an effect of "Low" magnitude and the significance is "Moderate".

#### 4.1.4 Green Belt

The Warwickshire County Council's Green and Green Field Review examined the Green Belt which accommodates the proposed site in terms of Green Belt Aims and Character. This LVIA considers the Green Belt as a Landscape Receptor and the landscape effects that any development may have upon it. The review refers to the Green Belt in terms of openness of character - non-enclosed, continued, open and exposed.

The landscape character of this part of the Green Belt exhibits many characteristics typical of Arden Parklands:

- An enclosed, gently rolling landscape defined by woodland edges.
- Middle distance views enclosed by woodland.
- Many woodlands often with irregular outlines
- Thick roadside hedgerows often with bracken.

Whilst Green Belt designations are valued "High" and are potentially sensitive to change, the proposed development does not significantly compromise the openness of the landscape or detract from any of the elements which combine to create the local landscape character. As the development is an extension to existing adjacent housing, the integrity of the space as a whole is retained.

The proposed site is not typical of the larger Green Belt landscape character. It has been used as a sports facility; the footpaths are restricted and show sign of heavy footfall. The grass is overgrown and neglected. The space is partially separated from the larger landscape by the position of Lodge Farm.

The proposed development represents an opportunity to create a new robust "green boundary" to the village edge which could enhance the green belt definition. The magnitude of the development would therefore result in a "Medium" effect on the landscape character of the green belt with "Moderate" significance.

#### 4.1.5 The Site

The site comprises three adjacent fields of 9.2 acres, 7 acres and 3 acres. To the West, the site abuts the rear boundary of houses on Cromwell Lane. To the North, the site abuts the rears of properties on Westwood Heath Road. To the South, the boundary is adjacent to open farmland. To the East, the site abuts the boundary with the access road to Lodge Farm, Lodge farm itself and open fields to the East.

Mature and semi-mature native and exotic vegetation on the Lodge Farm boundary filter views from the sloping ground to the East. Boundaries with the existing gardens to the West and North are populated with a variety of botanical forms, some native, some exotic. Field hedgerows have been replaced with post and wire fence and the site has previously been used for local sport and recreation.

The proximity of the adjacent settlement and associated activities have heavily influenced the current landscape character. The most notable elements within the fields are the overgrown rough grass species and goal posts from former use. Public footpaths run through the site, connecting the wider landscape with Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road.

The landscape character of the site contrasts with the adjacent landscape which is more rural in nature. The sensitivity of this landscape to change is therefore "Medium" and the magnitude of the development "Medium". The significance is considered "Moderate".

#### 4.1.6 Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodlands and SSSI

Most of the designated areas (Tile Hill Wood, Park Wood & Ten Shilling Wood, Plants Hill Wood, Pig Wood and Limbrook Wood) are to the North of the proposed site and insulated by surrounding build environment. Their landscape character is therefore unlikely to be further compromised by the proposed level of additional housing.

Crackley Wood, to the South-east of the site, is approximately 2km away and separated from the proposed site by several blocks of woodland. The above designations are considered of "Medium" sensitivity to this level of residential development. The magnitude of any landscape effect may be indirect through increased numbers visiting these sites. However, due to the scale of the development, these are likely to be low and therefore the magnitude is considered "Low". The significance of the effect is therefore "Minor".



## 4.2 Introduction to Visual Effects

The site was evaluated in January when the vegetation was largely without leaves and therefore at its most exposed.

Visual Effects have been evaluated in a similar fashion to Landscape Effects. The visual receptors have been identified and judgment made regarding their value and susceptibility to change. The magnitude of the size of the development's effects on the view is then assessed.

A judgment of the significance of the effect has been made based on the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the effect.

An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the view available to people and their visual amenity. The concern is with how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by change in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape or introduction of new elements.

A full definition of all degrees of Visual Effect is included in Appendix 2.

## 4.3 Visual Receptors

The interaction of the terrain, vegetation, buildings, structures and other human activity determines the potential view of the site or proposed development. The assessment has tried to establish the visibility of the site from a representative selection of surrounding receptors (people who have a viewing opportunity of the site).

Receptor sensitivity is determined by the type of viewer and their activity. Residents, walkers and recreational users of the countryside for its' own sake are considered highly sensitive. Motorists and people at work are considered low sensitivity.

Views from the North and West of the site are restricted to residents in properties which abut the site. They will have potential views of the site from the rear of the properties and from the rear gardens.

Public footpaths criss- cross the site and proceed further afield to the South and East of the site affording views from a distance.

Views from the Kenilworth Greenway and from the University of Warwick were also considered.

## VIEW LOCATIONS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA



**SITE LOCATION: BURTON GREEN, NR. COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE CV4**



**VIEW LOCATION AND REFERENCE (see numbered images)**

### 4.3.1 *Residences backing onto the site*

Although not public views, the visual amenity enjoyed by residences backing on to the site will be significantly affected. Although the proposals include additional boundary tree planting, the change in view from an open aspect to houses will be a major change. Residences with full view of the site are considered of "High" sensitivity and magnitude of the visual effect is also "High". The resulting significance of the visual effect of the development is therefore "Major".

A number of specific viewpoints were considered and the following thirteen were selected as the most representable. The view images are can be found in section 5. Views.

### 4.3.2 *View 1 - Kenilworth Greenway*

Lateral views from the Kenilworth Greenway are largely screened by vegetation, although in Winter there are glimpse views towards the site. The views from this well-used pedestrian and cycling route are of "High" sensitivity. The site, however, is distant and obscured by vegetation adjacent to the Greenway and on site. The magnitude of the effect of the development on the view is considered "Low" with the significance "Minor".

### 4.3.3 *View 2 - Footpath - Bockendon Grange*

This view is taken from the start of the footpath once leaving the Kenilworth Greenway. It is also a representative view of many of the views experienced from locations on footpaths between The Greenway and Bockendon Grange. Views of the site from these footpaths vary due to the undulating terrain and vegetation. For much of the path the site is not visible but will come into sight as the surrounds change. In general the magnitude of the effect is likely to be "Low" but given that the walkers are considered "Highly" sensitive receptors, the significance is "Minor".

### 4.3.4 *View 3 - Footpath before Bockendon Road*

This view is from the public footpath just before it reaches Bockendon Road. The land slopes upward to the site and is obscured in part by intermediate and site vegetation. The receptors at this point would be predominantly walkers which would afford a "High" sensitivity. The site is more visible than a location further away from the footpath and is likely to have a "Medium" degree of magnitude. The resulting significance is "Moderate".

### 4.3.5 *View 4 - Open views from Bockendon Road*

This view is from further along Bockendon Road with open views towards the site. Views would be experienced by the highly sensitive walking group but also motorists who are a less sensitive receptor. The overall sensitivity is considered "High".

Mitigating boundary planting will bolster existing peripheral site planting to help blend any new development into the landscape. The magnitude of the effect of the development is considered "Medium" and its significance "Moderate".

### 4.3.6 *View 5 - From Westwood Heath Road*

The view from Westwood Heath Road heading North-west would be largely experienced by motorists. There is a pavement so pedestrians will also experience the view but mainly walking to and from school or work. The magnitude of the visual effect is considered "Medium" and significance, due to the less sensitive receptors, is "Minor".

### 4.3.7 *View 6 - Lodge Farm Access Road*

The view into the site is from the access road leading from Westwood Heath Road. It carries vehicles to Lodge Farm but is also a footpath linking into the wider network to the South via the site. The sensitivity of the receptors is "High" and there will be major changes to most of this view if development was to take place. The magnitude of the effect is therefore "High". However, the existing view is of lower value given the site is mainly overgrown grass land with poor quality boundary treatments. The significance is therefore considered "Moderate".

### 4.3.8 *Views 7 and 8 - Close proximity footpaths*

Views 7 and 8 are taken from public footpaths looking into the site from close proximity. As with view 6, the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the effect are considered "High", however the change of the view due to development will not be as adverse as if there were outward views of the countryside. The significance is therefore "Moderate".

### 4.3.9 *View 9 and 10 - Close proximity residences*

Views 9 and 10 look into the site and differ from the views 6-8 in that they look towards an open landscape in the distance. This is a view which will resemble a proportion of views from the properties backing onto the site. Although the foreground view is of low quality grassland, the distant view is of the open landscape. The "Highly" sensitive receptors include local residents and walkers using the public footpaths. Given the distant views from these locations, the magnitude of the effect is "High" and the significance "Major".

### 4.3.10 *View 11 - From Cromwell Lane*

The view from Cromwell Lane indicates the site is largely obscured from the main road. The conifers visible behind the houses on Cromwell Lane are on the boundary of Lodge Farm. Receptors along Cromwell Lane would be pedestrians and road users and are considered "Low" sensitivity. The magnitude of the visual effect of development is considered "Low" and the significance "Minor".

### 4.3.11 View 12 - Distant View - Crackley Lane

View 12 demonstrates the impact of the development on views approximately 1.5km from the site. The view is from the public footpath which leaves Featherbed Lane and proceeds across fields to Crackley Lane. The view is westward towards the site which is approximately 30m higher than the viewpoint

The receptors are considered of "High" sensitivity as walkers using the paths for recreation would be the majority usage. However, the view is a distant view which includes blocks of woodland, vegetation, the water tower and power lines. The magnitude of the visual effect of any development is likely to be "Negligible" and "Insignificant".

### 4.3.12 View 13 - University of Warwick

View 13 is from the University of Warwick. This view was selected as the University accommodates a large number of residences which are considered of "High" sensitivity. Due to the distance from the site and position of vegetation between the site and the university, it was difficult to gain any view from the closest locations on the University campus. The magnitude of the visual effect of the development and its significance are therefore considered "Neutral".

## 4.4 Receptors

The following tables summarise the receptors and their sensitivity to the proposed Development.

LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS - SUMMARY	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
The Landscape Character - National	Medium	Low	Moderate
The Landscape Character - Local	Medium	Low	Moderate
HS2 - Coventry Rural Fringe	Medium	Low	Moderate
Burton Green Settlement Edge	Medium	Low	Moderate
Green Belt	High	Medium	Moderate
The Site	Medium	Medium	Moderate
Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodlands and SSSI	Medium	Low	Minor

VISUAL RECEPTORS - SUMMARY	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
Residences backing onto the Site	High	High	Major
View 1 Kenilworth Greenway	High	Low	Minor
View 2 Footpath - Bockendon Grange	High	Low	Minor
View 3 Footpath before Bockendon Road	High	Medium	Moderate
View 4 Open Views from Bockendon Road	High	Medium	Moderate
View 5 From Westwood Heath Road	Medium	Medium	Minor
View 6 Lodge Farm Access Road	High	High	Moderate
Views 7 & 8 Close Proximity Footpaths	High	High	Moderate
Views 9 & 10 Close Proximity Residences	High	High	Major
View 11 From Cromwell Lane	Low	Low	Minor
View 12 Distant View Crackley Lane	High	Negligible	Insignificant
View 13 University of Warwick	High	Neutral	Neutral



**1** From Kenilworth Greenway

## 5 Views

The areas surrounding the proposed site were surveyed to establish locations where the site could be viewed.

The following images detail viewpoints from thirteen different locations.



**2** From the Footpath near Bockendon Grange



**3** From the Footpath before Bockendon Road



**4** Open views from Bockendon Road

VIEW LOCATIONS: 5-8



**5** From Westwood Heath Road



**6** From Lodge Farm Access Road



**7** From Footpaths in close proximity



**8** From Footpaths in close proximity

VIEW LOCATIONS: 9-12



**9** Indicative of view from close proximity residences



**10** Indicative of view from close proximity residences



**11** From Cromwell Lane



**12** Distance view from Crackley Lane

## VIEW LOCATION 13



**13** View from University of Warwick, obscured by woodland

## 6 Conclusions

This assessment concludes that the overall landscape sensitivity of the Burton Green site and the landscape character area in which it is positioned is "Medium" and that the landscape has some capacity to accommodate change.

Although within the Green Belt, the proposed development site is not typical of the more extensive and open areas to the South and East. The degree of enclosure afforded by adjacent housing and Lodge Farm has created a character which already exhibits aspects of an open space within a built-up area.

Any development would bring with it opportunities to enhance the Green Belt and improve the biodiversity and aesthetics of the location by additional landscape planting.

Views into the site are screened from the North and East by existing housing on Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road. Although the ground to the South and West slope away from the site, more distant views are obscured by undulating ground, woodland and vegetation. The significant views are confined to very close to, or within the site.

The visual impact of the development is considered "Moderate".

# Appendix 1- Landscape Effects: Degrees of Significance - Definition

Degree of Sensitivity	Landscape Receptor
<b>Very High</b>	Landscape Quality: intact and very attractive landscape resource with distinct features which may be nationally recognised/designated for its scenic beauty ( e.g National Park or AONB)
	A landscape with a very low ability to accommodate change because such change would lead to a significant loss of landscape quality, resulting in a significant loss of character or prominent features
<b>High</b>	A high quality landscape, usually combining varied topography, historic features and distinct natural form. A landscape known and cherished by many people from across the region
	A landscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change would lead to some loss of valuable features or elements, resulting in a significant loss of character and quality
	Non-designated landscape, generally pleasant but with no distinctive features, often displaying relatively ordinary characteristics
	A landscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change would lead to a limited loss of some features or elements, resulting in a limited loss of character and quality
<b>Medium</b>	Non-designated landscape area, generally pleasant but with no distinctive features, often displaying relatively ordinary characteristics
	A landscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change would lead to a limited loss of some features or elements, resulting in some loss of character and quality
<b>Low</b>	The landscape is unattractive or low quality, subject to numerous detracting elements, e.g industrial activity, transport, extractive industries etc.
	A landscape with good ability to accommodate change. Change would not result in a significant loss of features or elements, or significant loss of character or quality.

Degree of Magnitude	Landscape Effect
<b>High</b>	Total or substantial loss or comprehensive enhancement of key landscape characteristics, features or elements, in the Medium to long term
<b>Medium</b>	Partial loss of, damage or enhancement to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape resource
<b>Low</b>	Slight/minor loss of or alteration to one or more key landscape characteristics, features or elements in the medium to short term
<b>Very Low</b>	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape characteristics, features or elements in the short term
<b>Neutral</b>	No loss or alteration of key landscape characteristics, features or elements

Degree of Significance	Landscape Effect
<b>Major</b>	The proposals are damaging to the landscape as they do not complement the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. They are visually intrusive and would detract from important views. They are at complete variance with existing landscape character and would permanently degrade its integrity. They will damage a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape
<b>Moderate</b>	The proposals are out of scale with the landscape and are visually intrusive with an adverse impact on landscape character or on vulnerable, important characteristics or features
<b>Minor</b>	The proposals do not complement the landform or scale of the landscape and have a slightly adverse effect on the recognised landscape
<b>Neutral</b>	The Proposals complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. They include measures for mitigation to ensure the scheme blends with its setting. It is not visually intrusive and does not detract from a recognised landscape.



# Appendix 2- Visual Effects: Degrees of Significance - Definition

Degree of Sensitivity	Visual Receptor
<b>High</b>	Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or environs of the property. Residents are subject to the views for protracted periods of time
	Users of Public footpaths or Rights of Way with predominantly open views in sensitive or unspoilt locations
	Visitors to recognised viewpoints and beauty spots
	Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside, such as long distance footpaths, country parks, country houses etc.
<b>Medium</b>	Residential properties with more limited views. Views will normally be from parts of the house or an oblique view from the environs of the property
	Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are detracting landscape features
	Users of outdoor recreational and sports facilities where the view is incidental to the view such as sports fields, play surfaces etc.
	Academic establishments, hospitals and other institutional buildings, and their environs
<b>Low</b>	Users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside
	People in their place of work
	Users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main routes.
	Users and spectators of outdoor Sports recreational facilities with where the purpose of that recreation is unrelated to the view.

Degree of Magnitude	Visual Receptor
<b>High</b>	Dominating changes over all or most of the view(s)
<b>Medium</b>	Significant changes over most of the view(s)
<b>Low</b>	Minor changes over all of the view(s) OR significant changes over a small proportion of the view(s)
<b>Negligible</b>	Minor changes over a small proportion of the view(s) only
<b>Neutral</b>	No discernible change to the view(s)

Degree of Significance	Visual Receptor
<b>Major</b>	The proposals would cause significant damage (or improvement) to a view from a sensitive receptor, or less damage (or improvement) to a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be an obvious or dominant element in the view
<b>Moderate</b>	The proposal would cause some damage (or improvement) to a view from a sensitive receptor, or less damage (or improvement) to a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be a readily discernible element in the view
<b>Minor</b>	The proposals would cause limited damage (or improvement) to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, but would still be a noticeable element within the view, or greater damage (or improvement) to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity
<b>Insignificant</b>	The proposals would not significantly change the view but would still be discernible
<b>Neutral</b>	No change in the view

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