



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Review

April 2020



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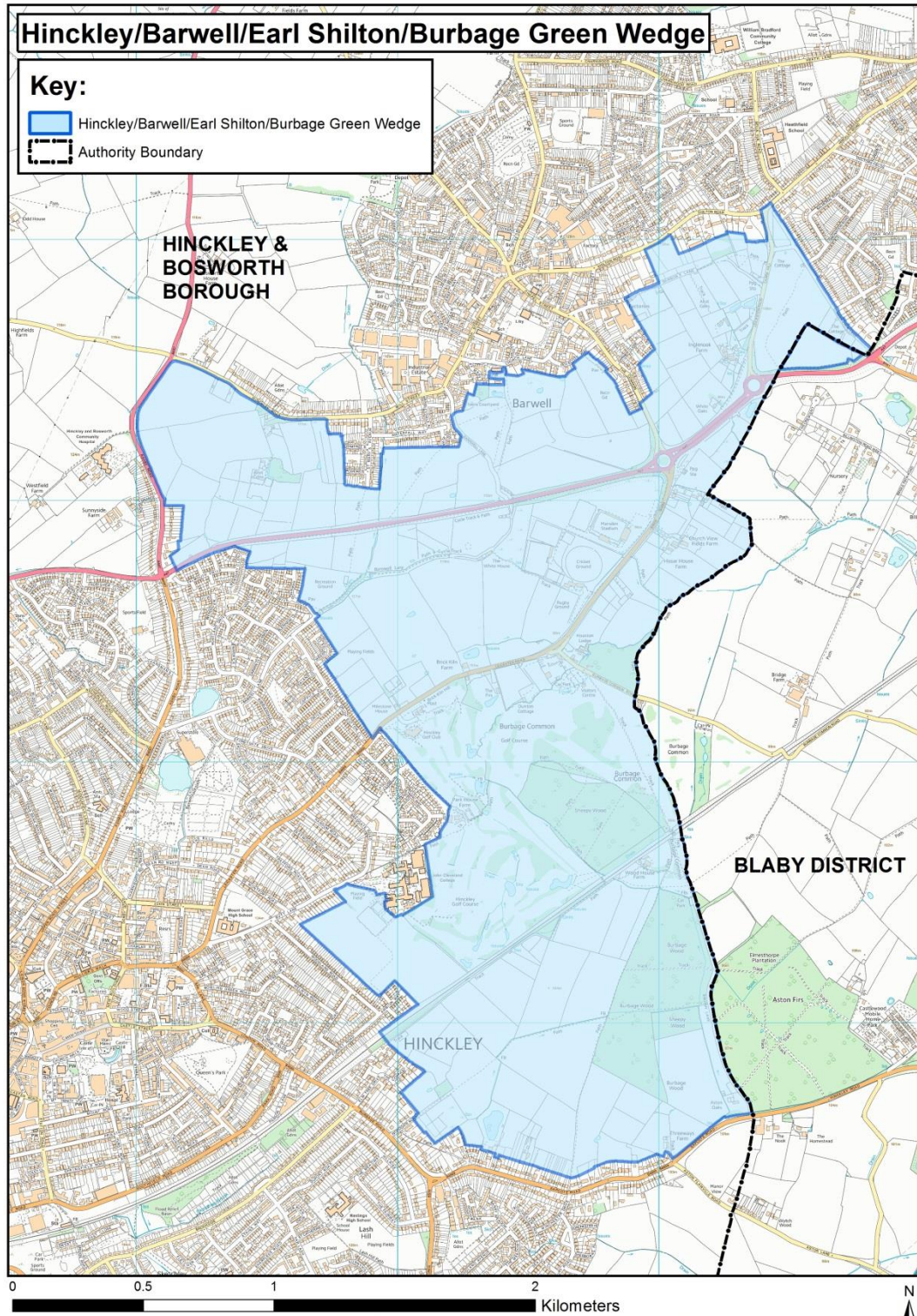
1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of the Green Wedge Review is to assist the Council in determining the boundary of the green wedge. A full review was last undertaken in 2011, so there is a need to update this to provide an up to date picture of the current state of the Green Wedge, and whether any modifications are needed.
- 1.2 The purpose of the review is to assess the functionality of the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge to identify whether revisions to the boundary are required. The current boundary is contained in Appendix A of this document and is shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The latest boundary was adopted through the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016).
- 1.3 Areas of green wedge primarily seek to guide the development form of urban areas. The presence of the green wedge helps to maintain settlement identity whilst providing green infrastructure links between settlements.
- 1.4 This assessment takes a full review of the green wedge and will recommend where boundary amendments could be made. This document will inform the preparation of the emerging Local Plan (2016-2036) which will define the boundaries of green wedges. It is not the purpose of this document to amend the green wedge boundary as this is done through the Local Plan and will be consulted upon as part of the production process. The green wedge area on the Local Plan Proposals Map will be in place until the new Local Plan is adopted.

General Description of the Overall Green Wedge

- 1.5 The extent of the green wedge lying in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough covers an area of 444 hectares and a further 3 hectares within Blaby District. The green wedge extends from the south of Barwell and stretches across to Earl Shilton. The green wedge spreads southwards following the boundary to the east and the built form of Hinckley to the west. The southern most boundary abuts Burbage. Figure 1 contains a map of the overall green wedge.
- 1.6 The Green Wedge is small in nature in comparison to Rothley Brook Green Wedge which spans a number of administrative districts. There are two narrow sections of the green wedge which includes the housing area accessed off Barwell Lane, Hinckley and the southern tip of St Mary's Avenue, Barwell. It is also narrow between Elmeathorpe Lane, Earl Shilton and the properties off Shilton Road, Barwell.
- 1.7 The part of the Green Wedge which falls within the Blaby administrative area is a small triangular area that is north of the Earl Shilton Bypass following the Borough Boundary as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Map of the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge (including Blaby District Council area)



2. Policy background

Formulation of the Green Wedge

- 2.1 Green Wedge policies were introduced in the Leicestershire Structure Plan in 1987. Since their introduction green wedges continued to be identified in subsequent Structure Plans in 1994 and 2005. The East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) did not contain a policy on green wedges, however it did identify four functions of a green wedge which includes preventing the merging of settlements, guiding development form, providing a green lung into urban areas and acting as a recreational resource.
- 2.2 The Regional Plan emphasised that green wedges are a local planning designation by stipulating that a review of existing green wedges or the creation of new ones in association with development will be carried out through the Local Development Framework process.
- 2.3 Since the repeal of Regional Planning, a number of Leicestershire authorities have adopted plans which contain green wedge designations. These have been accepted by inspectors as a legitimate policy tool without question.

Policy context

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 2.4 Although the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not contain a specific reference to green wedges, paragraph 31 makes it clear that 'the preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned'. Green wedges are a useful local planning tool used within Leicestershire which is consistent with the NPPF for the reasons set out below.
- 2.5 In 2011, Leicestershire County Council undertook a public consultation exercise to understand the value of local green spaces in Leicestershire. The green wedge areas were shown to be of high value and as such important to the local community. This correlates with paragraph 15 of the NPPF which states that the planning system should be a 'platform for local people to shape their surroundings'. Green wedges are important to local people and they help shape their surroundings.
- 2.6 Paragraphs 170 and 171 are relevant to green wedges and set out a number of factors which should be considered when developing planning policies and making planning decisions. Of particular note is paragraph 171 which states 'Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries'. Green wedges are locally designated areas which help guide development, provide a green lung and act as a recreational resource which directly relates to this paragraph.

- 2.7 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF identifies that ‘Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development’. One of the functions of the green wedge is to provide a green lung into urban areas; this relates to environmental value such as green infrastructure, wildlife sites, air quality and flood alleviation measures.

Core Strategy (December 2009)

- 2.8 The Core Strategy makes clear that the basis of the green wedge designation is, amongst other things, to provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces which contribute towards the quality of life for local residents. It proposes that the green wedges will provide an important element of green space infrastructure (recognised through evidence based studies, Landscape Character Assessment and the Green Infrastructure Strategy) that will provide opportunity for enhancement to local amenity and ecological value of the landscape. The Core Strategy contains two policies which relate specifically to the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge (Policies 6 and 9). These policies set out the purpose of the Green Wedges and what uses will be considered acceptable within them.

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016)

- 2.9 The Green Wedge Review (2011) undertook a full assessment of both green wedges and recommended changes to the green wedge boundaries which directly informed the production of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. The amendments to the green wedge are detailed in the Hinckley and Burbage settlement specific site allocation sections of the document and the new green wedge boundaries are illustrated on the Policies Map of the document.
- 2.10 The Inspector set out in his report that: *‘I have considered all of the proposed Site Allocations, but have focused upon the housing and employment allocations, as these are, in my judgement, more critical elements of the Council’s growth strategy. Nevertheless, I have also sought to ensure that other site allocations, including the various open space and green wedge designations, all conform with the spatial approach set out in the CS’.*

Landscape Character Assessment (September 2017)

- 2.11 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the area as ‘Burbage Common Rolling Farmland.’ It identifies the following key characteristics:
- 1 Large scale, gently rolling arable and pasture farmland with local variations in topography influenced by small streams.
 - 2 Burbage Common and ancient woodland is of national and local importance as an ecological and recreational resource.

- 3 Medium to large scale rectilinear field pattern bounded by low hedgerows and post and wire fencing with smaller scale pasture fields around the settlements. Field boundaries and hedgerows generally follow contours.
- 4 Urban fringe influences as a result of exposed settlement edges of Hinckley and Earl Shilton situated on higher ground and recreational uses around Burbage Common.
- 5 Sparse settlement within the area, comprising individual buildings and scattered farm complexes.
- 6 Major transport corridors dissect the landscape and introduce noise and movement.
- 7 Open landform and lack of tree cover allows for expansive and distant views to edge of settlement, often situated on the skyline, and punctuated by major infrastructure.
- 8 Public rights of way including the Leicestershire Round, concentrated around Burbage Common and extending outside the borough into Blaby.
- 9 Green Wedge providing separation between Hinckley and Barwell and green infrastructure to the cluster of settlements of Burbage, Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton.

Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2008)

- 2.12 The Green Infrastructure Strategy looks at existing assets/resources, functions and public benefit assessments in order to effectively map the current state of the boroughs Green Infrastructure and to look at potential opportunities to expand and improve. Key drivers of this study revolve around tourism, access and recreation, biodiversity and addressing and establishing potential strategic access routes.
- 2.13 The Green Infrastructure Strategy notes that green wedges are an important part of the Borough's and County's green infrastructure resource.
- 2.14 The Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge falls within the southern green infrastructure zone; it highlights that this zone has the *'highest population density, along with the highest levels of multiple deprivation and poor health in the Borough. The need for green space in this area is higher, in part because of the recreational needs of residents but also to combat the negative effects of climate change that will be felt most in the urban areas'*. Burbage Common and Woods is identified as a strategic intervention and highlights that it is possibly the most important site in the Borough in terms of functional value to the local communities

Open Space and Recreation Study (2016)

- 2.15 The Open Space and Recreation Study sets out an assessment of open space and recreational facilities within the Borough. It includes an assessment of quality, quantity and accessibility.
- 2.16 This Assessment identifies the important role that a green wedge can play in providing natural and semi-natural open space as a recreational amenity particularly Barwell and Earl Shilton, and highlights them as a strategic green asset. It notes that a key issue to maximise usage of natural open space is improvements to access routes to and within existing natural and semi-natural spaces (as well as to the nearby accessible countryside). It highlights that the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge also offers the opportunity to provide access to natural and semi-natural open space.

- 2.17 The Study highlights that where there is a deficiency in allotment provision it is possible to allow this land use within the green wedge. It also highlights the important role that the green wedge has in providing green corridors, in terms of footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways.

3. Methodology

Background

- 3.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011) is being used to carry out this review. The Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology has been agreed by the following six local authorities of Charnwood, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, Leicester, North West Leicestershire and Oadby & Wigston, which form part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area. A Joint Methodology was prepared as many green wedges cross administrative boundaries. Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge falls within Hinckley and Bosworth, and Blaby; and Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge spans the boundaries of Hinckley and Bosworth, Blaby, Charnwood and Leicester administrative areas. Using this methodology ensures a consistent approach is taken by the authorities.
- 3.2 The Methodology identifies that a review could be undertaken at a macro and micro scale; this Review assesses the green wedge at both of these scales. The evaluation assesses the green wedge in its entirety and future recommendations are set out at a micro scale.
- 3.3 The following assessment criteria have been identified for the Review of the Green Wedge.

Preventing the merging of settlements

- 3.4 Green Wedges will safeguard the identity of communities within and around urban areas that face growth pressures. The coalescence of settlements should be considered in terms of both physical separation and the perception of distance between the settlements.

Guiding Development Form

- 3.5 Green Wedges will guide the form of new developments in urban areas. Consideration will be given to designating new green wedges or amending existing ones where it would help shape the development of new communities' such as potential sustainable urban extensions.

Providing a Green Lung into urban areas

- 3.6 Green wedges will provide communities with access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond. They are distinct from other types of open space in that they provide a continuous link between the open countryside and land which penetrates deep into urban areas. Green wedges could also provide multi-functional uses such as:
 - Open space, sport and recreation facilities
 - Flood alleviation measures
 - Improving air quality
 - Protection/improvement of wildlife sites and the links between them
 - Protection/improvement of historic/cultural assets and the links between them
 - Links to green infrastructure at both a strategic and local level

- Transport corridors

Acting as a recreational resource

- 3.7 Green wedges will provide a recreational resource. This will include informal and formal facilities now and in the future. Public access will be maximised.
- 3.8 The individual Green Wedge Reviews will be produced in the following stages.

Data collection/ Desk top survey

- 3.9 Data has been collected about the Green Wedge in respect of:
- Public rights of way and permissive routes (footpaths/bridleways/cycleways). Degree of access to and from surrounding urban areas and access to strategically important access routes which provide connectivity across the wider area
 - Historical landscapes and archaeological remains
 - Findings of the Minerals and Waste Plan
 - Land use within the Green Wedge (including open space, sports and recreation, the location of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves)
 - Ecology (assessing whether green wedges form part of an important wildlife corridor)
 - Development Control decisions within the green wedge since adoption of the Local Plan, including Appeals.
 - Air Quality Management areas (AQMA's) and the proximity of the green wedge to these (the ability of green wedges to act as a 'green lung')
 - Water management (areas of flood risk)
 - Connection to green infrastructure in the wider area
 - Evidence of development pressures
 - Transport routes and infrastructure.

On site surveys

- 3.10 A visual appraisal of the Green Wedge has been carried out in terms of:
- Topography
 - Identification of key physical features within and out of the Green Wedge
 - Significant hedgerows/hedgerow trees/woodlands
 - The extent of built development within Green Wedges
 - Perception of separation from several points within and on the boundaries of settlements (intervisibility and intravisibility)
 - Visible informal uses through the Green Wedge
 - Consideration of whether the green wedge could fulfil other functions not yet identified
- 3.11 For assessment purposes the Green Wedge has been split into areas for the purpose of the survey so that the assessment captures the different roles and character of the green wedge. A map of the assessment areas are contained in Appendix A.

4. Desktop Survey

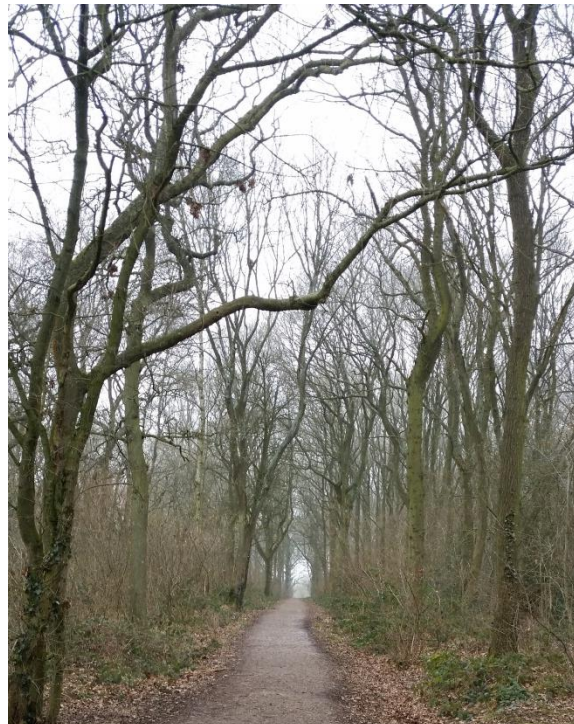
Introduction

- 4.1 The desktop survey is undertaken at a borough wide level. Assessment areas have been identified and these are mapped in Appendix A, these areas are sometimes referenced to aid the evaluation in the latter part of the review.

Historical landscapes and archaeological remains

- 4.2 Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) in this area defines the majority of fields as either 'planned' or 'piecemeal' enclosure. 'Piecemeal' enclosure is an earlier (16th/17th Century) form of informal enclosure, where open land was divided up into fields. 'Planned' enclosure is later (18th/19th Century) and was a more formalised process. Other HLC types within the area include 'golf course', 'other commons' and 'broadleaved ancient woodland'.
- 4.3 The medieval open field system that existed prior to enclosure is still visible in part due to surviving ridge and furrow earthworks. These earthworks, particularly noticeable in fields adjacent to Barwell, were created by medieval ploughing.

- 4.4 The area includes Burbage Wood and Sheepy Wood, both of which have been characterised as 'broadleaved ancient woodland'. Ancient semi-natural woodland sites are defined by Natural England as sites which have had continuous woodland cover since at least the beginning of the 17th century. These sites retain native tree and shrub cover that has not been planted, although they may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to naturally regenerate. Both Burbage and Sheepy Woods appear to have been held subject to common rights as early as the mid-thirteenth century.



- 4.5 Between Burbage and Sheepy Woods a small triangular area has been identified as Small Assarts. Small Assarts are characterised as small irregular or rectilinear fields which appear to have been created through woodland clearance. This character type will often border or occur in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland. In Leicestershire the process of woodland assartment is likely to have been underway during the 12th and 13th centuries although some examples may have much later, possibly 16th century origins.

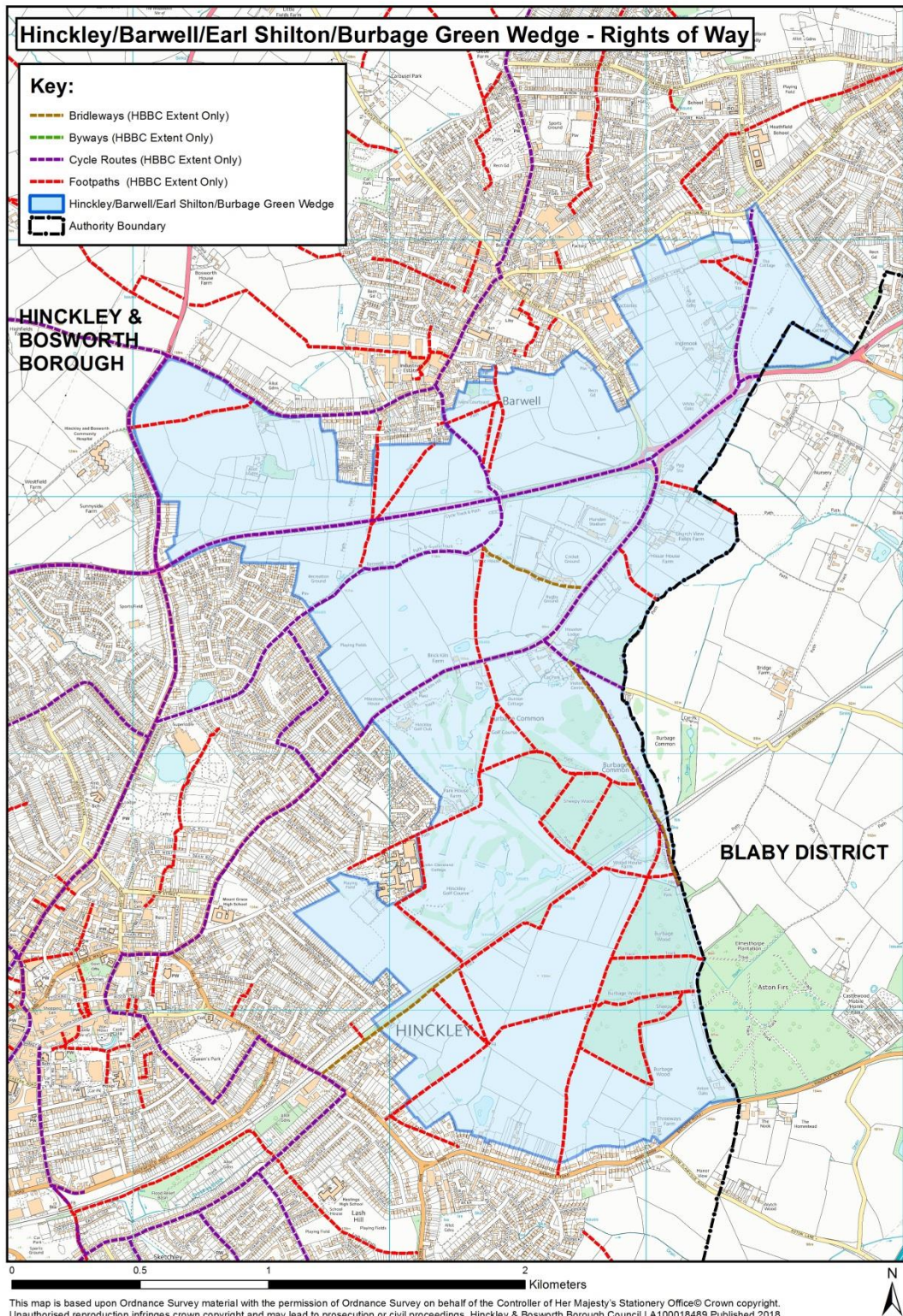
- 4.6 Sheepy Wood is bounded on its north-eastern and north-western sides by Burbage Common which is recorded in the Domesday Book as providing shared common grazing rights. The common is a valuable site for wildlife.
- 4.7 The area contains many archaeological sites. Of particular note is a possible Roman villa site south of Park House, Hinckley; which was discovered during an informal watching brief in the 1980s, a possible medieval moated site near Hall Close, Barwell; which is visible as ponds, and post-medieval brickworks at Barwell Lane, Barwell and Outwoods Brickyard, Brick Kiln Hill, Hinckley.

Access

- 4.8 There are a number of public rights of way, footpaths, cycle ways and a bridleway that run through the Green Wedge and these are set out in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Public Rights of Way



Minerals and Waste

- 4.9 There is potential for mineral reserves within the green wedge, e.g. sand and gravel reserves in the western fringe of the green wedge, however there is no information as to the type/volume/viability of such reserves.

Land use

- 4.10 There are a range of land uses within the green wedge including:
- Cricket Ground
 - Green King Stadium
 - Burbage Common
 - Woodland
 - Hinckley Golf Course
 - Farmland
 - Allotments
 - Rear gardens
 - Rugby Ground
 - Roads
 - Recreation Grounds
 - Rights of way and cycle tracks
 - Dorothy Goodman Upper School

Ecology

- 4.11 The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2014) found that there were sites of moderate ecological value within the Green Wedge and evidence of:
- Broadleaved woodland,
 - Unimproved natural grassland
- 4.12 Burbage Wood and Aston Firs are identified as a SSSI; the site comprises one of the best examples of ash-oak-maple woodland in Leicestershire and is representative of semi-natural woodland on underlying Glacial Boulder Clay in eastern England.

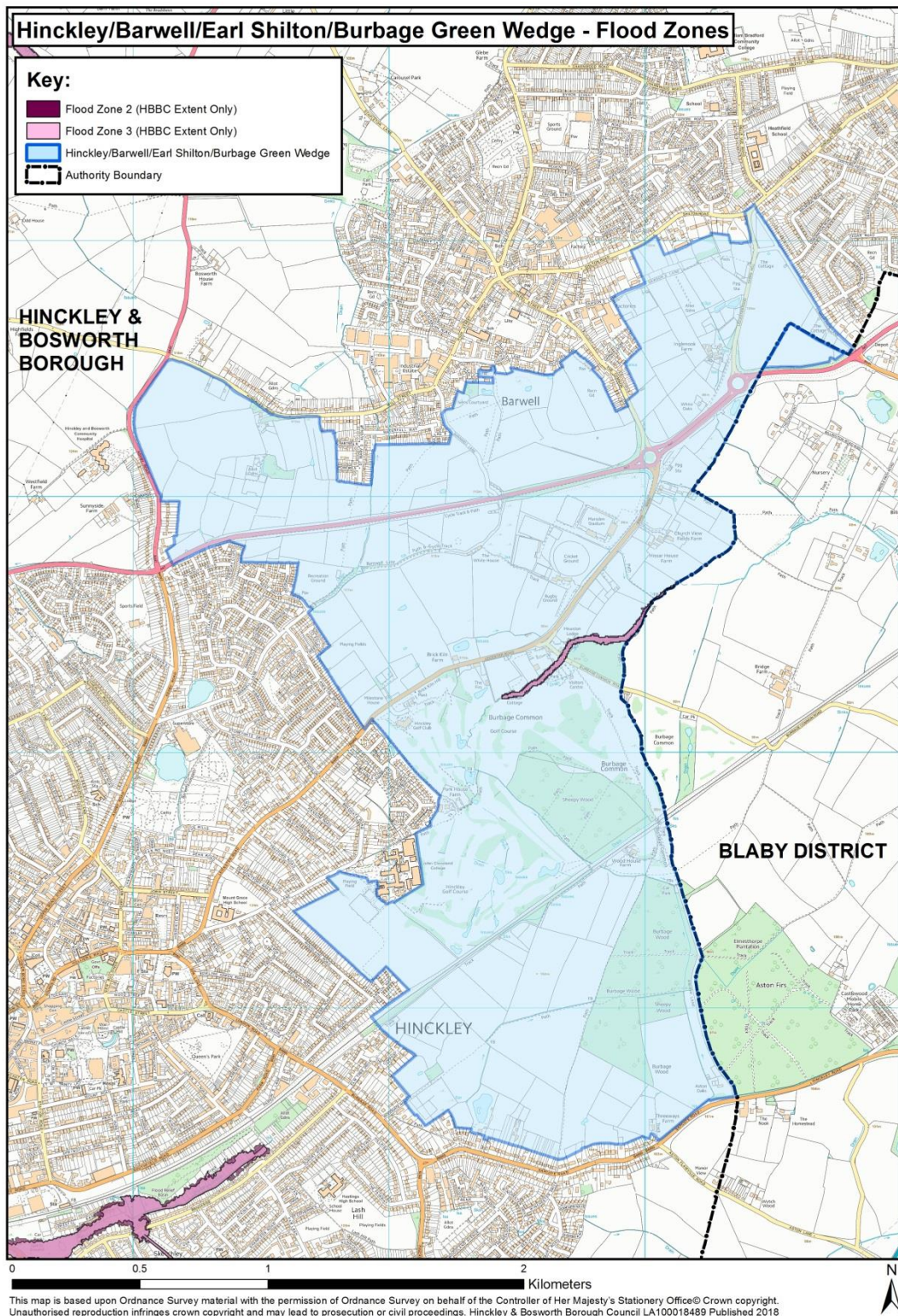
Air Quality Management areas (AQMA's)

- 4.13 There are no AQMA's within the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth.

Water management

- 4.14 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2014) identifies that an area to the east of the Green Wedge close to Burbage Common and Leicester Road/Burbage Common Road falls within flood zone 3b. This is illustrated in Figure 3.
- 4.15 The flooding issues would have an impact on guiding any development and reinforces the need to retain these areas as green wedge to limit any impact.

Figure 3: Flood Zones identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2014)



Green Infrastructure

4.16 As highlighted in Chapter 2 the Borough Council have produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2008). The following interventions and features have been identified within the green wedge area:

- Burbage Common and Woods Strategic Intervention Area
- Cross-boundary cooperation
- Biodiversity Area
- Main access arteries
- Access and Recreation
- Potential strategic access route

4.17 The Burbage Common and Woods Strategic Intervention Area are identified as being potentially one of the most important areas in the Borough due to its functional value to the local communities. It notes as the population expands the site will become even more valuable. There will be a requirement for growth within the urban area which will be identified through the Local Plan and will mean that Burbage Common and Woods will increasingly be an important asset to both existing and new residents to the area. A shortfall identified is access to the site and it is proposed to increase the size of the site to increase community and biodiversity value and to improve access to the site for cyclists and pedestrians.

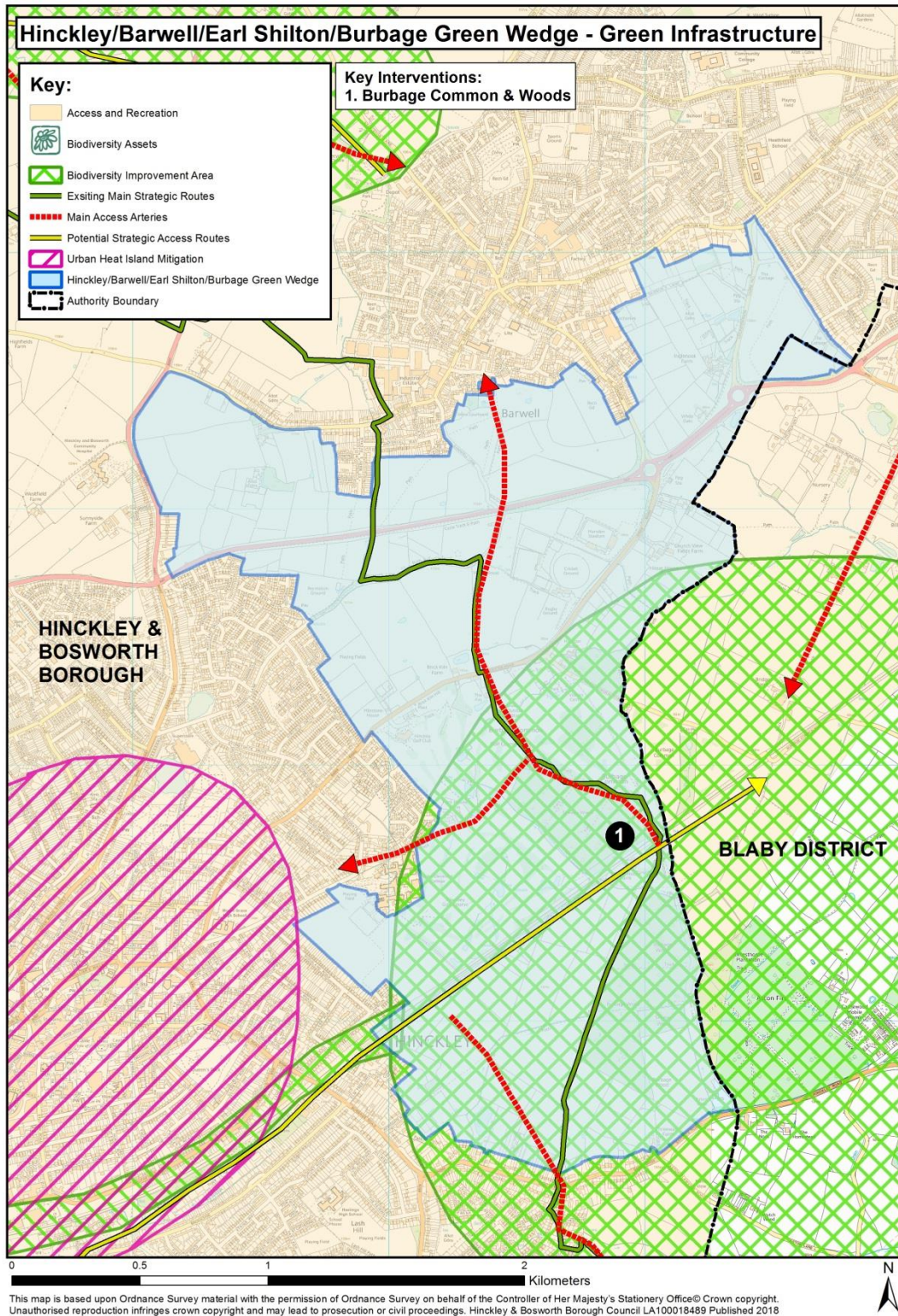


- 4.18 Cross-boundary cooperation is identified as important due to the proximity of the urban area to neighbouring districts, for instance, Burbage Wood continues into Aston Firs woodland, Elmesthorpe Plantation and Smenell Field which fall within Blaby District. Access from Earl Shilton to Burbage Common and Woods is also via public rights of way which are within Blaby District.
- 4.19 Access and recreation is identified as important as it is essential that existing and potential green infrastructure assets are retained and enhanced to provide for population demands for green and open space. Accessibility to sites should be enhanced and extended, particularly circular routes to incorporate green infrastructure assets. Burbage Common and woods provide a number of circular routes. Circular routes are also present south of Barwell through public rights of way and the pedestrianised Barwell Lane.
- 4.20 Biodiversity is highlighted to be protected, enhanced and increased, Burbage Common and Woods is identified as such an area.
- 4.21 Potential Strategic Access Routes are identified so that green infrastructure assets have improved access routes. One such route aims to improve access from Hinckley town centre to Burbage Common and Ashby Canal to benefit

wildlife in and around the towns, providing a natural corridor which compliments that which already exists alongside the railway.

- 4.22 The review of green infrastructure highlights the important role that Burbage Common and Woods provides in terms of access to green space for residents whilst providing an area of high biodiversity value. It shows that this area of the green wedge is a vital green infrastructure asset that provides positive benefits to residents and flora and fauna alike.

Figure 4: Core Strategy Green Infrastructure designations



Development pressures and planning applications

Development Management

- 4.23 There have been a number of minor planning applications within the green wedge and these are set out in Appendix B. Some of these applications have enabled improvements to the recreational offer within the green wedge including improved changing facilities at Barwell Common Recreation Ground and horse riding facilities.
- 4.24 Planning applications for residential development within the Green Wedge have been received and these are as follows:

Table 1. Table showing residential planning applications within the Green Wedge

Application reference	Description	Address	Decision
11/01023/REM	Erection of 184 dwellings (scale, appearance, layout and landscaping)	Land adjacent to Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
12/00452/FUL	Erection of 24 dwellings and associated infrastructure	Land adjacent to 108 Shilton Road, Barwell	Refused Appeal Dismissed
13/00117/FUL	Erection of 95 dwellings with associated infrastructure	Land adjacent to Woodgate Road, Burbage	Refused
17/00531/OUT	Residential development of up to 185 dwellings (outline – access only)	Land east of The Common, Barwell	Refused Appeal Dismissed
17/00896/FUL	Erection of 14 dwellings	Land at St Mary's Court, Barwell	Refused
18/00279/OUT	Erection of up to 25 dwellings, provision of open space and change of use of land for new cemetery and associated shelter	Land at Crabtree Farm, Barwell	Refused
20/00094/FUL	Proposed residential development of 9 dwellings	Land Rear Of 5 - 15 The Coppice Burbage Leicestershire	At the time of writing this application had not been determined.

- 4.25 Three of these applications went to appeal. In relation to the Shilton Road appeal (12/00452/FUL) the Inspector concluded that the scheme would be in significant conflict with the green lung and recreational resource purposes of the green wedge and concludes that its protection should be paramount. In terms of the appeal at The Common (17/00531/OUT) the Inspector concluded that the site is *'an integral part of a Green Wedge' and considers 'the site would significantly erode the function of coalescence, visual appearance and the green lung element afforded by this site. These harms together lead me to conclude that substantial harm arises to the character and appearance of the countryside, the setting of the town and the function of the Green Wedge'*. In terms of Land at Crabtree Farm (18/00279/OUT) the appeal was allowed. The Inspector noted that this was a much smaller site than at The Common and the reduction in the gap was not substantial. The Inspector also noted that the A47 roadside planting also mitigated any perception of the gap closing.
- 4.26 An application for a crematorium building and storage yard and the formation of memorial gardens has been permitted within the green wedge. As part of the planning application process a micro-scale assessment was undertaken to assess potential harm to the function of the green wedge. The micro-scale assessment suggested that the openness would be preserved and that the proposed change of land use for a crematorium and associated facilities would not conflict to a significant degree with the function of the Green Wedge in the case of this specific application. The Planning Committee Report states: *'By virtue of the comprehensive landscaping scheme including the varied habitat protection and provision measures, the proposal would significantly enhance the biodiversity of the site and provide public access where non currently exists. The provision of a more local facility in close proximity to the four urban centres of the Borough would reduce the need to travel to existing facilities further afield. The proposal would therefore result in a public benefit and contribute to the environmental objective of sustainable development'*.
- 4.27 Another application of note within the green wedge was for the relocation of Dorothy Goodman Upper School to land off Barwell Lane. This site was a former Local Plan allocation for a community facility, it was not carried forward into the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD as there was no certainty that a community facility would come forward. As such the land was deallocated as a new community facility to green wedge. As part of the application an assessment was made on the parcel of land against the four functions of the green wedge. An extract from the Committee Report is as follows: *'In weighing up the planning balance, although it is acknowledge that the proposal would result in the loss of part of the Green Wedge, this part of the Green Wedge has limited amenity value and the development would provide enhanced environmental benefits including the provision of playing fields and the enhancement of biodiversity within the site with the protection of the species-rich hedgerows and additional tree planting in accordance with Policy DM6. The impact of the built form within the open site has been mitigated through the relocation of the school building further away from residential development, it is low level design, the proposed materials and finishes and the provision of additional tree planting and this part of the proposal is acceptable under Policy DM10. ...The site was an allocation in a former plan and was only removed as part of the Site Allocations DPD due to the education authority being unable to commit to the scheme when the plan was renewed. It is considered that Policy DM25, which*

supports new community benefits across the Borough, outweighs the potential harm to the green wedge and character of the open countryside’.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

- 4.28 A number of sites have been put forward as expressions of interest and these have been assessed through the Strategic Housing and Economic Availability Assessment (2018) (SHELAA). The SHELAA does not allocate sites for development its purpose is to provide a comprehensive assessment of sites across the borough put forward by relevant stakeholders. It gives the Council a thorough view of what sites are available, suitable, achievable, deliverable, and developable. The sites contained in the table below were assessed in the SHELAA.

Table 2: Table showing sites assessed in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.

SHELAA Reference	Location	Overall Assessment
AS66	Land south of Shilton Road, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS67	Land between Dawsons Lane and Leicester Road / Carrs Hill, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS138	Land north of Sapcote Road, Burbage	Non-Developable
AS302	Allotments at Normandy Way, Hinckley	Developable
AS303	Land bounded by Barwell Lane, Laneside and Leicester Road, Hinckley	Developable
AS600	Land at Inglenook Farm, Leicester Road, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS602	Land to the south of Leicester Road, Hinckley	Non-Developable
AS606	Land between Leicester Road & Elmsthorpe Lane (Carrs Hill), Barwell	Non-Developable
LPR21	Land East of Woodgate Road, Burbage, Hinckley	Developable
LPR28	Land at 73 Sapcote Road, Burbage	Developable
LPR40	Land North of Sapcote Road, Burbage	Developable
LPR50	Land opposite Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road	Developable

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD

- 4.29 The Green Wedge Review (2011) was used as the evidence base for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD which revised the boundaries of the green wedge as a result of the Review.

Transport routes and infrastructure

- 4.30 The A47 runs through the green wedge area, this is a key route which connects to the A5 and continues into the City of Leicester. It also contains a number of route ways into the settlements which connects them to one another. This includes Leicester Road, Hinckley; The Common, Barwell; and Carrs Hill, Earl Shilton.

5. Site Surveys

Introduction

5.1 Site assessments were carried out on the green wedge in Spring 2018. The pro forma set out in the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology was used. The Green Wedge was split into 9 areas so that a micro analysis could be undertaken on site, as per the 2011 Review. A map of the areas is contained in Appendix A; the areas identified are listed as follows:

- A South of Hinckley Road and north of Normandy Way
- B South of Barwell and north of Normandy Way
- C East of The Common and south of Shilton Road
- D Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elmesthorpe Lane
- E Land off Leicester Road
- F Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road
- G Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road
- H Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course
- I Land south of railway line and north-east of Burbage

5.2 This chapter sets out the main findings of the on site surveys, the full site pro formas are contained in Appendix C.

Area A: South of Hinckley Road and north of Normandy Way



- 5.3 The area is used predominately for agricultural purposes and the road that runs alongside the area links Hinckley to settlements such as Market Bosworth. The site rises upwards slightly to Hinckley Road, Barwell. Two settlements are visible from Ashby Road including, Barwell and Hinckley which are within walking distance. Hinckley and Bosworth Community Hospital overlooks the area and there is a bus stop adjacent.
- 5.4 If development were to occur in this area it would have a significant visual impact due to the openness of the area to the east of Ashby Road. It provides an important visual amenity between the settlements of Hinckley and Barwell and there is no visual break between the two. Furthermore this area contains one of the narrowest points of green wedge separating the two settlements.
- 5.5 There is a public right of way which connects Ashby Road and Hinckley Road which is linear in nature but does not appear to be well used. The sign post is damaged and no longer visible. Having said this, the footpath from St Mary's Avenue to Normandy Way has good visible signage.



Area B: South of Barwell and north of Normandy Way



- 5.6 The area is mainly used for agricultural purposes although there is also a recreation ground within the Green Wedge off Dovecote Way. The area is characterised by hedgerows, scattered trees, grazing land and ploughed fields. St Mary's Church, Barwell is of particular note as it holds a prominent position abutting the boundary of the green wedge. The area is in fairly close proximity to Hinckley and Earl Shilton. The area has various points of access via cycle ways, public rights of way and a recreation ground.
- 5.7 This area of the green wedge provides an important recreational resource to residents of Barwell due to the presence of Dovecote Way Open Space. It also provides good pedestrian connectivity between Barwell and Hinckley, as Barwell Lane provides off road cycling and walking opportunities between the two. There are several points of entrance from Barwell and Normandy Way with interlinking footpaths. These are well trodden footpaths with good signage and visible from the access points.
- 5.8 Due to the gradient of the land sloping downwards from Barwell towards the A47 any development would have a noticeable impact. St Mary's Church is a Grade I Listed Building and an important designated heritage asset within Barwell. The Green Wedge provides a positive rural, tranquil setting to the south of the church.
- 5.9 This area provides a green lung for residents of Barwell and provides green infrastructure linkages between the settlements of Hinckley and Barwell.



Area C: East of The Common and south of Shilton Road



- 5.10 This area consists of a range of land uses. This includes allotments, agriculture, farm buildings, paddocks and grazing land. The allotments appear to be well used and are accessed via Dawsons Lane. There is a track that runs a short distance from Dawsons Lane which leads to a small, narrow, enclosed walkway which is well tracked but of poor quality surface. The small track does open up towards Earl Shilton and the right of way is well kept with a grassed walkway.
- 5.11 The topography slopes upwards towards Barwell and views to Burbage, Elmesthorpe, and the church spire in Stoney Stanton are evident.
- 5.12 This area is characterised by mature trees and hedgerows with a number of paddocks and provides multi-functional uses as outlined above enabling the green wedge to be well-utilised. The narrow track which forms part of the public right of way is well used although there is limited signage which does not aid navigation within this section of the Green Wedge. Improvements to this track would improve connectivity between Earl Shilton and Barwell.
- 5.13 Any significant built development would have an impact on the coalescence of Barwell and Earl Shilton with particular reference to the area close to Carrs Hill. It would also have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the wider green wedge area as there are open views towards Earl Shilton and into the neighbouring District of Blaby.



Area D: Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elmesthorpe Lane



- 5.14 This area lies between Carrs Hill and Elmesthorpe Lane and is a contained space. The triangular piece of land north of Elmesthorpe Lane is grassland and visible from the road. There is a strong tree line to the east of this area of land where as to the south and west there are scattered trees which gives a sense of openness on the approach to Earl Shilton. Part of the land to the north west includes an area of grassland which contains a sign for Earl Shilton which allows for a sense of arrival and place and a gateway into the town. The triangular piece of land to the south can be described as scrubland and is a natural area and not publically accessible. This area slopes southwards towards the A47 and there are open views towards Hinckley and a predominant skyline. A small section of this area falls within Blaby District.
- 5.15 This area is not publically accessible and therefore does not provide a recreational amenity. The site does provide remote access as it provides a visual green space to the community with distinct sightlines. The area plays a crucial role in preventing the coalescence of Barwell and Earl Shilton where the green wedge is at its narrowest point. Any development would have a significant impact on the visual amenity on the wider green wedge area as there is a wide panorama from the elevated position of this area. It provides a continuous linkage to the wider area from the countryside into the urban areas of Earl Shilton and Barwell. The edge of this area plays an important role in the settlement pattern of Earl Shilton and has a local prominence to the entrance of the settlement.



Area E: Land off Leicester Road



- 5.16 This site consists of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System; a lot of the area is covered by grassland although there is a small track leading off Leicester Road giving access to a Severn Trent Facility. There are a number of scattered mature trees and established hedgerows and the majority of the area is a natural habitat. The site is relatively flat and is at the base of the sloping topography towards Earl Shilton and Barwell. The far boundary of the site abuts the administrative area of Blaby District and is close to the village of Elmesthorpe. Properties are visible from the Earl Shilton Bypass, as the raised screening for the road ends at the edge of the green wedge.
- 5.17 There is no public access to the site although there is private access to a Severn Trent water facility. The site provides remote access as it provides important views towards Burbage Common and Woods and there are distinct sightlines. Remote access means that the area provides a valuable, visual green space resource which provides a panorama to the community.
- 5.18 Any development would have a significant impact on the visual amenity on the wider green wedge towards Burbage Common and Woods. It would impact on the rural nature and character of the western fringes of Elmesthorpe which is already sensitive due to the construction of the bypass. It provides a continuing green route way from Area C and into Area G which provides green linkages into Burbage Common.



Area F: Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road



- 5.19 This area is multi-functional and has a number of recreational uses including a recreation ground, football ground, rugby facilities, a cricket ground and tennis courts. The area also contains residential properties, the newly built Dorothy Goodman Upper School and agricultural land. There are a number of public rights of ways and informal walkways providing numerous access routes into and around the Green Wedge. The topography gradually slopes downwards towards Leicester Road and this makes the flood lights from the football stadium quite evident from the more elevated position, this is also true from other view points. This area abuts the built form of Hinckley and is in close proximity to Barwell. This area has the most built development in the green wedge which are structures relating to the recreational uses within the area, the built development is focussed off Leicester Road. It is more agricultural in nature to the west of the area. To the western fringe is a recreation ground and between the A47 and Barwell Lane there are a number of smaller enclosed fields.
- 5.20 The public rights of way are well utilised and this is visible from the condition of the track and the level of use whilst on site. Access to the right of way off Leicester Road is via a stile with a descent and was overgrown at the time of the site visit which isn't user friendly. This is an important access point as the right of way connects Barwell Lane to Burbage Common and Woods and therefore improvements to access would be beneficial. A barrier to accessing the Common and Woods for walkers is navigating across Leicester Road which is a busy road between Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton making this connection hazardous.
- 5.21 Although there a number of recreational opportunities within this area they are privately owned and therefore do not have open public access. The Swallows Green Recreation Ground is a well used and maintained open space with a good offering of play equipment.
- 5.22 Adjacent to the Swallows Green Recreation Ground is the newly built Dorothy Goodman Upper School and it is clear that this no longer meets the Green Wedge criteria.
- 5.23 To the west of Area F the green wedge is at one of its narrowest points between Hinckley and Barwell and therefore sensitive in relation to the coalescence of these settlements.

Area G: Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road



- 5.24 This area is on the fringe of Burbage Common and abuts the boundary of Blaby District. The frontage onto Leicester Road is tree-lined and contains a number of farm buildings/residential properties. The area is relatively flat although there is a slight incline towards Elmesthorpe. It is within close proximity to Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley. A public right of way runs along the northern edge of this area and leads to Elmesthorpe and Burbage Common and Woods. The area is predominately agricultural in nature although there is an area of dense woodland to the south. There are various private access points along Leicester Road and the only public access is via the public right of way, which is signposted off Leicester Road.
- 5.25 This area contributes towards the network of paths that connects to Burbage Common and Woods, the entrance to the right of way is close to Barwell increasing access to the natural environment for residents. The tree lined frontage blocks views into the countryside beyond, although this may be seasonal and views may be evident in the winter months. There are some gaps along the tree lined road which provides view points giving the perception that this area is within the countryside. The area of woodland provides a positive setting for Burbage Common and Woods adding to the natural environment. This area contributes to the function of the green wedge as it plays a role in the separation of Barwell/Earl Shilton to Burbage Common and Woods and Hinckley, whilst providing a valuable footway linking to the Common and Woods. Once the Hinckley Crematorium is constructed this area will provide an important role in the setting of the site.



Area H: Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley and Golf Course



- 5.26 This area consists of Burbage Common and Visitor Centre, a golf course with associated facilities, woodland, scrubland, agriculture and a scrap yard. This area provides a key open space giving access to an important natural environment. There is a network of pathways through the woodland and common which connects beyond the area to Hinckley, Burbage, Elmesthorpe and to a further extent Earl Shilton via a number of public rights of ways. The area is relatively flat although it does slope upwards towards Hinckley from the golf course. It is an important recreational resource for both public and private facilities and is well used. The scrap yard has a negative impact on the ambiance of the area and is visible at the entrance of Burbage Common and a footpath that connects to Leicester Road.
- 5.27 This area is an important open space that provides a green lung for residents and a valuable habitat for flora and fauna. It was evident from the site visits that both Burbage Common and the Golf Course were well utilised even given the adverse weather conditions at the time of visit, providing an important recreational amenity. The car park at Burbage Common was very busy which suggests a number of people drive to the open space. This could show that Burbage Common draws people from a larger catchment area demonstrating its importance locally and further afield. Any development would have an impact on the setting of Burbage Common, currently there is a scrap yard at the entrance of Burbage Common which already has a negative impact as it is visually intrusive and provides a disturbance in terms of noise. The sign posts were of good quality in and around Burbage Common with maps of the area dotted around at regular intervals. However, legibility of the right of way between Burbage Common and John Cleveland College is poor and better sign posting is required. The agricultural land to the north is not accessible and does not provide a recreational role.



Area I: Land south of railway line and north-east of Burbage



- 5.28 This area consists of Burbage Wood, agriculture, recreation, paddock and railway line (Leicester to Birmingham line) and relatively flat in terms of topography, although the railway embankment is raised. This area of the green wedge abuts Burbage and the administrative boundary of Blaby District. This area provides a key open space with car parking off Smithy Lane; the woodland connects to Burbage Common (Area H) which is via tunnels underneath the railway line. There are public rights of way off Sapcote Road and Woodgate Road, Burbage which provide a connection into Burbage Wood. On site visits these were well utilised and sign posted. The topography rises towards the railway line and it is possible to view Burbage and Hinckley from this area (Hinckley Academy and John Cleveland College Sixth Form is particularly visible). This area is also rich in biodiversity due to the nature of the woodland and a small watercourse runs through this section of the green wedge. A vast amount of the area is in agricultural use; however, the rights of way penetrate into the land providing good recreational opportunities. There is a tea room with picnic benches at Woodhouse Farm, on the site visits there were a number of visitors using the facility.
- 5.29 This area is an important open space that provides a green lung for residents and a valuable habitat for flora and fauna. It provides access to natural open space for residents of Burbage and the public rights of way provide good connectivity into a key recreational resource. It is evident from the site visits that the area is well used and the parking at Smithy Lane was busy. Similar to the findings of Area H this could show that Burbage Common and Woods draws people from a larger catchment area demonstrating its importance both locally and its wider catchment. Any development would have an impact on the setting of Burbage Wood. Sign posts were of good quality in and around Burbage Common and woods with maps of the area dotted around at regular intervals. The tracks were of a good quality within the woodland although the access from Woodgate Road was very wet and boggy and downhill leading it to become poor quality.

6. Evaluation

Introduction

- 6.1 The evaluation criteria set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Green Wedge Methodology Paper will be used to assess the green wedge and the findings are set out below. A small section of Area D falls within Blaby District and this will be a consideration throughout the evaluation.

Preventing the merging of settlements

- 6.2 The Green Wedge plays an important role in maintaining the separation between the urban settlements of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. There is intravisibility (can see more than one settlement from any one point in the green wedge) in parts of the green wedge including Area A, Area D and Area I. Due to the level of tree coverage between Barwell/Earl Shilton and Hinckley/Burbage it resulted in the built form of the settlements not being visible. The topography of this area results in the A47 acting as a valley floor and the tree coverage provides screening between the areas providing a valuable contribution in providing the perception of distance between settlements when in reality they are in close proximity.
- 6.3 There are some areas within the green wedge which are particularly sensitive. This includes: Area A and Area D. Area A is in close proximity to Barwell and Hinckley. Any development north of the A47, east of Ashby Road, and south of Hinckley Road would have an impact on this objective as it would reduce the already slim open gaps between the settlements. This is supported by the Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017) which identifies that a key sensitivity is the 'generally rural character and undeveloped landscape of the green wedge which forms an important gap between Hinckley and Barwell'. This further demonstrates the sensitive nature of this narrow part of the green wedge.
- 6.4 Barwell and Earl Shilton merge into one another and this is due to the industrial boom of the boot and shoe trade within the area. The construction of factories for the trade and associated workers houses were rapidly constructed in the 1930s, in the space of 50 years the two villages tripled in size. An argument could be put forward that Barwell and Earl Shilton have already merged to an extent but that does not mean it is acceptable to allow this further. Carrs Hill is an important approach into Earl Shilton from Hinckley and the A47, and this area plays an important role in the separation of Barwell and Earl Shilton and retaining their settlement identity. A particularly key area is the small triangular area of grassland to the north of Area D as the distance between the two settlements is just 50 metres in length. This area is considered to have an important role in the separation of the two settlements. There is intervisibility (seeing one settlement from the edge of the other) at numerous points within the green wedge, for example, Area D.
- 6.5 In the recent appeal decision at The Common Barwell (Area C) the Inspector identified that the residential proposal would result in increased coalescence between the settlements of Earl Shilton and Barwell. He also states that if further development were to be repeated it would lead to substantial erosion of this function.

- 6.6 At a macro scale the green wedge does prevent the merging of settlements. There are a number of sensitive areas of the green wedge which have been outlined above which includes the area around Carrs Hill, Earl Shilton and the area to the west of Barwell. The recent appeal decision has also highlighted to sensitivities to the south of Barwell.

Guiding Development Form

- 6.7 The uses on the perimeter of the green wedge are predominately agricultural, resulting in the built form beyond the green wedge to be of an open aspect. This is particularly evident around Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley where the urban fringe has exposed settlement edges due to the settlements being located on higher ground. The northern urban edge of Burbage is strongly influenced by the presence of Burbage Common and Woodland and the area between the urban edge and the common plays an important role on its setting. The recreation ground off Harwood Drive helps guide development form to some extent to the east which is one of the more sensitive areas of the green wedge due to the narrowness of the area between Hinckley and Barwell. Hinckley Golf Course provides an important role in guiding development form to the north east of Hinckley particularly in light of the recent housing development off Leicester Road.
- 6.8 There are fluvial flooding issues around Thurlaston Brook tributary in Area G and H. These flooding issues would have an impact on guiding any development and reinforces the need to retain these areas as green wedge to limit any impact.
- 6.9 The Local Plan is currently being prepared and there will be a housing requirement for the Hinckley Urban Area. This may create the need to identify land outside of the settlement boundary on green field sites as it is likely that the need will not be able to be met within the current settlement boundary. It is recommended that a sequential test is taken by first looking at sites within the settlement boundary, followed by sites within the countryside and finally land within the green wedge. There are a number of areas which are highly sensitive and the impact of built development on these areas should be carefully considered.
- 6.10 The green wedge is important in terms of protecting the historic nature of Elmesthorpe which is highlighted in Appendix 8 of the Blaby District Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment which notes that the '*Earl Shilton Bypass could have a marked influence on the western fringes of the settlement [Elmesthorpe]. The new road would be an urbanising influence in a fairly rural landscape*'. Elmesthorpe was expanded and developed largely by the Land Settlement Association during the 1930s to provide small holdings to enable workers to start a rural life and be self sufficient working off their land. Areas within the Review which could have particular impact on the rural nature of Elmesthorpe are Areas D and E. The other settlements adjacent to the green wedge are very urban in nature, Earl Shilton is particularly close and there is a Sustainable Urban Extension planned abutting the bypass which could further impact on the rural nature of Elmesthorpe. This demonstrates further the need to maintain the countryside within the green wedge in areas D and E.

- 6.11 The green wedge also helps guide the development of the north east of Burbage as its traditional pattern of development has been linear along Sapcote Road with the exception of properties off Burbage Road. It helps to guide development form to ensure the recreational resource and green lung are not compromised.
- 6.12 Guiding development form is an important element of the green wedge as it allows the other three functions to play their role in ensuring it prevents the merging of settlement, provides a green lung and recreational resource. Some areas may contribute to this function less due to strategic assets being within close proximity which potentially could perform this role. As highlighted above there are areas of sensitivity and the green wedge enables the protection of these structurally important areas of land.

Providing a green lung into urban areas

- 6.13 The green wedge provides the communities of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell, Earl Shilton and Elmesthorpe with access to green infrastructure and the countryside. These settlements are interlinked via route ways through the green wedge enabling connectivity between the settlements and countryside beyond.
- 6.14 The green wedge helps to preserve and promote wildlife and landscape character. In particular, Burbage Common and Woods is an important resource, the woodland is characterised as 'broadleaved ancient woodland' and identified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) playing an important role in supporting flora and fauna. The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies Burbage Common and Woods as one of the most important sites within the Borough in terms of functional value for the local community and a biodiversity asset. From the level of use identified on the site visits this would support the findings of the Strategy.
- 6.15 The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the green wedge as important in terms of access and recreation especially as demand for development occurs. It notes that the value of open landscape should be recognised for visual, quality of life and broader biodiversity reasons and the planning system must continue to protect the open landscape features. This is particularly evident from Barwell and Earl Shilton when looking towards Burbage and Hinckley. One example of such an important vista is on the urban fringe of Barwell from Shilton Road; from this location it is possible to see Burbage, Elmesthorpe, the church spire of St Michael's Church in Stoney Stanton, and Burbage Common and Wood is also prominent.
- 6.16 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) identifies that the area between Hinckley and Barwell is a sensitive area and important in terms of providing a green infrastructure link to the wider landscape to the north. The document proposes a landscape strategy to maintain the gap between Hinckley and Barwell as a multifunctional green corridor incorporating recreation. This is particularly relevant to Assessment Areas A and B.
- 6.17 The recent appeal decision at The Common, Barwell notes that *'a gap is established by the Green Wedge from The Common across to Elmesthorpe Lane, with the extension of open paddocks extending up to Shilton Road providing an important green lung element and a clear appreciation of the*

town's setting and relationship to the wider countryside'. This highlights the importance of the area between The Common, Barwell and Earl Shilton in terms of its function as a green lung.

- 6.18 Although there are no air quality management areas within the Borough the green wedge provides a green lung due to the busy road infrastructure present (A47, B4668 and Carrs Hill) as it provides a green buffer.
- 6.19 There is a broad range of open space and recreational facilities within the green wedge which draw people into using the area. Recreation will be considered in the criteria below.
- 6.20 It is evident that the green wedge does provide a green lung for both the immediate green wedge area and at the wider level sustaining positive green infrastructure routes and aids connectivity into the countryside from the urban areas of the Borough. Due to the nature of Burbage Common and Woods it is recognised that this can also provide a green lung to communities beyond the immediate urban areas potentially at a sub-regional area due to its wide appeal and strategic importance.

A recreational resource

- 6.21 There are a number of public and private recreational amenities within the green wedge which can be accessed from each of the settlements. These include:
- Recreation Grounds
 - Allotments
 - Tea rooms and picnic areas
 - Paddocks
 - Woodland walks
 - Burbage Common and Woods (plus visitor centre)
 - Football ground (stadium)
 - Cricket Ground
 - Squash Courts
 - Bridleways
 - Golf Course
 - Rugby Pitches
 - Tennis Course
 - Public rights of way
- 6.22 These recreational amenities provide opportunities not only for residents close to the green wedge but also draw people in from beyond the immediate area to use these sites.
- 6.23 There is a good network of public rights of way which encourages people into the green wedge. The majority of the public right of ways were of good quality with clear signage to aid the legibility of the routes, they also appeared to be well utilised. Informal routes were evident which diverged from the more formal routes.
- 6.24 The Open Space and Recreational Facilities Study (2016) identifies the urban areas as having a number of deficiencies in open space in relation to quantity and accessibility. Of particular note is the deficit of natural and semi-natural

open space in Barwell, Burbage and Earl Shilton. The Study recommends that a Green Wedge Management Plan could help evaluate options for improving access into the green wedge and improving its role as a recreational resource.

- 6.25 Abutting the boundary of the Green Wedge in Blaby District there are further recreational amenities which provide a continuation of Burbage Common and Woods. The woodlands known as Aston Firs and Elmesthorpe Plantation accessed off Smithy Lane broaden this recreational offering.
- 6.26 The importance of the green wedge in terms of recreation is evident in the Hinckley and Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy. It highlights that as the population increases it is important green infrastructure assets are retained and enhanced. Strategically important sites such as Burbage Common and Woods are of particular note and it recommends where possible it is expanded to accommodate the needs of the growing population and wildlife.

7. Recommendations and Conclusion

Introduction

- 7.1 Strategically at the wider area level the green wedge fulfils the objectives set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology Paper; however, at the Borough level there are small pockets that do not fully perform the role set out in the methodology. From the evaluation a number of observations and recommendations have been identified and are outlined below.

Area A: South of Hinckley Road and North of Normandy Way

- 7.2 Area A is important in terms of preventing the merging of settlement and guiding development form. The area is one of the narrowest parts of the green wedge and one of the more sensitive areas. The sensitivity of this area was highlighted in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017) which notes that ‘the generally rural character and undeveloped landscape of the green wedge... forms an important gap between Hinckley and Barwell’. North of Hinckley Road is the planned Barwell Urban Extension which contains a significant amount of built development, Area A will play an even more important role in acting as a green lung guiding and development form between Barwell and Hinckley. The area is open in nature and has an important role in relation to the adjoining countryside and neighbouring properties. The site is publically accessible via public rights of way which are well utilised. The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) recommends a landscape strategy for this area to help maintain the gap between Hinckley and Barwell so that it acts as a multifunctional green corridor incorporating recreation.
- 7.3 An appeal was allowed for up to 25 dwellings, provision of open space and land for a new burial ground at Land at Crabtree Farm. The green wedge boundary should be amended to exclude the residential element of the proposal. The open space and burial ground should be retained within the green wedge boundary as these meet the green wedge criteria.

Area B: South of Barwell and North of Normandy Way

- 7.4 The topography of Area B is an important feature of this area and contributes to the sensitivity of this area in terms of the impact of built development. Due to the topography any built development would have an impact of the setting of St Mary’s Church, an important designated heritage asset within Barwell. In addition to this the area contains ridge and furrow and a number of archaeological remains have been found including; early 20th Century various Neolithic finds and features were recorded in the area of a sand pit, evidence of a Roman settlement, including a possible floor, several hundred potsherds, brick, tile, tesserae and a whetstone, and a possible medieval lime kiln constructed of granite blocks was found here in a sand pit in the early 20th Century.
- 7.5 Area B is a green linkage between Barwell and Hinckley and provides good pedestrian connectivity between the two settlements. This is particularly the case to the centre and western edge of the area where there are a number of rights of way which provide circular and linear walks to the south of Barwell. This link within the green wedge provides a key green lung for residents of Dovecote Way Park is a public open space and is identified as a recreational facility in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (BRW34). It is recommended that although

the open space is identified as recreation within the development plan it should still remain within the green wedge boundary as it also contributes to the other functions of the green wedge. As highlighted above, the Landscape Character Assessment (2017) recommends a landscape strategy for this area to help maintain the gap between Hinckley and Barwell so that it acts as a multifunctional green corridor incorporating recreation.

- 7.6 There are no boundary amendments recommended for this area.

Area C: East of The Common and South of Shilton Road

- 7.7 Similar to Area B, topography is an important consideration within this part of the Green Wedge. The topography enables a unique character to the edge of Barwell; there are long distance views from Shilton Road. From this vantage point it is possible to view Burbage, Elmesthorpe and the spire of the church in Stoney Stanton. Paragraph 24 of the Inspector's Planning Appeal Decision for Shilton Road also found this area was particularly sensitive in terms of providing a green lung. The Inspector stated 'I consider the scheme would have a substantial and adverse effect on the third purpose – that of providing a green lung into the urban areas. Attributable in no small part to the elevation of Shilton Road, the existence of the appeal site as undeveloped land ensures the extension of the countryside into the built-up area of Barwell in a particularly attractive manner'. The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) supports this and identifies that a key sensitivity within this area is the 'extensive visibility and long distance views across open expanses of rolling farmland' and 'any change/development has the potential to be widely visible'.
- 7.8 This area helps to guide development form and contributes collaboratively to the prevention of the merging of settlements. It provides access via public rights of way, allotments and horse paddocks, performing the role of a green lung and a recreational resource.
- 7.9 The area is particularly sensitive to coalescence, providing a green lung and acting as recreational resource. It also plays an important role in connecting Barwell to Earl Shilton and provides intravisibility between a number of the settlements.
- 7.10 In the recent Appeal Decision at The Common, Barwell, the Inspector identified that the appeal site would be an integral part of the Green Wedge. He noted that '*the site would significantly erode the function of coalescence, visual appearance and the green lung element afforded by this site. These harms together lead me to conclude that substantial harm arises to the character and appearance of the countryside*'. This highlights the importance of this area in the function of the green wedge.
- 7.11 There are no suggested boundary amendments for this assessment area.

Area D: Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elmesthorpe Lane

- 7.12 Although Barwell and Earl Shilton are already joined near the junction of Leicester Road, Shilton Road and Hinckley this adds to the importance of this area creating settlement identity. This area of the green wedge is important to prevent the further coalescence to the south of the settlements and aids the recognition of the arrival into Earl Shilton as Carr's Hill is one of the main points of entry into the settlement.
- 7.13 This leads to the important role this area provides in relation to guiding development form, as Elmesthorpe Lane acts as a strong boundary to the Earl Shilton built up

area. This also re-enforces the sense of arrival into Earl Shilton and a clear divide between the settlements.

- 7.14 Archaeological remains have been found in this area which includes a late medieval mirror case which was recorded in 2004.
- 7.15 This area of the green wedge acts as a green lung as it provides the visual link to the countryside beyond which penetrates into Barwell, Hinckley and Burbage. Although there are no air quality management areas in the Borough the area does provide a buffer between the built up area and the two busy route ways of the A47 and Carrs Hill.
- 7.16 An area to the south of Area D falls within Blaby District. The Blaby District Strategic Green Wedge Review (2016), states that:
- 'The parcel of land within Blaby District does not contribute to all of the functions of Green Wedge. However, it forms part of a wider area within Hinckley and Bosworth that performs well as a Green Wedge. The land should continue to be protected as Green Wedge'.*
- 7.17 The Review concludes that there are no potential candidates for Green Wedge Review and it should continue to be protected.
- 7.18 There are no boundary recommendations for this area.

Area E: Land off Leicester Road

- 7.19 Area E plays an important role in terms of the wider green wedge role as it provides the green link from the A47 towards Burbage Common and the public right of way which runs alongside the northern boundary of Area E towards Elmesthorpe and Burbage Common and Woods. There is mature vegetation within this area and the poplar trees are particularly prominent. The Sustainable Urban Drainage System is the main feature visible from the A47 roadside and was put into place as a mitigation measure from the development of the A47 bypass. It now provides an aesthetic, wildlife habitat within the area whilst performing the green lung function in terms of flood alleviation.
- 7.20 This area offers the role of preventing the merging of settlements in relation to the wider context, whilst guiding development form beyond the A47 limiting any potential impact on the rural character of Elmesthorpe and its unique morphology. There is public access through the green wedge in terms of the A47 transport corridor which penetrates between Area E and C contributing towards separation and acting as a green lung. The A47 has a pavement that leads to Leicester Road and The Common, this allows pedestrian connectivity between Earl Shilton, Hinckley and Barwell.
- 7.21 The recently permitted crematorium off Leicester Road, Hinckley will have an impact on this area of the green wedge. The planning application sets out that the site will be extensively landscaped including the retention of existing grasslands and perimeter boundary hedgerows and trees. This should offer screening for the development and limit potential impact.
- 7.22 There are no boundary amendments proposed for the assessment area.

Area F: Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road

- 7.23 As highlighted in the assessment of Area A, the north-western part of Area F is one of the narrowest parts of the green wedge and sensitive to change and coalescence.
- 7.24 There are a number of sports and recreation facilities within this area. The sports facilities are privately owned but are an important local asset to the community. Swallows Green Recreation Ground is a public open space and is identified as a Formal Park with play provision for both children and young people and outdoor sports facilities in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. Swallows Green performs the role of the green wedge in terms of a recreational resource, green lung, guiding development form and preventing the merging of settlements and as such has a key role in the green wedge function.
- 7.25 There are various public rights of way within this area which provide good connectivity to Hinckley, Barwell and Burbage Common and Woods. These paths are an important feature, providing links within the green wedge and have an important role in providing a green lung. There are a number of private access points into the green wedge from Leicester Road.
- 7.26 Leicester Road is a key transport route that runs from the A47 into Hinckley which enables a pedestrian link between Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley whilst giving pedestrian access to the recreational opportunities provided within and adjacent to Area F.
- 7.27 Since the previous Green Wedge Review, a planning application was received for the relocation of Dorothy Goodman Upper School onto land off Barwell Lane. This site was a former Local Plan allocation for a community facility, it was not carried forward into the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD as there was no certainty that a community facility would come forward. As such the land was deallocated as a new community facility to green wedge. As part of the application an assessment was made on the parcel of land against the four functions of the green wedge. An extract from the Committee Report is as follows: *'In weighing up the planning balance, although it is acknowledge that the proposal would result in the loss of part of the Green Wedge, this part of the Green Wedge has limited amenity value and the development would provide enhanced environmental benefits including the provision of playing fields and the enhancement of biodiversity within the site with the protection of the species-rich hedgerows and additional tree planting in accordance with Policy DM6. The impact of the built form within the open site has been mitigated through the relocation of the school building further away from residential development, it is low level design, the proposed materials and finishes and the provision of additional tree planting and this part of the proposal is acceptable under Policy DM10. ...The site was an allocation in a former plan and was only removed as part of the Site Allocations DPD due to the education authority being unable to commit to the scheme when the plan was renewed. It is considered that Policy DM25, which supports new community benefits across the Borough, outweighs the potential harm to the green wedge and character of the open countryside'.*
- 7.28 It is recommended that the Green Wedge boundary is amended to exclude Dorothy Goodman Upper School.

Area G: Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road

- 7.29 There are two public rights of way which cut across this area and provide links into Burbage Common and Woods and Elmesthorpe providing a green lung. A watercourse runs into this area and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies Flood Zone 3 in this area.
- 7.30 This area provides recreational opportunities as there is a horse riding paddock. This is a private facility but remains a recreational facility all the same. The public right of way also affords recreational amenity value.
- 7.31 The area serves the role of preventing the merging of settlements in the wider context when considered alongside the other areas.
- 7.32 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

Area H: Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course

- 7.33 There are two predominant uses within this area. Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course with a smaller area used for agricultural purposes. The area acts as both a recreational resource and a green lung. Burbage Common is an important green infrastructure asset along with Burbage Wood and is a popular recreational area which was evident during the site visits. Burbage Common provides a popular area for the community and wildlife. In contrast the golf course is characterised by manicured lawns and rises to the north. Trees and woodland are a common landscape feature within this area.
- 7.34 The area is some distance from Barwell and Earl Shilton although when considered alongside the other areas it does serve the role of preventing the merging of settlements in the wider context. The Golf Course and Burbage Common are of a considerable size and by their very nature aid the separation of settlements and guide development form.
- 7.35 Burbage Common should be supported and sensitively managed to ensure it remains a positive green infrastructure resource and links to the asset should be maintained and improved to maximise access. This should be investigated as part of the site allocations process.
- 7.36 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

Area I: Land south of the railway line and north-east of Burbage

- 7.37 This area is similar to Area H as it contains Burbage Wood which forms part of the Burbage Common and Woods open space. Access between the two is via tunnels underneath the railway line.
- 7.38 This area does not perform a very strong role in preventing the merging of settlements as it is some distance from Barwell and Earl Shilton. In relation to the coalescence of Hinckley and Burbage the railway line acts a divide between the two. Hinckley Academy and John Cleveland Sixth Form playing fields provide an open aspect from Area I which gives the feel of separation between the two.
- 7.39 The properties on the northern side of Sapcote Road have been built in the form of ribbon development and there is an open aspect to the rear of the properties. In

contrast properties off Burbage Road have encroached further into the countryside. This is evident from the modern properties on Elm Tree Drive and The Coppice. The green wedge therefore successfully guides development form of Burbage.

- 7.40 In relation to this, there are development pressures on the edge of Burbage north of Sapcote Road, which could lead to significant backland development. It is important to consider impact of tandem development and how this could be repeated where development pressures do not already exist. The Green Wedge does guide the development form of Burbage in this location as the establishment of a line of sporadic backland development that causes a detrimental change to the character of the green wedge.
- 7.41 Area I provides both a recreational resource and green lung. The area is an important recreational resource and this was evident from the level of use of Burbage Woodland (including picnic area) and connecting rights of ways during the site visits. It acts as a green lung as it is an area important to wildlife and Burbage Wood and Aston Firs are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It provides links to green infrastructure at both a strategic and local level whilst providing a good recreational facility.
- 7.42 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

Revisions to the green wedge

- 7.43 A number of boundary amendments were made to the green wedge through the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD in 2016. These amendments included:
- Extension to include St Mary's Churchyard
 - Extension to include the Hinckley Academy and John Cleveland Sixth Form Playing Fields
 - Inclusion of St Mary's Avenue Playing Field
 - Removal of the Olympic Way housing development
- 7.44 Through this assessment these new areas of green wedge have been assessed to see how well they assimilate into the wider green wedge. It has been determined that these areas are a successful addition to the green wedge and aid its function. As such these areas of the green wedge will be retained.
- 7.45 It is important to highlight that the green wedge should be the minimum to provide the functions of the green wedge and this is an important element to consider when reviewing the boundary as it will ensure that the border identified is robust and defensible if future development pressures arise.
- 7.46 Since the last Green Wedge Review was completed, Dorothy Goodman Upper School has been constructed on an area of land off Barwell Lane. This land was formerly a community facility allocation in the Local Plan (2001) but was not retained as an allocation in the Local Plan (2016-2026) as the education authority were unable to commit to the scheme at the time of the document's production. Through the planning application process a micro-scale green wedge review was undertaken to assess the impact of the proposal against the four functions of the green wedge. In weighing up the planning balance, it was acknowledged that the development would result in the loss of the green wedge, but this part of the green wedge has limited amenity value and the development would provide enhanced environmental benefits. It was concluded that any adverse impacts arising from the development could be

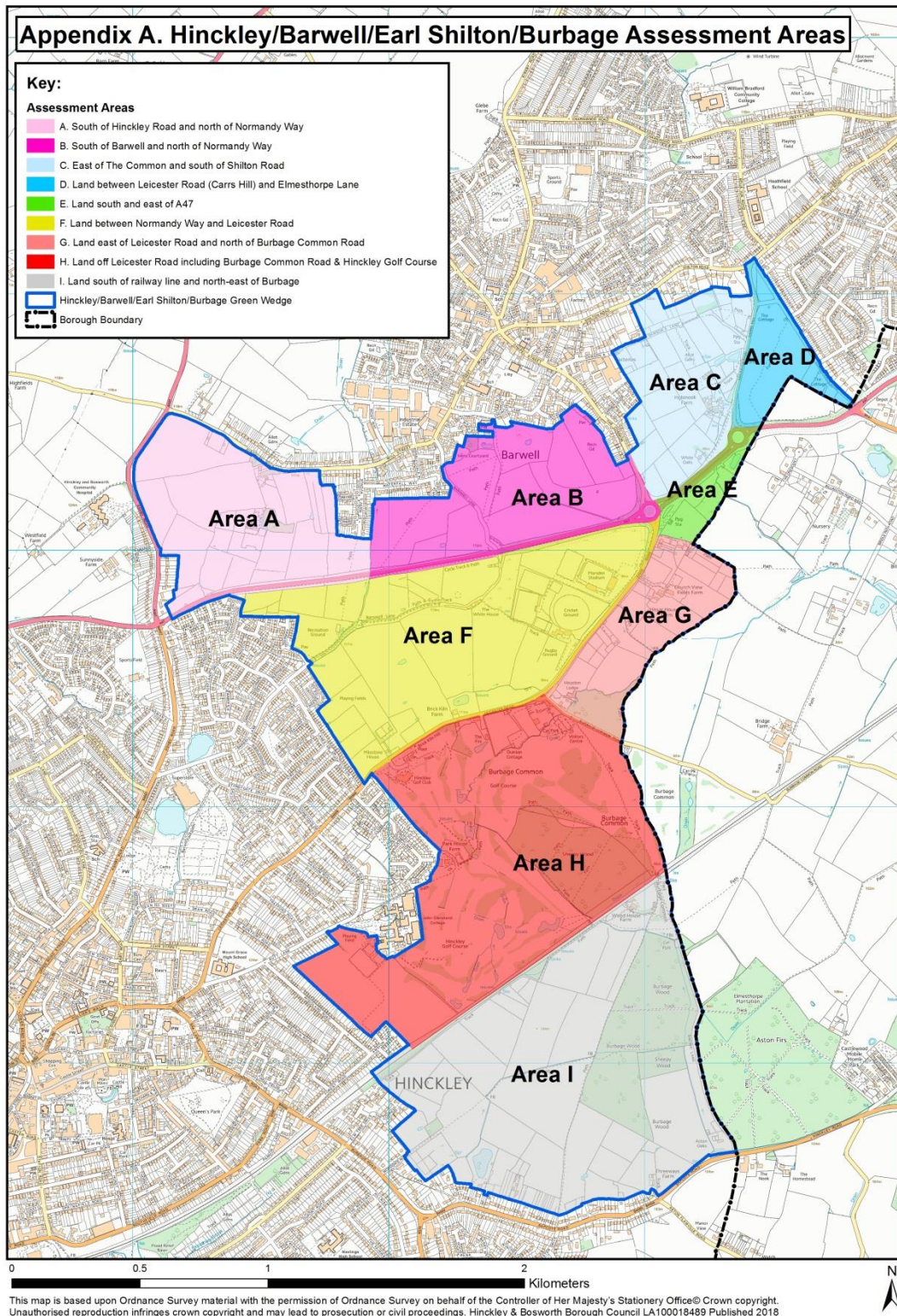
mitigated against. This scheme has now been built and therefore the boundary of the green wedge should be revised accordingly.

- 7.47 Another boundary revision put forward within this Review is to reflect the appeal decision at Land at Crabtree Farm for up to 25 dwellings, provision of open space and land for a new burial ground. The inspector noted that the appeal site was much smaller than the site at The Common and the reduction in the gap was not substantial. The A47 roadside planting also mitigated any perception of the gap closing. The green wedge boundary should be amended to exclude the residential element of the proposal. The open space and burial ground should be retained within the green wedge boundary as these meet the green wedge criteria.
- 7.48 At the time of writing this document the housing requirement to 2036 for the urban area is unknown. Green wedges do not perform the same function as a green belt, in that they do not restrict the growth of an urban area. Instead they aim to ensure that as urban development grows, open space is incorporated providing a recreational resource and acting as a green lung, whilst at the same time having regard to the coalescence of settlements and this is where the consideration of development form is important in meeting the future requirements. As the requirement is currently unknown, it may be necessary to allocate land within the current green wedge boundary to ensure that future development requirements set out in the Local Plan (2016-2036) can be met, where they can not be accommodated elsewhere.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This Review has demonstrated that the green wedge has a multi-functional role which is well used by the communities it abuts. The green wedge is a multi-functional designation. It provides the following uses:
- Recreational opportunities for the local and wider community;
 - Performs an agricultural role;
 - Haven for flora and fauna; and
 - Provides links into the countryside from the urban areas providing connectivity.
- 8.2 The outcomes of the review will inform the preparation of the Local Plan 2016-2036 to assist in the green wedge boundary allocation. From the assessment it is evident that boundary amendments will need to be made to ensure that the boundary is robust and defensible whilst maintaining the four functions of the green wedge.
- 8.3 It is important to re-iterate that the recommendations in this assessment do not revise the adopted boundary of the green wedge. The revision of the boundary will be carried out through the Local Plan Review and this document will be used as an evidence base for this process. The findings of the Review will be consulted upon as part of the preparation of the Plan. The Green Wedge boundary identified on the Adopted Proposals Map will remain in place until the Local Plan is adopted.

Appendix A: Assessment Areas



Appendix B: Planning Applications within the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge from October 2010 to Thursday, 16th April 2020

Application reference	Description	Address	Decision
11/00067/FUL	Demolition of existing changing rooms, erection of a replacement changing room facility with an altered vehicular and pedestrian access and formation of car park	Barwell Common Recreation Ground, Dovecote Way, Barwell	Planning Permission
11/00377/FUL	Travellers site for two pitches and the erection of a toilet and laundry room	Land Adjacent Hissar House Farm, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Refused Appeal Dismissed
11/00613/COU	Change of use of land and erection of stable block	Land Rear of Brooklyn, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
11/00719/OUT	Erection of four dwellings (Outline – Access and layout only)	Land St Marys Court, Barwell	Refused Appeal Allowed
11/00743/FUL	Demolition of existing farm buildings and erection of 6 dwellings	Land Adjacent 35 Sapcote Road, Burbage	Planning Permission
11/01022/FUL	Formation of surface water balancing pond and associated infrastructure	Hinckley Golf Course, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
11/01023/REM	Erection of 184 dwellings (scale, appearance, layout and landscaping)	Land Adjacent Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
12/00246/FUL	Demolition of garage building and erection of one dwelling	146 Shilton Road, Barwell	Planning Permission
12/00452/FUL	Erection of 24 dwellings and associated infrastructure	Land Adjacent 108 Shilton Road, Barwell	Refused Appeal

			Dismissed
12/00935/REM	Substitution of plots 93, 94, 98, 107, 112, 116, 120, 142, 148, 149, and 156 of planning permission 11/01023/REM	Land Adjacent Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
13/00117/FUL	Erection of 95 dwellings with associated parking, garages and infrastructure	Land Adjacent Woodgate Road, Burbage	Refused
13/00126/CONDIT	Variation of condition no. 1 of planning permission 11/01023/REM to amend the layout	Land Adjacent Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Approval of reserved matters
13/00467/COU	Change of use to a mixed use to allow for pre school playgroup for children aged 2-5 years to operate Monday - Friday term time only 9-3pm	Barwell Common Pavilion, Dovecote Way, Barwell	Planning Permission
13/00882/FUL	Part change of use of offices (B1) to canine rehabilitation centre (sui generis)	N And L Building Contractors, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
13/01044/FUL	Travellers site for 3 pitches with the erection of 3 day rooms provision of 8 parking spaces and stone surfaced turning area, together with associated landscaping and access road	Land Off Leicester Road, Hinckley	Refused
14/00014/FUL	Erection of dwelling with detached garage and one detached garage serving 146 Shilton Road, Barwell.	146 Shilton Road, Barwell	Planning Permission
14/00447/FUL	Construction of outdoor manege	Land Rear Of Brooklyn, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
14/01248/FUL	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of new dwelling	Aston Oaks, Sapcote Road, Burbage	Planning Permission
15/00887/FUL	Extension and first floor erection to east and west annexes to form additional function rooms	Leicester Road Football Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
16/00113/COU	Change of use of land for gypsy/traveller site	Land Adjacent Hissar House	Refused

	for the provision of two static caravans, one touring caravan, erection of two amenity buildings and associated infrastructure	Farm, Leicester Road, Hinckley	
16/00247/FUL	Land South East Of Junction Of Barwell Lane And Harwood Drive Hinckley	Relocation of Dorothy Goodman School	Planning Permission
16/00149/HOU	Erection of 3 no. outbuildings and swimming pool	Aston Oaks, Sapcote Road, Burbage	Planning Permission
17/00402/FUL	Proposed golf driving range shelter	Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
17/00531/OUT	Residential development of up to 185 dwellings (outline - access only)	Land East of The Common, Barwell	Refused Appeal Dismissed
17/00896/FUL	Erection of 14 dwellings	Land St Marys Court, Barwell	Refused
17/01229/CONDIT	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 16/00247/FUL to amend external elevations to include external roof handrails and ladders and the siting and enclosure of a proposed sprinkler system	Land South West of Junction of Barwell Lane and Harwood Drive, Hinckley	Planning Permission
18/00164/FUL	Erection of a bund and refreshments hut (part retrospective)	Leicester Road Football Club, Leicester Road Football Ground, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Refused
18/00279/OUT	Erection of up to 25 dwellings, provision of open space and change of use of land for new cemetery and associated shelter (Outline - access only)	Land at Crabtree Farm, Hinckley Road, Barwell	Refused Appeal Allowed
18/00751/DEEM	Erection of crematorium building and formation of associated memorial gardens, roadways, car parking, footpaths and	Land east of Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission

	landscaping.		
18/00892/CONDIT	Removal of condition 1 of planning permission 10/00257/CONDIT which seeks to restrict the ownership of the Bungalows to Hinckley Golf Course	Bungalow 1 and 2 Hinckley Golf Club, Leicester Road, Hinckley	Planning permission
18/01051/FUL	Siting of 2 storage containers ancillary to the existing equestrian use	Land East of The Enterprise Centre, Dawsons Lane, Barwell	Refused
18/01194/FUL	Removal of existing buildings and erection of 1no. Portal framed storage building.	Rear Of Gamekeeper Lodge, Burbage Common Road, Hinckley	Planning Permission
19/00393/FUL	Change of use of land to a new burial ground, new access	Land At Crabtree Farm Hinckley Road Barwell Leicestershire	Planning Permission
20/00094/FUL	Land Rear Of 5 - 15 The Coppice Burbage Leicestershire	Proposed residential development of 9 dwellings.	Decision pending

Appendix C: Assessment Area Pro-formas

Location: Area A – South of Hinckley Road and North of Normandy Way

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Agriculture, Allotments, Grassland, and A47	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, agriculture, and hospital	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Trees, hedgerows, and ploughed fields	
Topography	Small incline towards Hinckley Road, Barwell with some undulation.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	From the western edge of this area, it is possible to see properties in Hinckley located on the Ashby Road. Mature trees fronting Normandy Way block views towards Hinckley.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	The area abuts the built form of Barwell and Hinckley. This area is one of the narrowest parts within the green wedge between two settlements. It is possible to walk between the settlements.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Properties on Hinckley Road, Barwell	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	There are some farm related buildings.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	It would impact on the separation between Barwell and Hinckley having a significant visual impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No

Details	This area is mainly agricultural in nature.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	There is a public right of way that runs across the site from Hinckley Road to Ashby Road.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Via public right of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	It is a relatively small right of way, but is well signposted from the access points. There is no stile or kissing gate to access.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	The right of way looked well used	
What visible informal uses are there?	There appears to be an informal walkway between Hinckley Road and Normandy Way.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Limited recreational opportunity on this area although it is being actively farmed so it would have an impact on this. It would also have an impact on the visual break between Hinckley and Barwell.	

Location: Area B - South of Barwell and north of Normandy Way

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Agriculture, Recreation ground and A47	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, place of worship, Football Stadium, and Agriculture.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows, trees, grazing land and ploughed fields. Church has a prominent position on the edge of the green wedge.	
Topography	A fairly significant incline towards Barwell, peaking at the edge of the green wedge abutting the properties on Church Lane.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is estimated that this area is within equal distance to Hinckley and Earl Shilton. The distance to Hinckley would be approximately 10 minutes as the pedestrianised footway of Barwell provides a good link. Walking distance to Earl Shilton would be slightly longer as rights of way and pathways aren't as well connected to one another.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Built form of Barwell	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	None	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	The nature of the landscape sloping upwards from the A47 means that development would have a major impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Recreation ground	

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	Cycleway, pedestrianised Barwell Lane and rights of way across fields.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	The green wedge can be accessed at numerous points due to the number of public rights of ways that cut through this area.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Tarmac footpath linking Hinckley and Barwell. Well signposted footpath routes. Access to routes across fields via stiles and a kissing gate.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Barwell Lane footpath appeared to be well used while conducting site visit.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Barwell Lane provides a green walkway. The recreation ground is also allocated as open space.	

Location: Area C - East of The Common and south of Shilton Road

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Allotments, agriculture, farm buildings, paddocks and grazing.	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, residential and employment.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Paddocks, mature trees, and shrubs.	
Topography	Rolls downwards towards the A47	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	It is possible to see Burbage, Earl Shilton, Elmesthorpe and church spire in Stoney Stanton.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Within close proximity to Earl Shilton.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Residential properties off Shilton Road.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Allotment sheds, paddocks, farm buildings, electricity transmission box.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Due to the sloping topography of the green wedge, development of this site would have a substantial visual impact and bring development closer to the A47, compromising the integrity of the wedge.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Provides an open view from Shilton Road towards Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational	Yes	No

opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	Public rights of way, paddocks and allotments	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	There are public rights of way within the area.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Public rights of way, paddocks and allotments	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use, tracks look well trodden. The allotments also look fully leased, with no obvious vacant plots.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Allotments north of Dawson Lane are not allocated in the AAP and should be allocated in the new local plan.	

Location: Area D – Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elmesthorpe Lane

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Scrubland	
Adjacent land uses	Residential and agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Scattered trees around the edge.	
Topography	Rolls downwards towards the A47	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	Earl Shilton and Barwell	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Adjacent	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Abuts Elmesthorpe Lane. To the south the boundary is the administrative area of Hinckley and Bosworth.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Cottage and outbuildings on Elmesthorpe Road	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact the visual approach to Earl Shilton	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No

Details		
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details		
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	There were informal tracks around the perimeter of the lower field however not evident to the level of use.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Currently no recreational opportunity.	

Location: Area E – Land off Leicester Road

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDs) and grassland	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	SUD, scattered mature trees, and hedgerows.	
Topography	Relatively flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close to both Barwell and Earl Shilton	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	The administrative boundary	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	An access route is evident to a Severn Trent facility.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact on view towards Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details		

Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details		
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	N/A	

Location: Area F – Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Recreation ground, Football, Rugby, Cricket and Tennis facilities. Farmland, small brook running east to west with cycle track	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, A47 and Burbage Common.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature trees and established hedgerows, bund to the east	
Topography	Highest point to the east (bund slopping gradually to the west)	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Closely connected only separated by the A47 – Normandy way	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Residential development to the west	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	Roadways, Leicester road and the A47	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Club house at the recreational ground, Football stadium, Cricket clubhouse, Tennis courts and Rugby ground with clubhouse and bar	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Loss of recreational facilities	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Recreation ground connected by cycle and pathways	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths /	Yes	No

cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	Football, Rugby, cricket, tennis and squash. Public rights of way.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Several points of entrance from Normandy way, Leicester road and residential development	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	There are a number of public rights of ways and informal walkways providing numerous access routes into and around the Green Wedge.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use evident whilst on site.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Informal walkways around field.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?		

Location: Area G – Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Residential, Agricultural, stables, woodland	
Adjacent land uses	Common land , recreational grounds and on the boundary line with Blaby D.C.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature trees and hedgerows Well defined field boundary's Exercise area for horses	
Topography	Relatively flat, slight incline towards Elmesthorpe.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	Barwell and Hinckley and on the boundary of Blaby D.C.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close proximity to Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Administrative boundary of Blaby District.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm with stables Max of 6 dwellings for residential use.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Close proximity to the common land	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No

Details	Public right of way abutting Area E	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Public right of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Good sign post from Leicester Road.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Relatively well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No, provides the green connection.	

Location: Area H – Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course

Date of site visit: 7 March 2018

Land use description	Burbage Common and Visitor Centre, golf course, scrubland, woodland and scrap yard.	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, school and playing fields, railway line, agriculture.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Grassland, woodland, scattered trees, manicured lawns within Golf Course.	
Topography	Undulating in parts but mostly flat.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	Hinckley and Burbage	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Separated by the railway line	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Golf club and course	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	Golf club and course, school with playing fields	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Visitor Centre and Golf Club facilities.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Dependent on location of development, there would be more of an impact if development occurred close to Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle	Yes	No

paths)		
Details	Walkways, paths, bridleways, visitors centre, play ground and golf club	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Several access from Hinckley and Burbage, car parks	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Footpaths in good order, walkways well signposted with information boards, kissing gates and stiles	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	All well trodden and used every day, ramblers and dog walkers	
What visible informal uses are there?	Path and walkways, bridle paths	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?		

Location: Area I – Land south of railway line and north-east of Burbage

Land use description	Woodland, recreation, railway, agriculture, paddocks, tea rooms, school playing fields	
Adjacent land uses	Golf course, woodland, Burbage Common, residential properties	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature trees, brook, woodland and hedgerows	
Topography	Relative flat, the railway is on a raised embankment	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	Hinckley and Burbage	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close within walking distance	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Administrative boundary of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Blaby District Council. Residential properties	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Tea rooms, farm buildings, railway line	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Negative impact on the recreational value	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Yes, Burbage Common and Woodland and is a key open space for residents of Burbage and due to its size has a wide catchment area	
Does this green wedge provide recreational	Yes	No

opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	Woodland walks, public rights of way, tea rooms	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Numerous access points from Sapcote Road and Smithy Lane. Access from Burbage Common.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Sign posts are of good quality	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use	
What visible informal uses are there?	Informal walkways within the woodlands	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Provides access to the countryside for residents of the urban area.	

Appendix D: Glossary

Ancient Woodland

Woodland that is believed to have existed from at least medieval times.

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological remains are important resources often containing valuable information about the past. They are part of the areas heritage and are of great historic value. The Borough contains many sites of archaeological interest ranging from roman coins found off Barwell Lane to possible medieval moated sites near Hall Close, Barwell.

Biodiversity

Encompasses the whole of the natural world and all living things on the planet. It includes plants, animals and micro-organisms which, together, interact in complex ways with the environment to create living ecosystems.

Coalescence

The merging or coming together of separate towns or villages to form a single entity.

Core Strategy

Sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a Development Plan Document.

Development Plan Document

Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and form the Development Plan for a local authority area. They can include a Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of land, and other Development Plan Documents, such as generic development control policies. They will all be shown geographically on an adopted Proposals Map. Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents.

Green Corridors

Linear sections of habitat which connect other habitat areas at either end or along the way.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

A term encompassing all physical resources and natural systems, including ecological, geological and historical assets.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

Framework to aid our understanding of the landscape as a whole and provide us with an important tool that will contribute to the decision making process especially where issues affecting the landscape, both rural and urban are to be considered. Produced by Leicestershire County Council.

Intervisibility

It is possible to see one settlement from the edge of the other.

Intravisibility

It is possible to see more than one settlement from anyone point in the green wedge.

Issues and Options

The preparation of issues and options papers is the first step in preparing the Local Plan. They suggest different ways to address the issues facing the borough and help guide the preparation of the Local Plan. All Issues and Options papers are open for public comment before the Preferred Options stage is reached.

Local Plan

The Local Plan is the key document which helps develop the borough of Hinckley & Bosworth, over a 20 year period. It sets out the vision and framework to achieve development, addressing the needs and opportunities of the area. It also guides decisions on whether or not planning applications can be granted.

Sites and Monument Record (SMR)

Detailed records of the known archaeological investigations (sites or events), remains (monuments), findspots, buried deposits, and areas of archaeological potential of various kinds.

Remote Access

The site provides a valuable, visual green space resource to the community along a number of distinct sightlines and at a distance.

Settlement Boundary

Marks the extent of the built up area and the countryside beyond. They are used to prevent the unregulated encroachment of development into the countryside. A settlement boundary is sometimes also known as a village envelope.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected by the Statute under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and usually managed by Natural England. Their designation provides protection to features of regional/national biodiversity. There are seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Borough

Site Specific Allocations

Allocations of areas of land for specific purposes (e.g. housing, green wedge or employment land) or for mixed uses or development to be contained in the Local Plan.

Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDs)

Sustainable Urban Drainage System is a sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques

Urban area

The urban area consists of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton as identified in the Core Strategy