



Cossington Neighbourhood Plan

2021 – 2037

REFERENDUM VERSION, OCTOBER 2023





CONTENTS

Foreword from Chair	3
1. Introduction	4
2. How the Plan was prepared	7
3. How the Plan fits into the planning system	8
4. The Plan, its purpose and what we want it to achieve	9
5. Sustainable development	10
6. About Cossington	12
7. Neighbourhood Plan Policies:	
Housing and the Built Environment	13
The Natural, Historical and Social Environment	22
Community Sustainability:	47
Community Assets	47
Parish Communications	56
Transport and Road Safety	57
Business and Employment	63
8. Infrastructure	66
9. Monitoring and Review	67

Appendices

- a) Housing Census data
- b) Housing Needs Report YourLocale
- c) Residential Site Assessment process
- d) Affordable Housing for Sale Assessment
- e) Design Guide
- f) Environmental Inventory
- g) Local Green Spaces
- h) Notable trees
- i) Local Heritage Assets
- j) Important Views

Foreword

from the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee

Welcome to the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Cossington.

1. The current Neighbourhood Plan process was originated by Cossington at a Council meeting in 2020 when it was decided to set up a joint Parish Council/Community Advisory Committee.
2. The impetus for producing a Neighbourhood Plan was not to prevent development, but to ensure that it is of an appropriate scale and character. We are fortunate to live in an area of great beauty both in terms of the natural landscape and the built environment.
3. As the Neighbourhood Plan was being written, the new Local Plan for Charnwood was being finalised and is now at the submission stage.
4. The underlying premise of the Plan is to seek to ensure sustainable development within the parish that meets the needs of current and future generations, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. These goals are mutually dependent. Conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment will not only improve the lives of people but can further strengthen the economy through tourism activities.
5. As the Neighbourhood Plan was being finalised, the Government introduced a ten-point plan for a green industrial revolution. We have sought to embrace this commitment where we can within the Neighbourhood Plan so that development in the Parish has appropriate regard for the living conditions of future generations.
6. Alongside the Policies included in this NP are a range of Community Actions. These are not planning policies and are not subject to Examination but are a reflection of work that the Parish Council intends to take forward in support of NP Policies where it is appropriate to do so.
7. I would like to thank the members of the Advisory Committee, other Parish Councillors and the many other individuals and bodies for their support as we have undertaken this work, and for the grant funding received from Locality without which the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan would not have been possible.

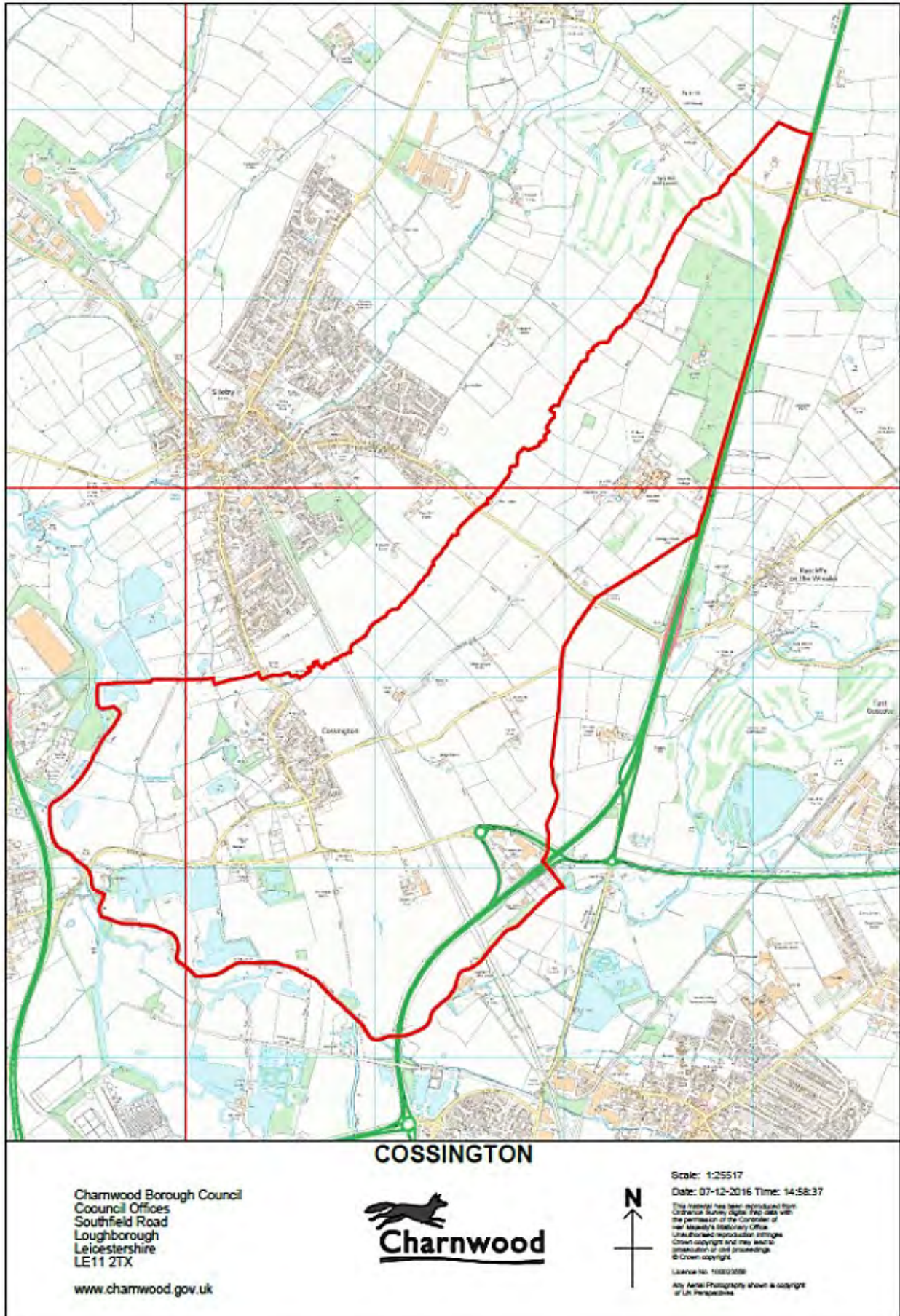
Councillor Penny Weston-Webb

Chair, Cossington Parish Council.

1. Introduction

8. The Cossington Neighbourhood Plan (the NP) has been prepared by the Cossington NP Advisory Committee, which brings together members of the local community and Parish Councillors.
9. A key part of the Government’s Localism agenda, a NP is a new type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes, shops, etc. should be built, what new buildings and extensions should look like, and which areas of land should be protected from development.
10. As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, “Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live”.
11. The NP covers the whole of the Parish of Cossington (Figure 1). It sits alongside Charnwood’s Local Plan (LP) to provide more detailed development ‘planning’ related policies to help achieve locally identified aims and objectives.
12. The NP sets out a long-term approach for the development of Cossington, and clear development related policies to realise this.
13. In preparing a NP, a community is not working from ‘a blank piece of paper’. Legislation requires that the NP, and the policies it contains, must be prepared in a certain manner; in particular, the policies must be in general conformity with adopted strategic local planning policies and must have regard to national planning policy and advice. Charnwood Borough Council has stated that all of the policies in the Charnwood Core Strategy Local Plan are the strategic policies for the purpose of neighbourhood planning.

Figure 1 Cossington Neighbourhood Area (Charnwood Borough Council)



2. How the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared

14. The Cossington Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Charnwood Borough Council on 17 April 2020.

15. The NP has been prepared by the Cossington NP Advisory Committee comprising members of the local community and local parish councillors, with the support of Charnwood Borough Council and consultants YourLocale, and under the direction of Cossington Parish Council (the Qualifying Body for the NP).

16. Effective and extensive consultation have been at the heart of its preparation in the most challenging of circumstances. This is key to ensuring that the NP fully reflects local needs and priorities. There have been a variety of consultation exercises, at which many local people have taken part.



17. A

questionnaire was sent to all the households in the Parish in the autumn 2020, to help define the priorities for the NP. There was an excellent response rate amounting to 41% of adults and up to 78% of households (171 actual responses) and the findings were used as the basis for three 'Theme Groups' involving members of the local community meeting throughout 2020

and into 2021 to consider in detail issues such as housing, the environment and sustainability (community facilities, employment and transport).

18. An open event was held in July 2021 to share the emerging policies. 40 people attended and there was a high level of support for the policies on display.

19. Further details regarding community consultation are provided in the Consultation Statement.



3. How the NP fits into the planning system

20. The right for communities to prepare NPs was established through the Localism Act 2011, which set out the general rules governing their preparation.
21. A NP forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area in which it is prepared. This statutory status means that it must be taken into account when considering planning decisions affecting that area.
22. A NP is required to meet a set of basic conditions if it is to proceed to referendum. Firstly, it must not breach, and be otherwise compatible with EU obligations, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and European Habitats Directive. Although Britain has formally left the EU, its laws still apply.
23. It also needs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan. In the case of Cossington, this is the Charnwood LP.
24. A NP must also have regard to national planning policy and advice. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF requires the planning system (including NPs) to encourage sustainable development and details three dimensions to that development:

An economic dimension – they should contribute to economic development;

A social dimension – they should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the right supply of housing and creating a high-quality built environment with accessible local services; and

An environmental dimension – they should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

4. The NP, its purpose and what we want it to achieve

25. The NP area encompasses the whole of the Parish of Cossington and covers the period up to 2037, a timescale which deliberately mirrors that for the emerging Charnwood Local Plan.
26. A vision statement has been prepared by the Advisory Committee based on community input. When asked in the community questionnaire, 96% of respondents agreed with the vision.
27. The parish of Cossington is located within the Soar valley. It lies between Rothley, Sileby, Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, Seagrave, Mountsorrel, Quorn and Syston. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure Cossington remains a peaceful and safe place to live. The Plan will inform and shape new and future development proposals in such a way that by the end of the Plan period, 2037, Cossington will have retained its independent identity and locality, distinct from adjoining towns and villages. Cossington will continue to thrive as a vibrant and distinct village with a balanced and diverse community.
28. Essential to the plan is the proposition that by supporting measured, proportionate, timely and sustainable development in a gradual phased manner, the character of the village and parish can be retained for future generations. In order to achieve this, Cossington Parish Council expects development to take account of:
 - Local need.
 - Preserving the distinct areas of separation between the villages.
 - Being sympathetic to the history and heritage of the village, retaining and enhancing the character and appeal of the existing conservation area.
 - Protecting the open spaces, the high-quality natural environment and wildlife, community and recreational facilities.
 - Containing environmental and sustainability policies that contribute positively to flood risk, mitigate climate change and minimise traffic volumes by encouraging home working to flourish in the modern digital age.
29. The main purpose of the NP is not to duplicate national or district-wide (i.e. Charnwood) planning policies, but to sit alongside these, to add additional or more detailed policies specific to Cossington. Where there are national and district-wide planning policies that meet the needs and requirements of the Parish they are not repeated here. Instead, the NP focuses on those planning issues which consultation shows matter most to the community, and to which the NP can add the greatest additional value.

5. Sustainable Development

30. According to the key national planning document; the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development.
31. The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people to satisfy their basic needs and to enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic and environmental needs.
32. The NPPF carries a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental and economic, all of which are important and interrelated. In accordance with this, the NP's aims and policies are centred on the achievement of sustainable development, including by, for example:

Social

- To safeguard existing open space for the enjoyment of residents;
- To protect existing community facilities; and
- To deliver a mix of housing types, so that it can meet the needs of present and future generations.

Environmental

- To ensure that housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- To protect important open spaces from development;
- To ensure that the design of development protects the distinctive local character and identity;
- To conserve and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats; and
- To make provision for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Economic

- To protect existing employment uses;
- To support appropriate small-scale business development and expansion; and
- To encourage appropriate start-up businesses and home working

33. It is important to note that when using the NP to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and the policies contained in it must be considered together.
34. While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this NP easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.
35. The NP will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements.

6. About Cossington

36. Set within the confluence of the two rivers Wreake and Soar, the village of Cossington and its parish has been a place of human habitation since the Bronze Age, with archaeological evidence found of bronze age, iron age, Saxon, Roman, and medieval settlement.

37. First recorded as 'Cosintone' (meaning 'Cossa's settlement') in the Domesday Book in 1086 as a farmstead of 77 villagers belonging to the Manor owned by Earl Hugh of Chester, Cossington Manor then changed hands many times until 1549, when it was bought by a member of the Rothley branch of the Babington family, beginning a long stabilising connection. The



Babingtons were responsible for starting the piecemeal enclosure of the three open fields to the east of the village during the seventeenth century and several of their family served as rectors for the parish.

38. Main buildings in the village are situated on medieval sites, including the village pound, the original manor house, the church, the

rectory, and the water mill. The church dates from the thirteenth century with additions in later centuries. Following a major Victorian renovation in the late nineteenth century, linen fold pew panelling, an effigy of a young priest and a celebrated sedilia still survive. The early twentieth century-stained glass window by Strachan is a rare example within a parish church. The rectory, recognised as one of the finest examples within the country, is a complex of various buildings some dating from the fourteenth century while the water mill, known as one of the earliest in Leicestershire, dates from the thirteenth century and produced paper, fulled wool and milled corn over 800 years.

39. In the late eighteenth century both rivers were canalised, with the River Soar eventually linking with the Grand Union Canal bringing trade to the area. To the east of the village the Midland Counties Railway was opened with Cossington having its own stop until 1873.

40. Education and social care improved in the parish during the nineteenth century. Having had its own private workhouse, the village became part of the Barrow upon Soar Poor Union in 1834. A separate vestry was built to provide a Sunday School in 1835 while Ratcliffe College, a Catholic school was built to the north of the village in 1847. The Dame school was replaced by a purpose-built National school in 1873 with spaces for sixty pupils. For thirty years a private boarding school for girls was run on by two sisters on Main Street offering French lessons and European governesses.

41. The village played its part in both wars, losing local inhabitants in service, and providing homes for Belgian refugees in WWI and refugees from Yorkshire in WWII. The Hall was used as an ATS base and Ratcliffe Aerodrome (a privately owned airfield) was used as a hub for the movement of military aircraft.

42. The updating of the local road links with the building of the A6 Quorn/ Mountsorrel and the A46 western Leicester bypass in the 1990s left the village peacefully between the two. Cossington had often been described as an example of a typical beautiful Leicestershire village in the mid twentieth century, having a high proportion of thatched cruck cottages, a post office, shop, blacksmith, veterinary practice, and market gardens. Since then, mains water, electricity, gas, and drains have been installed but the village has lost many of its facilities. Having survived the local gravel extractions of the 1980s and 90s, frequent flooding, and successfully fought off proposed housing development in the 1990s it is now predominantly a residential village, growing only in population from 77 inhabitants in 1086 to 598 in 2011.
43. There are several notable individuals with which Cossington is associated. In 1882 Lord Kitchener's father came to live at The Manor House until his death in 1894 whereupon he was buried in the village churchyard. In the twentieth century Colonel Abel Smith came to live at The Grove following his residence at Ratcliffe Hall. Lady Isobel Barnett, a radio and television personality famous for her role in 'What's My Line?' during the mid-1900s also lived in the village at the White House and Barnett Close is named in her memory.
44. Moving forward to the present day, at the time of the 2011 Census, the Cossington Parish was home to around 598 residents living in 218 households. Analysis of the Census suggests that between 2001 and 2011, the population in the local area grew by around 3% (15 people). During this period, it is estimated the number of dwellings increased by 11% (22).
45. There is evidence of an ageing population with the number of over 65 year olds rising by 9% and up from 20% of total population in 2001 to 22% in 2011. In line with national trends the local population is likely to get older as average life expectancy continues to rise.
46. Home ownership levels are very high with around 80% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan and at 7% the share of households living in social rented accommodation is very low when compared with regional and national rates.
47. There is evidence of under occupancy suggesting a need for smaller homes of one to two bedrooms which would be suitable for residents needing to downsize, small families and those entering the housing market. Providing suitable accommodation for elderly residents will enable them to remain in the local community and release under-occupied larger properties onto the market which would be suitable for growing families.
48. There is a predominance of large detached and an under representation of housing for single people with just 3% of dwellings having one bedroom.
49. Land Registry data indicates there has a small number of new build housing market activity over recent years, but this has been exclusively high value detached housing.
50. Deprivation is not a significant issue in the local area, but IMD domain data suggests that some residents may find it difficult to access owner-occupation or access the private rental market.

7. Policies

Housing and the Built Environment

Introduction

51. Ways in which the planning system can ensure sustainable development is to direct residential and employment growth to the most sustainable locations and to shape the key characteristics of that development.
52. This is a core principle of the NPPF, which promotes “guiding development towards sustainable solutions” whilst recognising that in doing so it “should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”. It is also at the heart of the Charnwood Local Plan which seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable settlements based on a Settlement Hierarchy.
53. Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) is preparing a new Local Plan from 2021 to 2037. It is expected to be adopted in 2022. Its strategic aim for housing is to deliver “urban concentration and intensification” to ensure sustainability. A central element of the Plan’s development has been the completion of a settlement hierarchy review that targets residential growth at the urban centres of Loughborough, the sustainable urban extensions adjoining Leicester City and in the four designated urban settlements at Shepshed, Birstall, Syston and Thurmaston. The next category of settlement in the hierarchy are service centres.
54. The consultation draft has confirmed the Local Plan hierarchy that Cossington is classified as one of 14 “other settlements” where opportunities for development will be responded to positively within a defined settlement boundary.
55. Results from a Questionnaire completed in October 2020 revealed that the community do not wish to see significant housing growth in the Parish but are generally sympathetic to small-scale developments within the settlement boundary.

Residential Allocation

56. The Submission Local Plan says ‘We will continue to support neighbourhood planning groups that wish to meet more local housing needs. Where requested by a neighbourhood planning body, an indicative housing requirement figure will be provided taking account of the latest housing need and infrastructure evidence at that time, the delivery of allocated sites and the period that the neighbourhood plan would cover’.
57. Through the Neighbourhood Plan, the opportunity has been taken to positively plan for development within Cossington to help meet local need and help to support local services. The Settlement Boundary has therefore been reinforced and updated in order to accommodate the potential for housing growth up to 2037 and to direct development to the most suitable locations.
58. An assessment of the limited options for residential development in the Parish was undertaken by the members of the Housing Theme Group. A call for sites was undertaken to add to the

Borough Council SHELAA. A total of 9 sites were put forward for consideration through a site assessment process which was independently lead and is described in Appendix C. A single site is put forward in this Neighbourhood Plan as an allocation for up to 12 units.

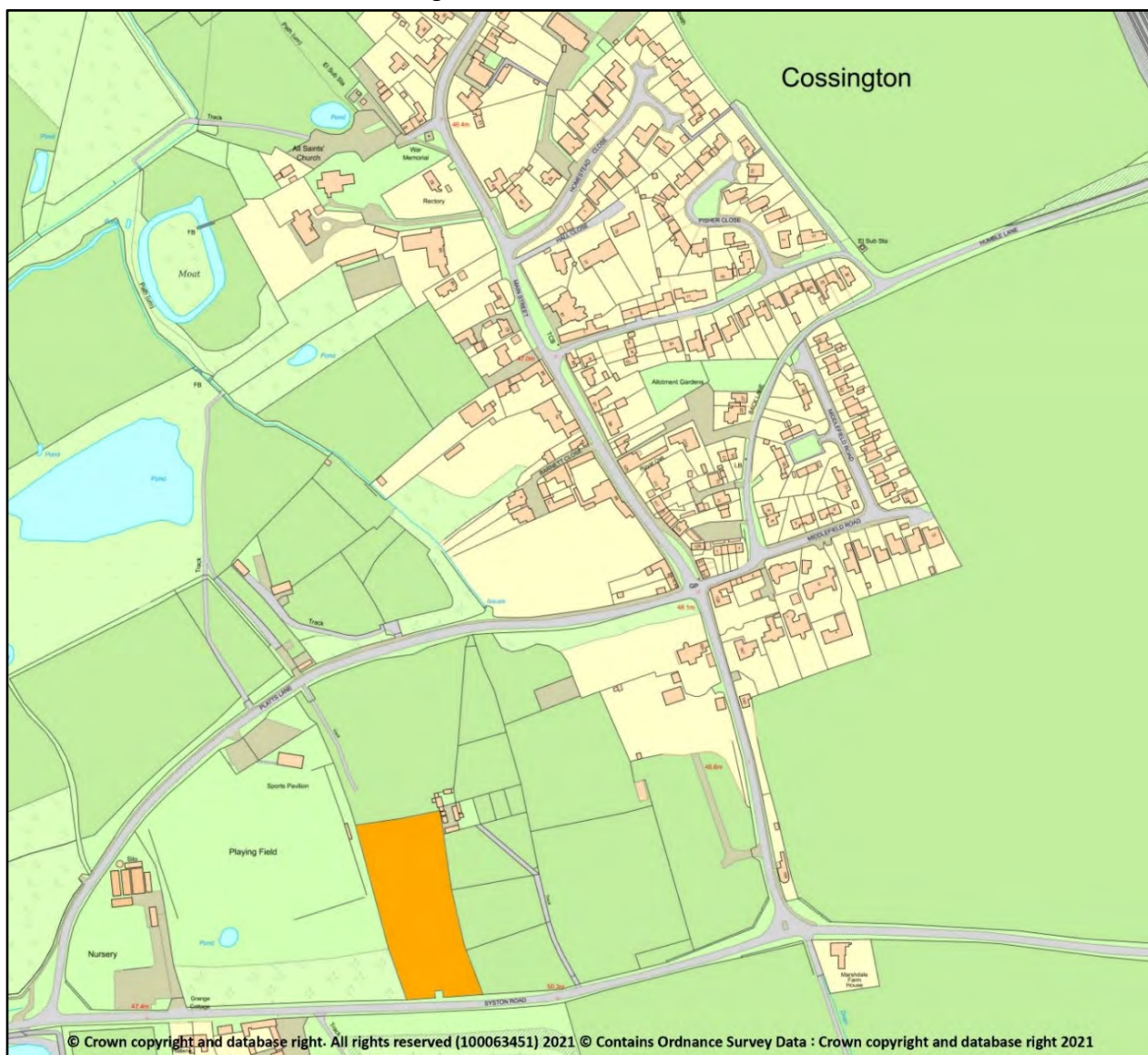
59. Following an approach by Cossington Parish Council to request a housing requirement figure for the Parish, a figure of 6.2 additional dwellings was identified by Charnwood Borough Council as the housing requirement for Cossington, in addition to the Local Plan allocation of 124 dwellings prior to the Local Plan being adopted. This figure reflects the total allocations for the Neighbourhood Area in the Regulation 19 Local Plan (124), plus a 5% buffer as suggested by Charnwood Borough Council post-Adoption. During the neighbourhood plan-making process, planning permission was granted for up to 130 dwellings at the site of the emerging Local Plan allocation.
60. The Cossington Neighbourhood Plan therefore supports sustainable development by containing policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement, as it is required to do to satisfy the intention of the NPPF (2021) Paragraph 14.
61. The landowner of the allocation in Policy H1 has agreed the planning conditions attached to this policy.

POLICY H1: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATION - land is allocated for residential development at the site shown in Figure 2. Development will be supported on the following basis:

Development will be supported subject to the following requirements being achieved:

- a) The development will provide for up to twelve dwellings.
- b) At least five of the dwellings will be Affordable Housing.
- c) At least one affordable housing unit will be constructed to a full physical access standard meeting part M Part 4 section 3 of the building regulations (2016).
- d) The existing planting will be retained with an arboricultural survey to be undertaken and its recommendations implemented.

Figure 2: Residential allocation



Settlement Boundary

62. The parish is predominately rural in nature with the built-up area of Cossington surrounded by open and attractive, countryside.
63. The Settlement Boundary in the Neighbourhood Plan includes land where planning permission has recently been granted for the development of up to 130 dwellings.
64. The purpose of a Settlement Boundary is to ensure that sufficient housing and employment land is available in appropriate locations that can be supported by existing infrastructure and avoid impinging into the local countryside.
65. It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Supporting “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside” is identified as a key element in the NPPF. This approach is also supported by this Plan, in particular, because it will help ensure that development is focused in more sustainable locations with a greater range of services and facilities and infrastructure that has capacity for expansion, as well as helping

to maintain the special landscape character of the Parish and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

66. Settlement Boundaries were established by Charnwood Borough Council in order to clarify where new development activity is best located.
67. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the retention of the Settlement Boundary for the built-up part of Cossington. The Settlement Boundary that was drawn up by Charnwood Borough Council for inclusion within the Part 2 Local Plan has been reviewed through the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The settlement boundary within the Submission Charnwood Local Plan 2021-2037 has been incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan with the addition of land with planning permission for development and the site allocated in Policy H1.

POLICY H2: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY – Development will be focused within the Settlement Boundary, as identified within Figure 3.

Figure 3: Settlement Boundary for Cossington



Housing Mix

68. Neighbourhood Plans offer the opportunity to include a policy on housing mix. This can enable a policy to be written that helps to balance the housing stock locally to ensure a wide range of accommodation is available to address local issues.
69. The Charnwood Core Strategy says that it expects ‘new housing developments to take account of local housing needs and the current mix of homes available in the local area’. The Submission Local Plan seeks to provide ‘a mix of house types, tenures and sizes having regard to housing needs, market conditions, economic viability and site-specific circumstances’.
70. In the Community Questionnaire, there was significant support for smaller houses of 2-3 bedrooms (63.36% of respondents saying they ‘agree or strongly agree’ with encouraging this form of housing). There was strong support for bungalows with 44% of respondents encouraging this type of housing. A housing needs report is available as Appendix B.
71. The Census profile from 2011 identifies a high proportion of 4/5 bed roomed properties in the Parish (34% of the 174 dwellings compared to a Borough-wide average of 23.2%) whilst there are also more detached houses (60.5% compared to 30.4% across Charnwood Borough).
72. There is an over representation of older people (aged 65+) at 21.7% of residents compared to a Borough-wide figure of 16.4%. There is also evidence of an ageing population with the number of people aged 65 and over increasing by 9% (11 people) between 2001 and 2011. Over 65s represented 20% of total population in 2001 compared with 22% by 2011.

Policy H3: HOUSING MIX - New development should provide for a mixture of housing types having regard to identified local housing needs.

The inclusion of four-bedroom or larger houses will be supported where there is an identified need. The number of four-bedroom or large dwellings should not exceed that of one-, two- and three-bedroom dwellings.

Affordable Housing

73. Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (2021 - annex 2). Affordable housing can provide housing for those whose needs are not met by the market.
74. The Charnwood Local Plan 2011 – 2028 references Affordable Housing throughout the document:
75. Cossington is specifically mentioned on page 30 where the development strategy highlights the need to ‘respond positively to affordable housing developments in accordance with Policy CS3’.
76. A specific section on the amount of affordable housing starts on page 36. It describes the issue of high house prices and identifies the need to increase amounts of affordable homes being delivered without compromising scheme viability.
77. This section goes on to identify the types of affordable housing required. It suggests that the greatest need is for 2 and 3 bed houses, and that 80% should be an affordable or social rent.
78. There is an expectation that affordable housing should be delivered alongside market housing to create mixed and balanced communities, and ‘rural exception sites’ are promoted in rural communities where a need for affordable housing can be demonstrated.

79. Draft Policy LP5 supports the provision of small-scale developments in rural areas for Affordable Housing outside settlement Limits to Development as an exception where:

- the housing is demonstrated to meet an identified local need for affordable housing; and
- development is well related to a rural settlement and respects the character and scale of the settlement and its landscape setting.

80. Planning permission for rural exception sites will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure that all initial and subsequent occupiers of the affordable dwellings will be local people in housing need and benefit from the status of the dwellings as affordable housing in perpetuity.

81. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with adopted strategic local policies. It is good practice that they take emerging Local Plans into account when finalising their Plans.

82. Just 7% of households live in Affordable Housing which is lower than the borough (12.6%), regional (16.5%) and national (18.5%) rates. There was no Affordable Housing for Sale in the Parish at the time of the Census in 2011.

83. An Assessment of Affordable Housing for Sale is available as Appendix D.

84. The Charnwood Rural Housing Guide and Housing Allocations Policy (2019), sets out Charnwood Borough Council's approach in relation to affordable housing on rural exception sites and criteria for establishing a local connection.

POLICY H4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING – Development proposals which include affordable housing including through an Exception Site should provide a mix of housing types and sizes to help meet the identified needs of the Parish. The provision of smaller homes, especially for young families and young people and for older people who wish to downsize, will be supported.

Rural exceptions housing should be made available in perpetuity for people with a local connection to the Plan area.

Developments should be 'tenure blind', where affordable housing is indistinguishable from market dwellings and is spread throughout the development.

Windfall sites

85. A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified as available through the local or neighbourhood plan process. Such sites normally comprise previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available.

86. The Core Strategy defines windfall sites as 'Sites which have not been specifically identified for housing development through the planning process but which may come forward over the course of the plan. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available'.

POLICY H5: WINDFALL SITES – Development of infill and/or redevelopment sites comprising individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings within the Settlement Boundary will be supported where it:

- a) Retains and integrates natural features such as trees, hedges and streams;
- b) provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;
- c) does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, the amenity of neighbours and the occupiers of the dwelling or has a significant detrimental heritage impact or fails to protect habitats;
- d) which reflects the character of the surrounding area;
- e) ensures that any traffic generation and parking impact including mitigation measures do not result in a severe adverse impact on road and pedestrian safety; and
- f) does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise.

Design and the built environment

87. The Parish of Cossington has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character. This is reflected in the designation of a Conservation Area which is substantively within Cossington village.
88. The biggest challenge facing the future of the Parish is to balance the desire to protect the character of the built-up area with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities.
89. The policy and design guide highlighted in this section seek to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve this aim. They reflect the outcome of work undertaken by a small group of people within the Housing Theme Group. The overall aim is to protect the settlement of Cossington to retain its character within a unique and distinctive Parish. This can be achieved by the use of the planning system to respond sensitively to the wide range of historic buildings, structures, landscapes and archaeology situated within the Parish. These assets form many of the key characteristics of the Parish, and future development should seek to enhance, reinforce and preserve this distinctive historic environment.
90. New development proposals should be designed sensitively to sit within the distinctive settlement patterns of the Cossington village. Existing settlement patterns have grown incrementally over time. The buildings date from many different periods, providing a richness and variety of styles and materials. This traditional character should be enhanced by new development and schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.
91. The community consider it to be important that new residential development is of the highest standard to ensure that it is in keeping with the residential properties already in the village. It is not considered necessary to have a uniform series of properties that all look the same, rather to ensure that new developments respect the features of buildings which make the Parish a desirable place in which to live.
92. New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment is maintained and enhanced, particularly where schemes are located within

or in close proximity to the Conservation Area. New designs should respond in a positive way to the local character through careful and appropriate use of high-quality materials and detail. Proposals should also demonstrate consideration of height, scale and massing, to ensure that new development delivers a positive contribution to the street scene and adds value to the distinctive character of the area.

93. The Government’s ten-point plan for a Green Industrial Revolution includes the need to make homes greener, warmer and more energy efficient. The Design Guide (Appendix E) sets out the importance of incorporating sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for water and energy efficiency.
94. The proposed location of any development should not adversely affect any of the Local Green Spaces or community-defined open spaces within the parish and show concern for bio-diversity features that make a strong contribution to the overall character and physical form of the Parish. The Design Statement has been produced to help shape appropriate design within the parish.

POLICY H6: DESIGN – Development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and use of materials in order to make a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the Parish. Development should have regard to the Cossington Neighbourhood Plan Character and

Design Statement:

- a) Development should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.
- b) Development should not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact negatively on any significant wider landscape views.
- c) New buildings should follow a consistent design approach in the use of materials, fenestration and the roofline to the building. Materials should be chosen to complement the design of the development and add to the quality of character of the surrounding environment and of the Conservation area.
- d) All new housing should reflect the character and historic context of the existing developments within the Parish; however, contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where such development respects its surroundings.. Development should enhance biodiversity and relate well to the topography of the area, with existing trees, boundaries and hedges preserved whenever possible.
- e) Development should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology, as appropriate.
- f) Roof and wall construction should follow technical best- practice recommendations for integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites.
- g) Hedges (or fences with ground level gaps) should maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs.

The Natural, Historical and Social Environment

Introduction

95. This chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with the *environmental* agenda of *sustainable development*, together with open spaces of community value in the *social* agenda, as described in the *National Planning Policy Framework (2021)*, page 5. The chapter aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan Area against the value of environmental and other features that are both *special* – appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people - and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of biodiversity, planning for resilience to climate change, and approaches to renewable energy generation.
96. Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan’s lifetime. Even taking into account the large size of Cossington Meadows nature reserve, only 16% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the parish is protected through the Neighbourhood Plan’s policies, and the planning system generally, from potential environmentally damaging development:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Plan Area	c.616 ha
2. Open and undeveloped land	c.592 ha
3. Area designated or recognised in this Plan for <i>environmental</i> protection (including Cossington Meadows nature reserve, 57 ha)	c.97 ha

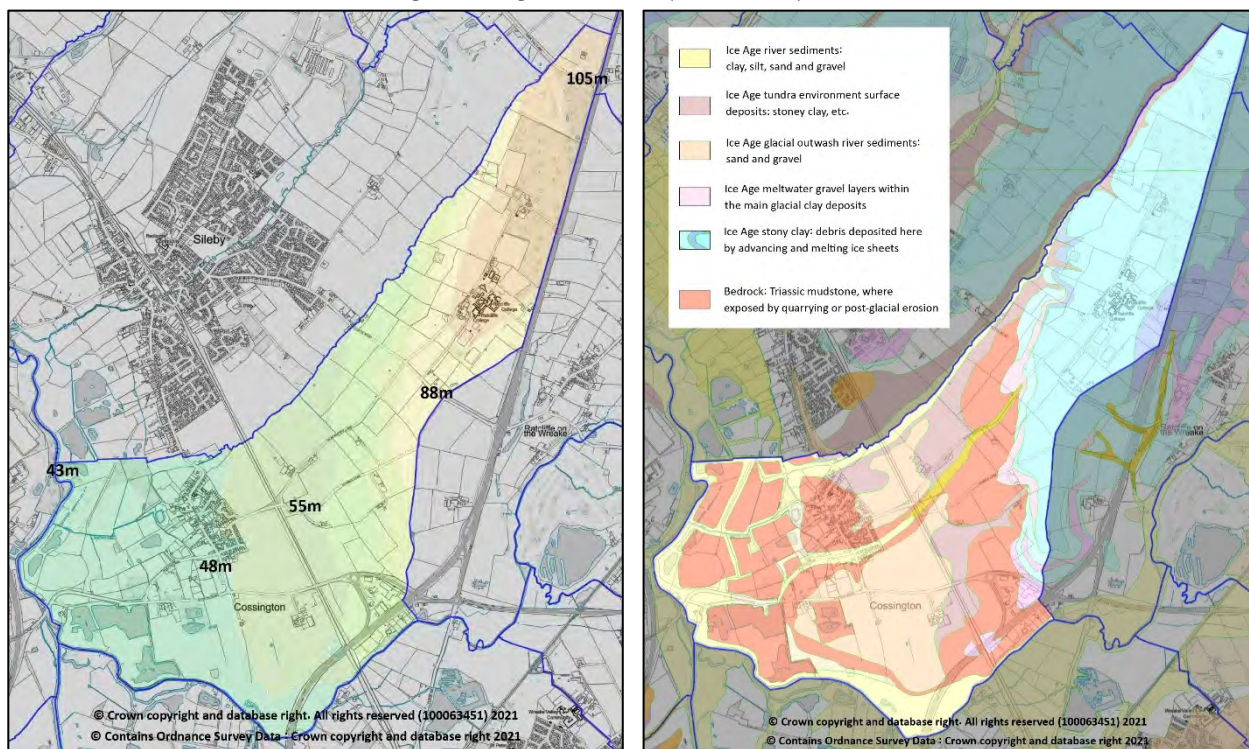
Landscape, geology and setting

97. The Plan Area occupies a wedge of land formed by the confluence of the Soar and Wreake valleys, a brook flowing southwest along the boundary with Sileby parish, and the course of Roman Fosse Way to the east. The wedge is also a ridge of high ground whose spine rises from southwest to northeast. Cossington village itself lies just to the south of a small brook, on slightly elevated river terraces and just above the natural flood limit of the Wreake/Soar floodplain; its location was evidently chosen by its first occupiers as providing enough water to drink but dry land for all other aspects of village life. The lowest point in the whole Area is at 43m, where the river Soar flows into Sileby parish, the highest is on Fosse Way (A46) at the top of the ridge known historically as ‘the wolds’; although modest this difference is enough to give good views west and south and to set the Plan Area in the wider Leicestershire landscape.
98. The Soar and Wreake valleys, which form the west and south boundaries of the Plan Area, are much wider than their present-day rivers could have created. Their present breadth and flatness is the result of their being shaped by torrents of meltwater released by ice sheets during the several phases of the Quaternary Ice Ages, starting about 2 million years ago. The area would have looked like the tundra of Siberia today, with the valleys being part of wide,

gravel-strewn, braided drainage systems. This Ice Age gravel was quarried extensively in the 20th century – the restored pits are now a landscape feature with biodiversity and recreational value in their own right.

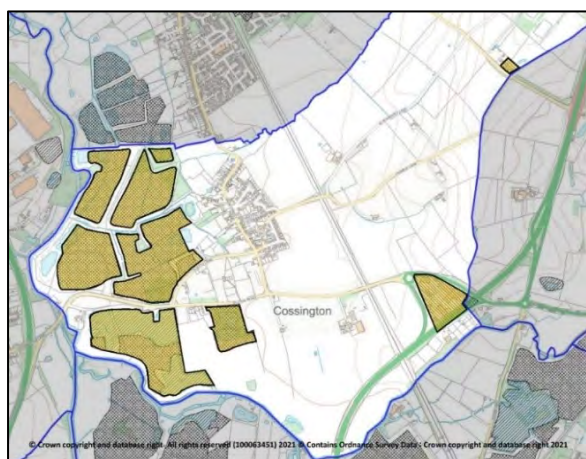
Figures 4.1 and 4.2: Topography (left) and geology of the Plan Area.

Geological map adapted from British Geological Survey online mapping. Both © Crown copyright and database rights. All rights reserved (100063451) 2021.



99. The Plan Area’s bedrock is Triassic (225 million years old) red siltstone. This is only visible on the river terraces mentioned above, or at the bottom of the gravel pits. Everywhere else has a covering of Ice Age deposits of two types: the sand and gravel in the valleys and on river terraces, and ‘boulder clay’ – the pulverised rock debris, clay and stones dumped here by advancing and retreating ice sheets – on higher ground (figure 4.2).

Quarrying



100. The extensive sand and gravel beds (see above) now forming the floor of the Soar and Wreake valleys were quarried on a small scale historically for local use – for surfacing muddy tracks and for building – but on a large scale in the mid-20th century for the national construction industry. Almost all the available gravel was removed (figure 5) down to the bedrock, to a

Figure 5: Locations of old quarries as mapped by British Geological Survey

depth up to 4 metres. After extraction of the gravel, the pits were backfilled, either with unused

‘overburden’ or inert landfill, or left to fill naturally as open water as part of planned biodiversity enhancement measures. Almost all the old gravel pits are in the natural ‘functional’ floodplain, the remainder of which retains the heterogenous hydrological and lithological characteristics of the braided and channelled sand/gravel/clay deposits. Development proposals in the Plan Area should pay particular attention to this situation and take these conditions into account, both in measures for flood risk mitigation and when planning for ground conditions.

Historical environment

101. People have been here for five millennia: archaeological finds and excavations of prehistoric dates show occupation in the Bronze Age and through the Iron Age and Romano-British centuries.

Cossington

'Farm/settlement connected with Cusa/*Cosa' or 'Cusa's/Cosa's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- Cusa (Old English) Personal name
- -ing- (Old English) Connective particle, linking a first element to a final element.
- tūn (Old English) An enclosure; a farmstead; a village; an estate.

Source: Key to English Place-Names (Nottingham University)

102. The Old English placename (left) suggests a date in the 5th century for the foundation of the present settlement, whose first documentary evidence is in Domesday Book as ‘Cosintone’. Archaeological records confirm occupation through Anglo-Saxon and early medieval times, as do the historical records of the medieval ridge and furrow earthworks (almost all lost

since WW2) that were the ploughlands of the medieval open field system. The basic village layout also dates from the medieval period, with a number of building plots and closes (small fields), the mill, village pound, manor house grounds, rectory and church all occupying their original sites.

103. At the time of Domesday (1087) Cossington was a community of 77 villagers owned by Earl Hugh of Chester; the manor changed hands many times until 1549, when it was bought by the Babington family. The Babingtons began the enclosure of the medieval open fields in the 17th century, converting arable to pasture, a process that was completed by an Act of Parliament integrating the remainder into the system in 1846. Later changes more generally included the slow expansion of the village and, in the 20th century, the establishment of Ratcliffe airfield and (significantly for the landscape and local economy) large-scale exploitation of the sand and gravel deposits in the Wreake and Soar valleys. Despite 21st century traffic (exacerbated by extensive new housing in surrounding parishes and ‘rat-run’ driving) and its proximity to Leicester and Loughborough, the village retains its rural character, layout and a number of surviving buildings of historical significance.

Natural environment

104. Like other parishes in Leicestershire, Cossington’s more or less continuous occupation and agriculture for two millennia means that no ‘wild’ natural habitats survive here. Until recently, however, wildlife has been able to adapt, with some species co-existing with and even taking advantage of human activity. This means that among the buildings and arable fields there are

still locally important patches of semi-natural habitat in the Plan Area, including species-rich grassland, woodland, wetland and watercourses. Rewilding of much of the area of 20th-century sand and gravel extraction as Cossington Meadows nature reserve is a regionally-important example of this, and will enhance local biodiversity more widely but acting as a centre from which plant and animal species established there can spread into suitable habitat areas beyond the nature reserve itself. Generally, there is a lack of woodland habitat here, but other ‘artificial’ areas, like gardens, allotments, churchyards and plantations, have biodiversity value. Pressure from intensive agriculture and development on these remaining semi-natural places outside Cossington Meadows means that they are highly valued by the community, while they make an essential local contribution to preserving England’s biodiversity and for carbon sequestration; they should be protected wherever possible by the planning system as a vital component of sustainable development.

Existing environmental designations

105. The Plan Area is located in National Character Area (NCA) 94 *Leicestershire Vales*. NCAs are landscape areas defined by Natural England for Planning purposes. It is also located in Charnwood Borough Council Landscape Character Area (LCA) Soar Valley. In the natural environment there are 23 areas of *Priority Habitat* and national *Forest Inventory* (as defined by Natural England), together with nine Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in the Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre database. Cossington Meadows, the largest Wildlife Trust nature reserve in Leicestershire, lies partly in the Plan Area and includes important areas of floodplain grassland, wetland habitats and open water.
106. In the historical environment there are 19 Listed Buildings and 30 further sites and features of historical environment significance (Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records), of which six are of relevance to Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Environmental inventory

107. An environmental inventory (Appendix F) of Cossington was compiled in support of the environmental designations and policies in this Plan between January and June 2021. The work comprised two elements:
- Review of all existing designations and other available information in the public domain and
 - Fieldwork to identify and confirm environmentally significant (in the context of the Plan Area) sites and features.
108. The review compiled information from many sources, including DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire Historic Environment Records, Leicestershire Environmental Record Centre (habitats, species and designations), Charnwood Borough Council, Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, old maps (Ordnance Survey, archive), local history and archaeology, publications and local knowledge.
109. Fieldwork was combined with local desk studies to review all open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan Area. Significant species, habitats, public open spaces, landscape

characteristics, earthworks and other extant heritage features, views and viewpoints were checked and recorded.

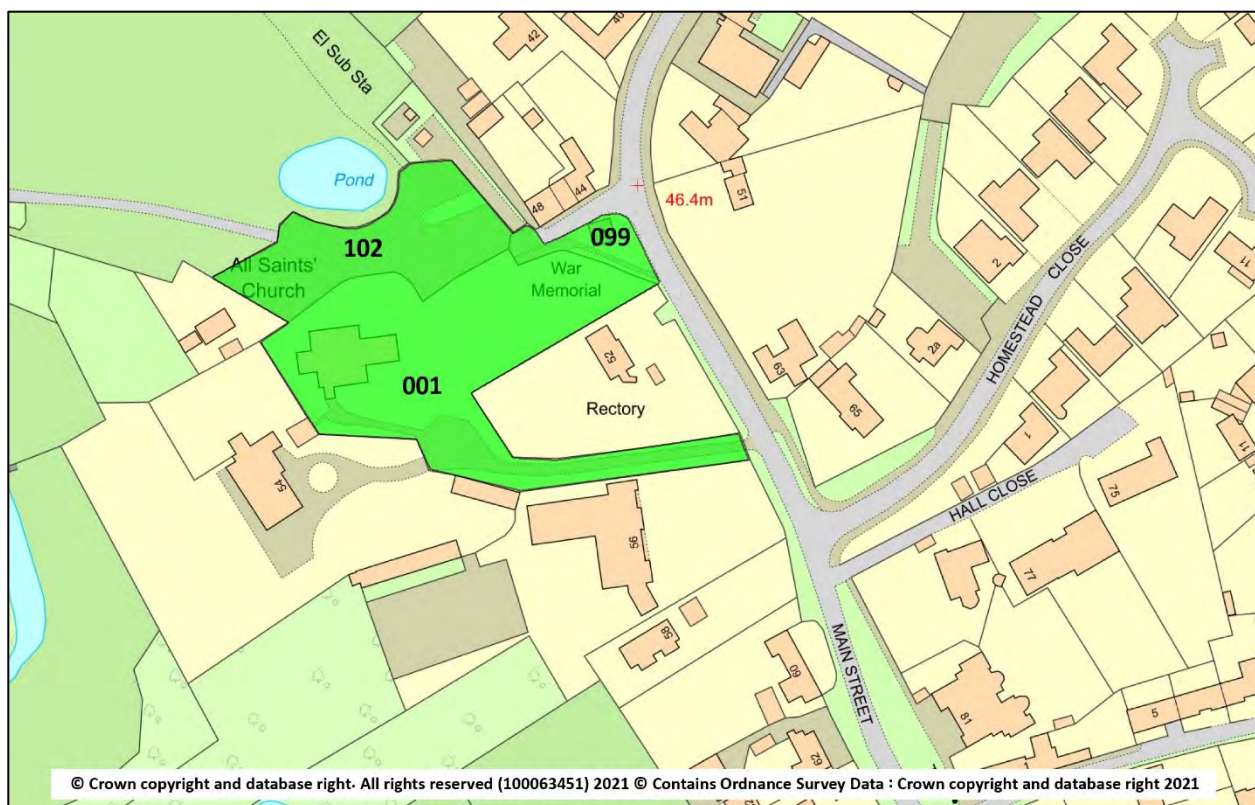
110. These data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and every site of local environmental significance was evaluated using a system based on the seven criteria for Local Green Space selection in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2021*.

Local Green Space

111. Of the approximately 108 inventoried parcels of open land in the parish, 43 were identified as having notable environmental (natural, historical and/or social) features. As described above, these sites were scored, using the seven criteria for Local Green Space designation noted in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2021* (see Appendix F for the criteria and scoring system used in this Plan).

112. One composite site (figure 6) scores highly under all relevant criteria in the inventory (Appendix F) and meets the essential requirements for designation as Local Green Space as outlined in National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 100. Its statutory protection will ensure its use for future generations.

Figure 6: Local Green Space



POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACE – All Saints Churchyard, war memorial green and car park (identified in Figure 6 above) is designated as a Local Green Space where development will not be permitted except in very special circumstances.

Important Open Spaces

113. A group of sites scored highly in the inventory for their outstanding community value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; some are recognised as Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites in the supporting documentation for the Submission Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan (2019-37).
114. All these sites' value as open space within and close to the built-up areas and/or their actual or potential value as community resources are recognised in Policy ENV 2. The policy is in conformity with, and adds local detail to, Charnwood Borough *Local Plan (2011-2028) paragraph 102*.
115. The need for effective, continuous maintenance arrangements for publicly accessible open spaces, irrespective of their public/private rights of access status, is recognised in Community Action ENV 1.

POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES - The following open spaces (locations, figure 5) are of high local value for recreation, beauty, amenity, or tranquillity, within or close to the built-up area. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by at least equivalent provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community.

Platt's Lane Recreation Ground (019.1 / 019.2); CBC-recognised OSSR *Outdoor Sports/Playing pitches*

Cossington Primary School grounds (031); CBC-recognised OSSR *Outdoor Sports/Playing pitches*

Main Street east side verges and commemorative trees (100); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Fisher Close Green (101); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Cossington allotments (104); CBC Open Spaces typology *Allotments*

Middlefield Road open space 1 (105); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Main Street west side verges (108) CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Main Street allotments (110), CBC Open Spaces typology *Allotments*

Middlefield Road open space 2 (111): CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

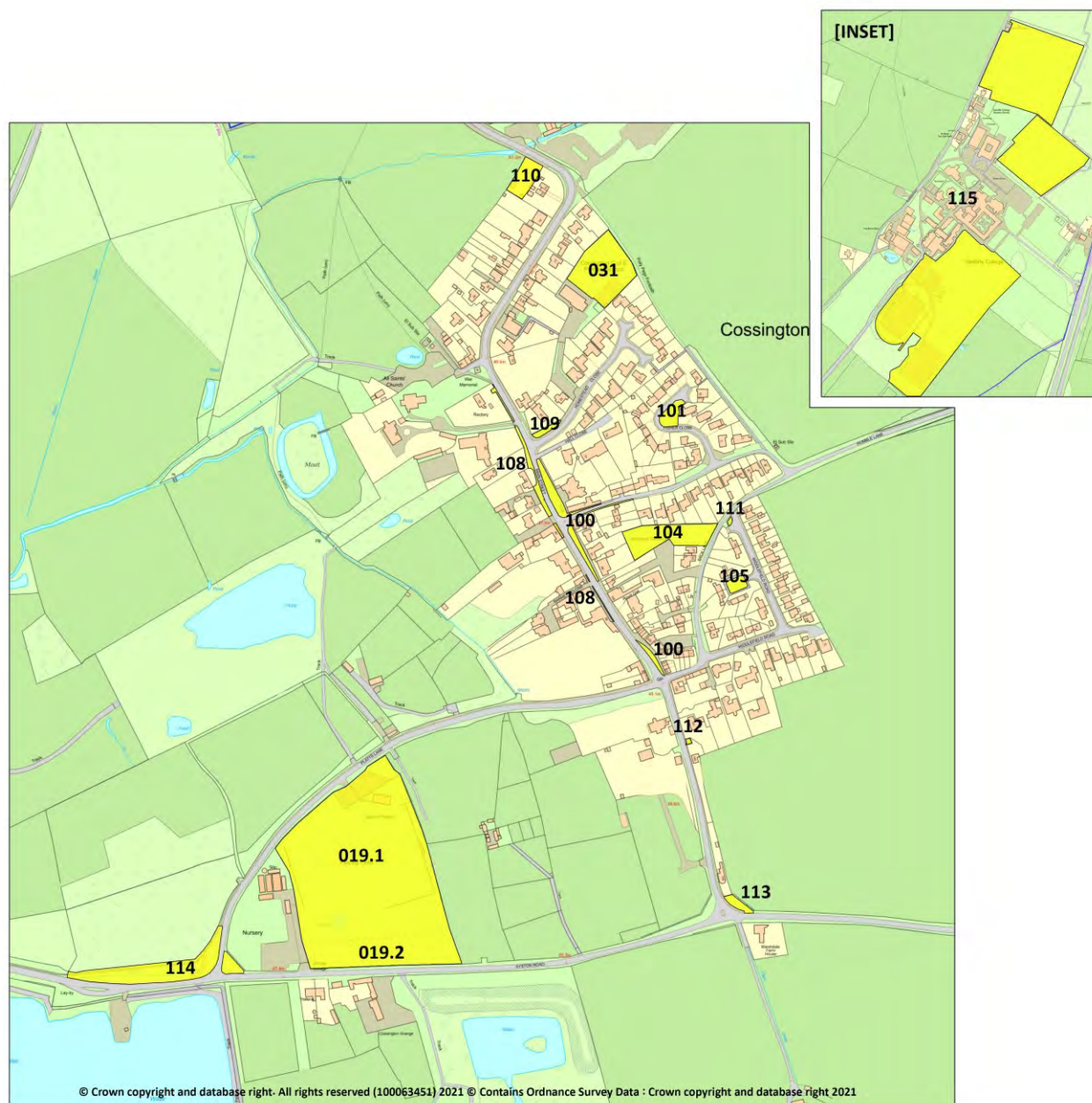
The Pound, Main Street (112); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Main Street / Syston Road triangle (113); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Platts Lane junction verges (114); CBC Open Spaces typology *Amenity green space*

Ratcliffe College pitches and outdoor sports facilities (115); CBC Open Spaces typology *Outdoor Sports/Playing pitches*

Figure 7: Important Open Spaces

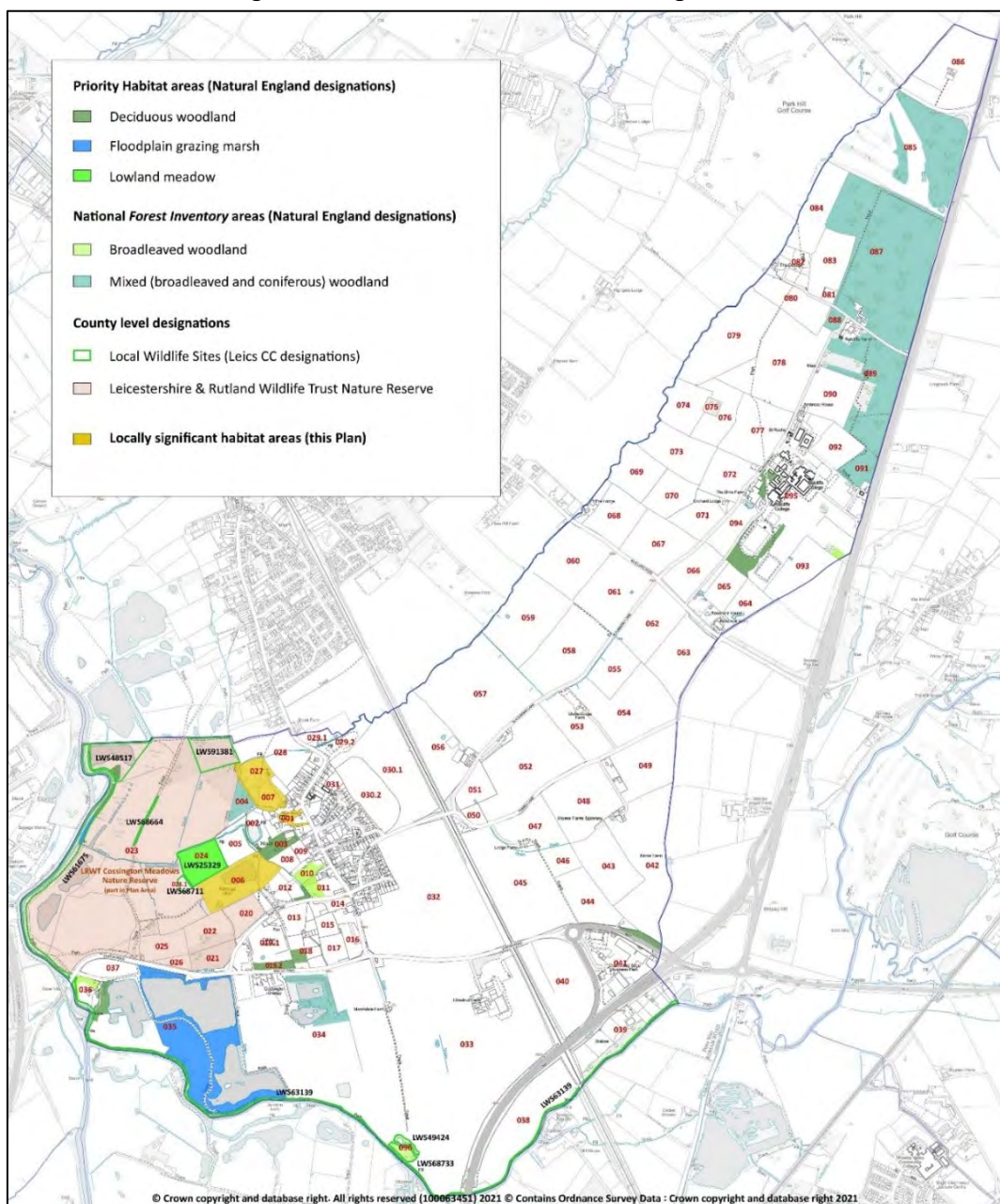


COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 1: MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES – The Cossington community expects all public open spaces mapped in figure 7 to be managed effectively to maintain or enhance their amenities, features or biodiversity, and to comply with public liability standards for safety, for as long as they continue to function as publicly-accessible open spaces.

Sites and features of natural environment significance

116. A group of inventory sites scores highly for ‘wildlife’ (scoring at least 3/5 under this criterion). The features and designations for which the identified sites have been selected are identified in the environmental inventory (Appendix F).

Figure 8: Sites of natural environment significance



117. Policy ENV 3 delivers site-level compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant Charnwood Borough Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and the European Habitats and Species Directives, any Transitional legislation in the Withdrawal Act 2018 and/or the Draft Environment Bill 2019.

POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites and features mapped here (figure 7) have been identified as being of at least local significance for their natural environment significance. They are ecologically important in their own right, make a local contribution to carbon sequestration, and are locally valued. The significance of the species, habitats or features present should be balanced against the local benefit of any development that would adversely affect them.

Woodland, notable trees and hedges



The wooded appearance of Cossington village as seen from the south, June 2021

118. The village of Cossington is surrounded by and interspersed with trees, mature wooded gardens and small woods, adding to its rural character and attractive appearance. But for historical reasons the open farmed countryside beyond the settlement boundary has very little woodland. Exceptions are some notable hedgerow trees, a few copses and small, naturally regenerated woodland areas, and one larger area of mixed (deciduous and coniferous) plantation and ornamental mixed woods in the far north of the Plan Area. The recognised importance of trees for carbon sequestration, and their biodiversity, landscape and amenity values, mean that new development will be required to result in no further loss and wherever possible to provide a net gain.

COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 2: INCREASING WOODLAND, TREES AND HEDGEROWS – initiatives for tree and hedgerow planting and woodland creation by planting or re-wilding in the Plan Area will be strongly supported.

POLICY ENV 4: WOODLAND NOTABLE TREES AND HEDGES – Woodland (Figure 8.1), notable trees (Figure 8.2; Appendix H) and hedges of arboricultural, biodiversity and landscape importance should be protected from loss or damage in development proposals and integrated into their design. Development proposals affecting features designated in this policy should be accompanied by a tree survey (BS5837 standard or its equivalent) to establish the health and longevity of trees and hedges on the site. Where damage or loss is unavoidable, the developer should provide or arrange for replacement trees and/or hedges of greater quantity and equivalent quality and type to ensure a net gain in biodiversity and amenity.

Figure 8.1: Woodland and notable trees in the Plan Area

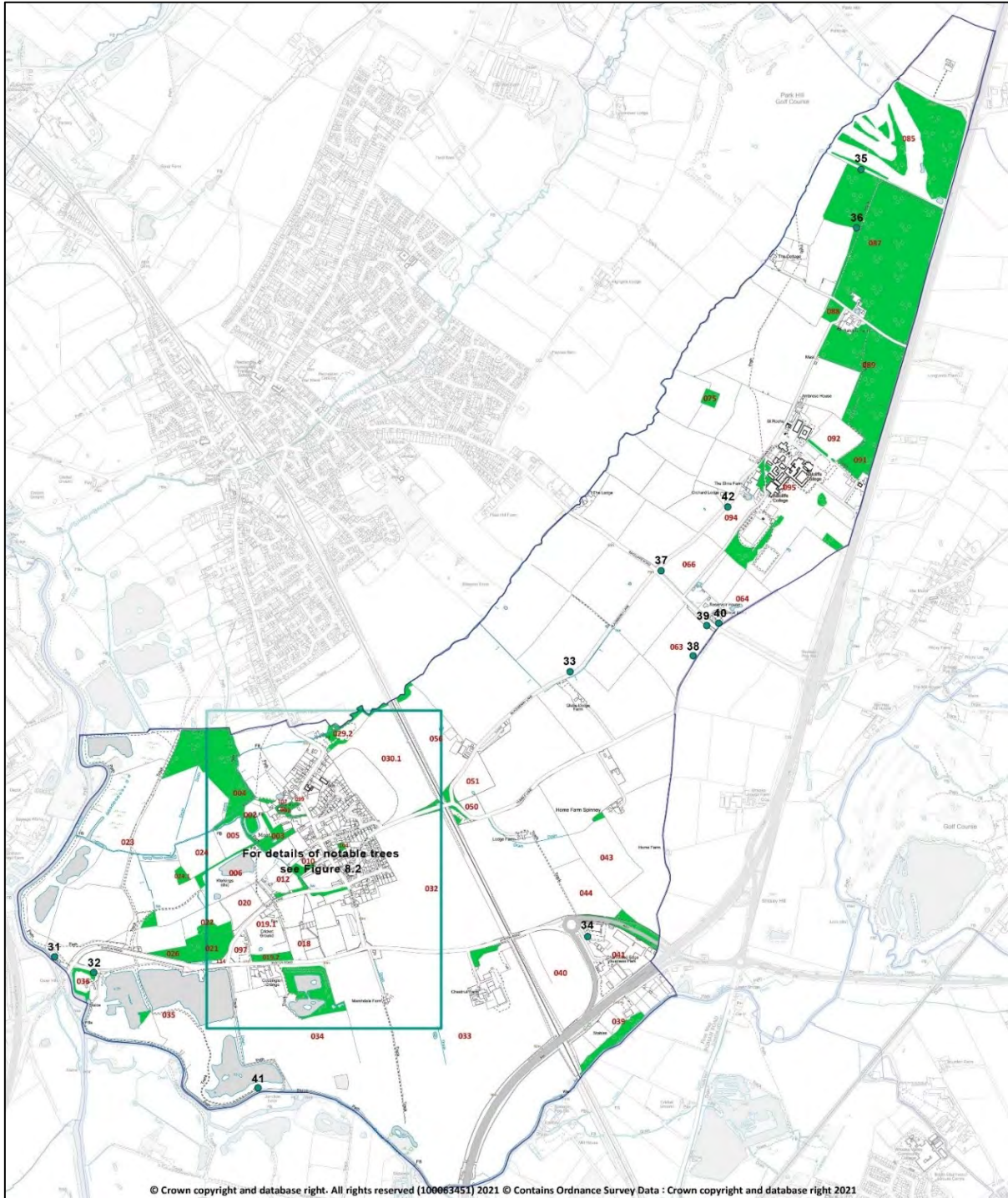
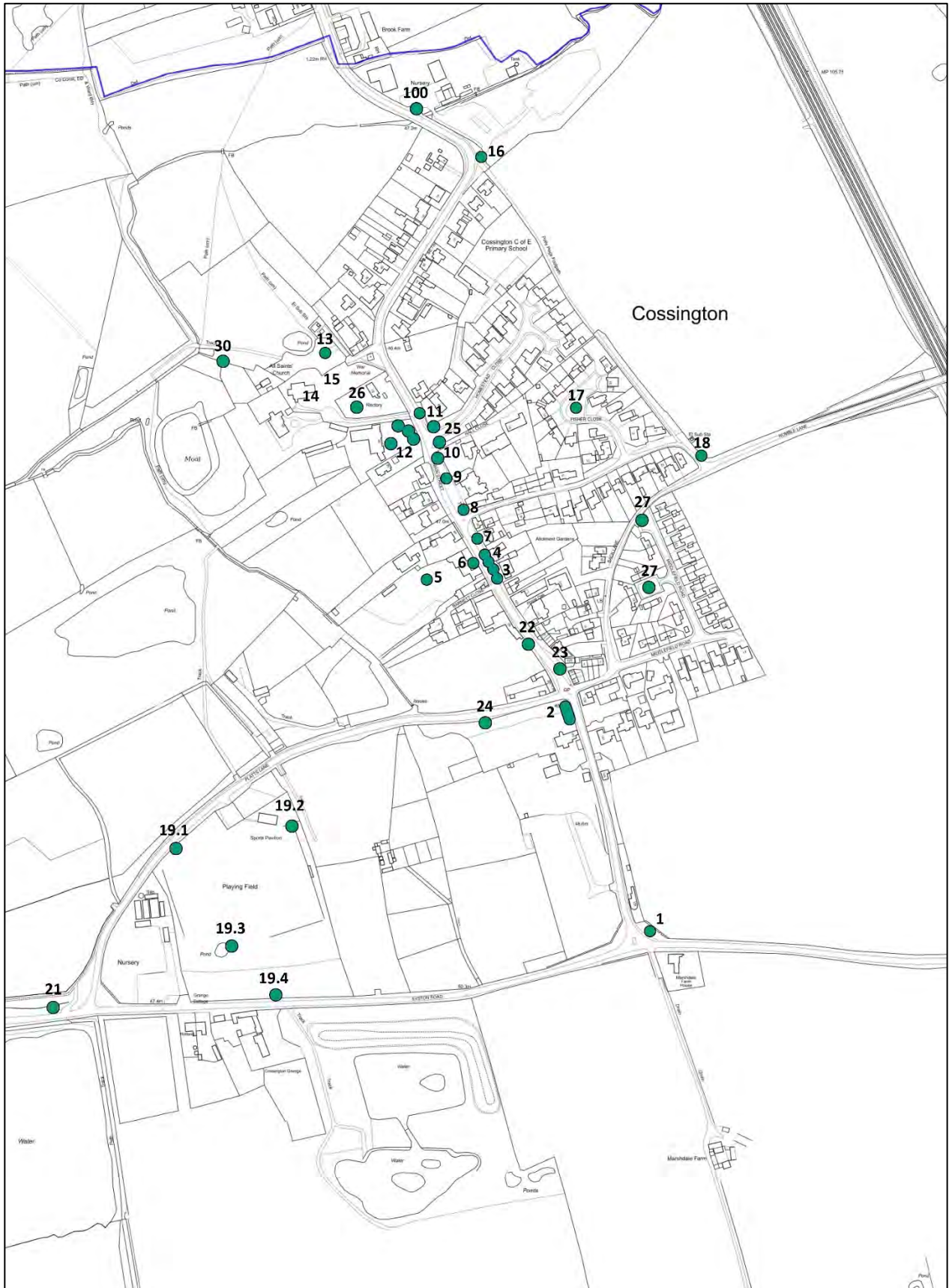


Figure 8.2: Notable trees in the village. For details see Appendix G



Biodiversity and habitat connectivity across the Plan Area

119. It might be said that Cossington is a ‘typical’ area of English Midlands countryside because it has no nationally important wildlife hotspots, and thus that it has little or no biodiversity significance to be taken into account in the Planning system. This would be a misunderstanding of the concept of biodiversity. England’s biodiversity is entirely and only the sum of the wildlife in all of its individual parishes: Cossington is as important in this regard as every other parish, and residents want it to play its essential part in protecting what remains of England’s threatened and diminishing biodiversity.
120. While Policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance, this policy is about general compliance across the Plan Area with the relevant Charnwood Borough Council biodiversity protection policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and (as applicable) the European Habitats and Species Directives, transitional legislation in the Withdrawal Act 2018 and the measures in the Draft (Principles and governance) Environment Bill 2019.
121. Connectivity is an essential component of biodiversity. Isolated populations of animals and plants are at risk of destruction or of simply ‘dying out’. Wildlife Corridors aim to re-connect populations and habitats within parishes and more widely.

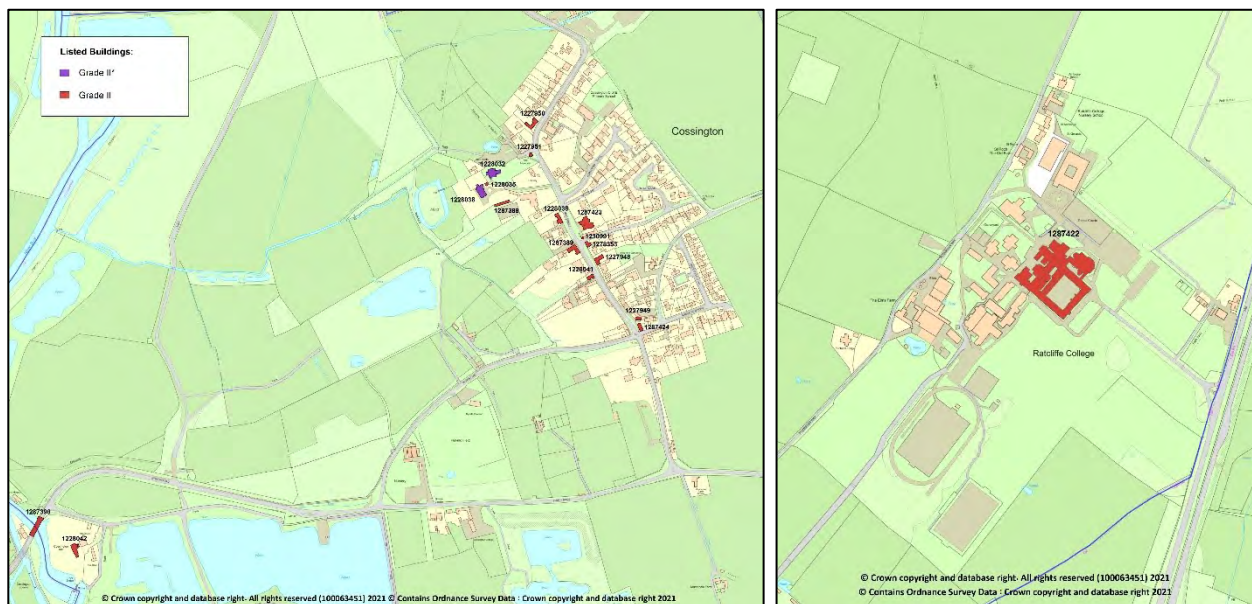
POLICY ENV 5: BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT CONNECTIVITY– All new development proposals will be expected to safeguard habitats and species, including those of local significance. Development proposals should not damage and should respect habitat connectivity corridors. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused, in conformity with paragraph 180 of the NPPF (2021).

Major developments must include biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, in line with National Planning Policy Framework guidance.

Statutorily protected heritage assets

122. Cossington is situated along a relatively flat stretch of land and the architectural forms and elements of the street scene are relied on to create interest rather than changes to the topography. Although the Conservation Area primarily follows the buildings along a single road, distinct areas can be discerned as you move along the road.
123. The first is the stretch from the north of the area to the junction with Homestead Close where Main Street curves before straightening out. There is a relaxed feel to this part of the Conservation Area with houses occupying larger plots and generally set back from the road with front gardens and driveways. The timber framing of Magpie Cottage is a prominent feature and the open space, the War Memorial and the trees surrounding the churchyard contribute to the open feel of this area. Front boundaries are generally low and formed of either red brick or granite and slate rubble stone. This ensures that the houses are generally very exposed within the street scene and this characteristic continues throughout the Conservation Area.
124. From Homestead Close to Back Lane the road appears to widen thanks to the wide verge to the east of the road. Houses are generally closer together here and there is a pleasing variety of architectural styles. Although there are a number of eye-catching buildings no single one dominates the space. The established commemorative oaks complement the wide verges and open aspects of the properties. Along the west buildings are located closer to the street and there is a wide variety of scales and proportions with the prominent half hipped roof of The Manor House juxtaposed with the delicate proportions of Christmas Cottage. Low-level front walls, hedges or estate style fencing continue along the street and this bestows an open nature to the space.
125. The final part of the Conservation Area is from the crossroads of Main Street with Platts Lane and Back Lane to the southern boundary edge. The houses become more widely spaced with larger plot sizes and there is more variety in the placement of the buildings with several set back from the road. Chine House and The Grove are both set within their own grounds with their main elevations perpendicular to Main Street. Platts Lane is undeveloped but the dense vegetation, established trees and the red brick and granite rubble stone wall reflect the characteristics found elsewhere within the Conservation Area.
126. Nineteen buildings and structures in the Plan Area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade II* or II. New development will be required to take into account their *settings*, as defined on a case-by-case basis by Historic England.

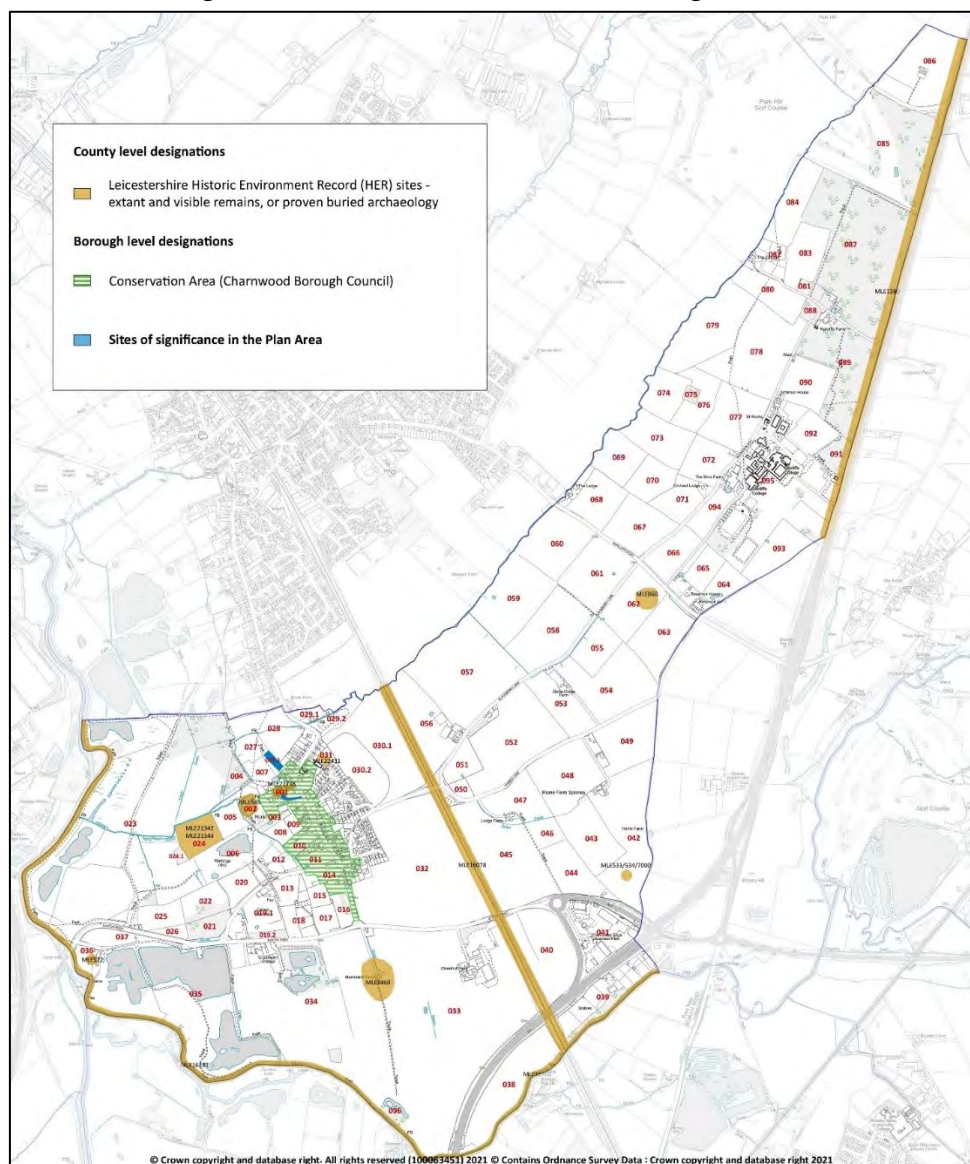
Figure 9: Statutory heritage assets – noted for protection of their *settings*



Sites of historical environment significance

127. A group of inventory sites scores highly for ‘history’ (scoring at least 3/5 under this criterion). The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in the environmental inventory (Appendix F). The map (figure 11) shows their locations.
128. These historic environment sites comprise a) sites with *extant and visible* archaeological or historical features or proven buried archaeology, as recorded in the Historic England and Leicestershire *Historic Environment Records* (HER) databases, b) surviving ridge and furrow earthworks recorded in the *Turning the Plough* surveys (see below) by Historic England, and c) other sites of historical and social significance recorded as non-designated heritage assets by Leicestershire CC. A large number of archaeological sites in the Leicestershire HER are known from a programme of investigation, excavation and publication in the 1990s, but these sites were all destroyed by subsequent gravel extraction and nothing remains on the ground to be protected.

Figure 10: Sites of historical environment significance



POLICY ENV 6: SITES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE - The sites mapped in figure 10 (details in Appendix F) have been identified as being of local or wider significance for history. The features are extant and have visible expression or there is proven buried archaeology on the site, and they are locally valued. The significance of the features present should be balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.

Local Heritage Assets

129. Leicestershire County Council recognises 8 buildings or structures of local historic significance in the Historic Environment Record (HER). In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies 21 other buildings, groups or structures in the built environment of Cossington that are considered to be of local significance for architectural, historical or social reasons.

130. The evidence for their inclusion (details in Appendix I) has been based on Historic England *Advice Note 7, 2016*. The inclusion of both sets in the Neighbourhood Plan records them in the

planning system as *non-designated heritage assets* in order that they can be afforded protection at the appropriate level, as described in footnote (63) to NPPF 2021 paragraph 200.

POLICY ENV 7: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS – The buildings listed here (locations figures 11.1 and 11.2, as numbered here, details Appendix I) are non-designated local heritage assets. They are important for their contribution to the layout and characteristic mix of architectural styles in the village and Plan Area. The scale of any harm or loss arising from a development proposal affecting a non-designated heritage asset must be balanced against the significance of the heritage asset.

Assets in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) as *Historic non-Listed buildings*: 1 Cossington C of E Primary School, 40 Main Street (MLE21772)

2. Village pinfold (pound), Main Street (MLE548)
17. Temple Cottages, nos. 6, 8 and 10 Main Street (MLE23560)
23. WW2 pillbox northwest of The Farm (MLE15987) [NB no evidence found, 05/21]
24. WW2 pillbox east of Ratcliffe College (MLE15996) [NB probably hidden in A46 road embankment, 05/21]
25. Prefabricated WW2 pillbox, Ratcliffe Farm (MLE24820)
26. Cossington Grange (MLE23562)

Assets recorded for this Plan, 2021

3. Royal Oak public house
4. Jubilee Hall, Main Street (within primary school grounds)
5. Grove Cottage, 145 Main Street
6. The Grove, Main Street
7. Chine House, Main Street
8. The White House
9. No. 125 Main Street
10. Nos. 101 and 103 Main Street
11. The Manor House, Main Street
12. Stone wall between nos. 99 and 101 Main Street
13. No. 63 Main Street (Mayfield Villa)
14. Rose Cottage
15. Barn behind nos. 28/30 Main Street
16. Warden House (formerly The Beeches), 39 Main Street
18. Memorial trees
19. Reservoir House
20. Barn Lodge Farm
21. Wall along Crab Tree Lane
22. Wooden building (boathouse), Grand Union Canal

Figure 11.1: Local heritage assets in the Plan Area

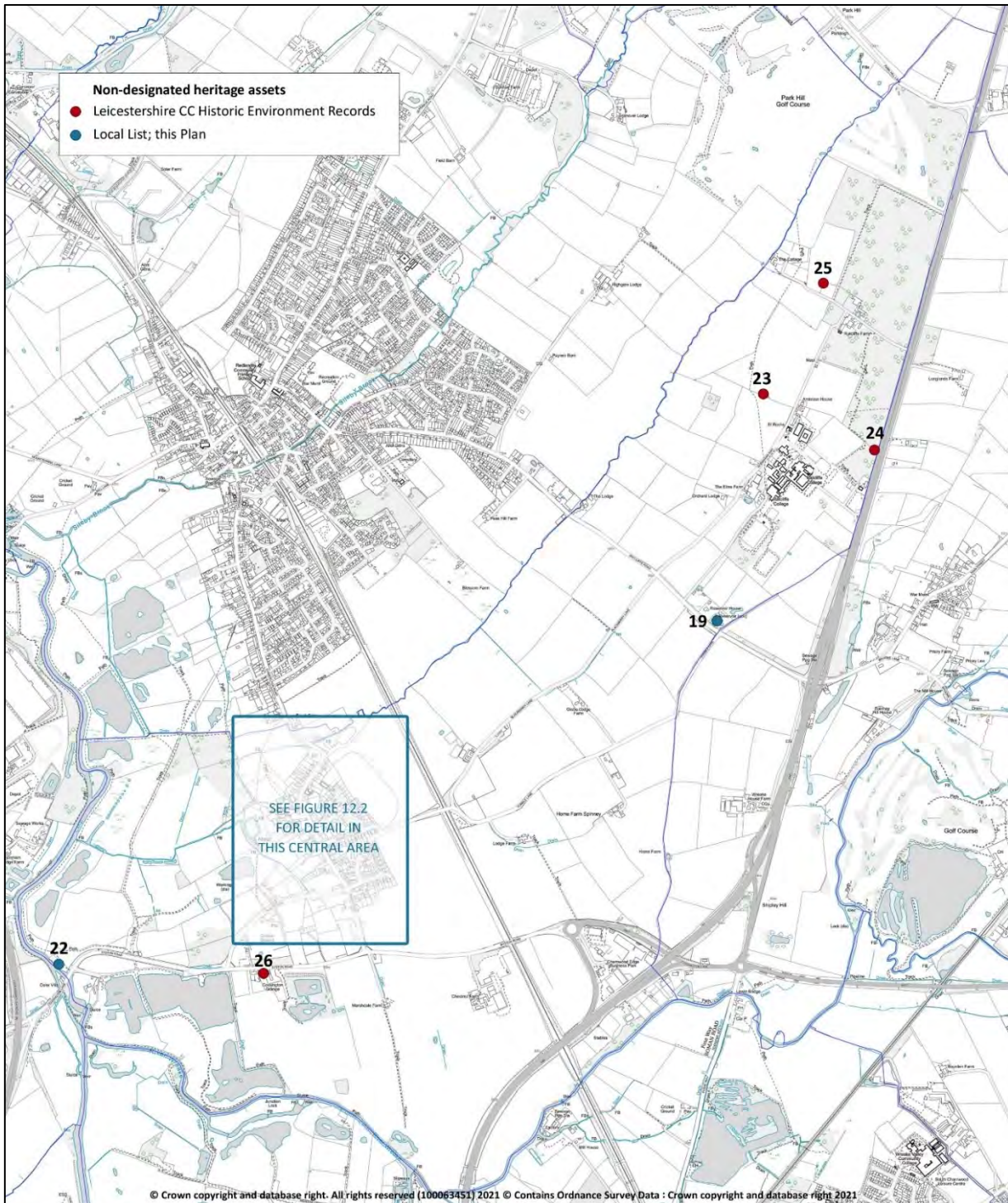


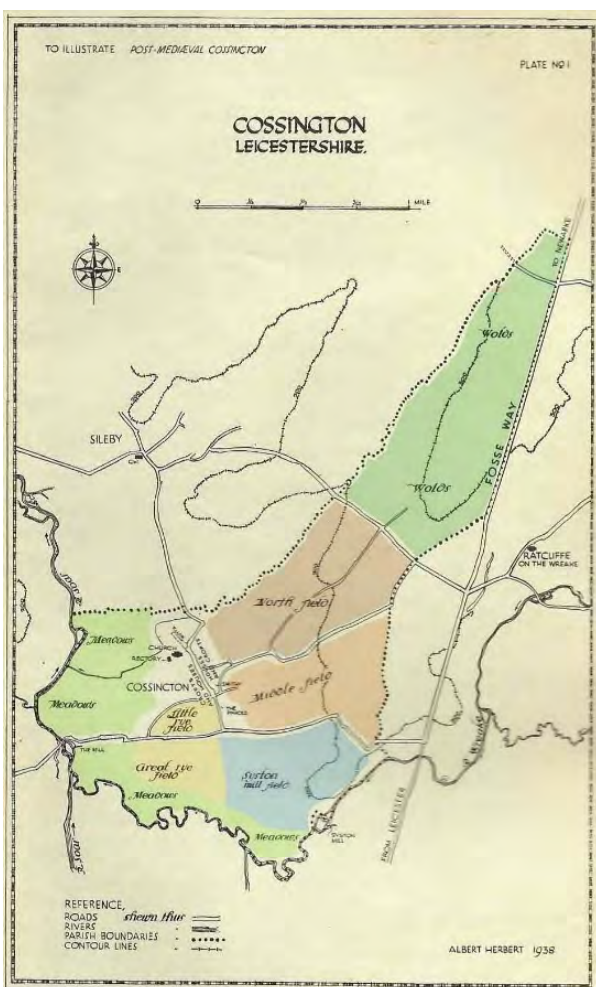
Figure 11.2: Local heritage assets in the village (detail)



Ridge and furrow

131. The medieval township of Cossington (with only minor changes, the present parish and Plan Area) was primarily agricultural and, beginning in the 8th or 9th century AD, was farmed using the *Open Field* system. Most of the open land, other than small fields (closes) backing onto the houses, the seasonally flooded grazing land in the two river floodplains and a few patches of

Late medieval open fields, water meadows and the wolds. Modified from Herbert, 1938



woodland or waste, was worked in a seasonal and yearly rotation of arable crops (cereals, beans), grazing and fallow, on four or five main open fields. Medieval ploughs were pulled by oxen and, because they were not reversible, the soil was always turned rightwards as the plough team progressed up and down the furlongs, to produce a corrugated pattern of ridges and furrows whose dimensions increased with every season.

132. The open field system was practised for most of the medieval period until changes in land ownership and use gave rise to a change across almost the whole parish from arable to pastoral (livestock) farming. The land in Cossington was converted in this way in several phases, beginning in the Tudor period with the introduction of sheep-farming on the Wolds and ending in the Parliamentary Enclosures in the mid- to late-18th century.

133. The result of Enclosure, although socially disruptive, was to ‘fossilise’ the ridges and furrows under grass and hedgerows, and this situation persisted until the mid-20th century, when a second agricultural revolution after the Second World War effectively reversed the first

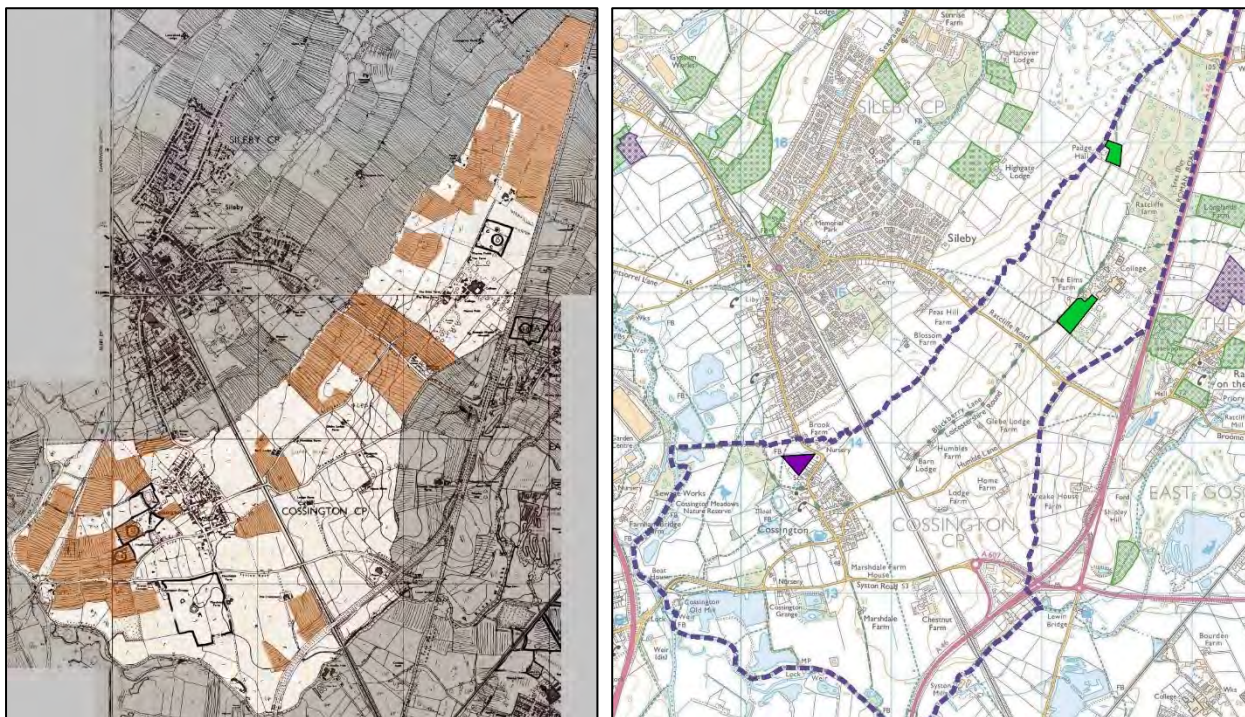
one. British governments, later the European Union, encouraged farmers, mainly through subsidies, to plough the pastures and turn them over to intensive arable production. Wherever this happened, modern reversible ploughs quickly obliterated the ridge and furrow. Cossington also lost ridge and furrow to quarrying in the 20th century. In most English open field Parishes, the loss of ridge and furrow since 1950 has been over 90%. In the 1990s, English Heritage (now Historic England), realising the scale of this destruction, undertook the first of a series of surveys (*‘Turning the Plough’*) across the Midlands, including Leicestershire, and made recommendations for protection and management.

134. The extent of ridge and furrow in Cossington in the mid-20th century was mapped using aerial photographs and fieldwork by Hartley (Leicestershire County Council) in the 1980s (figure 13.1) and again in the late 1990s for the Historic England *Turning the Plough* survey (figure 13.2). The latter provided the baseline for a new survey undertaken as part of the inventory for this Plan

in 2021. The findings were mixed: two further fields have lost their ridge and furrow, but a pair of small fields east of the village has been found to still have faint remains while field 028, north of the church on the Plan Area boundary with Sileby was confirmed as faint to good ridge and furrow.

Figure 12.1 (left): Ridge and furrow in Cossington about 1947 Reconstructed by RF Hartley (Leicestershire County Archaeology Unit) in c.1985

Figure 12.2 (right) Ridge and furrow in Cossington, c.1999 (*Turning the Plough* survey, Historic England)



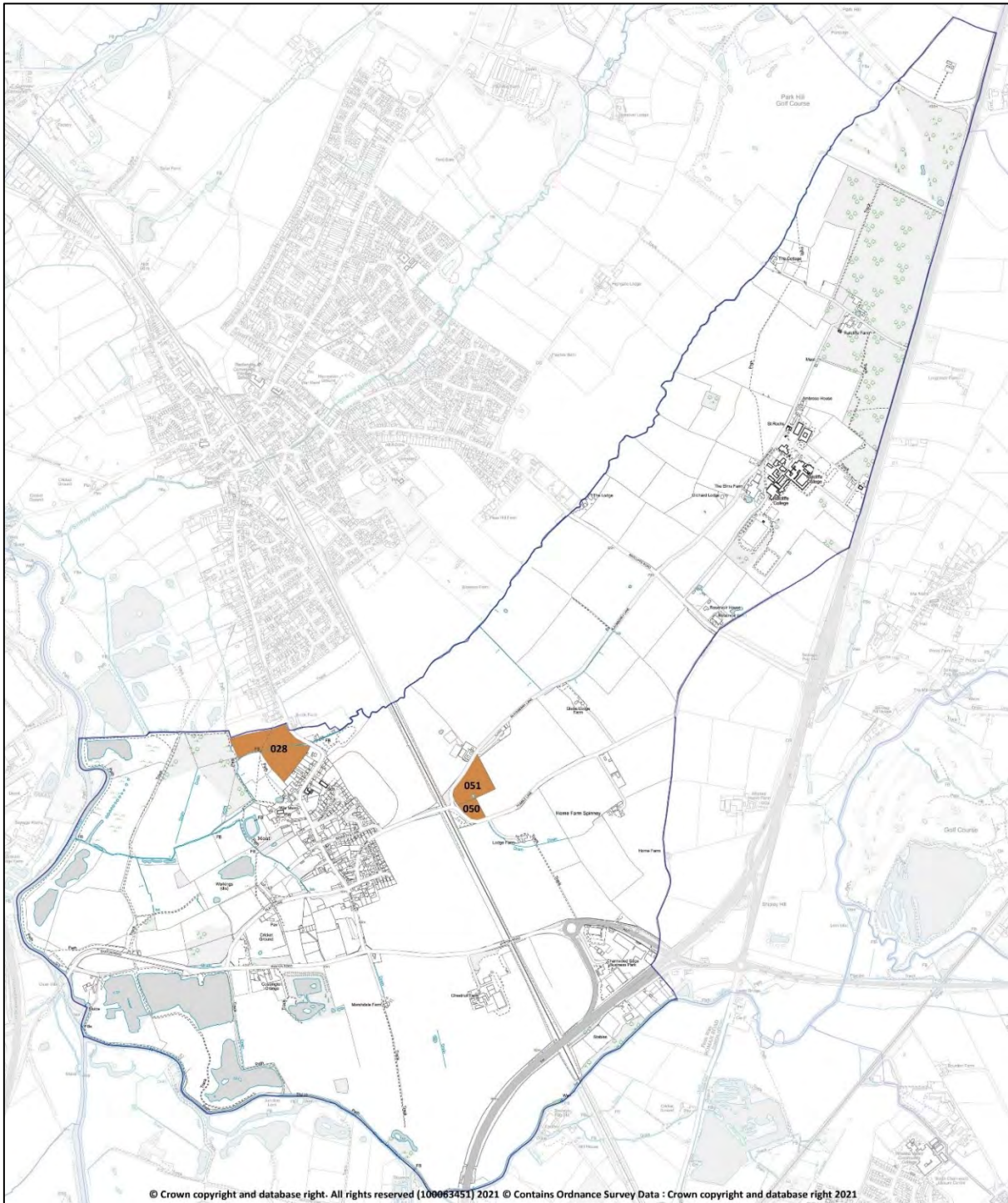
The summary results show the decline since World War II; the situation is now as follows:

1947	190 ha	
1999	6 ha	
2021	6.7 ha	

135. In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite recognition that “as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance” (English Heritage, 2001).

136. While the nine individual fields with surviving ridge and furrow in Cossington are not claimed to be of international importance, their rarity across the Midlands and their relationship with the other important medieval heritage assets in the Plan Area means that any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental. In future, and whenever possible, increased local housing need or new targets required at a higher level in the planning system should be fulfilled by allocating development to available sites with no surviving ridge and furrow.

Figure 12.3 Ridge and furrow surviving in 2021



POLICY ENV 8: RIDGE AND FURROW – The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks mapped in figure 13.3 are non-designated local heritage assets.

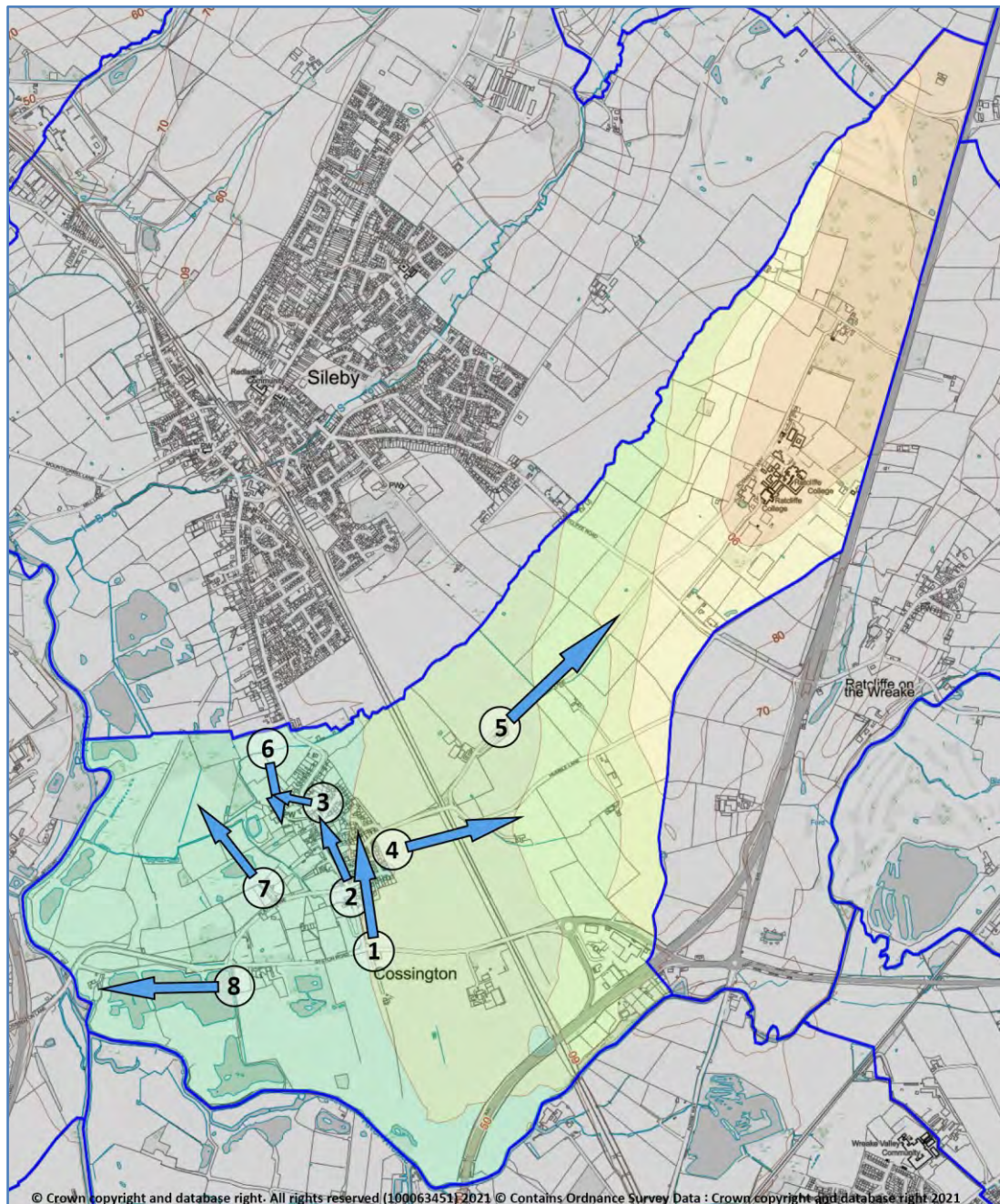
In considering development proposals directly or indirectly affecting the identified ridge and furrow earthworks, a balanced judgement will be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Important views

137. Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan’s preparation identified a widely held wish to protect Cossington’s rural setting, in particular its visual relationship with the surrounding landscape, high ground and river valleys, all characteristic of its location in Natural England National Character Area 94 *Leicestershire Vales*.

138. One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing several highly valued views within the village, at its ‘gateways’ and toward the surrounding countryside. These consultation findings were further defined by the environmental inventory, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance also confirmed the sightlines of the suggested views and mapped them (figure 14).

Figure 13: Important views



POLICY ENV 9: IMPORTANT VIEWS – The following views (map figure 14, details Appendix I) are important to the setting and character of the village. Development proposals should respect these views.

1. Gateway view into the village from the south
2. Main Street, both directions
3. War Memorial Green and surroundings
4. East out of the village from the end of Middlefield Road and along Humble Lane
5. Northeast along Blackberry Lane
6. Village duckpond and the church from the watermeadows
7. Fishing Lake and Cossington Meadows
8. From the large fishing lakes westward to the Plan Area boundary (hills of Charnwood Forest in the background)

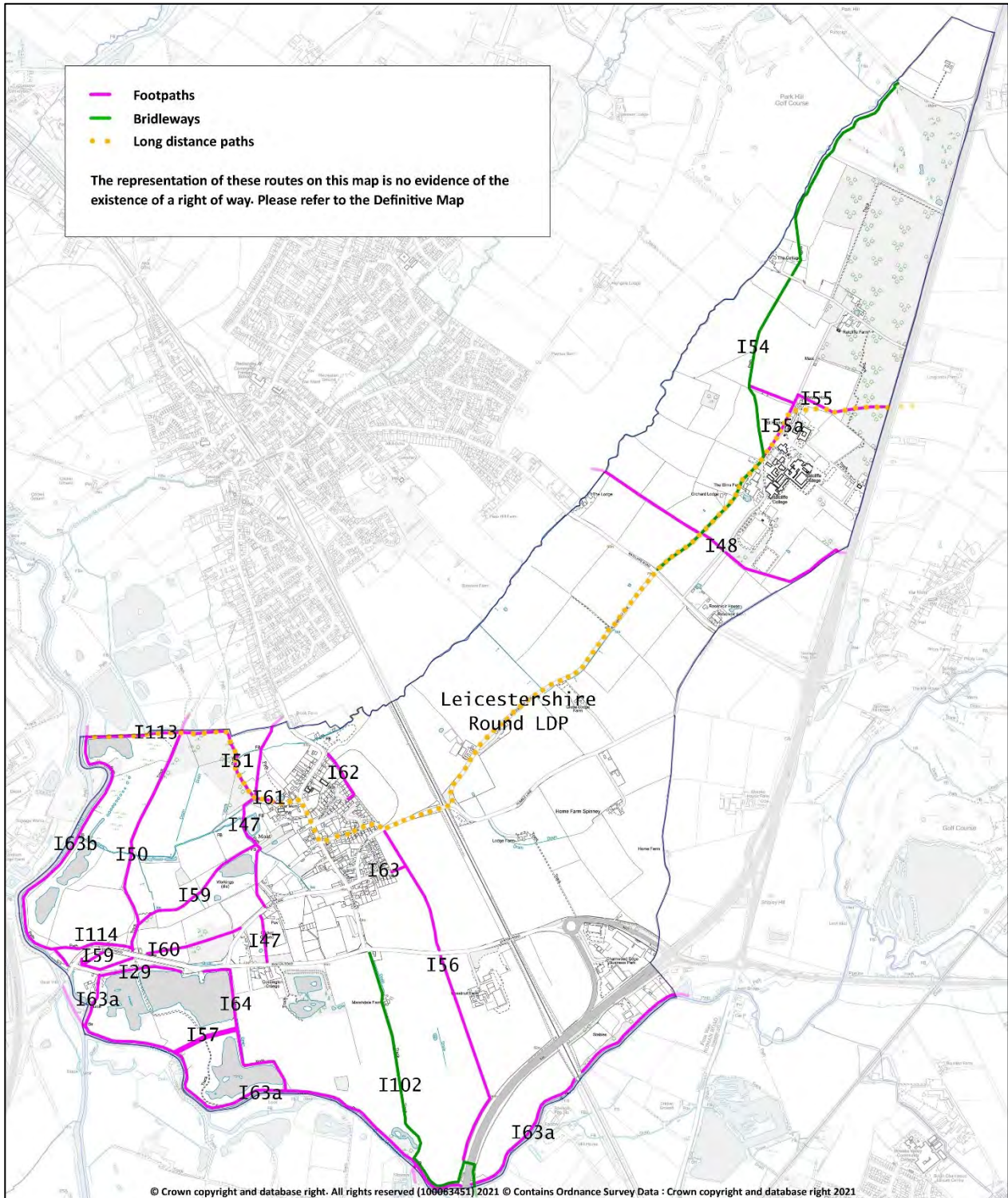
Footpaths and other walking routes

139. The network of footpaths and other rights of way in the Plan Area is not extensive compared with other parishes in north Leicestershire. Because walking routes everywhere tend to be survivors from before the 18th century Enclosure of the farmed landscape and from before the development of paved motor roads, there are good historical reasons for this, including in the case of Cossington the way some medieval tracks were converted to roads (now public highways), the wide area of seasonally flooded water meadows of the Rivers Wreake and Soar, the impact of quarrying, and the development of Cossington airfield. However, with modern recognition of the value of walking routes for health and wellbeing, the lack is unfortunate and any erosion of the network's extent and character will be resisted.

140. In the Neighbourhood Plan's consultation questionnaire (September 2020) 90% of respondents supported 'access to the countryside' as a highly valued part of the Plan Area's character.

POLICY ENV 10: FOOTPATHS AND OTHER WALKING ROUTES – The protection, enhancement and expansion of the public right of way network, will be supported.

Figure 14: Footpaths and other walking routes



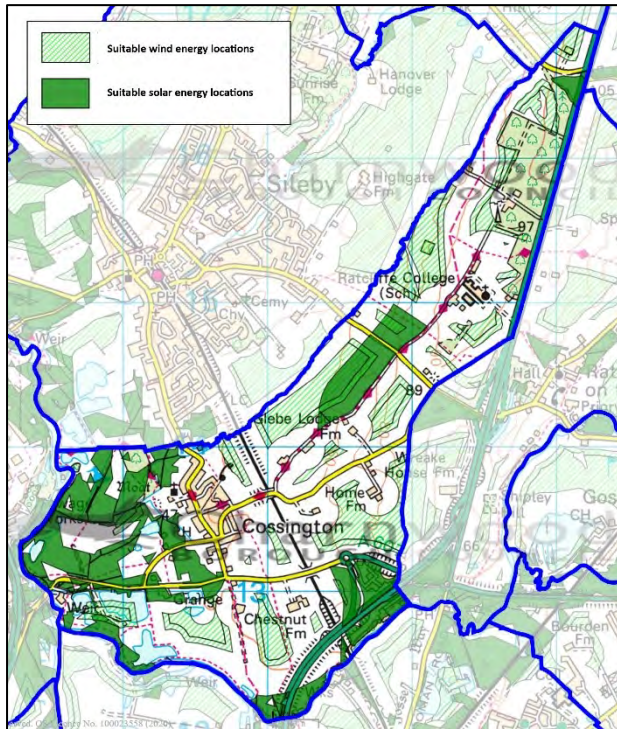
Renewable energy generation infrastructure

141. National Planning Policy Framework 2021 paragraphs 152-154 make it clear that all communities are responsible for reducing emissions as part of the necessary approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Residents of Cossington wish to play their part in this, but at a scale appropriate to the sensitive landscape of the Plan Area. The impact of wind

generation infrastructure on local communities has been recognised by the government: a Ministerial statement made on the 18th June 2015 notes that suitable areas for wind energy development must be identified in Local Plans (as has been done by Charnwood Council, see below) and crucially that any such developments must have the support of affected local communities.

Figure 15: Areas identified as ‘suitable’ for wind and solar generation in the Plan Area.

Adapted from Charnwood BC *Submission Local Plan 2019-2037 policies map*. © Crown Copyright



142. Figure 17 is from the Charnwood BC Submission Local Plan 2019-2037 policies map. It shows areas technically ‘suitable’ for wind and solar generation in the Plan Area without taking other factors into account – these factors include the mapping of much of Cossington Meadows nature reserve as suitable for solar PV generation and the likelihood of community resistance to renewables infrastructure in such close proximity to the settlement.

143. Cossington Plan Area is located in CBC Landscape Character Area *Soar Valley*. Its sensitivity to turbines of different heights and solar arrays of different sizes was assessed as part of the background evidence for the CBC Regulation 19 *Local Plan 2021 – 2037*. The recommendations, on which the application of Charnwood Borough policy to relevant development proposals will be based, are shown in figures 16 and 17.

Figure 16 Landscape sensitivity to turbines in Cossington Plan Area
(*Wind and Solar PV Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment*, CBC 2019)

Landscape Character Area	Landscape sensitivity to different height categories of wind turbines	
Soar Valley	Small-scale turbines (<40 metres)	L-M
	Medium-scale turbines (40-80 metres)	L-M
	Large-scale turbines (80-120 metres)	M-H
	Very-large scale turbines (120-160 metres)	H

Figure 17 Landscape sensitivity to solar PV arrays in *Soar Valley* LCA (Cossington Plan Area)
(*Wind and Solar PV Energy Landscape Sensitivity Assessment*, CBC 2019)

Development scenario					
Very small solar installation (<1 hectare)		L-M			
Small solar installation (>1-5 hectares)			M		
Medium solar installation (>5-10 hectares)			M		
Large solar installation (>10-15 hectares)				M-H	
Very large solar installation (>15-20 hectares)					H

144. Policy ENV 11 is in general conformity with NPPF 2021 paragraphs 156-158, and applies the Ministerial Statement of 2015; it is also in general conformity with Adopted Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan 2011-28 Policy CS 16 and Regulation 19 Local Plan 2019-37 Policy CC3 while adding local detail to them.

POLICY ENV 11: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INFRASTRUCTURE – Proposals for small-scale local, resident, business, amenity or community-initiated, wind and solar (turbines 30m tip height or less; solar arrays 5 ha area or less) generation infrastructure will be supported, subject to avoidance or mitigation of the following harmful amenity and environmental effects:

- adverse impact (noise, reflections, glare, shadow, flicker, water pollution, smell, air quality impairment, gaseous or particulate emissions) on the health, wellbeing or amenities of residents and third parties
- adverse impact on identified views or the character of the landscape
- adverse effect on footpaths and other recreational and amenity walking, cycling and riding routes
- adverse effect on biodiversity, or identified species and habitat sites
- adverse effect on statutory historic environment features or sites, non-designated heritage assets or ridge and furrow

In the case of solar PV arrays, proposals should also be supported by appropriate and relevant assessments and documentation in respect of transport, heritage, archaeology, landscape impact, environmental impact, flood impact, ecology, arboriculture (impact and method) and tree protection.

Community Sustainability

Community Assets – *Drawing the community together*

145. Community assets are premises and activities, which make a significant contribution to the life of Cossington Parish. They encourage social interaction, friendships and learning, and also facilitate new opportunities. It is essential to the ongoing wellbeing of the community that Cossington retains and continues to build on these assets.

Community Spirit

146. Cossington is a sustainable and vibrant parish with a strong sense of community. There are regular events and activities, including: - open gardens, quizzes, the W.I. and regular ad hoc events organised by the Parish Council, the church and local parishioners.

147. A strong community enables social links to be made, which reduces loneliness and isolation, thus improving mental health and wellbeing. Good facilities also have the potential to reduce the need to travel outside the village to meet needs, which can reduce the journeys people make.

148. Cossington's community spirit would be immeasurably improved by the provision of a much larger and better-equipped community space. The Jubilee Hall has done sterling service but it is too small, has no kitchen and is inconveniently positioned. The development of the Village Centre is vital to foster Cossington's community spirit. This is especially necessary if there is to be more housing built in the parish.

The assets

The village school

149. Cossington Church of England School was built in 1873 at a cost of £451.6s.6d, it was enlarged in 1902 and a second school building was built in 2015 on the edge of the school field to replace mobile classrooms that had been in use for numerous years.

150. The maintenance and running of the school was eventually taken over by Leicestershire County Council as a primary school for the education of children up to the age of eleven. Leicestershire County Council and the Diocese of Leicester are still responsible for the school.

151. The school mission statement is 'Care, Significance, Purpose' and this is rooted in a foundation of distinctly Christian Values. At the OFSTED 2018 inspection and SIAMS (statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) 2016 inspection, both rated the school as 'Good'.

152. Presently it has a planned admission of 15 pupils each year and the number on roll is 105. Currently, 20 children attend from within the school's catchment with the majority of children attending from the neighbouring village of Sileby.

153. Children start in the reception class at age 4 in September of each year, and generally transfer to Humphrey Perkins School in Barrow upon Soar or Rawlins Academy, Quorn, at the age of eleven years.

All Saints church

154. A Grade II* listed building built of local Mountsorrel granite with limestone dressings and timber from Charnwood forest oak trees. The Chancel and South Porch roof are of Swithland Slate with the remainder of the building having leaded and parapetted roofs. The oldest parts of the church namely the Nave and North Aisle date from the 12th century. The 13th century saw the addition of the tower and in the 14th century the South Aisle and the Chancel were constructed. The roof was raised to its present level with the addition of the Clerestory in the 15th century. The building then remained largely unchanged until the substantial restoration and refurbishment initiated by the rector, Joseph Mayor, 1864-5 by H Goddard & Son. The fine stained glass east window is by Douglas Strachan and was donated to the church by the Astill family in 1917.

155. The open churchyard is of ecological importance as it is grassed on all sides of the church building and contains many trees, one of which is a rare English Elm tree. An investigation by Natural England revealed that the Church site is home to three species of bats (Pipistrelle, Long-eared and Natterers). Notable graves include Colonel Kitchener, father of Lord Kitchener, who is buried below the East window. Also there is a significant double tomb just outside the south porch of the Rev. & Mrs John Fisher.

156. Unfortunately, the church has fallen into disrepair primarily due to dampness as identified in successive statutory quinquennial inspections provided by specialist conservation architects. The clay tiles on the main nave floor are particularly damp, uneven and notably sunken in places. Medieval pews are rotting where they rest on the floor and the north aisle floor has been cordoned off where joists have collapsed. Large areas of plaster have fallen off the walls in several places whilst the ancient carved oak choir stalls have become disjointed, however, thankfully the various pieces are all accounted for. Sadly, the ancient stone font, which has featured in the social history of Cossington's inhabitants for 800 years, regardless of their rank or status, has suffered almost irreversible harm - again caused by the relentless rising damp seeping up through the floor.

157. The building however has been completely re-roofed. The tower and both aisle roofs were renewed in 1998 and the nave and chancel roofs were replaced and insulated in 2016. Nevertheless Historic England has become increasingly concerned and added All Saints Church to the national Heritage At Risk register in January 2020, its 800th anniversary year.

Church vestry

158. The Grade II* listed vestry is situated between the Old Rectory and the south entrance of the church. It was built in the 1830s by the Rev. John Babington and is unusual because it is discretely separate from the church. It has a back door accessible from the Old Rectory with a front door opening in front of the south porch of the church thus it provided a through-route

for the rector. It has served as a school room for the village and has had various other uses over the year.

The Royal Oak pub

159. In the mid 19th century Pump Cottage served as a pub to the village, known as the Anchor Inn. When it closed to make way for the village school the Hudson family opened the Royal Oak where it now stands. It had 3 steps leading to the front door on Main Street and an entry led to a side door. There were three small rooms, the Tap Room, the Snug and the Best Room. The open cellar was in the Tap Room with about six steps down to it. Each order was fetched from the cellar.

160. In 1937 Everards Brewery bought the Royal Oak and it underwent a major reconstruction. In October 1992 a fire partially destroyed it to be followed by another fire in November 1992, which left only the walls standing. Eventually after a rebuilding project the pub reopened, still owned by the Everards Brewery it continues to serve the community today.

161. The pub is currently utilised mostly by locals, but could be developed further with the right investment, to attract visitors or those from neighbouring villages.

Cossington Meadows

162. The Cossington Meadow Nature Reserve was opened on 21 July 2008 by Sir David Attenborough to celebrate the Trust's 50th Anniversary year.

163. Lying along the river Soar, it is the largest of Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust's five nature reserves in the Soar Valley (215 acres). The area was quarried for gravel in the 1980s and 90s and the wetland site containing lakes, ponds, reed beds, ditches and tall hedges is now a vital habitat for thousands of breeding, over-wintering and migrating birds and many other species as well as wetland plants. The area is subject to flooding and is currently grazed by Welsh Black cattle, to control the growth of willow scrub and coarse vegetation.

Jubilee Hall

164. The Jubilee Hall was opened in 1977 the year of Queen Elizabeth's II Silver Jubilee. The original hall was no more than a wooden hut, which stood on some land donated to the village by Peter Astill. It was used for the parish council meetings and other village groups used it as a venue for their activities.

165. With the expansion of the village the hut became too small, the parish council were able to negotiate for some extra land from the owners of Rose Cottage. With the aid of grants, the new hall was constructed. Unfortunately the money ran out before it had been decorated or furnished. After a lot of hard work and fundraising by the management committee the hall was finished.

166. It is 16m x 6m and can accommodate approximately 50 people seated as an audience. There are toilets and a kitchen area but no cooking facilities. As Cossington's only community meeting place it is used for bridge clubs, women's institute, parish council, birthday celebrations, tai chi and much more. It has no car parking access. It is situated on the school

grounds and can only be accessed through the playground. This presents safeguarding issues for the school and this has been referenced in OSTED reports. As was common 44 years ago it is partly constructed of asbestos. This is safe as long as it is not disturbed. Funds exist to enable it to be dismantled correctly. As mentioned in the 2006 Parish Plan it is too small, inappropriately sited and not well enough equipped for Cossington. The Village Centre is much needed as a replacement.

167. For over twenty years the parish has been trying to build a replacement within the church building and many fundraising events have been held. The Cossington Project Group have been coordinating this task. The plan has been split into 2 phases. The first is to adapt the church into an open community space with new heating, a level, dry floor, moveable pews and a toilet. The second phase is to build an adjoining annexe, which will contain meeting rooms and kitchen facilities. All this has received planning permission and tenders have gone out. Future progress on this vital village project is close at hand.

Babington's charity

168. Reverend John Babington first set up the charity (Reg. No.220069) in 1881.

169. It is administered by a board of 6 trustees who, through residence, occupation or employment have special knowledge of the Parish of Cossington.

170. The charity owns several properties and parcels of land, some used as allotments, within Cossington. The rents received are used in the first instance to maintain these properties. Remaining income is then used for several purposes:

- Assisting the local Cossington C of E School with benefits not normally provided by the local education authority.
- For relief of hardship either generally or individually for persons resident in the parish of Cossington.
- Providing grants to persons under the age of 25 years, resident in Cossington, who are studying or undertaking an apprenticeship to promote their education.
- Excess income may be applied for the general or individual benefit of the inhabitants of the parish.

Platt's charity

171. Founded by decree on 10th February 1668 this one of the oldest charities in the world still to be functioning to the present day.

172. The Trustees manage land comprising the playing fields on Platts Lane and, previously, fields which were given over to gravel extraction and which are now a nature reserve.

Cossington allotments

173. The allotments are situated on two sites, a smaller plot behind the Babington cottages at the Northern end of the village and a larger plot in the heart of the village situated off Back Lane.
174. They form part of the legacy left to the village by the Rev. John Babington rector of Cossington from 1830 to 1839. In 1861 he made a charitable gift of five cottages and an area of allotment land 'for the benefit of the labouring classes and artisans'.
175. In total there are 15 Allotments; they are all occupied presently and there is a thriving community tending their allotment. A waiting list of people is maintained for when a plot becomes free.

Cossington recreation field

176. Early in the twentieth century the Parish Council rented an eight-acre field from Platts Charity for use as a recreation ground for the village, latterly the recreation ground has been rented to the Sibley Vikings Rugby Club. Situated off Platts Lane it is on the edge of the village.
177. There is a cricket pitch, rugby and football pitch at present along with a modern changing and function room and a car park. The pitches are hired for use by local teams and the function room is available for hire. In recent years some outdoor gym equipment has been placed at the northern end of the ground

The war memorial

178. Unveiled in December 1920 by Colonel Toller DSO and dedicated by Reverend HS Mathias. It consists of a Derbyshire stone square pedestal with inscription, on plinth forming 2 steps all round. From pedestal rises a tapering shaft, which becomes a cross with arms joined by curving pieces of stone carved as wreath. Reversed sword carved on front. It stands on the bend on Main Street and has a small gravel surround with a chain link fence around.
179. Originally, the memorial did not bear any names (names are recorded in the adjacent church), but following local requests, names of casualties from WW1 and WW2 were added in 1999. Due to its location it is prone to flooding.

Village car parks

180. There are two designated sites for car parking in the village.
181. The memorial car park situated to the north of the churchyard accessed by a drive to the side of the war memorial, this can accommodate approximately 20 Cars and is used mainly by a few residents of the nearby cottages, walkers visiting the Meadows, church goers and some school parents at pick up and drop off times. Lighting has been added in the past few years.
182. The Village car park is a small plot owned by the Parish Council, accessed via a small drive between the houses at the Southern end of Back Lane, there is also a pedestrian access from Main Street. It lies behind the row of terraced properties at the junction of Back Lane and Main

Street. It can accommodate approximately 12 cars and is used predominately by the local residents who don't have their own parking space.

The Royal Oak Trees and other tree planting

183. Passing along Main Street is an impressive row of oak trees in the centre of the village. These, along with the greens on which they stand, create an attractive and rural feel to the village.
184. Trees commemorate four coronations and a silver jubilee. The King Edward VII tree stands opposite the Old Manor House, the King George V tree is opposite the Manor House and immediately in front of the Hall is the King George VI tree. The Queen Elizabeth II tree is opposite the Rectory drive. The tree commemorating the 1977 Silver Jubilee is near to the entrance of Hall Close. At the northern end of the village near Polly Peggs stile is a tree planted in memory of the wartime leader Sir Winston Churchill this was planted after his death in 1966.
185. The Parish Council planted twelve English Oak trees on the Syston Road grass verge near to Platts Lane junction. These were to commemorate the signing of the Single European Market Treaty, which came into existence on midnight 31st December 1992.

Polly Peggs

186. This is a footpath that runs from the north end of Main Street to Crabtree Lane. It is so called after a village girl named Polly Pegg. She had become pregnant out of wedlock, this at the time was considered a sin and her father disowned her.
187. It was reputed that as part of her penance she had to spend the night in the church covered by a white sheet. In the morning it was still dark when she left, feeling she had nothing to live for she ran along the edge of a field and threw herself into a deep pond and drowned herself. The path she took became known as Polly Peggs and eventually became a public right of way.

Telephone kiosk

188. The type K6 telephone kiosk is a designated listed building and is situated in the centre of the conservation area, at the junction of Main Street and Bennett's Lane.
189. Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and made by various contractors, the cast iron, Square kiosk with domed roof has un-perforated crowns to top panels and margin glazing to the windows and door. It is maintained in the iconic 'Pillar Box Red' livery. It has now become home to a defibrillator.

The village pound

190. The Village Pound is situated at the Southern end of the village on Main Street. Village Pounds are Saxon in origin and would have been used in earlier times to impound villagers' animals or goods if they got into debt.
191. In 1985 it underwent a makeover after previously falling into a state of disrepair. The Parish Council along with the help of villagers and the Manpower Commission cleared the rubbish,

rebuilt the granite walls and included a flowerbed and placed a plaque on the wall. A time capsule was placed under the slab floor, which consisted of a plastic box containing contemporary coins of the realm, current newspapers and articles relating to the pound. A village family kindly donated a seat; passing walkers and locals now uses the space.

Derry's nursery

192. A family run nursery standing by Cossington Brook at the north end of Main Street which was established in 1979, originally Derry's Roses. It is now a supplier of plants, trees, hedging, garden supplies and firewood and landscaping services. In 2019 it established an online business to respond to the diverse needs of a wider customer base.

Goscote nurseries

193. Situated on Syston Road, the nursery has been growing and sourcing hardy plants, trees and shrubs from all corners of the world for 50 years. On the same site is the Goscote Design Practice, which has been designing bespoke gardens for 35 years, and the Kowhai café.

Willows Farm fishing

194. This a carp syndicate consists of a series of mature gravel pits covering 34 acres of water including Cossington Lake, Davis's Lake and Mill Lake. The lakes were securely otter fenced in 2018/19 and contain several 30lb+ carp. The area is rich in bird wildlife and is subject to flooding. Footpaths surround the whole of the external boundary.

Ratcliffe College

195. An independent day and boarding co-educational catholic school for pupils aged 3-18, it lies to the north of the parish on a site known as Ratcliffe Hills. Established by the Institute of Charity in 1847, it served as a Roman Catholic training college. A major reconstruction took place after a fire in 1979, which destroyed most of the south wing. It became a fully co-educational college in 1984. Students come from far and wide, some from overseas; there is an increasing number of day students, some of whom come from the parish.

196. The College has 'Victorian Gothic' buildings designed by Augustus Welby Pugin who collaborated with Sir Charles Barry on the design of the Houses of Parliament. During WWII, boy evacuees from Sheffield were sent to Cossington and were housed at Ratcliffe College, girls were housed in the village.

Bronze Age barrows

197. In 1976 two early Bronze Age round barrows were excavated (within gravel workings) just south of Syston Road, near the Grange. Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Unit undertook excavations. In 1999 a third Barrow was excavated (also within gravel workings) just north of Platts Lane, by University of Leicester archaeologists. This was a particularly well-preserved monument.

198. The Barrows were used and re-used over a period of 2,500 years. Barrow 3 showed possible Neolithic remains, Iron Age and Roman occupation and was latterly the site of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery. Charnwood museum has a display entitled 'Cossington Boy', with a model of one of the Barrow occupants re-constructed to show what he was buried with. A monograph entitled 'Monument, Memory and Myth' by John Thomas gives great detail regarding the finds across this broad spread of history.

The Village Butts

199. From Medieval times an area of ground was set aside for archery practice in most villages and towns to contribute towards readiness for various wars. The site is referenced in Skillington's 'History of Cossington'. Cossington's butts were sited next to the Church. The boundary of the area is still clearly identifiable today, by hedges along three sides of a narrow strip of land, to the eastern side of Church Yard field. The strip is approximately 30 metres wide and extends around 160m back from the frontages of the cottages facing the War Memorial for many years this land was in the same ownership as Magpie Cottage, forming part of a small holding.

POLICY CF1: RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AMENITIES AND ASSETS - Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility – 1) village school, 2) Ratcliffe College, 3) All Saints church and Vestry, 4) the Royal Oak pub, 5) the Jubilee Hall, 6) Allotments, 7) Car Parks, 8) Telephone Kiosk, 9) Derry's Nursery, 10) Goscote Nurseries, 11) the village pound and 12) the war memorial (see figure 18) - will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility; or
- b) Further to 12 months active and open marketing, the existing community facility is shown not to be economically viable; or
- c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish.

Figure 18 – Community Facilities, Amenities and Assets



New or Improved Community Facilities and Amenities

200. The parish encourages the provision of new and improved facilities so long as they serve to enhance Cossington as a place to live for all. Specifically, we are interested in acquiring a replacement village hall facility that could be regularly utilised as a community centre and enjoyed by a large proportion of the residents of Cossington.

POLICY CF2: NEW OR IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES - Proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:

- a) Does not harm highway safety and respects residential amenity;
- b) Includes appropriate parking provision;
- c) Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle; and
- d) Takes into full account the needs of people with disabilities.

Parish Communications – *keeping connected*

Broadband and mobile infrastructure

201. The modern economy increasingly depends on high-quality communications infrastructure to reap maximum benefit from technological advances. High-speed internet connectivity drives business innovation and growth and creates business and employment opportunities as well as reducing social exclusion. Online searching and transactions facilitate access to information and services, also providing new and easier opportunities for education and learning. The standard of broadband and mobile infrastructure is particularly important in rural settings such as Cossington Parish. Equally, good mobile signal availability is crucial to achieve good communication for each of the above reasons.
202. BT Open Reach has completed their installation of 'fibre to the cabinet'. We are at the furthest point from the Sibleby exchange, which slows the Internet down in peak periods. Although we have a fibre cable in the village this is not connected to any of the houses.
203. Every house uses the old existing telephone lines, which are copper to the houses from the local cabinet. 'Fibre to the premises', is not yet available in Cossington. This is more common in areas such as urban towns and city communities.
204. The mobile telephone signal in the village is variable and is poor in some parts of the village.
205. The increased number of people home working has focussed the issues of connectivity. We need to ensure that we maintain or improve the service going forwards.

POLICY PC1: BROADBAND AND MOBILE INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to provide improved access to faster broadband for all businesses and households in Cossington Parish will be supported.

Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that serves all businesses and households within the Parish will be supported. If a new mast is installed, this should be shared, where possible, by more than one provider.

Any infrastructure improvements requiring above ground network installations must be sympathetically located, where possible, designed to integrate into the local area, and not be in or near to open landscapes.

Transport and Road Safety – *a safe and connected parish*

206. Transport issues within the parish will be considered in the context of environmental sustainability. The Government’s ten-point plan for a green industrial revolution reinforces this. The parish is therefore very keen to integrate and extend public transport to all local villages; improve local safe cycling facilities with separate cycle paths, integration with the national network in adjacent communities, cycle storage at the train station and buses that accommodate cycles; improve local footpaths and improve local roadside pavements; work on traffic calming measures; off road parking for all new developments and consider road safety; work to support initiatives for zero emission vehicles, and install car charging points in the Cossington car parks.

Traffic flow

207. Main Street is the main road through the village of Cossington where the church, the village pub (the Royal Oak), the local school and war memorial can be found. It carries an increasing number and range of vehicular transport destined for domestic and industrial sites in both Sileby and Barrow-on-Soar.

208. Nearly all other roads comprising the village lead off Main Street. Cossington lies on an access route from Sileby and Barrow-upon-Soar to the A46 and A6. All traffic through the village increases dramatically when surrounding roads are closed due to flooding (Slash Lane, Mountsorrel Lane, Syston Road), and many pavement widths in Cossington are not designed to keep pedestrians safe as large HGVs pass so close by. The properties along main street do not all have off street parking, resulting in some hazards when the volume of traffic is high.

209. There is a strong desire from villagers for an official and authoritative traffic survey to be undertaken along Main Street using appropriate data monitoring equipment in order to establish; the volume of traffic and the type of vehicles passing through. The last time an official survey was undertaken was in 2018 but regrettably the equipment being used was incorrectly placed so the data collected gave false readings/was inaccurate. Villagers explicitly want consideration to be given to reducing the speed limit through the village. In a recent survey, 97% of respondents expressed particular concern about speeding traffic while 94% expressed great concern about the volume of traffic especially the number of HGVs passing through the village. The Parish Plan of 2006 had also identified these as major issues for the village and recommended discussions should take place about ‘traffic calming measures’ along with appropriate action to ‘enforce speed limits’ neither of which has happened.

210. Other traffic calming possibilities discussed within the group included reducing the size and weight of HGVs; a 20mph speed limit, along with a range of possible traffic calming measures, though preferably not speed bumps but possibly chicanes which reduce speed by allowing one-way preferences particularly at strategic points along Main Street or perhaps speed cameras. The 2006 Parish Plan proposed exploring weight limits that could be put in place, to stop the largest HGVs passing through. This action remains unaddressed.

211. The Plan also expressed concern about safety around the vicinity of the school and the bend outside Derry’s Nursery. Both are positioned at the narrowest section of Main Street. Yet despite the passing of time along with the expansion of domestic and industrial estates in Sibleby and beyond as well as an expansion of the local school these problems remain unresolved and the situation has deteriorated noticeably in the intervening time.

School parking

212. The ‘school run’ inevitably causes problems for the free flow of traffic along Main Street as well as the safety of parents and children walking to school. Additionally, such a concentration of traffic causes increased pollution especially around the school gates. Back in 2006 the Parish Plan identified a high level of concern about ‘the inconsiderate and dangerous parking of parents when dropping off/picking up their children from school’.

213. With a larger school the issue of parking and safety has become even more acute even though the accident rate involving casualties is low. Most pupils live within 0.7 miles of the school, so introducing measures to encourage walking, cycling and scooting to school particularly from Sibleby could have a significant impact both on the amount of pollution created as well as be a partial resolution to the traffic issues at school drop off and collection times. On a more positive note, during these key times drivers have to slow/stop in order to allow other vehicles to pass resulting in a reduction in speeding.

214. The village Memorial car park (owned by the Parish Council) is situated almost opposite the school and is only used by a small number of parents during pick up/drop off times. If parents are to be encouraged to use the car park instead of the street it must be made easier for them to cross Main Street either via a zebra crossing or the appointment of a school crossing/lollipop person.

215. The County Council Highways department in collaboration with the Parish Council should give priority consideration to undertaking an assessment of these or other safe methods of crossing Main Street. An additional issue for pedestrians walking/scooting to school is the poor visibility for some drivers when exiting from some properties. There are 16 properties along Main Street who have to reverse out of their driveways, which increases the potential for an accident. If the footpaths at the back of the school were to be paved, parents/children on foot could be encouraged to access the school this way thus avoiding Main Street.

General parking

216. The community questionnaire identified that almost 64% of villagers were very concerned about on street parking.

217. Potentially chicanes would create some space for on street parking in addition to reducing the speed of vehicles. There are no ‘yellow lines’ on any roads within Cossington. The installing of them could alleviate some specific parking issues though it must be remembered that many residents have nowhere else to park their cars other than on the road, with some even parking on the grass verge.

218. A second parish car park, accessed via Back Lane is well used by a number of residents, but does not have sufficient space for all the cars currently using the street to park. However, the

number of available spaces could be increased if the facility was appropriately refurbished. 18 houses in Cossington do not have off road parking available to them. In some instances those that do have a tendency to, still park on the road.

219. Cars are regularly parked immediately by the junction of Main Street, Platts Lane and Back Lane. This creates impaired visibility for drivers at this junction resulting in an increased risk of collisions.
220. Works' vehicles can often be seen parked partially on the road and partially on the pedestrian pavement area. Delivery vans can also cause major problems from inconsiderate parking if only for a short time. All of these issues present obstacles for people with disabilities, wheelchairs, pushchairs and pedestrians when needing to social distance. Over 76% of villagers expressed concern about the obstacles presented by pavement parking during the recent survey.
221. Bennett's Lane and Back Lane have particular problems for motorists that could be resolved by introducing a one-way system (as identified in the recent survey) coupled with some marked spaces exclusively for the parking of vehicles or indeed yellow lines on Main Street at its junction with Bennetts and Back Lanes. However, installing yellow lines must not act to simply displace the problem inconsiderate parking causes for drivers exiting those junctions and may cause further problems for those without off street parking.
222. The village recreation ground is located along Platts Lane. There is a small care park but no additional designated parking places on Platts Lane itself or any crossing points for those arriving on foot. The footpath is extremely narrow and with no nominated crossing points again this causes safety issues. Platts Lane is a 50 mph zone.

POLICY T1: TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY - Development must not harm highway safety and should not result in the loss of existing car parking provision.

COMMUNITY ACTION T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - The Parish Council will develop a coherent action plan to address traffic and parking issues that have been identified through the Neighbourhood Plan including:

- a) Undertake an ongoing awareness exercise to make explicit the negative impact on residents of inconsiderate parking
- b) Work to achieve improvement of car parking provision for the Parish for residents and visitors.
- c) Develop appropriate traffic management/calming measures for the Parish
- d) Introduce community speed reduction actions
- e) Work with the school to resolve parking issues at drop off and pick up times for example creating a new pedestrian access point via Polly Peggs and school field.

Bus service

223. The village is serviced by Kinch No 2 bus travelling between Loughborough town centre and Leicester. It travels through the village every 30 mins with journey time to Loughborough being around 45 mins as the bus calls at several stops in Sileby Barrow-on-Soar and Quorn on the

way. The journey to Leicester takes around 22 minutes. The frequency of this service reduces to an hourly service after 6 pm, with last bus leaving the village at 10.40pm (to Leicester) and at 11.22 (to Loughborough).

224. There are four stops along Main Street (two in each direction) none having a shelter. Designated bus stops should have protection from the elements along with special high kerb structures to allow easier access from the pavement onto public transport for wheelchairs or those with mobility problems. Villagers who are dependent on this particular public transport service (38% according to the recent survey) rate it highly for its overall range of destinations/routes. It is therefore important to retain the service but consideration has to be given to an expansion of destinations along with a more direct route to Loughborough and Melton Mowbray. The Parish Plan (2006) identified that a service to Syston for example would offer a greater range of local shops as well as ‘enable access to the Health Centre’.
225. Villagers want to encourage as many ‘green methods of travel’ as possible but there has to be both an expansion of bus journeys/destinations and an integration of these with train networks. An increase of cycle routes would also lead towards creating low traffic neighbourhoods. The result would be an improvement to air pollution and an increase in well being for villagers. Improving or increasing bus and rail networks may involve reinstating Cossington rail station alongside Humble Bridge a suggestion, which gained support in the recent survey.
226. Better coordination of public transport systems would also enable commuters to have greater confidence when planning their travel arrangements. Both buses and train stations must provide facilities for passengers who wish to cycle as part of their overall journey.

COMMUNITY ACTION T2: PUBLIC TRANSPORT - The Parish Council will lobby for more integrated public transport and a greater selection of destinations so that public transport better meets the needs of parishioners.

The Parish Council will also lobby for bus shelters and for Raised kerbs for ease of access to the bus.

Pedestrian footpaths, pavements and cycleways

Cycling

227. The Parish and surrounding areas are very popular with cyclists. However there are no designated cycle-lanes either in or through the village, so certain roads can cause safety issues for both residents’ and cyclists such as Back Lane, Bennett's Lane and The Humbles where there are no pavements or road markings. Safety issues arise in Platts Lane where the footpath is particularly narrow. Main Street can be particularly problematic as cyclists have to negotiate parked and moving vehicles in a 30mph zone or faster moving traffic along Platts Lane, which is a 50mph zone.
228. National Cycle Network route 6 leads from Cossington (at the junction of Syston Road and Platts Lane) in to Leicester and beyond, along the river Soar. This provides a level, traffic-free

route to Syston, Thurmaston, Birstall and Leicester and is used for leisure purposes, healthy commuting to work or to attend Wreake Valley College.

229. Accessibility and safety for cyclists would be improved significantly by better traffic management and a calmer flow through the village, particularly along Platts Lane. This would then safely link Main Street with Leicester and could be part of a greener, safer, healthier future, less reliant on ICE vehicles. There is also potential for linking up with the cycle path from Barrow-on-Soar to Loughborough.
230. Overall there should be greater access to cycle lanes in order to facilitate cycling and walking whether to school or work or for pleasure which would result in encouraging a more active lifestyle. This would be in keeping with the cycling and walking investment strategy document (Department for Transport 2019) which recommended doubling cycling provision by 2025.

Footpaths

231. Back Lane and Bennetts Lane have no pavements and can therefore be a dangerous location for villagers to traverse as can certain sections of Main Street, where there is also no pavement (or the path is very narrow). The village has public footpaths leading to Cossington Meadows as well as towards the canal towpath (which is also a designated cycleway) and eventually onto Syston or Watermead Country Park. Cossington Meadows is particularly difficult to access from the village during wetter months, due to the boggy nature of the footpaths which lead from the village Memorial car park alongside the church onto the nature reserve and which could be resolved by laying a more weatherproof pathway.
232. Polly Pegg and Crab Tree Lanes border the village and as with the aforementioned is part of a national footpath network. However, while Polly Pegg Lane does not have a hard surface, dog walkers nevertheless use it regularly.
233. The 2006 Village Plan noted that 21% of respondents experienced access difficulties within the village (footpaths, stiles etc.). More detailed work needs to be undertaken to enable access for all. The Government's ten-point plan for a green industrial revolution seeks to make cycling and walking more attractive.

Disability issues

234. The external environment of Cossington disenfranchises many people with disabilities as it denies them the opportunity to independently gain access to and enjoy both the village and surrounding countryside.
235. There are a number of inconsistencies in the external environment of Cossington (varying footpath widths for example) all of which can be useful orientation points for visually impaired people using guide dogs or long canes. However different environmental inconsistencies (such as erratic traffic speed and inconsiderate parking) can cause issues for all travellers including sensory overloads for people with autism resulting in increased anxiety and unpredictable behaviour.
236. The footpath along Platts Lane is extremely narrow and dangerous for people with disabilities. There is no designated safe crossing point along Main Street which there should

be given there is no footpath along one part. Dropped kerbs have been installed at some side roads leading off Main Street but there is no textured paving to lead visually impaired walkers to a safe crossing point. Roads without designated footpaths are dangerous for all pedestrians but particularly ambulant disabled people; wheelchair users or people using other mobility aids (walking frames) or indeed parents with buggies/prams/pushchairs as they all need to dodge (speeding/inconsiderate) traffic. Cossington Meadows discriminates against people with disabilities not only because of the boggy nature of the designated footpaths (during inclement weather) but the kissing gates prevent people in wheelchairs or families with pushchairs gaining access to the Meadows. This could be improved by laying level hard paths from the Memorial car park to the edge of the Nature Reserve and within parts of the Reserve itself. Additionally by replacing some existing kissing gates with wider models they would enable buggies and wheelchairs to also gain access.

237. The 2006 Village Plan noted that 65% of respondents (to the Village survey) were aware that footpath access in Cossington did not favour people with disabilities or people who were infirm. It was noted that changes were in hand and would be enacted shortly. However, any action taken needs to be audited against current legislation.

POLICY T2: PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATHS, PAVEMENTS AND CYCLE WAYS - The enhancement and expansion of the Neighbourhood Area's footpath and cycle network will be supported.

COMMUNITY ACTION T3: PEDESTRIAN FOOTPATHS, PAVEMENTS AND CYCLE WAYS - The Parish Council will work with neighbouring Parish Councils and other relevant stakeholders to create an improved and sustainable network of cycleways and footpaths accessible for all including those using pushchairs, wheelchairs and walking aids.

Business and Employment – *helping the community to thrive*

238. Cossington is a rural parish and close to several significant employment centres, such as Loughborough and Leicester as well as more local employment within the villages of Sileby, Barrow on Soar, Quorn and Rothley. There is no train station in Cossington, but there are regular buses to the surrounding villages and Loughborough and Leicester.

Support for existing businesses and employment

239. There are few employment opportunities in Cossington currently and it felt important for the community to maintain the opportunities currently available and further grow employment opportunities as well as support the growth in home working.

240. Cossington is a rural parish and close to several significant employment centres, such as Loughborough and Leicester as well as more local employment within the villages of Sileby, Barrow on Soar, Quorn and Rothley. There is no train station in Cossington; there is a linear bus service between Loughborough and Leicester. Other routes are non-existent. Employment opportunities within the Parish are however relatively limited in scale.

241. The school, Royal Oak pub, Derry's Nursery and Goscote Nurseries are the major employers in the village. Other employment opportunities include farming and sole traders offering services such as physiotherapy and driving instruction. In addition, Chestnut Farm and Charnwood Edge are both within the Parish. These are small industrial areas, which are home to a variety of businesses such as commercial vehicle servicing, cycle manufacture and construction companies. A recent parish survey (Feb 2020) suggests that around 8% of Cossington residents are homeworkers but is likely to be higher now.

POLICY BE1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land that provides employment. Applications for a change of use of an existing employment/ business use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

a) The commercial premises or land has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and

b) The commercial premises or land has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment uses and has been unsuccessfully marketed for employment uses for a continuous period of at least 6 months.

Support for new businesses and employment

242. New employment initiatives can help to boost and diversify the local economy, thus providing more local employment opportunities.

243. However, parishioners have been clear that any new employment initiatives should be small scale and sensitive to the character of the Parish. Employment proposals should only be approved if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment and also serve the community. For those working outside the parish, further opportunities within the parish could be helpful, reduce car traffic and carbon emissions. Re-opening of the train station at Cossington would support those working in Leicester and Loughborough. Currently public transport is limited (regular but infrequent buses) and the nearest park and ride is at Birstall. Further cycle routes would also be a benefit.
244. Being able to encourage new business start-ups, and more homeworking with local meeting facilities would be welcome to the community. However, there are no meeting room facilities anywhere within the village and it may not be possible for individuals to develop their homes to accommodate such spaces, and in any case may be inappropriate and insecure to use space such as upstairs spare bedrooms as meeting facilities. This may discourage potential homeworkers, or those with ideas for business start-ups. Businesses will be more readily encouraged that will foster the sense of community and work towards carbon neutral environment reducing the need to travel outside the village.

POLICY BE2: SUPPORT FOR NEW BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT - The development of brownfield land for business and employment use will be supported. In supporting additional employment opportunities, new development will be required to:

- a) Fall within the settlement boundary or within existing employment areas, unless it relates to small scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of commercial/employment related development appropriate to a countryside location;
- b) Be of a size and scale in keeping with local character and the historic and natural environment;
- c) Respect residential amenity;
- d) Not harm highway safety; and
- e) Contribute to the character, the design of the local built environment and the vitality of the local area.

COMMUNITY ACTION BE1: MEETING SPACE FOR BUSINESSES - There is an identified need for meeting space and facilities and it is proposed that this be included within the new Village Centre amenity to support small businesses and home workers

- a) Visitors could utilise the village car park, utilising existing space
- b) The provision of high-speed broadband and free Wi-Fi
- c) Consideration should be given to providing video conferencing facilities

Farm diversification

245. Farming plays a small role in the Parish in employment terms. Few parishioners are therefore employed in agriculture. The village does have agricultural land and rare breed cattle.
246. The agricultural land around the village provides access to the countryside and enhances the environment.

POLICY BE4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION - The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses will be supported subject to development respecting local character and residential amenity; not harming highway safety; and not harming the soil quality of surrounding farmland.

Tourism

247. Cossington is an attractive rural parish to which walkers and cyclists are attracted. The Parish already has off road cycle tracks leading to Watermead Park. The Meadows is also popular for walkers. However, it is subject to flooding, as are the paths to the Canal and Watermead Park, which makes local walking difficult in the winter months.
248. The Parish is keen to extend a welcome to visitors whilst ensuring that their visit does not have a negative impact on parishioners - for example, in the context of traffic.
249. The offer to visitors may be enhanced over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan through the development of activities, places to eat, in addition to infrastructure such as signage, seating, parking and other provision to welcome visitors.
250. The development of the village centre would provide an attraction and resource for visitors and residents alike. Not only would it provide much needed community space it would also give Cossington the opportunity to showcase many aspects of its rich heritage. The Village Centre would give us a place to present displays, artefacts and information about Cossington's history and culture. Technology could be harnessed; apps for smartphones would lead visitors around the 800-year-old church allowing visitors and residents to access Cossington's historical, cultural and natural heritage.
251. Local tourism attractions include: The Meadows, the canal footpath and the recreation ground on Platts Lane (all are subject to flooding). These attractions could be further enhanced with additional parking, widening of the paths, increased paths on the Meadows and flood prevention measures. The development of public toilets, near the Church area, would be a benefit. The pub is currently utilised by locals, walkers and cyclists. This could be developed further to attract tourists and visitors from further afield.

POLICY BE5: TOURISM – Tourism development will be supported subject to it being demonstrated to respect local character and residential amenity; and not to harm highway safety.

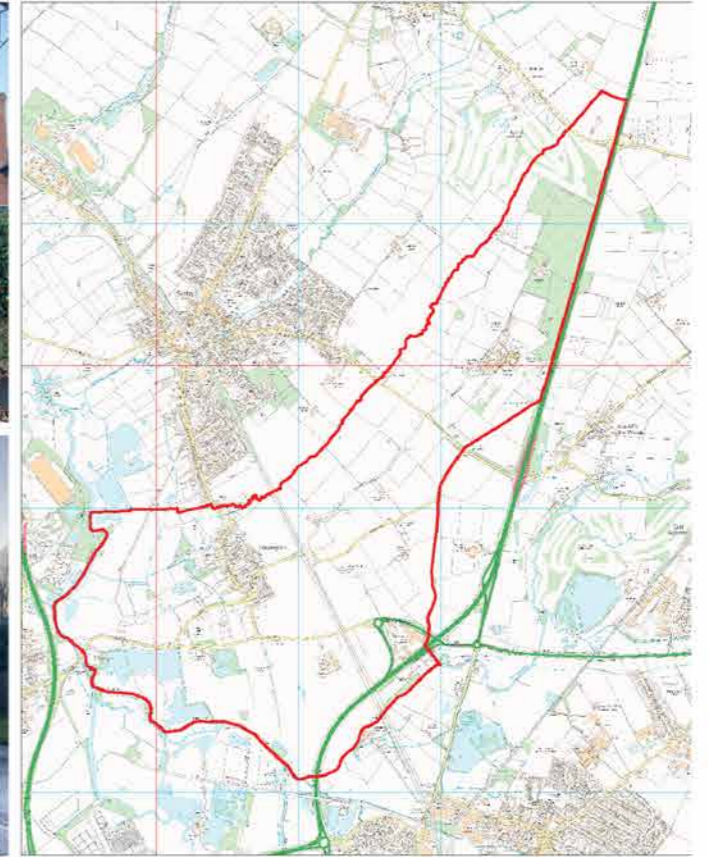
8 Infrastructure

252. All development has the potential to impact on the environment and place pressure on local infrastructure and services. It is recognised that the planning system should be used to ensure that new development contributes positively to the local environment and helps to mitigate against any adverse impacts on infrastructure.
253. The Regulation 19 Local Plan says ‘We expect all of our communities to benefit from a wide range of infrastructure, at the right time and in the right place. We want developments to create places that residents can be proud of’.
254. This is not only to ensure that the new development is properly served in respect of essential day-to-day infrastructure required by the occupants of any new development but also to minimise the impact upon existing infrastructure.
255. However, the NPPF stresses that the need for infrastructure accompanying development must have regard for the viability of that development. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG 46) also recognises the ability of Neighbourhood Plans to identify the need for new or enhanced infrastructure but requires the Plan to prioritise the infrastructure requirements.
256. Provision of the necessary physical and community infrastructure arising from proposed development is therefore a critical component of the Plan, which has identified a wide range of potential infrastructure requirements through its production.
257. Funding for new infrastructure is currently provided through a legal agreement (often referred to as a Section 106 Agreement) between the Borough Council and the applicant, along with other parties involved in the delivery of the specific infrastructure improvement. CBC is considering the introduction of what is known as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where charges will be applied according to the scale and type of development, and these funds used to pay for the infrastructure requirements, subject to CIL tests.

COMMUNITY ACTION INF1: The Parish Council will seek to secure funding for the provision of a replacement village hall, where possible through contributions via Section 106 Agreements and through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where applicable. This is the highest priority infrastructure requirement identified by the community.

9 Monitoring and Review

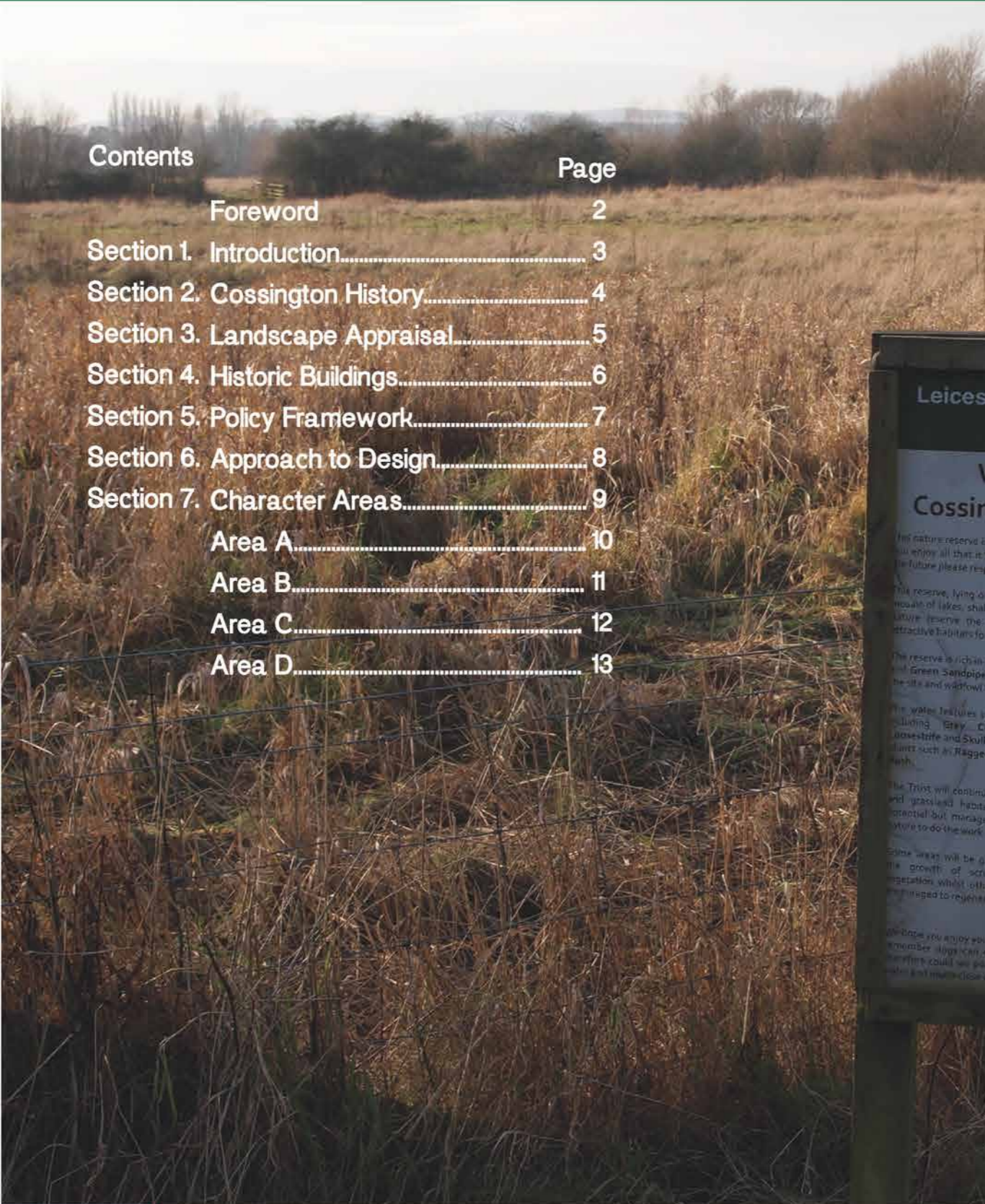
258. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period up to 2037. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.
259. The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Cossington Parish Council on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.
260. The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan in 2026 or to coincide with the review of the Charnwood Local Plan if this cycle is different.



THE COSSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

CHARACTER AND DESIGN STATEMENT

Contents	Page
Foreword	2
Section 1. Introduction.....	3
Section 2. Cossington History.....	4
Section 3. Landscape Appraisal.....	5
Section 4. Historic Buildings.....	6
Section 5. Policy Framework.....	7
Section 6. Approach to Design.....	8
Section 7. Character Areas.....	9
Area A.....	10
Area B.....	11
Area C.....	12
Area D.....	13



In early 2020, Cossington Parish Council took the decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the parish. Prior to this, the parish had no overall, integrated policy for design and development. The village inclined towards ad hoc development as land became available. With a high level of speculative development being proposed and the Borough Council at risk of falling below its 5-year land supply, it had become important to consider in depth how the parish should develop in the future – to define aims for the future, based around the unique characteristics of Cossington. The descriptions of the Conservation Area in this document are taken from the Cossington Conservation Area Character Appraisal produced by Charnwood Borough Council.

Once the neighbourhood plan process was underway, a Steering Group operating under the authority of the Parish Council was established to drive the delivery of the Plan forward and over time, Theme Groups made up of community volunteers and some Parish Councillors were established to look into the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan and to consider policies for inclusion in the Plan with support from the community and with a robust and proportionate evidence base to underpin it.

The decision was taken to produce a detailed Character and Design Statement in order to ensure the best possible attention to issues of character and design that the community regards as extremely important. Our thanks are extended to Simon and Clare Pearson and Liz Jenkin who have led the process on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee. This Design Statement is a full part of the Neighbourhood Plan, to which it is integrally linked and where related matters of infrastructure, landscape, environment and development are addressed.

Penny Weston-Webb
Chair Cossington Parish Council

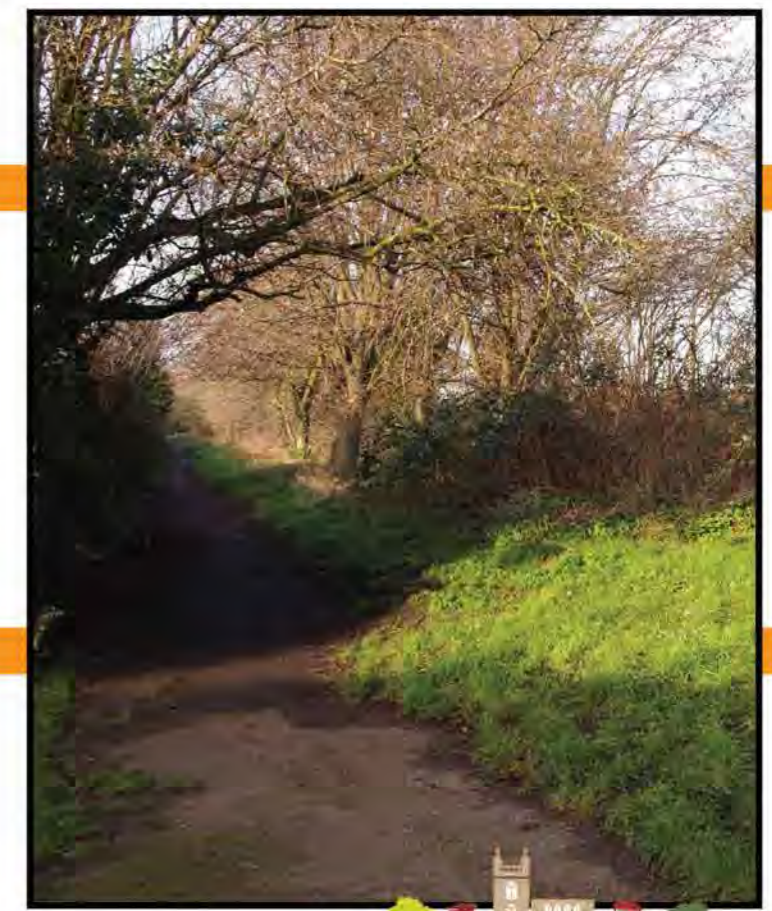
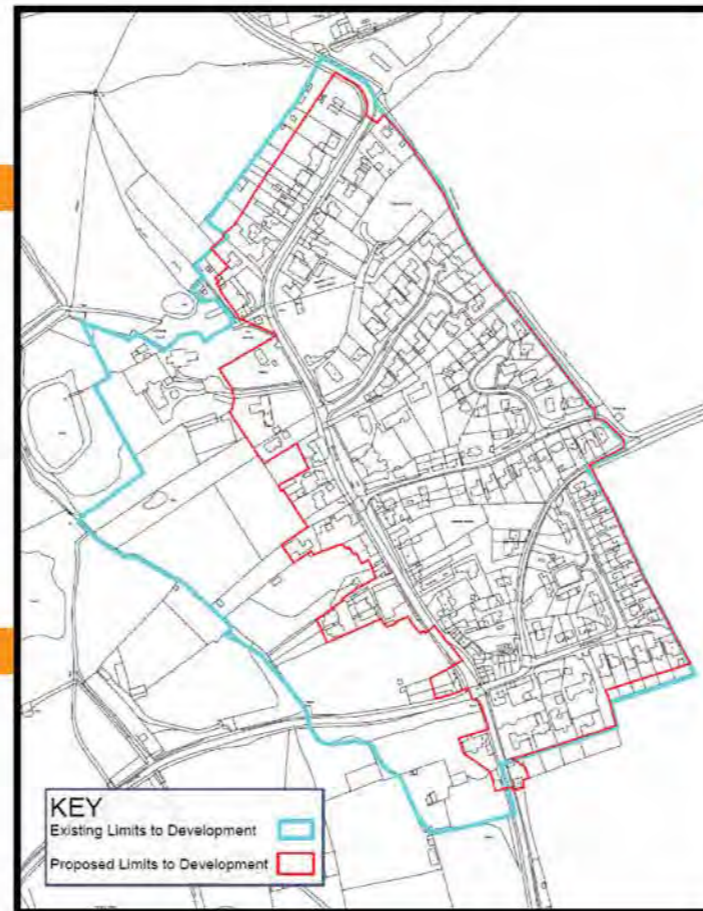


SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

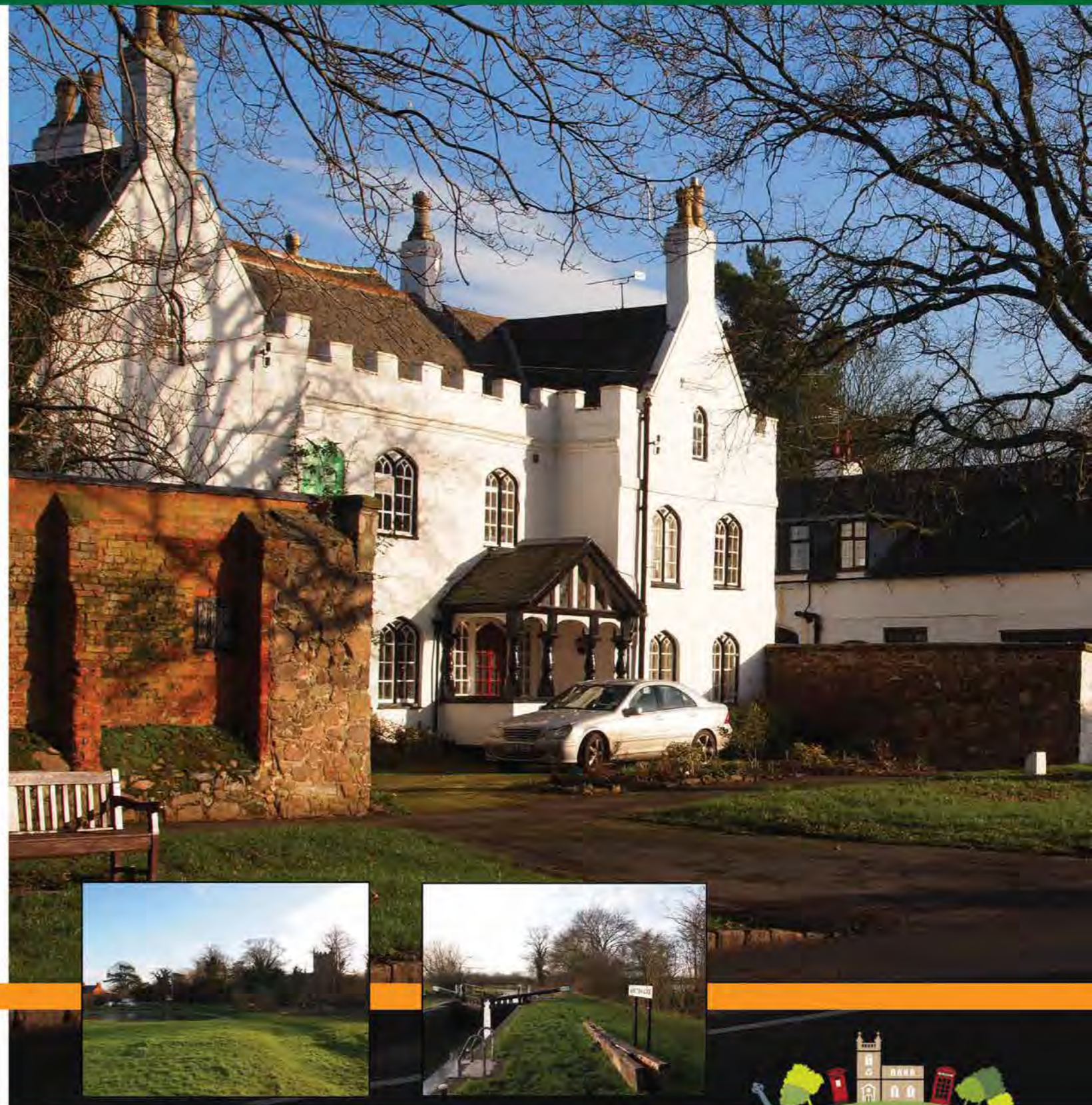
- 1.1. This Character and Design Statement has been prepared on behalf of Cossington Parish Council, with support from consultants YourLocale. Its preparation and content has been produced by the Cossington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group through its Housing Theme Group, following an established format for Character and Design Statements used by other communities within the UK. It forms part of the Cossington Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2. The Statement describes the Parish of Cossington in terms of its history, its context in the local landscape and the character of its built environment. The parish consists of a single built settlement, the village of Cossington, within which there are a small number of distinct character areas that have developed at different times in a variety of styles.
- 1.3. All planning applications must take account of this guidance. Although this Statement can be read as a stand-alone document, it is an integral part of the Cossington Neighbourhood Plan and its associated documents. It contains guidance which applicants to planning authorities must demonstrate have been taken into account in their applications; and to which planning authorities should refer in their decision-making about new development in the parish, including alterations to existing buildings.

- 1.4. Much of the village of Cossington is within a Conservation Area which was designated in 1975. A formal Conservation Area appraisal was undertaken in 2014. This Character and Design Statement seeks to take appropriate and proportionate account of the Conservation Area but it does not in itself constitute an appraisal. There are 19 listed buildings within the Parish, 16 of which are sited in Cossington village itself.
- 1.7. This Guidance supplements the design requirements of the Charnwood Local Plan.
- 1.8. In view of the special qualities which make up the architectural and historic character of Cossington Parish, the purpose of this Character and Design Statement is to:
 - (a) provide design guidance for all new development, extension or alteration to existing properties; and
 - (b) ensure that future change in the built environment respects the character of the relevant area while encouraging modern standards, sustainability and appropriate innovation.

- 1.9. Reference to, and assessment against, this guidance is required in framing planning applications and in making development decisions. The Statement is a key point of reference for designers, developers and planning professionals (including the local planning authority) involved with new-build developments or extensions; and for parish residents, businesses and landowners who may wish to improve or add to their home, garden or business premises. It does not discuss where development should happen but is about conditioning the design of future development.
- 1.10. This Character and Design Statement relates directly to Policy H6, in the Neighbourhood Plan, which requires that all planning applications must demonstrate how its principles and guidance have been incorporated in their applications; and to which planning authorities should refer in their decision-making about new development in the parish, including alterations to existing buildings.
- 1.11. A Statement alone cannot ensure high-quality design. Delivery of high-quality design also requires meeting and discussion among those proposing development and the community concerned, at a sufficiently early stage to ensure a shared understanding of the Character and Design Statement in this particular context and a due influence over the development outcome.



- 2.1 The Cossington Conservation Area Character Appraisal says that the village of Cossington almost certainly has Saxon origins, its name being derived from the Saxon Chief names Coss or Cussa who established a "tun" (enclosure) in this location. The open space, proximity to woodland, spring water and availability of animals for hunting would have made it an ideal location for settlement.
- 2.2 The earliest written record of Cossington can be found in Domesday (1086) where "Cosintone" is mentioned and the Earl Hugh of Chester held 6 carucates of land here, approximately 600 acres. It is relatively unusual for such a small settlement to be referenced specifically, indicating that it must have been a village of some significance by this time.
- 2.3 The manor at Cossington passed through various hands throughout the medieval period. Most notably the Duke of Suffolk held the manor here until it passed to the Crown following his death and that of his daughter, Lady Jane Grey. It was however the Babington family that boasted the longest and most fruitful connection with the village and was responsible for influencing much of village life over the centuries.
- 2.4 The medieval period saw a great change in the agricultural practices which dominated the everyday life of the villagers in Cossington. Piecemeal enclosure took place under Matthew Babington and an Enclosure act was passed in 1666. From the late eighteenth-century further changes found their way into the Cossington community. The canalising of the rivers Soar and Wreake was effected in 1790 and 1794 which altered the course of the Wreake between Syston Mill and Cossington Mill. Cossington Mill (Grade II) dates from the seventeenth century having probably been built on the site of a previous mill and lies to the south west of the village outside the Conservation Area. A further infrastructure development that affected Cossington was the Midland Counties Railways which opened in 1832. The line which is now the Midland Main Line runs along the eastern edge of the village and the stop at Cossington Gate was abolished when the line was expanded in 1873.
- 2.5 The population of Cossington has remained consistently small relative to other neighbouring settlements although it has grown over time. Nichols writing in 1800 noted that there were forty dwellings. The 1861 census records approximately 409 residents which rises slightly to roughly 448 by the 1901 census. This information has to be adjusted slightly as Ratcliffe School falls within Cossington Parish and therefore the students have been included in the census. By the beginning of the last century the census in 2001 recorded 583 people.
- 2.6 At the time of the 2011 Census, the Cossington Parish was home to around 598 residents living in 218 households. Analysis of the Census suggests that between 2001 and 2011 population in the local area grew by around 3% (15 people). During this period, it is estimated the number of dwellings increased by 11% (22).
- 2.7 There is evidence of an ageing population with the number of over 65-year-olds rising by 9% and up from 20% of total population in 2001 to 22% in 2011. In line with national trends the local population is likely to get older as average life expectancy continues to rise.
- 2.8 Home ownership levels are very high with around 80% of households owning their homes outright or with a mortgage or loan and at 7% the share of households living in social rented accommodation is very low when compared with regional and national rates.

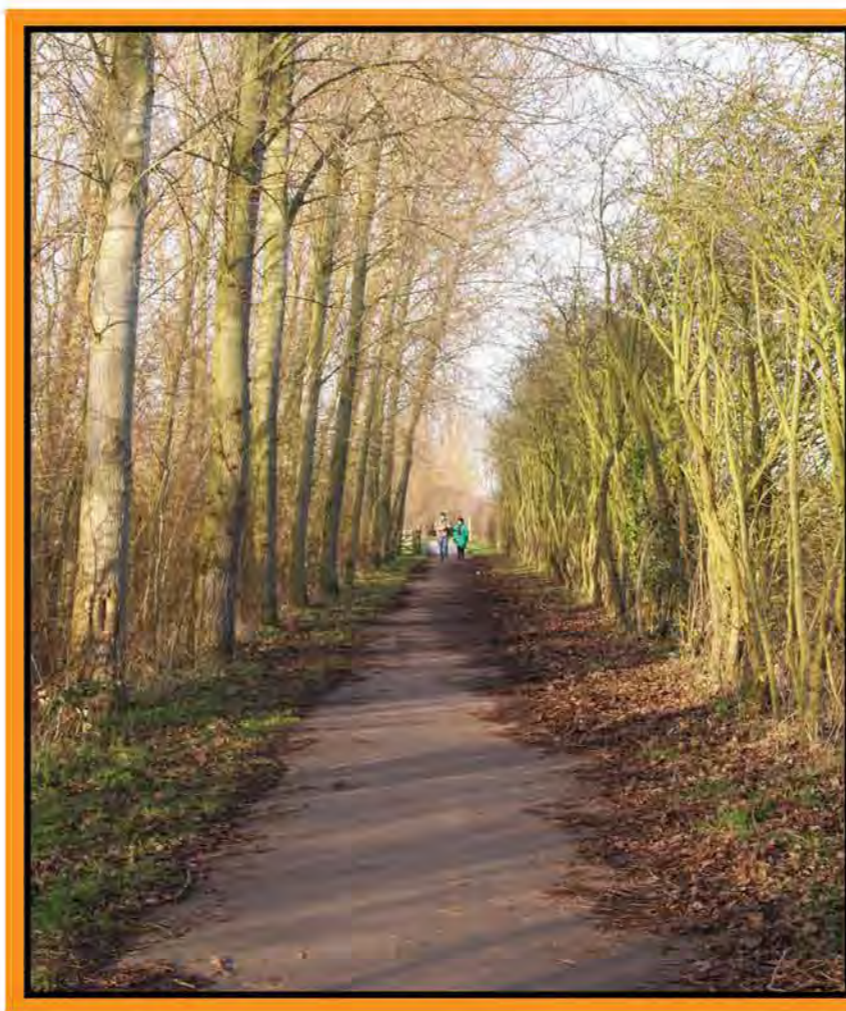


SECTION 3 LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

- 3.1 The Cossington Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that Cossington is situated along a relatively flat stretch of land and the architectural forms and elements of the streetscene are relied on to create interest rather than changes to the topography. Although the Conservation Area primarily follows the buildings along a single road, distinct areas can be discerned as you move along the road.
- 3.2 The first is the stretch from the north of the Area to the junction with Homestead Close where Main Street curves before straightening out. There is a relaxed feel to this part of the Conservation Area with houses occupying larger plots and generally set back from the road with front gardens and driveways. The timber framing of Magpie Cottage is a prominent feature and the open space, the War Memorial and the trees surrounding the churchyard contribute to the open feel of this area.

- 3.3 Front boundaries are generally low and formed of either red brick or granite and slate rubblestone. This ensures that the houses are generally very exposed within the streetscene and this characteristic continues throughout the Conservation Area.
- 3.4 From Homestead Close to Back Lane the road appears to widen thanks to the wide verge to the east of the road. Houses are generally closer together here and there is a pleasing variety of architectural styles. Although there are a number of eye-catching buildings no single one dominates the space. The established commemorative oaks complement the wide verges and open aspects of the properties. Along the west buildings are located closer to the street and there is a wide variety of scales

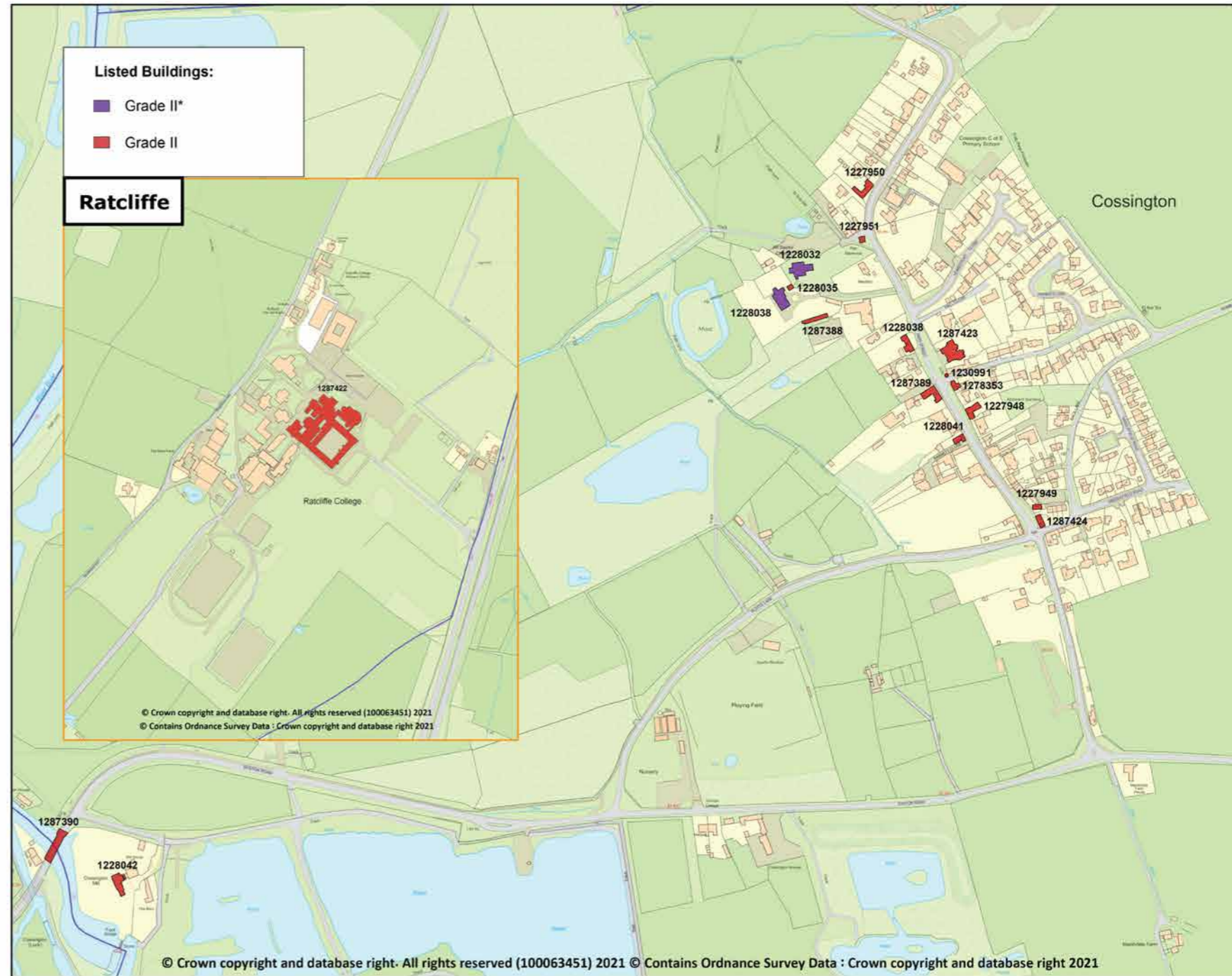
- and proportions with the prominent half hipped roof of The Manor House juxtaposed with the delicate proportions of Christmas Cottage. Low level front walls, hedges or estate style fencing continue along the street and this bestows an open nature to the space.
- 3.5 The final part of the Conservation Area is from the crossroads of Main Street with Platts Lane and Back Lane to the southern boundary edge. The houses become more widely spaced with larger plot sizes and there is more variety in the placement of the buildings with several set back from the road. Chine House and The Grove are both set within their own grounds with their main elevations perpendicular to Main Street. Platts Lane is undeveloped but the dense vegetation, established trees and the red brick and granite rubblestone wall reflect the characteristics found elsewhere within the Conservation Area.



SECTION 4 HISTORIC BUILDINGS

- 5.1 The considerable variety of building forms, styles, materials and so forth across the whole parish directly effect the particular historical period of their construction.
- 5.2 Cossington developed primarily as a residential village and it remains this way today. Houses are generally of two stories although there are significant differences in the sizes and scales of the buildings. Agriculture played a significant role in the origins and development of the village and was responsible for sustaining it through the centuries until modern industries and professions became more prominent. Farmsteads were scattered throughout the village and the surrounding land although this has now been largely lost from the Conservation Area itself.
- 5.3 The buildings with a statutory protection in Cossington are as follows (Grade II unless stated):

THE OLD RECTORY Grade II*
CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS Grade II*
COSSINGTON MILL
BRIDGE (THAT PART IN COSSINGTON CIVIL PARISH)
VESTRY AT CHURCHYARD OF ALL SAINTS
K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK
68, MAIN STREET
129, MAIN STREET
OLD MANOR HOUSE
74, MAIN STREET
COACH HOUSE AND STABLE AT NUMBER 54 (THE OLD RECTORY)
133 AND 137, MAIN STREET
44, MAIN STREET
THATCHED SHOP
WAR MEMORIAL
MILLSTREAM COTTAGE
LIME TREE COTTAGE
CLOSE COTTAGE HALLSIDE THE HALL
RATCLIFFE COLLEGE



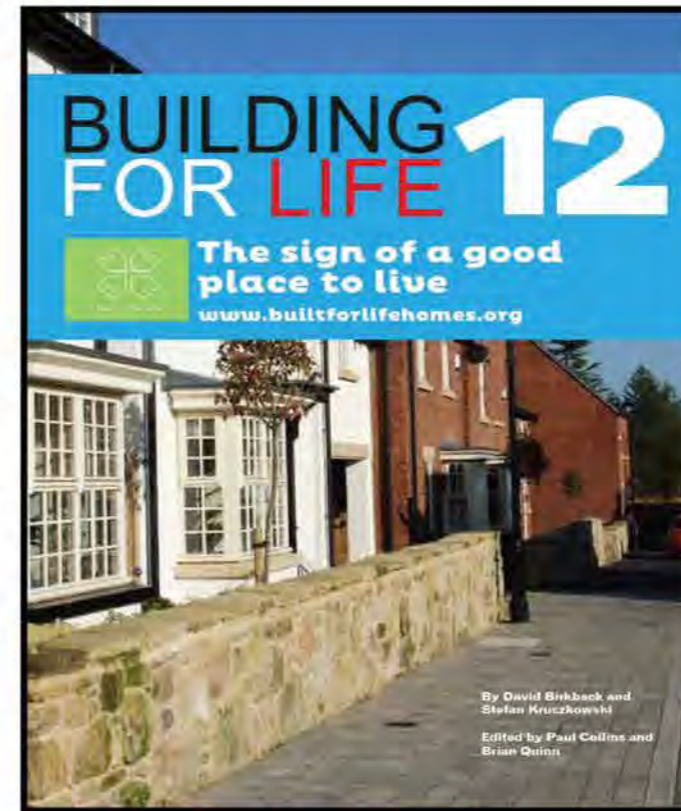
National Planning Policy Framework

4.1 Section 12 is dedicated to 'Achieving well-designed places' and reinforces the role high-quality buildings play in achieving sustainable development. It says 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'. It suggests that design policies should be developed alongside local communities and recognises the role that neighbourhood plans can play in identifying the special qualities of each area.

Charnwood Local Plan

4.2 The emerging Charnwood Local Plan 2019-2036 seeks to promote an improvement in design quality. It recognises that 'successfully designed schemes draw inspiration from the local distinctiveness of the Borough'. The Local Plan therefore requires new development proposals to make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area and achieve a high standard of architectural quality. The preferred approach to design is based upon Building for Life 12.

4.3 The Local Plan encourages neighbourhood plans to take a strong lead on design in their area. Local Plan Policy LP2 says: High Quality Design - We will require new developments to make a positive contribution to Charnwood, by responding positively to the local distinctiveness of the area and providing attractive and functional places where people will want to live, work and visit.

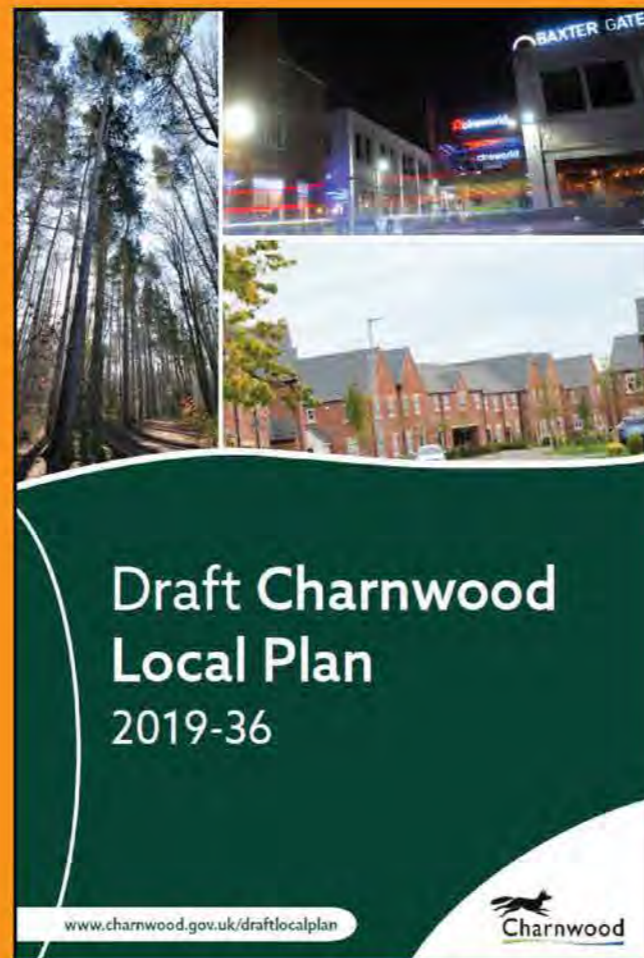
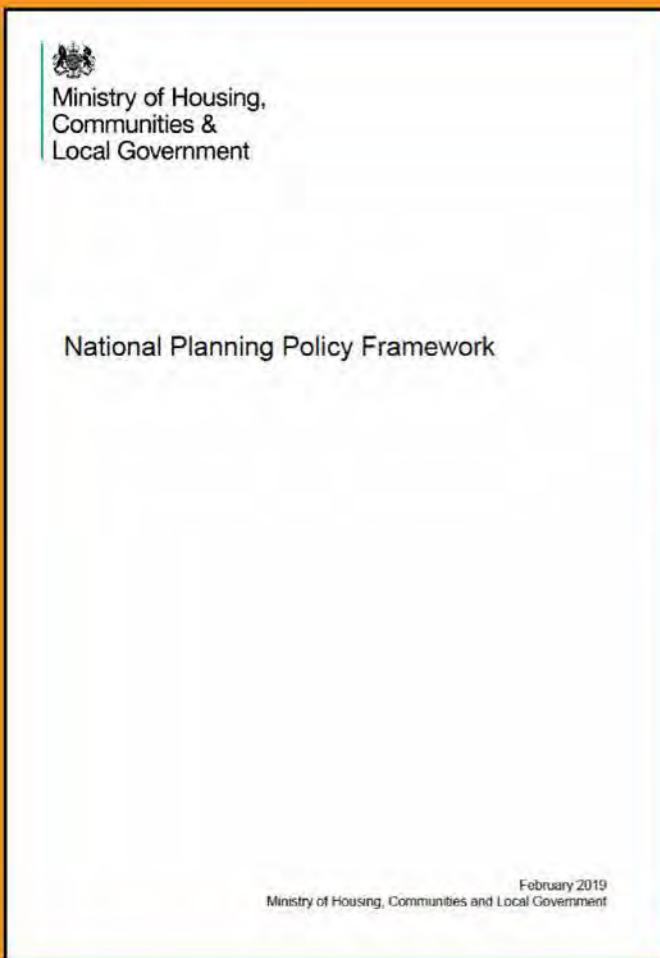


Building for Life 12

4.4 This is a national standard that seeks to achieve well designed buildings and neighbourhoods. It focusses around 12 considerations including Connections; Facilities and services; Public transport; Meeting local housing requirements; Character; Working with the site and its context; Creating well defined streets and spaces; Easy to find your way around; Streets for all; Car parking; Public & private spaces and External storage and amenity space.

Planning White Paper

4.5 The White Paper, published in August 2020, had as a key objective the need to bring a new focus to design and sustainability, suggesting that local residents should have a genuine say in the design of new development, and ensure that codes have real 'bite' by making them more binding on planning decisions. The White Paper sees neighbourhoods (through Neighbourhood Plans) playing 'a crucial role in producing required design guides and codes to provide certainty and reflect local character and preferences about the form and appearance of development'.



SECTION 6 APPROACH TO DESIGN

- 6.1 The Parish of Cossington has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character.
- 6.2 The biggest challenge facing the future of Cossington is to balance the desire to protect the character of the village with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities.
- 6.3 There are a number of general design principles and guidelines that all development must take into account and these are described below.
- 6.4 We have also looked at distinctive areas within Cossington to tailor proposals to specific parts of the village and these specific requirements are identified overleaf.

Design principles:

- 6.5 Cossington's rural character should be enhanced by new development and should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.
- 6.6 All new development proposals of one or more houses, replacement dwellings and extensions should have regard for the following building design principles to a degree that is proportionate to the development:
 - (a) Care should be taken to ensure that the development does not disrupt the visual amenities of the street scene and impact negatively on any significant wider landscape views.

- (b) New buildings should follow a consistent design approach in the use of materials, fenestration and the roofline to the building. Materials should be chosen to complement the design of the development and add to the quality of character of the surrounding environment and of the Conservation area.
- (c) All new housing should reflect the character and historic context of the existing developments within the Parish, however, contemporary and innovative materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be robustly demonstrated without detracting from the historic context.
- (d) Development should enhance biodiversity and relate well to the topography of the area, with existing trees, boundaries and hedges preserved whenever possible.
- (e) Development should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology, as appropriate.
- (f) Roof and wall construction following technical best- practice recommendations for integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites.
- (g) Hedges (or fences with ground level gaps) for property boundaries that maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs.

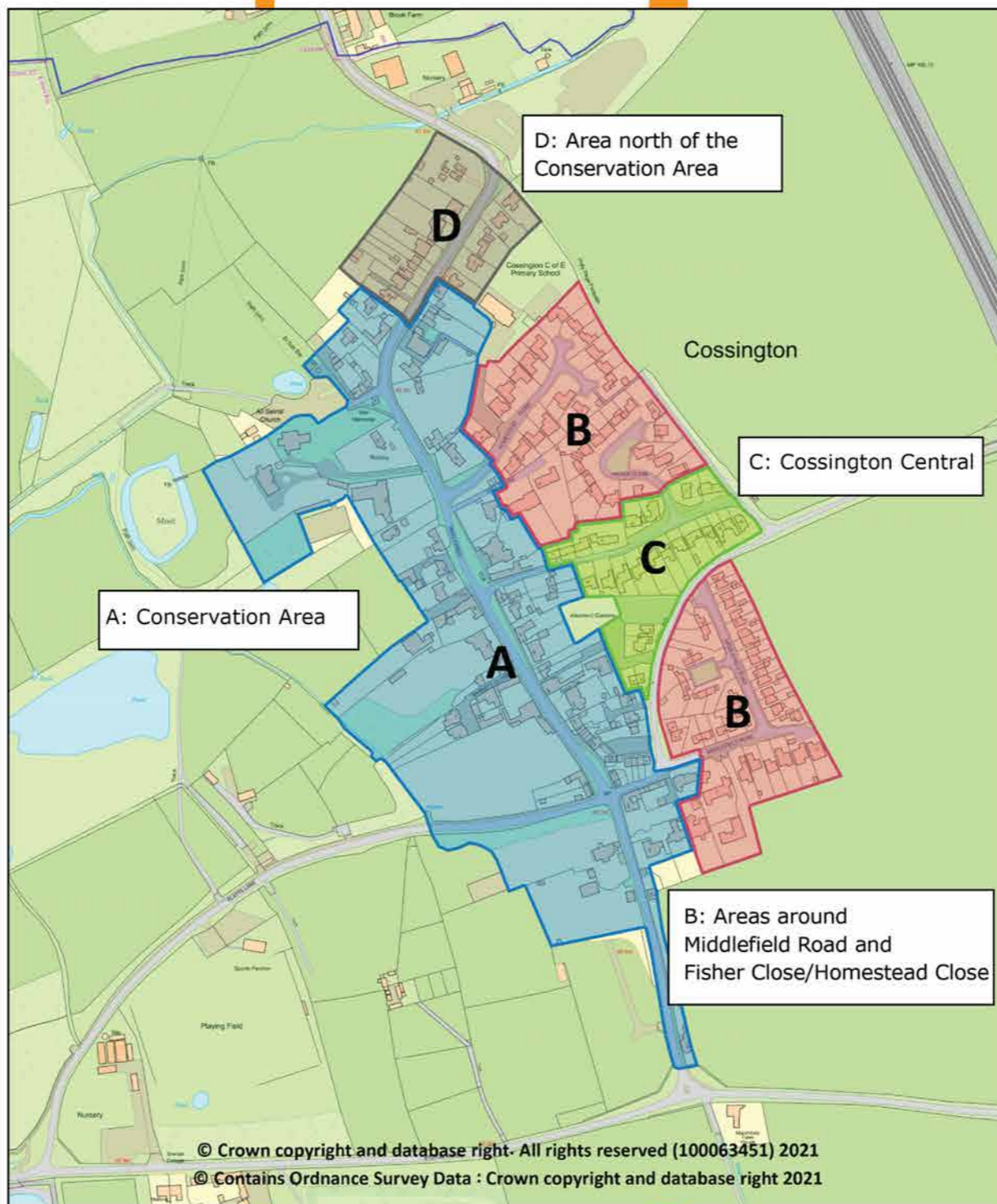
Design guidelines:

- (a) Any proposed development should be judged against the village's existing settlement pattern for scale, positioning within its plot and alignment to adjacent buildings.
- (b) Architectural style and building materials should be of the best quality, be in keeping with local village design and sympathetic to adjacent buildings.
- (c) It will not be acceptable to implement pattern book design. If several new buildings are permitted on one site, variation in design and layout will avoid monotonous repetition of one house type. Alternatively a small terrace sympathetic to the character of the village might be considered.
- (d) There must be variety of proportion and positioning of individual buildings in new developments to reflect existing patterns and this includes the spaces around and between buildings so that views within the village and from the village are interesting and dramatic.
- (e) The importance of the skyline on the setting of the village is important and new development needs to respect this.
- (f) Pedestrian circulation within the village is important, and new development should always be designed with the need of pedestrians and cyclists in mind, so that easy access to community facilities is possible.
- (g) The blending of the natural and the architectural landscape must be preserved and enhanced by new developments.



SECTION 7 CHARACTER AREAS

- 7.1 Cossington has a number of good characteristics, which can be used as design cues to inform this Design Guide, like its streetscapes, use of materials and local heritage assets.
- 7.2 In order to address issues and draw upon the local vernacular, we explored the potential to distinguish Character Areas as defined by the historic development of the village and the identification of common characteristics.
- 7.3 Whilst working on this Design Guide, it became apparent that there are 4 distinct Character Areas in Cossington as shown here and noted in the map:
 A – Conservation Area
 B – Areas around Middlefield Road and Fisher Close/Homestead Close
 C – Cossington Central
 D – Area north of the Conservation Area
- 7.4 Cossington village is encircled by a Settlement Boundary and bordered by open countryside to the south, west and east. Because of these constraints, development within the village is dense so volume housing developments within existing boundaries are unlikely to happen.
- 7.5 Where new development does occur it is likely to be limited to one or two dwellings. However, the content of this Design Guide applies to all extensions and small developments and, in the event that land outside the existing settlement becomes available, to larger developments also.
- 7.6 All areas that sit within the designated Conservation Area must be considered against generally established criteria for such historic areas. This commonly addresses aspects such as style and materials but, it is also essential to address issues of layout and settlement pattern.



SECTION 7 CHARACTER AREAS: AREA A

Area A: Cossington Conservation Area

- 7.7 Area A covers the Cossington Conservation Area which was designated in July 1975 and covers an area of 10.7 Hectares. Cossington is a linear settlement stretching north to south between Sibley and Syston Road. The concentration of listed buildings and historic houses along the length of Main Street indicates the historic form of the village, which despite some development to the east has retained its linear form.
- 7.8 The Conservation Area is primarily concentrated around the oldest part of the settlement along Main Street with the majority of development since the twentieth century lying outside its boundaries.
- 7.9 The buildings within Cossington developed along Main Street with the church, rectory and latterly the school situated to the north of the village and dwellings and farmsteads to the south. Originally of timber and thatch, the more substantial materials of brick, stone and slate were used for additions to buildings as well as their replacement over time. The form and materials of the early village dwellings are still evident in a number of surviving houses including a number of examples of exposed timber framing and thatched roofs.
- 7.10 Cossington developed primarily as a residential village and it remains this way today. Houses are generally of two stories although there are significant differences in the sizes and scales of the buildings. Agriculture played a significant role in the origins and development of the village and was responsible for sustaining it through the centuries until modern industries and professions became more prominent. Farmsteads were scattered throughout the village and the surrounding land although this has now been largely lost from the Conservation Area itself.
- 7.11 A commercial interest was sustained within the village with the blacksmith's forge and village shop operating from properties along Main Street. Education was also a large employer within the village with the boarding school at The Manor House and the village school established in the nineteenth century.

Building style and architectural materials

- 7.12 There are a multitude of elevation finishes within the Conservation Area but red brick is the most common, sometimes broken up with the use of painted or whitewashed brick. Render is also found and a number of buildings have timber frame which is visible.
- 7.13 There are three main roofing materials to the buildings within the Conservation Area: Swithland slate, Welsh slate and Thatch.
- 7.14 Chimneys are generally simple structures, but they create interesting roofscapes along the street. There are often several chimneys to each property and the use of decorative Bishop pots in some cases adds to this interest.
- 7.15 Often there is a mixture of window types to each property with the front elevation utilising one type and those to the side and rear of a different size, style or both.



Entrance to Cossington from Platts Lane towards Main Street



Main Street



Entrance to Cossington from Syston Road



Main Street



Main Street towards Syston Road



Main Street at junction of Platts Lane



Main Street

Area A – Conservation area of Cossington

Constraints; Conservation area with multiple listed properties, and dense existing development.

Building Line	Development should maintain the building line of existing historic houses. Development should enhance the building line of the street, and work to re-use previous historic footprints.
Roofline	Rooflines may vary in height and pitch, and need not be uniform. Character properties have variation of height, but are limited to 2 stories.
Boundaries	Use of local granite on lower walls, with red brick upper and 'blue' topping stones provide clear boundaries and are in keeping with the conservation area.
Parking	Any development should provide sufficient parking for prospective residents, and avoid further parking congestion on the Main Street.
Trees	Trees will be retained and numbers increased where possible. Large well-established trees line the Main Street and add to the character of the village.
Building Materials	Roofing materials namely slate and thatch should be in congruence with surrounding properties. A combination of brick, stone white painted brick, and white rendered brick work are in keeping with the surrounding area. Windows may use modern materials, but must create a look in terms of colour and style, in keeping with surrounding properties.

SECTION 7 CHARACTER AREAS: AREA B

Area B: Area around Middlefield Road, Fisher Close and Homestead Close

- 7.16 This area consists of a mix of 2 storey detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. It is now largely owner occupied, but there is still some social housing and private rented. A few of the bungalows are owned by a charity in the village called the Babington Trust and some were built specifically for people over 50.
- 7.17 Houses are predominantly built with red brick, sometimes painted white or rendered. Many of the houses feature A shaped roof lines and decorative chimneys are also common. The majority of houses were built in the 1960's and were built on fields or land belonging to Cossington Hall which was part of their market garden.
- 7.18 All houses are set back from the road with front and back gardens, separated by a mix of red brick walls, hedges and open plan grassed gardens. Nearly all the houses have driveways for at least 1 car and many of the houses have garages.
- 7.19 All the roads are cul-de-sacs and there is a safe, peaceful atmosphere to the area with plenty of trees and areas of shared green spaces. To the rear of many of these houses are key views across the fields.



Area B – Area around Middlefield Road, Fisher Close and Homestead Close

Building Line	Development should maintain the building line of existing adjacent houses and be set back from street.
Roofline	Careful use of the contours, building heights and wall/roof materials should ensure that any new buildings do not break the general roofline. Rooflines may vary in height and pitch and need not be uniform. Buildings should keep to the two storey eaves heights (using set back dormers if appropriate in context). Gable ends in keeping with nearby dwellings encouraged.
Boundaries	Boundaries of local stone, red brick or planting of shrubs and hedgerows are encouraged and open plan front gardens.
Parking	Any development should provide sufficient parking for prospective residents, and avoid further parking congestion on the roads.
Trees	Trees will be retained and numbers increased where possible. Large well-established trees line the Main Street and add to the character of the village.
Building Materials	Materials should aim to maintain congruence with the variety of styles of other buildings within the area. Materials should match original materials or be of sustainable materials. A combination of brick, white painted brick, and white rendered brick work are in keeping with the surrounding area.
Public Space	Development must not encroach on footpaths or existing greens. Green spaces between building encouraged.

SECTION 7 CHARACTER AREAS: AREA C

Area C: Cossington Central

- 7.20 This area consists mainly of large 2 storey detached houses and bungalows with one small row of terrace houses. It is now largely owner occupied, but some are still privately rented. Houses are primarily red brick, sometimes painted white or rendered.
- 7.21 Many of the houses feature A shaped roof lines and decorative chimneys are also common. The houses have been built over a period of time and show a wide range of styles and features. Though not as old as the houses on Main Street, some houses still have historical interest such as Red Roofs which was owned by the Peberdy family who ran the market garden and grew a lot of tomatoes!
- 7.22 All houses are set back from the road with front and back gardens, separated by a mix of red brick walls, hedges and open plan grassed gardens. Nearly all the houses have driveways for at least 1 car and many of the houses have garages.
- 7.23 There are no footpaths through this area and roads are narrow.



Area C – Cossington Central

Building Line	Development should maintain the building line of existing adjacent houses and be set back from street.
Roofline	Careful use of the contours, building heights and wall/roof materials should ensure that any new buildings do not break the general roofline. Rooflines may vary in height and pitch, and need not be uniform. Character properties have variation of height. Buildings should keep to the two storey eaves heights (using set back dormers if appropriate in context). Gable features encouraged in line with surrounding properties.
Boundaries	Boundaries of local stone, red brick or planting of shrubs and hedgerows are encouraged as appropriate.
Parking	Any development should provide sufficient parking for prospective residents, and avoid further parking congestion on the roads.
Building Materials	Materials should aim to maintain congruence with the variety of styles of other buildings within Cossington Central. Materials should match original materials or be of sustainable materials. A combination of brick, white painted brick, and white rendered brick work are in keeping with the surrounding area.
Public Space	Development must not encroach on footpaths or existing greens.

SECTION 7 CHARACTER AREAS: AREA D

Area D: North Main Street area of Cossington

- 7.24 The village entry from the direction of neighbouring Sileby has a rural countryside feel, with fields either side of the road, and Derry's nursery before arriving at the sweeping right-hand bend which presents housing in the foreground.
- 7.25 The north end of Main Street has houses dating back as far as Temple Cottages in 1876 with incremental development over the following 100 years. Mixed architectural styles including cottages, Edwardian, 1930's semis up to 1960s bungalows covering land previously used as a small holding.
- 7.26 Access to properties is from Main Street, and properties are blessed with large plots with front gardens and off-street parking. Boundaries are clear, with the use of traditional hedges and wooden picket fence lines.
- 7.27 The street is lined with many well established trees, and there is a mix of colour from plain brick and painted properties. The roof lines are varied given the types of property neighbouring each other.



Main Street beyond corner with Derrys Nurseries



Area D – North Main Street area of Cossington

Constraints; Dense existing development.

Building Line	Development should maintain the building line of existing historic houses. Development should enhance the building line of the street, and work to re-use previous historic footprints.
Roofline	Rooflines may vary in height and pitch, and need not be uniform. Character properties have variation of height, but are limited to 2 stories.
Boundaries	Use of brick walls, and planted hedgerows provide clear boundaries, and assist in hiding car parking areas.
Parking	Any development should provide sufficient parking for prospective residents, and avoid further parking congestion on the Main Street.
Trees	Planting of trees and shrubbery enhances the rural look of this part of the village.
Building Materials	Roofing materials should be in congruence with surrounding properties. A combination of brick, white painted brick, and white rendered brick work are in keeping with the surrounding area. Windows may use modern materials, but must create a look in terms of colour and style, in keeping with surrounding properties.



Entrance to Cossington from Sileby



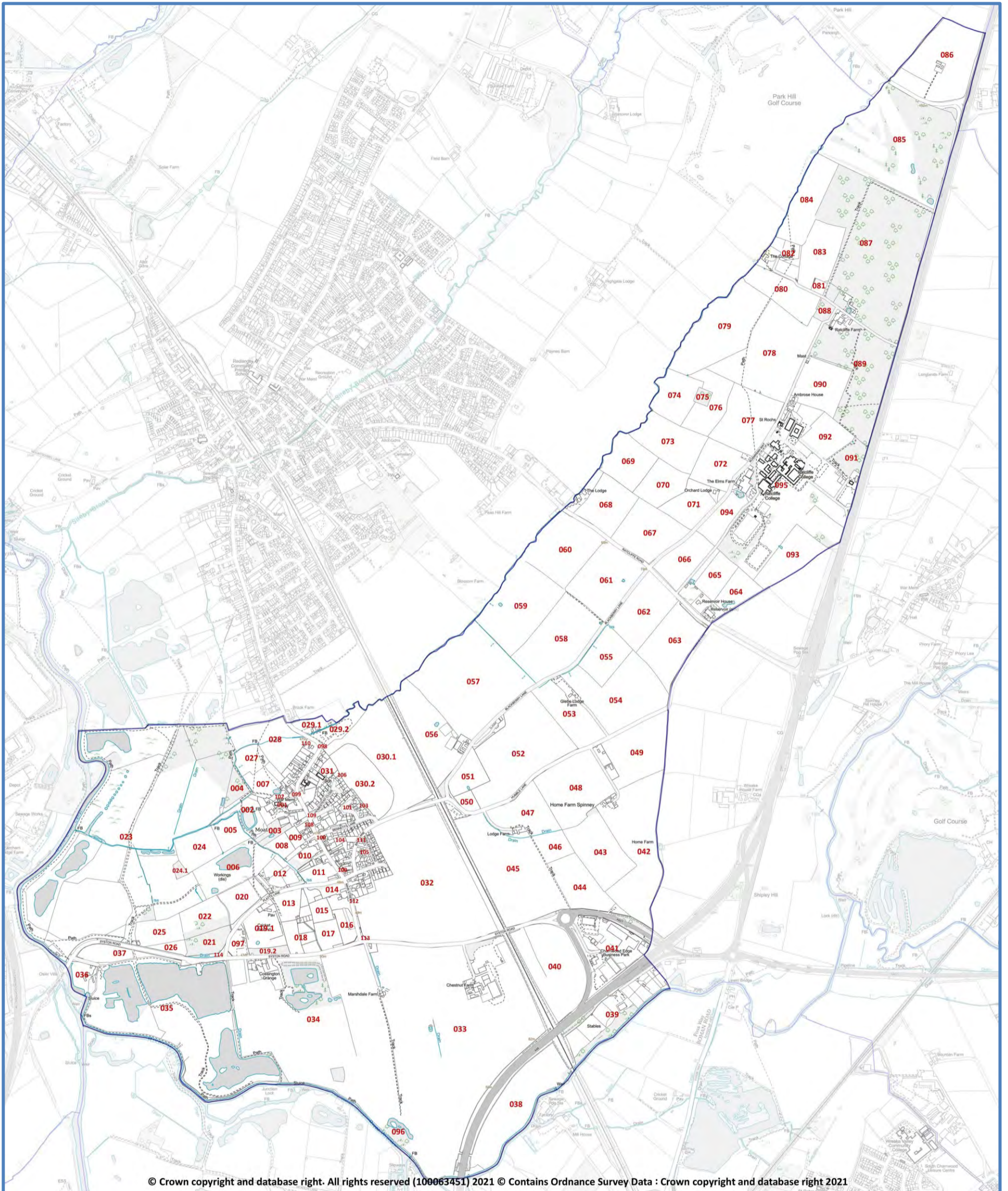
COSSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Appendix f) INVENTORY OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES, OPEN SPACES AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT SITES

1. Scoring criteria and system

Criterion (NPPF 2019)	Score range			Notes
LOCAL IN CHARACTER , not an extensive tract of land	N	Y		Yes is essential for LGS designation. The site should be a single bounded parcel of land, or a small, coherent group (evidence-based, with shared characteristics and in single ownership).
SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY:				
PROXIMITY	0	1-4	5	<p>5 = an open space <u>within</u> a settlement</p> <p>4 = adjacent to the settlement boundary (Limit to Development line when defined)</p> <p>3, 2, 1 = successively farther from settlement</p> <p>0 = most distant from main settlement(s)</p>
BEAUTY	0	1-2	3	Subjective, relative (give justification); use consultation 'dot' map results for views. Only the most attractive land in the Plan Area should qualify. Most should get 0 or 1.
TRANQUILLITY	0	1	2	<p>Tranquillity should be judged as a real experience; just being 'a long way from anywhere' doesn't make a site tranquil. Most sites should get 0.</p> <p>2 will probably be limited to e.g. churchyards, well-designed memorial gardens, managed semi-natural habitats where birdsong is louder than traffic noise.</p>
RECREATIONAL VALUE	0	1-4	5	<p>5, 4 = Public Open Spaces designed for sport and recreation or as facilities for children and young people</p> <p>3 = Membership sport facilities (tennis, bowls, etc.). Very well used park or other recreational space with full or comprehensive public access. Managed wildlife site with public access. Semi-natural parkland (trees, grass) with public footpaths and no restriction on access.</p> <p>2 = Paddock or grazing field with 1 or more public footpaths, e.g. well-used for dog-walking, traditional sledging field</p> <p>1 = arable farmland with public footpath but no other access.</p> <p>0 = private property with no public recreational value or access</p>
LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE:				
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE	0	1-4	5	<p>Historical significance can only apply to sites and features that can be seen (to be appreciated) or are proven buried archaeological features. NB cumulative: more features/designations = higher score.</p> <p>5 = statutory site, includes or comprises Scheduled monument, Listed Building, feature or structure. National Trust or English Heritage site</p> <p>4 = site with features in the County <i>Historic Environment Record</i>, Historic England <i>PastScape</i> records. <i>Registered park or garden</i>. Well-preserved <i>ridge and furrow</i>.</p> <p>3, 2 = site includes feature, earthworks or building with known local historic environment significance – history includes 20th century. Fainter <i>ridge and furrow</i></p> <p>1 = site of local oral or recorded history importance, no actual structure</p> <p>0 = No evidence for historical environment significance</p>
RICHNESS OF WILDLIFE (BIODIVERSITY); GEOLOGY	0	1-4	5	<p>Protection of habitats and species, in compliance with EU Directives and English legislation, at the local level of individual land parcels. NB cumulative: more features/species = higher score.</p> <p>5 = Statutory site, includes or comprises SSSI (biodiversity or geology) or other national or European designation.</p> <p>4 = County Wildlife Trust, etc. <i>nature reserve</i>, <i>Country Park</i> with importance for biodiversity, etc.</p> <p>3 – site with National, county and local biodiversity features, e.g. <i>Priority Habitats</i>, occurrence of one or more <i>Species of Conservation Concern</i> (use national or county Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Species lists), mapped Gt Crested newt ponds, bat roosts and foraging areas. County or local site designations e.g. <i>Local Wildlife Site (LWS)</i>, Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS), <i>Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)</i>, <i>Local Nature Reserve</i>, <i>Community WildSpace</i>, etc.</p> <p>2 = other site of known local biodiversity importance not recorded elsewhere with e.g. BAP species, species-rich hedgerows, watercourse, pond</p> <p>1 = (parish background level), moderate or potential wildlife value</p> <p>0 = no evidence for natural environment significance</p>
Maximum possible score			25	

2. Location map



3. Inventory

KEY TO COLOUR-CODING FOR DESIGNATIONS ETC.



INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	River Wreake in the Plan Area The watercourse and its banks and a buffer strip forming the south and much of the east boundaries of the Area – see Figure X Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 63139							3	n/a
	River Soar in the Plan Area The watercourse, its banks, towpaths and a buffer strip forming much of the west boundary of the Area – see Figure X Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 61675							3	n/a
001	All Saints churchyard Churchyard on slightly elevated site with a clear visual relationship with the medieval village layout including manor house site (shared access), high street, village brook, water-meadows and open fields. Swithland Slate headstones with genealogical and geological interest. CBC <i>Open Space</i> (draft Local Plan 2019-36) Leics <i>Historic Environment Record</i> (HER) site as historic churchyard and <i>setting</i> for Grade II* All Saints Church The Leicester Round and footpath I61 pass through. Great crested newts in adjoining gardens and field 007. Bats roost in church, at least 7 BAP species birds. Includes c.66 notable mature trees, including an important English Elm with apparent ‘Dutch Elm Disease’ resistance (arboricultural survey, 2017).	yes	5	3	2	3	4	3	21
002 003	The Old Rectory grounds Includes Leics <i>Historic Environment Record</i> (HER) site MLE545 Medieval moated site. Presumed to be the site of the medieval manor house and its grounds. The earthworks were degraded and altered in c.1994 but still provide visible evidence of this important local heritage. Private land including ancient restored moat. Fenced with trees and hedgerows on all sides Footpath I47 passes along the moat otherwise no access. To check A gate was used as the entrance for the burials of diseased bodies. See photo Grassed areas used for grazing (sheep and goats). The area floods badly. The landowner spots deer (muntjac) HER MLE 7747 (findspot. Roman coin) Natural England Priority Habitat as <i>deciduous woodland</i>	yes	4	2	1	2	3	3	15
004	Private land Woodland copse of native British trees thought to have been planted in the 1980s to protect the village from the disruption (noise, dust) due to neighbouring quarrying. Fenced off from public access Footpaths (I47 and I51) run alongside on two sides giving access to Cossington Meadows. Footpath I47 is on the Leicester Round. Natural England National Forest Inventory designation as <i>mixed woodland</i>	yes	3	2	2	2	1	3	12
005	Fenced with trees and hedgerows on all sides. Used as pastured for grazing (cows and sheep). Good bird life. Contains a small pond	yes	3	1	1	0	0	2	7
006	Old gravel pit Late 20 th century extension of Cossington gravel pit, now rough grazing and open water. Fenced with trees and hedgerows on all sides. Wonderful views. Area is used for grazing (cows). Contains two ponds, one very large. Area floods badly. Access via two footpaths (I47 and I59) Rich bird life - herons, swans, mallard, coots, buzzard, pheasant etc Village stories of Ice skating on the pond.	yes	3	3	2	2	1	3	14

INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	HER MLE9066 (Anglo Saxon cemetery, grave goods), HER MLE9069 (Iron age)								
007 027	'Duck Pond paddock' Grassed area fenced with trees and hedgerows (hawthorn, blackthorn, willow together) on all sides. There is stream running along two sides. Access is via two footpaths (I47 and I16). The area is subject to significant flooding. The Village duck pond, adjacent to the Memorial Car Park, contains great crested newts and rich birdlife (heron, mallard). Field used for parking for Secret Gardens. The field contains Severn Trent drains for managed overflow into Cossington Meadows.	yes	4	2	2	2	1	3	14
007b	The Butts Small rectangular grazing field bounded by hedges/fences; no right of access but visually part of 007/027 and of the historic setting of this part of the village centre. This field was the village butts (14 th -15 th century), used for archery practice and maintained by the churchwardens (documentary evidence). Although most English villages were required by statute to have butts it is very rare to have confirmation of their location.	yes	4	1	2	0	3	2	12
008 009	Private land, no access. Hedgerow and mature trees. Long grass.	yes	4	2	1	0	0	2	9
010	Private garden, no access The Manor House In part, Natural England National Forest Inventory as <i>broadleaved woodland</i>	Yes						3	3
011	Private garden, no access The White House In part, Natural England National Forest Inventory as <i>broadleaved woodland</i>	yes						3	3
012	One of the best views in the village (<i>poplar trees</i> , sunsets). Private garden for The Manor House, part field with grass, divided into paddocks for horses with stables. Surrounded by a variety of good quality trees and hedgerows. Contains filled in swimming pool and old pump house. Adjoins 006 and plots 010 and 011. SE corner is Natural England priority habitat area as <i>deciduous woodland</i>	yes	4	3	1	3	0	3	14
013	Field with rough grass. Old building in middle of field separating plots 013 and 018. Bounded by Platts Lane and a mixture of fences and hedgerows on two sides. Good wild life - Barn owl, rabbits, hares. Plans to convert into cricket field.	yes	3	1	1	0	0	2	7
014	Private garden The Grove								
015 017	Part, with 016 and 017, of CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36 <i>Proposed Housing Allocation</i> site Field with grass. Bounded by hedgerows, walls/hedgerows east and west and drains north and south and Syston Road. Contains paddocks and horses.	yes	3	1	1	0	0	1	6
016	Part, with 015 and 017, of CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36 <i>Proposed Housing Allocation</i> site Private garden and field The Orchard Field and Orchard House have access onto Main Street Bordered by Hedgerows. Adjoins Main Street and Syston Road.								
018	Field with rough grass. Building in middle of field separating plots 013 and 018. Bounded by Syston Road and a mixture of hedgerows and fences. Mature trees on the Syston Road end and the border with the Sportsground. Good wildlife - Barn owl, rabbits, hares. Western section includes area of Natural England priority habitat as <i>deciduous woodland</i>	Yes	2	1	1	0	0	3	7
019.1	Platt's Lane Recreation Ground	Yes	3	2	1	5	0	2	13

INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	Owned by the Platts Lane Charitable Trust and run by a volunteer committee made up of mostly village residents. Platts Lane is basically a large playing field area and plays host to soccer, cricket and rugby matches - most notably being the home of Sileby Town Rugby Football Club who are also known as 'The Vikings' and play all their home fixtures at Platts Lane. Pitches, clubhouse, changing facilities, etc. CBC Open Space <i>Outdoor sport</i> (draft Local Plan 2019-36) Sportsground and pavilion with car parking. Sports field for Cricket and Rugby. Outdoor gym and rustic play equipment. Very good recreation facility in excellent condition. Access via footpath I47 to Syston Road. There is a good variety of mature trees in a coppice on the Syston Road end, bordering the garden centre and along by the entrance. Bounded by Syston Road, Platts Lane, Goscote Nursery and a fenced entrance. The pond has great crested newts. Wildlife including rabbits.								
019.2	Woodland strip south of Cricket Ground (019.1) Natural England priority habitat area as <i>deciduous woodland</i>	Yes	3	2	1	1	0	3	10
020 021 022 023 025 026	Cossington Meadows Nature Reserve (part in the Plan Area) The whole site is part of a Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust Reserve, with extensive member and public access. Previously (until 1990s) Cossington Gravel Pits, a complex of shallow diggings subdivided by old field hedges, since restored with backfill or left to rewild. Wet meadows, standing water, rough grass, tall hedges, streamside trees and other vegetation. Of at least County level significance for water, wetland, open grassland and farmland mammals (otter etc), birds, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, flowering and non-flowering plants (407 species recorded to 2020). Includes part or all of four Local Wildlife Site: LWS 48517 <i>Cossington Meadows and adjacent River Soar</i> , with three priority habitats (reed beds, standing water, hedges) of sufficient size/extent to be notified for biodiversity significance. Two Red Book species of beetles. LWS 91381 <i>Cossington scrubby grassland northwest of village</i> , open rough grass, scrub and trees with old bounding hedges. This sub-site is good habitat for small mammals and attracts barn owls and short-eared owls, particularly in winter. LWS 68664 <i>Lower Soar Floodplain Wetland #95</i> for trackside ditches and hedgerows	Yes	3	3	2	3	2	4	17
024	Church Meadow, Cossington [description] Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 25329 for <i>Mixed grassland</i> , with 16 indicator flowering plant species on the mesotrophic and wet grassland lists' also Natural England priority habitat as <i>lowland grassland</i> Includes two adjacent Leics <i>Historic Environment Record</i> (HER) sites with proven buried archaeology: MLE21342 Iron Age enclosure(s) and MLE21344 Anglo-Saxon settlement. The latter, which is close to the mounded parish church site (001), is likely to be part of the original Dark Ages settlement which became Cossington.							3	
024.1	Scrub woodland Natural regeneration of old workings Local Wildlife Site (LWS) 68711 , <i>Lower Soar Floodplain wetland #94</i> for wet woodland and hedges							3	
028	Grassed field. Footpath from Cossington Road to 007 (147). Brook running through. Bounded by hedgerows. Limited evidence of ridge and furrow. Prone to significant flooding. Within CBC Area of Local Separation (draft Local Plan 2019-36)	yes	4	2	1	2	2	2	13
029.1 029.2	Derrys Nurseries Within CBC Area of Local Separation (draft Local Plan 2019-36) Site is split north and south of the brook.	Yes	4	2	1	2	1	2	12

INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	Occupied by Derry's Nursery for over 40years, northern edge forms Parish boundary. Cossington Brook runs through the plot, with a bridge over, crossing under the road, linking the meadows beyond, forming a wildlife corridor. The southern section is mainly natural, fallen trees and scrubland with brook meandering through, forming a biodiverse habitat for hedgehogs, small mammals, birds and insects. Woodpiles form nesting and roosting habitats. A drainage ditch runs along the eastern edge, flowing into Polly Peggs pond, which has historic importance to the folklore of Cossington, and gives name to the nearby footpath.								
030.1 030.2	Partly (030.2 on key map) allocated for housing: CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36 <i>Proposed Housing Allocation</i> site, including an indicative 'open space' buffer on the three sides facing part 030.1. Large rectangular arable field with boundaries to 029 north, railway embankment to the east and Humble Lane to the south. Footpath 162, Polly Peggs, and Crab Tree Lane form the west boundary, which are popular and well used paths, with open views. They pass the school playing field, which also enjoys the same extensive view. For walkers, and dog walkers, the paths are a tranquil and useful alternative route on the edge of the village. Small sub-station in east corner. Area adjoining 029 contains mature trees and rich understory valuable for bird, bats, hedgehogs and other wildlife (willow warbler, chaffinch, buzzard, kite, starling, corvids) probably not changed since 1945. Hedges both side of ditch on Crab Tree Lane green lane is valuable in terms hedgerows, trees and wildlife. Good understory. Wall on right of Crab Tree Lane is old wall surrounding Cossington Hall and has Fisher plaque. Leics HER MLE 549 (Neolithic - Bronze age), 1990s MLE 550 (Roman) at SK607 138 (findspots)	yes	4	2	1	2	2	2	13
031	Cossington Primary School grounds CBC Open Space (draft Local Plan 2019-36) Playground (tarmac area), field, nature area, peace garden, astro turf area. Bordered by tress, hedges and fencing. Includes Leics HER site MLE22431 as excavation (partial) of medieval pit: buried archaeology remains.	yes	5	1	1	4	3	2	14
032	Extensive field, bordered by Humble Lane to north, railway embankment to east, Syston Road to south. Rear gardens of homes in Middlefield road back on to this land, with extensive views. Footpath 156 crosses the field from Syston Road to the junction of Humble Lane and Bennetts Lane (open space with memorial tree and bench), linking the path to Crab Tree Lane, popular, and well used route. Part of the field is arable, and a large portion for horticulture, and rose growing, looking spectacular in the summer months. Migrating Canadian geese meet in this field.	yes	4	3	0	2	1	2	12
033	Large arable field contains Chestnut Farm (commercial) and Marshdale House, Marshdale Farm (now disused buildings and barn). There are ruins of granite and brick building (use unknown). Good birdlife - swans, rabbits, skylarks, gulls etc. Bounded by Syston Road, railway, A46 and Bridal path (I102). Access from footpath (I56) on Syston Road and Bridal (I102) path along side of Marshdale farm. A footpath runs along the side of the A46. Partially subject to flooding Includes Roman occupation site, Leics. <i>Historic Environment Record</i> (HER) site MLE8468 (proven buried archaeology) with pottery and metalwork finds but as yet no excavation.		2	1	0	2	3	2	10
034	Large arable field adjacent to Cossington Grange. Contains earthworks, mature trees and two ponds. Previous archaeological excavation in 1976 – bronze age barrow and cremation site. (1976: HER MLE527, 1999: HER MLE537, 1999: HER MLE539, 1976: HER MLE540, 1976: MLE 7745 (Roman), MLE8468 (Roman), HER MLE21338 (Anglo-Saxon) Bounded by Cossington Grange, Syston Road, Footpath (I64 and I63A), Bridal path (I102) along the side of Marshdale Farm and River Wreake canal.		2	1	0	1	2	3	9

INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	Partially subject to flooding. Large numbers of overwintering birds eg. Siberian Greylag geese, Canada geese, swan. Includes wooded area around lakes as Natural England National Forest Inventory <i>mixed woodland</i>								
035	Extensive commercial fishing lakes and grazing land. May contain ruins of Junction Lock lockkeeper cottage Fenced and bounded by footpaths (I64, I63A, I29), River Wreake canal and Syston Road. Access across on footpath (I53) through gates. Subject to extensive flooding. Extensive bird life - heron, moor hen, coots, crested grebe, Canada geese, Greylag geese, swan, etc., Otter. Includes areas of Natural England Priority Habitat <i>Floodplain grazing march and deciduous woodland</i> .		2	3	2	3	1	3	14
036	Land containing Cossington Mill (Grade II listed), Cossington Lock and Weir. Leics HER site MLE522 as site of medieval mill Bounded by Cossington Lane (Syston Road), Cul-de-sac, River Soar canal and Footpath (I63A) Subject to extensive flooding. Birdlife and recreational fishing in canal. Includes area of Natural England Priority Habitat <i>Lowland Meadow</i>		1	2	1	2	3	3	12
037	Small piece of Land – grassed, with hedgerows used for grazing Bounded by Syston Road, cul-de-sac and footpaths (I50, I59, I60) Birdlife – heron, egret Subject to extensive flooding.		1	0	0	1	0	1	3
038	Arable Field managed as 033 Bounded by A46, river Wreake and railway Footpath (I63A) along river and across field		1	1	0	2	0	1	5
039	Private field with stabling - no access. Contains several small fields with hedgerows. Bounded by Railway, A46		1	1	0	0	0	2	4
040	Large arable field. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by Railway Line, A46, A46 Exit Road, Syston Road.		2	1	0	0	0	2	5
041	Industrial Estate. Nice line of Silver Birch trees along the entrance road. Archaeological studies -1997, Event 1310064, Event 1329874.								
042	Very big field. Contains Home Farm. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by A46, walls/ hedgerows on three sides. Includes three Leics HER sites with potential surviving buried Bronze Age, Roman and medieval archaeology: MLE 533/534/7000		1	1	1	0	3	2	5
043	Field. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by fields on all sides – walls and hedgerows.		1	1	1	0	0	2	5
044	Field. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by Syston Road, and by fields on 3 sides with walls and hedgerows. Public footpath (?) to west. Nice trimmed hedgerow beside pathway.		1	2	1	0	0	2	6
045	Very large field. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by Railway Line, Syston Road, Humble Lane and a public pathway with a section of trimmed hedgerow. Public pathway (??) from Syston Road to Humble Lane.		1	2	1	0	0	2	6
046	Small field. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by fields on all sides. Public footpath (?) to west.		1	1	1	0	0	2	5
047	Big field. Contains Lodge Farm. Arable land, ploughed. Crops rotated Barley, Oats, Wheat. Bounded by Humble Lane, road, drain and hedgerow/wall.		1	2	1	0	0	2	6
048	Big field. Contains Home Farm Spinney.		1	1	1	0	0	2	5

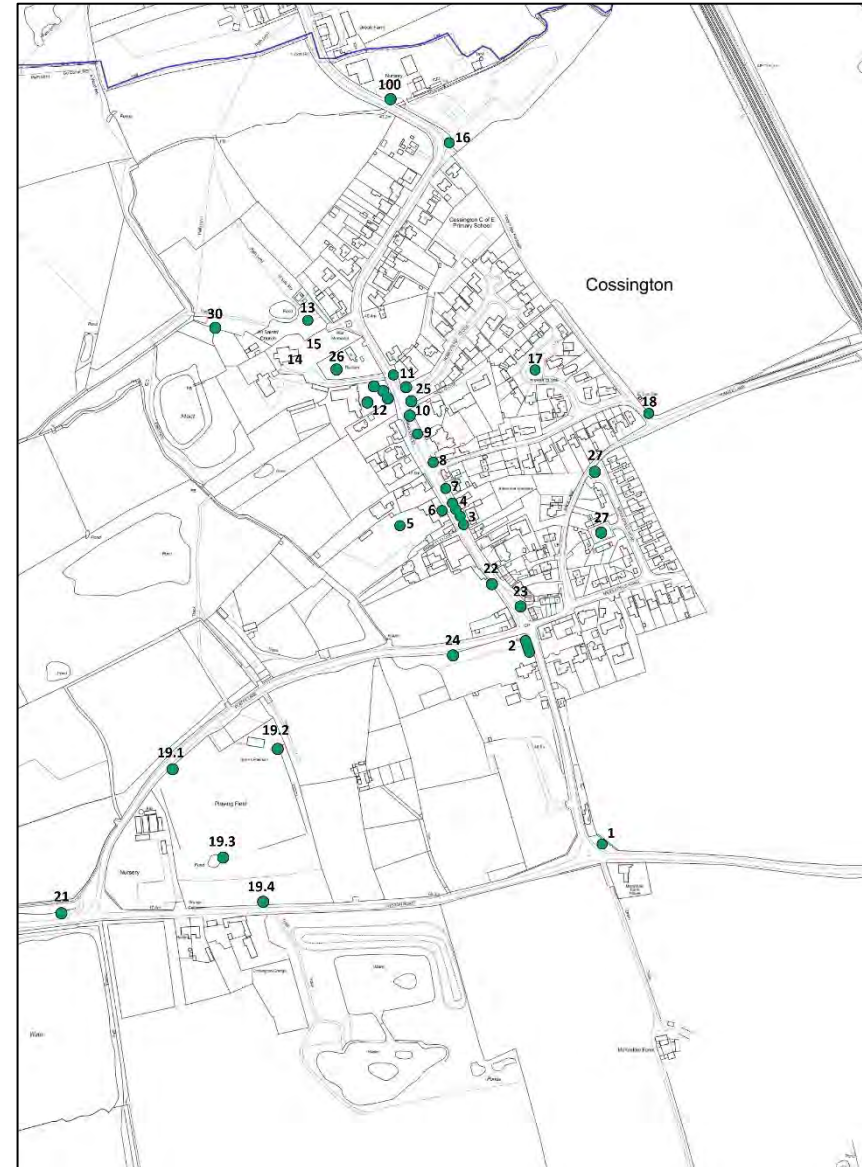
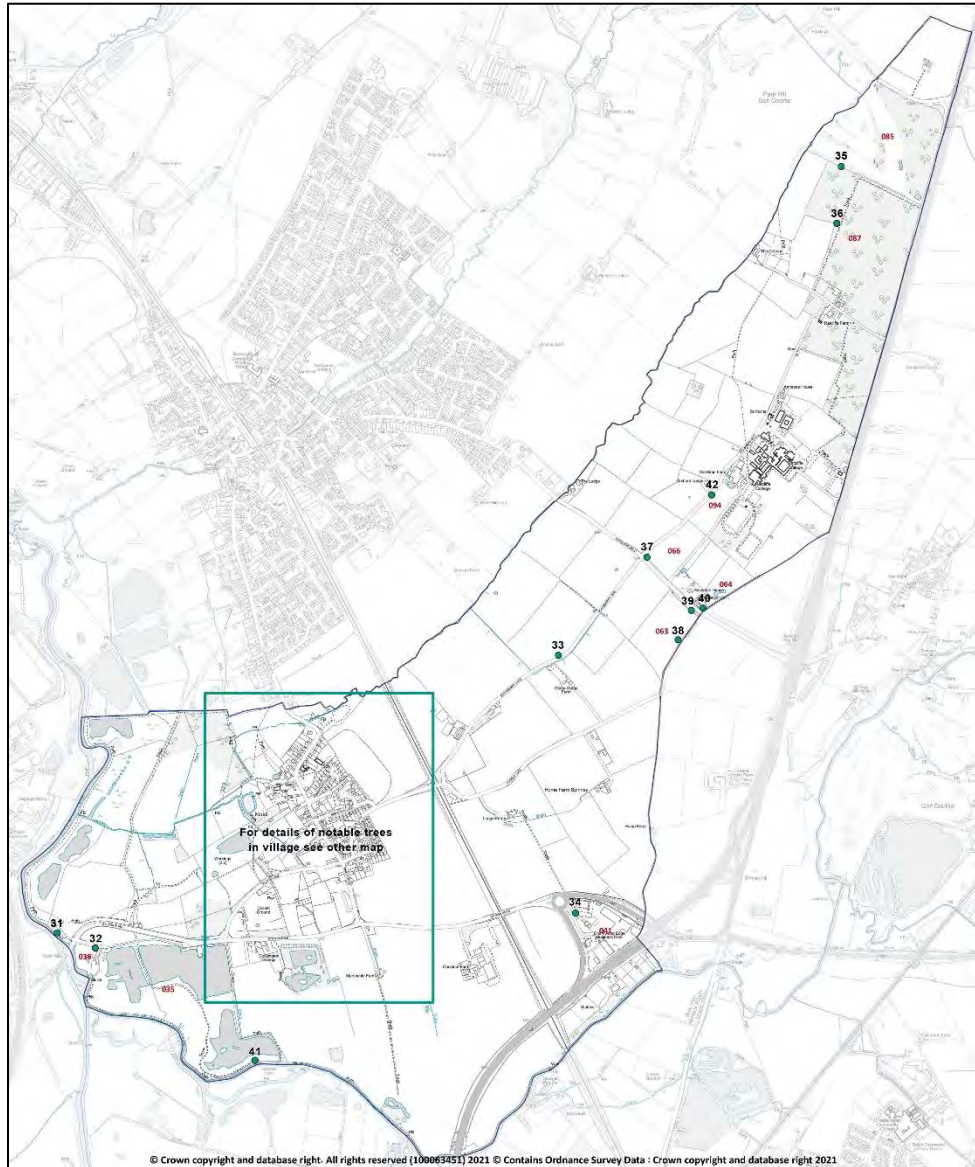
INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
066									
067									
068									
069									
070									
071									
072									
073									
074									
075									
076									
077									
078									
079									
080									
081									
082									
083									
084									
085	Part of Park Hill (previously golf course?) Includes areas of Natural England designation as National Forest Inventory <i>mixed woodland</i>							3	
086									
087	Natural England designation as National Forest Inventory <i>mixed woodland</i>							3	
088	Natural England designation as National Forest Inventory <i>mixed woodland</i>							3	
089	Natural England designation as National Forest Inventory <i>mixed woodland</i>							3	
090	Ratcliffe College grounds (part) Sports pitch. Open Space (outdoor recreation) CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36								
091								3	
092	Ratcliffe College grounds (part) Sports pitch. Open Space (outdoor recreation) CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36								
093									
094									
095	Ratcliffe College grounds (part)					3		3	6

INVENTORY MAP REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2019) CRITERIA FOR LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT							TOTAL /25
		LOCAL: BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	PROXIMITY 0 - 5	SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (<10)			LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (<10)		
				BEAUTY 0 - 3	TRANQUIL 0 - 2	REC. VALUE 0 - 5	HISTORY 0 - 5	WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
	Includes three sports pitches. Open Space (outdoor recreation) CBC draft Local Plan 2019-36 Includes areas of woodland with Natural England priority habitat designations as <i>deciduous woodland</i> and National Forest Inventory <i>broadleaved woodland</i>								
096	Natural riverine habitat area on north side of River Wreake. An old oxbow (abandoned meander of the river) now open water with aquatic and waterside vegetation, and an 'island' of wet woodland and ruderal vegetation between the lake and river Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) 49424 <i>River Wreake Oxbow</i> and 68733 <i>Wreake floodplain wetland</i> , with LWS 63138 <i>River Wreake within Charnwood</i> forming the southern boundary Access via bridleway I102 (immediately adjacent, in field 033).	No	1	2	1	0	0	3	7
097	Nursery								
098	Polly Peggs open space, Main Street CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
099	Memorial Green, Main Street Includes Cossington War Memorial, also Listed, Grade II, and registered WMO/250627 War memorial - with names from the two world wars – surrounded by grass with Parish noticeboard, village map and benches. Focal point for the village for example Remembrance Service, Christmas Carols etc CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Parks and gardens (memorial gardens)</i>	Yes	5	2	1	4	3	1	15
100	Main Street east side verges and commemorative trees CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4		2	6
101	Fisher Close Green CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
102	Church (memorial) car park Contains memorial Oak Tree for Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee in 2012 Owned by the Parish Council and used for church service, school pickups/drop offs and the village and visitors to Cossington Meadows. The Leicester Round and footpath I61 pass through.	Yes	5	2	1	3	2	2	15
103	Bennett's Lane/Crab Tree Lane verge CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
104	Cossington allotments CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Allotments</i>					4			
105	Middlefield Road open space 1 CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
106	Polly Peggs CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Green Corridors</i>					4			
107									
108	Main Street west side verges CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
109									
110	Main Street allotments CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Allotments</i>					4			
111	Middlefield Road open space 2 CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i>					4			
112	The Pound, Main Street CBC Open Spaces typology <i>Amenity green space</i> Registered Common Land CL13 (LCC register) confirmed 1965. The Pound is marked on medieval maps. It was refurbished by the Village Society in 1985 and contains a time capsule under the slab floor with coins, newspapers and articles relating to the pound. The Pinfold reflects the agricultural history of the village as it was where errant livestock were stored in the annual drive across the fields. Owners could claim their animals for a fee. There are references in census					4			





COSSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN





APPENDIX F: NOTABLE TREES



LOCATION MAPS







EVIDENCE BASE

	<p>The Grove Main Street</p>			
	<p>Orchard House Main Street</p>			
<p>1</p>	<p>Acer (maple) at junction of Main Street and Syston Road</p>			

2	Copper beech and Lombardy poplars. corner of Main Street and Platts Lane			
3	Street-side cherries. Main Street outside number 99			
4	Main Street: 3 Callery pears outside number 91			

5	Oak in garden			
6	<i>Tilia</i> (lime) outside no. 70			
7	Oak commemorating coronation of George V, 1911 Outside number 87 Main Street			





<p>8</p>	<p>Oak commemorating coronation of George VI, 1937 Outside Cossington Hall</p>			
<p>9</p>	<p>Oak commemorating coronation of Edward VII, 1902</p>			
<p>10</p>	<p>Oak commemorating silver jubilee of Elizabeth II, 1977</p>			





11	Oak commemorating coronation of Elizabeth II, 1952	 A large, mature oak tree with a thick trunk and dense green foliage, situated in a residential area with brick houses and a blue sky with light clouds in the background.		
12	Group of six trees (maple, beech, sycamore) outside no. 56	 A group of six trees, including a large maple, beech, and sycamore, situated in front of a house. A black car is parked on the road to the right, and a brick wall is visible in the foreground.		
12	Area 012	 A large tree with a thick trunk and sparse foliage, situated in a grassy field. A white fence is visible in the background, and the sky is blue with white clouds.	 A large weeping tree with long, drooping branches, situated in a grassy field. A white fence is visible in the background, and the sky is blue with white clouds.	

12	Area 012 continued			
13	Oak commemorating diamond jubilee of Elizabeth II, 2012, 'Stepping Stones' wildlife enhancement scheme, Leics. CC			
14	War memorial green plantings: lime, Scots pine, maple, yew			

<p>15</p>	<p>Churchyard trees group: oak and elm</p>			
<p>16</p>	<p>Oak, planted in memory of Winston Churchill, 1965 Polly Peggs corner</p>			
<p>17</p>	<p>Copper beech, Fisher Close</p>			


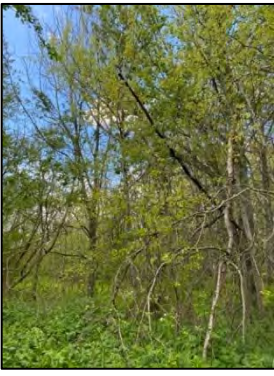



18	Crab Tree Lane group			
18	Crab Tree Lane corner: crab apple planted to mark the lane's name and heritage value			
19.1	Group of 8 trees at the Cossington playing field: ash, field maple, oak, willow, birch			

19.2	Trees in hedgeline, east side of Cossington playing field: oaks and ashes			
19.3	Willow beside pond, Cossington playing field			
19.4	Trees bordering Syston Road			

20	Oak on verge at junction of Syston Road and Platt's Lane	 A photograph of a young oak tree with sparse, brownish leaves, standing on a grassy verge. The background shows a residential area with houses and a grey sky.		
21	Road-side planting, Syston Road along footpath@ ashes, oaks	 A photograph showing a dirt path lined with young trees, including ash and oak, growing in a grassy area. The trees are lush green, and the sky is blue.		
22	Mulberry, The White House 80 Main Street	 A photograph of a large, dark mulberry tree standing in a grassy area. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.	 A close-up photograph of a mulberry tree, showing its thick trunk and dense canopy of green leaves against a blue sky.	







<p>23</p>	<p>Ornamental hawthorn, Main Street.</p>			
<p>24</p>	<p>Ornamental spinney/plantation group, Platts Lane: horse chestnut, holly, laurel, yew, beech, oak, ash</p>			
<p>25</p>	<p>Main Street / Homestead Close – amneithy open space with ornamental plantings: silver birch, Indian been tree, maple, etc.</p>			




<p>26</p>	<p>Rectory grounds: mulberry and redwood</p>			
<p>27</p>	<p>Small amenity open space plantings, Middlefield Road: <i>Cupressus</i>, walnut, silver birch, sycamore</p>			
<p>28</p>	<p>Parcel 002: mixed woodland and individual trees</p>			

29	Parcel 004: mixed deciduous woodland			
30	Parcel 007: large hedgerow ash			
31	023 – along the canal – the boathouse: Lombardy poplars			

32	Parcel 036: streamside trees including weeping willow, ash			
33	Hedgerow and lane-side trees on Blackberry Lane: hawthorn, oaks, ashes, ornamental conifers			
34	Parcel 041 Charnwood Edge entrance: poplars			

35	Footpath with shelter belt of conifers	 A photograph showing a dirt footpath running alongside a dense, tall shelter belt of coniferous trees. The path is bordered by a line of smaller, younger trees on the right side.		
36	Parcel 087 with extensive woodland planting including larch, birch	 A photograph of a paved path leading through a young woodland. The trees are mostly deciduous, with some larch and birch visible, showing early spring foliage.		
37	Parcel 066, hedge adjoining Ratcliffe Road: large oak	 A photograph of a large, mature oak tree standing next to a green hedge. The tree is partially covered in ivy. In the background, a road and a utility pole are visible under a blue sky with light clouds.		

38	Humble Lane: new planted chestnut and large hedgerow oaks			
39	Humble Lane / Ratcliffe Road: single and hedgerow oaks			
40	Humble Lane / Ratcliffe Road: hedgerow oaks, ashes etc.			

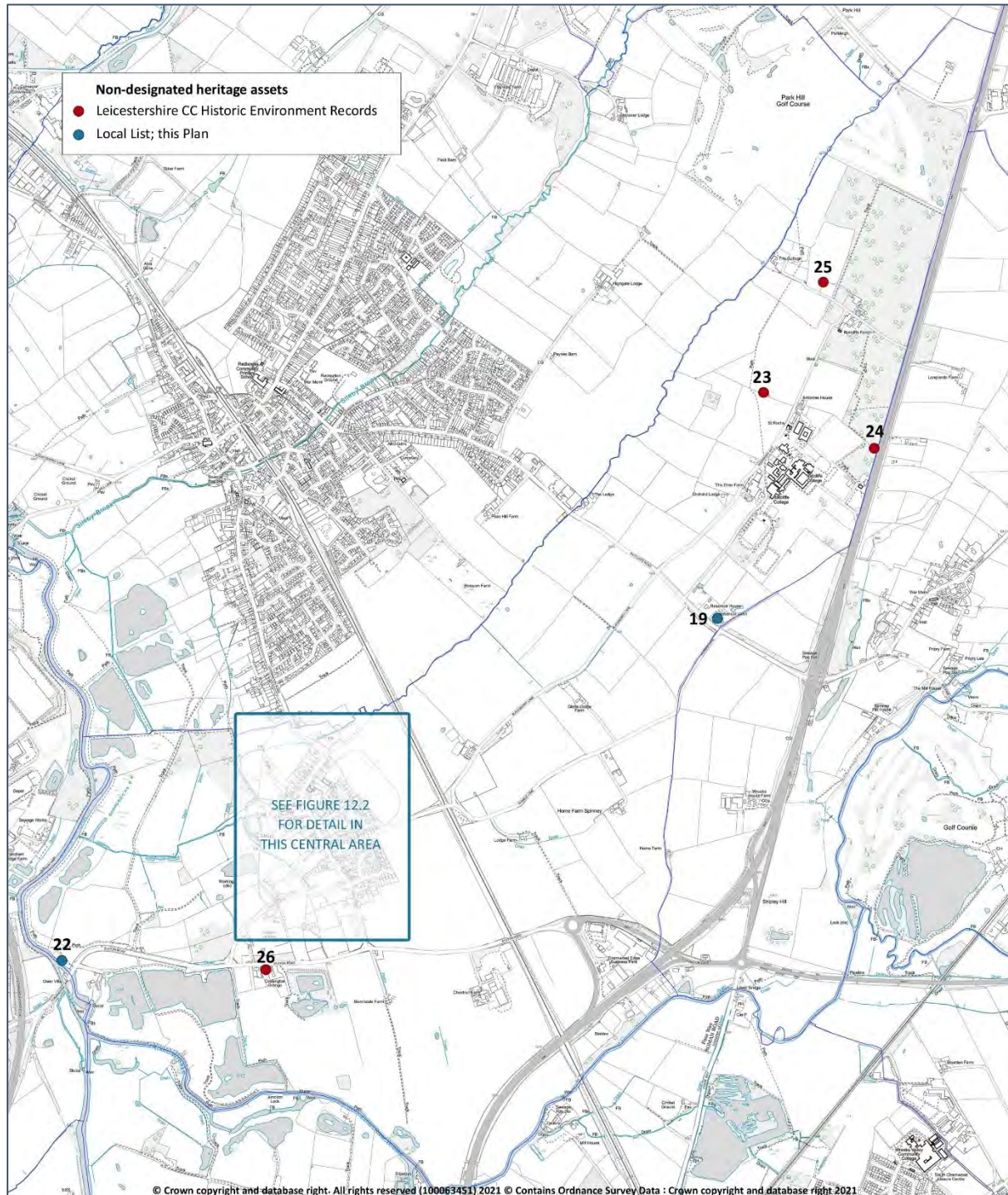
41	Towards Junction Lock on canal: large oaks, poplars, etc.			
42	Rosminian Way: horse chestnut			
100	Derrys Garden Centre: oak			

Appendix i)

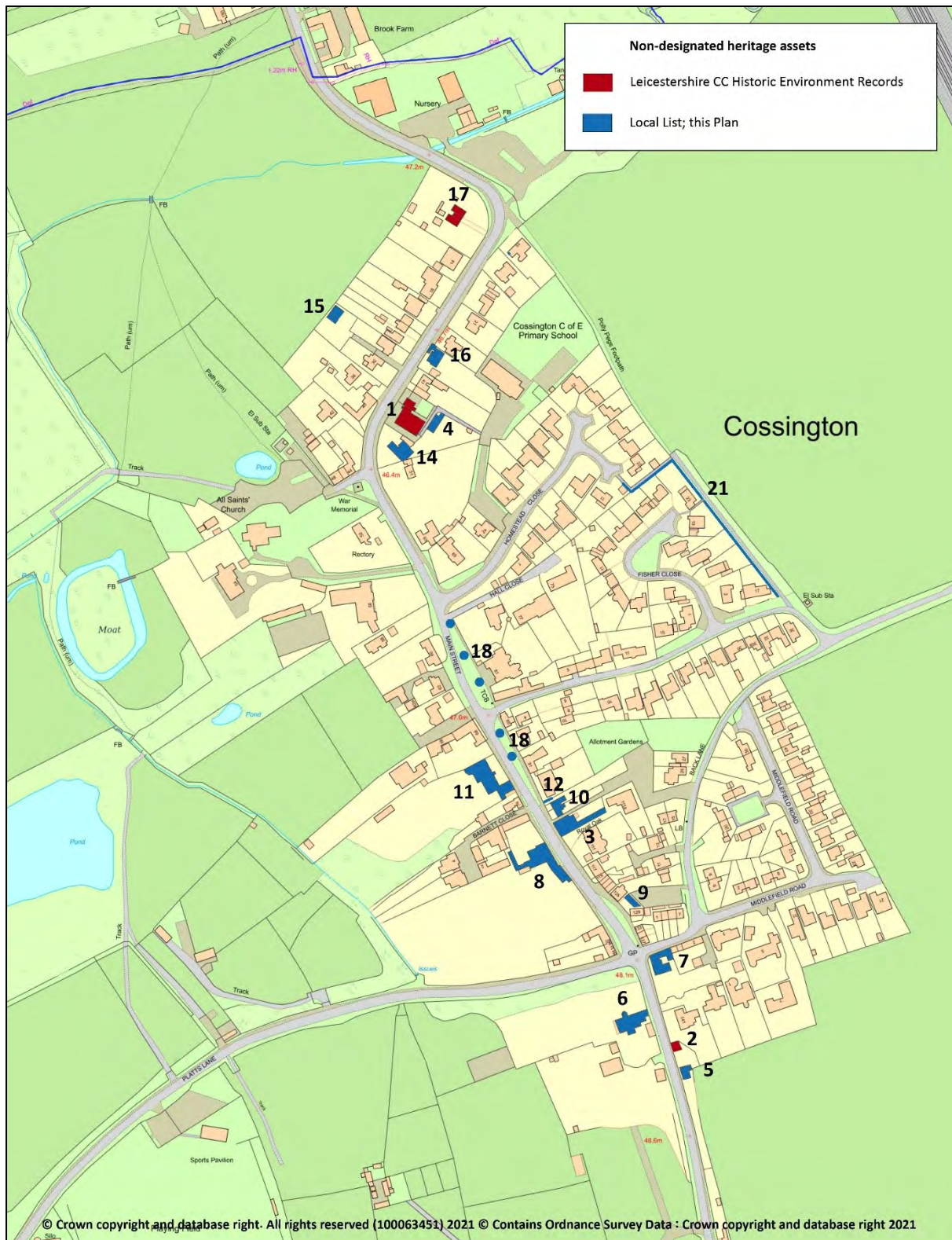
Local Heritage Assets (Buildings and structures of local significance)

1. LOCATIONS

In the Plan Area:



Detail in the central area:



EVIDENCE

A: Non designated heritage assets (Leicestershire County Council Historic Environment Record)

1. Cossington C E Primary School and Schoolhouse, 40 Main Street

Leics HER MLE21772

The main school building is a typical example of a small village school built at this time. School House (1a) to the left, originally part of the school, is owned by the Church and is now a private home. Census records show that head teachers lived here. It is thought the last one left in 1969. The school was extended in 1902 and a new School Hall was built in 2015. Excavations showed a pit containing pottery dating from 12th-14th century. The school is also used for community events e.g. school summer fayres.

Age: 1873

Rarity: typical of small schools of that time

Architectural/aesthetic value: A good example of a small village school. Stone mullions to divide casements. Tudor arched doorframes. Blue brick course which complement the stone mullions, lintels and cills.

Archaeological significance: n/a

Village landmark: Very important

Community value: Very important



2. Village Pinfold/Pound, Main Street adjacent to Grove Cottage

Leics HER MLE 548

The Pound, on common land, is marked on medieval maps. It was refurbished by the Village Society in 1985 and contains a time capsule under the slab floor with coins, newspapers and articles relating to the pound. The Pinfold reflects the agricultural history of the village as it was where errant livestock were stored in the annual drive across the fields. Owners could claim their animals for a fee. There are references in census and parish council minutes of people responsible for collecting animals. It is named in the Cossington Conservation Appraisal (2014) as a key unlisted asset.

Age: medieval, refurbished in 1985

Rarity: Rare

Architectural/aesthetic value: Highly commended in the Charnwood Design Competition in 1985

Archaeological significance: High

Village landmark: Important



Community value: Important

17. Temple Cottages, Nos.6/8/10 Main Street

Leics HER MLE 23560

Terrace of three almshouses built by Babbington Charity in 1876 possibly as starter homes for newly weds. There is a commemorative plaque on the righthand gable which says that the cottages were built as a memorial for the Rev John Babington who was Rector of Cossington for 40 years. Ruins of 3 pigsties are evident in the allotments. The cottages are locally listed (2014).



Age: 1876

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark:

Community value: Private houses. Allotments are in adjoining green space.

23. World War II pillbox northwest of The Farm

Leics CC HER MLE 15987

Prefabricated pillbox, part of Ratcliffe airfield's defences

Age: 1939-1945

[No evidence found, 05/21]

24. World War II pillbox east of Ratcliffe College

Leics CC HER MLE 15996

Part of Ratcliffe airfield's defences

Age: 1939-1945

[not located 05/21, may be in A46 road embankment]

25 World War II pillbox, Ratcliffe Farm

Leics CC HER MLE 24820

Prefabricated pillbox noted by the Pillbox Study Group 2020

Age: 1939-1945

[confirmed 05/21; no image]

26. Cossington Grange, Syston Road

Leics CC HER MLE 23562

Large cottage style Country House with a cluster of Barns. Perhaps late C18 in origin with late C19 Domestic Revival inspired alterations. Adjacent barns probably late C18. pitched roofs.

Locally listed (2014)

Age: Late C18

Community value: None, private ownership



b: Non designated heritage assets (Local List, this Plan)

3. Royal Oak Public House

Built by the Hudson family when the Anchor Inn closed to make way for the school. It was purchased in 1937 by Everards. In 1992 it was destroyed by two fires that left only the walls standing. It was rebuilt and remains owned by Everards. The space behind the Royal Oak used to be a wheelwrights in the nineteenth century. The Pub has a restaurant, a garden and skittle alley and hosts live music. A number of village groups meet here e.g. Book club, Boys Beer, Girls Gin, Poker club, Quiz, pensioners lunches, darts, skittles.



Age: c.1870, rebuilt 1992

Rarity: typical village pub with history

Architectural/aesthetic value: typical

Archaeological significance: n/a

Village landmark: yes

Community value: high

4. Jubilee Hall, Main Street within Primary School grounds

The Jubilee Hall, preceded by a wooden hut constructed on land donated to the village by Peter Astill, was opened in 1977. The new larger building was constructed on additional land acquired by the Parish Council from Rose Cottage by the Hall Management Committee in 1977). It is 16m x 6m, accommodates 50, and has toilets and kitchen area but no cooking facilities. It is used as Polling station and for various village meetings e.g. Parish Council, Womens Institute, Neighbourhood Watch, Noahs Ark playgroup, Crafters, Tai Chi, bridge clubs, the Heritage Society and as the only available space for any village meeting or family event.

[PHOTO]

Age: 1977

Rarity: Prefab construction

Architectural/aesthetic value: Little

Archaeological significance: None

Village landmark: Not visible from road but is a Polling Station.

Community value: High community value but not suitable as it situated in the school grounds and has an asbestos construction. There are active proposals for a new Village Centre adjacent to the Church.

5. Grove Cottage, 145 Main Street, Cossington

This is the last house in the village to be connected to the water mains in 1984. Previously known as Kings Cottage. It is adjacent to the pinfold.

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Important

Community value: None, private house



6. The Grove, Main Street Cossington

Home to Colonel Bertram Abel Smith (d. 1947).

Gardens have been used historically for village events eg. gymkhana. Rabbits were bred here 50/55 years ago.

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Poplar and other trees in garden are a village landmark.

Community value: None, private house



7. Chine House, Main Street

Chine House was a veterinary practice from 1955 (early 60s?) which moved to Sibley in 1994.

Age: 1955

Rarity: Unusual

Architectural/aesthetic value: Ornate doors with over lights. Windows are vertical sashes with distinctive square leaded panes, bay windows. Door on Main Street retains timer surround with pilasters.

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Yes, for directions

Community value: None, private House



8. The White House

General description]

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Important

Community value: None, private house



9. No.125 Main Street (part)

When a large brick house was built on site of old cruck houses (which were taken down) the single-storey old village blacksmiths, later a plumber's workshop, was retained. The old forge fire may be seen internally.

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark:

Community value: None, private house



10. Nos.101 and 103 Main Street

The two adjoining cottages are owned by Babbington Charity. A single beam passes through both suggesting they were built at the same time. No 101 was the village Bake House and No 103 the Old Post Office. The original inglenook fire is retained in no 103.

Age: early 1700s

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark:

Community value: None, private house



11. The Manor House, Main Street

The house previously on this site was a private residential girl's school owned by the Hogg sisters who went to live in Lime Tree Cottages. Manor House was home to Colonel Kitchener (father of Lord Kitchener) from 1882-1894. It was rebuilt in 1933 on the site of the previous manor house. The garage to the side of the dwelling is believed to have been the coach house to the original manor house. The garden contains the remains of a swimming pool, now filled in, and a pump house. When Lord Kitchener's sight failed, straight paths with wires were constructed so he could still walk in the garden. One is still in existence.

Age: 1933, garage older

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value: Arts and Crafts, Swithland slate roof

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Yes

Community value: The current owners allow village events that are not suitable for the Jubilee Hall to be



held here. e.g. open gardens, WI anniversaries, fund raising evenings for the new Community Centre, children's holiday club (church), Scottish dancing.

12. Stone wall between 101 & 99 Main Street

The 20ft wall is the remains of the old wash house. The Space next to it used to be used as the Scouts Hut.

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Not visible

Community value: Historical value



13. 63 Main Street (Mayfield Villa)

Built on a field ('May field') acquired in 1891, the land was used as a small holding, typical of the period. Vegetables, fruit trees, chickens, ducks and pigs were raised and this use continued into the 1980s. Evacuees and soldiers were billeted here with the family during the Second World War. There is a two storey stable block to the rear, with space for two horses, a cart and a first floor for storage. The bricks used to build the house were brought by cart from Wright's brick maker in Sileby by the original owner, Edward Smith. How many trips were needed is not known. The house was extended in 2009 and 2018 and has remained in the same family ownership since it was built.

Age: 1894

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Yes

Community value: None, private house



14. Rose Cottage, Main Street

Rose Cottage was originally thatched farm houses. The house was extended and refurbished in the 1950s. It was the location of the village post office before this was moved to 85 Main Street.

Age: ~1750



Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value: Swithland slate roof, bay windows

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Important, opposite entrance to carpark

Community value: None, private ownership

15. Barn behind 28/30 Main Street

This barn was used by the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) during second world war to repair trucks when billeted at Cossington Hall. Katherine Renshaw, who is named on the War Memorial. Was involved. The barn is not listed on the land registry (war secrets). There are three bays for vehicles.

[PHOTO]

Age: ~1940

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Not visible from road

Community value: None, in private ownership

16. Warden House (formerly The Beeches), 39 Main Street

The old garage (building directly on Main Street next to narrow footpath) used to house the first motor car in Cossington. It was previously a coach house. The original cottage dated from the

Age: Early 1700s.

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value: Bay windows

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: For directions

Community value: None, private house



18. Memorial Trees

Five mature deciduous trees forming a locally important feature with historical, heritage, landscape and community significance

- King Edward VII Coronation 9 August 1902 – Oak, opposite Old Manor House, Main Street
- King George V Coronation 22 June 1911 – Oak, opposite Manor House, Main Street
- King George VI Coronation 12 May 1937
- Queen Elizabeth II Coronation 2 June 1953 – Oak, opposite Rectory Drive

- Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee 6 February 1977 – Entrance of Hall Close

Age: from 1902

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value: Defines village

Archaeological significance: n/a

Village landmark: Very important

Community value: Very important



19. Reservoir House, formerly water underground water reservoir

The covered or underground reservoir was built in 1930 by the Leicester Corporation Waterworks at a cost of £7000. Water was drawn from Ragdale for this area. It was in use until 1950s, In 2001-2010, it was converted into a five bedroom luxury house with an indoor swimming pool. Original tower retained. The conversion was televised.

Age: 1930, converted 2010

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value: Art deco, unusual

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Yes, directions

Community value: None, private ownership



20. Barn Lodge Farm, field 056 and 057

Farm house and barns on Blackberry Lane

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark: Yes

Community value: None, private ownership



21. Wall along Crab Tree Lane with plaque

Brick wall originally belonging to Cossington Hall which runs along Crab tree Lane, the footpath to Homestead Close and along Hall Close.

[PHOTO?]

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark:

Community value:

22. Wooden building on side of Grand Union Canal near the Cossington/Rothley Bridge in field 037

Used by Ratcliffe College as a pavilion for historical rowing races by pupils.

Age:

Rarity:

Architectural/aesthetic value:

Archaeological significance:

Village landmark:

Community value:



References:

Cossington Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2013)

https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/cossington_caca_consultation_draft_181113/Cossington+CACA+Consultation+Draft+181113.pdf