



**Land North of
Barkby Road,
Syston**

**Landscape and
Visual Appraisal**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:
**Taylor Wimpey
(UK) Ltd**

December 2021
Report Reference
edp4685_r004f

Contents

Executive Summary

Section 1	Introduction, Purpose and Methodology.....	1
Section 2	Landscape Planning Policy and Designations.....	5
Section 3	Baseline Conditions: Landscape Resource	9
Section 4	Baseline Conditions: Visual Amenity.....	17
Section 5	The Proposed Development and Mitigation	25
Section 6	Assessment of Effects.....	29
Section 7	Conclusions	35

Appendices

Appendix EDP 1	Concept Masterplan
Appendix EDP 2	Assessment Methodology
Appendix EDP 3	Relevant Extracts from Local Policy
Appendix EDP 4	Relevant Extracts from Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area
Appendix EDP 5	Representative Photoviewpoints for Discussion Plan (edp4685_d001c 26 June 2018 JTF/JM)

Site Photographs

(edp4685_d013d 01 November 2021 GY/CJM)

Site Photograph EDP L1	View looking north-east across central and northern fields towards northern edges of site
Site Photograph EDP L2	View looking south-east across central and southern fields towards southern and eastern edges of site
Site Photograph EDP L3	View looking south-west from public footpath J37 across central and southern fields towards settlement edge off Empingham Drive and John Frear Drive

Site Photograph EDP L4 View looking north-west from public footpath J37 across north field towards settlement edge off Hallaton Drive

Plans

Plan EDP L1	Site Location and Site Boundaries (edp4685_d004c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L2	Site Character and Context (edp4685_d016c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L3	Landscape Planning Context (edp4685_d005c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L4	Published Landscape Character (edp4685_d014c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L5	Topography (edp4685_d006c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L6	Visual Receptors (edp4685_d011c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L7	Findings of the Visual Assessment (edp4685_d015c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L8	Landscape Strategy (edp4685_d032a 02 November 2021 MMm/TR)

Photoviewpoints

Winter Photoviewpoints - (edp4685_d012c 01 November 2021 LB/JM)

Summer Photoviewpoints - (edp4685_d024a 01 December 2021 GY/CJM)

Photoviewpoint EDP 1	View from Queniborough Road/public footpath J17
Photoviewpoint EDP 2	View from public footpath J17
Photoviewpoint EDP 3	View looking east along Barkby Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 4	View from Barkby Road looking north-east across site
Photoviewpoint EDP 5	View from Byway accessing Syston Grange
Photoviewpoint EDP 6	View from public footpath J37

Photoviewpoint EDP 7	View from Ridgemere Lane
Photoviewpoint EDP 8	View from public footpath I84 at Queniborough settlement edge
Photoviewpoint EDP 9	View from public footpath I84 between Syston and Queniborough
Photoviewpoint EDP 10	View from Barkby Lane at bridge over Barkby Brook
Photoviewpoint EDP 11	View from Barkby Thorpe Lane at public footpath J6
Photoviewpoint EDP 12	View from public footpath J7 south-west of Barkby Thorpe

This version is intended for electronic viewing only

	Ref: edp4685_r004			
	Author	Formatted	Peer Review	Proofed by/Date
004c_DRAFT	CJM	MW	TR	-
004d_DRAFT	CJM	DK	TR	-
004e	CJM	-	TR	NH 301121
004f	CJM	-	TR	-

Executive Summary

- S1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by the Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd, to inform planning proposals for the development of a residential scheme, on Land North of Barkby Road, Syston. It has been updated during 2021 to account for a revised design and updated field surveys.
- S2 This appraisal finds that the site does not lie within or form part of any landscape designation, nor does it lie within or form part of any Green Wedge or Local Separation Area under the adopted Local Plan.
- S3 In terms of effects on landscape character, development on the site would form a further modern residential extension to the eastern edge of Syston, which has already been extended in recent years, leading to a very prominent urban interface to the surrounding rural edge landscape of the Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA). Indeed, the Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal assessed the area in which the site is located to have capacity to *“form a natural extension to the existing urban form”*, and that development on the site could *“provide an opportunity to mitigate the impact of the urban edge on the wider landscape”*.
- S4 There will be inevitable localised elevated effects on landscape when the arable fields are developed, however in accordance with landscape guidance for the Wreake Valley LCA, the landscape strategy for the proposed development would conserve and enhance existing trees and hedgerows where possible and introduce substantial new planting within landscape buffers around the edges of the site, to reduce the impact of the urban edge on the surrounding countryside. Thus, this appraisal finds that development of the site would have limited effects on the local landscape context, and very little effect upon the wider Wreake Valley LCA.
- S5 A sensitive characteristic of the landscape are the views across the valley and towards village churches. In response to this, the Concept Masterplan has incorporated a designed view corridor through the development, to retain a view towards St Mary’s Church, Barkby, from the public footpath to the north and from within the development.
- S6 In terms of visual amenity, this appraisal finds that the effects of the proposed development would be localised due to the level of physical containment by Syston to the west, undulating topography and Queniborough to the north, and high ground to the east and south beyond Barkby Lane. Visibility of the site is further restricted by the strongly treed/wooded character of the landscape to the east of Queniborough Road and around Barkby. The proposed development would merge into the modern and recently extended eastern urban edge of Syston, which already exerts an influence on the surrounding landscape.

- S7 For the reasons outlined within the report, the proposed development is considered to be entirely consistent with the settlement edge landscape character and would not therefore result in any contraventions with local planning policy.

Section 1

Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

Introduction

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) has been commissioned by Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd ('the applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of the proposals at land north of Barkby Road, Syston ('the site') to inform planning proposals and accompany an outline planning application for the site.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cirencester, Cardiff and Cheltenham. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website (www.edp-uk.co.uk).
- 1.3 The proposed development is for the *"Outline planning application for up to 195 dwellings, together with associated affordable housing, open space, landscaping, drainage and play space facilities. All matters reserved bar access which is proposed from Barkby Road"*. The proposals are illustrated on the Concept Masterplan at **Appendix EDP 1**.
- 1.4 **Plan EDP L1** illustrates the location of the site and its boundaries. The site is located on the eastern edge of Syston and is within the jurisdiction of Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) Local Planning Authority (LPA) area. The application site is an emerging allocation for residential development in the Charnwood Pre-Submission Local Plan 2021 – 2037 under Policy DS3, site reference HA3. Policy DS3(HA3) Land north of Barkby Road, Syston allocates the site for 195 dwellings.
- 1.5 The site comprises two arable fields with boundaries defined by hedgerows, as illustrated on **Plan EDP L2**.

Purpose

- 1.6 The purpose of this LVA is to identify the baseline conditions of the site and its surrounding area; to inform the design layout and appearance; and provide an assessment of the effects predicted to arise from the development on two arable fields and visual baseline conditions.
- 1.7 In compiling the assessment, EDP has undertaken the following key tasks:
 - Reviewed the planning policy context for the site;

- Undertaken a desktop study and web search of relevant background documents and maps. EDP's study included reviews of aerial photographs, web searches, Local Planning Authority (LPA) publications and landscape character assessments. EDP has also obtained, where possible, information about relevant landscape and other designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), conservation areas and parks and gardens listed on Historic England's *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* (RPG);
- Undertaken a field assessment of local site circumstances (updated in 2021), including a photographic survey of the character and fabric of the site and its surroundings, using photography from a number of representative viewpoints. The field assessment was undertaken by a qualified landscape architect; and
- Provided an analysis of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme, which is determined by combining the magnitude of the predicted change with the assessed sensitivity of the identified receptors. The nature of any predicted effects is also identified (i.e., positive/negative, permanent/reversible).

Methodology Adopted for the Assessment

- 1.8 Landscape and visual assessment is comprised of a study of two separate but inter-linked issues:
- Landscape character is the physical make up and condition of the landscape itself, and arises from a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of physical and social elements, aesthetic factors and perceptual aspects; and
 - Visual amenity is the way in which the site is seen; views to and from the site, their direction, character and sensitivity to change.
- 1.9 **Section 3** addresses baseline landscape character issues, whilst visual amenity issues are addressed in **Section 4**. The potential landscape and visual effects of the development of the site are considered in **Section 6**.
- 1.10 This proposal is not subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The LVA has, therefore, been undertaken in accordance with the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition* (LI/IEMA, 2013) (GLVIA3), insofar as it is relevant to non-EIA schemes. The criteria referred to, but not defined within the guidelines, have been defined by EDP as set out in **Appendix EDP 2**.

Study Area

- 1.11 To establish the baseline and potential limit of material effects, the study area has been considered at two geographical scales.

- 1.12 A broad study area was adopted, as shown on **Plan EDP L1**, enabling the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined and providing the wider geographical context of the study. The search focused on the local planning policy context, on identifying national and local landscape and other associated designations (e.g. AONB, historic parks and gardens) and providing a general geographical understanding of the site and its broader context (for example, in relation to landform, transport routes and the distribution and nature of settlement).
- 1.13 Following initial analysis and subsequent field work, and having an appreciation of the development proposed, a refinement of the study area has been undertaken which focuses on those areas and features that are likely to be affected by the proposals. The extent of this detailed study area is 2km from the site boundary, although occasional reference may be made to features beyond this area where appropriate. This detailed study area is illustrated on **Plan EDP L1**.

This page has been left blank intentionally.

Section 2

Landscape Planning Policy and Designations

- 2.1 An appreciation of the 'weight' to be attributed to any landscape or visual effects arising from development starts with an understanding of the planning context within which any such development is to be tested for its acceptability. The site's relevant planning context is illustrated on **Plan EDP L3** and summarised below.

Landscape Related Designations

- 2.2 Landscape related designations and policy considerations within 5km of the site are shown on **Plan EDP L3**. In summary:

- The site does not contain or lie within any landscape designation; and
- Watermead Country Park is located approximately 2.6km to the west and separated from the site by Syston settlement, and therefore will not be considered further in this appraisal.

Other Relevant Considerations

Heritage Matters

- 2.3 A separate Heritage Statement considers the historic character and setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study area (see report no. edp4685_r001). While such assets are not landscape designations, they do, on occasion, serve to influence the character of the landscape and can inform landscape value, which are considerations within this report. Where this is the case, it is noted in the relevant assessment.
- 2.4 There are no heritage designations affecting the site or that would raise the value of the site in landscape terms.

Ecology Matters

- 2.5 A separate Ecology Appraisal (report no edp4685_r005) considers the ecological assets within the study area. While these are not landscape designations, as for the above referenced heritage assets, they do, on occasion, serve to influence the character of the landscape and can inform landscape value. Where this is the case, it is noted in the relevant assessment.
- 2.6 Within the wider study area there are no ecological designations affecting the site that would raise the value of the site in landscape terms.

Tree Preservation Orders and Ancient Woodland

- 2.7 There are no trees subject to Tree Preservation Order within the site.
- 2.8 Although there is notable deciduous woodland habitat in the landscape context of Barkby to the south-east of the site (east of Queniborough Road and south of Barkby Lane), there is no designated Ancient Woodland within the wider study area and therefore the value of the site is not elevated.

Public Rights of Way

- 2.9 As illustrated on **Plan EDP L6**, there is one public right of way (PRoW) within the site. Public footpath J37 runs in an east to west direction from Queniborough Road, along part of the northern boundary of the site, before crossing through the western section of the site into Syston settlement. This footpath does not directly connect with any other PRoW. This single right of way passing through the site may have community value and therefore requires careful consideration as part of the design process.

National Planning Policy

- 2.10 At the heart of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; this being the golden thread running throughout the document. For landscape, this means recognising the intrinsic beauty of the countryside (paragraph 174) and balancing any 'harm' to the landscape resource with the benefits of the scheme in other respects. This balancing exercise is to be undertaken by the decision taker (in this case the LPA) and falls outside the remit of this report. The benefits of the scheme are to be weighed against the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity as set out in this report, as detailed in the Planning Statement accompanying this application. The policy framework is supported by the *National Planning Policy Guidance* (NPPG) where relevant.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.11 The statutory development plan relevant to the site comprises the Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy (2015) and Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004) saved policies. A review of the local planning policy circumstances, including relevant supplementary planning documents, evidence base documents and associated guidelines relevant to this assessment is contained below. A detailed review of planning policy is undertaken within the Planning Statement accompanying this application.

2.12 The following policies in the adopted local plan Core Strategy (2015) are considered relevant for this LVA, with extracts saved in **Appendix EDP 3**:

- **Policy CS 11** – Landscape and Countryside – protect the character of the landscape, including sense of place, local distinctiveness, tranquillity, and separate identities of towns and villages;
- **Policy CS 12** – Green Infrastructure - protection of intrinsic character, quality and distinctive features of landscape types as identified in the Charnwood Landscape Assessment; and
- **Policy CS 2** – High Quality Design - relates to the quality of development and the impact upon the area, including respecting and enhancing the character of the area landscape character.

2.13 The following saved policies in the adopted Local Plan (2004) are shown on the online Proposals Map to be relevant to the site and its landscape context. Extracts of the policies are saved in **Appendix EDP 3**:

- **Policy CT/1** - General Principles for Areas of Countryside, Green Wedge and Local Separation – the site forming part of ‘open countryside’ and not Green Wedge or Local Separation areas (the site lies outside of, and to the south of, land subject to Saved Policy CT/4 Local Separation between Syston and Queniborough); and
- **Policy CT/2** - Development in the Countryside.

2.14 The application site is an emerging allocation for residential development in the Charnwood Pre-Submission Local Plan 2021 – 2037 under Policy DS3, site reference HA3. Policy DS3(HA3) Land north of Barkby Road, Syston allocates the site for 195 dwellings.

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.15 The following additional supplementary guidance is relevant:

- Leading in Design (2005), is a supplementary planning document (SPD) which aims to promote higher standards of development design and supports Saved Policy EV/1 Design.

Other Documents

2.16 The evidence base document ‘Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2017’ identifies the site as forming the northern part of Site Ref: PSH69 Land South East of Syston, and finds that “*there are no known irresolvable physical/environmental constraints preventing development*”.

Interim Conclusions

2.17 A review of the site's planning context has found that:

- The NPPF shows a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- The site does not lie within or form part of any landscape designation;
- The site does not lie within or form part of any green Wedge or Local Separation Area under the adopted Local Plan. It is a draft allocation for residential development; and
- Proposed development on the site should ensure it will not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside in accordance with Saved Policies CT/1 and CT/2 and Policy CS 11.

Section 3

Baseline Conditions: Landscape Resource

- 3.1 As advocated by GLVIA3 this section identifies the range of landscape resources likely to experience an effect. This first requires consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor, this being a function of the susceptibility to change of the receptor and its value.
- 3.2 EDP has undertaken a review of local landscape character, which included a site visit by an experienced, chartered landscape architect in March 2018. Where necessary, the relevance of the published character assessments to the local landscape is commented on below. Extracts of key characteristics, to assist with understanding the Council's accepted baseline position, are contained in **Appendix EDP 4**.

National Character Assessment

- 3.3 At the national level, the site lies within the western fringe of the High Leicestershire National Character Area (NCA 93). Descriptions of landscape character at the national level provide a useful characterisation of the wider landscape but are usually too broad for a site-specific assessment. Indeed, the only key characteristic of relevance to the site is the description of arable farmland on the wide valley bottoms. Descriptions of landscape character, undertaken within the Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment, are more relevant in establishing the landscape resource baseline at the site.

Local Landscape Character Assessments

Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012)

- 3.4 A review of the Charnwood landscape character assessment finds that the site is located within the Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA), the location of which is illustrated on **Plan EDP L4**.
- 3.5 The following key characteristics described in the LCA were found to be consistent with the area around the site:
- River Wreake meanders in a flat-bottomed river valley with gently sloping sides. The valley experiences flooding;
 - Leicester City and Syston have an urbanising influence in the west;
 - Area of mixed arable and pasture farming;
 - Some neglected and lost hedgerows and hedgerow trees;

- Settlements are on the valley slopes, with churches marking villages; and
 - Main settlements are Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Thrusington, Rearsby, East Goscote, Queniborough and Syston.
- 3.6 The context of the site generally conforms with the above key characteristics, including agricultural land use and condition of field boundary hedgerows. The eastern edge of Syston, which comprises recent modern residential developments, exerts a strong influence over the adjoining agricultural landscape extending up to Queniborough Road and including the site.
- 3.7 In terms of settlement character, the LCA description states that “the town of Syston, the suburban development of East Goscote and large village of Queniborough dominate the western part where the flat valley floodplain of the Wreake merges into the Soar Valley”, and “often the use of standardised materials in newer housing can present a harsh appearance at the countryside edge, such as at Syston and East Goscote”. This is certainly the situation on the eastern edge of Syston, where the settlement edge is defined by new residential development (as illustrated **Plan EDP L2**).

Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal

- 3.8 Part 2 of the Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment is the ‘Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal’. The site lies within Zone 22, as shown in **Figure EDP 3.1**.

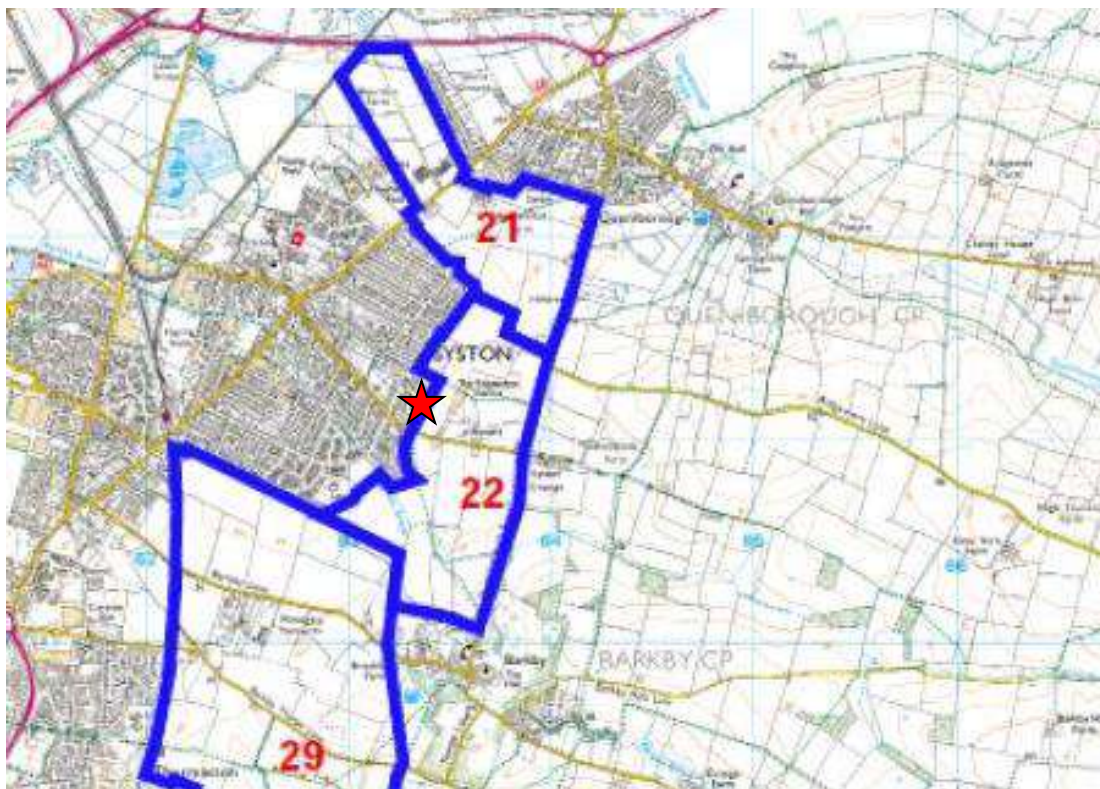


Figure EDP 3.1: Extract of Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Survey Zones (with site location indicated within Zone 22)

3.9 Zone 22 is described below:

- *“An area of flat land between the urban edge of Syston and Barkby/Queniborough Road;*
- *The new urban edge is distinct and creates an abrupt connection with the rural landscape; and*
- *Generally hedgerows are poor with a lack of significant trees but the landscape quality improves towards the southern end of the area, where there are significant trees along the banks of the Barkby Brook.”*

3.10 In terms of suitability for development, Zone 22 *“is considered to have **Medium High capacity** to accommodate development. This is due to the weak condition of the landscape and lack of variety in land use. **It could form a natural extension to the existing urban form and provide an opportunity to mitigate the impact of the urban edge on the wider landscape. Residential development could be suitable** subject to mitigation measures.”* (emphasis added by EDP).

Site Description

3.11 The site comprises two arable fields on the eastern edge of Syston, with boundaries defined by hedgerows. Agricultural landscape lies immediately to the north, with Queniborough settlement lying approximately 1km beyond. The site is bounded by highway on two sides, with Barkby Road to the south and Queniborough Road to the east, and their junction at the south-east corner of the site. Agricultural land lies beyond these roads to the east and south, and an isolated group of properties to the south-east of the site and road junction at Syston Grange. An aerial photograph of the site is provided as **Plan EDP L2**, and images of the site in its current form provided in **Site Photographs**.

3.12 In the broader landscape the site lies on the gently sloping sides of the Wreake Valley, as illustrated in **Plan EDP L5** Topography. In terms of underlying geology, the rising ground of the valley is underlain by a thick covering of boulder clay which overlies the Keuper Marl bedrock. The soils in the locality of the site are described in Soilscape (England) data as ‘slightly acid loam and clayey soils with impeded drainage’. The central portion of the site becomes seasonally waterlogged, partly as a result of irregular management of field ditches.

3.13 However, despite the impeded drainage in the area, there are no watercourses on the site, with the nearest being Barkby Brook to the south-west. As illustrated in **Plan EDP L2**, the site does not form part of the valley watercourse floodplain or flood zones as defined by the Environment Agency. The site is drained via ditches located on the south side of the east-to-west aligned internal and southern boundary field boundary hedgerows.

3.14 The site is flat to gently undulating with levels between c.58.5m aOD and 63.5m aOD, with the northern part of the site gently rising up at the lower western foot slope of the

ridgeline that extends from the high landscape to the east, as illustrated in **Plan EDP L5**. The site shares the same gently undulating character as the valley landscape to the south; to the north the landscape gently slopes north-west from the ridgeline into the gap between Syston and Queniborough. There is a more notable change in level, at a site scale, to the east where the landscape rises gently up to the ridge. There is a localised rise in ground level to the west of the site, where the open space landscape buffer of the adjacent residential estate has been formed and landscaped with earth bunds.

- 3.15 In terms of field pattern, the fields are semi-regular and of medium size, rather than the large, regular fields characteristic of the Wreake Valley LCA. The arable land use of the site reflects the '*moderate to high natural fertility*' of the clayey soils described by Soilscape and, in combination with low, maintained, sometimes gappy native hedgerows on the field boundaries of the site, is typically characteristic of the local Wreake Valley landscape, albeit with the condition of the hedgerows weakening it at a local scale. This is further exacerbated by a section of fencing defining part of the western boundary where there is a gap in the hedgerow. Furthermore, amalgamation of historic field parcels within the site has resulted in the loss of the internal field boundary hedgerow along the route of public footpath J37, where only a single mature oak tree remains.
- 3.16 There are no trees in the southern part of the site, and only three hedgerow trees along the northern boundary, and a single tree on the western boundary. The arboricultural survey (report edp4685_r003) finds the trees within the site to be mostly of low quality (11 category C), with the exception of three moderate quality (category B), including the single oak tree within the northern field of the site. One ash tree on the northern boundary is in poor condition (category U). The hedgerow tree species are either English oak (*Quercus robur*) or Common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). There is a greater number of tree species in the off-site planting within the landscape buffer of the adjacent residential development to the west, including Field maple (*Acer campestre*), Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), Common hawthorn (*Crateagus monogyna*), as well as oak and ash, demonstrating that there is potential to successfully establish a more diverse but locally appropriate treed character.
- 3.17 The hedgerows around and within the site are dominated by hawthorn, with other species including blackthorn, elder, elm, and ash. On the western boundary a beech hedgerow has been planted within the adjacent residential development and allowed to grow tall, presumably for visual screening purposes. Generally, the hedgerows are flailed to maintain low field boundary hedgerows, although some sections of hedgerow along the northern and western boundaries to the site have been allowed to become overgrown, leggy and gappy. Thus, the hedgerows have been assessed to be of low quality (category C) in the arboricultural report (edp4685_r003), with the exception of the hedgerows bounding the northern field to the north and west (H12, 14, 15 and 16), which have become over-mature and 'defunct', and are assessed to be of poor quality (category U).
- 3.18 In terms of ecological habitat, the site is largely arable land, with a few scattered trees on field boundaries, species-poor hedgerows, and some wet ditches with sparse or no aquatic vegetation.

- 3.19 In terms of cultural associations with the site, the public footpath (J37) crossing the site links the extended modern settlement edge to Queniborough Road. Historic mapping indicates the site has been in long term agricultural use.
- 3.20 In terms of tranquillity, the site is disturbed by the close proximity of Syston to the west (including current construction activity to the south-west), Barkby Road and Queniborough Road to the south and east respectively, and the road junction, which combine to introduce urban influences on the character of the site.
- 3.21 In terms of landscape setting, the flat valley landscape allows intervisibility with the open agricultural landscape to the south until rising hillslopes and woodland curtail more distant views. Views to the east are also contained by the rising topography beyond Queniborough Road. Views north are limited by topography to the northern edge of the site and the site of the old brick works, and thus there is no perception of Queniborough settlement to the north, except at the northern edge of the site. Barkby settlement is not visible to the south except for the church spire, of which just the upper section is visible above its surrounding wooded landscape context, which marks the location of the village (a characteristic feature in the landscape). The existing settlement edge of Syston, including the new development to the south of Barkby Road, forms a prominent urbanising detractor in views out from the site to the west.

The Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource

- 3.22 GLVIA3 sets out the requirements for considering sensitivity of landscape resources at paragraphs 5.39 to 5.47, and states here that “*Landscape receptors need to be assessed firstly in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape*”. The ‘susceptibility’ and ‘value’ of those receptors identified above are therefore considered below.

Susceptibility of the Landscape

- 3.23 The susceptibility of the landscape resource is defined as the ability of the receptor (whether the overall character, individual fabric elements or perceptual aspects) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.
- 3.24 The Wreake Valley landscape is recognised in the published character assessment to be influenced by the urban area of Syston, and this is clearly the case with the site, which adjoins the eastern edge of the settlement. This urban influence has been further amplified by the recent construction of a new residential development to the south-west of the site. As with all new developments, the newness and standardisation of building materials, and the immaturity of landscape mitigation proposals in the short term, result in the new development being particularly prominent in views, compared to more established residential areas. The residential development directly west of the site benefits from some sections of mature vegetation which partially soften the settlement

edge in views, but again this is a relatively new development. Thus, the site landscape character is strongly influenced by, and perceived in the context of, the existing modern and recently extended settlement edge.

- 3.25 The Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal concluded that the landscape to the east of Syston and west of Queniborough Road (Zone 22, as illustrated in **EDP Figure 3.1** above) could form a natural extension to the existing settlement and “provide an opportunity to mitigate the impact of the urban edge on the wider landscape.” Indeed, new development has already been built within the zone, to the north and south of Barkby Road and west and south-west of the site. Although the zone has been partly built out, the site still forms a small part of Zone 22.
- 3.26 The Charnwood appraisal is not clear in its definition of its sensitivity assessment; the sensitivity rating forming a step in the numerical process to calculate capacity for development, which was assessed to be ‘Medium High’. This would indicate a medium to low sensitivity landscape.
- 3.27 The existing landscape fabric of the site and its local context, which comprises generally low hedgerows and a limited number of scattered hedgerow trees, offers little in the way of visual screening to the surrounding countryside, so that any development on the site would be clearly visible from the surrounding landscape. However, development on the site would be in the context of the existing settlement edge, which already exerts an influence over the landscape to the east of Syston.
- 3.28 On the basis of the above consideration of susceptibility factors, the surrounding landscape context of the site within the Wreake Valley LCA is considered to be of medium susceptibility to the change proposed.

Value of the Landscape: Site

- 3.29 When considering landscape value, GLVIA3 advocates that the starting point should be a review of existing landscape designations, including those at a local and national level, to identify if it is valued sufficiently to warrant a greater level of protection. In this instance the site is not within a designated landscape, as confirmed by the Local Plan Proposals Map and **Plan EDP L3**. It is, however, also relevant to understand to what extent the site has value based on its characteristics, as described above. The GLVIA3 makes it clear that not being located within a designated landscape does not mean the site has no value in a landscape sense.
- 3.30 Similarly, even when the site *does* lie within a landscape designation, GLVIA3 confirms that “it is possible that the landscape value of that specific area may be different from that suggested by the formal designation”. It is therefore imperative to provide further assessment as part of the LVA baseline, to establish whether the value of the site itself has reason to differ from the documented position.

- 3.31 The process and criteria for understanding landscape value and the extent to which it is 'valued,' as may be determined by paragraph 174(a) of the NPPF, is described within the assessment methodology at **Appendix EDP 2**.
- 3.32 With reference to the criteria which indicate value as defined within Box 5.1 of GLVIA3, examination of the site's characteristics with reference to the local context, has found that:
- Landscape Quality (condition and intactness): all hedgerows are gappy, and some sections are overmature, leggy and defunct, hence hedgerows are of low or poor quality. There are scattered hedgerow trees which are of moderate to low quality;
 - Scenic Quality including views out: the modern settlement edge of Syston forms a prominent detractor in views across the site and surrounding landscape to the south and north from public footpath J37. The traffic lights at the road junction form a detractor in views along the eastern edge of the site towards Barkby church;
 - Rarity of features defined in the landscape such as landform: there are no rare features within the site;
 - Representativeness of particular landscape features: the arable fields and boundary hedgerows with sparse trees are typically representative of the local landscape;
 - Conservation Interests (such as condition of trees and habitats; historical): there are no conservation interests in the site, with the exception of three trees on the boundary which have bat roost potential;
 - Recreation Value/Access: public access across the site along public footpath J37 from Syston settlement towards Queniborough Road, however there is no direct connectivity with wider PRoW network beyond Queniborough Road;
 - Perceptual Aspects including consideration of site setting: the site context is strongly influenced by new residential development on the extended settlement edge to the west due to the openness of the arable fields with low hedgerows. Intervisibility to the north is restricted by topography, but the site is visible across fields to the south and east; and
 - Cultural Associations and historical land use: no associations exist that make the site out of the ordinary.
- 3.33 Having assessed the site in accordance with GLVIA3 Box 5.1, there is no reason to conclude that the site has any elevated landscape value or importance above the rest of the Wreake Valley landscape character area. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that the local community place special weight on the site, meaning that overall the site is considered to be of no more than local value. This assessment concurs with the Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal assessment that the Wreake Valley LCA possesses a low-medium landscape value.

- 3.34 Considering this alongside the medium susceptibility, the landscape character of the site is considered to have an overall medium sensitivity. This relates to the character of the site itself and also the near surroundings or context, i.e., the areas where landscape character effects are most likely, which is primarily to the open countryside between the site and Barkby village to the south, and the hill slope extending to the east of the site.

Value of the Landscape Fabric: Site

- 3.35 Earlier in this section the site is reviewed for conformity against the Wreake Valley LCA key characteristics and in the context of the physical features it contains. This review shows that those key landscape fabric elements with the potential to be impacted by the proposals are as follows, which are also shown on **Plan EDP L2**:

- Hedgerow boundaries; and
- Mature trees.

- 3.36 These landscape elements have been shown to be characteristic and present within the site or local context, and have a medium sensitivity based upon the largely low, sometimes poor quality and condition, balanced against the contribution that these characteristic elements of the landscape make to the wider value of the site, as defined within the discussion above.

Section 4

Baseline Conditions: Visual Amenity

Introduction

- 4.1 This section identifies those visual receptors that may be able to obtain views to the site, their distribution, character and sensitivity to change.
- 4.2 Using landform data within a Geographical Information System (GIS), EDP has prepared a broad Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). The ZTV is generated using landform height data only and therefore it does not account for the screening effects of intervening buildings, structures or vegetation. The ZTV was then visited by walking and driving (as appropriate) local roads, rights of way and other publicly accessible viewpoints. Through this exercise the main visual receptors predicted to have actual visibility to the site were identified and the Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV) was established.

Zone of Primary Visibility

- 4.3 The Zone of Primary Visibility (ZPV) is where the proposed development would be visible to the casual observer on foot, cycling, driving or travelling by train where the views would normally be close-ranging and open; the proposal would be an obvious element of the view. Beyond this area, there is a zone of visibility which is less open, being either partly screened or filtered. Views from within this zone would include the proposal - it may not be immediately noticeable, but once recognised would be a perceptible addition to the view. The extent of the proposal within such views would vary, and in some cases it would be almost indistinguishable as a consequence of both increasing distance and intervening visual screening.
- 4.4 The visual appraisal **Plan EDP L7** illustrates the main determinants of visibility to the site:
- North: The elevated ground levels associated with the low ridgeline extending towards Syston and north of the site screen ground level views of the site from the north. Higher elements within the site (trees) are visible across the agricultural fields from 1km to the north at the southern edge of Queniborough settlement. Beyond this, views are limited by the low-lying valley topography and built settlement;
 - East: The rising topography to the east and overlying field boundary hedgerows limit views to Ridgemere Lane (which runs along the top of the ridge) to the north-east, and c.560m across agricultural land to the east. Views are partially filtered by mature trees lining Queniborough Road;
 - South: The extent of intervisibility is greatest in a narrow visual corridor directly to the south of the site, due to the south-facing aspect of the site and open fields with low hedgerows and limited trees, which allow views across the relatively flat landscape

as far as the northern edge of Barkby settlement. Views to the south-west are restricted by the extended settlement edge of Syston to the south of Barkby Road, and to the south-east by woodland blocks to the east of Queniborough Road. The dense built form of Barkby village and its heavily treed/wooded context on the hillslopes to the south and east restrict views from around the settlement. Beyond Barkby to the south, visibility across the valley landscape extends up to 2km across the more open agricultural landscape on the rising hillslopes; and

- West: The settlement of Syston bounds the site to the west and limits views to the built settlement edge.

Representative Viewpoints

- 4.5 The main receptor groups have been identified and described below and are represented by the Photoviewpoints (PVP) presented in **Table EDP 4.1**.
- 4.6 Based on fieldwork observations and the findings of the data trawl, these Photoviewpoints have been selected to represent the variety of views available from public vantage points towards the site. EDP consulted with the Charnwood Borough Council Landscape Officer on 22 February 2018 to agree Photoviewpoint locations with the LPA (Representative Photoviewpoints for Discussion Plan contained in **Appendix EDP 5**). The officer suggested additional viewpoints from midway along footpath I84 and from PRoW on higher ground to the west of Barkby Thorpe.
- 4.7 Further additional viewpoints were requested from PRoW J20 (between Ridgemere Lane and Barkby Holt Lane) and an unclassified footpath east of Thorpe Farm. However, due to intervening topography and mature trees respectively, no views towards the site were identified from these receptors. The locations of the final selection of Photoviewpoints are shown on **Plan EDP L6** while the views themselves are shown in **Photoviewpoints EDP 1** to **12**. Details of each view, and the reason for its selection as a 'representative viewpoint', are provided in the table below:

Table EDP 4.1: Summary of Representative Photoviewpoints

PVP. No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection & Sensitivity of Receptor
1	PRoW J17 (footpath) at Queniborough Road	463662, 310114	845m; north-west	Pedestrians High Sensitivity
2	PRoW J17 (footpath)	463431, 310489	640m; north-east	Pedestrians High Sensitivity
3	Barkby Road	463642, 310973	6m; east	Pedestrians, cyclists and road users Low Sensitivity
4	Barkby Road	463667, 310967	0m; north-east	Pedestrians, cyclists and road users Medium Sensitivity

PVP. No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance and Direction of View	Reason(s) for Selection & Sensitivity of Receptor
5	PROW (byway) at Syston Grange	463987, 310917	120m; north-west	Pedestrians, cyclists and users accessing properties High Sensitivity
6	PRoW J37 (footpath)	463923, 311167	0m; south	Pedestrians High Sensitivity
7	Ridgemere Lane	464546, 311247	700m; south-west	Pedestrians, cyclists and road users Medium Sensitivity
8	PRoW I84 at Queniborough settlement edge	464220, 312059	970m; south-south-west	Pedestrians High Sensitivity
9	PRoW I84	463773, 312078	760m; south-east	Pedestrians High Sensitivity
10	Barkby Lane	463115, 310032	1.1km; north-east	Pedestrians, cyclists and road users Medium Sensitivity
11	Barkby Thorpe Lane/PRoW J6 (footpath)	463054, 309402	1.7km; north-east	Pedestrians on PRoW High Sensitivity Cyclists and road users Medium Sensitivity
12	PRoW J7 (footpath)	463028, 309045	2km; north	Pedestrians High Sensitivity

Visual Receptors

4.8 The main receptors identified as likely to experience a material effect, as a result of the proposals, are listed below.

PRoW

4.9 There is a network of PRoW running through the countryside to the north, east and south of the site, which provide links to the local settlements, including the following:

- Public footpath J37 runs roughly east-west from Queniborough Road to Syston settlement edge. It runs along the eastern part of the northern boundary of the site (as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 6**), before crossing through the western part of the site, allowing open views of the site, the modern residential edge of Syston, and agricultural land to the south and east;
- To the north there is one public footpath with potential intervisibility of higher elements on the site (there are no views of the site's ground level due to topography). PRoW I84 links Queniborough and Syston settlements, running across agricultural land in a north-east to south-west direction at c.700-970m distance from the site. The expanding settlement edge of Syston features in views towards the site (**Photoviewpoints EDP 8 and 9**);

- To the east, running across the agricultural landscape at a distance of c.560m, is public footpath I81. Views from the footpath to the north of Ridgemere Lane are screened by the ridge and thus focused towards Queniborough; to the south of the lane the footpath runs to the east of a mature field boundary hedgerow, thus any views towards the site are strongly filtered. A very short section of the footpath crossing Ridgemere Lane has a distant view towards the site (typical views from Ridgemere Lane are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 7**);
- To the south, public footpath J17 crosses agricultural fields between the south-east edge of Syston and Queniborough Road at the northern extent of Barkby village, at a distance up to 290m from the site (the northern section of the footpath runs into Syston settlement towards Barkby Road to the west of the site, but views towards the site are screened by housing). The low hedgerows and limited hedgerow trees allow partial open views towards the eastern part of the site from the southern end of the footpath (as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**). Further north, views of the site from the footpath become increasingly screened by the new residential development under construction to the south of Barkby Road (as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 2**); and
- Further south, views from the rising hillslope to the south of Barkby Lane are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 11** on public footpath J6 at Barkby Thorpe Lane. Views from the high ground to the west of Barkby Thorpe are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 12** on public footpath J7. These views look over Barkby settlement at the bottom of the hillslope, and across the valley landscape including the eastern edge of Syston, at distances between approximately 1.2km and 2km from the site.

Minor Roads

- 4.10 There are no main roads running through the landscape to the east of Syston. A number of minor rural roads link Syston with the surrounding settlements, which have the potential for views of the site.

Barkby Road

- 4.11 There are two sections of highway named Barkby Road. The section of highway between Queniborough and Ridgemere Lane to the north-east of the site has no views towards the site due to topography and intervening vegetation. Barkby Road, which runs from the centre of Syston to Queniborough Road, bounds the site to the south. This road is predominantly an urban road, with the exception of the short section at the eastern end of the road which is bounded by agricultural fields. However, this more rural section of the road is impacted by urbanising elements including highway lighting columns, signage and traffic lights at the road junction, and Syston Grange which forms the focus in views approaching the junction from the west (**Photoviewpoint EDP 3**). Low hedgerows bounding the road allow views of the surrounding agricultural landscape, including the site, as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 4**.

Queniborough Road

- 4.12 This rural road extends northwards from the village of Barkby, through a traffic light junction with Barkby Road and access to Syston Grange, and up to Ridgemere Lane. Travelling northwards, the residential edge of Syston and the site are visible in views across the open fields between the northern edge of Barkby (**Photoviewpoint EDP 1**) and Barkby Road. The road bounds the site to the east, allowing views over the low boundary hedgerow and across the site towards the eastern settlement edge of Syston, which is characterised by modern residential development (as indicated in **Photoviewpoint EDP 6** from the eastern section of PRow J37).

Ridgemere Lane

- 4.13 This rural lane runs from the east to a 'T' junction with Queniborough Road/Barkby Road, approximately 215m north-east of the site. As the name implies, the Ridgemere Lane runs along the top of the ridge which ends to the north of the site. There are extensive views from the ridge across the surrounding agricultural landscape, including views of Queniborough settlement to the north and Syston to the west. Views towards the site are restricted by topography and field boundary hedgerows to approximately 600m of the western section of the lane (**Photoviewpoint EDP 7**).

Empingham Drive

- 4.14 A short section of this residential estate road (approximately 65m), on the eastern edge of the existing settlement, lies immediately west of the southern site field before turning into the residential development. A tall, planted beech hedgerow and tree planting within open space on the east side of the road, filter views from the road into the site (as indicated on **Photoviewpoint EDP 4**).

Barkby Lane

- 4.15 This rural lane links Syston with the village of Barkby, over 1km to the south-west of the site. The southern edge of Syston is openly visible to the north when travelling east towards Barkby, until increasing vegetation alongside the road and Barkby Brook filter views. The site is screened in views from the road by the new residential development under construction to the south of Barkby Road. Approaching Barkby there are intermittent gap views to the north-east, in which the new residential development forms a prominent extension to Syston, and mature trees lining Ridgemere Lane feature on the horizon (**Photoviewpoint EDP 10**).

Barkby Thorpe Lane

- 4.16 This rural lane runs along the rising hillslope up from Barkby Lane immediately east of the railway line to Barkby Thorpe settlement. There are views across the lower hillslope and lowland fields towards the prominent hard settlement edge of Syston to the north, which screens views towards the site. Views from the higher section of the lane are more filtered by the wooded setting of Barkby settlement at the base of the hillslope, but

include partial distant views of the site beyond the new residential development, as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 11**).

Residential Dwellings/Groups

- 4.17 This appraisal has focused on the assessment of views from publicly accessible locations. Views from private residential properties, although likely to be of high to very high sensitivity to changes in the view, are not protected by national planning guidance or local planning policy. Good site masterplanning of the development site, however, has considered the visual amenity of domestic dwellings in close proximity to the proposals. **Site Photographs EDP L3** and **L4**, looking across the site towards the existing settlement edge, illustrate intervisibility between close proximity dwellings and the site which are referred to below.

Empingham Drive

- 4.18 The closest residential dwellings to the site are located on the existing settlement edge of Syston, to the north of Barkby Road and west of the site, on Empingham Drive. There are a few properties with front elevations looking directly towards the site at distances of approximately 30m, however the tall beech hedgerow along the eastern boundary of the estate filters views into the site.
- 4.19 Residential dwellings on a small cul-de-sac off Empingham Drive, which lie approximately 30m west of the site. may have close-range views from rear elevation upper windows through a gap in boundary vegetation into the central part of the site. Views from ground floor windows are likely to be screened by rear garden fencing and sheds, and partially screened by the southern end of an earth bund within the open space. Properties opposite the access to a residential parking area will have views into the site but framed by intervening properties.

John Frear Drive

- 4.20 Residential dwellings on a cul-de-sac off John Frear Drive, which back onto the open space buffer on the eastern edge of the estate, are located approximately 20m from the site's western boundary to the central field. However, a line of mature trees along the boundary strongly filters views between these properties and the site. Rear garden fencing and sheds, and bunding within the open space buffer, screens views from ground floor windows into the site.

Hallaton Drive

- 4.21 Residential dwellings on Hallaton Drive that back onto the open space buffer on the eastern edge of the estate are located approximately 20m from the site's western boundary to the northern field. The rising ground level of the northern field is above that of the adjoining estate (as illustrated in **Site Photograph EDP L4**). The dwellings will have direct close-range views from upper floor windows into the northern field of the site.

Rear garden fencing and sheds, and planting within the open space buffer, are likely to screen views from ground floor windows.

Barkby Road

- 4.22 Two residential dwellings on the southern side of Barkby Road and directly south-west of the site, will have close range oblique views looking north-east across the road into the site, but partially filtered by vegetation on the north-west boundary of the site. Further west along Barkby Road (Liberty Gardens frontage dwellings), site boundary vegetation and tree planting in the open space frontage to the Empingham Drive estate will filter views into the southern part of the site, whilst Empingham Drive built development will screen views into the central and northern parts of the site.

Liberty Gardens - New Residential Development south of Barkby Road

- 4.23 Residential dwellings on the eastern and north-eastern edge of this new development will have front or rear elevation views towards the site, as illustrated in **Site Photograph EDP L3**. Subject to the orientation of the dwellings these views will be largely oblique, with some direct views, and at distances between approximately 50m and 150m. Other dwellings within the new development are likely to feature in these views due to the density and layout of built development. Planting proposals within the open space buffer have not yet established sufficiently to effectively filter intervisibility with the new development.

Syston Grange

- 4.24 This group of buildings at the intersection of Queniborough and Barkby Road includes a residential property with windows facing west towards Queniborough Road and Syston, as illustrated in **Site Photograph EDP L2**. The property is well contained by mature vegetation and conifer trees, with filtered and gappy, oblique views towards the site from upper floor windows. The traffic lights and overhead services will appear in the foreground of these views.

Barkby Road (north of Ridgemere Lane)

- 4.25 There are scattered wayside residential dwellings along this section of road, including two bungalows on the west side of the road, at distances of approximately 250m and 400m to the north-east of the site. However, as illustrated in **Site Photograph EDP L1**, the topography of the ridgeline to the north of the site screens ground level intervisibility between the site and these properties. Furthermore, mature hedgerows, shrubs and trees associated with these properties largely screened views out from the dwellings, with only potential glimpsed or gap views towards the site and the existing settlement edge of Syston.

Redlands Farm

- 4.26 This farm dwelling is located to the north-east of Sutton Grange and approximately 280m east of the site. Mature hedgerows contain the house, screening low-level views out, whilst intervening mature trees within the farmstead and along Queniborough Road further filter views towards the site, which would be viewed in the context of Syston settlement edge.
- 4.27 Other residential dwellings with potential views towards the site are located 1km distant to the north, on the southern edge of Queniborough, and to the south, on the northern edge of Barkby, off Barkby Road. Intervening hedgerows and hedgerow trees will filter views from these receptors; in particular, new tree planting along a hedgerow near Queniborough will in time strongly filter views looking south. Furthermore, the site is not apparent in views from the north due to undulating topography. In all views, development on the site would be viewed in the context of the existing modern settlement edge of Syston.

Other Receptors

- 4.28 Barkby Cemetery is located approximately 830m to the south of the site. It is enclosed by hedgerows and mature trees which filter views out into the surrounding countryside. There is the potential for filtered views towards the site, although it is partially screened by the new residential development to the south of Barkby Road. This receptor would be of medium sensitivity to change in the view.

Section 5

The Proposed Development and Mitigation

The Proposed Development

5.1 The Design and Access Statement supporting this application provides full details of the development proposals. With reference to the Concept Masterplan (see **Appendix EDP 1**), these comprise:

- Up to 195 residential dwellings;
- Access off Barkby Road;
- Local Equipped Area of Play;
- Public open space comprising interlinked areas for informal rest and recreation and circulatory linear areas along all boundaries;
- Existing public footpath retained with new pedestrian links through the development to Barkby Road;
- Soft landscaping to frontages of dwellings and within street layout; and
- Areas of structural landscape proposals as described below.

Published Landscape Strategy Guidelines for the Wreake Valley LCA

5.2 When considering mitigation and the 'landscape fit' of a development proposal, it is important to consider any published assessments and how they might inform this. The landscape strategy for the Wreake Valley LCA is "*to conserve and enhance*".

5.3 Existing field boundary hedgerows will be retained, with the exception of limited sections removed for access from Barkby Road and internal accesses. The hedgerows will form the focus for the developments strategic open space and green infrastructure. As described above, the hedgerows are of low to poor quality and will be reinforced with additional native species to fill gaps and enhance biodiversity, and brought into regular, long-term management.

5.4 There are currently no notable hedgerow trees within the site's hedgerow boundaries, and so additional hedgerow trees will contribute towards an overall net gain in these features.

5.5 Guidelines for the LCA which are of relevance to the landscape strategy for the site include the following:

- “New development should ... have regard for the views across the valley”, and “retain views of the village churches”;
- *Enhance the Wreake Valley landscape character around the fringes of the existing larger settlements by increasing tree cover”;*
- “Preference will be given to the use of tree and shrub species locally native to the Wreake Valley character area in planting schemes”;
- “Seek opportunities for the creation and enhancement of ... habitat types typical of the Wreake valley” which in terms of appropriateness to the site include ‘hedgerows and hedgerow trees’, and ‘wetland habitats’ in the form of pond and shallow scrapes.

5.6 Locally native species characteristic to the Wreake Valley LCA which may be appropriate for planting on the site include:

- Hedgerows: Common hawthorn (*Crateagus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*);
- Trees: Field maple (*Acer campestre*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*), Wild cherry/guan (*Prunus avium*), and Pendunculate oak (*Quercus robur*); and
- Wetland: willow species including White willow (*Salix alba*), Goat willow (*Salix caprea*), Grey willow (*Salix cinerea*), and Osier (*Salix viminalis*). Aspen (*Populus tremula*).

5.7 Although ash is an important species in the landscape, it will be omitted from new planting within the development due to the risk of Chalara die-back of ash (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*).

Overall Landscape Strategy

5.8 The Concept Masterplan is contained in **Appendix EDP 1** with the Landscape Strategy at **Plan EDP 8**.

5.9 The overall landscape strategy is to provide linear open space on the edges of the site to allow tree planting which will filter and soften the proposed development in views from the surrounding countryside, and protect landscape character. A wider buffer is proposed along the western boundary.

5.10 The masterplan includes strategically positioned public open space (POS) and view corridors to maintain views across the site and valley towards Barkby church spire, a characteristic feature of the local landscape.

- 5.11 The proposed development will be integrated into the existing settlement edge through strategic POS which will be designed to integrate with the open space of the existing residential development adjoining the site. This will provide not only interconnecting open space and pedestrian links, but also Green Infrastructure and habitat connectivity.

Proposed Landscape Mitigation

- 5.12 The landscape and visual sensitivities of the site have influenced the masterplanning process through an iterative process. Thus, the scheme proposals incorporate a degree of integral (or embedded) mitigation designed by EDP to avoid or reduce potential landscape and visual effects. These measures can be summarised as follows:

- Eastern landscape buffer to Queniborough Road to include tree planting to filter and soften views of the development and protect the character of the rural landscape to the east of the site;
- Southern landscape buffer to Barkby Road to include tree planting to filter and soften views of the development and protect the character of the rural landscape to the south of the site; and
- Tree planting along the northern boundary of the site to filter and soften views of the development in views from the north, whilst incorporating a framed view across the development to retain a view towards Barkby church spire from public footpath I84 between Queniborough and Syston.

- 5.13 In adopting the above mitigation measures, the proposed scheme design serves to reduce the magnitude of potential landscape and visual effects on the identified baseline receptors. These proposals, however, go further; they contribute to the restoration and management of landscape features that contribute to the character and visual and wildlife amenity of the area. In the context of published landscape character assessments, this includes:

- Infilling gaps in hedgerows; and
- Hedgerow tree planting.

Proposed Landscape Enhancement

- 5.14 The above mitigation measures include additional tree planting, increased species diversity in hedgerows, and habitat diversification in the form of sustainable drainage system (SuDS) feature attenuation basins, that are inherent within the proposals as shown on the Concept Masterplan and will contribute to the enhancement of the landscape. The proposal would also provide significant benefits for the local community including: new areas of informal POS across the previously privately-owned field together with new areas of attractive, accessible, linked POS across the site. The detailed design

of these areas will be crucial to maximising their value for informal recreation, visual and wildlife amenity.

Section 6 Assessment of Effects

Introduction

- 6.1 In this section, the predicted effects on landscape character and visual amenity are summarised. The assessment uses the thresholds for magnitude, sensitivity and significance defined at **Appendix EDP 2** as a guide, but moderated where appropriate with professional judgement. Professional judgement is an important part of the assessment process; it is neither 'pro' nor 'anti' development but acknowledges that development may result in beneficial change as well as landscape harm. The assessment also takes account of the likely effectiveness of any proposed mitigation.

Predicted Effects on the Character of the Site

- 6.2 Predicted effects on landscape character are structured using the same format used to describe the site in **Section 4**:
- **Physical landscape** – the concept proposals would result in only localised grading of the landscape to facilitate the development. The existing drainage ditches would be retained within green open space corridors and linked with proposed SuDS attenuation basins as part of the drainage strategy for the development. It is predicted that changes to the topographical and hydrological character of the site would be low, resulting in **minor** effects, which would be a combination of adverse effects, and beneficial effects in respect of drainage;
 - **Visual and sensory character** - the introduction of residential development on this greenfield site would extend the existing urban character of the eastern edge of Syston across open fields and up to Queniborough Road. Although the proposed development would include areas of open space, these would contain a notable increase in trees, reducing the sense of openness. The change in visual and sensory character of the site would lead to a very high magnitude of change, resulting in **major/moderate** adverse effects;
 - **Landscape fabric and habitats** - the existing field boundary hedgerows and trees, including internal mature oak tree, would be retained, with loss of sections of hedgerow to accommodate new access from Barkby Road, and internal road access and pedestrian links within the site. The western section of the hedgerow on the southern boundary of the site would be removed to accommodate a new pedestrian link along Barkby Road. The loss of this section of hedgerow would be compensated for by a replacement species-rich hedgerow planted behind the pedestrian link. The existing low quality and poor quality field boundary hedgerows would be strengthened and enhanced with appropriate native species planting to fill gaps and increase biodiversity. New tree planting along the edges of the site and within open space

would increase and enhance the existing sparse hedgerow trees and overall trees within the site. In the long term, the maturing tree and hedgerow planting within the development would mitigate any losses, as well as enhancing landscape fabric and habitat. The residual magnitude of change would be medium, resulting in **moderate/minor** beneficial effects; and

- **Historic landscape character and cultural connections** – there are no known historic or cultural associations with the site, which appears to have always been in agricultural land use, other than the eastern section of public right of way (J37) which runs through the site and into the existing settlement, where the western section of the footpath acquires an urban character context. The footpath would be retained within open space in the extended settlement. The magnitude of change to these aspects of the landscape is predicted to be low, resulting in **minor** adverse effects.

Predicted Effects on the Character of the Site's Surroundings

- 6.3 The landscape context of the site, to the east of Syston, is largely representative of the key characteristics of the host Wreake Valley LCA. Most significantly, the LCA is acknowledged to be subject to the urban influence of Syston, so that an extension of the existing settlement edge on the scale of the site would lead to a **negligible** effect on the wider LCA.
- 6.4 When considering the effect of the development on the restricted area of the LCA, which falls within the visual influence of the proposed development, it is clear from the site and Photoviewpoint images contained in this LVA, that the existing edge of Syston is prominent in views across the local landscape context of the site. Thus, although the proposed development would result in an increased scale of effect on the more local scale, it would not be out of context with the existing character of the landscape in the vicinity of the Syston.
- 6.5 Furthermore, the landscape fabric of the LCA is noted to suffer from neglected and lost hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The retention and enhancement of these features on the site, including the compensatory replacement of the section of the southern boundary hedgerow removed to facilitate the introduction of a pedestrian footpath link along Barkby Road, would lead to beneficial effects, although these would be negligible in terms of the wider LCA.
- 6.6 Church spires marking the locations of villages are a characteristic of the LCA, and although the proposed development would inevitably interrupt views across this part of the valley, it is only a central section of public footpath I84 to the north-west of the site that would have views towards a church impacted. Thus, the proposed development has retained a view corridor through the development towards St Mary's Church, Barkby as illustrated on the Concept Masterplan (**Appendix EDP 1**) to retain a view towards the church.

- 6.7 Taking the above factors into account, it is predicted that the proposed development would result to an overall medium magnitude of change on the localised landscape context of the site, and **moderate/minor** adverse effects. Given the scale of the development, these would diminish in the wider landscape character area.

Predicted Effects on Visual Amenity

- 6.8 Inevitably, it is the views from the public footpath and roads bounding the site that would experience the greatest effects as the open fields are replaced by residential development. From public footpath J37 where it bounds the site to the north (**Photoviewpoint EDP 6**), the proposed development would introduce residential dwellings at close range, which would interrupt the existing open views across farmland towards the wooded backdrop of Barkby in the distance, and link Syston Grange with the settlement. The magnitude of change to the view would be very high, resulting in major adverse effects in the short term. Despite the filtering and softening of the development by the maturing landscape scheme on the northern boundary of the site, the long-term effect would remain **major** adverse due to the loss of open views across the valley.
- 6.9 In views looking eastwards along Barkby Road at the south-western edge of the site (**Photoviewpoint EDP 3**), the proposed development would introduce a new pedestrian footpath link and access to the site, and highway improvements to a road already impacted by urban highway elements. These works would result in the loss of the western section of the site boundary hedgerow during the construction phase, but a replacement hedge would be planted behind the new pedestrian footpath link. The residential dwellings would be set back beyond a landscaped edge, with tree planting which would filter views of the development, minimising the impact of the development as receptors approach from Syston, due to the filtering effect of off-site planting (beech hedge) on the adjacent residential development.
- 6.10 The magnitude of change on this approach (low sensitivity due to the urban edge) would be high in the short and long term, resulting in **moderate/minor** adverse effects. The replacement section of hedgerow and maturing tree planting along the site frontage would soften and filter views of the development in the long term, but reduce the sense of openness, and the pedestrian link would further urbanise the character of the view.
- 6.11 As receptors travel past the site (**Photoviewpoint EDP 4**), the change from open field to residential development would be a notable change to the views to the north of the road. The magnitude of change to views from the road (medium sensitivity) would be high, resulting in **moderate** adverse effects in the short and long term, despite the filtering effect of tree planting along the southern edge of the site.
- 6.12 Public views from the east towards the site are restricted to the western section of Ridgemere Lane, from where there are elevated views looking down across the site, and from the road access to Syston Grange and Redlands Farm which links with the wider PRow network (**Photoviewpoint EDP 5**) to the east, the proposed development would appear at close range to the viewer. Although the settlement edge is already a defining

feature in the view beyond the site, the closer proximity of the extended urban edge and loss of intervening open fields would result in a medium magnitude change, and **moderate** adverse effects in the short term.

- 6.13 As tree planting matures in the long term, there would be some beneficial effect as the settlement edge is softened in views, but this would be offset by the increase in built mass closer to Queniborough Road, and thus the overall effect would remain **moderate** adverse.
- 6.14 From the western section of Ridgemere Lane, the proposed development would be filtered by intervening mature trees, with Syston forming a backdrop. Therefore, the proposed development would not introduce a new element to the landscape, but rather extend the existing settlement edge towards the viewer. The proposed landscape scheme would introduce tree planting along the eastern boundary of the site, increasing the filtering and softening of the settlement edge in views. The magnitude of change to views from Ridgemere Lane (**Photoviewpoint EDP 7**) would see a slight change in the view as built development is brought within 20m of Queniborough Road, resulting in a low magnitude of change, and **minor** adverse effects in the short term.
- 6.15 As tree planting matures in the long term, there would be some beneficial effect as the settlement edge is softened in views, but this would be offset by the increase in built mass closer to Queniborough Road, and thus the overall effect would remain **minor** adverse.
- 6.16 To the south of the site, there is the potential for views across the open fields and low field boundary hedgerows from Queniborough Road and public footpath J17. The site is visible from the road at the northern edge of Barkby cemetery and up to the northern edge of the site. From the footpath, partial open or filtered views are available from the southern section. Both these receptors are represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 1**. The proposed development would appear a distant extension to the new residential development south of Barkby Road but would extend the settlement across the fields which currently separate Syston from Queniborough Road, and offer views of a distant ridgeline to the north.
- 6.17 The magnitude of change to the view would be medium, resulting in **moderate** (high sensitivity) to **moderate/minor** (medium sensitivity) adverse effects in the short term. As tree planting matures on the southern edge of the site, it would increasingly filter and soften views of the residential extension, integrating the development into the distant treed context beyond the site in the long term. The residual magnitude of change would reduce to low magnitude, resulting in **moderate/minor** to **minor** adverse effects. Moving along the road and closer to the site, the level of effect would increase to **moderate** adverse.
- 6.18 From the valley to the south-west, vegetation increasingly filters views, but the site is primarily screened by the new development to the south of Barkby Road, so that only a minor part of the eastern edge of the proposed development may potentially be visible (as illustrated by **Photoviewpoint EDP 2** from footpath J17 and **Photoviewpoint EDP 10**

from Barkby Lane). In the context of the existing settlement edge to the fore of the site, the proposed development would appear as a very minor extension to the existing settlement, resulting in **negligible** change at most.

- 6.19 From public footpaths on the higher ground to the south (**Photoviewpoints EDP 11 and 12**), where views across the valley and towards the site are not screened by trees around Barkby, the new residential development to the south of Barkby Road again forms a notable new feature in the views and largely screens the site. If the proposed development was visible, at distances up to 2km, it would appear as a very minor part of the view and as an extension to the existing settlement. Thus, the magnitude of change to these elevated views, both in the short and long term, would be very low, leading to **negligible** adverse or **no effects**.
- 6.20 As illustrated on **Plan EDP L7**, visibility to the north is limited by Queniborough settlement to 1km, and views of the site are restricted by topography and intervening field boundary hedgerow vegetation so that public views towards the proposed development would be restricted to sections of public footpath I84 between Queniborough and Syston. At the northern end of the footpath, as illustrated by **Photoviewpoint EDP 8** (which would also represent views from properties on the southern edge of Queniborough), views are strongly filtered by intervening vegetation, including new tree belt planting along the hedgerow on the far side of the foreground field, which would increasingly screen views of the development as the trees mature in the long term.
- 6.21 In the short term, there may be filtered views of the roofscape of new residential dwellings on the northern edge of the proposed development, but these would be perceived to form an extension to the existing visible settlement edge of Syston. Taking into account the distance between this receptor and the site, the existing settlement context, and filtering of views, the magnitude of change to the most northerly views of the site are predicted to be very low, resulting in minor adverse effects in the short term, reducing to **negligible** effects in the long term, as tree planting on the northern boundary of the site and intervening tree planting matures.
- 6.22 Along the central section of public footpath I84 (as represented by **Photoviewpoint EDP 9**) there are views across open field towards the site, with St Mary's Church at Barkby forming a minor feature on the wooded skyline. Again, intervening field boundary hedgerows would filter low-level views of new residential dwellings on the northern edge of the site (eastern section of the northern boundary set back in this view and so housing would be less visible). Sparse hedgerow trees would allow partial open and distant views of the new roofscape. As above, the development would be seen as an extension of the existing settlement edge. The Concept Masterplan (**Appendix EDP 1**) incorporates a view corridor centred on the church spire, so that on a short section of the footpath, a view toward the church would be retained, albeit framed by the new development.
- 6.23 The magnitude of change to this central section of the footpath is predicted to be low, resulting in **moderate/minor** adverse effects in the short term, reducing to **minor** in the long term as tree planting on the northern boundary of the site filters and softens views of

the development, integrating it into the wooded landscape to the east of Queniborough Road.

Section 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 EDP is an independent environmental consultancy and Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute, specialising in the assessment of developments at all scales across the UK.
- 7.2 This report has summarised the findings of a comprehensive landscape data trawl and field appraisal undertaken by EDP's landscape team (**Sections 2, 3 and 4**). In **Section 5** the proposed development is described with any proposed mitigation. **Section 6** undertakes an assessment of the likely landscape effects, having regard to the above and based on a combination of the thresholds set out in **Appendix EDP 2** coupled with professional judgement.
- 7.3 In terms of the character of the site, there will be a significant level adverse effect upon the visual and sensory character of the site when it changes from open fields to residential development; this is an inevitable consequence of development on green field land. However, the landscape strategy for the proposed development would strengthen and enhance the low to poor quality of the field boundary hedgerows, and sparse hedgerow trees within the site. This would lead to beneficial effects upon the landscape fabric and habitats within the site.
- 7.4 In terms of the immediate landscape context of the site, development of the site would form a further modern residential extension to the eastern edge of Syston, which has already been extended in recent years, creating a very prominent hard urban interface to the surrounding rural edge landscape. This reflects the urbanising influences of urban settlements such as Syston on the Wreake Valley LCA, as described in the published Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment. Indeed, the Charnwood Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Appraisal assessed the area in which the site is located to "*have Medium High capacity to accommodate development*", and "*could form a natural extension to the existing urban form*".
- 7.5 It also noted that development on the site could "*provide an opportunity to mitigate the impact of the urban edge on the wider landscape*", and thus the proposed development has responded by providing landscape buffers up to 10m in width to mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding landscape. Thus, this appraisal finds that development of the site would result in moderate/minor adverse effects on the local landscape context, and an overall negligible effect upon the wider Wreake Valley LCA.
- 7.6 A sensitive characteristic of the landscape are the views across the valley and towards village churches. In response to this, the Concept Masterplan has incorporated a designed view corridor through the development, to retain a view towards St Mary's Church, Barkby, from the public footpath to the north and from within the development.
- 7.7 In terms of visual amenity, the openness of the landscape between Syston and Queniborough Road would inevitably lead to significant level effects upon those public

footpath and road receptors with close range and open views of the site. However, as Photoviewpoints and site photographs in this report illustrate, in the wider landscape, the site is visible in the context of the adjoining settlement edge, and partially screened by the latest residential development to the south of Barkby Road in views from the south and south-west. Furthermore, natural topography and trees and woodland in the landscape contain views to a relatively small area of the valley to the east of Syston.

- 7.8 Therefore, this appraisal finds that the effects of the proposed development would be localised due to the level of physical containment by Syston to the west, undulating topography and Queniborough to the north, and high ground to the east and south beyond Barkby Lane. Visibility of the site is further restricted by the strongly treed/wooded character of the landscape to the east of Queniborough Road and around Barkby.
- 7.9 The proposed development would merge into the modern and recently extended eastern urban edge of Syston, which already exerts an influence on the surrounding landscape. Furthermore, in accordance with landscape guidance for the Wreake Valley LCA, the landscape strategy for the proposed development would conserve and enhance existing trees and hedgerows where possible, and introduce substantial new planting within landscape buffers around the edges of the site to reduce the impact of the urban edge on the surrounding countryside.

Appendix EDP 1
Concept Masterplan

This page has been left blank intentionally.

Appendix EDP 2 Assessment Methodology

Recording the Baseline

Landscape Resource

- A2.1 A description of the baseline character and condition of the different landscape receptors (topography and hydrology; landscape fabric and habitats; cultural and historic landscape; perceptual and sensory) with comparison against adopted character assessment, other published characterisations or, in the absence of these, EDP's own landscape characterisation. Considerations on the value of the landscape are drawn from GLVIA 3 Box 5.1.
- A2.2 When considering landscape value, GLVIA advocates that the starting point should be a review of existing landscape designations, including those at a local and national level.
- A2.3 Not being located within a designated landscape does not mean the site has no value in a landscape sense, and the GLVIA makes this clear at paragraph 3.26 where it states *"The fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value"*.
- A2.4 The issue of whether a landscape should reach the threshold of being a 'valued landscape' at a local or national scale as determined by paragraph 174(a) of the NPPF has been tested many times at appeal. These appeal decisions make it clear that as well as statutory designation, other factors have the potential to result a landscape being considered 'valued', including community or historical associations specific to a site or area.
- A2.5 Presence of such associations, however, do not automatically mean the landscape is valued, with site-specific consideration and objective assessment required in every case to determine this.
- A2.6 In the absence of national or local designation, GLVIA suggests how value might be assessed, setting out at paragraph 5.27:
- "Where local designations are not in use a fresh approach may be needed. As a starting point reference to existing Landscape Character Assessments and associated planning policies and/or landscape strategies and guidelines may give an indication of which landscape types or areas, or individual elements or aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are particularly valued"*.
- A2.7 The GLVIA assists further in regard of assigning value. Box 5.1 on page 84 of GLVIA 3 identifies eight criteria relevant to the judgements about local value and which form the basis for objective landscape assessment. These criteria are reproduced in **Table EDP A2.1** below.

Table EDP A2.1: Consideration of the Site against GLVIA Value Criteria

Value Driver
<p>Landscape Quality (Condition) A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.</p>
<p>Scenic Quality The term used to describe landscapes which appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).</p>
<p>Rarity The presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.</p>
<p>Representativeness Whether the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features and elements, which are considered particularly important examples.</p>
<p>Conservation Interests The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of a landscape as well as having value in their own right.</p>
<p>Recreation Value Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.</p>
<p>Perceptual Aspects A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities and/or tranquillity.</p>
<p>Associations Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or event in history that contribute to perceptions of natural beauty of the area.</p>

Visual Amenity

A2.8 Visual receptors are identified through theoretical visibility testing, followed by site-based recording of actual views and visual amenity. Visual amenity is described from specific locations which may also be represented by Photoviewpoints. Visual amenity may also be described for part, or all of a route, with reference made to viewpoints that do not have views.

The Proposed Development

A2.9 Description of the proposed development including – but not limited to - its scale, siting, layout and characteristics. This description also includes landscape mitigation measures, derived from published landscape character guidelines and, if available, as an illustrated plan.

Mitigation

A2.10 Mitigation measures will be described, where relevant, to demonstrate how adverse effects can be prevented/avoided, offset or remedied. These may be primary i.e. embedded into the design; part of construction and/or long term operational management practices, and/or secondary measures.

EDP Assessment of Effects

Landscape

A2.11 Description of the interactions likely to be experienced by the individual dimensions of landscape character and how this affects overall landscape character.

Visual

A2.12 Description of the interactions likely to be experienced by visual receptors at a specific point and/or in the broader context or along a route.

Assessment Criteria

A2.13 The set of tables below set out the criteria for considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptor, the magnitude of change to that receptor, and considers this with respect to landscape and visual receptors separately. These criteria are reproduced in **Tables EDP A2.2 to A2.4** below.

Table EDP A2.2: Consideration of the Overall Sensitivity of Landscape Baseline

EDP Assessment Terminology and Definitions	
Landscape Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
Very High	<p>Value: Nationally/Internationally designated/valued countryside and landscape features; strong/distinctive landscape characteristics; absence of landscape detractors.</p> <p>Susceptibility: Strong/distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; absence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in excellent condition. Landscapes with clear and widely recognised cultural value. Landscapes with a high level of tranquillity.</p>
High	<p>Value: Locally designated/valued countryside (e.g. Areas of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas) and landscape features; many distinctive landscape characteristics; very few landscape detractors.</p>

EDP Assessment Terminology and Definitions	
Landscape Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
	Susceptibility: Many distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; very few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in good condition. The landscape has a low capacity for change as a result of potential changes to defining character.
Medium	Value: Undesignated countryside and landscape features; some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors.
	Susceptibility: Some distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in fair condition. Landscape is able to accommodate some change as a result.
Low	Value: Undesignated countryside and landscape features; few distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors.
	Susceptibility: Few distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in poor condition. Landscape is able to accommodate large amounts of change without changing these characteristics fundamentally.
Very Low	Value: Undesignated countryside and landscape features; absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; despoiled / degraded by the presence of many landscape detractors.
	Susceptibility: Absence of distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of many landscape detractors; landscape receptors in very poor condition. As such landscape is able to accommodate considerable change.

Table EDP A2.3: Consideration of the Overall Sensitivity of Visual Baseline

EDP Assessment Terminology and Definitions	
Visual Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
Very High	Value/Susceptibility: view is designed/has intentional association with surroundings; is recorded in published material; from a publicly accessible heritage asset/designated/promoted viewpoint; national/internationally designated right of way; protected/recognised in planning policy designation.
	Examples: may include views from residential properties, National Trails; promoted holiday road routes; designated countryside/landscape features with public access; visitors to heritage assets of national importance; Open Access Land.
High	Value/Susceptibility: view of clear value but may not be formally recognised e.g. framed view of scenic value or destination/summit views; inferred that it may have value for local residents; locally promoted route or PROW.
	Examples: may include from recreational locations where there is some appreciation of the visual context/landscape e.g. golf, fishing; themed rights of way with a local association; National Trust land; panoramic viewpoints marked on OS maps; road routes promoted in tourist guides and/or for their scenic value.
Medium	Value/Susceptibility: view is not widely promoted or recorded in published sources; may be typical of those experienced by an identified receptor; minor road routes through rural/scenic areas.

EDP Assessment Terminology and Definitions	
Visual Baseline - Overall Sensitivity	
	Examples: may include people engaged in outdoor sport not especially influenced by an appreciation of the wider landscape e.g. pitch sports; views from minor road routes passing through rural or scenic areas.
Low	<p>Value/Susceptibility: view of clearly lesser value than similar views from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible.</p> <p>Examples: may include major road routes; rail routes; receptor is at a place of work but visual surroundings have limited relevance.</p>
Very Low	<p>Value/Susceptibility: View may be affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued.</p> <p>Examples: may include people at their place of work, indoor recreational or leisure facilities or other locations where views of the wider landscape have little of no importance.</p>

Table EDP A2.4: Consideration of the Magnitude of Change

Magnitude of Change	
(Considers Scale of Proposal/Geographical Extent/Duration and Reversibility/Proportion)	
Very High	<p>Landscape: total loss/major alteration to key receptors/characteristics of the baseline; addition of elements that strongly conflict or integrate with the baseline.</p> <p>Visual: substantial change to the baseline, forming a new, defining focus and having a defining influence on the view.</p>
High	<p>Landscape: notable loss/alteration/addition to one or more key receptors/characteristics of the baseline; or, addition of prominent conflicting elements.</p> <p>Visual: additions are clearly noticeable and part of the view would be fundamentally altered.</p>
Medium	<p>Landscape: partial loss/alteration to one or more key receptors/characteristics; Addition of elements that are evident but do not necessarily conflict with the key characteristics of the existing landscape.</p> <p>Visual: the proposed development will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor.</p>
Low	<p>Landscape: minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape receptors/characteristics; Additional elements may not be uncharacteristic within existing landscape.</p> <p>Visual: proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.</p>
Very Low	<p>Landscape: barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.</p> <p>Visual: proposed development will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly altered would be similar to the baseline.</p>
Imperceptible	<i>In some circumstances, changes at representative viewpoints or receptors will be lower than 'Very Low' and changes will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to negligible effects.</i>

Effects Matrix

A2.14 Based on the judgements above and the description of mitigation, the level of effect is assessed in the first year after completion of the development (Year 1). This is 'the worst case' and, if necessary at 15+ years when landscape proposals function more effectively. Effects of moderate or higher may be a material consideration. The tables below set out the matrix for defining effects and also a brief description of the effect level.

Table EDP A2.5: Level of Effects

Overall Sensitivity	Overall Magnitude of Change				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Very High	Substantial	Major	Major/- Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor
High	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/Negligible
Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible
Very Low	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/None

Table EDP A2.6: Definition of Effects

Definition of Effects	
Substantial:	Effects which are in complete variance to the baseline landscape resource or visual amenity.
Major:	Effects which result in noticeable and fundamental alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
Moderate:	Effects which result in noticeable but non-fundamental alterations to the baseline landscape resource or visual amenity.
Minor:	Effects which result in slight alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
Negligible:	Effects which result in barely perceptible alterations to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
None:	No detectable alteration to the landscape resource or visual amenity.
Consequence:	Effects can be positive, adverse or neutral i.e. if no change arises.
Duration:	Long term (20+ years); Medium-long term (10-20 years); Medium term (5-10 years); Short term (1 - 5 years); Temporary (>12 months); Construction.

Appendix EDP 3 Relevant Extracts from Local Policy

Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004) saved policies:

General Principles for Areas of Countryside, Green Wedge and Local Separation

6.12 POLICY CT/1

Land lying outside the defined Limits to Development is variously identified on the Proposals Map as Countryside, Green Wedge and Areas of Local Separation.

Development within these areas of generally open land will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will be granted for the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for uses suitable in scale and nature, and small-scale new built development, where there would not be a significant adverse environmental impact and the proposal would:

- i) be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or
- ii) facilitate the diversification of the rural economy; or
- iii) improve facilities for recreation, or leisure uses; or
- iv) implement strategically important schemes for mineral related uses, transport infrastructure, and for public services or utilities.

In all cases it should be demonstrated that the proposed development could not reasonably be located within or adjacent to an existing settlement.

(See also in particular Policies CT/2, CT/3, CT/4, CT/6, CT/15)

6.13 National planning policy guidance emphasises the need to protect the countryside for its own sake. With the reduced dependency upon agriculture the imperative now is to enable new forms of rural enterprise to sustain the rural economy while protecting the countryside for the sake of its natural beauty, the diversity of its landscape and its ecological, agricultural and recreational value. Policy CT/1 sets out those uses that will be acceptable in principle in the countryside and will apply with other countryside policies in the plan.

6.14 The Structure Plan also requires the definition of Green Wedges and allows for the identification of areas of local separation as discrete policy areas quite distinct from the countryside.

6.15 The guiding principles within these areas of essentially open land will be to ensure that new development is small scale and does not adversely affect the appearance and character of the landscape. Wherever possible new development should be focused on towns and villages in locations which reduce travel needs and extend transport choice accessibility. Particular care must be exercised in allowing development even for so called "soft uses" such as recreation. The quality of agricultural land and the landscape character will be important considerations.

Development in the Countryside

6.16 POLICY CT/2

In areas defined as Countryside, development(s) acceptable in principle will be permitted where it would not harm the character and appearance of the countryside and provided it could safeguard its historic, nature conservation, amenity, and other local interest.

(See also in particular Policies CT/1, CT/6)

6.17 Whilst it is recognised some new development will be necessary outside settlements, the countryside within the plan area will be protected from inappropriate or harmful developments. The range of developments acceptable in principle is defined in Policy CT/1.

Charnwood Local Plan 2011-2028 Core Strategy (adopted 2015)

Policy CS 11

Landscape and Countryside

We will support and protect the character of our landscape and countryside by:

- **requiring new developments to protect landscape character and to reinforce sense of place and local distinctiveness by taking account of relevant local Landscape Character Assessments;**
- **requiring new development to take into account and mitigate its impact on tranquillity;**
- **requiring new development to maintain the separate identities of our towns and villages;**
- **supporting rural economic development, or residential development which has a strong relationship with the operational requirements of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other land based industries and contributes to a low carbon economy, in accordance with Policy CS10;**
- **supporting the provision of community services and facilities that meet proven local needs as identified by a Neighbourhood Plan or other community-led plan; and**
- **supporting rural communities by allowing housing development for local needs in accordance with Policy CS3.**

We will protect the predominantly open and undeveloped character of Areas of Local Separation unless new development clearly maintains the separation between the built-up areas of these settlements.

Policy CS 12

Green Infrastructure

We will protect and enhance our green infrastructure assets for their community, economic and environmental values.

We will work with our partners to define, protect and enhance the Charnwood Forest Regional Park and support the aims of the National Forest Strategy by:

- **supporting the woodland economy, rural diversification, including sustainable and green tourism which protects and enhances the distinctive Charnwood Forest landscape;**
- **seeking planting from developments that are within the Charnwood Forest Regional Park that meet National Forest Planting Guidelines; and**
- **securing green links between developments and the Charnwood Forest**

We will support proposals that relate to the River Soar and Grand Union Canal Corridor which:

- **provide high quality walking and cycling links between the corridor and our towns and villages;**
- **deliver hubs and other high quality tourism opportunities linked to the River Soar at Loughborough, Barrow upon Soar and Thurmaston; and**
- **protect and enhance water bodies and resources.**

We will protect and enhance our Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Areas by:

- **enhancing our network of green infrastructure assets through strategic developments in accordance with Policies CS19, CS20, CS21, CS22 and CS23;**
- **addressing the identified needs in open space provision; and**
- **supporting development in Green Wedges that:**
 - **retains the open and undeveloped character of the Green Wedge;**
 - **retains and creates green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas; and**
 - **retains and enhances public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation.**

Policy CS 2

High Quality Design

We will require new developments to make a positive contribution to Charnwood resulting in places where people would wish to live through high quality, inclusive design and, where appropriate, architectural excellence. Proposals should respond positively to their context and reinforce a sense of place.

We will require new developments to:

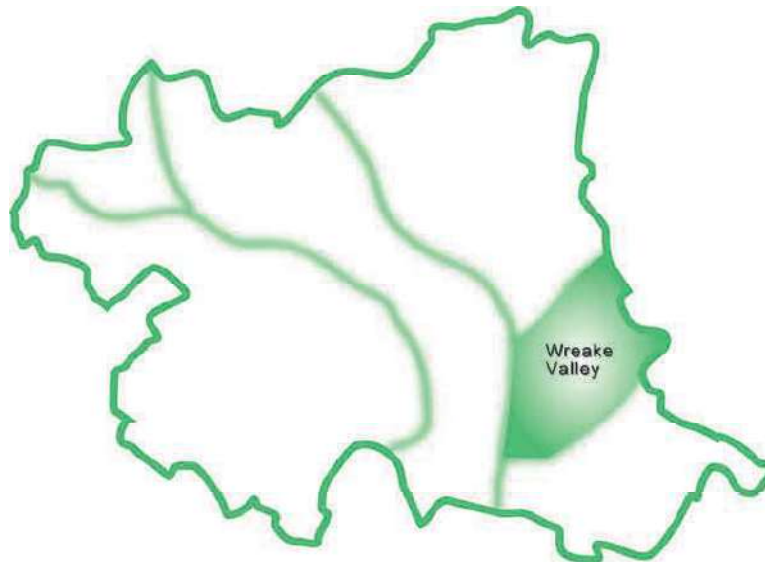
- **respect and enhance the character of the area, having regard to scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access arrangements;**
- **protect the amenity of people who live or work nearby and those who will live in the new development;**
- **function well and add to the quality of an area, not just in the short term, but over the lifetime of the development;**
- **provide attractive, well managed and safe public and private spaces;**
- **provide well defined and legible streets and spaces that are easy to get around for all, including those with disabilities; and**
- **reduce their impacts upon and be resilient to the effects of climate change in accordance with Policy CS16.**

We will do this by requiring independent design reviews for major or sensitive developments and using national design assessments to determine quality of new developments.

Appendix EDP 4
Relevant Extracts from Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area

This page has been left blank intentionally.

WREAKE VALLEY WREAKE VALLEY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA



7.63. Key Characteristics

- River Wreake meanders in a flat bottomed river valley with gently sloping sides. The valley experiences flooding
- Rural character to east of Broome Lane, East Goscote
- Leicester City and Syston have an urbanising influences in the west
- Limited valley crossings, with the A46 and A607 roads on engineered embankments
- Area of mixed arable and pasture farming
- Some neglected and lost hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Restored mineral workings
- Settlements are on the valley slopes, with churches marking villages
- Main settlements are Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Thrussington, Rearsby, East Goscote, Queniborough and Syston.

7.64. General Description

The River Wreake lies in a broad valley of two contrasting parts: the area east of Broome Lane, East Goscote has a rural quality, and the area to the west, where the Wreake joins the Soar, is affected by the urban influences of Syston and Leicester with their significant industry, housing and engineered roads.

The eastern area is still predominately rural in character retaining a remote countryside appearance and agricultural character. Settlements are sited on the gravel terraces on either side of the valley. The A46 and A607 are mostly elevated on embankments in

the floodplain. The Rearsby by-pass is a busy element on the southern fringe, but it has removed through traffic from the village roads and has created a more peaceful feel to Rearsby and East Goscote.

The Wreake Valley has a network of wetland habitats. Much of the western area has been worked for sand and gravels and subsequently restored, and is now returning to grazing or recreational use with lakes, ponds and a golf course in well wooded settings created by naturalisation and landscaping.

7.65. **Geology**

- The majority of the valley floor is alluvium with river gravel terraces and superficial deposits of sands and gravels. On the rising ground a thick covering of boulder clay overlies the Keuper Marl bedrock.

7.66. **Topography**

- The landscape is dominated by the slow-moving River Wreake, which flows eastwards along a flat valley bottom with gently sloping sides.

7.67. **Land Use**

- The eastern area is predominately farmed. The western area contains the larger settlements, industrial areas, and gravel workings. The working of the sands and gravels has had a significant effect upon the present day landscape, with some past workings now restored for agriculture or recreation.

7.68. **Farming**

- The more rural eastern area is characterised by mixed agriculture.
- Intensification of agriculture in the latter part of the 20th century has caused a loss of hedgerows due to field enlargement and in the last twenty years there has been a change from grassland management to the production of arable crops.
- Pastures are predominantly cattle grazed. However some conversion to horse paddocks has extended across the area, e.g. along Ratcliffe Road between Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake and Thrussington.
- A number of horticultural nurseries were established in the later part of the twentieth century near East Goscote and Syston. Although some smaller nurseries have recently been redeveloped for housing or horse grazing, there has been expansion of tree and shrub growing nurseries between Syston and Queniborough.

- Following mineral extraction at Syston the restored agricultural grazing land has an open parkland quality due to its large fields and lack of hedges.

7.69. **Industry**

- Syston and the surrounding area has a long tradition of manufacturing. Recent times have seen a decline in traditional industries of textiles and boot and shoe production and associated machinery manufacture. Some older industrial sites within the town have been redeveloped for housing.
- Currently the major industries of the area are distribution warehouses, engineering workshops and food manufacturing. There are a number of headquarter offices for local businesses, such as textiles and aggregates.
- More recent large industrial estates have tended to be concentrated either on the outskirts of the settlements, such as western Syston, south-west of Queniborough, and west of East Goscote, or some distance away, for instance on the former airfield to the south-east of Rearsby. The industrial buildings and associated areas are often very prominent in the valley landscape.

7.70. **Leisure & Recreation**

- The area includes formal recreational facilities following sand and gravel extraction in the floodplain:
 - private fishing lakes
 - a sailing club located north of Syston
 - a golf course at East Goscote, between the railway line and the A46.
- The Leicestershire Round footpath skirts the village of Ratcliffe on the Wreake, crosses Rearsby and joins the Midshires Way to the east beyond the Borough boundary to the south of Hoby.
- The quiet country lanes of the north and east are used for horse riding.
- There are proposals to re-open the River Wreake to navigation.

7.71. **Communication**

- A network of late 20th century roads has been constructed to link the major A6, A46 (Fosse Way) and urban centres and to bypass the villages in the valley. The roads, which are constructed on embankments above the floodplain, are highly intrusive on the flat landscape, particularly as the tree screening has yet to mature.
- A railway line between Syston and Melton runs parallel to the valley floor, with vehicle crossings at East Goscote and Rearsby, and pedestrian crossings in East Goscote and Syston. The lines connect at Syston Triangle where they are on embankments with mature trees, which screen parts of the settlement from the west.

- Two minor roads run on the river terraces parallel to the River Wreake through the villages; Melton Road along the southern edge of the valley through East Goscote and Rearsby, with the northern road passing through Ratcliffe on the Wreake and Thrussington.
- There are a few cross-links connecting the villages across the valley. These roads can become flooded. A long-established raised causeway runs by the side of the road between Rearsby and Thrussington to allow pedestrian access at times of flooding. Broome Lane from East Goscote to Ratcliffe on the Wreake has an engineered alignment.
- Overhead power lines coincide with the Borough boundary at Thrussington.

7.72. Ecology

- There are ten Local Wildlife Sites in the area, including a stretch of the River Wreake within the Borough. The River Wreake also functions as the major wildlife corridor across the area, forming a link with the Soar Valley landscape character area. Its tributaries provide local habitat connectivity.
- Key habitats are wet woodlands, marshes, ponds and hedgerows.
- Key species include the brown long eared bat, common pipistrelle bat, noctule bat, grass snake, great crested newt and barn owl. Important maternity bat roosts have been recorded in the area and bats are thought to use the river corridor as a feeding ground and commuting route.
- The otter returned to the River Wreake in the late 1990s.

7.73. Heritage

- The historic cores of Syston, Queniborough, Rearsby, Ratcliffe on the Wreake and Thrussington are conservation areas with many listed buildings. Notable amongst these are Queniborough Old Hall, and Queniborough Hall and, outside the villages, Rearsby Mill, Wreake House and Priory Farmhouses are listed. The packhorse bridge in Rearsby is an Ancient Monument, as are the earthworks of a mediaeval grange north of Thrussington.
- The River Wreake, the major tributary of the River Soar, was made navigable to Melton Mowbray in the 1790s with the navigation eventually extended to Oakham. It closed in 1877 and its route remains marked by converted canalside mill buildings, and the remains of disused wharfs and locks. Isolated in a field by the river at Ratcliffe on the Wreake is an old building known as “the boathouse”.
- Churches and their towers and spires often draw the view towards the villages from some distance across the landscape. The church at Ratcliffe on the Wreake is located on high ground and can clearly be seen from East Goscote.

- The church spire in Queniborough, at 49m (162 ft), is the second highest in Leicestershire and is clearly visible from the surrounding countryside.
- Traces of parkland remain around Ratcliffe Hall, Queniborough Old Hall and Queniborough Hall.

7.74. **Boundaries & Hedges**

- Some smaller hedged fields with ridge and furrow are evident on rising ground near Thrussington and Queniborough. These contrast with the larger fields of later dates; the regular shaped fields of parliamentary enclosure, fields enlarged in the twentieth century by hedgerow removal for arable production, and more recently, the large fields created for agricultural restoration following gravel extraction.
- Generally, cattle grazed pastures are enclosed by hedgerows with mature trees. Hedges are often in a poor state of management and where no longer stock-proof are frequently supplemented by wire fences.
- Fields under arable production tend to be productive, large to very large and regular in shape.
- Where arable production is more dominant, many hedgerows have been removed and field boundaries are characterised by mechanically trimmed, very low, sometimes gappy, hedgerows.
- Where equestrian uses have become established, fields tend to be subdivided into smaller paddocks by timber post and rail fencing which interrupts the sweep of the pastoral landscape.

7.75. **Woodland & Trees**

- Woodland is a minor component of the landscape, consisting mainly of small areas of semi-natural broad-leaved wet woodland dotted along the River Wreake. Ash, common alder, crack willow, white willow and goat willow are the dominant trees. The ground flora is species-poor and typical of this wet-woodland habitat.
- Riverside willow and ash trees grow along the river banks; mature willow pollards are frequent, although some are deteriorating through lack of regular management.
- Occasional trees are present where hedgerows remain in association with pastures. Ash tends to be the most abundant tree but, close to the watercourses, willow species and common alder dominate.
- .At Rearsby, mature trees in extensive grounds of Westfield and the Convent (Church Leys) create a distinctive approach to both south and north entrances of the village.
- Immediately to the east of the Borough boundary, there are views of Brooksby College in its treed parkland landscape.

7.76. Hydrology

- The valley is dominated by the east-west flowing River Wreake that joins the River Soar at Junction Lock, just north of Syston. The river and its tributaries are in the floodplain and are susceptible to flooding.
- The river is associated with a network of wetland habitats with a system of ditches, old oxbows and backwaters, marshes, fens, wet meadows, and small areas of wet woodland.
- The Gaddesby Brook, which meanders across the widest part of the flood plain, is the most visible of the several tributaries to the River Wreake.
- Nutrient enrichment through agricultural run-off can impact on the water quality of the river and minor watercourses. Stretches of the river can be choked with an abundance of aquatic vegetation.
- South of East Goscote the area has been intensively worked for sand and gravel extraction. Flooded gravel pits remain and provide water features for recreation, such as sailing and angling, and can be valuable for biodiversity.

7.77. Buildings & Settlements

- The area comprises two distinctive and contrasting parts:
 - East of Broome Lane, East Goscote, the area has a rural character, with small, nucleated villages often located on higher ground on valley sides with views across the landscape (e.g. Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, Thrussington and Rearsby).
 - The town of Syston, the suburban development of East Goscote and large village of Queniborough dominate the western part where the flat valley floodplain of the Wreake merges into the Soar Valley.
- Villages are generally of nucleated form. Village edges with red brick dwellings often blend well in the landscape. However, the demarcation is harsher where buildings have been refurbished with white window frames or white rendered walls.
- Often the use of standardised materials in newer housing can present a harsh appearance at the countryside edge, such as at Syston and East Goscote.
- Farm buildings are either dispersed or located within the small villages. These traditional buildings have red brick walls with clay tile or slate roofs. Auxiliary farm buildings can be large with tall silos highly prominent in the landscape (e.g. Manor Farm in Thrussington).
- Where agricultural use has switched to horse grazed pastures, timber stables have become common features in the fields.

Landscape Strategy for the Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area is to Conserve and Enhance

7.78. Strength of Landscape Character

Around the larger settlements of the western part of the Wreake Valley there is an urbanising influence and greater variety in land use and tree cover. The recreational uses and naturalising landscape of restored gravel workings also provides a contrast to the pastoral countryside. However, in general and particularly in the eastern valley there is a distinct well defined strong tranquil and rural character of the river valley landscape contained by the surrounding landform of rising slopes.

7.79. Landscape Condition

There is fragmentation of landscape features around the larger western settlements although planting around the restored gravel workings is now establishing and creating new cohesive, localised features. Although without substantial woods, there is a feeling of being in a well treed landscape, created by the hedgerow trees, waterside copses and tree fringed river. Neglect of some hedgerows and lack of management of waterside trees is leading to fragmentation and potential loss.

Overall the strength of landscape character is considered moderate and the landscape condition is moderate.

7.80. Landscape Strategy Matrix

Landscape Condition	Good	Moderate Enhance	Moderate-Good Conserve & Enhance	Good Conserve & Manage
	Moderate	Poor-Moderate Enhance & Restore	Moderate Conserve & Enhance	Moderate-Good Conserve & Enhance
		Poor Restore & Create	Poor – Moderate Enhance & Restore	Moderate Enhance
	Poor	Weak	Moderate	Strong
Strength of Landscape Character				

7.81. Guidelines For Wreake Valley Landscape Character Area

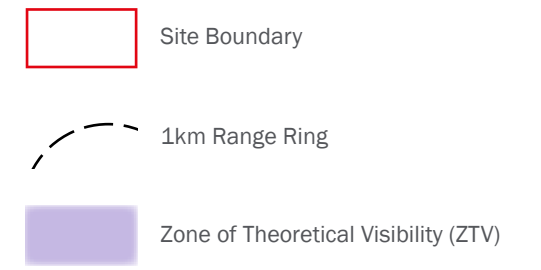
To be read in conjunction with General Guidelines.

- Conserve and enhance the tranquil and self-contained character of the rural part of the Wreake Valley with its well-treed landscape and relaxed management regime of hedges and roadside verges. Seek to include tree planting and small woodlands in and around any new development
- New development should preserve the open character of the Wreake valley, and have regard for the views across the valley
- Enhance the Wreake Valley landscape character around the fringes of the existing larger settlements by increasing tree cover
- Seek to mitigate the harsh urban edge of East Goscote
- Support the restoration of sand and gravel extraction pits to provide opportunities to deliver recreation where landscape and biodiversity objectives can be achieved
- Seek opportunities for natural water management storage within the floodplain particularly where this can benefit biodiversity
- Conserve the integrity of features of historic interest typical of the Wreake Valley such as the packhorse bridge at and the causeway to Rearsby, the boathouse at Ratcliffe on the Wreake and retain views of the village churches. Protect the setting of these features in the landscape
- Encourage the conservation and management of meadows and waterside pastures
- Preference will be given to the use of tree and shrub species locally native to the Wreake Valley character area in planting schemes
- Where safety allows retain dead wood to benefit invertebrates
- Seek to increase wet woodlands through natural colonisation and the use of local origin stock
- Seek opportunities for the creation and enhancement of the following habitat types typical of the Wreake Valley:
 - All wetland habitats (wet woodland, marsh, fen, ponds, shallow scrapes, etc.)
 - Riverside trees
 - Hedgerows and hedgerow trees.



Appendix EDP 5
Representative Photoviewpoints for Discussion Plan
(edp4685_d001c 26 June 2018 JTF/JM)

This page has been left blank intentionally.



NOTE:

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was calculated using a spatial modelling algorithm which considers the following parameters:

- 1.6m Receptor Elevation (Observer Height)
- 9m Proposed Development Locations (Ridge Height)
- 360 Degree Field of View
- OS Terrain 5m Digital Terrain Model (DTM) (vertical accuracy of +/- 2.5m)

client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title
Land North of Barkby Road, System

drawing title
Representative Photoviewpoints for Discussion

date	26 JUNE 2018	drawn by	JTF
drawing number	edp4685_d001c	checked	JM
scale	Refer to scale bar	QA	LB



info@edp-uk.co.uk www.edp-uk.co.uk
 Cirencester 01285 740427 Cardiff 02921 671900 Shrewsbury 01939 211190

Site Photographs

(edp4685_d013d 01 November 2021 GY/CJM)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Site Photograph EDP L1 | View looking north-east across central and northern fields towards northern edges of site |
| Site Photograph EDP L2 | View looking south-east across central and southern fields towards southern and eastern edges of site |
| Site Photograph EDP L3 | View looking south-west from public footpath J37 across central and southern fields towards settlement edge off Empingham Drive and John Frear Drive |
| Site Photograph EDP L4 | View looking north-west from public footpath J37 across north field towards settlement edge off Hallaton Drive |

This page has been left blank intentionally.

Site Photograph EDP L1: View looking north-east across central and northern fields towards northern edges of site



Site Photograph EDP L2: View looking south-east across central and southern fields towards southern and eastern edges of site



Site Photograph EDP L3: View looking south-west from public footpath J37 across central and southern fields towards settlement edge off Empingham Drive and John Frear Drive



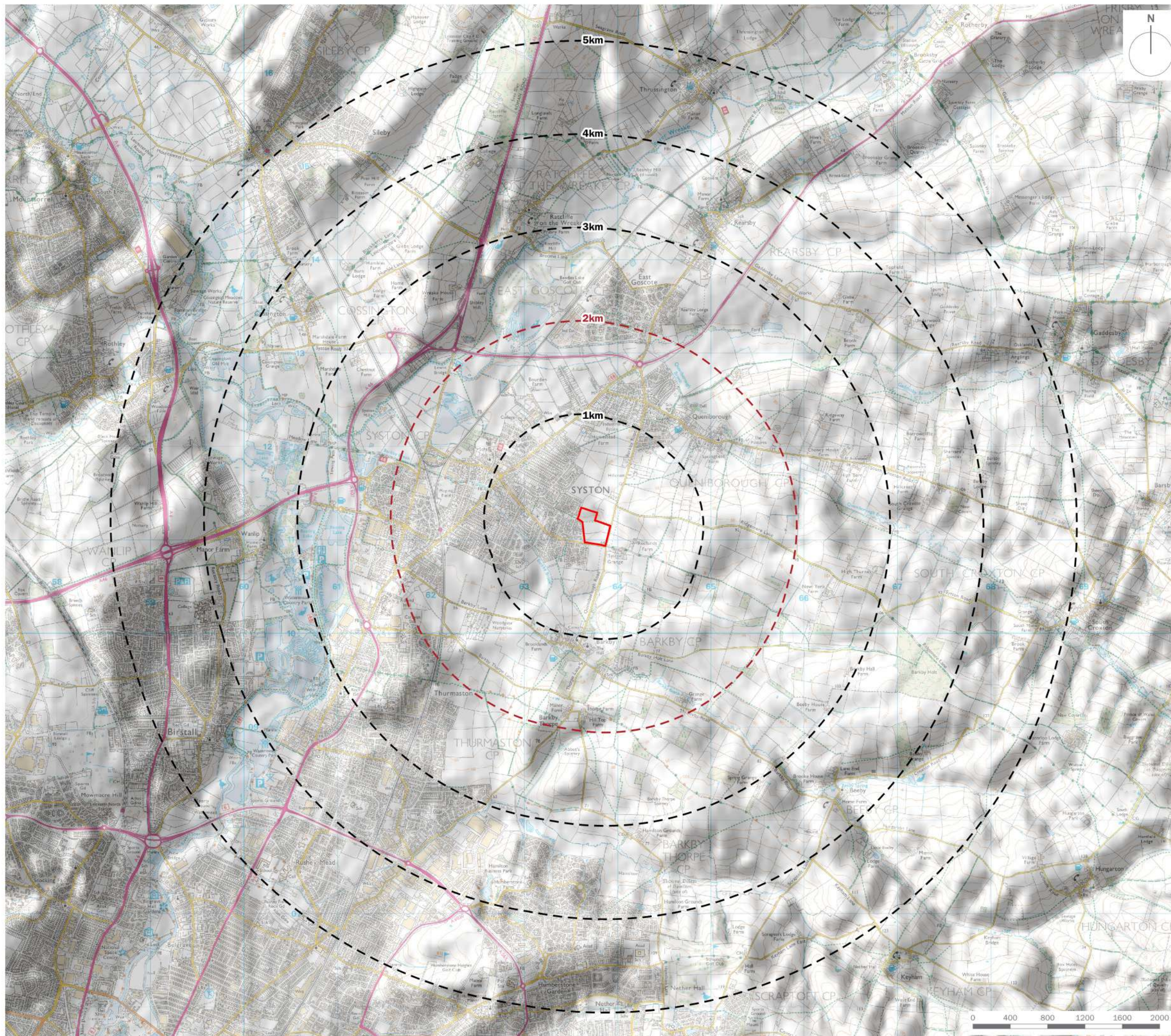
Site Photograph EDP L4: View looking north-west from public footpath J37 across north field towards settlement edge off Hallaton Drive



Plans

Plan EDP L1	Site Location and Site Boundaries (edp4685_d004c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L2	Site Character and Context (edp4685_d016c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L3	Landscape Planning Context (edp4685_d005c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L4	Published Landscape Character (edp4685_d014c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L5	Topography (edp4685_d006c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L6	Visual Receptors (edp4685_d011c 22 June 2021 GY/JM)
Plan EDP L7	Findings of the Visual Assessment (edp4685_d015c 22 June 2021 LB/JM)
Plan EDP L8	Landscape Strategy (edp4685_d032a 02 November 2021 MMm/TR)

This page has been left blank intentionally.



-  Site Boundary
-  Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
-  2km Detailed Study Area

client		
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd		
project title		
Land North of Barkby Road, Syston		
drawing title		
Plan EDP L1: Site Location and Site Boundaries		
date	22 JUNE 2021	drawn by LB
drawing number	edp4685_d004c	checked JM
scale	1:40,000 @ A3	QA JTF



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



Northern field of the site gently slopes up northwards towards western end of low ridgeline extending from east of Queniborough Road. Ridgeline contains views to the north and east.

Historical field pattern remains largely intact, with minor truncation of western edge of central field when settlement extended up to site boundary, and loss of section of hedgerow separating northern and central fields.

Established planting within wide green buffer on the settlement edge to the west of the site partially soften the settlement edge.

New buffer planting yet to establish, allowing views into settlement.

Established planting within wide green buffer on the settlement edge to the west of the site partially soften the settlement edge.

System recognised to have an urbanising influence on Wreake Valley LCA. New developments on the eastern edge of System to the north and south of Barkby Road form a prominent visual context to the site.

Traffic movement along Barkby Road and Queniborough and proximity of settlement (including construction activities) reduce visual and audible sense of tranquillity within agricultural landscape.

Traffic lights and overhead services introduce urbanising elements to Queniborough Road at junction with Barkby Road.

Gappy hedgerow.

Gappy hedgerow.

Grassland (site of old Brick yard and quarry).

Public Footpath J37 - Church spire of Barkby Church visible in the distance from public footpath (a characteristic of the Wreake Valley

Gappy hedgerow.

Main part of the site forms part of a largely flat landscape which extends southwards towards Barkby. Low trimmed field boundary hedgerows with no (or few) hedgerow trees allows intervisibility across the open arable fields, bringing a sense of openness within the site and to the valley landscape to the south of Barkby Road.

System Grange comprises a group of isolated buildings outside System settlement.



Site Boundary



Public Footpath



Site Photographs

client

Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title

Land North of Barkby Road, System

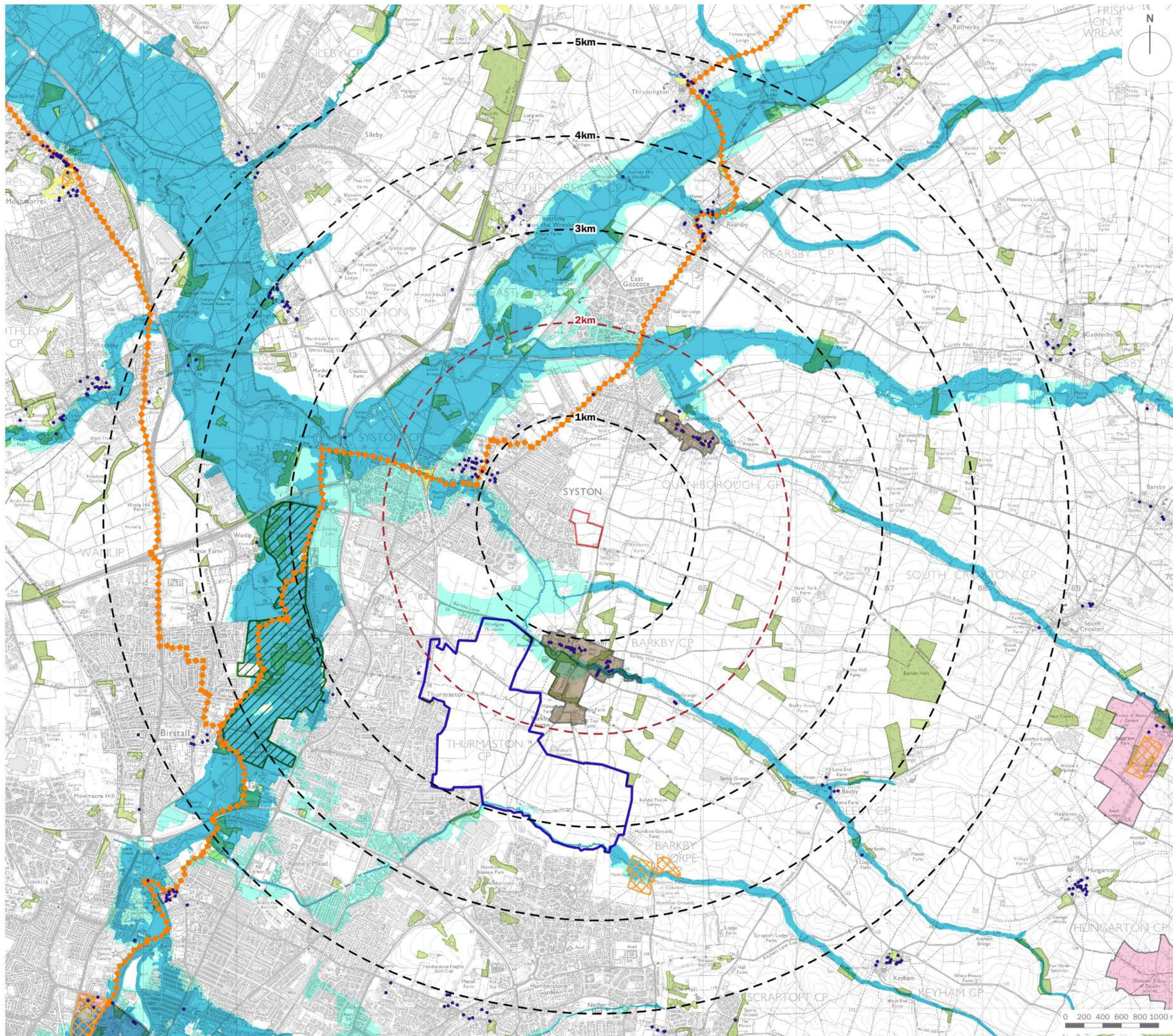
drawing title













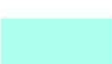

Plan EDP L2: Site Character and Context

date	22 JUNE 2021	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp4685_d016c	checked	JM
scale	1:2,500 @ A3	QA	JTF



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



-  Site Boundary
-  Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
-  2km Detailed Study Area
-  North East Leicester Sustainable Urban Expansion
-  Conservation Area
-  Listed Buildings
-  Scheduled Monuments
-  National Cycle Routes
-  Registered Parks and Gardens
-  Open Access Land
-  Country Parks
-  National Forestry Inventory
-  Flood Zone 3
-  Flood Zone 2

client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

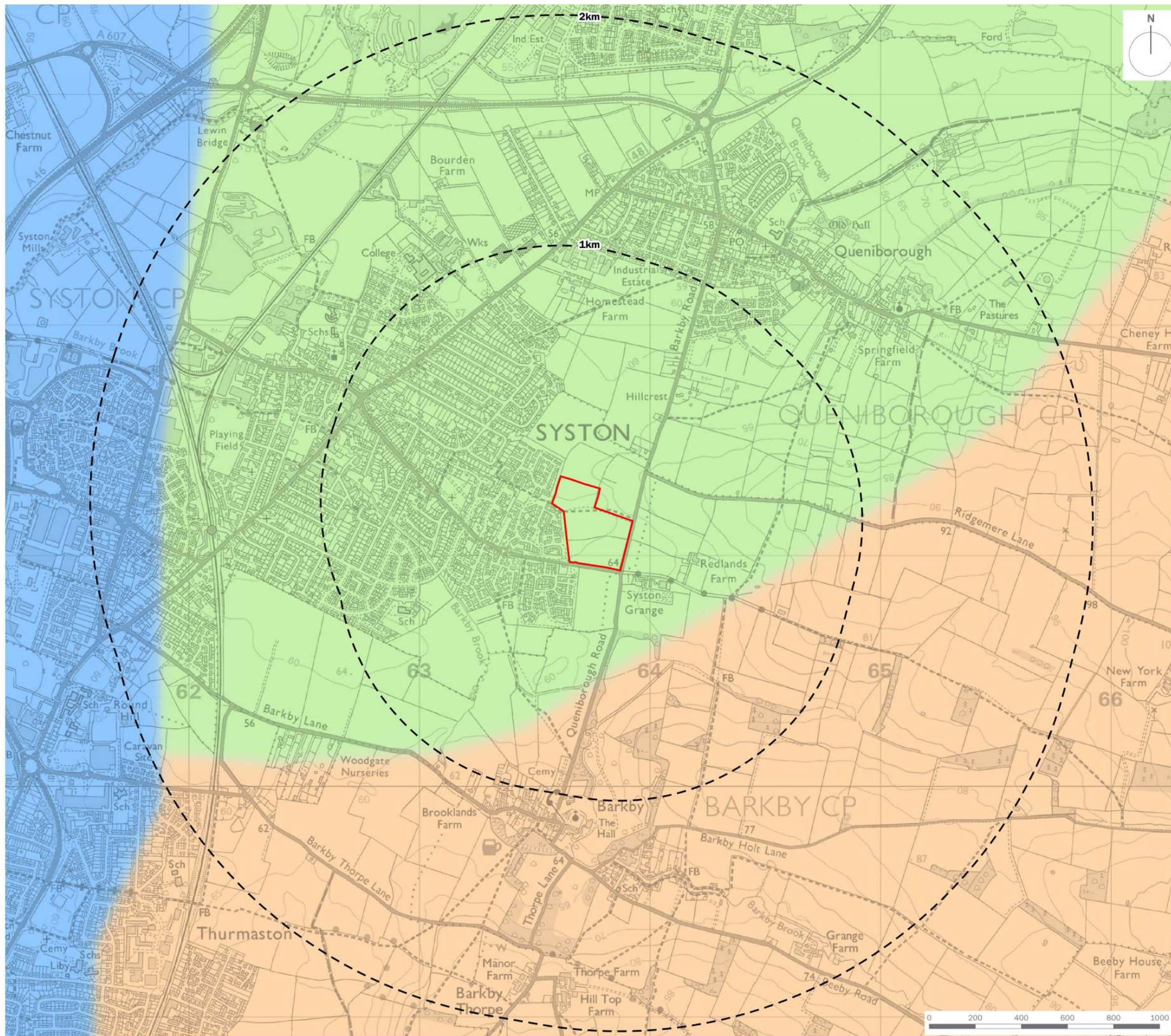
project title
Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

drawing title
Plan EDP L3: Landscape Planning Context

date **22 JUNE 2021** drawn by **LB**
drawing number **edp4685_d005c** checked **JM**
scale **1:40,000 @ A3** QA **JTF**



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk

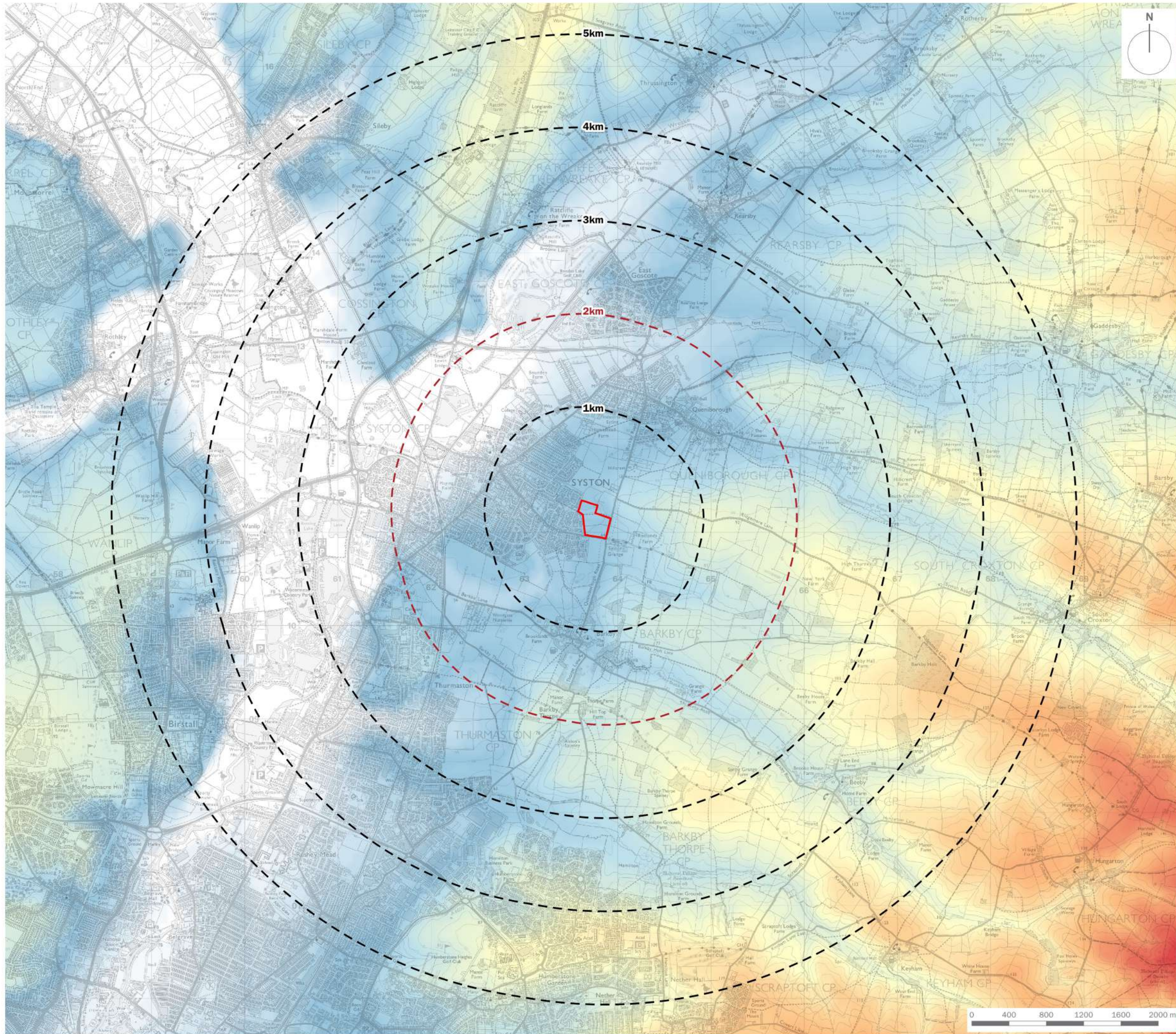


Note:
Landscape character area boundaries interpolated from illustrative plan in Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment

client	Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd	
project title	Land North of Barkby Road, Syston	
drawing title	Plan EDP L4: Published Landscape Character	
date	22 JUNE 2021	drawn by GY
drawing number	edp4685_d014c	checked JM
scale	Refer to scale bar @ A3	QA JTF

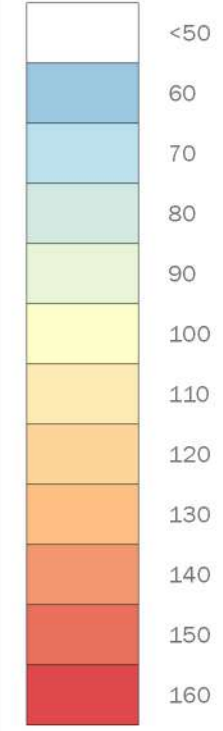


Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



-  Site Boundary
-  Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
-  2km Detailed Study Area

Topographical Relief (aOD)



client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title
Land North of Syston Road, Syston







drawing title
Plan EDP L5: Topography

date	22 JUNE 2021	drawn by	LB
drawing number	edp4685_d006c	checked	JM
scale	1:40,000 @ A3	QA	JTF



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



-  Site Boundary
-  1km Range Ring
-  Photoviewpoint
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
-  Public Footpath
-  Public Bridleway
-  Byway

client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

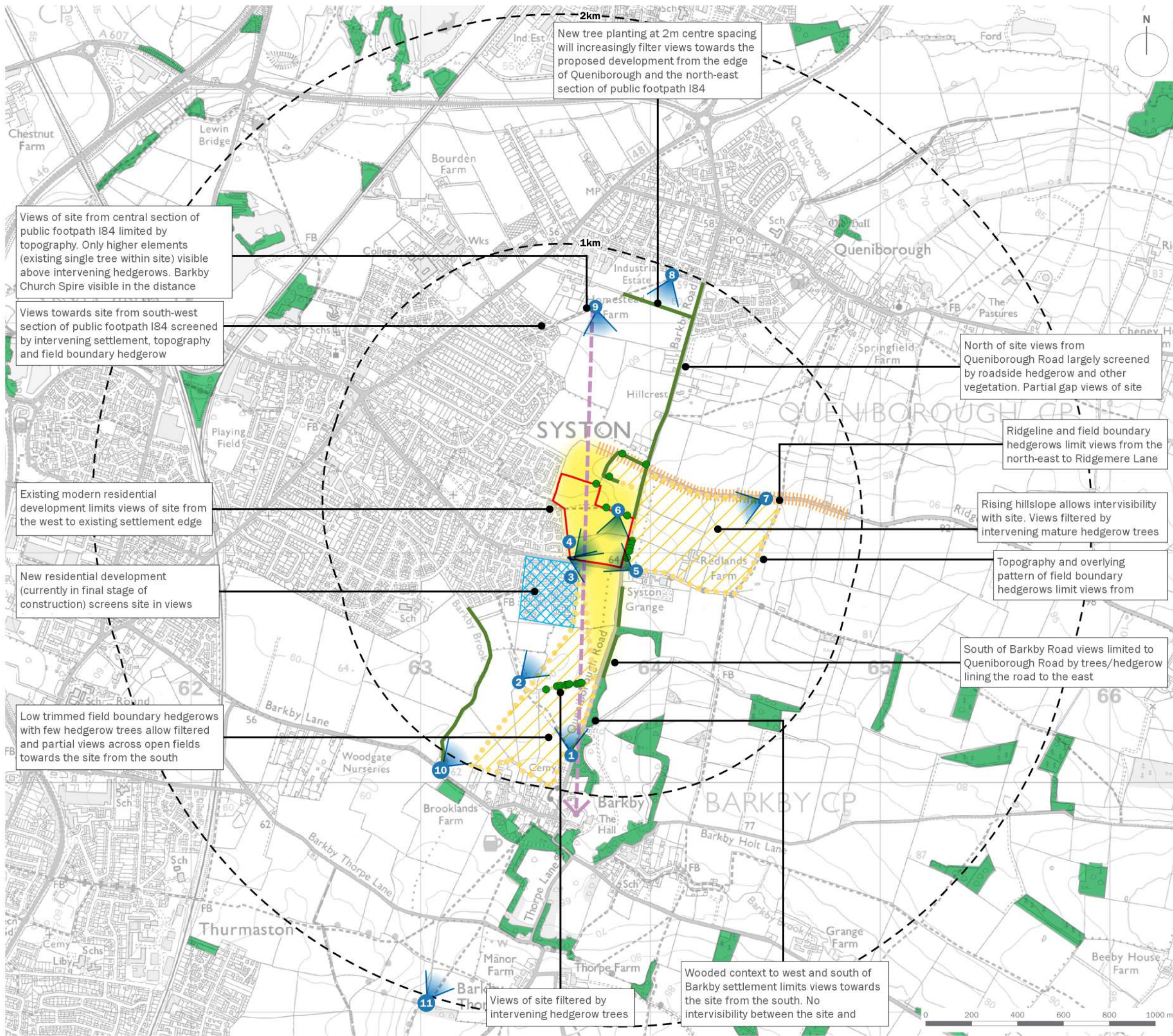
project title
Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

drawing title
Plan EDP L6: Visual Receptors

date **22 JUNE 2021** drawn by **GY**
drawing number **edp4685_d011c** checked **JM**
scale **Refer to scale bar @ A3 QA** **JTF**



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



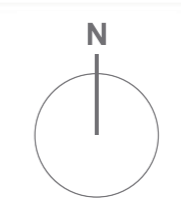
- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Zone of Primary Visibility
- Zone of Secondary Visibility (Partial and Filtered Views)
- Photoviewpoints
- Ridgeline
- Woodland/Prominent Tree Belts limiting views across landscape (National Forest Inventory)
- Prominent Hedgerows
- Mature Hedgerow Trees filtering views across landscape
- Housing Development Partially Completed/Under Construction
- Views towards Barkby Church Spire

client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title
Land North of Barkby Road, System

drawing title
Plan EDP L7: Findings of the Visual Assessment

date **22 JUNE 2021** drawn by **LB**
drawing number **edp4685_d015c** checked **JM**
scale **Refer to scale bar @ A3 QA** **JTF**



- Site Boundary
- Residential Area
- Local Equipped Area of Play (400m² With 20m Buffer)
- Existing Trees and Vegetation
- Proposed Trees and Vegetation
- Indicative Attenuation Basin
- Road Route
- Public Right of Way (Ref.J37/1) (PRoW)
- Pedestrian Link
- Views of St Mary's Church
- Proposed Footpath Link
- Mown Grass
- Species Enriched Grassland

Existing hedge, to the west, north of the PRoW, retained, gapped up, restored and enhanced with tree planting to contribute to privacy and softening of the development

Existing planting, to the west, south of the PRoW, retained and enhanced to contribute to an integrated and cohesive area of Public Open Space between the existing and proposed developments

Informal open space with incidental areas of amenity grassland within a framework of trees, shrubs and species enriched grassland

SuDs features to be sympathetically designed, with naturalistic shapes and varied gradients, to contribute to biodiversity and the visual and recreational amenity of the POS

Species enriched grassland with informal tree planting (where OHC allows) to soften and integrate the development in views from the road

Existing hedge retained and enhanced to retain existing character of the road

Mown grass

Existing hedge to north-east retained, gapped up and enhanced with additional species and tree planting

Hedge and 'avenue' along road

10m 'woodland belt' to soften the development in views from the east

Client
Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title
Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

drawing title
Plan EDP L8: Landscape Strategy

date	02 NOVEMBER 2021	drawn by	MMm
drawing number	edp4685_d032a	checked	TR
scale	1:1250 @ A2	QA	RB



Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk

Photoviewpoints

Winter Photoviewpoints - (edp4685_d012c 01 November 2021 LB/JM)

Summer Photoviewpoints - (edp4685_d024a 01 December 2021 GY/CJM)

Photoviewpoint EDP 1	View from Queniborough Road/public footpath J17
Photoviewpoint EDP 2	View from public footpath J17
Photoviewpoint EDP 3	View looking east along Barkby Road
Photoviewpoint EDP 4	View from Barkby Road looking across site
Photoviewpoint EDP 5	View from Byway accessing Syston Grange
Photoviewpoint EDP 6	View from public footpath J37
Photoviewpoint EDP 7	View from Ridgemere Lane
Photoviewpoint EDP 8	View from public footpath I84 at Queniborough settlement edge
Photoviewpoint EDP 9	View from public footpath I84 between Syston and Queniborough
Photoviewpoint EDP 10	View from Barkby Lane at bridge over Barkby Brook
Photoviewpoint EDP 11	View from Barkby Thorpe Lane at public footpath J6
Photoviewpoint EDP 12	View from public footpath J7 south-west of Barkby Thorpe

This page has been left blank intentionally.

Photoviewpoint EDP 1: View from Queniborough Road / public footpath J17



Photoviewpoint EDP 2: View from public footpath J17



Photoviewpoint EDP 3: View looking east along Barkby Road



Photoviewpoint EDP 4: View from Barkby Road looking north-east across Site



Photoviewpoint EDP 5: View from byway accessing Syston Grange



New residential development south of Barkby Road

Housing on Hallaton Drive

Approximate extent of site



Syston Grange

Barkby Church spire in distance beyond road junction traffic lights

New residential development south of Barkby Road

Photoviewpoint EDP 7: View from Ridgemere Lane



Photoviewpoint EDP 8: View from public footpath I84 at Queniborough settlement edge



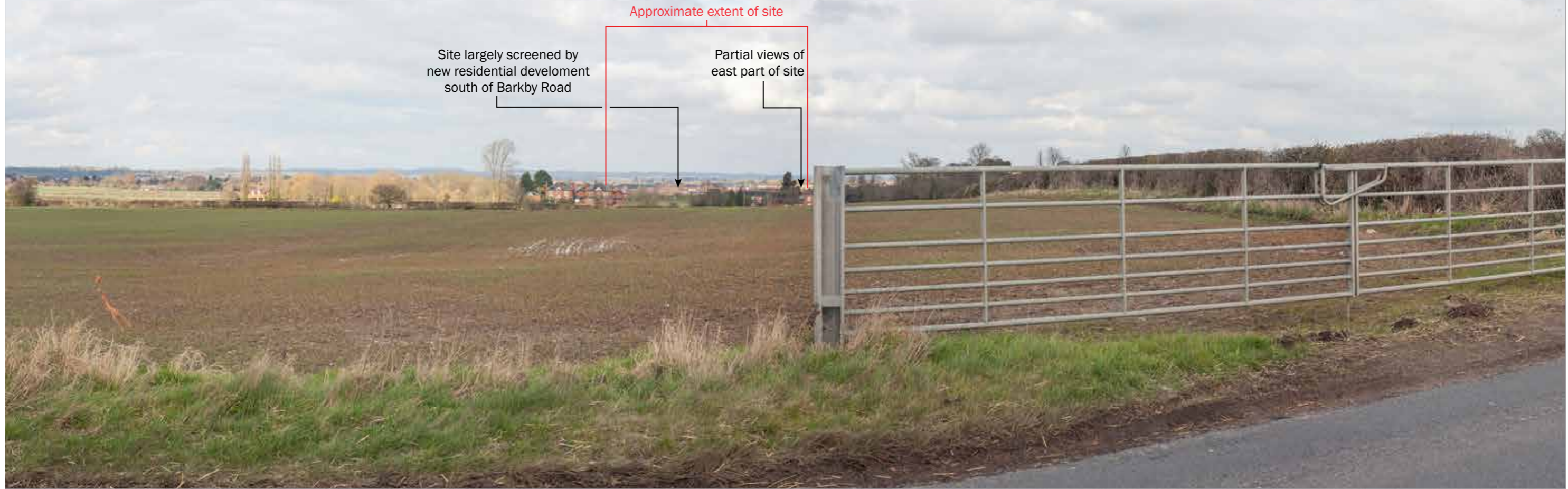
Photoviewpoint EDP 9: View from public footpath I84 between Syston and Queniborough



Photoviewpoint EDP 10: View from Barkby Lane at bridge over Barkby Brook



Photoviewpoint EDP 11: View from Barkby Thorpe Lane at public footpath J6



Photoviewpoint EDP 12: View from public footpath J7 south-west of Barkby Thorpe





Public Footpath

Approximate extent of site

New residential development south of Barkby Road screens western edge of site

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site beyond new residential development in final phase of construction south of Barkby Road



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site

Syston Grange



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Extent of site



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site

New residential development south of Barkby Road

Housing on Hallaton Drive



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site

Syston Grange

Barkby Church spire in distance
beyond road junction traffic lights

New residential development
south of Barkby Road



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Approximate extent of site

New tree planting will increasingly filter views beyond foreground field in the long term as it matures

Existing modern settlement edge of Syston

Footpath 184

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Approximate extent of site

Barkby Church spire

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Approximate extent of site

New residential development south of Barkby Road

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length



Approximate extent of site

Site largely screened by new residential development south of Barkby Road

Partial views of east part of site

To be viewed at comfortable arm's length

Approximate extent of site beyond new residential development south of Barky Road

Public Footpath J7

Barkby Church spire



CARDIFF
02921 671900

CHELtenham
01242 903110

CIRENCESTER
01285 740427

info@edp-uk.co.uk
www.edp-uk.co.uk

The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd. Registered as a Limited Company in England and Wales. Company No. 09102431. Registered Office: Tithe Barn, Barnsley Park Estate, Barnsley, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 5EG



**URBAN
DESIGN
GROUP** REGISTERED
PRACTICE

IEMA Transforming the world
to sustainability

**Landscape
Institute**
Registered practice