

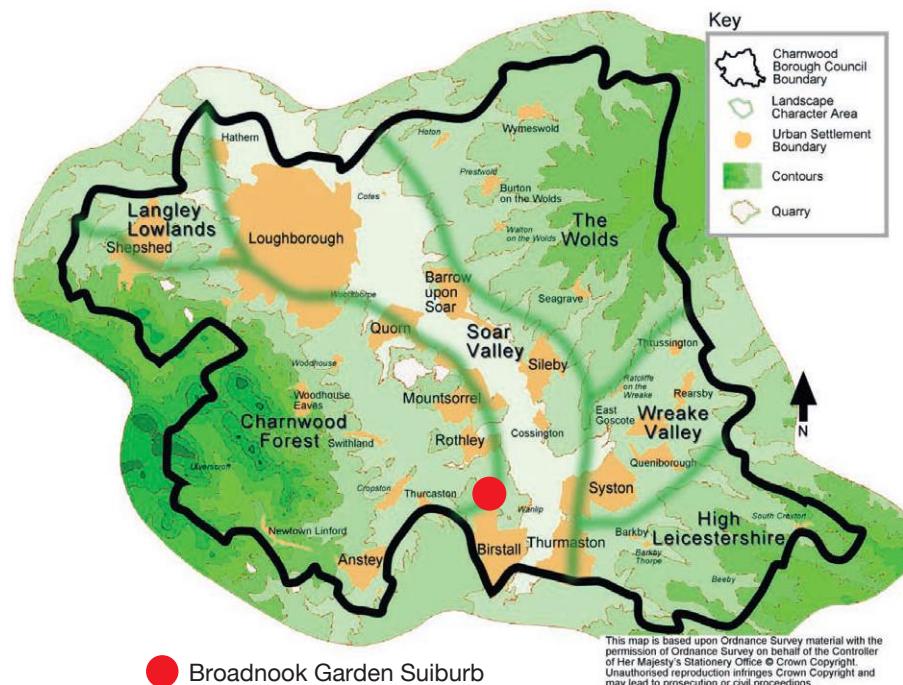
## 4.0 Assessment – the Broadnook Site and Its Setting - Understanding the Context

### Background and Recognised Advantages

*“... a crucial first step to achieving good design is to develop a thorough understanding of the context within which the new housing will sit and then the nature of the site itself and its immediate surroundings”*

(By Design – Better Places to Live)

The area north of Birstall enjoys a pre-eminent location at the confluence of the A6 and A46 primary roads on the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area. It is well connected to the City with high frequency bus links, the Birstall Park and Ride and Sustrans Route 6.



The area of interest occupies a position at the conjunction of two sub-areas of Charnwood Borough – Charnwood Forest and Soar Valley - elements of which contribute to the characteristics of the site. This provides a firm basis for a garden suburb, creating extensive green infrastructure and new connections for wildlife and people over a wide area in South Charnwood.

In terms of established planning policy designations the extract shown opposite from the 2004 Charnwood Local Plan Proposals Map demonstrates that the location has not been subject to multiple or higher order physical or policy constraints including;

- **Floodplain**
- **Particularly Attractive Countryside**
- **Green Wedges**
- **Areas of Local Separation**
- **Areas of Important Open Land**

At various points in the plan-making process the Borough Council has concluded that this location enjoys a number of important “key advantages”.

- “Within south Charnwood locations for further employment development attractive to the market will be well related to the trunk road network, along the A46 and A6 corridors ... This area enjoys good access to the A46 and M1 and is located on a high frequency bus route. It provides the opportunity to secure the provision of a high quality employment development in an accessible location. The provision of good quality employment land in locations attractive to the market is important for the local economy”
- “No significant harm to historic or archaeological interests”
- “Best opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car with good quality access to alternatives in the form of a high frequency Loughborough - Leicester bus service and National Cycle Route 6”
- “No flooding issues as this area is located in Flood Zone 1 and has no access constraints”
- “Frequent bus access to employment, health care, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sports activities in the City Centre and Loughborough Town Centre”
- “Good access to the countryside including Watermead Park and local leisure centres (including Soar Valley Leisure Centre) and to Leicester City Centre”
- “Good access to the strategic road network and some public transport services make it attractive for house buyers, investors and innovative companies”

## Site Definition

The general strategic location (a ‘direction of growth’) defined in the draft versions of the Borough Council’s Local Plan Core Strategy was described as “North of Birstall”. Environmental and technical assessments and iterative masterplanning work have therefore examined land north of Birstall in three quadrants defined by the A6/A46 interchange – to the north west, north east and south east (the Hallam Fields project is currently being completed to the south west). As the Local Plan process has progressed, partly as a consequence of the outcome of these assessments and also accounting for responses from stakeholders and the wider consultation exercises, the disposition of garden suburb proposals has been informed and clarified. It was an issue explored at the Core Strategy Examination by the independent Inspector.

The evaluation has concluded, confirmed now by adopted **Core Strategy Policy CS20**, that built development is to be confined within the northwest quadrant, north of A46 and west of A6.

Policy CS20 has also confirmed that in defining proposals it is necessary to;

- protect the separate identity of Wanlip, Rothley and Rothley Conservation Area;
- respond to the landscape and surrounding areas to create a locally distinctive development;
- protect historic and archaeological features including the setting of Rothley Park and Rothley Conservation Area. (to which can be added the Rothley Ridgeway Conservation Area designated in 2010)



Policy CS20 reads:

*"The sustainable urban extension will be to the north of the A46, west of the A6, east of the Great Central Railway line and to the south and west of the Broadnook Spinney. It will create a balanced community and a safe, high quality and accessible environment"*

The following references are made in that context. Clear physical, defensible and durable boundaries are defined to the west, south and east in the form of the Great Central Railway, A46 and A6 respectively. The definition of an appropriate and enduring boundary to the north requires careful consideration to ensure settlement separation and identity is maintained and green infrastructure priorities are safeguarded. In order to provide suitable non-vehicular connections to and from the garden suburb and to maximise green infrastructure benefits land for these purposes to the east of A6 has been included to confirm potential.

#### **Existing Land Uses**

The site is predominantly used intensively for arable farming. It has limited ecological value and there is no public access or recreational value.

The site is characterised by areas of woodland and copse and fields defined by hedgerows and individual trees. Buildings – comprising three dwellings, redundant traditional farm buildings, a number of utilitarian modern farm/industrial buildings and a garden buildings enterprise – are concentrated in a relatively small area at the eastern boundary of the site adjacent the A6.

#### **Existing Access**

Access to the collection of existing buildings and field access is facilitated by a partial junction with the A6 dual carriageway which involves limited turning movements. There is no existing or any prospect of direct access from A46. Elsewhere field access to serve the agricultural land is provided by field gates from tracks to the north and west and a connection in the south east corner to the roundabout at the A6/A46 Interchange.

#### **Surrounding Land Uses and Settlements**

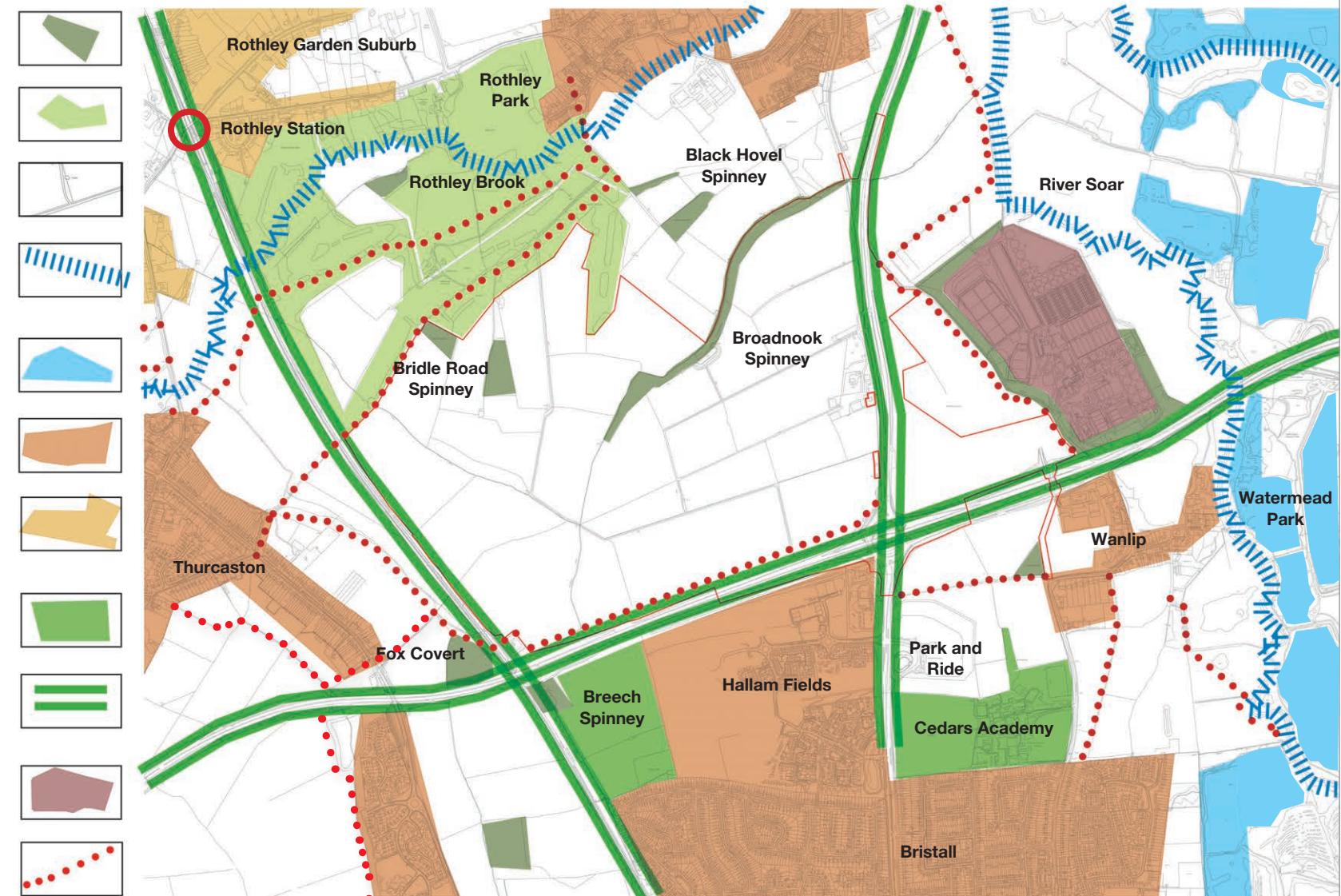
The garden suburb site has very limited direct relationship to any of the existing settlements of Wanlip, Rothley, Birstall and Thurcaston. In each direction the combination of distance, topography, vegetation and the primary road and rail infrastructure provide a framework for safeguarding settlement separation and identity.

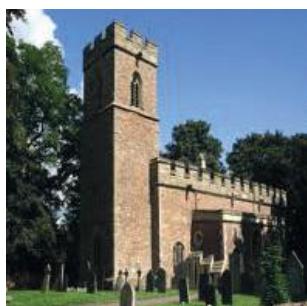
The garden suburb site occupies land in three parishes – predominantly Wanlip Parish – but also land defined by the Great Central Railway and A46 within the parish boundaries of Rothley and Thurcaston.

However the combined policy and physical considerations mean that the Broadnook proposal creates an independent community with its own employment opportunities and social, community and commercial facilities serving day-to-day needs.

Whilst an emphasis is on the self-contained nature of the Broadnook proposal it is appropriate to be fully mindful of the planning status, character and context of the four neighbouring settlements:

- Woodland, plantation, copse, spinney
- Parkland, golf course with tree cover
- Arable, grazing with field hedgerows and trees
- River corridor, main watercourses, with trees and aquatic vegetation
- Water body, lake, gravel pit, wetland
- Medium density housing in a village/town
- Mixed densities with some low density housing in a "garden suburb",
- Sports fields, school/college grounds
- Transport corridor with tree cover / woodland belts
- Utility area
- Public Rights of Way





Wanlip

**Wanlip** is the smallest of the four with a population estimated at about 180. Historically the 14th Century Church of St. Nicholas and the former Wanlip Hall have been prominent landmarks and influences; the attractive Hall parkland continues to contribute significantly to the local character.

The following extract from the 2004 Charnwood Local Plan is helpful in identifying the policy and physical setting for Wanlip Village. The A46 on embankment forms a prominent northern boundary. To the south west rising land has been the subject of an “Area of Local Separation” policy safeguarding land between Birstall and Wanlip. To the east lies the floodplain of the River Soar and an extensive area of former sand and gravel extraction which is now the attractive and popular Watermead Country Park. The refurbished Village Hall provides a community and social meeting place and planning issues have been aired in the recent past through a Parish Plan exercise.

As part of the new Local Plan’s approach to the “development strategy” for Charnwood (Policy CS1) existing villages are grouped into a settlement hierarchy for decision-making purposes, comprising “Service Centres”, “other settlements” and “**Small Villages and Hamlets**”. Wanlip is one of fifteen locations in the latter category which the Plan acknowledges “have few or no services and facilities”. Here Policy CS1 states;

*“We will safeguard services and facilities and respond positively to development that meets a specific local social or economic need in our smallest settlements...”*

*We will do this where;*

- *the specific local social or economic need is identified by a Neighbourhood Plan or other appropriate community-led strategy; or*
- *the development supports sustainable businesses in accordance with Policy CS10”*

**Birstall**, by contrast is very much at the other end of the settlement spectrum in the Charnwood context. With a population of some 15,500 it is served by the Cedars Academy (formed in 2014 from the amalgamation of Stonehill High School and Longslade Community College), two primary schools (Highcliffe and Riverside) with a third on the way (Hallam Fields); a vibrant District Centre along Sibson Road and a wide range of social, community and recreational facilities. Birstall is very accessible with full transport choice connections to many local as well as sub-regional destinations.

The new Local Plan includes Birstall in its planning assessment headed “The edge of Leicester City” and “Leicester Principal Urban Area”. The definition of the “**Principal Urban Area**” arises from a joint study prepared in 2009 by the planning authorities that adjoin the Leicester “Principal Urban Area”. It is described as:

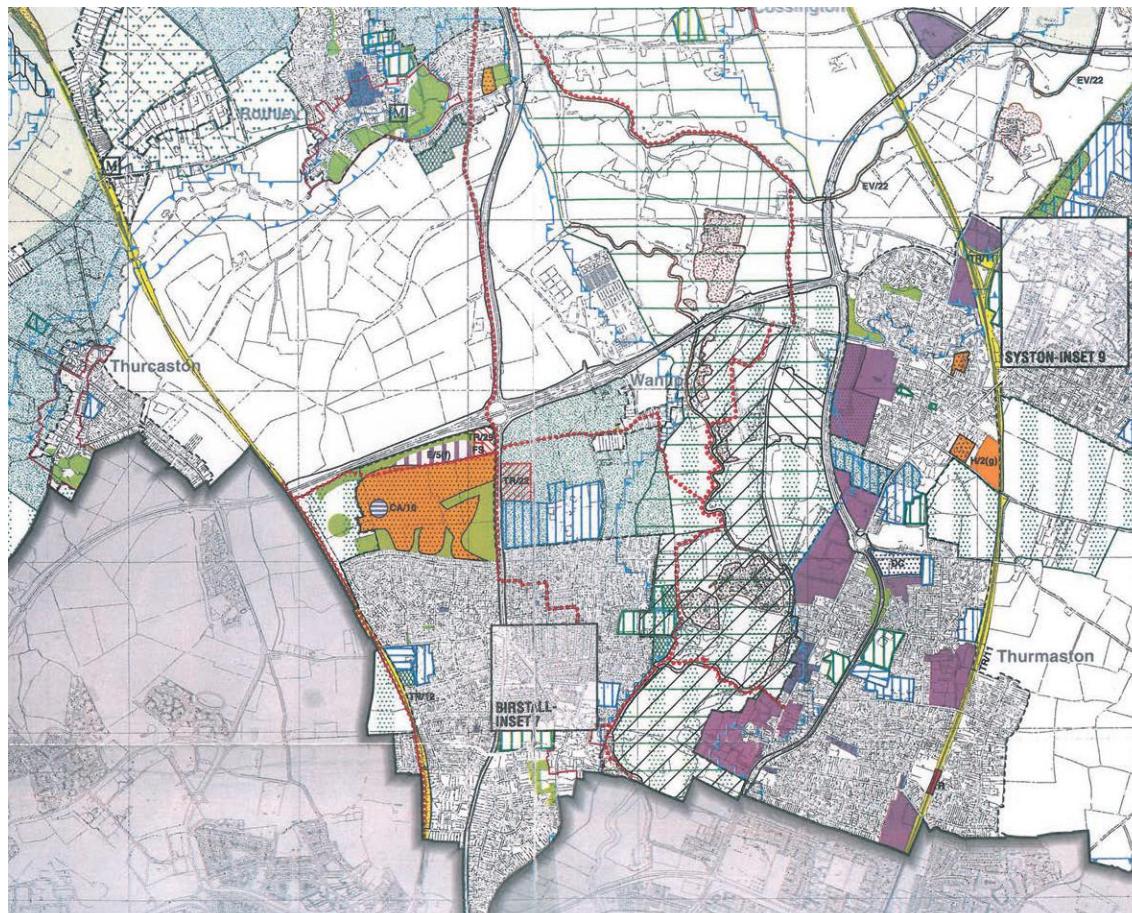
*“... the continuous built-up area of the City of Leicester and includes thirteen settlements outside the City boundary. The Principal Urban Area covers all or parts of Leicester City, Blaby, Charnwood, Harborough and Oadby and Wigston local authority areas”*



Birstall



Sibson road shopping Birstall



Extract from 2004 local plan

The Local Plan also explains that;

- “4.23 South Charnwood has a strong physical, social, economic and environmental relationship with Leicester City. Birstall and Thurcaston are defined as part of the Leicester Principal Urban Area. They form a physical edge to the city with strong links to it for jobs, services and community facilities including shops. A significant amount of land in our Borough adjoins Leicester Principal Urban Area Settlements in other local authority areas, including Hamilton in Leicester City and Glenfield in Blaby District.
- “4.24 We will concentrate development at the edge of Leicester to take advantage of existing infrastructure and support the regeneration in south Charnwood. This will include the development of two sustainable urban extensions and the Watermead Regeneration Corridor.
- “4.25 The city has almost reached its physical limits and our strategy will take advantage of this to attract new investment for the benefit of Charnwood, the City and the wider Principal Urban Area. The three strategic development areas will provide new homes and jobs for people and businesses that want to be close to the city to take advantage of its services and facilities but do not want to be in the City itself”

The Broadnook proposal is one of the three strategic development areas and makes a significant contribution to these identified needs. In doing so and in bringing forward proposals Policy CS20 anticipates that in relation to community facilities, development should;

*“maximise the opportunities to create strong social links with Birstall”*



Rothley

**Rothley** is one of seven larger villages in the Borough defined as “Service Centres” and has a population of approximately 4,100. The new Local Plan explains;

- “Anstey, Barrow-upon-Soar, Mountsorrel, Quorn, Rothley, Sileby and Syston are our Service Centres. Each has the following services and facilities;*
- *a primary school and good access to a secondary school;*
  - *access to employment opportunities;*
  - *food shops and a post office;*
  - *good access to a doctors surgery;*
  - *good, regular public transport services to at least one main urban centre and reasonable bus access to nearby villages; and*
  - *a good range of recreation, leisure and community facilities.*

*The Service Centres are all home to at least 3,000 people and the good range of services and facilities and good transport links allow them to provide for the daily needs of the people living there as well as supporting nearby communities.*

*There are commitments for around 3,500 homes in Service Centres. This is sufficient to meet the levels of planned provision and we only expect to see small scale windfall developments within the settlement boundaries between 2014 and 2028... Our priority is to see any new development that takes place at Service Centres to be within their existing built-up areas...”*

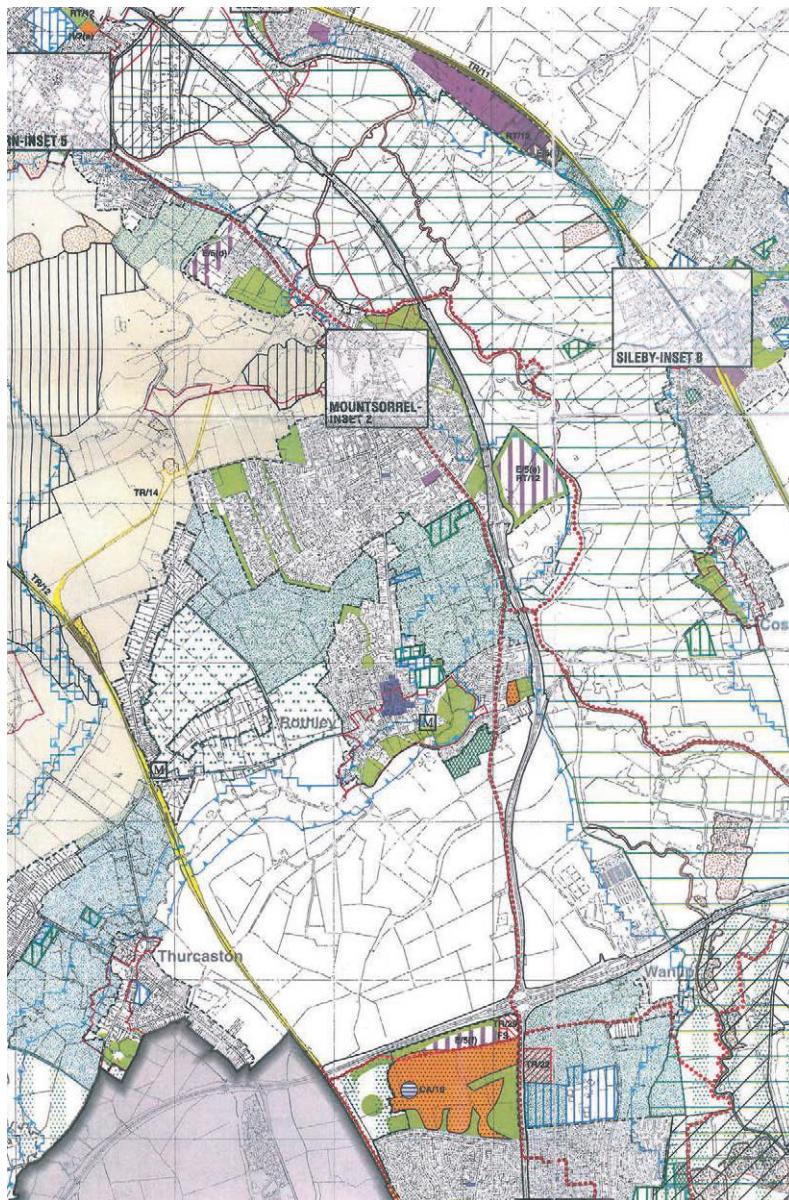
(Core Strategy 4.43 - 4.46)

**Rothley** is an interesting Charnwood village with a rich history and a strong character. It has a good range of facilities including a new primary school, although a common complaint concerns the lack of health care facilities in the village (the nearest GP Practices are at Mountsorrel and Birstall).

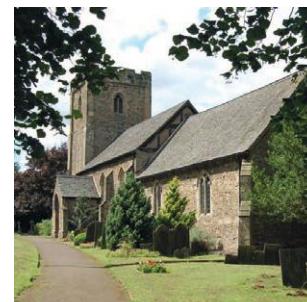
Two village greens establish two contrasting focal points and the established **Rothley Garden Suburb** has matured into one of the most attractive residential environments in Leicestershire. These qualities are now recognised by the designation of the **Rothley Ridgeway Conservation Area (2010)**. Rothley, with other Service Centres, has been a focus of unplanned growth over the past few years.

The following extract from the 2004 Local Plan identifies a range of earlier planning policy constraints around Rothley which when set were largely concerned with protecting the areas around the village from development – with separation from Mountsorrel and from the Ridgeway areas being particular priorities.

Notwithstanding these planning principles additional housing has been permitted in view of updated requirements, some following successful planning appeals. There is now strongly expressed local concern that further peripheral expansion should not be countenanced. As the extract alongside confirms the new Local Plan provides the balance by prioritising development at the Principal Urban Area, including Broadnook, whilst restricting any further permissions above existing commitments to infill proposals within Service Centre boundaries.



Extract from 2004 local plan



Thurcaston

**Thurcaston** completes the set of settlement categories in the Broadnook vicinity – it is one of twelve Charnwood villages categorised as “**Other Settlements**”. The new Local Plan approach for this group is as follows;

*“Many of our villages do not generally have access to a good range of services or facilities and rely largely on the private car for their day-to-day needs. Our strategy allows for some development in these locations to help us to protect and where possible increase services and facilities within them.*

*Where a village has four or more key services and facilities ... and bus access to a Service Centre, town or the City they are generally able to service some day-to-day needs of the people who live there...*

*These villages may be suitable for some small scale infill development to meet local needs. To be considered small scale, a development should be appropriate in size for the village they are in and the character of the site's location and surroundings. This could include single or small groups of homes or businesses that are developed through the conversion of existing buildings or on infill plots. Any development that increases the need to travel by car will not be considered to be acceptable small-scale development...*

*We expect Neighbourhood Plans to take a strong lead on meeting and managing the local housing needs of the neighbourhood they are prepared for...”*  
 (Core Strategy 4.47-4.58)

**Thurcaston** has a primary school (Richard Hill) and a public house (Wheatsheaf Inn) and an interesting Conservation Area surrounding the Parish Church.

The Draft Submission Consultation Version of the **Thurcaston and Cropston Neighbourhood Plan (TCNP)** was published in May 2016. The TCNP recognises that it needs to be in general conformity with relevant national and Charnwood Borough planning policies including the adopted Core Strategy.

The Proposals Map of the Neighbourhood Plan is set out opposite.

The TCNP proposes the designation of Limits to Development as shown, in accordance with the approach supported by the Charnwood Core Strategy. In this regard, the draft TCNP states;

*"Within the defined Limit to Development identified in this Plan small scale, sustainable development will be viewed sympathetically. This development will mainly comprise infill – the filling of a restricted gap in an otherwise built-up frontage or the conversion of an existing building. Any development will be required to demonstrate that it meets an identified local need, and is well designed and located"* (page 13)

**Draft Policy T&C3** establishes a criteria-based policy against which to assess proposals. Land outside the defined Thurcaston Limits to Development is identified as countryside which TCNP proposes to protect, under **Policy T&C5**, for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty.

The TCNP acknowledges the Charnwood Core Strategy position in relation to the North of Birstall proposal. The TCNP Proposals Map identifies that part of the Broadnook Garden Suburb which falls within the Thurcaston and Cropston Parish. TCNP says;

*"As the development has been identified in the Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy it would not be appropriate, nor do the rules governing the preparation of a neighbourhood plan allow, for the Plan to seek to change or amend the "strategic" elements of the development such as those detailed in the Policy CS1 of the Local Plan. Equally, as Broadnook is likely to be the biggest development in and around the Parish for many decades to come it is imperative that the community plays its part in ensuring that this reflects local needs and priorities."*

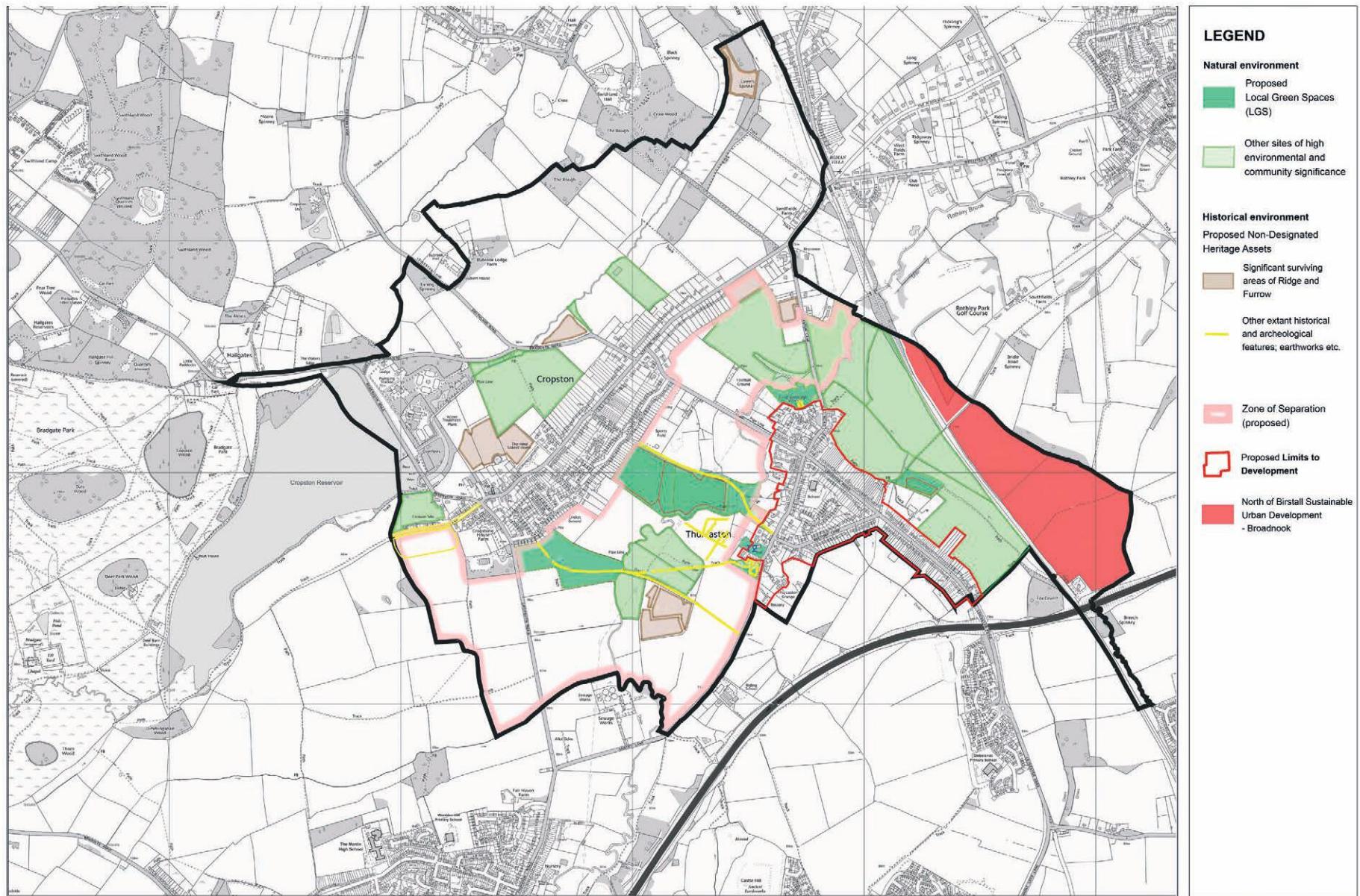
*The consultation shows that the community generally understands the concept of the development and the need and requirement for it to be reflected in the Plan"*

The local concerns relate to landscape effects of development on rising ground to the east of the railway, ensuring access is primarily related to the A6 and thence onto the A46 and that new housing assists in meeting the housing and other development needs of the Parish as set out in the TCNP. These concerns are recorded in **draft Policy T&C4** which reads;

*"Broadnook Development – The Plan recognises that part of the major Broadnook Development identified in the Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2018 Core Strategy is located within the Parish. In this location Policy CS20 and other relevant policies of the Core Strategy will be applied. In addition, the Plan requires that part of the Broadnook development in the Parish;*

- a) *That a landscaping area, including tree planting, of at least 25m depth should be provided between the railway line and new housing to provide a soft landscaped edge to the development and to preserve and enhance biodiversity and to preserve and enhance biodiversity as well as acting as a wildlife corridor;*
- b) *Important ponds, trees and hedgerows should be retained;*
- c) *The density of the dwellings to the edge of the residential development adjacent to the open landscape should be reduced and no more than two storeys in height to create a gradual transition from built area to more open green space and should generally be designed to be sensitive to the existing and adjoining uses and minimise visual impact;*
- d) *A mix of housing types and sizes to meet the current and future needs of people in the Parish and the wider area be provided; and*
- e) *Vehicular access and movements should be via and along the A6"*

## Thurcaston and Cropston Neighbourhood Plan: Proposals Map





Wanlip



Birstall



Rothley

In summary, the Broadnook site is flanked by four settlements of different scale and characteristics and with a corresponding variation in their respective planning policy position. The difference in status is also a reflection of the range of services and facilities in each location.

The Local Plan requires the Broadnook proposal to provide an integrated level of community and commercial facilities which will satisfy the everyday needs of the new community. In view of this self-containment it is not expected that there will be a significant effect on existing settlements in this regard and they will remain very much as they are under the prevailing planning regime.

That said, it is appropriate to record a number of issues arising from consultation and discussion which may require further dialogue as the Broadnook planning application is considered and determined:

**Wanlip** the community has previously prepared a Parish Plan which the Parish Meeting has indicated may be reviewed. There may be issues – public transport, specialist housing, environmental enhancements for example to examine further in dialogue with the community's representatives.

**Birstall** it has been suggested by a Birstall Stakeholders Group that there may be potential to support improvements to the community facility provision at the Cedars Academy with a particular emphasis on sport and leisure. The former Stonehill and Longslade institutions have been merged and a significant renewal process is underway. These discussions will be continued.

**Rothley** the Rothley community has expressed its concern about the lack of more convenient health care facilities. A Neighbourhood Plan exercise has been initiated and this may highlight matters of mutual interest.

**Thurcaston** the community here is supportive of the settlement's Core Strategy planning status - as an "Other Settlement" - referred to above for the settlement itself. The GCR provides a durable physical boundary to Broadnook. The Neighbourhood Plan exercise at Thurcaston is very helpful in highlighting issues for further appraisal and discussion - as expressed by TCNP Policy T&C4.

An exhibition was held at each of the four settlements during the period late January - early February 2016. The background to and nature of the draft Broadnook proposals was set out and comments and questions invited. The exhibitions were well attended and the feedback via comments forms and on-line options is helpful, positive and informative. The application is accompanied by a **Statement of Community Involvement** which sets this out in full.

Consideration has been given to the relevance of existing character at each of the four existing communities which could appropriately influence the design and development proposals for Broadnook. Consistent themes include architectural style, massing and materials. Again there are both similarities and differences between the existing settlements but, appropriately, the key references are taken from the established **Rothley Garden Suburb** and the **Park Road area at Birstall** – high quality housing areas developed around the newly found accessibility provided by the GCR stations in the early twentieth century. This is examined further in **Section 6**.



Thurcaston



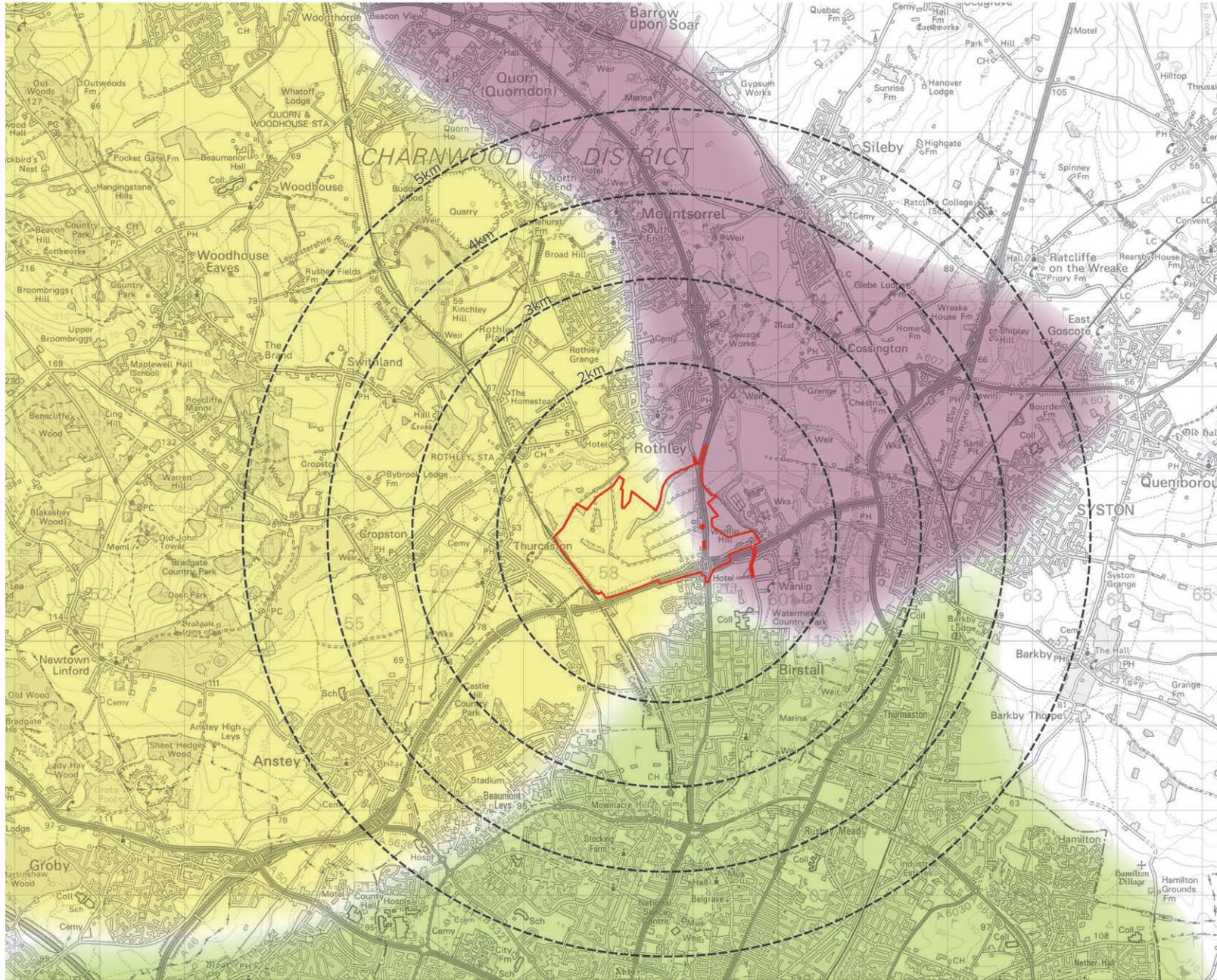


### Topography and Landscape Setting

The garden suburb site lies predominantly in National Landscape Character Area NCA 73 “Charnwood” and Local Landscape Character Area “Charnwood Forest”. The key characteristics of the site and its immediate setting are considered to be;

- the site includes land at the top of a low hill with slopes to the west, north and east;
- blocks of woodland and some significant hedgerow boundaries are prevalent to the west and north contributing to the character of the Charnwood Forest area;
- main arterial road and rail routes cut through the topography forming embankments and cuttings which are generally well planted;
- the edge of the Principal Urban Area is apparent from new development at Hallam Fields to the south. Otherwise there is a semi-rural outlook to the east, north and west with glimpses of Thurcaston and Cropston and, further afield, Cossington and Syston.





## LEGEND

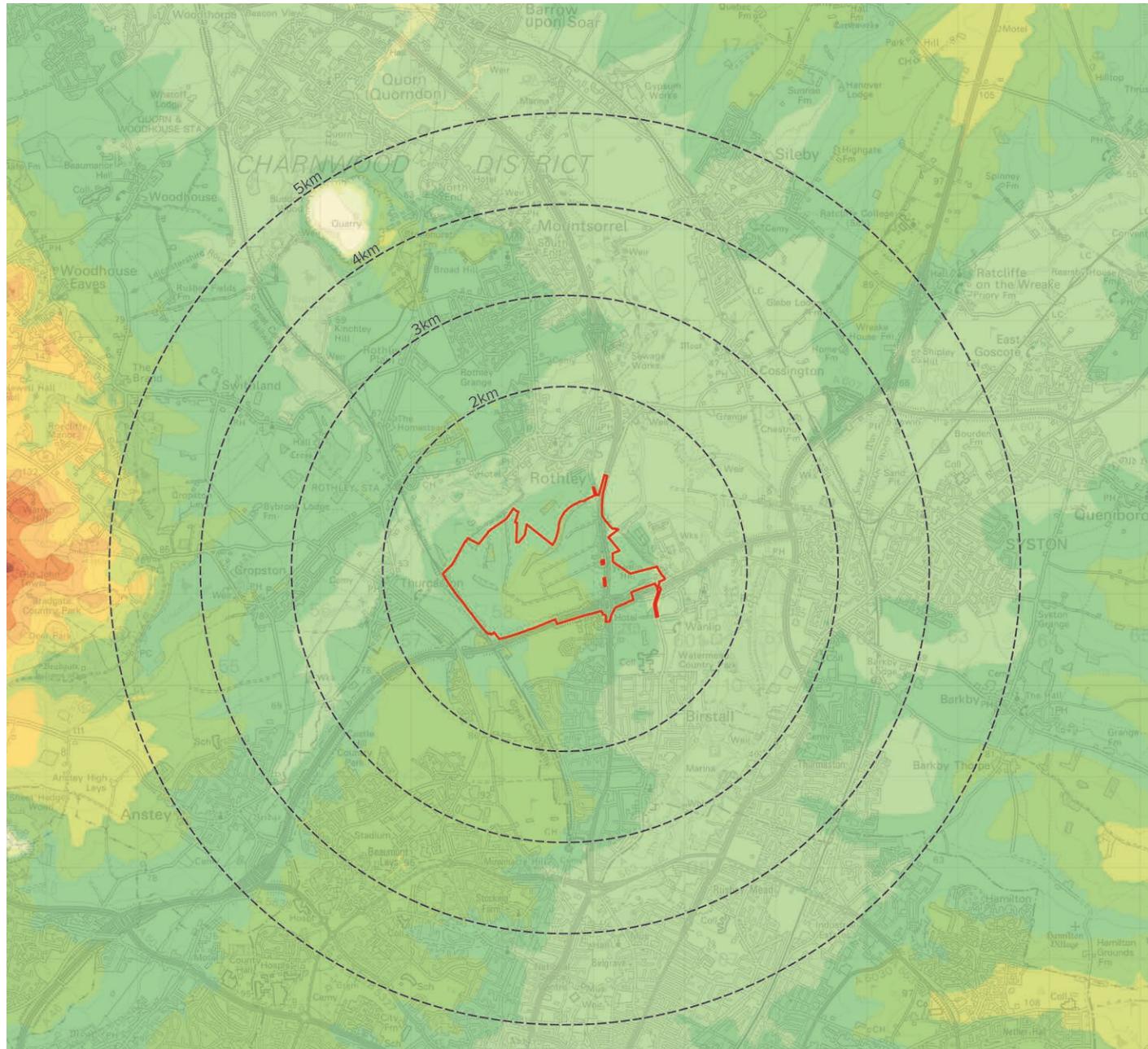
- Site boundary
- National Landscape Character Area
  - Trent Valley Washlands (NCA 69)
  - Charnwood (NCA 73)
  - Leicestershire Vales (NCA 94)



SCALE 1:50,000



National Landscape Character



Topography (Charnwood)

**LEGEND**

Site boundary

**Height (m AOD)**

-40 to -20
-20 to 0
0 to 20
20 to 40
40 to 60
60 to 80
80 to 100
100 to 120
120 to 140
140 to 160
160 to 180
180 to 200
200 to 220
220 to 240
240 to 260



SCALE 1:50,000



## VISUAL FOILS / BUFFERS

Woodland, plantation, copse, spinney



Transport corridor, tree/woodland belts



## VISUAL EXPOSURE

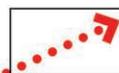
Secluded higher ground interspersed by hedgerows and mature trees



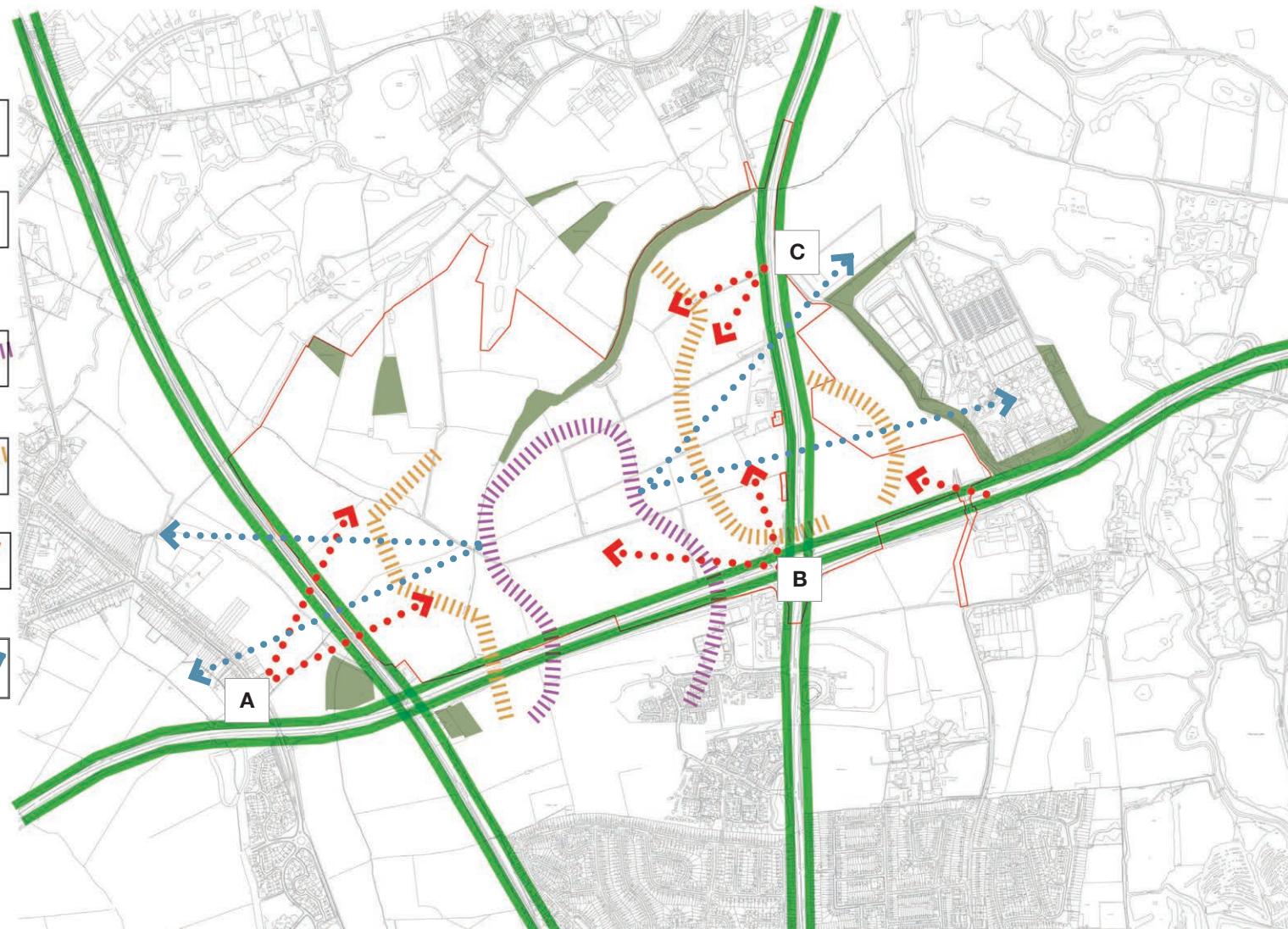
Shallow side slopes with hedgerows and mature trees



Visual access



Key views out- east and west



A



B



C



## VISUAL FOILS BUFFERS

Existing woodland, plantation, copse, and spinney



Existing transport corridors with hedgerows and woodland belts



## VISUAL RESPONSE

Linear parks and woodland belts to form a visually contained central area and meet biodiversity priorities (1)



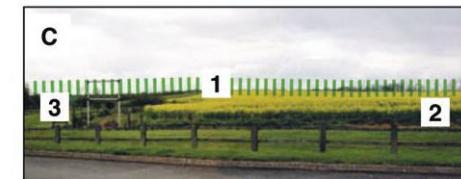
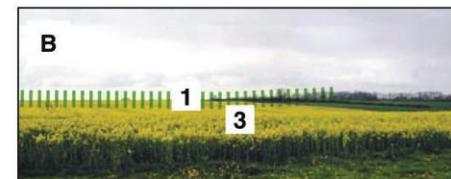
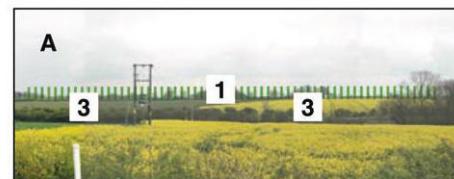
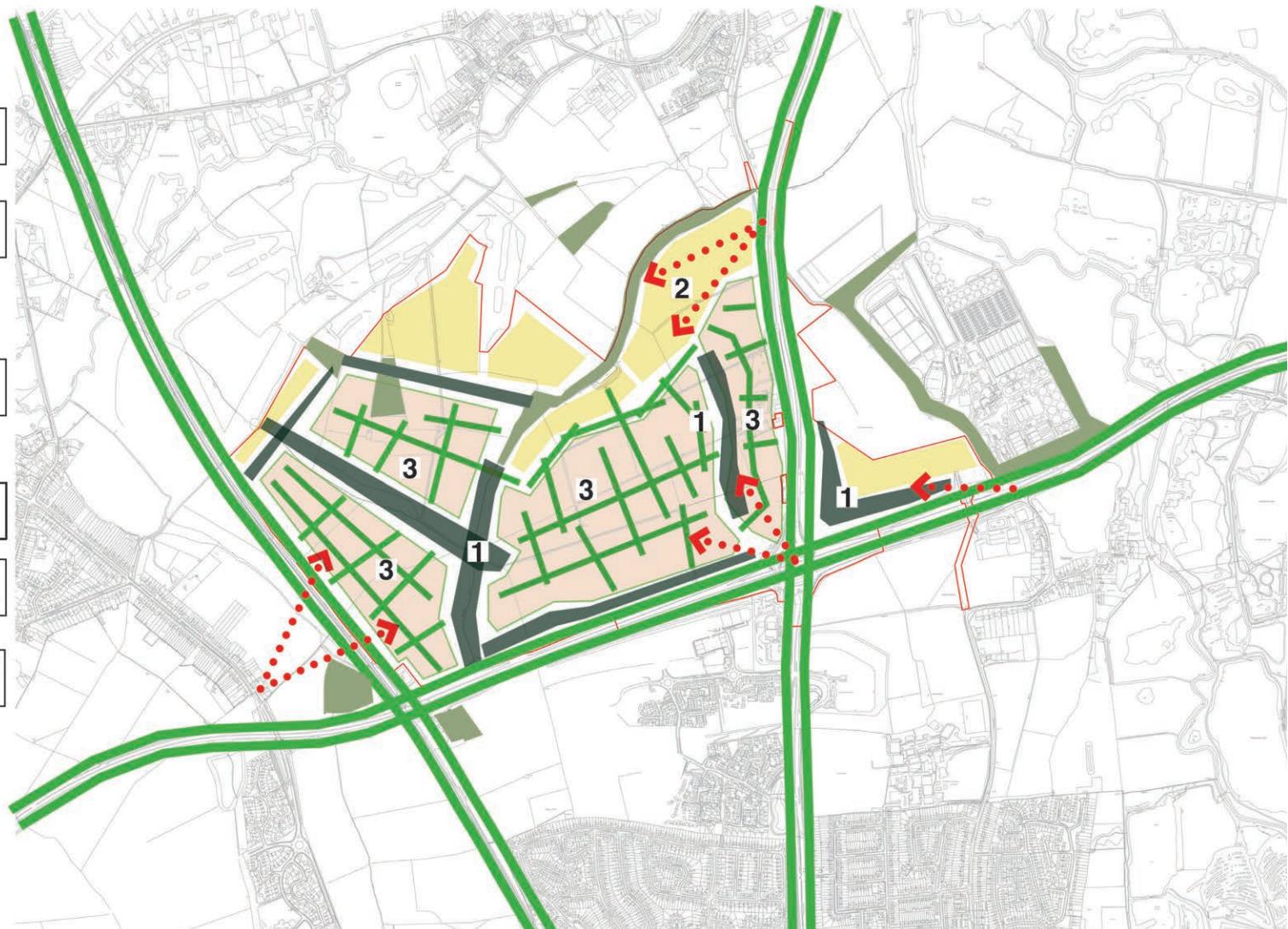
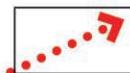
Side slopes retained as open ground (2)



Very dominant landscape structure within development areas (3)



Visual access



## KEY

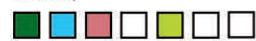
Woodland  
(Covers, spinneys, existing and proposed woodland)



Roadside Trees and Hedgerows  
(Field hedgerows, greenways, tree lined transport corridors)



Ornamental and Amenity Landscape  
(Countryside Park, sports pitches, Parkway, Golf course)



Agriculture and Horticulture  
(Agricultural fields, Allotments, Orchards)



River and Brook Corridor  
(Rothley Brook and River Soar)



## BENEFITS

Biodiversity



Shelter / Climate



Visual



Food production



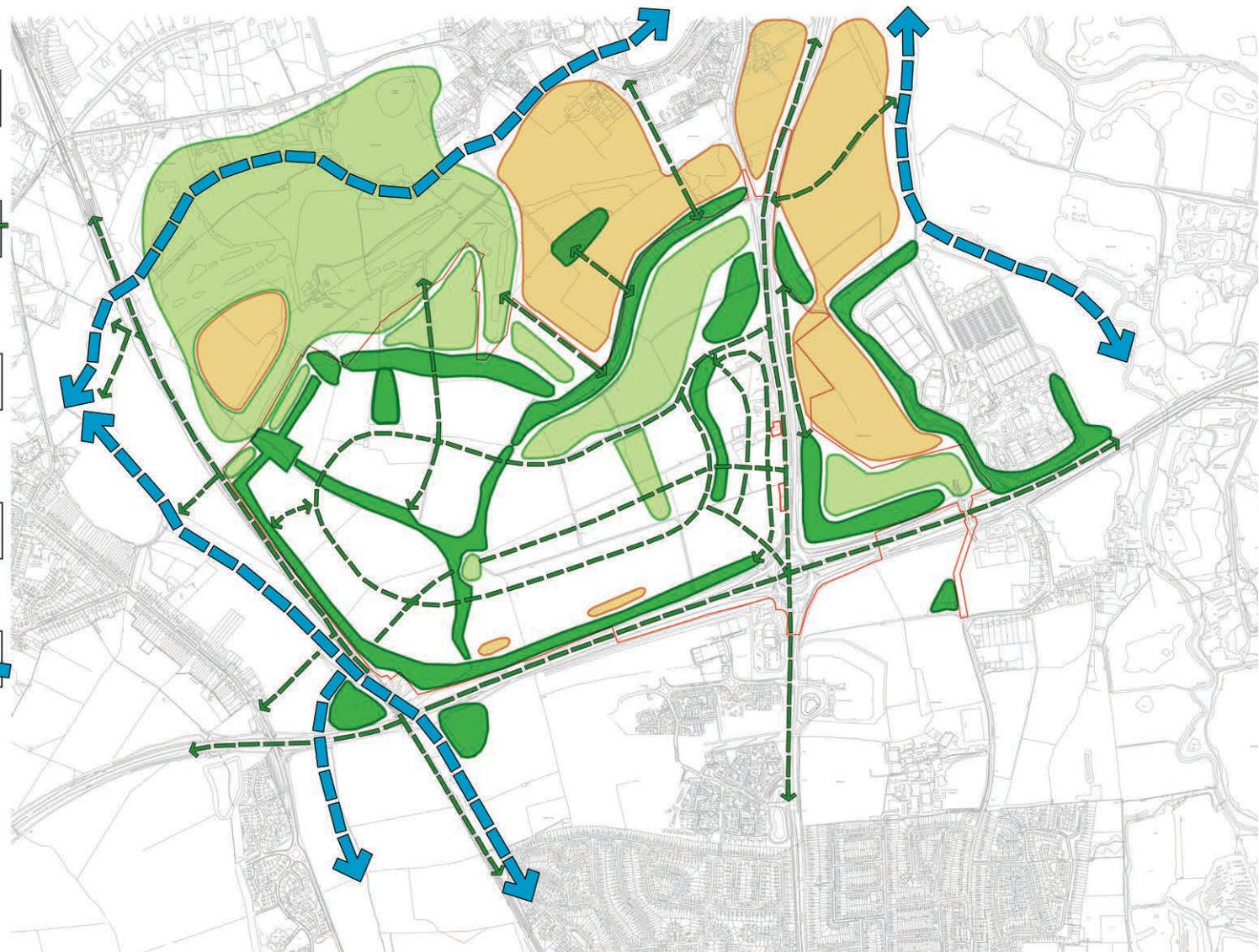
Recreation



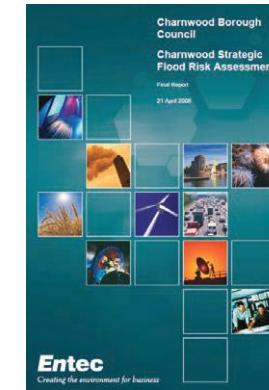
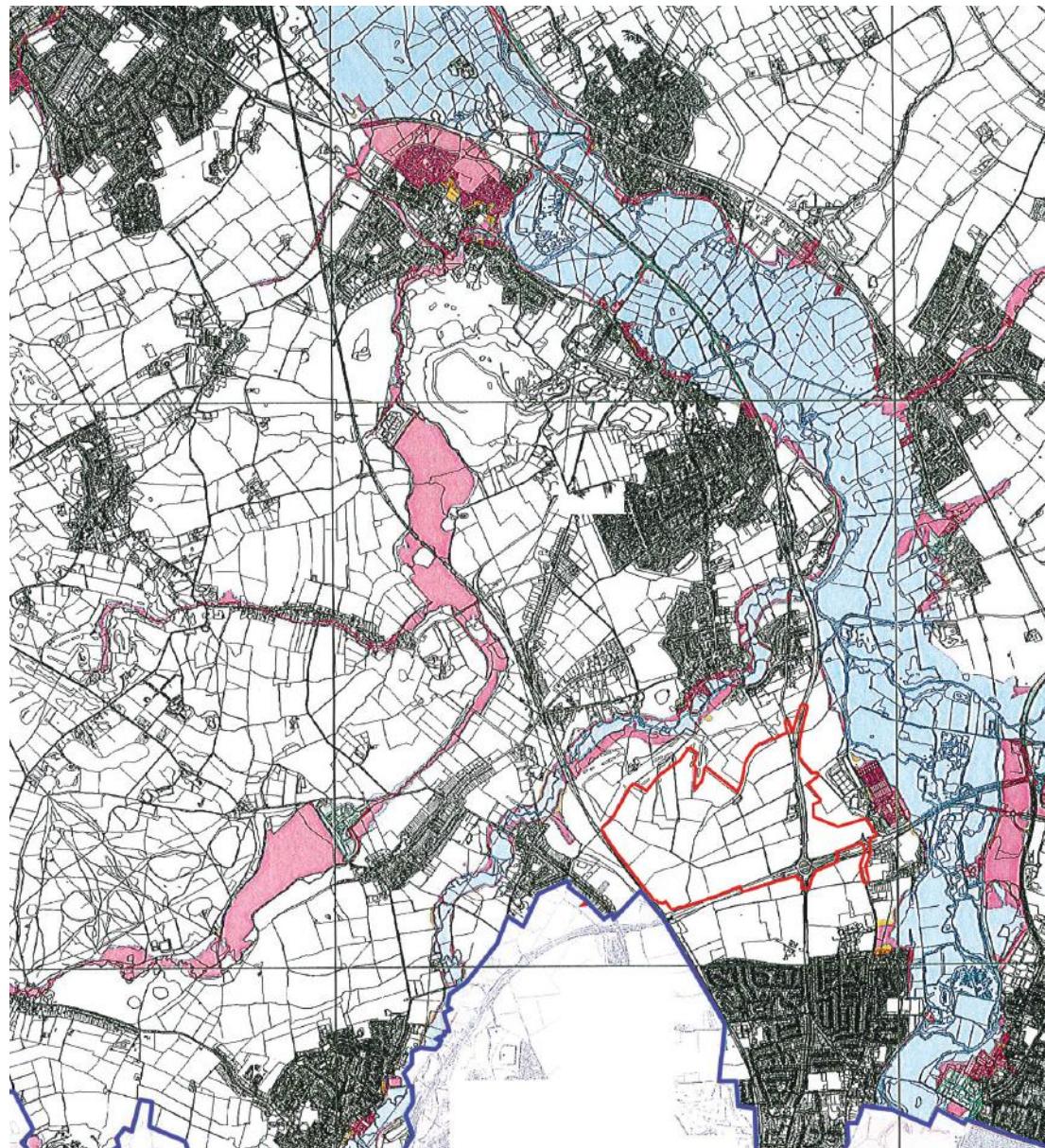
Fuel



Skills



New Green Infrastructure - Analysis



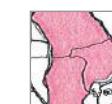
Broadnook Application Boundary



Charnwood Borough Boundary



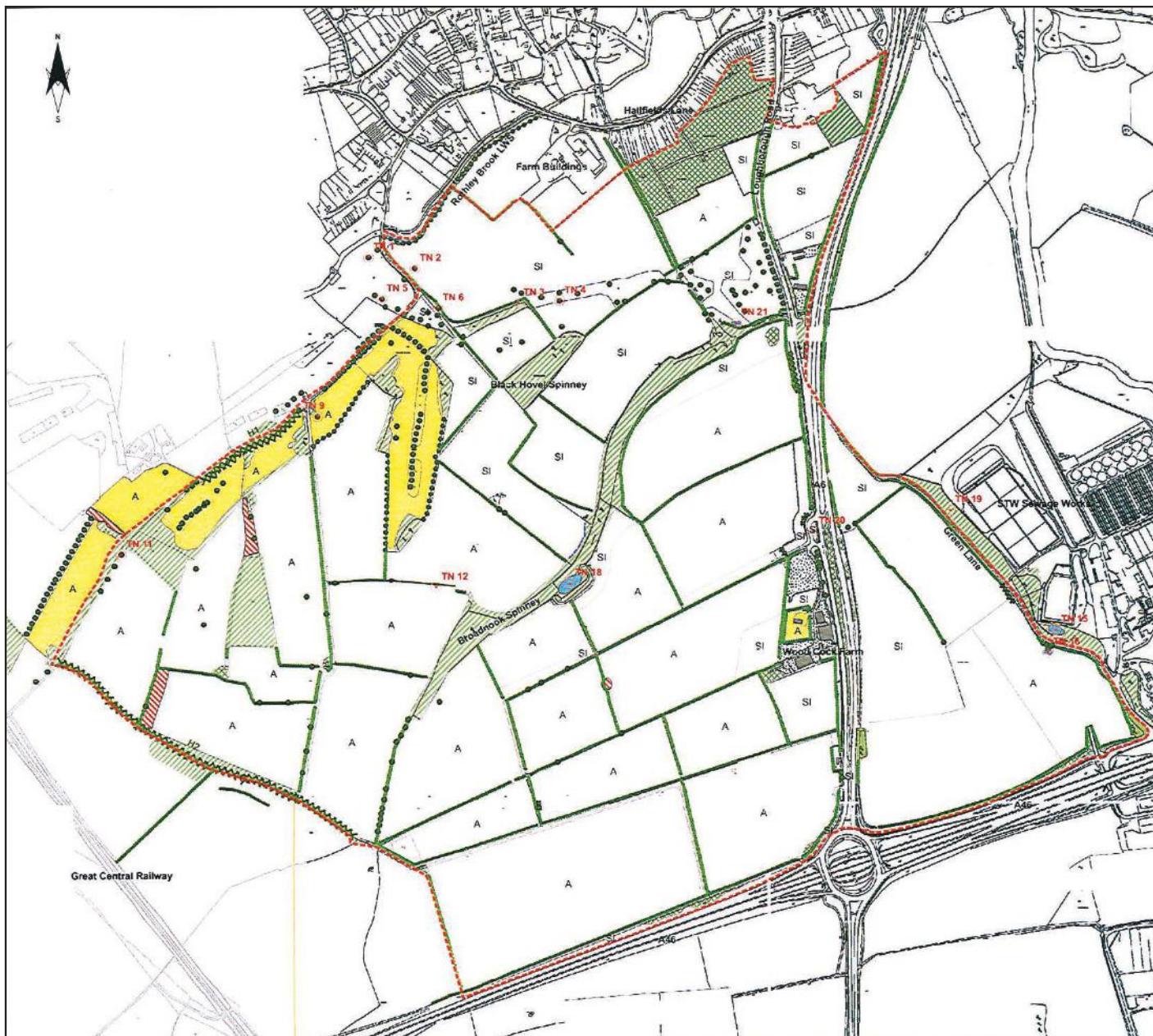
Areas of floodplain or flood risk



## Ecology

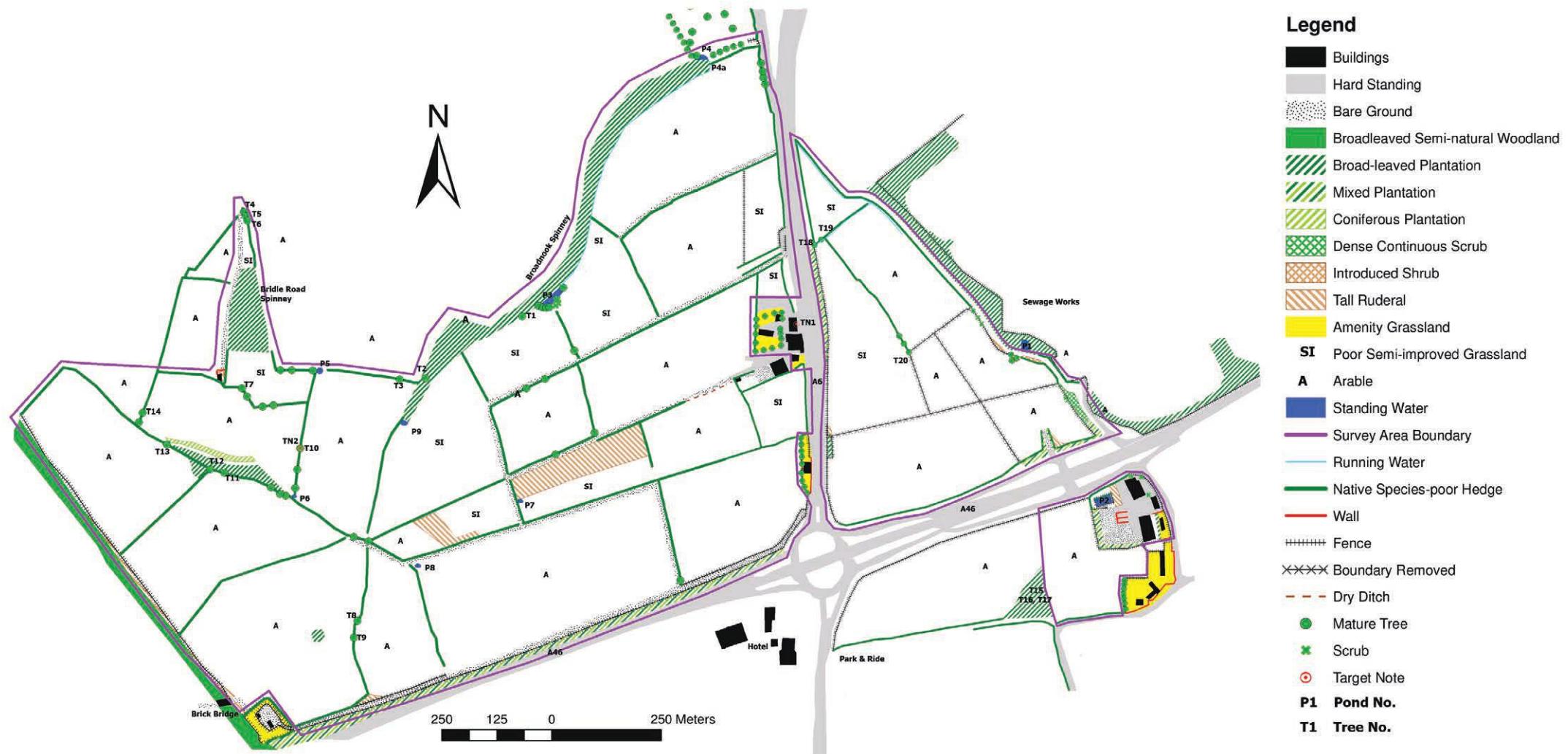
The areas north of A46 to the west and east of the A6 have been the subject of five habitat surveys since 2008 – two carried out by the Borough Council as part of the Local Plan evidence base and three more on behalf of the applicants to inform the hybrid planning application.

The overall conclusion is that in view of the intensive farming regime the site has low nature conservation value. Important habitats are beyond the site to the north associated with the valley of the Rothley Brook. Broadnook Spinney is the key landscape feature on site and two corridors are identified as wildlife priorities – the Spinney (north-east oriented south-west) and the Great Central Railway. The field pattern and hedgerows form the basis of a framework of vegetation albeit the majority of the existing hedgerows are of poor ecological value with a limited species-mix. The field pattern – geometric to the east of Broadnook Spinney, more informal to the west – presents a ready basis for considering a garden suburb layout and the prospect of a significant nett gain in green infrastructure. There are no significant water bodies on the site. An unnamed watercourse flows across and adjacent to Broadnook Spinney in a north eastern direction towards the River Soar. From the extensive assessments an ecological constraints and opportunities plan has been prepared (see page 145).



### Legend

- Target Note
- - Survey Extents
- Broad-leaved Trees
- Coniferous Trees
- Scrub
- Defunct Native Species Poor Hedge
- Native Species Poor Hedge
- Native Species Rich Hedge
- Native Species Poor Hedge and Broad-leaved Trees
- Native Species Poor Hedge and Confer Trees
- ● ● Line of Broadleaved Trees
- Wall
- Fence
- Boundary Removed
- Earth Bank
- Dry Ditch
- Running Water
- Broad-leaved Plantation
- Broad-leaved Semi-natural Woodland
- Coniferous plantation
- Mixed Plantation
- Dense Continuous Scrub
- Scattered Scrub
- Buildings
- Bare Ground
- A Arable
- A Amenity Grassland
- I Improved Grassland
- SI Poor Semi-improved Grassland
- SI Semi Improved Neutral Grassland
- SI Semi Improved Neutral Grassland and Tall Ruderal Mosaic
- SI Tall Ruderal
- SW Standing Water



Phase 1 Habitat Plan WYG 2013

## Designations

### (I) statutory planning and cultural heritage designations

- **nature conservation**

there are no sites on or adjoining the garden suburb site with a national or local designation for nature conservation value. (see “Designated Sites” on next page)

- **public rights of way (PRoW)**

there are no public rights of way which traverse the site but a number of public footpaths and bridleways pass along or near to the boundaries and form the basis of an improved network both for the site, for South Charnwood and its constituent settlements and enhanced connections into Leicester City. A number of the existing routes which adjoin the site have in recent times been severed by the construction of A6 and A46 and have become isolated, poorly connected and, in part, unsafe. The garden suburb proposal has the potential to achieve significant enhancements. (see Public Rights of Way plan on page 69)

- **tree preservation orders (TPOs)**

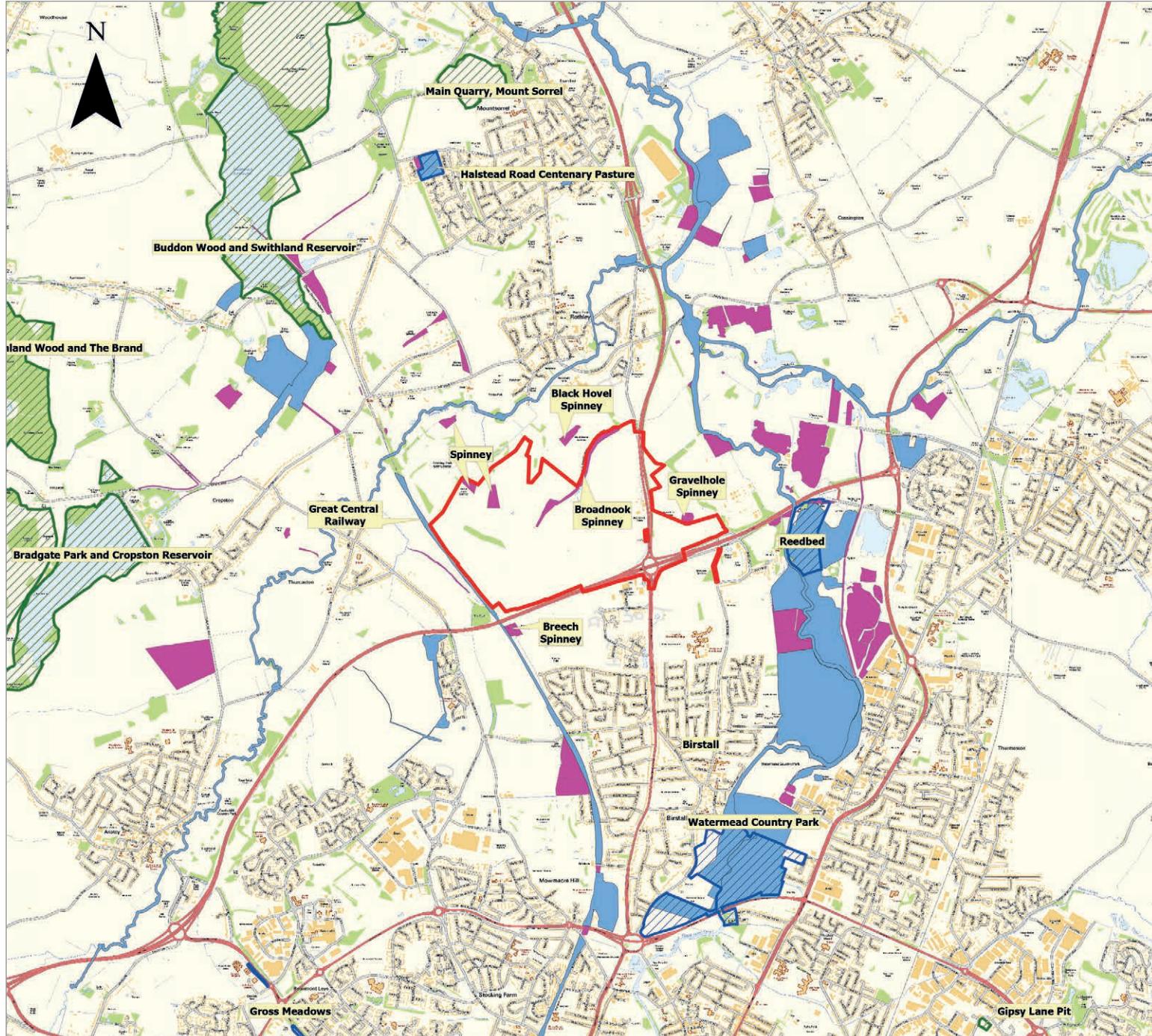
a number of TPOs protect tree groups within or in close proximity to the garden suburb site;

W10 – Bridle Road Spinney – “*mixed hard and soft woodlands*”

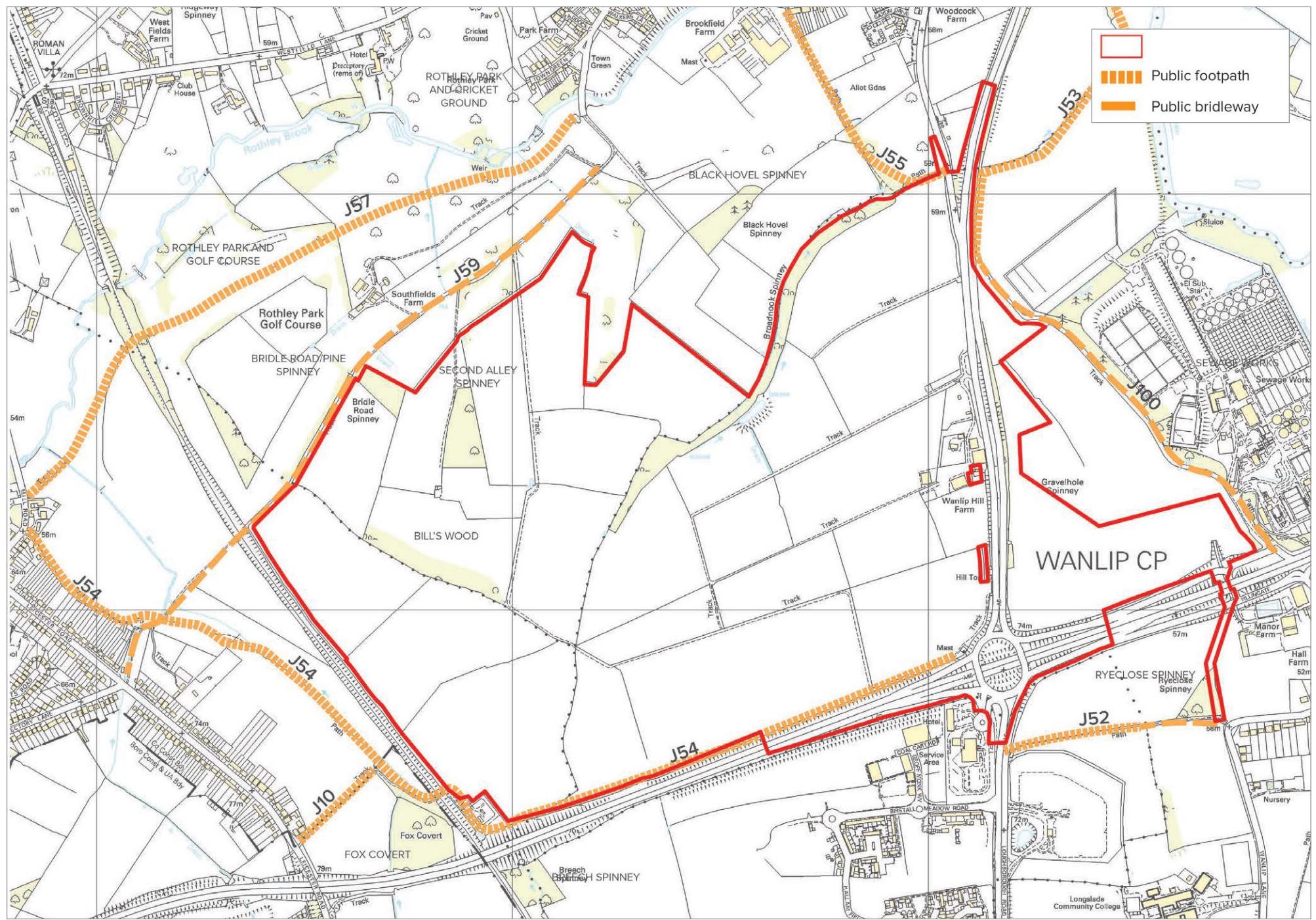
W11 – “*mixed hardwoods – mainly ash and elm*”

W13 – Broadnook Spinney – “*mainly poplars with other mixed hardwoods*”

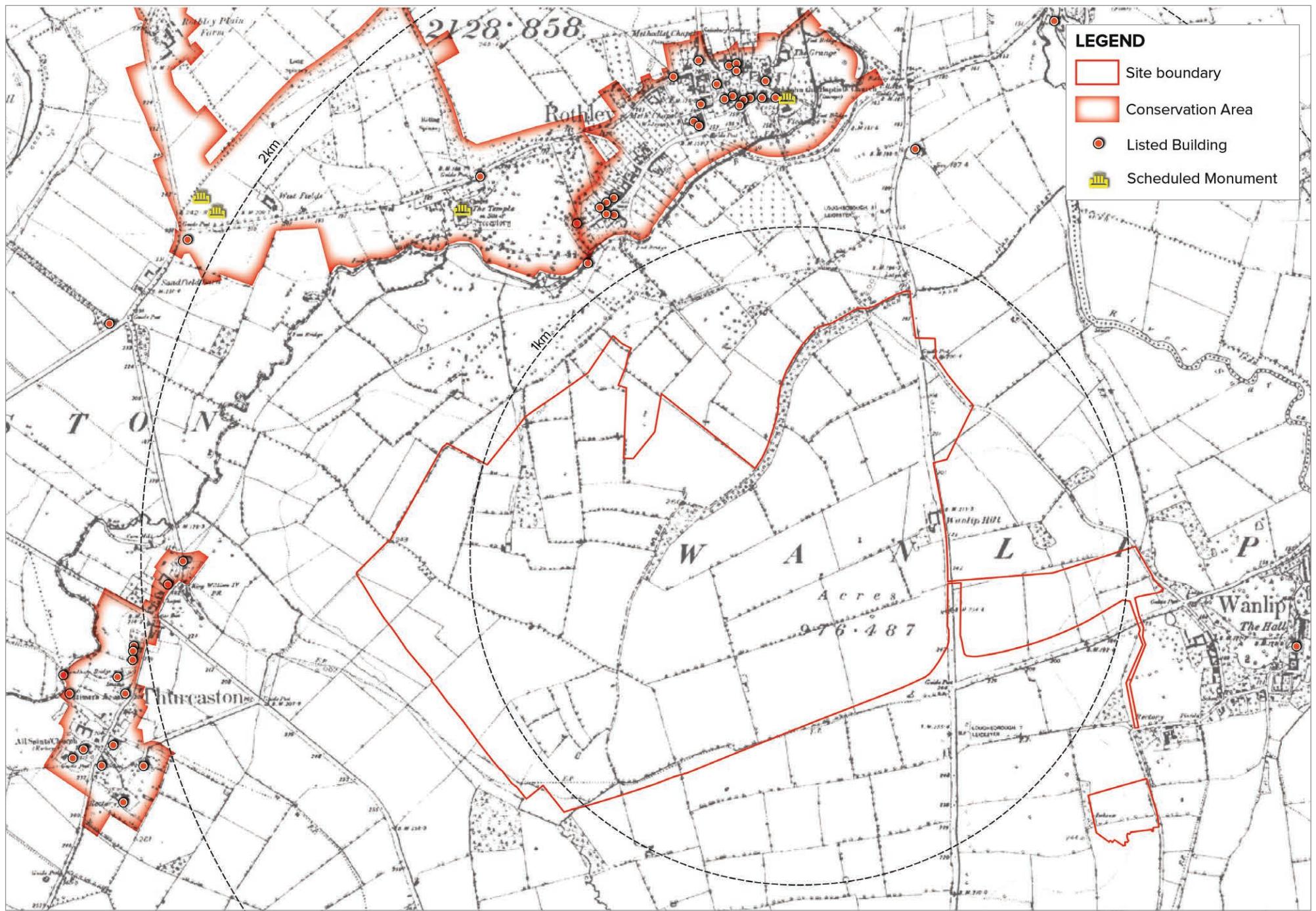
All trees subject to the Orders will be retained and protected both during the construction period and the occupation by the new community.



Statutory and Non-statutory Designated Sites



## **Public Rights of Way**



Historic Landscape character

- **conservation areas**

a number of Conservation Areas lie within 2km of the garden suburb site:

Rothley

Rothley Ridgeway

Thurcaston

Birstall

Due to the physical (distance) and visual separation (topography, physical infrastructure, existing vegetation and built form) between the garden suburb site and these areas, significant impact from new development is not anticipated.



- **scheduled monuments**

a site of a large Roman courtyard villa or country house is located c.1km to the north west of the garden suburb site. Little remains of the villa which was discovered during the construction of the GCR.

a Mercian Cross lies in the churchyard of Rothley Parish Church and is a rare example of a standing cross of the pre-Viking period

2 km to the southwest within the City boundary is the Castle Hill scheduled monument and the Rothley Temple monument is sited to the north.

- **listed buildings**

a number of listed buildings are concentrated in the historic centres of Rothley and Thurcaston and included within the respective Conservation Area boundaries.

whilst Wanlip does not have a Conservation Area there are two listed structures – the Parish Church and an Ice House associated with the former Wanlip Hall.

the garden suburb site is not affected by the location and setting of these listed buildings.

The Environmental Statement includes an assessment to identify any constraints to development and in the iterative masterplanning exercise to examine the potential impact of the proposal on below-ground archaeology and the built heritage. It concludes that some additional archaeological fieldwork and possibly post-excavation work could be required in relation to undesignated below-ground archaeology but the potential impact on designated heritage assets will be negligible.

## (ii) non-statutory planning designations

- Charnwood Forest Regional Park**

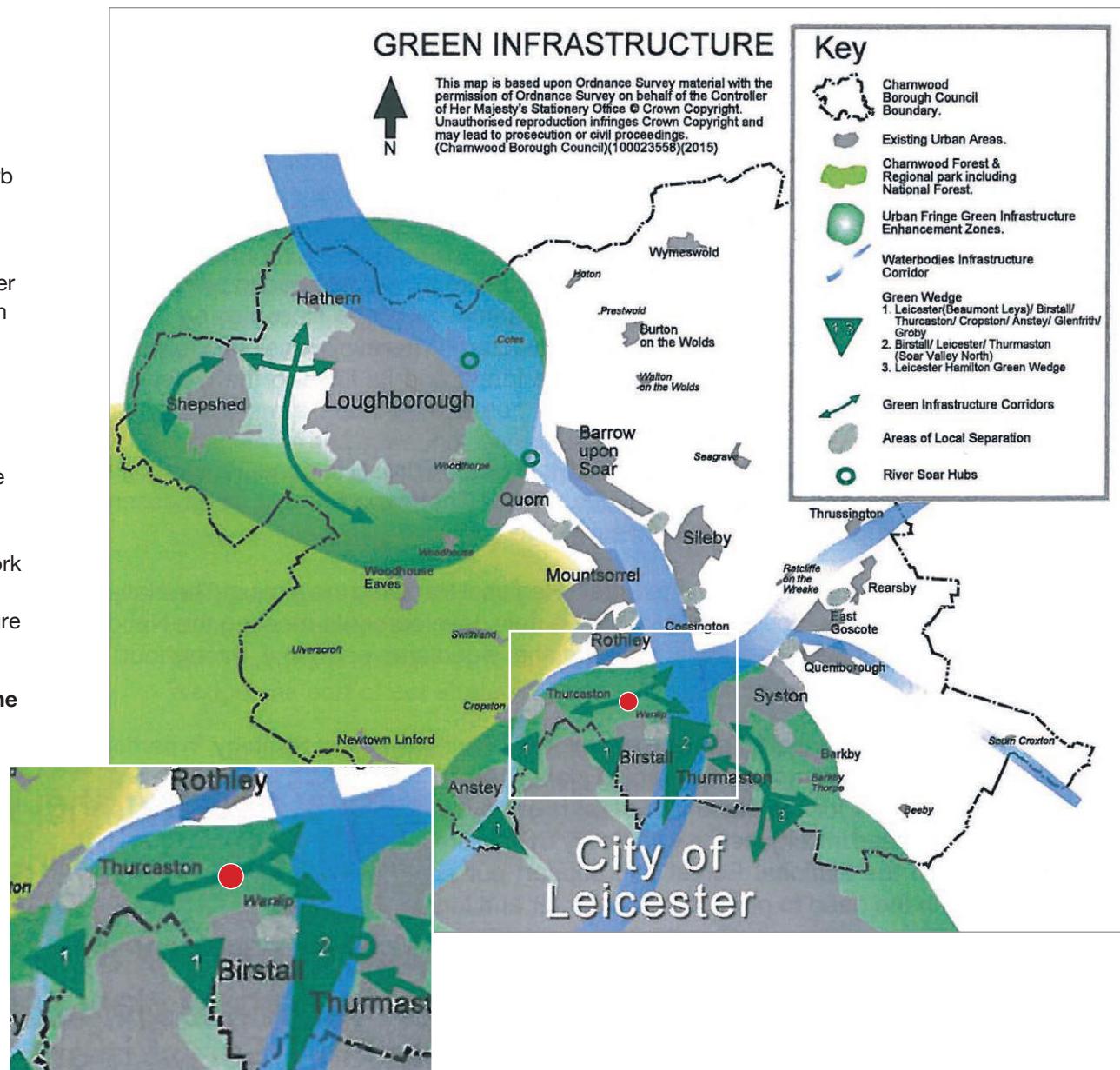
the garden suburb site is on the south-eastern fringe of a prospective Regional Park designation area albeit any final designation will account for the garden suburb proposals.

the Broadnook garden suburb principles are complementary to the surrounding landscape character and the high quality design aspirations associated with the attractive Charnwood Forest.

extensive green infrastructure, biodiversity and recreational improvements are in prospect as part of Broadnook (as required by the new Charnwood Local Plan) including managed woodland, creation of wildlife corridors and meadows, extensive tree planting of native species, wetland creation and the provision of sports pitches, play areas, allotments and cycle network – all compatible with and supported by Regional Park principles. A separate statement on Green Infrastructure accompanies the planning application.

- urban fringe green infrastructure enhancement zone**

a Green Infrastructure Strategy has been produced for the “6C’s area” (the Counties of Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and the Cities of Leicester, Derby and Nottingham).



The strategy identifies “**Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones**”. One of the Borough’s strategically important areas in the green infrastructure network is defined as “**the edge of Leicester Urban Fringe**” which includes “**Green Infrastructure Corridors**” – as shown on the diagram opposite taken from the Core Strategy in relation to the Broadnook location. The Strategy emphasises with respect to these considerations;

*“Our Green Infrastructure Strategy also identifies the fringe around urban areas as particularly important to the wider network of green infrastructure. These are the network of existing green spaces on the edges of towns and villages that can connect communities to each other and the countryside. They also provide an opportunity to connect the existing community with people who will live and work in our new strategic developments”*



**Core Strategy Policy CS12 “Green Infrastructure”** therefore emphasises;

*“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;*

*... 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;*

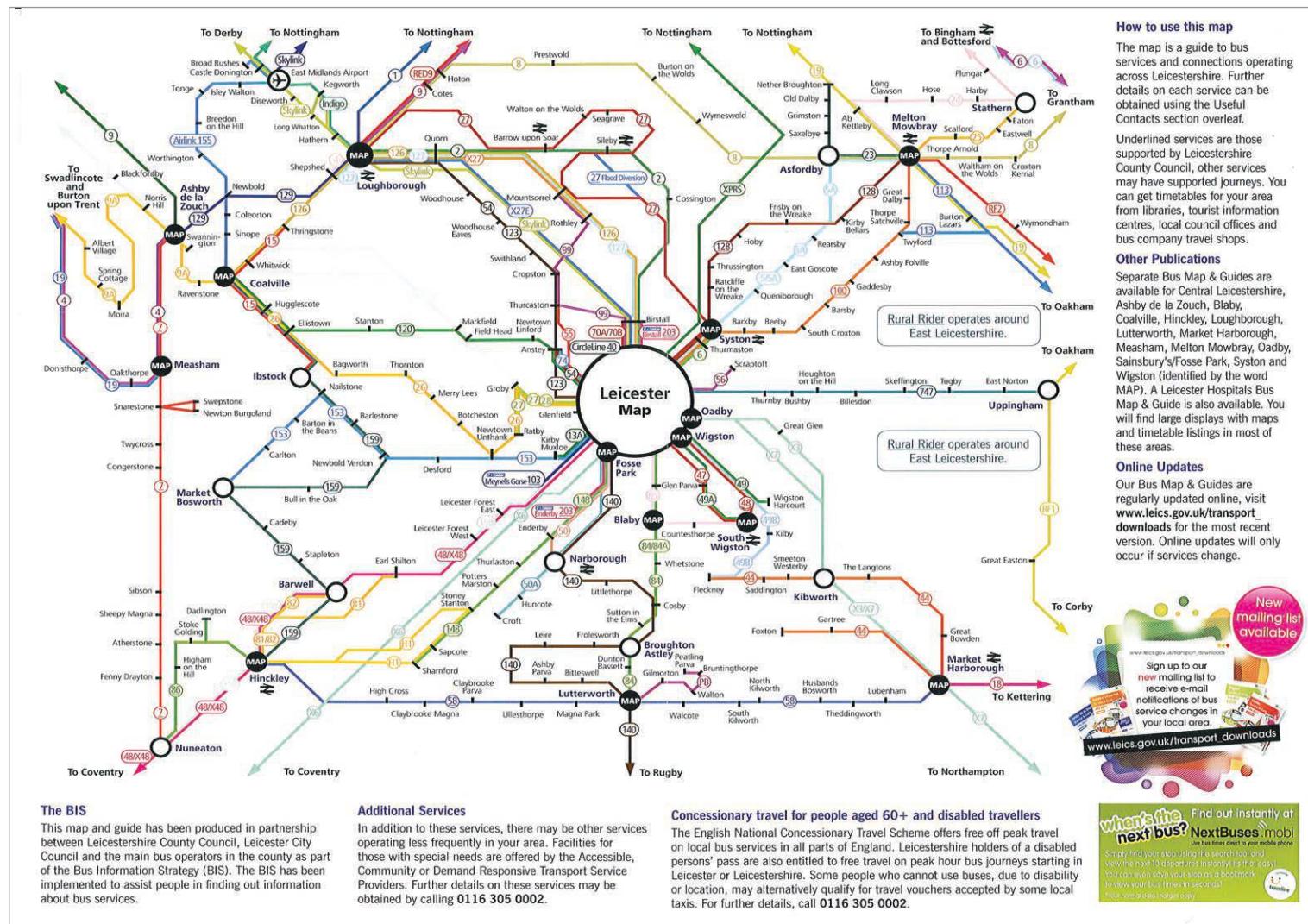
- provide high quality walking and cycling links between the corridor and our towns and villages...*

*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 (in this case) **Policy CS20***
- addressing the identified needs in open space provision...“*

and **Policy CS20** in turn, confirms the Borough Council’s commitment, as an important element in the Garden Suburb proposal, to;

*“providing an accessible, comprehensive and high quality network of multi-functional green spaces in accordance with our open space standards in accordance with Policies CS15 and CS12 and garden suburb principles”*

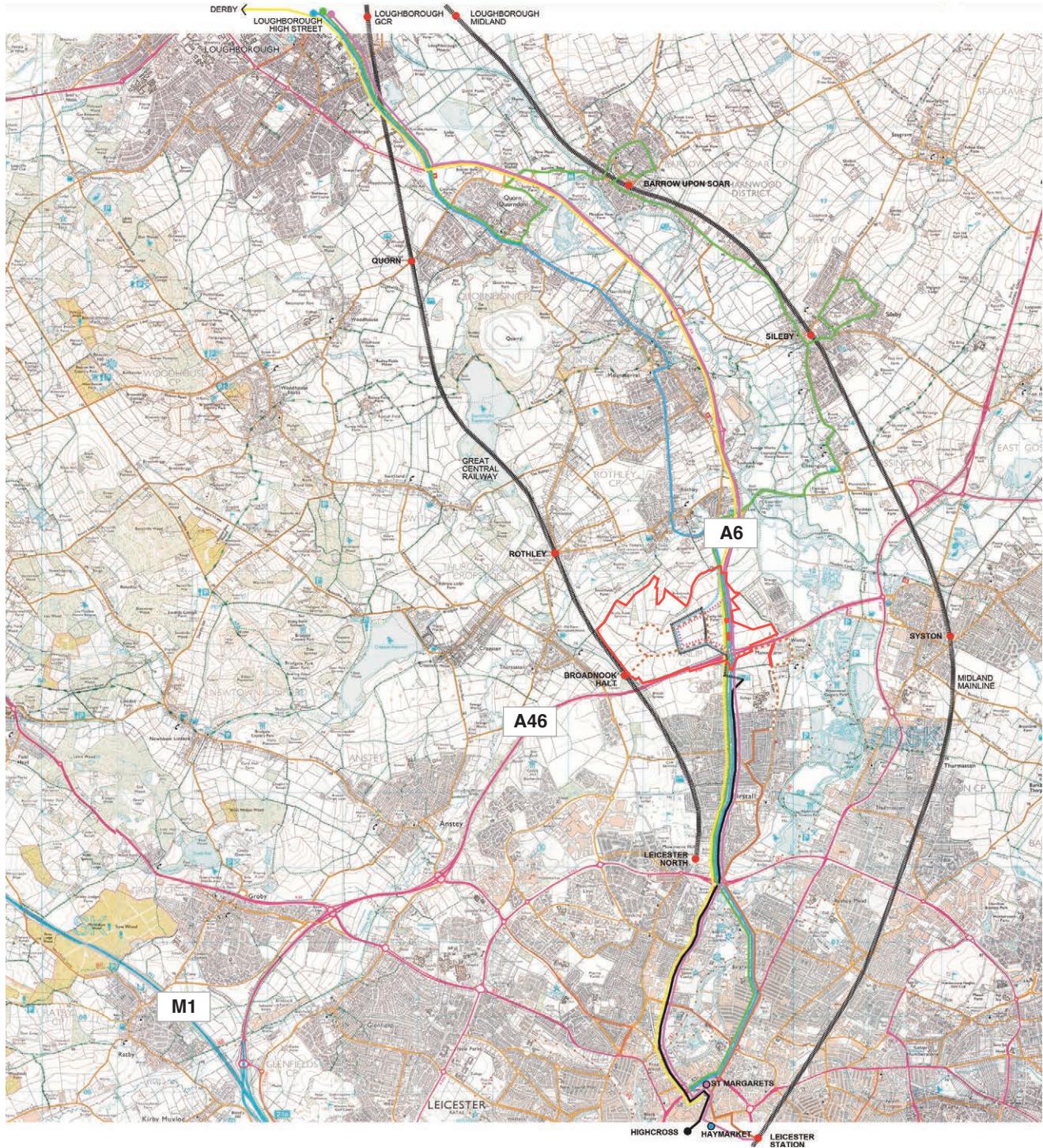


## Accessibility, Movement and Transport Choice

The Broadnook site is eminently accessible by all modes:

- immediate access to the primary road network north-south and east-west.
- adjacent to the best "transport choice" corridor in Leicestershire where a wide range of existing bus services provide high quality and high frequency public transport
- Sustrans national cycle route 6 runs alongside the site and a range of cycling routes for leisure or commuting purposes exist in the vicinity

The proposals can extend and enhance the existing walking and cycling routes and make optimum use of existing and extended bus services.



**BROADNOOK  
GARDEN SUBURB**

**126/127 ST. MARGARETS -  
LOUGHBOROUGH -  
COALVILLE  
ARRIVA 10/20 MINS**

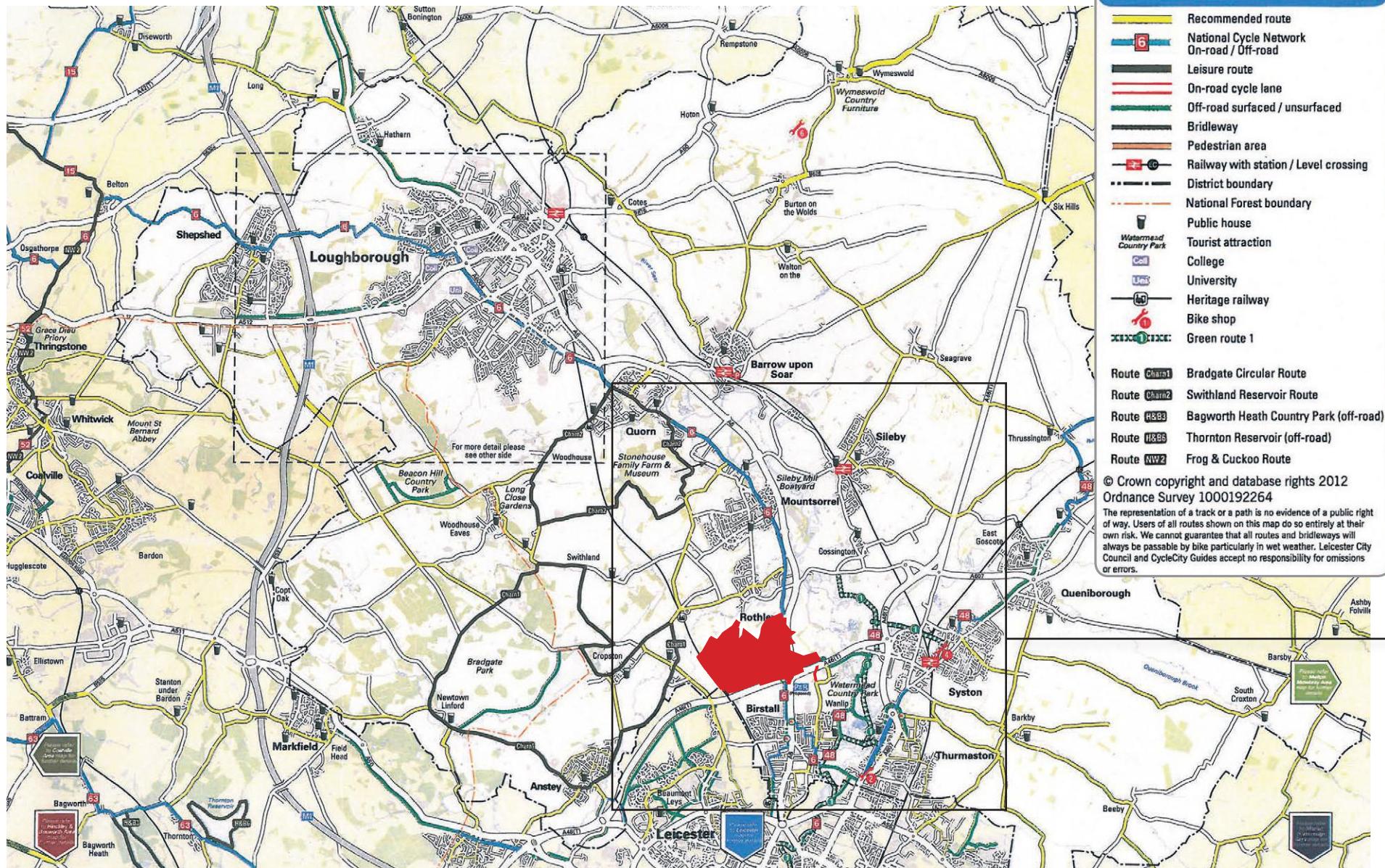
**22A/22B INGARSBY DRIVE  
RAILWAY STATION  
CHARLES STREET  
HAYMARKET  
CENTREBUS 20/40 MINS**

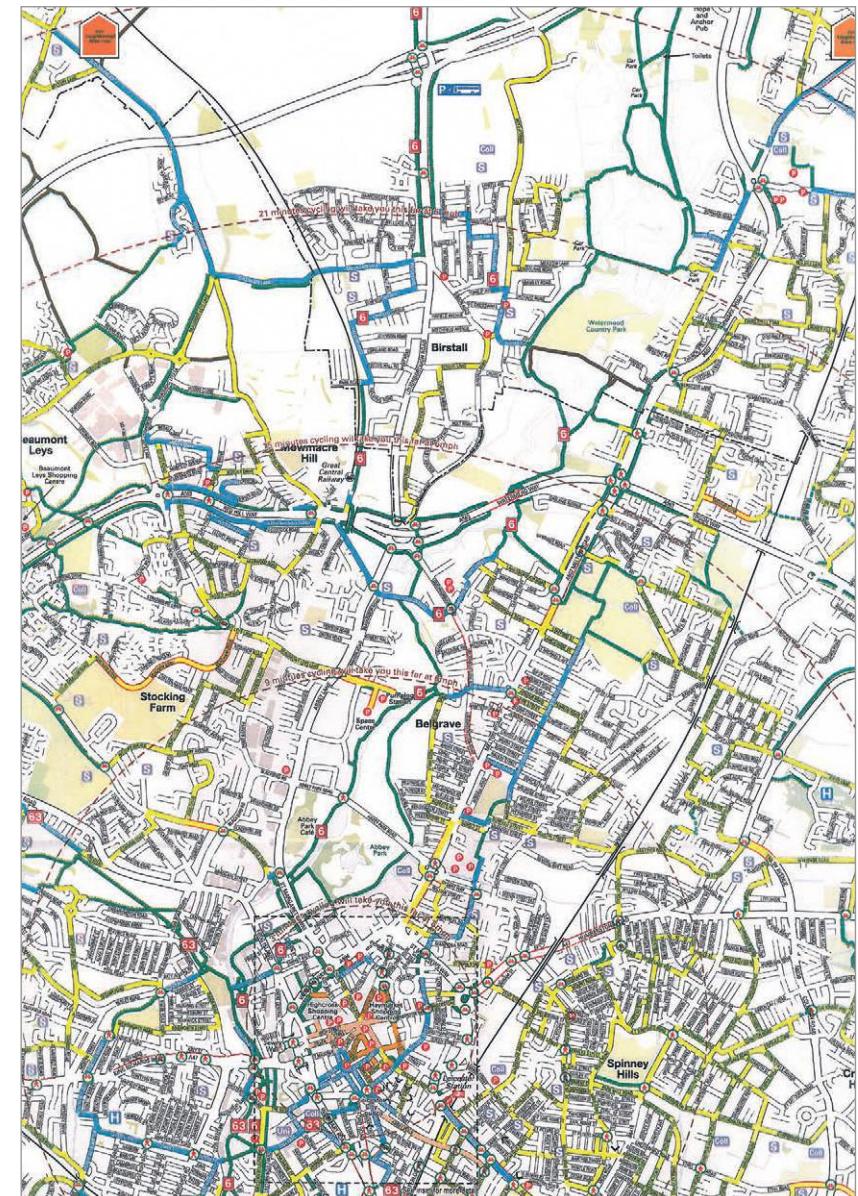
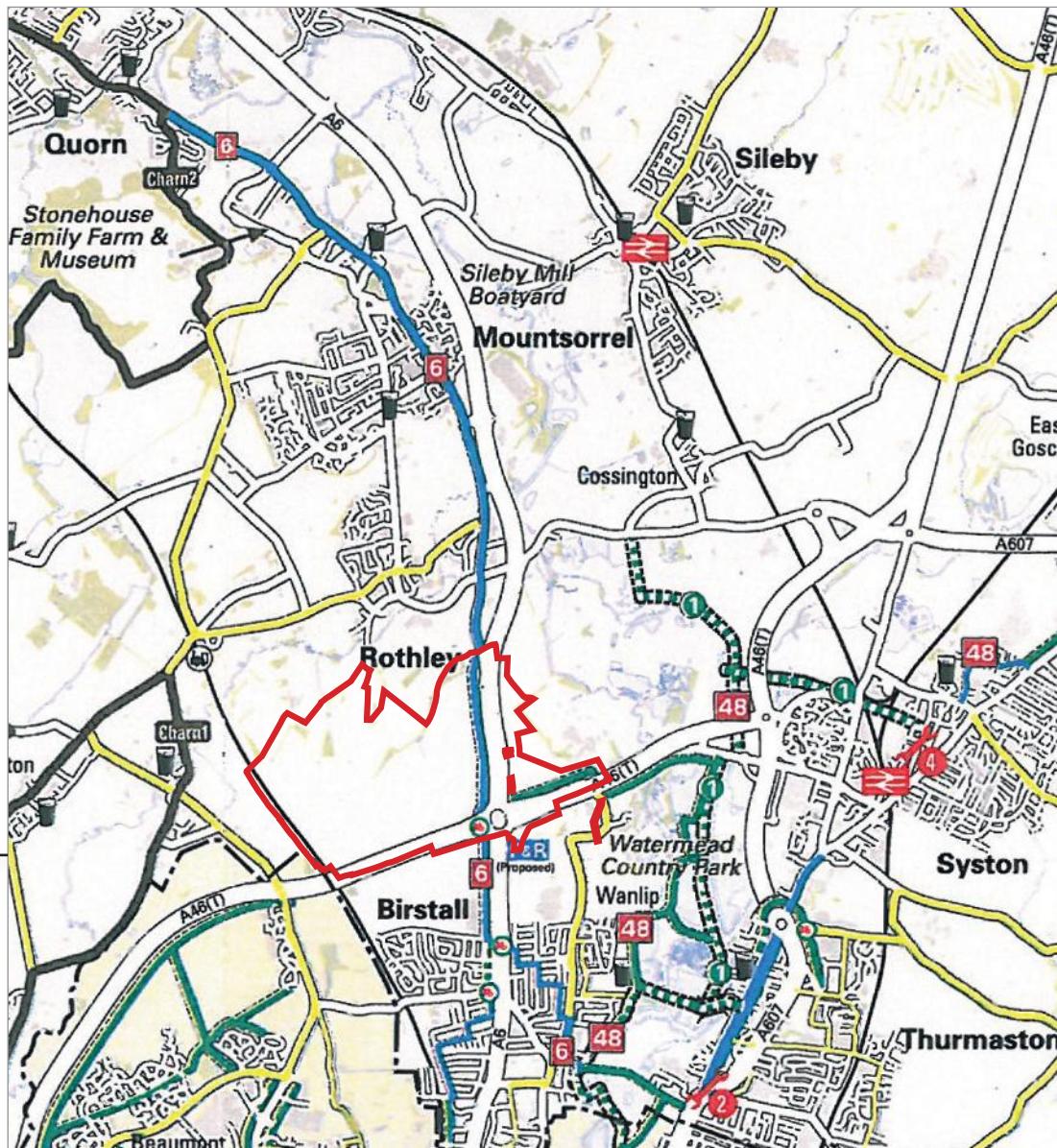
**303 PARK AND RIDE  
CLOCK TOWER  
HIGHCROSS  
ROBERTS COACHES 15 MINS**

**2 ST. MARGARETS -  
COSSINGTON - SILEBY -  
BARROW UPON SOAR -  
LOUGHBOROUGH  
KINCHBUS 30 MINS**

**X27E LEICESTER -  
LOUGHBOROUGH EXPRESS  
PAUL S. WINSON  
(2 JOURNEYS SCHOOL DAYS)**

**SKYLINK LOUGHBOROUGH  
EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT -  
DERBY  
KINCHBUS 30 MINS**





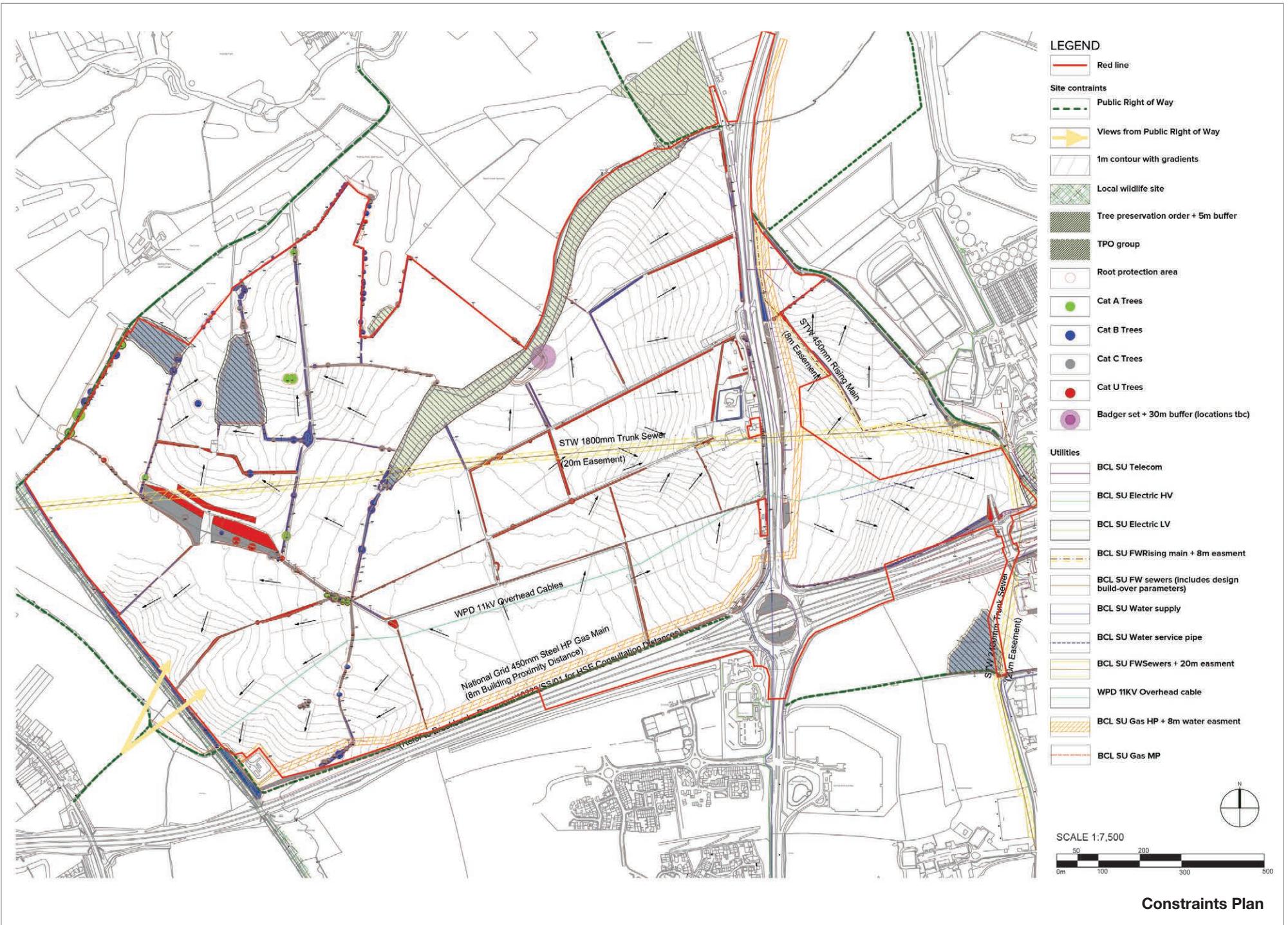
Cycle routes into Leicester city Centre

### Summary of Constraints, Opportunities and Potential

The constraints and opportunities presented by the North of Birstall location have readily been utilised to inform and structure the garden suburb proposals. These are summarised alongside and illustrated where relevant on the constraints, opportunities, assessments and proposals drawings.

#### Constraints

- services and easements crossing the site
- some views into and out of the site
- trees, woodland and copses
- features of landscape and ecological interest
- roads and access
- noise from A46
- settlement separation and identity
- observe garden suburb design principles in bringing forward proposals:
  - simple easy to understand layout
  - build on locally distinctive Charnwood's garden suburb architecture
  - utilise bold planting components
  - include structural edge planting where screening/softening is desirable
  - define an harmonious approach to architecture, materials and planting
  - provide for ease of movement and legibility
  - include key and landscape buildings
- account for the priorities identified by the environmental impact assessment process acknowledging the relationship of the proposals to existing uses and the potential for significant enhancement



### Opportunities

- create an exemplar garden suburb with a distinctive identity and character continuing the tradition of Garden Suburb housing in Charnwood Borough associated with the Great Central Railway;
- establish comprehensive green infrastructure to provide the framework for the garden suburb;
- protect and enhance nature conservation, heritage and archaeological interests;
- provide a strong landscape framework utilising established planting and vegetation;
- enhance ecological and landscape structure and wildlife corridors providing a significant nett gain;
- deliver a network of new public open space and parks;
- provide significant improvements in the area for pedestrians and cyclists and the development of the public rights of way network and countryside links;
- provide a range of housing types, sizes and tenures;
- deliver serviced land for a range of employment opportunities;
- provide new community and recreation facilities including a new primary school and a community resource centre; as the focal point of a walkable neighbourhood;
- utilise sustainable urban drainage systems where feasible;
- create an attractive, legible and permeable new environment with high quality design and good attention to detail
- provide a range of housing opportunities in close proximity to jobs, services and facilities





*Letchworth - the first Garden City (1903) was developed to the principle of Ebenezer Howard's design for new communities. This provided well-designed houses with gardens set in tree lined avenues, clean and healthy work places and a pleasant and healthy environment in which to live, work and follow leisure pursuits.*

(Department for Communities and Local Government 2007)



## Section 5 | Design Process



## 5.0 Design Process

### The Charnwood Planning Performance Agreement Charter



In April 2012 the Borough Council adopted a Charnwood Planning Performance Agreement Charter. The Charter sets out how the Council will work in partnership with landowners, prospective developers, the community and other key stakeholders to ensure that large scale and complex development proposals are carefully considered in a constructive, consistent and collaborative manner. Such an approach seeks to resolve problems and issues at the earliest possible stage and to ensure that the best possible scheme is achieved.



In the context of the Borough Council's Charter, a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) was put in place for the Broadnook Garden Suburb proposals to ensure a co-ordinated approach and, if approved, the early delivery of the development. The PPA;

- established a shared purpose;
- encouraged positive engagement and community involvement;
- has improved project management.



The PPA process has been supported and facilitated by ATLAS (Advisory Team for Large Applications). ATLAS arranged an Inception Day involving the Lead Partners in May 2013 and have promoted constructive joint working since.

### Vision and Development Objectives

The Borough Council has been very clear in seeking much higher standards in the design and quality of development in Charnwood.

The Council has included a Vision for the North of Birstall proposal in the recently adopted Core Strategy and stated that it would develop and explore it in partnership with the landowners/developers, Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council.

This dialogue has been progressed. Consequently the agreed **Vision and development objectives for the Broadnook Garden Suburb** are as follows;

#### The Vision for Broadnook Garden Suburb;

*"In 2028 the North Birstall Sustainable Urban Extension will be known for its reputation as an exemplar Garden Suburb. It will combine the benefits of proximity to the city and of the countryside. There will be excellent access to the City, Soar Valley settlements and Loughborough for work and leisure. The landscape and green spaces will define its distinctive character and offer fresh air, tranquillity and beautiful character."*

*"It will have been comprehensively planned and will be managed in the interests of the community to offer an excellent quality of life. The range of homes, jobs, community facilities and shops will meet the day-to-day needs of the people who live there. Community uses will provide a focus of civic pride."*

## Broadnook Garden Suburb Development Objectives

Broadnook Garden Suburb will deliver;



**1 Attractive and well managed landscape and green spaces integral to the development and defining its overall character.**

This will include multi-functional green infrastructure (a variety of parks, nature corridors, woodlands) as well as an emphasis on streets with trees and generous private gardens.

**2 A place that is managed in the long-term interests of the community**

A trust or other similar local management body will be constituted, funded and sustainable to manage the community assets and public realm in the long-term community interest.

**3 Distinctive and imaginative architecture within a coherent design framework**

An overall framework for layout, streets and spaces will be agreed within which there can be varied architectural expression emphasizing beauty, distinctiveness and an attention to detail.

**4 A community with a range of job opportunities, services and community facilities within walking distance of every home**

The Broadnook Local Centre will be at the heart of the development and include local day-to-day shops and services. A range of new employment opportunities should be provided as part of the Garden Suburb proposals as well as through the mixed use Centre and home working opportunities.

**5 Excellent public transport connections with Leicester, the Soar Valley communities and Loughborough**

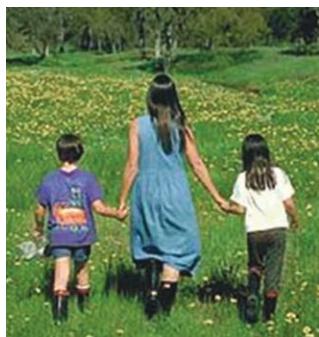
The development will include high frequency and high quality bus services running through the site and connecting to Birstall and Leicester City centre to the south, and settlements to the north. In addition, the potential for a rail halt on the Great Central Railway should be safeguarded.

**6 A wide choice of homes to cater for different ages, income groups and other needs**

A variety of homes will be provided to meet the range of income groups and specific needs to allow people at all stages of life to live on the site – a lifetime neighbourhood.

**7 A low carbon development through inclusive design and local energy generation**

The masterplan for the site will be prepared to minimise carbon emissions and encourage sustainable lifestyles and construction. This should include attention to layout, orientation, walking routes and connections and providing day-to-day services. Low carbon or renewable energy generation for the site should be explored and included.



It was further considered through dialogue that in order to meet the objectives the development should be expected to;

- be of an exceptionally high standard of design, architecture and landscape;
- respect and enhance the character of its surroundings, safeguard existing settlement identity and be in accordance with the environmental character of the area;
- create a strong sense of place by recognising the distinctive historic and architectural qualities of Garden Suburb developments both nationally and in the local area, through its design, landscaping and use of public art;
- be designed to promote healthier lifestyles and for people to be active outside their homes and places of work;
- allow for travel to home, local shops and services, work and schools on foot and by cycle and public transport.





Hampstead Garden Suburb

### The PPA Process and Working Arrangements

Progress on the Broadnook proposals has been made under the auspices of the **Charnwood Local Plan Growth Advisory Group** which has been established to enable the effective and timely delivery of the Borough Council's strategic growth proposals.

In the context of the Planning Performance Agreement a **Steering Group** takes the co-ordinating role whilst a number of **Working Groups** have explored themed aspects of the proposals, namely;

- **design and masterplanning**

Issues considered included garden suburb character and a range of urban design principles. At an early stage it was agreed that a hybrid planning application would be appropriate and advantageous. This was justified in part to progress a fully detailed element of development in order to explore, explain and resolve the approach to all design issues. In doing so this would substitute for and go beyond an equivalent Design Code level and subject matter; and in turn enable an expeditious start on site should the proposals be approved

- **transport and highways**

Issues considered;

- road access and the delivery of primary infrastructure;
- transport modelling;
- public transport provision;
- a strategy for walking and cycling;
- links to the Great Central Railway;
- integration of the “movement framework” with green infrastructure proposals.



- **environment and green space**

Issues considered;

- the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure to meet a range of social, environmental and economic needs;
- the completion of a Landscape Framework Plan and a Green Infrastructure Strategy

- **locally accessible community facilities**

Issues considered;

- education requirements including location and timing of provision;
- health care and community facilities;
- the prospect for appropriate early delivery to support a new community, accounting for market and viability considerations;
- design and management priorities in ensuring an attractive and convenient set of integrated and beneficial facilities.

- **locally accessible job opportunities**

Issues considered;

- the range and appropriate mix of employment uses in providing for strategic and local needs;
- the aspiration for the provision at each stage of the development of a balanced land use mix between homes and jobs;

- support for an appropriate range of jobs as part of the mixed use commercial and community heart of the garden suburb;

- the possibility of provision, possibly in partnership, of premises to support innovative and knowledge-driven enterprises.

- **community ownership and stewardship**

Issues considered;

- initial and ongoing management and maintenance of the Broadnook green infrastructure and community facilities;
- the options for long-term stewardship and local governance mindful of the Garden City and Suburb traditions and experience.





### The recommendations of the PPA Working Groups

From the outset the ATLAS-led dialogue identified the following **key working objectives and associated tasks to inform and to respond to the discussion by the working groups;**

#### **Objective: Generous, attractive and well managed green spaces;**

- ensure garden suburb vision is an integral part of green space design in order to define the character of the development;
- different parts of the site will express different characters within the green framework – define approach as part of a hybrid application;
- achieve nett gain in biodiversity including ‘landscape-scale’ linkages in response to Charnwood BC’s ‘network’ and ‘hierarchy’ considerations;
- balance the integration of green links whilst maintaining settlement identities;
- include a central green pedestrian walk;
- create green spaces which cater for all needs (i.e. multi-functional) and which are integral to the scheme;
- implement 6Cs Strategy support for an “Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone” in this vicinity;
- balance different influences of relevant rural and urban character in terms of locational influences – City of Leicester, Charnwood Forest, Soar Valley;
- to generate the garden suburb character consider the provision of parkland, pocket parks, a variety of open spaces, a Charnwood Arboretum, pleasure gardens, playing fields and sports facilities, allotments.

#### **Objective: Exemplary and imaginative design and architecture;**

- establish garden suburb framework and consider the relevance of character influences;
- create ‘sub-neighbourhood’ areas of appropriate scale to give an enhanced sense of identity;
- at site-wide level a garden suburb should have a coherent and consistent framework whilst allowing for differences between sub-areas;
- careful attention required to employment buildings as they will provide part of the main gateway to and some first impressions of Broadnook;
- very high standard of design expected;
- high level of detailing and craftsmanship should be key features at plot level;
- confirm full detail of built form and landscape in a first phase or demonstration area as part of a hybrid application in order to display exemplary design.

#### **Objective: High quality public transport, walking and cycling connections;**

- focus on high quality, high frequency public transport and create a walkable neighbourhood;
- it is acknowledged that the A6 and A46 present barriers to pedestrian/cyclist, horse-riding connectivity but proposal should aim for improved connections;
- through an enhanced public rights-of-way network secure connections between River Valley areas to the east with Charnwood Forest to the west;



- deliver walking, cycling and public transport connections including through attractive green corridors;
- seek to link into existing high frequency bus services which run between Leicester and Loughborough and utilise the Broadnook ‘Loop’;
- maximise “self-containment” in order to reduce need to travel;
- create a centre at the heart of the development which will provide day-to-day services for all residents and capable of easy access on foot or bike;
- an A6 underbridge would provide a connection to Wanlip, secondary schools (now the Cedars Academy), Watermead Park and Birstall. Ensure this is designed to feel safe and attractive to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders;
- phasing and timing of infrastructure needs to be considered in order to maximise transport choice and to establish non-car modes at the earliest opportunity, accounting for viability considerations;
- appropriate site at Great Central Railway to be safeguarded for potential rail halt.

**Objective: Locally accessible community facilities;**

- provision of day-to-day facilities and services within the site is an important part of the self-containment principle of garden suburbs;
- range of facilities to be provided for all ages;
- community facilities to be located within Broadnook Centre – to include a primary school, community, social and meeting space, administrative offices and other community uses;

- recreational facilities to be provided including sports pitches with changing rooms;
- opportunities for safe play for all ages to be identified.

**Objective: Varied homes to meet different needs;**

- variety of high quality homes to cater for different ages, groups, incomes and needs accounting for viability and infrastructure requirements;
- explore opportunity to include a “retirement village” and extra care provision;
- create a “lifetime” neighbourhood.

**Objective: Community ownership and stewardship of assets;**

- in line with garden city/suburb principles a characteristic of the Broadnook scheme should be independence in terms of control and management of the new community’s assets;
- need to establish appropriate governance arrangements – consider the establishment of a Garden Suburb Trust.

The way in which these objectives and tasks have influenced the evolution of the Broadnook Framework Plan is explained in **Section 6 and 7**.



### The Borough Council's independent design advice and Brief

As part of the PPA related process the Borough Council commissioned **Wei Yang and Partners** to participate in ongoing discussions and to contribute independently towards the emerging design parameters and priorities.

In response to the then emerging Core Strategy and the Borough Council's Vision and guiding principles for Broadnook the Wei Yang commission was expressed as follows;

- to anticipate the essential qualities of a Garden Suburb, identifying key principles and delivery requirements;
- to interpret how these principles might be applied specifically in relation to Birstall to produce an exemplary design, demonstrating how the physical features of the site can be optimised to deliver a truly high quality Garden Suburb;
- to identify the strategies and mechanisms that need to be put in place to inform the Masterplan, townscape and architectural elements of the development; and to secure delivery through effective development management and later stewardship.

In addition to identifying key priorities and principles at this stage in the design process Wei Yang also emphasised that the phased design and delivery of Broadnook would be an ongoing process;

*"Designing and delivering an exemplary Garden Suburb involves consideration of not only the initial master planning and site preparation work but also the later phases of delivery, on-going management and maintenance. This will ensure that the principles are not eroded with the transfer of responsibility from the plan-makers and "holders of the Vision" (effectively the Local Planning Authority and the landowner/developer who will have agreed the regulatory framework) to housebuilders, other developers and statutory agencies"*

Wei Yang recommended how the process to secure this objective should be put in place and this is discussed further at **Sections 10 and 11**.

Wei Yang concluded that it was appropriate to identify;

#### (i) Strategic Requirements for Broadnook

which were considered to be;

- **Landscape as a Defining Characteristic;**
- **Establishing a Community;**
- **Connectivity to the Surrounding Areas.**

#### (ii) Site-Wide Requirements for Broadnook

which were considered to be;

- **Articulating the Generous Structural Landscape;**
- **Effective Gateways;**
- **A Socially and Economically Active District Centre;**
- **Distinctive Character Areas**

#### (iii) "Character Areas" for Broadnook

which were considered to be;

- **The District Centre;**
- **The Mixed Use and Business Area;**
- **The Central Residential District;**
- **The Outer Residential Neighbourhood.**

## The Wei Yang “Strategic Requirements”

In relation to each the Wei Yang advice and guidance can be summarised as follows;

### Strategic Requirement 1

#### Landscape as a Defining Characteristic

##### **Policy Reference – Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS11**

state that the development should respond to the landscape and surrounding areas to create a locally distinctive development.

**Design Requirements** are considered to be;

- A Garden Suburb on land North of Birstall should have a well-defined identity as a stable, durable and positive community with a strong and easy interaction with the green environment;
- A generous and extensive network of green and blue spaces which surround and permeate the heart of the development areas, combining beauty with functionality;
- These characteristics should be clearly discernible upon first approach and should have a coherent physical form;
- The Masterplan needs to recognise the visual envelope of the site and put in place a clear strategy to project a positive image to the outside area including;
- the sense of a coherent development that reads as a well-defined whole from a distance;

- clear dominance of green spaces and trees over built form, even at the early stages of development;
- tidy green suburban edges all round, with particular attention to views from the A6 and A46 to ensure that the Garden Suburb identity is carried through consistently to include non-residential land uses.
- The quantity and quality of open space and landscaping should be in excess of conventional standards and should be varied in its type and location;
- The landscape should cater for a range of age groups, be well surveilled and support a healthy living agenda;
- Allotments should be included to provide opportunities for local food production;
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) should be utilised where possible to reduce the risk of flooding, assist with sustainable water management and provide rich habitats for wildlife;
- The landscape around the Garden Suburb should be enhanced to reduce the impact of the built development on the open countryside.



Desirable tree dominated view of a Garden Suburb from nearby viewpoint (Letchworth)



Green arrival gateways are essential to the presentation of the development (Welwyn)

## Wei Yang Strategic Requirement 2

### Establishing a Community

#### Policy Reference:

Core Strategy Policy CS20 seeks to create a balanced community served by an accessible Local Centre with strong social links with Birstall.

**Design requirements** are considered to be;

- Developing a Garden Suburb means establishing a community that is stable, well built and deeply caring about its living environment;
- This involves the creation of a socially mixed community, the provision of local employment opportunities for local residents and a strong community offer in terms of culture, education, local shopping and other social and gathering facilities;
- The future and ongoing management of the garden suburb will have a strong influence on how the community will evolve but the initial masterplan and phasing will also play an important role. Implementation should be geared to supporting new residents and workers and to engender a strong community spirit;
- A range of employment opportunities should be available to residents in a balanced way over the phases of development. They should include for business premises, workshops, small storage premises. The Broadnook Centre will also be an important generator of new jobs.
- The Broadnook Centre should be at the focal point of attractive walking and cycling routes and social, community and commercial facilities made available at the earliest feasible opportunity.

## Wei Yang Strategic Requirement 3

### Connectivity to Surrounding Area

#### Policy Reference:

Core Strategy Policies CS17 and CS18 require a well-connected street pattern and a walkable neighbourhood with new and improved cycling and walking routes well-related to the green infrastructure network, connecting with the employment areas, the Broadnook Centre, Birstall Park and Ride, Watermead Country Park and Charnwood Forest.

**Design requirements** are considered to be;

- direct and legible routes to the surrounding (where feasible) areas and countryside by foot, bicycle, horse, buses whilst safeguarding future access to a train halt on the Great Central Railway line;
- a clear design for the identity of arrival routes off-site and approaches and definition of the 'entry' or arrival points through landscape design and the setting of buildings (gateways);
- early phasing of public transport and non-motorised leisure routes to help promote sustainable travel patterns.



## The Wei Yang Site-Wide Recommendations 1

### 1. Articulating the Generous Structural Landscape

#### Core Strategy Policy References;

##### CS2 – High Quality Design

- respond to context;
- reinforce a sense of place;
- respect and enhance the character of the area;
- provide well defined and legible streets and spaces.

##### CS11 – Landscape and Countryside

- respond to landscape;
- maintain separate identities of villages;
- protect landscape character and reinforce local distinctiveness.

##### CS12 – Green Infrastructure and

##### CS 15 – Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation

- provide an accessible, comprehensive and high quality network of multi-functional green spaces in accordance with the Council's open space standards;
- secure green links between developments and Charnwood Forest;
- provide high quality walking and cycling links between the River Soar Corridor and towns and villages;
- protect and enhance the Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Area.

##### CS 13 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- provide a nett gain in biodiversity;
- protect/enhance existing wildlife corridors and, where appropriate, provide new corridors to create a coherent biodiversity network.

##### CS16 – Sustainable Construction and Energy

- provide an appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage system and flood attenuation measures and, where possible, reduce flood risk associated with Rothley Brook

**Design requirements** are considered to be;

It is in the nature of the Garden Suburb to be immersed in a beautiful and extensive green landscape so that residents and employees can take advantage of the “town-country” relationship.

The structural landscape of the Garden Suburb must exceed conventional standards for green landscaping in terms of quantity, quality, continuity and relevance within the site layout. The beauty and accessibility of the landscape should be articulated in;

- continuous woodland and biodiversity areas, including the existing woodland, spinneys and copse;
- a generosity of woodland and parkland for recreation and enjoyment including the areas towards Rothley; designed for seasonal interest with paths and resting places. Sustainable urban drainage features could be incorporated where feasible;
- incorporating formal and informal recreation facilities for sport and leisure;
- public gardens including a main civic garden at the heart of the Broadnook Centre;
- allotments;
- a pedestrian-oriented public realm, footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways which are essentially ‘green’ in their appearance.

Therefore the initial planning application should include a well-developed Green Infrastructure strategy and Landscape Masterplan defining the scope, rationale, location and size of structural landscape components.

This will highlight the richness and centrality of landscape and green spaces to the garden suburb.

The phasing and approach to planting will need to ensure that a reasonably mature green environment is provided early on, and create a strong green image and opportunities for recreation from the early stages.

**Detailed planning applications** should;

- include a diagram showing the area of interest in the context of the structural landscape and its relationship with it;
- demonstrate that detailed development areas are responding to the landscape and complementing it;
- adopt different but complementary designs in response to primary, secondary or local greenspace.





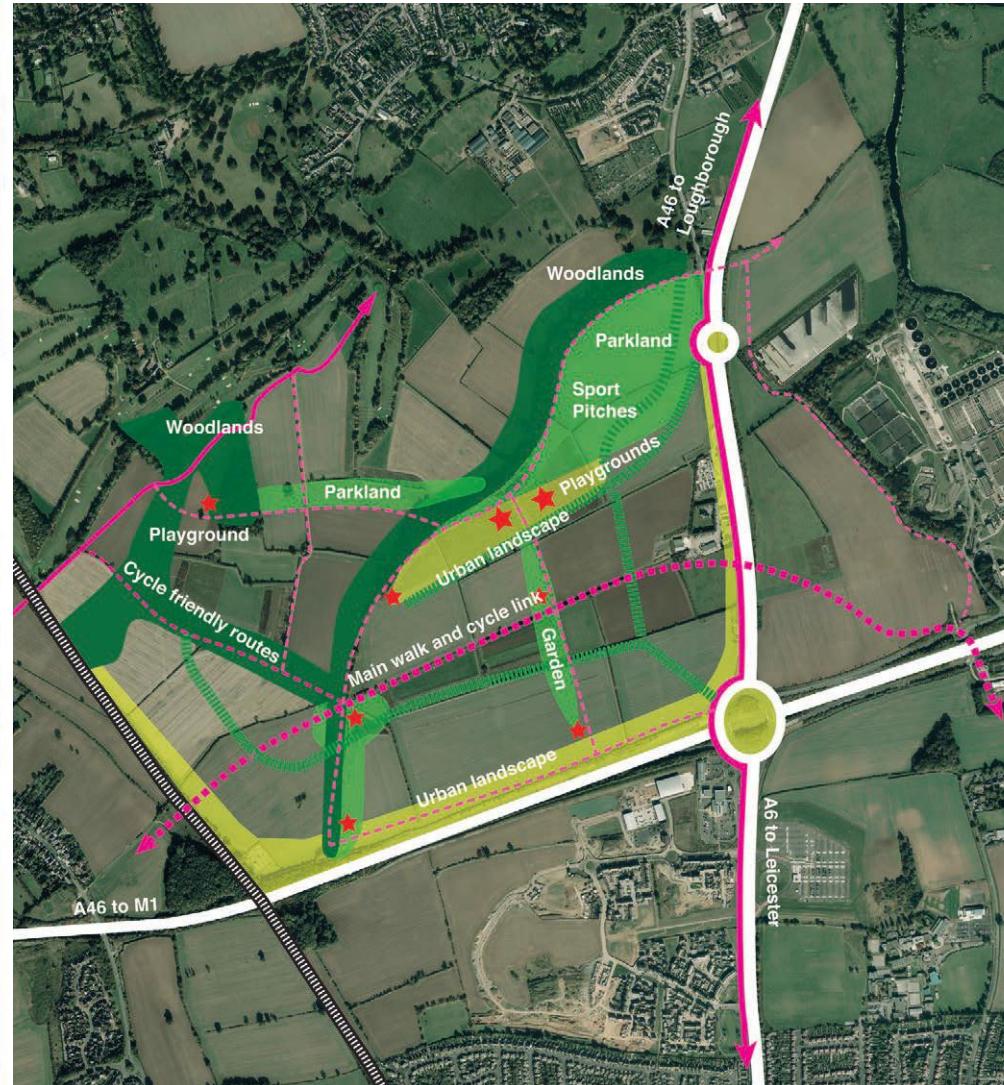
Woodland should create a 'backbone' for the Garden Suburb



Expansive parkland should be used to frame daily activities



Contained areas of urban landscape should provide an edge to the main arrival routes



Sports pitches are essential to fostering community spirit



A more intensely designed public garden should identify the District Centre



Residential street

## Wei Yang Site-Wide Recommendations 2

### Effective Gateways

#### Core Strategy Policy References;

##### CS 2 – High Quality Design

- locally distinctive;

##### CS 11 – Landscape and Countryside

- respond to landscape;

##### CS17 – Sustainable Travel

- well connected street pattern; high quality safe and direct walking, cycling and public transport;

##### CS 18 – Local and Strategic Road Network

- connections to A6 and Rothley.

**Design requirements** are considered to be;

- identify and define the characteristics of all “gateways” – the points of arrival from vehicular routes, from paths and internal routes between zones;
- use gateways to assist in the legibility of the site and its component parts;
- provide a concise but clear design brief/concept for each gateway;
- define the quality of built development required at each location;
- describe the landscape approach and explain how planting will be used to establish the identity of the Garden Suburb at these key locations.

**Detailed planning applications** should include;

- a diagram which clearly identifies any gateways, their purpose and proposed design approach, consistent with the overall approach;
- designs for frontages, forecourts, public spaces and landscape that clearly deliver the concepts and requirements of each gateway.

## Wei Yang Site-Wide Recommendations 3

### A Socially and Economically Active Centre

#### Core Strategy Policy References;

##### CS 9 - Town Centres and Shops

##### CS 20 – North of Birstall Direction of Growth

- provide one accessible Local Centre as a focal point for the new community including as a minimum, local shops and a supermarket, small scale employment and a range of non-retail and community facilities and services including a community centre, and a primary school to meet the need for school places

**Design requirements** are considered to be;

- the **Broadnook Centre** will be at the heart of the Garden Suburb where its identity will need to be strongest;
- the Centre should be accessed directly from the main gateway leading from the A6 and should be laid out and developed to offer continuous active urban spaces and remarkable features.

**It should be;**

- exceptionally green;
- people orientated;
- compact and mixed use (including business space and housing);
- focussed on prominent civic buildings of excellent architecture (the school, community centre, the medical centre etc.) all of which contribute to community cohesion and provide essential functions;

- the focus of opportunities for the employment of multiple destinations (such as short pick-up and grocery shopping or working and lunchtime recreation);
- the natural space for cultural and social exchanges; local festivals, parties, exhibitions or performances;
- designed to encourage street activity, social interaction, walking and cycling;
- set out with clear and legible routes to the Centre for visitors arriving for the first time and for residents.

**Proposals** should;

- determine the main elements of character, distinctiveness and identity of the Centre to be carried through consistently in buildings, spaces and landscape;
- define and locate landmarks, civic buildings and symbolic features for the purpose of creating an attractive, distinctive and memorable place;
- identify the land use mix and locations to ensure the viability of the commercial components and how they will contribute to the creation of a vibrant social and cultural reference point within the Garden Suburb;
- ensure prominence of walking and sustainable modes of transport with bus stops and cycle facilities attractively located for ease of use;
- locate car parks in discrete pockets in courtyard surrounded by active uses and away from the street frontage;
- describe how soft and hard landscape will reinforce the distinctive image of the Centre.

## Wei Yang Site-Wide Recommendations 4

### Distinctive “Character Areas”

Core Strategy Policy References;

**CS 2 High Quality Design**

**CS 3 Strategic Housing Needs**

**CS 6 Employment and Economic Development**

**CS 9 Town Centres and Shops**

**CS 15 Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation**

**CS 17 Sustainable Travel**

**CS 20 North of Birstall Direction of Growth**

In combination these policies anticipate the creation of a balanced community in a safe, high quality and accessible environment. They require the creation of different housing areas, employment areas and a Local Centre with community facilities in a legible, well-defined and accessible overall site.

**Detailed planning applications** should include;

- general character areas are identified for the purpose of achieving both harmony and diversity i.e. a cohesive overall image but different areas and neighbourhoods which will appeal to a broad range of individuals and families with different preferences and priorities;
- the definition of “character areas” should be considered as part of the outline planning application as below and each detailed application should demonstrate how the concepts are developed for each sub-area;
- overall the land North of Birstall should develop around four generalised character areas:



- 1 A substantial area of mixed use/employment towards the eastern part of the site, close to the entrance – providing a gateway from the A6;**
- 2 A Broadnook Centre, located to the centre-east of the site – which will need to display a concentration of activities and opportunities for social interaction around public spaces (gardens, boulevards, green links) and buildings of civic significance. There should be a strong architectural unity of scale, materials and essential elements of style as well as scope for exceptional landmark buildings for the use of the community. Inspiration should be taken from other Garden Cities and Suburbs to ensure that a civic and community centred proposal emerges;**
- 3 A green but orderly and compact residential area next to the centre inspired by the symmetry and order of the original Garden Suburb Principles. This area should be more urban, with aligned frontages, shallow front gardens and generous streetscape, formally laid out;**
- 4 An outer organic residential area towards the west and north in which the landscape of the countryside penetrates into the suburb. In this area streets should be less formal, trees large and to a degree more informally planted, front gardens deep and green, car parking hidden from view**

These considerations form the basis of the **Design Process** (Section 6) concluding with the **Development Framework and Parameter Plans** set out in Section 7.



- 1 Mixed Business Area**
- 2 Broadnook Centre**
- 3 Central Residential District**
- 4 Outer Residential District**



*"Our standards of design can be so much higher.  
We are a nation renowned worldwide for creative excellence yet,  
at home, confidence in development itself has been eroded by the  
too frequent experience of mediocrity"*

Minister for Planning Introduction to NPPF March 2012