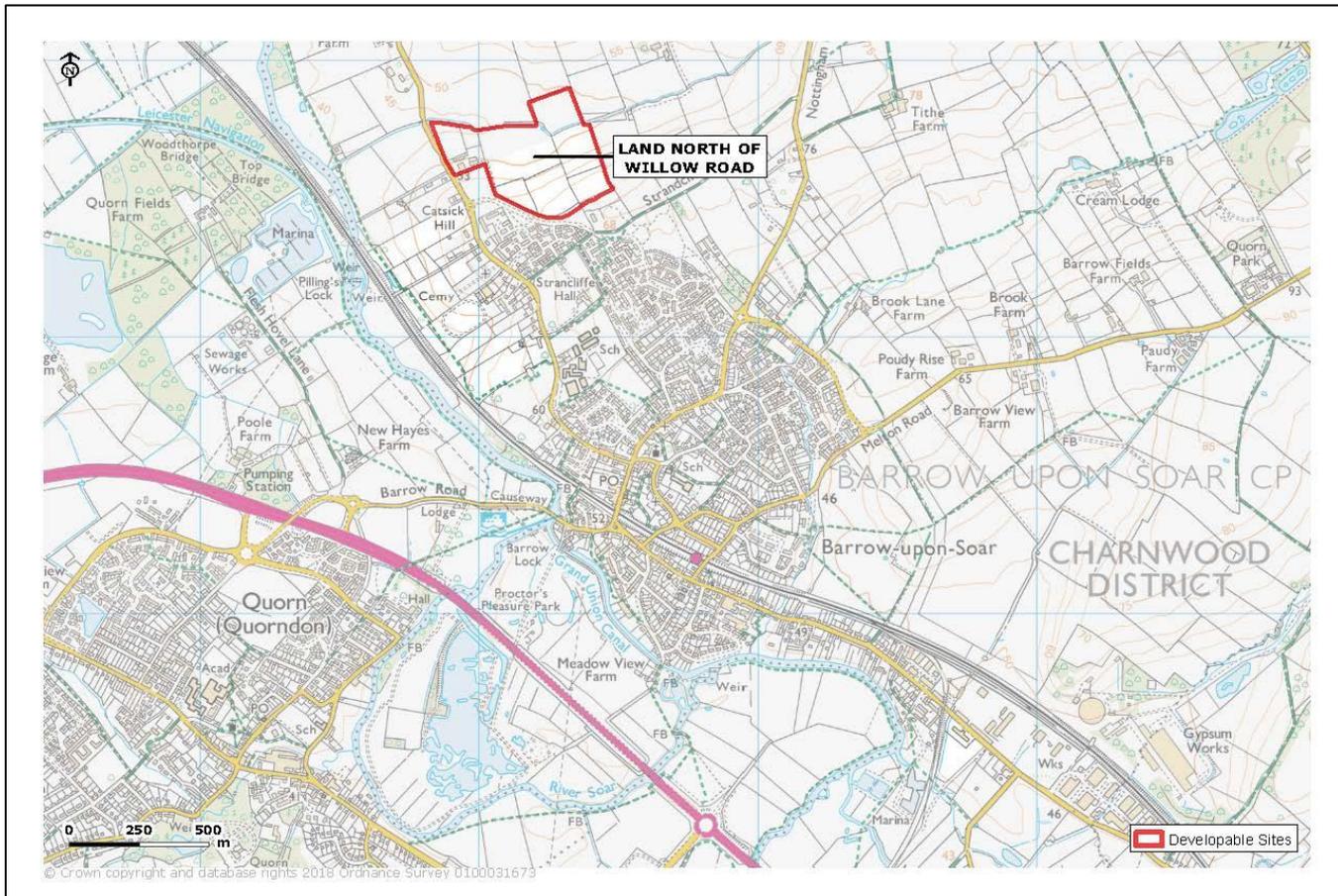


## Barrow Upon Soar



### Location and Description

Barrow upon Soar lies within the Soar Valley LCA, as defined within the Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012). The Key Characteristics of this LCA include the proximity of both the River Soar and Grand Union Canal as well as the infrastructure corridor associated with the valley floor. Development on the rising valley sides is prominent in localised views with restored gravel workings also forming a feature of the landscape.

## Land north of Willow Road Landscape sensitivity assessment

Criteria	Description	Rating
<b>Physical character (including topography and scale)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site lies on a north-west facing slope, which falls from the settlement edge to a small stream tributary of the River Soar.</li> <li>Elevation ranges from 45m AOD in the north-west to 70m AOD in the south-east.</li> <li>Expansive views across the surrounding countryside give the impression of a larger scale landscape.</li> </ul>	<b>M</b>
<b>Natural character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site comprises several regular small-to-moderate scale pasture fields, divided by mature hedgerows and sub-divided by wooden fences and pony tape.</li> <li>A small tributary stream of the River Soar crosses the north-east of the site and a small pond also lies in the north-east.</li> <li>A species-rich, young tree belt along the embankment separates the site from Willow Road to the south.</li> </ul>	<b>M</b>
<b>Historic landscape character</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HLC identifies field patterns to be piecemeal enclosure.</li> <li>The site contains no identified historic features.</li> </ul>	<b>L-M</b>
<b>Form, density, identity and setting of existing settlement/ development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site lies on the northern edge of Barrow-upon-Soar.</li> <li>Properties on the northern settlement edge comprise a mixture of two to three-storey, 21<sup>st</sup> century, detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged in cul-de-sacs.</li> <li>The young tree belt along the embankment limits the visual relationship between existing properties and the site.</li> <li>The landform slopes away from the settlement edge which is slightly at odds with the existing settlement form, situated on flatter land.</li> <li>The site has no relationship with the historic settlement core or its Conservation Area.</li> </ul>	<b>M</b>
<b>Views and visual character including skylines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views to the north and east are open and extend up the gentle slopes of the opposite stream valley side and towards the undeveloped countryside beyond.</li> <li>There are views of landmark and industrial buildings in Loughborough to the north-west.</li> <li>There are also prominent views of pylons along the River Soar.</li> <li>Skylines within the site are marked by several small-scale overhead lines and mature hedgerow trees.</li> </ul>	<b>M</b>
<b>Access and recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No public rights of way cross the site. Strandcliffe Lane (PRoW I5) is a bridleway located 100 metres to the south-east of the site.</li> <li>Brooker Play Area and an area of open amenity grassland are situated directly south of the site.</li> </ul>	<b>L</b>
<b>Perceptual and experiential qualities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site has strong rural perceptual qualities and has a greater association with the wider countryside than the existing development in Barrow-upon-Soar.</li> <li>The long views across the rolling valley create a sense of openness.</li> <li>The sense of rurality is partially degraded by traffic noise from Cotes Road and the mainline railway line to the west.</li> <li>The site provides a setting to the entrance to the village when travelling along Cotes Road.</li> </ul>	<b>M</b>

**Representative images**



Long views across the site to opposite northern valley slopes.



The sloping pastoral fields of the site, are enclosed by hedgerows with some mature trees and crossed by small-scale overhead lines.

**Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to development scenarios**

Development Scenario	Sensitivity				
2-3 storey residential housing			<b>M</b>		
Primary school			<b>M</b>		
New farmstead		<b>L-M</b>			
Notes on any variations in landscape sensitivity					
<p>The northern and eastern edges of the site are more sensitive to high-density development (e.g. residential housing) as development in these locations is likely to be visually prominent from the wider countryside.</p> <p>The area has low-moderate sensitivity to the introduction of a new farmstead, as this would be in keeping with the rural surroundings of the site (providing the new buildings are designed and constructed in a manner sensitive to the local vernacular – siting, scale, design, materials etc.).</p>					

### Key landscape sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the special landscape qualities and key features/attributes that would be sensitive to change as a result of new development:**

- The sloping landform of the site.
- The existing small pond, hedgerow boundaries, woodland copse, tree belts and small watercourse which provide important habitat networks and reinforce the landscape structure.
- The pastoral character of the landscape with moderate-scale fields that have a strong association with the wider countryside.
- The extensive views from the site to undeveloped skylines to the north as well as views of distinctive buildings within Loughborough to the north-west.

### Opportunities for mitigation or landscape enhancement

**Guidance and opportunities to consider for any future development within the area include:**

- Retain the existing hedgerows and woodland belt, which form part of the wider habitat network in the landscape. Consider enhancing existing hedgerow boundaries to the north and east to retain the development and limit the visual influence on the wider countryside.
- Avoid siting high-density residential development on the northern edge of the site, where it would be more visually prominent from the wider landscape.
- Conserve and enhance important semi-natural habitats including the pond, stream, hedgerows and woodland belts.
- Reinforce the existing settlement pattern through careful design. Consider building 2-3 storey residential properties organised in cul-de-sacs, which would form a continuation of the existing settlement edge. New buildings should use local vernacular building materials such as red brick laid in a Flemish bond<sup>1</sup>.
- Conserve and enhance the pastoral character of the valley slopes.
- Seek to retain views of landmark buildings within Loughborough including Towers Hall at Loughborough University, as well as views across the surrounding undeveloped countryside.
- Landscape mitigation along the western edge of the site adjacent to Cotes Road should be used to reduce the impact of development on the sense of arrival into the village.

---

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/barrow\\_conservation\\_area\\_character\\_appraisal/barrowconservationareacharactera.pdf](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/barrow_conservation_area_character_appraisal/barrowconservationareacharactera.pdf)