

LOES FARM

Land off Coventry Road, Warwick



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Urban Wilderness Ltd was commissioned by Chave Planning on behalf of Nurton Developments to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) for Loes Farm, a proposed residential development on land west of Coventry Road, due north of Warwick. This appraisal forms part of an engagement process by Nurton Developments with the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- 1.2 Following examination of the new Local Plan at a strategic level, it has been found that there are insufficient housing allocations currently being considered. This residential proposal therefore provides an opportunity for development to provide additional housing capacity in a sustainable location and which can be delivered without significant harm to the Designed Landscape of Guy's Cliffe and its setting, which itself forms part of the study area.
- 1.3 The site has been considered for development in the past, though no formal application has been made to date. The site has been the focus of various previous assessments which now form the evidence base for the formulation of the new Local Plan. These assessments did not adequately address the heritage of the site, namely the Guy's Cliffe registered park and its landscape setting. As a result, the site has been rejected by the Local Planning Authority due to the impact on the heritage asset being difficult to mitigate. These new proposals have been prepared following an integrated assessment by a multi-disciplinary design team. Here the Planning context is further informed by an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment and this LVIA, which assesses the landscape and visual impact on the historic designed landscape.
- 1.4 This appraisal has examined the nature and extent of the proposed development and measure, as appropriate, the level of impact of the proposed housing on the historic landscape and visual receptors within the visual envelope of the site. From this, an evaluation of landscape capacity can be made. Ultimately, the appraisal will provide a professional opinion on the suitability of the development proposed within its landscape context.
- 1.5 This results of this appraisal, in conjunction with those of the archaeological Desk Based Assessment, have informed the masterplanning process and underpin the Vision Document which is being submitted as part of this representation.
- 1.6 It is the author's opinion that the proposed development as shown on the masterplan (page 23) demonstrates how new dwellings can be successfully incorporated into the site without causing significant impact on the existing heritage assets. Indeed, it is anticipated that in developing the area to the western half of the site, the corresponding inward investment will help better define the boundaries of the existing registered park, make the landscape more legible and accessible to the public, we well as help protect key heritage assets for the future.

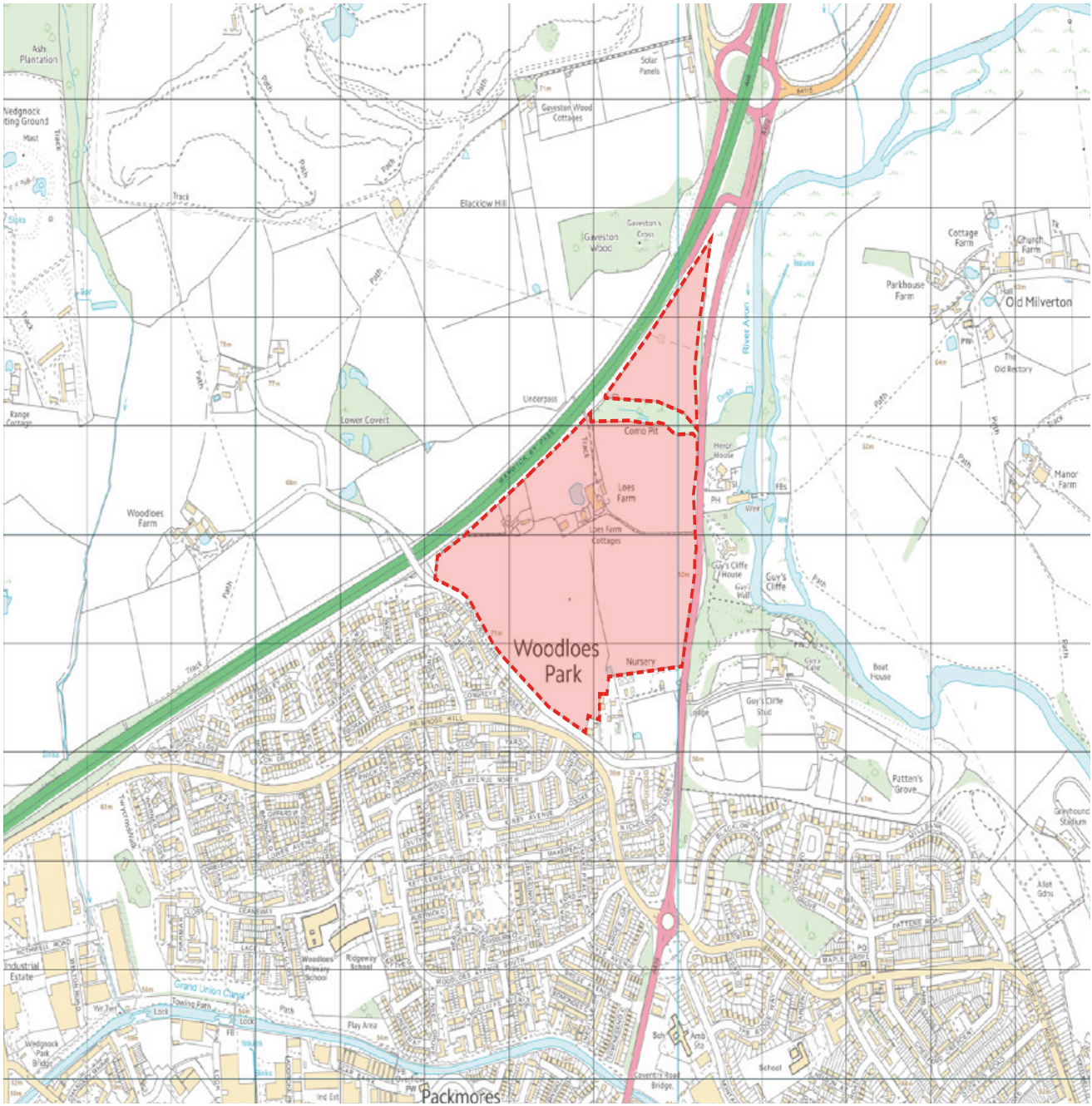
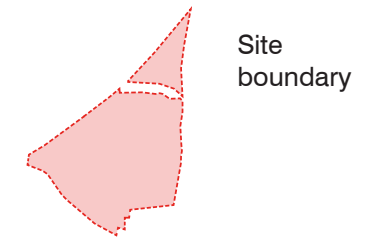


Figure 1: Site Location



2. METHODOLOGY

Current Guidance

2.1 This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” (3rd. Edition, 2013) produced by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.

Purpose of Assessment

2.2 The report studies the effects of a given development on (i) the landscape character and landscape resources of the site and its environs, and (ii) the visual amenity experienced by people in through and surrounding the proposed development. These two components are described separately within this report.

2.3 Landscape impacts describe the likely effects of the development proposals on the physical character and quality of the landscape – i.e. the Environmental Resource. In a similar way, Visual effects describe the likely changes that the development will have within the views of receptors, i.e. people that have a viewing opportunity of the development such as local residents, walkers, road users, etc.

2.4 There are three principle parts to the assessment process, namely:

- i. Describe the baseline condition of the site and its environs and ascribe an evaluation of the sensitivity and capacity of this resource to accommodate change of the type proposed;
- ii. Identify the changes proposed as a result of proposed development and their likely effects;
- iii. Identify mitigation to prevent, reduce or alleviate anticipated negative effects.

2.5 Predicted effects may occur both during construction as well as operation / occupation of the development and as such each stage of the development should be assessed individually.

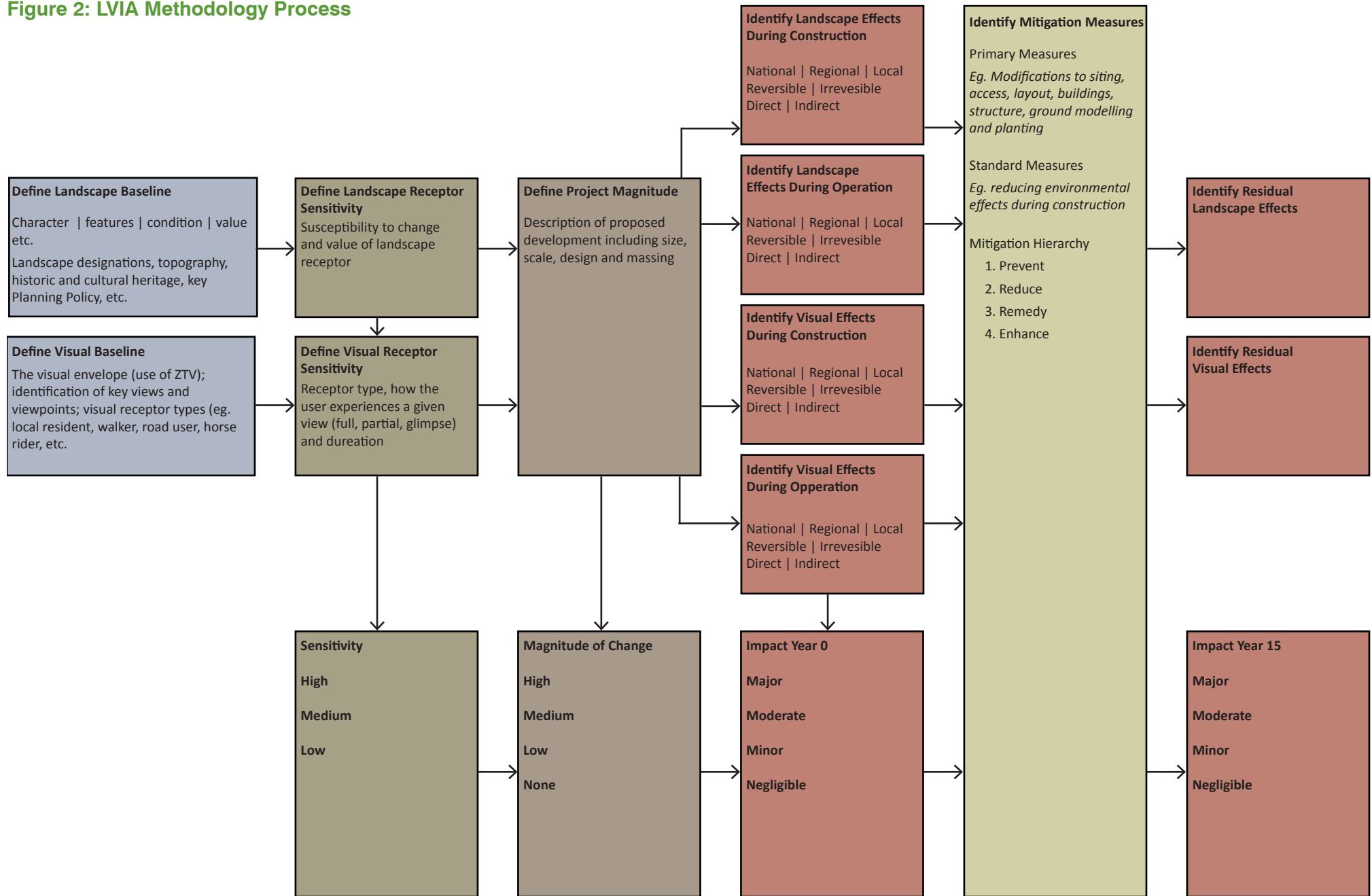
2.6 Whilst quantitative measurements should be employed where practicable the GLVIA guidance explains that a degree of professional experience and judgment should be exercised during the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) process and that these judgments should be “appropriate and proportional” (GLVIA (2013), cl. 2.24, para. 1.17). Professional opinions are given within the framework of “clear and transparent methods so that the reasoning applied at different stages can be traced and examined by others.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 2.24, page 21.

Defining the Baseline

2.7 The baseline study aims to provide an appropriate benchmark from which an appraisal of effects is based. The baseline sets out what the landscape is comprised of, describing its constituent parts, its function, its character, condition, value and capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed. It also describes the visual resource i.e. the area within which the development may be visible, the people (visual receptors) who may have views of the development and the nature of these views, i.e. whether they are distant, up close, open, constrained, transient, prolonged, etc.

2.8 Where existing landscape character assessments are available the baseline landscape is described with reference to published reports.

Figure 2: LVIA Methodology Process



Sensitivity to Change

- 2.9 The GLVIA states that sensitivity is “the nature of the receptor likely to be affected.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 3.24, page 38.
- 2.10 Both the landscape and visual receptors with potential views of the proposed development are ascribed a ‘sensitivity’. Judgments on sensitivity are derived by assessing landscape / visual receptor value, the nature of the landscape or visual receptor and their susceptibility to change of the type proposed. The following scale is used to determine landscape and visual receptor sensitivity:

Table 1: Sensitivity to Change of Landscape and Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Description
High	<p>A landscape or visual receptor considered to be highly sensitive to change of the type proposed and or with particularly distinctive characteristics.</p> <p>A highly valued landscape or visual receptor with little or no capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed.</p>
Medium	<p>A landscape or visual receptor which is considered to be potentially tolerant to change of the type proposed and which have less obvious or partially degraded characteristics.</p> <p>A landscape or visual receptor with some capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed.</p>
Low	<p>A landscape or visual receptor considered to be tolerant to change of the type proposed and or with particularly distinctive characteristics.</p> <p>A landscape or visual receptor with capacity to accommodate change of the type proposed.</p>

2.11 Landscape Value is defined within the GLVIA as:

“...the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons...Landscapes or their component parts may be valued at the community, local, national or international levels.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 5.19, page 80.

Magnitude of Change

2.12 The GLVIA states that magnitude is “the nature of the effect likely to occur.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 3.24, page 38.

2.13 The Magnitude of Change predicted is determined by the size and scale of effects on the landscape, the duration and reversibility of anticipated effects and the geographical extent of the area that will be affected.

2.14 With regard to visual receptors the magnitude of effects are considered in relation to the degree of change in the view, change in the composition of a view, the manner to which the proposed development visually integrates with its surrounds, (blends in or contrasts), the angle of view, the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development and the extent of the development that will be visible i.e. all of the development or only a small proportion of the development.

2.15 For transient receptors, such as motorists for example, the relative amount of time over which views of the proposed development will be available are considered. Effects on the landscape and visual receptors can be permanent or temporary i.e. long term or short term. Also, they can be direct or indirect, i.e. directly as a result of the development or indirectly through for example offsite services diversions or junction alterations, etc.

2.16 The following scale is used to quantify the magnitude of effect:

Table 2: Magnitude of Change as experienced by Landscape and Visual Receptors

Magnitude						
High Adverse	Medium Adverse	Low Adverse	No change	Low Beneficial	Medium Beneficial	High Beneficial

Significance

2.17 The GLVIA states the following:

“There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and landscape context and with the type of proposal. At the opposite ends of a spectrum it is reasonable to say that:

- Major loss or irreversible negative effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes are likely to be of the greatest significance;
- Reversible negative effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value are likely to be of least significance and may, depending on the circumstances, be judged as not significant; and
- Where assessments of significance place landscape effects between these extremes, judgements must be made about whether or not they are significant, with full explanations of why these conclusions have been reached. GLVIA (2013), cl. 5.56, pages 92-3

Further guidance on the significance of visual effects:

- Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant
- Effects on people at recognised and important viewing points or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant.
- Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 6.44, page 116

2.18 The significance of effects are evaluated by correlating the results of a receptor’s sensitivity to change against the developments predicted magnitude of change. Effects can be either adverse or beneficial. The assessment considers the significance of effects during construction, at year 0 on completion of construction and at year 15.

2.19 Ultimately the significance of predicated effects on a landscape or visual receptor is determined by the professional judgment of the individual undertaking the LVIA. The following scale has been used to determine the significance of effects:

Table 3: Significance of Change to Landscape and Visual Receptors

Significance	Description
Major	an effect considered very important in the decision making process.
Moderate	an effect that is notable and one that is generally considered to be material in the decision making process.
Minor	an effect that will be noticed, but is not considered to be an important factor in the decision making process
Negligible	an effect that will be discernible, but of very limited consequences and one that not important or relevant to the decision process.

Mitigation

- 2.20. The GLVIA states the following for the mitigation of landscape effects:
 “Where landscape effects are judged to be significant and adverse, proposals for preventing/avoiding, reducing, or offsetting or compensating for them (referred to as mitigation) should be described. The significant landscape effects remaining after mitigation should be summarised as the final step in the process.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 5.57, page 93

And similarly for visual effects:

“Where visual effects are judged to be significant and adverse, proposals for preventing/avoiding, reducing, or offsetting or compensating for them (referred to as mitigation) should be described. The significant landscape effects remaining after mitigation should be summarised as the final step in the process.” GLVIA (2013), cl. 6.45, page 116

- 2.21 The assessment will determine possible interventions which will help prevent, reduce or offset the anticipated significant adverse effects on landscape or visual amenity caused by the development.
- Drawing Conclusions**
- 2.22 For the purposes of this report, residual Moderate to Major and Major effects are considered to be significant during operation of the development whilst only Major effects, as a result of their temporary nature, are considered significant during construction. Effects ranging from moderate to negligible are not considered significant.
- 2.23 Residual and Construction-related impacts are described in Section 8 under Impact Appraisal so as to inform the development of the landscape strategy. The anticipated short and long terms effects on the landscape and visual resources are assessed within the context of the existing Landscape Masterplan. These then provide the basis for mitigation measures which are incorporated into the layout. Finally, conclusions are drawn and a professional opinion given as to the site’s capacity for change.

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

Introduction

- 3.1 This section considers the relevant planning and legislative framework in the context of landscape and visual issues. Not all policies are referred to or listed in full but insofar as they are relevant to the proposal and this assessment. Figure 3 illustrates the site's broader policy context with regard to landscape designations (see page 13 overleaf).
- 3.2 The site is of triangular shape, is 27.3ha in size and comprises of two main parcels of land divided by woodland running east-west between the two. There is a further small square of pasture land to the south which lies wholly in the Registered Park setting area.
- 3.3 The site broadly adjoins the Woodloes Park area of Warwick, some 1.5km north of the town centre and 3.5km north west of Leamington Spa. It is located due west of the A429 Coventry Road, Guy's Cliffe Registered Park and the Saxon Mill public house and is contained by the A46 Warwick Bypass along the northern boundary and Woodloes Lane to the south.
- 3.4 The entire site is located within the green belt, known as Land Parcel WA5 within the West Midlands Joint Green Belt Study (2015). The eastern half of the site lies within the landscape setting of Guy's Cliffe registered park and designed landscape. The section of land which lies south of the Loes Farm access also contains some well-preserved evidence of Medieval Ridge and furrow agriculture as shown in plate 1, right.



Plate 1 From Coventry Road, looking west across Loes Farm, with Medieval Ridge and furrow in the foreground

National Context

- 3.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaces the Government's former Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and as such sets out the Government's policy framework within which local and neighbourhood plans are to be developed. These plans once adopted aim to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities and are to be taken into material consideration in the determination of planning applications that fall within a plan area.
- Regarding Sustainable Housing Generally*
- 3.6 The NPPF states that in order to achieve sustainable development, there should be a steady "supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations." (cl.7, p.2)
- 3.7 Local Authorities should "Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes...and thriving places that the country needs." (cl.17, p.5)

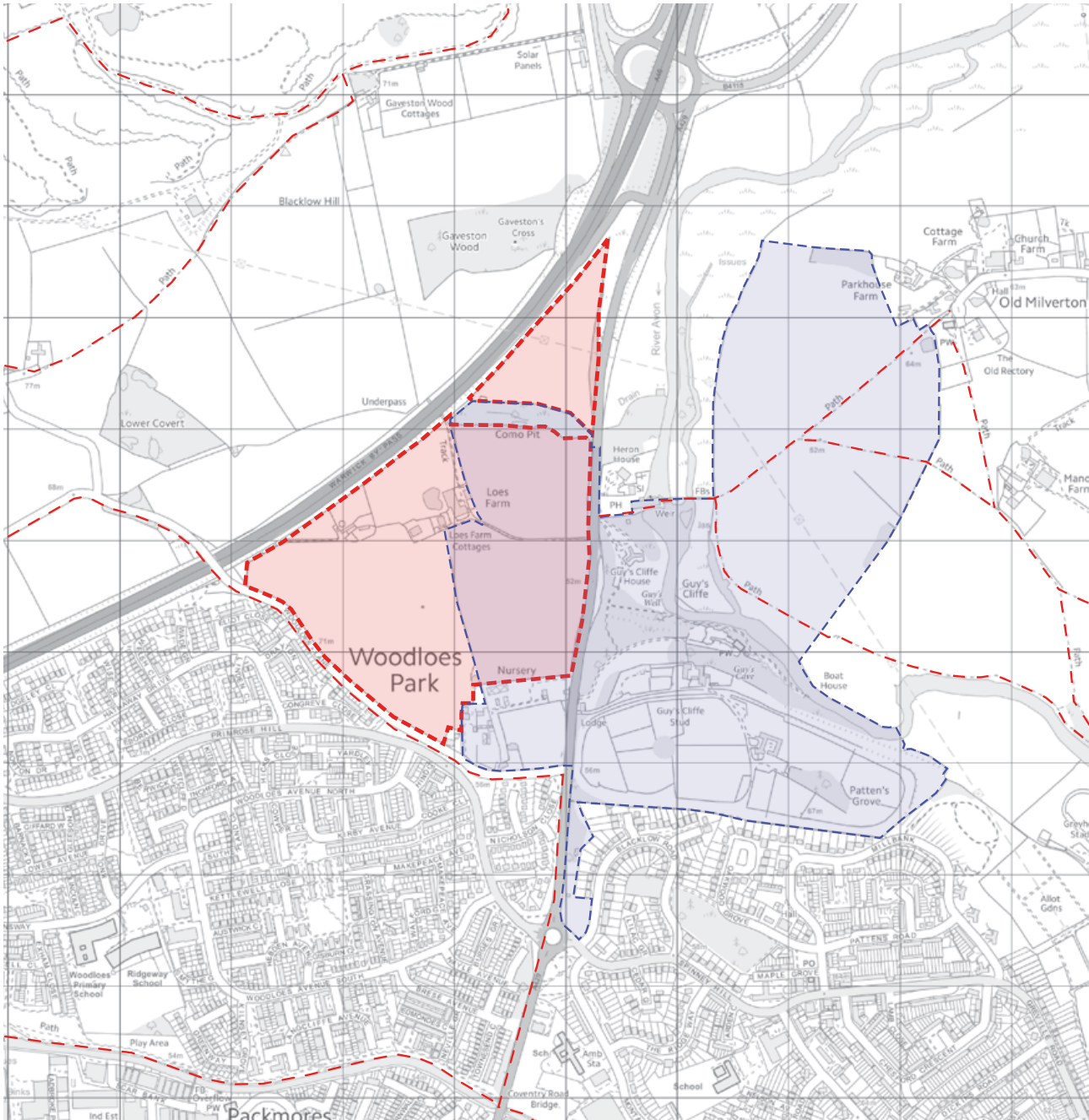





Figure 3: Policy Context

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Guy's Cliffe Registered Park
-  Pubic Rights of Way

- 3.8 “Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.” (cl.17, p.5)
- 3.9 “Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.” (cl.49, p. 13)
- 3.10 “Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.” (cl.75, p. 18)
- 3.11 “To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.” (Footnote 11 page 12)
- 3.12 NPPF Paragraph 47 reiterates that local authorities should maintain a 5 year supply of housing land as set against their housing targets with an additional buffer of 5%. Where local authorities have underachieved in meeting housing targets, an increased buffer of 20% should be provided for.
- 3.13 The NPPF does not contain specific policies relevant to landscape and visual matters but instead covers various aspects of the delivery of sustainable development. Guidance includes the following of relevance:
- 3.14 Under ‘Section 7. Requiring Good Design’:
 “It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces...” (para. 57, p.15)
- “...decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
 - Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings...”
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.” (para 58, p.15)
- Permission should be refused for a development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.” (para. 64 p.16)
- 3.15 Under ‘Section 11. Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment’
 “The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
 - Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible...” (para.109, p.25)

Regarding Conservation

- 3.16 “Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.” (para.126, p.30)
- 3.17 “...In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:
- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness” (para 126, page 30)
- 3.18 “When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.” (Para 127, page 30)
- 3.19 “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.” (Para 128, page 30)
- 3.20 “Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and world heritage sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.” (para.137, page 32)

The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

- 3.21 The NPPG came into force on the 6th March 2014 and comprises of an online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. This is part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.
- 3.22 With regard to the assessment of landscape character being used to inform plan-making and planning decisions, the NPPG states that:
'Where appropriate, landscape character assessments should be prepared to complement Natural England's National Character Area profiles. Landscape Character Assessment is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change and may be undertaken at a scale appropriate to local and neighbourhood plan-making.' (para. 001).
- 3.23 The NPPG also provides a brief description of Green Infrastructure:
'Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, allotments and private gardens.' (para. 015).

Local Context

- 3.24 The current Warwick District Local Plan (1996-2011) is under review and the Proposed Modifications to new Local Plan are open for consultation until 22 April 2016. Notwithstanding the now redundant policies, the adopted plan therefore remains the main point of reference.

Adopted Local Plan (1996-2011) Key Policies

- 3.25 There are a number of policies within the 2014-2029 adopted Local Plan which have a bearing on this assessment:

Policy DP3: Natural and Historic Environment and Landscape

- 3.26 Development will only be permitted which protects important natural features and positively contributes to the character and quality of its natural and historic environment through good habitat/landscape design and management. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they:-
- b) protect and/or enhance features of historical, archaeological, geological and geomorphological significance;
 - c) protect and enhance the landscape character of the area, particularly respecting its historic character;
 - d) provide appropriate levels of amenity space which incorporate suitable habitat features and hard and soft landscaping;
 - e) integrate the amenity space and proposed landscaping into the overall development;
 - f) secure the long term management and maintenance of habitat/landscape features (p.30)

3.27 “Wildlife habitats, landscape and geomorphological features can contribute towards the character and quality of our environment, whose character is also the product of long-term historical processes. There is a wide appreciation of the contribution that such features, can make to the particular character of the District and to wider community and social objectives. This is relevant in both urban and rural areas. Securing new development that can positively contribute to the character of the natural and historic environment is therefore essential.” (para.418, p.30)

Policy DAP11: Protecting Historic Parks and Gardens

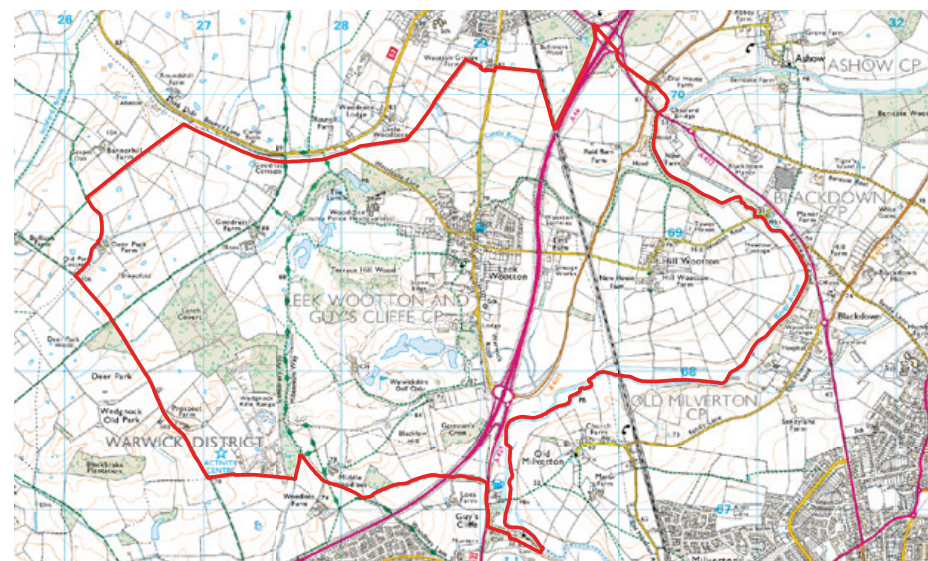
3.28 “Development will not be permitted if it would harm the historic structure, character, principal components and setting of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest included in the English Heritage Register...” (p.120)

3.29 “Historic parks and gardens are an important cultural, historical and environmental asset within the District and the Council wishes to ensure they are protected, maintained and restored. The objective of this policy is to protect them from development that would harm their character.” (Para.9.45, p.120)

*Leek Wootton and Guy’s Cliffe Local Neighbourhood Plan
(As designated by Warwick District Council 5 Nov 2014)*

3.30 The Local Neighbourhood plan boundary has been agreed, as Figure 4 below shows. Much of the Loes Farm development area is not included within the boundary. However, the northern-most triangular parcel is included, though it is anticipated that this area will not be developed as part of the proposals for Loes Farm.

3.31 There is currently no formal plan by the Local Parish Council available for public scrutiny and therefore no adopted policies to offer guidance.



**Figure 4: Agreed Local Neighbourhood Plan
Leek Wootton & Guy’s Cliffe (2014)**

4. BASELINE SETTING

4.1 The following section describes the existing conditions that prevail within the site and its immediate context.

Topography

4.2 The triangular site is located between the A46 Warwick Bypass and the A429 Coventry Road, rising from its lowest point at the Loes Farm Access off the Coventry Road at 50m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) up to the highest point at the western corner of the site of 75m AOD. More broadly, the site is part of the broad, open River Avon valley catchment, with agricultural pasture running north-south and rising gently westwards away from the river towards the Bypass.

4.3 There are a series of interlocking, shallow hillsides within a 5km radius, as the landform follows the River Avon alignment. These create a series of short-distance views, where vantage points afford glimpsed views across to Old Milverton village to the East, Warwick to the south and Leamington Spa to the south east. Due to the nature of the undulating lowland topography, the views are dominated by the middle distance scenery, punctuated by landmarks such as St. Mary's Church Tower and Warwick Castle for example. Views further afield, towards the Cotswolds for example, are not within the site's visual envelope.

Settlement, Infrastructure and Wider Context

4.4 The Woodloes Park residential area lies due south of the site and has a reasonably low density layout of approximately 20 dwellings per hectare (DPH). Housing comprises mostly modern two-storey accommodation, of red/beige brick and clay tiled pitched roof construction. Most properties have moderately-sized rear gardens which are often surrounded by tanalised larch vertical-slatted fencing. Open green spaces are characterised by intermittent tree and shrub planting and there are a number of tarmac paths, distinct from the road network, facilitating access to the countryside north along Woodloes Lane and across over the Bypass.

4.5 The Coventry Road in large part truncates the old Guy's Cliffe estate, with much of the registered park's landscape setting located on the western side of the road. Several of the designed landscape's historic built components remain in good overall condition: the estate's boundary sandstone masonry wall, partially covered in Ivy; the Lodge on Coventry Road, now run by the local Masonic group and the house's former kitchen garden, overgrown and unused, south of Hinton's Nursery. Guy's Cliffe House, St. Mary Magdalene's Chapel and grotto or cave are not visible from the road, with the wall and dense tree and shrub vegetation obscuring any views into the designed landscape beyond.



Figure 5: Aerial Photograph



Site boundary

Plates

2	3	4
5		

- 2. Loes Farm access & timber fence
- 3. Parkland trees (Oak and Lime)
- 4. Guy's Cliffe Lodge (Coventry Road)
- 5. Guy's Cliffe Kitchen Garden



Urban Grain

- 4.6 The existing residential settlement of Woodloes Park extends northwards and upwards from the Grand Union Canal, with traffic passing along the distributor road of Primrose Hill. This settlement abuts the Woodloes Lane alignment, stopping slightly shy of the lane and preserving the old field margin. The result is a lane which retains much of its former rural charm and serves to create a reasonably 'soft' edge to the town in this location. There are a number of properties, set back from the Lane, which have views looking out over the site.

Circulation - Roads and Public Rights of Way

- 4.7 The area is reasonably well connected with public footpaths and bridleways extending west from Woodloes Lane and meandering through the Guy's Cliffe estate via Old Milverton. The site also benefits from connections to longer distance routes such as Centenary Way, Millennium Way and 'The WaLK' which all pass along Woodloes Lane to the south of the site.
- 4.8 The A429 Coventry Road is a busy commuter road linking Warwick and Leamington Spa with Kenilworth and Coventry to the north. Similarly, the A46 Warwick Bypass dual carriageway is a busy route linking Tewksbury and Evesham to the south with Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwick and Coventry before connecting to the M69 to Leicester. Both roads carry a high level of traffic and reduce the sense of tranquillity within their immediate vicinity. Much of the A46 runs though a slight cutting as it passes the site, thus reducing noise impact from all but the most elevated sections of the site.

Land use & Vegetation Cover

- 4.9 The site itself is comprised of four main field compartments, radiating from Loes Farm in the centre. There are two further fields: one to the north of the woodland dividing the larger site and a second to the south below Hinton's plant nursery and cut-off from the rest of the farm site. The fields are fenced with a mixture of fencing: with timber post and rail down the farm access and around the site boundaries, with post and wire used to compartmentalise the central fields.
- 4.10 In terms of vegetation, there are a number of parkland trees, assumed to date from between 150 and 200 years ago, thereby dating them to the first half of the 19th century. They comprise Common lime (*Tilia x europaea*), English Oak (presumed *Quercus robur*), and smaller stand-alone and more recently planted Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Hedges adorn many of the external field boundaries, though these are fragmented and over-mature in several places. The predominant species are Hawthorn, Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*).
- 4.11 Farming culture revolves around sheep pasture within the site itself, with the ridge and furrow strip fields system precluding any other meaningful agricultural activity on the south east field. There is evidence of hay making beyond the site, to the north of the Bypass, with some arable within the Guy's Cliffe Designed Landscape. Historic woodland belts also exist in the form of Blacklow Hill Wood (now Gaveston Wood) to the north and Lower Covet to the west of the site and which are shown on the 1886 Ordnance Survey 6" edition (see Figure 16) . The Archaeology Report (para.3.32, p. 14) states that the former wood was planted around the Gaveston Cross memorial in 1821 . They are not shown on the Forestry Commission's Ancient Woodland data set.



6	7	8	9
		10	

Plates

- 6. Coventry Road (A429) looking north
- 7. Warwick Bypass (A46) looking north
- 8. View north west up Woodloes Lane
- 9. Informal path connection to Woodloes Park from Woodloes Lane
- 10. Old field margin and hedgerows partially retained



5. Development Proposals

- 5.1 The development is to accommodate up to 260 new dwellings, of mixed density with a maximum of 35 dwellings per hectare. There is associated green infrastructure proposed, comprising a number of pocket parks, equipped children’s play spaces and a new country park based around the historic setting of Guy’s Cliffe designed landscape.
- 5.2 The development delivers structural/screen planting along the northern boundary against the backdrop of the A46 Warwick Bypass; gapping-up and replacing fragmented and degraded sections of hedging along Woodloes Lane and Coventry Road; with structural internal tree planting to restore lost views from Guy’s Cliffe House as well help screen the development from Coventry Road.
- 5.3 Vehicular access to the development is from the existing access to Loes Farm off Coventry Road, with new Public Rights of Way created to improve site-wide circulation and connect to existing footpaths which currently terminate at Saxon Mill.
- 5.4 The masterplan has sought to respect, conserve and where possible restore the historic designed landscape whilst delivering a well-connected residential extension which responds to the existing grain of urban development of the adjacent Woodloes Park.
- 5.5 The proposals would include the retention of the main farmhouse in the centre of the site, whilst the farm outbuildings, including the associated Bungalow dwellings, would be removed. The farm would serve as the gateway to the new development serving to anchor the new housing layout and road circulation.

Figure 6
Proposed Residential Development
at Loes Farm, Coventry Road, Warwick
Illustrative Masterplan



6. BASELINE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

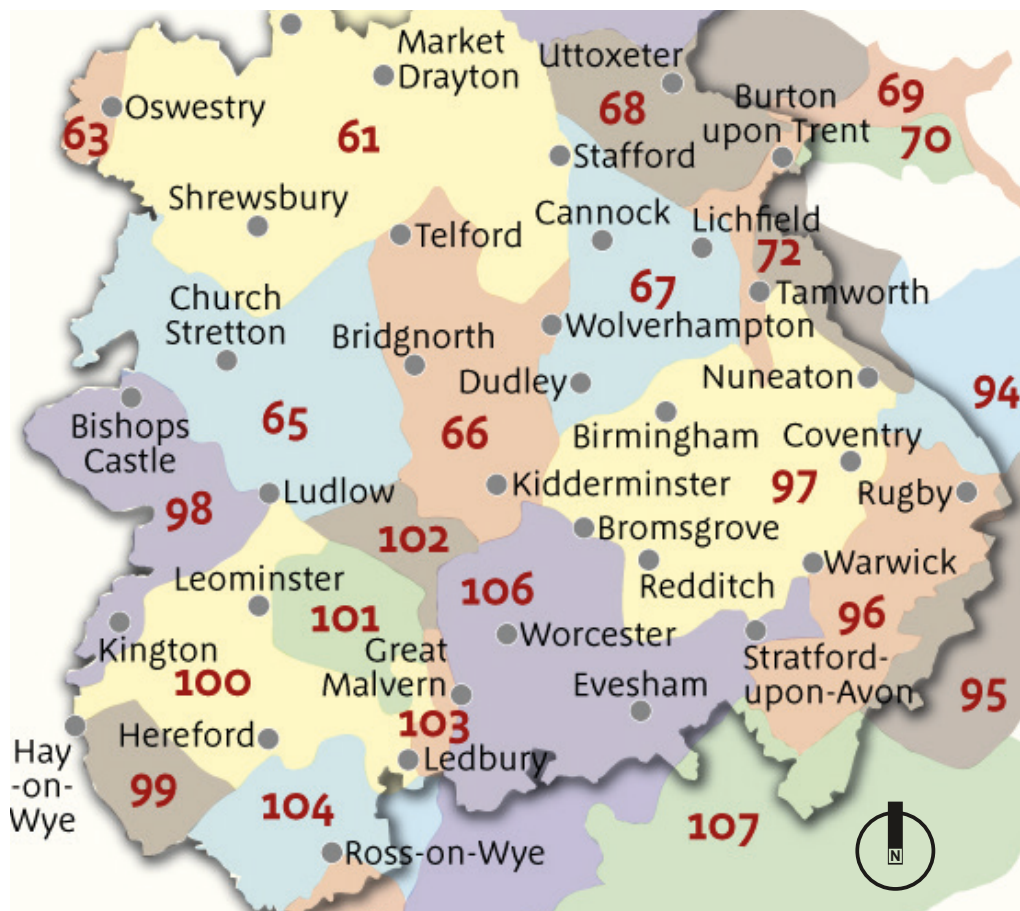
6.1 The various elements of a landscape when viewed in combination, including historical and cultural associations, set one area apart from another and make its character unique to the people who both live in or visit the area. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a process of characterising a landscape into 'Character Areas' through the identification of distinctive features followed by an assessment of each Character Area's ability to accommodate change.



- 6.2 **Natural England National Character Area Profile**
The site falls into Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 97: Arden, though it lies very close to NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon. Indeed much of Leamington Spa is within this area. The following extracts represent the area's character assessment and provide broader context to the site's landscape baseline.
- 6.3 "There are many mature hedgerow oaks, numerous patches of ancient woodland and parks containing remnants of wood-pasture. The association with former common and heathland also imparts a strong unity, reflected by the widespread occurrence of heathland vegetation and roadside bracken. The larger commons have been enclosed within a rectilinear pattern of larger fields, straight roads and hedges, but there are still smaller commons as well as extensive areas of farmland, characterised by small, irregular fields, dense, thick hedges, winding lanes and trackways." (NCA.97, p.6)
- 6.4 This reference to the enclosure of historic common land presents an interesting precedent for the residential development of the site and offers inspiration for the development of an open greenspace strategy for today's users.

Figure 7
National Character Area 97: Arden
Natural England (2014)

Figure 8
National Character Area 97: Arden
Natural England (2014)



- 6.5 “The heartland of the area is made up of a landscape of hedged, irregular fields and small woodlands. Narrow, often sunken lanes link scattered farms and there is a real sense of being closed in with restricted views.” (NCA.97, p.7)
- 6.6 “There is public access to numerous small woodlands and the canals, rivers and reservoirs offer opportunities for walking, cycling and water sports. The network of lanes is frequently used by horse riders and cyclists.” (NCA.97, p.10).
- 6.7 “Associations with Shakespeare’s ‘Forest of Arden’, featured in ‘As You Like It’ are still notable through the woodland cover, hedgerow oaks, small ancient woodlands and former wood pasture.” (NC.97, p.10)
- 6.8 “Despite the major road and motorway network, a sense of tranquillity can still be found in the woodlands, sunken lanes, narrow river valleys and enclosed urban landscapes.” (NC.97, p.11)
- 6.9 And regarding a sense of history of the area:
 “Manorial deer parks, remnants of wood pasture, ancient oak woodland, historic field patterns, historic farm buildings, Medieval moated sites, parkland landscapes, distinctive mining villages and former colliery sites all reflect the history of the landscape. Warwick Castle and Kenilworth Castle are also dominate features, built using locally found building materials, in the south of the NCA.” (NCA.97, p.11).

- 6.10 There are Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) within the NCA.97 document, the most salient of which are listed below.
- 6.11 “SEO 1: Manage and enhance the valuable woodlands, hedgerows, heathlands, distinctive field boundaries and enclosure patterns throughout the NCA, retaining the historic contrast between different areas.
- Managing small woodlands, semi-natural woodland and ancient woodland to maintain pockets of tranquillity and enhance biodiversity value.
 - Managing hedgerows in traditional local style to enhance landscape character and improve biodiversity value.” (NAC.97, p.12)
- 6.12 “SEO2: Create new networks of woodlands, heathlands and green infrastructure.
- Ensuring that the right type of tree is planted in the right location to maximise the benefits for... sense of place.
 - Planting new hedgerows...using species of local provenance, planting standard hedgerow trees, primarily oak, to maintain the distinctive character of the area.” (NCA.97, p.13)
- 6.13 SEO 3: Conserve and enhance Arden’s strong geological, industrial, and cultural resource, to increase public access, enjoyment, recreation and to retain a sense of place and history.
- Conserving and enhancing archaeological features such as moated sites and archaeology associated with the manufacturing and mining industries...; promote access and awareness.
 - Protecting and managing historic wood pasture, parklands and urban parks to conserve significant historic landscapes and important features and habitats such as veteran and urban trees and the associated invertebrate populations.” (NCA.7, p.14)
- 6.14 There are some observations made on the landscape resource and one note is of relevance with regard to NCA 97’s Historic Features: “In 1918 about 3 per cent of the Arden area was historic parkland, but by 1995 it is estimated that 54 per cent of that had been lost... This suggests some neglect of an important resource.” (NCA.97, p. 25)

Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines (1993)

6.15 The site falls into the “Arden Parklands” character zone whose “Overall character and qualities” are stated as “an enclosed, gently rolling landscape defined by woodland edges, parkland and belts of trees.” (p.17)

Characteristic features are noted as:

- Middle distance views enclosed by woodland edge
- Belts of mature trees associated with estatelands
- Many ancient woodlands, often with irregular outlines
- Large country house set in mature parkland
- Remnant deerparks with ancient pollard oaks
- Thick roadside hedgerows, often with bracken

(Arden Landscapes Map, Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines (1993))

6.16 The stated management strategy for this character zone is “retain and enhance the effect of wooded enclosure.” (ibid.)

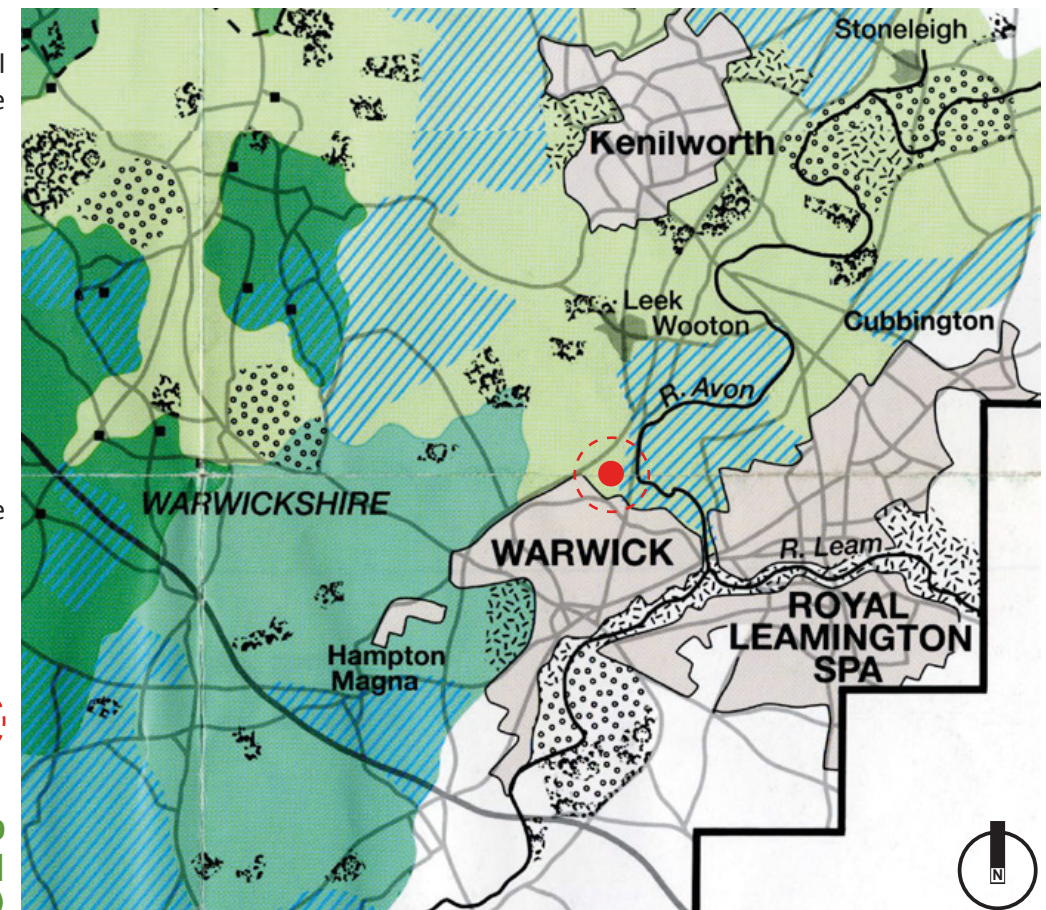


Figure 9
Arden Landscapes Map [Extract]
Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines (1993)

- 6.17 “Where field pattern is still reasonably intact the scale is usually reduced and filtered views through the landscape are more common.” (p.18)
- 6.18 “A characteristic feature of Arden is its irregular road network which reflects the ancient landscape pattern. Features are many and varied, including thick roadside hedgerows, narrow sunken lanes and trackways, irregularly shaped verges, hedgebanks, fords, and mature roadside oaks. Wherever possible these features should be retained. When improvements need to be made they should reflect the irregular landscape pattern, trying to avoid straight lines and looking to replace historic features.” (p.18)
- 6.19 “...hedgerow oaks and parkland trees are for the most part mature and in many places there are few young trees coming on to replace them. Excessive trimming of hedges exacerbates this problem by suppressing natural regeneration of hedgerow trees. Without urgent action there is likely to be a continued decline in the wooded character of the landscape.” (p.27)
- 6.20 “[Historic designations] provide strong social and cultural links with the past and add considerably to landscape detail at a local level. They are also part of our heritage and it is important to conserve all sites of archaeological and historical significance.” (p.29)
- 6.21 “The interface between new development and the surrounding landscape can often appear sharp and stark. Tree planting within and around new development is one of the best ways to soften hard edges...at least 10% of the site should be allocated for tree and woodland planting...The aim should not necessarily be to hide buildings, but rather to integrate them into the landscape, using locally occurring native species.” (p.29)
- 6.22 “...Arden is famous for its historical and cultural associations as being ‘Shakespeare’s Arden’. The wooded character of the landscape also has direct historical link with the ancient Forest of Arden... Of particular significance is the high proportion of ancient woodland sites and the association with oak as the dominant tree species. Equally important are the many built and other historic features and antiquities which impart an ‘ancient’ landscape character.” (p.32)
- 6.23 “New housing should also harmonise with the vernacular style, with particular attention being given to scale, building materials and incorporation of traditional features.” (p.32)
- 6.24 “Mature oaks are a characteristic feature of the Arden landscape. Through their size and antiquity individual trees can contribute greatly to landscape character...Wherever possible these old trees should be retained.” (p.33)
- 6.25 The wooded character of Arden parklands depends on the continuity of the various tree cover elements to create a sequence of linked wooded spaces. Wherever tree cover is weak, particularly on the edge of urban areas, the structure of the landscape also tends to be rather fragmented. There is scope for significant new planting in these areas.” (p. 42)

Joint Green Belt Study (2008)

6.26 The Joint Green Belt Study (JGBS), carried out by a Joint Warwickshire Council working group in 2008, gave the following character assessment for Land Parcel WL5a which covered the Guy's Cliffe area, as indicated in Figure 10 below.

JGBS, Appendix 11, Schedule 8, unpaginated.

6.27 Under Landscape Character: "The Avon valley is the significant landscape feature and there are many mature trees along the river valley and several blocks of woodland."

6.28 Under Visual Issues: "Trees, hedges and valley topography create a variety of visual experience but generally there are mid-distant views over an attractive rural landscape. The A46 and A429 are notable but tree planting generally screens them. Some views back to Warwick and Leamington."

6.29 Under Historic and Cultural Issues: "...Good footpath network. This area appears to be a well used section of the Green Belt, with various recreational opportunities."

6.30 Under Conclusion / Recommendation: "We recommend that both WL5a and 5b are retained within the Green Belt. Some piecemeal development maybe possible - not least the restoration of Guy's Cliff House."

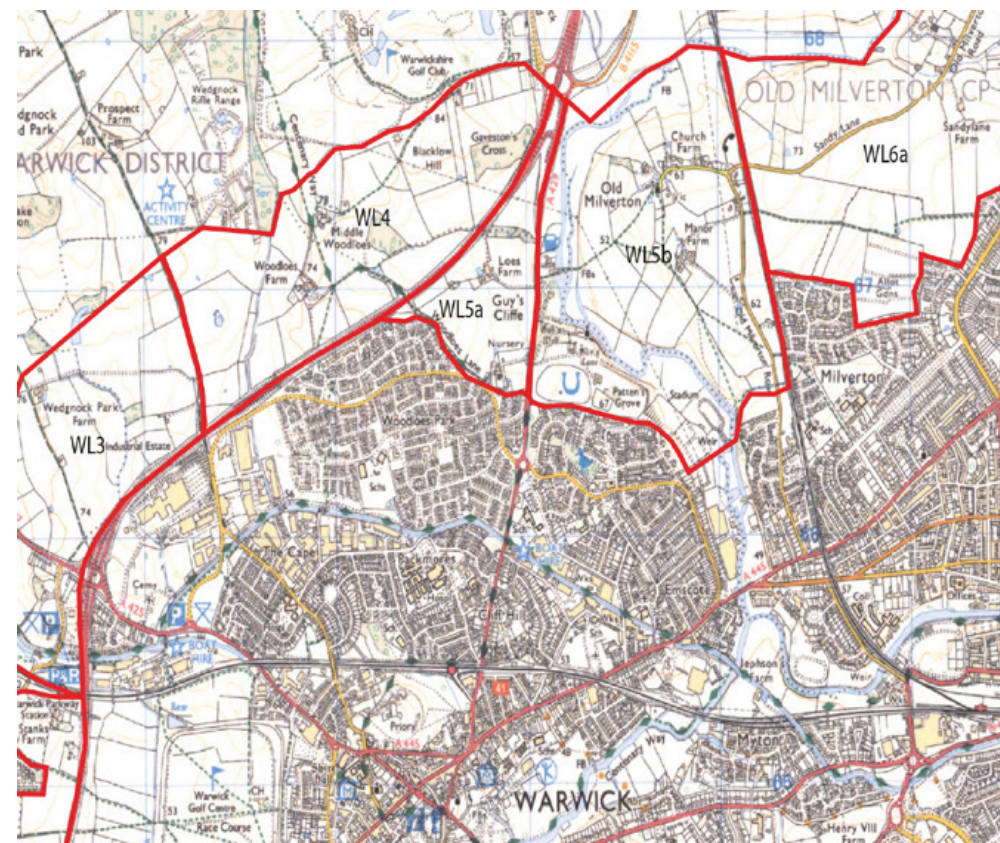


Figure 10: Warwick & Leamington Spa Land Parcels (Fig 2.4) [Extract] JGBS (2008)

**Richard Morrish Associates Report
Options for Future Urban Expansion in Warwick District -
Considerations for Sustainable Landscape Planning (2012)**

- 6.31 This study assesses the development opportunities for the Loes Farm site, identified as parcel 'WL5a' as per the preceding Joint Green Belt Study (2008).
- 6.32 "The study site is largely permanent stock grazed pasture with an attractive open 'parkland' character. There is a short north/south ridge (around 70m AOD) at the central southern edge of the site, with the topography running gently down from this high ground to the A46 and A429." (Section 4, p.18)
- 6.33 "The land south of the track appears to be much older and includes groups of mature oak and lime tree, well preserved ridge-and-furrow and a variety of other topographic detail that may indicate former workings or boundaries." (p.19)
- 6.34 "The boundary with Woodloes Lane is an overgrown hedge with hedge trees including elm, oak, ash, sycamore, holly, blackthorn and hawthorn – but with gaps that allow views into the parkland and, at the highest section, view north and north-east towards Old Milverton and Hill Wootton. The A46 is largely in cutting as it passes the site and there is a reasonable, but not complete, screen of woody vegetation. However, noise from this busy road is notable. Along the A429 boundary there are again sections of mature vegetation providing some site enclosure..." (p.19)
- 6.35 "At the northern end of the site a national grid transmission line passes overhead and there is a cellnet tower near the A46 boundary. Mature shelterbelts with oak, pine, poplar, ash and sycamore enclose the paddock, but the noise of the adjacent roads is especially notable." (p.19)
- 6.36 "The site has been historically connected to Guys Cliffe house – a significant historic site in Warwick with connections to the Earls of Warwick and other notable families. Most of the south eastern section of the site is included as part of the Guys Cliffe registered park and garden. In the early 19th century, the Greatheed family are known to have extended the estate to include Loes Farm as parkland. However, on the ground today it would appear that some of the best ridge and furrow and parkland trees lie beyond the designated historic garden in the south-west portion of the site." (p.19)
- 6.37 "If this site was brought forward for development, the following issues would need to be carefully considered:
- The significance of the historic setting and historic features
 - The potential landscape and visual impacts to a range of visual receptors including neighbouring dwellings, the adjacent to the A429 (a main gateway to Warwick), footpath users on the Coventry Way, and potentially, the A46 and land towards Old Milverton.
 - Noise and other impacts from adjacent roads
 - Proximity of overhead cables
 - Potential access and other infrastructure constraints

Figure 11
Options for Future Urban Expansion in Warwick District
Richard Morrish Associates
Figure A4 (2012)

- 6.38 “In our view this site has some significant landscape constraints that should define how far any development extends. If it is accepted that part of the registered parkland and areas of ridge and furrow are expendable, then a portion of land of between five and six hectares could be released for development along the eastern side of the site whilst upholding some landscape planning principles. (Refer to Figure A4).” (p.19)
- 6.39 Under Conclusions: “Pending more detailed review of possible site constraints and infrastructural requirements, the Loes Farm site may offer some potential for future urban expansion. However, the extent of such development will clearly be dependent on the extent to which it can be deemed acceptable to lose historic landscape features.” (p.20)
- 6.40 Under Constraints and Challenges: “The most logical area to develop would lie within the registered park / garden area. It would affect some well preserved ridge and furrow pasture. Other historic constraints may be defined in detailed studies.
- Road access requirements would need to be further explored and could introduce cost constraints.
 - Careful landscape design will be required in order to retain/provide an acceptable gateway to Warwick and a buffer for new development adjacent the A429.” (p.21)



Warwick District Urban Expansion Options
 Sustainable Landscape Considerations.
 Figure A4 Loes Farm, north Warwick.

Joint Green Belt Study, LUC (2015)

6.41 The site sits wholly within the WA5 land parcel defined by Land Use Consultants Joint Green Belt Study (2015). The land parcels were assessed against the five purposes of green belts set out in the NPPF as below.

- Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
- Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- Purpose 3 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
- Purpose 5 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

6.42 A simple scoring system against each of the above criteria generated a total score for each parcel, with higher scores having a greater contribution to the purpose of the green belt. Parcel WA5 scored 10/20 whereas the neighbouring WA4 and WA6 parcels scored 13/20 and 14/20 respectively.

6.43 In relation to Purpose 1 and in particular ribbon development LUC's notes which accompany the assessment state "The parcel helps to prevent ribbon development along Coventry Road towards Leek Wootton and Coventry to the North."

6.44 Regarding Purpose 3 it is stated that "Land within the parcel has the characteristics of countryside. The land parcel contains four detached dwellings which are scattered in the southern two thirds of the parcel. The site is relatively open".

6.45 Finally, the notes which accompany purpose 4 read as "The parcel does not overlap with a Conservation Area within an historic town. In addition, there is no intervisibility between the historic core of a historic town and the parcel."

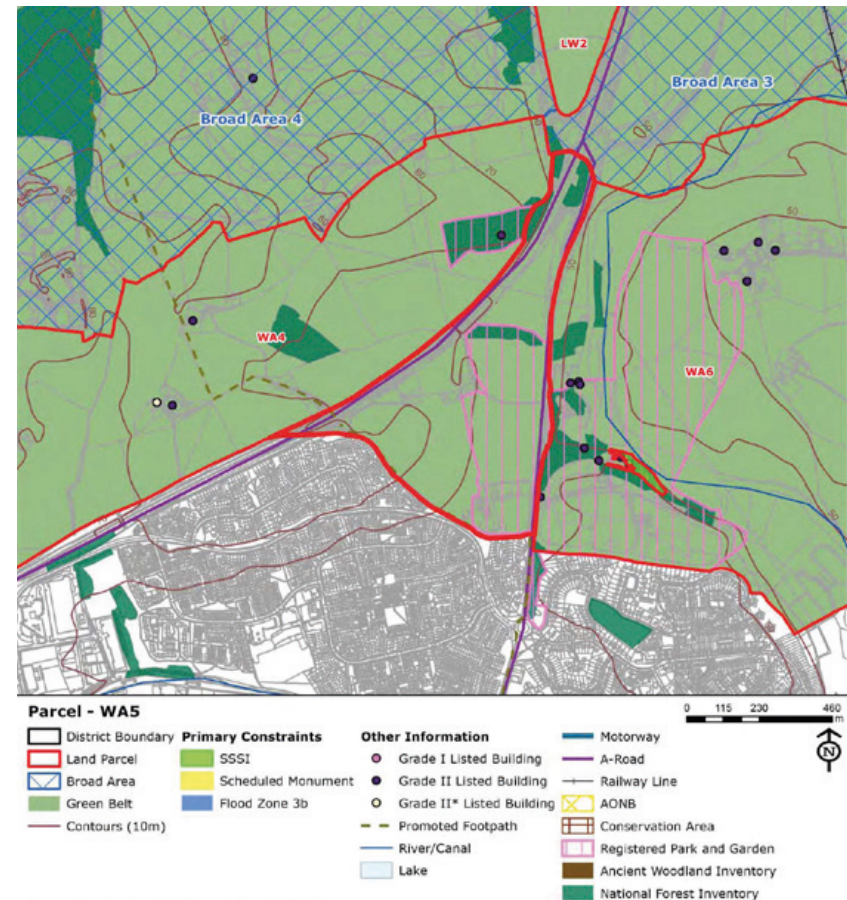


Figure 12: Joint Green Belt Study, LUC (2015)
WA5 Land Parcel Boundary

Historic Landscape Character

- 6.46 A separate report on the Archaeology of the site has been undertaken by Orion Heritage Ltd. "Land at Loes Farm, Warwick: Heritage Desk Based Assessment" (2016). The purpose of this report is not to duplicate information presented in the Heritage assessment but instead to explain the relevance of the designed landscape at Guy's Cliffe to the development of the site; assess the historic landscape character and state its current significance.
- 6.47 An Historic Landscape Survey of Guy's Cliffe Registered Park has not been carried out as part of this representation to the Local Planning Authority. The proposed development site is part of the park's setting, but not part of the walled park enclosure itself.
- 6.48 The land to the west of the Coventry Road shown green on the Conveyance plan in Figure 13 (right), was distant from Guy's Cliffe house, gardens, Chapel and Cave and was purchased by the then owner of Guy's Cliffe, Bertie Greatheed on 12 October 1824, as per the conveyance extract in Figure 14. This effectively extended the estate westwards.
- 6.49 Although the park was effectively severed by the Coventry Road Turnpike, it allowed the owner to open a vista from Guy's Cliffe House westwards. The line of parkland oak and lime trees which runs north-south, due west of the ridge and furrow would have served as the visual extents of the estate and the boundary of the picturesque landscape, giving the illusion of a more expansive estate.

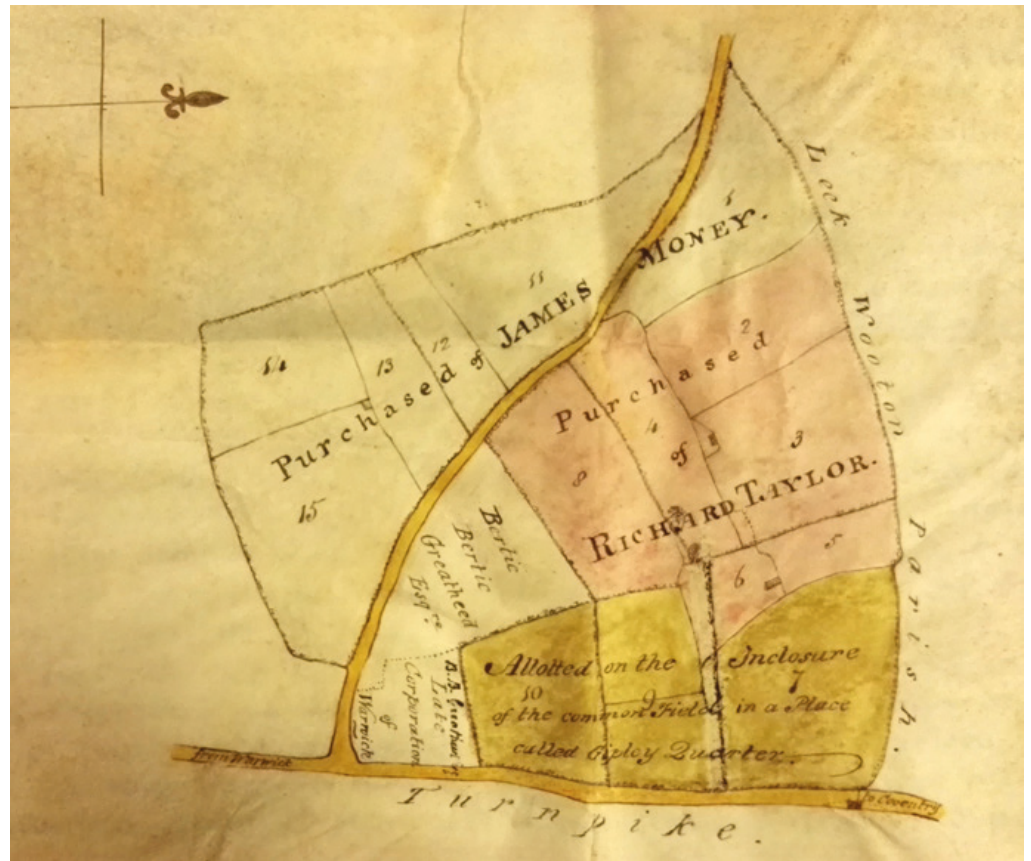


Figure 13: Land Conveyance Plan (12 October 1824)

- 6.50 This visual contrivance can be seen from the Aerial mark-up shown in Figure 15. The Early Guy's Cliffe Collection photo repository (which can be viewed on www.Guyscliffehouse.org.uk) contains a number of historic engravings which show the relationship between the house and the Coventry Road. Sightlines from the house were encouraged across the West Park via the use of a sunken section of masonry wall. This also allowed travellers passing along the road to gain a glimpse of the impressive mansion house underneath the mature tree canopy.
- 6.51 Other elements of the designed landscape which are shown on the Ordnance Survey plans are the 'Como Pit' and kitchen garden. The former is a pond constructed by Bertie Greatheed in 1824 following the land purchase and thought to have a resemblance to the original in Northern Italy. It lies to the north of Loes Farm within the mature woodland belt that crosses the northern half of the site.
- 6.52 The kitchen garden, at the southern corner, was already in the ownership of Bertie Greatheed when the West Park land purchase was undertaken in 1824. The rectangular walled garden (shown in Plate 5) is thought to be of 18th century origin and improved with new fruit trees in 1806-7 again by Bertie Greatheed. The access to the garden was via a track emerging from Coventry Road directly opposite the Guy's Cliffe Lodge and main entrance. Both of these landscape components are of some significance to the historic landscape and are worthy of conservation. However, with the walled garden now separate from the main estate and in third party ownership (Hintons Nursery), it is difficult to see how this could be achieved in the near term. The Como Pit is in a poor state, with the dam damaged and in need of repair.

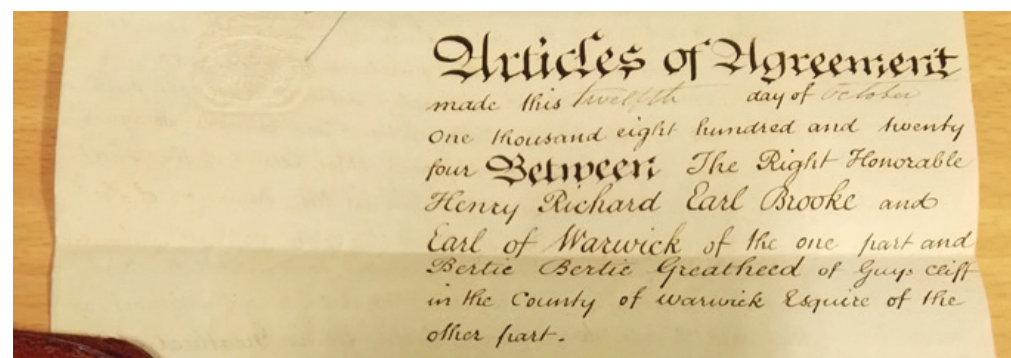


Figure 14: Land Conveyance Extract (12 October 1824)



Figure 15: Guy's Cliffe Aerial, showing tree-lined avenue

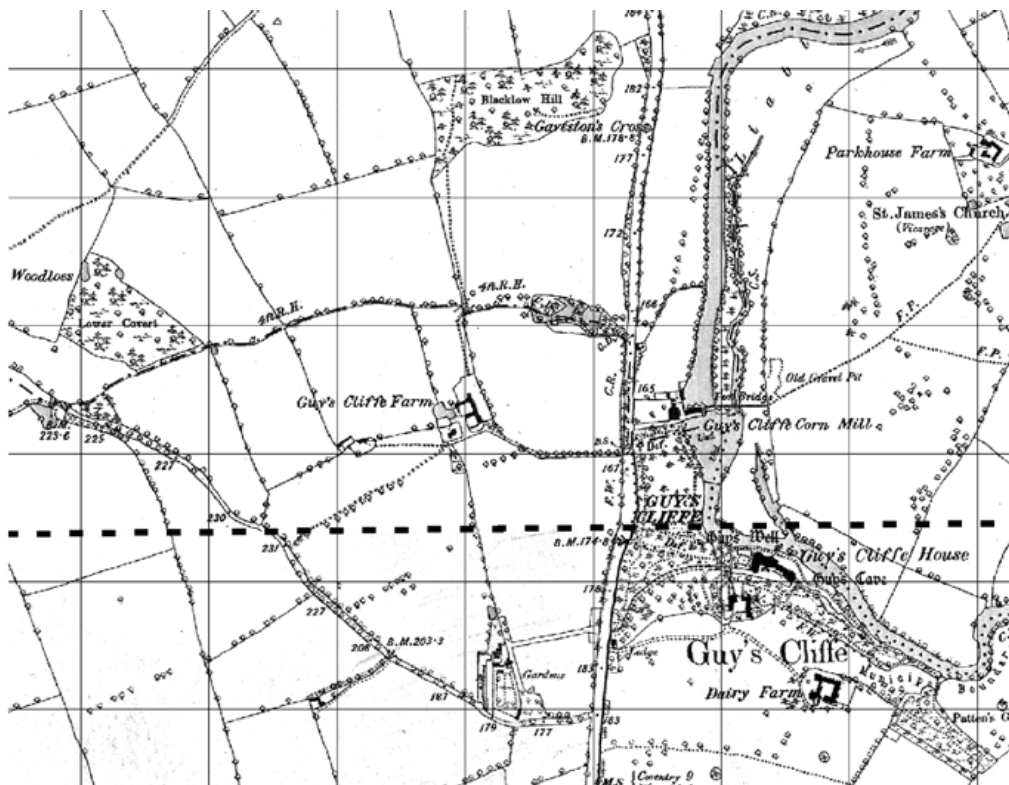


Figure 16: Extract from Ordnance Survey (1886-87) showing Guy's Cliffe Registered Park and Farm

6.53 As regards the condition of the tree the historic tree planting, the Archaeological DBA (para. 3.41, p.16) explains how, following investigation of the 1945 aerial photography archive, the trees shown on the First Ordnance Survey (shown left in Figure 16) were still largely intact at the end of the Second World War. Trees lined the Loes Farm access road and the west field boundary planting of oak and lime were more abundant than today. Meanwhile, the avenue of trees from Guy's Cliffe House is now very overgrown, with mature trees and other vegetation providing a total screen between the house, the road and the parkland beyond.

Summary

- 6.54 In the event that the proposed development is carried forward, there are clearly opportunities to dovetail restoration of the historic landscape elements of the Guy's Cliffe Park with the green open space strategy for the new dwellings. Careful consideration would need to be given to the eastern most boundary of the residential application, where the restoration of sightlines between Guy's Cliffe and the site could be implemented.
- 6.55 The views from within the site are characterised from the vantage point at the south-west corner, adjacent Woodloes Lane. This viewpoint offers the most expansive views, with sight of St. Mary's Magdalene Church and Warwick Castle from its top. The most significant historic view from Guy's Cliffe house into the Park has been eroded with overgrown vegetation which has therefore reduced its significance.
- 6.56 The designed landscape's setting (albeit already partially eroded), the picturesque design concept and assemblage of landscape components are considered the most pertinent aspects of assessment. There are lost or degraded elements of the historic designed landscape and the development proposals provide a source of funding and motivation to take advantage of such opportunities.



Plates

11	12	11. Guy's Cliffe House Main Gates, Coventry Road
		12. Over-mature tree stock, planted c.1825
13	14	13. Fragmented and degraded hedgerows, Woodloes Lane
		14. Guy's Cliffe sandstone rubble wall, overgrown

7. BASELINE VISUAL RESOURCES

Introduction

7.1 The interaction of urban areas, rural areas, vegetation, landform, buildings etc. determines the potential for views towards a site / proposed development. This assessment has sought to establish the visibility of the site from a representative sample of surrounding receptors (i.e. people who have a viewing opportunity over or towards the site). A baseline analysis of the available views is set out below, with each identified receptor represented by a viewpoint on the Viewpoint Location Plan (Figure 17) and depicted via a corresponding photograph (Figures 18 to 21). Photographs were taken in fair weather in March 2016.

Receptor Sensitivity

7.2 Receptors encompass residents, users of Public Rights of Way, views from highways and people at work. In overall terms the first two categories (residents and Public Rights of Way) are considered to be of higher sensitivity than the latter two (highways and people at work) due to the prolonged and/or proprietary interest in the view, although the context of individual receptors can have a bearing on their sensitivity. A summary of receptor sensitivity is available within the Methodology in Section 2.

7.3 In general, the most significant views were from the adjacent roads and public rights of way, specifically those on Coventry Road and Woodloes Lane. Views from the A46 Bypass were generally well screened, with much of the road in cutting and the remainder with well-established boundary tree and hedge planting.

Table 5: Summary of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Photo viewpoint	Receptors	Receptor Sensitivity
1.	Motorists cyclists pedestrians	medium high high
2.	Motorists cyclists pedestrians	Low Medium Medium
3.	Motorists cyclists Horse riders pedestrians	Medium Medium Medium Medium
4.	Motorists cyclists Horse riders pedestrians	High High High High

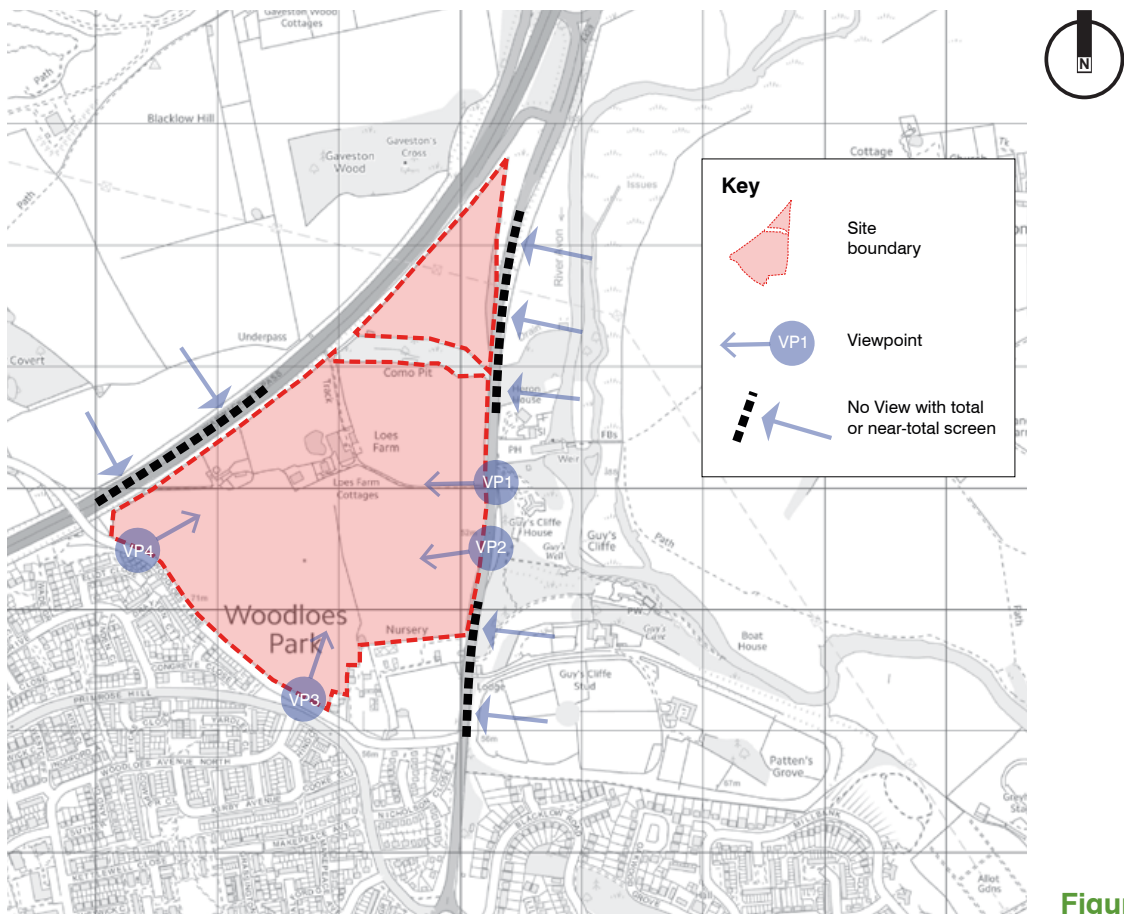


Figure 17: Viewpoint Location Plan

Photo Viewpoints

Viewpoint 1: View Looking West Towards Loes Farm From Coventry Road

- 7.4 Anticipated Receptors: Drivers, cyclists and pedestrians using the adjacent cycleway.
- 7.5 The view is available due to the access and significant gap in the broken hedgeline. Currently, the view is of animal pasture, with evidence of the Medieval ridge and furrow agriculture in the foreground. It's a view rural in character and presents a gentle arrival into the town of Warwick, with the Woodloes Park residential area in view a little way south of the photo montage in Figure 18.
- 7.6 The area in view is located within the Guy's Cliffe House designed landscape and is considered representative of the setting. The proposed residential housing will be set back from the line of trees which run south from the Farm, to the left of the field of view in the middle ground. Views westwards, up the hillside, will be prominent against the skyline on account of their more elevated position but will have structural tree planting extending from the current Registered Park boundary towards this receptor's viewpoint.
- 7.7 The view of the development will be glimpsed by (i) motorists, who are within a 40mph zone at this point, slowing from the 50mph zone a short distance to the north of Saxon Mill; and (ii) pedestrians walking to the Mill or cyclists using the cycleway along Coventry Road. On account of speed of travel, the transient nature of the receptors and the busy nature of the Coventry Road, it is anticipated that all receptors' sensitivity to change will be medium.



Figure 18: Viewpoint 1

Viewpoint 2: View West From Coventry Road, taken from the pavement

- 7.8 This viewpoint is representative of the glimpsed views through the hedge from the Coventry Road. The receptors will be motorists, cyclist and pedestrians.
- 7.9 These glimpsed views are short-lived whilst driving as much of the hedge provides a high level of screening, even in winter.
- 7.10 The proposed residential extension will sit behind the line of mature oak and lime trees which run to the west of the foreground field with ridge and furrow. Housing will also be on the elevated sections of the hill and be partially visible from the road, with the proposed structural tree planting providing a partial screen.
- 7.11 The existing Woodloes Park housing, to the south of the site and Woodloes Lane, is visible from the road at this point and therefore the rural character of the area is already semi-rural. Due to the speed at which motorists and cyclists experience this view, they are considered to be of low sensitivity, with the slower pace of pedestrians suggesting medium sensitivity.



Figure 19: Viewpoint 2

Viewpoint 3: View from Woodloes Lane, looking north

- 7.12 The main users of this route will be occasional motorists, cyclists, horse riders and walkers using the bridleway along this quiet lane.
- 7.13 The view shows the area west of the registered park and setting of the Guy's Cliffe designed landscape. Remnants of the Medieval ridge and furrow agriculture are visible in places within this section of the site, although the field was being rolled by the farmer as we walked the site and therefore makes this appear more pronounced.
- 7.14 Gaveston Wood is visible in the background, with parkland trees featuring prominently in the middle ground. The masterplan shows that this part of the site would become more heavily wooded, with structure planting creating privacy by screening the low-density housing from the road.
- 7.15 The receptors are considered to have a medium sensitivity to change: this view is representative of the rural Arden farmland character but with the Woodloes Park housing directly behind the receptor, the gradual urbanisation of the area reduces their sensitivity to change.



Figure 20: Viewpoint 3

Viewpoint 4: View from Woodloes Lane, looking north east

- 7.16 The receptors for this viewpoint would be motorists, cyclists, horse riders and walkers using travelling up and down Woodloes Lane. This view is also representative of some of the residential properties located immediately south of Woodloes Lane. Several properties have gable ends, with small frosted windows, facing the lane. Other dwellings, however, are set back from the lane and have first floor bedroom windows looking over the fields within the development site.
- 7.17 This view is characterised by gently undulating countryside as far as the horizon, with mature parkland trees punctuating the skyline. This presents another glimpsed view through the current broken hedgeline but which would be partially screened with new tree planting if the development were to proceed.
- 7.18 A private residence is visible, albeit partially screened on the left hand field of view, which lies between the site boundary and the cutting leading down to the A46 bypass. To the west of the viewpoint is the bridge across the bypass and with the Woodloes Park residential settlement lying immediately to the south.
- 7.19 By token of their activity, the residential and recreational receptor's experience of the landscape from this viewpoint is slow and considered. However, with the sense of tranquillity and rural character of the area already reduced with the adjacent housing, it is considered that their overall sensitivity to change is low.



Figure 21: Viewpoint 4

Summary

- 7.20 As the Viewpoint Plan in Figure 17 shows, the site is naturally well-screened from much of the A46 Bypass and Coventry Road with high, dense hedgerows which even in winter preclude sightlines far into the development area.
- 7.21 The site is constrained by roads on all three boundaries, most notably the west with the Warwick Bypass. The existing farm access would serve as the new development access point. This would also be consistent with the historic layout. This approach would require little change to the existing field pattern and prevent the erosion of the designed landscape and the Medieval ridge and furrow heritage asset.
- 7.22 Residential development to the south of Woodloes Lane is visible from the Coventry Road, thus alerting visitors of the change in landscape character and the transition to the urban environment. The precedent of extending the urban realm over the ridgeline and into the next 'fold' of undulating countryside has already been set by Woodloes Park. However, this existing development remains reasonably discrete when viewed from the Coventry Road. New residential development along the ridge and plateau in the south west corner will increase the visibility of the urban edge initially, but will become well integrated once the woodland planting becomes established around year 15.
- 7.23 In terms of the historic environment, the masterplan currently has only minor implications for the designed landscape, with the majority of this cultural landscape retained and preserved. Woodland planting will serve to partially screen the residential development whilst providing only a modest intrusion into the registered parkland. The masterplan presents clear opportunities to improve this cultural landscape through the restoration of the significant view from Guy's Cliffe House whilst improving public access and awareness of the site's rich cultural heritage.
- 7.24 It is accepted that the visual resource would be significantly changed by the development, with the urban edge further encroaching into the agricultural landscape. However, there are no significant long-range views to protect from the main viewpoints considered, with the views dominated by the natural containment presented by the undulating landform and mature vegetation. From an historic perspective, the specific channelled view of the site from Guy's Cliffe House is the only one worthy of protection, though the general sense of openness of this land is also an important aspect of the visual resource as part of the overall setting of the mansion house to which it relates.

8. IMPACT APPRAISAL

8.1 This section considers the landscape and visual effects that would arise as a result of the development. The effects on the site are based on the Scheme depicted on the Illustrative Masterplan shown in Figure 6, page 23.

Short Term Effects

8.2 Short term landscape and visual effects would result from alterations to the landscape during the construction of the development. These effects would be temporary and restricted in nature. Effects would be limited to the site and / or offsite highway works associated with modifications to site access and service provision.

8.3 Key landscape and visual effects resulting from construction include:

- The loss of farmland;
- The stripping and storage of topsoil;
- The construction of offsite highway improvements;
- Service connections to the site;
- The storage of materials and installation of a contractor's compound;
- Temporary traffic and pedestrian management arrangements;
- Traffic movements into and out of the site;
- Views of construction machinery;
- The construction of new buildings, infrastructure and the planting of public open spaces and structural landscape areas; and
- Lighting associated with construction and security.

8.4 Operations that would result in the greatest effects on landscape character and views would be in those areas that are used for the longest duration such as the site access and contractor's compound and / or operations such as the stripping and storage of topsoil within mounds or bunding. It is acknowledged that construction noise, vehicle activities etc., would provide a degree of increased disruption to the landscape and intrusion into views, especially to properties overlooking the site and to receptors using Public Rights of Way which cross or lie adjacent to the site.

Effects on Landscape Character

8.5 The effects are considered below in relation to (i) the National Character Area 97: Arden and (ii) the heritage designation of Guy's Cliffe House Registered Park. However, as this is a detailed appraisal of landscape impact and not landscape capacity no further discussion with regard to effects is presented.

8.6 Construction effects would be direct within the suburban environs of Warwick and the Guy's Cliffe heritage designation. The loss of animal pasture would adversely affect the landscape character of the area for the duration of the works, reducing the sense of tranquillity.

8.7 The magnitude of change within the landscape character area 97 is considered to be medium adverse. The effect on the registered park is considered to be low adverse.

- 8.8 As regards the NCA 97, the effects are medium adverse during construction as the activity has a deleterious effect on the area's sense of tranquillity and also the appearance of the landscape. The adverse effects of machinery, materials storage, contractor's compound, etc. on local character would typically be temporary in nature, however.
- 8.9 As regards Guy's Cliffe Registered Park, the direct construction effects are limited to the area beyond the registered park, thus leaving the designed landscape's setting unaffected. The busy Coventry Road has already disrupted the landscape character and the key landscape characteristics of the area would not be lost as a result of the development. Mature parkland trees, field boundaries, well-established hedging and the overall sense of visual containment will remain largely well-preserved.
- 8.10 There is currently only very limited inter-visibility between the site and the principle components of the Guy's Cliffe designed landscape. Over-mature and self-sown trees now totally occlude sightlines from the house westwards in the direction of the proposed development. As the ruinous state of the house relates, until the designed landscape is restored, any development on the west side of the Coventry Road would have little or no effect on the character of the heritage asset.

Effects on Visual Amenity

- 8.11 Construction activities would result in temporary, phased, adverse effects on the viewing experience of all visual receptors that have views of the works. The magnitude of change in the visual environment is considered to be medium adverse when the development is viewed as a whole, although from each particular receptor the magnitude of change would vary, being greater where construction activities are directly visible and lower where views are oblique or partially obscured for example.
- 8.12 While local residents within the Woodloes Park residential area with north-facing windows will have sight of all construction activity, the main receptors who will be affected are those travelling through the landscape, namely pedestrians, dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The effect will be most noticeable on those using the Woodloes Lane which at present is a narrow, quiet, characterful lane and who's visual resource will be reduced to contractor's hoarding along the lane's northern boundary.

Long Term Effects

- 8.13 The introduction of new housing, associated infrastructure and open space would result in permanent changes in the landscape.
- 8.14 Permanent effects upon the character of the landscape resulting from the development would lead to a change from a rural to a semi-rural and urban character. Permanent changes include:
- Change of land use;
 - Loss of farmland;
 - Introduction of new green infrastructure including public open space, tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), etc.;
 - Introduction of up to 260 new residential dwellings, streets, lighting and their associated activity
- 8.15 Permanent changes within an undeveloped rural landscape would typically be moderate to substantial adverse. This site however does not constitute virgin countryside and is influenced by the existing urban edge of Warwick. It also shows signs of deterioration with fragmented hedgerows, over-mature and dead parkland trees, as well as lost or damaged historic landscape components (such as the tree-lined farm access and Como pit respectively).
- 8.16 As such, permanent changes of the type proposed are considered in overall terms to result in low to moderate adverse effects. However, mitigation in the form of replanting historic parkland trees, restoration of the view from Guy's Cliffe House towards the site, restoration of the damaged Como Pit, new native tree planting, strengthening of the hedgerow network, creation of new areas of meadow planting, water storage/wetland and public amenity space may be considered to result in moderate beneficial effects.

Effects on Landscape Character during Occupation

- 8.17 The effects identified above would need to be refined as part of the detailed design process and through continued discussions between the local authority, the developer and project design team.
- 8.18 As with construction effects, permanent effects would lie directly within the open farmland layout and the setting of the designed landscape of Guy's Cliffe House. Development would physically affect these areas, resulting in the permanent loss of agricultural land, and a change in character from open field to a series of more enclosed spaces defined by built development.
- 8.19 Despite the loss of farmland to development, new tree planting along the western edge of the Registered Park (as shown on Figure 16, page 35) between the development and designed landscape would over time partially screen the new development, defining a new urban edge to the town. Similarly, this planting would seek to restore the lost view from Guy's Cliffe House and serve to subtly redefine the house's former parkland setting, adding greater definition to this boundary. While this would be a modern intervention, it would be in keeping with the Picturesque design ethos which the former owner, Bertie Greatheed, strove to implement.

8.20 This strategic tree planting would redefine existing field boundaries and markedly increase tree coverage across the area thereby 'greening' and softening the edge of Warwick. This would also be in accordance with the guidance provided within the Statements of Environmental Opportunity , specifically SEO1,2 & 3 which relate to the perceived recreational, heritage and wildlife benefits of new planting, space creation and historic landscape restoration. Tree planting will take time to mature, but the positive benefits over time would be substantial.

Summary

8.21 Table 6 summarises the sensitivity to change, the overall magnitude of change and the level impact predicted within each local landscape character area (completed development year 0).

Visual Effects During Occupation

8.22 Effects on the viewing experience of all visual receptors that have views of the development during its operational phase would be permanent and adverse to varying degrees. The sources of visual effects are as follows:

- Residential development to the north of Warwick, comprising of predominantly 2-storey private dwellings and affordable housing;
- Structural planting, of varying degrees, to the western boundary of the designed landscape and around the west and south eastern site boundaries;
- New hedge and specimen tree planting along all site boundaries;
- New public open space including parkland, meadow and wetland creation, with specimen tree and shrub planting;
- Sustainable drainage, with permanent standing water, north of Loes Farm;
- New footpath connections to existing Public Right of Way infrastructure, both short circular walks and longer distance routes, such as the Centenary Way and Millennium Way to the north west, including new signage and seating and
- Extension of the urban realm and change in the nature of the northern edge of Warwick.

8.23 When the development is considered as a whole, the effects on the visual environment are considered to be moderate adverse in year 0 following initial planting. This reduces incrementally by year 15 to a low visual impact. The visual effects would vary at each location, being greater where large areas of built development are visible and lower where the change takes in views of open space and/or green infrastructure for example.

- 8.24 As with construction effects, the receptors that would be the most significantly affected by the development would be the residents along the northern edge of Woodloes Park, or user of the public footpaths.
- 8.25 New boundary planting between the development and residents along Woodloes Lane lessen the impact of development over time. However, views looking north over open fields would largely be lost permanently. These would be replaced with urban development, interspersed with considerable open green space and parkland tree planting.
- 8.26 As previously stated, there is an opportunity to open-up the view from Guy's House across the ridge and furrow pasture over to the parkland tree planting. The receptors here would be visitors to the Guy's Cliffe House, who can join a pre-arranged tour by the current owners and management team. Close collaboration between the developer and Guy's Cliffe estate owners would be required to achieve this end, due to realities of separate ownership.

- Summary**
- 8.27 A summary of the long term effects (completed development year 0) upon the identified viewpoints is provided below:

Table 6: Summary of Landscape Effects

LCAs	Sensitivity to Change of the Type Proposed	Magnitude of Change	Short Term Effects	Long Term Effects
Arden Farmland (NCA 97)	Medium, (reduced from Medium-High due to its proximity to the Warwick's existing urban edge)	Medium adverse within the site and its immediate surrounds	Moderate adverse effects surrounding the immediate environs of the site	Neutral, since Woodloes Lane is already visible on the skyline and the established tree planting would add considerably to landscape character
Guy's Cliffe House Registered Park	Low due to the lack of intervisibility between the ruined mansion house and the site	Low adverse	Low adverse due to the loss of tranquillity with construction activity	Medium beneficial: with the potential for the restoration of lost or damaged components, the long term effects are likely to be beneficial to the conservation status and have a positive effect for ongoing maintenance and management

Table 7: Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Receptors	View type	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Short Term Effects	Long Term Effects
1	This view is representative of Motorists using the A429 Coventry Road and Cyclists and pedestrian using the adjacent Cycle way	glimpsed	Motorists: medium; cyclists & pedestrians: high	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Low to Moderate adverse
2	This view is representative of Motorists using the A429 Coventry Road and Cyclists and pedestrian using the adjacent Cycle way	glimpsed	Motorists: low; Cyclists and pedestrians: medium	Medium adverse	Moderate to Substantial Adverse	Low adverse
3	This view is representative of motorists and pedestrians, cyclist and horse riders using the Public Right of Way	motorists: glimpsed others: full	All: medium (as all receptors are slow-moving)	High	Medium Adverse	Low adverse
4	This view is representative of motorists and pedestrians, cyclist and horse riders using the Public Right of Way	motorists: glimpsed others: full	High	High	Substantial Adverse	Moderate adverse

Mitigation

- 8.28 Mitigation measures are important to ensure that adverse effects predicted during construction and occupation of the proposed development are minimised and that the proposed development fits into the landscape as sympathetically as possible. Mitigation measures are based on the findings of the impact appraisal and iterative development of the development throughout the process.
- 8.29 All planting proposed as long term mitigation for the development would be implemented as part of the proposals and would be managed and maintained in accordance with a 'Landscape and Ecological Management Plan' to be approved by Warwick District Council.
- 8.30 The details of the proposed mitigation are set out below and shown on the illustrated masterplan in Figure 6. Technically, mitigation is only recommended for substantial adverse effects. These have not been identified within this assessment. However, the section is included as for reasons of best practice given the historic sensitivities of the designed landscape and Medieval ridge and furrow contained within the landscape setting of Guy's Cliffe House.

Mitigation during Construction

- 8.31 The following mitigation measures are suggested throughout the construction of the development:
- Unnecessary tree and vegetation removal should be avoided and all existing trees and hedgerows to be retained would be protected prior to the commencement of construction in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction;
 - Site hoarding should be carefully considered to restrict views of the works from public footpaths. Regular windows set within hoarding may enable people to view the works in a controlled fashion should the works be of interest to passing walkers.
 - Lighting of the site will be restricted to agreed working hours and those necessary for security;
 - All machinery and materials will be stored tidily during the works and kept away from the boundaries of existing residents particularly around Primrose Hill and
 - Vehicle movements into and out of the site will be carefully controlled to limit disturbance to the residents around Primrose Hill. The Coventry Road is central access point is to be maintained free of dust and mud.

Mitigation during Occupation

8.32 The following mitigation measures are suggested to reduce the long term permanent effects that proposed development would have on the landscape character of the area and the visual amenity of surrounding receptors;

Built Development

- All development will be restrained to the area behind the registered park's western-most boundary to ensure that the integrity of the historic designed landscape is retained;
- Lost or damaged elements of the designed landscape within the control of Loes Farm landowners will be restored, including the lost view from Guy's Cliffe House;
- The development will be designed to a high standard, using materials and building styles that reflect the best examples of local distinctiveness;
- Built development will be set back from the development's edge behind public open space including meadow seeding and communal gardens;
- The housing will be carefully designed and sited in keeping with surrounding housing densities and urban pattern;
- The use of white render will be controlled to ensure the development's overall appearance does not appear generic or uniform; and
- The development proposals will seek to integrate the new residential area with the urban grain of Woodloes Park adjacent.

Green Infrastructure

- A Parkland planting strategy will be implemented to (i) restore and conserve the designed landscape west of Coventry Road and (ii) ensure that the development is adequately screened from the main viewpoints to add definition to the registered park's western limits and ensure that the development is well-integrated with the semi-rural character and existing urban edge;
- Buildings backing onto existing residents should, as far as is practicable, be screened by new structural planting, circa 5m in width. Proposed residential buildings to the south of the site will be set back circa 15m from the site boundary as a minimum;
- In accordance with the SEOs identified within the National Character Assessment, tree, hedge and field margin planting will be undertaken to strengthen existing infrastructure and gap-up fragmented hedge or woodland sections.
- New native structural tree and shrub planting along the western boundary should be implemented as soon as is practicable, and preferably within the first planting season, in order to maximise the effectiveness of the screening as early as possible
- A Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) will be used to attenuate surface water runoff. Any SuDS features will be located sympathetically and designed to maximise public amenity and biodiversity.

Biodiversity

- Open space will include new habitats, such as meadow planting and wetland creation, as well as enhancement of existing ditches and hedgerows as described above.

Lighting

- The development would include a range of measures which will control the use of artificial light without detriment to the lighting task. The need for lighting will be carefully assessed and all lighting will be designed in accordance with guidance issued by the Institute of Lighting Engineers (ILE) in order to minimise light pollution;
- Use will be made of light fittings that reduce light emitted upwards to the night sky. Use of reflective shields could reflect more of the light downwards, allowing a lower wattage bulb to be used to achieve the same luminance;
- Glare will be reduced by ensuring that the main beam angle of lights directed towards any potential observer is not more than 70 degrees. Within locations enabling higher mounting heights, lower main beam angles will be used to reduce glare further;
- At all times the minimum amount of lighting necessary to illuminate the area will be used. There are published standards for lighting tasks which the proposed development will adhere to such as The Outdoor Lighting Guide published by the ILE and Lighting in the Countryside: Towards Good Practice published by the ODPM (1997);
- Locations of lighting will be appropriately designed to reduce light spill and glare; and
- Use of shields, baffles and louvers will be considered to reduce light spill around and over the built development.

Residual Effects

- 8.33 Residual effects are those effects that remain following the implementation of the mitigation measures detailed above. For the purposes of this assessment those effects following mitigation of moderate to substantial adverse impact or higher are considered of note. Effects of moderate adverse or less are thought to be readily accommodated without detriment to the setting of the designed landscape or the wider area.
- 8.34 In the context of landscape and visual effects, the majority of mitigation measures identified within this report have been incorporated as an integral part of the design. In summary, the design approaches adopted have included measures to avoid, reduce or remediate adverse effects by considering the scale, location, extent, siting, mass and height of the built development, the routing of site infrastructure, the screening of key views, the retention and enhancement of existing landscape resources and new planting for screening and softening.
- 8.35 Given time for buildings to weather and planting to establish, the mitigation detailed above should reduce overall landscape effects from moderate to substantial adverse, to effects of moderate adverse. Furthermore, new planting is in keeping with the National Character Assessment's objectives and should result in overall beneficial effects on local landscape character, the historic environment, landscape structure, visual amenity and the recreational resource.
- 8.36 There would be some residual effects associated with the loss of arable land and change in land use which would be unavoidable given the nature of the development proposed.

9. SUMMARY OF EFFECTS

- 9.1 To conclude, given appropriate detailing and a commitment to implement the mitigation described above, the development of up to 260 dwellings on the site due north of Warwick could be readily assimilated into the landscape character of the wider area. The following additional points should be borne in mind:
- 9.2 Although inevitably urbanising in character the development would retain the landscape pattern and structure of the existing landscape and integrate new built elements into the surrounding landscape via the inclusion of extensive green infrastructure proposals. These would soften and screen development, provide an effective transition between urban and rural areas and ensure that the development was properly integrated into the landscape.
- 9.3 Due to the undulating character of the Arden landscape, the site is visually well contained, with only the highest section of the site in the south west offering occasional views towards some of Warwick's historic landmarks. While the existing urban edge has been well integrated with Woodloes Lane, the expansion of the built environment into the fields above the registered park can be equally-well integrated with the proposed tree planting strategy. Combined with the emphasis on planting of locally native trees, particularly common oak, there is significant potential to improve the overall environmental resource.
- 9.4 The same planting would also serve to create a strongly defined boundary to the historic environment, clearly demarcating the historic envelope and making the picturesque landscape more legible to the modern user.

References

- a) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Ed.) – The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)
- b) Landscape Character Assessment, Guidance for England and Scotland – The Countryside Agency – 2002.
- c) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - 2012
- d) National Character Area Profile 97: Arden, Natural England (2014)
- e) Joint Green Belt Study (2008)
- f) Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines (1993)
- g) Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe Local Neighbourhood Plan (2014)
- h) Options for Future Urban Expansion in Warwick District, Richard Morrish Associates (2012)
- i) Joint Green Belt Study, LUC (2015)

