Landscape Sensitivity Study for Renewable Energy for Blaby District Council

Final

October 2025

LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Landscape Sensitivity Study for Renewable Energy

Blaby District Council

FINAL

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Front cover: Wind turbines on the skyline in Blaby

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Acronyms & abbreviations

AGL	Above Ground Level
AMWS	Annual Mean Wind Speed
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
BDC	Blaby District Council
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BMV	Best and Most Versatile
CA	Conservation Area
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DECC	Department for Energy and Climate Change
DPD	Development Plan Document
EMR	East Midlands Railway
GHI	Global Horizontal Irradiation
kV	Kilovolt
LB	Listed Building
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LSCA	Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment
LSA	Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
LSS	Landscape Sensitivity Study
LVA	Landscape and Visual Appraisal
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MW	Megawatt
NCA	National Character Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
PV	Photovoltaic
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological Site
SM	Scheduled Monument
SRN	Strategic Road Network
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SWFR	Surface Water Flood Risk

Executive summary

About this Report

E1 Lepus Consulting has been appointed, on behalf of Blaby District Council (BDC), to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Study (LSS) for potential renewable energy developments. The study will inform a part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, which covers the period up to 2041.

About the LSS

E2 The LSS is used to influence where, and how much, development might be located in the areas of lesser landscape sensitivity, without having undesirable impacts and effects on landscape character, ecosystem services and visual resources. This LSS identifies and evaluates the sensitivity assessment units for wind turbines, land-based solar photovoltaic (PV) installations and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).

E3 Each identified assessment unit has undergone a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA). LSA is the process of assessing the resilience, or robustness of landscape character and the visual resource (and valued characteristics) to defined change or changes arising from development proposals. It can help decision makers to understand likely changes and the nature of change should the development scenarios be taken forward.

Context of Blaby District

E4 Blaby District is located in Leicestershire County to the southwest of the city of Leicester. The district covers approximately 13,000ha including a mixture of towns and villages. The northern part of the district forms part of the Leicester urban area and is urban in character whereas the south of the district is rural and consists of several villages.

E5 The landscape of Blaby mainly comprises of the urban fringe of Leicester in the east with large expanses of farmland and smaller, historic settlements moving away from Leicester towards the west. The landscape is predominately low-lying, with the more rural areas comprising large, open agricultural and pastoral fields of gently rolling farmland. Skyline views contain linear woodland, as well as views of urban settlements including Leicester. Croft and Huncote Quarry lies adjacent to Croft Hill, the highest point in Blaby, which provides expansive views over the quarry and the river Soar floodplain.

Opportunities and constraints analysis

E6 Assessment units were identified via a desk study using QGIS software to evaluate the opportunities and constraints for areas comprising potentially suitable renewable energy development opportunities within Blaby District. Definitions of the opportunity and constraints analysis are detailed below:

E7 **A) Opportunity analysis** - identifying areas with characteristics that are potentially favourable for renewable energy development, such as high wind speeds, strong levels of solar irradiance and proximity to grid infrastructure.

E8 **B) Constraints analysis** - identifying areas where there may be factors which restrict the potential for renewable energy developments, such as statutory environmental designations, landscape sensitivities, proximity to residential dwellings, and safety risks.

E9 Other opportunities and constraints considered in the selection of sites are outlined below:

- Heritage assets and historic landscape character is conserved in manner appropriate to their setting.
- Areas of designated biodiversity should not be lost and where possible, connecting habitat corridors and veteran trees.
- Areas of high agricultural quality comprising best and most versatile soil (BMV) should ideally be avoided.
- High flood risk areas should be avoided.
- Landscape designations should be avoided to avoid disruption of views from National Parks, National Landscapes, Locally Designated Landscape Areas and Country Parks.
- Recreational spaces should be retained and visual impacts minimised.
- Access to the site for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning should be obtained from the strategic road network (SRN).
- Possible supporting infrastructure for renewable energy technology must be considered.

Site Identification and assessment

E10 A total of 16 renewable energy opportunity sites were identified from the opportunity and constraints analysis and underwent the LSA process. Nine sites were assessed for the development of wind turbines, seven sites were assessed for solar photovoltaic (PV), and ten opportunity areas were assessed for the development of battery energy storage systems (BESS). Many of these sites were assessed for more than one renewable energy development type. All sites were assessed for small-scale, medium-scale and large-scale development.

E11 All 16 sites were systematically assessed using a five-point sensitivity scale (from low to high). The assessment considered how the landscape sensitivity and visual characteristics of each site would respond to different receptors of renewable energy technology development. The receptors assessed included:

- Landform, scale and enclosure
- Natural land cover
- Land use
- Time-depth

- Perpetual and aesthetic
- Inward and outward views
- Skyline features
- Landscape value
- Visual value

Summary of findings

E12 Sensitivity generally increased dependent upon the scale of development, primarily due to increased visual prominence and due to potential alterations in landscape character. No sites, for any scale or use type, were considered to be of high sensitivity.

E13 For the provision of wind turbines, no sites were assessed as being of low sensitivity. The majority of sites are assessed as being medium / low sensitivity for small-scale wind, and medium sensitivity for medium and large-scale wind. These sites have some potential to accommodate wind development providing effective mitigation is in place, predominantly in the form of appropriate screening and siting. Two sites were assessed as being high / medium for large-scale wind development where thresholds for change are low.

E14 For the provision of solar PV, sites were assessed as being of low or medium / low sensitivity for small-scale solar PV. A range of scores from low to medium sensitivity were presented for medium-scale solar PV, whilst sites were assessed as being of medium / low and medium sensitivity for large-scale solar PV. These sites have some potential to accommodate solar PV development providing effective mitigation is in place, particularly for those sites assessed as medium sensitivity, predominantly in the form of appropriate screening and siting.

E15 A wider range of sensitivity scores were presented for BESS sites. Sites for small-scale BESS were assessed as being from low to medium sensitivity, where these sites have some potential to accommodate BESS development providing effective mitigation is in place, predominantly in the form of appropriate screening and siting. Sites for medium and large-scale BESS were assessed as being from medium / low to high / medium sensitivity. Amongst these sites, the two sites assessed as high / medium sensitivity have a low threshold for change for medium and large-scale development.

1 Introduction

1.1 Appointment and scope of work

1.1.1 Lepus Consulting has been appointed by Blaby District Council (BDC) to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Study (LSS) for potential renewable energy developments. The study will inform a part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, which covers the period up to 2041.

1.2 Blaby New Local Plan

1.2.1 Blaby is in the process of producing a New Local Plan to guide future development in the District[1] up to 2042. A Regulation 18 consultation on the New Local Plan Issues and Options document took place between June and September 2019. The Regulation 19 version of the Plan is due to be published in November 2025. The New Local Plan will replace the existing Core Strategy 2013[2] and Local Plan Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD) 2019[3]. The results of the LSS will be used to form part of the evidence base for the New Local Plan, as well as by Parish Council Neighbourhood Planning Groups.

1.3 Landscape Sensitivity Study

1.3.1 The LSS for renewable energy technologies sets out opportunity areas for renewable energy development for the Local Plan. The assessments will be used to influence where, and how much, development might be located in the areas of lesser landscape sensitivity, without having undesirable impacts and effects on landscape character, ecosystem services and the visual resource.

1.3.2 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA) is the process of assessing the resilience, or robustness of landscape character and the visual resource (and valued characteristics) to defined change or changes arising from development proposals. It can help decision makers to understand likely changes and the nature of change should the development scenarios be taken forward.

1.4 Geographic context of Blaby District Council

1.4.1 The district of Blaby is located in the county of Leicestershire to the south-west of the city of Leicester, as seen in **Figure 1.4**. The district covers approximately 13,000ha including a mixture of towns and villages. The northern part of the district forms part of the Leicester urban area and is urban in character whereas the south of the district is rural and consists of a number of villages. The district is well connected with the M1 and M69 motorways running through it. Major cities such as Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Coventry and Birmingham are all within easy reach.

[1] Blaby District Council (2025) New Local Plan. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/new-local-plan/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[2] Blaby District Council (2013) Local Plan Core Strategy. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-core-strategy/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[3] Blaby District Council (2019) Local Plan Delivery DPD. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-delivery-dpd/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

1.5 Landscape of Blaby

1.5.1 The landscape of Blaby mainly comprises the urban fringe of Leicester particularly towards the east of the district, with larger expanses of farmland and smaller, historic settlements moving away from Leicester towards the west. The landscape is predominately low-lying, with the more rural areas comprising large, open agricultural and pastoral fields of gently rolling farmland. Skyline views contain linear woodland, as well as views of urban settlements including Leicester, particularly in areas where the landscape allows for intervisibility between the topography and vegetation. Areas of floodplain are concentrated around the River Soar, in particular to the southwest of Narborough. Croft and Huncote Quarry lies adjacent to Croft Hill, the highest point in Blaby, which provides expansive views over the quarry and the Soar floodplain. **Figures 1.1 to 1.3** display variations in the landscape across the Blaby district.

Figure 1.1: *Mixed farmland north of Thurlaston*

Figure 1.2: *Skyline views of development in Enderby and Narborough*

Figure 1.3: *Agricultural landscape southwest of Cosby*

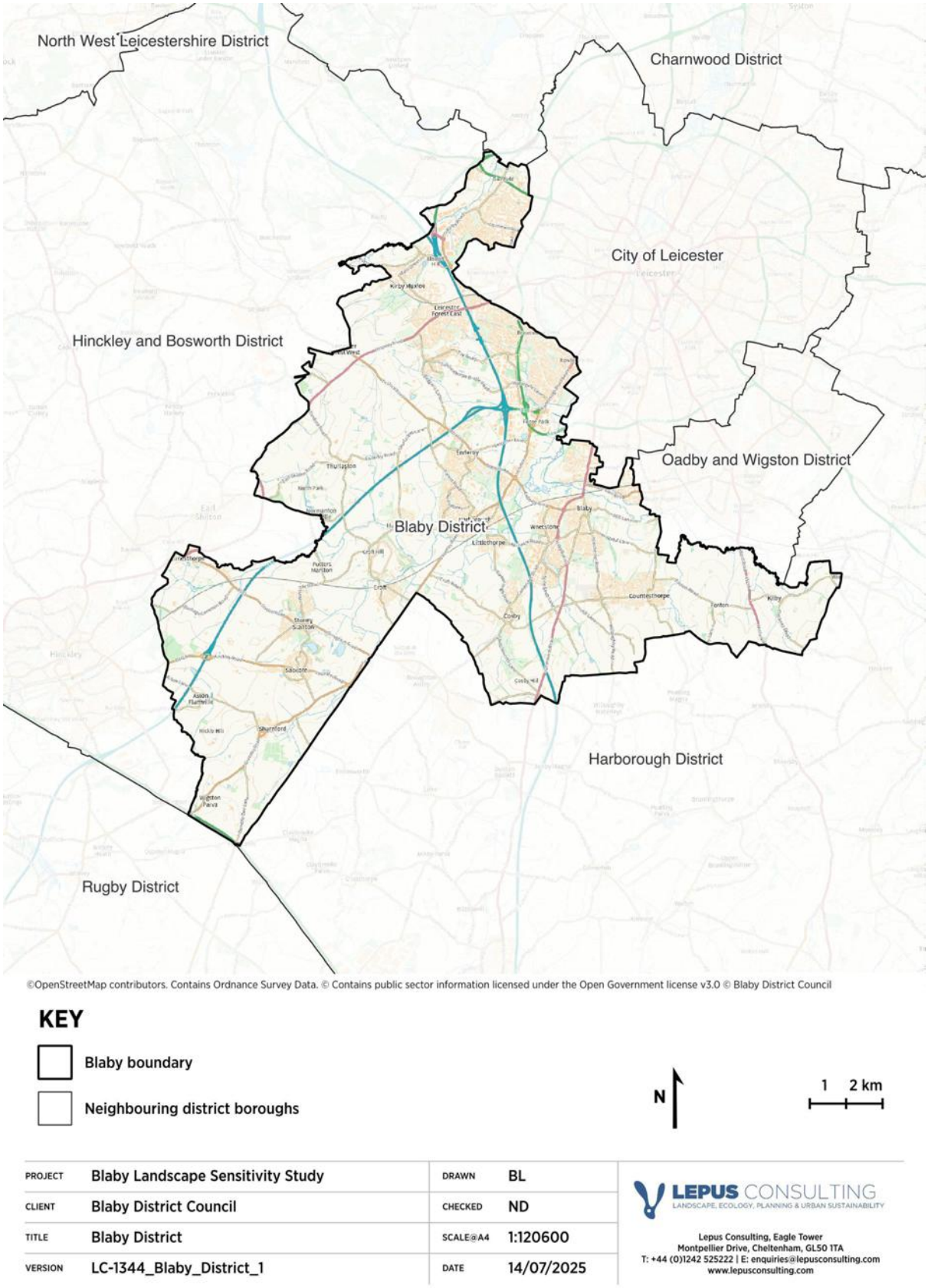


Figure 1.4: *Blaby District Council neighbouring districts and boroughs*

1.6 Climate Emergency

1.6.1 BDC is committed to addressing the global climate and ecological emergency, with a strong focus on mitigating the impacts of climate change. The BDC's adopted Climate Change Strategy[4] identifies six key themes outlined below:

- Reducing CO2 emissions;
- Protecting the environment and enhancing biodiversity;
- De-carbonising travel and transport;
- Reducing waste and resource use and moving to a circular economy;
- Support sustainable communities; and
- Behaviour change and education.

1.6.2 BDC recognises that to reduce carbon emissions, renewable energy must be utilised to eliminate sources of greenhouse gases and atmospheric carbon must be sequestered from the atmosphere using carbon sinks such as tree planting and wider nature recovery. The results of this LSS will be used to form part of the evidence base for the New Local Plan in order to aid with suitably locating renewable energy development, in order to contribute towards reducing carbon emissions and achieving the Council's Net Zero ambitions by 2050.

1.7 Structure of this Report

1.7.1 This report follows the structure as set out below:

- **Chapter 1** presents an introduction to this report.
- **Chapter 2** sets out information about planning policy in relation to landscape and renewable energy.
- **Chapter 3** sets out the LSS methodology.
- **Chapter 4** defines the renewable energy technologies to be considered in this LSS.
- **Chapter 5** sets out the landscape baseline and identifies opportunities and constraints for the development of renewable energy technologies in Blaby.
- **Chapter 6** identifies opportunities and constraints for wind energy technologies.
- **Chapter 7** identifies opportunities and constraints for solar photovoltaic technologies.
- **Chapter 8** identifies opportunities and constraints for BESS technologies.
- **Chapter 9** sets out the sites identified as renewable energy opportunity areas.
- **Chapter 10** sets out the LSAs for all the sites identified to have potential for renewable energy developments.
- **Chapter 11** outlines the conclusions of the report.
- **Appendix A** displays viewpoint maps and photos to accompany the LSAs.

[4] Blaby District Council (2020) Climate Change Strategy. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/environmental-issue/waste-and-environment/climate-change-strategy/ [Accessed: 22/10/25]

2 Planning Policy

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This LSS has been undertaken within the context of relevant planning policy. Planning policy and other material considerations are taken from the following:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[5]
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[6]
- Blaby Core Strategy 2013[7] and Local Plan DPD 2019[8]

2.1.2 Further details of these planning policies are provided below.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework

2.2.1 The NPPF[9] acts as guidance for local planning authorities, both in plan preparation and making decisions about planning applications. The environmental objective of the NPPF is: *"to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

2.2.2 The NPPF states in paragraph 165 that to help increase the supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should ensure adverse impacts are addressed appropriately and plans should consider identifying renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development.

2.3 Planning Practice Guidance

2.3.1 The Government publishes Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[10] to accompany the NPPF. In relation to landscape matters, the Natural Environment PPG provides broad guidance primarily relating to the development of local planning policy and accompanying evidence.

[5] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[6] Planning Practice Guidance (2021) Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance [Accessed: 05/08/25].

[7] Blaby District Council (2013) Local Plan Core Strategy. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-core-strategy/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[8] Blaby District Council (2019) Local Plan Delivery DPD. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-delivery-dpd/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[9] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2 [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[10] Planning Practice Guidance (2024) Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance [Accessed 05/08/25]

2.3.2 PPG guidance on renewable and low carbon energy states *"There are no hard and fast rules about how suitable areas for renewable energy should be identified, but in considering locations, local planning authorities will need to ensure they take into account the requirements of the technology and, critically, the potential impacts on the local environment, including from cumulative impacts."*[11]

2.4 Blaby Local Plan Core Strategy and Delivery DPD

2.4.1 The Blaby Core Strategy was adopted in 2013[12] and sets out the vision, objectives, strategy and core policies for the spatial planning of the District up to 2029. BDC is currently in the process of developing a New Local Plan as set out in the Local Plan DPD 2019[13]. Policy CS21 from the Core Strategy 2013 has been informed by the Low Carbon Energy and Heat Mapping for Local Planning Areas across the East Midlands (March 2011)[14] study and reproduced in **Table 2.1**. Commercial scale wind power, followed by Solar PV, represented the greatest resource potential for electricity generation in the district.

Table 2.1: *Policy CS21 from Blaby District Council Local Plan Core Strategy 2013 - 2029*

Policy CS21 – Climate Change	***Strategic objectives*** ***vi)*** *To protect the important areas of the District's natural environment (species and habitats), landscape and geology and to improve bio- diversity, wildlife habitats and corridors through the design of new developments and the management of existing areas by working with partners;* ***viii)*** *To minimise energy use and use of valuable resources and to encourage renewable energy production in suitable locations;* ***ix)*** *To minimise the risk of flooding (and other hazards) to property, infrastructure and people; and* ***xi)*** *To deliver the transport needs of the District and to encourage and develop the use of more sustainable forms of transport (Including walking, cycling and public transport).* Development which mitigates and adapts to Climate Change will be supported. The Council will contribute to achieving national targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by: a) focussing new development in the most sustainable locations, in accordance with Policy CS1 and Policy CS5. b) seeking site layout and sustainable design principles which reduce energy demand and increase efficiency. This includes: (i) providing for safe and attractive walking and cycling opportunities, including secure cycle parking and, where appropriate, showers and changing facilities. (ii) utilising landform, building orientation, massing and landscaping to reduce the likely energy consumption.

[11] Planning Practice Guidance (2021) Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Available at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance [Accessed: 05/08/25].

[12] Blaby District Council (2013) Local Plan Core Strategy. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-core-strategy/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[13] Blaby District Council (2019) Local Plan Delivery DPD. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plan/local-plan-delivery-dpd/ [Accessed: 05/08/25]

[14] LUC (2011) Low Carbon Energy Opportunities and Heat Mapping for Local Planning Areas Across the East Midlands.

(iii) supporting the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and encouraging residential development to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 3. This will be increased progressively over the plan period, where feasible, to support the Government's longer term aspirations for sustainable design.
(iv) encouraging the use of sustainable materials and construction methods.

c) encouraging the use of renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy at the commercial, community and domestic scale. Renewable and low carbon energy generation will be supported within the District where the proposal:

i) ensures that the siting and scale of development avoids harm to the significance of designated heritage assets and nationally important archaeological remains or their setting.
ii) ensures that the impact of the development on local landscape character and historic landscape character is minimised.
iii) ensures that the proposal does not result in significant detriment to residential amenity for new or existing residents.
iv) includes measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on the built and natural environment resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of any development.
v) does not create an overbearing cumulative noise or visual impact, when considered in conjunction with similar developments and permitted proposals in the area.

The Council will ensure that all development minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to climate change and flooding by:

a) supporting innovations which have a positive impact upon climate change adaptation on all development where feasible. (This could include, but is not limited to; appropriate shading and planting; green roofs; Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); rain water harvesting and storage and; grey water recycling). Opportunities for people, biodiversity, flood storage and carbon management provided by multi-functional green spaces and green infrastructure networks will also be encouraged.
b) managing flood risk in accordance with Policy CS22.

3 Landscape Sensitivity Study Methodology

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This LSS has been undertaken in three key stages, as presented in **Figure 3.1**:

1. Define the purpose and scope of assessment.
2. Gather information to inform the assessment: Assessment of opportunities, constraints and renewable resources to identify potentially suitable areas for renewable energy developments for wind, solar PV and BESS (**Chapters 4 to 9**).
3. Assess landscape sensitivity of the assessment units: Conduct an LSA of suitable areas identified for renewable energy developments (**Chapter 10**).

3.1.2 This methodology has been derived principally from:

- Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management'[15].

3.1.3 The methodology has also been informed by the following publications:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual and Impact Assessment Third Edition' (2013)[16]
- The Countryside Agency Topic Paper 6 (2002) 'Techniques and criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity'[17]
- Natural England (2014) 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment[18]
- Landscape Institute (2021) 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations' Technical Guidance Note 02/21[19]

[15] Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management' Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817928/landscape-sensitivity-assessment-2019.pdf [Accessed: 19/07/25]

[16] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) Abingdon: Routledge

[17] The Countryside Agency (2002) Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity. Available at: http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5601625141936128 [Accessed: 16/01/25]

[18] Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types [Accessed: 16/01/25]

[19] Landscape Institute (2021) 'Assessing landscape value outside national designations' TGN 02/21 Available at https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/publication/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations/ [Accessed: 16/01/25]

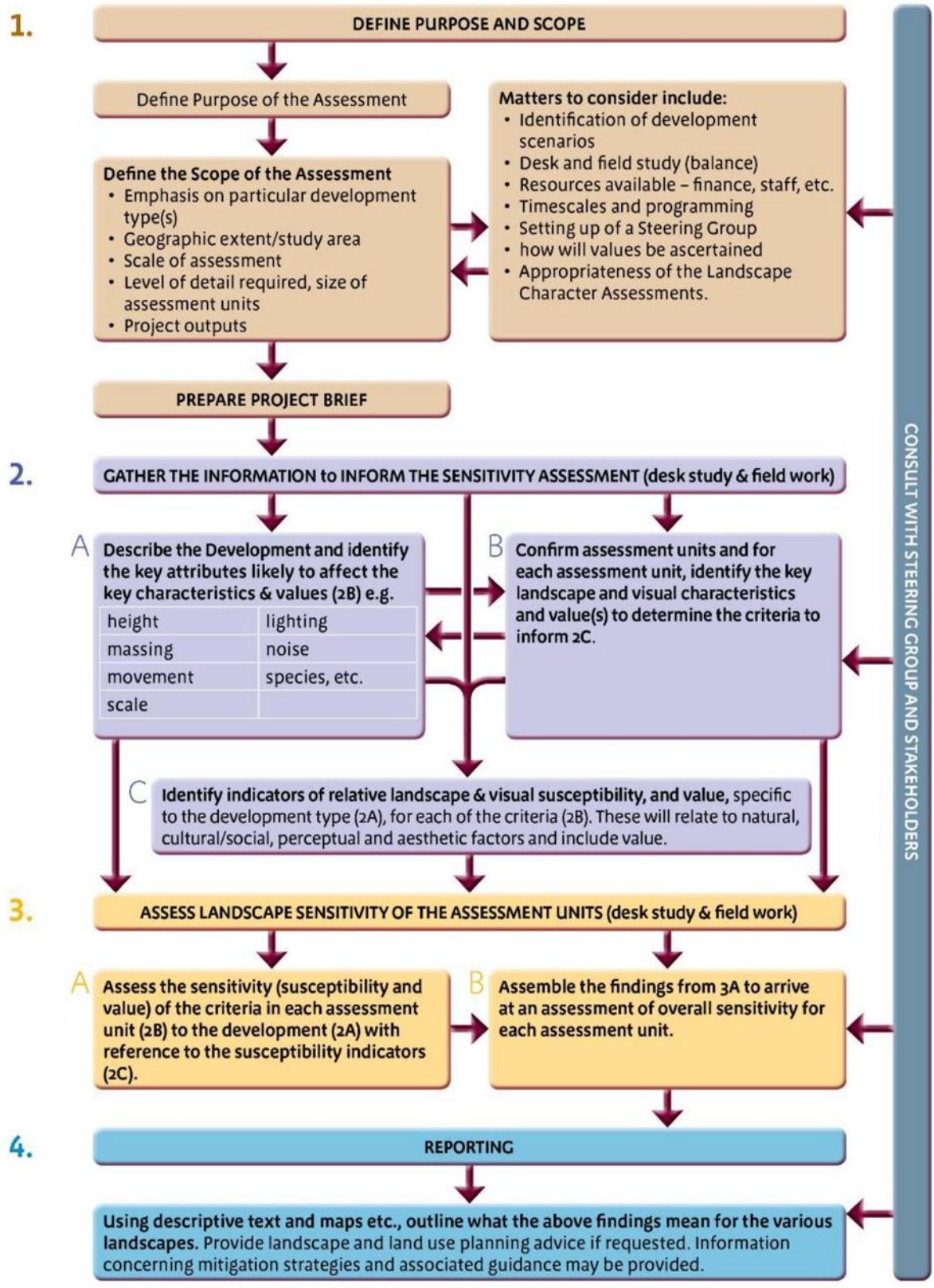


Figure 3.1: *The process of LSA*[20]

[20] Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management' Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817928/landscape-sensitivity-assessment-2019.pdf [Accessed: 05/08/25]

3.2 LSA Step 1: Define purpose and scope of assessment

Defining development types

3.2.1 This assessment considered landscape sensitivity to renewable energy development (wind turbines, solar PV installations and BESS). Broad areas only are considered; however, the assessment has also taken into account the potential of each assessment unit for various sizes of renewable energy technologies. The assessment assumed the development types broadly follow the key attributes of the renewable energy technologies in **Chapter 4**.

Defining the LSA process

3.2.2 Key terminology relating to the LSA process is outlined in **Table 3.1**. **Figure 3.2** shows how these definitions are combined to assess landscape sensitivity.

Table 3.1: *Definitions for landscape character, sensitivity, susceptibility and value*[21]

Landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape value	The relative value or importance attached to a landscape (often as a basis for designation or recognition), which expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, special qualities including perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness, cultural associations or other conservation issues.
Landscape sensitivity	Within the context of spatial planning and land management, landscape sensitivity is a term applied to landscape character and the associated visual resource, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the specific development type / development scenario or other change being considered together with the value(s) related to that landscape and visual resource. Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value.
Landscape susceptibility	Within the context of spatial planning and land management, landscape susceptibility is the degree to which a defined landscape and its associated visual qualities and attributes might respond to the specific development type/development scenario or other change without undue negative effects on landscape character and the visual resource.

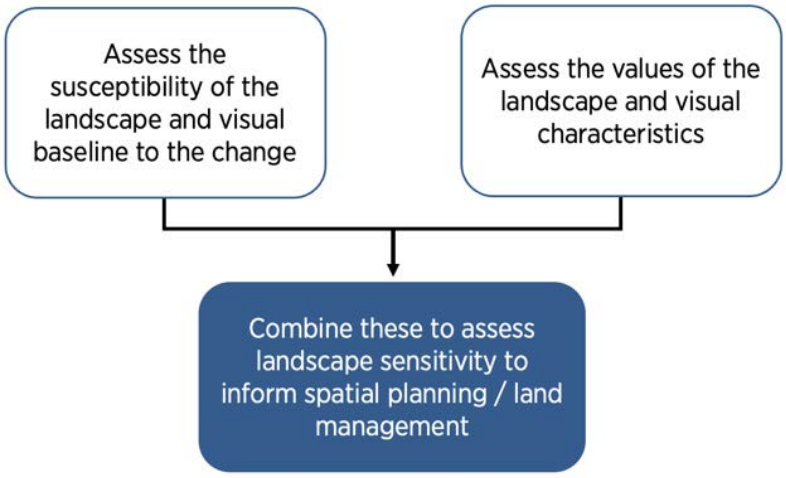


Figure 3.2: *Assessing Landscape Sensitivity*

[21] Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management' Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817928/landscape-sensitivity-assessment-2019.pdf [Accessed: 16/01/25]

Extent of the study

3.2.3 The geographic extent of the study area is the administrative boundary of BDC. The assessment units are derived from the opportunities and constraints analysis set out in **Chapters 5 to 8**, which range in size from approximately 9.63ha to 210.70ha. These include 16 sites which have been assessed and are listed in **Table 9.1** and shown on the map in **Figure 9.1**.

Project outputs

3.2.4 Project outputs of the LSA are presented in this report and include the following:

- LSA methodology (**Chapter 3**);
- Opportunities and constraints analysis (**Chapters 5 to 8**);
- Identification of sites (**Chapter 9**)
- Site assessments including maps of each site (**Chapter 10**);
- Conclusion (**Chapter 11**); and
- Annotated photos of each site with viewpoint location maps, taken with a 50mm lens (**Appendix A**).

3.3 LSA Step 2: Gather information to inform the assessment

3.3.1 Judgements regarding landscape sensitivity are informed by the susceptibility of landscape character and the visual resource, to the prescribed changes, combined with value. Step 2 requires three sub tasks, 2A, 2B and 2C.

3.3.2 The methodology for this stage of the assessment drew from a methodology published by Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in 2010: *Renewable and Low-carbon Energy Capacity Methodology for the English Regions*[22]. This assessment also considered the findings from: *Low Carbon Energy Opportunities and Heat Mapping for Local Planning Areas Across the East Midlands* (2011)[23], and *The Planning for Climate Change Study (2008)*[24].

Step 2A: Describe the development types and scenarios

3.3.3 The interaction between landscape and visual susceptibility and the attributes of the renewable energy technologies determine the degree to which a site can accommodate change. The assessment assumed the development types broadly follow the key attributes of the renewable energy technologies described in detail in **Chapter 4**.

Step 2B: Confirm assessment units and establish and review the landscape and visual baseline, and identify associated value(s)

3.3.4 This stage of the project involved identifying potentially suitable areas for renewable energy developments for solar PV installations, wind turbines and BESS. This assessment was carried out at desktop, using GIS software.

[22] DECC & DCLG (2010) Renewable and Low-carbon Energy Capacity Methodology for the English Regions. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7cadaeed915d7c983bc3e7/renewable_and_low_carbon_energy_capacity_methodology_ jan2010.pdf [Accessed 06/08/25]

[23] LUC (2011) Low Carbon Energy Opportunities and Heat Mapping for Local Planning Areas Across the East Midlands.

[24] IT Power (2008) Planning for Climate Change. Renewable energy opportunities for Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, North West Leicestershire, Oadby and Wigston and Rutland.

3.3.5 This research encompassed two dimensions:

- **Opportunity analysis** considered the parameters specific to each renewable energy technology. This step assisted with identifying areas which provide suitability for renewable energy development, such as those with appropriate wind speeds, gradients and / or necessary grid connection infrastructure.
- **Constraints analysis** identified the limitations surrounding renewable energy development in Blaby. This step involved identifying areas where renewable energy development is either unsuitable, or has limited capacity to accommodate renewable energy development.

3.3.6 This stage began with an information gathering exercise to prepare a baseline review of natural, cultural and social aspects of the borough. This review is presented in **Chapter 5.** Spatial data used to inform this LSS is listed in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: *GIS data used in this LSS*

Dataset	Source
Aspect	Ordnance Survey
Agricultural Land Classification	Natural England
Ancient woodland	Natural England
Built-up areas	Ordnance Survey
Country Parks	Natural England
Existing / planned renewable energy technologies	Blaby District Council
Flood zones and surface water flood risk	Environment Agency
Gas consultation zone	Blaby District Council
Geology	British Geological Survey
Historic environment and heritage assets (listed buildings, Conservation Areas (CAs) scheduled monuments (SMs))	Historic England
Historic Landscape Characterisation Project	Leicestershire County Council
Irradiance	Global Solar Atlas
Local Wildlife Sites	Blaby District Council
National Character Areas	Natural England
Nature conservation designations (Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), and Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS))	Natural England
Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Scale Colour Raster	Blaby District Council
OS Greenspaces	Ordnance Survey
Overhead power lines	National Grid
Priority habitat inventory	Natural England
PRoW Networks and Local Greenspaces	Blaby District Council
Roads, railways	Ordnance Survey
Terrain	Ordnance Survey Terrain 50
Watercourses and surface water	Ordnance Survey
Wind	Global Wind Atlas
Woodland	National Forest Inventory

3.3.7 Opportunities and constraints have been subsequently identified specific to wind turbines, solar PV and BESS (see **Chapters 6 to 8**). The results from the opportunity analysis and constraints analysis were combined to identify opportunity areas across the district with the highest potential for renewable energy technologies. These areas comprised the assessment units.

Step 2C: Identify indicators of susceptibility to be used when assessing landscape and visual sensitivity to the development types

3.3.8 The impact of the development scenarios on landscape character and visual qualities of the sites was evaluated by referring to assessment criteria which have been identified and listed in **Tables 3.3 to 3.5**. The assessment criteria included key landscape elements and features (see **Figure 3.3**) which are likely to be affected by the development proposals.

3.3.9 Landscape value (as defined in **Table 3.1**) also informed the LSA. The value of landscapes can be assessed qualitatively with reference to:

- Biodiversity and geodiversity designations (SSSI, LNR, LWS, Ancient Woodland, Priority Habitat, RIGS)
- Historic environment designations (listed buildings, scheduled monuments, RPGs and conservation areas)
- Valued attributes such as topography, perceptual qualities, cultural and historic features and associations, biodiversity.
- Valuation of ecosystem services (benefits which humans derive from the natural environment)
- Local community values
- Character and sense of place
- Recreational value
- Intrinsic value

Table 3.3: *Landscape, visual and value assessment criteria proforma*

Criteria	Description	Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure		
Natural land cover		
Land use		
Time-depth		
Perpetual and aesthetic		
Skyline features		
Inward and outward views		
Value		
Landscape value		
Visual value		

Table 3.4: *Assessment summary table*

Wind turbines / solar PV / BESS: Summary	Description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind turbines / solar PV / BESS	

Table 3.5: *Table of overall scores*

Wind turbines / solar PV / BESS: Overall Score	Small scale	Medium scale	Large scale
Low			
Medium / Low			
Medium			
High / Medium			
High			

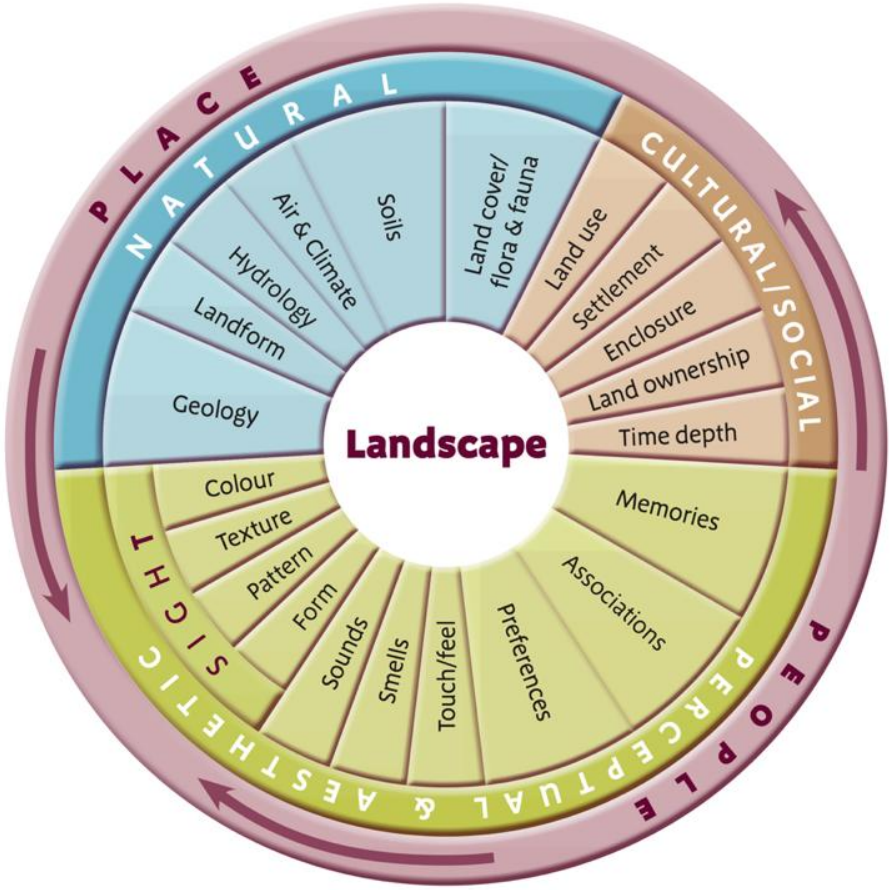


Figure 3.3: *What is Landscape?*

Step 2C: Identify indicators of susceptibility to be used when assessing landscape and visual sensitivity to the development type(s)

3.3.10 Indicators of susceptibility have been identified for each of the assessment criteria; these are presented in **Table 3.6**. The sensitivity of the landscape to the key attributes of the development scenarios were assessed with reference to the indicators of susceptibility at Step 3.

Table 3.6: *Indicators of susceptibility, value and sensitivity*

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	• **Topographical features:** Open, highly prominent and distinctive or intricate and complex landforms with sharp changes in level are more likely to be susceptible to change arising from development than flat and indistinct landforms. This criterion considers whether development would interrupt the relationship between distinctive landform features such as escarpments, or prominent hills or open plains. • **Scale:** Landscapes with a small scale, complex and intricate landscape pattern arising from landcover elements including settlement, field pattern or vegetation cover are more likely to be susceptible to change arising from larger scale development than landscapes with a simple landcover pattern. • **Enclosure:** Landscapes enclosed by buildings, trees and woodlands can offer more opportunity to accommodate development without affecting landscape character. This criterion considers the integrity of field boundaries such as hedgerows, stone walls and fences. Intact field boundaries can help screen development but can also be susceptible to loss or degradation from development.	• Irregular or complex landform • Narrow valleys and ridges • Distinctive landform features • Large-scale topographical features • Intimate and small-scale landscapes • Small scale field systems • Field pattern / mosaic • Human scale elements • Plateau • Open, exposed landscapes with high visibility • Field boundaries characterised by a large proportion of well managed low hedgerows, fences and/or walls. • Enclosure created by complex or prominent topographical features.	• Large-scale fields • Simple, featureless landscape • Convex landform • Flat and uniform landform • Enclosure created by man-made features • Enclosure created by unmanaged/high hedgerows/field boundaries
Natural land cover	• **Land cover:** Landscapes with a strong and positive rural character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, will be more susceptible to change. • **Biodiversity:** Semi-natural habitats and valued natural features such as woodland and hedgerows with good connectivity • **Geology and hydrology**: Presence of distinctive geological features, rock formations and high-quality soils. Presence of hydrological features such as lakes, rivers, waterfalls, ponds.	• Natural / semi-natural landcover • Ancient woodland • Field and hedgerow trees; mature hedgerows • Individual trees • Biodiversity features and distinctive habitats	• Simple, regular or uniform landscape • Developed land, derelict or waste ground • Lowland farmland • Large scale arable fields (low grade)

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
		• Complex, irregular or intimate landscape • Open hillsides • Valleys • Hydrological features • Distinctive geological features • High-quality soils	
Land use	• **Anthropogenic settings:** This criterion considers whether potential development would integrate with the general settlement form/pattern and how it may affect the character of the existing settlement edge and its functioning relationship with the surrounding countryside. • **Farmland:** Large-scale agricultural farmland is less susceptible to change than well-maintained pastoral features. • **Brownfield:** Presence of brownfield land is likely to indicate a landscape of lower sensitivity levels. • **Settlement:** Considers whether human settlements are present and the extent of their influence on the surrounding setting. • **Infrastructure and industry:** Presence and prominence of transport infrastructure, telecommunications and energy infrastructure, and industrial areas. • **Recreation:** Whether and how the site is used for recreational purposes.	• Absence of modern development • Infrequent/no residential built form • Dispersed settlement/sparsely settled/unpopulated areas	• Major infrastructure (transport/communications/utility infrastructure/wind turbines) • Modern day industrial development • Large/concentrated urban/modern settlements • Commercial forestry
Time-depth	• **Historic character:** The extent to which a landscape displays historic continuity and time depth can contribute to its sense of place. • **Farming and settlement patterns:** Historic field boundaries, ancient farming features and transportation routes can indicate how the landscape has been used over time. • **Natural historic features:** Ancient woodland and mature hedgerows may indicate long-term use.	• High density of historic features • Historic hedgerows • Built heritage features such as historic buildings and walls • Historical transportation routes • Ancient field patterns and farming features, such as ridge and furrow	• Intensive farming • Modern development • Regular, large-scale field patterns • Lack of historic features

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
		• Ancient woodland	
Perpetual and aesthetic	• **Tranquility and remoteness:** Landscapes with a strong sense of tranquillity will be more susceptible to development as this is likely to introduce disturbance and loss of this valued rural quality. Areas which feel far away from human influence, such as those with an absence of settlements, lack of air / light pollution and low noise levels may have a strong sense of tranquility and / or remoteness. • **Movement:** Visual detractors and the movement of visual elements in the landscape may affect perceptions of tranquillity. Moving elements include road traffic, plant machinery, agricultural vehicles, plumes from chimneys and other outdoor activities. • **Sounds and smells:** Noise, including vehicular and industrial noise, can detract from the sense of peace within a landscape, whereas sounds from nature such as birds and other wildlife may contribute to the landscape susceptibility. Pleasant or unpleasant smells can also contribute to altering the scenic quality of a landscape.	• Absence of modern features • High scenic quality • Strong sense of place • Remote; tranquil; wild; spiritual; attractive; peaceful • Physically or perceptually remote, peaceful or tranquil	• Low scenic quality • Weak sense of place • Pollution • Threatening; unattractive; noisy; settled • Close to visible signs of human activity and development • Frequent access • Busy • Visible and audible roads • Noisy; foul odours
Skyline features	• **Natural skyline features:** Undeveloped rural skylines are particularly susceptible including those with prominent topographical and wooded features. • **Man-made skyline features:** Presence of human settlement, in particularly modern development and infrastructure, may detract from the susceptibility of the skyline. • **Historic skyline features:** The presence of distinctive or historic landscape features such as hilltop monuments, church spires/towers or historic villages increases susceptibility.	• Prominent skylines • Distinctive skylines • Uninterrupted/undeveloped skylines • Presence of distinctive / sensitive landscape features such as historic landmarks • High intervisibility to skyline features	• Less prominent skylines • Existing vertical features (modern development) • Existing built development • Poor intervisibility to skyline features
Inward and outward views	• **Visual receptors:** The greater the number of sensitive visual receptors in an area, the more susceptible the area will be to change from development. The most susceptible receptors are residents, communities, people engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, visitors to landscape whose interest is focused on natural and built	• Landscapes which are open or exposed with far reaching views • Extensive intervisibility and little screening or filtering of views	• Landscapes which are confined, contained or enclosed with few inward or outward views • Sparsely populated or inaccessible

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
	heritage assets and users of scenic routes. Transport users (particularly of high-speed roads) are usually considered less susceptible receptors, unless the road is considered to be a scenic route or important gateway. • **Visual containment:** Landscapes which are visually contained with limited inward and outward views are likely to be less susceptible than open landscapes with extensive inward and outward views. The likelihood of a development being visible depends on the scale of the development, the landform in which the development is sited and the screening opportunities afforded by the land cover, particularly buildings, trees and woodlands. • **Landscape character:** Landscapes with views towards areas of strong scenic character, including those which are designated for their natural beauty.	• Sparse woodland/tree cover • Field systems bounded by fences/managed hedgerows/stone walls/no field boundaries • Forms an important part of a view from sensitive viewpoints (such as views from scenic routes, well known landmarks, or promoted viewpoints) • Densely populated • Views from scenic routes, well-known landmarks, or views from visitor viewpoints • Views into or out, especially from high ground • Neighbouring landscapes of higher sensitivity, especially internationally and nationally designated landscapes • Contributes to wider landscape • Distinctive or complex backdrops • Landscapes important to the settings/approaches/gateways to designated landscapes • Strong association with adjacent LCAs	• Neighbouring landscapes of lower sensitivity • Contributes little to wider landscape • Large scale simple back drops • The presence of woodland blocks and belts • Fields bounded with intact hedgerows/overgrown hedgerows/hedgerows with trees • Weak association with adjacent LCAs
Value			
Landscape value	• **Strength of landscape character/quality and condition:** Landscapes with a strong and positive character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, will be more susceptible to change because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace.	• Related published documentation (tourist information), art and literature • Historic Environment: RPG, visually prominent scheduled	• Lack of designated features and valued landscape features or use.

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
	• **Rarity:** Landscapes which are commonplace are less likely to be valued than landscapes which are unique or rare as these are often irreplaceable. • **Geological, topographical and geomorphological value:** This considers the shape and scale of the land and the extent that there may be distinctive and valued geological, topographical or hydrological features. Such features may be distinctive in their own right or may have influenced the creation of areas of distinctive and valued landscape character. • **Historic landscape value:** The extent to which a landscape displays historic continuity and time depth – reflected in the presence of nationally or internationally designated historic landscape components and their settings. May also be a reflection of artistic or literary references. Also whether a landscape is important to the setting and identity of designated landscapes and heritage assets. • **Natural value:** Landscapes with a strong and positive character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, will be more susceptible to change because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace. This applies to landscapes with semi-natural habitats and valued natural features such as woodland and hedgerows with good connectivity. • **Recreational value:** The extent to which the experience of the landscape makes an important contribution to the recreational use and enjoyment of an area. Indicators include the presence of such features as nature reserves, country parks, allotments, outdoor sports facilities, public rights of way, green infrastructure corridors, scenic routes and promoted viewpoints. Also includes recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes. • **Scenic and other aesthetic and perceptual and experiential qualities:** Defined by the presence of distinctive, dramatic or striking patterns of landform or land cover, or by strong aesthetic response to qualities such as rural character (traditional land uses with few human influences), perceived naturalness, sense of remoteness or tranquillity and dark skies.	monuments such as hillforts and castles which are also visitor attractions. Non-designated heritage assets and time-depth. • Biodiversity and geodiversity designations (SSSI, LNR, LWS). Non-designated areas of natural or geological value. • Areas valued by the local community • Landscapes considered to be rare or of high distinctiveness	

Criteria		Indicators of higher sensitivity	Indicators of lower sensitivity
Visual value	• **Iconic views:** Highly valued views of national or international importance which are important in relation to the special qualities of a designated landscape, the cultural associations of which are widely recognised in art, literature or other media. Views of very high scenic quality including those which are known historically for their picturesque and landscape beauty and are widely held in high regard. • **Views related to designated landscapes and landscape related features:** Views from tourist routes, national trails, and other recognised visitor destinations or attractions. Views which are important in relation to the special qualities of a designated landscape or which are identified in specific studies of views. Views to, from and within the setting of designated landscapes, historic and cultural sites and views recorded as important in relation to heritage assets (as recorded in the relevant designation citations and taking account of Historic England's guidance on the setting of heritage assets). • **Regionally / locally valued views:** Views which are identified in the local plan and/or of particular local importance including views from regionally and locally promoted trails. Views which appear on OS maps, tourist maps or in guide books. • **Views valued by the community:** Views from locations where there is provision of facilities for their enjoyment, such as parking and interpretation. Views which are locally well known, well-frequented and/or promoted as a beauty spot / visitor destination and may have significant cultural associations.	• Views related to designated features • Views related to non-designated features of interest, such as those towards natural or historic features • Locally valued views • Views which attract tourism • Expansive views with a range of features	• Lack of visual value and receptors.

3.4 LSA Step 3: Assess landscape sensitivity of the opportunity areas

Step 3A: Susceptibility of the assessment criteria

3.4.1 Step 3A involved assessing the landscape and visual susceptibility of the assessment criteria and landscape and visual value for each opportunity area against the key attributes of the renewable energy technologies, with reference to the indicators of susceptibility / sensitivity / value identified in **Table 3.6.** This was undertaken in two stages:

- **Desk study:** Utilisation of mapping data (OS 1:25,000 Scale Colour Raster, Google Earth and data from **Table 3.2**) to establish the landscape baseline of each site.
- **Field study:** A field study was undertaken to visit all identified assessment units as a part of the LSA process.

Step 3B: Overall sensitivity

3.4.2 Finally, informed by the susceptibility of the landscape and visual baseline to change and the values of the landscape and visual characteristics, the overall landscape sensitivity of each opportunity area was systematically assessed and described using professional judgement. The overall landscape sensitivity for each opportunity area was assessed using the five-point scale outlined in **Table 3.7**.

Table 3.7: *Landscape sensitivity definitions*[25]

High	Landscape and/or visual characteristics of the assessment unit are very susceptible to change and/or its values are high or high/medium and it is unable to accommodate the relevant type of development without significant character change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are very low.
High / Medium	Landscape and/or visual characteristics of the assessment unit are susceptible to change and/or its values are medium through to high. It may be able to accommodate the relevant type of development but only in limited situations without significant character change or adverse effects if defined in the relevant land parcel summary. Thresholds for significant change are low.
Medium	Landscape and/or visual characteristics of the assessment unit are susceptible to change and/or its values are medium/low through to high/medium and/or it may have some potential to accommodate the relevant type of development in some defined situations without significant character change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are intermediate.
Medium / Low	Landscape and/or visual characteristics of the assessment unit are resilient and of low susceptibility to change and/or its values are medium/low or low and it can accommodate the relevant type of development in many situations without significant character change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are high.
Low	Landscape and/or visual characteristics of the assessment unit are robust or degraded and are not susceptible to change and/or its values are low and it can accommodate the relevant type of development without significant character change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are very high.

3.5 Limitations

3.5.1 This report was informed by the best available data at the time of writing. Information derived from the field study is based off site visits conducted between the 30th to 31st July 2025. In a number of cases, access to sites was limited, preventing comprehensive field assessments for some areas of the sites.

[25] Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management' Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817928/landscape-sensitivity-assessment-2019.pdf [Accessed: 16/07/25]

3.5.2 Temporal variations are also possible whereby sites were assessed at a single time of day. Whilst the character, landcover, views and vistas of sites are always subject to change, it is important to note that seasonal variations in the landscape are particularly likely due to changing vegetation cover. Sparse vegetation in winter may lead to greater visibility to and from a site, for instance.

4 Renewable energy technologies

4.1 Defining renewable energy technologies

4.1.1 Definitions and characteristics of the types of renewable energy technologies to be considered in this study are outlined in **Table 4.1**. **Figure 4.1** shows the location of existing renewable energy development in Blaby, as well as renewable energy developments with planning permission.

Table 4.1: *Definitions and characteristics of renewable energy technologies*

Renewable energy type	Key characteristics	Type and scale
Wind turbines	• Most modern turbines are three-bladed • Cylindrical tower • Nacelle located at the top of the tower (housing the generator, gearbox, and other mechanical components) • Usually a single colour, white or light grey • Impacts also result from infrastructure serving the development, such as access tracks and borrow pits, anemometers, control buildings, and substations • Larger, slow-moving blades are potentially less distracting than shorter, faster moving blades • Moving blades can cause shadow flicker and noise • Wind turbines of between 100 – 150m can be visible at distances of up to 40 - 50km in some conditions; whilst single turbines of up to 50m are only visible at smaller distances[26].	(To blade tip) • Small-scale: 15-50m • Medium-scale: 50-100m • Large-scale: 100m+
Solar PV	• Arrays of solar panels approximately 3m in height • Panels angled to maximise sunlight exposure • Surrounded by security fencing and CCTV cameras • Include other electrical infrastructure including inverters • Arrays at 3m tall may be visible above hedgerows • Panels appear blue or grey in colour depending on weather conditions • More visible in open landscapes or elevated terrain	• Small-array (0-5ha) • Medium-array (5-10ha) • Large-array (10ha+)
Battery energy storage systems	• Modular design • Height ranges from approximately 2.5 to 3.5m in height • Shipping container-sized units • External vents, fans or air conditioning units • Neutral industrial colours, usually white or light grey • Surrounded by security fencing and CCTV cameras	• Small-scale (1-10MW) • Medium-scale (5-50MW) • Large-scale (50-100MW)

26 Scottish Natural Heritage (2014) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape. Available at: https://digital.nls.uk/pubs/e-monographs/2020/216528025.23.pdf [Accessed 17/07/25]

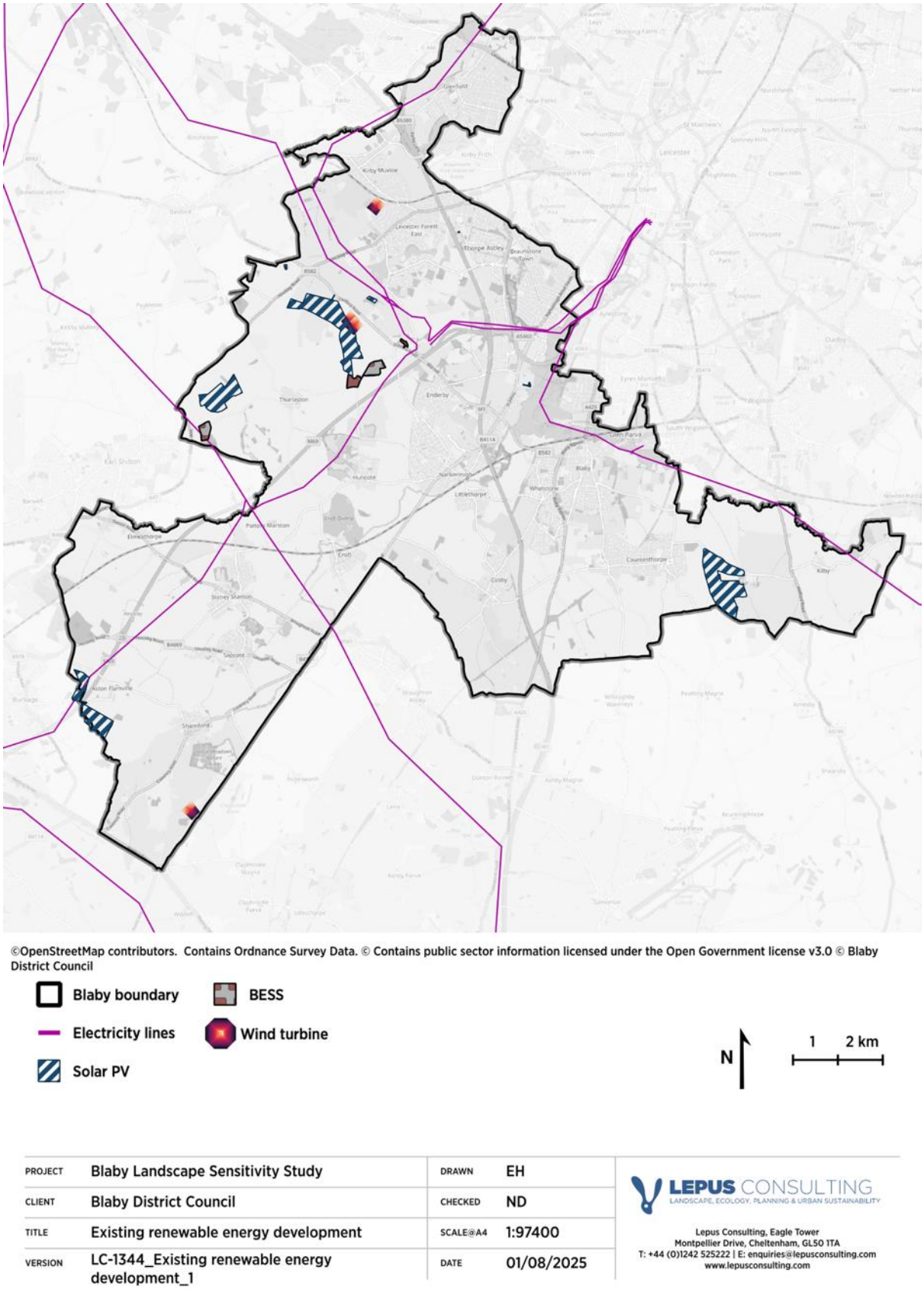


Figure 4.1: *Existing renewable energy development / renewable development with planning permission in Blaby and overhead power lines*

4.2 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

4.2.1 At the planning application stage, all types of renewable energy development are likely to be required to undergo an LVA (in full) or Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as a part of the planning application, depending on scale. The purpose of an LVIA is to establish the characteristics of the landscape and visual baseline at the site and in the surrounding area and identify the landscape and visual receptors likely to be affected by the proposed changes. The potential effects of the development proposed on the identified receptors are described and any mitigation is proposed, where appropriate, to prevent, reduce or offset adverse impacts.

5 Opportunities and constraints of Blaby

5.1 Defining opportunities and constraints

5.1.1 This chapter sets out the landscape baseline for Blaby and outlines the key considerations for the location and siting of renewable energy developments. This assessment was desk-based, using QGIS software, and was undertaken in the form of:

A) Opportunity analysis - identifying areas with characteristics that are potentially favourable for renewable energy development, such as high wind speeds, strong levels of solar irradiance and proximity to grid infrastructure.

B) Constraints analysis - identifying areas where there may be factors which restrict the potential for renewable energy developments, such as statutory environmental designations, landscape sensitivities, proximity to residential dwellings, and safety risks.

5.1.2 This chapter outlines opportunities and constraints which are applicable to all types of renewable energy development set out **Chapter 4**. Please see **Chapters 6 to 8** for the opportunities and constraints which are specific to each type of renewable energy technology (wind, solar PV and BESS).

5.1.3 In order to identify areas where renewable energy technologies can potentially be installed, a spatial database has been created on QGIS to build an inventory of opportunities and constraints across the district. Spatial data used to inform the opportunities and constraints analysis has been listed in **Table 3.2**.

5.2 Generic opportunities and constraints

5.2.1 All types of renewable energy development are subject to various landscape constraints which require careful consideration in relation to the design and siting of development. For instance, it is recommended that renewable energy developments give due regard to the following landscape features, as demonstrated in **Figures 5.1 to 5.5**:

- **Heritage assets:** Great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. Development also has potential to impact historic landscape character.
- **Biodiversity designations:** Development should not result in the loss of any area of a designated for biodiversity, and where possible, avoid the loss of connecting habitat corridors and veteran trees.
- **BMV Land:** Development should ideally avoid areas of high agricultural quality which comprises best and most versatile soils (BMV land) (Agricultural Land Classification Grades 1 to 3a). However, is it noted that the majority of Blaby comprises ALC Grade 3, which has potential to be BMV land. More detailed survey work is generally required to determine whether Grade 3 land

comprises Grade 3a (BMV soil), or Grade 3b (non-BMV soil), such as those presented in the BMV Strategic scale map for East Midlands[27].

- **Flood risk:** Areas where flood risk is high should be avoided. This comprises areas of Flood Zone 2 which has a 0.1% to 1% annual probability of flooding, and Flood Zone 3 which has over a 1% annual probability of flooding.
- **Surface Water Flood Risk (SWFR):** Development should be avoided in areas where SWFR is high. High risk entails a 1 in 30 annual chance of SWFR, medium risk entails a 1 in 100 annual chance of SWFR, and low risk entails a 1 in 1000 annual chance of SWFR.
- **Landscape designations:** Development should avoid being sited where this has potential to alter views from National Parks, National Landscapes, Locally Designated Landscape Areas and Country Parks.
- **Recreation:** Recreational spaces should be retained, such as open greenspaces, local greenspaces or public rights of way (PRoW) networks. Visual impacts should also be minimised from PRoW networks.
- **Access:** In most cases, access to the site for construction, maintenance and de-commissioning should be obtained from the strategic road network (SRN).
- **Supporting infrastructure:** Landscape impacts will need to be taken into consideration where renewable energy developments may require the development of supporting infrastructure such as roads or overhead power lines[28]. Landscape considerations will need to be given to the development of security measures associated with development, such as lights and fencing. Applicants may wish to consider the availability of natural defences such as steep gradients, hedging and rivers.

5.3 Natural factors of the Blaby landscape

Landscape Character

5.3.1 Blaby is located almost wholly within the Leicestershire Vales National Character Area (NCA), which is characterised by a relatively open, uniform landscape of low-lying clay vales interrupted by a range of river valleys[29]. A small proportion of the north of the district is located within the 'Charnwood' NCA, which contains upland areas, forming a mosaic of heathland, farmland, parkland and woodland[30].

[27] Natural England (2017) Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land – Strategic Scale map East Midlands Region. Available at: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6048285720051712?category=5208993007403008 [Accessed: 08/09/25]

[28] Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)(2023) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7889996a5ec000d731aba/nps-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en3.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

[29] Natural England (2014) Leicestershire Vales. Available at: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4900422342934528 [Accessed: 25/07/25]

[30] Natural England (2013) Charnwood. Available at: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4612848 [Accessed: 25/07/25]

5.3.2 The Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment[31] (LSCA) presents a classification and description of all 16 identified landscape character areas within Blaby, as well as an assessment of their landscape sensitivity. The results of the LSCA have been taken into consideration for the proposal of locations for renewable energy developments.

Landform and geology

5.3.3 There are small variations in topography across the district (see **Figure 5.1**). The lowest point is located at Croft and Huncote Quarry, whilst the highest point is located at Croft Hill at 128m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

5.3.4 The underlying geology of Blaby District is dominated by low-permeability clays and marls, mainly comprising the Triassic Mercia Mudstone Group and Jurassic Lower Lias Clays[32]. In the south-western part of the district, these sedimentary layers are interrupted by isolated bodies of intrusive igneous rock, which have historically provided a valuable source of high-grade granite.

5.3.5 Blaby District supports large areas of high-quality agricultural land, with the majority of the district classed as ALC Grade 3. A small section in the south is classed as Grade 2, with areas of Grade 4 typically surrounding watercourses.

Hydrology and flood risk

5.3.6 Numerous watercourses flow throughout Blaby District (see **Figure 5.2**). The River Soar, a tributary of the River Trent, is primary watercourse flowing northeasterly through the district. River Sence is a key tributary of the River Soar which flows past Blaby. Other watercourses include Thurlaston Brook, Lubbesthorpe Brook and Whetstone Brook, also all tributaries of the River Soar. Flood risk in Blaby is concentrated around these watercourses. Areas of SWFR are distributed across the district, with some areas of high risk being concentrated on the outskirts of roads and settlements (see **Figure 5.3**).

Landcover and biodiversity

5.3.7 No European sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas or Ramsar sites) are located within the district. There are six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the district of Blaby, shown on the map in **Figure 5.4** and listed below:

- Burbage Wood and Aston Firs SSSI
- Croft Hill SSSI
- Croft and Huncote Quarry SSSI
- Croft Pasture SSSI
- Enderby Warren Quarry SSSI
- Narborough Bog SSSI

5.3.8 There are three Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) in the district (see **Figure 5.4**). These are:

- Aylestone Meadows

[31] LUC (2020) Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/media/3804/blaby-landscape-and-settlement-character-assessment-accessible-version-lr.pdf [Accessed: 25/07/25]

[32] Blaby District Council (2023) Contaminated Land Strategy 2023 – 2028. Available at: https://www.blaby.gov.uk/media/uzdnubez/contaminated-land-strategy-2023-2028.pdf [Accessed: 25/07/25]

- Burbage Common Woods LNR
- Glen Parva and Glen Hills Local Nature Reserve

5.3.9 There are seven Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) in Blaby. These include:

- Croft Quarry
- Croft Pasture
- Granitethorpe
- Huncote Sand and Gravel Pit
- Narborough Bog
- Sapcote Quarry
- Stoney Cove

5.3.10 A number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are located within the district, comprising a number of habitat types, the most prominent being mature trees, rivers, hedgerows, mesotrophic grassland, and wet grassland, among others.

5.3.11 In addition, priority habitats in the district (Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory[33]) mainly comprise coastal floodplain and grazing marsh, deciduous woodland, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland dry acid grassland and traditional orchard, among others.

5.3.12 Areas of ancient woodland are sparse. There are two areas of ancient woodland in the district 'Aston Firs' and 'Freeholt Wood'.

[33] Natural England (2024) Priority Habitats Inventory (England). Available at: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::priority-habitats-inventory-england/about [Accessed 25/07/25]

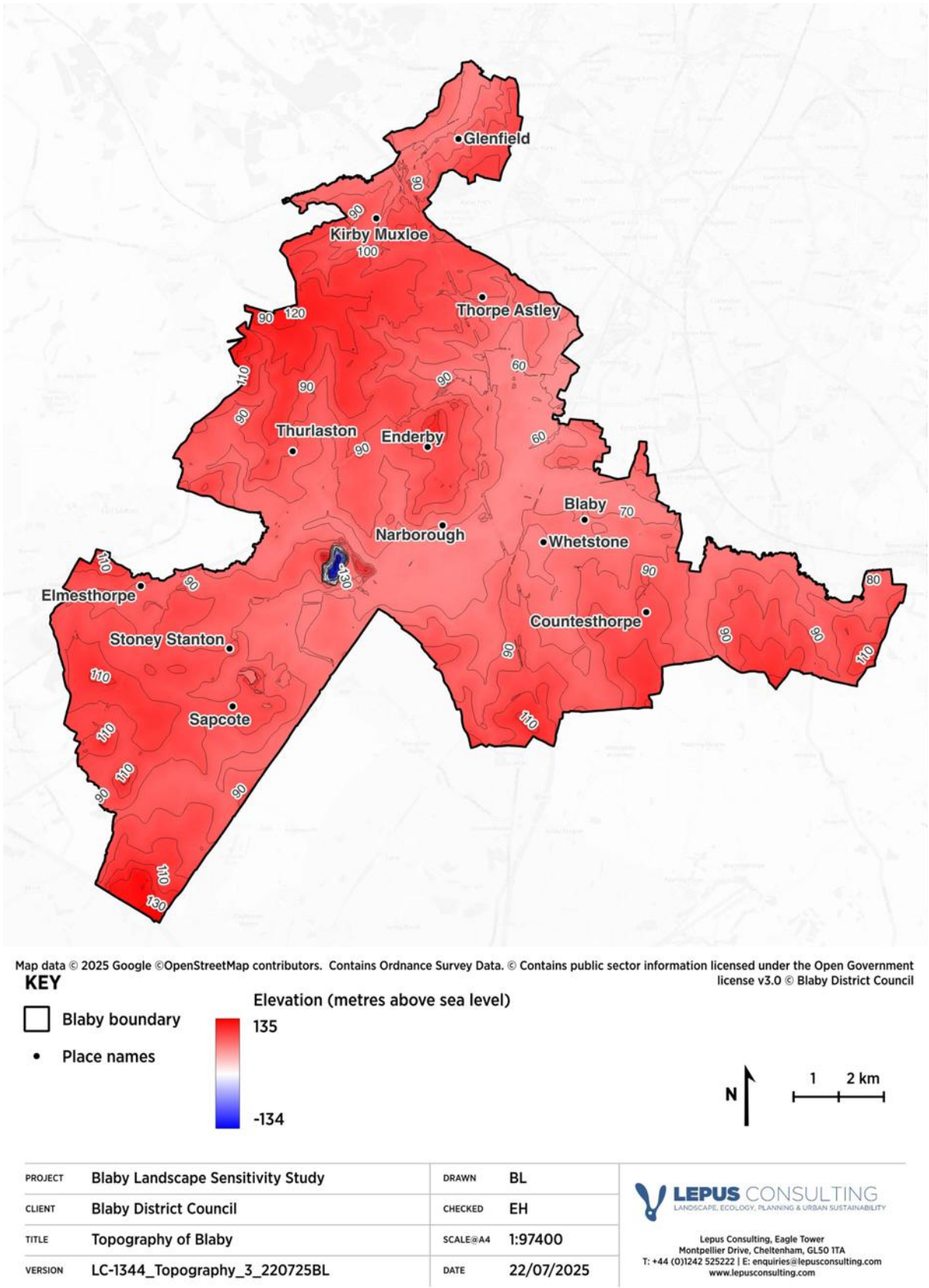


Figure 5.1: *Topography of Blaby District*

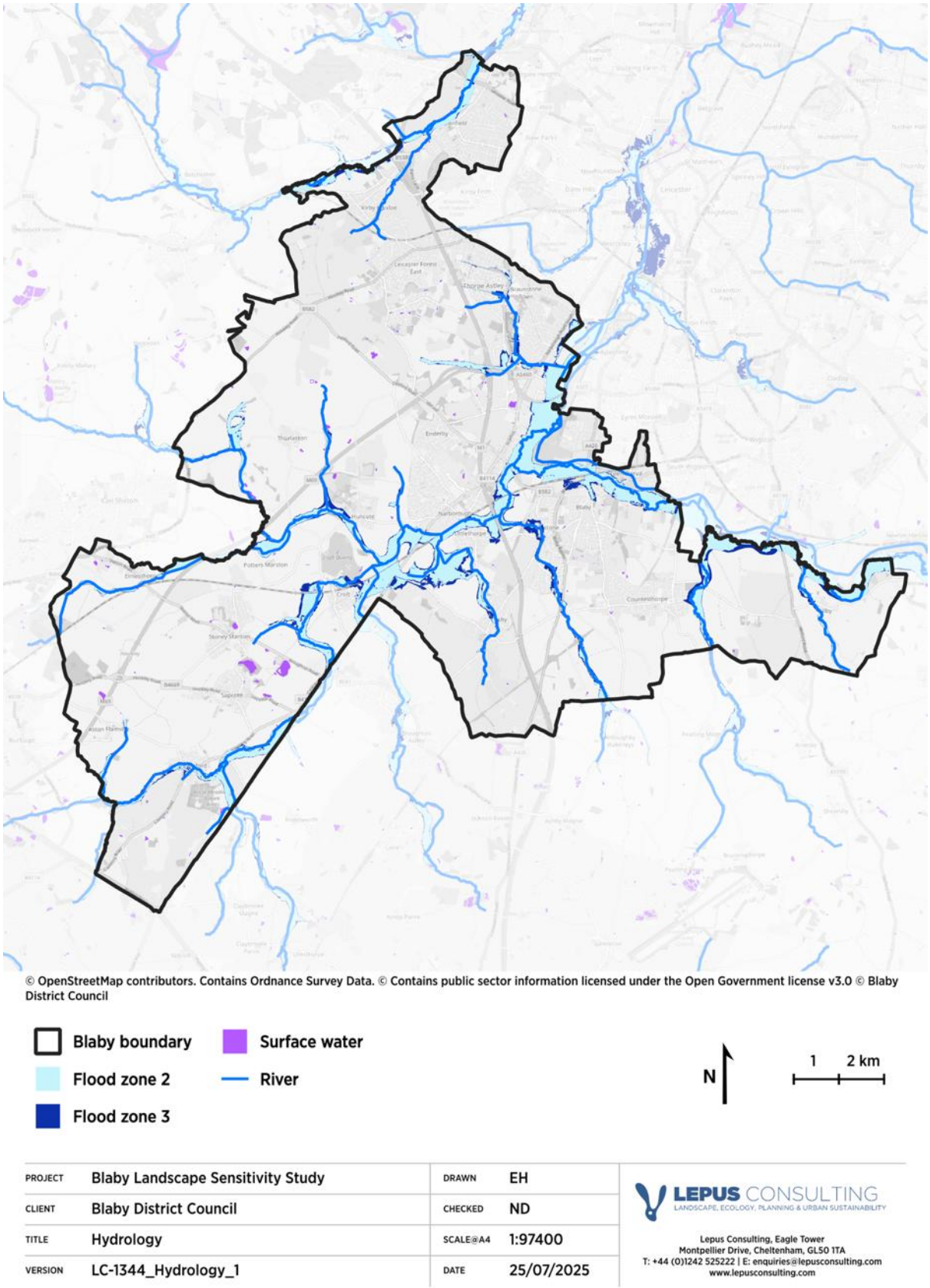


Figure 5.2: *Hydrology of Blaby District*

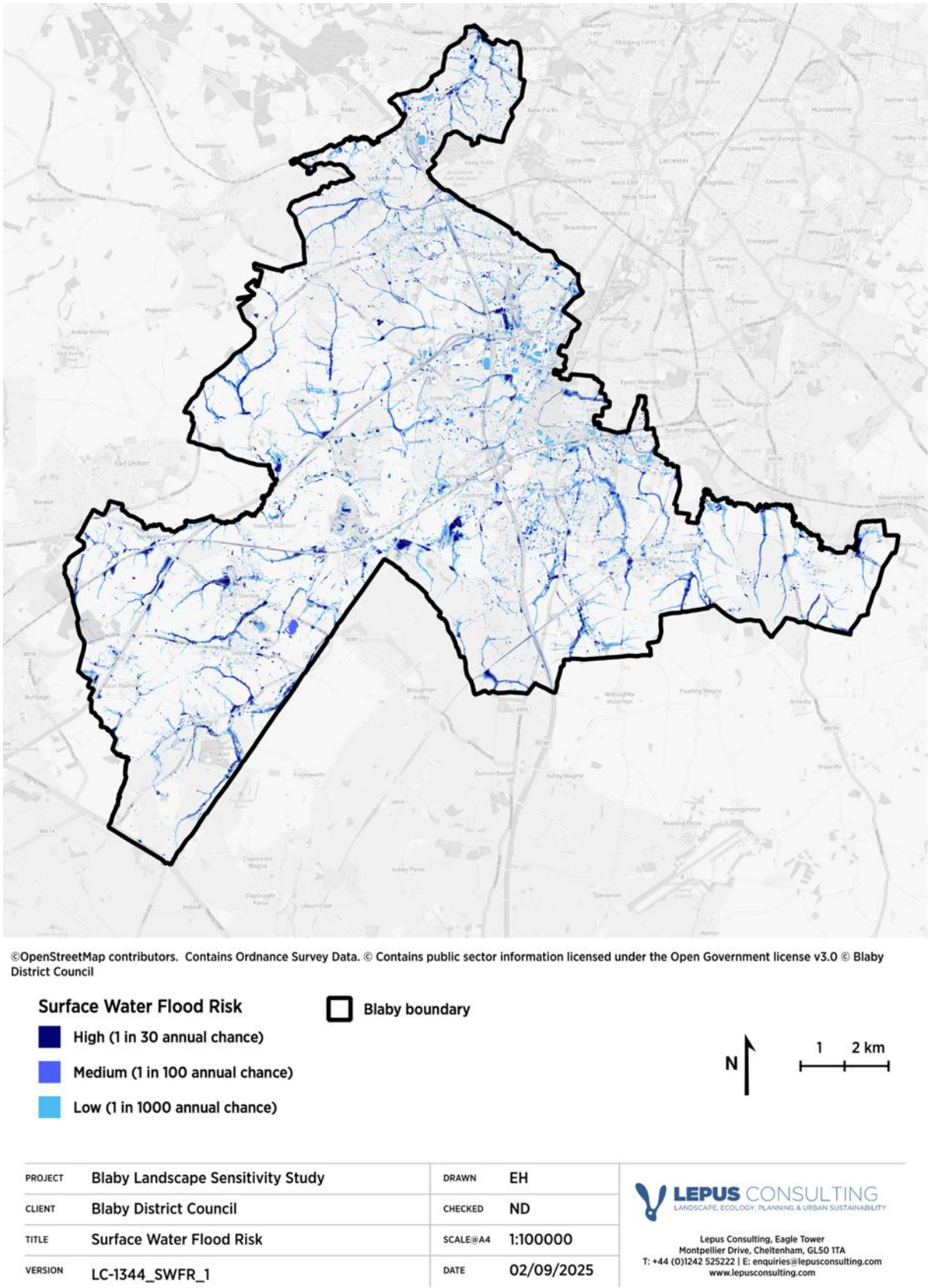


Figure 5.3: *Surface Water Flood Risk in Blaby District*

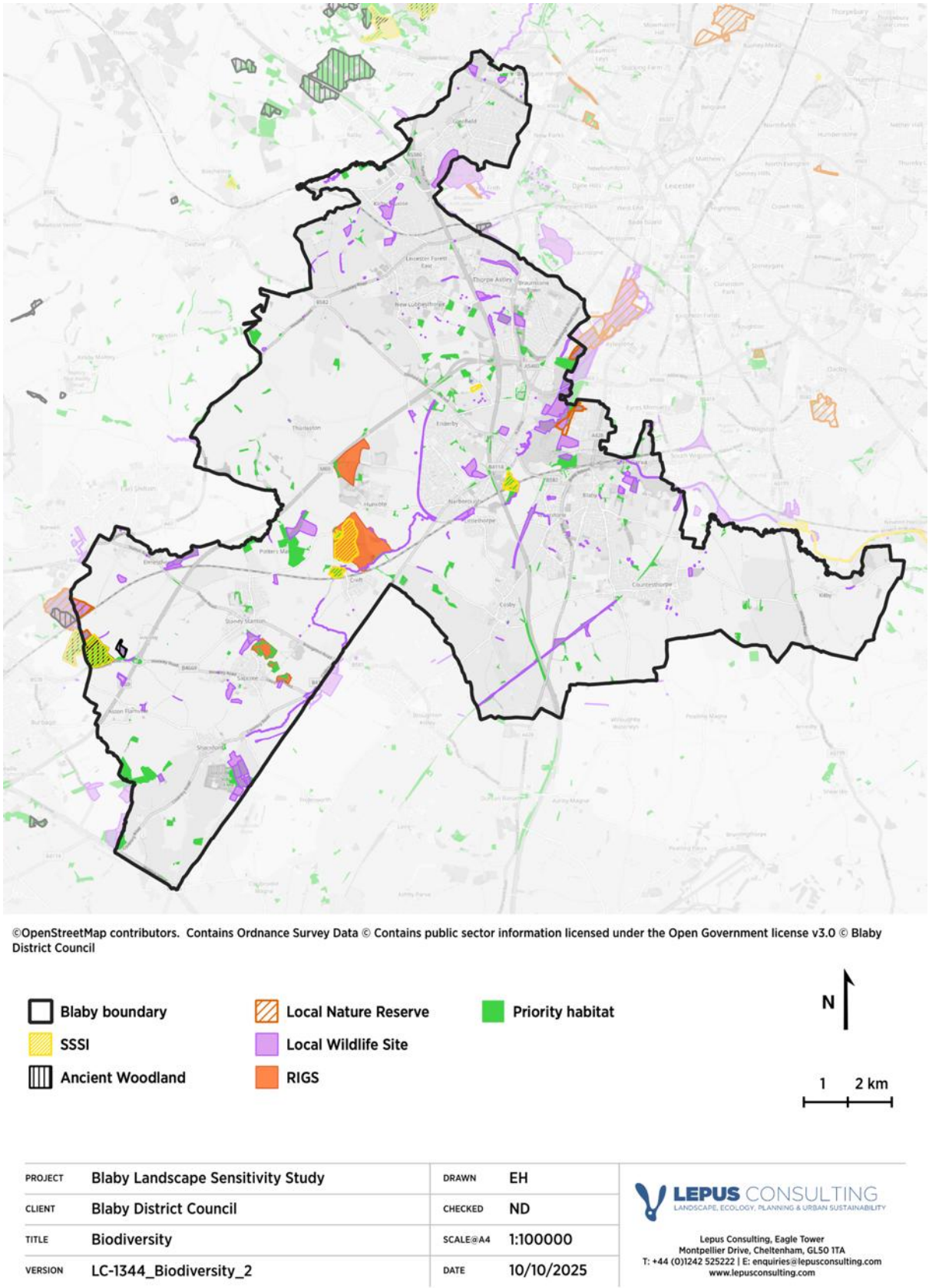


Figure 5.4: *Biodiversity of Blaby District*

5.4 Cultural and social factors of the Blaby landscape

Landscape designations and recreation

5.4.1 The northern part of the district forms part of the Leicester urban area, comprising towns and villages such as Blaby, Enderby and Narborough. The west and south of the district is rural and consists of a number of villages such as Stoney Stanton, Thurlaston and Countesthorpe. The district is traversed by key transport routes, including the M1 and M69 motorways, and the East Midlands Railway (EMR). The western portion of Burbage Commons and Woods Country Park is located partially within Blaby (see **Figure 5.5**). Areas of greenspace are typically located within or nearby urban areas to provide enjoyment and nature of the outdoors for local residents.

Historic environment and heritage assets

5.4.2 The historic environment of the district comprises 11 Conservation Areas (CAs) and 16 Scheduled Monuments (SMs). There are a number of Listed Buildings (LBs) in the district including three Grade I LBs, eight Grade II* LBs and 185 Grade II LBs (see **Figure 5.5**).

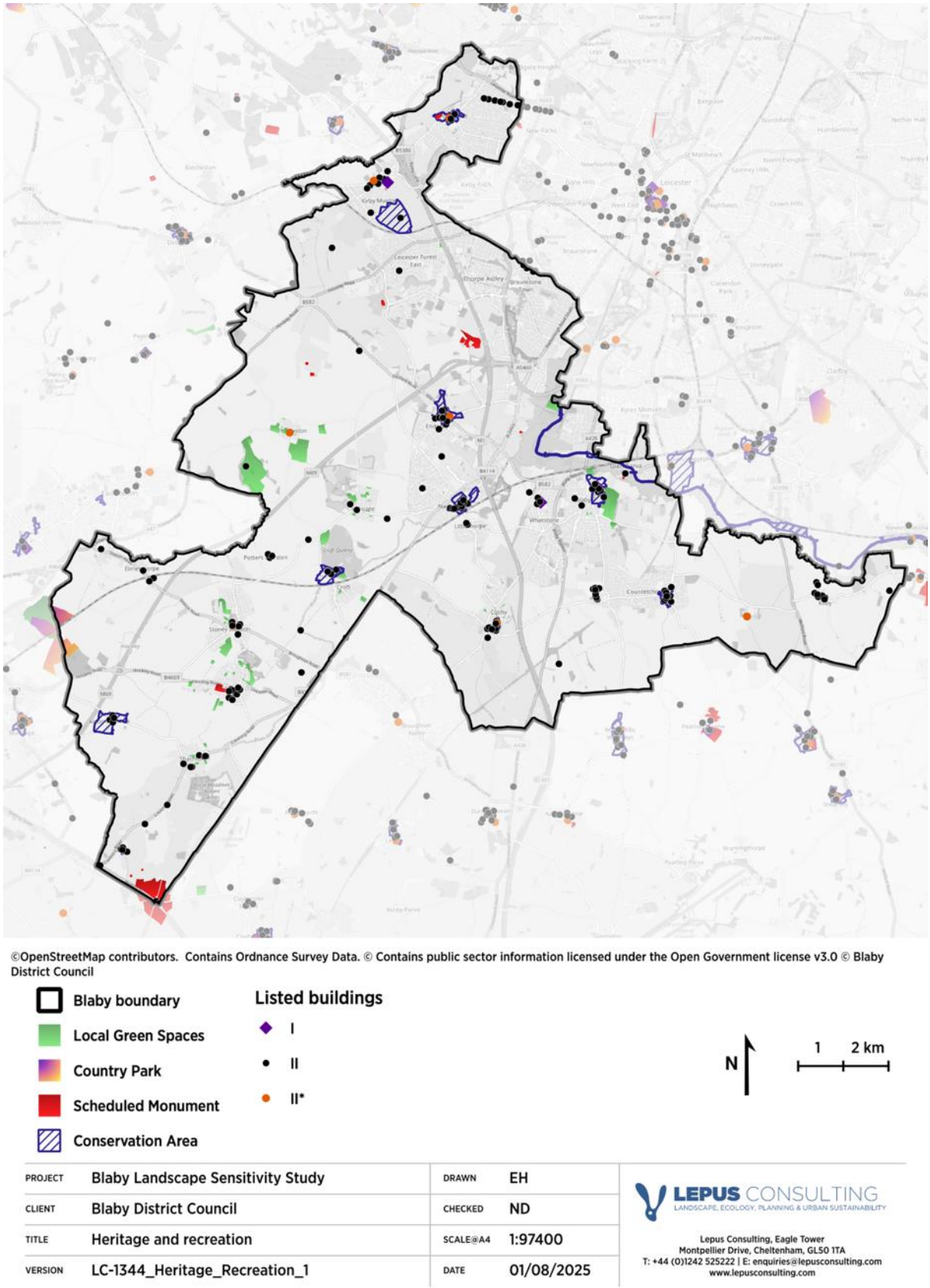


Figure 5.5: *Heritage and recreation in Blaby District*

6 Wind energy

6.1 Siting of wind turbines in the landscape

6.1.1 Potential siting for wind turbines is affected by predicted wind resources, considerations relating to air safeguarding, electromagnetic interference and access for large vehicles[34].

6.1.2 Visual impacts from wind turbines vary with the size, make and model of the proposed turbine design. The most prominent visual impacts from wind turbines involves alterations to the skyline. Important considerations for turbine properties and how these fit with the landscape include[35]:

- The direction from which the wind turbine will be most frequently viewed;
- The proportion of blade length to tower height;
- Overall height to blade tip, colour and individual design;
- The turbine's dynamic impact, resulting from rotation of its blades (larger, slow-moving blades will have a very different impact from shorter, faster moving blades which may give the impression of increased clutter); and
- Consistency with other existing and consented turbines in the vicinity.

6.1.3 **Figure 6.1** demonstrates how wind turbines appear when sited upon open, elevated areas within a farmland setting of high scenic quality.

34 Gov.uk, Renewable and low carbon energy (2023) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy [Accessed 11/08/2025]

35 Scottish Natural Heritage (2014) Siting Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/doc/siting-and-designing-wind-farms-landscape-version-3a [Date accessed: 18/07/25]

Figure 6.1: *Wind turbines located in upland areas of Wales (Shutterstock: Eldo)*

6.2 Wind speed opportunities

6.2.1 The annual mean wind speed (AMWS) for each square kilometre across the district demonstrates where there is potential for wind turbine development. Areas with wind speeds at and above 5m/s at 50m above ground level are considered suitable for commercial on-shore wind. The Global Wind Atlas[36] wind speed database provides estimates for AMWS globally and is suitable for high-level analysis. **Figure 6.2** demonstrates the estimated windspeeds within Blaby at 50m.

[36] Global Wind Atlas (2025) GWA 4.0. Available at: https://globalwindatlas.info/en/ [Accessed: 11/08/2025]

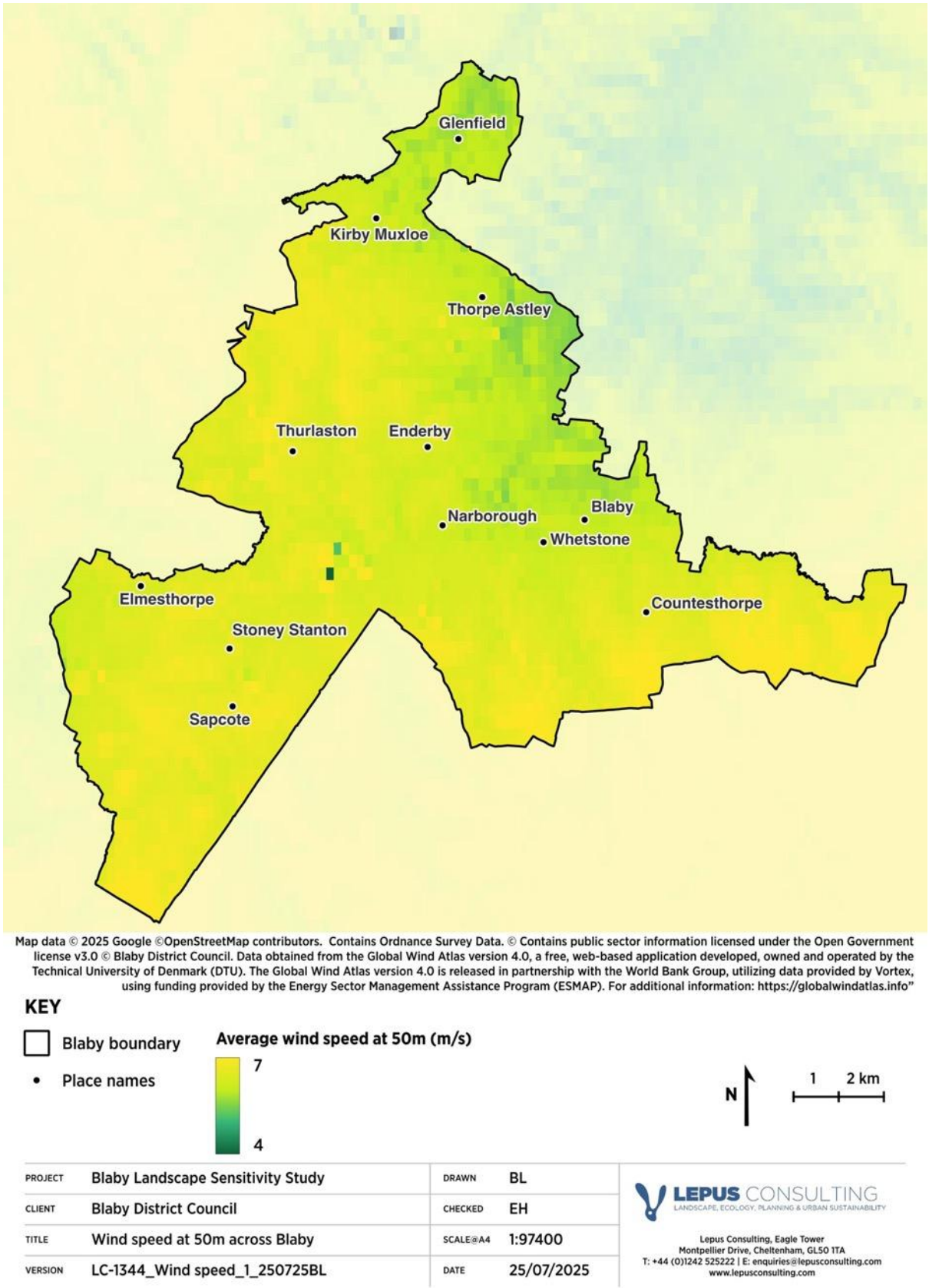


Figure 6.2: *Estimated annual mean wind speed in Blaby at 50m*

6.3 Separation distances

6.3.1 There are currently no statutory limits for wind farm distance from housing in England[37,38] where there is a variation of suggested recommended distances. Potential recommended distances include:

- **Wind Turbines (Minimum Distances from Residential Premises) Bill:** The House of Lords published the Wind Turbines Minimum Distances from Residential Premises Bill[39], which was rejected due to concerns that the bill would hinder meeting renewable energy targets. The buffer distances suggested in this bill would wholly restrict wind development in Blaby; therefore, these distances have been ruled out for consideration in this LSS.
- **350m noise buffer**: A minimum separation distance of 350 metres for a typical turbine[40] from residential areas in accordance with noise recommendations.
- **Fall over distance buffers:** Fall over distances (the height of the turbine to the tip of the blade) plus 10% to indicate a safe separation distance between wind turbines and buildings[41]. This is often less than the minimum desirable distance between wind turbines and occupied buildings. **Table 6.1** sets out fall over distances for a range of turbine heights.

6.3.2 PPG for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy[42] states that *'local planning authorities should not rule out otherwise acceptable renewable energy developments through inflexible rules on buffer zones or separation distances... distance of itself does not necessarily determine whether the impact of a proposal is unacceptable.'* Local context also plays a role, including factors such as topography, the local environment and near-by land uses.

6.3.3 As a consequence, the fall over distances for buildings outlined in **Table 6.1** have been used to rule-out unsuitable areas for wind turbine development on the basis of safety. Although turbine locations have not been ruled out according to 350m noise buffers on the basis of flexibility as noted in the PPG, these have been taken into consideration when identifying wind opportunity areas. **Figure 6.3** demonstrates fall over distance recommendations as well as a 350m recommendation for noise buffers.

Table 6.1: *Wind turbine fall over distance buffers*

Height of turbine	Fall over distance
15m	16.5m
50m	55m
100m	110m

37 Christopher Barclay, House of Commons Library, Wind Farms – Distance from housing (2011). Available at: https://ascogfarm.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SN05221.pdf [Accessed 10/07/25]

38 Ibid

39 House of Lords (2010) Wind Turbines (Minimum Distances from Residential Premises). Available at: https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldbills/017/11017.1-i.html [Accessed: 15/07/25]

40 Ibid

41 UK Government, Renewable and low carbon energy (2023). Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy [Accessed 10/07/2025]

42 Ibid

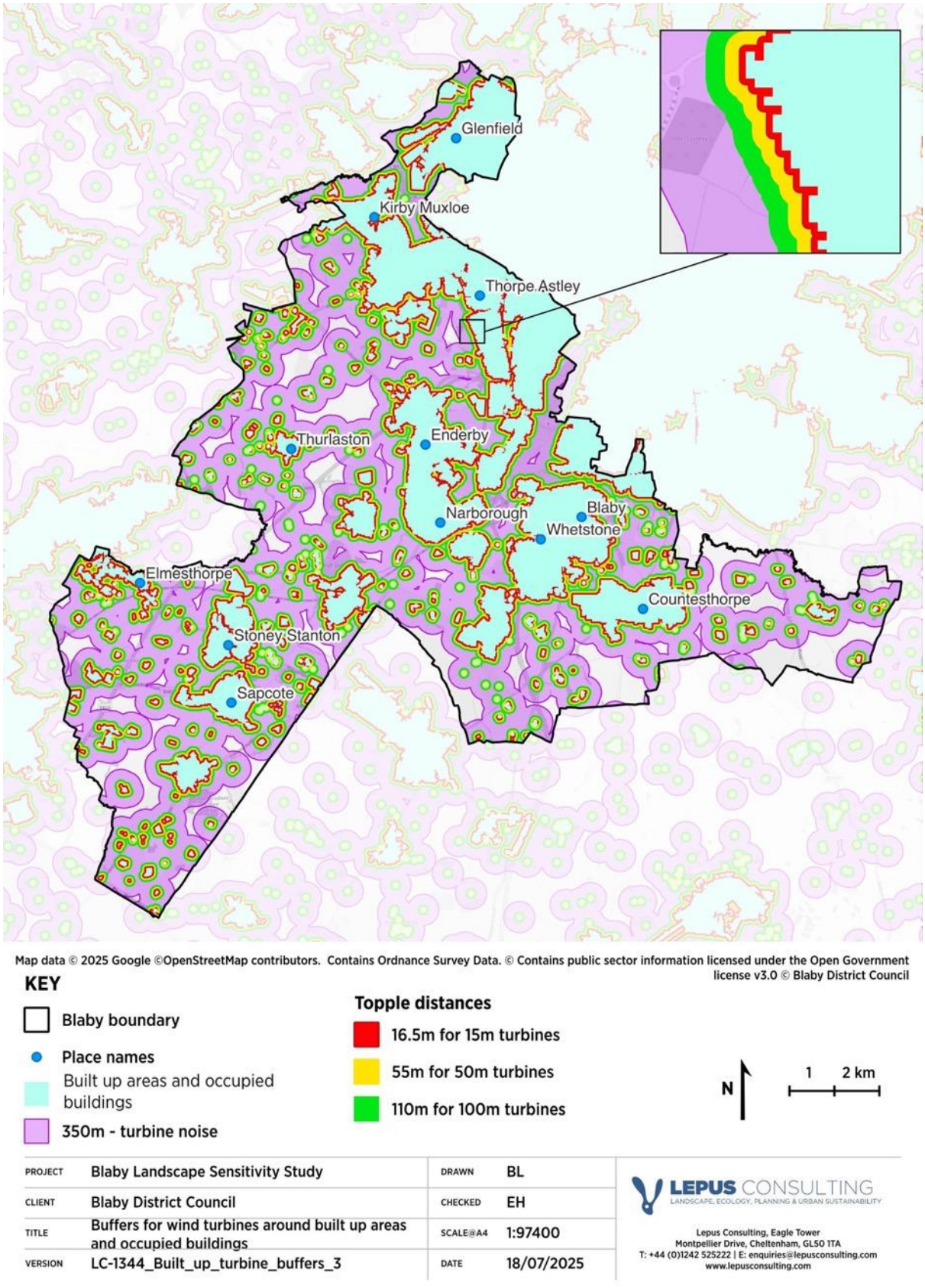


Figure 6.3: *Built-up area buffers for wind turbines*

6.4 Overhead power lines

6.4.1 Separation distances associated with overhead powerlines according to voltage have been set out in **Table 6.2**. The Energy Networks Association recommends fall over distances to be considered of either the tip of height of the turbine plus 10%, or the electrical safety distances outlined in **Table 6.2**, whichever is greater. Overhead power lines associated with pylons in Blaby have been mapped in **Figure 4.1**.

Table 6.2: *Distance of wind turbines from overhead power lines according to voltage*

System voltage (Kv)	Minimum distance from overhead power line
Less than 33	No minimum distance
66	1.7m
132	1.9m
275	3.3m
400	4.0m

6.5 Road and rail[43]

6.5.1 In accordance with safety measures wind turbines should be sited a minimum of height + 50 metres, or height x 1.5 (whichever is the lesser) from the highway boundary of the SRN, as demonstrated in **Table 6.3** and **Figure 6.4**. Variations in these distances may be appropriate subject to site-specific assessments, such as where there is a significant difference in elevation between the highway and proposed turbine location. In addition, development proposals must identify any impacts on the operation of the SRN from the construction, operation and de-commissioning stages and identify measures to mitigate these impacts.

Table 6.3: *Wind turbine road and rail buffer recommendations*

Height of turbine	Fall over distance
15m	22.5m
50m	75m
100m	150m

43 UK Government, Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development (2022). Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development [Accessed 10/07/2025]

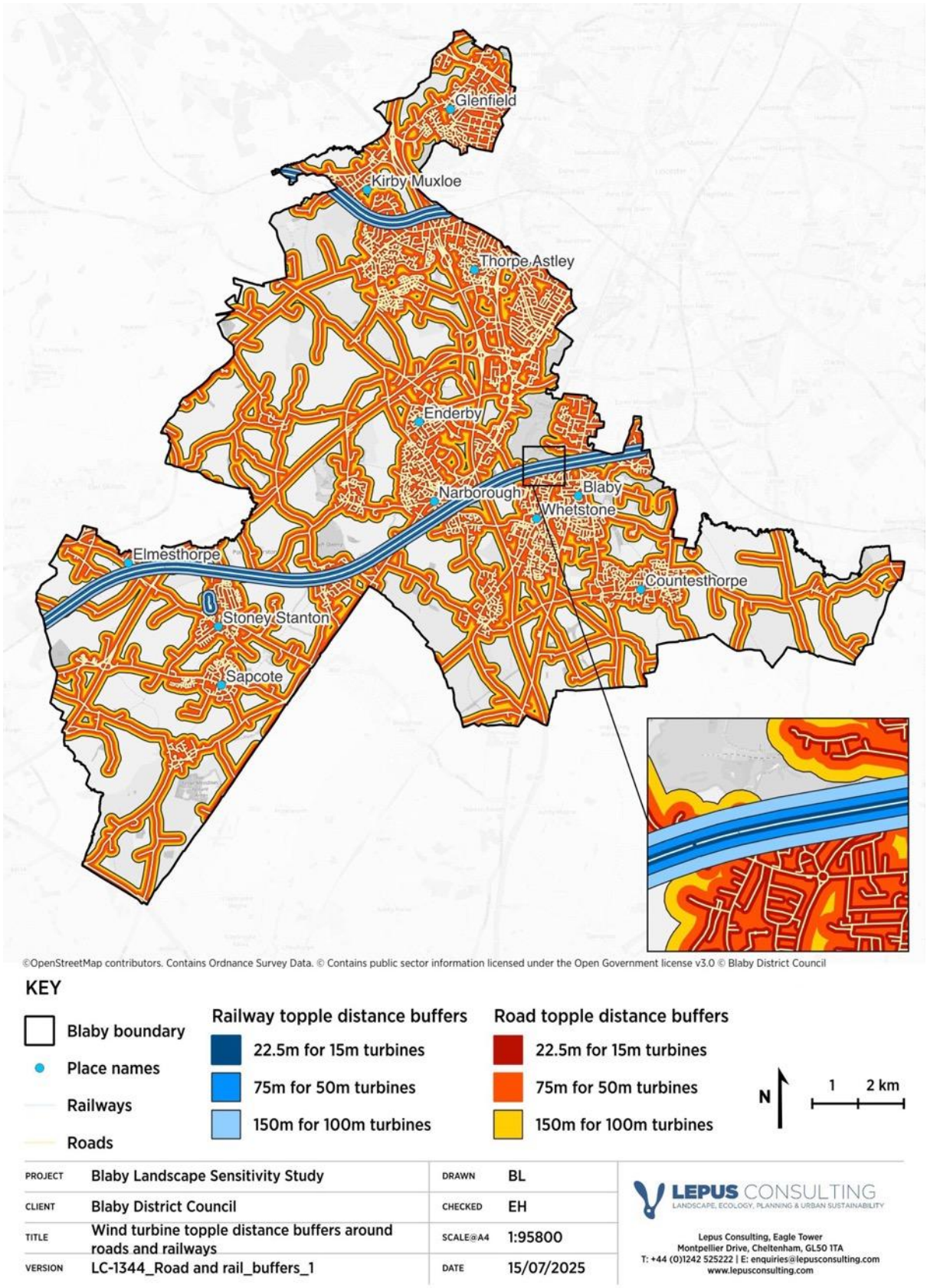


Figure 6.4: *Topple distance buffers of wind turbines for road and rail networks*

6.6 Public rights of way and recreation

6.6.1 Guidance from the British Horse Society suggests wind turbines should be located at least 200m away from PRoW bridleway networks[44], where horses are likely to react to noise made by wind turbines, the movement of the blades, or the movement from shadows cast by the blades. Safety may also be an issue in certain circumstances for other PRoW users (such as structural failure, blade throw and ice throw); however, risks can often be mitigated through appropriate siting and consultation with affected bodies[45]. **Figure 6.5** shows a 200m buffer for all PRoW networks within Blaby, as well as restrictions relating to areas of open greenspace.

6.6.2 Due to potential for mitigation, wind development has not been ruled out on the basis of proximity to PRoW networks, however the presence of these networks and recreational areas is still an important consideration when siting wind turbine development.

6.7 Air traffic and safety[46]

6.7.1 Wind turbines may present a risk of collision with low flying aircraft. Additionally, they may interfere with the proper operation of radar by limiting the capacity to handle air traffic, and aircraft instrument landing systems. In order to minimise radar interference, a 15km consultation zone, as well as a 30km or 32km advisory zone around every civilian air traffic radar, has been identified, as demonstrated in **Figure 6.6**.

6.7.2 In addition to air traffic radar, wind turbines may affect other infrastructural installations such as weather radar operated by the Meteorological Office, electromagnetic transmissions and radar associated with Ministry of Defence (MoD) operations. Developers and should consult with the MoD if a proposed turbine is 11 metres to blade tip or taller, and/or has a rotor diameter of 2m or more.

44 British Horse Society (2025) Wind Turbines and Equestrian access. Available at: https://www.bhs.org.uk/media/lgwdbphr/wind-turbines-0525.pdf

45 UK Government, Renewable and low carbon energy (2023) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy [Accessed 11/07/2025]

46 UK Government, Renewable and low carbon energy (2023) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy [Accessed 11/07/2025]

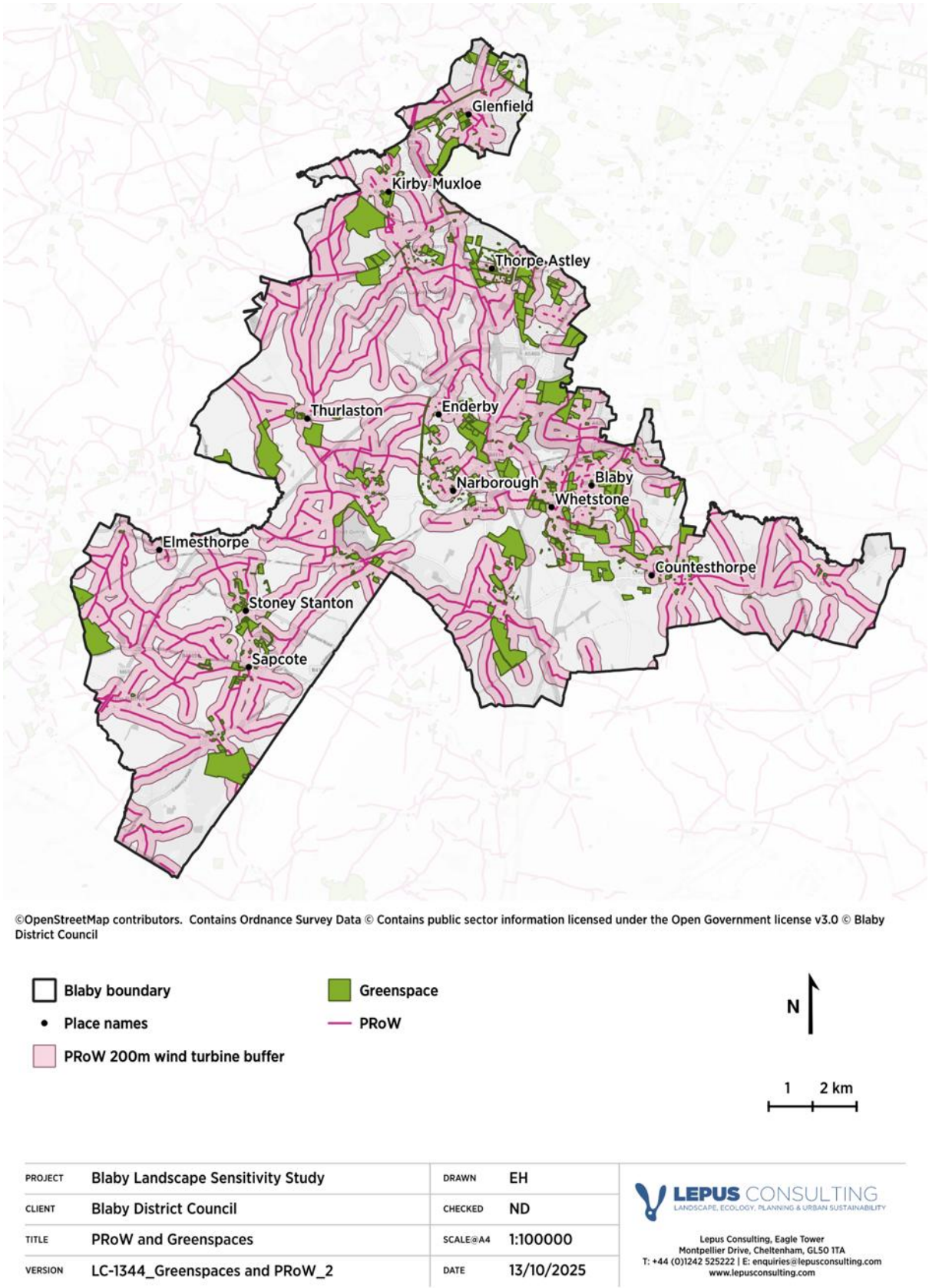


Figure 6.5: *PRoW network indicative buffers and greenspaces*

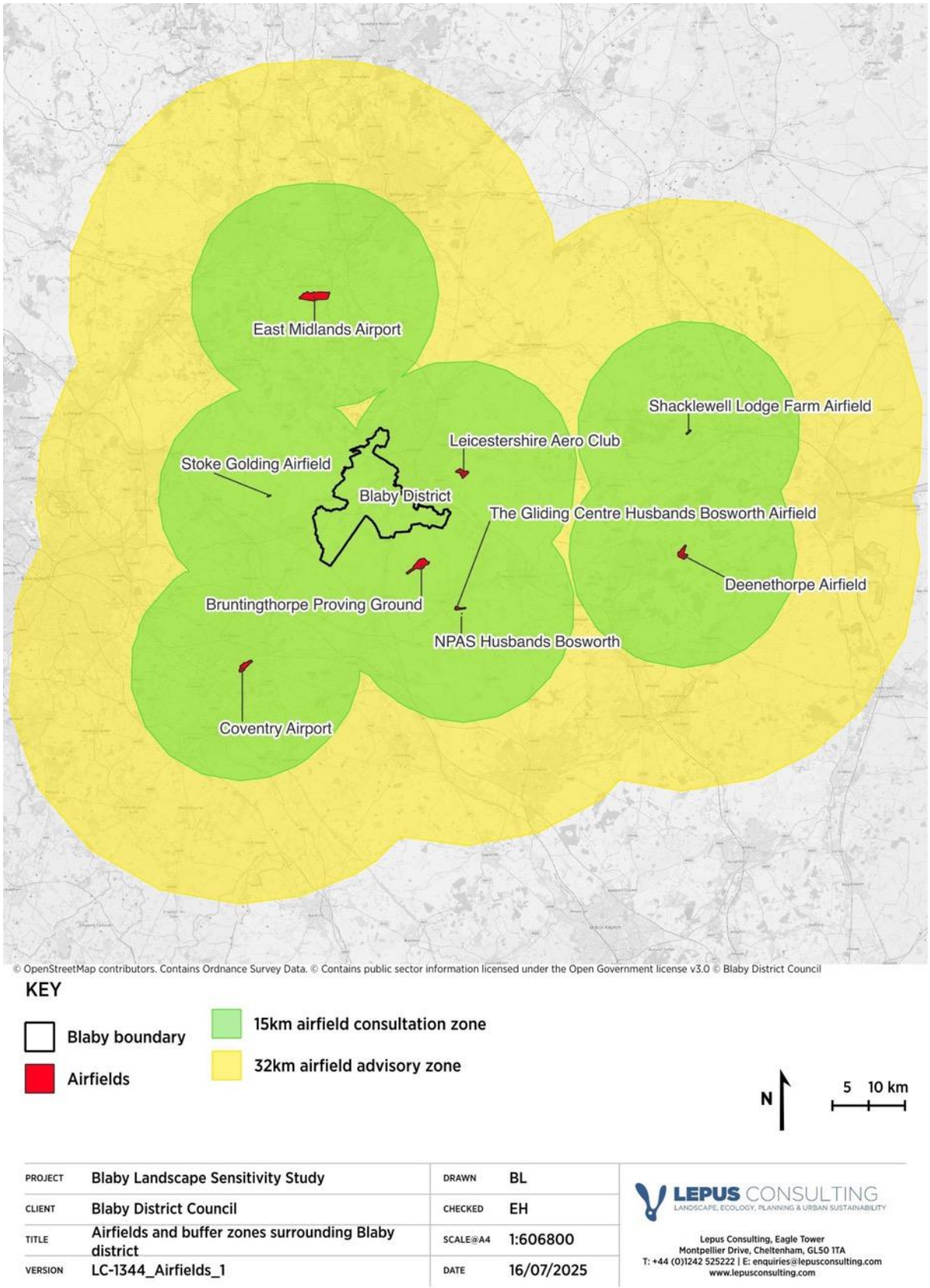


Figure 6.6: *Airfield consultation zones in and around Blaby*

6.8 Glint and shadow flicker[47]

6.8.1 Applicants should identify issues with glint, glare and shadow flicker early on in the design process for wind turbines. Glint refers to momentary flashes of light created from the position of the sun reflecting on rotating turbine blades. Shadow flicker refers to the passing of the sun behind rotating turbine blades, casting a flickering shadow over neighbouring development and roads, only impacting properties 130° either side of north in the UK.

6.8.2 Where the possibility of glint or shadow flicker exists, mitigation can be secured through the use of physical screening, optimised layout and shutdown schemes during periods when shadow flicker is likely to impact vulnerable locations.

6.9 Bird flight paths[48]

6.9.1 Wind turbines present a risk to birds through collisions with turbine blades, direct habitat loss or displacement from disturbance from wind turbines. Wind turbines should be sited away from known flight paths and migration routes for birds. It is recommended that collision risk modelling is undertaken to establish the risk to birds from wind turbine development, as well as setting out opportunities for mitigation.

47 Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)(2023) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7889996a5ec000d731aba/nps-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en3.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

[48] NatureScot. Wind farm impacts on birds. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/planning-and-development-advice/renewable-energy/onshore-wind-energy/wind-farm-impacts-birds [Accessed: 18/07/25]

7 Solar photovoltaic technology

7.1 Siting of solar PV in the landscape

7.1.1 A typical 50MW solar farm will consist of around 100,000 to 150,000 panels and cover between 50ha to 80ha[49]. Using these estimations, the capacities for solar farms considered within this LSS have been suggested in **Table 7.1**.

Table 7.1: *Estimated solar farm capacities*

Size of solar farm	Capacity	Panels
0.5ha	0.3MW	1000
5ha	30MW	10,000
10ha	60MW	20,000

7.1.2 Solar arrays should be placed away from tall structures to limit shade and maximise exposure to sunlight. Solar farms are best sited in open, low-lying areas with good exposure. Although this gives them a wider visual impact, they are generally less intrusive on the landscape than other types of onshore energy infrastructure. The colour and appearance of solar panel modules needs to carefully considered when siting within the landscape.

7.1.3 Other considerations for solar PV siting include[50]:

- The need for sufficient area of solar modules to produce the required energy output from the system.
- The potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges.
- The energy generating potential, which can vary for a number of reasons including, latitude and aspect.
- The capacity of the local grid network to accept the likely output from a proposed solar farm is critical to the technical and commercial feasibility of a development proposal[51].

[49] House of Commons Library (2023) Planning and solar farms. Available at: https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2023-0168/CDP-2023-0168.pdf [Accessed: 12/08/25]

50 Ibid

51 Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)(2023) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7889996a5ec000d731aba/nps-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en3.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

7.2 Irradiance

7.2.1 Irradiance of a site will in turn be affected by surrounding topography (see **Figure 5.1**), with year-round irradiance levels likely to be highest on uncovered or exposed sites with favourable south-facing aspect. The Global Solar Atlas[52] maps predicted levels of solar radiation levels across the world, including Global Horizontal Radiation (GHI). GHI refers to the total amount of solar radiation received by the surface of the Earth. **Figure 7.1** shows how annual average GHI levels are relatively consistent across Blaby District, decreasing slightly in urban areas, with a large dip in GHI at Croft and Huncote Quarry.

7.2.2 Solar farms should ideally be located on flat or on gentle south-facing slopes where they can collect the most energy from the sun. Areas with less than a 3% (1.7°) gradient are most suitable for solar PV, however slopes of a maximum of 10% (5.7°) can also hold solar development. **Figure 7.2** shows slope levels across Blaby in degrees, whilst **Figure 7.3** maps aspect, highlighting south, southwest and southeast facing slopes.

[52] Global Wind Atlas (2025) Global Solar Atlas. Available at: https://globalsolaratlas.info/map [Accessed: 12/08/25]

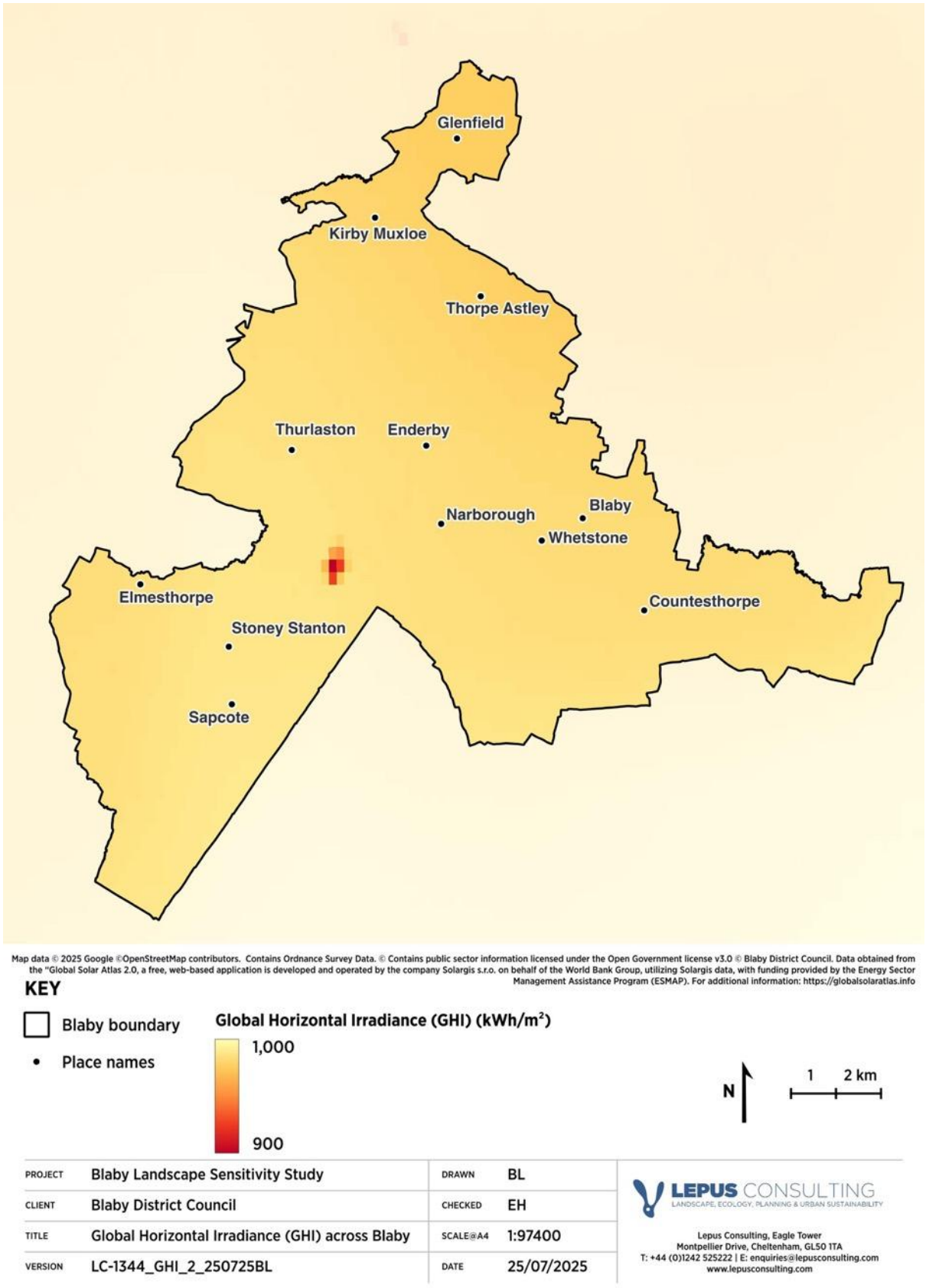


Figure 7.1: *Global Horizontal Irradiance levels across Blaby District*

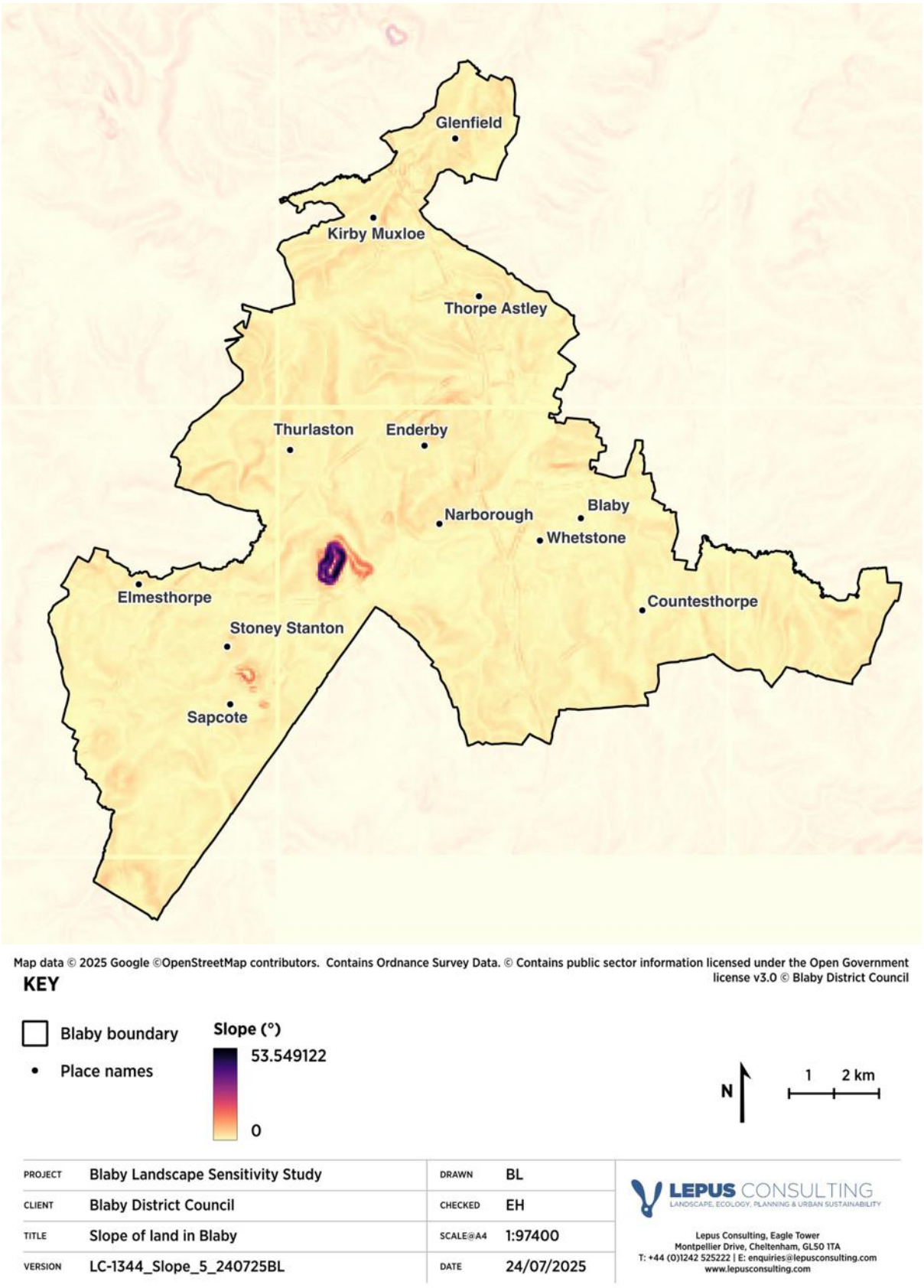


Figure 7.2: *Gradient of land (degrees) across Blaby District*

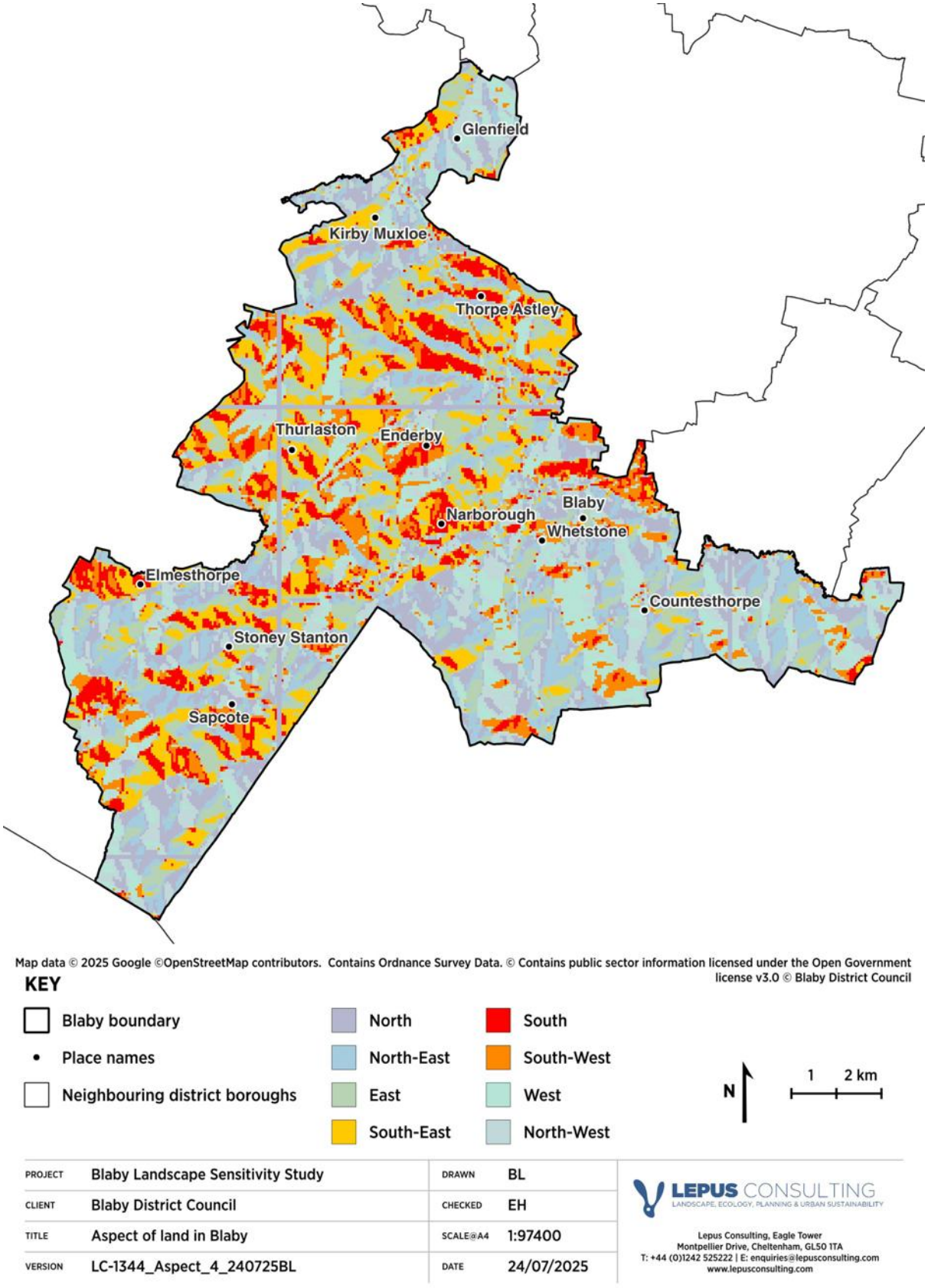


Figure 7.3: *Aspect of land in Blaby*

7.3 Glint and glare

7.3.1 Glint can be described as momentary flashes of light, whilst bright light from glare is more sustained such as from continuous reflection from the sun[53]. These effect occurs when the solar panel is stationed between or at an angle of the sun and the receptor.

7.3.2 Glint and glare can be hazardous for driving, aircraft, and trains, as well as being a nuisance for nearby residents. Applications for solar PV should map receptors qualitatively to identify potential glint and glare issues and determine if a glint and glare assessment is necessary as part of the application.

7.3.3 **Figure 7.4** demonstrates how the sun creates glare by reflecting off solar panels in a low-lying area of West Sussex.

Figure 7.4: *Glare from solar panels in West Sussex (Shutterstock: PBabic)*

7.4 PRoW[54]

7.4.1 Where possible, solar PV development should sites so that PRoW networks must be kept open. Solar farms are safe to built adjacent to PRoW networks providing there are adequate safety and security measures in place, although PRoW networks may need to be diverted. There should be adequate spacing between PRoW networks and solar farm fencing. Applicants are encouraged where possible to minimise the visual impacts of the development for those using existing PRoW.

[53] Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)(2023) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7889996a5ec000d731aba/nps-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en3.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

54 IBid

8 Battery energy storage systems

8.1 Siting BESS in the landscape

8.1.1 BESS comprise a series of units which resemble shipping containers, as seen **in Figure 8.1**. The units typically range from 2.5m to 3.5m in height. These can often be visually intrusive in rural areas where the design of BESS is generally more fitting within industrial settings. Large areas of flat gradient are most suitable for BESS development for efficient land use and ease of construction (see **Figure 7.2** for a gradient map of Blaby). Although noise levels from BESS are generally low, low-frequency noise can impact the sense of tranquillity.

Figure 8.1: *349MW BESS located at Blackhillock, Scotland (Shutterstock: Rotorworx 1)*

8.1.2 BESS should be located in proximity to grid connection infrastructure and industrial hubs in order to help to minimise transition losses. BESS may also benefit from being located in proximity to other renewable energy installations such as solar and wind, in order to absorb surplus power. Development may also consider proximity to existing power lines, in order to alleviate the requirement to build new power lines and supporting infrastructure.

8.2 Fire risk

8.2.1 Lithium-ion batteries are susceptible to catching fire because of a process called 'thermal runaway', caused by issues such as part of the battery being damaged[55]. For proposed BESS development of 1MWh or over, the local fire and rescue service should be consulted with prior to submission and application. This allows for the siting of BESS, and consideration of emergency service access, to help prevent and mitigate fire risk[56].

8.2.2 Although there is no statutory minimum separation distance for the siting of BESS from other buildings, the National Fire Chiefs Council proposes a minimum distance of 25 metres from occupied buildings[57,58]. Where possible, buildings should be located upwind[59] due to fire risks. **Figure 8.2** shows a 25m buffer for battery storage units around built up areas.

55 Hutton & Stewart, House of Commons Library, Battery energy storage systems (BESS) (2025) Available at: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7621/ [Accessed 14/07/2025]

56 UK Government, Renewable and low carbon energy (2023) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy#solar-farms [Accessed 11/07/2025]

57 Hutton & Stewart, House of Commons Library, Battery energy storage systems (2025) Available at: https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7621/CBP-7621.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

58 National Fire Chiefs Council, Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS (2022) Available at: https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Grid-Scale-Battery-Energy-Storage-System-planning-Guidance-for-FRS.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

59 National Fire Chiefs Council, Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS (2022) Available at: https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Grid-Scale-Battery-Energy-Storage-System-planning-Guidance-for-FRS.pdf [Accessed 11/07/2025]

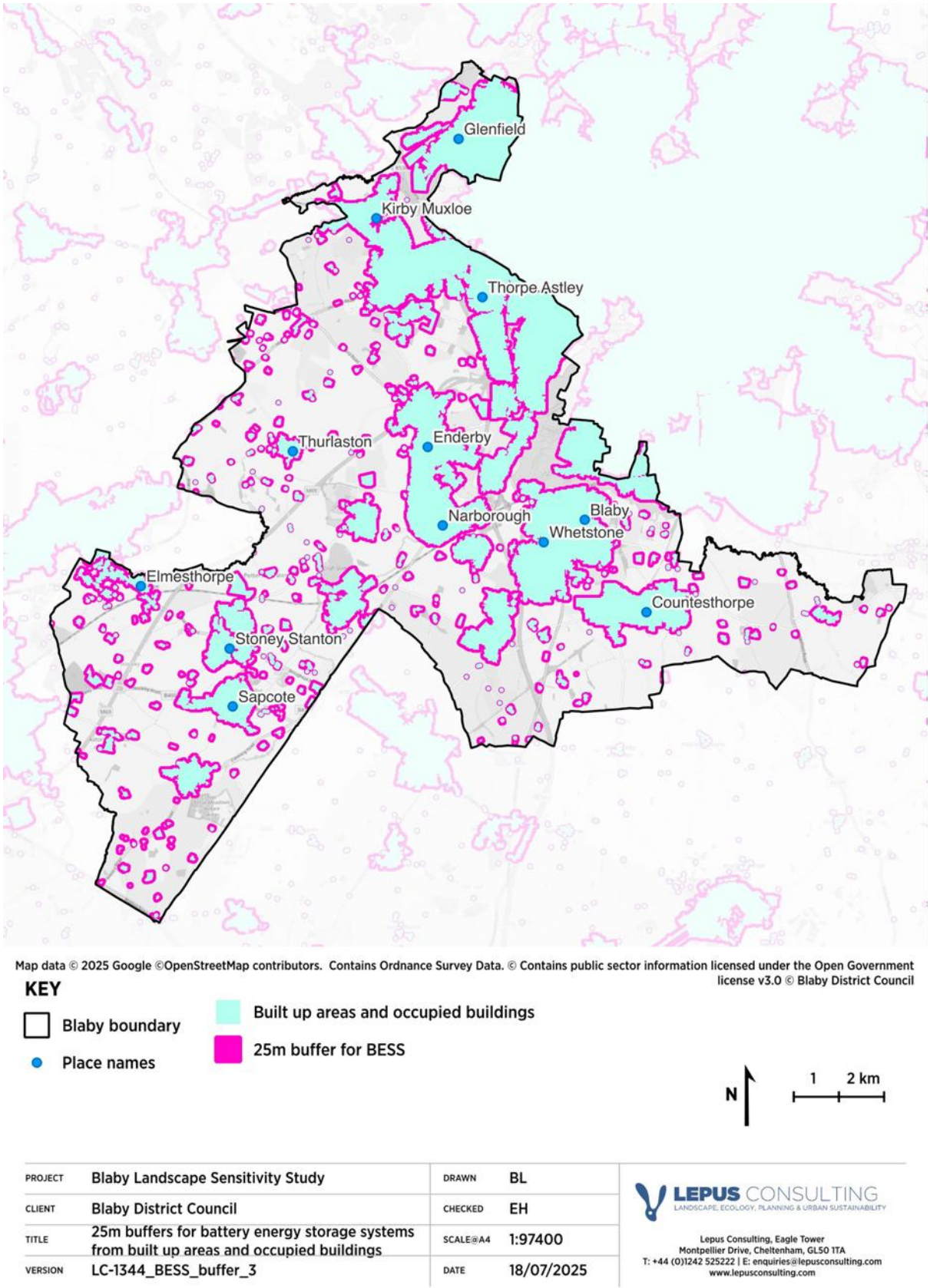


Figure 8.2: *25m buffer for BESS around built-up areas and buildings*

9 Identification of renewable energy development opportunity areas

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Sites, or renewable energy development opportunity areas, have been identified which have potential to be the suitable for wind, solar PV or BESS development in Blaby district, based off the research conducted in relation to opportunities and constraints for renewable energy development. Renewable energy opportunity areas have been identified without consideration of restriction related to land ownership or feasibility. All identified sites underwent the LSA process, utilising the methodology set out in **Chapter 3**.

9.1.2 Wind sites have been selected according to wind speed and elevation, as well as fall over zones from buildings, roads, railways and major power lines. Solar PV sites have been selected primarily according to gradient and aspect, whilst BESS sites have been selected predominantly through consideration of separation zones, gradient and proximity to grid infrastructure.

9.1.3 There are instances where identified renewable energy opportunity areas have potential to accommodate development of more than one use type. For instance, BESS sites have similar constraints to that of solar, therefore all solar PV opportunity sites have also been assessed for BESS. The majority of sites have had an LSA undertaken for more than one use type.

9.1.4 All identified renewable energy opportunity areas are shown in **Figure 9.1**, with details for each site outlined in **Table 9.1**.

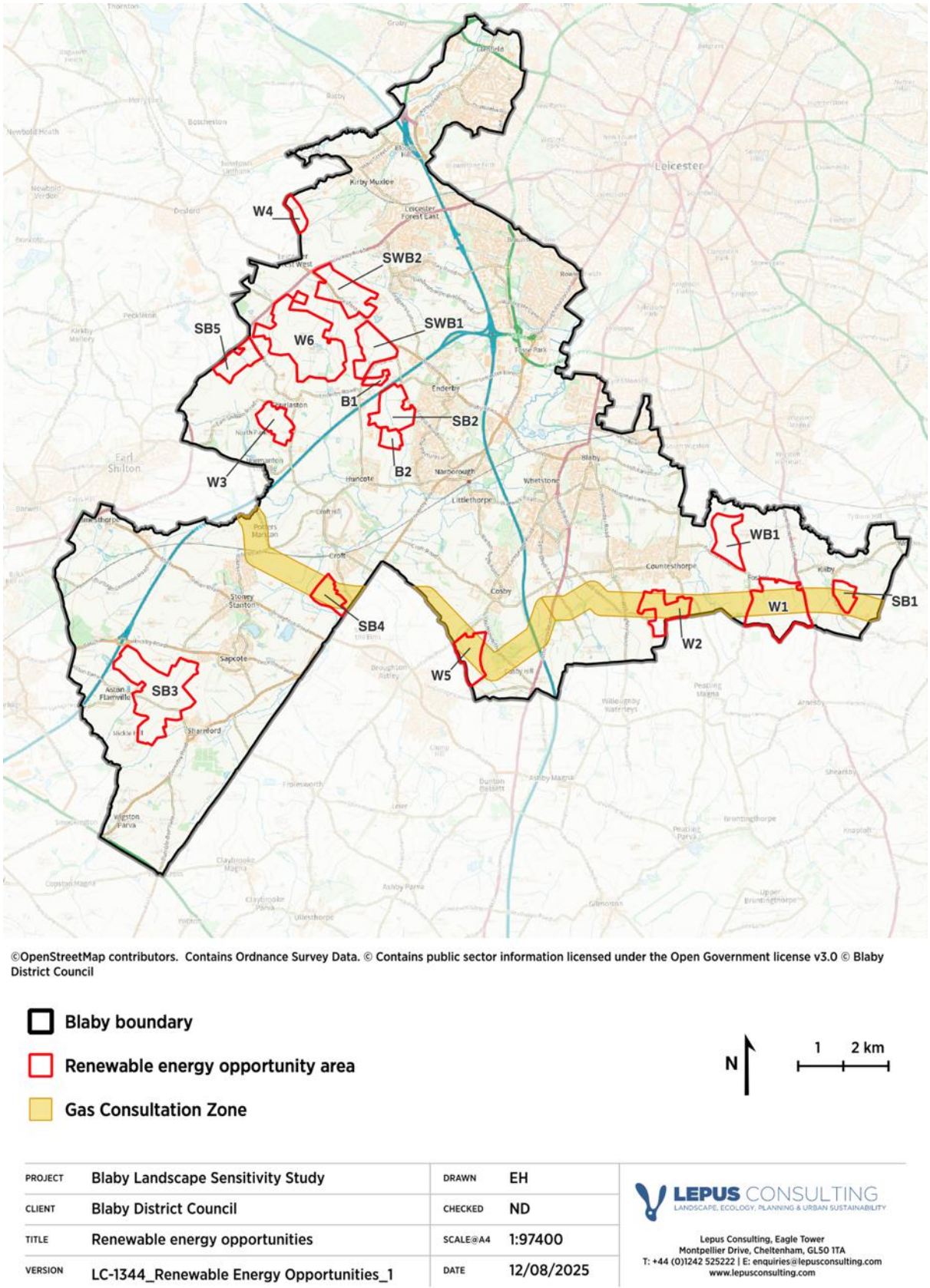
9.2 Gas consultation zone

9.2.1 It is worth noting that a number of identified renewable energy opportunity areas are situated within the gas consultation zone for a new gas pipeline which traverses Blaby, as shown on **Figure 9.1**. Whilst these areas still have potential to be suitable for renewable energy development, ease of access would need to be maintained, and the areas would be subject to further consultation with the Health and Safety Executive.

Table 9.1: *All identified renewable energy opportunity sites*

Site ref.	Site name	Site use	Area (ha)
B1	Land west of Cook's Lodge Farm	BESS	9.63
B2	Land west of Enderby	BESS	18.67
SB1	Land east of Fleckney Road	Solar and BESS	24.67
SB2	Land south of M69	Solar and BESS	64.99
SB3	Land off Aston Lane	Solar and BESS	193.98
SB4	Land south of Croft	Solar and BESS	34.60
SB5	Land south of Leicester Road A47	Solar and BESS	44.14
SWB1	Land north of Thurlaston Lane	Solar, wind and BESS	62.37
SWB2	Land off Desford Road	Solar, wind and BESS	84.51

W1	Land east of Barley Lane	Wind	127.71
W2	Land south of Countesthorpe	Wind	58.71
W3	Land southwest of Thurlaston	Wind	45.76
W4	Land north of the Hollows Farm	Wind	20.56
W5	Land southwest of Cosby	Wind	50.97
W6	Land at New Hall Park Farm	Wind	210.71
WB1	Land north of Foston Road	Wind and BESS	54.62



PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Renewable energy opportunities	SCALE@A4	1:97400
VERSION	LC-1344_Renewable Energy Opportunities_1	DATE	12/08/2025

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www.lepusconsulting.com

Figure 9.1: *Identified renewable energy opportunities for LSA*

10 Site assessments

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 All 16 renewable energy opportunity areas have been assessed according to the LSA methodology as set out in **Chapter 3**. The LSA assessments have been presented in **section 10.3** to **section 10.18**.

10.2 Site maps

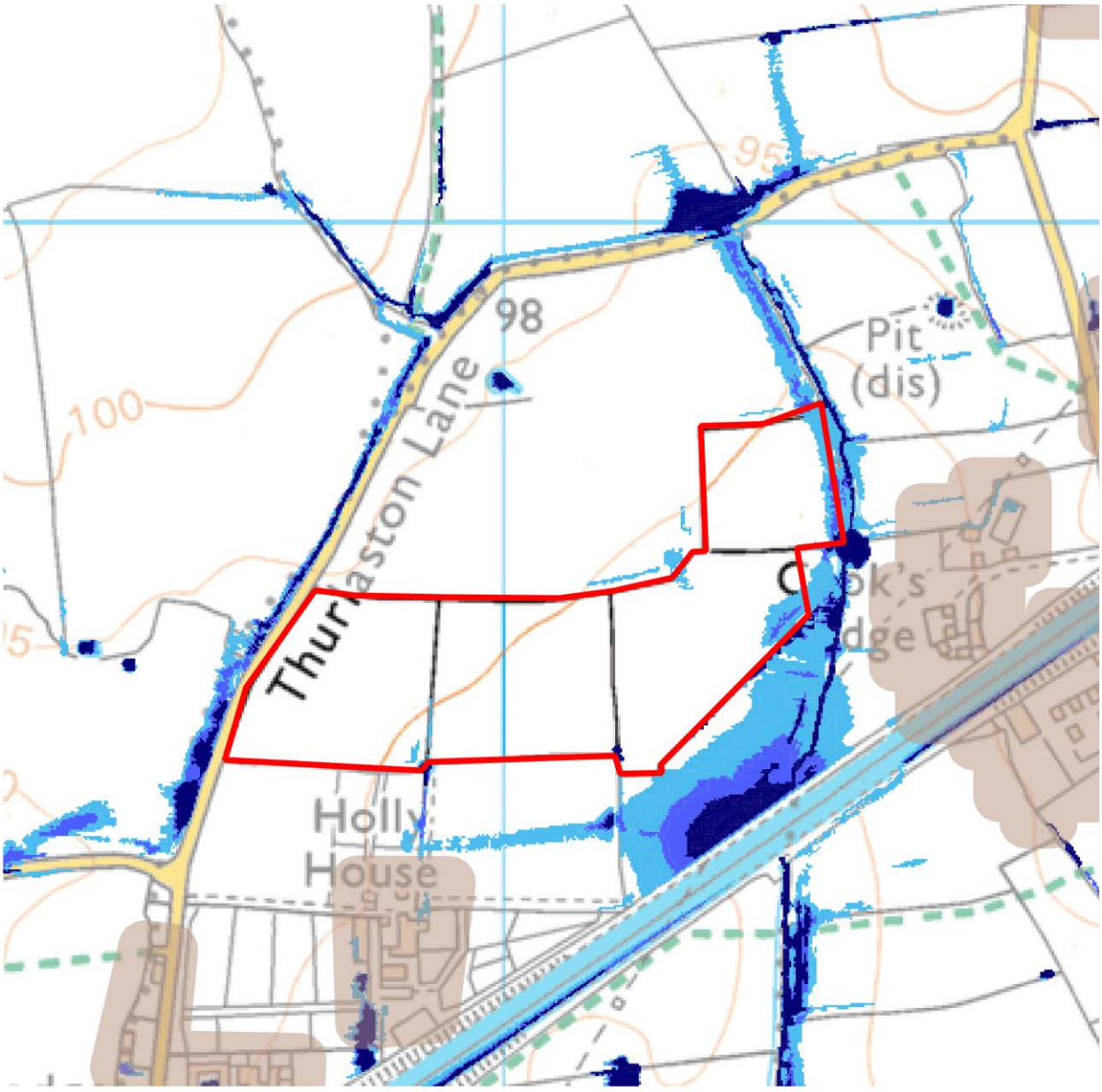
10.2.1 All sites have been mapped according to the constraints to be considered when considering the scale, use and precise location of development. **Figure 10.1** to **Figure 10.16** display constraints maps for all 16 renewable energy opportunity areas.

10.2.2 Sites have been selected and drawn according to the smallest fall over distance or buffer distance associated with the renewable energy use type for that site. All fall over distances, or buffer distances, for small, medium and large-scale development, have been displayed on the map where relevant. These fall over and buffer distances show how sites may become further constrained dependent upon the use type and scale proposed.

10.2.3 Surface water flood risk has been shown on the map in order to display potential flooding constraints within the site. Flood zones have not been mapped where no identified sites coincide with flood zones.

10.2.4 All heritage assets, biodiversity designations and greenspaces have been shown where these are located within the extent of the map. Irradiance, wind speed, aspect and gradient, whilst considered in the selection of renewable opportunity areas, have not been included on site specific mapping where these are not definitive constraints and are best evaluated via a project level analysis when considered on a detailed scale.

10.3 B1: Land West of Cook's Lodge Farm



B1
BESS 25m buffer

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site B1	SCALE@A4	1:5000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site B1_2	DATE	10/10/2025

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Figure 10.1: *Site B1*

Site information	
Site reference	B1
Site name	Land West of Cook's Lodge Farm
Site size	9.63ha
Development type	BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25

Criteria	Description	BESS score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises four small / medium-sized fields, predominantly pastoral, extending towards the M69 motorway. The topography of the site is mostly flat, dipping slightly towards the east of the site where boundary trees create some sense of enclosure. Vegetated boundaries are weaker towards the west of the site, decreasing the sense of enclosure towards Thurlaston Lane.	M
Natural land cover	Modified grassland covers the site. Site boundaries comprise young hedgerows and tall trees, with smaller hedgerows located at Thurlaston Lane and towards the farm to the south.	M/L
Land use	The site is mainly used for grazing purposes, including where the central field is subdivided by strip farming, separated by metal fencing. A small pond is located adjacent to the east of the site. Farm buildings are highly visible to the south of the site, whilst Thurlaston Lane bounds the site to the west. The M69 is largely audible and visible to the southeast, with pylons directly in the foreground. Wind turbines are visible from the site. A BESS development currently has planning permission adjacent to the north of the site.	M/L
Time-depth	Regular field patterns of planned late enclosure indicate limited historic character.	L
Perpetual and aesthetic	Although there are largely rural, partially distant views from the site, these lack scenic quality where the prominence of adjacent pylons detract from the rural character. Vehicular movement on the M69 is visible and audible to the southwest, reducing the sense of tranquility. However, the adjacent fields to the west of the site have slightly higher levels of tranquility. Numerous boundary trees and hedgerows offer some visual separation from nearby urban features.	M/L
Skyline features	Pylons form prominent skyline features to the southeast. When looking west, nearby wind turbines are visible on the skyline. The skyline is otherwise largely wooded, with distant, elevated skyline views of wind turbines to the southeast.	M/L
Inward and outward views	Direct views from the site comprise vegetated boundaries and open fields to the west. However, the nearby farmhouse to the south, the M69 and the adjacent pylons all form prominent views from the site. Limited distant views to the southeast are rural in character.	L
Value		
Landscape value	The site is grazed by cattle and occasionally used for agricultural purposes, and is bounded by hedgerows and trees, with strong urban influences. The site is not accessible to the public.	L
Visual value	There are distant views towards hills when looking southeast. Visual receptors are most likely to comprise views from Thurlaston Lane and nearby farmhouses.	L

BESS: Summary	Description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	BESS is most likely to be appropriate towards the east, closer to the motorway and pylons, or directly extending off the adjacent BESS development. Planting of high hedgerows and trees can be used to obscure development from Thurlaston Lane and nearby farmhouses.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to BESS	The site comprises small / medium pastoral fields with partial enclosure, where modified grassland is bounded by hedgerows and trees. Views from the site are rural, although the prominence of nearby farm buildings, the M69, pylons, and wind turbines, all limit levels of scenic quality and tranquility. Historic character is limited, and skyline views are dominated by wooded features and pylons. With an approved BESS site immediately north and existing energy infrastructure in view, the landscape has potential to accommodate further BESS development.

BESS: Overall Score	Small scale	Medium scale	Large scale
Low			
Medium / Low	♦	♦	♦
Medium			
High / Medium			
High			

10.4 B2: Land West of Enderby

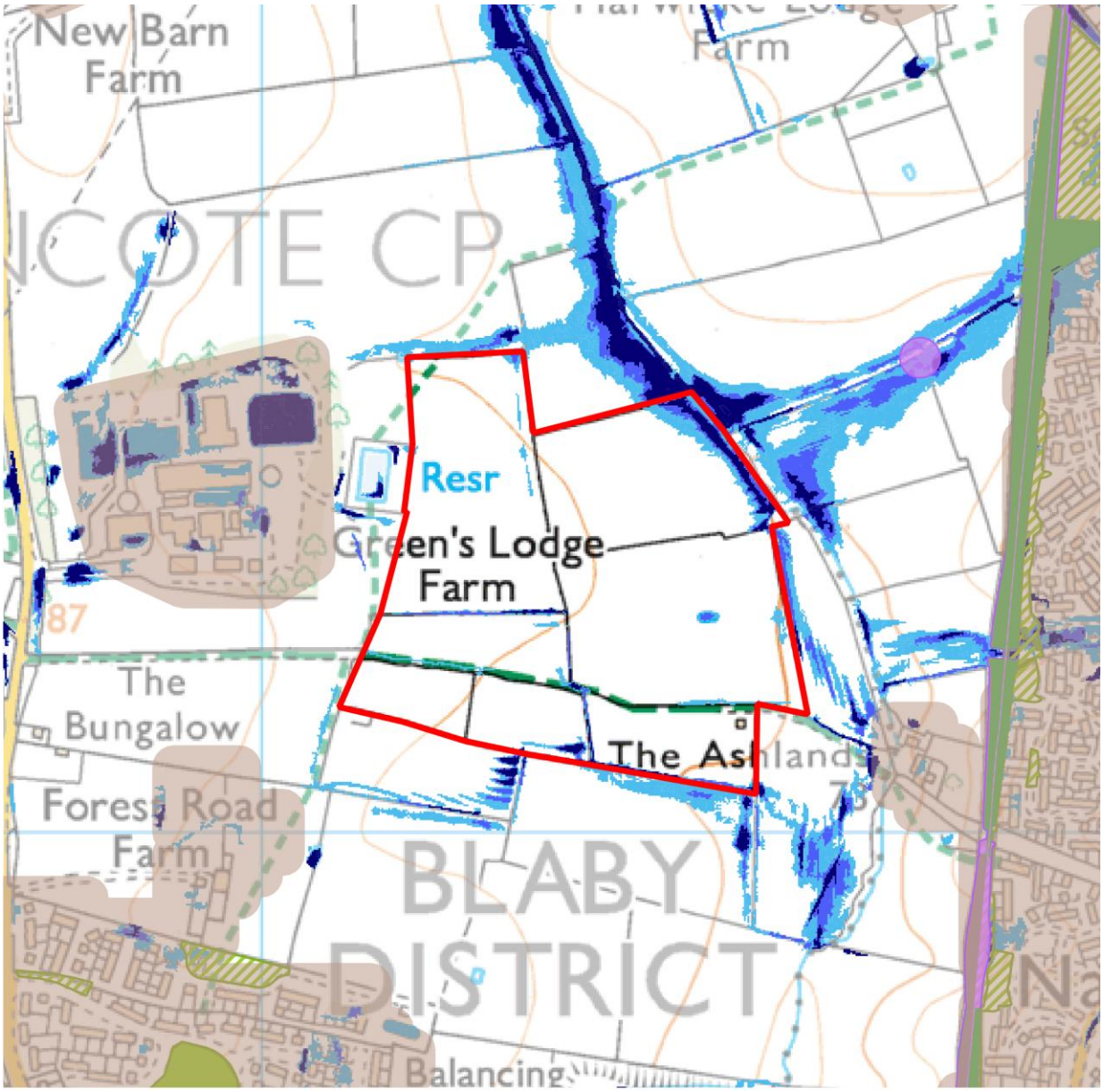


Figure 10.2: *Site B2*

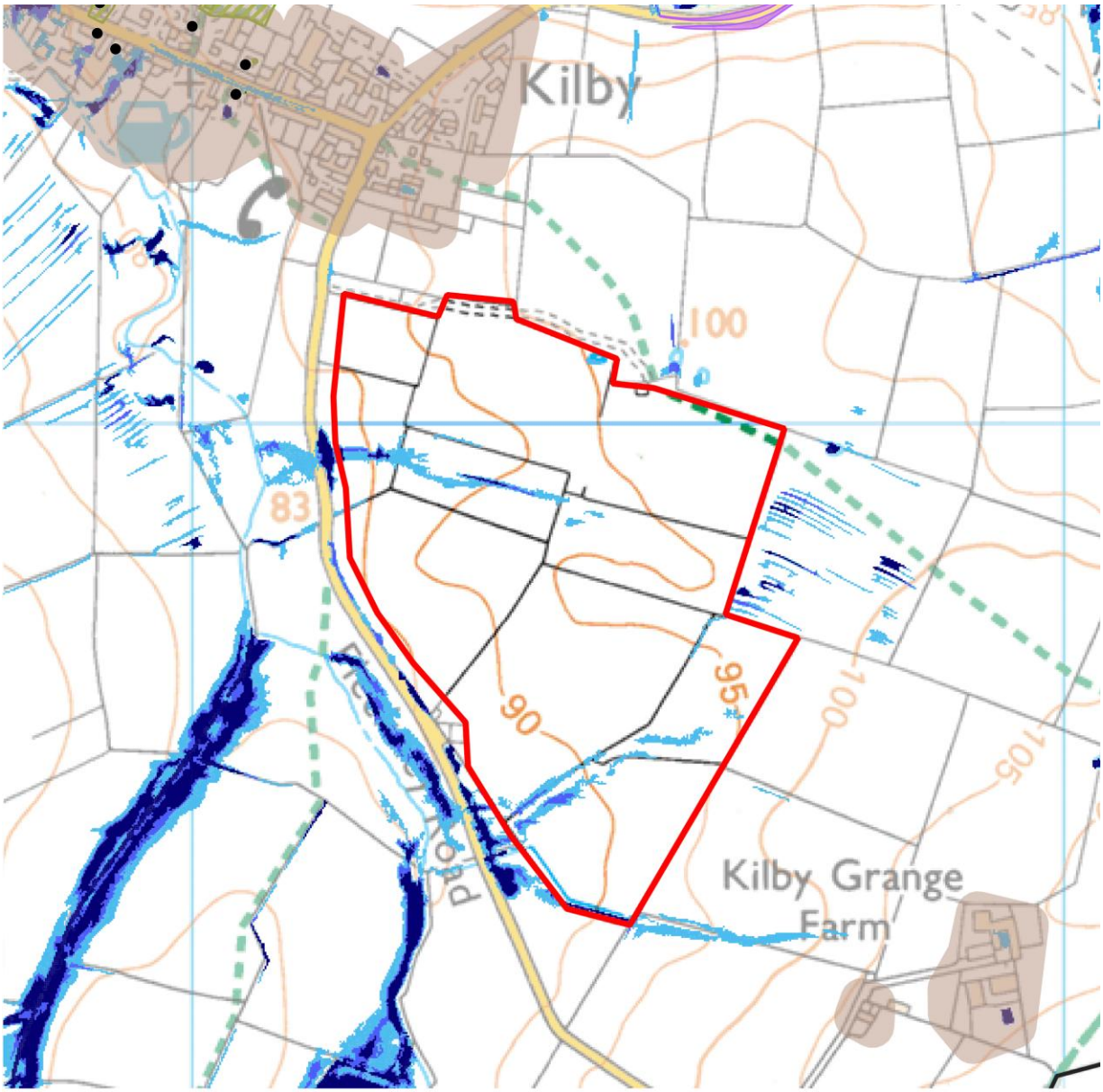
Site information	
Site reference	B2
Site name	Land West of Enderby
Site size	18.67ha
Development type	BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25

Criteria	Description	BESS score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises three medium sized agricultural fields, adjoined to four, small rectangular fields of pasture to the south. There is a strong sense of enclosure from delineating hedgerows, although the sense of openness increases to the north of the site. Topography of the site is largely flat, although rises slightly towards the west.	M/L
Natural land cover	Modified grassland covers the site. Field boundaries are defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, forming habitat corridors for nearby deciduous woodland priority habitat.	M/L
Land use	The site comprises mixed farming uses located on the urban edge of Enderby. A public bridleway runs along the pastoral field boundaries. An anaerobic digester is located immediately to the west of the site, whilst development in Huncote is visible to the south. Development in Enderby is mostly obscured by vegetation.	M/L
Time-depth	Regular field patterns of planned enclosure indicate limited historic character. The Great Northern and London and North Western Joint Railway was previously located to the east of the site, delineating Enderby.	L
Perpetual and aesthetic	There is limited scenic quality within the site, where the site is located on the urban edge of Enderby and Huncote. Croft Hill is a positively contribution to the setting where this is visible to the south of the site. Although the site is predominantly pastoral to the south, areas of rubble around the site edge detract from the scenery. A strong, unpleasant odour from the adjacent anaerobic digester detracts from any remaining sense of rural quality, particularly with the M69 audible towards the northwest.	L
Skyline features	Croft Hill is the main skyline feature visible to the southwest, as well as pylons to the northwest. Wind turbines are visible on the skyline beyond the pylons.	M/L
Inward and outward views	Views from the site are limited and are primarily vegetated, although the site is visible from Croft Hill SSSI, the highest point in the district. An anaerobic digester is visible to the east, as well as residential development in Huncote to the south.	M/L
Value		
Landscape value	Pastoral fields are lined by a public bridleway connecting Enderby to Huncote and Forest Road. A public footpath is also located to the west, in between the site and the anaerobic digester. Enjoyment of these pathways is likely interrupted by the odour from the anaerobic digester and noise from the motorway.	L
Visual value	Middle-distance views from Croft Hill are possible into the site, however the scenic character of these views are interrupted by development in Huncote. Views from the public footpaths are likely detracted from towards infrastructural development associated with the anaerobic digester and nearby pylons.	M/L

BESS: Summary	Description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	BESS development is mostly likely to be appropriate to the west of the site, adjacent to the anaerobic digester. The site would benefit from visual screening from higher boundary trees to the south, in order to obscure any potential BESS development from residential properties in Huncote.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to BESS	The site comprises three medium-sized agricultural fields and four smaller pastoral fields, with strong enclosure from hedgerows and trees connecting with nearby deciduous woodland priority habitat, though openness increases to the north. Located on the urban edge of Enderby, the site is influenced by nearby development, an adjacent anaerobic digester creating protruding odours, and the M69, all of which reduce rural quality. Historic character is limited, though Croft Hill provides a positive skyline feature, alongside pylons and distant wind turbines. Views to and from the site are generally vegetated with urban features, although middle-distance views occur from Croft Hill SSSI.

BESS: Overall Score	Small scale	Medium scale	Large scale
Low	♦		
Medium / Low		♦	♦
Medium			
High / Medium			
High			

10.5 SB1: Land East of Fleckney Road



SB1
BESS 25m buffer
Tree Protection Order
Greenspace
Local Wildlife Site
Listed buildings
Grade II
Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)
N
100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site SB1	SCALE@A4	1:6000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site SB1_2	DATE	10/10/2025

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Figure 10.3: *Site SB1*

Site information	
Site reference	SB1
Site name	East of Fleckney Road
Site size	24.67ha
Development type	Solar and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Kilby Rural Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	This site is located in the gas consultation zone.

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	BESS score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises nine fields of agricultural and pastoral use varying in size, with smaller fields located towards the north near Kilby. Although the site comprises an elevated convex landform and rising towards the east, intact field boundaries retain strong sense of enclosure.	M	M
Natural land cover	There are areas of permanent pasture within the site, grazed by sheep. The site is delineated by well-maintained, low hedgerows, occasionally interrupted by boundary trees. Kilby Community Woodland is located directly across the road to the west. A small area of woodland is located adjacent to the southwestern edge of the site.	M/L	M/L
Land use	The site is comprised of mixed farmland. Telegraph poles intersect the site. A public footpath is located to the north of the site, intersecting the edge of the north easternmost field. Fleckney Road runs adjacent to the western edge of the site.	M/L	M/L
Time-depth	The site mainly comprises post-war fields, although there is some evidence of ridge and furrow and mature hedgerow boundaries. However, the site has potential to be partially visible from a number of Grade II Listed Buildings in Kilby.	M	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	Although residential development in Kilby is visible, the rural character of the village is a positive contributor to the scenic quality; however, this does detract from the sense of remoteness. The nearby A5199 is audible from the site, as well as vehicular movement from Fleckney Road being visible.	M/L	M
Skyline features	Immediate skyline features are mostly vegetated with some telegraph poles, although middle-distance skyline views comprising pylons.	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Views from the site are largely vegetated, including of ash trees when looking outwards from the north and eastern site boundaries. The village of Kilby is visible to the north of the site.	M/L	M/L
Value			
Landscape value	A footpath extending from Kilby provides important connections to walking routes in the area. The landscape forms part of the setting for a number of Grade II Listed Buildings located nearby in Kilby, in particular from the ridge and furrow within the site.	M	M
Visual value	There is potential for views from listed buildings in Kilby to be altered, such as from Grade II Listed Building 'Church of St Mary Magdelene'. However, views to development comprising low-lying structures such as solar PV are likely to be mostly obscured by the Kilby Community Woodland. Views of BESS	M/L	H/M

	systems are more likely to be visible in the landscape, including views from the public footpath extending out from Kilby.		

Solar and BESS: Summary	Solar description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar development is best sited within the centre of the site, away from visual receptors and where there is a strong sense of enclosure. Development should be avoided within fields which contain ridge and furrow.	At this location, BESS is likely to be least inappropriate when sited towards the western area of the site within the setting of the pylons. Development should be avoided within fields which contain ridge and furrow.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to Solar and BESS	The site comprises nine elevated agricultural and pastoral fields of varying size, with smaller fields to the north near Kilby. Intact hedgerows provide strong enclosure, though ridge and furrow and mature hedgerows contribute some historic character. Views include the village of Kilby and vegetated skylines with distant pylons, while nearby roads and audible traffic reduce tranquility. The site forms part of the setting for nearby Grade II Listed Buildings, though woodland provides partial screening. This site has some potential to integrate solar PV into the landscape.	The site comprises nine agricultural and pastoral fields with strong enclosure from low hedgerows and occasional trees. It lies on an elevated convex landform near Kilby, with views influenced by surrounding vegetation, Kilby village, and distant pylons. Rural qualities are diminished by visible infrastructure and traffic noise, though heritage features such as ridge and furrow and the setting of Grade II Listed Buildings contribute to sensitivity. This site has limited potential to accommodate BESS where this is likely to form a dominant landscape feature, although the PRoW to the north of the site would likely require redirection.

Solar and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low						
Medium / Low	♦					
Medium		♦	♦	♦	♦	
High / Medium						♦
High						

10.6 SB2: Land south of M69

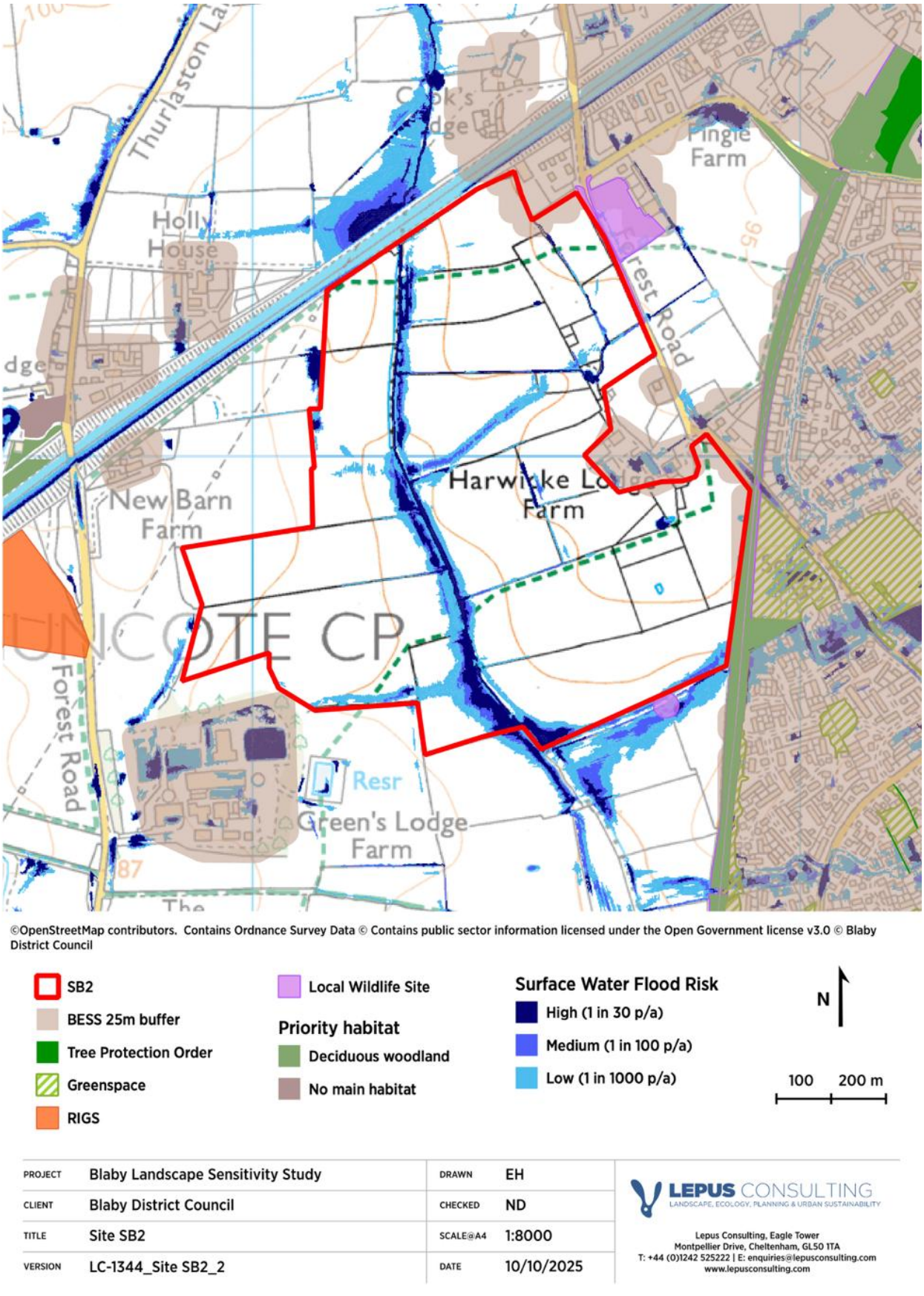


Figure 10.4: *Site SB2*

Site information	
Site reference	SB2
Site name	Land south of M69
Site size	64.99ha
Development type	Solar and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	BESS score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	This is a large site comprising numerous fields of varying shapes and sizes, bounded by well-maintained, intact hedgerows to the east, and high hedgerows and trees to the north. A strong sense of enclosure within hedgerow networks is exacerbated by the gently undulating, concave landform.	M/L	M/L
Natural land cover	A-shaped hedgerows delineate the boundary to Forest Road. An individual tree lies within the centre of the northernmost field. Two LWSs lie adjacent to the site, comprising 'Ashlands Crack Willow' to the south and 'Forest Road grassland, hedges and verges' to the northwest. The land cover otherwise comprises farmland, and hedgerow networks connecting to the adjacent deciduous woodland priority habitat.	M/L	M/L
Land use	Paddocks are present towards the east of the site, whilst agricultural fields are located towards the west. Pylons are located just outside of the westernmost corners of the site, whilst the M69 delineates the site to the north. An anaerobic digester is located adjacent to the southwest. Residential development, including farm buildings and urban development in Enderby, is presented to the east of the site. Public footpaths traverse the site from east to west.	M/L	M/L
Time-depth	Regular field patterns of planned enclosure indicate a lack of historic character. The Great Northern and London and North Western Joint Railway was previously located adjacent to the east of the site, delineating Enderby. Some field boundaries have been lost since the 1800s, creating larger, more open fields.	M/L	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	A strong, pastoral landscape comprising paddocks is present towards the east of the site, with A-shaped, low hedgerows contributing to the scenic quality. However, unpleasant odour from the adjacent anaerobic digester largely detracts from the scenic quality. Tranquility is lowered by high levels of noise from the M69 to the north, where filtered views are possible from the site. The sense of remoteness increases towards the centre of the site, however, this is limited by the presence of development in Enderby and Huncote.	M/L	M
Skyline features	Skyline views are present towards elevated landforms, such as where middle-distance views of Croft Hill is visible. Pylons also feature a prominent skyline view.	M	M
Inward and outward views	Limited views are possible into the site from Croft Hill. The anaerobic digester to the west is visible from the site, whilst filtered views towards the M69 are visible to the north. Deciduous woodland priority habitat largely views towards development in Enderby.	M/L	M
Value			

Landscape value	Whistle Way is a popular local walking route which is located to the east of the site alongside the disused railway line, connecting to public footpaths within the site. Adjacent LWSs contribute to the surrounding character, including where 'Forest Road grassland, hedges and verges' contain A-lined hedgerows.	M	M
Visual value	There is potential for filtered views from Whistle Way. Views from the M69 into the site are fleeting, however views across the site are possible from the adjacent farm to the east. Development has potential to alter views from Croft Hill, a popular walking location being the highest point in the district. A-lined hedgerows adjacent to Forest Road are a key visual feature.	M	M

Solar and BESS: Summary	Solar description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar PV development would be most appropriate to the northwest of the site, adjacent to the M69, or to the southwest adjacent to the anaerobic digester. There is also potential for development to be situated within agricultural fields towards the centre of the site. Walking routes connecting to Whistle Way should be retained, with views towards development obscured from these receptors.	BESS development would be most appropriately sited towards the northwest of the site, adjacent to the M69, or to the southwest adjacent to the anaerobic digester. Walking routes connecting to Whistle Way should be retained, with views towards development obscured from these receptors.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to Solar and BESS	The site comprises numerous agricultural and pastoral fields bounded by intact hedgerows and trees, with a gently undulating, concave landform enhancing the sense of enclosure. Deciduous woodland priority habitat and LWS's enhance the landscape setting, although this is detracted from by noise from the M69 and odours from the nearby anaerobic digester. Views from Croft Hill, and PRoW networks connecting to Whistle Way, have potential to be impacted by solar PV development.	The site comprises numerous agricultural and pastoral fields bounded by intact hedgerows and trees, with a gently undulating, concave landform enhancing the sense of enclosure. Deciduous woodland priority habitat and LWS's enhance the landscape setting, although this is detracted from by noise from the M69 and odours from the nearby anaerobic digester. Views from Croft Hill, and PRoW networks connecting to Whistle Way, have potential to be impacted by BESS development, where this is likely to incorporate more visible industrial features into the landscape.

Solar and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low						
Medium / Low	♦					
Medium		♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
High / Medium						
High						

10.7 SB3: Land off Aston Lane

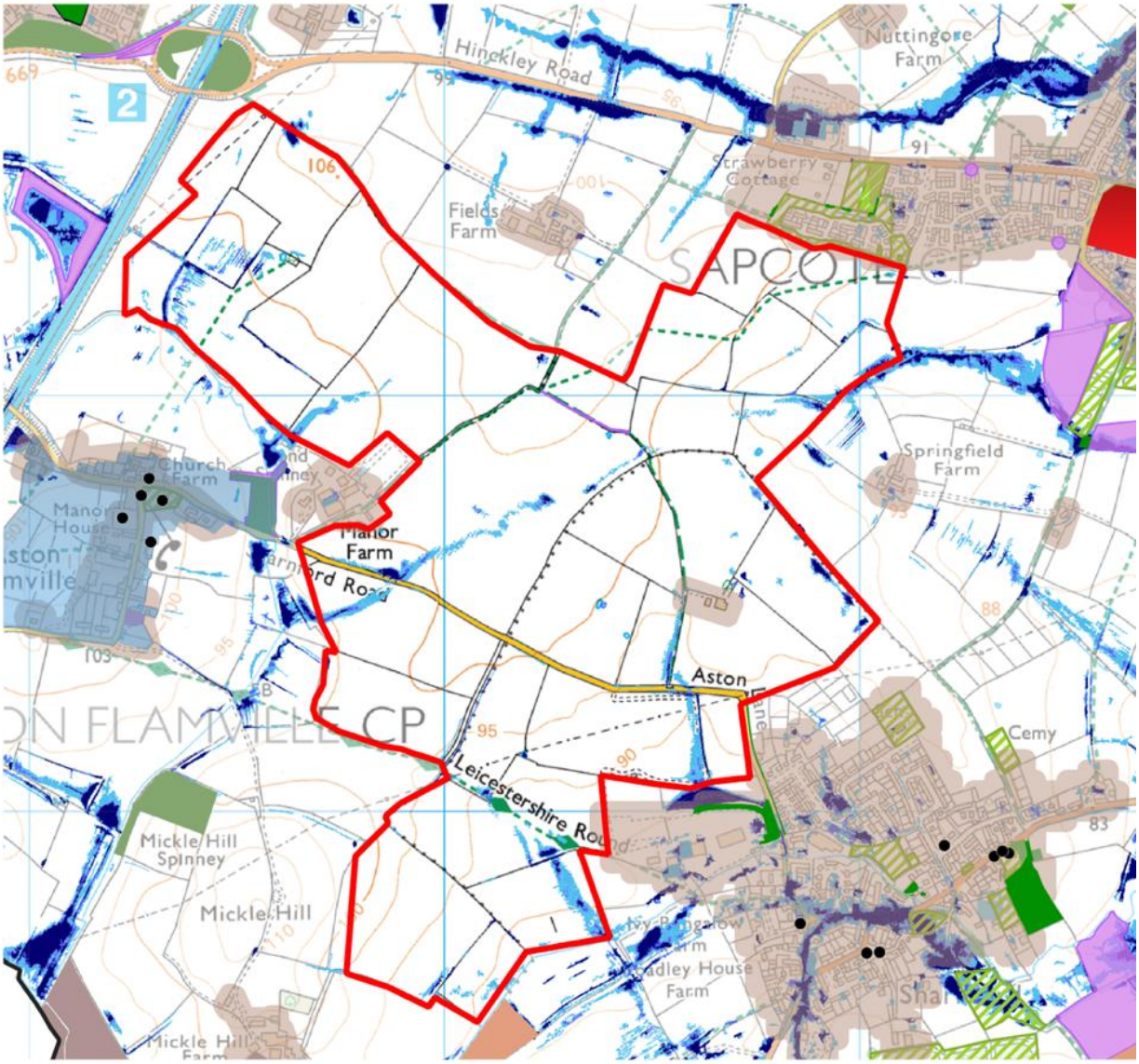


Figure 10.5: *Site SB3*

Site information	
Site reference	SB3
Site name	Land off Aston Lane
Site size	193.98ha
Development type	Solar and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland and Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	BESS score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	This is a large site with an extensive number of medium to large sized agricultural fields, bounded by bushy, intact hedgerows. The topography is mostly flat, comprising lowland farmland with slight undulations which contribute to a sense of enclosure, although some intervisibility is possible when looking south.	M/L	M/L
Natural land cover	Agricultural farmland covers the site. 'Dead Elm Hedgerow' LWS lies within the northern area of the site. Soar Brook defines an area of the southern boundary, adjacent to good quality semi-improved grassland priority habitat outside the site. Boundary trees to the north include ash and berry.	L	M/L
Land use	The site is used for agricultural farming purposes. Sharnford Road / Aston Lane intersects the site. Pylons are located within the northwestern corner. Residential development in Sapcote lies adjacent to the north, whilst industrial development in Sharnford lies adjacent to the south. M69 is located in close proximity to the site to the northwest. There are interconnecting PRoW networks within the northern portion of the site, whilst a public footpath in the southern section connects Sharnford to Aston Flamville. Other human influences include small-scale metal barrier fencing in the northeastern edge of the site, whilst telegraph poles are located to the south.	L	M/L
Time-depth	Aston Flamville Conservation Area is located in close proximity to the west of the site, acting as a historic buffer between the site and the motorway. Fields within the site, in particular closer to the road, were split into smaller fields within the 1800s, however some boundaries have been removed to create more open areas of piecemeal enclosure.	M/L	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	The M69 motorway is highly audible from the site, as well as vehicular noise and movement from Sharnford Road / Aston Lane. The site lacks distinctive features, comprising visually deteriorating agricultural lowland farmland. Aston Flamville is a small, rural village to the west which positively contributes to the scenic character within the setting between the site and the motorway. The sense of remoteness to limited, decreasing towards the roads.	L	M/L
Skyline features	The skyline is mostly characterised by trees and vegetation, however pylons within the site are visible to the northwest. Wind turbines are visible on the skyline when looking southwest.	L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Some intervisibility is possible within the site, creating middle-distance views towards pockets of vegetation and agricultural fields. Industrial development in Sharnford is visible when looking south. Views into the site are also possible from residential development in Sapcote, although partially obscured	M/L	M/L

	by boundary trees. Limited views are possible from Grade II Listed Buildings in Aston Flamville.		
Value			
Landscape value	PRoW networks intersecting the site provide opportunities for rural walking routes for nearby residential development in Sharnford, Sapcote and Aston Flamville. Amenity greenspace is located adjacent to the north of the site at Lime Avenue. The site plays a role in preserving the rural feel of Aston Flamville Conservation Area. 'Dead Elm Hedgerow' LWS lies within the northern area of the site.	M/L	M/L
Visual value	Limited, middle-distance views into the site are possible from Aston Flamville Conservation Area where this is slightly elevated, including from the top of Grade II Listed building 'Church of St Peter' and 'Pigeoncote at Manor Farm'. Mickle Hill, a small, elevated area to the southwest, also provides views into the site from the associated farm track.	M/L	M/L

Solar and BESS: Summary	Solar description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Tall vegetation and bushy hedgerows should be retained and planted to obscure solar PV development from surrounding receptors, including from heritage assets in Aston Flamville and residential development in Sapcote. Solar PV development would be most appropriately sited to the northwest of the site, in close proximity to the M69, or to the south of Aston Lane.	Tall vegetation and bushy hedgerows should be retained and planted to obscure BESS development from surrounding receptors, including from heritage assets in Aston Flamville and residential development in Sapcote. BESS development would be most appropriately sited to the southeast, to integrate with industrial development in Sharnford.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to Solar and BESS	The site comprises extensive medium to large agricultural fields enclosed by bushy hedgerows, with flat lowland farmland and slight undulations providing partial enclosure. An LWS comprising hedgerows lies within the site, whilst adjacent habitats include semi-improved grassland along Soar Brook. Whilst rural qualities are diminished by proximity to the M69, pylons, and nearby settlements, low-lying solar PV could be contained within existing vegetation, reducing visibility from PRoW and nearby villages.	The site comprises extensive medium to large agricultural fields enclosed by bushy hedgerows, with flat lowland farmland and slight undulations providing partial enclosure. An LWS comprising hedgerows lies within the site, whilst adjacent habitats include semi-improved grassland along Soar Brook. Whilst rural qualities are diminished by proximity to the M69, pylons, and nearby settlements, BESS development has potential to be integrated within nearby industrial areas.

Solar and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low	♦					
Medium / Low		♦	♦	♦	♦	
Medium						♦
High / Medium						
High						

10.8 SB4: Land south of Croft

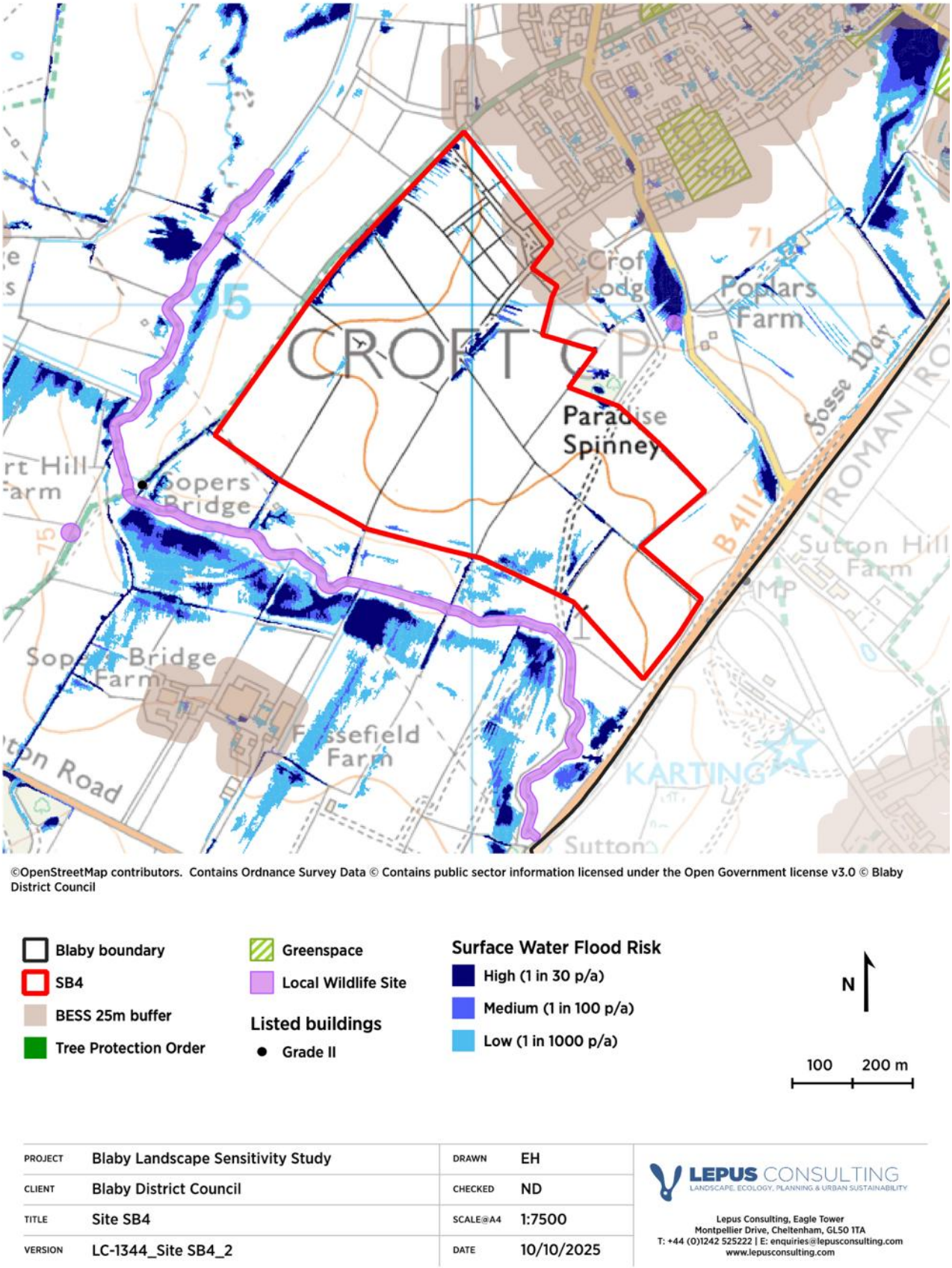


Figure 10.6: *Site SB4*

Site information	
Site reference	SB4
Site name	Land south of Croft
Site size	34.60ha
Development type	Solar and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	This site is located in the gas consultation zone.

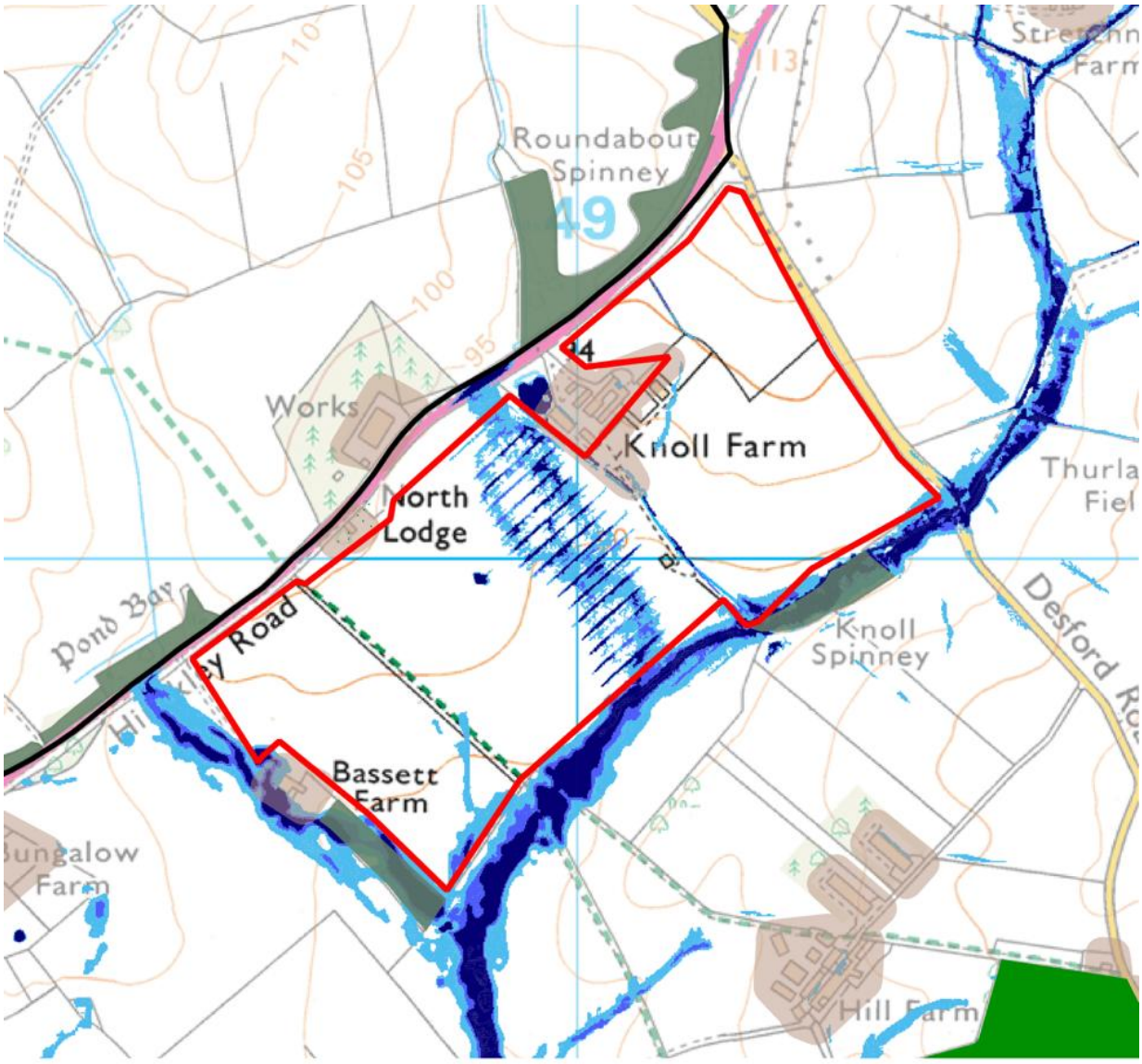
Criteria	Description	Solar Score	BESS score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises eleven medium to large-scale arable fields, as well as one field of pasture. The fields are bounded by strong, intact hedgerows and trees, creating a strong sense of enclosure. Topography is mostly flat, rising slightly from northwest to southeast.	L	L
Natural land cover	The site is mostly comprises of arable fields; however, a singular field of pasture is located to the north, covered with dock and grazed by horses. A veteran tree is located within the hedgerows of the northwestern boundary, whilst a small clump of trees are located within the centre of the site. A combination of mature hedgerows and young, bushy hedgerows define field boundaries. The River Soar is located in close proximity to the south and east of the site.	L	M/L
Land use	Land use is predominately arable, with a small area of pasture comprising horse paddocks within the northern area. A public bridleway provides walking routes from Croft adjacent to the northwestern boundary. Residential development in Croft is visible to the north.	L	M/L
Time-depth	The site comprises fields of piecemeal enclosure, with some field boundaries defined by mature hedgerows. Ridge and furrow is present within the horse paddocks. A small area of plantation woodland, a ‘spinney’, is located adjacent to the east of the site.	M/L	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	A horse paddock, in a semi-natural state, creates a moderately attractive linkage between Croft and adjacent arable fields. Sense of remoteness and tranquility is low whereby settlements and telecommunications infrastructure are clearly visible. Movement and noise from passing trains is possible when looking northwards.	L	M/L
Skyline features	The skyline is interspersed with occasional areas of woodland, telegraph poles and pylons. Croft Hill forms a prominent feature against the skyline towards the north of the site when viewing from the bridleway.	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Field boundaries are defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees of varying heights, creating a visual impression of layers of trees when looking at the foreground against the hinter ground. Views to the northwest are interspersed with settlements and telecommunication infrastructure. Views into the site are possible from Croft Hill.	M/L	M/L
Value			

Landscape value	A spinney, comprising a small area of plantation woodland, lies adjacent to the east of the site, which is now an unusual feature in Leicestershire where most have been cut down for development purposes. The public bridleway adjacent to the northwestern boundary is well-kept and popular with walkers. A small area of ridge and furrow within the horse paddocks contributes to the historic character of the site.	M/L	M/L
Visual value	Development is unlikely to obscure views towards Croft Hill from the public bridleway, where this is located to the north of the site. However, Croft Hill provides expansive views across the district, including across the site.	M/L	M

Solar and BESS: Summary	Solar description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar PV development is most appropriately sited within arable fields towards the south of the site. Tall boundary hedgerows should be retained to help obscure development, in particular from surrounding residential properties and the public bridleway.	BESS development is most appropriately sited within arable fields towards the south of the site, in proximity to the pylons. Tall boundary hedgerows should be retained to help obscure development, in particular from surrounding residential properties and the public bridleway.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to Solar and BESS	This site comprises eleven medium to large arable fields and one pastoral field, well-enclosed by intact mature and young hedgerows. Topography is mostly flat with slight elevation to the southeast. Croft Hill is visible on the skyline, however rural qualities are reduced by views of settlements, pylons, and telecommunication infrastructure, though some historic character remains through ridge and furrow in the horse paddocks to the north of the site. There is potential for solar PV to be integrated within the site, providing adequate screening is maintained.	This site comprises eleven medium to large arable fields and one pastoral field, well-enclosed by intact mature and young hedgerows. Topography is mostly flat with slight elevation to the southeast. Croft Hill is visible on the skyline, however rural qualities are reduced by views of settlements, pylons, and telecommunication infrastructure, though some historic character remains through ridge and furrow in the horse paddocks to the north of the site. There is potential for small to medium scale BESS to be located within the site, particularly where this can integrate with the industrial character of the pylons.

Solar and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low	♦	♦				
Medium / Low			♦	♦	♦	
Medium						♦
High / Medium						
High						

10.9 SB5: Land south of Leicester Road A47



Blaby boundary
SB5
BESS 25m buffer
Tree Protection Order

Priority habitat
Deciduous woodland

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site SB5	SCALE@A4	1:8000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site SB5_1	DATE	10/10/2025

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Figure 10.7: *Site SB5*

Site information	
Site reference	SB5
Site name	Land south of Leicester Road A47
Site size	44.14ha
Development type	Solar and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Normanton Agricultural Parkland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	BESS score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises three medium and two small arable fields, bounded by mostly intact low hedgerows, and hedgerow trees. Hedgerows are higher adjacent to the roads. There is a strong sense of openness across the site, with gently undulating topography.	M	H/M
Natural land cover	Arable fields cultivate wheat crop. Deciduous woodland priority habitat lies adjacent to the south and west of the site.	L	M/L
Land use	The site is used for agricultural purposes. A public footpath runs from north to south, connecting to Thurlaston. The A47 runs adjacent to the north of the site, and Desford Road to the east. Farms are dotted within the surrounding landscape including adjacent to the site. A solar farm currently has planning permission adjacent to the southernmost corner; however, this has not yet been constructed.	L	M/L
Time-depth	The site comprises fields of planned enclosure. Field boundaries have been removed to create a more open field in the centre. The site previously comprised a spinney.	L	L
Perpetual and aesthetic	Vehicular noise and movement from the A47 to the north largely detracts from the sense of tranquility. However, the landscape is visible scenic, with a sense of openness and gently rolling topography.	M	M
Skyline features	The skyline is mostly wooded with some individual trees. Long-distance views of pylons are visible to the south.	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Views from the site mostly comprise open views of trees and fields within the landscape setting. Views towards Thurlaston are possible although are largely obscured, including by a small area of woodland 'The Holt' by Thurlaston.	M	M
Value			
Landscape value	Fields are partially bounded by low, well-managed hedgerows, enhancing intervisibility towards the wider landscape. A public footpath runs through the site, whilst Desford Road separates the site from the A47 car boot sale	M/L	M
Visual value	Glimpsed views into the site are possible from the adjacent roads. However, views from the public footpath within the site have potential to be altered, in particular where is a high level of intervisibility.	M/L	M

Solar and BESS: Summary	Solar description	BESS description

Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar PV development is best sited towards the southeastern corner of the site, where a slight dip in topography allows for views to be partially obscured. Increasing the height of boundary hedgerows would limit views further.	BESS development is best sited towards the southeastern corner of the site, where a slight dip in topography allows for views to be partially obscured. Increasing the height of boundary hedgerows would limit views further.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to Solar and BESS	The site comprises three medium and two small arable fields, with low hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Gently undulating topography and contributes to openness, with long-distance wooded skylines and pylons to the south. Rural qualities are reduced by noise and movement from the adjacent A47, though scenic value remains. A public footpath runs through the site, offering open views across the landscape. Low-lying solar PV could be accommodated within the existing field structure, if integrated into the surrounding vegetation and topography.	The site comprises three medium and two small arable fields, with low hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Gently undulating topography and contributes to openness, with long-distance wooded skylines and pylons to the south. Rural qualities are reduced by noise and movement from the adjacent A47, though scenic value remains. A public footpath runs through the site, offering open views across the landscape. Industrial BESS structures are likely to be in juxtaposition with the scenic character and would be best to consider only on a small-scale.

Solar and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low						
Medium / Low	♦					
Medium		♦	♦	♦		
High / Medium					♦	♦
High						

10.10 SWB1: Land north of Thurlaston Lane

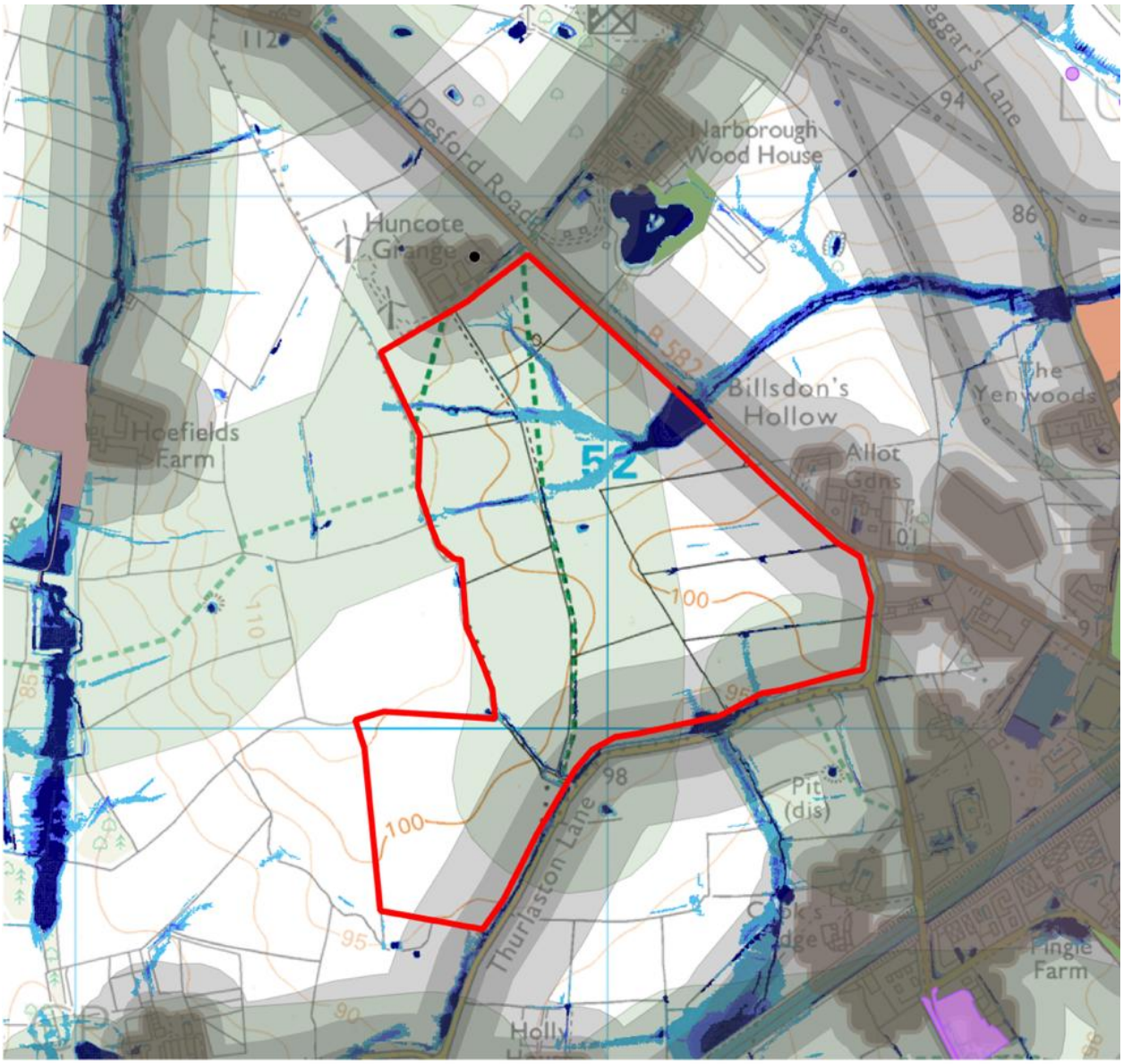


Figure 10.8: *Site SWB1*

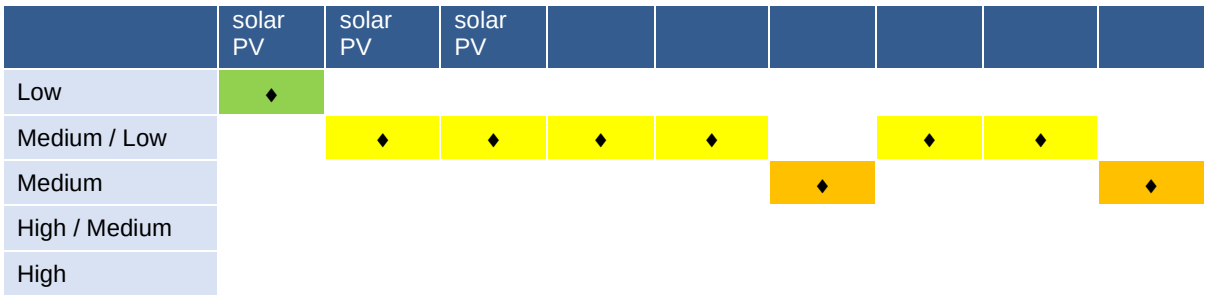
Site information	
Site reference	SWB1
Site name	Land north of Thurlaston Lane
Site size	62.37ha
Development type	Solar, wind and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	Wind score	BESS score
Susceptibility				
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises ten small agricultural fields bounded by low hedgerows and irregular trees creating minimal enclosure. Topography across the site is mostly flat, although slightly more elevated towards the west.	M	M	M
Natural land cover	The site is covered by agricultural farmland, with fields bounded by some hedgerows and mature oak trees.	L	M/L	M/L
Land use	The site is used for agricultural purposes, including for maize production, where a farm is located adjacent to the northern boundary. Roads with high vehicle traffic surround the west and southern boundaries, whilst the M69 is situated in close proximity to the south. A small area of slurry is located within the southern portion of the site. Utility poles traverse the site, whilst public footpaths run across the site from north to south. This site is characterised by renewable energy development, where wind turbines are situated directly adjacent to the north. There is planning permission for solar PV farm to be constructed directly adjacent to the west, and a BESS development to the south.	L	M/L	M/L
Time-depth	The site is composed of small rectilinear fields, where some fields boundaries have been removed since the 1800s. These fields contribute to the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange' which is located adjacent to the north of the site.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	Constant traffic flow is present along the adjacent roads, where vehicular movement and noise detract from the sense of tranquility. The sense of remoteness increases towards the centre of the site. A moderate sense of visual scenic quality prevails across the site, with wooded skylines and in some areas, middle to long-distance views are possible. However, a pungent odour from slurry disrupts the scenic character, potentially in combination with the nearby anaerobic digester	M/L	M	M
Skyline features	There are short skyline views towards ash trees. However, this is detracted from by tall, man-made features such as short-distance views towards wind turbines, and middle-distance views towards pylons.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Middle distance views from the site primarily comprise woodland and intervisibility towards arable fields. There is some visibility towards development in Enderby and the M69 when looking south.	L	M/L	M/L
Value				

Landscape value	Public footpaths within the site create opportunities for recreational use. The presence of mature trees, including oak trees, contributes to the landscape value. The site forms part of the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange'.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Visual value	There is potential for views to be altered from the public footpaths within the site. Fleeting views into the site are possible from the adjacent roads.	L	M/L	M/L

Solar, wind and BESS: Summary	Solar description	Wind description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar PV development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the western edge, extending off the forthcoming solar PV farm. Cumulative effects from extending development would need to be carefully evaluated, where this could risk dominating the landscape. Views would benefit from an increase in vegetation height, particularly along PRoWs and to obscure views from 'Huncote Grange'.	Wind development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the north edge, extending off the existing wind turbines. Cumulative effects from extending development would need to be carefully evaluated, where this could risk dominating the landscape. Careful siting should be considered along the topography, where the height and design of turbines should appear visually similar to adjacent turbines. Siting should carefully consider the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange'.	BESS development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the southern edge, extending off the forthcoming BESS site and blending in with man-made influences such as pylons, the motorway and industrial development to the south. Cumulative effects from extending development would need to be carefully evaluated, where this could risk dominating the landscape. Views would benefit from an increase in vegetation height, particularly along PRoWs, and to obscure views from 'Huncote Grange'.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to solar, wind and BESS	The site comprises ten small agricultural fields with low hedgerows and scattered trees, providing minimal enclosure and an open character, especially to the south where land is more elevated. Surrounded by high-traffic roads and close to the M69, rural qualities are diminished by infrastructure, odour from slurry, and nearby renewable energy schemes, including consented solar PV to the west. Whilst visible from public footpaths and adjacent roads, low-profile solar PV could be integrated into the gently rolling landform.	The site comprises ten small agricultural fields with low hedgerows and scattered trees, providing minimal enclosure and an open character, especially to the south where land is more elevated. Surrounded by high-traffic roads and close to the M69, rural qualities are diminished by infrastructure, odour from slurry, and nearby renewable energy schemes, including consented solar PV to the west. Whilst there is good scope for wind turbines to integrate with existing wind development, cumulative impacts would require consideration is more turbines where to be built in this location.	The site comprises ten small agricultural fields with low hedgerows and scattered trees, providing minimal enclosure and an open character, especially to the south where land is more elevated. Surrounded by high-traffic roads and close to the M69, rural qualities are diminished by infrastructure, odour from slurry, and nearby renewable energy schemes, including consented BESS to the south. Whilst visible from public footpaths and adjacent roads, small to medium BESS could be integrated into the gently rolling landform in proximity to existing industrial areas, pylons and roads.

Solar, wind and BESS: Overall Score	Small array	Medium array	Large array	Small scale wind	Medium scale wind	Large scale wind	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS


solar PV
solar PV
solar PV
Low
Medium / Low
Medium
High / Medium
High

10.11 SWB2: Land off Desford Road

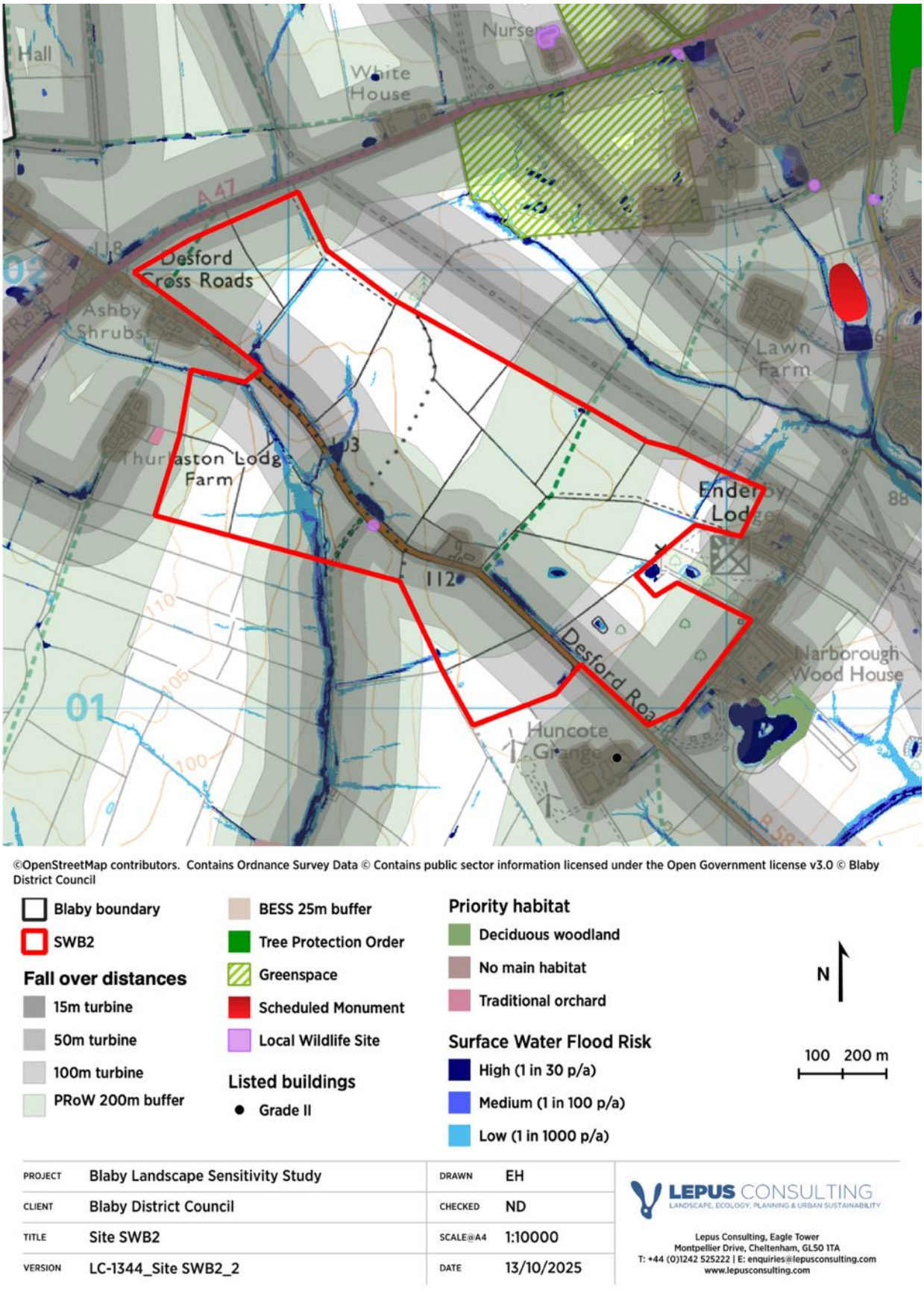


Figure 10.9: *Site SWB2*

Site information	
Site reference	SWB2
Site name	Land off Desford Road
Site size	84.51ha
Development type	Solar, wind and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

Criteria	Description	Solar Score	Wind score	BESS score
Susceptibility				
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises numerous agricultural fields of varying sizes, bounded by intact bushy hedgerows of varying heights allowing for a moderate sense of openness. There is a stronger sense of enclosure towards the northern edge of the site. The topography of the site is flat, with some minor undulations.	M/L	M	M
Natural land cover	The site is covered by agricultural farmland, with fields bounded by some hedgerows and mature trees. LWS 'Desford Road Oak' is located in the centre of the site along Desford Road. Traditional Orchard priority habitat is located in close proximity to the west of the site.	L	M/L	M/L
Land use	The site is used for agricultural purposes, with farm buildings dotted near to the edges of the site. Busy roads dominate the site, where Desford Road runs through the site and the A47 adjacent to the north, both with high traffic volumes. Public footpaths connecting to New Lubbesthorpe run from east to west. Telegraph poles traverse the site, where pylons are located directly to the northwest. Cabling is most prominent towards the north of the site. This site is characterised by renewable energy development, where wind turbines are situated directly adjacent to the south, and there is planning permission for solar PV farm to be constructed directly adjacent to the southwest. Additionally, a smaller solar farm is situated adjacent to the southeast.	L	M/L	M/L
Time-depth	The site is composed of fields of planned enclosure, where some field boundaries have been removed since the 1800s. These fields contribute to the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange' which is located directly to the south of the site.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	Constant traffic flow is present along the A47 and Desford Road, where vehicular movement and noise largely detract from the sense of tranquility. A moderate sense of visual scenic quality prevails across the south of the site, in comparison to the north where views are comprised of heavy cabling from pylons and telegraph poles.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Skyline features	Tall, man-made features perpetuate the skyline such as short-distance views towards wind turbines and pylons. Limited, long-distance skyline views of wooded elevated land and settlements are possible towards the south.	M/L	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Middle distance views from the site primarily comprise vegetation. Cabling forms a dominant view to the north.	L	M/L	M/L
Value				

Landscape value	Public footpaths within the site create opportunities for recreational use. The presence of mature trees, in particular LWS 'Desford Road Oak', contribute to the landscape value. The site forms part of the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange".	M/L	M/L	M/L
Visual value	There is potential for views to be altered from the public footpaths within the site. Fleeting views into the site are possible from the roads.	L	M/L	M/L

Solar, wind and BESS: Summary	Solar description	Wind description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Solar PV development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the western edge, extend off the forthcoming solar PV farm. Cumulative effects from extending development would need to be carefully evaluated, where this could risk dominating the landscape. Views would benefit from an increase in vegetation height, particularly along PRoWs and to obscure views from 'Huncote Grange'.	Wind development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the southern edge, extend off the existing wind turbines. Cumulative effects from extending development would need to be carefully evaluated, where this could risk dominating the landscape. Turbines should be carefully designed where these should appear visually similar to adjacent turbines. Siting should carefully consider the setting of Grade II Listed Building 'Huncote Grange'.	BESS development at this site is most likely to be appropriately located towards the northern edge, where this can integrate with other man-made influences such as pylons and the A47. Views would benefit from an increase in vegetation height, particularly along PRoWs, and to obscure views from 'Huncote Grange'.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to solar, wind and BESS	The site comprises numerous agricultural fields of varying sizes, bounded by intact, bushy hedgerows and scattered mature trees, providing a moderate sense of openness with stronger enclosure towards the north. Flat topography with minor undulations characterise the site, which contains an LWS comprising mature trees along Desford Road. Surrounded by high-traffic roads, including the A47 to the north and Desford Road running through the site, rural qualities are diminished by constant vehicular movement, cabling, pylons, and adjacent renewable energy schemes, including existing and consented solar PV and wind turbines. Overall, landscape sensitivity is lower to the north of the site. Whilst visible from public footpaths and adjacent roads, low-profile solar PV could be	The site comprises numerous agricultural fields of varying sizes, bounded by intact, bushy hedgerows and scattered mature trees, providing a moderate sense of openness with stronger enclosure towards the north. Flat topography with minor undulations characterise the site, which contains an LWS comprising mature trees along Desford Road. Surrounded by high-traffic roads, including the A47 to the north and Desford Road running through the site, rural qualities are diminished by constant vehicular movement, cabling, pylons, and adjacent renewable energy schemes, including existing and consented solar PV and wind turbines. Overall, landscape sensitivity is lower to the north of the site. Whilst visible from public footpaths and adjacent roads, wind turbines have potential to	The site comprises numerous agricultural fields of varying sizes, bounded by intact, bushy hedgerows and scattered mature trees, providing a moderate sense of openness with stronger enclosure towards the north. Flat topography with minor undulations characterise the site, which contains an LWS comprising mature trees along Desford Road. Surrounded by high-traffic roads, including the A47 to the north and Desford Road running through the site, rural qualities are diminished by constant vehicular movement, cabling, pylons, and adjacent renewable energy schemes, including existing and consented solar PV and wind turbines. Overall, landscape sensitivity is lower to the north of the site. Whilst visible from public footpaths and adjacent roads, BESS could be integrated into the

	integrated into the agricultural field pattern.	integrate into existing prominent skyline features such as pylons and other turbines.	landscape to the north of the site.

Solar, wind and BESS: Overall Score	Small array solar PV	Medium array solar PV	Large array solar PV	Small scale wind	Medium scale wind	Large scale wind	Small scale BESS	Medium scale BESS	Large scale BESS
Low	♦	♦							
Medium / Low			♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	
Medium						♦			♦
High / Medium									
High									

10.12 W1: Land east of Barley Lane

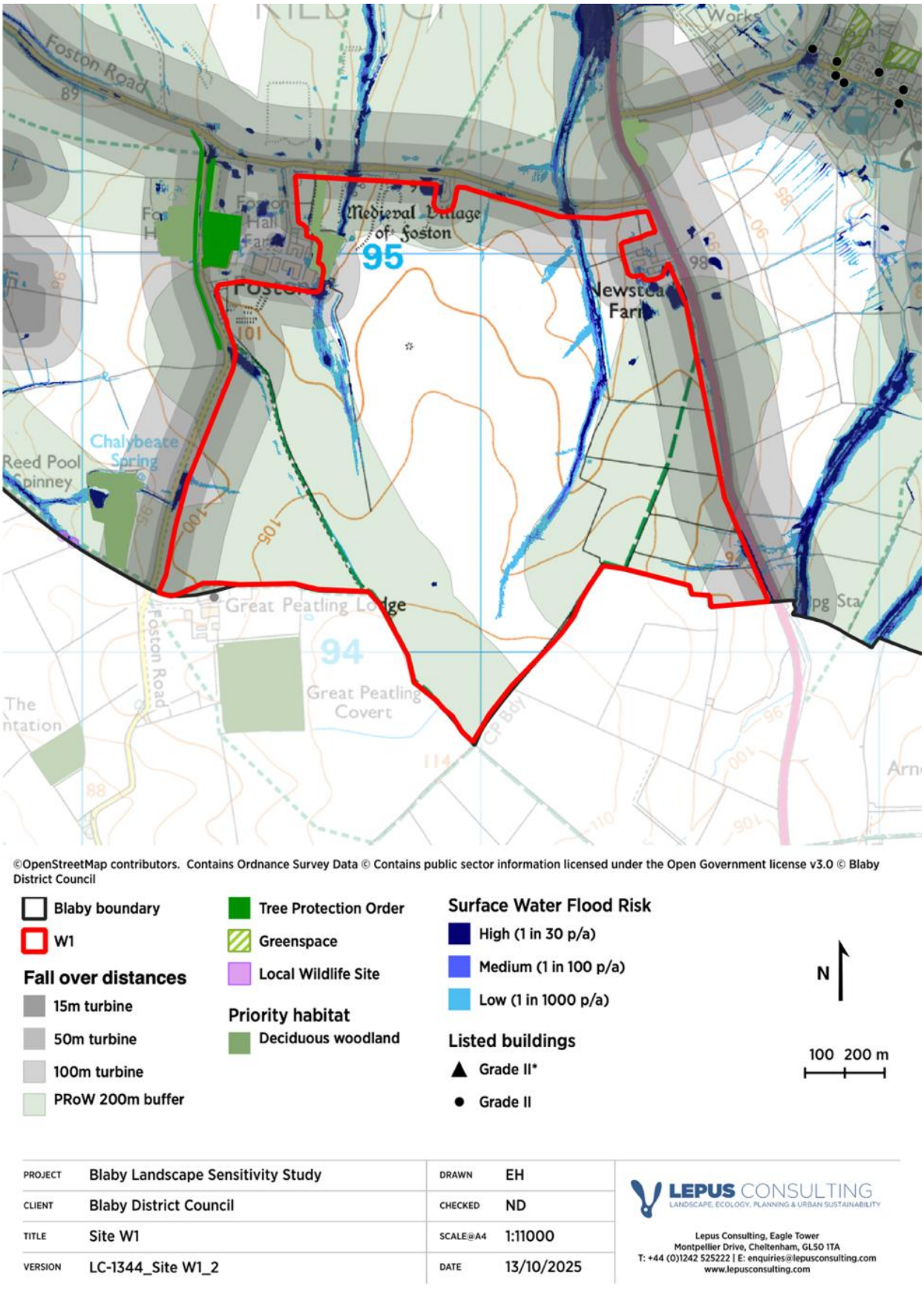


Figure 10.10: *Site W1*

Site information	
Site reference	W1
Site name	Land east of Barley Lane
Site size	127.71ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Foston Open Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	This site is located in the gas consultation zone.

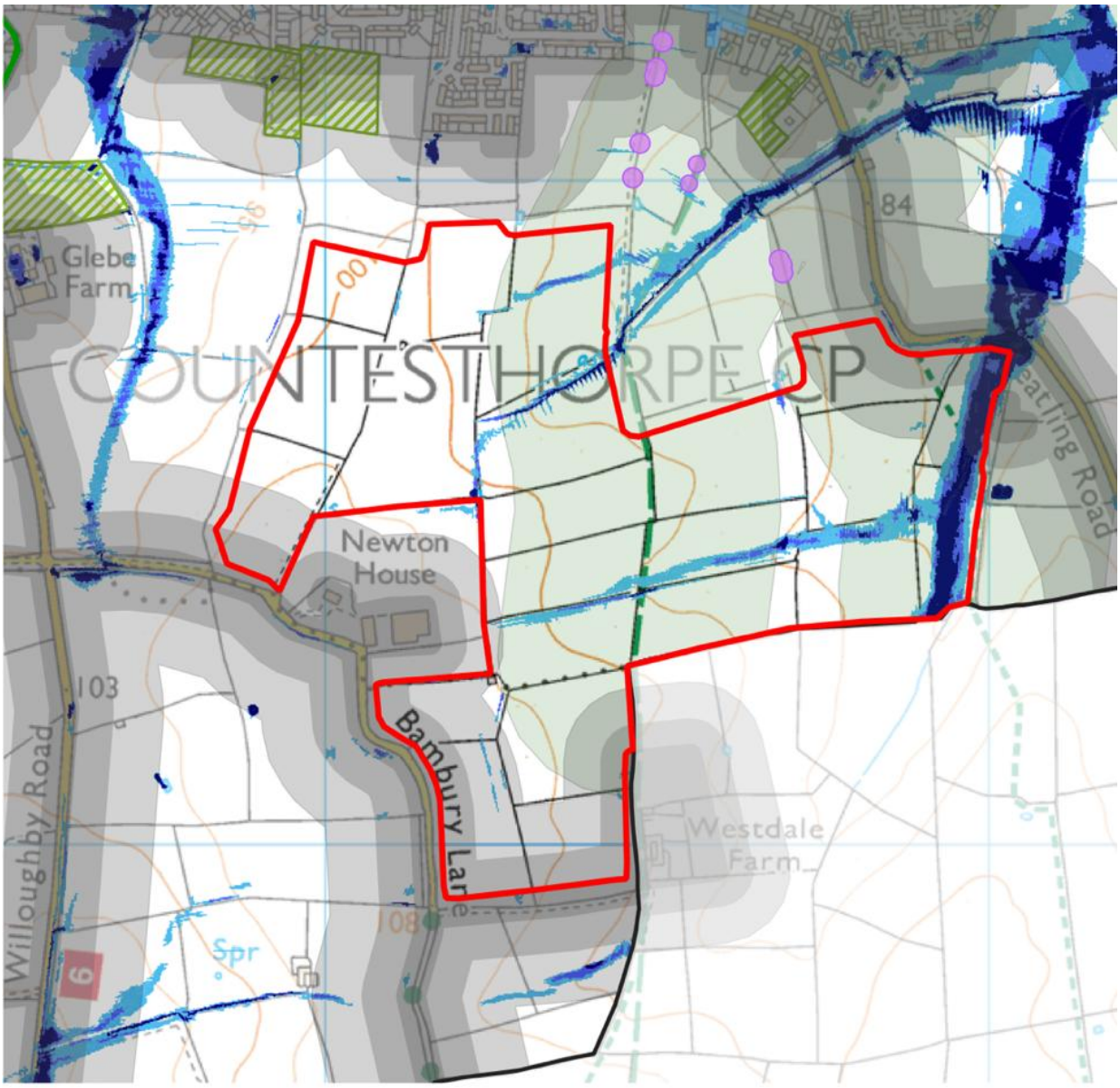
Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises a large-scale agricultural field in the centre, with smaller agricultural fields situated towards the eastern and western edges. There are some small pastoral fields within the southeastern corner. A strong sense of openness prevails across the site, where there are few field boundaries, many of which are fragmented. The sense of enclosure is strongest around Foston, where bushy hedgerows line Barley Lane. Topography is gently undulating rising to the north of the site where the sense of exposure increases.	H/M
Natural land cover	The site is covered in arable fields with a small area of pasture in the southeast, with field boundaries interspersed by hedgerow and ash hedgerow trees. Ash trees line the site boundary to the west. An area of deciduous woodland priority habitat is located in the northwest of the site.	M
Land use	A5199 defines the eastern edge of the site, whilst Foston Road borders the site to the north, both with high levels of vehicular traffic. Barley Lane is a quieter road running adjacent to the eastern edge of the site. A smaller number of houses are located in the village of Foston adjacent to the northwestern edge. Telegraph poles are situated within the site, whilst public footpaths run diagonally from east / west to south. There is planning permission for solar panels adjacent to the west of the site.	M/L
Time-depth	Although this site is comprised of large post-war fields, a number of heritage features still remain. Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of St Bartholomew' is located within the adjacent small village of Foston, where the village itself is situated on a deserted medieval village. A small area of ridge and furrow is also located within the southwestern edge of the site. The sense of historic character decreases towards the eastern edge.	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	Sense of vastness, however the undulating topography presents wide-reaching views where the site rises to the south. Remoteness increases towards the south of the site, whilst a sense of business from vehicular movement and noise strongly detracts from the sense of tranquility in Foston. However, there is a strong rural field down Barley Lane where deciduous woodland and TPOs surround the village of Foston.	M
Skyline features	There are long-distance views of wind turbines on the skyline to the south. The skyline is otherwise characterised by open views, broken by trees and occasional farm buildings.	M
Inward and outward views	Middle-distance views prevail towards surrounding agricultural fields and pockets of vegetation, in particular to the west of the site. Views within a towards Foston are mostly obscured by thick vegetation around the village. Some long-distance views to elevated areas are possible when looking east.	M/L

Value		
Landscape value	Intact, mature hedgerows and ash trees contribute to the rural character on the site boundaries. A sense of historic character is present in Foston and down Barley Lane, although this weakens when moving towards the east. PRoW networks provide popular walking routes for the area.	M/L
Visual value	Wind turbines are likely to be visible from buildings within Foston, particularly Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of Bartholomew'. Wind turbine development is likely to alter views from public footpaths within and in proximity to the site.	M

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind turbines are best situated towards the south of the site where elevation is higher, keeping distance from the historic character of Foston and Barley Lane. If appropriate, turbines could be situated in slight dips in topography if no sensitive receptors are present in the elevated areas; small undulations can be used to obscure turbines from adjacent roads and settlements.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	The site comprises a large central arable field with smaller arable and pastoral fields to the east and west, bounded by fragmented hedgerows and occasional trees, creating a strong sense of openness. Intact hedgerows and ash trees along the site boundaries contribute to rural character, alongside heritage features in Foston, including the Grade II* Church of St Bartholomew. High-traffic roads and cabling reduce tranquillity, though Barley Lane retains a strong rural feel. With elevated topography and long-distance visibility of existing turbines, wind development has potential to be highly visible from the surrounding landscape, including Foston, as well as altering views from nearby public footpaths.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low	♦		
Medium		♦	♦
High / Medium			
High			

10.13 W2: Land south of Countesthorpe



Blaby boundary
W2

Fall over distances
15m turbine
50m turbine
100m turbine

PRoW 200m buffer
Tree Protection Order
Greenspace
Conservation Area
Local Wildlife Site

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site W2	SCALE@A4	1:8000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site W2_2	DATE	13/10/2025

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Figure 10.11: *Site W2*

Site information	
Site reference	W2
Site name	Land south of Countesthorpe
Site size	58.70ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Cosby and Whetstone Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	This site is located in the gas consultation zone.

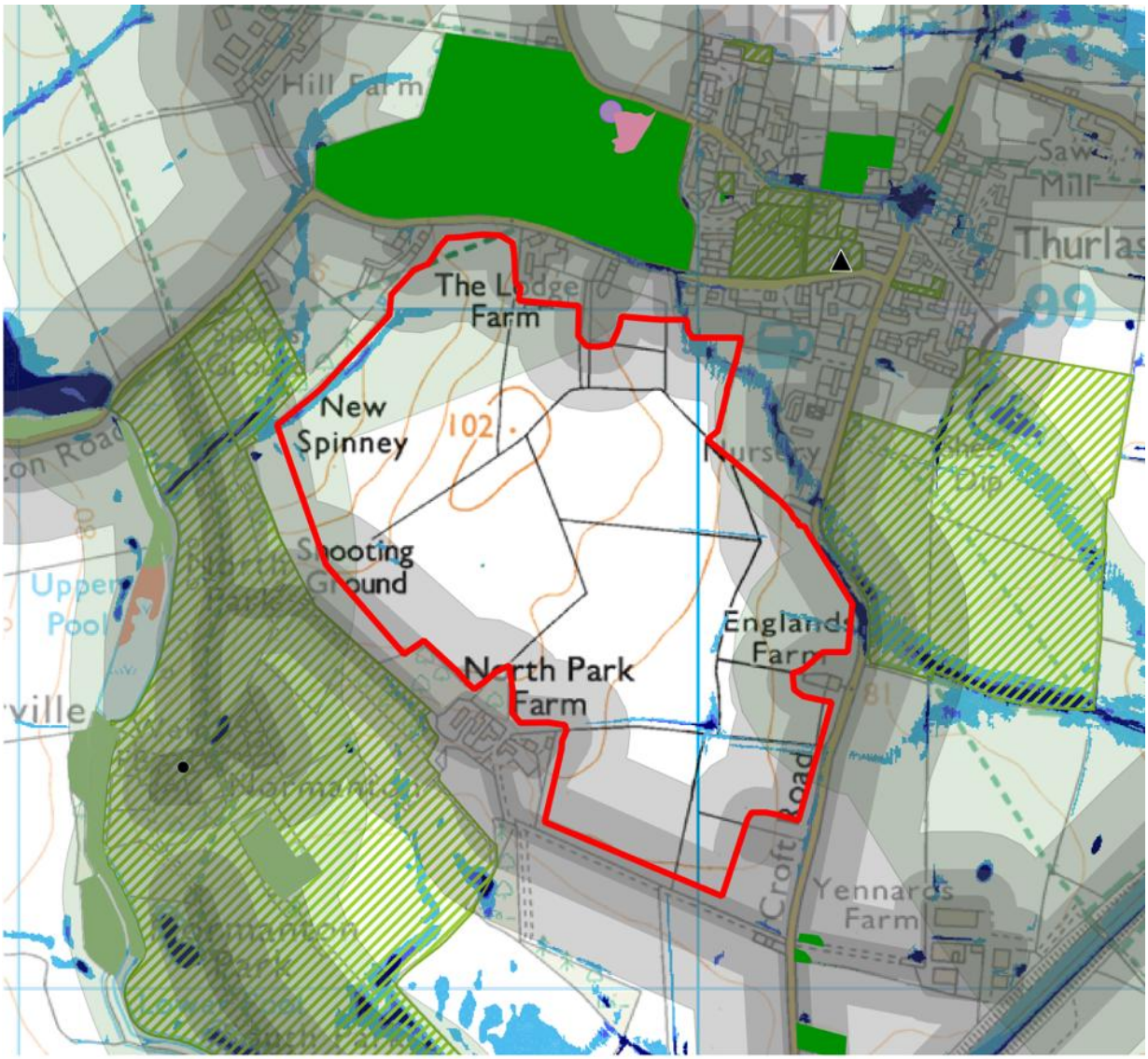
Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises numerous medium-sized agricultural fields bounded by low hedgerows and irregular trees creating minimal enclosure. A stronger sense of openness prevails towards the south of the site where topography is more elevated. The topography is otherwise irregular and gently rolling.	M
Natural land cover	The site is covered by agricultural farmland, with fields bounded by some hedgerows and trees. Mature hedgerow boundaries lie to the south of the site.	M
Land use	Utility poles traverse the site. The site is used for agricultural purposes. Farm vehicles are present within the site, whilst farm buildings are located adjacent to the southern boundaries. Residential development in Countesthorpe is located close to the northern edge of the site. A public bridleway running from north to south connects Countesthorpe with the surrounding landscape.	M/L
Time-depth	Field boundaries have been removed to create more open fields of piecemeal enclosure. Mature trees are situated to the north of the site, forming the setting of Countesthorpe Conservation Area.	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	Constant traffic flow is present along Peatling Road, where vehicular movement and noise detract from the sense of tranquility. The sense of remoteness increases towards Bambury Lane, where traffic is more infrequent. A moderate sense of scenic quality prevails across the site, with wooded skylines and in some areas, middle to long-distance views are possible.	M
Skyline features	A sylvan skyline boots visual appeal in particular from Peatling Lane. A telephone mast on skyline within site, whilst there are long-distance views of elevated areas, dotted with pylons and wind turbines but otherwise vegetated.	M
Inward and outward views	There are middle distance views from the site, mostly towards areas of woodland. The site is visible from residential development on the southern edge of Countesthorpe.	M/L
Value		
Landscape value	PRoW networks within the site provide popular walking routes from Countesthorpe, where the site contributes to the landscape qualities of the mature tree LWSs to the north of the site and the Countesthorpe Conservation Area.	M
Visual value	Development has potential to detract from short distance views within the site populated with mature trees from the public rights of way. More open views of the site are visible from Bambury Lane, whilst views are likely to be more fleeting from Peatling Road. In addition,	M/L

	wind development has potential to detract from the visual value of wooded skylines.	

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind turbines would most likely be appropriately located towards the southeastern edge of the site, away from development in Countesthorpe, where there is a stronger sense of enclosure and tranquility is lower. Vegetation should be heightened to increase the integration of wind turbines into the landscape.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	The site comprises numerous medium-sized agricultural fields with low hedgerows and scattered trees, creating minimal enclosure and an open character, particularly to the south where land is more elevated. LWSs comprising mature trees contribute to the setting of Countesthorpe Conservation Area. High-traffic routes on Peatling Road, utility poles, and a telephone mast reduce tranquillity, though a sylvan skyline and wooded horizons enhance scenic quality. Visible from PRoW and nearby residential areas, wind turbines would be prominent across the open southern areas and elevated skylines and could affect views from both within the site and surrounding areas, including from Bambury Lane and the Conservation Area.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low	♦		
Medium		♦	♦
High / Medium			
High			

10.14 W3: Land southwest of Thurlaston



W3

Fall over distances
- 15m turbine
- 50m turbine
- 100m turbine
- PRoW 200m buffer

- Tree Protection Order
- Greenspace
- Local Wildlife Site

Priority habitat
- Deciduous woodland
- Lowland fens
- Traditional orchard

Surface Water Flood Risk
- High (1 in 30 p/a)
- Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
- Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

Listed buildings
- Grade II*
- Grade II

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site W3	SCALE@A4	1:8000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site W3_2	DATE	13/10/2025

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Figure 10.12: *Site W3*

Site information	
Site reference	W3
Site name	Land southwest of Thurlaston
Site size	45.76ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Normanton Agricultural Parkland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

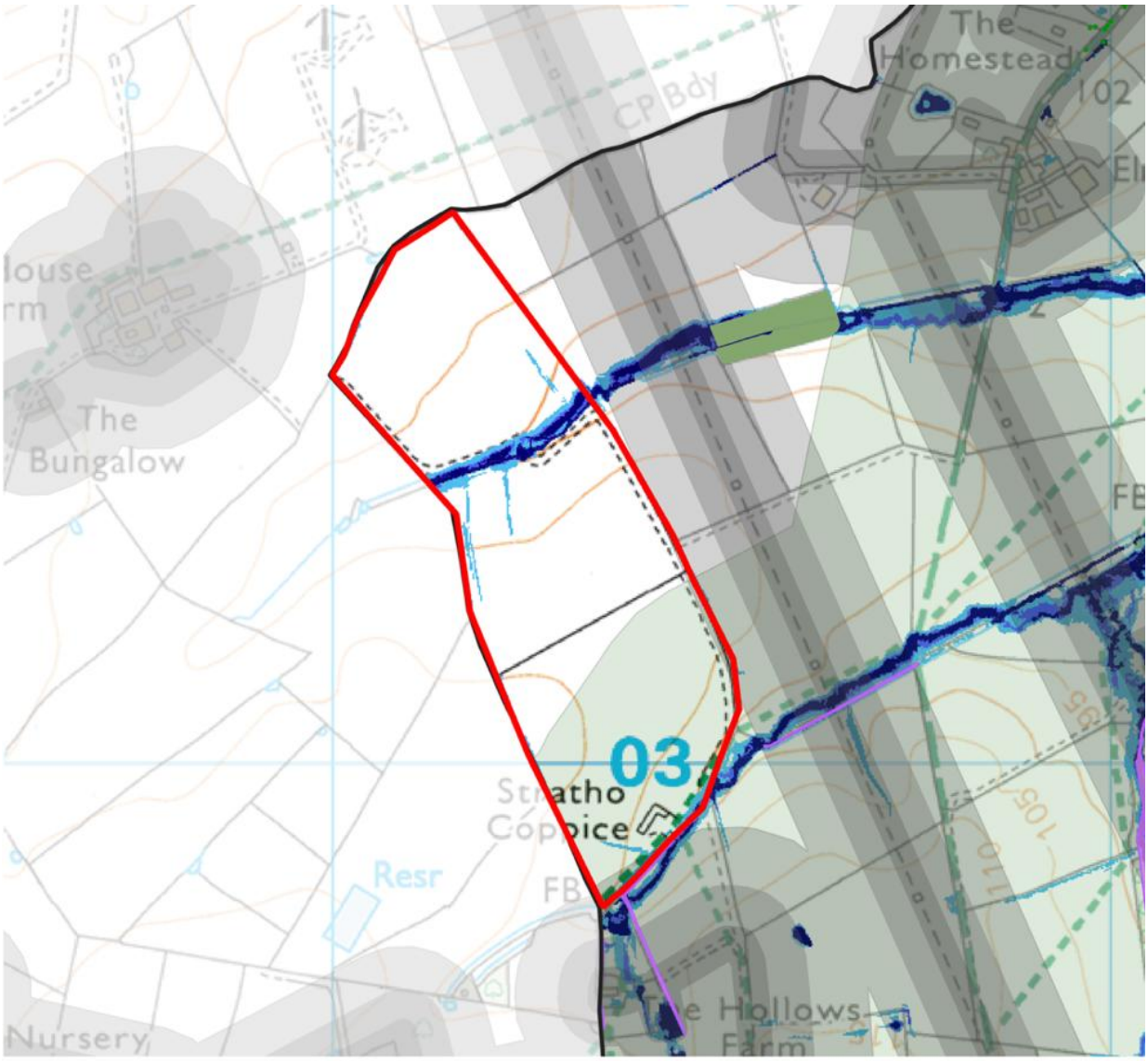
Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	This site comprises mostly small to medium-sized agricultural fields, with three small fields of pasture within the southeastern site corner. These fields are bounded by fences, low hedgerows and irregular trees creating minimal enclosure. A moderate sense of openness prevails over the gently rolling topography, rising from southeast to northwest.	M
Natural land cover	The site is covered by agricultural farmland with a small area of pasture to the southeast. Fields are bounded by interspersed, low hedgerows and trees. Sections of the western site boundaries are populated with woodland.	M/L
Land use	The site is predominately used for agricultural purposes with some pasture. Farm buildings are located adjacent to the southern boundaries, as well as a garden centre. Residential development in Thurlaston is located close to the northern edge of the site. The site is bounded by Croft Road to the eastern side, and a small farm track to the south.	M/L
Time-depth	Internal boundaries have been slightly altered since the 1800s, comprising rectilinear fields and planned enclosure. Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints' is directly visible in Thurlaston. Normanton Park comprises historic parkland directly to the southwest of the site and encompasses Grade II Listed Building 'Ice House approximately 20 metres north of Normanton'.	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	There is a moderate level of tranquility where traffic flows are infrequent on adjacent roads. Scenic qualities increase south of Thurlaston towards Normanton Park. Areas of woodland comprising TPOs 'The Holt, Desford Road' further contribute to the scenic character, bounded by mature hedgerows. Alpacas are grazed adjacent to the northwestern corner of the site.	M
Skyline features	Skylines are far-reaching and vegetated, however are detracted from by pylons, telephone masts and settlements.	M
Inward and outward views	An overhead wire forms a prominent view into the site from Earl Shilton Road. Views are otherwise far-reaching in some areas, with visibility towards development of elevated, vegetated skylines located on the outskirts of Leicester.	M
Value		
Landscape value	Wind turbines are likely to be largely disruptive to development in Thurlaston where the site forms the surrounding landscape setting for the south of the village. The site lies across the road from numerous areas of open space, including Normanton Park, Thurlaston Sports Club, open fields and parks within Thurlaston. A garden centre adjacent to the east of the site attracts visitors. Additionally, Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints is visible from the site.	H/M

Visual value	Views into the site are directly visible from numerous receptors, including development in Thurlaston, numerous areas of open space, and from Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints'.	M

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind turbines would most likely be appropriately located towards the centre of the site, where topography begins to rise and approximately equidistant from surrounding receptors, such as Thurlaston, open spaces and pastoral fields. Vegetation should be heightened to increase the integration of wind turbines into the landscape.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	The site comprises mostly small to medium-sized agricultural fields with low hedgerows, scattered trees, and some woodland, creating minimal enclosure and a moderate sense of openness, particularly where land rises from southeast to northwest. Historic features, including Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints' in Thurlaston and Normanton Park, contribute to landscape value. While skylines are generally vegetated, views are interrupted by pylons, masts, and settlement edges. Publicly accessible areas and open spaces, including Normanton Park and the garden centre, overlook the site. Wind turbines would be prominent from these locations and from the village, altering views that form part of the southern setting of Thurlaston.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low			
Medium	♦	♦	
High / Medium			♦
High			

10.15 W4: Land north of the Hollows Farm



Blaby boundary
W4

Fall over distances
15m turbine
50m turbine
100m turbine

PRoW 200m buffer
Tree Protection Order
Local Wildlife Site

Priority habitat
Deciduous woodland

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site W4	SCALE@A4	1:7000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site W4_2	DATE	13/10/2025

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Figure 10.13: *Site W4*

Site information	
Site reference	W4
Site name	Land north of the Hollows Farm
Site size	20.56ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises three medium-sized, agricultural fields within an open and exposed landscape. Fields are slightly undulating with alternating slopes and are bounded by low, intact hedgerows.	M
Natural land cover	Agricultural farmland covers the site, whilst some field boundaries are interspersed with oak trees to connect with deciduous woodland priority habitat in close proximity to the east of the site. LWS 'Hedgerow' bounds the site to the south.	M/L
Land use	The site is currently used for agricultural purposes. A PRoW traverses the southernmost boundary, whilst a farmhouse is located near to the south of the site adjoined to a gravel-track road. Telegraph poles are located within the site, whilst wind turbines are located in close proximity of the site to the north.	M/L
Time-depth	Fields have been enlarged since the 1900s, now comprising fields of planned enclosure. There is potential for skyline views of the site from Grade II Listed Building 'Desford Hall'.	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	There is a sense of tranquility within the site, although this is slightly detracted from by noise from the distant motorway. In addition, occasional movement from cars is present along the gravel track nearing the south of the site. Scenic quality within the site itself is limited with low hedgerows and oak trees comprising key aesthetic features. However, the hinterland comprises a backdrop of rolling hills within the National Forest of increased scenic quality.	M
Skyline features	Wind turbines to the north of the site form the dominant skyline feature. A backdrop of rolling hills and the National Forest also features on the skyline when looking north behind the wind turbines.	M/L
Inward and outward views	There is some intervisibility towards farmhouses filtered by surrounding trees, such as where there is potential for skyline views of development from Desford. Views into the site are also possible from hilltop settlements. The sense of openness within the site gives way to far reaching views of rolling hills and forest in the hinterland, in particular from the PRoW within the site and another directly to the north of the site.	M
Value		
Landscape value	PRoW networks are located within the site, connecting Desford to Kirby Muxloe Golf Club. The presence of LWS 'Hedgerow' along the southern boundary contributes to the landscape value.	M/L
Visual value	Low hedgerows and rolling hinterland comprising the National Forest provide scenic backdrop views for walking routes within the site. There is potential for wind turbines to be visible from Grade II Listed Building 'Desford Hall'. Visual receptors otherwise comprise filtered skyline views from surrounding farmhouses.	M/L

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind turbines are most likely to be appropriately located towards the north of the site, extending off existing turbine development. Tree planting to extend the height of hedgerows has potential to soften the wind turbines against the rolling, wooded hinterland.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	The site comprises three medium-sized agricultural fields bounded by low, intact hedgerows interspersed with oak trees, creating an open and exposed character with some intervisibility to surrounding farmhouses. Fields are additionally bounded to the south by LWS 'Hedgerow'. A PRoW crosses the southern boundary, whilst a farmhouse and gravel track lie to the south. Skylines are dominated by wind turbines to the north, with rolling hills and the National Forest forming a scenic backdrop. Views of potential wind development may be possible from Grade II Listed Building 'Desford Hall'. There is some sense of tranquility, although this is reduced by distant motorway noise and occasional car movements. Noise from additional wind turbines may detract from this further.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low	♦	♦	
Medium			♦
High / Medium			
High			

10.16 W5: Land southwest of Cosby

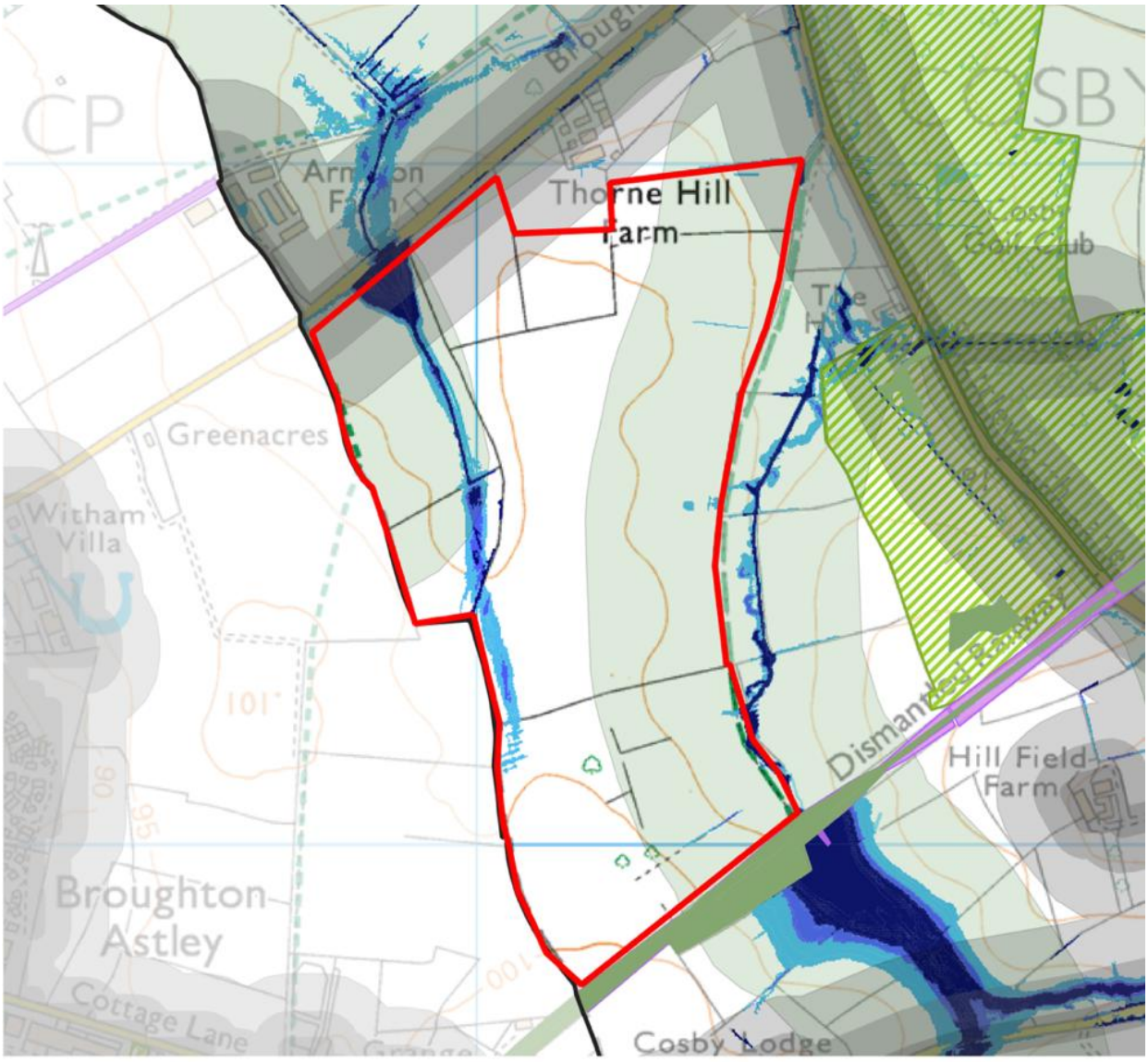


Figure 10.14: *Site W5*

Site information	
Site reference	W5
Site name	Land southwest of Cosby
Site size	50.97ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Cosby Agricultural Parkland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	This site is located in the gas consultation zone.

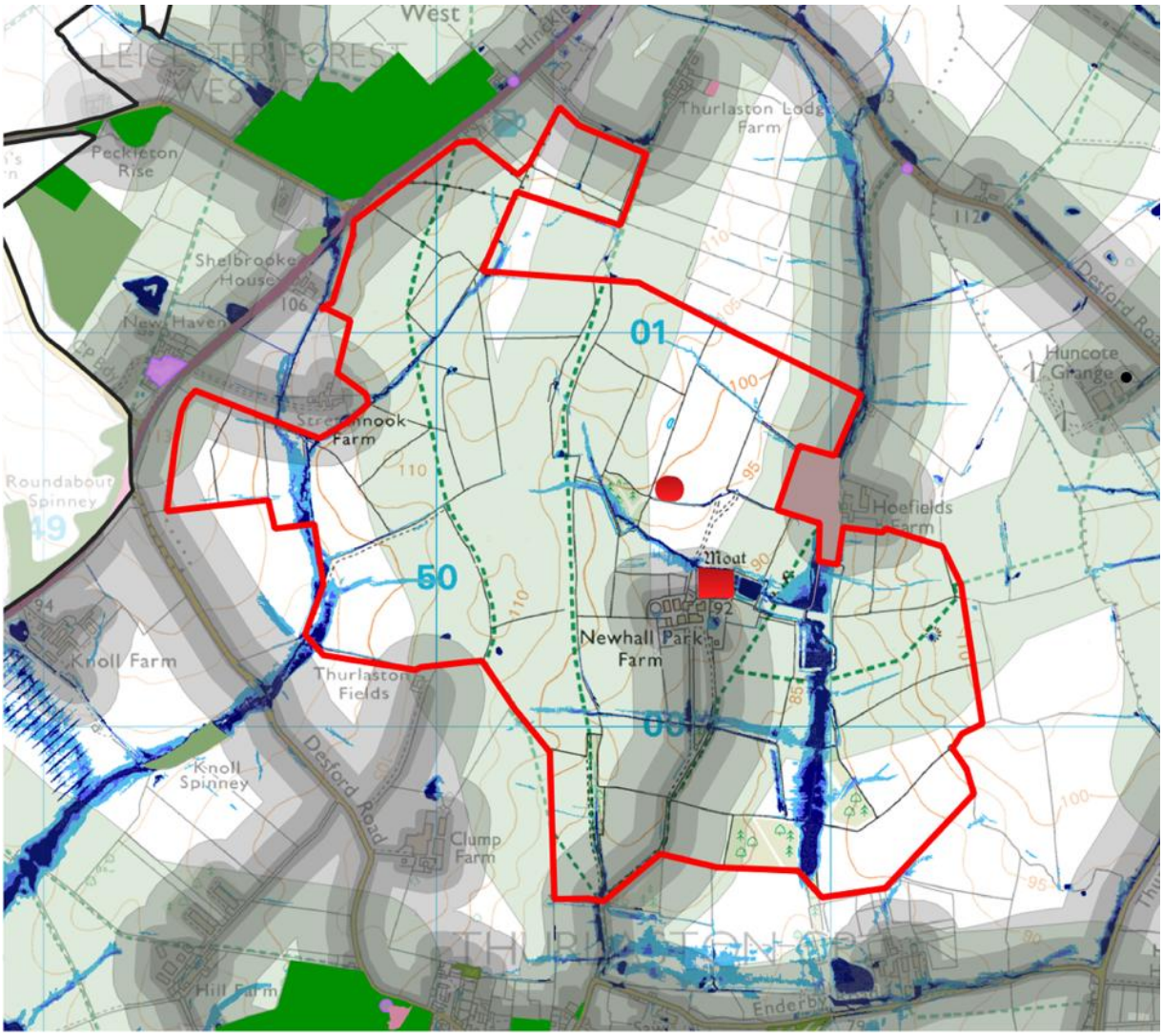
Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises eight medium-sized agricultural fields of varying shapes, mostly bounded by low, A-shaped hedgerows with interspersed trees. A sense of openness prevails across the site, increasing where the gently undulating topography rises towards the west.	M
Natural land cover	The site is wholly agricultural farmland, with biodiversity value generally restricted to hedgerows and interspersed hedgerow trees. A drainage ditch is located in the centre of the site, whilst LWS 'Clinker Lane' including deciduous woodland priority habitat is located adjacent to the south of the site.	M/L
Land use	Site use is predominantly agricultural, with farm buildings being located to the north of the site. A small farm track running south connects the farmhouses to the northern centre field. PRoW networks delineate both the west and eastern site boundaries.	M/L
Time-depth	This site comprises fields of re-organised piecemeal enclosure, where some field boundaries have been removed since the 1800s. The dismantled railway associated with LWS 'Clinker Lane' lies adjacent to the south of the site.	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	The site is relatively tranquil with strong rural character, increasing towards the southern portion of the site. However, vehicular movement and noise along Broughton Road detracts from the sense of tranquility. Scenic qualities within the site itself are limited to hedgerows comprising field boundaries, although scenic perceptions are improved by the deciduous woodland located directly to the south of the site. More intricate landscapes surround the site, such as an area of pastureland located to the southeast.	M
Skyline features	Skyline views are mostly characterised by deciduous woodland to the south and a line of poplars to the east. However, telegraph poles are directly visible on the skyline where these lie adjacent to the north of the site, and a telecommunications tower is visible on the skyline to the west.	M/L
Inward and outward views	Views are mostly vegetated and limited to middle-distance views interspersed with farm buildings. Views to the south give way to a scenic landscape comprising open, undulating, agricultural fields bounded by low hedgerows. When looking into the site from the east, the rising topography obscures any views beyond the immediate field.	M/L
Value		

Landscape value	Footpaths adjacent to the site connect to Broughton Astley and Cosby Golf Club. The LWS 'Clinker Lane' adjacent to the south of the site contributes to the value of the landscape setting, as well as the historic setting where the LWS dissects the disused Great Northern and London and North Western Joint Railway. This area contributes to rural separation between Cosby and Broughton Astley.	M/L
Visual value	Deciduous woodland priority habitat comprising the LWS 'Clinker Lane' is the most prominent visual feature from the site. Wind development has potential to detract from the visual value of the wooded skyline, where woodland is otherwise sparse within the surrounding landscape setting. The site is predominately visible from Broughton Road and the adjacent PRoW networks.	M/L

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind development would be best situated on areas of higher elevation within the centre of the site, away from the adjacent PRoW networks. Additional tree planting has potential to soften the prominence of wind turbines against the skyline.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	The site comprises eight medium-sized agricultural fields bounded by low hedgerows and scattered trees, creating an open rural character that becomes more exposed to the west. Adjacent LWS 'Clinker Lane' with deciduous woodland contributes to the scenic and ecological value. Views are generally middle-distance and vegetated, where the site is visible from nearby PRoWs and Broughton Road. Skylines of woodland and low hedgerows contrast with telegraph poles and a telecoms mast. Whilst the site retains a largely tranquil, agricultural setting, this is partially detracted from by traffic noise and movement. Wind development has potential to detract from the wooded skyline and rural character.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low	♦		
Medium		♦	♦
High / Medium			
High			

10.17 W6: Land at New Hall Park Farm



Blaby boundary
W6

Fall over distances
15m turbine
50m turbine
100m turbine
PRoW 200m buffer

Tree Protection Order
Greenspace
Scheduled Monument
Local Wildlife Site

Priority habitat
Deciduous woodland
No main habitat
Traditional orchard

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

Listed buildings
Grade II

N

0.25 0.5 km

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site W6	SCALE@A4	1:14000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site W6_2	DATE	13/10/2025

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Figure 10.15: *Site W6*

Site information	
Site reference	W6
Site name	Land at New Hall Park Farm
Site size	210.70ha
Development type	Wind
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
Date of site visit	31/07/25

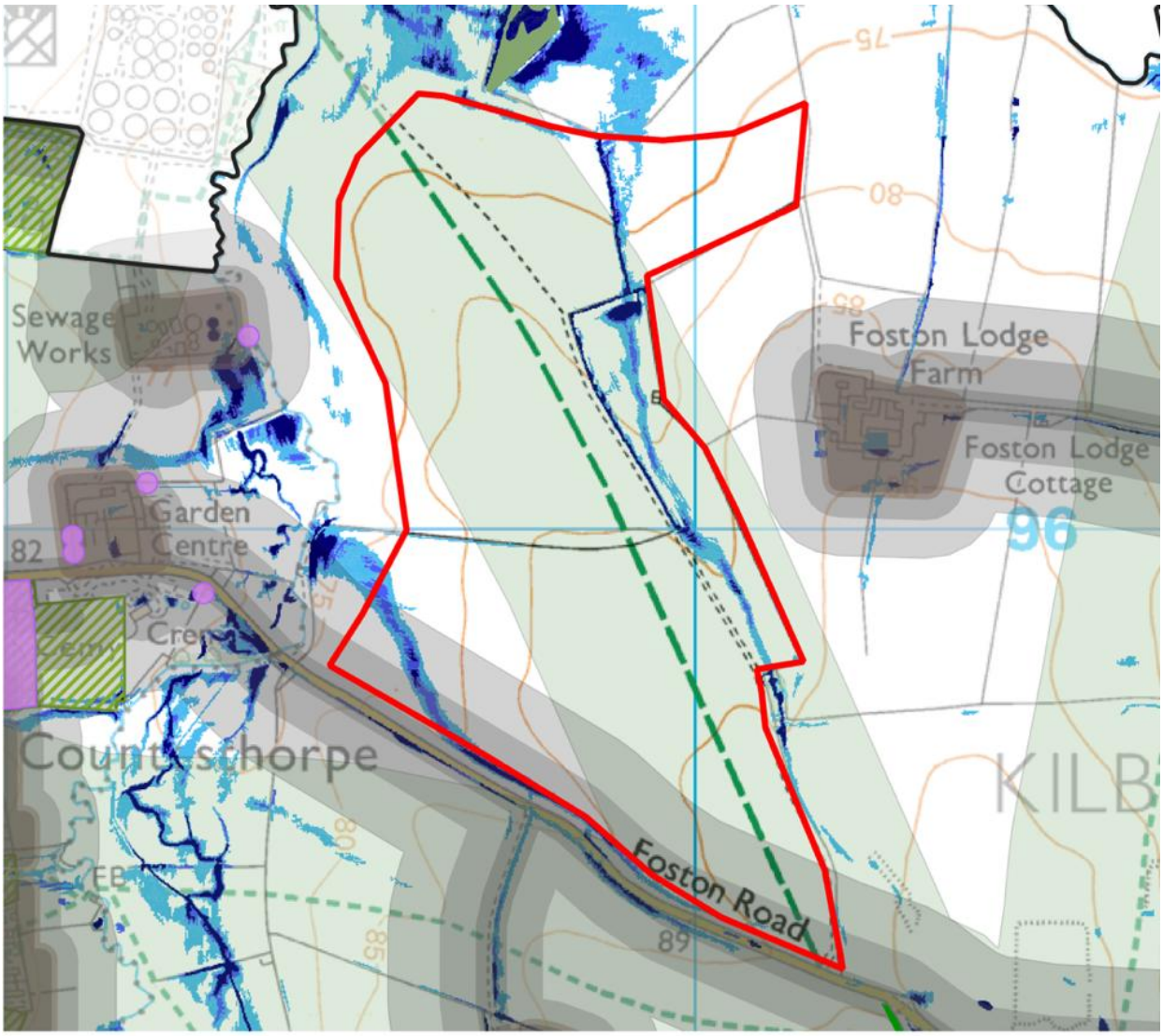
Criteria	Description	Wind Score
Susceptibility		
Landform, scale and enclosure	This is a large site comprising numerous medium and large-sized fields of mostly agricultural use as well as some pasture. Fields are bounded by low and mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees, and wire fencing. A-shaped hedgerows delineate the southern site boundaries. Topography is rolling throughout the site with gentle swells leading into concave features contributing to a sense of openness. The steepest slopes can be found within the east of the site surrounding 'Hoefields Farm'. The sense of enclosure is stronger towards the southeast of the site where trees and small woodland clusters are more prominent.	M
Natural land cover	Agricultural farmland predominately covers the site alongside occasional areas of pasture, with areas of mixed farming. Tree coverage is generally sparse although hedgerow boundaries are interspersed with oak, ash and white poplar trees. A small watercourse runs from the fishponds to the south. An area of priority habitat comprising coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and purple moor-grass and rush pasture lies adjacent to the east of the site.	M/L
Land use	PRoW networks intersect the site north to south. A fish farm 'Newhall Park Farm' with associated moat and ponds is located within the centre of the site, whereby a farm track connects the site to the PRoW and subsequent roads to the south. Numerous farms lie adjacent to the site boundary, as well as a pub to the northwest. A telephone mast is located within the site.	M
Time-depth	Two Scheduled Monuments are located within the centre of the site, comprising 'Iron Age Enclosure' and 'Moated Site and New Hall, Thurlaston'. Fields predominantly comprise areas of re-organised piecemeal enclosure, as well as planned enclosure and large post-war fields.	M
Perpetual and aesthetic	The site maintains a strong rural character, particularly with a bucolic edge grazed by cattle to the south. Rolling topography contributes to the scenic character and tranquility increases towards the centre of the site, away from the surrounding roads. Vehicular noise and movement from the A47 detracts from the tranquility to the north. The landscape setting is also of strong scenic quality, whereby a horticultural, pastoral setting adjacent to the south of the site. Tree protection orders are located across from the adjacent A47 to the northwest of the site.	H/M
Skyline features	The skyline is mostly populated by trees and farm buildings. A telephone mast is located behind trees on the skyline when views from the south of the site. Wind turbines are visible on the skyline to the northeast.	M/L
Inward and outward views	Views across the site are relatively open, although partially obscured to middle-distance views within areas of concave topography. Low hedgerows, vegetated boundaries and farm buildings primarily make	M/L

	up views within the site. Wind turbine development within the site is likely to be visible from development within Thurlaston.	
Value		
Landscape value	PRoW networks, in particular those connecting to Thurlaston, facilitate open air recreation, where dog walkers were visible along these routes at the time of site visit. Valued hedgerow features line footpaths within the site. Recreational activities adjacent to the site include the A47 car boot takes place to the west, whilst the Bull's Head pub is located directly to the northwest. Heritage designations within the site comprise Scheduled Monuments 'Iron Age Enclosure' and 'Moated Site and New Hall'.	M
Visual value	The 'Moated Site and New Hall' Scheduled Monument is visible within the site, although partly enclosed by trees. Although the remnants of the 'Iron Age Enclosure' are located within the site, the enclosure outline is largely faded. There is potential for wind development in the site to be visible from Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints'. Visual receptors include the adjacent farms, the Bull's Head Pub, the A47. Wind turbines, dependent upon height, are also likely to be visible from the village of Thurlaston.	M

Wind: Summary	Wind description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Wind turbines located within this site should be small in quantity and low in height, in order to preserve the scenic qualities of the height and limit visibility from Thurlaston. Additional tree planting may be used to help integrate wind turbines into the landscape. Wind turbines may be most suitably located within the eastern edge of the site, in proximity to the nearby wind turbines at Huncote Grange.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind	This site comprises large, rolling agricultural site with some pasture of medium to large fields bounded by low hedgerows and scattered trees, with higher levels of enclosure to the southeast. The area retains a strong scenic, rural character, though tranquility is reduced near the A47. Two Scheduled Monuments within the site potential for visibility from a Grade II* Listed Building adds to heritage sensitivity. Views are open across undulating farmland with trees, farm buildings, and a visible telephone mast, whilst turbines in Huncote appear on the skyline to the northeast. Wind development, depending upon height, may detract from the rural and historic character and affect views from Thurlaston and key heritage assets.

Wind: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
Low			
Medium / Low	♦		
Medium		♦	
High / Medium			♦
High			

10.18 WB1: Land north of Foston Road



Blaby boundary
WB1

Fall over distances
15m turbine
50m turbine
100m turbine

PRoW 200m buffer
BESS 25m buffer
Tree Protection Order
Greenspace
Local Wildlife Site

Priority habitat
Deciduous woodland

Surface Water Flood Risk
High (1 in 30 p/a)
Medium (1 in 100 p/a)
Low (1 in 1000 p/a)

N

100 200 m

PROJECT	Blaby Landscape Sensitivity Study	DRAWN	EH
CLIENT	Blaby District Council	CHECKED	ND
TITLE	Site WB1	SCALE@A4	1:8000
VERSION	LC-1344_Site WB1_2	DATE	13/10/2025

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Figure 10.16: *Site WB1*

Site information	
Site reference	WB1
Site name	Land north of Foston Road
Site size	54.62ha
Development type	Wind and BESS
Landscape Character Area (Blaby LSCA)	Foston Open Farmland
Date of site visit	30/07/25
Notes	Accessibility to this site was difficult; viewpoints to this site are limited.

Criteria	Description	Wind Score	BESS Score
Susceptibility			
Landform, scale and enclosure	The site comprises two large agricultural fields, a medium-sized agricultural field and a small agricultural field. The topography of the site is highest in the southeast, falling towards the north. A sense of openness prevails across the site.	M/L	M/L
Natural land cover	The site is covered by agricultural farmland. Low hedgerows within the site, sparsely populated by hedgerow trees, connect to an area of deciduous woodland priority habitat in proximity to the north of the site. The River Sence floodplain is located adjacent to the east of the site.	M/L	M/L
Land use	The site primarily used for agricultural purposes. A PRoW crosses the site northwest to southeast.	M/L	M/L
Time-depth	Localised undulations in the topography have determined the historic field boundaries in the LCA within which this site is located and are likely responsible for the field boundaries defining the falling topography within this site. The historic village of Foston is located to the southeast of the site, where there is potential for the sites to be visible from Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of St Bartholomew'. Field boundaries have been removed since the 1800s, where fields now comprise very large post-war fields.	M/L	M/L
Perpetual and aesthetic	The falling topography contributes to some sense of scenic quality, although this is detracted from by nearby development. Fast-moving traffic down Foston Road gives way to a lack of tranquility with high levels of vehicular noise. The site is separated from Countesthorpe by Foston Road and the meandering River Sence. There is potential for odours from nearby sewage works.	M/L	L
Skyline features	Skyline views are mainly vegetated, with some residential development visible in Countesthorpe and Wigston.	M/L	M/L
Inward and outward views	Limited visibility into the site from accessible viewpoints at the time of site visit, however it is likely that wind development would be visible upon the skyline depending upon height. There are likely to be views into the site from the nearby sewage works. Falling topography gives way expansive views of development in Countesthorpe to the southwest, whilst the River Sence is likely visible to the west.	M/L	M/L
Value			
Landscape value	A PRoW crosses the site northwest to southeast, although accessibility to the PRoW was limited at the time of site visit due to fast-moving traffic.	M/L	M/L

Visual value	The site is directly visible from the PRoW intersecting the site and partially from other nearby PRoW networks. Development has potential to be visible from Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of St Bartholomew'.	M/L	M/L

Wind and BESS: Summary	Wind description	BESS description
Guidance on siting and mitigation potential	Increasing vegetation cover has potential to soften the wind turbines against the landscape. Wind turbines should be situated so not to alter views from nearby listed buildings.	Increasing vegetation cover has potential to soften the BESS units against the landscape. BESS should be situated so not to alter views from nearby listed buildings and may be best located within the northwest of the site to integrate with the industrial setting of the sewage works.
Summary of overall landscape sensitivity to wind and BESS	The site comprises mostly large agricultural fields within a gently falling, open landscape comprised of low hedgerows and a small number of trees. Deciduous woodland priority habitat lies in proximity to the north, and the River Sence floodplain forms the eastern boundary. Scenic quality is limited and tranquility is reduced by traffic along Foston Road and proximity to development and a sewage works. Views have potential to extend to nearby settlements and the Grade II* Listed 'Church of St Bartholomew'. Wind development may appear prominent on the open skyline.	The site comprises mostly large agricultural fields within a gently falling, open landscape comprised of low hedgerows and a small number of trees. Deciduous woodland priority habitat lies in proximity to the north, and the River Sence floodplain forms the eastern boundary. Scenic quality is limited and tranquility is reduced by traffic along Foston Road and proximity to development and a sewage works. Views have potential to extend to nearby settlements and the Grade II* Listed 'Church of St Bartholomew', dependent upon the height of BESS units.

Wind and BESS: Overall Score	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind	Small-scale BESS	Medium-scale BESS	Large-scale BESS
Low				♦		
Medium / Low	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦
Medium						
High / Medium						
High						

11 Conclusion

11.1 About this report

11.1.1 This report comprises an LSS for potential renewable energy development opportunity areas within the Blaby District. The study will inform a part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, which covers the period up to 2041.

11.2 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

11.2.1 LSA is the process of assessing the resilience, or robustness of landscape character and the visual resource (and valued characteristics) to defined change or changes arising from development proposals. It can help decision makers to understand likely changes and the nature of change should the development scenarios be taken forward.

11.2.2 The methodology for this study has been derived principally from: Natural England (2019) '*An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management"*[60].

11.3 Renewable energy opportunity areas

11.3.1 A total of 16 sites have been identified and evaluated as part of the LSA for renewable energy opportunity areas, which range from approximately 9.63ha to 210.71ha. Renewable energy opportunity areas have been considered for wind, solar PV and BESS development, and considered for small-scale, medium-scale and large-scale development. Photos of each renewable energy opportunity area are presented in **Appendix A**.

11.3.2 Informed by the susceptibility of the landscape and visual baseline to change and the values of the landscape and visual characteristics, the overall landscape sensitivity of each renewable energy opportunity area has been systematically assessed and described using the five-point scale (high, high/medium, medium, medium/low and low). No sites have been assessed as being of high sensitivity for any type of renewable energy development. The distribution of renewable energy opportunity areas across the district area focused predominantly towards the west of the district in proximity to Thurlaston; and the south of the district, in particular the southeast near Countesthorpe.

11.4 Overall sensitivity of renewable energy opportunity areas for wind

11.4.1 A total of nine sites have been identified and assessed for wind opportunities, as presented in **Table 11.1**. Sensitivity generally increases dependent upon the scale of wind development, primarily due to increased visual prominence on the skyline and potential alterations to landscape character. No sites for wind were assessed a being of low sensitivity.

[60] Natural England (2019) 'An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management' Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/817928/landscape-sensitivity-assessment-2019.pdf [Accessed: 14/10/25]

Small-scale wind

11.4.2 Almost all sites assessed for small-scale wind were considered to be of medium / low sensitivity, where these are located within open, exposed landscapes with ability to accommodate change on a small-scale. Site W3, by exception, has been assessed as medium sensitivity for small-scale wind, due to the proximity of heritage assets and recreational spaces in Thurlaston. Wind development would need to be more sensitively designed in this location and preferably located in the centre of the site.

Medium-scale wind

11.4.3 Sites SWB1, SWB2, W4 and WB1 were assessed as medium / low for medium-scale wind, where these are typically located adjacent to or surrounding busy transport corridors and / or near existing wind development. Sites W1, W2, W3, W5 and W6 were assessed as medium sensitivity for medium-scale wind, where these sites are more likely to be located in areas with more perceptible scenic qualities.

Large-scale wind

11.4.4 The majority of sites have been considered as medium sensitivity for large-scale wind, where development of this nature would require some mitigation such as improved vegetation planting in order to soften large-scale wind structures against the skyline. Site WB1, by exception, has been considered as medium / low for large-scale wind whereby limited tranquillity and scenic attributes increase the ability for the site to accommodate change. On the other hand, sites W3 and W6 have been assessed a high / medium for large-scale wind and are located in areas with higher scenic qualities and landscape value.

Table 11.1: *LSA of renewable energy opportunity areas for wind turbines*

Site ref.	Site name	Area (ha)	Small-scale wind	Medium-scale wind	Large-scale wind
SWB1	Land north of Thurlaston Lane	62.37	M/L	M/L	M
SWB2	Land off Desford Road	84.51	M/L	M/L	M
W1	Land east of Barley Lane	127.71	M/L	M	M
W2	Land south of Countesthorpe	58.71	M/L	M	M
W3	Land southwest of Thurlaston	45.76	M	M	H/M
W4	Land north of the Hollows Farm	20.56	M/L	M/L	M
W5	Land southwest of Cosby	50.97	M/L	M	M
W6	Land at New Hall Park Farm	210.71	M/L	M	H/M
WB1	Land north of Foston Road	54.62	M/L	M/L	M/L

11.5 Overall sensitivity of renewable energy opportunity areas for solar PV

11.5.1 A total of seven sites have been identified and assessed for solar PV opportunities, as presented in **Table 11.2**. Sensitivity generally increases dependent upon the scale of solar PV development, primarily due to increased visual prominence and potential alterations to landscape character.

Small-scale solar PV

11.5.2 Sites SB3, SB4, SWB1 and SWB2 were assessed as being of low sensitivity for small-scale solar PV, where these sites almost wholly comprise agricultural fields with existing human influences such as telegraph poles and cabling. Sites SB1, SB2 and SB5 were assessed and being of medium / low sensitivity, where sites have some capacity to accommodate small-scale solar providing the development is carefully sited to minimise inward views.

Medium-scale solar PV

11.5.3 Sites SB4 and SWB2 were assessed as being of low sensitivity for medium-scale solar PV, where these sites almost wholly comprise medium to large agricultural fields with existing human influences such as telegraph poles and cabling. Sites SB3 and SWB1 were assessed as being of medium / low sensitivity, where sites have some capacity to accommodate medium-scale solar providing the development is carefully sited to minimise potential impacts on scenic qualities and historic features. Sites SB1, SB2 and SB5 were assessed as being of medium sensitivity for medium-scale PV, where these sites are more likely to be located in areas with more perceptible scenic qualities.

Large-scale solar PV

11.5.4 Sites SB3, SB4, SWB1 and SWB2 were assessed as being of medium / low sensitivity for solar PV, where these sites almost wholly comprise agricultural fields which could accommodate large-scale solar PV providing development is effectively sited. Sites SB1, SB2 and SB5 were assessed as being of medium sensitivity for large-scale PV, where these sites are more likely to be located in areas with more perceptible scenic qualities.

Table 11.2: *LSA of renewable energy opportunity areas for solar PV*

Site ref.	Site name	Area (ha)	Small-scale solar PV	Medium-scale solar PV	Large-scale solar PV
SB1	Land east of Fleckney Road	24.67	M/L	M	M
SB2	Land south of M69	64.99	M/L	M	M
SB3	Land off Aston Lane	193.98	L	M/L	M/L
SB4	Land south of Croft	34.60	L	L	M/L
SB5	Land south of Leicester Road A47	44.14	M/L	M	M
SWB1	Land north of Thurlaston Lane	62.37	L	M/L	M/L
SWB2	Land off Desford Road	84.51	L	L	M/L

11.6 Overall sensitivity of renewable energy opportunity areas for BESS

11.6.1 A total of ten sites have been identified and assessed for BESS opportunities, as presented in **Table 11.3**. Sensitivity generally increases dependent upon the scale of BESS development, primarily due to increased visual prominence and potential alterations to landscape character.

Small-scale BESS

11.6.2 Sites B2 and WB1 have been assessed as being of low sensitivity for small-scale BESS development, where these sites are located in proximity to existing industrial influences including those which produce odours. Sites B1, SB3, SB4, SWB1 and SWB2 have been assessed as medium / low sensitivity for small-scale BESS, whereby development is unlikely to largely alter the skyline providing development is effectively sites and screened by vegetation.

Medium-scale BESS

11.6.3 The majority of sites have been assessed as being of medium / low sensitivity, where these sites have some capacity to accommodate medium-scale BESS providing development is effectively sited and screened by vegetation. Sites SB1 and SB2 have been assessed as medium sensitivity for medium-scale BESS, where development is more likely to alter the scenic qualities within these sites. Sites SB5 is unlikely to be suitable for medium-scale BESS development and is considered to be of high / medium sensitivity.

Large-scale BESS

11.6.4 Sites B1, B2 and WB1 have been assessed as being of medium / low sensitivity, where these sites have some capacity to accommodate medium-scale BESS providing development is effectively sited and screened by vegetation. Sites SB2, SB3, SB4, SWB1 and SWB2 have been assessed as medium sensitivity for large-scale BESS, where development will need further screening and is more likely to alter the scenic qualities within these sites. Sites SB1 and SB5 have been assessed as high / medium sensitivity for large-scale BESS development, where development at these sites have potential to obscure valued views from PRoW networks and largely detract from scenic qualities within these sites.

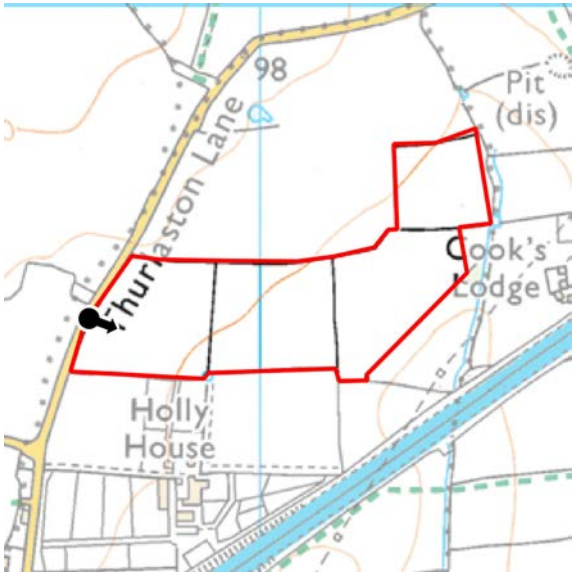
Table 11.3: *LSA of renewable energy opportunity areas for BESS*

Site ref.	Site name	Area (ha)	Small-scale BESS	Medium-scale BESS	Large-scale BESS
B1	Land west of Cook's Lodge Farm	9.63	M/L	M/L	M/L
B2	Land west of Enderby	18.67	L	M/L	M/L
SB1	Land east of Fleckney Road	24.67	M	M	H/M
SB2	Land south of M69	64.99	M	M	M
SB3	Land off Aston Lane	193.98	M/L	M/L	M
SB4	Land south of Croft	34.60	M/L	M/L	M
SB5	Land south of Leicester Road A47	44.14	M	H/M	H/M
SWB1	Land north of Thurlaston Lane	62.37	M/L	M/L	M
SWB2	Land off Desford Road	84.51	M/L	M/L	M
WB1	Land north of Foston Road	54.62	L	M/L	M/L

Appendix A: Viewpoint maps and photos

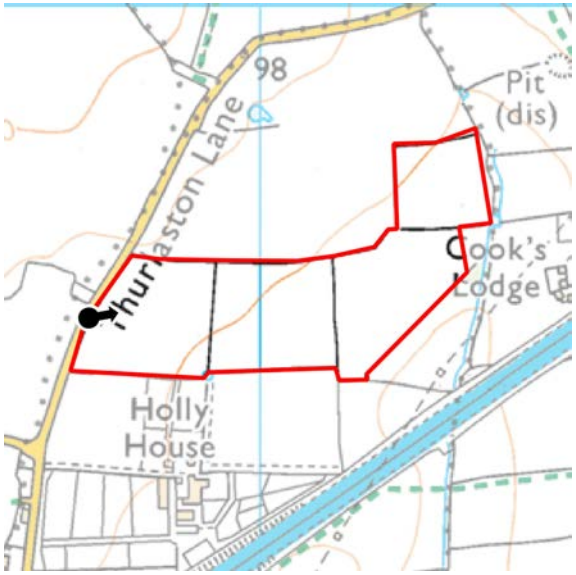
Land west of Cook's Lodge Farm (Site ref: B1)

View from Thurlaston Lane (looking east)



Land west of Cook's Lodge Farm (Site ref: B1)

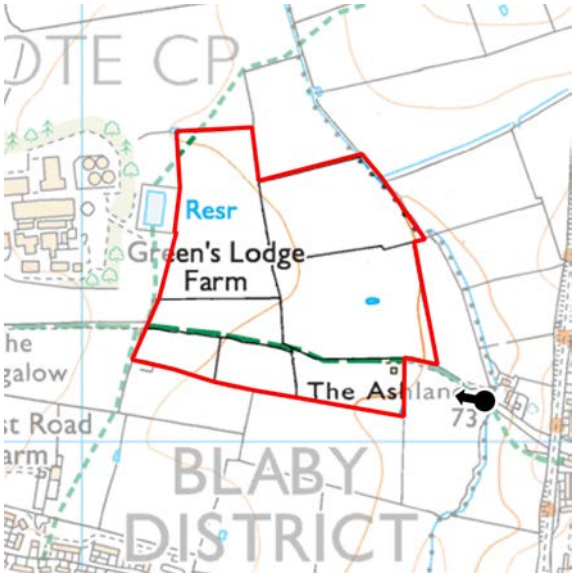
View from Thurlaston Lane (looking northeast)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

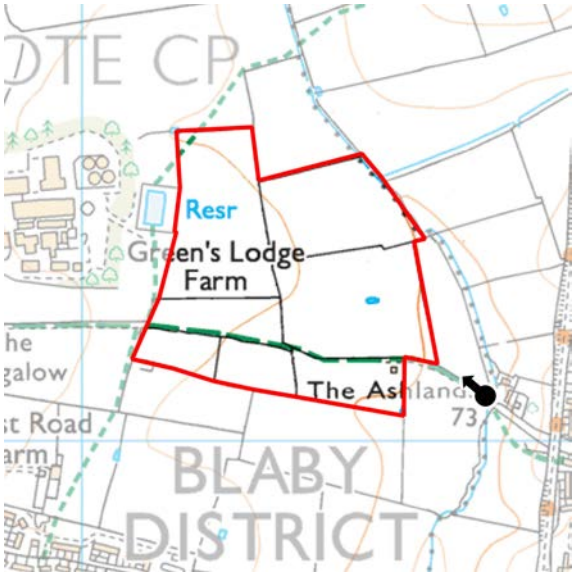
Land west of Enderby (Site ref: B2)

View from J O Groundworks (looking west)



Land west of Enderby (Site ref: B2)

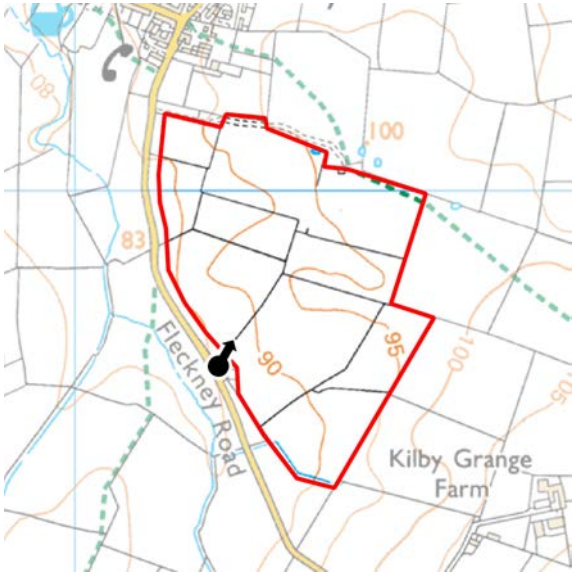
View from J O Groundworks (looking northwest)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

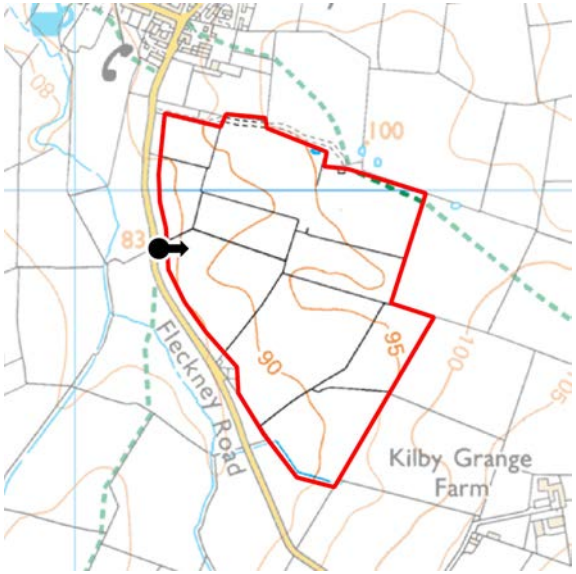
Land east of Fleckney Road (Site ref: SB1)

View from Fleckney Road



Land east of Fleckney Road (Site ref: SB1)

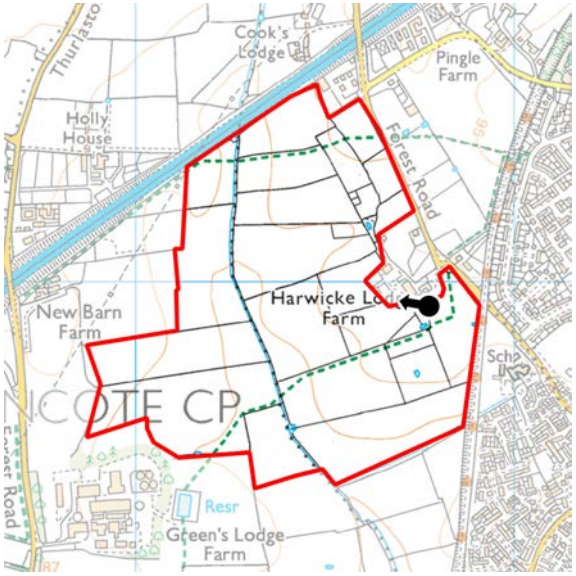
View from Fleckney Road (close to Main Street)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

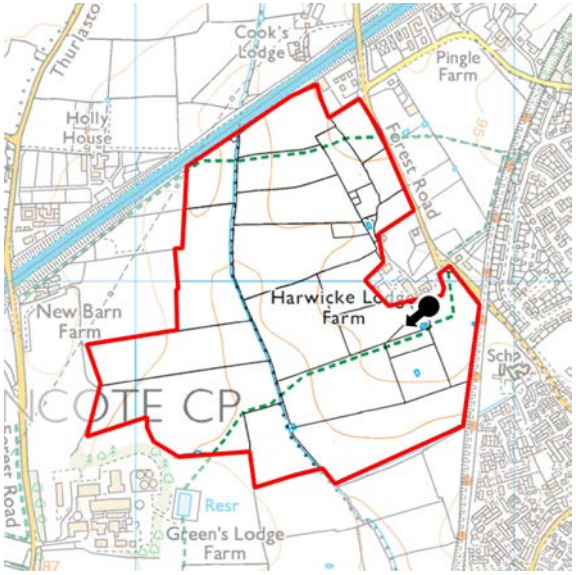
Land south of M69 (Site ref: SB2)

View from Harwicke Lodge Farm (looking west)



Land south of M69 (Site ref: SB2)

View from Harwicke Lodge Farm (looking southwest)

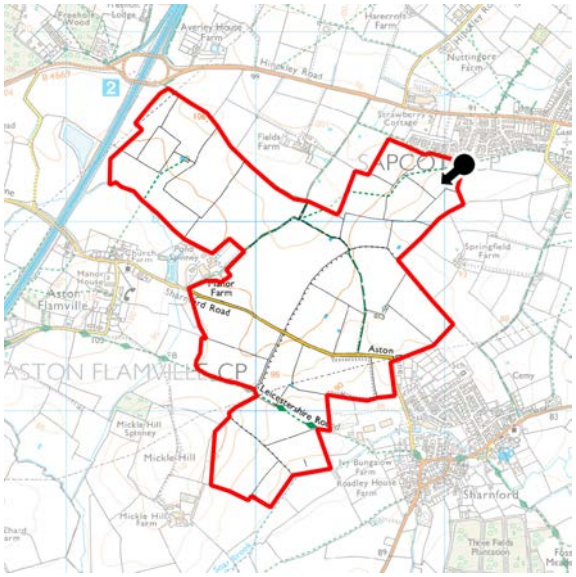


Anaerobic digester

Photograph taken 30/07/25

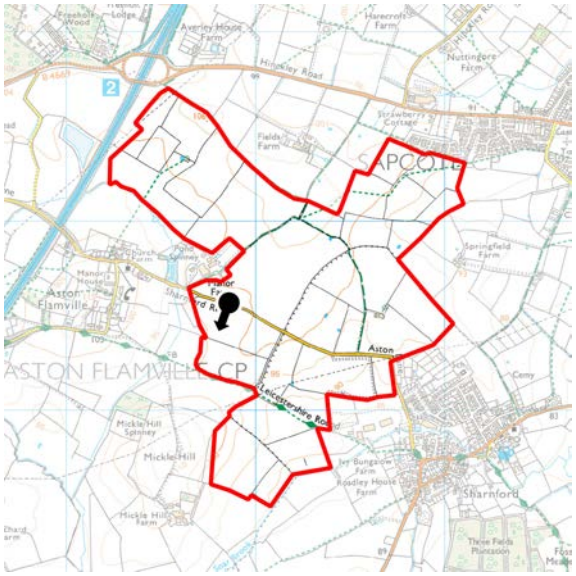
Land o Aston Lane (Site ref: SB3)

View from site adjacent to Sapcote



Land o Aston Lane (Site ref: SB3)

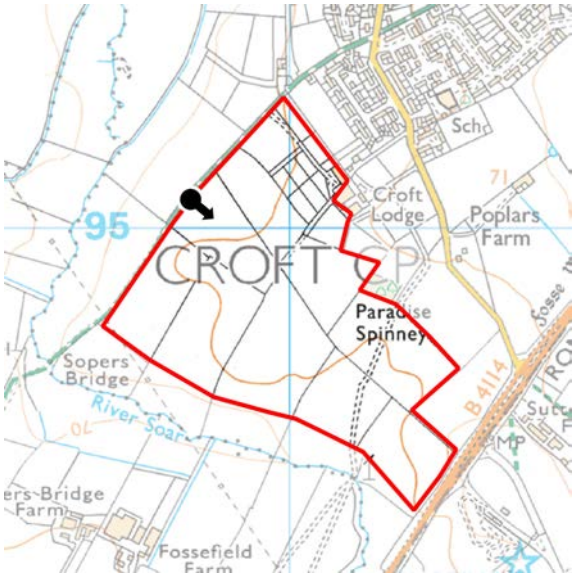
View from Sharnford Road



Photograph taken 30/07/25

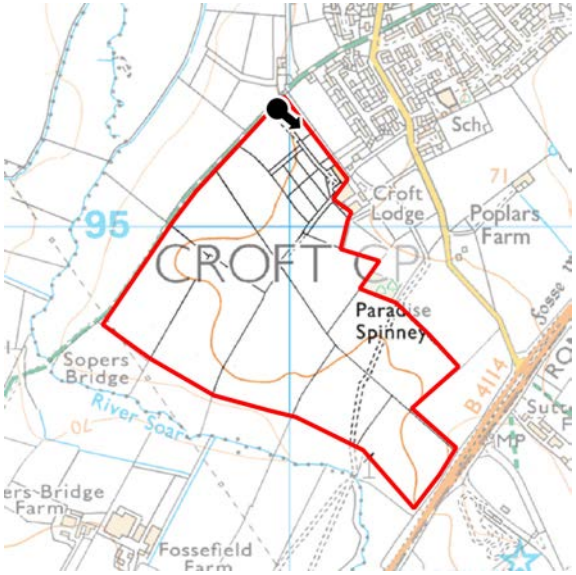
Land south of Croft (Site ref: SB4)

View from bridleway (midway)



Land south of Croft (Site ref: SB4)

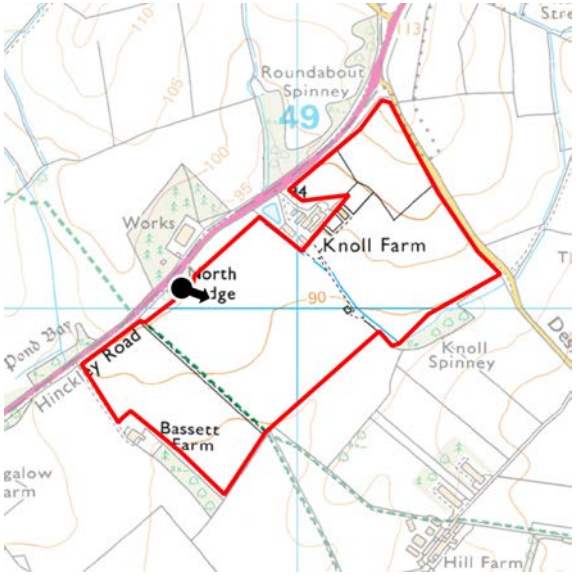
View from bridleway (northern entry)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

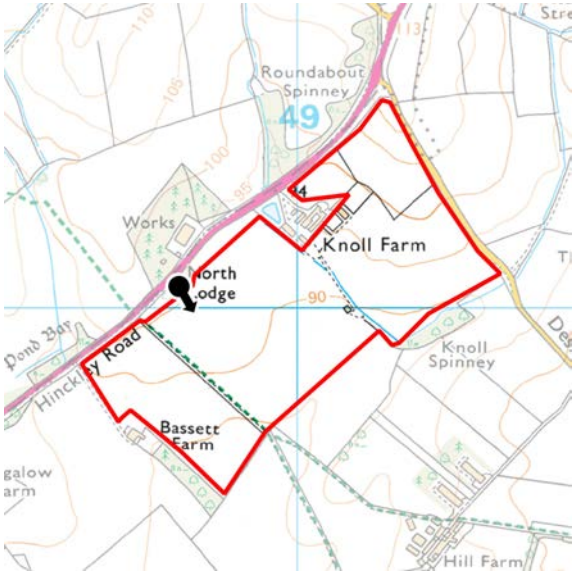
Land south of A47 (Site ref: SB5)

View from A47 (looking east)



Land south of Leicester Road A47 (Site ref: SB5)

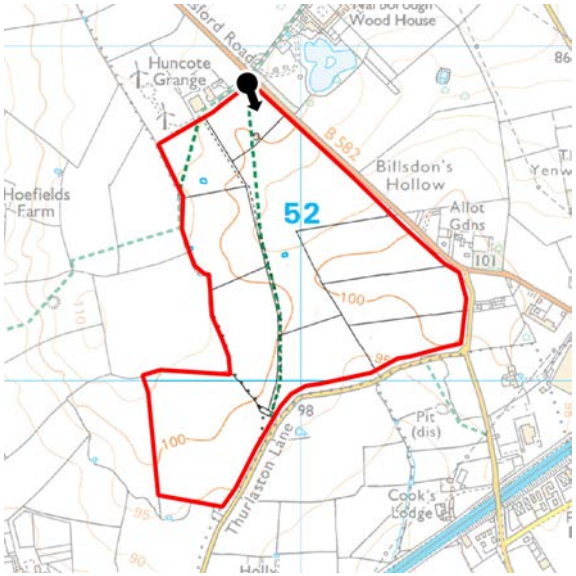
View from A47 (looking southeast)



Photograph taken 31/07/25

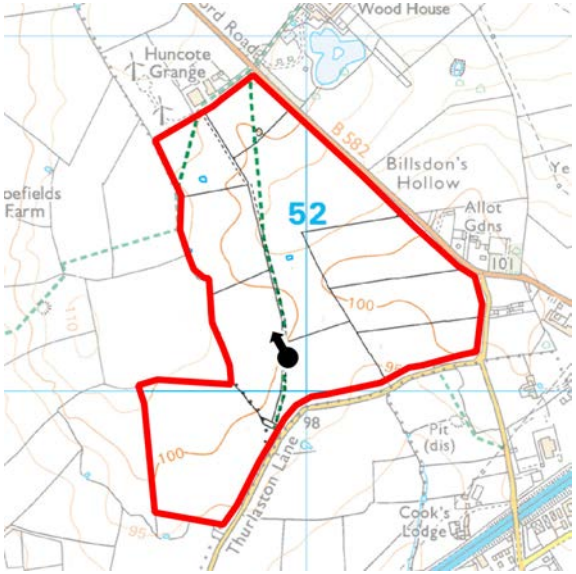
Land north of Thurlaston Lane (Site ref: SWB1)

View from Desford Road



Land north of Thurlaston Lane (Site ref: SWB1)

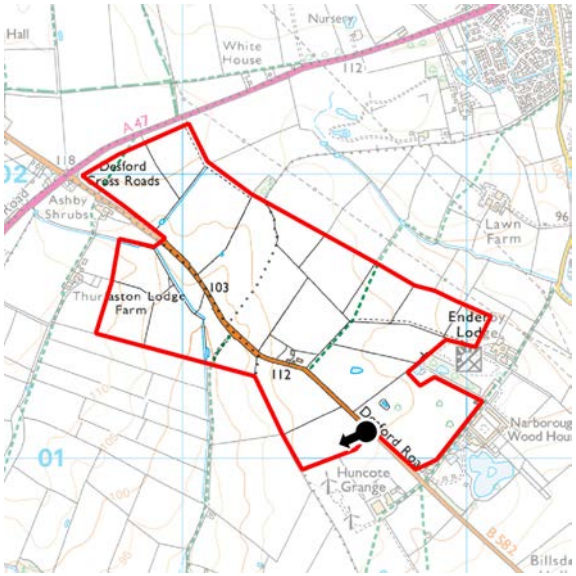
View from public footpath



Photograph taken 31/07/25

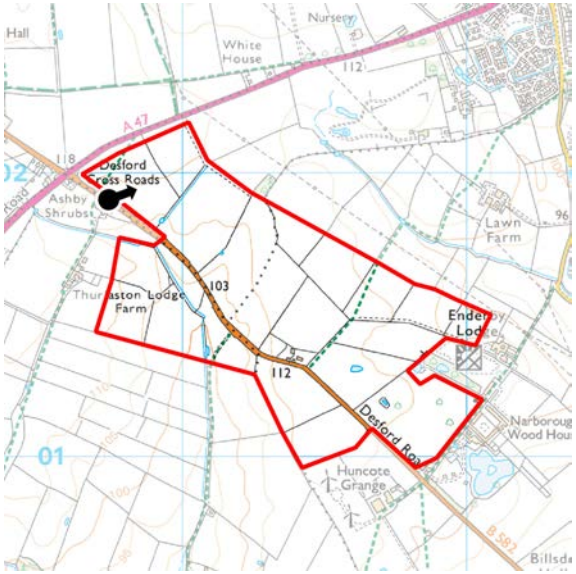
Land o Desford Road (Site ref: SWB2)

View from Desford Road (midway)



Land o Desford Road (Site ref: SWB2)

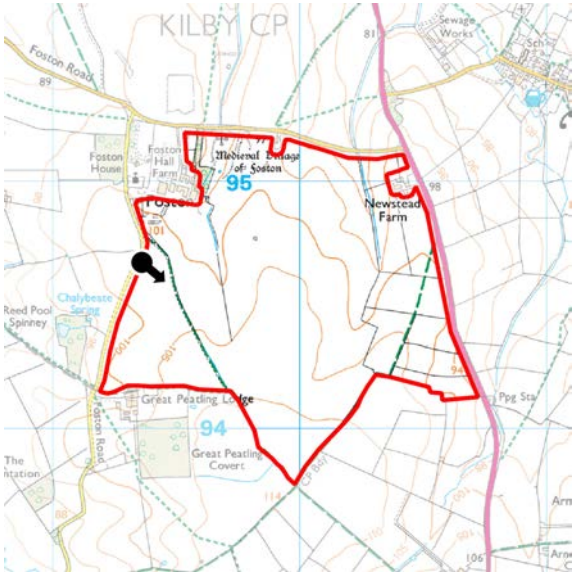
View from Desford Road (north)



Photograph taken 31/07/25

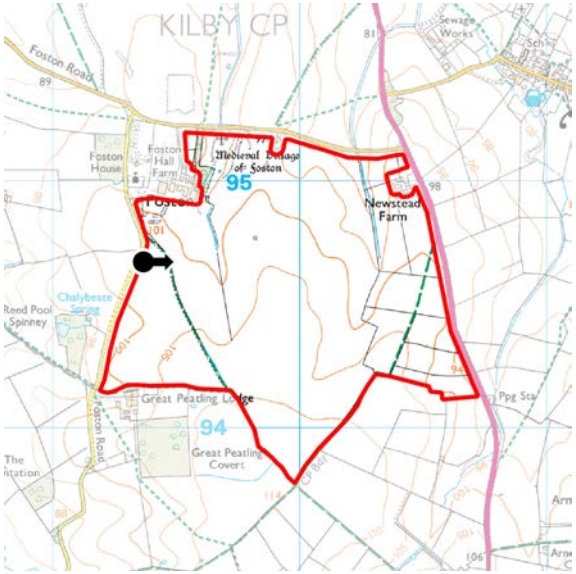
Land east of Barley Lane (Site ref: W1)

View from Barley Lane (looking southeast)



Land east of Barley Lane (Site ref: W1)

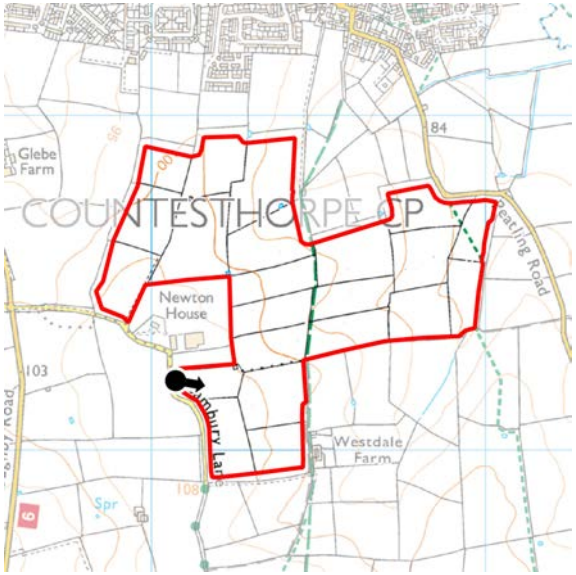
View from Barley Lane (looking east)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

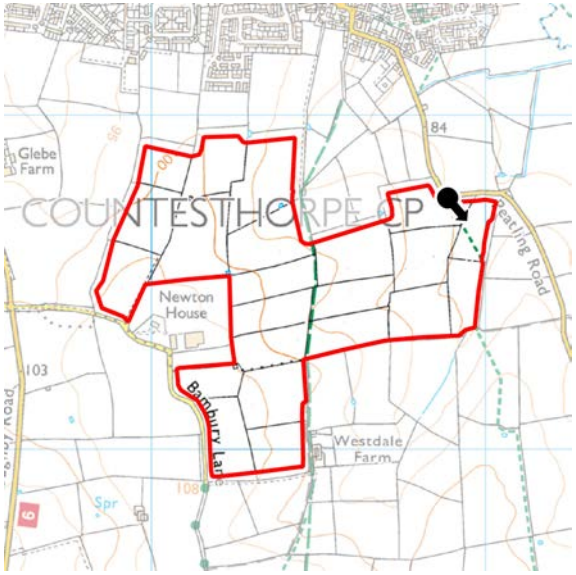
Land south of Countesthorpe (Site ref: W2)

View from Bambury Lane



Land south of Countesthorpe (Site ref: W2)

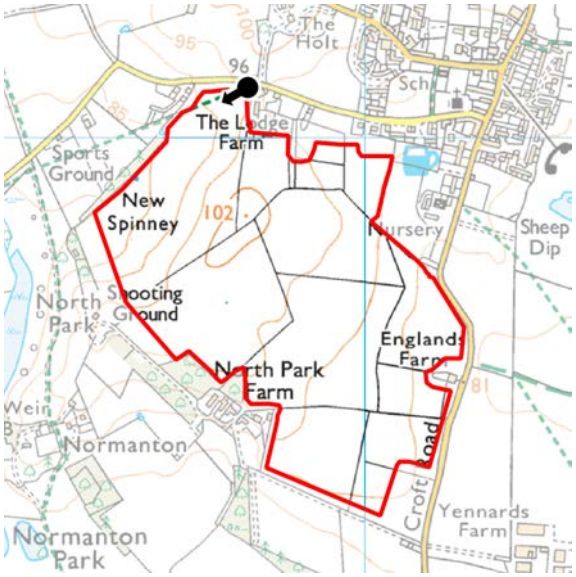
View from Peatling Road



Photograph taken 30/07/25

Land southwest of Thurlaston (Site ref: W3)

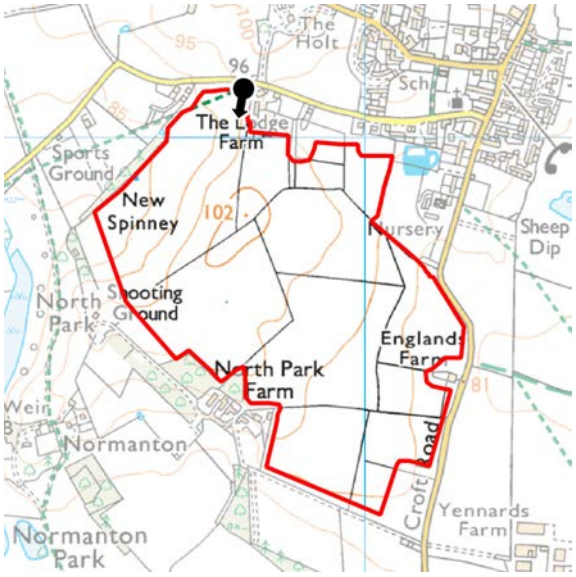
View from Earl Shilton Road (looking southwest)



Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of All Saints'

Land southwest of Thurlaston (Site ref: W3)

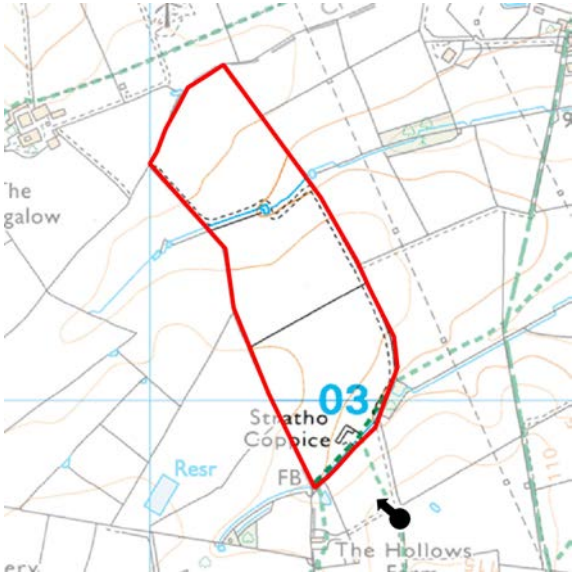
View from Earl Shilton Road (looking south)



Photograph taken 31/07/25

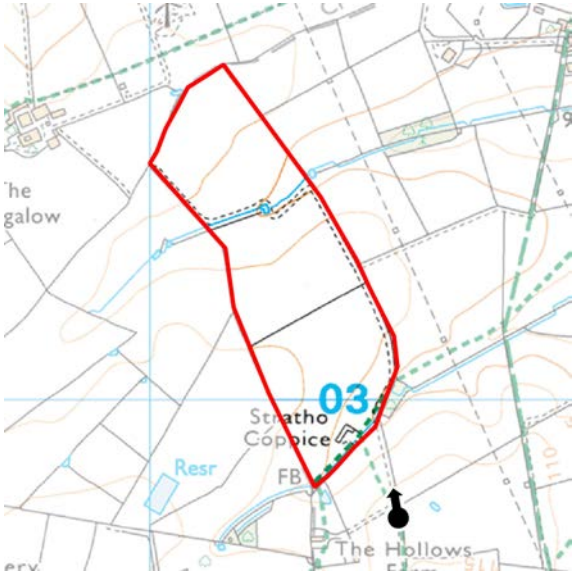
Land north of the Hollows Farm (Site ref: W4)

View from Hollows Park Lane (Looking northwest)



Land north of the Hollows Farm (Site ref: W4)

View from Hollows Park Lane (Looking north)



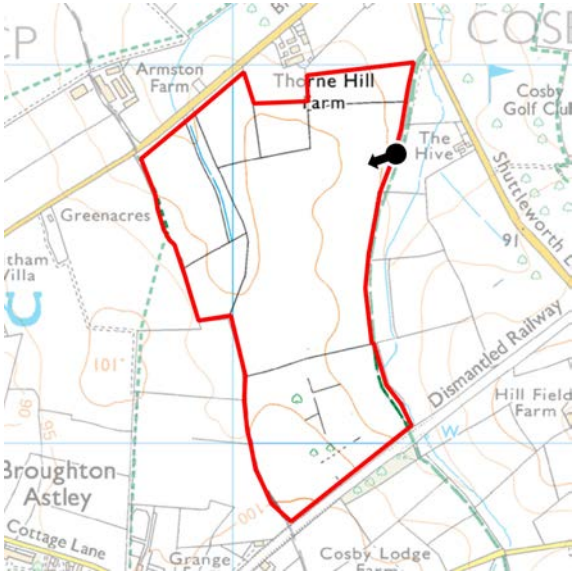
Photograph taken 31/07/25

Land southwest of Cosby (Site ref: W5)

View from public footpath

Land southwest of Cosby (Site ref: W5)

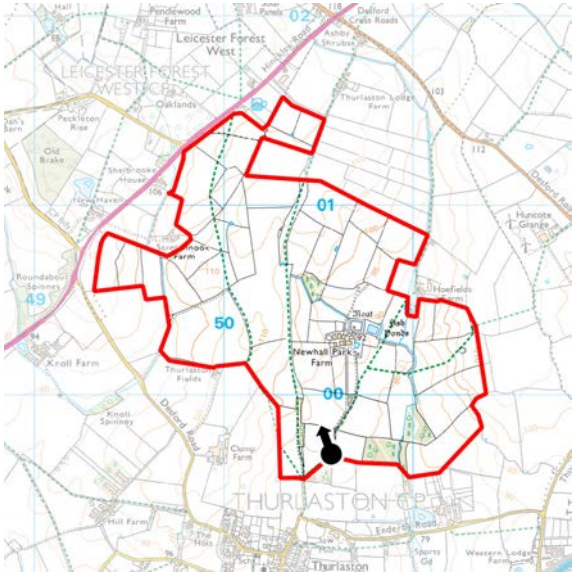
View from Broughton Road



Photograph taken 30/07/25

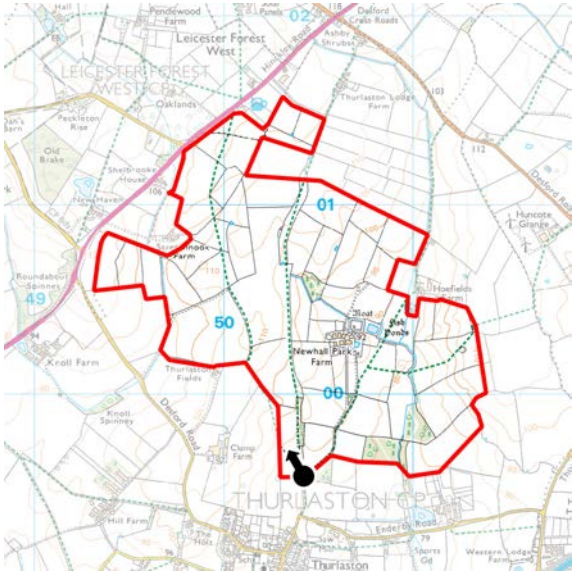
Land at New Hall Park Farm (Site ref: W6)

View from public footpath (northend)



Land at New Hall Park Farm (Site ref: W6)

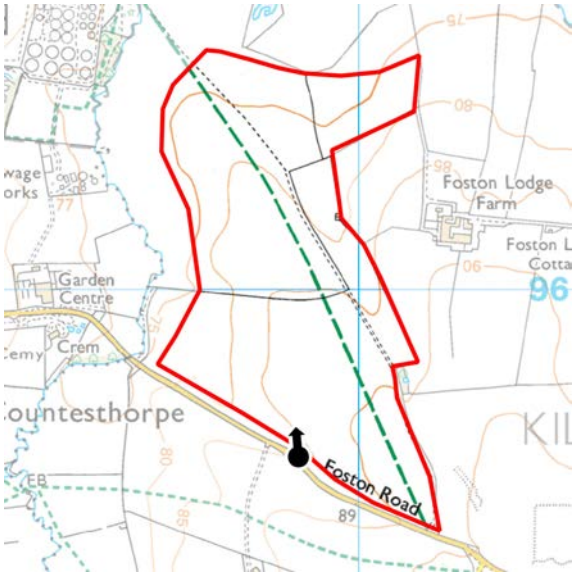
View from public footpath (southend)



Photograph taken 31/07/25

Land north of Foston Road (Site ref: WB1)

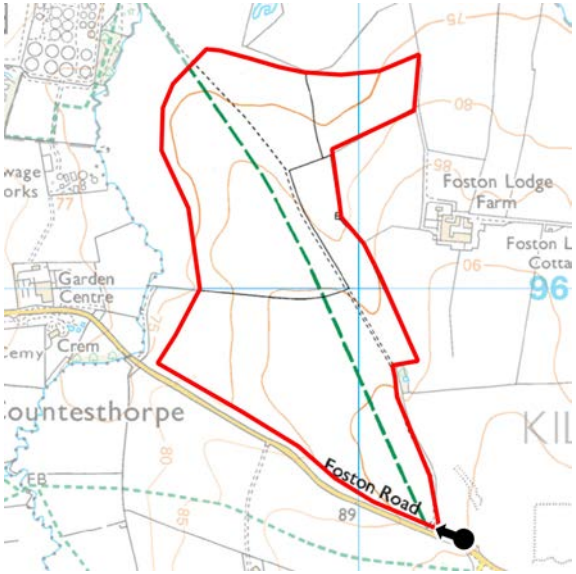
View from Foston Road (looking north)



© Google

Land north of Foston Road (Site ref: WB1)

View from Foston Road (looking northwest)



Photograph taken 30/07/25

Habitats Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys

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