

Green Wedge and Areas of Separation Review 2026



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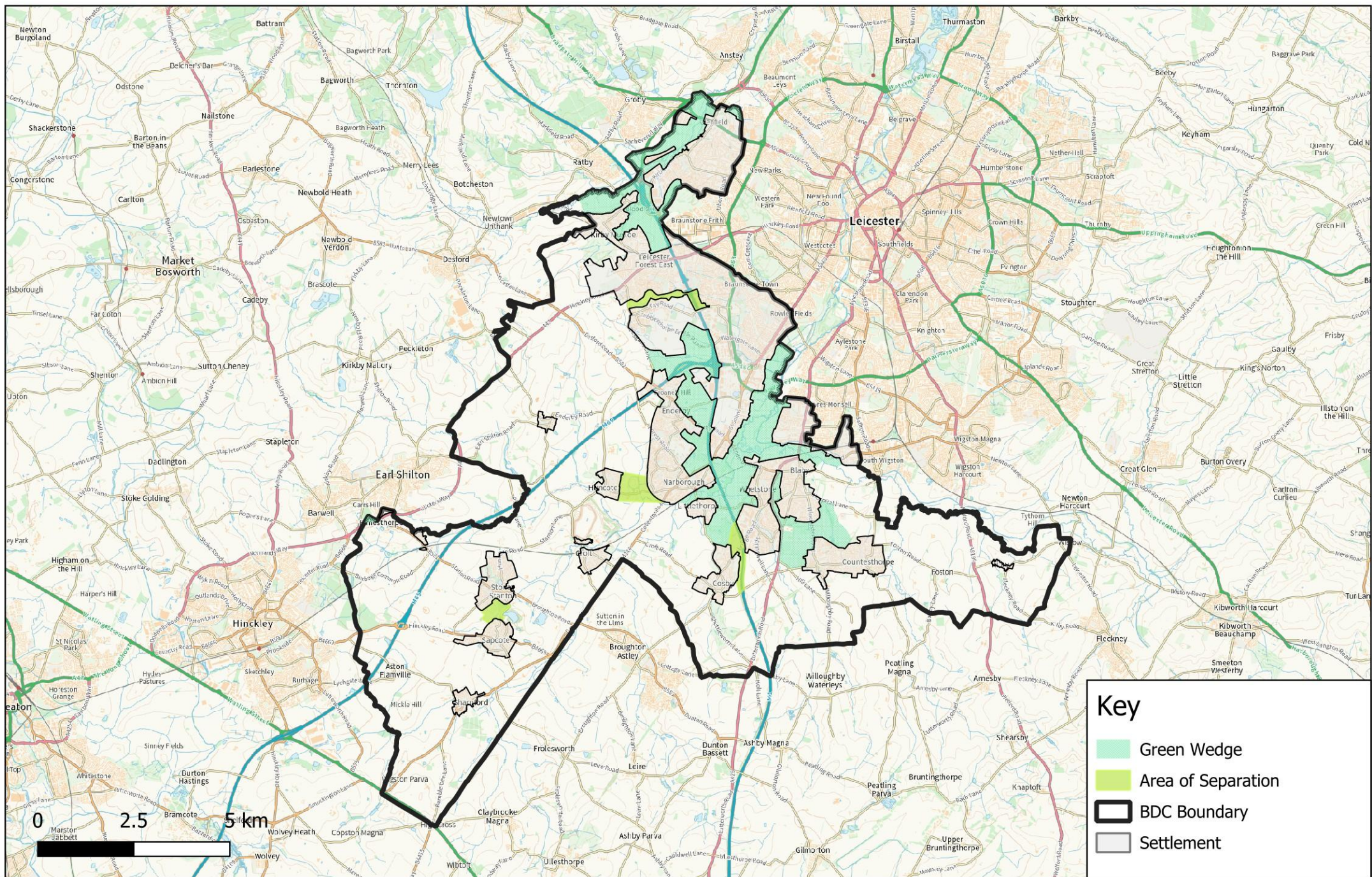
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This document is a review of Green Wedges and Areas of Separation designations for the emerging local plan. This is important due to the amount of time that has elapsed since the previous assessment, and that the new Local Plan includes several potential allocations on designated Green Wedge areas. It supersedes previous Green Wedges and Areas of Separation Reviews carried out by the Council in 2016 and 2017 respectively.
- 1.1.2 Although this review will be used as evidence to inform the emerging Local Plan, it does not have any status as adopted policy. It does not amend existing or designate new Green Wedges and Areas of Separation, which will be confirmed following full consideration through the Local Plan process.
- 1.1.3 Figure 1 at the end of this section shows a map of the Green Wedge and Area of Separation designations within Blaby District including where they connect to neighbouring authorities.

1.2 Format of Green Wedge and Area of Separation Review

- 1.2.1 The main report is split into a Green Wedges section followed by an Areas of Separation section. Each part sets out the purpose and includes the policy context, methodology used to carry out the assessments, summary of the results and a conclusion. Appendices with the document include further information and details that have helped inform the main report.
- 1.2.2 Appendices A-D of this report include the Green Wedge detailed assessments, planning applications and permissions, impact analysis of proposed allocations with consideration of potential extensions, and scoring summary tables.
- 1.2.3 Appendices E-G include the Area of Separation detailed assessments, impact analysis of proposed allocations with consideration of potential designation extensions, and scoring summary tables
- 1.2.4 Appendices H and I include blank pro-formas used for the assessments, and a Statement of Consistency between Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities in relation to the use of Green Wedge designations and the NPPF.
- 1.2.5 Figure 1 below shows the existing designations within Blaby District.



Green Wedge and Areas of Separation Designations

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Scale
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at A4

2. Green Wedge Assessment

2.1 Purpose of the Green Wedge assessment

- 2.1.1. This report systematically assesses each of the Green Wedges against the four designation purposes (explained in the Policy Context below). It seeks to identify if each of the Green Wedges (in whole or in part) are functioning effectively and, where amendments to the boundaries should be made as a result of the objectives not being met (without undermining the integrity of the Green Wedge as a whole).
- 2.1.2. The report also considers the impacts of the proposed local plan allocations and what effect they have on the scoring for each area as described above. It is emphasised that this is a separate stage from the assessment of current Green Wedge status, and that the selection of sites is subject to change as work on the local plan progresses. Identification of potential directions of extension for Green Wedges is also considered in relation to the allocations as well as any recent developments or permissions.
- 2.1.3. It is acknowledged that the emerging Local Plan will consider first whether there is land available for development in strategically preferable locations (such as brownfield sites within the Urban Area) before considering Green Wedge land.

2.2 Policy Context

Formulation of Green Wedge Policy within Leicester and Leicestershire

- 2.2.1 Green Wedge policies were initially introduced in the County of Leicestershire, in the Leicestershire Structure Plan adopted 1987. The policy stated that ‘the character of the green wedge areas...will be protected and wherever possible improved’ and general locations of green wedges were set out. Detailed boundaries of the green wedge designations were subsequently defined and illustrated within each relevant local authority Local Plan.
- 2.2.2 The Leicestershire Structure Plan (1994) then maintained green wedges through Environmental Policies 3 and 4. Paragraph 3.21 of the policies Explanatory Memorandum usefully stated the four specific aims of Green Wedges:
 - a) ‘To protect structurally important areas of open land that influences the form and direction of urban development, prevent coalescence and maintain the physical identity of adjacent settlements;

- b) To ensure that open areas of land extend outwards from urban centres to preserve links with open countryside;
- c) To provide appropriate recreational facilities within easy reach of urban residents;
- d) To promote the positive management of such (green) wedges to ensure that they remain or are enhanced as attractive environmental features with good public access’.

2.2.3 The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005), Strategy Policy 6, again reinforced the importance of green wedges as well as listing the purpose of green wedges. There were subtle differences to the aims given in the 1994 Structure Plan, particularly regarding ‘strategic landscape and wildlife links’, however by and large the strategy towards green wedges remained much the same. The policy stated that detailed green wedge boundaries would be reviewed as part of the Local Plan reviews. The Structure Plan was replaced by the East Midlands Regional Plan, which was introduced due to changes to the national planning system.

2.2.4 The East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) (now revoked) set out the strategic planning context for the East Midlands area. The Plan did not have a specific green wedge policy but did emphasise that a review of existing green wedges or the creation of new ones in association with development will be carried out through each planning authority’s Local Plan process. Paragraph 4.2.18 of the supporting text stated that:

‘Green wedges serve useful strategic planning functions in preventing the merging of settlements, guiding development form and providing a ‘green lung’ into urban areas, and acts as a recreational resource. Although not supported by government policy in the same way as Green Belts, they can serve to identify smaller areas of separation between settlements. Provision will be made in green wedges for the retention or creation of green infrastructure or green links between urban open spaces and the countryside, and for the retention and enhancement of public access facilities, particularly for recreation.’

2.2.5 In July 2010 the Government announced that it was to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies. The East Midlands Regional Plan was formally abolished through the Localism Bill on 12th April 2013.

Use of Green Wedges in Local Plan policy

2.2.6 Blaby District Council adopted Green Wedges into local planning policy in its Local Plan 1999, which included detailed boundaries of the designations based on the broad areas set out in the regional plans. These designations have

been carried forward into what is currently the local plan – the Blaby District Council Core Strategy 2013, and shown in detail within the accompanying Delivery DPD 2019.

2.2.7 In line with the functions set out in the regional plan, Core Strategy Policy CS16 sets out that Green Wedges are important strategic areas designated in order to:

- Prevent the merging of settlements;
- Guide development form;
- Provide a green lung into urban areas;
- Provide a recreation resource.

2.2.8 The policy confirms the following locations are Green Wedge areas, which relate to those previously set out in the Leicestershire Structure Plans:

- a.** Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley);
- b.** Between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe;
- c.** Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South);
- d.** Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester;
- e.** Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby;
- f.** From Elmesthorpe towards Barwell and Earl Shilton.

The policy also confirms that the need to retain Green Wedges will be balanced against the need to provide new development (including housing) in the most sustainable locations.

2.2.9 The Core Strategy 2013 did not include a policies map, which was to be provided as part of the accompanying Delivery Development Plan Document to sit alongside the plan. The Delivery DPD was adopted in 2019 and included the (updated) detailed boundaries of the Green Wedges.

2.2.10 To inform the detailed boundaries within the Delivery DPD, a review of the Green Wedges was carried out by the Council in 2016. This recommended boundary changes in response to developments taking place within the designations over time and the allocations as set out in the Core Strategy 2013. The changes included removing several sites across the wedges that had planning permission or had been developed. A new area of Green Wedge was set out between the allocation of New Lubbethorpe, Enderby and Braunstone. These amendments were formally made upon adopting the Delivery DPD 2019.

Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Methodology

- 2.2.1 The most recent Statement on the consistency of the green wedge designations in Leicester and Leicestershire was published in May 2024 by the collective authorities. The statement sets out the continued support for green wedge designations and their consistency with the NPPF and other statements of national planning policy. A copy of the Statement is included as Appendix H to this study.
- 2.2.2 The Leicester & Leicestershire Green Wedge Joint Methodology Review 2011 set out a consistent assessment approach to ensure the soundness of each DPD prepared by each local authority. Although referred to in the review, it was acknowledged that Blaby District Council took a differing approach to how assessment should be carried out. This related to whether a designation was required to fulfil all of the four purposes, or just one (with BDC adopting the latter).
- 2.2.3 The approach by BDC still sought to identify where Green Wedges are *“functioning effectively (in whole or in part) and those where amendments to the boundaries could be made as a result of the objectives not being met without undermining the integrity of the whole” (BDC Green Wedge Review 2016).*
- 2.2.4 In practice, it has not been considered the assessment approach differs so significantly than that adopted by the other Leicester and Leicestershire authorities. For clarity and for the purposes of this review, it has been considered more appropriate for the approach to align with that set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Methodology 2011, in particular:

“When assessing a green wedge (on a macro scale) in its entirety, or when identifying a new green wedge; a green wedge should achieve all of the mentioned evaluation criteria, or be capable of fulfilling all criteria in the future.”
(Para 3.2.2)

and

“A micro-scale review, could be undertaken by an Authority through the creation of sub-areas within the green wedge to enable a detailed analysis..... Sub areas within a green wedge may not meet all of the four functions....The Authority would need to consider the relationship that individual sites have on the role and function of the green wedge as a whole.” (Para 3.2.3)

2.3 Methodology

Background

- 2.3.1 Using a pro-forma, as with the 2016 Review assessment of the Green Wedges is carried out on a parcel by parcel basis using desk and site based observations (see Stages 1 and 2 below). Results are summarised for each purpose and scored (Stage 3). Finally a recommendation as to whether the land is justified for retention as Green Wedge, or if amendments should be made is included.
- 2.3.2 The review relates only to existing Green Wedge designations, with additional consideration to their potential amendments in response to developments (or proposed for allocation). It does not consider the whole land within the district for potential designation. There has not been an identified need to deviate significantly from the areas originally set out in the structure plans, and defined in detail through local plans and reviews to date.
- 2.3.3 For the purposes of this review, as described in the policy context above it is considered that Green Wedges should fulfil all of the four purposes at a strategic level (macro level). On a parcel basis ('micro' scale), it is possible that a parcel may underperform and not meet all the purposes, however the Green Wedge as a whole may still be considered functional.
- 2.3.4 The distinction between macro and micro scale assessments is considered useful to consider in sufficient depth the wider strategic functionality of the wedge, and also where more localised amendments could be made. The need for a wedge to fulfil all four purposes at a macro level also reflects the necessary designation criteria previously used for new green wedges.
- 2.3.5 Section 2.4 summarises the findings for each parcel and the wedge. Each assessment includes a recommendation for both the parcel and the whole wedge. The detailed assessments are set out in Appendix A, with supporting information showing constraints mapping and planning permissions in appendices B and C respectively.
- 2.3.6 The sub areas identified for assessment have been carried forward from the 2016 Green Wedge review. There are no specific criteria for deciding the extent of each sub-parcel however they have been selected as 'manageable' sized areas relating to the broad spaces between settlements.
- 2.3.7 Assessments including site observations were carried out between October and December 2024.

Assessment Process

Stage 1: Desk based assessment

2.3.8 The desk based assessment largely utilised the Council's Geographical Information Systems and other evidence including the Landscape Character Assessment 2020, Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2025, Historic Environment record (HER) and Environment Agency flood risk data. This helped identify some of the key land uses and important elements of the built and natural environment within Green Wedges.

2.3.9 The desk-based assessment comprised:

a) Identification of existing Green Wedge boundaries (from GIS software and the DPD 2019 Policies Map).

b) Confirming the smaller manageable parcels to undertake the assessment (reference made to the Blaby Green Wedge Assessment 2016).

c) Using the site pro-forma as a guide (see Appendix G and details below) identifying characteristics, 'green assets' or constraints that contribute to the function of or influence the shape of the Green Wedge, including:

- Flood risk
- Land Uses
- Landscape character and features (high hedgerows etc.)
- Green infrastructure
- Historic buildings, settings and landscape
- Potentially defensible boundaries
- Public access routes
- Public open space, playing pitches and sports and recreation facilities
- Recent or proposed developments
- Topography and vantage points
- Wildlife and biodiversity

The following GIS datasets were used to help identify constraints

- Conservation Areas
- Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Listed Buildings
- Local Nature Reserves
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Neighbouring Authority Green Wedges
- Open Space

- Planning Permissions
- Public Rights of Way
- RIGS
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Settlement Boundaries
- SSSI
- Tree Preservation Orders

Following identification of the relevant characteristics and features, observations were listed.

Stage 2: Site based assessments

- 2.3.10 The desk based assessment is followed by a site based appraisal. Site visits are researched through preparation of maps showing the extent of all the Green Wedges, identification of Public Rights of Way and relationship with nearby settlements.
- 2.3.11 Site visits are a way of obtaining further information regarding the characteristics of parcels which may not be apparent from desktop observation. This can include better assessment of intervisibility between areas, topography, potential habitats and the health of trees and other green infrastructure.
- 2.3.12 In most cases, Green Wedges were assessed from multiple viewpoints and accompanied by photographs to record the visual setting and potential impacts. Site observations were made from publicly accessible land.
- 2.3.13 A pro-forma was developed to ensure that the desk-based assessment and site appraisals were conducted using a consistent approach. The pro-forma sought to test whether the Green Wedge sites were fulfilling each of the four purposes through a series of questions. The purposes and associated questions are set out below:

1. Prevent the merging of settlements

Description:

Typically undeveloped land between built-up areas that may provide a sense of space or includes certain features restricting development. Helps avoid coalescence and maintains the character and identity of settlements.

Q1A: Are there physical features to prevent the merging of settlements and does the land contribute to maintaining the open and undeveloped character of the land?

Examples: Major roads, waterbodies, pylons as features. Is there undeveloped space making a significant contribution to sense of space?

Q1B: Are there features to provide a visual perception of distance between settlements?

Examples: Uninterrupted views across long distances, open space, even gradient giving sense of openness, permanent physical features that disrupt views between settlements and increase perceived distance between them.

Q1C: Does the land include uses or proposed developments that are incompatible with the Green Wedge policy?

Examples: Approved planning permissions for certain types of development, allocations in a development plan, existing residential or employment development.

2. Guide development form

Description:

Whether and how the land potentially contributes to shaping the character and pattern of new development.

Q2A: Does the land form defensible boundaries along its edges that defines or would influence the pattern of development or is there an alternative?

Examples: Roads, watercourses or other clearly defined built or natural features

3. Provide a green lung into urban areas

Description:

A green lung is typically a natural or semi-natural space connected to a wider area, helping to permeate an area and provide linkages. It may include wildlife habitats and form part of a wider infrastructure.

Q3A: Does the land contain wildlife or biodiversity assets that should be retained?

Examples: Local Wildlife Sites, vegetated areas and watercourses that may provide habitats.

Q3B: Does the land contain landscape or Green/Blue Infrastructure assets that should be retained?

Examples: Refer to GBI study. Are there any other features visible?

Q3C: Does the land contain historic assets that should be retained?

Examples: Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments. See Historic Environment Records.

Q3D: Do any assets within the land connect to other infrastructure in other areas and help form a continuous green lung from the countryside into urban areas?

Examples: Continuous hedgerows, lines of trees, watercourses, connected open spaces.

4. Provide a recreational resource

Description:

Whether the land provides a recreational benefit to the public through the provision of accessible features such as informal open space, walking routes and other facilities for recreation activities.

Q4A: Does the land contain public access routes?

Examples: Public Rights of Way, access onto public land

Q4B: Does the land contain open space or other sport or recreation resources?

Examples: Identified through the Open Space study, sports clubs, pitches, open grassland and amenity areas.

Stage 3: Summary and Recommendation

2.3.14 The findings are evaluated in a summary and a recommendation is made on a parcel by parcel basis. To help focus results and aid in comparisons the following word based scale was adopted to quantify the extent land contributes to a particular Green Wedge purpose:

- No contribution – The land has no features or characteristics present that provide a contribution, or such features are so insignificant as to not have any material effect on the findings.
- Weak contribution – Limited features or characteristics are present that support the land in making a contribution. These may be sparse in comparison to the wider surroundings or outweighed by other non-contributing features, however nonetheless are identifiable and worthy of note.
- Moderate contribution – Clear Features or characteristics are present to support the land in making a contribution. This may need be balanced against a lack of features or those that detract from Green Wedge purposes, however they should be carefully considered and given weight.

- Strong contribution – The land includes obvious and prevailing features that clearly support its contribution. There are unlikely to be other factors present to diminish the weight that should be given.

Scoring may be considered to fall between two categories and represented as such e.g. Weak/Moderate or Moderate/Strong. Each score has been allocated colour coding to aid with presentation.

2.3.15 The results will confirm the status of the Green Wedge, and whether the parcel is justified for retention, or if any boundary amendments made.

2.3.16 Opportunities for amending or designating new Green Wedge areas will be explored further to identify how this policy tool can be used beneficially in relation to the planned new development.

Stage 4: Impact of Allocation Sites and Potential Directions of Extension

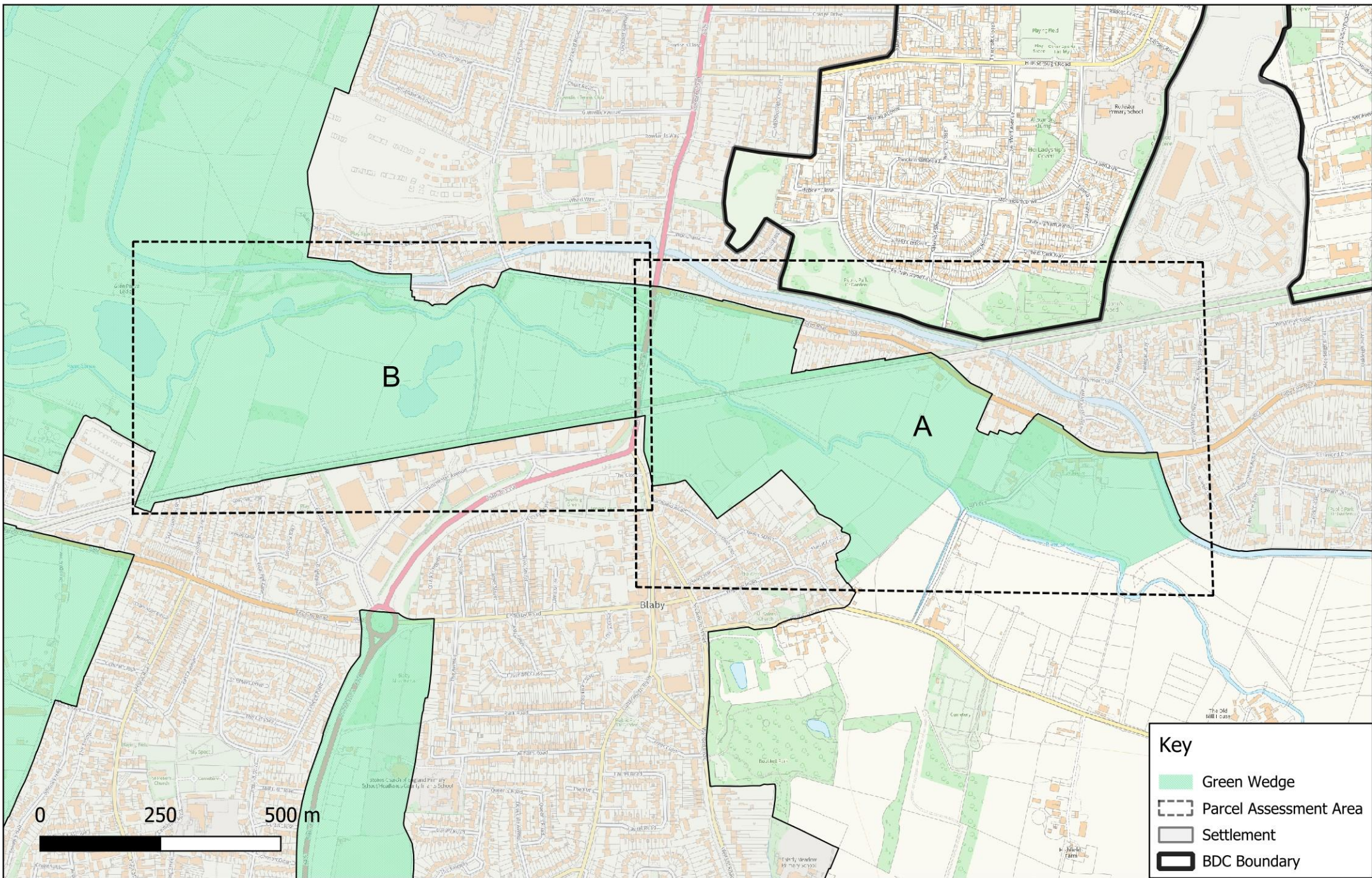
2.3.17 Following completion of the assessment of the wedge, the potential impacts of proposed allocation sites are recorded separately. This examines the likely implications of such development on the parcel should these sites come forward. Green Wedge Potential Directions of Extension are also considered in broad terms in response to the proposed developments and are set out in Appendix C. It should be noted however that this aspect of the assessment does not affect the status of the current wedge as assessed and concluded in Stages 1-3.

2.4 Summary of Assessments:

Green Wedge (a) Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley)

Description:

- 2.4.1 There are two sub-areas in the Sence Valley Green Wedge, separating Glen Parva from Blaby and Whetstone. The wedge extends from West to East in a relatively linear fashion, with the River Sence being a permanent feature running continuously through it. Parcel A in the Eastern half of the wedge connects to the wider countryside beyond, while Parcel B to the West links to Green Wedge (ci) ((Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (North))). Figure 2 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.



Green Wedge (a) Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley)

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GW (a) Parcel A

Summary Assessment

2.4.2 Much of the northern boundary of the parcel is defined by Little Glen Road and the railway line, with the Grand Union Canal curving round on to the eastern edge. The land includes a variety of assets, including the River Sence which helps to safeguard the area from development with its associated floodplain, and providing Green/Blue Infrastructure benefits as well as ecological ones.

2.4.3 The parcel makes a Strong Contribution to Purposes 1, 3 and 4, and a Moderate Contribution to Purpose 2.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.4 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (a) Parcel B

Summary Assessment

2.4.5 The land is clearly defined along much of its boundary by the Grand Union Canal and New Bridge Road to the north and the railway line to the south. As with Parcel A, the River Sence is a permanent feature running through the land, helping to safeguard the area from development with its associated floodplain and providing Green/Blue Infrastructure benefits as well as ecological ones.

2.4.6 The parcel makes a Strong Contribution to Purposes 1,2 and 3, and a Moderate contribution to Purpose 4. It is considered to fulfil its Green Wedge function.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.7 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (a) Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley)

GW(a)	Parcel A Contribution	Parcel B Contribution
Purpose 1	Strong	Strong
Purpose 2	Moderate	Strong
Purpose 3	Strong	Strong
Purpose 4	Strong	Moderate

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

- 2.4.8 Each parcel makes predominantly strong contributions to each of the Green Wedge purposes, including for Purpose 1. The River Sence is a continuous permanent feature running through the land that both provides multiple benefits to the purposes and helps safeguard the openness of the wedge and its integrity. Some recreation opportunities are also present across the land. Overall the wedge is considered to clearly fulfil its function.

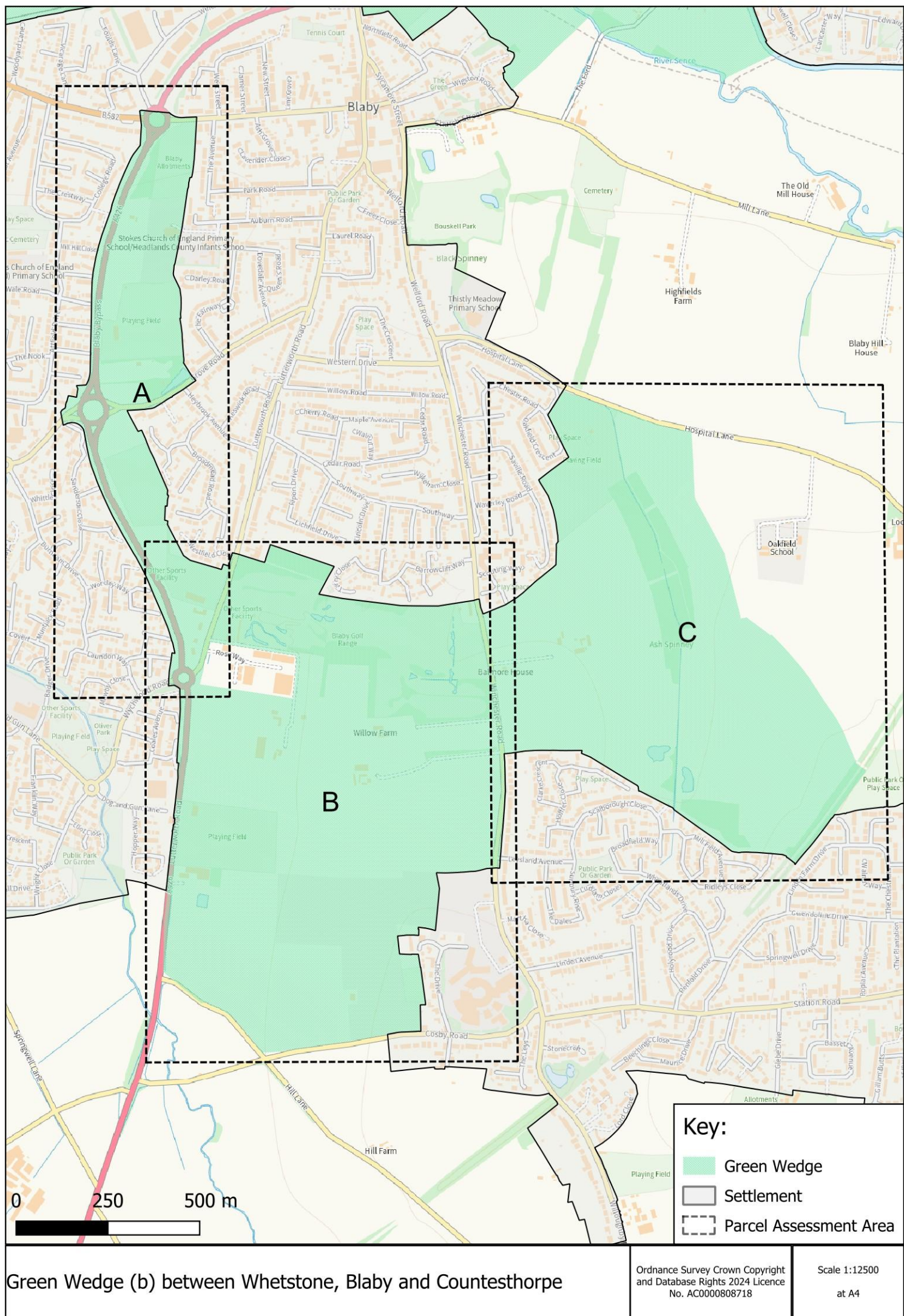
Green Wedge Recommendation:

- 2.4.9 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (b) Between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe

Description:

- 2.4.10 The wedge consists of three sub-areas between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe. Parcel A is a relatively narrow strip following the A426 covering the land in between the built-up areas of Whetstone and Blaby. Parcel B connects the parcels and is a more expansive area situated centrally between the surrounding three settlements with countryside to the South. Parcel C extends eastwards between Blaby and Countesthorpe, out towards the open countryside. Figure 3 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.
- 2.4.11 Across the wedge there are multiple open space and recreation facilities including allotments, sports clubs, Blaby golf course and Countesthorpe country park. The land otherwise consists primarily of agricultural fields.



GW (b) Parcel A

Summary Assessment

2.4.12 The land makes an important contribution to separating Blaby and Whetstone and has a number of assets and features that positively contribute to the Green Wedge purposes, including established hedgerows with trees, allotments, and sports facilities. The development of the Grove Road apartments (now complete) may necessitate an amendment to the Green Wedge boundary, however the remainder of the land is considered to be justified in retaining its Green Wedge status.

2.4.13 Parcel A is considered to make Moderate contributions to Green Wedge Purposes 1, 2 and 3, and a Strong contribution to Purpose 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.14 The Green Wedge boundary should be amended in relation to the Grove Road apartments development. The parcel otherwise fulfils its Green Wedge function and is justified for retention subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (b) Parcel B

Summary Assessment

2.4.15 The parcel includes expanses of open and undeveloped land across the agricultural fields. It has defined and defensible boundaries along much of its perimeter, although lacks clear physical features to prevent the merging of settlements. The integrity of the wedge is affected to a degree by the presence of the Rose Way commercial estate which the wedge encompasses, and some isolated examples of existing development not compatible with Green Wedge purposes, however the parcel fulfils its function in providing clear separation between Blaby, Whetstone and Countesthorpe.

2.4.16 Various biodiversity and green/blue infrastructure features are present including numerous hedgerows, trees, and some ponds, which include Local Wildlife Sites. The land includes sports facilities such as Blaby Golf Course and others associated with Countesthorpe Academy and Whetstone Junior Football Club.

2.4.17 Parcel B is considered to make Moderate/Strong contributions Purposes 1, 3 and 4, and a Moderate contribution to Purpose 2.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.18 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (b) Parcel C

Summary Assessment:

- 2.4.19 The land does not have strong physical characteristics to prevent the merging of settlements or clear defensible boundaries however nonetheless provides a large undeveloped space that gives a visual perception of distance between settlements. It contains several valuable ecological, green and blue infrastructure, landscape, and open space assets, including footpaths, that form a strong link throughout the parcel and provides a significant recreation resource.

- 2.4.20 Parcel C is considered to make a Moderate/Strong contribution to Green Wedge Purpose 1, a Moderate contribution to Purpose 2 and Strong Contributions to Purposes 3 and 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.21 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (b) Between Whetstone Blaby and Countesthorpe

GW (b)	Parcel A Contribution	Parcel B Contribution	Parcel C Contribution
Purpose 1	Moderate	Moderate/Strong	Moderate/Strong
Purpose 2	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Purpose 3	Moderate	Moderate/Strong	Strong
Purpose 4	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Strong

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

- 2.4.22 The parcels within the wedge provide a mix of moderate to strong contributions to each of the Green Wedge purposes, with Parcel C performing the strongest overall. Certain weaknesses including the presence of existing incompatible development or lack of contributing features for are present across all parcels to restrict the scores for Purposes 1 and 2, however nonetheless what is there is considered significant and is sufficient in fulfilling the purposes. The predominantly undeveloped character plays an important role in separating the three settlements, and the presence of several recreational

facilities including a country park, and ecological or green infrastructure assets reinforce the multi-faceted benefits of the wedge.

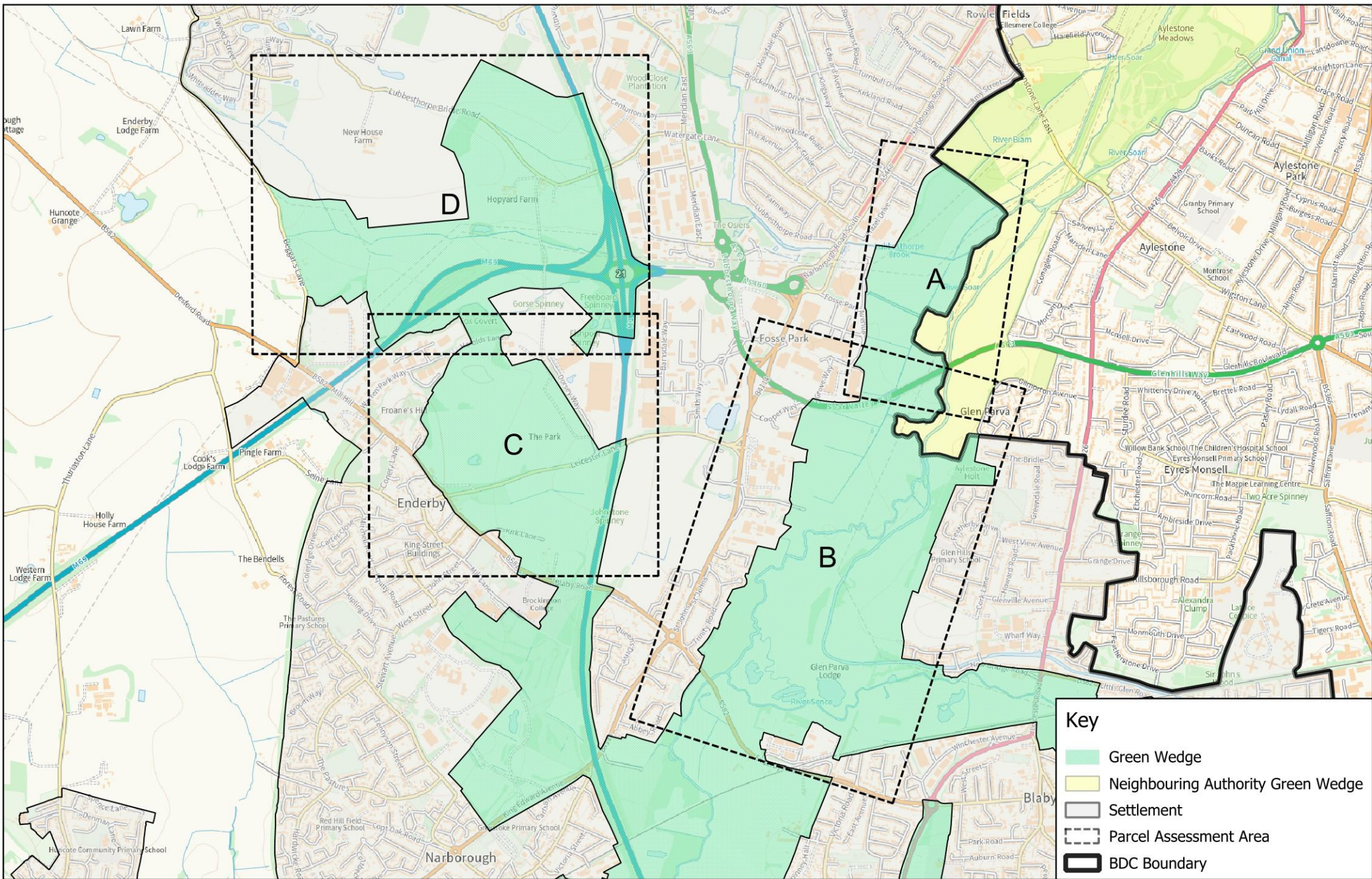
Green Wedge Recommendation:

- 2.4.23 The wedge is justified retention although alterations to the boundary of Parcel A should be made in relation to the Grove Road developments and extension of the built-up area in this location.
- 2.4.24 The wedge should otherwise continue to be protected subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (c(i)) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (North)

Description:

- 2.4.25 This is the Northern section of Green Wedge (c) and consists of 4 parcels. Parcels A and B form a corridor running from North to South, separating Leicester City from Braunstone Town, and between Glen Parva and Enderby St Johns respectively. The land includes the River Soar as well as the Grand Union Canal, with extensive areas of meadows.
- 2.4.26 Parcel C is located to the West on the opposite site of Enderby St Johns, creating space between this area and the settlement of Enderby. It mainly consists of historic parkland (associated with Enderby Hall) as well as agricultural fields. It is connected to the Southern section of the overall Green Wedge (c), as well as Parcel D to the North.
- 2.4.27 Parcel D is more recently designated (through the Development Plan DPD 2019) Green Wedge created in relation to the New Lubbethorpe development further to the North, separating this development from Enderby to the South and the industrial estate of Meridian Business Park to the East on the other side of the M1. It primarily consists of agricultural fields. Figure 4 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.



Green Wedge (c(i)) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (North)

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GW (ci) Parcel A

Summary Assessment:

2.4.28 The River Soar is a permanent feature running through the land and its associated floodplain helps preserve openness and safeguard extensive areas of the parcel from development, maintaining separation between Enderby/Fosse Park and Aylestone within Leicester City. Aylestone Meadows Local Nature Reserve (also within Leicester City) extends into the parcel and there is an established network of trees and hedgerows across the land providing green infrastructure and biodiversity benefits. The meadows and surrounding area provide a large space for informal recreation with much of the land being publicly accessible.

2.4.29 Parcel A is considered to make Strong contributions to all of the Green Wedge Purposes.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.30 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (ci) – Parcel B

Summary Assessment:

2.4.31 As with Parcel A, the River Soar runs through the land and its associated floodplain helps preserve openness and safeguard the land from development. There is less of a defensible boundary on the edge the development under construction to the South of the Great Central Way near Westdale Avenue, however the edges are otherwise well defined and protected to guide development form. The land includes several biodiversity assets including meadows and wet grassland Local Wildlife Sites, Glen Hills and Glen Parva Local Nature Reserves, and a network of trees and hedges across the land. The meadows and Jubilee Park cover large areas of the parcel and provide opportunities for recreation provides.

2.4.32 Parcel B is considered to make Strong contributions to Purposes 1, 3 and 4, and a Moderate/Strong contribution to Purpose 2.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.33 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (ci) Parcel C

Summary Assessment:

- 2.4.34 The land provides an expansive undeveloped area separating Enderby from Grove Park (and also Enderby St Johns including the proposed Enderby Hub development). Some areas adjoining the existing urban area of this land are already developed reducing the defensible nature of the boundaries in these locations.
- 2.4.35 The land includes sensitive landscape and historic features on the land to the north of Leicester Lane, including Enderby Hall parkland and the nationally important geological feature at Enderby Warren Quarry. The Fosse Way, Roman road, is located to the east of the M1. The Green Wedge designation helps to protect these features.
- 2.4.36 Parcel C is considered to make Moderate to Strong contributions to Purposes 1 and 3, and Moderate contributions to Purposes 2 and 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.37 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (ci) Parcel D

Summary Assessment:

- 2.4.38 The land provides clear separation between the new settlement of Lubbesthorpe (under construction) and Enderby to the South and Braunstone Town to the East. Lubbesthorpe Brook and some areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are present on the land. The M1 is a defining feature along the eastern edge of the parcel and the M69 runs across the southern area.
- 2.4.39 Several Local Wildlife Sites are present on the land consisting of woodland, hedgerows and parts of the brook. A Scheduled Monument (Lubbesthorpe deserted Medieval village) is situated on the southeastern part of the land.
- 2.4.40 The land includes Rights of Way running from North to South as well as another route across the land leading to/from Fox Covert. There are only a limited number of designated assets however the features and characteristics present make a significant contribution to the green wedge purposes.

- 2.4.41 Parcel D is considered to make a Strong contribution to Purpose 1, Moderate contributions to Purposes 2 and 4, and a Moderate/Strong contribution to Purpose 3.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.42 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (ci) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (North)

GW (ci)	Parcel A Contribution	Parcel B Contribution	Parcel C Contribution	Parcel D Contribution
Purpose 1	Strong	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Strong
Purpose 2	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Purpose 3	Strong	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Moderate/Strong
Purpose 4	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

- 2.4.43 Parcels A and B are connected to form the Eastern section of the wedge and make predominantly strong contributions across all of the Green Wedge purposes. The land here provides a lengthy defined corridor between settlements with multiple assets and features that contribute to Green and Blue Infrastructure, biodiversity, and recreation opportunities. The presence of the River Soar running through the land is a permanent feature supporting these benefits that influences much of the shape and openness of the land.
- 2.4.44 Parcels C and D situated to the West are also connected to each other and provide a mix of Moderate up to Strong contributions to each of the purposes.
- 2.4.45 Parcel C plays an important role in separating Enderby from the urban area East of the M1, and includes features such as the historic parkland, Conservation Area, SSSI, and designated open space.
- 2.4.46 Parcel D plays a distinct role in separating New Lubbethorpe from Enderby, and the presence of a Scheduled Monument helps maintain the openness of the wedge and safeguard the eastern part from development. The extent of New Lubbethorpe is yet to be built out which will help establish how the wedge responds to the new development.

2.4.47 Overall Green Wedge (ci) is considered to be fulfilling its purpose.

Green Wedge Recommendation:

2.4.48 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required at this time subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (c(ii)) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (South)

Description:

- 2.4.49 Green Wedge (cii) consists of 3 sub-areas covering the southern section of the wedge (c).
- 2.4.50 Parcel E is focussed on the gap between Narborough and Littlethorpe. It sits adjacent to the railway line and follows the route of the River Soar. It connects to Parcel F to the east and open countryside to the west.
- 2.4.51 Parcel F is a more expansive area between Whetstone and Littlethorpe, Narborough and Enderby St Johns. It is the largest of the parcels and links to both Parcels E and G, as well the countryside to the south and c(i) to the north. The River Soar flows northwards and the land mainly consists of agricultural fields. The M1 motorway cuts through the land in a north-south direction.
- 2.4.52 Parcel G sits between Narborough and Enderby/Enderby St Johns and also forms a link to c(i). The land abuts the Carlton Park development to the West. The site includes Enderby Golf Course, allotments and formal sports facilities. Walking routes are available through the land. Figure 5 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.

GW (cii) Parcel E

Summary Assessment:

2.4.53 The land provides a distinct separation between Narborough and Littlethorpe and is safeguarded to a large extent by the River Soar as a permanent feature and its associated floodplain. The parcel is clearly defined by the railway line along its northern edge and Sycamore Road and Riverside way to the south. Thorpe Meadows and River Soar Local Wildlife Sites are present as are woodland habitats. It provides both a physical and visual gap between the settlements and includes assets that make clear contributions to the Green Lung and Recreation Resource functions of the wedge.

2.4.54 Parcel E is considered to make Strong contributions to Purposes 1 and 2, a Moderate/Strong contribution to Purpose 3, and a Moderate contribution to Purpose 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.55 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (cii) Parcel F

Summary Assessment:

2.4.56 The land provides an expansive undeveloped area separating Whetstone from Enderby, Narborough and Littlethorpe, as well as separating Cosby from Littlethorpe. It includes the River Soar and Whetstone Brook as permanent features along with their floodplains to help safeguard large areas from development. Much of the parcel's boundaries are clearly defined and considered defensible, although there are some localised areas with weaker boundaries that may be more susceptible to encroachment. Wildlife and biodiversity assets are present along the River Soar and former railway line, and there are pockets of established tree planting as well as field hedgerows. There are a variety of open space designations that include Whetstone Golf Course, Sports grounds, Allotments and Accessible Natural Green Space.

2.4.57 Parcel F is considered to make Strong contributions to Purposes 1, 3 and 4, and a Moderate/Strong contribution to Purpose 2.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.58 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (cii) Parcel G

Summary Assessment:

2.4.59 The land is open and undeveloped providing a spacious gap between the eastern part Enderby and Narborough, and Enderby St Johns. There is a general lack of defensible boundaries in the western and northwestern section of the parcel due to the pattern of existing development adjacent, although the eastern edge is clearly defined by the M1 motorway. The land includes green infrastructure throughout including dense pockets of trees as well as hedgerow and tree lines, which link to surrounding areas. A significant portion of the parcel is occupied by Enderby golf course which is designated open space, as are a selection of other sports facilities within the parcel and allotments. Several areas of the land are publicly accessible and a Right of Way runs through the land.

2.4.60 Parcel G is considered to make a Moderate contribution to Purpose 1, a Weak/Moderate contribution to Purpose 2, and Strong contributions to Purposes 3 and 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.61 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (cii) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (South)

GW(cii)	Parcel E Contribution	Parcel F Contribution	Parcel G Contribution
Purpose 1	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Purpose 2	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Moderate
Purpose 3	Moderate/Strong	Strong	Strong
Purpose 4	Moderate	Strong	Strong

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

2.4.62 The parcels make a mix of Moderate up to Strong contributions. All parcels fulfil their primary purpose in preventing the merging of settlements in their respective areas.

2.4.63 The River Soar flowing through Parcels E and F is a permanent physical feature running through the land, safeguarding significant areas from development with its floodplain and contributing Green/Blue Infrastructure as well as biodiversity benefits.

2.4.64 Some boundaries of Parcel G are less defensible in nature however the land otherwise includes more defined features to guide development. The M1 motorway runs along the eastern edge, safeguarding a corridor connecting to Green Wedge (ci) Parcel C to the North and Green Wedge (cii) Parcel F to the South.

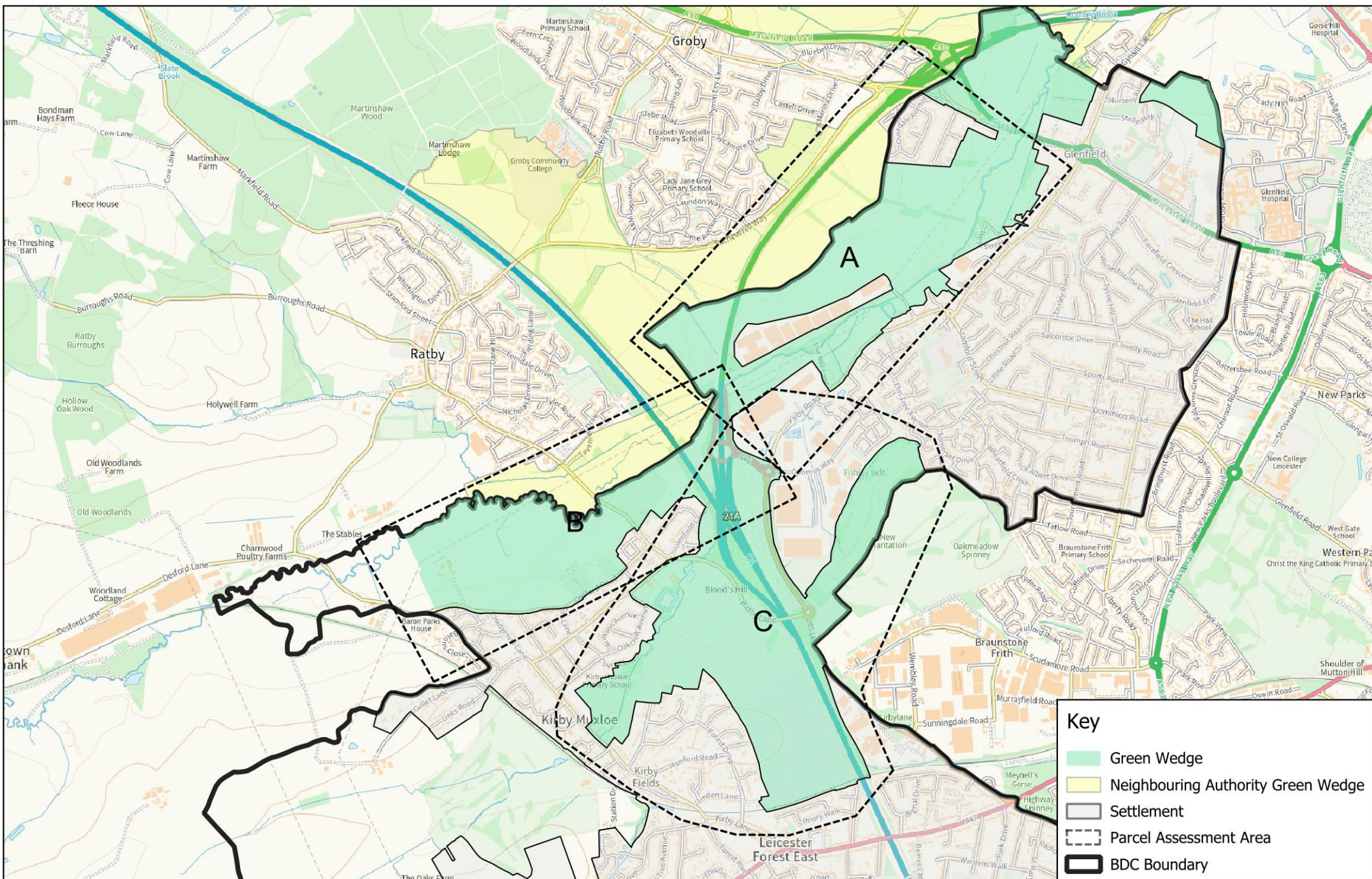
Green Wedge Recommendation:

2.4.65 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required at this time subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (d) Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester

Description:

- 2.4.66 There are three sub areas within the wedge. Parcel A is adjacent the edge of the district covering an area between Glenfield and Groby and links to a wider green wedge in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. The land rises towards the northwest. It primarily consists of agricultural fields but also has Rothley Brook running through the southern edge of the land as a permanent feature. The land encompasses an industrial development (The Mill Lane) which is not part of the wedge designation but sits relatively central within the parcel.
- 2.4.67 Parcel B links to the southwest of Parcel A, extending into the area between Kirby Muxloe and Ratby, with open countryside further out to the West. It is also adjacent to the Hinckley and Bosworth boundary and a section of wedge in this location. The land consists of agricultural fields and Rothley Brook continues through the land, with the gradient sinking gradually towards this feature and rising either side. Thorneyfields Farm sits centrally within the wedge and includes vehicular storage areas.
- 2.4.68 Parcel C branches off to the South in the direction of the M1 and Leicester Forest East, with a hilly gradient across agricultural fields. The wedge extends either side – to the West between Kirby Muxloe and Kirby Fields, and to the East onto the site of the former Western Park Golf Course between Glenfield and Braunstone Frith, where it also connects into part of a wedge within Leicester City. Figure 6 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.



Green Wedge (d) Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester

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Scale 1:25000

at A4

GW (d) Parcel A

Summary Assessment:

2.4.69 Rothley Brook and its floodplain is a permanent feature running through the land, safeguarding an area of separation between Glenfield and Groby. The land also includes expansive open agricultural fields adding to a sense of space and separation. The Mill Lane industrial development is however an interrupting feature in this openness. The presence of this as well the existing residential development adjacent to the north and some localised examples of irregular patterns of development are considered to have a negative effect the defensible nature of the parcel boundaries.

2.4.70 The land includes a variety of Green/Blue infrastructure, biodiversity, and open space and recreation assets concentrated along the route of Rothley Brook, and part of the Glenfield conservation area is also in this vicinity.

2.4.71 Parcel A is considered to make Moderate contributions to Purposes 1 and 4, a Weak/Moderate contribution to Purpose 2, and a Strong contribution to Purpose 3.

Parcel Recommendation

2.4.72 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (d) Parcel B

Summary Assessment:

2.4.73 Parcel B has a mostly open and undeveloped character, providing (alongside the neighbouring wedge in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough) clear separation between Kirby Muxloe and Ratby. Thornfields Farm within the parcel includes a sizable vehicular storage area that interrupts the openness, however this is an isolated example and the land is otherwise open.

2.4.74 Rothley Brook runs along part of the northern boundary of the parcel and Blaby District authority area, and has a floodplain to help safeguard this area from development. The southern boundary of the wedge is defined by Desford Road, and is mostly uniform, although the recent housing development just outside the wedge to the east encroaches beyond this boundary and affects the pattern of development.

2.4.75 Rothley Brook also provides green/blue infrastructure and biodiversity benefits, and field hedgerows and trees form a network across the land. A cemetery and allotments are designated as open space and a Right of Way runs

by the Wedge edge of the parcel and there are two other small sections in the eastern half, however the land is otherwise largely inaccessible.

- 2.4.76 Parcel B is considered to make a Strong contribution to Purpose 1, Moderate contributions to Purposes 2 and 4, and a Moderate/Strong contribution to Purpose 3.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.77 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

GW (d) Parcel C

Summary Assessment:

- 2.4.78 Much of the land has an extensive and undeveloped character giving a spacious setting for Kirby Muxloe Castle (a grade 1 listed building and Scheduled Monument). The western section of the parcel separating Kirby Muxloe and Kirby fields is more formal in character, with an established path running through, maintained grassland and recreation areas. The eastern section of the parcel separating part of Glenfield from Leicester Forest East (and also towards Kirby Muxloe and Kirby Fields) is characterised by the former Western Park golf course, which although disused retains its layout. This part is somewhat segregated from the rest of the parcel by the M1. The built development in this area links around to Braunstone Firth to the East and around to the South.

- 2.4.79 Parcel C is considered to make Strong contributions to Purposes 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.80 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (d) Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester

GW (d)	Parcel A Contribution	Parcel B Contribution	Parcel C Contribution
Purpose 1	Moderate/Strong	Strong	Strong
Purpose 2	Weak/Moderate	Moderate	Strong
Purpose 3	Strong	Moderate/Strong	Strong
Purpose 4	Moderate	Moderate	Strong

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

2.4.81 The wedge makes Moderate to Strong contributions to each of the purposes with the exception of Parcel A Purpose 2, which has a Weak/Moderate contribution due the presence and pattern of existing development. A variety of open space, heritage and biodiversity assets are distributed throughout the parcels that make significant contributions, including Rothley Brook, Kirby Muxloe Castle, allotments, and formal and informal recreation areas.

2.4.82 Several parts of the wedge are connected to the designation in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and it may be necessary to review the status of the wedge depending on any proposals affecting this.

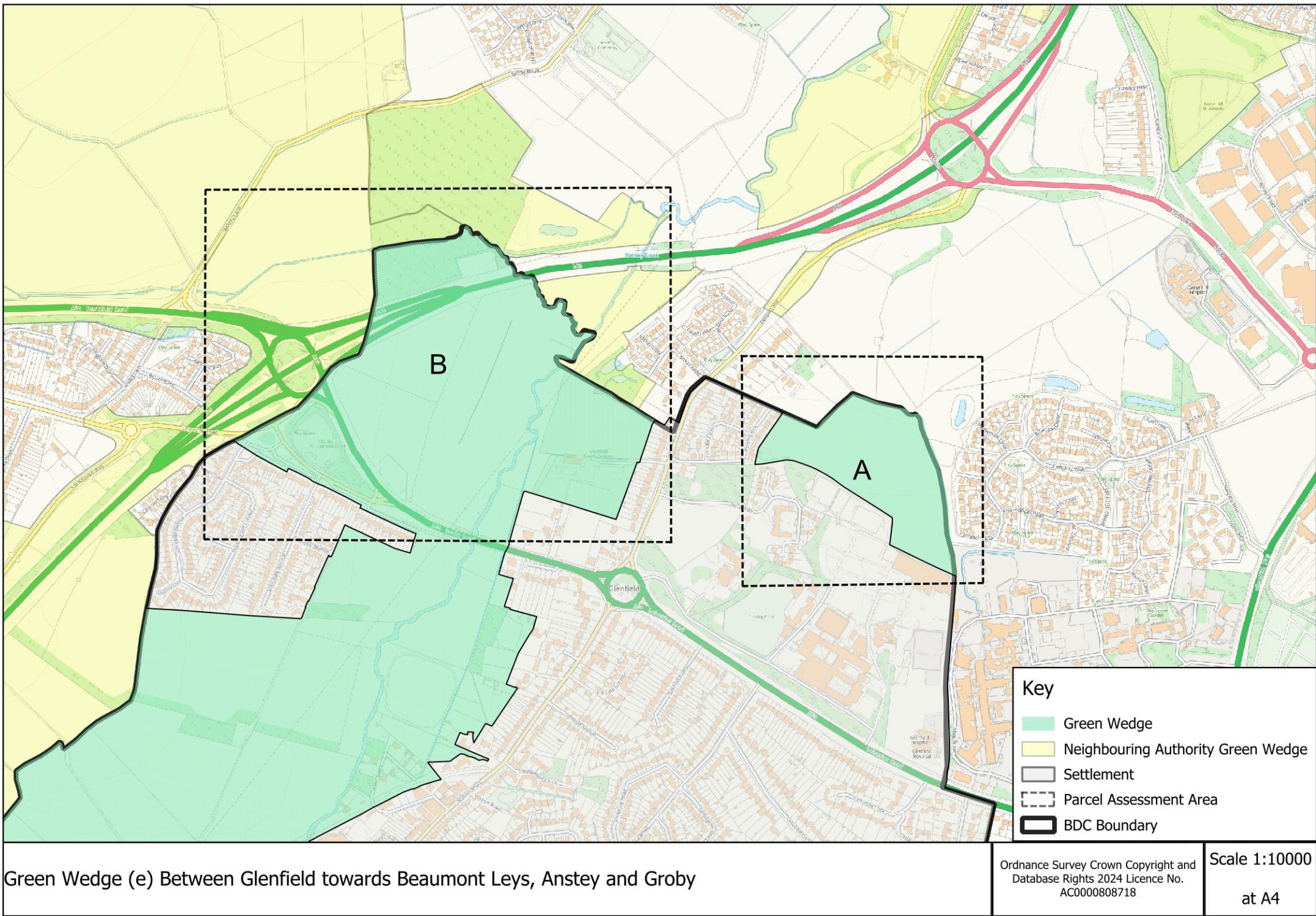
Green Wedge Recommendation:

2.4.83 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required at this time subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (e) Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby

Description:

- 2.4.84 The wedge consists of two distinctly separate sub-areas on the northern edge of the district. Parcel A is a pocket of land enclosed by built development to the East, South and West. It is predominantly grassland with a rising gradient to the southwest. It connects into the Leicester City green wedge, separating Glenfield and Beaumont Leys, and also links to a section in Charnwood District towards Anstey. Parcel B is situated between Glenfield and Groby and also connects to a Green Wedge in Charnwood District heading north towards Anstey. Figure 7 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment areas.



GW (e) Parcel A

Summary Assessment:

- 2.4.85 Parcel A effectively forms the end of a wedge that extends from the two neighbouring authorities Charnwood Borough and Leicester City. It is relatively enclosed but provides an undeveloped open space despite its relatively small size. Existing development is present to its east, south and west boundaries.
- 2.4.86 The parcel area has been reduced in size since its original designation due to development additions. While identifiable boundaries are present, these are considered to lack defensibility in parts. There are no specific wildlife designations and the area has a general lack of biodiversity assets, however the boundary hedgerows and trees run across the edges and connect to other areas. The land is not publicly accessible with the exception of a Right of Way along the northernmost part of the boundary and does not otherwise contain recreation features.
- 2.4.87 Of note, areas of the connecting green wedges in Charnwood District and Leicester City are proposed for housing allocation in these authorities' respective plans. The reduction in these designations may affect the function of the Green Wedge. It is understood that the designation in Charnwood will extend to the edge of the built-up area in the allocation once developed, and may include green infrastructure links. The allocation will also need to be planned for comprehensively with the area of land in Blaby. This may retain a degree of connectivity between the authorities' green wedges as well as the functionality in this location.
- 2.4.88 Parcel A is considered to make Moderate contributions to Purposes 1 and 4, a Weak/Moderate contribution to Purpose 2, and a Weak contribution to Purpose 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

- 2.4.89 The parcel is justified for retention although only when considered together with its role with the neighbouring authorities' green wedge areas. Regard will need to be had to remaining green wedge retained in neighbouring authority areas and layout of development in these locations. Retention of the parcel will also need to be balanced against development needs of Blaby District.

GW (e) Parcel B

Summary Assessment:

2.4.90 The land includes Rothley Brook with its associated floodplain as well as formal and informal areas of open space and recreation. These provide and help safeguard an open undeveloped area separating Groby from Glenfield. The parcel lacks clear defensible boundaries in parts, however the A50 and A46 are urban features broadly define the edges of the parcel and would help guide development form.

2.4.91 The land includes Local Wildlife Sites associated with the brook and Jubilee Wood, and there are other areas of continuous and dense vegetation. A Right of Way runs North to South through the land and the park and wood are publicly accessible.

2.4.92 Parcel B is considered to make Strong contributions to Purposes 1, 2 and 4, and a Moderate contribution to Purpose 2.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.93 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (e) Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby

GW (e)	Parcel A Contribution	Parcel B Contribution
Purpose 1	Moderate	Strong
Purpose 2	Weak/Moderate	Moderate/Strong
Purpose 3	Moderate	Strong
Purpose 4	Weak	Strong

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

2.4.94 The two parcels forming this green wedge are characteristically different. Parcel A being a relatively isolated feature whereas Parcel B provides a larger continuous link to other Green Wedges that is secured in part by Rothley Brook running from north to south.

2.4.95 Due to the differing characteristics, the relatively weaker performance of Parcel A is not considered to compromise the larger Parcel B and the role this plays. Parcel B performs strongly overall and retains a strategic role in the function of the wider green wedge. Should Parcel A be de-designated then the

description of the wedge may require amendment as it would not relate to a separation between Glenfield and Beaumont Leys.

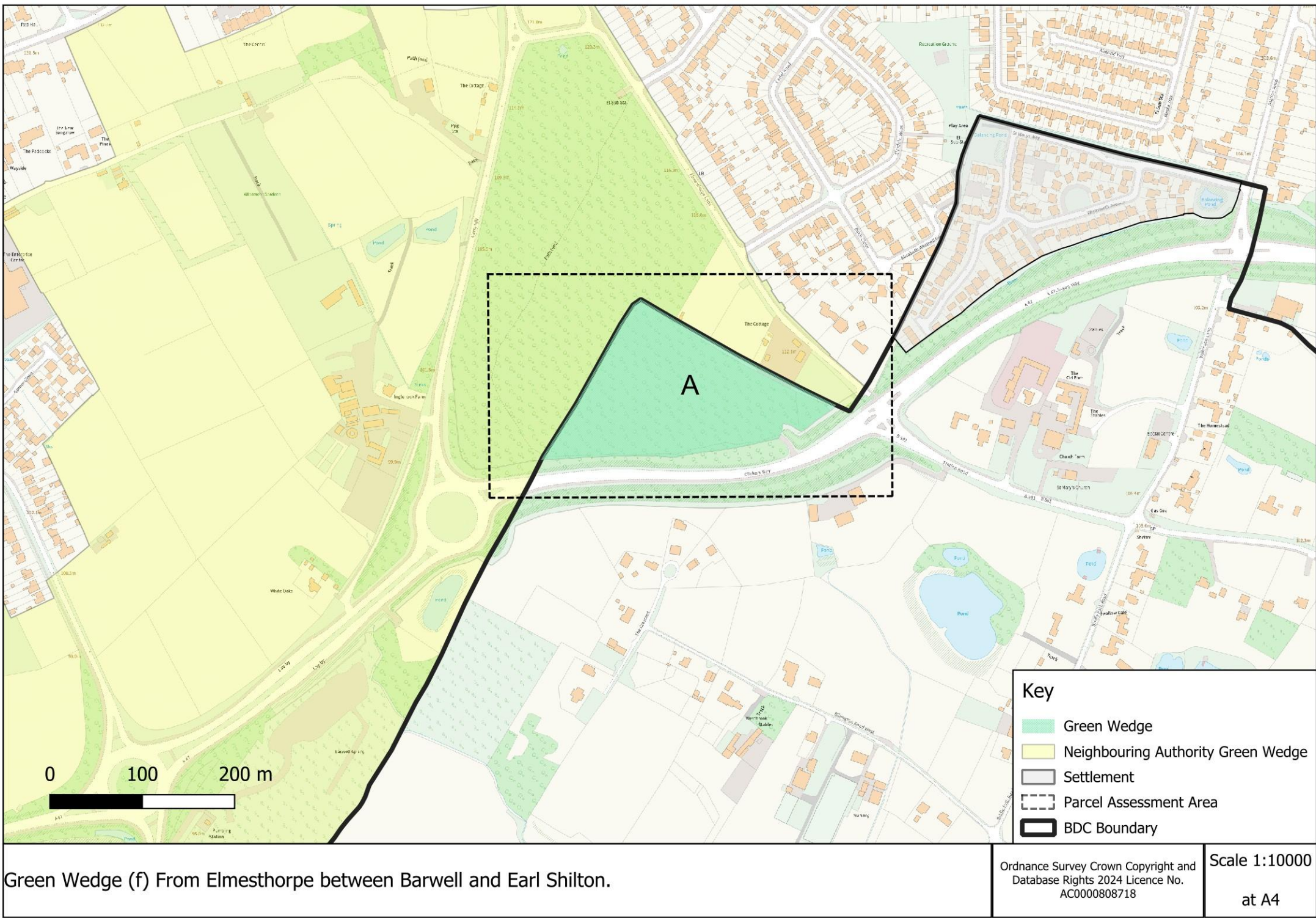
Green Wedge Recommendation:

- 2.4.96 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required at this time subject to consideration of development needs.

Green Wedge (f) From Elmesthorpe towards Barwell and Earl Shilton

Description:

- 2.4.97 This is a small section of Green Wedge to the North of Elmesthorpe consisting of a single parcel. It is located adjacent to the district boundary shared with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and forms part of a larger wedge in that authority. Figure 8 below shows the wedge and parcel assessment area.



GW (f) Parcel A

Summary Assessment:

2.4.98 The land has dense established tree planting, is undeveloped, and includes a defensible boundary where it is not connected to the neighbouring authority green wedge. The land is not publicly accessible. Regard is had to the relatively small size of the land and that it is a part of the larger wedge in Hinckley and Bosworth District. As such, its status should be considered together with any proposals affecting the neighbouring authority Green Wedge.

2.4.99 Parcel A is considered to make Moderate contributions to Purposes 1 and 2, a Weak to Moderate contribution to Purpose 3, and Weak contribution to Purpose 4.

Parcel Recommendation:

2.4.100 The parcel should be retained subject to consideration of development needs, however should continue to be reviewed in line with any proposals affecting the neighbouring authority wedge.

Overall Assessment for Green Wedge (f) From Elmesthorpe towards Barwell and Earl Shilton

GW(f)	Parcel A Contribution
Purpose 1	Moderate
Purpose 2	Moderate
Purpose 3	Weak/Moderate
Purpose 4	Weak

Overall Green Wedge Summary:

2.4.101 The land makes Moderate contributions to Purposes 1 and 2 although only makes Weak/Moderate and Weak contributions to Purposes 3 and 4. It is important to acknowledge however that this area is a relatively small component of the wider Green Wedge within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and does not connect to other areas of Green Wedge within Blaby District. As such, the merits of its status as a Green Wedge should be considered together with any proposals affecting the neighbouring authority Green Wedge.

Green Wedge Recommendation:

2.4.102 The wedge is justified for retention and no amendments are required subject to consideration of development needs. Its status however should be reviewed in relation to any changes in the neighbouring authority green wedge.

2.5 Conclusion of Green Wedge Assessments

- 2.5.1 Overall the Green Wedges perform well in relation to the four purposes and are considered justified for retention. They continue to provide a strategic function along with the benefits associated with the four purposes. There are a limited number of localised areas where development has taken place which may require boundary alterations, however the circumstances of each wedge have not been considered to have changed so significantly since the previous review to warrant de-designation on a larger scale.
- 2.5.2 Some parcels perform notably weaker (Green Wedge (e) Parcel A and Green Wedge (f) Parcel A), however these are not considered to warrant de-designation on this basis alone. They contribute to preventing the merging of settlements as well as other elements by performing a role within the wider (neighbouring authority) green wedges with which they sit. These may be more susceptible to changes as a result of development needs and the proposals affecting the neighbouring authority green wedges are likely to affect the suitability of retaining these parcels.
- 2.5.3 As set out in existing green wedge policy and acknowledged in this review, the need to retain Green Wedges will be balanced against the need to provide new development (including housing) in the most sustainable of locations. It is accepted that the allocations proposed in the emerging plan may have significant impacts, which are set out further in the next section and detailed in Appendix D. While areas of wedge may be compromised, due to the development needs of the District the principle of development in these locations can be considered acceptable, although consideration is required as to how the wider green wedge will be affected. The Local Plan provides an opportunity to plan for these comprehensively and assess the impacts upon the green wedges concurrently. It will be necessary to ensure the detailed design and layout of any proposals retain the overall strategic nature of the wedges and that as a whole they can continue to function at a suitable level.

3. Green Wedge - Impact of Allocation Sites and Potential Directions of Extension

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following section summarises the findings of Appendix D. It is separate from the assessment process in Section 2 above, which relates to the current status of the Green Wedges. It is based on the proposed allocations at the time of writing (April 2026), potential areas of extension have been identified in response where applicable.
- 3.1.2 The specific impacts of the sites on scoring, and maps showing potential directions of extension are presented within Appendix D, and are not repeated in detail here.
- 3.1.3 Potential designation of new areas of Green Wedge will depend on confirmation of allocation sites to be brought forward through the local plan process. This review does not seek to establish the detailed extent of new areas, however an addendum will be provided identifying potential boundaries. Final boundary allocations will be determined through the local plan itself following confirmation of proposed allocations and further clarification on expected layouts.

3.2 Summary of Assessments

Green Wedge (a) Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley)

Impact of Allocation sites

- 3.2.1 None. No sites are proposed are proposed within the wedge.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.2 There may be opportunity to extend the wedge to the East should the Reserve site at Hospital Lane (BLA031/034/039/40) be brought forward. Extending the wedge along this area would provide separation between the new development and Glen Parva. It contains features including the River Sence, Local Wildlife Sites, and the Grand Union Canal conservation area, to support its contribution to the Green Wedge purposes and complement the existing designation.

Green Wedge (b) Between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 3.2.3 Three sites are proposed for allocation in Parcel B (BLA30, BLA033 and BLA038). Significant alterations to the wedge boundaries are likely to be required and development of these sites has the potential to diminish the open and undeveloped character between the settlements. It is understood from available layout information that areas within allocation boundaries could be maintained as open space or left undeveloped. It would be necessary to ensure sensitive design is incorporated into developments to adequately maintain links between parcels and the overall strategic Green Wedge function. The size of the development sites however may afford increased opportunities for public access onto open space and land for recreation purposes.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.4 There may be opportunity to extend Parcel C further to the northeast if the Reserve site at Hospital Lane ((BLA031/034/039/40) comes forward. The land could have a role in separating the new development from Countesthorpe. It could incorporate the existing row of protected trees in this area and potentially the play area, to complement the wider parcel.
- 3.2.5 Parcel B was considered for potential direction to the southwest in between the proposed allocations of WHE027 and WHE031, however it is a very large extensive area of land that has a general lack of contributing features. It has not been considered designation of this area is required given the existing countryside designation and protection this affords.

Green Wedge (c(i)) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (North)

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 3.2.6 No allocation sites are present within the designation. LUB002 is situated just outside Parcel D to the West, however does not affect the impact scoring.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.7 Parcel D could be extended Westwards in relation to the Preferred Allocation sites in this vicinity, to separate the North of Enderby from New Lubbethorpe.

Green Wedge (c(ii)) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South) (South)

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 3.2.8 The wedge as a whole could continue to function effectively should the proposed allocation sites be developed, however the role and contribution of Parcel G is likely to become more limited. Nonetheless this may still provide some separation between settlements and retention of a corridor in this location would help maintain a strategic link to the green wedge designation to the North.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.9 Planning permission has been granted for 155 dwellings on land off Oak Road to the West of the settlement of Littlethorpe. This is outside the green wedge designation and does not impact on the scoring, however Parcel E could be extended westwards in response to this development.

Green Wedge (d) Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 3.2.10 An allocation on the area of land north of the existing commercial buildings at the Mill Lane (GLE032) may have a negative impact on the contribution Parcel A makes to preventing the merging of settlements. It is considered however that the parcel and overall wedge could still continue to function effectively should this be developed.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.11 None identified.

Green Wedge(e) Between e) Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 3.2.12 None. No sites are within the designation.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 3.2.13 None identified.

*Green Wedge (f) From Elmhurst towards Barwell and Earl Shilton
Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby*

Impact of Allocation Sites

3.2.14 None. No sites are within the designation.

Potential Directions of Extension

3.2.15 None identified.

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The proposed allocation sites are likely to involve significant alterations to the Green Wedge boundaries to accommodate development. While areas of the wedge may be compromised, the principle of development in these locations can be considered acceptable subject to the continuation of the designations' wider strategic function and due to the requirement to balance development needs. The local plan's selection of sites has taken the green wedge status of land into account and has been considered alongside other factors through the site selection process.

3.3.2 The Local Plan provides an opportunity to plan for the allocations comprehensively and assess the impacts upon the green wedges concurrently. It is considered the selection of sites as proposed will allow the Green Wedges to continue to fulfil the four purposes, however it will be necessary to ensure the detailed design and layout of any proposals retain the overall strategic nature of designations.

4. Areas of Separation Assessment

4.1 Purpose of the Area of Separation Assessment

4.1.1 This report also systematically assesses each of the Areas of Separation. Areas of Separation do not fulfil multiple purpose like Green Wedges, they function at a smaller localised scale focussed on maintaining separation between settlements in a specific area, and preserving their character and identity. The report seeks to identify which of the areas are functioning effectively and those where amendments to the boundaries should be made.

4.1.2 The impacts of the proposed local plan allocations and what effect they have on the scoring for each area as described above and potential directions of extension or new Areas in response to these sites are also considered. It is emphasised that this is a separate stage from the assessment of existing Area of Separation status, and that the selection of sites is subject to change as work on the local plan progresses.

3.1.4 As with Green Wedges, this report does not amend existing Areas of Separation or designate new ones. An addendum will be provided identifying potential boundaries. Final boundary allocations will be determined through the local plan itself following confirmation of proposed allocations and further clarification on expected layouts.

4.2 Policy Context

4.2.1 The principle of protecting an area of land between settlements which neither performs the functions of a green wedge nor can properly be regarded as countryside, but nonetheless should remain open in the interests of maintaining the character and identity of those communities gained formal recognition in the Leicestershire Structure Plan (1987).

4.2.2 The policy was taken forward into Environment Policy 5 of the 1994 Structure Plan as follows:

‘In areas to which Green Wedge policies do not apply and which can not be properly designated as countryside, provision will not normally be made for development which would result in a reduction in the separation between the built up area of settlements.’

4.2.3 The supporting text explains that there will exceptionally be circumstances where an area of land between settlement that neither performs the function of a green wedge nor can properly be regarded as countryside needs to remain open in the interests of maintaining the character and identity of these

communities. Furthermore, the supporting text goes on to explain that the definition of the exceptional circumstances was a matter to be determined at a local level.

- 4.2.4 Policy 7 (Separation of Settlements) of the 2005 Structure Plan also supported the definition of Areas of Separation stating:

‘Predominantly open land between the defined development boundaries of neighbouring settlements which is not part of a Green Wedge but performs an essential function in keeping the built-up areas of those settlements separate may be defined in local plans as Areas of Separation. Within such areas, development will be permitted only where it would not result in a material reduction in the degree of separation between the neighbouring built-up areas.’

- 4.2.5 The Structure Plan was however superseded by the Regional Plan in 2009. The Regional Plan does not specifically refer to Separation Areas, however Policy 3 (Distribution of New Development) states:

‘The development needs of other settlements and rural areas should also be provided for. New development in these areas should contribute to:

Maintaining the distinctive character and vitality of rural communities;...’

- 4.2.6 Areas of Separation were incorporated into local plan policy in the Blaby District Local Plan 1999 and carried forward into the current Blaby Core Strategy 2013 and associated Delivery DPD 2019. Policy CS18 sets out that:

“Areas of Separation are areas of open land designated specifically to maintain the character and identity of individual settlements through preventing their coalescence.”

and

“Development will only be allowed in Areas of Separation where it would not result in the reduction in the separation between the built-up areas of these settlements.”

- 4.2.7 The policy also acknowledges the need to retain the areas will be balanced against the need to provide new development in the most sustainable locations, and new areas to designate will be explored in association with development growth.

- 4.2.8 As set out in CS18, Areas of Separation function at a very localised scale, generally tending to provide a narrow gap between just two settlements. This characteristic clearly differentiates Areas of Separation from other designations

which tend to operate over larger areas and can be multifunctional in nature (such as green wedges).

- 4.2.9 The detailed boundaries of the Areas of Separation were set out in the Delivery Plan DPD 2019. This was informed by the Areas of Separation Review carried out in 2017.

4.3 Methodology

- 4.3.1 The methodology used for the Area of Separation assessment is based on the Area of Separation Review 2017. Although focussing on preventing the merging of settlements, the assessment questions used differs from (the first purpose of) Green Wedges. This is due to the increased emphasis on character and identity as set out in CS18 and to reflect their more localised scale (where smaller changes are more likely to affect the area as a whole).
- 4.3.2 The assessment otherwise follows the format used for Green Wedges, and includes summary and recommendations, as well as an analysis of impact of allocation sites and potential directions of extensions. The stages of assessment are set out below for clarity.

Stage 1: Desk based assessment

- 4.3.2 The desk based assessment largely utilised the Council's Geographical Information Systems and other evidence including the Landscape Character Assessment 2020, Green and Blue Infrastructure Study 2025, Historic Environment record (HER) and Environment Agency flood risk data. This helped identify some of the key land uses and important elements of the built and natural environment within Areas of Separation.
- 4.3.3 The desk-based assessment comprised:
- a) Identification of existing Area of Separation boundaries (from GIS software and the DPD 2019 Policies Map).
 - b) Using the site pro-forma as a guide (see Appendix G and details below) identifying characteristics, 'green assets' or constraints that contribute to the function of or influence the shape of the Area of Separation, including:
 - Flood risk
 - Land Uses
 - Landscape character and features (high hedgerows etc.)
 - Green infrastructure

- Historic buildings, settings and landscape
- Potentially defensible boundaries
- Public access routes
- Public open space, playing pitches and sports and recreation facilities
- Recent or proposed developments
- Topography and vantage points
- Wildlife and biodiversity

The following GIS datasets were used to help identify constraints

- Conservation Areas
- Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Listed Buildings
- Local Nature Reserves
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Neighbouring Authority Green Wedges
- Open Space
- Planning Permissions
- Public Rights of Way
- RIGS
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Settlement Boundaries
- SSSI
- Tree Preservation Orders

Following identification of the relevant characteristics and features, observations were listed.

Stage 2: Site based assessments

4.3.4 The desk based assessment is followed by a site based appraisal. Site visits are researched through preparation of maps showing the extent of all the Areas of Separation, identification of Public Rights of Way and relationship with nearby settlements.

4.3.5 Site visits are a way of obtaining further information regarding the characteristics of each area which may not be apparent from desktop observation. This can include better assessment of intervisibility between areas, topography, and identification of physical features.

4.3.6 Areas were assessed from multiple viewpoints and accompanied by photographs to record the visual setting and potential impacts. Site observations were made from publicly accessible land.

4.3.7 A pro-forma was developed to ensure that the desk-based assessment and site appraisals were conducted using a consistent approach. The pro-forma sought to test whether each Area was fulfilling its purpose through a series of questions. The questions are set out below:

Question 1:

Does the land fully separate the two settlements and are there physical features to prevent merging?

Examples: No connecting development. Clear observable separation between settlements. Presence of watercourses or pylons that would prohibit development.

Question 2:

Does the land have an open and undeveloped character and are there areas of intervisibility?

Examples: Lack of built development, even gradient giving sense of openness. Viewpoints from the edge of each settlement to the other.

Question 3:

Does the land contribute to maintaining the character and identity of either of the separated settlements?

Examples: Defined edges to the settlement boundaries reinforced by the Area. Edge of settlement can be appreciated on approach through the Area. Physical features to reinforce sense of separateness.

Question 4:

Is the separation of settlements being compromised by inappropriate uses or development?

Examples: Residential development, commercial vehicular storage.

Question 5:

Does another policy prevent the settlements from coalescing.

Examples: Existing Core Strategy 2013 and Development Plan DPD (2019) policies.

Stage 3: Summary and Recommendation

2.3.18 The findings are evaluated in a summary and a recommendation is made for the area. To help focus results and aid in comparisons the following word based scale was adopted to quantify the extent the land contributes to the Area of Separation function:

- No contribution – The land has no features or characteristics present that provide a contribution, or such features are so insignificant as to not have any material effect on the findings.
- Weak contribution – Limited features or characteristics are present that support the land in making a contribution. These may be sparse in comparison to the wider surroundings or outweighed by other non-contributing features, however nonetheless are identifiable and worthy of note.
- Moderate contribution – Clear Features or characteristics are present to support the land in making a contribution. This may need be balanced against a lack of features or those that detract from Green Wedge purposes, however they should be carefully considered and given weight.
- Strong contribution – The land includes obvious and prevailing features that clearly support its contribution. There are unlikely to be other factors present to diminish the weight that should be given.

Scoring may be considered to fall between two categories and is represented as such e.g. Weak/Moderate or Moderate/Strong. Each score has been allocated colour coding to aid with presentation.

2.3.19 The results will confirm the status of the Area of Separation, and whether the parcel is justified for retention, or if any boundary amendments made.

2.3.20 Opportunities for amending or designating new Areas of Separation will be explored further to identify how this policy tool can be used beneficially in relation to recent developments.

Stage 4: Impact of Allocation Sites and Potential Directions of Extension

2.3.21 Following completion of the assessment of the Area, the potential impacts of proposed allocation sites are recorded separately. This examines the likely implications of such development on the designation should these sites come forward. Area of Separation Potential Directions of Extension are also considered in broad terms in response to the proposed allocations. These are summarised in Section 5 and detailed Appendix D. It should be noted however

that this aspect of the assessment does not affect the status of the current Area of Separation as assessed and concluded in Stages 1-3.

- 4.3.8 Assessments were carried out between November 2024 and January 2025.

4.4 Summary of Assessments

Area of Separation (a) Between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote

Description:

- 4.4.1 The northern edge of the area is defined by the rear and side boundaries of the properties along the edge of Stoney Stanton. Sapcote Road serves as another boundary as the area extends southwards to the edge of Sapcote itself before approximately following the line of the settlement. To the southeast of Sapcote Road the gradient falls steeply into Stoney Cove. To the west of the designation is open countryside.
- 4.4.2 The land consists of a mix of uses. There is a sizable area of established trees with paths through in the eastern part of the designation. Memorial Fields which includes multiple tennis courts and 4 football pitches occupies a large area of the central part of the land, and there are other outdoor sport and recreation facilities including a play park and a skate park. Agricultural fields cover the western part of the wedge.

Summary Assessment:

- 4.4.3 The Area of Separation forms a clear gap between the two villages. It remains largely open and contributes to maintaining the distinct identity of the two settlements. A substantial portion of the land provides sport and recreational resources for the local community which are publicly accessible. The openness and sense of separation can be appreciated from these aforementioned areas as well as Sapcote Road, which serves as the main transport link between the settlements.

Area of Separation Score: **Strong Contribution**

Area Recommendation:

- 4.4.4 The Area of Separation should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Area of Separation (b) Between Huncote and Narborough

Description:

- 4.4.5 The land consists of agricultural fields in a gently undulating landscape. It includes a farm property with buildings used for several commercial uses, and a landfill site is present on the site of a former quarry. The land is mainly inaccessible although Huncote Road serves as the through-route connecting the two settlements.

Summary Assessment:

- 4.4.6 The area of land North of Huncote Road is predominately open as are large swathes of land to South, providing a significant sense of separation between the settlements. The existing built development present more central to the area interrupts the openness to a degree, however the land otherwise has an undeveloped character and makes a strong contribution to separating the settlements.

Area of Separation Score: **Moderate/Strong Contribution**

Area Recommendation:

- 4.4.7 The Area of Separation should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Area of Separation (c) Between Lubbethorpe, Leicester Forest East, and Thorpe Astley.

Description:

- 4.4.8 This land was designated as part of the Local Plan Delivery DPD 2019 in relation to the development of New Lubbethorpe, which is currently under construction to the South, and the existing settlement of Leicester Forest East to the North. It stretches East to West and primarily consists of accessible open grassland and agricultural fields. To the East of the M1 adjacent Thorpe Astley is a more formalised designated open space together with play area to form the eastern edge.

Summary Assessment:

- 4.4.9 The land has a clearly defined open and undeveloped character providing a sense of separation between settlements, much of which can be enjoyed recreationally. The area to the East of the M1 is separate in character however provides a clear buffer from the built up area of Thorpe Astley further to the East.

Overall the land makes a strong contribution to preventing the merging of settlements.

Area of Separation Score: **Strong Contribution**

Area Recommendation:

- 4.4.10 The Area of Separation should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

Area of Separation (d) Between Cosby and Whetstone

Description:

- 4.4.11 The land is broadly defined by the M1 motorway, which sits on a raised embankment to the East, and the disused railway along much of the Western part, together with boundaries of the industrial estate and dwellings that sit more centrally.
- 4.4.12 Cosby Golf course occupies the northern section of the land and elongated grass fields extend southwards of Cambridge Road to form the separation area. The Area is adjacent to Green Wedge (cii) to the North.

Summary Assessment:

- 4.4.13 The land has an open character and while the golf course is more artificial in character, it nonetheless provides a sense of separation. The grass fields extending to the South provide a clear undeveloped area that is readily observable from Cambridge Road and contributes to the sense of separation. Overall the land is considered to make a strong contribution to preventing the merging of settlements.

Area of Separation Score: **Moderate/Strong Contribution**

Area Recommendation:

- 4.4.14 The Area of Separation should be retained subject to consideration of development needs.

4.5 Conclusion of Area of Separation Assessments

- 4.5.1 Each of the areas perform Moderate to Strong, or Strongly in their function of preventing the merging of settlements, and are considered justified

for retention. It is not considered there have been significant changes over time to require amendments to their boundaries.

5. Areas of Separation - Impact of Allocation Sites and Potential Directions of Extension

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The following section summarises the findings of the impact of allocation sites and potential directions of extension assessments detailed in Appendix F. It is separate from the assessment in Section 3 above, which relates to the current status of the Areas of Separation. It considers the proposed allocations at the time of writing (November 2025) and identifies potential areas of extension where relevant.

5.1.2 New separate Areas of Separation have been considered although none have been identified as a result of this review.

5.1.3 This review does not seek to establish the detailed boundaries of extended areas, as it will first be necessary for the sites to be considered through the local plan process and to have clarification on development layouts.

5.2 Summary of Assessments

Area of Separation(a) Between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote

Impact of Allocation Sites

5.2.1 The Land West of Stoney Stanton strategic allocation (STO026) runs through part of the area of separation and includes a large area of land adjacent to the West. The impact upon the character and identity of the settlements will be largely influenced by the detailed design, however it is likely to have some impact on the existing designation. From information currently available it is understood the development would be separate in character from Stoney Stanton.

Impact of Reserve Sites

5.2.2 N/A. No sites.

Potential Directions of Extension

5.2.3 There may be potential to extend the Area of Separation further to the southwest and along west edge of Stoney Stanton to preserve a gap in this

location and maintain the character and identity of the new and existing settlements. The specific area would be influenced by the detailed design and layout of the proposed development.

Area of Separation(b) Between Huncote and Narborough

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 5.2.4 Two allocation sites are proposed on the north and south edges of Huncote (HUN019 and HUN013), which are in line with the settlement's Eastern boundary. In response to these the area of separation could be extended north and south over what are currently agricultural fields to retain a separation gap between the two settlements.

Impact of Reserve Sites

- 5.2.5 N/A. No sites.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 5.2.6 The allocation sites do not significantly impact upon the gap between the settlements, potential extensions of the Area of Separation to the south and north over the agricultural fields may be appropriate to respond to these developments. This would preserve the space in relation to the new extent of the built-up area and help continue to preserve each settlement's character and identity.

Area of Separation (c) Between Lubbethorpe, Leicester Forest East, and Thorpe Astley.

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 5.2.7 There are two proposed allocation sites (LFE019 AND LFE020) forming an extended area westwards over a former golf course from the existing edge of the built-up area of Leicester Forest. It continues the southern edge of the existing settlement and would not significantly affect the Area of Separation or the gap between the settlements.

Impact of Reserve Sites

- 5.2.8 N/A. No sites.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 5.2.9 The Area of Separation could be extended westwards in response to the proposed allocations. This would continue the existing corridor present to maintain the line of the Leicester Forest East settlement and maintain a gap and protect the character and identity of developments.

Area of Separation (d) Between Cosby and Whetstone

Impact of Allocation Sites

- 5.2.10 An allocation site is proposed outside of the Area of Separation on the southern edge of Whetstone (WHE031). It sits on the Eastern side of the M1 motorway, so the main gap present between the settlements would be maintained. The site does not extend further south than the extent of the existing Area of Separation.
- 5.2.11 The impacts are not considered to have a significant effect on the land's contribution to the Area of Separation.

Impact of Reserve Sites

- 5.2.12 N/A. No sites.

Potential Directions of Extension

- 5.2.13 The existing extent of the Area of Separation is considered sufficient in relation to the Area of Separation and no potential extensions have been identified.

5.3 Conclusion

- 5.3.1 The Areas of Separation are considered to be functioning effectively and there has not been significant change since the previous review to require de-designation of areas. It is acknowledged however that the proposed local plan allocations will have an impact in certain areas, and extensions or amendments may be required in relation to these.
- 5.3.2 The area most likely to be affected is the designation between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote, where part of the proposed Land West of Stoney Stanton strategic allocation is situated. This may involve infrastructure passing through the existing designation and extending the Area of Separation along the west side of Stoney Stanton. An extension northward of the Area of Separation between

Huncote and Narborough may also be required in relation to the proposed allocation here.

- 5.3.3 The remaining Areas do not include any proposed allocations, although have some adjacent or near to existing boundaries. It is not considered further extensions or amendment to these areas are required however.