

Assessment of New Green Wedge Allocations Topic Paper

July 2012

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this Topic Paper is to assess the potential of a number of areas to identify whether they should be designated as a green wedge. The Topic Paper will inform the preparation of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.2 The areas to be investigated have been identified through the site allocations process. This includes consultation responses on the Site Allocations Issues and Options Paper (August 2007); Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Preferred Options Report (February 2009); Green Wedge Review Workshop (March 2011); and all Parish and Borough Councillors were requested to submit potential areas for green wedge designation (January-February 2012).
- 1.3 To assess whether an area should be identified as a green wedge, the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011) has been used. The Methodology sets out four evaluation criteria for assessing a green wedge, these include:
 - Preventing the merging of settlements
 - Guiding development form
 - Providing a green lung into urban areas
 - Acting as a recreational resource
- 1.4 When assessing a new green wedge the Methodology stipulates that it must achieve all four of the evaluation criteria or be capable of fulfilling all criteria in the future.
- 1.5 The Joint Methodology has been used to assess the following proposed green wedges:
 - Area between Burbage and the M69
 - Land between Sketchley, Three Pots Estate, A5 and Sketchley Lane Industrial Area, Burbage
 - Area between the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension allocation and Stapleton
 - Area between Westfields Farm and Harwell House
 - Area between Higham on the Hill and Hinckley
 - Area between Stoke Golding and the Northern Perimeter Road, Hinckley
 - Area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington
 - Area between Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill
 - Area between Market Bosworth and Carlton
 - Area between Market Bosworth and Priory Lane and Area between Market Bosworth and Cadeby
 - Area between Dadlington, Shenton and Sutton Cheney

2. Policy Context

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1.1 Although the NPPF does not contain a specific reference to green wedges, paragraph 1 of the NPPF makes it clear that the Framework *'sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities'*. Green wedges are a useful local planning tool used within Leicestershire which is consistent with the NPPF for the reasons set out below.

Core Planning Principles

2.1.2 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF sets out a number of core planning principles that should underpin plan making. One of these principles is that planning should be plan led which empowers local people to shape their surroundings. In 2011 Leicestershire County Council undertook a public consultation exercise to understand the value of local green spaces in Leicestershire. The green wedge areas were shown to be of high value and as such important to the local community. Green wedges are therefore important to local people and they help shape the communities surroundings.

2.1.3 Another Core Planning Principle states that [planning should] *'take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it'*. The different roles of the green wedge are defined in the Regional Plan and are reviewed locally to ensure that the green wedge maintains its function and role.

2.1.4 A further Core Planning Principle in the NPPF states that [planning should] *'contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent policies with other policies within this framework'*. One of the functions of the green wedge is to provide a green lung into urban areas; this relates to environmental value such as green infrastructure, wildlife sites, air quality and flood alleviation measures. The presence of green wedges enables a sequential approach to be taken when allocating land with green wedges being identified as having higher environmental value than non-green wedge areas. Green wedges therefore are a useful tool to enable this assessment to take place.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 2.1.5 The Natural Environment section of the NPPF re-emphasises the Core Planning Principle identified above and states *'in preparing plans to meet development needs the aims should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value'*. The NPPF highlights that a strategic approach should be taken in Local Plans which plan *'positively for the creation, protection and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure'*. The green wedge designation is important locally with green wedges providing multifunctional green space in terms of maintaining settlement identity, providing a green lung into urban areas and providing a recreational resource; the role of green wedges therefore being of higher environmental and amenity value than other areas of countryside.

Green Infrastructure

- 2.1.6 The NPPF defines green infrastructure as *'a network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'* (NPPF; page 52). The green wedge designation reflects this as they are a multifunctional allocation recognising the importance these areas have by providing a green lung into urban areas and creating access to green infrastructure.

Plan Making

- 2.1.7 The NPPF recognises the importance of the countryside and green spaces with the introduction of the Local Green Space designation and the protection of the Green Belt. The Local Green Space designation provides the same level of protection as Green Belt but cannot be extensive tracts of land, therefore they are not an appropriate designation for areas currently designated as green wedges. There is no Green Belt land within Leicester and Leicestershire and green wedges do not perform the same role as a Green Belt. Green wedges do not seek to restrict the amount of development, but aim to ensure that as urban development extends, open land is incorporated within it preserving and enhancing links between urban areas and the countryside. Bullet points 7 and 8 of paragraph 157 states that Local Plans should *'identify land where development would be inappropriate, for instance because of its environmental significance; and contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment'*. Green wedges are a tool which helps to achieve this in Leicestershire by facilitating the positive management of land by helping to shape growth and improve the quality of life of residents.

Duty to Cooperate

2.1.8 Leicestershire Authorities have continued to work together after the removal of the overarching Structure Plan policies to ensure that the green wedge designation retains its strategic cross-border function through review of its boundaries. This included working together to produce the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology. This joint working demonstrates that Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities are committed to the continuation of green wedges subject to their review through the preparation of individual Local Plans. The NPPF reaffirms the duty to cooperate; paragraph 178 states that *'Public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross local boundaries'* and paragraph 180 states that *'Local planning authorities should work collaboratively on strategic planning priorities to enable delivery of sustainable development in consultation with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships'*.

2.2 East Midlands Regional Plan (2009)

2.2.1 Although the Government has announced its intention to abolish regional spatial strategies, the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) still provides the most recent policy context for green wedges which informed the Core Strategy as they are not recognised at the national level.

2.2.2 The East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) does not contain a policy on Green Wedges. Instead, it emphasises that a review of existing green wedges or the creation of new ones in association with development will be carried out through the Local Development Framework (now referred to as Local Plan (2006-2026)) process. Paragraph 4.2.18 of the supporting text states 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.'

2.2.3 The Regional Plan sets out key planning functions for green wedges namely: preventing the merging of settlements; guiding development form; providing a 'green lung' into urban areas; and acting as a recreational resource.

2.2.4 The East Midlands Regional Plan Panel Report identifies that:

Para 14.47 *'...there is general support for their continuation but that does not mean to say that regional strategy, even sub-regional strategy, is the right place for a policy relating to them'*.

Para 14.48 *'Green wedges do not have the national policy status of the Green Belt and it seems to us that there is justifiable concern that they should not be regarded as unduly restrictive and must be subject to review in order to accommodate new development'*.

Para 14.50 *'We accept that green wedges are not "local landscape designations" as referred to in PPS7 but they are essentially a local policy tool. Green wedges clearly fulfil a useful function in helping to define the structure of urban areas. However, we consider that the justification for the retention of existing green wedges, as well as for the creation of new ones in association with new development and urban extensions, should be a matter for local development framework core strategies in the context of draft strategy Part 1 Policy 4. They need also to be related to green infrastructure in the terms of Policy 27'*.

2.2.7 The Panel Report clearly outlines that it is the role of the Local Development Framework to review green wedges and that they should not be looked upon in terms of local landscape designations but to help guide the form of urban areas. It is in this context that policies 6 and 9 of the Core Strategy were formulated.

2.3 Adopted Core Strategy (December 2009)

2.3.1 The Core Strategy identifies two green wedges within the Borough and states that a review of the boundary of the green wedges will be carried out through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD. Policies 6 and 9 of the Core Strategy replaced Policy NE3: Green wedges of the Local Plan (2001) and outline the policy for the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge.

2.3.2 The Core Strategy makes clear that the basis of the green wedge designation is, amongst other things, to provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces which contribute towards the quality of life for local residents. It proposes that the green wedges will provide an important element of green space infrastructure (recognised through evidence based studies, Landscape Character Assessment and the Green Infrastructure Strategy) that will provide opportunities for enhancement to local amenity and ecological value of the landscape.

2.3.3 The Core Strategy went through a public examination, the Inspectors Report (2009) identified that the Borough Council should remove reference to landscape character, the Inspector noted that this change *'brought the text and policies more into line with the guidance in PPS7*

*Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*¹, which advises that Councils should not maintain local landscape designations'. The Borough Council were also asked to indicate that a review of the green wedge boundaries would be carried out through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD.

- 2.3.4 The Core Strategy sets out the spatial strategy for the Borough. It identifies the urban area as being the focus for most new development due to the concentration of services and includes the settlements of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. In the rural areas there are three main types of settlements identified: Key Rural Centres, Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets. A definition of these settlement types is included within the Glossary.

2.4 Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD)

Issues and Options (August 2007)

- 2.4.1 The Issues and Options Document identified the intention of the Council to protect open countryside and prevent the merging of separate settlements. The document raised a number of questions in relation to green wedges to invite comments. A number of new green wedges were suggested through this consultation and these are explored within this document.

Preferred Options Report (February 2009)

- 2.4.2 The Preferred Options Report went out for public consultation from 9th February to 6th April 2009 and sets out the proposed boundary for the existing green wedges. New green wedges were suggested through this consultation and these are explored through this document.

2.5 Landscape Character Assessment (July 2006)

- 2.5.1 The Landscape Character Assessment is a tool used to define areas with consistent distinctive characteristics resulting from the interaction of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlements. It provides an understanding of the landscape, its evolution and future pressures.

2.6 Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2008)

- 2.6.1 The Green Infrastructure Strategy looks at existing assets/resources, functions and public benefit assessments in order to effectively map the current state of the Borough's green infrastructure and to look at potential opportunities to expand and improve. Key drivers of this study

¹ PPS7 was revoked in March 2012 and replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework

revolve around tourism, access and recreation, biodiversity and addressing and establishing potential strategic access routes.

- 2.6.2 The Green Infrastructure Strategy notes that green wedges are an important part of the Borough and County's green infrastructure resource.

2.7 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy (July 2010)

- 2.7.1 The 6Cs Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy provides a long term vision and strategic framework for the delivery of green infrastructure across the 6Cs Growth Point which encapsulates all authorities within Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

2.8 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011)

- 2.8.1 The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study sets out the key findings of the open space, sport and recreation assessment and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17)² and its Companion Guide (September 2002) as well as the Best Practice Guidance for the preparation of open space strategies (CABE Space and Mayor of London May 2009).
- 2.8.2 This Assessment identifies the important role that a green wedge can play in providing natural and semi-natural open space as a recreational amenity and highlights them as a strategic green asset. It notes that a key issue to maximise usage of natural open space is improvements to access routes to and within existing natural and semi-natural spaces (as well as to the nearby accessible countryside).

2.9 Biodiversity Assessment (2009)

- 2.9.1 The Biodiversity Assessment provides a baseline of the biodiversity and nature conservation interest of the Borough.

2.10 Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007)

- 2.10.1 The Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was jointly commissioned by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and Blaby District Council in partnership with the Environment Agency and Leicestershire County Council.

² PPG17 was revoked in March 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF maintains the need to carry out an assessment of the needs for open space, sports and recreational facilities. The Companion Guide to PPG17 was not revoked as a result of the publication of the NPPF.

2.10.2 It was produced in line with Planning Policy Statement 25³ and is a planning tool that enables local authorities to select allocations away from flood risk areas.

2.11 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (April 2011)

2.11.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) assesses areas of land around the Borough for their potential for residential development. The SHLAA examines site constraints, accessibility, potential housing capacity, market interest and expected timeframe for development. These elements combine to provide sites with a deliverable, developable or non-developable classification which informs the allocations for residential development within the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.

³ PPS25 was revoked in March 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 100 of the NPPF retains the need for Local Plans to be supported by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

3. Background

3.1 Formulation of the Green Wedge

3.1.1 Green Wedge policies were introduced in Leicestershire in the Leicestershire Structure Plan (1987). The Secretary of State's approval makes it clear that Green Wedges were considered to be '*...policies for protecting structurally important areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development in Leicester...*'

3.1.2 The Leicestershire Structure Plan (1994) maintained green wedge policies. It highlighted that '*Green Wedges around Leicester and Loughborough have proved to be effective in retaining open areas both between settlements and extending into the main built-up areas*'.

3.1.3 The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005), Strategy Policy 5, lists the purposes of Green Wedges. There are subtle differences to the aims given in the 1994 Structure Plan, particularly with regard to "strategic landscape and wildlife links". Strategy Policy 6 lists the general location of green wedges. The policy states that '*The defined boundaries of Green Wedges in the following general locations will be reviewed as part of local plan reviews...*'. The supporting text states that this must not compromise any of the 4 purposes of Green Wedges set out in Strategy Policy 5 which are:

- (a) '*Protecting structurally important areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development;*
- (b) '*Ensuring that open land extends outwards between the existing and planned development limits of the urban areas;*
- (c) '*Preserving strategic landscape and wildlife links between the countryside and urban open spaces; and*
- (d) '*Preventing the coalescence and maintaining the physical identity of settlements adjoining the main urban areas*'.

3.1.4 The 2007 Structure Plan was superseded by the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009).

3.1.5 The green wedge was defined on the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (2001) Proposals Map and Policy NE3 applied to the green wedge. Policy NE3 has subsequently been superseded by policies 6 and 9 of the Core Strategy. As part of the Core Strategy examination the Borough Council put forward the justification for the green wedge policies and argued that in respect of national guidance the Government recognises and accepts that there are areas of landscape outside nationally designated areas that are particularly highly valued locally (PPS7 paragraph 24⁴). It was noted that this is the case in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough where the two separate green wedges were proposed to be retained. The Authority highlighted during the

⁴ PPS7 was revoked in March 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

examination that the Core Strategy makes clear that the basis of the green wedge designation is, amongst other things, to provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces which contribute towards the quality of life for local residents. Further, that the green wedges proposed will provide an important element of green space infrastructure (recognised through the Landscape Character Assessment (2006) and the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008)) that will provide opportunities for enhancement to local amenity and ecological value of the landscape.

4. Methodology

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011) is being utilised to carry out this assessment. The Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology has been agreed by the following six local authorities of Charnwood, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, Leicester, North West Leicestershire and Oadby & Wigston, which form part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area. A Joint Methodology was prepared as many green wedges cross administrative boundaries.
- 4.1.2 The Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Methodology was first produced in August 2009 in accordance with the East Midlands Regional Plan. On the 6th July 2010 the Government announced its intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and in light of this the Methodology was amended and republished in July 2010. Due to the ongoing changes to the planning system it was necessary to amend the Methodology in light of the outcome of the CALA Homes High Court Judgement (February 2011) and the emerging Localism Bill (December 2010).
- 4.1.3 The Methodology identifies that a review could be undertaken at a macro and micro scale; this Topic Paper assesses the proposed new green wedges at a macro scale (in its entirety). This is because they are proposed new green wedges as opposed to a review of existing green wedges.
- 4.1.4 The following assessment criteria are identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011).

Preventing the merging of settlements

- 4.1.5 Green Wedges will safeguard the identity of communities within and around urban areas that face growth pressures. The coalescence of settlements should be considered in terms of both physical separation and the perception of distance between the settlements.

Guiding Development Form

- 4.1.6 Green Wedges will guide the form of new developments in urban areas. Consideration will be given to designating new green wedges or amending existing ones where it would help shape the development of new communities' such as potential sustainable urban extensions.

Providing a Green Lung into urban areas:

- 4.1.7 Green wedges will provide communities with access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond. They are distinct from other

types of open space in that they provide a continuous link between the open countryside and land which penetrates deep into urban areas. Green wedges could also provide multi-functional uses such as:

- Open space, sport and recreation facilities
- Flood alleviation measures
- Improving air quality
- Protection/improvement of wildlife sites and the links between them
- Protection/improvement of historic/cultural assets and the links between them
- Links to green infrastructure at both a strategic and local level
- Transport corridors

Acting as a recreational resource

4.1.8 Green wedges will provide a recreational resource. This will include informal and formal facilities now and in the future. Public access will be maximised.

4.1.9 The Green Wedge assessment will be produced in the following stages.

4.2 Data collection/ Desk top survey

4.2.1 Data has been collected about the proposed green wedges which includes:

- Public rights of way and permissive routes
- Historical landscapes and archaeological remains
- Land use within the Green Wedge
- Ecology
- Development Control decisions
- Agricultural land quality
- Air Quality Management areas
- Water management
- Connection to green infrastructure in the wider area
- Evidence of development pressures
- Transport routes and infrastructure

4.3 On site surveys

4.3.1 A visual appraisal on site of the proposed green wedges has been carried out in terms of:

- Topography
- Identification of key physical features within and out of the Green Wedge
- Significant hedgerows/hedgerow trees/woodlands

- The extent of built development within Green Wedges
- Perception of separation from several points within and on the boundaries of settlements (intervisibility⁵ and intravisibility⁶)
- Visible informal uses through the Green Wedge
- Consideration of whether the green wedge could fulfil other functions not yet identified

4.4 Consultation

4.4.1 Green wedges have been consulted upon at various stages of the production of the Site Allocations Document. Firstly the green wedge designation was consulted upon within the Issues and Options version of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) in 2007.

4.4.2 One of the questions asked as part of the consultation was 'Are there any additional areas that you feel should be allocated as Green Wedge in the Borough?' The following areas were suggested:

- Stoke Golding and Dadlington
- Stoke Golding and Hinckley
- Land west of Chappells Drive, Burbage
- Land south of Burbage to the M69
- Sites listed as number 17, 237 and 240 (Barwell) in Appendix B of the Issues and Options Paper
- Land west of Barwell and north of Hinckley around Westfields Farm/Harwell House
- north west of Barwell and Stapleton
- Sites listed in Appendix B of the Issues and Options Paper as 173A and 208, Ratby/Groby
- Canal, the Spinney to the railway south side Station Road, Market Bosworth
- Barton Road between Market Bosworth and Carlton.

4.4.3 Green wedges were also consulted upon within the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD Preferred Options in 2009. Although there was not an explicit question asking whether there are any new green wedges that should be designated a number of areas were suggested. These include:

- Area to the south of Burbage
- Area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington
- Stoke Golding and Hinckley,
- Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill.
- The area currently designated as an Area of Separation to the west of the Three Pots, Herald Way and Greenmoor Road estates

⁵ Intervisibility is where it is possible to see one settlement from the edge of the other

⁶ Intravisibility is where it is possible to see more than one settlement from any one point in the green wedge

- Fields between Stoke Golding and Wykin village

4.4.4 In addition, all Borough and Parish Councillors were requested to submit potential areas for green wedge designation which were considered to meet the four green wedge evaluation criteria identified within the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review. A call for sites consultation took place between 12 January and 24 February 2012 and a number of sites were suggested:

- Land behind the High School and Primary School, between Station Road and Nutswood Pastures, MKBOS22, Market Bosworth
- Kyngs Golf Course, Station Road, Market Bosworth
- Nutswood Pastures and AS399, Market Bosworth
- Silk Hill and AS560, Market Bosworth
- Agricultural farmland to the south of the Springfield Estate (AS393, AS559)
- Land to the south of AS393 across which footpath 72 crosses
- Field with Stanley Road & York Close to north, Northumberland Avenue to the east and Shenton Lane allotments to the south, Market Bosworth
- Land between Shenton, Dadlington, Sutton Cheney

4.4.5 The area between Stapleton and Barwell was suggested through the Green Wedge Review Workshop which took place on 21st March 2011. Attendees in the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Workshop identified the area in relation to the physical separation of the settlements and community identity.

4.4.6 The suggested sites listed above have been included within this Topic Paper. An exception to this is the following sites suggested through the Site Allocations DPD Issues and Options Consultation: Sites listed as number 17, 237 and 240 (Barwell) in Appendix B; Land north of Hinckley; and Sites listed in Appendix B as 173A and 208, Ratby/Groby. This is because these areas are already subject to the green wedge designation and have therefore been considered through the Borough Council's Green Wedge Review (December 2011).

4.4.7 Market Bosworth Water Trust was also suggested as a green wedge, this site is not going to be assessed further as it is not adjacent to a settlement and therefore from the outset does not guide development form or prevent the merging of settlements.

4.4.8 All other sites have been considered although the site description/title may vary to that listed above. Where a number of small sites have been suggested these have been amalgamated to form a larger site.

4.5 **Evaluation**

4.5.1 The proposed green wedges have been evaluated against the criteria set out in the Joint Methodology using the information from the data collection on site surveys and consultation. The criteria is:

- Preventing the merging of settlements
- guiding development form
- providing a green lung into urban areas
- a recreational resource.

4.5.2 The evaluation is at a macro scale. Paragraph 3.2.2 of the Joint Methodology states:

‘3.2.2 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.

4.5.3 As highlighted in the above paragraph when assessing these new green wedges they must meet all of the four evaluation criteria to be allocated.

4.6 **Outputs**

4.6.1 The green wedge assessment will form an important part of the evidence base for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD which will set out the detailed boundaries of green wedges.

5. Green Wedge analysis

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the Topic Paper will assess the following proposed green wedges:

- Area between Burbage and the M69
- Land between Sketchley, Three Pots Estate, A5 and Sketchley Lane Industrial Area, Burbage
- Area between the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension allocation and Stapleton
- Area between Westfields Farm, Earl Shilton and Harwell House, Barwell
- Area between Higham on the Hill and Hinckley
- Area between Stoke Golding and the Northern Perimeter Road, Hinckley
- Area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington
- Area between Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill
- Area between Market Bosworth and Carlton
- Area between Market Bosworth and Priory Lane and Area between Market Bosworth and Cadeby
- Area between Dadlington, Shenton and Sutton Cheney

5.2 Area between Burbage and the M69

5.2.1 The proposed green wedge boundary follows the built up boundary of Burbage, the M69 and the Borough Boundary.

5.2.2 The area was suggested through the site allocations public consultation process.

Desk Top Survey

- 5.2.3 The area is predominately agricultural in nature but also contains uses such as recreation, farm buildings, allotments, and a cemetery. The size of the proposed green wedge area is 191 hectares. There is no Grade I or Grade II agricultural land within the area. There is a Local Wildlife Site located to the south of Three Pots Road. There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Borough. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) does not identify any areas of flood risk.
- 5.2.4 There are a number of public rights of way within the area which provide circular walking routes. The area is within the Southern Green Infrastructure Zone in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) and is identified as an area for access and recreation. It highlights that *'the value of an open landscape should be recognised, for visual, quality of life and broader biodiversity reasons'* and that *'accessibility to such sites and between urban and rural should also be enhanced and extended.'* The Landscape Character Assessment (2006) identifies the area within the Hinckley, Barwell and Burbage Fringe Area, the key characteristics of the Character Area is that it is a mix of arable and pasture land. There is a medium sized rectilinear field pattern bounded by hedgerows and a few hedgerow trees. It notes that the landscape is heavily influenced by established settlements which are often situated on higher ground with masts and poles prominent. The Borough Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011) identifies allotments, a recreation ground, and a cemetery and as a result performs a recreational role.
- 5.2.5 There have been a number of planning applications within the area including applications for an Antennae, stables, a number of applications relating to Britannia Road Recreation Ground, and an application for a Business Park which was withdrawn. There have also been expressions of interest registered within/close proximity to the area, these have been considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 5.2.6 A high voltage transmission line runs through the area close to the M69 motorway. There are also a number of roads which run through the area which includes Rugby Road that links Hinckley and Burbage to the M69.

Site Assessment

- 5.2.7 The area is agricultural in nature, and the main land uses adjoining the proposed boundary includes residential properties and the M69. There are a number of mature trees and hedgerows across the area. In terms of topography the area is varied with parts being relatively flat and then sections falling towards the M69 around the Rugby Road area. Due to

the area being relatively flat and sections of the M69 being raised it is possible to view and hear traffic from the M69 from the built up edge of Burbage.

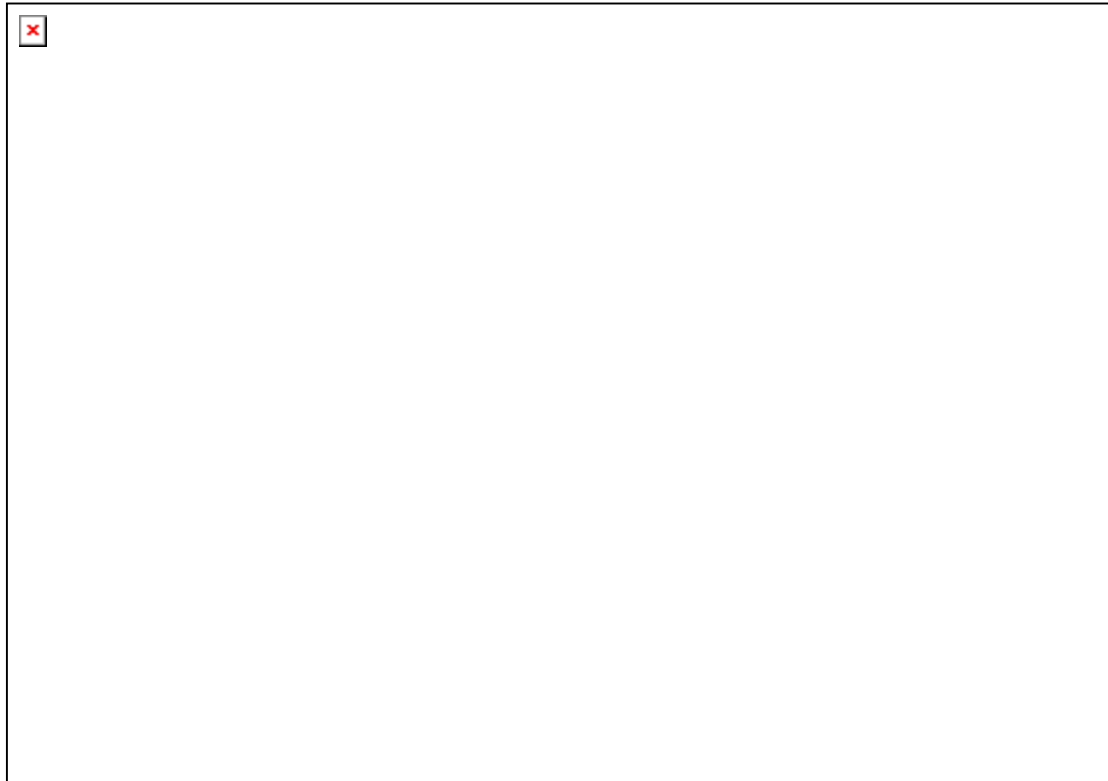
- 5.2.8 It is not possible to visualise two or more settlements from any parts of the proposed green wedge area nor does the boundary abut another settlement.
- 5.2.9 The area does provide a recreational resource in relation to allotments and public open space. There are rights of way within the area and there is evidence of informal walkways. The rights of way are well trodden and appear to be well used.

Evaluation

- 5.2.10 From the assessments it is possible to conclude that the area does not perform the role of a green wedge. This is because the area does not prevent the merging of settlements as the proposed boundary does not abut two or more settlements. The main boundaries are the built up form of Burbage and the M69. Beyond the M69 is open countryside.
- 5.2.11 The area does provide a recreational role as there is open space and recreational facilities within the area as identified within the Borough Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011).
- 5.2.12 To a limited extent the area provides a green lung as it provides an air quality buffer between the M69 and Burbage although there is no AQMA within the vicinity. It also provides a green infrastructure resource.
- 5.2.13 For a green wedge to be designated it must meet all four evaluation criteria, this is not the case for this area and for the above reasons can not be designated as a green wedge.

5.3 Land between Sketchley, Three Pots Estate, A5 and Sketchley Lane Industrial Area, Burbage

5.3.1 The proposed green wedge was suggested through the preparation and consultation on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the boundary has been derived from the Local Plan (2001) Area of Separation Policy (NE4).



Desk Top Survey

5.3.2 The area is predominately agricultural in nature although there is no Grade I or Grade II agricultural land within the area. The size of the area is 36.45 hectares. The area surrounding Sketchley Hotel is identified as a Local Wildlife Site; there is also a small Local Wildlife Site north of Sketchley Meadows Industrial Estate. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the area. There are no Air Quality Managements Areas (AQMAs) within the Borough. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) does not identify any areas of flood risk within the area.

5.3.3 There is a bridle path (known as Chappell's Drive) that runs to the south of Sketchley Lane which connects to Watling Street (A5). There is also a public right of way (known as the Nobbies) that runs to the north of Sketchley Lane connecting to Brookfield Road. The Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) does not identify any open space within the proposed area.

5.3.4 There have been a number of planning applications within the area. A number of these are associated with Scketchley Grange Hotel including an extension to create 42 additional bedrooms and additional car parking (07/01230/FUL). Other applications are related to the agricultural uses within the area and some for single dwellings along Sketchley Lane. Planning permission has been granted for a large mixed use development adjacent to the area which includes housing, employment and a local centre. The residential element of the scheme is closest to the proposed green wedge area. Expressions of interest have been registered within the area; these have been considered through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Site Assessment

5.3.5 The area is predominately agricultural in nature and is characterised by high hedgerows and mature trees. There are a number of different uses within the area including paddocks, farm buildings, hotel, scrub land and grazing land. The topography is varied, to the south of Sketchley Road the topography is relatively flat where as to the north of Sketchley Road the area drops towards Sketchley Brook.

5.3.6 From the 'Nobbies' it is possible to view Hinckley and Burbage. Having said this, the site at the former Sketchley Works is currently flattened for development. When this new development has taken place it is believed that this view will be diminished.

5.3.7 The area includes a right of way and a bridle path which appear to be well utilised.

Evaluation

5.3.8 From the assessments it is possible to conclude that the area does not perform the role of a green wedge. This is because the area does not prevent the merging of settlements as the proposed boundary does not abut two or more settlements. The main boundaries are the built up form of Burbage, Sketchley Meadows Industrial Estate and the A5.

5.3.9 There is no public open space within the area as identified within the Borough Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). Although the area is publically accessible through the public rights of way and bridle path.

5.3.10 For a green wedge to be designated it must meet all four evaluation criteria, this is not the case for this area and for the above reasons can not be designated as a green wedge.

5.4 Area between the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension allocation and Stapleton

- 5.4.1 The proposed green wedge area has been identified as the area between the south of Stapleton/East of the A447 and the proposed settlement boundary of Barwell as identified in the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (November 2010).
- 5.4.2 The area was suggested through the Green Wedge Review Workshop which took place on 21st March 2011. Attendees in the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Workshop identified the area in relation to the physical separation of settlements and community identity.

Desk Top Survey

- 5.4.3 The area is predominately agricultural in nature although there is no Grade I or Grade II within the proposed area. The size of the area is 14.15 hectares. There are no designations such as local wildlife sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the area. The Biodiversity Assessment (March 2009) did not identify any protected

species or bird sightings. There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the Borough. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) does not identify any areas of flood risk within the area.

- 5.4.4 There is a public right of way which runs through the area which is accessed off Hinckley Road (A447); the entrance is within close proximity to Stapleton providing good access for local residents. Running along the northern boundary is a bridle path. Outside of the proposed area at Barwell Fields Farm, the bridle path terminates and continues as a network of footpaths providing a circular route back to Stapleton and two links to the existing urban edge of Barwell. The Green infrastructure Strategy (October 2008) identifies the area for access and recreation. It highlights that *'the value of an open landscape should be recognised, for visual, quality of life and broader biodiversity reasons'* and that *'accessibility to such sites and between urban and rural should also be enhanced and extended.'* The Landscape Character Assessment (July 2006) identifies the location as being within the Stoke Golding Vales Character Area. It highlights that the area has a relatively flat topography with a rectilinear field pattern bounded by mixed hedgerows with scattered hedgerow trees and small copses. Although there are public rights of way which run through the area it does not serve a recreational role as no spaces were identified within the Borough Council's Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011).
- 5.4.5 There have been no major planning applications or expressions of interest assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment within the area.
- 5.4.5 Adjacent to the proposed area and the reasoning behind investigating this area for green wedge status is the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) identified within the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (December 2009). When the SUE is developed it will significantly reduce the area between Stapleton and Barwell. This development pressure is an important consideration. The Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan Consultation Draft (November 2010) document recognises the eastern tip of the area as being visually sensitive at a low to medium level. There is currently a planning application (12/00295/OUT) being considered for the SUE which includes uses such as 2,500 dwellings, an employment zone, sports facilities, open space, allotments, a primary school, health care facility and a local centre. As part of the planning application the masterplan includes green fingers penetrating into the urban development and therefore it is not necessary to allocate a green wedge to enable this.
- 5.4.6 There are no major transport routes or infrastructure contained within the area. Hinckley Road (A447) borders the west of the proposed area.

Site Assessment

- 5.4.7 The area is predominately agricultural in nature and characterised by high hedgerows and mature trees. Abutting the area is a public house, church and residential properties. The topography undulates with the gradient falling from Chapel Street, Stapleton to Ashby Road (A447) before rising.
- 5.4.8 Presently, it is not possible to view another settlement and the perception of distance to Barwell is that it is not within close proximity. However, the purpose of this assessment is to consider the impact of the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension which will reduce the gap significantly between Stapleton and Barwell. It was not possible to envisage the visual impact that the SUE will have on the feeling of settlement identity and separation as it has not been developed yet.
- 5.4.9 The area includes a number of public rights of way which run through the area which appear to well utilised.

Evaluation

- 5.4.10 The area does not provide a recreational resource as defined in the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). The area does not currently act as a green lung as it does not penetrate into an urban area and is rural in character. It is recognised that the area does play a role in terms of green infrastructure which is identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2008). A planning application has been submitted for the Barwell SUE and this includes green fingers penetrating into the urban area to guide development form.
- 5.4.11 Geographically the development of the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension will significantly reduce the separation of Barwell and Stapleton. As highlighted in the site visit section it was not possible to visualise where the edge of the Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) will be so that the perception of settlement separation could not be assessed.
- 5.4.12 This area does not meet the four evaluation criteria as it does not provide a recreational resource, or green lung and it is not necessary to allocate the green wedge to guide development and therefore can not be designated as a green wedge. It is recognised that when the SUE is developed there is potential for the reduction of the perception of separation between the settlements however; it would still not meet all of the evaluation criteria. Due to the reduction of separation it is important that landscaping, design, layout and building mass is carefully planned on the outer edge of the SUE to limit any visual impact to protect Stapleton's settlement identity.

5.5 Area between Westfields Farm, Earl Shilton and Harwell House, Barwell

5.5.1 The proposed green wedge boundary is guided by the A447 to the west and field boundaries to the north of Earl Shilton.

5.5.2 The area was suggested through public consultation on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document Issues and Options Paper.



Desk Top Survey

5.5.3 The area is predominately agricultural in nature but also includes uses such as recreation grounds, allotments, school playing fields, recycling and household waste site, and a travelling show persons site. The size of the area is 239.34 hectares.

5.5.4 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) identifies non-main rivers within the area but does not conclude that these are a flood risk. There is a small section of the River Tweed to the west of the proposed area off Ashby Road which falls within Flood Zone 3. There are some Local Wildlife Sites within the Area; one adjacent to Barwell Park, another to the rear of properties on Yew Tree Close, Barwell and one to the rear of properties off Mountfield Road, Earl Shilton, adjacent to the Health Centre. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the area. There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Borough.

5.5.5 There are a number of rights of way within the area. There are seven rights of way that can be accessed directly from the built up area of Barwell which provides links to the wider countryside. One of these rights of way provides a link to Earl Shilton. There are three rights of

way accessed from the built up area of Earl Shilton including the one that connects to Barwell. The other rights of way go through Wood Street Recreation Ground.

- 5.5.6 The Open Space Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011) identifies open spaces within the area including Barwell Cemetery; Kirkby Road Allotments, Barwell; Barwell Park; Wood Street Community Park, Earl Shilton; and William Bradford College, Earl Shilton. There are also allotments off Heath Lane, Earl Shilton.
- 5.5.7 Expressions of interest have been registered within/close proximity to the area, these have been considered through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 5.5.8 Policy 3 of the Core Strategy (2009) states: *'Allocate land for the development of a mixed use Sustainable Urban Extension to the west of Barwell including 2500 environmentally sustainable homes, 15 ha of employment, neighbourhood shops, a new primary school and children's centre, GP's, Neighbourhood Policing and green space provision'*. A large section of the proposed green wedge to the west of Barwell falls within this area specified on the Key Diagram of the document. The emerging Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan also identifies a large section of this proposed green wedge area for development.
- 5.5.9 There is currently a planning application (12/00295/OUT) being considered for the SUE which includes uses such as 2,500 dwellings, an employment zone, sports facilities, open space, allotments, a primary school, health care facility and a local centre. As part of the planning application the masterplan includes green fingers penetrating into the urban development and therefore it is not necessary to allocate a green wedge to enable this.

Site Assessment

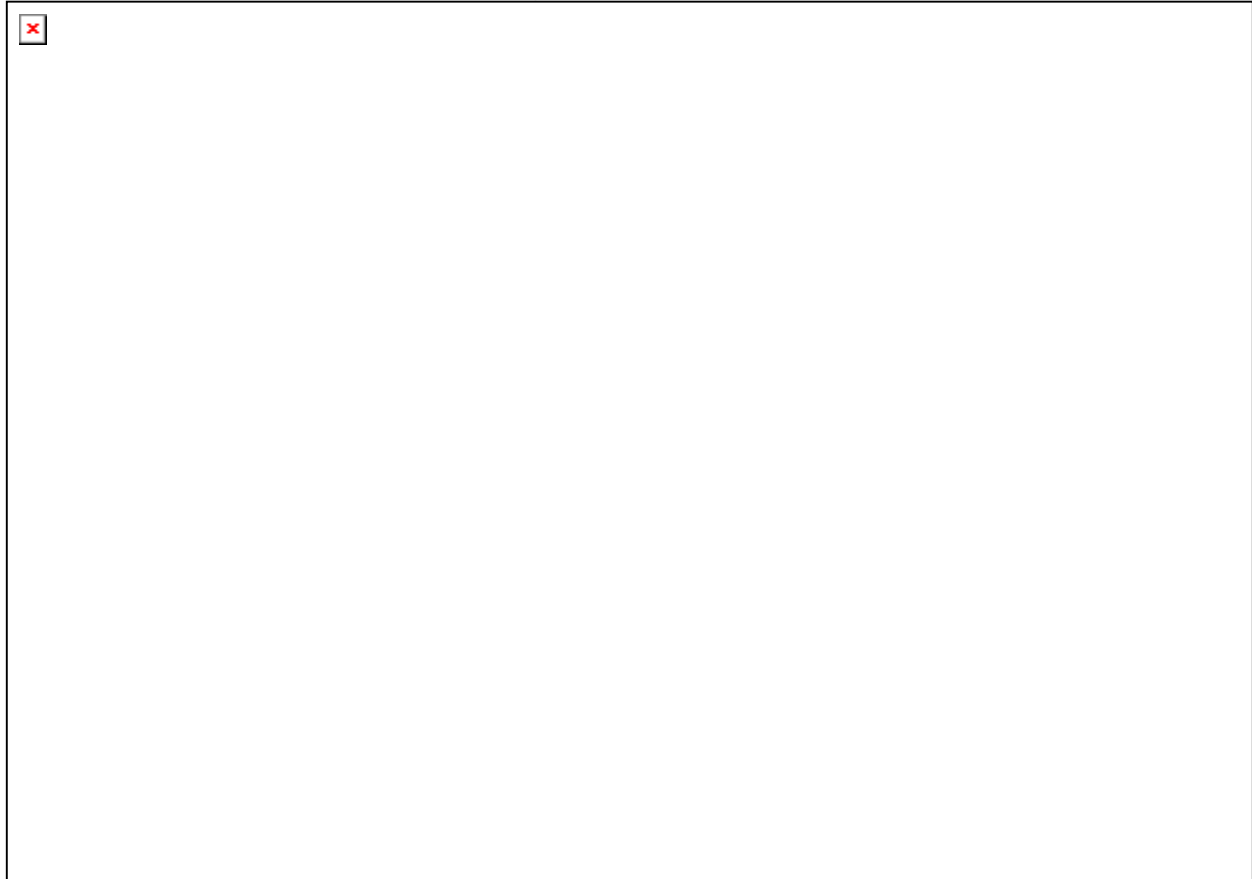
- 5.5.10 The area is predominately agricultural in nature although there are some other uses such as recreational resources. The area is characterised by mature hedgerows and scattered trees. Abutting the area is a number of uses such as housing, a health centre and employment. The topography undulates to the north of Earl Shilton and relatively flat to the west of Barwell.
- 5.5.11 The settlements of Earl Shilton and Barwell adjoin and therefore it is possible to view more than one settlement as they already connect. There are no areas at threat of coalescence currently in this location.
- 5.5.12 There are a number of rights of way within the area which appear to be well used.

Evaluation

- 5.5.13 The area provides a recreational resource as there are a number of open spaces identified within the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). The area does provide a green lung as it provides access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond from the urban area.
- 5.5.14 The area to the north of Earl Shilton and Barwell does not prevent the merging of settlements; the settlements have already merged in this location. The area to the west of the Barwell also does not prevent the merging of settlements as this section is bounded by the A447 and open countryside. The closest settlement to the west of Barwell other than Earl Shilton is Stapleton. The potential for a green wedge between Barwell and Stapleton has been assessed separately within this Paper. In terms of guiding development form and the relationship to the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension the A447 acts as a boundary/barrier to the proposed development and therefore a green wedge is not needed to guide development form. The current planning application sets out the indicative layout for the development which includes green fingers penetrating into the urban area.
- 5.5.15 For a green wedge to be designated it must meet all four evaluation criteria, this is not the case for this area and for the above reasons can not be designated as a green wedge.

5.6 Area between Higham on the Hill and Hinckley

- 5.6.1 The proposed green wedge was suggested through the preparation and consultation on the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Development Plan Document Preferred Options Report and the boundary has been identified by following field boundaries, roads and the settlement boundaries of Hinckley and Higham on the Hill.



Desk Top Survey

- 5.6.2 The area is predominately agricultural in nature with allotment gardens and the cricket ground located off Nuneaton Lane. The proposed green wedge area is 165.73 hectares. There are three rights of way within the area two of which connect Nuneaton Lane and Barr Lane in Higham on the Hill and the third connects Main Street, Higham on the Hill with Watling Street (A5). The rights of way connect at two points.
- 5.6.3 The Open Space, Sports, and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies a number of spaces including allotments, outdoor sports facilities, green corridor, a formal park with only private access, cemetery, formal park with public access and provision for young people.
- 5.6.4 There is potential for sand and gravel resources identified within the Leicestershire Minerals Core Strategy.

- 5.6.5 The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the area as important for tourism and access and recreation. The aim of the tourism intervention is to enhance and protect existing assets, as well as encouraging the sustainable use of the natural tourism resource and promoting local as well as out of town use. The aim of the access and recreation intervention is to enhance accessibility between the urban and rural areas.
- 5.6.6 There have been no major planning applications within the area.
- 5.6.7 Expressions of interest have been registered within/close proximity to the area, these have been considered through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 5.6.8 Part of the proposed area is identified as Grade II agricultural land. The SHLAA identifies this as a red constraint to development and therefore expressions of interest for development within this grade are excluded from consideration.
- 5.6.9 There are no areas of flood risk identified within the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. There are no major transport routes which run through the area although the A5 is located to the south of the area (although not adjacent).

Site Assessment

- 5.6.10 The area is adjacent to the settlement of Hinckley and the main use is agriculture with some recreational uses. Adjacent to the area is employment uses, residential development, and agriculture. The area is characterised by hedgerows and mature trees and the topography falls from Higham on the Hill towards Hinckley. The topography of the area results in distant views of Hinckley from the edge of Higham on the Hill. Although there is intervisibility (possible to see one settlement from the edge of the other) there is the perception that the two settlements are some distance apart. It is also possible to view the spire of St Margaret of Antioch Church in Stoke Golding; again the perception of distance is quite far.
- 5.6.11 There is public access into the green wedge; these public rights of way are accessed from Higham on the Hill and provide connections to different parts of Higham on the Hill and the A5. These rights of way appeared to be well utilised on the site visits.

Evaluation

- 5.6.12 This area provides a recreational resource as there is a cricket ground and allotments located within the proposed area.

- 5.6.13 The area provides a green lung to a limited extent as it provides access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond from the urban area. It does provide an area of open space and recreation as highlighted in the previous paragraph but this is limited to residents of Higham on the Hill and does not provide a green lung for those residents in the urban area. The area does not alleviate flooding issues or improve air quality.
- 5.6.14 The proposed green wedge would not help guide development form or prevent the merging of settlements. The distance between the nearest points of the two settlements as the crow flies is 1.2 miles (1.95km) and the settlements are not in danger of coalescing. Grade II agricultural land is designated to the eastern edge which plays a role in guiding development as it is identified as a red constraint in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 5.6.15 This proposed area only meets one of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as green wedge.

5.7 Area between Stoke Golding and Hinckley

- 5.7.1 Stoke Golding Parish Council submitted a potential green wedge through the Call for Sites letter relating to potential Green Wedges, Areas of Separation, Housing Sites and Local Green Spaces. The Parish Council submitted two options for a Green Wedge between Stoke Golding, Higham on the Hill and Hinckley. The proposed area of green wedge follows the same boundaries as that proposed in Option 1 by the Parish Council. Option 2 was suggested in case Option 1 was too excessive however, this option only abuts Stoke Golding settlement boundary and therefore would not prevent the merging of settlements. Although Option 2 is not going to be assessed further in this Topic Paper it has been considered through the Borough Council's Area of Separation Review (March 2012).



Desk Top Survey

- 5.7.2 The area is predominately agricultural in nature although the hamlet of Wykin falls within the proposed area. Other uses include Ashby Canal and farm buildings. There are some small sections within the area which are classified as Grade II Agricultural land. The proposed area of the green wedge is 575.63 hectares. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the area as a tourism resource and important for access and recreation. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) does not identify any flood risk areas but there are non-main rivers which run through the area. There are local wildlife sites within the area. The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies the following spaces: a cemetery; a formal park with public access; provision for

young people and outdoor sports facilities. There are a number of rights of way that run through the area. Two can be accessed directly from Stoke Golding.

- 5.7.3 A Scheduled Ancient Monument known as 'Hlaew and medieval farmstead' is located immediately south west of Park House to the west of Stoke Golding. To the north of Stoke Golding outside of the proposed green wedge boundary is the designated area of Bosworth Battlefield.
- 5.7.4 There is an 11kv power line that runs through the area.
- 5.7.5 There have been a number of minor planning applications within the area including applications relating to agricultural uses, equestrian, small residential developments generally around Wykin, and also some small scale employment development.
- 5.7.6 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

Site Assessment

- 5.7.7 The area is agricultural in nature although the settlement of Wykin falls within the area. Adjacent uses include employment, residential development, and agriculture. The area is characterised by hedgerows and mature trees. The topography is varied with places which are relatively flat and areas that rise, particularly towards Stoke Golding. There is not intervisibility (possible to see one settlement from another) between the two settlements. This is because of the nature of the topography, mature vegetation within the area, and distance between the settlements.
- 5.7.8 The area is publically accessible through the network of public rights of way, and roads. The rights of way appear to be well used and can be accessed from Stoke Golding, Hinckley and Wykin.

Evaluation

- 5.7.9 The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies the following spaces: a cemetery; a formal park with public access; provision for young people and outdoor sports facilities within the area and it therefore acts as a recreational resource. The area does provide a green lung as it provides access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond from an urban area.
- 5.7.10 The proposed green wedge would not help guide development form or prevent the merging of settlements. The distance between the settlements is not small enough to warrant the need to allocate a green wedge to guide the development form or prevent the merging of settlements.
- 5.7.11 This proposed area only meets two of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as green wedge.

5.8 Area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington

- 5.8.1 The Site Allocations and Generic Control Policies DPD Preferred Options consultation responses revealed concerns from respondents over the potential coalescence of Stoke Golding and Dadlington. In addition, comments were received stating a Green Wedge should be introduced between the two settlements.
- 5.8.2 Stoke Golding Parish Council submitted a potential Green Wedge through the Call for Sites letter relating to potential Green Wedges, Areas of Separation, Housing Sites and Local Green Spaces.



Desk Top Survey

- 5.8.3 The area is predominately agricultural in nature and a significant part of the area is designated as Grade II agricultural land. The proposed area of the green wedge is 575.63 hectares. There are no designations such as local wildlife sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the area. There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the Borough. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) does not identify any areas of flood risk within the area.
- 5.8.4 The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011) does not identify any areas of open space within this area. Ashby Canal is located close to the boundary.

- 5.8.5 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 5.8.6 A planning application of note was for residential development off Hinckley Road, Stoke Golding (planning application reference: 10/00408/OUT), part of the application site fell within SHLAA site AS603. The planning application was refused and the applicant appealed the decision which was subsequently dismissed. Paragraph 11 of the Inspectors Report put forward local residents views on the planning application stating *'the site serves as part of a 'green wedge' that helps to maintain the separate identities of Stoke Golding and Dadlington; as part of the rural setting of the village it should be preserved and enhanced'*. The Inspector Report concludes that *'although the development would be closer to Dadlington, it would encroach no further than Goosegrange, which now heralds the southern end of the gap between the 2 villages; a gap of some 240m would remain'* (para 22). The Inspectors Report continues *'Nor do I consider that the site would be inherently unsuitable for development'* (para 23).
- 5.8.7 The Inspectors Report also noted that comments from residents highlighted that there was *'evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation'* and that *'recent research indicates that the Battle of Bosworth is likely to have taken place closer to, albeit to the west of, the village and, as bodies were carted from the battlefield to Dadlington Church for burial, the archaeological significance of the appeal site might be greater than the trial trenches currently denote'* (para 11). In reply the Inspector concluded that *'although it contains signs of medieval ridge and furrow, there is no convincing evidence that important archaeological remains are likely to be present. Not only have the trial trenches revealed nothing of significance, but also the recent research seems to me to indicate that the battlefield is likely to be well to the west of the village and in a position that would not naturally have led those carting bodies to Dadlington Church to traverse the appeal site'*.
- 5.8.8 The above indicates there are development pressures within/adjacent to the area.
- 5.8.9 There is no major infrastructure contained within the area. Hinckley Road which connects Stoke Golding and Dadlington runs through the area.

Site Assessment

- 5.8.10 The area is agricultural in nature and adjoined by residential development, a school and Ashby Canal. There are mature hedgerows and scattered trees. In terms of topography the area rises gently towards Dadlington. From Stoke Lane, Dadlington it is possible to view Stoke Golding as the topography falls and the Church of St Margaret of Antioch is prominent.
- 5.8.11 It is possible to view both settlements from numerous points adjacent to the site area and this is partly due to the topography. This is particularly evident from Ashby Canal, Sherwood Road, Stoke Golding and Stoke Lane, Dadlington. To a lesser extent it is not possible to view the main settlements of Dadlington and Stoke Golding from Hinckley Road due to the vegetation and bend in Hinckley

Road. Having said this, there is a sense that the two settlements are within close proximity and it is a short distance between them along Hinckley Road. If development were to occur it would reduce the distance between the settlements north of Sherwood Road.

5.8.12 The area does not provide a recreational resource and there is no public access into the site.

Evaluation

5.8.13 From the site visit it is possible to conclude development within the area would contribute to further coalescence. Although as per the Inspectors Report on the planning appeal the physical separation between Stoke Golding and Dadlington would not shorten the distance between the two unless development encroached past the properties on Sherwood Road. The green wedge would help to guide the development form of the settlements.

5.8.14 The area does not provide a recreational resource as identified in the Open Space, Sport, and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). There is potential for archaeological remains due to the close proximity of the Bosworth Battlefield designation which could result in the area performing a minor green lung function.

5.8.15 For a green wedge to be designated the area must meet all four evaluation criteria, this is not the case with this area for the reasons highlighted above and therefore it can not be designated as a green wedge.

5.9 Area between Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill

- 5.9.1 The proposed green wedge was suggested through the preparation and consultation on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the boundary has been identified by following field boundaries, roads and Ashby Canal.



Desk Top Survey

- 5.9.2 There are a number of rights of way that run through the site including Ashby Canal Towpath. It is possible to walk from Higham on the Hill to Stoke Golding using the network of paths which are connected via roadways. Ashby Canal provides a recreational and tourism resource. The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies the following spaces within the area: a green corridor and natural and semi-natural open space. The proposed area of the green wedge is 132.45 hectares.
- 5.9.3 A Scheduled Ancient Monument known as 'Hlaew and medieval farmstead' which is located immediately south west of Park House to the west of Stoke Golding. To the north of Stoke Golding outside of the proposed green wedge boundary is the designated area of Bosworth Battlefield.
- 5.9.4 The area is predominately agricultural in nature. There are no designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the area. There are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the Borough.

- 5.9.5 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) does not identify any areas of flood risk within the area.
- 5.9.6 There have been a number of minor planning applications within the area including agricultural related developments, living accommodation for agricultural workers, stables, extension dwellings, retention of a mobile home and storage uses.
- 5.9.7 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

Site Assessment

- 5.9.8 The area is rural in nature with the main use being agriculture with a number of natural and manmade features including; Ashby Canal, Bridges, high hedgerows, and scattered trees. From Higham on the Hill (Hinckley Lane) the topography falls before rising again towards Stoke Golding. From Hinckley Lane, Higham on the Hill there is intervisibility (seeing one settlement from the edge of the other) between the two settlements which results from the nature of the topography and prominence of the Church of St Margaret of Antioch in Stoke Golding. Although it is possible to view the settlements, they are some distance apart.
- 5.9.9 The area is publically accessible through the network of public rights of way, canal (which provides boating opportunities and access via the towpath), and roads. The rights of way and tow path appear to be well used although access to a number of footpaths is limited as they are quite a distance from the edge of the settlements.

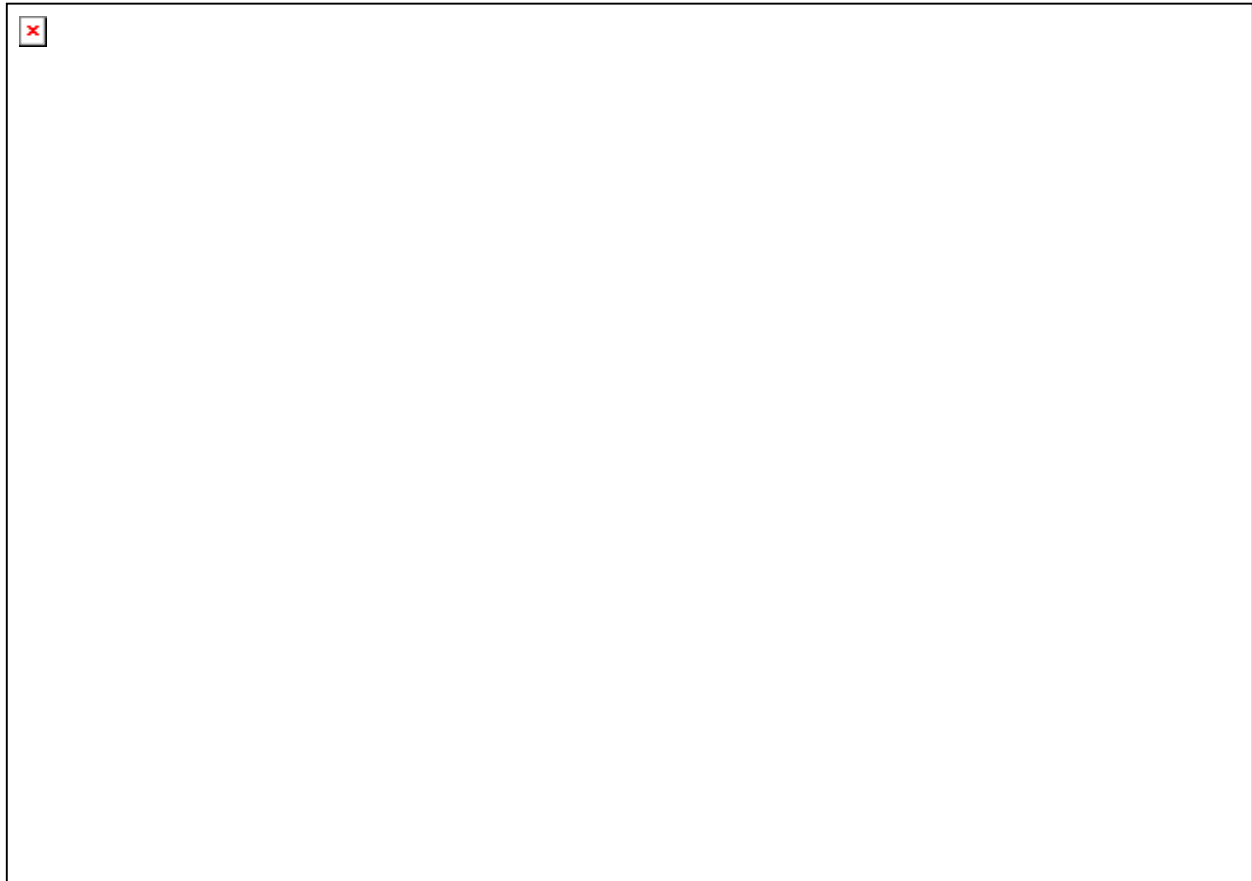
Evaluation

- 5.9.10 From the site visit it is possible to conclude that development within the area would not contribute to coalescence of the settlements as they are some distance apart. Stoke Golding is identified as a Key Rural Centre and Higham on the Hill is a Rural Village and are not identified for significant growth in the Core Strategy and therefore it is not necessary for a green wedge designation to guide the development form of these settlements. The site size is excessive in relation to the proposed housing provision to warrant the need to allocate a green wedge to guide the development form or prevent the merging of settlements.
- 5.9.11 The area does provide a recreational resource as Ashby Canal cuts through the area and Basin Bridge is identified within the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). The area does not provide a green lung into the urban area. Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill area identified as being within the rural area of the Borough and therefore the proposed area does not provide a continuous link between the open countryside and land which penetrates deep into urban areas as identified in the Joint Methodology.

5.9.12 For a green wedge to be designated the area must meet all four evaluation criteria, this is not the case with this area and for the reasons highlighted above and therefore it can not be designated as a green wedge.

5.10 Area between Market Bosworth and Carlton

5.10.1 This area was suggested by Market Bosworth Parish Council through the call for sites consultation. The boundary has been derived by selecting the minimum site size considered necessary to perform the green wedge function by following the battlefield line and fields to the west and Barton Road/Bosworth Road to the east.



Desk Top Survey

- 5.10.2 There are a number of different land uses within the area including agriculture, golf course and school playing fields. The area of the proposed green wedge is 190 hectares. There are a number of public rights of way that run through the area which connect Market Bosworth and Carlton. The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies outdoor sports facilities within the area. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) identifies flood zone 3 running through the area. It notes that an issue could be surface water run off due to the wet clay soil which could also lead to groundwater flooding problems.
- 5.10.3 There are local wildlife sites within the area but no Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Borough.
- 5.10.4 There have been a number of minor planning applications within the area, the most significant being the erection of a golf club house with a new access off Station Road, Market Bosworth.

- 5.10.5 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 5.10.6 A tributary of the River Sence runs westwards to the north of Market Bosworth through the area and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) identifies the area around the tributary as falling within flood risk zone 3.

Site Assessment

- 5.10.7 The area is predominately used for agricultural purposes and rural in nature. Adjacent land uses includes housing, agriculture, battlefield railway line and schools. The area is characterised by hedgerows and mature trees. The topography is varied, from Silk Hill and Back Lane in Market Bosworth the topography falls before shallowing out and rising again toward Carlton. Due to this topography it is possible to view some properties in Carlton from the edge of Market Bosworth (Back Lane) although the visibility is limited to a few larger properties. Although there is intervisibility (possible to see one settlement from the edge of another) there is still the perception that these settlements are distant from one another and are not at threat of coalescence.
- 5.10.8 There is public access into the proposed area via a number of rights of way which appear to be well used.

Evaluation

- 5.10.9 The area provides a recreational resource as the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies outdoor sports facilities within the area.
- 5.10.10 The area does not provide a green lung as it does not penetrate deep into an urban area. The Core Strategy identifies Market Bosworth and Carlton being part of the rural area.
- 5.10.11 The proposed green wedge would not guide development form. The Core Strategy identifies a minimum of 100 dwellings within Market Bosworth and no residential requirement for Carlton. The site size is excessive in relation to the proposed housing provision to warrant the need to allocate a green wedge to guide the development form or prevent the merging of settlements.
- 5.10.12 The proposed area only meets one of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as a green wedge.

5.11 Area between Market Bosworth and Priory Lane

5.11.1 A number of sites to the south of Market Bosworth were suggested by Market Bosworth Parish Council, these have been amalgamated to form the proposed boundary (Area A on the Map below). The boundary follows the battlefield line to the west, the road network to the south and abuts the boundary of Market Bosworth Country Park.



Desk Top Survey

5.11.2 The area is rural in nature and the predominant land use is agriculture. The area of the proposed green wedge is 79.23 hectares. There is one public right of way that runs through the area which connects Market Bosworth to Coton Priory. The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies allotments within the area. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) does not identify any flood risk zones within the area, although there is a non-main river.

5.11.3 There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within the area but no Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Borough. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the area as being a tourism resource and a potential strategic access route is demarcated. A potential strategic access route aims to improve access and have a beneficial effect on wildlife in and around towns providing a natural corridor. There is an 11kv power line that runs through the area.

- 5.11.4 There have been two planning applications within the area of note which includes the construction of a pumping station in 1991 and the change of use from agriculture to a burial ground in 2002 both of which were permitted.
- 5.11.5 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

Site Assessment

- 5.11.6 There are a number of different uses within this area including a cemetery, allotments, paddocks and its main use agriculture. Adjacent uses include agriculture, housing, Bosworth Battlefield Line and employment uses. The area is characterised by high hedgerows and areas of woodland. The topography falls from Coton Priory towards Market Bosworth before rising towards York Close, Market Bosworth.
- 5.11.7 The nearest settlement to the area is the hamlet of Far Coton, it is not possible to view both settlements at the same time and the perception of distance between the settlements is that they are distant and not at threat of coalescence.
- 5.11.8 There is limited public access into the area with a public right of way between Coton Priory Cottages and Market Bosworth.

Evaluation

- 5.11.9 The area provides a recreational resource as the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies allotments within the area.
- 5.11.10 The area does not provide a green lung as it does not penetrate deep into an urban area. The Core Strategy identifies Market Bosworth as a rural area.
- 5.11.11 The proposed area does not prevent the merging of settlements as it only borders Market Bosworth. It is not necessary to designate a new green wedge to guide development form to help shape development as Market Bosworth is not an urban area.
- 5.11.12 The proposed area only meets one of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as a green wedge.

5.12 Area between Market Bosworth and Cadeby

5.12.1 A number of sites to the south of Market Bosworth were suggested by Market Bosworth Parish Council, these have been amalgamated to form the proposed boundary (Area B on the map below). The boundary follows the road network to the north and east (The Park and Cadeby Lane) and from Cadeby follows the field pattern towards Market Bosworth Country Park.



Desk Top Survey

5.12.2 The area is predominately rural in nature, there are a number of rights of way which run through the area. Some of these are within Market Bosworth Country Park which connects to the wider countryside. One of the rights of way connects to Cadeby. The proposed green wedge area is 85.14 hectares.

5.12.3 There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Borough. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) does not identify any flood risk zones within the area, although there is a non-main river. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the area as being a tourism resource and an existing strategic access route is demarcated. A strategic access route aims to improve access and have a beneficial effect on wildlife in and around towns providing a natural corridor. There is a local wildlife site within the area. The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies a country park and outdoor sports facilities.

5.12.4 There have been minor planning applications within Market Bosworth Country Park including the erection of a flag pole and the erection of a toilet block. There have also been applications relating to the Rugby Club for uses such as additional car parking, flood lighting and equipment store.

5.12.5 There are no expressions of interest registered within the area.

Site Assessment

5.12.6 The vast majority of this area is agricultural although a large section includes Market Bosworth Country Park. Adjacent uses to the area include housing, agriculture and the grounds of Bosworth Hall Hotel. The area is characterised by parkland on the periphery of Market Bosworth and agriculture adjacent to Cadeby. There are a number of mature trees, water features and pocket woodlands within the area. The topography rises from Cadeby before flattening towards Market Bosworth.

5.12.7 It is not possible to view both settlements at the same time and the perception of distance between the two is that they are quite far apart.

5.12.8 The proposed green wedge area is publically accessible via the Country Park which is well used, the Rugby Playing Fields and a public right of way which connects Cadeby to Market Bosworth.

Evaluation

5.12.9 The area provides a recreational resource as the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies a country park and outdoor sports facilities.

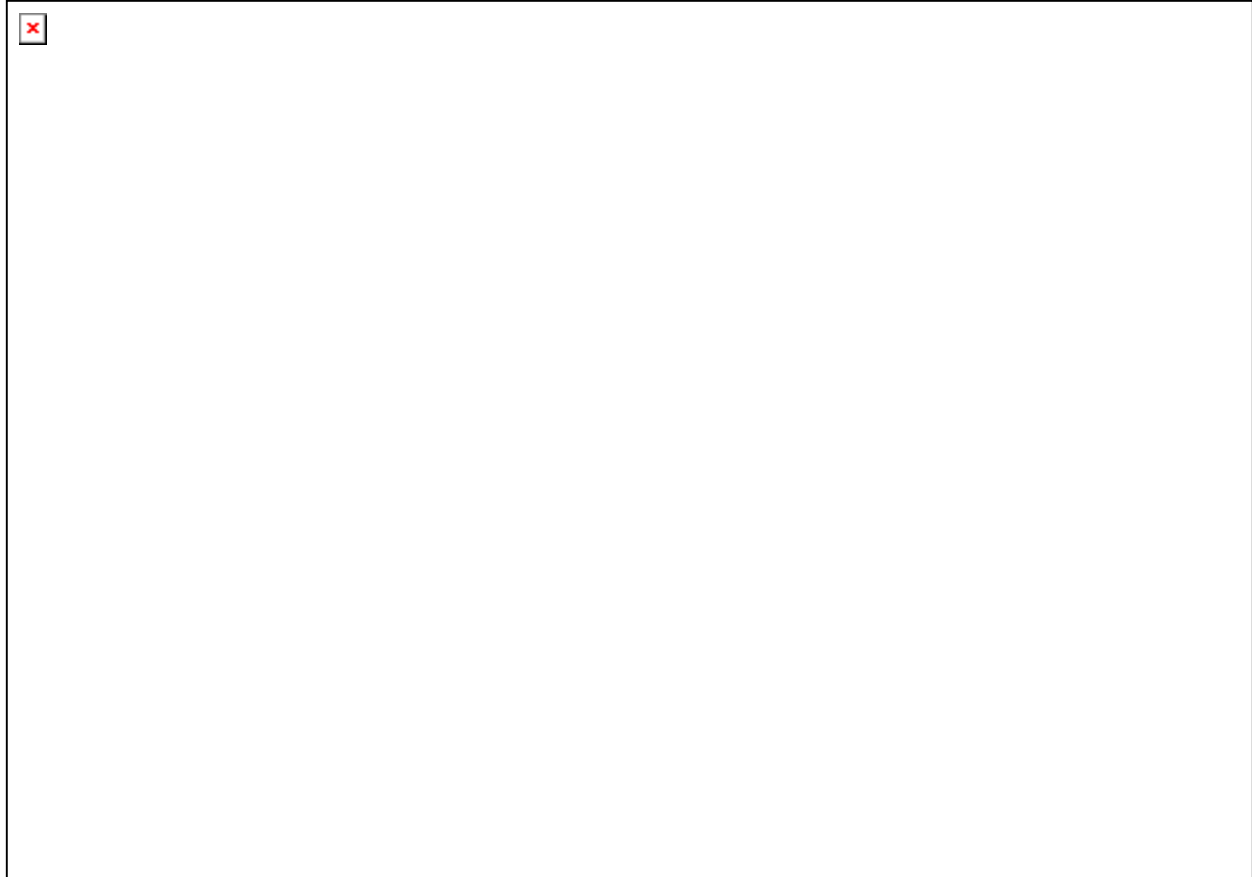
5.12.10 The area does not provide a green lung as it does not penetrate deep into an urban area. The Core Strategy identifies Market Bosworth and Cadeby as a rural area.

5.12.11 The proposed green wedge would not guide development form. The Core Strategy identifies a minimum of 100 dwellings within Market Bosworth and no residential requirement for Cadeby. The site size is excessive in relation to the proposed housing provision to warrant the need to allocate a green wedge to guide the development form or prevent the merging of settlements.

5.12.12 The proposed area only meets one of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as a green wedge.

5.13 Area between Dadlington, Shenton and Sutton Cheney

5.13.1 This area was suggested by Sutton Cheney Parish Council through the call for sites consultation. The boundary has been derived by selecting the minimum site size felt necessary to perform a green wedge function by following road, water courses and field boundaries.



Desk Top Survey

5.13.2 The area is rural nature and there are a number of public rights of way which run through the area. A number of these are focused around Bosworth Battlefield but there also rights of way from Shenton and Dadlington into the proposed area. The towpath along the Ashby Canal also provides access into the area. The proposed green wedge area is 446.17 hectares.

5.13.3 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007) identifies flood risk zones 2 and 3 within the area. These zones run close to the settlement of Sutton Cheney. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the area as being a tourism resource, contains a heritage asset and important for biodiversity. Bosworth Battlefield is identified as a strategic intervention area as it is a key attraction for visitors and tourists. It notes that the provision of a recreational route through to the Weddington Country Walk and Nuneaton would connect the Battlefield site, railway terminus and Ambion Wood creating a 'tourism hub' for the Borough. There is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within the area.

- 5.13.4 Part of the area is covered by the Bosworth Battlefield Designation. The battle of Bosworth was fought on the 22 August 1485. The battle resulted in a rebel force defeating a royal army more than twice its size leaving Richard III, the last Plantagenet king, dead on the field and placing Henry VII on the throne as the first of a new, Tudor dynasty.
- 5.13.5 There have been a number of planning applications within the area, including a number associated with Sutton Cheney Wharf for uses such as car parking and erection of a wooden building for ticket sales and refreshments. There have also been a number of applications at Bosworth Battlefield for uses such as use of the Heritage Centre and Tithe Barn for weddings. Other applications are associated with the rural nature of the area include the erection of horticultural poly tunnels, ménage, stables, conversion of dwellings to two dwellings and erection of agricultural buildings.
- 5.13.6 The Open Space, Sports, Recreational Facilities Study (2011) identifies a country park, green corridor, and allotments.
- 5.13.7 There have been expressions of interest within the area and they are considered through the latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
- 5.13.8 The Core Strategy (2009) identifies Shenton, Sutton Cheney and Dadlington as being within the Rural Area. Dadlington and Sutton Cheney are identified as Rural Hamlets.

Site Assessment

- 5.13.9 This area has a number of different land uses including Ashby Canal, Wharf, Woodland, Bosworth Battlefield Line, Shenton Railway Station, Bosworth Battlefield and Visitor Centre, Agriculture, farm buildings and Paddocks. Adjacent land uses include agriculture and residential properties. There are a number of important landscape features within this area including Ashby Canal and Ambion Wood. Due to the size of the proposed area the topography is varied. The most noted topographical feature is Ambion Hill where from this vantage point there are far reaching views northwards.
- 5.13.10 The proposed green wedge area is fairly large and as a result the settlements of Sutton Cheney, Dadlington and Shenton are some distance apart. It is not possible to view more than one settlement within the area and there isn't any threat of coalescence.
- 5.13.11 Due to the land uses and tourism resources within the area there is good public access. These uses are located towards the middle of the proposed green wedge area around Bosworth Battlefield and there are good walking opportunities around the area to visit Shenton Station, Ashby Canal, Sutton Cheney Wharf and Ambion Wood. The level of use around this area is good and footpaths are well maintained. There are also a number of public rights of way within the area providing access into the proposed green wedge from Dadlington and Shenton.

Evaluation

- 5.13.12 The area provides a recreational resource as the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) a country park, green corridor, and allotments.
- 5.13.13 The area does not provide a green lung as it does not penetrate deep into an urban area. The Core Strategy identifies Shenton, Dadlington and Sutton Cheney as a rural area.
- 5.13.14 The proposed green wedge would not guide development form. The Core Strategy does not identify a housing requirement for these settlements. The site size is excessive in relation to the level of housing provision likely to come forward to warrant the need to allocate a green wedge to guide the development form or prevent the merging of settlements.
- 5.13.15 The proposed area only meets one of the four evaluation criteria and therefore can not be allocated as a green wedge.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

- 6.1 This Topic Paper has evaluated a number of potential green wedges. To allocate a green wedge paragraph 3.2.2 on the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011) states that:

'When assessing a green wedge (on a macro scale) in its entirety, or when identify 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'.

- 6.2 The evaluation criteria includes: Preventing the merging of settlements; guiding development form; providing a green lung into urban areas; and acting as a recreational resource. None of the areas evaluated perform all four of the evaluation criteria although they did meet one or two of the criteria. As a result there are no new green wedges suggested to be allocated in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, instead it is recommended that these areas are allocated as countryside.
- 6.3 The area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington and Stapleton and the emerging Barwell SUE were identified as being particularly sensitive in terms of separation distance. The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD provides the opportunity to refine and update the countryside policy with an explicit reference to maintaining the physical separation between settlements. The wording of a criteria based policy would ensure that the physical separation of settlements which maintains the separate identity of communities forms part of the consideration for any application outside settlement boundaries.
- 6.4 In terms of guiding development form, a number of the proposed green wedges fell within rural areas. The Core Strategy does not allocate a significant amount of development within these areas to warrant the need to designate a green wedge to guide development form. The focus of development identified within the Core Strategy is within the urban area. The most sensitive part of the urban area is between Barwell, Earl Shilton, Hinckley and Burbage, where there is already a green wedge allocated within this area. The proposed green wedges investigated around the urban area include the area between Hinckley and Stoke Golding and Hinckley and Higham on the Hill. It is not felt necessary to allocate a green wedge to guide development form in these areas.
- 6.5 In relation to the proposed areas providing a green lung, a number of the areas did provide multifunctional uses which contribute towards providing a green lung. This applies to a number of the rural area proposed green wedges. Having said this, these are within the rural area where access to the countryside is more achievable for rural residents as opposed to residents who live within the urban area. The proposed green wedge between the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension and Stapleton has the opportunity to provide a green lung into the extension. Having said this, the indicative layout of the current planning application and the emerging Area Action Plan includes green fingers penetrating into the urban extension and therefore it is not necessary to allocate a new green wedge within the area to enable a green lung.

- 6.6 One of the functions of the green wedge is to provide a recreational resource a number of the areas did provide a recreational resource. Those spaces that provide a recreational resource which are identified within this Topic Paper have been recognised through the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Study (July 2011). The spaces identified through this Study will be allocated as open space within the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. The allocations will be supported by a 'Safeguarding Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Policy.

7. **Glossary**

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological remains are important resources often containing valuable information about the past. They are part of the areas heritage and are of great historic value. The Borough contains many sites of archaeological interest ranging from roman coins found off Barwell Lane to possible medieval moated sites near Hall Close, Barwell.

Coalescence

The merging or coming together of separate towns or villages to form a single entity.

Core Strategy

Sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a Development Plan Document.

Development Plan Document

Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and form the Development Plan for a local authority area. They can include a Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of land, and other Development Plan Documents, such as generic development control policies. They will all be shown geographically on an adopted Proposals Map. Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

A term encompassing all physical resources and natural systems, including ecological, geological and historical assets.

Intervisibility

It is possible to see one settlement from the edge of the other.

Intravisibility

It is possible to see more than one settlement from anyone point in the green wedge.

Issues and Options

The preparation of issues and options papers is the first step in preparing the Local Development Framework. They suggest different ways to address the

issues facing the borough and help guide the preparation of Local Development Documents. All Issues and Options papers are open for public comment before the Preferred Options stage is reached.

Key Rural Centres

Key Rural Centres are those villages that have populations over 1500 people, have a primary school, local shop, post office, GP, community/leisure facilities, employment and a 6 day a week bus service (hourly). Key Rural Centres that provide localised provision of facilities permit access by foot, bike and local bus and can minimise car journeys not only for those people who are living in the Key Rural Centres, but also the rural villages and hamlets surrounding these centres.

Local Development Document (LDD)

The collective term covering Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Local Plan

The name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents, formerly known as the Local Development Framework. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for a local authority area and may also include Local Development Orders and Simplified Planning Zones.

Rural Areas

The Core Strategy identifies the rural areas within the Borough. Three main types of settlements have been identified; Key Rural Centres, Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets.

Rural Hamlet

Rural Hamlets have limited, if any services, and generally rely on Key Rural Centres or surrounding urban areas for schooling, employment and the provision of goods and services.

Rural Villages

Rural Villages are villages with more limited services than Key Rural Centres, as a minimum they must have: a primary school, community and/or leisure facilities and bus service. A public house, or hot food take-away is desirable, but not essential. These services are considered essential to the functioning of a village as they provide a community 'heart', allow children to attend a local school and allow access by public transport, although the frequency of this is limited.

Sites and Monument Record (SMR)

Detailed records of the known archaeological investigations (sites or events), remains (monuments), findspots, buried deposits, and areas of archaeological potential of various kinds.

Remote Access

The site provides a valuable, visual green space resource to the community along a number of distinct sightlines and at a distance.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected by the Statute under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and usually managed by Natural England. Their designation provides protection to features of regional/national biodiversity. There are seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Borough

Site Specific Allocations

Allocations of areas of land for specific purposes (e.g. housing, green wedge or employment land) or for mixed uses or development to be contained in Development Plan Documents. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.

Urban area

The urban area consists of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton as identified in the Core Strategy.

Appendix A. Site Visit Proformas

The pro-forma is that set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology. As the pro-forma has been designed to consider both new and existing green wedges some of the items within the pro-forma are not applicable.

Location: Area between Burbage and the M69

Land use description	Agriculture, allotments, cemetery, paddocks, farm buildings	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, A5, M69	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows and mature trees	
Topography	Relatively flat although varied in places. The topography drops towards Rugby Road.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	There is no other settlement close by. It abuts the M69 and there is open countryside beyond	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Open countryside beyond so there is no perception of distance to the neighbouring settlement.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings, National Grid transmission pylons	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Development would be located closer to the M69, considerations relating to noise would need to be taken into account.	

Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	The proposed area is on the edge of Burbage which is classified as part of the urban area within the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths, allotments, paddocks	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths, allotments, paddocks	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details		
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	There are some informal footpaths	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes, through the allocation of open spaces.	

**Location: Land between Sketchley, Three Pots Estate, A5 and Sketchley Lane
Industrial Area, Burbage**

Land use description	Agriculture, scrubland, hotel, paddocks, farm buildings	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, A5, Employment, development site	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows and mature trees. High tree formation along the 'The Nobbies'. Chappell Drive is enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows.	
Topography	Relatively flat although varied in places. The topography drops towards 'The Nobbies' on the field adjacent to the Sketchley development site.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Presently it is possible to view Hinckley and Burbage from 'The Nobbies' However, this view will be removed once the Sketchley site is completed.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Within close proximity.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings, local transmission pylon, Hotel	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Elements of this area are relatively enclosed due to the mature vegetation. Development adjacent to the A5 would have more of an impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>

environment?		
Details	The only access is through the two rights of way, no other recreational resources. Burbage is identified as an urban area within the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpath, Bridleway, paddocks	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths, bridle path, paddocks, hotel	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details		
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) and Stapleton

Land use description	Predominately agriculture	
Adjacent land uses	Public house, residential, church	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows and mature trees	
Topography	Gradient falls from Chapel Street to A447 before rising slowly	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	You can not view more than one settlement at the present time. This may change however when the Barwell SUE is built out.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is felt that the distance between Barwell and Stapleton is far.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm Structures	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	The proposed green wedge is between the Stapleton and Barwell SUE and would be development in the countryside.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>

Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Stile from the A447 is in good condition	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Westfields Farm and Harwell House

Land use description	Predominately agriculture, allotments, recreation ground	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, school, doctors	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows and mature trees	
Topography	Undulating	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Barwell and Earl Shilton have already amalgamated.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Barwell and Earl Shilton have already amalgamated.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm Structures	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact on distant views from the health centre	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Recreation ground and allotments. Barwell and	

	Earl Shilton are identified as being within the urban area in the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, recreation ground and allotments	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, recreation ground and allotments	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Stile from the A447 is in good condition	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Higham on the Hill and Hinckley

Land use description	Agriculture, allotments, cricket ground, paddocks	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, A5	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows and mature trees	
Topography	Gradient falls towards Hinckley from Higham on the Hill	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	There are distant views of Hinckley from the edge of Higham on the Hill. It is possible to view the spire of St Margaret of Antioch Church in Stoke Golding.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Although it is possible to view Hinckley, the perception of distance is that it is not within close proximity.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	College, farm buildings	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Development within the countryside.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>

Details	The proposed area is adjacent to Dodwells Industrial Estate and there is no immediate access for residents from the urban area of Hinkley.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths, allotments, cricket ground	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths, allotments, cricket ground	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good access from Higham on the Hill	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Stoke Golding and the Northern Perimeter Road,

Hinckley

Land use description	Predominately agriculture in nature. Wykin Village is within the boundary. Other uses include; playing field, cemetery, farm steads.	
Adjacent land uses	Public house, residential, church	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows and mature trees	
Topography	Relatively flat although rises towards Stoke Golding.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	You can not view more than one settlement.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is felt that the distance between Stoke Golding and Hinckley is far.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm Structures, Wykin Village	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	There is a significant distance between the two settlements and therefore built development would not lead to coalescence.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>

Details	There are public rights of way from the urban area of Hinckley. The recreational opportunities are located adjacent to Stoke Golding which is classified as being within the rural area.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, recreation ground	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, recreation ground, cemetery	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	At the time of the site visit the right of way access points from Hinckley were overgrown which made the entrance (via stile) difficult to navigate.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Stoke Golding and Dadlington

Land use description	Agriculture	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, School, Ashby Canal	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature hedgerows and scattered trees.	
Topography	Rises gently towards Dadlington. From Stoke Lane, Dadlington it is possible to view Stoke Golding as the topography falls.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	From Stoke Lane, Dadlington. From Ashby Canal. From Sherwood Road. To a lesser extent Hinckley Road.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close proximity. Using Hinckley Road short walk between Stoke Golding and Dadlington.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Pumping station and agricultural structures.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Coalescence, visual perception and development in the countryside.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Identified as being within the rural area in the Core	

	Strategy	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	No access into this area	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	No access into this area	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No recreational amenity.	

Location: Area between Stoke Golding and Higham on the Hill

Land use description	Predominately agriculture, paddocks, Ashby Canal	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Ashby Canal, Bridges, high hedgerows, scattered trees.	
Topography	From Higham on the Hill (Hinckley Lane) topography falls before rising again towards Stoke Golding.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Can view Stoke Golding Church Spire.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Some distance, not walkable.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings, roads, bridges	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Development within the countryside	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	It is within a rural area	

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Footpaths	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Network of public rights of way, canal – boating and towpath, roads	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good quality access points.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good use, access to some footpaths. Access to a number of footpaths is limited as they are quite a distance from the edge of the settlements.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Market Bosworth and Carlton

Land use description	Agriculture, golf course, school playing fields	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, residential, Battlefield Railway Line, Schools	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows and scattered trees	
Topography	Varied, Silk Hill slopes downwards from Back Lane and rises again towards Carlton.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Distant views of larger houses in Carlton	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Although there is intervisibility between the settlements the perception of distance is that it is quite far.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Some farm structures	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Visible impact	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Market Bosworth and Carlton are identified as	

	being within the rural area in the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, golf course	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, golf course	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Generally good quality. Slightly overgrown at the access point from Back Lane which makes navigation difficult.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Market Bosworth and Priory Lane

Land use description	Agriculture, cemetery, allotments, paddocks	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, residential, Battlefield Railway Line, employment	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows and scattered trees. Area of small woodland towards Market Bosworth.	
Topography	Slopes upwards towards Market Bosworth.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	The proposed area is not adjacent to a settlement	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	The proposed area is not adjacent to a settlement and therefore there is no perception of distance.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Some farm structures	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Visible impact	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Market Bosworth is identified as being within the	

	rural area in the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Generally good quality. Slightly overgrown at the access point from Back Lane which makes navigation difficult.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Market Bosworth and Cadeby

Land use description	Agriculture, country park, rugby playing fields	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, park, agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature trees, woodland, water courses	
Topography	The topography rises from Cadeby before flattening towards Market Bosworth.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Due to the topography and mature vegetation it is not possible to view more than one settlement	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is felt that the settlements are some distance apart.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Some farm structures, amenity blocks within the Country Park.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Visible impact	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Market Bosworth is identified as being within the rural area in the Core Strategy.	

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, Country Park, Rugby Playing Fields	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public rights of way, Country Park, Rugby Playing Fields	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good quality, particularly those rights of way within Market Bosworth Country Park.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Market Bosworth Country Park was well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Some informal tracks within the Country Park.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	

Location: Area between Dadlington, Shenton and Sutton Cheney

Land use description	Agriculture, Ashby Canal, Wharf, Woodland, Bosworth Battlefield, Shenton Station, Farm Buildings, Paddock.	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Ashby Canal, mature trees, woodland, water courses	
Topography	The topography rises towards the battlefield and there are far reaching views at the top of Ambion Hill.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	The settlements are a significant distance apart and therefore it is not possible to view more than one settlement.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is felt that the settlements are some distance apart.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings, tourist centre, café, marina, train station	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Visible impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Dadlington, Shenton and Sutton Cheney are	

	identified as being within the rural area in the Core Strategy.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Tow path, tourism facilities, boating, rights of way	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Tow path, tourism facilities, boating, rights of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good quality, particularly those rights of way within and around Bosworth Battlefield, Ambion Wood and Sutton Cheney Wharf.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	The footpaths were well used whilst out on site.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None noticeable	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes	