



Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Landscape + Visual Sensitivity Capacity Assessment



One Creative Environments Ltd

5 The Triangle,
Wildwood Drive,
Worcester.
WR5 2QX
Tel 01905 362300
www.oneltd.com

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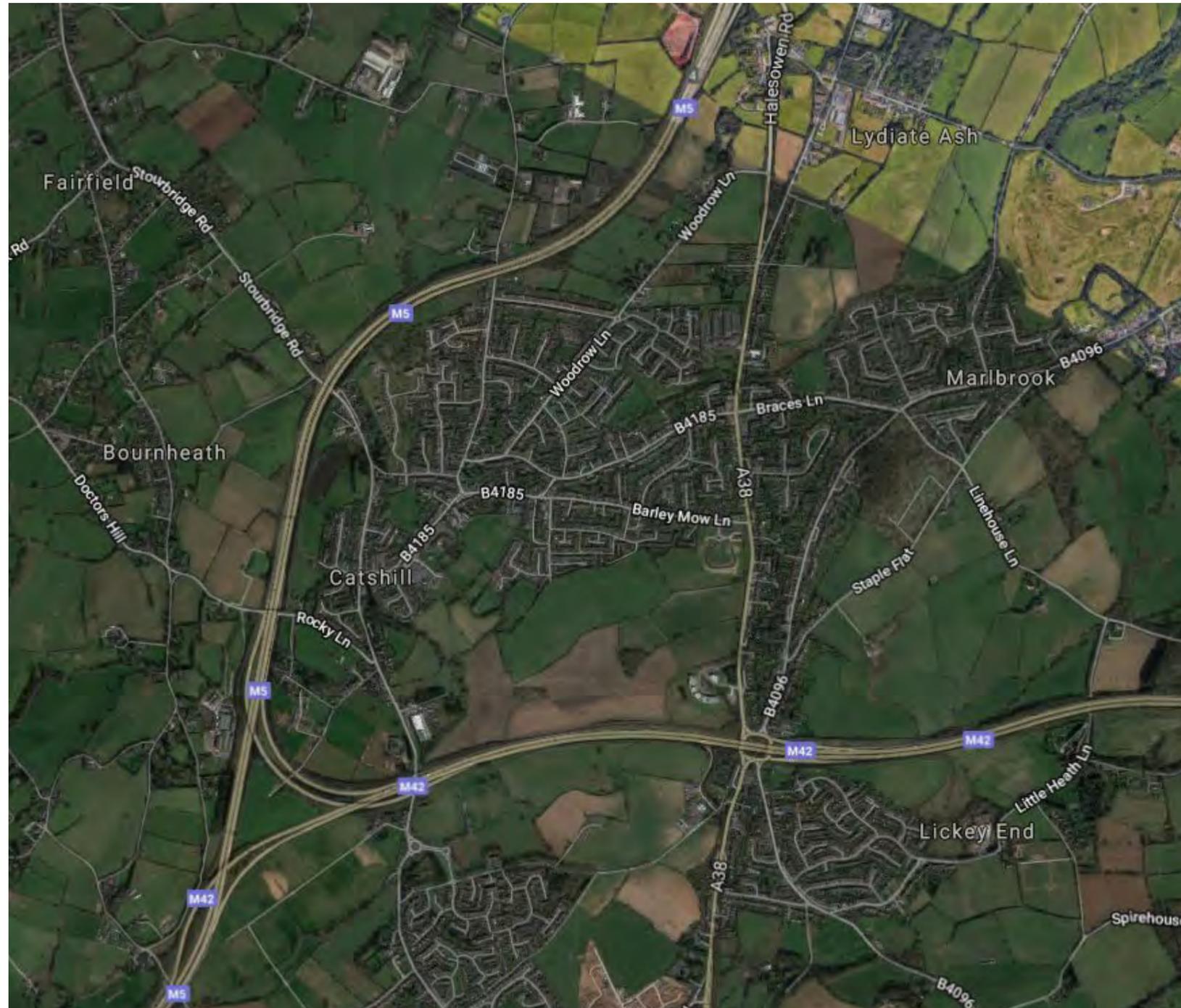


Figure 1.1 Aerial view of Catshill and Marlbrook Parish

1.0 Background

1.1 Introduction

Catshill and North Marlbrook is one of twenty Parishes within Bromsgrove District. It is situated in a roughly triangular area between the M5 and M42 junction, lying to the east of the M5 and north of the M42 and Bromsgrove.

In December 2017 One Creative Environments Ltd. (ONE) was appointed by Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council (CNMPC) to provide a landscape character sensitivity and capacity assessment on the parish. The advice was to be provided in the form of a written, illustrated report and maps based on a landscape and visual assessment of the existing boundary and its wider landscape context, informed by desktop research and discussions with representatives from CNMPC.

The purpose of the assessment was to initially identify a series of character areas that make up the parish of Catshill and Marlbrook. It then provided an independent, professional assessment of the landscape sensitivity and visual sensitivity of the areas outside the current settlement boundary where future residential development could be sited.

These areas are graded in terms of the capacity of sites to accept development (in landscape and visual terms) on a five point grading scale ranging from high to low with categories in between. This would ensure that the judgements arrived at could be interrogated and any future decisions made in the light of a robust and transparent evidence-based process.

The findings would be used to guide the preparation of Catshill and North Marlbrook's Neighbourhood Development Plan.

1.2 Existing process for carrying out Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LSCA)

LSCA is a systematic process for assessing the sensitivity of landscapes to certain types of change, and their capacity to 'accept' certain types of development. It has been developed in response to an increasing awareness of the need to understand the multi-faceted nature of the environment and to ensure that there is an objective, impartial and transparent system for assessing the capacity of the landscape to accommodate social and economic expansion whilst also retaining the aspects of the environment that – for a variety of reasons – are valued.

LSCA's are widely recognised as a tool to help guide decisions about allocation and management of land and its ability to accommodate different types of development. An effective LSCA makes a fundamentally important contribution to finding solutions that allow necessary development to take place while at the same time helping to maintain the diverse landscape characteristics and visual qualities of the countryside and settings to settlement.

This study assesses landscape and visual considerations only. A range of other environmental considerations may need to be taken into account, such as ecology and nature conservation, heritage and archaeology, water quality and flooding potential, etc. by others to determine the potential wider environmental and cumulative impacts of development on a particular site. Other site considerations, including access and drainage issues for example, will also need to be considered by decision makers but do not form part of this assessment.

1.3 Recent changes to the LSCA process

To date, Sensitivity and Capacity Studies have been based upon Topic Paper 6 - 'Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity' - dated October 2002 and produced by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England). It's title is 'An exploration of current thinking about landscape sensitivity and capacity, to stimulate debate and encourage the development of common approaches.' This is a discussion paper only and has been the subject of much discussion within the landscape profession, particularly since the 3rd Edition Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (GLVIA3) was published in 2013.

Following recent review by Natural England and the GLVIA3 Landscape Institute committee in January 2018, it was agreed that Topic Paper 6 is now out of date and does not reflect the latest 3rd edition guidance on LVIA published by the Landscape Institute in 2013 and needs to be

replaced. It is now under review by NE and the LI and is likely to be replaced with adopted guidance. It was agreed that assessing a site's sensitivity and capacity should be based upon the approach advocated by GLVIA3. i.e. Landscape Sensitivity and Visual Sensitivity should be assessed separately (where value forms an inherent part of assessing sensitivity) and it is renamed a Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Capacity Assessment (LVSCA).

This LVSCA has therefore been carried out in accordance with best practice as set out in GLVIA3. This published guidance is regarded by the landscape profession as the 'industry standard'.

GLVIA3 makes clear that professional judgement is a very important part of the process. Whilst there is some scope for quantitative measurement of objective matters, much of the assessment relies on qualitative professional judgements that are based upon training and experience and should be made by experienced landscape professionals. Ideally, more than one person should be involved in the assessment to provide checks and balances, particularly in identifying the likely levels of effects.

This LVSCA has been carried out by Alison Osborne-Brown, a Chartered Landscape Architect and Technical Director for ONE and Andy Craven-Webb, Associate for ONE. Alison has over 30 years experience and Andy over 15 years experience, in undertaking landscape and visual assessments.

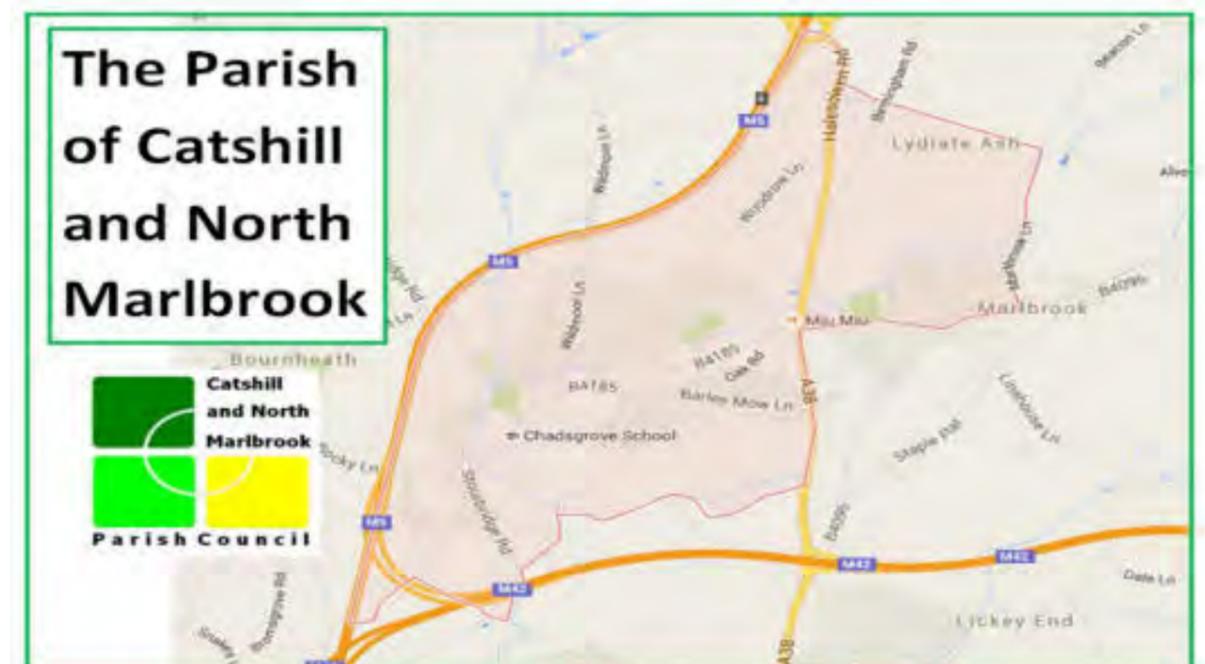


Figure 1.2 Map of Catshill and Marlbrook Parish Boundary

2.0 Assessment Methodology

2.1 Landscape + Visual Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment

The Landscape and Visual Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (LVSCA) has been carried out in accordance with best practice as set out in the following published guidance, which is regarded by the landscape profession as the ‘industry standard’:

- “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” (GLVIA3) -Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition, 2013;
- GLVIA 3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 (2013), published by the Landscape institute;
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, published by Natural England.

GLVIA3 states that:

“Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and amenity”.

2.2 Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Land Use	What the land is used for based upon broad categories such as urban, industrial, agriculture, forestry.
Landscape Elements	Individual components which make up the landscape such as hills, valleys, woods, trees and hedges, ponds, buildings and roads.
Landscape Character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (landform, vegetation) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape Condition	A measure of the physical state of the landscape.
Landscape Effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
Designated Landscapes	Areas of land identified as making a special contribution to the overall landscape character or visual quality of a locality. Those of national importance are protected by law and are known as statutory landscape designations. Areas of regional or local importance are identified at the local level (usually by the Planning Authority) and are known as non-statutory landscape designations.

Landscape Value	The relative value or importance attached to a landscape (often as a basis for designation or recognition), which expresses national or local consensus about its quality. Special qualities may include perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity, wildness or cultural/conservation associations.
Perceptual aspects	A term used to describe the sensory (i.e. received through human senses) with the cognitive (i.e. knowledge and understanding gained from sources and experience). A landscape may be valued for its specific perceptual qualities notably its wildness and/or tranquillity.
Permissive Paths	A path over which there is no formal right of access (i.e. not a public right of way) whose use by the public is permitted by the landowner.
Scenic quality	A term to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly visual).
Susceptibility to change	Ability of the receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.
Topography	The physical appearance of the natural and man-made features of an area of land.
Tranquillity	A state of calm and quietude associated with peace and considered to be an important asset of a landscape.
Visual Effect	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
Sense of Place	The essential character and ‘spirit’ of an area.
Sensitivity of Visual Receptor	All visual receptors are people. Their sensitivity is assessed in terms of their susceptibility to a change in view/visual amenity and also the value attached to the view.
Viewpoint	The location from which photographs are taken, to illustrate specific or representational views of the proposed development.
Visual Amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.

2.3 Assessing the capacity of the area to accommodate change

The methodology for evaluating the capacity of the landscape to accommodate change or development, follows the methodology for GLVIA3.

The assessment must clearly distinguish between the assessment of landscape effects dealing with changes to the landscape as a resource,

and the assessment of visual effects, dealing with changes to views and visual amenity.

This is a **step-by-step sequential approach** taken to identify landscape effects and visual effects for each local landscape character area. The rationale for the overall judgement is intended to be clear and transparent.

For clarity, the definition of the terms ‘landscape effects’ and ‘visual effects’ are set out below:

- **Landscape effects:** Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
- **Visual effects:** Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

2.4 Summary Approach to the Assessment

2.4.1 For Landscape Effects:

1. The initial step is to establish the Baseline Landscape Conditions.
2. The Landscape Sensitivity is then determined. This is based on:
 - Susceptibility of the receptor to type of change proposed and;
 - Value attached to the receptor
3. The potential Magnitude of Landscape Effect is assessed based on the size, scale, geographical extent of the area affected and duration.
4. The next step is to combine the judgements about sensitivity and magnitude of change in order to determine the level of landscape effects. Professional judgement must also be applied.

2.4.2 For Visual Effects:

1. The initial step is to establish the Baseline Visual Conditions.
2. The Visual Sensitivity is then determined. This is based on:
 - Susceptibility of the receptor to type of change proposed and;
 - Value attached to the receptor
3. The potential Magnitude of Visual Effect is assessed based on the size, scale, geographical extent of the area affected and duration.
4. The next step is to combine the judgements about sensitivity and magnitude of change in order to determine the level

of visual effects. Professional judgement must also be applied.

2.4.3 Assessing Capacity to Accommodate Change:

A professional judgement is then made on the ability, or capacity of the site to accommodate development.

2.5 Assessment of Landscape Effects

The assessment of Landscape Effects considers how the proposal will affect the components that make up the landscape, often referred to as landscape receptors.

2.5.1 Landscape Receptor

The first step is to identify the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected as part of the existing baseline situation:

- The character of the landscape identifying the components that contribute to it i.e. topography, land use, vegetation, settlement patterns
- Any individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape that contribute to the distinctive character of the landscape.
- The condition or the physical state of the landscape, including the condition of elements or features such as buildings, hedgerows or woodland and any evidence of current pressures causing change.
- The value placed upon the landscape.

2.5.2 Landscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining judgements on the value attached to the landscape resource and its susceptibility to the type of change proposed, i.e. a judgement about the nature of the proposed development in relation to the ability of the baseline landscape to accept that change. The sensitivity of landscape receptors will vary therefore depending on the type and nature of development proposed.

Landscape value describes the level of value/importance attached to a landscape or feature (that would potentially be affected by the proposed development). Factors considered include: existing landscape, heritage or nature conservation designations and the level of importance that they signify i.e. whether international, national or local); relevant local planning

policy and guidance; the status of individual areas or features (e.g. TPO's), the quality, condition and rarity of individual features and / or elements within the landscape; any verifiable local community interest i.e. village greens, allotments, recreational areas; and any particular associations i.e. is the landscape associated with artists, writers or events in history.

Landscape susceptibility describes the ability of a landscape receptor i.e. character or quality/condition of a particular landscape feature or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate change (i.e. the proposed development) without undue consequences for maintenance of the baseline situation.

Landscape Sensitivity = Susceptibility + Landscape Value

The sensitivity of a landscape receptor is categorised as: Very High; High; Medium; Low; or Very Low. The judgements are based upon objectively determined criteria and professional reasoning. These are shown overleaf in Table A: Criteria for determining landscape sensitivity.

2.5.3 Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of change in the landscape is influenced by a number of factors including the extent to which landscape features are lost and/or altered, the introduction of new features in the landscape, and the resulting change in the physical and/or perceptual characteristics of the landscape. For each of the landscape receptors a clear approach is taken to assess the potential magnitude of impact.

The magnitude of landscape change is described using a five-point scale. Magnitude is assessed as being: Very High; High; Medium; Low; or Very Low. The judgements are based on objectively-determined criteria and professional reasoning. Refer to Table B.

2.6 Assessment of Visual Effects

The assessment of visual effects considers how the proposal will affect specific views and the general visual amenity experienced by people.

2.6.1 Visual Receptors

Visual receptors are people and comprise individuals or groups of people who are likely to be affected by the proposed development at specific viewpoints or series of viewpoints. Each area was assessed on account of how visible the areas were from viewpoints such as public rights of way, roads and private dwellings.

2.6.3 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Evaluating the visual sensitivity of each area requires consideration of both its susceptibility to change arising from the proposal, and the value attached to the view.

Visual Sensitivity = Susceptibility to Change + Value

The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in their view and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at a particular location
- The extent to which the attention or interest is focused on the view and the visual amenity people experience.

A view is valued through formal designation and/or indicators of value attached by people. This takes account of:

- Recognition of the value attached to a view through planning designations and / or in relation to heritage assets and indicators of the value attached to views by visitors e.g. featuring in guidebooks or on tourist maps
- Provision of facilities for their enjoyment i.e. parking places, and interpretive boards and any references to them in literature or art e.g. 'Ruskin's View' over Lunedale.

Sensitivity is recorded as: Very High; High; Medium; Low; or Very Low. Sensitivity is specific to each visual receptor and reflects a balanced judgement on the value attached to the view by the receptor, the visual amenity and susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change proposed. The judgement made is supported by a clear written rationale and supported by the guidelines in Table C: Guidelines for the Assessment of Visual Receptor Sensitivity.

2.6.4 Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of change on visual receptors is influenced by a number of factors including; the extent to which the view and visual amenity of people arising as a result of the proposed development is lost and/or altered; the introduction of new features in the view, and; the resulting change in the view. For each of the visual receptors a clear approach is taken to assess the potential magnitude of impact. Magnitude is assessed as being major, moderate, minor, and negligible or none. The judgement made is reliant upon by a clear written rationale and professional judgement. Refer to Table D.

Table A: Guidelines for the Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	<p>Very highly valued with international and national level designated areas (e.g. World Heritage Sites, National Parks, AONB's, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I or II* Listed Buildings, SSSI's etc.) and is experienced by a high number of people where the quality of the landscape is likely to be the primary purpose of the visit. Exceptional aesthetic attributes with significant scenic quality and iconic views.</p> <p>An important component of the country's character with very rare and distinctive elements and features. Landscape condition is very good and maintained to a high standard. The landscape has elevated perceptual qualities and is highly valued for its wildness / remoteness and level of tranquility. No detracting features present. A landscape with a very low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed, with components that cannot be replaced (e.g. ancient woodland, historic parkland).</p> <p>A landscape or component with a very high susceptibility/vulnerability to change.</p>
High	<p>Highly valued with regional or county level designated areas (e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Country Parks, Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas etc.). May be highly valued locally and experienced by many people where the quality of the landscape is likely to be one of the main reasons for the visit.</p> <p>High aesthetic attributes with significant scenic quality and views. An important component of the region or county's character with rare or distinctive elements and /or features. Landscape condition is good and is generally well maintained. The landscape has very good perceptual qualities and a high level of tranquility. A landscape with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed, with components that are not easily replaced (e.g. ancient woodland, historic parkland. No detracting features present.</p> <p>A landscape or component with a high susceptibility/vulnerability to change.</p>
Medium	<p>Moderately valued but no designated landscapes present - may be moderately valued locally. The landscape is unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit but makes a positive contribution to the experience.</p> <p>Commonplace elements / features present in good to fair condition, some of which could not be replaced but are a good to fair representation of the landscape type, but common. Generally unremarkable character, albeit with some sense of place. The landscape has good to fair perceptual qualities and a moderate level of tranquility. Some detracting features present. A landscape with a moderate capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed with some resilience to, and tolerance of, change.</p> <p>A landscape or component with a moderate susceptibility/vulnerability to change.</p>
Low	<p>Low value – of low importance, low quality and in fair to poor condition, with few features of value or interest. The landscape has little or no amenity value – and is unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit</p> <p>Rare or distinctive elements and / or features are not present. Several or many elements / features are discordant, derelict, in decline or lost, resulting in little or no positive contribution to landscape character and / or visual amenity. All landscape elements are easily replaceable. The landscape has few, if any, perceptual qualities and is of low tranquility. Several detractors present. A landscape with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed and relatively resilient to change.</p> <p>A landscape or component with a low susceptibility/vulnerability to change.</p>
Very Low	<p>Very low value – a degraded landscape, likely to be industrial or contaminated land, with no amenity value – and there is unlikely to be a reason to visit for recreational use.</p> <p>A landscape of very low quality and in poor condition, with very low potential for biodiversity. The landscape has no perceptual qualities and is not considered to be tranquil.</p> <p>Widespread detractors present. Most elements / features are discordant, derelict, in decline or lost altogether, resulting in negative effects on character with all intrinsic sense of place lost. Little prospect of improvement. A landscape with a large capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed and very resilient to change.</p> <p>A landscape or component with a very low susceptibility/vulnerability to change.</p>

Table B: Criteria For Determining Magnitude Of Landscape Change

Magnitude of Effect	Landscape
Major	<p>Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features and characteristics of the baseline condition.</p> <p>The size and scale and/or geographical extents of change are considered large due to the extent and proportion of loss of existing landscape components and extent of alteration of aesthetic and perceptual qualities which are critical to the landscape character.</p> <p>The duration of effect would be considered long term and would either be irreversible or very difficult to reverse in practical terms.</p>
Moderate	<p>Notable alteration to, or significant loss of, key elements, features and characteristics of the baseline condition.</p> <p>The size and scale and/or geographical extents of change are considered medium due to the extent and proportion of loss of existing landscape components and extent of alteration to aesthetic and perceptual qualities and would cause a noticeable difference to the landscape character or existing landscape components.</p> <p>The duration of effect would be considered medium term and / or potentially reversible, although it may not be practical to do so.</p>
Minor	<p>Minor alterations to key elements, features and characteristics of the baseline condition.</p> <p>The size and scale and/or geographical extents of change are considered low due to the extent and proportion of loss of existing landscape components and extent of alteration to aesthetic and perceptual qualities and would cause a very small change to the landscape character and/or existing landscape components.</p> <p>The duration of effect would be considered short term and / or potentially reversible, and in practical terms would easily be achievable.</p>
Negligible	<p>Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features and characteristics of the baseline condition.</p> <p>The proposed scheme would be barely perceptible or entirely appropriate in its context and would cause no perceptible change to its landscape components, aesthetic and perceptual qualities and character.</p> <p>The duration of effect would be considered short term / temporary and / or easily reversible, and in practical terms would very easily be achievable.</p>
None	No change to the baseline condition.

Table C: Guidelines for the Assessment of Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	<p>A viewer with a very high susceptibility/vulnerability to change; with a specific interest in the view, prolonged viewing opportunities and a very high value placed upon the view. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to very high value landscapes and townscapes • Receptors in Internationally or Nationally designated sites such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Landscape Areas, National Trails, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings; • Recognised scenic travel routes and other places where the views are the major contributor to the visit. <p>Internationally / Nationally important visual function (context, setting, gateway, gap, screen, buffer, transition zone, skyline, panorama, vista, focal point, cultural association etc.). Highly visible in the wider area.</p>
High	<p>A viewer with a high susceptibility/vulnerability to change; with a particular interest in the view, prolonged viewing opportunities and a high value placed upon the view. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptors in landscapes of Regional or County importance (e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), country parks, long distance trails, Grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas etc.). • Views from other important /valued/well-used visitor destinations and recreation areas, including long distance / themed trails, touring routes, cycle paths, canals, rights of way used by many people where the view is an important reason for the visit; • People in high value landscapes and townscapes where views contribute to the high value landscape setting; • Residents at home using rooms normally occupied during daytime hours and are likely to experience prolonged views. <p>Important wider visual function. Visible in the wider area.</p>
Medium	<p>A viewer with a moderate susceptibility/vulnerability to change; with some interest in their surroundings, a medium period of exposure to the view and a moderate value placed upon the view. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People whose attention is not solely focused on the view or for short periods of time while passing through the landscape / townscape • People involved in outdoor recreational facilities where landscape appreciation is unlikely to be a primary motive i.e. fishing or golf • Users of scenic road, rail or waterway corridors not used by many people and where the view is only part of the reason for the visit; • Residents with limited view of the development; • People at their place of work/educational institutions where visual amenity is an important contributor to the setting and quality of working life. <p>Important local visual function. Locally visible but limited influence.</p>
Low	<p>A viewer with a low susceptibility/vulnerability to change; with little or no interest in their surroundings, attention not focused on the landscape and a low value placed on the view. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People using busy main roads where their view is focused on the road; • People at their place of work where the appreciation of the setting is of limited importance to the quality of working life; • People engaged in outdoor recreation or sport which does not involve or depend upon an appreciation of views; • People using infrequently used / inaccessible public rights of way and likely to be travelling for a purpose other than to enjoy the view. Usually in landscapes / townscapes of low to moderate value. <p>Not important visual function. Limited local visibility.</p>
Very Low	<p>A viewer with a very low susceptibility/vulnerability to change; with no interest in their surroundings, attention not focused on the landscape and a very low value placed on the view. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People moving past the view often at high speed (e.g. motorways and main line railways); People in degraded landscapes / townscapes of low value. <p>No visual function and no visibility.</p>

Table D: Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Visual Change

Magnitude of Effect	Visual Effect
Major	The size and scale and/or geographical extent of change is considered substantial and would cause a major deterioration in, or change to, a large proportion of the existing view. The duration of effect would be considered long term and would either be irreversible or very difficult to reverse in practical terms.
Moderate	The size and scale and/or geographical extent of change is considered to cause a noticeable change to a large proportion of the existing view, or significant deterioration in or a significant change to a smaller proportion of the existing view. The duration of effect would be considered medium term and / or potentially reversible, although it may not be practical to do so.
Minor	The size and scale and/or geographical extent of change would cause a small change or small deterioration in or change to the existing view. The duration of effect would be considered short term and / or potentially reversible, and in practical terms would easily be achievable.
Negligible	The development is at such a distance as to be barely perceptible and may go unnoticed. The duration of effect would be considered short term / temporary and / or easily reversible, and in practical terms would very easily be achievable.
None	No change to the existing baseline view.

Table F: Criteria for determining the Capacity to Accept Development

	Capacity for Accepting Development
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Result in a barely perceptible deterioration of landscape character Have a barely perceptible impact on characteristic elements and features of the landscape Barely degrade the sense of place Result in a barely perceptible change in the view, associated with the introduction of uncharacteristic features or elements
MEDIUM/HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not quite fit with the character of the landscape Be at odds with some of the characteristic elements and features of the landscape Detract from the sense of place Cause a limited deterioration to the view of a receptor of medium to high sensitivity that would constitute a noticeable change in the view or would introduce uncharacteristic features or elements into the view; or, an obvious deterioration to the view of low sensitivity.
MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict with the character of the landscape Have an adverse impact on some characteristic elements and features of the landscape Diminish the sense of place Cause an obvious deterioration to the view of a receptor of medium to high sensitivity that would constitute a clear change in the view or introduce a discordant element into the view
LOW/MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be at considerable variance with the character of the landscape Degrade or diminish the integrity of a wide range of characteristic elements and features of the landscape Substantially damage the sense of place Cause a major deterioration to the view of a receptor of high sensitivity that would constitute a total change in the view or introduce a major discordant element into the view
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be at complete variance with the character of the landscape Cause total permanent loss or major alteration to a wide range of characteristic elements and features of the landscape Permanently damage the sense of place Cause a major deterioration to the view of a receptor of very high sensitivity that would constitute a total change in the view and / or introduce a major discordant element into the view

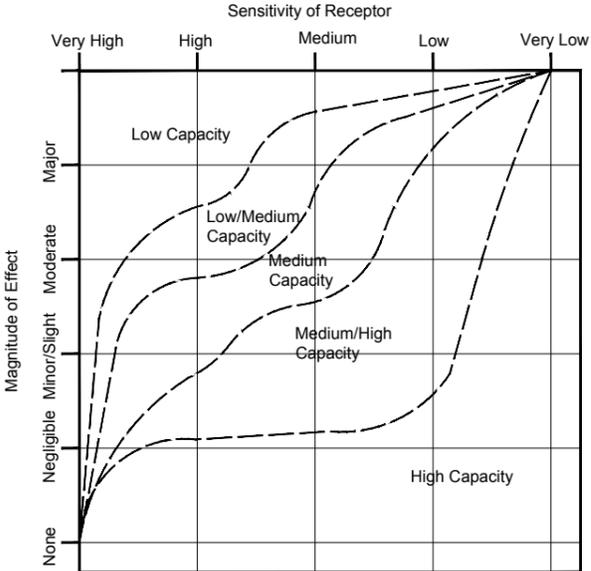
2.7 Determining Capacity to Accept Development

Judging the site’s capacity to accept development considers the predicted level of landscape effects and predicted level of visual effects separately.

Table E - Matrix for determining the Level of Landscape and Visual Effects illustrates how the effect is determined by a combination of the level of sensitivity of a receptor and the level of magnitude of change arising from development.

The matrix is a guide only and not an absolute scoring system. It is supported by a clear, written rationale of professional judgement to determine each areas Capacity to Accept Development. See Table F adjacent.

Table E: Matrix for Determining Capacity to Accept Development



3.0 Site Assessment

3.1 Baseline Components

The landscape baseline is identified and described within this chapter on the following pages. The components that make up the landscape baseline comprise:

- The landscape character of the site and surroundings
- The landscape components i.e. topography, land use, vegetation, settlement patterns and the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape that contribute to the character
- The value placed upon the landscape - factors that help in the understanding of this include: existing landscape designations (international, national or local); presence of conservation, historical or cultural interest (international, national or local); scenic quality; recreational value and; associations ie. some landscapes are associated with particular painters or writers or events in history.
- The condition or the physical state of the landscape - including the condition of elements or features such as buildings, hedgerows or woodland and any evidence of current pressures causing change.

3.1.2 Standard Data Sources and Desk Study

The baseline information has been obtained from a number of sources:

- Topographical and Pathfinder OS Maps
- Natural England National Character Area Profile 97
- Landscape Character Assessment, Worcestershire County Council interactive data
- Landscape Character Supplementary Guidance, WCC, 2012.
- Aerial photographic maps
- Google and Bing aerial data maps
- Public Rights of Way
- Magic interactive GIS dataset

3.2 Landscape character

Landscape character is what makes an area unique. It is defined as “a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse”. The parish is covered by a number of assessments from a national to local scale.

3.2.1 National Character Area

Natural England are responsible for the National Character Area (NCA) profiles in England, of which there are 159. These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

At a national level the site lies within the:

3.2.2 National Character Area Profile: 97. Arden.

Arden comprises farmland and former wood-pasture lying to the south and east of Birmingham, including part of the West Midlands conurbation. Traditionally regarded as the land lying between the River Tame and the River Avon in Warwickshire, the Arden landscape also extends into north Worcestershire to abut the Severn and Avon Vales. This NCA has higher ground to the west, the Clent and Lickey Hills and to the east, the Nuneaton ridge. The landscape of the lower lying central area is gently

rolling with small fragmented semi-natural and ancient woodlands. Mature oaks set in hedgerows, distinctive field boundaries, historic parklands and narrow river corridors are key features, all on the doorstep of a heavily urbanised area.

Land use throughout the area is mainly, residential, agricultural and industrial including coal mining, which is still active in the north-east of the NCA. Numerous transport corridors; road, rail, air and canal run through the area. There is likely to be increased development and greater pressure upon the existing infrastructure, particularly around Birmingham, Coventry and the main towns. This pressure could lead to the creation of new green infrastructure linking the urban areas out into the more rural areas. This NCA is among the most geologically diverse. This has had a strong impact on the landscape’s character and development and is further reflected in the range of locally and nationally important geological assets across the NCA. There are also many local biodiversity assets and strong cultural links with William Shakespeare and his ‘Forest of Arden’.

3.2.3 Landscape Character Type

At County level, the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance document, August 2012, has been produced with an accompanying technical handbook (August 2013). Together, these two documents, in association with the accompanying website (www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca including interactive maps) comprise the Landscape Character Assessment resource for Worcestershire.

This Supplementary Guidance sets out the latest thinking behind the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment which was originally carried out between January 1997 and January 1999.

Landscape Character Types (LCT’s) are a generic classification for landscape character and may occur anywhere in the country where the same combinations of physical and cultural landscape attributes are found. Catshill and Marlbrook are identified in the Worcestershire Landscape Character guidance, 2012, as lying within two different landscape character types:

- **Catshill** - Principal Settled Farmlands
- **Lower Marlbrook** - Enclosed Commons

See Figure 3.2 for the boundaries of the two LCT’s.

3.2.4 Principal Settled Farmlands

These are small to medium-scale, settled agricultural landscapes of scattered farms, relic commons and clusters of wayside dwellings. These

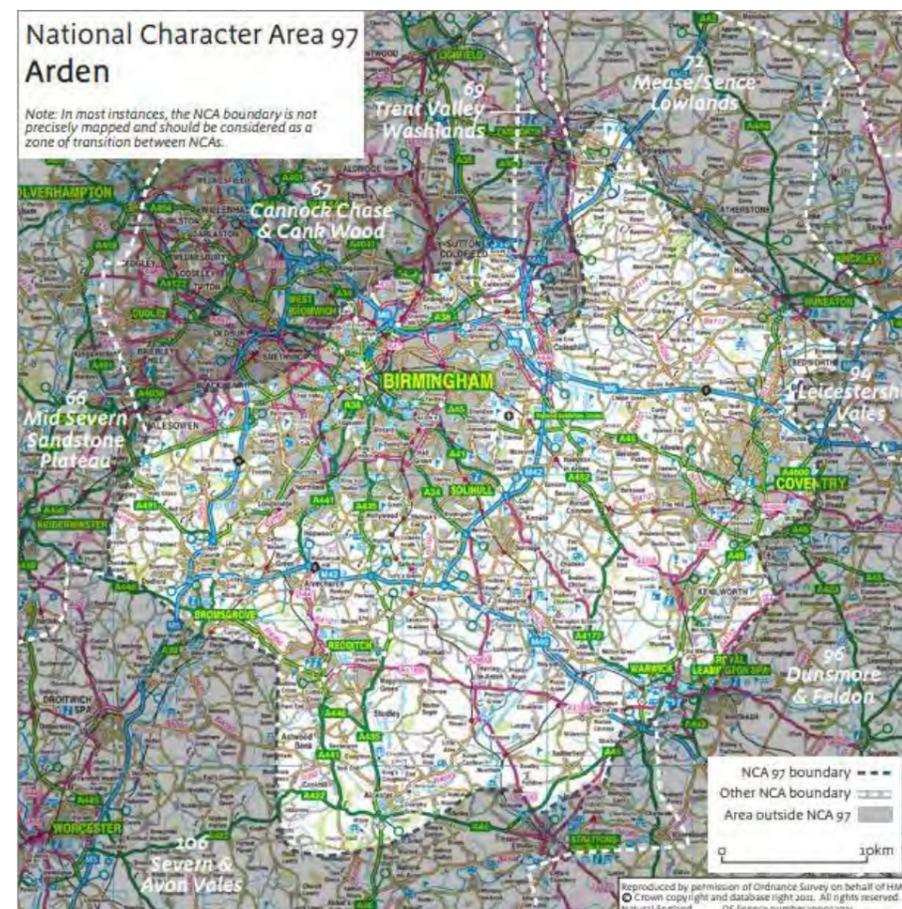


Figure 3.1 National Character Profile: 97. Arden

buildings are linked by a network of narrow, winding lanes which nestle within a matrix of hedged fields. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees and groups of trees around dwellings. The land is primarily one of mixed farming.

Key Characteristics

- Primary
 - Hedgerow boundaries to fields
 - Moderate-to-high density settlement pattern of farmsteads and rural dwellings dispersed throughout the area
- Secondary
 - Mixed farming land use
 - Rolling lowland with occasional steep-sided hills and escarpments
- Tertiary
 - Irregular enclosure pattern of small and medium-sized fields
 - Scattered hedgerow trees

3.2.5 Enclosed Commons

A landscape of very similar character to the Sandstone Estatelands, with the same ordered pattern of large fields of regular outline, straight roads and estate plantations. It is an open, formal landscape with a visual clarity primarily defined by the straightness of the field boundaries, patterns that have arisen as a result of late enclosure from former waste and woodland.

Key Characteristics

- Primary
 - Hedgerow boundaries to fields
 - Planned enclosure pattern of straight boundaries and roads
- Secondary
 - Pastoral land use
 - Planned woodland character
 - Woodland pattern of discrete blocks
- Tertiary
 - Gently rolling topography
 - Open farmland landscape
 - Impoverished soils
 - Dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads and scattered way- side dwellings

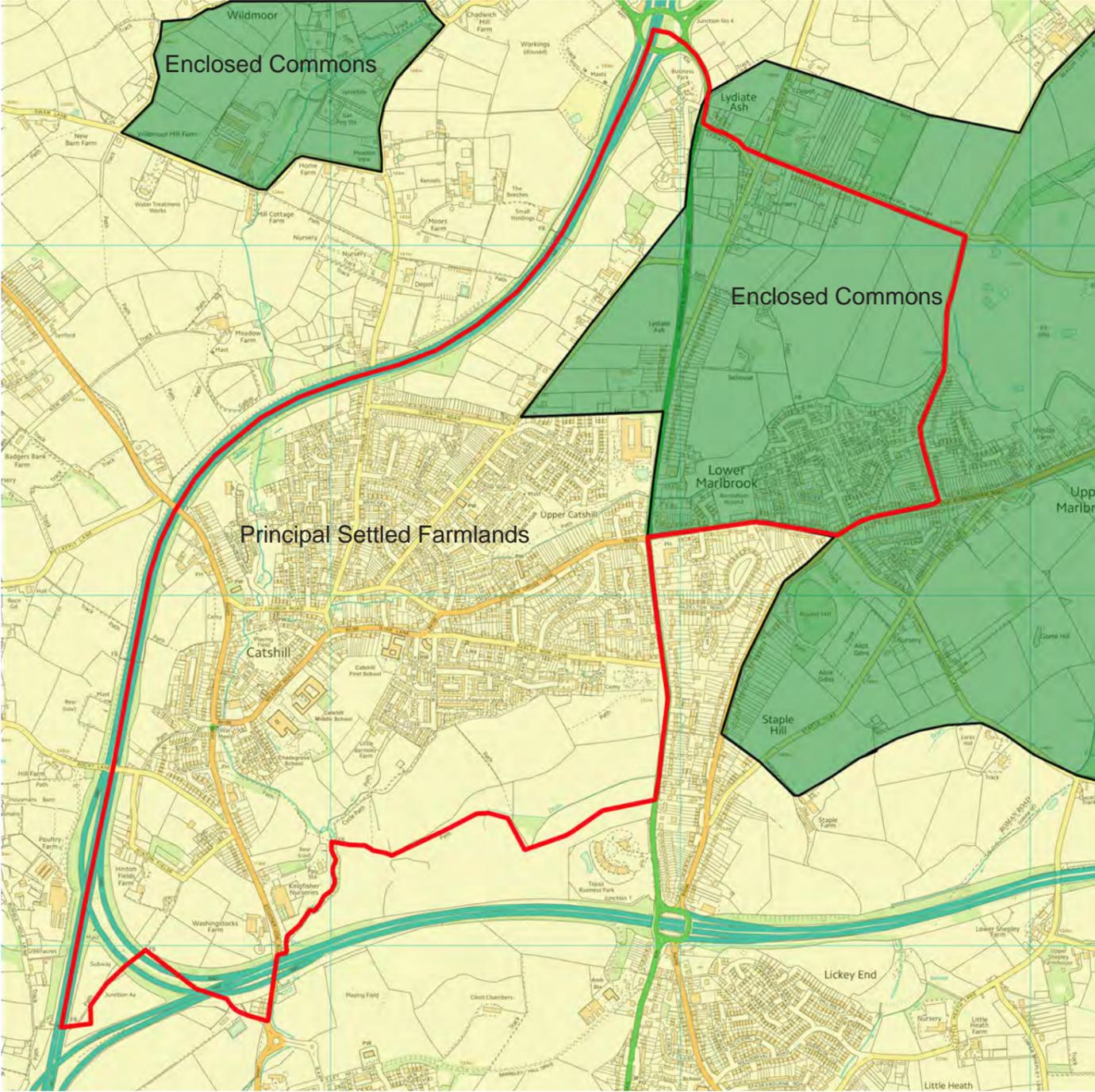


Figure 3.2 Landscape Character Types for Casthill and Marlbrook Parish

3.2.5 Landscape Description Unit - LDU MW127 Catshill Principal Settled Farmlands

In some areas LCT's are further broken down into Landscape Description Units (LDUs) that are a representation of a Landscape Type in a specific location. LDUs are the building blocks of the Landscape Character Assessment and are determined by analysing maps of geology, topography, soils, tree cover character, land use and settlement pattern.

Catshill has a LDU - MW127 Catshill Principal Settled Farmlands.

This is described as an area of soft rock sandstone with impoverished sandy soils and an intermediate, rolling topography. The settlement pattern is one of farmsteads and strings of wayside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal and a small to medium scale field pattern. The land use is mixed farming and the tree cover comprises thinly scattered hedgerow and stream side trees together with groups of trees associated with settlements.

- elm prominent in hedgerows
- thorn hedges associated with enclosed commons
- red brick building style
- tree groups around settlement
- dense streamline tree cover
- predominately mixed farming, locally pastoral

Condition (updated 2011)

- moderate intensity land use with declining field pattern in places fragmented with boundaries in poor condition
- lack of hedgerow trees
- localised intermittent stream tree lines
- localised impact of urban development
- moderate widespread impact of new development at times coalescing into ribbon development
- localised high impact of roads
- widespread low impact of amenity land use of horse paddocks and associated structures
- localised moderate impact of mineral extraction

3.3 Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

PRoW's include footpaths, bridleways, national cycle-ways and trails, and some canal towpaths. These are rights of way on which the public have a legally-protected right to pass.

There are a range of PRoW's that run through the parish and lead beyond to the surrounding neighbouring area/countryside. The majority of these are footpaths with a few bridleways.

There is also a circular walk that runs from the Church on Stourbridge Road westwards over the M5 providing a linked up circular walk through the countryside to Dodford and Bournheath.

A Sustrans National Cycle Network route runs through the parish north to south. This runs on-road from Lydiate Ash, down Woodrow Lane, Green Lane and Milton Road where it then goes off-road onto a traffic-free route past Kingfisher Nurseries and across the M42 connecting up to the northern edge of Bromsgrove.

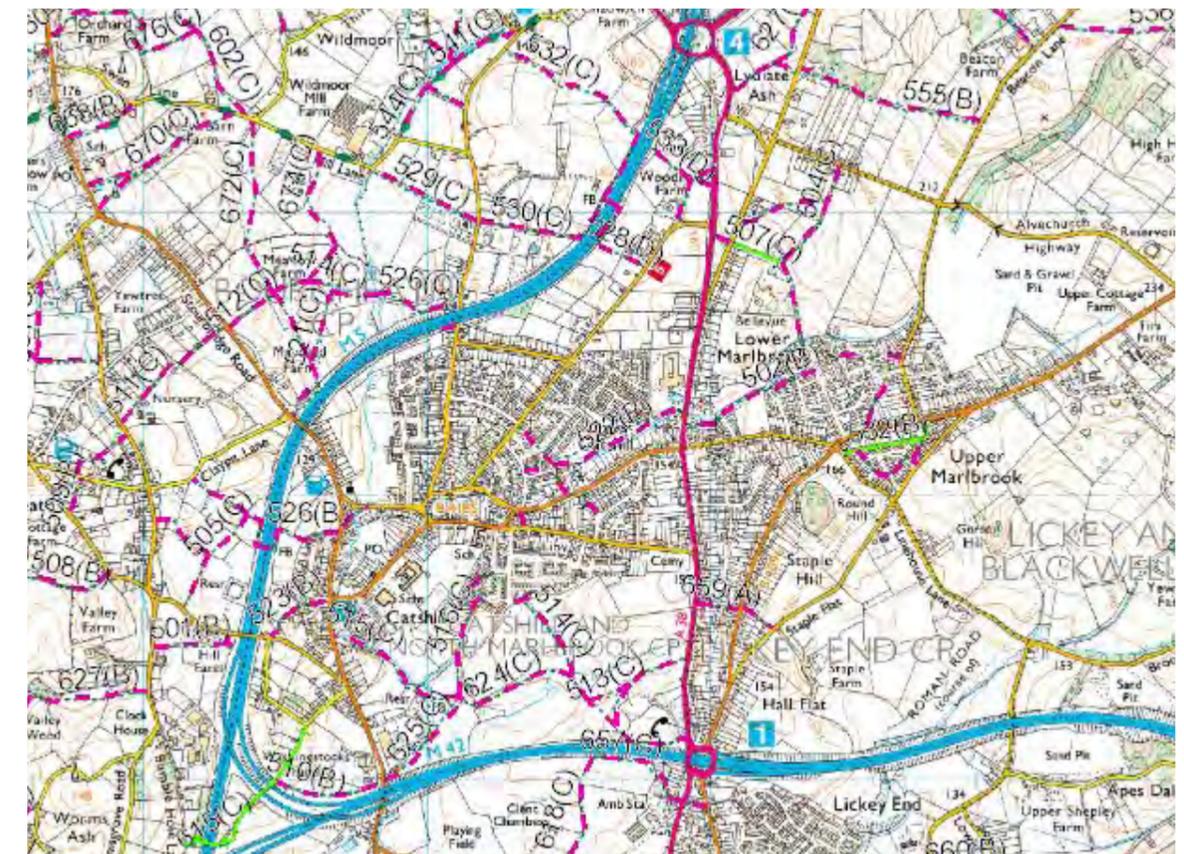
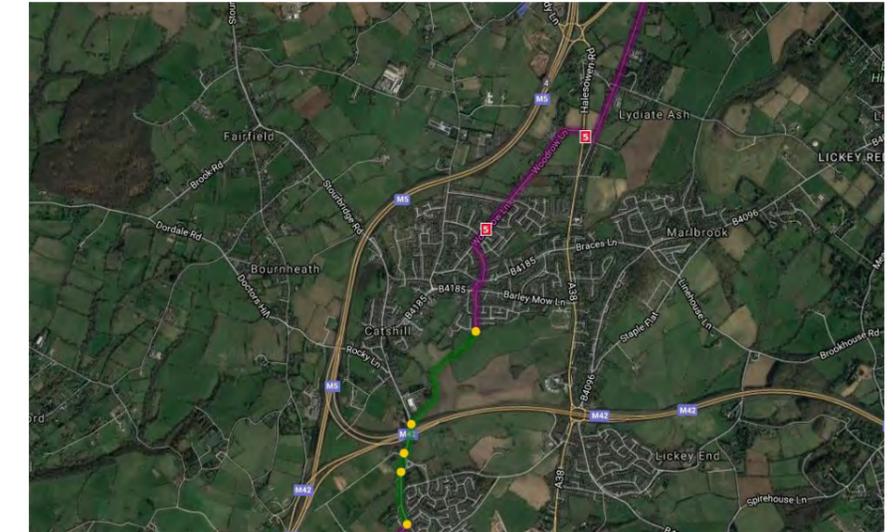


Figure 3.4 Public Rights of Way (source: Worcestershire County Council)

3.4 Landscape Planning, Heritage and Nature Conservation Designations

All land outside the existing settlement boundary of Catshill and Marlbrook Parish lie within Green Belt. Other than this there are no landscape planning designations associated with the parish.

There are no statutory or non-statutory areas of nature conservation value within the parish.

There are limited heritage assets associated with the parish. There are four listed buildings:

- Christ Church - Grade II
- Catshill and North Marlbrook war memorial - Grade II
- Lydiate Ash House - Grade II
- Gate Piers east of No 61, Lydiate Ash - Grade II

Listed Building status is a statutory designation, where a building has been deemed to be of 'special architectural or historic interest'.

3.5 Green Belt

As shown on Figure 3.5, all undeveloped areas within the parish are designated as Green Belt. A strategic Green Belt review is currently underway by the local planning authorities for the West Midlands and so it has not been considered as part of this assessment.

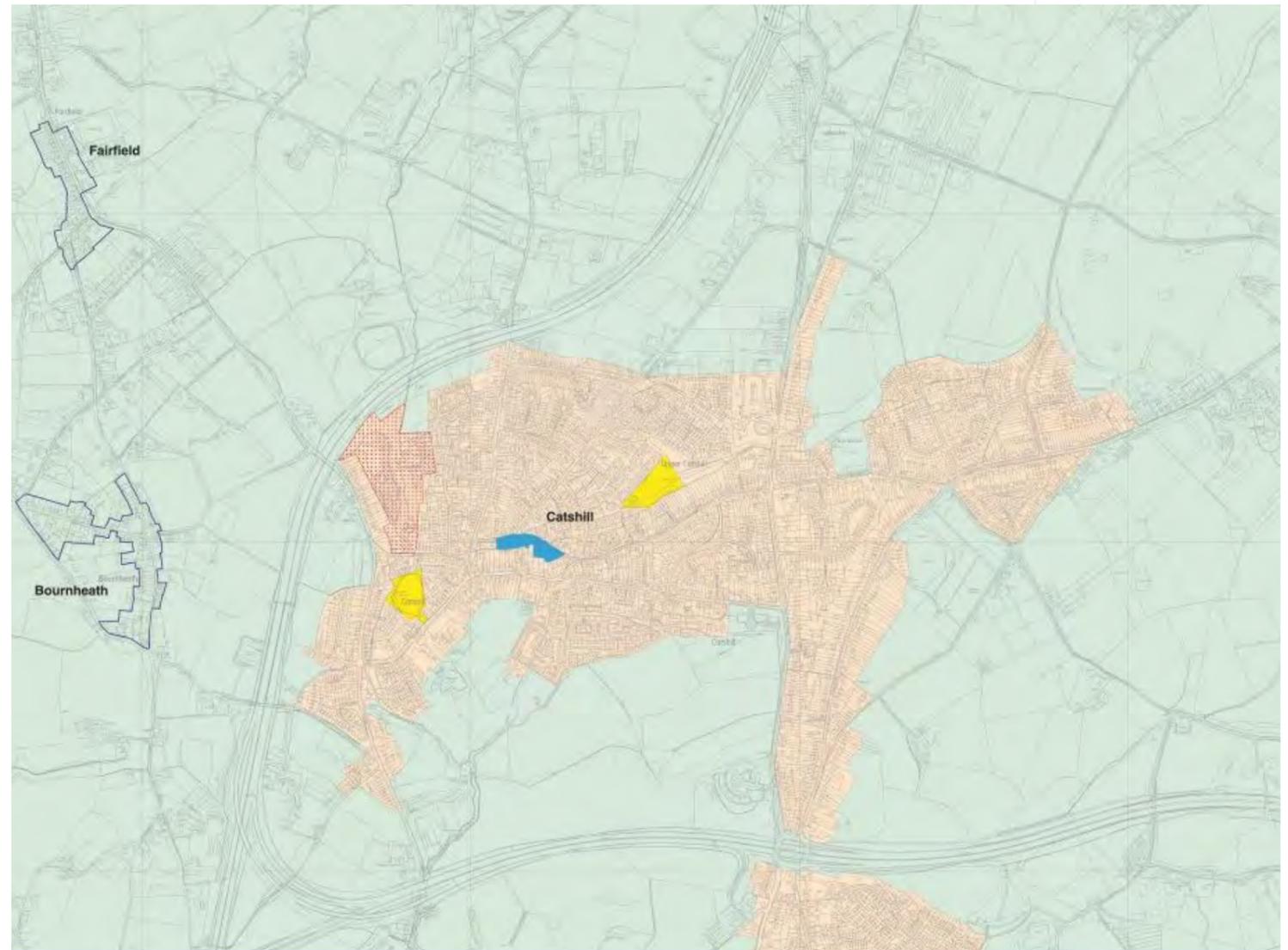


Figure 3.5 Bromsgrove District Council Proposals Map

4.0 Local Landscape Character Area Assessment

4.1 Summary of the Local Landscape Character Area Assessment

In order to fully understand the landscape character setting of the parish a detailed assessment of the local landscape character was carried out. Both rural and urban landscape characteristics have been considered.

Figure 4.1 Local Landscape Character Areas shows the location of these. A total of 27 character areas have been identified and surveyed.

There are certain LLCA's which are wholly built up and offer no capacity for further development. Detailed descriptions of these areas are appended in Appendix A .

4.2 LLCA's with Capacity to Accept Development

A plan showing the LLCA's that have been assessed for their Capacity to Accept Development are shown overleaf on Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3.

These are:

- LLCA 1
- LLCA 2
- LLCA 3
- LLCA 4
- LLCA 5
- LLCA 6
- LLCA 21
- LLCA 24
- LLCA 25
- LLCA 27

A detailed assessment of each of these LLCA's are set out on in this section.

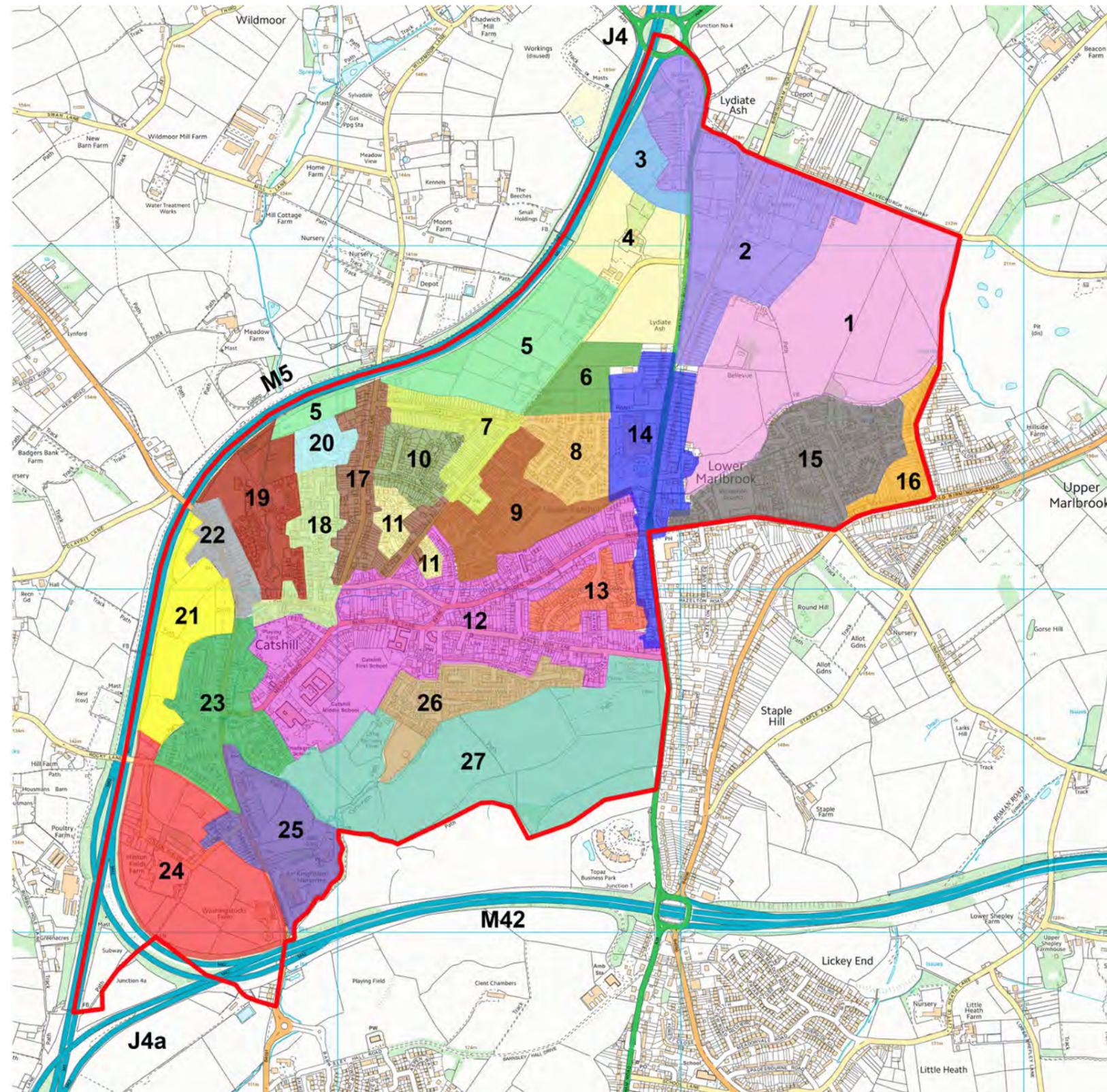


Figure 4.1 Local Parish Character Areas

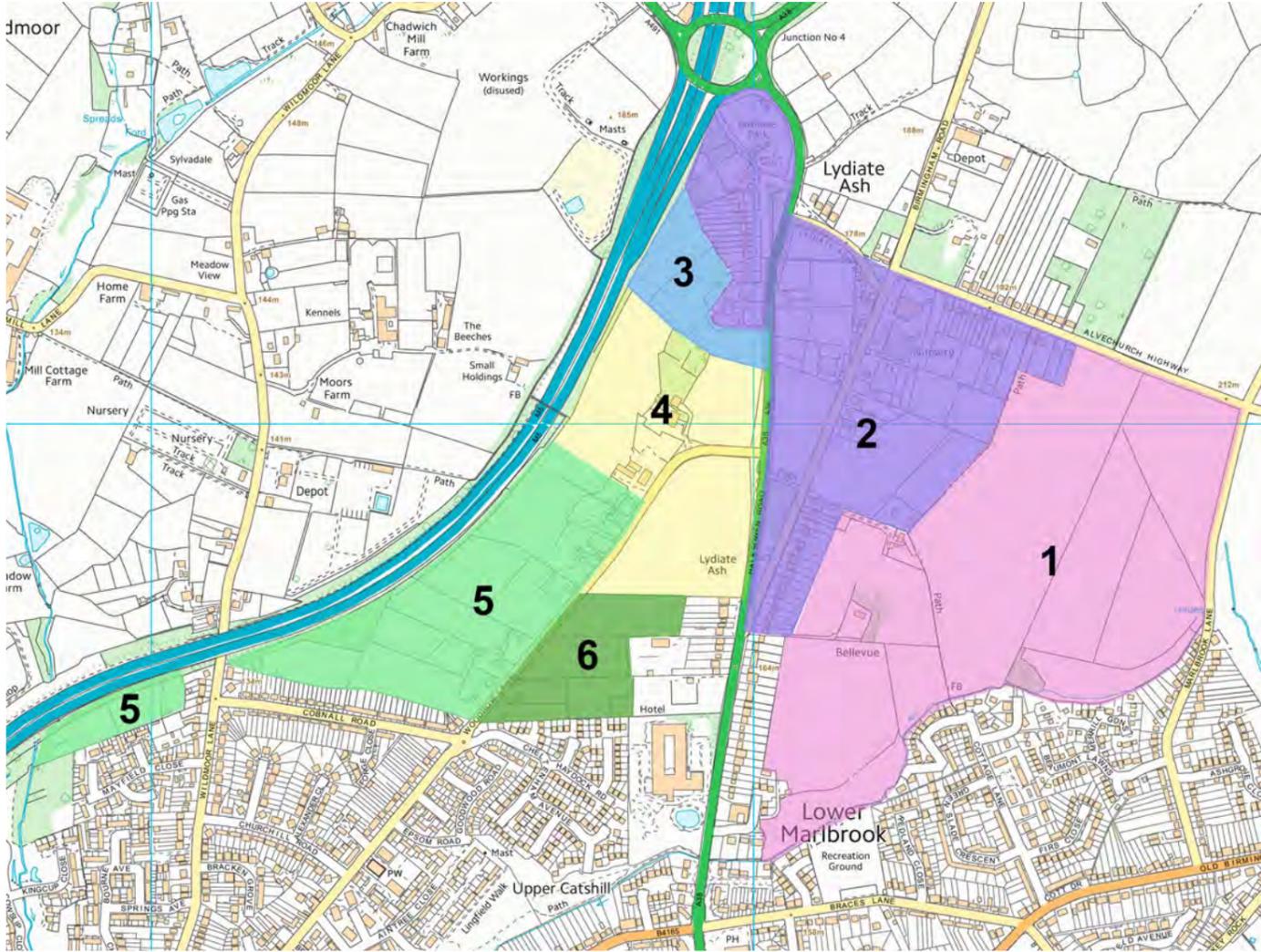


Figure 4.2 LLCA's in the northern part of C+M parish with Capacity to Accept Development

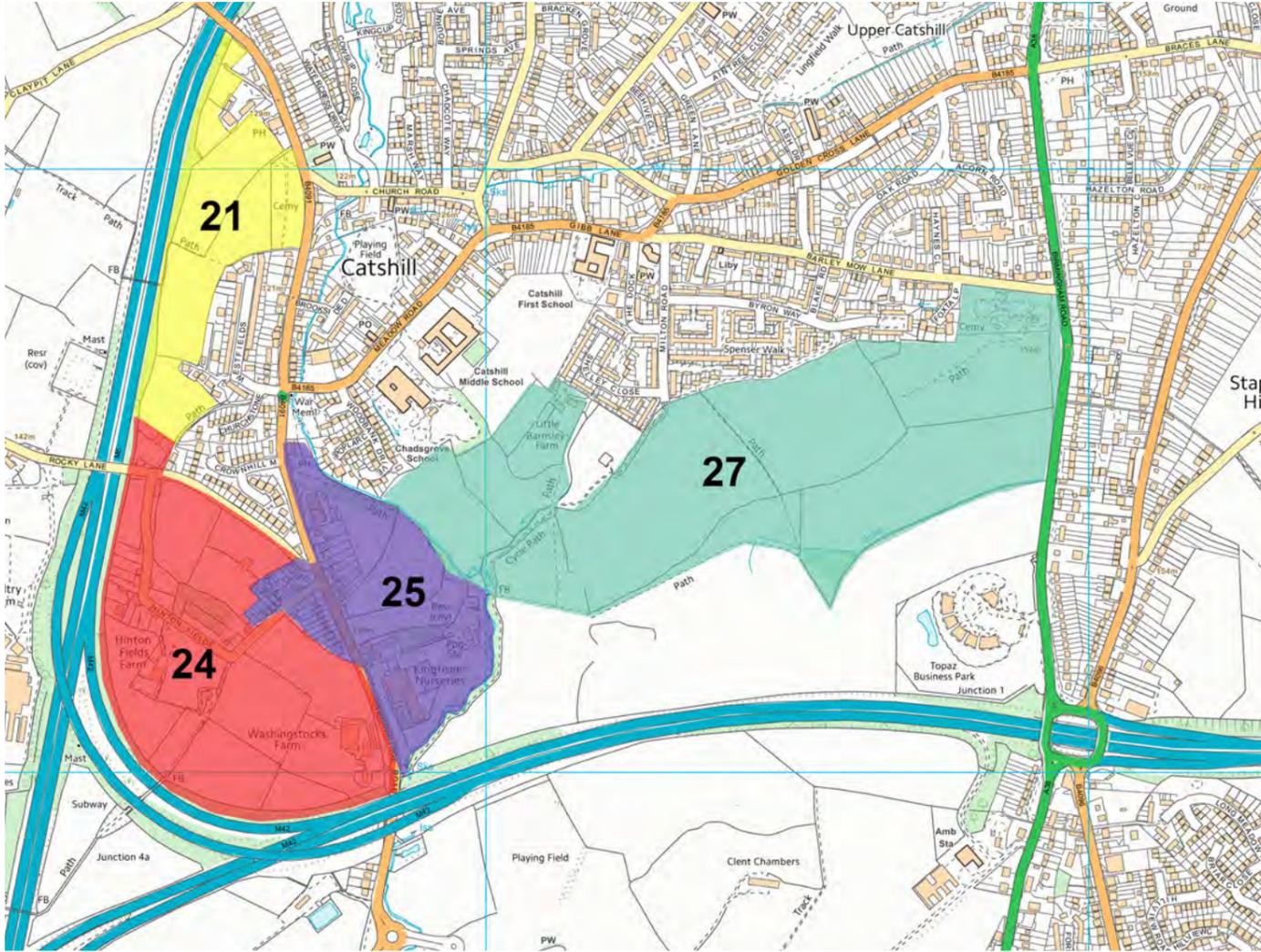


Figure 4.3 LLCA's in the southern part of C+M parish with Capacity to Accept Development

Local Landscape Character Area - 1

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Arable

Elements and Features: Large scale fields enclosed by med/high hedgerows containing occasional mature trees. Ground slopes down from north to south with undulations. Lanes to north and east lined with mature trees.

Vegetation: Main species of trees and hedgerows - Oak, elder, holly, native hedgerows.

Built Form: No built form.

Communication: PRow's, bordered on two sides by lanes.

Hydrology: Stream along southern boundary.

Public Amenity: PRow network.

Context and Function: Predominantly rural farmland.

Visual: Views within the LLCA – The northern part is the highest in the parish with distant open views looking south over the urban settlement of Lower Marlbrook. Good inter-visibility with the landscape beyond. Partial screening from undulating land form and hedgerows defining field boundaries. Open views of LLCA from PRow.

Landscape Character: Rural quality, rolling land form is attractive and distant views possible. Reasonably tranquil, although aware of M5 noise in the distance. Views to east and south. Boundaries - Strong; hedgerows, with some post and rail & post and wire. Vegetation – hedgerows and occasional mature hedgerow oak tree (good quality). Few detractive elements - power/communication lines, rear view of bungalows with white plastic conservatories within residential area along southern boundary, quiet hum of motorway.

Condition and Quality: Good condition well managed farmland with few detractors.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): High
High local value, un-designated landscape with common place elements in good condition. Moderately tranquil with few detracting elements. PRow well used by local walkers. Has a high susceptibility to change.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium
Users of the PRow running length of LLCA will have an interest in the view with a prolonged viewing opportunities and a moderate value placed upon the view. Elevated with good inter-visibility beyond.
Overall Capacity: Low / Medium
Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRow could be retained although the agricultural land use would be lost. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Major as there would be a noticeable change to a large proportion of the view. It is assessed that the area has a Low / Medium Capacity for Development.

Local Landscape Character Area - 2

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Arable, residential, small holdings, plant nursery.

Elements and Features: Small field sizes bounded by medium hedgerows with frequent mature trees, grass verges, mature street trees.

Vegetation: Ash, oak, sycamore, holly, native hedgerow. Small wet woodland at intersection of A38 and Birmingham Road.

Built Form: Victorian/30's large semi-detached and detached, large detached 2000's, glass houses.

Communication: A38, lanes, tracks, PRow,

Hydrology: Stream/field drain to the north,

Public Amenity: PRow network leading to open countryside.

Context and Function: Low density housing surrounded by small fields on the urban fringe.

Visual: The most open and visible aspect of the LLCA is the field east of the Birmingham Road in the centre of the character area. A public right of way runs along it's southern boundary and users would have unobstructed views from it looking north. Boundaries to the north and east are hedgerows, some of which are evergreen. Opposite, a small field sandwiched between the A38 and Birmingham Road is entirely enclosed by hedgerow. Glimpses into this field are possible from the PRow running along it's southern boundary. Lanes and roads to the north of the LLCA are relatively well-contained mainly by roadside vegetation although there is the occasional glimpse into the small fields from Lydiate Ash Road.

Landscape Character: Large houses generally set well back in their plots creating a sense of space and openness. Numerous small fields for grazing back onto linear groups of housing. Small cluster of commercial activity including a business park and plant nursery. Mixed land use results in a range of boundaries, generally in good condition, including native hedgerows, post and rail fencing, brick walls associated with recent development and ornamental hedgerows.

Condition and Quality: Good condition..



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium

Undeveloped parts are of Low to Moderate value, undesignated landscape with common place elements in good condition. Two small fields with a PRow running through is well used by local walkers. Has a moderate susceptibility to change.

Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium

Of the undeveloped fields, 2 are well screened and 1 is open to the road and PRow. Views experienced are for a short period. Limited local visibility.

Overall Capacity: Medium / High

Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRow could be retained although the agricultural land use would be lost. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Minor due to the existing screening and context of linear built form fronting roads. New built form east of Birmingham Road should front the road following the existing pattern. New built form west of Birmingham Road should be low density and contained by retention of existing mature boundary hedgerows. It is assessed that the area has a Medium / High Capacity for Development.

Local Landscape Character Area - 3

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Pasture land

Elements and Features: Small scale fields enclosed by med/high hedgerows. Gentle ground undulation. Mature trees in hedgerows, small copses with some high quality mature trees as part of copse. Discrete area of land.

Vegetation: Numerous mature holly hedgerows and mixed native. Oak, Scots pine, elder, beech trees. Strong green infrastructure.

Built Form: None

Communication: PRow's, adjacent to M5 close to junc 4, and A38

Hydrology: none evident

Public Amenity: PRow network

Context and Function: Rural farmland, contained, small-scale grazing fields. Rural feel although noise of M5 is strong and intrudes upon the setting.

Visual: Visibility beyond LLCA from western fields looking south. Limited distant view of settlement to south but not an obvious visual connection to the village. Some visual connection to rear properties of Lydiate Ash.

Landscape Character: Limited tranquillity due to the proximity of the M5. Rural fringe. Visibility beyond LLCA from western fields looking south. Limited distant view of settlement to south but not an obvious visual connection to the village. The rest of the LLCA is visually well-contained. Strong boundaries to the periphery of the LLCA of mature hedges often with post and rail fencing; boundaries separating fields within are not as strong. Gaps in places and some poor condition post and barbed wire fencing. Vegetation - Oak, Scots pine, elder, beech as well as site of evergreen species within rear gardens along the northern boundary. Detractive elements - Telegraph poles and communication lines, noise of M5 + glimpses of motorway infrastructure such as lights and signage (likely to be winter only)

Condition and Quality: Moderate to good condition, some fencing needs attention.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium
Low to Moderate value, un-designated landscape with common place elements in good to fair condition. Some detracting elements. PRow appears occasionally used. Has a low / moderate susceptibility to change.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Low
Reasonably well contained. Visibility from infrequently used PRow running through area, but limited influence. Viewer with low to moderate susceptibility to change.
Overall Capacity: Medium / High
This is a discreet LLCA with visual connections to Lydiate Ash. Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRow could be retained and the M5 has an influence on its limited tranquillity. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Moderate as there would be a noticeable change to a proportion of the view. It is assessed that the area has a Medium / High Capacity for Development.

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands and Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Arable

Elements and Features: Medium sized fields enclosed by medium and high hedgerows. Ground gently undulates with high spots in the north western most field and south eastern corner of the LLCA. Mature trees in hedgerows, and a small copse. Some ornamental gardens associated with a limited number of individual houses. One single specimen field tree.

Vegetation: Main species - Oak, beech, silver birch trees, native hedgerow - hawthorn. Notable quantity of holly hedges, grass verges adjacent to lane.

Built Form: Large red brick pre-war residential property, small farmstead with associated commercial activities, concrete block construction

Communication: M5 and A38, lane and PRow

Hydrology: Field drains

Public Amenity: PRow network

Context and Function: Agricultural land on the urban fringe. Existing surrounding areas of housing are visible and the place is influenced by the surrounding road network. Provides separation between Catshill and Lydiate Ash to the west of the A38.

Visual: Due to slight land rise, the fields are clearly visible from the surrounding roads and PRow. and offer semi-rural views to the receptors. Screening along western boundary by planting alongside M5, a copse and hedgerows some of which are tall evergreen. Attractive agricultural landscape although the influence of the M5, A38, light columns and vehicles is ever present.

Landscape Character: Arable land use, size of fields, hedgerows, and gentle undulation inform the character. Individual houses limited in number and set back within large plots. Attractive elements – hedgerows, copse. Not tranquil, constant hum of M5 and busy A38. Rural fringe. Generally short distance views due to contained nature except for a single middle to long distance view looking south towards Catshill. Boundaries – reasonably strong; hedgerows and some post and rail/wire. Mature trees in hedgerows and a small copse separating two of the fields. Detractors include; M5, telegraph poles & lines, glimpse into the commercial premises off Woodrow Lane (concrete block, corrugated sheds).

Condition and Quality: Moderate to good condition, some gaps in hedgerows.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Low / Medium

Low to Moderate value, un-designated landscape with common place elements in good condition. Amenity value providing semi rural setting to the village/parish. Some detracting elements. PRow occasionally used. Has a low/moderate susceptibility to change.

Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium

Any development on the field east of Woodrow Lane would be prominent approaching Catshill from the A38/Woodrow Lane junction. Visible from users of the PRow but no sense of tranquillity and road network are very present and visible. Viewer with low to moderate susceptibility to change.

Overall Capacity: Medium

Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRow could be retained although the land-use would be permanently altered. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Moderate as there would be a noticeable change to a large proportion of the view. It is assessed that the area has a Medium Capacity for Development.

Local Landscape Character Area - 5

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Scattered individual residential properties, pasture land, small holdings (inc small xmas tree plantation)

Elements and Features: Small fields enclosed predominantly by medium height hedgerows. Small undulations, southern fields are quite flat. Occasional hedgerow tree, numerous hedgerows, linear buffer planting to M5.

Vegetation: Oak, holly, silver birch, hawthorn, native mix shrub belt. Small copse south west of site adjacent to M5.

Built Form: Individual residential properties including bungalow and large houses. Typically red brick but varying in style and age.

Communication: M5, A38, lane, PRoW to north.

Hydrology: Field ditches

Public Amenity: PRoW used occasionally

Context and Function: Rural fringe. Small scale agricultural activity. Provides a green buffer to the M5

Visual: Lower in elevation than LLCA 4 & 6 results in most views well contained. Occasional long distance view from localised high spots. Screening is provided by the planting on the motorway embankment and field hedgerows, although glimpses of motorway vehicles are possible in winter. Views south to the boundary include a row of houses within the neighbouring LLCA although they are partially obscured by intervening field hedgerows. Some openings within the hedgerow along the east of the site allow glimpsed views into adjacent fields.

Landscape Character: The M5 is a major influence/prominent element adjacent to the LLCA. The land use, scale of field and hedgerows are the main components contributing to character. Boundaries – strong, generally well-managed hedgerows. Detractive elements; Some properties (limited no.) with disused vehicles, sheds & outbuildings, proximity of M5.

Condition and Quality: Moderate condition for the land use. Hedges and gates generally well maintained.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Low
Low value with no designations, unlikely to be the reason for the visit. The landscape elements are common place and in fair condition but easily replaceable. The landscape is of low tranquillity. Low susceptibility to change.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Low
Limited local visibility mainly from houses backing onto it providing a semi-rural backdrop. Views from PRoW in the north are limited and do not extend over the whole of the LLCA.
Overall Capacity: Medium / High
Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as there would be a clear change to the baseline characteristics although elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRoW could be retained. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Minor to Moderate as there would be a noticeable change to a proportion of some views. It is assessed that the area has a Medium / High Capacity for Development.

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Pasture land, unused, small holding

Elements and Features: Small scale fields with medium high hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees. Topography slopes down from east to west

Vegetation: Native hedgerows. Hawthorn, holly, elder.

Built Form: Single residential dwelling, set back and associated with field in which it sits. White painted render. Other outbuildings, carports/sm stable like structures.

Communication: Lane

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Discrete parcel bound on two sides by existing residential development. Woodrow Lane forms western boundary. Fields accessible from Woodrow Lane through 5 bar metal gate.

Visual: Views well contained from within the fields due to strong hedgerows and a ridge line along the northern boundary. No distance views. Visually connected to the northern part of Upper Catshill. Limited visibility from adjacent residential properties

Landscape Character: Fields slope gradually from south west up to the ridge line, separated by mature hedgerows. Visual connection to adjacent red brick housing estate contribute most to LLCA. Suburban fringe. Boundaries –strong hedgerows. Detractive elements; telegraph poles and lines; vehicles stored/being repaired in fields

Condition and Quality: Some fields overgrown/unused in a poor state. Small holding with vehicles stored in small open field.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Low
Low value landscape with few features of importance and little amenity value. Hedgerows and landform contain the site. Rank grassland in poor condition.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Low
Limited local visibility and the area has no important visual function. Visual receptors will have a low susceptibility to change.
Overall Capacity: High
Magnitude of landscape change would be Minor as elements such as hedgerows could be retained. Magnitude of visual change would be Minor to Moderate, although permanent, the change to the limited view of residents in the neighbouring area would be small. It is assessed that the area has a High Capacity for Development.

Local Landscape Character Area -21

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Pasture and cemetery

Elements and Features: Small sized fields with undulating topography. Bounded to the west by the M5 and its associated embankment planting. Treed hedgerows within the character area.

Vegetation: Linear belts and hedgerows. Beech, silver birch, hawthorn, holly, yew & conifers (cemetery)

Built Form: None

Communication: PRoW, M5 adjacent

Hydrology: None evident

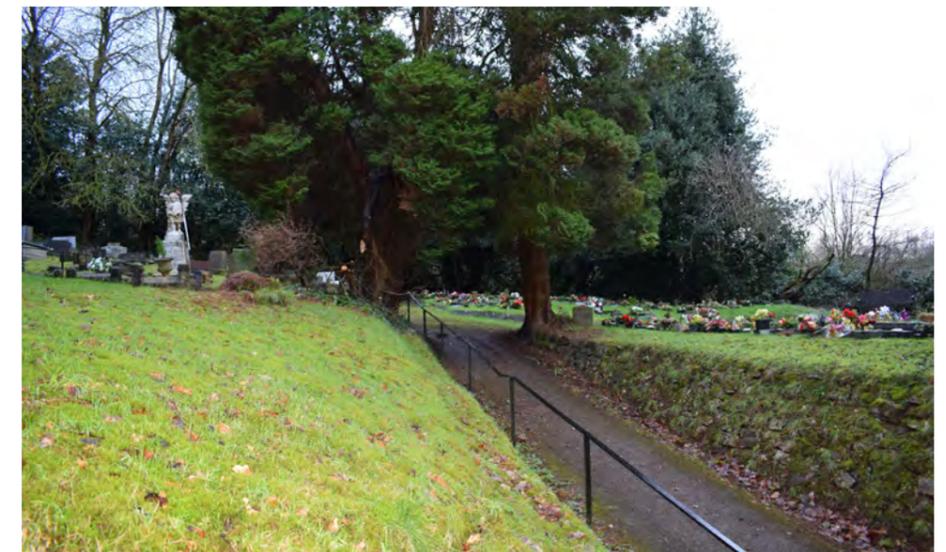
Public Amenity: PRoW

Context and Function: A small enclosed cemetery and narrow fields used as pasture between the M5 and residential development.

Visual: Elevated panoramic views from public right of way looking north east across Catshill. Intervening vegetation in the foreground partially obscures some of this view. Views west are partially obscured by the vegetation belt adjacent to the M5, however it is possible to see some motorway infrastructure in winter months. Views into site from Motorway bridge. The cemetery is well-screened with limited views in and out and is visually separated from the adjacent road frontage.

Landscape Character: Elevated location consisting of a small enclosed cemetery and narrow fields used as horse grazing acting as a buffer zone between the M5 and residential development. Not tranquil due to noise of M5. Field boundaries are strong and are made up of hedgerows and post and wire fencing in good condition.

Condition and Quality: Generally the LLCA is in moderate to good condition. The on-going maintenance of cemetery has room for improvement.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium
Un-designated landscape, moderately valued locally by users of PRoW and bounding residents. Unremarkable character but some sense of place due to elevated nature with some open views to surrounding landscape and presence of adjacent M5.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium
Users of PRoW have valued long distance views from the elevated site out across the surrounding landscape. Due to the site's elevation and visual exposure, it is likely that development on parts of the site would be highly visible from Catshill to the east and beyond.
Overall Capacity: Medium
Acts a physical green buffer to the M5. This is a narrow area of Moderate landscape value and sensitivity. Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as there would be a clear change to the baseline characteristics although elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRoW could be retained. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Major due to the elevation and visual exposure of the upper areas. However with the retention of the skyline trees that lie outside the boundary to maintain a green skyline it is assessed that the site has a Medium capacity for development.

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Agricultural land (arable and pasture), residential, small holdings on pasture land.

Elements and Features: The topography is high to the west adjacent to the M5 and falls to the south east towards Stourbridge Road. Small enclosed fields on higher ground generally used for grazing by small holdings. Medium sized fields with field hedgerows to the slopes.

Vegetation: Small wooded area on the high ground, embankment planting adjacent to motorway, hedgerows, ornamental garden plants, mature field trees.

Built Form: Large modern agricultural barns, farm houses, pre-war residential properties clustered along narrow rural lane.

Communication: Adjacent to M5, lanes and tracks, PRoW

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: PRoW

Context and Function: Agricultural land on the periphery of the parish contained on two sides by the M5/M42 intersection.

Visual: Distant panoramic views looking east can be experienced from some tracks and lanes at higher elevations. The motorway network is clearly visible as well as the distinctive Topaz Business Park off the A38.

Landscape Character: A semi-rural farmed edge to the village/parish. A large proportion of this LLCA is open, elevated fields used for grazing sheep, with some arable. Hedgerows forming internal field boundaries are generally low resulting in a visual connection with the rural landscape to the east. The motorway influences the character both visually and audibly. The narrow lanes bounded by tree-lined hedgerows and associated rural cottages and houses are attractive and well contained on the higher ground.

Condition and Quality: Land in agricultural use is well-managed. Houses and gardens are of good quality and well-looked after.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium
Moderately valued but no designations. Features present are common but contribute positively and should be retained if development is considered.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium
The sloping nature of the site means any development for housing would likely to be locally visible from the south and east including some residents with limited views and users of the PRoW. The extent of these potential views would need to be considered in detail.

24 - Overall Capacity: Medium
Magnitude of landscape change would be Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRoW could be retained although the land-use would be permanently altered. Development on the fields south of the lane (Hinton Fields) would be to some extent slightly disconnected from the rest of Catshill. It would also be the closest new built form to that at Bromsgrove on the south side of the M42. Magnitude of visual change would be Moderate as there would be a noticeable change to a large proportion of the view.
24a - Overall Capacity: Medium / High
Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRoW could be retained although the land-use would be permanently altered. Development on the fields south of Rocky Lane and east of Hinton Fields would be screened locally by the existing boundary vegetation but may be visible from further away although with careful layout this would not break the skyline when viewed from south-east. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Minor as there would be a noticeable change to a small proportion of the view. It is assessed that the area has a Medium / High Capacity for Development.

Local Landscape Character Area - 25

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential, pasture, plant nursery, pumping station

Elements and Features: Small undulating field for pasture, Battlefield Brook. The land west of the brook sits higher than that to the east and slopes up to the north.

Vegetation: Naturalised stream-side vegetation, ornamental garden planting, evergreen screening hedges, small woodland copse, field hedgerows.

Built Form: Pre 1880's public house, 1940's large detached houses, 1970's detached housing, semi-permanent horticultural growing structure.

Communication: B road, PRow, access road

Hydrology: Battlefield Brook running length of eastern and southern boundary

Public Amenity: PRow

Context and Function: Edge of the urban settlement, low residential development surrounded by commercial agricultural land for sheep grazing and smaller fields for grazing horses.

Visual: PRow runs along eastern boundary adjacent to brook so views from numerous locations to some parts of the site. View into the undeveloped areas from Stourbridge Road are limited by existing dwellings and hedgerows.

Landscape Character: A ribbon pattern of development, predominantly residential facing onto Stourbridge Road. Undulating small pasture fields.

Condition and Quality: Generally the LLCA is in moderate to good condition.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium
Un-designated landscape with commonplace landscape elements in a fair to good condition. The undeveloped areas are of low to moderate value with little amenity value.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): Medium
The undeveloped fields east of Stourbridge Road are bound by mature hedgerows but development would be partially visible from the road due to the elevation of the land. It would be viewed in places from the PRow along the eastern boundary. Partial views of potential development on the higher of the sloping fields may be possible from the PRow to the east in open fields. However, this would not be extensive and would be partially screened by intervening vegetation. Local residents may have a limited view of any proposed residential development.
Overall Capacity: Medium / High
This is a discrete parcel of land that, other than a PRow running along it's edge, has a limited landscape value attached to it. Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as there would be a clear change to the baseline characteristics although elements such as hedgerows, trees, PRow could be retained. The Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Minor to Moderate as there would be a change to a proportion of some views. It is assessed that this has a Medium / High capacity for development.

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Agricultural - pasture

Elements and Features: Very open with few landscape features. Gently undulating, medium to large sized fields. The border to the north is bound by mature hedgerow with the occasional tree. Other field boundaries within are medium/high hedgerows with occasional mature trees, gappy in places. Land rises from the south-west of the LLCA to a high point close to the cemetery in the north east corner.

Vegetation: Oak, hawthorn, holly. Ornamental planting associated with cemetery.

Built Form: Small brick built structure forming part of the cemetery infrastructure.

Communication: PRow, includes a section of cycleway and also many permissive footpaths - well used by dog walkers.

Hydrology: Stream forming the boundary to smaller fields to the west of the LLCA.

Public Amenity: PRow network, adjacent to public open space

Context and Function: Urban fringe farmland along the southern edge of the parish. Forms part of the Green Belt between Catshill and Bromsgrove.

Visual: Due to the elevation and sloping nature of the site this LLCA is visible from a wide area. It is visible from the motorway to the south and the countryside beyond the motorway. The fields to the east are visible from the existing development along the A38. The residential area immediately north is screened by the mature hedgerow and land form. Distance views from the site are of the Malvern Hills to the southwest. Vegetation on the south side of the M42 provides partial screening to countryside beyond. Clear views of the Topaz Business Park to the south east.

Landscape Character: Although rural in nature as a result of the land use, it is perceived as urban fringe due to the visual connection with existing housing to the east and north east as well as the motorway and associated infrastructure to the south. The area is not tranquil due to the constant hum and sight of vehicles using the motorway.

Condition and Quality: Low quality agricultural land for pasture in fair condition.



Landscape Sensitivity (Landscape Susceptibility + Landscape Value): Medium
Un-designated landscape with no rare features or distinctive elements. It is unremarkable in character but is valued locally as a local amenity green space with many permissive footpaths and a designated PRow.
Visual Sensitivity (Susceptibility to change + Value): High
Users of the PRow and permissive footpaths within the LLCA and residents overlooking this area have a high sensitivity and high susceptibility to change. Even though the site is elevated and sloping, visibility from the Bromsgrove area and PRow south of the M42 may well be limited due to the intervening vegetation either side of the motorway. The views of drivers using the motorway are focussed on the road and therefore have a low value placed upon the view. Residents to the east of the A38 would experience views of any development proposed in the two fields west of the A38.
Overall Capacity: Low / Medium
Magnitude of landscape change is assessed as Moderate as whilst landscape elements such as hedgerows could be retained there would be noticeable alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual qualities of the area. Magnitude of visual change is assessed as Major due to the open nature of the area. Any potential development would need to ensure generous open space and amenity is provided.

5.0 Capacity Assessment Plan

5.1 Summary of the capacity assessment of the parish

In terms of landscape and visual capacity, only the undeveloped areas have been considered. The written rationale and professional judgement documented in Section 4.0 has determined each areas capacity to accept development.

Within the areas identified there are known locations where flooding occurs. These areas have been identified in the Flood Risk and Hydrology report, and will be taken into consideration as part of the strategic overview when considering development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Capacity for Accepting Development	
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Result in a barely perceptible deterioration of landscape character Have a barely perceptible impact on characteristic elements and features of the landscape Barely degrade the sense of place Result in a barely perceptible change in the view, associated with the introduction of uncharacteristic features or elements
MEDIUM/HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not quite fit with the character of the landscape Be at odds with some of the characteristic elements and features of the landscape Detract from the sense of place Cause a limited deterioration to the view of a receptor of medium to high sensitivity that would constitute a noticeable change in the view or would introduce uncharacteristic features or elements into the view; or, an obvious deterioration to the view of low sensitivity.
MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict with the character of the landscape Have an adverse impact on some characteristic elements and features of the landscape Diminish the sense of place Cause an obvious deterioration to the view of a receptor of medium to high sensitivity that would constitute a clear change in the view or introduce a discordant element into the view
LOW/MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be at considerable variance with the character of the landscape Degrade or diminish the integrity of a wide range of characteristic elements and features of the landscape Substantially damage the sense of place Cause a major deterioration to the view of a receptor of high sensitivity that would constitute a total change in the view or introduce a major discordant element into the view
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be at complete variance with the character of the landscape Cause total permanent loss or major alteration to a wide range of characteristic elements and features of the landscape Permanently damage the sense of place Cause a major deterioration to the view of a receptor of very high sensitivity that would constitute a total change in the view and / or introduce a major discordant element into the view

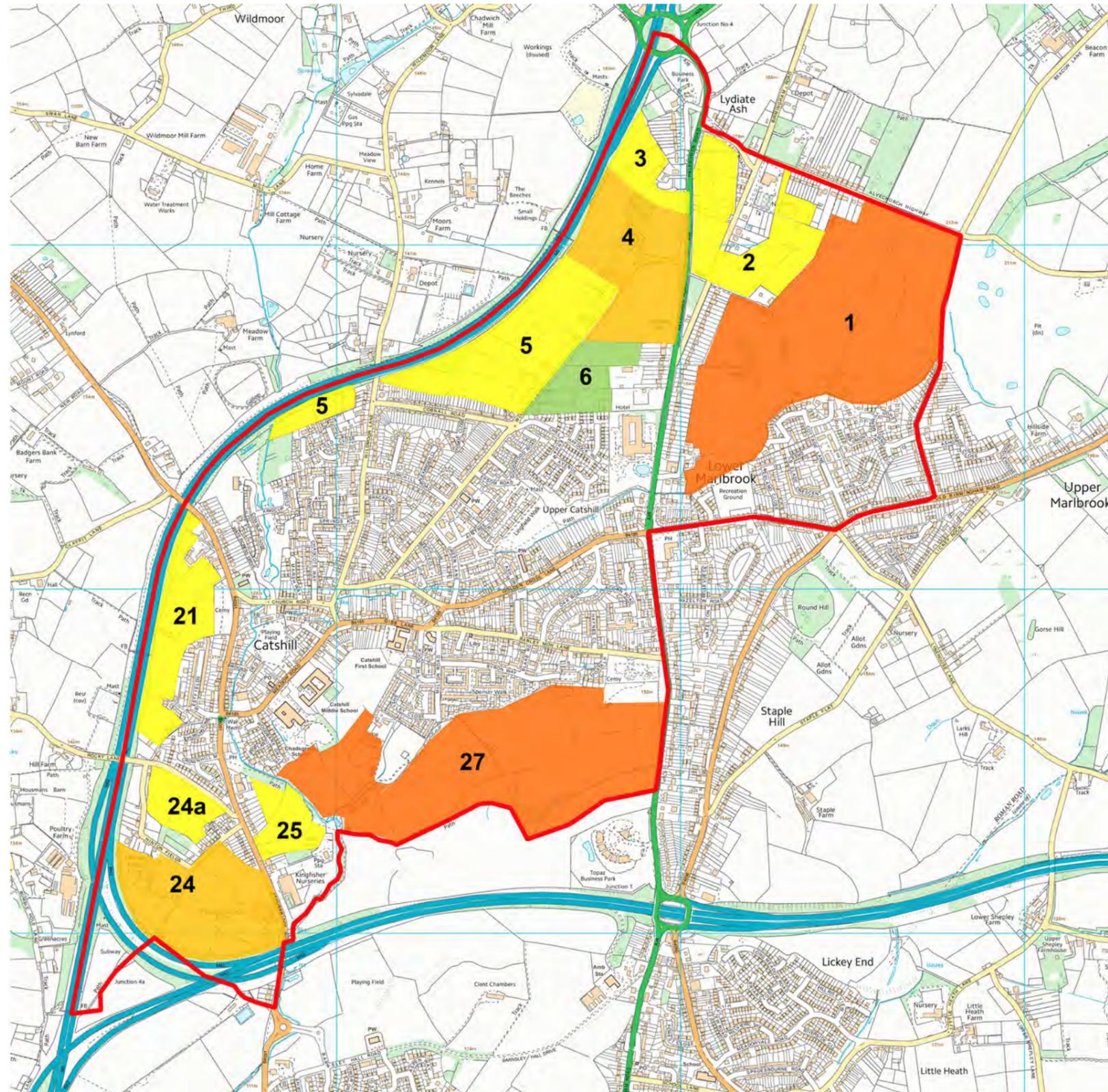


Figure 5.1 Capacity Assessment Plan

Appendix A

Local Landscape Character Areas that are built up with no capacity for development

Local Landscape Character Area - 7

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Ornamental hedgerows to property fronts

Vegetation: Ornamental within gardens and hedges to form boundary

Built Form: 40's/50's white render and red brick housing typically semi detached, pitched roofs, front gardens and drives. Mixed frontages

Communication: Access roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Residential area on a road linking Wildmoor Lane and Woodrow Lane

Visual: Generally limited to the confines of the roads. Framed glimpse out to vegetation south of M5 looking west along Cobnall Road

Landscape Character: Contained residential development, vehicles parked both on and off road. Gardens have evolved to be a mix of hard paved, ornamental planting, garden walls/hedges/fences. A mix of styles and materials. Foot ways to both sides with street lights and telegraph poles. Suburban character, poor sense of place, limited views out.

Condition and Quality: Moderate condition, generally well maintained hedges, fences and properties.



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Open front gardens, some grass verges

Vegetation: Ornamental within gardens

Built Form: 2000's housing estate, light red brick pitched roofs, large predominantly detached with front gardens and drives

Communication: Estate roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: Links to amenity space in adjacent LLCA. Minor green spaces at junctions with occasional ornamental tree and shrub planting

Context and Function: Modern housing estate

Visual: Views in and out of the site are well contained by houses and boundary walls.

Landscape Character: Contained residential development with open front gardens and vehicles parked 'off street'. Red brick walls where rear/side boundaries meet foot ways. Foot ways to both sides with street light. Suburban character, no sense of place or views out.

Condition and Quality: Good condition, well maintained properties and front gardens. Typical housing estate. No distinctive characteristics.



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View

Local Landscape Character Area - 9

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Mix of apartment blocks and small blocks of terraces, public open space, blocks of garages, parking bays

Vegetation: Ornamental within gardens, areas of amenity grass with occasional tree, stream side vegetation. Willow, alder, holly, hawthorn.

Built Form: 70's housing estate, with a consistent brown tile hung cladding and light brown/red brick throughout. Mix of 3 storey apartments and 2 storey house blocks

Communication: Estate roads, paths through public amenity

Hydrology: Stream along south eastern boundary to amenity space

Public Amenity: Green space including play area, open grassed 'kick about'.

Context and Function: Higher density housing estate with recreational area close village centre.

Visual: Some short distance views north east from the amenity space with visual connection to neighbouring residential area. No distance views. View to local shops on Woodrow Lane but no real connection to the heart of the village.

Landscape Character: Numerous blocks of houses front onto public open space with garages and access road to rear. Apartment blocks surrounded by amenity grass with little other planting. Stark in terms of planting. Pedestrian paths link house fronts and apartment blocks. Detractors are numerous blocks of garages, lack of positive frontage to rear access roads, steel palisade fencing.

Condition and Quality: Moderate condition, blocks of garages look untidy and in need of repair.



Local Landscape Character Area - 10

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Wide grass verge to one side

Vegetation: Ornamental within gardens and hedges to some front form boundaries

Built Form: 40's/50's red brick housing typically semi detached, pitched roofs, front gardens and drives

Communication: Access roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Residential area on a road linking Wildmoor Lane and Woodrow Lane

Visual: Generally limited to the confines of the roads. Glimpse of vegetation south of M5 looking west along Church Road.

Landscape Character: Contained residential development, vehicles parked both on and off road. Gardens have evolved to be a mix of hard paved, ornamental planting, garden walls/hedges/fences. A mix of styles and materials. Foot ways to both sides with street light. Suburban character, no sense of place and limited views out.

Condition and Quality: Moderate condition, generally well maintained.



Local Landscape Character Area - 11

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Open front gardens

Vegetation: limited to small areas of ornamental shrubs/hedges within gardens

Built Form: 80's housing estate, light red brick shallow pitched roofs with attached single garages. Predominantly semi-detached.

Communication: Estate roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Modern housing

Visual: Views in and out of the site are well contained by houses

Landscape Character: Contained residential development with open front gardens and vehicles generally parked on drives in front of property. Front gardens /drives have evolved resulting in a mix of materials and boundary treatments. Suburban character, no sense of place and no views out.

Condition and Quality: Moderate condition.



Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential, retail, school & playing fields, church, pubs

Elements and Features: Occasional interesting building, numerous properties with ornamental planting which contribute to a relatively green street.

Vegetation: Generally ornamental within private gardens

Built Form: Mix of 60's/70's with pockets of development from 40's, 90's and 2000's

Communication: Local 'B' roads, lanes, closes, links to A38

Hydrology: Streams

Public Amenity: Playing field, local shops,

Context and Function: Although not particularly centrally focussed, feels like the village core of Catshill. Contains most of the local services in terms of schools, shops, places of worship, pubs etc.

Visual: Visually well contained due to built form along the lanes and access roads as well as boundary vegetation. Occasional glimpsed view of the fields and associated hedgerow and boundary vegetation to the south of Catshill.

Landscape Character: The buildings contribute both positively and negatively to the character depending on age and quality. Housing is an eclectic mix of styles and ages. Predominantly buildings are set back providing a frontage which can accommodate parking and/or ornamental planting. Vegetation in the street scene is predominantly within private gardens with only the occasional street tree where a grass verge provides the space.

Condition and Quality: Generally well maintained properties. Frontage to shops a little cluttered and dominated by macadam and vehicles.



Local Landscape Character Area - 13

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Occasional street tree or within local green, some grass verges

Vegetation: Evergreen ornamental hedges, Acer spp.

Built Form: Mix of 70's/80's/90's red brick housing, semi detached and terrace blocks of 3 & 4, all with pitched roofs.

Communication: Access roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: 1 small play area, small incidental grassed areas with little function

Context and Function: Residential area close to village centre

Visual: Visually well contained due to built form along the access roads as well as garden boundary vegetation.

Landscape Character: Enclosed urban housing area with some local green space providing softness to a predominantly built up area. Vehicles parked both on and off road. Front gardens have evolved to be a mix of hard paved, ornamental planting, garden hedges/fences. A mix of styles and materials. Foot ways to both sides with street light.

Condition and Quality: Mixed quality of built form but generally well maintained.



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View

Local Landscape Character Area - 14

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands and Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Residential, hotel, shops, commercial

Elements and Features: Large frontages to houses and commercial properties, land form falls north to south. Busy A road, well vegetated fronts predominately private.

Vegetation: Ornamental hedges, hawthorn, oak, leylandii, eucalyptus, silver birch. Very few Street trees.

Built Form: Large 1930's houses, glass fronted car sales garage, petrol station single storey red brick hotel/gym/spa. Some more recent infill residential development.

Communication: A38, access roads off A38.

Hydrology: Stream flowing east to west

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Principal 'A' road linking Junction 4 of the M5 to the M42 and settlements of Lickey End and Lowes Hill to the south. A38 separates Catshill and Marlbrook.

Visual: Visually well contained due to built form along the A38 as well as boundary vegetation. Glimpsed distant views looking west at the junction between A38 and Golden Cross Lane where the highway widens.

Landscape Character: Urban character with built form predominantly fronting onto A38. Main detractor is the visual quality of the Golden Cross Lane junction. Combination of shop fronts, carriageway, bus stop, foot way, Toby Carvery car park creates a wide expanse of road and parking with no landscape structure.

Condition and Quality: The residential areas are generally well maintained and of good quality. Commercial and highway environment is of poor quality and average/poor condition.



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View



Image courtesy of Google Street View

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Recreation ground, ornamental garden vegetation. A single local store.

Vegetation: Ornamental, as well as along the stream corridor to the northern boundary.

Built Form: Predominantly 70's with some 60's and 80's, detached and semi detached. Within the overall LLCA there are variations in architectural styles and quality.

Communication: PRow, access roads

Hydrology: Stream along the northern boundary

Public Amenity: Recreation ground, paths leading to wider countryside

Context and Function: Suburban residential area backing onto open countryside.

Visual: Generally well contained due to built form along the access roads as well as garden boundary vegetation. Glimpsed views of the high ground to the north known as the 'Knowle' with identifiable group of trees upon it. This is an important visual relationship to the rural setting of the parish.

Landscape Character: Functional in character. Numerous cul-de-sacs with house frontage large enough to accommodate off road parking and gardens. Limited number of street trees. Limited sense of place with the exception of the glimpsed views of the 'Knowle'.

Condition and Quality: Moderate to good condition.



Local Landscape Character Area - 16

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Enclosed Commons

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Some large street trees and vegetation in front garden contribute to a green street scape.

Vegetation: Ornamental, native vegetation along the stream corridor to the northern boundary. Well established street trees and ornamental garden planting.

Built Form: Predominantly 50's with some pre-war and some later in fill, large properties both detached and semi-detached, some bungalows. Mix of architectural styles.

Communication: PRow connections, access roads, lanes

Hydrology: Stream along the northern boundary

Public Amenity: PRow links to wider countryside

Context and Function: Suburban residential area adjacent to open countryside.

Visual: Generally well contained due to built form along the access roads as well as garden boundary vegetation.

Landscape Character: Houses set back on large plots with frontage able to accommodate off road parking and gardens. Gardens provide 'greening' to the street scape contributing to a sense of place. Grass verges help to create a feeling of space.

Condition and Quality: Good condition, well managed.



Local Landscape Character Area - 17

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Most properties have a generous front garden, many with ornamental hedgerows and occasional tree.

Vegetation: Limited ornamental planting/hedges within front gardens

Built Form: Housing mix from 60's/70's/80's. Houses and bungalows, a mix of styles.

Communication: Lanes

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: Local shop

Context and Function: 'Ribbon' residential development along urban lanes close to village centre.

Visual: Well contained due to built form along the lanes as well as garden vegetation. Occasional glimpsed view looking west of mature vegetation on higher ground adjacent to M5.

Landscape Character: Residential lanes leading to village centre with housing fronting the road. Fronts generally accommodate parking and some ornamental planting and a few trees. A mix of housing styles. Detractors include patched up foot ways and overhead communication lines.

Condition and Quality: Moderate to good.



Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Occasional tree within front garden on green space.

Vegetation: Limited ornamental planting/hedges within front gardens, occasional local green spaces including cherry spp, silver birch,

Built Form: Housing mix from 60's/70's/80's typically semi-detached.

Communication: Lanes and estate roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: Occasional local green space with a handful of ornamental trees, housing fronting on.

Context and Function: Linear belts of residential development along urban roads close to village centre.

Visual: Well contained due to built form along the roads as well as garden vegetation. Occasional glimpsed view looking west of mature vegetation on higher ground adjacent to M5.

Landscape Character: Residential roads close to village centre. House style typically has integral garage and cladding panels or tile hanging. Fronts just big enough to accommodate a single car length so most frontages are hard paved. Detractors include patched up foot ways, overgrown conifer hedges, overhead communication lines, lack of green garden frontage and on street parking often straddling the foot way. Vehicles dominate the street scape.

Condition and Quality: Poor to moderate.



Local Landscape Character Area - 19

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Higher ground adjacent to M5, topography slopes down towards the water course which bisects the LLCA.

Vegetation: Alongside naturalised watercourse and attenuation area and ornamental garden vegetation. Willow, alder, oak.

Built Form: 2000's, 2 storey pitched roof, mix of red/brown brick and render finishes. Mix of town houses, detached and apartment blocks. Adjacent to church.

Communication: Estate roads, adjacent to M5

Hydrology: Stream with integrated flood attenuation area associated with recent development

Public Amenity: Public open space, play area, small green spaces.

Context and Function: Residential development adjacent to M5 influenced by the water course as a central integrated feature. Church outside of LLCA does provide historic context an entrance to main development of Church Road.

Visual: Middle distance panoramic views possible from public open space on high ground adjacent to M5 looking east towards Round Hill and north east side of parish over the roof tops of Catshill and Marlbrook.

Landscape Character: A sense of place influenced by the water course as a central integrated feature. Suburban in nature with an appropriate mix of boundaries including post and rail, close board fencing and railings. Detractor elements include sound and glimpses of M5 on the western side of the LLCA.

Condition and Quality: Good condition, well maintained.



Local Landscape Character Area - 20

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Open front gardens, some grass verges

Vegetation: Ornamental within gardens

Built Form: 1980's housing estate, light red brick pitched roofs, small to medium sized houses, typically semi detached or blocks of 3 houses often with integral garages.

Communication: Estate roads

Hydrology: None evident

Public Amenity: None

Context and Function: Modern housing estate

Visual: Views in and out of the site are well contained by houses, boundary walls and vegetation.

Landscape Character: Contained residential development with small open front gardens, some turned over to hard pave, some remaining as garden. Vehicles parked both on and off street. Red brick walls where rear/side boundaries meet foot ways. Foot ways to both sides with street light. Suburban character, little sense of place and no views out.

Condition and Quality: Moderate quality and moderate to good condition.



Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential, commercial, church, small holding

Elements and Features: Listed sandstone church, mature street trees, ornamental garden vegetation, Plough and Harrow pub.

Vegetation: Native hedgerows, ash, oak, willow, hawthorn, holly, privet, yew, horse chestnut, leylandii.

Built Form: Mix of housing styles and ages - bungalows, large detached 30's houses, pre war, occasional 70's infill. Car garage and sales business next to M5.

Communication: M5 close by, B road, access roads, PRow

Hydrology: Low lying wet area behind pub

Public Amenity: The church

Context and Function: Focussed along the Stourbridge Road which connects the parish to the north west via a bridge over the M5.

Visual: Visually well contained by the rising and well vegetated land form to the west as well as the houses and their associated ornamental garden vegetation.

Landscape Character: Buildings typically front onto the main road with large frontages containing gardens and space for off road parking. A relatively well vegetated urban corridor providing the transition from rural countryside to the north of the M5 to the parish of Catshill and Marlbrook. The church and it's grounds provide a significant feature at the centre of this LLCA providing a sense of place.

Condition and Quality: Houses and gardens are generally in a good well maintained condition. Foot way adjacent to cemetery overgrown in places.



Local Landscape Character Area - 23

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential

Elements and Features: Land form undulates from high ground on the west side dropping down to the Stourbridge Road and the brook that runs parallel. Listed war memorial in prominent position. Steep grass embankments.

Vegetation: Limited street trees, Ornamental planting within gardens - silver birch, prunus spp.

Built Form: A mix of housing styles from the 70's/80's, social club. Bungalows, detached and semi detached houses.

Communication: B road, access roads, PRoW

Hydrology: Brook running north to south

Public Amenity: PRoW

Context and Function: Residential area on the edge of the parish located in close proximity to the village centre.

Visual: On the high ground, glimpsed distant views between houses can be experienced from the roads. Views from the lower elevations along Stourbridge Road are contained by the built form, vegetation and land form in which they sit.

Landscape Character: Housing style on the higher ground is informed by the rising land form set in to make best use of views. Away from the Stourbridge Road, front gardens are open and able to accommodate parked vehicles. Groups of different style housing are evident, many with integral garages. Materials include red/orange brick, white/cream render, tile hanging, timber cladding. Social club and car park is of a poor quality and condition and a detractor within the LLCA.

Condition and Quality: Properties are generally well managed and in good condition with the exception of the social club.



Local Landscape Character Area - 26

Worcestershire Landscape Character Type: Principal Settled Farmlands

Land Use: Residential with public open space

Elements and Features: Text

Vegetation: Willows, silver birch, limited ornamental garden plants, garden hedges, conifer spp.

Built Form: Linear blocks of 2 storey housing and blocks of separate garages.

Communication: Access roads, PRow/cycle path

Hydrology: Stream

Public Amenity: Public open space with play and multi use games area, PRow.

Context and Function: Residential are just south of the village centre with open fields forming the southern and western boundary.

Visual: Views are generally contained by the built form. Occasional glimpsed views into fields to the south.

Landscape Character: Public open space and local greens which houses front onto functional housing with low amenity. Numerous inactive road frontages. Vehicles parked on street, in banks of parking bays or on hard paved frontages to houses. Detractors include; garages fronting one another on rear access roads; 'anti climb paint' signage; lack of gardens and greenery; utilitarian railings. Good access to public open space and play provision as well as PRow through open fields to the south. No sense of place.

Condition and Quality: Many garages in poor condition, numerous gardens unmaintained.



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