

Harborough District Council

**Green Wedge Review:  
Draft Technical Update 2015**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 There are currently two green wedge designations within Harborough district. The Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge lies entirely within Harborough district and the Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge which adjoins similar designations in Oadby & Wigston Borough and Leicester City. Harborough's green wedge policy is set out in 'saved' policy EV/2 of the Harborough District Local Plan (2001) with detailed boundaries shown on the Proposals Map. The Core Strategy (2001) sets out the Council's commitment to retaining the principle of green wedges and to carrying out a review of detailed boundaries as part of the new Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, where appropriate. The new Local Plan, which will replace the Core Strategy, will set out the development strategy for the district to 2031 along with strategic allocations to meet development needs. It will also identify the district's strategic green infrastructure, including green wedges.
- 1.2 The purpose of this study is to assess the boundaries of the green wedges as defined in the Local Plan, to identify anomalies and to take account of changes in circumstances. Each green wedge will be assessed on whether it fulfils, or has the potential to fulfil, the four functions as set out in the Core Strategy (2011).
- 1.3 This is a technical report and as such it does not represent Council policy. The assessment will provide evidence to help inform the preparation of the new Local Plan and neighbourhood plans. Policy in the new Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan, where appropriate, will eventually replace Local Plan Policy EV/2 in defining detailed green wedge boundaries. The final detailed boundaries set out in the Local Plan will need to take into account the strategy to meet development needs across the district to 2031.
- 1.4 Evidence to support the policy approach to preventing the merging of settlements across the District will come forward at a later stage in the preparation of the new Local Plan as appropriate.

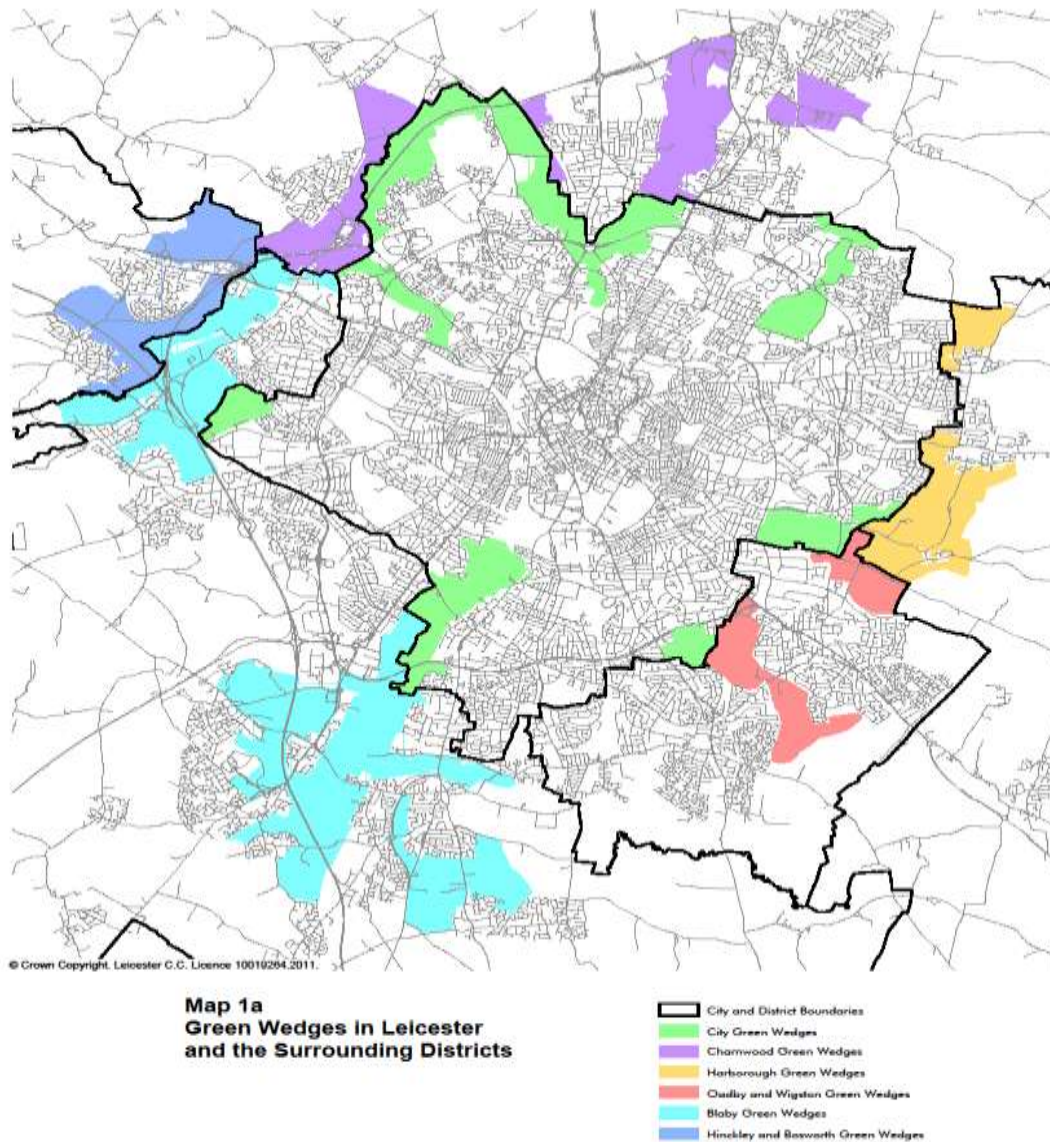
## **2. Overview of Current Green Wedge Designations**

### **2.1 Green Wedges in the Leicester PUA**

- 2.1.1 Harborough's green wedges form part of a wider network of green wedges around the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA). Figure 1a shows all these green wedges as designated in Local Plans. Many of them cross administrative boundaries. Essentially they are strategic areas of undeveloped land between the PUA and the countryside aimed at preventing the merging of settlements, providing access to the countryside and facilitating recreational opportunities. They guide new development to ensure that existing communities retain access to

greenspace and links to the countryside. Although landscape character is an important quality of the green wedges, they are not landscape designations. New green wedge designations could be planned alongside areas to be brought forward for development.

Figure 1a: Leicester PUA Green Wedges (as at 2011)



## 2.2 Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge (Figure 1b)

2.2.1 Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge lies entirely within Harborough and is 67 hectares in area. The majority of the Green Wedge lies to the north of Scraptoft village, to the east of Hamilton Community College/Nether Hall (Leicester City) and to the west of Beeby Road. It extends to the border of the District with Charnwood to the north and comprises

Scraptoft Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Scraptoft Golf Course. Scraptoft Brook runs along the southern edge of the area.

- 2.2.2 The southern part of the Green Wedge extends south from the golf course to Scraptoft Lane. It lies between Scraptoft village and Leicester City and at its narrowest the separation is less than 100 metres.

Figure 1b: Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge Boundary



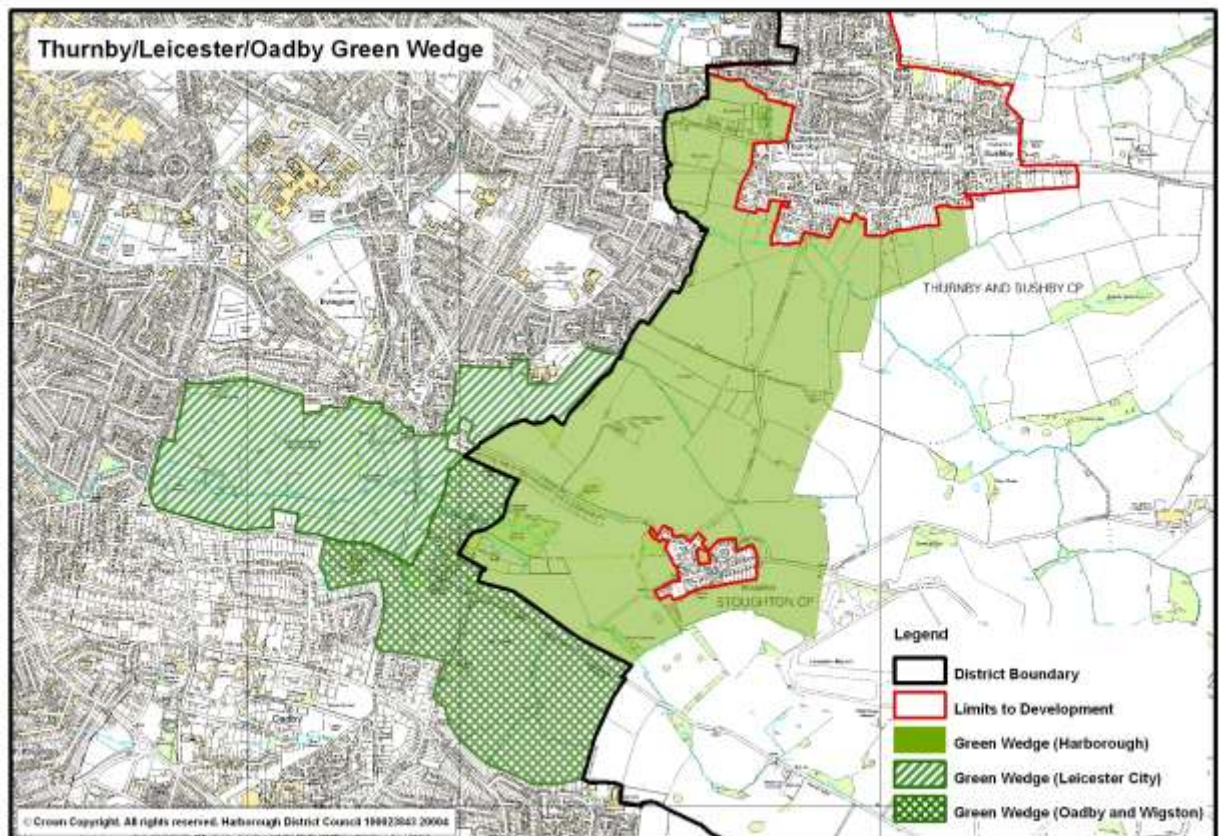
### 2.3 Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge (Figure 1c)

- 2.3.1 This more extensive Green Wedge extends from Coles Nursery north of the A47 at Thurnby to the District's border with Oadby & Wigston to the south. The Green Wedge covers approximately 280 hectares and at its longest is 2.8 kilometres (1.74 miles). At its widest point it extends 1.76 kilometres (1.1 miles) into open countryside, enveloping the village of Stoughton. At the District's south western boundary, the Green Wedge extends into Oadby where it continues beyond Gartree Road to incorporate the Spire Hospital, open countryside and playing fields abutting the built up area. Leicester City's Evington Green Wedge adjoins the Green Wedge to the west and incorporates Leicestershire Golf Course, Judgemeadow Community College Playing fields, Evington Brook and a number of spinneys.



2.3.2 The section to the north of the A47 is dominated by Coles Nursery. The north western part of the Green Wedge separates Thurnby and Leicester. At its narrowest this separation is less than 200 metres. The Green Wedge then extends eastwards, encompassing the slopes falling away from Thurnby, and southwards to surround the village of Stoughton. In 2005 a Management Strategy was prepared for the Green Wedge area in conjunction with Oadby & Wigston Borough Council and the Stepping Stones Countryside Management Project.

Figure 1c: Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge Boundary



### **3. Green Wedge Policy Background and Objectives**

#### **3.1 Strategic Policy Context (1987-2005)**

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

3.1.2 The Leicestershire Structure Plan (1994) maintained Green Wedge policies and set out their general location but left it for Local Plans to

set detailed boundaries. Paragraph 3.21 of the Explanatory Memorandum stated the four specific aims of the policy as follows:

- a) To protect structurally important areas of open land that influence the form and direction of urban development, prevent coalescence and maintain the physical identity of adjacent settlements;*
- b) To ensure that open areas of land extend outwards from urban centres to preserve links with open countryside;*
- c) To provide appropriate recreational facilities within easy reach of urban residents;*
- d) To promote the positive management of such wedges to ensure that they remain or are enhanced as attractive environmental features with good public access.*

3.1.3 Policies in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005) again supported the continuation of green wedges but slightly amended their purpose to include reference to 'preserving strategic landscape and wildlife links' and left it for local plan reviews to look again at their detailed boundaries. The Structure Plan however was replaced by the Regional Plan following the introduction of the 2004 planning system.

## **3.2 Regional Plan (2009)**

3.2.1 The revoked East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) set the strategic context for green wedges around Leicester. It did not contain a policy on green wedges but instead emphasised that a review of existing green wedges, or the creation of new ones in association with development, should be carried out through the local development framework process. Paragraph 4.2.18 of the supporting text stated:

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

3.2.2 The Regional Plan set the context for the preparation of Green Wedge policy in the Core Strategy (see Section 3.4 below). It also formed the basis of the Green Wedge Joint Methodology which was prepared in 2009 (and updated in 2011) in conjunction with other local authorities which have designated green wedges.

### **3.3 Local Plan (2001)**

3.3.1 Structure Plan policies set the context for the preparation of the Harborough District Local Plan and the detailed definition of green wedges. The outer boundaries of the district's two Green Wedges however were originally defined in the adopted Scraftoft, Thurnby and Stoughton Local Plan (1987). The policy dealing with Green Wedges was in 2 parts reflecting distinct roles for particular areas of Green Wedge. Part 1 dealt with those parts of the Green Wedges separating Scraftoft from Leicester and Thurnby from Leicester and the need to ensure that the open nature of the land was maintained. Part 2 of the policy was aimed at protecting the quality, character and operation of agricultural land in the rest of the Green Wedge to the south of Thurnby and protecting the environmental setting of Stoughton.

3.3.2 These Green Wedge boundaries, along with the policy distinction, were taken forward in the Draft and Deposit Harborough Local Plans (1993 and 1995 respectively). In the Harborough District Local Plan (HDLP) Deposit Draft Report on Objections (1997) the Inspector recommended that Green Wedge policy:

- Should give a proper explanation of all their purposes (particularly re: incorporating open land within the urban area as it grows);
- Should state that Green Wedges lie outside the area covered by countryside policies;
- Should explain more fully what sort of uses and scale of development would be appropriate in Green Wedges;
- Should not be seen as either a countryside policy or a 'character and appearance' policy. He considered that policy seeking to maintain agricultural character went beyond what was required for the land to function as a Green Wedge insofar as it restricted other non-agricultural open uses; and
- Should not address the issue of the environmental setting of Thurnby and Stoughton as this was not connected with the purpose of Green Wedges.

3.3.3 The Inspector concluded that Part 2 of the policy should be deleted and that the approach taken in Part 1 of the policy should apply to all parts of the Green Wedge. His suggested wording was accepted and incorporated into Policy EV/2 of the Adopted Harborough Local Plan, thus:

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROTECT THE OPEN AND UNDEVELOPED CHARACTER OF THE GREEN WEDGES DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAPS AND WILL REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THAT CHARACTER.

His recommendation to explain in detail the purposes of Green Wedges and acceptable uses within them was also accepted as follows.



- Paragraph 3.4 was amended to include *'The purpose of Green Wedges is not to seek to restrict the growth of an urban area but to aim to ensure that, as development extends, open land is incorporated within it. The green wedges should remain open and undeveloped to prevent coalescence of settlements on the fringe of Leicester and to retain links with the countryside. They lie outside the area covered by countryside policies.'*
- Paragraph 3.6 was amended to include *'These include agriculture, recreation, forestry, transport routes and mineral uses. It is recognised that built development may be required in connection with some of the above uses. However, only small scale development limited to the operational requirements of the activity will normally be permitted, where such development does not detract from the open and undeveloped character of the green wedge.'*

3.3.4 Regarding the boundaries of the Green Wedges, the Inspector felt that there was little practical benefit in including the buildings on the Coles Nursery site and the neighbouring dwellings within the Green Wedge: *'The area is not open and undeveloped and does not fulfil the strategic function of a Green Wedge'* (para 3.10). Furthermore he called into question the inclusion of the whole area to the north of the A47 in the Green Wedge. He was of the opinion that it put pressure on Greenfield sites further away from the urban area and with poorer access to services and facilities. He also felt that Thurnby and Leicester north of the A47 were already substantially conjoined to the north.

3.3.5 The Inspector recommended therefore that the Green Wedge north of A47 be deleted with the nursery buildings and dwellings included within the limits to development. This recommendation was not taken forward by the Council which considered the land to be 'fundamentally open in character' and 'important in retaining the separation of Leicester and Thurnby'. The Council also felt that the Inspector's concern over Coles Nursery's inclusion in the Green Wedge preventing its development in the longer term and thereby placing additional pressure on less well-placed countryside sites, was 'a matter that should properly be considered in the review of the Local Plan', concluding that there was no need to release the land for development at that time (pages 23-24, HDLP: Statement of Decisions and Reasons on the Inspector's Report and Proposed Modifications, 1991).

## **3.4 Core Strategy (2011)**

3.4.1 From 2009 the East Midlands Regional Plan provided the strategic context for emerging Green Wedge policy in the Harborough Core Strategy. At all stages of the Core Strategy's preparation process, local communities expressed strong support for Green Wedges and their continued protection.

3.4.2 Core Strategy policy supports the retention of Green Wedges in principle around the Leicester PUA, commits to a review of detailed boundaries as part of the new Local Plan (referred to as the Allocations DPD in the Core Strategy), outlines their functions and sets out acceptable uses (see Appendix 1). Core Strategy policy also makes it clear that Green Wedges, along with Separation Areas, will be the 'main focus for Green Infrastructure improvements in urban fringe areas of the District'. The commitment to improving accessibility through the provision of walking/cycling routes and leisure activities and promoting biodiversity in Green Wedges is also reflected in Core Strategy Policy CS15: Leicester Principal Urban Area.

3.4.3 Both Leicester City Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council have adopted complementary Green Wedge policies in their respective Core Strategies.

### **3.5 National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

3.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) simplifies planning policy guidance and reflects the government's localism agenda. Paragraphs 73-78 set out the policy in relation to the delivery of open space, sports and recreation facilities. The document recognises the important role that such uses play in contributing to the health and well-being of communities. Not only does it reinforce the importance of protecting and enhancing rights of way and access, it allows communities through local and neighbourhood plans to identify green areas, of particular importance to them, for special protection. Many of the criteria specified for identifying these 'Local Green Spaces' overlap with the aims of the Green Wedges as follows (extract from para 77):

- *Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- *Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

3.5.2 Green Wedge policy as set out in the Core Strategy reflects the government's commitment to protecting green space that is valued and used by local communities.

3.5.3 The Framework also highlights that public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. The Government expects joint working on areas of common interest to be diligently undertaken for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities.

The development of the Green Wedge Joint Review Methodology since 2009 is an example of this joint working approach.

### **3.6. New Local Plan**

3.6.1 Since the adoption of the Core Strategy there have been a number of important changes to the planning policy context for the District. Briefly these are as follows:

- The introduction of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (the Framework) which sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for local planning authorities to seek positively opportunities to meet the development needs of their area through the preparation of a Local Plan. Accompanying [Planning Practice Guidance](#) is also in place and explains how the Framework's policies should be interpreted and used;
- New evidence in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) shows that the number of new homes needed annually across the District to 2031 is substantially higher than the figure set out in the Core Strategy (increased from 350 dwellings per annum to 475 dwellings per annum); and
- Parish Council's have embraced the introduction of neighbourhood planning and several are leading on the preparation of neighbourhood development plans. Two neighbourhood plans have been 'made' and form part of the development plan for the district.

3.6.2 In light of these changes, the preparation of a new Local Plan is underway. The new Local Plan (2011 - 2031) will set out a strategy to meet the higher housing numbers, whilst ensuring that sustainable economic development is supported, infrastructure is delivered, local communities are protected, environmental capacity is respected and the quality of the built environment and heritage assets are protected.

3.6.3 A Local Plan options consultation is due to take place in September/October 2015. This will set out the likely scale of development across the district and options in respect of the distribution of development at settlement level, including the Leicester urban fringe settlements. This Green Wedge Review will be used as evidence in assessing options at a settlement level and the impact of alternative options for development on the green wedges will be a consideration.

3.6.4 Depending on the scale of development to be accommodated in the Leicester urban fringe settlements, the identification of potential strategic allocations to meet development needs to 2031 could mean that some adjustment of Green Wedge boundaries as currently defined, or as set out in this Review, may become necessary.

3.6.5 Given the strategic function of the network of Green Wedges across the Leicester urban area, the development of Green Wedge policy will not only need to work for the benefit of local Harborough residents but also for those living in the wider Leicester urban area. The Council will work with neighbouring local authorities under the duty to cooperate to ensure consistency of policy approach.

#### **4. Review Methodology**

##### **4.1 Development of methodology**

4.1.1 Many Leicestershire authorities, including Harborough, have cross boundary green wedges (see Map 3) and in order for a consistent approach to their boundary review, a joint methodology was developed in 2009 in accordance with the Regional Plan. This Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology has been reviewed periodically to take account of Government announcements and relevant planning appeal decisions.

4.1.2 The overarching principles of Green Wedges (as set out in the Joint Methodology) are:

- Preventing the merging of settlements;
- Guiding development form;
- Providing a green lung into urban areas; and
- Providing a recreational resource.

4.1.3 The methodology allows for the Green Wedge review to be carried out at a macro scale (looking at the Green Wedge as a whole) or at a micro scale (sub-dividing the Green Wedge into appropriate sections). Whatever approach is taken, the Green Wedge as a whole should achieve all of the functions as set out in the Regional Plan. At the micro scale however sub areas may not meet all four Green Wedge functions.

##### **4.2 Desk Top Review**

4.2.1 A desk top review was undertaken initially to collect data relating to the Green Wedges on the following:

- Main land uses/Adjacent uses;
- Current physical Green Wedge boundaries;
- Public access/Public Rights of Way (RoW)/Informal access;
- Historical landscapes and archaeological remains;
- Minerals and Waste Plan;
- Ecology;
- Development Pressures/Development control decisions/ Appeals;
- Areas of flood risk; and
- Connection to green infrastructure in the wider area.

4.2.2 The District's Green Wedges are mapped on the Council Geographical Information System (GIS) allowing planning histories, public rights of way, flood zones, mineral safeguarding areas, tree preservation orders, listed buildings, local wildlife sites, PPG 17 sites and high pressure gas pipelines to be identified. Aerial photography was also used to initially identify land uses and vegetation cover/features.

### **4.3 Site Visits**

4.3.1 Supplementing the desk top findings an initial site visit identified if and how the Green Wedges should be sub-divided for analysis purposes. With the identification of vantage points and RoWs, subsequent site visits allowed the assessment proforma sheets to be completed detailing land uses/features/functions/topography of specific parts of the Green Wedges. Desk top and site survey findings have been combined to inform the assessment of Green Wedges and identify issues.

## **5. Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge**

### **5.1 Overview of survey findings**

#### **5.1.1 Main land uses**

The majority of the area is in use as Scraptoft Golf Course, practice area, club house and associated parking. The only other built development in the Green Wedge is a dwelling just off Beeby Road. The area to the south of the golf course, adjoining Scraptoft Brook and Scraptoft village, is a designated Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and is in agricultural use as grazing pasture. Agricultural land to the south curves round Scraptoft, separating it from Leicester. The agricultural land here is more urban fringe in character (smaller partitioned paddocks with horse grazing, associated fencing and jumps) and is surrounded by built development. Like most of the surrounding agricultural land it is Grade 3. The Green Wedge is predominantly open and undeveloped in character. The absence of main roads in the vicinity means that the Green Wedge has a tranquil quality.

#### **5.1.2 Current boundaries**

The western boundary of the Green Wedge is delineated by Hamilton Lane beyond which is Leicester (Hamilton Community College/Nether Hall). Beeby Road, a relatively quiet country road, forms the eastern boundary of the Green Wedge. Beyond Beeby Road is open countryside with the land in agricultural use (primarily arable) with views across to an area of woodland which is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). This woodland is linked to the Green



Wedge by a RoW running alongside Scruptoft Brook; both the brook and the woodland are identified as wildlife corridors in the Phase 1 Habitat Study. The District's boundary with Charnwood marks the northern extent of the Green Wedge and coincides with the golf course's limit. The southern section of the Green Wedge is almost entirely surrounded by urban development (Leicester and Scruptoft). Unusually, the carriageway of both Scruptoft Lane and Scruptoft Rise currently lie within the Green Wedge. This is an anomaly as elsewhere boundary roads are not incorporated.

### **5.1.3 Topography/Key physical features**

From being relatively flat in the north around the golf course, the terrain slopes gently southwards, falling away more noticeably in the LNR towards Scruptoft Brook. High, often wide, hedges and scattered mature trees prevent significant views into the golf course from the boundary roads. Open views across the LNR are prominent with dense scrub towards the brook and field margins. A significant woodland belt runs to the east of the Green Wedge and is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Beyond Scruptoft Brook the land rises more sharply with Nether Hall Farm/Nether Hall prominent on the higher ground. From there the terrain levels off towards Scruptoft Lane, the southern boundary of the Green Wedge. Views into this southern section are more open.

### **5.1.4 RoW/Public access/Informal access**

RoW footpath D26 crosses the narrowest part of the Green Wedge linking Scruptoft (Hamilton Lane) with Leicester. Footpaths D26A, D19 and D50 run close to the Green Wedge. The LNR is subject to informal public access. A green lane/track crosses the golf course east to west. The accessibility of this track to the public is unknown and will be investigated further as to its potential for public access.

### **5.1.5 Historical landscapes and archaeological remains**

The management plan for the LNR recognises that the undulating, uneven nature of the site echoes its ridge and furrow history and the underlying rubble of the prisoner of war camp that once occupied the LNR site. The historic core of Scruptoft is a Conservation Area, with several listed buildings, and very different in character to the surrounding, more modern development of both Scruptoft and Leicester City (Nether Hall).

### **5.1.6 Ecology**

The field to the north of Scruptoft was designated as Local Nature Reserve in 2002 due the value of its ecological habitats specifically unimproved grassland, scrub, pond, mature hedgerow and standard trees and a small stream on its southern border (Scruptoft Brook). The

Phase 1 Habitat Survey (2008) found that the LNR was heavily grazed, making any determination of species-richness impossible (at the time of writing the LNR continues to be heavily grazed). The Council adopted the Scraftoft Green Wedge Management Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2001 and a Scraftoft LNR management plan was drawn up in 2005 by Leicester City Council (as owner). Neither of these documents has been updated since preparation. Scraftoft Brook runs along the southern boundary of the LNR is of ecological significance at a Parish Level and recognised as a wildlife corridor in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey. The Brook links up with the area of broadleaved woodland to the east of Scraftoft (also of Parish Level significance and a wildlife corridor).

#### **5.1.7 Minerals and Waste**

Much of the Green Wedge lies within the minerals safeguarding area for gypsum resources (Leicestershire Minerals Development Framework: Core Strategy & Development Control Policies up to 2021, adopted 2009). In common with the rest of Leicester's urban fringe areas, the Green Wedge is included in the 'Broad Locations for Strategic Waste Management Sites' (Leicestershire Waste Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Control Policies up to 2021, adopted 2009). However, policy WCS13 does give added protection to Green Wedges.

#### **5.1.8 Evidence of development pressures**

Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2001 there has been little evidence of development pressure in the Green Wedge. The only application was in 2007 on the land between the LNR and the golf club (change of use application from football pitch to golf practice area) and was permitted. The draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2015 includes 3 sites (ref. nos: A/SC/HSG/05, A/SC/HSG/06 and A/SC/HSG/07) within the Green Wedge as being potentially developable in the next 11-15 years.

#### **5.1.9 Flood Risk/Water Management**

There is an area of Flood Zone 2 in the Green Wedge which is associated with the western part of Scraftoft Brook before it runs into Leicester City.

#### **5.1.10 Socio-economic data**

The Green Wedge is not adjacent to any Priority Neighbourhoods.

## 5.2 Evaluation Table

Criteria	Does the Green Wedge (GW) meet the criteria?
Preventing the merging of settlements	<p>Yes. The GW plays a role in preventing coalescence between Scraftoft and Leicester (&lt;100m at narrowest point). Its separation role helps to ensure that the village character of Scraftoft, the core of which is a designated Conservation Area, is protected; a recognised policy priority in the Core Strategy. Fundamentally the Green Wedge remains open and undeveloped in character. The southern section of the GW is open to views from surrounding parts of the built up area, particularly from New Romney Crescent and Scraftoft Lane bringing greenspace into the urban environment. With the possibility of the Leicester PUA growing in the Hamilton area, within Charnwood District, the northern part of the Green Wedge will ensure that an open, undeveloped area is maintained to prevent coalescence. This part of the Green Wedge will also ensure continued separation from Leicester City should Scraftoft expand to the north east.</p>
Guiding development form	<p>Yes: The Green Wedge will ensure that as Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA) expands (not only within Harborough but in adjoining districts) a substantial block of countryside is protected and remains undeveloped. There are significant development pressures on Scraftoft village and it is likely to receive further development. The designation will guide any possible further expansion as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan and/or the new Local Plan.</p>
Providing a green “lung” into urban areas	<p>Yes. The Green Wedge penetrates the urban area running between Leicester and Scraftoft, ensuring that wildlife has an access corridor locally and into the wider countryside via the LNR and the golf course. The Green Wedge has links with wider green infrastructure assets (i.e. via the Memorial Park to the Separation Area). Scraftoft Brook forms a significant wildlife corridor through the Green Wedge and beyond (woodland belt to east which is subject to a TPO and Nether Hall recreation ground to west). Expanding the Green Wedge to include the Edith Cole Memorial Park would allow the park’s contribution to the wider Green Wedge to be formalised.</p>
A recreational resource	<p>Yes. The golf course, footpath and informal public access mean that there is a degree of public access across the GW which plays a part in encouraging healthy lifestyles. However, it has the potential to contribute to a greater extent and the Core Strategy provides the policy context for this. As part of the Steeping Stones Countryside Management Project opportunities to improve and formalise access in the Green Wedge need to be pursued. The inclusion of the Edith Cole Memorial Park into the Green Wedge would strengthen the recreational value of the designation.</p>

**N. B. The new Local Plan will set out the strategy for meeting the District's development needs to 2031. A number of options will be considered as part of the preparation process relating to the distribution, scale and location of future development. Any impacts arising from the provisions of the new Local Plan for the District on the Green Wedge designations set out in this strategy will be assessed as part of the ongoing preparation of the new Local Plan.**

### **5.3 Summary**

- 5.3.1 Overall the Leicester/Stoughton Green Wedge fulfils all of the functions set out in the Core Strategy. It has a role in preventing the coalescence of Scraftoft and Leicester, providing greenspace and green corridors in the urban area, safeguarding valuable ecological habitats close to the PUA and providing recreational opportunities and potential. Working with the Stepping Stones Countryside Management Project and other partners (i.e. Leicester City as owners of the Local Nature Reserve) further recreational opportunities and improved public access in the Green Wedge should be explored.
- 5.3.2 The Edith Cole Memorial Park adjoins the south eastern edge of the Green Wedge. Its inclusion in the Green Wedge would improve access, strengthen the green 'lung' function and contribute to the recreational value of the designation.
- 5.3.3 For the most part the Green Wedge's detailed boundaries, formed by adjoining development, roads and the District boundary are defensible. The only anomaly is the inclusion of the Scraftoft Lane and Scraftoft Rise carriageways within the current designation.
- 5.3.4 The scale of development which Scraftoft needs to accommodate to 2031 will be set out in the new Local Plan. The extent of allocations within or adjacent to Scraftoft will be considered as part of this process. It is considered that, with the inclusion of the Edith Cole Memorial Park, the extent and scale of the Green Wedge is appropriate and should be protected in the consideration of scale of development to be directed towards Scraftoft.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

- 5.4.1 **Extend the current Green Wedge to include the Edith Cole Memorial Park. For the sake of consistency amend the detailed boundary to take out Scraftoft Lane carriageway (see Figure 2 below); and**
- 5.4.2 **Develop further initiatives to improve public access, recreational opportunities and biodiversity in the Green Wedge where appropriate.**

Figure 2: Proposed Amendments to Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge boundary



## **6. Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge**

### **6.1 Overview of survey findings**

For the sake of analysis the Green Wedge has been split into 2 parts:

- Area A - North of Bushby Brook incorporating area north of A47
- Area B – Wider Green Wedge area running south from Thurnby to Stoughton.

#### **6.1.1 Main land uses**

Area A – North of the A47, the Green Wedge is dominated by Coles Nursery (approximately half of which is covered by ancillary buildings, parking and poly tunnels and the other half by planting areas) and nos. 576 – 596 Uppingham Road (detached dwellings). To the west of these properties is an agricultural grazing paddock (PPG17 open space – specified as grazing for horses). South of the A47 the land is open in character, with horticultural uses (tree plantations) adjacent to Evington and A47 and agricultural grazing on the slopes adjacent to Thurnby. There is a small wooded area (PPG17 area) in the north east corner adjacent to A47 and Thurnby (some of trees are subject to TPO protection). Bushby Brook is a significant landscape feature.

Area B: This extensive area is mainly in agricultural use with large arable fields dominating. Smaller fields of improved grassland exist on



the slopes adjacent to Thurnby. An area of horticultural plantation lies adjacent to Evington. Small areas of spinney are also a feature of the landscape especially to the southern end, along with remnant parkland around Stoughton. A stretch of ribbon development (large detached houses) is included in the Green Wedge along Stoughton Lane and Stoughton Lodge Farm has been redeveloped for residential use. Stoughton village is entirely surrounded by Green Wedge but is excluded from it. Although the buildings of Stoughton Park Farm lie outside Harborough, the associated fields lie within the District and allow informal access to surrounding countryside.

### **6.1.2 Current boundaries**

Area A: Built up parts of Leicester City (Thurnby Lodge and Evington to west) and Thurnby (to north and east) form the boundaries of the Green Wedge.

Area B: Leicester City (Evington to west) and neighbouring Green Wedges form the western and south western boundaries. Elsewhere field boundaries are followed where possible. However, the eastern extremity of the Green Wedge on the Thurnby slopes follows a field boundary that no longer exists. This needs to be revised and an alternative defensible boundary established. The ribbon development along Stoughton Lane is currently included in the Green Wedge. The western part of this development however lies in Leicester City and is not included in the Evington Green Wedge. For the sake of consistency, consideration should be given to removing the ribbon development from the Green Wedge as it is not open and undeveloped. This would reflect the approach taken to Stoughton which is excluded from the Green Wedge.

### **6.1.3 Topography/Key physical features**

Area A: Whilst most of the land to the north of the A47 is relatively flat, it falls away noticeably westwards towards Bushby Brook (Thurnby Hill). This means that despite having mature hedgerows the agricultural paddock adjacent to Wintersdale Road and the western half of the nursery site is open to good views when looking east from Leicester City along the A47, marking a change in the character from the urban area to the start of the Green Wedge. It provides clearly apparent separation between Leicester City and Thurnby. South of the A47 the land is undulating with a more pronounced falling away to the brook which forms the western and southern borders (offering views across Leicester). Due to the slope, views into this area are extensive especially from Evington and the wider Green Wedge area to the south. From the A47 views across this area to the arable farmland of the Green Wedge give a feeling of openness. Bushby Brook is marked by a substantial tree/scrub belt.

Area B: The majority of this area is gently undulating farmland; the southern part around Stoughton being more enclosed than the northern section with its open character. However, the land rises relatively steeply from Bushby Brook to meet the edge of Thurnby. Thurnby village stands out as a prominent view from the footpaths in the northern section of the Green Wedge. Stoughton lies on higher ground to the south and views across Leicestershire to the west and north can be seen. Leicester itself is not prominent as it is low lying. Mature trees and healthy hedgerow growth are dominant features throughout the Green Wedge, often limiting the views available. Even though this area is immediately adjacent to Leicester, it is very rural and tranquil in character, with arable farming and horticultural plantations being the predominant land uses. It is a relatively unified landscape and does not appear to be unduly affected by its urban fringe location.

#### **6.1.4 RoW/Public access/Informal access**

Area A: Footpath (RoW D17 runs northwards along edge of field (but not in the field). It is narrow and overgrown although well signposted. There is informal access into the area of woodland off the A47 adjacent to Thurnby.

Area B: This part of the Green Wedge is well served by RoWs, all of which are used regularly and well signposted:

- Footpath D18 Evington to Thurnby;
- Footpath D24 Thurnby south linking to bridleway D14;
- Bridleway D25 Evington eastwards across Green Wedge is also a recognised as a traffic-free cycle route;
- Bridleway D14 Thurnby Lane to Houghton Lane;
- Bridleway D15 Stoughton to Gartree Road.

Other RoWs exist within adjoining Green Wedge areas which can be accessed. Footpath D11 runs from Thurnby into open countryside just beyond the eastern extremity of the current Green Wedge boundary.

National Cycle Network on-road route 63 runs along Stoughton Lane and Gaulby Lane across the Green Wedge.

#### **6.1.5 Historical landscapes and archaeological remains**

Work carried out as part of the Management Strategy found evidence of ridge and furrow earthworks remaining in two fields just south of Thurnby. There are 2 scheduled monuments in Stoughton village (site of a former Manor House and a 14<sup>th</sup> century cross in the churchyard). There are however numerous Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) sites and references within the Green Wedge with most finds concentrated around Stoughton and along Gartree Road, which marks the general location of the former Roman Road Via Devana. The historic cores of both Thurnby and Stoughton are designated Conservation Areas.

### 6.1.6 Ecology

The majority of the Green Wedge comprises of large arable fields lined with hedgerows, with the occasional pocket of woodland. There are 3 sites of nature conservation importance at a 'Parish Level', namely:

- Pasture, horse grazed (adjacent to Thurnby);
- Buttercup meadow (Thurnby slopes); and
- Dams Spinney (south of Stoughton Lane).

The Phase 1 Habitat Study identified Bushby Brook as wildlife corridor as it is 'likely to support a number of BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) species, and provide a dispersal corridor for many other species.' The buttercup meadow mentioned above lies adjacent to Bushby Brook.

### 6.1.7 Minerals and Waste

Much of the Green Wedge lies within the minerals safeguarding area for gravel and sand resources (Leicestershire Minerals Development Framework: Core Strategy & Development Control Policies up to 2021, adopted 2009). In common with the rest of Leicester's urban fringe areas, the Green Wedge is included in the 'Broad Locations for Strategic Waste Management Sites' (Leicestershire Waste Development Framework: Core Strategy and Development Control Policies up to 2021, adopted 2009). However, policy WCS13 does give added protection to Green Wedges.

### 6.1.8 Evidence of development pressures:

The most notable planning application to have come forward in the Green Wedge is the 2011 outline application for 175 dwellings on the Coles Nursery site. This was refused by the Council and taken to appeal in 2012. Despite the lack of a 5 year housing land supply, the appeal was dismissed by the Inspector who considered that the scale and extent of the proposed development would have a serious adverse effect on increasing the extent of merging between Leicester City and Thurnby. He felt that the open space corridor along the western edge of the site, proposed as part of the scheme, was not 'sufficient to provide a readily perceived sense of separation between new development and properties on the edge of Leicester City'. (Appeal Ref: APP/2415/A/12/2171036).

Other planning applications in the Green Wedge have been limited to those relating to Coles Nursery (miscellaneous ancillary development), Stoughton Lodge Farm (residential development) and ancillary development in connection with the dwellings along Stoughton Lane and Uppingham Road.

The draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2015 includes 4 sites (ref. nos A/TH/HSG/07, A/TH/HSG/15 and

A/TH/HSG/22) within the Green Wedge as being potentially developable in the next 11-15 years.

### 6.1.9 Flood Risk/Water Management

A swathe of land along the line of Bushby Brook is classified as being Flood Zone 2 & 3, much of it functional floodplain (3b). Current policy makes it clear that the use of Flood Zones 2 and 3a for recreation, amenity and environmental purposes will be supported, and land in Flood Zone 3b will be safeguarded from development.

### 6.1.10 Socio-economic data

The Green Wedge is not adjacent to any Priority Neighbourhoods.

## 6.2 Evaluation Table

Criteria	Does the Green Wedge meet the criteria?
Preventing the merging of settlements	<p><b>Area A</b>  <u>North of the A47.</u>                      Yes. Whilst the eastern half of the Coles Nursery part of the Green Wedge is no longer primarily open or undeveloped and is more urban in character, the western half of the site plays a substantive role in the separation of Leicester City and Thurnby. The dwellings along Uppingham Road and the buildings of the nursery operation impact on the separation between Thurnby and Leicester. In light of this the western half of the site which remains open, relatively undeveloped and peaceful in character is of added significance and plays an important part in keeping the identities of Leicester City and Thurnby separate. The openness of the area and its separation function is particularly evident in views eastwards from the A47. Also of importance is the greenspace contribution made by the triangular grazing paddock to the north of the A47. Although not large enough to be considered strategic, this field plays a separation role and marks the transition into the Green Wedge from the west (Leicester), especially when viewed with the open area of the Coles Nursery site to the east.</p> <p><u>South of the A47:</u>                      Yes: From Bushby Brook to the A47 the Green Wedge is open and undeveloped playing a role in preventing the merging of Leicester (Evington) and Thurnby.</p> <p><b>Area B</b>                      Yes: The northern section adjacent to Evington and Bushby Brook contributes to preventing the merging of Evington and Thurnby (a Conservation Area). The southern part of the Green Wedge helps to ensure that Stoughton, a rural</p>

	village, is not encroached upon. Stoughton is the first village outside the eastern edge of the built up area of the PUA and much of it is a Conservation Area.
Guiding development form	<p><b>Area A</b> Yes: In the process of identifying appropriate sites for strategic development to meet objectively assessed housing need, the Green Wedge (and any recommended changes to it) will be likely to ensure that strategic land, needed to prevent coalescence and provide greenspace, will be safeguarded around Thurnby wherever possible. In that way the Green Wedge will potentially guide development form to the most appropriate locations.</p> <p><b>Area B</b> Yes: The Green Wedge along the slopes of Thurnby is likely to contribute to guiding development form in so far as it will avoid development taking place in an area of high landscape sensitivity, which is open to views from the Green Wedge footpaths and contributes to the enjoyment of the Green Wedge. The Green Wedge is likely to contribute to guiding development for in protecting Stoughton against coalescence from growth of the Leicester PUA. In these ways the Green Wedge will potentially guide development form to the most appropriate locations.</p>
Providing a green “lung” into urban areas	<p><b>Area A</b> Yes: This part of the GW, particularly south of the A47, constitutes a green corridor in a primarily urban area being almost entirely surrounded by built development. The A47 however represents a substantial physical barrier to wildlife linkages.</p> <p><b>Area B</b> Viewed as a standalone area, Harborough’s Green Wedge designation does not penetrate into the urban area. However, when similar neighbouring designations (Leicester/Oadby &amp; Wigston) are taken into account the southern part of the Green Wedge supports this role.</p>
A recreational resource	<p><b>Area A</b> Public access to this part of the GW is very limited with only 1 RoW (running north from the A47) which is in need of improvement. There are no recreational uses other than the woodland area (a recognised ‘Open Space, Sport and Recreation’ site south of A47 adjacent to Thurnby which is accessed informally. Opportunities to improve the recreational value of the Green Wedge north of the A47 should be sought.</p> <p><b>Area B</b> The numerous footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes in this part of the Green Wedge mean that it presents the opportunity for residents of Leicester City, Oadby &amp; Wigston</p>



	and Harborough to access open and tranquil countryside in close proximity to the PUA. However, the potential of the area to contribute further to recreation and public access need to be explored further and encouraged as set out in the current Harborough Core Strategy policy.
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**N. B. The new Local Plan will set out the strategy for meeting the District’s development needs to 2031. A number of options will be considered as part of the preparation process relating to the distribution, scale and location of future development. Any impacts arising from the provisions of the new Local Plan on the Green Wedge designations set out in this Strategy will be assessed as part of the ongoing preparation of the new Local Plan.**

### **6.3 Summary**

6.3.1 While not all parts of this relatively large Green Wedge fulfil all the functions set out in the Harborough Core Strategy, taken as a whole it meets all the objectives. The section adjacent to the A47 plays an important role in preventing the merging of Leicester and Thurnby. The numerous RoWs and recognised cycle routes mean that the Green Wedge is a recreational resource, contributing to the health and wellbeing of surrounding communities. It has however the potential to contribute further, something that current policy encourages. With the exception of the area to the north of the A47, it remains largely open and undeveloped contributing to maintaining wildlife corridors into the urban area, particularly when adjoining Green Wedges are taken into account.

6.3.2 The eastern half of the Coles Nursery site north of the A47 is not open and undeveloped since it is occupied by garden centre buildings, glass houses and large horticultural polytunnels. Similarly the properties adjacent to Coles Nursery on Uppingham Road represent an area of development impacting on the openness of the Green Wedge. It is considered that neither of these areas contributes to the stated functions of a Green Wedge. There is no justification for their continued inclusion in the Green Wedge.

6.3.3 The western half of the Coles Nursery Site (to rear of Uppingham Road Properties) and the adjacent triangular grazing paddock form the western half of the Green Wedge and play a substantive role in maintaining separation between Leicester City (properties at Wintersdale Road and other development to the west in Leicester City) and Thurnby to the north and east. To the north of the site are properties at Telford Way, Thurnby which have the railway corridor and the Willowbrook playing fields separating them from Leicester. Any development on the western half of the Coles Nursery site would therefore prejudice the current function of the Green Wedge in preventing the merging of settlements (Leicester City and Thurnby) at the corner of the site with Wintersdale Road.

6.3.4 There are some amendments that could be made to detailed boundaries to strengthen the designation and ensure consistency:

- Remove the eastern, developed part of the Coles Nursery site and the adjoining Uppingham Road properties from the Green Wedge as the area is not predominantly open and undeveloped and does not provide opportunities for public access and recreation. The removal of this area from the Green Wedge would not impact on the overall separation function of the area between Telford Way and Wintersdale Road.
- Adjust the north eastern boundary adjacent to Thurnby up to the eastern hedgerow so that it has a defensible physical boundary; and
- Exclude the area of residential ribbon development along Stoughton Lane from Green Wedge reflecting the approach taken to Stoughton and the fact that it is not open and undeveloped. However, the specific site boundary for removal from the Green Wedge should apply to the boundaries of residential development only. Stoughton Lane is bordered by an avenue of mature trees at that point which are in the highway and beyond the curtilage of residential development. The highway land and trees should continue to be identified as within the Green Wedge.

6.3.5 The recommended changes to the Green Wedge should ensure that it is robust enough to guide development away from strategically important areas of open and undeveloped land.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

**6.4.1 The boundary of the Green Wedge site allocation north of the A47 is recommended to exclude the eastern half of the Coles Nursery site (currently occupied by nursery buildings and ancillary development) and the properties on Uppingham Road (see Figure 3 below). This will mean that land which is not predominantly open in character is not included in the Green Wedge. The removal of this area will not prejudice the separation of settlements at Leicester City and Thurnby at Wintersdale Road and Telford Way respectively.**

**6.4.2 The designated boundary of the Green Wedge south of Thurnby is recommended to include a defensible boundary by being extended to the field boundary as shown on Figure 4 below.**

**6.4.3 A boundary amendment to exclude Stoughton Lane properties is recommended (Figure 5 below). The highway land and adjacent**

trees should continue to be identified as within the Green Wedge;  
and

- 6.4.4 Develop further initiatives to improve public access, recreational opportunities and biodiversity in the Green Wedge where appropriate.

Figure 3: Proposed Amendment 1 to Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge (see Recommendation 6.4.1 above)



Figure 4: Proposed Amendment 2 to Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge (see Recommendation 6.4.2 below)

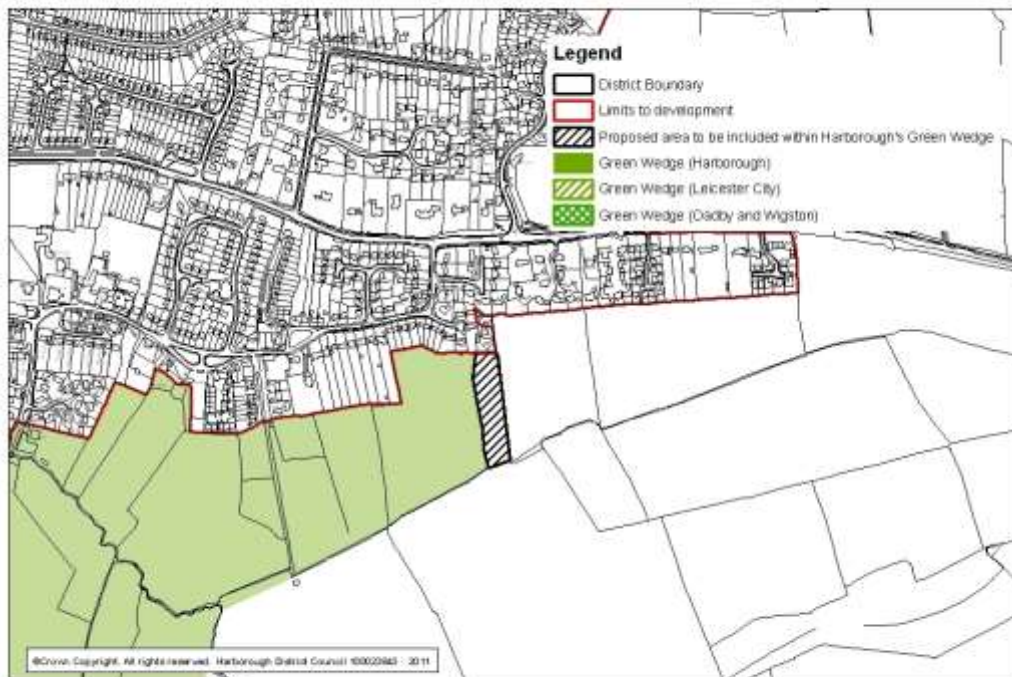
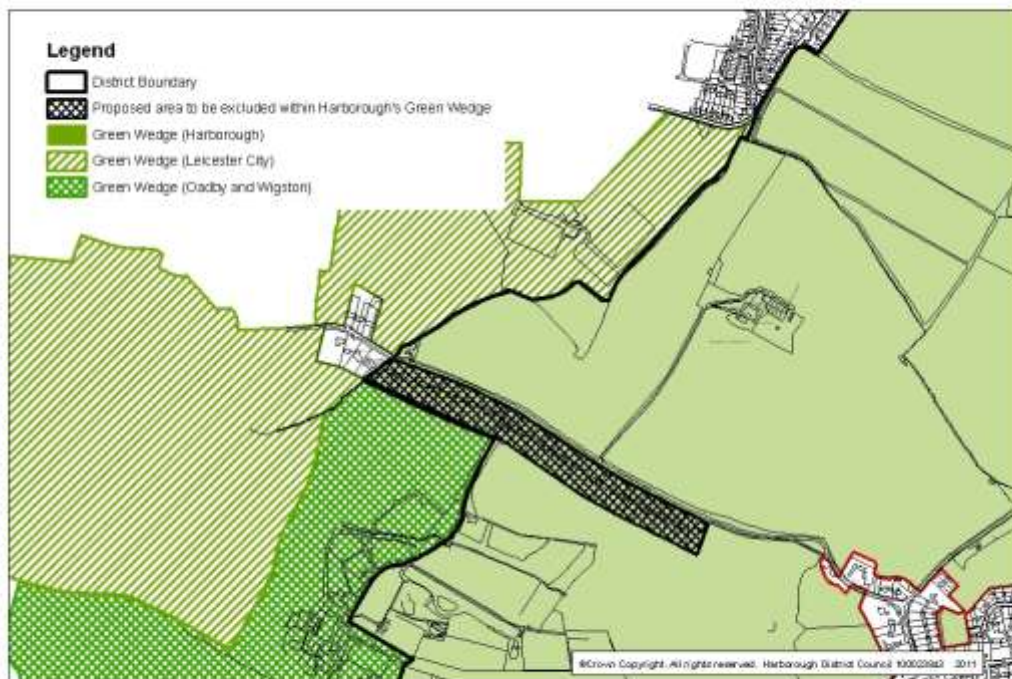


Figure 5: Proposed Amendment 3 to Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge (see Recommendation 6.4.3 below)



## **Appendix 1: Core Strategy Green Wedge Policy**

### **Policy CS1: Spatial Strategy for Harborough (extract)**

Continue to support in principle the Green Wedge designations in order to prevent the merging of settlements, guide development form and provide access to strategic green space and recreational opportunities around the Leicester urban area;

### **Policy CS8: Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure (extract)**

The Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge to the north of Scraptoft and the Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge to the south of Thurnby will be important elements of Green Infrastructure provision not only for that part of the District but also for communities in neighbouring authorities.

Green Wedges are largely undeveloped areas defined with the aim of:

- Preventing the merging of settlements;
- Guiding development form;
- Providing access from urban areas into green spaces/countryside; and
- Providing recreational opportunities.

In order to retain the open and undeveloped character of the Green Wedges the following land uses will be acceptable, providing that they are consistent with the above aims:

- Agriculture, horticulture and allotments not accompanied by retail development;
- Forestry;
- Outdoor leisure, sporting and recreation facilities;
- Cycle ways, footpaths and bridleways;

A detailed review of Green Wedge boundaries will take place as part of the Allocations DPD.

### **Policy CS15: Leicester Principal Urban Area (extract)**

The principle of Green Wedges in the Leicester PUA will be maintained. Green Wedges have been identified as the Leicester/ Scraptoft Green Wedge to the north of Scraptoft, and the Thurnby/ Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge to the south and west of Thurnby. The latter is part of a more extensive Green Wedge which extends out from Leicester City and Oadby and Wigston Borough. These Green Wedges contribute to the aims of:

- Preventing the merging of settlements;
- Guiding development form;
- Providing access from urban areas into green spaces/countryside; and
- Providing recreational opportunities.

## Appendix 2: Site Visit Proforma for Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge

### Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge site visit – 1

Location: Beeby Road layby just north of Scraptoft

Time and date of site visit: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011 1.00pm

Land use description	Heavily grazed agricultural pastureland. Natural/semi-improved (check on Habitat Study). Designated as a Local Nature Reserve. Horse grazing at time of survey. Beeby Rd boundary wire fencing (poor condition) and occasional length of hedgerow. Areas of dense scrubland (overgrown bushes/trees to south and west).	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Scraptoft village to south, partially hidden by trees/bushes. To east agricultural land in arable use and views beyond of wooded area (subject toTPO).	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Margins of LNR are dominated by dense scrub with some mature tree. Views limited by this growth. Views from this point limited by trees/tall hedge growth. Although there are very distant views of beyond Leicester to south west.	
Topography	LNR slopes gently from north to the south, falling away to the brook on the edge of Scraptoft.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?		No
Details	Only Scraptoft residential development is visible with trees/bushes hiding much of it. Leicester cannot be seen from this point.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Scraptoft is visible in the near distance to the south but not a dominant urban influence on the view. No other development can be seen from here.	
Does this part of current Green Wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Beeby Road forms eastern boundary and southern boundary is the brook/edge of Scraptoft. Golf course to north and west is part of GW.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details		
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	None other than a small brick shed and animal pens.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	It would represent development in open countryside and could threaten the separation between Nether Hall (to west) and Scraptoft (to south).	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide green open		

space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details	It is on the edge of Scraftoft but the village does not exert an urban influence on the area. Nether Hall is not visible from this point.	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		No
Details	None evident.	
Can this part of Green Wedge be accessed by the public		No
Details	No access apparent	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None visible	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the Green Wedge boundaries were moved?	No recreational uses observed but area is a LNR and therefore sensitive. Need to investigate whether there is any informal access.	

## Leicester/Scraftoft Green Wedge site visit - 2

Location: Golf Club, Beeby Road NE corner of GW

Time and date of site visit: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011, 1.20pm

Land use description	Golf course with club house with associated buildings and parking. One further residence to south on Beeby Road. Open practice area of golf course adjacent to LNR with area of scrub/semi-improved grassland.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	2 farms and agricultural farmland (arable)	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Views into golf course are very limited due to high, wide overgrown hedges and trees (some native and some non native planting in association with golf course)	
Topography	Generally quite level with slight undulations	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?		No
Details	There are no views of settlements as high hedges limit views.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	No perception of distance as no views from this part of GW from Beeby Road.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	District boundary/ field margins to north, Beeby Road to east	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	Club house and associated buildings and parking. 1 further residential property along Beeby Road. Not intrusive.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Would represent development in the countryside as not near existing built development	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No



Details	It is not predominately urban in this part of GW as not adjacent to Scraptoft or Nether Hall	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Scraptoft Golf Course (private).	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	No
Details	There is a track running along the north of the Golf Course. Not a right of way. Need to investigate whether it can be used by the public. Nobody seen using it at time of survey	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A as no RoW in this part of GW	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None identified	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No. The boundary follows golf course extent. Would make no sense to move GW boundary either beyond or through the golf course.	

### Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge site visit - 3

Location: Hamilton Lane NE part of GW

Time and date of site visit: 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2011, 1.50pm

Land use description	Golf course with heavily wooded/wide hedged (scrub) boundary. Very few views into golf course from Hamilton Lane	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	To west horse grazing paddocks and beyond that Hamilton Community College. To north arable agricultural land	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Very high hedgerows with plentiful mature native trees (check whether any TPOs in this area). Occasional, rare view into golf course and associated tree planting (some non native)	
Topography	Gently undulating and falling away to south (brook)	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?		No
Details	Due to hedges/trees views are poor and no development can be seen until half way down Hamilton Lane when Nether Hall starts to the west.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	No perception of distance as views are really limited by excessively tall hedges and tree growth.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Hamilton Lane (which is the District boundary) and the end of the golf course (district boundary)	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details		
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	No built development in this part of GW	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	In the very north of the GW it would impinge on open countryside. Further south to east of Hamilton Lane development would threaten the separation of Leicester and Scraptoft	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	
Details	Certainly it marks and end to the built form when coming from Leicester. However, it cannot really be described as open as no views into it at present.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational	Yes	

opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	Only in so far as it is a golf course (private). It is not publically accessible . No RoW through site.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public		No
Details	Doesn't look like it can be. There is a track indicated on the map but there is a gate preventing access to it from Hamilton Lane.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)		No
Details	N/A as no RoWs	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Hard to tell as no access to golf course to exact of the layout.	

## Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge site visit - 4

Location: New Romney Crescent, Nether Hall looking southwards

Time and date of site visit: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011, 2.20pm

Land use description	Agriculture. Relatively small, wire fenced paddocks of improved and semi-improved grassland with well-vegetated brook running to northern edge along New Romney Crescent. Land under grazing.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Residential with Nether Hall to west and Scraptoft to east and south.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows/numerous mature trees, brook and associated tree/bush growth, Nether Hall Farm on hill top visible from New Romney Crescent	
Topography	Rising from brook to Nether Hall Farm and Nether Hall	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Nether Hall part of Leicester and the fringes of Scraptoft although much hidden by trees/bushes etc.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	No distant views only medium distant view of rest of Nether Hall residential area.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	The edge of the built up areas of Scraptoft and Nether Hall (Leicester) define the boundary of this part of the GW	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	There is no built development in this part of the GW. Only thing that impinges on the agricultural landscape are field boundaries which are mainly wire/tape. This part of the GW (to the west of Hamilton Lane) has more of an urban fringe character with horse grazing , smaller partitioned fields, show jumping fences etc. Field to east of Hamilton Lane is more pastoral, less urban fringe in character. Views into it are limited however by high hedgerows.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Development here would severely reduce the separation between Scraptoft and Leicester (Nether Hall) and raise very real possibility of coalescence. Essential to keep this part of the GW open and undeveloped	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	

Details	Essentially surrounded by development and views into it are widespread.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Footpath D26 (RoW) crosses the GW from Nether Hall Farm to Leicester.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	Footpath	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)		No
Details	The footpath was not signposted from Hamilton Lane (seemed to be a post but no sign on it). Not obvious that there is a footpath.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	None	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	There is little recreational opportunity at present but there is potential to improve access.	

## Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge site visit - 5

Location: Scraptoft Lane

Time and date of site visit: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011, 2.50pm

Land use description	Agriculture, grazing paddocks. Improved/Semi-improved grassland.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Residential areas of Scraptoft to east and south and Nether Hall (Leicester) to west and north. GW separated from Edith Cole Memorial Garden (PPG 17 open space) to eastern edge by Scraptoft Rise.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Generally lower hedgerows which allow better views into GW. Occasional mature trees along hedgerows and field margins.	
Topography	Relatively flat from this viewpoint but falls away to north towards brook	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Views again affected trees/hedges Scraptoft and Leicester can seen	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	No long distance views due to trees/hedges. GW gives area an open character.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Development associated with Scraptoft and Leicester form the boundary. Check if roads are included in GW (ie. Scraptoft Rise and Scraptoft Lane)	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	None evident other than odd hut/cabin in connection with keeping of animals	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Development here would result in the coalescence of Leicester (Nether Hall) and Scraptoft both very different in character. The open feel of the area would be lost.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	
Details	It fulfils this function increasingly as Scraptoft continues to grow eastwards.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including	Yes	

footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	One footpath crosses the GW at Nether Hall Farm.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	It can be though not well signposted locally.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)		No
Details	Not signposted from Hamilton Lane	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	No seen	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	The recreational value of the GW is not good but it has the potential to contribute	

### Appendix 3: Site Visit Proforma for Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge

#### **Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 1**

Location 1: North of A47

Time and date of first site visit: 1.30pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Second site visit: 2.00pm 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Land use description	Commercial nursery with associated buildings/poly tunnels/ parking area with low plant growing areas on western part of nursery to rear of Uppingham Road properties. Row of detached dwellings front onto A47 (576 – 596 Uppingham Road). Western part of area is agricultural field (PPG17 open space – specified as grazing for horses), no evidence of animals at time of site visit. Footpath (ROW D17 runs northwards along edge of field (but not in the field)	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	A47 runs to south of this part of GW and forms physical barrier with rest of GW south of A47. Otherwise area is surrounded mainly by residential development. Co-op store at north east boundary.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedge on 2 sides of field, occasional mature tree. Other trees part of nursery, mainly not native.	
Topography	Area is predominantly flat but falls away to west towards the valley of Bushby Brook	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Thurnby, Evington and Thurnby Lodge	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	All but western part feels part of the built up area.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?		No
Details	Other than the paddock, most of the area is impacted by development to some degree. However, the eastern part of the site is most impacted by built development associated with the nursery use. The properties on Uppingham Road form much of the southern boundary.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	Not for the area as a whole. The field to the west is defensible as it is open/undeveloped/green in character with clear boundary. The eastern part of the Coles Nursery site is developed to a greater extent than the western half but there is no obvious boundary.	
Extent of built development within this part of Green	Built development impacts on this part of the GW. The dwellings on Uppingham Road and the	



Wedge	buildings associated with the nursery have the effect of making the eastern part of the site feel urban in nature The remainder of the nursery site is predominantly open in character.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	In terms of its impact on the Green Wedge as a whole development on the eastern part of the nursery site would not affect the functioning. Its character is not open and undeveloped and therefore development would not have such a detrimental impact. Development on the western part of the nursery site and the grazing paddock would lead to the loss of separation between Leicester City and Thurnby. The north east corner of the site directly adjoins the Leicester City boundary and residential properties at Wintersdale Road Leicester City. To the north of the site are properties at Telford Way Thurnby which have the railway corridor and the Willowbrook playing fields separating them from Leicester. Development of the western part of the Coles Nursery site could prejudice the current function of the GW in preventing the merging of settlements at the corner of the site with Wintersdale Road.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	
Details	But only in part. Due to the impact of development, only the western part of the GW feels as though it provides green open space in a predominantly urban area. This part of the GW is predominantly open particularly when viewed from west (driving from Leicester eastwards along the A47). The grazing field is particularly evident as open green space in the predominantly urban environment north of A47. The field is shielded from the A47 and the wider GW by high hedges. There are also views of the western part of the Coles Nursery site (i.e. the part with no permanent development) from Leicester looking eastwards.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways /bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	A footpath (RoW D17) runs along the eastern edge of the field running from A47 to Wintersdale Road. The footpath is separate from the field however. It is in need of upgrading as it is badly overgrown.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public		No
Details	Whilst there is public access along the footpath, overall there is no other public access to this part of the Green Wedge.	

Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)		No
Details	Whilst the RoW is signposted, it is badly overgrown and very narrow. Opportunities to improve this should be sought.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Saw no evidence on site visit of footpath being used. Overgrown nature of RoW would suggest it is not well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident from site visit	
Could the integrity/quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	N/A as no recreational uses were identified in this part of the Green wedge	

## Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 2

Location 2: A47 Southwards towards Bushby Brook

Time and date of site visit: 2.00pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	Horticultural land (tree plantation) adjacent to Evington and A47. Lower slopes adjacent to Thurnby agricultural grazing land. Wooded area (PPG17 area) north east corner adjacent to A47 and Thurnby (some of Tree are subject to TPO protection).	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	A47 and GW to north. Beyond Bushby Brook to the west is residential area (Evington). To east is Thurnby village (part of which is Conservation Area). To south adjoins the greater GW area.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Bushby Brook is heavily vegetated with shrub and tree cover (biodiversity value).	
Topography	Undulates from A47 then falls away more steeply towards Bushby Brook to west and south. Good view of GW from Evington.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Extensive views across valley of Evington and wider Leicester area. Thurnby more hidden by trees at this point. This part of GW separates Thurnby from Evington.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Extensive views across valley towards Evington in near distance and wider Leicester area beyond. Views also of wider Green Wedge area are evident.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Bushby Brook is a natural boundary to west. Edge of Thurnby forms western boundary. N.B. A47 forms a barrier to GW to north of the busy road	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	Hillcrest Cottages (2 in number) adjacent to A47 are the only built development in this part of the Green Wedge. These cottages do not impact adversely on the undeveloped open character of the area.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	<b>Any</b> built development in this part of the GW would impact severely on the open character of the area, views into and through the GW and lead to the coalescence of Thurnby and Evington.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly	Yes	

urban environment?		
Details	Given the built up character of Evington, Thurnby Lodge and Thurnby this area of the GW provides an essential arm of undeveloped, open, green space	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		No
Details	None evident from site visit	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public		No
Details	No RoWs or informal access identified in this part of GW.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident from visit.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	N/A as no direct recreational uses identified. However, views into and beyond area should be factored in to value of the area.	
Perception of tranquillity	A47 impacts on the tranquillity of the northern part of this section of the GW	

### Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 3

Location: 3 – South of Bushby Brook from footpath D18 near Evington

Time and date of site visit: 2.50 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	Fairly large agricultural fields in arable use. Bushby Brook to north of area (heavily vegetated)	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Evington residential area to west. Thurnby to north east. Otherwise wider countryside/agricultural land	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows separate fields. Mature trees and shrubs along the edge of Bushby Brook	
Topography	Overall land is sloping, rising gently from Bushby Brook in north to bridleway D25 to south	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Views of Thurnby on northern slopes and Evington to west.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Sweeping view of Thurnby on northern slopes gives perception of distance. Flatter views towards Evington and beyond – do not impact greatly.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Edge of Evington built up area is the main boundary in this part of the GW	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	There is no built development in this part of the GW.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Built development in this part of GW would impinge on quality, open countryside and have a big impact on the integrity and overall function of the GW. The countryside is not urban fringe in character in so far as the change from urban to rural is practically immediate. Would not appear to have any of the problems often associated with urban fringe countryside.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	
Details	The area is predominantly urban fringe, Evington and Thurnby/Bushby being in close proximity. It provides	

	immediate access to countryside for nearby residents.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Footpath (RoW D18) links Evington to Thurnby Bridleway (RoW D25) runs from Evington to eastwards linking with other RoWs (D24 to Thurnby/Bushby and D14 southwards)	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	Footpaths and bridleways allow extensive access to open countryside.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	
Details	Mainly compacted earth footpaths across arable fields, well signposted with stiles where necessary.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Appear to be well used. At time of survey several people were out walking/ jogging/dog walking.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident from survey	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	The recreational value of the GW here is based on its access to unspoilt, peaceful countryside with views to Thurnby being especially unique. Any development in this area would invariably impact negatively on these special qualities.	
Perception of tranquillity	Very tranquil in character. No noise other than occasional vehicle on local route between Stoughton and Thurnby. No city noise evident.	

#### Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 4

Location: 4 – Layby on Thurnby/Stoughton Road looking northeast/south east  
 Time and date of site visit: 3.10pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	Fields immediately adjacent in arable use. Views of Thurnby slopes where agricultural fields are generally smaller with a mix of arable and grassland. Small area of woodland on edge of eastern edge of GW. Bridleway to southern edge	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Thurnby/Bushby to north. Elsewhere agricultural land/open countryside.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Field boundaries are marked by hedgerows of varying quality. Scattering of mature trees along field boundaries. Bushby Brook runs across the northern part of the area. Excellent views of valley form of Bushby Brook.	
Topography	Undulating arable land which falls away in the north to Bushby Brook before rising steeply to edge of Thurnby/Bushby. This sloping land levels out more to the east of the GW south of Thurnby.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Thurnby/Bushby/Leicester/Houghton on the Hill	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Feel as though well out into the countryside with panoramic views across to Thurnby/Bushby and Houghton further along the A47.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	For the most part the GW boundary follows field boundaries. Where it does not the boundary takes in wider field margin, skirts the coppice area and cuts across to next available field boundary.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	GW boundary bisects one field but this is unavoidable as it is an extensive field which extends well into open countryside. It would not be feasible to follow field boundary in this location. The north eastern boundary follows a field boundary that no longer exists. GW needs to be taken east to existing field boundary.	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	There is no built development within this part of the GW	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Development in this area would be in open countryside and would impact greatly on the open, tranquil quality of the area. Any development along the slopes adjacent to Thurnby/Bushby would	

	interfere with the panoramic views offered by the GW	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details	Whilst not directly providing green open space within the urban environment this part of the GW links with the urban area via RoWs to provide stunning views which are not available from the built up area itself	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Footpath D24 runs from Thurnby south through the area and links in to bridleways D25 (which runs east west across the Green Wedge i.e. from Evington) and D14 which is also within the GW.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	Footpath/bridleway access is plentiful as described above.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	
Details	Very good. Paths across fields are compacted earth. Well signed with stiles where needed	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Several people were using the paths on the survey day (dog walking, jogging, walking)	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evidenced	
Could the integrity/quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	This part of the GW offers excellent access to views and tranquil, open countryside which could be threatened if the GW status was removed, especially with regard to the edge of Thurnby/Bushby.	



## Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 5

Location: 5 – Bridleway D25 southwards

Time and date of site visit: 3.40pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	In northern part of the area the fields in use for tree growing. Rest of fields, around Stoughton Lodge Farm, are arable.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Adjacent to residential part of Evington and Judge Meadow College to west. Also adjoins Leicester City's part of the Green Wedge (this includes the playing fields of the college). Stoughton Lodge Farm (residential development) lies in the centre of the area.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	2 area of broad leaved woodland lie within the area, one of which is Jones's Spinney. Otherwise hedgerows and occasional mature trees are a feature of the agricultural landscape. Evington Brook runs SE to NW across the area (not as heavily vegetated as Busby Brook however)	
Topography	Broadly undulating farmland, falling away slightly to south west.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Evington / Thurnby. Judge Meadow College impacts on view across to Evington	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	There is a perception of distance to Evington and beyond	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	District boundary defines the Harborough's part of the GW here.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	The only built development is the residential development associated with Stoughton Lodge Farm. Stoughton village is to south east of the area	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	It would be development in open countryside and impact on rural character of the wider GW area including Leicester and O & Ws areas. It would also impact on the separation between Leicester and Stoughton.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details		

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways /bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Bridleway D25 runs across the north of the area, linking with other footpaths north and south. National Cycle Network on-road Route 63 follows the road to the south of the area from Evington to Stoughton.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	RoW footpath D25 and Cycle route allow views across the area. The undeveloped nature of the area contributing to the rural quality and tranquillity of the GW	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	
Details	RoWs/Cycle route are well sign posted	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Footpath use witnessed	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident	
Could the integrity/quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No this central part of the GW is essential to its openness and tranquillity.	

## Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 6

Location: 6 – East of Stoughton Bridleway D14

Time and date of site visit: 4.00pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	Large agricultural fields around Stoughton village. Smaller improved grassland fields in and adjacent to village.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Leicester Airport adjacent to south east. Otherwise agricultural land (arable and improved/semi-improved grassland).	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Two woodland areas – Dam's Spinney and Brook Spinney. High hedgerows and mature trees are features throughout the area,	
Topography	Stoughton occupies a relatively high position in relation to the rest of the GW with the land gently undulating down to Evington Brook to the west.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Evington and the wider Leicester area. Also Stoughton and Thurnby/Bushby	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	There are relatively distant views from the higher ground around Stoughton, over Leicester PUA to East Midlands Airport and Ratcliffe on Soar power station. Real perception of distance as a result.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Follows district boundary with O&W and Leicester City and field boundaries for the most part. Only one part at boundary with airport does it not follow hedgerow boundary.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	There is not an obvious alternative boundary at Airport which could be substituted.	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	Stoughton village is located fully within the GW here although the boundary goes round the settlement following limits to development. Ribbon development along Stoughton Road leading out of Evington lies within the GW boundary.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Development in this part of the Green Wedge would have a detrimental effect not only on Harborough's part of the GW but also on neighbouring authority parts by impacting on open countryside and tranquillity, and on the separation between Stoughton and the Leicester PUA.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	
Details	Viewing the GW as a whole (across all 3 authority areas) this area provides extended green open	

	space for the PUA.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways /bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	The National Cycle Network on-road Route (63) runs along Stoughton Road from Leicester through Stoughton. A bridleway (RoW D15) leads from Stoughton out to the south east of the GW.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	Cycle way and RoW.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	
Details	RoW well signed and good condition. Cycleway signposted.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	No evidence on this at site visit.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident	
Could the integrity/quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?		

## Thurnby/Leicester/Oadby Green Wedge site visit: 7

Location: 7 – Stoughton Lane looking east

Time and date of site visit: 4.15pm 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Land use description	Large arable agricultural fields to north. Ribbon development comprising detached houses along southern side of Stoughton Lane. Jones Spinney and a further unnamed spinney to north. Brook forms boundary with Leicester City.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Neighbouring Green Wedges	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Small spinney. Medium height hedgerows with occasional mature trees.	
Topography	Land rises from brook at edge of GW, levels out then rises gently to Stoughton.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?		No
Details	Evington (particularly Judgemeanow School) on higher ground to north can be seen from road.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	There are relatively distant views across to Evington.	
Does this part of current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	The District boundary with Leicester City and Oadby and Wigston form the GW boundary here. Green wedge designations extend beyond administrative boundary.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	N/A	
Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	Residential development extends along much of Stoughton Lane (southside). Other residential development at Stoughton Lodge Farm impacts less on the GW.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Any intensification of development in this area would further impact on the openness of this GW.	
Does this part of green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details	Although there is residential development along Stoughton Lane, it is not urban in character. However Leicester (Evington) is close by although not visible.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways /bridle	Yes	

paths)		
Details	The National Cycle Network on-road Route (63) runs along Stoughton Lane and through Stoughton.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public		No
Details	Only on the on-road cycle route. There are no RoW here.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	
Details	Cycleway signposted.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None evident	
Could the integrity/quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No recreational uses evident	