

Harborough District Council

Settlement Profile: Bitteswell with Bittesby



May 2015

General Introduction

This settlement profile has been prepared as part of the evidence base for the preparation of the new Local Plan. The new Local Plan, which will cover the period 2011 – 2031, will review and replace existing Core Strategy policies.

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. The new Local Plan will set out a strategy to meet these higher housing numbers, whilst ensuring that sustainable economic development is supported, infrastructure is delivered, local communities are protected, environmental capacity is respected, the quality of the built environment and heritage assets are protected and the level of development is not disproportionate to the size of the settlement and the level of services.

This profile seeks to summarise currently available evidence in relation to the settlement which, along with other evidence, will be used in determining the appropriate amount of development to be directed to the settlement to 2031. The profile does not seek to set out future policy as this will be done through the new Local Plan and any reference to Core Strategy policies is to provide context only.

Section D of the profile sets out the findings of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for the settlement. It should be noted that the sites shown are not allocations and their inclusion in no way implies that planning permission for housing will be granted. Information in the SHLAA regarding potential sites will be part of a range of evidence used in deciding the appropriate scale of housing development for the settlement.

It is important to note that the profile only provides a snapshot of the evidence available for the settlement at a point in time. Every effort will be made to incorporate new evidence as it becomes available.

The settlement profile is split into the following sections:

- Introduction
- A) Transport and Communications
- B) Local Services and Facilities
- C) Natural Environment
- D) Built Environment
- E) Local Employment and Economic Activity
- Emerging Findings
- Appendix 1 (Maps)

Bitteswell with Bittesby Profile

Introduction

General Location: Bitteswell with Bittesby (hereby referred to as Bitteswell), lies immediately to the north-west of Lutterworth, the A4303 and the A426, as well as being between the A5 and M1 (junction 20). Market Harborough is approximately 15 miles to the west and therefore, Bitteswell lies close to the District's border with the Borough of Rugby. Bitteswell's boundaries are defined by certain stretches of the M1 and A5, the village occupies an area of approximately 1 mile (north to south) and 2 miles (east to west), bordered by Ullesthorpe to the west, Ashby Parva to the north and Gilmorton to the east, whilst the village shares a border with Lutterworth to the south, Magna Park is in the south-west part of the parish.

Bitteswell parish council assumed responsibility for Bittesby parish on 1st April 2014. This amalgamation considerably extended the parish boundaries in the north-westerly area but has had little impact upon the parish's population as Bittesby has a population of only 6 (2001 census). Although this now means that Magna Park lies almost entirely within the parish, the independence of Bitteswell from Magna Park and Lutterworth continues to be a long standing concern, with the physical limits between Bitteswell and Lutterworth being as little as 128 metres at its minimum.

Bitteswell was an important location for the RAF with RAF Bitteswell being located in the south of the parish from 1940-1987. Throughout that time, the area was also home to a Hawker Siddeley factory that built and maintained numerous aircraft. In the present day, Magna Park now occupies the area and is the single largest employer in the district, whilst also being an area of considerable strategic interest on a national level.

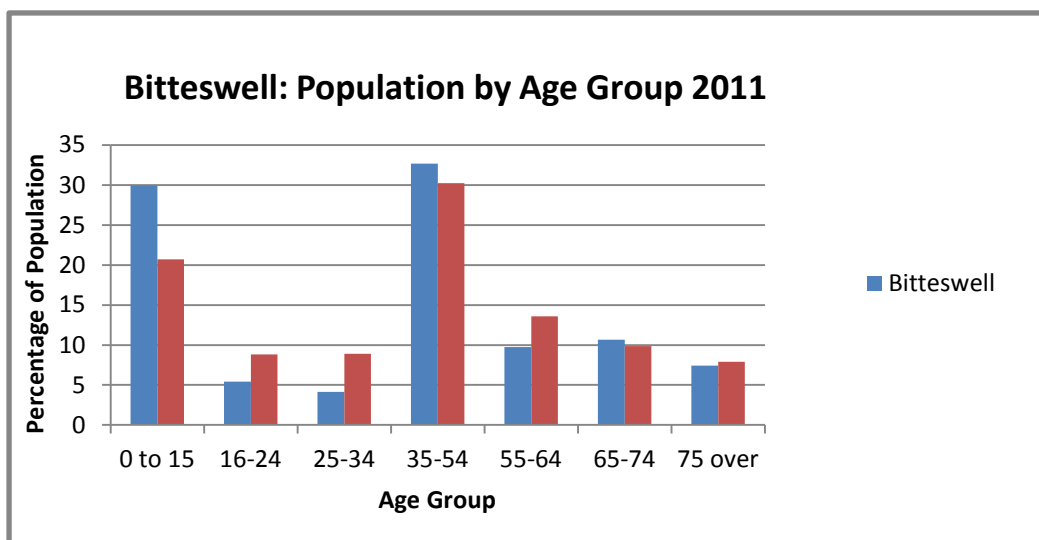
Bitteswell is identified as a Selected Rural Village in the Core Strategy for the District and as such, is outlined as a settlement that would potentially benefit from the support of limited development such as rural housing. It is therefore important to understand the function, key characteristics, role, form, issues, problems, and ultimately sustainability of the settlement, in order to determine the appropriate level of development to be directed towards the settlement and to understand the local community's aspirations for their village.



Key Statistics for Bitteswell Parish (Census 2011):

- Population of 554 (increase of 95 or 21% since 2001 compared to an increase of 11.5% across the District over the same period);
- 30% of population is in 0-15 age group whilst 18% of population is 65 or over;
- Number of dwellings 199 (increase of 8% since 2001);
- Number of households is 195 (increase of 16% since 2001);
- 70% of households have 2 or more cars/vans, whilst 6% of households have no car/van;
- 71% of households live in detached dwellings (compared to 48% across the District);
- 80% of dwellings are owner occupied, 7% are social rented/ shared ownership and 13% are private rented;
- 10% of the population is in bad or very bad health;
- 12% of the population said day to day activities were limited a lot and a further 7% said day to day activities were limited a little through long term health problems or disability. 43 people were residents in a medical and care establishment;
- 3.4% of the population are black and minority ethnic (BME) compared to 1.5% in 2001;
- 80.5% of the population is Christian and 1.3% is other religions (including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh).

Age Structure: The age structure of the population, compared to the District, is set out below. Noticeable differences from the District average centre on the disproportionately large percentage of the population in Bitteswell that are aged 0-15, and a considerable absence of those aged 16-34.



Source: ONS Census 2011

Bitteswell with Bittesby Parish Council

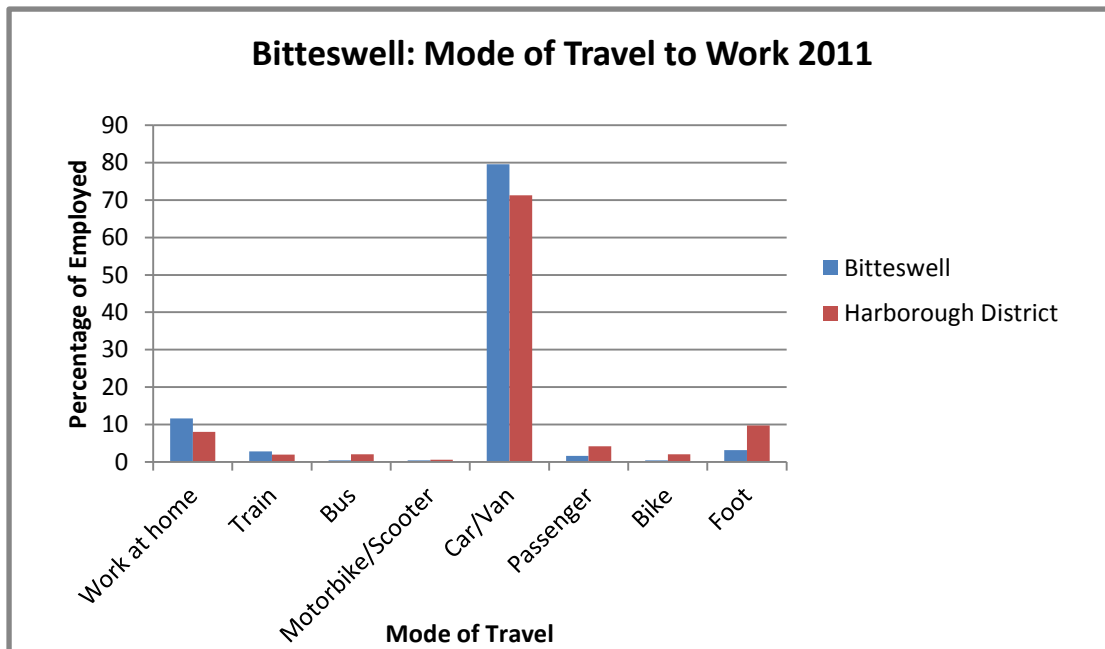
- There are currently five seats on the parish council, meetings take place monthly with the council being particularly active in their involvement with planning matters. Elections are due in 2015;
- Bitteswell has a Parish Plan and Village Design Statement, although the most recent available publications are dated 2004. The above have highlighted certain issues of paramount importance to the population, they include:
 - Conserving the character and separate identity of Bitteswell;
 - By maintaining the present area of separation between Bitteswell and Lutterworth, Ullesthorpe and Magna Park;
 - By sustaining the numerous communal green spaces and generous space around dwellings, to retain the open nature of the village;
 - By enforcing adherence to the limits to development that are defined for the village;
 - Limiting development to small sites only, with a strict control over large scale commercial development;
 - Reduce the speed and occurrence of vehicle passing through the village.
 - Re-establishing a community store/post office in the village;
 - Establishment of cycle paths and walkways to reduce the need for car transport.
- The Parish Council has expressed an interest in taking the lead on the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish.
- Highlighted issues: Enforcement, Magna Park and traffic calming.

For more information: <http://bitteswell.leicestershireparishcouncils.org/>
<http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/bitteswell/>

The next sections consider Bitteswell's:

A) Transport and Communications

- **Transport;**
 - Rail: Bitteswell's nearest railway stations are Rugby (6 miles), Hinckley (9 miles) and Market Harborough (15 miles).
 - Bus services/frequency:
 - Arriva service X44: Leicester – Fosse Park – Broughton Astley – Lutterworth – Rugby, Monday – Saturday hourly service from 7am – 8pm (no Sunday or Bank Holiday service).
 - Bus stops:
 - Outside The Green to Lutterworth/Rugby; and
 - Opposite The Green to Leicester.
 - Travel to work: Over 79% of people drive a car or van to work (further 1.6% are passengers). This is higher than the District average of 71%. Almost 12% work from home.



Source: ONS Census 2011

- Bitteswell is covered by the Lutterworth Community Transport initiative which can provide transport for shopping, visiting friends and relatives, social activities and health appointments for the elderly, the mobility impaired/disabled, the rurally isolated and those who find it difficult to use public transport.
- **Car Ownership:** Whilst the majority of households have access to at least one car or van, 11 (5.6%) of households do not have a car or van available for use, lower than in 2001 and considerably lower than the comparable district percentage of 11.8%. During this same period the percentage of households with 3 or more cars has increased from 14.7% to 19.0% indicating an increasing reliance on private transport. The total number of vehicles in the parish has risen from 274 to 368 over the past 10 years, an increase of 34%.
- **Connectivity: Broadband Coverage:**
 - The majority of Bitteswell has fibre broadband, delivered by commercial providers without public investment. However, further investment in fibre broadband that will cover the entirety of the parish is scheduled for completion between summer 2014 and summer 2015.
 - <http://www.superfastleicestershire.org.uk/when-and-where/>

B) Local Services and Facilities

Bitteswell currently has Selected Rural Village status in the Harborough District Core Strategy (2011). This means that development (such as rural housing) will be on a small and limited scale that reflects the size and character of the settlement and its service provision. Consistent with this, the Core Strategy supports the maintenance of an area of separation between Bitteswell and Magna Park/Lutterworth. Bitteswell's Selected Rural Village status has been identified on the basis of the presence of at

least two of six relevant services (food store, GP surgery, library, post office, primary school and pub). This section is concerned with the range of services and facilities in Bitteswell to determine whether the village can continue to function as a Selected Rural Village going forward.

- **Key services present:**
 - Primary school (St Marys C of E Primary School, the Green);
 - Pubs (The Man at Arms, The Green; The Olde Royal Oak, Valley Lane).

- **Other services/ community facilities present:**
 - Village Hall (Manor Road);
 - Bitteswell Church (Lutterworth Road);
 - Lutterworth Country Park (off Brookfield Way, although within Bitteswell Parish it is essentially a Lutterworth facility);
 - The Village Greens for recreation, children’s play and events (The Green);
 - Cricket club and pitch (Ullesthorpe Road);
 - Mobile Library (fortnightly on alternate Fridays);
 - Care Home (Ashby Lane).

Infrastructure Capacity Issues:

Early consultation with infrastructure providers identifies specific issues regarding:

- Need for further equipment at Lutterworth GP practices. S106 contributions to the provision of further equipment would be sought;
- Capacity of primary school. S106 contributions to the extension of the village primary school would be sought;
- Shortfall in types of open space. Appropriate S106 contributions would be sought where a shortfall in certain types of open space is identified.

Bitteswell has 2 out of the 6 key services identified in the Core Strategy. Based on the Core Strategy definition, the services and facilities in Bitteswell support its continued designation as a Selected Rural Village. No insurmountable infrastructure constraints have been identified to date.

C) Natural Environment

Natural Environment Constraints in and around Bitteswell

Issue/Constraint	Commentary
<p>Landscape:</p> <p>District Landscape Character Assessment (2007)</p>	<p>Located within the Lutterworth Lowlands Landscape Character Area which has medium – high landscape capacity to accommodate development (in general terms it is an area that is able to accommodate development or change with only minor compromise or degradation of the existing landscape).</p>

Lutterworth and Broughton Astley landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2011)	The capacity of the landscape around Bitteswell was assessed as part of the Lutterworth study. The study found that the area least suitable for development is the land between Bitteswell and Lutterworth. The landscape capacity map for the Bitteswell area is included at Appendix 1.
Area of Separation	Bitteswell, Magna Park and Lutterworth Area of Separation is defined in 'saved' Local Plan policy EV/3. Core Strategy policy supports the continuation of such a designation in principle with the boundaries being defined in an allocations document (the new Local Plan). The purpose of the separation area is not only to prevent coalescence with Lutterworth but also to maintain the separation between Bitteswell and Magna Park.
Tree Preservation Orders	Tree on green in front of Chestnut Cottage and Chestnut House
SSSI	None in vicinity.
Local Wildlife Sites	None identified at present.
Protected Species and Wildlife Corridors	Bats Badgers The 2008 Phase 1 Habitat Survey identified Bitteswell Brook and mature hedgerows around Bitteswell as important wildlife corridors.
Areas at risk of flooding	Flood Zones 2 and 3 identified around Bitteswell Brook and other brook running south west of Bitteswell but they do not affect the main village.
Footpaths and Bridleways	2 footpaths lead into open countryside to the south of the village whilst another leads west from the village to join Ullesthorpe Road.
Country Park	Lutterworth Country Park is relatively close to the village adjacent to Bitteswell Brook. It is in the parish but is essentially a Lutterworth facility.
Other settlement/local features	The village greens are an important part of the village character.

D) Built Environment

Number of Dwellings: The Census 2011 found that there were 199 dwellings in Bitteswell, representing an 8% increase since the 2001 Census, compared to an increase of 12% across the District.

The number of properties in the parish liable for council tax is 205 (2014).

Completions, Commencements and Planning Permissions: From 2011 to March 2014 the Council has recorded no net gain in terms of house completions (although 2 replacement dwellings have been completed). As of March 2014 there was 1 dwelling under construction and 3 residential units with outstanding planning permission.

Housing Land Supply: The recently completed 2014 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment forms part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan and supports the delivery of sufficient land for housing across the District. The study identifies sites with potential for housing, assesses their housing potential and assesses when they are likely to be developed (next 5 years, 6-10 years, 11 -15 years and 16+ years). It should be noted that the sites identified are not allocations and sites still need to be taken through the normal planning application process for full consideration.

The following table summarises the SHLAA findings in relation to developable sites in Bitteswell (a map of the sites is included at Appendix 1). The full document is available at:

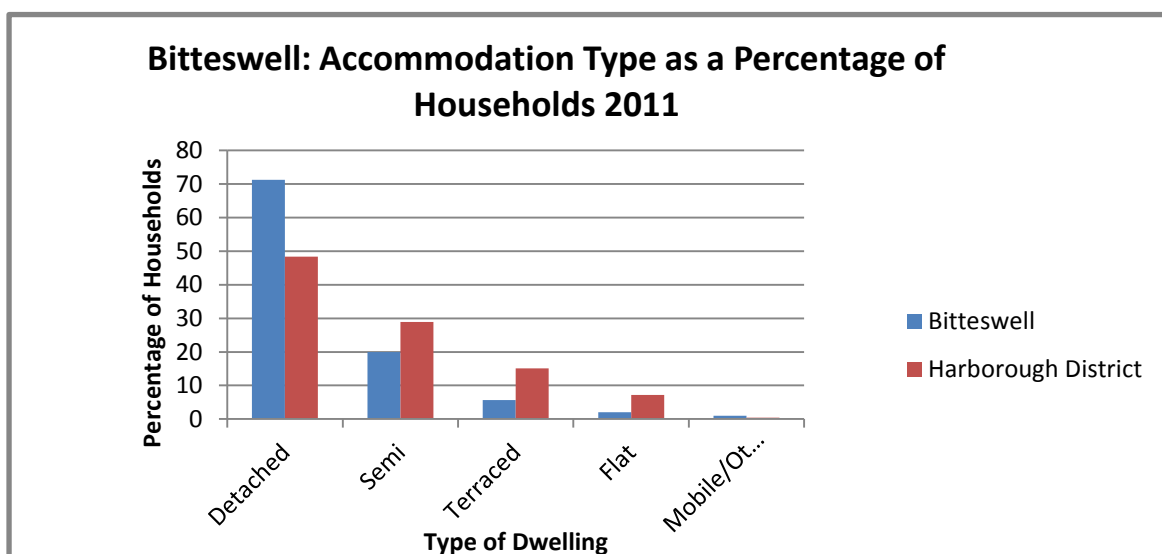
http://www.harborough.gov.uk/directory_record/571/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_20132014.

No. developable sites identified in SHLAA 2014	Total area of developable sites	Estimated yield of developable sites (dwellings)	Estimated timeframe for development of developable site (no. of dwellings)			
			0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 – 15 years	16+ years
3	7.44ha	129	-	79	-	50

A new call for sites for potential housing development took place early in 2015 and a SHLAA update is underway.

Tenure: In 2011, 79.5% of dwellings were owner occupied, a little above the District figure of 78% and down from 2001 when 83.9% of dwellings were owner occupied. 6.6% were social rented/ shared ownership and 12.9% were private rented (up from 4.3% in 2001).

Accommodation Type: In terms of housing type, the percentage of households living in detached dwellings (72.3%) in 2011 was well above the District level of 48.4%.



Source: ONS Census 2011

Under Occupancy: The 2011 Census found that 65% of households had at least 2 more bedrooms than required well above the District figure of 49%.

Households: Of the 195 households in Bitteswell:

- 18% are one person households (compared to 26% across the District);
- 24% are pensioner only households (compared to 23% across the District);
- 10% are single pensioner households (compared to 13% across the District).
- 37% have dependent children (compared to 30% across the District).

Built Environment Features/Heritage Assets/Designations

Issue/Constraint	Commentary
Conservation Area	Bitteswell Conservation Area was first designated in 1972. The boundary was revised in March 2005 to include the area up to Bitteswell Brook to the east and south of the village. See map at Appendix 1.
Scheduled Monuments	None
Listed Buildings:	
Grade I	None
Grade II*	Church of St Mary
Grade II	12
Ridge and Furrow	Not known – Local input needed
Archaeological Sites	Not known – Local input needed
Recreation Grounds/Play Areas	None identified
Open Space, Sport and Recreation	See map at Appendix 1
Proposed Local Green Space	No sites suitable for proposed for designation at present.

E) Local Employment and Economic Activity

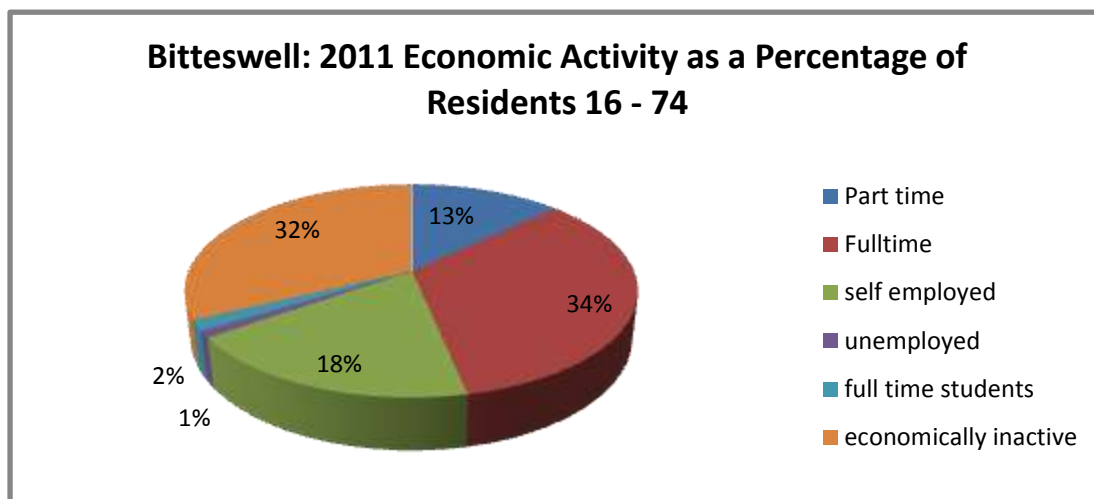
Local Employment: There are no purpose built employment premises in Bitteswell village itself. However, the parish includes much of Magna Park Distribution Centre, which the Council's Existing Employment Area Review recommends should be identified in policy as a Key Employment Area for the District. It is one of the largest dedicated strategic logistics parks in the UK, is the single largest site of employment activity in the District and one of the 6 largest Business Parks in the county. It occupies some 200ha and provides approximately 750,000m² of warehouse floorspace. The site has been established for some 20 years and comprises

approximately 27 units, providing in the region of 6,000 jobs (up from 4,984 in 2001), approximately 20% of all the jobs in the District.

Current Core Strategy policy CS7 seeks to protect Magna Park’s unique role but states that no further phase of development or large scale expansion of the site, beyond the existing development footprint will be supported. New evidence in relation to the future need for land for the storage and distribution sector across Leicester and Leicestershire is currently underway and will be evidence in the preparation of the new Local Plan and the policy approach to Magna Park.

Lutterworth and its employment opportunities are also accessible to the village. Despite this few residents (fewer than 4% of those employed) either walk or cycle to work. However, almost 12% of those in employment work from home or mainly from home, higher than the District figure of 8%.

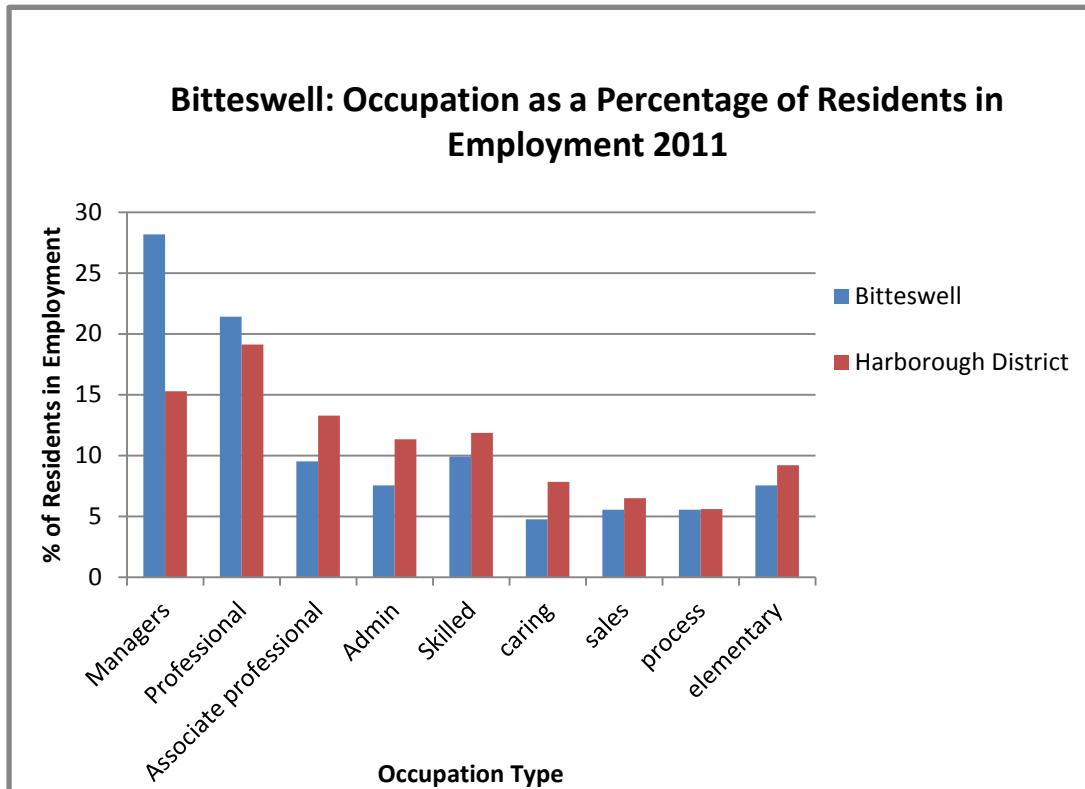
Economic Activity: In 2011, 78% of the Bitteswell population aged 16-74 was economically active, higher than the District figure of 74% and much higher than the regional and national levels of 69% and 70% respectively. The unemployment rate of 1.1% was lower than the District figure of 2.5%. The rate of self employment (18%) was well above the District level of almost 13%. Of the economically inactive, 44% were retired.



Source: ONS Census 2011

Qualifications (16 and over population): In 2011 the percentage without any qualifications was 15.5%, lower than the comparable District figure of 18% and well below the regional and national levels of 23% and 25% respectively. The percentage with a degree or higher degree was 23%, above the District figure of 19%.

Occupation: Most noticeable is that in 2011 the percentage in managerial and professional occupations was almost 50% in Bitteswell, well above the Harborough level (34%) as can be seen from the table below.



Source: ONS Census 2011

Emerging Findings

Opportunities

Bitteswell benefits from a reasonable bus service, good access to the wider road network and good broadband speeds. The village has two key services and an aspiration for a village store. It is very close to Lutterworth with its extended range of services and facilities. There is a high rate of economic activity among residents, with Lutterworth and Magna Park providing local employment opportunities. Working from home and self employment levels are relatively high compared to the District. The percentage of households with children is relatively high but the population in the 16 – 34 age groups is under represented. The rate of under occupation of homes is high compared to the District.

Developable housing land has been identified through the SHLAA and sympathetic development may provide the opportunity to improve the mix of homes.

Development would need to reflect the form of the village and relate well to service provision.

The Parish Council has expressed an interest in leading on the preparation of a neighbourhood plan for the parish.

Constraints

Maintaining Bitteswell's separation from Lutterworth and Magna Park is a local priority. As regards the local landscape there are areas of low landscape capacity around the village.

Development would need to respect the Conservation Area and high number of listed buildings (including their setting) through sensitive design and siting.

The village primary school has limited capacity and an extension may be required. The site would have capacity to accommodate such an extension.

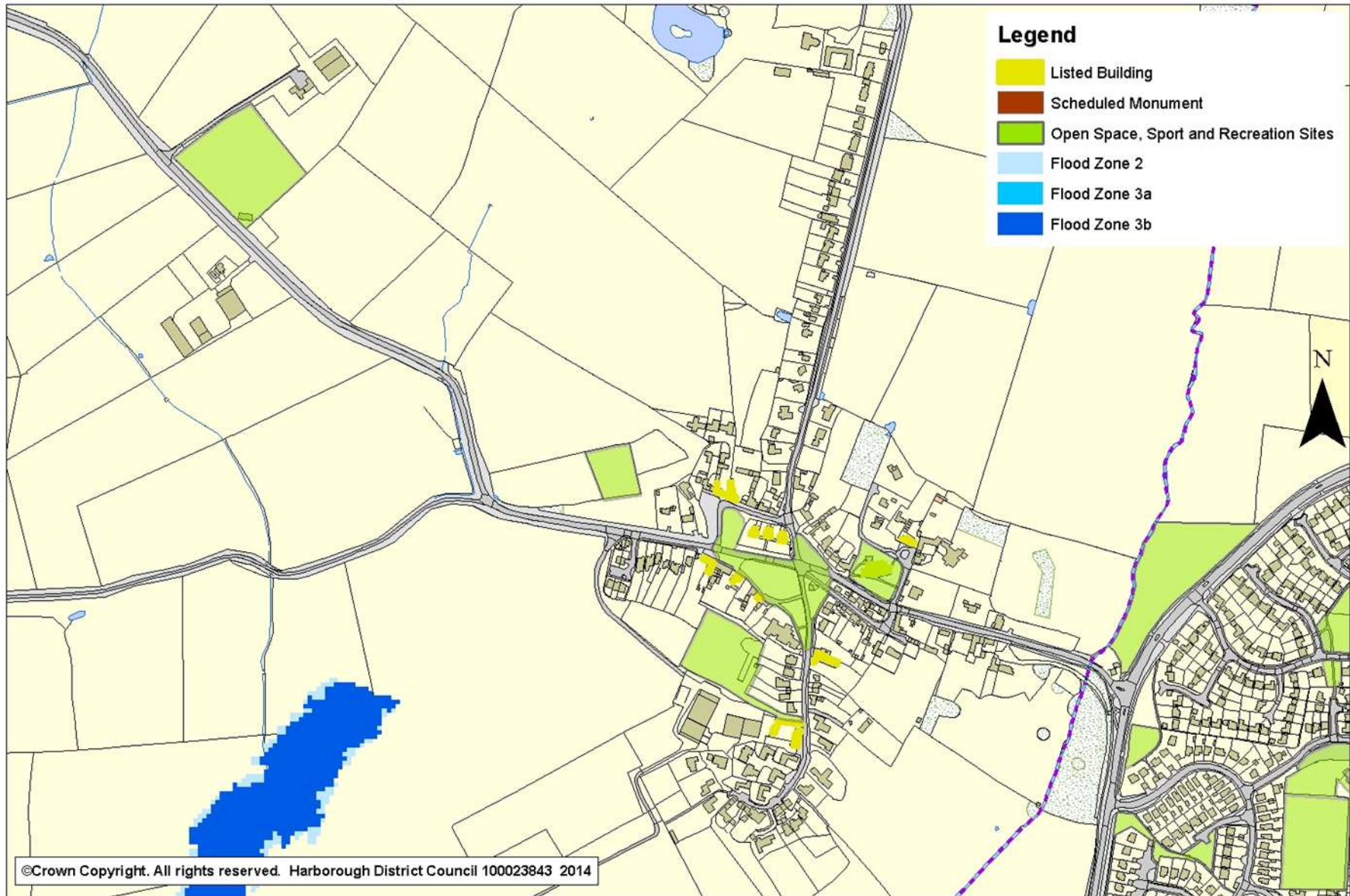
Overall Summary

Bitteswell has the services to support its continued designation as a Selected Rural Village and the capacity to accommodate limited growth providing development is sympathetic to the existing form of the village, local heritage assets, the need to maintain separation from Lutterworth and Magna Park and any specific housing needs of the local population.

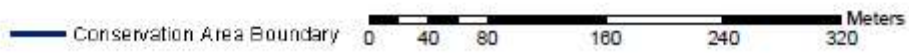
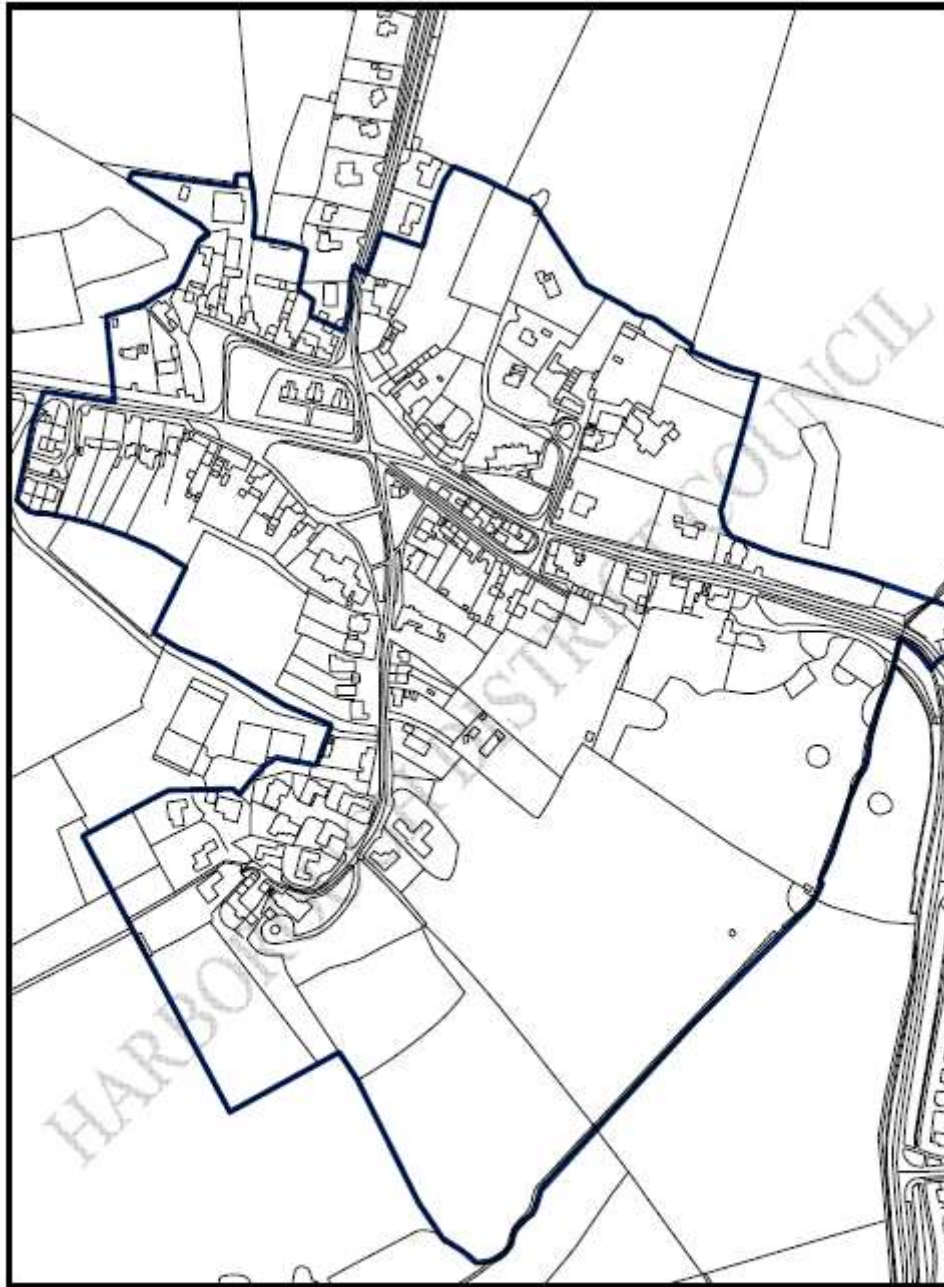
Appendix 1: Maps showing

- **Bitteswell Listed buildings/scheduled monuments/open space, sport and recreation sites/flood zones**
- **Bitteswell Conservation Area**
- **Bitteswell Landscape Capacity**
- **SHLAA 2014 Bitteswell Sites (please note that the map does not show all commitments – only those on sites submitted for consideration as part of the SHLAA)**


Bitteswell



Bitteswell Conservation Area

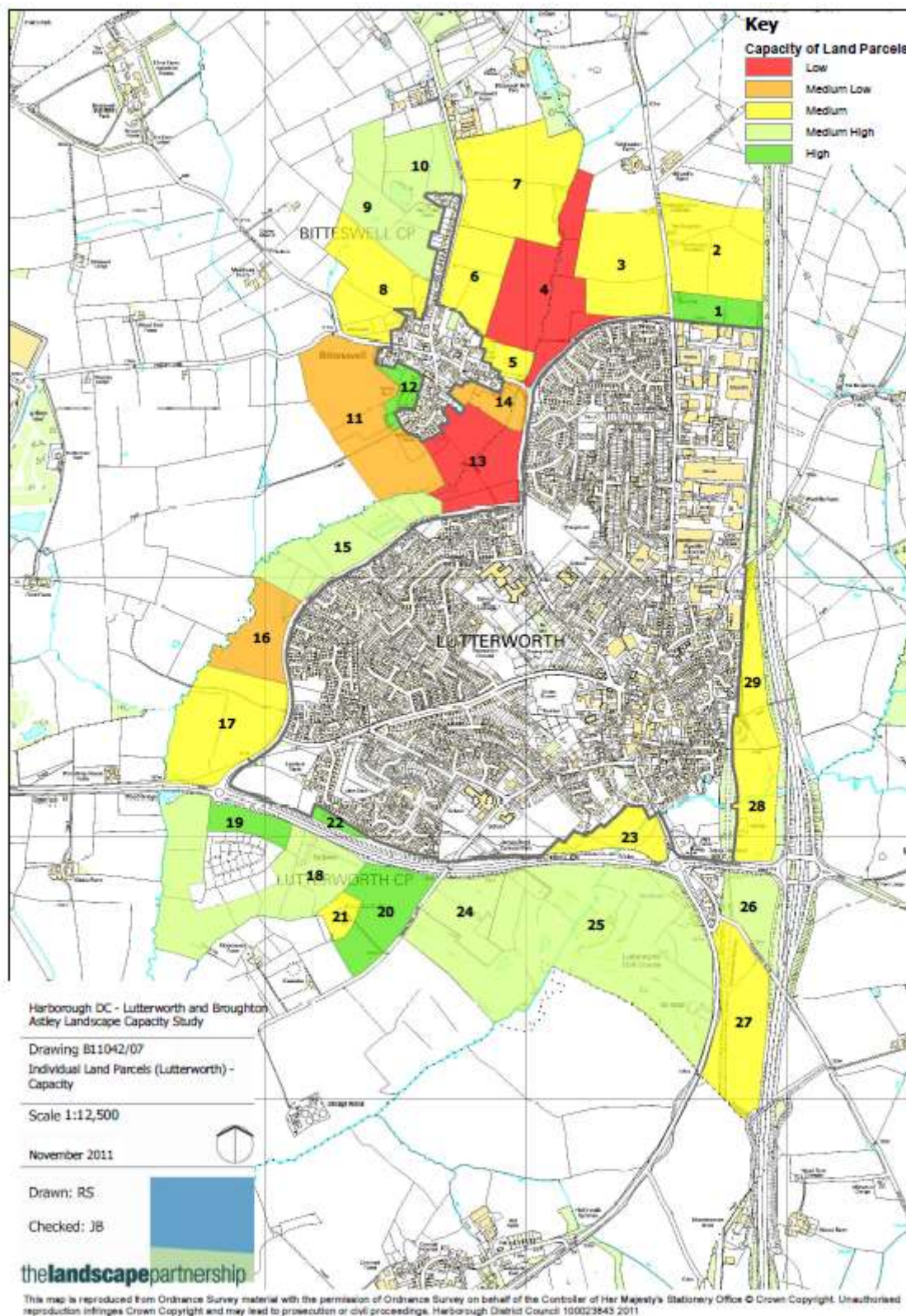


Designated 1972
Boundary Revised 9th March 2005

1:3,325 

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Broughton Astley and Lutterworth LCA – Bitteswell landscape capacity (taken from Broughton Astley and Lutterworth Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2011))



SHLAA 2014 Lutterworth North & Bitteswell Sites

