

Harborough District Council

**Proposed
Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby
Green Wedge: Background report**



March 2018

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge is currently one of two Green Wedge designations within Harborough District. It was originally defined in 'retained' Policy EV/2 of the 2001 Local Plan¹. The boundaries of the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge were amended in 2016 by Policy S6 of the Scraptoft Neighbourhood Plan 2016² (see Figure 2.1 below).
- 1.2 The Core Strategy (2011)³ 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 Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031, which underwent proposed submission consultation in September-November 2017, will replace the Core Strategy and sets out the proposed development strategy for the District to 2031 along with strategic allocations to meet development needs. It also identifies the District's strategic green infrastructure, including a proposed Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge⁴ (see Appendix 1) to replace the current Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge and the Area of Separation defined in the Scraptoft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3 This report outlines how the Proposed Submission Local Plan impacts on the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge and provides further explanation for the new Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge designation as proposed in Policy GD7.
- 1.4 The 2015 Green Wedge Review: Technical Update was published to accompany the Local Plan Options Consultation. It set out the policy background and objectives relating to Green Wedges as well as the methodology adopted in the review of boundaries. However, it was prepared prior to the emergence of the Local Plan's spatial strategy. This was recognised at paragraph 3.6.4 as follows:

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.
- 1.5 This report therefore provides an update to the 2015 Review in relation to the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge and supersedes its findings in relation to the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge.

¹ [Local Plan 2001](#)

² [Scraptoft Neighbourhood Plan 2016](#)

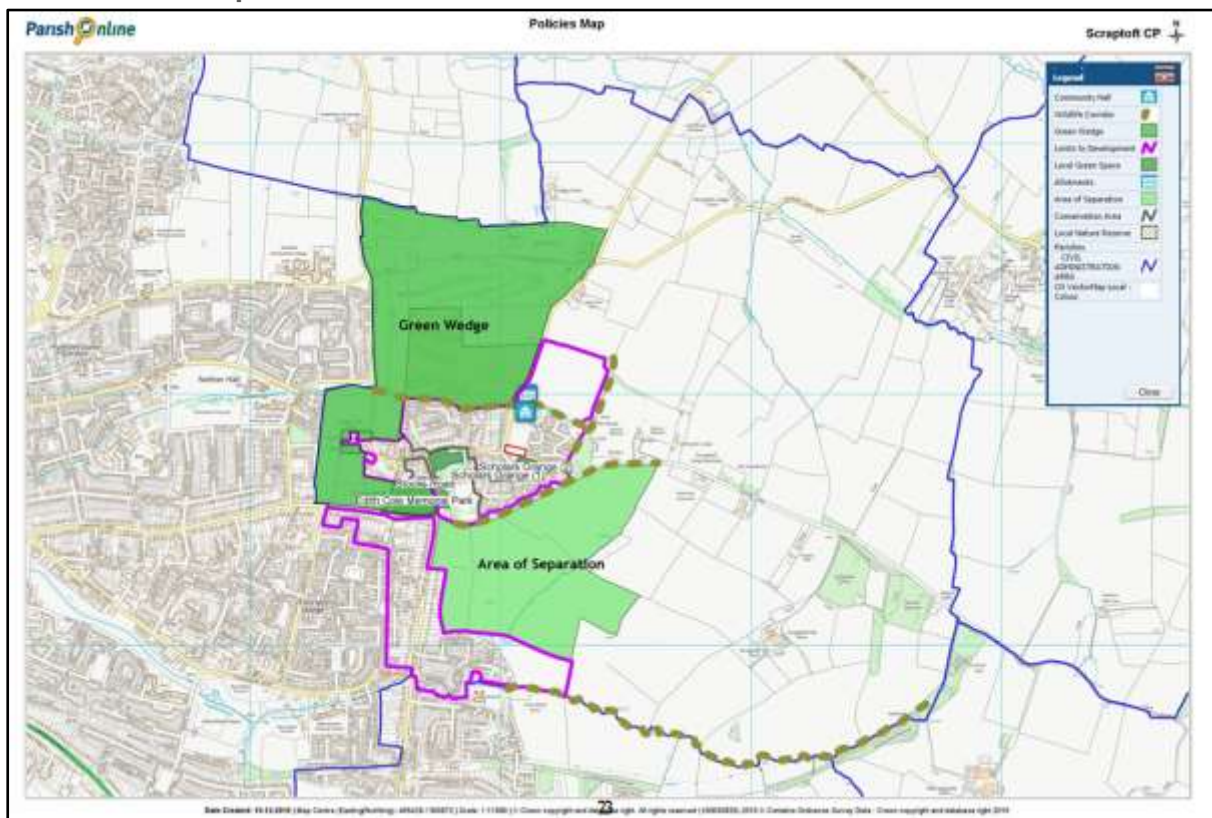
³ [Core Strategy 2011](#)

⁴ http://www.harborough.gov.uk/downloads/file/3495/a1_scraptoft_thurnby_bushbypdf

2. Current Green Wedge boundary

- 2.1 The Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' in March 2016. It defined an amended Leicester/Scraftoft Green Wedge (see Figure 2.1 below) and was informed by the Green Wedge Review (2015). The designation covers an area of over 70 hectares, adjoining both Leicester City and Charnwood Borough.
- 2.2 The majority of the Green Wedge lies to the north of Scraftoft 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 Scraftoft Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Scraftoft Golf Course. Scraftoft Brook runs along the southern edge.
- 2.3 The southern part of the Green Wedge extends south of Scraftoft Brook to incorporate the Edith Cole Memorial Park. It lies between Scraftoft village and Leicester City and at its narrowest the separation is less than 100 metres.

Figure 2.1: Leicester/Scraftoft Green Wedge as defined on Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map

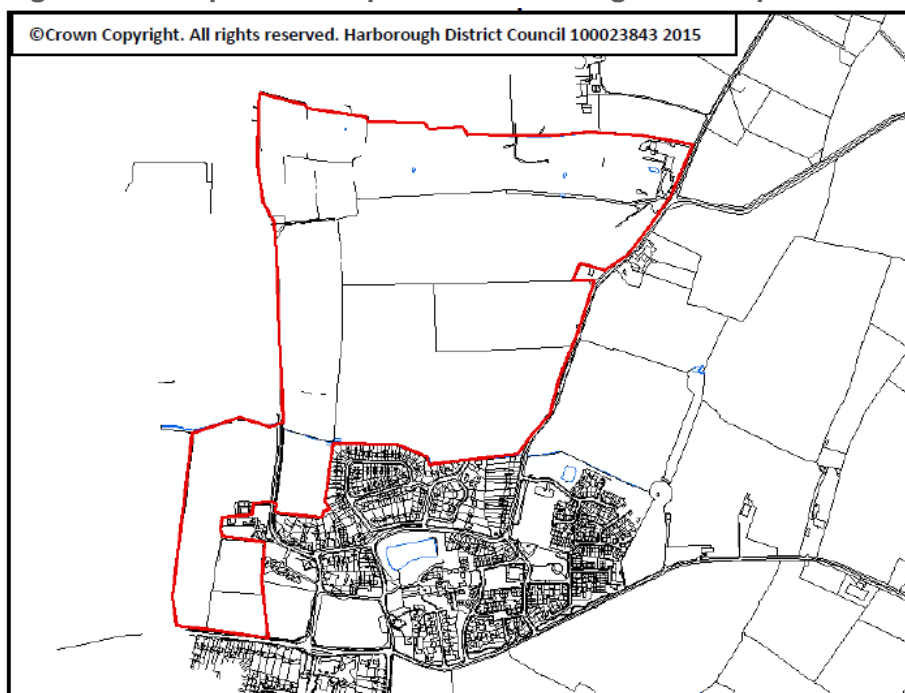


Source: Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan 2016

3. Proposed Submission Harborough Local Plan 2011- 2031

- 3.1 In light of the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 and evidence showing higher housing need than set out in the Core Strategy, work on the preparation of a new Local Plan has been ongoing since 2013 when a Scoping Consultation took place. This was followed by a Local Plan Options Consultation⁵ which took place in September/October 2015 and set out 9 alternative distribution options.
- 3.2 Following the Options consultation, analysis of the options and further evidence gathering took place with a view to developing a spatial strategy on which to base the Local Plan. As part of this process, the full details of which are detailed in the Spatial Strategy Topic Paper, an option relating to a Scraptoft North Strategic Development Area (SDA) emerged. This proposed a development of 1200 dwellings on land to the north and west of Scraptoft village, incorporating the Scraptoft Golf Club, all of which formed part of the designated Green Wedge between Scraptoft and Leicester City. The site was assessed as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update (May 2016) (see Figure 3.1 below). This proposal became one of four Selected Options which were subject to further testing.

Figure 3.1: Proposed Scraptoft North Strategic Development Area boundary



Source: SHLAA Update (May 2016)

- 3.3 The Selected Options assessment process is described in the Spatial Strategy Topic paper. This led to the identification of the Scraptoft North SDA as part of the strategy for meeting Harborough District's housing requirements, together with provision for unmet needs likely to arise from Leicester City and further flexibility to allow for future circumstances affecting the supply of housing.

⁵ [New Local Plan Options 2015](#)

- 3.4 The impact of the development of the Scraptoft North SDA on the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge was considered through the Sustainability Appraisal assessment of effects on built and natural heritage. Moderate negative effects were predicted for Scraptoft in this category. However, overall the benefits and advantages of a strategic development on land to the north of Scraptoft and adjacent to the City were considered to outweigh the loss of this part of the Green Wedge designation.
- 3.5 The loss of a large part of the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge resulting from the allocation of the Scraptoft North SDA is proposed to be compensated by the designation of a new Green Wedge incorporating the open land to the west of Scraptoft village and extending into the Area of Separation between Scraptoft and Bushby. It was recognised that this would be an important part of any strategy for Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby and would be beneficial for local residents including those within Leicester City. It would not only compensate for the loss of a large part of the Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge but also guide future growth and development form. As a result the Proposed Submission Local Plan proposes a new Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge.

4. Proposed Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge

- 4.1 This study provides background to the proposed replacement Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green designation and explains how it fulfils the four functions of a Green Wedge designation as set out in the Proposed Submission Local Plan Policy GD7 as follows:
- Preventing the merging of settlements;
 - Guiding development form;
 - Providing access from urban areas into green spaces/open countryside; and
 - Providing recreational opportunities.
- 4.2 These functions are recognised and supported by the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011)⁶ which is the result of joint working in relation to Green Wedges. The strategic function of the network of Green Wedges across the Leicester PUA means that Green Wedge policy not only needs to work for the benefit of local Harborough residents but also for those living in the wider Leicester principal urban area. The Council is working with neighbouring local authorities under the duty to cooperate to ensure that Green Wedge boundaries are robust and meet the needs of neighbouring communities.
- 4.3 Many Leicestershire authorities, including Harborough, have cross boundary Green Wedges and, in order for a consistent approach to reviewing

⁶ [The Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology July 2011](#)

boundaries, the joint methodology was developed in 2009 and amended in 2011. Whilst the methodology has not been updated recently, it remains a useful starting point in assessing how areas perform in terms of meeting the aims of green wedges.

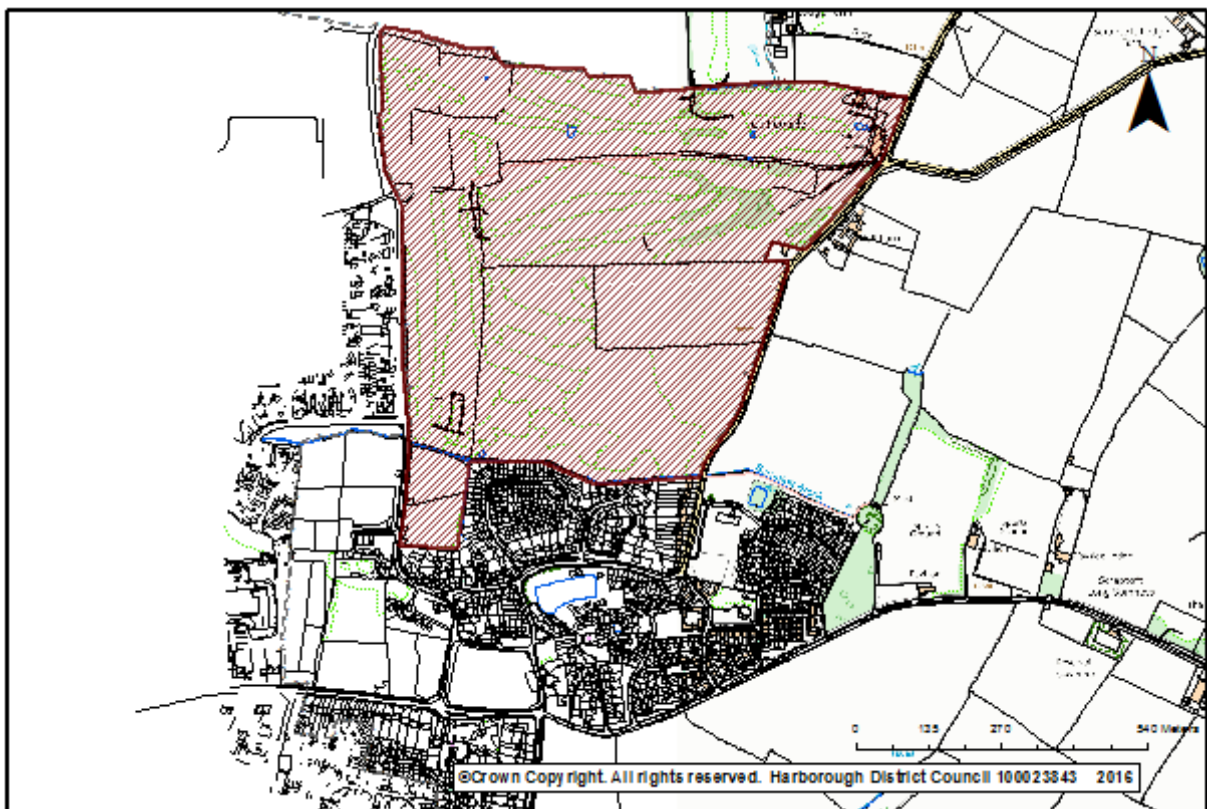
- 4.4 The methodology allows for a Green Wedge review to be carried out at a macro scale (looking at the Green Wedge as a whole) or at a micro scale (sub-dividing the Green Wedge into appropriate sections). Whatever approach is taken, the Green Wedge as a whole should achieve all of the functions as set out in para. 4.1 above. At the micro scale however sub-areas may not meet all four Green Wedge functions. Whilst it is acknowledged that this report is not a review, a similar process has been adopted in assessing how the proposed Green Wedge meets these functions.
- 4.5 A desk top review was undertaken initially to collect data relating to the Green Wedge relating to the following:
- main land uses/adjacent uses;
 - physical Green Wedge boundaries;
 - topography/key physical features;
 - public access/public Rights of Way (RoW)/informal access;
 - historic environment;
 - minerals and waste;
 - ecology;
 - evidence of development pressures
 - flood risk;
 - socio-economic data; and
 - landscape character assessment and landscape capacity evidence.
- 4.6 The Council's Geographical Information System (GIS) has been interrogated allowing planning histories, public rights of way, flood zones, mineral safeguarding areas, tree preservation orders, listed buildings, local wildlife sites, open space, sport and recreation (OSSR) sites, and high pressure gas pipelines to be identified. Aerial photography was also used to initially identify land uses and vegetation cover/features (see Appendix 4).
- 4.7 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 (see Appendix 3) to be completed detailing land uses/features/functions/topography of specific parts of the Green Wedge. Desk top and site survey findings have been combined to show how the proposed Green Wedge meets the aims set out in Policy GD7.

5. Approach to assessment

5.1 Leicester/Scraptoft Green Wedge assessment sub-areas

5.1.1 Figure 5.1 below identifies the area needed to accommodate at least 1200 dwellings and associated infrastructure at the proposed SDA. This precise location of development has yet to be decided and there will be strategic green infrastructure incorporated as part of the scheme in the area indicated, including around Scraptoft Brook.

Figure 5.1: Main area for development in Scraptoft North SDA

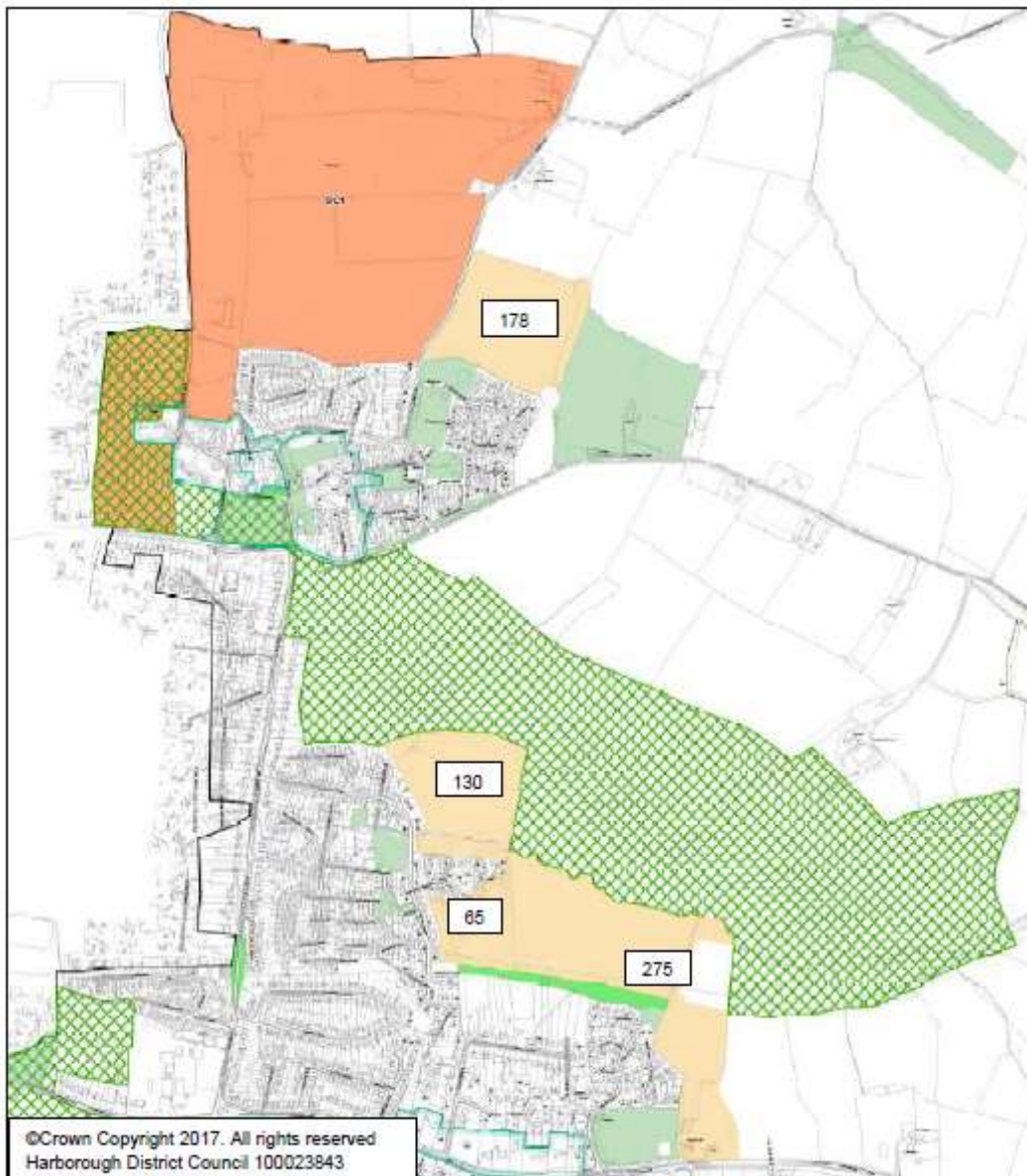


5.1.2 In light of the Submission Local Plan's spatial strategy and the allocation of the Scraptoft North SDA, this report excludes consideration of the area shown in Figure 5.1 and concentrates on the evidence relating to new Green Wedge.

5.1.3 There are a number of outstanding residential commitments in Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby the majority of which have yet to be built. The outstanding commitments on these sites are set out in Figure 5.2 below. As at 30th November 2017 dwelling completions on these sites stood at:

- Land off Beeby Road (14/01637/OUT) 0 of 178 dwgs.
- Land off Pulford Drive (14/00669/OUT) 0 of 130 dwgs;
- Land at Uppingham Road (14/01088/OUT) 0 of 275 dwgs; and
- Land off Pulford Drive (11/01080/OUT) 63 of 128 dwgs.

Figure 5.2: Outstanding commitments in Scruptoft, Thurnby and Bushby showing number of dwellings yet to be built

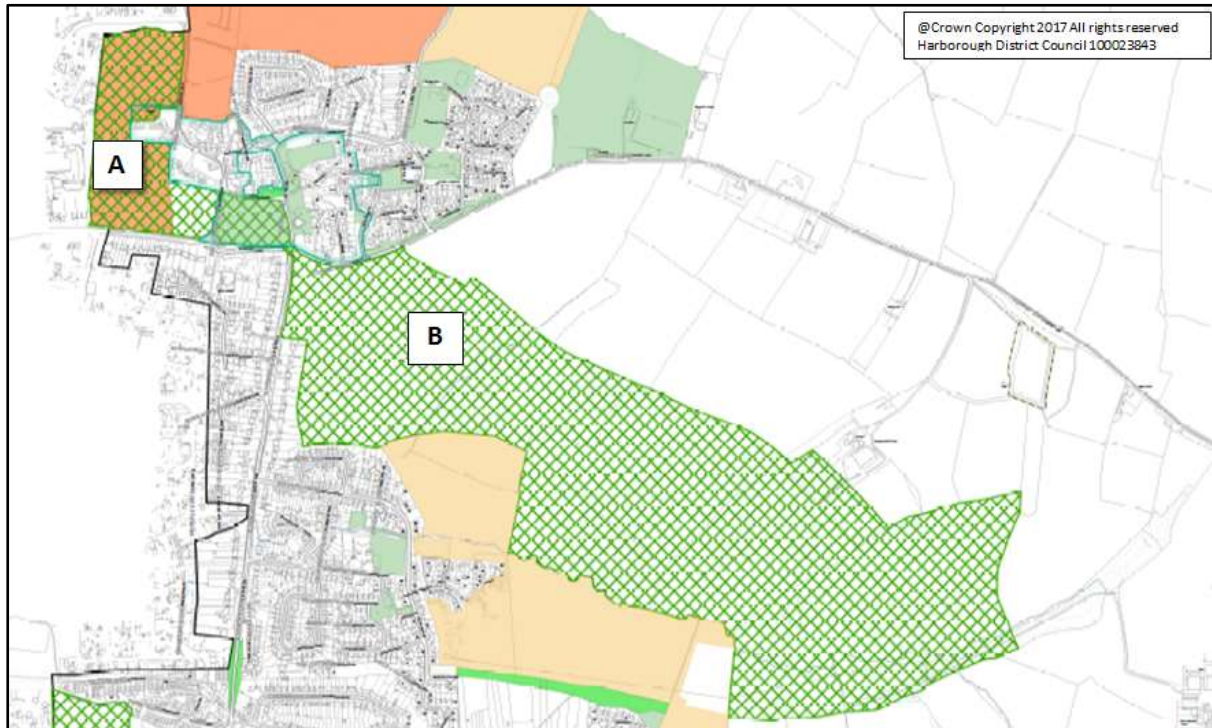


5.1.4 For assessment purposes the proposed Green Wedge is divided into 2 sub-areas (see Figure 5.3 below). The report looks into whether:

- The part of the Green Wedge to the west of Scruptoft (and outside the area needed to accommodate the Scruptoft North SDA) fulfils the functions of a Green Wedge. This is referred to as sub-area A; and

- Given the scale of recent developments, existing commitments and the development pressures at Scraftoft/Thurnby/Bushby, the extension of the Green Wedge as proposed as part of the emerging Local Plan is appropriate and fulfils the functions of a Green Wedge. This is referred to as sub-area B.

Figure 5.3: Leicester/Scraftoft Green Wedge assessment sub-areas



5.2 Overview of survey findings

5.2.1 Main land uses/adjacent uses

Sub-area A: This area lies to the west of Scraftoft and meets the District's border with Leicester City to the west and south. The majority of the sub-area A is in agricultural use and has an urban fringe character with smaller partitioned paddocks, horse grazing, associated fencing/hedgerows (of varying condition) and jumps, and is surrounded by built development. Like most of the surrounding agricultural land it is grade 3. The easternmost part of the sub-area is Edith Cole Memorial Park, a designated Local Green Space in the Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan and a recognised Open Space, Sport and Recreation (OSSR) site in the submission Local Plan. There is evidence of recent tree planting in the paddock to the west of the Memorial Park. The 2009 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (LCALCS) reported some evidence of Ridge and Furrow.

Sub-area B: This more extensive sub-area lies to the south of Scraftoft village/Covert Lane. It is east of Station Lane and north of established

residential development (and planned development) adjacent to Thurnby/Bushby. It is agricultural land, with a pattern of relatively large arable fields, and is located on the steeply undulating slopes adjoining Thurnby Brook which forms the southern boundary. A small tributary brook and associated woodland runs diagonally (north east to south west) and joins Thurnby Brook. A further area of dense vegetation is associated with Thurnby Brook and the dismantled railway line along the southern border.

5.2.2 Physical Green Wedge boundaries

Sub-area A: This sub-area is almost entirely surrounded by urban development (Leicester and Scraftoft) to the north, west and south. The northern boundary is formed by Scraftoft Brook with associated vegetation cover and wide grass verge, beyond which are properties off New Romney Crescent. The eastern boundary is Hamilton Lane, the built up area of Scraftoft Village (including Nether Hall) and Church Hill (at the south eastern edge). Scraftoft Lane, with its tall hedgerows with gaps, forms the southern boundary beyond which is built development. The built up area of Leicester (development off New Romney Crescent) forms the western edge of this area. The north eastern boundary borders undeveloped land which will form part of the area necessary to deliver the SDA (see Figure 5.1 above).

Sub-area B: The sub-area's northern boundary is Covert Lane with relatively dense hedgerows and its western extent is Station Lane highway and properties off Station Lane. The southern boundary is established residential development off Pulford Drive (including Leybury Way and Padgate Close), consented residential development north of Thurnby Brook, Thurnby Brook itself and the disused railway line. The north eastern and eastern extents follow existing field boundaries formed of hedgerows and incorporate the pronounced undulating slopes of the Thurnby Brook valley.

5.2.3 Topography/Key physical features

Sub-area A: This sub-area is located on gentle valley slopes that run north from Scraftoft Lane down to Scraftoft Brook. The brook forms the northern boundary and flows westward into Leicester City. Small horse paddocks are a particular feature with patchy hedgerows and fencing giving an urban fringe character. These paddocks surround the listed Nether Hall and associated buildings.

Sub-area B: This sub-area is on prominent sloping land which falls from the north and north east down towards Thurnby Brook and the built up area of Thurnby/Bushby. The relatively steeply undulating landform is part of the Thurnby Brook valley and there is a small stream running diagonally north east to south west across the area that has cut into the landform with associated vegetation. It is predominantly open countryside in agricultural use (mainly large arable fields). Hedgerows boundaries are of mixed quality with occasional mature trees. However, there are some areas of denser vegetation along the brook, the aforementioned tributary and the disused railway line. Whilst sub-area B incorporates the main slopes of the valley, the landform

continues to rise towards a ridgeline along Covert Lane to the north. There are views of the valley floor, Bushby to the south and more distant views of Leicester City from the high points within the sub-area.

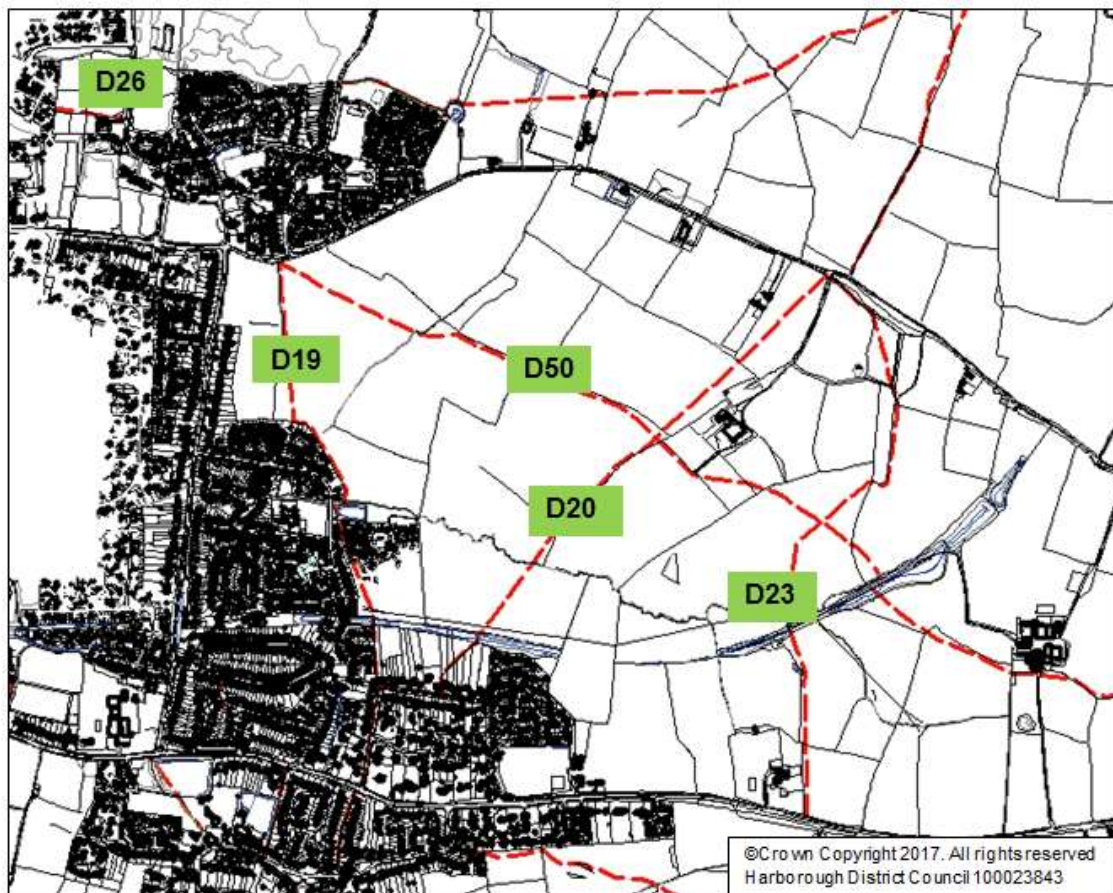
5.2.4 Rights of Way/public access/informal access (see Figure 5.4)

Sub-area A: RoW footpath D26 crosses the narrowest part of the area linking Scraftoft (Hamilton Lane) with Leicester. It passes just north of Nether Hall. It is currently unmarked and there is no through access due to the presence of residential development on the edge of Leicester to the west. The area would benefit from better public access routes.

Sub-area B: Overall the sub-area B is well served by RoW giving access to the countryside within and beyond the sub-area (see Figure 5.4 below). Four RoW cut across the sub-area B as follows:

- Footpath D19 runs from Covert Lane to meet development to the south at Padgate Close. It then runs further south skirting the edge of the built up area then into Bushby (where it links to D20) and Thurnby.
- Footpath D50 runs from Covert Lane south eastwards across the area into open countryside along the valley slopes to meet the disused railway line. It also links with footpath D20 and D23 within the Green Wedge.
- Footpath D20 runs from Covert Lane and crosses sub-area B in a south westerly direction before reaching Bushby.
- Bridleway D23 crosses the south eastern edge of sub-area B. It runs from Covert Lane southwards to the A47. In so doing it intersects with D50 and the disused railway line.

Figure 5.4: Bridleways and footpaths



5.2.5 Historic environment

Sub-area A: This sub-area wraps around the western section of the Scraftoft Conservation Area (CA) (see Figure 5.5 below) and Nether Hall, a grade II listed building (see Figure 5.6 below), incorporating only a small area of the north western corner of the CA. The sub-area forms part of the setting of the CA and listed buildings. The Edith Cole Memorial Park is included in the CA boundary and according to the Scraftoft Conservation Area Character Statement⁷ recalls the agricultural history of the settlement. The sub-area also borders All Saints' Church (grade I listed), Churchyard cross (scheduled monument/grade II listed) and Old Parsonage (grade II listed). The Leicester PUA Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2009) reported that some of the paddocks contain Ridge and Furrow. Edith Cole Memorial Park and All Saints Church/Scraftoft Hall are designated as Local Green Spaces in the Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan.

Sub-area B: The sub-area's north eastern section borders the Scraftoft Conservation Area and the Old Parsonage (grade II listed), forming an important part of their setting. The undeveloped, open fields off Station Lane

⁷ https://www.harborough.gov.uk/directory_record/1284/scraftoft_conservation_area

play a vital role in preventing the merging of Scraftoft village with the built up area to the south. This was recognised in Appeal Decisions APP/F2415/A/11/2160313, APP/F2415/A/11/2163769 relating to these fields. Despite a lack of 5 year supply of housing sites and a shortfall in the provision of affordable housing, the Inspector concluded that this was not sufficient to outweigh the serious adverse effect the proposed developments would have on the perceived separation between Scraftoft and Thurnby/Bushby.

Figure 5.5: Scraftoft Conservation Area

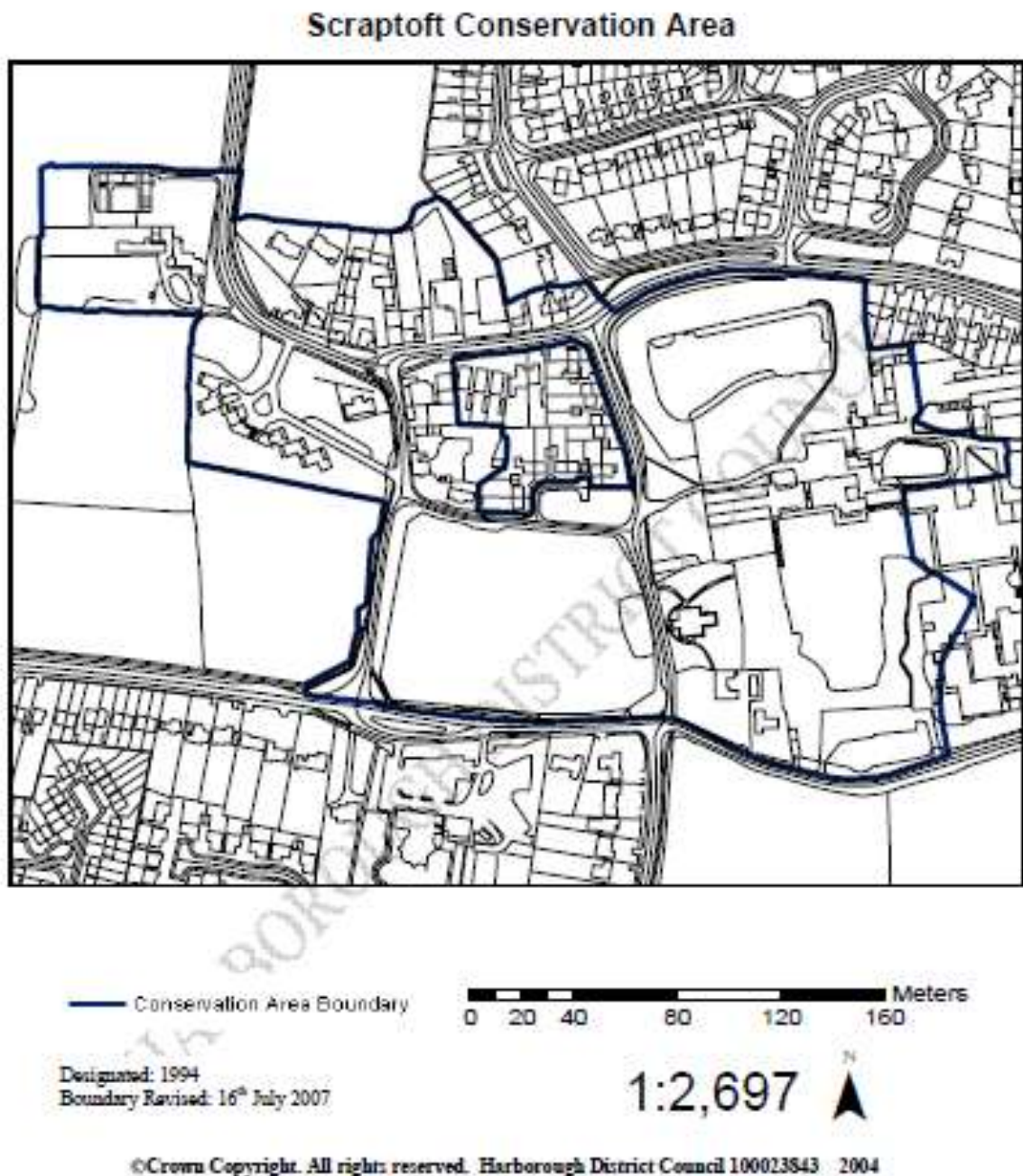
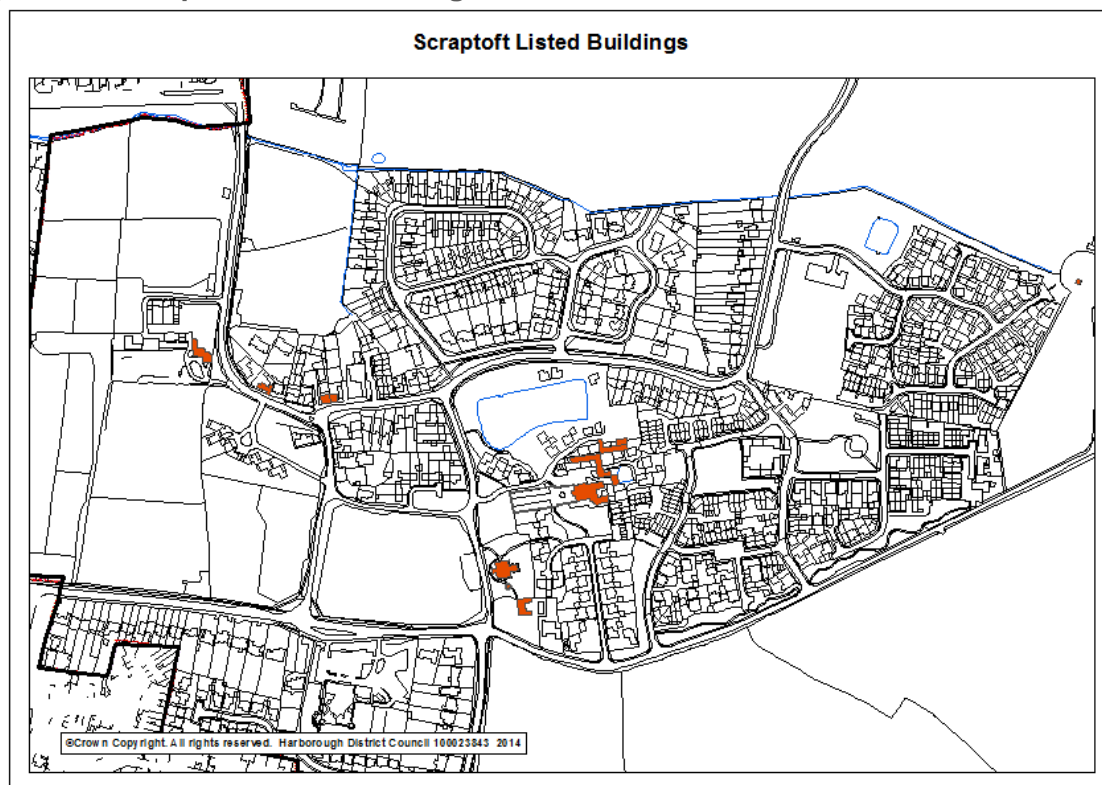


Figure 5.6: Scraftoft Listed Buildings



5.2.6 Ecology

Sub-area A: Scraftoft Brook is of ecological significance at a Parish Level and recognised as a wildlife corridor in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey⁸ (2008). The brook links up with the area of broadleaved woodland to the east of Scraftoft (also of Parish Level significance and a wildlife corridor). The area is made up of a number of paddocks, comprising improved and semi improved grassland with hedgerows of relatively poor quality. There is an area of broad leaved semi-natural woodland adjacent to the Nether Hall part of the Conservation Area.

Sub-area B: This area is mainly large arable fields divided by hedgerows (of varying quality) and occasional mature trees. There are some denser areas of vegetation along:

- the tributary stream cutting diagonally across the sub-area;
- the length of Thurnby Brook; and
- the dismantled railway line.

The smaller fields, comprising the western part, are poor semi improved grassland. The Covert Lane hedgerow, Thurnby Brook and the dismantled railway are identified as wildlife corridors in the Phase 1 Habitat Survey.

⁸ [Phase 1 Habitat Survey 2008](#)

5.2.7 Minerals and waste

Only a small part of sub-area B's southern extremity lies in a Mineral Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel). Neither sub-area is affected by Waste Safeguarding.

In common with the rest of Leicester's urban fringe areas, both sub-areas are 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). Policy WCS13 does give added protection to Green Wedges. Similar policies are being taken forward in the Pre-Submission Draft Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan up to 2031.

5.2.8 Evidence of development pressures

Sub-area A: Although there have been no applications for substantive development in this sub-area, Scraftoft has been the focus of substantial residential development in recent years. The majority of sub-area A is included in the Scraftoft North SDA allocation in the Submission Local Plan.

Sub-area B: There is strong evidence of development pressures in and around this area. This is backed up by the number of outstanding commitments abutting the proposed Green Wedge (see Figure 5.2 above) to the south. At time of writing a further application is under consideration for 125 dwellings and associated infrastructure. This site (Land at Charity Farm) adjoins the southern edge of the proposed Green Wedge and would extend the built form of Bushby further eastwards along the A47. It is further evidence of continuing development pressures.

A Scraftoft East SDA was one of the alternatives consulted on as part of the Options Consultation in 2015. This was based on a submission from the developers and the site is included in the SHLAA 2015 Update (ref: A/SC/HSG/13).

There have however been applications within the sub-area which have not been successful in obtaining planning permission (due primarily to their separation role) as follows:

- 10/01045/OUT: Erection of up to 100 dwellings (access to be considered) –refused;
- 11/00853/OUT: Erection of up to 41 single and two storey dwellings (means of access to be considered) (revised scheme of 10/01045/OUT) – Refused and appeal dismissed (see para. 5.2.5 above).

There is evidence of strong developer interest in and adjacent to the sub-area B as evidenced by the SHLAA 2015 Update. This includes the following sites which are within or partially within sub-area B (see Appendix 2):

- A/SC/HSG/13 East of Scraftoft SDA – 1470 dwellings (16+ years)

- A/SC/HSG/01 Land off Station Lane, Scraptoft – 48 dwellings (6 -10 years)
- A/SC/HSG/10 Land east of Pulford Drive and south of Covert Lane, Scraptoft – 366 dwellings (6 -10 years)
- A/SC/HSG/14 Land at Charles' Field, Scraptoft Hill Farm, Scraptoft – 114 dwellings (11 – 15 years)
- A/SC/HSG/15 The Hay Field, Scraptoft Hill Farm, Scraptoft – 40 dwellings (11 – 15 years)

5.2.9 Flood risk/water management

Sub-area A: There is an area of Flood Zone 2 on the northern boundary associated with the Scraptoft Brook before it runs into Leicester City.

Sub-area B: All Flood Zone 1.

5.2.10 Socio-economic data

The areas are not adjacent to any Priority Neighbourhoods.

5.2.11 Landscape evidence

Although it is not the function of a Green Wedge to act as a landscape designation, the descriptions of the land parcels contained within the relevant Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Studies are useful in understanding the characteristics of the various land parcels which comprise the proposed Green Wedge

Sub-area A: The majority of the sub-area (excluding the Edith Cole Memorial Park) was assessed as Land Parcel 27 (see Figure 5.7 below) of the Leicester PUA Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study (2009)⁹. It was found to have a strong role in preventing coalescence between Scraptoft and Leicester and as being visible from a wide area. The parcel was identified as having low-medium capacity to accommodate development. It should be noted that the Green Wedge designation was factored in to this conclusion.

Sub-area B: The Leicester PUA Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study Addendum: Scraptoft¹⁰ assessed the vast majority of this sub-area as it was clear that there were substantial development pressures in the Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby area (see Figure 5.8 below). The assessment found that Thurnby Brook valley retains a well-defined largely arable character of moderate condition, with medium to large fields. Most of the Parcels are composed of varying gradients of valley slopes from the gentle lower and upper valley slopes, becoming steeper within the mid-valley slopes, some being sufficiently steep to form a prominent feature. Consequently, fields are generally open and relatively exposed, with some

⁹ [Leicester PUA landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study 2009](#)

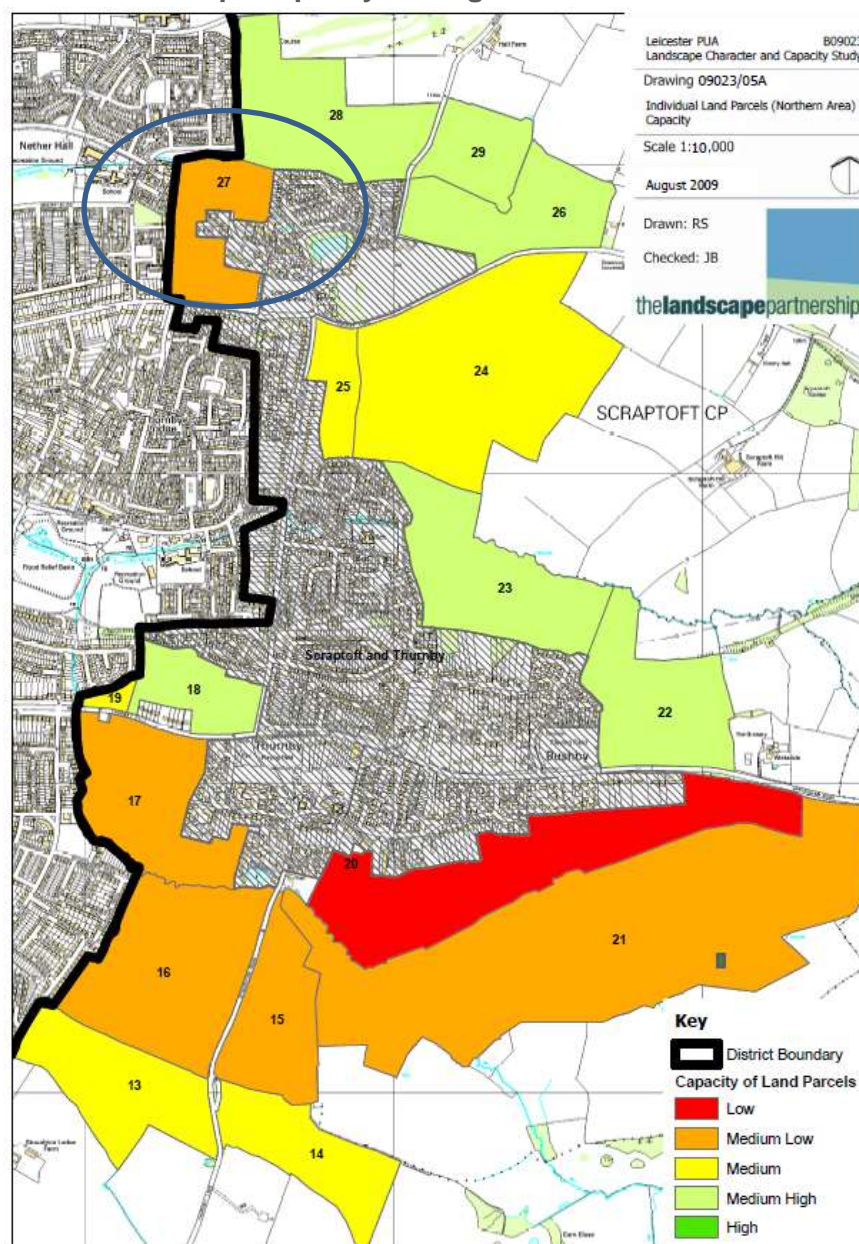
¹⁰ [Leicester PUA Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study Addendum: Scraptoft](#)

cross-valley views from adjoining residential areas and public views from a network of public footpaths and bridleway that follow or cross the valley.

The findings in terms of capacity of the sub-area were as follows:

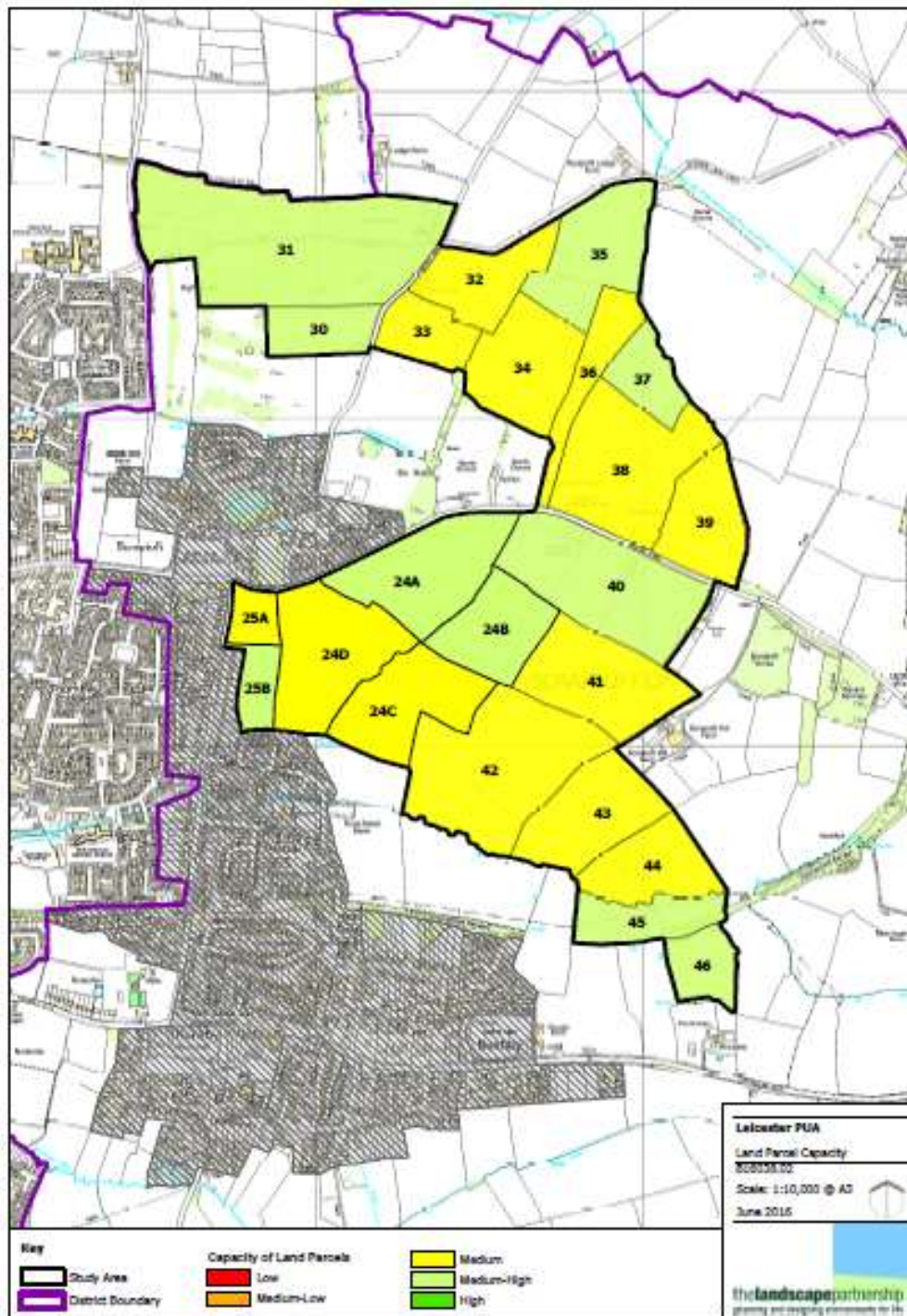
- The more open and exposed valley side locations were considered to have medium capacity;
- Coalescence between Scraftoft village and Thurnby/Bushby (including development to the east of Station Lane in Scraftoft Parish) formed a key difference between the land parcels to the west and those to the east;
- Development should be avoided on the steeper valley slopes within the relevant parts of the Parcels and land immediately adjacent to Thurnby Brook and the valley floor.

Figure 5.7: Sub-area A landscape capacity findings – Land Parcel 27



Source: Leicester PUA Landscape Character and Landscape Capacity Study 2009

Figure 5.8: Area B landscape capacity findings



Source: Leicester PUA Landscape Character and Landscape Capacity Study 2009

5.3 Evaluation table for Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge

Criteria	Does the Area meet the Green Wedge criteria?
Preventing the merging of settlements:	<p>Sub-area A: Strong role and increasingly important role Sub-area A plays a strong role in preventing coalescence between Scraptoft and Leicester (<100m at narrowest point). Its separation role helps to ensure that the village character of Scraptoft, the core of which is a designated Conservation Area, is protected. Sub-area A is open to views from surrounding parts of the built up area, particularly from New Romney Crescent and Scraptoft Lane bringing greenspace into the urban environment. As development of the proposed SDA progresses, this sub-area will have an increasing important role to play in maintaining the separation and distinctiveness of Scraptoft and Leicester City.</p>
	<p>Sub-area B: Strong and increasingly important role Scraptoft village, with its Conservation Area and listed buildings, has its own character and identity. Sub-area B plays an important part in the continued separation of Scraptoft village from more modern, less distinctive housing to the south (to the east of Station Lane). Commitments yet to be developed will impact further on the separation by bringing more housing north of the Brook. The inclusion of sub-area B into the Green Wedge will ensure that this separation is maintained and the open vista across the valley slopes is protected. This will protect the character of Scraptoft village and the setting of its Conservation Area/listed buildings. Sub-area B occupies prominent sloping land visible from Thurnby/Bushby to the south and the contribution it makes to perceived separation between Scraptoft and Thurnby/Bushby is substantial. At present the northern part of Area B plays a particularly important role in separating the two and by giving a countryside setting to the villages. The southern part of the Green Wedge will ensure that, going forward, the valley slopes which so crucial in the perception of separation, are protected.</p>
Guiding development form:	<p>Sub-area A: Strong role Area A has clearly defined boundaries and is entirely surrounded by established development. Its inclusion as GW will guide development away from an area which is sensitive to potential coalescence and as part of the setting for Scraptoft Conservation Area and listed buildings. It separates two built up areas of differing character.</p>
	<p>Sub-area B: Strong and increasingly important role Sub-area B will ensure that as the PUA villages grow, valued countryside is incorporated and that the most prominent Thurnby Brook valley slopes are protected from development. Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby form part of the PUA and are recognised as sustainable in the Harborough's settlement hierarchy. As evidenced through the high level of commitments and SHLAA, the villages experience, and will continue to experience, high levels of developer interest. Inclusion of sub-</p>

Criteria	Does the Area meet the Green Wedge criteria?
	area B within the Green Wedge will ensure that development is directed away from the most sensitive and valued parts of the landscape.
Providing access from urban areas into green spaces/open countryside	<p>Sub-area A: Strong role Sub-area A penetrates the urban area running between Leicester and Scraftoft. Sub-area A has links with wider green infrastructure assets (i.e. via the Memorial Park into open countryside and the slopes of the Thurnby Brook valley). Scraftoft Brook forms the northern boundary of sub-area A and is a significant wildlife corridor, linking with woodland belt to east of Scraftoft which is subject to a TPO and Nether Hall recreation ground to west. The inclusion of the Edith Cole Memorial Park allows the park's contribution to the wider has strengthened the role of sub-area A. The sub-area's position within the built up area and its links to the surrounding countryside mean that it has a strong role as a green lung in the urban area. Improved access to the sub-area and linkages to surrounding green infrastructure will be sought as part of the Scraftoft North SDA development.</p> <p>Sub-area B: Moderate but increasingly important role Sub-area B provides good access to open countryside via a network of RoW across the sub-area and beyond. As part of the Green Wedge it will protect views of the valley slopes and ensure that linkages between wildlife corridors, including Thurnby Brook and the dismantled railway are protected. Improved linkage with the Edith Cole Memorial Park and sub-area A will be sought to bring the countryside setting of Scraftoft within reach of residents.</p>
Providing recreational opportunities:	<p>Sub-area A: Moderate role which needs strengthening There is a public footpath across sub-area A that needs to be improved. There is also a degree of informal public access. The Edith Cole Memorial Park provides recreational opportunities within sub-area A. Given its location between Scraftoft and Leicester sub-area A's recreational offer could be improved. As most of it is included within the Scraftoft North SDA boundary, improvements to access and its recreational value will be sought.</p> <p>Sub-area B: Moderate role Sub-area B's value is in the role it provides in term of access to open countryside for residents of the PUA both within Harborough and beyond. Current RoWs give access to the area and promote walking as part of a healthy lifestyle. There are no other recreational uses within the area and any future recreational uses would have to be low impact and respect the open character of the area. Improved links to sub-area A will help in promoting recreational opportunities within the Green Wedge.</p>

5.4 Summary

5.4.1 The development of a Strategic Development Area at Scraftoft North will lead to the loss of part of the current Green Wedge to the north of Scraftoft. However, the allocation of the SDA presents significant opportunities to improve public access and recreation in the remaining Green Wedge at sub-area A. The extension of the Green Wedge to include sub-area B will strengthen and 'future proof' the designation in the long term. Overall the Leicester/Scraftoft/Bushby Green Wedge as proposed fulfils all of the functions of a Green Wedge. The proposed Green Wedge will:

- play an important role in preventing the coalescence of Scraftoft and Leicester and will maintain the separation between Scraftoft village and more recent development (established, new and committed) to the south;
- protect the landscape setting of Thurnby and Bushby and contribute to the perception of separation between these settlements and Scraftoft;
- prevent further development impacting on the character and identity of Scraftoft village as a whole, the Conservation Area and listed buildings and their setting;
- protect and enhance green infrastructure linkages for existing residents to the open countryside of the Thurnby Brook valley. As part of the Scraftoft North SDA new, improved access and recreational facilities will be sought in Area A as well as links into the SDA and its green infrastructure; and
- safeguard valuable ecological habitats close to the PUA and providing recreational opportunities and potential. Working with local communities, partners and the SDA promoters further recreational opportunities and improved public access in the Green Wedge will be explored.

5.4.2 For the most part the Green Wedge's detailed boundaries within sub-area A, formed by adjoining development, roads and the District boundary are clearly identifiable. The boundaries of sub-area B are:

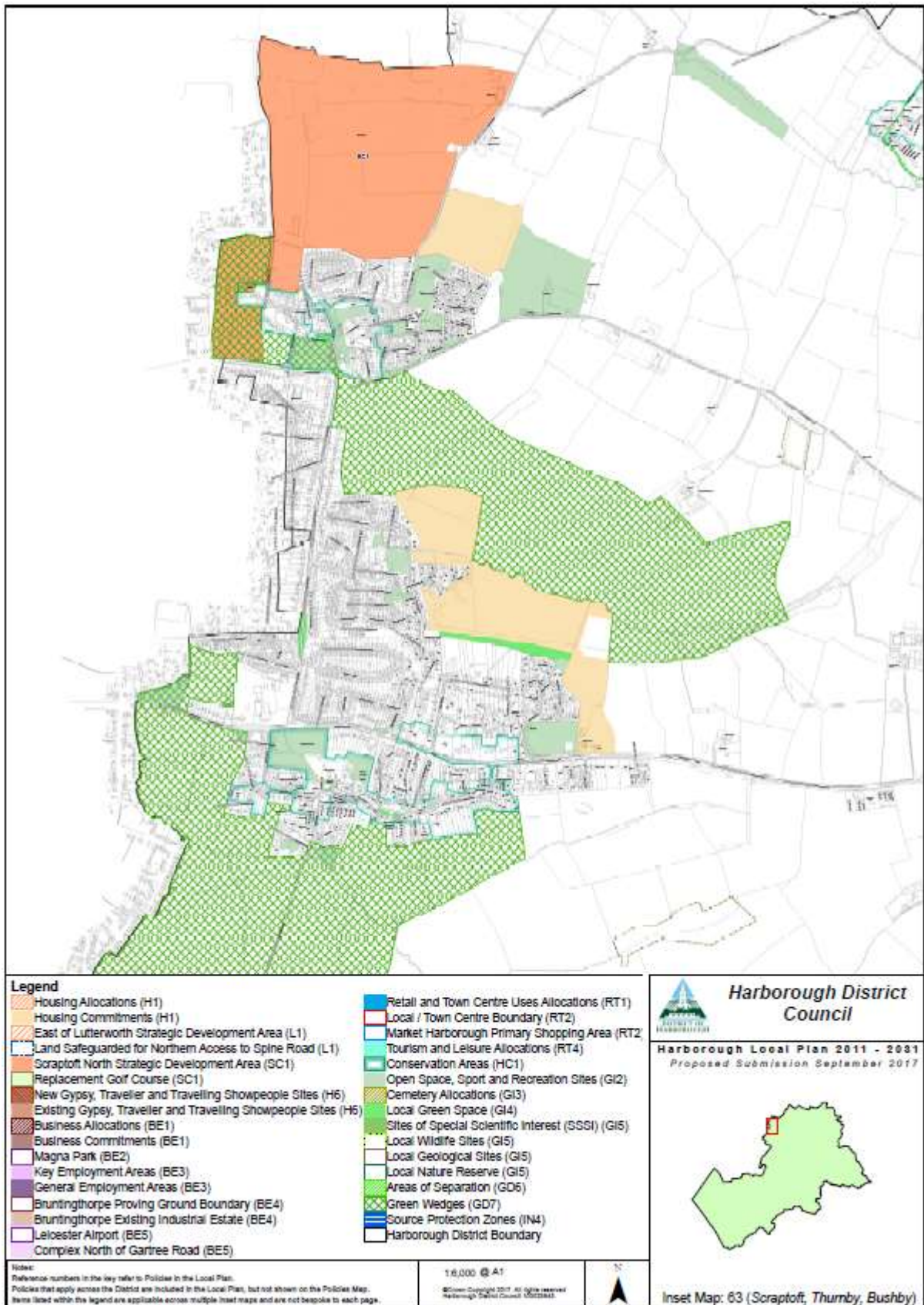
- Covert Lane to north;
- Station Lane and established and committed development off Pulford Drive to west;
- Committed development/Thurnby Brook and disused railway to south; and
- Various hedgerows dividing arable fields to east/north east.

5.4.3 The boundaries of the proposed Leicester/Scraftoft/Bushby Green Wedge are considered to be effective and justified. Although Green Wedges are not recognised as a protective designation by the NPPF, national policy makes it clear that planning should take account of the different roles and characteristics of different areas with reference to their environmental value, should deliver conservation of the natural landscape, should encourage healthy lifestyles and should identify where development would be inappropriate. Within the context of the Submission Local Plan's spatial strategy, the Green Wedge designation will deliver these outcomes whilst also meeting the development needs of the District over the plan period.

5.4.4 The Scraftoft North SDA master planning process should pursue opportunities to:

- improve public access and recreational uses within the northern section of the Green Wedge;
- improve pedestrian linkages between the 2 parts of the Green Wedge at the junction of Scraptoft Lane with Covert Lane to encourage people into the countryside; and
- protect and provide linkages between green infrastructure and areas of biodiversity in the Green Wedge and the SDA.

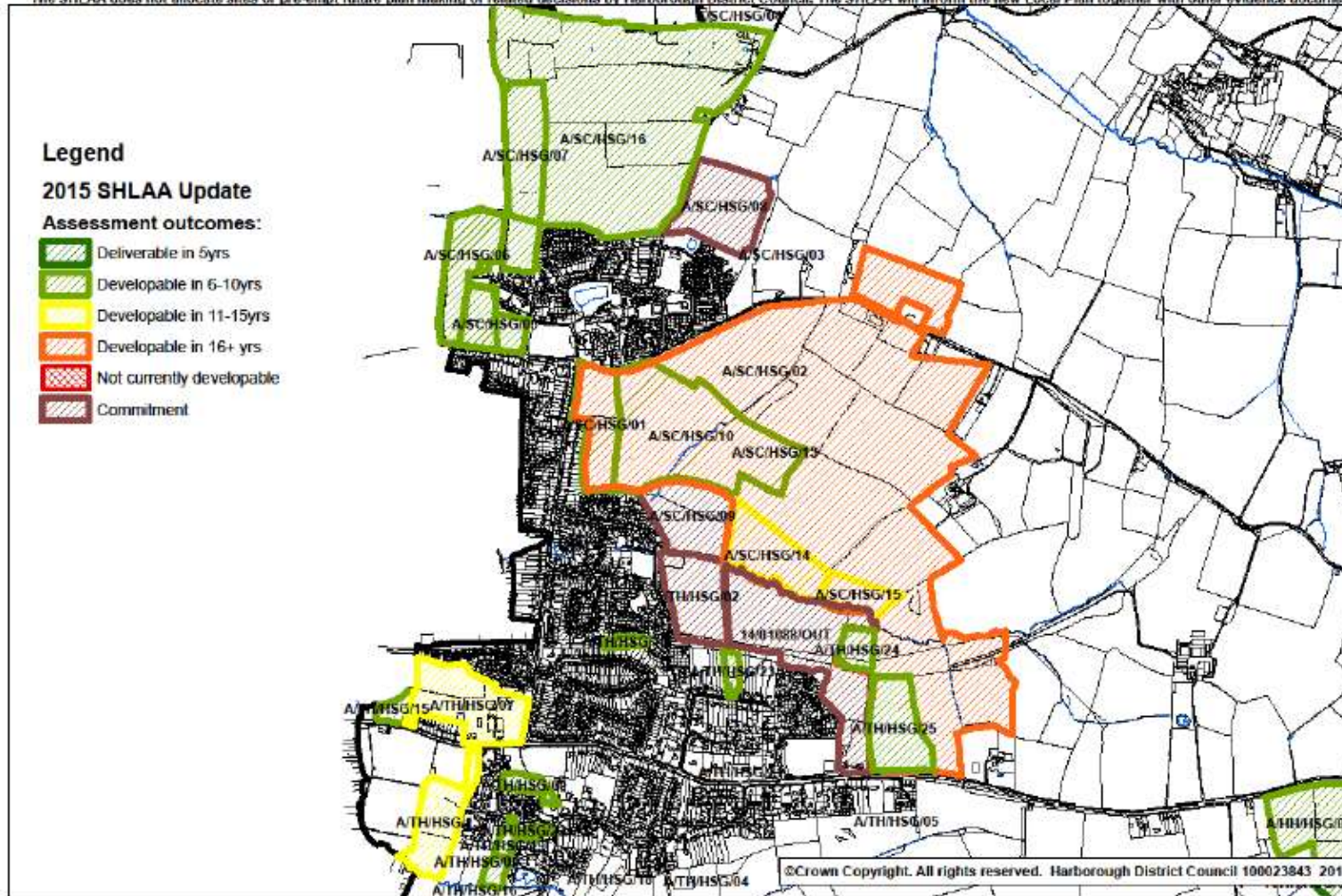
Appendix 1: Scraftoft, Thurnby, Bushby Policies Map (showing proposed Leicester/Scraftoft/Bushby Green Wedge)



Appendix 2: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015

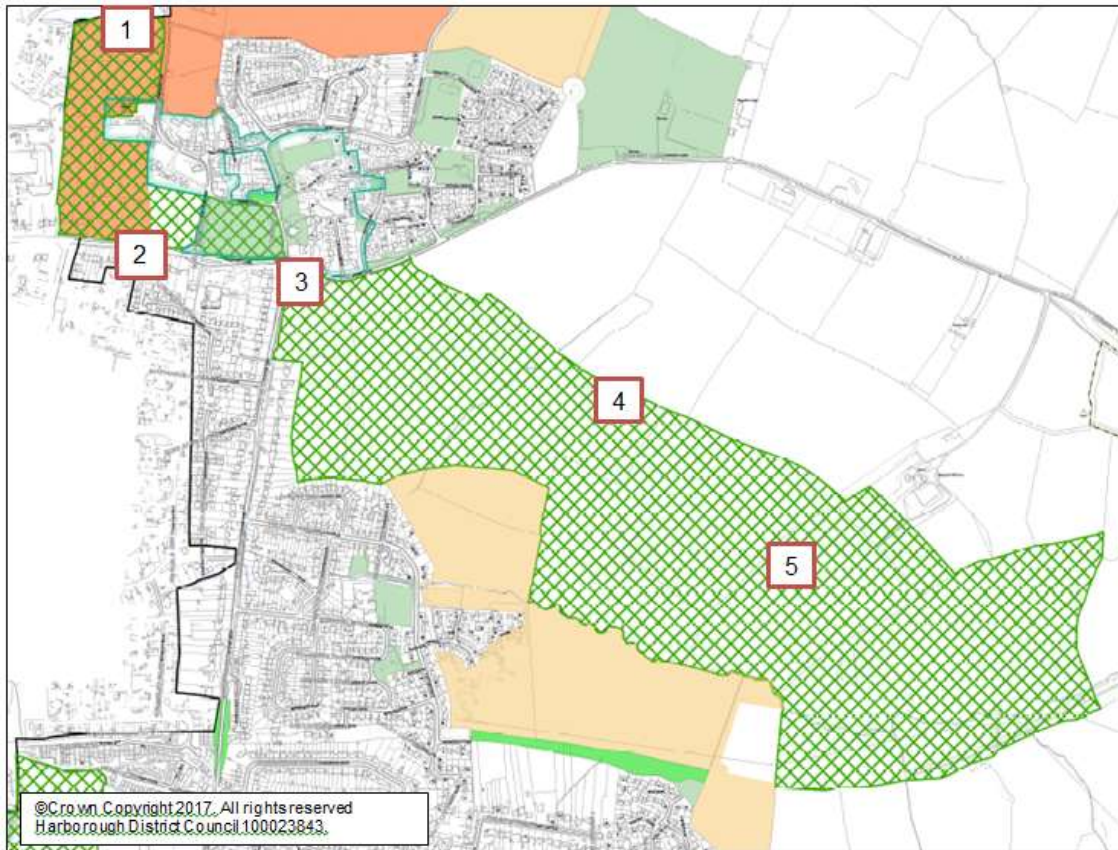
SHLAA 2015 Scraptoft/Thurnby/Bushby Developable Outcomes

The SHLAA does not allocate sites or pre-empt future plan making or related decisions by Harborough District Council. The SHLAA will inform the new Local Plan together with other evidence documents.



Appendix 3: Site Visit Proforma for Proposed Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge

Field survey proforma points



Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge

Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge site visit – 1 (Sub-area A)

Location: New Romney Crescent, Nether Hall looking southwards

Time and date of site visit: 10:15am, 6 Feb 2018

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 (within Leicester City) with Nether Hall to west and New Romney Crescent is to north (beyond the brook). Scraptoft to east and south. Hamilton Lane forms the part of the eastern boundary beyond which is land within the proposed SDA.	
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 an urban fringe character with horse grazing, smaller partitioned fields, show jumping fences etc.	
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 area) and depending on the proposed development raise very real possibility of coalescence.	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide green open space in a predominantly	Yes	

urban environment?		
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 but to a limited extent.	
Details	Footpath D26 (RoW) crosses the GW from Nether Hall Farm to Leicester. However, it is not signed and therefore unwelcoming.	
Can this Green Wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	To a limited extent as status of footpath unclear. There is some informal access.	
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/Bushby Green Wedge site visit – 2 (Sub-area A)

Location: Scraptoft Lane

Time and date of site visit: 10:45am, 6 Feb 2018

Land use description	Agriculture, grazing paddocks. Improved/Semi-improved grassland. Some evidence of tree planting in field adjacent to Memorial Park.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Residential areas of Scraptoft to east and south and Nether Hall (Leicester) to west and north. Edith Cole Memorial Garden (Local Green Space in Scraptoft NP and OSSR) forms eastern boundary with Scraptoft village.	
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 be 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	Roads and/or development associated with Scraptoft and Leicester form the boundary.	
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 clearly fulfils this function given the relatively close distance between Scraptoft and Leicester City in this area. Undeveloped character contributes to setting of	

	Scraptoft village.	
Does this Green Wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	One footpath crosses the GW at Nether Hall Farm but not well signposted. Edith Cole Memorial Park is included in the GW.	
Can this Green Wedge be accessed by the public	Potentially 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?	Not 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?	Beyond the Memorial park, the recreational value of the GW is not good but it has the potential to contribute	

Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge site visit – 3 (Sub-area B)

Location: Covert Lane

Time and date of site visit: 11:10am, 6 Feb 2018

Land use description	Agricultural use. Majority large arable fields. There are smaller fields adjacent to Station Lane which are less cultivated and more semi-improved grassland in character. Occasional mature tree. There is strong hedge growth and trees along Covert Lane. Pastoral views which link with Memorial Park to form settling for village.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Beyond strong hedge/tree growth, to north of Covert Lane there is relatively recent housing development which has extended Scraptoft significantly eastwards. There is a view through the new development to the nearby listed Scraptoft Hall. Station Lane highway forms the western edge and further south properties off Station Lane.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Strong hedgerow with occasional mature tree. Some gaps.	
Topography	Relatively flat at Covert Lane (which forms a sort of plateau/ridgeline) and adjoining fields but the fields fall away relatively steeply towards the south and the brook (out of sight).	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Scraptoft – although much is hidden by trees/hedges adding to rural feel. Glimpses of development along Station Lane. Distant views of Scraptoft Thurnby to south of brook	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Thurnby/Bushby on northern slopes of Thurnby Brook valley appear to be in the distance. Current housing completions and consented residential development is on the lower slopes of the valley and out of sight giving perception of distance between Scraptoft and Thurnby/Bushby.	
Does this part of current Green Wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	Existing roads: Covert Lane and Station lane, rear of properties and field boundary to north east.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	Large arable field (Land Parcel 24A as shown on Figure 5.8) was considered for inclusion as is currently within AoS. However, would extend GW well beyond existing built up area and in light of proposed GW is not key to retaining separation between settlements. It has no public access.	

Extent of built development within this part of Green Wedge	There is not built development visible in this part of the GW.	
What effects would built development in this part of Green Wedge have?	Development would affect the integrity of the Thurnby Brook valley. Development to the east of Station Lane or south of Covert Lane would affect the pastoral setting of Scraftoft Village and could lead to perception of merging of settlements of different character.	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Partially (north west corner)	
Details	This north western part sub-area B is part of the rural setting for Scraftoft village. It forms a visual link with the Memorial Park. There is development to the north and west and to the south (although at more of a distance)	
Does this Green Wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	Two footpaths run from Covert Lane into this part of the Green Wedge – one running south (to Bushby) and the other runs the entire length of the GW in a south easterly direction, joining with other footpaths along the way.	
Can this Green Wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	Via RoW as mentioned above.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	In general yes	
Details	The footpaths are in reasonable condition given that they are unmade and cross agricultural land. They are signposted, navigable and stiles/gates are in place where necessary.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	They appear to be well used and on the day of the visit there were several users despite cold/damp conditions.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None seen.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the Green Wedge boundaries were moved?	The recreational function is based primarily around the network of footpaths. However, the main function of this part of the GW is to prevent the merging of settlements and to guide development form in the future. The moving of boundaries would impact on these roles.	

Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge site visit – 4 (Sub-area B)

Location: Footpath D50

Time and date of site visit: 11:45am, 6 Feb 2018

Land use description	Large cultivated arable fields. To west a small tributary stream with relatively dense vegetation. Views to south of valley floor with strong riparian growth including semi-natural woodland.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Further agricultural land to north and built up area of Bushby and dismantled railway line. Some of the current open land north and south of brook has planning consent for housing and associated development.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedges of varying condition and height form the field boundaries, with the occasional mature tree.	
Topography	Prominent steep slopes on Thurnby Brook valley's northern which slope down from the north east to the south west. Topography is gentler towards the valley floor of which there are good views.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	
Details	Thurnby/Bushby and Leicester.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	There are distant panoramic views of Leicester city from the top of the slopes. Full views of Bushby and Thurnby along and on the gently rising southern valley slopes.	
Does this part of current Green Wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	These are formed by field boundaries/hedges to the north, the extent of committed housing site and the brook to the south.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	There is no other logical boundary give the extent of planned development and the valley topography/land use.	
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 would impact on the unspoilt character and integrity of the northern valley slopes and the enjoyment of them from the public ROWs. It would also impact adversely on the continued separation of Scraptoft and Bushby.	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details	This part of the GW will have development adjacent to	

	the south (once built). Its main function in this area will be to prevent the merging of settlements and to guide development form in the future. The moving of boundaries would impact on these roles.	
Does this Green Wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	D50 the main footpath following the north eastern boundary of the GW gives full views of the valley and access to the countryside for both Harborough and Leicester City residents. It also links up with other RoW within the GW.	
Can this Green Wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	D50 and other RoW	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	In general yes	
Details	The footpaths are in reasonable condition given that they are unmade and cross agricultural land. They are signposted, navigable and stiles/gates are in place where necessary.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	They appear to be well used and on the day of visiting there were several users despite cold/damp conditions.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None seen.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the Green Wedge boundaries were moved?	It is hard to see how the northern boundary can be moved given the position of the RoW. The recreational function is based primarily around the network of footpaths. However, the main function of this part of the GW is to prevent the merging of settlements and to guide development form in the future. The moving of boundaries would impact on these roles, given the committed sites adjoining to the south.	

Leicester/Scraptoft/Bushby Green Wedge site visit – 5 (Sub-area B)

Location: Footpath D20

Time and date of site visit: 12:30am, 6 Feb 2018

Land use description	Large cultivated arable fields with smaller grass fields to south of Thurnby Brook with increased vegetation along stream and dismantled railway line. Views across valley up to A47.	
Adjacent land uses (other than Green Wedge)	Further agricultural land to north and built up area of Bushby and dismantled railway line. Some of the current open land north and south of brook has planning consent for housing and associated development. Scraptoft Hill Farm lies adjacent to north of this part of GW.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedges of varying condition and height form the field boundaries, with the occasional mature tree. However, stronger vegetation covers along stream and part of dismantled railway line.	
Topography	Lower slopes of prominent, undulating valley slopes which characterise the valley from stream to Covert Lane. Topography is gentler towards the valley floor, of which there are good views, rising again to A47 to the south of the Green Wedge.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes from higher slopes	
Details	Primarily Bushby with Thurnby beyond. Development in Leicester including distant views from highest points of valley slopes. Maintaining separation not a main GW function in this part of GW.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	There are distant panoramic views of Leicester city from the top of the slopes. Views of Bushby and Thurnby along and on the gently rising southern valley slopes.	
Does this part of current Green Wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	
Details	These are formed by field boundaries/hedges to the north, incorporating the steepest valley slopes, the extent of committed housing site and the brook to the south.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?		No
Details	There is no other logical boundary given the extent of planned development and the valley topography/land use.	
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 would impact on the unspoilt character and integrity of the northern valley slopes and the enjoyment of them from the public ROWs. Maintaining separation less of an issue at this end of	

	the valley at present.	
Does this part of Green Wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?		No
Details	This part of the GW will have development adjacent to part of its southern boundary (once built). Its main function in this area will be to guide development form in the future. The moving of boundaries would impact on this role by leaving prominent slopes and the setting to RoW routes outside GW protection.	
Does this Green Wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	
Details	D50 continues to cross the northern part of the GW with D20 crossing northeast to southwest. D20 links to Covert Lane beyond the GW in the north (giving a route back into Scraftoft or into countryside to the north) and links to Bushby and Thurnby in the south, crossing the brook and valley floor in the process. .	
Can this Green Wedge be accessed by the public	Yes	
Details	D50 and D20 primarily.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	In general yes	
Details	The footpaths are in reasonable condition given that they are unmade and cross agricultural land. They are signposted, navigable and stiles/gates are in place where necessary.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	There were other users on the day of the visit.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None seen.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the Green Wedge boundaries were moved?	It is hard to see how the northern boundary can be moved given the position of the RoW. The recreational function is based primarily around the network of footpaths. However, perhaps the main function of this part of the GW is to guide development form in the future, ensuring that the integrity of the valley particularly its most prominent valley slopes are retained as further development is considered in the future. The moving of boundaries would impact on these roles, given the committed sites adjoining to the south and the need to give the GW longevity. .	

Appendix 4: Aerial views
Sub-area A



Source: Google Maps

Sub-area B



Source: Google Maps