

# 2018-2029

## Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



View from Croft Hill



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Foreword

Following a positive referendum result (on Thursday 6 May 2021), on 15 June 2021 Blaby District Council 'made' the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan part of Blaby District's Development Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, several Local Green Spaces were deleted by the independent Examiner primarily due to a lack of supporting evidence. The evidence has now been reviewed and Local Green Spaces have been restored and added in the parishes of Huncote, Stoney Stanton and Sharnford.

This update to the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan incorporates a number of new Local Green Spaces at Policy FV5 and the related policy maps. Other than consequential revisions, there are no further modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan.

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance, the Qualifying Body has taken the view that the changes made to the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan are not substantial and do not change the nature of the Plan because the objectives and broad strategy of the Plan are unaltered. Both the Planning Authority and Independent Examiner agree with this conclusion and the changes made to the Plan do not need to be pursued through a referendum.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Contents

.....	0
Foreword.....	i
Introduction.....	1
Neighbourhood Plans.....	1
The Leicestershire Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan area .....	1
Parish Councils.....	1
Parish Meetings .....	1
What we have done so far.....	3
Neighbourhood Plan Update .....	4
Sustainable Development.....	4
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).....	5
Key Issues .....	5
Road Traffic and Congestion (69%).....	5
Protecting Village Identity (65%) .....	5
How much development and where? (61%).....	6
Improved Services and Facilities (35%).....	6
Improved public transport (30%).....	6
Meeting Local Housing Needs (16%) .....	6
Providing Jobs for Local People (10%) .....	6
Opportunities for Renewable Energy (5%).....	6
Gypsies and Travellers (5%).....	6
Vision.....	7
Implementation .....	7
Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Vision for Growth.....	8
Layout of the Plan.....	9
Transport.....	10
Highways .....	10
Sharnford.....	10
South West Leicestershire.....	11
Midlands Connect .....	11
Rail .....	12
Buses .....	13
Footways and Cycleways .....	14
Other transport matters .....	14

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Village Identity.....	15
Landscape.....	15
Croft Hill.....	15
Woodland.....	15
Geodiversity, Ecology and Biodiversity.....	15
Burbage Wood and Aston Firs.....	16
Croft Hill.....	16
Croft Pasture.....	16
Croft and Huncote Quarries.....	16
Local Green Space.....	16
Historic Environment.....	18
Design.....	18
How much development and where?.....	20
Housing Provision.....	20
Windfall Housing.....	22
Employment.....	22
Services and Facilities.....	23
Sharnford Allotments.....	24
Stoney Stanton Cemetery.....	24
Housing Needs.....	26
Provision for older households.....	26
Provision for single and smaller households (one and two-bedroom units).....	26
Affordable Housing.....	27
Affordable Housing in the Fosse Villages.....	27
Rural Exception Sites.....	28
Jobs.....	29
Employment and Occupations.....	29
Croft Quarry.....	29
Renewable Energy.....	31
Wind Energy.....	31
Solar Farms.....	31
Biomass.....	31
Microgeneration Technologies.....	31
Gypsies and Travellers.....	33
Aston Flamville Settlement Statement.....	34

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Location and context.....	34
Community profile.....	34
Landscape.....	34
Built form and settlement pattern .....	35
Heritage.....	36
Architectural style .....	36
Local Green Spaces.....	37
Gateway features.....	37
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	37
Services and Facilities .....	37
Development .....	37
Croft Settlement Statement .....	38
Location and context.....	38
Community profile.....	38
Landscape.....	38
Built form and settlement pattern .....	39
Heritage.....	40
Designated Heritage Assets.....	40
Features of Local Heritage Interest.....	40
Architectural style .....	40
Local Green Spaces.....	41
Gateway features.....	41
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	41
Services and Facilities .....	41
Housing Needs .....	42
Jobs.....	42
Transport and Infrastructure .....	42
Housing.....	43
Huncote Settlement Statement.....	44
Location and context.....	44
Community profile.....	44
Landscape.....	45
Built form and settlement pattern .....	46
Heritage assets.....	46
Designated Heritage Assets.....	46

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Features of Local Heritage Interest.....	46
Architectural style .....	47
Local Green Spaces.....	47
Gateway features.....	48
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	48
Services and Facilities .....	48
Housing Needs .....	49
Jobs.....	49
Transport and Infrastructure .....	49
Housing.....	50
Leicester Forest West Settlement Statement .....	51
Location and context.....	51
Community profile.....	51
Landscape.....	51
Heritage.....	51
Local Green Spaces.....	51
Services and Facilities .....	51
Development .....	51
Potters Marston Settlement Statement.....	52
Location and context.....	52
Community profile.....	52
Landscape.....	52
Heritage.....	52
Services and Facilities .....	53
Jobs.....	53
Development .....	53
Sapcote Settlement Statement.....	54
Location and context.....	54
Community profile.....	54
Landscape.....	55
Area of Separation.....	56
Sapcote and Granitethorpe Quarries.....	56
Built form and settlement pattern .....	56
Heritage assets.....	57
Designated Heritage Assets.....	57

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Features of Local Heritage Interest.....	57
Architectural style .....	58
Local Green Spaces.....	58
Gateway features.....	59
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	59
Services and Facilities .....	59
Transport and Infrastructure .....	60
Air Quality .....	60
Housing Needs .....	60
Jobs.....	61
Development options.....	61
Housing.....	61
Employment.....	61
Sharnford Settlement Statement .....	62
Location and context.....	62
Community profile.....	62
Landscape.....	62
Built form and settlement pattern .....	63
Heritage assets.....	63
Designated Heritage Assets.....	63
Architectural style .....	64
Local Green Spaces.....	64
The Park.....	65
Poor's Meadow.....	65
Bluebell Green.....	65
Fosse Meadows Country Park.....	65
Parsons Lane Allotments .....	65
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	65
Services and Facilities .....	65
Evergreen Hall and GP Surgery .....	65
Village Shop .....	66
Allotments.....	66
Flooding.....	66
Jobs.....	67
Transport.....	67

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Sharnford Bypass.....	67
Smockington Junction .....	68
Air Pollution.....	68
Vehicle Parking.....	68
Public Transport.....	68
Development options.....	69
Housing.....	69
Stoney Stanton Settlement Statement.....	70
Location and context.....	70
Community profile.....	70
Landscape.....	70
Area of Separation.....	71
Built form and settlement pattern .....	72
Heritage assets.....	72
Designated Heritage Assets.....	72
Features of Local Heritage Interest.....	73
Architectural style .....	73
Local Green Spaces.....	74
Gateway features.....	74
Services and Facilities .....	74
Cemetery.....	75
Transport.....	75
Housing Needs .....	75
Development options.....	75
Housing.....	75
Employment.....	76
Thurlaston Settlement Statement.....	77
Location and context.....	77
Community profile.....	77
Landscape.....	77
Thurlaston Rolling Farmland.....	78
Normanton Agricultural Parkland.....	78
Built form and settlement pattern .....	79
Heritage assets.....	79
Designated Heritage Assets.....	79



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Features of Local Heritage Interest.....	79
Architectural style .....	80
Local Green Spaces.....	80
Gateway features.....	81
Geodiversity and biodiversity.....	81
Flooding.....	82
Services and Facilities .....	82
Thurlaston C of E Primary School.....	82
Sport & Recreation.....	82
Housing Needs .....	82
Jobs.....	83
Transport and Infrastructure .....	83
Development options.....	84
Employment.....	84
Housing.....	84
Wigston Parva Settlement Statement .....	85
Location and context.....	85
Community profile.....	85
Landscape.....	85
Built form and settlement pattern.....	86
Heritage.....	86
Architectural style .....	86
Local Green Spaces.....	87
Gateway features.....	87
Services and Facilities .....	87
Development .....	87
Wigston Parva Policies Map .....	97
Neighbourhood Area Policies Map .....	99

## Introduction

### Neighbourhood Plans

- 1 The 2011 Localism Act has given communities the right to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan. This right is aimed at giving local communities genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live. Decisions on planning applications must take account of neighbourhood plans.
- 2 Following a positive referendum result (on Thursday 6 May 2021), on 15 June 2021 Blaby District Council 'made' the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan part of Blaby District's Development Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 3 This update incorporates additional Local Green Spaces in the parishes of Huncote, Stoney Stanton and Sharnford.

### The Leicestershire Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan area

- 4 The Leicestershire Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan area comprises the following 10 Parishes which are situated in the south-west part of Blaby District, Leicestershire:

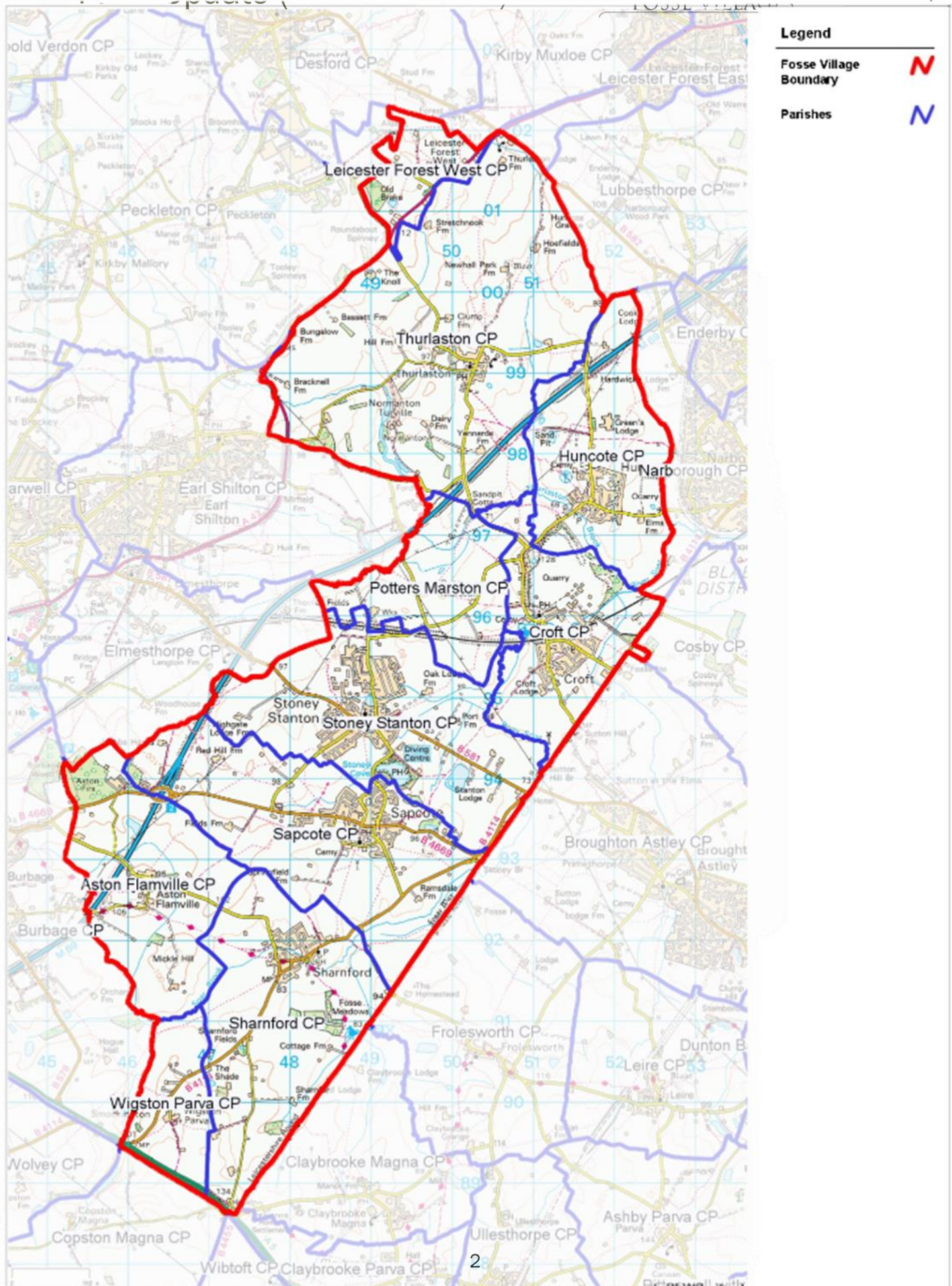
#### Parish Councils

[Croft](#), [Huncote](#), [Sapcote](#), [Sharnford](#), [Stoney Stanton](#) and [Thurlaston](#)

#### Parish Meetings

Aston Flamville, Leicester Forest West, Potters Marston and Wigston Parva

- 5 The Fosse Villages area amounts to 5,311 hectares, representing 41% of the District of Blaby. In administrative terms, the area shares a common boundary with parts of both Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and Harborough District Council in Leicestershire and with Rugby Borough Council in Warwickshire along a short length of its south-western boundary.
- 6 The Fosse Villages include lively, highly active communities which share common concerns which provide a cohesive basis for neighbourhood planning. The ten settlements within the area each have their own character, although they are generally small to medium scale communities, ranging from hamlets such as Potters Marston (population 30) to Stoney Stanton (population 3,460). The total population of the area amounts to an estimated 11,663, giving an overall population density of 2.2 persons per hectare. It is, therefore, predominantly a rural area.
- 7 The Fosse Villages were designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 13 January 2016. This replaces an earlier Neighbourhood Area designation approved in 2012 which at that time included Elmesthorpe parish. The Plan has been prepared by the parish councils and meetings through the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan Joint Working Board. Sapcote Parish Council is the qualifying body. The plan period covers the period to 2029.





# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## What we have done so far

- 8 We held a Stakeholder Event on 30 May 2012 for organisations with an interest in the area to help identify topics and issues that could be explored and developed during the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan. But as the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan will be a new, community-led level of planning for the area, it was important that the residents get involved.
- 9 Local people took the opportunity to influence where new development can take place and which areas should be protected during a series of village events that took place during September and October 2012. We also asked local school children what they thought during sessions at primary schools in Huncote, Sapcote, Sharnford and Thurlaston that also took place in the winter of 2012.
- 10 In July and August 2013, we invited comments on the proposed housing provision for each village through to 2029.
- 11 The feedback from these consultations helped us to prepare an 'Issues and Options Report' together with summary newsletters. The newsletters were delivered to households and businesses in March 2017 and people were encouraged to complete a questionnaire seeking views on the main issues facing the Fosse Villages. 772 responses were received.
- 12 More details of these surveys and the stakeholder event are on our website at:  
[www.fossevillages.org.uk](http://www.fossevillages.org.uk)
- 13 The results helped us to prepare a (Pre-Submission) Draft version of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Development Plan. A six-week pre-submission consultation period on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for the Fosse Villages ran from Tuesday 29 May to Wednesday 11 July 2018.
- 14 A copy of the Pre-Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan was available to download, along with supporting documentation, on the parish website. The Draft Plan was also available for inspection at the [Huncote](#), [Sapcote](#) and [Stoney Stanton](#) Community Libraries.
- 15 All the comments received were considered by the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan Joint Working Board and used to amend the draft Neighbourhood Plan. A Consultation Statement, including a summary of all comments received and how these were considered, is available on the Fosse Villages website.
- 16 In March 2019, the Plan was submitted to Blaby District Council for publication, A further period of consultation of six weeks took place (2 April 2019 – 21 May 2019) before it was issued to an independent examiner.
- 17 In November 2019, the Examiner recommended that the Plan be modified to meet the 'Basic Conditions' and then submitted to a referendum. The referendum held on 6 May 2021 returned a 'yes' majority of 85% to the question: "Do you want Blaby District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Fosse Villages to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- 18 On 15 June 2021 Blaby District Council 'made' the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan part of Blaby District's Development Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, forming part of the Statutory Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Area.

## Neighbourhood Plan Update

- 19 This update to the 'made' Neighbourhood Plan incorporates additional Local Green Spaces in the parishes of Huncote, Stoney Stanton and Sharnford.
- 20 A six-week pre-submission consultation period on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan amendments ran from Monday 31 January to Tuesday 15 March 2022. All the comments received have been considered by the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan Joint Working Board. A Consultation Statement, including a summary of all comments received and how these were considered, is available on the Fosse Villages website: [www.fossevillages.org.uk](http://www.fossevillages.org.uk)
- 21 The Updated Plan was submitted to Blaby District Council on 6 February 2023 for publication and a further six-week public consultation took place before it was sent to an Independent Examiner.
- 22 Material modifications which do not change the nature of the first Plan require examination but not a referendum. The Independent Examiner agreed that the changes made to the first Plan do not need to be pursued through a referendum.
- 23 When the Updated Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' it will replace the original version of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan and form part of the Statutory Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Area (comprising the Parishes of Aston Flamville, Croft, Huncote, Leicester Forest West, Potters Marston, Sapcote, Sharnford, Stoney Stanton, Thurlaston and Wigston Parva), alongside the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document. Blaby District Council continues to be responsible for determining most planning applications (mineral and waste planning applications are determined by the County Council), but the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will be the basis for those decisions.

**Note, when considering a development proposal, ALL the relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan will be applied.**

## Sustainable Development

- 24 The Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
  - an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 25 This Plan constitutes our view of what sustainable development in the Fosse Villages means in practice.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 26 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken to inform the first Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan. This process was required by the SEA Regulations.
- 27 Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects arising as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.
- 28 The Environmental Report, which accompanied the Plan, was the latest document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (February 2018), which included information about the Neighbourhood Plan area’s environment and communities.

## Key Issues

- 29 Feedback from earlier consultation has helped us to identify the key issues our Neighbourhood Plan needs to address. Based on our 2017 Questionnaire Survey, the key issues are ranked in order of importance with the percentage of respondents who identified each issue as a top three priority in brackets:

### Road Traffic and Congestion (69%)

- 30 With no passenger rail station in the area and poor bus services, footways and cycleways, there is no realistic alternative to the private car for most of the Fosse Villages’ residents. However, local roads are already overloaded with cars and HGVs and with more development and car use the problems caused by traffic will get worse. There is a particular problem with the B4114 which passes through Sharnford.

### Protecting Village Identity (65%)

- 31 Although we are preparing this Neighbourhood Plan together, each of the Fosse Villages has its own character and identity that it wants to conserve. We want to conserve local heritage features and protect green areas that are important to local people and improve the design of new development so that it respects local character. The main part of this

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



document is followed by a series of Settlement Statements that describes the unique character and identity of each of the Fosse Villages.

## **How much development and where? (61%)**

- 32 We don't have a free hand over how the plan is prepared. It must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and the development plan for the area- the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy). Our Neighbourhood Plan will cover the same period as the Blaby Local Plan i.e. to 2029.

## **Improved Services and Facilities (35%)**

- 33 Residents want access to basic services and facilities without the need to travel, especially by car.

## **Improved public transport (30%)**

- 34 The lack of bus services affects old and young. For example, young people from rural areas cannot access leisure and entertainment services in urban centres and this contributes to anti-social behaviour in rural areas where facilities are more limited.

## **Meeting Local Housing Needs (16%)**

- 35 We want to ensure that local people have the opportunity of living in a decent home which they can afford. Local people say there is a need for smaller housing e.g. 1-2 bedroom homes, family homes e.g. 3 bed housing, and accommodation for older people.

## **Providing Jobs for Local People (10%)**

- 36 We want to support the sustainable growth of the local economy so that local businesses reach their full potential and help provide jobs for local people.

## **Opportunities for Renewable Energy (5%)**

- 37 We have a responsibility to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.

## **Gypsies and Travellers (5%)**

- 38 There is a large concentration of Gypsies and Travellers in the Aston Firs area. The Gypsy and Traveller community co-exists with the settled communities in the area.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Vision

- 39 In setting out our aims for the Neighbourhood Plan it is vital to consider how the area should be at the end of the plan period. Our plan needs to be aspirational, but realistic:



- 40 Our 2017 questionnaire survey indicates that 88% of Fosse Villages residents support this vision.

## Implementation

- 41 There is no point in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which cannot be delivered. To help implement the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan we have engaged key stakeholders at an early stage and identified what infrastructure is needed to support the plan.
- 42 Almost all development has some impact on the existing, and the need for new, infrastructure, services and amenities. Sometimes these impacts are detrimental and so it is only fair that new development pays a share of the cost of providing additional infrastructure.
- 43 The Fosse Villages will also contribute. In drawing up this Neighbourhood Plan, the Fosse Villages parish councils will receive 25% of any future planning levy charged by Blaby District Council on new developments in the area, should Blaby District Council adopt Community Infrastructure Levy, and this will be used to help implement our proposals.



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Vision for Growth

44 In January 2018, the Leicester and Leicestershire Growth Plan was published for consultation. The Strategic Growth Plan is a long term, high-level plan that is being prepared jointly by ten partner organisations in Leicester and Leicestershire (including Blaby District

Council). In its final form, the Growth Plan will set out an agreed strategy for the period to 2050.

45 The Draft Growth Plan recognises that Leicester and Leicestershire will continue to grow. The Strategy identifies 'primary' and 'secondary' growth areas where most development would take place and 'key centres' where growth would

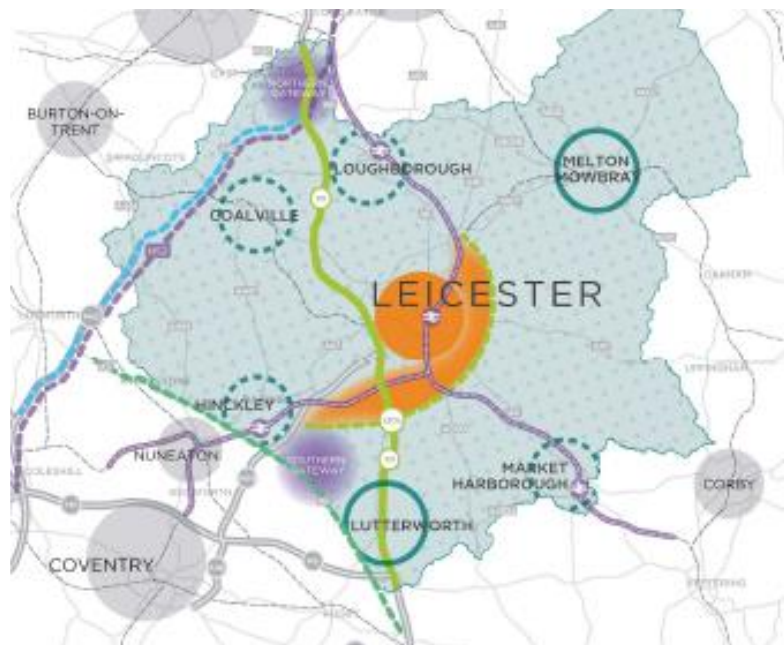


Figure 1: Leicester and Leicestershire Growth Plan Extract

support existing Local Plan strategies. Elsewhere growth would be more limited.

46 The Fosse Villages are potentially affected by proposals for a Southern Gateway focused around the A5 and a proposed new link between the M69 and the M1. Expressway proposals for the A5 and the new section of the A46 (see below) will create opportunities for development in areas well located relative to employment opportunities.

47 The A46 is identified as a primary growth corridor and includes proposals for a new road extending from the M69 around the south and east of Leicester with a new junction on the M1 (J20a). Together with the Southern Gateway, there is potential to accommodate about 40,000 new homes and additional new jobs. Local Plans will identify specific development locations within the corridor.

48 Currently, the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan must support the strategic development needs set out in the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy), including policies for housing and economic development. However, a future version of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan may have to consider the implications of the Leicester and Leicestershire Growth Plan.

49 In the meantime, you can be assured that the parish councils in the Fosse Villages area are working together to represent the best interests of the area as these major growth projects evolve.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Layout of the Plan

- 50 The layout of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan follows the identified key issues, providing a background to each, followed by relevant policy or policies to address these matters. The next section of the plan provides a detailed statement providing information on each of the settlements. This is followed by the Policies Maps for each of the settlements and include references to the relevant policies of the neighbourhood plan.

## Transport

- 51 With no passenger rail station in the entire Fosse Villages area and very poor and declining bus services, few footways and cycleways, there is no realistic alternative to the private car for most of the Fosse Villages' residents. However, local roads are already overloaded with very heavy through traffic -cars and HGVs on the B4114, B581, B3669 and B582. The road network in the Fosse Villages area has had no substantive improvement whatsoever since the opening of the M69 in 1977. With more development and car use the problems caused by traffic and air pollution will get worse. The virtual total absence of inter-village roadside footways or bicycle tracks ensures there are no safe alternatives to vehicular use.

## Highways

### Sharnford

- 52 The B4114 which runs parallel to the M69 motorway in a north-south direction runs through the centre of Sharnford via a one-way system at the south of the village and adjacent to 19th century properties and St Helens Church in the north of the village. It is estimated over three-million vehicles pass through Sharnford each year of which over 1,000 per day are HGV's. It is considered that this appalling traffic situation on a B road will in due course be exacerbated by the New Lubberthorpe development of over 4,000 houses to the west of the M1, south of Leicester Forest East and north and south of the M69. Each development in the area, including the massive commercial developments along the A5, has a directly incremental effect on traffic on the B4114 and other roads in the plan area. This is not just HGV traffic, but major, increasing volumes of employee commuting.
- 53 The Sharnford Traffic Action Group was set up by residents in 2005 to lobby the Highway Authority, local Members of Parliament, the Leicestershire Police and District Councillors with a view to putting a case forward to reduce traffic congestion and speeding traffic. The Group has carried out Speed Watch exercises with the Leicestershire Police which clearly indicated the need for further action to be taken to reduce reckless driving through the village. This has featured in both national and local press and TV coverage, and as a result Sharnford has been chosen to participate in a permanent average speed monitoring programme, with trials commencing in Q4 2017, due to the dangers of the situation.
- 54 Most Sharnford residents have shown their preference for a bypass to be built on the B4114 from the north to the south of the village eliminating all transit traffic in either direction on the B4114 from passing through Sharnford. Leicestershire County Council has started a 'South West Leicester and Leicestershire Transport Study', the primary aim of which is to identify and deliver measures that achieve the most effective and efficient access to and from the Strategic Road Network for Leicester and businesses in the study area. A range of options have been looked at and several schemes are being taken forward for further investigation. A Sharnford Bypass option is not being taken forward as it offers 'poor value for money' relative to its safety and environmental benefits.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## South West Leicestershire

- 55 The Fosse Villages form part of the South West Leicestershire Growth Area, one of five growth areas identified by the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The M1 corridor (including the M69/M1 junction 21 location) and A5 corridor are crucial economic areas, with established and expanding services, distribution, retail and leisure roles providing thousands of jobs for the sub-region.
- 56 The south-west Leicestershire area is already home to several locally and nationally significant businesses and is set to accommodate significant housing and employment growth in the next 15-20 years. Major Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) and Strategic Employment Sites will create more than 8,000 new homes and 32 hectares of commercial development in areas adjoining the Fosse Villages. New Lubbethorpe will deliver 4,250 new homes and 21 hectares of employment land to the east of the Fosse Villages. The site lies to the west of the M1, east of Beggar's Lane, south of Leicester Forest East and north and south of the M69. The Earl Shilton SUE will provide 1,550 homes and 4.5 hectares of employment land to the north-west of the neighbourhood area. The Barwell SUE will deliver 2,500 homes and 6.2 hectares of employment land.
- 57 In addition to planned development, there are proposals for a huge employment, housing and rail freight hub on green fields south of Earl Shilton and west of Stoney Stanton. Much of it is in the parishes of Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. Developers DB Symmetry have devised early proposals for a rail interchange between the B4669, B581 and the railway on a 215-hectare site dissected by the M69. Applications for nationally significant projects like this are normally dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate rather than local councils. The Secretary of State makes the final decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.
- 58 Developers have already submitted a planning application for a 33-hectare DPD distribution employment site near Hinckley between the M69 and B578/A5 junction.
- 59 The success of these significant growth plans depends largely on the delivery of supporting infrastructure. The local road network in the area provides vital links between Leicester and the Strategic Road Network (SRN), particularly via Junction 21 of the M1. Transport modelling shows that the failure of this area to operate effectively in transport terms has impacts on the accessibility of major employers to the M1 and Leicester and highlights the important economic relationships between the city and the West Midlands.

## Midlands Connect

- 60 In March 2017, government launched the Midlands Engine Strategy as a demonstration of its commitment to making the Midlands a powerful engine for economic growth. Stretching from Shropshire to Lincolnshire, with the M1, M6, and most of the country's major railway lines running through it, the Midlands sits at the very heart of the UK economy. The Midlands is also a gateway to the global economy, boasting Birmingham and East Midlands Airports alongside key ports such as at Grimsby and Immingham.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



61 The Midlands is essential to national economic success. The region is responsible for over a fifth of the UK's total manufacturing capability. The services sector in the Midlands accounts for over four million jobs and is worth around £158 billion a year. There are now 427,610 more people in employment in the Midlands than there were in 2010 and the size of the Midlands economy has increased by £32.9 billion.

62 Midlands Connect is a pan-Midlands partnership of local transport authorities, local enterprise partnerships and local business representatives working with the Department for Transport and its key delivery bodies. The Partnership forms the transport component of the Midlands Engine for Growth.

63 The current Road Investment Strategy (RIS) programme will see improvements to the Strategic Road Network across the Midlands

including the current upgrading of the M1 junctions 19-23A to Smart motorway. In 2020/21, subject to land purchase, Highways England will be widening the current section of single carriageway on the A5 between Dodwells roundabout and the Longshot junction into a dual carriageway. An early investment priority for Midlands Connect is the development of a A46 (M40 to Syston) upgrade business case. Although a route has yet to be decided, it would run from the A46 in Syston, loop around the east and south of Leicester and join the M1 at a new junction (20a) between M1 junctions 20 and 21.

64 The proposals hint at a new link road from junction '20a' on the M1 to the M69.

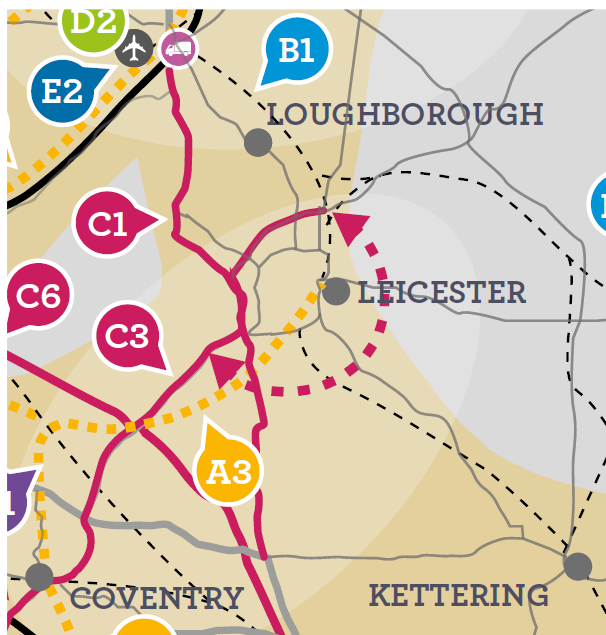


Figure 2: Midlands Connect extract from Early Investment Priorities diagram

## Policy FV1: Road Traffic

Measures that provide reductions in traffic on the B4114, including through Sharnford and traffic reductions in the Fosse Villages will be supported.

## Rail

65 The region has the fastest improving rail network in Europe and by 2033 will be the hub of the country's new HS2 high speed rail network – expanding capacity and connecting to London in less than 50 minutes. Whilst the HS2 route passes close by the Fosse Villages to its north west, it will not provide any service benefit to the area; similarly, the Midland Main Line (Sheffield/Leeds <> Leicester and London electrification scheme) has been cancelled. The development of Birmingham to Leicester rail services is an early priority for the Midlands Connect Strategy.

66 Many Fosse Villages residents commute to Leicester or the West Midlands, so we would like to see increased station provision on the existing Birmingham to Peterborough line

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



that runs through the Fosse Villages area. Our nearest rail passenger stations are at Narborough and Hinckley.

- 67 In the past, land has been safeguarded for a station at Station Road, Croft. A new station within the Fosse Villages area would offer an opportunity for more sustainable travel and relieve some of the traffic problems in the area. 73% of respondents to our 2017 Questionnaire Survey agreed that we should continue to push for a new rail passenger station in the Fosse Villages area. An alternative site could be provided in Elmesthorpe in connection with the proposed Railfreight Terminal development scheme, adjacent to the B581 and M69, serving a very substantial population- Barwell, Earl Shilton, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote, Broughton Astley etc.

## **Policy FV2: Rail**

Proposals for the delivery of a railway station, associated parking and access at Station Road Croft, as shown on Policies Map, will be supported. Conversely, proposals which would prejudice the delivery of such infrastructure will be resisted.

## **Buses**

- 68 Leicester Forest West is served by a frequent bus service to Leicester, Hinckley, Nuneaton, Bedworth and Coventry (Stagecoach 48) and the Arriva Midlands 158 service to Leicester, Earl Shilton, Barwell, Hinckley and Nuneaton.
- 69 Croft and Huncote are served by the hourly Hinckleybus X84 service between Leicester and Rugby. However, this service doesn't provide either village with an evening or Sunday service.
- 70 Similarly, the infrequent Hinckleybus X55 to Leicester/Hinckley serving Aston Flamville, Thurlaston, Potters Marston, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote and Sharnford does not run in the evenings or Sunday. Wigston Parva has no service at all.
- 71 Poor bus services were one of the key issues identified by residents during consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan. The lack of bus services affects old and young. For example, young people from rural areas cannot access leisure and entertainment services in urban centres and this contributes to anti-social behaviour in rural areas where facilities are more limited. We think that new homes should be served by at least an hourly bus service to include evenings and Sundays, even if it means that developers need to subsidise bus services.
- 72 Leicestershire County Council's Passenger Transport Policy (PTP) identifies that the County Council will have to become less reliant on grants to deliver their services, in-line with reductions in central government grants. There will be an expectation that services should be delivered without subsidies. The accompanying Passenger Transport Strategy sets out how this policy will be implemented. It provides the basis for how rural bus services will be assessed, where priority will be given and the level of service expected. It also offers encouragement for consideration to be given to other forms of public transport and potential funding opportunities.
- 73 In light of the County Council's approach, it is suggested that developers consider the extent to which rural housing developments, in excess of 10 dwellings, might be



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



reasonably expected to contribute to existing public transport services with Blaby District Council. Liaison with Leicestershire County Council, where appropriate, is encouraged.

## **Policy FV3: Bus Services**

New residential developments of more than 10 dwellings will be supported where proposals include a viability statement evidencing the extent to which the proposals will enhance rural bus services within the Neighbourhood Area on a proportionate basis, having regard to the size, nature and location of the proposed development. Where financial contributions are offered, these should be provided by way of a s106 agreement in accordance with the guidance in the Passenger Transport Strategy.

## **Footways and Cycleways**

74 Local people are concerned about the lack of safe footpaths and cycleways between the Fosse Villages and Leicester, Hinckley, Earl Shilton, Broughton Astley and Lutterworth.

## **Other transport matters**

75 During local consultation, several other traffic matters were raised including speeding through villages, highway maintenance and inconsiderate parking. These are generally not matters for the Neighbourhood Plan but are being taken up by the parish councils separately.

## Village Identity

- 76 Each of the Fosse Villages has its own character and identity that it wants to conserve. We will do this by recognising the unique landscape that characterises the Fosse Villages, identifying green areas of local importance, protecting the natural environment, and through the design of new buildings,

### Landscape

- 77 The Blaby District Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment identifies broad landscape character types and more detailed landscape character areas. It will be used to guide planning decisions. There are 7 landscape character areas in the Fosse Villages area. These are listed below, grouped into their relevant landscape character type:

#### *Floodplain*

- Soar Meadows

#### *Gently Rolling Farmland*

- Thurlaston Rolling Farmland
- Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland

#### *Agricultural Parkland*

- Normanton Agricultural Parkland

#### *Hills*

- Croft Hill

#### *Wooded Farmland*

- Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland

#### *Croft Hill*

- 78 Croft Hill is a prominent igneous rock outcrop that forms a distinctive landscape feature which rises 60m above the surrounding countryside. Croft Hill is a locally valued landscape feature and we want to protect its prominence in the Fosse Villages landscape.

#### *Woodland*

- 79 Ancient, semi-natural woodland within Blaby District is scarce with only two areas at Aston Firs and Freeholt Wood- both located within the Fosse Villages area. Ancient semi-natural woodland is of particular importance for nature conservation and as such its management is particularly important. Aston Firs woodland is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

### Geodiversity, Ecology and Biodiversity

- 80 The Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan area contains four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). SSSIs are designated by Natural England through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to protect wildlife and geological sites of importance and these areas are protected from potentially damaging operations.

- 81 The ecologically important SSSIs are:



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Burbage Wood and Aston Firs

The site comprises one of the best remaining examples of ash-oak-maple woodland in Leicestershire and is representative of semi-natural woodland developed on the clays of eastern England.

## Croft Hill

Croft Hill supports a nationally rare vegetation type of short, tussocky grasses in open sward. The site is the largest known area of this grassland type in Leicestershire.

## Croft Pasture

The site includes unusual Leicestershire examples of acidic mixed grassland.

- 82 The geologically important SSSI is:

## Croft and Huncote Quarries

The quarries at Croft and Huncote are important in exposing tonalitic igneous rocks of Ordovician age together with attendant zeolite mineralisation, and much younger manganese mineralisation of Triassic age.

- 83 Land at Fosse Meadows is managed as a nature park. This site has extensive paths through flower meadows and newly planted woodlands. It is a good area for bird spotting, with a new wildlife lake and bird hide. There is a permissive bridleway around the site and a permanent orienteering course.
- 84 In addition, there are other sites of local ecological importance identified by Leicestershire County Council to preserve locally important flora, fauna and geology. These sites are afforded some protection by Policy CS19 of the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy) which ensures their protection and improvement and, in exceptional cases, replacement if loss is unavoidable.

## **Policy FV4: Biodiversity**

New development which minimises impacts on and provides net gains for biodiversity and enhances resilience to current ecological pressures on habitats at Fosse Meadows Nature Park will be supported.

New development will be expected to maintain and enhance existing ecological corridors and landscape features (such as watercourses, hedgerows and tree-lines) to support biodiversity.

## Local Green Space

- 85 Local people have been given opportunities to identify, for special protection, green areas of significance to them. This local significance could be because of the green area's beauty, historic importance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife. By designating land as Local Green Space, we will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.
- 86 Most of the following Local Green Spaces have been designated in the 'made' Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan. However, new Local Green Spaces are designated in Huncote, Sharnford and Stoney Stanton in this updated Plan and are included in Policy FV5 and related policy maps.

## **Policy FV5: Local Green Spaces**

The following sites have been designated as Local Green Spaces:

LGS C1 Croft Hill  
LGS C2 North of River Soar, Croft  
LGS C3 The Bridle Play Area, Croft  
LGS C4 St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft  
LGS C5 Arbor Road Allotments, Croft  
LGS C5 Grassy bank and War Memorial, Croft  
LGS C7 Sheep Dip, Croft  
LGS C8 Link to old sports field, Croft  
LGS H1 Recreation Ground, Huncote  
LGS H2 The Green, Huncote  
LGS H3 Brook House Gardens, Huncote  
LGS H4 (a-b) Huncote Allotments and Sports Field  
LGS H5 Peers Way/Preston Way Play Area and Open Space, Huncote  
LGS H6 Spence Lane open space and play area, Huncote  
LGS SA1 War Memorial, Sapcote  
LGS SA2 Spa Drive, Sapcote  
LGS SA3 Sapcote Cemetery and extension  
LGS SA4 Harecroft Crescent green space, Sapcote  
LGS SA5 All Saints churchyard, Sapcote  
LGS SA6 Grace Road, Sapcote  
LGS SA7 The Limes, Sapcote  
LGS SA8 Parish Council Allotments, Leicester Road, Sapcote  
LGS SA9 Allotments, Spring Gardens, Grace Road, Sapcote  
LGS SA10 Allotments, Hinckley Road, Sapcote  
LGS SA11 Allotments, Donkey Lane, Sapcote  
LGS SA12 Allotments, Cooks Lane/Pougher Close, Sapcote  
LGS SH1 The Park, Sharnford  
LGS SH2 Poors Meadow, Sharnford  
LGS SH3 Bluebell Green, Sharnford  
LGS SH4 Parsons Lane Allotments, Sharnford  
LGS SH5 Sharnford Cemetery  
LGS SS1 St Michael's churchyard, Stoney Stanton  
LGS SS2 Foxbank, Stoney Stanton  
LGS SS3 Holt Close allotments, Stoney Stanton  
LGS SS4 Nock Verges cemetery, Stoney Stanton  
LGS SS5 Brindley Close play area, Stoney Stanton  
LGS SS6 War Memorial Playing Fields, Stoney Stanton  
LGS T1 Recreation Ground, Thurlaston  
LGS T2 Off Moat Close, Thurlaston  
LGS T3 Normanton Park, Thurlaston  
LGS T4 Thurlaston Sports Ground

LGS T5 Land at Main Street/Croft Road, Thurlaston  
LGS T6 Enderby Road Sports Ground, Thurlaston  
LGS T7 Village Hall allotments, Thurlaston  
LGS T8 Holt Crescent allotments, Thurlaston  
LGS T9 All Saints Graveyard, Thurlaston  
LGS T10 Thurlaston Chapel Graveyard  
LGS WP1 the Village Green, Wigston Parva

Development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space (as designated on the Policies Map) or its significance and value to the local community will not be supported unless there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space, such as:

- A. Provision of appropriate facilities to service a current use or function; or
- B. Alterations or replacements to existing building(s) or structure(s) provided that these do not significantly increase the size and scale of the original building(s) or structure(s).

## Historic Environment

- 87 It is often a place's heritage that makes it special. That distinctiveness gives local people a sense of belonging and a feeling of pride in a place. The character of the Fosse Villages owes much to its Roman past and its history of minerals extraction and it is important that this and other local heritage that is valued by the local community is protected.
- 88 The Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan includes information about local heritage to guide decisions. It includes a description of the historic character of each village, as well as recording Listed Buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and other local heritage assets.

## Design

- 89 The Fosse Villages have been subjected to standard, 'identikit' homes that typify new developments built by some volume house builders. Some of our housing looks the same as developments elsewhere and could be anywhere in the country. Too often new developments are dominated by the same, identikit designs that bear no resemblance to local character.
- 90 94% of respondents to our 2017 questionnaire survey agree that the design of new development should reflect the individual character of our villages. We now expect all development to contribute positively to the creation of well-designed buildings and spaces. Through good design, practical and meaningful places we want to maintain and enhance the individual character of our villages and create places that work well for both occupants and users, and which are built to last.
- 91 Policy CS2 of the Blaby District Council's Core Strategy sets out basic design principles that must be followed by all new development, but we want to go further. By setting out how our communities have evolved and what makes them distinctive we will help guide the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development to ensure that they are sensitive to the character of the local area. Just because poor design has been allowed in the past doesn't mean that we will allow it to

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



continue. Each Village Statement contains a description of its architectural style which should be considered when planning new development.

## **Policy FV6: Design**

Development that reflects the distinctive and traditional character of the Fosse Villages, as described in the Settlement Statements, or contextually appropriate innovative design will be supported. Development proposals must also:

- A. Be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings;
- B. Protect locally significant features such as traditional walls, hedgerows and trees;
- C. Not significantly adversely affect the amenities of residents in the area, including daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution;
- D. Promote sustainable design and construction, which minimises waste and maximises the potential for recycling materials either on or off site; and
- E. Provide safe and suitable access.

## How much development and where?

- 92 The Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan must support the strategic development needs set out in the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy), including policies for housing and economic development.

### Housing Provision

- 93 There has been considerable pressure for housing development in the Fosse Villages and several planning applications for large-scale residential development have been granted against the wishes of local people. The Neighbourhood Plan gives local people a greater say over where the remaining houses that are needed will be built.
- 94 Except for Stoney Stanton, the Blaby Core Strategy contains no specific housing provision for each of the Fosse Villages. Instead, Huncote, Croft and Sapcote (including 'The Limes') are grouped with the other Medium Central Villages of Littlethorpe and Cosby. Sharnford and Thurlaston, along with Elmesthorpe and Kilby are Smaller Villages.
- 95 Aston Flamville, Leicester Forest West, Potters Marston and Wigston Parva are not sustainable locations for further development. There is little local support for new housing development in these locations.

	Minimum Housing Provision 2006-2029	Total built and committed (as at 31 March 2017)	Balance Required 2017-2029
<b>Rural Centres</b> Stoney Stanton	<b>320</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>-102</b>
<b>Medium Central Villages</b> (Cosby, Croft, Huncote, Littlethorpe, Sapcote)	<b>815</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>-280</b>
<b>Smaller Villages</b> (Elmesthorpe, Kilby, Sharnford and Thurlaston)	<b>80</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-20</b>

- 96 In the summer of 2013, we consulted on a housing provision for each of the Fosse Villages to help guide the selection of housing sites. In setting the housing provision we had regard to the Core Strategy, the housing supply situation, the availability of housing sites as set out in the Blaby Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and representations received during consultation.
- 97 Having regard to housing completions and commitments at 31 March 2017, the minimum housing provision for each of the Fosse Villages will be:

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



	Minimum Housing Provision 2006-2029	Total dwellings built and committed (as at 31 March 2017)	Balance Required 2017-2029 (dwellings)
<b>Rural Centre</b>			
Stoney Stanton	320	467	-102
<b>Medium Central Villages</b>			
Croft	77	44	33
Huncote	140	181	-41
Sapcote	415	488	-73
<b>Smaller Villages</b>			
Sharnford	25	43	-18
Thurlaston	20	22	-2

- 98 The expression of the overall housing requirement and the constituent apportionments in the tiers of the hierarchy as minimums provides for flexibility to take account of changing market conditions over time. It is not a signal that the figures should be comprehensively exceeded. There is very little support for more greenfield housing in the Fosse Villages.
- 99 Further, the housing supply in Sapcote (488dw at 31 March 2017) is now more than the minimum requirement for Stoney Stanton. This problem has been exacerbated by Blaby District Council's decision in June 2017 to grant outline planning permission for 125 homes on land south of Hinckley Road east of The Limes (Ref: 17/0247/OUT). It is important to protect the Blaby Core Strategy's settlement hierarchy by ensuring that this discrepancy is not made worse.
- 100 While there appears to be a small residual requirement for housing in Croft this too has largely been met. Full planning permission has since been granted (August 2017) for 14 homes on the former school playing fields site (17/0323/FUL) and several smaller sites also have permission. Any residual requirement for housing can be met by development within the Limits to the Built-up Area in accordance with Policy FV8. In particular, the former Croft Quarry offices and car park provide a brownfield redevelopment opportunity.

## Policy FV7: Housing Provision

The minimum housing provision for the Fosse Villages for the period 2006 - 2029 is

Croft	77 dwellings
Huncote	140 dwellings
Sapcote	415 dwellings
Sharnford	25 dwellings
Stoney Stanton	320 dwellings
Thurlaston	20 dwellings

This will be met by:

- A. Existing commitments; and
- B. Development within the Limits to Built Development in accordance with Policy FV8.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Windfall Housing

- 101 Housing sites that come forward which have not been specifically identified in the Neighbourhood Plan are referred to as 'windfall sites'. To clarify where windfall development would be acceptable, the Neighbourhood Plan defines Limits to Development for Croft, Huncote, Sapcote, Sharnford, Stoney Stanton and Thurlaston. These replace the Limits to Development defined by the 1999 Blaby District Local Plan.
- 102 Outside these settlement boundaries, which includes the settlements of Aston Flamville, Leicester Forest West, Potters Marston and Wigston Parva, new residential development will not normally be permitted.
- 103 It is however recognised that the development of isolated homes in the countryside maybe acceptable in particular circumstances. For example, where there is an essential need for a rural worker, or would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building or result in the re-use of a redundant building,

### **Policy FV8: Windfall Housing**

Proposals for housing development within the Croft, Huncote, Sapcote, Sharnford, Stoney Stanton and Thurlaston Limits to Built Development, as defined on the settlement policies maps, will be supported.

Outside the Limits to Built Development, Areas of Separation and Green Wedges, support for proposals for housing development will be limited to:

- A. The re-use and adaptation of redundant rural buildings in the most sustainable locations, assessed against the need to retain Countryside;
- B. Small scale housing in the most sustainable locations, assessed against the need to retain the Countryside;
- C. Replacement dwellings of a similar scale and with no greater impact on the Countryside than the existing dwelling;
- D. Dwellings to meet an essential need associated with small-scale employment and leisure development subject to the consideration of its impact;
- E. Dwellings to meet the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the Countryside; and
- F. Rural Exception Sites.

Proposals in categories A, B and C proposals should be accompanied by a landscape and sustainability impact assessment.

Proposals in categories D and E should be accompanied by a functional/essential need statement demonstrating justification for the proposal in terms of the permanent need to be on or near at most times and the particular nature and needs of such rural enterprises.

## Employment

- 104 There is no specific requirement to provide land for employment development. We look more closely at the need to provide more local jobs on page 30.



## Services and Facilities

- 105 We want to promote the retention and expansion of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, schools, public houses and places of worship.
- 106 There is also a feeling that some services and facilities need improvement to meet growing demands. There are issues about the lack of healthcare services in the Fosse Villages.

### **Policy FV9: Community Services and Facilities**

Development that would result in the loss of the following community facilities will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- A. it is no longer needed by the local community; and
- B. it is not needed for any other community use or that the facility is being replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity, quality and location:

Croft Primary School  
Croft Recreation Ground and pavilion  
Huncote Community Primary School  
Huncote Recreation Ground  
The Pavilion, Huncote  
Huncote Community Library  
All Saints Church of England Primary School, Sapcote  
Sapcote Recreation Ground  
Sapcote Community Library  
Sharnford Church of England Primary School  
Evergreen Hall and GP Surgery, Sharnford  
Sharnford Recreation Ground  
Stoney Stanton Medical Centre  
Stoney Stanton Community Library  
Manorfield Church of England Primary School, Stoney Stanton  
Stoney Stanton Village Community Hall  
Thurlaston Church of England Primary School  
Thurlaston Village Hall

Development that would result in the loss of the following commercial facilities will not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that it is no longer viable. Development proposals should be supported by a market report prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced valuer to indicate whether there is commercial interest in the property for any existing permitted uses, sufficient to provide an adequate market return at an appropriate benchmark land value having regard to comparable market value evidence for such uses in the market area. Such market reports should cover a period of not less than 9 months, include all expressions of interest made during the marketing period and demonstrating that the property has been freely exposed to the market during that entire period. The market report should provide an assessment of all offers and expressions of interest received up to the date of the conclusion of the market report. The market report



should include a redacted version for reasons of commercial confidentiality for consultation purposes. The applicant would be expected to fund the full costs of a peer review of the market report to assess its veracity, undertaken by an independent valuer selected by the local planning authority at its discretion to assist its consideration of the proposal prior to determination.

Croft Co-op  
Croft Convenience Store and Post Office  
Heathcote Arms PH, Croft  
The Red Lion PH, Huncote  
Spar convenience store with Post Office, Huncote  
Stoney Stanton Post Office PH, Sapcote  
Spar convenience store with Post Office, Huncote  
Red Lion PH, Sapcote  
Sapcote Post Office and newsagents  
Stoney Stanton Post Office  
Poachers Bistro, Thurlaston  
Thurlaston Rural Garden Centre  
The Elephant & Castle PH, Thurlaston

## Sharnford Allotments

107 Sharnford's allotments are located at Parson's Lane. Currently all plots are in use and there is a waiting list for vacancies. Suggestions have been made that the current facilities should be extended to allow more residents to grow their own provisions. 85% of respondents to our 2017 questionnaire survey supported the extension of the Parson's Lane allotments.

### **Policy FV10: Sharnford Allotments**

The extension of Parson's Lane allotments, Sharnford will be supported.

## Stoney Stanton Cemetery

108 The existing cemetery at Nock Verges, Stoney Stanton is almost at capacity. There may be an opportunity for the Parish Council to work with the County Council to provide additional cemetery facilities to the west of the village, providing the land is suitable for cemetery use.

### **Policy FV11: Stoney Stanton Cemetery**

A broad area of search has been identified for the development of a new cemetery between Hinckley Road and Station Road, Stoney Stanton. Development proposals for a new cemetery will have regard to the current guidance for the time being issued by the Environment Agency concerning Cemeteries and burials, groundwater risk assessments and Cemeteries and burials, and prevent groundwater pollution in addition to providing further information regarding likely environmental impact and proposed mitigation, as appropriate relating to:

- A. Ground conditions;
- B. Drainage;
- C. Archaeology;

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- D. Ecology; and
- E. Underground services

## Housing Needs

- 109 In planning for new homes, there should be a mix of housing to meet the needs of people living locally. New evidence about the future need for housing in Leicester and Leicestershire was published on 31 January 2017. The 2017 Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Need Assessment identifies a range of factors which influence the need for different types of homes. This includes demographic trends, and in particular a growing older population, market dynamics and affordability.
- 110 For Blaby district, the appropriate mix of homes of different sizes needed in the market and affordable sectors is as follows. Evidence of housing need at a local parish level provided by the District Council.

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4+ bedrooms
Market Housing	0-10%	25-35%	50-60%	5-15%
Affordable Housing	45-50%	35-40%	10-15%	5-10%

### Provision for older households

- 111 Provision of both market and affordable housing units that cater for older households is a key supply gap which urgently needs to be addressed. While 'land hungry' bungalows are not attractive for developers, building more bungalows will allow older people to downsize, freeing up family sized homes for younger families.
- 112 Most older households are owner-occupiers and so are most likely to require market solutions to housing problems. Based on household projections, demand from this age group is expected to increase substantially over coming years so it is important that efforts are made within all new developments to provide for older households.

### Provision for single and smaller households (one and two-bedroom units)

- 113 While the supply of smaller units should be limited due to a higher turnover within this property type, historically there has been an under-supply of small affordable properties. Due to the increased 'squeeze' on housing benefits and crackdown on under-occupation, it is expected that demand for smaller units will face increased pressure both from existing tenants and new applicants for affordable housing. Consequently, there will be an increase in the proportion of small affordable units requested on new sites.

#### **Policy FV12: Housing Mix**

Proposals for new housing providing for a mix of housing types informed by and reflecting the most up to date evidence of housing need will be supported. In demonstrating housing need, consideration will be given to supporting evidence provided by an applicant together with other salient planning matters. Proposals for development of 10 or more dwellings will need to demonstrate how their proposed mix will meet the needs of older households and the need for smaller, low-cost homes.

All affordable housing will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure that when homes are allocated, priority is given to people with a local connection to the local parish (i.e. including living, working or with close family ties in the Parish). If there are no households fulfilling these criteria in the parish, then people with a local connection to other places within the Fosse Villages will be given priority.

## Affordable Housing

114 Affordable housing is housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). Affordable housing can include affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership.

### Affordable Housing in the Fosse Villages

115 The Fosse Villages face a combination of housing pressures;

- The inward migration of commuters and retired households has contributed significantly to demand-led house price inflation;
- The 'Right to Buy' council houses have had a greater impact in reducing the stock of affordable housing here than it has in urban areas... and fewer new affordable homes have been built to replace those sold;
- Higher land prices and planning controls have created a lack of development land to build new affordable homes.

116 In many places, it has become impossible for people on lower and moderate incomes to afford to remain in a village or to move there to take up work. Those in lower-paid employment tend to move within their local areas but they cannot afford to do so without suitable housing being made available.

117 The consequence of this is that the Fosse Villages population is ageing with a very low number of people in the age group where new households typically emerge (18-29). The housing market is failing to provide opportunities for this group to either remain or take up residency in the area because of the poor supply of both suitable lower cost and affordable housing. In addition, there is a lower level of existing affordable housing compounded by low turnover.

118 Affordable housing can make a huge contribution to a village by:

- meeting the housing needs of local people;
- maintaining the viability of amenities in the parish e.g. the local school;
- supporting social mix and networks in the parish; and
- supporting the local economy by allowing staff to afford to live locally.

119 Blaby District Council looks for a minimum of 25% of the total number of dwellings as affordable housing on all developments of 15 or more dwellings. There are already several larger housing developments in Huncote, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton which are providing affordable housing so there will be little need for more affordable housing there.

## Rural Exception Sites

- 120 Small sites can be used for affordable housing in places where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites help meet the needs of the local community by providing homes for households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. The Fosse Villages parish councils have already been working in partnership with Blaby District Council to increase the supply of rural affordable housing but we are keen to ensure that these properties continue to provide for local housing needs even when they change hands. There is support for further affordable housing provision on exception sites in Sharnford and Stoney Stanton (Tansey Crescent).
- 121 The provision of rural exception developments for affordable housing should be based on evidence of need from the village concerned. In view of the large number of market homes already planned for the Fosse Villages, we will not normally consider allowing market housing on these sites to help facilitate this.

### **Policy FV13: Rural Exception Sites and Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing will be supported on rural exception sites within or adjoining the Limits to Built Development where the proposed development is demonstrated to meet an identified local need for affordable housing that would not otherwise be met.

All affordable housing proposals on rural exception sites will be subject to a planning obligation;

- 1) to ensure that the dwellings remain in affordable housing tenure in perpetuity and;
- 2) on first occupation, dwellings are allocated to households with a local connection including living, working or with close family ties to the host Parish. If subsequent to the first occupation there are no households fulfilling these criteria in the parish, then households in need of affordable housing and with a local connection to other places within the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Area will be given priority.

## Jobs

- 122 We want to support the sustainable growth of the local economy so that local businesses reach their full potential and help provide jobs for local people.

## Employment and Occupations

- 123 Self-employment levels are higher in rural areas in Blaby than urban areas, with 1,330 people in rural areas self-employed (10.3%), compared with 8.5% in urban areas and 8.8% in Blaby district. In terms of occupation, people in rural areas in Blaby are more likely to be working in managerial roles than any other occupational role, with 16.3% of people in rural areas working in managerial roles. In terms of industry sector, people in rural Blaby are more likely to be working in 'manufacturing' than any other employment sector, with 20.5% of workers in rural areas working in 'manufacturing'. Despite the presence of extraction industries only 0.4% of people in rural Blaby are employed in mining and quarrying.
- 124 The average household income per week is higher in rural areas in Blaby compared with urban areas, with an average household income of £667 in rural areas, compared with £650 in urban areas and £654 in Blaby. Rural areas in Blaby have a lower average household income (£667) compared with the average for rural areas across England (£712).
- 125 Rural areas in Blaby have a lower level of business units per head (679 per 10,000 working age population) compared with the average for rural areas across England (1,000 per 10,000 working age population). The proportion of VAT-registered local business units employing less than 5 people is higher in rural areas in Blaby compared with urban areas, with 76% of VAT-registered local business units in rural areas employing fewer than five people, compared with 67% in urban areas and 69% in Blaby. In total, 20% of these smaller businesses in Blaby are in rural areas (550 businesses).

## Croft Quarry

- 126 Croft Quarry remains an important mineral resource of national significance which needs to be protected. Excavation has been going on for hundreds of years, but the quarry is nearing the end of its economic life. This has given rise to concerns about the loss of local jobs. From our 2017 questionnaire survey, we know that 77% of local residents agreed that we should be planning for the loss of jobs at the quarry.
- 127 The potential closure of the quarry has also raised worries about its potential for landfill. However, there are conditions controlling the restoration of the site. While the exact form of the restoration is not prescribed, restoration cannot go beyond agriculture, amenity (which includes nature conservation) or forestry uses without a separate, new planning permission. Landfilling of the final quarry void with waste is unlikely because of European, national and local policies and financial factors which would make a waste landfilling at Croft or any other hard rock quarry practically unviable. Any proposal for landfilling with waste would require a planning application.
- 128 The quarry is also the site of several businesses belonging to Aggregate Industries. The Marions Way site now has Masterblock, Bardon Concrete and the Asphalt plant as well as the main quarry operation. Responses to our 2017 questionnaire survey suggest that

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



91% of local people support using the cement area at Croft Quarry could be used for general industrial use provided vehicles used Marion's Way.

- 129 The southern part of the site lies within a Flood Zone 2 but the remaining northern part lies in Flood Zone 1 where there is less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year.

## **Policy FV14: Croft Quarry**

Proposals for employment development (uses falling within class B of the Use Classes Order including offices (B1) manufacturing (B2) and small-scale warehousing and distribution (B8)) at the cement area at Croft Quarry, as defined on the Croft Polices Map, is supported provided:

1. the only vehicular access is from Marion's Way;
2. development should demonstrate appreciation of the surrounding historic environment through sensitive and responsive design;
3. a site specific flood risk assessment should be undertaken and submitted with the planning application; and
4. the potential for multifunctional green infrastructure networks and significant long-term positive effects should be maximised.

## **Employment Areas**

- 130 As part of our strategy for generating new and better jobs for local people we want to support the retention and growth of key business areas in the Fosse Villages.

## **Policy FV15: Employment Areas**

All of the following Employment Areas, listed below and as defined on the FVNP Policies Maps, will be safeguarded for employment development (uses falling within class B of the Use Classes Order including offices (B1) manufacturing (B2) and small-scale warehousing and distribution (B8)).

Development proposals in the Employment Areas located within the Limits to Built Development conforming to Policy DM1 of the Delivery DPD comprising;

EC1 Winston Avenue, Croft  
EC2 Riverside Court, Croft  
ESH Haulage Site, Aston Lane, Sharnford;  
ESS1 Foxbank Industrial Estate, Stoney Stanton; and  
ESS2 Highfields Farm Enterprise Centre, Stoney Stanton, will be supported.

Development proposals in the Employment Areas located beyond the Limits to Built Development, conforming to Policy DM2 of the Delivery DPD comprising;

EH1 Elms Farm Industrial Estate, Huncote  
EH2 Green's Lodge Farm, Huncote  
EPM1 Dovecote Court Business Park, Potters Marston; and  
ESS3 Calor gas Centre, Stoney Stanton; and  
ET1 Sawmill, Thurlaston, will be supported



## Renewable Energy

- 131 To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, we recognise our responsibility to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.

### Wind Energy

- 132 The Fosse Villages has an average wind speed of 6-7m/s (at 45 m above ground level) across most of its area. This is a good resource for large-scale wind turbine installations. However, with scattered villages, important roads and railways, landscapes (particularly the open unobstructed views of the area from Croft Hill) and heritage assets that need to be protected. Only 23% of respondents to our 2017 questionnaire survey supported large wind turbines and wind farms

### Solar Farms

- 133 Solar farms (sometimes known as solar parks or solar fields) are the large-scale application of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to generate green, clean electricity at scale, usually to feed into the grid. Solar farms can cover anything between 1 acre and 100 acres and are usually developed in rural areas.

### Biomass

- 134 Biomass is fuel that is developed from organic materials, a renewable and sustainable source of energy used to create electricity or other forms of power. In biomass power plants, wood waste or other waste is burned to produce steam that runs a turbine to make electricity, or that provides heat to industries and homes.
- 135 Anaerobic digestion is a natural process in which micro-organisms break down the organic matter found in wet biomass waste (such as sewage sludge, animal manure and slurry and waste food) in the absence of oxygen, to produce biogas (mainly a mixture of around 60% methane and 40% carbon dioxide) and digestate (a nitrogen rich fertiliser). A biogas plant had been planned at Sutton Lodge Farm, to the east of Fosse Way, Sapcote.

### Microgeneration Technologies

- 136 Many microgeneration technologies projects, such as solar photovoltaic panels, ground source and air source heat pumps are often permitted development which means they do not require planning permission providing certain limits and conditions are met. 84% of respondents to our 2017 questionnaire survey supported small-scale renewable energy technologies.

#### **Policy FV16: Renewable Energy**

Ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms will be supported where:

- A. They are on previously developed or non-agricultural land;
- B. Their location is selected sensitively and well-planned so that the proposals do not impact on any heritage asset;
- C. The proposal's visual impact has been fully assessed and addressed in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance on landscape assessment (Planning Practice Guidance ref: 5-013-20150327); and



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



D. The installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use.

Wind turbines will not be supported.

## Gypsies and Travellers

- 137 There is a large concentration of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Aston Firs area, close to Junction 2 of the M69 in the parishes of Aston Flamville and Sapcote. The area is locally visible in the landscape, however its proximity to Freeholt Wood and Aston Firs Wood provide some screening.
- 138 There is a cluster of around 6 sites with some 165 caravans. Families tend to use services and facilities in Hinckley, but children also attend All Saints Primary School, Sapcote and Sharnford Primary School. The Gypsy and Traveller co-exists with the settled communities of the area.
- 139 We will discourage the provision of more sites in the area to ensure that the combined scale of the sites does not dominate the settled community and to avoid placing pressure on local services. We understand that residents of Aston Firs do not favour site expansion either. 68% of respondents to our 2017 questionnaire survey thought that the intensification, expansion or creation of new sites at Aston Firs should be discouraged.

### **Policy FV17: Aston Firs**

Development proposals for new sites or the extension or intensification of existing sites at Aston Firs, whether for Gypsies and Travellers or other households, will not be supported.

## Aston Flamville Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- AF1. Aston Flamville is situated near Hinckley and Burbage, but on the other (eastern) side of the M69. It has a parish meeting rather than a parish council. The parish lies on the south-west boundary of Blaby district. The village was originally named Eston and was renamed in the 11th century by Lord Flamville.
- AF2. The village lies on slightly higher ground than the nearby motorway which helps to filter road noise and so remains a largely undisturbed and a very rural area. Strong planning restrictions and control have ensured that the historic village characteristics have been preserved. The village is a designated Conservation Area.

### Community profile

- AF3. The parish amounts to 608 hectares with a population of 241 with 107 homes (2011 Census) about 1 mile (1.6 km) east of Burbage and 1 mile (1.63 km) north-west of Sharnford. There were 147 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- AF4. Aston Flamville is the largest settlement in the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland landscape character area. This character area is situated on the edge of Blaby District along its south-western boundary. The character of the area is similar to the landscape beyond the district boundary.
- AF5. The landform includes a series of high points intersected by broad valleys which creates a wide variation through the area. This area includes the highest point in Blaby district at 130m AOD within the south-western most point of the district at High Cross.
- AF6. Land use is predominantly agricultural with an even mix of arable and grazing land. Recreational areas are scarce although more concentrated within the northern part of the character area and associated with urban fringes and blocks of woodland.
- AF7. Field pattern is quite variable across the character area, although generally includes large regular shaped fields with boundaries following contours. Field sizes become slightly smaller around watercourses and to the south of the district. Field size often reflects the land use within it with grazing land often being on smaller fields than arable.
- AF8. Fields are generally bounded by hedgerows many of which, particularly in the northern part of the character area, are mature and often scrubby in appearance. These tend to contain a high proportion of hawthorn although in places blackthorn, elder and hazel become more dominant. Hedgerows are generally mature and intact although often appear slightly scrubby in appearance through low intensity of management. Hedgerow trees are scattered throughout hedges and are a dominant feature on the horizon. There is an even mix of ash and oak species present although ash is more common towards the south of the character area.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- AF9. There are numerous public rights of way which cross the character area linking Aston Flamville to Sharnford and the wider countryside including the Leicestershire Round. Public footpaths are concentrated around recreational facilities such as woodland at Aston Firs on the south-western boundary of the district and Burbage Common within the Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth.
- AF10. This area maintains a predominantly rural character although many urban influences are present. This is particularly evident within the northern part of the character area. Several pylon routes cross the area; however, these are generally not prominent as their siting in relation to topography reduces their prominence on the skyline. The M69 which crosses the character area is noticeable within the landscape due to the noise and movement of traffic. Prevailing road noise prevents the area from being a peaceful rural landscape and is a constant reminder of nearby urban development. Aston Firs Gypsy and Traveller site is locally visible in the landscape, however its proximity to Freeholt Wood and Aston Firs Wood provide screening.
- AF11. This character area contains the most significant block of woodland within the district at Aston Firs, which is ancient semi-natural woodland of importance as ecological habitat and is designated as an SSSI. Other smaller copses and clumps of woodland in regular shapes reflect the field pattern surrounding them. Woodland appears prominent within the landscape due to its location on high ground, ridge lines and prominent slopes. Although the majority is mixed oak-ash broadleaf woodland, evergreen and ornamental species are common within the village fringes.

## Built form and settlement pattern

- AF12. Aston Flamville is a small linear settlement located on high ground. Vegetation around the edges and generally low height of development, prevent the village from being a prominent feature of the skyline.
- AF13. The settlement pattern is strongly linear following the route of the lanes Lychgate Lane and Hinckley Road running through Aston Flamville. The settlement is well screened from the wider landscape by mature vegetation. It contains a church, (the Church of St Peter), a manor house and several residential properties. Both the churchyard and Manor House grounds contain very large mature trees which create enclosure around the sites and restrict views of the buildings from the surrounding area.
- AF14. Buildings are often well spaced apart in substantial gardens and most are set back from the road with grass verges to the front.
- AF15. Most buildings in the Aston Flamville form the historic core. Aston Flamville has developed around the central Manor House opposite the church. Many of the surrounding houses are substantial cottages, farmhouses and converted farm buildings within courtyards, indicative of an historic association with agriculture. Modern development is relatively unobtrusive and has respected its small rural character although of a typical modern architectural style.
- AF16. A brick pigeoncote stands alone within an open field opposite the Manor House forming a significant landscape feature and historical reference within Aston Flamville. The

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



structure is marked with the date 1715 giving an indication of the minimum age of settlement around The Manor.

- AF17. Generally, the roofline of the settlement is not prominent within the surrounding landscape due to the presence of tall mature vegetation. Buildings are low in height, two storeys or lower, with the church tower being the tallest structure. The church also is enclosed by substantial trees and is not visually prominent beyond Aston Flamville.
- AF18. The roofline of the contemporary dwellings to the southern fringe of the settlement is uniform. The buildings are situated slightly higher than the road although the view from this direction is broken by surrounding vegetation.

## Heritage

- AF19. There are five Listed Buildings in Aston Flamville.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
K6 Telephone Kiosk, Lychgate Lane	Grade II
The Manor House, Lychgate Lane	Grade II
Church Farm Court and Boundary Wall, 1-3, Hinckley Road	Grade II
Pigeoncote at Manor Farm, Lychgate Lane	Grade II
Church of St Peter, Lychgate Lane	Grade II

- AF20. Aston Flamville Conservation Area was designated in 1975.

## Architectural style

- AF21. Aston Flamville contains a mixture of building styles, either domestic or agricultural in nature and including cottages, detached and semi-detached dwellings and converted farm buildings. Several houses have attractive architectural detailing to the facades, gables and roofs.
- AF22. The Manor House at Lychgate Lane/ Burbage Lane marks the centre of the settlement and dates from the late 16th century. It is constructed from brick with plain tile and slate roofs. It also contains elements of stone and granite rubble although not visible from the public road. It has gated access and is enclosed by red brick walls and vegetation.
- AF23. A modern housing development has been incorporated into the settlement adjacent to the Manor House. This is reasonably successful in reflecting the local character and built form of Aston Flamville. The dwellings take advantage of views onto the brick pigeoncote and beyond to the east of the settlement across the surrounding countryside. The siting of the houses to the roadside respects the existing building line and they face on to the road as do adjoining cottages.
- AF24. Further houses to the rear are accessed via a road between the two frontage buildings. Although these modern houses lack some of the architectural detailing which can be seen in the facades of the adjoining buildings, they are constructed of a mixture of red and brown shades of brick with dark roof tiles, which is complementary to the existing colour palette.
- AF25. Boundary treatments are varied. Properties tend to be enclosed by low red brick walls. The front gardens of some houses are marked by timber garden fences and/or

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



ornamental planting. More modern houses tend to lack brick walls and have planting to the boundaries. Vegetated boundaries, mature hedgerows, trees within gardens and belts of woodland contribute to the well vegetated character of the village.

- AF26. Buildings are predominantly constructed from red brick with dark slate or tiled roofs. Woodwork and timber detailing are often painted white. There is one thatched building which is rendered and painted cream. St. Peter's church is constructed from local granite. This material is not a common feature of building construction in Aston Flamville.

## Local Green Spaces

- AF27. Aston Flamville contains no specifically allocated public open space, play facilities or recreation ground. However, residents have easy access to the immediate countryside via several public rights of way.

## Gateway features

- AF28. The entrance to the Aston Flamville is denoted by dense overhanging vegetation along Sharnford Road. Mature trees and vegetation cover the roadside on both sides restricting views, creating visual narrowing, and a leafy shaded enclosure to this part of the settlement. This approach increases the perception of a remote and rural location.
- AF29. The thatched building, which comprises three cottages, is a very distinctive property and the first to be seen on entering Aston Flamville through the vegetated enclosed entrance on Sharnford Road. One of the cottages has a thatched garden gate facing onto the roadside.
- AF30. A line of large modern detached properties denotes the entrance to Aston Flamville from a westerly direction. These properties occupy a very desirable location overlooking Mickle Hill Spinney and the wider the countryside of Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland landscape character area.
- AF31. Aston Flamville contains a red painted and glazed panel telephone kiosk which stands outside the church at the junction of Lychgate Lane and Hinckley Road. This kiosk is a Grade II listed Type K6 designed 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. Its position at this junction is within an open grass verge and is visually prominent opposite the thatched cottages forming a further gateway feature on entering the settlement.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

- AF32. Two compartments at Aston Firs are scheduled ancient semi-natural woodland.

## Services and Facilities

- AF33. Aston Flamville has no services and facilities other than St Peter's church.
- AF34. Aston Flamville is on the infrequent Hinckleybus X55 route, with no service on Sunday or evenings.

## Development

- AF35. Aston Flamville has a very poor range of services and facilities. Public transport services are also infrequent. Aston Flamville is not considered a 'sustainable' location for new development and no further growth is proposed.



## Croft Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- C1. Croft is bisected by the Birmingham to Peterborough railway line and is just off the B4114 at Croft Hill. The village adjoins Croft Quarry, the largest quarry in the area, which has had a significant influence on the form and character of the settlement.
- C2. Tradition has it that the parish stone pit at Croft, known as The Clevis, was worked by the Romans and that their engineers used its granite in constructing the foundations of bridges on Fosse Way. Large-scale quarrying was started around the mid-19th century and its output was primarily used for road making materials. In 1959 The Croft Granite and Brick Company was taken over by English China Clays and was later passed to Camas. Croft's granite quarry is now operated by Aggregate Industries.
- C3. Croft retains a distinctive core of historic buildings, although most the settlement has expanded to the south-east over the 20th Century. The two areas are separated by the River Soar and the railway.

### Community profile

- C4. A Croft (parish) rural community profile has been prepared to help us identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 Census.
- C5. The Community profile shows that the population of Croft has been in decline. This is confirmed by the 2011 Census which records 1,639 people living in Croft compared with 1,731 in 2001. Of greatest concern is the reduction in the number of young people. In 2001 there were 342 children aged under-15, in 2011 there were 275. In 2011, 22% of residents were aged 65+ and only 18% aged under-16. While there has been a net outflow of people of all ages, the number of young people moving out is particularly significant.
- C6. Our 2017 Questionnaire Survey indicated that 54% of Croft's residents did not feel that the declining population was an issue.
- C7. There are relatively few children, working age adults and older people living on low incomes.
- C8. 21% of working age people have no qualifications compared with the Leicestershire average of 13%. Relatively few have the highest qualification level. In general, those with low or no skills are more likely to experience exclusion, and be vulnerable to changes in the economy, such as increased demand for higher-skilled workers.
- C9. There were 722 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- C10. Croft lies in the Croft Hill landscape character area. Croft Hill is a prominent igneous rock outcrop forming a distinctive landscape feature which rises 60m above the surrounding countryside and is currently designated as an Area of Local Landscape Value. Man-made ground is clustered around Croft Hill. The prominence of Croft Hill is emphasised further

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



by the relatively flat landscape which extends across most the Fosse Villages area. There are now two circular walks taking in Croft, Huncote and Potters Marston.

- C11. Land-use across the area is strongly influenced by the presence of quarrying activities, associated buildings, infrastructure and spoil mounding. The area contains several informal recreational routes which includes Croft Hill and other publicly accessible woodland areas. Farming is fragmented and interrupted by quarrying activities which contributes to a relatively chaotic landscape character.
- C12. Croft quarry includes a large area of operational buildings, offices and the quarry itself. The buildings are generally well screened from the surrounding area. Expansive panoramic views are possible across most of the Fosse Villages from Croft Hill due to its elevated position and lack of vegetation on its summit. There are relatively open views across lower lying areas due to the fragmentation of hedgerow boundaries. Views are heavily influenced by quarrying activities and adjoining man-made hills. There are dramatic views into the quarry from the summit of Croft Hill with the rock strata, previous quarry working and turquoise lagoon in the base.
- C13. A local green corridor links Croft and Narborough into the Sub-Regional and wider Green Infrastructure network. This corridor broadly follows the line of the River Soar, therefore, opportunities to enhance this ecological corridor should also be considered. New developments should be encouraged to contribute to the route either through the creation of new links or the improvement of existing routes and networks.
- C14. Although there are no Green Wedges or Areas of Separation proposed for Croft, residents were keen to see the green spaces between Croft and Huncote, Stoney Stanton and the B4114 maintained. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Croft. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside. Our 2017 Questionnaire Survey showed that 91% of respondents supported the proposed Limits to the Built-up Area of Croft.

## **Built form and settlement pattern**

- C15. The core of the village is characterised by its sharp rise in the landscape towards the quarry and Croft Hill and the relatively narrow street pattern created by high granite stone walls, often up to 2m in height, which border the roads. The buildings are visible above the stone walls due to the sharp rise in the landscape.
- C16. The historic core of the village is also regarded as the village centre and is located at the junction of Station Road, Huncote Road and Hill Street which links to the edge of the quarry. The centre is mainly residential, and the only commercial building is the Heathcote Arms which is on higher ground at this junction.
- C17. The street pattern to the north of the village tends to be relatively narrow with a sense of enclosure created by a mix of mature trees, shrubs and hedges within private gardens and properties on higher ground which front almost directly onto the road.
- C18. Most of the village lies to the south of the river and railway line and is suburban in character with wide roads and houses set behind front gardens designed to accommodate car parking. This area does not reflect the character of the historic core of the village.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- C19. The roofline is relatively uniform within most of the village; however, the ground rises sharply towards the church and buildings which are set within a wooded backdrop. The church tower is visible above this planting and is a localised feature on the horizon.

## Heritage

- C20. Croft Hill is an important and well-known historic site in the area. Although now used for recreation and quarrying, many centuries ago it was said to be a meeting place for druids, and by the time of the Saxons its dominant position overlooking the surrounding countryside had ensured its pre-eminence as a meeting place.

### Designated Heritage Assets

- C21. There are five Listed Buildings in Croft.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
War Memorial Cross and Enclosure, Huncote Road	Grade II
No. 5 And adjoining Boundary Wall and Butchers Shop, Hill Street	Grade II
Church of St Michael and All Saints, Huncote Road	Grade II
Stone Coffin 1.5m south of Nave at Church of St Michael, Huncote Road	Grade II
Hill Foot Farmhouse, Stanton Lane	Grade II

- C22. Croft Conservation Area was designated in September 2016. The boundary of the Conservation Area has been drawn around the historic core of the village, which lies primarily along Station Road, Huncote Road and Hill Street.

### Features of Local Heritage Interest

- C23. During consultation with residents and from work undertaken in preparation for the designation of the Croft Conservation Area, several other local heritage assets were identified:

- Croft House, Huncote Road
- The Old Rectory, Huncote Road
- 1-8 Station Road
- The School House, Hill Street
- The former school, Hill Street
- 1 Hill Street
- 4-18 Hill Street
- 1-6 The Green
- 9 The Green
- Former agricultural buildings to the rear of 7-9 The Green
- Former Union Chapel

## Architectural style

- C24. The older historic buildings tend to use granite stone in their construction. These buildings tend to be detached and relatively large with detail provided around windows including sandstone lintels and cornerstones. They are set behind high granite walls with mature trees and vegetation surrounding them.
- C25. Other buildings to the north of the river are built of granite with brick detailing on the edges and around windows. Cottages and terraces closer to the quarry are mainly built of brick and tend to front either directly onto the street or are set back slightly by a low stone wall. Some of the windows within these terraces have been designed to reflect the

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



window style of the church and old rectory. Other properties have a simpler design although original window features have often been lost through the installation of uPVC windows and doors.

- C26. Windows in some older brick buildings tend to have architectural highlights provided by a darker blue/black coloured brick or sandstone. Although a mix of materials is used within the village the over-riding colours which these combinations create are soft pinks/reds and browns with smaller features and detailing using either buff coloured sandstone or dark blue brick. A small amount of white render paint is used on buildings, but this is not a prominent feature in the village.
- C27. To the south of the river and railway the buildings have little relationship with the older core and are more suburban in character. Houses are set back to enable off-street car parking, creating a relatively open and wide character which is emphasised by the general lack of mature vegetation within gardens or in public spaces.

## Local Green Spaces

- C28. Early in 2011, Leicestershire County Council asked the public to say which local green spaces they particularly valued and why. Areas were identified by communities using an online interactive map-based application and at special sessions run at the 27 Community Forums. Important green spaces were also identified by local people during consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in September 2012 and more recently through our 2017 Questionnaire Survey. Eight Local Green Spaces have been identified for protection in Croft.

## Gateway features

- C29. There is a strong gateway into the village from Huncote created by the high granite boundary walls, which edge the road, and which are reinforced by entering the village from higher ground.
- C30. Within the centre of Croft, the bridge over the railway and river in combination with the Heathcote Arms on higher ground provide a strong gateway into the historic core of the village. From Coventry Road to the east, Croft lacks a defined entrance; the two routes appear suburban and industrial in character and do not reflect the village's heritage. A village gateway can help to create 'a sense of place' when drivers enter the village and can be designed so that drivers are required to slow down before entry.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

- C31. The solid geology of the area is mainly made up of mudstone, with pockets of sandstone and an outcrop of granite at Croft Hill. The quarries at Croft and Huncote SSSI are important in exposing tonalitic igneous rocks of Ordovician age together with attendant zeolite mineralisation, and much younger manganese mineralisation of Triassic age.

## Services and Facilities

- C32. With a primary school, pub, recreation ground, co-op and convenience store (with Post Office) there is a reasonable level of services and facilities in the village. In November 2017, planning permission was granted for the construction of a new pavilion building at

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



the playing fields off Winston Avenue. The new building will include a multi-purpose function room, changing rooms and ancillary kitchen/offices/toilet facilities.

## Housing Needs

- C33. An affordable housing needs study was carried out in Croft in the summer of 2005 by the Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Housing Enabler in conjunction with Croft Parish Council. The findings were updated in 2009 by contacting the original respondents to see if they were still in housing need and by examining Blaby District Council's Housing Register for the parish. The Study concluded that there was a need for affordable rented properties.
- C34. In July 2011, seven affordable homes in Poplars Road were built for people from the area. They were built by the East Midlands Housing Association after Croft Parish Council said affordable homes were needed in the village. The new houses were very popular and a further six affordable homes have been built there.

## Jobs

- C35. Croft Quarry remains an important mineral resource of national significance which needs to be protected. The quarry is also the site of several businesses belonging to Aggregate Industries. The Marions Way site now has Masterblock, Bardon Concrete and the Asphalt plant as well as the main quarry operation. Quarry excavation has been the cause of local air quality problems.
- C36. Excavation has been going on for hundreds of years and the quarry is nearing the end of its economic life. This has given rise to concerns about the loss of local jobs.
- C37. The potential closure of the quarry has also raised worries about its potential for landfill. However, there are conditions controlling the restoration of the site. While the exact form of the restoration is not prescribed, restoration cannot go beyond agriculture, amenity (which includes nature conservation) or forestry uses without a separate, new planning permission. Landfilling of the final quarry void with waste is unlikely because of European, national and local policies and financial factors which would make a waste landfilling at Croft or any other hard rock quarry practically unviable.
- C38. Croft also has an industrial area on Winston Avenue with offices and manufacturing companies. However, vehicles must pass through the village to Winston Avenue and there are local concerns about HGV traffic that is generated.
- C39. Riverside Court is an office development comprising of eight semi-detached office units off Station Road.

## Transport and Infrastructure

- C40. The Leicester to Nuneaton/Birmingham main railway line passes through the centre of the village; however, the passenger station has been closed for many years. In the past, land has been safeguarded for a rail passenger station at Station Road, Croft. The railway still provides an important service to the Quarry/Village as aggregate materials are still transported by rail.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- C41. During consultation on the Fosse Villages Local Plan, local people highlighted other transport concerns:
- No evening, Sunday or Bank Holiday bus service;
  - No bus service to Hinckley; and
  - Traffic congestion and parking problems around the primary school at drop-off and pick-up times.

## Housing

- C42. Since 2006, 16 houses have been built in the village (to 31 March 2017). 12 of these are affordable houses at Poplars Road.
- C43. Another 28 homes have planning permission (at 31 March 2017). These include nine houses on Primary School land on Broughton Road.
- C44. Taking account of these houses already built and in the pipeline, Croft needs to find a site for around 33 new homes to meet housing needs to 2029. Our 2017 Questionnaire Survey showed that 51% of respondents supported this level of growth.
- C45. Full planning permission has since been granted (August 2017) for 14 homes on the former school playing fields site (17/0323/FUL) and several smaller sites also have permission. Consequently, the housing needs of Croft have largely been met and it is expected that any residual requirement for housing can be met by development within the Limits to the Built-up Area. In particular, the former Croft Quarry offices and car park provide a brownfield redevelopment opportunity.



## Huncote Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- H1. Huncote is a small rural village lying some 10km (six miles) South West of the City of Leicester. The population is 1,745 with 1,459 persons on the electoral register. The parish contains 426.436 hectares of land, and forms 1.9% of the district population.
- H2. The nearby Croft Hill was an important meeting place as early as 836 A.D. when Wiglaf, King of Mercia, held a Council there. It also holds a macabre place in history as on one occasion, it was a place of execution for forty-one men, sometime after St. Andrew's Day (30th November) of 1124.
- H3. In the 18th Century the villagers' chief occupation was domestic framework knitting. This was replaced during Queen Victoria's reign by quarrying, which improved transport by providing better roadways. The old handmade setts can still be seen as kerb stones in the older parts of the village.
- H4. The population then was just over 500, and the village extended from an area bounded by Main or Bridge Street, Church Back Lane and Thurlaston Brook, with Cheney End, the Mill and Hall Farm on the opposite side of Main Street, to include new houses on Forest Road as far as Duncan Avenue.
- H5. The old school at the bottom of Brook Street was completed in 1852 and two new chapels were built; the Primitive Methodists on Cheney End in 1874 and the Baptist on Main Street in 1876. St James the Greater (Church of England) was dedicated in 1898 but was never fully completed. Huncote Cemetery was opened in 1897.
- H6. There are two churches currently in use in the village; St James the Greater (Church of England) on Narborough Road, and Huncote Methodist Church on Forest Road. Both churches have Church Halls.
- H7. There is an active community centre attached to the Huncote Primary School on Denman Lane. The Pavilion (previously known as the Huncote Leisure Centre) offers a wide range of activities for people of all ages. Huncote also has a BMX club (Huncote Hornets) with 8-lane BMX track, as well as football teams, and a model car club.
- H8. Most houses are semi-detached or terraced. The parish has two active sites for quarrying and aggregates and is dissected by the M69.
- H9. The village adjoins Croft Quarry, the largest quarry in the area, which has had a significant influence on the form and character of the settlement.

### Community profile

- H10. A Huncote (parish) rural community profile has been prepared to help us identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 Census.
- H11. The Community profile shows that the population of Huncote has been in decline. This is confirmed by the 2011 Census which records 1,745 people living in Huncote compared with 1,774 in 2001. Of note is that in 2010, 18.6% of residents were aged 65+ and

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



18.9% aged under-16. While there has been a net outflow of people of all ages, the number of young people moving out is particularly significant.

- H12. There are relatively few children, working age adults and older people living on low incomes.
- H13. 15.7% of working age people have no qualifications compared with 13.1% (Leicestershire) and 13.4% (England). 24.6% of working age people have the highest qualification level, compared to 32.7% nationally. In general, those with low or no skills are more likely to experience exclusion, and be vulnerable to changes in the economy, such as increased demand for higher-skilled workers.
- H14. The Community profile indicates crime rates are over 30% below the national average. However, access to services such as GP's, Secondary schools, hospitals and Job Centre's is significantly above the national average.
- H15. There were 816 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

## Landscape

- H16. Huncote lies in the Croft Hill landscape character area. Croft Hill is a prominent igneous rock outcrop forming a distinctive landscape feature which rises 60m above the surrounding countryside and is currently designated as an Area of Local Landscape Value. Man-made ground is clustered around Croft Hill. The prominence of Croft Hill is emphasised further by the relatively flat landscape which extends across most the Fosse Villages area.
- H17. Land-use across the area is strongly influenced by the presence of quarrying and aggregate activities, associated buildings, infrastructure and spoil mounding, as well as pig farming. The area contains several informal recreational routes which includes Croft Hill and other publicly accessible woodland areas. Farming is mainly found in the North and East of the parish, with the South West a fragmented mix of quarrying activities and flood plain for the Thurlaston Brook as it approaches the River Soar.
- H18. Expansive panoramic views are possible across most of the Fosse Villages from Croft Hill and the viewing platform in the Huncote Nature Walk due to its elevated position and lack of vegetation on its summit. There are relatively open views across lower lying areas due to the fragmentation of hedgerow boundaries. Views are heavily influenced by quarrying activities and adjoining man-made hills. There are dramatic views into the quarry from the summit of Croft Hill with the rock strata, previous quarry working and turquoise lagoon in the base.
- H19. An Area of Separation (as defined in the Blaby Local Plan) is sited between Huncote and Narborough to the north and south of Narborough Road, which includes the SITA landfill site.
- H20. During consultation, local residents were keen to see the green spaces between Croft and Huncote, Stoney Stanton and the B4114 maintained. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Huncote. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside where development will be restricted.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Built form and settlement pattern

- H21. The historic core of the village is also regarded as the village centre and is located at the junction of Brook Street, Narborough Road, Main Street and Forest Road which links to the flood plain of Thurlaston Brook. The centre is a mix of residential and commercial buildings; with the Red Lion, Indian takeaway, garage, Post Office, Spar, chip shop, 3 hairdressers, newsagents, ancient pinfold, care home and mix of residential property types around the junction.
- H22. The street pattern on Brook Street is relatively narrow with a sense of enclosure created by a mix of hedgerows, courtyard gardens and older properties which front almost directly onto the road.
- H23. The historic properties of Forest Road have relatively little room at the front of the properties, causing the road to be reduced to a single lane, with cars parking at the side of the road in-front of properties.
- H24. The rest of the village is suburban in character with most roads being wide and houses set behind front gardens designed to accommodate car parking. This area does not reflect the character of the historic core of the village.
- H25. The roofline is relatively uniform within most of the village; however, the ground drops sharply towards Thurlaston Brook, with most buildings fronting directly onto the road.

## Heritage assets

- H26. Croft Hill is an important and well-known historic site in the area. Although now used for recreation and quarrying, many centuries ago it was said to be a meeting place for druids, and by the time of the Saxons its dominant position overlooking the surrounding countryside had ensured its pre-eminence as a meeting place.

### Designated Heritage Assets

- H27. There are three Listed Buildings in Huncote. Locally, the older houses on Brook Street, the older houses built for quarry workers, triangle of cottages, Mills and Chandlers Cottage on Croft Hill Road, along with the Old School House and Red Lion PH are considered important.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
The Thatched Cottage, 6, Brook Street	Grade II
2, Cheney End	Grade II
Elms Farmhouse, Narborough Road	Grade II

### Features of Local Heritage Interest

- H28. During consultation with residents several other local heritage assets were identified:
- Chandlers Cottage, Croft Hill Road
  - Huncote Mill, Croft Hill Road
  - Mill House, Croft Hill Road
  - Former minerals line
  - Old School House, Brook Street
  - 6 Brook Street (The Thatched Cottage)
  - The Old Chapel, Cheney End
  - Baptist Chapel, Main Street

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- Red Lion PH
- The Pinfold, Main Street
- Triangle of cottages on Forest Road/Narborough Road/Main Street/Brook Street crossroads
- Methodist Church, Forest Road
- Church Rooms, Narborough Road
- St James the Greater Church, Narborough Road
- The Stone, Narborough Road

## Architectural style

- H29. The older historic buildings in the village are mainly brick built. These buildings are a combination of detached, semi-detached properties and terraced, set relatively close to the kerb, with those set back often having a low brick wall. The bay windows on the triangle of cottages on Forest Road/Main Street are relatively unique locally in that they overhang the highway. Many of the central properties have a simple design to their windows, with original window features potentially having been lost through the installation of uPVC windows and doors.
- H30. The thatched cottage on Brook Street is of a unique style within the village and forms a part a noticeable street scene of the village.
- H31. Elms Farm was worthy of note for the Lime/Ash screed flooring to be found in the property which was one of only a very small number of examples of this type in the county.
- H32. All properties within Huncote are a maximum of 2 storeys before, the roofline. Future developments of this ilk would be more in keeping with the overall architectural style of the village.
- H33. Windowsills and exterior lintels in some older brick buildings tend to have architectural highlights provided by a coloured brick or sandstone. Although a mix of materials is used within the village the over-riding colours which these combinations create are creams, reds and light browns with smaller features and detailing using either buff coloured sandstone or dark blue brick. A small amount of white render paint is used on buildings, but this is not a prominent feature in the village.
- H34. The properties on Denman Lane, and connected roads, have little relationship with the older core and are more suburban in character. Houses are set back to enable off-street car parking, creating a relatively open and wide character which is emphasised by the general lack of mature vegetation within gardens or in public spaces.

## Local Green Spaces

- H35. Early in 2011, Leicestershire County Council asked the public to say which local green spaces they particularly valued and why. Areas were identified by communities using an online interactive map-based application and at special sessions run at the 27 Community Forums. Important green spaces were also identified by local people during consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in September 2012 and more recently through our 2017 Questionnaire Survey. Six Local Green Spaces have been identified for protection in Huncote.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Gateway features

- H36. There is a strong gateway into the village as you pass over the narrow humpback bridge over the Thurlaston Brook, emphasised by the journey from Croft created by the high granite boundary walls, and hedgerows, which edge the road, and which are reinforced by entering the village from higher ground.
- H37. The railway bridge from Narborough forms a strong gateway feature when entering the village from the East. The marker stone near the Sita landfill site also contributes to creating a noticeable feature when entering the parish.
- H38. Other than the turning to Thurlaston, there is no defined gateway to the parish from the North, nevertheless the flow from open countryside to built-up area is quite distinct.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

- H39. The solid geology of the area is mainly made up of mudstone, with pockets of sandstone and an outcrop of granite at Croft Hill. The quarries at Croft and Huncote SSSI are important in exposing tonalitic igneous rocks of Ordovician age together with attendant zeolite mineralisation, and much younger manganese mineralisation of Triassic age.
- H40. Croft Hill SSSI supports a nationally rare vegetation type of short, tussocky grasses in a rather open sward. The site is the largest known area of this grassland type in Leicestershire.
- H41. The landscape surrounding Huncote is dominated by quarries on most sides. These works have created suitable habitat for sand martins (*R. riparia*), which have been frequently recorded within and surrounding the area. Ecological features of interest include:
- Thurlaston Brook which is likely to function as an important corridor for species dispersal across a landscape that is relatively poor in hedgerows.
  - An area of broad-leaved woodland to the rear of the leisure centre with some mature hedgerows connecting it to the wider landscape.

## Services and Facilities

- H42. With a primary school, pub, recreation ground, Indian takeaway, Spar convenience store (with Post Office), newsagents, fish and chip shop, three hairdressers and service station there is a good level of services. However, there are concerns about the availability of a local community building.
- H43. There are two churches in the village. St James the Greater and Huncote Methodist Church.
- H44. The Pavilion (Leisure centre) and SureStart Children's Centre can also be found within the village.
- H45. Huncote Animal Aid is an animal sanctuary found on the opposite side of the M69 to the main village.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



H46. The primary school teaches 4-11-year-old children and has a capacity of 180 and there is currently a school role of 179 pupils. Local people report that the school role has been approaching capacity following recent housing completions.

## Housing Needs

H47. A Housing Need consultation was carried out by Blaby District Council in August 2010 in conjunction with Huncote Parish Council. The findings suggested the level of development proposed were sufficient through to 2029 at 140 properties.

H48. Seven affordable homes in Field View Close have been built as part of the overall development (09/0328/1/PX). In early 2011, redevelopment of prefabricated housing on Quarry View Close (Duncan Avenue) was completed by East Midlands Housing Association, with the demolition of 32 post-war homes and 49 new properties (9 privately owned, 10 shared-ownership and 30 rental properties) were built to replace them on the existing site. Further affordable houses are planned as part of the Denman Lane development.

## Jobs

H49. Huncote/Croft Quarry remains an important mineral resource of national significance which needs to be protected. The quarry is also the site of several businesses belonging to Aggregate Industries. The Marions Way site now has Masterblock, Bardon Concrete and the Asphalt plant as well as the main quarry operation. Quarry excavation has been the cause of local air quality problems.

H50. Excavation has been going on for hundreds of years and the quarry is nearing the end of its economic life. This has given rise to concerns about the loss of local jobs.

H51. The potential closure of the quarry has also raised worries about its potential for landfill. However, there are conditions controlling the restoration of the site. While the exact form of the restoration is not prescribed, restoration cannot go beyond agriculture, amenity (which includes nature conservation) or forestry uses without a separate, new planning permission. Landfilling of the final quarry void with waste is unlikely because of European, national and local policies and financial factors which would make a waste landfilling at Huncote or any other hard rock quarry practically unviable.

H52. Acresford Sand and Gravel is located to the North West of the village and provided a large quantity of sand and gravel across the region. It is now being restored, with lots of soil being brought in from various building projects to infill where sand was removed. It is expected to be less than two years until it is fully restored to its previous condition.

H53. Huncote also has an industrial area on Cheney End with offices and manufacturing companies. However, vehicles must pass through the village to Cheney End and there are local concerns about HGV traffic that is generated from all the sites mentioned above.

## Transport and Infrastructure

H54. During consultation on the Fosse Villages Local Plan, local people highlighted village transport concerns:

- No evening/Sunday bus service to Leicester;



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- Concerns of speeding vehicles travelling through the village;
- Vehicles parking in the street, reducing the roads to single lanes, particularly near the 8 terraced houses exiting the village on Narborough Road and Forest Road;
- Traffic congestion and parking problems around the primary school at drop-off and pick-up times;
- Vehicles travelling through the village above the permitted 7.5ton weight limit; and
- Vehicles using 'access only' Denman Lane as a 'rat-run'

H55. Comments were also raised about the provision of the Enderby Park-and-Ride service only running until 7pm. Alternative suggestions included opening the service later on 'match days' for the rugby/football to reduce traffic into Leicester.

## Housing

H56. Over the period 2006 to 2017, 119 new homes were built in Huncote and at 31 March 2017 there was planning permission for 62 more. Most of the houses that have been built (75) are at the Jelson site south of Narborough Road. Most of the homes with planning permission are at Denman Lane where 60 homes were granted on appeal in April 2016.

H57. Taking account of what has already been built and permitted, Huncote does not need to find sites for more new houses on greenfield sites.

## Leicester Forest West Settlement Statement

### Location and context

LFW1. Leicester Forest West is a hamlet with a population of about 30, making it much smaller than its neighbour, Leicester Forest East. The hamlet takes its name from the ancient Leicester Forest. The hamlet has a parish meeting rather than a parish council.

### Community profile

LFW2. The population of the village at the 2011 census was included in the civil parish of Thurlaston. There were 15 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

LFW3. Leicester Forest West lies in the Normanton Agricultural Parkland landscape character area which contains a mixture of agricultural farmland, both rough grazing and arable. Grazing tends to be located around properties and within the northern part of the character area; arable farmland covers much of the other parts.

LFW4. Landform is rolling, and fields are regular in layout and boundaries are marked by well-managed hedgerows and/or timber post and rail fences.

### Heritage

LFW5. There are no Listed Buildings in Leicester Forest West.

### Local Green Spaces

LFW6. Important green spaces were also identified by local people during consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in September 2012. Local residents were keen that the wood-land known as the Old Brake should be protected, however the Examination of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan did not support the proposed designation of this site as Local Green Space.

### Services and Facilities

LFW7. The only facilities are the Bulls Head PH and the Desford Crossroads Service Station.

LFW8. Leicester Forest West is served by a frequent bus service to Leicester, Hinckley, Nuneaton, Bedworth and Coventry (Stagecoach 48) and the Arriva Midlands 158 service to Leicester, Earl Shilton, Barwell, Hinckley and Nuneaton.

### Development

LFW9. Leicester Forest West has a very poor range of services and facilities and is not considered a 'sustainable' location for new development and no further growth is proposed.

## Potters Marston Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- PM1. Potters Marston is a village and civil parish in the district of Blaby in Leicestershire, England. It has a population of around 40, and is roughly between Huncote and Stoney Stanton, but closest to Croft. It has a view of the remaining side of croft quarry and has 12 houses. The hamlet has a parish meeting rather than a parish council.
- PM2. The Church has a congregation of around 10 people and was originally a barn which became a school house.

### Community profile

- PM3. The population of the village at the 2011 census was included in the civil parish of Croft. There were 12 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- PM4. Potters Marston lies within the Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA). It is a relatively large LCA situated within the south-western part of Blaby District, to the south of the M69. The LCA also includes Sapcote and Stoney Stanton.
- PM5. The landform across the area is very gently rolling with localised topography influenced by small streams around settlements, which are often on localised plateaux.
- PM6. Land use across the area is mainly agricultural which is primarily arable with some grazing land; particularly horse paddocks on the edge of settlements. There are a few watercourses that flow through the LCA, although these tend to be less distinct than in other areas with less defined vegetation along their route.
- PM7. There is a comprehensive network of public rights of way and bridleways through the character area leading from settlements into the wider countryside. Numerous roads cross the area; however, many are on lower topography and are not prominent in the landscape. The railway is well screened by mature woodland planting.
- PM8. Pylons are a common feature of the landscape and they are generally located on high ground. There is a general lack of mature woodland vegetation and other tall structures that means that pylons are visually prominent elements, often visible for a long-distance section of their route.
- PM9. There are relatively long-distance views across the LCA because of low hedgerows and absence of vegetation and woodland blocks. Views become slightly more restricted around settlement fringes and the railway where boundaries tend to be taller and more enclosed.

### Heritage

- PM10. There are three Listed Buildings in Potters Marston. The dovecote north of Potters Marston Hall is a Scheduled Monument.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
Potters Marston Hall and Adjoining Bakehouse and Boundary Wall, Pingle Lane	Grade II
Pigeoncote 100 Metres North of Potters Marston Hall, Pingle Lane	Grade II
Church of St Mary, Pingle Lane	Grade II
Dovecote 85m north of Potters Marston Hall	Scheduled Monument

## Services and Facilities

PM11. Potters Marston has a bus service that runs between Hinckley- Leicester Arriva X55 with a request stop at the top of Pingle Lane.

## Jobs

PM12. Dovecote Court Business Park, Potters Marston employs over 90 people, the majority live in the Fosse Villages. Dovecote Court has two high-speed fibre broadband connections: one from Sutton Elms and the other from Earl Shilton, the latter being recently installed. Dovecote Court has plans for a new office which will secure jobs for people on site and create another 30/40 jobs. Any extension of business development will have regard to its impact on heritage assets.

## Development

PM13. Potters Marston has a very poor range of services and facilities. Potters Marston is not considered a 'sustainable' location for new housing development and no further housing growth is proposed.

## Sapcote Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- SA1. Sapcote lies on the B4669 which links M69 junction 2 with the B4114. Sapcote was mentioned in the Domesday Book as Scepecote. Its name came from the Anglo-Saxon Scēapcot - "shed or enclosure for sheep" - like Shepshed. An early Bronze Age occupation site has been discovered here, and a Roman villa and bathhouse dating from the 1st century AD. Druids, Saxons, Romans and Normans have been known to have inhabited the area in and around Sapcote.
- SA2. From the 12th-14th century the village was the home of the powerful Basset family. Ralph de Basset was High Sheriff of England and, possibly, the first Member of Parliament, being the first Lord to be called to the Barons Parliament by Simon de Montfort.
- SA3. The oldest surviving building in the village is the 12th century All Saints Parish Church, an elegant well-proportioned building of Early English style. The Wesleyans built their first church in Sapcote in 1805; the church is a fine example of the Arts and Crafts period.
- SA4. In 1806 a bathhouse was built by John Frewen Turner over the so-called Golden Well in Stanton Road, in an attempt to turn Sapcote into a Spa.
- SA5. Other historical buildings include several thatched cottages, Park Farm, a timber-framed house in Stanton Road which is dated 1683, the Old School, Leicester Road which was built in 1819, and the Stanley Burrough's Almshouses in Cooks Lane, erected in 1847.

### Community profile

- SA6. A Sapcote (parish) rural community profile has been prepared to help us identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 census.
- SA7. The population in Sapcote marginally increased between 2001 and 2011. The population in 2001 was 2,404 and in 2011 had increased to 2,442. During the same period the number of households has increased from 985 in 2001 to 1,062 in 2011.
- SA8. In 2009 migration levels were broadly similar for all age ranges apart from those aged 1-14 where there was a difference of 41 (133 migrating outward and 92 migrating inward). The number of young people moving out is particularly significant. Many rural communities highlight that young groups, particularly families, move out of the area due to a lack of affordable housing or not having suitable employment or training opportunities.
- SA9. 49.7% of properties within the Parish are detached whilst only 11.4% of properties are terraced. A lack of smaller properties in rural communities may mean that local people may be priced out of the housing market in the area in which they grew up.
- SA10. The 2011 Census shows that 25.4% of the working age population have no qualifications compared with the Blaby average of 22.2% and the England average of 22.46%. In terms of qualifications, whilst there are lower than average numbers of the working age population with qualifications in Levels 1, 2 and 3 there are a higher number of those

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



with Level 4 (highest) qualifications at 25.5% compared to the Blaby average of 24.9% and East Midlands average 23.6%.

SA11. The 2011 Census identifies that there are a greater number (30.05%) of those employed in professional or associate professional occupations compared to the Blaby average of 28.9% and the East Midlands average of 26.5%.

SA12. There are relatively few people living on low incomes.

SA13. There were 1,366 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

## Landscape

SA14. Saplote lies within the Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA). It is a relatively large LCA situated within the south-western part of Blaby District, to the south of the M69. The LCA also includes Stoney Stanton and shares boundaries with five other Blaby LCAs.

SA15. The landform across the area is very gently rolling with localised topography influenced by small streams around settlements, which are often on localised plateaux. The urban edges of Saplote, Stoney Stanton, Sharnford and Croft are located on high ground with little boundary vegetation which increases their prominence within the landscape.

SA16. Land use across the area is predominately agricultural and primarily arable although some grazing land is present, particularly horse paddocks, close to urban fringes. Field pattern varies considerably across the character area with field size becoming larger towards the northern part of the character area.

SA17. There is a concentration of water related recreational activities within open land between Saplote and Stoney Stanton. Many of the water-based facilities have developed because of former quarrying which created some deep man-made lagoons. Many of these are sunken into the ground and surrounded by sharp almost vertical rock slopes, such as Stoney Cove.

SA18. There are a few watercourses that flow through the character area, although these tend to be less distinct than in other areas with less defined vegetation along their route.

SA19. There is a comprehensive network of public rights of way and bridleways through the character area leading from settlements into the wider countryside. Numerous roads cross the area; however, many are on lower topography and are not prominent in the landscape.

SA20. Pylons are a common feature of the landscape and they are generally located on high ground. The general lack of mature woodland vegetation and other tall structures means that they are visually prominent elements, often visible for long distance sections of their route.

SA21. There are relatively long-distance views across the LCA however; views become slightly more restricted around settlement fringes where boundaries tend to be taller and more enclosed. The fringes of Saplote have sharp urban boundaries, which make the change within the landscape abrupt.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



SA22. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Sapcote. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside where development will be restricted.

## Area of Separation

SA23. There is an Area of Separation (AoS) between Sapcote and Stoney Stanton, as defined in the Blaby Local Plan. Areas of Separation are designated areas of land between settlements which need to remain open to ensure that the character and identity of individual settlements is maintained by preventing them from merging. Development, which would result in a reduction of the separation between the built-up areas is resisted.

## Sapcote and Granitethorpe Quarries

SA24. Sapcote and Granitethorpe Quarries are in pre-cambrian syenite. This is an impervious rock but is massively fissured and jointed and therefore has a free-flowing aquifer and drainage regime which results in the water levels interacting between quarries. Any pollution of this aquifer from the use of any of these sites for landfill would pollute not only Stoney Cove Diving Centre, but also the stream controlling the water table.

SA25. While the Neighbourhood Plan cannot consider minerals or waste matters, local people consider that the quarries should not be used for landfill or any other activity which could cause pollution to the Diving Centre or local watercourses.

## Built form and settlement pattern

SA26. The historic core of Sapcote and the present centre are not in the same place. The historic core, including the church, the rectory, site of the castle and older housing along an enclosed street, is located on the southern fringe. There are thatched cottages located on winding back roads in this part of the village.

SA27. The street pattern is generally sinuous as the village is built around a semi-circular road which curves to the south off the main B4669 road at one end of the village and links back in at the other end. Newer residential development tends to be in a more geometric street pattern and is generally located to the north of the B4669.

SA28. The development to the north of the main road is where the village has extended through post-war development and has a weaker connection with the historic core of the village. These housing estates have a harder urban edge which is emphasised by the road running along the settlement boundary and by a lack of vegetation. This urban edge is visible from northern and eastern approach roads.

SA29. The roofline is varied. The church spire is clearly visible from outside the settlement. The unusually designed chimney of the Homestead House Nursing Home is a prominent feature in the roofline, although not visible from outside the settlement. Elsewhere the roofline is a mixture of flat and pitched roofs, generally no greater than two storeys, and is slightly rising in the in the south towards higher ground.

SA30. Views from the south of the settlement are long over the Soar Floodplain and surrounding landscape. From the north, it is possible to see Stoney Stanton rising on the opposite hillside with the lower vegetated landscape of the stream in the foreground.



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Heritage assets

### Designated Heritage Assets

SA31. There are eight Grade II Listed Buildings within the Parish. Sapcote Castle and Moat is designated as a Scheduled Monument.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
Burrough's Almshouses, Cook's Lane	Grade II
Former Sapcote Church School, Leicester Road	Grade II
15 Sharnford Road	Grade II
17 Sharnford Road	Grade II
Church of All Saints, Church Street	Grade II
South View Farmhouse, Cook's Lane	Grade II
1 New Walk	Grade II
Sapcote Methodist Church, Leicester Road	Grade II
Sapcote Castle and Moat	Scheduled Monument

### Features of Local Heritage Interest

SA32. The Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan Consultation highlighted other locations of heritage interest:

- Sapcote Village Sign
- Freeholt Wood, Aston Firs
- The M69 Island habitat for flora and fauna.
- The Gravel Pit
- The Limes Avenue
- The Village Washpit
- Donkey Lane
- The Pavilion, Sapcote playing fields
- The Old Fosseway
- Church Walk, one of the medieval footpaths or back lanes in Sapcote.
- The Cross
- The old village forge, the Cross including the old mounting block
- Sapcote Club built in 1906 in the Arts and Crafts style.
- Three thatched cottages, Leicester Road, originally part of the village workhouse
- Granitethorpe Cottages, Leicester Road.
- Granitethorpe Quarry
- Sapcote Quarry Leicester Road
- The Old Rectory Church Street
- Calver Hill Cottages Sharnford Road, former quarry worker's cottages.
- All Saints Church lych-gate, Church Street.
- The Stable and Coach House within the Old Rectory grounds.
- 16th-17th century stone boundary wall to the Old Rectory, approximately 200ft long.
- 1840 cottages adjacent to the Old Rectory.
- Eighteenth and nineteenth century cottages opposite The Red Lion, Church Street.
- The War Memorial and memorial garden, Church Street.
- The Red Lion, Church Street dates to the 18th century.
- Langdale House Church Street, a residential home.
- Period cottages and farmhouse, New Walk.
- The old abattoir in the garden of a house in New Walk.
- Old Park House Farm Stanton Road restored and converted into a housing complex.
- Park Farm Stanton Road dated 1683 is the oldest building in the village.
- The Bath House Stanton Road is the remaining part of the buildings erected in 1806.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- 19th century cast iron milestone on Leicester Road/Grace Road corner
- The Black Piece and surrounding area in Leicester Road, the site of a Roman villa.
- The field in Park Road off the corner of Donkey Lane contains the remains of a medieval moat.
- The footpath between Basset Lane and the Recreation ground runs along the top of a medieval moat.

## Architectural style

SA33. Sapcote has a mixed architectural style with no single defining character.

SA34. The core of the village consists of small-scale domestic cottages and houses, interspersed with occasional larger houses and focal buildings. Buildings are not tall and only occasionally important buildings such as churches and the chapel are taller than two storeys. Larger houses are enclosed within garden walls and mature vegetation, often not visually prominent. The older buildings in the historic core tend to be cottages or small terraces. There are several thatched cottages, often with white rendering, which are maintained in good condition. There are also a number of flat roofed modern buildings in the centre of the settlement. Newer development is varied and includes terraced housing along the busier roads and semi-detached properties in the residential areas in the north of Sapcote.

SA35. Building materials tend to be red brick, with occasional white rendering and clay tiles roofs. Some buildings have dark slate roofs, which look particularly striking on new buildings with white rendered walls and large dark dominant roofs. This is well demonstrated on the Homestead House Nursing Home development. The church is granite and because of the close association with Stoney Stanton and its quarrying, some of the older buildings also have granite stone walls.

SA36. There is a mixture of boundary treatments throughout the village. Rubble stonewalling is a significant feature, especially around properties near the church. Red brick walls are common in the centre. In the newer developments, ornamental hedgerows and garden vegetation form strong boundary features.

## Local Green Spaces

SA37. The most significant area of open space is at the site of the Motte and Bailey castle in the centre of the settlement. This is a wide expanse of grassland with the archaeologically significant remains of the castle earth works visible in the centre. It is bounded on one side by tall scrub vegetation. Around the outskirts there are various recreational facilities including numerous benches and a children's play area. It is an important site for the heritage of the settlement and contributes to the settlement's individual character and in forming its sense of place. However the Examination of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan did not support the proposed designation of this site as Local Green Space.

SA38. The war memorial is located opposite the castle and is a small and well-maintained public square with floral planting including rose beds. It is raised from street level and bounded by hedges creating a peaceful enclosed space which fronts onto the street.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- SA39. Public consultation identified that local people valued many of the local green spaces in and around Sapcote, in particular the open space and recreation ground at the site of the Motte and Bailey castle for its leisure and recreation opportunities and land to the north of Sapcote between Spa Drive and Stanton Road was most appreciated for its amenity value. However the Examination of the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan did not support the proposed designation of the site of the Motte and Bailey Castle as Local Green Space.
- SA40. Further sites have been the subject of an examination of an updated Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan with land at Parsons Lane Allotments, Bluebell Green, Poor Meadows and The Park now designated as Local Green Spaces.

## Gateway features

- SA41. The northern approach to Sapcote is dominated by Stoney Cove National Diving Centre. This flooded disused quarry forms a striking feature between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote, although views are only glimpsed from the road. A small stream is a vegetated linear feature through a dip in the landscape between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote which also forms a gateway feature. Without these, there would be a lack of a distinctive boundary between the two settlements as they are near one another.
- SA42. Other approaches have less significant gateway features. The north-eastern fringe is a harsh line of modern development and consequently the approach from the east is dominated by residential development. The western gateway is also residential, although this is softer as it is slightly more vegetated with a gentler transition from rural to urban.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

- SA43. The dominant habitat type to the south of village is large arable field with species poor hedgerows between. However, to the north of Sapcote relatively large areas of broad-leaved woodland surround the disused quarries. Connecting hedgerows ensure that species can disperse between the woodland areas and the wider landscape.
- SA44. White-clawed Crayfish have been recorded from Stoney Cove, and bats have been recorded in the wider area.
- SA45. There are several wildlife corridors outside of the built-up area to all sides of the village.
- SA46. Residents consider that woodland, nature areas and green areas important for wildlife should be protected from development.

## Services and Facilities

- SA47. There is a good level and range of services. Sapcote has a primary school, pub, recreation ground, Post Office and newsagents. Sapcote Library has been saved from closure thanks to a community group. The library was at risk after the county council announced it would scrap its funding in June 2015, but the Sapcote Community Library has stepped in to take-over the management of the building.
- SA48. In terms of additional facilities and services residents identified most need for a doctor's surgery/pharmacy, youth facilities/play area and faster broadband.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



SA49. The primary school teaches 4-11-year-old children and has a capacity of 280 but there is currently a school roll of 218 pupils. However, new housing development in the area should see an increase in pupils attending the school in the coming years. All Saints C of E primary school is in a federation arrangement with Sharnford C of E primary school sharing a board of governors, head teacher and management arrangements.

## Transport and Infrastructure

SA50. The B4669 through Sapcote is part of Leicestershire's Heavy Lorry Route and there are no restrictions on the size or weight of HGVs. HGVs are a problem and local residents consider that they should be diverted around the Sapcote, as they have to mount the kerb to get through the narrow s-bend in the centre of the village.

SA51. The M69 motorway runs within the Parish, along the western boundary, there is an exit for southbound traffic and an access for northbound traffic. Many vehicles using the motorway already use Sapcote as a through route to and from the motorway. While there are no plans to open the southern access or northern exit, if it was to happen it could cause additional traffic through the village. Residents consider that the current access and egress arrangements at the M69 junction should remain as they are unless the village is bypassed.

SA52. Also identified as part of the public consultation were excessive numbers of cars parked along pavements due to the lack of off-street parking. Speeding vehicles are also identified as an issue along several arterial roads as well as through the village centre.

## Air Quality

SA53. Residents have long been concerned that the volume and type of traffic that passes through village has an adverse impact on air quality in the centre of the village with potential health issues. Blaby District Council's 2018 Air Quality Annual Status Report demonstrates that NO<sub>2</sub> Annual results ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) from the Hinckley Road monitoring location has not exceeded air quality objectives since 2013. Although diffusion tube monitoring ceased in Hinckley Road, Sapcote in 2017, there is now due to be a large development close by on the B4469 linking J2 on the M69. As a result, monitoring will be reinstated in January 2019.

## Housing Needs

SA54. In October 2012, a scheme to develop 12 affordable homes specifically for local people on Sharnford Road, Sapcote was completed. The houses were built on a rural exception site after a survey highlighted there were not enough affordable homes to enable local people to stay in the village. The homes are reserved for people with a local connection and there are eleven houses and one bungalow. Three of the houses are shared ownership and the other homes are for social-rent.

SA55. The proposed Jelsons development for some 111 dwellings on Stanton Road is to include 26 affordable dwellings. This was an important factor weighing in support of the appeal. The proposed development of 'The Limes' is to include 32 affordable homes and the Sapcote Lea development off Grace Road will add another 24. With 12 recently built and over 80 with planning permission there is a good supply of affordable housing emerging.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Jobs

- SA56. Sapcote has very limited employment opportunities. There are no allocated employment sites or any sites with planning permission for employment use.
- SA57. There has been some loss of employment land in recent years at the former Sapcote Site Supplies at Leicester Road; this site has been developed for 37 residential dwellings. Also, land at Rugby House, Hinckley Road has planning permission for demolition of the factory and erection of 8 residential dwellings.

## Development options

### Housing

- SA58. In the summer of 2013, we consulted on a housing provision for Sapcote to help guide the selection of housing sites. The minimum housing provision for the period 2006 to 2029 for Sapcote is 415 dwellings and, taking account of houses built and in the pipeline, this has already been achieved.
- SA59. Since 2006, 358 homes have been built in the village (to 31 March 2017). A further 130 houses had planning permission (at 31 March 2017). Many of the houses built and committed are on the following three large sites:

### The Limes, Hinckley Road

- SA60. On 27 March 2013, planning permission was granted for 131 homes at The Limes (Ref: 12/1023/1/PX and 15/0171/FUL). Originally proposed as a 'retirement village', this development provides for around 70 homes less than previously planned but it now provides open-market housing. The development was completed in 2016/17.

### Sapcote Lea, Grace Road

- SA61. Planning permission has been granted for David Wilson Homes to build 100 homes at Sapcote Lea, off Grace Road (Ref: 13/0592/1/PX and 15/0445/FUL). The development is now complete.

### West of Stanton Road

- SA62. Jelsons have started the construction of 111 dwellings on land west of Stanton Road (Ref: 13/0795/1/MX).
- SA63. In June 2017, Blaby District Council's decided to grant outline planning permission for a further 125 homes on land south of Hinckley Road east of The Limes (Ref: 17/0247/OUT).

### Employment

- SA64. We also asked local people to identify opportunities for new businesses. While there was support for the expansion of existing business, it was difficult to identify and new employment sites.

## Sharnford Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- SH1. Sharnford Parish extends in general terms from the A5 at High Cross at its southern extremity, to the line of the Fosse Way in the east, the Frolesworth Road in the North and the Soar Brook in the west. Sharnford village sits in the northern section of the Parish and is approximately 13 miles from Coventry in the south and 13 miles from Leicester in the north. The village is set in a predominately rural area and straddles the B4114 road which runs from Smockington Hollow on the A5 in the south to Narborough in the north.
- SH2. The name 'Sharnford' is derived from the Anglo Saxon 'Scarn' which means division. Until the construction of a foot and horse bridge, the two halves of the village were divided by a ford.
- SH3. The centre of Sharnford lies on either side of the B4114 and housing in this area consists of 19th century properties in the north end of the village on a hill around St Helens church and to the south predominantly 20th century contained on a one-way road system. Later built housing estates with more modern properties are located mainly to the west side of the village with limited development to the east side of the village restricted to older cottages and houses.

### Community profile

- SH4. A Sharnford (parish) rural community profile has been prepared to help us identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 Census.
- SH5. The Community profile shows that the population of Sharnford has been in decline. This is confirmed by the 2011 Census which records 985 people living in Sharnford compared with 1,038 in 2001. Of concern is the reduction in the number of young people. In 2001 there were 191 children aged under-15, in 2011 there were 130. In 2011, 26% of residents were aged 65+ and only 13% aged under-16. While there has been a net outflow of people of all ages, the number of young people moving out is particularly significant.
- SH6. There are relatively few working age adults and older people living on low incomes. However, in 2010 there were more children in out of work families than the Leicestershire average.
- SH7. 21% of working age people have no qualifications compared with the Leicestershire average of 13%. Relatively few have the highest qualification level. In general, those with low or no skills are more likely to experience exclusion, and be vulnerable to changes in the economy, such as increased demand for higher-skilled workers.
- SH8. There were 457 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- SH9. Sharnford lies at the junction of three landscape character areas. To the north of the B4114 is the Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland. The landform across the area is very



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



gently rolling with localised topography influenced by small streams around settlements, which are often on localised plateaux.

- SH10. To the west of the village is the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland landscape character area. The landform includes a series of high points intersected by broad valleys which creates a wide variation through the area. Land use is mainly agricultural with an even number of arable and grazing land. There are many rights of way which cross the area linking Sharnford to Aston Flamville and the wider countryside including the Leicestershire Round.
- SH11. To the south east of the village, south of the B4114, is the Soar Meadows landscape character area which stretches to the Fosse Way. The landform is low-lying and forms a wide, shallow valley with large areas of flat ground within the central part of the character area. Land use is a mix of agricultural farmland with both arable crops suited to wetter conditions and grazing land.
- SH12. Residents were keen to see the green spaces between Sharnford and Sapcote maintained. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Sharnford. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside where development will be restricted.

## Built form and settlement pattern

- SH13. The built-up area of the village is roughly circular, centred on the Soar Brook and the main road pattern. The village has developed around three noticeable areas. The first is on higher ground to the northeast where important community buildings such as St Helen's Church, the Methodist chapel and public house are situated. The second is a more modern extension to the north comprising mainly post-war housing on a geometric layout. The Soar Brook creates a visual break to the south and is adjoined by the third part of the village in a generally linear pattern. This part of the village is focussed around the junction of Coventry Road and Aston Lane/Hinckley Road and contains several older cottages and farmhouses.
- SH14. Older buildings to the north and south of the Soar Brook give the impression of two small historic centres, one around the two churches and the other around the B4114/Aston Lane junction.
- SH15. The village contains mainly small-scale low-rise buildings, rarely above two storeys. Only significant buildings such as the church, chapel and large farmhouses are of greater height.

## Heritage assets

### Designated Heritage Assets

- SH16. There are 11 Listed Buildings in Sharnford. There is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument-the High Cross Monument at the crossroads of the Roman Fosse Way and Watling Street, which is also a Listed Building. The Roman town at High Cross, which is also in Warwickshire is also a Scheduled Monument.



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
Sharnford Methodist Church, Chapel Lane	Grade II
Church of St Helen, Leicester Road	Grade II
Tudor Cottage, School Lane	Grade II
Sharnford Shade, Coventry Road	Grade II
Number 45, with adjoining outbuildings, Leicester Road	Grade II
High Cross House and adjoining outbuildings, Watling Street	Grade II
Pipalpen House and adjoining Former Cottages, Cart Shed and Barn, Aston Lane	Grade II
Number 8 with adjoining outbuilding and Stable, Coventry Road	Grade II
The High Cross Monument, Watling Street	Grade II Ancient Monument
Wayside Farmhouse with adjoining Cottage and Stables, Coventry Road	Grade II
The Barn, Watling Street	Grade II

SH17. The community have expressed concerns about the upkeep of some of these buildings.

## Architectural style

SH18. Buildings are a mix of ages and architectural styles. They include cottages, farms, detached and semi-detached houses, bungalows and country houses.

SH19. Within the historic core, properties such as rows of cottages tend to front straight onto the road. Small front gardens are present with brick and stone boundary walls often wrapping around the sides of properties. In other areas boundaries are made up of a variety of hedgerows, fences and brick walls.

SH20. Stone walling encloses St Helen's Church. Woodland forms the boundary to the cemetery and rectory and defines the extent of the village in this area.

SH21. Occasional timber-framed buildings create focal points within the street scene.

SH22. The use of local stone is most noticeable in focal buildings such as St Helen's Church and in stone walling throughout the village. Stone is a key traditional building material and present in many buildings.

SH23. In addition to local granite, the other building materials are a mixture of red brick, painted render and painted brick.

SH24. Views within the village are generally only over short distances, enclosed by landform and vegetation. Sharnford is well screened within the local landscape. Even St Helen's Church, which is on higher ground towards the edge of the village, is well screened by mature trees and shrubs.

## Local Green Spaces

SH25. Early in 2011, Leicestershire County Council asked the public to say which local green spaces they particularly valued and why. Areas were identified by communities using an online interactive map-based application and at special sessions run at the 27 Community Forums. Important green spaces were also identified by local people during consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in October 2012. The main green spaces identified are set out below.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## The Park

SH26. The Park is owned by Sharnford Parish Council off Park View being recently purchased from Blaby DC. Children's play facilities are provided in the Park and a new Youth Club and Community Centre has been recently built by Sharnford Parish Council and will be leased back to the Youth Club for a peppercorn rent for a period of 25 years.

## Poor's Meadow

SH27. The village currently supports one playing field, owned by Sharnford Parish Council on Poor's Meadow adjacent to the B4114 which contains youth play/sports facilities.

## Bluebell Green

SH28. Bluebell Green is a small grassed area on the B4114 on land opposite the Sharnford Arms Public House. The Green sits on the site of a former public house and is owned by Sharnford Parish Council.

## Fosse Meadows Country Park

SH29. Fosse Meadows Country Park is a good area for walking and bird spotting, there is a wildlife lake and two bird hides. A new hide opened in February 2014, this new hide has a much clearer view of the sandmartin bank. There are also bats and in summer evening bat walks are arranged. There are extensive paths through flower meadows and woodlands and a permissive bridleway around the site marked by white topped posts. The site also has a permanent orienteering course. There is a car park, picnic area, adventure playground and two wheelchair friendly gates.

## Parsons Lane Allotments

SH30. Sharnford's allotments are located at Parson's Lane and have been an aspect of village life for many decades.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

SH31. Sharnford lies in an area usually associated with rather more woodland cover than most of the Fosse Villages, however, much of the area surrounding the village is comprised of arable fields and improved grassland. Several intact, mature hedgerows exist, particularly to the south of Sharnford. These and the Soar Brook running through the village are likely to provide important wildlife corridors into the surrounding landscape, particularly out towards the Fosse Meadows Nature Park, a complex natural habitat likely to provide suitable foraging for many species.

SH32. There is a known long-eared bat roost to the south of the village, and features such as mature hedgerows and the brooks will provide commuting and foraging routes for species such as this.

## Services and Facilities

SH33. With a primary school, pubs, recreation grounds, convenience store (with Post Office), community hall and youth club there is a good level of services. However, there are concerns about the availability of healthcare services.

## Evergreen Hall and GP Surgery

SH34. The Evergreen Hall is in the centre of the village opposite The Bricklayers Pub. It has been used constantly as the Village Hall for the past 50 years and is used every day by 14

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



regular users. It has recently been refurbished to provide insulation to all outside walls to minimise energy costs and completely redecorated in the main areas. A new kitchen has also been installed.

- SH35. There is a main hall which has a well curtained stage and dressing rooms to provide entertainment. There is also a small meeting room which used to double as a visiting clinic but the local GP surgeries no longer support this facility.
- SH36. Medical facilities no longer exist in Sharnford so residents now have to travel to surgeries in Burbage, Broughton Astley, Stoney Stanton and Wolvey. There is also a surgery in Ullesthorpe connected to the Broughton Astley practise. Travelling to these facilities is difficult for residents relying on public transport.

## Village Shop

- SH37. Sharnford has one general store/post office that serves the whole community. It is located on the Leicester Road hill in the centre of the village but there is no car parking. This can be an issue for elderly or physically infirm residents. The shop is limited in size and concentrates on general provisions, newspapers and Post Office services. The current shop owners are serving the community well but at a time when they decide to retire, steps may need to be taken to establish a larger shop that will sell for a wider range of goods and have adequate car parking.

## Allotments

- SH38. Sharnford's allotments are located at Parson's Lane. Currently all plots are in use and there is a waiting list for vacancies. Suggestions have been made that the current facilities should be extended to allow more residents to grow their own provisions.

## Flooding

- SH39. The Soar Brook that flows from west to east through the centre of Sharnford has a history of flooding into the village approximately each decade from the early 20th Century to the present day. The extent of flooding and consequential property damage has varied but the worse damage occurs close to the B4114 directly south of the main road bridge. In the past this has resulted in damage and demolition of many buildings that originally stood close to the Brook and flooding of other older properties, including the Bricklayers Public House. In the most recent flood event in November 2012, 12-15 properties were affected, with more being at risk.
- SH40. The Soar Brook to the west of Sharnford is created from three separate tributaries originating in Burbage, Aston Flamville and Smockington Hollow on the A5 respectively. These tributaries join in the fields to the west of Sharnford where the combined flow proceeds to the village. The Environment Agency has confirmed there is a high clay content in the soil of the area which in times of heavy and prolonged rainfall allows water flow with very little resistance or hindrance, into the Soar Brook, greatly increasing water flow and raising the level in the Brook considerably. At the Soar Brook entrance to Sharnford at the Aston Lane Road Bridge if the water level exceeds the height of the bridge openings the bridge structure acts as a dam and the water rises at an even greater speed and spills into Aston Lane. Flood water flows down Aston Lane towards the Leicester Road (B4114) and then via Leicester Road into the centre of the village, flooding most of the properties on either side of the road on its way. Finally flood water

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



accumulates in the lower section of the B4114 below the Leicester Road Bridge making it impassable to vehicle traffic.

SH41. In December 2012, a public flood debate in Sharnford Evergreen Hall was sponsored by the Environment Agency, Leicestershire County Council, Blaby District Council and Sharnford Parish Council. The purpose of the event was to gather information to allow the Environment Agency to establish the causal factors of the event and prepare plans for its resolution. The Environment Agency in conjunction with the other public agencies returned to Sharnford to present their findings to the Sharnford residents in April 2013. A set of statistical information and computer flood plain predictions was displayed and was generally in line with the information established by residents on the day of the flood. Initial proposals for retaining flood waters in the fields immediately to the west of Sharnford, which had previously been indicated as the potential ideal solution was rejected by the Environment Agency because the cost was not considered justified by the level of flood damage. The Environment Agency agreed to look at the ground further upstream to establish if further, more cost-effective proposals could be established.

## Jobs

SH42. Sharnford currently has several small businesses that provide local employment. These are spread throughout the village and not centred in one area. They include 2 public houses, a garage, various engineering and farming companies, a photography business as well as a haulage/container company.

SH43. At the Neighbourhood Planning Consultation Event, we asked local people to identify opportunities for new businesses. There was some support for the protection of existing employment sites, the main one being on Aston Lane. Residents were also asked if 'are there any other sites you consider suitable for employment/business development?' - 75% replied 'No'.

## Transport

SH44. The B4114 which runs parallel to the M69 motorway in a north-south direction runs through the centre of Sharnford via a one-way system at the south of the village and adjacent to 19th century properties and St Helens Church in the north of the village. It is estimated over 3 million vehicles pass through Sharnford each year of which over 1,000 per day are HGV's. It is considered that this appalling traffic situation on a B road will in due course be greatly exacerbated by the recent approval of the Lubbersthorpe development in south Leicester which will throw more traffic onto the B4114.

SH45. The Sharnford Traffic Action Group was set up by residents in 2005 to lobby the Highway Authority, local Members of Parliament, the Leicestershire Police and District Councillors with a view to putting a case forward to reduce traffic congestion and speeding traffic. The Group have carried out Speed Watch exercises with the Leicestershire Police which clearly indicated the need for further action to be taken to reduce reckless driving through the village.

## Sharnford Bypass

SH46. The majority of Sharnford residents have shown their preference for a bypass to be built on the B4114 from the north to the south of the village eliminating all transit traffic in

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



either direction on the B4114 from passing through Sharnford. In February 2009 Leicestershire CC sponsored a Sharnford By-Pass Feasibility study prepared by Scott Wilson Ltd. This study both showed the practical viability of such a scheme and at a cost of approximately £7M to £10M.

SH47. Leicestershire County Council has started a 'South West Leicester and Leicestershire Transport Study', the primary aim of which is to identify and deliver measures that achieve the most effective and efficient access to and from the Strategic Road Network for Leicester and businesses in the study area. A range of options have been looked at and several schemes are being taken forward for further investigation. A Sharnford Bypass option is not being taken forward as it offers poor value for money.

## Smockington Junction

SH48. This is the road junction between the two lane B4114 to the south of Sharnford and the A5 dual-carriageway running from the M69 in the west to the M1/M6 Motorway junctions to the east. Vehicles negotiating the A5 from the east into the B4114 and from the B4114 onto the A5 going west must pass through the central reservation of the A5. The A5 traffic travels at high-speed through this junction and traffic from B4114 turning west and traffic from the A5 east cut across each other's path at this point creating a highly dangerous set of vehicle manoeuvres. During peak traffic periods the vehicles can be stacked back for a considerable distance on both the B4114 and A5 eastern approach. Sharnford residents have indicated an urgent need to address this problem.

## Air Pollution

SH49. Residents have long been concerned that the volume and type of traffic that passes through village has an adverse impact on air quality in the centre of the village with potential health issues. Blaby District Council's 2018 Air Quality Annual Status Report demonstrates that NO<sub>2</sub> Annual results ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) from the Coventry Road monitoring location has not exceeded air quality objectives since 2013.

## Vehicle Parking

SH50. Over the last few years Blaby Council owned garage sites, which were originally provided for residents, have been redeveloped. Thus, there is a lack of residents' car parking in locations such as Henson Way, Brookfield and Park View.

SH51. In the centre of the village where older properties front the B4114 on Leicester Road, residents often park cars at Bumble Bee Gardens Off the Old Leicester Road and adjacent to the Sharnford Arms car park. When the pub car park is full this causes extreme traffic congestion across the road and it has been suggested further public car parking should be found in the area.

## Public Transport

SH52. The Hinckley bus X55 has now been taken out of service and replaced by Fox Connect, a public on-demand bus service connecting rural areas of South West Leicestershire. The service is limited, not travelling to the main secondary school in Burbage. Children are now bussed to school by a private service financed by Leicestershire County Council. Residents wishing to travel to Leicester City now have to use Fox Connect and then transfer to the Leicester Park & Ride service at Enderby. This is proving difficult for the older residents who rely on a regular service for shopping and healthcare visits.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Development options

### Housing

- SH53. Over the period 2006 to 2029, Sharnford is expected to provide for at least 25 new homes.
- SH54. Up to 31 March 2017, 20 new homes had been built- most of them in 2015/16. They include six homes at 70 Leicester Road and eight affordable houses built for Leicestershire Rural Housing Association at Coopers Close, Leicester Road. The Coopers Close development has helped to provide accommodation that fills the need for local affordable housing and the homes are available to people already living in the area or to people that have ties to the existing community i.e. family members of residents. The new housing offers high quality homes, including a mix of two and three-bedroom units.
- SH55. At 31 March 2017, there was planning permission for 23 more houses. These include the development of 12 dwellings off Coventry Road.
- SH56. The number of homes built and committed exceeds the minimum housing requirement for Sharnford and there is no need to find additional Greenfield sites.



## Stoney Stanton Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- SS1. Stoney Stanton lies some ten miles from Leicester and five miles east of Hinckley, just to the east of the M69. It is the largest of the Fosse Villages and has the greatest level of services and facilities.
- SS2. Stoney Stanton is set on rocky outcrops of igneous rock, granodiorite, which has had influence on its history. Even in the eighteenth century, Parish records show that gravel and stone was being removed from Carey (or Quarry) Hill in the centre of the village. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it continued to be quarried for its valuable stone, along with Lanes Hill (now the Stoney Cove Diving Centre), Clint Hill, and Hall's Court. Carey Hill and Hall's Court quarries were later filled in, but Clint Hill remains- a relic of the village's industrial heritage, now filled with water and a haven for wildlife.
- SS3. The village is of ancient origin, being mentioned in the Domesday Survey of Leicestershire (1086). Prior to the growth of industry, the village was mainly dependent on farming. Several old farmhouses can still be identified in the heart of the village. At the heart of the village, not far from the crossroads, stands the parish church of St. Michael, first recorded in 1149.
- SS4. Expansion took place during the late nineteenth century, with rows of terraced housing built to accommodate the workforce. In the early 1960s, housing began to be built in quantity, with the first estate roads being built on the old field known as the Fleet, named after the streams running through it. Further development followed with the village expanding outwards onto former industrial sites and fields.

### Community profile

- SS5. A Stoney Stanton (parish) profile has been prepared to help us identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 census.
- SS6. The Community Profile and 2011 Census show that the population of Stoney Stanton has increased over the last 10 years. At the time of the 2011 Census the population of Stoney Stanton was 3,793 people with 1,540 households.
- SS7. There are a high number of detached properties within the Parish, at the 2011 Census the percentage of detached properties in Stoney Stanton was 47.4% with the figure for Blaby District at 36.3% and the East Midlands 32.5%. A high proportion of the properties within the parish are owner occupied.
- SS8. There are particularly high levels of multiple car or van ownership in Stoney Stanton.
- SS9. There are relatively few people living on low incomes.
- SS10. There were 1,817 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- SS11. Stoney Stanton lies within the Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA). It is a relatively large LCA situated within the south-western part of Blaby



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



District, to the south of the M69. The LCA also includes Sapcote and shares boundaries with five other Blaby LCAs.

- SS12. The landform across the area is very gently rolling with localised topography influenced by small streams around settlements, which are often on localised plateaux. The urban edges of Stoney Stanton are located on high ground with little boundary vegetation, this increases its prominence in the landscape.
- SS13. Land use across the area is mainly agricultural which is primarily arable with some grazing land; particularly horse paddocks on the edge of settlements. There is a concentration of water related recreational activities within open land between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. Many of the water-based facilities have developed because of former quarrying which created deep man-made lagoons. Many of these are sunken into the ground and surrounded by sharp almost vertical rock slopes, such as Stoney Cove.
- SS14. There are a few watercourses that flow through the LCA, although these tend to be less distinct than in other areas with less defined vegetation along their route.
- SS15. There is a comprehensive network of public rights of way and bridleways through the character area leading from settlements into the wider countryside. Numerous roads cross the area; however, many are on lower topography and are not prominent in the landscape. The railway is well screened by mature woodland planting.
- SS16. Pylons are a common feature of the landscape and they are generally located on high ground. There is a general lack of mature woodland vegetation and other tall structures that means that pylons are visually prominent elements, often visible for a long-distance section of their route.
- SS17. There are relatively long-distance views across the LCA because of low hedgerows and absence of vegetation and woodland blocks. Views become slightly more restricted around settlement fringes and the railway where boundaries tend to be taller and more enclosed. Village fringes have sharp urban boundaries, which make the change within the landscape abrupt.
- SS18. In terms of future development within the LCA there is a risk that expansion around the edges of Stoney Stanton and Sapcote may result in the loss of their individual identities and result in the appearance of a large settlement rather than distinct villages within the LCA.
- SS19. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Stoney Stanton. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside where development will be restricted.

## Area of Separation

- SS20. There is an Area of Separation (AoS) between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote, as defined in the Blaby Local Plan. Areas of Separation are designated areas of land between settlements which need to remain open to ensure that the character and identity of individual settlements is maintained by preventing them from merging. Development, which would result in a reduction of the separation between the built-up areas is resisted.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Built form and settlement pattern

- SS21. Stoney Stanton has a defined centre and associated historic buildings, such as the parish church, former school which is now the village hall, rectory, manor house and public house. The village has a modern, purpose-built row of retail units adjacent to the parish church.
- SS22. The centre of the village contains a small roundabout and wide road layout. The surrounding street pattern at the core of the village is compact and the streets are narrow. The road layout at the centre is wide, busy and contains a high number of road markings and signs. Thus, it is a prominent feature that detracts from the rural character of this part of the village.
- SS23. In terms of housing, the core of the village consists of small-scale cottages and houses, interspersed with occasional larger houses and focal buildings. Buildings are not tall and only occasionally important buildings such as the church and chapel are taller than two storeys. Larger houses are enclosed within garden walls and mature vegetation, often not visually prominent.
- SS24. The village fringes have expanded in various directions although mainly in northern and south-westerly directions where estates of modern housing (1970s to current) have been built. These are laid out in a geometric road pattern and give clearly defined straight edges to the south west, north and north-east edges of the village.
- SS25. New development introduces three storey dwellings to the village skyline. As buildings of this height are not characteristic of the village, this creates a prominent contrast with the surroundings.
- SS26. The former quarries at Clint Hill and Carey Hill form distinctive green spaces in the village centre. Both have relatively well vegetated boundaries, particularly Clint Hill which is a large water-filled quarry. Vegetation around its boundary screens the water from the surrounding roads. Views of Croft Hill and quarry are often seen between buildings from within the Broughton Road area of the village. Views of the northern fringes of Sapcote are prominent from the public open space area.

## Heritage assets

### Designated Heritage Assets

- SS27. There are six Grade II Listed Buildings within the parish and one Grade II\* Listed Building.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
<b>Church of St Michael, New Road</b>	Grade II*
<b>Soper's Bridge</b>	Grade II
<b>Stanton Lodge Farmhouse and adjoining outbuilding, Broughton Road</b>	Grade II

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



<b>The Old Rectory, Nock Verges</b>	Grade II
<b>Tudor Cottage + adjoining house to the east, Carey Hill Road</b>	Grade II
<b>Stanton House + adjoining conservatory, Long Street</b>	Grade II
<b>No. 33, Yew Tree House + adjoining outbuildings, Long Street</b>	Grade II

## Features of Local Heritage Interest

- SS28. During consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan, residents considered Mountsorrel Cottages, the Methodist Chapel and other granite-built buildings as key buildings and heritage assets within the village. Neither Mountsorrel Cottages nor the Methodist Chapel are Listed buildings.
- SS29. We could identify these buildings as Locally Listed Buildings which, whilst not listed by the Secretary of State, local people feel to be an important part of Stoney Stanton's heritage due to their architectural, historic or archaeological significance.

## Architectural style

- SS30. The buildings within the village are of mixed style and age. Housing includes terraces, cottages, semi and detached dwellings. The older landmark buildings are located within the village core. Buildings often create a continuous built-up frontage to roadsides with varied roof height between separate buildings.
- SS31. Building frontages are often enclosed by natural stone walling and a typical style is random granite rubble construction. Many buildings, particularly those within the centre of the village, have no front gardens and are situated immediately to the back of footways.
- SS32. Many streets and lanes are of a small-scale and are enclosed due to the buildings facing immediately onto the roadside. This characteristic of the village core is not reflected in modern housing areas which are more suburban in nature and characterised by wider roads, footpaths and verges. Here buildings are set back from the road with front gardens.
- SS33. A sharp contrast in building style and materials exists between the character of the parish church area, constructed from natural stone in a traditional style and the modern row of shops immediately adjacent, a low-rise development with flat roof, painted cladding, railings and light-coloured bricks.
- SS34. In terms of housing development, the post-war and more recent housing estates largely comprise semi-detached dwellings. Though they have slightly differing building styles they lack distinctiveness. Red brick is the most common building material within the village. Natural granite forms a key component of the building materials within the historic core of the village. Roofs are generally dark in colour and are a mixture of materials including slate, concrete and clay tiles. New development has introduced red tiles to roofs and lighter yellow tones of brick, which are not characteristic of the village and create a notable contrast.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



SS35. Although predominantly residential the village contains pockets of industrial and commercial buildings. The largest area is Foxbank Industrial Estate on the north-eastern edge of the settlement.

## Local Green Spaces

SS36. In early 2011, Leicestershire County Council asked the public to say which local green spaces they particularly valued and why. Areas were identified by communities using an interactive online map-based application and at special sessions run at the 27 Community Forums. In addition, local people identified important green spaces during the consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in October 2012.

SS37. The village contains a large area of open space with an arboretum, conservation area, play facilities and a newly opened adult outdoor gym. This is located to the southern edge of the village, within the Area of Separation between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. There is also a seating/ commemorative area in the centre of the village overlooking the central roundabout and road junction. Carey Hill Park/War Memorial playing fields are identified as a Local Green Space for protection.

SS38. The former quarries of Clint Hill and Carey Hill form important landscape areas within the village. However public access is prevented to Clint Hill and restricted to the edges of Carey Hill.

## Gateway features

SS39. On entering the village along Hinckley Road, a row of stone-built terrace houses are a notable feature. The houses are constructed from the local stone which tends to be a more prominent building material within the historic core of the village. Their position towards the edge of the village and the use of stone as a building material makes these buildings prominent features on entering the village.

SS40. The former quarry at Stoney Cove creates a key landmark feature on approaching the village via Sapcote Road. Views of the lagoon and vertical rock face can be seen from the roadside.

SS41. The parish church of St Michael dates from the late 14th Century. The church is a key landmark of the village; it has a tall spire and is set at a higher level than the adjacent road. It is visually prominent from the surrounding area. Its prominence is increased by the openness of a wide grass verge to the roadside which gives clear views of the spire and side elevation of the church.

## Services and Facilities

SS42. Stoney Stanton has a good level of services and facilities; they include a doctor's surgery, pharmacy, library, primary school, churches, a village hall, a Post Office and several public houses.

SS43. Through the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan Consultation residents raised issues regarding the services and facilities within the village. Of most concern was the capacity of the local doctor's surgery, the lack of high-speed broadband and the need for more shops or businesses.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Cemetery

SS44. The existing cemetery at Nock Verges has an estimated 15 years capacity on current usage. There may be an opportunity for the Parish Council to work with the County Council to provide additional cemetery facilities to the west of the village, providing the land is suitable for cemetery use.

## Transport

SS45. Through the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan consultation residents were most concerned about the need for improved public transport especially at weekend and in the evenings

SS46. Other concerns raised through the public consultation included:

- Volume and speed of heavy goods vehicles
- Relief Road/Bypass for HGVs to access the M69 without going through the village
- Parking
- Speeding traffic

## Housing Needs

SS47. In July 2014, a Housing Needs Survey was undertaken by East Midlands Housing with the support of Stoney Stanton Parish Council. The survey identified a need for 22 affordable rented and six shared-ownership affordable homes. A site has been identified off Tansey Crescent, close to an existing affordable housing development. Due to lack of funding the new scheme has not progressed, but it is hoped that it will be built after 2018.

## Development options

SS48. Stoney Stanton is the largest and best served of the Fosse Villages. It contains a range of retail, medical and education facilities and acts as a higher order centre for other nearby villages, including Sapcote and Sharnford. However, the village has only limited employment opportunities and public transport. The village is identified as a Rural Centre by the Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy).

## Housing

SS49. The Blaby Core Strategy requires Stoney Stanton to provide for 320 new homes over the period 2006 to 2029.

SS50. Since 2006, 350 homes have been built in the village (to 31 March 2017). A further 118 houses have planning permission (at 31 March 2017). Most of the houses remaining to be built are on two large sites:

### Land off Station Road

SS51. Bellway Homes are to build 29 homes north of Station Road (Ref: 16/0205/RM).

### Mayfield off Huncote Road

SS52. Planning permission has been granted for Jelsons to build 105 homes at Mayfield, off Huncote Road (Ref: 13/0523/1/PX). At 31 March 2017, 35 houses had been built and 38 were under-construction. 32 houses remain to be completed.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



SS53. With so many homes being built in Stoney Stanton, there is no need to allocate more greenfield sites for housing development.

## Employment

SS54. As part of the consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan residents were asked to identify opportunities for new employment/businesses within the local area.

SS55. Local people prioritised the protection of existing employment/business sites, having seen employment sites in the village being redeveloped for housing. Residents were happy to see the redevelopment or expansion of existing employment/business sites rather than new sites being developed for business use. Planning permission was granted to extend Highfields Farm Enterprise Centre in July 2017 for up to 8,460 sq.m of employment floor space for Class B1, B2 and B8 uses.

SS56. Residents also wanted better provision of off-street parking in relation to employment/business uses as well as clear signage to employment, business and retail facilities. A need was identified for premises for small to medium-sized businesses which would allow local businesses to grow and remain within the parish.

## Thurlaston Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- T1. Thurlaston Parish lies to the southwest of Leicester. The Parish covers around 2,575 acres and includes the hamlet of Normanton Turville. Although small in population, with just over 800 inhabitants, Thurlaston geographically is the largest Parish within Blaby District. Thurlaston is located west of Enderby and northwest of Croft and Huncote.
- T2. Thurlaston is a small compact rural village centred around the village church and the junction of three roads.

### Community profile

- T3. A Thurlaston (parish) rural community profile has been prepared to help identify local needs and priorities. This has been supplemented with data from the 2011 Census.
- T4. The population of Thurlaston has increased from 745 residents (2001 Census) to 807 (2011 Census). The age structure of the population has remained broadly the same but with increases in people aged 16-24, 45-64, 65-74 and 75+, whereas the number of those aged 0-4, 5-15 and 25-44 has decreased. The most notable increase is that of people aged 45-64 from 209 in 2001 to 272 in 2011 (+63 people). The biggest decrease is that of people aged 25-44 which has dropped from 214 in 2001 to 167 in 2011 (-47 people).
- T5. Thurlaston has a low percentage of benefit claimants with only 6% of the population claiming benefits compared to an England average of 14.1% (May 2011).
- T6. Thurlaston has a higher than England average (76.7%) level of economically active residents at 81.3% (2008-10). Many are self-employed, in 2011 17.01% of economically active residents were self-employed (without employees) and 9.54% self-employed (with employees) compared to England figures of 12.8% and 4.28% respectively.
- T7. The 2011 Census identifies that there are a significant number of working residents that work mainly at or from home (8.4%) compared to the figure for England of 5.4%.
- T8. A higher percentage (18.7%) of working age people have no qualification compared to the Leicestershire average of 13.4% with relatively few achieving the highest qualification level.
- T9. There were 326 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- T10. There are two Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the Parish; these are Thurlaston Rolling Farmland LCA and Normanton Agricultural Parkland LCA. Both are strongly characterised by their undeveloped rural nature and their rolling topography. The simple land use pattern and wide views beyond localised enclosure around Thurlaston village are significant elements within the surrounding landscape.



# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## **Thurlaston Rolling Farmland**

- T11. The Thurlaston Rolling Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA) encompasses the eastern and central parts of the Parish and the Normanton Agricultural Parkland LCA covers the western part.
- T12. The Thurlaston Rolling Farmland LCA is characterised by a gently rolling landform, long open views and wide vistas, a simple land use pattern (primarily arable farming) with transport and communication corridors visibly and audible prominent. Both the communications and transport corridors are significant and often intrusive within the landscape with noise and movement on busy roads reducing the tranquillity of this landscape.
- T13. Although there is limited woodland cover in this LCA, small fields have been planted with woodland towards Thurlaston, which over time will increase the woodland content. The increase in the number of trees in hedgerows is also important in this LCA to improve diversity in the landscape, improve ecological and aesthetic value and to align the landscape with the over-riding character of the District.
- T14. Any removal of field boundary and roadside hedgerows could result in a simple and relatively featureless landscape. These elements are generally the only form of separation between open fields.

## **Normanton Agricultural Parkland**

- T15. Normanton Agricultural Parkland is a distinctive LCA containing a mixture of agricultural farmland, both rough grazing and arable. Grazing tends to be located around properties and within the northern part of the character area; arable farmland covers much of the other parts.
- T16. Landform is rolling, and fields are regular in layout and boundaries are marked by well-managed hedgerows and/or timber post and rail fences.
- T17. A central swathe of parkland around Normanton Turville and Normanton Park has strong localised influence of the character of this area through the presence of large specimen trees in fields, open grazing and its long driveway to the main house.
- T18. The landscape has a strong association with water; Normanton Park includes both natural and man-made water bodies. There are substantial blocks of woodland and the presence of large country houses with their associated estate and farm buildings are key characteristics. Restricted and enclosed views mean that there are few notable urban influences, although glimpse of the A47 can be seen from some areas. Dense tree cover along its edges helps to reduce its impact on the surrounding area. Substantial tree coverage means that neighbouring settlements, transport corridors and communications are not highly visible within the landscape.
- T19. We have drawn limits to the built-up area of Thurlaston. Outside these limits land will be designated as Countryside where development will be restricted

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Built form and settlement pattern

- T20. While the parish is generally very rural with several large farms, Thurlaston village is compact with a well-defined centre, where the school, church and recreation ground are found. Outside of Thurlaston village there are scattered farmsteads which are characterised by their use of white or cream painted render.
- T21. Historically the village was associated with the textile industry. Prior to the Second World War it contained a small factory, which manufactured hosiery. Today the village is primarily a residential settlement with few amenities. Many lanes within the historic core of the village remain of small scale with narrow footpaths with buildings immediately abutting the roadside paths.
- T22. The core of the village has developed around an important road junction created by three incoming roads; Croft Road/Enderby Road north to south, Desford Road from the north-west and Earl Shilton Road from the south-west. Several of the village's oldest buildings are located at this part of the village, The Poachers Brasserie restaurant (c1670) and the church dating from the 13th century indicate that this has been a historic meeting place and important community focus.
- T23. There is a second public house, The Elephant and Castle and Thurlaston Chapel also located at the cross roads of Earl Shilton Road and Croft Road reinforcing this as the central focus of the village.
- T24. Buildings throughout the village are of a domestic scale, generally low rise and rarely above two storeys. Only landmark buildings such as the church, the rectory and large farmhouses are taller. The church tower is visible from various locations in and around the village however it is most prominent when viewed from the south above the lower level rooflines.

## Heritage assets

### Designated Heritage Assets

- T25. There are two Listed Buildings and two Scheduled Monuments in Thurlaston Parish. The Listed Buildings are the Church of All Saints, Church Street and the Ice House (located approximately 20 metres to the north of Normanton) both are Grade II Listed. The Scheduled Monuments are an Iron Age Enclosure to the northwest of New Hill Park Farm and a Moated Site at New Hall, Thurlaston.

### Features of Local Heritage Interest

- T26. There is no conservation area in Thurlaston. Although Thurlaston Chapel, Thurlaston School, The Poachers Brasserie restaurant, The Holt, The Bier House at All Saints Church, the Village Hall, The Elephant & Castle Public House and the Mud Barn (Croft Road) are all considered important buildings within the community.
- T27. We could identify these buildings as Features of Local Heritage Interest which, whilst not listed by the Secretary of State, local people feel to be an important part of Thurlaston's heritage due to their architectural, historic or archaeological significance.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Architectural style

- T28. A mixture of architectural styles is present throughout the village including cottages and converted farm and agricultural buildings. Materials include red/brown brick, granite and occasionally black and white timber facades.
- T29. All Saints Church at the village core is of Norman origin. It is constructed from granite rubble, has a modest tower and is accessed via a cobbled entrance with a lych gate off Earl Shilton Road. A granite rubble wall encloses the churchyard.
- T30. Most domestic buildings are constructed from red brick, slate and dark coloured roof tiles. A mixture of coloured painted render is present within a row of terraces along Desford Road. Other buildings include painted brick work and red brick as the main building material.
- T31. The Holt, a former rector's house was built in 1845. It is a strong feature of the northern approach to the village characterised by its brick walls, outbuildings and adjoining cottages.
- T32. A modern development at Hollies Close, a central location, reflects and integrates into the village pattern. Although new buildings are larger than some of the surrounding cottages, they face onto Main Street with a courtyard entrance to access properties behind, while boundaries are enclosed by brick walls. All are typical features of properties within the village. The use of red shades of brick and darker reds and greys of roof tiles is complementary to the existing buildings.
- T33. The presence of local granite stone is prevalent within the building at the historic village core. The colours associated with this material are muted shades of grey to warm reddish brown.

## Local Green Spaces

- T34. In early 2011, Leicestershire County Council asked the public to say which local green spaces they particularly valued and why. Areas were identified by communities using an interactive online map-based application and at special sessions run at the 27 Community Forums. In addition, local people identified important green spaces during the consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan in October 2012. The main green spaces identified are set out below.
- T35. A central recreation ground or 'green' is located at the village core to the rear of the churchyard. It contains an open, well-maintained field and play area, it provides a valuable green setting and important focal point at the predominantly built-up centre of the village. The recreation ground abuts the school playing field and jointly they provide physical separation and a pleasant outlook between buildings along Desford Road and Earl Shilton Road. The site is bounded by a public footpath along its length and provides an important pedestrian link between the two roads. Residents consider the recreation ground to be an asset that should be preserved and that the facilities for young people could be improved.
- T36. A consultation event was held at Thurlaston Primary School and children liked the recreation ground being close to the school and the play equipment. However, they did

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



identify that some of the play equipment was damaged and that they would like to see more recreation facilities. The Parish Council has now made improvements to the area. Over the last two summers a mobile skatepark has also been provided.

- T37. In addition to the recreation ground in Thurlaston there are recreation areas located to the south of the Parish around Normanton Park. There are fishing pools and Normanton Wood, which is Woodland Trust woodland.
- T38. Residents consider that other areas within the Parish that should be protected are the areas of ridge and furrow opposite Moat Close and the green space on Croft Road, between Thurlaston and the M69. Residents also consider that Thurlaston should remain surrounded by open green space/agricultural land to maintain the identity of the village.

## Gateway features

- T39. The village church tower is visible above surrounding roofs when approaching the village from the south along Croft Road forming a key focal and orientation point in the surrounding landscape.
- T40. At the eastern entrance to the village the old sawmill site is now occupied by a flooring company. This site provides an employment opportunity within the area.
- T41. On the western edge of the village is The Holt. The Holt is a large country house enclosed by a tall red brick wall which are strong landscape features in contrast with the surrounding more natural rural landscape. This property creates a sense of arrival to the village at a prominent turn in the road when approaching from this direction.

## Geodiversity and biodiversity

- T42. Thurlaston is surrounded by large arable fields. Hedgerows are mainly well managed, although those to the northeast of the village tend to be slightly bushier and less managed. The key ecological features are considered to be:
- Broad-leaved semi-natural woodland around The Holt on Desford Road, particularly given the lack of woodland found in the area surrounding the village.
  - Broad-leaved plantation woodland incorporating a lake to the west of the survey area off Nursery Close.
  - Mature, less managed hedgerows to the northeast of the survey area.
- T43. There is a known badger sett within the buffer zone around the village, and further badger surveys would be required if development were to take place in the southeast corner of the survey area.
- T44. Residents considered that local wildlife habitats and nesting sites (including Mud Barn on Croft Road, Lake and area around Normanton Turville) should be enhanced and maintained. In addition, residents thought local trees (with particular attention to Ash) should be protected and enhanced.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Flooding

- T45. Although flood risk is not a major issue within Thurlaston village, there have been problems with drain/sewer flooding at the junction of Desford Road and Main Street/ Enderby Road. The drains were unable to cope with the run off from heavy rain fall and the areas have all flooded in recent years. Remedial action has now been taken to prevent a reoccurrence. Flooding along Earl Shilton Road and within Moat Close has also occurred and steps have been taken to improve the situation.

## Services and Facilities

- T46. Thurlaston has a limited range of services and facilities. The village has a primary school, village hall, public house, church and chapel.
- T47. The Village has a Rural Centre located on Croft Road. The Rural Centre is a developing asset with coffee shop and retail outlets (including hairdressers). The Garden retail area will reopen after refurbishment in January 2018.
- T48. A two-hourly bus service (X55) runs Monday to Saturday between Leicester Fosse Park and Hinckley and stops at Thurlaston. The service is limited in its suitability for those residents wishing to travel to work, college, etc. Without a GP surgery in the village, many local people are reliant on this service for access to health facilities, albeit the service is very limited.
- T49. The consultation undertaken at the primary school identified that the children thought the garden centre and shop and pub were positive features about their village.

### Thurlaston C of E Primary School

- T50. The village primary school teaches children ages 4 to 11 in four classes. The number on roll varies but historically it has been just over 100. However, there were only 88 pupils on roll in August 2017. All year groups have spaces. The school was graded as good with outstanding behaviour at its last OFSTED in November 2017.

### Sport & Recreation

- T51. A Sport, Open Space and Recreation Facilities (PPG17) Study was published in June 2009 and covers Blaby District. The findings for Thurlaston identified sufficient levels (when compared to a recommended minimum) of natural green space, outdoor sport, and park and recreation grounds. The Study found a very high provision of informal open space, with 25.27 hectares per 1000 population.
- T52. Both residents and school children have identified that it would be nice to have allotments or a community/children's garden within the village. The Parish Council is actively looking for land to establish additional allotments/community gardens.

## Housing Needs

- T53. Most houses in the Parish are detached or semi-detached, so affordability is an issue.
- T54. A detailed housing needs survey was undertaken by the Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Housing Enabler in conjunction with Thurlaston Parish Council. The results of the survey were published in June 2010. A further Housing Needs Survey was carried out in March 2017.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



- T55. Both studies identify Thurlaston as an affluent parish containing professional households who aspire to be homeowners but because of high prices and the current economic situation are excluded from the market. The 2010 study concluded that there was a need for several shared ownership properties and it considered that a Rural Exception Site with up to 8 affordable homes would be suitable for the village. The outcomes of the 2017 Survey are currently being investigated.
- T56. Planning permission was granted for eight affordable homes on Land off Normanton Grove, Thurlaston and work took place during 2013. To be entitled to one of these affordable homes priority was given to people who live, work, or have family connections or responsibilities in the village. The eight houses at All Saints Close have now been completed and are fully occupied.

## Jobs

- T57. There are a limited range of employment opportunities within the Parish. Other than the old Sawmill site there are no allocated employment sites or employment sites with planning permission (as at March 2016).
- T58. There is support from residents for protecting existing businesses and for the redevelopment or expansion of existing businesses to create additional jobs within the Parish.

## Transport and Infrastructure

- T59. Speeding traffic through Thurlaston has been identified as a significant issue by residents as well as the local school children. In response to the issue of speeding traffic a small group of residents have formed Thurlaston Against Speeding (TAS) and together with the Parish Council have investigated options for long-term solutions to the problem. The main issues include Traffic travelling too fast past the nurseries on Croft Road, as well as the village being used as a cut-through.
- T60. TAS have worked with Leicestershire County Council to consider the installation of a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS). VASs flash-up the set speed limit if it is being exceeded by an approaching vehicle, making the driver aware that they should slow down. The signs are battery operated can be moved around the village and positioned to optimise its effectiveness. TAS has successfully raised the funds needed to purchase a VAS and has been installed in the village. For the sign to be as effective as possible, it is regularly moved between two pre-determined locations around the village. These are Croft Road, near Hill View Nursery and Desford Road.
- T61. During consultation on the Fosse Villages Local Plan, local people highlighted other transport concerns:
- No evening bus service to Leicester;
  - Bus service to Hinckley runs just one day a week (the two hourly X55 service now features a Monday to Saturday service to and from Hinckley); and
  - Traffic congestion and parking problems around the primary school at drop-off and pick-up times.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



## Development options

- T62. Thurlaston has a limited range of employment opportunities, services and facilities. The village is not well served by frequent public transport either and thus Thurlaston is not a good location for major development, but some small-scale housing and business development could be suitable.
- T63. As part of the consultation on the Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan residents were asked to identify opportunities for new employment/businesses within the local area.

## Employment

- T64. We asked local people to identify opportunities for new businesses. There was some support for the provision of office premises for small to medium sized businesses and employment, business or retail development mixed with any future housing development.
- T65. Many residents identified the Thurlaston Sawmill site on Enderby Road as an opportunity for business development. This site is now fully operational, being used by Sylvan Flooring Ltd, although there remains potential for future development.

## Housing

- T66. Over the period 2006 to 2017, 19 new homes were built in Thurlaston including eight affordable dwellings at All Saints Close. At 31 March 2017, there was planning permission for a further three new dwellings. Taking account of what has already been built and permitted, Thurlaston does not need to find sites for more new houses on greenfield sites



## Wigston Parva Settlement Statement

### Location and context

- WP1. Wigston Parva has a population of about 30. It is very near the county boundary with Warwickshire. Nearby places include Smockington and Sharnford.
- WP2. Wigston Parva has a very rural character despite its proximity to the A5. It is set on relatively flat ground which rises to the south and west helping to nestle the hamlet in the wider landscape.

### Community profile

- WP3. The population of the hamlet at the 2011 census was included in the civil parish of Stanton and Flamville. There were 14 Council Tax properties on the Valuation List at 15 January 2018.

### Landscape

- WP4. Wigston Parva lies in the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland landscape character area. This character area is situated on the edge of Blaby District along its south-western boundary. The character of the area is similar to the landscape beyond the district boundary.
- WP5. The landform includes a series of high points intersected by broad valleys which creates a wide variation through the area. This area includes the highest point in Blaby district at 130m AOD within the south-western most point of the district at High Cross.
- WP6. Land use is predominantly agricultural with an even mix of arable and grazing land. Recreational areas are scarce although more concentrated within the northern part of the character area and associated with urban fringes and blocks of woodland.
- WP7. Field pattern is quite variable across the character area, although generally includes large regular shaped fields with boundaries following contours. Field sizes become slightly smaller around watercourses and to the south of the district. Field size often reflects the land use within it with grazing land often being on smaller fields than arable.
- WP8. Fields are generally bounded by hedgerows many of which, particularly in the northern part of the character area, are mature and often scrubby in appearance. These tend to contain a high proportion of hawthorn although in places blackthorn, elder and hazel become more dominant. Hedgerows are generally mature and intact although often appear slightly scrubby in appearance through low intensity of management. Hedgerow trees are scattered throughout hedges and are a dominant feature on the horizon. There is an even mix of ash and oak species present although ash is more common towards the south of the character area.
- WP9. This area maintains a predominantly rural character although many urban influences are present. This is particularly evident within the northern part of the character area. Several pylon routes cross the area; however, these are generally not prominent as their siting in relation to topography reduces their prominence on the skyline. The M69 which crosses the character area is noticeable within the landscape due to the noise and movement of

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



traffic. Prevailing road noise prevents the area from being a peaceful rural landscape and is a constant reminder of nearby urban development.

## Built form and settlement pattern

- WP10. Wigston Parva comprises a small group of large farmhouses, dwellings, farm buildings and a parish church arranged around a central green. Wooded boundaries aid its integration with surrounding landscape.
- WP11. The houses within the hamlet are almost all set around a central green. There are selective views between properties into the wider countryside; however, due to the rising topography these views are only over a short distance and always have woodland as a component of the view.
- WP12. The hamlet feels remote and private in character due to its small size and entire focus set around the small green within the centre.

## Heritage

- WP13. There are eight Listed Buildings and three Scheduled Monuments in Wigston Parva Parish.

Nationally Designated Heritage Assets	Designation
Stables, Coach House and Bakehouse At Hall Farm, The Green	Grade II
Manor Farmhouse, The Green	Grade II
Hall Farmhouse, The Green	Grade II
Barn 5 Metres North East of Manor Farmhouse and Adjoining Stable, The Green	Grade II
Number 2 And Adjoining Horseshoe End, The Green	Grade II
Milestone at Smockington Junction, Watling Street	Grade II
Church of St Mary, Church Lane	Grade II
Water Pump 10 Metres South of Manor Farmhouse, The Green	Grade II
Roman Town at High Cross	Scheduled Monument
Bowl Barrow at Wigston Parva	Scheduled Monument
Crop Mark of A Bowl Barrow at Wigston Parva	Scheduled Monument

- WP14. Wigston Parva Conservation Area was designated in 1975.

## Architectural style

- WP15. The properties are all detached and of individual style. Some are constructed of red brick and others are finished with pale coloured render. Most of the roofs are a mix of dull red tiles and grey slate which provides a distinctive pattern to the roofline as well as being steeply sloping. The only building to be constructed from granite is the church which is relatively modest in appearance and reflects the small size and nature of this settlement. Some of the brick work has simple detailing which provides variation.
- WP16. Some properties have small paved courtyards which are visible through gated archways.
- WP17. Property boundaries vary between open well-managed front gardens to small brick walls and informal driveways. The hamlet has a strong connection to its rural surrounding with a high proportion of barns and stables present, some of which have been converted into private residences.

# Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: Update (Made Version)



WP18. The church is set on slightly higher ground than the properties and provides a slight vista from the eastern corner of the green.

## Local Green Spaces

WP19. This hamlet is very small and focused around a central green which makes it very distinctive. Local residents were keen that the village green on Church Lane should be protected.

## Gateway features

WP20. The hamlet is accessed by one small lane which then splits around a central green to individual properties' drives. These access roads have the appearance of long drives to private residences rather than roads. This entrance into the hamlet is enclosed and wooded in character which mostly screens the buildings until entering the central green where the hamlet opens up slightly. From the B4114 the hamlet is totally screened by mature vegetation and has the appearance of a small block of woodland with ornamental species within it.

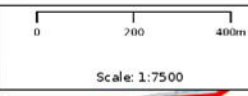
## Services and Facilities

WP21. Wigston Parva has no services and facilities other than the Church of St Mary.

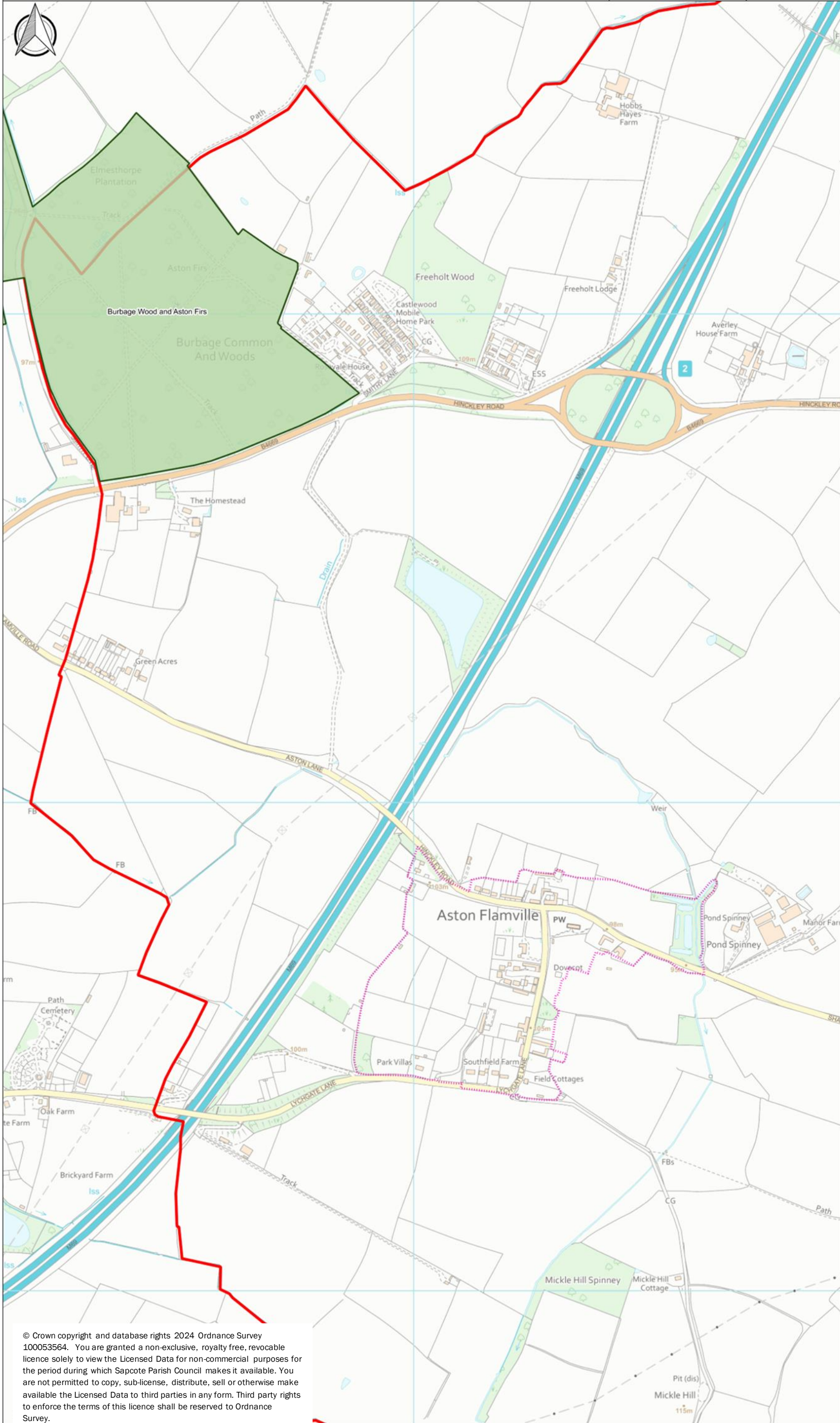
## Development

WP22. Wigston Parva has a very poor range of services and facilities. Public transport services are non-existent. Wigston Parva is not considered a 'sustainable' location for new development and no further growth is proposed.





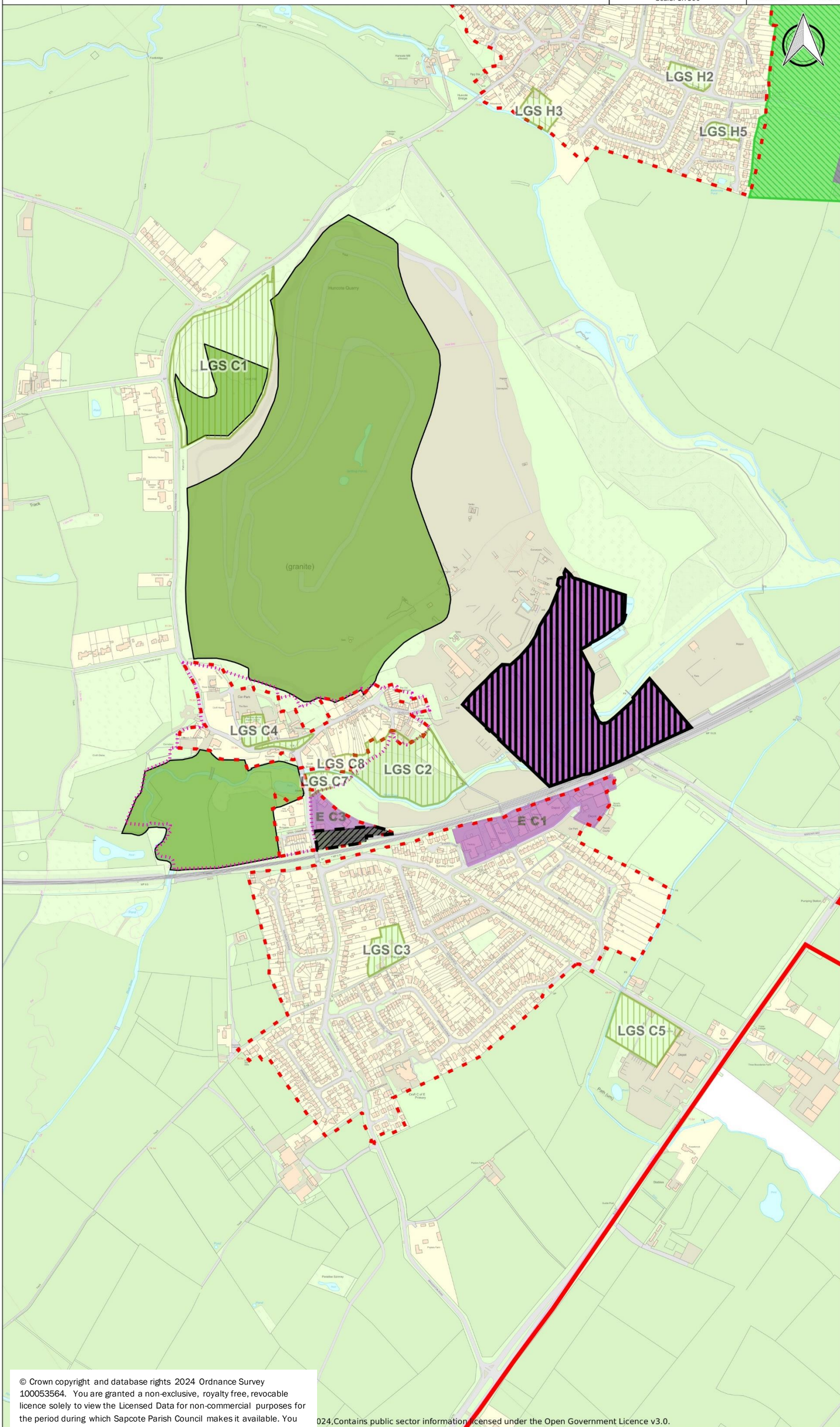
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**Date:** 05/03/2020




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- Croft Quarry (Policy FV14)**
- Conservation Area**
- Fosse Village Boundary**
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- Limits to Built-up Area (Policies FV8)**
- Rail Station Safeguarding (Policy FV2)**
- Employment (Policy FV15)**
- Housing Commitment (10 or more dwelling)**
- Local Green Space (Policy FV5)**
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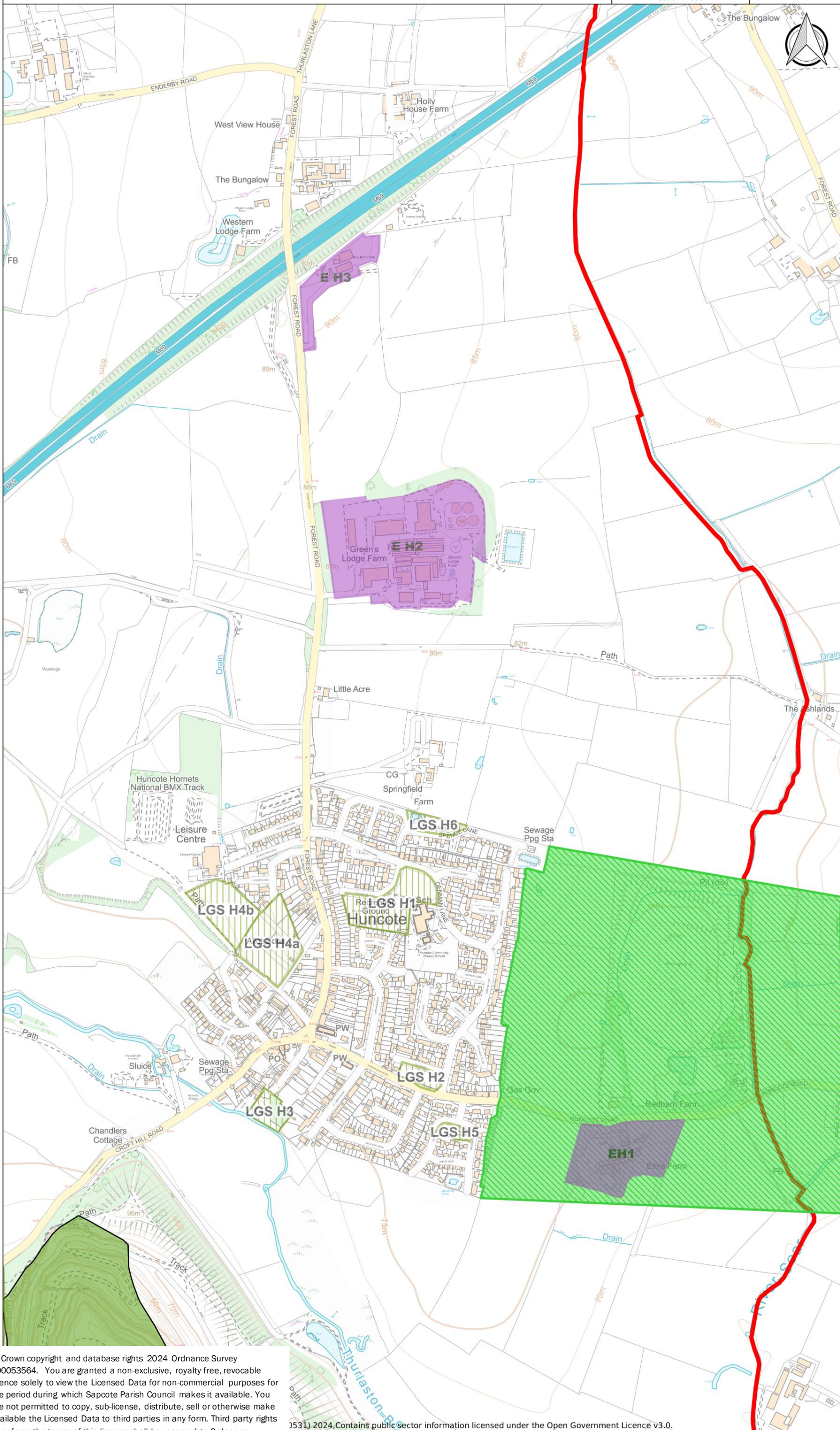
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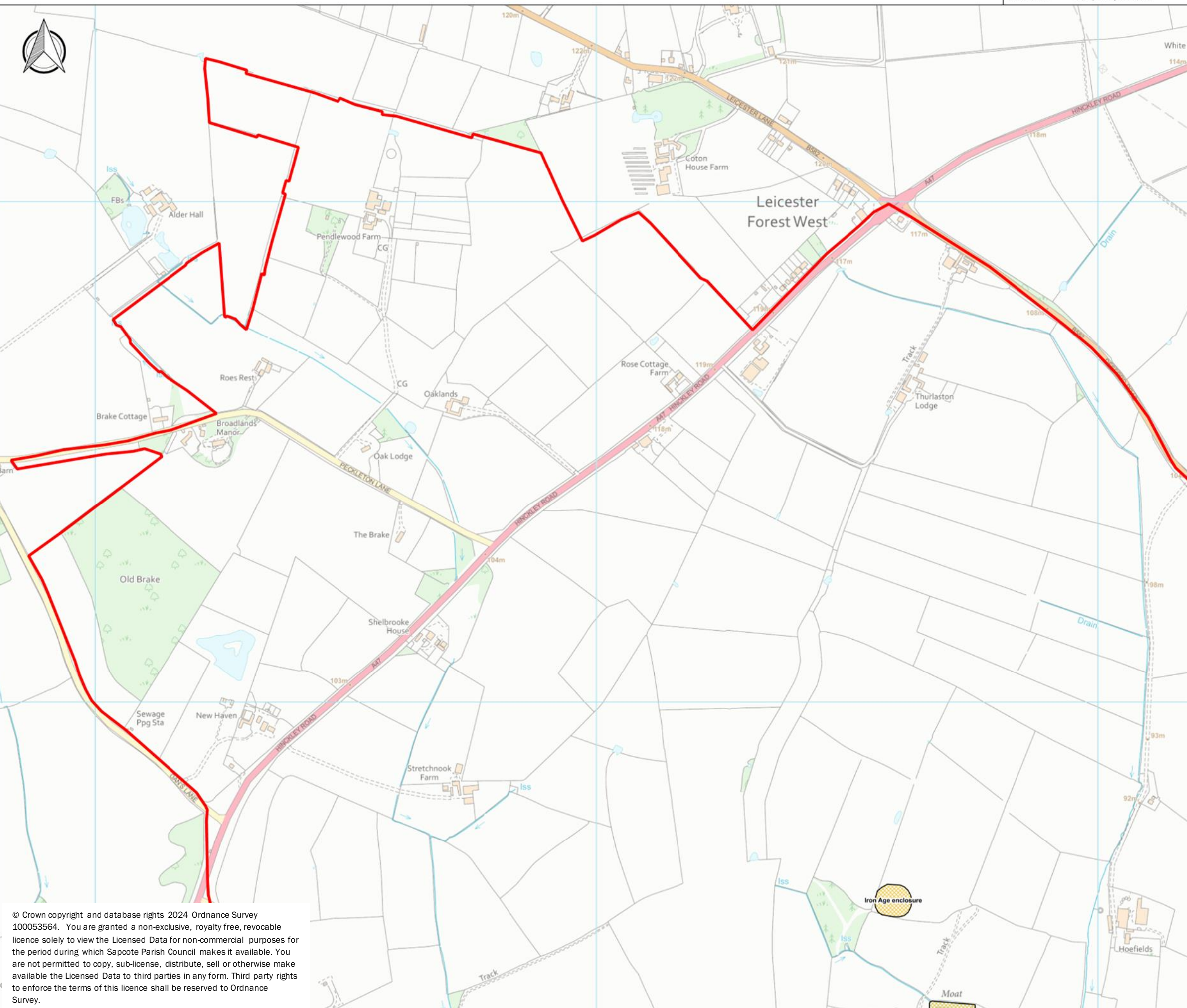
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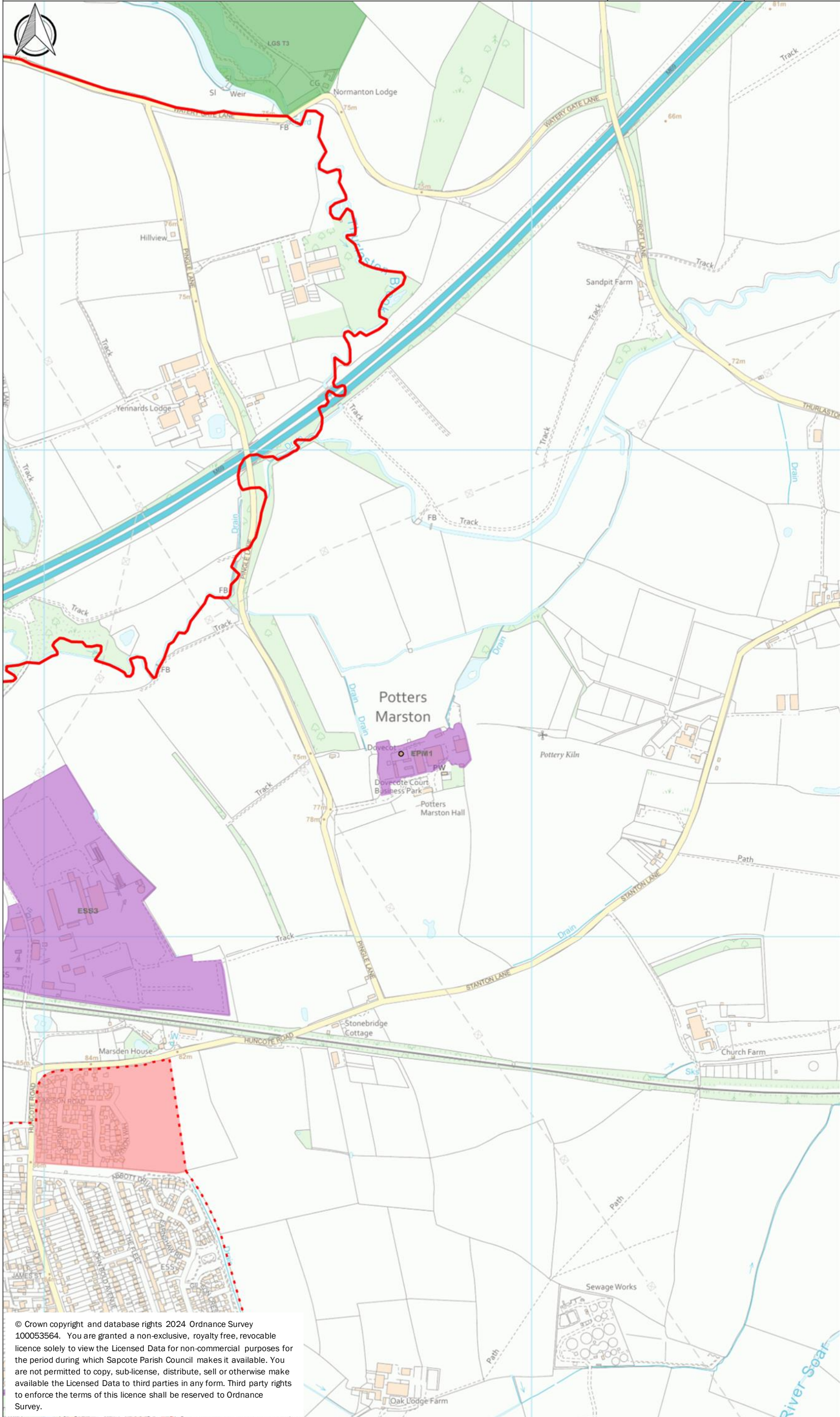
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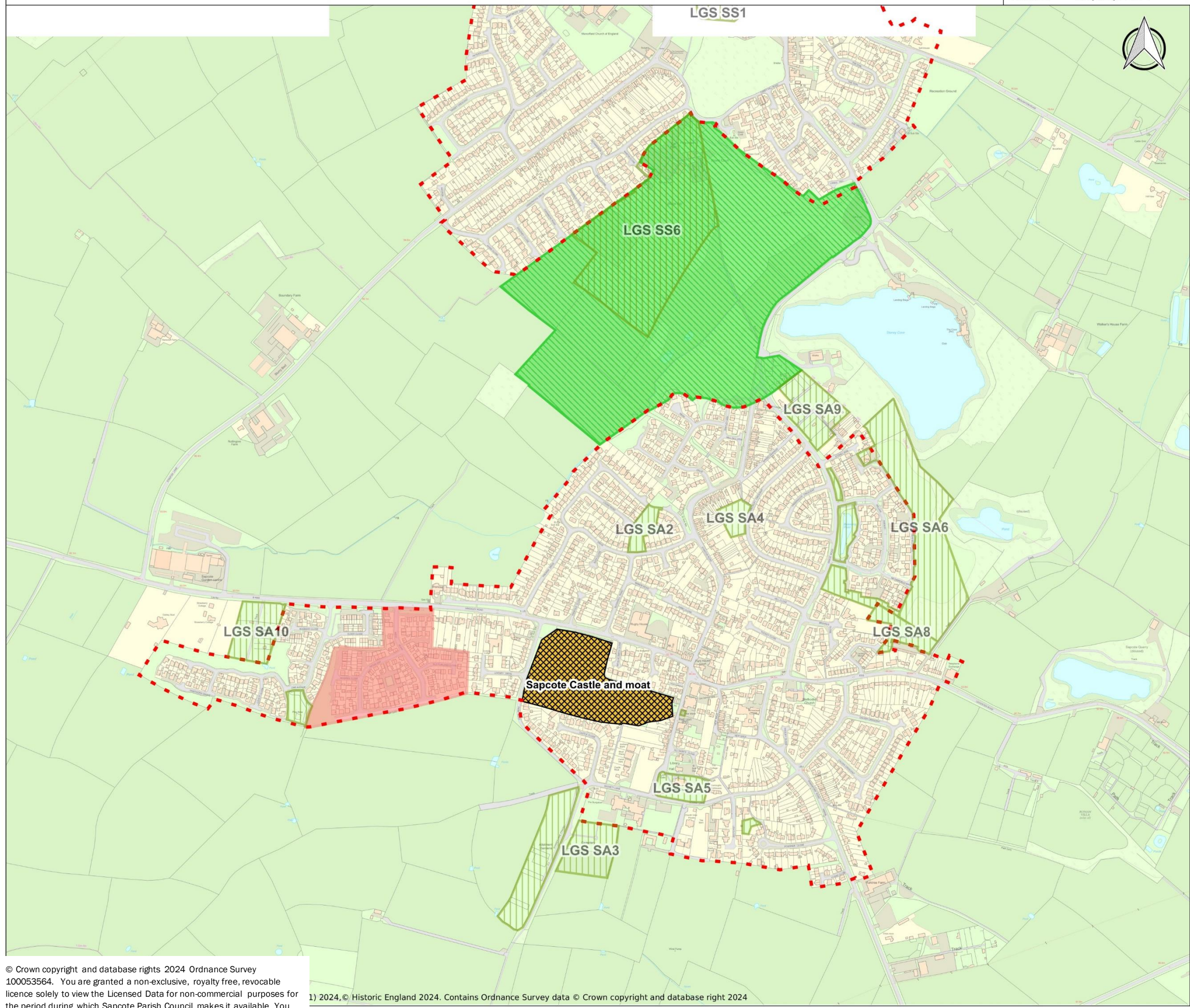




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**Scheduled Monuments**

Scheduled Monuments

**Fosse Village Boundary**

Fosse Village Boundary

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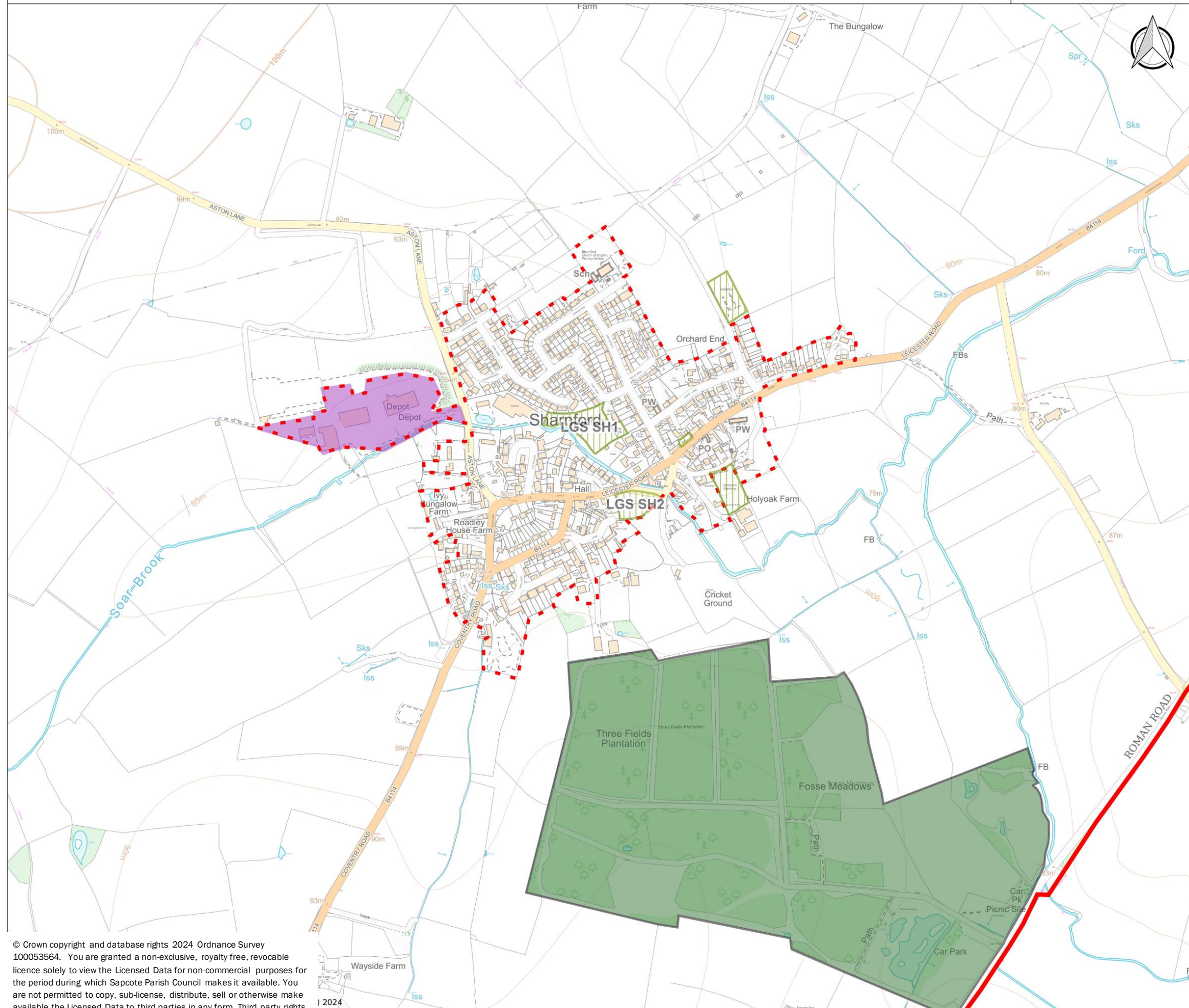
**Local Green Space (Policy FV5)**

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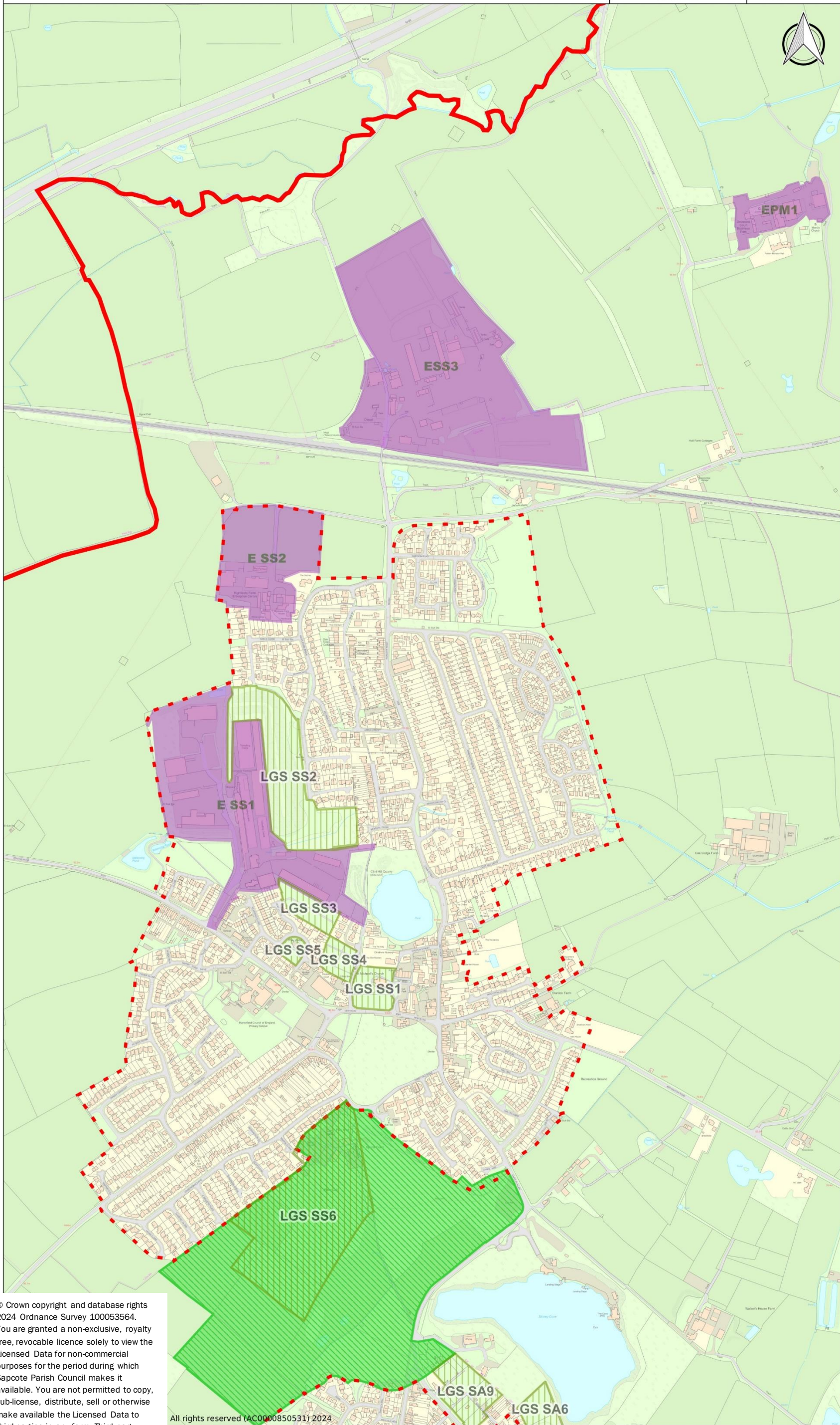
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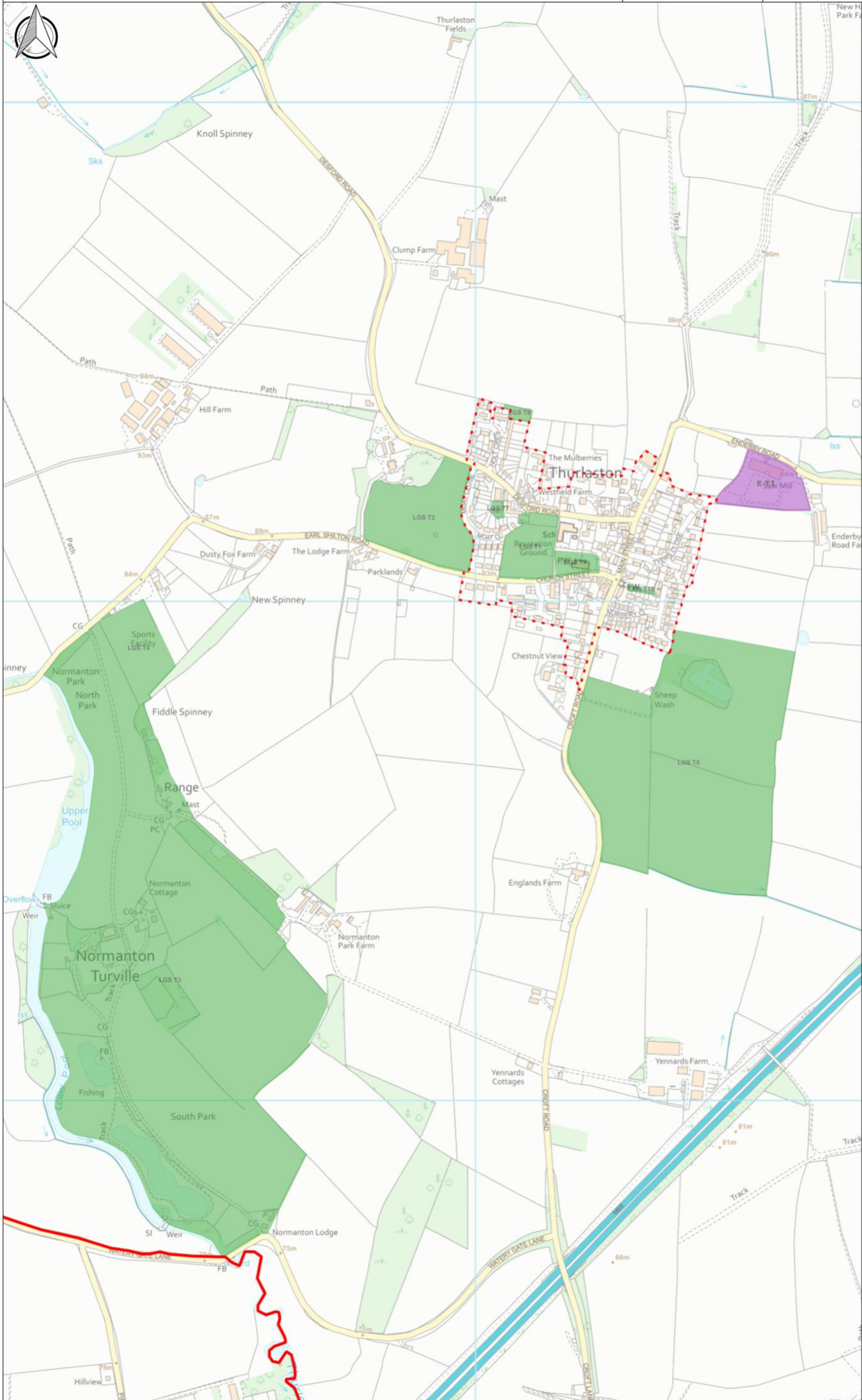
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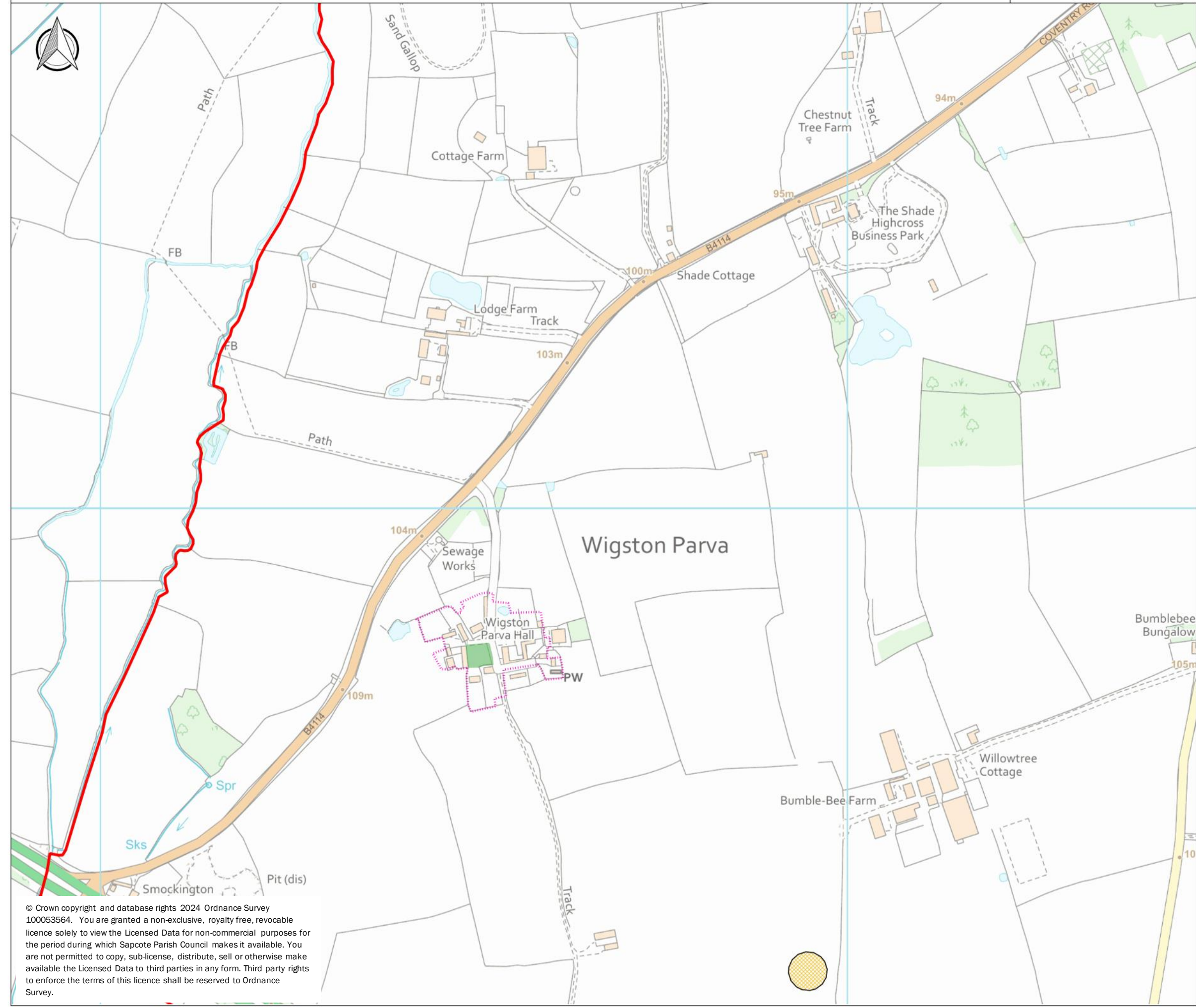
*Fosse Villages*



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Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



Scheduled Monuments



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Croft Quarry (Policy FV14)



Conservation Area



Fosse Village Boundary



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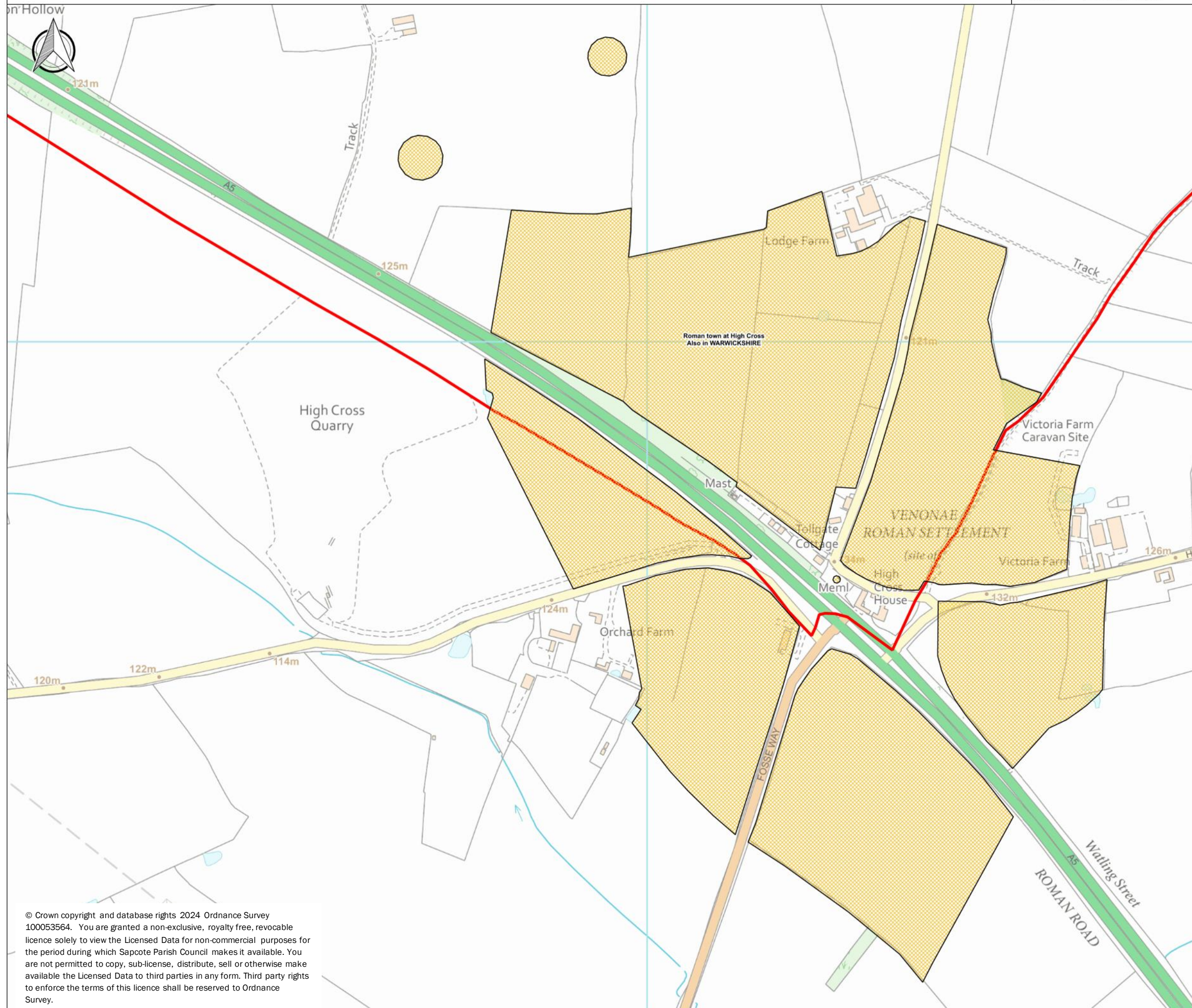


Local Green Space (Policy FV5)





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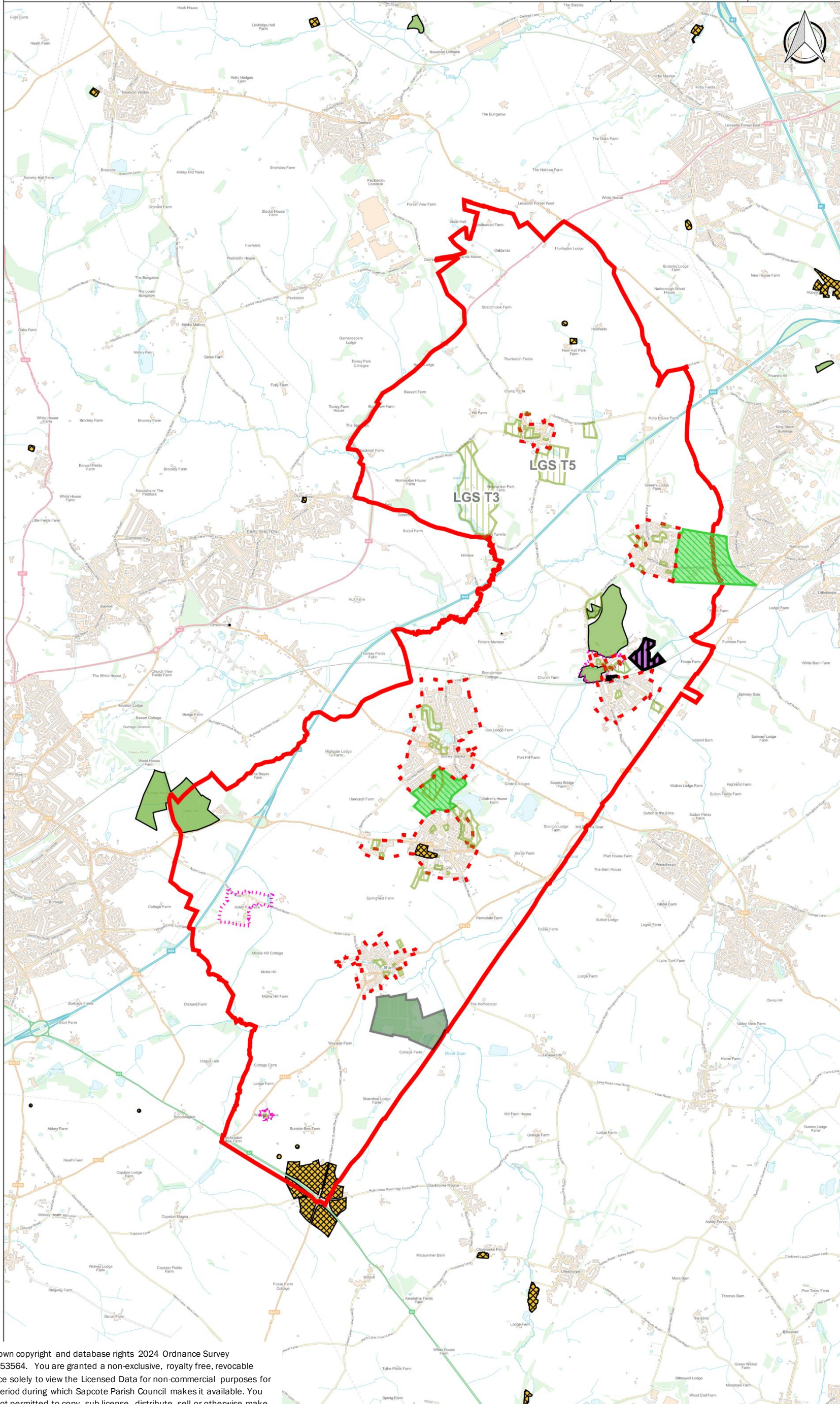





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