



STREETS and TREES

Bottesford Parish, Leicestershire

Revision A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE LANDSCAPE OF BOTTESFORD

A study has been undertaken to identify, analyse and advise, from a landscape perspective, the considerable importance of trees within the settlements of Bottesford Parish and how they contribute to the landscape character.

This has been put together following consultation with the forum, consideration of scoping material produced (and Melton Borough Council published material), and field work.

The community vision, prepared by the Steering Group following consultation and questionnaire feedback includes the following points of relevance to our study:

"In 2036 the Parish will remain an attractive, environmentally friendly and vibrant place for people of all ages ...

*New housing development will have been sensitively located within village envelopes to **protect the Parish's green spaces**, Conservation Areas and its rural setting in the beautiful Vale of Belvoir. **The trees, hedgerows and wide grass verges that are part of its character will be protected and green spaces well located and maintained for the enjoyment of residents.***

Walking and cycling around the Parish will be safe and direct, access to the River Devon will be improved."

In order to provide a succinct response to both the vision from a landscape point of view, and our individual brief, we have identified the four (out of ten) most relevant 'Community Objectives' our study could inform.

The selected community objectives are:

Community Objective 1

"To ensure that development minimises the impact on the landscape character and biodiversity of the Plan area, recognizing the value of long views and vistas into and out of the rural setting of the villages and the valued open spaces within them."

Community Objective 2

"To ensure that all new development is within the Village Envelope, reinforcing the existing rural character."

Community Objective 4

"To ensure all development is designed to a high quality that reflects local style and materials reinforcing the distinctive rural character of the Parish and minimises emissions and resource consumption. Plots for self-build will be encouraged."

Community Objective 7

"To ensure that heritage of the Plan area is protected and, where possible, enhanced."

As such, we have directed our research and guidance towards the individual settlements themselves. This is further reinforced by the proposed aim in the Steering Groups brief;

"To ensure that important trees are protected the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is looking to identify those trees, individual and groups, which are significant due both to their ecological value and their contribution to the street scene."

The Group would also like to identify any plots of land owned by the Parish Council which would be suitable for tree planting.

Structure of this Report

We have firstly taken into account what makes Bottesford individual from other parishes locally, with particular emphasis on the existing vegetation (primarily trees).

We then focus on the settlements themselves, in particular the approaches to each settlement, key characteristics, open spaces and street scene. Each time identifying and assessing the contribution existing vegetation makes to each area, culminating in a series of drawings that shows where trees are influential in the four identified settlements.

Finally, as requested in the brief, the report seeks to identify areas and provide advice for how small, yet effective, improvements could realistically be made to maintain and enhance the existing character of Bottesford.



REVISIONS

Initial Issue 26th October 2020

Revision A. 11th November 2020.

Produced by DSA Environment + Design Ltd.

All images taken by:

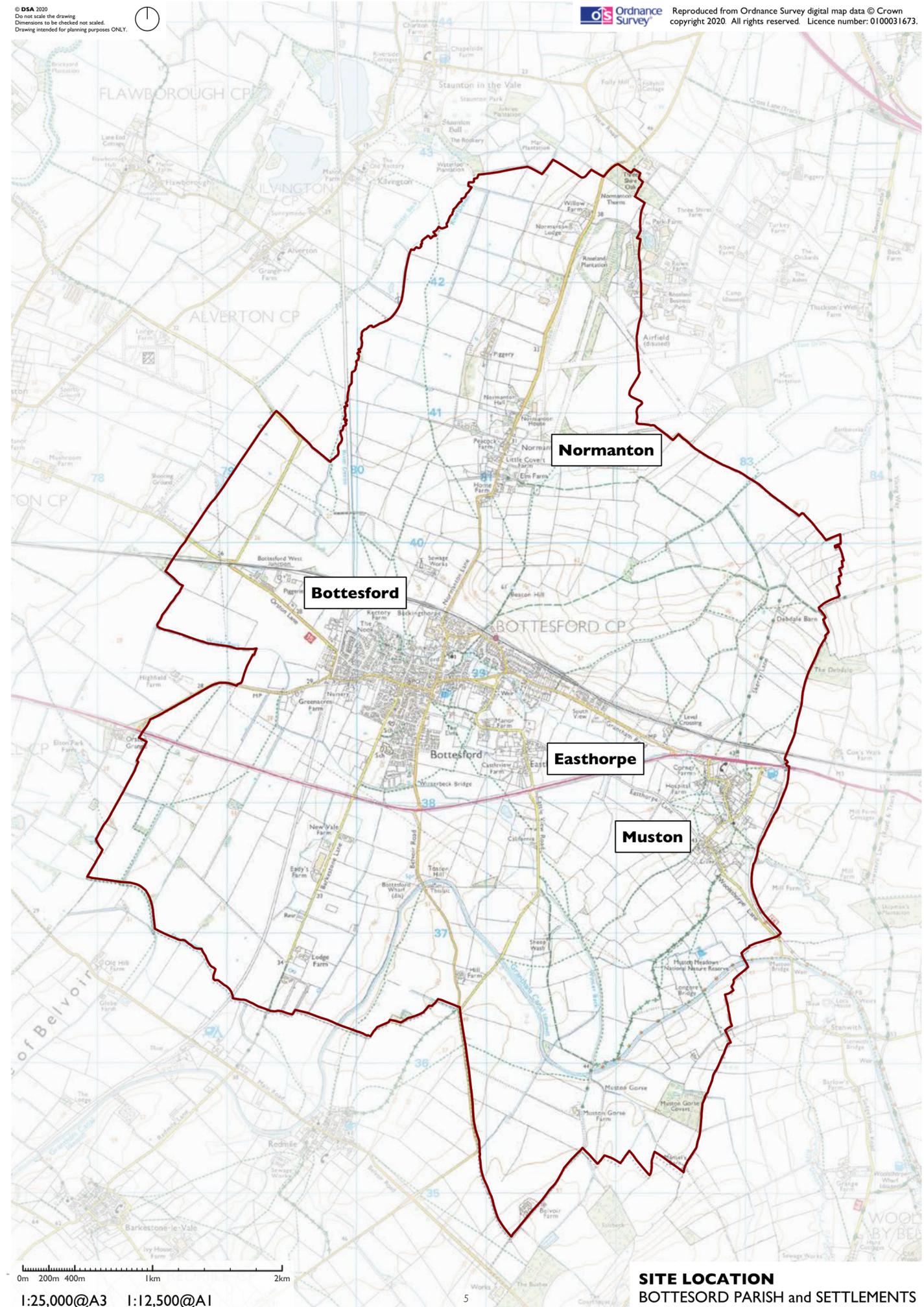
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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	03
<i>UNDERSTANDING WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO BOTTESFORD'S CHARACTER?</i>	
1 THE BOTTESFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN The Aim of the Neighbourhood Plan	06
<i>UNDERSTANDING THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF BOTTESFORD PARISH: ITS STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF EXISTING VEGETATION</i>	
2 THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER: The Existing Landscape	08
Trees: Tree Preservation Orders and other protection	08
The Green Spaces of Bottesford Parish.	12
The importance of separation: Settlement Entrances	14
Views in Bottesford: Where are trees least influential?	18
<i>PRESENTING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING VEGETATION IN BOTTESFORD PARISH</i>	
3 LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES Bottesford Parish as a Whole Spaces within Settlements Opportunities to Enhance Vegetation	24



BOTTESFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

PROVIDING AN EVIDENCE BASE

THE AIM OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The neighbourhood plan seeks to set out a 'shared vision for the parish that will enable local residents to have a say on the location and design of future development and also to protect existing spaces and features considered important to the area.'

OUR BRIEF

To aid the production of this plan and provide a robust evidence base for policies, in particular those around the protection and enhancement of the landscape, we have been asked to investigate the contribution of trees to the character and street scenes of Bottesford.

In particular the steering group would like the report to:

"identify those trees, individual and groups, which are significant due both to their ecological value and their contribution to the street scene."

However, during discussions with the steering group it has become apparent that it is not just trees that contribute to the character of Bottesford. Mature hedgerows and wide grass verges, especially at approaches to the settlements, set a precedent for the rural character that makes Bottesford the unique place it is.

THE WIDER PARISH

The wider parish has a small number of designations for landscape and natural importance, including a National Nature Reserve, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Primary Green Infrastructure corridors. As can be seen on the drawing opposite these are all generally remote from the settlements and therefore

don't contribute to the character of the settlements themselves.

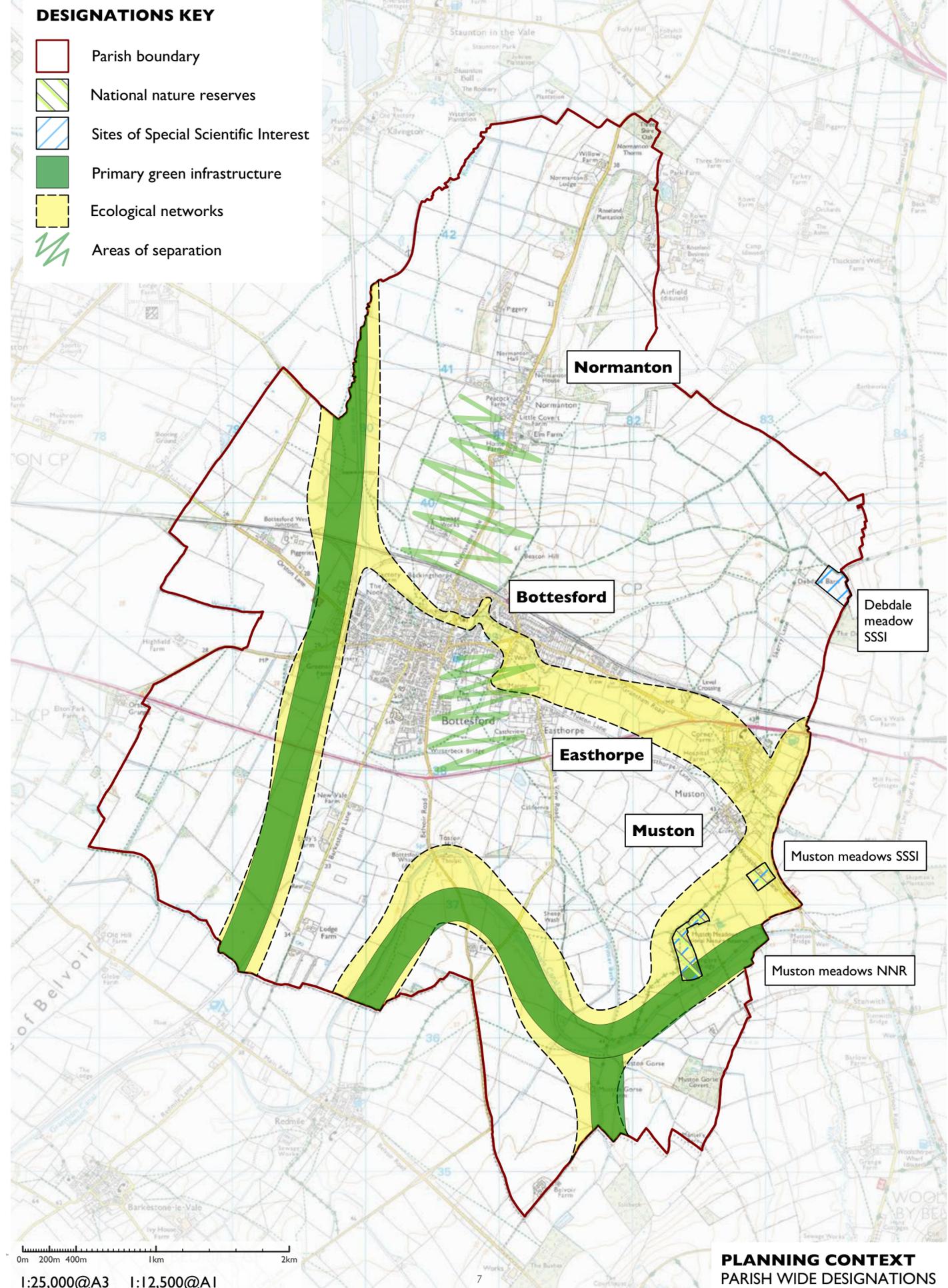
A key designation, reinforced through discussions with the steering group are the areas of separation that existing between Bottesford - Normanton (North) and Bottesford - Easthorpe (South). It was noted that the separation between settlements and the busy A52 is another feature that contributes to the character of the settlements.

The key characteristics of the ideal village approach were agreed as wide grass verges, mature hedgerows with blocks of woodland and trees belts creating layers of vegetation. This adds to the rural character of the area meaning urban forms are generally not visible until entering the settlements.

FOCUSING THE REPORT

It is these characteristics, in particular the contribution of mature trees, and how they 'reach' into the settlement centres, that our report is intended to analyse. To provide a succinct and usable document we have assessed village approaches and the street scenes separately. Each has been graded on a scale of the perceived influence of vegetation on the views and experience of a user when in, or travelling through, the area.

These grades are colour coded in a traffic light fashion and plotted on plans to quickly identify areas where vegetation is least influential. The areas that benefit least from the influence of vegetation are clearly visible on the plans and efforts can be focussed around these to improve the influence of vegetation, whether through protection of existing features and or increasing vegetation cover locally if land is available.



2 THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER INFLUENCE OF VEGETATION ON STREETS

THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE

Before suggestions are made on any potential opportunities, it is important to identify and analyse the existing situation. The different features of the landscape that give it its character have been mapped, described and analysed.

These are:

1. The distinct separation between settlements and, in particular, the A52 that cuts the parish in half from east to west.
2. Approaches to the settlements that contribute to the sense of separation and rural character
3. The open spaces and other breaks between buildings that exist due to the scale and massing of former agricultural buildings (farmhouses and barns).
4. The existing vegetation within the area, especially mature trees, hedgerows and grass verges.

Additional drawings have been produced to illustrate the analysis of the existing typical street character, to show which areas are currently most heavily influenced by the existing trees.

The following pages describe and analyse the drawings, highlighting some of the strengths and assets of the existing local landscape as well as some of the weaknesses or threats.

Below: TPO 7B protects some of the largest trees existing in Bottesford within private property curtilages.

Right: As noted on site some of the TPO records differ from these situation on the ground. Here the record shows TWO sycamore to the rear of the Red Lion pub, however only ONE is present.



TREES: TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS AND OTHER PROTECTION

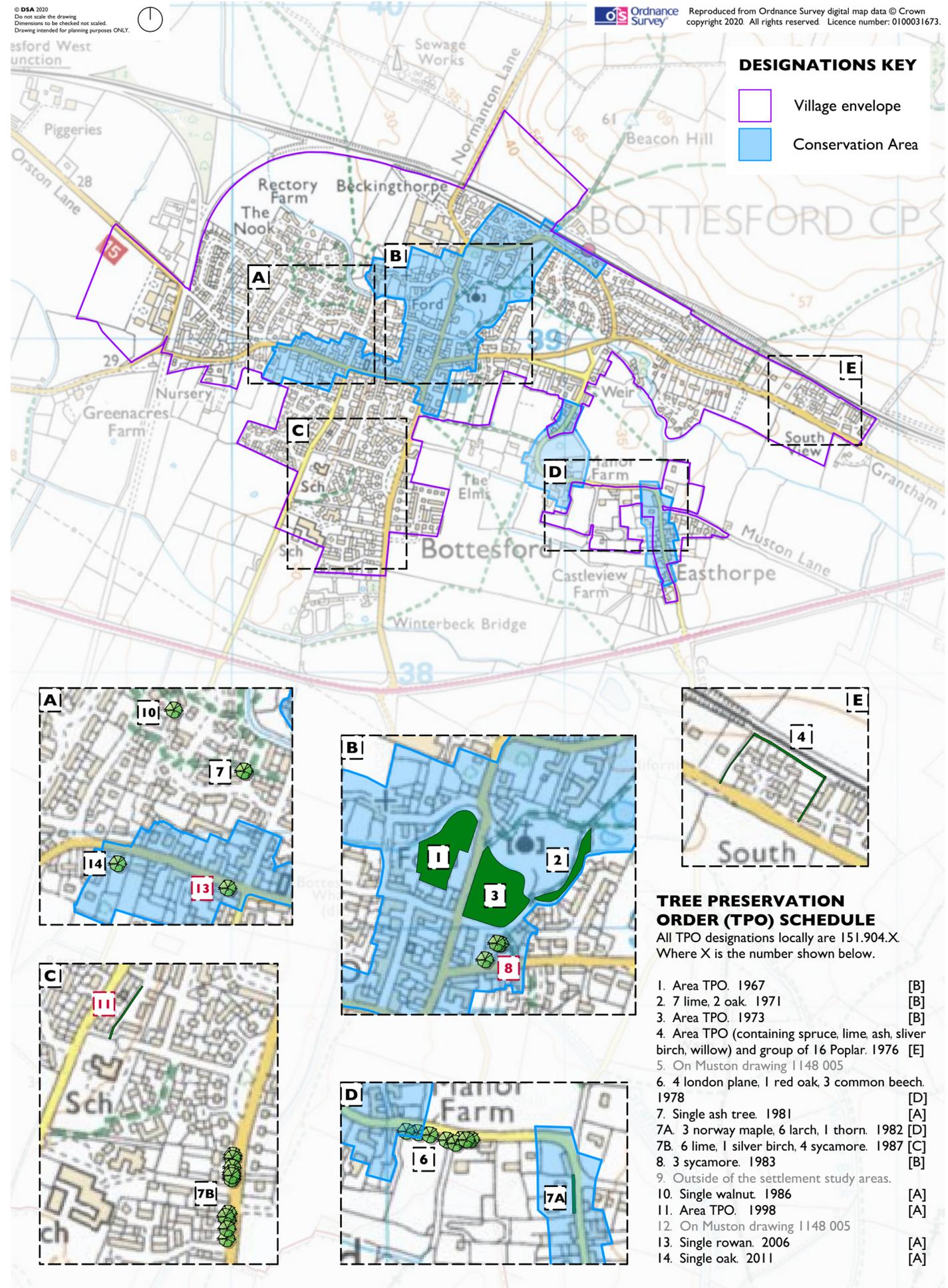
The primary focus of this report, as set out in the brief from the Steering Group, is to "identify those trees, individual and groups, which are significant due both to their ecological value and their contribution to the street scene."

A starting point for this is to identify those trees which have already been afforded some form of protection. A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) provides legal protection for trees, in general, making it a criminal offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree protected by that order, or to cause or permit such actions, without the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) permission.

Conservation areas also afford trees some protection, if not under the protection of a TPO. Before carrying out works written notice needs to be given to the LPA to allow them to apply a TPO if they deem the tree of sufficient quality.

13 TPOs have been identified in the Bottesford Parish area and are shown on the following drawings, along with Conservation areas of each settlement. These set a precedent for the type and quality of tree that is considered to bring significant amenity value locally.

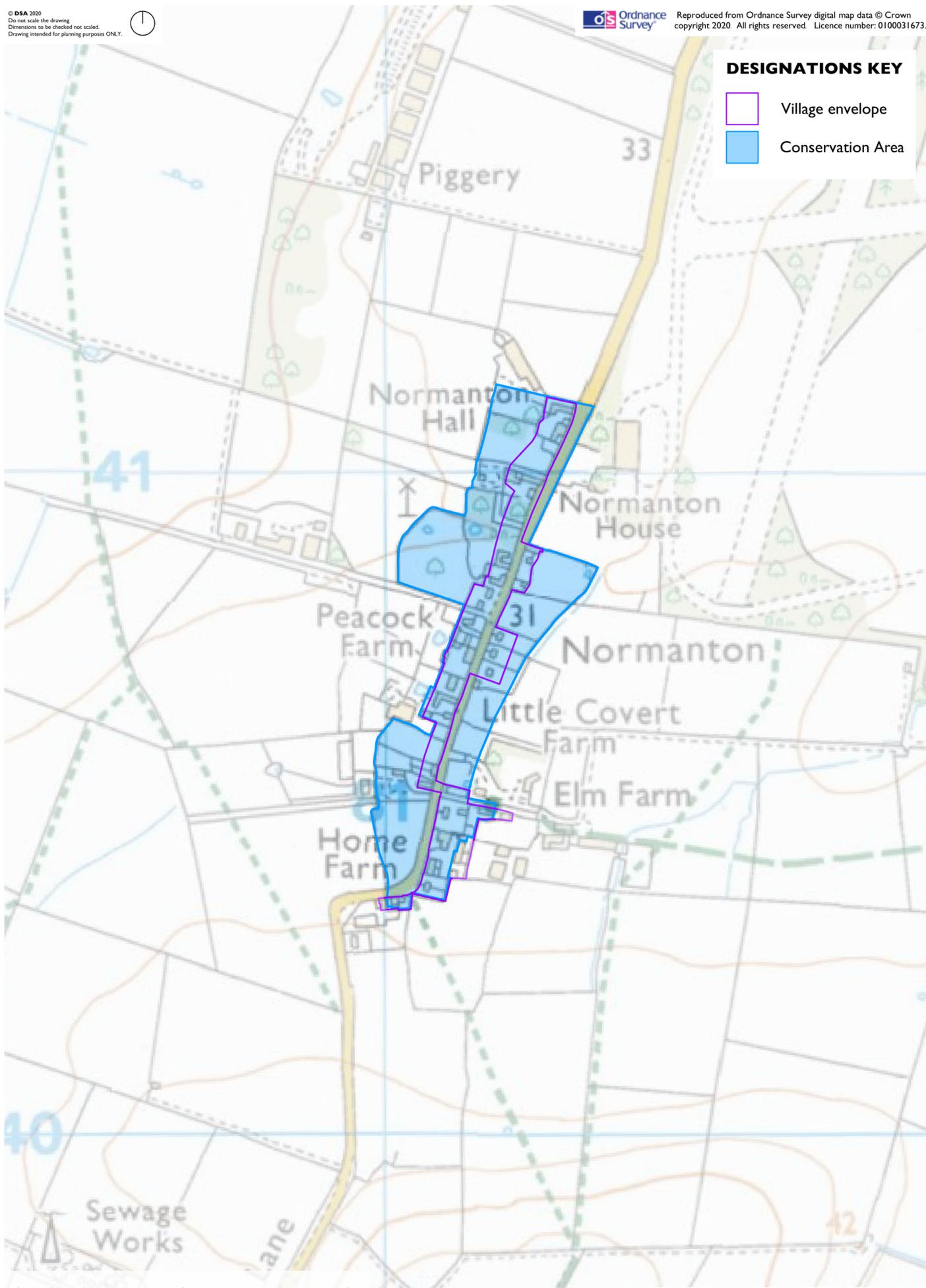
It was noted during field survey that some trees protected by TPO do not appear to be present any more, which are also identified on the following plans (shown in red). These may have been subject to subsequent planning applications allowing for their removal. If so TPO records should be updated to reflect these changes.





DESIGNATIONS KEY

-  Village envelope
-  Conservation Area



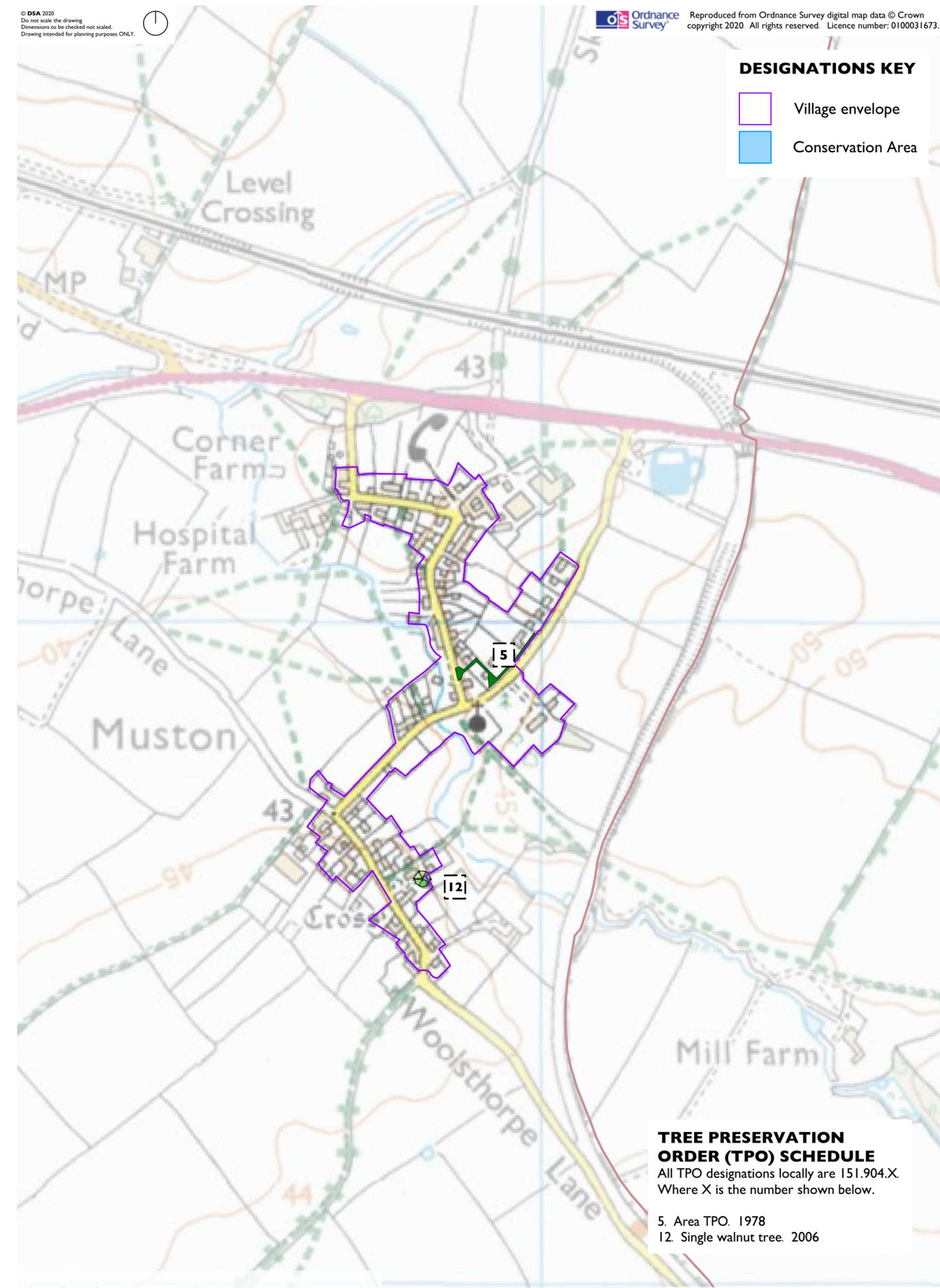
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**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS
NORMANTON DESIGNATIONS**



DESIGNATIONS KEY

-  Village envelope
-  Conservation Area



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**TREE PRESERVATION
ORDER (TPO) SCHEDULE**
All TPO designations locally are 151.904.X.
Where X is the number shown below.

- 5. Area TPO. 1978
- 12. Single walnut tree. 2006

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS
MUSTON DESIGNATIONS**

THE GREEN SPACES OF BOTTESFORD

GRANTHAM ROAD RECREATION AREA [1]



Many of the green spaces have very discreet, defined entrances that separate them from the general street scene. The recreation ground is very much separated from Grantham road by mature hedgerow and specimen trees.

VILLAGE GREEN. GRANTHAM ROAD [2]



In contrast the Village Green is much more open than other green spaces locally. This means the size of the green space is visible from the street making them feel wider and more spacious.

THE GREEN (BELVOIR ROAD AND KEEL DRIVE) [3]



The green spaces appear for the most part well maintained (although there is variation in this). There are opportunities to 'relax' the mowing regime in areas to increase the diversity of habitat.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ADJACENT THE WICKETS [4]



Relatively new areas of open space have not had time to mature and provide the sort of benefits provided by more mature vegetation. Careful management and, more importantly, replacement of any failures will increase their influence locally.

THE SQUARE, CHAPEL STREET [5]

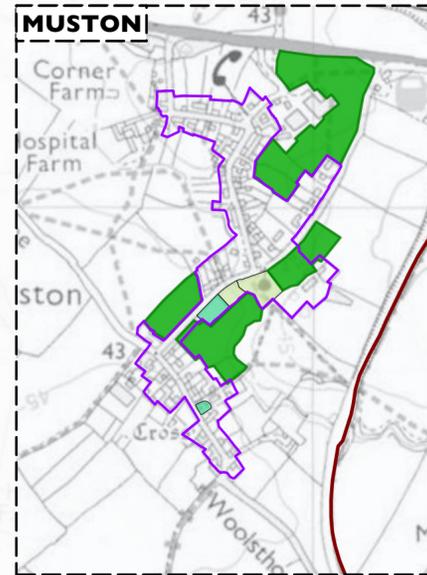
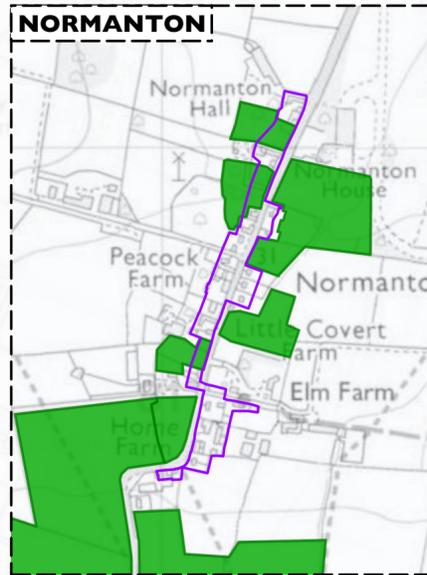
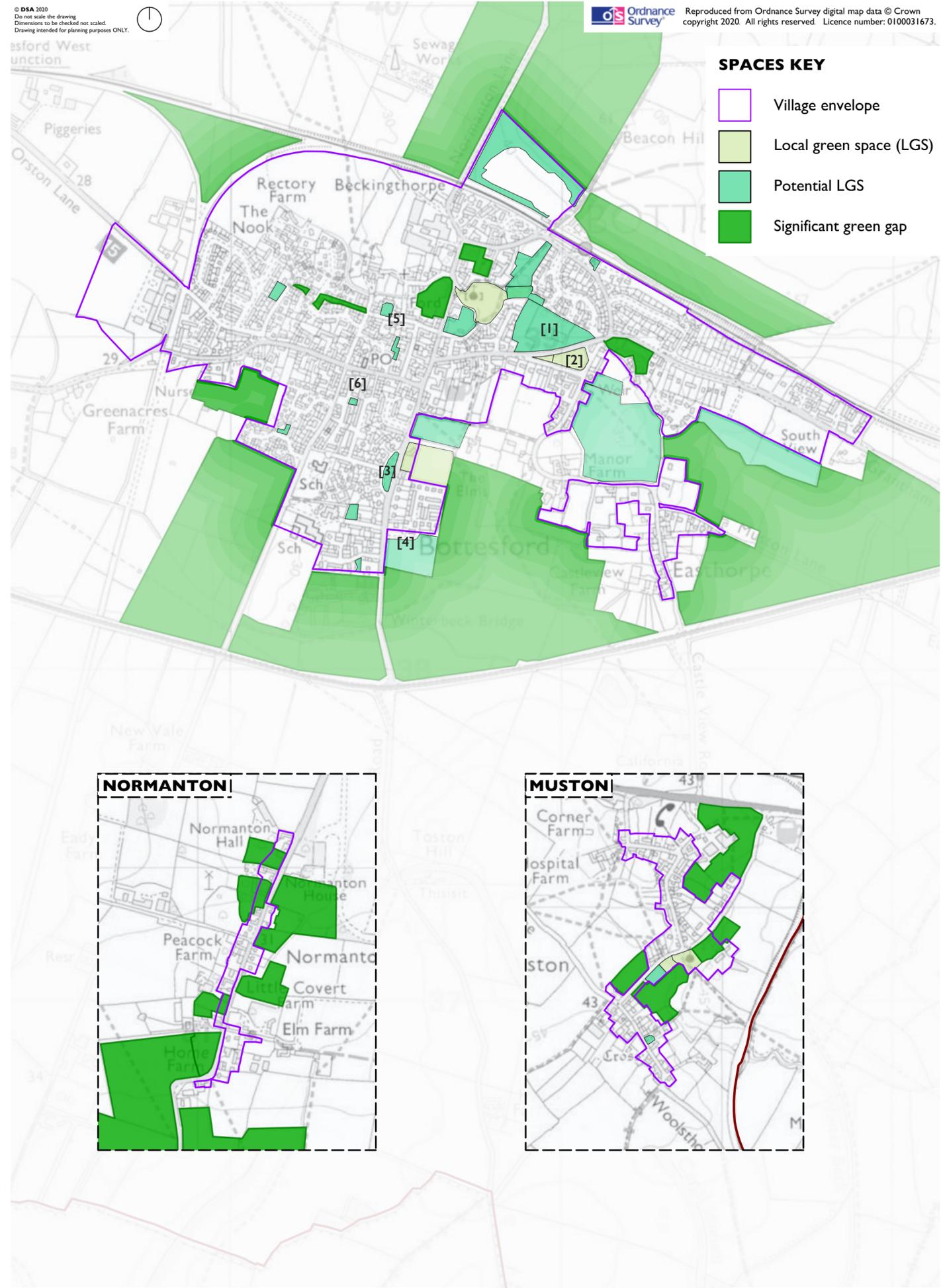


Small incidental spaces such as 'The Square' allow enough space for trees and other vegetation to mature providing great habitat and amenity value to the local area. Taller trees exert influence over wider areas where small green spaces can't be created.

CORNER OF BARKESTON LANE AND HIGH STREET [6]



Another example of where small incidental space exerts a greater influence than its small size through accommodating large mature trees that act as landmarks locally. This area is not currently picked up as a local green space on Melton BC GIS data.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SEPARATION

SETTLEMENT ENTRANCES

As discussed earlier, separation is an important characteristic for the settlements in Bottesford. This is especially true for the approaches to the settlements. A distinct break between one settlement and the next, or between the settlement and the A52 creates a sense of arrival somewhere new.

The key characteristics of the ideal village approach were agreed as wide grass verges, mature hedgerows with blocks of woodland and trees belts creating layers of vegetation. Each of the entrances to the four settlements have been visited and the perceived influence of vegetation assessed and recorded on the following plan. A brief explanation for each is given below along with some example photographs.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE ENTRANCES

BOTTESFORD

Orston Lane - A long, wide lane leading to Bottesford. Improving field boundaries would further separate the village visually improving this approach.

Nottingham Road - Wide grass verges and mature hedges provide a sense of space around the roads. However the lack of specimen trees does not give the sense of separation present at other approaches to the village.

Barkstone Lane - A pedestrianised approach to the village with grass verges, mature hedgerows and prominent mature trees.

Belvoir Road - Again an ideal combination of components. A glimpsed view of the church could be improved by screening the new housing at 'the wickets'.

Easthorpe Road - Small or no grass verges along this entrance on quite a narrow road. The tall poplars to the west act as a local landmark between Easthorpe and Bottesford.

Grantham Road - A distinct lack of mature trees to the north of Grantham Road allows views towards Bottesford from quite some distance, reducing the sense of separation.

Normanton Lane - Wide verges, hedgerows and mature trees make this a characteristic entrance to the village. The new development north of the railway brings urban form up the hill reducing the sense of separation. Screening this would help restore this approach.

EASTHORPE

Easthorpe Road - Similar to heading north, little or no verges prevent it from being an ideal approach to the village.

Castle View Road - Verges and hedgerows alone don't provide enough height to visually separate Easthorpe from the main road on this approach. Additional trees along the road would improve this entrance.

Muston Lane - Another approach closed to traffic. Narrow lane with small hedgerow trees allowing glimpses of urban elements. Taller mature trees would add height to the vegetation and increase the sense of separation.

MUSTON

Main Street - Well vegetated but too short to fully separate the settlement.

Church Lane - Wide verges and hedgerows, but lack of mature trees.

Easthorpe Lane - Another non trafficked route. Small pockets of mature trees, but at very irregular intervals. Regularising this would improve approach.

Woolsthorpe Lane - All three components, but trees missing to the south. Allows wider views towards the built form reducing the separation.

NORMANTON

Normanton Lane (South) - Wide verges and hedges but lacking in mature trees to provide wider screening to views.

Normanton Lane (North) - All three components for village approaches with tall mature trees providing height and visual separation until very close.

- COLOUR CODING KEY:**
- 1 These views contain little or no green components associated with an ideal village approach and in some cases contain detracting features.
 - 2 Views contain some green components, but ones that are not characteristic of a village approach.
 - 3 Views contain a single component characteristic of a village approach, such as street trees or hedges.
 - 4 Views have a combination of components characteristic of the village approach, but with evidence of loss or detracting features.
 - 5 Views contain an ideal combination of garden suburb components with little or no evidence of loss of components, such as mature trees or hedges.



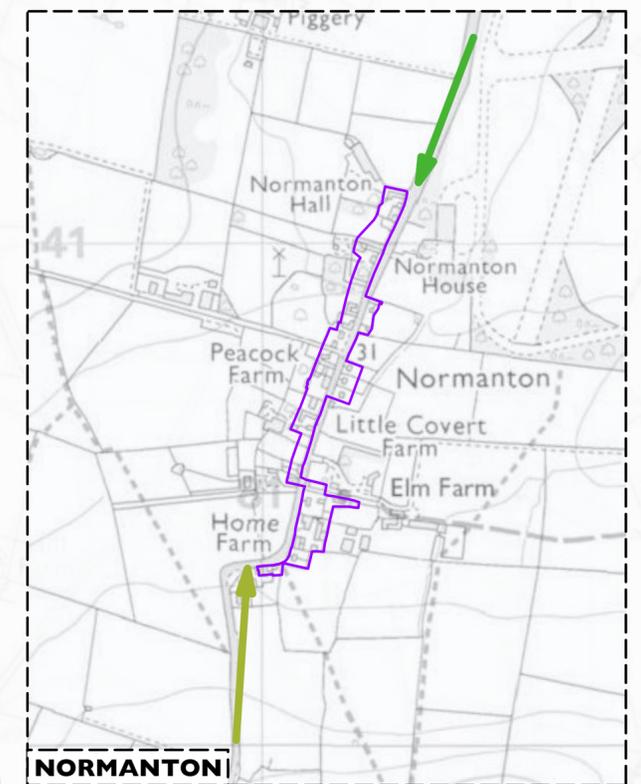
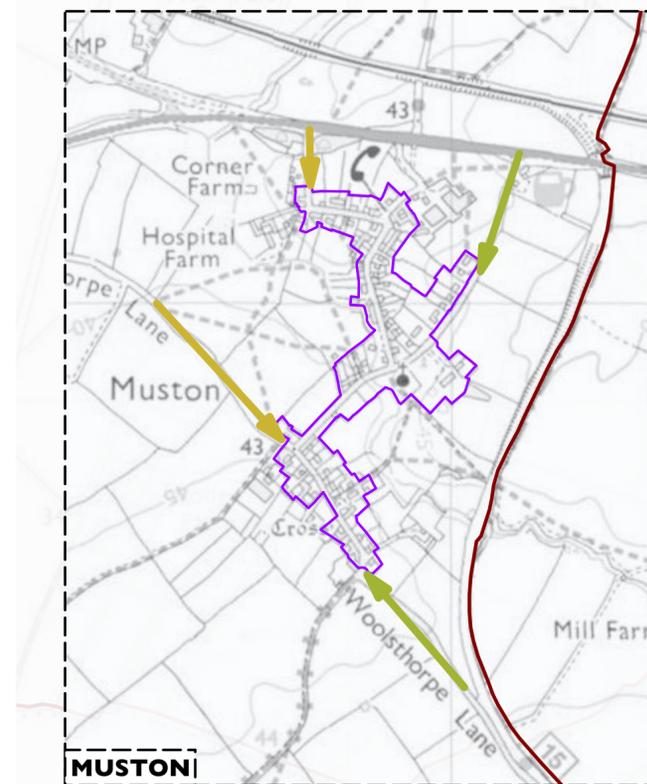
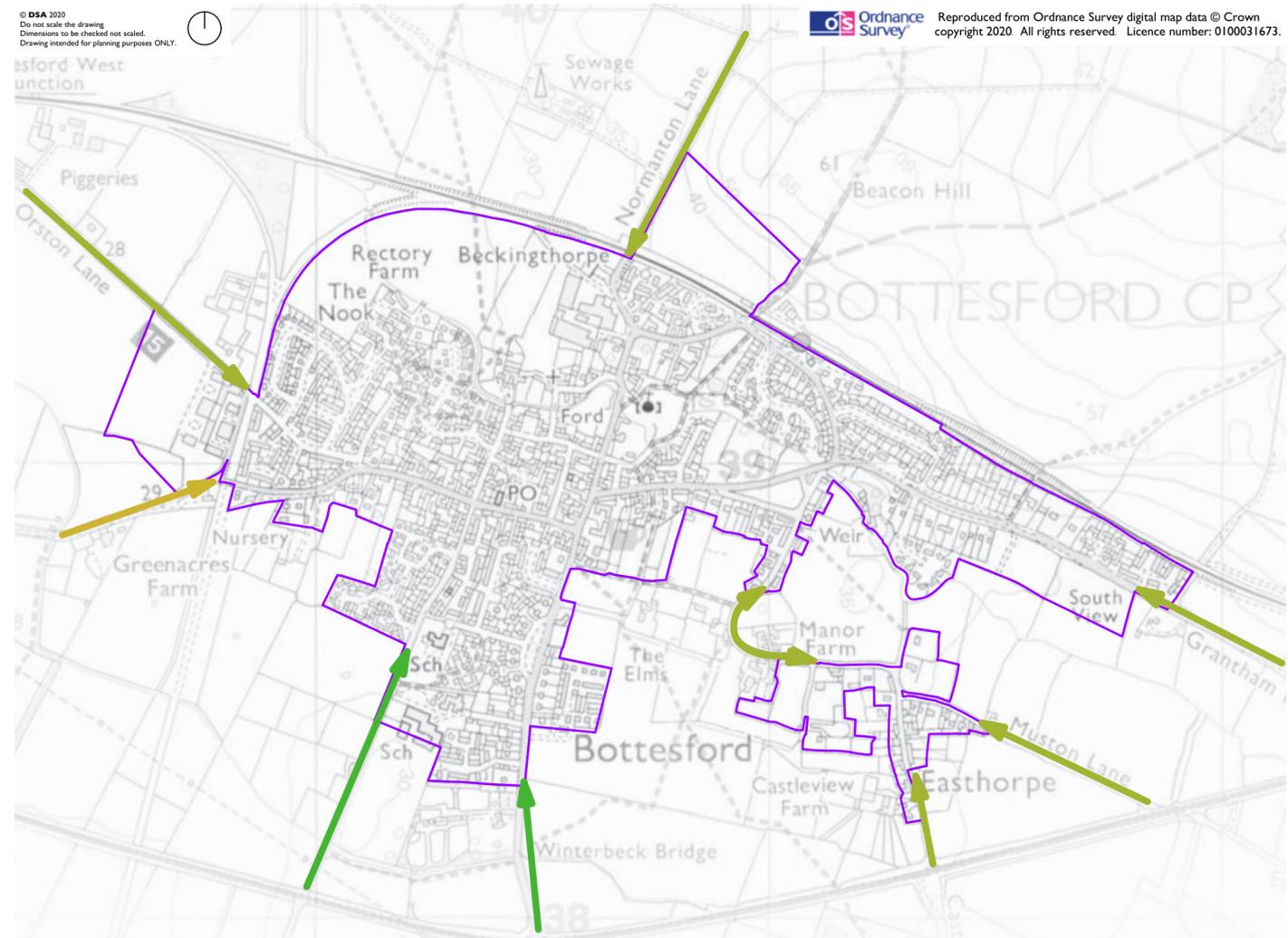
Example image showing the entrance to Bottesford from the south along Belvoir Road. This approach has the ideal combination of components to the village approach. The new development at the wickets is prominent in the view and would benefit from additional tree planting to screen views.



This entrance to Muston off the A52 from the north, on Main Street, has mature vegetation, but doesn't include the mature hedgerows and wide verges that contribute towards the ideal settlement approach.



The entrance to Normanton from the north benefits from large physical separation from other urban elements. It also contains all three of the key characteristics for a village entrance; wide verges, mature hedgerows and scattered trees.





AERIAL IMAGE OF BOTTESFORD
PROVIDED BY THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN STEERING GROUP

VIEWS IN BOTTESFORD PARISH

WHERE ARE TREES LEAST INFLUENTIAL IN BOTTESFORD PARISH?

The aerial image on the previous page gives a generally unseen perspective of Bottesford and the surrounding area. From this angle it is possible to see the amount of green space and tree cover present locally. It also allows easy identification of small areas within Bottesford where trees can clearly be seen to exert influence on the local character, but also see pockets where their influence may be less prevalent.

This has been reinforced by our fieldwork, walking the streets of Bottesford and surrounding settlements to experience and record the influence of trees, and other vegetation, on these street scenes.

The perceived influence of vegetation on the street scenes has been recorded on the following plans. Recorded in a traffic light style it is hoped that this colour coding will quickly identify areas where vegetation is least influential and reveal potential areas for future interventions.

It is only when walking the streets and actually experiencing the place that the importance to height becomes so apparent. There are a number of areas that, when viewed in plan, would appear to have a large number of trees in them. However, due to their low overall height and the height of surrounding buildings, for example centrally in Bottesford around Queen Street and Market Street, they aren't generally experienced on the street.

The opposite is also true. Some areas that may appear to be deficient in trees and vegetation locally, say Beacon View in the north or Bowbridge Gardens in the west, they benefit from the influence of taller vegetation visible as a backdrop to built form.

These key areas of vegetation and specimen trees are highlighted on the following plans along with the ranked street scenes. It is thought that those which are not already afforded some protection be formally assessed and if found of sufficient quality be protected.

The following section will look to combine this assessment with an analysis of publicly owned land that may be able to accommodate additional tree planting and improve the influence of vegetation on local street scenes.

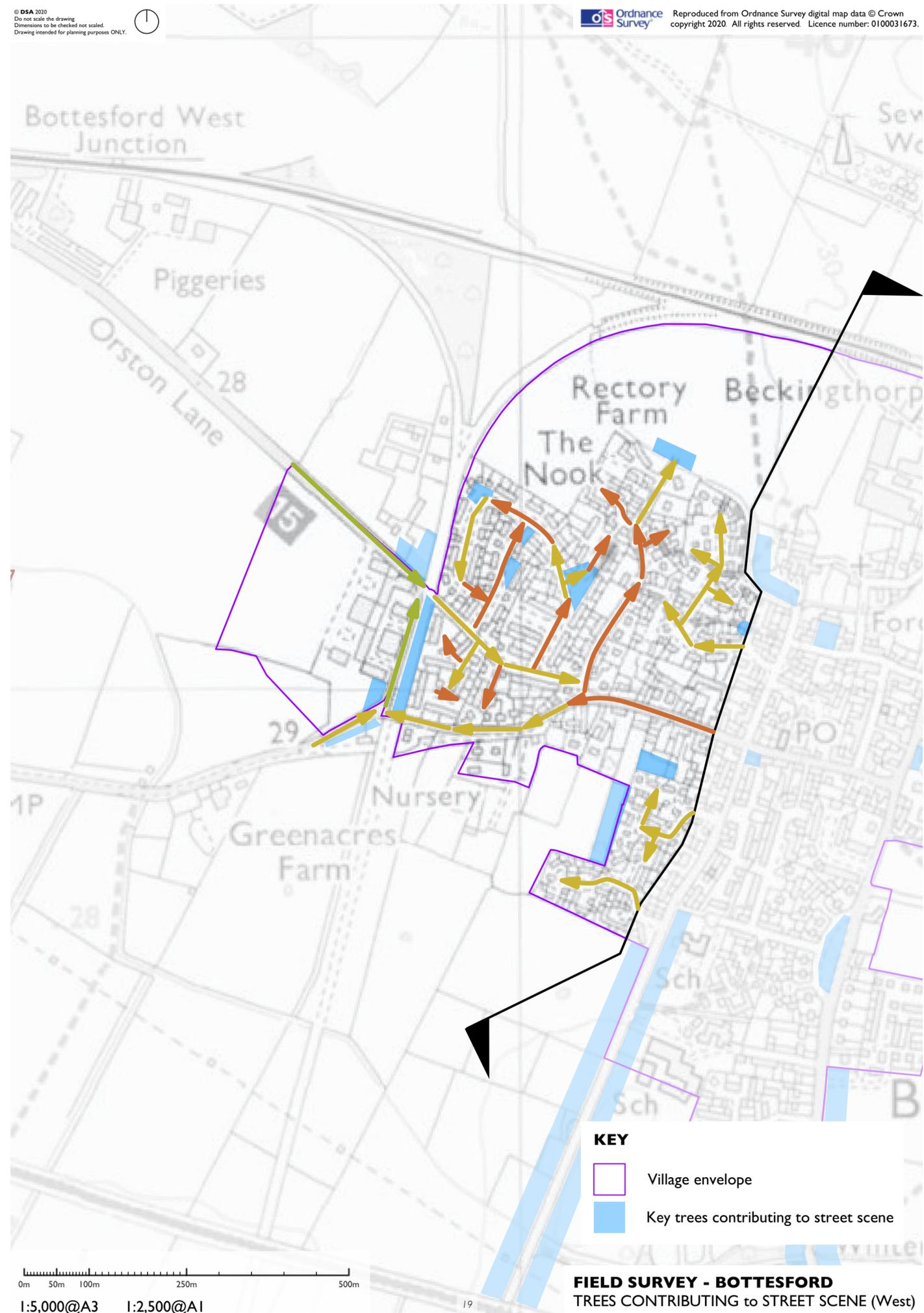
- COLOUR CODING KEY:**
- 1  These views contain no green components associated with a garden suburb and in some cases contain detracting features like security fencing.
 - 2  Views contain some green components, but ones that are not characteristic of a garden suburb.
 - 3  Views contain a single component characteristic of garden suburbs, such as street trees or hedges.
 - 4  Views have a combination of components characteristic of garden suburbs, but with evidence of loss of components, such as garden walls or hedges.
 - 5  Views contain an ideal combination of garden suburb components with little or no evidence of loss of components, such as garden walls or hedges.



Rutland Lane benefits from an area of open space along its northern side and wide grass verges. Large front gardens to properties push them further back allowing more space for trees and hedges.

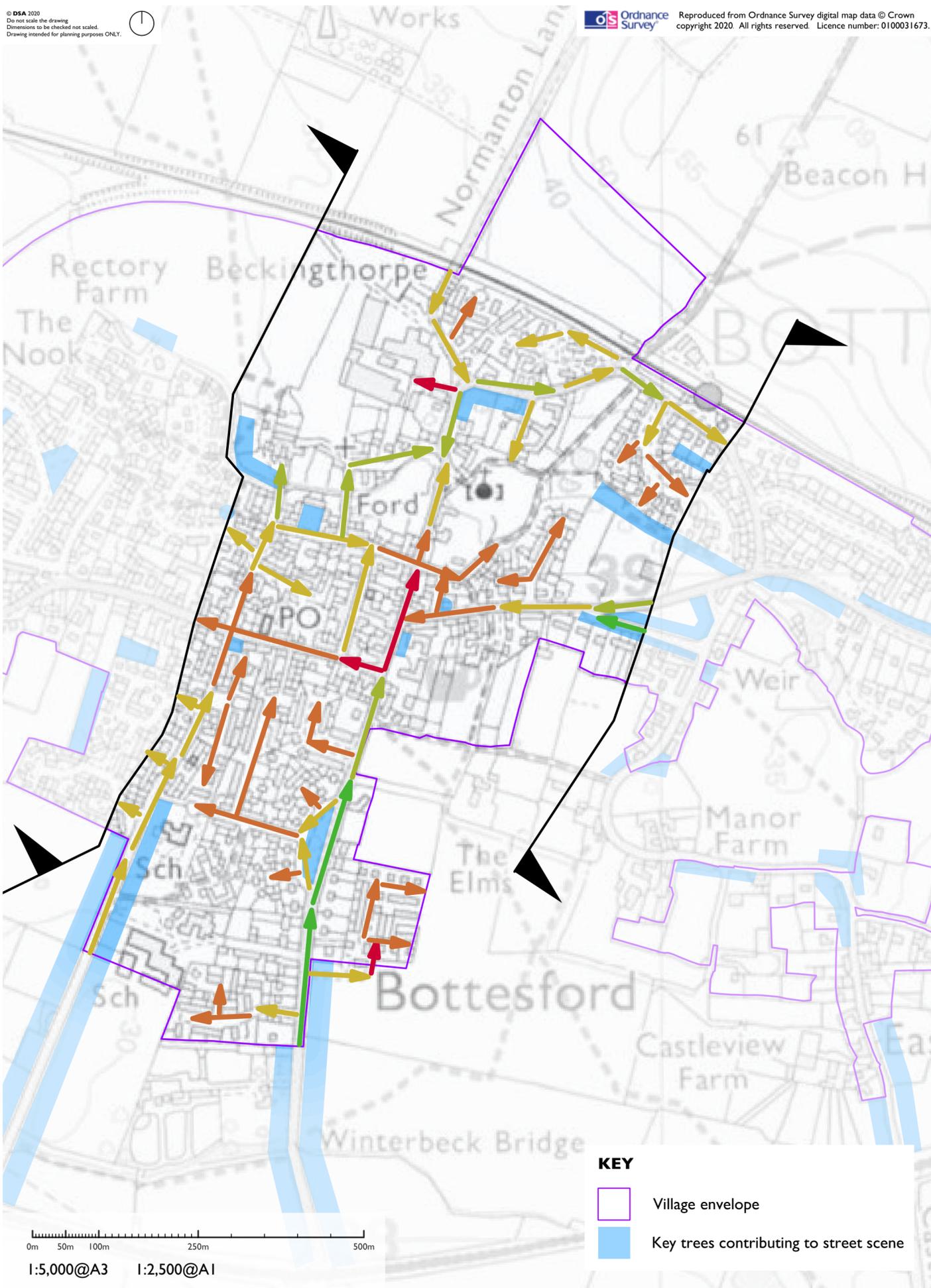


This area is central to Bottesford village with strong influence of thin streets, bringing buildings closer together. This allows little room for vegetation to influence the street scene.



KEY

-  Village envelope
-  Key trees contributing to street scene



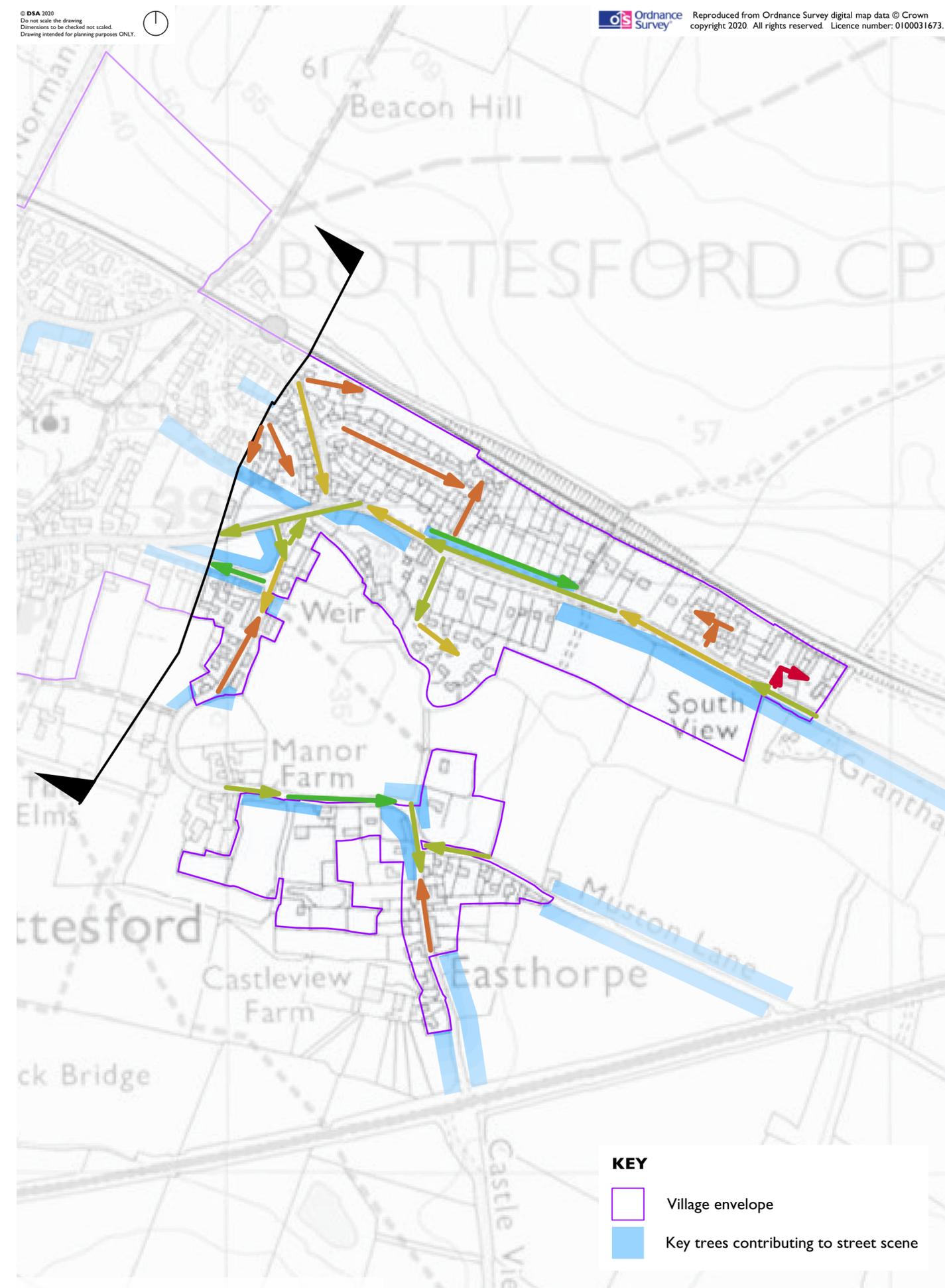
KEY

- Village envelope
- Key trees contributing to street scene



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FIELD SURVEY - BOTTESFORD
TREES CONTRIBUTING to STREET SCENE (Central)



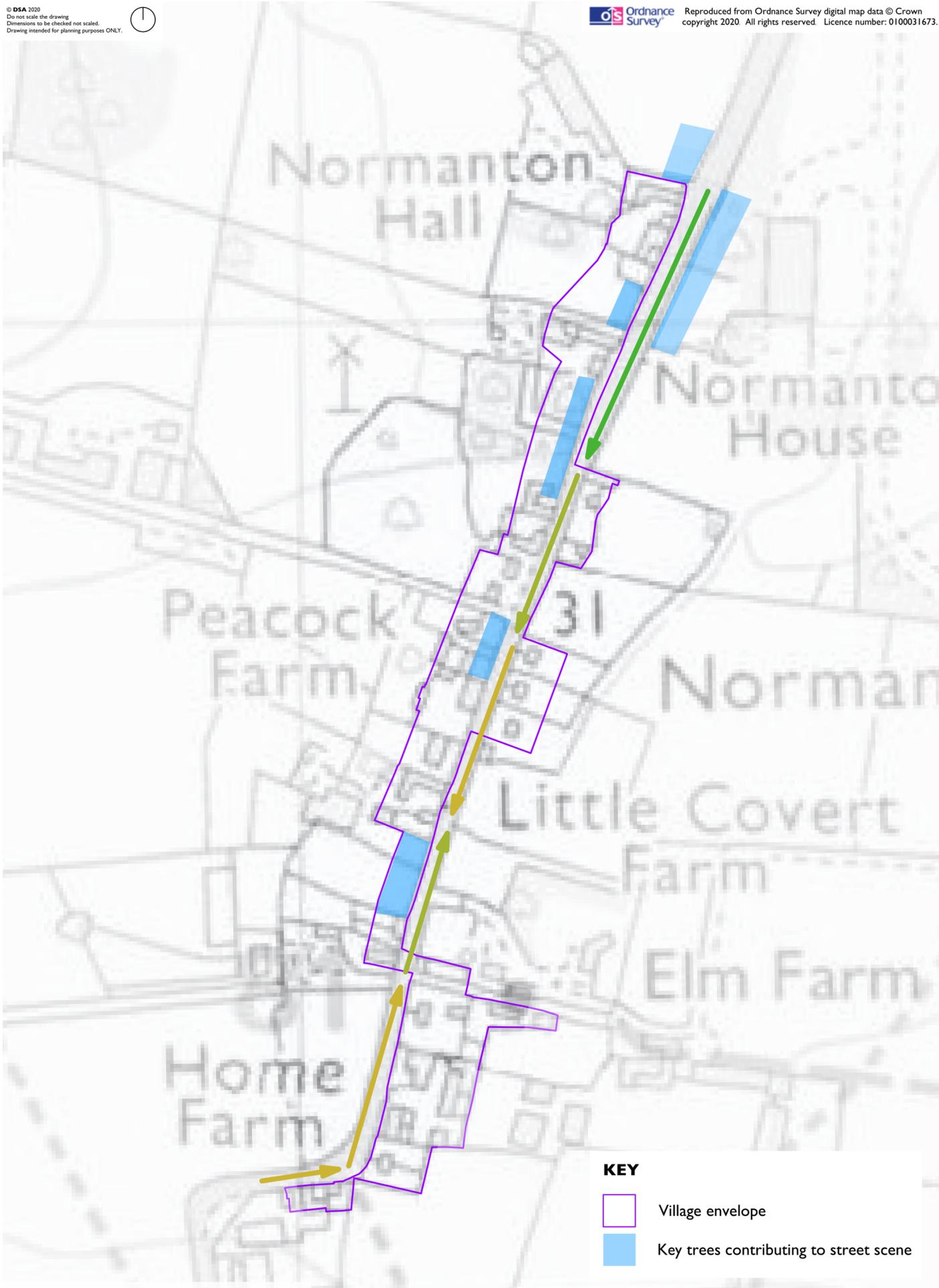
KEY

- Village envelope
- Key trees contributing to street scene



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FIELD SURVEY - BOTTESFORD
TREES CONTRIBUTING to STREET SCENE (East)



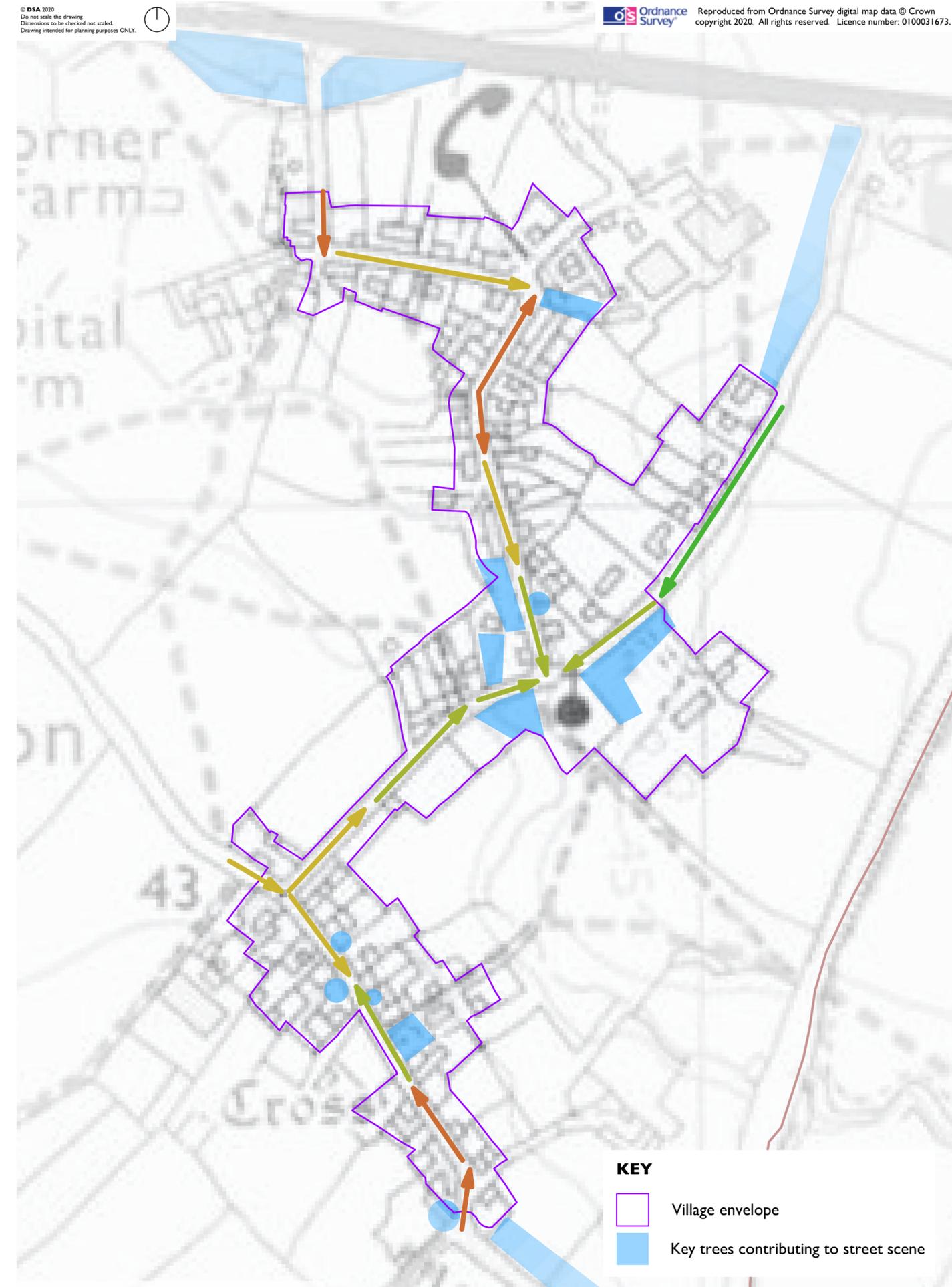
KEY

- Village envelope
- Key trees contributing to street scene



1:2,500@A3 1:1,250@A1

FIELD SURVEY - NORMATON
TREES CONTRIBUTING to STREET SCENE



KEY

- Village envelope
- Key trees contributing to street scene



1:2,500@A3 1:1,250@A1

FIELD SURVEY - MUSTON
TREES CONTRIBUTING to STREET SCENE

3 LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES: BOTTESFORD PARISH AS A WHOLE

Around Bottesford Parish the majority of landuse is agricultural and lies outside of each village envelope (as can be seen in the image on pages 16 and 17). Therefore the opportunities for trees generally revolve around the protection of existing areas - especially those that add to the secluded character of Bottesford.

- COLOUR CODING KEY:**
- P** Protect - Existing trees and spaces have positive influence locally and should be protected from loss.
 - E** Enhance - Existing trees and spaces, on publicly owned land, can be enhanced through additional planting.
 - C** Create - Trees can be planted in areas where little or no trees exist, or to accompany new development.

SPACES WITHIN SETTLEMENTS

The spaces within the settlements themselves are much more complex than the spaces around the parish as a whole. Physical space for trees and vegetation becomes much more restricted, especially around the historic cores of each settlement. These areas are generally, unsurprisingly, where the influence of existing trees is lowest. However as space is restricted there is little scope for increasing this limited influence.

Instead the identification of opportunities has been focussed around spaces owned and/ or maintained by the local authorities (it should be noted however that records are currently being updated at the local planning authorities so accuracy of areas owned should be checked before actual works considered) and those allocated for future development.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE VEGETATION

PROTECTING EXISTING TREES

A large amount of the existing trees in and around Bottesford are not subject to any formal protection, but offer ecological and environmental benefits locally.

large and mature. There are very few smaller sized, juvenile trees, except around new development, such as at 'The Wickets'.

Further developing this analysis, individual trees should be identified and catalogued (in part by community representatives) then protected. An audit would assist in the more direct protection of street trees (all or most of which are in Melton Borough Council ownership) at the local level. A number of online resources exist (such as 'Treezilla' www.treezilla.org) that encourage 'Citizen Science' activities to map and record the locations, species and health of trees globally. In places (to be identified as part of an ongoing programme) trees may be either replaced or new trees planted. The latter could occur in tandem with funding from planning gain.

A relatively simple intervention to improve the longevity of the vegetation locally is to identify areas where the age of planting can be diversified. This could be through simply planting new trees, or as part of the detailed audit identified previously, where over mature specimens can be removed and replaced with new stock.

Differences in planting on streets, especially tree planting, could have a very strong overall effect on street character, as could the use of native forest sized species, potentially with taller-growing 'exotics' in the larger green spaces, such as along Keel Drive.

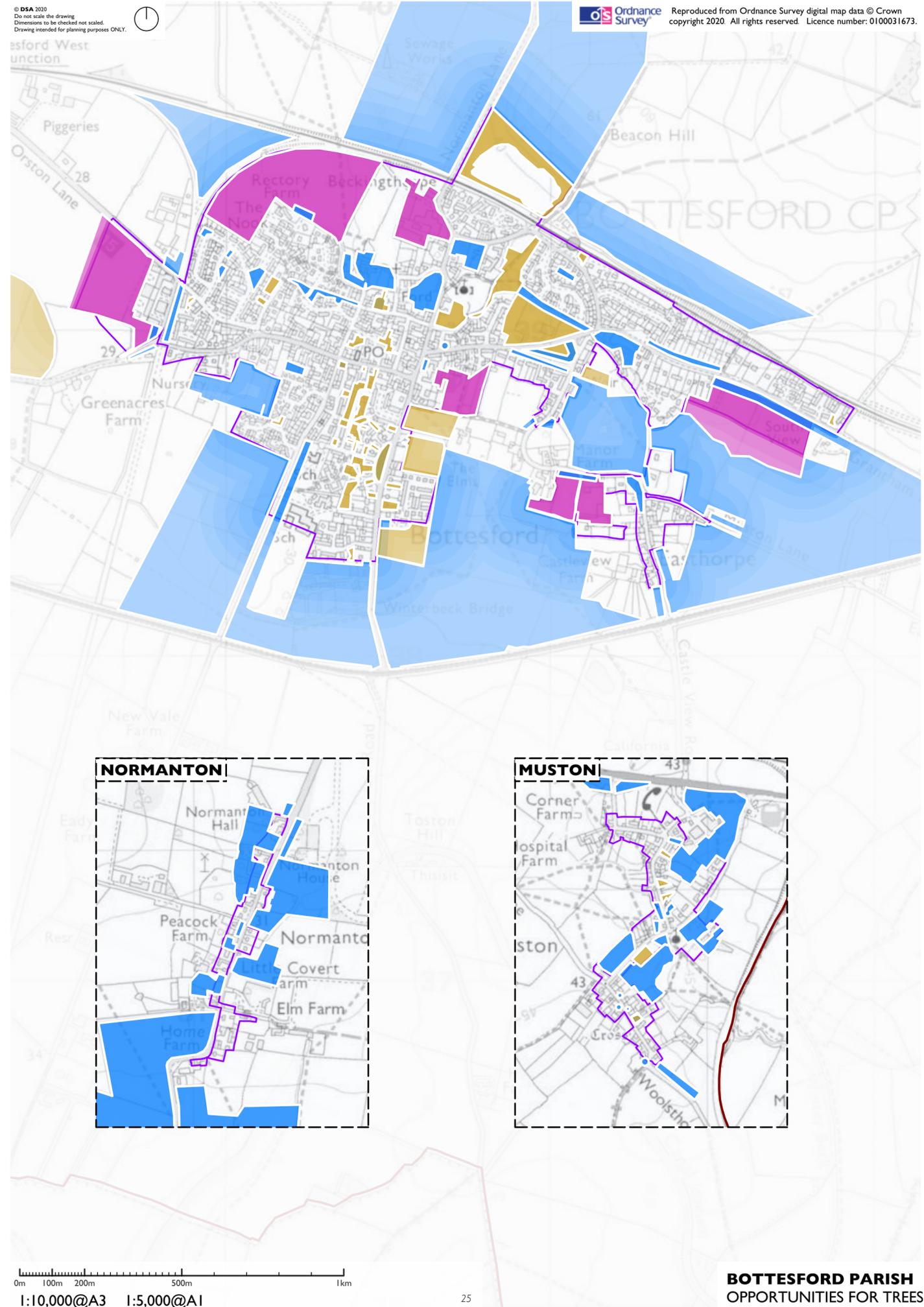
The physical selection and planting of trees could be undertaken with the local community. Organisations such as the Woodland Trust regularly supply local communities with trees for woodland creation and tree planting activities.

CREATING NEW WOODLAND

As part of any new developments, and in accordance with the recently published design guides for Bottesford, areas of trees and woodland should be created to enhance the existing wooded character of Bottesford and surrounding settlements. Most of the allocated development sites are on the edges of existing settlements, allowing the potential for ecological connections to the wider countryside, creating multiple benefits.

ENHANCING EXISTING TREES

A large majority of the tree stock in and around Bottesford is



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