

Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011



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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2006 Melton Borough Council (MBC) commissioned ADAS to carry out a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of Melton Borough as part of its work on the Melton Local Development Framework (LDF). Since then further development has occurred around the urban fringe of Melton Mowbray, which may have had an effect on the character of the landscape. As a result, MBC considered it important that the original LCA (2006) was reviewed and checked to ensure that any changes in the landscape that have had a material effect on the character and the potential sensitivity of the landscape, are accommodated in future plans for the area. ADAS was asked to carry out this review and update in February 2011.

Following an initial review of the original LCA, it was agreed that the first four chapters did not need any further updates as these chapters concentrate on background information that is unlikely to change in the short to medium term. Similarly, Section B – Historic Urban Character Assessment Report stands alone as an important record of the cultural heritage which at present does not require further updates. If further significant historical records come to light in future years then this Section should be reviewed at that time.

The landscape descriptions in Chapter 4 are fairly general and are flexible enough to accept relatively small changes in the landscape. Most of the descriptions cover the wider countryside of Melton Borough where less change has occurred in the intervening years when compared with the urban fringe around Melton. However, a review of LCA 20 – Melton Farmland Fringe was carried out to ensure that it was fully representative of the existing landscape in that area.

The main chapter that required updating was Chapter 5 – Landscape Sensitivity Around Melton Mowbray and time and effort was focused on this section to ensure that it was still fit for purpose. The work involved a site visit to the fringe areas around Melton Mowbray, followed by the production of this stand alone report updating Chapters 4 and 5 of the Melton LCA.

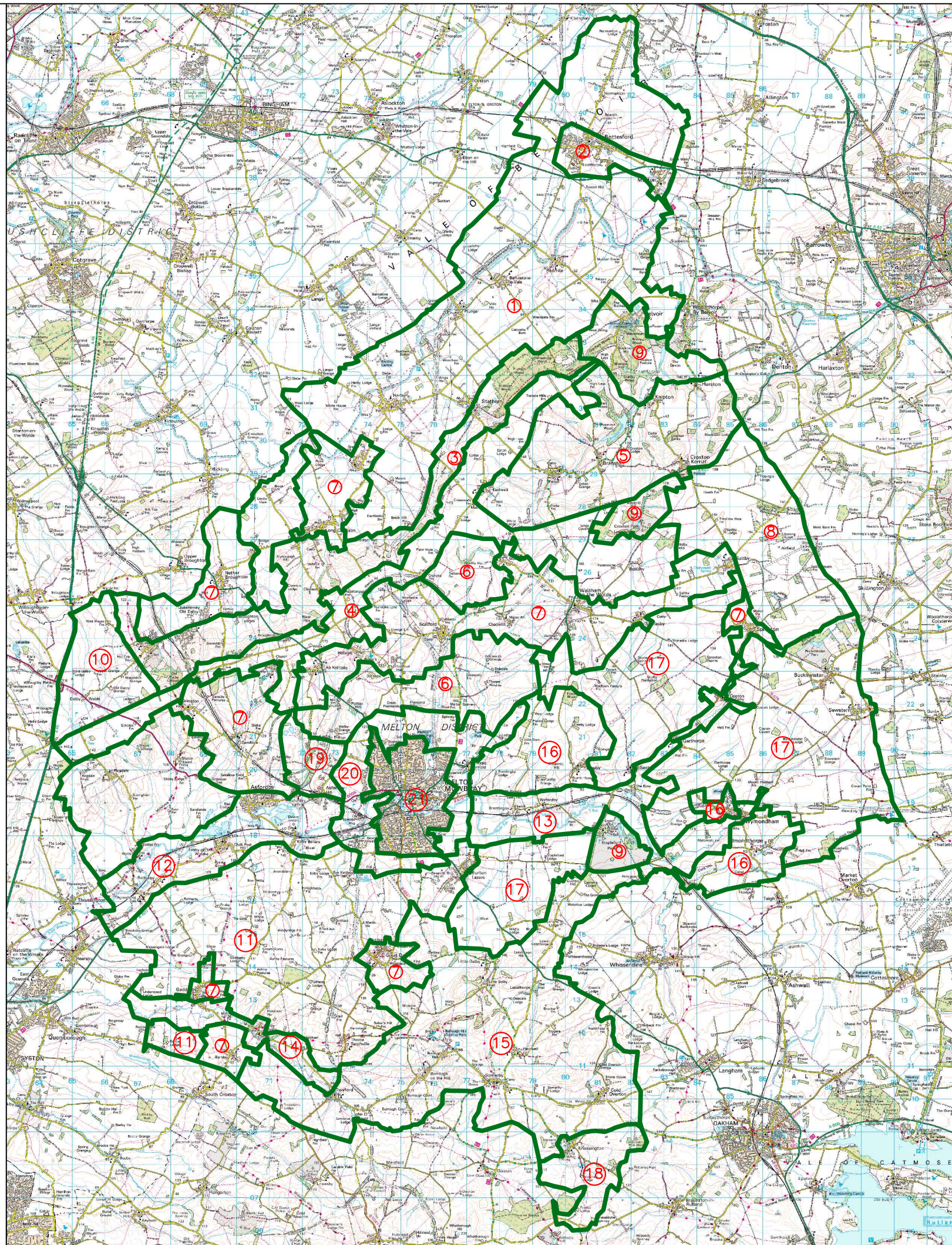
2. MELTON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (2006 LCA)

The objective of the original 2006 study was to inform the policies and proposals of the new Development Framework and in particular the allocation of development sites for a range of uses. Whilst the LCA covered the whole of the Borough, a more detailed assessment was carried out on eleven areas around Melton Mowbray. These areas offered the potential for new development adjoining the town as identified in the adopted Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (March 2005). The Structure Plan identified a need to allocate about 30 hectares of greenfield land for new housing and 30 hectares for business uses in the Melton LDF and accommodate a bypass around part of the town.

The scale of development has the potential to have a significant impact on the setting of Melton Mowbray and the quality of the local landscape. Therefore the study specifically considered the landscape around the town of Melton Mowbray to explore its potential to accommodate the development requirements of the new Framework. The 2006 study focused on the provision of a description of landscape character that would form the background to the preparation of policies and proposals in the new Framework and most importantly, robust decision making within the development control process.

When the 2006 assessment was carried out, potential development around Melton Mowbray had not been specified and therefore it was not possible to conduct an evaluation of landscape sensitivity to a specific type of change nor a landscape capacity study. For the 2006 assessment, an evaluation of landscape sensitivity was undertaken with the aim that at a later date the Council (through consultation and discussions with stakeholders) could place values on the identified landscape areas (or on specific elements within it) and assess the areas against particular type of change or development in order to identify the landscape capacity. In order to maintain consistency, this review and update will keep to the original methodology and approach.

**MAP OF MELTON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS – LCA MAP 3
(2006)**



ID	NAME
1	Vale of Belvoir
2	Bottesford
3	Wolds Scarp
4	Wolds Top
5	Knpton Bowl
6	Ridge and Valley
7	Village Pastures
8	Limestone Edge
9	Parkland
10	Mixed Farmland
11	Pastoral Farmland
12	Wreake Valley
13	Eye Valley
14	Gaddesby Valley
15	High Leicestershire Hills
16	Farmland Patchwork
17	Open Arable
18	Traditional Pasture
19	Asfordby Quarry
20	Melton Farmland Fringe
21	Melton

Job Title

**MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
MELTON LANDSCAPE
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

Drawing Title 2006 Map of Melton
Landscape Character Areas

Drawing No MBC01/BC/EGG/L/LCA01

Scale: Not to Scale

Drawn by:		Checked by:			
DW	23/03	KR	23/03		

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2.1. 2006 LCA - Melton Farmland Fringes (LCA 20)

The LCA of Melton Borough resulted in the definition and mapping of twenty Landscape Character Areas within the Borough. The assessment sought to refine the regional and county level Assessments and whilst some character areas and descriptions remained the same, some new areas were created in order to characterise the local landscape. Character Area [LCA 20 Melton Farmland Fringes] envelopes the town and is likely to be the one character most under pressure as the town develops over time. Therefore in the context of this update, LCA 20 is reviewed to see if it requires any changes.

Character Area LCA 20 covers the areas surrounding Melton Mowbray which have a distinctly urban fringe character, including the eleven zones identified for further evaluation. The original description of LCA20 is as follows.

2.1.1. Landscape Character Description

A mixed urban fringe ridge and valley and valley floor landscape, mostly pastoral farmland, MOD and recreational land.



2.1.2. Distinct Characteristics

- *Rolling landscape of fields and hedges*
- *Mixed pasture and arable land*
- *Clear distinction between urban edge and countryside*
- *Housing estates remain unscreened*
- *Some industrial and other land uses (e.g. MOD)*

2.2. Brief Review of LCA 20

Following a survey in the field and a review of the character description, it has been found that LCA 20 Melton Farmland Fringes remains a valid description and is still current. Minor changes within the character area should be adequately covered by the descriptions which cover a mix of countryside and urban fringe landscape.

The next consideration is the degree to which the setting of Melton Mowbray and the sensitivity of the landscape around the town has been affected by any recent development, which is covered in Section 3.

3. REVIEW OF CHAPTER 5 - LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AROUND MELTON MOWBRAY (2006 LCA)

In order to provide a useful update to the original 2006 Character Assessment, the original methodology for the evaluation of the landscape needs to remain the same in order to maintain consistency. The approach to the evaluation which was used in the original 2006 study and which has been used for the 2011 revision, is described below.

3.1. Approach to Evaluation

The evaluation of landscape sensitivity is set out in the Countryside Agency's Topic Paper 6 – *Techniques and Criteria for Judging Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity*. The Topic Paper defines landscape character sensitivity as follows:

“Evaluating the sensitivity of the landscape as a whole, in terms of its overall character, its quality and condition, the aesthetic aspects of its character, and also the sensitivity of individual elements contributing to the landscape”

For the areas (or zones) around Melton, decisions were taken on:

- The degree to which the landscape in question was considered robust, in that it might be able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character.
- Whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss through disturbance.
- Whether or not the significant characteristic elements could easily be restored. Whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change. Consideration was also given to the addition of new elements, which may also have a significant influence on character.

Relevant information was drawn from the Historic Urban Character Assessment to identify:

- Whether or not direct destruction or damage to cultural heritage might occur.
- Whether or not indirect effects to cultural heritage or setting might occur.

The sensitivity matrix [**See Table 1: Landscape & Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Matrix (2006) on page 14**] was put together in an attempt to rank the urban fringe areas around Melton Mowbray in terms of sensitivity. Following identification of significant agents of change for landscape and cultural heritage, each of the areas were scored on the basis of likely ability to absorb change (1=Negative 2=Neutral 3=Positive). These scores were added up and ranked from High Sensitivity (lowest score) to Low Sensitivity (highest score). The range of scores provides a useful framework for comparing adjacent areas and offering an indicator of sensitivity. **Sensitivity Map - LCA Map 4 (2006)** provides a visual presentation of Less Sensitive Areas combined with key areas of cultural heritage sensitivity (areas of archaeological potential, historic setting, standing/ designated features and areas).

3.2. 2006 LCA – The Setting of the Town

The town of Melton Mowbray is nucleated and compact with well defined residential areas of the northern and southern edges. The eastern and western edges are less well defined with industrial areas on the Wreake and Eye Valley floodplains. On the eastern side a large factory with light coloured roof and walls is prominent and poorly related to the townscape and landscape. On the western side the mixture of industrial, commercial, and retail buildings in proximity to the road and rail corridors and river floodplain is visually confusing and poorly related to the townscape and landscape.

The topography of Melton Mowbray is essentially one of gentle sloping ridge and valley, with two halves of the town situated on rising land north and south of the river valley. The Scalford Brook forms a secondary valley through the northern part of the town, an important green wedge that has been conserved as the Country Park. The urban fringes to the north of the town rise to over 130 metres whilst those to the south are slightly lower at 112 metres. A shallow valley forms the western fringe of the town, and this is partly farmed and partly used by the MoD for dog training. This valley also separates the town from the large excavated area of the former Asfordby Colliery. Two nucleated villages of Thorpe Arnold and Burton Lazars are located close to the east and south eastern fringes of the town, with a narrow strip of farmland in between.

3.3. 2006 LCA – Landscape Sensitivity of Zones A-K around Melton Mowbray

[Refer to Table 1 Landscape & Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Matrix (2006) and LCA Map 4 Sensitivity Map (2006)]

The following text in italics has been extracted straight from the 2006 LCA without modification and can be used as a reference point when reading the review in this report.

Sensitivity of Zones A, B, C

“These Zones have the highest quality landscape surrounding the town. This is an area of farmland, arable and pasture, mostly on the open higher ground to the north of Melton Mowbray and is a coherent well managed rural landscape with few visual detractors. Landform is ridge and valley and landcover is mostly traditional pastoral farmland with a strong pattern of small to medium scale fields enclosed by hedgerows and scattered mature trees. The ridgelines have high visibility, and the townscape/ landscape interface is well defined.

Zone A has a high historic value with features such as ridge and furrow and former settlement sites. The area around Sysonby Lodge is particularly sensitive having both designated historic features and an interesting setting. This area also includes some open space areas protected by the Protected Open Area designation.

Melton Country park is situated between Zones B and C and forms an important green wedge into the town. The park affords extensive views over the surrounding landscape. A footpath to Holwell and the Mowbray Way (which both run north south) add to the amenity value of the areas. Zone B has two areas (in the north and south of the zone) of archaeological potential.

*If development were to take place in Zones A, B, C, particularly in the higher northern part of the zone, it would significantly increase the visibility of the town from the surrounding area. At present, built development is confined to the lower slopes leaving open countryside to the north. The landscape character sensitivity of Zones A is considered to be **High** and the Zones B and C to be **High/ Medium**.”*

Sensitivity of Zone D

“Zone D forms an arc of farmland around the eastern edge of Melton Mowbray between the railway line and the A607, Thorpe Road. It is bisected by Saxby Road, the B676. The area to the south of Saxby Road is on the floodplain of the River Wreake/Eye and low-lying. Across Saxby Road the ground crosses the slopes of the ridge on the crest of which lies the village of Thorpe Arnold, dropping down towards Thorpe Road, where there is a stream and playing fields. Within the arc of Zone D is the Hudson Road Industrial Estate and a Tesco store. This Zone covers two distinct landscape character areas, ridge and valley in the north, and the Eye valley in the south.

The northern area has small traditional pastures and a strong network of hedges and trees, high visibility from residential areas and a public footpath, a riverside area with wildlife interest and close proximity to an important historic site and the village settlement. The medieval village of Thorpe Arnold sits in a prominent position and with its well preserved earthworks is considered to have a sensitive setting.

The southern area includes the eastern edge of Melton Mowbray and this is very visible. It is also dominated by large-scale industrial buildings that fail to relate to the more intimate rural landscape beyond the urban fringe. New development within this industrial area might provide an opportunity for improving the urban edge, creating a stronger sense of identity, and a better relationship between townscape and landscape.

*There would be some impact on the visibility of the town from the surrounding area from development in Zone D. The most significant impact would be on Thorpe Arnold, which is at present a distinct historic settlement and is at risk of becoming an extension of Melton Mowbray. The setting of the earthworks on the West Side of the village would also be compromised. Landscape sensitivity of Zone D is considered to be **High/ Medium**.”*

Sensitivity of Zone E

“The landscape character of the eastern side of the town at Zone E is open and has few features of great significance. Here the edge of the town is well defined and the townscape/ landscape interface is abrupt. The land is productive agricultural land, which provides a buffer against the potential coalescence with the nearby settlement of Burton Lazars on the higher land in the southern part of the Zone. Overhead power lines and a public footpath cross the area. The lower lying northern part of the zone is more robust and amenable to change. The southern boundary of the area is the line of a former Roman road and has archaeological potential. The setting of the historic position of the village of Burton Lazars is sensitive.

*If development were to take place in Zone E, particularly in the upper parts, it would moderately increase the visibility of the town from the surrounding area. The river valley makes the existing town edge more visible from the east, particularly from the hilltop villages of Thorpe Arnold and Burton Lazars. Landscape sensitivity of Zone E is considered to be **Medium**.*

Sensitivity of Zones F and G

“The landscape of these two Zones is open, predominantly arable farmland with gentle ridges alternating with hollows. This area is bounded on the north side by the line of the former Roman road and extends from Dalby Road in the west to Burton Road in the east, crossing Sandy Lane. It is agricultural land, mainly in arable cultivation. In the area to the west of Sandy Lane the ground rises towards the southwest, but the eastern part is more level. The southern edge of Melton town stops abruptly along the line of the Roman road and there is very little screening. The area is dominated by residential development and this intrudes on the rural landscape.

There is potential for coalescence of Melton Mowbray with the settlement of Burton Lazars at the eastern end of Zone F, which is on the higher more visible land and ridgeline. The land in-between is productive farmland with springs, ponds and watercourses. Zone F has a number of cultural heritage constraints - the setting of Burton Lazars, the setting of the medieval leper hospital (Scheduled Monument) and the Roman Road.

*Zone G is less sensitive away from the Roman Road and the area of archaeological potential along the Dalby Road and west of Aerodrome Farm. The landscape to the west of the ridgeline at Old Guadeloupe in Zone G is of stronger character than elsewhere within the Zone, and provides a softer edge to the town. The landform contains concave dips creating natural screening opportunities. The landscape sensitivity of Zone F is considered to be **High/Medium** and Zone G is considered to be **Medium**.*

Sensitivity of Zone H

“This area lies either side of Leicester Road (A607), which is a major route into the town of Melton Mowbray. The Zone is bounded on the north side by the railway line and the Roman Road (Kirby Lane) in the south. The northern part of Zone H is fairly flat and open, but in the southwest it slopes upwards towards Kirby Lane, which is lined by vegetation. The developments to the north east are partly screened by the topography and artificial bunding has been used to screen some parts of the site adjoining the Lane. Much of the area has already been developed for business and industrial estates, the remainder for arable farming.

The ridge and valley landscape continues in Zone H, where there are contrasting areas of housing, farmland, industry and more farmland. Industrial buildings, which are large in scale are located within the valley area and are partly screened by natural and artificial landform. In the western part of the Zone, south of Leicester Road, there is a prominent west facing farmland slope providing an effective green edge to the town.

*There is an area of rough grassland on the north side of the Leicester Road, which is a Scheduled Monument containing earthworks and buried features from the medieval settlement of Eye Kettleby. The monument, its setting and an area of archaeological potential alongside the railway line make the north western part of Zone H sensitive. However, the overall landscape sensitivity of Zone H is considered to be **Medium**.*

Sensitivity of Zone I

“This area is located between the railway line to Leicester to the south and the A606, Asfordby Road to the north and is divided by the River Wreake. The south bank of the river contains fields. A disused railway bisects the Zone and is marked by trees for much of its length. The landscape character of the river valley and floodplain has been significantly modified and altered by a variety of built development, as well as by road and railway infrastructure. This is a mixed use landscape without a clear townscape/ landscape interface. Egerton Park, nearby golf course and the open spaces that remain along the river valley provide an important green wedge to the town and a valuable local amenity for the town. The addition of well-designed new development could bring a greater unity of character and sense of identity.

*The area contains the remains of the former village of Sysonby, particularly the church, farm and earthworks from a moated site next to the river. The listed buildings, scheduled monuments and historic features have an important setting that could be compromised by further development. The land in the western part of the zone rises fairly steeply to the northwest and the low-lying area would be fairly visible from Asfordby Hill, although this is itself a modern development. Landscape sensitivity of Zone I is considered to be **High/Medium**.*

Sensitivity of Zone J

“This area occupies a block of land between the A6006 to the south, Welby Road to the east and Welby Lane to the north, with a stream running north south through the centre. This is the lowest part of the area and the ground rises on either side, more steeply towards the east. The eastern part of Area J is MoD land, containing the Remount Depot and associated pasture and training grounds. Along Welby Road in the west are some arable fields. This Zone is a gentle sloping rural valley lying between the west of Melton Mowbray and the former Asfordby Colliery site. The valley is visually contained and thick screening obscures the colliery site to the west. The Welby Road runs along the crest of a ridge with the area to its east dropping away.

*Zone J can be seen from Asfordby Hill, to its southwest, but this is itself a modern development. The urban edge is partially fragmented and encroaches into the surrounding fields. The impact of development within Zone J on the surrounding area would be limited. Landscape sensitivity of Zone J is considered to be **Low**.”*

Sensitivity of Zone K

“This area is bounded by Welby Lane in the south, Welby Road to the west and Nottingham Road to the north. The east-west road, St Bartholomew’s Way, divides it in two and a stream runs through from north to south. This stream represents the lowest point with the ground sloping upwards on either side. In the southwest corner of Zone K is a Depot and the Animal Defence Centre. From midway along St Bartholomew’s Way, Horseguards Way runs into new housing east of the area. The remainder of the southern part of Zone K is farmland.

*The landscape character of this Zone is the northwards extension of the gently sloping valley in Zone J, and the southern part is also MoD land, with a strong pattern of pastoral fields enclosed by hedges. The roads are bounded by hedges creating a rural character. The urban edge is well defined and partially screened and the southern part of the Zone is less sensitive. In the northern part of the Zone lies a well defined earthwork, the remains of Sysonby Grange which is a medieval monastic farm. The earthwork is a Scheduled Monument and together with its setting and the surrounding area of archaeological potential it makes the northern area sensitive in cultural heritage terms. The Landscape sensitivity of Zone K is considered to be **High/ Medium**.”*

2006 LCA - Recommendation

“The general recommendation based on an evaluation of landscape sensitivity of Zones A-K around Melton Mowbray is that,

- *Zones A, B, C, D, F, I and K are considered to be sensitive landscapes that would not be suitable for most new development. Any proposed development would need to be very sensitively designed and demonstrate a high regard for the local landscape and historical character of the area.*
- *Zones E, G & H are considered to have landscapes that are moderately sensitive to development but possess areas that could accommodate appropriately designed development.*
- *Zone J is considered to have a landscape character that has low sensitivity and could accommodate appropriately designed development.*

The new Landscape Character Areas should replace the local landscape designation ‘Areas of Particularly Attractive Countryside’ as suggested in Government Planning Policy Statement 7.”

2006 LCA - TABLE 1 LANDSCAPE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE SENSITIVITY MATRIX – ZONES A-K AROUND MELTON MOWBRAY

	<i>Landscape</i>				<i>Cultural Heritage</i>		
ZONES	<i>Loss through disturbance</i>	<i>Ability to be restored</i>	<i>Aesthetic change</i>	<i>Addition of new elements</i>	<i>Direct destruction or damage</i>	<i>Setting and indirect effects</i>	<i>High/Medium/Low Sensitivity</i>
<i>A</i>	1	1	1	2	1	1	7 High
<i>B</i>	1	1	1	1	2	3	9 High/Medium
<i>C</i>	1	1	1	1	3	3	10 High/Medium
<i>D</i>	1	2	2	2	3	1	11 High/ Medium
<i>E</i>	2	3	2	2	3	1	13 Medium/ Low
<i>F</i>	2	2	2	2	1	2	11 High/ Medium
<i>G</i>	2	2	2	2	2	3	13 Medium
<i>H</i>	2	3	3	3	1	1	13 Medium
<i>I</i>	2	2	3	2	1	1	11 High/ Medium
<i>J</i>	2	2	3	3	3	3	16 Low
<i>K</i>	2	2	2	2	1	1	10 High/Medium

Landscape Criteria

- 1 = *High likelihood of loss/ Very poor ability to be restored/ Negative aesthetic change/ Negative impact of new elements*
- 2 = *Medium likelihood of loss/ Poor ability to be restored/ Neutral aesthetic change/ Moderate negative impact of new elements*
- 3 = *Low likelihood of loss/ Ability to be restored/ Positive aesthetic change/ Low negative impact of new elements*

Cultural Heritage Criteria – Direct destruction/ damage to cultural heritage

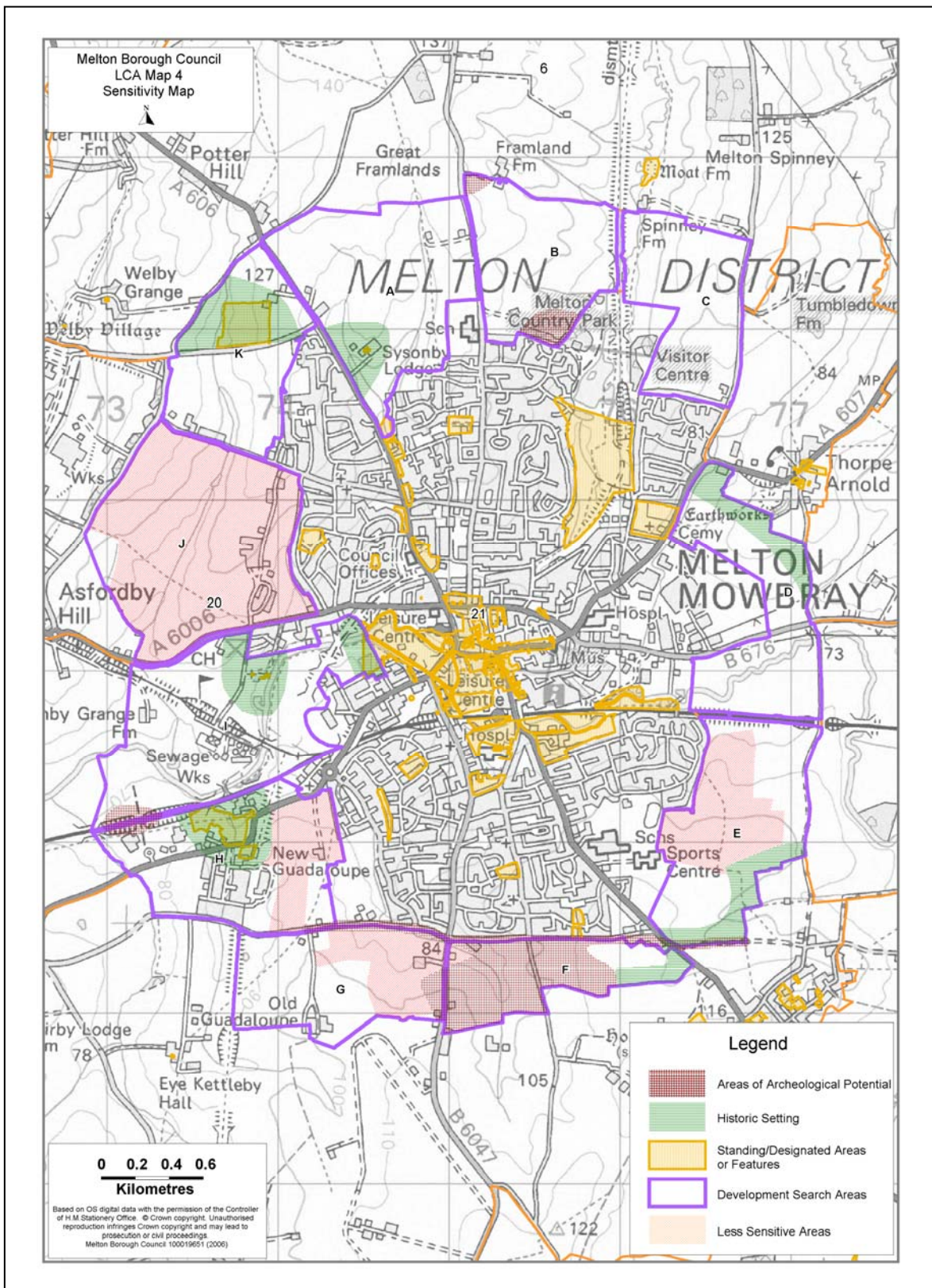
- 1 = *Likely severe impact on above ground features*
- 2 = *Impact on known below-ground archaeological potential*
- 3 = *Negative known impact*

Cultural Heritage Criteria – Indirect Effects

- 1 = *Significant negative aesthetic or contextual impact*
- 2 = *Some reduction in quality of setting*
- 3 = *Neutral effect on setting*

Score

7 = High	9 = High/ Medium	11 = Medium	13 = Medium/ Low	15 = Low
8	10	12	14	16



SENSITIVITY MAP – LCA MAP 4 (2006)

3.4. Review of Chapter 5

3.4.1. Corrections to Table 1

The 2006 Landscape Character Assessment contained a few errors in Table 1 where the words describing the overall sensitivity of a zone did not properly match the score. This review took the opportunity to make these corrections in order to maintain clarity and utility in subsequent reports. In the Key accompanying Table 1, text describing the level of overall sensitivity of a zone was matched to two scores e.g.

11 = *Medium*

12

The identified errors and corrections are:

- For Zone D the score was 11 and therefore the Overall Sensitivity should have been Medium (not High/ Medium).
- For Zone F the score was 11 and therefore the Overall Sensitivity should have been Medium (not High/ Medium).
- For Zone G the score was 13 and therefore the Overall Sensitivity should have been Medium/ Low (not Medium).
- For Zone H the score was 13 and therefore the Overall Sensitivity should have been Medium/ Low (not Medium).
- For Zone I the score was 11 and therefore the Overall Sensitivity should have been Medium (not High/ Medium).

Table 1 was corrected as part of the 2011 review, prior to any changes being identified during the field survey. A few alterations were also made to the structure of the table in order to improve its clarity – the last column now has a title of Overall Sensitivity to make it clear that it is the total score and not part of the Cultural Heritage assessment [see Revised Table 1 on page 27].

3.4.2. Field Survey Results

A field survey was carried out on 11th February 2011 to specifically consider significant changes in the landscape that have occurred within the Zones around Melton Mowbray since the 2006 Character Assessment. Each zone (starting with Zone A) was taken in turn and observations in the field were made, noting significant changes such as new development and its impact on the surrounding landscape character. The field survey also looked again at the 2006 landscape scores and sought to revise these if the scores did not closely match observations.

Only two zones have been notably affected by new development and these are Zones A and D.

Zone A – For the majority of the zone, little has changed since 2006, however the John Ferneley School has had new buildings constructed within the school grounds. The main building is significantly larger than the previous building and is more prominent, being contemporary in design, rendered white and with an adjacent wind turbine. All of the new building is visible in views to the south east from the northern part of the zone.

The buildings are set against a backdrop of Melton, in particular the large factory buildings and their prominent roofs in Zone D, the housing estates south of Zones A and B and the housing estates in the far distance across the valley in Zone E, which has the effect of setting the school buildings within the urban context. However, few people will actually see the buildings from the north as there are few receptors and accessible viewpoints. Other views, such as from the south and from the Scalford Road, are limited due to rising foreground, which partially screens the buildings reducing their apparent height.

As the new school buildings are located within the existing school grounds there has been no impact on the underlying landscape structure and the character of the agricultural fields, hedges and woods remains unaffected. Therefore the sensitivity of the landscape character of Zone A has not been diminished and remains High.

Zone D – Since 2006 there has been further construction of large industrial units on the Hudson Road Industrial Estate situated between the A607 and B676. Whilst within the urban context, they have very prominent walls and roofs that are visible from the surrounding countryside. As a result the lower lying ground within the valley is less sensitive to change. The score for ‘Addition of New Elements’ has been revised from 2 (moderate impact of new elements) to 3 (low negative impact of new elements). This results in a Medium sensitivity score for Zone D.

With regard to proposed changes to scores, Zones G and K had elements of the landscape which were found to no longer closely match observations.

Zone G – The majority of the zone has not been identified as having Areas of Archaeological Potential. The only areas are on the boundary of the zone and therefore the majority of the zone is left undesignated. As a result it is considered that the Cultural Heritage score for ‘Direct Destruction or Damage’ should be revised downwards from 2 (impact on known below-ground archaeological potential) to 3 (No known impact). With regard to landscape, the area is dominated by residential development that intrudes on the rural landscape, especially along the line of the Roman Road where there is very little screening. Whilst the landscape to the west of the ridgeline at Old Guadeloupe is of stronger character than elsewhere within the zone, the landform reveals a shallow valley that contains views and provides natural screening opportunities. As a result it is considered that this area is less sensitive to ‘Aesthetic Change’ and the score can be revised downwards from 2 (neutral aesthetic change) to 3 (positive aesthetic change) reflecting the potential opportunities to improve the town/ countryside transition. This results in a Low sensitivity score for Zone G.

Zone K – The southern part of the Zone south of the Welby Road (approximately two thirds of the area) is very similar in character to Zone J. It is a northern extension of the gently sloping valley in Zone J and is predominantly horse paddocks and the Animal Defence Centre on MoD land. As this area makes up the majority of the zone it is considered appropriate to revise the landscape scores ('Loss through Disturbance/ Ability to be Restored/ Aesthetic Change') downward resulting in a Medium/ Low sensitivity score. Scores for these three criteria have been revised down from 2 (Medium likelihood of loss/ poor ability to be restored/ neutral aesthetic change) to 3 (Low likelihood of loss/ ability to be restored/ positive aesthetic change). The final criteria 'Addition of New Elements' has been left unchanged as the northern section of the zone is in an 'Historic Setting' area and maybe affected by the introduction of new elements.

3.4.3. Requirement for Updating

These Zones therefore have altered descriptions, new total scores and possible new wording for Overall Sensitivity. The relevant new text descriptions have been inserted and highlighted in the following section [Section 4] and a revised Sensitivity Matrix [Revised LCA 2011 – Table 1 Landscape and Cultural Heritage Sensitivity Matrix – Zones A-K Around Melton Mowbray] and new map [Revised Sensitivity Map (2011)] have been produced.

4. THE MELTON BOROUGH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT – REVISED TEXT & MAP 2011

{The revised text has been highlighted in grey to help identification}

4.1. Zones A, B, C

These Zones have the highest quality landscape surrounding the town. This is an area of farmland, arable and pasture, mostly on the open higher ground to the north of Melton Mowbray and is a coherent well managed rural landscape with few visual detractors. Landform is ridge and valley and landcover is mostly traditional pastoral farmland with a strong pattern of small to medium scale fields enclosed by hedgerows and scattered mature trees. The ridgelines have high visibility, and the townscape/ landscape interface is well defined.

Zone A has a high historic value with features such as ridge and furrow and former settlement sites. The area around Sysonby Lodge is particularly sensitive having both designated historic features and an interesting setting. This area also includes some open space areas protected by the Protected Open Area designation. Although there are few detractors in the area, the new building at the John Ferneley School has increased the prominence of the built form within certain views. However, these views are predominantly from the north, an area with few receptors, and the building being sited on the existing site does not significantly alter the underlying landscape and visual character of the area.

Melton Country Park is situated between Zones B and C and forms an important green wedge into the town. The park affords extensive views over the surrounding landscape. A footpath to Holwell and the Mowbray Way (which both run north south) add to the amenity value of the areas. Zone B has two areas (in the north and south of the zone) of archaeological potential.

If development were to take place in Zones A, B, C, particularly in the higher northern part of the zone, it would significantly increase the visibility of the town from the surrounding area. At present, built development is confined to the lower slopes leaving open countryside to the north. The landscape character sensitivity of Zone A is considered to be **High** and the Zones B and C to be **High/ Medium**.

4.2. Zone D

Zone D forms an arc of farmland around the eastern edge of Melton Mowbray between the railway line and the A607, Thorpe Road. It is bisected by Saxby Road, the B676. The area to the south of Saxby Road is on the floodplain of the River Wreake/ Eye and low-lying. Across Saxby Road the ground crosses the slopes of the ridge on the crest of which lies the village of Thorpe Arnold, dropping down towards Thorpe Road, where there is a stream and playing fields. Within the arc of Zone D is the Hudson Road Industrial Estate and a Tesco store. This Zone covers two distinct landscape character areas, ridge and valley in the north, and the Eye valley in the south.

The northern area has small traditional pastures and a strong network of hedges and trees, high visibility from residential areas and a public footpath, a riverside area with wildlife interest and close proximity to an important historic site and the village settlement. The medieval village of Thorpe Arnold sits in a prominent position and with its well preserved earthworks is considered to have a sensitive setting.

The southern area includes the eastern edge of Melton Mowbray and this is very visible. It is also dominated by large-scale industrial buildings that fail to relate to the more intimate rural landscape beyond the urban fringe. New development within this industrial area might provide an opportunity for improving the urban edge, creating a stronger sense of identity, and a better relationship between townscape and landscape.

There would be some impact on the visibility of the town from the surrounding area from development in Zone D. The most significant impact would be on Thorpe Arnold, which is at present a distinct historic settlement and is at risk of becoming an extension of Melton Mowbray. The setting of the earthworks on the West Side of the village would also be compromised. The buildings on the industrial estate within the southern part now dominate the lower valley land. Further development in this area would not have a significant effect on the landscape and visual character of the zone. Landscape sensitivity of Zone D is considered to be **Medium**.

4.3. Zone E

No Change

4.4. Zones F and G

The landscape of these two Zones is open, predominantly arable farmland with gentle ridges alternating with hollows. This area is bounded on the north side by the line of the former Roman road and extends from Dalby Road in the west to Burton Road in the east, crossing Sandy Lane. It is agricultural land, mainly in arable cultivation. In the area to the west of Sandy Lane the ground rises towards the southwest, but the eastern part is more level. The southern edge of Melton town stops abruptly along the line of the Roman road and there is very little screening. The area is dominated by residential development and this intrudes on the rural landscape.

There is potential for coalescence of Melton Mowbray with the settlement of Burton Lazars at the eastern end of Zone F, which is on the higher more visible land and ridgeline. The land in-between is productive farmland with springs, ponds and watercourses. Zone F has a number of cultural heritage constraints - the setting of Burton Lazars, the setting of the medieval leper hospital (Scheduled Monument) and the Roman road.

Zone G is less sensitive away from the Roman Road and the area of archaeological potential along the Dalby Road and west of Aerodrome Farm. The landscape to the west of the ridgeline at Old Guadeloupe in Zone G is of stronger character than elsewhere within the Zone, and provides a softer edge to the town. However, through careful design this character could be incorporated into a development as the landform, which is a shallow valley, creates natural screening opportunities. The landscape sensitivity of Zone F is considered to be **Medium** {as a result of a correction to Table 1} and Zone G is considered to be **Low**.

4.5. Zone H

Correction to Table 1 and accompanying text: '.....overall landscape sensitivity of Zone H is considered to be **Medium/ Low**.'

4.6. Zone I

Correction to Table 1 and accompanying text: 'Landscape sensitivity of Zone I is considered to be **Medium**.'

4.7. Zone J

No Change

4.8. Zone K

This area is bounded by Welby Lane in the south, Welby Road to the west and Nottingham Road to the north. The east-west road, St Bartholomew's Way, divides it in two and a stream runs through from north to south. This stream represents the lowest point with the ground sloping upwards on either side. In the southwest corner of Zone K is a Depot and the Animal Defence Centre. From midway along St Bartholomew's Way, Horseguards Way runs into new housing east of the area. The remainder of the southern part of Zone K is farmland.

The landscape character of this Zone is predominantly the same as the gently sloping valley in Zone J (Low Sensitivity). In the very northern part of the Zone near Hilltop Farm lies a well defined earthwork, the remains of Sysonby Grange which is a medieval monastic farm. The earthwork is a Scheduled Monument and together with its setting and the surrounding area of archaeological potential it makes the area north of the Welby Road sensitive in cultural heritage terms. The land south of the Welby Road is MoD land and is mostly grazing paddocks enclosed by hedges or fencing. Although the urban edge is well defined and partially screened, the fields are essentially 'urban fringe' paddocks making this southern part of the Zone less sensitive. The Landscape sensitivity of Zone K is considered to be **Medium/ Low**.

REVISED TABLE 1 LANDSCAPE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE SENSITIVITY MATRIX – ZONES A-K AROUND MELTON MOWBRAY (2011)

[Text highlighted in grey indicates a change in score/ overall sensitivity as a result of the 2011 field survey]

	Landscape				Cultural Heritage		Overall Sensitivity
ZONES	Loss through disturbance	Ability to be restored	Aesthetic change	Addition of new elements	Direct destruction or damage	Setting and indirect effects	High/ Medium/ Low
A	1	1	1	2	1	1	7 High
B	1	1	1	1	2	3	9 High/ Medium
C	1	1	1	1	3	3	10 High/ Medium
D	1	2	2	3	3	1	12 Medium
E	2	3	2	2	3	1	13 Medium/ Low
F	2	2	2	2	1	2	11 Medium
G	2	2	3	2	3	3	15 Low
H	2	3	3	3	1	1	13 Medium/ Low
I	2	2	3	2	1	1	11 Medium
J	2	2	3	3	3	3	16 Low
K	3	3	3	2	1	1	13 Medium/ Low

Landscape Criteria

- 1 = *High likelihood of loss/ Very poor ability to be restored/ Negative aesthetic change/ Negative impact of new elements*
- 2 = *Medium likelihood of loss/ Poor ability to be restored/ Neutral aesthetic change/ Moderate negative impact of new elements*
- 3 = *Low likelihood of loss/ Ability to be restored/ Positive aesthetic change/ Low negative impact of new elements*

Cultural Heritage Criteria – Direct destruction/ damage to cultural heritage

- 1 = *Likely severe impact on above ground features*
- 2 = *Impact on known below-ground archaeological potential*
- 3 = *No known impact*

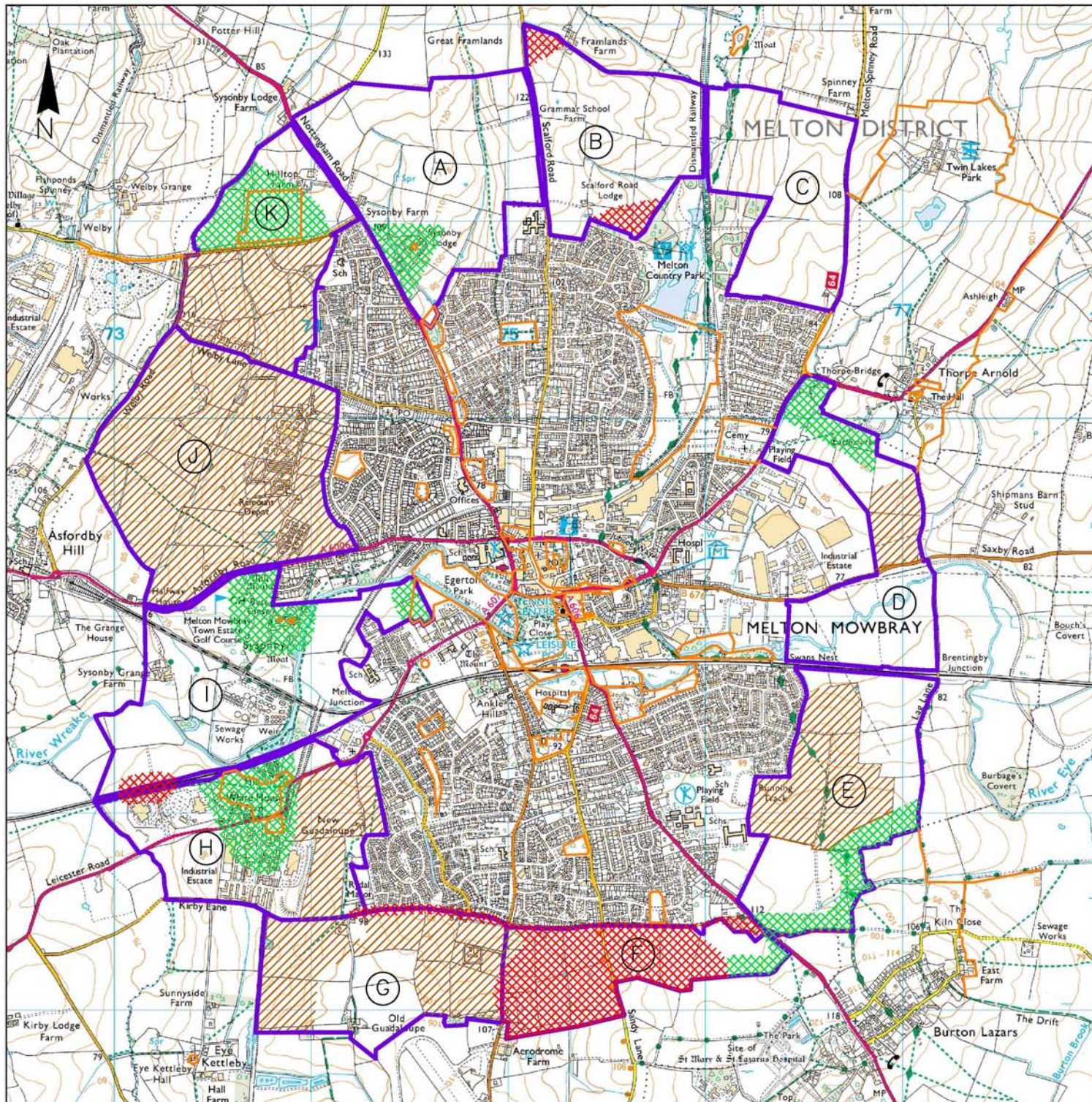
Cultural Heritage Criteria – Indirect Effects






- 1 = *Significant negative aesthetic or contextual impact*
- 2 = *Some reduction in quality of setting*
- 3 = *Neutral effect on setting*

Score

7 = High	9 = High/ Medium	11 = Medium	13 = Medium/ Low	15 = Low
8	10	12	14	16

REVISED SENSITIVITY MAP (2011)



-  Areas of Archeological Potential
-  Historic Setting
-  Standing/Designated Areas or Features
-  Development Search Areas
-  Less Sensitive Areas

Job Title

MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MELTON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Drawing Title

2011 Melton LCA Sensitivity Map

Drawing No

MBC02/BC/EGG/L/LSM01

Scale: Not to Scale

Drawn by: Checked by:

DW	23/02	KR	23/02		
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CERTIFICATE NO. 936648



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