



BULCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

APPENDIX F

VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDE

2019 EDITION



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FOREWORD

In early 2018 Bulcote Parish Council determined that we should constitute a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. This Design Guide was commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group who worked alongside Urban Forward Limited to assess the character of the Parish determining the most important and most valued character forming features.

Bulcote is a beautiful and historic place which is valued highly by residents and visitors alike, but that does not mean that Bulcote will not change. The evidence within this Guide and the subsequent Neighbourhood Plan Policies that rely on some of this evidence will be used to influence design in future development. Any development will then add positively to the character of the Village and be of a type which is likely to be supported by the community.

Dr Nicholas Leaves

Chairman
Bulcote Neighbourhood
Plan Steering Group

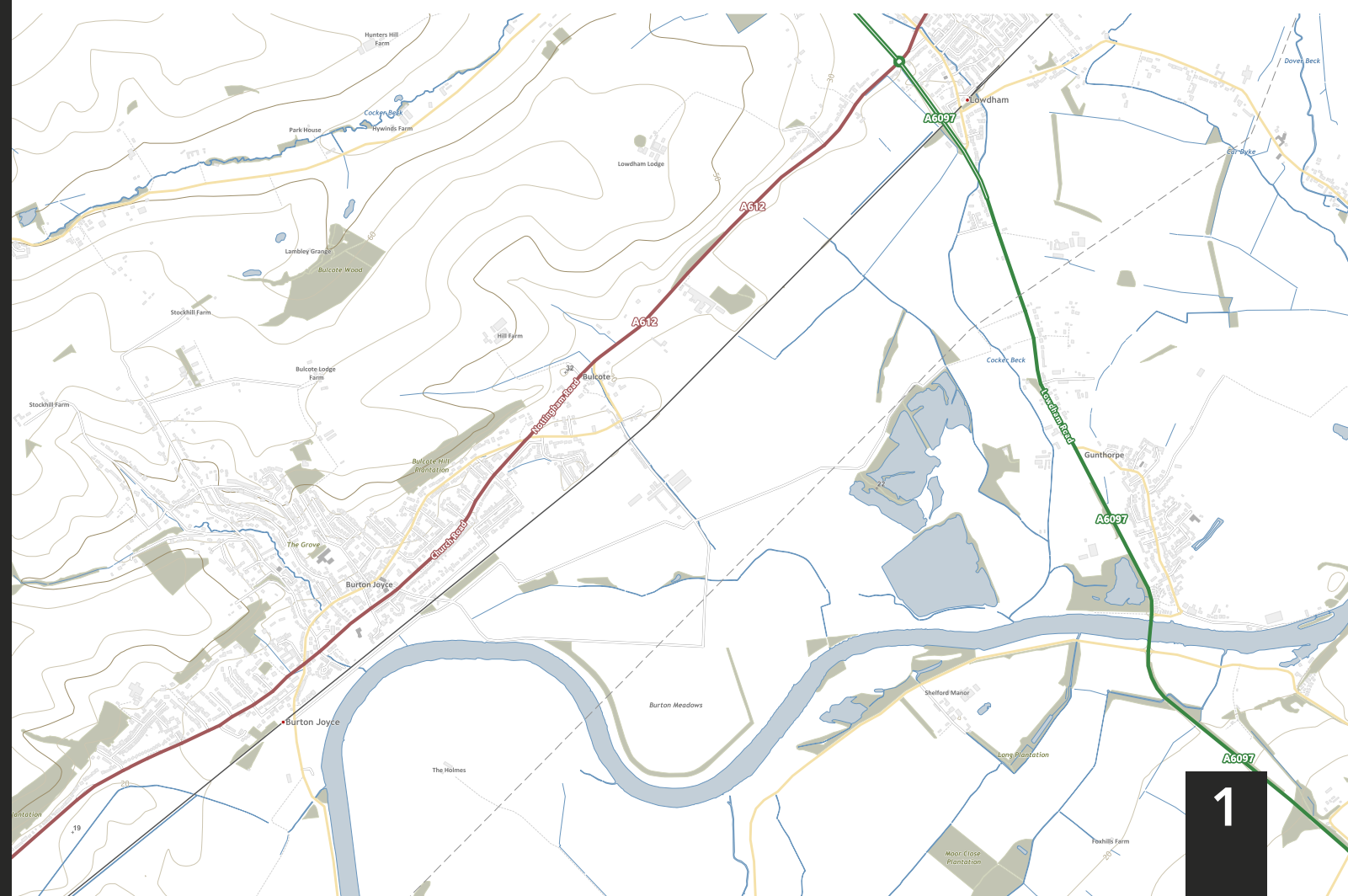
INTRODUCTION

This Design Guide has been written to help designers working in Bulcote Parish ensure their proposals support the character and identity of the village. It supports the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), which forms part of the statutory planning framework for the determining Local Planning Authority. Therefore, Local Planning Officers and Elected Members are required to assess submitted planning applications against the requirements of the NDP and this Guide.

In producing this Guide, members of the local community have been instrumental in shaping the contents. Following the guidance in this document therefore enables designers to directly implement the design aspirations of local people.

The Guide has been written not to be prescriptive, but rather to offer a framework in which designers can innovate whilst strengthening local character and identity. The guidance is therefore more focused on *how* to think rather than *what* to think, with a recognition that merely copying what is existing is unlikely to produce a good outcome.

In doing so, it is our aim to enhance what is good about Bulcote, and to not repeat some of the mistakes of the past. All stakeholders have a duty to ensure that as changes happen in Bulcote they are ones which future generations will appreciate and value.





ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Good design encompasses more than just the way buildings look. This Guide has been written to ensure that wider considerations are brought in to the design process, such as landscape setting, ecological and hydrological aspects, connectivity and movement, and access to facilities and services beyond the village.

Designers should use the whole Guide to help them when completing the modified BfL12 checklist. Design and Access Statements should clearly demonstrate this. However, this Guide is not a 'one-stop-shop' and designers should also refer to national best practice and policy.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Bulcote is committed to good design at every scale, from new places that create thriving communities to buildings that minimise their environmental impact. It is everyone's duty to ensure that what gets built here is of the highest quality. This document is intended to help designers and decision-makers improve design by highlighting common design issues and suggesting simple ways to embed quality.

To do this, we have developed a bespoke version of Building for Life 12 for use in Bulcote Parish. Planning applications involving residential development are expected to demonstrate how they address the design issues within this Guide. Applicants and Local Authority Planning Officers should use this Guide to structure their discussions as they develop their proposals. Elected Members will use the BfL12 checklist to help assess planning applications for design quality. It is suggested that designers use BfL12 to help them develop their designs. Applicants should also demonstrate how they have used BfL12 in their Design and Access Statement.

The main version of BfL12 is free to use, and home builders and Local Authorities across England are encouraged to use it to structure pre-application discussions. The NPPF suggests using BfL12 to improve design quality, and Local authorities are also encouraged to refer to BfL12 in their Local Plans. Many local community groups are also using BfL12, with many already referring to BfL12 in their Neighbourhood Plans.

BfL's 12 questions are designed to create a structured and focused design dialogue. BfL12 can also help identify what issues really matter to local communities and how development proposals can respond positively to these.

Based on a traffic light system, the aim is simple – to achieve as many 'greens' as possible (we recommend at least nine), challenge 'ambers' and avoid 'reds'. The more 'greens' a development secures, the better it will be. By using BfL12, better places can be created and common pitfalls associated with many new developments avoided.

Part of the Building for Life initiative is about raising consumer awareness of the benefits of good design and helping them to easily identify which developments have been sensitively designed and considered. The Built for Life™ accreditation scheme offers home builders the opportunity to secure a quality mark to give consumers added confidence that their development is a good place to buy a home. Built for Life™ Quality Marks are available once a development has secured planning approval. To obtain a quality mark the process is simple: secure at least nine 'green' indicators.

In April 2014 builtforlifehomes.org was launched. Here you can find a fascinating range of Built for Life™ schemes from across the country, from north to south, east to west. These reflect a range of market areas demonstrating the Building for Life principles can be achieved even in challenging market conditions.



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Much of the contents of this Guide has been developed in collaboration with the people of Bulcote. Residents know their home village better than anyone, and their knowledge and understanding of what makes their place theirs is invaluable.

To build an accurate characterisation of the village not just in terms of how it looks, but in terms of what the experience of living there is, residents used the methodology developed by Oxford City Council. This methodology has

been specifically developed to enable a range of stakeholders to catalogue and record what is important to them about the character of their place.

In undertaking this work, members of the community used the 'long-hand' version of the toolkit to capture the essential characteristics of Bulcote. Going street-by-street, a detailed picture of the physical, social and spatial attributes has been developed. This information has then been used to inform the Bulcote-specific version of BfL12 in Section 4.

SECTION 2: VILLAGE CHARACTER

“Many local groups want to contribute to the planning process by commenting on the preparation of planning documents or applications. These groups provide considerable knowledge and awareness of the positive aspects of the local character. The character assessment toolkit provides an opportunity for local groups to put their knowledge into a structured form that can be used to articulate their views and help informed decision making”

Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit

VILLAGE-WIDE CHARACTERISTICS

The study areas used in this Guide reveal characteristics in Bulcote that apply across the village. These help to bind the differing characters across the village so that even though there is variation within Bulcote, for the most part, this variation does not jar or create the impression of incoherence.

Key to this is the way the village sits within its landscape, and the roll of trees and green spaces in establishing the character of the village. Generally, large trees within the village screen long views onto Bulcote from the surrounding area. Within the village, green spaces allow for visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside, and create a sense of ‘openness’ even when in the village core.

Soft edges to the streets, both in the form of verges within the public realm and in hedges delineating plots help to create a very green and rural feel. The informal streets with very little clutter, signage or marking support this rural character, with many of the streets feeling more like country lanes and farm tracks than formal roads.

Earthy, industrial colours such as reds and browns are predominant in terms of the built environment, with many properties and some boundaries being made up of red brick. Pantile roofs are also common and help to integrate the buildings into the landscape. Some stone can be found but is only used on special and memorable buildings such as the church and Bulcote Crossing Cottage.



Linking all systems: A key characteristic of Bulcote is its green and blue links, and the way they integrate with human movement systems. Effort should be made to use this approach in new development.



Sightlines: Many of the streets in Bulcote have good sight lines, with forward visibility extending to 100m or more. Short, deflected streets are not in keeping with the character of Bulcote’s street system.

Future Management:

Make space for large trees: woodland scale tree species require space to grow and mature. Designers should allow for this in their proposals.

Green the streets: verges, ditches and hedge boundaries are critical in defining the wider character of the village.

Leave gaps: green spaces create a feeling of openness within the village, and views out onto the countryside are as much a characteristic of Bulcote as the environment within it. Designers should not close down gaps or views in their proposals.

Use calm and considered materials: at the building level, a simple and restrained palette of materials help to create a cohesive built environment even though building styles vary considerably.



Direct connections: Streets in Bulcote take you where you want to go as directly as possible. New streets should keep the alignment such that people can move in straight lines, with landscape visible along the street.



Streets as green corridors: The water and green edges to the streets in Bulcote allow them to perform a green corridor function. New development should put in the infrastructure to make these connections into the streets.









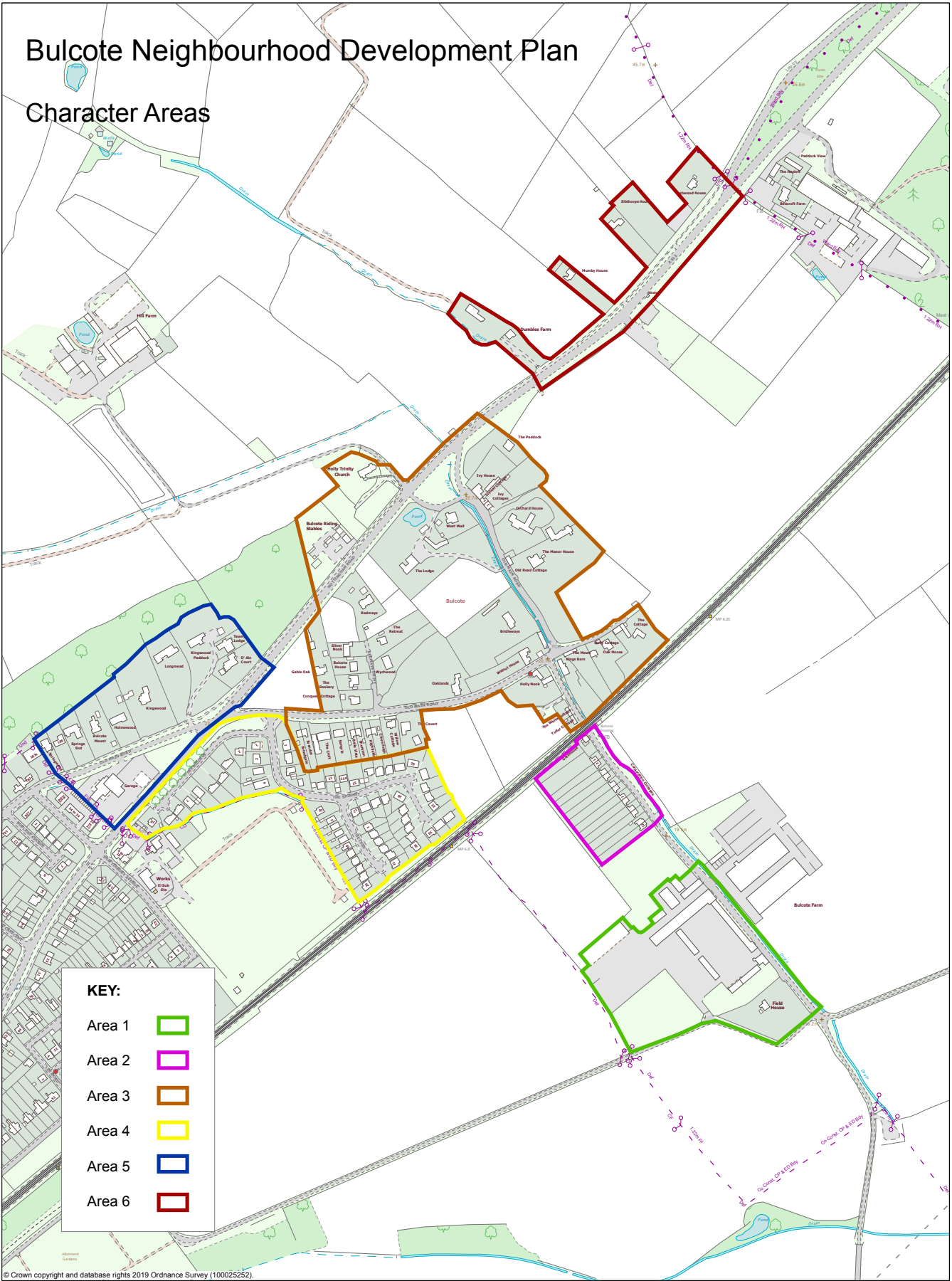
CHARACTER AREAS

The assessments undertaken by the community reveal the following character areas. For each of these, an individual character and identity has been formed. In doing so, it is possible to establish what is special and memorable about each of the areas identified, and which of the characteristics are shared across other parts of the village.

A full reproduction of the community-produced assessments is provided in the appendices at the end of this document.

Note: Not all of the character areas within this study are within the built envelope of the village. Also, whilst the term ‘character areas’ has been used here due to its familiarity within the design industry, it is also possible to view the defined zones as ‘study areas’.

-  **Character Area 1:** Nottingham Corporation Bulcote Farm
-  **Character Area 2:** Bulcote Crossing Cottage and Corporation Cottages
-  **Character Area 3:** Bulcote Village Core
-  **Character Area 4:** The Ridings, The Spinney and The Leas
-  **Character Area 5:** Old Main Road (north)
-  **Character Area 6:** Main Road



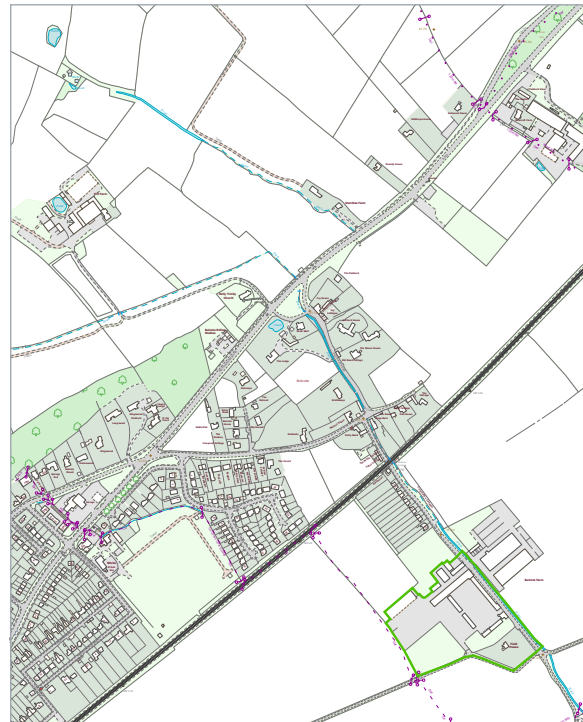
CA1: Bulcote Farm

Whilst Bulcote Farm is outside of the village envelope due to its former agricultural use, it is worth including in this analysis as it a key heritage asset of the village and is of important historical significance. It also sits within the Conservation Area.

It has a distinctive arrangement of buildings, with large cobbled courtyards surrounded by industrial / 'working' structures with long edges to the space, regular windows and doors and fine-grain detailing that typifies the Victorian-era buildings found in the area.

The scale and massing of buildings, the way they 'contain' spaces within the farm and the way the farm provides a 'hard' perimeter all contribute to the farm as feeling very much its own entity rather than something that is woven deeply into the wider village.

However, the materials, routes and detailing ensure that the farm complex is functionally part of the village's collection of places and spaces. The farm also forms the edge to open countryside in this part of the village, and as such there are excellent views across the Trent valley.



Future management:

- Keep courtyard spaces uncluttered and open.
- Preserve existing built structures and resist the loss of period detailing.
- Maintain the sense of rural heritage, with minimal lighting, uncluttered lanes and a simple architectural detailing.
- The visual connections beyond the edge of the village to the Trent Valley should be maintained and protected.



Connections to the village: The farm buildings have a presence on the lanes in the area, which are simple with a rural look and feel.



Fine-grained detailing: Simple buildings from the Victorian era still have a rich, fine-grained detailing that add quality when viewed up close.



Open spaces: Courtyard spaces that are open and uncluttered are a key characteristic of the farm.



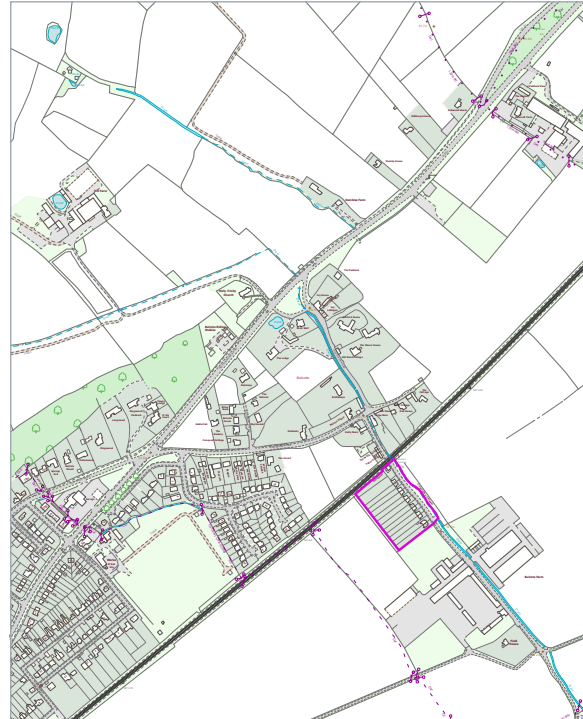
Enclosed edges: The buildings within the farm provide strong edges to the routes and spaces.

CA2: Bulcote Crossing Cottage and Corporation Cottages

The area around the railway crossing leading south towards the farm is characterised by regular, neat built form combined with a feeling of expansive open space and long views across the countryside. The built form works as a 'set piece', where the relationship between the buildings, their plot, and their detailing exhibits shared components so that the view along the street is of a consistent approach. This area also sits within the Conservation Area.

Integral to the character of this part of the village is the way you remain visually connected to the flat landscape of the Trent Valley. Long views to the east and south mean that whilst the buildings are urban, the general feel is of being in a rural space.

The simple street treatment, stream ditch and sights and activities associated with the farmland give this part of the village a 'working farm' feel that makes for an effective transition between the village envelope and the rural landscape beyond.



Future management:

- Maintain the feeling of openness by not blocking views across the countryside.
- Maintain existing boundary treatments as they add to the regularity of treatment.
- Restrict the use of materials and detailing, so that the built form is cohesive and clearly of the same type.
- Where possible, reinstate the historic street furniture and restrict the loss of historic detailing from the buildings and spaces.



Defining the street: Ordered, regular buildings and a green boundary form a strong edge to the street.



Significant markers: Where variation does occur, it has a logic due to the significance of the structures.



Simple architecture: Victorian-era structures in this area have a simple palette of materials combined with a richness of details when viewed up close.



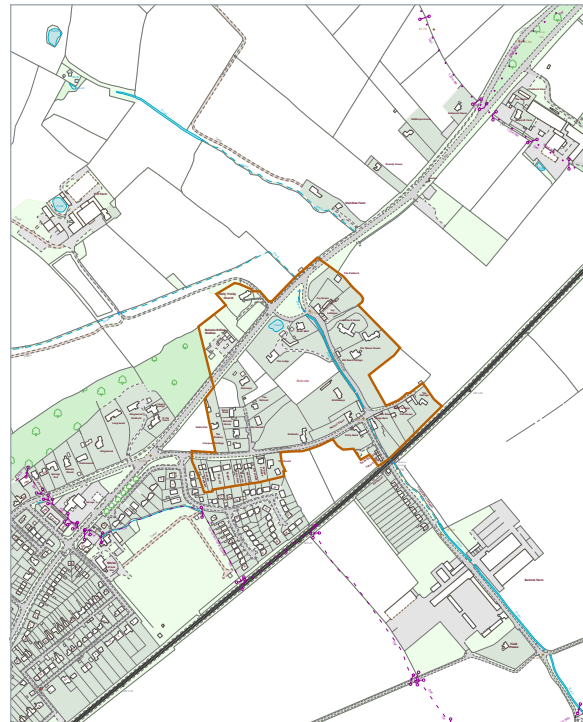
Boundaries: Although the buildings are more in keeping with the industrial character of the adjacent farm, the boundaries help blend the overall look and feel of this area in with the rest of the village.

CA3: Bulcote Village Core

This part of the village sits within the conservation area, and contains some of the oldest buildings within Bulcote. It is characterised as much by the contribution of open space as it is by the built form, with dwellings sitting in large, expansive plots with generous green boundaries.

Whilst there are a range of building types, only a few buildings break from the rest in terms of their colour and materials, with most of the area being of red brick. The calm materials palette of earthy tones makes the buildings and landscape work together to create the character of the area. Notable exceptions to this include the Holy Trinity Church, which occupies an elevated plot with a commanding view across the village looking south.

The way buildings are detailed help to support the overall character and identity of the area, which is one of craftsmanship, fine-grained detail and richness in terms of construction and finish. Whilst some of the buildings are plain and simple, up-close they exhibit the kind of traditional attention to detail that leads to a feeling of high quality and robustness.



Future management:

- Resist the urge to infill large plots, as the openness of the area is just as important as the buildings in creating character.
- Restrict the introduction of new materials. When choosing materials, these should be influenced by with the existing pallet or by the landscape setting.
- The greenness of the area is in large put generated by what is happening within private plots. Allowing space for planting, hedge boundaries and garden trees is critical.
- Streets are calm, uncluttered and simple. Street lighting should be subtle, and surface treatments such as block paving should be avoided.



Simple materials: Some render buildings feature in this part of the village.



Horizontal emphasis: Buildings with a centrally placed entrance and a horizontal emphasis typify this area.



Streets, buildings and water working together: The stream sits adjacent to the street and building edge, providing much of the character of Bulcote.



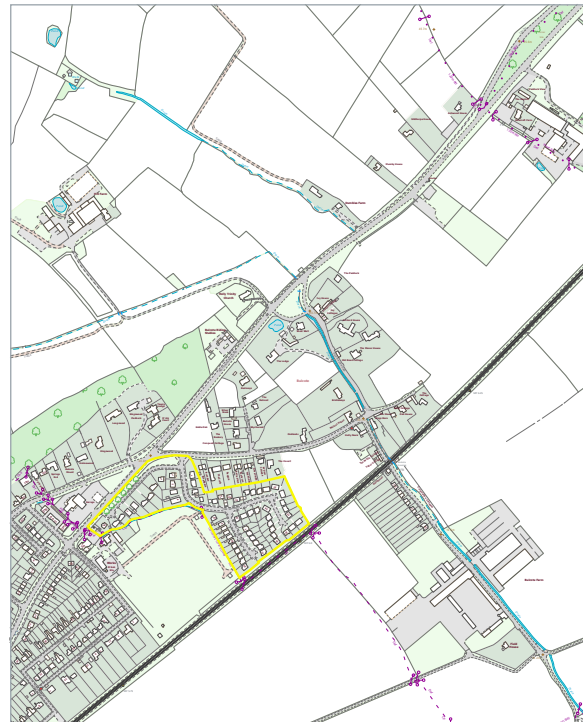
Openness: Views across large plots contribute to the general feel of openness of this part of the village.

CA4: The Ridings, The Spinney and The Leas

The area of development around The Ridings, The Spinney and The Leas is the largest and newest large-scale addition to Bulcote. It has a character that is quite different to the rest of the village. This area sits outside of the Conservation Area.

One of the key aspects of this is that for the most part it is an 'inward looking' area, one which you 'enter' rather than 'pass through' as with the rest of the village.

The form and detailing of the houses do not reference the historic part of Bulcote. The form of the streets, the way the plots are formulated and landscaped and the choice of materials erode rather than reinforce the distinctive character of Bulcote.



Lessons for future development:

- Avoid closing down views and creating an inward-looking development.
- Provide enclosure to plots using low walls or hedges rather than providing open-fronted plots.
- Choose materials or colours inspired by the local area (including landscape) rather than importing new materials.
- Keep the treatment of streets simple, rural, and allow space for water management and greener within the street corridor.



A mix of housing: This area of the village provides a mix of housing types.



Standard streets: Unlike other parts of Bulcote, the streets here are more reminiscent of modern estate roads.



Open plots: The lack of boundaries between plots and streets causes parked cars to dominate the street scene.



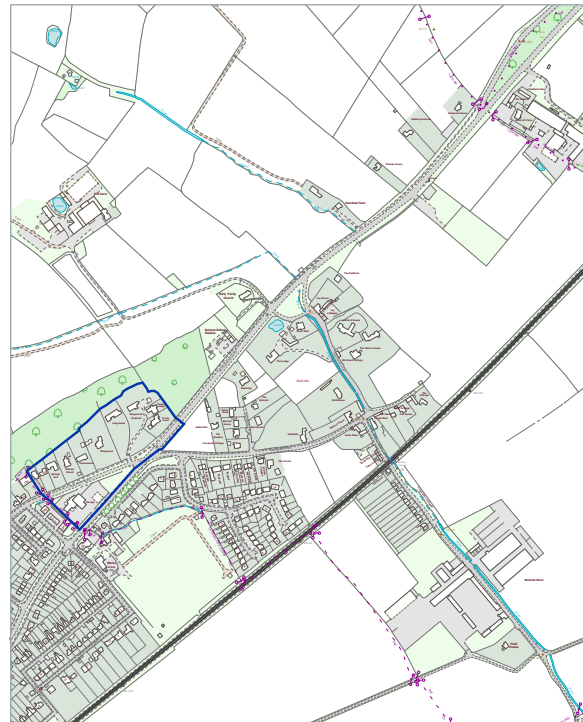
Open corners: An enclosed courtyard, with a strong building line with the garage and parking within would have been a better solution to this corner plot.

CA5: Old Main Road (north)

Old Main Road is the only part of the village with significant parts sitting to the north of Nottingham Road, and in many ways the buildings here 'read' more as part of Burton Joyce than of Bulcote. Therefore, design teams are encouraged to refer to the Burton Joyce Character Study alongside this one when developing proposals for this area. This character area is not included within the Conservation Area of Bulcote.

The general feel of the village here is still open, with large plots and generous greenery within private land bringing landscape into the experience of being within the village. Here, the high ground to the north of the village provides an important backdrop to the built form.

The generosity of the plots, the consistent building line, and the way the boundary treatments serve to provide the edge to the street are an important part of the character of this area. Less important are the specifics of the buildings, and here there may be more scope to innovate should new buildings be added.



Future management:

- Resist the loss off green boundaries to the street edge, so that plots contribute positively to the look and feel of the public space.
- Maintain the gaps between buildings so that views of the higher landscape can be seen.
- Maintain the relationship between buildings and the street, so that buildings face the front and provide an active frontage to the public space.



Landscape backdrop: The rising land to the north provides a landscape edge to this part of the village.



Listed Gate: This area is home to several listed structures, including this gate at the front Kingswood.



Green streets: The mature hedgerow boundaries, wide verges and large trees make for an attractive and green streets.



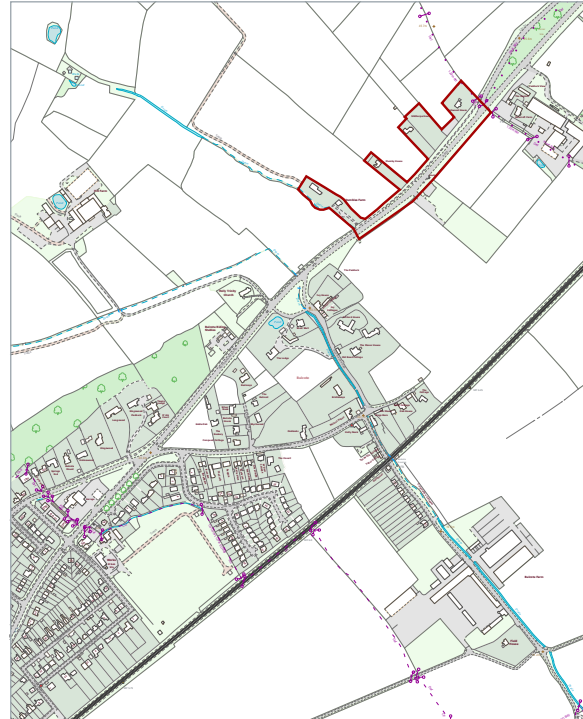
Substantial plots: Many of the dwellings in this area sit in large plots, such as Kingswood (formerly known as Tenterden), which was designed by the renowned architect Watson Fothergill. The house, gate house and the front gates are Grade II Listed.

CA6: Nottingham Road / A612

This part of the village is characterised more by the feeling of openness than by the buildings, which sit far apart from each other and behind significant hedge boundaries. The general look and feel of the area is that of being connected with the Trent Valley through long views and of the space between buildings.

This edge of the village is outside of the conservation area but retains the rural character of the rest of Bulcote through the generosity of the plots and spaces.

The vehicle speeds on the A612 detract from the quality of the space, making it uncomfortable for pedestrians and cyclists and adding noise to the experience of the place. Reducing the speed limit on the approach to the village would greatly improve the quality of this part of the village.



Future management:

- The high levels of greenery afforded by the boundary hedges should be protected and enhanced.
- The gaps between buildings which allow for views onto countryside help maintain a connection to the rural surroundings. Blocking views and closing gaps should be avoided.
- Speed reduction options for this stretch of the A612 should be explored, as this would greatly improve the quality of the space and would make accessing bus stops etc more viable.



Road not a street: The speed of cars along this stretch of road mean that it feels like it is outside of a village setting.



Buildings in the foreground: Buildings sit low in the landscape, prominent to the street in places but with the land rising in the background.



Greenery in private plots: The very important trees and hedge boundaries are privately owned and vulnerable to loss. Effort must be made to retain and enhance these features.

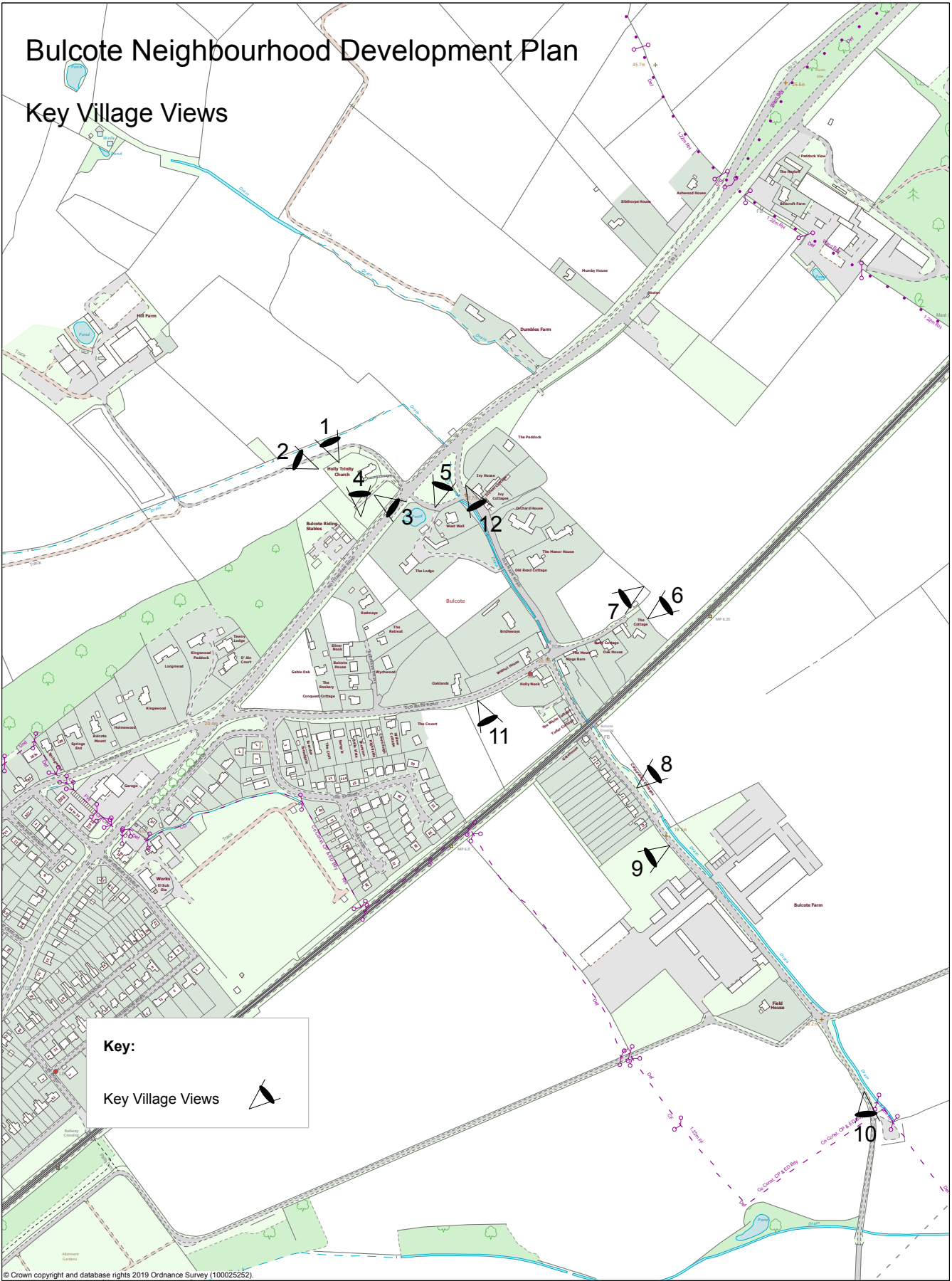


Buildings set within the plot: Homes tend to sit deep within the plot, away from the road edge.

VILLAGE VIEWPOINTS



Bulcote Neighbourhood Development Plan
Key Village Views



VILLAGE VIEWPOINTS



VV4



VV9



VV10



VV7

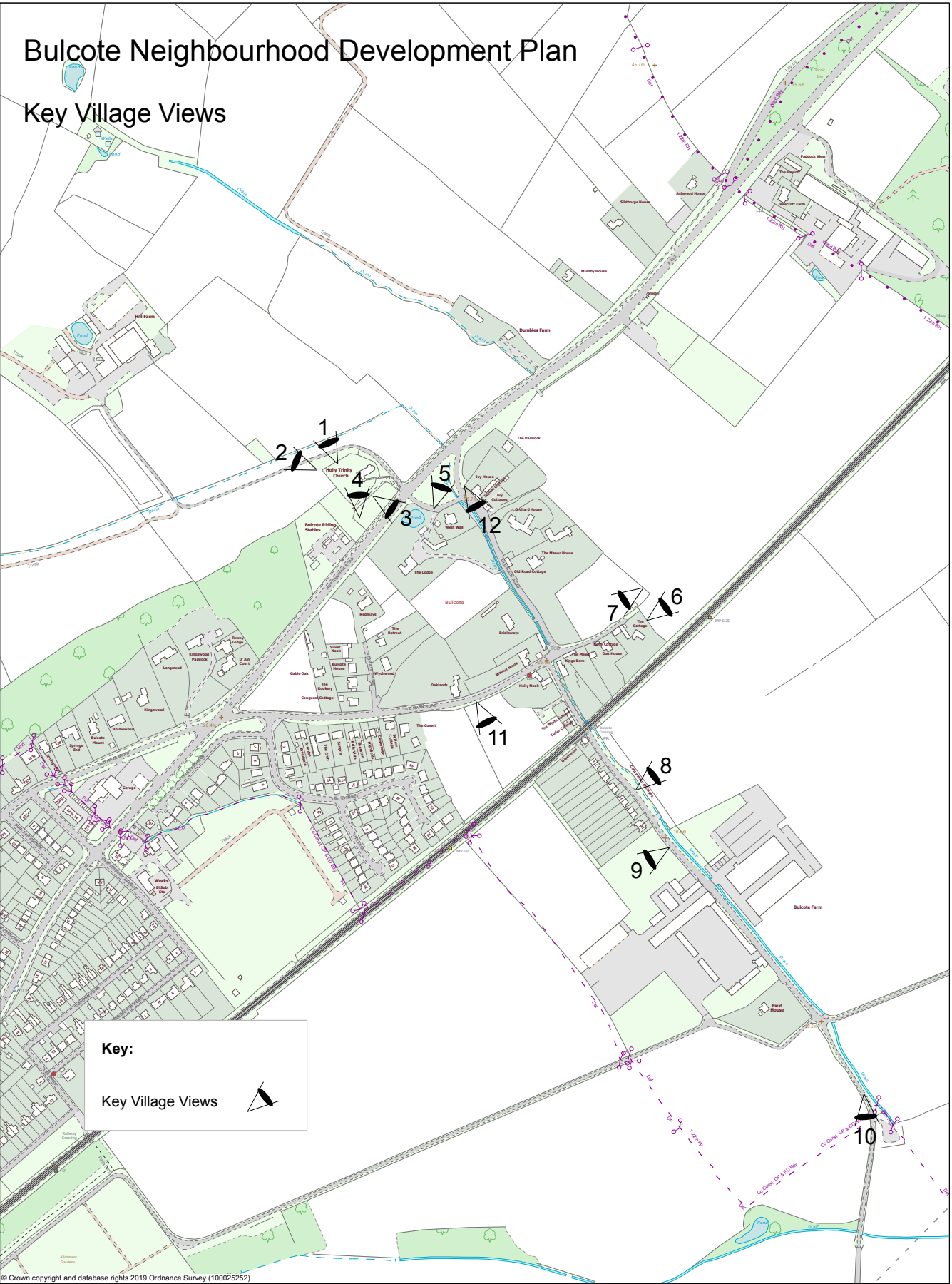


VV11



VV8

Bulcote Neighbourhood Development Plan
Key Village Views





SECTION 3: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

SUMMARY

In this section of the study we aim to explain how the various landscape elements combine to form landscape character areas and how Bulcote sits in the landscape. The study area is focussed around the settlement of Bulcote and its wider parish boundary setting.

The character of the study area is typical of the landscape locally. The study area straddles two distinct character areas. At the point of the transition lie the busy A612 and railway line that run northeast to southwest through Bulcote. The Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands character area contains steep, partially wooded, slopes to the north and the Trent Washlands character area has flat farmland with mature hedgerows to the south.

The settlement itself is well integrated into the landscape with the amount of mature tree and woodland vegetation largely screening views. This effect is particularly strong from the south and actually within the settlement where they have a much more dominant character than in other settlements locally. Mature trees are a major feature of Bulcote village. Some roofs can be seen amongst the trees with buildings to the east more visible where the tree cover lessens.

The existing electricity pylons and large agricultural buildings that are noted in the landscape character assessment as detractors are dominant in most views.

The main pressure for change appears to be the large development proposal centred on the 'model farm', in the open farmland to the south. Here mature tree cover is less.

Any further coalescence of Bulcote and Burton Joyce, which would involve the 'infilling' of land, would have the effect of extending the wider settlement of Burton Joyce north east towards Lowdham.

If development is to occur near the existing settlement it should be accompanied by extensive and carefully considered tree planting to maintain the treed character and screening effect that exists currently within Bulcote village. This would also help to diversify the age of tree stock locally.

Development extending up the hill, into the Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands LCA would be highly visible from most parts of the wider landscape and therefore should be resisted.

ABOUT THIS SECTION

In this section of the study we explain how the various landscape elements combine to form landscape character areas and how Bulcote sits in the landscape. It examines how the landscape has influenced growth and change in the area, and sets out useful principles for managing change.

‘Landscape Character Areas’ are those that share similar landscape characteristics rather than following administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

Landscape Character Areas can be applied at various scales. Natural England have divided England into 159 ‘natural areas’. Most local authorities (at both a county and district level) have smaller scale ‘Landscape Character Assessments’ that identify differences in landscape character at a local level. We map the type and distribution of these landscape character areas and examine how Bulcote sits in relation to this wider landscape context.

This section is arranged as follows:

- 1. National Landscape Character
- 2. Local Landscape Character
- 3. Viewpoints
- 4. Managing Change
- 5. Pressures and opportunities



‘Hidden Bulcote’, with the village sitting low in the landscape and using materials that soften the visual impact of the built form on the wider area.

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Each of the 159 National Character Areas (NCAs) is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geo-diversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. These are described in an NCA profile for each area. It is also important to note that, particularly at this scale, the boundaries of character areas that are shown on the maps are not intended to be precise; the edge of one character area is likely to share similar characteristics to its neighbour and they therefore should be regarded as ‘blurred’ not ‘sharp’.

Bulcote lies within ‘NCA 48: Trent and Belvoir Vales’. The closest neighbouring character area is ‘NCA 49: Sherwood’, around 4km to the west.

NCA 48 is described as ‘characterised by undulating, strongly rural and predominantly arable farmland, centred on the River Trent. A low-lying rural landscape with relatively little woodland cover, the NCA offers long, open views. To the west, the escarpment of a broad ridge of rolling landscape defines the boundary with the neighbouring Sherwood and [much further to the north] Humberhead Levels NCAs.’

Cultural heritage is evident in the Trent and Belvoir Vales NCA with the overall settlement pattern little changed since medieval times. Rural tranquillity is still a feature over much of the area; however, significant residential and infrastructure development pressures exist from the main settlements and major roads that traverse the area.

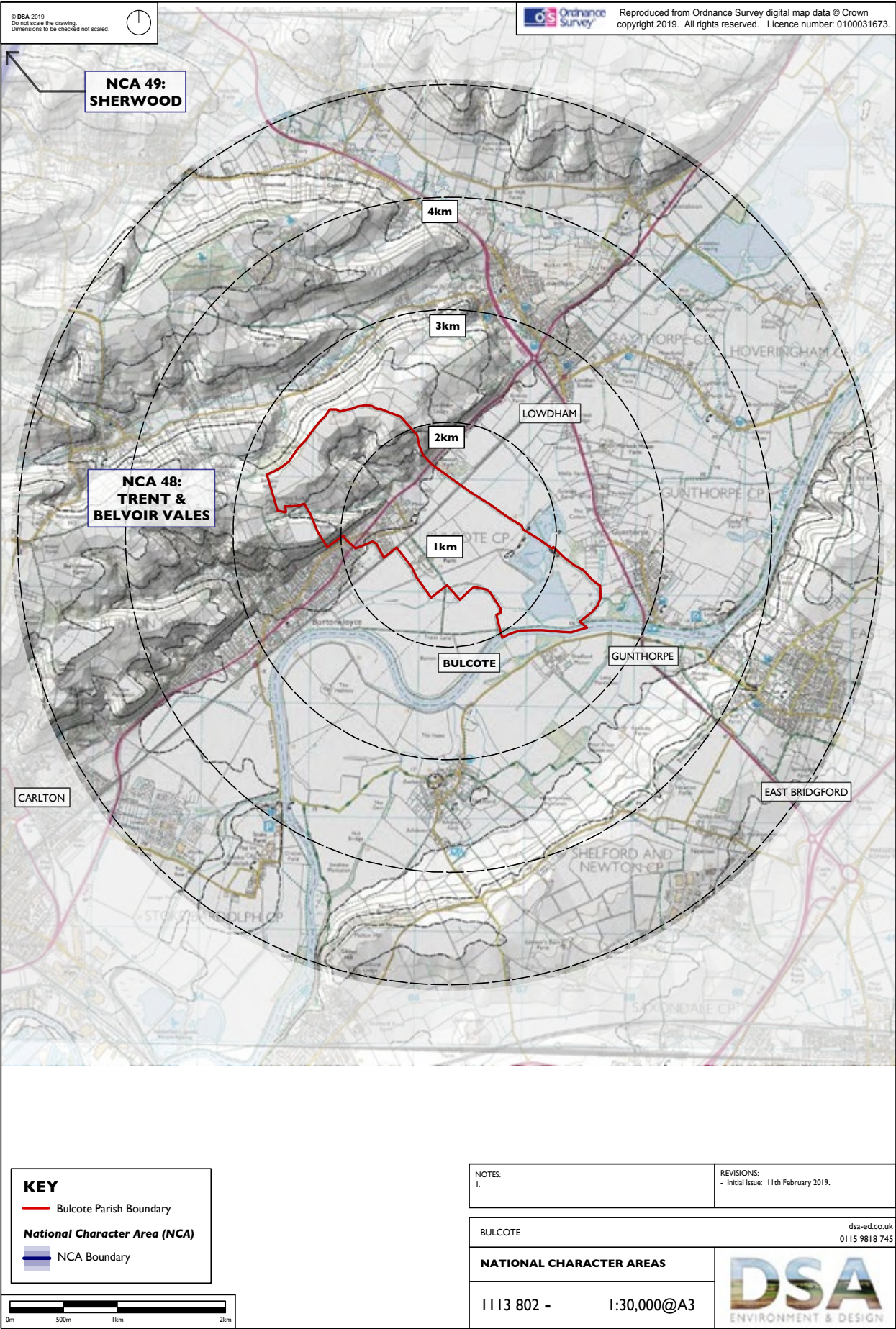
As well as general summaries of the characteristics of the area, the NCA profiles pick out a number of key characteristics. The key characteristics of the Trent and Belvoir Vales relevant to Bulcote include:

- A gently undulating and low-lying landform in the main, with low ridges dividing shallow, broad river valleys, vales and flood plains. The River Trent flows north through the full length of the area, meandering across its broad flood

plain and continuing to influence the physical and human geography of the area as it has done for thousands of years.

- Agriculture is the dominant land use, with most farmland being used for growing cereals, oilseeds and other arable crops. While much pasture has been converted to arable use over the years, grazing is still significant in places, such as along the Trent and around settlements.
- A regular pattern of medium to large fields enclosed by hawthorn hedgerows, and ditches in low-lying areas, dominates the landscape.
- Very little semi-natural habitat remains across the area; however, areas of flood plain grazing marsh are still found in places along the Trent.
- Extensive use of red bricks and pantiles in the 19th century has contributed to the consistent character of traditional architecture within villages and farmsteads across the area. Stone hewn from harder courses within the mudstones, along with stone from neighbouring areas, also feature as building materials, especially in the churches.
- A predominantly rural and sparsely settled area with small villages and dispersed farms linked by quiet lanes, contrasting with the busy market towns of Newark and Grantham, the cities of Nottingham and Lincoln, the major roads connecting them and the cross-country dual carriageways of the A1 and A46.

NCA profile also detail current key facts and track the historic landscape change of an area. The sections on ‘landscape change’ are particularly important as they identify key changes and trends, and also the drivers of this change within the NCA. It is notable in the case of Trent and Belvoir Vales that one of these is an on-going pressure for urban development in and around the main settlements.



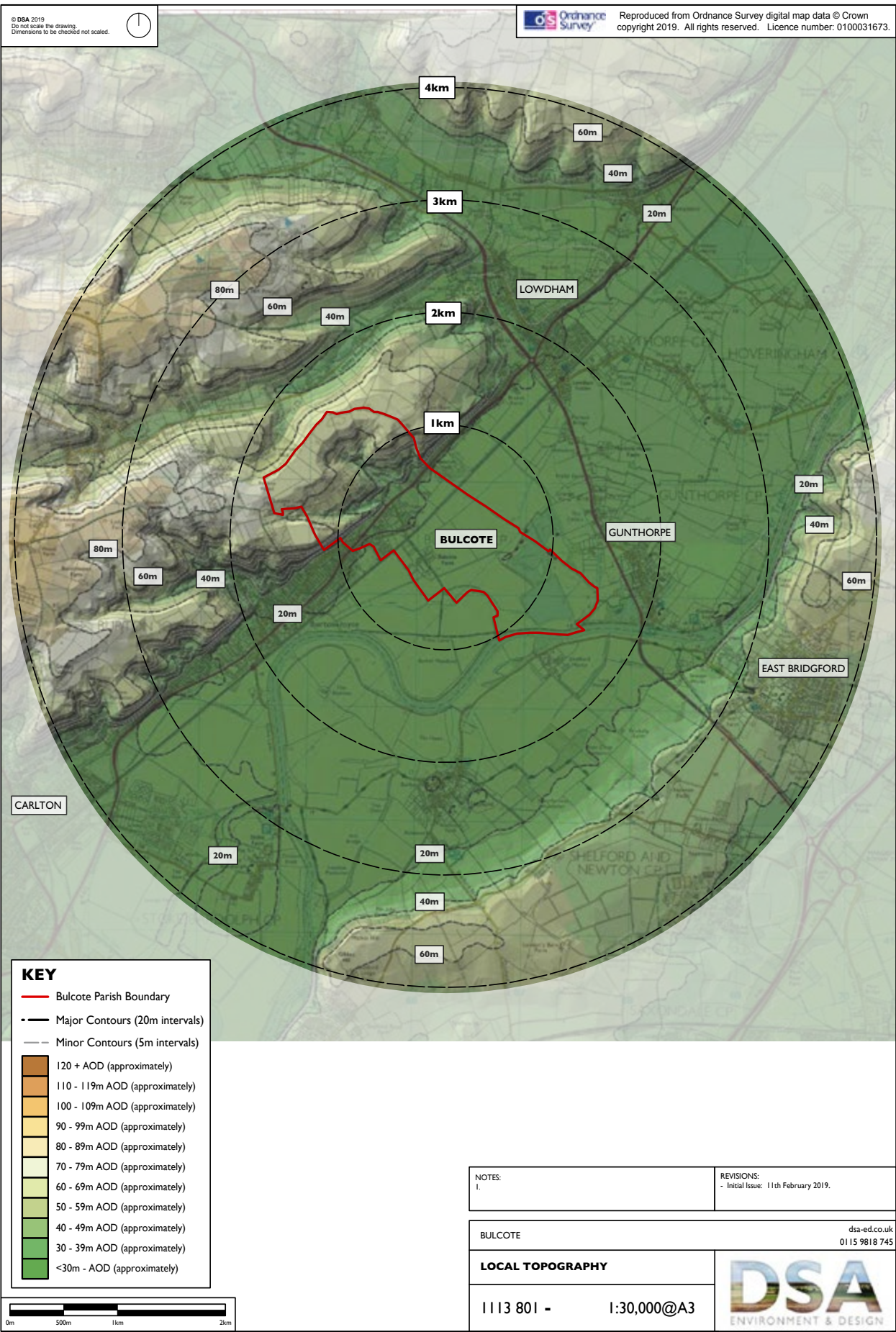
LOCAL LANDSCAPE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

At a local level Nottinghamshire is covered by three separate character assessments. These are the Bassetlaw District Council Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), Newark and Sherwood District Council LCA and the Greater Nottingham LCA.

Bulcote lies just within the boundary of the Newark and Sherwood LCA, but again quite close to a neighbouring area, that covered by the Greater Nottingham LCA. The parish is ‘split’ with the central and south eastern part (at a lower elevation) lying within the Trent

Washlands landscape character area and the northern part, that rises up the valley side, characterised as Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands.

These landscape character areas are then further divided into a series of ‘policy zones’, intended to tie into local planning policies, which set out the characteristics, sensitivity and some landscape actions (amongst other details) for each of the local areas. These are mapped and examined in the following sections.



Trent Washlands Policy Zones (TW06 and TW51)

Trent Washlands Policy Zones (TW06 and TW51) These policy zones relate predominantly to the southern half of Bulcote. The Trent Washlands are generally characterised by a flat, low-lying landscape dominated by agricultural fields. Depending on proximity there tends to be a strong suburban influence, in particular around Lowdham, Bulcote and Burton Joyce. The valley floor has an enclosed character and views are restricted by topography and woodland and tend therefore to be ‘channelled’ along the valley.

The Trent Washlands locally have a generally low to moderate sensitivity to development, with poor to moderate condition. The two that lie within Bulcote are at the better end and classed as moderate for both sensitivity and condition. A number of detractors are noted throughout the area, which include pylon lines and busy transport routes.

The sensitivity and condition are combined to provide the context for suggested landscape actions for the Trent Washlands. For the areas around Bulcote these are generally to ‘conserve’ and ‘create’.

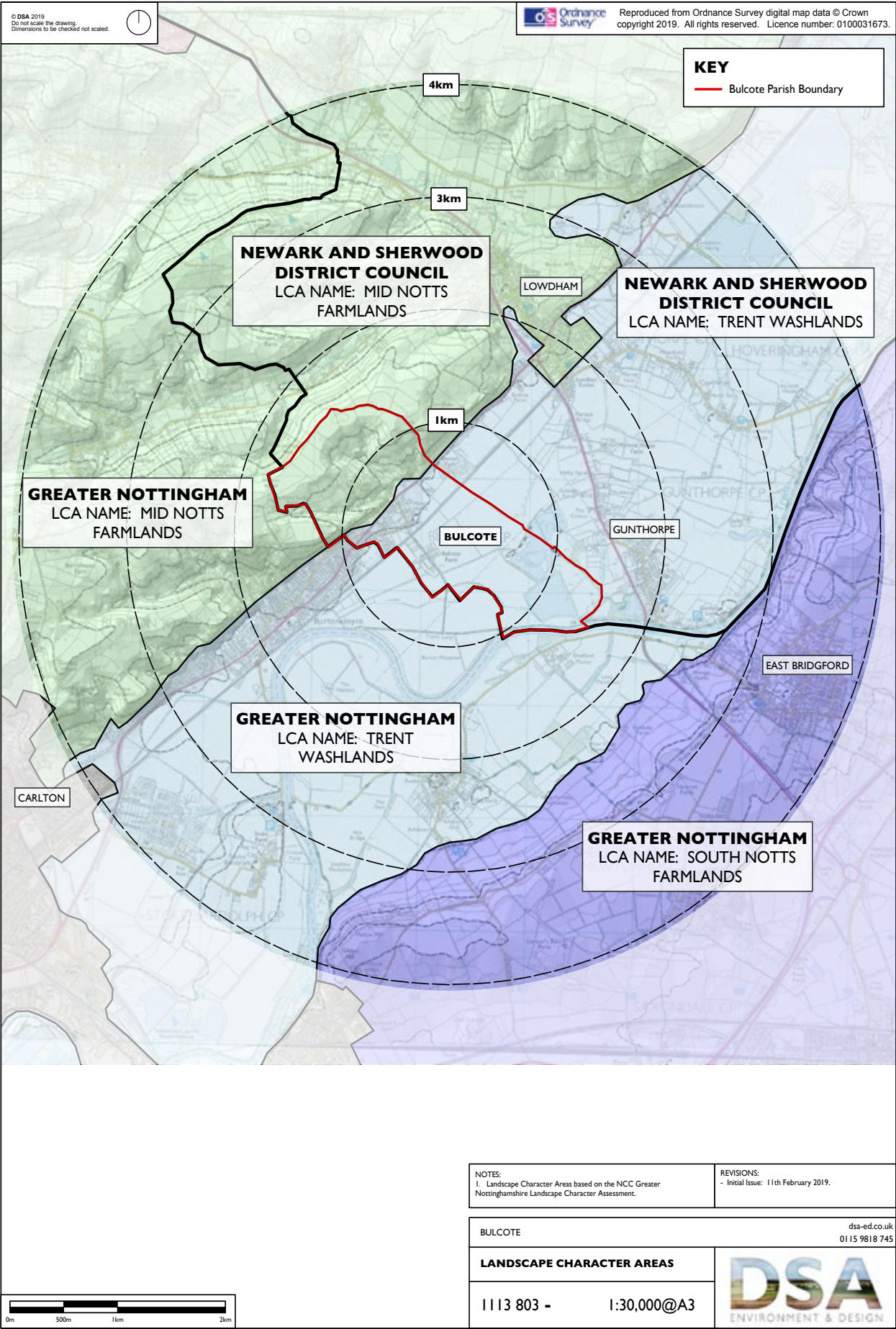
The landscape action guidelines include:

Landscape Features:

- Conserve and enhance the pattern and special features of meadowland hedges and seek opportunities to restore the historic field pattern with new hedgerow planting;
- Seek opportunities to restore arable land to permanent pasture and/or provide field margins to increase biodiversity and link existing habitats;
- Conserve the traditional pastoral character and undeveloped flood plain adjacent to the River Trent;
- Enhance visual unity through small-scale tree and woodland planting.

Built Features:

- Conserve the historic character and setting of village settlement of Bulcote - new development should respect the scale, design and materials used traditionally;
- Conserve historic field pattern by containing new development within historic boundaries;
- Promote sensitive design and siting of new agricultural buildings;
- Promote measures for reinforcing the traditional character of farm buildings using vernacular styles.



Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands Policy Zones (MN 41)

This landscape policy zone relates predominantly to the northern, more elevated parts of Bulcote.

The Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands are generally characterised by a varied, undulating landscape with a traditional pattern of farms and small rural villages nestled low in the valleys (known locally as ‘dumbles’ and sometimes very steeply incised) and on the lower slopes. Villages are linear, often with narrow routes through the centre. Red brick properties are characteristic, in a range of styles, usually with pantile roofs.

The rising pantile roofline of the villages is visible from higher ground and church spires in particular are prominent, but rarely protrude above the horizon. Views from these ridgelines are long and open, over rolling farmland and villages nestled in smaller valleys. Hedgerows and linear riparian belts of trees often filter views of settlement edges; the settlements appear well integrated into the landscape.

The Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands locally have a generally high to moderate sensitivity to development, with a good to very good landscape condition. MN41 has a high sensitivity and very good condition. This sensitivity is due in part to a unified pattern of elements both visually and functionally.

The sensitivity and condition are combined to provide the context for suggested landscape actions for the Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands. For the areas around Bulcote these are generally to conserve.

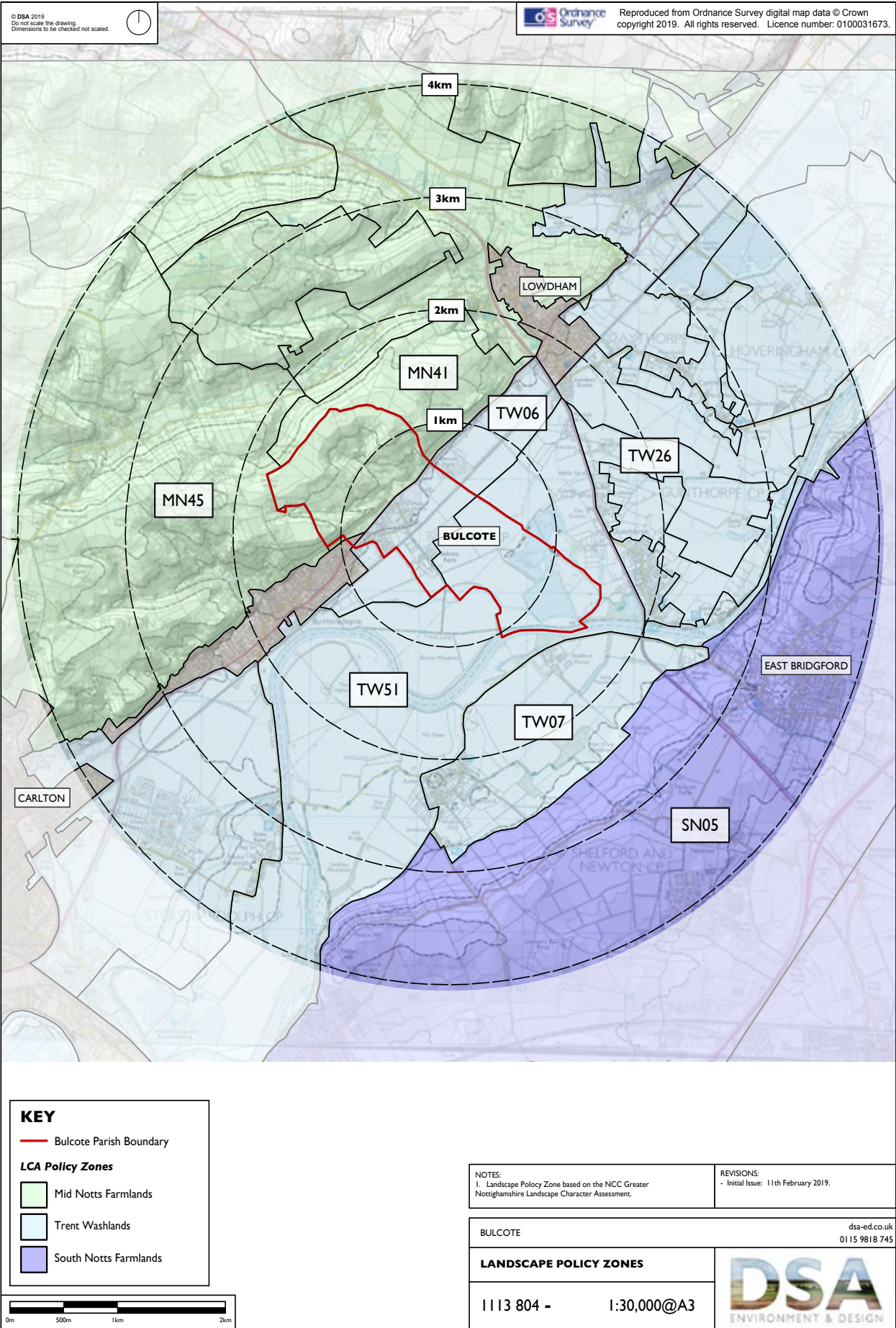
The landscape action guidelines include:

Landscape features:

- Conserve existing historic field pattern;
- Conserve and enhance the ecological diversity of deciduous woodland, particularly Ploughmans and Boughton Park ancient woodland;
- Conserve and enhance hedgerows where these are gappy and in poor condition, particularly internal hedgerows. Seek opportunities to restore the historic field pattern/ boundaries where these have been lost and introduce more hedgerow trees.

Built features:

- Conserve the vernacular character of the existing villages if Bulcote and Lowdham;
- Limit development to periphery of villages to prevent urban sprawl;
- Maintain use of vernacular materials, style and scale in any new developments.

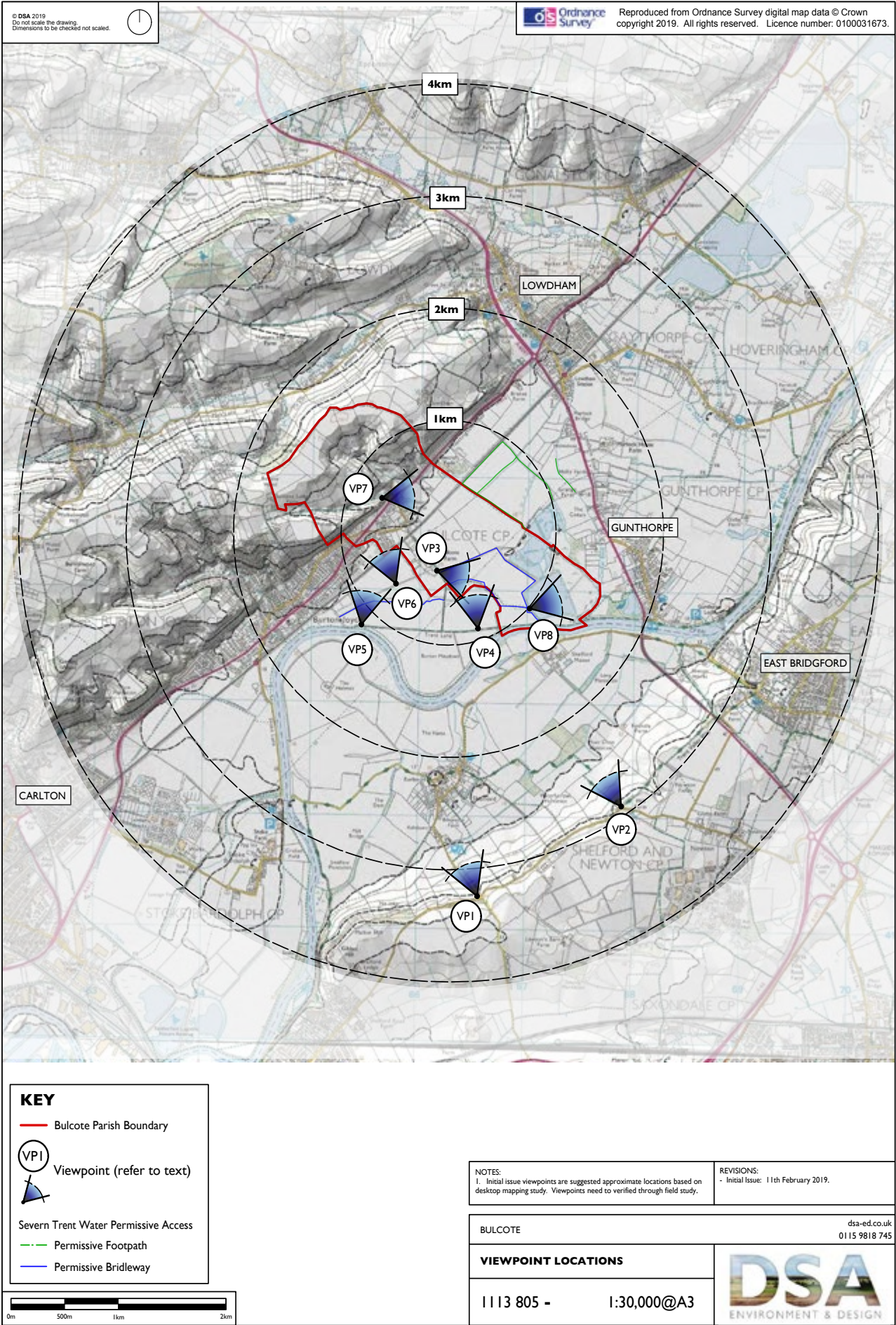


VIEWPOINTS

As described in the previous sections Bulcote lies at a junction of many ‘different’ character areas showing that locally the landscape varies considerably. Topography is the main influence, with the contrast between the rising ground to the north west and the flat Trent valley to the south east being especially evident. Scattered trees and mature woodland are also strong influences on the area. It is this combination of slope and flat expanse that enable the characteristic expansive views out (and also in) across the Trent Valley, with the intermittent woodland framing these views.

Views of the settlement are generally few and scattered. The presence of mature vegetation further reduces the visibility of built form at the village centre. This contrasts with the views available of and from the higher ground.

Through desktop analysis of mapping and site visits, including consultation, key viewpoints have been picked out and explored in the following pages.



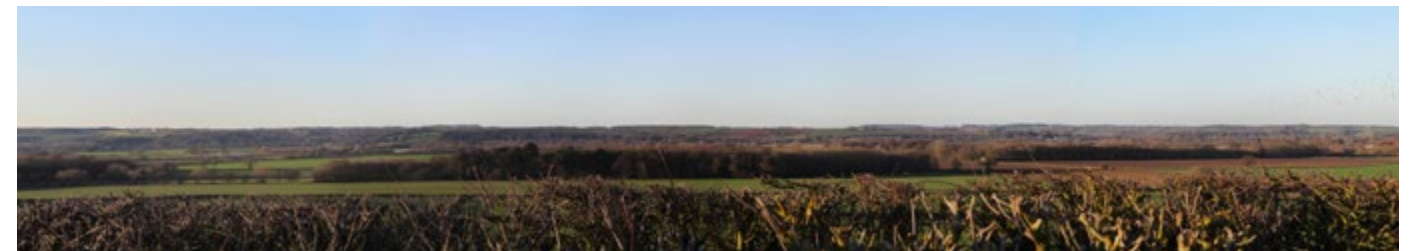
VP1

Arguably one of the most important views towards Bulcote is from the junction of Shelford Hill, Shelford Road and Oatfield Lane and is fairly typical of views close by. This spot has been designated as an 'official' viewpoint and is interpreted as such with signage in a small layby. The view looks directly north west across the Trent Valley from the opposite valley side at an elevation of around 50m. The settlements of Shelford directly in front and Carlton on the edge of Nottingham to the west can be clearly seen on the valley floor as can the recently erected wind turbine north of Stoke Bardolph. Open fields and woodland exert a strong influence. The newer development in Burton Joyce can be seen rising up the valley side. Bulcote (village) however sits lower in the valley amongst the mature vegetation with only the eastern end becoming visible where tree cover breaks down.



VP2

Travelling further east along Shelford Road, to the junction with the Trent Valley Way long distance footpath the importance of mature woodland vegetation in breaking up views becomes apparent. Waterfurrows and Moor Close plantations start to screen views of built form south of the River Trent and focus views towards the river bluff to the north. Bulcote still sits low amongst the trees, with some built form visible to the east, with views of the larger settlement at Lowdham become apparent further east.



VP3

Characteristic of the Trent Washlands, due to the trimmed (and in some cases gappy) hedges with very occasional trees, are expansive views over the flat landscape. This view shows a junction on the permissive access network over hard surfaced tracks indicating good (and relatively extensive) access throughout this part of the parish. A number of detractors identified in the local character assessment can be seen from here including the large agricultural sheds, pylon lines and gappy hedges.



VP4

This view is from the bridleway close to the River Trent known as 'Trent Lane' (and is a rare gap in the vegetation to the northern side). It again demonstrates the importance of mature vegetation in this low-lying landscape to provide screening to built elements. Even parts of Lowdham and Burton Joyce that have encroached up the slope are difficult to see from here. This draws more attention to the noted detractors of the pylon line and large agricultural buildings at Bulcote Farm.



VP5

Is further west along the same bridleway close to the River Trent, as it reaches Burton Joyce. From here the built form is still difficult to see amongst the mature vegetation. Built form on the ridge can be seen above the trees and some buildings through breaks in the tree line. The mature vegetation closes down the previously more open views that were available from further south. The permissive route network extends right along the river valley at this point.



VP6

This view is one of the few available in the area where the built form of Bulcote village breaks the horizon line and can be clearly seen in the landscape. A distinct difference can be seen between the darker roofed buildings that sit amongst the mature vegetation to the left and the houses that have no mature vegetation surrounding them (the cottages associated with the model farm).



VP7

A view from the steps of the church in the northern part of Bulcote showing how mature the vegetation associated with the village is. The main transport route through the village (A612) can be seen in the foreground, but views out of the village are largely screened by the trees.



VP8

A distinctive feature of the western side of the parish landscape is the large open (and partially wooded) remains of gravel extraction. These form several extensive water bodies with relatively shallow margins, but little marginal vegetation.



MANAGING CHANGE

How Bulcote relates to its wider landscape setting is key to understanding its character and identity. The older core of the village sits at the edge of the Trent valley and developed as a nucleated settlement with some more recent development effectively joining it to Burton Joyce.

The strong agricultural presence is a key landscape characteristic around Bulcote common to local landscape character areas. Trent Washlands to the south characterised by a flat low lying landscape and Mid Nottinghamshire Farmlands to the north with a varied, undulating landscape. This combination gives rise to some very good long range views.

The type of views does vary. Open and expansive views are available from the higher ground to the south over the Trent Washlands, towards the wooded slope to the north. The Trent Washlands generally have enclosed views channelled along the valley, but in places where hedgerow boundaries are degraded and gappy, more expansive views are available.

In fact, trees exert a strong influence on local landscape character. Individual trees within the village frame and control views, and ‘soften’ built form as viewed from a distance. Blocks of woodland frame the settlement and screen areas of housing.

PRESSURES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In landscape character terms, two main pressures for change appear to be present. The first derives from desire to build larger houses and to continue development into the open farmland to the south. Here built form would become more prominent as it would not benefit from the screening afforded to the rest of village by mature vegetation, in particular trees.

New development should be concentrated within the existing built-up area. In particular, development on higher ground towards the ridgeline, like that present in the neighbouring Burton Joyce, should be resisted. It is especially important, to conserve the character of the village setting, to avoid built development in the open fields near the river. This would help to maintain the quality of views across the Trent valley. Some development may be accommodated close into the existing built form, at a lower elevation and using strong planting belts (along existing field boundaries) to reduce visual impact and connect with existing blocks of vegetation. Bulcote has a very strong and relatively ‘tree rich’ setting, which contrasts with other local villages like Lowdham and Shelford. Loss of mature trees would increase visual prominence of built form in short-range views but also from views across the Trent Valley.

The second form of pressure for change would be the coalescence of Bulcote with Burton Joyce to the southwest. Care should be taken not to weaken the character of the village at this sensitive point. In particular, concentrating new development close to the existing centre of Bulcote, and integrating this with mature tree planting to maintain the strong screening of built form locally, would help to maintain a separate identity.

Built development can be accommodated without undue erosion of landscape quality. Doing this would focus on the retention of existing vegetation, both as individual specimens and blocks of established woodland.

A narrow range of materials, building detailing and boundary treatments help to give the village a strong character. Red brick and pantile are the characteristic materials of the historic village. Boundaries are commonly very large hedges, with hedgerow trees and, as we note above mature garden and street trees are important components of the character of Bulcote.



SECTION 4: BULCOTE BFL12

PRODUCING DESIGN PROPOSALS

One of the most effective ways of ensuring new design proposals are of the highest quality and that they enhance the character and identity of an area is to produce them through a robust process. Many design guides are heavily descriptive, telling you what exists, but fewer are propositional or help in structuring the process in a way that helps achieve better outcomes.

Build for Life 12 was written specifically to address this issue. It deals not just with basic principles and good practice but introduces a process for how to design good places.

This Guide uses a modified version of Building for Life 12, where the core universal design principles remain untouched, but where the design prompts around 'do's' and 'don'ts' are changed to respect the specific character of Bulcote.

Design teams working in Bulcote are expected to use the BfL12 methodology to produce their design proposals. This should be evident not just through submitting a design checklist, but in how design and access statements are structured. The design process should be presented in a step-wise fashion demonstrating how each of the BfL12 questions has been responded to.

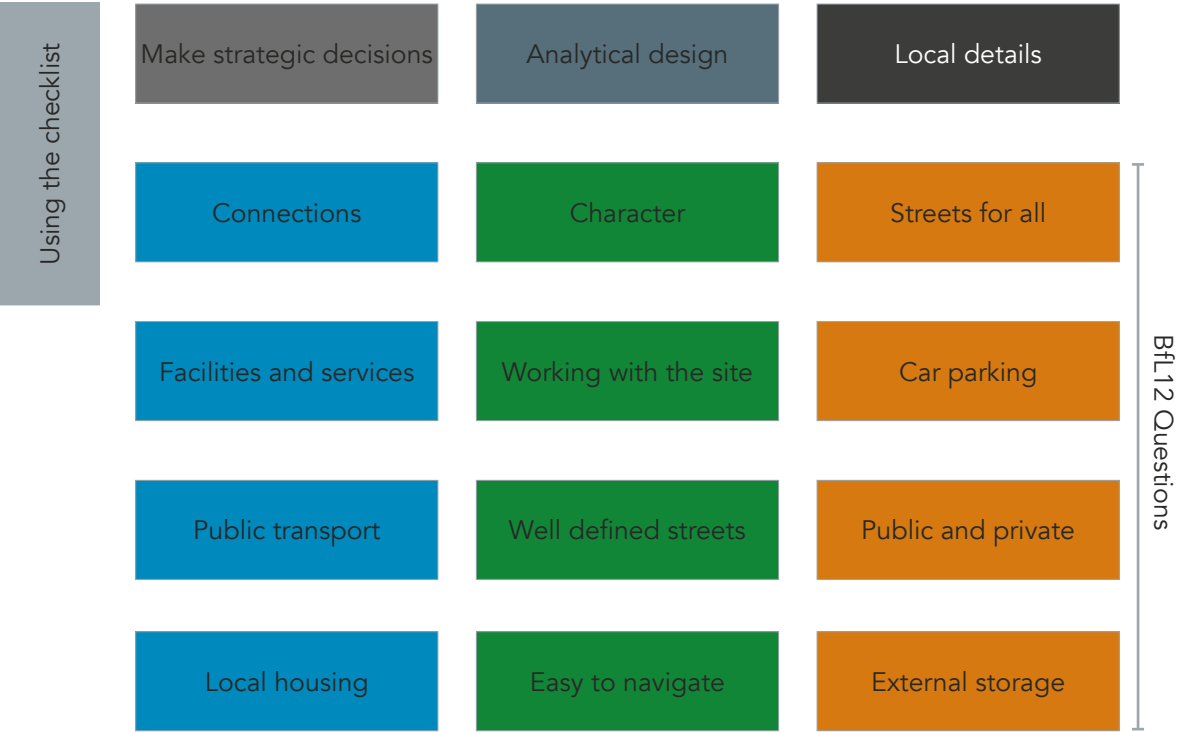
The Bulcote Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the decision-making process when assessing planning applications. It is expected that design teams demonstrate how their proposal meets the requirements of BfL12 so that planning committee members can understand both the quality of the proposal and how it has been produced.



12 EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND QUESTIONS

Each question is followed by a series of additional questions that are intended as prompts to stimulate discussions and ensure that all aspects of a scheme have been well considered. We’ve also provided five recommendations for how you might respond with the aim of offering a range of responses.

Recommendations are designed to stimulate discussion with local communities, the project team, the local authority and other stakeholders to help you find the right solution locally. No one is required to meet all recommendations, instead they are prompts to guide you to better design solutions.







Stage one: Think about what the village as a whole needs, or what new residents will need beyond the site.



Stage two: Bring the character and identity of the village into the design thinking through analysis and interpretation.

Stage three: Work within the site to express local character at the detailed level, including plots and gardens.





Integrating into the neighbourhood

-  **1 Connections**
Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site?
-  **2 Facilities and services**
Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?
-  **3 Public transport**
Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?
-  **4 Meeting local housing requirements**
Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

Creating a place

-  **5 Character**
Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?
-  **6 Working with the site and its context**
Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates?
-  **7 Creating well defined streets and spaces**
Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?
-  **8 Easy to find your way around**
Is the scheme designed to make it easy to find your way around?

Street & home

-  **9 Streets for all**
Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?
-  **10 Car parking**
Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?
-  **11 Public and private spaces**
Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe?
-  **12 External storage and amenity space**
Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and cycles?



NATIONAL POLICY AND BFL12

By using BfL12 as a dialogue tool throughout the design process, compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) can be demonstrated. BfL12 is aligned to the NPPF and NPPG. By following BfL12's questions and the guidance provided within this booklet, new developments can be designed to accord with design policies set out within the NPPF.

The table below illustrates the relationship between the twelve questions, the NPPF and NPPG. BfL12 is therefore an easy way to ensure that proposed developments meet national policy requirements – a more streamlined way of working than working through 24 individual NPPF policy references. Planning Inspectors are increasingly referring to BfL12 when considering the design merits (or deficiencies) of planning applications.

The Bulcote BfL has been approved and endorsed by the Parish Council as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. It is designed to be used to support consultation and community participation.

It will also be used to: guide masterplans and design codes; frame pre-application discussions (applicants will be expected to self-assess their emerging proposals); inform design reviews; structure design and access statements; support local decision making, give a framework to the design section in committee reports (with the full BfL assessment potentially included as an appendix); and where necessary, justify conditions relating to detailed aspects of design, such as materials.

Building For Life 12 Question	Links with the NPPF (2018)	Links with Planning Policy Guidance (2014*)
Integrating into the neighbourhood		
1. Connections	84, 91a), 98, 103, 104c),108a)	006, 008, 012, 015, 022
2. Facilities and services	72b), 83d), 85a), 91a), 104a), 110, 118a), 127e), 129	006, 014, 015, 017
3. Public transport	84, 110a), 102c), 105c), 123a), 137b)	012, 014, 022
4. Meeting local housing requirements	14b) and c), 15, 73, 75-78, 92e), 118, 145g)	014, 015, 017
Creating a place		
5. Character	79e), 85a), 110c), 125, 170b) and c)	006, 007, 015, 020, 023
6. Working with the site and its context	57, 62, 72d), 84, 85, 104c), 108, 118, 121, 123c), 127e), 137, 158, 163, 168, 170a), 175, 180, 189	002, 007, 012, 020, 023
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces	8b), 91a), 102e), 110c), 127	008, 012, 021, 023
8. Easy to find your way around	8b), 91a), 110, 127	022
Street and home		
9. Streets for all	91a), 102, 110, 127d)	006, 008, 012, 022, 042
10. Car parking	122c), 105, 106	010, 040
11. Public and private space	8b) and c), 83d), 91b), 92a), 96, 97, 99-101, 127d), e) and f)	006, 007, 009, 010, 015, 016, 018
12. External storage and amenity	127	040

Generally:
2018 NPPF: 124-127, 130, 131
2014 PPG*: 001, 004, 005, 029, 031 – 038

*2014 paragraph references within 'Design' guidance category. PPG on design due to be updated in spring 2019, to align with 2018 NPPF (MHCLG, November 2019)



Q1: Connections

Does the scheme integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site?

We recommend

Thinking about where connections can and should be made; and about how best the new development can integrate into the existing neighbourhood rather than creating an inward looking cul-de-sac development like that around the Spinney and The Lees.

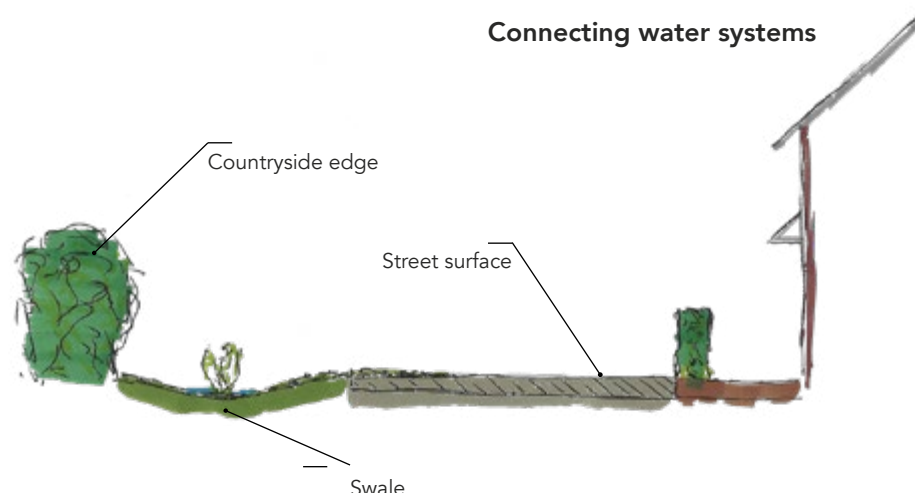
Remembering that people who live within a new development and people who live nearby may want to walk through the development to get somewhere else, such as the main centre in Burton Joyce.

Thinking carefully before blocking or redirecting existing routes, particularly where these are well used. Carefully consider connectivity around the edges of the development, bearing in mind that a network of private drives can frustrate and block pedestrian and cycle movement.

Ensuring that all street, pedestrian and cycle only routes pass in front of people's homes, rather than to the back of them.

Remembering that **connections are needed for natural systems too**, so green and blue corridors should be provided where possible to connect ecological systems across a site. The stream and hedgerow systems in Bulcote provide an important mesh which should be enhanced where possible.

An important characteristic of Bulcote is the way in which water is managed. A system of streams, ditches and swales running next to streets should be used in new development where water needs to be conveyed.



We recommend that you avoid

Seeing connectivity only in term of access to a development and not considering how the layout of a development could be designed to improve connectivity across the wider neighbourhood or to the river Trent and the footpath network to the south.

Not considering where future connections might need to be made - or could be provided - in the future. This could include links to footpath networks beyond the site as well as to existing streets.

Leaving space between the end of a new route and the edge of a site that could later become a ransom strip, stopping developments next to each other from joining up.

Addressing green and blue corridors as if there were an add-on rather than integral to the layout. Retrofitting ecological corridors is difficult, so they should be included at the outset. New corridors should form part of the public realm rather than be placed in underground systems.

1a Where should vehicles come in and out of the development?

1b Should there be pedestrian and cycle only routes into and through the development? If so, where should they go?

1c Where should new streets be placed, could they be used to cross the development site and help create linkages across the scheme and into the existing neighbourhood and surrounding places?

1d How should the new development relate to existing development? What should happen at the edges of the development site?



Linking all systems: A key characteristic of Bulcote is its green and blue links, and the way they integrate with human movement systems. Effort should be made to use this approach in new development.



Sightlines: Many of the streets in Bulcote have good sight lines, with forward visibility extending to 100m or more. Short, deflected streets are not in keeping with the character of Bulcote's street system.



Footpaths: Whilst many of the streets are rural and 'shared' in Bulcote, some have pavements behind verges. Connectivity for all modes needs to be tailored for the conditions.



Streets as green corridors: The water and green edges to the streets in Bulcote allow them to perform a green corridor function. New development should put in the infrastructure to make these connections into the streets.



Q2: Facilities and services

Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, parks, play areas, pubs or cafes?

We recommend

Planning development so that everyday facilities and services are located within a short walk of people's homes. The layout of a development and the quality of connections it provides can make a significant impact on walking distances and people's travel choices. Direct access to Burton Joyce should be enhanced where possible

Providing access to facilities through the provision of safe, convenient and direct paths or cycle routes. Consider whether there are any barriers to pedestrian/cycle access (for example, busy roads with a lack of crossing points) and how these barriers can be removed or lessened.

Locating new facilities (if provided) where the greatest number of existing and new residents can access them easily, recognising that this may be at the edge of a new development or on a through route; but consider whether existing facilities can be enhanced before proposing new ones.

Creating new places within a development where people can meet each other such as public spaces, community buildings, cafes and restaurants. Aim to get these delivered as early as possible. Think carefully about how spaces could be used and design them with flexibility in mind, considering where more active spaces should be located so as to avoid creating potential conflict between users and adjacent residents.

We recommend that you avoid

Locating play areas directly in front of people's homes where they may become a source of tension due to potential for noise and nuisance.

Carefully consider the distance between play equipment and homes in addition to the type of play equipment selected and the target age group.

Creating the potential for future conflict if residential uses and commercial premises are not combined thoughtfully. Noise and odours need to be considered carefully, as do servicing requirements and the hours of operation.

2a Are there enough facilities and services in the local area to support the development?
If not, what is needed?

Where new facilities are proposed:

2b Are these facilities what the area needs?

2c Are these new facilities located in the right place? If not, where should they go?

2d Does the layout encourage walking, cycling or using public transport to reach them?



Burton Joyce: The relationship between Bulcote and Burton Joyce is critical as the facilities in Burton Joyce are well-used by local residents (main walking route below).



Heritage: Bulcote is a heritage village, and as such new development should contribute positively to the enjoyment of the village's existing heritage assets.





Q3: Public transport

Does the scheme have good access to public transport to help reduce car dependency?

We recommend

Maximising the number of homes on sites that are close to good, high frequency public transport routes, but ensure that this does not compromise the wider design qualities of the scheme and its relationship with its surroundings. The main routes in the area run along Nottingham Road and through Burton Joyce.

Carefully considering the layout and orientation of routes to provide as many people as possible with the quickest, safest, attractive and most convenient possible routes between homes and public transport.

Considering how the layout of the development can maximise the number of homes within a short walk from their nearest bus, tram or train stop where new public transport routes are planned to pass through the development. Locate public transport stops in well used places, ensuring that they are accessible for all, well overlooked and lit.

Considering how the development can contribute towards encouraging more sustainable travel choices, for example by establishing a residents car club, providing electric car charging points, creating live/work units or homes that include space for a home office.

We recommend that you avoid

Thinking about development sites in isolation from their surroundings, so that existing public transport services do not benefit from new passengers.

Where encouraging through-traffic might be problematic, bus-only routes (or bus plugs) can be used to connect a new development to an existing development and create a more viable bus service without creating new routes cars.

Relying on bus services to come into new developments when often the existing routes to the edges of developments are the most convenient. This means that existing bus routes need to be easy to get to.

3a What can the development do to encourage more people (both existing and new residents) to use public transport more often?

3b Where should new public transport stops be located?



Access to public transport: A bus stop sitting right outside the door on Main Road (North). The bus routes in the area are shown below.





Q4: Meeting local housing requirements

Does the development have a mix of housing types and tenures that suit local requirements?

We recommend

Demonstrating how the scheme's housing mix is justified with regard to planning policy, the local context and viability.

Aiming for a housing mix that will create a broad-based community.

Considering how to incorporate a range of property sizes and types, avoiding creating too many larger or too many smaller homes from being grouped together.

Providing starter homes and homes for the elderly or downsizing households. People who are retired can help enliven a place during the working day. Providing for downsizing households can also help to rebalance the housing market and may help reduce the need for affordable housing contributions over time.

Designing homes and streets to be tenure-blind, so that it is not easy to differentiate between homes that are private and those that are shared ownership or rented.

Designing to the highest possible standards in terms of sustainability and adaptability, so that future residents have a home that is affordable to run and that can be adapted as their needs change over time.

Developments that create homes for one market segment unless the development is very small.

We recommend that you avoid

Using exterior features that enable people to easily identify market sale from rented / shared ownership homes, such as the treatment of garages or entrances.

Reducing the level of parking provision for rented / shared ownership homes. Rows of unbroken frontage parking often highlight affordable housing within a development and reduce the quality of the street.

Designing only to the minimum standards for sustainability and adaptability, unless viability is truly an issue and can be demonstrated as such.

4a What types of homes, tenure and price range are needed in the area (for example, starter homes, family homes or homes for those downsizing)?

4b Is there a need for different types of home ownership (such as part buy and part rent) or rented properties to help people on lower incomes?

4c Are the different types and tenures spatially integrated to create a cohesive community?



Smaller units: Terraces are an appropriate model of housing for smaller units in Bulcote.



Classical proportions: Larger homes sitting in generous plots typify the village.



Q5: Character

Does the scheme create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character?

We recommend

Identifying whether there are any architectural, landscape or other features, such as special materials that give a place a distinctive sense of character as a starting point for design. It may be possible to adapt elevations of standard house types to complement local character. Distinctiveness can also be delivered through new designs that respond to local characteristics in a contemporary way.

Exploring what could be done to start to give a place a locally inspired identity if an area lacks a distinctive character or where there is no overarching character. The use of brick and pantile for buildings and walls is a key characteristic of the area, and there is great scope for using vernacular details such as this in modern ways to reinforce local character.

Landscaping treatments are often fundamental to character, especially boundary treatments. For Bulcote and surrounding areas, post and rail fencing in split-logs or 'rivens' is commonplace, as are boundary hedges and large trees.

Introducing building styles, details and public realm features that can be readily familiar to someone visiting the development for the first time. Where an area has a strong and positive local identity, consider using this as a cue to reinforce the place's overall character.

Varying the density, built form and appearance or style of development to help create areas with different character within larger developments. Using a range of features will help to give a place a sense of identity and will help people find their way around. Subtle detailing can help reinforce the character of areas and in doing so, provide a level of richness and delight.

Working with the local planning and highway authority to investigate whether local or otherwise different materials can be used in place of standard highways surface materials and traffic furniture. Be creative and adventurous by exploring the potential to innovate - develop new ideas and build with new materials.

We recommend that you avoid

Using the lack of local character as a justification for further nondescript or placeless development. Ignoring local traditions or character without robust justification.

Using non-native planting for landscape treatments, especially for boundaries and street trees. The landscape character of the Trent Valley and surrounding is an especially relevant and useful source of inspiration in this area.

Timber knee rail or other bland and cheap boundary treatments rather than the types common in the area. Hedges for plots, post-and-rail fencing made of locally sourced timber, and walls in brick reference the character of the area. Native hedge species can be used to soften the street and improve biodiversity.

Using materials that do not support the character and identity of the area, such as buff bricks, weather boarding, and roofing materials that are out of character.

5a How can the development be designed to have a local or distinctive identity?

5b Are there any distinctive characteristics within the area, such as building shapes, styles, colours and materials or the character of streets and spaces that the development should draw inspiration from?



Relating buildings to streets: It is not uncommon for buildings and boundaries to have complex relationships with the street in Bulcote such as above.



Simple materials: A simple palette of materials combined with detailing help to create a calm and attractive character to the buildings.



Water in view: The landscape character of the area is expressed within the public realm, as seen here with the stream.



Clay pantiles: Red clay pantile roofs are commonplace, and in the village core render can be found on some buildings.



Q6: Working with the site and its context

Does the scheme take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), trees and plants, wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimate?



We recommend

Being a considerate neighbour. Have regard to the height, layout, building line and form of existing development at the boundaries of the development site. Frame views of existing landmarks and create new ones by exploiting features such as existing mature trees to create memorable spaces. Orientate homes so that as many residents as possible can see these features from within their homes. Carefully consider views onto the development from the hills to the north and how best these can be designed.

Assessing the potential of any older buildings or structures for conversion. Retained buildings can become instant focal points within a development. Where possible, avoid transporting building waste and spoil off site by exploring opportunities to recycling building materials within the development.

Working with contours of the land rather than against them, exploring how built form and detailed housing design can creatively respond to the topographical character; thinking carefully about the roofscape. Explore how a holistic approach can be taken to the design of sustainable urban drainage by exploiting the topography and geology of streams and ditches common in Bulcote.

Exploring opportunities to protect, enhance and create wildlife habitats. Be creative in landscape design by creating networks on ditches and hedges that can act as biodiversity corridors.

Considering the potential to benefit from solar gain through building orientation and design where this can be achieved without compromising good urban design or creating issues associated with over heating. Finally have regard to any local micro-climate and its impact.

We recommend that you avoid

Leaving an assessment of whether there are any views into and from the site that merit a design response until late in the design process. Bulcote's relationship with the surrounding landscape is integral to the character and identity of the places in the area. Views out onto the Trent Valley should be incorporated into new development rather than blocked by buildings.

Transporting uncontaminated spoil away from the site that could be used for landscaping or adding level changes where appropriate.

Simply turfing over retained spoil without a good layer of topsoil. Existing soil often contains important micro-organisms that can aid biodiversity.

Retaining existing landscape features without thinking about whether they are viable or contribute to the quality of the new development.

Not carefully considering opportunities for rainwater attenuation both on plot and off. Swales and ditches are commonplace in this part of the country and should be integrated into the development within the public realm.

6a Are there any views into or from the site that need to be carefully considered?

6b Are there any existing trees, hedgerows or other features, such as streams that need to be carefully designed into the development?

6c Should the development keep any existing building(s) on the site? If so, how could they be used?



Connected water systems: Here, existing ditches are integrated into the surroundings of the village. Identifying and connecting to existing water networks should be explored in new designers.



Mature trees: Mature trees effectively hide the village in the landscape. Space should be made for large trees within new development.



Q7: Creating well defined streets and spaces

Are buildings designed and positioned with landscaping to define and enhance streets and spaces and are buildings designed to turn street corners well?

We recommend

Creating streets that are principally defined by the position of buildings rather than the route of the carriageway. Variations in the width of the street can add interest and allow for parking and landscape.

Designing building that turn corners well, so that both elevations seen from the street have windows to them, rather than offering blank walls to the street. Consider using windows that wrap around corners to maximise surveillance and bring generous amounts of natural light into people's homes.

Using a pattern of street types to create a hierarchy, and especially considering their enclosure, keeping to the well proportioned height to width ratios relative to the type of street.

Designing streets so that the hierarchy reinforces their role in organising movement on site, with more important streets for moving around being easily identifiable to visitors.

Varying the materials applied to buildings so that they support the hierarchy of streets, with more expensive materials use on the primary streets and most cost-conscious treatments applied to more minor streets.

Respecting basic urban design principles when designing layouts. For example, forming strong perimeter blocks, providing active frontages, and avoiding routes that are poorly overlooked.

Orientating front doors to face the street rather than being tucked around the back or sides of buildings.

We recommend that you avoid

Streets that lack successful spatial enclosure by exceeding recommended height to width ratios. Where a wide street is needed, tree planting can help add enclosure.

Over reliance on front-of-plot parking that tends to create over wide streets dominated by parked cars and driveways unless there is sufficient space to use strong and extensive planting to compensate the lack of built form enclosure.

Homes that back on to the street or offer a blank elevation to the street, although for some plots the garden can present its edge to the street. For corners, the new home should address the highest order street with its front and put any return frontage onto the lower order street.

Locating garages and /or driveways (or service areas and substations) on street corners or other prominent locations, such as the 'end point' of a view up or down a street.

Open frontages to plots, so that the private space is not clearly defined from the public streets and footpaths. Instead, boundaries should be vertically delineated.

7a Are buildings and landscaping schemes used to create enclosed streets and spaces?

7c Do all fronts of buildings, including front doors and habitable rooms, face the street?

7b Do buildings turn corners well?



Defining the street: A simple building line delineating the extent of the plot, and buildings adjacent to the street help to support the usability and attractiveness of this street.



Well-overlooked spaces: Public routes that are well-overlooked are more likely to be used and less likely to attract antisocial behaviour. Here, the street is addressed by buildings on all sides, helping to make the street attractive, welcoming and safe.



Q8: Easy to find your way around

Is the development designed to make it easy to find your way around?

We recommend

Making it easy for people to create a mental map of the place by incorporating features that people will notice and remember. Occasional render buildings, large trees or openings between buildings work well for this purpose within Bulcote.

Create a network of well defined streets and spaces with clear routes, local landmarks and marker features. For larger developments it may be necessary to create distinct character areas. Marker features, such as corner buildings and public spaces combined with smaller scale details such as colour, variety and materials will further enhance legibility.

Providing views through to existing or new landmarks and local destinations, such as the Trent Valley, woodlands or tall structures help people understand where they are in relation to other places and find their way around.

Making it easy for all people to get around including those with visual or mobility impairments.

Identifying and considering important viewpoints within a development, such as views towards the end of a street. Anticipate other, more subtle viewpoints, for example a turn or curve in the street and how best these can be best addressed.

Creating a logical hierarchy of streets. A street lined with verges or ditches through a development can be an easy and effective way to help people find their way around.

We recommend that you avoid

Creating a concept plan for a scheme that does not include careful consideration as to how people will create a mental map of the place. Site planning should ensure that special and memorable structures and planting support wayfinding.

Dead-ends, or routes that appear to lead to somewhere important for the wider public but then stop. Allowing views along a street helps to avoid this.

Blocking views of landscape and ridge lines often visible within Bulcote, so that a connection to the wider landscape setting is lost.

8a Will the development be easy to find your way around? If not, what could be done to make it easier to find your way around?

8b Are there any obvious landmarks?

8c Are the routes between places clear and direct?



Visual connectivity: Make sure that people can see where routes lead to. Here, a strong visual connection between the main street near the entrance of the village helps people find the things they want.



Direct routes: Simple, direct streets and paths are easier to navigate. Making connections as direct as possible, avoiding unnecessary deflections and curves, is a key component of easy to navigate places.



Q9: Streets for all

Are streets designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds and allow them to function as social spaces?

We recommend

Creating streets for people where vehicle speeds are designed not to exceed 20 mph. Work with the Highways Authority to create developments where buildings and detailed street design is used to tame vehicle speeds. Sharp or blind corners force drivers to slow when driving around them while buildings that are closer together also make drivers proceed more cautiously. 20mph zones are becoming increasingly popular with local communities and are a cost effective way of changing driver behaviour in residential areas.

Thinking about how streets can be designed as social and play spaces, where the pedestrians and cyclists come first, rather than simply as routes for cars and vehicles to pass through.

Using the best quality hard landscaping scheme that is viable without cluttering the streets and public spaces.

Designing homes that offer good natural surveillance opportunities; carefully considering the impact of internal arrangement on the safety and vitality of the street. Consider maximising the number of street facing rooms to enhance surveillance opportunities creating a stronger relationship between the home and the street.

Creating homes that offer something to the street, thinking carefully about detail, craftsmanship and build quality. Afford particular attention to the space between the street and front doors. A thoughtful and well designed entrance area and front door scheme will enhance the kerb appeal of homes whilst also contributing towards creating a visually interesting street. Carefully consider changes in level, the interface between different materials, quality finishing and the discreet placement of utility boxes.

We recommend that you avoid

20mph speed limits enforced with excessive signage or expensive compliance systems or features.

Designing a scheme that allows drivers to cross pedestrian footpaths at speed to access their driveways. Consider how hard and soft landscaping can be used to make drivers approach their street and home more cautiously and responsibly.

Minimise steps and level changes to make them as easy as possible for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

A pavement that has lots of variation in levels and dropped kerbs to enable cars to cross it can encourage unofficial parking up on the kerb and may make movement less easy for those pushing a pushchair, in a wheelchair or walking with a stick or walking frame.

9a Are streets pedestrian friendly and are they designed to encourage cars to drive slower and more carefully?

9b Are streets designed in a way that they can be used as social spaces, such as places for children to play safely or for neighbours to converse?



Shared surface: In places with very low vehicle movements (less than 100 per day) it may be appropriate to create a shared surface lane like this one.



Streets for people: Minimal street clutter, lots of greenery and a surface treatment that encourages low vehicle speeds help make this street a place in its own right.



Q10: Car parking

Is resident and visitor parking sufficient and well integrated so that it does not dominate the street?

We recommend

Anticipating car parking demand taking into account the location, availability and frequency of public transport together with local car ownership trends. Provide sufficient parking space for visitors.

Designing streets to accommodate on street parking but allow for plenty of trees and planting to balance the visual impact of parked cars and reinforce the spatial enclosure of the street. On street parking has the potential to be both space efficient and can also help to create a vibrant street, where neighbours have more opportunity to see and meet other people.

Prevent anti-social parking. Very regular and formal parking treatments have the potential to reduce anti-social parking. People are less prone to parking in places where they should not be parking, where street design clearly defines other uses, such as pavements or landscape features.

Making sure people can see their car from their home or can park it somewhere they know it will be safe. Where possible avoid rear parking courts.

Using a range of parking solutions appropriate to the context and the types of housing proposed. Where parking is positioned to the front of the property, ensure that at least an equal amount of the frontage is allocated to an enclosed, landscaped front garden as it is for parking to reduce vehicle domination. Where rows of narrow terraces are proposed, consider positioning parking within the street scene.

We recommend that you avoid

Relying on a single parking treatment. A combination of car parking treatments nearly always creates more capacity, visual interest and a more successful place.

Large rear parking courts. When parking courts are less private, they offer greater opportunity for thieves, vandals and those who should not be parking there.

Parking that is not well overlooked or near to the property it serves. Parking that is isolated will be poorly used and will lead to nuisance parking elsewhere.

Layouts that separate homes and facilities from the car, unless the scheme incorporates secure underground car parking.

Using white lining to mark out and number spaces. These are not only costly, but unsightly. It can be cheaper and more aesthetically pleasing to use small metal plates to number spaces, and a few well placed block markers to define spaces.

Not providing a clear and direct route between front doors and on-street parking or not balancing the amount of parking in front of plots with soft relief.

10a Is there enough parking for residents and visitors?

10b Is parking positioned close to people's homes?

10c Are any parking courtyards small in size (generally no more than five properties should use a parking courtyard) and are they well overlooked by neighbouring properties?

10d Are garages well positioned so that they do not dominate the street scene?



Strong boundaries: The hedgerows here hide parking from view.



Open fronts: Cars detract from the street scene where not well integrated into the plot.



Courtyards on plot: Bringing parking into the plot like this makes use of a farmstead-type arrangement to good effect.



Open to the street: Less successful is this corner plot, that fails to hide the car or provide a good edge to the street.



Q11: Public & private space

Will public and private spaces be clearly defined and designed to have appropriate access and be able to be well managed and safe in use?

We recommend

Clearly defining private and public spaces with clear vertical markers, such as hedges, walling or post and rail fencing. Where there is a modest building set back (less than 1m), a simple change in surface materials may suffice. Select native species that will form a strong and effective boundary, such as hedge forming shrubs rather than low growing specimens or exotic or ornamental plants. Ensure sufficient budget provision is allocated to ensure a high quality boundary scheme is delivered.

Creating spaces that are well overlooked by neighbouring properties. Check that there is plenty of opportunity for residents to see streets and spaces from within their homes. Provide opportunities for direct and oblique views up and down the street which can further increase opportunities for natural surveillance.

Thinking about what types of spaces are created and where they should be located. Consider how spaces can be designed to be multifunctional, serving as wide an age group as possible and how they could contribute towards enhancing biodiversity.

Think about where people might want to walk and what routes they might want to take and plan paths accordingly providing lighting if required. Consider the sun path and shadowing throughout the day and which areas will be in light rather than shade. Areas more likely to benefit from sunshine are often the most popular places for people to gather.

Exploring whether local communities would wish to see new facilities created or existing ones upgraded. Think how play can be approached in a holistic manner, for example by distributing play equipment or playable spaces and features across an entire open space.

Providing a management and maintenance plan to include a sustainable way to fund public or shared communal open spaces.

We recommend that you avoid

Informal or left over grassed areas that offer no public or private use or value and do little or nothing to support biodiversity.

Avoid creating small fenced play areas set within a larger area of open space where the main expense is the cost of fencing.

Landscaping that is cheap, of poor quality, poorly located and inappropriate for its location. Low growing shrubs rarely survive well in places where people are likely to accidentally walk over them (such as besides parking bays).

Narrow, segregated service strips at the side of carriageways that have the appearance of a very narrow footway.

11a What types of open space should be provided within this development?

11c How will they be looked after?

11b Is there a need for play facilities for children and teenagers? If so, is this the right place or should the developer contribute towards an existing facility in the area that could be made better?



Topography and space: There is potential for the space near to the church to offer a good public space overlooking the village and Trent Valley.



Multifunction: The space at the western edge of the village on Nottingham Road contains a shallow depression for water storage, but can be used as a social space when dry.



Q12: External storage and amenity space

Is there adequate external storage space for bins and recycling, as well as vehicles and cycles?

We recommend

Providing convenient, dedicated bin and recycling storage where bins and crates can be stored out of sight. Check with the local authority to determine exactly what space is required and minimise the distance between storage areas and collection points. Where terraced housing is proposed, consider providing integral stores to the front of the property (such as within an enclosed section of a recessed porch) or by providing secure 'twittens' between properties that provide direct access to the rear of properties.

Designing garages and parking spaces that are large enough to fit a modern family sized car and allow the driver to get out of the car easily. Where local authorities have requirements for garage sizes, parking spaces and circulation space design these into your scheme from the outset. If garages do not meet local requirements, do not count these as a parking space.

Considering whether garages should be counted as a parking space. If garages are to be counted as a parking space, ensure that sufficient alternative storage space is provided for items commonly stored in garages. Consider extending the length of the garage to accommodate storage needs or allowing occupants to use the roof space for extra storage.

Anticipating the realistic external storage requirements of individual households. Residents will usually need a secure place to store cycles and garden equipment. A storage room could be designed to the rear of the property (either attached or detached from the home), reviving the idea of a traditional outhouse. More creative solutions may be needed to satisfy the cycle storage requirements of higher density apartment accommodation.

Thinking carefully about the size and shape of outside amenity space. It is a good idea to ensure that rear gardens are at least equal to the ground floor footprint of the dwelling. Triangular shaped gardens rarely offer a practical, usable space. Allow residents the opportunity to access their garden without having to walk through their home.

We recommend that you avoid

Bin and recycling stores that detract from the quality of the street scene.

Locating bin and recycling stores in places that are inconvenient for residents, or they might find it easier to leave their bin and containers on the street.

Designing garages that are impractical or uncomfortable to use.

Cycle storage that is not secure or is difficult to access.

12a Is storage for bins and recycling items fully integrated, so that these items are less likely to be left on the street?

12b Is access to cycle and other vehicle storage convenient and secure?



Keep it simple: A simple boundary hedge allows the front garden to act as a bin store after this waste has been collected.



Direct access Here, the bin is easy to place on the street and to put away again after due to the gate onto the plot.



SECTION 5: APPENDICES

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