

Area of Separation

Assessment of Potential Housing Sites

Coalville Urban Area

on behalf of

North West Leicestershire District Council

Issue Version

October 2023

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Coalville Urban Area

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Coalville Urban Area is the Principal Town as identified within the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2011-2031) and includes the settlements of both Coalville and Whitwick. An Area of Separation (AOS) is also defined within the overall boundary of the Coalville Urban Area being located between Coalville and Whitwick. The AOS comprises two discrete parts, being separated by Hermitage Road, namely Area A to the south-east and Area B to the north-west as shown on Figure 08 within Appendix 3.
- 1.2 The Landscape Partnership Ltd (TLP) were initially appointed by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) in July 2018 to carry out a study of the AOS, the purpose of which was to provide part of the evidence base in support of the Adopted Local Plan Area of Separation designation (as set out in Policy En5). The up to date version of the AOS Study also provides part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.3 The study was originally completed in July 2019 and subsequently updated in May 2022¹ following the completion of the Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre within the AOS.
- 1.4 It is intended that the May 2022 Area of Separation Study should still form part of the Council's evidence base and that this report on the Assessment of Potential Housing Areas should be read in conjunction with the full extent of the May 2022 study.
- 1.5 The supporting text for Policy En5 states:

.... in the Coalville Urban Area there are two² large, open, undeveloped areas of land which are within the Limits to Development and not subject to the countryside policies, as they are surrounded by built development, but which perform a very important role in maintaining the physical separation between Coalville and Whitwick. Development in this area, if permitted, would result in the physical coalescence of Coalville and Whitwick and the loss of the separate identity of the two settlements. Therefore, these open areas are identified as Areas of Separation and subject to the policy below.

(1) Land between Coalville and Whitwick, as identified on the Policies Map, is designated as an Area of Separation where only agricultural, forestry, nature conservation, leisure and sport and recreation uses

1

https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/area_of_separation_study_update_may_2022/Area%20of%20Separation%20Report%20-%20combined%20report%20and%20appendices%20May%202022.pdf

² Area A and Area B

will be allowed. Any other proposed uses will need to demonstrate why they cannot be accommodated elsewhere within the district.

(2) Development will not be permitted which, either individually or cumulatively, would demonstrably adversely affect or diminish the present open and undeveloped character of the area.

- 1.6 The Inspectors Report (October 2017) of the Examination in Public of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan covered the Area of Separation (AOS) at paragraphs 72-83 and concluded from paragraph 82,'

'It is concluded above that the spatial distribution of new development by the Plan across the Settlement Hierarchy is broadly justified. On balance, I consider there to be overriding merit in the judgement of the Council that the AOSs, as designated, are justified for the life of this Plan, especially taking into account the established commitment to the extensive South East Coalville Urban Extension. Given the AOS designation is justified for the purpose of this Plan, there is no inconsistency between Policy En5 and the aspects of national policy, summarised above, recognising local differences.

83. Importantly though, on the evidence provided to this Examination, there is scope for reconsideration of the detailed boundaries and land uses of the AOS, in the event that it becomes necessary, at any time in the future, for the Plan to be reviewed in the light of increased development needs.

- 1.7 The Inspector's Report therefore suggested a reconsideration of both the detailed boundaries and the land uses of the AOS as part of a future review of the Local Plan. It was for this reason that the initial AOS report of 2018 was commissioned to inform in due course the review of the adopted Local Plan. This current report provides a further review of the situation in the context of the stage the emerging Local Plan has now reached.

Brief

- 1.8 TLP were approached in June 2023 by NWLDC to carry out a further review of the AOS in the context of an increased need for housing allocations in the authority as set out below.
- 1.9 The development strategy to be included in the new Local Plan proposes to continue to identify the Coalville Urban Area as the Principal Town. In accordance with the proposed strategy and taking account of existing commitments, this means that there is a need to identify sufficient land to accommodate a further 2,230 dwellings in the Coalville Urban Area.
- 1.10 The starting point for identifying sites was the Council's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). This identified land for just over 4,200 dwellings in the Coalville Urban Area.

- 1.11 In considering which sites should be proposed for development consideration needed to be given to a broad range of planning factors including accessibility to services and facilities, environmental impacts (such as ecology, heritage etc), any other designations, access to the highway network and deliverability. The decision whether to allocate a site is to be a balanced consideration of all factors.
- 1.12 Work undertaken by officers to date concluded that many of the sites included in the SHELAA are not suitable for a variety of reasons. Therefore, there is a shortfall in provision in the Coalville Urban Area. The only way to address this shortfall is to consider the release of land within the AoS.
- 1.13 In order to address this shortfall, therefore, the Council wanted to investigate which parts (if any) of the AOS might be suitable for development, whilst maintaining a meaningful sense of separation between Coalville and Whitwick.
- 1.14 The first step in this process is to consider the planning merits of each of the 'Land Units' on the AOS. The table at Appendix 1 (authored by NWDC to inform the current TLP study) considers all of the Land Units identified in the Area of Separation study. Appendix 1 identifies which land units have been promoted for development in the Council's SHELAA and assesses their suitability from a planning point of view, notwithstanding their current status as part of the AOS. It concludes as to whether sites are considered to be developable or not, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.15 In commissioning this study NWLDC has sought the advice of TLP as to which would be the most appropriate areas within the AOS for development, whilst maintaining, as far as possible, its function as a means to ensure the separation of Coalville and Whitwick. The brief clarified that the study did not have to be restricted to those areas identified in the SHELAA.
- 1.16 In respect of possible development, the following was to be assumed for the scope of the study:
- Up to 1,000 homes;
 - Development to be 2 storey;
 - The incorporation of open space, tree planting and satisfying national requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain and
 - No commercial development other than a small shop to serve local needs along with a GP surgery.
- 1.17 In addition to the above there may be a need for a new primary school but its exact size and location would depend upon the views of the education authority. Therefore, this study does not include allowance for a school within any of the parcels. Should a school be required, then this would affect the overall capacity of which ever parcel a school was located within.

- 1.18 The study should identify which land units are relatively most suitable for development/least harmful to the function of the AOS and to set out an appropriate mitigation strategy which together should ensure that separation is maintained as far as possible.
- 1.19 It should be noted that this study has a specific focus on the Area of Separation rather than the full range of planning considerations.

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

- 2.1 The study included a desktop review including the following:
- Review of the existing Area of Separation Study (May 2022)³
 - Review of the relevant parts of the SHEELA (Part1 – Assessment of Potential Housing Sites)⁴
 - Briefing by NWLDC that provided a planning assessment of the 24 Units identified within the AOS (See Appendix 1)
- 2.2 The Area of Separation Study (May 2022) provides a fuller description for each of the following aspects of the baseline and should be referred to in support of this report:
- Landscape Character (National, Regional and District level) – Section 3
 - Study Area (Topography, Soils, Vegetation, Land-use, Landscape change, Character of settlements, Distance between settlements and Key Views)
- 2.3 The Area of Separation Study (May 2022) subdivided the AOS into 24 'Land Units' based on areas of distinctive and character. These units have been retained for this current study. In addition there has also been come aggregation of Land Units where it was considered that either two or more units in combination would be able to create a more cohesive area of development where this might not be viable for a land unit in isolation. Conversely some Land Units have been sub-divided (a, b etc) where there is a case to consider a smaller part of a land unit for development which would still relate well to its context.

3

https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/area_of_separation_study_update_may_2022/Area%20of%20Separation%20Report%20-%20combined%20report%20and%20appendices%20May%202022.pdf

⁴ Ref required

Field work

- 2.4 Field work followed on after the collection of data from the desktop study. The field work for this report was carried out in August 2023, and followed earlier visits in October 2018, March 2019 and April 2022 carried out by the same assessor and author of this report. The field work enabled informed professional judgements to be made from public locations on local roads, public rights of way and other accessible land.

Factors to consider

- 2.5 In considering the scope for residential development in the AOS the following questions were kept in mind.
- How well would new development relate to the existing urban area and edge with the AOS? Built form that positively addresses urban edges can provide a logical location for development. It is assumed that development away from the existing urban fabric would be more likely to be isolated in character and location and would as a consequence be likely to have a relatively more adverse effect on the AOS.
 - How prominent would development appear from the local urban area and from within and across the AOS? Built form on more elevated or sloping ground may be more prominent, particularly without appropriate mitigation and be likely to weaken the sense of separation. The key views identified in the AOS Study May 2022 (Figure 04) were considered in this process.
 - To what degree would there still be a clear sense of separation and distance between locations at a new edge/s of the AOS (either physically or perceived) between settlements with both development and mitigation in place?
 - Are there locations where strategic mitigation through land uses as identified in Policy En5 as being potentially appropriate (forestry, nature conservation, leisure, sport and recreation) might be able to protect the open undeveloped character and reinforce the sense of separation between settlement even if the physical gap is reduced? Such mitigation measures could contribute to an increase in the positive functioning of the AOS to in part offset any physical reduction of the extent of the AOS.
 - Are there any specific factors in terms of layout, height of built form, retention of existing features and open space provision that should be included as part of a development? Local context of: topography, vegetation features, accessibility, visibility and built form are all material factors.
- 2.6 The primary consideration in terms of retaining the sense of separation relates to the separation between Coalville and Whitwick as separate settlements. However, in a number of locations there is also benefit

in retaining the separation between different parts of the same settlement. This particularly applies to Whitwick which has grown over the years to include a number of linear ribbon characteristics most notably along Hermitage Road and Thornborough Road.

Reporting

2.7 Following the desk study and field work results have been set out in structured format for each of the Land Units. It should be noted that the individual Land Unit Appraisals at Appendix 2 of in the AOS Study (May 2022) are still relevant and should also be referred to for a fuller understanding of:

- each of the Land Units' character and role in providing separation,
- the relationship with the adjacent settlement,
- links with other Land Units and the relatively landscape value.

2.8 For the consideration of the potential suitability for residential development to meet the housing requirements in the emerging Local Plan the Land Units have been assessed based on the following additional sub-headings. The results are set out in Appendix 2 of this report:

Land Unit number/s – with explanation if land units are aggregated/sub-divided

Main findings from preceding reports

- Planning Assessment including SHEELA status – as provided by NWLDC – see Appendix 1
- Planning history: Including relevant Planning applications
- Contribution of Land Unit/s within the AOS (2022 AOS Study Appendix 2) – (Primary, Secondary or Incidental)

Findings of this study

- Context and scope for residential development - setting out the main features of the context and if and why development is considered appropriate
- Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS – for Land Units where development is appropriate
 - Features to be retained
 - Potential development areas including relationship with the existing built edge
 - Potential open space and recreation
 - Proposed planting
- Potential housing capacity - based on the principles of the Concept Plans
- Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

- Effect of development on the integrity and functioning if the AOS
- 2.9 For Land Units where built development is considered feasible a Concept Plan has been produced to illustrate the broad principles of how this could come forward. The plans are shown in Figures 01-06, together with a key diagram as Figure 07 (see Appendix 3). It should be noted that Figures 01-06 show the combined layouts for all the potential development areas identified within the study. It is possible that of these development areas only some come forward.
- 2.10 The relative suitability of the Land Units has been ranked according to the following five Priorities:
- A- where development could form a coherent extension to an existing urban area subject to suitable mitigation measures in place and where the Land Unit is being promoted for development and without any access restrictions involving third party land.
 - B- Where development could form a coherent extension to existing urban area subject to suitable mitigation in place and where the Land Unit is being promoted the development but requires access through third party land.
 - C- Where development could form a coherent extension to existing urban area but is not being promoted and may require access through third party land.
 - D- Where development is being promoted by the landowner but is considered would have an unacceptable effect on the AOS and would lead to a major erosion in terms of the separation of the settlements of Coalville and Whitwick that cannot be adequately mitigated.
 - U- Where development is not promoted and considered unsuitable in terms of loss of existing land-uses.
- 2.11 A summary Table (see Section 3- Table 1 below) is produced in the main text below which ranks the Land Units in terms of relative suitability for residential development. Table 2 (see Section 4 below) in the Conclusions groups the findings in terms potential housing delivery based on the Priority categories A- C.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POTENTIAL HOUSING AREAS

- 3.1 The existing AOS as defined in the Adopted Local Plan and as described in the May 2022 Study has been assessed based on the potential suitability of the 24 Land Units to contribute towards the housing needs of the authority within the Coalville Urban Area while still retaining the integrity of an AOS between Coalville and Whitwick. The individual returns for each unit/s are provided in Appendix 02.

Considerations

- 3.2 The approach taken in this study to identify suitable areas for development acknowledges that for the majority of the Land Units that development is likely to have an adverse effect on the AOS overall.
- 3.3 However, the ability for mitigation to reduce harmful effects on the AOS overall in the medium to longer term are given due consideration in assessing whether proposals for land units or sub units would be acceptable. The benefit of suitable mitigation particularly relates to the provision of areas of woodland planting within the AOS that could form suitable enclosure and foreshortening of views towards or from areas of both existing and future development. Planting within recent years in the AOS (e.g. Land Units 9 and 13) have demonstrated that within a relatively short period time (less than 10 years) that woodland can begin to alter the characteristics of the landscape and where views across and to the AOS can markedly change. There is also scope for mitigation to soften existing raw edges to settlement and improve the sense of separation between settlements.
- 3.4 It is recognised that there are a number of different landowners/developers who are promoting their own interests through the Local Plan. The approach of this study has been to identify the most suitable sites in terms of limiting adverse effects on the AOS (and within the broad housing numbers being required) rather than restricting proposals to individual landowners. For some of the suggested proposals to come forward there will be a need for landowners to positively collaborate. For example it may be that one landowner can provide areas for mitigation, replacement of lost facilities on development land (e.g. allotments) or to enable requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain, which in turn would support the more efficient and coherent use of land to protect the AOS overall. In addition there are locations where access may be required through third party land to deliver some of the proposals.
- 3.5 A further consideration (albeit outside the scope of this study) is the viability of remaining areas of agricultural land as some areas of agriculture within the AOS are potentially developed. While the continued use of land for agriculture is an appropriate use, alternative suitable uses including forestry, nature conservation /biodiversity and leisure, sport and recreation are also potential future uses should an agricultural holding cease to be viable.
- 3.6 Potential housing numbers as shown in Tables 1 and 2 are based on an average of 35 units per ha. It is possible that the densities may not be achievable on specific sites due to specific constraints within the sites or on neighbouring land which would need exploring in more detail. Furthermore, the suitability

of the access points indicated on the concept plans at Figures 01-06 (see Appendix 3) are subject to verification by highway engineers. For these reasons the indicated housing numbers should be seen as a starting point for potential capacity.

- 3.7 Should areas of land within the AOS be taken forward for built development an adjustment to the AOS boundary would be required to ensure that the residual part of the AOS has an integrity and fulfils its purpose and function in separating Coalville from Whitwick.
- 3.8 The results from the study are summarised in Table 1 then described in the text below. Only Land Units ranked A, B and C in terms of priority for housing are given NDA and capacity figures in Table 1. It should be noted that should a primary school be required in any Land Unit then housing capacity would be impacted. Land Units with a priority D and U are not considered appropriate for development so no figures are provided.

Table 1 – Summary of Land Units

Land Unit	Gross Unit Area (ha)	Net Developable Area (ha)	Capacity (35units p ha)	Priority for housing	Contribution to the AOS
1 + 2	13.46	6.88	240	A	Secondary
3	2.83	0.42	14	C	Incidental
4	13.3	/	/	U	Primary
5	6.4	/	/	D	Primary
6	13.81				Primary
6a		3.39	118	A	Primary
6b		4.37	152	B	Primary
7	6.64	4.06	142	A	Primary
8	33.56				Primary
8a		0.89	31	B	Primary
8b				D	Primary
8c				D	Primary
9	5.99	/	/	U	Primary
10	3.56	0.26	9	C	Primary
11	1.8	/	/	U	Incidental
12	0.93	/	/	U	Secondary

Land Unit	Gross Unit Area (ha)	Net Developable Area (ha)	Capacity (35units p ha)	Priority for housing	Contribution to the AOS
13	8.41	/	/	U	Primary
14	1.95	/	/	D	Secondary
15	14.23	/	/	U	Primary
16a	6.24	/	/	U	Primary
16b	5.44	/	/	U	Secondary
17	18.61				
17a		3.01	105	B	Primary
17b		/	/	U	Primary
17c		0.60	21	B	Primary
18	3.31				Incidental
18a		1.36	47	A	Incidental
18b		0.30	10	A	Incidental
18c		0.82	28	C	Incidental
19	1.98	0.92	32	C	Incidental
20	0.81		/	U	Secondary
21	2.77				Secondary
21a		0.67	23	B	Secondary
21b		/	/	U	Secondary
22	2.69	/	/	U	Secondary
23	2.12	/	/	U	Secondary
Total		27.95	972⁵		

Recommendations for potential housing areas

Area of Separation Area A – south-east of AOS

- 3.9 **Units 1 and 2** - these units comprise a self-contained and coherent area of potential development located within Coalville and where there would be a limited effect on the wider separation between

⁵ Capacity rounded down to whole houses per land unit

Coalville and Whitwick due to the strong area of vegetation that separates the units to the northern boundary. This characteristic was identified in the May 2022 study and formed the rationale for the Units having a Secondary contribution to the AOS. The land is being promoted for development. Access to the units can be provided from the A511 and Broom Leys Road. A scheme was previously submitted (and later withdrawn) on the site which set out a reasonable approach. Subject to the range of mitigation measures suggested it is considered that Units 1 and 2 are considered to be Priority A. One further consideration would be the provision of a suitable community facility to the south of Unit 2 e.g. health centre or local shops to meet shortfall in local needs.

- 3.10 **Unit 3**- this unit comprises a recreation ground with a small play area within the ownership of NWLDC. Although not being promoted for development it is considered feasible to provide for a small, developed area to the east to the rear of the existing development on Sharpley Avenue from which there is a suitable access point. This would provide for improved surveillance of the play area and in a location where the effects on the AOS would be very limited. Unit 3 is considered to be Priority C.
- 3.11 **Unit 6** - this unit comprises three agricultural fields to the west of Whitwick and is being promoted by landowners/developers through the Local Plan. Access is achievable off Torrington Avenue (and potentially also off Perran Avenue and Tiverton Avenue). There are open views over Unit 6 from residential properties to the edge of Whitwick although conversely the built edge of the settlement forms a relatively raw interface with the AOS at this point. The Unit has been subdivided into 6a to the east and 6b to the west. Unit 6a is relatively more suitable as it extends less into the AOS. It is also likely that 6b would require additional road connections from Unit 7 to the north. Both 6a and 6b would require broad areas of planting to their western edges to provide suitable mitigation of any future development and to protect the functionality of the remainder of the AOS. Areas for proposed mitigation includes land within Unit 8a and 8b which would be subject to agreement with the relevant landowners. If this were not possible mitigation could be provided within 6b but would lead to lower housing numbers. Unit 6a is considered to be Priority A and Unit 6b to be Priority B. A planning application was refused and then dismissed at appeal (2017) on land at Units 6a and 6b and the south-east part of Unit 7. The inspector concluded that the Council was able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land and that the policy concerned with the Area of Separation was up to date. The Inspector considered that the proposals would erode the gap between Whitwick and Coalville and cause harm to the AOS and that this, together with his conclusions in respect of 5-year land supply, warranted that the appeal be dismissed.
- 3.12 **Unit 7** - this unit comprises three agricultural fields to the west of Hall Lane along which the built edge of Whitwick currently fronts. There are open views from both public and private properties into the AOS from this location and introduction of built form would mark a notable change. The young woodland within Unit 9 is beginning to provide enclosure across the remainder of the AOS beyond Unit 7. A new area of associated woodland mitigation largely within Area 8a linking Unit 9 to Unit 4 could significantly

contain the effects of development within Unit 7 (and 6b and 8a) on the remainder of the AOS and provide an enhanced and stronger vegetative edge to the AOS in the medium term, albeit reducing the physical extent of the AOS by c 250m. The land is being promoted for development with options for access directly off Hall Lane. Unit 7 is considered to be Priority A. The provision of woodland planting within Unit 8a would require the agreement of a third party landowner.

- 3.13 **Unit 8a** - this is a relatively small sub-division of Unit 8 and has been identified to link with adjacent developments on Units 6b and 7 and provide suitable land for mitigation where the natural landform is locally higher and will provide the best location for a strategic woodland connection between Units 9 and Unit 4. The land is being promoted for development as referred to under Unit 7 above, but access for 8a would be required through third party land on Unit 7 or 6a. There is also potential for sub-unit 8b, that extends up to Green Lane, to provide for a mix of forestry, biodiversity and recreational uses in support of development within Units 6 and 7. The more varied use of unit 8b could create a number of opportunities to improve the functioning of the AOS and connect with Units 9 and 4. Unit 8a is considered to be Priority B.
- 3.14 **Unit 10** – the unit comprises an area of undeveloped grassland that rises up to the east and from where there are elevated and long-distance views to the north-west and south-east. The unit is bounded and sub- divided by mature hedges. The unit is not promoted for development. However, part of this unit adjacent to Green Lane is considered to have some suitability for a small development up to the depth of existing properties. This part of Unit 10 is considered to be Priority C.

Land Units not considered suitable for development in Area A

- 3.15 No other land units within Area A are considered to be suitable for development as part of this review. The largest remaining area is **Unit 8c** which is being promoted along with other neighbouring areas including the western part of Unit 5. The land is not considered suitable for a number of reasons. It would require a new access off the A511 and result in a new freestanding and detached area of development that does not relate well to either Coalville or Whitwick. Development in Unit 8c would be located within Whitwick parish but be located closer to the settlement of Coalville. It would result in development being located either side of the A511 which would appear inappropriate whether small, medium or large in scale and lead to a notable incursion within the core of one of the most open parts of the AOS. Unit 8c is considered to be Priority D. Development within Land Unit 8 (for a large scheme along with Units 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 14) was promoted through an application in 2010. The application was refused and then dismissed at appeal and in the High Court. As noted above Units 8a and 8b are considered suitable for mitigation and biodiversity uses (along with some limited built development) as part of a development to the west of Whitwick within Units 6 and 7.

- 3.16 It is considered that **Unit 5** has similar constraints to Unit 8c in spatial terms. Unit 5 is considered to be Priority D.
- 3.17 **Unit 4** comprises the Coalville Rugby Football Club facilities. The site is not being promoted for development and in any event a replacement facility would be required. Unit 4 also provides an important area of land that help separate Coalville from Whitwick and which is strengthened by the vegetation to its perimeters separating Unit 1 from Unit 6. Unit 4 is considered the unsuitable for development and Priority U.
- 3.18 **Unit 14** occupies a narrow gap close to Hermitage Road at the boundary between Coalville and Whitwick. Development on this land and the adjoining narrow strip next to Hermitage Road would lead to coalescence between the two segments and is therefore considered unsuitable and Priority D.
- 3.19 **Units 9 and 13** both largely comprise young woodland planted through the National Forest initiative and are forming important parts of the local landscape and AOS in terms of amenity and visual and physical separation. Units 9 and 13 are being promoted for development but are not considered to be suitable for development and Priority D.
- 3.20 **Units 11 and 12** comprise recreational land including a play area and allotments. Neither are being promoted to be developed and are considered unsuitable and Priority U.

Area of Separation Area B – north-west of AOS

- 3.21 Area B within the AOS is relatively smaller than Area A to the south-east and therefore more sensitive to reductions in its scale that may also affect its functionality. As result areas for potential housing development in Area B are also relatively smaller than in Area A.
- 3.22 Land Unit 17** - occupies the northern slopes of the Grace Dieu Brook Valley. The upper slopes/plateau area comprising sub-units 17a and 17c are considered to be relatively less sensitive and more suitable to potential development such that it would not unacceptably harm the separation provided by the AOS in this location, subject to suitable mitigation including a substantive belt of woodland planting to the upper slopes of 17b located adjacent to Units 17a and 17c. Access into 17a is unlikely to be achieved directly off Thornborough Road and more likely that this will need to take place through Unit 18. The same would be the case into sub-unit 17c. However, the loss of allotments within Unit 18 could be compensated for within 17b. There is therefore scope for a collaboration between landowners to achieve a wider area development beyond their own indirect interests. Sub-Unit 17b and 17c are considered to be Priority B, but Sub Unit 17b Priority D.
- 3.23 Land Unit 18** - the unit comprises three sub-units namely 18a the Thornborough Road allotments, 18b an area of scrub and woodland and open glade and 18c a paddock and strip of land bounded by mature hedgerows. The function of the unit overall was considered to be Incidental in the May 2022 Study due

to the strong enclosing vegetation to the boundaries. Access into 18a can be achieved directly off Thornborough Road and this route could also serve as a point of access into 18b, 18c, together with 17a and 17c all subject to clearance of vegetation. Land for a replacement allotment could be provided within Unit 17b on the slopes of the valley with a suitable access track provided. Sub-Units 18a and 18b are under the control of the same landowner who is promoting the sites and they are considered to be Priority A. Sub- Unit 18c is under different ownership and not currently being promoted so is classified as Priority C.

3.24 **Land Unit 19**- comprises paddocks on an area of enclosed land that slopes away from and is visually separate from the majority of the AOS. The unit was considered to make an Incidental contribution to the AOS in the 2022 study. There is no direct access into the unit. Access would require third party land most realistically from a property/s fronting onto Church Lane. Development is considered most suitable to the eastern part of the unit to avoid loss of the ménage/stabling/paddocks associated with 241a Church Lane and due to the close proximity of some of the existing properties adjacent to the northern boundary. Unit 19 is considered to be Priority C.

3.25 **Land Unit 21** - comprises areas of paddocks and is subdivided by a footpath and corridor grassland. The whole unit is being promoted for development in the SHELAA. Sub-Unit 21a lies to the north of the footpath and is more closely associated with the development along Church Lane. Access into Unit 21 would need to be subject to agreement with a third party landowner/s on Church Lane. The existing track access adjacent to the cemetery is considered too narrow at the approach on Church Lane. Unit 21a is considered to be Priority C. In contrast development within Unit 21b would create a greater adverse effect on the AOS both between two parts of Whitwick and also through effects on the longer views from Unit 22 across to the edge of Coalville to the south-west. For these reasons Land Unit 21b is considered to be Priority D.

Land Units not considered suitable for development in Area B

3.26 **Units 15, 16a, 16b and 23** together comprise the Hermitage Recreation Ground, Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre and associated recreational routes. These areas are owned by NWLDC and are not available for development and should retain their recreational/leisure uses. These Units are considered to be Priority U.

3.27 **Unit 20** comprises a narrow field grassland bound by mature hedgerows together with footpaths running through. The area is considered too narrow to support a viable built development without the loss of hedgerows and unacceptable effects on the rights-of-way. The unit is not being promoted for development and is considered to be Priority U.

3.28 **Unit 22** is occupied by Whitwick Cemetery which is an operational burial ground and as such is not available for development in the long term and considered to be Priority U.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The different parts of the AOS have been evaluated for their suitability to accommodate housing development in the context of there being a requirement to do so in order to meet the overall housing needs for the district as part of the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.2 Potential development areas have been assessed using the Land Units defined in the AOS Study (May 2022) with some further subdivisions as appropriate.
- 4.3 A priority ranking A, B, C, D and U has been devised based on availability, suitability and scope for mitigation to protect the integrity of the AOS post development.
- 4.4 Land Units considered most appropriate are those that would: form a logical urban extension to an existing built-up area, provide scope for substantive mitigation and not unacceptably compromise the separation function of the AOS.
- 4.5 Table 2 below sets out the main overall findings based on the list of Land Units and five priorities (A, B, C, D and U).

Table 2 Potential housing capacity and split between Priorities A-U

Priority	Land Units	Net Developable Area of Land units in Priority	Capacity at 35dpha
A – forms coherent extension with suitable access, can be adequately mitigated and is available and promoted	1, 2, 6a, 7, 18a, 18b	15.99	559
B - forms coherent extension, can be adequately mitigated, is available and promoted but requires third party land for suitable access	6b, 8a, 17a, 17c, 21a	9.54	333
C - forms coherent extension, can be adequately mitigated, is not promoted and may require third party land for suitable access	3, 10, 18c, 19,	2.42	84
D – where land is promoted but is considered would have unacceptable effect on the AOS	5, 8b, 8c, 14	/	/
U – Where land is not promoted and unsuitable in term of loss of existing land uses	4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16a, 16b, 17b, 20, 21b, 22, 23	/	/

Priority	Land Units	Net Developable Area of Land units in Priority	Capacity at 35dpha
Totals		27.95	972⁶

- 4.6 It is recognised that development of the scale indicated represent a substantial incursion into the existing AOS and therefore that extensive mitigation forms an integral and essential part of the proposals. Areas for potential development include Land Units in all three categories - (Primary, Secondary and Incidental) in their functional role within the AOS based on the May 2022 study. On the understanding that the AOS has to be one of the areas of search for residential development as part of the emerging Local Plan it is not possible to provide the quantum of housing required through the Local Plan without affecting land that provides either a Primary or Secondary contribution to the AOS.
- 4.7 The overall quantum of housing within the AOS in Priorities A-C is c. 972 units which would potentially help to meet the requirements identified by the Council. To achieve this amount of development it is likely that there will be a requirement for cross ownership collaboration to realise the potential mutual benefits to landowners involved.

⁶ Capacity based on rounding down to whole numbers for each land unit in the Net Developable Areas identified

Area of Separation

Assessment of Potential Housing Sites

Coalville Urban Area

on behalf of

North West Leicestershire District Council

Appendix 1

Overview Planning Assessment of Land
Units within AOS (excluding AOS criteria)

Issue Version

October 2023

NEW LOCAL PLAN

AREA OF SEPARATION

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL HOUSING SITES

The development strategy to be included in the new Local Plan proposes to continue to identify the Coalville Urban Area as the Principal Town. In accordance with the proposed strategy and taking account of existing commitments, this means that there is a need to identify sufficient land to accommodate 2,230 dwellings in the Coalville urban Area.

The starting point for identifying sites is the Council’s Strategic Housing and Employment land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). This identifies land for just over 4,200 dwellings in the Coalville Urban Area.

In considering which sites should be proposed for development consideration needs to be given to a broad range of planning factors including accessibility to services and facilities, environmental impacts (such as ecology, heritage etc), any other designations, access to the highway network and deliverability. The decision whether to allocate a site will be a balanced consideration of all factors, but ultimately whatever is proposed the Council must be able to demonstrate that the required number of dwellings will be built, otherwise the plan will be unlikely to be found sound at Examination.

The SHELAA includes a number of sites which are located on land between Coalville and Whitwick which is identified in the adopted Local Plan as an Area of Separation (AOS). There is no specific requirement in national policy to identify such areas; it is very much a local designation based on local characteristics.

The AOS included in the adopted Local Plan had not been subject to any independent study. The matter was debated at the Local Plan Examination in 2017. In his report the Inspector commented that *“On balance, I consider there to be overriding merit in the judgement of the Council that the AoSs, as designated, are justified for the life of this Plan”*. But the inspector went to on say *“there is scope for reconsideration of the detailed boundaries and land uses of the AoSs, in the event that it becomes necessary, at any time in the future, for the Plan to be reviewed in the light of increased development needs”*.

In the light of the Inspector’s comments, the Council decided that as part of its new Local Plan it would need further evidence to potentially justify a continuation of the AOS. To this end a study was commissioned in 2018. This divided the AOS into a number of units (23 in total) and each was assessed and identified as one of four categories based on the units contribution to the AOS (primary, secondary, incidental or none). An update study was undertaken in 2022 to take account of the recent construction of a new Leisure Centre in part of the AOS. This subsequently divided one unit in to two, so there are now 24 units in total.

Work undertaken by officers has concluded that many of the sites included in the SHELAA are not suitable for a variety of reasons. As a result there is a shortfall in provision in the Coalville Urban Area which could only be addressed by the release of land within the AoS.

In order to address this shortfall, therefore, it is necessary to look at the AOS and to consider which (if any) parts of the AOS might be suitable for development, whilst maintaining a meaningful sense of separation between Coalville and Whitwick.

The first step in this process is to consider the planning merits of each of the units. The table below looks at all of the units identified in the Area of Separation study and identifies which ones have been promoted for development in the Council’s SHELAA and assesses their suitability from a planning point of view, notwithstanding their current status as part of the AOS. It concludes as to whether sites are considered to be developable or not, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

AREA OF SEPARATION STUDY UNIT NUMBER	UNIT CONTRIBUTION	IS UNIT PROMOTED FOR DEVELOPMENT?	SHELAA REFERENCE	PLANNING ASSESSMENT
1	Secondary	Yes	C46	<p>The site is within good walking distance to a primary school and GP surgery, as well as recreation opportunities and public transport routes. Access to secondary education, shops, health facilities and employment are further afield at about 1km, but still within a reasonable walking distance. A wider range of services facilities are available in Coalville which is about 1.8 KM distant, although it is accessible by public transport.</p> <p>Site would need to be accessed from Broom Leys Road. A previous planning application (14/00808) was not determined, but the Highway Authority did not raise an objection to the proposed access which involved an access from the A511 which linked through to Broom Leys Road.</p> <p>No ecological designations</p> <p>Site is in single ownership. Understood to be developer interest.</p> <p>Overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable, subject to AOS issues.</p>
2				

3	Incidental	No		<p>Site is a playground. If developed would need replacement facility. Could get access from Sharpley Avenue.</p> <p>In view of current use the site is not considered to be developable.</p>
4	Primary	No		<p>Site is Coalville Rugby Club. If developed would need replacement facility. Access via existing access from Hall Lane.</p> <p>In view of current use the site is not considered to be developable.</p>
5	Primary	Yes	C19	<p>Previous planning application (10/01208) for residential development and a local centre which encompasses units 6,7,8,9,10,13 and 14 in their entirety as well as the western field of unit 5. Application was refused and dismissed at appeal in 2012.</p> <p>A further planning application (14/00800) for residential development which encompasses unit 6 in its entirety and the eastern most field of unit 7 was refused and dismissed at appeal in 2017 (and a subsequent legal challenge). This included access from both Hall Lane and Torrington Avenue which was considered acceptable.</p> <p>The site is located within the built-up Coalville Urban Area, with a supermarket, public transport and recreation all within good walking distance. However, other services such as schools and employment are somewhat distant and beyond the walking distances recommended by the CIHT. The scale of the site is such that it could potentially incorporate some local services, such as a primary school and local shop. A wider range of services facilities are available in Coalville which is about 2.5 KM distant. Bus services along Hermitage Road to the west of the site means Coalville Town Centre is accessible by public transport, although this would involve a walk of about 800metres from the eastern part of the site. However, the scale of development could potentially facilitate either new services or a changed route to an existing service.</p> <p>Unit 9 has been the subject of tree planting. This would raise questions as to its suitability for development.</p>
6				
7				
8				
9				

				<p>The impact upon the highway network would need to be the subject of a separate assessment.</p> <p>Units 6 and 7 are in the ownership and control of a developer (Jelson Homes), whilst units 8,9,13, 14 and the western part of unit 5 is understood to be in the control of a developer (William Davis). The eastern part of unit 5 (Glebe Farm) is in private ownership.</p> <p>The two eastern most fields of unit 6 has been the subject of a separate representation (Enc 1)</p> <p>The 2018 SHELAA had representation from William Davis which was restricted to most of unit 8 as well as the western field of unit 5 (Enc 2).</p> <p>Subject to addressing highway impact and AOS issues (as well as the suitability of unit 9), overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
10	Primary	No		<p>Was included as part of 2010 planning application refused at appeal. Subsequently not included in later application and no longer being promoted as part of development.</p> <p>Access to services and facilities similar to units 5 to 9, although more distance to supermarkets and leisure centres. Public transport available along Hall Lane.</p> <p>Site could be accessed via Green Lane.</p> <p>In the absence of a developer or landowner promotion the site is not considered to be developable.</p>
11	Incidental	No		<p>Site is part allotment and part a field.</p> <p>Access to services and facilities similar to units 5 to 9. Access to services and facilities similar to units 5 to 9, although more distance to supermarkets and leisure centres. Public transport available along Hall Lane.</p>

				<p>No means of access other than via third party land.</p> <p>In view of current use the site is not considered to be developable.</p>
12	Secondary	No		<p>Site is a playground.</p> <p>No means of access other than via third party land. If developed would need replacement facility.</p> <p>In view of current use the site is not considered to be developable.</p>
13	Primary	Yes	C19	<p>Subject of previous application (10/01208) referred to in respect of units 5,6,7,8 and 9.</p> <p>Planning assessment under units 5,6,7,8 and 9 apply to this site, although its closer to most services and facilities than other units (other than unit 14).</p> <p>No access to the site other than via another unit of third party land (towards Hermitage Road).</p> <p>The 2018 SHELAA excluded this site, but 2019 land ownership included it.</p> <p>Site has been planted with trees and there are footpaths through the unit. This would raise questions as to its suitability for development.</p> <p>Unless access could be secured from Hermitage Road this unit could not be developed on its own, it would have to be as part of a larger development.</p> <p>Subject to resolving access issues, the issue of tree planting that has taken place and AOS issues, overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
14	Secondary	Yes	C19	<p>Subject of previous application (10/01208) referred to in respect of units 5,6,7,8 and 9.</p>

				<p>Planning assessment under units 5,6,7,8 and 9 apply to this site, although its closer to most services and facilities then other units.</p> <p>Site could (subject to views of the Highway Authority) potentially be accessed via land to the west which has previously had the benefit of planning permission for residential development, but which has now lapsed (18/01773). The previous study had recommended that if not developed the land to the west could be included in the AOS. It is understood that the land to the west is in the same ownership as unit 14. Therefore, this unit could potentially be developed separate from other land.</p> <p>Subject to resolving access issues and AOS issues, overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
15	Primary	No		<p>This unit comprises most of the Hermitage Recreation Ground and is in the ownership of North West Leicestershire District Council. Within the unit are pitches (grass and artificial) and a lake.</p> <p>The former leisure centre was located to the north-east and is now the subject of discussion regarding its redevelopment. There are no plans to develop this unit and so as such it is not developable.</p>
16a	Primary	No		<p>This unit comprises part of the Hermitage Recreation Ground and is in the ownership of North West Leicestershire District Council. A public bridleway crosses the site from east to west, but otherwise comprises a grassed area.</p> <p>There are no plans to develop this unit and so as such it is not developable.</p>
16b	Secondary	No		Unit occupied by Leisure Centre. Not available for development.
17	Primary	Yes	C18	<p>The site is well related for access to Stephenson College and the new Coalville Leisure Centre, whilst two supermarkets and employment opportunities are available within a reasonable walking distance of less than 1km, albeit on the opposite side of the A511 which would act as a barrier to some degree. The site is well placed for access to bus services which pass along Thornborough Road, although the site does not itself front Thornborough Road. A wider range of services facilities are available in Coalville which is about 1.6 KM distant, although it is accessible by public transport.</p>

				<p>The site lacks an access to the highway network without the acquisition of third-party land. Land to the west is being promoted separately (Site C45) and could provide a means of securing access.</p> <p>The site has been promoted on behalf of the landowner, but there is no developer interest at this time.</p> <p>Subject to resolving access issues and AOS issues, overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
18	Incidental	Yes	C45	<p>This unit comprises mainly of well used as allotments. The northeast corner appears to be paddock land.</p> <p>The site is within good walking distance of Stephenson College and the new Coalville Leisure Centre, whilst two supermarkets, a primary school and employment opportunities are within a reasonable walking distance, albeit on the opposite side of the A511 which would act as a barrier to some degree. The site is well placed for access to bus services which pass along the frontage of the site. A wider range of services facilities are available in Coalville which is about 1.6 KM distant, although it is accessible by public transport.</p> <p>The Highway Authority considers that there is no reason to exclude the site at this stage, subject to detailed assessment.</p> <p>Development of the site would require the relocation of the allotments.</p> <p>The site is in single ownership and is promoted by an agent, although there is no known developer interest and the site has not been promoted for some time.</p> <p>Subject to resolving access issues, the provision of a replacement allotment and AOS issues, overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
19	Incidental	No		<p>This unit comprises of two small paddocks, stabling and a ménage.</p>

				<p>Access to services and facilities similar to unit 18 and 21.</p> <p>Access to this site would have to be via unit 17 or, if it was to be developed on its own, through other third party land fronting Church Lane.</p> <p>The site has not been promoted for development. For this reason along with the lack of accessibility, the site is considered to not be developable.</p>
20	Secondary	No		<p>This unit comprises a narrow strip of grassland.</p> <p>Access to services and facilities similar to unit 18 and 21.</p> <p>Access to this site would have to be via units 17 or 21. It could not be developed on its own.</p> <p>The unit has not been promoted for development. For this reason along with the lack of accessibility, the site is considered to not be developable.</p>
21	Secondary	Yes	C44	<p>The unit comprises a number of grazed paddocks. The area is bounded by Unit 20 to the south, the cemetery to the east and the rear of properties fronting Church Lane to the north.</p> <p>The site is within good walking distance of a small supermarket, public transport and recreation opportunities, whilst a primary school and health facilities are slightly further afield but within reasonable walking distance. Employment opportunities and secondary education are not within walking distance, although employment opportunities are accessible by public transport. A wider range of services facilities are available in Coalville which is about 2.2KM distant, although it is accessible by public transport.</p> <p>The site does not have an access to the highway network without acquiring third party land or via units 21, 17 and 18.</p>

				<p>The hedges, scrub and watercourses around the site represent potential Biodiversity Action Plan habitats although it is considered that mitigation is possible.</p> <p>The site is promoted on behalf of a developer.</p> <p>Subject to resolving access issues, appropriate mitigation in respect of ecology and AOS issues, overall it is considered that the site is potentially developable.</p>
22	Secondary	No		This site comprises a cemetery. Not available for development.
23	Secondary	No		<p>This unit comprises a narrow strip of land along the former railway and adjoining the Grace Dieu Brook.</p> <p>Access to services and facilities similar to unit 21 and 15.</p> <p>Access to this site would have to be via units 20, 21, 22 or 15. It could not be developed on its own.</p> <p>The unit has not been promoted for development. For this reason along with the lack of accessibility, the site is considered to not be developable.</p>

On the basis of the above the following units are considered to be potentially developable:

1,2,5,6,7,8,9,13,14,17,18 and 21.

Of these:

- unit 18 is identified as making an incidental contribution to the AOS.
- units 1,2 14 and 21 are identified as making a secondary contribution to the AOS.
- Units 5,6,7,8, 9,13 and 17 are identified as making a primary contribution to the AOS.

The next step is to consider whether from the point of the AOS there are units which could be potentially developed in such a way as to maintain the separation between Coalville and Whitwick.

Area of Separation

Assessment of Potential Housing Sites

Coalville Urban Area

on behalf of

North West Leicestershire District Council

Appendix 2

Land Unit Returns

Issue Version

October 2023

Land Unit Nos. 1 + 2Size = 13.46ha
(Unit 1 = 11.48ha, Land Unit 2 = 1.98ha)

Land Units 1 and 2 are considered together in this study as the potential of developing Unit 2 in isolation of Unit 1 is limited due to: the narrow triangular shape, the proximity to the A511 and low prospect of securing a suitable access from the A511 due to the smaller size of Unit 2. Furthermore the physical and functional association with Unit 1 in terms of existing uses and in the potential for Unit 2 to form part of a combined and more coherent development area.

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Potentially Developable
Land Units 1 and 2 comprise the majority of SHELAA Site C46

Planning history: Application 14/00808/OUTM for up to 250 units. Application withdrawn.
There have been a number of other applications for activities related to the land uses at Broom Leys Farm (including dog exercising, conversion of barns for B8 use, use for car boot sales)

Contribution of Land Units within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Units 1 and 2 are located to the north of the residential ribbon development which fronts Broom Leys Road. The units comprise the land holding of Broomleys Farm with a number of paddocks and a cluster of farm buildings. The farmhouse provides a distinctive feature seen from the south set back from Broom Leys Road but there are no open public views into the units. Properties along Broom Leys Road have long rear gardens and some view into the units.

Unit 1 is strongly defined and enclosed to the north by the established trees, hedging and shrubs that follow the recreational route which also marks the administrative boundary between Coalville with Whitwick (see Appendix 3 Figure 08). This planting limits views from across the wider AOS. There are views to the south from the recreational route (that follows the line of the former mineral railway) across the open character of the land up to the rear of houses on Broom Leys Road and to the farm buildings. There are also views from the cycle/footbridge over the A511 and the associated embankments looking across Unit 2 and beyond to the wooded skylines to the south. The vegetation to the north provides a strong sense of separation from Whitwick including the neighbouring open fields and sports facilities in Units 4 and 5. An internal hedge marks the boundary with Unit 2. Established planting along the A511 marks the western extent of Unit 2.

Built development on Unit 1 would partly relate to the northern built edge of Coalville and could provide opportunities to positively address new areas of public open space which would be visible from the recreational route to the north. There would be a loss of openness through development. Housing should be set back from the northern boundary and the recreational route where there is scope for generous areas of open space to the north and east of Unit 1 and over much of Unit 2 to retain the visual connections to the wider landscape to the south.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedges and trees within and adjacent to the land units should be retained outside of development areas wherever possible. The dense planting to the north of the Unit 1 is critical to maintaining the perceived separation from Whitwick to the north. It is also recommended to retain the

existing farmhouse and the closer vernacular outbuildings as part of the layout to provide a focus and continuity of character as seen from Broom Leys Road.

- **Potential development areas** (See Figure 01 – Appendix 3)
Built development is preferred to the centre and south of Unit 1 with access potentially from both Broom Leys Road and the A511. This approach follows the principles of the withdrawn application 14/00808. There is also potential for a free-standing community facility to the south of Unit 2 e.g. surgery, subject to there being an identified need.
- **Proposed open space and recreation**
Open space associated with development should be focused on the northern, western and north-east boundaries. This approach will retain the open outlook from the recreation route to the north, allow for housing to front the open space and retain the domed area to the north-east as open space. Although outside the AOS, it is also recommended to include both the small paddock fronting Broomleys Farmhouse and the paddock area to the north of the Coalville Community Hospital as open space. There is scope to provide new recreational routes across the units connecting with Broom Leys Road.
- **Proposed planting**
There is scope to include new tree planting throughout the areas of proposed open space. This would serve to strengthen the sense of separation, soften the appearance of proposed development and create resources for semi-natural amenity, recreation and biodiversity. A new area of woodland is recommended to the south- east of Unit 1.

Potential housing Capacity

Based on the Concept Plan on Figure 01 in Appendix 3 and a Gross Development Area (GDA) of c 13.46 Ha and a Net Development Area (NDA) of 6.88ha this would provide c 240 units at an average of 35dph across Units 1 and 2.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There should be a limited effect from development in Units 1 and 2 on the separation between the Coalville and Whitwick as distinct settlements. This is principally due to the strong northern vegetated boundary which restricts visual and physical connections into Land Units 3, 4 and 5 to the north. Vehicular access would be provided from within Coalville on the A511 and Broom Leys Road.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c 260m to the north of the rear of properties on Broom Leys Road. This would be most readily perceived from the recreational route immediately to the north, from the overbridge across the A511 and from the rear of the houses backing to the unit. Proposed planting within open space areas would help to reduce the local effects as it establishes and combine with established areas of planting to the north that help maintain the functional separation between Coalville and Whitwick in this location.

The AOS would overall still largely retain the separation of Whitwick and Coalville should Units 1 and 2 be developed in accordance with the Concept Plan.

Land Unit No 3

Size = 2.83 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports**Planning Assessment** (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable

The site is playground and if developed would require a replacement facility.
Land Unit 3 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None**Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS** (from 2022 Review) = **Incidental****Findings of this study****Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 3 is an area of open space including a play area, amenity grassland and areas of woodland and scrub which physically and visually enclose the unit to the north, west and south. To the eastern boundary a number of detached properties off Sharpley Avenue back onto the site with 1.8m close boarded fencing forming the boundary.

Vehicular access is provided off Sharpley Avenue. As the Unit comprises a playground and associated open space the comprehensive development for housing is not considered feasible as a replacement facility would be required. However, it is considered that there is scope for a small-scale development that utilizes the existing access and creates a small group of houses fronting the open space and backing on to the houses on Sharpley Avenue. This would provide surveillance of the users of the open space. The properties would need to be set back c 20m from the playground. This approach should still retain most of the unit for open space.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing woodland and scrub areas within and adjacent to the land unit should be retained.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 01 – Appendix 3)

Built development is only recommended to a depth of one plot to the eastern boundary facing the play area and backing onto the rear gardens of the existing houses. Minimum standards for residential amenity for existing and new residents would need to be met between houses and next to play areas.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

The majority of the existing open space and associated vegetation should be retained. The existing cycleway and rights of way through the unit should be retained.

- ***Proposed planting***

Intermittent tree planting could be provided to the frontage of the housing area. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

Based on the Concept Plan on Figure 01 in Appendix 3 and a GDA of c 2.83 and NDA of 0.42ha this would provide c. 14 units at an average of 35phh.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There should be a negligible effect from a small development within Unit 3 on the separation between the Coalville and Whitwick as distinct settlements. This is principally due to the modest scale of the potential

development and the strong vegetated enclosure boundary which restricts visual and physical connections into the neighbouring Land Unit 4 to the west. Vehicular access can be provided from Sharpley Avenue which is part of Coalville.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a very small physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c 30m to the west of the rear of properties on Sharpley Avenue. This would only be perceived from the remainder of Unit 3 which would be retained as open space. Proposed planting within open space area would help to reduce the local effects as it establishes. The low level of effect reinforces the finding of the unit making an Incidental contribution to the separation of settlements as set out in the May 2022 AOS Study.

The AOS would overall still retain the separation of Whitwick and Coalville should part of Unit 3 be developed in accordance with the Concept Plan.

Land Unit No 4

Size = 13.3 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.

The site comprises the home of Coalville Rugby Football Club and if developed a replacement facility would be required.

Land Unit 4 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: Various applications have been submitted and approved for the Unit related to the use as a sports facility (including floodlights, changing rooms, extension of club house). An application for a telecommunications mast was refused in 2004.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 4 is located within the settlement of Whitwick and comprises the home of the Coalville Rugby Football Club which contains a number of playing pitches and practice areas, a clubhouse and associated car parking. The site is access via a surfaced route from Hall Lane. The unit occupies what was formerly three field units subdivided and bounded by hedges and linear woodland. Since 2006 the boundaries have been strengthened by further tree and shrub planting particularly to the north and west and a more natural wetland area to the south. The semi-mature plantations now combine to enclose the awareness of the formal sports use from the wider area, apart from the presence of floodlights and locally where views into the site towards the clubhouse and car park are available where a public footpath crosses the entrance road. The plantations have also developed to help provide containment and enclosure from a number of locations views across the AOS including towards the built edge of Whitwick.

The unit forms an integrated recreational facility for the local rugby club with its own dedicated vehicular access c 250m long from Hall Lane. Lanus uses to the perimeter help to benefit biodiversity. Comprehensive development would require a replacement facility to be identified, purchased and laid out to free up Unit 4 for built development.

The unit is not being promoted for development and therefore is not considered developable. As a result residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 4 should retain its function as making a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 5

Size = 2.83 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports**Planning Assessment** (See Appendix 1) = Potentially developable

Part of SHELAA site C19.

The 2018 SHELAA had representation for the western part of Unit 5 and most of Unit 8. The western part of Unit 5 is considered to be potentially developable subject to addressing Highway and AOS issues.

Planning history: The western part of Unit 5 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included all of Land Units 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012.**Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS** (from 2022 Review) = **Primary****Findings of this study****Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 5 comprises a number of small paddocks, grassland fields and a small area of allotments together with Glebe Farm which has associated farm/industrial buildings. The unit is located east of the A511 from where there is pedestrian access via a public footpath which crosses the unit to link with Green Lane. A further footpath runs north to south and broadly parallel to the A511. There are elevated views across Unit 5 where the footpath climbs on embankment over the footbridge across the A511. The only vehicular access to Unit 5 is along Green Lane which leads through arable land for c.800 from the built edge of the settlement of Whitwick. The route is relatively narrow and not suitable for two-way traffic.

The unit is located with Whitwick parish with the parish/town boundary with Coalville following the A511 in this location. Development of Unit 5 in isolation is not considered suitable as it would appear detached from other residential development. A potential new access directly from the A511 would locate any new development more closely with the settlement of Coalville rather than Whitwick but would still be physically separated from Coalville by the A511 and the linear tree belts and hedges that follow the A511. Built form whether residential or commercial within Coalville to the west of the A511 Way backs on to the A511 and together with boundary planting forms a well-defined and enclosed edge to the town. The A511, Stephenson Way has the character of a bypass that marks the edge of Coalville.

A larger development that combined with the Units 8 and 14 and other neighbouring units could potentially create a more cohesive development (along the lines of the dismissed application). However, such a larger development would appear isolated from Coalville and Whitwick. It would be located within in the open agricultural core of the AOS and not meaningfully relate to any existing urban edges. It would also place a larger area of built development within Whitwick parish adjacent to the boundary with Coalville. This would be particularly damaging to the physical and perceived sense of separation between the two settlements.

For these reasons development is not considered suitable in Unit 5. As a result residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 5 should retain its function as making a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 6

Size = 13.81ha

Land Unit 6 has been sub-divided into two parts 6a and 6b for the purposes of this study. Some parts of the description cover Unit 6 as a whole with other parts relating to 6a and 6b for suitability for development.

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = potentially developable.

Part of SHELAA site C19.

The two eastern fields of Unit 6 (6a) have been subject to a separate representation.

Planning history: Unit 6 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included all of Land Units 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. A further planning application 14/00800 encompassing all of Unit 6 and the most eastern field of Unit 7 was also refused and dismissed at appeal in 2017.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 6 comprises three arable fields located to the west of the built edge of Whitwick. The land is gently sloping, and the three fields are divided by clipped hedgerows. The southern boundary adjoins semi-mature woodland planting to the edge of Unit 4 which visually contains the Coalville Rugby Football Club beyond. There are more open views to the west across Unit 8 towards the vegetated edge of Coalville at c 850m-1km distance. The eastern boundary backs onto properties along Tiverton Avenue and Stainsdale Gardens. Most of the properties to the built edge are single storey with a group of two storey to the north-east corner. The edge of Whitwick in this location has a relatively abrupt built interface with the adjacent agricultural land with minimal planting to the rear of properties. Most views across Unit 6 are from private rear gardens although there is a section of footpath to the north-east where there is a more open aspect and a localised break in the hedgerow to the south-east corner.

Vehicular access could be provided (into 6a) centrally off Torrington Avenue to the east which links to Hall Lane. Secondary points of access could be made to the north-east of Tiverton Avenue and Perran Avenue.

Development of Unit 6a could be achieved in isolation while development within Unit 6b would require access either through 6a and/or Units 7 and/or 8a. Built development within 6a would extend westwards by up to c 220m while development within 6b would extend to c.480m. Development would comprise a marked reduction in the physical extent of the AOS. However, there is scope to provide substantive planting to the western boundary of either/both Units 6a and 6b that would help to visually contain the edge of an expanded Whitwick in this location. The existing planting to the southern boundary within Unit 4 illustrates the effectiveness of planting in providing containment. The existing built edge of Whitwick is relatively raw and more sympathetic development, including areas of open space and woodland planting could provide a more permanent and effective edge to the AOS. Development of Unit 6a in isolation, assuming there is suitable mitigation planting in place, would in isolation be relatively less harmful to the AOS compared with 6a and 6b.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows within and around the 6a and 6b unit should be retained together with the semi-mature tree planting to the southern boundary within Unit 4.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 02 – Appendix 3)

Built development within 6a could comprise two areas, one to the north and one to the south with a central area of open space. Development to the east adjoining Whitwick could back onto existing rear

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gardens and require suitable levels of residential amenity for existing and future occupants. It is likely that single-storey properties should be provided backing onto existing bungalows. Suitable offsets should be provided from retained woodland and hedgerow features. Access could be provided from Torrington Avenue.

Built development within 6b should be set more centrally within the unit with the scope for residential areas to positively face outwards to address extensive areas of open space to the perimeter. A central tree-lined boulevard could be included along the main linking road through the residential areas. Access could be provided through 6a but it is likely that an additional connection would also be required through Unit 7 linking to Hall Lane.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

Areas of open space within 6a should be provided in association with existing vegetative features to ensure they are located and managed within areas of communal ownership. The northern corner of Unit 6a provides a suitable location for a play area.

Areas of open space within 6b should be more extensive to provide sufficient offset and mitigation to contain development from the remainder of the AOS, most notably to the south and west. Suitable provision should also be made for play areas and sports facilities.

- ***Proposed planting***

Within 6a a tree belt should be provided to the western edge, providing a similar character to that to the northern edge of Unit 4. Should 6a develop in isolation then this would need to be wider and potentially occupy part of 6b to provide sufficient depth for screening, recreation and biodiversity. If 6b also came forward at the same time the depth planting could be reduced but areas of open space increased accordingly.

Within 6b and adjacent in Unit 8b extensive areas of woodland planting should be provided to create a clear vegetated edge between an expanded Whitwick and the retained parts of the AOS. This planting should provide a strategic link following locally higher ground between the semi-mature planting around Unit 4 the south and the more extensive woodland area within Unit 9. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

For 6a based on the Concept Plan on Figure 02 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 3.39ha this would provide c. 118 units at an average of 35ph.

For 6b based on the Concept Plan on Figure 02 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 4.37ha this would provide c. 152 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be an erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of 6a. There would be an additional more notable erosion with the development of 6b. The extent of these effects would depend on the mix and location of development areas, open space and woodland within the unit. Currently Units 6a and 6b strong visual links and similarity character with Unit 8 which extends across much of the AOS towards the A511 and edge of Coalville. Development north of 6b would also impinge towards Unit 7. Development within 6b would also narrow the gap to the south towards Units 1 and 2 with only Unit 4 potentially remaining undeveloped.

A clear and substantial vegetated boundary would be required to the western edge of developments within either 6a or 6b to help to mitigate the effects on adjacent units most notably Unit 8.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a notable physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c.200m to the west of the rear of properties on Tavistock Avenue/ Stainsdale Gardens for 6a and by c.400m for 6b. This nature of effect is to be expected as the Unit 6 was considered to make a Primary contribution to the AOS in the May 2022 AOS Study. This potential change would be likely to weaken the function of the AOS in this location. However, this could be meaningfully offset by the provision of a substantive planted western boundary to 6a and 6b.

Subject to substantive woodland being established, as indicated on the Concept Plan and linking with existing woodlands within Units 4 and 9, the AOS could overall still retain a separation, albeit reduced, between Whitwick and Coalville. Should 6a develop in isolation then the harm to the AOS would be notably reduced.

Land Unit No 7

Size = 6.4ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = potentially developable
Part of SHELAA site C19.

Planning history: Unit 7 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included all of Land Units 6, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 14 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. A further planning application 14/00800 encompassing all of Unit 6 and the most eastern field of Unit 7 was also refused and dismissed at appeal in 2017.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 7 comprises three arable fields located to the west of the built edge of Whitwick. The land is gently sloping from south up to the north, and the three fields are divided and partly bounded by clipped hedgerows. The eastern boundary fronts onto Hall Lane beyond which is the developed edge of Whitwick comprising mid-20th century residential development with a mix of largely two-storey semi-detached, detached and maisonette properties. There is a tall hedgerow fronting the two northern fields which partially contains visibility into the unit from the adjacent housing while the southern field has a more open aspect for both public receptors along Hall Lane and from the houses fronting. The western boundary is partly contained by the young woodland within Unit 9, which although less than 10 years old, is already forming a coherent area of woodland and enclosing wider views to the west across the rest of the AOS. Belts of tree planting around the fringe of Unit 11 contain views to the higher ground to north. Vehicular access could be provided directly off Hall Lane.

Development of Unit 7 would extend built edge of Whitwick westwards by up to c 185m and would comprise a reduction of approximately one fifth in the physical extent of the AOS in this location. However, the young woodland within Unit 9 is all providing enclosure from the wider AOS. In addition, there is scope to provide additional substantive planting to the western boundary of Unit 6b and eastern extent of Unit 8 to visually contain the edge of an expanded Whitwick in this location. There is also scope for built development in Unit 7 to extend and link into the eastern edge of Unit 8 and Unit 6b. While there are opportunities to view into the AOS from Hall Lane the existing built edge of Whitwick along Hall Lane is suburban in character and relatively raw. A more sympathetic development including areas of open space and woodland planting could provide a more permanent and effective edge to the AOS.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows within and around the unit should be retained including the taller section of hedgerow fronting the northern two fields along Hall Lane.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 03 – Appendix 3)

Built development within Unit 7 is recommended to be located in two areas either side of a central corridor of open space. Development should face outwards to areas of open space.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

Areas of open space should be provided in association with existing vegetative features. A central generous corridor of open space is proposed to provide physical and visual connections from Hall Lane to the west towards existing and proposed woodland features. Longer views across the AOS would be curtailed but connections to woodland features would be retained. The area of open space could also contain a play area. Further areas of open space are proposed to the perimeter of the Unit including to the north towards

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Units 10 and 11 and following the western boundary of the unit. There is scope to formalise public access around Unit 7 giving greater recreational opportunities for existing and future residents into the remainder of the AOS.

- ***Proposed planting***

Existing woodland planting beyond Unit 7 would form part of the backdrop to the site. Additional woodland areas are shown to the eastern edge of Unit 8. Alternatively these areas could be created closer to or within Unit 7 albeit this would reduce potential areas for development. The location for the new woodland belt shown within Unit 8 has been selected to occupy the relatively higher ground so as to form a natural enclosure for a potential western expansion of Whitwick and occupy the higher ground to the east of Unit 8. Additional areas of planting and individual trees would be provided within the open space. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

Based on the Concept Plan in Appendix 3 and a GDA of c 6.4ha and NDA of 4.06ha this would provide c. 142 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be an erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of Unit 7 in one of the locations where the edge of the AOS is most open to both public and private views along Hall Lane. This would affect outward views to the west albeit these have been more recently partially restricted by the woodland planting within Unit 9. Elevated public views into Unit 7 from the footpath that passes through Units 10 and 11 would represent a further adverse visual effect from within the AOS. There is a more limited landscape linkage to Units 6 and 8 from Unit 7. However, there is scope for greater enclosure to be created by planting development to reduce effects on the remainder of the AOS.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a notable physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c.185m to the west of Hall Lane. This nature of effect is to be expected as the Unit 7 was considered to make a Primary contribution to the AOS in the May 2022 AOS Study. This potential change would weaken the function of the AOS in this location. However, this could be meaningfully offset by the provision of a strengthened woodland boundary to the west including land on Units 6 and 8. There is also scope to provide an enhanced built edge to Whitwick in this location with greater access to open space

Subject to additional areas of woodland being created as indicated on the Concept Plan and linking with existing woodlands within Units 4 and 9, the AOS could overall still retain a clear separation between Whitwick and Coalville.

Land Unit No 8

Size = 33.56ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports**Planning Assessment** (see Appendix 1) = potentially developable

Part of SHELAA site C19.

A representation as part of the 2018 SHELAA was made for Unit 8 and the western fields of Unit 5.

Planning history: Unit 8 comprised a large part of Application 10/01208 which also included all of Land Units 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 14 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012.**Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS** (from 2022 Review) = **Primary****Findings of this study****Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 8 comprises an extensive area of gently undulating arable land and is the largest Land Unit assessed within the AOS. The unit is fully located within Whitwick with vehicle access only available along narrow Green Lane that leads to 2 isolated properties within the centre of Unit 8 and Glebe Farm. Fields are typically bounded by clipped hedgerows with minimal hedgerow trees. The landscape is therefore relatively open to view and allows for distant views across the AOS between Coalville and Whitwick. However, views to Coalville to the west are generally largely visually contained beyond planting associated with the A511. Views to the north towards built form along Hermitage Road are becoming more contained by the young woodland planting within Unit 13 and equally views to the east and south contained by planting around Unit 9 and Unit 4. The built edge of Whitwick to the east along Hall Lane and to the edge of Unit 6 is seen to a limited degree.

Apart from where Green Lane leaves Whitwick there is no physical connection with built form within either Whitwick or Coalville. Development in the majority of Unit 8 in isolation or attached to Unit 5 is not considered suitable as it would appear detached from other residential development. A potential new access directly from the A511 would locate any new development more closely with the settlement of Coalville rather than Whitwick but would still be physically separated from Coalville by the A511 and the linear tree belts and hedges that follow the A511. Built form whether residential or commercial within Coalville to the west of the A511 Way backs on to the A511 and together with boundary planting forms a well-defined and enclosed edge to the town. The A511, Stephenson Way has the character of a bypass that marks the edge of Coalville.

A large development that combined Unit 8 with parts of Unit 5 and 14 could potentially create a more cohesive development (along the lines of the dismissed application). However, such a larger development would appear isolated from Coalville and Whitwick. It would be located within the open agricultural core of the AOS and not meaningfully relate to any existing urban edges. It would also place a larger area of built development within Whitwick parish adjacent to the boundary with Coalville. This would be particularly damaging to the physical and perceived sense of separation between the two settlements.

For these reasons a substantive development is not considered suitable in Unit 8. An exception to this general pattern would be the inclusion of part of the most easterly field that runs adjacent to Units 6, 7 and 9. This sub-area is identified and marked as 8a. A smaller area of development connected to and forming part of a more comprehensive area of development within Units 6b and 7 could be suitable subject to Unit 8a also providing for a substantive woodland buffer (minimum 40 m wide) linking the woodland within Unit 9 and the semi-mature planting around the perimeter of Unit 4. The following parts of the section relate to development within sub- area 8a only.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS (Unit 8a only)

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows within and around the unit should be retained.

- **Potential development areas** (See Figure 03 – Appendix 3)
Built development within Unit 8a is recommended to be located to the most eastern extent of the unit. Development should face outwards to areas of open space.
- **Proposed open space and recreation**
Areas of open space should be provided in association with existing vegetative features and as part of open space provided for Units 6b and 7. A generous corridor of open space is proposed to the north and west giving linkage to a large area of woodland planting.
- **Proposed planting**
Unit 8a could provide the opportunity for a substantive belt of new woodland linking that within Unit 9 to the north and around Unit 4 to the south. The alignment of a new woodland area should follow the relatively higher ground to provide increased separation between the open arable landscape to the west and the land falling towards Hall Lane to the east. This woodland should be an essential component of any larger area of development to the east. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

Based on the Concept Plan on Figure 03 in Appendix 3 and NDA of 0.89 ha this would provide c. 31 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be a limited erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the proposed level of built development within Unit 8a. The majority of land identified within Unit 8a would be for woodland planting and associated open space to form a more coherent and comprehensive development within Units 6, 7 and 8a. This planting would also serve to limit the effect of a wider development to the east from the remainder of the AOS.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a modest physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c.100m to the west. However, development within Unit 8a would only occur in association with Unit 6b and in this respect would not extend as far west as 6b and be a relatively smaller component of the potential development. This potential change would weaken the function of the AOS in this location but to a more limited degree than for Unit 6b. However, Unit 8a provides an opportunity to provide a substantive woodland edge to expanded Whitwick that fits with the natural topography. In this respect there would be a net benefit of allowing a smaller area of built development within 8a. Should development within 8a not be viable or achievable this would result in the need to provide suitable mitigation within adjacent Units 7 and 6. This would reduce potential housing numbers that could be achieved within Units 6 and 7. Conversely there is also considerable scope within the remainder of Unit 8 (and in particular 8b east of Green Lane) to provide for shortfalls in requirements for open space, formal sports and biodiversity net gain related to built development located closer to the edge of Whitwick. Such open space uses would be fully compatible with and support the function of the AOS.

Subject to the proposed land uses indicated for Unit 8a being achieved the AOS could overall still provide a meaningful separation between Whitwick and Coalville.

Land Unit No 9

Size = 5.99 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Potentially Developable.

Suitability queried as Unit 9 has been the subject of tree planting as part of the National Forest. Part of SHELAA site C19.

Planning history: Unit 9 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included Land Units 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. Unit 9 was indicated for woodland planting and open space on the Illustrative Masterplan for the dismissed appeal.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 9 is located to the east of Green Lane on land that rises up to the east. The majority of Unit 9 was planted in c.2016 being created through funding from the National Forest Company to form part of the National Forest. The young woodland is generally establishing well and beginning to form a meaningful presence in the landscape with trees reaching up to circa 5-6 m in height and including a mix of deciduous and evergreen native species. The woodland is also helping to provide containment of views across the AOS. Forestry is one of the uses supported by Policy En5 in the AOS.

The Unit also includes a flood relief basin located closer to Green Lane, areas of wildflower/meadows and to the perimeter lengths of established hedgerow. A public footpath follows the northern boundary of the unit and there is also some informal access round other parts of the unit. The woodlands have scope for educational use or outdoor classrooms.

The removal or partial removal of the woodland and associated habitats would result in a loss of ecological value, public access and amenity etc. The removal of trees is also likely to require a felling licence from the Forestry Commission.

The unit is not being promoted for development and is not considered developable. Residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 9 should retain its function as making a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 10

Size = 3.56 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Unit 10 is not being promoted within the SHELAA.

Planning history: Unit 10 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included Land Units 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. Unit 10 was indicated for woodland planting, open space and allotments on the Illustrative Masterplan for the dismissed appeal.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 10 is located to the east of Green Lane on land that rises up to the east to form an area of locally higher ground. The Unit comprises two areas of rough grassland fields and is bounded by established hedgerows and a tree belt to the east along the boundary with Unit 11. There are distant views to the north-west over Whitwick and to wooded skylines to the south-east over Unit 7 and the part of Whitwick along Hall Lane. There are a number of informal footpaths across and around Unit 10 which therefore currently provide for a level of informal recreation with outward facing views together with an area of semi-natural biodiversity interest. The undeveloped character of Unit 10 helps to contain the presence of Whitwick to the north. The young woodland within Unit 9 is also beginning to form enclosure to the south. Vehicular access could be provided from Green Lane.

Development of the whole Unit would result in built form appearing in a prominent elevated location which is likely to be visible from a number of locations across the AOS and from the edge of Whitwick. Existing development at nearby Weavers Close has occurred in a similar elevated location to create a prominent and unsympathetic built form on the edge of the AOS and a similar effect should not be repeated. The Unit is not being promoted for built development and the majority of Unit 10 is not considered suitable for development.

However, there is potential for a small area of development on the lower ground fronting Green Lane to a similar depth as existing properties to the east. These could potentially comprise an option for self- build plots. The following parts of the section relate to a small area of development to the frontage of Green Lane.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerow fronting Green Lane should be retained apart from a single point of access serving a short service road.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 03 – Appendix 3)

Built development within Unit 10 is recommended to be located to the western frontage with Green Lane only.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

The remainder of Unit 10 could be retained in existing condition and use.

- ***Proposed planting***

Planting should be provided to the rear and side of residential areas to soften views from the remainder of Unit 10. This could be provided by way of a planning condition related to development. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

Based on the Concept Plan on Figure 03 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 0.26ha this would provide c. 9 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be a limited erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the proposed level of built development. The area is opposite existing frontage development to Green Lane and so would not extend built form further along Green Lane. The suggested area for development is at a lower elevation with limited views across the AOS.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a modest physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c.40m to the east from Green Lane. There would no effect on the separation of Whitwick from Coalville and a negligible effect on the separation of the different parts of Whitwick.

The addition of a small area for development off Green Lane would ensure that the AOS would overall still provide a meaningful separation between Whitwick and Coalville.

Land Unit No 11

Size = 1.8 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable
Land Unit 11 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Incidental**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 11 is located to the west of Hall Lane and comprises an area of allotments with a small associated informal car park and an area of grassland. The Unit occupies a similar area of relatively elevated ground to that on the adjacent Unit 10 but is enclosed to the western and southern boundaries by an established tree belt which restricts views into and out of the land. There are private views from the rear elevations of properties that front onto Hall Lane. A narrow single-track route leads to the allotment car park but this is not considered suitable for accessing potential residential development.

The development of Unit 11 would require a replacement allotment facility being provided in alternative location and access to the land would also require the use of third-party land from Unit 7 or Unit 10.

The unit is not being promoted for development and is not considered developable. Residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 11 should retain its contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 12

Size = 0.93 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable
Land Unit 11 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 12 is located to the south of Weavers Close and to the rear properties on Green Lane to the east. The Unit comprises an area of open space associated with a play area located on the adjacent land to the north-west which itself fronts Hermitage Road and is excluded from the AOS although both areas read as being of one common character. The landform is relatively elevated with the land falling to the west, south and east into Green Lane. The majority of the land use comprises amenity grassland with a small area of semi-natural woodland to the east. The Unit is enclosed by established hedgerows to the south-west beyond which the young woodland within Unit 13 is beginning to provide visual enclosure. There are more open views to the south across the AOS and reciprocal views from within the AOS to the north towards the Unit and the prominent built form of the three-storey block at the end of Weavers Close.

The development of Unit 12 would result in the loss of open space which would require a replacement facility and reconfiguration of existing playground on the adjacent land. Access could potentially be achieved from Green Lane or through third-party land on Hermitage Road. Potential built development would occupy a location that is relatively elevated. Woodland planting to the south-west will provide progressive containment of the Unit.

The unit is not being promoted for development and is not considered developable. Residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 12 should retain its function as making a Secondary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 13

Size = 8.41 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Potentially Developable
Suitability queried as Unit 13 has been the subject of tree planting as part of the National Forest.
Part of SHELAA site C19.

Planning history: Unit 13 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which included Land Units 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14 and part of Unit 5. The application which was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. Unit 13 was indicated for woodland planting and open space on the Illustrative Masterplan for the dismissed appeal.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 13 is located to the rear of properties to the south of Hermitage Road set on gently rising ground from the south- West up to the north-east. The majority of Unit 13 was planted in c.2016 being created through funding from the National Forest Company to form part of the National Forest. The young woodland is generally establishing well and beginning to form a meaningful presence in the landscape with trees reaching up to circa 5-6 m in height and including a mix of deciduous and evergreen native species. The woodland is also helping to provide containment of views across the AOS and in particular is effectively beginning to screen views of properties along Hermitage Road as seen from within the AOS. Forestry is one of the uses supported by Policy En5 in the AOS.

The Unit also includes areas of wildflower/meadows and to the perimeter lengths of established hedgerow. Permissive access is allowed through Unit 13 linking from a public footpath to the south up to an area of open space to the north. The woodlands have scope for educational use or outdoor classrooms. There is no vehicular access into Unit 13.

The removal or partial removal of the woodland and associated habitats would result in a loss of ecological value, public access and amenity etc. The removal of trees is also likely to require a felling licence from the Forestry Commission.

The unit is not being promoted for development and is not considered developable. Residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 13 should retain its function as making a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 14

Size = 1.95 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Potentially developable
Part of SHELAA site C19.

Planning history: Unit 14 comprised part of Application 10/01208 which also included all of Land Units 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and part of Unit 5. The application was refused and then dismissed on appeal in 2012. Unit 14 was indicated as open space on the Illustrative Masterplan for the dismissed appeal.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 14 comprises the majority of a single arable field to the north-west of Area A within the AOS. The landform falls from south-east to north-west. The unit lies adjacent to the A511 corridor to the west which includes a line of trees and hedging to both sides of the road providing some screening from the road and traffic. The A511, Stephenson Way has the character of a bypass that marks the edge of Coalville.

The field as a whole is bounded by hedging and the young woodland within Unit 13 which lies to the north. There is a public footpath that runs inside the northern boundary which also provides access into the young woodland in Unit 13. The northern strip of the field (c 40m depth) fronting Hermitage Road is outside of the AOS boundary but the boundary of this area is unmarked on the ground. This strip of land had planning permission for 9 residential units in two short terraces and a central access point to rear parking under Application 18/01773. The application lapsed in 2021. There are some filtered private views from the north from properties off Hermitage Road.

The unit is located with Whitwick parish with the parish/town boundary with Coalville following the A511. There is potential for an access through the land to the north of Hermitage Road which is in the same ownership. However, it is considered that development on Unit 14 combining the land next to Hermitage Road would weaken the sense of separation and reinforce the coalescence between Whitwick and Coalville at this already narrow gap between the settlements. The existing sense of separation would be strengthened if the adjacent land next to Hermitage Road also remained undeveloped and were included in the AOS.

A larger development that combined with the Units 8 and other neighbouring units could potentially create a more cohesive development (along the lines of the dismissed application). However, such a larger development would appear isolated from both Coalville and Whitwick. It would be located within in the open agricultural core of the AOS and not meaningfully relate to any existing urban edges. It would also place a larger area of built development within Whitwick parish adjacent to the boundary with Coalville. This would be particularly damaging to the physical and perceived sense of separation between the two settlements.

For these reasons development is not considered suitable in Unit 14. As a result, residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and Unit 14 should retain its contribution to the AOS at the point that the two settlements of Coalville and Whitwick are very closely located. At the time the Unit was first assessed in 2019 there was planning permission on the land adjacent to Hermitage Road and for this reason the contribution was considered to be Secondary. Now the permission has lapsed there is a stronger case to extend the Unit up to Hermitage Road and increase the contribution to Primary.

Land Unit No 15

Size = 14.23 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable
Land Unit 15 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: One minor application related to the use of the Unit as a recreation facility involves works to the miniature railway.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 15 comprises The Hermitage Recreation Ground facilities which include: sports pitches (both grass and artificial), a lake, miniature railway, play area, parking and areas of amenity grassland and planting. A cycle way runs through the Unit along the alignment of a former railway. The Unit is a well-used public facility and open space. Vehicular access is gained from Hermitage Road and also from the car park of Silver Street to the north associated with the former (now demolished) Hermitage Leisure Centre.

The Unit is located in the core of the north part (Area B) of the AOS and has a strong visual relationship to the sloping parts of Unit 17 (17b) to the west and connections to Unit 16a to the south-west and Unit 23 to the north which continues the alignment of the cycleway. The Unit is overlooked from the rear of a number of properties along of Hermitage Road and also from Lakeshore Crescent, Grove Road and Silver Street.

Part of the Unit to the north-east comprising grass sports pitches could potentially be developed with access from Silver Street via the point that served the former leisure centre. However, this would notably reduce the AOS between the two parts of Whitwick either side of the Grace Dieu Brook. Furthermore, replacement sports pitches would be required in alternative location.

The Unit is in the ownership of North West Leicestershire District Council and has not been promoted or considered suitable for development. As a result residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and will retain its function as a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 16a

Size = 6.24 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable
Land Unit 16a is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: One application for kiosk to monitor combined storm overflow?

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 16a is located to the southern part of Area B of the AOS and comprises part of the Hermitage Recreation Ground facilities which are concentrated to the east. Together with Unit 16b the land formerly comprised a small golf course that was run by North West Leicestershire District Council. The facility fell into disuse and is now managed as areas of amenity grassland with some groups of trees that formed part of the golf course and have now established into copses. Bridle Road is a right of way which passes through the centre the area (linking Hermitage Road to Thornborough Road) and is an attractive recreational route which also links to a separate cycle route connecting to the north-east through the remainder of the Hermitage Recreation Ground. The whole of the unit has recreational access for the public and is therefore open to view.

Potential vehicular access from A511/ Hermitage Road would need to be checked in highway terms but does not appear suitable and would cause harmful effects to the character of Bridle Road.

The Unit is and has a visual relationship to the sloping parts of Unit 17 (17b) to the north and connections and views to Unit 16b where the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre is located. The Unit is partly overlooked from the rear of a number of properties along of Hermitage Road.

The frontage of Unit 16a to Hermitage Road provides an important narrow gap between the settlements of Coalville and Whitwick. Residential Development on the Unit would markedly weaken the separation between Whitwick and Coalville which are in close proximity in this location. The Unit is in the ownership of North West Leicestershire District Council and has not been promoted or considered suitable for development. As a result residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and will retain its function as a Primary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 16b

Size = 5.44 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable
Land Unit 16b is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: Application 19/01343/FULM for the Whitwick and Coalville Leisure centre and two subsequent related applications.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 16b is located to the south-west corner of Area B of the AOS and contains the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre together with landscaped parking areas close to the A511 and areas of informal semi-natural vegetation to the west, north and east. The leisure centre is well used and built form of the provides the primary focus within the Unit. Access provided directly off the A511 and is highly visible from this approach. However, the building is set relatively low compared to the land to the north and therefore is not widely visible within the remainder of the AOS. The Bridle Road right of way follows the northern boundary connecting to Thornborough Road. This recreational route provides an attractive informal tree and hedge lined corridor with some longer distance views to the east across the valley of the Grace Dieu Brook.

Unit 16b has a visual relationship with Unit 16a to the south-east and both areas once formed part of small golf course. There are some longer distance views to the north-east along the valley towards properties on Church Lane and the tower of St John the Baptist Church can be seen within the vegetated skyline.

The Unit is in the ownership of North West Leicestershire District Council and provides an important recreational facility for the local population. The Unit has unsurprisingly not been promoted or considered suitable for development. As a result residential proposals and mitigation are not indicated and will retain its function as a Secondary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 17

Size = 18.61ha

Land Unit 17 has been sub-divided into three parts 17a, 17b and 17 c for the purposes of this study. Some parts of the description cover Unit 17 as a whole with other parts relating to the sub-units for suitability for development.

(NB Units 17a and 17c are considered to have some suitability for development subject to the provision of a suitable access through Unit 18).

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = potentially developable subject to provision of a suitable access. Part of SHELAA site C18.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Primary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 17 comprises three arable fields on the western slopes of the valley feature running through Area B of the AOS. The field adjacent to the rear of properties on Thornborough Road occupies relatively more gently/plateau land whereas the larger field to the east has a more marked slope running down to the Grace Dieu Brook. The more northerly field contains land on both the steeper slopes and a smaller triangle area of the plateau landscape to the north-west.

The higher and more level ground to the rear of the existing properties along Thornborough Road is considered to be relatively more suitable for built development. In relation to 17a the existing hedgerow that separates 17a and 17b also forms logical line and break in the slope. The north-south alignment of footpath running through 17c forms a further logical eastern extent for development relating to both a change in slope and extension of the hedgerows enclosing the rear of Unit 18. The rear of properties on Thornborough Road can be clearly viewed from the public footpath that runs adjacent to the hedgerow between 17a and 17b and also from some locations within the Hermitage Recreation Ground (Unit 15) to the east. Therefore built form to the edge of Thornborough Road/Whitwick is already visible within this part of the AOS. A suitably scaled development in combination with mitigation planting on the upper slopes of the valley to the east of the existing hedgerow is considered potentially suitable. A small area of development to the north within 17c also has some suitability subject to the provision of an access through Unit 18.

The majority of Unit 17b comprises open arable fields that slope down towards the Grace Dieu Brook. These fields are relatively prominent compared with Units 17a and 17c particularly as seen from the Hermitage Recreation Ground which is a popular and well used facility with many receptors. The introduction of built form on the sloping fields would make a major physical and visual incursion into the AOS. For this reason, built development is not considered a suitable within Unit 17b.

There are three existing access points into Unit 17 from Thornborough Road, one to the south connecting to the right of way Bridle Road, a second via a gated field access south of the allotments adjacent to No. 222 Thornborough Road and a third to the north via a public footpath. It is likely that none of these points will create a suitable vehicular access. In these circumstances access will be required via the allotments forming Unit 18 (SHELAA Site C 45). In these circumstances a suitable area for replacement allotments would need providing subject to agreement. This would logically be within the northern part of Unit 17b as shown on the Concept Plan at Figure 05 (or alternatively possibly on Units 19-21).

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***
The existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree groups within and around Unit 17 should be retained and further strengthened, except where removals are essential to create a suitable vehicular access point. Existing rights-of-way should be retained.
- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 05 – Appendix 3)
Built development could comprise a larger area within 17a and a smaller area within 17c. Development within 17a could comprise a single area which should be set back from areas of open space located to the east, south east corner and to the north. Development to the western boundary should respect the residential amenity of residents to minimise overlooking to acceptable standards.
- ***Proposed open space and recreation***
Areas of open space within 17a should be focused on the eastern boundary following the existing public footpath and to the northern boundary along a new recreational route from Thornborough Road adjacent to No 222 (if this proves not to be suitable for vehicular access) to Unit 17b. It is also important to retain cross valley vistas from Bridle Road to the south-east corner of 17a.
- ***Proposed planting***
A new tree belt c 30m wide should be provided to the on the western edge of Unit 17b extending up to the existing hedgerow and east of the public footpath to provide visual containment of the development from the remainder of the valley and the Hermitage Recreation Ground. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

For Unit 17a based on the Concept Plan in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 3.01ha this would provide up to 105units at an average of 35ph.

For Unit 17c based on the Concept Plan in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 0.60ha this would provide up to 21 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be an erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of 17a and 17c. The extent of these effects would depend on the mix and location of development areas, open space and woodland within the unit. Currently Unit 17a and 17c have strong visual links with 17b and across into Units 15 and 16a within Area B of the AOS with longer distance views beyond across Whitwick and higher ground beyond the AOS. There are more limited visual connections between Unit 16b due to the enclosure provided along Bridle Road. A clear and substantial woodland boundary would be required to the western edge Unit 17b to help to mitigate the effects of built development in 17a and 17c on the retained open parts of the AOS most notably Units 15 and 17b.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a notable physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c.120m to the east of the rear of properties on Thornborough Road. This effect is to be expected as Unit 17 was considered to make a Primary contribution to the AOS in the May 2022 AOS Study. This potential change would be likely to weaken the function of the AOS in this location. However, this could be partly offset by the provision of a substantive planted eastern boundary of Units 17a and 17 c.

Subject to substantive woodland being established, as indicated on the Concept Plan the AOS could overall still retain a sense of separation, albeit reduced between two separate parts of Whitwick along Hermitage Road and Thornborough Road. There would be a much more limited effect on the connections with Coalville. Due to the intervening presence of Unit 16b.

Land Unit No 18

Size = 3.31ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = potentially developable subject to provision of a replacement allotment site.

Parts of Unit 18 (18a and 18b) are within SHELAA site C45.

Planning history: One minor application related to the use of the Unit as allotments and one application for an extension to an existing residential property whose long rear curtilage extends into Unit 18c.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Incidental**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 18 comprises three land uses. The larger sub-division Unit 18a is the Thornborough allotments, the second Unit 18b an L shaped area of unmanaged land including hedges and trees located to the south and east of the allotments and a third 18c to the north-east forms a paddock that is enclosed by mature and tall hedges to all sides.

The only access into Unit 18 is from the access off Thornborough Road into the allotments. A public footpath runs to the east of Unit 18 within a narrow corridor. However, the route is very poorly maintained and an alternative route to the edge of Unit 17b appears to be currently unofficially used by the public in preference.

Unit 18 could also provide an access into Units 17a and 17c subject to suitable agreements between relevant landowners.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree groups within and around Unit 18 should be retained with the exception of where removals are essential to create a suitable vehicular access point into a development area. The existing right-of-way to the east should be retained and improved to enable use.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 05 – Appendix 3)

Built development within Unit 18 could comprise three locations. Firstly, the main area would be on 18a the existing allotments. A layout on this area could facilitate access into Unit 17a. A replacement allotment facility would be required which could be provided on Unit 17b. A second sub-division Unit 18b is a smaller parcel to the east and would be accessed through an existing belt of trees. A third area 18c comprises the paddock area to the north-east with access through a narrow strip of land bound by hedges and would require reaching agreement with a third party. Development on 18c could potentially also facilitate access into Unit 17c.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

Areas of open space within Unit 18 should be focused on the area of the current allotments and include a communal central open space and protected corridors by retained vegetative features. A new pedestrian link could be provided within the narrow strip of land to the existing footpath to the east.

- ***Proposed planting***

New planting could be provided as part of the proposed open spaces and retained vegetative features. Additional planting would also be beneficial to the west of Unit 17b to mitigate development to the east and north-east parts of Unit 18 (sub-units 18b and 18c) should these areas come forward. Planting within

Unit 17b is more feasible if access to 17a is provided through agreement with the landowner of Sub-Unit 18s. All existing and new planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

For Sub-Unit 18a based on the Concept Plan on Figure 5 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 1.36ha this would provide c. 47 units at an average of 35ph.

For Sub-Unit 18b based on the Concept Plan on Figure 5 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 0.3ha this would provide c. 10 units at an average of 35ph.

For Sub-Unit 18c based on the Concept Plan on Figure 5 in Appendix 3 and a NDA of 0.82ha this would provide c. 28 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be an erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of Unit 18. The extent of these effects would depend on the extent of the development in the sub-units. However Unit 18, is currently relatively enclosed which is reflected by the Incidental status of the Land Unit within the 2022 Study.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a medium scale physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by up to 230m to the east of Thornborough Road. However subject to the existing vegetative features being retained there would be a limited effect on the integrity and function of the AOS.

Land Unit No 19

Size = 1.98ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Access would be required through third party land.
Land Unit 19 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Incidental**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 19 comprises two paddock areas divided by an established hedgerow. The eastern paddock includes a menage and some stabling which is accessed from the private drive of 241a Church Lane. The topography falls towards the southern boundary of the unit and away from the upper slopes of the Grace Dieu Brook valley to the south-east within the core of the Area B part of the AOS. Unit 19 is enclosed by tall mature hedges to the south which further reinforces the separation from the rest of the AOS and explains the Incidental nature of the Land Unit to the AOS overall in the May 2022 report. Existing residential development backs on the Land Unit to the north, west and east. To the north the properties are mainly bungalows and include some relatively short rear gardens such that the bungalows are close to the boundary such that overlooking and residential amenity would need to be mitigated by any residential layout on the unit.

There is currently no clear direct access for a development so there would need to be agreement with owners of Third Party land.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree groups within and around Unit 19 should be retained subject to providing a suitable access point.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 06 – Appendix 3)

Built development within Unit 19 could subject to access from to Third Party land, extend to the whole of the Unit. However, any development to the northern and eastern boundaries should respect the residential amenity of residents to minimise overlooking to acceptable standards.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

Internal areas of open space should relate to existing vegetative features which should where possible be retained in communal use rather than in back gardens.

- ***Proposed planting***

New tree planting should be provided within a layout to supplement existing features and existing planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

For Unit 19 based on the Concept Plan on Figure 6 in Appendix 3 and a GDA of 1.98ha and NDA of 0.92 ha this would provide c. 32 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be a limited erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of Unit 19 and a minimal effect on the remainder of the AOS. This is largely due to the way the land falls away from the majority of the AOS and the strong vegetative enclosure to the southern boundary.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a small physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c. 90m to the south of rear of properties on Church Lane. This effect is to be expected as Unit 19 was considered to make an Incidental contribution to the AOS in the May 2022 Study. This limited effect is a function of the very enclosed character and that the landform slopes away from the Grace Dieu Brook valley and back towards Church Lane. The potential change would have a limited effect on the function of the AOS in this location.

The AOS would still retain the physical and visual a sense of separation between the two parts of Whitwick, albeit slightly reduced. Ther would be no effect on the separation between Coalville and Whitwick.

Land Unit No 20

Size = 0.81ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Land Unit 20 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 20 comprises a single area narrow (c. 30m wide) field of grassland bounded by mature tall hedges to both sides and that slopes down the valley sides towards the Grace Dieu Brook to the east. Two rights of way cross through the Land Unit. There is no direct access which would need to be provided via Unit 17 or via 137 Church Lane.

The presence of the rights of way and narrow shape of the unit indicates that it would not form a meaningful site for residential development. It could potentially form a related area of open space or land to provide Biodiversity Net Gain for development on other land Units.

The Unit has not been promoted for development and residential proposals are not feasible. Unit 20 should retain its Secondary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 21

Size = 2,77ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Access would be required through third party land.
Land Unit 19 is promoted in the SHELAA as C44.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study**Context and scope for residential development**

Land Unit 21 comprises two separate paddock areas that are subdivided by a public footpath passing through a wide strip of grassland linking to Church Lane to the north adjacent to Whitwick Cemetery. The landform slopes from the north-west down to the south-east towards the Grace Dieu Brook. There are mature hedges and tree planting to all boundaries except to the north-east adjacent to Whitwick cemetery and the rear of some of the properties on Church Lane. A mature hedgerow also follows the public footpath through the Unit.

A potential point of access adjacent to the cemetery provides the route of an existing public footpath and access to garages to the rear of houses on Church Lane. However, the track reduces to 3.5m wide at its narrowest point on Church Lane and is not suitable to access a new residential development. Access would need to be provided from third party land.

Development is considered to be more suitable to the north-west field, Unit 21a as this relates more to the existing development on Church Lane. Unit 21b to the south-east is considered less suitable due to the relative detached location from the existing built form and that it would represent an intrusion into the setting of the AOS and the views from Whitwick Cemetery looking to the south-west. Development in Unit 21b would have a much greater adverse effect on the sense of separation within Whitwick and on the longer views towards Coalville to the south-west.

Mitigation to reduce the effect on the AOS

- ***Features to be retained***

The existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees within and around Unit 20 should be retained subject to providing a suitable access point.

- ***Potential development areas*** (See Figure 06 – Appendix 3)

Built development within 21a indicates development to the north-west paddock. Development should ideally front to the south-east to a retained corridor of open space along the line of the right of way. Any development to the northern boundary should respect the residential amenity of residents on Church Lane to minimise overlooking to acceptable standards.

Subject to Third Party land it is potentially feasible to develop the whole Land Unit including 21b but this would have a much greater effect on the AOS and require a link across the public footpath. Development on 21b is not recommended.

- ***Proposed open space and recreation***

Internal areas of open space should relate to existing and retain vegetative features which should where possible be retained in communal use rather than in back gardens and follow the existing right of way. Open space could also be related to retained trees.

- ***Proposed planting***

New tree planting should be provided within a layout to supplement existing features and to soften the edge of the housing in 21a to the south and existing planting should be positively managed to benefit biodiversity.

Potential housing Capacity

For Unit 21a based on the Concept Plan in Appendix 3 and NDA of 0.67 ha this would provide 23 units at an average of 35ph.

Effect of development on the remainder of the AOS

There would be a local erosion of the physical extent of the AOS with the development of 21a and a modest effect on the remainder of the AOS as the planting along the adjacent Units 20 and 23 contains wider views.

Effect of development on the integrity and function of the AOS

There would be a small physical reduction in the AOS by extending built form by c. 50m to the south of the properties on Church Lane. However, development in Unit 21a would still bring an uncharacteristic intrusion of built form into this part of the AOS. The potential change would have a moderate effect on the function of the AOS in this location. Development into Unit 21b in addition would bring a much greater level of effect and further adverse effects on Units 21 and 22.

The AOS would still retain the physical and visual a sense of separation between the two parts of Whitwick, albeit reduced with development in Unit 21a. There would be a negligible effect on the separation between Coalville and Whitwick by the development of Unit 21a.

Land Unit No 22

Size = 2.69 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Land Unit 22 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 22 comprises Whitwick Cemetery. As an active burial ground it is not available or suitable for development. Unit 22 has not been promoted or considered feasible for development. Unit 22 should retain its Secondary contribution to the AOS.

Land Unit No 23

Size = 2.69 ha

Date Surveyed = August 2023

Surveyor = JB

Summary of findings from preceding reports

Planning Assessment (see Appendix 1) = Not Developable.
Land Unit 22 is not included in the SHELAA.

Planning history: None.

Contribution of Land Unit within the AOS (from 2022 Review) = **Secondary**

Findings of this study

Context and scope for residential development

Land Unit 23 comprises a linear corridor along the alignment of a disused railway and Grace Dieu Brook. The corridor forms part of a recreation route with wooded cutting and embankment slips. It has not been promoted or considered suitable for development. Residential proposals are not feasible. Unit 23 should retain its Secondary contribution to the AOS.