

# South Nottinghamshire Farmlands: Aslockton Village Farmland

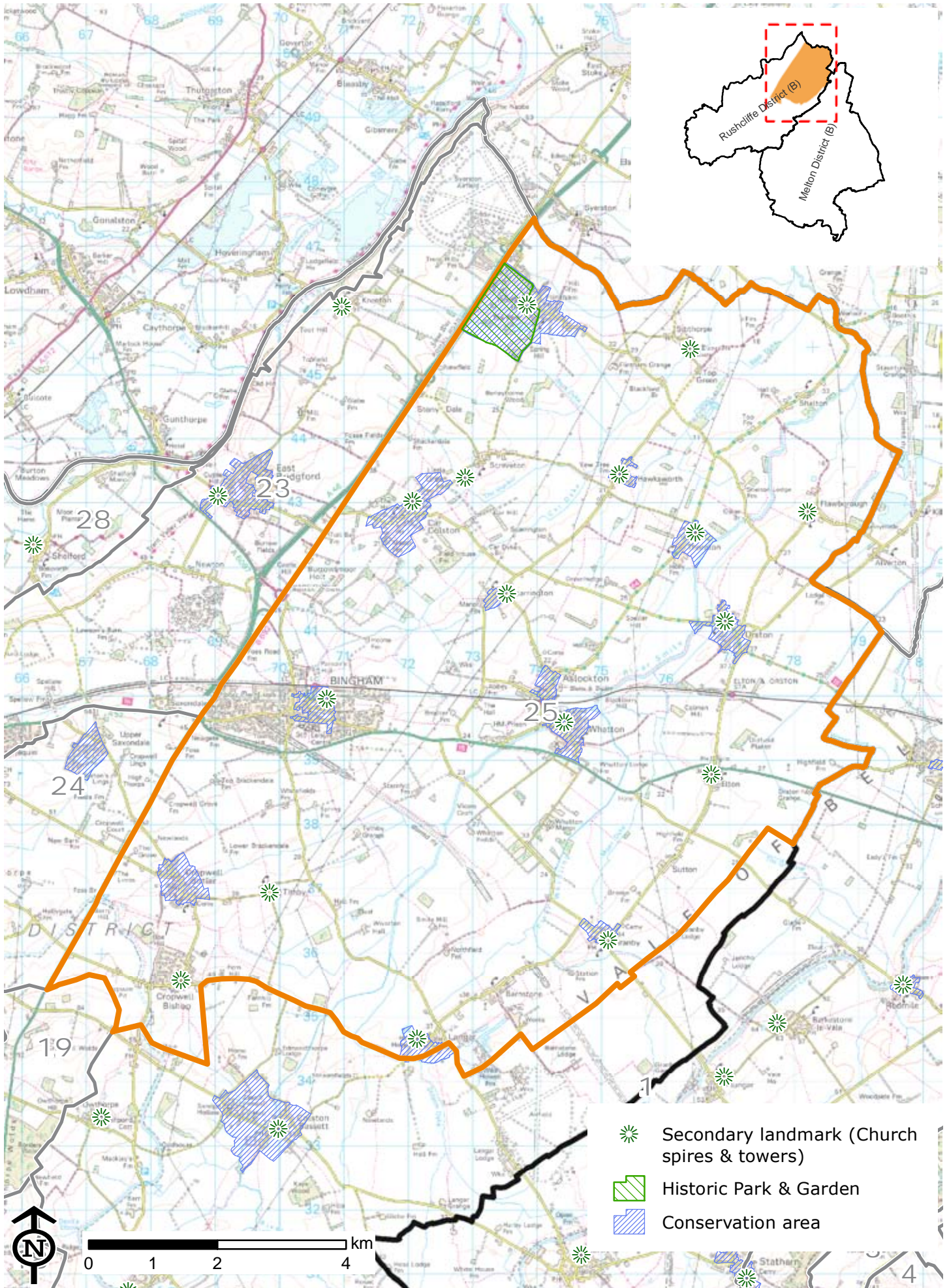


Figure 5.25

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# LCU25 South Nottinghamshire Farmlands: Aslockton Village Farmland

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7.191 This Landscape Character Unit comprises SN06 Aslockton Village Farmland within Rushcliffe borough. The extent of the LCU is shown in **Figure 5.25**.

## Key Landscape Characteristics

7.192 Key characteristics of the Aslockton Village Farmland LCU are as follows<sup>37</sup>:

- Series of Mercia Mudstone outcrops and thin bands of lower-lying alluvial levels following rivers. The outcrops vary between 5 and 10m above adjacent levels; the most prominent being along Sutton Lane and Barnstone Lane in the south east of the area.
- A number of watercourses such as the River Smite and Devon flow through the landscape; they are lower than surrounding ground with arable fields extending to their banks and little riparian vegetation. Therefore they are not easily discernible in the landscape.
- Rural remote and tranquil character comprising arable farmlands and a regular dispersal of small rural settlements.
- Land use is mostly arable although pasture is common around village fringes. Larger tracts are present where villages are situated close to each other and pasture extends between; these tend to have a slightly more enclosed and intimate character.
- Field pattern ranges from small-scale fields around village fringes to expansive large scale fields in open countryside.
- Field boundaries are almost all hedgerows which are of variable condition; they tend to be more intact around pasture fields where left to grow taller whereas in adjacent arable fields are often low and in places quite fragmented.
- There is a relatively low level of woodland cover with a regular pattern of small geometric and irregular shaped woodlands throughout; other woodland is often linear in character following the line of a former railway, around village fringes and where individual hedgerows are left to mature.
- Hedgerow trees are infrequent although clustered around pasture fields on village margins and within villages. Where hedgerows are often taller around arable fields trees tend to be less frequent. There are lots of young hedgerow trees planted as avenues along small lanes which will increase tree cover as they mature. These are mostly ash and horse chestnut.
- The combination of taller hedgerows, hedgerow trees and scattered woodlands creates a dispersed wooded character and woodland is often a key component within skyline views.
- Small parklands at Flintham, Langar, Whatton and Wiverton Hall are local wooded features.
- Dispersed small rural settlements include both linear and nucleated patterns; they are often situated on the slightly higher Mercia Mudstone outcrops. Bingham is the only large commuter settlement within the LCU and its northern and eastern edges are locally prominent in the landscape.
- Villages of Elton on the Hill, Granby, Sutton and Barnstone are prominent on higher ground; they are seen mostly as a single line of dispersed housing set within trees.
- Rooflines of villages are generally obscured by mature trees; where visible they appear dispersed and as individual or small groups of properties. Church towers and spires are prominent above the villages and are distinctive features within the landscape.

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<sup>37</sup> Taken from the Greater Nottingham Character Assessment (2009)

- Villages are particularly distinctive often containing very little modern development; they are along narrow roads often bordered by red brick walls. All villages are well wooded with many mature trees along roads within small fields and open spaces within the villages and around their fringes.
- Buildings within villages include small cottages and terraces and larger individual properties both set behind small and larger front gardens. Almost all are constructed of red brick with red pantile roofs although there is the occasional rendered or painted house. Villages often contain a few former farm buildings which are now converted to private residences.
- Churches within villages are almost all constructed from local stone and are either towers or spires and always set within mature grounds.
- Narrow winding lanes are common throughout the landscape although a few straighter roads across lower lying land are present around Orston and Granby. Roads are characterised by often large verges or pockets of grassland. In these places traditional gypsy caravans and horses grazing are sometimes present.
- Scattered farmsteads, often constructed of red brick with small out buildings and barns are throughout the LCU although not present on the lowest lying ground.
- Pockets of rough grassland and village greens grazed by cattle are a feature of villages in the northern part of the area such as between Car Colston and Screveton.
- Many prominent overhead line routes are present within the landscape and are always visible on the skyline.
- Expansive long distance views across the landscape to the Belvoir Ridge to the south in Leicestershire.

## Landscape-related designations

- 7.193 Many of the villages or parts of villages within this relatively large LCU are designated as Conservation Areas. These are: Cropwell Butler, Langar, Granby, Bingham, Watton, Aslockton, Orston, Scarrington, Car Colston, Thoroton, Hawskworth and Flintham. Flintham Hall Listed Garden also lies within the LCU.

## Important Landmarks and Views

- 7.194 There are no primary landmarks within this unit. One key view is noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal for Langar, stating that the open views across the river valley from Langar Hall to Wiverton Hall are particularly important. Church spires form local landmarks throughout the LCU.
- 7.195 Views are often over quite long distances due to the very gently undulating landform and low woodland cover. There are expansive long distance views across the landscape from the Belvoir Ridge to the east and south and partly from within Leicestershire.
- 7.196 In addition, there are a number of views which are valued locally. Such views are too numerous to identify as part of this borough-wide study, but will nevertheless need to be taken into account as part of the process of siting and design of any wind energy development, and in particular as part of the process of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

## Landscape sensitivity assessment

- 7.197 The following table sets out the landscape sensitivity assessment to wind energy development. Refer to **Table 4.4** for full details of the evaluation criteria.

**Table 7.25: Landscape sensitivity assessment for Landscape Character Unit 25 South Nottinghamshire Farmlands: Aslockton Village Farmland**

	Lower sensitivity		↔	Higher sensitivity	
<b>Landform and Scale</b>		L-M			
	<p>A very gently undulating landform of between approximately 20m – 50m AOD. Villages are generally situated on mudstone outcrops between 5 and 10m above the adjacent alluvial levels; the most prominent being along Sutton Lane and Barnstone Lane in the south east of the area – these areas will be more sensitive as turbines may diminish the scale of the villages and landscape. The landform is generally medium – large in scale.</p>				
<b>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</b>			M		
	<p>There is a regular pattern of land cover varying between expansive large scale arable fields and small scale pasture around village fringes (these often have an enclosed and intimate character and will be of greater sensitivity as turbines may dominate these smaller scale features). Fields around Car Colston and Orston display patterns which are some of the oldest enclosures in Nottinghamshire – these will be more sensitive.</p> <p>There is also a relatively uniform pattern of dispersed rural villages and a regular pattern of small geometric and irregular shaped groups of woodland around village fringes and where individual hedgerows are left to mature.</p>				
<b>Skylines</b>			M		
	<p>Skylines in this low lying and gently undulating landscape are generally not distinctive. They are often wooded and contain views of villages set within woodland on higher ground – e.g. Elton on the Hill, Granby, Sutton and Barnstone.</p> <p>Church towers and spires are prominent above the villages and are distinctive features within the landscape – increasing sensitivity, as turbines may detract attention away from them. Many prominent overhead line routes are present within the landscape and are always visible on the skyline.</p>				
<b>Perceptual qualities</b>			M		
	<p>The LCU has a rural, remote and tranquil character despite the prominence of intensive arable farmlands which are set within a regular dispersal of small rural settlements - often containing very little modern development. All villages are well wooded with many mature trees along roads within small fields and open spaces within the villages and around their fringes. Narrow winding lanes are common throughout the landscape. The A46 along the western boundary provides a major urbanising element locally.</p>				
<b>Scenic qualities</b>				M-H	
	<p>The relatively intact rural character of the LCU results in typical rural scenes of farming and distinctive small villages along narrow roads often bordered by red brick walls set in a wooded character of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and scattered woodlands. Small parklands at Flintham, Langar, Whatton and Wiverton Hall are local wooded features.</p>				

<b>Intervisibility</b>			M		
	There are expansive long distance views across the landscape to and from the Belvoir Ridge to the south in Leicestershire and on the southern fringes at the start of the Leicestershire Wolds. Views across the LCU from outside the area are possible from surrounding high ground and along the A46.				
<b>Discussion on landscape sensitivity to the principle of wind energy</b>	The relatively large scale, simple topography and regular land cover of the LCU indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy. However, the strongly rural, remote and tranquil character of the area in addition to the distinctive and small scale villages, church spires on the skylines and surrounding farmland/ woodland increase sensitivity as turbines may detract from these features.				

### Landscape sensitivity to different turbine heights

<25m	L
25 to 50 m	L-M
51 to 75 m	M
76 to 110 m	M-H
111 to 150 m	H

7.198 Although the landform is relatively large scale, the scale of the landscape pattern and presence of human scale features means it is likely to be particularly sensitive to turbines 75m and highly sensitive to turbines over 110m.

### Discussion on different cluster sizes

7.199 The LCU would be particularly sensitive to clusters of over 2-3 turbines (possibly increasing to five turbines in larger scale areas).

### Summary of Key Sensitive Features and Views

- Small scale landform features of the raised mudstone outcrops with villages e.g. Sutton Lane and Barnstone.
- Small scale field patterns in the north particularly enclosure patterns around Car Colston and Screveton.
- Narrow winding rural lanes.
- Rural, remote and tranquil character.
- Prominence of church spires.
- Distinctive historic villages in wooded settings.
- Local wooded features such as the small parklands at Fintham, Langar, Whatton and Wiverton Hall.
- Long views to and from the Vale of Belvoir.

## Guidance for Development

### Existing and permitted development within the Landscape Character Unit

- 7.200 A map showing the locations of permitted sites for wind development is presented in **Figure 2.1b**. At the time of writing there was one operational scheme within the LCU, at Butt Field Recreational Ground, Bingham, measuring 15m height to tip.

### Guidance for development

- 7.201 The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this landscape would be particularly sensitive to turbines 75m and highly sensitive to turbines over 110m. In addition it would be particularly sensitive to clusters of over three turbines (possibly increasing to five turbines in larger scale areas).
- 7.202 When siting and designing wind energy developments in this landscape, the generic guidance provided within **Section 6** should be followed. In addition, within this area particular care will need to be taken to ensure:
- The character of the smaller scale raised mudstone outcrops such as at Sutton Lane and Barnstone are maintained.
  - Areas of smaller scale fields close to villages such as the enclosure patterns around Car Colston, are preserved.
  - Local wooded features such as the small parklands at Fintham, Langar, Whatton and Wiverton Hall are conserved as features of the rural landscape.
  - The rural setting of the large number of small historic villages and the special character of the Conservation Areas are maintained. See **Appendix 3** for notes on views to/from the Conservation Areas of Cropwell Butler, Langar, Granby, Bingham, Watton, Aslockton, Orston, Scarrington, Car Colston, Thoroton, Hawksworth and Flintham.
  - The attractive views along the winding narrow lanes and towards the small villages are retained and village church spires continue to form locally prominent features/ landmarks.
  - The quiet, remote and rural characteristics of the landscape are conserved.
  - The pleasing combination of intact rural farmed fields, distinctive small villages along narrow roads and wooded settings remains and modern built development forms occasional features within this, rather than becoming defining elements of landscape character.
  - Development does not detract from the quality and character of the expansive views to and from the Vale of Belvoir and the Belvoir Ridge.
  - The character of the narrow rural lanes is preserved (avoid widening associated with turbine delivery).
  - Excessive visual 'clutter' is avoided e.g. as a result of seeing different types and sizes of turbines and/or pylons against one another – this is particularly important in the context of the open landscape and extensive views.
- 7.203 Multiple developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCU.
- 7.204 The overall aim should be to make sure that wind energy developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape or have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape (i.e. developments be occasional features within the landscape and would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the landscape unit or result in a change in landscape character of the unit).