

Urban Fringe 1: North eastern edge of Ashby de la Zouch



1: View from the A511

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Urban/Urban Fringe: large, often sprawling settlements with new built development are dominant. Major roads and railways are also prominent which affect the tranquillity of the area. Cropped farmland with gappy, poorly managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Farmland often appears sandwiched between urban and industrial uses. There are areas of remnant pasture around settlements which display a strong hedgerow pattern although hedges are often overgrown. Urban trees, open spaces and new woodland planting contribute to the setting of the urban area, however horse grazing, allotments and other non-agricultural uses contribute to the fragmented appearance of the area. Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	Gently sloping to undulating land which falls from a highpoint of 165m AOD close to the A511 to 130m AOD on the edge of Ashby de la Zouch. The land has a regular field pattern with smaller older patterns of field enclosure on the lower ground with field size increasing as the land rises. The small fields with overgrown hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees close to the urban fringe have a strong sense of enclosure; this enclosure reduces as the land rises and field size becomes larger, managed for arable crops with low and often fragmented hedgerows. A pocket of woodland on higher ground is prominent within the landscape. The northern part of this fringe is on the highest land and includes a prominent building Cliftonthorpe/Ivanhoe. Mature linear woodland following the line of a former railway is to the south of this property. This woodland creates a more rural character and wooded setting around Cliftonthorpe. Industrial buildings both on the northern and south eastern edge of the settlement are prominent above structure planting. A small brook denoted by mature trees along it forms the southern edge of the fringe.	2
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The fringe displays consistency with the wider character of the landscape although the A511 with young plantation woodland partially bisects the landscape. As the vegetation matures it will provide further screening and separation between the fringe and the wider landscape. The National Forest Character Assessment identifies a character change part way across this fringe. The main change in character between the two areas is where the landform restricts views of Ashby and warehouse development which enhances the rural feel to the area.	2
Remoteness and tranquillity	Parts of this landscape retain a rural character where views of industrial development are obscured however there are few places where the landscape feels tranquil or remote. Road noise and traffic movement along the A511 and frequent views of the urban and industrial edge of Ashby reduce the tranquillity and rural character of the landscape. Pockets of smaller fields retain some rural character although views of traffic movement and the edges of gardens remain possible.	1
	Landscape quality value	5

Urban Fringe 1: North eastern edge of Ashby de la Zouch

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is only locally visible from public rights of way such as the Ivanhoe Way as it rises to the east of the fringe and the A511. The higher ground of this fringe appears in views from vantage points along Corkscrew Lane and the public right of way north of Holywell Spring Farm. These are long distance views across Ashby. The landform to the north of the A511 rises slightly to a plateau before falling towards Black Ditches 0.85km from the fringe. This provides good enclosure to the fringe and prevents views of Ashby from the wider area. Cliftonthorpe is visible to the north from the fringes of Smisby. Properties along Nottingham Road, Wood Street and Money Hill have views from rear elevations across farmland. These views are rural in character with few urban influences other than the A511 on higher ground.	2
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement appears mostly as a dispersed rising roofline. The smaller field pattern with mature hedgerows and trees in combination with trees along the urban fringe at Hood Park and Woodcote Primary School provide screening. The small brooks along the fringes also provide a vegetated edge. To the north woodland along the railway line screens much of the urban form although industrial development becomes visible as the A511 meets Smisby Road. Industrial buildings on the eastern edge of Ashby are particularly prominent within the landscape, although their lower parts are screened by mature riparian trees.	2
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	Ashby Castle and St Helens Church are prominent above the rising roofline of Ashby. They are on the highest ground and set amongst mature trees which cover the highest ground. There are glimpsed views to higher ground beyond but this does not diminish the prominence of these features. The Cemetery Tower is also prominent set within woodland. The setting of Ashby is characterised by a rising roofline with the castle and church on highest ground. The technical college, leisure centre and industrial development are visible within the urban fringe. Industry along the southern edge of the fringe is particularly prominent; its scale and form contrast with the surrounding urban development and rural landscape. Distinctive views of the edge are mostly restricted to along the A511. To the north there are views of residential development on the highest ground which contrasts with the generally wooded horizon which is characteristic of much of the other parts of the settlement. Cliftonthorpe is prominent along the northern fringe set within woodland, landform restricts views of the majority of the settlement. However these views also contain industrial development and chimneys on the northern edge of Ashby which lessen the buildings' prominence.	1
Public accessibility	The Ivanhoe Way follows the stream along the southern boundary of the site; at one point it crosses some fields along the edge of the fringe. Another footpath borders the western edge of the fringe although in places is surrounded by urban development. There are no footpaths or general access through this fringe.	2
		Visual quality value
		7
Scope for mitigation		
The landform adjacent to this fringe provides some screening to views from the wider landscape to the east. To the south of Ashby views to the fringe are only possible to the highest ground. In views from the north and west of Ashby the settlement provides screening of much of the fringe although the highest land is visible. Woodland is a feature within the wider landscape although is reported as generally being small scale copses. Larger blocks of woodland have been planted as part of the National Forest which, as they mature, will increase the influence of woodland on the character. Mitigation could be achieved but would need to ensure that development retained a rising roofline and that it did not prevent views of the castle and church, reduce the prominence of Cliftonthorpe or was developed on the highest ground which would be more visually prominent within the wider area. It should also reflect the dispersed and vegetated edge present within the edge of the residential part of Ashby and seek to reduce the prominence of warehouses within the landscape.		



2: View from The Ivanhoe Way

Urban Fringe 2: Urban fringe to the east of Ashby and north of Nottingham Road



1: View from small lane off Nottingham Road

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Urban/Urban Fringe: large, often sprawling settlements with new built development are dominant. Major roads and railways are also prominent which affect the tranquillity of the area. Cropped farmland with gappy, poorly managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Farmland often appears sandwiched between urban and industrial uses. There are areas of remnant pasture around settlements which display a strong hedgerow pattern although hedges are often overgrown. Urban trees, open spaces and new woodland planting contribute to the setting of the urban area, however horse grazing, allotments and other non-agricultural uses contribute to the fragmented appearance of the area. Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	This is a gently rolling landscape which rises to a high point of 150m AOD at the northern fringe. The land is characterised by small to medium scale irregular shaped pasture fields bordered by thick hedgerows in variable condition. However in places a line of trees is all that remains of the hedgerow and stockproof fencing is installed. Frequent mature hedgerow trees are also features. The land has strong enclosure created by new and maturing woodland on restored land on higher ground and mature woodland planting along Nottingham Road. There is an area of recreation close to Nottingham Road and a depot which contrast slightly with the surrounding rural landscape. There are a number of wooded areas and ponds at Fourwinds and along the A511. Woodland planting on restored land and along the A511 as they mature will increase the wooded enclosure within this landscape. Apart from the properties along Nottingham Road there are no other farmsteads and buildings. The character of the land is consistent across this fringe and on lower ground is generally rural in character. From higher ground on the edge of this fringe there are longer distance views towards Ashby which has a minor influence on the enclosed character.	2
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The land is representative of the wider landscape character type. From lower ground to the east the urban edge of Ashby is relatively obscured and only visible on the edges of woodland on the higher ground and footpaths close to the A511. As this woodland matures views of the urban edge would reduce further. The sometimes gappy and variable management of the hedgerows and remnant pasture with a strong pattern is consistent with reported descriptions. The land is more wooded than the descriptions, probably as a result of National Forest planting, although the reported information does state that the landscape has a wooded 'feel' due to the combination of mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small woodlands.	3
Remoteness and tranquillity	This landscape has a relatively rural character with few urban influences, although there are a few properties along Nottingham Road. The noise from the B587(Nottingham Road) and A511, glimpsed views of traffic along the A511 and the industrial development reduce the sense of remoteness and tranquillity and are a reminder of the proximity to the edge of Ashby. Although views towards Ashby are possible along footpaths they are over longer distances and, in combination with the woodland and views across farms, creates a sense of separation from lower ground. This is notably reduced where the warehouse development is visible.	2
Landscape quality value		7

Urban Fringe 2: Urban fringe to the east of Ashby and north of Nottingham Road

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is only locally visible from the small residential road accessed from the B587, from the public rights of way through the fringe and from the A511. Although views from the wider landscape to woodland on the northern edge of the fringe are possible the landform provides screening to the rest of the fringe. To the south, mature trees along the B587 restrict and largely prevent views. From the edge of Ashby and the A511 the fringe appears as rolling and enclosed farmland with new and mature woodland on higher ground.	1
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement edge of Ashby is to the west of the A511 and defined by industrial development and mature and young woodland along the A511. The urban elements which are present (the dispersed houses along Nottingham Road) are generally set within large gardens which contain a mixture of mature trees and lower hedgerows and fences. They are dispersed and appear as a small cluster of houses. When the urban edge is viewed from higher ground it is set behind mature woodland planting which during summer months would soften the settlement edge, however warehouse development would remain visible above.	2
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	From lower ground views are focused towards the woodland on the highest land in the northern part of the fringe. There are no distinctive views into Ashby. Views are generally rural although warehouse development close to the A511 is visible from the western part of this fringe. During summer months the visibility of this would reduce as trees would provide screening. From higher ground views are more extensive across agricultural land to the south and across the edge of Ashby to the west. The town centre is characterised by a rising roofline which extends along a ridge with housing, warehouses and industry prominent at Holywell. The eastern edge of the settlement along the A511 is characterised by large warehouses which screen and limit views of Ashby Castle and St Helens Church. The approach to Ashby along the B587 is predominately rural with glimpses of rising farmland with woodland on highest ground. Views of the urban fringe are only experienced from the route close to its junction with the A511 where industrial development is a dominant feature of the approach into Ashby.	2
Public accessibility	The Ivanhoe Way follows the northern edge of this urban fringe to the north of mature and young woodland which filters and reduces views across this land. Another footpath crosses fields within the north western part of this fringe on higher ground with glimpsed views across the farmland towards the wooded B587.	2
	Visual quality value	7
Scope for mitigation		
The landform adjacent to this fringe provides some screening to views in the wider landscape to the east. To the south views are only possible to woodland on the highest ground. If this fringe was to be developed it would need to ensure that the glimpsed rural views on the approach road to Ashby were maintained and the edge of the settlement remained relatively indistinct until close to the B587 and A511 junction. Development on the higher ground would be visible in the wider landscape particularly to the south and potentially to the north. Whilst woodland could partially screen this, the rising landform would prevent complete screening and it could be potentially difficult to mitigate. The rural character along the B587 and the sense of separation experienced along footpaths within this fringe would need to be retained including maintaining views across farmland. It would be difficult to achieve this separation between development and footpaths through woodland planting and open land.		

2: View from public right of way through fringe



Urban Fringe 3: Land to the north of the A42 and south of Nottingham Road



1: View from Dunbar Way

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Urban/Urban Fringe: large, often sprawling settlements with new built development are dominant. Major roads and railways are also prominent which affect the tranquillity of the area. Cropped farmland with gappy, poorly managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Farmland often appears sandwiched between urban and industrial uses. There are areas of remnant pasture around settlements which display a strong hedgerow pattern although hedges are often overgrown. Urban trees, open spaces and new woodland planting contribute to the setting of the urban area, however horse grazing, allotments and other non-agricultural uses contribute to the fragmented appearance of the area.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	Gently sloping land which rises from a low point of 125m AOD along a watercourse on the eastern and southern fringe to a highpoint of 140m AOD adjacent to housing along Leicester Road. The land cover includes an area of recreational land comprising football and rugby pitches and pasture farmland which is small scale with rectilinear fields bordered by hedgerows in variable condition with few hedgerow trees. One triangular field is characterised by young woodland planting and rough grassland/meadow which provides a soft and naturalistic character. The field is close to mounding with mature tree planting along the eastern boundary which provides some screening of warehouse development to the south. Pockets of fields close to the urban edge have been sub-divided for grazing using post and tape fencing. Warehouses are visible within the northern part of this land although to the south only residential development is visible. Mature woodland to the immediate north of the A511, some mature hedgerow trees and linear woodland along the watercourses in combination with the gently rising landform provide a strong sense of enclosure. There are limited views out although glimpses of higher ground to the east and south are possible. The urban fringes are always visible within the landscape. The industrial site contains an area of rough grassland and bare ground.	1
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The landscape displays consistency with the National Forest Character Assessment as the land is strongly influenced by urban development. Remnant pasture areas are present close to the settlement fringe with a strong hedgerow pattern although in places hedges have been left to mature. Non agricultural uses are present within the landscape. The landscape does not display consistency with the county landscape character assessment and is physically separated from the wider landscape by the A511 and mature woodland along it.	1
Remoteness and tranquillity	This landscape is generally not very tranquil. Frequent views of industry and road noise are constant in the landscape and are reminders of the close proximity of the urban edge. Within a small triangular field which is planted with young woodland, bird song helps to create a sense of tranquillity although road noise and views of warehouses and housing reduce the tranquil character and prevent a feeling of remoteness.	0
Landscape quality value		2

Urban Fringe 3: Land to the north of the A42 and south of Nottingham Road

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is generally only locally visible as woodland, landform and development provide a strong screen. As the land rises close to the settlement edge to the west the land is more visible. This land is visible from the wider landscape such as Corkscrew Lane where it is viewed as a pocket of green with warehouses in the foreground and the rising roofline of Ashby behind. There are no views of the fringe from the main roads into or out of the settlement or from the A511. Properties on the roads bordering the fringe have both front and rear elevations across the fields towards warehouse development which is visible above structure planting.	1
Nature of the urban edge	Where the settlement edge is only one property deep the properties are generally older and have larger gardens. Views of properties available in winter months would be softened by tree planting during the summer. In areas where relatively modern housing is present the edge is generally 'hard' with little tree or hedgerow planting; garden boundaries are visible. Along the eastern edge there is a strong line of structure planting on mounding which provides a vegetated edge to warehouse development.	1
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	When within this landscape the only views are of the rising roofline of Ashby with an irregular roofline where properties are larger and of different styles. Modern housing is more uniform in character and more densely developed. Within this landscape there are no distinctive views, however within the wider landscape when looking back towards Ashby the setting is characterised by a rising and sometimes dispersed roofline with St Helens Church and Ashby Castle prominent within trees on the highest ground. The rising roofline of Ashby is a prominent feature with the fields glimpsed between industry and this edge.	1
Public accessibility	A public right of way crosses the northern part of this character area linking Range Road with warehouse development. This footpath has views generally constrained to the recreational ground it crosses views also contain development to the west, north and east. There are glimpsed views out from this fringe to higher ground within the wider landscape to the south and east. There are no other accessible routes although there are frequent desire line paths leading from this open space into the area of woodland and from Dunbar Way into adjacent fields.	1
		Visual quality value
		4
Scope for mitigation		
The landform adjacent to this fringe and surrounding development provide a good screen to this land. The presence of the A511 and warehouse development to the east provides separation between the fringe and the wider landscape. It would be possible to develop this land and retain the setting and character of Ashby with development appearing to rise towards St Helens Church and Ashby Castle. However it is important that any development does not diminish or obstruct views of the castle and church. Existing mature woodland provides good screening and should be retained. The small area of young woodland provides an area of naturalistic land which provides a soft buffer between the urban edge and warehouse development; it also has a higher sense of tranquillity than the surrounding land. This should be retained if development was taken forward within this fringe.		

2: View from an informal footpath on the southern edge of the fringe



Urban Fringe 4: Land to the south of Ashby and A511



1: View from Corkscrew Lane

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	Land either side of the A511 includes restored land on former coal working. To the north of the A511 there is a large restored mound of rough grassland and a disused railway and access track. To the south land includes areas of hard standing, mounding with rough grassland and rail sidings. This land is in a derelict condition on lower levels than the surrounding road network. South of this area, the land comprises large arable fields which rise to a locally high point along Corkscrew Lane close to Cornworthy. A watercourse is within the northern part of this landscape, characterised by mature woodland which follows its course. The landform is gently rolling with the field pattern comprising a mix of medium to large scale fields with generally intact hedgerow boundaries. The field pattern tends to be smaller where fields are used for pasture and larger where fields support crops. Post and wire fencing is also evident within the southern parts of this fringe. The landform is variable rising from a low point of 110m AOD on the southern edges of the fringe to a high point of 155 to 160m AOD within the northern part of the fringe. The landscape features are of variable condition with some intact and some fragmented hedgerows. The restored land is generally consistent with the wider landform although the change of vegetation to rough grassland reduces the consistency of the land cover within this fringe.	1
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The landscape displays consistency with the National Forest Character Assessment and the county assessment. The only anomaly is the northern area where land was formerly a colliery and is now vacant. It integrates within the wider landscape through the restored mounds which reflect the rolling countryside; the formerly developed areas are generally enclosed and not visible within the wider landscape.	3
Remoteness and tranquillity	Within the southern and eastern edges of this fringe the land has a rural and tranquil feel with views of Ashby appearing distant which helps to retain a rural and more tranquil character. Views and noise from traffic movement along the A42 and A511 partially reduce this sense of tranquillity.	2
Landscape quality value		6

Urban Fringe 4: Land to the south of Ashby and A511

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe includes prominent higher ground and rolling farmland within views from Ashby and in views towards Ashby to the south. The landform within this fringe is important in reducing the scale of Ashby in views from the landscape to the south. Pockets such as the former colliery site are enclosed by mounding and less visible within the wider landscape.	3
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement edge of Ashby is defined and contained by the A42 and associated trees and structure planting along its route provide some screening. The fringe has a softened and vegetated edge and the edges in places are also screened by landform within this fringe. As the settlement is on rising ground views of rooflines are frequent within the landscape although generally restricted to those rooflines on higher ground. The extent and scale of Ashby appears large and expansive due to development within the northern part close to Holywell Spring where housing development has extended onto high ground as is visible beyond St Helens Church and Ashby Castle. Properties within the fringe are prominent on higher ground but seen as a small pocket of housing rather than a settlement edge.	3
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	Within the wider landscape when looking back towards Ashby the setting is characterised by a rising and sometimes dispersed roofline with St Helens Church and Ashby Castle prominent within trees on the highest ground. The rising roofline of Ashby is a prominent feature which extends along the higher ground although woodland and farmland are generally visible beyond, particularly within the northern part of Ashby. This fringe provides an important rolling farmland setting to the edge of Ashby and in places it softens the scale and frequency of warehouse development and residential development in views, restricting these views to the higher ground. In summer when mature trees are in leaf the edges of Ashby would be softened further and in places screened.	2
Public accessibility	A public right of way crosses the northern edge of this fringe skirting around the edge of the restored mound. There is a bridleway in the north western part of this fringe which follows the A42. Another public right of way crosses the southern part of this fringe. All routes have views across parts of the fringe although landform prevents extensive views across all of the fringe.	2
Visual quality value		8
Scope for mitigation		
<p>This urban fringe is important in defining the character and setting of Ashby. The landform provides a softening to the views of industry along the edge of Ashby often limiting the scale and frequency of the warehouses in the view. The edge of Ashby is seen as rising but appears remote within views in the wider landscape. The scale of development along the fringe is reduced by the landform which limits views of development on the lower ground. The urban edge of Ashby appears contained by the A42 and mature woodland along it. There are areas of derelict or underused and restored land although the mounding within these areas plays an important role in providing screening and limiting the scale of warehouse development and in helping to create a sense of separation within the landscape from the urban fringes of Ashby. Mitigation of new development although possible, would need to be extensive to ensure that the edge of Ashby was not more prominent within the wider landscape. The rolling landform includes high ground which is prominent within the wider landscape and careful placement of development would be necessary to prevent the edge substantially extending into the rural landscape. New woodland planting along restored mounds would be beneficial in providing additional screening of warehouse development whilst also retaining the rising residential edge of Ashby with St Helens Church and Ashby Castle landmarks on the highest ground. Although there is a preference for developing 'brownfield' (previously developed) land before 'greenfield' land, developing 'brownfield' land on this fringe could make the edges of Ashby appear much more prominent within the landscape. If developed care would need to be taken to implement and establish advanced planting on mounding along the southern edge of the former colliery to screen views of development on the site whilst retaining views of a rising roofline of Ashby with St Helens Church and Ashby Castle prominent features.</p>		

2: View from Corkscrew Lane to the south of the A511



3: View from Coleorton Lane



Urban Fringe 5: Land to the south of Ashby bordering Packington Nook Lane



1: View from Packington Nook Lane

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
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Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	The land rises from a low point of 115m AOD at Gilwicksaw Brook sharply along the valley sides to 130m AOD before becoming more undulating although continuing to gradually rise to a highpoint on the southern corner of the fringe at 135m AOD. The land closest to the urban fringe is characterised by flat land with a gentle fall towards Gilwicksaw Brook which is a distinctive feature of the landscape with mature riparian trees along its course. There are collapsed willows along the brook which is a sign of lack of management to willow pollards. The field pattern tends to be smaller scale with low hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. Hedgerow condition is variable with hedgerows on the rising valley slopes to the south being generally intact and in good condition although those close to the brook are fragmented in places and patched with stockproof fencing. There is localised evidence of replanting along roads. The landform immediately adjacent to the urban edge rises sharply and the land is left for rough pasture. There is a small recreational area along Upper Packington Road which fits with the pattern and scale of the landscape. This landscape is distinctive. It is one of the few intact pasture landscapes around the fringes of Ashby and represents the 18 th to 19 th century enclosure prior to intensification of farming. Mill Farm is a prominent and distinctive building within the landscape, when viewed from the settlement edge the building and other scattered farms provide a rural character. Planting along the urban fringes reduces the prominence of Ashby within the landscape. As the land rises the landscape becomes more open with larger arable fields with low hedgerows and fewer hedgerow trees. The landform obscures views of Ashby which creates a strongly rural character emphasised by the views to adjacent farmland and scattered farmsteads. There is a small line of avenue trees of variable condition which is part of the extended avenue of limes which continue into Willesley Golf Course. The combination of the smaller field pattern and the watercourse provides a strong and consistent wetland valley landscape and as the land rises the landform is that of gently rolling arable farmland with pockets of woodland with extensive views towards Charnwood Forest which provides an attractive backdrop.	3
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The landscape displays consistency with the National Forest Character Assessment and the county assessment. The land closest to the settlement is classified as urban fringe although in many places woodland planting reduces views of the settlement and helps retain a rural character. The watercourse has a strongly distinctive character which is consistent with watercourses within the wider landscape; the only difference is that more development is visible as the land is immediately adjacent to the urban edge.	3
Remoteness and tranquillity	Although the urban fringe is visible within this landscape views to it are typically channelled with only small sections of the urban edge visible in views. Throughout much of this landscape, and particularly as the land rises to the south of Packington Lane the land has a rural character with few views of settlement edges. Extensive views across farmland reinforce the rural character. However the rural and tranquil character is reduced by the presence of the A42; there are views of traffic movement along it and even where not visible the traffic is always audible within the landscape. Packington Nook Lane is rural in character, although initially there are views of housing which reduces the sense of tranquillity. Further south there are a few isolated farm properties with fields and woodland enhancing the sense of separation and tranquillity only reduced by the noise of traffic along the A42.	2
Landscape quality value		8

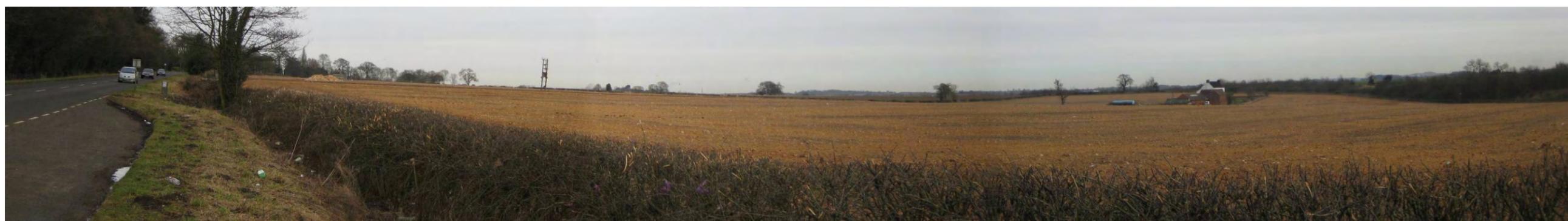
Urban Fringe 5: Land to the south of Ashby bordering Packington Nook Lane

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	The northern part of this fringe is on low ground and not prominent within the wider landscape although is prominent along some of the urban fringes. Its prominence is reduced in part by tree planting along the urban fringe. As the land rises from the river valley onto arable farmland it reaches a high point of 128m AOD. Whilst this is not as high as other parts of Ashby it is relatively high and comparable within the wider landscape to the south. It forms part of the extensive arable farmland within this part of the District and is important in providing screening to the edge of Ashby. The woodland at Willesby Park to the north provides a backdrop to the farmland in views from the south. There are also some filtered views from Ashby Castle grounds of the rising fields along a ridge to the east of Measham Road and around Middle Barn within the northern part of this fringe. Views from Packington are limited by landform. There are some views of the southern part of the fringe from Corkscrew Lane where it appears as an area of farmland close to a compact edge of Ashby (only a small part of the settlement is visible).	2
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement edge is generally softened by mature tree planting and garden vegetation which reduces its prominence in views and helps to retain a strongly rural character within the landscape. Where it is visible it tends to be as a rising roofline with mature woodland on the highest ground. Pockets of the edge are 'harder' with less tree planting, however their influence is reduced by field boundary vegetation which helps to reduce the extent of the fringe from which these edges are visible.	2
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	Within the river valley the urban edge is quite often screened although where it is visible it is seen as a uniform rising edge with the tower at the cemetery visible along Measham Lane. Along Packington Nook Lane Ashby Castle and St Helens Church are prominent on the highest land. This is the most distinctive view of the castle and church from around the fringes of Ashby. Further south the landform rises restricting views of the settlement, however the tower of St Helens Church is discernible on the horizon and is a feature within views. Other views include expansive and long distance views towards the hills on the edge of Charnwood Forest including Bardon Hill. These hills form an attractive and distinctive backdrop to views across gently undulating farmland. The settlement is generally obscured from view by the landform and is indistinct within the landscape to the south, although as the land drops there are channelled views of the rising edge of a small part of Ashby with the tower within the cemetery forming a distinctive feature. Landform and vegetation reduce the scale of Ashby creating an impression that the settlement is smaller than it is. Farmland and parkland along this edge provide a distinctive setting to the settlement. In other places such as from Packington Nook Lane the settlement generally appears as a narrow band of housing with a rising roofline; Ashby Castle and St Helens Church are prominent surrounded by clumps of trees on the highest land.	3
Public accessibility	A bridleway extends along Packington Nook Lane through the central part of this fringe and another footpath links Lower Packington Lane with Mill Farm and Nook Farm through the lower river valley part of the fringe. These allow views across the landscape and the settlement is viewed at a short distance away. However in places the settlement is obscured providing a sense of separation from the urban edge for users of these routes.	2
Visual quality value		9
Scope for mitigation		
<p>This urban fringe is important and has a distinctive character not represented elsewhere along Ashby's fringes. The soft edge of Ashby provides a strong transition between the urban and rural environment. The landscape has a strong sense of place created through the enclosed river valley with other features such as the avenue of limes into Willesley Golf Course. On the higher land the arable landscape is strongly consistent with the wider landscape and there are distinctive views to the east towards the hills of Charnwood Forest providing an attractive backdrop. On the approach to Ashby the landform screens the majority of the housing although the top of St Helens Church is a prominent and distinctive feature. As the land drops the views of the Cemetery Tower set above a small part of the rising edge of Ashby is distinctive. If development was to take place across this landscape its rural character would be lost and would be difficult to mitigate. In addition if developed on the higher ground it would be prominent within the wider landscape and would reduce the sense of separation present between Packington and Ashby. It would also reduce views to hills within Charnwood Forest and prevent views towards St Helens Church. It would also be difficult to retain the distinctive rural tree lined approach into Ashby along Measham Road as the character would be more urban in character.</p>		

2: View from Lower Packington Road



3: View from Measham Road



Urban Fringe 6: Western fringe of Ashby to the north of Willesley Lane



1: View from Willesley Lane

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	Gently sloping valley landscape surrounded by mature woodland. The fields display an irregular field pattern which is influenced by the brook which adjoins Shellbrook along the western edge of this fringe. Hedgerows are variable with some intact and maintained at a low height, particularly roadside hedgerows. Other hedgerows are fragmented or taller. There are frequent hedgerow trees which in combination with the mature woodland provides a wooded rural character to the landscape. A small brook flows through the centre of the fringe towards Shellbrook which is along the south western boundary; these watercourses are defined by mature trees. Young plantation woodland is on rising ground at Shellbrook Wood which as it matures will increase the wooded enclosure. The land has a rural and distinctive character despite its close proximity to the edge of Ashby. Woodland softens and channels views of Ashby which creates the impression of a village rather than a town edge. Features are consistent across the fringe and provide a strong 'sense of place'.	3
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The landscape displays consistency with the wider character area although it is not an open or sparsely wooded landscape. This pocket of landscape is representative of the pockets of land which have a well wooded feel through the combination of small woodlands and watercourse trees.	3
Remoteness and tranquillity	This landscape has a relatively tranquil rural character created through limited views of the urban fringe and low levels of urban influences and noise from surrounding roads.	3
Landscape quality value		9

Urban Fringe 6: Western fringe of Ashby to the north of Willesley Lane

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is only locally visible from the urban fringe, Willesley Road and from the edge of Shellbrook Wood. There are no direct footpaths along the edge of this woodland and as it matures views of the fringe where possible will typically be screened. Woodland along the railway prevents views of this fringe from the north at Shellbrook and along Moira Road.	1
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement appears mostly as a dispersed rising roofline, properties back onto the landscape and have long rear gardens with mature vegetation. Glimpsed channelled views are possible although only a small part of the settlement is visible in these views, reducing the perceived scale and extent of Ashby.	2
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	The tower at the cemetery is prominent on the skyline but only in views from the edge of access land at Shellbrook Wood. Along Willesley Road there are limited rural views on the approach to the settlement; it is generally a rural approach and woodland close to The Paddocks provides screening to properties on the edge and thus retaining the rural winding and enclosed character of the road. This creates a strong transition between the rural and urban edge. There is a small building close to the river and a large farmhouse and converted barns close to Willesley Road which are the only visible built form within this landscape beyond the urban edge.	2
Public accessibility	There is no public access possible into this landscape although it lies to the immediate east of Shellbrook Wood a young plantation woodland to which access is available.	0
		Visual quality value 5
Scope for mitigation		
<p>Whilst this landscape is reasonably well screened from the wider landscape, the edge of Ashby is also well screened and integrated. This creates a strong rural transition between the urban and rural environment. Any change within this landscape would need to retain this strong transition and the rural winding approach and the narrow and enclosed river valley. It would be difficult to develop this fringe without increasing the urban influences along Willesley Road and within the landscape. The rural and tranquil character would also be difficult to retain; the landscape would be subject to greater recreational pressures and urban fringe uses typically experienced in landscapes close to the urban edge which would reduce its tranquillity.</p>		

2: View from the edge of Shellbrook Wood



Urban Fringe 7: Western fringe of Ashby bordering either side of Moira Road



1: View from Ivanhoe Way

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Urban/Urban Fringe: large, often sprawling settlements with new built development are dominant. Major roads and railways are also prominent which affect the tranquillity of the area. Cropped farmland with gappy, poorly managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Farmland often appears sandwiched between urban and industrial uses. There are areas of remnant pasture around settlements which display a strong hedgerow pattern although hedges are often overgrown. Urban trees, open spaces and new woodland planting contribute to the setting of the urban area, however horse grazing, allotments and other non-agricultural uses contribute to the fragmented appearance of the area. Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	The landform is generally flat to the south of Moira Road becoming gently rolling to the north. It consists of large often irregular shaped fields with large blocks of young plantation woodland such as Prestop Park which will increase the sense of enclosure and woodland contribution to the character of the land as it matures. The land falls towards Shellbrook before rising again to Norris Hill. The landcover is mostly larger arable fields with pockets of pasture. Field enclosure includes older patterns of piecemeal enclosure to the north of Moira Road and planned enclosure during the 18th and 19th century. Hedgerows are generally well maintained although there is evidence of some fragmentation particularly close to larger fields. Hedgerow trees are infrequent which contributes to an 'open' character. Mature woodland is present along the railway which provides some wooded enclosure and prevents views of lower ground to the south. From higher ground at Prestop Park and Burton Road at 144m AOD there are extensive views across the rolling countryside to the south. Mature woodland is clustered around isolated properties such as White House Farm, small clumps at field margins, as a linear belt along the railway and as individual trees on the fringes of Shellbrook. Urban edges are frequent and prominent within the landscape although the field pattern extends up to the edge of the settlements which helps to retain a more rural character. The land is distinctive as rolling agricultural farmland although the pattern of the land is fairly uniform. The presence of urban fringes reduces the quality of the landscape. Over time this land will become more distinctive as woodland matures although longer views will be foreshortened.	2
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The fringe has strong consistency with the county level assessment; it is a gently undulating/rolling landscape with a dense pattern of towns and villages. In addition the land has a low level woodland cover. However as the National Forest planting matures the landscape will become more wooded in character. It is consistent with the National Forest assessment with settlements prominent within the landscape and the land cover is generally arable with hedgerows of variable condition. The key difference defined in the National Forest Assessment between the urban fringe and enclosed farmland character is the presence of settlements within views and the perceived wooded character along watercourses.	2
Remoteness and tranquillity	This landscape has a rural fringe character. From the fringe views are generally rural in character and extensive across rolling farmland. However in the wider landscape the settlement edges of Ashby, Norris Hill and Shellbrook are prominent which in combination with traffic movement along Moira Road reduce the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.	1
Landscape quality value		5

Urban Fringe 7: Western fringe of Ashby bordering either side of Moira Road

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is visible within the landscape to the west and from the edge of Norris Hill. As the land rises at Prestop Park it is higher than the surrounding land with views extending over long distances to the south although mature woodland along the railway prevents views of the fringe from the edge of the settlement to the south of the railway. There are glimpsed views across Ashby from corresponding high ground to the east along Corkscrew Lane. To the north views across the sloping landform are possible from close to Ingles Hill Farm which is on one of the highest points around Ashby. As the landform rises to the north of this fringe it reduces and screens views of it from the north such as the A511 and Smisby.	2
Nature of the urban edge	The settlement appears mostly as a continuous line of housing on rising ground. The fringe is visible as a rising edge to the south of Moira Road with views to the wooded cemetery where the tower is a prominent feature. Woodland and mature trees are features on the highest ground with the roofline rarely protruding above this. The majority of the edge is well defined with fields extending up to the edge of the development. To the south of Moira Road a field boundary hedge and some mature trees provide some softening to views of the edge. As this edge rises there is less vegetation and it is 'harder' in appearance with little vegetation to soften views of the properties. Housing appears as a single line or shallow rising edge of uniform roofs with no woodland on the highest ground. Other 'hard' edges visible within the landscape include the edge of Norris Hill which is also on higher ground with a uniform character to the roofline. The land along this fringe provides separation between Ashby and Shellbrook.	1
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	The tower at the cemetery is prominent on the skyline but is most distinctive in views from the edge of Prestop Park where views are across the wider rising edge of Ashby and from Ivanhoe Way. In both these views woodland and mature trees cover the highest ground. The edge of Ashby is viewed as a soft rising edge to the south of Moira Road. To the north of Moira Road there is little vegetation and development is on a slight ridgeline making it prominent in views. The development is dense with few trees and the edge is more urban and uniform in character. Other distinctive views include from Burton Road and the settlement edge across rolling farmland and woodland towards the church spire at Backfordby and to the south across rolling farmland with pockets of woodland on some of the highest land.	2
Public accessibility	Ivanhoe Way crosses fields to the south of Moira Road. To the north of Moira Road one public footpath crosses the fringe linking the settlement edge with publicly accessible young woodland planting at Prestop Park. Another footpath on the western edge of the fringe leads north from Moira Road into the young woodland. The woodland along this fringe is part of the National Forest and is all accessible.	3
		Visual quality value
		8
Scope for mitigation		
<p>This landscape has an open character where woodland is currently not a prominent feature, with views towards the surrounding settlements of Ashby and Norris Hill. These edges are prominent on rising or high ground with other clusters of properties at Shellbrook and large farms such as Woodside Farm, Prestop Park Farm and White House Farm. Urban elements are a frequent feature within the landscape although the landscape does retain a rural fringe character. Young woodland planting is relatively extensive along this fringe and would provide greater enclosure over time as it matures. The land is undulating rising to a high point around Prestop Park and along Burton Road. From the higher ground there are distinctive views across rolling farmland which extend over long distances through the countryside to the south. Development within this fringe would need to respect the sense of separation and countryside experience felt by users of footpaths which link the edge with Prestop Park and also ensure that the edge does not become more prominent within views to the south. Any development should avoid the highest ground and ensure that it does not reduce the separation between Ashby and Shellbrook. It should also retain the rural rolling character and farmland extending up to the edge of the settlement. Development should include tree planting and ensure that a soft wooded edge, through copses of woodland and interconnecting woodland are included. When viewed from the wider landscape it should appear as a rising edge with woodland on the highest ground. In addition it should maintain views from the edge towards the church at Backfordby, the extensive views from Burton Road and the prominence of the tower within the cemetery in views on the approach to Ashby along Moira Road.</p>		

2: View from Mathews Court



Urban Fringe 8: North western fringe of Ashby close to Holywell Spring Farm extending to the A511



1: View from public right of way linking Oundle Close with Prestop Park

Element	Assessment	Score
County Landscape character area	The Coalfield: Gently undulating landscape with effects of past and present coal and clay working. It displays a relatively dense pattern of former mining towns and village. The landscape is characterised by mixed farmland with a generally low woodland cover. The assessment notes that the land is part of the National Forest.	
National Forest Landscape character area	Area: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield Type: Urban/Urban Fringe: large, often sprawling settlements with new built development are dominant. Major roads and railways are also prominent which affect the tranquillity of the area. Cropped farmland with gappy, poorly managed hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Farmland often appears sandwiched between urban and industrial uses. There are areas of remnant pasture around settlements which display a strong hedgerow pattern although hedges are often overgrown. Urban trees, open spaces and new woodland planting contribute to the setting of the urban area, however horse grazing, allotments and other non-agricultural uses contribute to the fragmented appearance of the area. Type: Enclosed Farmlands: predominantly rural with little woodland. There are few urban intrusions. The field pattern is generally defined by hedgerows with areas of arable farmland often having an open pattern with sometimes poorly define hedgerows. Pockets of pasture remain close to settlements and along watercourses with a small field pattern, thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Watercourse trees and clusters of small scale estate woodlands contribute to a perceived wooded character in places.	
Landscape Quality		
Landscape Character	This fringe covers Ingles Hill which is some of the highest ground around the edge of Ashby with a high point of 152m AOD close to Holywell Farm. The land rises from the settlement edge up to this high point and falls to 144m AOD at Burton Road to the south and 135m AOD close to the A511 to the north. The land is characterised by small scale pasture and horse grazing around Hollywell Spring Farm; fields have mature tree lined boundaries which provides a strong sense of enclosure. As the land rises and across the high ground the land is characterised by some arable and pasture fields and an area of newly planted woodland. Mature linear woodland follows a small spring which provides some screening to the urban fringe and a sense of enclosure. Close to the A511 the land has been remodelled to provide wetlands and ditches and there is new planting which forms part of Ingles Hill Woodland which extends across the hill to Burton Road. There are large farms on high ground such as Holywell Farm and Mill Farm which comprise a small residence and a number of larger modern agricultural buildings. Other village fringes at Smisby and Blackfordby are features within views within the northern part of this fringe; these villages are on rising ground with young woodland along their fringes. The fringe of Ashby includes warehouse development on lower ground to the north and residential edges along the remainder. At Prestop Drive and Atkinson Road the properties extend onto high ground and are particularly prominent. The landscape character is consistent across the landscape, the landform and views to the south across rolling farmland are distinctive. To the north the land is less distinctive due to remodelling, warehouse development and the A511. Over time as woodland matures the landscape character will become more distinctive.	2
Representativeness and consistency with wider character	The character has strong consistency with the county level assessment as a gently undulating/rolling landscape with a dense pattern of towns and villages although the northern part of this fringe has been altered and does not have a rural character. In addition the land has a low level of woodland cover. However as the National Forest planting matures the landscape will become more wooded. It is consistent with the National Forest Assessment with settlements being prominent within the landscape and the land cover is generally arable with hedgerows of variable condition and pasture and horse grazing close to settlement fringes. The key difference defined in the National Forest Assessment between the urban fringe and enclosed farmland character is the presence of settlements within views. The character boundary is formed at the point landform provides screening of the urban fringe to the west beyond Ingles Hill Farm.	2
Remoteness and tranquillity	This landscape does not feel particularly tranquil as there are long views from high ground across Ashby including the industrial and warehouse development to the north and traffic movement along the A511. Views to the south are slightly more rural and more associated with the rolling landscape. The sense of separation with the urban fringe is reduced by the presence of 'hard' urban edges and prominent rooflines on high ground and limited boundary structure along the fringes of warehouse development.	0
	Landscape quality value	4

Urban Fringe 8: North western fringe of Ashby close to Holywell Spring Farm extending to the A511

Visual Quality		
Visual prominence	This fringe is visible within the landscape to the west towards Blackfordby and to the north from the edges of Smisby. Views from the edge of Smisby are likely to reduce over time as young woodland at Annwell Wood matures. From Blackfordby views would be softened and filtered as mature woodland at Ingles Hill Woodland matures. The land is at one of the highest points within the surrounding landscape and is visible across Ashby from high ground to the east and south. New development which is on part of this high ground at High Gate and Oundle Close is prominent within these views and contrasts with the central core of Ashby as development extends to the high ground and there is no woodland visible above the houses. The higher parts of this fringe are also visible from roads and footpaths to the south although views are distant and across the built rising edge of Ashby.	3
Nature of the urban edge	Along much of this edge the settlement has little boundary vegetation to provide softening or screening and it is prominent, particularly the edge of properties at High Gate and Oundle Close which are developed on the highest ground and form a prominent 'stark' feature within the wider landscape often forming the skyline. The edge of industry at the northern fringe of Ashby is also prominent within the landscape although its prominence is reduced as it is on slightly lower ground and only visible from the north. The fringe close to Holywell Spring Farm is 'softer' and in places obscured through mature linear woodland which follows the spring and the small scale and enclosed character of fields immediately adjacent to the fringe.	1
Distinctive views and setting of the settlement	From high ground within this fringe there are distinctive and long distance views across Ashby which is on undulating land with views across to wooded hills beyond. It is one of the few places along the fringes of Ashby that allows views across the settlement. The settlement includes two high points: one at St Helens Church and Ashby Castle; and the other at the Cemetery. Both of these are characterised by mature trees on higher ground and prominent built form. Views across the landscape include features such as St James Church at Smisby and St Margaret's Church at Blackfordby which are prominent on the skyline. The large property at Cliftonthorpe is also a prominent feature within views from footpaths on higher ground although these views also include warehouse development and housing in the foreground. The approach to Ashby along Burton Road remains relatively rural until immediately adjacent to the settlement, due to the nature of the landform and woodland along the road. The start of the settlement is seen as being at the group of properties which are along Burton Road but separate from the defined urban edge of Ashby. Ingles Hill Woodland as it matures will provide enclosure along this route and reduce views towards the settlement edge.	3
Public accessibility	There is only one public footpath along the southern part of this fringe linking Oakham Grove with Burton Road. There are no other roads or footpaths within this fringe other than private tracks. Ingles Hill Woodland is accessible woodland on the western edge of this fringe.	1
Visual quality value		8
Scope for mitigation		
This landscape includes some of the highest ground around Ashby which, if developed, would be prominent within the wider landscape and potentially alter the setting of the settlement. The orientation of this fringe and its elevation may reduce the prominence of the Castle and St Helens Church within views to the south. Development close to the current warehouse development and on lower ground around Holywell Spring Farm could be accommodated without altering the setting of Ashby or making the edge more prominent within the wider landscape. The edges should include copses and linear belts of woodland to help reduce the prominence of urban fringes and in particular warehouse development within the wider landscape. Development on the highest ground should be avoided as it would be highly visible throughout Ashby and from the landscape to the east and south. Any change should also retain the strong transition from the urban edge to rural landscape and retain extensive views from high ground across the settlement and towards the rolling farmland landscape beyond to the south and south east.		

2: View from public right of way linking Oundle Close with Prestop Park

