



Rutland
County Council

**LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY STUDY
OF LAND TO THE NORTH AND WEST OF UPPINGHAM,
RUTLAND
*ADDENDUM REPORT***



June 2017

by



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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction and Executive Summary	1
Background	1
Purpose and Scope of the Study	1
Format of the Report	2
Executive Summary.....	3
2. Methodology	4
3. Assessment & Analysis	14
Uppingham Local Landscape Character Context	14
Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity of Study Sites	17
Site 1.....	18
Site 2.....	23
Site 3.....	27
Site 4.....	32
Site 5.....	37
4. Recommendations for Prioritising Development	41

Tables

Table 1: Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity of Study Sites to the North and West of Uppingham	3
Table 2: Landscape and Settlement Character Sensitivity.....	10
Table 3: Visual Sensitivity.....	11
Table 4: Overall Landscape Sensitivity Categories.....	11
Table 5: Landscape Value.....	12
Table 6: Overall Landscape Capacity Categories.....	12
Table 7: Priority of Study Sites around Uppingham.....	41

Figures

Figure 1: Local Landscape Character Setting.....	44
Figure 2: Aerial View.....	45
Figure 3: Landscape & Visual Context	46
Figure 4: Photograph Viewpoints.....	47
Figure 5: Landscape Sensitivity	48
Figure 6: Landscape Capacity	49

1. Introduction and Executive Summary

Background

- 1.1 Rutland County Council is undertaking a Local Plan Review in order to extend the Local Plan period to 2036 and to provide for any additional new housing, employment or other sustainable development that may be needed over the extended plan period. The current Local Plan comprises a number of development plan documents (DPD) that will be combined into a single Local Plan, informed by up-to-date evidence within a range of supporting documents on key aspects including the environment, as required by the national planning policy framework (NPPF)¹.
- 1.2 The Council has commissioned a number of studies to examine the landscape sensitivity and capacity of the countryside around towns and villages in Rutland to accommodate new development and to provide evidence to help determine the most appropriate directions for future growth. One such study was a landscape sensitivity and capacity study of land around Oakham and Uppingham and land on the edge of Stamford in Rutland, undertaken in 2010². This included an assessment of the landscape sensitivity and capacity of undeveloped land to the north and west of Uppingham close to the built-up edge of the town. That study concludes that those areas range from low to high sensitivity and medium-high to low-medium capacity to accommodate new housing.
- 1.3 The 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* referred to above was used to inform the Council's *Core Strategy* DPD (adopted in July 2011) which requires that development at Uppingham should be mostly on allocated sites to the north and west of the town. The current housing requirement to 2026 is in part being met by sites for new houses to the north-west and west of Uppingham allocated in the *Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan* (the *Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan* was 'made' by the Council on 11 January 2016).
- 1.4 The Council is currently considering responses to the *Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation* document including the most appropriate directions of growth around Uppingham that will be needed to meet future requirements for new development in the period to 2036. Consequently the Council has commissioned this study to provide evidence of the landscape sensitivity and capacity of land to the north and west of the town taking into consideration the sites for new houses allocated in the *Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan*.

Purpose and Scope of the Study

- 1.5 This study relates to five areas of undeveloped land to the north and west of Uppingham. The purpose of the study is to assess these sites in terms of their landscape sensitivity and capacity to accommodate housing. The study will form part of the evidence base to support the *Local Plan Review Preferred Options* document that will set out the Council's proposed policies and sites to be allocated for development. It may also be used to support the Council's position at the Public Examination of the Council's Local Plan Review.

¹ NPPF, 2012, paragraphs 165 & 166

² David Tyldesley and Associates, May 2010, '*Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*'

- 1.6 The study provides an updated addendum to the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* referred to above. The Council has commissioned this study to take account of the sites allocated for new housing, including future housing, and Important Open Space in the *Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan*, and any other changes since 2010 that may affect the landscape sensitivity and capacity of land to the north and west of Uppingham.
- 1.7 The study provides an independent appraisal of the landscape sensitivity of land to the north and west of Uppingham and its landscape capacity to accommodate housing, based on recognised guidance which has been adapted to suit local circumstances (this is discussed further in Section 2). It should be noted that this study assesses landscape and visual considerations only. A range of other environmental considerations may need to be taken into account, such as ecology and nature conservation, heritage and archaeology, water quality and flooding potential, etc. by the Council to determine the potential wider environmental and cumulative impacts of development on a particular site. Other non-environmental site considerations, including access and drainage issues for example, will also need to be considered by others but which do not form part of this assessment.
- 1.8 Local interpretation of existing landscape character assessments was made following field survey, as discussed further below, to gain an understanding of the character of the local landscape to the north and west of Uppingham.
- 1.9 It was also important to include an historic dimension to landscape character assessment in order to gain a more complete, holistic understanding of existing character and how it has changed over time. The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) was completed in 2010 and provides an historic categorisation at different scales and levels of detail. Although a detailed review of the HLC was beyond the scope of this study, broad category types as defined within it were taken into consideration during the desk study and fieldwork, as discussed further in Section 2. Additional historic landscape character assessment and detailed site assessments to consider, for example, the setting of heritage assets will be required with any application for development.
- 1.10 It is recognised that stakeholder consultation is important to achieving robust study outcomes. Although the study programme did not enable inclusion of stakeholder input, consultation will be undertaken as part of the consultative process on the Council's *Local Plan Review Preferred Options*.

Format of the Report

- 1.11 The following **Section 2** describes the methodology used in this study. It follows the same methodology as used in the 2010 study to enable comparison with that study's findings. This study should therefore be read alongside the 2010 report. Criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity and capacity are described and set out in a number of tables within Section 2.
- 1.12 **Section 3** sets out the assessment and analysis of each of the study sites. It begins by describing the local landscape character context of land to the north and west of Uppingham, using the County-wide *Rutland Landscape Character Assessment, 2003*³, and the finer grain of landscape characterisation within the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*. **Figure 1** indicates the local landscape character setting of the study sites around Uppingham. An aerial view is provided in **Figure 2**.

³ David Tyldesley & Associates, May 2003, '*Rutland Landscape Character Assessment*'

- 1.13 For each of the study sites an assessment is made of its landscape sensitivity, using the criteria described in Section 2 to assess firstly landscape character sensitivity, and secondly visual sensitivity. **Figure 3** indicates the landscape and visual context of the study sites, for example indicating distinctive ridgelines and key views into and out of the village. The scope for mitigation of each area, for example structure planting in-keeping with landscape character or to help soften an already harsh edge to the village, is discussed and taken into consideration in the assessment. Photographs are included to illustrate the landscape and visual context of each village within the vicinity of the land being assessed. Photograph viewpoints are shown in **Figure 4**. **Figure 5** illustrates landscape sensitivity of the study sites.
- 1.14 Criteria described in Section 2 to assess landscape value are then applied to each identified area, and conclusions made on the overall landscape capacity of each area to accommodate housing. **Figure 6** illustrates landscape capacity of the study sites.
- 1.15 The final **Section 4** provides recommendations to the Council for prioritising the study sites around Uppingham for housing development in landscape and visual terms, and describes any mitigation measures that may be required for the most suitable areas.

Executive Summary

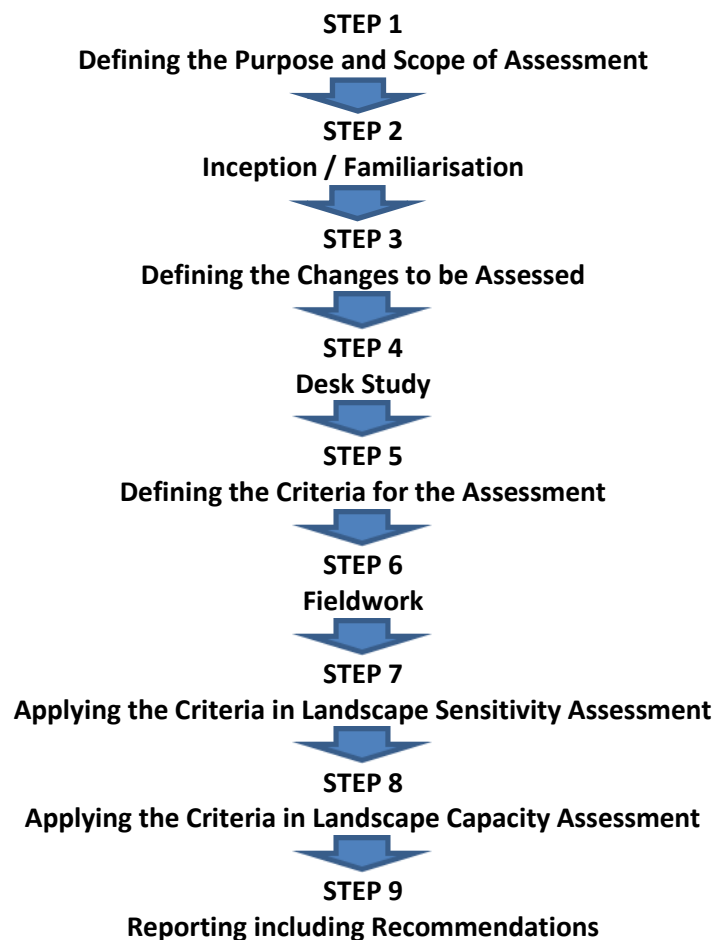
- 1.16 The following **Table 1** summarises the assessment of landscape sensitivity and capacity of the five areas of land to the north and west of Uppingham. The assessment of overall landscape sensitivity and capacity of each area is reported within a range of low-medium-high and colour coded (using a “traffic light” notation) to allow visual comparison between the different areas. Figures 5 and 6 illustrate separately landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity of each area, reproducing the same colour coding notation.

Table 1: Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity of Study Sites to the North and West of Uppingham

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
1	Moderate to High	Moderate to High	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Medium
2	High	Moderate to High	High	Moderate to High	Low to Medium
3	Low to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium
4	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	Moderate	Low to Moderate	Medium
5	High	Moderate to High	High	Moderate	Low to Medium

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The study follows guidance on judging landscape sensitivity and capacity including the techniques and criteria described in The Countryside Agency's and Scottish Natural Heritage's joint *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland*, 2002, Topic Paper 6. The study is also consistent with the impact assessment methodology advocated by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in their *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Third Edition, 2013.
- 2.2 Current guidance stresses the importance of professional, qualitative judgement in reaching conclusions on likely change in the character of the landscape and visual amenity. This study has been undertaken by suitably qualified professionals highly experienced in the field of landscape character assessment and sensitivity throughout the UK. An approach and method has been adopted for assessing landscape sensitivity and the impact of built development and settlement expansion that is appropriate to the purpose and scope of the study. The methodology used in the study replicates that used in the May 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* referred to in Section 1.
- 2.3 Essentially, capacity evaluation is a systematic and chronological process through the steps shown below. However, it is also an iterative process and some steps were repeated in a cycle part way through the method to refine and apply the criteria:



Step 1: Defining the Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

- 2.4 The purpose and scope of the assessment are described in Section 1. The study provides only one part of the evidence base for the review of the Rutland Local Plan. It enables the Council to compare the suitability of specified areas of land to the north and west of Uppingham on a consistent basis in terms of its landscape sensitivity and capacity to accommodate small scale housing development.
- 2.5 The study should not be used in isolation or to ‘test’ proposed development which will need to be supported by additional studies and detailed site assessment. It is important to recognise that an area considered suitable for small scale development in landscape and visual terms may be unsuitable for other reasons.

Step 2: Inception and Familiarisation

- 2.6 Since the report is an addendum to the previous 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* an inception meeting with the County Council was considered unnecessary.
- 2.7 Having undertaken the 2012 landscape sensitivity and capacity study, as well as the 2010 landscape sensitivity and capacity study and The consultants were already extremely familiar with the landscapes of Rutland in general (having worked on the 2003 *Rutland Landscape Character Assessment* when employed at David Tyldesley and Associates - DTA) and the landscape setting of Uppingham in particular (having worked on the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* when employed at DTA). Familiarisation for this study entailed desk study of background material and mapping, and fieldwork as described below.

Step 3: Defining the Changes to be Assessed

- 2.8 The study does not address potential development sites. In undertaking the study the consultants were unaware of any proposals for the development of land within the areas assessed.
- 2.9 Acceptability in terms of landscape and visual impact of any proposal for housing development within the study sites is likely to be determined by detailed site assessment, site layout and detailed design considerations. It is assumed for the purposes of this study that any new housing would be conventional, domestic-scale residential development and that buildings would be well designed and would use traditional or other appropriate building techniques and materials. Where structural landscaping including ground modelling, if appropriate, and tree planting of appropriate scale, area, design and species composition is considered essential mitigation, to ensure that the development achieves a good fit in the landscape, then this is specifically mentioned.

Step 4: Desk Study

- 2.10 Desk study of background information and documents required to carry out the study was undertaken prior to fieldwork. The main documents consulted were:
- Rutland Core Strategy DPD (adopted 2011);
 - Rutland Site Allocations & Policies DPD (adopted 2014);

- Rutland Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation
- Rutland Landscape Character Assessment, May 2003;
- Rutland County Council Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, May 2010;
- Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation, 2010; and
- Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan.

2.11 Other information was obtained from the Council's website, including background documents. Satellite imagery and aerial photography was used to gain an initial appreciation of landscape and settlement character prior to the fieldwork.

2.12 Broad character area data within the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) was used to inform the general descriptions of the character and setting of the study sites. Analysis of this data provides an understanding of how and where the town has expanded over time. Further detailed historic characterisation of land surrounding Uppingham was beyond the scope of the study and was considered unlikely to affect the findings.

Step 5: Defining the Criteria for the Assessment

2.13 The most important stage in the study is defining appropriate criteria for relevant assessment so that these may be applied in a systematic, impartial and transparent judgement and the conclusions of the assessment summarised into meaningful recommendations. The technique adopted follows the methodology in Topic Paper 6 (see paragraph 2.1 above) for assessing the overall sensitivity of the landscape to a particular type of change or development, defined in terms of the interactions between the landscape itself, the way it is viewed and the particular nature of the type of change or development in question, summarised as follows:

Overall Landscape Sensitivity = Landscape Character Sensitivity + Visual Sensitivity

2.14 For judging the ability or capacity of the landscape to accommodate change or development, the technique adopted follows the methodology in Topic Paper 6 for judging the overall landscape sensitivity, as above, and the value attached to the landscape or to specific elements in it, summarised as follows:

Landscape Capacity (to accommodate specific type of change) = Overall Landscape Sensitivity + Landscape Value

2.15 Criteria were defined based around four key aspects:

- (i) Landscape and settlement character sensitivity
- (ii) Settlement form and pattern
- (iii) Visual considerations
- (iv) Landscape value

(i) Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

- 2.16 This considers impacts upon particular aspects of landscape character including landform, land cover, land use, scale, pattern, enclosure, quality and condition. An assessment of the character of the landscape to the north and west of Uppingham was undertaken including local interpretation of the landscape character areas as defined in the 2003 *Rutland Landscape Character Assessment* and the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*.
- 2.17 It is important to recognise that the study addresses landscape sensitivity and capacity and is not a detailed landscape character assessment. It is also important to recognise that landscape character rarely changes abruptly and boundaries drawn often represent transitional zones between one character area and another where changes in topography, geology, soils, cultural patterns, land use etc. might be quite subtle. Consequently character area boundaries often follow physical or mapped features such as roads or field boundaries, for example hedgerows or walls.
- 2.18 An assessment is made on the presence or absence of distinctive landscape elements or features, whether they could be readily replaced and whether they make a positive contribution to character and sense of place. Conclusions are made on whether development would overall have a negative effect, neutral or positive effect on landscape character.
- 2.19 Criteria are used as developed in the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*, to assess the function of each area of land in the wider setting of Uppingham. The most important considerations in this respect are the function of the land as actual or perceived intervening land between settlements; and as an important break between village and countryside.
- 2.20 Where the character of a site is defined more by surrounding built development rather than its setting on the edge of the village and countryside, its function as open space affecting the setting, appearance, form and / or character of the built environment is made.

(ii) Settlement form and pattern

- 2.21 It is recognised that Uppingham has a distinctive historical core. Of particular importance in relation to the assessment of built development is the historic settlement pattern and the extent to which this has been sustained or modified. Growth has occurred which has obviously altered settlement shape and to varying extent the pattern of the town, i.e. the direction of growth which is a reflection of natural influences or other considerations. In some areas there is a good landscape fit where the built-up area on the edge of a village relates well to its landscape setting, for example an irregular form or layout related to topography or hydrology or historical land use or patterns of buildings or activities. In other areas the fit is not so good resulting in a harsh edge to the settlement which does not blend so well into the landscape.
- 2.22 Compatibility of change to the overall shape of the town and how it fits into the wider settlement pattern within the landscape is essential if new development is to sustain the appreciation of distinctive settlement pattern and character. Thus the study considers settlement pattern, settlement morphology and the design, external finish and landscape fit of buildings. An assessment is made of whether development within an identified area would represent an appropriate extension to the village, or where there may be some

association with settlement form and pattern but where this is less clear, or where development would be isolated from the town. Conclusions are made on whether development would overall have a negative effect, neutral or positive effect on settlement form and pattern.

(iii) Visual considerations

2.23 The assessment considers the visual effects of development, such as the obstruction of views (for example by new buildings) or intrusion into views; how conspicuous new housing may be or whether it would affect important skylines or views, for example those seen from dwellings, roads, paths and other viewpoints, and to what extent this might affect the setting of the town. Some visual effects may be reduced by mitigation measures; however these may themselves have adverse effects on the landscape or may obstruct important views in the attempt to prevent views of the new development.

2.24 The elements considered to be important in the assessment of visual considerations are:

- Views into the area and approaches; the impact on views of and approaches to the town from the approach roads, public rights of way and other viewpoints;
- Outward views; the impact of development on views out of the settlement where these are strategically significant and distinctive and an important aspect of settlement character;
- Ridges and other areas of high ground; the potential effect on distinctive ridges and other areas of high ground or where the settlement avoids such elevated positions;
- Conspicuity; whether development would be located in a visually conspicuous location, such as open, flat ground or on open, high or rising ground, where this is not already a key positive landscape characteristic.

2.25 Visibility of development is not necessarily an adverse effect, even where it would be conspicuous. Thus the assessment considers whether development is likely to be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view, or where development would enhance views or existing visual amenity.

(iv) Landscape value

2.26 The first three key aspects considered above, namely landscape character and setting of the town; settlement form and pattern; and visual considerations, were assessed to reach conclusions on the overall landscape sensitivity of each identified parcel of land. This process inevitably involved both objective assessment, such as the presence or absence of landscape features, and relative and comparative qualitative judgements, such as changes to patterns, diversity and openness.

2.27 Turning the sensitivity study into an assessment of capacity to accommodate a particular type of change i.e. new housing, requires consideration of more subjective, experiential or perceptual aspects of the landscape and of the value attached to it. Relative value is attached to different landscapes by society for a variety of reasons and this needs to be reflected in judgements made about capacity to accept change. Thus the capacity

assessment considers the interaction between the sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change, the way that the landscape is valued and by whom.

- 2.28 The fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value. In recent years UK planning policy and advice has on the whole discouraged local designations unless it can be shown that other approaches would be inadequate. The European Landscape Convention⁴ promotes the need to take account of all landscapes, with less emphasis on the ‘special’ and more recognition that ‘ordinary’ landscapes also have their value, supported by the landscape character approach.
- 2.29 Criteria are used which consider landscape designations and other aspects of value, such as scenic value / interest , and public amenity value by way of views, access, biodiversity (general wildlife) interest and opportunity for quiet enjoyment (tranquillity).
- 2.30 With regard to designated landscapes, there are no national designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty within Rutland. The previous Rutland Local Plan (July 2001) included a policy for the protection of Countryside of Special Landscape Value (Policy EN28) referring to the designation of Areas of Particularly Attractive Countryside (APAC) and Areas of Local Landscape Value (ALLV) within the county. Policies in the previous Rutland Local Plan were automatically saved for a 3 year period to September 2007 under the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Several policies were extended beyond that date by a Direction issued by the Secretary of State, to remain in force until replaced by new policies through the LDF process. Included in the list of extended policies was EN28.
- 2.31 For that reason in assessing landscape value in the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* consideration was given to whether a site was located within or adjacent to a designated APAC or ALLV, which increased landscape value. The current statutory development plan in Rutland does not include local landscape designations. However, to meet the requirement for consistency of this study with the methodology used in the 2010 study, the fact that all of the land to the north and west of Uppingham lies wholly within an area previously designated APAC increases the value of the study sites in landscape terms. This approach is consistent with the national planning policy framework (NPPF) which encourages the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes⁵.

Step 6: Fieldwork

- 2.32 Detailed fieldwork in and around Uppingham was undertaken in early June 2017 to view the landscape and townscape setting of each site. Landscape characteristics were recorded, using the finer grain of landscape characterisation within the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* (rather than the strategic level county-wide *Rutland Landscape Character Assessment*, 2003) as the basis for the study. Key characteristics and features were recorded as referred to in paragraphs 2.16 – 2.22 above.
- 2.33 An appreciation of views into and out of the town in the vicinity of the study sites was gained by walking along footpaths, tracks and rights of way including sections of the Rutland Round recreational route, and driving along local roads in and around the northern, western and southern sides of the town. Photographs were taken to record key characteristics in

⁴ Council of Europe, 2000, ‘*European Landscape Convention*’, Strasbourg

⁵ NPPF, 2012, paragraph 109

accordance with the study criteria, and as an aide memoire. Paragraphs 2.23 – 2.25 refer to the key visual considerations during fieldwork.

Step 7: Applying the Criteria in Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

- 2.34 As described in Step 5 appropriate criteria were defined and then applied in a systematic and impartial judgement of the sensitivity and capacity of each identified zone. Criteria for all the four key aspects explained in Step 5 were devised as being most appropriate to the consideration of built development on the edges of the three Local Service Centre villages. To assess landscape character sensitivity the following criteria in **Table 2** were used:

Table 2: Landscape and Settlement Character Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity	Assessment Criteria
High Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinctive elements and combination of features present that could not be replaced and which make a positive contribution to character and sense of place. • Important intervening open land between settlements, or perceived as such. • Important to the setting of the town by providing a distinctive break between town and countryside. • Open space important to the appearance, form and character of the built environment. • Development would be isolated from the town or would detract from important aspects of settlement form and pattern. • The site may be adjacent to built limits but lies outside clear and important boundary features defining settlement extent.
Moderate Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common place elements and combination of features present, some of which could not be replaced and which create generally unremarkable character but some sense of place. • Part of a larger area of intervening open land between settlements, or perceived as such. • Of some importance to the setting of the town but the break between town and countryside is less distinctive. • Open space of some importance to the setting, appearance, form and character of the built environment. • Development would have some association with the town and may have some effect on settlement form and pattern.
Low Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some elements / features are discordant, derelict or in decline, resulting in indistinct character with little or no sense of place. Few, if any, features / elements that could not be replaced. • Is not important intervening open land between settlements. • Of little or no importance to the setting of the town as there is little or no distinctive break between town and countryside. • Open space of little or no importance to the appearance, form and character of the built environment. • Development would be an appropriate extension of the town with no adverse impact on important aspects of settlement form and pattern.

2.35 To assess visual sensitivity the following criteria in **Table 3** were used:

Table 3: Visual Sensitivity

Visual Sensitivity	Assessment Criteria
High Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides important views into and/or out of the town which could not be mitigated. Important to the setting of the town where development would create unacceptable visual intrusion into the countryside that could not be mitigated. The site is very open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are very important. Development would be uncharacteristically conspicuous and could not be successfully mitigated.
Moderate Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views into and/or out of the town are of some importance and / or there may be scope for mitigating potential visual impacts. Of some importance to the setting of the town but development could be mitigated so that visual intrusion into the countryside is acceptable. The site is partially open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important, or is more open to views in which the countryside or open space is of less importance. Development likely to be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view.
Low Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of little or no importance to the setting of the town such that development would not lead to unacceptable visual intrusion into the countryside, with or without mitigation. The site is well screened from public or private views. Development would not be discernible or would enhance views or existing visual amenity.

2.36 To make a judgement on overall landscape sensitivity by considering the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity, the following categories given in the matrix in **Table 4** were used:

Table 4: Overall Landscape Sensitivity Categories

Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	High	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
	Moderate	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH
	Low	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		Low	Moderate	High
		Visual Sensitivity		

Step 8: Applying the Criteria in Landscape Capacity Assessment

2.37 As described above, turning the sensitivity study into an assessment of capacity to accommodate a particular type of change requires consideration of the way that the landscape is valued. To do this the following criteria in **Table 5** were used:

Table 5: Landscape Value

Landscape Value	Assessment Criteria
High Landscape Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape where localised character and scenic value is distinctive. Presents locally important landscape characteristics or scenic value; and / or Presents important public amenity value by way of views, access, sporting facilities, biodiversity interest or opportunity for quiet enjoyment (relative tranquillity).
Moderate Landscape Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lies wholly or partially within a previously locally designated landscape but where localised character and scenic value is less distinctive or has become degraded. Lies adjacent to a previously locally designated landscape. Presents locally distinctive landscape characteristics with some scenic interest; and / or Presents some public amenity value by way of views, access, sporting facilities, biodiversity interest or opportunity for quiet enjoyment (relative tranquillity).
Low Landscape Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not lie within or adjacent to a previously locally designated landscape. Does not present locally important / distinctive landscape characteristics or scenic value / interest; or Does not present important public amenity value by way of views, access, sporting facilities, biodiversity interest or opportunity for quiet enjoyment (relative tranquillity).

2.38 To make judgements on overall landscape capacity by considering the interactions between overall landscape sensitivity and landscape value, the following categories given in the matrix in **Table 6** were used:

Table 6: Overall Landscape Capacity Categories

Overall Landscape Sensitivity	High	MEDIUM	LOW TO MEDIUM	LOW
	Moderate	MEDIUM TO HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW TO MEDIUM
	Low	HIGH	MEDIUM TO HIGH	MEDIUM
		Low	Moderate	High
		Landscape Value		

Step 9: Reporting including Recommendations

- 2.39 This report presents the findings of the landscape sensitivity and capacity assessment. Paragraphs 1.11 – 1.15 set out the format followed in reporting the assessment of sensitivity and capacity for each of the five study sites in turn. The different aspects of landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity, and landscape value are assessed to three categories; *low*, *medium* and *high*. However, in some cases the assessment does not fall squarely into one of these categories and a split assessment, such as *moderate to high* landscape character sensitivity, has been given based on professional judgement. Overall landscape sensitivity using the matrix in Table 4 is also assessed to these three categories and colour coded as shown in the table. Again, for some sites decisions have been made about how the individual assessments are combined where split assessments have led to more than one possible category. For example, an area with a *moderate to high* landscape character sensitivity and *moderate* visual sensitivity could have an overall landscape sensitivity of either *moderate* or *high* using the matrix in Table 4. Thus a judgement has been made, including comparison with the assessment of other zones, to arrive at the most appropriate category of overall sensitivity.
- 2.40 To arrive at overall landscape capacity, a five point scale has been used as shown in the matrix in Table 6; *low*, *low to medium*, *medium*, *medium to high* and *high*. A five point scale allows greater differentiation between sites. These five categories are also colour coded as shown in the table and illustrated via GIS mapping.
- 2.41 When assessing overall landscape capacity, again for some zones decisions have been made about how the individual assessments are combined where split assessments have led to more than one possible category.
- 2.42 Colour coded summary tables are presented at the end of the assessment of each study site. The five summary tables have been combined into overall summary table presented as Table 1 in the Executive Summary. This allows easy comparison between zones and cross-referencing to the coloured maps.
- 2.43 Recommendations are given in Section 4 to prioritise sites and to guide the direction of the future growth of Uppingham. Where study sites have been assessed as having the same overall capacity to accommodate development, a judgement is made and recommendations given on the order that these areas could be brought forward for development, in landscape and visual terms.

3. Assessment and Analysis

Uppingham Local Landscape Character Context

- 3.1 Uppingham lies within the *High Rutland* landscape character type. The boundaries of *High Rutland* were established within the 2001 *Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy*⁶, although the area was referred to in that county-wide study as High Leicestershire. The 2003 *Rutland landscape Character Assessment*⁷ used the term *High Rutland* as it was considered more appropriate for a district-wide assessment of Rutland. The following extracts from the 2003 Rutland LCA describe the main characteristics of the **High Rutland landscape type** within which Uppingham lies:

'High Rutland forms part of the watershed between the Soar - Trent - Humber and the Welland catchments. It is dissected by radiating rivers and streams which have formed steep sided valleys separated by ridges. This gives the whole area the distinctive steeply rolling landform familiar to travellers who are either continually ascending and descending the steep slopes or travelling along the ridges enjoying panoramic views across the surrounding countryside'.

'The highest parts of the landscape character type in Rutland reach over 190 metres AOD. Much of High Rutland is deeply rural and locally feels relatively remote. A distinctive feature is the network of narrow gated roads connecting isolated hamlets and farms. The only major roads within the area are the A47 running east to west and the A6003 running north to south, neither of which is seriously visually intrusive in the landscape but they do create a busier, noisier ambience in the main road corridors'.

'Land use is a mixture of arable on the flatter and more gently sloping ridge areas and grassland mainly on the steeper slopes and in the valley bottoms. Ridge and furrow is fairly well distributed throughout the area and reflects the intensity of arable cultivation here in the early Middle Ages. Field ponds are also characteristic. The field pattern is mainly one of regularly shaped fields bounded by thorn hedges with mainly ash, and in a few places oak, as hedgerow trees. These enclosure hedges contrast with the older mixed species hedges that form the more sinuous parish boundaries'.

'Throughout the area, but especially in Leighfield Forest, some hedgerows are substantial and many still perform an important function in this pastoral landscape, providing containment, shelter and shade for stock. Whilst a number of hedges have been neglected, relatively few have been removed and there is evidence of the increasing practice of traditional hedgerow management by laying, protection of hedgerow trees and fencing of new field and hedgerow trees to protect them from grazing animals. A number of hedgerow trees are over-mature, including some left isolated in the fields when associated hedgerows were removed, these need careful maintenance and surgery to extend their lives and replacement to ensure continuity of hedgerow tree cover. Some ponds are being cleaned, restored and nurtured demonstrating that all these important contributions to landscape character can still be practicable today'.

'Whilst horse-keeping helps to maintain the pastoral character, a number of the fields are over-grazed. The use of inappropriate fencing and the accumulation of stables, barns and

⁶ Leicestershire County Council, 2001, '*Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland Landscape and Woodland Strategy*'

⁷ David Tyldesley & Associates, May 2003, '*Rutland Landscape Character Assessment*'

other, usually temporary and unsightly, buildings, vehicles, lighting and clutter detracts from the generally unspoilt rural character and is particularly intrusive in views of, to and from the villages’.

‘Woodland is a significant feature throughout the area reflecting the old Leighfield Forest. The woodlands tend to be broadleaved, mainly ash and oak, but there are also mixed conifer and broadleaved plantations associated with 19th century sporting estates and a number of mature poplar plantations. In general the woodlands tend to be even aged. Parkland is an important component of the landscape in some parts. Other concentrations of sites of ecological value are provided by small streams, ponds, disused railway lines and Eyebrook Reservoir’.

‘Whilst the Leighfield Forest and Chater Valley sub-areas have remained pastoral and well wooded, elsewhere there has been extensive conversion or reversion to arable with attendant loss of pasture, woodland, field boundaries, hedgerow trees and small pockets of semi-natural vegetation. However, in parts new woodland planting is quite extensive; the Woodland Trust has new plantations between Oakham and Braunston-in-Rutland. Some parkland landscapes are in good condition, others urgently need restoration and reinstatement of good management practice’.

- 3.2 The 2003 Rutland LCA divides the landscape character types into a number of smaller landscape character sub-areas, providing a more local assessment than in the 2001 *Landscape and Woodland Strategy*. All of the study sites within this report to the north and west of Uppingham are located within the *Ridges and Valleys* sub-area. The *Eyebrook Valley* sub-area falls sharply immediately to the west of study sites 1, 4 and 5. The following extracts from the 2003 Rutland LCA describe the main characteristics of the **Ridges and Valleys sub-area** within which Uppingham lies:

‘This extensive part of west, south and central Rutland has typical generic landscape elements, features and characteristics of High Rutland but differs from Leighfield Forest by lacking the sense of rural isolation and having a much more open, regular, geometric field pattern (exacerbated by some boundary removal) with fewer, low-cut or gappy hedges, fewer hedgerow trees and less enclosure. The ridges and valleys are evident but not as pronounced as to the west. There are fewer woodlands and those that occur tend to be enclosure or post-enclosure, straight-edged plantations. In parts there are a number of small plantations and some of the valley streams have linear strips of woodland or narrow, linear wetland habitats’.

‘Mixed or arable farming prevails with a variety of crops and intensively managed, improved grasslands grazed by cattle and sheep. There are more farm steadings in the countryside and more and larger farm buildings’.

‘Although the sub-area does exhibit a number of historic features, with ridge and furrow and old lanes linking medieval villages still characteristic, this part of High Rutland has a less obvious feeling of antiquity and continuity. It is busier and noisier with the main roads passing through it, settlements are more frequent and larger (including Uppingham) and settlement pattern much denser, especially between North and South Luffenham and Uppingham. Roads, railways and disused railways form important linear features sometimes seeming to run against the grain of the ridges and valleys which run generally east – west’.

- 3.3 The 2003 Rutland LCA recommends the following landscape objectives for the *Ridges and Valleys* sub-area:

Recommended Landscape Objectives

High Rutland - Ridges and Valleys

To sustain and restore the rural, mixed-agricultural, busy, colourful, diverse landscape with regular patterns, straight lines, frequent movement, many large and small historic, stone built conservation villages that fit well with the landform, to protect the landscape setting and conserve and enhance the edges of villages, to increase the woodland cover and other semi-natural habitats whilst protecting historic features and panoramic views from the ridges.

- 3.4 An even finer-grain of landscape character assessment around Uppingham is contained within the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*⁸ to inform the assessment of a number of sites around the town within that study. This further sub-divided the Ridges and Valleys landscape into *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* and *Uppingham Plateau* where localised landscape character shows some variation from the generic description of the wider sub-area. These sub-units are described below and shown in **Figure 1**, in the context of the study sites and their immediate setting in relation to Uppingham itself. The following extracts from the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* describe the main characteristics of the **Uppingham Ridges and Valleys landscape sub-area** within which study sites 2 and 3 are located:

'The countryside fringing Uppingham to the north, east and south exhibits strong characteristics typical of the 'High Rutland – Ridges and Valleys' landscape sub-area as described in the LCA. A series of streams flow west to east with pronounced steep sided valleys, and broad ridges in-between. The town has developed on relatively flat high ground between two valleys and has expanded primarily northwards, and south-eastwards, where the valley is much shallower. The steepness of the valleys to the east and south of the town has limited expansion in these directions'.

'Agricultural land use is typically arable on the flatter, higher ridges with improved / semi-improved grassland for rough pasture grazing on the steeper valley sides. Rectilinear arable fields are larger than the grasslands, an indication of where field boundaries have been removed. Hedges are predominantly well maintained hawthorn with occasional hedgerow trees, creating an open, exposed character with a distinctive west to east alignment following the predominant pattern of the landscape. A number of isolated farms lie close to the built up edges of the town, located on the higher broad ridges'.

'On the sloping valley sides the smaller grassland fields provide a more regular, geometric field pattern. Here there is much more of a sense of enclosure, due to the topography and the prevalence of taller hedges with trees, areas of scrub and small copses, especially those which follow the more sinuous course of a stream. In some areas individual mature trees mark the line of former hedges, and ridge and furrow remains in several places'.

'From the upper valley sides and the broad ridges, views are often extensive across the

⁸ David Tyldesley and Associates, May 2010, '*Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*'

steeply rolling countryside of 'High Rutland'. By way of contrast views from the numerous minor roads which continually ascend and descend the ridges and valleys rapidly alternate from panoramic to foreshortened views'.

- 3.5 The following extracts from the 2010 *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study* describe the main characteristics of the **Uppingham Plateau landscape sub-area** within which study sites 1, 4 and 5 are located:

'To the west of Uppingham is an elevated, comparatively level expanse of land; a tableland plateau gently rising from around 150m in the east to around 163m further west. It lies between the steeply rolling ridges and valleys of 'High Rutland' to the north and east, including Uppingham itself, and the steeply falling valley sides within the watershed of the Eyebrook Valley landscape sub-area to the south and west'.

'Land use is almost entirely pasture, comprising improved or semi-improved grassland for sheep grazing, although there are small arable fields abutting the western edge of the town. There is a regular, geometric, rectilinear field pattern, with closely trimmed hawthorn hedges and more abundant hedgerow trees than to the east. Many trees are becoming over mature, many with extensive ivy and large dead boughs. Dry stone walls provide field boundaries alongside the winding Stockerston Road, and there are patches of remaining ridge and furrow'.

'Despite being elevated, the plateau is well contained by topography, vegetation and the built up edge of Uppingham, limiting views both out of and in to the plateau'.

'A key characteristic is the lack of streams across the area. There are small ditches within the hedgerow bottoms but these are not obvious features within the landscape. There is a series of wells and springs on the edge of the plateau, which are also inconspicuous. A section of the Rutland Round long distance footpath cuts across the middle of the plateau and along Leicester Road'.

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Sites

- 3.6 The following pages comprise the assessment of landscape sensitivity and capacity of the five study sites to the north and west of the town to accommodate new housing development, taking into consideration the sites for new houses allocated in the *Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan*.

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 1

Location

North-west of Uppingham lying immediately south of the A47 (which bypasses the town to the north). Leicester Road (the main north-western road into / out of the town) borders the site to the west. The triangular shaped outlying residential development at Westlands and housing allocated in the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan (UNP) along Leicester Road lie along the site's southern boundary. A public right of way and study site 2 borders the site to the east.

Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

The site lies at the northern end of the localised *Uppingham Plateau* landscape sub-area. It is relatively flat, falling gradually eastwards from 157m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the boundary with Leicester Road and then more sharply towards study site 2 at around 145m AOD. The land to the north and east of the site is more undulating and characteristic of the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* landscape sub-area.

The relatively flat plateau topography of the site continues to the south. The ground falls much more sharply to the west towards the Eyebrook Valley.

The site is in arable use apart from a small triangular-shaped grass field along its eastern boundary, grazed by cattle. Trimmed hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees border the geometrically shaped, rectangular arable field along its northern and eastern boundaries. There are taller roadside hedgerows and mature trees along the Leicester Road frontage, although the hedge is low trimmed opposite the Cemetery that juts into the site off Leicester Road. A relatively dense mix of tall hedgerow, trees and mature garden vegetation including tall conifers lies along the boundary with the Westlands housing development and UNP housing site to the south that defines the previous Civil Parish boundary and provides a well-integrated edge to Uppingham in this location.



View A at the western end of the site at the junction of the main A47 and Leicester Road, set behind trimmed roadside hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

The site exhibits typical characteristics of the *Uppingham Plateau* landscape comprising relatively flat, featureless land with no distinctive landscape features or elements considered particularly sensitive to housing development. However, the site has a clearly rural, countryside character although this is somewhat diluted by the presence of the built up edge of Uppingham and the busy

A47. Thus, overall, future housing development on the site is considered to have a negative effect on landscape character.

The previous Civil Parish boundary along the northern edge of the Westlands housing development and UNP housing site provides a green barrier (albeit not especially picturesque) that softens the built-up edge of Uppingham along this north-western side of the town and which assimilates it well into the surrounding countryside. The site is important to character of Uppingham and the setting of the town in the landscape, a transitional landscape between the town and the more sensitive landscapes of the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* and the *Eyebrook Valley* to the north and west respectively. It provides an important function as intervening open countryside between Uppingham and the village of Ayston to the north of the A47, where development could lead to the coalescence of the settlements with adverse impact on Ayston's countryside setting, including the setting of Ayston Church. Thus the site serves as an important break between town and countryside.



View B looking across the site from Leicester Road towards Ayston village and its church. A line of dense conifers marks the previous Uppingham Civil Parish boundary (right side of the photograph).



View C looking northwards across the grassland at the eastern end of the site, showing the open countryside and undulations of the Uppingham Ridges and Valley landscape within which Ayston village is located.

Settlement form and pattern

The older historic core and commercial centre of the town sits upon an east-west ridge between two valleys. The deeply incised valleys have restricted the southern and eastern growth of the town that has principally been to the north, including recent employment development at Uppingham Gate Business Park extending the town northwards to the A47. Future housing growth is likely to be on

the flatter land to the north-west and west as indicated by sites allocated along Leicester Road in the UNP.

Thus development of the site could be seen to be in-keeping with settlement pattern and growth of the town northwards to the A47 (in keeping with recent employment development and which may be seen as a recognisable linear boundary feature defining settlement extent in the future) and eastwards along Leicester Road. However, northwards growth has not extended beyond the previous Civil Parish boundary that forms a recognisable green buffer to the town which development of the site would extend beyond. Consequently development of the site would be somewhat isolated from the town and would have a negative effect on settlement form and pattern.

Overall the site is assessed as **Moderate to High landscape and settlement character sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 2:

- Important intervening open land between settlements, or perceived as such.
- Important to the setting of the town by providing a distinctive break between town and countryside.
- Open space of some importance to the setting, appearance, form and character of the built environment.
- Development would be isolated from the town or would detract from important aspects of settlement form and pattern.
- The site may be adjacent to built limits but lies outside clear and important boundary features defining settlement extent.

Visual considerations

Although the site occupies a relatively elevated, flat plateau, views into the site from nearby viewpoints are restricted by boundary hedgerows and trees. These also serve to provide a relatively well integrated built edge to the town along its north-western side. The site provides an important open buffer in views approaching Uppingham from the west along the A47, from the public footpath passing north-south through the eastern end of the site, and from Leicester Road which is also part of the Rutland Round recreational route. Housing on the site would be conspicuous on the skyline in some views currently unaffected by built development (for example in viewpoint A above) and would create a new exposed edge in foreground views.



View D looking through a field gate off the A47 south-eastwards across the site, showing the relatively well integrated settlement edge of the town softened by the green barrier along the previous Civil Parish boundary.



View E from the same gateway as view D but looking south-west across the site, showing the relatively well integrated settlement edge of the town softened by the green barrier along the previous Civil Parish boundary (left) and the more open boundary along Leicester Road (centre and right).

The undulating topography surrounding the site to the north and west serves to limit views of the site (and the town generally), especially from lower lying valleys. Views from ridges of higher ground into the site are also generally restricted by vegetation that new development could breach.

The currently open site allows important views out of the town from the northern edge of the town, from Leicester Road and public rights of way, to Ayston to the north and to distant hills to the east, as seen in views B & C. These views would be obstructed by development of the site.

These important landscape, settlement and visual impacts are unlikely to be successfully mitigated by any sensitive design or layout of any new housing development, or landscape works such as boundary planting.

The site is assessed as **Moderate to High visual sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 3:

- Views into and out of the town are of some importance.
- Important to the setting of the town where development would create unacceptable visual intrusion into the countryside that could not be mitigated.
- The site is partially open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important.
- Development would be uncharacteristically conspicuous and could not be successfully mitigated.

Conclusion on overall landscape sensitivity

A judgement has been made on overall landscape sensitivity by using the matrix shown in Table 4 to consider the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity; **overall landscape sensitivity for Site 1 is judged as HIGH.**

Site 1 is assessed as **Low to Moderate landscape value** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 5:

- Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape (Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside) but where localised character and scenic value is less distinctive.
- Does not present locally important / distinctive landscape characteristics or scenic interest.
- Presents some public amenity value by way of views and access.

Conclusions on landscape capacity

A judgement has been made on landscape capacity by using the matrix shown in Table 6 to consider overall High landscape sensitivity and Low to Moderate landscape value; **landscape capacity for Site 1 is judged as LOW to MEDIUM.**

A medium capacity would also be a possible result of using the matrix, but on balance a slightly lower capacity has been allocated because development would intrude into the countryside, would be isolated from the town, and would overall have a negative effect on landscape character and settlement form and pattern.

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 1

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
1	Moderate to High	Moderate to High	High	Low to Moderate	Low to Medium

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 2

Location

On the northern periphery of Uppingham lying immediately south of the A47 (which bypasses the town to the north) and west of the A47/A6003/Ayston Road roundabout that marks the northern gateway into the town. A mature tree belt along a shallow ditch forms the site's southern boundary, beyond which lies an arable field (Study Site 3) and allotments adjacent to the town's north-western built up edge. Study Site 1 lies immediately to the west.

Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

The site lies within the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* landscape sub-area. It falls eastwards from approximately 145m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at its western end to around 130m AOD at the A47 / A6003 / Ayston Road roundabout. Beyond the site the ground continues to gradually rise southwards (Study Site 3) to properties on Firs Avenue and Rutland Close, and more gradually westwards on to the flatter *Uppingham Plateau* landscape (Study Site 1).

The site is in arable use, of small to medium scale. Trimmed hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees border the roughly triangular-shaped agricultural field along its western boundary with Site 1 and the A47 roadside boundary to the north. The mature broadleaf tree belt to the south provides a strong landscape feature that helps define the rural, countryside character of the site and reinforces its separation from the town's northern built limits.



View F from a field gate off the A47 looking south-west across the site and up to the northern built up edge of Uppingham, showing the falling topography of the site and the mature tree belt along the site's southern boundary.



View G similar to View F but taken from higher ground on Ayston Road to the north, showing Site 1 in the foreground and the land beyond (Study Site 3) rising up to the northern built up edge of Uppingham.

The site and its immediate surroundings to the north, east and south exhibit typical characteristics of the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* landscape comprising undulating and in parts rolling countryside. The site has no distinctive landscape features or elements considered particularly sensitive to housing development. However, the site has a clearly rural countryside character, despite the presence of the busy A47, and a perception of it being clearly divorced from the town. Thus, overall, future housing development on the site is considered to have a significant adverse effect on landscape character.



View H looking at the northern part of the site showing that it has a distinctly rural countryside character, despite the presence of the busy A47, and a perception of it being clearly divorced from the town (Uppingham lies to the left of the view).

The site is important to character of Uppingham and the town's setting in the landscape. It provides an important function as intervening open countryside between Uppingham and the village of Ayston to the north of the A47, where development could lead to the coalescence of the settlements with adverse impact on Ayston's countryside setting, including the setting of Ayston Church. Thus the site serves as an important break between town and countryside.

Settlement form and pattern

The deeply incised valleys have restricted the southern and eastern growth of the town that has principally been to the north. Housing along Firs Avenue, Goldcrest and Rutland Close currently form the northern-most residential built up edge to Uppingham. Growth of the town northwards by new housing within the site would be in keeping with this pattern and form of development but would encroach onto the sensitive rising ground north of the mature broadleaf tree belt to the south that provides a strong landscape feature. It would be perceived as development within the countryside, divorced from planned limits of development.

Recent employment development at Uppingham Gate Business Park has extended the town northwards to the A47. Development of the site northwards could be seen to be in-keeping with settlement pattern and growth of the town up to the A47 (which may be seen as a recognisable linear boundary feature defining settlement extent in the future). However, development of the site would be isolated from the town and would have a negative effect on settlement form and pattern.

Overall the site is assessed as **High landscape and settlement character sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 2:

- Distinctive elements and combination of features present that could not be replaced and which make a positive contribution to character and sense of place.
- Important intervening open land between settlements, or perceived as such.
- Important to the setting of the town by providing a distinctive break between town and countryside.
- Open space important to the appearance, form and character of the built environment.
- Development would be isolated from the town.

Visual considerations

The site is open to views from the A47 and further north albeit limited to approximately 0.5km along the A6003 north of the roundabout due to the ridge and valley topography. Housing on Firs Avenue (including some three-storey residential properties) and Rutland Close is prominent on a ridge of higher ground and relatively exposed (see view G above) although vegetation does help to soften the otherwise harsh built edge, especially in the summer months. In this respect new housing within the site would be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view. Views in the opposite direction from the town northwards are sensitive to built development that would interrupt important views of the countryside including Ayston. Views are limited from single story bungalows but more extensive from two and three storey properties.

The site provides an important open buffer in views approaching Uppingham from the A47 and A6003. Housing on the site would be conspicuous and would create a new exposed edge to development in foreground views.

These important landscape, settlement and visual impacts are unlikely to be successfully mitigated by any sensitive design or layout of any new housing development, or landscape works such as boundary planting.

The site is assessed as **Moderate to High visual sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 3:

- Provides important views into the town which could not be mitigated.
- Important to the setting of the town where development would create unacceptable visual intrusion into the countryside that could not be mitigated.
- The site is partially open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important.
- Development likely to be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view.

Conclusion on overall landscape sensitivity

A judgement has been made on overall landscape sensitivity by using the matrix shown in Table 4 to consider the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity; **overall landscape sensitivity for Site 2 is judged as HIGH.**

Site 2 is assessed as **Moderate to High landscape value** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 5:

- Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape (Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside) where localised character and scenic value is distinctive.
- Presents locally distinctive landscape characteristics with some scenic interest.
- Presents some public amenity value by way of views and biodiversity interest.

Conclusions on landscape capacity

A judgement has been made on landscape capacity by using the matrix shown in Table 6 to consider overall High landscape sensitivity and Moderate to High landscape value; **landscape capacity for Site 2 is judged as LOW to MEDIUM.**

A low capacity would also be a possible result of using the matrix, but on balance a slightly higher capacity has been allocated because although development would intrude into the countryside and would overall have a negative effect on landscape character and settlement form and pattern, the barrier effect of the A47 somewhat reduces this intrusion and thus in time expansion of the town up to the main road may be more preferable than development on other sensitive areas elsewhere around the town. Development on the site should only occur with development of Study Site 3 otherwise new housing on the site would be isolated from the town. With development of sites 2 and 3 the well wooded valley in-between should remain as an area of important open space and green corridor.

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 2

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
2	High	Moderate to High	High	Moderate to High	Low to Medium

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 3

Location

On the north-western periphery of Uppingham lying immediately north of properties on Firs Avenue and the Goldcrest and Rutland Close culs-de-sac (which mark the northern limit of residential development of the town) and west of Ayston Road and the A47/A6003 roundabout (that marks the northern gateway into the town). A mature tree belt along a shallow ditch forms the site's northern boundary, beyond which lies an arable field (Study Site 2). Allotments currently occupy the western part of the site, beyond which are open arable fields allocated for housing in the UNP.

Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

The site lies within the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* landscape sub-area. It falls eastwards from approximately 150m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at its western end to around 130m AOD at the A47 / A6003 / Ayston Road roundabout. Uppingham Gate Business Park is located to the east of Ayston Road. Beyond the site the ground gradually rises north-eastwards from the ditch-side mature tree belt (Study Site 2) towards the A47 (which bypasses the town to the north), and more gradually westwards on to the flatter *Uppingham Plateau* landscape beyond the allotments.

The site comprises two small to medium scale arable fields separated by a low trimmed hedgerow and occasional hedgerow trees aligned north-south through the centre of the site, and allotment gardens to the west. Mostly tall hedgerows and trees surround the site on most sides: the mature broadleaf tree belt within a minor valley to the north provides a natural landscape feature; a dense roadside hedgerow and tree belt separates the site from Ayston Road; the hedgerow boundary with the allotments is tall and dense; a linear tree and shrub belt planted along the northern edge of housing on Firs Avenue and Goldcrest now provides a relatively dense semi-mature screen, whilst the boundary with single storey bungalows on Firs Avenue and Rutland Close comprises low trimmed hedges and occasional small trees.



View 1 looking from Ayston Road southwards into the site, showing the ridge and valley landscape and single storey bungalows on Firs Avenue and Rutland Close marking the northern limit of residential development of the town.



View J similar view to view I but a closer view from Ayston Road near the A47/A6003 roundabout, looking into the site towards the built up ridge of higher ground along the site's southern boundary. Bungalows on Firs Avenue are relatively exposed whilst taller houses are relatively well screened.



View K from the edge of the allotments looking southwards across the site, showing the linear tree belt in front of properties on Firs Avenue and Goldcrest cul-de-sac (note: compare this with the same view in the 2010 study taken when the screen planting was immature⁹).

The site and its immediate surroundings to the north and east exhibit typical characteristics of the *Uppingham Ridges and Valleys* landscape comprising undulating and in parts rolling countryside. The site has no distinctive landscape features or elements considered particularly sensitive to housing development, although surrounding landscape features are important characteristics that help to dilute the somewhat urbanising effects of neighbouring land uses, in particular the busy A47 and Ayston Road to the north and east respectively, housing to the south, and allotments to the west. Overall, future housing development on the site is considered to have a negative although not significant effect on landscape character.

Settlement form and pattern

The deeply incised valleys have restricted the southern and eastern growth of the town that has principally been to the north. Housing along Firs Avenue, Goldcrest and Rutland Close currently form

⁹ David Tyldesley and Associates, May 2010, '*Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study*', Final report, Issue 2, View R on page 121

the northern-most residential built up edge to Uppingham. Housing allocated within the UNP to the west will extend residential development further northwards, in effect closing the undeveloped gap between the town and the outlying residential development along Leicester Road at Westlands (including Shepherd's Way). New housing on the western parts of the site would close the gap further and an appropriate extension north-eastwards would be in keeping with the allocated pattern and form of development. It is noted that access into the western and central parts of the site would be available via Firs Avenue and / or Goldcrest cul-de-sac.

The mature broadleaf tree belt to the north provides a strong landscape feature that could be perceived as a new natural limit to development of the town northwards, avoiding development within the countryside further north (Study Site 2). Or development could be set back from this minor valley to follow the line of the previous Civil Parish boundary that runs along the northern edge of the Westlands development and UNP allocations (on the north side of Leicester Road) towards the roundabout.

Recent employment development at Uppingham Gate Business Park has extended the town northwards to the A47 / A6003 / Ayston Road roundabout. Hence development of the site could be seen to be in-keeping with this pattern and recent growth of the town.

Overall the site is assessed as **Low to Moderate landscape and settlement character sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 2:

- Common place elements and combination of features present, some of which could not be replaced and which create generally unremarkable character but some sense of place.
- Is not important intervening open land between settlements.
- Of some importance to the setting of the town but the break between town and countryside is less distinctive.
- Open space of little or no importance to the appearance, form and character of the built environment.
- Development would be an appropriate extension of the town with no adverse impact on important aspects of settlement form and pattern.

Visual considerations

The site is relatively well screened from the A47 and from Ayston Road west of the site. There are views into the site from higher ground further north but these are limited to approximately 0.5km along the A6003 north of the roundabout due to the ridge and valley topography. Housing on Firs Avenue (including some three-storey residential properties), Goldcrest and Rutland Close is visible on the skyline on a ridge of higher ground above the site although vegetation does help to soften the otherwise harsh built edge, especially in the summer months. In this respect new housing within the site would be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view. Development on the eastern part of the site, in front of single storey bungalows, would be more visually intrusive than development on the western side of the site due to the screening and softening effect of surrounding vegetation. Where housing would create a new exposed edge to development in foreground views, mitigation planting could be important in time in reducing its impact.

Views in the opposite direction from the town northwards are sensitive to built development that would interrupt important views of the countryside including Ayston. Views are limited from single story bungalows but more extensive from two and three storey properties.

A public right of way runs north-south from Ayston to Leicester Road, across the A47 and through the allotments along the site's western boundary. Views into the site are limited to glimpses of houses on Firs Avenue and Lime Tree Avenue from the footpath through the allotments.



View L from the footpath alongside the allotments on the site's western boundary, showing glimpses of houses on Firs Avenue and Lime Tree Avenue.

The site is assessed as **Moderate visual sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 3:

- Views into and/or out of the town are of some importance and there may be scope for mitigating potential visual impacts.
- Of some importance to the setting of the town but development could be mitigated so that visual intrusion into the countryside is acceptable.
- The site is partially open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important.
- Development likely to be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view.

Conclusion on overall landscape sensitivity

A judgement has been made on overall landscape sensitivity by using the matrix shown in Table 4 to consider the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity; **overall landscape sensitivity for Site 3 is judged as MODERATE.**

Site 3 is assessed as **Moderate landscape value** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 5:

- Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape (Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside) where localised character and scenic value is less distinctive.
- Presents locally distinctive landscape characteristics with some scenic interest.
- Presents some public amenity value by way of views, access and biodiversity interest.

Conclusions on landscape capacity

A judgement has been made on landscape capacity by using the matrix shown in Table 6 to consider overall Moderate landscape sensitivity and Moderate landscape value; **landscape capacity for Site 3 is judged as MEDIUM.**

Development within Site 3 would continue recent and allocated growth of Uppingham to the north and west with no adverse impact on important aspects of settlement form and pattern. Although it would breach current planned limits of development the well wooded valley along its northern boundary could become a new natural limit of development. It would be beneficial in landscape terms to set back any new development from this tree belt, for example restricting development to a line defined by the former Civil Parish boundary, and to retain the land between as an important green landscape and wildlife corridor. The eastern parts of the site are visually more sensitive where development would be more prominent and exposed, but mitigation by way of sensitive layout and design, together with boundary planting should reduce any significant adverse effects.

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 3

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
3	Low to Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Medium

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 4

Location

Located on the western periphery of Uppingham, on the south side of Leicester Road. The outlying residential development at Westlands (including Shepherd's Way) is located adjacent to the site on the north side of Leicester Road. Land immediately to the east is allocated for housing in the UNP, whilst land to the south (Study Site 5) and west lies within open countryside.

Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

The site is flat, lying along the western edge of the localised *Uppingham Plateau* landscape sub-area at approximately 155m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The flat plateau landscape continues to the north, east and south. Immediately to the west the land falls sharply towards the *Eyebrook Valley*.

The site comprises two arable fields, small to medium scale, with the smaller agricultural field to the east separated by a track leading to Uppingham Town Cricket Club (within Study Site 5). The track has a low trimmed hedgerow on one side. Site boundaries also comprise closely trimmed hedgerows, with additional occasional mature hedgerow trees along the roadside, eastern and western sides. The western site boundary with the *Eyebrook Valley* comprises a taller, untrimmed hedgerow and denser trees. In contrast the north-western boundary is relatively open, with a low gappy hedgerow and no trees. A bungalow ("Dunedin") is located in the north-western corner of the site. The cricket clubhouse is visible beyond the site to the south and a couple of agricultural barns to the north-west.

Lying in open countryside, the site is rural in character with few urbanising influences, of which the Leicester Road and roadside houses within the outlying Westlands development exert some urbanising influence. Leicester Road is an uncharacteristically wide, long straight road, in stark contrast to the more typically narrow, winding roads found elsewhere around the town and surrounding countryside. It has a wide verge, footpath and street lighting on one side, and other urban features including road signage and kerbed accesses. Avenues of mature trees and housing on both sides of the road within the current planned limits of development add to the urban character of Leicester Road, which will be further strengthened by new housing allocated in the UNP on land immediately to the east of Study Site 4.

Whilst not directly impacting on the site, its current rural character will be heavily influenced by the new housing allocated in the UNP as the site will become surrounded by residential development on two sides, to the north and east.



View M looking westwards along Leicester Road. The land in the foreground is allocated for housing in the UNP which will significantly affect the character of the site currently lying within countryside beyond the mature trees.



View N looking from Leicester Road showing the small arable field at the eastern end of the site and the cricket clubhouse at the end of the access track. The open land in the middle distance beyond the mature trees is allocated for housing in the UNP.



View O looking southwards into the site from the north-western corner off Leicester Road, showing its current countryside setting and rural character.



View P looking eastwards along Leicester Road, showing the frontages of properties within the outlying Westlands development on the north side (left) of the road. The site lies beyond the bungalow on the south side of the road.

The site exhibits typical characteristics of the *Uppingham Plateau* landscape comprising relatively flat, featureless land with no distinctive landscape features or elements considered particularly sensitive to housing development. The site presently has a clearly rural, countryside character although this is somewhat diluted by the presence of nearby houses and the Leicester Road. Character will become more urbanised with the development of adjacent housing as allocated in the UNP. Thus, overall, future housing development on the site is considered to have a neutral effect on landscape character.

Settlement form and pattern

New housing on the site would continue the pattern and form of current and allocated housing development on the flatter land to the west of the town along Leicester Road. On the north side the current gap between the Westlands housing development (including Shepherd's Way) and current planned limits of development of the town will be largely closed by housing allocations within the UNP. On the south side a similar housing allocation in the UNP will continue housing westwards beyond the Uppingham School playing fields and open space around the Sports Centre. New housing on Study Site 4 will continue this westwards growth without extending beyond the western end of the Westland's housing development.



View Q looking from the site's southern boundary north-eastwards. The current gap between the Westlands housing development including Shepherd's Way (left) and the western edge of the town (right) would be closed by housing allocated in the UNP.

Overall the site is assessed as **Low to Moderate landscape and settlement character sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 2:

- Common place elements and combination of features present, some of which could not be replaced and which create generally unremarkable character but some sense of place.
- Is not important intervening open land between settlements.
- Of some importance to the setting of the town but the break between town and countryside is less distinctive.
- Open space of little or no importance to the appearance, form and character of the built environment.
- Development would be an appropriate extension of the town with no adverse impact on important aspects of settlement form and pattern.

Visual considerations

Although the site occupies a relatively elevated, flat plateau, views into the currently undeveloped site from nearby viewpoints are restricted by boundary hedgerows and trees. The site is important to the setting of the town and in particular when approaching Uppingham from the west along Leicester Road (which is also part of the Rutland Round recreational route); the current approach is a pleasant, leafy picturesque scene due to the high density of tree cover that softens built form and where the skyline is largely unaffected by built development (see view P above and view R below).



View R looking from the site's southern boundary north-westwards, showing the dense mature vegetation along Leicester Road on the western approach into the town.

Housing on the site would be conspicuous on the skyline in some views currently unaffected by built development and would create a new exposed edge in foreground views. However, for the reasons mentioned above, the town's setting would not be significantly compromised by new housing within the study site, which would represent further development on the *Uppingham Plateau* landscape. Development should replicate the current density of tree cover to mirror the character of the current approach into the town and avoiding an exposed edge to development. This would go some way to mitigating impact on views from a number of properties over the site that currently look out across open countryside and which would consequently be significantly affected.

New housing development on the site could impact on more distant views into Uppingham, especially from the west. New development should be set back from the site's western edge if necessary to avoid adverse impact on the unsettled character of the *Eyebrook Valley* in views from higher ground to the west, for example from the A47, and also when looking up towards the site from lower ground, for example from the Rutland Round recreational route as it emerges out of Wardley Wood.

The site is assessed as **Moderate to High visual sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 3:

- Views into and out of the town are of some importance and there may be scope for mitigating potential visual impacts.
- Of some importance to the setting of the town but development could be mitigated so that visual intrusion into the countryside is acceptable.

- The site is very open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important.
- Development likely to be perceptible but would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within the existing view.

Conclusion on overall landscape sensitivity

A judgement has been made on overall landscape sensitivity by using the matrix shown in Table 4 to consider the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity; **overall landscape sensitivity for Site 4 is judged as MODERATE.**

Site 4 is assessed as **Low to Moderate landscape value** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 5:

- Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape (Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside) but where localised character and scenic value is less distinctive.
- Does not present locally important / distinctive landscape characteristics or scenic interest.
- Presents some public amenity value by way of views and access.

Conclusions on landscape capacity

A judgement has been made on landscape capacity by using the matrix shown in Table 6 to consider overall Moderate landscape sensitivity and Low to Moderate landscape value; **landscape capacity for Site 4 is judged as MEDIUM.**

A medium to high capacity would also be a possible result of using the matrix, but on balance a slightly lower capacity has been allocated because development on the site would be conspicuous on the skyline in some views currently unaffected by built development and would create a new exposed edge in foreground views. However, mitigation planting should reduce the impact and help retain the present picturesque, leafy western approach into the town.

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 4

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
4	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High	Moderate	Low to Moderate	Medium

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 5

Location

Located on the western periphery of Uppingham, on the south side of Leicester Road and further south than Study Site 4. Land immediately to the east is allocated as Important Open Space in the UNP, whilst nearby land to the east of Study Site 4 is allocated for housing in the UNP. Land to the south and west lies within open countryside.

Landscape and settlement character sensitivity

The site is flat, lying along the western edge of the localised *Uppingham Plateau* landscape sub-area at 156m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The flat plateau landscape continues to the north, east and south. Immediately to the west the land falls sharply towards the *Eyebrook Valley*.

The site is currently divided into two separate parts with different land uses; a small scale arable field lies in the east, whilst Uppingham Town Cricket Club is located in the western half of the site. The cricket clubhouse is located close to the northern site boundary, accessed via a track off Leicester Road and through Study Site 4 to the north.

A low trimmed hedgerow separates the two halves of the site. Site boundaries comprise generally taller hedgerows, with a small copse of woodland in the south-eastern corner and a line of semi-mature ash and hawthorn hedgerow trees along the southern boundary. The western site boundary with the *Eyebrook Valley* comprises a gappy hedgerow, in parts relatively tall and untrimmed.

Lying in open countryside, the site is rural in character although somewhat modified by the manicured cricket ground and associated features including the clubhouse, parking and other paved areas, and advertising boards. Despite these features it has strong links with the surrounding countryside, the arable fields to the north giving way to regularly sized, geometric, sheep-grazed pastureland bounded by low trimmed and taller hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees within the *Uppingham Plateau* landscape to the south.

Whilst the cricket paraphernalia affects the character of the site such impacts are localised and do not significantly affect the character of the surrounding countryside. The hedgerow and tree-lined plateau landscape serves to minimise the effects of landscape modification including built development; the clubhouse appears similar to other isolated agricultural buildings dotted within the countryside. Such sporting and recreational facilities are commonly located on the edge of a village where their open nature compliments a countryside setting.



View S looking northwards as Stockerston Road approaches Uppingham from the west, showing the plateau landscape to the south of the site that has strong links with the surrounding countryside.



View T looking westwards across the cricket ground lying on the edge of the Uppingham Plateau landscape, with the Eyebrook Valley beyond.

By way of contrast the *Eyebrook Valley* landscape immediately to the west of the site is demonstrably different in character to the *Uppingham Plateau* landscape within which the site lies. Land to the west falls steeply towards a tributary of the Eye Brook that flows out of the Eyebrook Reservoir (a popular destination for informal recreation) further south. The valley is diverse, generally broad and open but dominated by large woodlands amongst the regular agricultural field pattern and largely unsettled agricultural landscape.



View U from the western edge of the site, along the boundary of the cricket ground, looking west over the Eyebrook Valley towards Wardley Wood.

Overall, it is considered that housing development on the site would have a significant adverse effect on the character of the surrounding countryside including the *Uppingham Plateau* and *Eyebrook Valley* landscape character sub-areas. Although the site abuts land allocated for housing in the UNP, it is more closely associated with the important open space allocation immediately to the east whereby the Uppingham School playing fields and open space around the Sports Centre has strong links with the open countryside, important to the setting of the town.

Settlement form and pattern

Housing allocations within the UNP will see the growth of Uppingham on the flatter land to the west of the town, along Leicester Road (the main western approach into the town). New housing would extend westwards to meet the outlying Westland's residential area. Any further new housing within Study Site 4 (discussed above) would continue this pattern of growth westwards along Leicester Road.

Study Site 5, however, is divorced from the town and sits within open countryside some way south of the Leicester Road. Although abutting future housing development, the site's open character is strongly associated with the surrounding countryside and open space. Development on the site would be isolated from the town and would detract from important aspects of settlement form and pattern.

Overall the site is assessed as **High landscape and settlement character sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 2:

- Important to the setting of the town by providing a distinctive break between town and countryside.
- Open space important to the appearance, form and character of the built environment.
- Development would be isolated from the town or would detract from important aspects of settlement form and pattern.

Visual considerations

Although the site occupies a relatively elevated, flat plateau, views into the site are restricted by boundary hedgerows and trees. However, development within the site would be conspicuous in views when approaching the town from the west along Leicester Road (also part of the Rutland Round recreational route) and Stockerston Road. Despite any filtering effect of existing hedgerows and trees in the countryside, the perception would be of built development extending out into the open countryside, isolated from the town and well beyond planned limits of development.

New housing development on the site could impact on more distant views from the west, with potentially significant adverse effect on the unsettled character of the *Eyebrook Valley* in views from higher ground to the west, for example from the A47, and also when looking up towards the site from lower ground, for example from the Rutland Round recreational route as it emerges out of Wardley Wood.

The site is assessed as **Moderate to High visual sensitivity** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 3:

- Views into and out of the town are of some importance.
- Important to the setting of the town where development would create unacceptable visual intrusion into the countryside that could not be mitigated.
- The site is partially open to public or private views where views of the countryside or open space are important.
- Development would be uncharacteristically conspicuous and could not be successfully mitigated.

Conclusion on overall landscape sensitivity

A judgement has been made on overall landscape sensitivity by using the matrix shown in Table 4 to consider the interactions between landscape & settlement character sensitivity and visual sensitivity; **overall landscape sensitivity for Site 5 is judged as HIGH.**

Site 5 is assessed as **Moderate landscape value** in accordance with the following criteria in Table 5:

- Lies wholly within a previously locally designated landscape (Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside) but where localised character and scenic value is less distinctive.
- Presents locally distinctive landscape characteristics with some scenic interest.
- Presents some public amenity value by way of views and sporting facilities.

Conclusions on landscape capacity

A judgement has been made on landscape capacity by using the matrix shown in Table 6 to consider overall High landscape sensitivity and Moderate landscape value; **landscape capacity for Site 5 is judged as LOW to MEDIUM.**

The site is judged to have low to medium capacity to accommodate new housing because development would intrude into the countryside, would be isolated from the town, and would overall have a negative effect on landscape character and settlement form and pattern.

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment of Study Site No. 5

Study Site	Landscape & Settlement Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Overall Landscape Capacity
5	High	Moderate to High	High	Moderate	Low to Medium

4. Recommendations for Prioritising Development

- 4.1 Table 7 below suggests the order in which the study sites should be prioritised for development, in landscape and visual terms, to help guide the direction of the future growth of Uppingham. Two study sites, 3 and 4 are assessed as having the same overall medium capacity to accommodate development and there is little to choose between the two sites in terms of landscape sensitivity and capacity. The key factors from the assessment influencing the recommendation for the priority of site development are summarised after the table.
- 4.2 Study sites 1, 2 and 5 are marked in the table with 'X' because they are considered to be highly sensitive with low to medium capacity to accommodate development. Consequently they are not prioritised for development.
- 4.3 It is stressed that a range of other environmental considerations will need to be taken into account, such as ecology and nature conservation, heritage and archaeology, water quality and flooding potential, etc. by others to determine the potential wider environmental and cumulative impacts of development on a particular site. Other site considerations, including access and drainage issues for example, will also need to be considered by decision makers but which do not form part of this assessment.

Table 7: Priority of Study Sites around Uppingham

Order of Priority	Study Site	Overall Landscape Sensitivity	Overall Landscape Capacity
1=	3	Moderate	Medium
1=	4	Moderate	Medium
X	1	High	Low to Medium
X	2	High	Low to Medium
X	5	High	Low to Medium

- 4.4 The key factors influencing the priority of sites are as follows:

Study Site 3

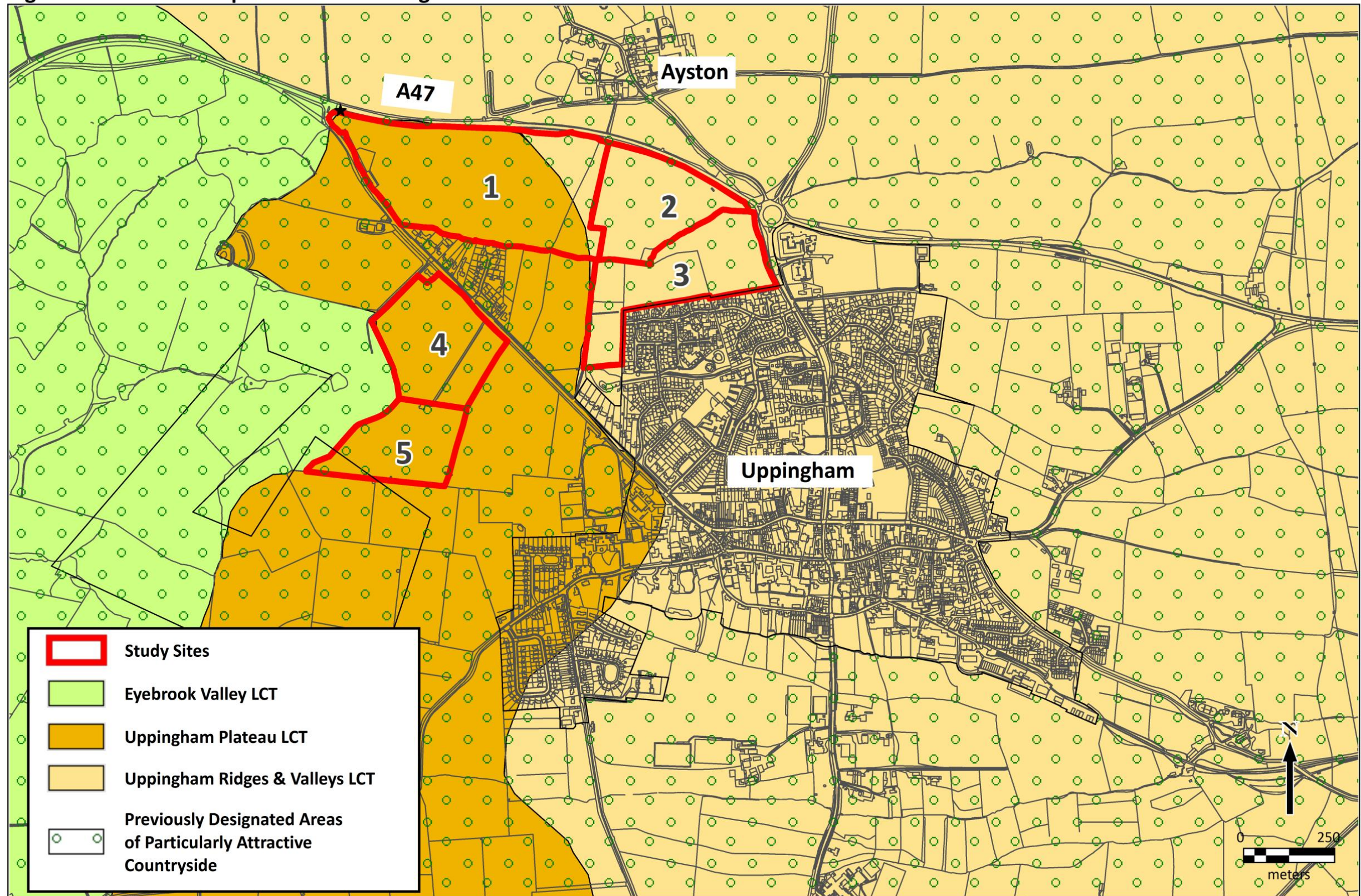
- Development would represent an appropriate continuation of the form and direction of recent and allocated growth of Uppingham to the north-west and would thus be in keeping with settlement form and pattern;
- Would not conflict with the recommended landscape objective in the 2003 Rutland LCA "to protect the landscape setting and conserve and enhance the edges of villages";
- Development would be on lower lying land than housing on Firs Avenue, Goldcrest and Rutland Close and although it would be perceptible it would not significantly alter the balance of features or elements within existing views from the north which are limited to a distance of approximately 0.5km;
- Development on the western part of the site would be less visually intrusive than development on the eastern part of the site due to the screening and softening effect of surrounding vegetation;
- Development would initially create a new exposed edge in foreground views but mitigation planting should reduce the impact.

Study Site 4

- Development would represent an appropriate continuation of the form and direction of recent and allocated growth of Uppingham to the west along Leicester Road and would thus be in keeping with settlement form and pattern;
- The site's present rural character will be heavily influenced by new housing allocated in the UNP immediately to the east as the site will become surrounded by residential development on two sides, to the north and east;
- Would not conflict with the recommended landscape objective in the 2003 Rutland LCA "to protect the landscape setting and conserve and enhance the edges of villages";
- Development should be set back from the site's western edge to avoid adverse impact on the unsettled character of the *Eyebrook Valley*;
- Development would initially create a new exposed edge in foreground views but mitigation planting should reduce the impact and help retain the present picturesque, leafy western approach into the town.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Local Landscape Character Setting



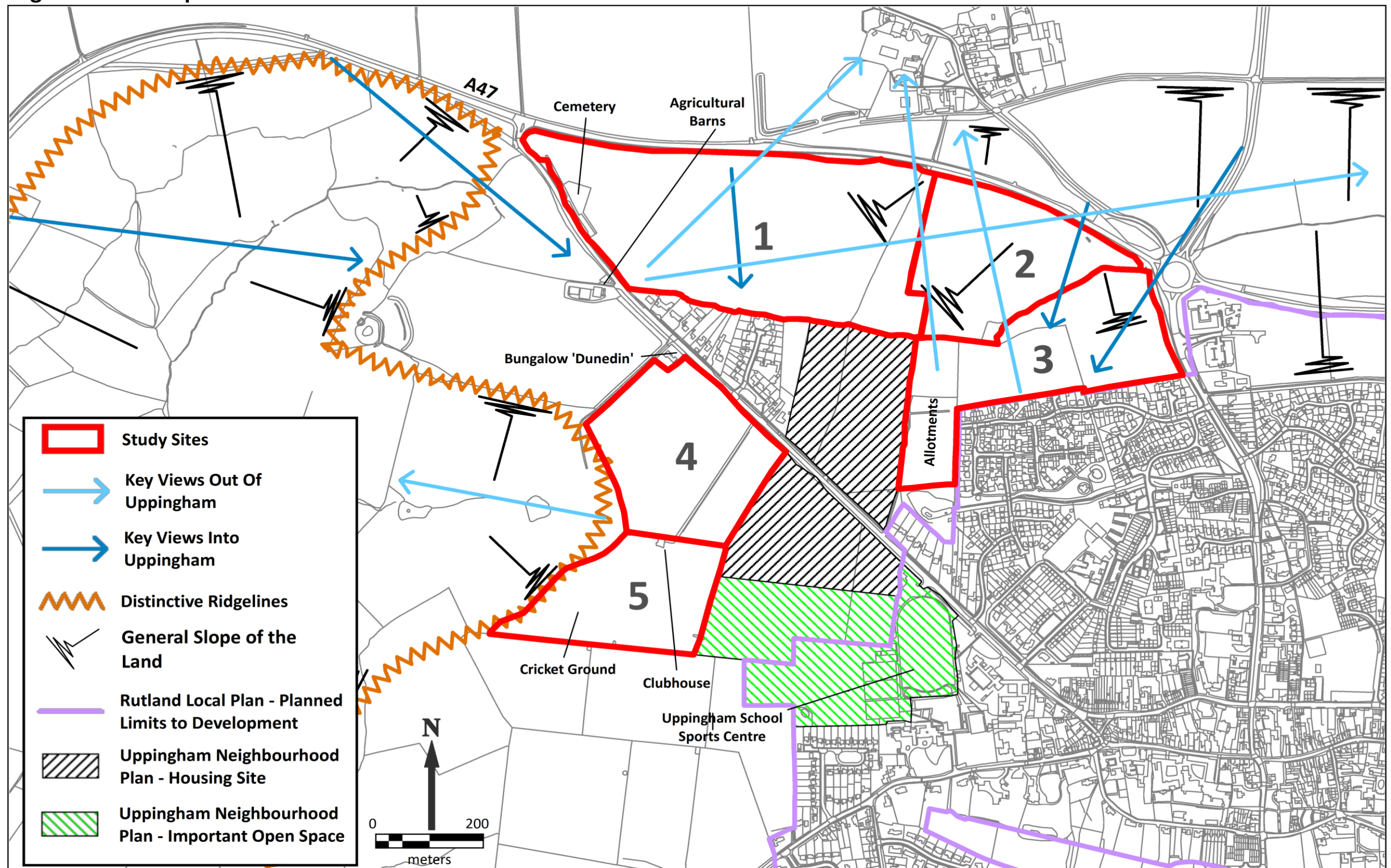
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Figure 2: Aerial View



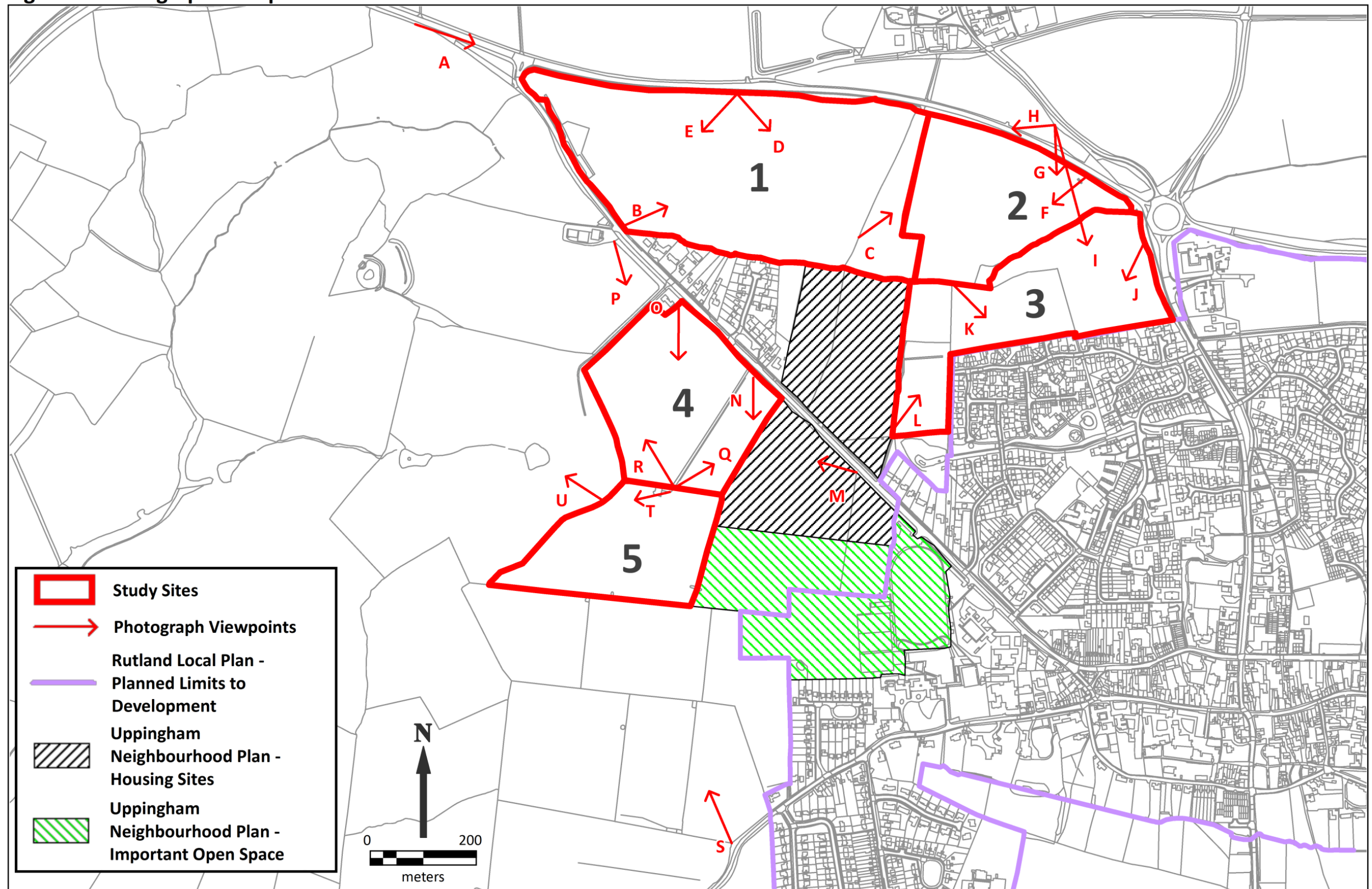
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Figure 3: Landscape & Visual Context



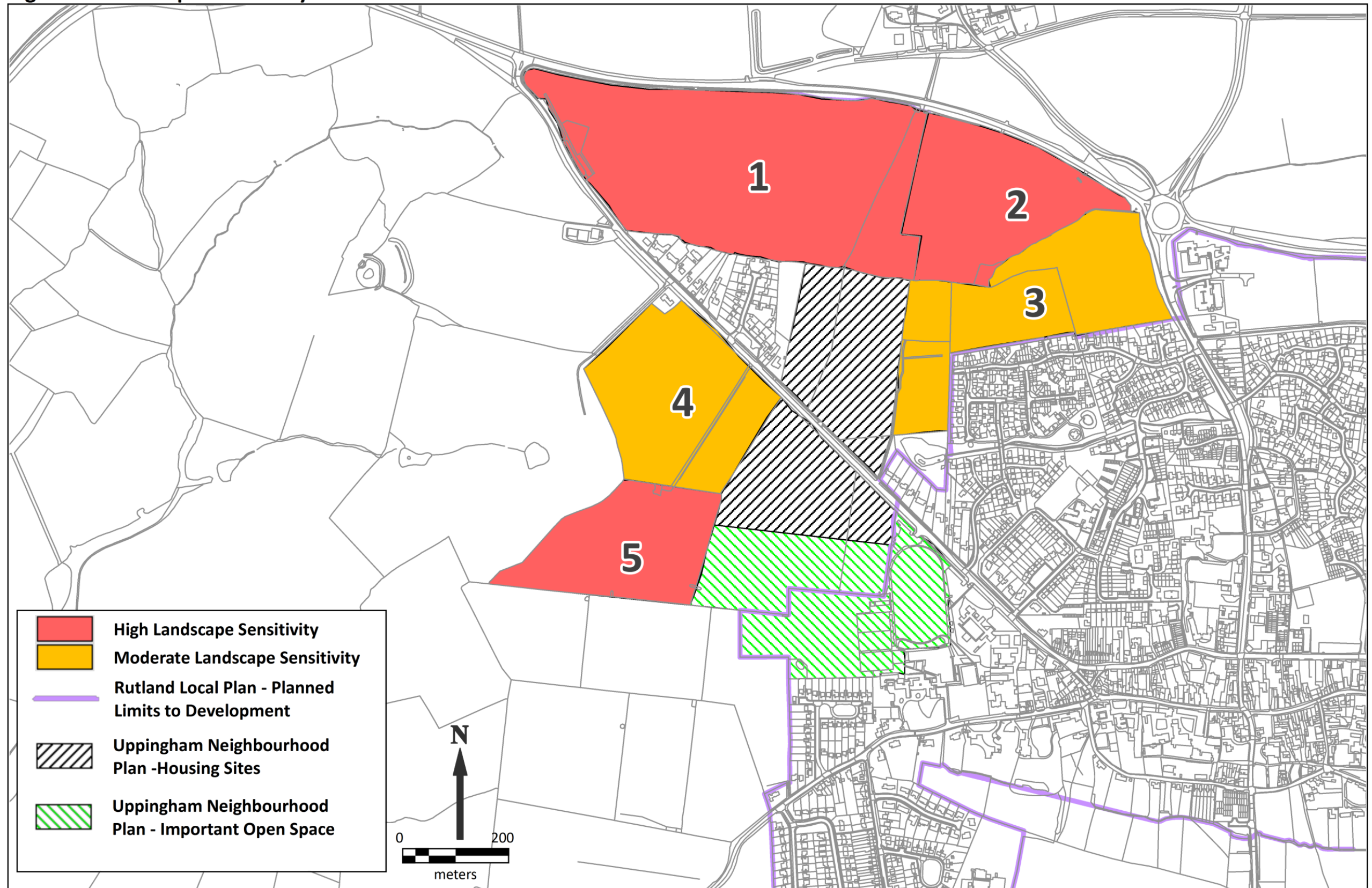
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Figure 4: Photograph Viewpoints



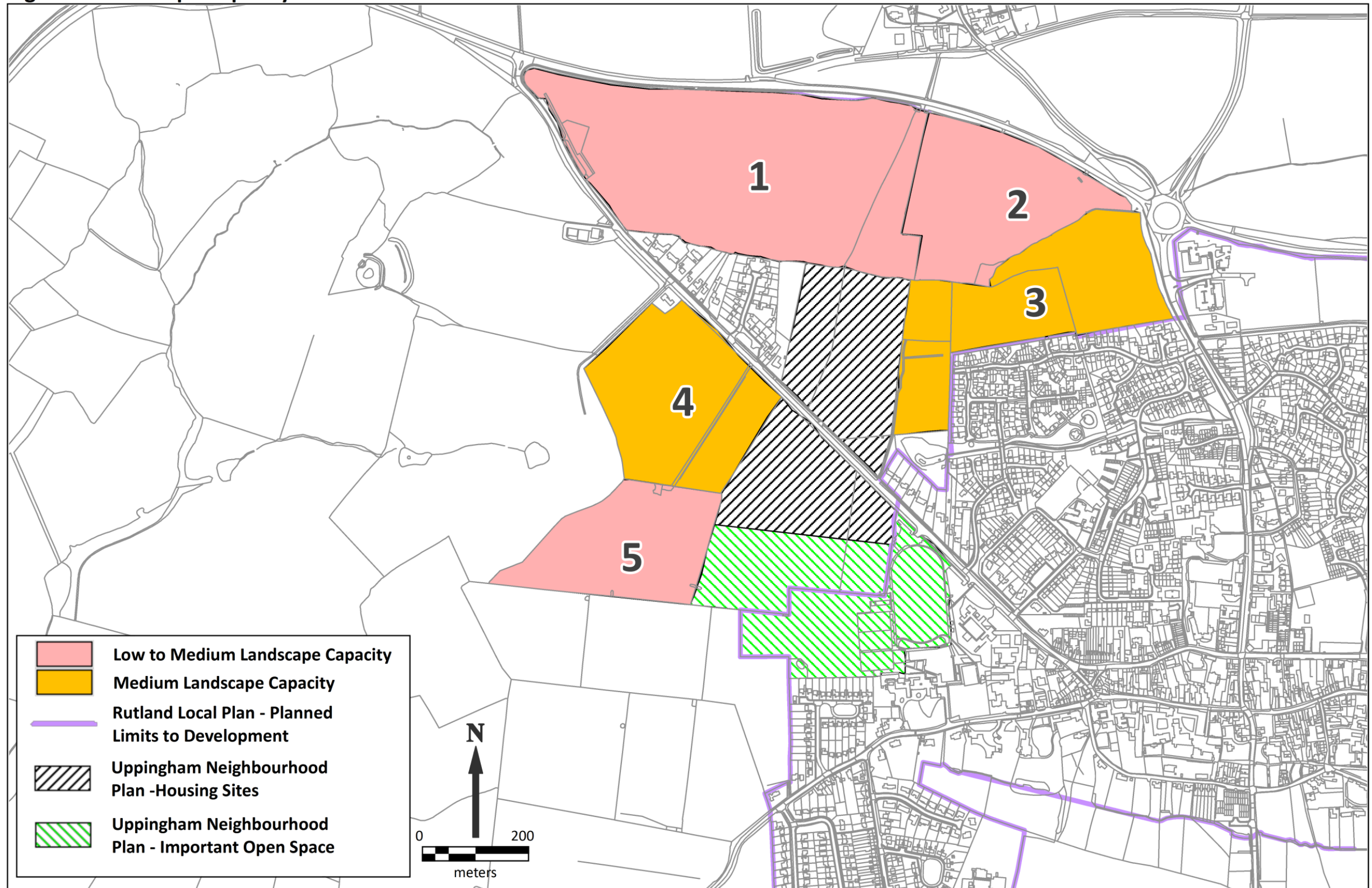
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Figure 5: Landscape Sensitivity



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Figure 6: Landscape Capacity



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