

COVENTRY URBAN FRINGE

Coventry City Council
Landscape Assessment & Guidance

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1. Introduction

The original landscape guidelines for Warwickshire [1] pioneered the development of an objective and systematic method for mapping the physical and cultural character of landscapes in England. As a result of these guidelines a considerable amount of effort has been devoted to maintaining and restoring the Ancient Arden landscape on the north western fringe of Coventry. Since 1980 the City, part funded by the Countryside Agency, has run a Countryside Project to implement management that is sympathetic to the character of the Landscape. A number of initiatives have been undertaken, often in partnership with local landowners, to maintain the distinctive features of this characteristically ancient landscape and, in particular, to maintain the sharp distinction between urban and rural in the Green-belt.

This current study was commissioned to evaluate the extent to which this has been achieved. More specifically, the study has assessed the condition of the landscape within the context of the management guidelines set out within the *Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines* [1] and the more recent *Design Guidelines for Development in Coventry's Ancient Arden* [2].

The objectives of this study were to:

1. review the character and condition of the landscape;
2. review recent management/conservation activity;
3. identify forces for change and management priorities.

2. The Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines

The LDU method emerged from the Warwickshire Landscapes Project, a detailed study which combined a review and analysis of existing written and mapped information with field survey to describe the character and special features of the different landscapes within the county. This was followed by an evaluation of recent changes which had affected the landscape and the factors likely to influence change in the future. From this a series of management strategies and landscape guidelines were

developed. The guidelines were designed for people directly involved in landscape management, providing advice about how and where landscape character needed to be conserved, restored, or enhanced.

The majority of the study area lies within Ancient Arden, an area of former wood pasture and ancient farmlands lying on the eastern side of the Birmingham plateau. Although there are few dramatic physical features, the Arden countryside has an intimate, historic character with a strong sense of unity. Brick and timber are the chief building materials throughout the area and the many farmsteads and hamlets blend subtly with their surroundings.

The historical development of Arden is a major factor influencing the character of the present day landscape. In a region with few dramatic physical features it is these subtle human influences, developed over many centuries, which have created the man-made landscapes and special features that clearly distinguish Arden from other areas of the county.

The natural vegetation of Arden is thought to have consisted of dense broadleaved woodland, dominated by oak on the light sandy soils and lime on the heavier clays and loams. Woodland clearance, from earliest times, resulted in the development of grassland and wood pasture over much of the area with heathland on the poorer, leached soils. Marshland occurred in low-lying areas along rivers and streams. All of these habitats have been greatly influenced by land-use history and no extensive areas have survived. Ancient woodlands retain significant ecological interest and remain as prominent visual features in the present day landscape. Farmland ponds and restricted areas of lowland heath are also important ecologically.

The irregular pattern, reflected in the shape of fields and the network of narrow winding lanes, is the essential structural element of Ancient Arden. Maintaining this pattern is the key to conserving the ancient landscape character [2]

This aspiration is summarised in the management guidelines derived from the *Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines* [1] and is summarised below (Table 1).

Theme	Management guidelines
Woodlands & Trees	<p>Conserve all ancient woodlands and restock with locally occurring native species</p> <p>Restocking of ancient woods should favour broadleaved species, preferably through natural regeneration</p> <p>The design of all new woodland planting should complement the shape and scale of the surrounding landscape pattern</p> <p>Enhance tree cover through small scale woodland planting</p> <p>Conserve the high heritage and ecological value of individual ancient oaks and single large native trees which often define old field boundaries</p>
Field boundaries	<p>Conserve & restore the irregular pattern of ancient hedgerows</p> <p>Avoid the removal of hedgerows, especially along footpaths, bridleways, parish boundaries and woodland edges</p> <p>New hedge planting should reflect the irregular field pattern and include only native species</p>
Land management	<p>Conserve pastoral character and identify opportunities for conservation of arable land back to permanent pasture</p> <p>Retain and manage field ponds in areas of permanent pasture</p> <p>Retain the natural course of streams and conserve the tree cover lining the banks</p> <p>Promote the regeneration and management of heathland flora on all remnant heathy areas</p>
Highways	<p>Landscape assessment must be a major consideration at the inception of all road schemes</p> <p>Protect and conserve the irregular pattern and characteristic features of roads and lanes</p> <p>Protect and conserve the irregular pattern of the public footpath network</p> <p>Conserve the rural character by limiting standardised treatments during highway improvement schemes</p> <p>Highway landscaping should be strongly linked to the surrounding landscape pattern</p> <p>Diversify roadside character through the creation and management of heathy vegetation on highway verges</p>

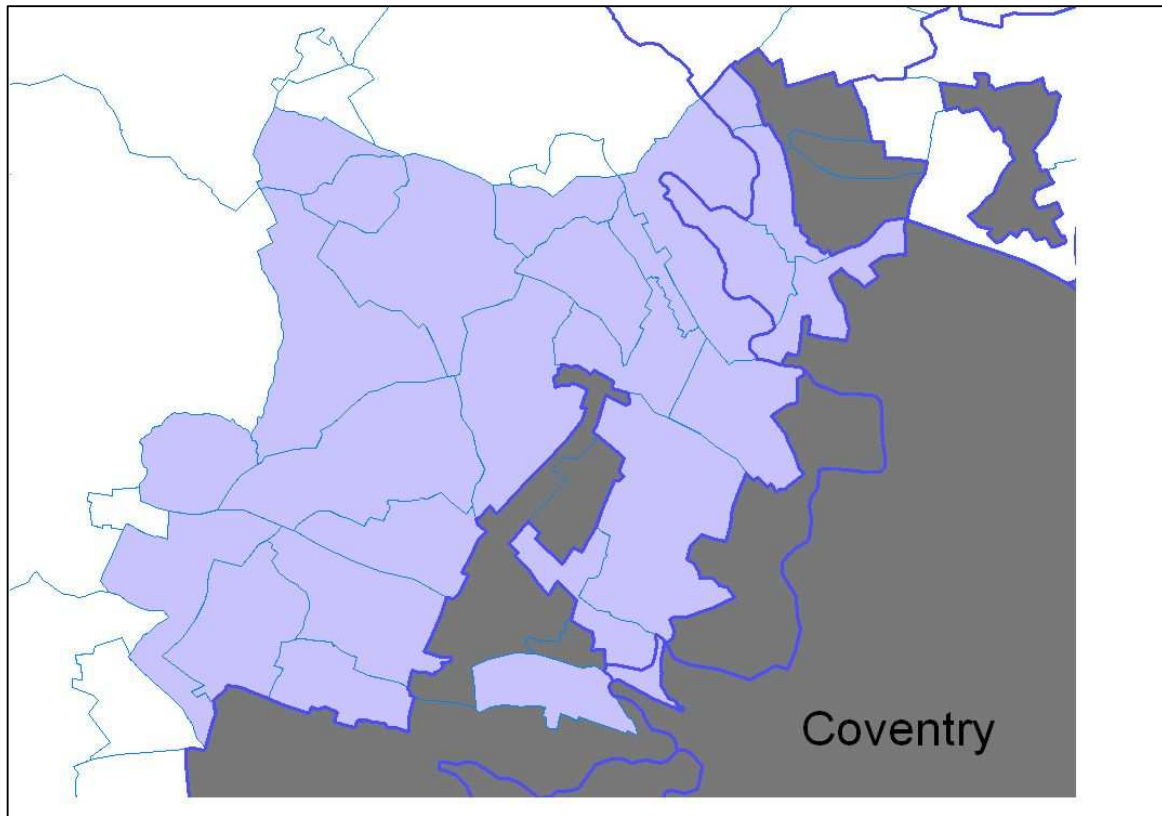
Table 1. Warwickshire landscape guidelines relevant to Coventry's Ancient Arden (simplified)

3. Method

3.1 The spatial framework

The building block of the system used in this study is the Landscape Description Unit (LDU). This now forms the spatial framework for a substantial area of landscape character mapping across the country, including all of the counties in the West Midlands Region.

A map of LDUs had already been produced for Warwickshire and, for this study, these have been sub-divided into smaller (c. 1:10,000 scale) Land Cover Parcels (LCPs), as shown in Figure 1. Land Cover Parcels are derived by sub-dividing each LDU based on differences in land cover and historic pattern. The land cover analysis identifies features within the landscape, such as areas of parkland, larger woodlands, and patches of disturbed land, smaller urban areas and other non -agricultural land. The historic analysis identifies parish units and areas of farmland with different sizes/patterns of fields.



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Figure 1. Distribution of Land Cover Parcels within LDUs (study area - light blue; LDU Level 2 Boundaries - heavy dark blue lines; LCP Boundaries - light blue lines).

3.2 Character & Condition

The process of landscape characterisation involves a combination of desk study and field survey to systematically divide the countryside into discrete and relatively homogenous units of land, within which the constituent physical, biological and historical elements occur in repeating patterns and share certain aesthetic characteristics. The desk study generates landform, land cover and historical overlays in the GIS which, combined with field survey, results in landscape types that have a discrete and distinctive *character*.

The *condition*, of a landscape, which should be clearly distinguished from its character, is a measure of how far removed that landscape is from an 'optimal' state where all the key characteristics are present and functional. Condition, therefore, has a *visual* as well as a *functional* dimension. The former reflects the degree to which the existing landscape pattern appears visually fragmented, due to the loss of existing features or the imposition of new features which appear 'out of place'. The functional dimension embraces a range of issues related to the ecological quality of the countryside and the extent to which present day land use respects the inherent ecological/cultural character of the land.

3.3 Sensitivity

The ecological, cultural and visual sensitivity of the landscape is usually evaluated at the scale of the Landscape Description Unit (LDU), as a planning tool for development control. Analysis of landscape sensitivity is therefore not directly relevant to a review of character and condition at an LCP level, the main purpose of this study. In any case, at present, it is only possible to derive indices of landscape sensitivity at LDU Level 2.

3.4 The Field Survey

Field survey is used to gather additional information within each LCP. Field survey builds on the map analysis by providing essential information about the condition of the landscape, in particular the impact of recent change.

Each LCP was surveyed during the period December 2006 – January 2007. Information on key characteristics, condition and potential management priorities were recorded (see Appendix A).

4. Summary of results

The following is a summary from the field survey of the character, condition and management options for each of the LCPs surveyed. The primary data, with associated maps, is summarised in Appendix A.

4.1 Character

The character of the landscape remains largely intact with only minimal new development since the publication of the *Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines* [1]. The character is typical of Ancient Arden, a Landscape Type of small-medium, sub-regular fields bounded by mixed species hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

The maintenance and enhancement of the character of the landscape has been encouraged by the adoption, by the City of Coventry, of the management strategy expressed in the *Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines* [1].

4.2 Condition

The pastoral character of the landscape survives in places, but in many areas there has been a shift to a more intensive system of mixed arable farming, a long term trend that has affected many parts of formerly mixed farming in lowland agricultural landscapes of the UK. This shift toward a more arable farming system (Figure 2) has been associated with the loss of hedgerow boundaries, a process that has slowed since the introduction of legislation to retain hedgerows. There is evidence of the decline in hedgerow function resulting in 'gappy' and thinning hedgerows, especially in areas of intensive arable farming and, to a lesser extent, 'horticulture' (Figure 3).



Figure 2. Intensive arable farming characterised by loss of hedgerows and the creation of large, regular fields

In many cases previous hedgerow removal is indicated by a line of isolated trees (Figure 3), many of which are mature oaks (*Quercus robur*). A strategy for their replacement will be needed for in the medium-term.



Figure 3. Isolated hedgerow oaks following hedgerow removal



Figure 4. A thin, gappy hedge suffering from loss of function in an area of 'horsiculture'.

Green belt policies have protected the area from uncontrolled development and many new initiatives have been taken to enhance landscape elements, which, in total, have a *landscape scale* impact. In isolated locations visual intrusion from new development is apparent, a good example being development on the old colliery site at Kerseley (Figure 5). The region remains largely tranquil, with the exception of LCPs bordering the A45(T). Visual intrusion is evident from electricity pylons at a number of locations, but these are not new.



Figure 5. Visual intrusion of new warehousing at Kerseley

Despite these pressures and adverse changes, the landscape of the study area retains many features that are characteristic of Ancient Arden. This has emerged from the implementation of management guidelines that are sensitive to the intrinsic character of the Arden landscape.

There are many examples of initiatives of this type including:

- retaining and, where necessary, replacing black and white finger post signs at road junctions;
- sympathetic road design, including retention of 'triangular' junctions and avoiding 'hard kerbing' of rural roads;
- new signposting of public footpaths (Figure 6);
- improving natural habitats, especially restoration of neutral grassland and new planting of broadleaf woodland.



Figure 6. New footpath signposting

4. Summary

4.1 Management Priorities

Much has been achieved at the landscape scale as a result of initiatives to retain and, where possible, enhance the character of the Arden landscape. Whilst many of these initiatives have been small-scale, for example sympathetic sign-posting and way-marking, much has also been achieved via planning control to avoid the 'suburbanisation' of the landscape that is often apparent in peri-urban locations. At the broader scale initiatives to work with landowners to maintain and restore permanent grassland and to plant new woodlands, is also evident at a number of sites. Careful management has, for example, been the key factor in maintaining neutral grassland in the Coundon 'wedge'.

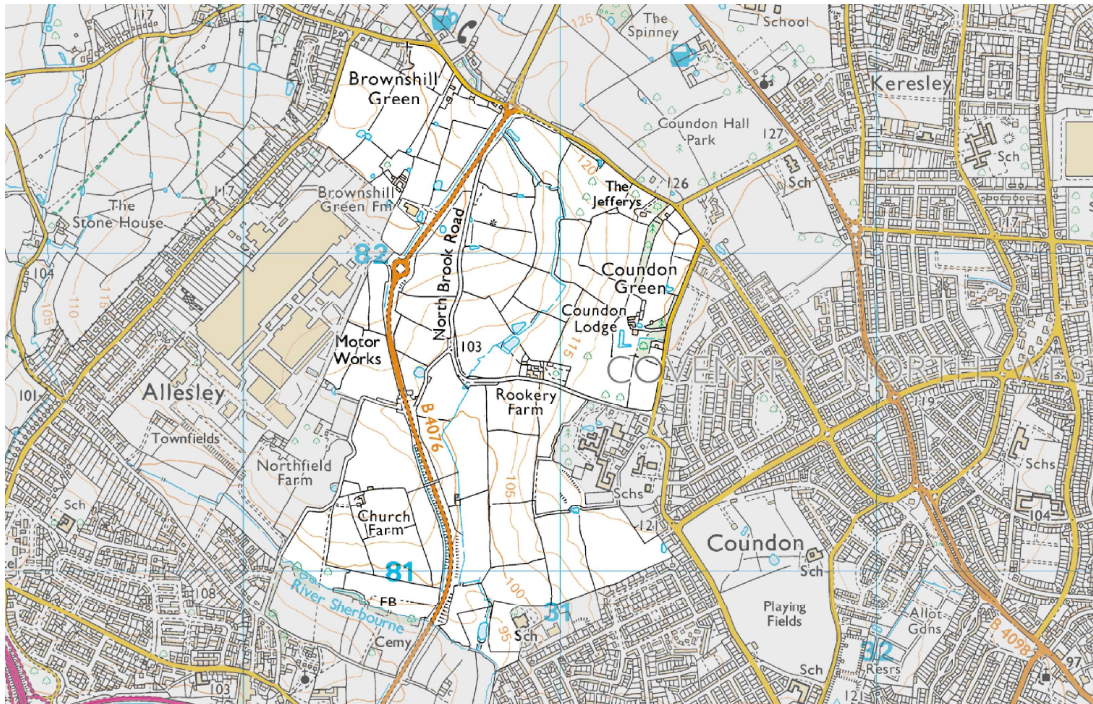
Existing policies to maintain the distinctive character of the Ancient Arden landscapes in the urban fringe to the North-west of the city appear to be effective. The urban edge remains clear with a sharp distinction between 'town and country' and new development elsewhere is minimal. However, the region is suffering from the type of neglect of trees and hedgerows evident across large areas of lowland England as farming changes. The ecological interest of the region is confined largely, but not solely, to neutral grassland and ancient woodland, habitat types that are widespread in a few LCPs.

References

- [1] *Assessment and Conservation of Landscape Character – the Warwickshire Landscapes Project approach*. Countryside Commission, CCP 332, 1991.

- [2] *Design guidelines for development in Coventry's Ancient Arden – An historic landscape area*. Coventry City Council, p.39, 1995.

APPENDIX A: Field Survey Data



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	- stock rearing with cattle and horses
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small to medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow/stream trees	

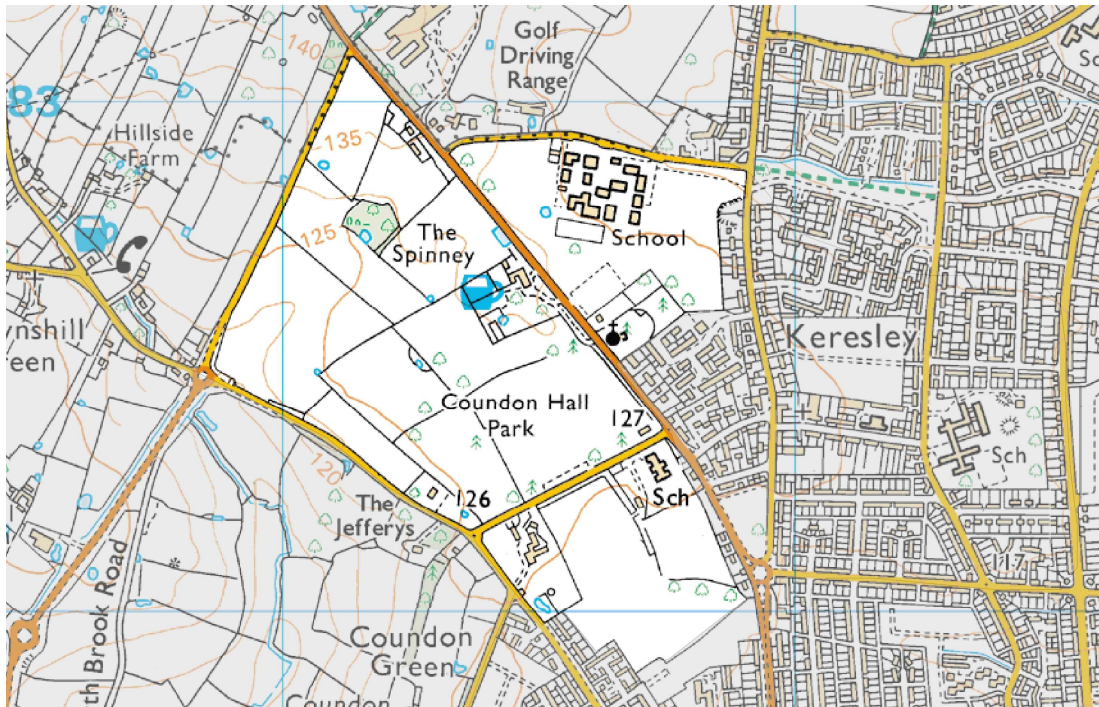
Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	- still largely pastoral with moderate intensity use
Habitat survival	Widespread patches	- neutral grassland
Field boundaries	Declining	- pattern still intact, but hedges becoming gappy
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age trees	
New development	Localised/moderate	- urban around edges, but fairly well screened
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- well hidden, but noisy roads

Summary: LCP still retains rural character, despite surrounding urban edge, which is generally well hidden by landform and trees. There is much evidence of countryside management activity, including maintenance and restoration of neutral grassland and hedgerow regeneration.

Management priorities

- Conserve neutral grassland and enhance species diversity
- Conserve and restore mixed species hedgerows



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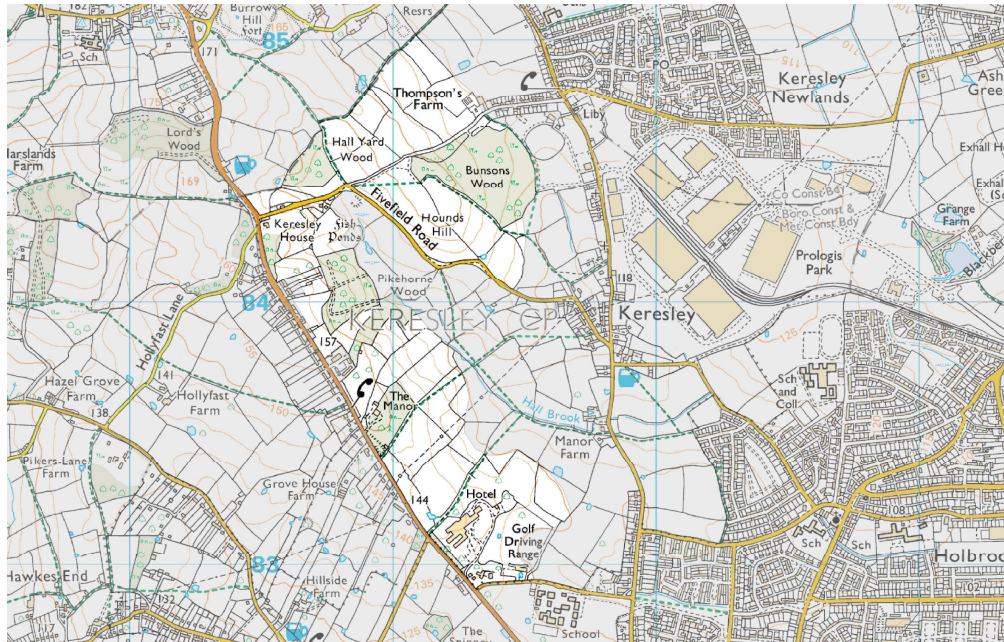
Character

Land use	Amenity grass	- playing fields & open space
Field pattern	Regular	- medium/large sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Scattered/tree groups	

Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Good	- managed but 'gappy' at base
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age trees	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Parkland character continues to be a strong influence within this unit, despite its use for schools and playing fields. Landscape generally well managed, but boundaries have lost stock control function. Urban edge well hidden by trees with evidence of new tree planting.



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Character

Land use	Mixed arable	- high intensity of use
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Oak

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- shift to arable farming
Habitat survival	Widespread ancient woods	
Field boundaries	Declining	- becoming 'gappy' at base, in places
Tree cover	Scattered mature	- poor age structure
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

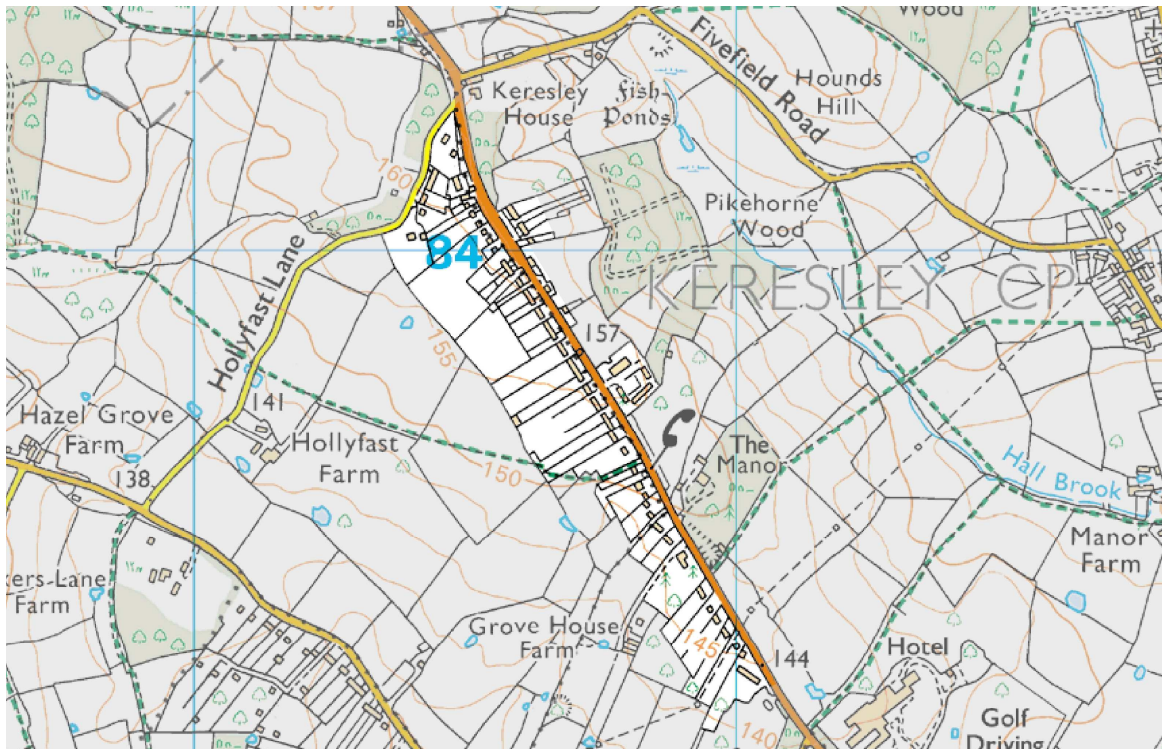
Summary: Good example of Ancient Arden landscape, including ancient woodlands and small to medium sized fields. Evidence of shift to intensive arable farming with a consequent decline in the function of field boundaries. The age structure of hedgerow trees is also dominated by mature oaks.

Management priorities

- Conserve and enhance diversity of ancient woodlands.
- Conserve sub-regular field pattern and improve management of field boundaries.
- Enhance age structure of hedgerow tree cover

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01d



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Character

Land use	Urban	- 1930s ribbon development
Field pattern	n/a	- large paddock gardens
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn
Tree cover	Scattered trees	- in garden boundaries

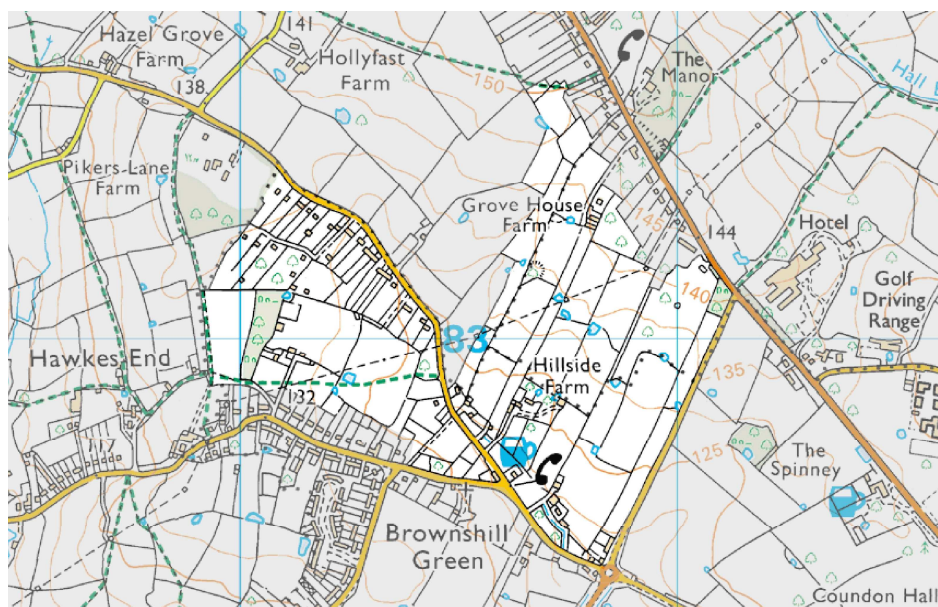
Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Good	- some thin/gappy boundaries
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age trees	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: A parcel dominated by 1930's ribbon development and associated large paddock gardens. Some remaining small, pastoral fields used for horse grazing.

Management priorities

- Conserve and look for opportunities to enhance hedgerow tree cover.



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	- stock-rearing
Field pattern	Regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Oak and Ash

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/low	- limited change to arable
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- gappy with fences in places
Tree cover	Scattered mature	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

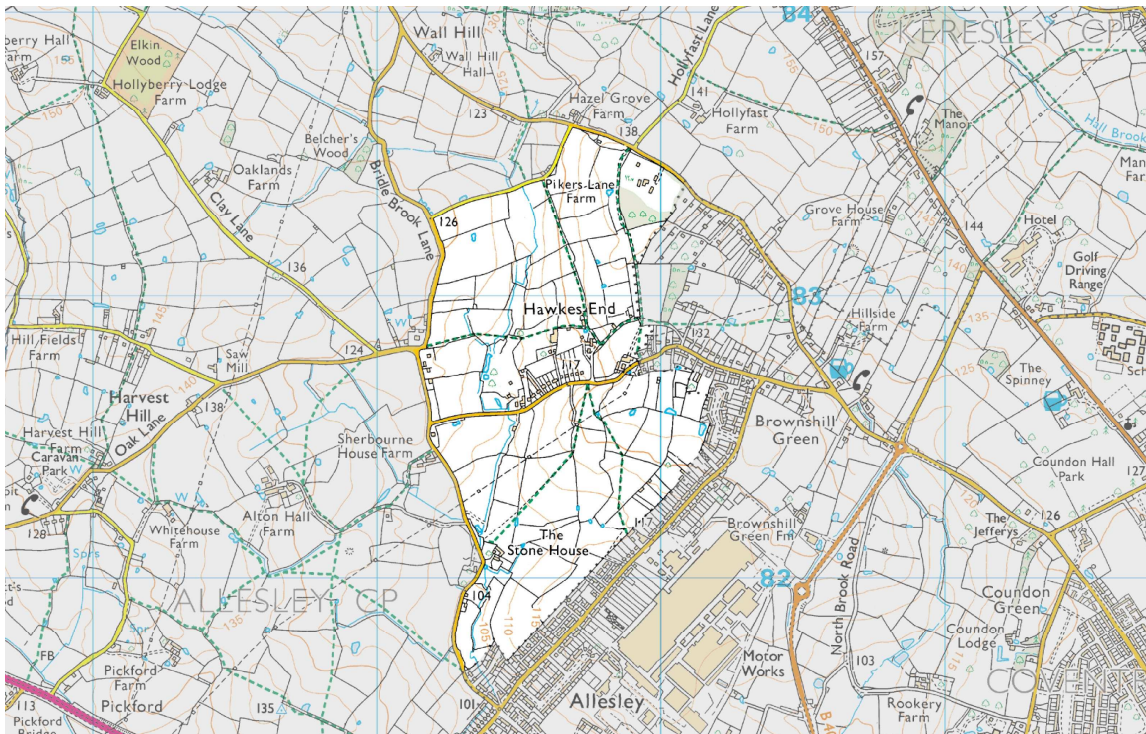
Summary: 1930s ribbon development obvious in places, but otherwise small scale pattern of pastoral fields remains relatively intact. The strip field system around Hillside farm is of particular significance.

Management priorities

- Conserve pastoral character
- Conserve small scale field pattern and improve management of field boundaries.
- Enhance age structure of hedgerow tree cover

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01f



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Character

Land use	Mixed pasture	- mainly stock-rearing with some arable
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Oak and Ash

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/low	- moderate intensity of use
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Good	- some evidence of decline
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

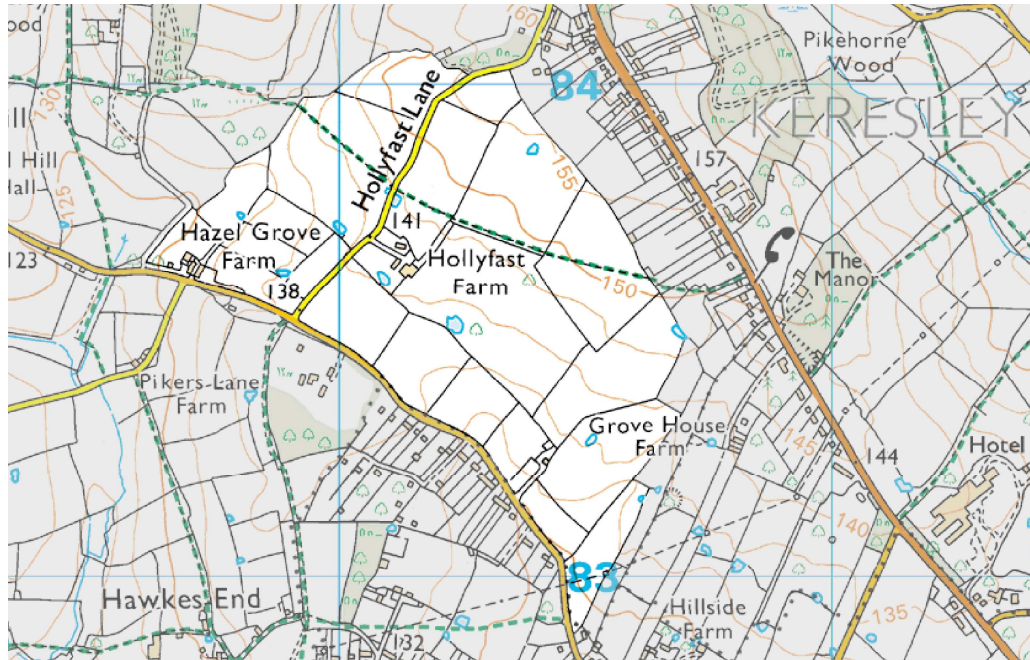
Summary: A relatively intact rural landscape with some evidence of decline due to agricultural intensification. The urban edge along the SE boundary is fairly well screened.

Management priorities

- Conserve existing field pattern and improve management of field boundaries.
- Enhance hedgerow tree cover.
- Maintain strong rural character.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01g



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Character

Land use	Mixed pasture	- mainly stock-rearing with some arable
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Oak and Ash

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/low	- moderate intensity of use
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Good	- some evidence of decline
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

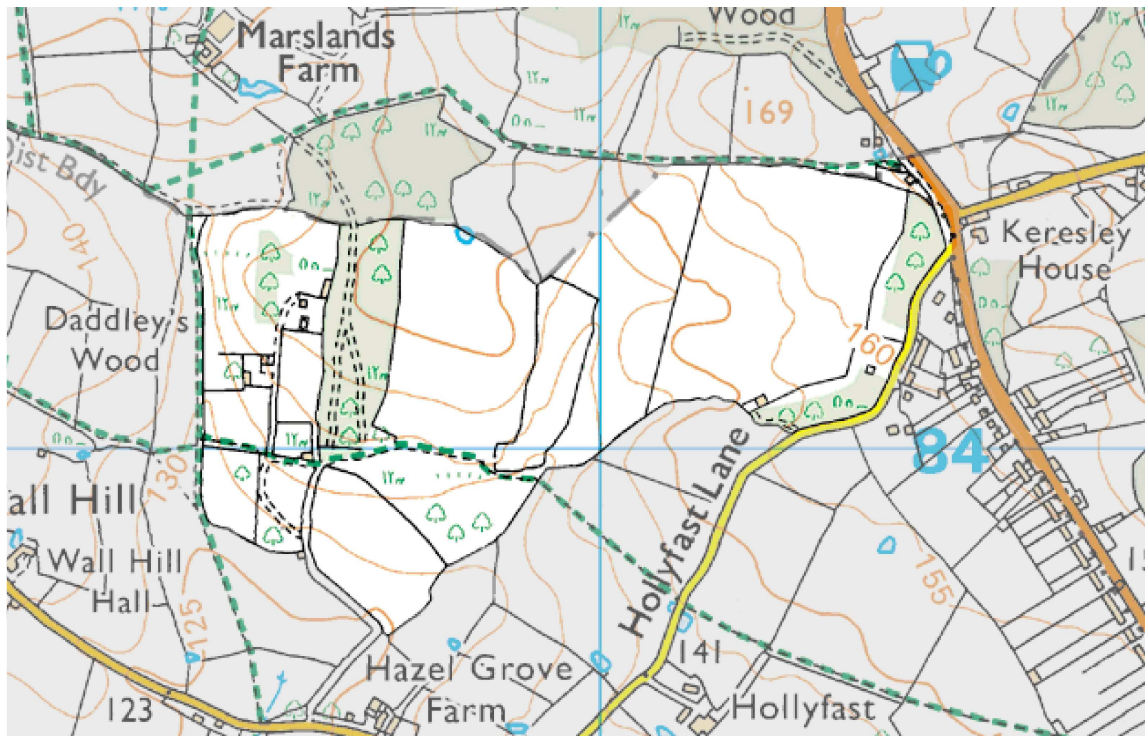
Summary: A relatively intact rural landscape with some evidence of decline due to agricultural intensification. The urban edge along the SE boundary is fairly well screened.

Management priorities

- Conserve existing field pattern and improve management of field boundaries.
- Enhance hedgerow tree cover.
- Maintain strong rural character.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01h



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Character

Land use	Mixed arable	
Field pattern	Regular	- medium/large sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

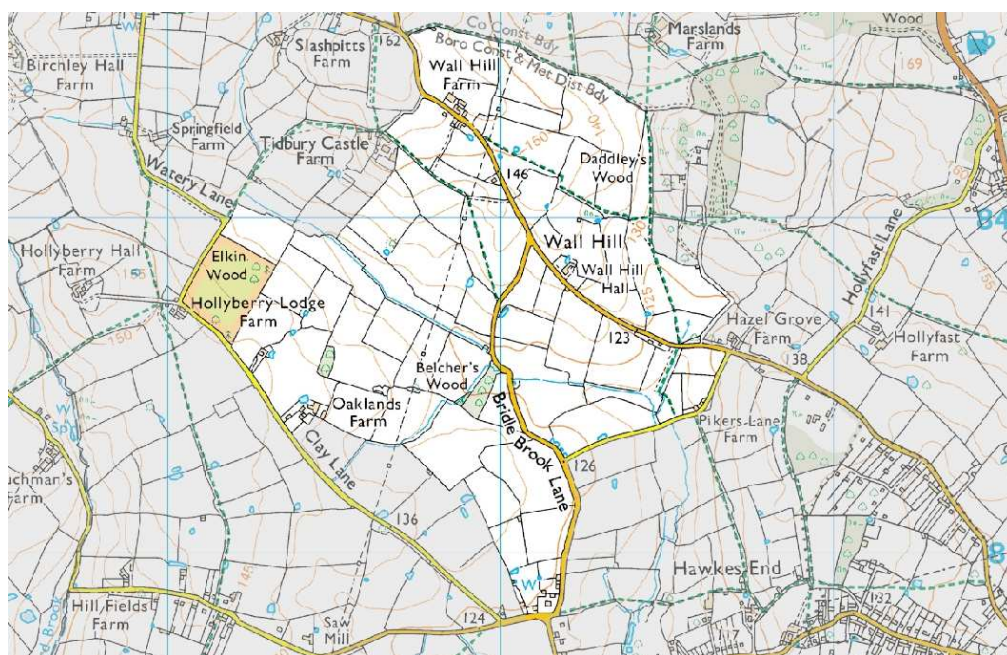
Condition

Landcover change	Widespread/high	- post-war large scale clearance of ancient woodland
Habitat survival	Localised/neglected	- relic ancient woods
Field boundaries	Declining	
Tree cover	Scattered/mature	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Degraded landscape having suffered significant change due to loss of ancient woodland in the post war period.

Management priorities

- Identify opportunities for restoring ancient woodland on former sites.
- Reintroduce mixed species hedgerows along primary boundaries.



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Character

Land use	Arable	- with some pasture
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- mainly Oak

Condition

Landcover change	Widespread/moderate	- arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- often thin at base and gappy
Tree cover	Scattered/mature	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Moderate/localised	- pylons

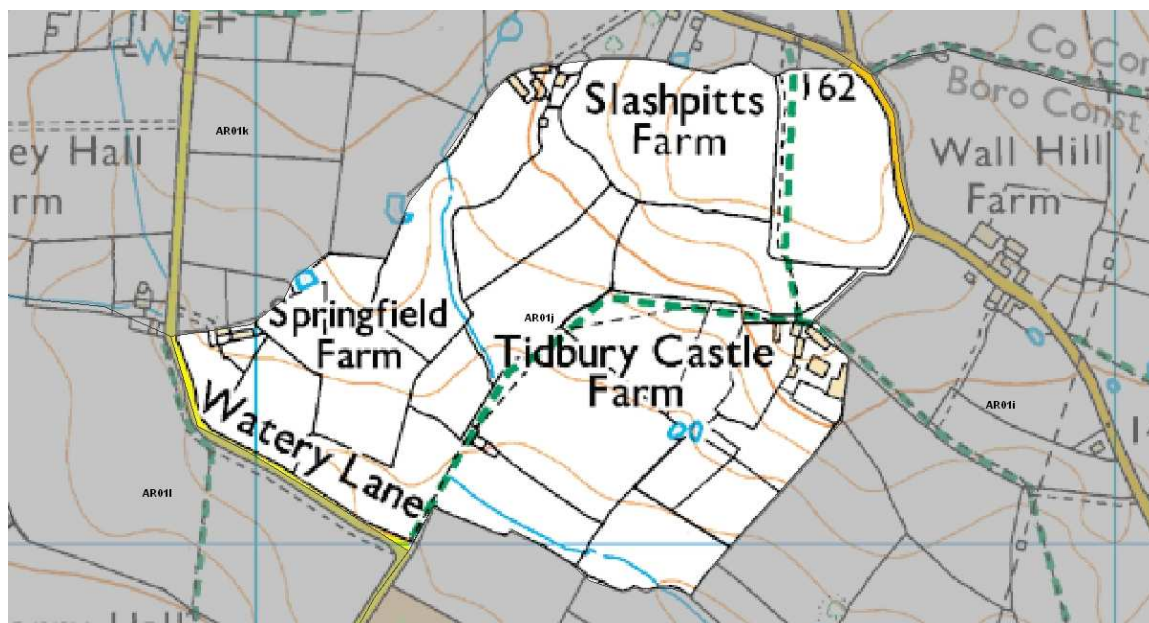
Summary: Extensive post war change has resulted in a larger-scale arable landscape with a consequent loss of structure and decline of individual landscape features.

Management priorities

- Promote better management of remaining primary hedgerows.
- Enhance age structure of hedgerow tree cover.
- Identify opportunities for new woodland planting>

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01j



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Character

Land use	Pasture	- stock-rearing
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- boundaries 'gapped – up' with wire in places
Tree cover	Scattered/mature	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

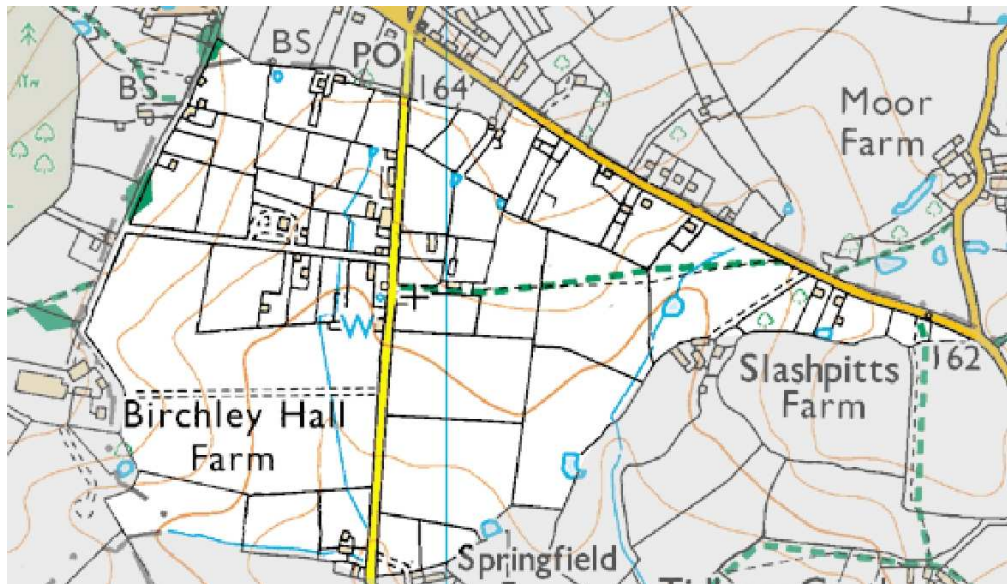
Summary: A relatively intact small scale, pastoral Ancient Arden landscape with evidence of conservation management activity, but still need for further work.

Management priorities

- Complete restoration of gappy hedgerows.
- Enhance hedgerow tree cover.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01k



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Land use	Pastoral	- mainly horses with some cattle and sheep
Field pattern	Geometric	- small fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age	

Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Localised patches	- neutral grassland
Field boundaries	Declining	- hedges thin and gappy in places
Tree cover	Scattered mixed age	
New development	Localised – moderate	- poor building style of modern houses
Other impacts	Insignificant	

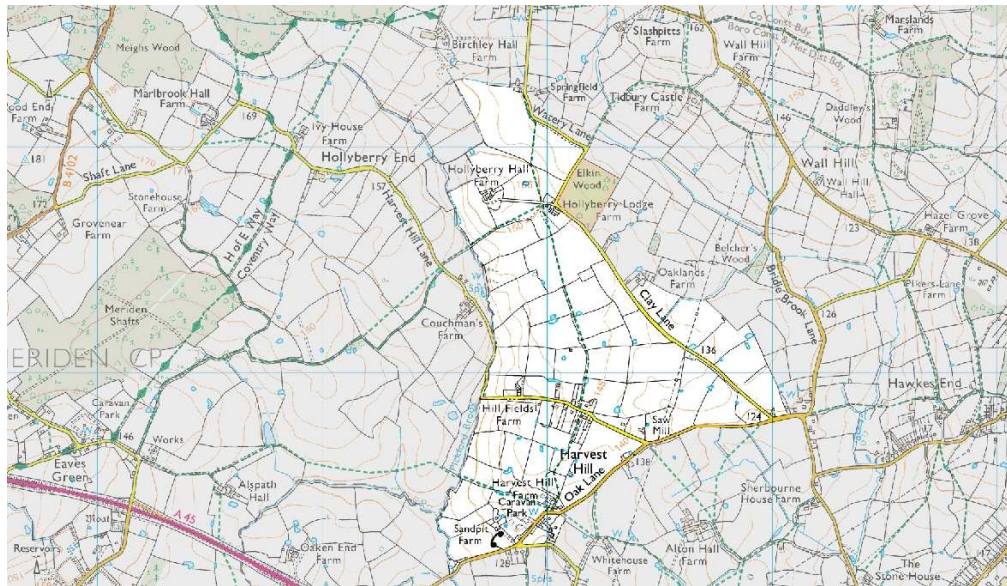
Summary: A good example of a planned, small scale, settled landscape on a former common. Poor building style was a problem with more recent post war development, but this has improved since the publication of the Warwickshire Landscape guidelines.

Management priorities

- Conserve neutral grassland and enhance species diversity.
- Maintain small scale geometric field pattern.
- Restrict continued sub-urbanisation of this landscape.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR011



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Character

Land use	Mixed pasture	
Field pattern	Regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedges	
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Oak and Ash

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- hedges gappy in places
Tree cover	Scattered/mature	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Moderate/localised	- pylons

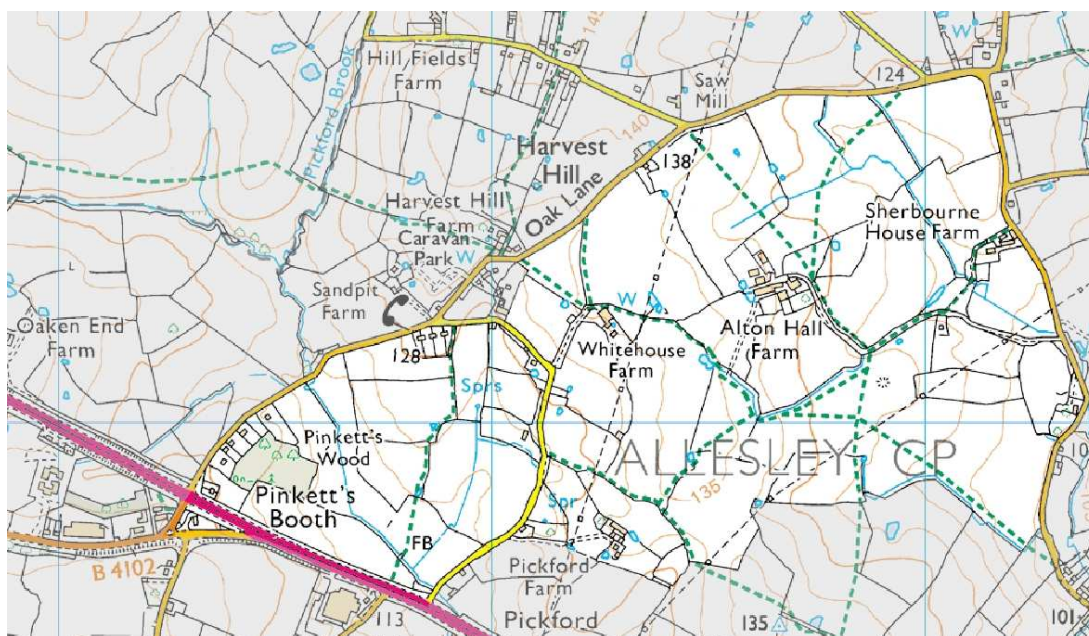
Summary: Overall pattern still intact, but landscape in gradual decline due to gradual intensification of land use and poor management of field boundaries.

Management priorities

- Conserve and restore field hedgerows.
- Enhance age structure of hedgerow tree cover.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01m



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Character

Land use	Mixed arable	
Field pattern	Semi- regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- some arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- pylons and traffic noise

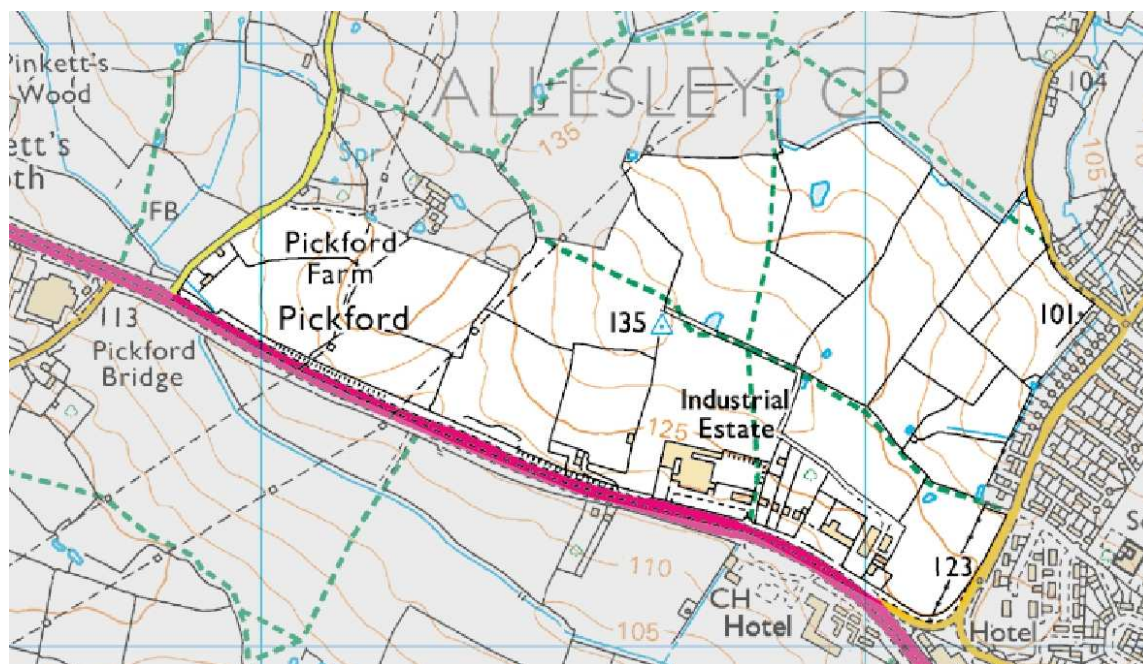
Summary: An intensively farmed, mainly arable parcel, where the overall structure of the landscape is under pressure, typified by declining field boundaries and a gradual loss of hedgerow tree cover.

Management priorities

- Conserve and restore field hedgerows.
- Enhance tree cover through replanting/regeneration of hedgerow tree cover.
- Identify opportunities for new woodland planting.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01n



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Character

Land use	Arable	
Field pattern	Regular	- medium/large sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- significant arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Poor	- gappy/species-poor hedges
Tree cover	Relic	- little remaining tree cover
New development	Localised/moderate	- hard urban edge on eastern margin
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- pylons & noise from A45(T)

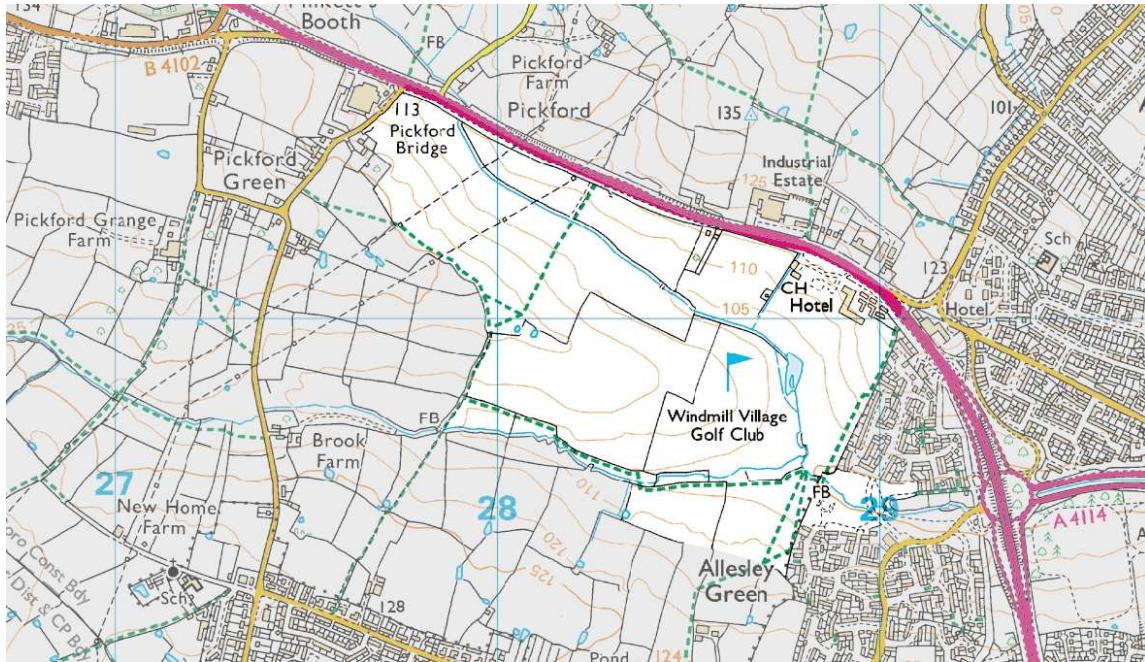
Summary: A degraded 'open' arable landscape with gappy/species-poor hedgerows and little remaining tree cover.

Management priorities

- Enhance structure of landscape through replanting/regeneration of primary hedgerows.
- Identify opportunities for new tree planting to soften impact of buildings.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01o



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Character

Land use	Arable	
Field pattern	Regular	- medium/large sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Hedge/streamside trees	

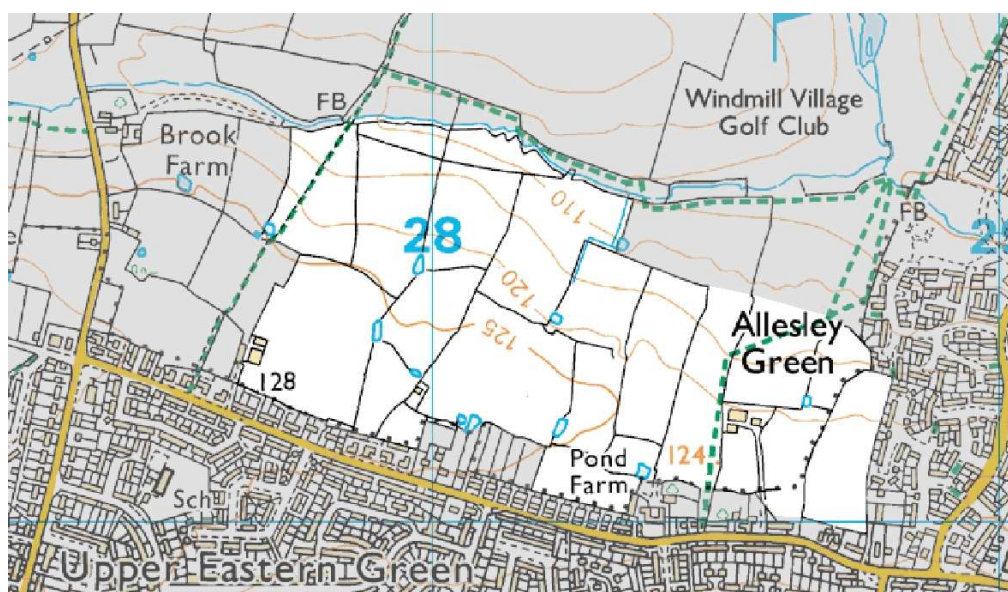
Condition

Landcover change	Widespread/high	- much arable intensification and new golf-course
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Relic	
Tree cover	Some streamside trees	- little remaining tree cover
New development	Localised/high	- hotel complex on hill
Other impacts	Localised/high	- pylons & A45(T)

Summary: Degraded arable landscape on urban fringe, with little sense of cohesion.

Management priorities

- Restore primary field structure
- Enhance tree cover along streams and in primary hedge lines
- Identify opportunities for new tree planting to strengthen sense of cohesion.



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Character

Land use	Arable	
Field pattern	Regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Widespread/moderate	- significant arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- many gappy hedges
Tree cover	Mature	- occasional scattered trees
New development	Localised/moderate	- hard urban edge on eastern and southern margins
Other impacts	Insignificant	

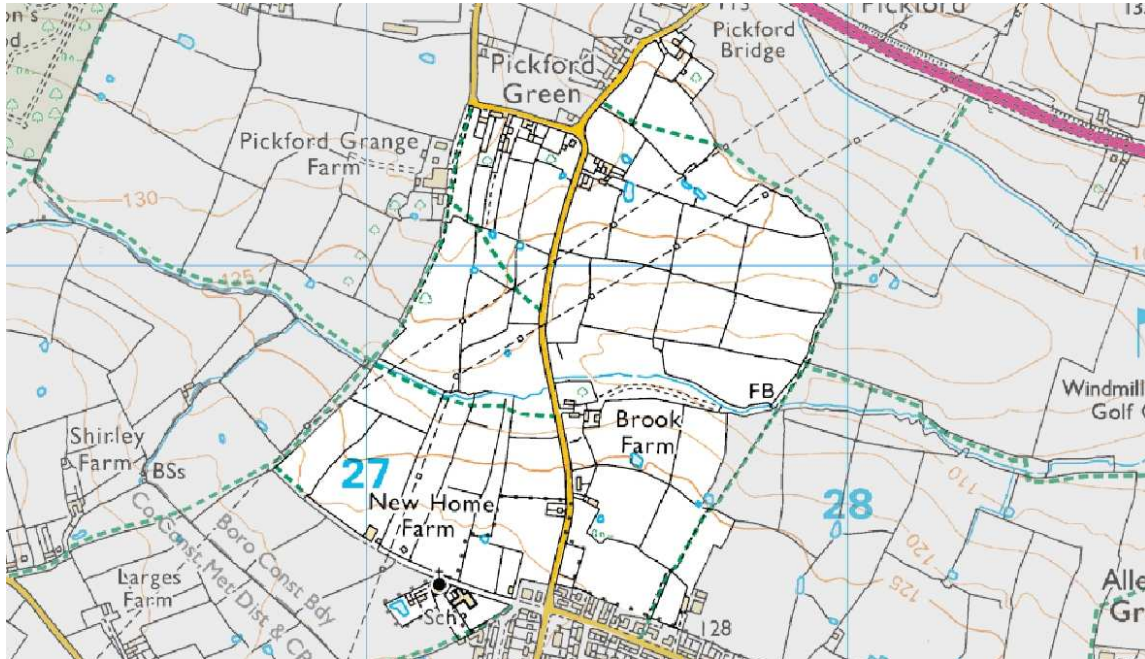
Summary: Degraded arable landscape on urban fringe, with a declining strength of character.

Management priorities

- Strengthen primary hedgerow pattern.
- Enhance tree cover along primary hedge lines.
- Identify opportunities for new woodland planting to strengthen sense of cohesion.

Location: Allesley

LCP: AR01r



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	
Field pattern	Regular	- small fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- Ash and Oak

Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	- still largely pastoral with moderate intensity use
Habitat survival	Localised patches	- neutral grassland
Field boundaries	Declining	- pattern still intact, but hedges becoming gappy
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age trees	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- pylons

Summary: Generally intact rural landscape, but hedges becoming gappy and in decline.

Management priorities

- Conserve pastoral character.
- Maintain pattern of small to medium size hedged fields.
- Maintain/gap up hedgerows.



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Character

Land use	Arable	
Field pattern	Regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn/elm
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

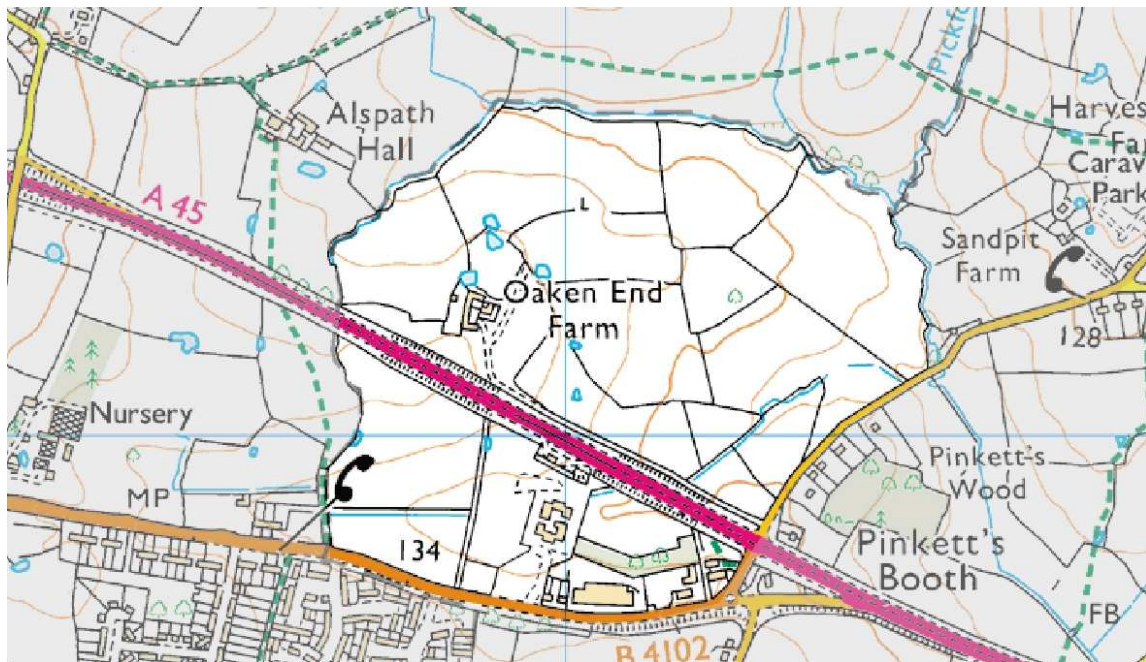
Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- significant arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- many gappy hedges
Tree cover	Semi-mature	- scattered trees
New development	Localised/low	- hard urban edge at eastern margin
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Field pattern in decline due to arable intensification, with many gappy hedgerows and declining tree cover.

Management priorities

- Restore gappy hedgerows
- Enhance tree cover along primary hedge lines



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Character

Land use	Arable	
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Widespread/moderate	- significant arable intensification
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- many gappy hedges
Tree cover	Mature	- occasional scattered trees
New development	Localised/moderate	- industrial units in southern part of area
Other impacts	Localised/high	- noise from A45(T)

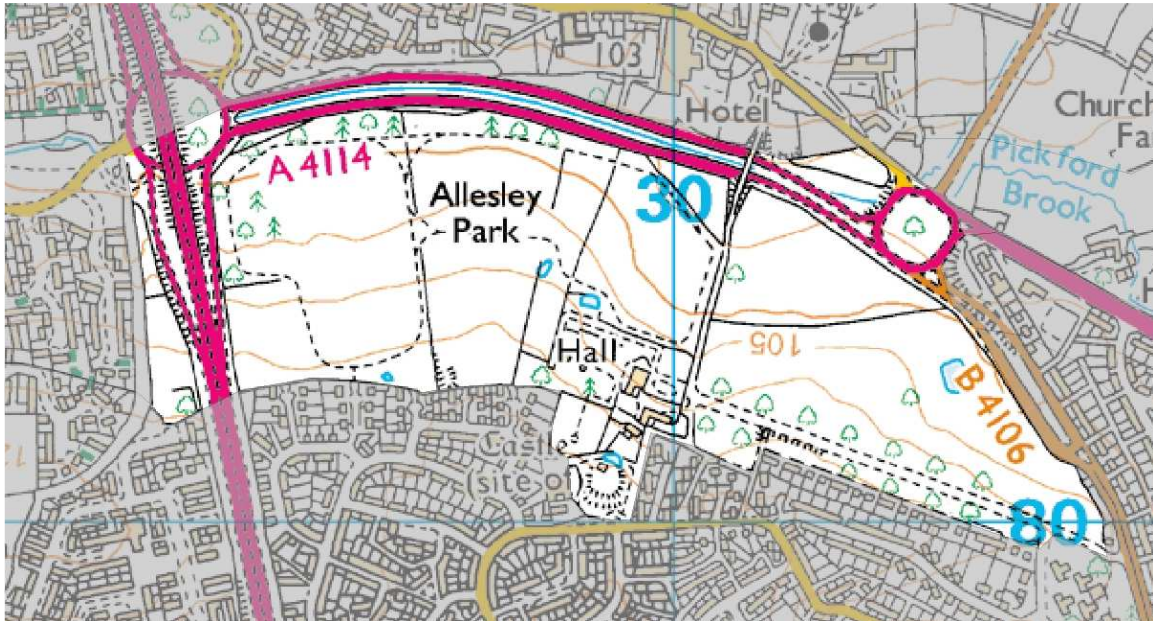
Summary: Field pattern has become degraded due to arable intensification and new development, but more recent hedgerow planting has started to redress this problem.

Management priorities

- Continue to strengthen primary hedgerow pattern.
- Enhance tree cover along primary hedge lines.

Location: Allesley Park

LCP: AR03a



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Character

Land use	Amenity	- golf course and public open space
Field pattern	Regular	- medium/large sized fields in former open parkland
Field boundaries	n/a	
Tree cover	Isolated trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Relic	- mostly removed
Tree cover	Mixed age	- some older, perhaps original parkland trees
New development	Localised/moderate	- around edges of parcel
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- noise from A45(T)

Summary: A quasi - urban landscape, but still retains some semblance of original historic deer park, which could be enhanced to create a new character.

Management priorities

- Enhance historic parkland character as a setting for amenity uses.



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	

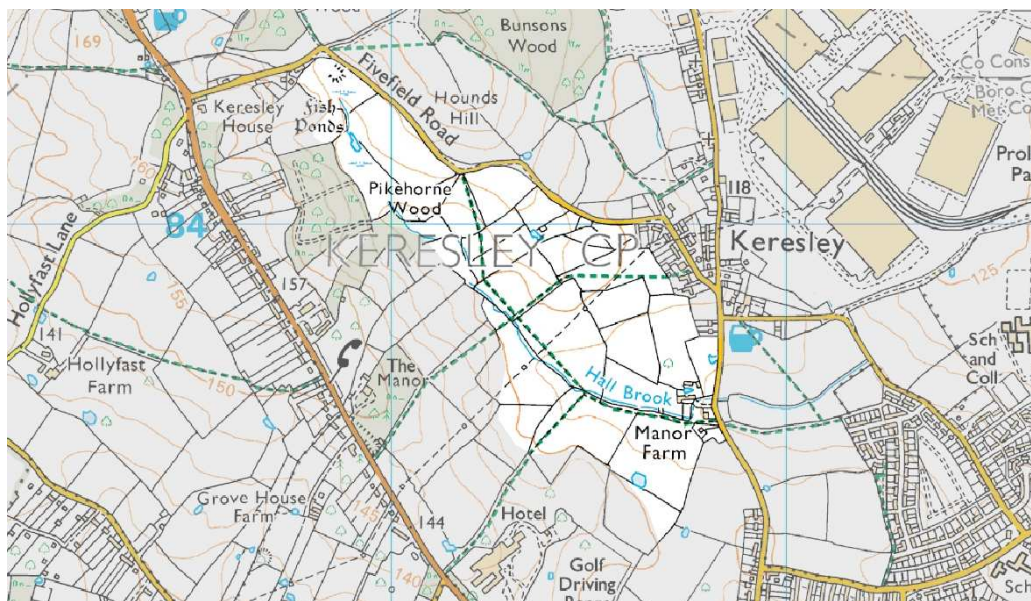
Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	
Habitat survival	Widespread patches	- wet pasture
Field boundaries	Good – well managed	- evidence of recent hedge laying
Tree cover	Scattered/mixed age	
New development	Localised/moderate	- extensive urban edge but well screened
Other impacts	Localised/moderate	- road well hidden but noisy (A45)

Summary: A relatively intact survival of a former wet meadow landscape, with much evidence of hedge laying/planting and tree planting.

Management priorities

- Conserve ecological character of wet grassland.
- Conserve streamside/hedgerow tree cover.



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	- stock rearing with cattle and horses
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small to medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedge/stream trees	

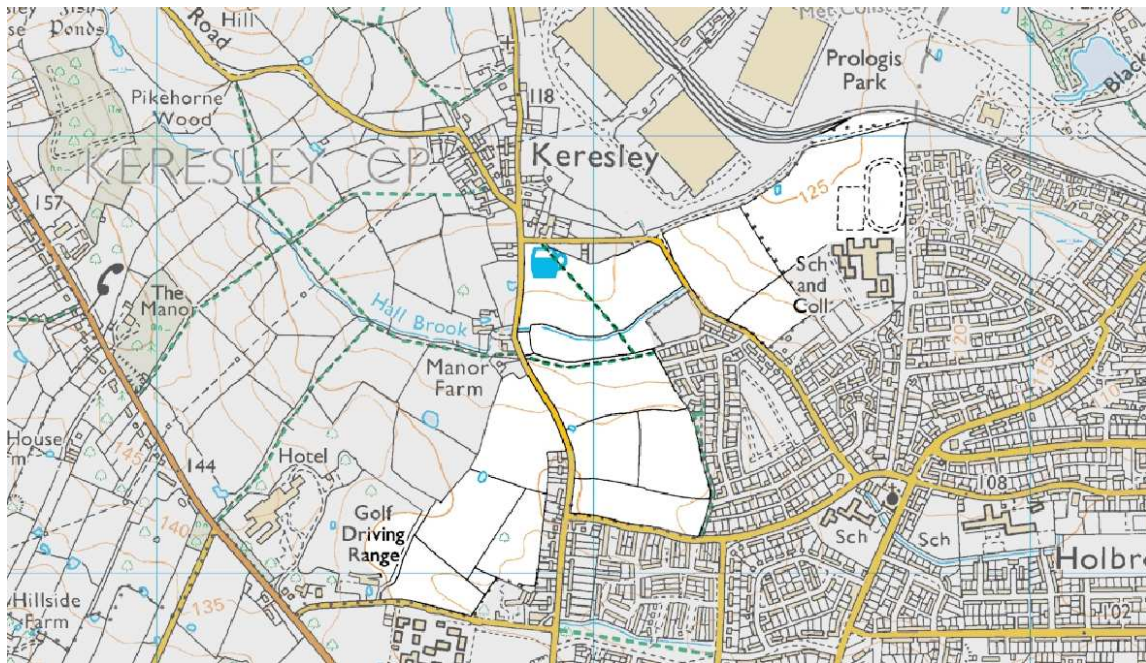
Condition

Landcover change	Insignificant	- still largely pastoral, but many horses
Habitat survival	Localised patches	- neutral grassland
Field boundaries	Poor	- many poor/gappy hedges
Tree cover	Scattered/mature trees	
New development	Insignificant	
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Although still pastoral in character, this is a declining landscape with many poor/gappy hedges and few hedgerow trees.

Management priorities

- Maintain/restore areas of older permanent pasture
- Restore gappy hedgerows
- Restore hedgerow/ streamside tree cover.



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Character

Land use	Pastoral	
Field pattern	Regular	- small/medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- thorn
Tree cover	Hedgerow trees	- mainly Ash with some oak

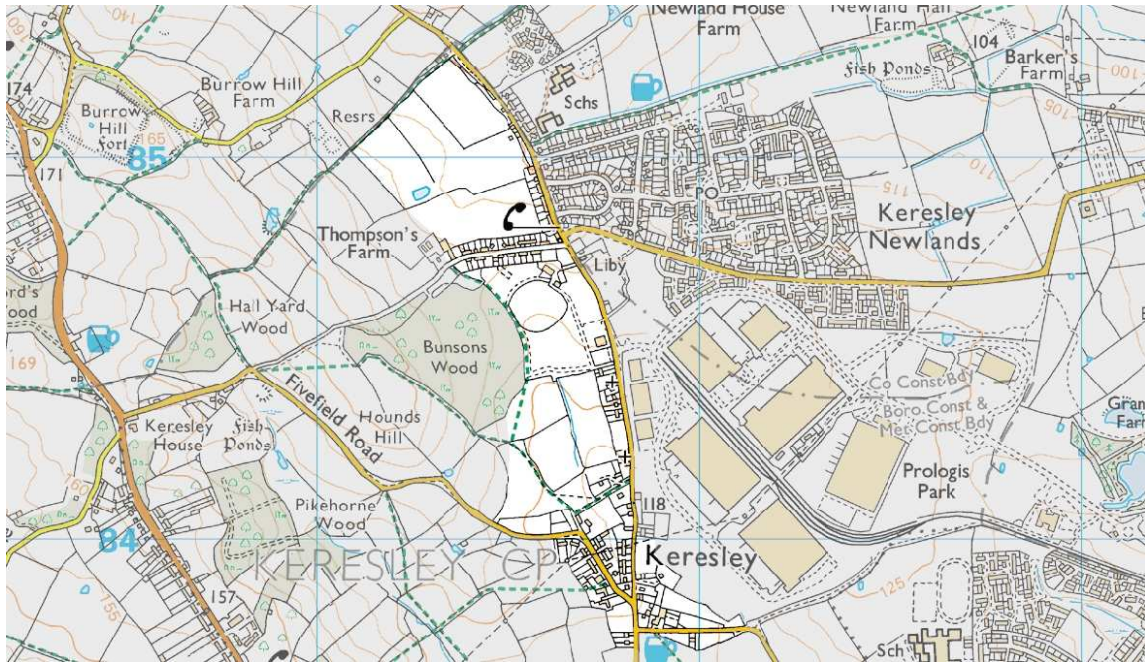
Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- neglected pasture and some conversion to arable
Habitat survival	Localised patches	- neutral grassland
Field boundaries	Declining	- hedges trimmed, but many gappy with wire fences
Tree cover	Declining	- patchy distribution of trees
New development	Localised/moderate	- hard urban edge very visible
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Landscape continues to have a ‘scruffy’ urban fringe character with a mixture of poor/gappy and overgrown hedges and only localised hedgerow trees.

Management priorities

- Conserve pastoral character
- Maintain and gap up hedgerows
- Enhance hedgerow tree cover



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Character

Land use	Mixed use	
Field pattern	Sub-regular	- small to medium sized fields
Field boundaries	Hedgerows	- mixed species
Tree cover	Hedge/stream trees	

Condition

Landcover change	Localised/moderate	- mixture of pasture, arable and sub-urban uses
Habitat survival	Relic	
Field boundaries	Declining	- some gappy hedges
Tree cover	Scattered/mature trees	
New development	Localised/moderate	- urban edge visible on three sides
Other impacts	Insignificant	

Summary: Landscape has a strong urban fringe character, with a mixture of pastoral, arable, amenity and sub-urban uses. The very large buildings in Prologis Park create a prominent visual impact along the eastern edge of this unit.

Management priorities

- Maintain and enhance pastoral character
- Maintain and strengthen field hedges
- Enhance hedgerow tree cover

