

Solihull Landscape Character Assessment (2016)

Review and Update Statement 2026



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this review

This statement has been prepared to review the continued relevance and robustness of the Solihull Landscape Character Assessment (SLCA) (2016), which forms part of the Council's evidence base supporting plan-making and development management.

National guidance recognises that Landscape Character Assessments (LCAs) may be used, reviewed and updated, rather than replaced, depending on their purpose, age, scale and the degree of change since preparation. This review assesses whether the SLCA remains fit for purpose and whether any material changes have occurred that would justify a comprehensive reassessment.

The review focuses on:

- The continued validity of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).
- The continued relevance of key characteristics and sensitivities.
- Changes in land use, settlement patterns and infrastructure.
- Changes in planning policy and environmental priorities.
- The need, if any, for updates to boundaries, descriptions or guidance.

1.2 National guidance and accepted practice

Natural England's guidance "*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*" recognises that existing LCAs can be reviewed and updated rather than replaced in full. The guidance establishes LCAs as living evidence documents that should be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain robust and fit for purpose.

The key considerations are:

- The purpose of the assessment.
- Its age and scale.
- The degree of change since preparation.
- Whether it remains capable of supporting planning decisions.

1.3 Review Methodology

The review has comprised a proportionate assessment of:

- The 2016 SLCA and associated mapping.
- Major planning permissions and completed development since 2016.
- Strategic infrastructure projects.
- National, regional and local planning policy changes.
- Aerial imagery and available GIS information.
- Environmental legislation and guidance.
- Changes in landscape pressures and opportunities.

The review has focused on testing the continued robustness of the existing characterisation framework rather than repeating the original assessment process. The intention has not been to undertake a new borough-wide landscape character assessment but to establish whether the existing evidence base remains valid.

Table 1: Summary Review Matrix

Review Component	Evidence Reviewed	Purpose	Outcome
Original SLCA (2016)	Character area descriptions, boundaries and guidance	Test continued validity of framework	Character areas remain robust
GIS Mapping Review	Current spatial datasets and constraints mapping	Identify land use and landscape change	No boundary changes required
Aerial Photography Review	Recent aerial imagery compared with 2016 baseline	Assess extent and nature of physical change	Change generally localised
Planning and Development Review	Major permissions, completed development and emerging allocations	Assess influence on landscape character	Character framework remains valid
Infrastructure Review	HS2, M42 Junction 5A/6, strategic transport projects	Assess impact on landscape structure and perception	Localised effects only
Policy Review	National, regional and local policy changes	Identify implications for landscape guidance	Guidance updates required
Environmental Evidence Review	LNRS, Natural Capital, BNG and climate change initiatives	Assess emerging environmental priorities	Additional guidance incorporated

1.4 Continued robustness of the existing LCA

The review concludes that the SLCA remains fundamentally sound because:

- The underlying landform and topography remain unchanged.
- The historic Arden landscape framework remains evident.
- The dispersed settlement pattern remains broadly intact.
- The network of hedgerows, woodland blocks, watercourses and field patterns continues to define landscape character.
- The Landscape Character Areas continue to provide a useful framework for decision-making.
- The SLCA continues to be used in planning applications, landscape assessments and development management decisions.

No substantial changes have been identified that would fundamentally alter the defined Landscape Character Areas or require preparation of a wholly new landscape character assessment.

1.5 Review of Character Area Boundaries

The review has considered whether development, infrastructure projects, changes in land management or environmental factors justify amendments to Landscape Character Area boundaries.

No evidence has been identified that would justify changes to the extent or classification of the Landscape Character Areas defined in 2016.

Accordingly, all Landscape Character Area boundaries are retained.

1.6 Nature of change since publication

The principal changes since adoption of the SLCA comprise:

- HS2 and associated mitigation works.
- M42 Junction 6 Improvement Scheme and Junction 5A.
- Residential and employment development.
- Renewable energy generation and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
- Climate change policy and adaptation measures.
- Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
- Nature recovery and green infrastructure initiatives.

Whilst significant in some locations, these changes have generally been localised and thematic rather than structural and have not fundamentally altered the underlying landform, landscape pattern or key characteristics upon which the SLCA is based.

Accordingly, the landscape character areas and assessments remain reasonable, and the landscape sensitivity and capacity conclusions of the 2016 study remain robust.

1.7 Proportionate and efficient evidence base approach

A full LCA rewrite would:

- Duplicate substantial elements of the existing evidence base
- Require significant resource with limited change in outcomes
- Risk unnecessary inconsistencies with long-established character areas used in decision-making

In contrast, a proportionate update approach:

- Retains a stable and defensible baseline
- Enables focused updates where change has occurred
- Aligns with Planning Practice expectations for proportionate, up-to-date evidence

1.8 Approach taken by the Council

The Council has therefore adopted an approach that the SLCA:

- Retains the existing character areas and overall framework and updates:
 - Key characteristics (where necessary)
 - Forces for change
 - Management and planning guidelines
- Integrates new policy requirements and evidence, including:
 - Climate adaptation and mitigation
 - Green infrastructure planning
 - Biodiversity and natural capital considerations

Where appropriate, this has been delivered through:

- Selective review of specific character areas where change is greatest

1.9 Cumulative Change Assessment

The review has also considered the cumulative influence of development, infrastructure and environmental change.

The most notable cumulative effects occur within the eastern and northern parts of the Borough where HS2, highway improvements, energy infrastructure and growth proposals occur in relatively close proximity.

Whilst these pressures are capable of affecting local landscape character, tranquillity and visual amenity, they do not fundamentally alter the defining characteristics of the relevant Landscape Character Areas.

The Borough-wide landscape character framework therefore remains appropriate.

1.10 Climate Change, Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Since 2016 there has been greater emphasis on:

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Biodiversity enhancement.
- Woodland creation.
- Natural flood management.
- Carbon sequestration.
- Green infrastructure.
- Nature recovery.
- Health and wellbeing benefits associated with accessible green spaces.

Since publication of the SLCA there has been increased emphasis on climate resilience, nature recovery, natural capital and ecosystem services through the Environment Act 2021, the West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (2026). These initiatives strengthen the role of landscape in delivering environmental, social and economic benefits but do not alter the underlying landscape character framework identified within the 2016 assessment

1.11 National Character Areas

The review has considered the continuing relevance of the wider National Character Area framework within which the Borough sits.

No changes have been identified that would necessitate revision of the Borough's Landscape Character Area framework.

The relationship between the SLCA and National Character Areas therefore remains valid.

1.12 Conclusion

The review has assessed whether the Solihull Landscape Character Assessment (2016) remains fit for purpose having regard to its age, purpose, scale and the degree of change that has occurred since publication.

The review concludes that the Landscape Character Areas, key characteristics and overall characterisation framework remain robust and valid. Whilst development, infrastructure projects and changing environmental priorities have introduced localised changes across parts of the Borough, these changes have not fundamentally altered the underlying landscape character identified in the assessment.

The review has also considered changes to national planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2026). Whilst policy priorities relating to housing delivery, climate

change, Green Belt, nature recovery and infrastructure have evolved, these changes do not alter the fundamental landscape character of the Borough or undermine the validity of the existing Landscape Character Assessment framework.

Accordingly, the Council considers that a proportionate update approach, focused on factual updates and supplementary guidance, represents the most appropriate and efficient means of maintaining an up-to-date evidence base. A full re-assessment of landscape character is not considered necessary at this time as it would not materially alter the understanding of landscape character across the Borough.

The Council will continue to monitor landscape change and will undertake further review where future evidence indicates substantial changes to landscape character or where required to support major plan-making processes.

2.0 Planning context

The documents listed below have either been published or updated since adoption of the 2016 SLCA. Whilst these documents do not alter landscape character in themselves, they influence the way landscape is considered through planning policy, environmental management, nature recovery and climate change adaptation

2.1 National Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
 - Recent updates to national planning policy continue to reinforce the importance of recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, supporting nature recovery, strengthening green infrastructure networks, delivering Biodiversity Net Gain, addressing climate change and ensuring that development responds positively to local character. These updates reinforce rather than alter the role of landscape character assessment as a key evidence base for plan-making and decision-taking.
- Environment Act 2021
 - Biodiversity Net Gain
 - Air Quality
 - Resource Efficiency
 - Nature Recovery
- Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (2024)
- National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3), 2025
- Planning Practice Guidance
 - Planning Practice Guidance continues to emphasise the importance of landscape character evidence in plan-making, site allocation, Green Belt assessment, design policy, landscape-led masterplanning and the consideration of cumulative effects. The guidance supports the use of proportionate and up-to-date evidence, including the review and updating of existing Landscape Character Assessments where appropriate.

2.2 Regional Guidance

- West Midlands Natural Environment Plan: 2021 – 2026

A regional plan to:

- Launch a Community Green Grants programme
 - Build on the launch of the West Midlands Virtual Forest
 - Set up a Wildlife Corridors Commission to develop a ‘doorstep to landscape’ vision for the region.
 - Develop regional natural capital data capture and mapping to better understand the state of the region’s nature and prepare the foundations for a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
 - Produce the first West Midlands Natural Capital Investment Plan
 - Explore ways to ensure biodiversity net gain across new transport infrastructure and other developments funded by the WMCA.
- Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy (2024)

The purpose of this Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy (known henceforth as the Strategy) is to provide evidence for the preparation of plans, policies and strategies relating to GI at a sub-

regional level and at a local level. It also details how GI can be delivered with the help from landholders and relevant stakeholders. The Strategy covers the disciplines of:

- Landscape
- Biodiversity/Natural Capital
- Accessibility

Landscape: the main strategic areas of opportunity for strengthening landscape character are identified in the Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines and are still relevant, including opportunities to demonstrate exemplary approaches to landscape conservation management. However, it is recommended that the Enhancement Zones, where particular effort is required to restore and enhance landscape character, be re-assessed to identify target areas for landscape restoration. In particular, planning and implementing substantial landscape frameworks, well in advance of major developments and transport infrastructure, can bring many benefits, including safeguarding and enhancing vital landscape assets, helping to create a sense of place for new development and retaining vital links with the past.

- West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy 2025

The West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy marks the first time a detailed, unified view of nature in the WMCA region, along with clear priorities for nature recovery and target locations for action, has been brought together in one place. Building on years of work by regional stakeholders, the LNRS provides a shared vision and coordinated strategy that transcends administrative and political boundaries to deliver greater impact for nature.

It enables everyone, from environmental organisations and local authorities to landowners, businesses, and engaged citizens, to see where nature recovery efforts will be most effective. This collective approach supports the national goal of halting biodiversity loss while ensuring local priorities are met.

The LNRS identifies priority areas for habitat creation, restoration and ecological connectivity across the region. The existing Landscape Character Areas provide an appropriate spatial framework through which these priorities can be considered and delivered in a manner sensitive to local landscape character.

LNRSs were mandated by the Environment Act 2021 and regulated by the 2023 LNRS Regulations.

- West Midlands Nature Delivery Plan 2026 – 2029

This West Midlands Nature Delivery Plan includes:

- A summary of the natural environment context.
 - A summary of the West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy, its purpose, vision, aims, priorities and actions.
 - The region-wide and place-based key deliverables for 2026-2029 to help achieve our ambitions.
- West Midlands Climate Change Five Year Plan 2026-31

This plan aims to reduce carbon emissions in the West Midlands to achieve our ambition that the region should be carbon neutral by 2041. It builds on progress since the first plan in 2021 and it retains its driving purpose to ensure a fair and just transition for our residents and businesses – complementing and helping to deliver our recently published West Midlands Growth Plan.

Delivery programmes such as Net Zero Neighbourhoods are demonstrating the value of place-based delivery through the Local Net Zero Accelerator, supported by Government. Devolved

energy efficiency programmes, zero emission buses and energy advice for businesses are all playing their part.

2.3 Local Planning Guidance

Emerging Local Plan 2026 – 2043

Neighbourhood Plans

- Hampton in Arden Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Berkswell Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Balsall Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Meriden Neighbourhood Development Plan

Urban Forestry Strategy (2019 – 2029)

Natural Capital Investment Strategy and Delivery Plan (2024)

- The Strategy identifies opportunities for investment in natural capital assets including woodland creation, habitat restoration, flood management, green infrastructure and nature recovery. The Landscape Character Assessment provides an important framework for directing these interventions that deliver environmental benefits whilst respecting local landscape distinctiveness.

Public Open Space SPD (2026)

Net Zero Action Plan Report (2021)

Solihull Climate Change Action Plan 2026 – 2030

Solihull Council Carbon Plan 2025 – 2030

Air Quality Strategy 2024 – 2028

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015)

Solihull Connected Transport Strategy (2023)

Solihull Green Belt Assessment (2026)

- The Green Belt Assessment identifies areas of land that make varying contributions to Green Belt purposes. Whilst Green Belt designation and landscape character are distinct planning considerations, landscape character evidence continues to provide important context regarding openness, settlement pattern, visual containment, landscape setting and local distinctiveness.

Street Lighting Strategy 2023 – 2033

2.4 Since publication of the SLCA in 2016, there has been an increased emphasis on climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity net gain, and the delivery of multifunctional green infrastructure. These considerations are reflected in updated landscape guidance set out in this addendum.

3. Overview of Borough Landscape Character

The review concludes that the Borough-wide landscape character framework remains valid. The following sections identify factual updates and additional context required to reflect changes since 2016. No changes are proposed to Landscape Character Area boundaries or classifications.

3.1 Hydrology

HS2 includes surface water management and ecological water features (attenuation areas, swales) along parts of the route. These introduce new wetland micro habitats and modify local drainage expression at corridor scale, while existing watercourses and floodplains continue to define the wider landscape pattern referenced in the SLCA.

3.2 Topography

The Borough retains its underlying pattern of gently rolling landform, but localised modification occurs along the HS2 alignment where cuttings, embankments and noise/landform bunds introduce engineered relief and new visual edges. These features influence both intervisibility and landscape enclosure, particularly in rural Arden farmland south of Hampton in Arden and around the Interchange approaches. The original terrain analysis and character descriptions from 2016 remain broadly applicable beyond the corridor influence

3.3 Land Use Pattern

Arable and pastoral farmland, hedgerow networks and woodland blocks remain characteristic; however, mitigation planting associated with HS2 (new woodland, hedgerow reinforcement, grassland and habitat creation) is now a notable landscape shaping element within and adjacent to the corridor. Over time, this planting will mature to form new green infrastructure spines, subtly re-expressing field patterns and edges in affected areas

3.4 Settlement and Infrastructure

The M42 Junction 6 Improvement Scheme was a major National Highways project around the NEC, Birmingham Airport, Birmingham International Station, HS2 Interchange Station site, and the M42 J6/Bickenhill Interchange. The scheme includes:

- In 2024 the new M42 Junction 5A was built between the existing Junctions 5 and 6.
- New A4545 link road, alternative to Junction 6.
- Enlargement and remodelling to Junction 6.

This has introduced additional road infrastructure within the landscape.

HS2 is under construction and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.

3.5 Sustainability

The Environment Act 2021 introduced the requirement to provide a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on qualifying planning schemes, this could lead to landscape change, both positively and, in some locations, with potential tensions between biodiversity objectives and traditional landscape character.

3.6 Historic Landscape Character and Tranquillity

The historic Arden landscape remains readily identifiable across much of the Borough through its distinctive pattern of:

- Hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Ancient woodland
- Irregular field patterns
- Historic lanes
- Dispersed rural settlements

Whilst tranquillity has reduced locally around major transport corridors, HS2 construction areas and urban edges, the wider pattern of rural landscape character and relative tranquillity remains evident across large parts of the Borough.

4.0 Borough Wide Landscape Guidelines

The following guidance supplements, rather than replaces, the landscape guidance contained within the 2016 SLCA. It reflects changes in national policy, environmental legislation and emerging landscape pressures.

4.1 Residential Development

The Local Plan Review 2026 – 2043 will set out the strategy for housing, jobs, and infrastructure across the borough.

As a result of changes to national policies, Solihull is required to significantly increase housing provision, which may come from additional housing allocations and the release of Green Belt and Grey Belt, this will lead to changes in the Borough's landscape.

Guidelines:

- Maintain and enhance valued landscapes that contribute to local distinctiveness, sense of place, cultural heritage, biodiversity, recreation and community wellbeing.
- Maintain the rural character – residential development should be avoided where it will impact negatively on a landscape that exhibits recognisable countryside qualities including its:
 - land use (largely agricultural in Solihull, and the continuity of agricultural land use helps reinforce countryside identity)
 - settlement pattern (distinct settlements e.g. Berkswell, Meriden etc.)
 - landscape structure (hedgerows, hedgerow trees, parkland trees, field size and pattern),
 - tranquillity (limited traffic intrusion and urban activity)
 - openness (open farmland, long views across open countryside)
- Maintain historic environment assets – the features create the distinctive Arden landscape that differentiates Solihull from more intensively farmed parts of the West Midlands.
- Maintain and promote biodiversity networks and nature recovery objectives
 - The River Blythe corridor protection and enhancement
 - Ancient woodlands across the Arden landscape and strategic woodland creation
 - Hedgerow networks linking farmland and woodland.
 - Habitat created through HS2 mitigation works.
 - Green corridors associated with parks, open spaces and watercourses.
 - Urban-rural ecological corridors.
- Retain important countryside gaps where they
 - Maintain a clear perception of separate settlements.
 - Contain strong rural landscape characteristics.
 - Include important views or visual connections.
 - Contribute to Green Belt purposes.
 - Form part of a wider green infrastructure or biodiversity network.
 - Help preserve the setting of a village, town or historic feature.
 - Contribute to landscape character and the setting of settlements identified through the Solihull Green Belt Assessment.

4.2 Lighting

Darkness is increasingly regarded as a landscape resource. National planning guidance, dark skies initiatives, biodiversity policy and professional lighting standards all support assessing:

- Dark skies.
- Rural tranquillity.
- Light pollution.
- Night-time landscape character.

Artificial light is not always necessary. It has the potential to become what is termed 'light pollution' or 'obtrusive light', and not all modern lighting is suitable in all locations. It can be a source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes.

Guidelines:

- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments/Appraisals should consider how lighting from new development effects the landscape in terms of tranquillity, remoteness, and night-time character.
- Protect the River Blythe corridor from increases in artificial lighting to protect the strong rural and night-time character.

4.3 Transport

The M42 Junction 6 Improvement Scheme including the new M42 Junction 5A and A4545 has been completed near Birmingham Airport and the NEC. This has introduced additional road infrastructure and lighting within the landscape.

HS2 is under construction and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.

Guidelines:

- New roads, junctions and amendments to existing road should have a landscape assessment carried out prior to design and include a landscape planting scheme to mitigate any losses arising from the scheme and enhance the landscape character.

4.4 Renewable Energy Generation and Storage

Solihull is likely to experience significant growth in renewable energy generation and storage infrastructure over the next 10-15 years.

Solar energy is currently the most significant renewable technology being promoted in the Borough, with an approved energy park at Meer End.

The Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan is promoting Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) because they are seen as essential to delivering a low-carbon electricity system based on renewable energy.

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) affect the landscape as they introduce:

- Industrial-looking infrastructure into rural landscapes.
- Security fencing and compounds.
- Lighting and CCTV.
- New substations and grid connections.

Several BESS facilities have been approved in Solihull, mainly in the rural east of the Borough, close to the Berkswell Sub-station. This part of the Borough is generally well served by public

rights of way, including long-distance, recreational footpaths such as The Coventry Way and The Heart of England Way.

Guidelines:

- BESS facilities have the potential to affect the landscape character; a Landscape and Visual Appraisal/ Impact Assessment is required to select the least visually intrusive locations for these activities.
- Proposals must demonstrate how it responds to the local Landscape Character Assessment.
- They should avoid prominent locations on skylines or elevated ground.
- They should retain the perception of openness within the wider countryside.
- They must minimise industrialisation of the rural landscape.
- Restoration plans should be designed and included within planning applications to demonstrate the long-term restoration of the landscape character.

4.5 Climate Change, Nature Recovery and Natural Capital

Guidelines:

- Support woodland creation that reinforces local landscape character.
- Promote natural flood management measures where consistent with local character.
- Strengthen ecological connectivity between habitats.
- Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in a manner that respects landscape character.
- Incorporate climate resilience measures within landscape design.
- Recognise the contribution landscapes make to carbon storage, health and wellbeing, biodiversity and recreation.
- Support delivery of priorities identified within the West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Solihull Natural Capital Investment Strategy in ways that reinforce local landscape character.

5.0 Solihull Borough Landscape Character Areas

Please refer to the updated Landscape Character Areas Map in Appendix One of this Review and Update Statement.

The updates below identify notable changes, emerging pressures and additional considerations since publication. The review found no evidence that require amendments to the Landscape Character Area boundaries or classifications.

5.1 Solihull Fringe LCA1

Sub-area 1A

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- Impact on landscape from JLR expansion into a greenfield site
- New road infrastructure (A4545), new junction with M42, and re-aligned Damson Parkway.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- The area (UK2) around Damson Parkway is identified for growth in business, industrial and logistics uses.
- Potential renewable energy and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) around Bickenhill and Catherine-de-Barnes.
- Residential development at Catherine-de-Barnes has gained planning approval.

5.2 Southern Countryside LCA2

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below:

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- There has been an increase in residential development south of Dickens Heath and at Blythe Valley Park.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Residential development has been approved for areas in the north of this LCA which will extend the urban area of Shirley.
- There is pressure from development in the west and south of this area, which may lead to coalescence of Dickens Heath, Tidbury Green and Earlswood, this will likely impact on the openness of the LCA.
- Pressure to remove trees and hedgerows, particularly where they are associated with highway widening and infrastructure required for residential development.

5.3 Knowle & Dorridge Fringe LCA3

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Residential development has been approved for areas in the east of this LCA which will extend the urban area of Knowle to Warwick Road.
- There is further pressure from development in the east of Dorridge, which will reduce the size and may affect the character of this LCA.

- Potential pressure to remove trees and hedgerows, particularly where they are associated with highway widening and infrastructure required for residential development.

5.4 Rural Centre LCA4

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.
- A large renewable energy and BESS scheme has been given planning permission on Holly Lane.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Pressure to remove trees and hedgerows, particularly where they are associated with highway widening and infrastructure required for residential development.
- Loss of open fields and agricultural land to renewable energy.
- Visual impact on footpath users from BESS developments, introducing urbanising features into a rural, farmed landscape.

5.5 Balsall Common Eastern Fringe LCA5

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.
- A BESS scheme has been given planning permission at Beechwood Farm.
- Several housing schemes have been given planning approval in this LCA.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Pressure to remove trees and hedgerows, particularly where they are associated with highway widening and infrastructure required for residential development.
- Loss of open fields and agricultural land to renewable energy.
- Visual impact on footpath users from BESS developments, introducing urbanising features into a rural, farmed landscape.
- Loss of Notable trees due to housing schemes.

5.6 Eastern Fringe LCA6

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.
- Several BESS schemes have been given planning permission, with a concentration around the Berkswell Electricity Substation.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Visual impact on footpath users from BESS developments, introducing urbanising features into a rural, farmed landscape.
- Pressure to remove trees and hedgerows, particularly where they are associated with highway widening and infrastructure required for residential development.
- Loss of open fields and agricultural land to renewable energy.
- Loss of Notable trees due to housing schemes.

5.7 Northern Upland LCA7

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- There has been some limited built development on the northwest of Meriden.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Pressure from development on the edge of Meriden.
- Visual impact on footpath users from new housing developments, introducing urbanising features into a rural, farmed landscape.
- Loss of open fields and long views.

5.8 Blythe Lowland LCA8

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction to the east of Hampton-in-Arden and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.
- Recent housing development has extended the built area of Hampton-in-Arden to the east.
- The areas around Cornets End Lane have expanded mineral working and there has been construction of recycling facilities.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- Continued mineral workings and new permanent industrial facilities are delaying or preventing landscape restoration.

5.9 Motorway Corridor LCA9

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction to the east of the M42 and is influencing the landscape; it is currently expected that this will continue into the first half of the 2030s.
- A new road (A4545) and a new junction with M42 (5A) have been constructed which has increase the transport infrastructure in the area. This has also brought additional lighting to the area.

Sensitivities and Pressures:

- There will be pressure on the landscape from HS2, the Interchange Station and related transport infrastructure in the north of the LCA.
- The aspirations of Arden Cross HealthTech Campus will introduce built form into the landscape.

5.10 Urban Green Spaces LCA10

There have been some changes to the landscape since the SLCA in 2016 and these are summarised below;

Settlement, built environment and communications:

- HS2 is under construction within the eastern part of this LCA and this is scheduled to continue into the 2030s.

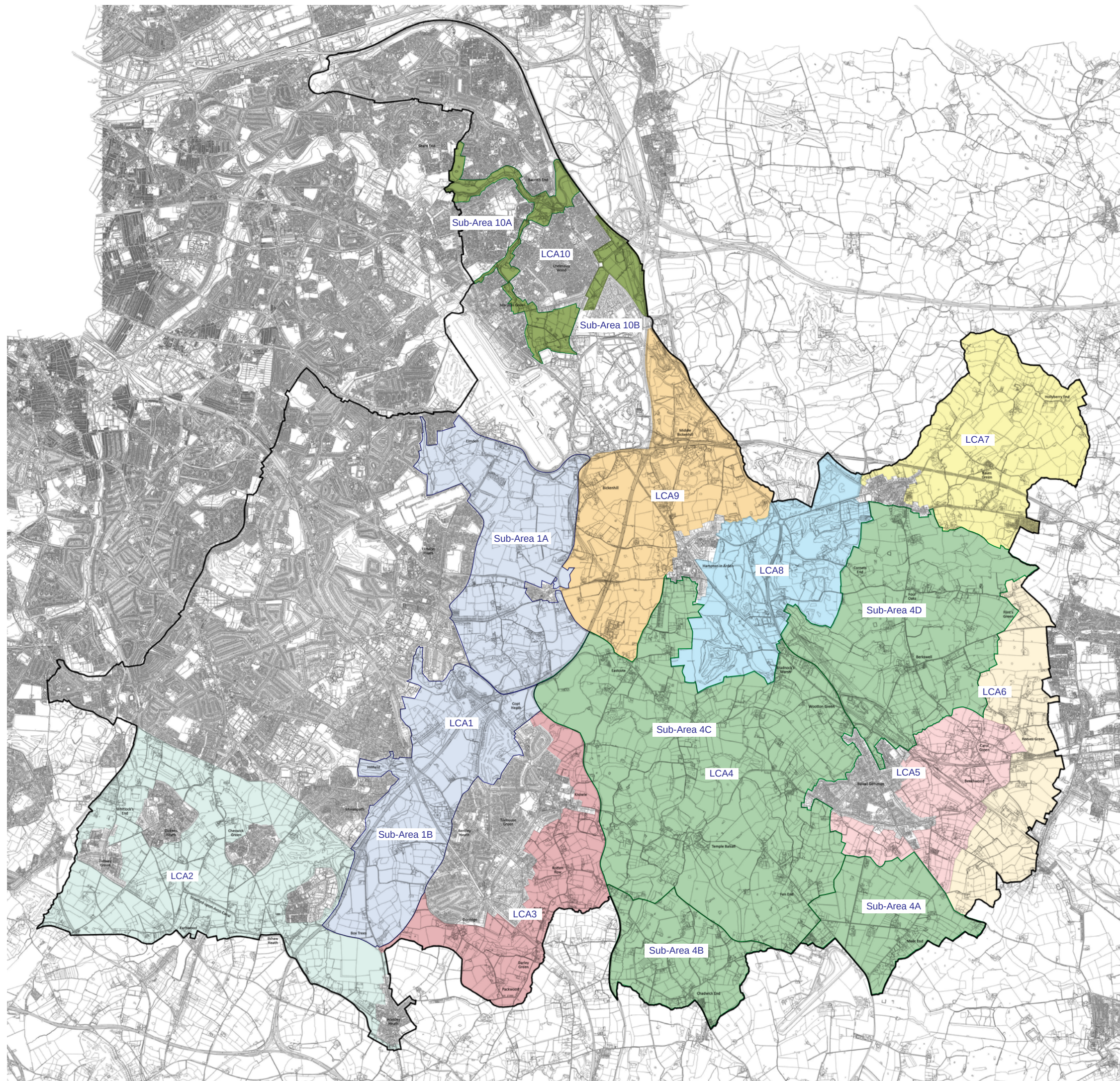
Sensitivities and Pressures:

- There will be pressure on the landscape from HS2 and associated infrastructure.
- Part of the Green Belt in the north adjacent to the M6 has been approved for housing development, this will affect the landscape and reduce the area of open space.
- Potential for some of the area to be considered as Grey Belt which could lead to pressure for development, reducing greenspace.

Appendix 1

Updated Landscape Character Areas Map

Updated Landscape Character Areas Map



Appendix 2

Summary Review Matrix

Topic	Change Since 2016	Effect on Character Framework
HS2	Major infrastructure project	No change to LCA boundaries
M42 Junction 6 & 5A	Localised infrastructure change	No change to character framework
Housing Growth	Incremental expansion of settlements	Character areas remain valid
Biodiversity Net Gain	New legislative requirement	Guidance updated
Nature Recovery	Increased emphasis	Guidance updated
Green Infrastructure	Greater policy focus	Guidance updated
Climate Change	Significant policy evolution	Guidance updated
Renewable Energy	Increased development pressure	Additional guidance required
Battery Storage Facilities	New landscape pressure	Additional guidance required
Natural Capital	Greater importance in decision-making	Guidance updated
Historic Landscape Character	Remains evident across Borough	No change to framework
Tranquillity	Localised reductions	No change to overall character areas