

Appendix A: Landscape Sensitivity Assessments



Area reference: SP001

Figure A.1: Map of the area with designations / constraints

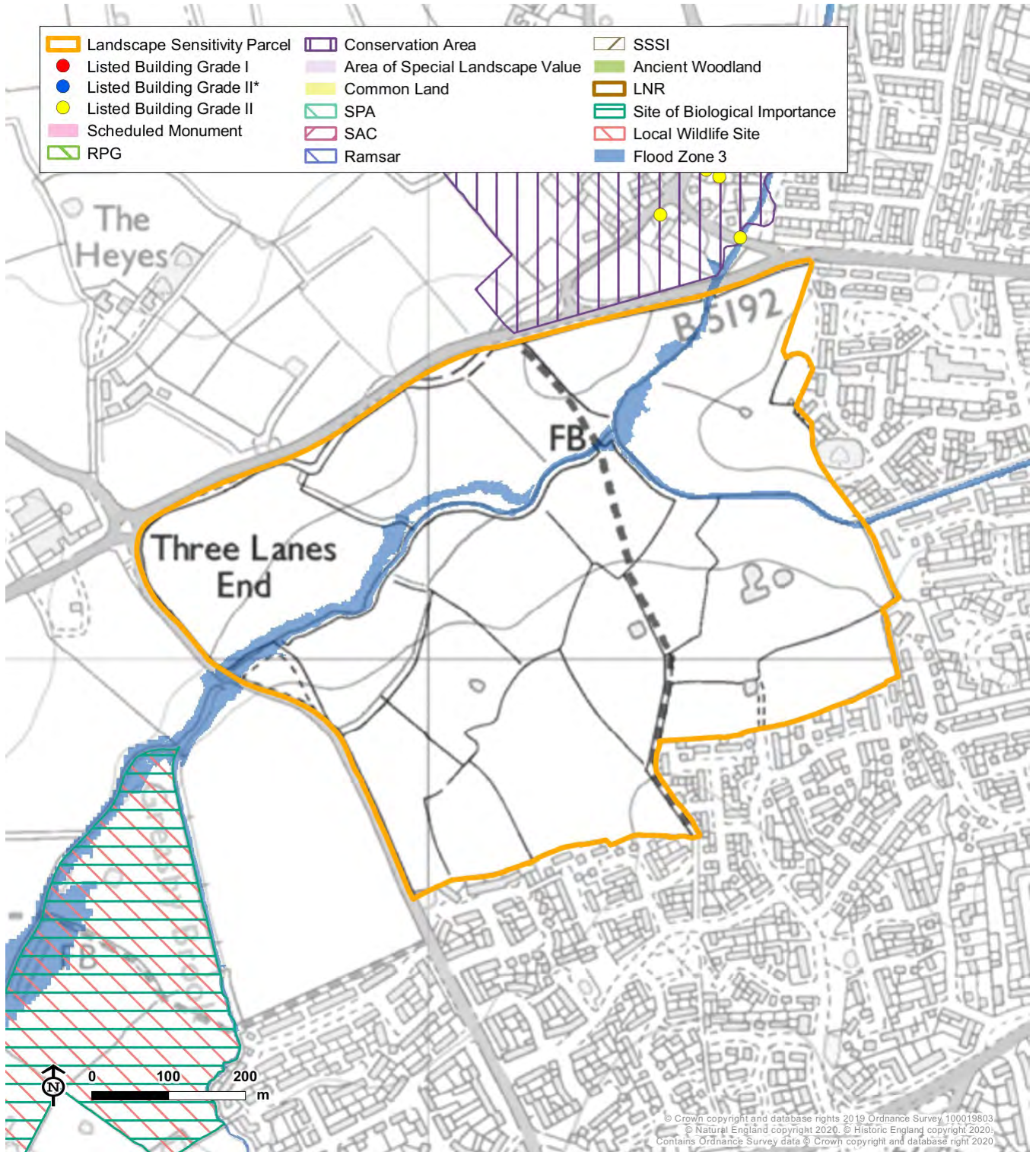


Figure A.2: Aerial photograph of the area



Figure A.3: Representative photos



Woodland copse and informal open space in the east set against the settlement edge of Greasby



Gently undulating landform with fragmented hedgerows

Location and landscape character context

The area is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the north-west of Greasby. The B5192 Saughall Massie Road and Pump Lane form the northern and western boundaries respectively. The village of Saughall Massie is situated adjacent to the north-eastern corner of the area.

The area lies within the The Birket LCA, forming part of the River Floodplain LCT. It comprises low-lying gently undulating ground with Arrowe Brook and Greasby Brook meandering through the landscape and small-medium scale pastoral fields. The area accommodates Saughall Massie Community fire station in the north-east and areas used for equestrian activities, including stables in the north-west and Greasby Equestrian Centre south-east.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). However, Arrowe Brook and Greasby Brook are key features distinctive for their meandering nature which have influenced the irregular field pattern of the area. The Conservation Area at Saughall Massie (which lies adjacent to the north of the area) contributes to the overall value, although there is very limited intervisibility between it and the area.

The area's use as pastoral farmland for livestock limits its recreational value, although there is a public right of way that crosses the area, providing a connection between Saughall Massie (and the B5192) in the north and Bromsgrove Road in Greasby in the south, as well as a network of informal paths on public open space in the north-east.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	<p>The gentle sloping landform falls from both the B5192 in the north (15m AOD) and the settlement edge of Greasby in the south (20m AOD) towards Arrowe Brook and Greasby Brook which flow west to east through the middle of the area indicating lower levels of sensitivity to residential development. Around the brooks the topography is more undulating and rising ground exists towards woodland on the edge of Greasby increasing the sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>The area has a pattern of irregular fields (partly due to the meandering nature of Arrowe Brook and Greasby Brook) that are small to medium in size and mostly formed by mature hedgerows with occasional hedgerow</p>

	trees, providing a modest density of small-scale landscape features, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development.
Natural Character	<p>The majority of the area consists of pasture used for livestock grazing with smaller areas relating to equestrian activities. The area accommodates some existing development (Saughall Massie Community Fire Station in the north-east, a collection of stables in the south-east and single stable building in the north-west), resulting in lower sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>Pockets of higher sensitivity to residential development exist where there are areas of valued semi-natural habitats and valued natural features including a wooded copse in the east, hedgerows (including those lining the courses of Arrowe Brook and Greasby Brook) enhanced occasionally with hedgerow trees, small pockets of trees/ shrubs surrounding occasional field ponds and mature trees along the settlement edge. In some places, hedgerows are fragmented and post and wire fencing occurs which lowers the sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Historic landscape character	<p>The Cheshire HLC indicates that the area contains a relatively diverse time depth which increases sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>The area comprises a high concentration of ancient fieldscapes (pre-1600); namely the small-medium scale irregular field pattern along the northern edge which is categorised as Medieval Town Fields and a larger proportion of irregular Ancient Field Systems forming the southern part of the area, which increases sensitivity to residential development in these areas.</p> <p>Lower levels of sensitivity to residential development exist in the north-eastern part of the area which is categorised as 20th Century Settlement and contains the Saughall Massie Community Fire Station set within an area of informal open space.</p> <p>There are no heritage assets within the area; however the area lies directly south of the village of Saughall Massie (located north of the B5192) which is designated as a Conservation Area and an area of archaeological importance. The area is also screened as medium for archaeological issues by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The area would therefore require further archaeological investigation as part of any proposed development.</p>
Character and setting of existing settlement	<p>The area plays a role in the separation of Saughall Massie in the north and the settlement edge in the south at Greasby, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. The gap is best perceived when travelling along the public right of way running through the area which provides a connection between Saughall Massie (and the B5192) in the north and Bromsgrove Road in Greasby in the south.</p> <p>The area provides a rural setting to Saughall Massie, although a high hedgerow along the northern edge of the B5192 (marking the edge of the Conservation Area) and the wooded character of the village restricts intervisibility with the area. It is however acknowledged that any residential development proposed close to the B5192 could overlook the hedge and be visible from the village, adversely affecting its setting, which indicates higher levels of sensitivity to residential development in this area.</p> <p>The area also provides a rural setting to the Greasby settlement edge; however vegetation along the boundary of the area integrates this settlement edge into the landscape and limits the intervisibility with the area. Development may therefore adversely affect the existing settlement edge to some extent, resulting in higher sensitivity to residential development. Parts of Greasby are of lower sensitivity to residential development where the setting is already influenced by the built form associated with the fire station and stables.</p>
Views and visual character including skylines	The area is visually enclosed by surrounding built development to the south and east, as well as by woodland in the east and around Saughall Massie, indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development. The mature field boundary hedgerows, accented by the relatively flat landform, result in a sense of enclosure, limiting the intervisibility with the surrounding landscape which also lowers the sensitivity to residential development.
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>Although largely a rural agricultural landscape, the area is influenced by urban fringe elements including the equestrian uses and fire station in the east, reducing sensitivity. The area is already influenced by surrounding development, disturbing its scenic value and limiting dark night skies through existing light sources, and therefore decreasing the sensitivity to residential development. The B5192 in the north is a relatively busy road resulting in aural intrusion.</p> <p>The north-eastern part of the area exists as an area with informal grass paths providing a circular route, accessible from the edge of Greasby. There is a sense of separation and remoteness away from the urban edge provided by the wooded copse and the vegetated meanders along the brooks which create enclosure and a perceived naturalness, resulting in a higher sensitivity to residential development in this area.</p>

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The gently sloping landform, the presence of buildings (mainly in the east), surrounding human influences and equestrian uses (which are typical of the urban fringe) lower sensitivity across the area. However sensitivity is increased given the presence of the vegetated meandering brooks, semi-natural habitats (including the wooded copse), small-medium scale irregular historic field patterns, the rural setting of the area and to the Saughall Massie Conservation Area and Greasby settlement edge and its role in contributing towards a perceived gap between settlements. Overall, the area is considered to have **moderate** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

Guidance¹

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing additional native woodland planting.
- Restore hedgerow boundaries where these are fragmented and replace post and wire fencing with native hedgerow species.
- Preserve the natural meandering character of Arrowse Brook and Greasby Brook, avoiding development that will change their course or introduce artificial banks.
- Retain and manage the area of deciduous woodland within the area. Pursue opportunities to extend native woodland, new hedgerows and tree lines across undeveloped parts of the area as part of an integrated green infrastructure network connected to the surrounding landscape (consistent with the priorities of the River Birket Corridor Nature Improvement Area), as well as to protect visual amenity and to help integrate potential development into the landscape.
- Conserve the rural character and small to medium scale intact historic field pattern, particularly ancient fieldscapes in proximity to Saughall Massie where the area contributes towards the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Conserve the mixture of vegetated and open field ponds which are characteristic features of the area.
- Ensure the function of the area as a perceived gap is maintained by providing a clear physical and visual separation between adjacent settlements.
- Protect and enhance the public right of way connecting Saughall Massie to Bromsgrove Road (Greasby) and promote further opportunities to increase access and enjoyment of the landscape, particularly along the river corridors, in association with any new development.

¹ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

Area reference: SP002A / SP002B

Figure A.4: Map of the area with designations / constraints

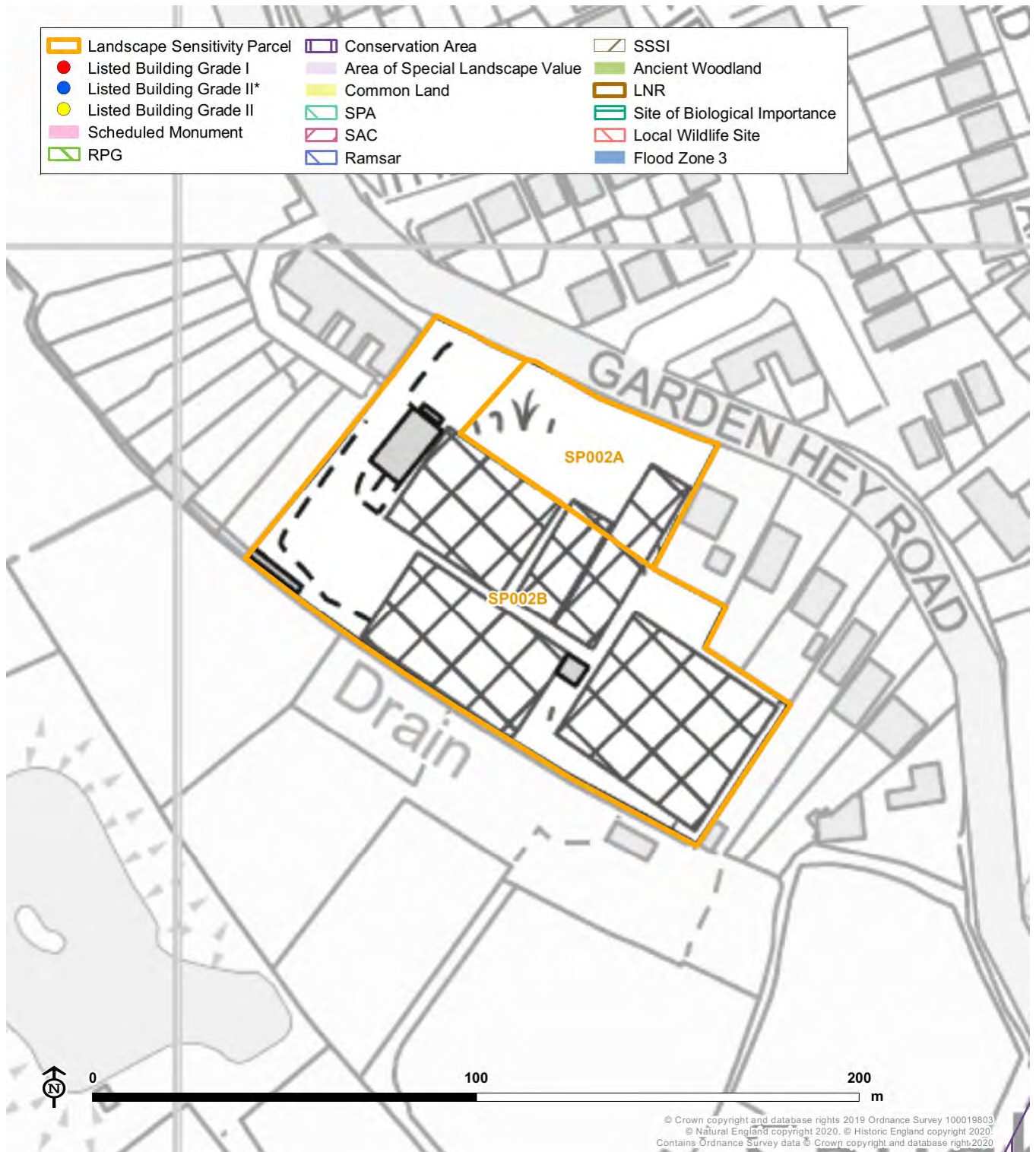


Figure A.5: Aerial photograph of the area

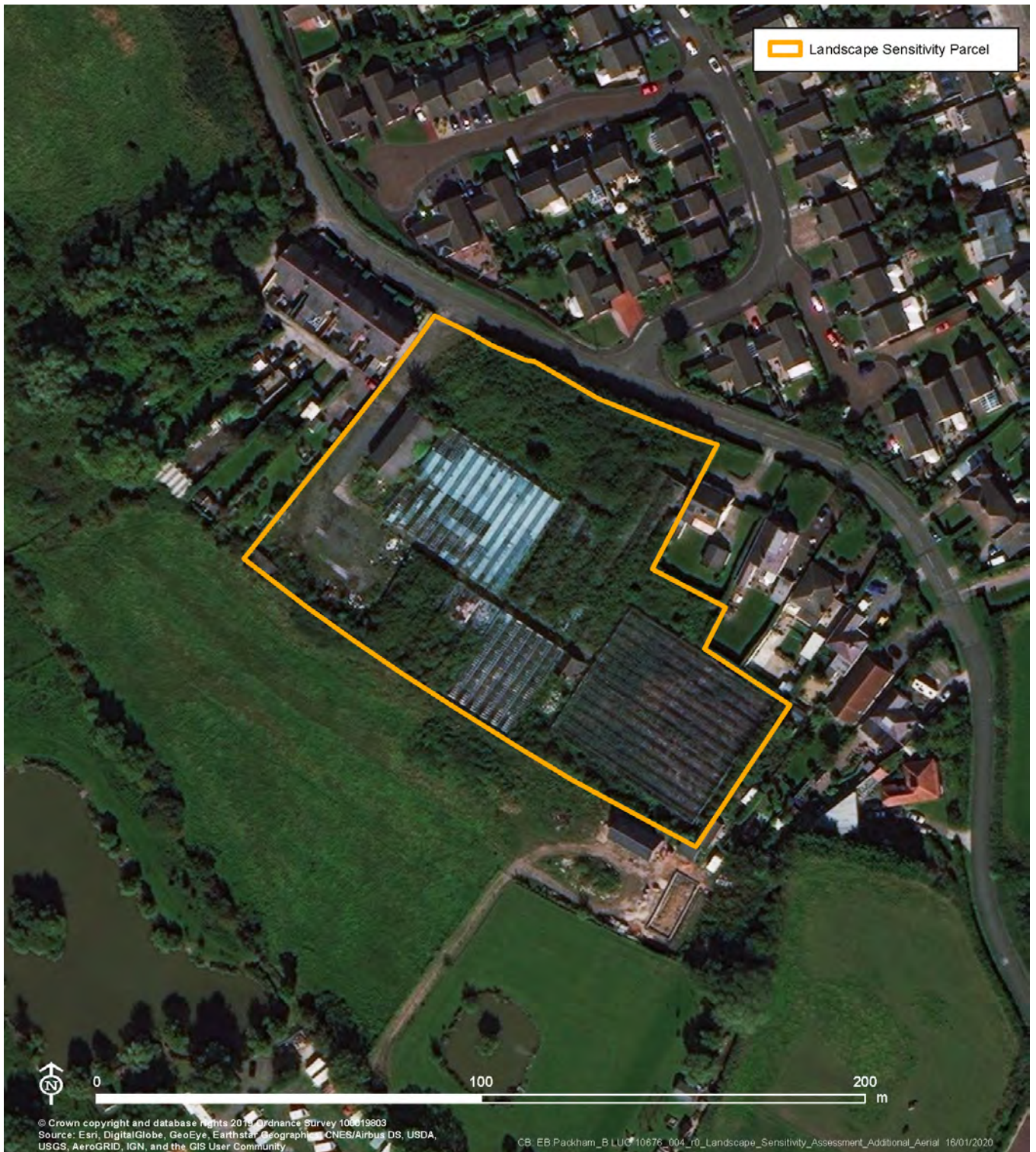


Figure A.6: Representative photos



Sheds and glasshouses are in a dilapidated condition



Overgrown scrub vegetation dominates throughout the area

Location and landscape character context

The area (incorporating SP002A and SP002B) is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the south-west of Moreton and north-west of Saughall Massie village, along the south-western edge of Garden Hey Road. The area lies between properties that are situated along the road and which abut its eastern and western boundaries. A hedgerow defines the southern boundary with fields and Barnacre Coarse Fishing Lake located beyond.

The area lies within The Birket LCA, forming part of the River Floodplain LCT. It is derelict, containing an array of glasshouses and sheds, and has been left to colonise resulting in overgrown scrub vegetation covering the area.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). Lack of management has resulted in the formation of natural scrub habitats.

Public access into the area is restricted, resulting in no recreational value.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	The flat and featureless landform indicates low levels of sensitivity to residential development. The existing buildings within the area, comprising large glasshouses and sheds, also lower levels of sensitivity as they influence the scale of development that can be accommodated in the landscape.
Natural Character	The existing glasshouses and sheds form a large proportion of the area, therefore lowering the sensitivity to residential development. The overgrown nature of the area has resulted in the formation of natural habitats, predominantly scrub vegetation that covers most of the area as well as the boundary hedgerows, resulting in higher levels of sensitivity to residential development.
Historic landscape character	The area does not contain an identifiable field pattern given its developed and overgrown nature. There is no sense of time depth and the Cheshire HLC categorises it as 20 th Century Industry, indicating low levels of sensitivity to residential development. There are no heritage assets within the area.

Character and setting of existing settlement	The area does not contribute positively to the setting of Moreton, given its dilapidated condition or play a separation role between Moreton and Saughall Massie. Future development in the area would have a good relationship with the existing settlement form and pattern, and would improve the existing settlement edge of Moreton, therefore indicating low levels of sensitivity to residential development.
Views and visual character including skylines	The area is visually enclosed by surrounding built development and tall hedgerow boundaries that contain it, resulting in a low degree of visibility from the surrounding landscape and indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development.
Perceptual and experiential qualities	The area is significantly influenced by development and human activity within and surrounding it. New development would not be out of character and would be an improvement from the areas neglected state, resulting in low levels of sensitivity to residential development.

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The flat landform, dilapidated character, presence of large buildings, surrounding human influences, absence of historic features and visual containment lower the sensitivity across the area. The natural habitats that have formed from the scrub vegetation that covers the area slightly increases sensitivity. However, overall, the area is considered to have a **low** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

Guidance²

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and manage hedgerows as important wildlife habitats and landscape features.
- Conserve, enhance and manage any other valued habitats that have formed within the area.

² The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

Area reference: SP002C

Figure A.7: Map of the area with designations / constraints

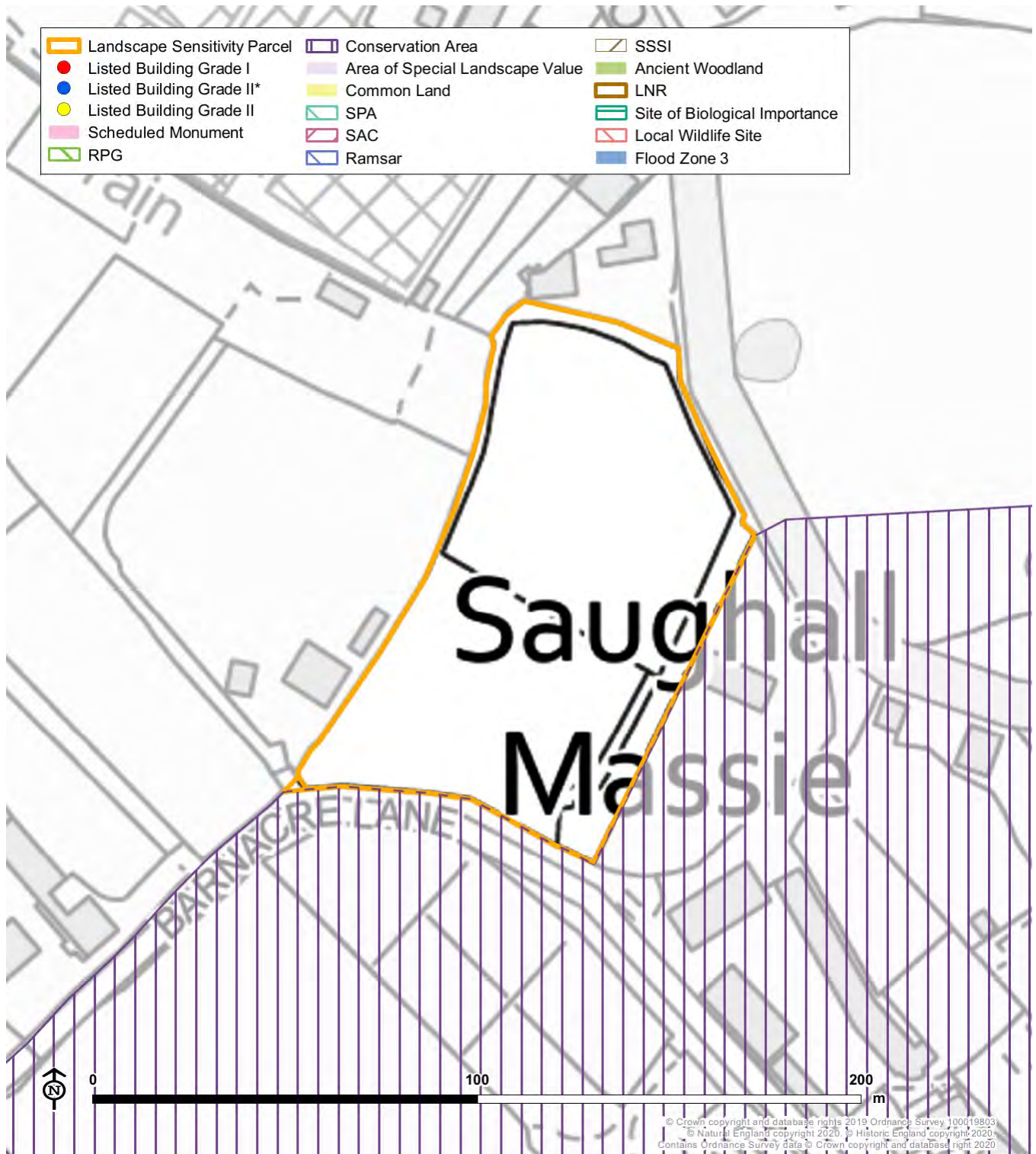


Figure A.8: Aerial photograph of the area



Figure A.9: Representative photos



Pastoral field used for horse grazing



Surrounding development encloses the area

Location and landscape character context

The area is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the south of Moreton and to the north-west of Saughall Massie village. Garden Hey Road runs along its north-eastern boundary and Barnacre Lane forms the southern boundary. Detached properties surround the area to the north, east and west.

The area lies within The Birket LCA, forming part of the River Floodplain LCT. It comprises a small pastoral field grazed by horses and bounded by hedgerows with occasional trees.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). The Conservation Area at Saughall Massie which lies directly adjacent to the area contributes to the overall value, given the role that the area plays in providing a rural setting to it.

The area's use as working farmland for grazing restricts public access resulting in there being no recreational value.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	The flat and featureless landform indicates low levels of sensitivity to residential development. Hedgerows form the boundaries of the area with occasional hedgerow trees, providing some small-scale landscape features, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development.
Natural Character	The area consists of pasture used for grazing by horses and does not contain any built development, although fencing and fencing tape is a frequent feature across the area. There is limited coverage by semi-natural habitats resulting in a lower sensitivity to residential development. Valued natural features consist of the hedgerows that bound the area enhanced occasionally with hedgerow trees (although these typically lie within property boundaries abutting the area), which increases the sensitivity to residential development.

Historic landscape character	<p>The area forms part of a wider field pattern of ancient fieldscapes (pre-1600), being categorised in the Cheshire HLC as Medieval Town Fields which surround the village of Saughall Massie. This results in the area having a sense of time depth, increasing the sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>There are no heritage assets within the area; however the Saughall Massie Conservation Area wraps around the southern and eastern boundaries of the area and is an area of archaeological importance. The area was also screened as medium for archaeological issues by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The area would therefore require further archaeological investigation as part of any proposed development.</p>
Character and setting of existing settlement	<p>The area plays a role in the separation of Saughall Massie village from development that has occurred to the north along Garden Hey Road (forming part of Moreton), resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. The gap is best perceived when travelling along Garden Hey Road.</p> <p>The area also provides a rural setting to Saughall Massie village which residential development would adversely affect, as recognised in the Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan³ which states, 'The agricultural land outside the conservation area is also critical to its setting and visual character.' This indicates higher levels of sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>The existing development surrounding the area is relatively well integrated into the landscape by trees and hedgerows and collectively comprises a dispersed settlement pattern where dwellings are typically located within large property boundaries. Development in the area is therefore likely to be at odds with the surrounding settlement pattern, resulting in higher sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>The low-lying area is visually enclosed by surrounding built development, hedgerows and woodland around Saughall Massie, indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development. Intervisibility is restricted with the wider landscape because of the surrounding coverage of built form and vegetation.</p>
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>Although being an undeveloped and rural agricultural landscape, the area is influenced by surrounding development, disturbing its scenic value and limiting dark night skies through existing light sources, and therefore decreasing the sensitivity to residential development. In addition, the fencing and fencing tape scattered across the area form a visual detractor.</p>

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The flat and featureless landform, the limited coverage of semi-natural habitats, the visual enclosure and surrounding human influences lower sensitivity across the area. However sensitivity is increased as the area forms part of a historic field pattern, as well as the role it plays in providing a rural setting to Saughall Massie Conservation Area and contributing towards a perceived gap between settlements. Overall, the area is considered to have **moderate** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

Guidance⁴

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing additional native woodland planting.
- Preserve the area's contribution towards the wider pattern of ancient fieldscapes in proximity to Saughall Massie village.

³ Donald Insall Associates Ltd (2007) Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

⁴ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

- Conserve the rural character of the area which contributes towards the setting of the Saughall Massie Conservation Area.
- Ensure the function of the area as a perceived gap is maintained by providing a clear physical and visual separation between adjacent settlements.

Area reference: SP003

Figure A.10: Map of the area with designations / constraints

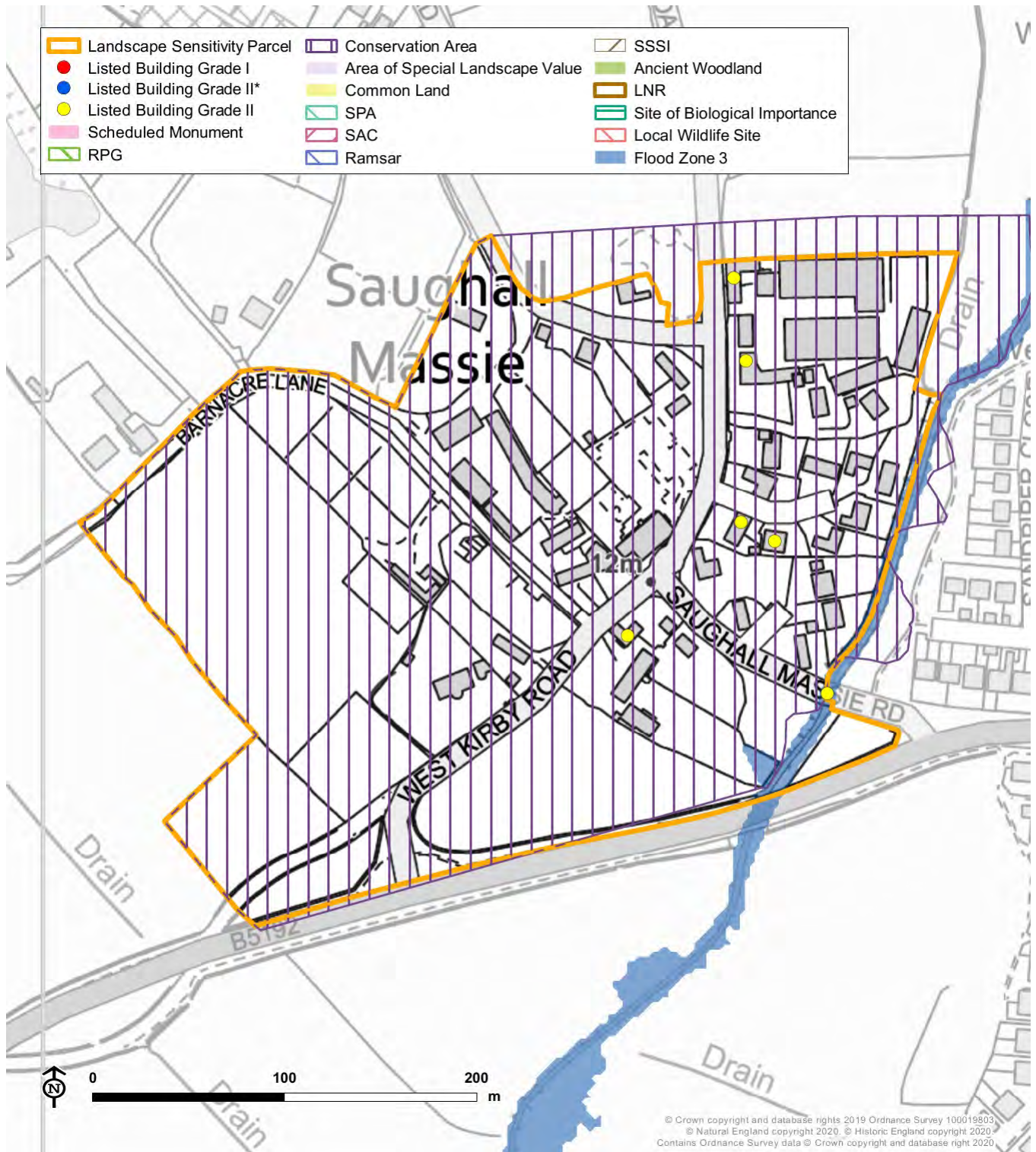


Figure A.11: Aerial photograph of the area

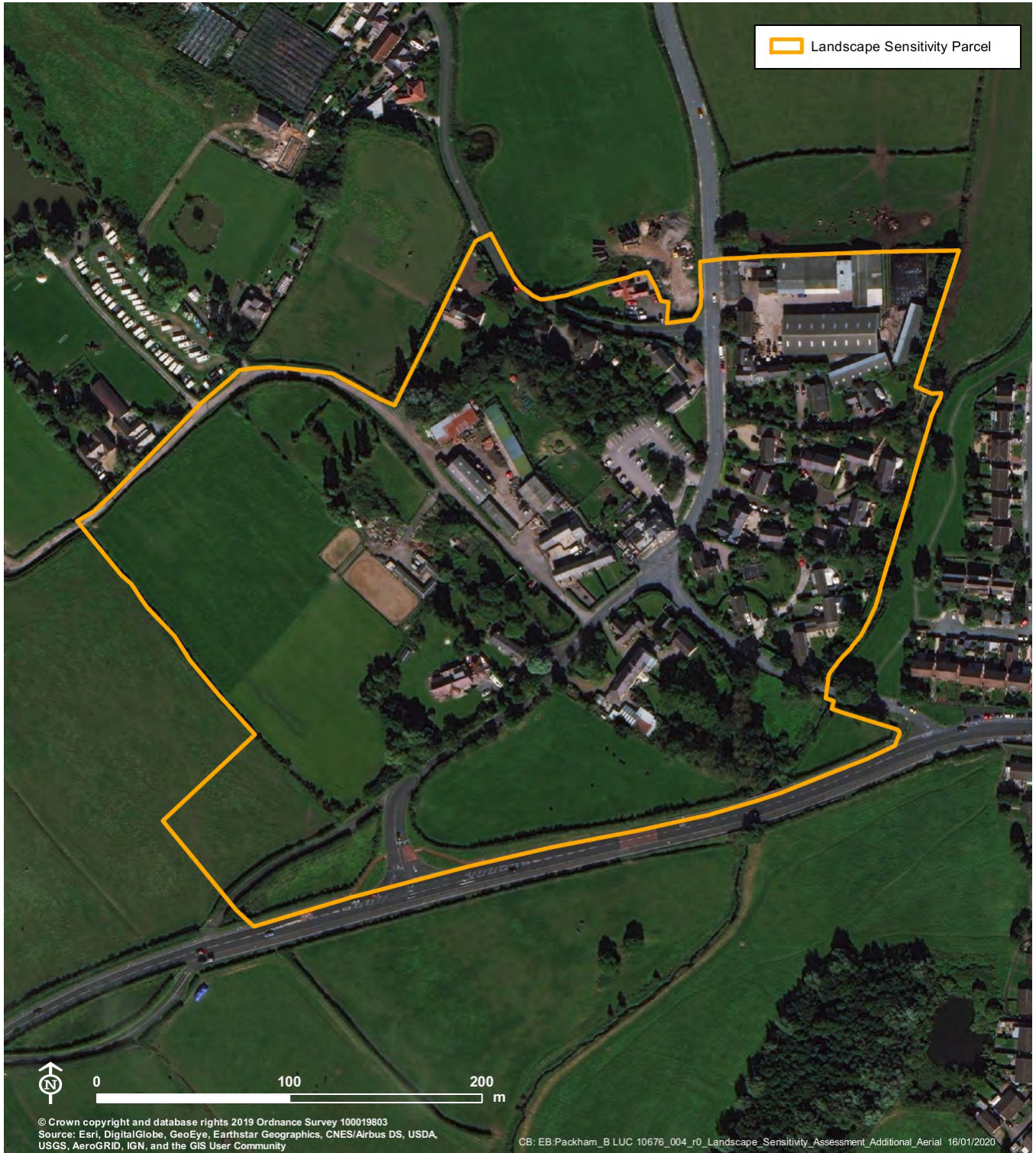


Figure A.12: Representative photos



Small pastoral field in the south enclosed by the wooded character of the village and bounded by Arrowe Brook



Fragmented hedgerow boundary to the western field reinforced by post and wire fencing

Location and landscape character context

The area is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the south and west of Moreton. It follows the Saughall Massie Conservation Area boundary and is separated from the surrounding settlements by agricultural fields to the north and Arrowe Brook and associated floodplain to the east. It is contained by the B5192 Saughall Massie Road along its southern edge.

The area lies within The Birket LCA, forming part of the River Floodplain LCT. It is occupied by the historic village of Saughall Massie which includes residential dwellings and two working farms. It is adjoined by small scale pastoral fields to the south and west which lie within the area boundary.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). However, the Conservation Area at Saughall Massie (which is encompassed fully by the area) contributes significantly to the overall value. Arrowe Brook is a key feature along the eastern edge of the area, contributing towards the setting of Saughall Massie as well as the Moreton settlement edge to the east.

The area is accessible from a number of roads that run through the village including Saughall Road (providing a connection between the B5192 in the south and Moreton in the north). Access to the village is also provided by a public right of way that runs between the B5192 Saughall Massie Road (in the south-west) and Bromsgrove Road in Greasby in the south, providing some recreational value.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	The landform falls gently from the western edge of the village (15m AOD) to Arrowe Brook (10m AOD) which flows south to north along the eastern boundary, indicating lower levels of sensitivity to residential development. Most of the area is occupied by the village and is characterised by existing dwellings and larger sheds associated with two working farms, influencing the scale of development that can be accommodated in the landscape. Sensitivity to residential development increases as the village comprises a wooded character with

	<p>frequent trees providing a modest density of small-scale landscape features, along with mature hedgerows that bound the fields to the south and west of the village.</p>
Natural Character	<p>Given that the majority of the area consists of built form associated with the village and the adjoining fields to the south and west are managed as pasture, there is limited coverage of semi-natural habitats resulting in a lower sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>Pockets of higher sensitivity to residential development exist where there are areas of valued semi-natural habitats and valued natural features including priority habitat lowland mixed broad-leaf woodland copse in the south-east, clumps of trees throughout the village and hedgerows (including those bounding the pastoral fields to the south and west of the village) enhanced occasionally with hedgerow trees.</p>
Historic landscape character	<p>The Cheshire HLC indicates that the area contains a sense of time depth which increases the sensitivity to residential development. Ancient fieldscapes (pre-1600) that have been categorised as Medieval Town Fields immediately surround the village and form part of a wider pattern of ancient fieldscapes that stretch towards the settlement of Meols in the north-west. Sensitivity to residential development slightly decreases where C20th development has occurred around the periphery of the village core.</p> <p>The area encompasses the Saughall Massie Conservation Area, which is also an area of archaeological importance, along with its associated historic buildings and bridge (all Grade II listed), resulting in a high level of sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>The area was screened as high for archaeological issues by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The area would therefore require further archaeological investigation as part of any proposed development.</p>
Character and setting of existing settlement	<p>The village of Saughall Massie is a distinctive settlement of historic origin which is reflected in its designation as a Conservation Area. As most of the area is overlain by existing dwellings there is little opportunity for the area to accommodate additional development, which would be limited to infill development within the village or within the surrounding fields to the south and west. However, these fields also lie within the Conservation Area, and contribute towards providing a rural setting for the village. This is recognised in the Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan⁵ which states, <i>'The agricultural land outside the conservation area is also critical to its setting and visual character'</i>.</p> <p>Further development would have a poor relationship with the existing loose form and informal pattern of the village and would lead to its expansion, resulting in a loss of identity, and diminishing the sense of arrival when entering the village off the B5192 Saughall Massie Road in the south. This therefore indicates high levels of sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>The area is visually enclosed by its wooded character and by the surrounding settlement of Moreton to the north and east, resulting in lower levels of sensitivity to residential development. The groups of trees within the village provide a backdrop and form features on the skyline when viewed from the edge of Moreton in the north and when approaching the village along Saughall Road, indicating higher sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>There is clear intervisibility between the village and Moreton in the east given their proximity to one another (<40m). The adjoining fields to the south are less visible from the surrounding landscape as they are enclosed by mature hedgerows and groups of trees, indicating lower levels of sensitivity to residential development. The flat open fields to the west are also bounded by hedgerows; however these are more fragmented (and reinforced by post and wire fencing) resulting in some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape to the west, indicating higher sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>Much of the area contains existing development that contributes towards the identity of the historic village through its vernacular design. Despite the proximity of surrounding settlements, the village retains a strong rural character. However light glow from within the village limits dark night skies through existing light sources including street lighting along Saughall Road, indicating lower sensitivity to residential development. There is also some aural intrusion from Saughall Road and Saughall Massie Road (B5192) to the south.</p>

⁵ Donald Insall Associates Ltd (2007) Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The gentle sloping landform, the limited coverage of semi-natural habitats, the visual enclosure provided by trees within the village and surrounding human influences lower sensitivity. However, the historic associations of the area as a Conservation Area, the historic field patterns, the contribution of the surrounding fields towards the setting of the village and the identity of the village through its settlement pattern, strong vernacular and wooded character increase sensitivity.

Although there are some characteristics that lower sensitivity to residential development (as noted above), future development would lead to significant change to the Conservation Area. Therefore, the area is considered to have a **high** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

Guidance⁶

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing additional native woodland planting.
- Retain and manage the area of deciduous woodland within the area. Pursue opportunities to extend native woodland, new hedgerows and tree lines across undeveloped parts of the area as part of an integrated green infrastructure network connected to the surrounding landscape (consistent with the priorities of the River Birket Corridor Nature Improvement Area), as well as to protect visual amenity and to help integrate potential development into the landscape.
- Conserve the rural character and small scale intact historic field pattern, particularly as these ancient fieldscapes contribute towards the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Preserve the areas contribution towards the wider pattern of ancient fieldscapes in proximity to Saughall Massie.
- Preserve rural views out from and surrounding Saughall Massie Conservation Area.
- Ensure the identity of the village is maintained by retaining its existing settlement pattern, strong vernacular and wooded character.

⁶ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

Area reference: SP004A / SP005A

Figure A.13: Map of the area with designations / constraints

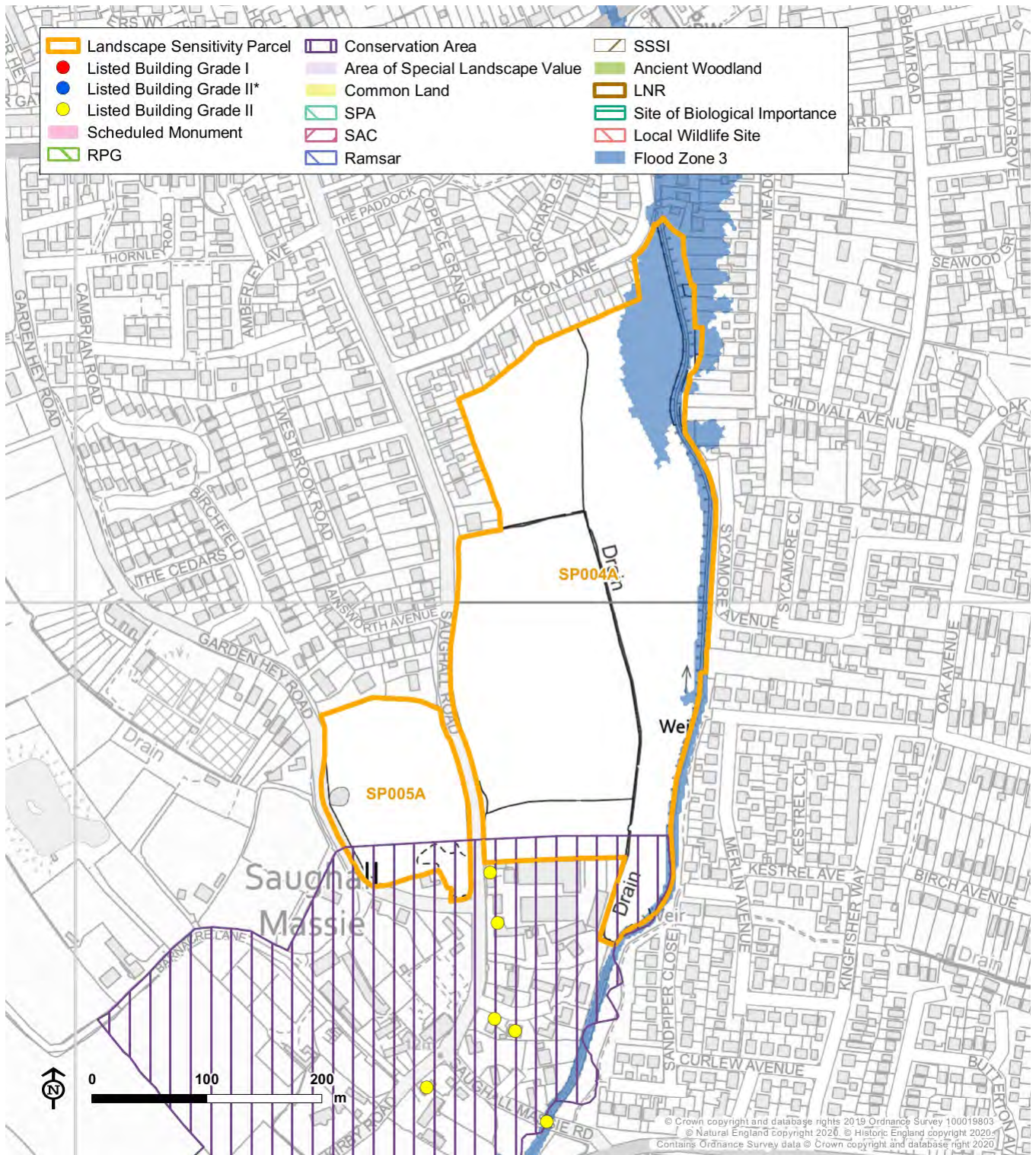


Figure A.14: Aerial photograph of the area



Figure A.15: Representative photos



Diamond Farm on the edge of Saughall Massie Conservation Area



Edge of Moreton beyond fragmented hedgerow boundaries bounding pastoral fields

Location and landscape character context

The area (incorporating SP004A and SP005A) is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the south and west of Moreton, and to the north of Saughall Massie village. Garden Hey Road forms the western boundary and Saughall Road bisects the area (marking the division of the two land parcels).

The area lies within The Birket LCA, forming part of the River Floodplain LCT. It comprises small-medium scale pastoral fields on gently sloping ground, falling towards Arrowe Brook which runs along the eastern edge of the area.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). However, Arrowe Brook is a key feature along the eastern edge of the area, contributing to the setting of both Moreton and Saughall Massie settlement edges. The Conservation Area at Saughall Massie contributes to the overall value, extending into the southern edge of the area, and with clear intervisibility with most of the area.

The area's use as working farmland for grazing restricts public access, resulting in no recreational value.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	<p>The landform gently falls from the edge of Saughall Massie in the south-west (15m AOD) to Arrowe Brook (10m AOD) which flows south to north along the eastern boundary, indicating lower levels of sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>The area has a mixture of regular and irregular fields, which are small to medium in size and mostly bound by mature hedgerows/ The field pattern is partly due to the meandering nature of Arrowe Brook and Saughall Road which bisects the area. These hedgerows and the occasional trees that line Arrowe Brook, provide a modest density of small-scale landscape features, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Natural Character	<p>The area comprises areas that are farmed or managed for pastoral use and apart from Saughall Road which cuts through the area, is absent of existing development. However overall, there is limited coverage of semi-natural habitats resulting in lower sensitivity to residential development.</p>

	<p>Pockets of valued natural features consisting of hedgerows and hedgerow trees (including those lining the course of Arrove Brook and along either side of Saughall Road and Garden Hey Road) and the group of shrubs surrounding a field pond in the south-west indicate higher sensitivity to residential development. In some places, hedgerows are fragmented and post and wire fencing occurs which lowers the sensitivity to residential development.</p>
Historic landscape character	<p>The Cheshire HLC indicates that the area comprises ancient fieldscapes (pre-1600) that have been categorised as Medieval Town Fields indicating a sense of time depth. This is characteristic of the landscape surrounding Saughall Massie and increases the sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>Land to the south within the area, which buffers the village core of Saughall Massie, forms part of its conservation area, making this part of the area highly sensitive to residential development. SP005A lies within an area of archaeological importance.</p> <p>There are no other heritage assets within the area.</p>
Character and setting of existing settlement	<p>The area plays a role in the separation of Moreton to the north and east from Saughall Massie village in the south, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. There is intervisibility between the two settlements, although the gap is best perceived when travelling along both Saughall Road and Garden Hey Road.</p> <p>The area also provides a highly rural setting to Saughall Massie village which residential development would adversely affect, particularly alongside the Conservation Area where it contributes towards the setting of Diamond Farmhouse and attached barn (Grade II listed) where there is clear intervisibility with the area. This is recognised in the Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan⁷ which states, '<i>The agricultural land outside the conservation area is also critical to its setting and visual character.</i>' This indicates higher levels of sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>Much of the Moreton urban area is exposed to the area, and further development could be in accordance with the pattern and form of this existing development, while providing opportunities to improve and integrate the rural settlement edge. However the area provides a rural setting to these settlement edges with uninterrupted views afforded from some areas towards Saughall Massie, where groups of trees within the village provide a backdrop and form features on the skyline indicating a higher level of sensitivity. Arrove Brook contributes towards the identity of the Moreton settlement edge along the eastern boundary of the area, increasing the sensitivity to residential development in this area.</p>
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>The area is visually enclosed on most of its sides by surrounding built development, including large farm sheds to the south, restricting intervisibility with the wider landscape and indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development. However, the ground is slightly elevated along its eastern edge above Arrove Brook resulting in some visual prominence when viewed from areas to the east, increasing sensitivity to residential development in this area. The area also contributes towards the setting of Arrove Brook, with varying levels of openness and enclosure along its course.</p>
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>Although largely a rural agricultural landscape, the area is influenced by surrounding development, disturbing its scenic value and limiting dark night skies through existing light sources including street lighting along Saughall Road, and therefore decreasing the sensitivity to residential development. There is also some aural intrusion from Saughall Road.</p>

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The presence of the vegetated Arrove Brook (contributing towards the identity of the Moreton settlement edge), elevated ground in the west (resulting in some visual prominence), historic field patterns, the role the area plays in contributing towards a perceived gap between settlements and its contribution towards the setting of Saughall Massie Conservation Area, increases sensitivity. Sensitivity is slightly lowered by the gently sloping landform, limited coverage of semi-natural habitats high mature hedgerows along road boundaries and surrounding human influences. Overall, the area is considered to have a **moderate-high** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

⁷ Donald Inshall Associates Ltd (2007) Saughall Massie Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

Guidance⁸

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing native woodland planting.
- Restore hedgerow boundaries where these are fragmented and replace post and wire fencing with native hedgerow species.
- Pursue opportunities to plant native woodland, new hedgerows and tree lines across undeveloped parts of the area as part of an integrated green infrastructure network connected to the surrounding landscape (consistent with the priorities of the River Birket Corridor Nature Improvement Area), as well as to protect visual amenity and to help integrate potential development into the landscape.
- Preserve the open setting and natural meandering character of Arrowe Brook, avoiding development that will change its course or introduce artificial banks.
- Conserve the rural character and small to medium scale intact historic field pattern, particularly in proximity to Saughall Massie village where the area contributes towards the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Conserve the field pond which is a characteristic feature of the area.
- Avoid visually intrusive development on more elevated areas along the western edge of the area.
- Ensure the function of the area as a perceived gap is maintained by providing a clear physical and visual separation between Saughall Massie, Moreton and Upton.

⁸ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

Area reference: SP010A

Figure A.16: Map of the area with designations / constraints

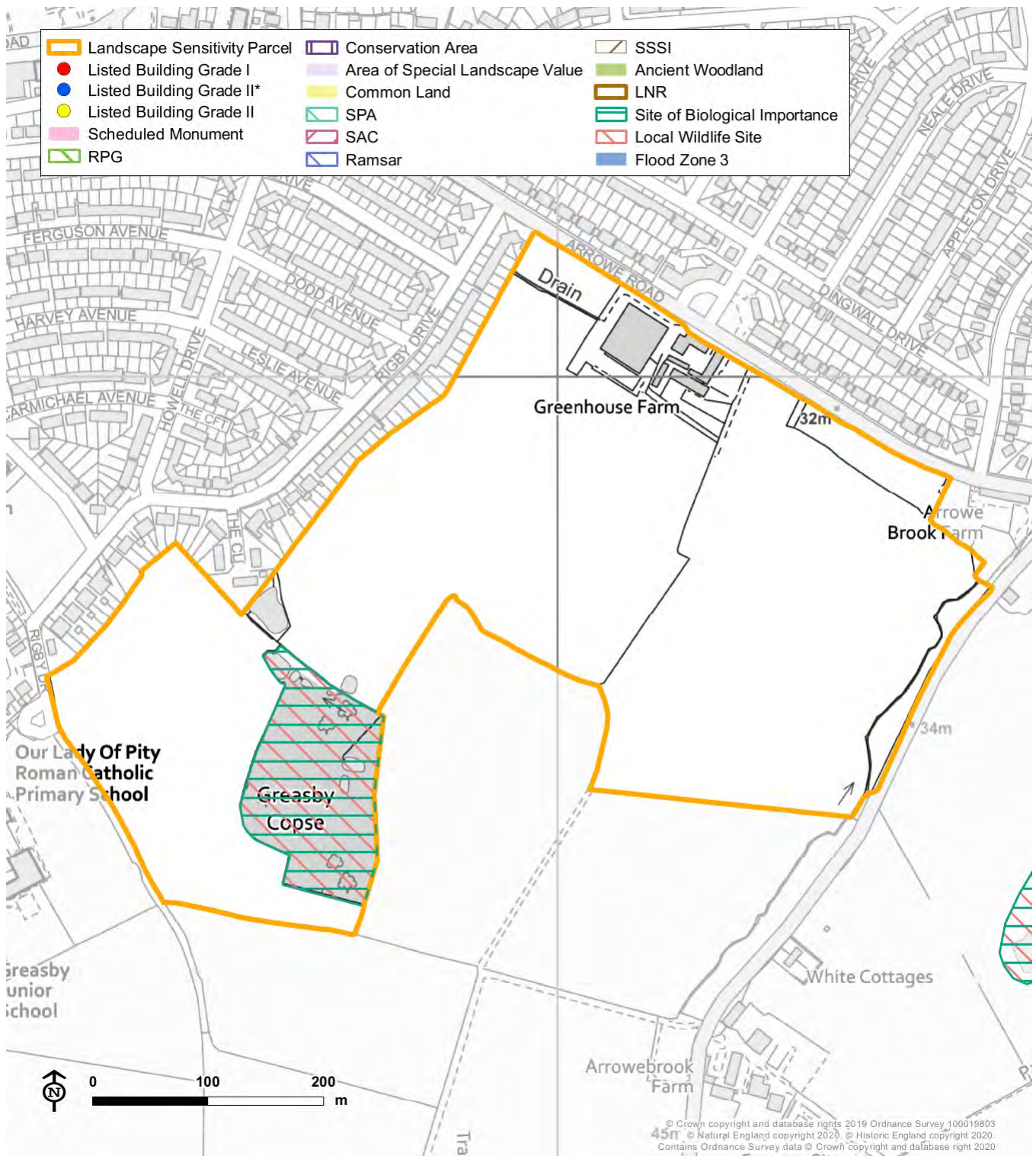


Figure A.17: Aerial photograph of the area



Figure A.18: Representative photos



Pastoral fields on sloping ground



Greasby Copse

Location and landscape character context

The area is situated in the west of the borough and lies to the south-east of Greasby. It is irregular in shape with field boundaries defining the majority of its edges. Arrowe Road and Arrowe Brook Lane run along the north-eastern and eastern boundaries respectively.

The area lies within the Thurstaston and Greasby LCA, forming part of the Sandstone Hills LCT. Gentle slopes falling towards Arrowe Brook in the north and east and Greasby Brook in the west characterise the area, which comprises pasture farmland in the form of small-medium scale fields.

Landscape value

This area is not subject to any landscape designations (national or local). However, the Greasby Copse and Ponds is a key feature, distinctive for its vegetation and valued for its contribution to biodiversity, designated as a Local Wildlife Site / Site of Biological Importance.

The area's use as working farmland for grazing restricts public access resulting in there being no recreational value.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	The gently undulating landform falls to the east and north-west (from 50m to 30m AOD) from a local high point just south of the area, indicating lower levels of sensitivity to residential development. The area is overlain by a pattern of geometric and rectangular fields that are small to medium in size and mostly formed by hedgerows (although hedgerow trees are largely absent within the area). Greasby Copse lies in the south-west and a small amount of tree cover lines a drain along the eastern boundary. Overall there is a modest density of small-scale landscape features, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development.
Natural Character	Much of the area comprises areas that are farmed or managed for pastoral use, associated with dairy production at Appleby's Farm off Arrowe Road in the north. There is some existing development present; namely a cluster of buildings at the farm, and a limited coverage of semi-natural habitats resulting in lower sensitivity to residential development.

	A higher sensitivity to residential development exists where there is an area of priority habitat lowland mixed deciduous woodland at Greasby Copse (forming part of the designated Greasby Copse and Ponds Local Wildlife Site / Site of Biological Importance). Valued natural features include hedgerows and small pockets of trees/ shrubs surrounding field ponds in the south-west as well as lining a field drain along the eastern boundary.
Historic landscape character	The Cheshire HLC indicates that the area contains little time depth which decreases sensitivity to residential development. A large proportion of the area consists of Post Medieval Landscapes, with fields categorised as Late Post Medieval Agricultural Improvement in the west. Greasby Copse is characterised as a Post Medieval Plantation. In the east, the land is categorised as 20 th Century Field Systems. There are no designated heritage assets within the area, however it was screened as high for archaeological issues by Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. The area would therefore require further archaeological investigation as part of any proposed development.
Character and setting of existing settlement	The area is located within a larger area that separates the settlements of Greasby in the north from Irby in the south, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. The gap is best perceived when travelling along Mill Lane/Mill Hill Road which provides a connection between the two settlements; however the gap is weakened by limited intervisibility between the two settlements and ribbon development along the road. Much of the Greasby urban area is exposed to the area, and further development could be in accordance with the pattern and form of this existing development, while providing opportunities to improve and integrate the hard settlement edge. The area provides a rural setting to this settlement edge with uninterrupted views afforded towards wooded skylines that include Greasby Copse and other surrounding woodland, indicating a high level of sensitivity.
Views and visual character including skylines	The area is semi-enclosed by surrounding built development and by the woodland at Greasby Copse indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development. Although field boundaries are typically formed by low hedgerows within the area, intervisibility with the surrounding landscape is limited by the rising topography to the south. Mature vegetated boundaries exist along the north-eastern and eastern edges of the area; namely the high hedgerow along Arrowe Road and the wooded character along Arrowe Brook, which also restrict views from the wider landscape. Elevated ground in the south results in some visual prominence from surrounding areas (particularly from areas to the north-east) and increases the sensitivity to residential development in this area. Greasby Copse also provides a visually distinctive feature on the skyline from surrounding areas resulting in a higher sensitivity to residential development.
Perceptual and experiential qualities	Although largely an undeveloped and rural agricultural landscape, the area is influenced by surrounding development, disturbing its scenic value and limiting dark night skies through existing light sources, which decreases the sensitivity to residential development. A small margin of land running along the edge of Arrowe Road in the north is used for equestrian related activities, and being associated as an urban fringe element, reduces sensitivity to residential development. There are pockets of tranquillity located away from the urban edge and enclosed by Greasby Copse which results in higher levels of tranquillity.

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The elevated nature of the landscape in the south (resulting in some visual prominence), the localised natural habitats and features, the role the area plays in contributing towards a perceived gap between settlements, and the role Greasby Copse plays in providing a distinctive skyline feature increase sensitivity. However, the limited coverage of semi-natural habitats (outside of Greasby Copse and Ponds), the surrounding human influences and equestrian uses (which are typical of the urban fringe) and the visual enclosure to the area lower sensitivity. Overall, the area is considered to have **low-moderate** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

There is a higher sensitivity in areas close to Greasby Copse where development could affect its wooded character and its contribution towards tranquillity.

Guidance⁹

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing additional native woodland planting.
- Retain and manage the area of deciduous woodland at Greasby Copse. Pursue opportunities to extend native woodland across undeveloped parts of the area as part of an integrated green infrastructure network connected to the surrounding landscape, to protect visual amenity and to help integrate potential development into the landscape.
- Conserve the wooded field ponds which are characteristic features of the area.
- Avoid visually intrusive development on prominent slopes and elevated areas in the south, ensuring that views towards Greasby Copse are conserved and enhanced through additional planting.
- Ensure the function of the area as a perceived gap is maintained by providing a clear physical and visual separation between adjacent settlements.

⁹ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.

Area reference: SP013

Figure A.19: Map of the area with designations / constraints

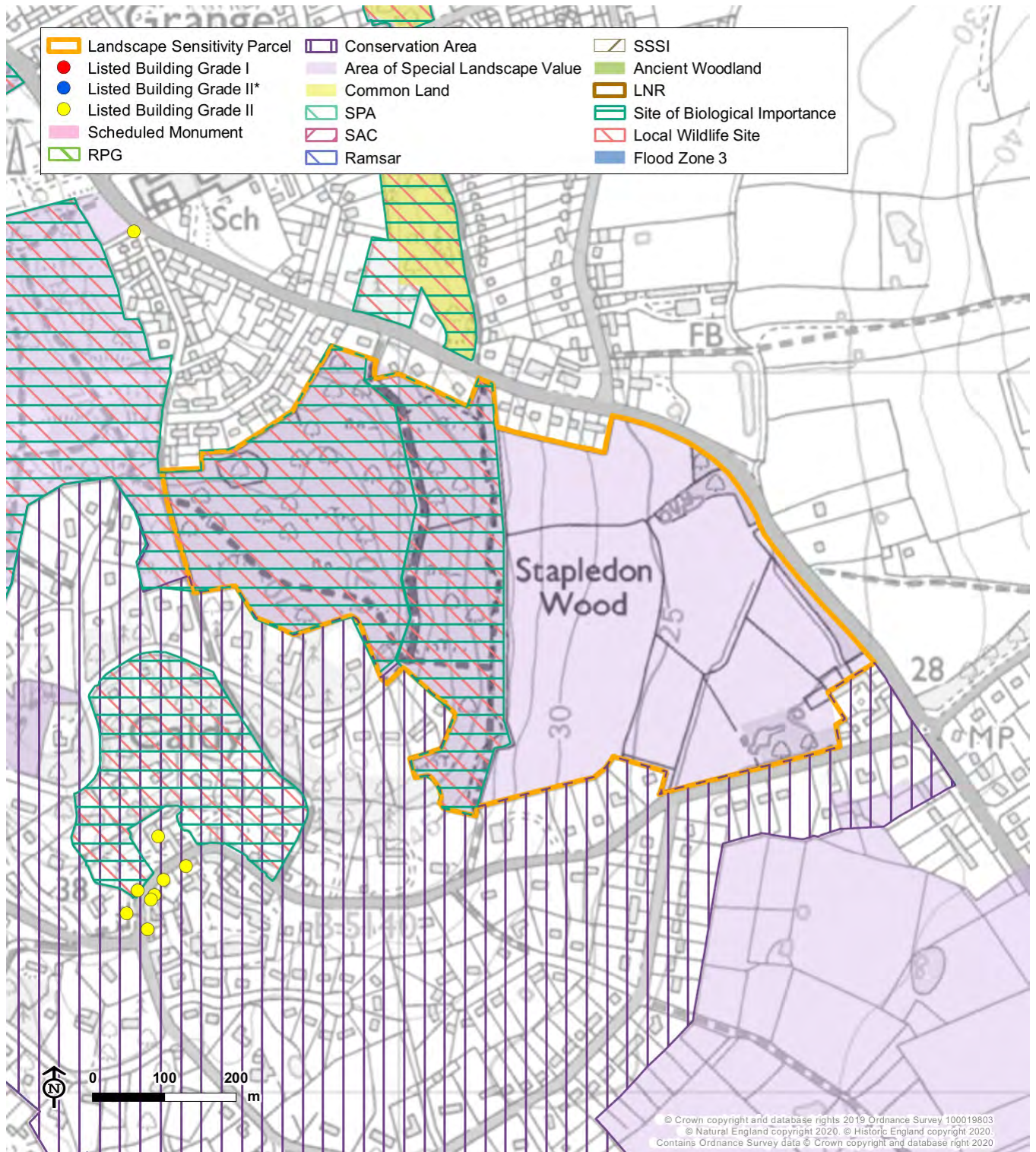


Figure A.20: Aerial photograph of the area



Figure A.21: Representative photos



Stapledon Wood on elevated ground forming a skyline feature



Views across the area from the edge of Stapledon Wood

Location and landscape character context

The area is situated in the north-west of the borough and lies to the north of Caldy and south of Newton. It is irregular in shape with the A540 Column Road wrapping around the northern and north-eastern boundaries. Caldy Road (B5140) runs along the southern boundary and detached dwellings surrounded by woodland at Caldy Hill forms the south-western edge. Properties along Boundary Road define the north-western boundary.

The area lies within the Thurstaston and Greasby LCA, forming part of the Sandstone Hills LCT. The western half of the area is covered by woodland (Stapledon Wood and Caldy Hill) and a mix of arable and pastoral fields of a small-medium scale are in the east.

Landscape value

The area forms part of an Area of Special Landscape Value which covers Stapledon Wood and Caldy Hill. These woodlands are key features distinctive for their vegetation, and valued for their contribution to biodiversity, both being a Site of Biological Importance / Local Wildlife Site. The Conservation Area at Caldy (which lies adjacent to the area) also contributes to the overall value, given the intervisibility between it and the area.

The woodlands within the west are accessible by public rights of way that run through it, providing recreational value to the area. The working farmland for crops and livestock limits the recreational value in the eastern half of the area.

The table below incorporates these indicators of value into the assessment of sensitivity.

Assessment Criterion	Landscape Sensitivity Description
Physical Character (including topography and scale)	<p>The area comprises a varied landform. In the east, fields are relatively flat and low lying (25m AOD), indicating lower sensitivity to residential development. The land then rises to the west where it becomes very steep along the eastern edge of Stapledon Wood forming a relatively distinctive feature resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. The landform continues to rise steeply within the wooded areas towards high ground (75m AOD) along the western edge of the area.</p> <p>The extensive coverage of woodland across the western half of the area along with small woodland copses, hedgerows and hedgerow trees in the eastern half results in a high density of small-scale landscape features resulting in a higher sensitivity to residential development.</p>

Natural Character	<p>The east of the area is intensively farmed or managed (through both arable and pastoral practices), with some existing development present (stables with outdoor riding arena in the south-eastern corner), resulting in lower sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>Higher sensitivity to residential development exists where there are areas of valued semi-natural habitats, including Priority Habitat Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland; the largest area being Stapledon Wood and Caldý Hill in the western half (both designated as a Site of Biological Importance / Local Wildlife Site). Other valued natural features include hedgerows enhanced occasionally with hedgerow trees, small woodland copses (Priority Habitat Lowland Mixed Broad-leaf Woodland) and small pockets of trees/ shrubs surrounding field ponds.</p>
Historic landscape character	<p>The area consists of small to medium scale fields that have a semi-regular pattern as a result of the Post Medieval Planned Enclosure in the eastern half (as categorised by the Cheshire Historic Landscape Characterisation), along with Post Medieval Woodland / Plantation. The area also includes land categorised as 20th Century Settlement in the south-eastern corner. The area therefore has little time depth indicating lower sensitivity to residential development.</p> <p>There are no heritage assets within the area; however the area lies directly adjacent to the village of Caldý, located to the south, which is designated as a Conservation Area.</p>
Character and setting of existing settlement	<p>The area plays a role in the separation of Newton in the north from Caldý in the south, resulting in a higher level of sensitivity to residential development. The gap is best perceived when travelling along the public right of way running along the eastern edge of Stapledon Wood providing a connection between the two settlements.</p> <p>The area also provides both a wooded and rural setting to Caldý which residential development could adversely affect, indicating a higher sensitivity to residential development. While the woodland in the western half provides a backdrop to views from within Caldý, the importance of the fields in the east are also recognised in the Caldý Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan¹⁰ which states, <i>'On entering the village from Telegraph Road there are views out into the open fields lying on the north side of Caldý Road and south east of the hill'</i>.</p> <p>The surrounding settlement edges are generally well integrated into the landscape by woodland indicating higher sensitivity to residential development. Parts of Caldý in the south-east are of lower sensitivity to residential development where the setting is already influenced by equestrian related use.</p>
Views and visual character including skylines	<p>The area is visually enclosed by surrounding built development, as well as by woodland at Stapledon Wood and along the A540 Column Road, indicating a lower sensitivity to residential development. However, woodland in the western half of the area is located on elevated ground forming a skyline feature, increasing sensitivity. The steeper slope immediately to the east of Stapledon Wood also results in some visual prominence from surrounding areas.</p>
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<p>The enclosure provided by the woodland in the western half of the area provides a sense of tranquillity and perceived naturalness indicating higher levels of sensitivity to residential development. Although largely a rural agricultural landscape, the eastern half of the area is influenced by surrounding development, disturbing its scenic value and limiting dark night skies through existing light sources. It is also influenced by the equestrian uses in the south-western corner, and aural intrusion from the A540 which decreases the sensitivity to residential development.</p>

Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity to future change from residential development

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The area is locally designated as part of an Area of Special Landscape Value. The steep sloping landform along the eastern edge of Stapledon Wood (resulting in some visual prominence), localised natural habitats and features and the role the area plays in contributing towards a perceived gap between settlements and the setting to Caldý Conservation Area increase sensitivity. The flatter landform further to the east, the presence of equestrian facilities and visual enclosure slightly reduces sensitivity. Overall, the eastern half of the area is considered to have **moderate-high** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development with lower sensitivity on lower more enclosed ground to the south east.

The elevated nature of the woodland in the western half of the area (resulting in it being a distinctive skyline feature), its contribution towards biodiversity as a natural habitat, its role in providing a wooded setting to Caldý, its recreational

¹⁰ Donald Insall Associates Ltd (2007) Caldý Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

value and its contribution towards providing a sense of tranquillity results in a **high** sensitivity to any potential future change from residential development.

Guidance¹¹

Given the overall assessment of landscape sensitivity outlined above, the following general guidance applies to any development on this area:

- Conserve and reinforce the network of native hedgerows and seek to create a stronger landscape structure to integrate development by increasing the presence of hedgerow trees and providing additional native woodland planting.
- Retain and manage areas of deciduous and broadleaf woodland within and along the edge of the area. Pursue opportunities to extend native woodland across undeveloped parts of the area as part of an integrated green infrastructure network connected to the surrounding landscape, to protect visual amenity and to help integrate potential development into the landscape.
- Maintain the extent and increase species diversity of existing grassland (and revert other areas to grassland) in order to support surrounding heathland (consistent with the priorities of the West Wirral Heathlands and Arrowe Park Nature Improvement Area).
- Conserve the rural character particularly in proximity to Caldy where the area contributes towards the setting of the Conservation Area.
- Conserve the wooded field ponds.
- Preserve the woodlands in the western half of the area as landscape features and retain the role they play in the setting of Caldy, ensuring that their intimate character is retained.
- Preserve rural views out from and surrounding Caldy Conservation Area.
- Avoid visually intrusive development on prominent slopes and elevated areas along the eastern edge of Stapledon Wood, ensuring that wooded skylines are conserved and enhanced through additional planting.
- Ensure the function of the area as a perceived gap is maintained by providing a clear physical and visual separation between adjacent settlements.
- Protect and enhance the public rights of way running through the woodlands and promote further opportunities to increase access and enjoyment of the landscape in association with any new development.

¹¹ The guidance provided should not be interpreted to the effect that residential development of the scale assessed would be considered acceptable in principle in landscape terms.