

# Ashby de la Zouch

Design guidance and codes

Final report  
July 2023

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## Quality information

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## Revision History

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INTRODUCTION

# 01

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document sets out design guidance and codes based on the existing features of Ashby. This historic and fast growing town has seen layers of development spanning centuries and requires a context specific design approach.

Through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design guidance to support the Steering Group (SG).

### WHAT IS GUIDANCE AND WHAT IS CODE?

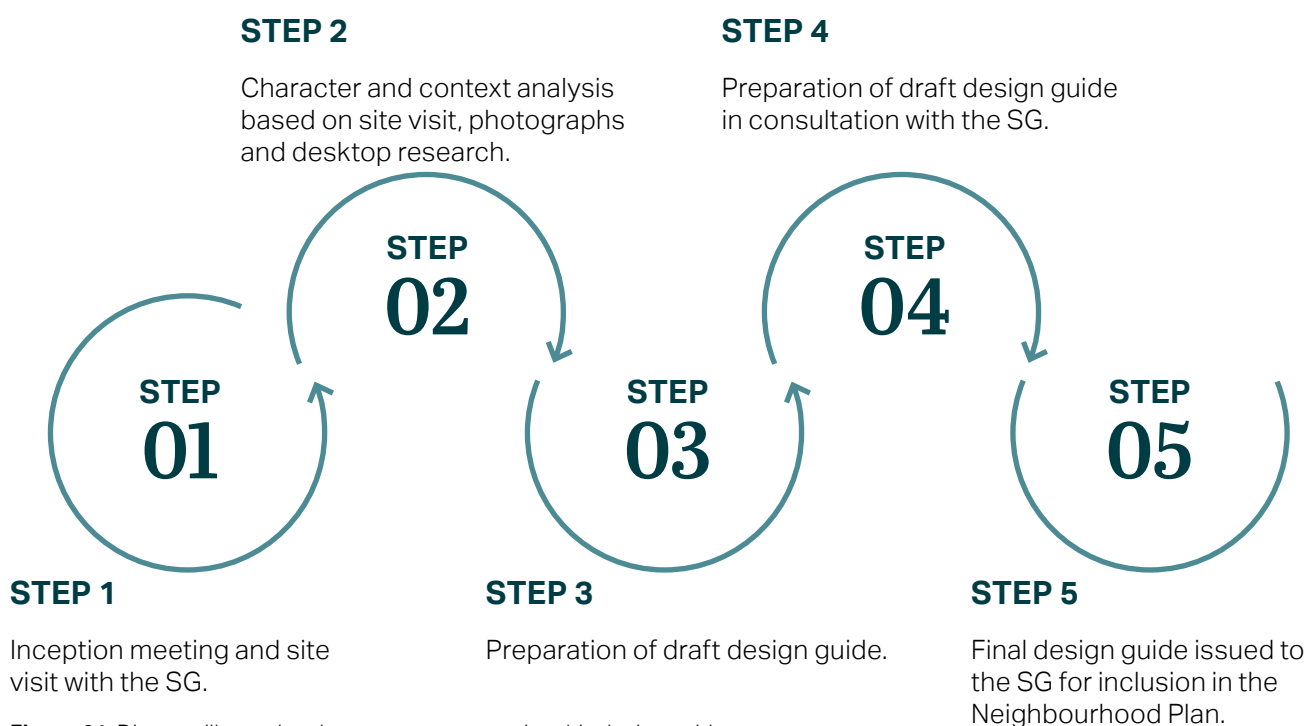
**Codes** are to be understood as specific instructions which give clear directions for the development of design proposals.

Additional suggestive information including diagrammatic illustrations are intended as best-practice **Guidance** only.

The Design Code is intended to sit alongside the Neighbourhood Plan to provide guidance for applicants preparing proposals in the area and as a guide for the Town Council when making comments on planning proposals and applications, and North West Leicestershire District Council when considering and making decisions on planning applications. It sets out the expectations for proposals and ensures that they will reflect Ashby's key characteristics.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY

To ensure this design guide accurately reflects the Ashby community's aspirations, the SG provided AECOM with guidance and local knowledge. **Figure 1** provides a brief overview of the process:



**Figure 01:** Diagram illustrating the process to preparing this design guide





**Figure 02:** Map showing the Ashby Neighbourhood Area.



## 1.3 STUDY AREA

Ashby de la Zouch (locally shortened to Ashby) is a market town and civil parish in Leicestershire within the North West Leicestershire district. The Neighbourhood Area (NA) comprises of the majority of the Parish of Ashby. Ashby is located at the centre of the National Forest and sits on the borders of Leicestershire and Derbyshire. The town has a vibrant high street hosting shops, cafes, restaurants, and pubs. It also has significant areas of light industry, manufacturing and employment on its outskirts, especially distribution. The town sits in the heart of the informally known Golden triangle for logistics, as it is accessible to most of England within four hours by the motorway network. Ashby Castle is a major local historic landmark.

Ashby is positioned just northwest of the A42 bypass which links Nottingham and Birmingham. The A511 bypasses the town to the north, linking Leicester to Stoke-on-Trent, and the nearby towns of Swadlincote and Coalville where the district council is headquartered. The nearest train stations are in Burton-upon-Trent on the Birmingham to Derby line which is approximately 8 miles northeast, Tamworth on the West Coast Mainline 12 miles to the southwest and Loughborough on the Midland line 14 miles to the east. Ashby is crossed by the Leicester-Burton upon Trent rail line to the south and was served by a station until 1964, the railway remains open for freight. There are aspirations to reopen the railway line for passenger services in the future.

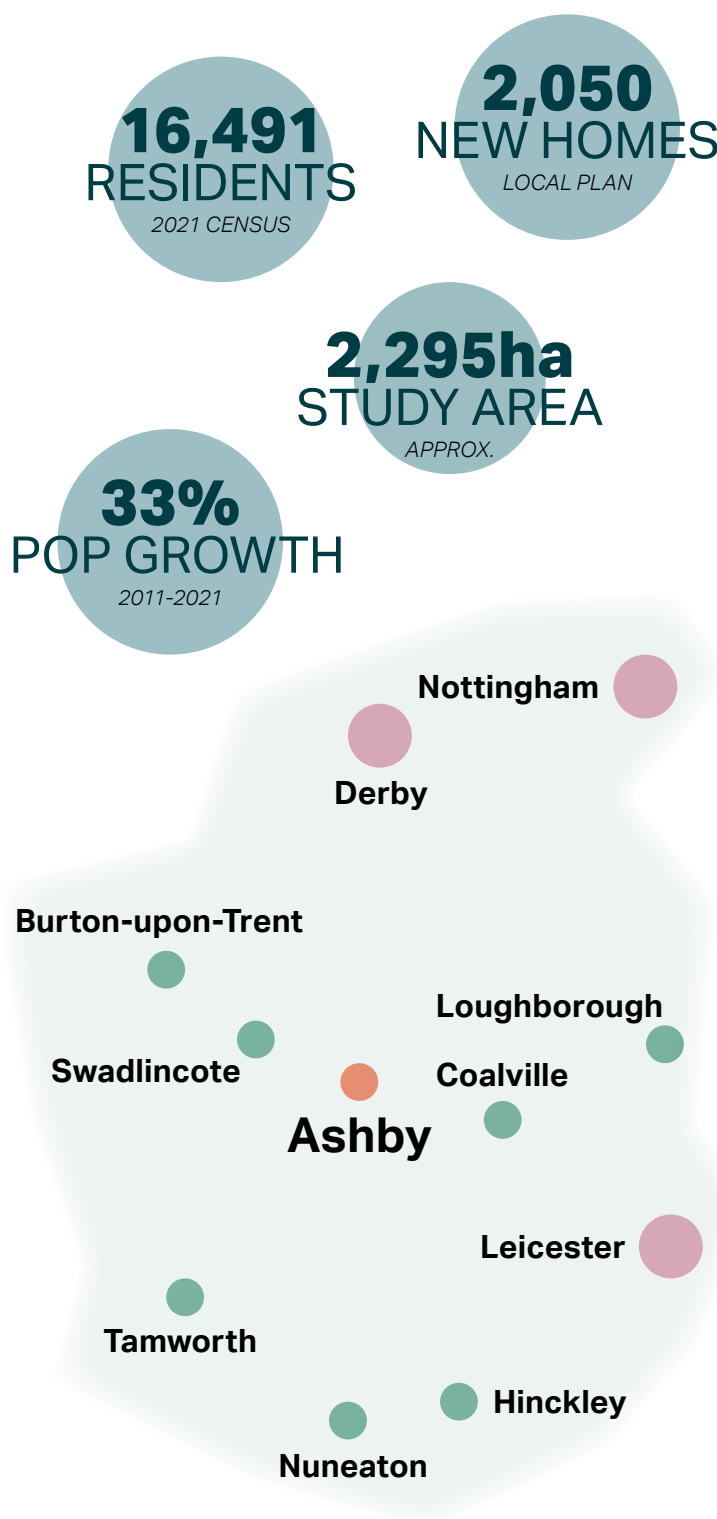


Figure 03: Ashby's nearest major settlements





**Figure 04:** Our Lady of Lourdes Church (above - left).  
**Figure 05:** Northward view of Market Street (above - right).  
**Figure 06:** Eastward view of South Street (below - left).  
**Figure 07:** Interior of Ashby Market, Market Street (below - right).



## 1.4 HOW TO USE THIS DESIGN GUIDE

This design guide should be a valuable tool in securing locally distinctive, high quality development in Ashby. It may be used differently by various stakeholders during the planning and development process, as summarised in **Table 1**.

A valuable way the design guide can be used is as part of a process of co-design and involvement that seeks to understand and take account of local preferences and expectation for design quality. As such, the Design Guidelines and Codes (refer to **Section 4**) can help to facilitate conversations on the various topics to help align expectation and aid understanding on key local issues. The design guide alone will not automatically secure optimum design outcomes, but should help to influence that.

Stakeholders	How they may use this design guide
<b>Applicants, developers and landowners</b>	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authority expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow the Design Guidance and Codes as planning consent is sought.
<b>North West Leicestershire District Council</b>	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which to assess planning applications.  The Design Guidance and Codes should be discussed with applicants during any pre-application engagement.
<b>Ashby Town Council</b>	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the Design Guidelines and Codes are complied with.
<b>Ashby community organisations</b>	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
<b>Statutory consultees</b>	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

**Table 01:** How stakeholders may use this design guide



## 1.5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

This section outlines the national and local planning policy and guidance documents that have influenced, and should be read in conjunction with, this design guide.

### 1.5.1 NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

#### **(2021) National Planning Policy Framework**

Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

Development needs to consider national level planning policy guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) and the associated National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In particular, the NPPF Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It sets out a number of principles that planning policies and decisions should consider ensuring that new developments are well-designed and focus on quality.

#### **(2021) National Model Design Code** DLUHC

The National Model Design Code 2021 provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide. This guide should be used as reference for new development.

#### **(2021) National Design Guide** DLUHC

The National Design Guide 2021 illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.

#### **(2020) Building for a Healthy Life** Homes England

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is the Government-endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The BHL toolkit sets out principles to help guide discussions on planning applications and to help local planning authorities to assess the quality of proposed (and completed) developments, but can also provide useful prompts and questions for planning applicants to consider during the different stages of the design process.

BHL is supported by Streets for a Healthy Life, which demonstrates what can be achieved in creating streets as places for people.

#### **(2007) Manual for Streets** Department for Transport

Development is expected to respond positively to the Manual for Streets 2007, the Government's guidance on how to design, construct, adopt and maintain new and existing residential streets. It promotes streets and wider development that avoid car dominated layouts and place the needs of pedestrians and cyclists first.

## **1.5.2 LOCAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

### **(2017) North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2011 to 2031**

#### **North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC)**

The preparation of the Local Plan has included a number of consultations and the plan was the subject of an Examination in early 2017. Following receipt of the Inspector's Report in October 2017, the plan was adopted in November 2017.

The adopted Local Plan together with the Neighbourhood Plans and the Minerals and Waste Local Plan prepared by Leicestershire County Council comprise the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire. The Development Plan provides the basis for determining planning applications.

This Local Plan replaces the 2002 adopted Local Plan.

### **(2014) North West Leicestershire Local Growth Plan 2014 - 2018**

#### **NWLDC**

This Local Economic Growth Plan sets out the growth priorities for North West Leicestershire to 2018. The Growth Plan has been facilitated by North West Leicestershire District Council, working with a range of partners active in supporting economic growth and inclusion. The development of the Growth Plan has run concurrently with the consultation process for economic strategies for Leicester and Leicestershire

### **(2019) Money Hill Wider Site Masterplan**

#### **NWLDC**

The site promoter has been working with the district council and a range of other stakeholders to develop this masterplan which shows how it is envisaged that the site would be developed. The total allocation for Money Hill site in the NWLDC Local Plan is for 2,050 houses, including those that

have already received planning permission (605 in south) and Arla Dairy site.

The masterplan has been in preparation since 2016 and has been the subject of extensive dialogue with key consultees.

The final version of the Money Hill wider site Masterplan was approved by the Council in December 2019 following extensive dialogue with key stakeholders and public consultations since 2016. It will now be used to help guide development of the Money Hill site.

### **Good Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

#### **NWLDC**

The Good Design SPD details the Council's policies for good design which are based on a series of place making principles. The policies apply to all development within North West Leicestershire and will also apply to any land disposed of or developed by the District Council.

### **Shop Fronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

#### **NWLDC**

In most instances the installation or alteration of a shop front would require Planning Permission. In some instances the installation of advertisements on business premises would require Advertisement Consent. This document will guide the District Council in determining relevant applications for Planning Permission or Advertisement Consent.

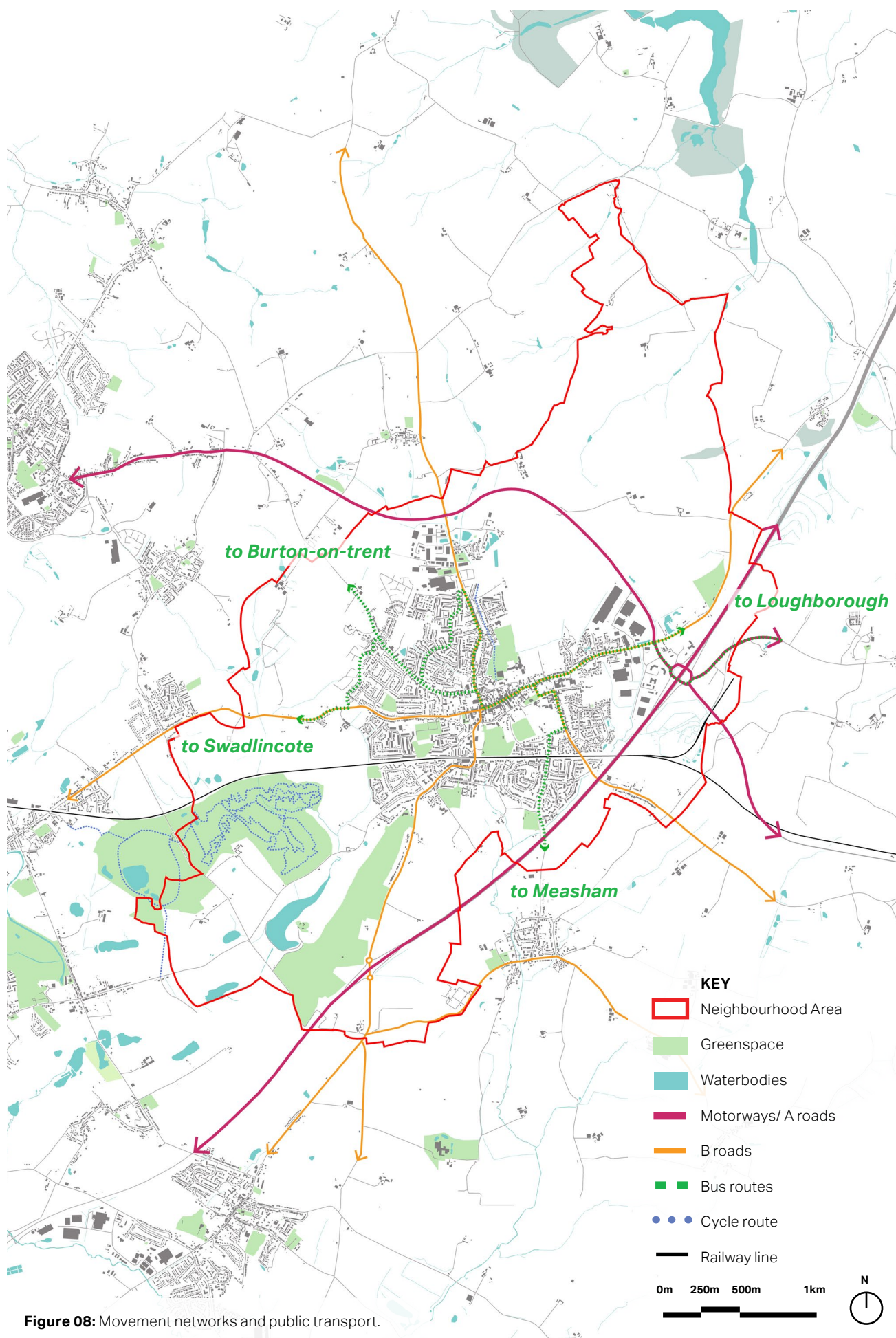




CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

02





**Figure 08:** Movement networks and public transport.



## 2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

**This section presents the context of the Neighbourhood Area to inform the design objectives of the Design Guidance and Codes. It provides an overview of Ashby's heritage, landscape, ecology, and movement network.**

### 2.1 MOVEMENT NETWORK

#### 2.1.1 ROADS

Ashby has a comprehensive network of primary and secondary roads. The A42 passes the town on its immediate south eastern boundary. This is a trunk road forming part of the network between Nottingham and Birmingham, northwards the road links to the M1 and southwards to the M42 and M6.

Ashby is bypassed to the north by the A511 with links the town with Coalville, and Burton upon Trent.

Ashby's town centre is bisected by two A roads running north-south and east-west. Running east-west and linking westward to the village of Moira is the Ashby Road. This route becomes Moira Road, Kilwardby Street and then Market Street on approach to the town from the east.

Smisby Road approaches the town centre from the north before terminating at Market Street. Station Road continues northwest crossing the railway line and linking to the A42 and onwards to Measham.

Ashby's road network is generally well connected although cul-de-sac street layouts are prevalent in the late 20th and early 21st century development which circles the town centre.



**Figure 10:** Traffic moves through Ashby town centre.

**Figure 11:** Many businesses have car parks in Ashby and cars are a popular form of transport, and large amounts of land are used for parking in the outskirts. If the private car ownership model were to change in the future these sites would offer many infill opportunities.

## 2.1.2 WALKING AND CYCLE

Ashby benefits from an extensive internal footpath network, with the majority of the road network having double sided pedestrian footpaths.

A leisure cycling route currently runs north-south through Ashby town centre on Derby Road southbound to the B5006 towards Measham.

## 2.1.3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Ashby's primary mode of public transport is by bus. There are seven bus routes through the town and 71 bus stops. However, some parts of the NA are not served by bus routes, such as Willesley ward in the southwest.

A westerly loop connects Ashby to Measham in the south, onwards to Cadley Hill, and back eastwards to Ashby via Woodville. A radial route connects northwestward to Burton Upon Trent as well as eastward to Loughborough.

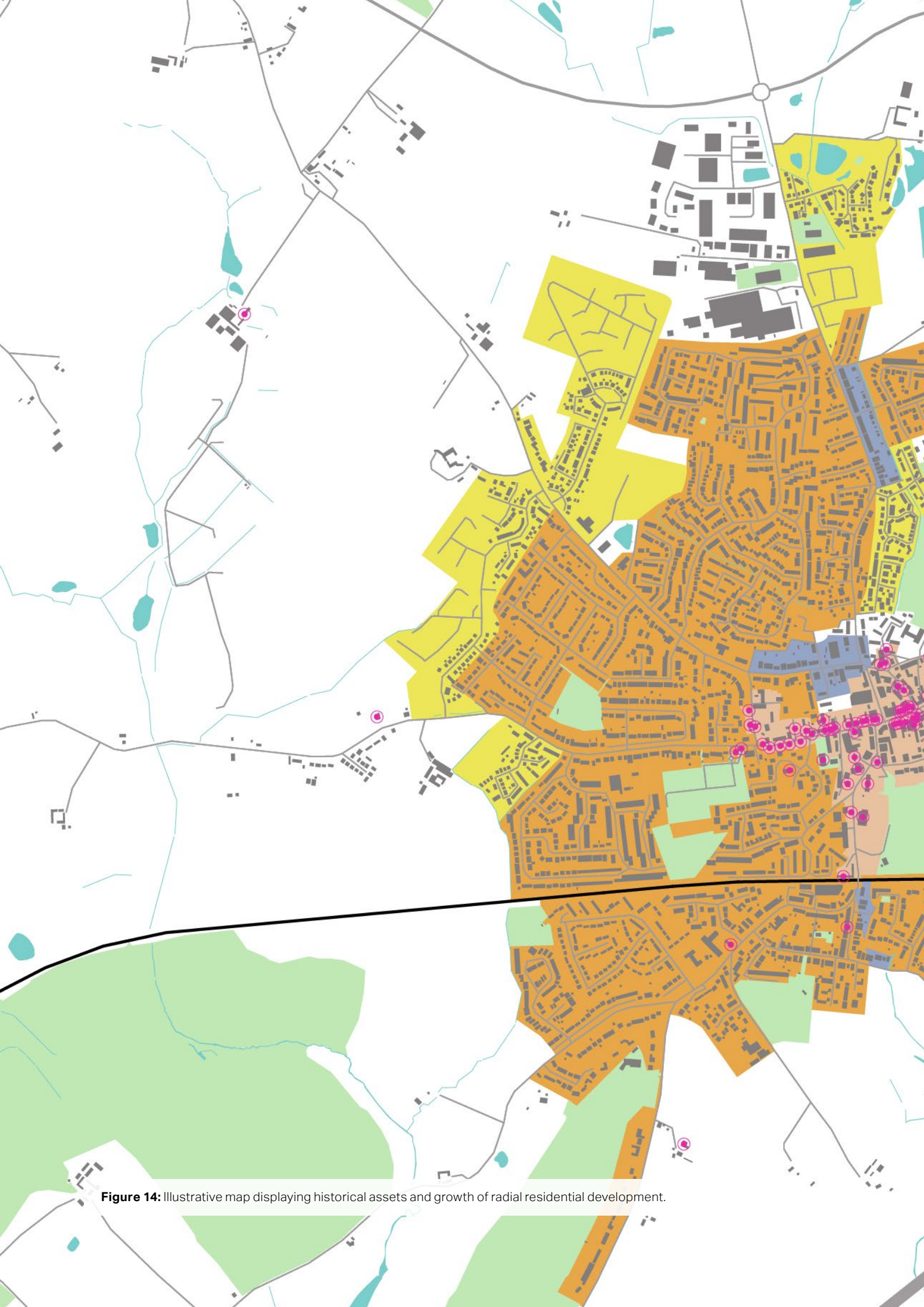
The Ashby railway line between Swannington and Burton-on-Trent is operational for freight journeys only. In 2009, the Association of Train Operating Companies published a proposal to restore passenger services to the line that would include reopening a station at Ashby. In 2018 the Campaign for Reopening of the Ivanhoe Line (CRIL), a community voluntary action group, was set up with the aim of restoring passenger services to the Burton to Leicester railway line, the group's aims include a station at Ashby.



**Figure 12:** Public footpath at the northern entrance to Ashby Bath Grounds.

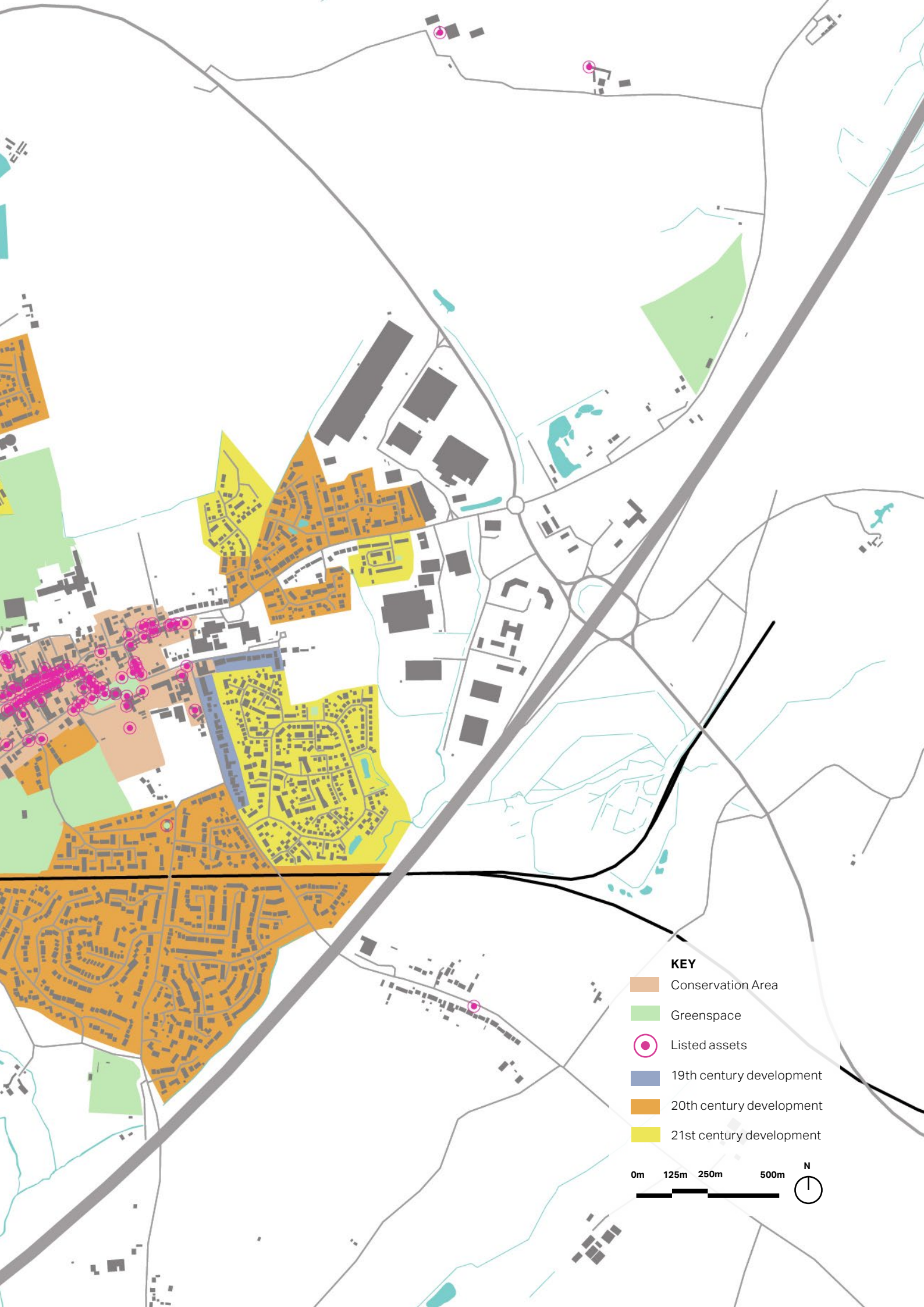
**Figure 13:** The former Ashby Railway Station now in private ownership in use as offices.





**Figure 14:** Illustrative map displaying historical assets and growth of radial residential development.





**KEY**

- Conservation Area
- Greenspace
- Listed assets
- 19th century development
- 20th century development
- 21st century development





## 2.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN FORM

### 2.1.1 ORIGINS OF THE SETTLEMENT

Ashby de la Zouch takes part of its name from the La Zouch family whom held the castle and manor from around 1160 to 1399. The town was known as 'Ashby' until 1086 meaning 'Ash-tree farm/settlement'.

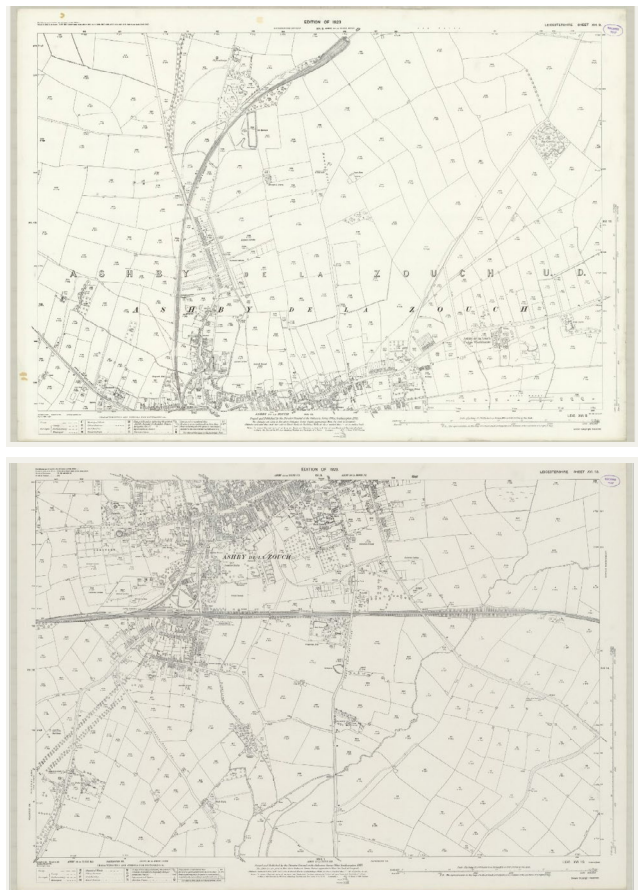
Ashby is located on a site of historical strategic importance between Nottingham and Birmingham. The town is first documented in the Domesday Book of 1086/87 when the manor and village were coextensive. Settlement in the area is likely to trace back to the Anglo-Saxon period when it is believed that there were originally two separate settlements at Ashby.

Due to its opportune location at a cross roads, a market was established between the original two settlements to capture passing trade. This medieval core is made up of the area between the parish church and lower Market Street.

Ashby Castle was one of the major influential factors on the development of the town. In 1462, William Lord Hastings was granted the manor and between 1474 and 1483, he undertook a series of building works to the castle including the erection of the tower to fortify the structure.

By the beginning of the 18th century, Ashby was considered a principal destination of coach services between London and the East Midlands. The wealth of the settlement grew up to the Georgian period when there was extensive re-fronting and rebuilding

of properties on Market Street alongside the construction of substantial dwellings at what was then the town's edge. Ashby's prosperity continued through the 19th century when a spa resort was established south-west of the centre. Water was collected from a saline spring at Moira and transported to Ashby by truck. The Ivanhoe Baths were opened in 1822 and nearby terraces were completed to provide accommodation for spa visitors.



**Figure 15:** Ordnance survey maps showing Ashby in 1923. © National Library of Scotland.

In 1849 Ashby's railway station opened on the Midland Railway's line from Leicester to Burton which encouraged further development of the town at its south-western edge. The Station was linked to the town centre by a new street joining Bath Street to the north, called Station Road.

In the later Victorian period the town became more industrial with the establishment of factories and works. Ashby's industry was additionally served by the Melbourne (Derby to Ashby) railway line from 1868.

In the second part of the 20th century, industrial manufacturing increased on the town's outskirts. This was followed by residential development around the historic core. Rapid housing growth peaked in the post-war era as Ashby became established as a commuter town. The A42 bypass was constructed in 1989.

### 2.1.2 LISTED BUILDINGS, SCHEDULED MONUMENTS

Ashby has over 120 listed buildings which are concentrated on Market Street and its surrounds within the Conservation Area. One of the most notable listed structures is the Castle which is Grade I listed as well as being a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The Parish Church of St Helen is another Grade I listed structure in Ashby dating from the fourteenth century. There are six Grade II\* listed properties of particular importance: Royal Hotel, Rawdon House/Terrace, the former Midland Railway Station (now offices), Bulls Head (no.67 Market Street), Mansion House (nos. 26 & 26A Kilwarby Street), and the Loudon Monument (Bath Street).



Figure 16: View of Ashby Castle.



Figure 17: View of St Helen's Parish Church from the east, Upper Church Street. © Alan Murray Rust.



### 2.1.3 CONSERVATION AREA TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS

Ashby de la Zouch Conservation Area became designated by Leicestershire County Council in November 1972. In September 1992 and April 2001 the Conservation Area boundaries were amended by North West Leicestershire District Council. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Study provides an analysis of the key features of Ashby Town Centre which should be preserved.<sup>1</sup>

The town centre has a Georgian and early Victorian townscape, with some examples of medieval or modern development. The Conservation Area represents the extent of Ashby's built up area during the early 19th century. Market Street is the main linear strand of development, with most buildings being of three storeys with street facing shop fronts.

Most buildings are in red brick typical of this part of the midlands, and showcase a grand but restrained Georgian and early Victorian style. The Town Hall, HSBC formerly Midland Bank building, Ashby Baptist Church and Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady of Lourdes and the Loudoun Memorial are examples of fine landmark buildings which help to frame the Conservation Area.



**Figure 18:** HSBC, formerly Midland Bank building, dating to 1891, and Georgian buildings to the right.



**Figure 19:** The Lamb Inn. 16th century, Grade II listed.



**Figure 20:** The Bulls Head, 16th century, Grade II\* listed.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/ashby\\_de\\_la\\_zouch\\_conservation\\_area\\_appraisal\\_and\\_study/Ashby%20de%20la%20Zouch%20Conservation%20Area%20Appraisal%20and%20Study.pdf](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk/files/documents/ashby_de_la_zouch_conservation_area_appraisal_and_study/Ashby%20de%20la%20Zouch%20Conservation%20Area%20Appraisal%20and%20Study.pdf)

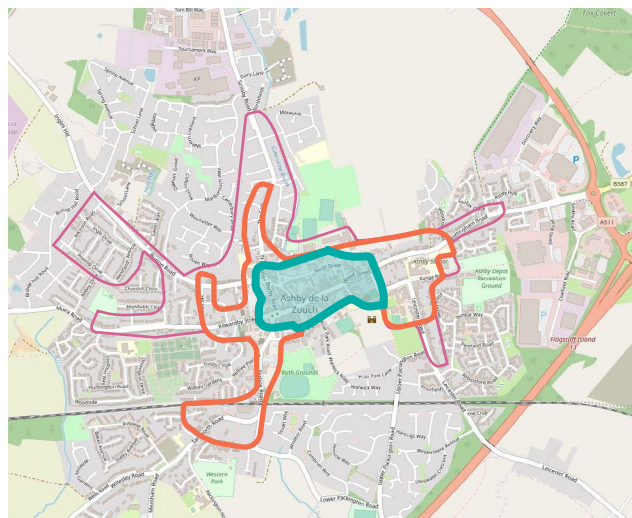
## 2.1.4 ASHBY TOWNSCAPE ANALYSIS AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Up to the early 19th century, Ashby was clustered in a relatively much smaller footprint in a linear pattern along Market Street and The Green. At this time the settlement largely focused on the high street and had limited outlying development. Subsequently, a railway suburb developed to the south west, extending Ashby in this direction along Tamworth Road during the mid to late 19th century. This part of Ashby has several handsome Victorian and Edwardian terraces.

Ashby's industrial growth and population expansion can be seen on Ordnance Survey maps by the late 19th century. The two railway lines encouraged a transition from a rural market town to an industrial town, with a soap works, glove works and gas works. By the 1920s, further linear growth took place along Wood Street to the east, Leicester Road to the south east and Smisby Road to the north. This began to establish Ashby's much larger urban footprint, albeit it would take a very significant amount of later modern infill to turn the limited linear development of terraces into the modern suburbs of Ashby.

One of the first large scale modern housing developments was built some distance from the town centre off Burton Road. This began a trend towards large scale suburban development at Ashby's outskirts. Ashby has since gradually infilled although large patches of open space and fields remain within a 2 mile radius from the town centre, which means that Ashby has retained a great deal of access to open space.

The mid to late 20th century saw very large employment sites built on Ashby's periphery, with several industrial estates and big box retail parks. The 1989 A42 bypass diverted long distance traffic away from the town, and encouraged further employment and logistics development at the junction with the A511, which was built shortly after. More recently Ashby has seen 21st century development mostly to its north, infilling land between the town and the A511 bypass to the north. The wider Money Hill masterplan will continue this pattern of filling out the main gap in Ashby's settlement pattern.



**Figure 21:** Ashby's rough built up area in 1800 in green, 1900 in orange and 1945 in pink, demonstrating the rapid residential growth of the town in post-war period.



**Figure 22:** Typical Victorian or Edwardian terrace in Ashby, many are of a very high quality and have architectural flourishes.



### 2.1.5 MODERN ASHBY AND THE CHARACTER OF RECENT DEVELOPMENT

Post-war Ashby grew rapidly owing to structural changes in the economy of the industrial midlands which saw jobs and households relocate en masse from dense inner city areas to commuter towns. Large numbers of people and firms relocated from cities such as Nottingham, Derby and Birmingham, which were losing some of their traditional manufacturing industries such as lacemaking, to areas where land was cheaper and advantageously connected to the motorway network.

Industries such as distribution, logistics and retail provided jobs in Ashby creating a much higher demand for housing. Ashby's location on the A42 and growing car ownership also led to further people commuting long distances, in a way in which previously did not typify what was a market town.

Developments follow three main patterns. The developments dating from 1960 to 1980 tend to have wide roads, grass verges, sweeping curves and large blocks and houses with front gardens on large plots. Developments subsequently have tended to be denser, either apartment blocks, or housing developments with smaller plot sizes and cul-de-sacs with few opportunities for through routes.

Design quality has varied quite substantially in recent housing developments, with some using higher quality materials but others suffering from a lack of attention to detail. Ashby always deserves good design.



**Figure 25:** Much of Ashby dates from 1960 - 1980 and consists of large scale suburban housing estates. Some of these were built by the local authority, and others by private developers. They have a gentle level of density with front gardens.



**Figure 23:** Ashby has several examples of higher density flat developments, particularly infill near the town centre.



**Figure 24:** Much of Ashby's housing stock dates from 2000 onwards, and there have been several large developments particularly in the north and west directions. These developments are typified by cul-de-sacs and a large number of detached homes but on smaller plot sizes than the late 20th century housing typically enjoys. These developments vary quite widely in design quality and there is a need to establish a reliable standard.

### 2.1.6 GOOD DESIGN IN ASHBY

Ashby is an unpretentious industrial midlands town. It has a proud history and marvellous local heritage showcased by its town centre. It is also a busy working town with a successful employment sector and it has adapted to the modern world by providing large amounts of land for housing and logistics. Ashby's examples of good design are fairly straightforward and common sense. It is not the design of a picturesque village or a National Park, but it is a solid and very often red brick midlands vernacular.

Ashby has a great deal of access to open space and countryside, meaning that most parts of the town are within 15 minutes walking distance of a usable public open space. This is a great strength to carry forward in the future. Ashby has a fantastic linear high street filled with shops, cafes, restaurants, pubs and supermarkets. This is a destination town centre that draws people in from the surrounding hinterland. Ashby's future depends on maintaining the vibrancy of its high street.

Ashby is a place that people put down roots because it offers quiet suburban residential areas within a short walk, cycle, bus journey or drive to many amenities and services. Whether these are older Victorian and Edwardian terraces, solidly built and occasionally flamboyantly detailed, post-war housing estates or new housing, there are examples of good design in all cases.

A key principle of good design in Ashby that must be taken forward is a respect for a building's context and the people that live in a development. This means

avoiding design which demonstrates a lack of care and attention to detail. Examples of poor design in Ashby include the following examples: blank facades that face a street or a corner, unusable open space that is an afterthought, circuitous or impassable road patterns that frustrate pedestrian movement through the town, poorly designed parking which leads to pavement parking, cheap materials that wear quickly and design ideas which bear no resemblance to the pre-existing character of Ashby. Avoiding these does not require a complicated design solution, and simplicity done well will always work.



**Figure 26:** An example of good design in Ashby with high quality materials and a layout which reflects Ashby's character.



**Figure 27:** Poor design in Ashby, demonstrating a lack of consideration of using space effectively.



## 2.2 LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY AND WATER NETWORKS

### 2.2.1 LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY

Ashby is situated in the Settled Coalfield Farmlands Character Landscape Type according to the East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment 2010. This landscape type is defined by an undulating landform of low hills and ridges, and shallow valleys with local variations reflecting the differing characteristics of the underlying Coal Measure geology. This Landscape Area is physically marked by its past and present mining heritage with numerous former mine sites, pit heaps, clay pits, disused railway lines, tramways, canals, and opencast coal and clay working mines. This is combined with substantial areas of agricultural land with varied field sizes and dense hedgerows, as well as scattered woodlands, copses, and linear tree belts. Healthy vegetation is associated with steeper slopes and uncultivated land in the region.

Ashby is surrounded by various forest types primarily to the east, west, and north. These range from broadleaved trees, to young trees, ground prep, and low density forests. Much of the area is covered by Priority Deciduous Woodland Habitat designation. The extensive woodlands and plantations in the wider area are part of the restoration of former mining areas by The National Forest which aims to link the two ancient forests of Charnwood and Needwood. The area covers 200 square miles of the midlands and encompasses the towns of Burton upon Trent, Coalville, Swadlincote, and Ashby.



**Figure 28:** Old Parks Farm Wood, Ashby. © Trevor Rickard.

### 2.2.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND WATERWAYS

Ashby sits on a relatively flat and gently undulating landscape. The area is at approximately 134m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum). To the north of the town, the landscape rises until Smisby where the height reaches approximately 189m AOD. There is a gentle slope downwards to the west towards Moira, dropping by 57m.

The Ashby de la Zouch canal is a 31 mile long canal southwest of Ashby which connected the mining industries at the Moira furnace to the Coventry Canal and the national network. The canal remained profitable until the 1890s and then faced steady decline with the section from Moira to Snarestone closing progressively from 1944 to 1966. The abandoned section, which runs through the South Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfields, is currently subject to a restoration project involving a new route through the centre of Measham.

### 2.2.3 VIEWS AND VISTAS

Ashby has multiple unique views outward from the core of the settlement to the surrounding countryside, and within the settlement to valued assets.

The wider northwest Leicestershire region displays a dense pattern of former mining towns and villages. Ashby's northeastern urban fringe is most vulnerable to change due to the Housing Provision of the 2017 Local Plan. Views of Ashby Castle and St Helen's Church are prominent here above the rising roofline of the town. The cemetery tower is also prominent, set within woodland. Industry on the southern edge of the fringe contrasts in scale and form with surrounding urban residential development and the surrounding woodland.

Land to the south of Ashby is defined by its historic coal and clay working. This area is characterised by rolling farmland which provides a frame for the visible rising roofline of the town as well as softening the scale and frequency of the warehouse development, restricting these views to the higher ground.

Within Ashby, Market Street provides a focused point for numerous heritage assets. Views east-west on Market Street display a broad collection of historical architecture spanning from the 16th to 20th century.



**Figure 29:** View of Ashby's northeastern fringe. Source: North West Leicestershire District Council.

**Figure 30:** View of Ashby's southern fringe. Source North West Leicestershire District Council.

**Figure 31:** View westward on Market Street showing Our Lady of Lourdes Church.



## 2.2.4 OPEN SPACES

Ashby benefits from a series of large open spaces spread across the breadth of the town which range from parkland to sports grounds.

Ashby Castle, which is managed by English Heritage, is surrounded by a large green which is accessible only to paid visitors of the castle. To the west of the castle grounds are the Memorial Grounds, which are not publicly accessible, as well as Prior Park Field and Bath Grounds, which are both open to the public. The Bath Grounds also host both the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Bowling Club, and Ashby Hastings Cricket Club. This series of open spaces creates a large expanse of green space to the immediate south of the dense town centre.

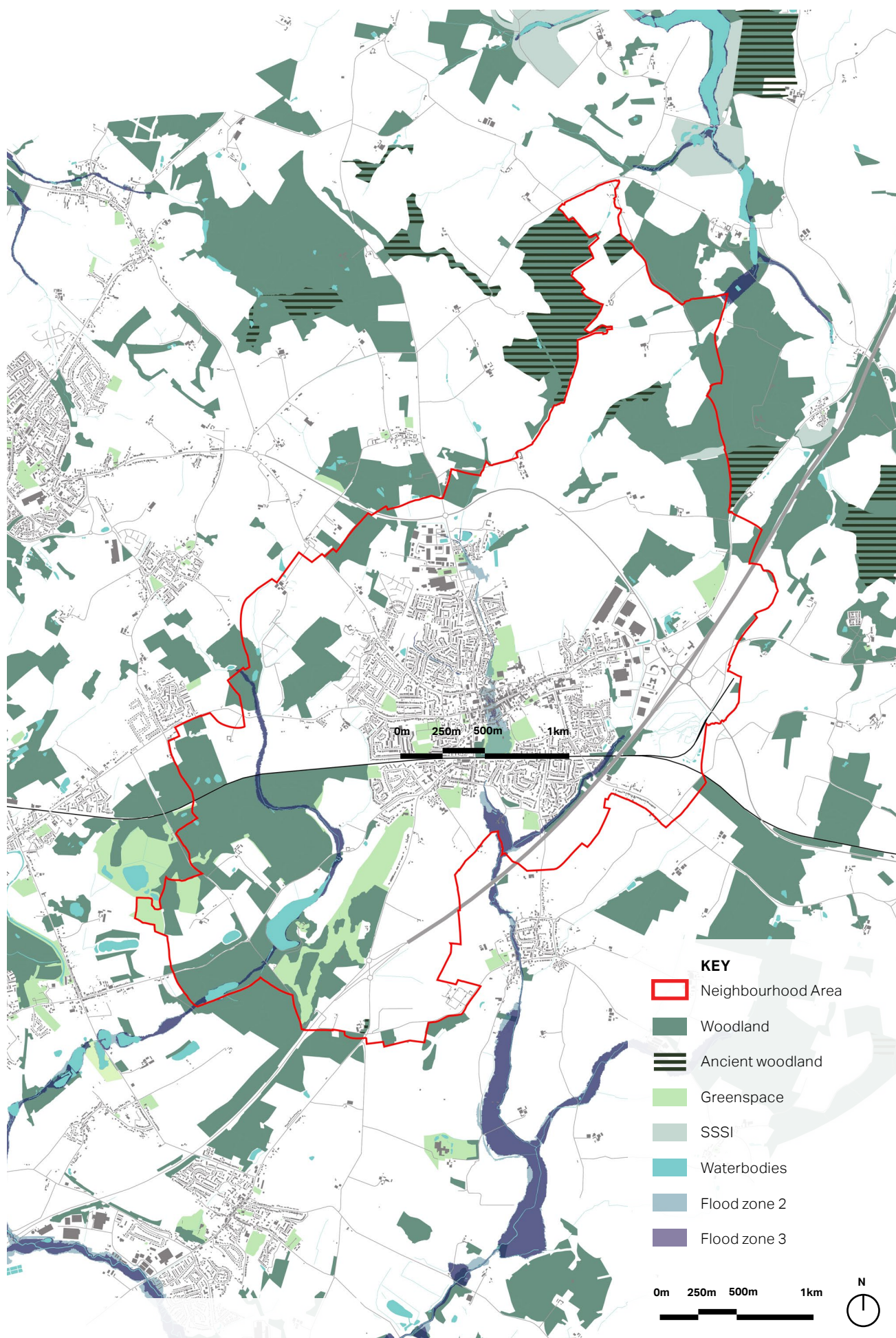
To the north of the town centre, adjacent to Ashby Leisure Centre & Lido, lies Hood Park which is a small park equipped with playground facilities, alongside Ashby de la Zouch Skate Park. Numerous football clubs are hosted on the playing pitches to the rear of the leisure centre owned by Ashby Town Council.

Other open spaces in the area include Ashby School Playing Field on Range Road to the north of the town centre, a large playing pitch with basketball court and playground accessible from Highfields Close or Abbey Drive to the west of the town centre, and Western Park to the south. There is also a large open space at Willesley Recreation Ground off Ridgeway Road. Contemporary housing developments across Ashby are also interspersed with smaller green spaces and play spaces, contributing to an open and leafy atmosphere.



**Figure 32:** Internal view of the Bath Grounds. © Oliver Mills.

**Figure 33:** Internal view of Western Park. © Oliver Mills.



**Figure 34:** Landscape context and greenspace.





DESIGN OBJECTIVES

03



# 3. DESIGN OBJECTIVES

**This section outlines the overarching objectives of the design guidance and codes. The following objectives were identified through an analysis of national and local policy, as well as a reflection of the existing character of Ashby.**

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section identifies the general objectives for design in the Ashby Neighbourhood Area followed by specific guidance and codes for development to support these objectives. They are organised under four types of development further explored in chapter 4.

- **IM:** Infill and modification
- **NH:** New housing
- **EM:** Employment buildings
- **RH:** Rural hinterland

The objectives should be understood as the intended overall outcomes from the application of the design guidance.



## 3.2 DESIGN OBJECTIVES

### 3.2.1 REINFORCE LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Ashby's rich heritage, bustling atmosphere, and unique location within the National Forest should be reflected in new development within the parish. Place-sensitive design which responds to context will improve local distinctness and have a placemaking impact on new communities.

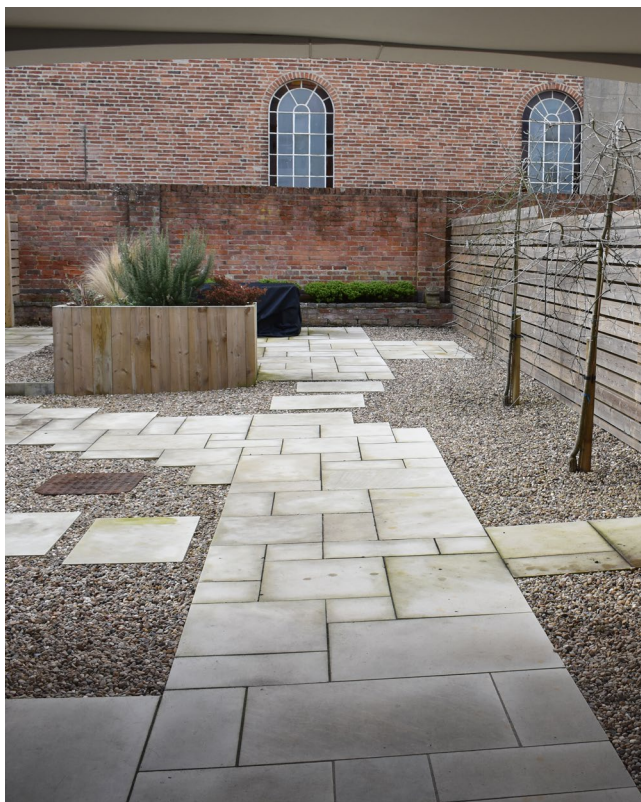
### 3.2.2 IMPROVE LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND BIODIVERSITY

Valuable landscape connections should be protected and enhanced across the parish with regard for the wider historic Leicestershire landscape. Green spaces throughout Ashby should be of a high landscape quality and intentionally incorporated in the design of new developments. Opportunities must be created to improve biodiversity within the built-up area, this is essential for achieving sustainable urban spaces.

### 3.2.3 ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND STREETSCAPE

Streets should seek to provide pleasant, accessible, and direct routes. The streetscape should be visually rich with a strong sense of place. Spaces of enclosure should be created which are adaptable to varied uses over time. Healthy streets are conducive to vibrant economies and active communities.





**Figure 35:** Casement windows, porch and decorative brick work of new development in Chobham (top - left).  
**Figure 36:** Landscaped courtyard at Knights Muse (top - right).  
**Figure 37:** Row of detached Edwardian dwellings with bay windows, Moira Road (centre).  
**Figure 38:** Georgian terrace with pebble-dash frontage, South Street.





A photograph of a residential street with brick houses and a large teal circle overlay containing text. The houses have red brick walls and tiled roofs. A large teal circle is centered over the image, containing the text 'DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES' and the number '04'.

DESIGN GUIDANCE AND  
CODES

04

## 4. DESIGN GUIDANCE AND CODES

**This section outlines the design approach to be taken in various types of development within Ashby. The following section has been laid out based on type of development, to provide codes which are specific to the category of the development proposal.**

### 4.1 DEFINING THE DEVELOPMENT TYPES

Due to the extremely varied built typologies and architecture across Ashby, design codes have been organised by type of development rather than location within the Neighbourhood Area. This section will include an overview analysis of each development type including where it is likely to occur, followed by design guidance and codes which will guide new development proposals of each type.

The boundaries of each development type should not be misinterpreted for a settlement boundary and are for use only to apply targeted area design guidance.

**IN**

#### INFILL AND MODIFICATION

Development taking place within dense and established residential areas across Ashby and within Ashby's historic core.

**NH**

#### NEW HOUSING

New build housing developments where streets and places are being created as part of the development.

**EM**

#### EMPLOYMENT BUILDINGS

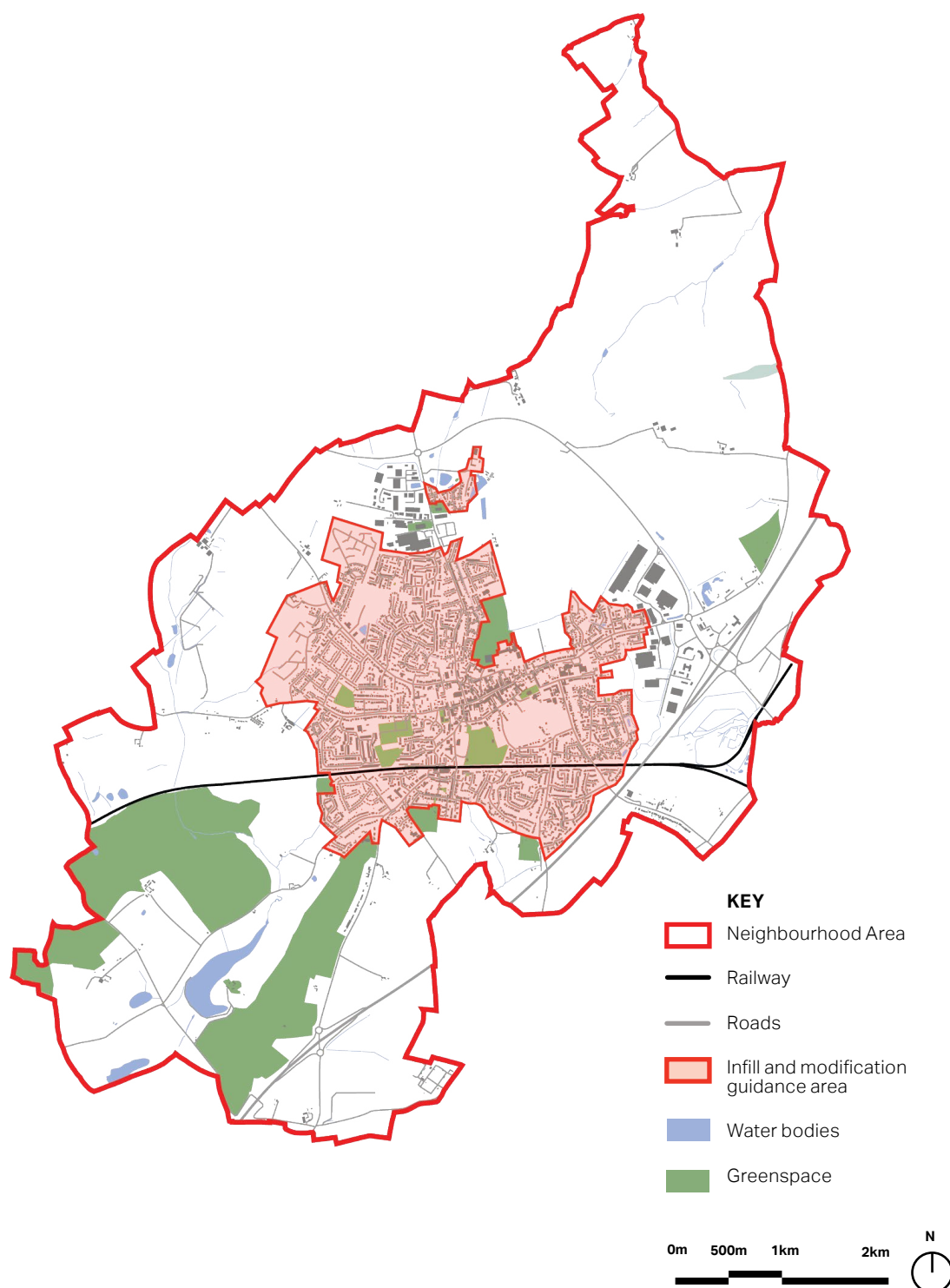
Development of commercial or industrial buildings generally confined to the outskirts of Ashby, as well as retail development.

**RH**

#### RURAL HINTERLAND

Small scale residential development on greenfield sites outside of the existing built-up area.





**Figure 39:** Map showing the applicable areas in the Neighbourhood Area.

## 4.2 INFILL AND MODIFICATION

This section will contain guidance for development which is within the established built-up area, consisting of the town centre and its surrounds. This development will come forward in the form of plot infill, tandem development, backland development, intensification, or replacement.

Infill development should seek to reflect the overall height, form, and scale of neighbouring buildings, as well as improving the streetscape with high quality materials and boundary treatments.

Modifications and extensions should seek to retain the original form and character of the structure with additions that are subordinate and complementary.



**Figure 40:** Eastern view of Market Street, Ashby Town Centre.



## IN.01 SETBACK AND BUILDING LINE

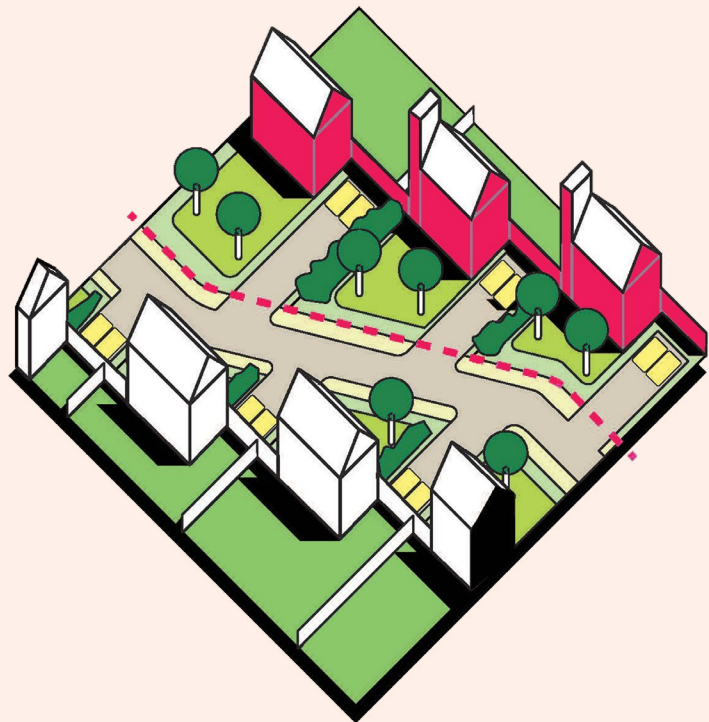
New development in an established residential area should respect the existing built line. The building line should be fairly consistent along a lane to form a unified whole whilst allowing for subtle variations in the form of recesses and protrusions. This provides variety and movement.

Infill development should respect the following principles:

- i. Infill should not disrupt the current settlement pattern and must have sufficient off road parking and garden space for new development.
- ii. Infill should not overwhelm neighbouring dwellings and should be in harmony with the streetscape.
- iii. Plot infill will respect the existing standard street edge.
- iv. New development should have minor setbacks where appropriate and provide a street addressing facade.



**Figure 41:** Row of dwellings in Ashby with a regular setback.



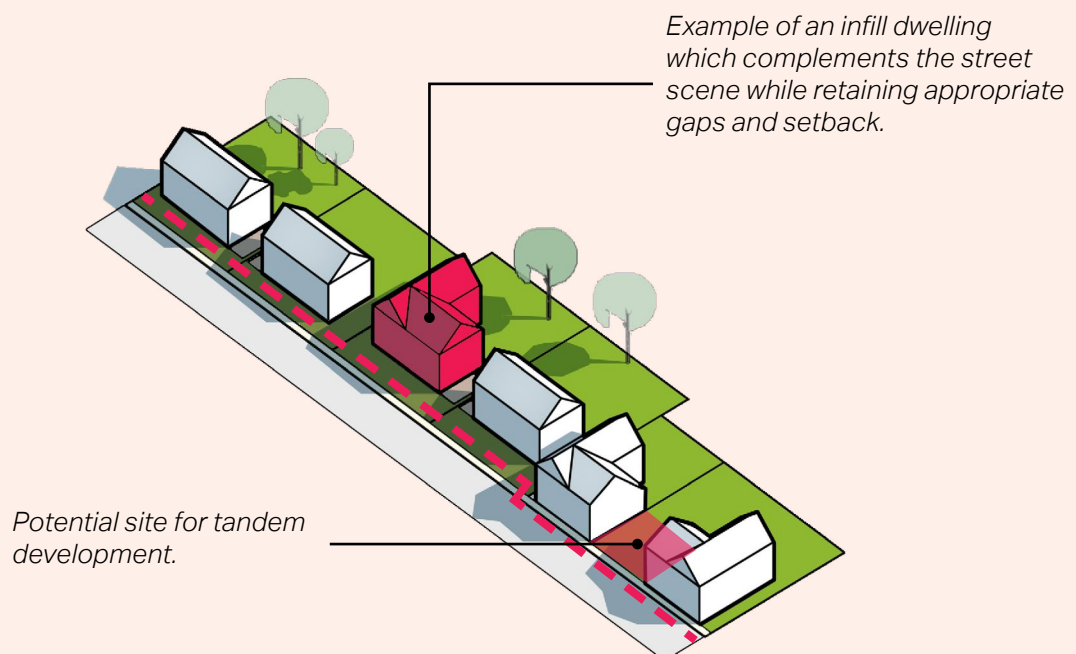
**Figure 42:** Illustrative diagram of a development with a uniform built-line creating a sense of enclosure, creating enclosure and separating publicly visible front gardens from private rear gardens.

## IN.02 SCALE AND MASSING

When new development takes place adjoining to existing dwellings, the height and scale should match that of the existing built form of the street.

- i. Infill should not overwhelm neighbouring properties and should be of a similar scale and height to adjoining properties.
- ii. Plot infill should respect the existing setback if there is a standard street edge.
- iii. Infill should seek to limit obstruction of views by retaining built gaps where appropriate.

- iv. New developments should address the street and should have entrances which front onto the street edge.
- v. Tandem development should be carefully considered and will only be acceptable in dense areas.
- vi. Backland development should be carefully considered and should not disrupt the settlement pattern of the area.



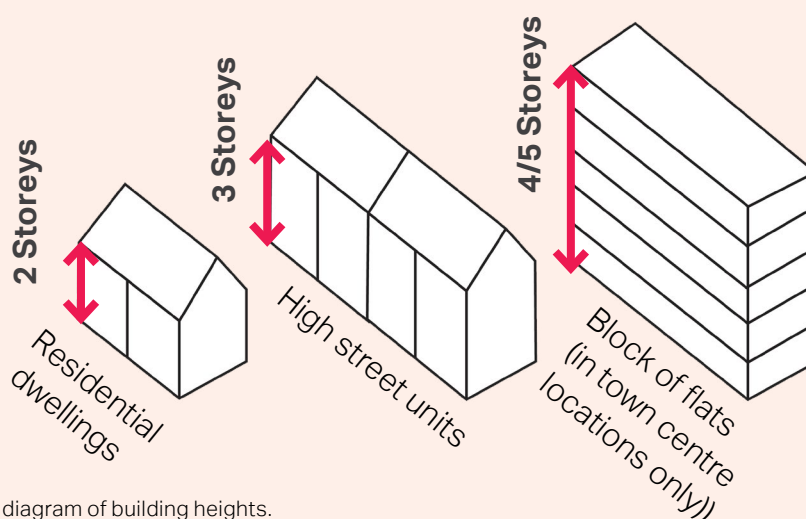
**Figure 43:** Illustrative diagram of infill development which respects the existing built form.



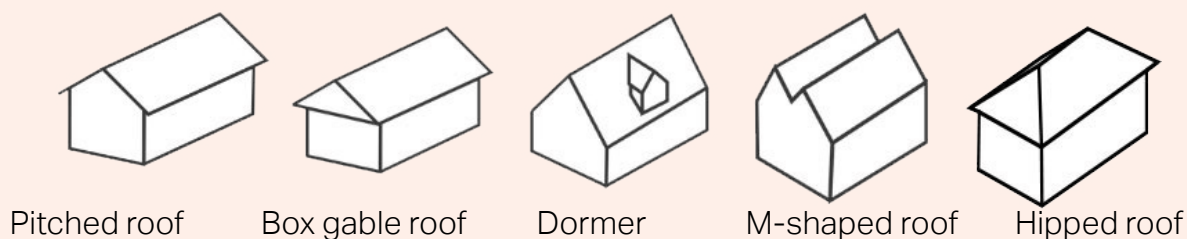
## IN.03 HEIGHT AND ROOF

The building heights vary throughout the town centre and Ashby's surrounding residential developments. Development should look to the immediate surroundings to ensure that they are in keeping with the existing building heights in order to preserve the character of the area.

There are a variety of roof typologies throughout Ashby as shown in Figure 37, however the most common in this area are pitched roofs. Therefore, any development should aim to enhance the character of the area by utilising roof typologies that are already present and taking note of the buildings in the immediate surroundings.



**Figure 44:** Illustrative diagram of building heights.



**Figure 45:** Illustrative diagram of roof types.

## IN.04 BOUNDARY TREATMENT

Ashby has a range of various boundary treatments from walls and fences to trees and soft landscaping. Boundary treatments of any type should respect the following principles

- i. Boundary treatment should be utilised to demonstrate a demarcation between public and private spaces.
- ii. Boundary treatments should reflect the existing built character of the street, urbanising boundary treatments such as tall steel fences or walls may not be appropriate in suburban areas.
- iii. Boundary treatments must not inhibit sightlines across the street and should be low in height (generally one meter or below).
- iv. If boundary treatments are solid construction, they should reflect the style and materials of their respective dwelling.



**Figure 46:** Example of natural boundary treatment of evergreen laurel shrubs which provide a soft and green threshold to properties in this development.



**Figure 47:** Example railing used as boundary treatments with an urbanising effect. Railings will not be encouraged as boundary treatment at edge-of-settlement developments.



## IN.05 SYMPATHETIC ADDITIONS

There are multiple ways to create extra space within a building using different types of extensions. Extensions must be designed to an appropriate scale and be secondary to the original building. The pitch and form of a building's roof forms part of its character; therefore, extensions should respond by enhancing the existing character. Extensions should consider the materials, architectural features and proportions of the original building and be designed to complement these existing elements.

Many household extensions are covered by permitted development rights, meaning that they do not need planning permission.

The latest guidance is here: [Technical Guidance](#).

- The character of the existing building, along with its scale, form, materials and details should be taken into consideration when preparing proposals for alterations and/or extensions;
- External extensions should respect or enhance the visual appearance of the original buildings and the character of the wider street scene;
- Extensions should be subordinate in term of scale and form and shall not be visually dominant or taller than the existing building;
- Extensions should be recessed or in line with the existing building facade and shall use lower ridge and eaves levels to ensure that the length and width of the extension are less than the dimensions of the original building;
- Extensions should be designed using materials and details to match the existing building or, alternately, use contrasting materials and details with a contemporary design approach. However, in either case extensions should create a harmonious overall composition and a strong degree of unity with the original building.
- Extensions should safeguard the privacy and daylight amenity of neighbouring properties;
- Extensions should retain on-site parking capacity and a viable garden area to meet the needs of existing and future occupiers; and
- Extensions of existing buildings should help to reduce carbon emission by complying with high energy efficiency standards and utilising low energy design.



**Figure 48:** Example of a sympathetic side extension in Ashby using similar material finishes, window proportions, and a subordinate roofline of a similar angle and style.

## Front extensions

Front extensions are generally not acceptable. If proposed, in all cases front extensions should take the form of the existing building, mirroring the roof pitch, replicate or have lower cornice height and their ridge should be below the existing ridge height. The extension can project maximum 2 metres beyond the front facade and will not cover more than 50% of the front elevation. Front extensions should not result in a reduction of parking spaces below that of the minimum guidance in North West Leicestershire<sup>1</sup>.

## Rear extensions

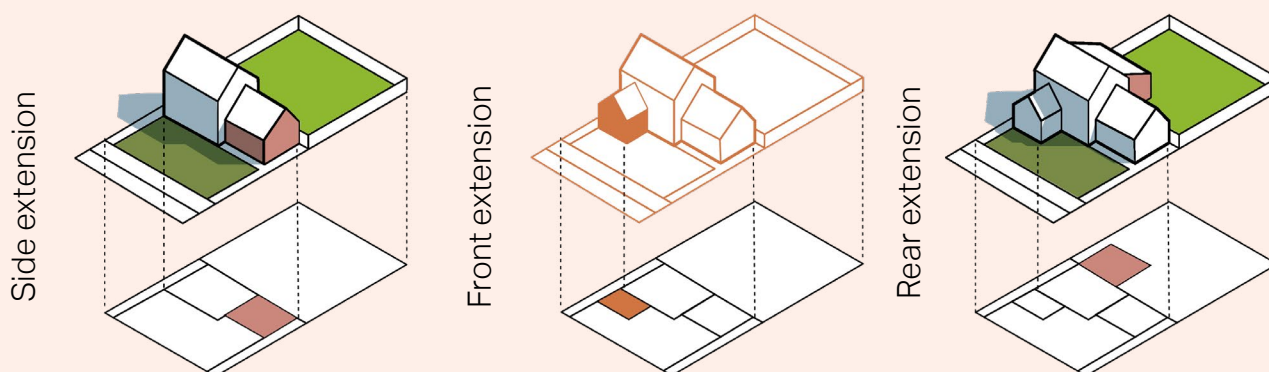
Single-storey rear extensions are, generally, the easiest way to extend a house and provide extra living space. The extension should be set below any first-floor windows and designed to minimise any effects on neighbouring properties, such as blocking day light. A flat roof is generally acceptable for a single storey rear extension.

In the case of a double-storey rear extensions, applicants should be conscious of the effect on neighbours' access to light and privacy. The roof form and pitch should reflect the original building and sit slightly lower than the main ridge of the building.

## Side extensions

Single-storey and double-storey side extensions, including extensions above existing garages, should be set back from the main building line to the front of the dwelling and complement the materials and detailing of the original building, particularly along the street elevation. The roof of the extension should harmonise with that of the original building. Side windows should also be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that they would not result in overlooking of neighbouring properties. Conversion of garage space into habitable rooms will not be acceptable where it results in a reduction of car parking spaces below that of the minimum guidance in North West Leicestershire.

<sup>1</sup> Found [here](#).



**Figure 49:** Diagram to highlight examples of subordinate extensions.



## IN.06 MATERIALS AND DETAILS

Ashby has a broad palette of materials and architectural details due to its many layers of historical and contemporary development. The stylistic variety in Ashby's built form means that new developments should not be expected to conform to a specific palette.

Material finishes in new developments should be complimentary to neighbouring properties and should enhance the existing streetscape.

Architectural features and details should be included in street addressing facades to add visual interest and variety to the streetscape.



**Figure 50:** Dwellings in Ashby with decorative architectural features adding depth and visual interest to the streetscape as well as cohesive material palette of redbrick facades and slate roofs.



**Figure 51:** Example of brick detailing, window lintels, and a protruding porch which adds visual interest to the property facade.

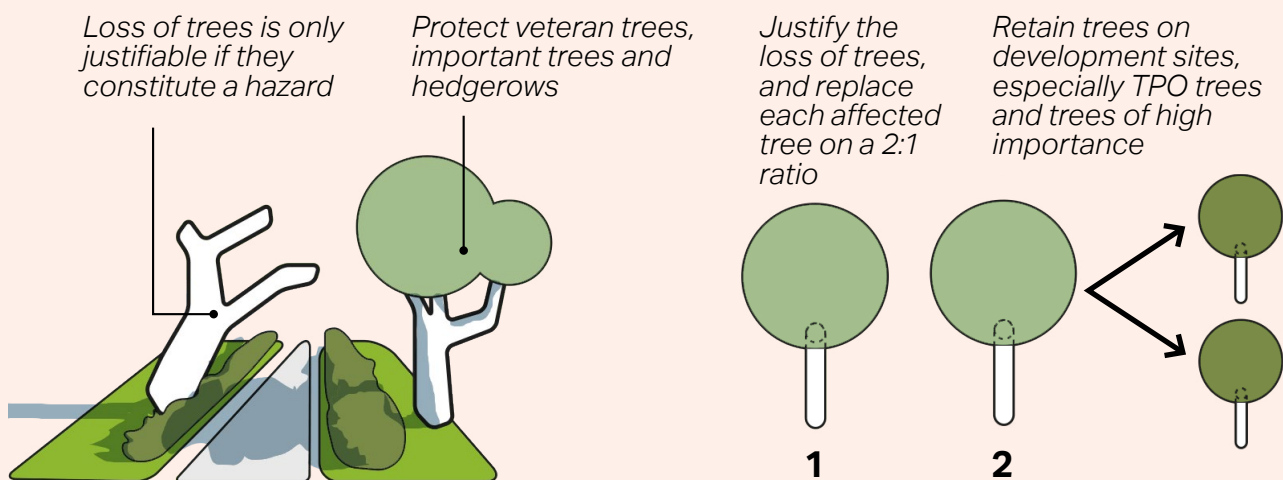
## IN.07 TREES AND HEDGES

Trees and soft landscaping are crucial in Ashby due to its siting within the National Forest. The neighbourhood area's green character can be preserved or revived in places through the use of street trees and landscaping measures. Developments and any change in the physical environment should:

- i. Incorporate existing native trees and shrubs and avoid unnecessary loss of flora, especially hedgerows which are prominent in the area.
- ii. Replace any tree or woodland lost to development. Native trees and shrubs should be used to reinforce the more rural character of the area.
- iii. Promote rich vegetation in front and rear gardens to improve the visual impact and mitigate air pollution. New and retained vegetation at the edges of new developments are particularly important for their successful integration into the wider landscape.

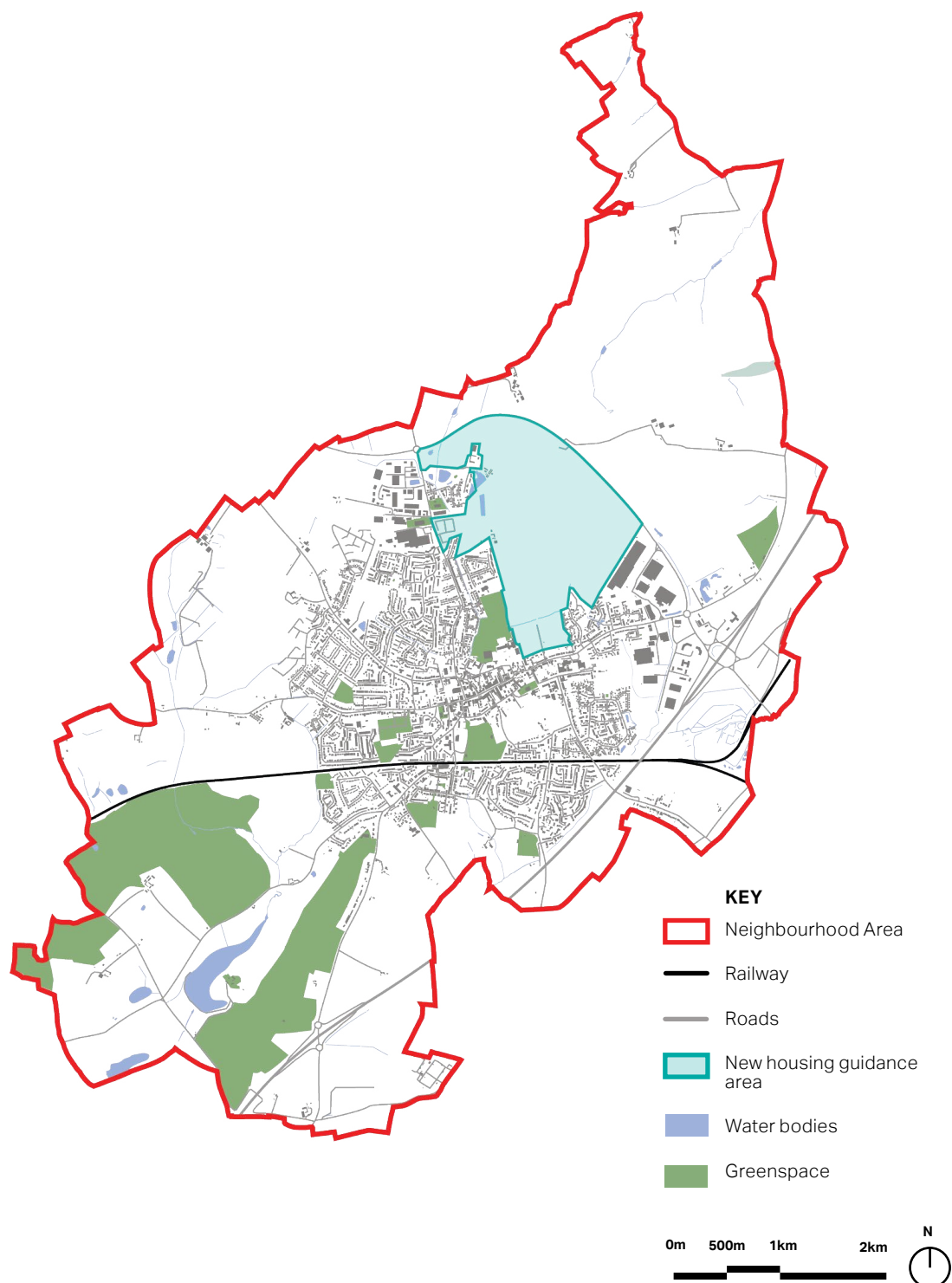


*Trees, hedges, flower beds, bushes and shrubs are typical green elements of the street in the area and any new development should also include them in the design*



**Figure 52:** Diagram to highlight some guidelines related to tree preservation.





**Figure 53:** Map showing the Character Area in the Neighbourhood Area.

## 4.4 NEW HOUSING

This section contains general guidelines for new housing proposals, typically of multi-dwelling developments where new streets, spaces, and places are created. Should additional housing development come forward, any residential scheme over a size of 10 dwellings or creating a new street should follow the guidance set out under this section.

In the design of new housing, key considerations should be made across form, landscape, parking, open space, enclosure, streetscape, movement, and sightlines.

The following guidance should be followed to create safe, connected, attractive, and sustainable communities.

The Money Hill masterplan site makes up the majority of the land parcel northeast of Ashby (development sites H3a and Ec2(1) - North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2017). Development of this area will be guided by the Money Hill masterplan<sup>1</sup> 2019 which is a high level indicative masterplan for the development of 1,400 homes and 16 hectares of employment land.

Additional district wide guidance can be found in North West Leicestershire's Good Design Supplementary Planning Document<sup>2</sup>.



**Figure 54:** Examples of contemporary housing developments in Ashby.

<sup>1</sup> Please see the Money Hill Masterplan on North West Leicestershire District Council website [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> [Good Design SPD](#).



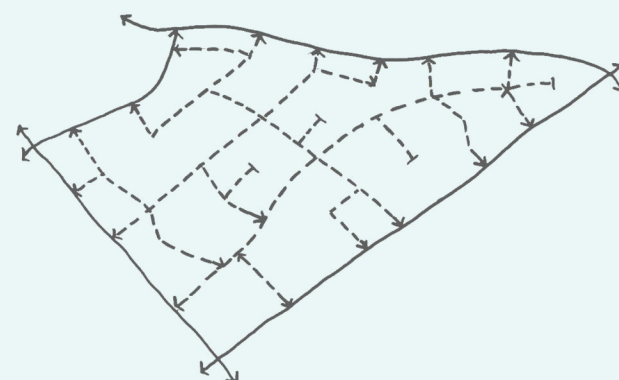
## NH.01 CONNECTED STREET PATTERN

Streets should generally be connected with each other and different travel options and routes should be considered. Good practice favours a generally connected street layout which provides onwards pedestrian and cycle connections. This makes it easier to travel by foot, cycle and public transport<sup>1</sup>.

A more connected pattern creates a 'walkable neighbourhood', a place where routes link meaningful places together. The street network in Ashby is generally well connected within the town centre, however in more recent 20th and 21st century development, there are highway barriers that disrupt the connectivity between neighbourhoods.

- i. Proposed routes should be laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Where cul-de-sacs are provided, they should be relatively short and provide safe, open and overlooked onward pedestrian and cycle links.
- ii. Streets should be designed for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as well as motor vehicles.
- iii. Proposed routes should be short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a ten minute walk or a five mile trip by bike.

- iv. To avoid the creation of 'rat runs' on through routes, traffic calming measures should be implemented such as chicanes, raised crossings, bus only gates and speed bumps in discussion with the relevant highways authority.



**Figure 55:** A poorly connected street layout dominated by cul-de-sacs increasing reliance on cars.

**Figure 56:** A well connected street layout which supports mixed mobility with occasional cul-de-sacs where appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> See p.30 of the [National Model Design Code](#).

## NH.02 PRIORITISE WALKING AND CYCLING

Where there is a choice, new developments in Ashby should be selected where they would generate the least amount of car movements and be within a comfortable distance of local services. This will help to promote active travel, an important feature in 'livable' neighbourhoods.

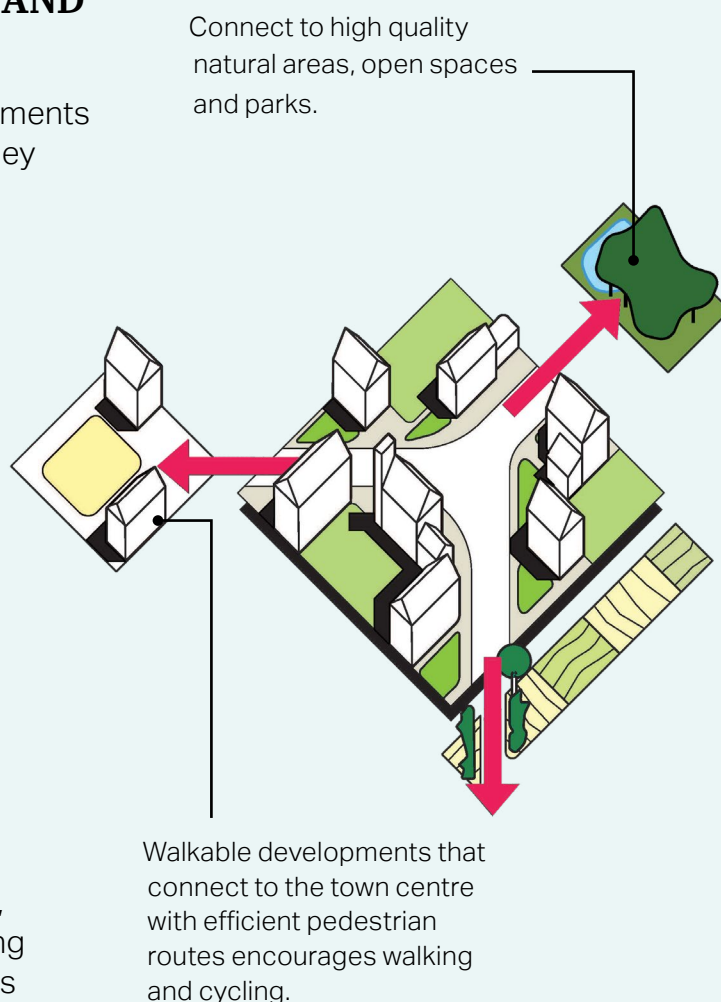
New development should ensure that pedestrian and cycle routes are incorporated into new designs ensuring that the option to travel on foot or by bike is incentivised.

These routes should link to key services and other existing routes to form a network of walkable and cyclable areas.

Users of public and private space are varied and include disabled users, parents/carers with buggies and young children. It is important for these users to be catered for when designing new development.

Walking and cycling routes along a roadway should provide safety from vehicles on the road. This requires a footway, grass verge or pavement that is wide enough to ensure pedestrians do not conflict with vehicles. Primary through routes should also be designed wide enough for the passage of buses to facilitate public transport movement.

In addition, walking routes should not pass through hazardous areas such as fields with large animals, dykes, ditches or areas of flooding.



**Figure 57:** Illustrative diagram showing direct routes from dwellings to amenities.



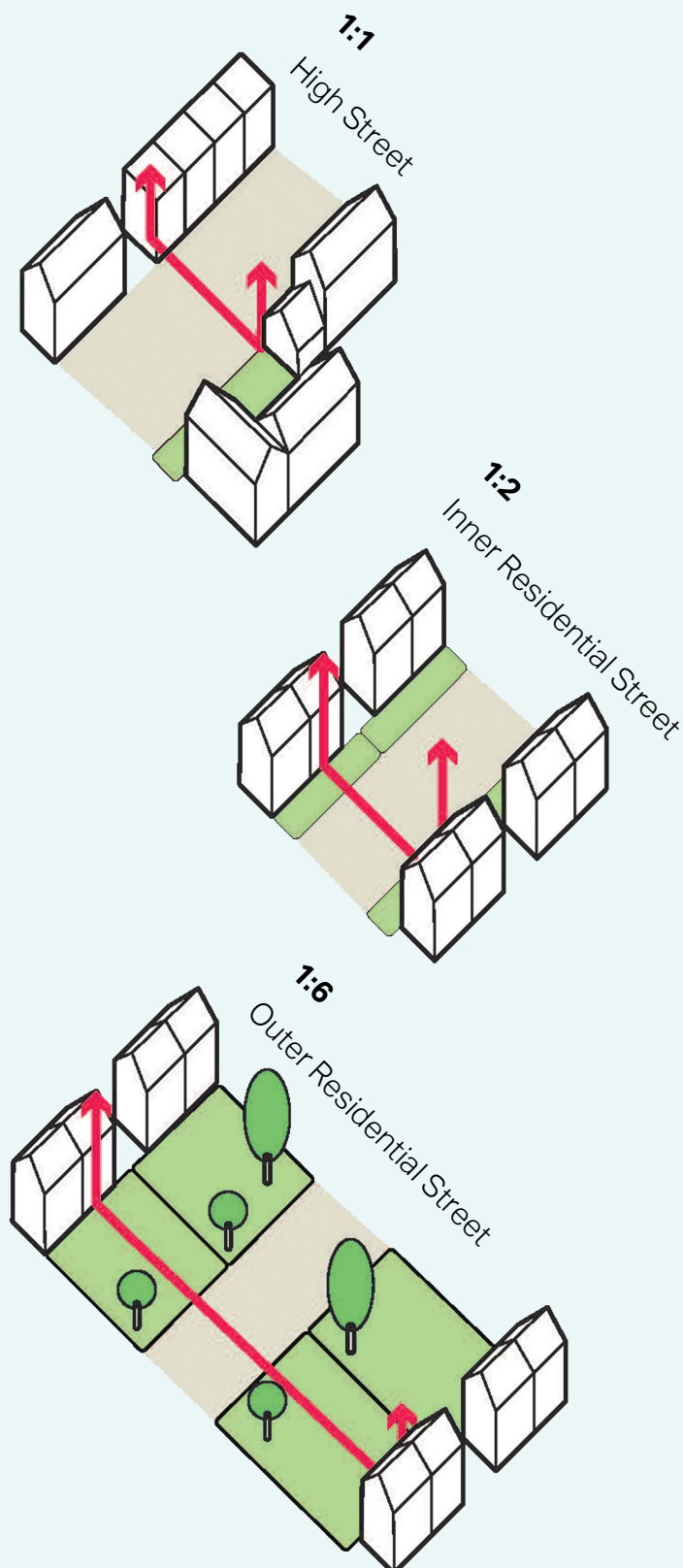
## NH.03 ENCLOSURE AND STREET EDGE

Both High Streets and the residential streets should retain their strong sense of enclosure provided by the building height to street width ratio as well as consistent building lines and boundary treatments, which create an intimate street scale. This allows the built form to define the space within.

Along High Streets and in residential streets there should be a strong continuous building line with small protrusions to allow for visual interest.

The buildings on the High Street should not have a large setback from the street to allow for easy access to the commercial units and to increase activity and therefore footfall. The residential streets should have a small setback from the street between 1-3m with a small front garden and a consistent boundary treatment at the property edge.

Due to lower levels of activity, it may be appropriate on residential streets to allow for greater setbacks which can be used to incorporate trees and planting.



**Figure 58:** Enclosure on a High Street with a 1:1 ratio.

**Figure 59:** Enclosure on a residential street with a 1:2 ratio.

**Figure 60:** Enclosure on a residential street with a 1:6 ratio.

## NH.04 ACTIVE FRONTAGES

Active frontages bring life and vitality to street and public gathering spaces. They allow for connections between people, interest, and activity on the street while also creating surveillance onto the road. Active frontages help to provide visual interest on the street. Providing more active frontages in Ashby should be an objective of each new development.

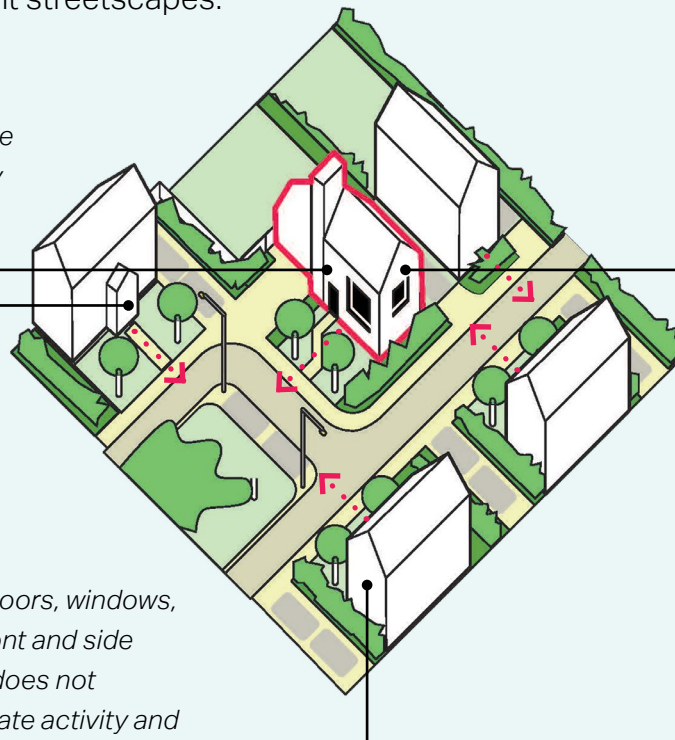
*Narrow frontages with vertical rhythm can create a more attractive and interesting streetscape, while articulation on facades and use of bays and porches can create a welcoming feeling.*

The following principles should be regarded in new development proposals to support active frontages and vibrant streetscapes.

*Exposed blank facades facing the public realm must always be avoided. They should generally be fenestrated.*

*Introducing regular doors, windows, front gardens and front and side parking, providing it does not dominate, can stimulate activity and social interactions.*

*Buildings should be positioned at varied setbacks to avoid monotonous frontages. It may not always be necessary to vary setbacks in the more historic localities where the existing built form supports building up to the pavement in some specific cases.*



**Figure 61:** Illustrative diagram of active frontages in a residential area.



## NH.05 PARKING

Sufficient on-plot parking is key to preventing on-street parking and vehicular clutter on through roads.

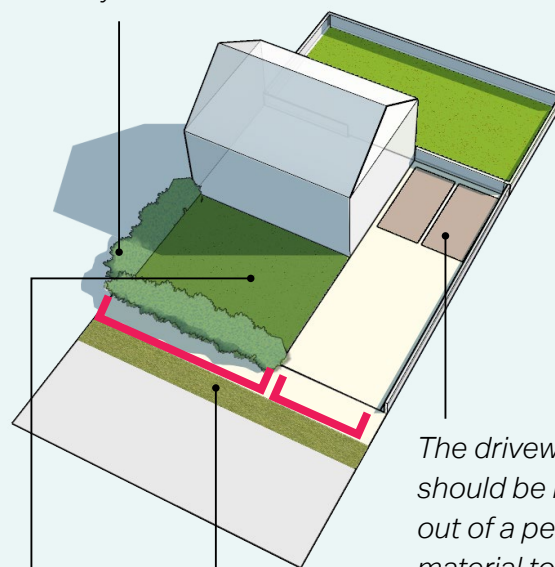
On-plot parking can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well designed soft landscaping. Front garden depth from the pavement should be sufficient for a large family car.

Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high quality paving materials between the private and public space.

Driveways should be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off and flooding therefore on-plot parking should consist of permeable spaces.

Any rear parking courtyards should be small, overlooked and not be at the expense of rear gardens.

*Use of hedges as boundary treatment*



*The driveway should be made out of a permeable material to enable water filtration.*

*Garden should be equal to or greater than parking area where possible.*

*The front garden should utilise natural elements such as grass, planting and hedgerows.*

**Figure 62:** Illustrative diagram of parking principles in a detached dwelling.

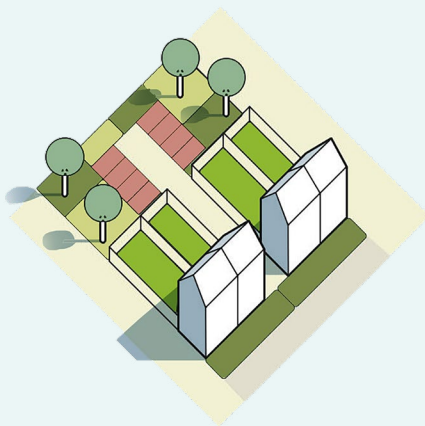
A good mix of parking typologies should be deployed, depending on, and influenced by; location, topography and market demand.

The main types to be considered are as follows:

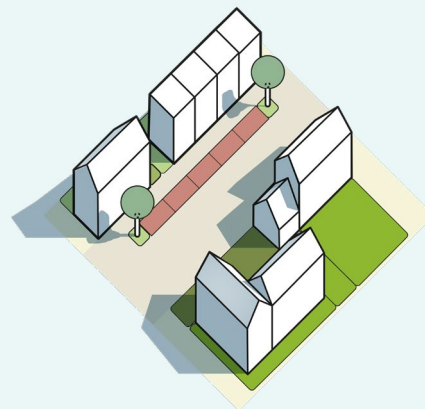
- i. For family homes, cars should be placed at the front or side of the property. For small pockets of housing a front or rear court is acceptable.
- ii. Car parking design should be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.

- iii. Parking areas and driveways should be designed to minimise impervious surfaces, for example through the use of permeable paving.

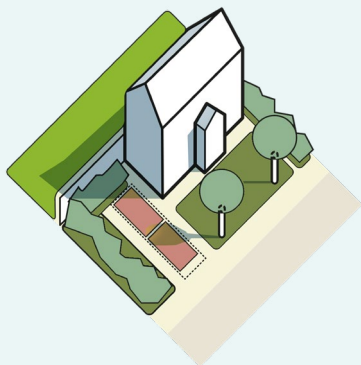
- iv. When placing parking at the front, the area should be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend in with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings by means of walls, hedging, planting, and use of differentiated quality paving materials.



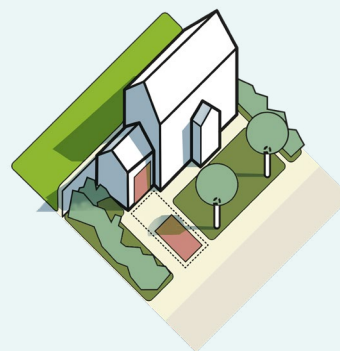
*Rear courtyard parking*



*On lane parking  
(appropriate in dense urban areas)*



*On plot side parking*



*On plot garage and side parking*



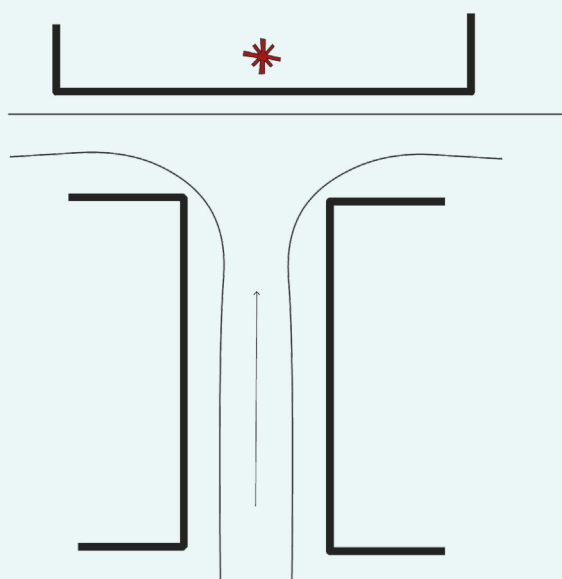
## NH.06 WAYFINDING AND LEGIBILITY

Wayfinding techniques are an integral part of encouraging sustainable modes of transport as they make walking and cycling easier by ensuring that routes are direct and memorable.

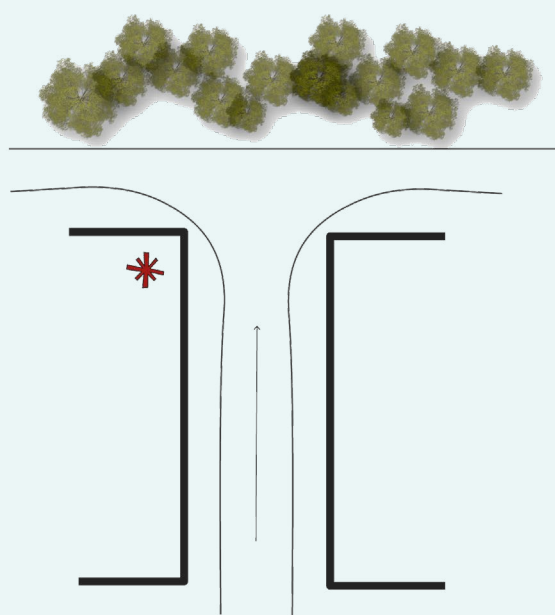
- i. Places should be created with a clear identity, clear views and sightlines, and be easy to navigate.
- ii. Local landmark buildings of distinctive building features such as towers or chimneys can aid legibility.
- iii. Landscape features, distinctive trees and open spaces can also be used as wayfinding aids as well as providing an attractive streetscape.



**Figure 63:** Example of a taller corner feature at a street edge which aids in legibility.



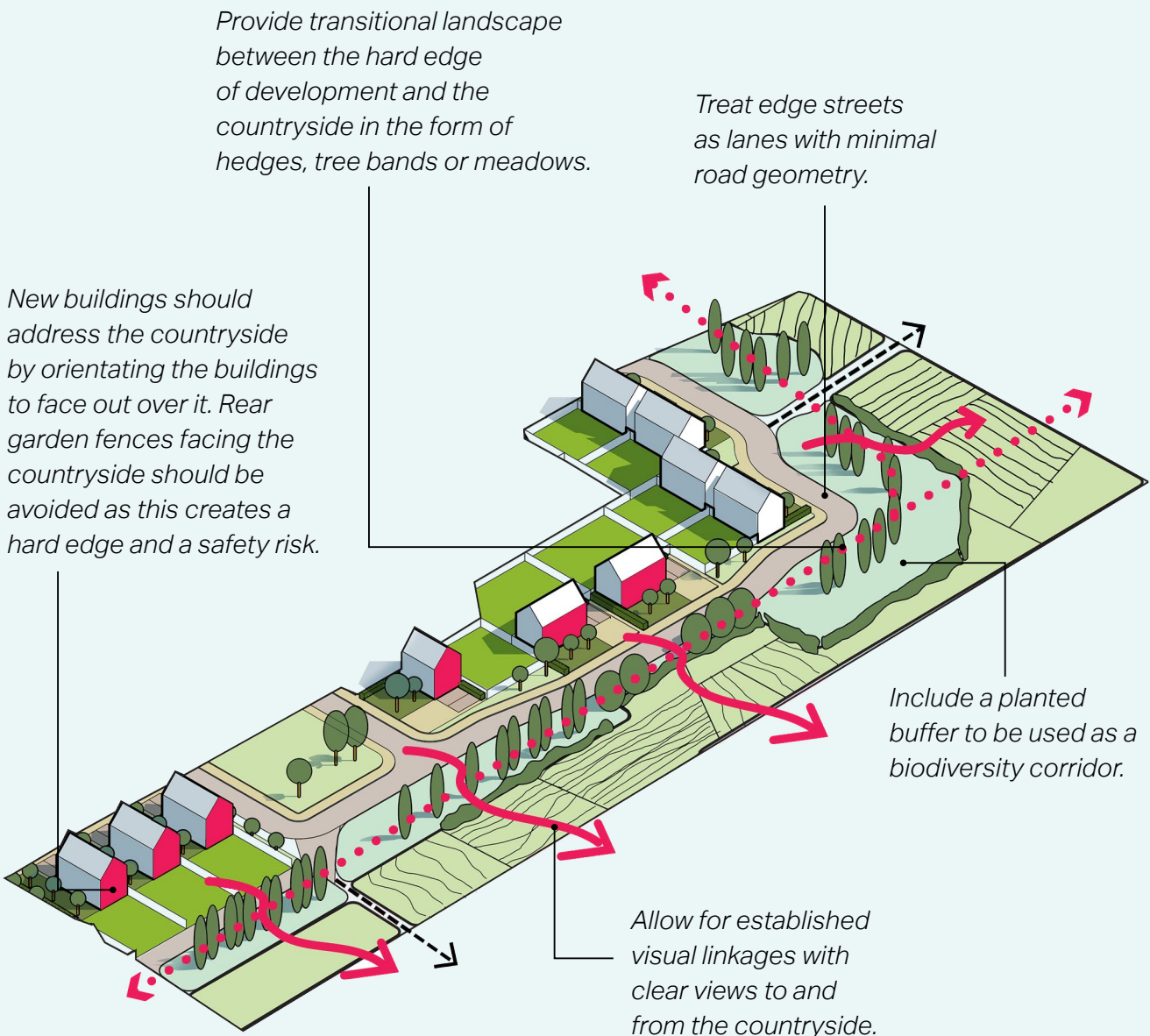
**Figure 65:** A landmark building located at the termination of the view.



**Figure 64:** A view terminating at a wooded area with a landmark building located on the left

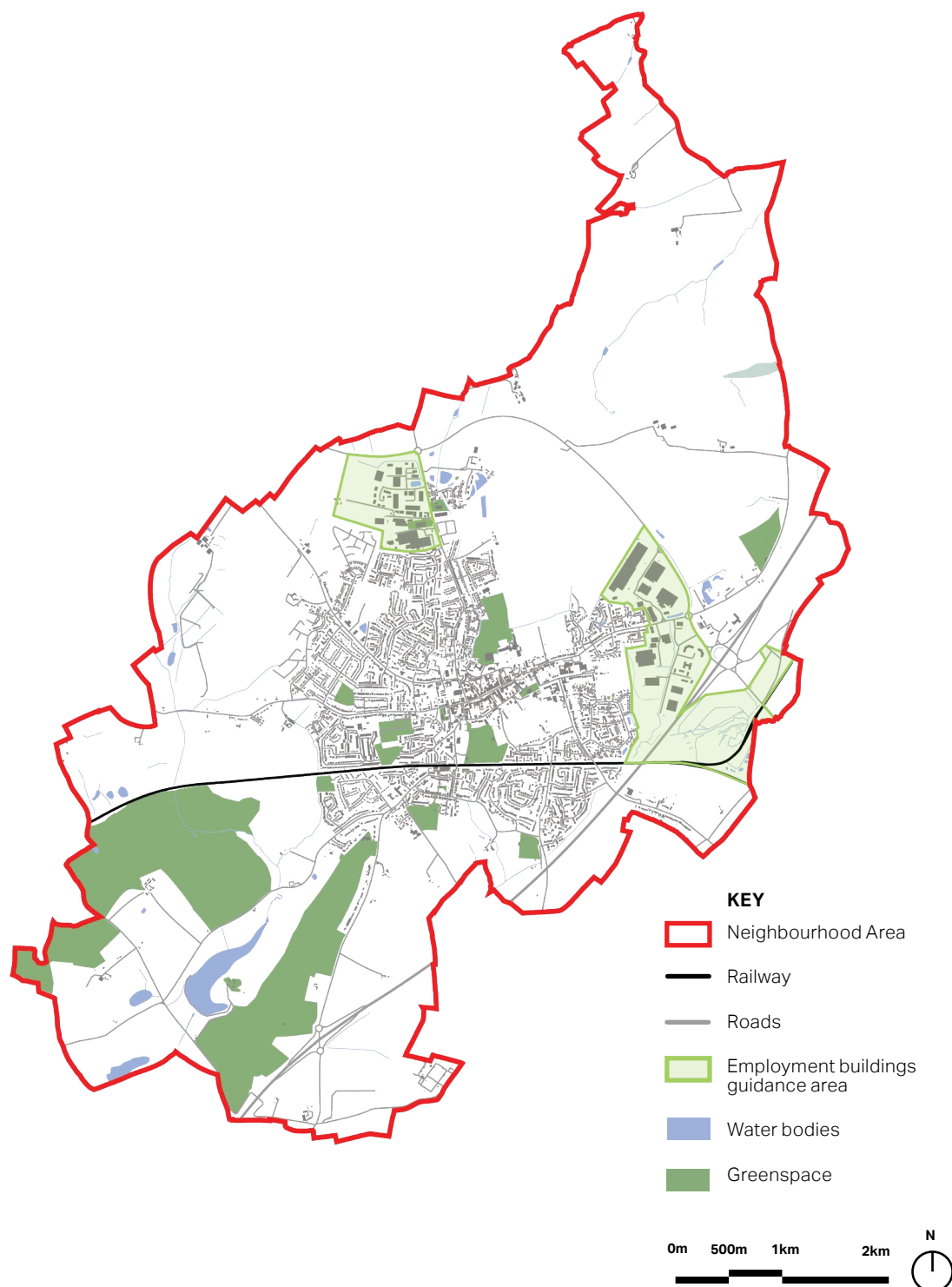
## NH.07 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

When new development occurs on the settlement edge, the built form should seek to incorporate the surrounding landscape character within the built form to provide a soft and natural built edge to the settlement. New developments should improve visual and physical connections to the landscape.



**Figure 66:** Diagram illustrating desirable features in a settlement edge development.





**Figure 67:** Map showing the guidance area in the Neighbourhood Area.

## 4.5 EMPLOYMENT BUILDINGS

Ashby has a strong industrial heritage as well as a healthy light industry and retail economy today. The town hosts numerous large scale employers and many residents live and work within Ashby. Should additional employment proposals come forward, these should follow the guidance set out in this section. Mixed use development incorporating employment should also follow the guidance in this section where relevant.

Employment areas are concentrated to the north and east of the settlement core and are mostly comprised of light industrial units. Retail offerings can also be found within the town centre. District-wide shopfront guidance can be found [here](#).

The following guidance is intended to cover out-of-town retail outlets, as well as light industrial and manufacturing units.



**Figure 68:** McVitie's facility, view from Resolution Road, Ashby.



**Figure 69:** B&M Home Store, Coalfield Way, Ashby.



## EM.00 EMPLOYMENT BUILDING PRINCIPLES

### Screening

*Developments should incorporate screening from main roads using natural features such as trees and hedges.*

### Building line

*Buildings lines in light industrial areas should still address internal streets and should have a rational layout.*

### Outside circulation

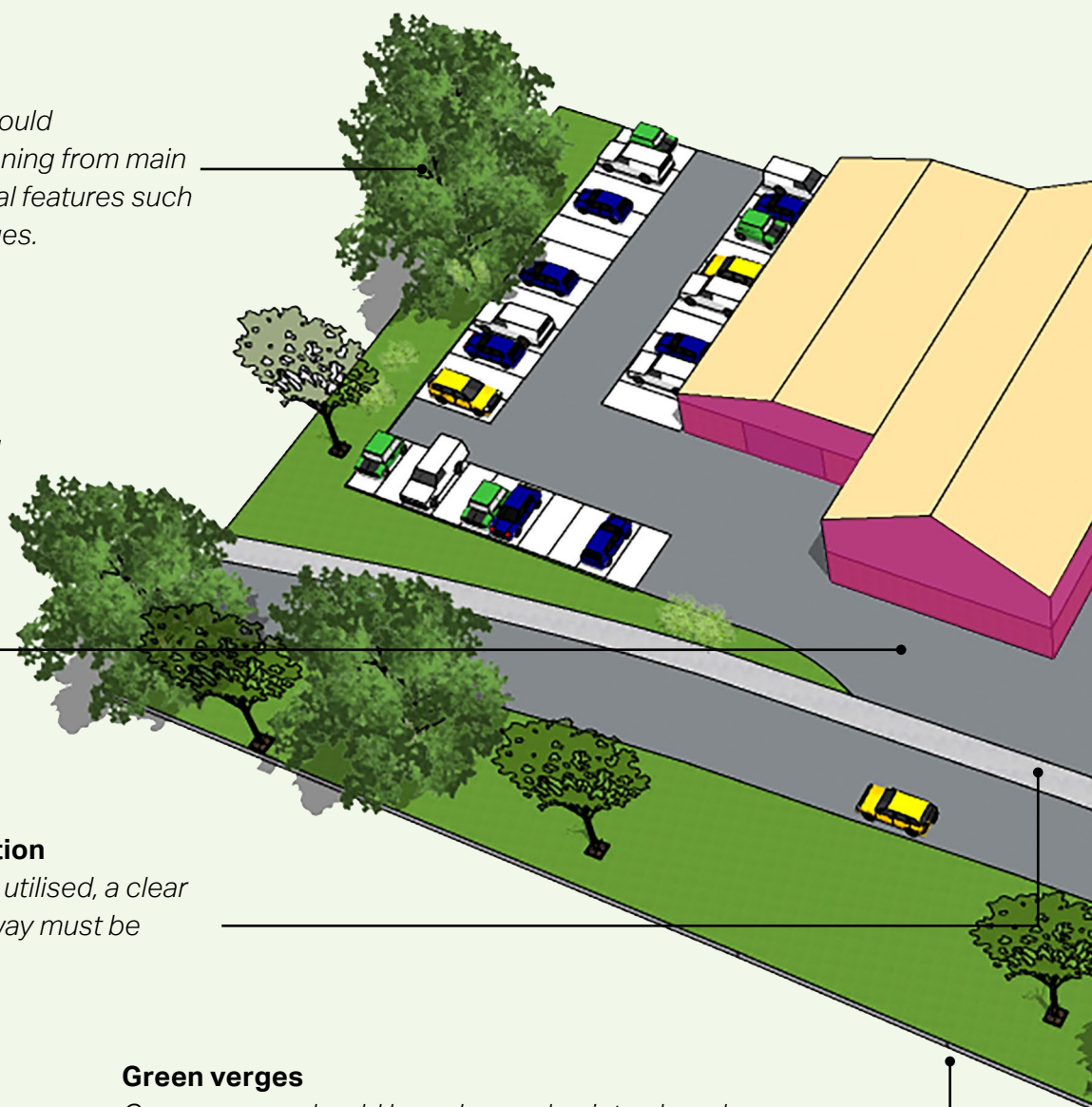
*If outer areas are utilised, a clear pedestrian pathway must be preserved.*

### Green verges

*Green verges should be enhanced or introduced where possible. Green verges do not necessarily have to be grass and could be wild flowers, for example. Attention should be paid to the mowing regime to preserve flowering plants.*

### Tree planting

*Tree planting should be encouraged to create a natural setting.*



## Solar panels

*Due to their high proportion of roof area, industrial or commercial units should make use of solar panels where possible.*

## Materials

*When visible from passing routes, units should be clad in high quality materials which improve their visual impact and decrease their visual presence such as ash wood.*

## Height

*Industrial and commercial buildings should be low in height, of 1-2 storeys maximum to minimise impact on the surrounding landscape.*

## Frontages

*Where industrial buildings have a glazed area, such as offices, this should face onto the street.*

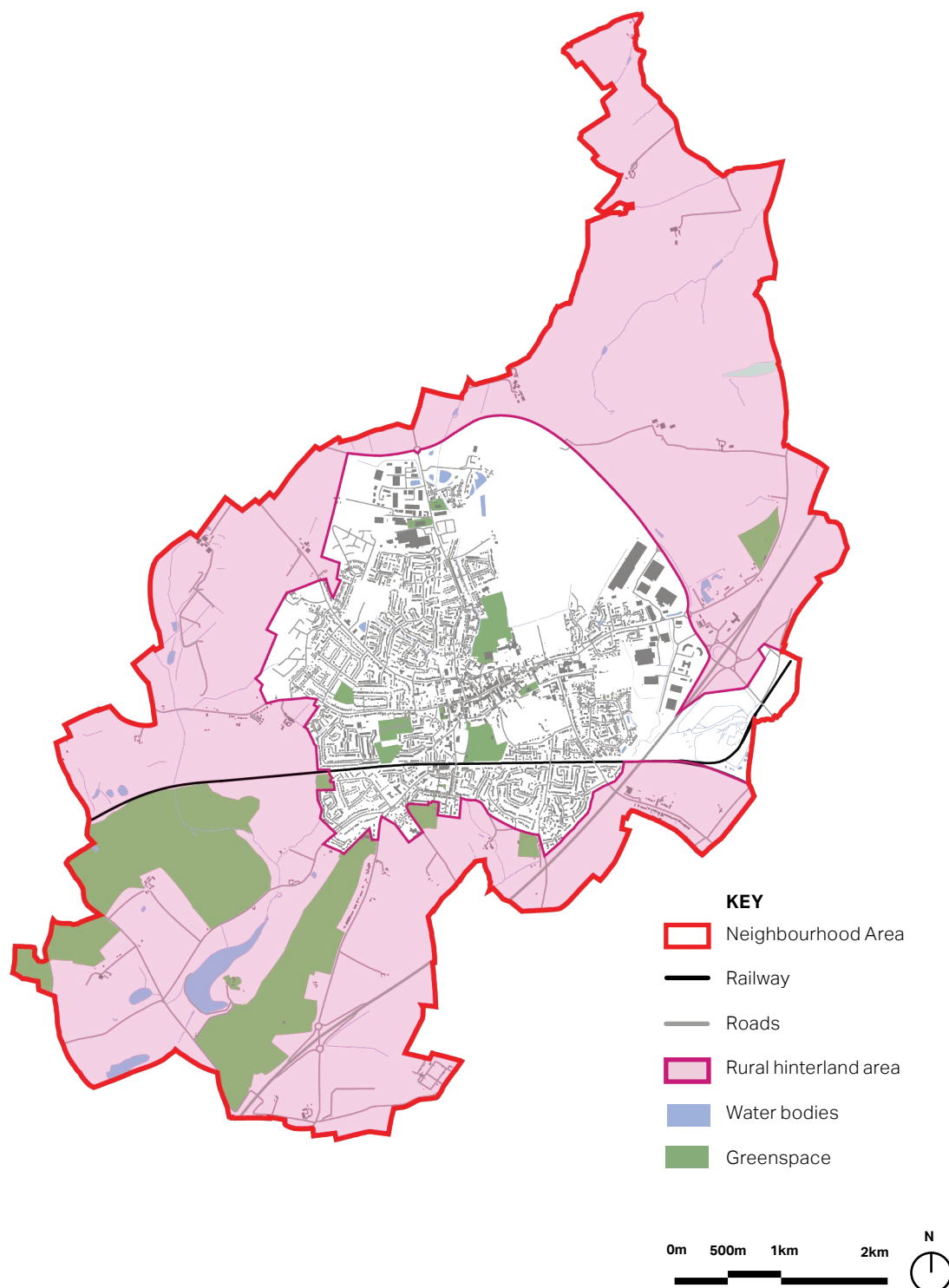
## Parking

*Sufficient car parking should be provided for businesses and their employees. Parking should not be allowed on verges / green spaces or roads, and should be to the side or rear of buildings. Cycle routes and cycle parks should be included to support cycling to work.*



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note a more





**Figure 70:** Map showing the guidance area in the Neighbourhood Area.

## 4.6 RURAL HINTERLAND

This section will contain guidance for development which takes place outside of the existing built-up area of Ashby.

The following principles focus on small scale residential development and seek to protect rural character and connections to landscape setting.

For further detail on North West Leicestershire landscape studies, please see [here](#).



**Figure 71:** Old Parks Farm east of Ashby.



**Figure 72:** Rural scene north of Packington in the south of Ashby Parish.



## RH.00 RURAL HINTERLAND DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

### Areas of transition

*Retain areas of transition between the street and the surrounding countryside.*

### Car parking

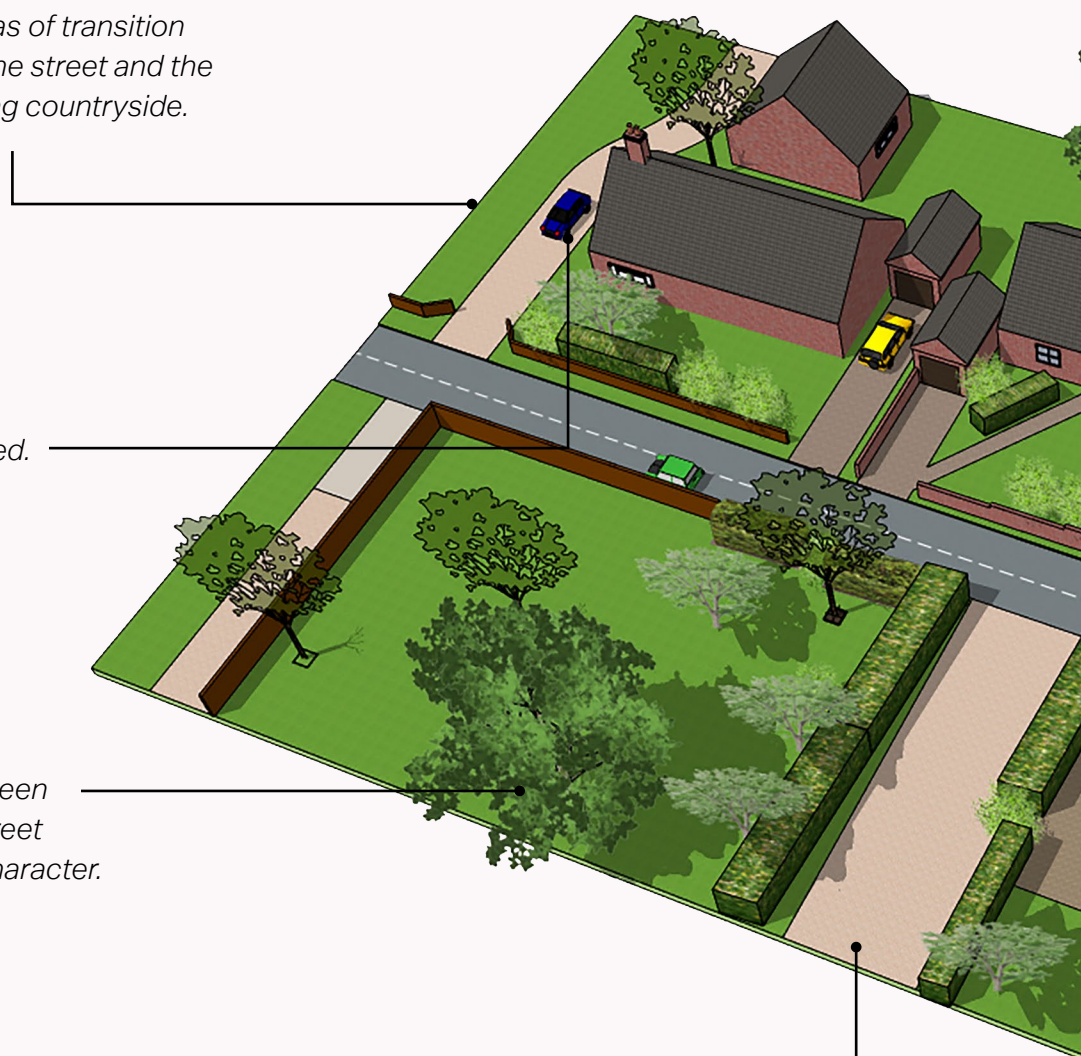
*On-plot front or garage parking should be provided.*

### Green spaces

*Preserve informal green spaces along the street which add to rural character.*

### Layout

*Excessive ribbon development on the entrance routes to Ashby should be avoided. Where appropriate, dwellings should be arranged in small clusters.*





## Boundary treatment

*Green hedges and vegetation should be encouraged along with wooden fencing.*

## Front gardens

*Front gardens with landscaping should be provided with buildings sat back from the carriageway.*

## Density and scale

*Development outside of built-up areas should remain low density with unobtrusive form to prevent urbanising feature.*



A modern, multi-story brick building with large, dark-framed windows. The building features a mix of brick textures and dark horizontal bands. A large, semi-transparent teal circle is centered over the image, containing white text. The foreground shows a paved walkway, some low-lying greenery, and a young tree.

CHECKLIST FOR  
DEVELOPMENT

05



## 5. CHECKLIST

As the design Guidelines and Codes in this section cannot cover all development scenarios, this concluding section provides a number of questions based on established good practice against which the design proposal should be evaluated.

The checklist can be used to assess all proposals by objectively answering the questions below. Not all the questions will apply to every development. The relevant ones, however, should provide an assessment as to whether the design proposal has taken into account the context and provided an adequate design solution.

As a first step there are a number of ideas or principles that should be present in all proposals. These are listed under 'General design guidelines for new development'. Following these ideas and principles, a number of questions are listed for more specific topics.



# 1

## General design guidelines for new development:

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

## 2

### Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

## 3

### Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

## 3

### Local green spaces, views & character:

- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?



# 3

## Local green spaces, views & character:

- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

# 4

## Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

# 5

## Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimising overheating risk?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

# 6

## Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

# 7

## Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now, or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so, can they be screened from view, being careful not to cause over shading?

# 8

## Household extensions:

- Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?
- In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?
- Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?
- Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?



# 9

## Building materials & surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

# 10

## Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

