

# Newtown Linford Village Design Statement 2008

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*“Newtown Linford is a charming place with thatched and timbered dwellings, an inviting inn and a much restored medieval church in a peaceful setting by the stream - nor is this all, for the village is the doorstep to Bradgate Park, one of Leicestershire’s loveliest pleasure grounds,... .. with the ruins of the home of the ill fated nine days queen Lady Jane Grey”*

Arthur Mee - “Leicestershire” - Hodder and Stoughton. (1937)

Executive Summary	Main Text Ref
<p><b>Newtown Linford</b> is the second largest parish in Charnwood Borough. It measures 39.3 km<sup>2</sup> and constitutes the south-eastern portion of Charnwood Forest, an upland lying to the north-west of Leicester. Unlike much of the County it is relatively well-wooded, with trees and semi-natural vegetation covering more than 45% of the area. It is unique in the country botanically, zoologically and geologically -- one of few sites in England where rocks date from the Precambrian era. The parish has 425 residences and a population of about 1200.</p>	3.0 2.0
<p>The village lies at the threshold to <b>Bradgate Park</b> which contains the ruins of a Tudor mansion (home of the ill fated Lady Jane Grey, nine days Queen of England), surrounded by a 12<sup>th</sup> century deer park which preserves a remarkable medieval landscape. The Park was gifted in Trust to the people of Leicestershire and provides an important tourist attraction.</p>	2.0
<p>The village dates from the 13th century and retains much of the charm of the original estate village of the Greys. It lies mainly along a single road in the steep-sided valley of the Lin, hidden from sight from within the Park. The old cottages are constructed in local stone or brick, roofed with thatch or locally quarried Swithland slate. Although the village has grown since sale of the estate in 1925, this has been by ribbon development along the approach roads which in consequence also remains largely invisible from within the Park.</p>	2.0 3.0
<p>It is highly desirable to maintain the impression of a small rural estate village and avoid developments that encroach on the open vistas of countryside seen from within the Park. Inside the Conservation Area, developments should retain the local vernacular style of building. Available building land is restricted by the confines of the <b>village development envelope</b>, and within it the trend towards over-development of plots should be resisted. This leads to loss of gardens and rural character. <b>Zones of separation</b> from the neighbouring villages of Anstey, Groby and Markfield are narrow and need preserving as farmland.</p>	3.0
<p>The village separates rather sharply into the <b>Conservation Area</b>, which contains 44 listed buildings, intended to preserve the character of the original estate village, and that outside which consists mainly of post-1930 housing - including some attractive houses from the 1930s period that need preserving - with considerable infilling after 1960. Before its sale in 1925, the absence of development on an impoverished estate meant that a feature is lack of houses built during the Victorian and Edwardian periods.</p>	4.0
<p>Retention of <b>community spirit</b> ought to be important in planning due to the harmful social consequences from losing it. Newtown Linford is remarkable in that after the Second World War, despite converting from a farming to a dormitory village with considerable influx of new residents, it retains nevertheless a strong sense of community, fostered by the way it has grown and by the presence of its own primary school, church, village hall, shop, public house and social club. However, the rising value of land for residential housing causes commercial as well as agricultural land to be converted to housing. In recent years a restaurant, hotel and garden centre have been lost and remaining enterprises are at risk. The village, with its diverse legacy of architecture, is an attractive and rewarding place to live -- which Charnwood Borough Council, Newtown Linford Parish Council and local residents should seek to preserve.</p>	2.0 4.0
<p>The purpose of the Design Statement is to set the standards for all future developments in the Parish, including house extensions. It is intended as a supplementary planning document and to carry considerable weight in deciding all future planning applications. It will help to ensure consistency in recommendations made by the Parish Council and decisions of the planning authority, Charnwood Borough Council.</p>	1.0

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>Main Text Ref</b>
<p>New buildings (and extensions), both inside and outside the Conservation Area, should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• harmonise with what is around them in scale and style;</li> <li>• adhere to the ideals set out in the Charnwood Supplementary Planning Document "Leading in Design";</li> <li>• observe existing arrangements of buildings, whether established building lines, or gentle curves, or irregularly disposed;</li> <li>• not be over-dominant nor diminish the quality and integrity of neighbouring buildings, nor (for an extension) of the original structure;</li> <li>• not result in close proximity to adjacent houses by building up to boundaries, which interferes with maintenance of side walls and guttering, and access to the rear;</li> <li>• avoid excessive bulk so as not to create a terraced effect;</li> <li>• conform to village domestic-scale architecture rather than suburban "executive-style" housing;</li> <li>• avoid insensitive infilling and retain the open rural aspect of the village.</li> <li>• Small extensions not requiring planning permission should adhere to the guidelines in this document.</li> </ul>	<p>1.0</p> <p>5.01</p> <p>5.01</p> <p>5.02</p> <p>5.03</p> <p>5.03</p> <p>5.03</p> <p>5.03</p>
<p>New roofs should fit in with the roofscape and not be dominant. The character and proportion of buildings are imposed by past technologies, and are reflected in the span of beams, the height of walls, and the pitch of gables and dormers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dormers are not traditional, but can occasionally be used to break up a featureless Roof line.</li> <li>• Roof lights spoil the unbroken vista of a roof; they should be avoided on frontages; elsewhere they should be of the "Conservation Area" type.</li> <li>• Eaves can be lowered to emphasize the cottage character of a building.</li> <li>• Thatch should be retained on buildings where it exists.</li> <li>• Swithland slate is now difficult to obtain but can be matched with substitutes; laying in the traditional manner of diminishing courses requires specialist skills.</li> <li>• Tiles of suitable hues are acceptable, but concrete tiles should not be used in more sensitive locations; the latter also tend to continue bleeding sand into the guttering.</li> <li>• Weatherboarding and hung slates or tiles are not traditional and are best avoided.</li> </ul>	<p>5.02</p> <p>5.02</p> <p>5.14</p> <p>5.13</p> <p>5.15</p> <p>5.08</p>
<p>Porches give added character to village buildings, and improve insulation of the house.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the Conservation Area a cottage style is preferred with thatched or slate roof.</li> <li>• Elsewhere it should match the existing roofing material of the house.</li> <li>• Simple solid-looking porches are better than insubstantial over-fussy canopies that appear added as an afterthought.</li> </ul>	<p>5.07</p>
<p>Common materials and high standards of workmanship should be used. The temptation to emulate past styles poorly, without applying the craftsmanship of the past, can result in a pastiche of ill-matched styles. Previous generations of architects and builders seemed able to produce buildings that blended well into their surroundings without relying on imitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone as a traditional constructional material is a particular feature of the Conservation Area and some outlying parts, and its use is to be encouraged -- but not merely as a decorative device giving an artificial effect.</li> <li>• Bricks should harmonise with existing buildings in texture and colour, and are perhaps best obtained from local brickworks.</li> </ul>	<p>5.10</p> <p>5.02</p> <p>5.11</p> <p>5.12</p>

Executive Summary	Main Text Ref
<p>Windows and doors should keep the same proportions and appearance as in the original structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uVPC doors and windows are not sympathetic to older properties and are unacceptable for listed buildings -- for these, traditional material (wood) and style (small casement windows and board doors) must be utilised. Elsewhere in the Conservation Area it may be advisable to consult the Planning Authority.</li> <li>• Newer houses sometimes have glass panels in doors (although security should be considered).</li> <li>• Cast iron guttering and down pipes are required for listed buildings, although uVPC may be used elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<p>5.06 5.05 5.04 5.16</p>
<p>Paintwork on doors, window frames, fascia boards, soffits and guttering should avoid garish colours; where walls are rendered or painted, natural colours are preferred.</p>	<p>5.09</p>
<p>Surfaces around buildings are important to their appearance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granite setts, York stone slabs and Swithland slate laid flat are the traditional materials.</li> <li>• Modern riven concrete slabs or block paving in appropriate colour laid in traditional patterns are also used successfully.</li> <li>• Driveways in gravel or natural-looking block paving suit the character of the village better than expanses of tarmac or concrete.</li> </ul> <p>Care must be taken to avoid causing surface water to discharge on to the highway or on to adjacent properties.</p>	<p>5.17 5.18 5.18</p>
<p>Plot boundaries include granite or field-stone walls, brick, wooden palings and traditional hedge species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel fences, metal railings, concrete-block walls or hedges of Leyland Cypress are to be discouraged in locations visible from public places or roads; they should normally not exceed 1½ metres in height.</li> <li>• Along frontages: walls, fences and railings must not exceed 1 metre in height.</li> </ul>	<p>5.19 5.21</p>
<p>Landscaping should respect local topography, and suitable trees and shrubs be planted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees and landscape conceal the village until the residential area is reached. However trees are being progressively lost, and must be protected and their numbers enhanced.</li> <li>• Gardens are an important feature, and in the Conservation Area front gardens should favour traditional cottage gardens, rather than adopting urban styles.</li> <li>• The tendency to subvert use of the garage and pave front gardens as a parking lot is deplored. Gardens enhance the rural character of the village and provide a haven for wildlife.</li> <li>• The wide grassy banks at the lower ends of both the Groby and Markfield Lanes, help to give a spacious feel to the village.</li> </ul>	<p>6.01</p>

Executive Summary	Main Text Ref
<p>The roads are relatively narrow, carry a vehicle weight restriction and today are unclassified. Traffic and car parking problems are caused by the many visitors to Bradgate Park. Vehicle speeds and parking need to be regulated and closely monitored. Roadside parking is restricted, and provision of adequate off-road parking space is requisite for all new developments.</p>	6.01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads and pavements are tarmac, and in residential areas granite kerbstones conform to the character of the village.</li> <li>• Road markings and road signs are kept minimal in order to foster a rural ambience.</li> <li>• Grass verges line all the approach roads, together with the trees, hedges and dry-stone walls that border them, giving outstanding views that must be preserved. Verges are protected by inserting wooden posts where parking may cause damage.</li> <li>• A speed limit of 40 m.p.h applies along most of Bradgate Road and Markfield Lane, and 30 m.p.h. through the rest of the village.</li> <li>• Through traffic by heavy vehicles (&gt; 7.5 tons) is disallowed.</li> <li>• Double yellow lines, mini-roundabouts and speed humps are employed to help reduce speeds and maintain traffic flow.</li> <li>• Finger-style road signs are preferred, although the Highway Authority has placed an unsightly clutter of large prominent suburban-style signs at a few junctions.</li> </ul>	6.02
<p>Other rights of way</p>	6.05
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many footpaths radiate from the village, giving easy access to the adjacent countryside and its imposing views; these must be preserved.</li> </ul>	6.04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horse riding is allowed along prescribed tracks in Bradgate Park, but otherwise the Parish is poorly served by bridleways.</li> </ul>	6.06
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a few un-adopted roads.</li> </ul>	6.13
<p>Street furniture</p>	6.13
<p>Must blend in with the village and reflect its rural character.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bus shelter and public notice boards are of rustic timber construction.</li> <li>• Cast-iron green litter bins harmonise well.</li> <li>• Green plant troughs and hanging baskets enhance the heart of the village.</li> <li>• Wooden benches are put in several places for convenience of residents and visitors.</li> <li>• The old cast-iron village pump (listed building) has been preserved.</li> <li>• 4 post boxes are conveniently located at various points through the village.</li> <li>• A traditional red telephone box (listed building) is sited opposite the Public House.</li> <li>• Satellite dishes and aerials are placed unobtrusively, and this is requisite.</li> <li>• Signs on commercial outlets comply with existing planning requirements as regards appearance and illumination, and conform with the rural setting.</li> </ul>	
<p>Transmission poles</p>	6.02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street lighting is kept fairly minimal to reduce light pollution, but the poles vary in materials and style.</li> <li>• Electricity poles have been kept off road frontages.</li> <li>• Telephone poles and dangling wires have been allowed to disfigure much of the village during the post-war period.</li> </ul>	
<p>In newer developments the unsightly appearance of poles and overhead wires has been avoided by using underground cables.</p>	

Executive Summary	Main Text Ref
<p>Wildlife and biodiversity</p> <p>The Parish falls within the National Forest and is well-wooded compared with other parts of Leicestershire. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are extensive and ecologically varied, and provide important recreational areas for the general public.</li> <li>• 32 Local Wildlife Sites that identify known locations of declining or endangered species but confer no rights of access beyond existing rights of way.</li> </ul> <p>The above receive protection under various laws and planning regulations.</p>	7.0
<p>Geology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient rocks outcrop, dating from the Pre-Cambrian geological era; they are world-famed for first discovery of the Ediacaran fauna and provide the source of Swithland slate.</li> <li>• Massive intrusions of diorite ("granite") are quarried locally, mainly for road material.</li> <li>• Mercia Mudstone ("Keuper Marl") may overlay; it provided clay for the bricks of Bradgate House.</li> <li>• Boulder Clay, deposited by glaciation in the Pleistocene, may blanket earlier layers.</li> </ul>	7.0
<p>Freshwater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear fast-flowing brook ("River Lin") of national importance flows through the Parish, valued for its specialist fauna, which includes Brook Lamprey and a surviving isolated population of the European Crayfish.</li> <li>• Alder trees along its banks, notably by the Cricket Field, are of superior genotype.</li> <li>• This stream also provides the main natural water source for Cropston Reservoir, which is unusual for a mesotrophic lake.</li> <li>• It is essential to keep the stream free of pollution and silt.</li> <li>• Field ponds are neglected, but a new pond has been dug at the east end of the Parish for conservation purposes.</li> </ul> <p>The village lies in a depression, and sewage has to be pumped out. It is necessary to minimise risk of overflow into the stream, whether due to excessive sewage production, heavy rainfall or power or pump failure.</p>	7.0
<p>Trees and field boundaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progressive loss of trees from hedgerows and from residential areas causes concern; and every effort is needed to protect them and to enhance their numbers.</li> <li>• Hedgerows constitute an important ecological habitat that links woodlands and assists in dispersal of species.</li> <li>• Field dry-stone walls are also a feature of the Parish and provide a special habitat.</li> <li>• In local woods the presence of a ground flora of anemones, bluebells or wild garlic indicates the presence of ancient woodland.</li> </ul> <p>These all receive various sorts of protection, both from Forestry and Hedgerow legislation and from cross compliance under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, as well as within the Conservation Area and by means of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).</p>	7.0
<p>Fields and road verges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of feudal strip cultivation survives in a few fields, showing that they have remained virtually unploughed since land enclosure in 1829.</li> <li>• The old meadow flora survives along road verges, which should not become depauperated by inappropriate management.</li> </ul>	7.0

## **Purpose of this Village Design Statement**

The purpose of the Village design Statement is to act as a Supplementary Planning Document. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to expand upon policy or provide further detail to policies in Development Plan Documents. It does not have development plan status, but it will be accorded significant weight as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The provisions of any SPD cannot, therefore, be regarded as prescriptive but they can provide a powerful indicative tool in the interpretation and application of policy.

The document has been prepared to supplement policy EV1 in the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (January 2004). The Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Leading in Design' should be read in conjunction with this document.

The Council is preparing new planning documents as part of its Local Development Framework. These documents will introduce new spatial planning policies which will create a new decision making framework for the future development of the borough. Nothing in this Village Design Statement should be seen as constraining the open and democratic process of preparing these new planning policies and the reader should be aware that this supplementary planning document or parts of it may be superseded as new policies are approved.

More information about the local development framework and the planning documents proposed can be found on the Council's website at [www.charnwood.gov.uk](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk).

## 1. Introduction

**How:** -This Village Design Statement (VDS) has been produced by a group of village volunteers, supported by the Parish Council, following a public meeting. Further input from residents came from completed questionnaires sent to all village households, the village walkabout and the photographic exhibition in the Village Hall. The group has received continuing guidance from Charnwood Borough Council's planning department and the Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Community Council.

**What:** - Adopted by the Charnwood Borough Council with the status of 'Supplementary Planning Document', (Regional plan Policy 3. "Promoting better Design"). This VDS constitutes an additional planning tool in the decision-making planning process. It will guide new developments, large and small, so that the settlement pattern, building design, materials and facilities of the parish are respected and enhanced. It is not intended to prevent change, but, rather, to ensure consistency and good quality. Each guideline has been developed following detailed analysis of the historic and landscape settings, and existing development styles, to conserve the village features that attract both residents and visitors alike; especially the surviving core features of the old estate village.

**Why:** - This VDS will be the starting point for consideration of all developments and alterations by those involved: County, Borough and Parish Councils, other statutory organizations and interested groups, landlords, developers, architects, objectors and persons supporting the applications. Village Design Statements represent an advance in planning, involving the community at the earliest stage, rather than simply being left to support or object at a later stage.



**Entrance to Bradgate Park in the centre of the Village**

## 2. The Village Context

Newtown Linford is a 13th century village lying in the Charnwood Forest, seven miles North West of Leicester. It is within easy reach of the A50 and the M1. All roads leading into the main village descend from the surrounding parishes. The village nestles in the valley of the River Lin and is mainly one long street. When viewed from inside Bradgate Park the village is hidden by trees. The parish is well wooded, which is unusual for Leicestershire and it has been designated part of the National Forest.



**Newtown Linford the hidden village. This is the vista towards the village from Bradgate Park**

The village is adjacent to Bradgate Park, which was the childhood home of Lady Jane Grey (1537-1554). “Nine Days Queen of England”. The deer park surrounds the ruins of the family house in the Park. The house was built in decorated brick, starting around 1490. It is notable in being one of the first unfortified country mansions in England.

Throughout the park there are Precambrian rocky outcrops. Stone has been extensively quarried from granitic intrusions in the surrounding area for road aggregate, kerbstones and building stone for local houses and churches. The park still looks much as it did in the middle ages with bracken and grass covered slopes, interspaced with small woodland spinneys. These were planted to provide cover when it was a shooting estate. Herds of roaming deer remain from its origin as a deer park from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Grey family sold the cottages, farms and woodland of the estate in 1925, by which time, many were in a poor state of repair. The park and ruined mansion were bought in 1928 by Charles Bennion, a Leicester industrialist, who gave them to the people of Leicestershire: “that for all time it might be preserved in its natural state for the quiet enjoyment of the people of Leicestershire”. The Park is now managed by Bradgate Park Trust.

The parish contains 425 houses and has a population of 1200. In the village conservation area and in the Park there are 44 listed buildings and other items, which include the village pump and the telephone kiosk. The stone-built church dates from the 14th century. The Sunday school, built in 1820 was the day school until 1907, when the present school was opened. The village hall was built in 1930 of stone and brick with a Swithland slate roof. The public house is a more modern building in both brick and stone. There are several Cruck and frame-built cottages. Traditional building materials were brick and stone for cottages, some with a rendered finish. They are either thatched or have Swithland slate roofs.

The village expanded after 1925 with properties being built along the approach roads. There are now only two working farms in the village. Other former farms have been developed into housing.

Newtown Linford is a dormitory village with limited “affordable housing”, particularly for the young. There is no sheltered accommodation for the elderly.

The trend is to over-develop existing properties, which threatens the character of the village. Currently there is no quarrying at Groby quarry, although planning permissions granted in the 1940s have been revalidated for future extraction from this area. Employment within the village is now largely confined to service industries. There is a village store, a nursery which sells plants, fruit, vegetables, ice cream, garden furniture and sundries, a farm shop, a flower and gift shop, an equestrian centre, a public house, a café, a club and a restaurant. A cricket club, tennis club and youth club thrive in the village.



**Village cricket club with Bradgate Park  
in the background**



**All Saints Church**

Bradgate Park has a marked influence on village life. The tourist industry refers to it as a ‘Honey pot site’. It is the largest tourist attraction in the county, attracting around 1 million visitors a year. The park provides income for local businesses, an example being the small ice cream kiosk opposite the park gates



**Children’s favourite, the ice cream Kiosk**



**Problem of being a tourist village**

### 3. The Landscape Setting

#### 3.00 Landscape setting

The Charnwood Forest is a distinctive isolated area of high relief north-west of Leicester, lying on ancient rocks from the Precambrian geological era. In places, the older rocks became intruded by igneous material. The soils are poor -- common land reduced in medieval times by overgrazing and annual fires to open heathland and rough grazing. After Parliamentary Enclosure in 1829, the landscape became divided into the woodlands and fields separated by hedges and drystone walls which largely survive today. The Parish of Newtown Linford lies in the south-east of the Forest. A fast-flowing stream of clear water runs through it approximately west-east from Ulverscroft into Cropston Reservoir at the eastern boundary. It has been named the “River Lin” because of its official status as the principal natural source of water entering the Reservoir.

#### 3.01 South

In the south of the Parish, there is a plateau c.125 m (410 ft) AMSL covered by heavy boulder clay, where the fields average about 15 acres (6 hectares). The plateau exceeds 1 km<sup>2</sup> in area, extending up to Chaplin's Rough and southwards towards Sheet Hedges Wood (former Oak/Ash woodland with Hazel coppice), and Groby Pool. It stretches northwards to the perimeter wall of Bradgate Park alongside Bradgate Road.

#### 3.02 Northeast

Bradgate Park measures 3.5 km<sup>2</sup> (1.3 ml<sup>2</sup>) in area, and is roughly square in shape. It contains the highest points in the Parish, the adjacent rocky peaks: Old John, the name of a Folly at its crest, and the War Memorial obelisk, both at just over 220 metres AMSL. The landscape is picturesque, comprising a surviving medieval deer park largely covered by bracken with herds of Red and Fallow deer. It also contains a ruined Tudor mansion built from bricks fabricated from clay dug nearby. Behind the house is the original fishpond. Stone is also quarried within the Parish, but the only surviving quarry is on the southern boundary near Groby Pool. Slate pits in Swithland Woods to the north of the Park provided a local source of roofing material (and ceased working in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century).

#### 3.03 Northwest

The northwestern part of the Parish consists of hilly dissected terrain with rocky outcrops, today largely covered by woodland – Abells Wood, Benscliffe Wood, Blakeshay Wood, Cravens Rough, Sandhills Wood etc. North of Bradgate Park are further areas of woodland including Swithland Woods, Hunts Hill, Hallgates Spinney and Warren Hill. The fields between the woods are enclosed by hedges, much as since land enclosure, but tend to be smaller (between 5 and 10 acres) than those on the flatter land.

#### 3.04 West-East valley

The headwaters of the Lin rise in the Ulverscroft area, and fed a watermill at the western end of the village -- which remains as a semi-ruined shell in a small patch of woodland. The brook passes beside the village roughly parallel to and south of Main Street, before crossing under the road, skirting the cricket field and entering Bradgate Park, whence it proceeds via a series of artificial waterfalls and ponds into Cropston Reservoir (completed 1870), which provides drinking water for Severn Trent Water plc. In more distant fields, ponds existed for watering livestock, but since 1960 these have usually been abandoned, and ditches alongside hedges are

also often filled in or neglected. In the 1990s, for landscaping and conservation purposes, a large pond was excavated in the field behind houses at the Anstey (eastern) end of the village.

### **3.05 The village**

The old village of Newtown Linford, c. 110 metres (360 ft) AMSL, lies at the southern main entrance to Bradgate Park, in the narrow valley of the River Lin with rising land on either side. It is designated a Conservation Area and retains much of its original character, formerly comprising estate workers' cottages and tenant farmhouses strung along the Lin brook. Roads from adjacent villages enter down steep hills -- from Anstey in the east, Groby in the south, Markfield in the west and from the northwest down Sharpley Hill. The cottages are close enough to the stream so that, before piped water, it need not be carried too far for domestic use, but usually sufficiently distant to reduce risk from flooding. More recently, small fields behind the houses have become paddocks for horses, and former allotments converted to flower gardens or built on for additional housing. After the Estate was sold in 1925, the village retained its linear pattern of settlement by extending along the approach roads -- down Bradgate Road to the Parish Boundary, and for a short way up the Groby and Markfield Lanes. Where the housing is separated from the main road along service roads, as depicted on the front cover. These features have helped preserve the rural character of the village.

Along the connecting roads, the gaps between this and other villages have been progressively reduced, in places to only two or three fields. "Zones of separation" need to be kept from the adjacent settlements of Anstey, Groby and Markfield, and changes from agricultural use to houses, stabling or other leisure activity must be restricted.



**River Lin in Bradgate Park**



**Old John & The War Memorial in Bradgate Park**



**The Ruins of Lady Jane Grey's House  
in Bradgate Park**



**Cropston Reservoir**

## 4. Settlement Pattern and Character

### 4.00 Ribbon Developments

The village consists of a single undulating road winding along the valley with rural lanes connecting with the adjacent villages of Markfield and Groby.

#### 4.01 Main Street



**Main Street showing the irregular positioning of old cottages dating back between the 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> century**

Main Street is characterised by old farmhouses and cottages in local Charnwood granite with roofs of thatch or Swithland slate, irregularly sited along the hillside. The soft grey unified appearance is relieved by some old mellow red brick or off-white stucco. Infilling, modernisation and extensions have occurred at an increasing pace in recent years.

At the main entrance to Bradgate Park on Bradgate Road, there is a small nucleus of important buildings: All Saints Church and churchyard, Sunday School, Village Store and Restaurant. The Cricket Ground and bridge over the River Lin by Main Street/Groby Lane junction are

attractive features. Other community buildings, the Primary School, Bradgate Public House, Village Hall and Linford Club, are grouped further along Main Street. All the buildings are domestic in scale and rural in character, set among many trees, and with vistas of fields and woods between and behind them.

#### 4.02 Bradgate Road, Groby Lane and Markfield Lane.



**Bradgate Road with houses set back from the road**



**More uniform siting of later housing on Markfield Lane dating from the late 1930s to the early 1950s**

Development along Bradgate Road, Groby Lane and Markfield Lane became possible after the sale of the Grey family estate, which included the Estate village, in 1925. Brick houses and bungalows began to spread up the three steep approach roads, although on one side only, and set well back from the road by large front gardens at the bottom of Bradgate Road and behind the service roads in Groby Lane and Markfield Lane. This preserved a sense of open countryside, although recent enlargements of these dwellings have introduced an undesirable density, and has given these roads a more suburban aspect.

There are two examples of the use of service roads in the village: on Groby Lane and Markfield Lane, they confer a feeling of space and create wide verges with the opportunity for appropriate tree planting. They also preserve the original meadow flora.

#### **4.03 Grey Crescent**

Begun at the end of the Second World War as housing for agricultural workers, this road off the north side of Main Street was extended in the late 1960s to form a loop of varied houses and bungalows with open frontages. Both parts of this development are of excellent quality.



**Grey Crescent showing a 60s scheme that has retained its open plan and not been overdeveloped**

The later part was designed by a local architect as a co-ordinated scheme to conform to the hillside. Built in local stone and Swithland slate together with toning brickwork, it forms a most successful contemporary development. Apart from its own merit, it accords very well with the traditional grey stone houses of the Conservation Area in Main Street, and in fact the whole of Grey Crescent now forms part of the Conservation Area itself.

#### **4.04 Ulverscroft Lane, Warren Hill and Sharpley Hill.**

Outlying development in the Forest only increased with the advent of the car and the popularity of rambling and cycling. From the 1920s, holiday chalets began to appear, but on Ulverscroft Lane and Cravens Rough they were soon converted into detached houses. The ancient Blakeshay Farm has become a large family complex. A few groups of semi-detached and other houses expanded along Roecliffe Road with the building of the Water Works in the 1930s. Other large houses with large grounds were built along Warren Hill and Priory Lane, and most isolated farms have become gentrified over the years.

#### **4.05 Redevelopment**

In recent years pressure for housing in this desirable village has led to the redevelopment of former sites of commercial enterprises: Bracken Hill (formerly a restaurant), Stamford Rise (formerly a garden centre opposite the Park entrance), Johnsccliffe Close (formerly a hotel). These new developments are overcrowded with dwellings with minimal or no gardens causing a loss to the open character of the settlement. It is felt that a higher and more sympathetic standard of design could have been achieved both in layout and buildings, and that this must be an essential requirement for future schemes. For a detailed description of standards of design required in Newtown Linford, refer to Section 5 on Buildings and Materials. With regard to affordable housing, there is a need for 'Sheltered Accommodation'. The Caravan Site off Bradgate Road is visible from within Bradgate Park, and is therefore a sensitive area. Any redevelopment should take this into account.

#### 4.06 Open space and countryside

Newtown Linford is fortunate in having the 840 acres of Bradgate Park on its doorstep, an outstanding recreational resource. Within the village, the cricket field adjoins the churchyard with fields and the Park beyond. Apart from this however, open space is limited to glimpses of the stream, the bank in Groby Lane and the burial ground on the edge of habitation and the playing field hidden behind Grey Crescent. At the north end off Main Street there is a small dell leading to fields, and the bank on Markfield Lane. The majority of homes in the village back onto or overlook open fields, the stream or woods, providing close contact with wildlife and the countryside. There are six public footpaths leading directly from the village through the adjacent fields, their access points well distributed throughout the residential area. There are also good bridle paths in the Park.

#### 4.07 Guidelines for Settlement Pattern and Character

1	Newtown Linford is closely associated with Bradgate Park, an important tourist resource, and therefore it is essential to maintain its original character of a small rural estate village.
2	Developments in the village must not encroach on the open vistas of countryside observed from within the Park.
3	Any developments that might be seen from within Bradgate Park are particularly sensitive, and must be avoided.
4	Affordable Housing, especially sheltered accommodation may be required.
5	It is important that any new development is complementary and does not destroy the natural charm of the village. Available building land in the village is limited and is restricted by the confines of the development envelope and the Charnwood local plan.
6	The tendency to build up to boundaries of plots must be resisted in order to avoid a terraced effect; it is essential to provide access for maintenance. Multiple dwellings on one plot and houses too large for their plot must be resisted to prevent loss of rural character and gardens.
7	While the local vernacular style of the Charnwood Forest is desirable in the Conservation Area, good contemporary design could be encouraged elsewhere.
8	Trees along the approaches and within the village are an important element in enhancing its charm and form wind breaks. The number of trees must be maintained or even increased, and individual trees carefully managed. Refer to map of Conservation Area.
9	Distinctive features such as the River Lin, the main source of natural water flowing into Cropston Reservoir, the churchyard, the cricket field, the grassy banks and verges, and the Field paths need to be preserved and sympathetically maintained.
10	Appropriate rural businesses should be encouraged, in order to provide income in the village, and diversify the rural economy.
11	Conversion of agricultural land around the village to housing, commercial stabling and leisure activities should be resisted in order to maintain the separate identity of the village.
12	Zones of separation, consisting of agricultural and forest land, between the built-up areas in this parish and adjacent villages, should be preserved.

## 5. Buildings and Materials in the Village

### 5.01 The Challenge of Good Design

Newtown Linford with its valued style and diverse legacy of architecture is an attractive and rewarding place to live. It is essential that the Planning Authority, Charnwood Borough Council, together with Newtown Linford Parish Council and local residents, seek to retain and enhance the quality of all new developments and extensions to existing properties, so that it meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own aspirations in order to preserve and improve our heritage.

New development must comply in every respect with the ideals set out in the Charnwood Supplementary Planning Document “Leading in Design” with particular regard to Good Design, Harmony, Street Scene, Proportions, Simplicity, Materials and Craftsmanship. This Document and the Village Design Statement will carry considerable weight in the decision-making process for all future planning applications and applicants should be aware of this. New designs, even outside the Conservation Area, should be seen in context with the existing village. Where the scale or functions of a building is such that the characteristics of the traditional style cannot reasonably be adopted, buildings should still exhibit the highest standards of architecture and be in keeping and proportion with their surroundings in both scale and style. Simple, understated design is not only more fitting in many village locations, it is sometimes cheaper.

Three-storey houses do not occur in the village and are considered unsympathetic although two and a half storey houses which utilise the roof space are occasionally seen.

### The Role of Modern Architecture

It is not easy to introduce modern architecture into traditional settings. The temptation is to emulate past styles, often rather poorly and sometimes without applying the craftsmanship of the past. This frequently leads to a rather bland twentieth century version of the traditional style. Previous generations of architects and developers were able to produce buildings that blended well into their surroundings without relying on imitation. The use of common materials, a high standard of workmanship and care in harmonising the new buildings with the street scene can also achieve this successfully. (See Section 5.21.02 Materials guidelines) Development should be complementary rather than identical to surrounding buildings.

### 5.02 Harmony & Street Scene

New buildings should be in harmony with those around them. They can add interest and variety but should not be out-of-keeping. They should not clash visually with neighbouring buildings and, where possible, should be in character and use sympathetic materials. Where existing buildings are arranged in gentle curves, irregular building lines or sit on or close to a footpath, these local characteristics should be emulated in new development. However, where there are established building lines, these should be adhered to in order to preserve consistency in the street scene. New roofs should fit in with the roof scene of the area and not be dominant. Well-designed dormers can help to break up a featureless roofline where this is important to the character of a building. Roof-light windows spoil the unbroken vista of the roof and must be avoided on front elevations, and be restricted to Conservation Area-type roof-lights when used elsewhere.



Carefully positioned buildings can help to create a sense of enclosure and completeness in the street scene. This can be seen in its natural context where farmsteads have been converted into residential units e.g. courtyard developments.

**A sympathetic conversion of old farm buildings in a courtyard setting.**

### **5.03 Proportion**

New buildings should be well proportioned and in scale with their surroundings, and all extensions should be in scale and character with the building to which they are added. Elevations should be in proportion with one another and with adjacent properties.



**Two older buildings showing balanced elevation creating a distinctive appearance**

The location of houses and extensions within existing curtilages are recommended to use the following criteria:

- Excessive bulk must be avoided, as it creates a terraced effect.
- Building up to boundaries should be avoided in order to facilitate access for maintenance work and prevent a terracing effect.
- The size, spacing and location of openings in a structure must be in proportion and relate to the function of the building and be harmonious with its architectural style.

It is possible to add a well-designed extension to an old or traditional building as long as the character of the extension does not diminish the quality or integrity of the original structure by being over-dominant.



### **Recent extensions in proportion to the original cottages**

The character and proportions of buildings are the result of the discipline imposed by past technologies, such as the span length of beams or the height of stone walls. Steeply pitched gables and dormers are a product of the best and most practical use of local stone, slates and thatch, plus the need to use attic and roof space to best advantage.

Although many of these restrictions have been overcome by modern materials and technology, new buildings should still be well proportioned and follow the traditional style.

#### **5.04 Craftsmanship**

The Charnwood Area has a long tradition of craftsmanship in building. The skill and knowledge of generations of local builders is evident throughout the locality with many fine examples of their work.

It is important to lay granite in the right manner as it is an extremely hard stone, which resists dressing. It requires specialist skills to successfully lay and maintain tight even bedding joints. Equivalent skills apply also to the cutting, drilling and laying of Swithland slate roofs in diminishing courses, and similarly to the intricacies of thatching, which has long been regarded as a specialist craft.



**This house built in 1990 shows what can be achieved with thought and good design**



**An extension showing Swithland Slate in diminishing courses, granite walling and brick quoins to openings**

### 5.05 Windows



**Traditional wooden-style windows**



**Tradition style double glazed window**

Development in the older parts of the village should respect the existing characteristics of small casement windows with the detailing of frame and glazing bars preferably in wood. Windows and surrounds in extensions and new buildings should, wherever possible, maintain the same proportions and materials as the original structure. The use of uPVC material on listed buildings for windows, conservatories and guttering is not permitted. Elsewhere, uPVC window units, if used, should be carefully chosen in order to be in character with the original fitments. In the conservation area the planning authority must be consulted.

### 5.06 Doors

Doors in older houses are usually wooden boarded construction. Some have glazed panels and some a window above the door, however the majority are solid. Doors in newer houses often have glass panels but security should be a consideration. uPVC doors are not sympathetic to the character of the older properties or listed buildings, where solid wooden construction is preferred.



**Preferred styles of traditional doors**



**A modern door in keeping with other parts of the village**

### 5.07 Porches

These give added character to village buildings, usually cottage style with slate or thatched roof, but in any case, matching the property in materials and style. Simple solid-looking porches designed as part of the building usually look much better than insubstantial, over-fussy canopies added as an afterthought.



**Examples of traditional porches that complement the character of the building**

### 5.08 Detail

There is scope for variety. There are rarely two identical cottages or houses alongside each other, except in the more formal estate layouts. It is the variety of finishes: random rubble, dressed stone walling, brick quoins, window lintels, window styles, porches, gables, dormers and subtle variations of eaves lines, roof pitches and chimneys that create the ever-changing picture of a typical Charnwood village. These features are brought together by the unifying colours and textures of the local stone, slate and thatch. Weather-boarding is not traditional and is undesirable. Hung tiles and slates on vertical surfaces have been used on dwellings in the village, but they are also not traditional and should be avoided wherever possible.

### **5.09 Decoration**

There is an opportunity to add interesting details, ornamentation and elements of local craftsmanship. This may be in the detailing of windows, chimneys, mouldings, door cases and finials or some other features.

The use of colour on buildings needs to be handled with particular care. In Newtown Linford natural colours tend to be used.

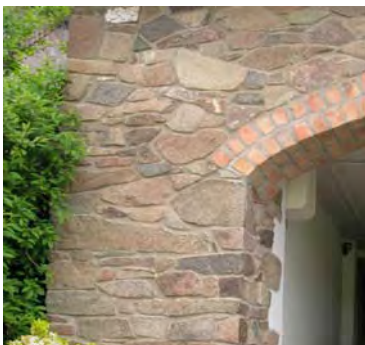
Rendering, Stucco and Tyroleon finishes are often used on walls for contrasts and economy. These should be left in natural colours or finished in white, cream or beige. Bright garish colours should be avoided.

### **5.10 Materials**

New buildings should be constructed of materials typical of, and utilised in similar proportions to, those traditionally used in the immediate surroundings. Particular care should be taken to achieve this in the Conservation Area of the village.

### **5.11 Stone**

In the Conservation Area local stone is the main feature of many buildings, with thatch or Swithland slate as the favoured roofing material. Stonework should be encouraged in new developments and extensions as a main construction material and not just as a decorative feature. Due to the imposition of legislation, the Health and Safety at Work Act has made access to stone quarries more difficult for local builders and consequently the availability and cost of stone are important considerations. In certain instances reclaimed stone from demolition sites is an option and has been successfully used on many projects.



**Examples showing quality of brickwork and stone**

### **5.12 Bricks**

Brickwork is frequently used in many alterations, extensions and new developments, however it must be chosen to blend in with and complement adjacent buildings. Bricks for detailed work, around openings and for quoins and plinths etc., should be carefully selected for texture and colour and, here again, re-claimed bricks can be used. In both stone and brickwork, the mortar and pointing are important in achieving a finish that does not detract from the final appearance of the work.

### 5.13 Slate

Steep pitched roofs are clad with local Swithland slate, this favoured material, laid in diminishing courses, is traditional on roofs in the village. Sadly, Swithland slate is no longer quarried and can only be obtained second-hand in small quantities. Alternatives include blue-grey Welsh or Alaskan slate; however synthetic substitutes have been used successfully on small roof areas.

### 5.14 Thatch

Sixteen of the cottages in the Conservation Area have thatched roofs, many of these have recently been re-thatched and add a special ambience to the village. Every effort must be made to retain thatched roofs.



**Examples of good roofing craftsmanship**

### 5.15 Tiles

Tiles of similar hue to Swithland Slate are often specified to maintain the appearance of the existing roof scene. Occasionally the more modern plain concrete tiles may be acceptable, but not in the most sensitive locations.

### 5.16 Rainwater Pipes

Gutters and down pipes are traditionally cast iron, but nowadays uPVC can be used in the appropriate colour. However, not on Listed buildings.

### 5.17 Paved Surfaces

The materials and design of surfaces around buildings are important to the overall appearance of a development. In this area granite setts, York stone flags, Swithland slate laid flat, form the traditional surface treatments. Modern riven concrete slabs or block paving of an appropriate colour laid in traditional patterns have been used successfully.



**Granite Setts**



**Block Paving**

### 5.18 Driveways

A variety of surfaces of driveways exist in the village. Gravel or natural looking block paving fit in much better with the character of the village than expanses of tarmac or concrete, although it is necessary to take steps to avoid gravel and excess surface water discharging on to the highway, or onto adjacent properties.

### 5.19 Boundaries

Boundaries play an important role in settling a new building into an existing street scene. Traditional Charnwood Style boundaries include local granite or field stone walls, brick, wooden palings, or traditional species of hedge. Modern treated wooden fences, metal railings, concrete block walls or hedges of Leyland Cypress are to be discouraged in locations visible from roads and public places, and should be controlled by specific conditions in new planning permissions in sensitive areas.

Fences, railings and walls adjoining the highway should not exceed 1 metre in height (with the exception of retaining walls).



**Traditional Charnwood-Style boundaries**



**A well constructed dry stone wall**



**Traditional Layered hedge**

### 5.20 Local Businesses

The parish has two working farms, one with a farm shop. There are three livery and equestrian establishments, adding to the rural environment. All these businesses contribute to the appearance and welfare of the village, catering for tourists as well as for local residents, and change to residential use should be resisted.

#### Local Businesses

• Ice Cream Kiosk	• Farm Shop
• Jade Tea Rooms	• Shop, nursery and restaurant
• The Village Restaurant	• Linford Social Club
• Florist shop and gift shop	• The Bradgate Public House
• Village store and Tea room	• Equestrian Centres
• Gibson's Grey Lady Restaurant	



**Village store and Tea Room**



**Village Public House  
The Bradgate**



**Village Farm Shop**



**Equestrian Centre**

## 5.21 Building Guidelines applicable to the Parish

The purpose of these building guidelines is to preserve the key vernacular features of the village and carefully consider and adopt unobtrusive additions.

### 5.21.01 Design guidelines

1	New development should harmonize with the character of the village. Provided this is observed, appropriate high quality contemporary design could be welcomed.
2	Roof heights within the village vary, and this should be echoed in future developments, although roof heights should not be significantly higher than in the adjacent street scene.
3	Building styles within the village allow extensions to be more easily incorporated. However, significant attention must be paid to detailing in relation to adjacent buildings so that a sense of coherent design is not lost.
4	Insensitive infilling and inappropriate extensions would destroy the character of the village and its sense of space. Breaks in the line of buildings should be preserved to retain an open rural aspect.
5	Village domestic scale architecture will be used rather than suburban 'executive style' housing.
6	Where a landscape scheme is required, it should respect the local topography, and suitable trees and shrubs should be planted.
7	On large sites there should be a variety of architectural styles, whilst respecting the context of the existing surroundings.

### 5.21.02 Materials guidelines

1	Stone walls are a particular feature of the parish and are to be encouraged in new developments. They must reflect local building traditions, and not merely be included as a decorative device.
2	Modern building methods and materials are generally less expensive than the traditional stone and slate, but nevertheless, with carefully chosen materials and well considered detailing and design it is possible to utilise them, while retaining the character of the village.
3	In the Conservation Area, traditional-sized Swithland slate is a desirable material and should be retained. For new developments, reclaimed slate may not be the most economic material, although it is preferred. An acceptable alternative is blue-grey Welsh or Alaskan slate. Tiles in subtle hues, or suitable synthetic alternatives, may also serve to maintain the existing colouring of the village roof scene.
4	As well as stone and slate, brick is another defining material used in the village. Stone, slate and brick used in any alterations, extensions, or development must be chosen to enhance and complement adjacent buildings.

### 5.21.03 Windows guidelines

1	Development within the Conservation Area must respect the existing characteristics of fenestration: a) Small casement windows that are well proportioned. b) Detailing of frames and glazing bars, preferably wood.
2	Windows and frames in extensions should, wherever possible, maintain the same proportions and materials as the original structure. uPVC window units are not permitted for listed buildings, but if they are used elsewhere in the Conservation Area, they will match existing proportions, and must be discussed with the Conservation Officers of the Planning Authority.

### 5.21.04 Doors guidelines

1	uPVC doors are not sympathetic for properties in the Conservation Area.
2	Doors and windows, if painted, should avoid bright and garish colours.

### 5.21.05 Chimneys and Roof Gables guidelines

1	Within a development the relationship between roofs, gables, dormers and chimneys must be coherent, and should respect and be complementary to the existing architectural and historical features of the village.
2	Gables and dormers can be used to lower the level of eaves and emphasise the cottage character of a building.

### 5.21.06 Planning Applications guidelines

1	All planning applications must adhere rigorously to checklist in 'Charnwood Leading in Design'.
2	The submission of details for all materials, including mortar joints and mixes, at the time of the application, is needed. Details provided at an early stage of the planning procedure help to facilitate the planning decision.
3	Residents proposing small extensions, that do not require planning permission, should follow the building guidelines in this document, and consult the Planning Department.

### 5.21.07 Local Businesses guidelines

1	Signs must be limited in size, and professionally painted in order to enhance the traditional setting.
2	Large plastic and illuminated signs and fascias are discouraged.
3	Where lighting is required, discreet methods must be used.

## 6. Highways and Traffic

### 6.01 Characteristics of local roads and streets

There are no classified roads in the parish. Trees and the landscape obscure the view of the village until the residential area is reached. Some of the views from the approach roads are outstanding. The roads are relatively narrow and are not suitable for heavy-goods vehicles. The roads carry a weight restriction, but this is often ignored as enforcement is difficult. Grass verges line all the approach roads, with mature trees, hedges or traditional dry stone walls. The roads descend into the heart of the village, where the grass verges create a spacious feel. The tarmac pavements in the residential areas have granite kerbstones in keeping with the character of the village. Double yellow lines were introduced, partly due to the parking problems created by visitors to Bradgate Park, and partly at the request of the police and other emergency services to ensure a free flow of traffic. Inconsiderate parking by visitors damages the verges even where preventative wooden posts have been placed.



**Modern large signs spoil rural surroundings**



**Wooden posts and double yellow lines to control parking**



**Finger posts harmonise with a rural parish**

### 6.02 Road Signs, Lighting and Services

At present the road signs are limited in number and in keeping with a rural village. Road markings have been kept to a minimum. Although the existing finger post signs are more desirable in a rural setting, the larger urbanised style has been introduced by the County Council and clutter can result. This is exemplified by the plethora of signs at the Roecliffe cross roads. Street lighting is dictated by the County Council, resulting in lamp posts constructed in different materials and styles all fitted with yellow sodium lamps. The street scene is disfigured by telephone wires dangling from poles at the edges of the road, although all new developments have underground cables.

### 6.03 Street Furniture

There are three designs of post boxes: two small rectangular boxes on posts, one traditional floor standing cylindrical type outside the post office and one mounted flat in a dry stone wall at the end of Markfield Lane. The traditional red telephone box opposite the Bradgate Public House and the village pump on Main Street are both Grade 2 listed. The bus shelter and the public notice boards are rustic timber construction in keeping with the village surroundings. The green cast iron litter bins cope with the litter problem and fit well into the surroundings. The green plant troughs and hanging baskets also help to enhance the Conservation Area. Several wooden benches are located around the village and positioned to take advantage of the surroundings and local views. Commercial outlets have complied with existing planning requirements regarding signs and illumination, which has preserved the rural feel of the village.

#### **6.04 Bridleways**

The parish of Newtown Linford is poorly served by Bridleways: only a few hundred metres link John Lee's Wood to Markfield Lane. It is however fortunate that the Bradgate Park Trust allow horse riders to use various prescribed horse tracks within and adjacent to the Park. These provide some of the best off-road scenic riding in the county. The downside is that horse riders have to use busy roads with inadequate verges to reach the Park from their stables and paddocks.

#### **6.05 Footpaths**

There are many footpaths radiating from the village, some of which connect with surrounding villages. These ancient footpaths must be preserved in their present form. They form an important part of residents' and visitors' enjoyment in the peace and quiet of this local countryside with its imposing views.



**Footpath to Woodhouse, from the village centre**



**Concessionary Bridle Paths in Bradgate Park**

#### **6.06 Unadopted Roads**

The parish has a number of un-adopted roads and tracks, which are a valuable feature of the village. These, along with the wide grass area at the top of Groby Lane and the bank along the bottom of Markfield Lane, give a spacious feel to the village.



**Post Office Row, an Unadopted Road**

## 6.07 Highways and Traffic Guidelines

1	The appearance of the street lighting should reflect the rural character of the village, and where possible low energy lamps should be used within a “lantern” design that reduces light pollution.
2	Future design of street furniture must reflect the rural nature of the village & blend in with what exists already.
3	Street clutter from street furniture, road signs, utility enclosures and information road signs & road markings will be minimised. In sensitive locations, e.g. rural junctions and conservation areas, fingerposts are preferable to standard, large, utilitarian signs.
4	Tree-lined lanes with grass verges and traditional stone walls or hedges are a characteristic that must be preserved.
5	Any widening of junctions or roads should be discouraged in order to conserve the rural character and blend in with other roads in the locality.
6	All new developments must have adequate off road parking.
7	The Parish footpaths and bridle paths are an important part of leisure activities and must be kept in their present form. Notices to warn drivers of horse riders should be displayed.
8	Granite kerbstones will be retained.
9	Temporary advertising signs will be in keeping with the surroundings & must be removed at the end of their useful life.
10	New developments will have underground cables.
11	Satellite dishes and aerals must be sympathetically sited & hidden where possible The Conservation Area must abide by the CBC guidelines, in relation to aerals.
12	Speed and parking of vehicles will be regulated and closely monitored, in order to alleviate danger to residents and tourists.
13	Parking on grass verges by visitors to the Park will be controlled to prevent environmental damage and nuisance to residents.
14	The un-adopted roads have a rural appearance, and any future development or adoption by LCC must not destroy their character.
15	Existing bridleways should be clearly marked and maintained with suitable well-drained surfaces.
16	Trees and hedges on the highways and verges should be kept well trimmed for the safety of of all users.

## 7. Wildlife, Biodiversity and Geology

Newtown Linford parish measures 39.3 km<sup>2</sup> (9713 acres) and is the second largest in Charnwood Borough. It falls within the National Forest and compared with other parts of Leicestershire is well-wooded, and woods constitute 15% of the area. Woodland plus other semi-natural vegetation cover more than 45% of the Parish. The Parish is exceptional geologically, botanically and zoologically. It contains **5 Sites of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSIs), protected under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These are ecologically varied, more or less extensive, and provide important public recreational areas. National policy is that planning decisions should prevent harm to biodiversity or geological conservation within SSSIs, whether arising inside or outside an SSSI. Also **32 Local Wildlife Sites** (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) identify known locations of declining or endangered habitats and species, and are the best examples for the County. They confer no right of access beyond existing rights of way, but receive protection in local plans under Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and as outlined in DEFRA Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9). A number of Local Wildlife Sites form backland to the village, along both sides of the valley.

### 7.01 Geology

Ancient rocks outcrop in the Parish, world-famed because of first discovery there in 1957 of the Precambrian Ediacaran fauna, from an era formerly supposed to predate the fossil record. The fossils are preserved in deposits laid down by a volcano emerging from deep seas. In deeper layers even more enigmatic impressions are found, perhaps representing some of the oldest macrofossils yet known. In places the silty deposits hardened and metamorphosed into slate, used locally for roofing. Elsewhere are massive intrusions of igneous rock, quarried for road and building material, notably towards Groby, where it was called “granite” although it is in fact Diorite, sometimes termed “Markfieldite”, which also dates from the Precambrian. The older rocks are generally covered by Triassic deposits, notably Mercia Mudstone (formerly termed “Keuper Marl”) from which clay for the bricks of the former Bradgate House was dug. In many places these are blanketed by Boulder clay, deposited from an earlier glaciation about 440,000 years ago (cf. the last glaciation 10,000 years BC). PPS9 obliges planning authorities to liaise with British Geological Survey on geodiversity issues.

### 7.02 Freshwater

The brook (**River Lin**) flows through both the Village and Bradgate Park, and is a natural trout stream identified in the *Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan* as a clear fast-flowing stream valued for its specialist fauna. It contains an isolated population of European crayfish whose survival elsewhere is threatened by recent introduction of the American Signal Crayfish. Also present are Minnows, Bullheads, Three-spined Sticklebacks and Brook Lampreys. A high invertebrate fauna includes species from 6 families of Mayflies and 5 families of Molluscs. Mature Alder trees (*Alnus glutinosa*) line the brook and some (e.g. by the Cricket Field) display exceptional form, with straight boles and fine horizontal branching, probably genetic in origin. It is vital to protect the stream flow and keep it free of pollutants and silt, both because it is the main natural source of water flowing into Cropston Reservoir and because of its national contribution to biodiversity. The channel and banks require strict protection (c.f. Charnwood Bye-laws), and development both near the stream and on its catchment should be restricted. The old village lies in a valley bottom, and, because sewage has to be pumped out, production of excessive quantities, high rainfall, or power failure magnify the risk of overflow into the stream. Regulation 17 of Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003 requires public bodies to have

regard to the management plan for the River Basin District both in relation to nature conservation and to sustainable water use.

### **7.03 Trees, hedgerows, field walls and woodlands**

Trees are being progressively lost, both from natural causes and from the activities of residents, farmers and developers. Government Circular 01/2005 imposes a duty on Planning Authorities to ensure that they are protected and replanted, including within built-up areas. Efforts are needed to conserve local provenances of native species especially those constituting good genotypes (i.e. inheritable) in terms of bole, crown form, or wood quality, e.g. Alder, Ash, Field Maple, Sessile Oak, and Elms that appear resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. Trees should form a component in any new development, and where possible existing numbers increased. In the Conservation Area all trees over 7.5 cm diam. at 1 metre from the ground are protected, and elsewhere may be protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

Ancient semi-natural woodland and veteran trees are an especial feature of the Parish, and are singled out by PPS9 for protection. Ground flora of Bluebells and Anemones are an indicator of ancient woodland (defined as continuously wooded since 1600). In damp woodland these may be replaced by carpets of Ramsons (Wild Garlic). There is also a wide variety of uncommon herbaceous species. Hedges, drystone walls and copses are important as they provide shelter for wildlife and a widespread network linking habitats together. They allow passage of animals and birds, and hedges act as semi-woodland which assists dispersal of woodland plants. Hedgerow trees provide roosting and nesting sites for birds and bats, and an important habitat for numerous small creatures, both vertebrate and invertebrate. Their progressive loss causes reduction in biodiversity and harms the general aspect of the countryside. Existing trees must be preserved, regeneration protected and replanting promoted. Hedges are substantially protected under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Drystone walls, which are such a feature of the locality, receive some protection under the DEFRA Environmental Stewardship Scheme which makes payments to farmers for approved care of the countryside (see DEFRA "Cross Compliance Handbook for England").

### **7.04 Meadows, road verges and gardens**

Within the Parish, the old meadow flora survives along road verges and on the banks beside the Groby and Markfield Lane service roads; these ought not to be allowed to become depauperated by inappropriate management. This is both the responsibility of the Highways Authority and of Landowners whose properties abut public roads. A few fields in the village retain clear evidence of feudal strip cultivation, often un-ploughed since land enclosure, and ought to be preserved as meadow (some notable examples are constituted as Local Wildlife Sites). Neglect of field ponds may be causing reduced numbers of newts, frogs and toads. Larger traditional-type gardens provide a haven for wildlife, because of the varied habitats they contain, and it is important to conserve them. Numbers of birds and bird species are greater in older gardens than in new, and larger gardens often contain less disturbed areas that benefit wildlife, including butterflies, moths and bees as well as hedgehogs, moles and other small mammals.

### **7.05 Bradgate Park and Cropston Reservoir**

Bradgate Park preserves a unique historical landscape, largely a consequence of continuous grazing by deer. Recent reduction in bracken owes both to trampling and to intervention by Park management. Ground-nesting birds, e.g. Skylarks and Meadow Pipits, still occur, but recreational activities can conflict with conservation, due in recent times to excessive disturbance. Scattered in the bracken are ancient Oaks, some belonging to the less common upland species *Quercus petraea*. Grass snakes, Slow Worms and Adders are found in the Park.

Cropston Reservoir is adjacent to the Park and constitutes part of the SSSI, unusual in being a mesotrophic lake (as opposed to eutrophic); it provides a trout fishery and an important haunt for water birds - helping to facilitate their seasonal migrations.

#### 7.06 Wildlife and Biodiversity Guidelines

1	The Parish is exceptional for its geology, flora & fauna, attested by the number & size of Local Wildlife Sites & Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The latter receive a high degree of protection under the planning system (DEFRA Circular 01/2005). Local Wildlife Sites must always be considered when determining planning applications. (See map).
2	Trees foster biodiversity and embellish the countryside. Planning authorities are obliged to protect ancient woodlands and veteran trees, and to make adequate provision for protecting or planting trees to conserve or enhance their numbers, including built up areas and new developments. Trees or woodlands may be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, within the Conservation Area application must be made to the authorities before felling or lopping a tree, and elsewhere consultation with them may be advisable. Trees are being progressively lost, and must not be cut down or lopped without good reasons.
3	Hedges and stone walls sustain biodiversity by offering shelter to wildlife, bird nesting sites, and linking woodlands. Protection is received under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 to minimise loss. Land owners are responsible for maintenance, and an application must be made to the Planning Authority (Charnwood Borough Council) before removal.
4	Road verges are refuges for the meadow flora that has disappeared from fields due to modern agricultural farming. Verges need protection and management. This obligation falls mainly on the Highway Authority, and landowners whose properties abut highways.
5	Traditional gardens furnish havens for wildlife, because agriculture has become relatively inimical. Government has accepted the goals of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan 1994: "to conserve and enhance biological diversity within the UK. through all appropriate mechanisms"; gardens should be conserved and appropriately tended.
6	<p>The River Lin is a clear fast-flowing trout stream, noted for its distinctive fauna, and the main natural source of water flowing into Cropston Reservoir. Careful protection is needed from pollution and silting. Sewage has to be pumped out of the village, and planning must take into account the risks of overflow into the stream -- whether due to excessive quantities, high rainfall, or power failure. Alder trees (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) along the stream banks appear to be a superior natural genotype and should be conserved.</p> <p>The riparian owner of a watercourse is responsible for maintenance of the bed and banks and must control vegetation along the banks, remove any cuttings, prevent infestation and damage to the banks by vermin (Water Vole excluded) and not allow damage by grazing or domestic animals. No goods or rubbish, including garden rubbish and domestic waste, may be stored or disposed of on or near the banks, nor fires lighted, nor vegetation burned, nor any detrimental substance (liquid or solid) permitted to remain in proximity to it. Prior consent must be obtained from Charnwood Borough Council for any work to a watercourse, or construction or planting within 9 metres of its edge. Without consent, the owner may not remove material from the bed or banks, nor allow any pipe, cable, wire, fence, bridge, jetty or revetment allowed to pass in, over or through the stream. (Land Drainage Bye-laws, Borough of Charnwood 2000).</p>
7	Cropston Reservoir provides drinking water for Severn Trent Water plc. It is also a fishery and a haunt for water birds which, together with other bodies of water, forms a network that facilitates their annual migrations. The Environment Agency, water companies and local authorities have a statutory duty to protect biodiversity under the Water Resources Act 1991, the Land Drainage Act 1991 and the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2003.

## **8. Acknowledgements**

VDS team members  
Brian Anderson (Vice Chairman)  
Joan Bates  
Peter Bates (Chairman)  
Malcolm Brewin  
Lydia Knott (Editor)  
Richard Lowe  
Janet Neaverson  
Ken Waterfall

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Front cover from a watercolour by John Nixon of Newtown Linford

### **References**

Leading By Design (Charnwood Borough Council)

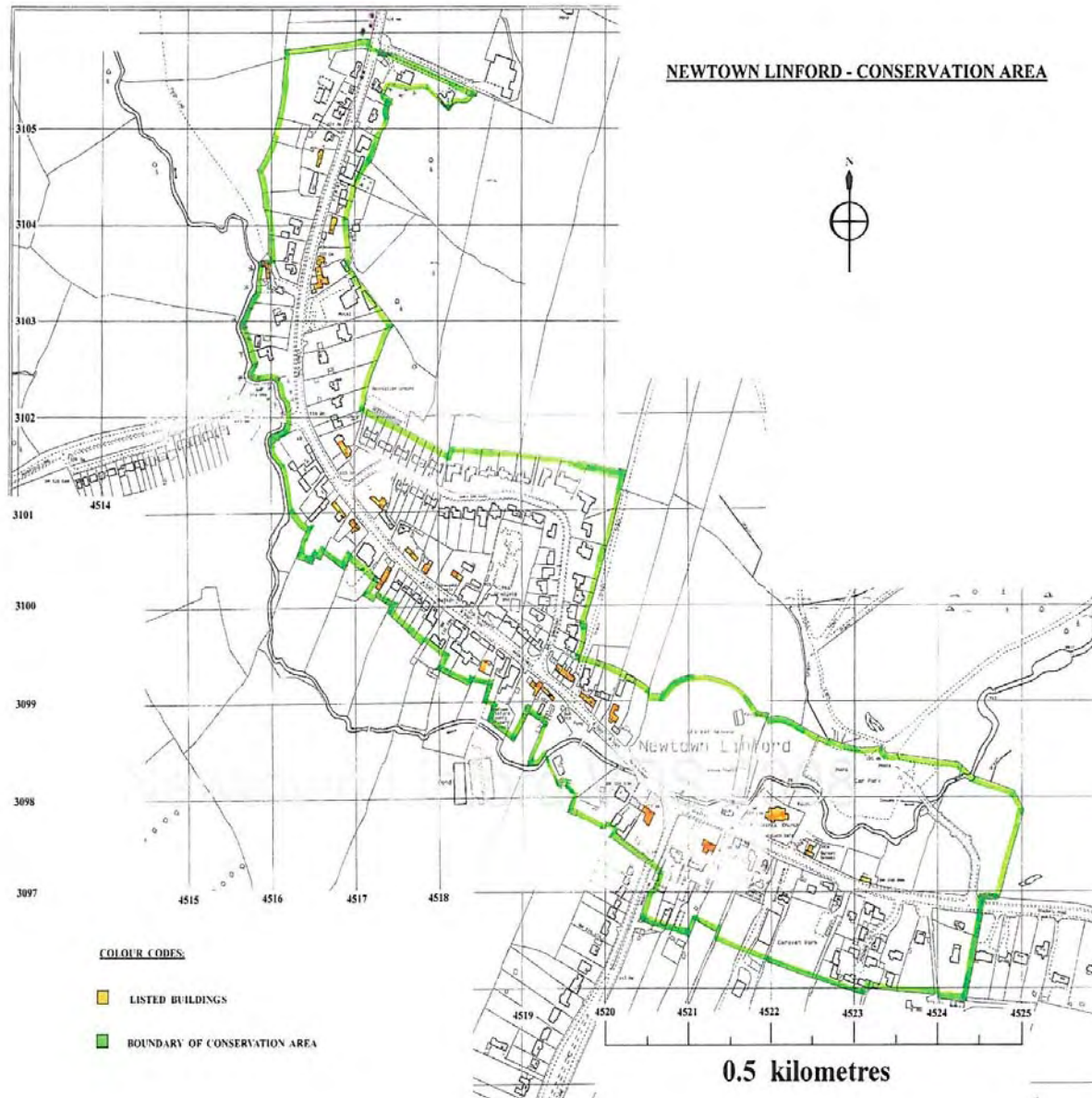
### **Finally**

**The VDS Team would like to sincerely thank all the residents of Newtown Linford who contributed information, attended exhibitions and completed questionnaires, to enable this document to be completed.**

**This is your Design Statement for Newtown Linford and the team could not have completed it without your help**

## 9. Appendix 1.1

### The village Conservation area



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## 9 Appendix 1.2

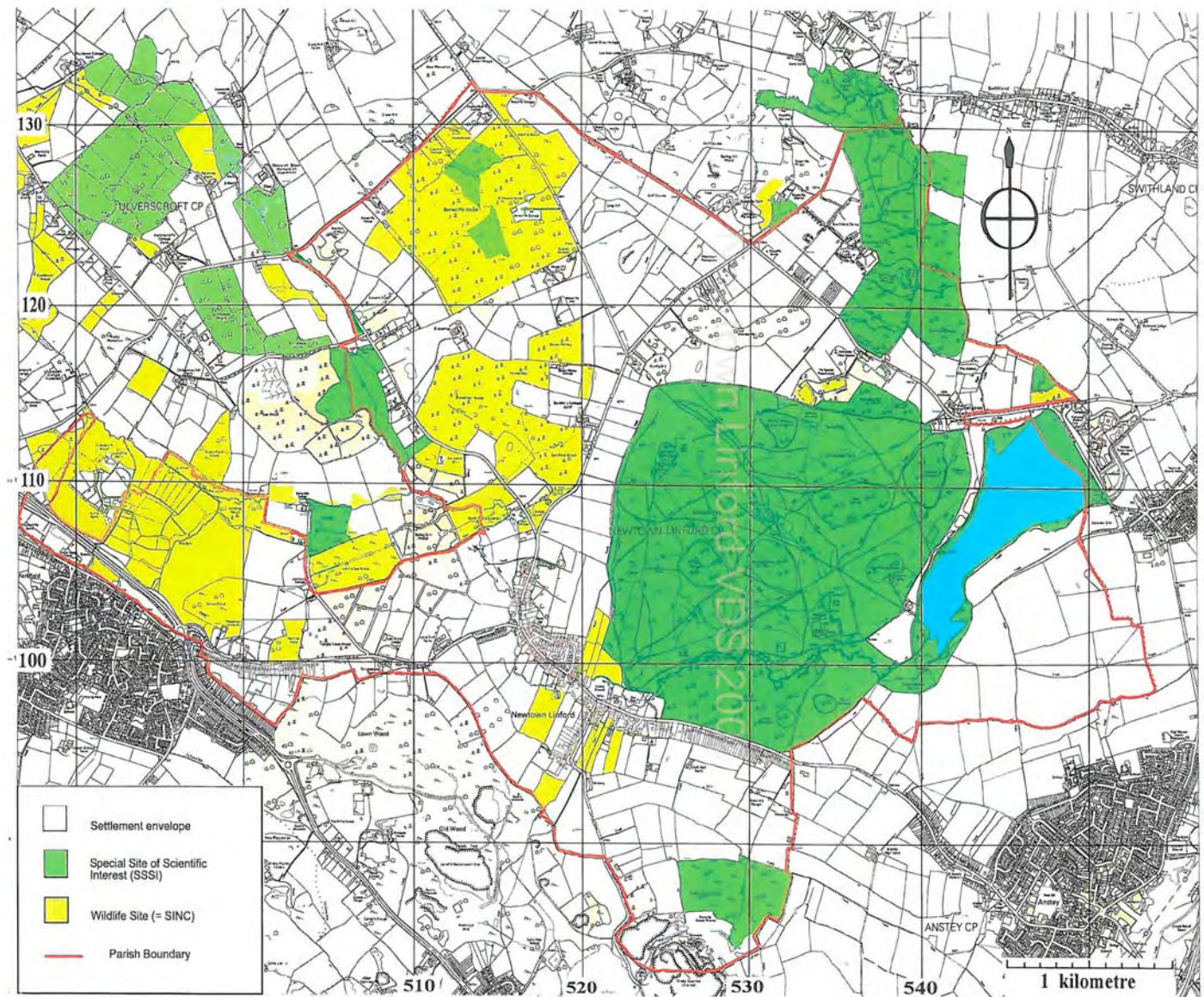
### Statutory Grade II & Locally Listed buildings in the village of Newtown Linford

Name	Century	Type	Location	Grade	Listing date
Chapel & ruins of mansion	C15	Monument	Bradgate Park	II*	01/06/66
Garden wall	Early C16	Wall	Bradgate Park	II*	01/06/66
Tudor sunken garden (tiltyard)	Early C16	Raised walkways	Bradgate Park	II	01/06/66
Old John Tower	1787	Folly	Bradgate Park	II	01/06/66
Leics Yeomanry War Memorial	Early C20	Monument	Bradgate Park	II	15/03/84
Yew Tree Farm	C17	Cottage	41 Main St	II	01/06/66
Yew Tree Cottage	C17	Cottage	43 Main St	II	01/06/66
Thatched Roofs	C17	Cottage	45 Main St	II	01/06/66
High Acres	C17	Cottage	51 Main St	II	01/06/66
Orchard Cottage	C18	Cottage	57, 59 Main St	II	01/06/66
The Old Cottage including outhouse	C17	Cottage	75, 77 Main St	II	01/06/66
Cobblestones	C17	Cottage	79 Main St	II	01/06/66
Lilac Cottage	C17	Cottage	81 Main St	II	01/06/66
Primrose Cottage	C17	Cottage	87 Main St	II	01/06/66
Lenthill Farmhouse	C18	House	95 Main St	II	15/03/84
Old Post Office Row	Mid C16	Cottages	60, 62,64, Main St	II	01/06/66
White Cottages	C18	Cottages	68, 70 Main St	II	01/06/66
Ivey House Farm	C16	Cottage	72 Main St	II	01/06/66
The Paddocks	Early C19	House	78 Main St	II	07/12/76
Dell Cottage& Watermead Cottage	C17	Cottages	92, 94 Main St	II	01/06/66
	C17	Cottage	114 Main St	II	01/06/66
	Early C19	Cottage	124 Main St	II	15/03/84
Red Telephone Kiosk	C20	Street furniture	Main St	II	20/08/91
Vine Cottage	C17	Cottage	9 Main St	II	01/06/66
	C17	Cottage	11, 13 Main St	II	15/03/84
Jasmine Cottage & Old Blacksmith's	C17	Cottages	15,17 Main St	II	01/06/66
	C17	Cottage	31 Main St	II	15/03/84
Greystones	C18	House	2 Main St	II	01/06/66
Village Pump	C19	Street furniture	Main St	II	15/03/84
Dairy Farm	C17	Cottage	28,30 Main St	II	01/06/66
Gable Cottage	C16	Cottage	32 Main St	II	01/06/66
Linford Farm	C17	Cottage	36 Main St	II	01/06/66
Sunday School	1822	School	Bradgate Rd	II	15/03/84
Church of All Saints	C14	Parish Church	Bradgate Rd	II*	01/06/66
Rose Cottage	early C19	Cottage	534 Bradgate Rd	II	15/03/84
Beech Farm	Late C18	House	552 Bradgate Rd	II	01/06/66
The Vicarage	Late C18	House	554 Bradgate Rd	II	01/06/66
Marions Cottage & adj. cottage	Late C18	Cottage	501 Bradgate Rd	II	15/03/84
Field Head Farmhouse	Late C18	now Hotel	Markfield Lane	II	15/03/84
The Wardens Lodge		House	Bradgate Park		17/06/04
Obelisk		Monument	John Lee's Wood		17/06/04
Benscliffe House		House	Priory Lane		17/06/04
Hallgate Filter Station		Water Works	Roecliffe Road		17/06/04
Swithland Camp		Chalets	off Roecliffe Rd		17/06/04

II\* indicates a higher classification

## 10. Appendix 2.1

### Map of SSSIs and Wildlife sites



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## 10. Appendix 2.2

### SSSI and Local Wildlife sites in Newtown Linford

#### Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Name	Grid Ref
Benscliffe Wood	SK513127, SK514124
Swithland Wood and The Brand (part Swithland Wood)	SK539125
Bradgate Park & Cropston Reservoir	SK530105, SK509451
Sheet Hedges Wood	SK529087
Ulverscroft Valley (parts: Lea Meadows & along Ulverscroft Lane)	SK507116

#### Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Name	Grid Ref	Reason for LWS Notification	Ref No
Abell's Wood	SK518129	9.5 ha woodland (natural regeneration)	W5112/2
Benscliffe Wood	SK513126	61.9 ha ancient woodland 5,096 m mixed grassland (linear habitat) 1 standing water ( <i>Sphagnum</i> dominated pool)	W5112/1
Field West of Benscliffe Wood	SK509123	2.7 ha mixed grassland 118 m hedgerow, 208 m hedgerow	W5012/4
Benscliffe Hay Meadow	SK521116	1.3 ha mixed grassland 1 field pond (with <i>Potamogeton</i> spp) 238 m hedgerow, 385 m hedgerow	W5211/4
Blakeshay Wood	SK515115	46.6 ha ancient woodland	W5111/8
Benscliffe Hay	SK518118	2,140 m mixed grassland (linear habitat)	
Sandhills Wood	SK519111		
Sharply Hill	SK517118		
Blakeshay Wood Field	SK515112	3.7 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland	W5111/5
Strip Field (Sandhills Wood)	SK516111	0.5 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland	W5111/6
Leicester Hill Wood	SK512111	3.1 ha ancient woodland	W5111/7
Mill House	SK514108	1.1 ha wet woodland 1.2 ha woodland (bluebells) 2.9 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland 1,255 m streams (order <4)	W5110/8 part
Christmas Tree Field	SK516107	0.5 ha mixed grassland	W5110/1
Stinking Wood	SK499109	7.5 ha ancient woodland 663 m stream	W4910/8
Ulverscroft Wood	SK491112	1.53 ha ancient woodland	W4911/15 part
Fields South of Ulverscroft Wood	SK489109	Field 2a – 2.9 ha mesotrophic grassland	W4810/1 part
Home Farm	SK495108	Area 2 – 1.9 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland Area 4 part – 21.7 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland Area 5 – 1.7 ha woodland (bluebells)	W4910/2 part
Cover Cloud Field	SK498106	17.9 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland 263 m hedgerow RDB species	W4910/4
Cover Cloud Hedges	SK500104 to SK503107	630 m hedgerow	W5010/6

## LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES (LWS)

Name	Grid Ref	Reason for LWS Notification	Ref No
Cover Cloud Wood	SK498102	8.2 ha ancient woodland	W4910/7
Field North of Leicester Road	SK491104	1.4 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland	W4910/5
Heyday Hayes	SK503102	2.8 ha woodland (bluebells)	W5010/10
Lane End Farm Hedgerows	SK510103	1,199 m hedgerows, 541 m hedgerows	W5010/11
Markfield Lane Hedgerows	SK513102	1,033 m hedgerow	W5110/11
Bradgate Trust Fields	SK521100	5.6 ha mesotrophic grassland 5 mature trees	W5210/1
Field South of Main Street	SK518097	4.5 ha mesotrophic grassland 2 mature trees 1 pond	W5109/3
Newtown Linford West Field	SK520096	0.9 ha mesotrophic grassland 241 m hedgerow	W5209/9
Hedgerow Opposite Cemetery	SK519092	332 m hedgerow	W5109/8
Beech Farm	SK521096	1.7 ha mesotrophic grassland 0.2 ha wetland 1 mature tree	W5209/1
Beech Farm Oaks	SK520096	2 mature trees	W5209/8
Caravan Park Field	SK522095	1.6 ha mesotrophic/mixed grassland 1 field pond	W5209/5
Grobby Lane	SK519095	0.3 ha mesotrophic grassland Community criteria	W5109/5
Grobby Lane Fields	SK518093	2.1 ha mesotrophic grassland 359 m hedgerow 1 mature tree 1 field pond	W5109/1
Hallgates Covered Reservoirs	SK534115	1.57 ha acidic/mixed grassland 184 m rocks & built structures RDB species	W5311/2
Puddledye Wood	SK548115	1.19 ha semi-natural woodland 1.03 ha scrub	W5411/1

### Rationale for LWS notification:

Site qualifies under Habitat Quality of stated habitat, according to the Guidelines for the Selection of LWS; or under Habitat Diversity for stated habitat, Red Data Book (RDB) Species, Species Assemblage, or Community Criteria as indicated.

Before applying for Planning Permission for small or large projects, developers should take note that there are many notable, protected and endangered species in the Parish of Newtown Linford. Their needs and habitat must be taken into account. Information on these species can be obtained from the website, or the named societies detailed below:

The Leicestershire Environmental Resources Centre (Holly Hayes), the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, the Loughborough Naturalists' Club.

Further information can be obtained from Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2005. Information on species status can be found on the Department of Communities and Local Government's website, in the lists under Annex A and Annex C of [Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within The Planning System](#) and Defra's website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/biodiversity/sect41-nerc.htm>.