
BROXTOWE LOCAL PLAN – Appendix 7

Mature Landscape Areas (Policy E14)

THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COUNTRYSIDE APPRAISAL

The County Council has undertaken a Countryside Appraisal project which seeks to provide a strategic, countywide overview and information base for the landscape of Nottinghamshire. The Appraisal is an important resource designed to be used as a tool for landscape protection, conservation, management and enhancement. The Countryside Appraisal comprises two main elements. The first of these, the identification of Mature Landscape Areas (MLAs) throughout the county, was completed in 1992. The second element, the Nottinghamshire Landscape Guidelines, was published in 1997.

MLAs are a local countryside designation, which seeks to identify and protect those parts of Nottinghamshire's landscape which have been least affected by adverse change. In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 7, The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development, MLA designation is based on a formal assessment of the qualities of the countryside.

In the first stage of the assessment a list of potential MLAs was identified using a combination of desk studies and field surveys to record land use, historical and physical features, as well as ecological interest. Areas which had been subject to urban development, mineral extraction, extensive commercial forestry, or intensive modern agricultural practices resulting in the permanent loss of important landscape features were excluded from the list and from further consideration. In the second stage of the assessment, MLAs were designated from the list because they represented good examples of valuable and vulnerable landscapes which have remained relatively unchanged over time.

The method does not seek to identify the most attractive landscapes, but most MLAs are typical of Nottinghamshire's distinctive landscape types and they do have important visual qualities. Final selection of MLAs, therefore, involved a judgement concerning an area's historical, ecological and physical features, and the continuity of its landscape character and setting within the local context. Boundaries were drawn along easily recognisable features on the ground. Individual designations can thus be clearly identified and delineated in development plans.

In 1997 the County Council commissioned an independent review of the need for and effectiveness of the MLA designation as a whole. The review rigorously assessed the designation and its method and compared it to the criteria for local countryside designations set out in the reviewed PPG7. The review endorsed the need for MLAs to be identified and the way in which the designation had been developed and applied. It also recommended a series of action points, all of which were adopted by the County Council. Broxtowe's MLAs were also the subject of a comprehensive review in 2001. This resulted in a revised set of MLA boundaries, which are incorporated in this Plan.

Further details concerning the method by which MLAs have been designated can be found in "Mature Landscape Areas Study and Methodology", copies of which can be obtained from the County Council's Countryside Group together with copies of the 1997 countywide review of MLAs, the citations for each MLA in the borough and the 2001 review of Broxtowe's MLAs.

The Inspector for the Broxtowe Local Plan Inquiry in May 1993 recommended the extension of the Cossall MLA in response to objections and Broxtowe Borough Council endorsed this in December 1993. These additional areas are now included in the Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan (1997).

Description of Mature Landscape Areas

a Brinsley Forge

An important landscape along an unaltered stretch of the River Erewash characterised by a series of damp grasslands, meadows and marshland.

b Brinsley Hall

A landscape composed of permanent pasture with an intact field pattern.

c High Park

An extensive and varied landscape encompassing large blocks of woodland, a reservoir and a mixed farming pattern defined by mature hedgerows and trees. Parts of the woodland are believed to be of ancient origin. The area includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

d Watnall Coppice

A diverse landscape characterised by a mixture of permanent pasture, improved grassland, and broad-leaved woodland.

e Greasley & Watnall Fields

This interesting landscape is predominantly pastoral with small to medium sized fields defined by an intact field pattern including a number of species rich hedgerows.

f Shilo North

An important grassland landscape containing a mixture of species rich pastures and floods meadow. The Erewash River and Erewash Canal provide linking features.

g Babbington/Swingate/Verge Wood

A varied and interesting landscape composed of permanent pasture, woodland and open water. The area is characterised by an irregular pattern of small to medium sized fields.

h Cossall

An interesting landscape consisting of medium to large-scale grass fields with an intact field pattern. The Nottingham Canal provides a linking feature. A Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Woodland Trust Reserve occur within the area.

i Strelley

An extensive area of mature parkland and grassland interspersed with numerous small scale mixed species woodlands. Parkland tree species include oak, sweet chestnut, sycamore and beech.

j Trowell

A combination of permanent pasture and mixed broad leafed woodland produce a varied landscape adjacent to the Nottingham Canal. Many of the pastures display ridge and furrow.

k Trowell Hall

A grassland landscape characterised by remnant parkland and groups of mature trees centred on Trowell Hall.

l Bramcote

An interesting landscape of mixed woodland, meadow, improved pasture and amenity grassland.

The officers at the Environment Department, Nottinghamshire County Council have prepared these descriptions and all survey material.