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DERBYSHIRE DALES DISTRICT COUNCIL

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY STUDY

August 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong have been commissioned by Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC) to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Study (LSS) of settlements within the District.

The aim of the study is to assess the sensitivity of the landscape surrounding settlements to housing development. The LSS will provide a strategic context for landscape capacity and impact assessments undertaken at the field level, and form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

It is stated within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that Local Planning Authorities must prepare Local Plans positively, and Local Plans must also be justified, effective and consistent with National Policy. This study was therefore prepared in the context of the NPPF. The study also take account of documents within the existing DDDC evidence base.

This study takes account of the guidance set out within the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” Third Edition published by Routledge (2013) which sets out the methodology to be adopted in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Of particular relevance is the methodology for assessing the sensitivity of particular types of development, relating to susceptibility to change and landscape value.

The study was undertaken through a combination of desk study and field survey. The Study Area did not include the full extent of the District, and was limited to the land surrounding a list of identified settlements provided by DDDC.

The desktop survey identified that there are five National Character Area (NCAs), as defined by Natural England, within the District:

- The Dark Peak
- The White Peak
- Derbyshire Peak Fringe and Lower Derwent
- The Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands
- The Trent Valley Washlands

“The Landscape Character of Derbyshire” published by Derbyshire County Council in 2004, and updated in 2014, identified distinctive Landscape Character Types within the broader

NCA's. This document, in combination with the NCA profiles provided by Natural England, provide descriptions of the varying landscape within the District and formed part of the baseline assessment.

The desktop study also comprised researching available documentation relating to the identified areas, including the identification of sensitive environmental receptors which could affect landscape value. A GIS database was used to locate environmental assets within the areas of search, including the Peak District National Park, nature conservation sites, heritage assets, flood zones and topography.

The field survey utilised Assessment Sheets which listed the identified assets and features within each area of search. These sheets were then used to determine in broad terms the sensitivity of the landscape surrounding settlements, based on factors such as land use, the nature of the adjacent settlement edge, designated land and important features relating to landscape, heritage, ecology and hydrology.

Land within the areas of search was then assessed as being of high, medium or low sensitivity. Where relevant, potential measures that could be undertaken to reduce the sensitivity of land or improve the settlement edge were also identified.

The results of this study should be read in combination with Maps 1, 2 and 3 which illustrate the findings of the assessment.

Within the District the density of settlements increases towards the north, with the collection of settlements located on the A6 around Matlock comprising the most densely developed area. To the south the pattern of settlements is smaller and more dispersed, with a more rural character.

Areas of high sensitivity in the north of the District predominantly related to land which prevents coalescence between settlements, and visually prominent land which is visible from the Peak District National Park.

Areas of high sensitivity within the south of the District predominantly related to visually prominent land which slopes down from the hilltop settlements, land which contributed to the rural character of settlements, and land surrounding the smaller settlements with a large number of heritage constraints.

Areas of low and medium sensitivity were generally identified on land at a similar elevation to the adjacent settlement edge, which was enclosed or semi-enclosed with low visual prominence, and did not contribute to the character or setting of the settlement.

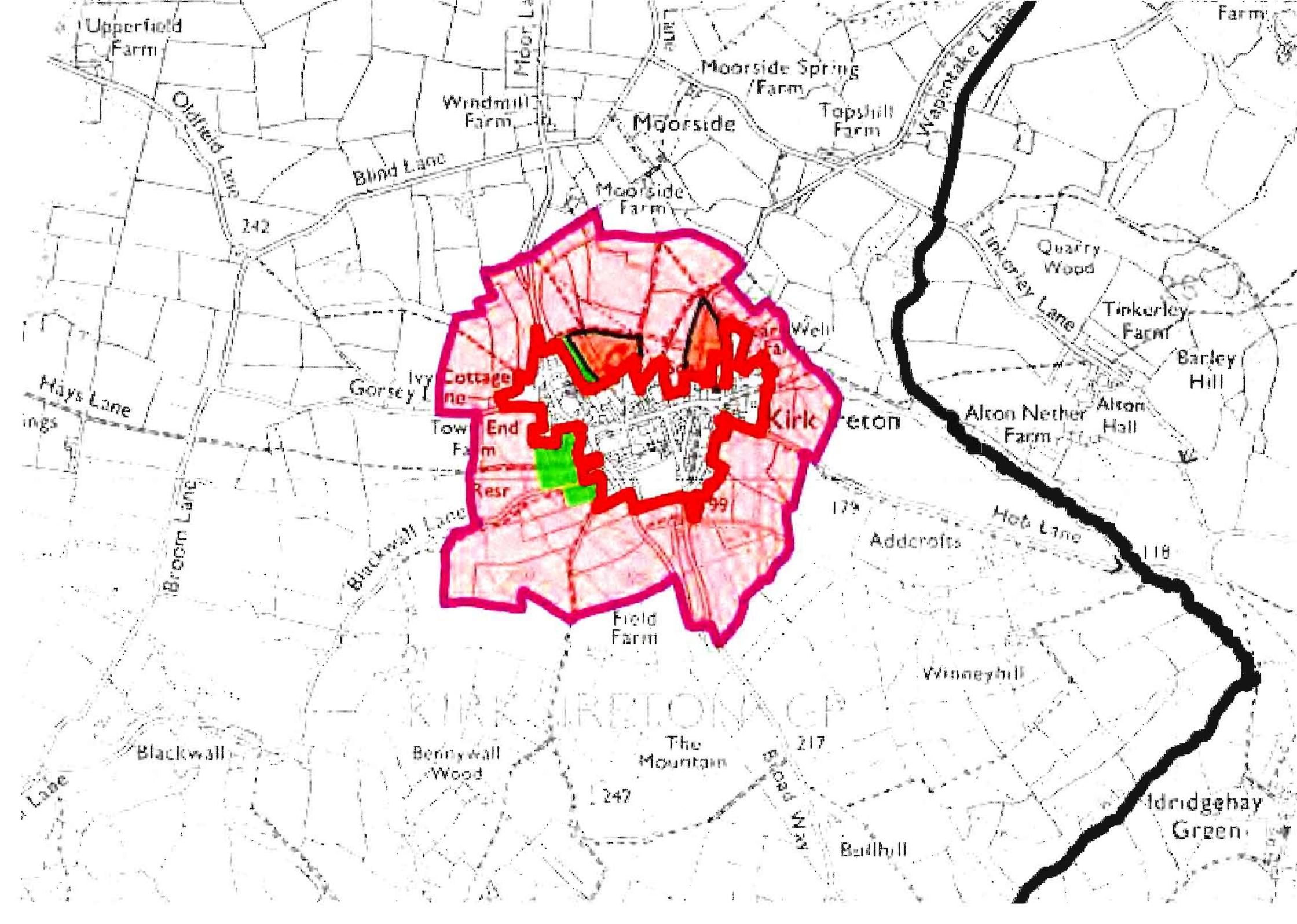
Kirk Ireton (Map 2)

Description and Analysis

- 6.4.30 Kirk Ireton is rural in character, with narrow winding roads and a wooded character created by strong tree belts and woodland blocks. All approaches to the settlement are rural, and land immediately surrounding the settlement predominantly comprises smaller fields enclosed by tree belts, forming a vegetated edge. The village and surrounding land is located within the Kirk Ireton Conservation Area.
- 6.4.31 Land to the east of the settlement slopes down away from Kirk Ireton with high visual prominence, and is an important approach into the settlement, with open views framed by woodland blocks.
- 6.4.32 The north-eastern settlement edge is well-defined but urban. However the majority of land beyond this edge is enclosed by vegetation, and tree belts to the north screen long distance views. Additional planting on the boundaries of these fields could reduce the visual prominence of this land further, in addition to creating a vegetated edge to the settlement.
- 6.4.33 Land to the south-west of the settlement is enclosed by hedgerows and tree belts, and is located within the settlement pattern.
- 6.4.34 Remaining land surrounding the settlement, particularly to the east, contributes to the rural character of and approaches to, the settlement.

Conclusion

- 6.4.35 The field to the east of Hardings Close is of low sensitivity and the adjacent fields to the east are of medium sensitivity. The field west of Wirksworth Road is also of medium sensitivity. Small fields adjacent to the south-western edge of the settlement, north and south of Blackwall Lane, are of low sensitivity. All remaining land surrounding the settlement is of high sensitivity.



Upperfield Farm

Oldfield Lane

242

Blind Lane

Windmill Farm

Moor Lane

Moorside

Moorside Spring Farm

Topshill Farm

Moorside Farm

Wapentake Lane

Tinkerley Lane

Quarry Wood

Tinkerley Farm

Barley Hill

Hays Lane

Ivy Cottage

Cottage

End Farm

Resr

Well Farm

Kirkstretton

Alton Nether Farm

Alton Hall

ings

Broom Lane

Blackwall Lane

99

179

Addraits

Hot Lane

118

Field Farm

Winneyhill

Blackwall

Bennywall Wood

The Mountain

217

242

Bullhill

Idridgehay Green

KIRKSTRETTON GP