

Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment
Idle Lowlands: IL PZ 09

Idle Lowlands

Policy Zone 09: Retford

POLICY: CREATE AND REINFORCE

Character Summary

The area is a narrow strip of land located between the hamlet of Tiln in the north and the north-western edge of Retford in the south. Sutton-cum-Lound is located south-west and Barnby Moor is further west. The Policy Zone is bounded along its eastern edge by the River Idle creating a flat valley floor across much of the area. Medium distance views are afforded with frequently wooded skylines, particularly towards the north.

Large scale pig farming occupies the north of the area while permanent pasture and flood meadow extend across the south. A series of water bodies lie adjacent to the river channel including part of the disused Sutton and Lound Gravel Pits [SSSI] and numerous fishing lakes associated with the Coarse Fishing Centre located in the south of the Policy Zone.

Woodland strips are evident across the Policy Zone, and tend to connect to larger blocks which surround the water bodies. Species include oak, birch and willow becoming more coniferous towards Retford. Drainage ditches are apparent as field boundaries in the north, fences are more prominent in the south around pastoral land.

Idle Lowlands – Policy Zone 09: Retford

PHOTOGRAPH



CONTEXT

Policy Zone: IL PZ 09
Land Cover Parcel[s]: IL31

Condition

Good	REINFORCE	CONSERVE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE
Moderate	CREATE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE & CREATE	CONSERVE & RESTORE
Poor	CREATE	RESTORE & CREATE	RESTORE

Low Moderate High
Sensitivity

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- River Idle corridor.
- Flat valley floor.
- Sutton and Lound Gravel Pits [SSSI/SINC] and a series of further man-made water bodies; associated with the Coarse Fishing Centre.
- Mixed farmland including large scale pig farming.
- Drainage ditches dividing fields along with hedgerows, fencing to pasture and pig farm.
- Woodland blocks and belts associated with water bodies.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

The landscape condition is moderate. Within the Policy Zone is a coherent pattern of elements and with some detracting features, including high and low voltage power lines and a campsite. Overall the area is **visually coherent**.

A narrow Policy Zone alongside the River Idle corridor with significant ecological features. A large proportion of land use is dominated by recreational facilities including man-made fish ponds and associated caravan site, mixed farmland encompassing large scale pig farming extends across the remainder of the Policy Zone. Field boundaries are predominantly drainage ditches with fencing providing livestock enclosures. The temporary caravans and low quality buildings which support the recreation are of functional design and layout and do not respect the character of the region as a whole. The cultural integrity is assessed as **poor**.

Wetland habitats are a fairly extensive feature throughout the area comprising the River Idle, part of the Sutton and Lound Gravel Pits [SSSI/SINC] along with several fishing lakes. Woodland is generally located around the wetlands and comprises oak, ash, willow and birch species, with belts of trees and scrub [willow dominant] along the river corridor. Overall the tree cover is considered low. The ecological integrity is considered to be **strong** which gives a **coherent** habitat for wildlife/functional integrity overall. A **visually coherent** area combined with a **coherent** functional integrity results in a **moderate landscape condition** overall.

Sensitivity

Features which give the area local distinctiveness are **indistinct** of the Idle Lowlands region and the continuity/time depth is **historic** [post 1600] giving a **weak** sense of place.

Visibility is considered to be **moderate** and the landform **apparent**. A **weak** sense of place with **moderate** visibility results in **low landscape sensitivity** overall.

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Condition

Moderate

Pattern of Elements:	Coherent
Detracting Features:	Some
Visual Unity:	Coherent
Ecological Integrity:	Strong
Cultural Integrity:	Poor
Functional Integrity:	Coherent

Sensitivity

Low

Distinctiveness:	Indistinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of Place:	Weak
Landform:	Apparent
Extent of Tree Cover	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Create and Reinforce

Landscape Features

- **Create** woodland and landscape planting to **reinforce** existing vegetation and the overall character of the Policy Zone.
- **Conserve** and **reinforce** drainage ditches/hedgerows where they have become gappy and are in poor condition. Seek opportunities to restore the historic field pattern/boundaries where these have been lost.
- **Create** new hedgerows to replace fencing.
- Seek opportunities to **create** further habitats to increase and **reinforce** the ecological diversity and biodiversity throughout the Policy Zone.
- **Conserve** the ecological diversity and setting of the Sutton and Lound Gravel Pits [SSSI] and **reinforce** as appropriate.
- **Create** a balance between recreational and conservational needs and opportunities while **reinforcing** what currently exists.

Built Features

- **Conserve** the traditional character of the surrounding settlements of Sutton-cum-Lound and Bamby Moor, **reinforce** the local vernacular in any new development.
- **Conserve** and **reinforce** the open rural character of the Policy Zone by concentrating new small scale development around Sutton-cum-Lound and Bamby Moor at the boundaries of the Policy Zone.
- New development should take account of the distinctive ecological elements within the Policy Zone.

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