

Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment
Sherwood: S PZ 55

Sherwood

Policy Zone 55: Gamston

POLICY: CONSERVE

Character Summary

The area is located south of Retford and east of Gamston airport. The River Idle forms much of the western boundary, while the eastern boundary follows existing field boundaries. The A638 bisects the Policy Zone north to south. The A57 meets the A1 at the far south of the area below Markham Moor.

Topographically the Policy Zone is flat and low-lying in the east becoming more gently undulating further west before sloping towards the River Idle valley at the western [and part of the] southern boundaries. Views are more extensive across the flatter landscape in the east becoming more limited by landform and vegetation in the west.

Arable farmland is dominant across the area and biomass crop production is also a prominent land use in the east. Small areas of pasture are apparent across the area but more so in the west. The Policy Zone encompasses the villages of Gamston and Eaton, and the smaller hamlets of White Houses and Markham Moor which are located at the northern and southern extremities respectively.

Sherwood – Policy Zone 55: Gamston

PHOTOGRAPH



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Intensive arable farmland with biomass crop production.
- Medium sized fields; little of the historic field pattern remains.
- Deteriorating hedgerows infilled with post and wire fencing.
- Mature hedgerow trees.
- Settlement areas of a small scale, built in the local vernacular.
- Busy roads; A1, A57, A638.
- Low tree cover; small deciduous and coniferous woodland clumps.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

The landscape condition is good. There is a **coherent** pattern of elements with **few** detracting features within the Policy Zone; the recently constructed A57 junction with the A1 and A638, services. Overall the area has a **unified** visual appearance.

The historic field pattern has been noticeably rationalised, particularly in the east, due to the increase in intensive arable farming and the introduction of biomass crops. This has resulted in some irregular shaped fields in places. Fields are divided by trimmed hedgerows which are often gappy and supplemented by post and wire fencing. Occasional hedgerow trees are evident; mostly mature oak and ash. Hedgerow trees remain apparent in the east where some hedgerows have been either lost or removed. Settlement includes Gamston and Eaton, both traditional style villages, along with smaller hamlets; Markham Moor and White Houses. More recent development is evident at the fringe of White Houses and also at the A57/A1 junction, however these are at the northern and southern edges of the Policy Zone and therefore bear little impact on the overriding character of the area. Farmhouses tend to be near to settlement and are generally of red brick construction. The overall cultural integrity is considered **variable**.

Tree cover is generally considered low comprising small scattered clumps of deciduous and coniferous planting predominantly towards the west and the wooded corridor of the River Idle along the western boundary of the Policy Zone. Age structure is mixed and some woodland blocks contain more mature canopy trees with a younger understorey. A short coniferous tree belt is evident at Horman's Holt, north of Gamston. There are no SINC's or other ecological designations within the Policy Zone. The ecological integrity is described as **moderate** which overall gives a **coherent** habitat for wildlife/functional integrity. A **visually unified** area with a **coherent** functional integrity gives a **good landscape condition** overall.

Sensitivity

Features which give the area local distinctiveness are **characteristic** of the Sherwood region and the continuity/time depth has been assessed as **historic** [post 1600], giving a **moderate** sense of place.

The extent of tree cover is **intermittent** and the landform **dominant** resulting in **high** visibility which affords distant views north to south along the flatter areas in the east. A **moderate** sense of place combined with **high** visibility gives **high landscape sensitivity** overall.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Conserve

Landscape Features

- **Conserve** what remains of the historic field pattern, maintain existing hedgerows, restore and reinforce poor hedgerow boundaries where necessary, replacing post and wire fencing with new hedgerow planting.
- Seek opportunities to restore arable land to pasture.
- **Conserve** and enhance woodland/plantation clumps and connectivity generally across the area.
- **Conserve** hedgerow trees and seek opportunities to plant more, particularly along roadsides.

Built Features

- **Conserve** the sparsely settled and rural character of the landscape by concentrating new small scale development around Gamston and Eaton.
- **Conserve** the character and setting of Gamston, Eaton, White Houses and Markham Moor – new development should respect the scale, design and materials used traditionally in the settlements.
- Contain new development within existing field boundaries.
- **Conserve** the traditional architectural style of red brick construction.

CONTEXT

Policy Zone: S PZ 55
Land Cover Parcel[s]: S52, S53

Condition

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

Low Moderate High

Sensitivity

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Condition | Good |
|------------------|-------------|

Pattern of Elements: Coherent

Detracting Features: Few

Visual Unity: Unified

Ecological Integrity: Moderate

Cultural Integrity: Variable

Functional Integrity: Coherent

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Sensitivity | High |
|--------------------|-------------|

Distinctiveness: Characteristic

Continuity: Historic

Sense of Place: Moderate

Landform: Dominant

Extent of Tree Cover: Intermittent

Visibility: High