

# Telford and Wrekin Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study

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Final Report  
to  
Telford and Wrekin Council

*May 2009*



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# PART 1

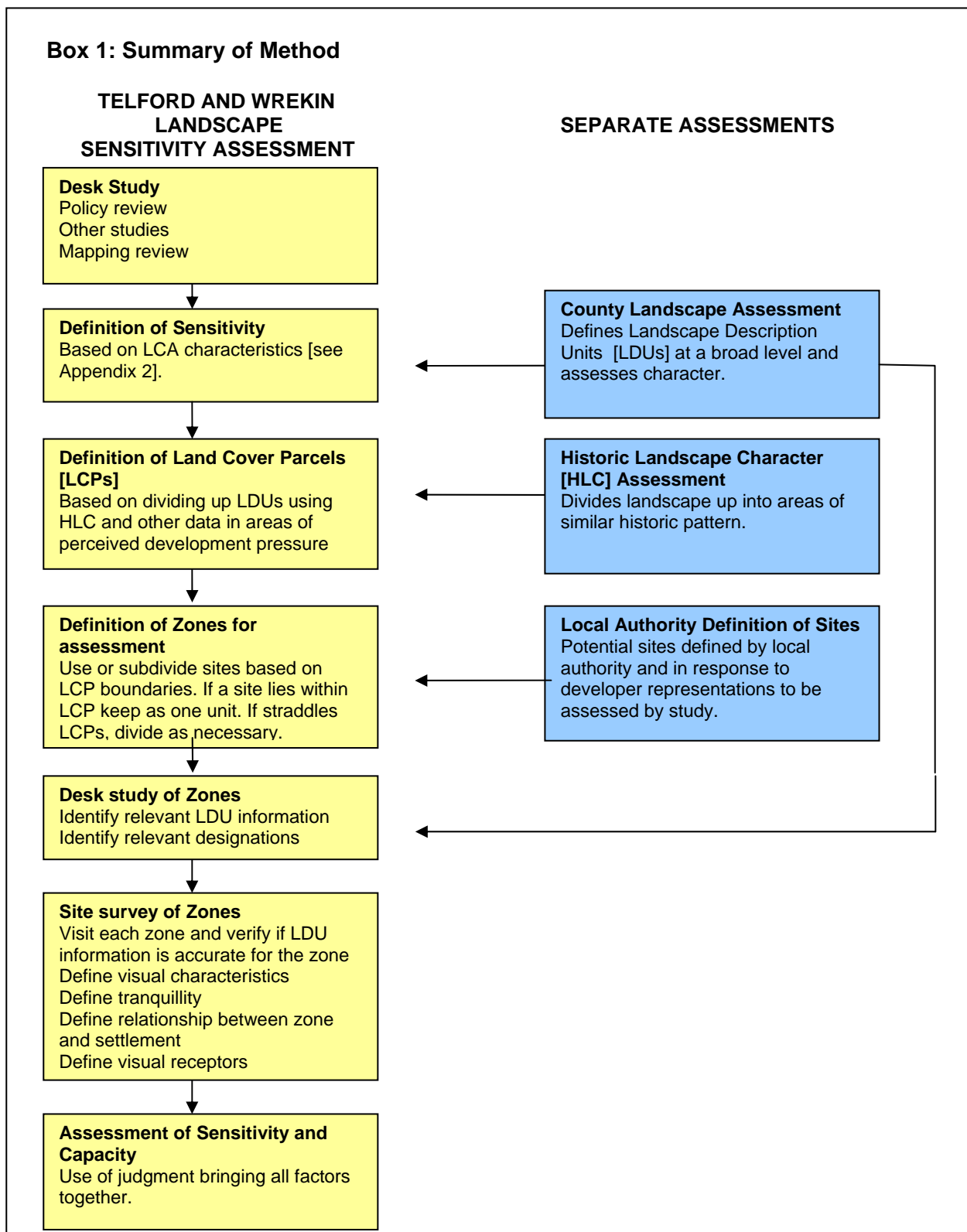
## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 White Consultants were appointed by Telford and Wrekin Council in September 2007 to undertake a landscape sensitivity and capacity assessment for defined areas around Telford, Newport and other settlements in the area. The aim of the study is to complete the sensitivity study using the same method that has been developed in Shropshire by members of the consultant team. Diacono Associates have worked with White Consultants to deliver the project.
- 1.2 A county landscape character assessment has already been undertaken by Shropshire County Council and analysis of sensitivity has been made using a method based on four aspects of inherent sensitivity- ecological, cultural, visibility and tranquillity.
- 1.3 This project works within this assessment, reviews the sensitivity devised at Landscape Description Unit level and assesses the capacity of the landscape to accommodate housing development and to identify those landscapes that should be protected from development. The study is intended to form part of the evidence base which will inform the Local Development Framework.
- 1.2 The report is divided into two parts. In Part 1 we discuss the method [2.0] and briefly set out a summary of findings [3.0]. The sensitivity and capacity assessments for each identified zone are set out in Part 2 for the relevant settlements in alphabetical order.

## 2.0 METHOD

- 2.1 This study is a technical exercise and the report uses a number of technical terms for precision and as a means for reaching conclusions on sensitivity and capacity. These terms are defined in the Glossary in **Appendix 1**. We have taken into consideration Countryside Agency 'Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity [2004]'. **Sensitivity** is taken to mean the sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change which may be under consideration. It is a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource [including its historical and ecological features and elements] and the visual sensitivity of the landscape [such as views and visibility]. For the purposes of this study it also includes landscape value [including designations]. **Capacity** is taken to mean the ability of a landscape to accommodate different amounts of change for a development of a specific type.
- 2.2 Key tasks are explained in more detail:  
*Definition of Sensitivity*
- 2.3 The Shropshire County Council landscape character assessment is at a broad scale identifying landscape description units [LDUs] and ascribing characteristics. For each of these units the team has carried out an assessment of intrinsic sensitivity. These are divided into ecological sensitivity (see **Figure A1**),

cultural sensitivity [see Figure A2), visual sensitivity and tranquillity. The latter two aspects are not attached because a more detailed visibility and tranquillity assessments related to each specific area is presented in this study. The County landscape assessment provides the background to the detailed analysis of sensitivity and capacity that is the subject of this study. It should be noted that the LDUs cover countryside only and do not extend into the built-up parts of the borough such as Telford and Newport. Box 1 shows a summary of the process undertaken which is then further explained in the text.



*Defining Land Cover Parcels:*

- 2.4 In areas where sites are put forward by the local authority for assessment Land Cover Parcels (LCPs) are derived. These are discrete areas of land nested within a larger LDU reflecting variations in the physical character of the land. Bounded by roads, railways, watercourses and parish boundaries, these parcels define areas with similar patterns and land use, field pattern and tree cover. They provide the finer grain of resolution necessary for assessment. They are derived from Historic Landscape Character [HLC], previous studies, aerial photos and mapping.

*Defining zones for assessment:*

- 2.5 Zones are based on the sites put forward by the local authority for assessment. If these lie within LCPs they are usually kept as one unit unless they are very large with differing characteristics or relationship with the settlement edge. However, where they cross LCP boundaries they are subdivided to reflect the different characteristics of each LCP. The numbering reflects this sub division with the first number indicating the identified site, and the second the relevant LCP in which it lies. The areas identified are set out in **Figure 1**.

*Desk study of zones:*

- 2.6 LDU sensitivity information is abstracted from the LDU assessment- cultural, ecological and visual sensitivity [see **Appendix 2**]. Ecological and historic designations are identified which further refine each area's sensitivity. The functional relationship of the area with the adjoining settlement is assessed including its role as a green wedge or for recreation/access etc.

*Site Survey of zones:*

- 2.7 The LDU sensitivities are verified for each zone. Because of the size of the LDUs there will often be variations in both characteristics and sensitivity within them. In terms of this more detailed study, each zone is assessed to check whether its sensitivities do correspond to the broader level assessment. It is worth noting that at the county scale of the assessment some of the LDUs in Telford and Wrekin including both built form and adjacent green space were classified as urban and were not, therefore, attributed a sensitivity value.
- 2.8 Other relevant factors are then recorded including:
- Function of area
  - Presence of water
  - Visual characteristics
  - Tranquillity
  - Functional and visual relationship of the zone with its surroundings and the built-up area.

- Description of settlement edge- is it a positive or negative edge to the built-up area?
- Definition of sensitive receptors within and outside the area.
- Potential for improvement of the settlement edge and for overall mitigation.

These are further explained in **Part 2**.

2.9 Bringing all the information together, an overall analysis of each zone's sensitivity is made. Judgments are not based on a mathematical adding up of factors, positive or negative. Some factors will be more important than others in different zones. For instance, the function of an area in separating settlements may be considered very important and make it sensitive to development even if it is of limited inherent landscape value. A justification is given as to why it is considered that an area has a particular sensitivity. The calibration of the sensitivity is as follows:

- Low- key characteristics of landscape are robust and/or are of relatively low intrinsic value as a landscape resource.
- Medium-low- key characteristics of landscape are resilient to change and/or are of limited intrinsic value as a landscape resource.
- Medium- key characteristics of landscape are susceptible to change and have value as a landscape resource.
- High-Medium- key characteristics of landscape are vulnerable to change and/or have high value as a landscape resource.
- High- key characteristics of landscape are very vulnerable to change and/or have significant value as a landscape resource.

2.10 A capacity rating is then defined for housing uses. This is based on the sensitivity of a zone and the likely magnitude of effect and character of proposed development. Housing is taken to be around 8m high ranging from individual houses through to larger estate developments. The calibration of the capacity is as follows:

- High- thresholds for significant change are very high and much of the area can be developed.
- High-medium- thresholds for significant change are high and the area is able to accommodate a significant proportion for development.
- Medium- thresholds for change are intermediate with some ability to accommodate development in some parts.
- Medium-low- thresholds for change are low and development can be accommodated only in limited situations.
- Low- thresholds for change are very low and the area is unable to accommodate development without significant adverse effects.

### **3.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 3.1 Overall, the study has found that there is capacity for housing around Telford, Newport and in some of the other settlements in the Borough.
- 3.2 Areas of higher sensitivity and lower capacity have tended to be those of intrinsically higher value, those in open countryside not closely associated with a settlement, acting as setting to conservation areas or listed buildings, in valley corridors, in floodplains, on steep or prominent slopes or those forming gaps between settlements. There is a need to protect in particular the landscapes of the valley bottoms which in a number of instances penetrate between and into settlements. Some zones assessed form an important visual setting to parts of a settlement and act as recreational and wildlife corridors and reservoirs.
- 3.3 Some settlement edges, usually consisting of housing estates, present an unsympathetic boundary with the countryside. In these cases, and combined with where the landscape itself has lower intrinsic sensitivity, the opportunity is taken to recommend a higher capacity for development. This is with the proviso that the development itself will present a positive edge in order to integrate and enhance the landscape. This is best achieved by a design or development brief including landscape, nature conservation and urban design/settlement edge objectives.
- 3.4 The landscape sensitivities and capacities of each zone are summarised in Table 1 and are shown in **Figures 1-6**.
- 3.5 In summary, there is high capacity for housing in two zones- in Tibberton and Waters Upton. High/medium landscape capacity for housing is found in 18 zones- in Arleston [2], Newport [6], Wellington [4], and one each in Hadley, High Ercall, Horsehay, Lawley, Muxton and Tibberton. There is medium capacity in a further 26 zones in Bratton, Cluddley, Hadley Park, High Ercall, Jackfield, Lawley, Lightmoor, Muxton, Newport, Preston upon the Weald Moors, The Nedge, Tibberton and Waters Upton. Some of these areas should only be considered for development in the longer term due to their current visual prominence and where advance planting is suggested if considered appropriate. Most zones [62%] are considered to be areas of constraint with low or medium/low capacity.
- 3.6 It is recommended that these findings are taken into consideration in the preparation of the Local Development Framework and the allocation of sites for housing development.

**Table 1 Telford and Wrekin zones landscape sensitivity and capacity**

<b>Zone no- Site_LCP</b>	<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Zone landscape sensitivity</b>	<b>Zone landscape capacity for housing</b>
TWAd1 - 55	Admaston	medium	medium/low
TWAd2 - 53	Admaston	high/medium	low
TWAr1 - 35	Arleston	medium/low	high/medium
TWAr1 - 38	Arleston	medium/low	high/medium
TWBr1 - 61	Bratton	medium	medium
TWBr1 - 62	Bratton	medium	medium
TWBU1 - 4	Buildwas	high/medium	low
TWCI1 - 36	Cluddley	medium/low	low
TWCI2 - 33	Cluddley	medium	medium/low
TWCI3 - 34	Cluddley	medium	medium/low
TWCI4 - 28	Cluddley	medium	medium
TWCI5 - 26	Cluddley	medium	medium
TWDo1 - 77	Donnington	high/medium	low
TWDo2 - 78	Donnington	high/medium	low
TWDo3 - 75	Donnington	medium/low	medium/low
TWGr1 - 46	Redhill/Granville	high/medium	low
TWHa1 - 56	Hadley	medium	high/medium
TWHa2 - 57	Hadley Park	high/medium	medium
TWHE1 - 85	High Ercall	medium/low	high/medium
TWHE2 - 83	High Ercall	medium	medium
TWHE2 - 84	Upper Ercall	medium/low	medium/low
TWHE3 - 81	High Ercall	high/medium	low
TWHE3 - 82	High Ercall	medium	medium
TWHh1 - 11	Horsehay	medium/low	high/medium
TWHh2 - 13	Horsehay	high	low
TWHo1 - 69	Horton	medium	medium/low
TWHo1 - 73	Horton	high/medium	medium/low
TWHP1 - 58	Hadley Park	medium/low	low
TWJf1 - 1	Jackfield	high	low
TWJf1 - 2	Jackfield	high/medium	medium/low
TWJf2 - 3	Jackfield	high/medium	medium
TWLa1 - 20	Lawley	high/medium	medium/low
TWLa1 - 21	Lawley	low	high/medium
TWLa1 - 22	Lawley	medium	medium
TWLa1 - 25	Lawley	medium	medium
TWLa2 - 19	Lawley	high/medium	low
TWLa2 - 24	Lawley	high/medium	low
TWLa2 - 27	Lawley	high/medium	low
TWLa2 - 31	Lawley	high/medium	low
TWLe1 - 59	Leegomery Roundabout	medium/low	low
TWLi1 - 5	Lightmoor	high	low
TWLi1 - 7	Lightmoor	medium	medium
TWLi2 - 6	Lightmoor	high	low
TWLi2 - 8	Lightmoor	high	low
TWLi2 - 9	Lightmoor	high/medium	medium/low
TWLi3 - 10	Lightmoor	medium	medium/low
TWMu1 - 72	Muxton	medium/low	medium
TWMu2 - 70	Muxton	medium	medium
TWMu3 - 60	Muxton	high/medium	low
TWMu3 - 74	Muxton	high/medium	low
TWMu4 - 64	Muxton	medium	high/medium
TWMu5 - 54	Muxton	medium	low
TWNe1 - 87	Newport	medium	medium
TWNe10 - 129	Newport	medium/low	high/medium

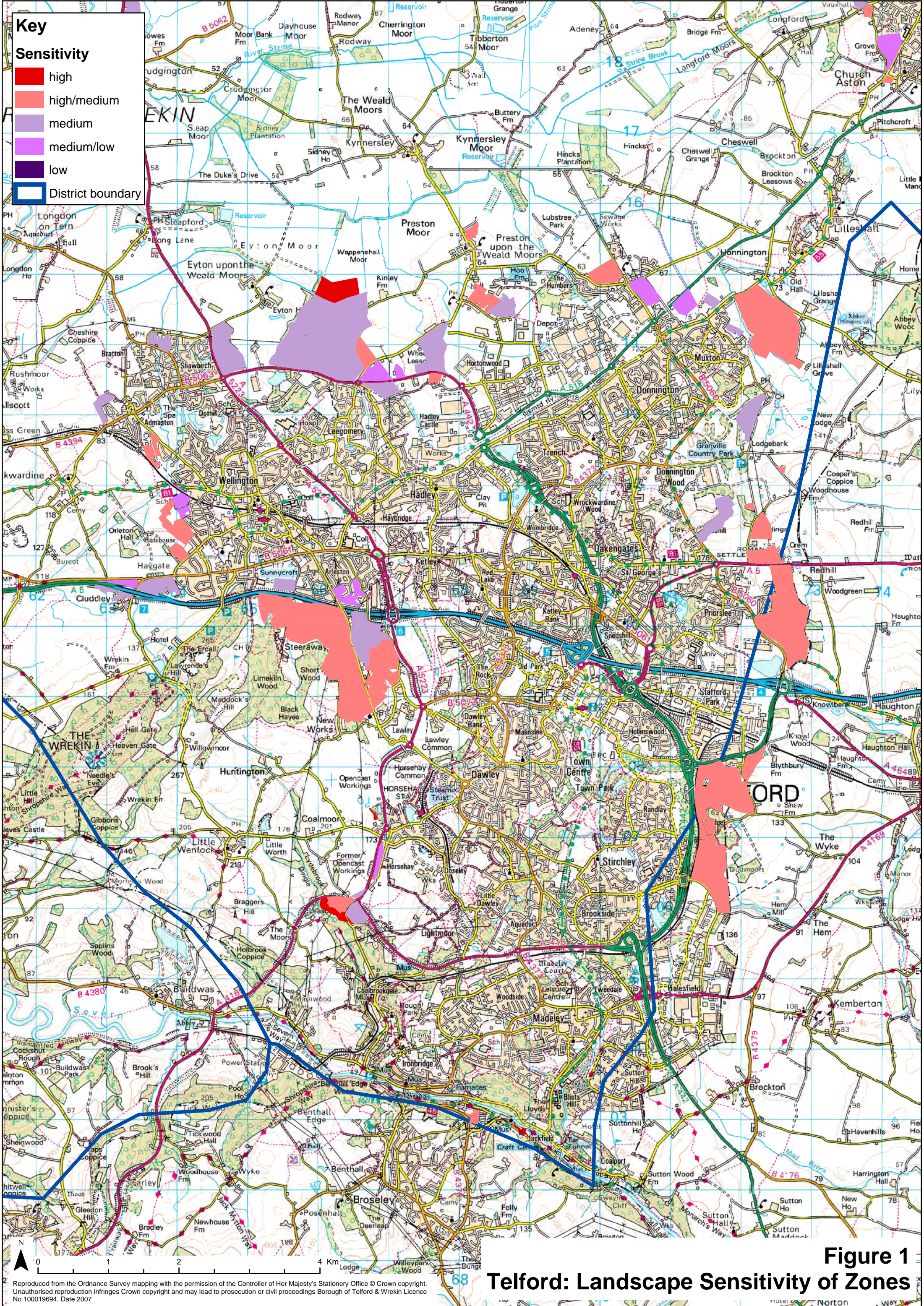
<b>Zone no- Site_LCP</b>	<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Zone landscape sensitivity</b>	<b>Zone landscape capacity for housing</b>
TWNe11 - 119	Newport	high/medium	medium
TWNe12 - 114	Newport	high/medium	low
TWNe13 - 110	Newport	medium	medium
TWNe14 - 106	Newport	medium/low	medium
TWNe15 - 95	Newport	medium	medium/low
TWNe16 - 93	Newport	high/medium	low
TWNe17 - 88	Newport	medium/low	high/medium
TWNe18 - 86	Newport	high/medium	medium/low
TWNe2 - 89	Newport	medium/low	high/medium
TWNe2 - 91	Newport	medium/low	medium
TWNe3 - 92	Newport	medium/low	high/medium
TWNe3 - 94	Newport	high/medium	low
TWNe3 - 96	Newport	medium/low	high/medium
TWNe4 - 100	Newport	medium	medium
TWNe5 - 115	Newport	medium/low	high/medium
TWNe5 - 117	Newport	medium	medium
TWNe6 - 118	Newport	medium/low	medium/low
TWNe7 - 121	Newport	medium	medium
TWNe8 - 126	Newport	medium	medium/low
TWNe9 - 132	Newport	medium	medium
TWNH1 - 15	Nedge Hill	high/medium	low
TWNH1 - 16	Nedge Hill/The Nedge	high/medium	low
TWPI1 - 29	Priorslee	high/medium	low
TWPI1 - 32	Priorslee	high/medium	medium/low
TWPI1 - 41	Priorslee	high/medium	low
TWPW1 - 79	Preston upon the Weald Moors	medium	medium
TWPW2 - 80	Preston upon the Weald Moors	high/medium	low
TWRh2 - 51	Redhill	high/medium	medium/low
TWRh3 - 44	Redhill	high/medium	low
TWRh4 - 42	Redhill	high/medium	medium/low
TWRh5 - 47	Redhill	medium	medium/low
TWSb1 - 66	Shawbirch	medium	low
TWSN1 - 12	South Nedge	high/medium	low
TWTN1 - 14	The Nedge	high/medium	medium
TWTt1 - 120	Tibberton	medium	high/medium
TWTt1 - 122	Tibberton	medium	medium
TWTt2 - 127	Tibberton	medium	high
TWTt3 - 128	Tibberton	medium/low	medium/low
TWTt3 - 130	Tibberton	medium	low
TWTt3 - 131	Tibberton	high	low
TWTt4 - 123	Tibberton	medium	low
TWWe1 - 40	Wellington	medium	low
TWWe2 - 39	Wellington	medium	low
TWWe3 - 43	Wellington	high/medium	low
TWWe4 - 37	Wellington	medium	high/medium
TWWe5 - 45	Wellington	medium/low	high/medium
TWWe5 - 48	Wellington	medium/low	high/medium
TWWe5 - 49	Wellington	high/medium	low
TWWe6 - 50	Wellington	medium/low	high/medium
TWWe7 - 52	Wellington	high/medium	low
TWWL1 - 65	Wheat Leasowes	medium	medium/low
TWWs1 - 63	Wappenshall	high/medium	low
TWWs1 - 68	Wappenshall	medium	low
TWWs1 - 71	Wappenshall	medium	medium/low
TWWs1 - 76	Wappenshall	high	low
TWWU1 - 112	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low

<b>Zone no- Site_LCP</b>	<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Zone landscape sensitivity</b>	<b>Zone landscape capacity for housing</b>
TWWU1 - 113	Waters Upton	high/medium	low
TWWU2 - 111	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low
TWWU3 - 107	Waters Upton	high/medium	low
TWWU3 - 108	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low
TWWU4 - 102	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium
TWWU4 - 103	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low
TWWU4 - 105	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low
TWWU4 - 99	Waters Upton	high/medium	low
TWWU5 - 109	Waters Upton	high/medium	medium/low
TWWU6 - 104	Waters Upton	high/medium	low
TWWU7 - 98	Waters Upton	low	high
TWWU8 - 97	Waters Upton	medium	low

*Note: The zone number is a combination of site number [eg TWWU8] and land cover parcel number [eg 97]*



FIGURES



**Key**

**Sensitivity**

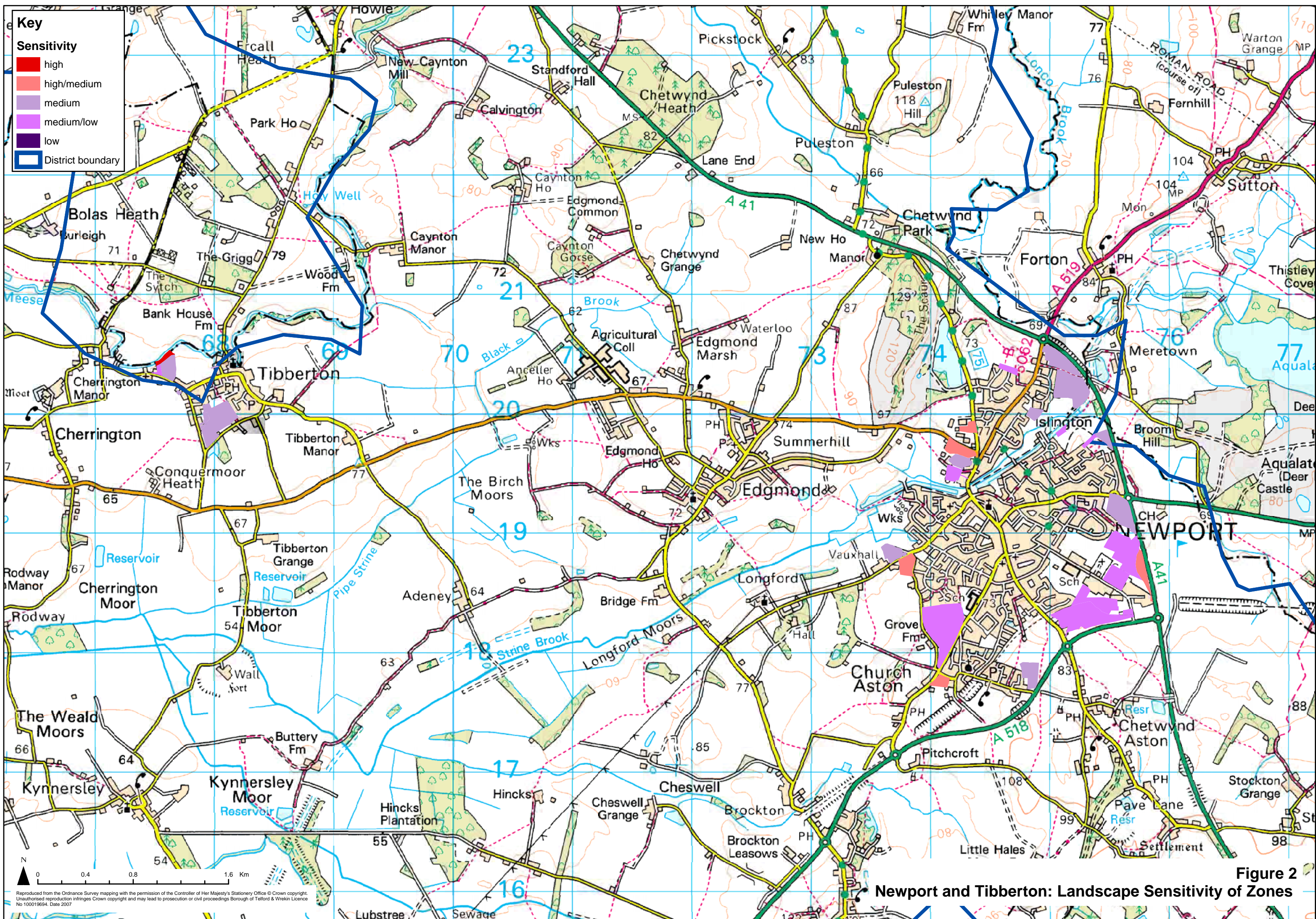
- high
- high/medium
- medium
- medium/low
- low

District boundary

**Figure 1**

**Telford: Landscape Sensitivity of Zones**

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**Figure 2**  
**Newport and Tibberton: Landscape Sensitivity of Zones**

