

We have had an independent Landscape Assessment carried out by Wardle Armstrong as the evidence base for the Draft Plan does not include a landscape assessment.

Consideration of Landscape and visual impacts is limited to a question on landscape character within the site assessments undertaken as part of the Sustainability Appraisal produced for the Draft Plan. Both assessments state that there will be a negative outcome for landscape character.

The key conclusions from the report commissioned by the local community are:

1. Due to the proposed major loss of key landscape features and the introduction of new, incongruous features that would affect the currently intact rural character of the area it is considered that mineral extraction within sites 4 and 5 would have significant adverse effects on landscape character.
2. The sites have high visibility due to their size and flat topography. The sites are generally open, with limited screening provided by vegetation within the site. Therefore receptors in the surrounding area (often at a higher elevation) would experience significant adverse visual effects as a result of mineral extraction within sites 4 and 5.
3. It would not be possible to mitigate the significant adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity predominantly due to the sensitivity of the existing landscape character and the size and scale of the sites.

It is worth reminding you that the Warwickshire Landscapes Project, which is a report prepared by your own Council and the Countryside Commission talks about the need to retain landscapes such as this.

Let me quote from this report:

“We must recognise the key factors which characterise each landscape and manage the land accordingly”

“ Ultimately they aim to ensure that the diversity and beauty of Warwickshire, Shakespeare’s County is conserved for present and future generations to enjoy”

“ The historic house and well preserved deer park at Charlecote are a special feature of this landscape”

and what do Natural England have to say;

The sites are located within National Character Area (NCA) 106: Severn and Avon Vales, adjacent to the boundary with NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon. 

Natural England describes NCA 106 as follows: “Woodland is sparse and it is a generally open landscape... On the eastern boundary the area flows more subtly into the Arden and Dunsmore and Feldon NCAs... the Warwickshire River Avon meanders

*over a wide flood plain...*” Natural England also highlight the important cultural associations of NCA 106, due to the “*sense of history which is internationally important due to its links with Shakespeare.*” 