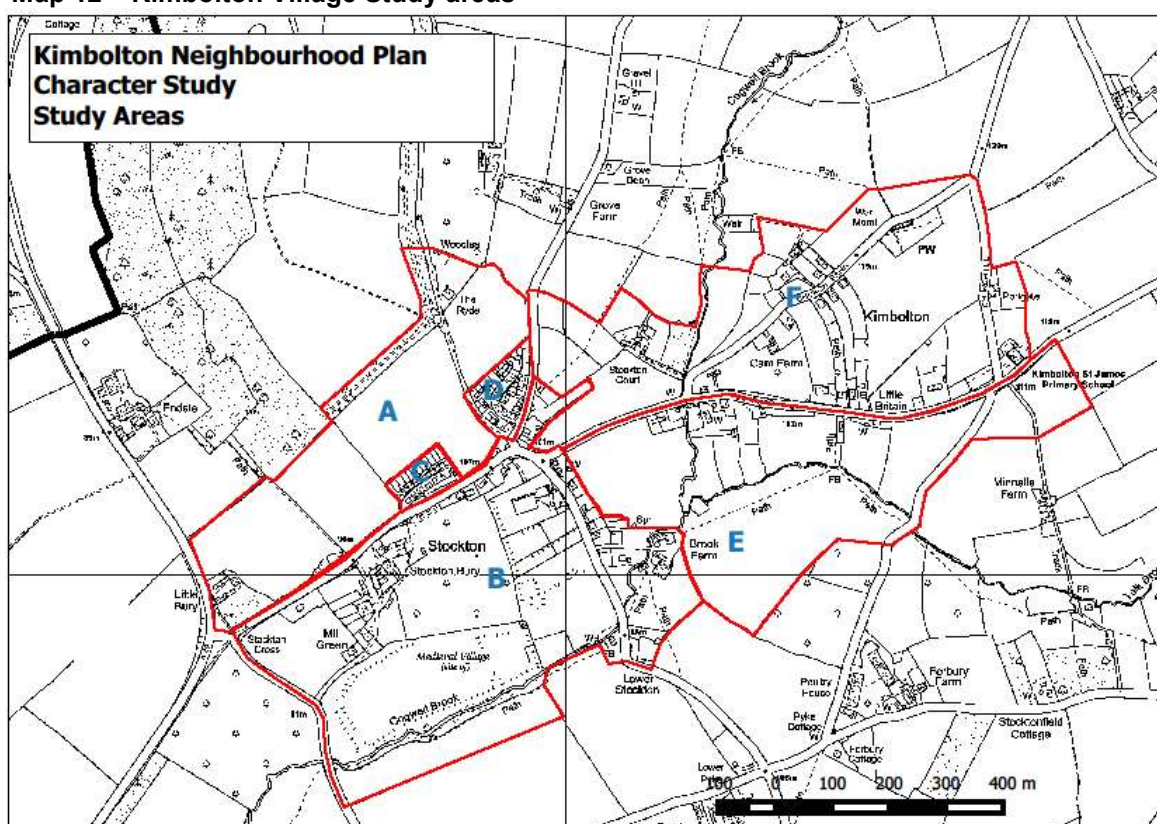


5.0 Detailed Assessment of Kimbolton village

- 5.0.1 This section of the Report provides a detailed assessment of Kimbolton village – the principal settlement of the area.
- 5.0.2 The settlement is made up of a number of distinct parts reflecting the organic way in which it has developed and changed over time. For the purposes of the Character Assessment six individual areas were identified as shown on Map12 below.

Map 12 – Kimbolton Village Study areas

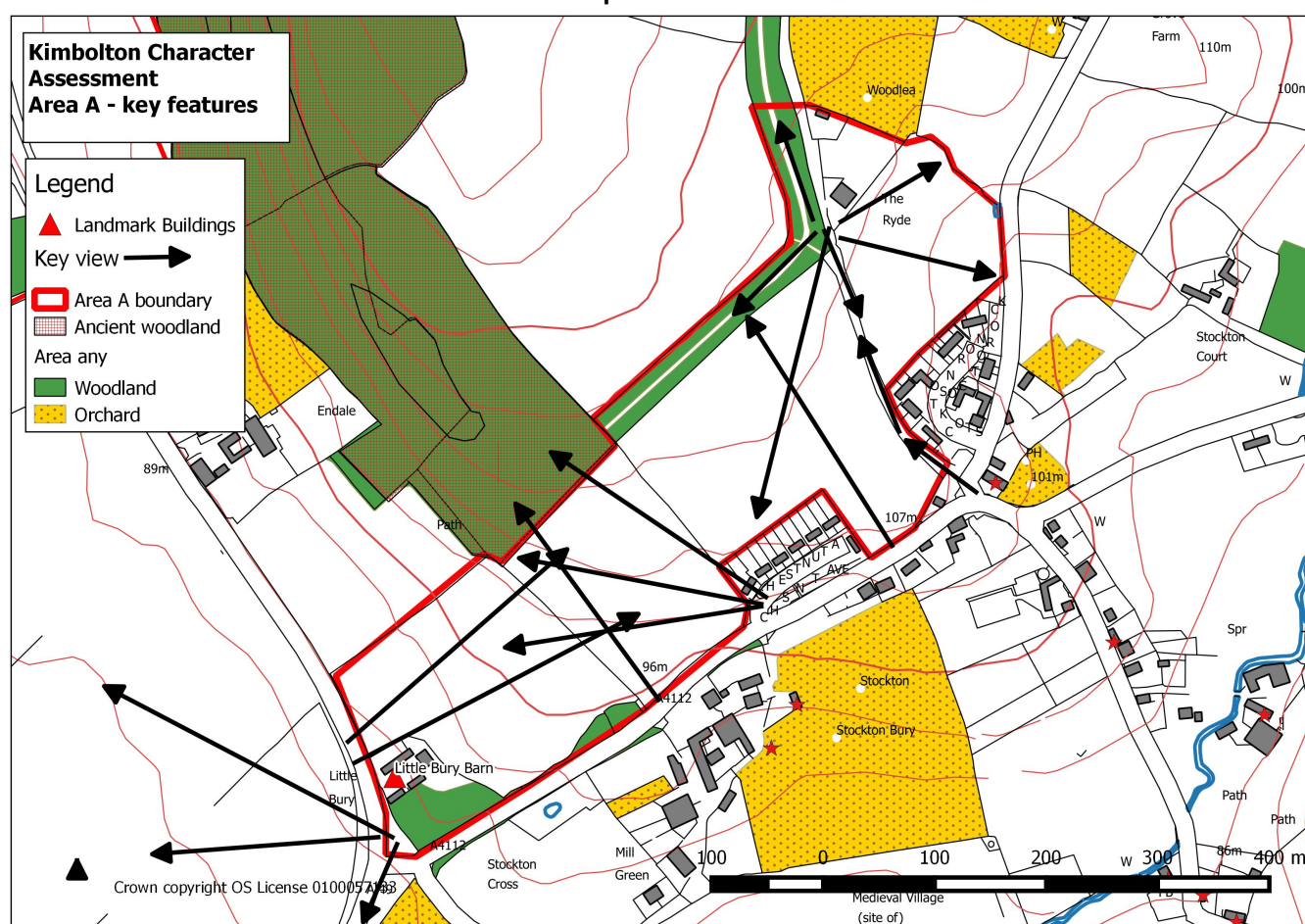


- 5.0.3 The settlement is made up of two broad parts – Stockton and Kimbolton. Stockton is the more densely developed and nucleated western half of the settlement consisting of Study Areas A-D, and Kimbolton the more dispersed eastern half consisting of Study Areas E and F. The two areas are separated by an area of open countryside to the south of Stockton Court and through which runs the Cogwell Brook.
- 5.0.4 Each of the Areas are described in detail below.

5.1 Area A – Little Bury and The Ride Road

5.1.1 Area A is an area of farmland currently made up of four large fields to the immediate north-west of Kimbolton village. The area includes three Landscape Character Types - the western third of the area is within the 'Wooded Estate-lands' Landscape Character Type, the central area is 'Plateau Estate Farmlands' and the eastern area 'Plateau Estate Farmlands'.

Map 13 – Area A



5.1.2 Topography, land-use and layout

5.1.3 The area is characterised by gently sloping countryside falling from east to west with the Ride Road at the highest point. The principal land use is mixed farming with an extensive area of woodland along the northern boundary.



Image 54 – the gently sloping countryside to the rear of Chestnut Avenue rising to the belt of woodland near the Ride Road.

5.1.4 Roads, streets, routes

- 5.1.5 The area is bounded by the A49 to the west, the A4112 to the south and a minor road to Middleton on the Hill to the east.



Image 55 – the narrow section of the A4112 near the junction with the A49

- 5.1.6 For part of its length the A4112 has a pavement on its northern side which provides access towards the village centre. However, from Chestnut Avenue westwards towards the A49 the pavement ends and the road narrows. Much of the frontage is bounded by a mature hedgerow and at the western end a steep bank leads up to a small dense wooded area above. Pedestrian access between the A49 junction and slightly beyond

Chestnut Avenue is, therefore, quite dangerous. The A4112 is in a poor state of repair particularly at the road edges and there is evidence of significant tractor, agricultural plant and heavy lorry usage.



Image 56 – the southern end of the Ride Road

- 5.1.7 Ride Road, which runs north from a point near the pub is a loose surfaced lane providing access to two houses and a Farmstead. This route is an historic one - in 1997 the Herefordshire County Archaeological Officer observed that it follows the line of the Roman Road which ran from Stockton Cross. The route was used as a bridleway in the early 19th century but by 1835 was used only by walkers.
- 5.1.8 The lower section is of hardcore/mud, in bad repair, with the upper section beyond the houses unmade and only suitable for horses and pedestrians. With the exception of the entrances for the houses, the lane has high natural hedges/trees to both sides with open fields beyond. The lane is very wild and natural looking. There appears to be no attempt to manage the tree/hedge growth.

5.1.9 Buildings



Image 57 – The Ryde showing extensive modernisation but retaining the stone stepped chimney stack, domestic scale and clay tile roof.

5.1.10 The houses which are accessed from the Ride Road – Woodlea and The Ryde - are both extensively modernised and extended but of a domestic scale and at their core of sandstone rubble construction with tiled roofs. Both contain substantial stone stepped chimney stacks on their gables.



Image 58 – Little Bury showing the distinctive gable of the barn fronting the A49

5.1.11 Little Bury is a small former steading at the junction of the A49 with the A4112. The pair of semi-detached cottages are of brick and slate construction. The complex includes a distinctive barn of part stone, part timber construction with a prominent gable end window detail.

3.2 Visual impact of proposal



Map 14 the proposed residential development to the rear of Chestnut Avenue

5.1.12 In April 2016 outline planning permission was granted for the development of up to 21 houses on the field to the west of Ride Road between Chestnut Avenue and Stockton Rock. This development has the potential to have a significant impact upon the character of the area and the indicative layout is shown above on Map 14.

5.1.13 Landmarks

5.1.14 The Barn at Little Bury described above is the most prominent landmark building in the area.

5.1.15 Green and natural features



image 59 – the western most field from the A49 showing the gently rising topography, large fields and resulting open character of the countryside

5.1.16 Part of the woodland forming part of the northern boundary of the area is designated as Ancient Woodland and is the most significant natural feature. It is prominent from a wide area by virtue of its elevated location and is made up of mixed broadleaf species with oak dominant.

5.1.17 The large fields are all enclosed by relatively low hedgerows which gives the area an open character. There is an additional area of woodland on the northern side of the A4112 between Little Bury and Chestnut Avenue

5.1.18 Views

5.1.19 Due to its gently sloping topography and elevated location, the area provides a number of far reaching views to the west towards Leominster, the broad valley of the River Lugg and the Bircher Hills. The westernmost of the four fields and the woodland which sits above it are particularly prominent when viewed from the west. The key views are shown on Map 13.

5.1.20 Summary of key defining characteristics / other observations

5.1.21 The area is made up of gently sloping land which forms an important part of the setting of Kimbolton village. It is sparsely settled and has an open character which makes it very sensitive to development. The northern part of the area contains an important and prominent area of woodland.

5.1.22 Management guidelines and priorities

5.1.23 The key priorities should be:

- Conservation, management and enhancement of the area of woodland, and particularly the Ancient Woodland, including restocking where appropriate.
- Conservation and enhancement of hedgerows.
- Ensuring that the scale, siting and massing of new residential development to the west of Stockton Rock is consistent with the existing domestic character and building materials used in the area. Maximise opportunities to enhance existing hedgerows and include new trees and hedgerows both within and on the boundaries of the site.
- To protect the existing open and visually prominent character of the area from further development particularly when viewed from the west.
- To retain the distinct rural character of the Ride Road.
- To investigate opportunities to enhance pedestrian safety on the A4112 between Chestnut Avenue and the A49.