

## **Sherwood Landscape Policy Zone 8 - Vicar Water and Rainworth Heath Wooded Estatelands**

### **Policy: Create**

This Landscape Policy Zone lies to the urban fringes of Clipstone to the north, Mansfield to the west and Rainworth to the south. Rainworth bypass runs through the southern area.

There are many detracting features to the urban fringes which include Crown Farm Industrial Estate - a large scale development visible over long distances. There is also large-scale commercial and industrial development along the A617 on the approach into Mansfield and Ransom Wood Business Park lies to the southwest of the Landscape Policy Zone.

The underlying gently undulating landscape has been considerably altered by coal mining activity at Rufford and Clipstone collieries. Rufford is still in the process of restoration and part of Clipstone colliery has been restored to create the Vicar Water Country Park to the north. Steep slopes have been created on the spoil tips which are an unnatural feature in the landscape. There is also an active sandstone quarry at Ratcher Hill where quarrying has left steep vertical slopes.

There are pine plantations and smaller blocks of deciduous woodland within the Landscape Policy Zone and the large-scale pine plantation of Clipstone Forest lies to the east. More recent planting has taken place on reclaimed spoil tips.

The Policy Zone area is largely shown as unenclosed heathland on Sandersons Plan of 1835. There are small pockets of heathland but the majority of the area has been disturbed by mineral and quarrying activity. Spoil heaps and disused mineral lines are now prominent features. Other features include a golf course and sewage works. Fly tipping is a problem in some areas and off road motorcycles are also evident.

The area has many SINCs and areas designated on the Heathland Register, including former mineral railway lines and colliery sites. Rainworth Heath is a designated SSSI. The area has a strong network of interconnecting blocks of deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and patches of heathland and scrub providing good wildlife networks. Small areas of farmland have strong hedgerows with trees, for example around Newlands Farm.

There are panoramic views from Vicar Water Country Park. Elsewhere views are contained by landform, urban edges and by mature plantations to the east.

Threats to the area include urban/industrial and residential expansion of the adjacent towns. Recent development has been large scale and does not respect the local vernacular and landscape character. The Rainworth bypass/MARR route (A617) will create more pressure for industrial and commercial development on the eastern edge of Mansfield. The Rufford Colliery site is under pressure despite restoration proposals for heathland.

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## PHOTOGRAPH



## CHARACTERISTIC VISUAL FEATURES

- Landscape altered by mineral extraction and quarrying activity
- Large scale commercial and industrial/business parks on the urban fringes of Mansfield, Mansfield Woodhouse & Rainworth
- Busy roads – Mansfield and Ashfield Regeneration Route (A617)
- Large scale pine plantations and smaller deciduous blocks of woodland
- Heathland areas with bracken, gorse and heather
- Fishing lake at Vicar Pond

## LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

### Landscape Condition

The Landscape condition is defined as **very poor**. The area has an **incoherent** pattern of elements with **many** detracting features such as mineral extraction sites and industrial estates. Visual unity is **significantly interrupted**.

Rainworth Heath is a SSSI and there are many SINCS and Heathland Register sites. Ecological integrity is **strong**, there are good wildlife corridors within the site and linking to adjacent areas. Areas of unrestored colliery workings and recently restored areas are considered to have moderate ecological value.

Cultural integrity is **poor**. The historic pattern of unenclosed heathland landscape has largely been destroyed by mineral activity.

A **significantly interrupted** area with a **coherent** functional integrity/ habitat for wildlife gives a **very poor** landscape condition.

### Landscape Sensitivity

Sandersons Plan of 1835 shows the Landscape Policy Zone largely as unenclosed heathland. This has largely been disturbed, but heathland has successfully established on some restored mineral sites.

Overall the features are **characteristic** of Sherwood with an **historic** time depth (post 1600) and the area has a **moderate** sense of place.

An open panoramic view is possible from the top Vicar Pond Country Park. Views within the site are enclosed by landform and woodland. The apparent landform and intermittent tree cover give a **moderate** visibility within the site.

A **moderate** sense of place with a **moderate** visibility gives a **moderate** landscape sensitivity.

## LANDSCAPE ACTIONS – Create

### Landscape Features

- **Create** heathland habitats with Oak/Birch woodland and open acid grassland/heathland
- **Create** natural rolling landforms in keeping with the Sherwood region when restoring mineral and quarry sites - avoid unnatural, engineered landforms
- **Create** woodland to help restore unity to the landscape – medium to large-scale planting would be appropriate in this area
- **Conserve** existing heathland habitats

### Built Features

- Concentrate new development around the existing settlements of Mansfield, Mansfield Woodhouse, Clipstone and Rainworth to conserve the remote rural character of the landscape
- Promote sensitive siting of new industrial and commercial buildings
- New development should respect the local character in scale and design
- Promote measures for reinforcing the traditional character of isolated farm buildings using vernacular designs
- **Create** woodland to contain and soften urban development, preferably in advance of new development

## CONTEXT

NCC Landscape Type: Wooded Estatelands  
Landscape Policy Zone: S LPZ 8  
Land Cover Parcels: S20 and S21

## Condition

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

Low Moderate High

## Sensitivity

**N.B. Where one criterion is 'very poor' this pushes the policy description into the next lowest category.**

## SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

### Condition Very Poor

Pattern of Elements:	Incoherent
Detracting Features:	Many
Visual Unity:	Significantly interrupted
Ecological Integrity:	Moderate/Strong
Cultural Integrity:	Poor
Functional Integrity:	Coherent

### Sensitivity Moderate

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