

## **Sherwood Landscape Policy Zone 50 - Strawberry Hills Heath Wooded Farmlands with Wooded Estatelands**

### **Policy: Conserve**

This small Landscape Policy Zone (LPZ) lies to the east of Mansfield (Oak Tree area). Residential properties lie to the west of the LPZ and business parks are located off the A617 to the southwest.

The site is comprised of woodland and remnant heathland within a landscape disturbed by coal mining activity to the north and east; an active sand quarry (Ratcher Hill) lies to the western boundary. Mansfield Family Golf Centre lies to the north of the site on a former coal site. A coniferous plantation lies to the south.

The site rises from 115 metres at the western corner to over 135 metres at the summit of Strawberry Hill Heaths SSSI. The area around the SSSI is made up of acidic deciduous woodland and small pockets of heather. Strawberry Hill Heaths SSSI itself has been colonised by Sessile Oak. Due to lack of management, former heathland areas have reverted to Oak and Birch woodland of varying ages and densities. Existing pockets of heathland is dominated by Ling Heather. Bracken, broom, gorse and heather are also common and Bell Heather can also be found. There are sandy footpaths, some of which are suffering from erosion.

The site has a very distinct heathland character and is a historic landscape within a disturbed area. Sandersons Plan (1835) shows Strawberry Hill Heaths as part of an open, unenclosed heathland landscape crossed by tracks and public rights of way.

The whole of the Landscape Policy Zone is a designated SSSI and SINC, described as an important area of acidic deciduous woodland and heath. The area is a strong habitat for wildlife and there are good links to adjacent areas. Rainworth Forest to the south is also a designated SINC – an extensive coniferous plantation with deciduous areas and noteworthy ground flora in parts.

The site has a strong sense of place, although there is some noise from the quarry and the palisade fence to this boundary is incongruous in the rural landscape. There is some evidence of former fly tipping and burnt out vehicles to the west off Jubilee Way North.

Threats to the area include expansion of the adjacent quarry which would destroy the historic heathland landscape and the distinctive landform of Strawberry Hill. Opportunities exist for further heathland and oak-birch woodland creation.

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## PHOTOGRAPH



## CHARACTERISTIC VISUAL FEATURES

- Oak and Birch Woodland
- Strawberry Hill Heaths SSSI is a dominant feature in the landscape
- Heathland vegetation includes Heather, Bracken, Broom and acidic grassland
- Sandy paths up to Strawberry Hill Heaths SSSI, show some signs of erosion
- Open views to adjacent quarry site to the west
- Generally views within the site are enclosed by woodland

## LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

### Landscape Condition

The Landscape condition is defined as **very good**. The area has **few** detracting features – the main detracting feature is the active sand quarry to the western edge of the site. Overall the LPZ is **strongly unified**.

The LPZ is a designated SSSI and SINC – described as an important area of acidic deciduous woodland and heathland.

Oak and Birch trees dominate the site and vary in age. The site has a **strong** ecological integrity and has good links to adjacent areas.

Cultural integrity is **good** as the historic heathland has been retained within a wider landscape which has been altered by mining and quarrying activity.

A **visually strongly unified** area with a **very strong** functional integrity/ habitat for wildlife gives a **very good** landscape condition.

### Landscape Sensitivity

Sandersons Plan of 1835 shows large areas of open heathland – this has largely disappeared as a result of the expansion of Mansfield to the west, quarrying activity, and coal mining. Strawberry Hill is a remnant of this heathland landscape.

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

There are open views over the quarry site from the western edge of the site and filtered views to the golf course from the footpath to the north of the site. Views within the site are enclosed by the woodland The dominant landform and enclosed 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 – Conserve

### Landscape Features

- **Conserve** the ecological diversity and character of the heathland habitat – management objectives are likely to involve thinning or removal of Birch woodland to restore and enhance acid grassland and heathland habitats
- **Conserve** the landform of Strawberry Hill
- **Create** additional areas of heathland and woodland habitats within adjacent areas

## CONTEXT

NCC Landscape Type: Wooded Estatelands

Landscape Policy Zone: S LPZ 50

Land Cover Parcels: SH20 and SH21

## Condition

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

Low Moderate High

## Sensitivity

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

## SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

**Condition Very Good**

Pattern of Elements:	Unified
Detracting Features:	Few
Visual Unity:	Strongly Unified
Ecological Integrity:	Strong
Cultural Integrity:	Good
Functional Integrity:	Very Strong

**Sensitivity Moderate**

Distinctiveness:	Characteristic
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of Place:	Moderate
Landform:	Dominant
Extent of Tree Cover	Enclosed
Visibility:	Moderate