



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment

March 2020

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

SUMMARY

This Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment of the Parish of Deerhurst is an extension of previous work carried out by Toby Jones Associates Ltd (TJA) for Tewkesbury Borough Council. The original assessment applied to six land parcels around the village of Apperley, when it was being considered as a possible service village; as part of the Joint Core Strategy.

This assessment applies to ten land parcels across the Parish but mostly not within Flood Zone 3. Some of these ten land parcels are identical to the original six while some are modified; the other four are new. For this work, the land parcels are identified as Deer-01, Deer-02, etc. to apply to the Parish; instead of App-01, App-02, etc.

Each land parcel is defined in this document by a map. For each land parcel in turn, TJA has provided a written assessment of its sensitivity to new residential development; concluding with a HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW rating separately for the sensitivity of landscape character and visual sensitivity. These ratings are listed below for the ten land parcels.

Deerhurst Parish: Land Parcel Name	Sensitivity to New Residential Development	
	Landscape Character	Visual
Deer-01	HIGH	MEDIUM
Deer-02	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Deer-03	LOW	LOW
Deer-04	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-05	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-06	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-07	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-08	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-09	HIGH	HIGH
Deer-10	HIGH	HIGH

At the end of this document, these same ratings are shown in the form of maps: both of the whole Parish of Deerhurst and, at a larger scale, to show more clearly the area around the Parish playing fields and Apperley Village Hall.

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

CONTENTS

Title	Page
SUMMARY	i
INTRODUCTION	1
PARISH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS	2
LAND PARCELS NAMES AND AREAS	3
LAND PARCEL MAPS	3
ASSESSMENT AND RATING	3
LAND PARCEL: Deer-01	4
LAND PARCEL: Deer-02	5
LAND PARCEL: Deer-03	6
LAND PARCEL: Deer-04	8
LAND PARCEL: Deer-05	10
LAND PARCEL: Deer-06	12
LAND PARCEL: Deer-07	14
LAND PARCEL: Deer-08	15
LAND PARCEL: Deer-09	17
LAND PARCEL: Deer-10	18
SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAPS	19
VISUAL SENSITIVITY MAPS	21
SUMMARY OF SENSITIVITY RATINGS	23

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

INTRODUCTION

The designated area for the Neighbourhood Plan is the Civil Parish of Deerhurst, which is in the Borough of Tewkesbury and the County of Gloucestershire.

In 2014, Tewkesbury Borough Council published “Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study, Rural Service Centres and Service Villages” which was produced by Toby Jones Associates Ltd (TJA). This was the final report that included the study of land parcels immediately surrounding the twelve service villages: Alderton, Coombe Hill, Gotherington, Highnam, Maisemore, Minsterworth, Norton, Shurdington, Toddington (including New Town), Twigworth, Twyning and Woodmancote.

While the final report did not apply to any part of Deerhurst Parish, the area immediately surrounding Apperley was studied at the same time as the other village because it was considered as a possible service village but subsequently not selected.

In the original study around Apperley, TJA had defined six land parcels, the results for which were included in the draft version of the published document.

To support the Deerhurst Neighbourhood Plan, TJA was asked to extend the original study to the remainder of the Parish but not including land within Flood Zone 3. Some of the original six land parcels have been modified or extended and four new land parcels have been added; to give a total of ten.

TJA has provided the landscape and visual sensitivity analysis and ratings included in this report, while the maps of the land parcels have been produced using the Parish Online software; from a sketch provided by TJA. The analysis was written after a visit to the Parish in late February 2020.

PARISH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

The Parish of Deerhurst is within National Character Area (NCA) 106, Severn and Avon Vales. See document: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6268024103370752>

The Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment (GLCA), published in 2006, classifies the landscape across the County into landscape types, with reference to the Countryside Agency's Character Map of England. See document:

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/6800/glca_report_severn_other_vales_text_2006-51673.pdf (text)

https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/6799/glca_report_severn_other_vales_figures_2006-51674.pdf (figures)

Within the Parish of Deerhurst, in whole or in part, there are three distinct landscape character areas, as follows:

Character Area	Landscape Character Type (LCT)	See GLCA Section
SV3G - The Severn Hams	Floodplain Farmland	5.3
SV6B - Vale of Gloucester	Settled Unwooded Vale	5.6
SV11G - Apperley Hill	Vale Hillocks	5.11

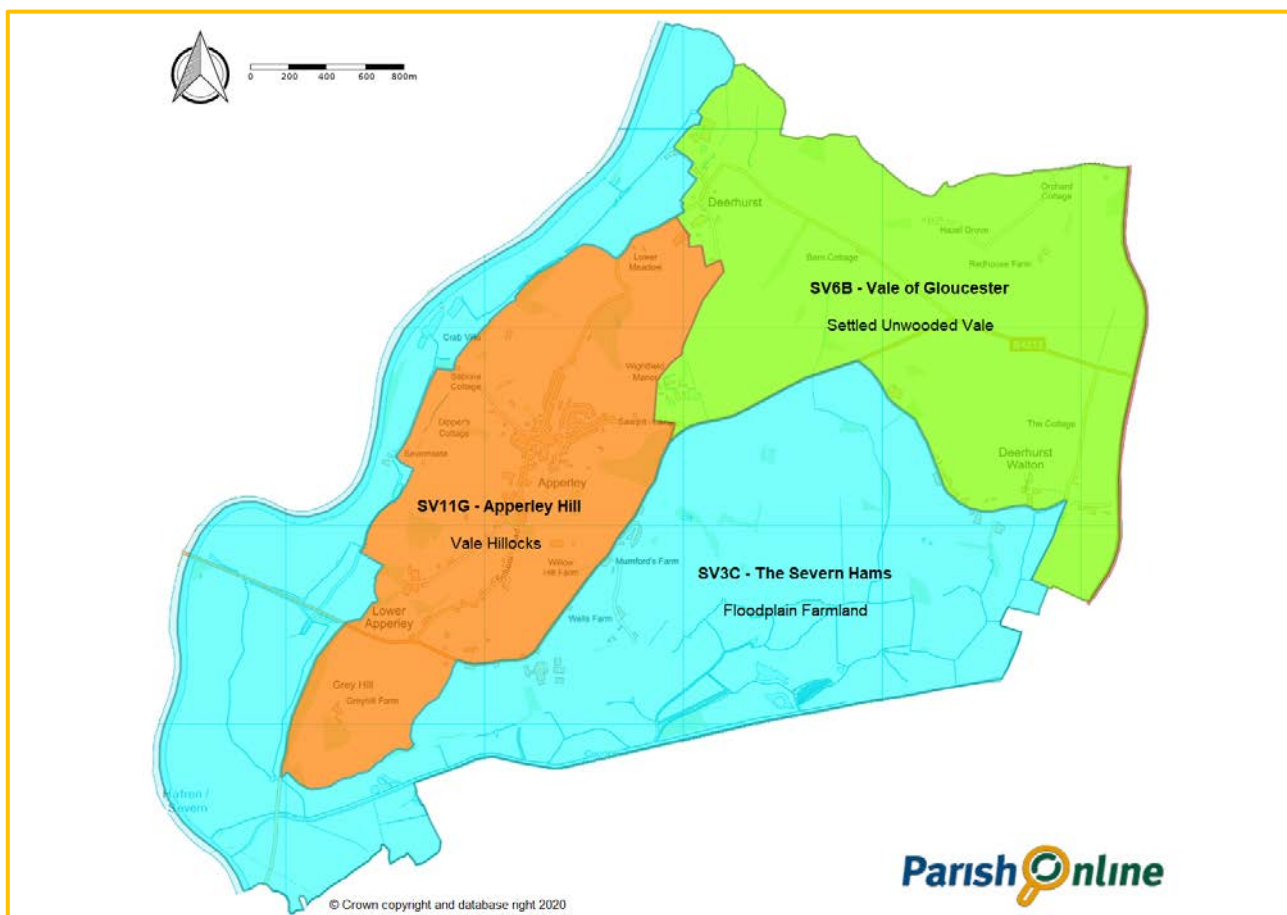


Figure 1 - Landscape Character Areas within Deerhurst Parish

LAND PARCELS NAMES AND AREAS

The ten land parcels defined for this study are as follows:

Land Parcel Name	Area (hectares)
Deer-01	17.7
Deer-02	6.5
Deer-03	5.2
Deer-04	52.0
Deer-05	23.2
Deer-06	75.6
Deer-07	47.6
Deer-08	75.9
Deer-09	415.8
Deer-10	55.7
Total	775.2

The total area included in this study is 63.3% of the area of Deerhurst Parish; which is 1224.7 hectares.

LAND PARCEL MAPS

The map defining each land parcel is followed in turn by: the Landscape Character assessment; and the Visual Sensitivity assessment.

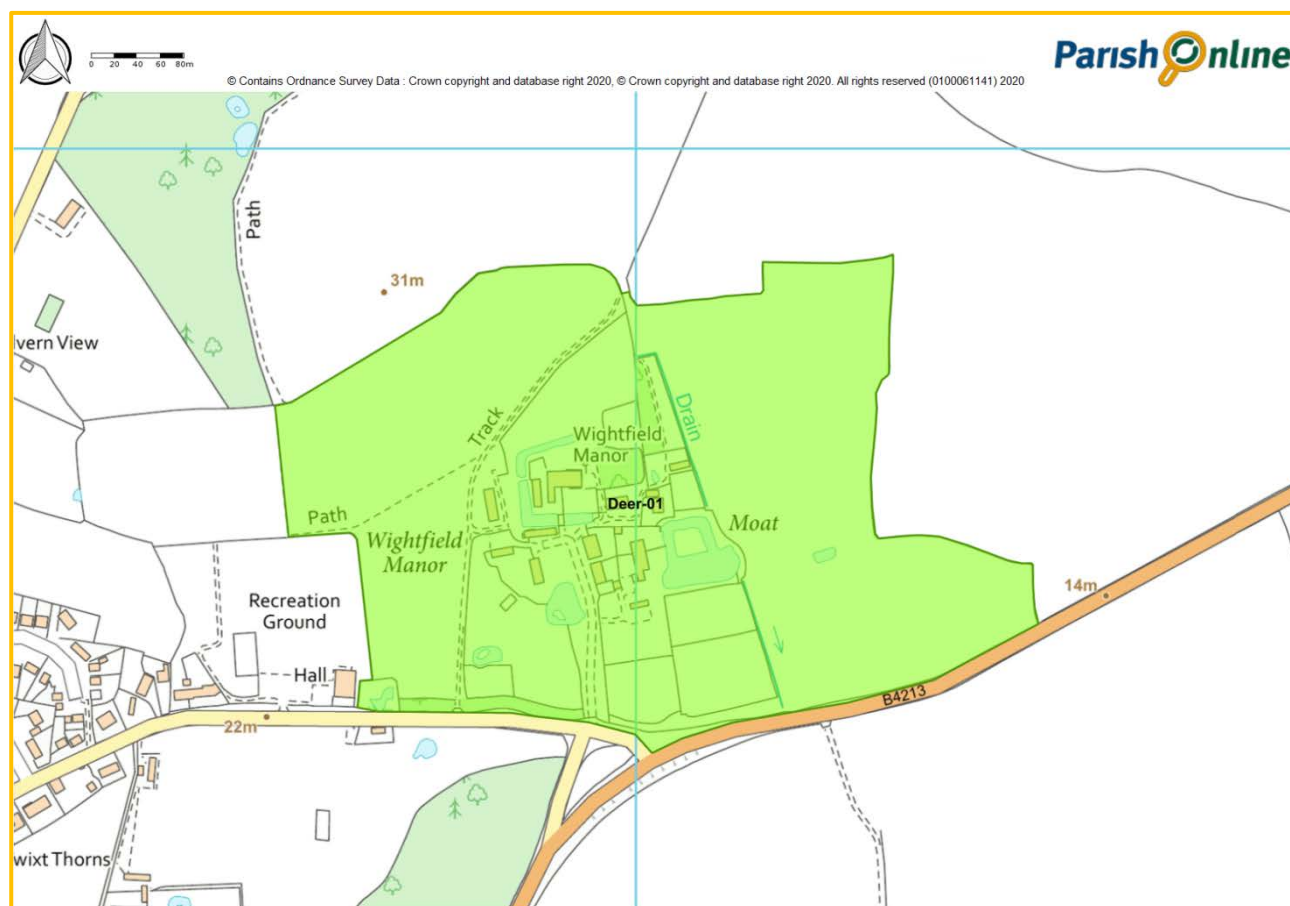


The land parcel is shown in green and labelled with its name; **Deer-01**, etc.

ASSESSMENT AND RATING

In the assessment of each land parcel, reference is made to the landscape character areas shown in Figure 1.

The result of each landscape and visual assessment is a sensitivity rating: **HIGH**, **MEDIUM** or **LOW**. This is how sensitive the land parcel being assessed is to new residential development.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-01**Landscape Character: Deer-01**

This is an arable landscape on gently undulating land on the transition between the open, undulating Severn Vale to the east (Settled Unwooded Vale: **SV6B - Vale of Gloucester**) - and the Vale Hillocks to the west (**SV11G - Apperley Hill**). There are prominent mature oaks that stand as field trees and in the hedgerows and represent distinctive local features. The Land Parcel forms the setting of Wightfield Manor and provides a strong sense of separation between the Manor complex and the village itself. It also contributes to a strong sense of openness and surrounding countryside from the Village Hall and playing fields with long distance views available.

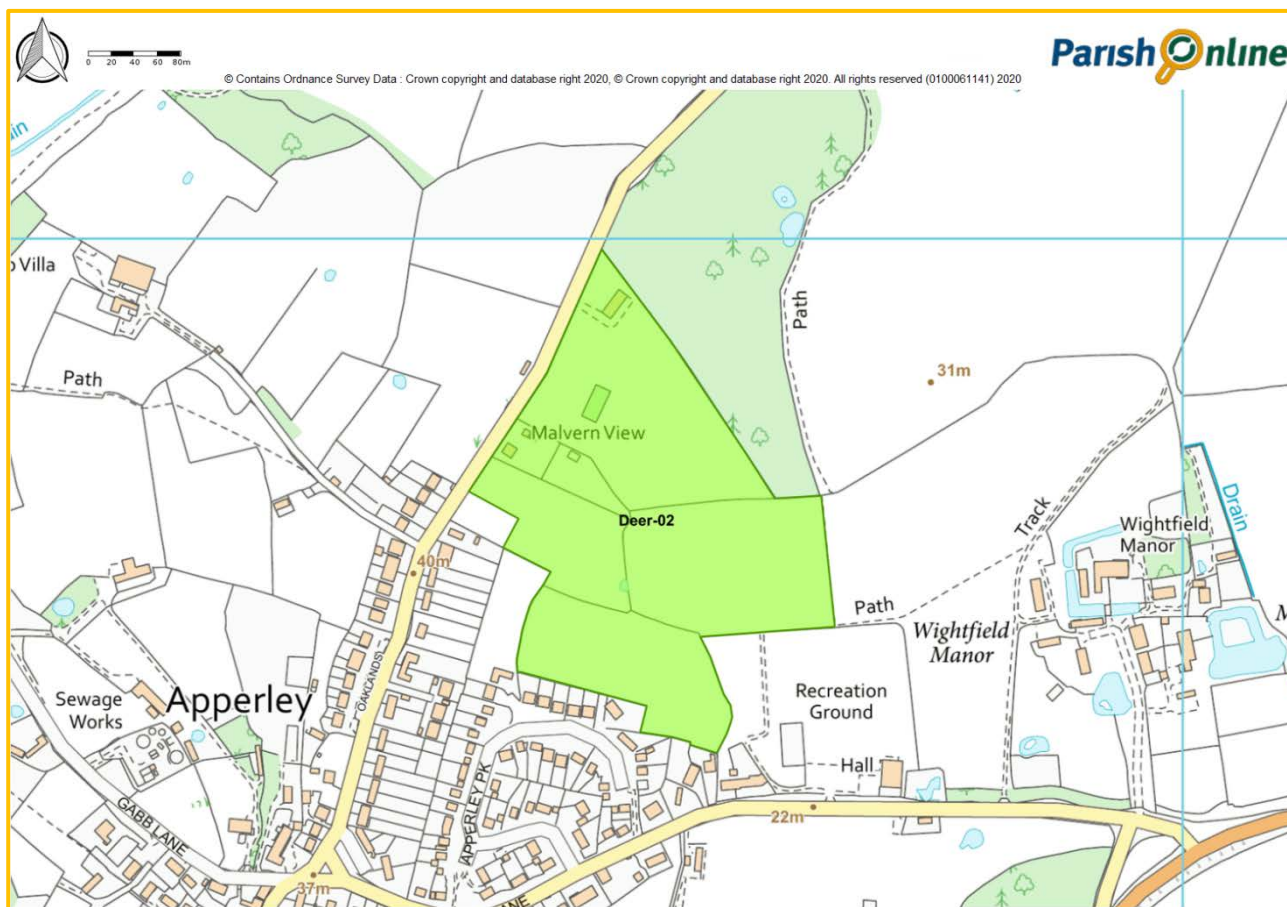
This is a robust and distinctive landscape character with few detractors. There is some influence from the adjacent Village Hall, car park and recreation ground but the settlement influence remains slight and this parcel is more associated with the wider vale landscape.

The landscape sensitivity of this landscape is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-01

There are few opportunities to mitigate views of new residential development in this open and exposed landscape and there is little precedent for housing development spreading out onto the Vale from Apperley. The area features in distinctive views from the playing fields and Village Hall as well as forming the distinctive open setting to Wightfield Manor.

The visual sensitivity of this area is considered to be **MEDIUM**

LAND PARCEL: Deer-02**Landscape Character: Deer-02**

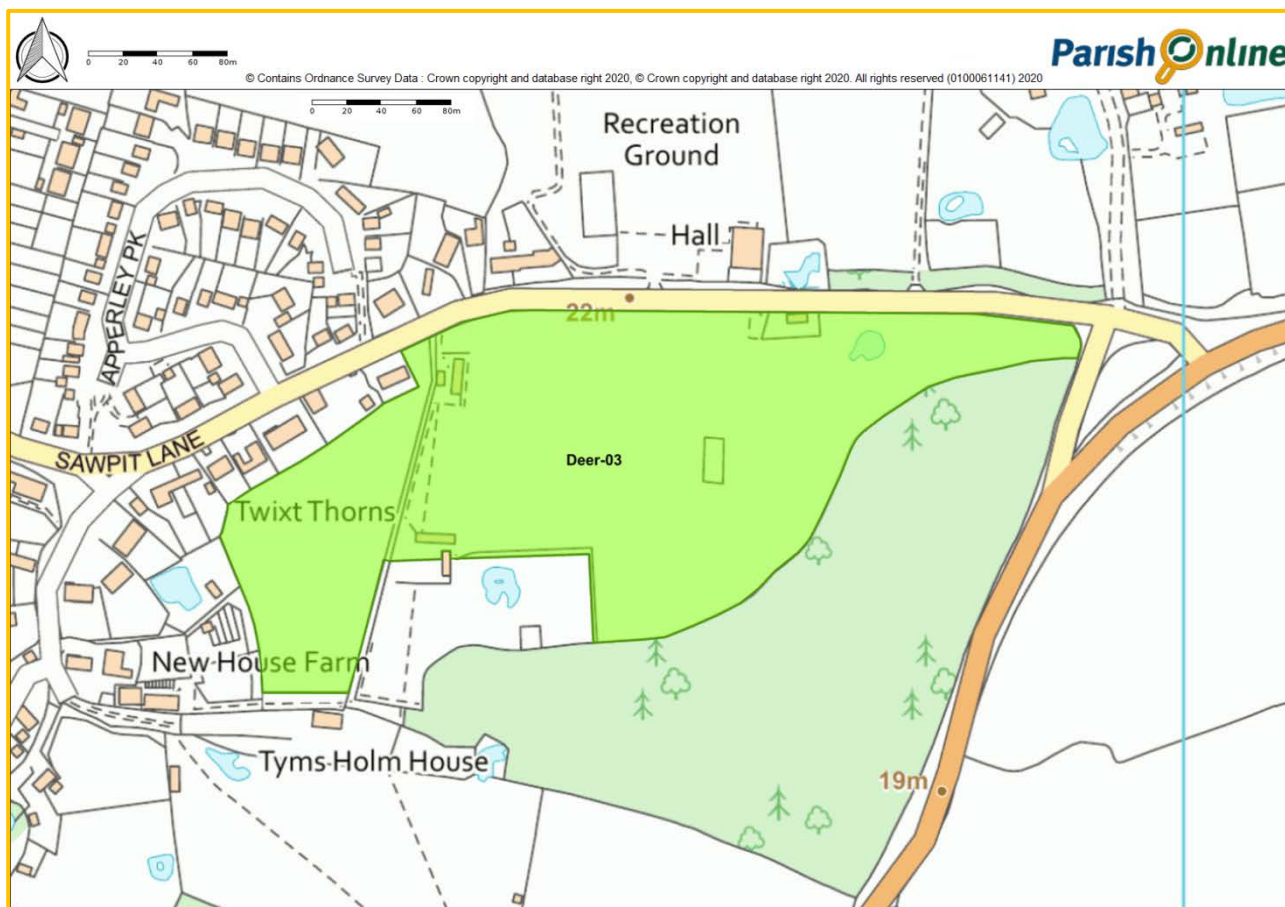
In this Land Parcel, the vale landscape rises up to Severn Way on the distinct ridge typical of the Vale Hillocks (**SV11G - Apperley Hill**). The arable fields of the Vale give way to pastures on the steeper upper slopes. Existing settlement along the ridge, topography and mature woodland combine to create an enclosed character with open views to the east. There is a strong influence from the existing settlement edge to the south and some opportunities to mitigate new development.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **MEDIUM**

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-02

This area is enclosed by topography, mature woodland and the existing settlement. However, it is exposed in long distance views towards Apperley from the east. Prominent or conspicuous new residential development on the higher exposed open slopes would be inappropriate.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **MEDIUM**

LAND PARCEL: Deer-03**Landscape Character: Deer-03**

This Land Parcel falls at the very edge of the Vale Hillocks (**SV11G - Apperley Hill**); at the edge of the Vale. A distinctive feature of this Land Parcel is that it is separated from the open vale by a mature woodland block, which combines with topography, and the existing settlement edge to create a well contained and enclosed Land Parcel.

It contains a stable block and yard and paddock fencing all of which have weakened the countryside character. There are strong visual influences from the surrounding residential development.

Strong enclosure provided by the woodland to the east emphasise the relationship between this character area and the settlement edge.

The landscape character here is not distinctive. There is limited time depth and it is dominated by equestrian activity and the 20th century settlement edge. Surrounding woodland offers opportunities for mitigating new residential development with characteristic landscape features.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **LOW**.

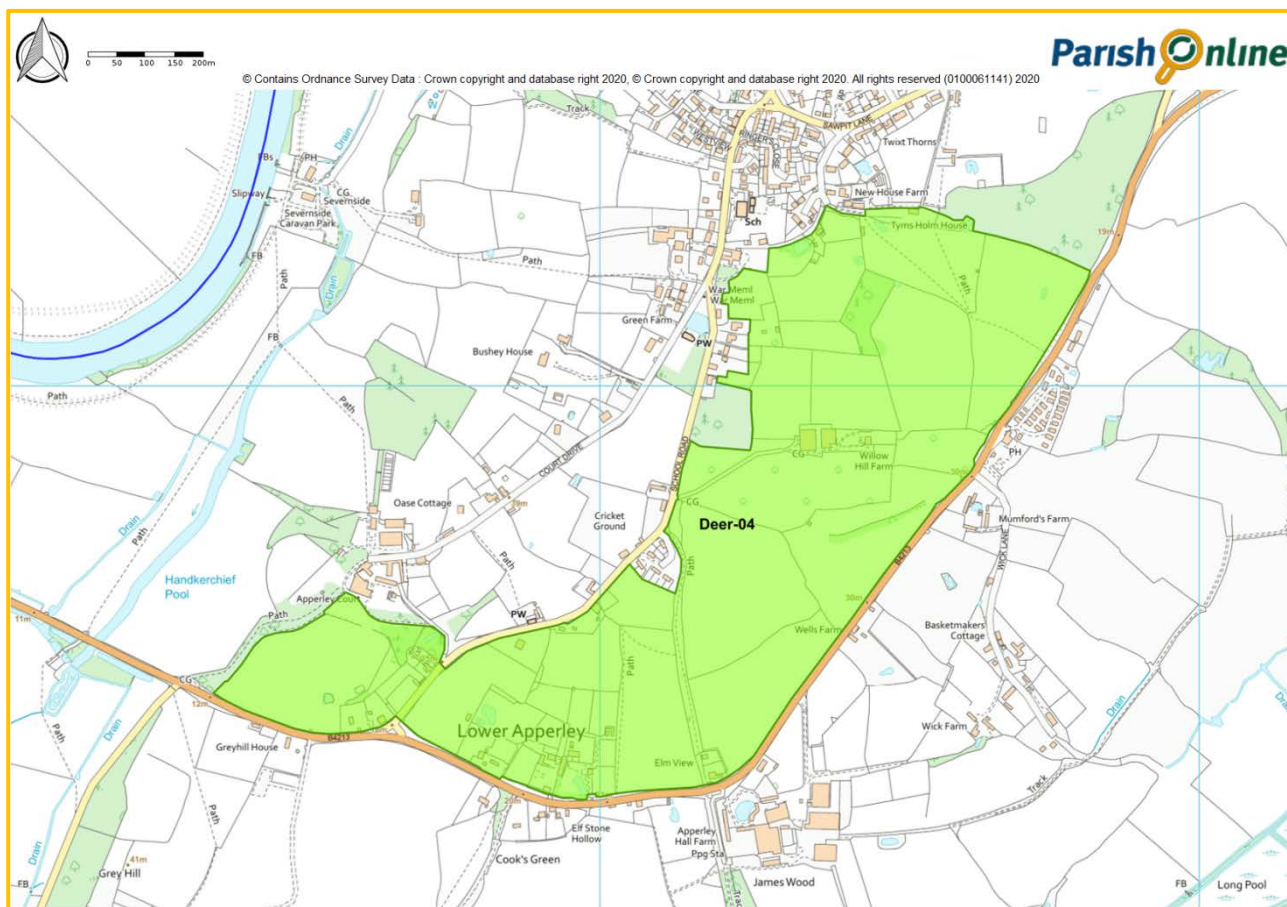
Visual Sensitivity: Deer-03

This is a visually very well contained land assessment parcel. Glimpsed views are available from Sawpit Lane and it is visible from a local footpath that crosses it. Houses back on to this land assessment parcel on Sawpit Lane and around Newhouse Farm. The parcel is very well screened by mature woodland to the east. This screens the parcel from long distance views from the east.

The land assessment parcel is typical of equestrian uses and supports a number of visual detractors such as paddock fencing and a stable yard together with hardstandings.

Effective screening and numerous visual detractors drive the judgment about visual sensitivity.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **LOW**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-04**Landscape Character: Deer-04**

This Land Parcel occupies land rising up from the expansive Vale landscape to the distinctive ridge of the Vale Hillocks (**SV11G - Apperley Hill**). This Land Parcel slopes down from an established and "feathered" edge of Apperley along School Road and at Apperley House. It mainly consists of irregular paddocks and pasture and supports a dense network of public rights of way. The complex topography and strong woodland blocks help to create a strong and distinctive landscape character little influenced by the settlement. The distant outlook to the east accentuates this sense of separation from the village.

There is a strong time depth evident in the settlement edge and in the variety and form of field enclosures including relic orchards.

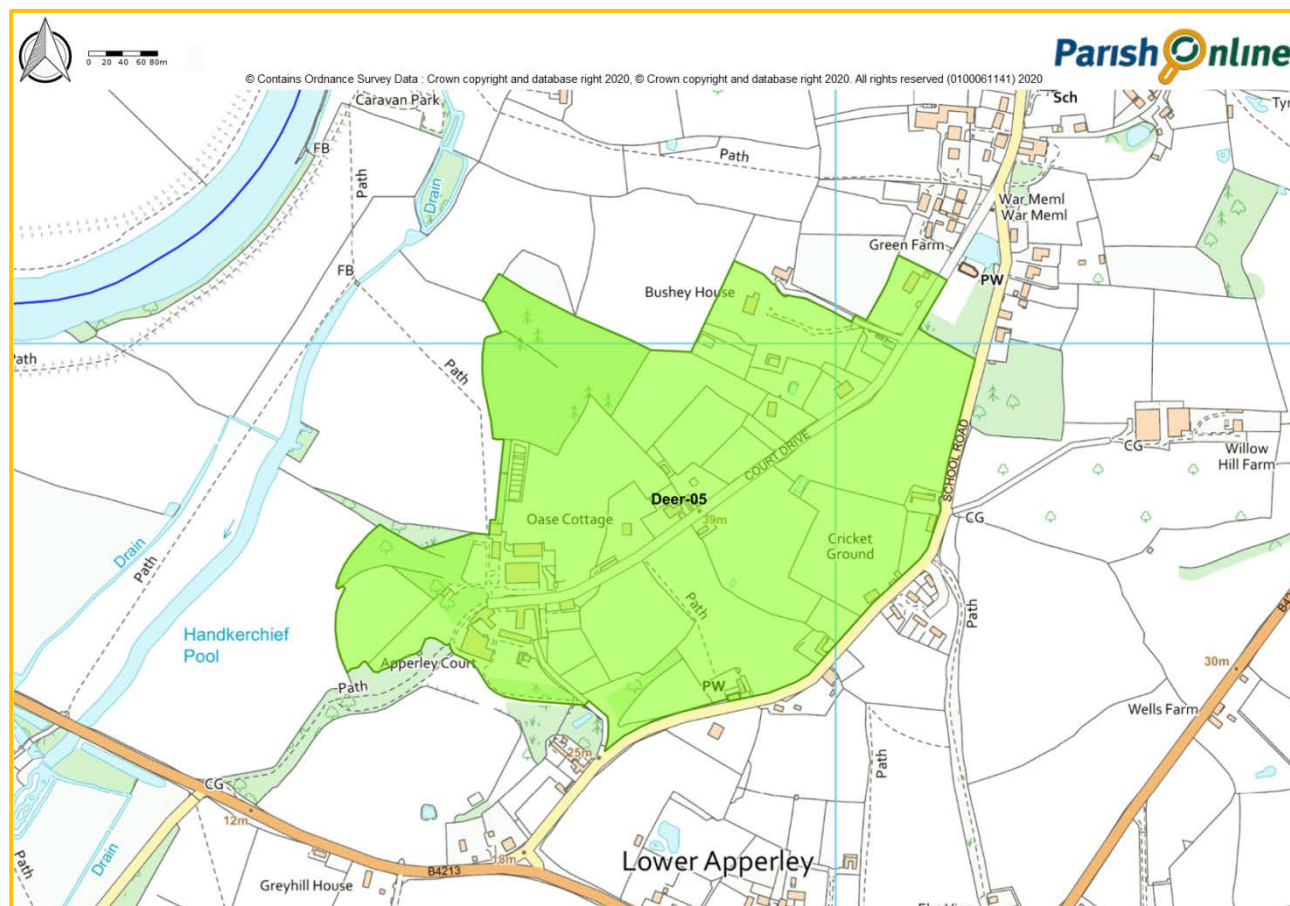
These undeveloped slopes represent a distinctive characteristic of Apperley, which occupies a ridge position. Encroachment of new residential development here would appear conspicuous and uncharacteristic with few opportunities to mitigate an intact and robust landscape character.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-04

This Land Parcel occupies the complex slopes rising up to Apperley. It is visible from the east, in particular from the B4213 and plays an important role in the foreground setting to Apperley in more distant views from the east. There is little precedent for residential development extending off the ridge and down onto these exposed slopes. Any new development here would be conspicuous.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-05**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-05**

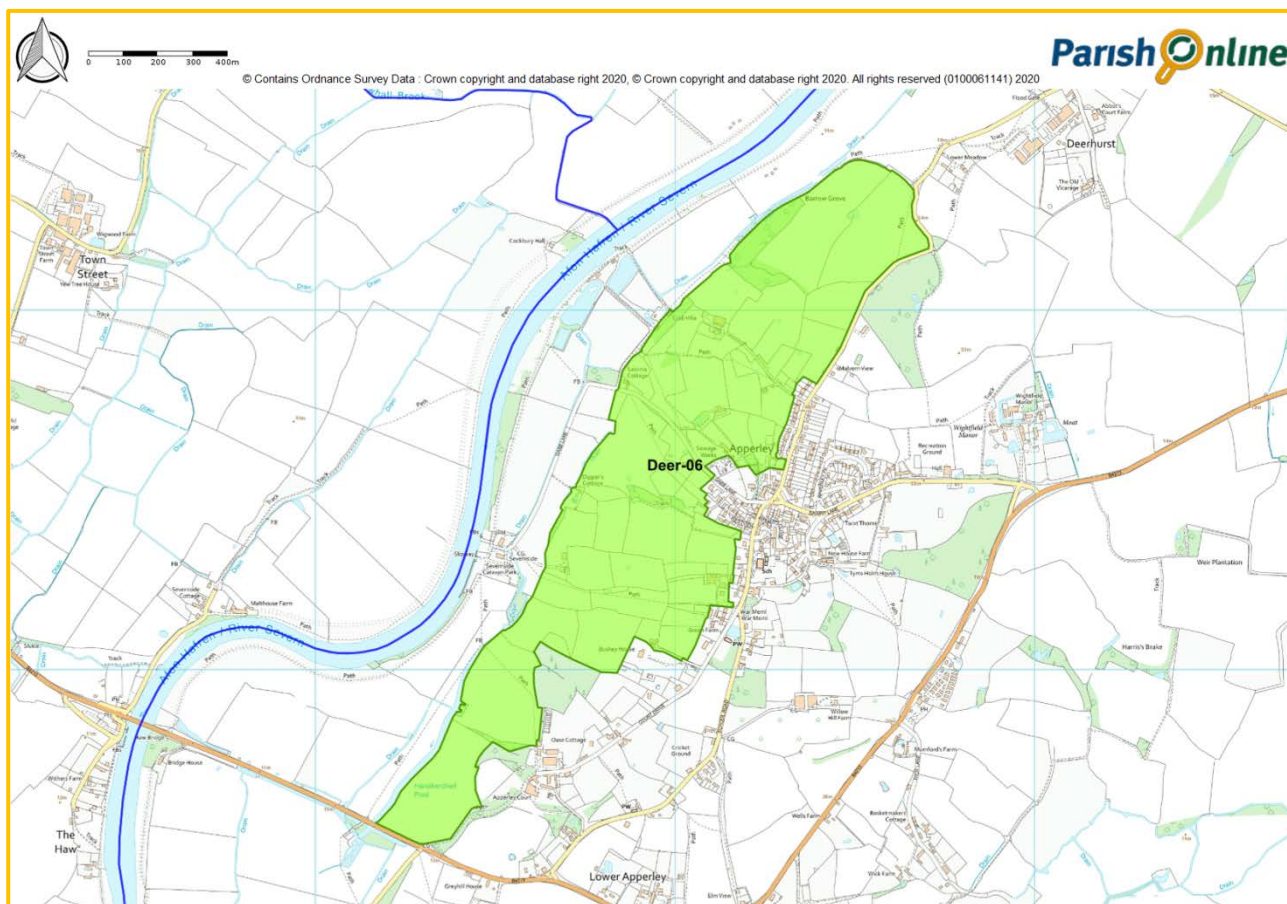
This Land Parcel occupies the top of the southern end of Apperley Hill (Vale Hillocks: **SV11G - Apperley Hill**). It supports pasture, sports facilities and recreational open space as well as the gardens and the setting to Apperley Court. This is a very distinctive open landscape with mature “parkland” trees (predominantly oak). The pasture and sports field contribute to a very strong sense of openness. Long distance views to the north and west ensure that the wider landscape context of the village is apparent. There is a strong sense of elevation and that this is an isolated hillock in an expansive vale landscape. Settlement pattern is very distinctive with scattered wayside dwellings and the cluster of development around Apperley Court. There are very few “modern” influences. The low density and scattered nature of the existing settlement pattern here enables generous views out and this in turn creates a very distinct open character.

Due to the lack of detractors, the distinctive character and the vulnerability of the sense of openness, the landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-05

There are few mitigation opportunities in this generally open landscape that is valued for what it is. It is a prominent ridge top position and is a valued landscape with no visual detractors. It has historic associations with Apperley Court and is enjoyed as a recreation asset by the village. There are no opportunities for characteristic mitigation that would preserve the open views beyond the ridge and new residential development here would appear prominent and intrusive.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-06**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-06**

This Land Parcel occupies the west facing slopes of Apperley Hill (Vale Hillocks: **SV11G - Apperley Hill**). It is characterised by complex topography comprising a number of small vales and bluffs along a distinct scarp with an outlook to the River Sever floodplain and Malvern Hills beyond. The area supports small scale, irregular pastures generally enclosed by mature hedges and hedgerow trees with frequent woodland blocks. There is a strong sense of enclosure and intimacy in some of the vales and a strong sense of openness and distant outlook on some of the more exposed bluffs and west facing slopes. The slopes generally fall away rapidly from the existing settlement edge and are free from development.

This landscape is sensitive to development that might appear conspicuous against the established ridgeline settlement or encroach down onto the side slopes.

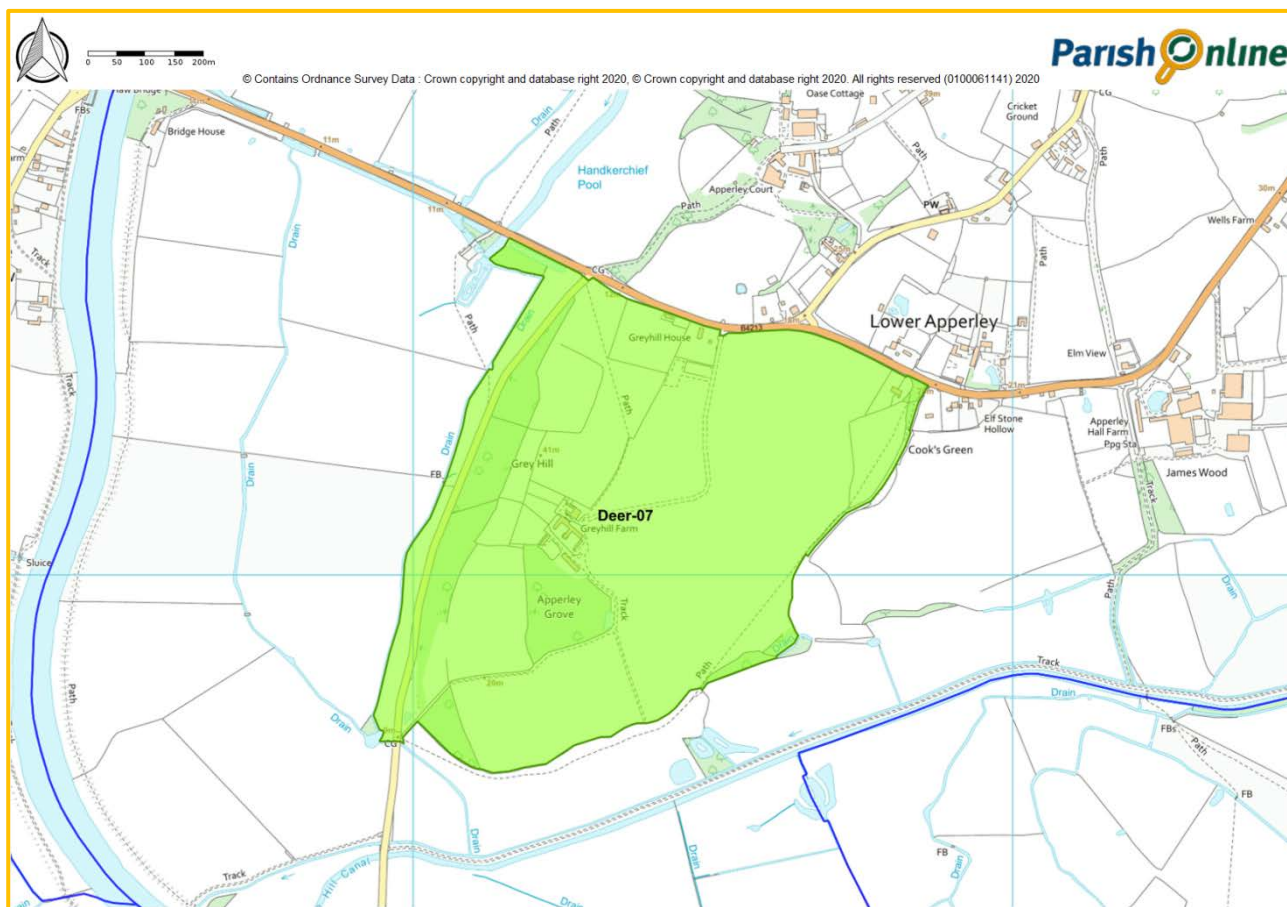
This is a distinctive landscape with a strong time depth. There may be some limited and localised opportunities for new development along the settlement edge.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-06

This Land Parcel features in views from the west where it appears as an undeveloped flank to Apperley Hill. It is also overlooked from the road network within Apperley where it enables glimpsed and occasional long distance views out across the Severn; which are important. These long distance views from the village serve as a reminder of the context of the village in the wider landscape. Care should be taken to prevent new development from enclosing the street scene and blocking these views.

These slopes are clearly free from development and feature in distant views from the west and contribute to the distinctive ridgeline setting of Apperley. The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-07**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-07**

This Land Parcel includes land to the south of the B4213 at Grey Hill. It represents the southern tip of Apperley Hill (Vale Hillocks: **SV11G - Apperley Hill**) but is actually a distinct hillock separated from Apperley by a small vale through which the B4213 passes. There is a woodland block at the base of the slope at Wainlode Lane and a woodland block close to the summit at Apperley Grove but, for the main part, this area is characterised by open, large scale arable fields with a strong sense of openness and connection with the vast surrounding Vale. The formal avenue trees along the approach to Greyhill Farm are distinctive and conspicuous.

This Land Parcel is elevated and supports a single farmstead. It is distinctly separated from the village of Apperley by topography and the B4213.

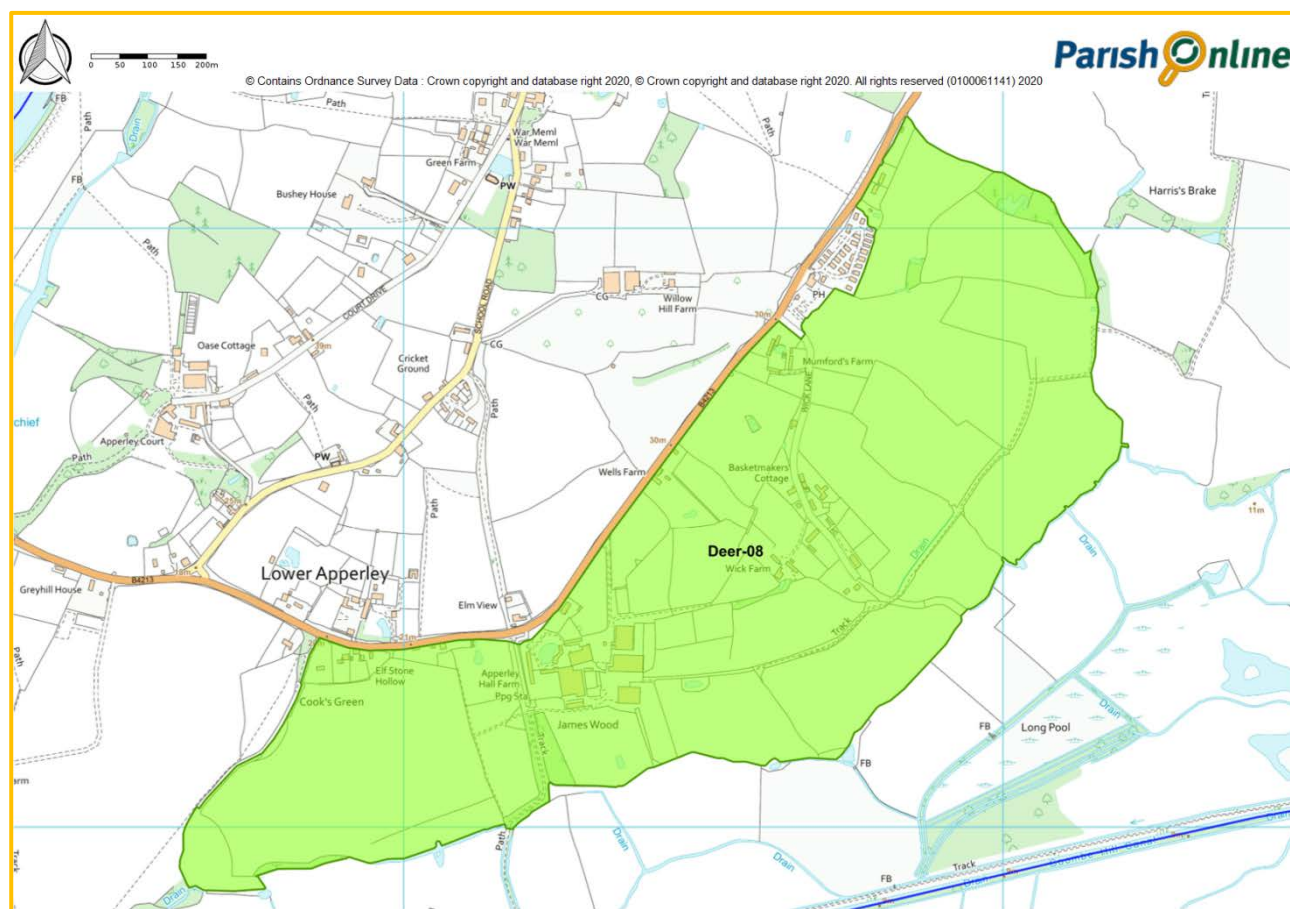
The elevation of this Land Parcel and the openness of the large scale arable landscape would mean that new residential development here is likely to be very conspicuous and out of character.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-07

This Land Parcel is prominent in views from the west, south and east. It appears undeveloped and is seen as the conspicuous southern tip of Apperley Hill. The Land Parcel appears isolated and separate from existing settlement.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-08**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-08**

This Land Parcel lies to the east of the B4213 at the foot of Apperley Hill. It occupies the lower slopes between Apperley and the flood plain at Coombe Hill Meadows. According to the published Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment, the southern part of the area in the vicinity of Apperley Hall falls within Floodplain Farmland (**SV3C - The Severn Hams**) while to the north it falls within Vale Hillocks (**SV11G - Apperley Hill**). The area is characterised by a large-scale field pattern of pasture and arable with occasional paddocks and orchard. There are a number of farmsteads and some wayside settlement. A park home development appears as a somewhat incongruous land use but is well screened from the B4213.

A key characteristic of this area is that due to a slight break of slope along the B4213, it appears to have more affinity with the open Vale to the south and east than with Apperley Hill and Apperley village. This characteristic as well as the physical separation provided by the road provides a strong sense of open countryside.

Development that deviated from the existing scattered settlement pattern in this Land Parcel would be conspicuous and uncharacteristic.

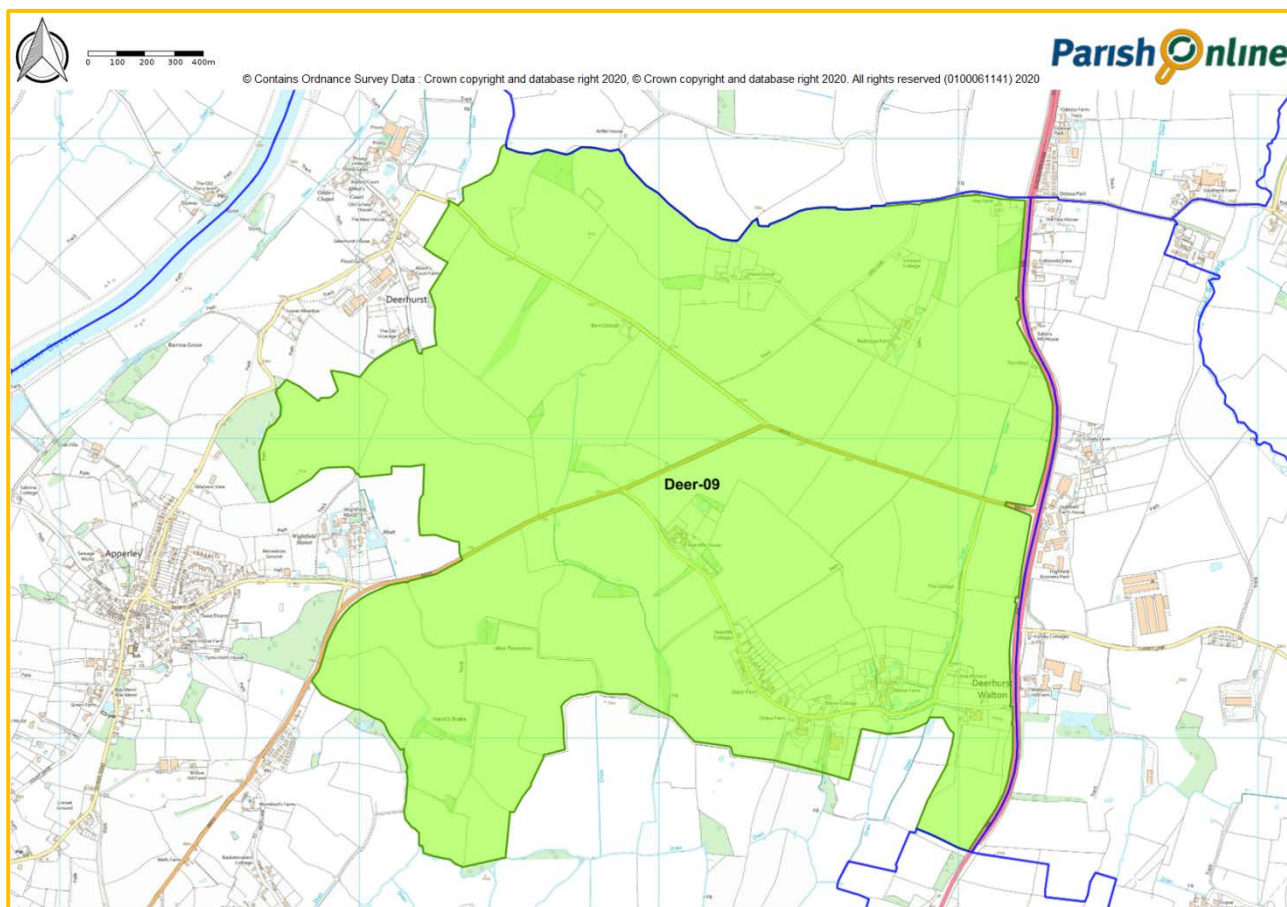
The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-08

This Land Parcel occupies the lower slopes of Apperley Hill so is not as prominent as some of the more elevated and exposed slopes and ridge. It does however feature in some long distance views from the A38 and from other hillocks such as Walton Hill. From these vantages, it appears as the generally undeveloped base of Apperley Hill. Conspicuous new development in this area would detract from the distinctive ridgeline settlement pattern at Apperley.

The area is most clearly seen from the B4213 where it is generally perceived to be undeveloped with the exception of occasional wayside settlement and farmsteads.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-09**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-09**

This large Land Parcel occupies the undulating **Settled Unwooded Vale (SV6B-Vale of Gloucester)**. There are two distinct ridges that both offer views towards Apperley, but also provide prominent features in the landscape. The most prominent is the ridge (Walton Hill) between Notcliffe House and Deerhurst Walton. With the exception of Deerhurst Walton, Walton Hill and Notcliffe House, this is generally an unsettled, large-scale rural landscape and clearly forms part of the wider and expansive Vale.

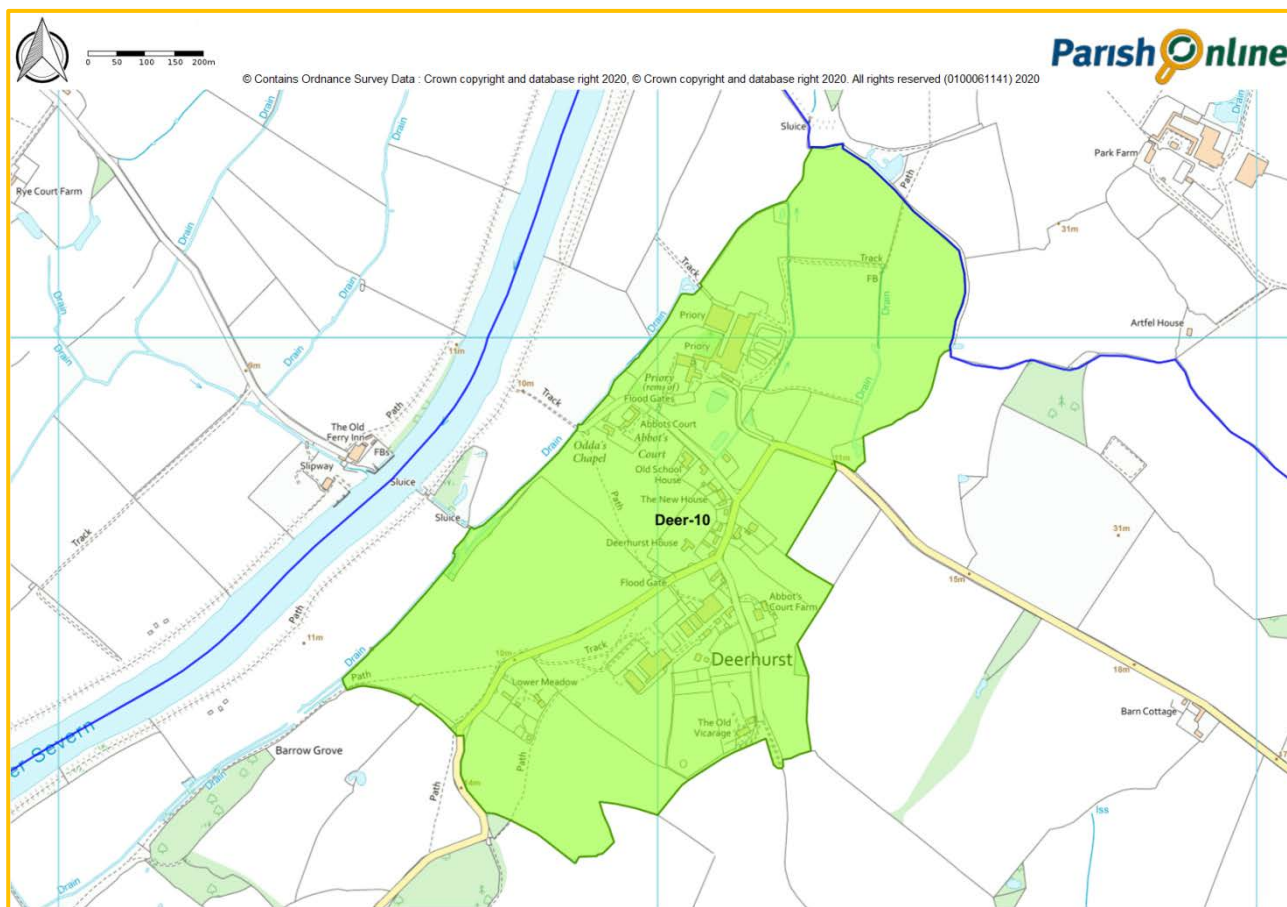
The openness and distinctly rural character of this area would make it difficult effectively to mitigate new residential development without it appearing conspicuous and uncharacteristic.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-09

This Land Parcel is most clearly overlooked from the A38 which follows a distinct ridge past Coombe Hill and on to Tewkesbury. This Land Parcel forms an open and expansive rural outlook and creates a foreground setting in views across to the Malverns as well as Apperley Hill. This is clearly open countryside and there are very few opportunities to mitigate new residential development without it appearing conspicuous and distracting.

The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

LAND PARCEL: Deer-10**Landscape Sensitivity: Deer-10**

This Land Parcel represents an area that is influenced by the very distinctive skyline and settlement pattern of Deerhurst. It also forms the foreground setting to the settlement. Deerhurst emerges from the surrounding large scale arable landscape occupying subtle higher ground with a well treed skyline and the very distinctive profile of St Mary's Church. The predominant character is that of an historic and religious core with farmsteads nestling around it. The influence of modern residential development remains very muted and incidental to the main character of this settlement. Whilst the strong tree cover might offer some mitigation opportunities for small-scale development, the distinctive character of the settlement could easily be overwhelmed by new residential development appearing conspicuous and at odds with the small scale and settlement pattern at Deerhurst.

The landscape sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

Visual Sensitivity: Deer-10

Deerhurst appears as a small settlement tightly drawn around the very distinctive St Mary's Church and its well treed skyline contrasting with the vast open landscape around it. There are important views to Deerhurst from the River Sever including the Severn Way. There are also very distinctive views towards the village on the approach from the A38 along the B4213 and on past Grove Barn and Barn Cottage. In these processional views, the village is seen as the foreground to the Malvern Hills in the distance.

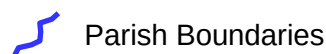
The visual sensitivity of this area to new residential development is considered to be **HIGH**.

SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAPS

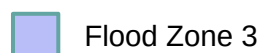
The sensitivity ratings for each land parcel are shown by on the map by colouring it as follows:



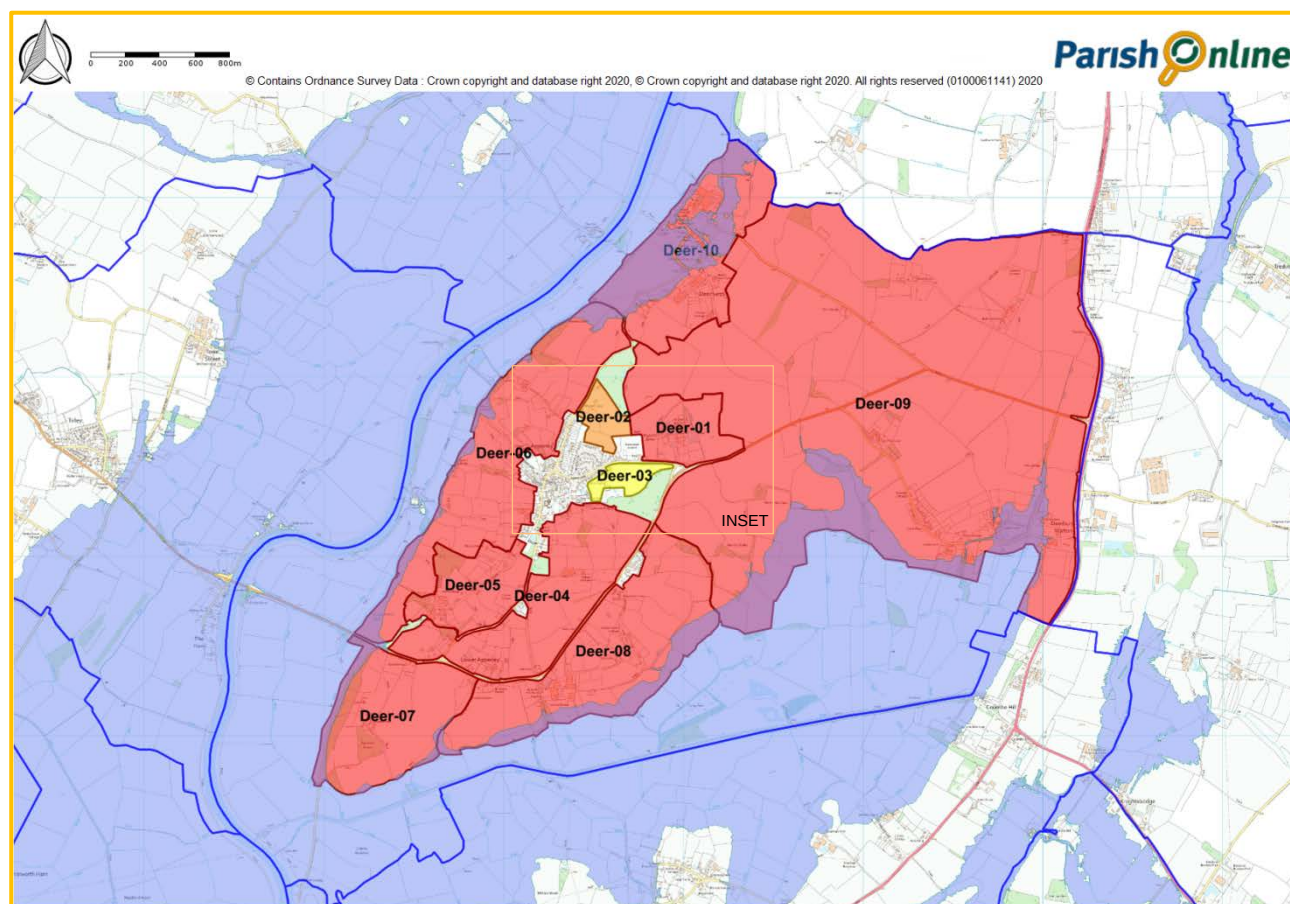
The map of the whole Parish of Deerhurst is shown below, with each land parcel coloured to indicate the sensitivity rating given to it for landscape character.



The flood zone is also shown to explain the extent of the land parcels included in the study.



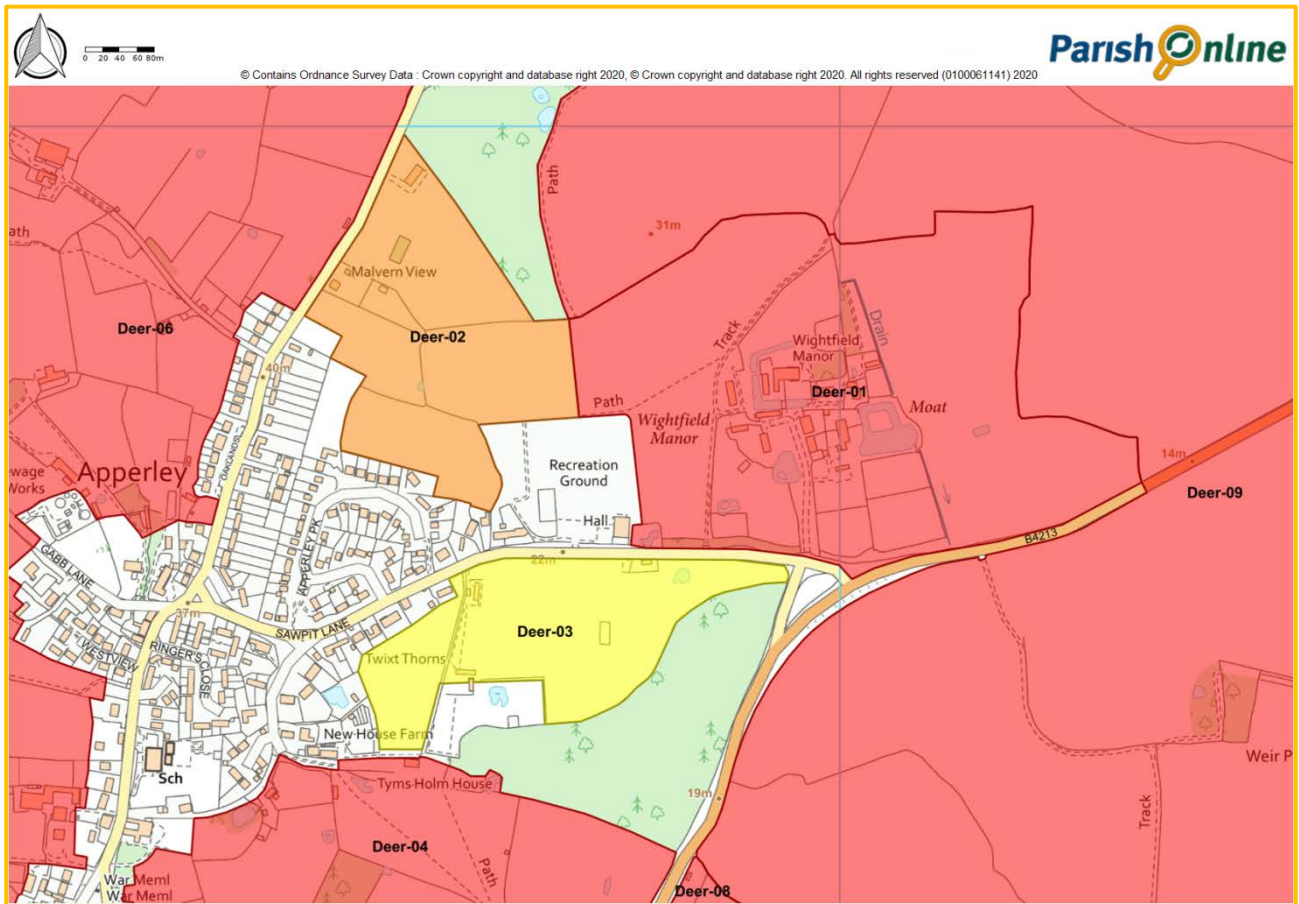
Based on the ratings given by Toby Jones Associates, the sensitivity of the landscape character to new residential development across the Parish of Deerhurst is shown on the following map.



SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAP - Deerhurst Parish

Given the HIGH sensitivity of the landscape character to new residential development over much of the Parish, the two land parcels with lower (MEDIUM or LOW) sensitivity to the north and east of Apperley village can be seen more clearly at a larger scale. Both are near Apperley Village Hall and are adjacent to the Parish playing fields.

To show the land parcels around the Parish playing fields more clearly, they are shown below at a larger scale. The area of the map is the marked inset on the map of the Parish.



SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAP - Adjacent to the Ludlow-Hewitt Memorial Playing Fields and Apperley Village Hall

VISUAL SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT MAP

The visual sensitivity ratings for each land parcel are shown by on the map by colouring it as follows:



HIGH



MEDIUM



LOW

The map of the whole Parish of Deerhurst is shown below, with each land parcel coloured to indicate the visual sensitivity rating given to it.



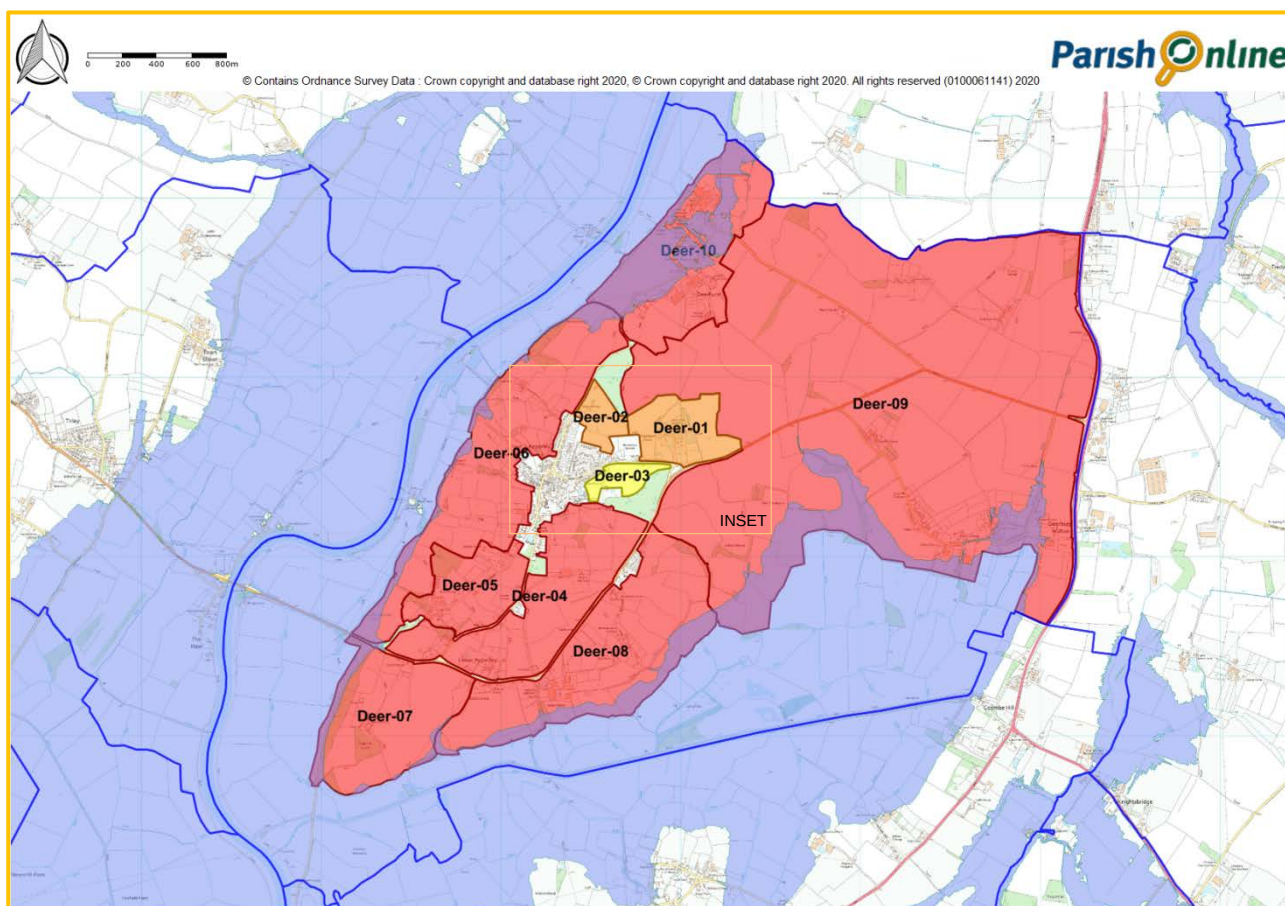
Parish Boundaries

The flood zone is also shown to explain the extent of the land parcels included in the study.



Flood Zone 3

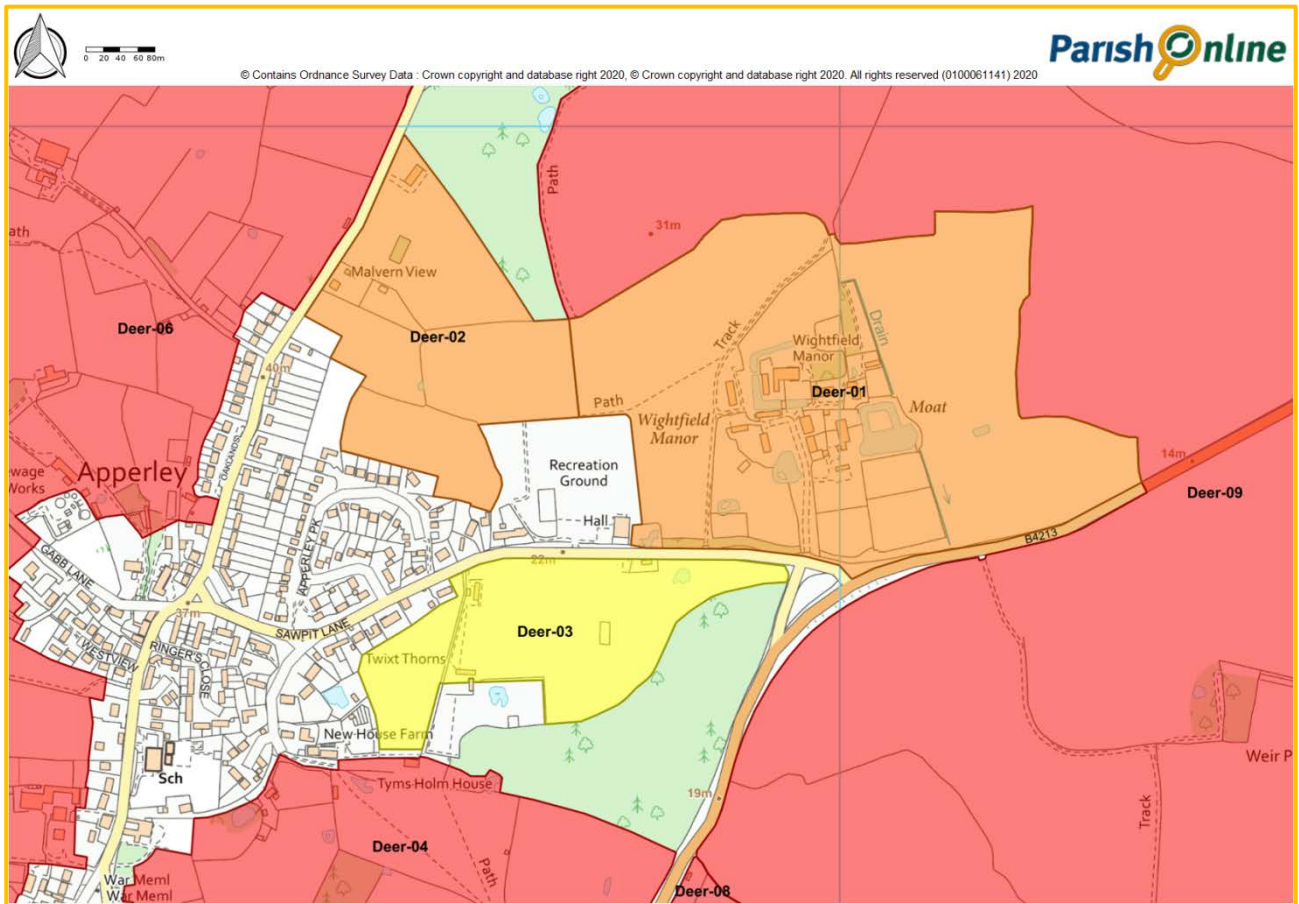
Based on the ratings given by Toby Jones Associates, the visual sensitivity to new residential development across the Parish of Deerhurst is shown on the following map.



VISUAL SENSITIVITY MAP - Deerhurst Parish

Given the HIGH visual sensitivity to new residential development over much of the Parish, the three land parcels with lower (MEDIUM or LOW) visual sensitivity to the north and east of Apperley village are seen more clearly at a larger scale. All three are near Apperley Village Hall and together surround the Parish playing fields.

To show the land parcels around the Parish playing fields more clearly, they are shown below at a larger scale. The area of the map is the marked inset on the map of the Parish.



**VISUAL SENSITIVITY MAP - Adjacent to the
Ludlow-Hewitt Memorial Playing Fields and Apperley Village Hall**