



Two and three storey terraces within village centre

Granite walls around the church



Church set amongst mature trees

Centre of the village, around a busy roundabout



Vegetated Rothley Brook Corridor

Eastern gateway into the village

## Location and Context

Anstey is to the north-west of Leicester City, separated from Beaumont Leys on the city fringes by Rothley Brook and the A46. The landform is low and flat along the Rothley Brook floodplain to the east and south of the settlement. To the west the landform begins to rise and becomes more wooded. The linear historic core of the settlement is a Conservation Area and contains numerous listed buildings.

## Built Form and Settlement Pattern

Anstey is a large and clustered settlement which has expanded considerably through modern development. The historic core is linear and lies towards the south of the settlement. It slopes down from higher land in the west, past the green and the church to the present day centre of the village, on lower land by Rothley Brook.

The centre of the village is focussed around a small roundabout at the junction of four roads. It has a thriving centre including shops, cafes and pubs. The modern expansion which has spread to the north has weakened the character of the settlement and lacks cohesion with the village centre.

## Sense of Place

### Gateway Features

The northern gateway is indistinct. Mature garden vegetation softens the urban edge. The fringes of Cropston are visible across flat land to the north from this gateway.

The eastern gateway over Rothley Brook is distinct. The partially tree-lined road crosses the floodplain and passes over a low road bridge into Anstey. The pedestrian entrance is over an old stone bridge, known as Packhorse Bridge. Upon entering the built-up area a flat roofed industrial building is prominent and has a negative impact on this gateway.

The cemetery is a prominent feature of the southern approach, but this gateway is otherwise indistinct.

The western gateway is formed by a row of residential properties, but beyond this the old village green and historic core form a distinctive feature.

### Landmark Features

**St Mary's Church:** 13th century granite building surrounded by stone walls and elevated above the level of the road.

**The Old School:** a slate building with red brick and stone detailing around the windows and roofline.

**Packhorse Bridge:** originally built to take pack horse trains, this 16th century stone bridge is now used as the pedestrian crossing over the brook.

**Village Green:** this large and sloping area of green space is surrounded by low density housing and has a distinct character.

### History and Heritage

The name Anstey is thought to mean a narrow forest track and dates from Anglo-Saxon times, although the site has been used since Roman times. The settlement now titles itself 'Gateway to Charnwood Forest'.

Local industry began with homeworkers' stockingframes, progressing gradually to machines, and eventually to small factories employing outside labour. Probably the most famous resident of Anstey was Ned Ludd, from whom the Luddites took their name.

The buildings in the centre are densely grouped with a wide range of building styles, heights and ages. This includes factories and industrial developments, flat roofed buildings, red brick and white render two and three storey residential terraces and semis, historic granite and brick buildings and modern infill development. The attractive three storey red brick converted mill building forms a distinct feature in the centre. The granite church and old school buildings are also locally distinctive features. Some modern development has been designed to match the character of existing buildings in the centre.

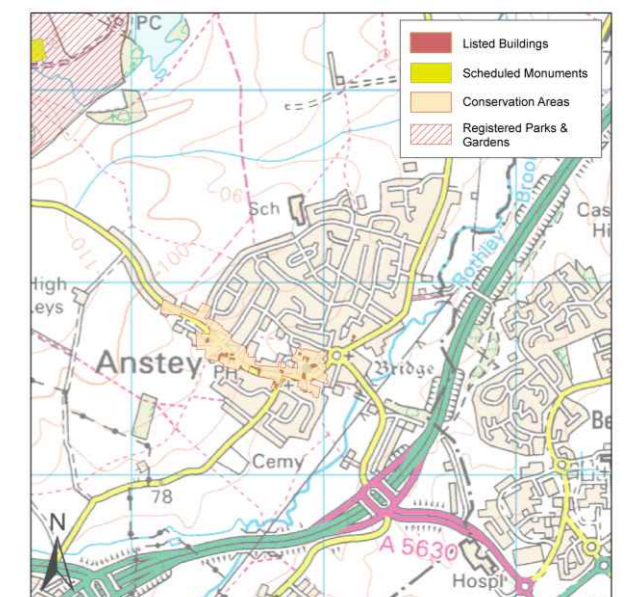
Building materials are predominantly red brick and white render. Slate roof tiles and granite are common features of the historic core. Properties often front direct onto the street forming a strong street scene. Where there are property boundaries, there is a mix of granite walls, low brick walls, black railings and ornamental hedgerows.

Green space in the village includes open space by the Rothley Brook and a large park by Jubilee Hall which contains a play area and war memorial. There is also an attractive triangle of open space within the old core area, and the historic village green.

# ANSTEY

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- A large clustered settlement with substantial areas of post-war expansion, particularly to the north
- Rothley Brook flows to the east of the settlement and the surrounding land to the east is low and flat
- The settlement is on the gently sloping eastern valley side of Rothley Brook
- The historic core is linear and land slopes from the west towards the village centre
- A mix of building styles and ages as historic buildings have been interspersed with modern development
- Red brick and white render is the predominant building material
- An overhead line and the A46 follow the brook corridor along the eastern fringe



## Setting in the Landscape

### Topography

Within the village land slopes from higher land in the west to lower land in the east by Rothley Brook. The settlement is on the western slope of the broad and shallow brook valley with Beaumont Leys on the opposite valley slope. Development on the western edge is on higher land sloping towards the centre which is on more level ground.

The surrounding landscape is also shaped by Rothley Brook corridor. To the north, east and south the landscape is low and flat and follows the course of the brook. To the west and north-west the land begins to rise and become more wooded and rolling.

### Roofline

The roofline in the centre of the village is varied, comprising two and three storey residential buildings, factories, flat roofed buildings and terraced housing. The church has a low tower on rising land, increasing its prominence in the village roofline. The housing estate expansion developments are a uniform two storey height.

The settlement is built on low land and the rising landform to the west and north-west provides a backdrop so little built form is visible on the skyline. From the lower land to the east, the rising roofline is visible, with the church a distinctive feature within it. In the east an overhead line follows the route of the Rothley Brook and is prominent in the landscape. Typical waterside trees such as willow intersperse the roofline on the eastern fringe. Garden trees also punctuate the roofline in the centre of the village around the church and in the north of the village.

### Key Views

The fringes of Anstey are filtered in distant views from the higher land within Bradgate Country Park to the east. From footpaths within the Country Park development appears clustered on the floodplain with the fringes of Leicester beyond. Views from the eastern approach to the village are of the rising roofline and the church.

Higher land to the west of the village offers views eastwards over the sloping roofline to Rothley Brook. Long views over development in the shallow valley of the Rothley Brook and in Beaumont Leys beyond are glimpsed between properties.

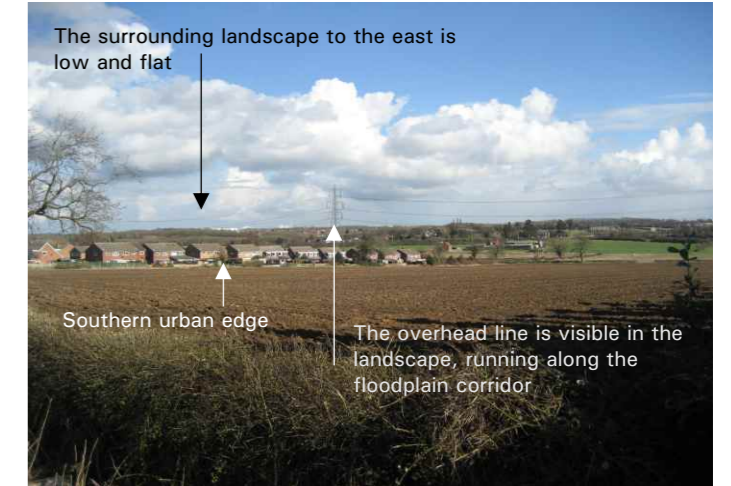
### Urban Edge

The northern edge consists of modern development. Mature garden vegetation filters views of the urban fringe from the surrounding landscape.

The brook system and associated floodplain define the eastern edge of the settlement. A picnic area and a public footpath called the 'Century Walk' are notable at the eastern gateway. Willow trees are scattered throughout this area which filter views to the large red brick properties on the urban edge.

The southern edge is denoted by a row of terraces with limited tree cover which makes them fairly prominent within the adjacent landscape. Trees in the cemetery on the outer edge help to filter views.

The western edge is largely modern residential development. Trees within gardens and hedgerows filter views of this edge which adjoins rolling landform to the west.



## Recommendations

- Protect the character of the historic core and village centre by ensuring infill development reflects the existing character
- Protect the open land to the north of the settlement, between Anstey and Cropston, to safeguard their individual characters and maintain separation between the villages
- Enhance the urban fringes, particularly those to the south, through the establishment of new woodland planting. Future changes or developments along the urban fringes should incorporate a wooded edge to reduce impacts on the landscape
- Protect and enhance the existing levels of woodland cover along the northern and western urban edges. These fringes are visible from the historic landscape at Bradgate Country Park to the west and should remain well wooded in views

