

## Shrewsbury Battlefield (LEN: 1000033) Risk Assessment

Date designated: 6<sup>th</sup> June 1995

Risk assessment undertaken: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2014

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Risk to registered battlefields is assessed in terms of the condition, vulnerability and trend of the four key criteria used in their designation:

- Landscape readability – is it possible to understand the setting and course of the battle by reading the landscape in which it was fought?
- Landscape features – are features which we know influenced the battle visible and able to be appreciated in the landscape today?
- Archaeological integrity – is archaeology that would help us understand the battle threatened?
- Ambience – is our appreciation of the factors that influenced the site of the battle affected by negative elements such as noise, development or infrastructure destroying the ambience to the extent that its setting can no longer be understood?

### Condition

Landscape readability is in **fair** condition as the ground upon which it was fought and the topographical influences on the battle are still clearly legible. The context in which the forces amassed, particularly those of the King coming south from Shrewsbury is less clear due to the expansion of the urban area up to the southern edge of the battlefield.

Landscape features are in **good** condition as the respective locations of the opposing forces at the start of the battle, the location of the main focus of the battle and the topography which influenced this are still clearly legible.

Archaeological integrity is in **fair** condition, the site was the subject of uncontrolled metal detecting and finds have undoubtedly been lost, but this is now under control.

Ambience – is in **fair** condition as the designated area is relatively unaffected by development. Transport infrastructure in terms of the railway and the A5124, A49 and the junction on the outer ring road affect the margins of the site while development in the form of the hotel and cattle market and of the industrial estate affect its setting.

### Vulnerability

Land use is a major factor influencing vulnerability. In this instance the majority of the site is in agricultural use, in single ownership and ownership which is sympathetic to the value of the heritage asset. There are questions regarding the currently public ownership of the battlefield viewing area and the small area of battlefield south of the A5124.

The vulnerability of landscape readability is **medium** – this is generally protected by the benign ownership of the site. However, the history of development on the southern edge of the designated area and the apparent inclusion of those parts of the registered area south of the A5124 as ‘protected employment land’ by Shropshire Council suggest further development will take place here. Draft policy guidance for the battlefield exists but can be

accorded only limited weight in the planning process until adopted. Recent planning history suggests an inconsistent approach to the significance of the battlefield by the Council.

The vulnerability of landscape features is **low** as there is every indication that the principal owners will continue to manage the site in such a way as to protect its significance.

The vulnerability of archaeological integrity is **low** as unauthorised metal detecting is under control and land use minimises threat to the archaeological record.

The vulnerability of ambience is **high** as there appears to be considerable development pressure on the southern edge of the battlefield and the conservation of its setting cannot currently be guaranteed.

### **Trend**

Landscape readability - declining

Landscape features – stable

Archaeological integrity – stable

Ambience – declining

### **Risk assessment**

Shrewsbury battlefield is considered to be **vulnerable**. Its current condition is fair to good, in large part due to the positive management of the site by the majority owner, it would therefore be inappropriate to consider it as at risk. It is however, vulnerable to development on its margins which has the potential to impact negatively upon its setting and development which has already taken place means that both ambience and landscape readability are declining.