

# LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

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**JULY 2025**

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**Sandy Brow RFP**  
Perimeter Road  
Knowsley

U R B A N  
G R E E N



# QUALITY MANAGEMENT

|                  |                                |                            |           |          |
|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|----------|
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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF APPRAISAL

This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by Urban Green and provides an appraisal of the proposed development of the Site at Sandy Brow RFP, Perimeter Road Knowsley. The location of the Site is shown at Fig. 1.1, opposite.

The proposals comprise of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), access road and associated landscape works.

The aim of this document is to identify the key landscape and visual sensitivities of the Appraisal Site, and provide recommendations to support the appropriate development of the Site.

This document considers changes to:

- The character of the landscape, vegetation, landscape features and designations within and surrounding the Site; and
- The composition of selected views from identified visual receptors as a result of the proposed development.

The landscape and visual analysis was prepared following Site visits in April 2025. This appraisal describes and evaluates the anticipated change to landscape and visual amenity, and the extent to which these changes will affect the perception and views of the landscape.

## KEY

  Site Boundary

  1km

  2km

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

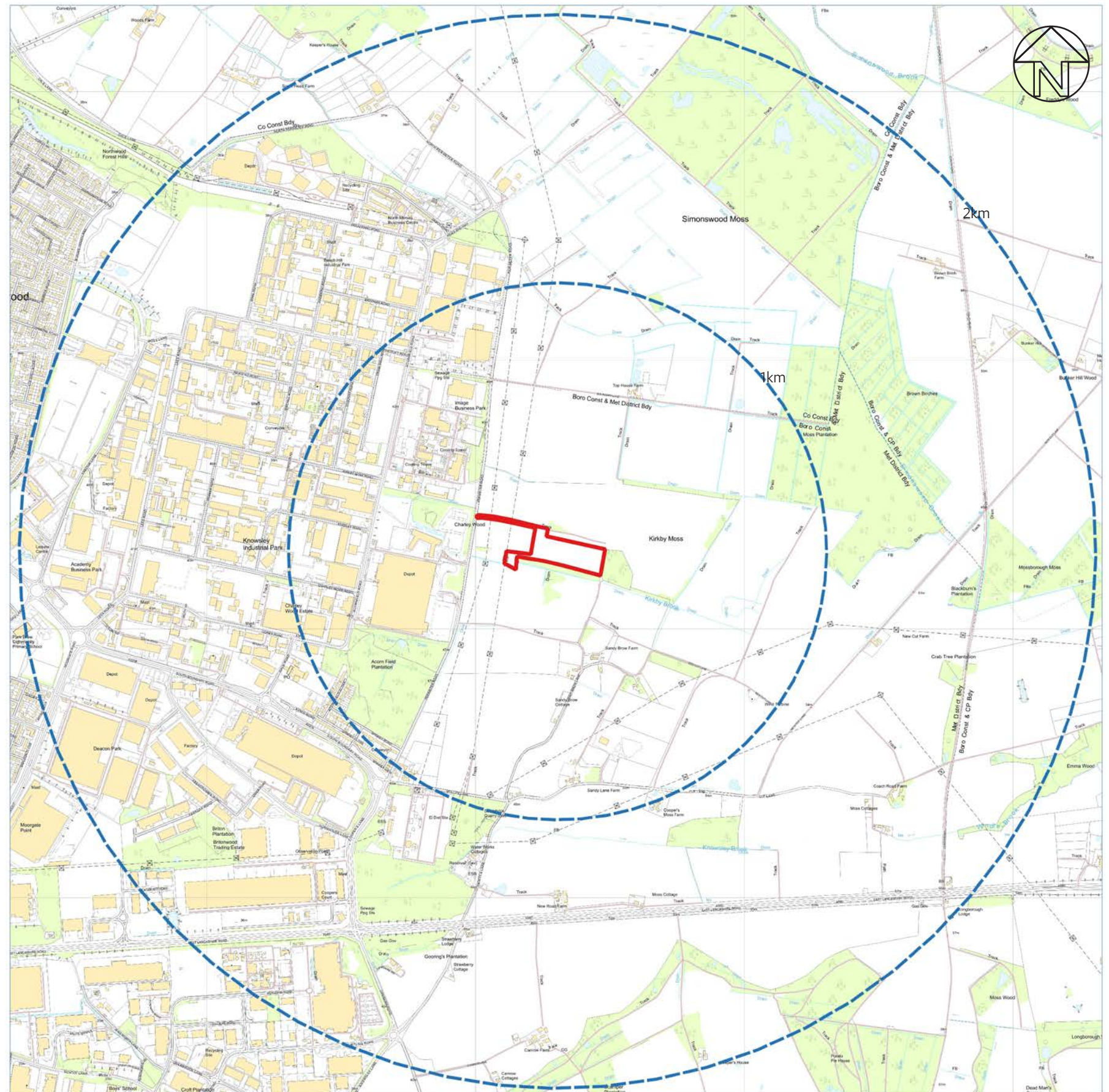


Figure 1.1 - Site Location

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## National Planning Policy Framework

The National planning policy for England is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (herein referred to as the NPPF) that has distilled the content of previous Planning Policy Statements into one comprehensive document. The NPPF is the relevant national planning policy document against which to test the proposals. A revised NPPF was issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 12 December 2024.

### General Considerations

As a central theme, the NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11) for which it defines three mutually interdependent objectives of sustainability (para. 8) to be jointly sought (economic, social and environmental). With relevance to landscape and visual matters the third objective states:

*“an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; (...)”*

The planning system is identified as the vehicle for guiding development to sustainable solutions but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

## Strategic Policies

Paragraph 20 discusses the role of strategic policies within the plan-making framework. It suggests that sufficient provision should be made for the:

- d. “conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”*

### Section 12 Achieving well-designed places

This section of the NPPF identifies that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (para. 131) it states that policy should ensure that developments (para. 135):

- b. “(...) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c. are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d. establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e. optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; (...)”*

In regards to trees in new developments, paragraph 136 states:

*“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should*

*work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.”*

### Section 13 Protecting Green Belt Land

This section of the NPPF relates to Green Belt land. Paragraphs 142 and 143 state:

*“The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*

*Green Belt serves five purposes:*

- a. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”*

In reference to proposals which affect the Green Belt, paragraphs 153 to 160 state:

*“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*

*Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:*

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- a. buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b. the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c. the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d. the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e. limited infilling in villages;
- f. limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g. limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- h. Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
  - i. mineral extraction;
  - ii. engineering operations;
  - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
  - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
  - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and

- vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

## Section 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

This section of the NPPF identifies a requirement in favour of (para. 187):

- a. “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b. recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; (...)”

As listed in the NPPF, these valued landscapes include:

- National Parks;
- The Broads; and
- National Landscapes.

The Appraisal Site is not located within any of the above mentioned valued landscapes.

## Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

For proposals affecting heritage assets, the NPPF places a requirement on applicants to (para. 207):

“describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

Para. 208 also states:

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by

development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”

Para. 210 states:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a. the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b. the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c. the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

It is also considered that (Para. 220):

“Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance.”

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

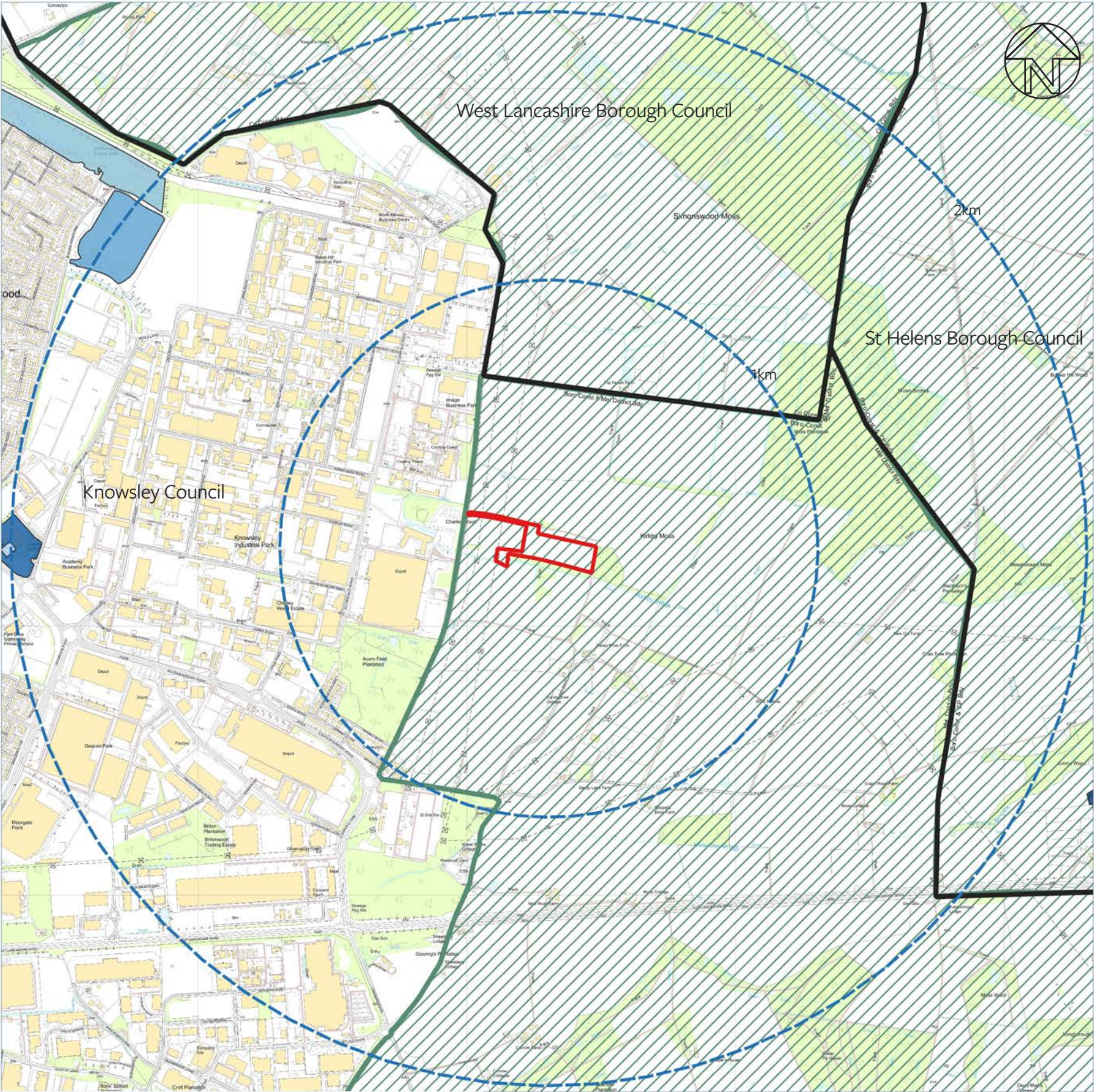


Figure 2.1 - Local Planning Policy

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The Application Site and the central and southern portions of the study area lie within the jurisdiction of Knowsley Council. The northern portion of the study area lies within the jurisdiction of West Lancashire Borough Council and the eastern part of the study area lies within St Helens Borough Council. Key local policies relating to landscape and visual matters are briefly outlined below.

## Adopted Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a requirement upon local authorities when determining planning applications to do so in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The current development plan comprises:

- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted (2016);
- Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006);
- West Lancashire 2012-2027 Local Plan (2013); and
- St Helens Borough Local Plan up to 2037 (2022).

The relevant policies within the above noted document are as follows:

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016 and sets out the vision, objectives and policies which will guide development within Knowsley until 2028.

Policy CS5 considers the Green Belt locally and states that:

### *"New Development in the Green Belt*

1. *Inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances in which it has been demonstrated that the harm to the Green Belt (including any harm to its openness, purposes or to its visual and recreational amenities) would be clearly outweighed by other considerations.*

### *Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt*

2. *Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies.*
3. *Limited infilling and redevelopment of Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt is considered appropriate provided it would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.*

### *Review of Green Belt Boundaries to meet future development needs*

4. *A number of locations (identified as Sustainable Urban Extensions and safeguarded land) have been removed from the Green Belt to accommodate development needs up to and beyond 2028. Guidance concerning the development of these locations is set out in Policies SUE1, SUE2, SUE2a, SUE2b and SUE2c."*

Policy CS8 discusses the delivery of green infrastructure and states that:

### *"Maintenance and Enhancement of Knowsley's Existing Green Infrastructure*

1. *Knowsley's existing Green Infrastructure and its beneficial functions will be protected, managed and/or enhanced, primarily to:*
  - a. *Ensure more attractive and cleaner residential neighbourhoods;*
  - b. *Sustain and promote biodiversity (including designated sites, priority habitats and protected and endangered species) in accordance with importance and contribution to ecological networks;*
  - c. *Preserve the character and function of historic environments and valued landscapes;*
  - d. *Mitigate the effects of climate change and flood risk;*
  - e. *Mitigate air, water and noise pollution;*
  - f. *Provide local opportunities for sport, recreation and allotments; and*
  - g. *Provide sustainable transport linkages between residential neighbourhoods and easy access to employment and services.*

2. *To achieve the above, planning powers and other interventions will be used to:*

- a. *Protect and enhance strategically important areas of greenspace;*
  - b. *Ensure an appropriate quantity and improved quality of locally important open spaces, including outdoor sports provision (and ancillary facilities of appropriate scale);*
  - c. *Promote effective movement of wildlife through a network of strategic green links, by protecting, maintaining and improving existing and new open spaces, water courses (including water quality) and biodiversity assets;*
  - d. *Protect, enhance and/or introduce biodiversity into existing areas of Green Infrastructure, through integration into the design of new development and public realm projects;*
  - e. *Improve accessibility for communities to greenspace offering leisure and recreation opportunities;*
  - f. *Protect and where possible improve green paths and cycleways linking residential areas, existing strategic areas of greenspace, employment locations, local community services and leisure facilities;*
  - g. *Work in partnership with other districts and relevant bodies at a landscape scale to minimise the impact of development upon Knowsley's existing biodiversity and geological assets, and sustain the protection afforded to internationally important sites, including supporting habitat, for biodiversity outside of the borough; and*
  - h. *Deliver new integrated and functional Green Infrastructure that helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change, such as sustainable drainage systems, carbon capture and storage, soft landscaping and green roofs.*
3. *Site allocations for greenspace will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies document, with further guidance set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document or future Supplementary Planning Document as appropriate.*

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

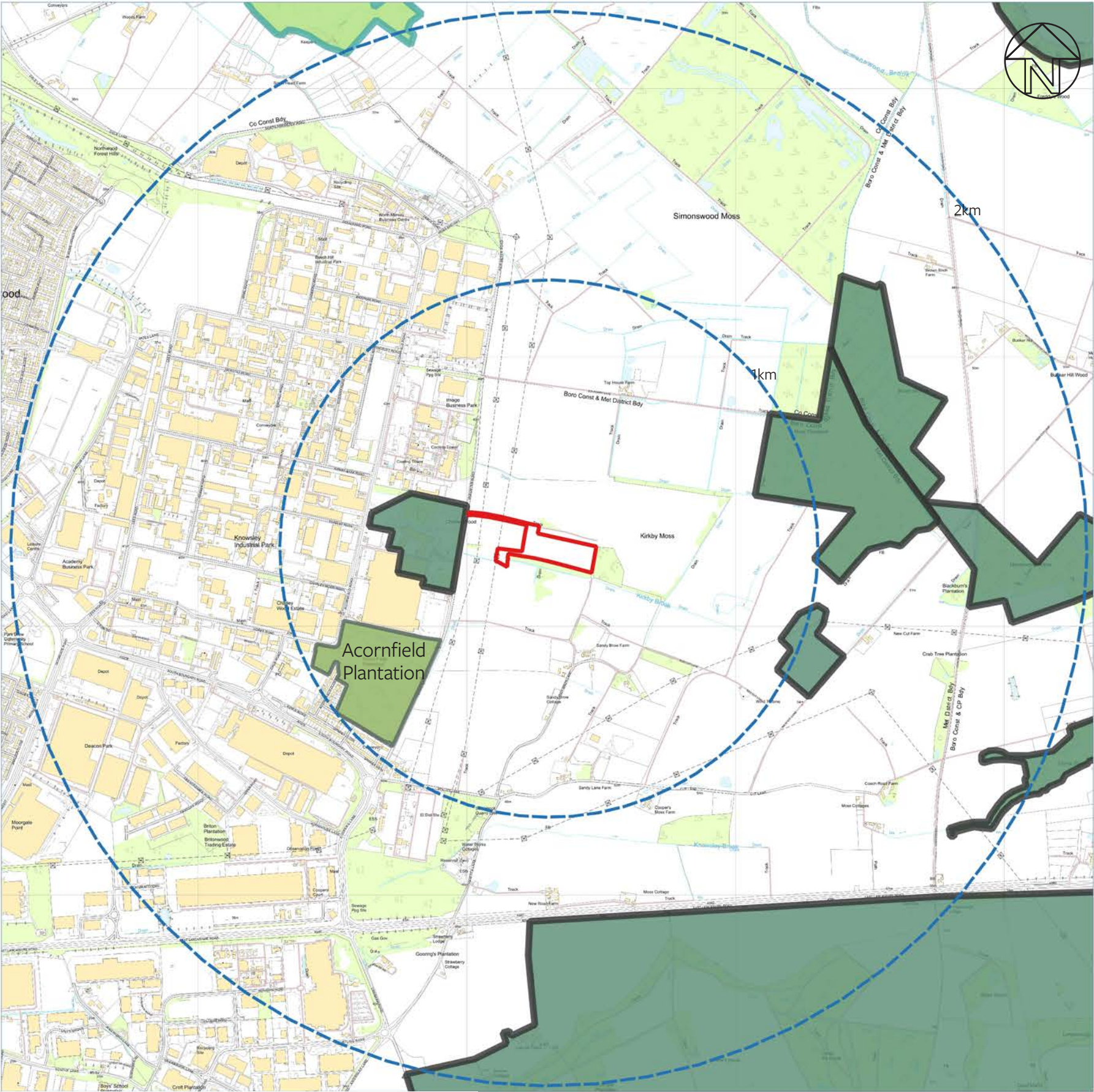


Figure 2.2 - Local Planning Policy - Ecological Designations

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## Strategic Green Links

4. Knowsley's strategically important green links are:
- a. Alt Corridor (Huyton) – stretching from Huyton Village through South Alt Park, Alt Park, Alt Meadows and into Stockbridge Village;
  - b. Valley Corridor (Kirkby) – stretching through Valley Meadow, St. Chad's Park, Millbrook Park, Millennium Green and Mill Dam;
  - c. Whiston to Cronton Corridor – stretching through Cronton, Stadt Moers Park and Whiston Greenway;
  - d. Halewood Triangle – Halewood Park linkage with the Trans-Pennine Trail and to the national cycle network;
  - e. M57 Green Belt Corridor; and
  - f. Knowsley Hall Estate – including Knowsley Safari Park and Local Wildlife Sites.

## Green Infrastructure within the Liverpool City Region

5. Knowsley Council will work with partners to help deliver local and sub-regional programmes, initiatives and strategies to enhance Green Infrastructure. Approach to Green Infrastructure and New Development
6. New development must be served by Green Infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and the local environment, in a manner which will:
- a. Contribute to the creation of a high quality residential environment;
  - b. Provide access to high quality open space for leisure and recreational purposes;
  - c. Seek to protect, maintain and where possible enhance biodiversity within and around new developments according to their designation and significance to provide space for nature; and
  - d. Provide adequate mitigation and/or, as a last resort, compensation for Green Infrastructure or biodiversity loss, in circumstances where harm

resulting from the development is otherwise unavoidable."

Policy CS20 relates to the management of the borough's Historic Environment and states that:

1. "Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance. The Council will:
- a. Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape;
  - b. Prevent demolition and/or development which would result in substantial harm or the loss of a designated historic asset or its setting, unless the proposal would result in substantial public benefits which clearly outweigh the harm or loss;
  - c. Where a development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting, assess such harm against the benefits of the proposal;
  - d. Facilitate long term conservation and enhancement of local assets and areas of historic importance, including through the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans.
2. The re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given, where appropriate, to proposals which will:
- a. Enable a use for a purpose sympathetic to its conservation;
  - b. Retain or introduce public access; and
  - c. Enhance the importance of the asset for local tourism, leisure or the economy.
3. Development proposals on sites which include, or are considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets or comprising archaeological interest, should be accompanied by a heritage impact statement.

4. Locally important historic assets which are not subject to statutory designation will be identified in a local list and will be afforded consideration in the decision making process."

Policy CS21 is concerned with greenspaces and trees and states that:

## "Greenspace protection

1. In supporting the wider Green Infrastructure functions of urban greenspace in accordance with Policy CS8, the Council will provide and maintain quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards for different types of public open space.
2. New development which would result in the loss of urban greenspace, will not be permitted unless at least one of the following criteria are met:
- a. A surplus of provision for all types of greenspace would be maintained relative to local standards;
  - b. The land is considered unsuitable in terms of size, location or character to prevent or address individual deficiencies of different types of greenspace relative to local standards;
  - c. Appropriate mitigation is provided through replacement facilities of at least an equal quantity, quality and accessibility;
  - d. The development is required to improve greenspace provision or for ancillary facilities to support sport or recreation; or
  - e. Where the proposal relates to the loss of indoor or outdoor sports provision, and there is no evidence of future or continuing need for sports use, or alternatively only land incapable of forming a playing pitch or sporting facility is affected and its release accords with either clause 2)a) or 2)b).
3. Irrespective of whether criteria in 2) are met, unless the benefits of a proposal clearly outweigh the loss of urban greenspace, development will be resisted where it would significantly harm any existing or potential special qualities of greenspace in the area in terms of:
- a. Visual amenity;

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

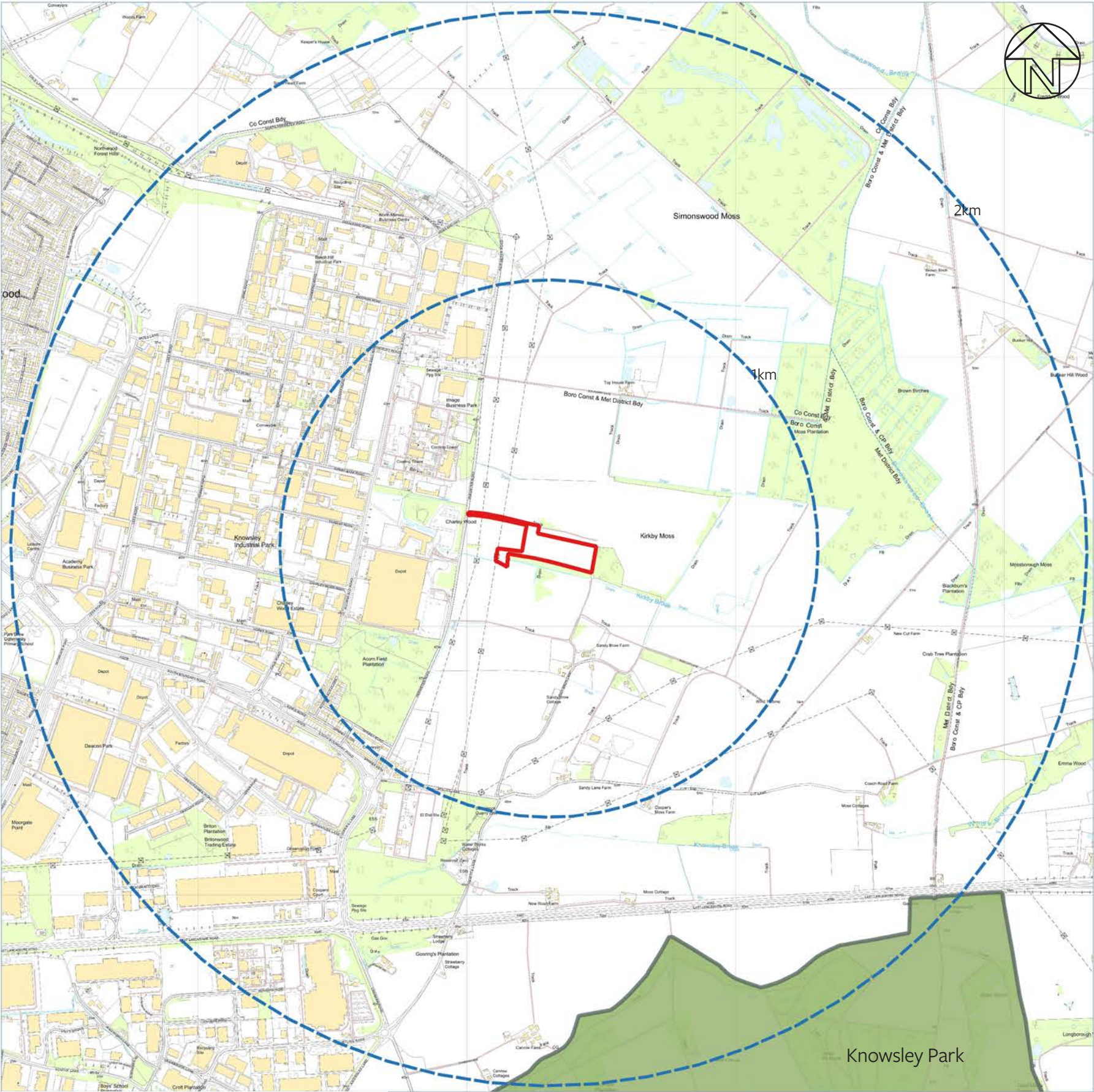


Figure 2.3 - Local Planning Policy - Heritage Assets

# 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- b. Residential amenity;
- c. Biodiversity and environmental benefits;
- d. Historical, cultural or community value;
- e. Recreational benefits; or
- f. Physical and/or visual linkages between adjoining urban greenspaces.

## Local Greenspace Standards

- 4. The quantitative and accessibility standards for the provision of public open spaces within Substantial Residential Areas are set out in Table 9.1: Substantial Residential Area (SRA) Standards for Greenspace Quantity and Accessibility for the following greenspace typologies:
  - a. Park and Garden;
  - b. Amenity Greenspace;
  - c. Provision for Children and Young People; and
  - d. Allotments.
- 5. The Council's quantitative standards for Outdoor Sports Provision are set out in Table 9.2: Community Area Standards for Outdoor Sports Provision Quantity and Accessibility and seek to maintain an appropriate range of sites and address quantitative needs for individual sports at a Community Area level.
- 6. The Council will keep the standards of provision referred to above under review and if necessary publish revised standards in a future Local Plan document or Supplementary Planning Document.

## Accessible and Quality Greenspaces

- 7. The Council will support improvements to existing and new areas of greenspace in accordance with best practice standards<sup>127</sup>, to achieve the following requirements:

- a. Accessible, safe and secure locations for all members of the community to use;
  - b. Clean and well maintained facilities, equipment and open spaces; and
  - c. Conservation of natural features, wildlife, fauna, landscapes, buildings and other structural features, as appropriate.
- 8. When considering proposals for new residential development, the Council will seek enhancements to greenspaces via on-site provision, new off site provision or enhancement of existing off site provision through developer contributions secured by legal agreement in accordance with Policy CS27: Planning and Paying for New Infrastructure, the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document and/or a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, as appropriate.

## Local Green Spaces

- 9. Any Local Green Spaces Designations which are formally designated will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies or future Neighbourhood Plans (if applicable). This designation will only be used where the greenspace concerned is:
  - a. Reasonably close to the community it serves;
  - b. Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
  - c. Local in character and not an extensive tract of land. Enhancement of Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace and Tree Protection
- 10. The Council will encourage proposals for new development to incorporate:
  - a. Retention of existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features which offer a positive contribution to the local environment in terms of visual amenity, recreation value or biodiversity/wildlife interest;
  - b. Appropriate planting of trees, other soft landscaping and installation of habitat features for the benefit of biodiversity; and

- c. Adequate replacement provision where tree loss is unavoidable, comprising two additional trees for every tree lost and taking account of species and size."

Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006) contains a number policies which continue to be saved, those pertinent to the Site and study area include:

- Policy DQ4: Trees and Development.

The West Lancashire Borough Council Local Plan 2012-2027 (2013) covers the northern portion of the study area, relevant policies include:

- Policy EN2: Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Natural Environment;
- Policy EN3: Provision of Green Infrastructure and Open Recreation Space; and
- Policy EN4: Preserving and Enhancing West Lancashire's Cultural and Heritage Assets.

St Helens Borough Local Plan up to 2037 (2022) covers the east portion of the study area, relevant policies include:

- Policy LPA02: Development Principles;
- Policy LPA08: Green Infrastructure;
- Policy LPC06: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
- Policy LPC08: Ecological Network;
- Policy LPC09: Landscape Protection and Enhancement;
- Policy LPC10: Trees and Woodland; and
- Policy LPC11: Historic Environment.

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

## Landscape Baseline – Landscape Character

The assessment of landscape character is a method of understanding the particular attributes or factors that have influenced the historic development, current and future features of an area, and what makes that area distinctive from other areas. Natural England describes landscape character assessment as a:

*“...systematic way of analysing and describing landscape identifying areas of distinctive character, classifying and mapping them. The process involves identifying the patterns, elements and features that give landscapes homogeneity and make them different from each other.”*

Landscape characterisation is a process which has been developed extensively by local authorities to assist them in the planning process. Published studies of landscape character provide a source of information to enable the fuller understanding of landscape character – whether at a regional or national scale or at a local district scale; it is of course possible to carry through the process of analysis to individual sites or parts of sites. Typically, the published assessments provide character descriptions of specific areas and consider factors likely to influence future character and / or set out prescriptions for change.

There is a range of published assessments at national, regional, and local levels relevant to the Appraisal Site. Each is considered below. That at a national level pre-dated the guidance set out in the ‘Landscape Character Assessment; Guidance for England and Scotland (2002)’ – widely regarded as the definitive guidance on the subject. That said, it is important to recognise that these assessments are purely assessments of landscape character; they are not, and are not intended to be, the development plan, and thus what the documents may say about the potential effects of development in any location cannot of itself be considered determinative as a matter of policy.

## National Landscape Character Assessment

At a National level the west portion of Appraisal Site and study area lies within National Character Area (NCA) 58: Merseyside Conurbation and the east portion of the Site and study area lies within NCA 32: Lancashire and Amounderness Plain. The key characteristics pertinent to the west portion of the study area and the Site within NCA58: Merseyside Conurbation are described as:

- *“A low-lying but gently rolling platform punctuated by low ridges; however, the extensive urban development generally dominates the topography.*
- *Extensive intertidal mudflats/sand flats relating to the Mersey Estuary, although the waterfront is generally built up; wide coastal frontages along the open coast.*
- *Flowing north-west, the River Mersey dissects the area entering the Irish Sea in Liverpool Bay.*
- *Woodland cover is significant in such a heavily urban area, with new community woodland being created, while urban parks, cemeteries and suburban street plans provide trees and, in some cases, wooded habitats.*
- *Pockets of mainly versatile and good-quality farmland remain on the fringes of urban areas, often arable or horticultural.*
- *Field boundaries are generally hedgerows, sometimes marked by drainage ditches with grassy banks.*
- *Green infrastructure is interspersed through the urban fabric, while pockets of ‘encapsulated countryside’ provide important wildlife refuges and opportunities to link local people to the natural world.*
- *Renowned for its strong maritime heritage, there is much industrial archaeology, along with Victorian public parks and designed gardens.*
- *The built environment is characterised by a mix of red brick and sandstone within the city and a diverse range of modern materials in the outlying suburbs.*
- *Distinct urban centres have amalgamated to form the Merseyside*

*conurbation, surrounding the larger dominant centre of the city of Liverpool, but split by the River Mersey.*

- *Dense settlement pattern with extensive areas of housing and industry.*
- *Extensive transport infrastructure of motorways and railway lines, while the ports provide for significant international trade and cruise liners, as well as international and local passenger ferries.*

The area to the east, within NCA 32: Lancashire and Amounderness Plain is described as:

- *“A rich patchwork of pasture, arable fields and drainage ditches, on a relatively flat to gently undulating coastal landscape.*
- *Extensive views across the plain, within which small to medium-sized blocks of mixed woodland (wind-sculpted near the coast) provide punctuation and vertical accents.*
- *Thickly blanketed by glacial till, with poorly-drained peat-filled hollows that give rise to mosses and meres (now mainly remnants).*
- *Medium-sized to large fields form an open, large-scale agricultural landscape. Pasture is more dominant north of the Ribble Estuary, with arable to the south. There is a high density of relict pastoral field ponds on the eastern side of the NCA.*
- *Localised areas of intensive market gardening provide seasonally varied colours and textures.*
- *A complex network of wide meandering rivers, raised drainage ditches and dykes divide and drain the landscape. Along with fragmented relicts of reedbeds and mosses, and historic place names, these provide a reminder of the area’s heritage of wetland reclamation.*
- *Coastal habitats and large areas of open water are of international importance for their migratory and wintering wildfowl and wading bird populations.*
- *Mixed arable and pastoral farmland habitats support a nationally important assemblage of breeding farmland bird species.*

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

- A complex network of channelised rivers, canals, drainage ditches and dykes supports a nationally important population of water vole.
- The Fylde coast, which extends from Fleetwood in the north to the mouth of the Ribble Estuary, includes significant urban areas along the coastal strip (such as Blackpool and Fleetwood).
- Urban settlement is concentrated in the planned Victorian coastal resorts (including Blackpool) and inland towns (the largest of which is Preston).
- The Ribble Link, Lancaster Canal, and Leeds and Liverpool Canal all cross the NCA.
- Designed landscapes associated with large houses are locally common in the south, where they provide enclosure in an otherwise open landscape.
- A rectilinear network of lanes and tracks – usually without fences or hedges subdivides the landscape, and isolated brick farmsteads occur in rural areas.
- Tourism is an important contributor to the local economy, with many opportunities for informal recreation – particularly along the Fylde coast.
- Several long-distance paths cross the NCA, including the Lancashire Coastal Way, the Ribble Way and the Wyre Way, as well as canal towpaths.”

## County / Local Landscape Character Assessment

Knowsley Council published their Landscape Character Assessment of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough in 2007. The Assessment identifies seven landscape character areas within Knowsley, the Appraisal Site is located within the area described as Simonswood Moss. Key characteristics of this area pertinent to the Site and study area include:

“This area is located at the extreme southern end of the regional character area and is typical of the moss landscapes of the Lancashire Plains. It has a flat low-lying topography with wide views across a mainly agricultural landscape. It is a patchwork of large fields of arable and market garden crops, framed by woodland edges or rising ground on the horizon. Sparse tree cover is largely restricted to groups of trees around buildings and along roads and farm tracks. The open character is emphasised through localised loss of field boundaries including hedgerows, trees and ancient field patterns, evidenced by the presence of remnants of drainage ditches that characterised this landscape. A strong visual element is the dark peaty soils

Remote brick built farmsteads, barns and wayside dwellings are scattered across the landscape. The ‘urban edge’ of Kirkby and in particular Kirkby Industrial Park on the west of the area has localised distracting impact on the landscape, as does the landfill site at Coopers Moss, on Perimeter Road. A number of overhead power lines and pylons detract from the overall landscape character of this area providing a dominating visual intrusion against the horizon.

### Key Summary

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Topography | Flat low lying                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Geology    | Glacial drift overlying sandstone (Permian) and undivided cyclic sedimentary rocks (Carboniferous)                                                                               |
| Soil Types | Peaty soils                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Land Use   | Agricultural cropping – Arable and Market Gardening                                                                                                                              |
| Tree Cover | Sparse tree cover with some deciduous woodland blocks. Isolated trees and tree clusters limited to along tracks, roads and around farmsteads with a woodland edge on the horizon |
| Settlement | Isolated farms and residential dwelling. Mainly red brick with some white render and pitched grey slate tiled roofs                                                              |

### Other Distinguishing Features

- Large-scale field pattern with open character accentuated by the lack of field boundaries and the flat topography
- Dark peaty soil sitting largely below road, track and settlement levels
- Mixed cropping provides a strong visual texture on the rising ground to the south of Rainhill.
- Sparse tree cover
- Urban influences on the area have high impact on this area and lessen the ‘rural feel’ such as the industry on the urban fringe, overhead power lines and road corridors such as Perimeter Road and the A580.”

## Landscape Designations

There are no landscape designations that cover the Site or surrounding area. The Liverpool, Manchester and West Yorks Green Belt covers the Site and the area of agricultural land to the east of the study area. The registered park and garden, Knowsley Park is approximately 1385m to the south east of the Site and covers part of the south east portion of the study area.

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

Site Boundary

1km

2km

NCA

NCA 32 Lancashire and Amounderness Plain

NCA 58 Merseyside Conurbation

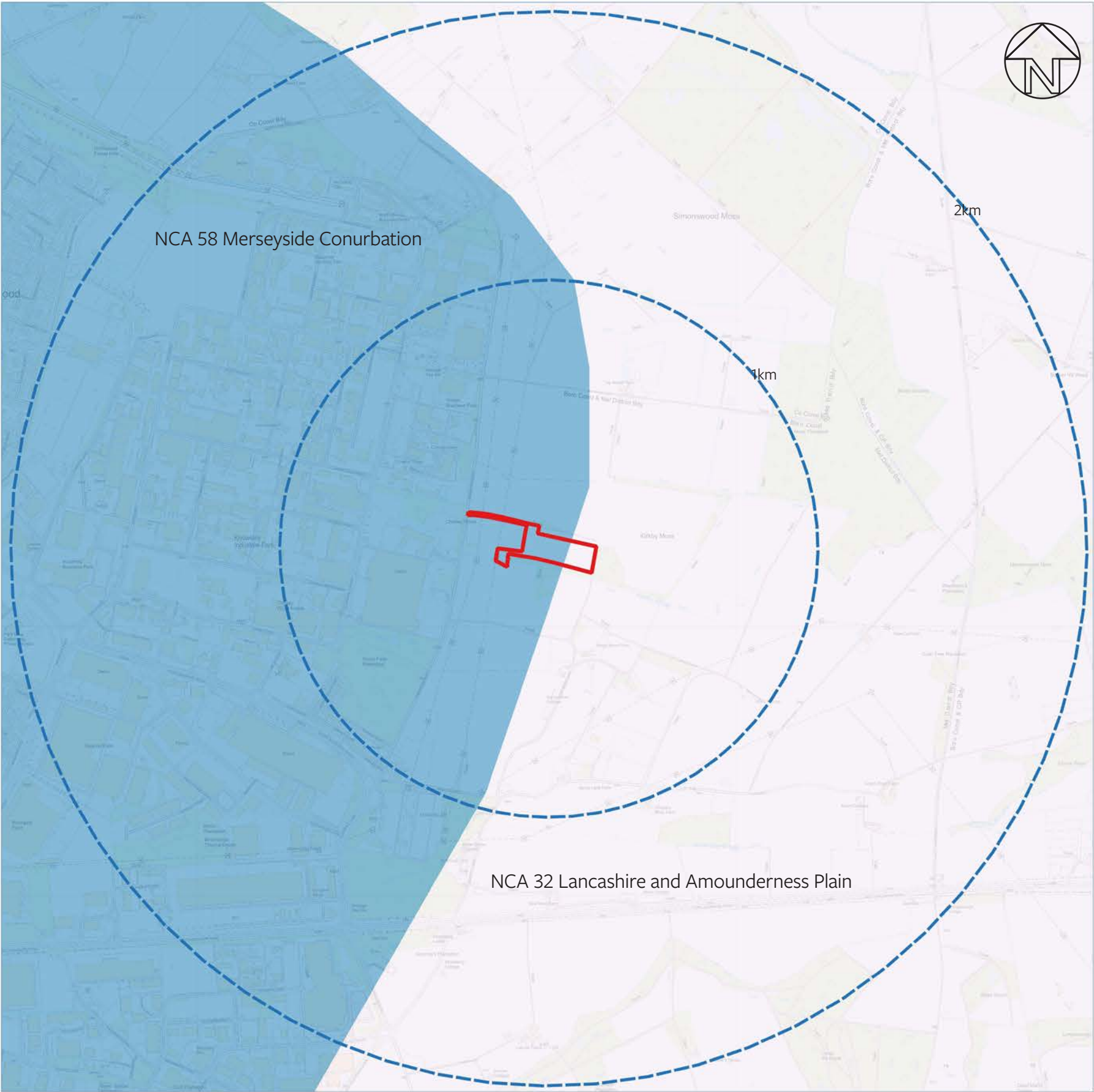


Figure 3.1 - Landscape Character

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

## KEY

 Approximate Site Location

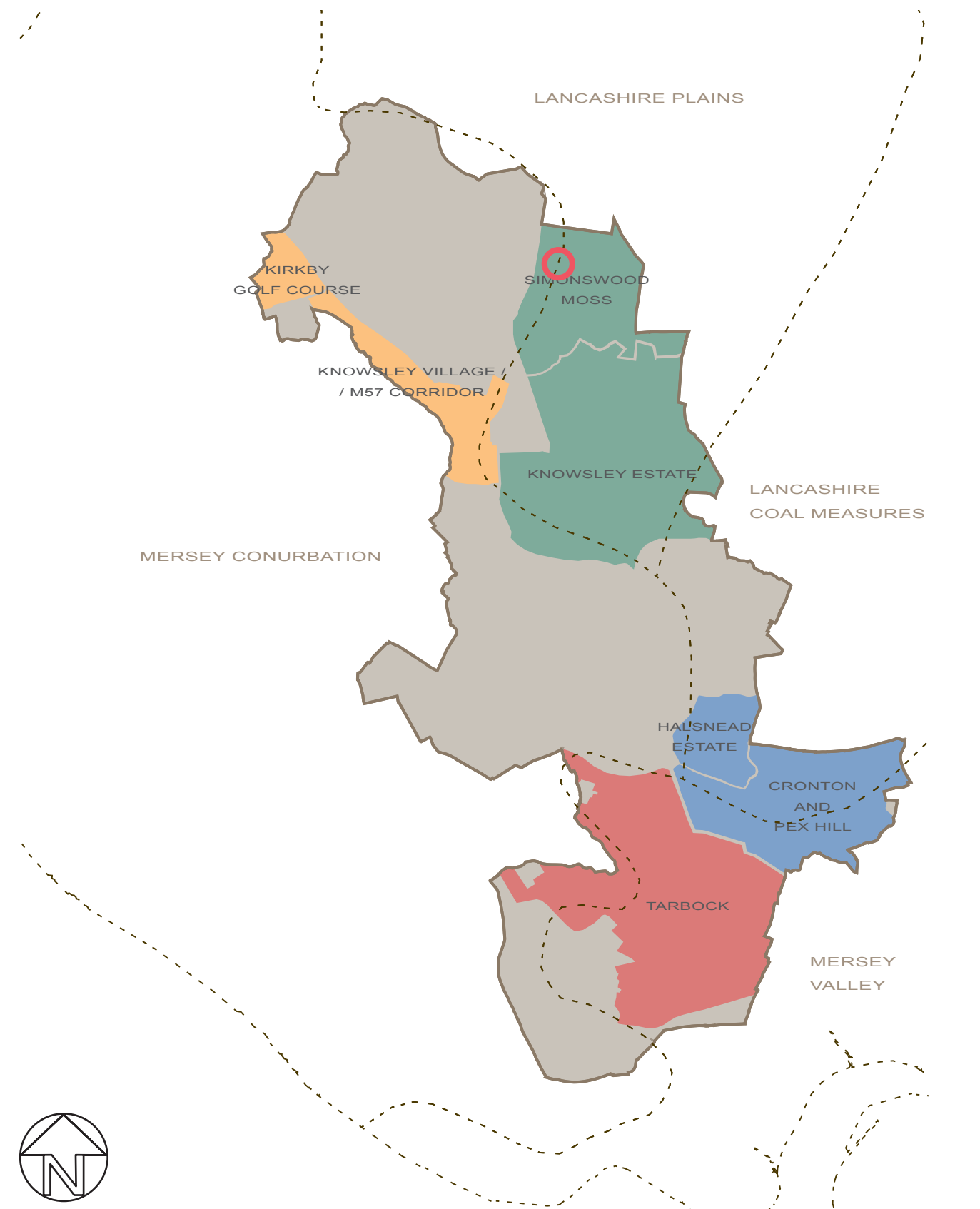


Figure 3.2 - Knowsley Landscape Character Areas - 2020 Knowsley Ltd

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

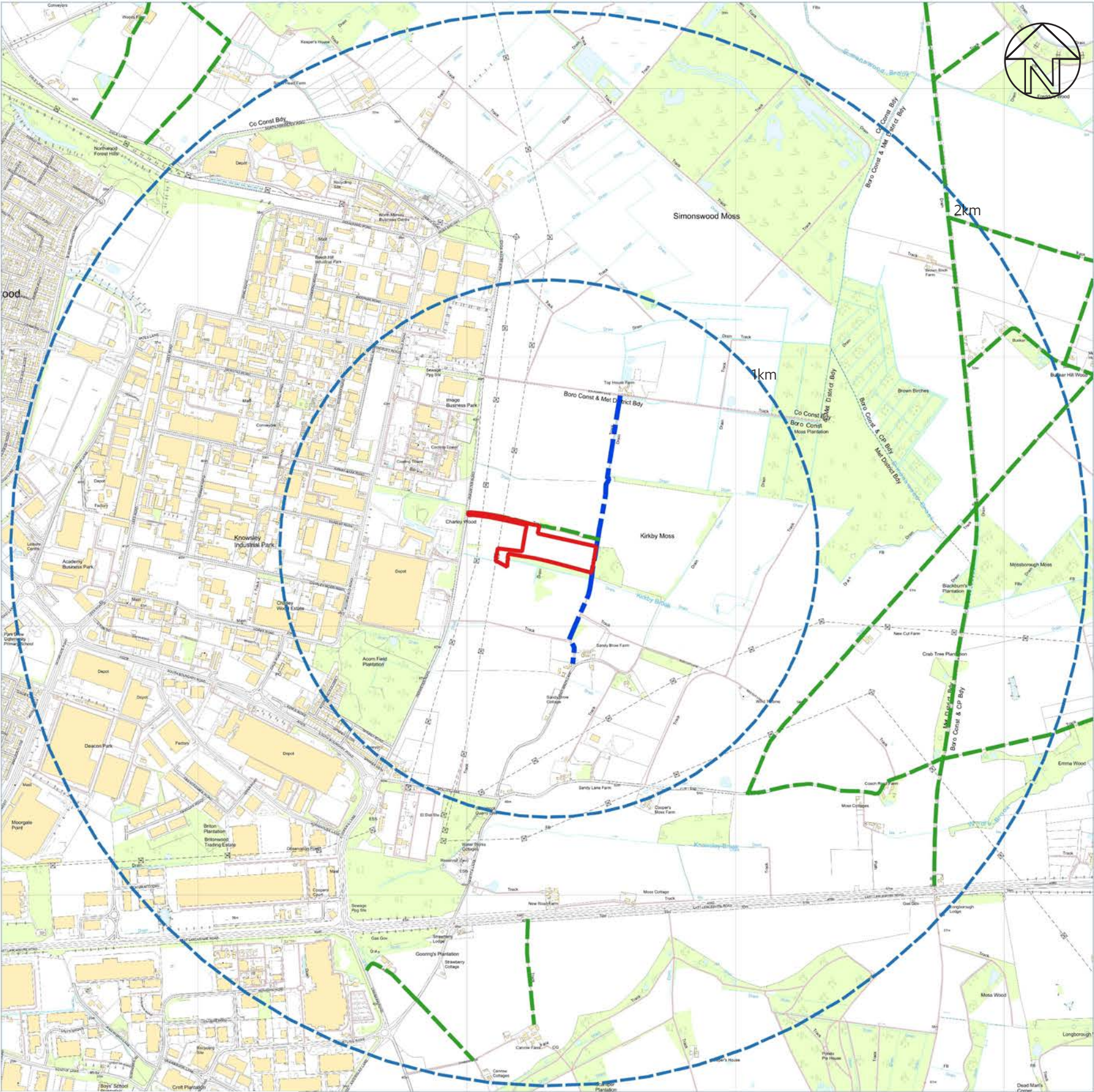


Figure 3.3 - Public Rights of Way

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

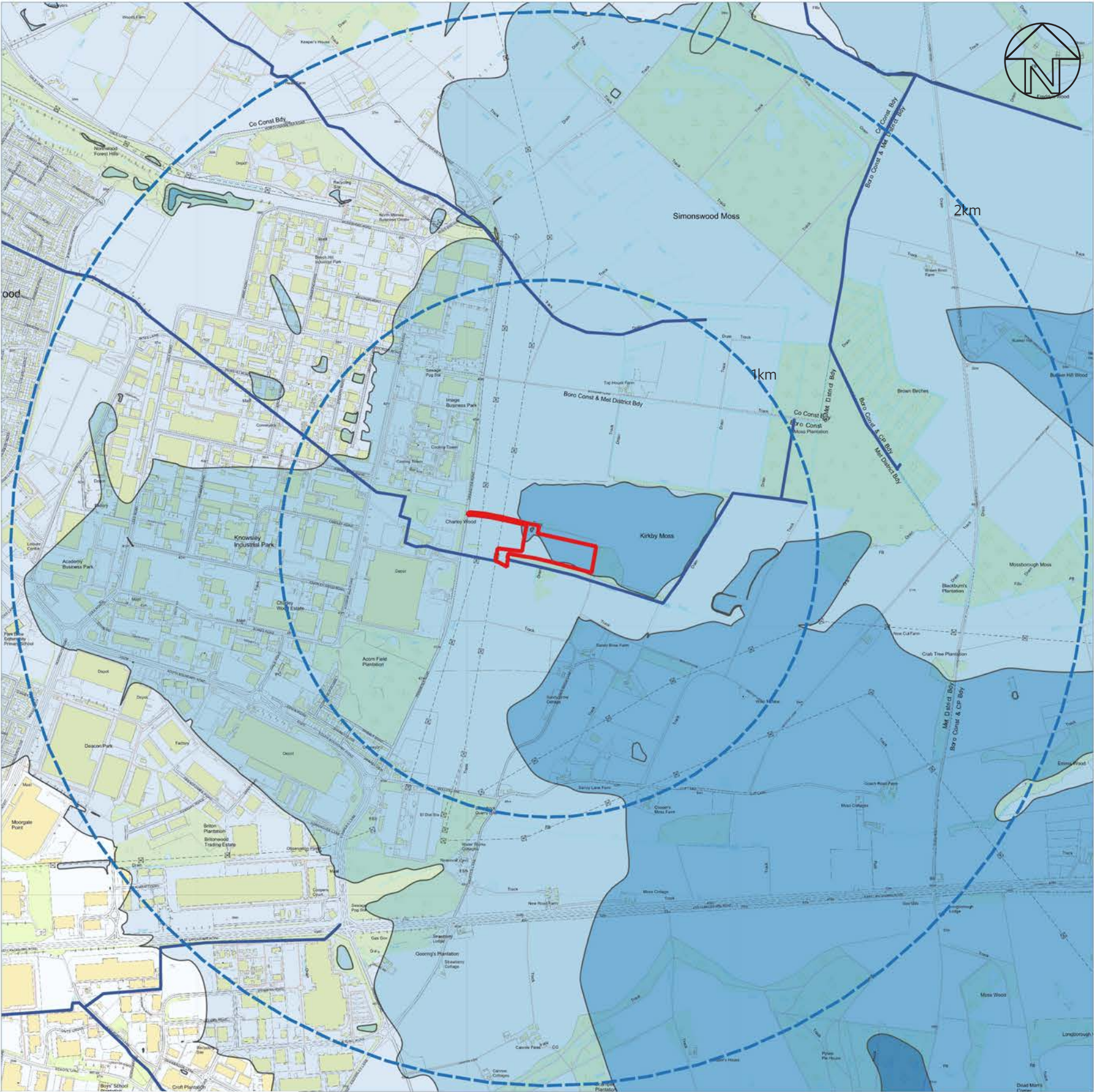
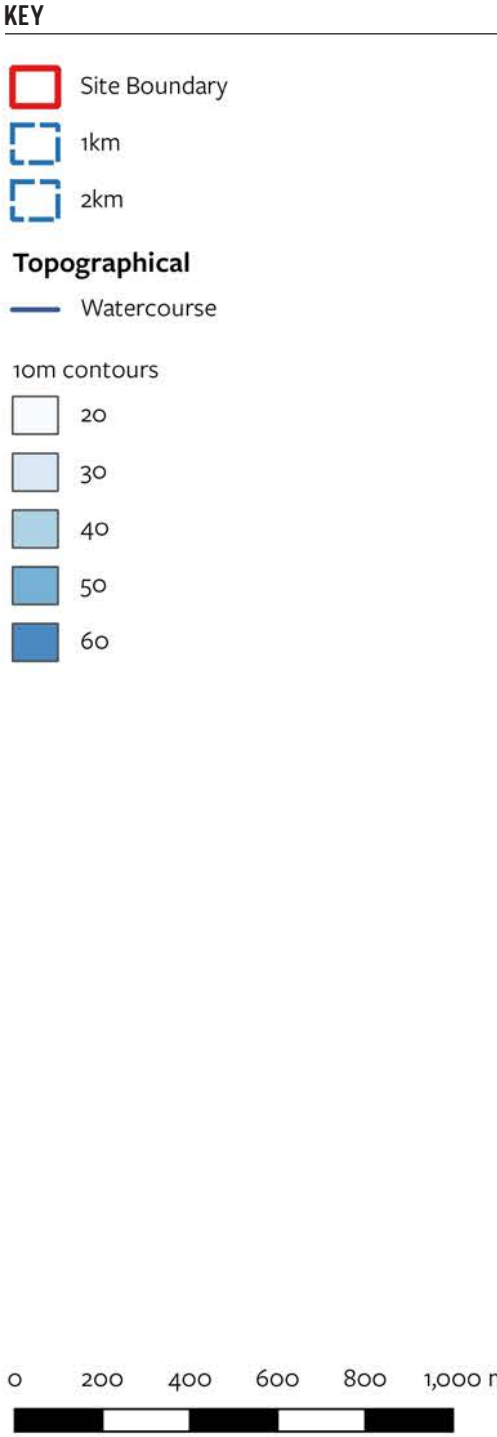


Figure 3.4 - Landform

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

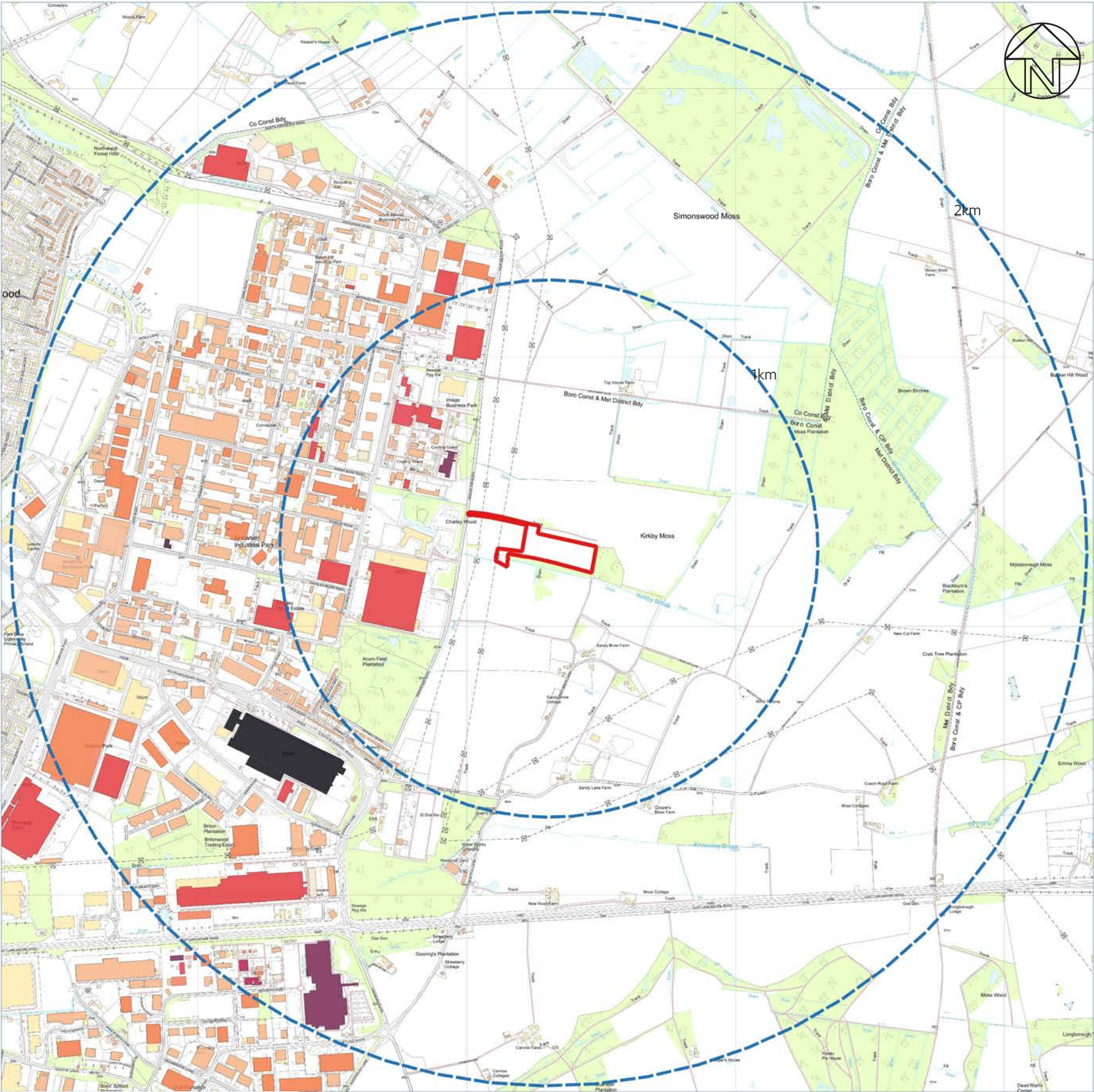
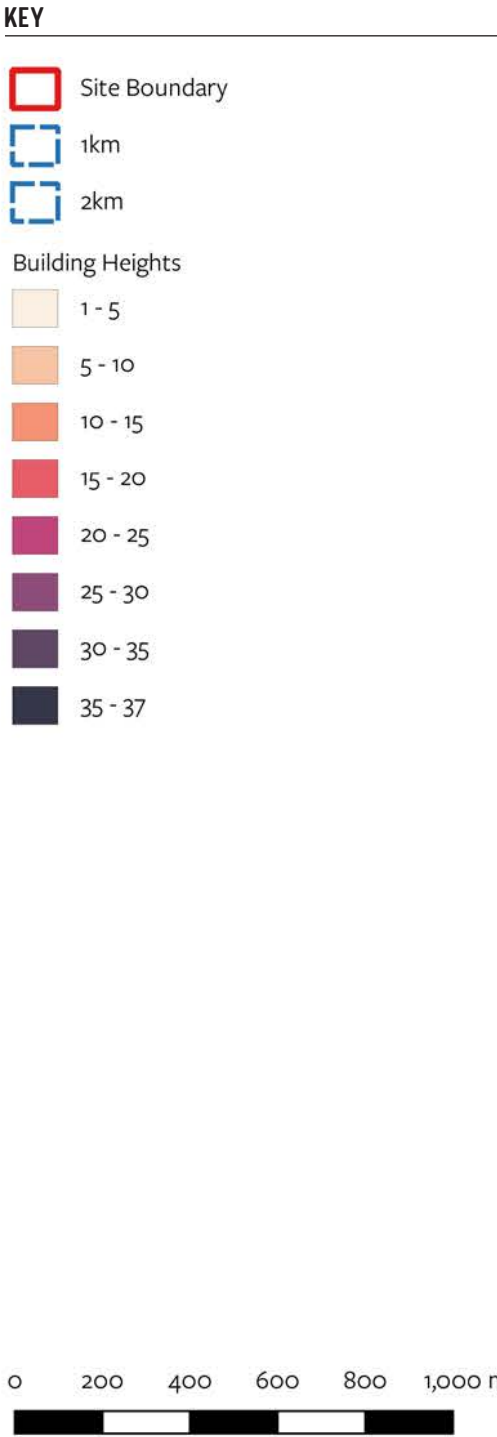


Figure 3.5 - Building Heights

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

## Characteristics of the Appraisal Site

### Land Use

The Appraisal Site is an area of farmland to the east of Perimeter Road, accessed via an existing, 210m long track (which is also a public footpath) from Perimeter Road. The main body of the Site to the east is broadly rectangular with a small extension to the south west towards an existing electricity pylon which sits on the Site boundary. The Site is bound by farmland to the north and west, woodland with agricultural land beyond to the east and a tree belt with arable land beyond to the south.

### Topography

The Site and surrounding area is relatively flat, lying on a broad plain to the east of Kirkby. Landform within the Site falls broadly from north east to south west from a high point of approximately 52.8m AOD on the Site's north eastern boundary to a low point of approximately 47.2m AOD to the west of the Site near Perimeter Road.

### Vegetation

A tree survey including the Site and the ownership boundary of the client has been carried out in accordance with BS 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction' by Urban Green, in April 2025. The report revealed the Site and surrounding area contains a total of 4 individual trees and 11 groups. Of these there were:

#### Individual Trees:

- 2 category 'B' trees; and
- 2 category 'C' trees.

#### Groups:

- 5 category 'A';
- 5 category 'B'; and
- 1 category 'C'.

There are mix of tree species; those typically characteristic of an agricultural landscape. Species include; Alder, Silver Birch, Cherry, Black Pine, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Osier, Larch, Crack Willow, Goat Willow, Poplar, Ash and Elderberry.

The principal arboricultural features of good to fair health are formed by the individual trees and the boundary groups i.e. those of A and B grade category. These trees are prominent within the Site and form a strong green infrastructure especially to the south and east Site boundaries. Off Site trees have been considered during this survey and the development of the proposals.

### Water Bodies

Kirkby Brook follows a small portion of the south west boundary of the Site.

### Built Elements

Built form within the Site is limited to an existing electricity pylon on the western boundary of the Site and boundary fencing to the Site's southern and eastern boundary and a field gate near the access from Perimeter Road.

### Public Rights of Way

Footpath KB 19/1 follows the unmade access track to the north of the Site, connecting Perimeter Road to the Bridleway KB 18/3 which follows the Site's eastern boundary.

### Heritage

There are no Heritage Assets within or in close proximity to the Site. The closest designated asset to the Site is Knowsley Park, a Grade II Register Park and Garden, located approximately 1385m to the south east of the Site.

### Ecology

There are no designated areas within the Appraisal Site. The closest statutory site is the Acornfield Local Nature Reserve, approximately 360m south west of the Site and Charley Wood, a Local Wildlife Site is approximately 10m west of the Site.

## Landscape Baseline – Landscape Resource

Landscape character areas differ in their range of Landscape features and the patterns these create, and consequently in their ability to accommodate different types of development. Some areas may be particularly sensitive and others more resilient.

In respect of Landscape Condition (the physical state of the landscape), the Assessment Site essentially comprises a part of a pastoral field parcel and mature boundary vegetation. When judged against the criteria set out in Appendix 1 Table 1, the Appraisal Site is considered to be in Ordinary Condition. This conclusion is reached on the basis that although the Site itself is not designated, the Footpath KB 19/1 crosses the northern portion of the Site and there are a limited number of recognisable landscape features such as mature boundary and fencing, however, there are some detracting landscape elements including the existing electricity pylon.

## Landscape Baseline – Landscape Receptors

From the above analysis of the Landscape Baseline, it is concluded that the Landscape Receptors relevant to the Appraisal Site that need to be assessed in the following section on Landscape Effects are:

- Landscape Character Areas both on Site and within the Study Area;
- Public Right of Way within and adjacent to the Site; and
- Vegetation and landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries.

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

Site Boundary

PRoWs

Footpaths

Bridleways

Policy

Green Belt

Ecological

LNRs

Local Wildlife Site

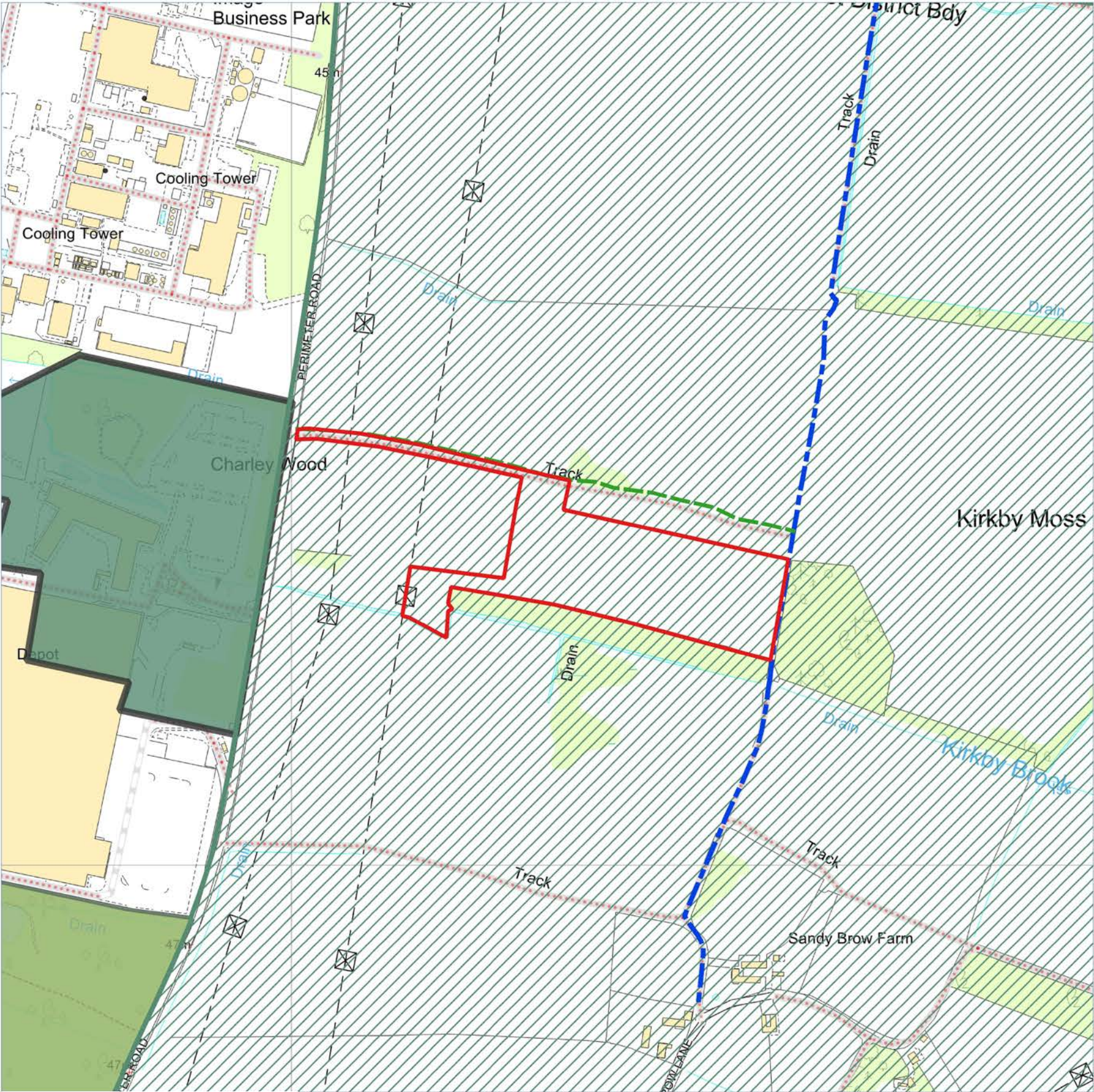


Figure 3.6 - Designations - Site Level

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

A visual inspection of the Appraisal Site was conducted in April 2025.

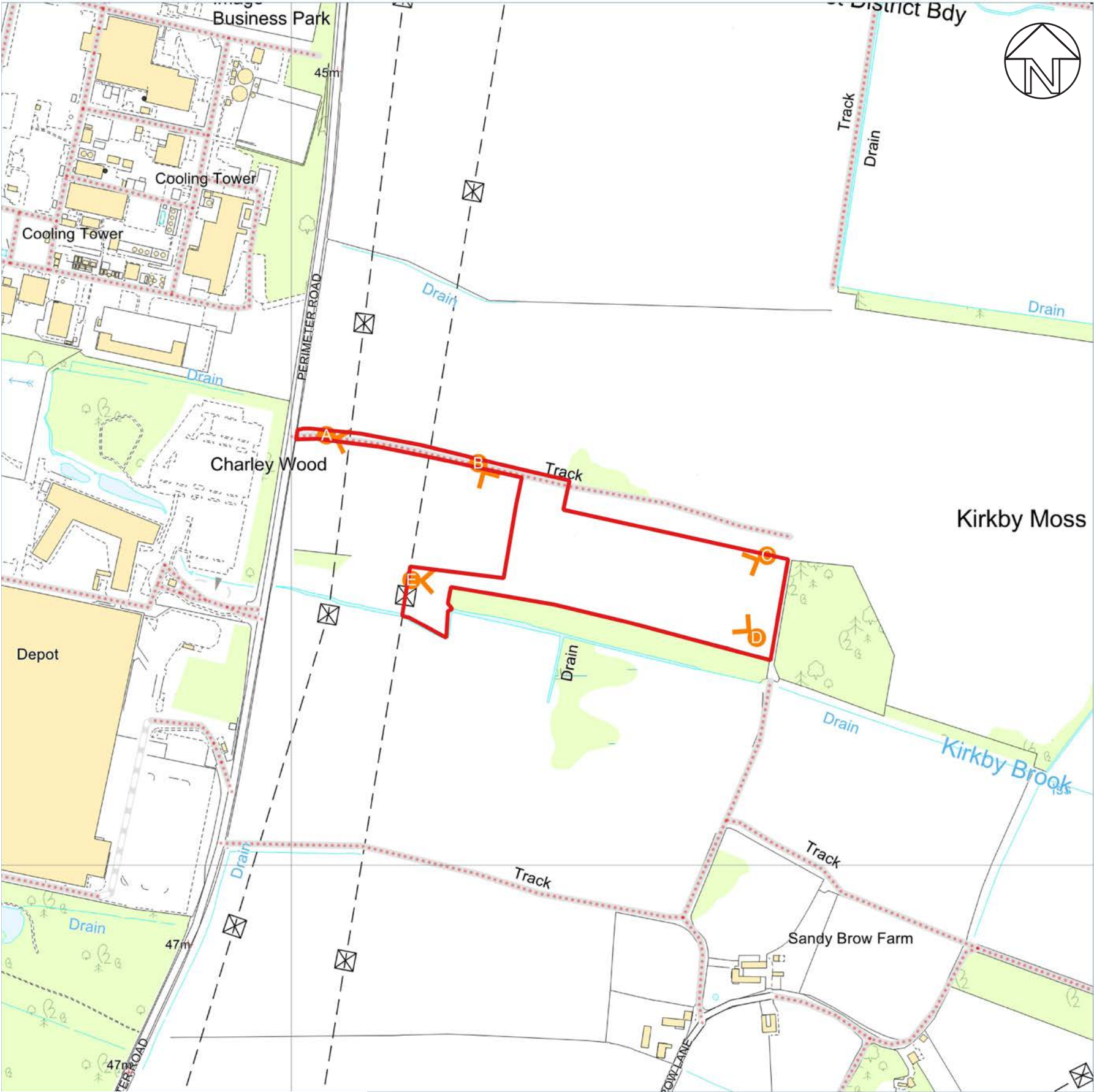
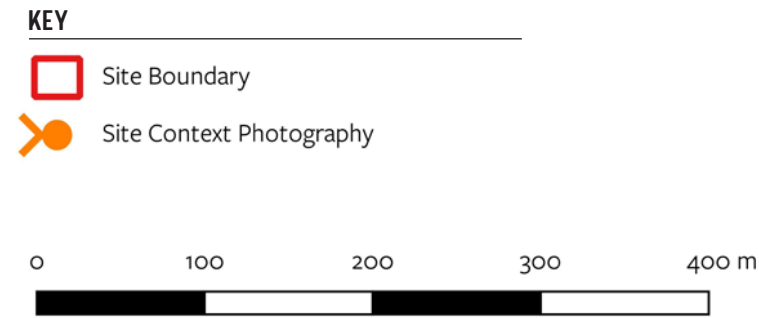


Figure 3.7 - Internal Site Context Photographs

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE



**Internal Site Context View A** - View looking east along the access track and Footpath KB 19/1 from within the Appraisal Site, towards the main Appraisal Site area. The landform within the Appraisal Site is generally flat, with mature vegetation beyond the Site boundary to the south east. Views include the electricity pylon on the Site boundary, and other pylons and a wind turbine within the local landscape context beyond the Site.



**Internal Site Context View B** - View looking south east along Footpath KB 19/1, and across the main body of the Appraisal Site from within the Appraisal Site. The view includes the electricity pylon on the Site boundary, and further pylons beyond the Appraisal Site. The wind turbine is also seen above the mature boundary vegetation.

# 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE



**Internal Site Context View C** - View looking south west across the Appraisal Site from within the Appraisal Site. The mature vegetation to the south and east of the Site largely obscure views out in these directions. The electricity pylon on the Site boundary and other pylons beyond the Appraisal Site are visible above the mature vegetation. There are also glimpsed views of a warehouse within the industrial estate to the west of the Site.



**Internal Site Context View D** - View looking north west across the Appraisal Site from within the Appraisal Site. Mature vegetation lies adjacent to the south and east Site boundaries. There are views out to the electricity pylons and the industrial estate beyond the Site to the west.

## 3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE



**Internal Site Context View E** - View looking west from the electricity pylon on the Site boundary across the Appraisal Site. Mature vegetation lies adjacent to parts of the southern Site boundary. There are views of electricity pylons to the left of the views and views out towards Kirby Moss and a distant ridge line to the north.

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

This LVA considers a study area of 2km radius from the Site boundary, in order to establish the spatial parameters of the Site and identify the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. It is considered that views from receptors beyond 2km will be at such distances that the proposals would form only a very minor proportion of the wider view and are barely perceptible to the casual observer.

A field survey was undertaken in April 2025 which identified a range of views offering a wide coverage of the Site from a number of representative viewing locations, ranging from within the Appraisal Site and its immediate proximity, to longer distance views. A summary of key visual receptors is provided below, and a selection of representative viewpoints is presented at Table 4.1.

## Residents of Dwellings

There are not anticipated to be any views to the Site for residents of dwellings within the study area due primarily, to distance and the intervening mature vegetation.

## Road Users

There are open and partial views to the Site for transient users of the local road network from portions of Perimeter Road in close proximity to the Site (refer to Viewpoints 1, 2 and 3) where the access point on to Perimeter Road is visible or the electricity pylon on the south west boundary is visible within the view. There is also a partial glimpsed view to the south west corner of the Site from Viewpoint 1. Views in to the main body of the Site from Perimeter Road are generally truncated by the intervening mature vegetation or landform. There are also more distant, partial views to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary from portions of Boundary Lane (refer to Viewpoint 13), views of the main body of the Site are truncated from this route. Further views to the Site for users of the wider road network within the study area are truncated due to either mature vegetation or built form.

## Public Rights of Way

There are open views across the Appraisal Site from Footpath KB 19/1 within the Appraisal Site and in close proximity to the northern boundary of the Site (refer to Viewpoints 3 and 5), the main body of the Appraisal Site becomes more visible to the viewer as the viewer moves from west to east. There are also open and partial views from Bridleways KB 18/2 and KB 18/3 in close proximity to the east boundary and north east corner of the Site (refer to Viewpoints 5 and 6), again views from these locations include the main body of the Appraisal

Site. There is an open view of the electricity pylon within the Site from portions of Bridleway KB 18/4 to the south of the Site and a partial glimpsed view to the Site's south west corner, views to the main body of the Site are truncated from this location by the intervening mature vegetation to the south of the Site (refer to Viewpoint 7). There are also more distant, partial views to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary from portions of Bridleway KB 18/1 (refer to Viewpoint 14), views of the main body of the Site are truncated from this route. Further views to the Site for users of the public right of way network within the study area are truncated due to, distance, intervening mature vegetation or built form.

## Heritage Assets

There are not anticipated to be any views to the Site for visitors to heritage assets within the study area due primarily to distance and the intervening mature vegetation.

## Employees at their Place of Work

There are potential, partial glimpsed views to the Site for employees at their place of work within Knowsley Industrial Estate to the immediate west of the Site. Further views from places of work within the study area are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation or built form within the study area.

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

KEY

Site Boundary

Viewpoints

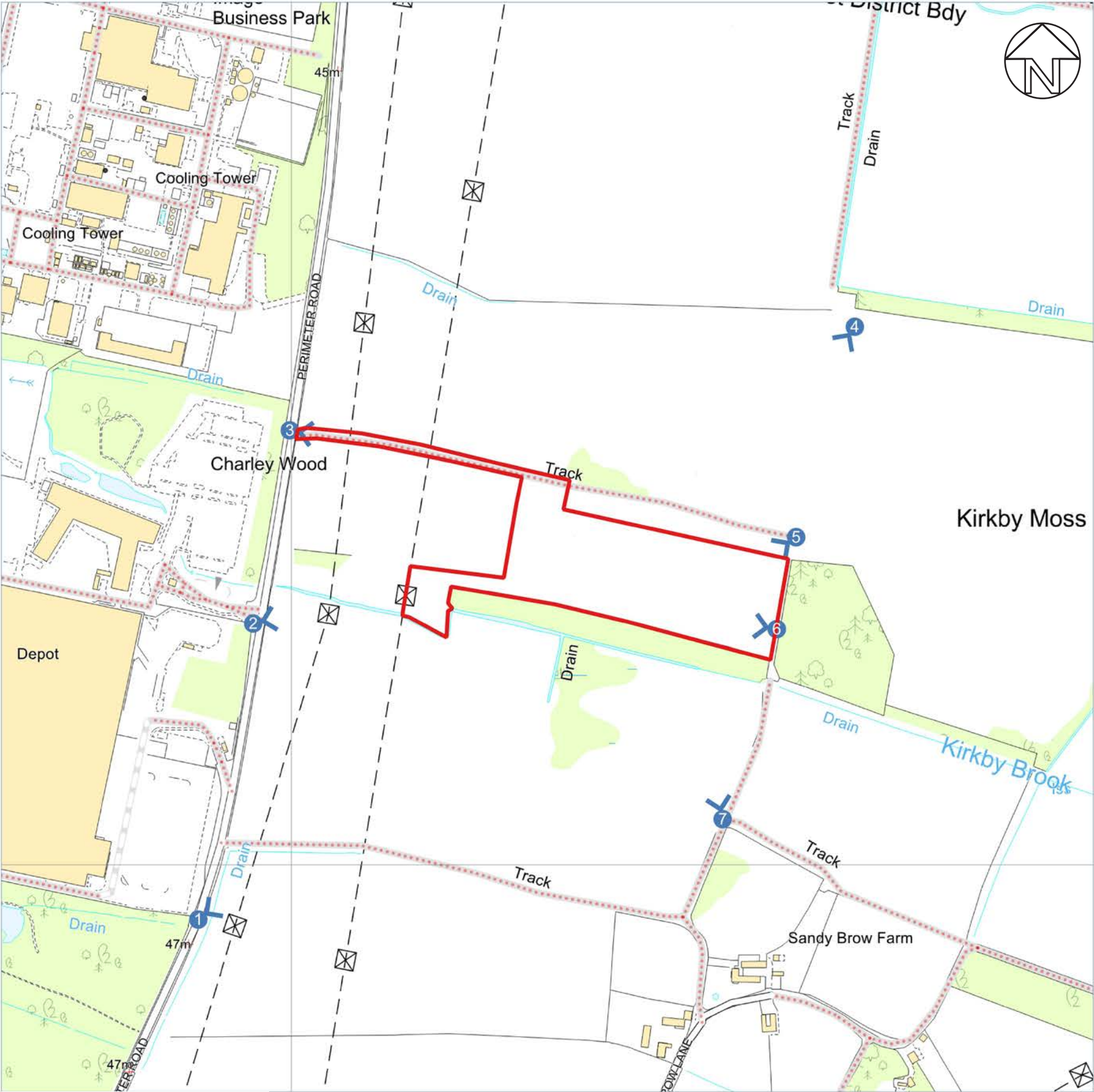


Figure 4.1 - Viewpoints - Close Range

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

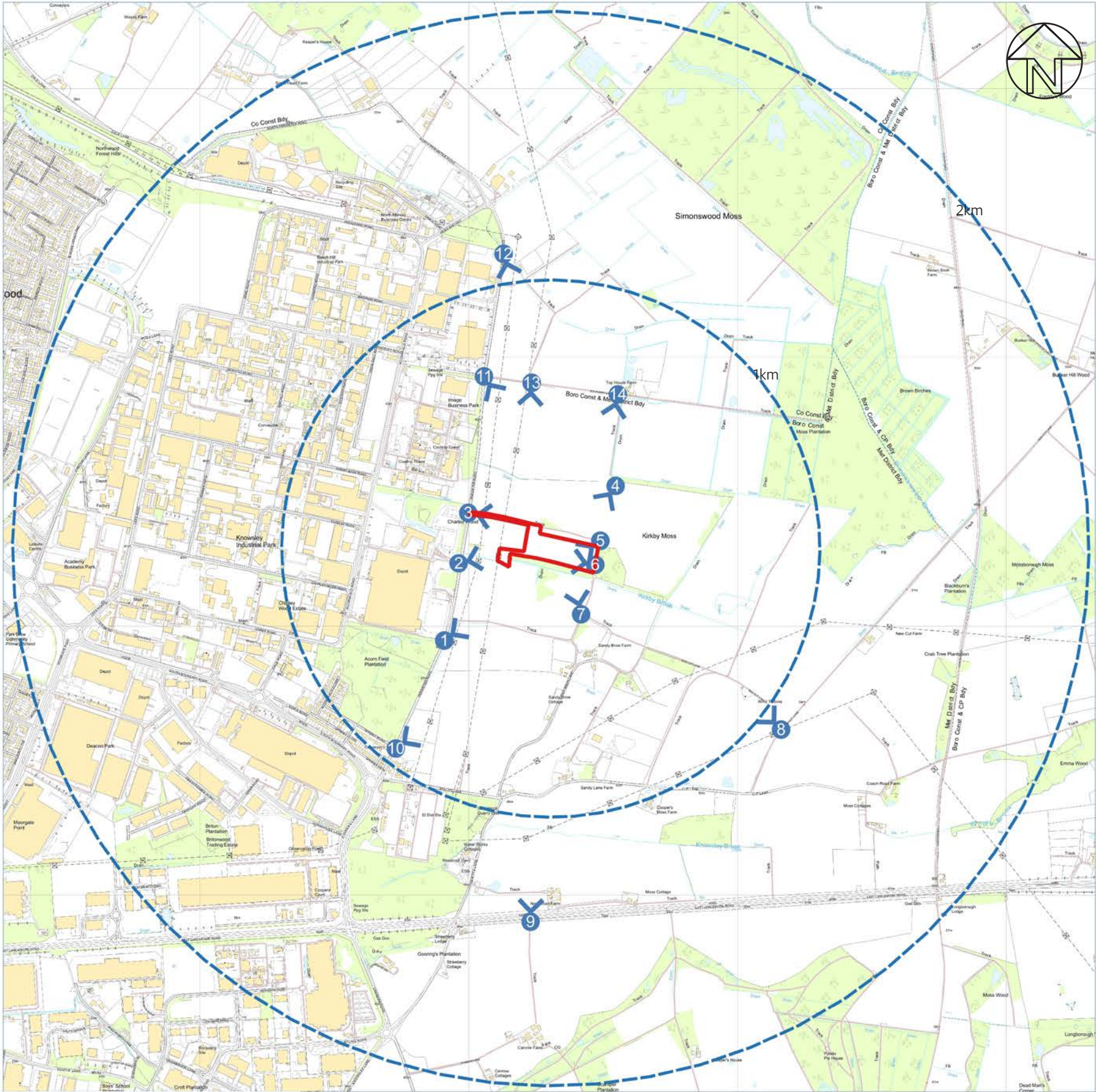


Figure 4.2 - Viewpoints

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

| Table 4.1 - Visual Receptors |                                                  |                   |                  |                                                                          |                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Viewpoint No.                | Location                                         | Viewing Direction | Distance to Site | Visual Receptor(s)                                                       | Visibility of Site                                                                                                     |
| 1                            | Perimeter Road near Acorn Field Plantation       | North east        | ~365m            | Road users, visitors to nature reserve, employees at their place of work | Open views to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary. Partial glimpsed views to the Site's south west corner       |
| 2                            | Perimeter Road                                   | North east        | ~145m            | Road users, employees at their place of work                             | Open views to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary. Partial glimpsed views to the access point on Perimeter Road |
| 3                            | Junction of Perimeter Road and Footpath KB 19/1  | East              | ~5m              | Road and footpath users, employees at their place of work                | Open and partial views                                                                                                 |
| 4                            | Bridleway KB 18/2                                | South west        | ~235m            | Bridleway users                                                          | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 5                            | Bridleway KB 18/2                                | South west        | ~20m             | Bridleway users                                                          | Open and partial views                                                                                                 |
| 6                            | Bridleway KB 18/3                                | West              | ~5m              | Bridleway users                                                          | Open and partial views                                                                                                 |
| 7                            | Bridleway KB 18/4                                | North west        | ~160m            | Bridleway users, residents of dwellings                                  | Open views to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary. Partial glimpsed views to the Site's south west corner       |
| 8                            | Footpath KB 15/1                                 | North west        | ~910m            | Footpath users                                                           | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 9                            | Junction of East Lancs Road and Footpath KN 12/1 | North             | ~1320m           | Road and footpath users, residents of dwellings                          | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 10                           | Perimeter Road near Acorn Field Plantation       | North east        | ~795m            | Road users, visitors to nature reserve, residents of dwellings           | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 11                           | Perimeter Road                                   | South east        | ~510m            | Road users, employees at their place of work                             | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 12                           | Perimeter Road                                   | South east        | ~970m            | Road users, employees at their place of work                             | Views are truncated                                                                                                    |
| 13                           | Boundary Lane                                    | South             | ~510m            | Road users                                                               | Partial view to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary                                                             |
| 14                           | Bridleway KB 18/1                                | South west        | ~565m            | Bridleway users, residents of dwellings                                  | Partial view to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary                                                             |

## 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



**Viewpoint 1** - View looking north east towards the Appraisal Site from Perimeter Road near Acorn Field Plantation. There is an open view of the electricity pylon on the south west corner of the Site and partial glimpsed views of the Site's south west corner from this location beyond the intervening vegetation. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation.



**Viewpoint 2** - View looking north east towards the Appraisal Site from Perimeter Road. There is an open view of the electricity pylon on the south west corner of the Site. There is also a partial glimpsed views of the Site's west boundary where the Site access is from Perimeter Road. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation.

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



**Viewpoint 3** - View looking east towards the Appraisal Site from junction of Perimeter Road and Footpath KB 19/1. There are open and partial views of the Appraisal Site from this location including the Site access and the electricity pylon on the Site boundary. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening vegetation.



**Viewpoint 4** - View looking south west towards the Appraisal Site from Bridleway KB 18/2. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation and landform.

## 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

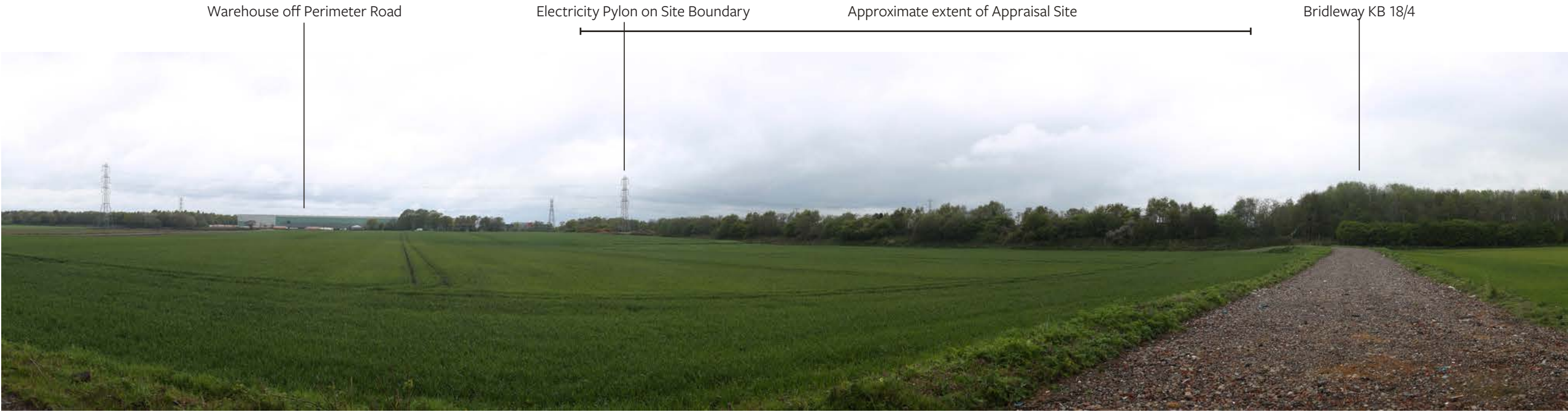


**Viewpoint 5** - View looking south west towards the Appraisal Site from Bridleway KB 18/2. There are open and partial views of the Appraisal Site from this location.



**Viewpoint 6** - View looking west towards the Appraisal Site from Bridleway KB 18/3. There are open and partial views of the Appraisal Site from this location.

# 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



**Viewpoint 7** - View looking north west towards the Appraisal Site from Bridleway KB 18/4. There is an open view of the electricity pylon on the south west corner of the Site and partial glimpsed views of the Site’s south west corner from this location. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation.



**Viewpoint 8** - View looking north west towards the Appraisal Site from Footpath KB 15/1. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.

## 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



**Viewpoint 9** - View looking north towards the Appraisal Site from the junction of East Lancs Road and Footpath KN 12/1. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.



**Viewpoint 10** - View looking north east towards the Appraisal Site from Perimeter Road near Acorn Field Plantation. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.

## 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

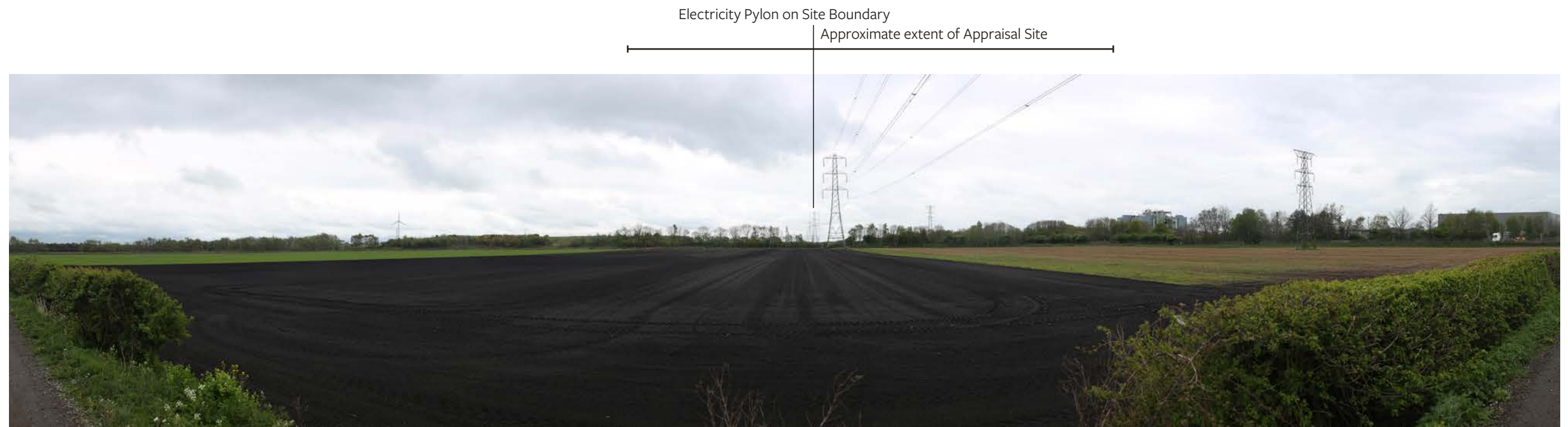


**Viewpoint 11** - View looking south east towards the Appraisal Site from Perimeter Road. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.



**Viewpoint 12** - View looking south east towards the Appraisal Site from Perimeter Road. Views of the Appraisal Site are truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.

## 4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



**Viewpoint 13** - View looking south towards the Appraisal Site from Boundary Lane. There is a partial view of the electricity pylon on the south west boundary of the Site from this location. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation.



**Viewpoint 14** - View looking south west towards the Appraisal Site from Bridleway KB 18/1. There is a partial view of the electricity pylon on the south west boundary of the Site from this location. Further views in to the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation.

# 5.0 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY



The proposed landscape strategy for the Appraisal Site comprises the following main elements:

- Retention of tree groups in close proximity to the boundaries of the Appraisal Site, limited vegetation removal is required to facilitate the development;
- New native structure planting to be incorporated to the boundaries of the Site of appropriate species to provide screening to the BESS facility and green infrastructure linkages between existing and new vegetation;
- The sowing of species rich wildflower and wet wildflower meadow to the internal areas of the Site to improve biodiversity; and
- To provide a landscape structure for the proposed development that is consistent, in scale with, and reinforces the landscape character of the locality and of the surrounding landscape context.

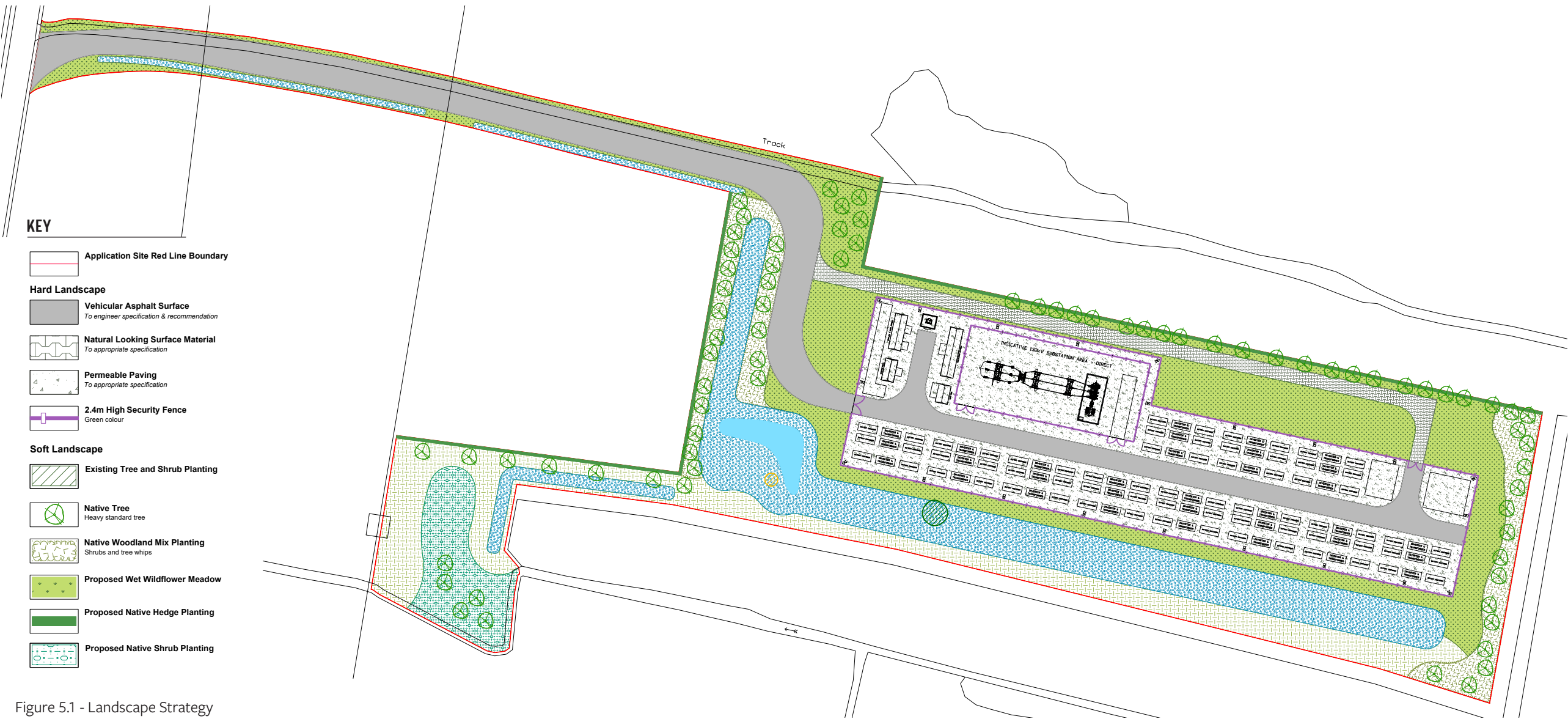


Figure 5.1 - Landscape Strategy

# 6.0 APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS

## Landscape Effects

The following paragraphs summarise the anticipated landscape effects as in respect of each main landscape receptor. The criteria for the determination of sensitivity and magnitude of landscape effects is set out in the methodology at Appendix 1.

### Landscape Character

At a national level, the anticipated landscape effect of the future development of the Site are anticipated to be negligible and entail negligible change to the existing landscape of NCA 32 Lancashire and Amounderness Plain or NCA 58 Merseyside Conurbation.

At a local and Site level, the development of the Site will maintain the existing green infrastructure adjacent to the Site's southern and eastern boundaries; and vegetation removal is limited to two trees within the Site in order to facilitate the development. The proposed built development within the Site is located to the southern portion of the main body of the existing field parcel, away from the more sensitive portions of the field adjacent to northern and western boundaries. The Site is also already subject to a number of detracting elements in the vicinity including the presence of energy infrastructure elements such as electricity pylons and high voltage cables within and in the local landscape context of the Site.

Notwithstanding this, the development of the Site would have direct, long term changes in terms of the impact on the local and Site landscape character. The magnitude of effect is anticipated to be Small resulting in an overall Minor adverse effect on the landscape character at the Site level and Negligible adverse on the Simonswood Moss landscape character area at the district level. Effects are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed landscape structure planting to the Site boundaries matures.

The proposals will seek to reinforce the existing vegetation framework surrounding the Site to the south and east and development is contained within the existing field boundaries. The proposal will establish a new framework of native planting combining new native tree, shrub and wet wildflower meadow planting, which will create a new landscape framework to the development. New planting will be characteristic of the area and of local provenance where practical.

## Landscape Features and Vegetation

Existing mature vegetation within the Site is limited, however, there are significant groups of trees to the south and east of the Site boundary. The sensitivity of the Appraisal Site to change is considered to be Low, since it currently comprises limited vegetation. The development proposals will require the removal of two trees in order to accommodate the proposed development. However, considering the proposed tree planting within the Site and the predominately native planting palette, the anticipated magnitude of effects on this resource are considered overall to be Small resulting in an overall Minor beneficial significance of effect in terms of landscape features and vegetation.

### Public Rights of Way

There is an existing Public Right of Way (PROW), Footpath KB 19/1, which follows the access track to the Site and continues adjacent to the Site's northern boundary. This PROW is considered to be of High overall sensitivity in landscape terms. The development proposals seek to retain this route along its current alignment. It is therefore considered that, in landscape terms, the proposals would give rise to a Negligible magnitude of effect resulting in a Minor adverse effect on this route.

### Heritage Assets

The existing, limited heritage assets within the study area are physically and visually separated from the Appraisal Site and would not be effected by any future development proposals.

### Green Belt

At the Site level, the development of the Site would see a direct and permanent alteration to the Green Belt designation through the removal of the former agricultural land, limited vegetation, and the creation of a new built development and landscape structure within the Site. The development of the Site would be in keeping with local land uses currently present within the Green Belt including the energy infrastructure in the vicinity of the Site and the Site is considered to be visually contained. Views are limited to Perimeter Road and the Public Rights of Way within and in the immediate vicinity of the Site. Refer to the Green Belt Assessment, prepared for this application, for further details and anticipated effects.

## Overall Conclusions on Potential Landscape Effects

In overall terms, the proposed development of the Appraisal Site would give rise to some Negligible and Minor adverse effects on landscape character and Minor beneficial effects on landscape features and the vegetation at the Site level. There are not anticipated to be any further landscape effects on receptors in the study area. It is therefore considered that the development of the Site would not constitute an overall significant or unacceptable environmental effect.

# 6.0 APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS

## Visual Effects

The following paragraphs summarise the visual effects in respect of each identified category of visual receptor. The criteria for the determination of sensitivity and magnitude of visual effects are set out in the methodology at Appendix 1.

### Residents of Dwellings

Views to the development for residents of dwellings are wholly truncated due to a combination of intervening mature vegetation or built form. There are therefore not anticipated to be any effects on residents within the study area.

### Users of Public Rights of Way

The principle views of the proposed development from users of Public Rights of Way will be from the route within and adjacent to the northern boundary the Site, Footpath KB 19/1 and also Bridleways KB 18/2 and KB 18/3 in close proximity to the Site's eastern boundary (refer to Viewpoints 3, 5 and 6). For visual receptors along these routes, the proposals would form a new built elements within the view, and would comprise an overall Small magnitude of effect for footpath users within the Site and in close proximity reducing to Negligible for users at greater distances along these routes. Since users of Public Rights of Way are considered to be High sensitivity receptors, the overall significance of effect is considered to be range from Moderate for footpath users within and in the immediate vicinity of the Site reducing to Minor adverse at greater distances.

Views towards the proposed development from users of Public Rights of Way at greater distances are generally either entirely screened by intervening mature vegetation or are only to the existing electricity pylon on the Site boundary resulting in magnitudes of effect of either Negligible or None. The overall significance of the effect on these visual receptors is therefore considered to be Negligible or None.

### Road Users

Views towards the Site from road users are reserved to portions of Perimeter Road in close proximity to the Site and a distant view to the electricity pylon on the Site boundary from Boundary Lane (refer to Viewpoints 1, 2, 3 and 13). These views are primarily in close proximity to the Site's access point from Perimeter Road, and views to the main body of the Site where the elements of

the built form of the BESS are proposed are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available. Views to the Site are seen in the context of detracting elements of the existing energy infrastructure in the surrounding landscape context. Road users are considered to be of Low sensitivity. The potential development of the Site is considered to give rise to Negligible magnitudes of effect resulting in Negligible overall effects to transient road users. Effects are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed native planting, to the Site boundaries, matures.

### Employees at their Place of Work

There are anticipated to be potential limited partial views to the Appraisal Site for employees within the Knowsley Industrial Estate to the immediate west of the Appraisal Site. Views of the built form of the BESS are anticipated to be limited due to the existing intervening mature vegetation, the distance to these elements and the proposed landscape framework. The sensitivity of the employees as visual receptors is considered to be Low. The overall significance of effect on employees in close proximity to the Site's western boundary is therefore considered to be Negligible.

### Heritage Assets

Heritage assets within the study area will not be directly affected and notable views to the Appraisal Site are not predicted, due to separation by distance, intervening built form, and existing mature vegetation.

### Public Open Space

Views from areas of public open space within the study area to the development are wholly truncated due to a combination of intervening mature vegetation or built form. There are therefore not anticipated to be any effects on users.

### Overall Conclusions on Visual Effects

The potential development of the Site is therefore considered to have a range of Negligible to Moderate effects on visual receptors within the study area, primarily for receptors within or in close proximity to the Site. Effects are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.

# 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared on the Third Edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Routledge, 2013). The appraisal of the Site at Sandy Brow RFP, Perimeter Road, Knowsley, has been carried out to inform the landscape design response to the outline development proposals in consideration of the landscape and visual issues, current planning policy and emerging guidance.

A review of the landscape designations and planning policy at the national, regional and local level has been carried out. There are no landscape, ecological or heritage designations which directly cover the Site. The Site is located within a wider tract of land designated as Green Belt to the east of Knowsley. The Site topography and that of the surrounding area is generally flat and low lying. The Site is currently largely in agricultural use, with groups of trees beyond the Site's southern and eastern boundaries and an existing electricity pylon on the Site's south west boundary.

Open and partial views into the Site are available from portions of Perimeter Road, Footpath KB 19/1, Bridleway KB 18/2, Bridleway KB 18/3 and Bridleway KB 18/4. At greater distances, further views are largely truncated by built form or mature vegetation or are limited to the vertical elements of the existing electricity pylon within the Site only. Where views are available they are seen within the context of the existing energy infrastructure within the local landscape context.

The proposed development has been laid out to retain the existing landscape features including vegetation to the Site boundaries and avoiding built form within the most sensitive parts of the Site. Existing boundary vegetation will be retained and enhanced with additional native tree and shrub planting. In response to the greater visibility of the northern and western areas of the Site, the layout has developed to locate the significant built form within the southern portions of the Site in order to reduce the Site's visual envelope.

The proposed development of the Appraisal Site is anticipated to give rise to some Negligible and Minor adverse effects on landscape character and Minor beneficial effects on landscape features and vegetation at the Site level. Visual effects are anticipated to range from Negligible to Moderate on visual receptors within the study area, primarily for receptors within or in close proximity to the Site, where the Appraisal Site will form a small portion of the wider view which is currently influenced by the existing energy infrastructure within the local landscape context. Effects are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting adjacent to the Site boundaries matures.

In summary, the proposed development will sit within the existing landscape character without causing significant harm. New tree planting is to be considered for long term replacement ensuring the longevity and vigour of the existing vegetation is maintained on Site.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

## Guidance and Publications

This appraisal has been carried out in light of the latest relevant guidance as set out in ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), and ‘Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland’ published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage (2002). These documents do not set out a prescriptive approach to how assessments or appraisals should be undertaken, but rather identify key principles and good practice.

Whilst this methodology refers to landscape appraisals, the same general principles are also applicable in townscape settings. Further guidance on townscape appraisal is given at page 74 of GLVIA3 (2013).

The following guidelines and publications have also been considered when producing this appraisal:

- ‘Seeing the History in the View: A Method for Assessing Heritage Significance within Views’ (English Heritage; 2011);
- ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)’ (Historic England; 2017); and
- ‘Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Technical Guidance Note 06/19’ (Landscape Institute; 2019)

The appraisal comprises the following stages:

- A summary of the relevant aspects of extant and emergent landscape planning policies;
- A definition the scope of the appraisal, Site reconnaissance and desktop background research;
- A description of the existing conditions in respect of the landscape baseline (dealing with matters of current landscape character and existing landscape resources), and the visual baseline (dealing with matters relating to the visibility of the Appraisal Site);
- Summary of key landscape and visual sensitivities relating to the Appraisal Site and surrounding land;

- A description of the development proposed on the Appraisal Site;
- An appraisal of landscape effects; and
- An appraisal of visual effects.

## Baseline Appraisal Methodology

The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- A review of the planning policy relevant to the Appraisal Site;
- A review of any existing landscape character appraisals relating to the study area;
- A review of landscape designations from the English Heritage database and local authority sources; and
- Identification of landscape character and key landscape elements.

The baseline description in this appraisal comprises two separate elements:

- a. Landscape Baseline; and
- b. Visual Baseline.

In this appraisal, a distinction has been drawn between the study area and the Appraisal Site. The Appraisal Site is the area proposed for development whilst the study area takes in the wider surrounds of the Appraisal Site. The determination of the study area has been informed by desk top studies of maps and aerial photographs to assess how topography, vegetation and built form in the area surrounding the Site were likely to control views towards the Appraisal Site.

This work was followed by Site visits to determine the potential visibility of the Appraisal Site. The study area boundaries were then set to ensure that all relevant areas of potential visibility were assessed. In general terms, it is assumed that the extent of visibility of the Appraisal Site (and ultimately of proposed development upon it) will not exceed a 2km radius.

## The Landscape Baseline

The Landscape Baseline comprises two elements; the existing Landscape Character and the existing Landscape Resource.

Landscape Character is defined in GLVIA3 as *“a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”* As such, character is influenced by the physical constituent components of the landscape including geology, soils, topography, vegetation, water features, land utilisation and built elements. Landscape Character Appraisal is the process of identifying variation and change in the landscape and using that information to assist in managing future landscape change (arising from development or other factors). Landscape Character Appraisals – at differing scales – have typically been prepared by, or on behalf of, national and local government or agencies, and provide a starting point for the consideration of landscape character. As a generality, the more detailed the existing Landscape Character Appraisal, the more relevant it will be to the specific Appraisal Site and/or the development proposal. There are four main levels at which landscape character appraisal has been, or may be carried out, as follows:

- a. National Level (the National Character Area Profiles prepared by Natural England);
- b. Regional Level (typically produced for Natural England or a regional grouping of local authorities);
- c. Local Authority Level (normally at a County, or District level, or for a number of Districts (or specific parts thereof)); and
- d. Local Level (typically of a settlement or a group of settlements within a local authority).

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

In addition to referencing these published documents, a local level character appraisal of the Appraisal Site and its surrounding has been undertaken which describes, in summary, the following elements:

- a. Existing Land Use;
- b. Adjoining Land Uses;
- c. Topography;
- d. Vegetation;
- e. Water Features; and
- f. Public Rights of Way.

The Landscape Resource baseline considers two separate aspects; landscape condition – the physical state of the landscape – and landscape value – how different areas of landscape are valued by society. The following criteria have been used to categorize landscape condition, which is described in the appraisal text. The typical examples given provide an indication of the likely landscape condition but it does not necessarily follow that because a Site is within a specific designated area that the categorisation of landscape condition will automatically follow; much will depend on specific Site conditions.

| Table 1: Landscape Condition |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Category                     | Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Typical Example                                                                                                                       |
| Exceptional                  | <div><div>i.</div><div>Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns, balanced combination of landform and landcover;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Appropriate management for land use and landcover;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Distinct features worthy of conservation;</div><div>iv.</div><div>Sense of place;</div><div>v.</div><div>No/ negligible detracting features.</div></div>                              | Internationally or Nationally recognised e.g. all or the great majority of which would be World Heritage Site, National Park or AONB. |
| High                         | <div><div>i.</div><div>Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns, balanced combination of landform and landcover;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Appropriate management for land use and landcover but potentially scope to improve;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Distinct features worthy of conservation;</div><div>iv.</div><div>Sense of place;</div><div>v.</div><div>Occasional detracting features.</div></div> | Nationally or Regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Park or AONB, all or the great majority of AGLV.                           |

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Good      | <div><div>i.</div><div>Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and cover are still evident;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Scope to improve management for land use and landcover;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Some features worthy of conservation;</div><div>iv.</div><div>Sense of place;</div><div>v.</div><div>Some detracting features.</div></div> |  |
| Ordinary  | <div><div>i.</div><div>Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristic</div><div>ii.</div><div>Patterns of landform and landcover often masked by land use;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Scope to improve management of vegetation;</div><div>iv.</div><div>Some features worthy of conservation;</div><div>v.</div><div>Some detracting features.</div></div>                                 |  |
| Poor      | <div><div>i.</div><div>Weak landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and landcover are often masked by land use;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Frequent detracting features.</div></div>                                                                                                   |  |
| Very poor | <div><div>i.</div><div>Degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and landcover are masked by land use;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Lack of management / intervention has resulted in degradation;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Extensive detracting features.</div></div>                                                                                     |  |
| Damaged   | <div><div>i.</div><div>Damaged landscape structure;</div><div>ii.</div><div>Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment;</div><div>iii.</div><div>Detracting features dominate.</div></div>                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
| Derelict  | <div><div>i.</div><div>Land so damaged by industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.</div></div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |  |

The following criteria have been used to categorise the landscape value of the Site. The categories of Exceptional and High are informed directly by reference to development plan documents; the other categories entail a judgement in respect of the attributes of the area / locality or may be informed by published landscape character appraisals.

| Table 2: Landscape Value |                                                                                                   |                           |                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Value                    | Typical Criteria                                                                                  | Typical Scale             | Typical Example                                                                                        |
| Exceptional              | Very high importance (or Quality) and Rarity. No or extremely limited potential for substitution. | International, National.  | World Heritage Site, National Park or AONB.                                                            |
| High                     | High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.                      | National, Regional, Local | National Park, AONB, AGLV, ALLI                                                                        |
| Good                     | Medium Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.                    | Regional, Local           | Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use.        |
| Ordinary                 | Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.                                                           | Local                     | Areas identified as having some redeeming feature or features and possibly identified for improvement. |
| Poor                     | Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.                                                           | Local                     | Areas identified as having few redeeming features and lots of scope for improvement.                   |
| Very poor                | Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.                                                           | Local                     | Areas identified for recovery.                                                                         |

From these separate appraisals of landscape character and the landscape resource, the overall sensitivity of landscape receptors – defined as those aspects of the landscape that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development - is determined.

## The Visual Baseline

The extent of visibility of the Appraisal Site, and of the proposed development, is determined by the buildings/development surrounding the Site, as well as by existing vegetation and topography. An initial appraisal was made, using OS mapping and aerial photographs of potential locations from where the Appraisal Site might be seen by visual receptors - defined as individuals or groups who have the potential to be affected by the proposal. Potential locations that are identified include residential and commercial properties, roads, PROW, and areas of public open space/ recreational land.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

A field visit was carried out in April 2025. The Site was viewed from the surrounding area from a range of locations, including those identified through the desk study and other locations that became apparent from the field appraisal. In the appraisal the potential visual receptors are identified on plan and described in tabular form, which categorizes the receptor by type (i.e. residential property etc.) and distance from the edge of the Appraisal Site (using the terms set out in Table 3).

| Table 3: Distance of Views |                                                       |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Distance of Views          | Definition                                            |
| Adjoining                  | On the edge of the Appraisal Site                     |
| Close                      | Less than 250m from the edge of the Appraisal Site    |
| Middle                     | From 250m to 500m from the edge of the Appraisal Site |
| Long                       | 500m or greater from the edge of the Appraisal Site   |

From the field appraisal, a number of viewpoints have been identified which are representative of visual receptors in proximity. The viewpoints selected essentially cover three types of views:

- Representative viewpoints: typical of a particular type of visual receptor, e.g. certain points along a PRoW;
- Specific Viewpoints: a key or promoted viewpoint within the landscape possibly related to local visitor attractions or associated with a designated landscape or a cultural landscape; and
- Illustrative Viewpoints: where a particular effect may only be available from certain locations.

Not all of these types of viewpoints will necessarily be present or need to be considered in all appraisals. Generally, but not exclusively, the majority of viewpoints identified will be representative viewpoints. All of the viewpoints identified are public viewpoints. Whilst private locations, such as houses, were not visited during the field appraisal, an appraisal of the likely views from these properties and their visual context was made from nearby locations.

Viewpoint locations are shown in plan form and the views available from the selected viewpoints shown as photographs in the appraisal.

## Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects – General Approach

As defined in GLVIA3, landscape effects are those effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right, and visual effects are those effects on specific views and on the general amenity as experienced by people. The judgement made in respect of both landscape and visual effects is a combination of an appraisal of the sensitivity of the receptor against the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect.

The judgement to be made in respect of sensitivity is a combination of the susceptibility of those receptors to the specific change occasioned by the proposed development (for both landscape and visual receptors) along with the value attached to that receptor (again for both landscape and visual receptors). Similarly, the judgement to be made in respect of the magnitude of landscape and / or visual effects is derived from a combination of the size or scale of the effect(s); the duration of the effect(s); and whether such effect(s) is / are reversible (or not). The appraisal of landscape and visual effects give rise to separate considerations and these are set out in more detail below.

## Appraisal of Landscape Effects

In respect of the judgment to be made of the sensitivity of landscape receptors, the susceptibility to specific change for each landscape receptor is categorized as set out in the following tables.

| Table 4: Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receptor                                                 | Susceptibility of Receptor to Change                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                          | High                                                                                                                                             | Medium                                                                                                                                                    | Low                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Landscape Character                                      | A highly distinctive and coherent landscape character, with an absence of detracting or intrusive elements. Low or no capacity to accept change. | Distinctive character, with a general consistency, notwithstanding the presence of some detracting or intrusive elements. Some capacity to accept change. | Mixed character, where there is a lack of coherence and detracting or intrusive elements have become dominant or have eclipsed original character. Significant capacity to accept change. |
| Designated Areas                                         | National designated Landscape such as National Park and AONB                                                                                     | Local landscape designations (e.g. AGLV/Areas of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI) (or similar)                                                           | Not designated                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Landscape Features                                       | Largely or completely intact, in good condition                                                                                                  | Largely in moderate condition – may be in process of improvement                                                                                          | Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use.                                                                                           |
| Aesthetic / Perceptual Aspects                           | Recognised formally as a coherent area/ feature of aesthetic attraction                                                                          | Some areas/ features of aesthetic attraction                                                                                                              | Not noted for aesthetic qualities                                                                                                                                                         |

The value for each landscape receptor is taken from Table 2 above. The overall sensitivity of each receptor is then categorised on a High/ Medium / Low/ Negligible basis. In respect of the magnitude of landscape effects, Table 5 sets out the judgements to be made, and the categories adopted in respect of the separate considerations of scale, geographic extent, duration.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

| Table 5: Magnitude of Landscape Effects |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Effect                          | Magnitude of Effects                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Size/Scale                              | Major                                                                                                                                                                              | Moderate                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Minor                                                                                                                                                                          | Negligible / None                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                         | Total loss of, or major alteration to key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or the introduction of elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape | Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or introduction of elements that would be evident, but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape | Limited loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or introduction of elements characteristic with the receiving landscape. | Very minor or no loss or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or introduction of elements characteristic within the surrounding landscape – approximating to a “no change” situation. |
| Geographic Extent                       | Extensive                                                                                                                                                                          | Major                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Localised                                                                                                                                                                      | Restricted                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                         | Effects would be experienced over many landscape character types or area                                                                                                           | Effects would extend over the major part of the landscape character type or area                                                                                                                                         | Effects would be confined to the immediate setting of the Appraisal Site                                                                                                       | Effects would not extend beyond the Appraisal Site                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Duration                                | Long                                                                                                                                                                               | Medium                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Short                                                                                                                                                                          | Construction Stage                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|                                         | Over 15 years after completion of construction works                                                                                                                               | 5-15 years after completion of construction works                                                                                                                                                                        | 0-5 years after completion of construction works                                                                                                                               | Restricted to construction stage (explain likely length of construction and any key stages)                                                                                                                                         |

The overall magnitude of landscape effects is then described on the basis of professional judgement on a High / Medium / Low / Negligible basis. The separate appraisals in respect of sensitivity and magnitude have been drawn together in the appraisal in a single tabular form. An overall conclusion in respect of landscape change – the likely significant landscape effects - is set out in the appraisal text. That overall conclusion is expressed by reference to the terms set out in the matrix at Table 6, showing the interrelationship between sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of landscape effect. The principal conclusions deriving from the tabular presentation are then summarised in the appraisal text.

| Table 6: Landscape Effects |                         |                 |                 |            |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Magnitude of Effect        | Sensitivity of Receptor |                 |                 |            |
|                            |                         | High            | Medium          | Low        |
|                            | Large                   | MAJOR           | MAJOR/ MODERATE | MODERATE   |
|                            | Medium                  | MAJOR/ MODERATE | MODERATE        | MINOR      |
|                            | Small                   | MODERATE        | MINOR           | NEGLIGIBLE |
|                            | Negligible              | MINOR           | NEGLIGIBLE      | NEGLIGIBLE |
|                            | None                    | NEUTRAL         | NEUTRAL         | NEUTRAL    |

In Table 6 the terms used to describe overall landscape effects are taken to have the following meanings, particularly in respect of the purpose of the Appraisal to identify likely significant environmental effects:

- Major: Would fundamentally change the existing landscape and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Major / Moderate: Would substantially change the existing landscape and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Moderate: Would bring about some change to the existing landscape but would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Minor: Would entail only limited change to the existing landscape and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Negligible: Would entail negligible change to the existing landscape and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Neutral: Would be approximate to a no-change situation.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

## Appraisal of Visual Effects

In respect of the judgment to be made of the sensitivity of visual receptors, the susceptibility to specific change for each landscape receptor is categorised as set out below.

| Table 7: Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Visual Receptor                               | Susceptibility of Specific Change | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Residential Property                                  | High                              | Residential properties are considered the most sensitive of potential visual receptors and are thus accorded a High susceptibility. It is an established tenet that the planning system does not serve to protect private interests; the issue is not whether owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties would experience financial or other loss (including visual effect) from a particular development but whether such development would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings which ought to be protected in the public interest. Thus, in seeking to assess the visual effects of development account should be taken of the effects on residential property, but it is pertinent to note that purely private interests may carry less weight than public interests. |
| Commercial Property / Places of Employment            | Low to Medium                     | Indoor workers are likely to have a Low susceptibility; outdoor workers (e.g. in agriculture) a Medium susceptibility.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Public Roads                                          | Low to Medium                     | The degree of susceptibility will vary according to the nature of the road and its primary purpose for users. Motorways and trunk roads are taken to have a Low susceptibility; A class roads a Low to Medium susceptibility, and all other roads a medium susceptibility.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Public Rights of Way / Cycleways                      | High                              | The degree of susceptibility will vary according to the nature of the PRoW and its primary purpose for users. Bridleways and PRoW designated locally as specific routes are taken to have a High susceptibility.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|                         |                |                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Informal Paths          | Medium to High | Informal paths have been taken to have a Medium to High susceptibility.                                                                                                                    |
| Public Open Space       | High           | Users of areas of POS are likely to be at leisure, and thus such areas are taken to have a High susceptibility.                                                                            |
| Cultural Heritage Sites | High           | Users of areas of cultural heritage sites are likely to be at leisure, and thus such areas are taken to have a High susceptibility.                                                        |
| Recreational Land       | Medium         | Users of recreational land are likely to be at leisure but are taken to be focussed primarily on the recreational activity, and thus such areas are taken to have a Medium susceptibility. |

The value of views is categorized as set out below:

| Table 8: Criteria for Value of Views |                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Magnitude                            | Criteria                                                                                                         |
| High                                 | A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on OS map or marked on a tourist map) or one noted in literature |
| Medium                               | A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor type                                            |
| Low                                  | Undistinguished or unprepossessing view                                                                          |

In respect of the magnitude of visual effects, Table 9 below sets out the judgements to be made, and the categories adopted in respect of the separate considerations of scale, geographic extent, duration, and reversibility.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

| Table 9: Criteria for Determination of Visual Effect |                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of Effect                                       | Magnitude of Effects                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Size/Scale                                           | Major                                                                                                                   | Moderate                                                                                                                            | Minor                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Negligible / None                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                      | The proposals form a significant and immediately apparent part of the view that will change its overall character.      | The proposals will form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall view and will be readily noticed by the observer. | The proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view, which might be overlooked by the casual observer. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the view. | Only a very small Part (or no part) of the proposal will be discernible and / or it will be at such a distance that it will be scarcely appreciated, and consequently it will have very little/ no effect on the view. |
| Geographic Extent                                    | Extensive                                                                                                               | Major                                                                                                                               | Localised                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Restricted                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                      | Effects would affect all the visual receptor/ and/ or would be seen at close distance.                                  | Effects would extend over the major parts of the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at medium distance.                          | Effects would be confined to part/s of the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at long distance.                                                                                                                | Effects would be confined to edges of/ glimpse views from the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at long distance.                                                                                                  |
| Duration                                             | Long                                                                                                                    | Medium                                                                                                                              | Short                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Construction Stage                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                      | The visual effect, even considering mitigation works, will still obtain 15 years after completion of construction works | The visual effect, taking into account mitigation works, will obtain for between 5-15 years after completion of construction works  | The visual effect, taking into account mitigation works, will obtain for up to 5 years after completion of construction works                                                                                     | Restricted to construction stage (explain likely length of construction and any key stages)                                                                                                                            |
| Reversibility                                        | Irreversible                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                     | Reversible                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                                      | The development will entail a permanent effect on the view.                                                             |                                                                                                                                     | If the development was de-constructed/ demolished the existing view (i.e. without development) would be returned.                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

The overall magnitude of visual effects is then described on the basis of professional judgement on a High / Medium / Low / Negligible basis. The separate appraisals in respect of visual sensitivity and magnitude have been drawn together in the appraisal in a single tabular form. An overall conclusion in respect of visual change – the likely significant visual effects - is set out in the appraisal text. That overall conclusion is expressed by reference to the terms set out in the matrix at Table 10, showing the interrelationship between sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of visual effect. The principal conclusions deriving from the tabular presentation are then summarised in the appraisal text.

| Table 10: Visual Effects |                         |                |                |            |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Magnitude of Effect      | Sensitivity of Receptor |                |                |            |
|                          |                         | High           | Medium         | Low        |
|                          | Large                   | MAJOR          | MAJOR/MODERATE | MODERATE   |
|                          | Medium                  | MAJOR/MODERATE | MODERATE       | MINOR      |
|                          | Small                   | MODERATE       | MINOR          | NEGLIGIBLE |
|                          | Negligible              | MINOR          | NEGLIGIBLE     | NEGLIGIBLE |
|                          | None                    | NEUTRAL        | NEUTRAL        | NEUTRAL    |

In Table 10 the terms used to describe overall visual effects are taken to have the following meanings, particularly in respect of the purpose of the Appraisal to identify likely significant environmental effects:

- Major: Would fundamentally change the existing view and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Major/ Moderate: Would substantially change the existing view and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Moderate: Would bring about some change to the existing view but would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Minor: Would entail only limited change to the existing view and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Negligible: Would entail negligible change to the existing view and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Neutral: Would be approximate to a no-change situation.

# APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

## Overall Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects

The separate conclusions in respect of likely significant landscape and visual (as described above) are set out in the appraisal text.

## Visual Baseline Conditions

The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- Identification and field appraisal of potential receptors within the visual envelope and an appraisal of their sensitivity.
- Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors.

The visual appraisal involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context within which views initially appear to be set, followed by Site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the proposed development area in such views.

## Methodology for Preparation of Photographs

The Site survey includes a photographic record of the viewpoints. At each of the viewpoints the following details are recorded;

- The grid reference (of the viewpoint);
- The viewer height (measured to the lens of the camera);
- The date (of survey);
- The distance to the development (from the viewpoint).

The photographs have been taken using a digital SLR camera with a 50mm fixed focal length lens, giving a focal length equivalent to 75mm on a 35mm film camera. The photographs were taken in accordance with guidance outlined in the document 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Technical Guidance Note 06/19' (Landscape Institute; 2019).

# GET IN TOUCH

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