

LAND OFF NETHERLEY ROAD, TARBOCK GREEN

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

SEPTEMBER 2019



Pegasus
Group

01 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Tarbock Development Limited. This appraisal accompanies a planning application for 14 live-work units on previously developed land (Sterling Inks) within the Green Belt.
- 1.2 An application for 14 homes on the site was previously submitted (Ref: 16/00481/FUL). The application was withdrawn due to concerns on the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The submitted masterplan is included in Appendix B.
- 1.3 The report highlights relevant planning policy and landscape character assessments reviewed as part of a desk-top study in addition to survey work undertaken in the field. The analysis is pulled together in to a series of plans including a landscape framework / mitigation plan with the intention of guiding further iterations of the masterplan.
- 1.4 Given the context of the site, including the local topography and vegetation coverage as well as the proposed development, a 1km study area is considered to be appropriate.

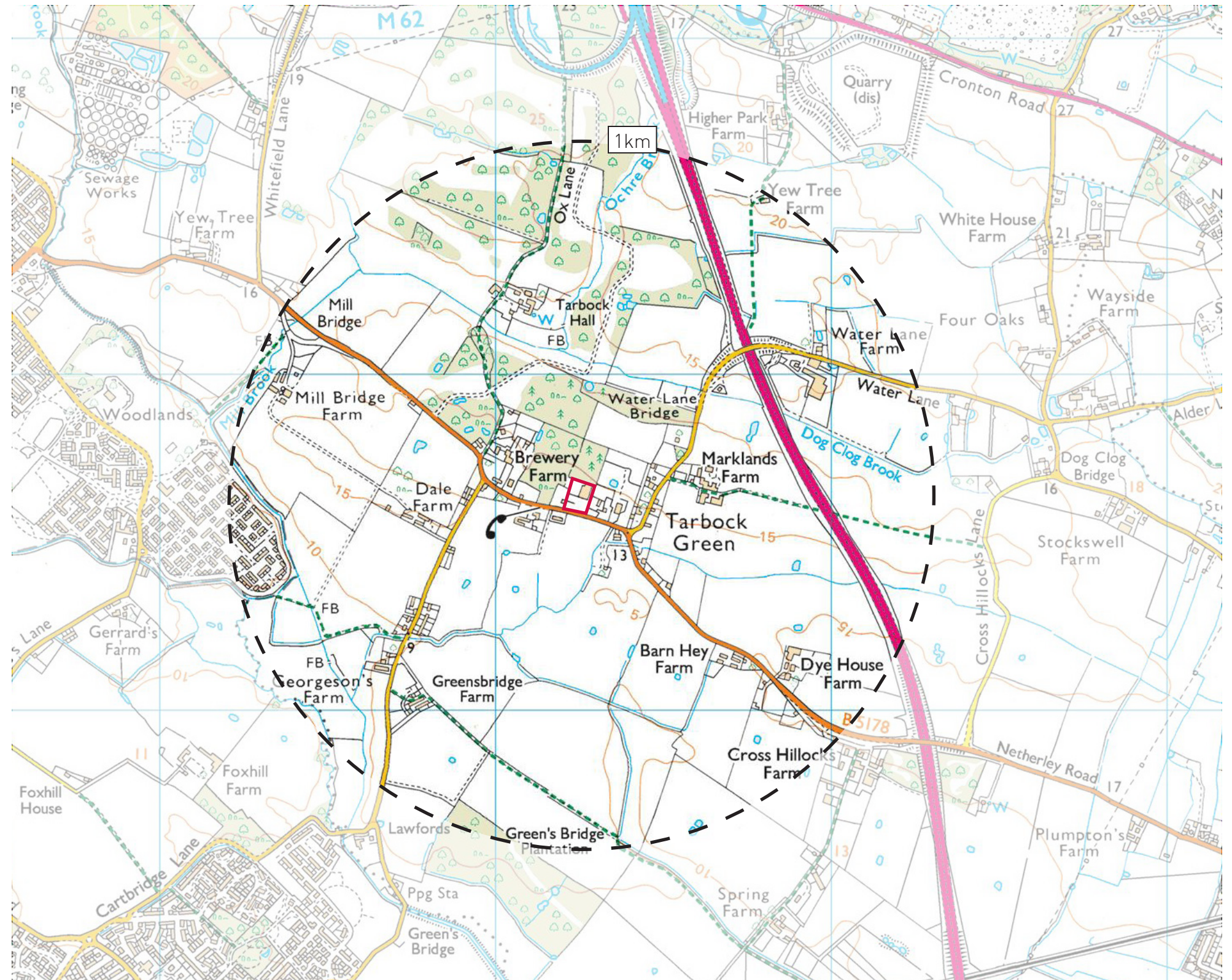


Figure 1: Site Location

02 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 The site is located in Tarbock Green, immediately north of Netherley Road and west of the A5300 (Knowsley Expressway). Tarbock Green is a small village and has several farms within and around its periphery.

Designations

2.2 The site is located in the Green Belt between Tarbock Green and Tarbock Village Conservation Areas. There is substantial tree planting to the west and north, partially covered by a Tree Preservation Order, the same area is also known as Brickwall Covert Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Tarbock Hall Farmhouse (GII) is located north west of the site whilst Rose Cottage (GII) is located to the south west.

2.3 The site located in Flood Zone 1.

Local Planning Policy

2.4 The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in 2016. Some of the key policies in relation to the site and proposed development are listed below along with relevant Supplementary Planning Documents:

- CS2 - Development Principles
- CS5 - Green Belt
- CS8 - Green Infrastructure
- CS17 - Housing Sizes and Design Standards
- CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
- CS20 - Managing the Borough’s Historic Environment
- CS21 - Green Spaces
- Design Quality in New Development SPD
- Trees and Development SPD
- New Residential Development SPD

Openness of the village

8.1 In the current local plan for Knowsley the village is washed over as Green Belt. Paragraph 140 of the NPPF states that if a village makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt then it should be included in the Green Belt. The openness of the village is discussed below.

5.1 The village is accessed from one of three roads, Water Lane, Netherley Road (from the south and west) and Greensbridge Lane. Once within the village views out to the Green Belt to the north are extremely restricted. Existing properties, woodland and tree planting heavily restrict views of the Green Belt to the north in the vicinity of the site. Views to the south are slightly more open, where hedgerows are lower and where there are spaces between buildings such as Tarbock Hall and Pets Country Manor (kennels and cattery). The section of the village along Water Lane offers some glimpses of the Green Belt to the

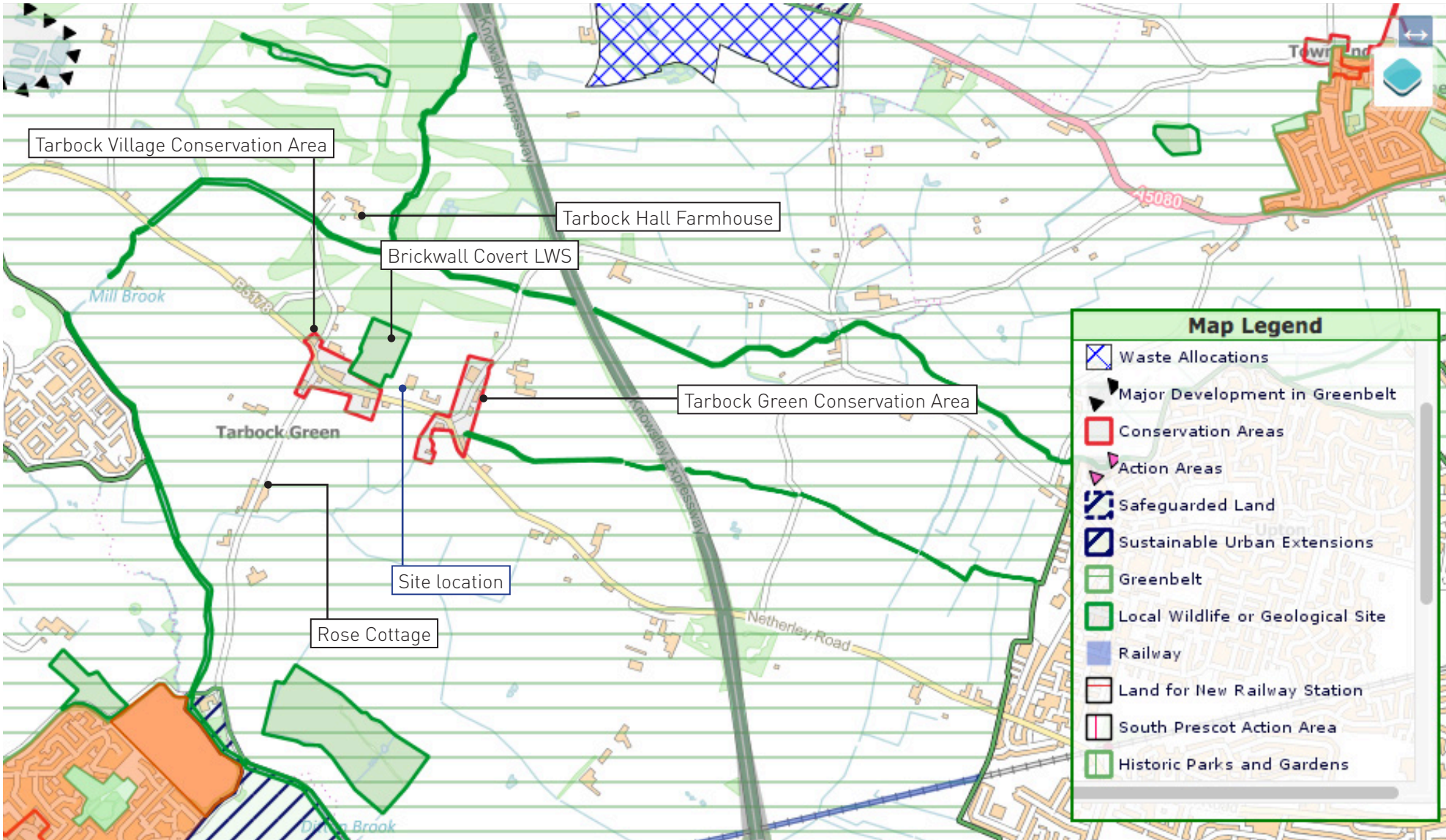


Figure 2: Extract from Knowsley Council Local Plan Policies Map

east where there are occasional gaps between properties, however to the west views of the surrounding Green Belt are generally restricted by vegetation or properties.

5.2 Tarbock Green and Tarbock Village, in particular, the area of the village north of Netherley Road, nor the site itself are considered to contribute significantly to the openness of the Green Belt. It is considered that if development is taken forward on the basis of the parameters set out in Figure 5 that there will be no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the buildings that are present on the site.

03 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

- 3.1 A baseline study has been undertaken to record the character of the landscape and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to it and to highlight any particular sensitivities that should be addressed in the masterplan.

National Landscape Character Assessment

- 3.2 The site falls within National Character Area 60, Mersey Valley. This national level assessment gives a broad impression of a region and provides a useful contextual overview of the character of the wider landscape, however, due to the small size of the proposal site, for the purpose of this assessment a greater degree of focus has been given to the Landscape Character Assessment provided by Knowsley Council.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

- 3.3 The site falls within Landscape Character Type 'Urban fringe farmed river plain' and Landscape Character Area, 'Tarbock' of the Landscape Character Assessment of Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Stage 1 - Characterisation. The assessment provides a description of the character area but hasn't progressed to stage 2. No further detail has been provided on landscape strategies, guidelines or the landscapes capacity to accommodate change.
- 3.4 The key features of this character area of relevance to the report are described below:

- *"Topography - predominantly flat broad valley with some gentle undulating landform ... ;*
- *Land Use - Predominantly agriculture cereal cropping with some market gardening and pasture in the north;*
- *Tree cover - Generally deciduous woodland in clumps with isolated trees along tracks, roads and old field boundaries. Some tree cover and shelterbelts around isolated dwellings, ponds and along roads such as the Knowsley Expressway;*
- *Settlement - Urban fringe settlement can be seen in the background with isolated farmsteads and residential dwellings scattered throughout the landscape. Mainly red brick with some render with pitched grey slate roofs;*
- *Other Distinguishing Features - The Ditton Valley area is surrounded by transport links including railways and roads including the Knowsley Expressway. Ambient noise from these transport routes detracts from the rural landscape. Some distant views of industry such as the chemical works and Fiddlers Ferry power station provide a visual intrusion on the rural landscape".*

- 3.5 Additional description goes on to say that the area generally remains at or below 20m AOD. There is a strong influence on character from a range of agricultural activities. The field pattern has been identified as "regular, large scale, often poorly defined by degraded or missing

hedgerows". Trees around regularly occurring field ponds, isolated trees and woodlands, particularly associated with Tarbock Village and farm buildings gives the impression that the area is more densely wooded than it is.

- 3.6 The assessment notes that Tarbock Green is the "largest cluster of buildings within a settlement pattern of isolated farmsteads and small groupings of residential dwellings". The assessment states that the surrounding settlements of Hough Green, Halewood and Netherly are prominent at the fringes, however, their influence over the character area is limited due to the flat landscape and presence of tree cover.
- 3.7 In terms of infrastructure the report states that "Transport routes such as the Knowsley Expressway and the A562, sever the landscape and have a greater negative impact. The presence of pylons also has a localised distracting influence on character".

Character of the site and immediate surroundings

- 3.8 The site is located within a broad river valley which is generally flat with subtle undulations. It is low lying, generally on or below 20m AOD. The site itself lies at approximately 15m AOD. Within the wider landscape surrounding the site, the landscape continues to remain fairly flat and low lying.
- 3.9 An ink factory operates on the site. There a number of warehouse buildings and sheds with large areas of hardstanding used for storage. The site is fenced off with a mix of heras and palisade fencing. Access is available from Netherly Road leading to a large area of macadam used for parking and storage. Areas of hardstanding extend along the western area to the rear of the site.
- 3.10 Within the wider landscape land uses include the small settlement at Tarbock Green and isolated, scattered farmsteads. Major transport networks surround the site including the M62 to the north, the Knowsley Expressway to the east, as well as the Liverpool to Warrington railway line and A562 to the south. Road noise is notable from parts of the landscape.
- 3.11 Vegetation on the site generally comprises scrub where it has developed on degraded areas of macadam and around the periphery. Mature trees are also present along the length of the western and eastern boundaries.
- 3.12 Outside of the site within the wider landscape vegetation comprises a range of woodland and arable fields. Immediately to the north west is a woodland protected by a Tree Preservation order (TPO), also known as Brickwall Covert LWS. Further south lies Greens Bridge Plantation, another LWS also protected by a TPO. Field ponds are a common feature often surrounded by mature trees, as well as riparian trees along water courses, this in combination with scattered trees and hedgerows creates the appearance of a landscape with a high level of tree cover.



Figure 3: Extract from Knowsley LCA, Figure 12, page 15

04 VISUAL EFFECTS

4.1 The visual envelope surrounding the site is tight due to the combination of the flat landscape, woodlands, scattered trees, vegetated field ponds and hedgerows along with scattered built form. This is illustrated opposite on Figure 4.

Views from the local road network

4.2 Views of the site from the local road network are very limited. The flat landform and frequent tree and hedgerow coverage largely prevent views towards the site. There are occasions when a glimpse is caught of the tops of the poplar trees along the eastern site boundary however direct views of the site itself are rare and only become available when directly outside the site on Netherley Road. Views of the site quickly dissipate the further away the rector travels in either direction along the road due to the combination of scattered buildings, mature trees and hedgerows. Greensbridge Lane has a combination of built form and hedgerows lining it, with clusters of trees around field ponds and along a watercourse in the landscape east of it that generally prevent views of the site. Water Lane to the east of the site also has no direct view of the site; occasionally the tops of the poplar trees along the eastern site boundary are observed.

4.3 Viewpoints 02, 03, 04, 07, 09 and 10 illustrate a range of views from the local road network.

Views from Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

4.4 Views towards the site from the local network of footpaths are rare. The combination of the flat landform, intervening vegetation and built form generally limit views of the site. The poplar trees that line the eastern boundary are a prominent feature and the tops of these trees can be observed from some locations, however, direct views in to the site area are extremely unlikely.

4.5 Viewpoints 01, 04, 05, 06, 08, 13 and 14 demonstrate typical views available from nearby footpaths.

Views from Residential Properties

4.6 There is limited opportunity for views of the site from residential properties. The house situated immediately west of the site is unlikely to experience views of the development as it is set within a garden containing mature trees. Part of the facade of this property is visible from the site but there do not appear to be any windows on this part of the eastern elevation. Similarly another residential property to the east of the site is orientated to the south and set in a curtilage of mature trees. It is unlikely that the properties further east on Water Lane will experience direct views of the site, they may get glimpses of the tops of the poplar trees along the eastern boundary. It is possible that residents living in the Brewers Cottages may experience glimpses of the site, however a mature tree at the end of the drive to Yewtree House may filter views. The cottages are orientated to the north. Further west properties north of Greensbridge Lane are unlikely to experience views of the site due to the intervening area of woodland to the east.

4.7 In the wider landscape views of the site from settlements such as Netherley and Halewood to the west and south respectively, are prevented by intervening vegetation and built form within the landscape.

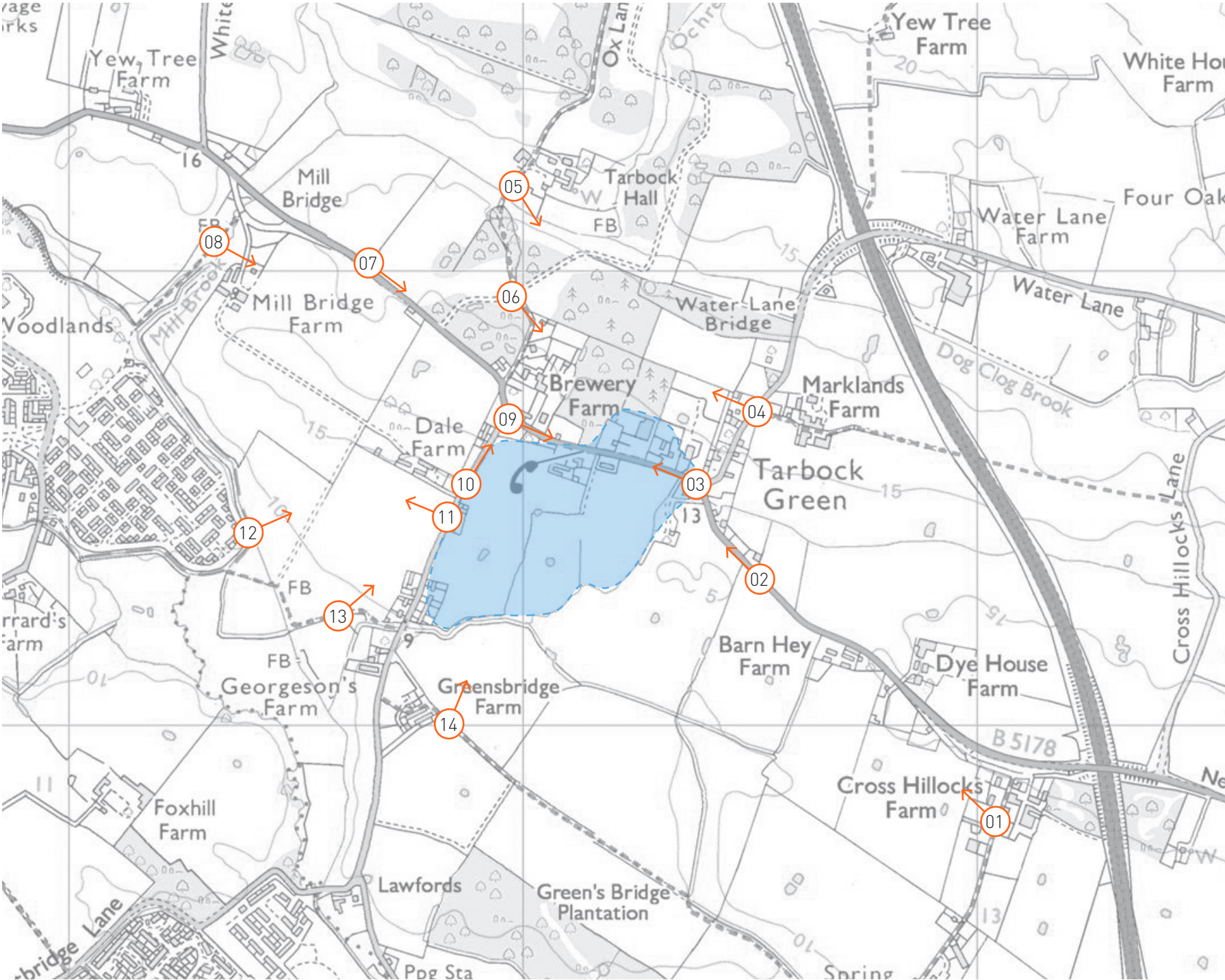


Figure 4: Visual Envelope and Viewpoint Locations

KEY

Approximate Visual Envelope

Viewpoint Locations

05 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 5.3 The Landscape Framework Plan opposite summarises the initial findings of this landscape appraisal by indicating a potential plot in which to site development and mitigation measures that aim to address the following:
- Potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - Potential impact on the character of the street and setting of the adjacent Conservation Areas.
- 5.4 The site is very well contained to the west, north and south by existing vegetation. The site is slightly more open to the south as the boundary is only partially vegetated.
- 5.5 In the vicinity of the site and the Conservation Areas along Netherley Road, scattered properties generally set within gardens containing mature trees, and set back from the street are characteristic. Hedgerows are also a typical boundary to the frontage of properties and of fields adjacent to the road.
- 5.6 The mitigation measures proposed for the site focus around the southern boundary where it is most open. The suggested development area is set back in line with adjacent properties. This allows space for structure planting to be set behind a new hedgerow that could line the frontage of the site. This will provide further screening of the site from the immediate area to the south, reducing the potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt and will ensure proposals are in keeping with the existing character of this part of the road and the Conservation Areas.
- 5.7 Tree planting could be extended along the access road in to the site and be introduced within gardens to break up development and retain a wooded character to the site.
- 5.8 Development should not exceed the total area of the existing buildings on site and should remain within the existing developed area including buildings and hardstandings.
- 5.9 The parameters set out in Figure 5 have the potential to improve the site by removing existing development comprising a factory and other ancillary buildings, sheds and external storage areas and creating a tidy frontage to the site in keeping with the character of the local area, without having any greater impact on openness of the Green Belt than the existing development.
- 5.10 In summary the site offers the potential for redevelopment of previously developed land that will improve the appearance of the village without having a detrimental effect on the character or setting of the existing conservation areas or any greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.



Figure 5: Landscape Framework Plan

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWPOINTS FROM SURROUNDING AREA



Viewpoint 01 : View looking north west from footpath TA/11/1 at Cross Hillocks Farm



Viewpoint 02 : View looking north west from Netherley Road, south of Tarbock Green village



Viewpoint 03 : View looking west from Netherley Road east of the site

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWPOINTS FROM SURROUNDING AREA



Viewpoint 04 : View looking west from the footpath leading through Marklands Farm adjacent to Water Lane (note footpath shown on OS mapping but not on Knowsley’s Definitive Map)



Viewpoint 05 : View looking south east from Footpath TA/8/2 south of Tarbock Hall



Viewpoint 06 : View from Footpath TA/8/2 looking south east

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWPOINTS FROM SURROUNDING AREA



Viewpoint 07 : View looking south east from Netherley Road west of Mill Bridge Farm



Viewpoint 08 : View looking south east from Footpath TA/3/1 north of Mill Bridge Farm



Viewpoint 09 : View looking east from the Netherley Road / Greensbridge Lane junction within the Conservation Area boundary

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWPOINTS FROM SURROUNDING AREA



Viewpoint 10 : View looking north from Greensbridge Lane



Viewpoint 11 : View looking west from Greensbridge Lane



Viewpoint 12 : View looking east from Winster Drive

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWPOINTS FROM SURROUNDING AREA



Viewpoint 13 : View looking east from Footpath TA/2/3 west of Greensbridge Lane



Viewpoint 14 : View looking north east from Footpath TA/1/3

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWS FROM WITHIN SITE



Viewpoint A : View looking east from the north western corner of the site



Viewpoint B : View looking north from the northern area of the site



Viewpoint C : View looking south from the north eastern corner of the site

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWS FROM WITHIN SITE



Viewpoint D : View looking south from the southern area of the site



Viewpoint E : View looking west from the southern area of the site



Viewpoint F : View looking north from the south eastern corner of the site

APPENDIX A - PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

VIEWS FROM WITHIN SITE



Viewpoint G : View looking west from site boundary with Netherley Road



Viewpoint H : View looking east from site boundary with Netherley Road



Viewpoint I : View looking north from the site entrance

APPENDIX B - WITHDRAWN MASTERPLAN (REF: 16/00481/FUL)

