

# LAND AT CHIDSWELL, DEWSBURY, WEST YORKSHIRE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL STATEMENT & GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP ON BEHALF OF DAVID WILSON HOMES | FEBRUARY 2016 | YOR.2695\_001A



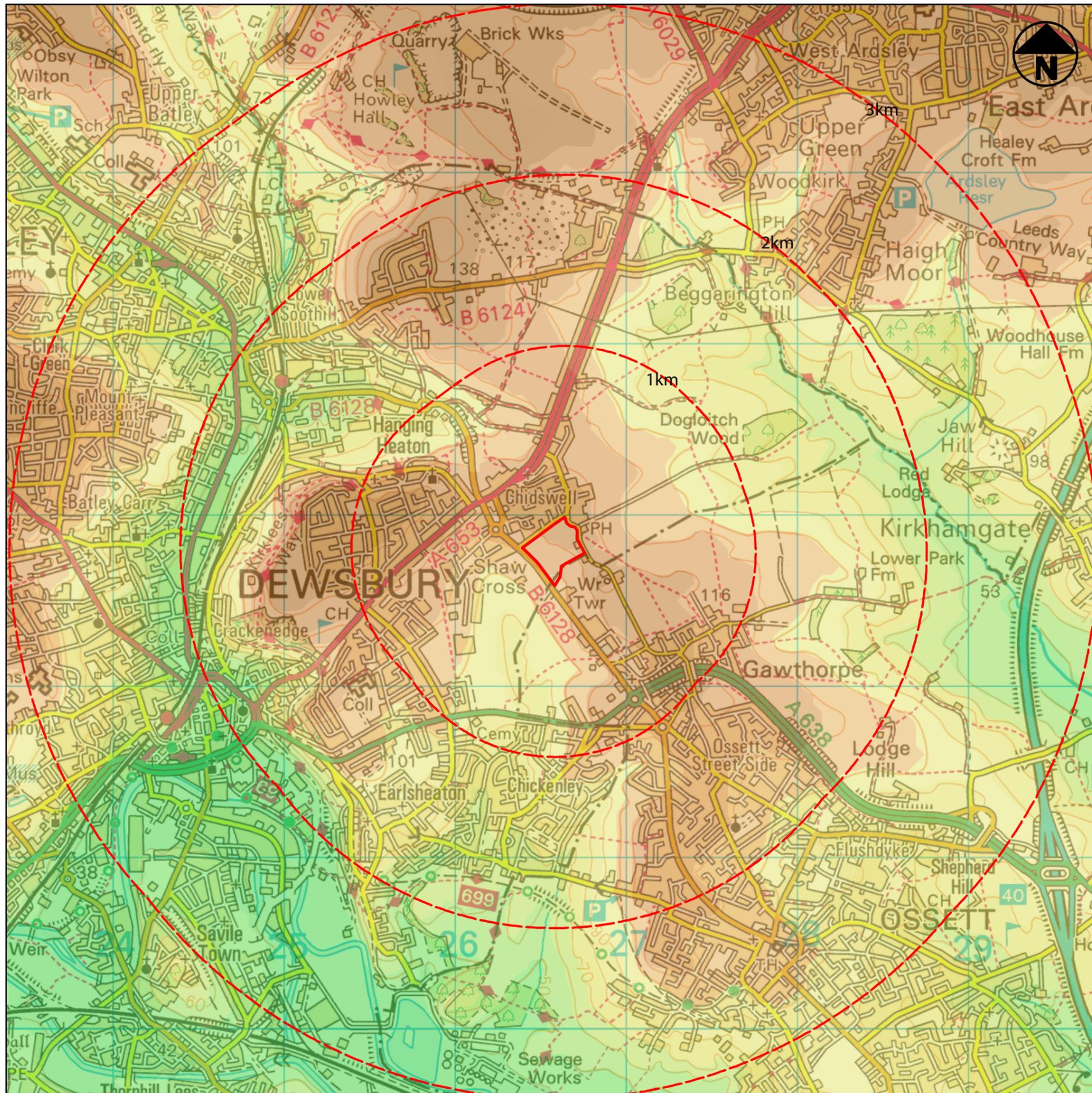
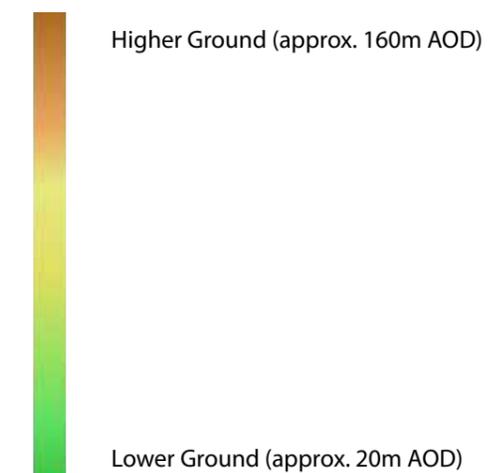


Figure 1: Site Location and Topography Plan

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape & Visual Statement and Green Belt review has been carried out by Pegasus Group on behalf of David Wilson Homes. It relates to an 8ha parcel of land on the southern edge of Chidswell, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire.
- 1.2 The site currently lies within the Green Belt and has recently been rejected as a site option (reference code: H559) within Kirklees Council's preparation of the new Kirklees Local Plan due for adoption in late 2017.
- 1.3 This review presents the landscape and visual context of the site as well as a consideration of the extent to which the site contributes to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 1.4 In considering the extent to which the site contributes to the purposes of the Green Belt, masterplanning considerations are presented to illustrate how development could respond positively within the landscape and benefit the wider Green Belt. These masterplanning considerations have been informed by the analysis of the landscape and visual context.
- 1.5 The review concludes by outlining the effects that would be incurred on the Green Belt as a result of development on the site.
- 1.6 This review is not a formal assessment of landscape and visual effects but does take into consideration the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (2013), published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (GLVIA).

Key:



## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site comprises approximately 8ha of arable farmland on the southern edge of Chidswell, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire. The site is contained on its north eastern, north western and south western boundaries by roads. These boundaries are defined by managed hedgerows and other variable boundary features including stone walls, post and rail fencing, post and wire fencing. Hedgerows vary in condition and intactness and are notably absent along certain sections. The south eastern boundary is defined by a small stream along which lies a gappy and intermittent hedgerow.
- 2.2 The site has a gently sloping western aspect lying as it does on the western slopes of a local ridgeline that aligns broadly with Chidswell Lane. This road forms the north eastern boundary of the site and as such, the site lies within a locally elevated location. Gawthorpe Water Tower stands prominently within 200m to the south east of the site and is a prominent landscape feature owing to this elevation.
- 2.3 Residential dwellings within Chidswell lie immediately beyond Windsor Road to the north of the site with the Dewsbury Rams Rugby League Stadium and Shaw Cross industrial development lying to the north west beyond Owl Lane (B6128). The restored site of former Shaw Cross Colliery and landfill site lies to the south west of the site although at the time of writing, it was noted that new dwellings were being built at Amberwood Close (part of a wider planning application 2014/62/90780/E, approved November 2014) to the south of the B6128.



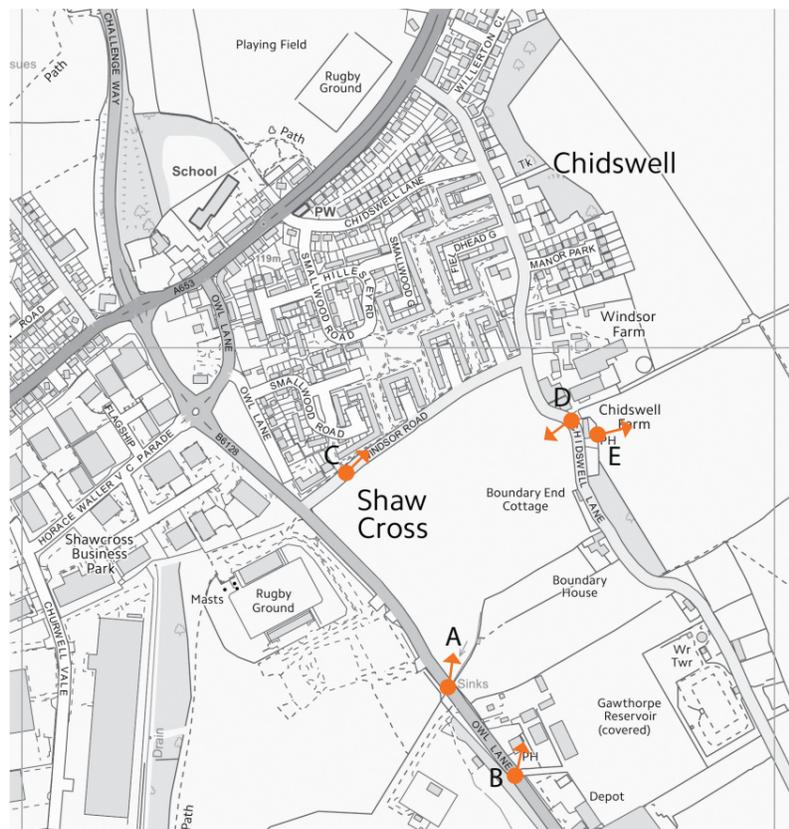
A - View from south western corner of site, from Owl Lane (B6128)



B - Industrial development to south of site, along Owl Lane (B6128)



C - Settlement edge character along Windsor Road and site boundary



D - View from eastern site boundary, Chidswell Lane



E - Character of the wider landscape to the east of the site, beyond Chidswell Lane and the ridgeline

### 3.0 LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

3.1 The site is located within the administrative boundaries of Kirklees Metropolitan Council although it is noted that the south eastern boundary of the site lies at the interface with Wakefield Council. Relevant landscape planning policies are therefore set out in the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (Saved Policies 2007).

3.2 The primary planning designation covering the site and local landscape setting is Green Belt. Green Belt policy was controlled under Policy D8 of the UDP. Following the review of the UDP in 2007 Policy D8 was not saved with reliance on the existing national planning guidance PPG2. This has subsequently been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

#### Green Belt and the NPPF

3.3 The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their 'openness and their permanence'. The NPPF requires that local planning authorities, when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, should also take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.

3.4 The NPPF identifies that the Green Belt serves five purposes as follows:

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

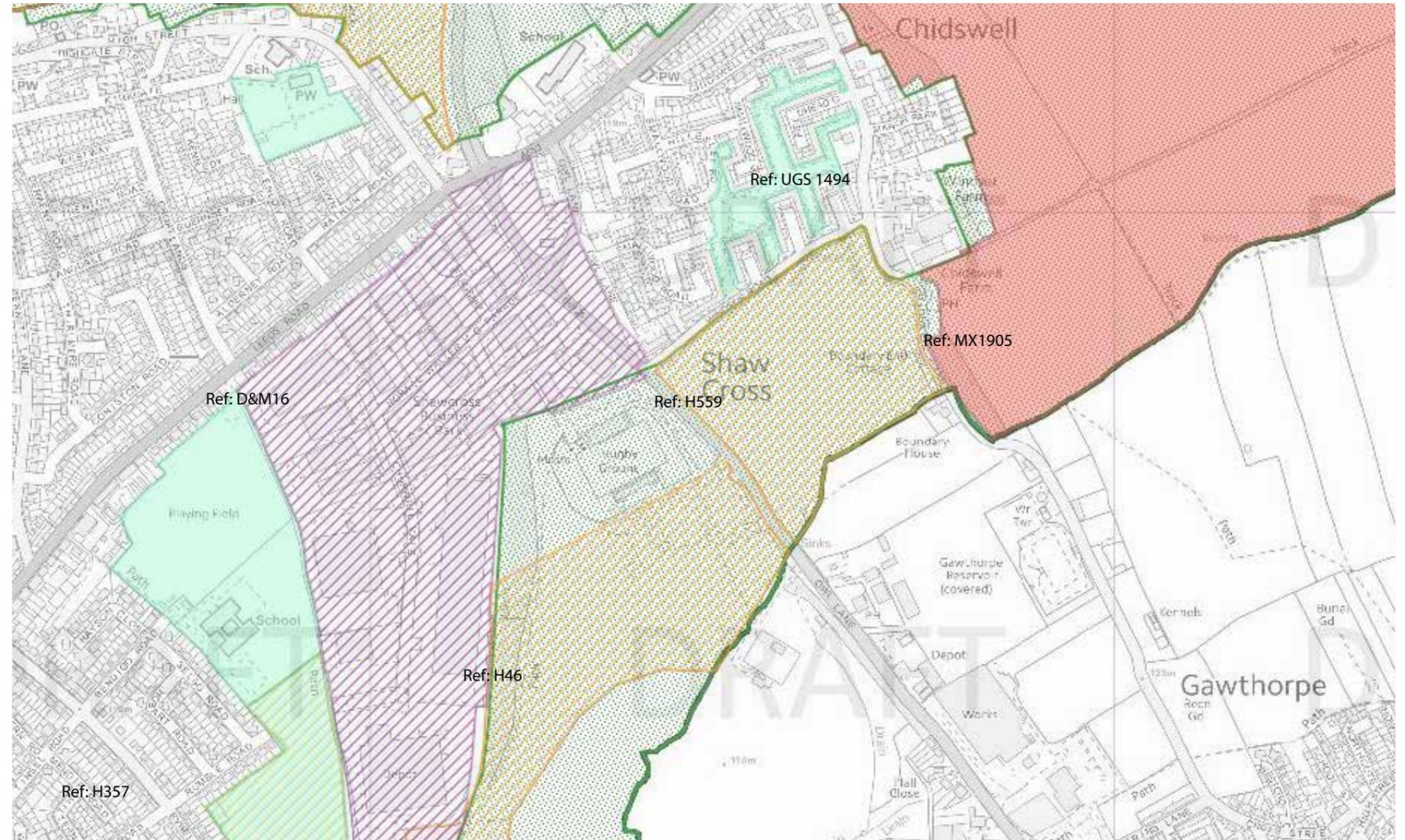
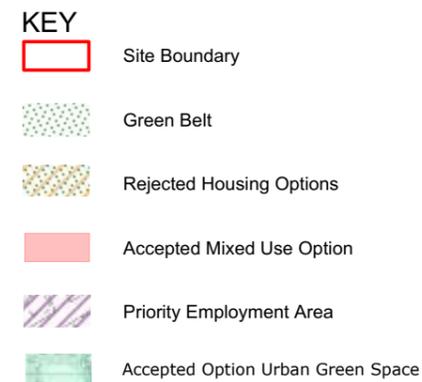


Figure 2: Extract from Kirklees Local Plan Map



## 4.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.1 The following section provides an overview of the landscape character of the site and its locality. Different combinations of the physical, natural and cultural components (including aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects) of the landscape and their spatial distribution create the distinctive character of landscapes in different places.

4.2 When considering the landscape character, a number of published documents have been used as a reference. Published landscape character assessments that cover the site have been interrogated and are detailed below

- National Character Area Profiles (2013-14); and
- Kirkles District Landscape Character Assessment (2015).

### Landscape Value

4.3 The site is typical of the local agricultural landscape and settlement fringe character around Chidswell. It is not subject to any landscape designations, although, as noted, it does fall within the Green Belt. There are no listed buildings or identified historical interest associated with the site. The site is not accessible to the public for recreation purposes. The site forms part of a gently undulating landscape on the edge of Dewsbury. A large number of large scale industrial buildings and warehouses lie to the west of the site, beyond the Dewsbury Rams rugby stadium. Immediately to the south lies a garden nursery with large glasshouses present. Further large scale industrial buildings/warehouses are located to the south, beyond. Settlement adjoins the site along its north western edge, and large scale farm buildings sit to the north east. A new housing development (Amberwood Chase) lies to the south west of the site. The site is strongly influenced by the surrounding urban edge development and large scale industrial buildings. In addition, and as previously explained earlier within this report, a large area of Mixed Use development has been identified within the Draft Local Plan - September 2015, on the Accepted Options plan, immediately adjacent to the east of the site. This area would cover a large area to the north east of the site, and extend as far south as the site boundaries. It has been judged therefore that the landscape value of the site is low.

### Landscape Features and Elements

4.4 Land form across the site slopes from north east to south west and is gently undulating. A small stream marks the south eastern boundary, however no other known watercourses cross the site. Landform and drainage are fairly typical of the surrounding landscape. Vegetation comprises arable crops, with recently cut hedgerows, typically hawthorn, defining the site boundaries. A stone wall defines a short section of the north eastern boundary, and the south western boundary. The most southerly part of the south western boundary is more open, with rough grassland vegetation defining this edge. A mix of scrub, hedgerow and rough grassland define the south eastern edge, alongside the stream. A block of woodland lies to the east of the site, beyond Chidswell Lane. Windsor Road and residential properties on the settlement edge of Chidswell flank the north western boundary, with a large

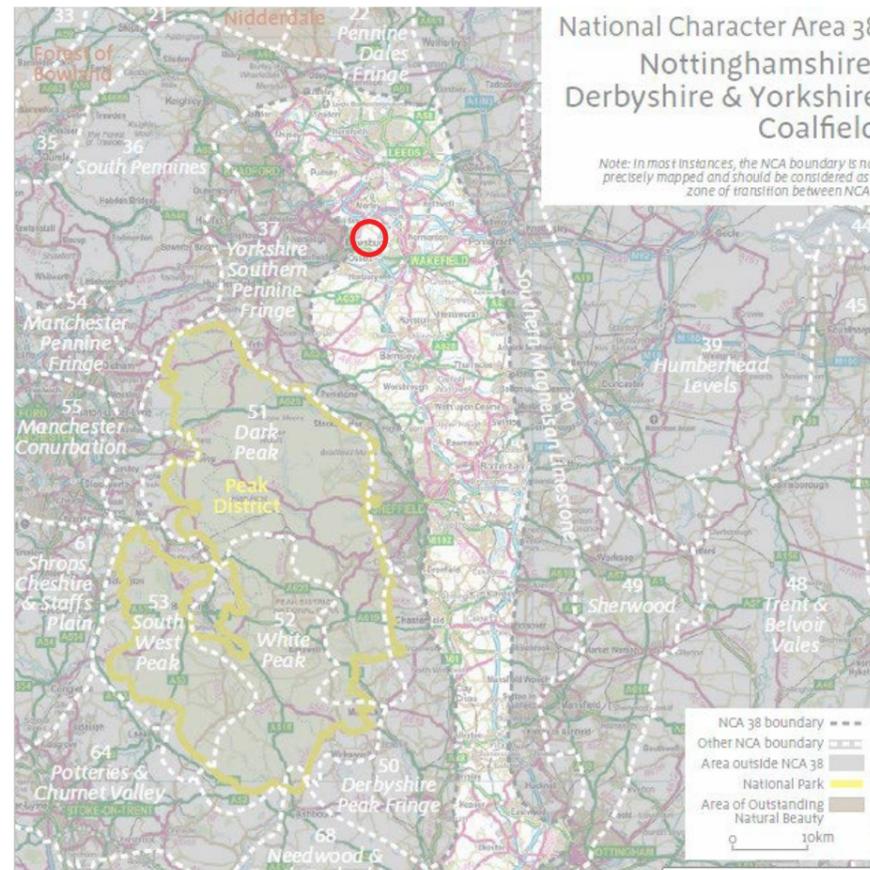


Figure 3: Extract of Natural England NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield(2013) with approximate site location circled

farmstead located at the north eastern corner. Scattered residential buildings and a public house are located along Chidswell Lane to the north east, and a distinctive tall water tower is located beyond the site to the south east. This forms a notable feature in the landscape. New housing development (Amberwood chase) immediately joins the south western part of the site, and extends south west along the settlement edge of Dewsbury. Larger scale buildings including Dewsbury Rams rugby stadium and large warehouses lie to the west. Farmland continues to the south, with a garden nursery and large scale industrial buildings located further south along the B6128 (Owl Lane).

### Landscape Character

#### National level landscape character

4.5 The site falls entirely within National Character Area (NCA) 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield as defined in the Natural England character area profile published in 2013. The key characteristics of the landscape character area are detailed below from the National Character Area Profile:

- A low-lying landscape of rolling ridges with rounded sandstone escarpments and large rivers running through broad valleys, underlain by Pennine Coal Measures.

- Local variations in landscape character reflecting variations in underlying geology.
- Several major rivers flow through the rural and urban areas of the NCA, generally from west to east in broad valleys.
- A mixed pattern of built-up areas, industrial land, pockets of dereliction and farmed open country.
- Small, fragmented remnants of pre-industrial landscapes and more recent creation of semi-natural vegetation, including woodlands, river valley habitats and subsidence flashes, with field boundaries of clipped hedges or fences.
- Many areas affected by urban fringe pressures creating fragmented landscapes, some with a dilapidated character, separated by substantial stretches of intact agricultural land in both arable and pastoral use.
- A strong cultural identity arising from a history of coal mining, steel making and other heavy industry which resulted from the close relationship between underlying geology and resource availability, notably water power, iron ore and coal.
- Features of industrial heritage such as mills, goits, tips, old railway lines, canals and bridges are evident, along with former mining villages.
- Many large country houses and estates established by wealthy industrialists in the 18th and 19th centuries and ancient monuments create focal points and important recreational opportunities within the landscape, such as Bretton Hall, Wentworth, Woodhouse, Temple Newsam, Nostell Priory, Bolsover Castle and the ruins of Codnor Castle.
- Extensive urbanisation, such as in the major cities of Leeds and Sheffield, with terraced and back-to-back housing and grand 19th-century municipal buildings and churches at their centres, now surrounded by extensive housing and industrial development.
- Widespread influence of transport routes, including canals, roads and railways, with ribbon developments emphasising the urban influence in the landscape.
- An extensive network of multi-user trails on former railway lines and canal towpaths, such as the Trans Pennine Trail and the Ebor Way.
- Continuing development pressure including land renewal and regeneration projects, especially along river corridors and around towns.

4.6 This national scale assessment is useful in providing a broad contextual overview of landscape character, however it is not intended to be applicable at a site specific level. Despite this, a number of these characteristics are of relevance to the landscape local to the site.

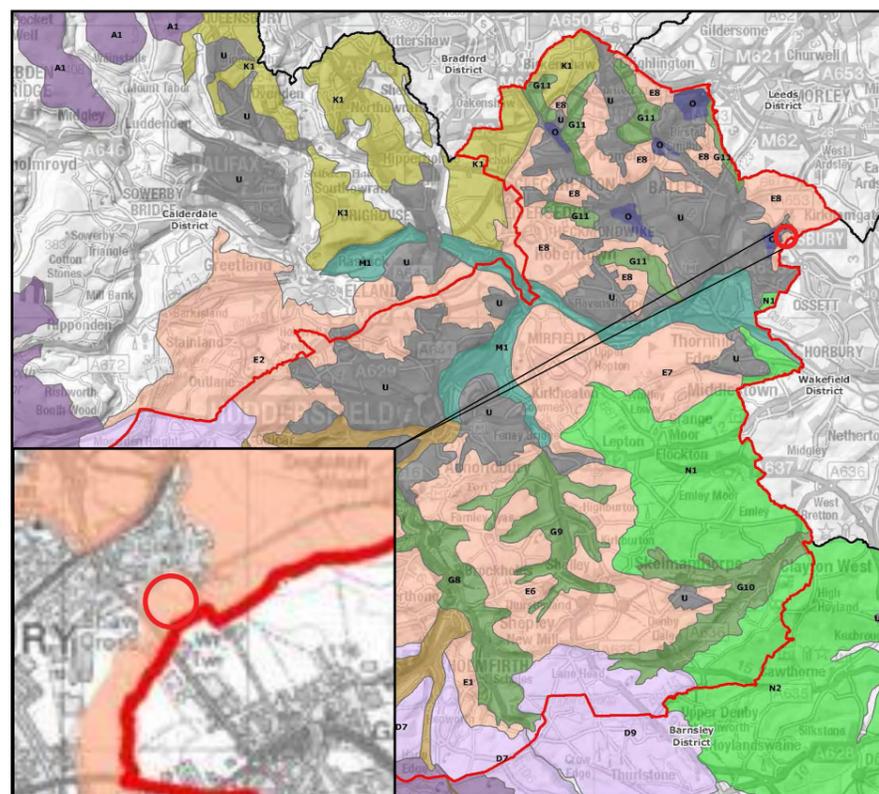


Figure 4: Extract of Landscape Character Types and Areas, from the Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment (2015), with approximate site location circled

#### Local level landscape character

3.1 The site and study area falls entirely within the scope of the Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment (2015) and is identified as falling within Landscape Type E8 - Batley - Dewsbury Rural Fringes. The site lies immediately adjacent to the District boundary, which adjoins its southern edge.

4.1 It is noted that within the character document that the key characteristics of Landscape Type E8 - Batley - Dewsbury Rural Fringes are as follows:

#### Topography, geology and drainage

- Gently undulating land, found between approximately 100 and 200 metres altitude. The land typically falls in elevation towards the surrounding urban areas.
- Local variations in topography create areas of more complex landform, including some elevated ridges and hill summits and parts where the slopes are deeply incised by valleys.
- Bedrock geology consists of the Pennine Coal Measures formation typical of much of the District, with areas of alluvium deposits associated with watercourses.

- To the west a number of tributaries flow into the River Calder, including Nun Brook.

#### Woodland cover

- Varied tree cover, with trees in shelterbelts, along field boundaries and some areas of broadleaved woodland, which follow streams.

#### Land use and field patterns

- Typical pattern of small scale grassland pastures with some more limited areas of more intensive arable cultivation.
- Urban expansion and associated land uses spreading into the farmland landscape, including horse paddocks and equestrian enterprises.
- Mix of field boundary types including stone walls, hedgerows and fences.

#### Semi-natural habitats

- Isolated remnants of species-rich grasslands (hay meadow and wet pastures) exist within the improved grassland, including some wildflower meadows at Colliery Field in Oakwell Hall Country Park.
- Some of the areas of broadleaved woodland are also locally important for wildlife, including Dogloitch Wood and Dunn Wood.

#### Archaeology and cultural heritage

- There are numerous Listed Buildings and the fringes of Conservation Areas around Batley and Gomersal fall in this LCA. Traditional stone-built cottages, Victorian terraces and farmsteads provide a contrasting historic sense of place within the urban context.
- Part of the Grade II listed Kirklees Park is also located to the far west of this LCA, and the landscape includes the nationally important remains of a motte and bailey castle at Castle Hall Hill.
- Disused railways and industrial works provide evidence of the area's coal mining heritage.

#### Settlement and road pattern

- A fragmented landscape forming urban fringe pockets within and around the Dewsbury, Batley, Mirfield, Liversedge and Cleckheaton conurbation.
- A dense network of A roads, minor roads and narrow winding lanes link the LCA's small villages to the surrounding urban centres. The M62 forms a definitive boundary to the north and west.

#### Views and perceptual qualities

- There are distant views from elevated ridgelines (e.g. in Upper Batley) south towards Emley Moor (including its landmark transmission station)

and north towards the industry and urban development of Huddersfield.

- Some areas still retain a relative sense of tranquillity and rural character, however increasing urbanisation creates a landscape of transition.

4.2 The site and surrounding study area generally conform to the key characteristics of the character type E8. The site lies on gently undulating land, and comprises arable farmland on the edge of Chidswell. Large scale industrial and mixed use developments on the edge of this settlement have an influence on the overall character. The site has urban fringe character, and a closer affiliation with the settlement of Chidswell, rather than the more open countryside to the east. The most elevated part of the site lies along the north eastern boundary, which marks the higher point of a ridgeline which passes through this part of the landscape. Landform slopes south westerly across the site away from this ridgeline, and similarly slopes away to the east, beyond the site. This topography subtly defines the difference in character, with land to the east being more strongly characterised by open farmland, and land to the west (including the site) being more closely characterised by the settlement edge and urban elements.

## 5.0 VISUAL AMENITY

5.1 This section provides an overview of general viability of the site as well as identifying the key visual receptors to whom development of the site would most notably affect. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map has been produced using digital terrain data and a maximum development height of 10m above ground level to illustrate locations where views of the proposed development are theoretically available before the effect of screening elements such as buildings and vegetation are taken into account. It demonstrates the influence that the local topography has on theoretical views. A site visit has revealed that, the visual envelope is generally limited to within approximately 500m of the immediate site environs, with longer distance views available from a small number of locations, extending to an approximate maximum distance of 2.5km to the north east and east only and 1km to the south. An approximate area of key visibility has been illustrated. General observations noted during the site visit are as follows:

### VIEWS FROM THE NORTH

The majority of potential views from the north of the proposal would be restricted by the settlement of Chidswell in combination with topography, which slopes gently away to the north of Chidswell and south across the site. Views generally limited to the residential receptors along the settlement edge of Chidswell and motorists along Windsor Road and Chidswell Lane (as it travels north through the settlement). Longer views extend across farmland from the north east, and would be possible from the settlement edge of West Ardsley, local footpaths and the Leeds Country Way, as well as roads such as Bately Road. Although the site itself is not visible from here, due to landform descending across the site, development on the site would rise above the ridgeline.

### VIEWS FROM THE EAST

From the east partial views in the direction of the site extend across open and undulating farmland. Although the site itself is not visible from this direction, located beyond the ridgeline, development on the site would rise above this edge. Immediate, close distance views would be limited to users of Chidswell Lane and individual properties along this road, adjacent to the site.

### VIEWS FROM THE SOUTH

Close proximity views from the south are typically restricted to users of the B6128 (Owls Lane) on the approach to Dewsbury. Landform drops away across the open space formed by the spoil from the former Shaw Cross Colliery, further to the south, towards Chickenley. As such, topographical change restricts views from the south. Some residential receptors on the steeper sloping topography to the south of Wakefield Road, such as from Syke Lane and Westfield Avenue may have glimpsed and filtered views towards the site.

### VIEWS FROM THE WEST

From the west views would be limited to immediately adjacent receptors, including motorists along the B6128 (Owls Lane), recreational users of Dewsbury Rams rugby stadium, and residential receptors within the newly developed Amberwood Chase housing development. Beyond this, views are screened by this intervening development.

5.2 The following viewpoint photographs seek to illustrate the nature of views available.



Figure 5: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoint Locations

Approximate location of Site



New and emerging housing development (Amberwood Chase)

Dewsbury Rams rugby stadium

Owl Lane (B6128)

Settlement edge of Chidswell (properties along Windsor Road)

### PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 1

View looking north from Owl Lane (B6128), adjacent to entrance to Owl Lane Farm Nurseries

Approximate location of Site



Settlement edge of Chidswell (properties along Windsor Road)

Entrance to new and emerging housing development (Amberwood Chase)

The Huntsman Inn pub, at eastern site boundary

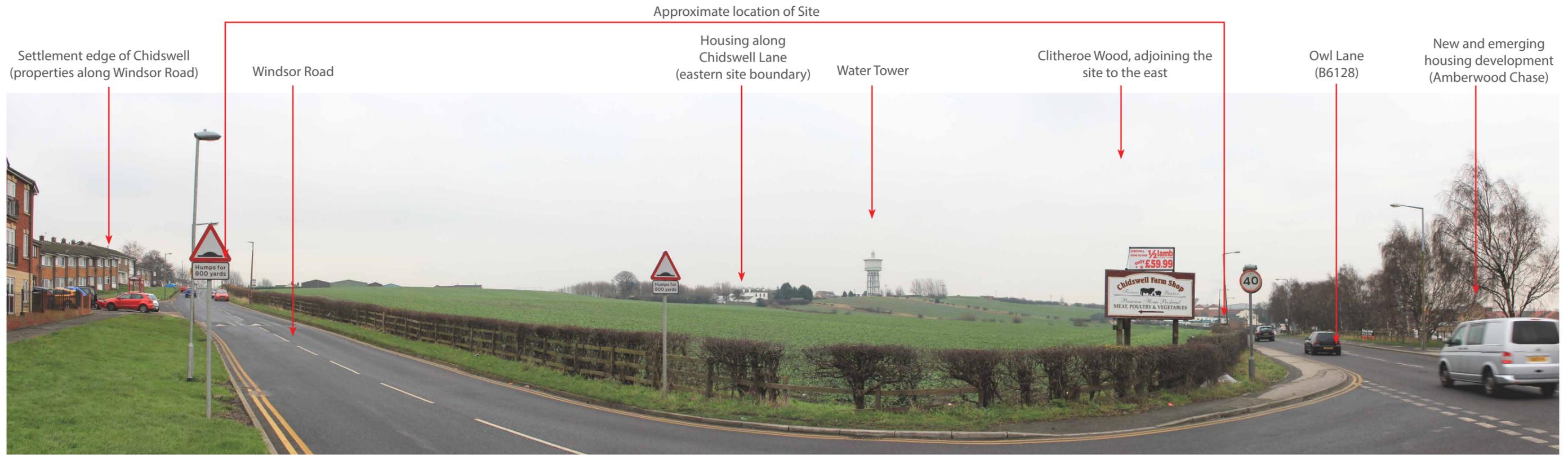
Housing along Chidswell Lane (eastern site boundary)

Owl Lane (B6128)

Water Tower

### PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 2

View looking north east from the edge of the new and emerging housing development (Amberwood Chase), just off Owl Lane (B6128)



**PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 3**

View looking west across the site, from the junction of Windsor Road and Owl Lane (B6128)



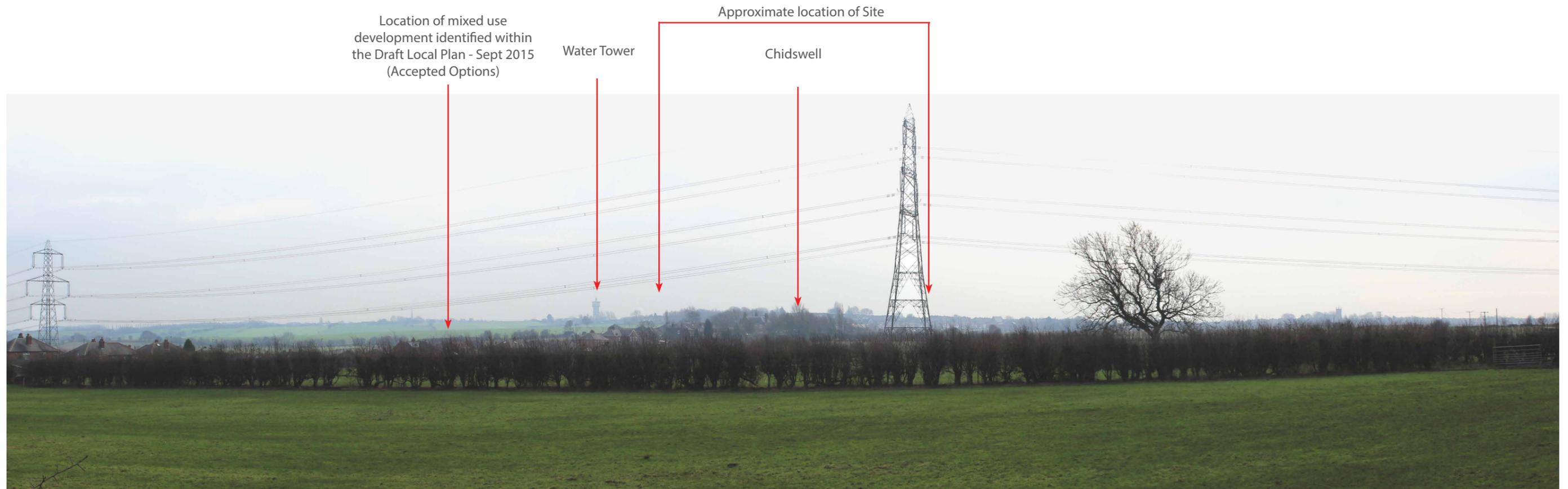
**PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 4**

View looking north west from local footpath (Ossett 3) near the settlement edge Gawthorpe (site not visible)



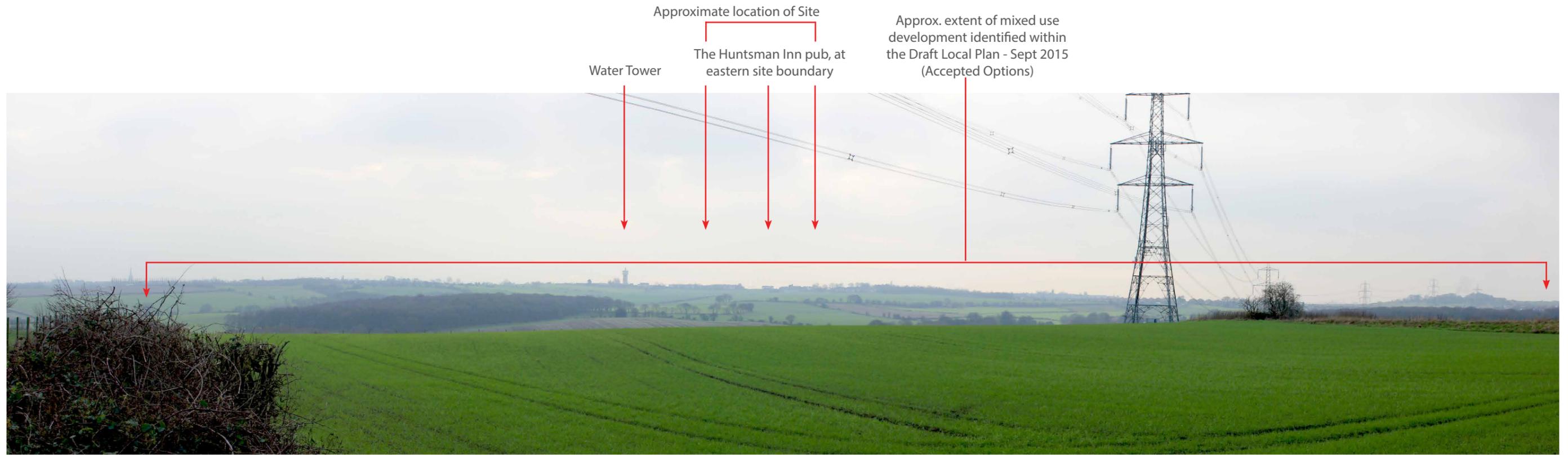
**PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 5**

View looking north east from Syke Lane, adjacent to cemetery.



**PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 6**

View looking south from the B6124 (Soothill Lane) on the edge of Woodkirk (site not visible)



### PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION 7

View looking south west from Batley Road, at the junction with Haigh Moor Road (corresponding with the Leeds Country Way), on the edge of West Ardsley (site note visible).



6.7 In terms of the edge review results, Appendix 4a of the 'Kirklees Draft Local Plan – Green Belt Review and Outcomes, November 2015 document provides outcomes of tests 1 to 2d (as shown in Extract 3) in relation to the site (identified as edge reference DE6) illustrated in Extract 2.

6.8 Critical analysis from this study against the purposes of the Green Belt is discussed further later in the report.

**Changing Green Belt Context in the immediate locality**

6.9 It is noted that to the west of the site, the first phase of a larger development (planning application 2014/62/90780/E, approved November 2014) has commenced. This site is identified within the Rejected Site Options Report under reference code: H46 – Land to the south west of, Dewsbury Rams RLFC, Owl Lane, Shaw Cross and was also rejected as a site option (see Figure 2).

6.10 It too received a 'red' score in relation to the 2015 existing Green Belt edge review and a 'red' overall site assessment score in relation to the Green Belt.

6.11 Appendix 4a of the 'Kirklees Draft Local Plan – Green Belt Review and Outcomes, November 2015 document provides more detail in relation to the site (identified as edge reference DE8) in relation to tests 1 to 2d, as illustrated in Extract 4.

6.12 It is also noted that an approximately 118ha area to the east of the site has been accepted as a mixed use site option (reference MX1905). This accepted site option area extends eastwards from Chidswell Lane adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site (see Figure 2).

6.13 It too received a 'red' scores in relation to the 2015 existing Green Belt edge review. Appendix 4a of the 'Kirklees Draft Local Plan – Green Belt Review and Outcomes' document provides more detail in relation to the site (identified as edge reference DE5) in relation to tests 1 to 2d, as illustrated in Extract 5.

**Kirklees Green Belt Review 2011**

6.14 An earlier Green Belt Review of various areas of Green Belt in Kirklees was undertaken in 2011. Within this review, the site forms part of potential Green Belt Release Area N12b – South Chidswell which included an area to the west of Chidswell in addition to the site. The area was assessed as having a 'moderately important' Green Belt role scoring 3 out of a possible 5 points as stipulated within the methodology of the review.

6.15 In conclusion, area N12b is described as "No merger between Chidswell and Ossett but helps prevent sprawl of Chidswell southwards. Part urban fringe but eastern area helps prevent encroachment into open countryside". (see extract 6).

6.16 Critical analysis from this study against the purposes of the Green Belt is discussed further later in the report.

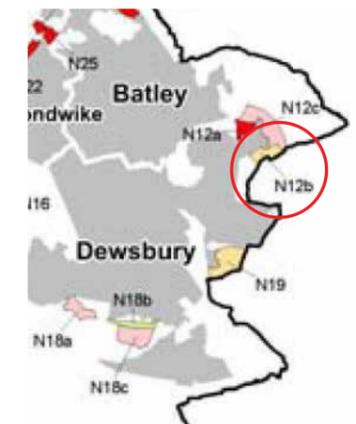
Ref.	TEST 1: CONSTRAINTS			Existing use	TEST 2: GREEN BELT PURPOSES				Conclusion	Test 2 score
	1a Topographical	1b Physical	1c Environmental		2a Prevents merging	2b Checks Sprawl	2c Safeguards from encroachment	2d Preserves setting & character		
DE8	None	None	Landfill gas	Grazing land	Restricted gap	Development would breach strong existing boundary	Undeveloped character of green belt in Wakefield provides visual separation but little scope for containment. New strong boundary would need to be found.	No impact	Would breach the existing strong boundary formed by edge of industrial development and trees.	5

Extract 4 - from Appendix 4a of the 'Kirklees Draft Local Plan – Green Belt Review and Outcomes, November 2015

Ref.	TEST 1: CONSTRAINTS			Existing use	TEST 2: GREEN BELT PURPOSES				Conclusion	Test 2 score
	1a Topographical	1b Physical	1c Environmental		2a Prevents merging	2b Checks Sprawl	2c Safeguards from encroachment	2d Preserves setting & character		
DE5	None	None	Protected trees	Cultivated land	Extensive gap	Potential for sprawl east of current boundary. Limited opportunities for containment.	Part of wider countryside	No impact	Limited potential to contain development. New strong eastern boundary would need to be found.	5

Extract 5 - from Appendix 4a of the 'Kirklees Draft Local Plan – Green Belt Review and Outcomes, November 2015

N12b South Chidswell	Prevents sprawl of Chidswell. Part of northern boundary and western edge adjoin existing built up area.	Western portion comprises urban fringe land whilst remainder forms part of larger area of open countryside to the east.	No relationship.	No merger of Chidswell with Ossett but helps prevent sprawl of Chidswell southwards. Part urban fringe but eastern area helps prevent encroachment into open countryside.	3
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Extract 6 - from Table 4 and Map 1 of the Green Belt Review 2011

## 7.0 SITE APPRAISAL AND LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

### Opportunities

- Characteristic landscape features present within the site (such as hedgerows and stone walling) offer potential to enhance the setting of the development.
- Opportunities to develop strong green infrastructure within the site and provide recreational linkages with the wider landscape.
- Potential to improve the approach to Chidswell from the south at this gateway location.
- Potential to 'round off the urban edge which is influenced in this locality by the new development to the west of Owl Lane

### Constraints

- The site is clearly visible (although it is noted that this is limited to locations in the immediate vicinity)
- Sensitive visual receptors such as residents and users of public footpaths lie within close proximity.
- 

### Masterplanning considerations

- 7.1 A zone plan has been used to describe key issues pertaining to each part of the site in terms of guiding a sensitive masterplanning.

#### Zone A

- 7.2 Undeveloped part of the site on the lower slopes that offers potential to achieve higher densities most discretely.

#### Zone B

- 7.3 An extension to zone A with no physical differences excepting being at a greater elevation. Development has the potential to be more conspicuous in this locality from locations to the east and masterplanning should seek to incorporate open space, lower densities and reduced building heights to minimise adverse effects.

#### Zone C

- 7.4 Comparable qualities to other zones but this edge would require sensitive masterplanning in terms of its relationship with Owl Lane on the approach into Chidswell. There is potential to retain and incorporate existing and established landscape features into the masterplanning layout and augment this through additional planting and open space.

#### Zone D

- 7.5 Potential to create a strong landscape buffer and new Green Belt boundary that will provide a less abrupt and more sensitive transition to the existing green belt this improving the character of the remaining green belt to the south.

#### Zone E

- 7.6 Comparable qualities to other zones but this edge would require sensitive masterplanning in terms of its relationship with the existing urban edge. There is potential to retain and incorporate existing and established landscape features into the masterplanning layout as well as create linkages with the urban greenspace network to the north.

### Access and linkages

- 7.7 Due to the proximity of the site to the local road network, access into the site would be available from Owl Lane, Windsor Road or Chidswell Lane.
- 7.8 The development of the site offers potential for strong linkages and green infrastructure improvements to be implemented including a connection between the adjacent urban greenspace to the north of Windsor Road and connections with the wider public footpath network to the east.
- 7.9 Connections could also be implemented with the new development to the west.

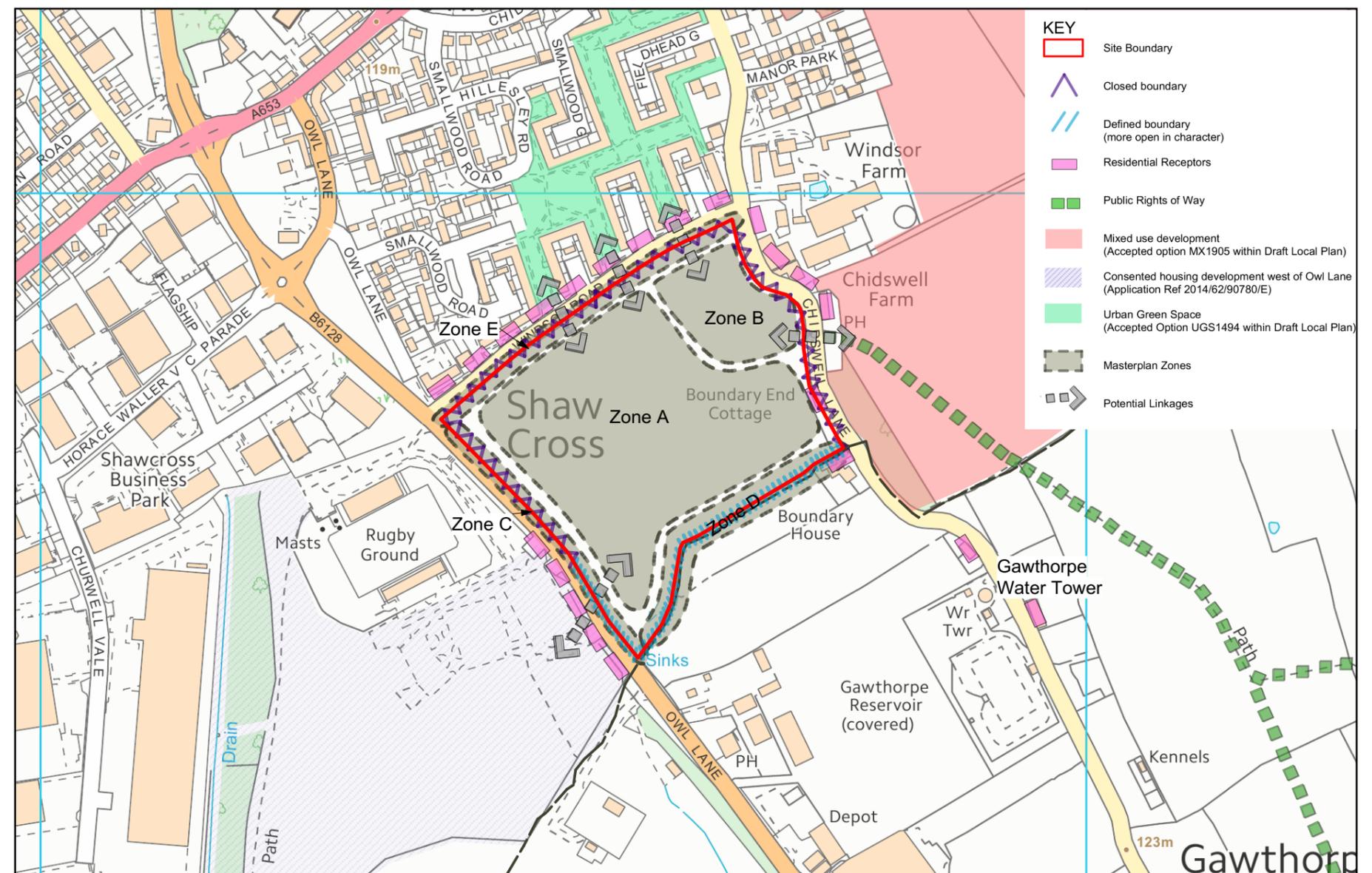


Figure 6: Masterplan Considerations

## 8.0 GREEN BELT REVIEW

8.1 The following section provides an assessment of the site against the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF. This assessment has been undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect using a combination of site visits and desk study.

### *Purpose 1 'to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas'*

8.2 The assessment of the relationship of the proposed site and the existing Green Belt area with the current built up area boundary requires consideration in relation to the potential for urban sprawl. The degree of containment provided by adjoining built up areas can indicate how much proposed development may potentially project development from the existing boundaries of the built up area.

8.3 It is stated within the Green Belt edge review (appendix 4a) that *"Development would breach existing strong boundary south east of Windsor Road. Contained on three sides but south side is the Wakefield boundary (green belt)"*.

8.4 In the earlier Green Belt Review undertaken in 2011 its function (as an identified parcel of land) against this purpose is described as *"prevents sprawl of Chidswell. Part of northern boundary and western edge adjoin existing built up area"*. In conclusion it states *"No merger of Chidswell with Ossett but helps prevent sprawl of Chidswell southwards"*.

8.5 The site is constrained by the local road network on three sides and these features would act to prevent sprawl in these directions. The only potential for sprawl would be to the south and in this regard the review fails to acknowledge the presence of a small watercourse along this boundary which as a physical landscape feature forms the administrative boundary between Kirklees and Wakefield. This boundary has the potential through sensitive masterplanning to form a robust green belt boundary as well as improve the character of the remaining green belt south of this stream.

8.6 In addition it is noted that the approved development to the west of Owl Lane (Planning Application reference 2014/62/90780/E, approved November 2014) brings the settlement edge (and green belt edge) further south along Owl Lane in the vicinity of the site entrance to Amberwood Close (currently under construction).

8.7 Given the topography of the site and the limited intervisibility with the landscape to the east of Chidswell Lane, with appropriate masterplanning considerations the site offers considerable potential to round off the urban area and provide a more subtle and natural urban edge.

8.8 Conclusion: There would be no unrestricted sprawl.

### *Purpose 2 'to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another'*

8.9 Strategically in the context of Kirklees, assessment of this Green Belt purpose is the identification of the role this portion of the Green Belt performs in terms of preventing built up areas (i.e. land not in the Green Belt), from merging into one another. In the context of the proposed site this relates to the settlement of Ossett (located within Wakefield) to the south.

8.10 It is stated within the Green belt edge review (appendix 4a) that the site forms part of a *"Restricted gap"*.

8.11 In the earlier Green Belt Review undertaken in 2011 its function against this purpose was also assessed. It was identified as Area N12b (South Chidswell) where it was considered that *"some development could take place without resulting in a merger, or the appearance of built up areas merging together"*. Area N12b was described as *"Part of a larger green belt area between Chidswell and the settlement of Ossett in neighbouring Wakefield District. Not critical to maintaining the gap between these two settlements"*.

8.12 In conclusion the review states *"No merger of Chidswell with Ossett but helps prevent sprawl of Chidswell southwards"*.

8.13 Whilst it is acknowledged that there is development along Owl Lane, the character and more open and sporadic nature of this development (relative to the separate areas of settlement) is not considered to have the potential to result in a 'merging' effect as a result of the development of the site. There would remain an undeveloped parcel of land between the settlements.

8.14 The site therefore is considered to perform a role of lower importance in preventing built up areas from merging.

8.15 Conclusion: There would be no merging of neighbouring towns.

### *Purpose 3 'to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment'*

8.16 To assess this aspect of the five purposes of the Green Belt, an appraisal of the extent to which the land constitutes "open countryside" can be made.

8.17 At a local level, the site falls within Landscape Type E8 - Batley - Dewsbury Rural Fringes. The site displays landscape characteristics associated with this landscape type being as it is a limited area of intensive arable cultivation in an otherwise predominantly pastoral agricultural context. However, the landscape type is described as a "fragmented landscape" with "urban fringe pockets". This is especially true of the site given the strong influence of the immediate urban context on landscape character. The sense of tranquility and rural character present in some areas of the Landscape Type are not displayed here where urban expansion is a more defining characteristic (as identified within the landscape character assessment).

8.18 It is stated within the green belt edge review (appendix 4a) *"Narrow extent of Green belt in Wakefield with sporadic development. High risk of encroachment"*.

8.19 In the earlier Green Belt Review undertaken in 2011 its function (as a specific parcel of land) against this purpose was assessed. In this review it was stated that the *"western portion comprises urban fringe land whilst the remainder forms part of larger area of open countryside to the east"*. In this regard it is noted that the western portion represents the proposed site and was therefore assessed as being *"urban fringe"*.

8.20 The site has a gently sloping western aspect lying as it does on the western slopes of a local ridgeline that aligns broadly with Chidswell Lane. This western aspect coupled with development and vegetative features present along Chidswell Lane act to visually separate the site from the landscape to the east. Excepting a small number of locations along the boundary of the site on Chidswell Lane where the site can be seen in opposing views to views of the landscape to the east, there are no locations where these are seen together.

8.21 Whilst the site currently demonstrates some rural characteristics in terms of its arable agricultural use and the presence of rural landscape features, it has a very limited visual relationship with the wider rural landscape to the east and is considered to perform a role of lower importance in this regard.

8.22 It is also noted that there is no public accessibility across the site and no connectivity with the wider landscape.

8.23 Conclusion: The site is not part of the open countryside.

### *Purpose 4 'to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns'*

8.24 Both the 2011 and 2015 Kirklees Green Belt reviews identify that there are no historic towns within Kirklees.

8.25 In order to assess this purpose in relation to this site, consideration is given to conservation areas, listed buildings and other features of historic significance. There are no listed buildings or features of designated historic significance within or immediately surrounding the site and there is no intervisibility between the site and any such features within the wider landscape.

8.26 In the earlier Green Belt Review undertaken in 2011 its function against this purpose was assessed where "no relationship" was identified. As such the site performs no role in terms of this purpose.

8.27 Conclusion: The site is not part of an historic town.

*Purpose 5 'to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'*

8.28 It has been identified as part of the production of the new Local Plan process that there is insufficient capacity available from urban regeneration to meet proposed future development growth in Kirklees, therefore sites will have to be sought outside the currently defined urban area.

8.29 Conclusion: The site does not perform a role in this purpose.

## 9.0 CONCLUSIONS

### Proposed Green Belt Boundary and the wider Green Belt context.

9.1 In combination with the revised boundary associated with the approved development to the west of Owl Lane, the site offers considerable potential to round off the urban area, provide a robust green belt boundary and create a more subtle and natural urban edge to Chidswell.

9.2 Development on the proposed site would have little influence on the green belt land to the east (which is acknowledged to have been accepted as a mixed use site option) due to the visual disconnect created through the local ridgeline that aligns broadly with Chidswell Lane.

9.3 Sensitive treatment of the southern boundary has the potential to improve the character of the remaining green belt to the south through the creation of a more subtle urban interface.

### Potential landscape and visual effects and positive benefits of development on the remaining adjacent Green Belt.

9.1 The existing green belt boundary is somewhat abrupt and contributes to a somewhat fragmented urban fringe character. There is considerable potential to create an equally robust green belt boundary along the southern boundary of the site which would create a less abrupt urban edge and provide a more natural green belt boundary that would complement the remaining agricultural context.

9.4 There are also opportunities to provide improved connectivity with the wider footpath network and greenspace network.

9.5 Whilst it is acknowledged that there are a number of sensitive visual receptors that would be able to see the development of the site, these are all within close proximity and heavily influenced by existing built form in the immediate locality. Sensitive masterplanning would minimise visual influence of development.

### Effects of the development of the site on the purposes of the Green Belt

- Purpose 1 'to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas'  
Conclusion: There would be no unrestricted sprawl.
- Purpose 2 'to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another'  
Conclusion: There would be no merging of neighbouring towns.
- Purpose 3 'to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment'  
Conclusion: The site is not part of the open countryside.
- Purpose 4 'to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns'  
Conclusion: The site is not part of an historic town.
- Purpose 5 'to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'.  
Conclusion: The site does not perform a role in this purpose.

**KEY**

-  Existing Green Belt Boundary
-  Proposed Green Belt Boundary
-  Proposed land to be removed from the Green Belt

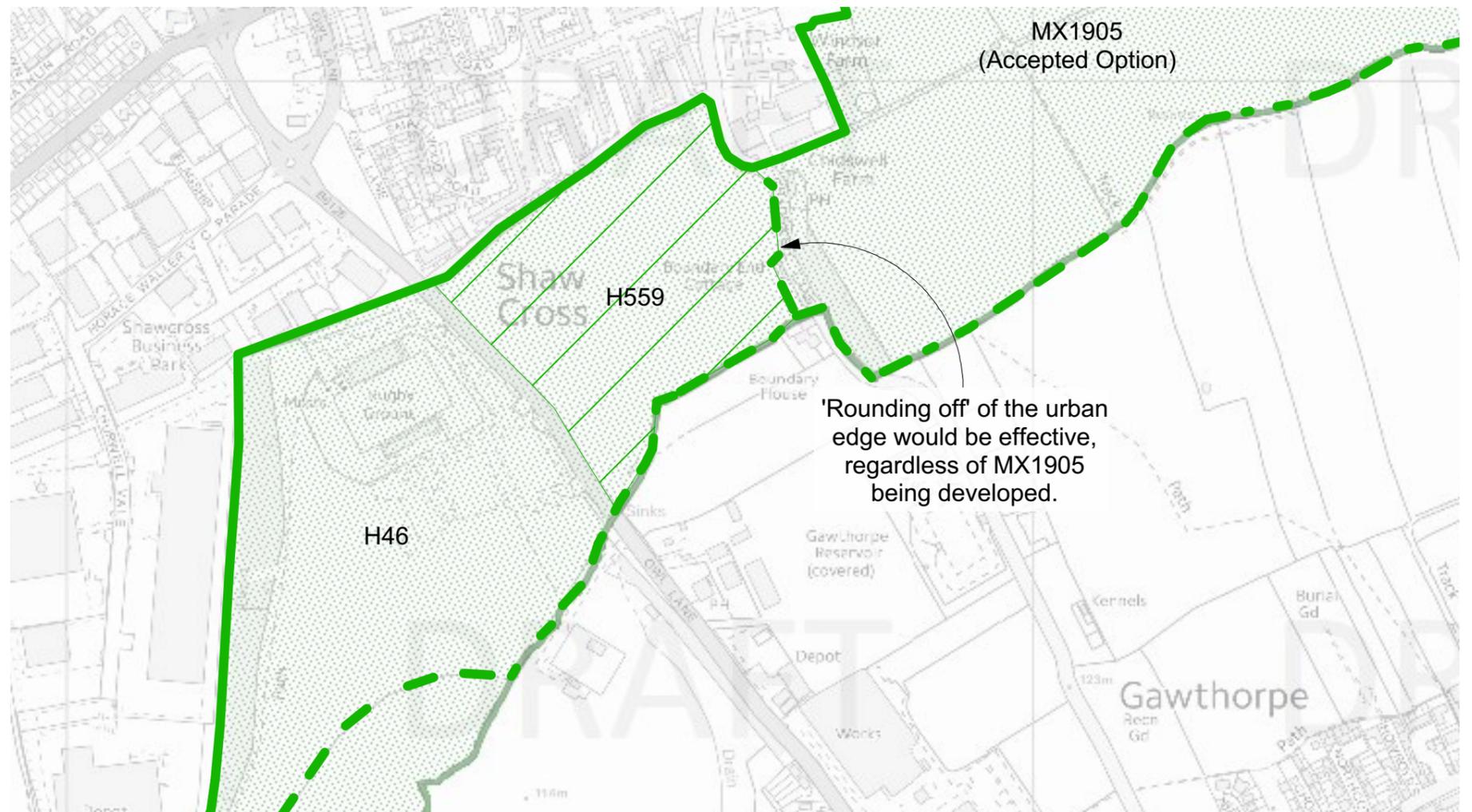


Figure 7: Proposed Green Belt Boundary Modification



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Registered Office:  
Pegasus House,  
Querns Business Centre,  
Whitworth Road, Cirencester,  
Gloucestershire, GL7 1RT