

Green/Grey Belt Appraisal

Paddock Road, Kirkburton

On behalf of Persimmon Homes West Yorkshire.

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Summary of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review, 2017 (Kirklees Local Plan Submission Documents SD19)	5
3. Landscape Character.....	7
4. Effect of the Site on the Green Belt.....	9
5. Potential for Proposed development	12
6. How the Site has a bearing upon the remaining Green Belt across the Plan.....	13
7. Summary and conclusion.....	14
8. Recommended Landscape and Visual Strategy for the Site.....	15

Appendices contents

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan and Viewpoint Locations.....	16
Appendix 2: Green Belt Designation Plan.....	17
Appendix 3: Designations Plan.....	18
Appendix 4: Photo Views	19
Appendix 5: Annex E Assessment Considerations and Illustrative Features (NPPF, August 2026).....	20

1. Introduction

Introduction & Purpose

- 1.1. Pegasus Group have been instructed by Persimmon Homes to undertake a Landscape and Visual Green/Grey Belt Site appraisal on land at Paddock Road, Kirkburton. The Site falls within the Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council area.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to assess the contribution made by the Site to the purposes of the Green Belt, determine whether the Site meets the definition of grey belt land and consider whether its development would fundamentally undermine the purposes, taken together, of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan. The appraisal has regard to Chapter 13, Policies GB1 to GB8, Annex B and Annex E of the National Planning Policy Framework, published in August 2026.
- 1.3. The Site, (as shown in the Site Location and Viewpoints Plan at Appendix 1), comprises an irregularly shaped parcel of approximately 7.5 hectares. It is predominantly grassland, currently used for horse grazing, with a cluster of shipping containers forming an agricultural hub in the centre of the Site. The Site is divided by traditional dry-stone walls and post-and-wire fencing, which reflect the local landscape character, and is further subdivided by temporary electric horse tape fencing.
- 1.4. The topography is gently undulating overall, ranging from approximately 152m to 165m AOD, with a notable initial rise from east to west that plateaus towards the centre of the Site. This steeper eastern slope contributes to the limited visibility of the farmhouses on Paddock Road from Gregory Playing Fields. In contrast, the north-south variation consists of more localised and subtle undulations.
- 1.5. The Site is bounded by a characteristic dry-stone wall along most of its perimeter. A public footpath (Ref: KIR/70/10) runs along the western boundary, connecting Moor Lane to Burton Acres Lane and Gregory Playing Fields, which adjoin the southwestern edge of the Site. This boundary is defined by a linear arrangement of mature trees and a combination of dry-stone wall and fencing. The PRoW connects Moor Lane to the north with Burton Acres Lane to the south, also linking to Gregory Playing Fields to the southwest and to Public Footpath Ref: KIR/91/10 to the north, providing access to the wider network of public footpaths across the surrounding Green Belt. Roadside footpaths run just outside the Site boundary along Burton Acres Road and Moor Lane, allowing pedestrians to walk adjacent to the Site with clear views in across the low stone walls.
- 1.6. To the northwest, the Site adjoins the residential edge of Kirkburton village. The northern boundary along Moor Lane is open, offering views across the wider rural Green Belt. The eastern boundary is defined by intermittent mature vegetation and residential properties fronting Paddock Road. The southern boundary, along Burton Acres Lane, is open and defined by a dry-stone wall, with a linear row of residential dwellings situated opposite.
- 1.7. Internally, the Site contains scattered mature trees and shrubs. The grassland is classified as modified, with evidence of weed encroachment across the Site.
- 1.8. This report provides a detailed appraisal of the Site's landscape and visual characteristics, its contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, and its potential to be considered as grey belt land in the context of national planning policy.

Methodology

- 1.9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in August 2026. Chapter 13 sets out the national Green Belt Policy (Policies GB1 to GB8). Policy GB2 identifies the five purposes of the Green Belt as identified in the table below:

Green Belt Purposes (NPPF, 2026)	
<i>Purpose 01</i>	<i>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</i>
<i>Purpose 02</i>	<i>To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</i>
<i>Purpose 03</i>	<i>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</i>
<i>Purpose 04</i>	<i>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</i>
<i>Purpose 05</i>	<i>To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</i>

- 1.10. This appraisal has been informed by the assessment principles set out in Annex E of the NPPF (August 2026). Annex E sets out the key steps for undertaking Green Belt assessments and identifying grey belt land. Grey belt is defined in Annex B of the NPPF as land in the “Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b) or (d) in Policy GB2.” Accordingly, the identification of grey belt requires an evidence-led assessment of the contribution made by the relevant land to those three purposes, using the considerations and illustrative features in Annex E. The relevant considerations and illustrative features informing the assessment are reproduced in Appendix 5.
- 1.11. The August 2026 definition of grey belt no longer includes the former qualification relating to areas or assets identified through Footnote 7 of the December 2024 NPPF. Such environmental, landscape, heritage and flood-risk considerations remain relevant through the applicable policies elsewhere in the NPPF, but they no longer form part of the definition used to determine whether land is grey belt.
- 1.12. This assessment has been informed by desk study, review of relevant national and local policy and Green Belt evidence, and a Site visit undertaken on 14th September 2026. The Site visit considered the Site, its immediate surroundings and the wider Green Belt context, including physical boundaries, settlement relationships, landscape character, topography, vegetation, visibility and perceptual openness. A photographic record is provided at Appendix 4.

2. Summary of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review, 2017 (Kirklees Local Plan Submission Documents SD19)

- 2.1. The village of Kirkburton lies within the West Yorkshire Green Belt, which was reviewed as part of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review (April 2017). This review formed a key component of the evidence base for the Local Plan, adopted to guide development across the district. The purpose of the review was to assess the extent to which land within the Kirklees Green Belt met the five purposes of Green Belt as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). National planning policy attaches great importance to protecting green belt land. The fundamental aim of green belts is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- (1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - (2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
 - (3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - (4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and,
 - (5) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 2.2. The Kirkburton area was assessed as part of the Kirklees Rural (East) sub-area, and more specifically under the Kirkburton Ward. The south-eastern part of the district is defined by a pattern of development that follows river valleys, interspersed with expansive areas of open countryside and distinct, well-separated settlements. The Green Belt here is extensive and plays a crucial role in shaping the boundaries of existing settlements, preserving the open character of the countryside, and maintaining clear separation between communities.

Figure 1: Extract of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review, map showing southeast Kirklees Green Belt.

(The approximate Site area is outlined in red)



- 2.3. The assessment framework applied a series of tests to determine the degree of constraint and the contribution of each parcel to Green Belt purposes. The methodology included topographical, physical, and environmental constraints (Test 1), followed by an evaluation of Green Belt purposes (Test 2a–2d). The outcomes were colour-coded and scored from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important) in terms of Green Belt function.

Figure 2: Extract of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review, showing summary of colours and numbers for tests 1 to 2d

Black	Test 1 indicates that there may be a significant constraint to development, caused by an absolute barrier to development along the edge (railway line for example) or that the land immediately adjacent to the edge is significantly constrained (severe slope, ancient woodland for example)	
Red	Test 2a indicates that the green belt is performing a strategic role such that development may result in the merging of settlements.	
Importance of green belt role based on combination of tests 2b to 2d where the site 'passes' tests 1 and 2a;		
1	Less important	(dark green)
2		(light green)
3		(light yellow)
4		(dark yellow)
5	More important	(pink)

- 2.4. The Kirkburton area was assessed in the Green Belt Review under reference codes KH1 to KH15. While the exact boundaries of each parcel are not explicitly mapped in the document, the proposed Site lies to the south of Moor Lane, and based on the descriptions provided, KH4 appears to be the most directly relevant assessment parcel.

KH4 – Grazing Land South of Moor Lane

- **Constraints:** No topographical, physical, or environmental constraints identified.
- **Existing Use:** Grazing land.
- **Containment:** Bounded by **Moor Lane** and **Paddock Road**; however, land rises to the south, making development potentially more prominent.
- **Green Belt Role:** Part of wider countryside; well-contained but with visual sensitivity due to elevation.
- **Conclusion:** Development could be visually prominent on higher ground but is otherwise well-contained.
- **Green Belt Score: 3.**

Figure 3: Extract of the Kirklees Local Plan Green Belt Review, showing outcomes of the Green Belt Edge Review (tests 1 to 2d)

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		
KH4	None	None	None	Grazing land	Extensive gap	Moor Lane, Paddock Road provide containment but rising land possibly more prominent towards the south.	Part of wider countryside. Undeveloped edge with urban greenspace follows a feature on the ground but southern boundary strong	No impact	Well contained but development could be more prominent towards the south on higher ground.	3

- 2.5. However, this assessment was prepared before the most recent PPG Green Belt Guidance (updated February 2025) was published, hence its methodology and findings are not considered up to date. Further sections of this report explore the Site in the context of updated Site conditions, such as the nearby Crematorium development, and the updated NPPF guidance noted above.

3. Landscape Character

Existing landscape character of the Site and surrounding area

- 3.1. According to the Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment (2015), prepared by LUC for Kirklees Council, the Site lies within Landscape Character Area (LCA) E6: Fenay Beck Valley Rural Fringes, part of the broader Landscape Character Type (LCT) E: Rural Fringes.
- 3.2. This landscape is defined by a gently undulating plateau, with elevations between 150 and 280 metres. Localised variations in topography result in more complex landforms, including deeply incised valleys that enhance visual interest.
- 3.3. The area has a well-wooded character, with broadleaved woodlands dominating the slopes, alongside occasional mixed woodlands. Shelterbelts, mature in-field trees, and boundary trees contribute to the naturalistic feel. Numerous locally important woodlands reinforce this character.

- 3.4. Land cover is small-scale and intricate, with grassland pastures enclosed by gritstone walls and hedgerows, creating a varied and textured landscape.
- 3.5. The area retains a strong historic character, with traditional stone-built cottages, farmsteads, and historic villages. A network of minor roads and narrow, winding lanes radiates from the A629, which traverses the Fenay Beck Valley.
- 3.6. Settlements are typically clustered into small villages, with scattered farms and rural dwellings dispersed throughout. The elevated terrain allows for long views northward, contributing to the area's settled yet rural identity.
- 3.7. Landscape Evaluation (Valued landscape features and attributes)

Perceptual qualities (including levels of tranquillity):
 - This is mostly perceived as a tranquil landscape with a traditional rural feel, although this is impacted upon by the main roads and urban development.
Access and enjoyment of the landscape:
 - There are several public rights of way emanating into the wider countryside from settlements, although some areas of the LCA are less accessible.
Cultural and historical:
 - Conservation areas such as Highburton and Kirkburton.
- 3.8. The Site exhibits several key characteristics identified in the landscape assessment, including mature in-field and boundary trees, grassland pastures enclosed by gritstone dry-stone walls, and a strong local character influenced by the surrounding high-quality village settings. These villages are typically defined by the prominent use of traditional natural stone and vernacular architecture. The presence of a Grade II Listed Building adjacent to the Site further reinforces the area's historic and architectural value. These features contribute to the Site's landscape sensitivity and should, where possible, be integrated into the development proposal.
- 3.9. The surrounding network of minor roads and the elevated topography afford long views to the north, reinforcing the area's settled yet distinctly rural identity. The Site is influenced by adjacent built form to the west and south, its northern and eastern boundaries are more exposed, allowing for longer-range views across the surrounding countryside. These views contribute to the perception of openness, particularly from elevated ground to the north and from sections of Moor Lane and the immediate surroundings. While the Site lacks hedgerows and extensive woodland cover, the broader landscape is well-wooded, featuring broadleaved woodlands and shelterbelts that contribute to its naturalistic and enclosed character.
- 3.10. In terms of landscape character, the Site sits within a setting defined by valued landscape features and attributes, including a tranquil atmosphere, traditional rural character, and a network of public rights of way that extend from nearby settlements into the wider countryside. A sensitive, landscape-led approach to development would help ensure that these qualities are respected and, where possible, reinforced.

- 3.11. With appropriate design, native planting, restoration of dry-stone walls, and integration of SuDS, the development would align with the area's well-wooded and tranquil rural character. Whilst not heritage features, a number of stone buildings are attractive local features, and the dry-stone walls, prevalent in the surrounding areas, are important elements of the valued local character.

4. Effect of the Site on the Green Belt

- 4.1. Before considering the nature of proposed development on the Site and how a proposed scheme may have a bearing upon Green Belt and landscape character, first of all this report considers how the Site as a discreet parcel of land currently has a bearing upon Green Belt purposes.

Effect of the Site area on the purposes of Green Belt

- 4.2. Policy GB2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), August 2026, identifies the five purposes of the Green Belt. For the purposes of identifying grey belt land, Annex B and Annex E require consideration of whether a Site makes a strong contribution to Green Belt purposes (a), (b), and (d). The Site's contribution to each of these purposes is assessed below.

Purpose (a)

- 4.3. Purpose (a) of the Green Belt, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), seeks to prevent the unregulated expansion of large built-up areas into the countryside. For the purposes of this assessment, villages are not considered large built-up areas. As such, Kirkburton and Highburton are not considered a large built-up area for the purposes of this assessment, with the NPPF (2026) stating that "*Villages should not be considered large built-up areas.*" Consequently, Purpose (a) is not directly engaged in this instance.
- 4.4. Notwithstanding the above, the Site benefits from a degree of physical containment, defined by a series of robust and enduring boundaries. To the north, Moor Lane forms a clear and permanent edge, beyond which lies open countryside that continues to perform a strategic Green Belt function. To the east, Paddock Road and a small number of individual residential properties located in the north-eastern and south-eastern corners form a further established boundary. The southern boundary is defined by Burton Acres Lane, beyond which lies a linear pattern of residential development that forms part of Kirkburton and Highburton, reinforcing the sense of enclosure. To the north-west, the Site adjoins existing residential properties, which extend further west to form the northern edge of Highburton village. Along the south-western boundary, the Site is delineated by Gregory Playing Fields, separated by a mature tree belt and a dry-stone wall, beyond which lies further residential development associated with Kirkburton and Highburton.
- 4.5. The Site does not project into the more open countryside to the north, nor does it represent an isolated or detached parcel of land. The Site also displays evidence of human usage and disturbance. Features such as wood pole lines and electric tape fencing subdivide the fields, and additional signs of human activity are evident, including two large metal containers and a cluster of discarded farm machinery, such as the shell of an old tractor, centrally located within the Site. Although some of these elements may be temporary, they contribute to a sense of human intervention and disturbance. Overall, the

Site forms a logical and well-defined infill opportunity within the existing settlement pattern of Kirkburton.

- 4.6. Should the Site be brought forward for development, it would be essential that a landscape-led masterplan is adopted. This would ensure that the development responds sensitively to the Site's topography and landscape character, while reinforcing existing boundaries through strategic planting and green infrastructure. Such an approach would enhance visual containment and ensure that the development integrates seamlessly with the surrounding built and natural environment.
- 4.7. In the context of the illustrative features set out within Annex E of the NPPF, the Site is not adjacent to or near to a large built-up area. The Site is enclosed by existing development and durable landscape features such that development would not result in an incongruous pattern of development. The presence of urbanising influences, such as wood pole lines and electric tape fencing subdivide the fields, metal containers and a cluster of discarded farm machinery further reduces the Site's contribution to this purpose. Accordingly, the Site makes **a weak to no contribution** towards checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and therefore does not strongly contribute to Purpose (a) of the Green Belt.
- 4.8. Overall, its development would not result in unrestricted urban sprawl, and with appropriate design and mitigation, the Site presents a sustainable and contained opportunity for limited growth that would not compromise the strategic function of the Green Belt in this location.

Purpose (b)

- 4.9. Purpose (b) is concerned with preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another. The Site is immediately adjacent to the northern edge of Kirkburton, which is identified as a village within the Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment. As such, Kirkburton is not considered a town for the purposes of this assessment, with the NPPF (2026) stating that "This purpose relates to the merging of towns (includes cities), not villages". Consequently, Purpose (b) is not directly engaged in this instance.
- 4.10. The Site is located on the north-western edge of Kirkburton, a defined village within the Kirklees settlement hierarchy. Nearby settlements include Highburton (approximately 0.5 km to the northwest), Shelley (approximately 1.7 km to the south), and Fenay Bridge (approximately 1.5 km to the northwest). These are all classified as villages and, as such, do not fall within the scope of Purpose (b).
- 4.11. The nearest towns are Huddersfield, approximately 5.5 km to the northwest, and Barnsley, around 15 km to the southeast. While the Site lies broadly within the wider area between these settlements, its small scale, lack of intervisibility, and the significant distance involved mean it plays a very limited—if any—role in preventing their coalescence. The Site does not lie within a strategic gap, and its separation from these towns is reinforced by intervening topography, vegetation, and built development, which preclude any meaningful visual or spatial relationship.
- 4.12. In the context of the illustrative features set out within Annex E of the NPPF, the Site does "form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of this gap, without making a contribution to visual separation". Accordingly, the Site makes a **weak to no** contribution towards preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another and therefore does not strongly contribute to Purpose (b).

Purpose (d)

- 4.13. Purpose (d) is concerned with preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. Annex E of the NPPF (August 2026) states that this purpose relates to historic towns and not villages, and that where there are no historic towns within the plan area it may not be necessary to provide a detailed assessment.
- 4.14. The Site is located on the north-western edge of Kirkburton, a defined village within the Kirklees Metropolitan Borough. The nearest historic town is Huddersfield, located approximately 5.5km to the northwest. The Site does not lie within or adjacent to the historic core of Huddersfield, and is separated from it by a substantial extent of intervening built form, topography, and vegetation. There is no visual or experiential connection between the Site and the historic town centre of Huddersfield, nor does the Site contribute to its setting or character.
- 4.15. While Kirkburton and Highburton villages contain designated Conservation Areas, located approximately 360m to the south, 600m to the southwest, and 500m to the west respectively, these are not considered to fall within the scope of Purpose (d), which is focused on historic towns. Furthermore, there is no direct intervisibility between the Site and these Conservation Areas due to intervening built form and vegetation.
- 4.16. The southeastern corner of the Site contains a Grade II Listed Building, which, while not assessed under Green Belt Purpose (d), may still influence the development potential of the Site. A landscape-led design approach, supported by a heritage assessment, could effectively address and minimise these localised heritage sensitivities, including the building's setting and intervisibility with the Site.
- 4.17. Notwithstanding the presence of this heritage asset, the Site does not form part of the setting of a historic town and does not contribute to the preservation of its special character.
- 4.18. In the context of the illustrative features set out within Annex E of the NPPF, the Site does not form part of the setting of a historic town and has no visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of these towns. Accordingly, the Site makes a **weak to no contribution** towards preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and therefore does not strongly contribute to Purpose (d) of the Green Belt.

Grey Belt Summary

- 4.19. The Site is located on the north-western edge of Kirkburton village and is influenced by existing residential development to the west and south. It is physically contained by a combination of established roads, dry-stone walls, mature vegetation and adjacent built form, providing some enclosure and separation from the wider Green Belt.
- 4.20. The assessment demonstrates that the Site does not make a strong contribution to purposes **(a)** checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, **(b)** preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another, or **(d)** preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. These are the three purposes relevant to the identification of grey belt under the NPPF.
- 4.21. The Site makes a weak to no contribution to Purpose (a). While the Site is near existing development, it is not adjacent to a large built-up area. There are occasional open views in

certain directions, but overall the Site is contained by strong, defensible physical boundaries and its development would not result in unrestricted urban sprawl. The Site also makes a weak to no contribution to Purpose (b), as it does not form part of a gap between towns and Kirkburton is identified as a village rather than a town. With regard to Purpose (d), the Site is not located within or adjacent to a historic town and has no visual or spatial relationship with the historic core of Huddersfield or any other historic town. While a Grade II Listed Building lies immediately adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the **Site**, this is not relevant to Purpose (d).

- 4.22. Accordingly, the Site does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b) or (d) of Policy GB2. On this basis, the Site aligns with the definition of **grey belt** set out in Annex B of the NPPF (August 2026) and should therefore be regarded as grey belt land for the purposes of this assessment.

5. Potential for Proposed development

- 5.1. Policy GB8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), August 2026, sets out the Golden Rules applicable to major development involving the provision of housing on land released from the Green Belt or on Sites within the Green Belt subject to a planning application. In relation to public open space provision, the policy seeks ***"the provision of new green space, or improvements to existing, green spaces, which is accessible to the public"*** and that ***"new residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home"***.
- 5.2. The NPPF further states that green space secured through the Golden Rules should ***"make a positive contribution to the landscape setting of the development"***, ***"support nature recovery"*** and ***"meet local standards for green space provision where these exist in the development plan."***
- 5.3. The Site presents a clear opportunity to deliver a landscape-led development that integrates new housing with high-quality green infrastructure. While the Site is relatively open, particularly along its northern and eastern boundaries, this openness provides scope for the introduction of structural landscaping and green corridors that would soften the visual impact of development and reinforce a new defensible Green Belt boundary.
- 5.4. The Site is defined in part by characteristic dry-stone walls, which are a valued feature of the local landscape. Some sections of these walls are broken or deteriorating. A development proposal could retain, repair, and enhance these features, reinforcing the Site's rural identity and providing a strong visual framework for future development. The dry-stone walls could be integrated into the layout as part of a green infrastructure strategy, helping to define development parcels and maintain continuity with the surrounding landscape.
- 5.5. The introduction of native planting along the Site's more exposed boundaries—particularly to the north and east—would help to soften the visual impact of development. This would allow the development to be layered and filtered in a manner consistent with the surrounding settlement pattern, reducing its prominence and enhancing its integration with the wider countryside.
- 5.6. A Grade II Listed Building lies immediately adjacent to the southeastern corner of the Site. While this heritage asset requires careful consideration, its current setting is influenced by

low-quality agricultural structures and modified grassland. A sensitively designed scheme, incorporating appropriate landscaping and open space, could enhance the setting of the listed building and provide a more positive interface between built form and heritage.

- 5.7. Public access is already established via a Public Right of Way (Ref: KIR/70/10), which runs along the western boundary of the Site and connects to the wider local footpath network, including Gregory Playing Fields to the southwest. This existing route could be enhanced and integrated into a wider network of pedestrian connections, improving permeability and access to nearby green spaces for both existing and future residents.
- 5.8. The Site's gently undulating topography and modified grassland condition provide opportunities for the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These features would not only manage surface water but also contribute to the Site's ecological value and visual amenity.
- 5.9. In summary, the Site offers strong potential for a sensitively designed, landscape-led development. Through the integration of green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancements, native planting and improvements to public access, the Site could deliver a high-quality residential environment that respects its context, enhances the setting of adjacent heritage assets and contributes positively to the landscape character of the area.
- 5.10. Accordingly, development of the Site could support the objectives of **Policy GB8 of the NPPF (August 2026)** through the provision of accessible green space that makes a positive contribution to the landscape setting of the development, supports nature recovery and is integrated within the overall development framework.

6. How the Site has a bearing upon the remaining Green Belt across the Plan

- 6.1. Policy GB7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), August 2026, states that development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as '*inappropriate*' where:

'The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.'

'In the case of major development involving the provision of housing, the development proposed complies with policy GB8.'
- 6.2. The Green Belt Designation Plan at **Appendix 2** illustrates the wider context of the Kirklees Green Belt. As assessed in preceding sections, the Site makes a **weak to no contribution** to Green Belt Purposes (a), (b), and (d). Although the Site is currently open in character, it is not isolated within the Green Belt. It is influenced by adjacent residential development to the west and south, and notably, there are existing residential properties located within the same parcel of land to the northeast and southeast.
- 6.3. The Site does not form part of a key strategic gap between towns, nor does it contribute to the setting of a historic town. It occupies a relatively small parcel of land on the edge of an established village and Green Belt, and its development would not compromise the overall openness or strategic function of the wider Green Belt in this part of Kirklees. The

surrounding Green Belt remains extensive and would continue to perform its intended purposes at a strategic level.

- 6.4. It is considered that development of the Site would **"not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan."** The proposed development is therefore consistent with criterion (g)(i) of Policy GB7 of the NPPF (2026).
- 6.5. From a landscape perspective, the Site has the capacity to accommodate development whilst retaining and enhancing its existing vegetation. The provision of accessible green infrastructure, habitat creation and public open space could contribute positively to **the landscape setting of the development, support nature recovery and enhance overall place quality**, consistent with the objectives of Policy GB8 of the NPPF (August 2026).

7. Summary and conclusion

- 7.1. The Site makes a weak to no contribution to Purposes (a), (b) and (d) of Policy GB2. Although the Site retains an open character in parts, it is not adjacent to or near a large built-up area and is influenced and contained by existing development and physical landscape features. Development of the Site would therefore not result in an incongruous pattern of development in the context of Purpose (a). The Site does form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of the gap and does not form part of the setting, or contribute to the special character, of a historic town. Accordingly, the Site does not strongly contribute to any of Purposes (a), (b) or (d) and therefore aligns with the definition of **grey belt** set out within Annex B of the NPPF.
- 7.2. The Site is influenced by adjacent residential development to the west and south and includes existing residential properties within the same parcel to the north-east and south-east, it retains a degree of sensitivity in landscape and visual terms. This is particularly evident in open views from Moor Lane, Burton Acres Lane and elevated ground to the north, which contribute to the Site's rural character and visual exposure. A Grade II Listed Building immediately adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the Site should also inform the design response and be considered through an appropriate heritage assessment.
- 7.3. Overall, the Site represents a contained and logical opportunity for development. Having regard to its weak to no contribution to Purposes (a), (b) and (d), and its relationship with existing development and established physical boundaries, development of the Site **would not fundamentally undermine the purposes, taken together, of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan**. Any landscape and visual effects would be localised and could be addressed through a landscape-led approach that responds to the Site's valued landscape features, attributes and local landscape character.

8. Recommended Landscape and Visual Strategy for the Site

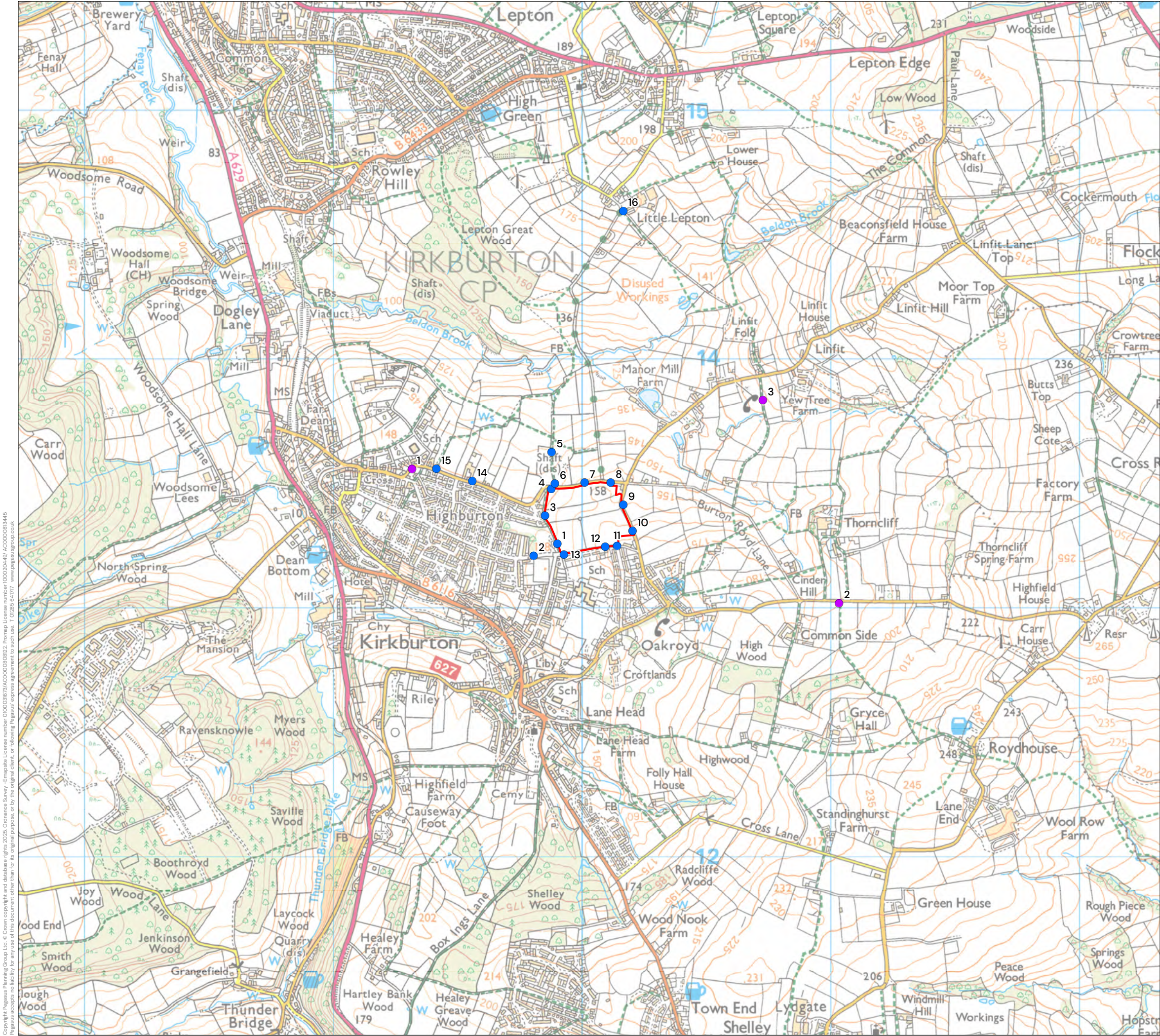
8.1. It is recommended that a proposed residential layout for the Site includes the following aspects of a combined landscape framework to underpin the design and ensure it is landscape led and robust in terms of the grey belt context:

- Retain and enhance the existing dry-stone walls that subdivide and define the Site. These are characteristic features of the local landscape, and although some sections are currently broken or deteriorating, they offer a valuable opportunity for restoration and incorporation into the development layout to reinforce local identity and structure.
- Introduce native planting along the northern and eastern boundaries to soften the visual impact of development, establish a layered edge that reflects the surrounding settlement pattern and reinforce a new defensible Green Belt boundary. This planting should be designed to filter views and provide a gradual transition between built form and open countryside.
- Respect the setting of the adjacent Grade II Listed Building through the introduction of landscape buffer.
- Design a network of accessible, well-landscaped open spaces within the Site that serve both new residents and the wider community, contributing to local green infrastructure, supporting health and well-being, and connecting directly to Gregory Playing Fields to create a continuous and accessible green link.
- Strengthen pedestrian connectivity by enhancing the existing Public Right of Way (Ref: KIR/70/10) along the western boundary and integrating it into a wider network of footpaths and green links, improving access to nearby amenities and recreational areas.
- Incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that respond to the Site's natural topography. Features such as swales, rain gardens, and attenuation basins should be designed to manage surface water, reduce flood risk, and deliver ecological and visual benefits.

8.2. Collectively, these measures will ensure that the development is landscape-led, visually sensitive, and well-integrated into its rural edge setting. The strategy will also support the delivery of biodiversity net gain, contribute positively to the character of the area, and reinforce a durable and defensible Green Belt boundary.



Appendix 1: Site Location Plan and Viewpoint Locations



- KEY
- Site Boundary
 - Viewpoint Location
 - Context Photo Location

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION

FIGURE 4: VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

PADDOCK ROAD, KIRKBURTON

PERSIMMON HOMES (WEST YORKSHIRE) LIMITED

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
21/07/2025	1:15,000@A3	NC	PL

SHEET	REV	N	0	250M
-	A	▲		

DRAWING NUMBER

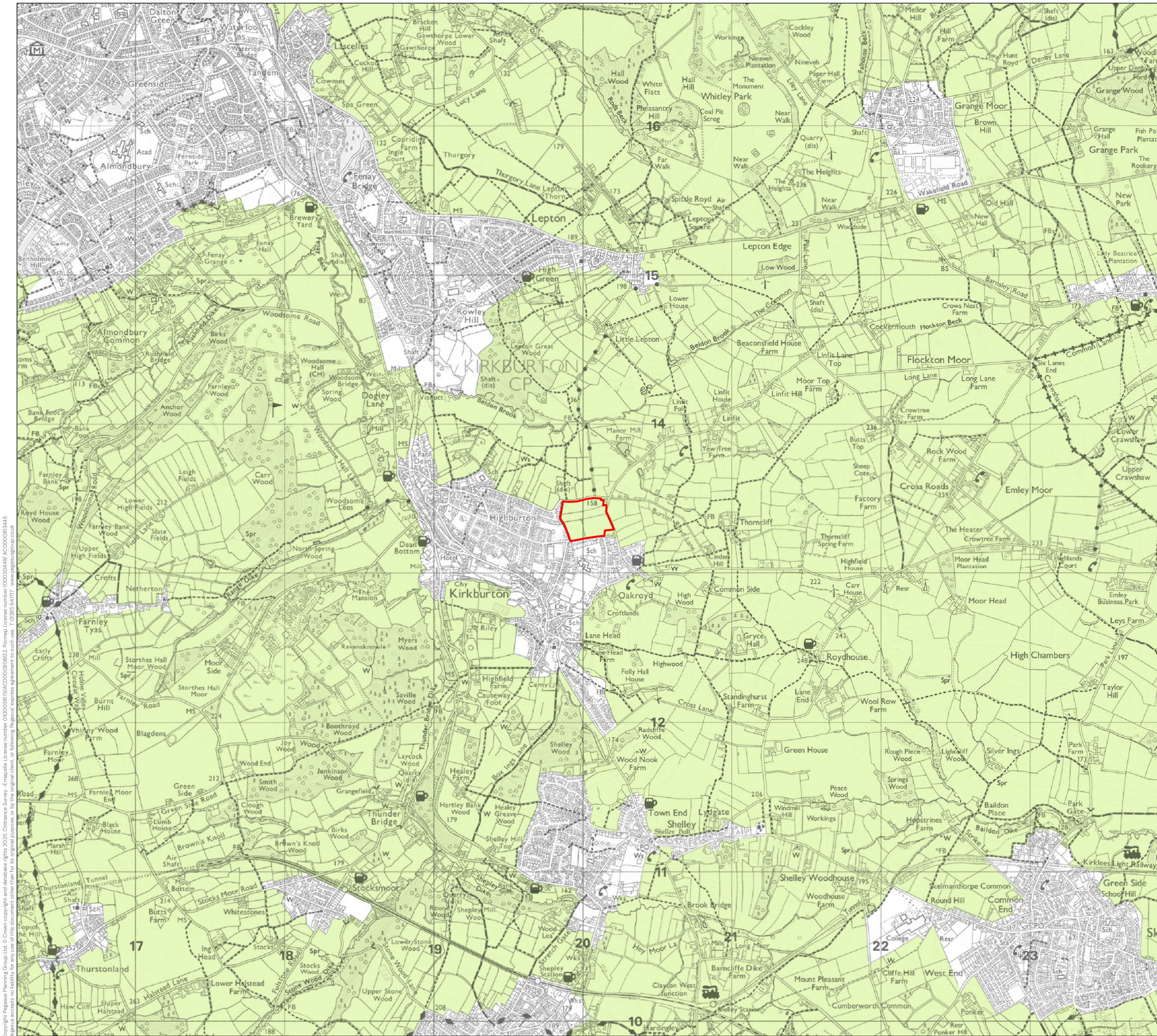
P25-1724_EN_04

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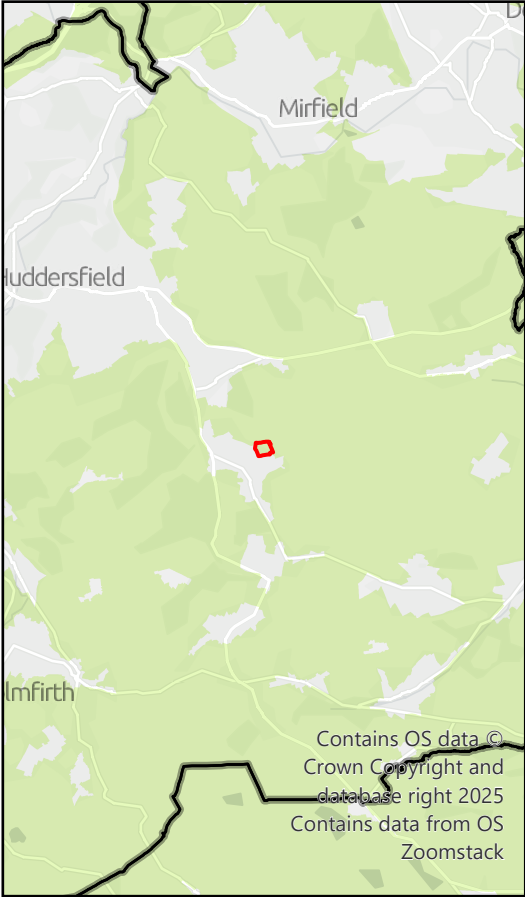
Appendix 2: Green Belt Designation Plan



KEY

Site Boundary

Green Belt



Contains OS data ©
Crown Copyright and
database right 2025
Contains data from OS
Zoomstack

1:150,000@A3
0 2.5KM

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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GREEN BELT DESIGNATIONS PLAN

PADDOCK ROAD, KIRKBURTON

PERSIMMON HOMES (WEST YORKSHIRE) LIMITED

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
10/07/2025	1:25,000@A3	MCL	PL

SHEET	REV	N	0	0.5KM
-	A	▲	L	

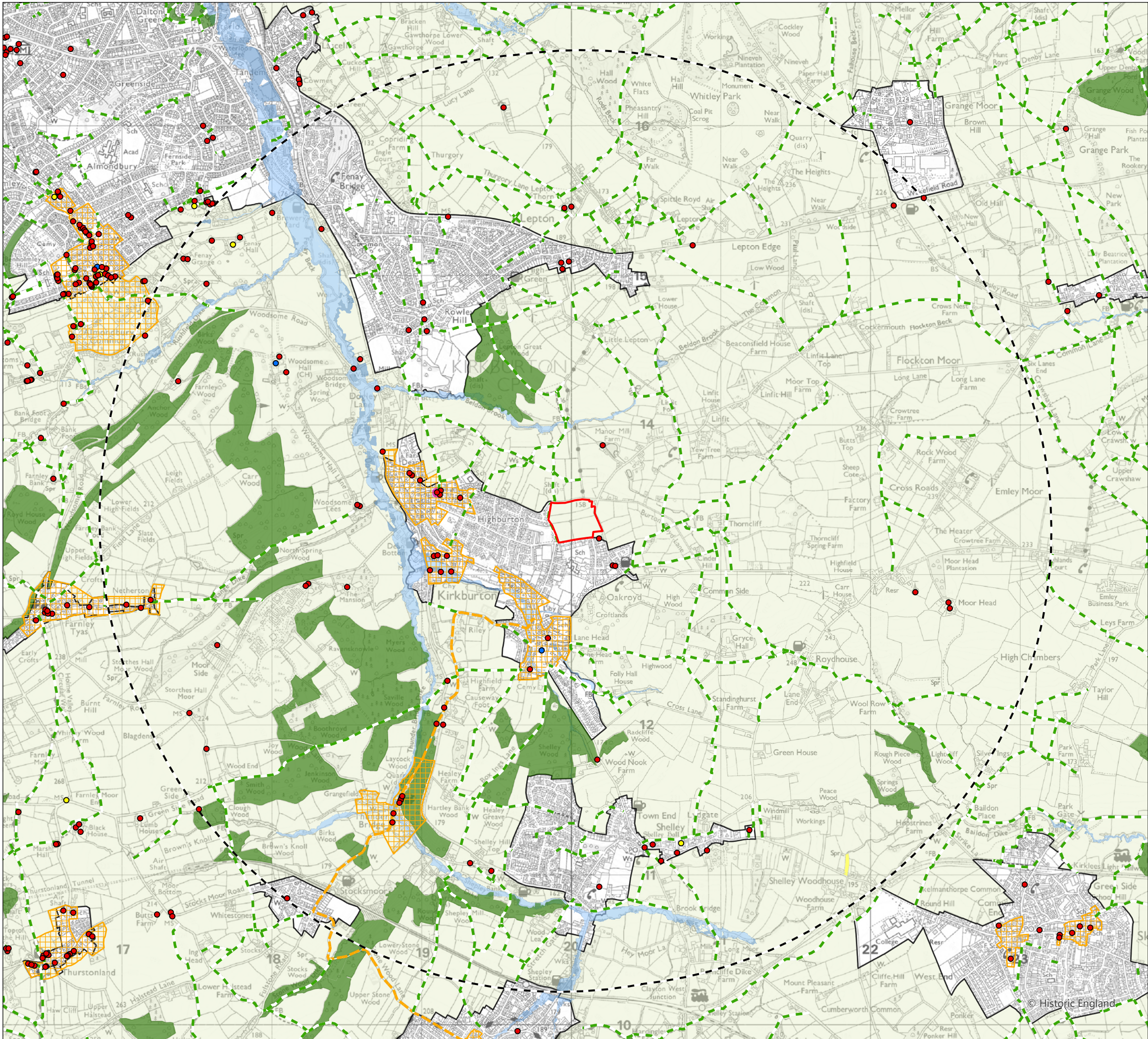
DRAWING NUMBER
P25-1724_EN_02

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Appendix 3: Designations Plan

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- KEY**
- Site Boundary
 - 3km Study Area
 - Grade I Listed Building
 - Grade II* Listed Building
 - Grade II Listed Building
 - Public Rights of Way
 - National Cycle Network
 - CRoW Access Land
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - Conservation Area
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Green Belt
 - Flood Zone 2
 - Flood Zone 3

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATION PLAN

PADDOCK ROAD, KIRKBURTON

PERSIMMON HOMES (WEST YORKSHIRE) LIMITED

DATE	SCALE	DRAWN	APPROVED
10/07/2025	1:25,000@A3	MCL	PL

SHEET	REV	N	0	0.5KM
-	A	▲	L	

DRAWING NUMBER
P25-1724_EN_03

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Appendix 4: Photo Views

Photographic Record



Photograph 1: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/70/10, located along the eastern boundary of Gregory Playing Fields, looking towards and across the southwest part of the site.



Photograph 2: View taken from the edge of Burton Acres Lane, located along the western boundary of Gregory Playing Fields, looking across the playing fields toward the southwest part of the site.

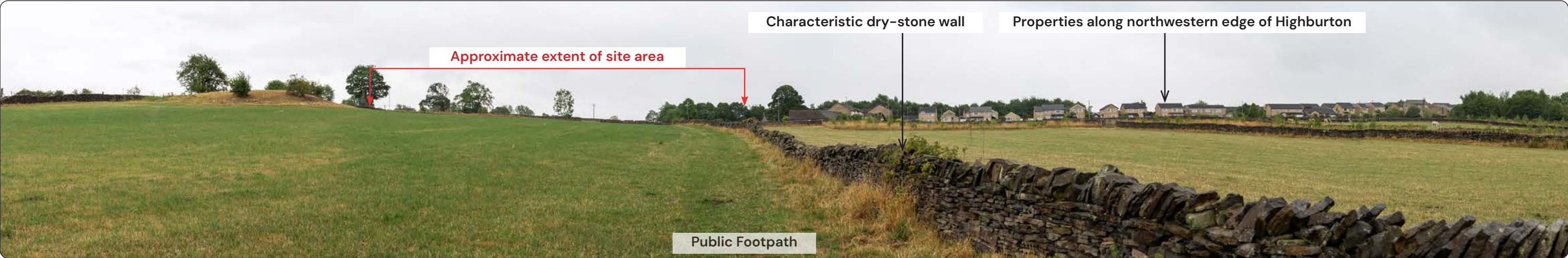


Photograph 3: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/70/10, located along the western boundary of the site, looking across the western part of the site.

Photographic Record



Photograph 4: View taken from Moor Lane, looking southeast across the northwestern boundary of the site.

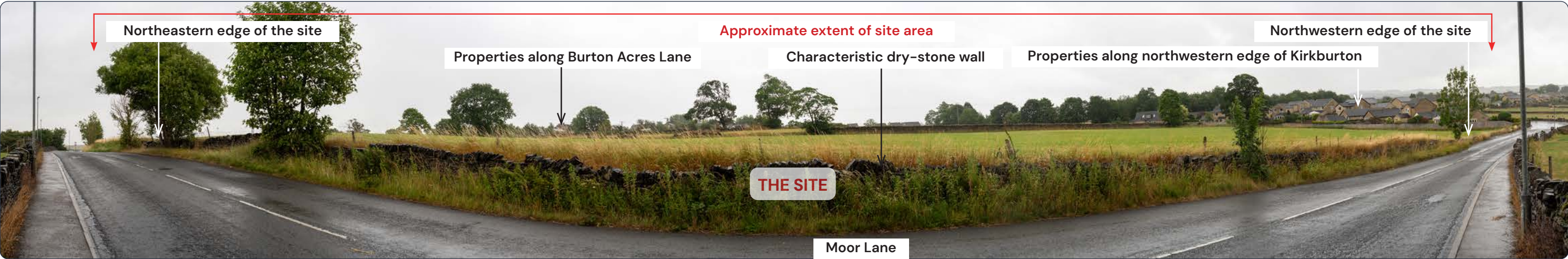


Photograph 5: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/91/10, looking south across grassland toward the northern edge of the site.



Photograph 6: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/91/10, looking south across a grassland field bordered by a characteristic drystone wall toward the northern edge of the site.

Photographic Record



Photograph 7: View taken from Moor Lane, looking south across the northern boundary of the site.



Photograph 8: View taken from Moor Lane, looking southwest across the northeastern boundary of the site.

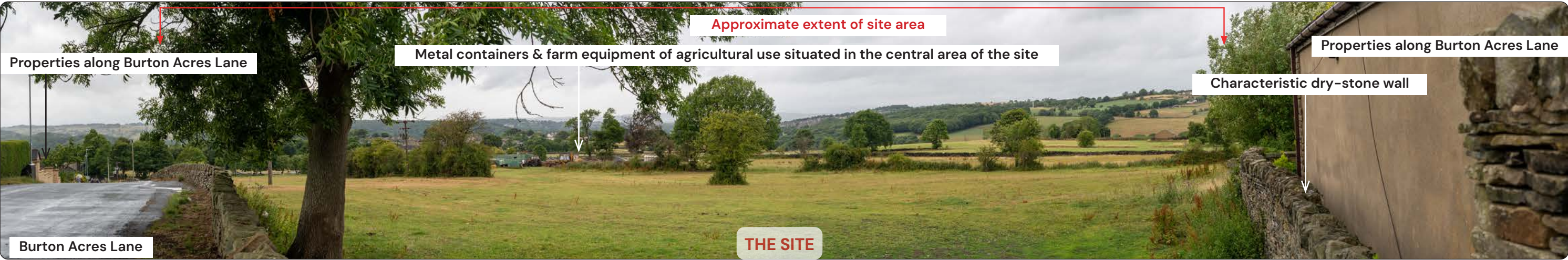


Photograph 9: View taken from Paddock Road, looking west across the eastern boundary of the site.

Photographic Record



Photograph 10: View taken from Paddock Road, looking southwest across the northeastern boundary of the site.



Photograph 11: View taken from Burton Acres Lane, looking northwest across the southeastern boundary of the site.

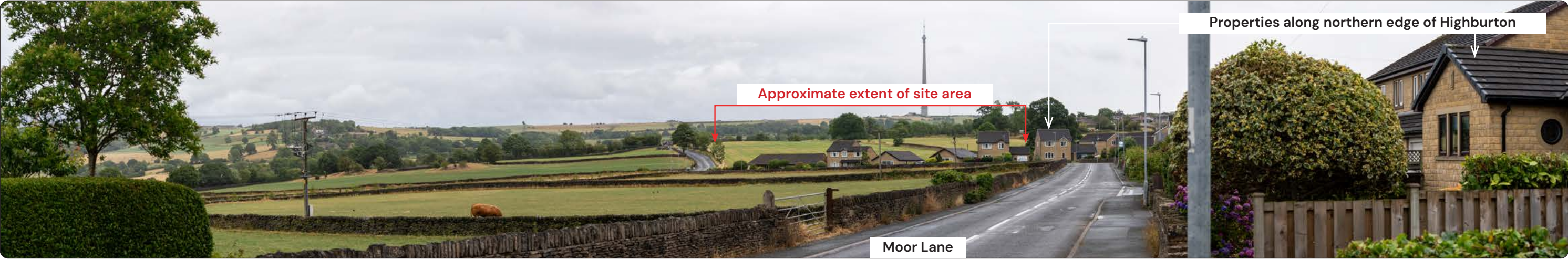


Photograph 12: View taken from Burton Acres Lane, looking northwest across the southern boundary of the site.

Photographic Record



Photograph 13: View taken from Burton Acres Lane, looking northeast across the southwest boundary of the site.

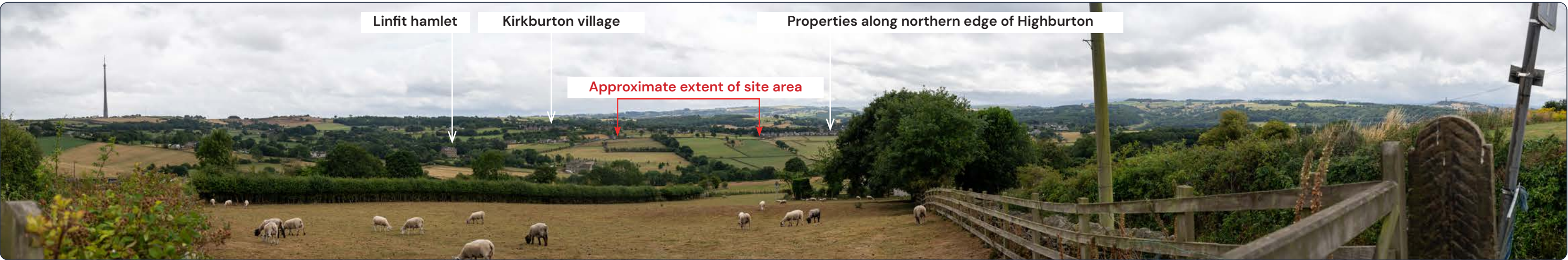


Photograph 14: View taken from Moor Lane, looking east towards the site.



Photograph 15: View taken from the public footpath Ref:KIR/90/180, looking southeast towards the site.

Photographic Record



Photograph 16: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/89/10, looking south across the Green Belt toward the site.

Photographic Record



Context Photograph 1: View taken from Moor Lane within the Highburton Conservation Area, looking northeast toward the site. The view is obscured due to intervening built form.

Photographic Record



Context Photograph 2: View taken from Thorncliffe Green Road, looking west.
No views toward the site due to intervening landform and the layering effect of existing vegetation.



Context Photograph 3: View taken from public footpath Ref: KIR/23/6/20,
looking southwest toward the site. The view is obscured due to intervening woodland blocks.



Appendix 5: Annex E Assessment Considerations and Illustrative Features (NPPF, August 2026)

Annex E: Green Belt assessments

1. Green Belt assessments should:
 - a. Identify the location and appropriate scale of the area or areas to be assessed, and in doing so:
 - i. Consider all Green Belt within the plan area in the first instance;
 - ii. Be broadly consistent with any Strategic Green Belt assessment in an adopted Spatial Development Strategy;
 - iii. Ensure assessment areas are small enough to enable variations in their contribution to the Green Belt purposes to be assessed;
 - iv. Facilitate identifying areas of grey belt by subdividing areas into smaller assessment units where this is necessary; and
 - v. Consider where it may be appropriate to vary the size of assessment areas based on local circumstances. For example, the assessment of smaller areas may be appropriate in certain places, such as around existing settlements or public transport hubs or corridors.
 - b. Identify areas of grey belt land, as defined in the glossary at Annex B, by evaluating the contribution each assessment area makes to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) and (d) set out in policy GB2, using the criteria below.
 - c. Identify whether the release or development of the assessment area(s) would fundamentally undermine the five Green Belt purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt when considered across the area of the plan.
2. When making judgements as to whether land is grey belt, authorities should consider the contribution that assessment areas make to Green Belt purposes (a), (b) and (d). Considerations for informing these judgements are set out below:

Purpose A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

3. This purpose relates to the sprawl of large built-up areas. Villages should not be considered large built-up areas.

Contribution	Illustrative features
---------------------	------------------------------

Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development, and lack physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development. They are also likely to include all of the following features: • Be adjacent or near to a large built-up area; and • If developed, result in an incongruous pattern of development (such as an extended 'finger' of development into the Green Belt).
--------	--

Contribution	Illustrative features
Moderate	Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be adjacent or near to a large built-up area, but include one or more features that weaken the land's contribution to purpose A, such as (but not limited to): • Having physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development; • Be partially enclosed by existing development, such that new development would not result in an incongruous pattern of development; • Contain existing development; and/or • Being subject to other urbanising influences.
Weak or None	Assessment areas that make only a weak or no contribution are likely to include those that: • Are not adjacent to or near to a large built-up area; or • Are adjacent to or near to a large built-up area, but containing or being largely enclosed by significant existing development.

Purpose B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

4. This purpose relates to the merging of towns⁷⁷, not villages.

Contribution	Illustrative Features
Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development and include all of the following features: • Forming a substantial part of a gap between towns; and • If developed, would be likely to result in the loss of visual separation of towns.
Moderate	Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be located in a gap between towns, but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to): • Forming a small part of the gap between towns; and/or • Being able to be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns. This could be (but is not limited to) due to the presence or the close proximity of structures, natural landscape elements or topography that preserve visual separation.
Weak or None	Assessment areas that contribute weakly are likely to include those that: • Do not form part of a gap between towns; or • Form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of this gap, without making a contribution to visual separation.

⁷⁷ For this purpose 'towns' includes cities.

Purpose D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

5. This purpose relates to historic towns, not villages. Where there are no historic towns in the plan area, it may not be necessary to provide detailed assessments against this purpose.

Contribution	Illustrative Features
---------------------	------------------------------

Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely be free of existing development and to include all of the following features: • Form part of the setting of the historic town; and • Make a considerable contribution to the special character of a historic town. This could be (but is not limited to) as a result of being within, adjacent to, or of significant visual importance to the historic aspects of the town.
Moderate	Assessment areas that perform moderately are likely to form part of the setting and/or contribute to the special character of a historic town, but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to): • Being separated to some extent from historic aspects of the town by existing development or topography; • Containing existing development; and/or • Not having an important visual, physical or experiential relationship to historic aspects of the town.
Weak or None	Assessment areas that make no or only a weak contribution are likely to include those that: • Do not form part of the setting of a historic town; or • Have no visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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