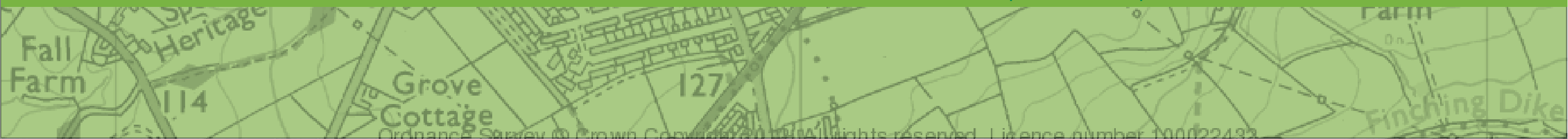




SF2267 Roberttown, Liversedge
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - 300614



Document Check Sheet

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1.0 Introduction

Smeeden Foreman Ltd have been appointed by Signet Planning to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for a housing allocation site within the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees.

This report will identify both the sensitivity of the site character and of views into the site and then assess the potential effects of a proposed housing development.

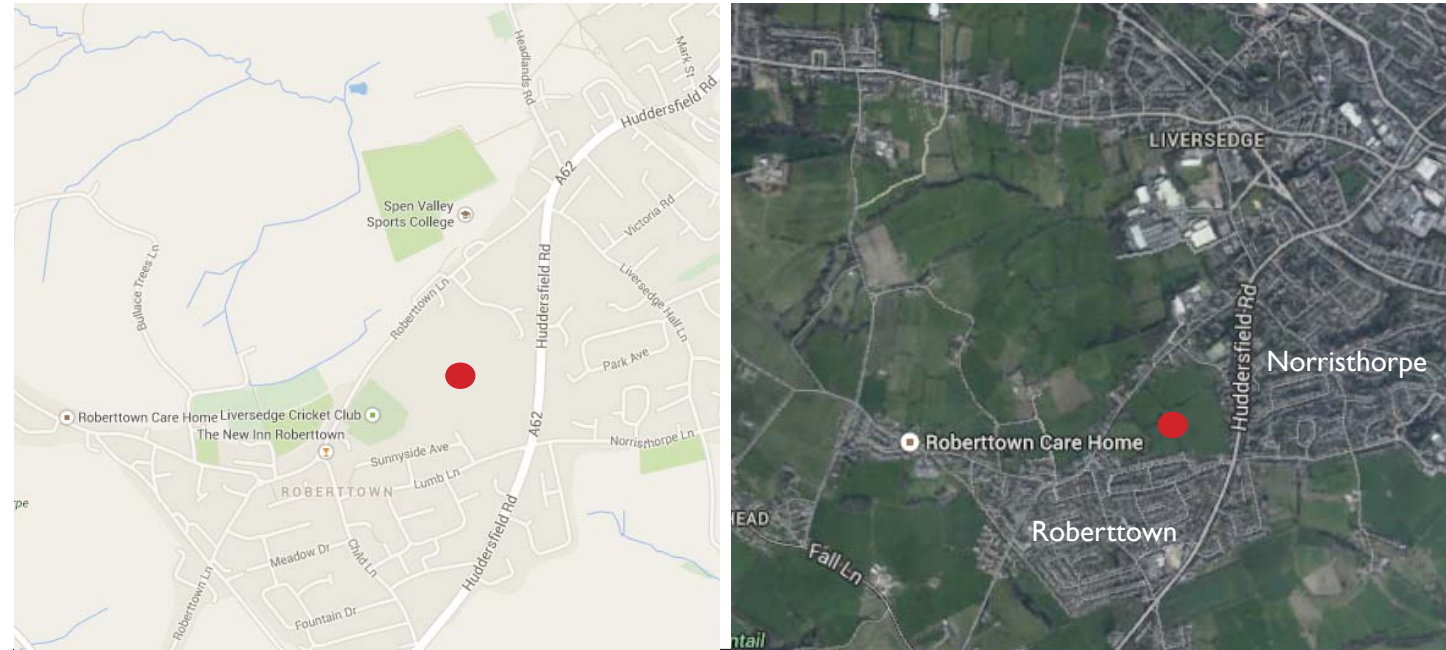


Image 1.1 Site Location Plans – Roberttown (<https://www.google.co.uk/maps>)

1.1 The Site

The allocation site is located 1km to the south of the township of Liversedge and borders the villages of Norristhorpe to the west and Roberttown to the south. The River Spen flows through Liversedge and forms the steep, narrow river channel known as the Spen Valley. Liversedge is situated within the metropolitan borough of Kirklees between Cleckheaton and Heckmondwike. It is approximately 165 miles north of London and 9 miles southwest of Leeds. It is a historic township comprised of several smaller settlements and is 'named after the Norman nobleman Robert de Liversec, who was granted the land after the conquest of 1066.' He also gave his name to local village Roberttown' [4].

1.2 Proposed Development

Proposed development of the site is for the construction of a housing development consisting mainly of two story housing with a small number of three storey units located towards the centre of the site. Proposals also include two small areas of public open space, and two small surface water balancing ponds with swales. A concept plan of the proposals is shown in Image 1.2.

The field is currently surrounded on all sides by a variety of different boundary types, including dry stone walls, native and ornamental hedgerow, and fencing. The land also has a mixture of land-uses including, domestic and commercial properties, agricultural fields, paddock and gardens.

The proposals seek to retain a channelled view across the site to surrounding countryside from Stanley Road. The proposals also intend to retain the drystone boundary wall along Roberttown Lane where the main access road is to be located. Proposed housing adjacent to Roberttown Lane are separated by a narrow green strip and are to be in a 'stable/barn style' to reflect a more rural character.



Image 1.2 Extract of the Concept Masterplan by Signet Urban Design

1.3 Scope and Study Area

A distinction has been made in this Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) between the 'study area' and the 'allocation site'.

The visual assessment considers the visual amenity of the site and the surrounding area and identifies potentially sensitive visual receptors and the approximate visibility of the development. The study area is defined as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and it is 'the area in which a proposed development may have an influence or effect on visual amenity' [1].

The character of the allocation site is examined in relation to that of the wider area, which is set out and described in Natural England's National Character Area 37 [2], Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe.

2.0 Methodology

The process has been guided by the third edition of the document 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', published by Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment [4].

'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.' Para 1.1 P4

The two distinct components of LVIA are:

- 1. assessment of landscape effects: assess effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;
- 2. assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.' Para 2.21 P21 [4]

This report separates these elements into two distinct sections so that the differences can be clearly appreciated. In order to satisfy the objective of this study, each section has been set out as follows:

Baseline Analysis - This is an analysis of the existing situation within and surrounding the site. It draws upon information gathered during a desk study and field survey work. In relation to the visual amenity section, the area of study (extent of visibility) is also identified and visual receptors are selected and visited. Planning designations intended to protect landscape and visual amenity are also recorded.

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects - This part of the study describes the likely nature and scale of changes to landscape character and visual amenity. The proposed development is studied and then compared against the baseline information to ascertain potential effects upon the landscape and visual amenity. To accompany the description of baseline and assessment information, a series of classifications have been applied to the landscape character of the site and each visual receptor. These act as a summary and place a defined value on; the sensitivity of the character area/visual receptor, the magnitude of change and the subsequent significance of the effect of the development.

2.1 Sensitivity of Existing Landscape Character/Visual Receptors

The sensitivity of the landscape to change is the degree to which a particular landscape can accommodate changes, or new features without significant detrimental effects to its essential characteristics.

The sensitivity of visual receptors will depend on three key factors:

- The receptor's activity whilst exposed to the view (work, recreational activities, resident);
- Degree of exposure to view; and,
- Period of exposure to view.

The sensitivity of landscape character or a visual receptor is defined as being High/Medium/Low, where High is the most sensitive.

General criteria for establishing the sensitivity of visual receptors and landscape character are set out in the following table.

Where viewpoint locations have more than one receptor, the impacts for those of greatest anticipated sensitivity will be used to determine the anticipated overall impact magnitude; thus ensuring the worst case scenario is reported.

Sensitivity	Visual Receptors	Landscape Character
High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from principal living rooms and from windows of rooms in use during the day. 2. Users of Public Rights of Way with predominantly open views and of recreational use. 3. Non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside 4. Visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots, or to designated buildings or landscapes where the wider landscape setting contributes to or adds value to the experience. 5. Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside – e.g. Country Parks, National Trust sites etc... 	<p>Strong landscape structure.</p> <p>Strong positive character.</p> <p>Good condition.</p> <p>Strong sense of place.</p> <p>Visually distinctive.</p> <p>Aesthetically pleasing/occasional detracting features.</p> <p>Distinct features worthy of conservation.</p> <p>Designated landscapes such as National Parks, Registered Parks and Gardens or designated buildings/structures where landscape character contributes to its designation.</p>
Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and and/or other intervening vegetation. 2. Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features. 3. Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas. 4. Motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside. Where attention is focussed upon often narrow and winding routes. 	<p>Recognisable landscape structure.</p> <p>Positive character.</p> <p>Moderate condition.</p> <p>Reasonable sense of place.</p> <p>Visually notable.</p> <p>Aesthetically satisfactory or uninspiring/some detracting features.</p> <p>Some features worthy of conservation.</p>
Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People in their place of work. 2. Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes. 3. Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the activity is focussed within the area. 4. Occupants of industrial premises. 	<p>Weak or degraded landscape structure.</p> <p>Weak or negative character.</p> <p>Poor condition.</p> <p>Poor sense of place.</p> <p>Visually poor.</p> <p>Aesthetically unsatisfactory or unpleasant.</p> <p>Many detracting features, which are likely to be dominant.</p> <p>Few or no features worthy of conservation.</p> <p>Scope for positive enhancement.</p>

2.2 Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change is the ‘combination of the scale, extent and duration’ [4] of the development and its impact on landscape character and visual receptors.

In the case of landscape impacts this relates to:

- The size, extent or degree of change to landscape character or individual landscape features;
- Whether there is a direct impact resulting in the loss of landscape features or a change beyond the land take of the scheme having an impact on the character of the area; and,
- Whether the impact is permanent or temporary.

For visual impact this relates to:

- Degree of change to existing views;
- Distance of the receptor from the application site; and,
- Whether the impact is permanent or temporary.

Magnitude of Change	Visual Amenity	Landscape Character
High	Where the proposals become the only dominant feature in the scene or would form a significant and immediately apparent element which would affect the overall impression of the view.	High degree of loss or major alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements considered to be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Medium	Where proposals would form a visible and recognisable new feature in the scene but may not be immediately apparent, or become the dominant feature in the view.	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Low	The proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view and may not be immediately apparent to the casual observer. Awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

The magnitude of change may also be Negligible or No Change and in this instance the resulting Effect Significance would also be Negligible or No Change as the application development would hardly be seen or not seen at all or the loss to landscape features and the character of the area would experience very little or no change.

Magnitude of Change	Visual Amenity	Landscape Character
Negligible	The proposal is largely indiscernible and/or they are at such a distance that they are scarcely appreciated. Consequently they have little effect on the scene.	Very minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the landscape character. Introduction of elements are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.
No Change	No change to the view is experienced.	No change to the landscape character is experienced.

2.3 Scoring Matrix

The two principal criteria determining significance of effect are the magnitude of change and the environmental sensitivity of the location or receptor. ‘A higher level of significance is generally attached to large-scale effects and effects on sensitive or high-value receptors; thus small effects on highly sensitive sites can be more important than large effects on less sensitive sites. It is therefore important that a balanced and well-reasoned judgement of these two criteria is achieved’ [4]. The matrix shown below encourages transparency in the process of identifying the significance but the experience and judgement of the landscape architect is also used.

Note that the significance of effects may be adverse or beneficial depending upon the nature of the magnitude of change.

		Magnitude of Change				
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible	No Change
Sensitivity	High	Major	Moderate/ Major	Moderate	Minor	No change
	Medium	Moderate/ Major	Moderate	Minor/ Moderate	Minor/Neutral	No change
	Low	Moderate	Minor/ Moderate	Minor	Neutral	No change

2.4 Nature of impact

Determination of the nature of an impact is a result of judging whether the introduction of a proposed development would be of benefit or detriment to the existing landscape character or view. Therefore, the impact of a proposed development can be adverse or beneficial.

The following system of categorisation is used for the nature of the impact:

Nature of Impact	
Adverse	The key characteristics of the existing landscape or view would be weakened by the introduction of the proposed development.
Neutral	The key characteristics would neither be weakened nor strengthened by the proposed development.
Beneficial	The key characteristics of the existing landscape or view would be strengthened by the introduction of the proposed development.

The following standards are used in assessing whether the impacts are short, medium or long term.

- Short term – < 12 months
- Medium term – one to five years
- Long term - + five years.

2.5 Effect Significance Table

Effects will be categorised using the terms Neutral, Minor, Moderate and Major effects, with both moderate and major categories being considered as comprising significant effects.

Effect Significance	Visual Amenity	Landscape Character
Major adverse	The proposals would result in a large and obvious change to a view from a highly sensitive receptor and would constitute a discordant, dominant element in the view.	The proposed scheme would result in effects that are at complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. It would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued characteristic features, elements and/or their setting. A high quality landscape would be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Moderate adverse	The proposals would cause some damage to a view from a more sensitive receptor and would be an obvious element in the view.	The proposed scheme would be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform and it would leave an adverse impact on valued landscape features.
Minor adverse	The proposals would cause limited damage to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, but would still be a noticeable element within the view, or greater damage to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.	The proposed scheme would not entirely fit into the landform and scale of the landscape and it would affect an area of valued landscape features.
Neutral	No change in the view.	The proposed scheme would compliment the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape and would maintain existing landscape quality.
Minor beneficial	The proposed development would result in visual effects that constitute a perceptible and temporary improvement in the existing view.	The proposed scheme has the potential to improve landscape character. It would fit in with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape and enable the incorporation of valued characteristic features.
Moderate beneficial	The proposed development would result in visual effects that constitute a conspicuous or temporary improvement in the existing view.	The proposed scheme would have the potential to accord with landscape character and improve the quality of the landscape through removal of damage caused by existing land uses.
Major beneficial	The proposed development would result in a substantial improvement to the existing view and positively influence the quality of the view	The proposed scheme would have the potential to accord seamlessly with the landscape character and significantly improve the quality of the landscape through restoration and the removal of damage caused by existing land uses.

2.6 Illustrative Material

2.6.1 General Photographs

General photographs were taken as a record and also to illustrate character. These photographs are presented within the document, and they illustrate the features and collective character of the site and its surroundings and views from identified viewpoints.

2.6.2 Maps and Plans

Plans have been produced using 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey maps as a base, to show the Viewpoint Locations (Figure 1), Local Landscape Designations (Figure 2), Landscape Character Areas (Figure 3), Green Belt Character Areas (Figure 4) and Zones of Theoretical Visibility (Figure 5).

3.0 Planning Context

This section introduces the landscape planning setting for the project, listing the relevant documentation that needs to be considered and the landscape designations, within and surrounding the site.

3.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 replacing Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Sustainable development is a target in which the environment can play a key role. 'Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.' Para 7 p2 [6].

The overarching emphasis on sustainable development sets out principles which Local Planning Authorities must reflect in local policy. The following paragraphs from the NPPF are most relevant to landscape and the proposal site location.

Paragraph 58 - Requiring Good Design

The NPPF places an emphasis on good design as a key factor to providing sustainable development. It sets out a list of design objectives.

'Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

1. will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
2. establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
3. optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;
4. respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;
5. create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and
6. are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.'

Generally the proposed development will not conflict with the objectives of this document as the layout and design respond to the landscape character and visual amenity of the area. It provides affordable housing and facilities that will be of benefit to the community. As the proposals continue to be developed a high standard of design should be employed throughout.

3.2 Local Planning Policy

The proposal site lies within the planning jurisdiction of Kirklees Borough Council.

The Kirklees Unitary Development Plan currently guides decisions on planning and development applications in the Kirklees district, although this is soon to be replaced by the Kirklees Local Plan. Outlined below are the saved policies belonging to the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (March 1999). The landscape designations and related policies that exist as part of, or adjacent to the site, are shown on Figure 2 – Landscape Designations.

3.3 Other Statutory and Non Statutory Landscape Applicable Designations and Classifications

3.3.1 Green Belt (Policy D8-I4)

The allocation site lies within an area currently designated as Green Belt. 'The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.' [8]

The Green Belt serves five purposes;

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns 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.[8]

Figure 4 illustrates the character of parcels of Green Belt land surrounding the site. (N.B. The boundaries do not represent designated Green Belt boundaries). Each parcel of land was assessed, and boundaries were defined using the following criteria:

- Where Green Belt was dissected by major roads (roads smaller than a secondary road were not included).
- Where Green Belt boundaries lie adjacent to urban areas
- Where Green Belt boundaries lie adjacent to land which is not designated as Green Belt.
- Where there is a change of land use.

The allocation site lies within Character Area 1 and has been categorised as 'Urban Fringe'. This area is strongly defined with built form, namely housing development, and urban features comprising a secondary road with associated street lighting. Overhead electricity pylons are a prominent urban detractor within the site.

The diagram illustrates the extent at which the Green Belt encompassing the allocation site is fragmented from its adjacent parcels and highlights the degree of enclosure which already compromises the 'openness' of this area. Changing the land use within Area 1 will have little impact on the fundamental principals of Green Belt policy in adjacent parcels (with the exception of Area 2, which already possesses a sub-urban character).

Policy D8-I4 of the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan states that 'development will only be appropriate where it is genuinely small scale and will occupy a small gap in a definable frontage or a small site largely surrounded by development. It will also need to harmonise with its surroundings so that there is no detriment to visual or residential amenity or highway safety.' [5]

This policy ensures that development is controlled, by 'preventing the coalescence of settlements' and 'regulating the growth of urban areas' [5]. Any proposed development must not be considered to be inappropriate, with inappropriate being, 'by definition, harmful to the Green Belt' [5]. The allocation site is located between the villages of Roberttown and Norristhorpe with its western boundary adjacent to Norristhorpe and its southern boundary adjacent to Roberttown. It forms an area of greenspace that largely separates these two settlements, however, coalescence has already occurred around the peripheral of the allocation site.

The character of the area will change but existing features are limited and there are already some urban detractors. The spaciousness and views will be diminished, but this is confined to the site and its immediate surroundings only. Views from the main road (A62) linking Roberttown and Norristhorpe are restricted by the existing residential areas lining the road and the impression is of a continuous urban area. The development within the allocation site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy as the site is mainly surrounded by an urban environment, with urban detractors already present within the site. The allocation site has clear boundaries, defined by urban development. Mitigation on the northern boundary will provide a visual buffer between development and the countryside.

3.3.2 Urban Greenspace (Policy D3)

The policy provides the following guidance:

•‘In order to safeguard these sites it will be appropriate to resist development proposals except those which would maintain or enhance a site’s value as open land.’ [5].

This policy ensures that development on these sites ‘will need to be carefully conditioned to ensure that it does not prejudice the amenity or ecological value of the site or its use for sport and recreation.’ [5]. The allocation site is located directly southwest of Liversedge Tennis Club, a small Urban Greenspace.

The development within the allocation site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy as the site will not encroach onto the Tennis Club. The Tennis Club is currently enclosed by residential development and so proposals will not affect the amenity value.

3.3.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the study area.

3.3.4 Public Rights Of Way

In addition to the local landscape designations, there are also statutory designations that apply to the site, such as Public Rights of Way. Kirklees Council have produced a document that sets out a ‘Rights of Way Improvement Plan in Kirklees’ [7]. The aim of this document is ‘to identify what is required to allow people to get out and about in the surrounding countryside and to enjoy the many local attractions Kirklees has to offer. It also means making sure the network meets with the needs of local people who use it to get to school, work and to local facilities or other services and to ensure no one is excluded from using the network by making it accessible to everyone.’ [7]

The allocation site contains two public rights of way and is also well connected with other footpaths across the wider landscape. The Kirklees Rights of Way Improvement Plan states that;

•‘The public rights of way network provides the public with opportunities to explore the countryside. It enables people to get away from urban areas for fresh air and tranquillity and to enjoy the countryside by way of recreational/leisure interests. Equally, the rights of way network still functions as its original use for travelling to work, school, church, local markets etc. Rights of way can also be seen as an important historical and cultural asset from both a local and national perspective.’ [7].

Currently the Rights of Way Improvement Plan states that ‘although Kirklees rights of way network has significant provision for walkers, it is poor and fragmented for horse riders and off-road cycling. The network is also very limited for those with mobility and sensory impairments.’ [7]. Therefore, the existing public rights of way around the allocation site have the potential to be enhanced and used as an opportunity to create green links and accessible areas across the landscape. Further links will be accommodated within the development to also promote pedestrian movement.

Development within the allocation site will not conflict with the objectives of this designation if the existing public rights of way are retained. The views towards the development could be screened with existing and new planting in order to maintain a consistent user experience along this section of the route.

3.3.5 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

The site encompasses a designated site from the Kirklees Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) draft findings (2013). The allocation site is represented by No. 812 on Image 1.3 below and lies within the Liversedge and Gomersal Ward. The SHLAA uses a ‘traffic light’ coding system to assess the suitability, availability and the achievability of a particular site. Area 812 encompasses the whole of the allocation site and is graded as ‘Amber’ on all three elements with ‘Amber representing a moderate level of constraint’, within the document. [7]. The asterisk identifies site which lie wholly or mainly in the Green Belt.

When assessing the suitability of a potential SHLAA site, environmental constraints were considered. These included;

- protected species,
- green corridors or other open space designations,
- protected habitats and ancient woodlands.

The report concluded that there were no limitations due to landscape factors.

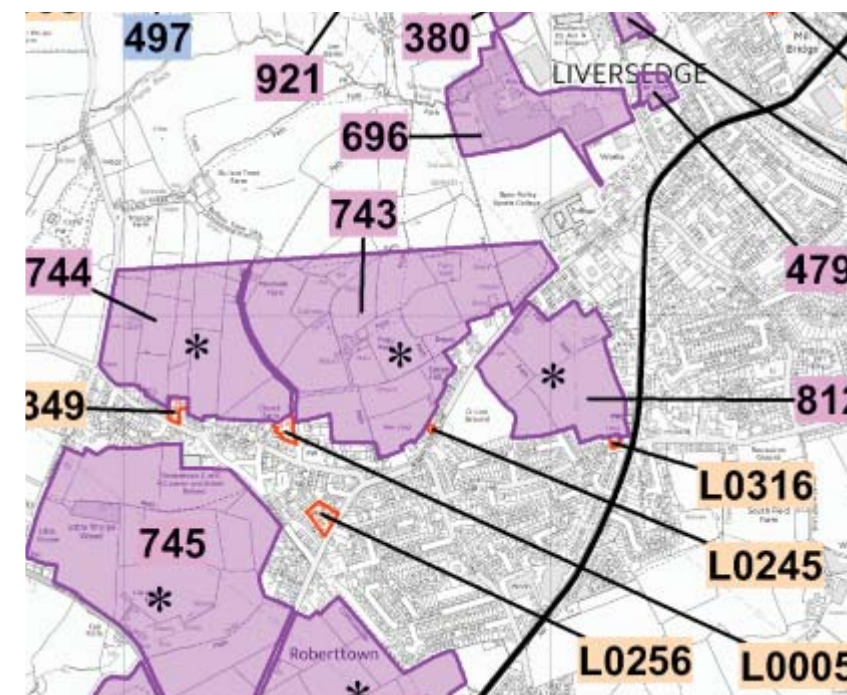


Image 1.3 Extract from Kirklees Borough Council (<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/business/regeneration/ldf/pdf/shlaa/LiversedgeandGomersal2013.pdf>)

3.3.6 Listed buildings

There are no listed buildings or structures within the site itself, however, there are ten listed buildings within the study area. These include;

1. List no: 1135409 Old Hall Farmhouse (Grade II*)
2. List no: 1300069 Duxbury Hall and Cottage (Grade II)
3. List no: 1135408 Headlands Hall (Grade II)
4. List no: 1134602 Boundary Stone (Grade II)
5. List no: 1134587 Pogg Myers Farmhouse (Grade II)
6. List no: 1134629 and 1184256 Bullace Trees Farmhouse and Barn (Grade II)
7. List no: 1134591 and 1134592 Church Road (numbers 120, 122 and barn) (Grade II)
8. List no: 1313711 Church Road (numbers 124 and 124A) (Grade II)

Image 1.4 and Figure 2 show these in proximity to the site within the study area. The listed buildings which were considered to have views of the allocation site were visited and considered within this report.

It is anticipated that Old Hall Farmhouse will experience a significant adverse change to the view due to its close proximity to the allocation site. However, the property contains a strong boundary of mature vegetation and a stone wall between the house and Roberttown Lane. The impact could be further reduced with careful mitigation along the northern boundary of the allocation site.

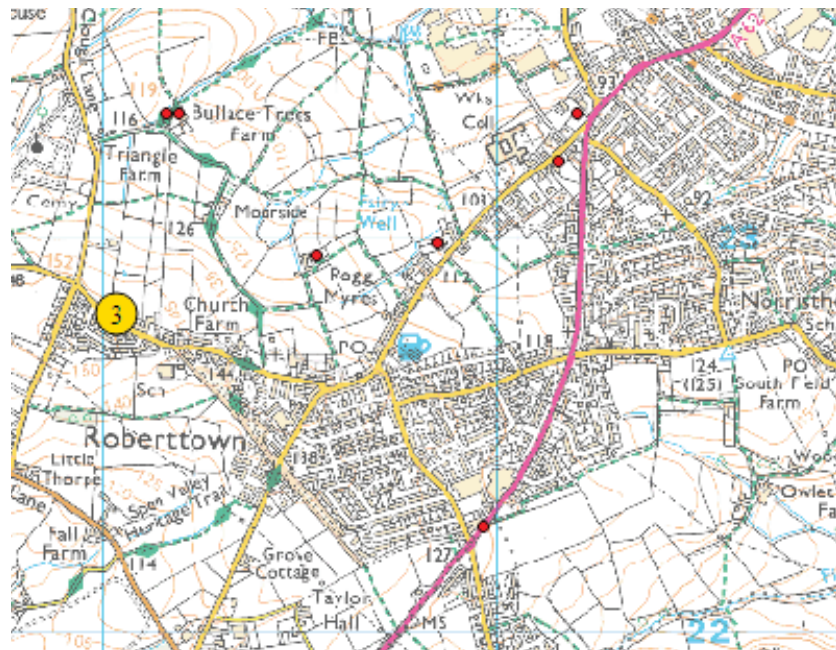


Image 1.4 Extract from English Heritage National Heritage List for England <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk>

3.3.7 Registered Parks and Gardens

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the study area.

3.3.8 Tree Preservation Orders

There are four Tree Preservation Orders within the allocation site and several more in the immediate area. The TPOs affecting the site directly are:

1. ID 16/81/g1 (located on the southern boundary of the allocation site)
2. ID 09/89/a1 (located on the northern boundary of the allocation site)
3. ID 09/89/g1 and 09/89/g2 (located on the north eastern boundary of the allocation site)

The TPOs could affect potential access points into the allocation site, however during the site visit the TPO 16/81/g1 appeared to have been removed.

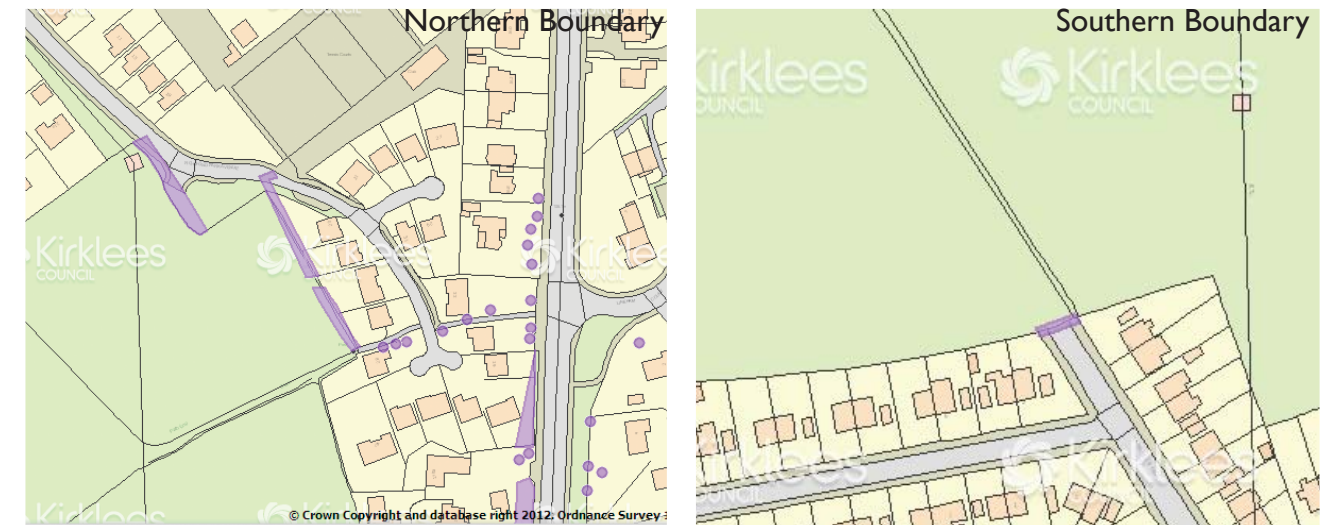


Image 1.5 Extracts from <http://map.kirklees.gov.uk/treepreservationorders/Map.aspx?zoom=7&lon=419564&lat=422606&triggerClick=false&searchText=Roberttown%20Lane#>

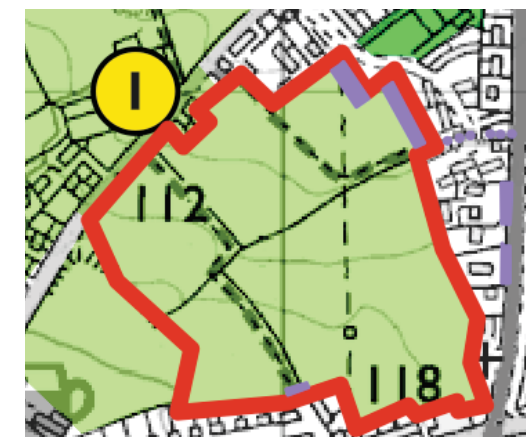


Image 1.6 Extract from Figure 2 - Landscape Designations



Image 1.7 Extract from the Kirklees Unitary Development Plan

4.0 Landscape Character and Fabric

This section provides an appraisal of the existing landscape baseline of the site and study area and commences with a review of landscape character followed by a more detailed examination of the landscape resource.

4.1 National Landscape Character

The study area and the wider areas sit within National Character Area 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe [3].

Natural England has produced the Character Map of England, which groups the English Landscape into distinct character areas and types that share common features and qualities. The site lies in Character Area 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe [3]. The 'striking aspect of the landscape is the mingling of predominantly 'gritstone' industrial towns and villages with the strong valley forms and pastoral agriculture of the Pennine foothills. The gritstone industrial buildings and settlements bring a sense of visual unity to the landscape.' Access is described as an important feature in the landscape as 'river corridors provide links through the NCA from the uplands into the towns and cities in the valleys, supplying not only water for the large population in these areas but also opportunities for people to access and enjoy the natural environment and for species movement through the landscape.' [3].

Settlement patterns are described as being 'constrained within valley floors and up side slopes, with location and layout strongly influenced by the landform.' [3]

A key feature of this landscape is that 'the landscape is the close juxtaposition of predominantly gritstone industrial towns and villages with the strong valley forms and the pastoral agriculture of the Pennine foothills' [2].

Settlement patterns and the types of views are also discussed. The document states that 'The pronounced landform gives rise to dramatic views, with long views over busy urban areas across valleys and over lower-lying land to the east. From within the towns there are views out to the surrounding hills, so that town and country are more obviously linked. Around Batley and Dewsbury, where the Coal Measures rocks are exposed, the hills and valleys are gentler and more rounded, and urban development has extended further. Here there is a complex mix of land cover, with small patches of open land, fields and woods separating areas of housing and industry.' [2].



Image 1.8 National Character Area 38
Screen-shot of National Character Area 38 map.

4.2 Local Landscape Character

The site and its surrounding landscape have been split into different character areas to illustrate the localised differences within the area and to define the different opportunities and constraints that exist in each area. The location of each character area is shown in Figure 3 - Landscape Character Areas.

4.2.1 Character Area 1 – Urban

The urban fringe extends along the valley tops and along main roads to form ribbon development that extends into the countryside. Liversedge is described as a township incorporating the smaller villages of Hartshead, Roberttown and Heckmondwike. The smaller villages are linear in formation and do not appear to have an obvious centre to them. With the exception of Roberttown (eastern aspect), the boundaries of each of these villages are unclear when travelling through the landscape. They appear to be unified in character but lack distinction.

Houses are predominantly compact terraces built in local stone, notably those located within village centres and along main roads. Other developments include newer post-war housing estates, a typical example of which can be found along Lumb Lane, joining Norristhorpe to Roberttown.

4.2.2 Character Area 2 - Agricultural

This area consists of gently undulating agricultural land divided into a patchwork of small irregular fields with mainly hedges acting as field boundaries. A network of narrow becks traverse through the valley, creating enclosed intimate areas within areas of lower land. On the tops of valleys the view opens with extensive views over a matrix of industrial, residential and agricultural land uses.

Scattered farmsteads, several of which are listed, are set within the rural landscape. One of these listed farmsteads, Bullace Trees Farm (see Image 1.8), proves to be an interesting feature and reflects the landscape's historic past. Along the urban fringe many of the fields have been made into extensions of residents' gardens and into paddocks. These contain stable blocks and various other outbuildings. They also act as a visual gradient between urban and rural.

Access to this area is extensive, with a network of trails and footpaths. The Spen Valley Heritage Trail runs straight through this character area along with the Brontë Way further to the west.

Vegetation outlines field boundaries and public rights of way. It comprises mainly of tall deciduous scrub, for example Hawthorn, with small copses of mature deciduous trees. The vegetation channel views on higher ground and enclose views within the lower valleys.

The sensitivity of this landscape character area is considered to be medium, due to the open nature in certain locations, and extensive connections with the wider landscape. However, the views of existing urban detractors such as housing, industrial units and electricity pylons that are visible across the landscape add to an urban infringement upon a seemingly rural area.



Image 1.9 - View within the Agricultural Character Area

4.2.3 Character Area 3 - Urban Fringe

This character area is located at the apex of a gentle hill and is enclosed by mixed-use urban development. The allocation site is located within this character area, along with Liversedge Cricket Club. The character area consists of a patchwork of small fields, enclosed with defunct hedgerows and tall ruderal vegetation. It is surrounded by high density housing on two sides, an embankment and low-density housing along Roberttown Lane. The area of recreational open space (Cricket Club), included in this character area, is positioned adjacent to the southwest boundary of the site.

The area is well connected to the wider landscape and local infrastructure. There are two public rights of way within the site, which, connect to and link with an extensive network of other rights of way. There are also two entrance points wide enough to allow vehicular access from Roberttown Lane and from Stanley Road.

This character area (Area 1) is made up of agricultural fields that are periodically grazed. The area has an open feel especially when viewing this character area from its southern border where views encompass the wider landscape seen above the housing along Roberttown Lane. Boundary fencing and intermittent garden planting forms a degree of enclosure along the edge of the site and housing forms a prominent feature. When experiencing this area from the north, the overall impression is of a significantly more enclosed and urban fringe character landscape, which is heavily influenced by the density of the housing, pylons, and topography which limits wider views.

The heritage and cultural associations within this character area exist as a grade II* listed building (Old Hall Farmhouse). The farmhouse is encircled by a stone wall and surrounded by mature ornamental vegetation which partially screens its frontage.

The sensitivity of this character is medium because although it is a green area that provides an open space within an urban setting, it is surrounded by housing and a secondary road. The field boundary planting does not provide a strong contribution to landscape pattern and electricity pylons run through the site. The land is low intensity agricultural pasture in which its openness varies depending on which part of the site it is experienced.

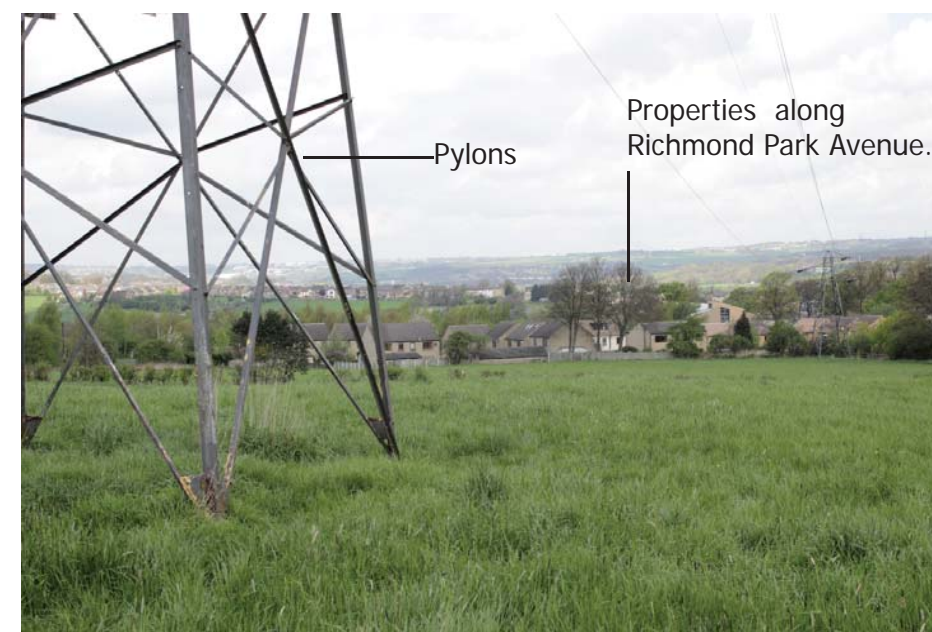


Image 1.10 - View from within the allocation site

4.2.4 Analysis of Landscape Character and Sensitivity to Change

Research on the local and national landscape character suggest that this is a highly dynamic and transitional landscape set on the periphery of Liversedge. Over the past 100 years the surrounding area has experienced many changes in land use and reflects the changing history of the areas industrial past.

The allocation site possesses many strengths within its landscape character, for example, the expansive views put the site into context and provide visual links into the surrounding settlements and countryside. However, it is also evident that this landscape could easily be susceptible to neglect and degradation. Urban pressures are already evident within the site and it currently lacks positive distinctive features. It remains typically urban fringe in character.

The allocation site is considered to be medium to low sensitivity to change as identified with the following criteria;

- Recognisable landscape structure (medium).
- Moderate condition (medium).
- Visually notable (medium).
- Dominant detracting features (low).
- Few features worthy of conservation (low).

4.3 Landscape Fabric

The fabric of the landscape is comprised from physical components (e.g. landform, land use and landscape elements and features). Proposals may affect the landscape fabric either directly (i.e. through physical disturbance such as tree removal) or indirectly (i.e. separated from the source of change in time or space, e.g. alteration to a drainage regime could result in changes in vegetation cover down stream).

There would be an impact on landscape fabric due to the presence of a housing development on an area of grassland that is currently grazed and undeveloped. Current proposals intend to retain some of the existing features and landscape structure, for example, the drystone wall along the northern boundary and the public rights of way running through the site.

Some of the key physical features such as the trees and hedgerows are being retained. In places where the hedgerows would be lost to development, for example, former field boundaries, the development proposes to install narrow green corridors, extra trees and swales.

5.0 Visual Amenity

5.1 Viewpoint selection

Through desk based study thirteen locations were identified as having the potential to experience a visual change as a result of development within the study area.

Viewpoint no.	Location	Distance from the site (approximate)	Key Receptors at viewpoint
1	Roberttown Lane	0.1km	Residents and Road users
2	Sunnyside Avenue	0.1km	Residents and Road users
3	Stanley Lane and Lumb Lane	0.2km	Road users
4	A62, Lumb Lane, Norristhorpe	0.2km	Road users
5	Richmond Park Avenue	0.1km	Residents and users of recreational ground
6	Roberttown Lane	0.1km	Road users
7	A62 and Roberttown Lane	0.4km	Road users
8	PROW spe/114/20		Users of PROW
9	PROW spe/111/70 and Balks		Residents and users of PROW
10	PROW spe/114/60		Users of PROW
11	PROW spe/126/20 Spen Valley Heritage Trail		Users of PROW
12	PROW spe/126/50		Users of PROW
13	A651 Oxford Road		Road users

Table 1 Viewpoint Location Table

Figure 1 -Viewpoint Locations, shows where each viewpoint is situated in relation to the site. There are thirteen viewpoints from which the allocation site is potentially visible.

A visual survey was carried out; the extent and nature of the views and the contribution made by the existing site was recorded. Any close and direct views of the site were recorded and then a wide variety of further views were selected within the visual envelope to demonstrate the effect on viewpoints from all directions surrounding the site.

The photographs are representative of the views experienced from each viewpoint; however, they should not be considered a substitute to visiting the viewpoint in the field. It is also noted that in some instances photographs could not be taken as access was unavailable and so locations as close as possible to the viewpoints were used instead.

5.2.1 Viewpoint Location 1 - Roberttown Lane (looking south)



Image 1.11

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint is located directly outside the allocation site and consists of low-density two storey houses and a listed building, Old Hall Farmhouse. The properties face onto the site. Front garden boundaries are combinations of trees, hedges, fences and stonewalls, and the screen effect varies from filtered to open views.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of houses on Roberttown Lane and listed building (Old Hall Farmhouse II*) and road users. Receptors are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation.
- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes.

Existing Conditions

Views experienced are of gently undulating pasture in the foreground. This has an intimate and enclosed character, created by: the topography, embankment to the west, and the field boundaries transecting the site. Beyond the site boundary to the north and east, the view is enclosed by a backdrop of high-density two storey houses, broken with the occasional group of mature trees. An overhead line of electricity pylons bisect the space, forming a dominant vertical feature. The embankment to the west of the allocation site marks the boundary between the site and the Cricket Club.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The views from this receptor will change as the allocation site is prominent and built form will be introduced to the foreground of the view. The open space and agricultural character will be replaced by development and all existing views will be screened by the close proximity of new buildings. However, the change is tempered by the existing presence of pylons, and the edge of housing on Lumb Lane and Sunnyside Avenue. The anticipated magnitude of change is considered to be **high**.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is high. An anticipated overall impact significance of **moderate adverse** would be expected.

5.2.2 Viewpoint Location 2 - Sunnyside Avenue



Image 1.12



Image 1.13

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint is located directly outside the allocation site and consists of a row of high density, post-war, two storey houses that back onto the site. Properties will have open views across the site, from both upstairs and downstairs windows. Back garden boundaries comprise mostly of low level hedging or fences and provide little in the way of screening. This screen effect varies from slightly filtered to open.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of Sunnyside Avenue and are considered to be of **high** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Residential properties with predominantly open views from garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from principal living rooms and from windows of rooms in use during the day.

Existing Conditions

Views from the houses towards the north consist of gently undulating, pasture in the foreground. The landform gently slopes down to the north presenting a more open aspect to the landscape character and linking the site with the longer-range views typical of this character area. These views extend across the narrow valley and are eventually enclosed by urban development in Liversedge, located along the top of the valley (see Image 1.13). The overall effect is ribbons of urban development interspaced by fields and agricultural land.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The views available from this receptor towards the north will change as the allocation site will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space will become urban development and longer-range views of open countryside will be diminished. The dominant view for road users along Sunnyside Avenue will remain the same. The anticipated magnitude of change is considered to be **high**.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of high sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is high. An anticipated overall impact significance of **major adverse** would be expected.

5.2.3 Viewpoint Location 3 - Stanley Lane and Lumb Lane (looking north)



Image 1.14

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint is located approximately 50 metres outside the allocation site and consists of post-war two-storey residential housing. Several houses are adjacent to the corner of the allocation site. Back garden boundaries consist primarily of low level fencing with intermittent hedging.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of Stanley Lane and road users of Lumb Lane and are considered to be of **medium to low** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes (low).
- Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation (medium).

Existing Conditions

Remaining views towards the north experience glimpse views of pasture in the foreground, although this appears to have a generally enclosed character. The landform gradually slopes down to reveal longer-range views of agricultural land in the valley and urban development on higher ground.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The views from dwellings on Stanley Lane towards the north will change as the allocation site will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space will become urban development. The dominant view along Lumb Lane will largely remain the same apart from glimpse views of the proposed development from Stanley Lane. The anticipated magnitude of change is considered to be **medium to low** as the proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view (with the exception to properties on Stanley Lane, where proposals would form a visible and recognisable new feature)

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium to low sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is of medium to low to the existing conditions. An anticipated overall impact significance of **moderate adverse** would be expected.

5.2.4 Viewpoint Location 4 - A62, Lumb Lane, Norristhorpe Lane (looking north west)



Image 1.15

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint is located on the southwest corner of the allocation site and consists of two story houses that back onto the site and users of the A62 road. The A62 is a main route and presents features associated with the road, for example, traffic lights, street signs and lighting, and bus shelters for public transport. The viewpoint is urban and enclosed in character.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of Lumb Lane and road users of the A62 and are considered to be of **medium to low** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes (low).
- Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation (medium).

Existing Conditions

The view is of two storey detached and semi-detached residential housing in the foreground and is predominantly urban in character, particularly with being located on a busy junction. There are few glimpse views through gaps between houses and mature trees.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The views from this receptor will change very little as the development will be largely obstructed by two story residential buildings in the foreground and more mature trees as a backdrop. The space and character will remain enclosed. The magnitude of change is anticipated to be **low** as the proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view and may not be immediately apparent. Awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the scene.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium to low sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is low. An anticipated overall impact significance of **minor adverse** would be expected as the proposals would cause limited damage to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity.



5.2.5 Viewpoint Location 5 - Richmond Park Avenue



Image 1.16

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of medium to large detached and semi-detached two storey houses and a small recreational facility (Liversedge Tennis Club). Several of the houses border the allocation site with boundaries consisting of low level hedging. The viewpoint is sub-urban in character.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of Richmond Park Avenue and users of Liversedge Tennis Club and are considered to be of **medium to low** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the activity is focussed within the area (low).
- Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation (medium).

Existing Conditions

The existing view comprises low shrubs, small mature trees and a brick and fence boundary in the foreground, with mature trees and vegetation located in the adjacent field. The allocation site lies beyond the field boundary. The topography gradually slopes up and is eventually enclosed by a backdrop of two story houses. A line of pylons are visible to the south west, beyond the hedgerows.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

Views experienced from residential dwellings will experience a change in the nature of the view. Views will feel more enclosed and residents will lose a visual connection to open space. Users of the tennis club will experience a partial loss of view, although this will not detract from the amenity value of its current situation. The magnitude of change is anticipated to be **low** as the proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view and may not be immediately apparent to the casual observer.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium to low sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is low. An anticipated overall impact significance of **minor adverse** would be expected as proposals would cause limited damage to the view from a receptor of medium sensitivity but would still be a noticeable element within the view.

5.2.6 Viewpoint Location 6 - Roberttown Lane (looking south west)

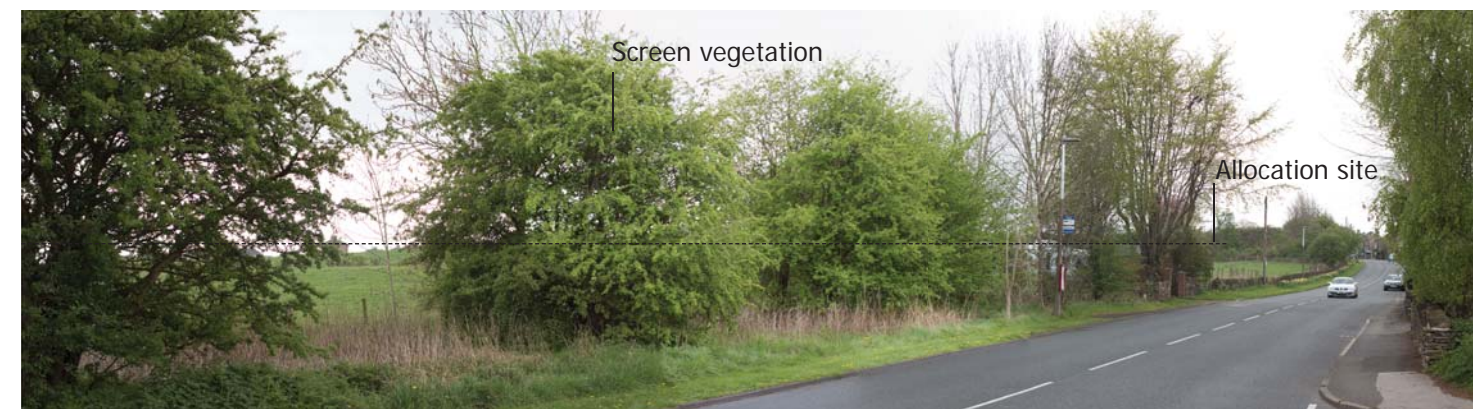


Image 1.14

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint is located adjacent to the northern border of the site on Roberttown Lane. Roberttown Lane is a minor road considered to be wider than 4 metres and contains associated urban features, including a bus stop, road signs and street lighting. The road is enclosed by a stone wall and an intermittent hedgerow.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are motorised users of Roberttown Lane. Receptors are considered to be of **low** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes.

Existing Conditions

The view is screened by tall vegetation and mature trees, with intermittent glimpse views of the allocation site beyond. There is a line of pylons visible in the middle ground and in winter it will be possible to glimpse views of existing houses on Sunnyside Avenue and Stanley Lane.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The view from this receptor will change because as the proposed housing development will be partially visible from this location. The anticipated magnitude of change is medium as proposals would form a visible and recognisable new feature in the scene but may not be immediately apparent or become a dominant feature in the view.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of low sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is medium. An anticipated overall impact significance of **minor adverse** would be expected as the proposals would cause limited damage to a view.

5.2.7 Viewpoint Location 7 - A62 and Roberttown Lane (looking south west)



Image 1.15

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of two storey houses and bungalows facing onto the A62 Huddersfield Road, in the direction of the allocation site. Huddersfield Road is a busy main road with associated urban features including, street lighting, sign posts and bus stops.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are road users of a Roberttown Lane, and the A62 Huddersfield Road. Grade II listed building, Toll House, is also reflected in this viewpoint. They are considered to be of **low** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes.

Existing Conditions

The view is of the road junction with two storey housing, a listed building (Toll House) and tall mature trees in the foreground. The views are urban and enclosed in character and the proposed allocation site beyond is fully screened.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The views available from this receptor towards the north will not change as the allocation site is not visible from this location. **No change** in the view is anticipated from this viewpoint.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of low sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is no change. An anticipated overall impact significance of **neutral** would be expected.

5.2.8 Viewpoint Location 8 - Public Right of Way, spe/114/20

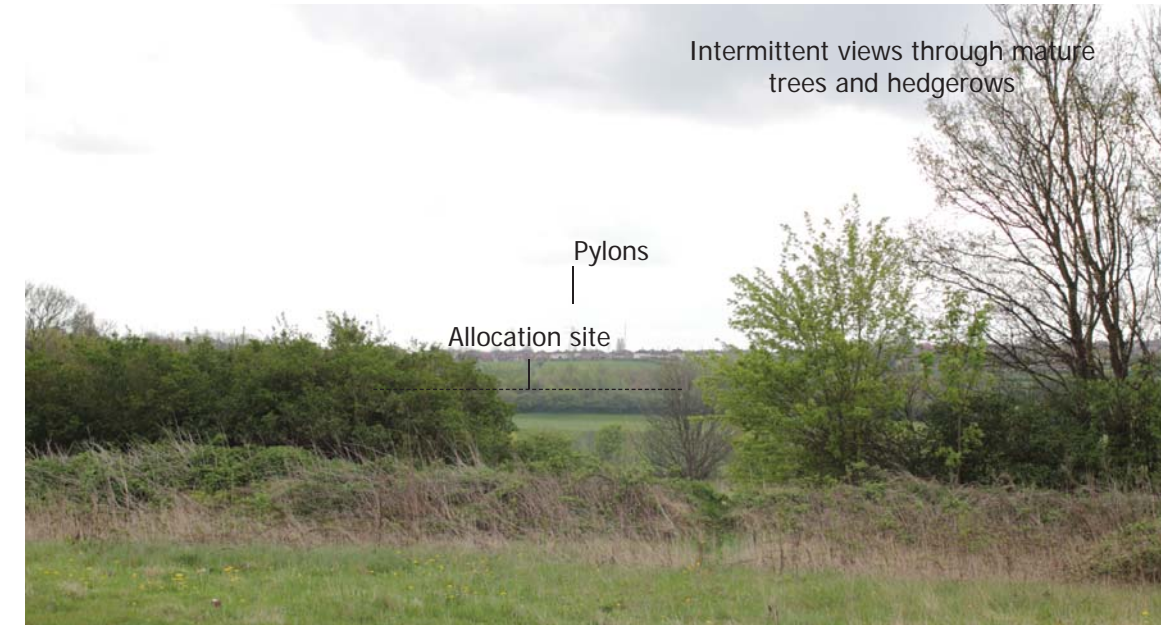


Image 1.16

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of a Public Right of Way, accessed from the A645 Halifax Road, in Liversedge. Several mature trees and a hedgerow dominate the view along the footpath. There are, however, glimpse views towards the allocation site between gaps in the vegetation.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are users of Public Right of Way, spe/114/20 and are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.

Existing Conditions

Where views are available they reveal undulating pasture with bands of mature trees and hedgerows along field margins. This gives the view a semi-rural agricultural character. Further views to the south are enclosed by a continuous band of urban development running along the southern boundary of the allocation site.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The allocation site exists in the distant view and is largely obscured by vegetation. The magnitude of change is considered to be **negligible** as the proposal is largely indiscernible and is at such a distance that it would be scarcely appreciated.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is negligible. An anticipated overall impact significance of **minor adverse** would be expected as the proposals would cause limited damage to a view of medium sensitivity.

5.2.9 Viewpoint Location 9 - Balks and Public Right of Way spe/111/70



Image 1.17

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of two storey houses and bungalows, some of which have an angled view towards the site. Views are restricted to first floor windows by planting and trees in front gardens. Public right of way users have restricted views obscured by trees and vegetation.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are residents of properties on Balks and users of Public Right of Way spe/111/70. They are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.

- Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation.

Existing Conditions

The view is of undulating, agricultural land in the foreground, which is dissected by scattered mature trees and hedgerows. The distant views are enclosed by landform, a mixture of mature trees and urban development. Industrial development forms a prominent feature within the landscape.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The allocation site exists in the distant view and is largely obscured by vegetation. The magnitude of change is considered to be **negligible** as the proposal is largely indiscernible and is at such a distance that it would be scarcely appreciated.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of moderate sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is negligible. An anticipated overall impact significance of **minor adverse** would be expected as the proposals would cause limited damage to a view of medium sensitivity.

5.2.10 Viewpoint Location 10 - Public Right of Way spe/114/60 (looking east)



Image 1.18

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of a public footpath accessed from Clough Lane. The land is gently undulating pasture with field margins comprising native hedgerow and larger mature trees.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are users of Public Right of Way spe/114/60 and are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.

Existing Conditions

Views are open to the south and the east and extend across softly undulating agricultural pasture. Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerow with a scattering of mature trees. The distant views are enclosed by a mixture of mature trees and urban development. It is consistent with the character area profile.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The view from this receptor will **not change** because the proposed housing development would not be visible from this location due to landform and the proximity from the allocation site.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is no change. An anticipated overall impact significance of **neutral** would be expected.

5.2.11 Viewpoint Location 11 - Public Right of Way spe/126/20, Spen Valley Heritage Trail



Image I.19

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of a public bridleway accessed from Bullace Tree Lane. Views are open to the north and east across pasture. Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerow with scattered copses of mature trees. Further views comprise two storey houses with large extended gardens and paddocks. Liversedge and Heckmondwike can be seen in the far distance.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are users of Public Right of way Spe/126/20 and are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.

Existing Conditions

The view extends over undulating, agricultural land in the foreground dissected by mature trees and hedgerows. The distant views are enclosed with a mixture of mature trees and urban development.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The view from this receptor will **not change** because the proposed housing development would not be visible from this location due to landform and the proximity from the allocation site.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is no change. An anticipated overall impact significance of **neutral** would be expected.

5.2.12 Viewpoint Location 12 - Public Right of Way spe/114/60 (looking east)

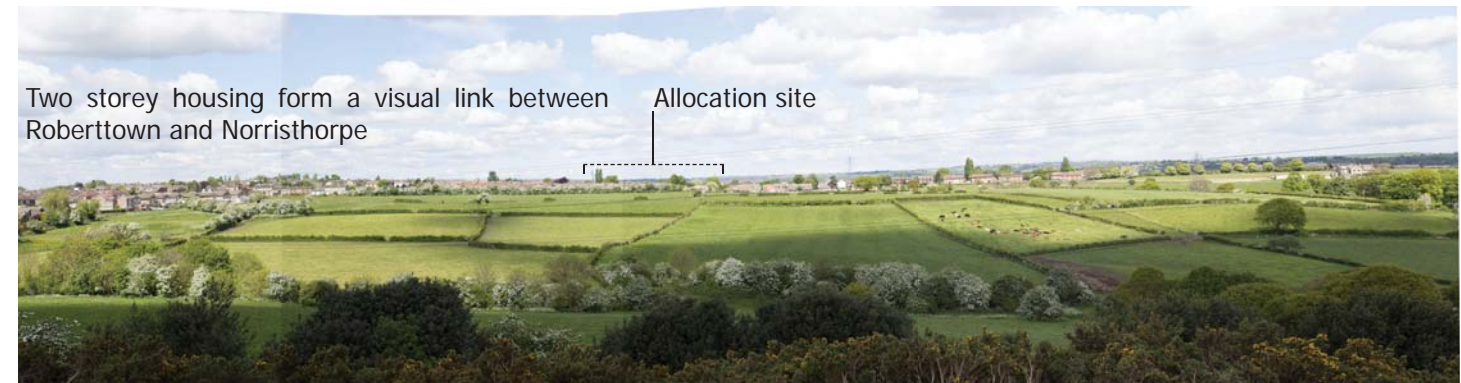


Image I.19

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of a Recreational Route and is accessed from Clough Lane, halfway between Liversedge and Roberttown. Views are open to the north and east across agricultural pasture. Field boundaries are predominantly hedgerow with the occasional presence of mature trees.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are users of public right of way spe/114/60 and are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.

Existing Conditions

The view is of undulating, agricultural land in the foreground dissected by mature trees and hedgerows. Listed building Bullace Trees Farm proves an interesting feature within the landscape. The view is enclosed to the south by rising landform and a tall deciduous field boundary. The eastern views are enclosed by a mixture of different housing types, with many having extended gardens and paddocks.

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The view from this receptor will **not change** because the proposed housing development would not be visible from this location due to landform and the proximity from the allocation site.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is no change. An anticipated overall impact significance of **neutral** would be expected.

5.2.13 Viewpoint Location 13 - A651 Oxford Road



Image 1.17

Viewpoint Representation

The viewpoint consists of the A651 Oxford Road. The A651 links the surrounding towns and villages with the A650 (Bradford to Dewsbury) and the M62. The main road is predominantly enclosed with large detached two storey residential houses, however, where views are available they are open and extensive.

Receptors

Key receptors at this location are road users and are considered to be of low sensitivity to change as identified within the methodology as follows:

- Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes.

Existing Conditions

The view is predominantly urban in character with occasional glimpse views to the southwest. Open views comprise the villages of Liversedge, Norristhorpe and Roberttown, which visually amalgamate into one large area of urban development. A distant view of open countryside is visible surrounding the urban development. The allocation site is visible as a narrow strip of agricultural land set between mature trees (in the foreground) and urban development (in the background).

Anticipated Magnitude of Change of View

The view from this receptor will not change because the proposed housing development would not be visible from this location due to landform and the proximity from the allocation site.

Overall Impact Significance

The receptors of this view are assessed as being of medium sensitivity to change. The anticipated magnitude of change is no change. An anticipated overall impact significance of **neutral** would be expected.

5.2.2

The character of the allocation site will change with development; pastoral farmland will become housing development and will appear to be an extension to the existing urban fabric of Norristhorpe and Roberttown. Currently the two settlements are joined at the road junctions between Huddersfield Road, Norristhorpe Road and Lumb Lane. Views of the two settlements from the south (viewpoint location 11) already illustrate the extent to which coalescence has already occurred. The development will serve as infill to land between the two settlements. Development within this area will change the local character and introduce significant new buildings, particularly to the village of Roberttown.

The scale and nature of a new housing development would be considered to be moderate in comparison to the surrounding urban areas. It would not appear to be out of scale or context.

The proposed development will urbanise this area, but its context is already dominated by the surrounding housing and busy road.

Existing hedgerows and groups of trees are located at the edge of the site and along Roberttown Lane. Vegetation is an important part of the landscape character and provides the site with localised enclosure. New trees and hedgerows should be positioned along the boundaries of the proposed development, along Roberttown Lane and also as part of any future green open space along the southern boundary.

6.0 Non Technical Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Planning Policy Context

Development within the allocation site will conflict with landscape policies and other material considerations in this area. The development will take place in an area that is designated as Green Belt and therefore classed as an unsuitable site for development. Earlier analysis of the allocation site in relation to its Green Belt designation (see section 3.31) discusses the possibility that the sites function as Green Belt has been reduced due to the encroachment of urban development and has allowed the site to become fragmented from larger, less enclosed areas of Green Belt. The proposed development will not change the nature or compromise the fundamental purposes of adjacent parcels of Green Belt land.

The urban settlements of Roberttown and Norristhorpe have already coalesced along Lumb Lane with housing development. It is a feature that is apparent when these two settlements are viewed from a number of viewpoints within the wider landscape.

6.2 Landscape Character and Fabric

Development within the allocation site will change the landscape character and introduce built form. The character of the landscape within the allocation site will change from pastoral farmland to a sub-urban residential development. Some of the physical features which contribute to the landscape structure could be retained.

This report identifies the allocation site as urban fringe in character, comprising agricultural and grazed fields. Its context is relatively urban, situated between housing on three sides and Roberttown Lane to the north, with associated urban features. Over-head electricity pylons prove to be a prominent urban detractor within the site.

6.3 Visual Amenity

Table 2 summarises the impact of the overall significant of changes to each viewpoint. It is concluded that although significant residual effects are recorded for viewpoint 2 (Sunnyside Lane) this location is directly adjacent to the allocation site, where the existing views will be diminished and a housing development would be a marked change to the existing scene. Another significant change will be the approach to Roberttown along Roberttown Lane. The value to the view on the approach to Roberttown on Roberttown Lane from the east arises from the brief experience of a green gap in the built-up area. This could be considered to be a negative impact. Such impacts might be successfully mitigated through design of the road frontage to the proposed allocation site. Viewpoints further away from the site experience insignificant residual change or no change.

Where possible, screen planting should be implemented within the new development, especially where it abuts residential areas. Evergreen species will provide year round cover and so should be included within the species mix.

6.4 Mitigation

Mitigation measures may assist in further integrating the proposed development and reinforce the existing nature of views. Such mitigation may reduce the overall impact significance as indicated due to the balance between the development and the existing key characteristics within the view.

Key points to consider;

- Retention of the green gap on the approach to Roberttown along Roberttown Lane.
- Enhancement of existing PROW and accessibility within the site.
- Retain a north-south channelled view linking the allocation site with countryside to the north
- Improve and augment existing vegetation on southern boundary to create a strong and defined visual boundary.

The table below summarises the findings of the assessments from each location.

Viewpoint no.	Location	Sensitivity of Key Receptor	Overall impact (without mitigation)
1	Roberttown Lane	Medium	Moderate Adverse
2	Sunnyside Avenue	High	Major Adverse
3	Stanley Lane and Lumb Lane	Medium to Low	Moderate Adverse
4	A62, Lumb Lane, Norristhorpe Lane	Medium to Low	Minor Adverse
5	Richmond Park Avenue	Medium to Low	Minor Adverse
6	Roberttown Lane	Low	Minor Adverse
7	A62 and Roberttown Lane	Low	Neutral
8	PROW spe/114/20	Medium	Minor Adverse
9	PROW spe/111/70 and Balks	Medium	Minor Adverse
10	PROW spe/114/60	Medium	Neutral
11	PROW spe/126/20 (Spen Valley Heritage Trail)	Medium	Neutral
12	PROW spe/126/50	Medium	Neutral
13	A651 Oxford Road	Low	Neutral

Table 2 Viewpoint Sensitivity and Impact Table









The majority of the receptors who would experience adverse effects from the potential housing development are located within close proximity to the site itself and lie adjacent to the site boundary. From the east, south, and west the site is screened by a continuous ribbon of high-density housing and its elevated position on the hillside means there are no views from these aspects into the site. To the north of the allocation site there are open views towards the site location, however, the view is partially obscured by a band of mature vegetation along Roberttown Lane. Viewpoints 9 to 13 are located at a proximity where the proposed scheme would remain in context with the surrounding landscape features and would fit into the existing landform.

7.0 Bibliography

- [1] Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute, 2013).
- [2] The Character Map of England (Natural England, 1996).
- [3] National Character Area Assessment: 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe (Natural England)
- [4] www.roberttownvillage.org.uk
- [5] Kirklees Borough Council 'Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement' September 2006
- [6] Kirklees Council 'Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan' April 2007
- [7] Kirklees Council 'Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment' December 2013
- [8] <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk>

ROBERTTOWN, LIVERSEGE

KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Screen Vegetaion
-  Screen Buildings and Structures
-  Public Right of Way - Footpath
-  Public Right of Way - Bridleway
-  Public Right of Way - Recreational Route
-  Green Corridor
-  Viewpoint Location and Direction



Viewpoint Locations










SF2267
Figure 1





Roberttown, Liversedge

KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Listed Building
-  Urban Greenspace - Policy D3
-  Green Belt
-  Recreational Route
-  Green Corridor
-  Tree Preservation Order



Landscape Designations






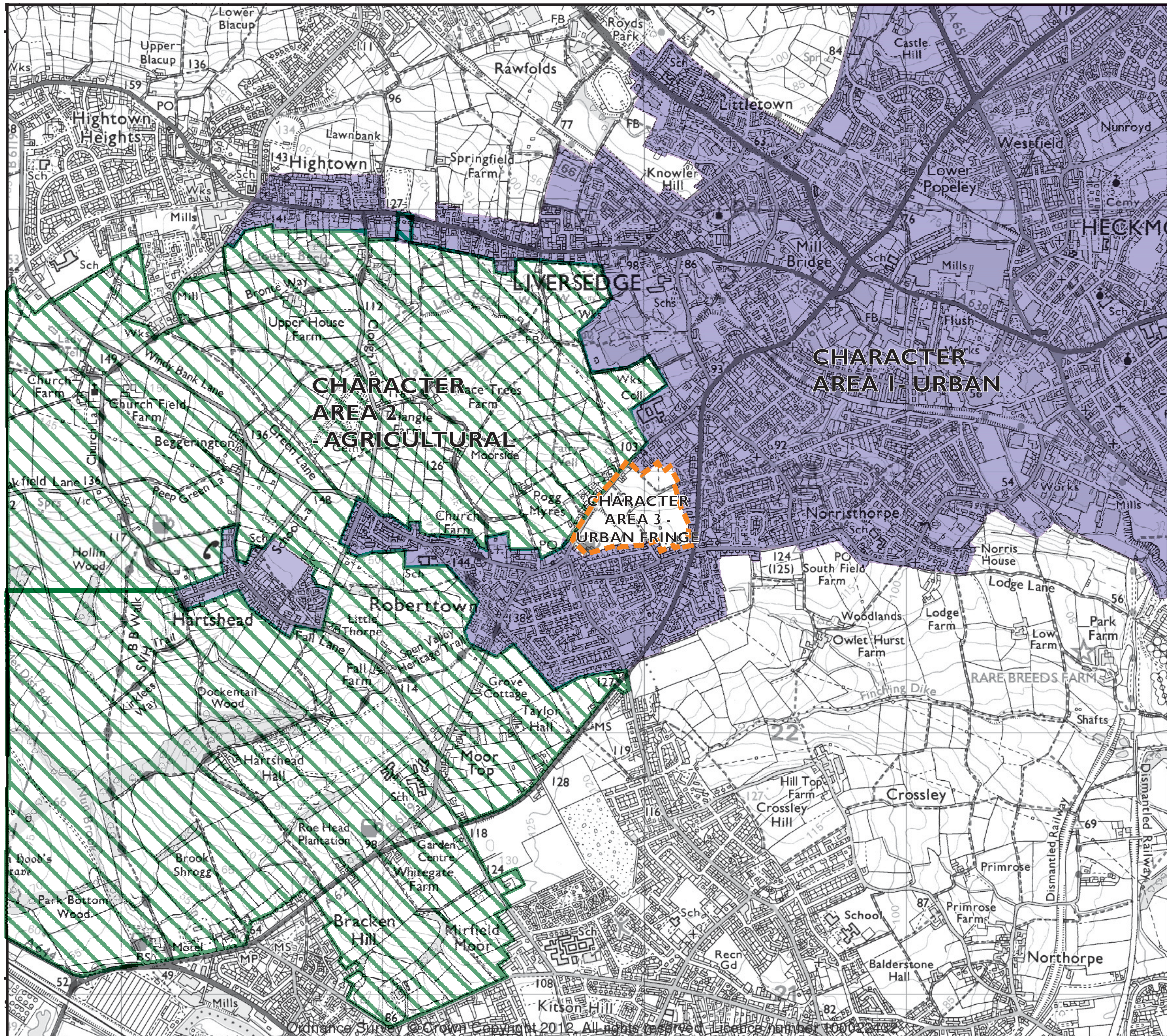
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Figure 2



ROBERTTOWN, LIVERSEDEGE

KEY

-  Character Area 1 - Urban
-  Character Area 2 - Agricultural
-  Character Area 3 - Urban Fringe



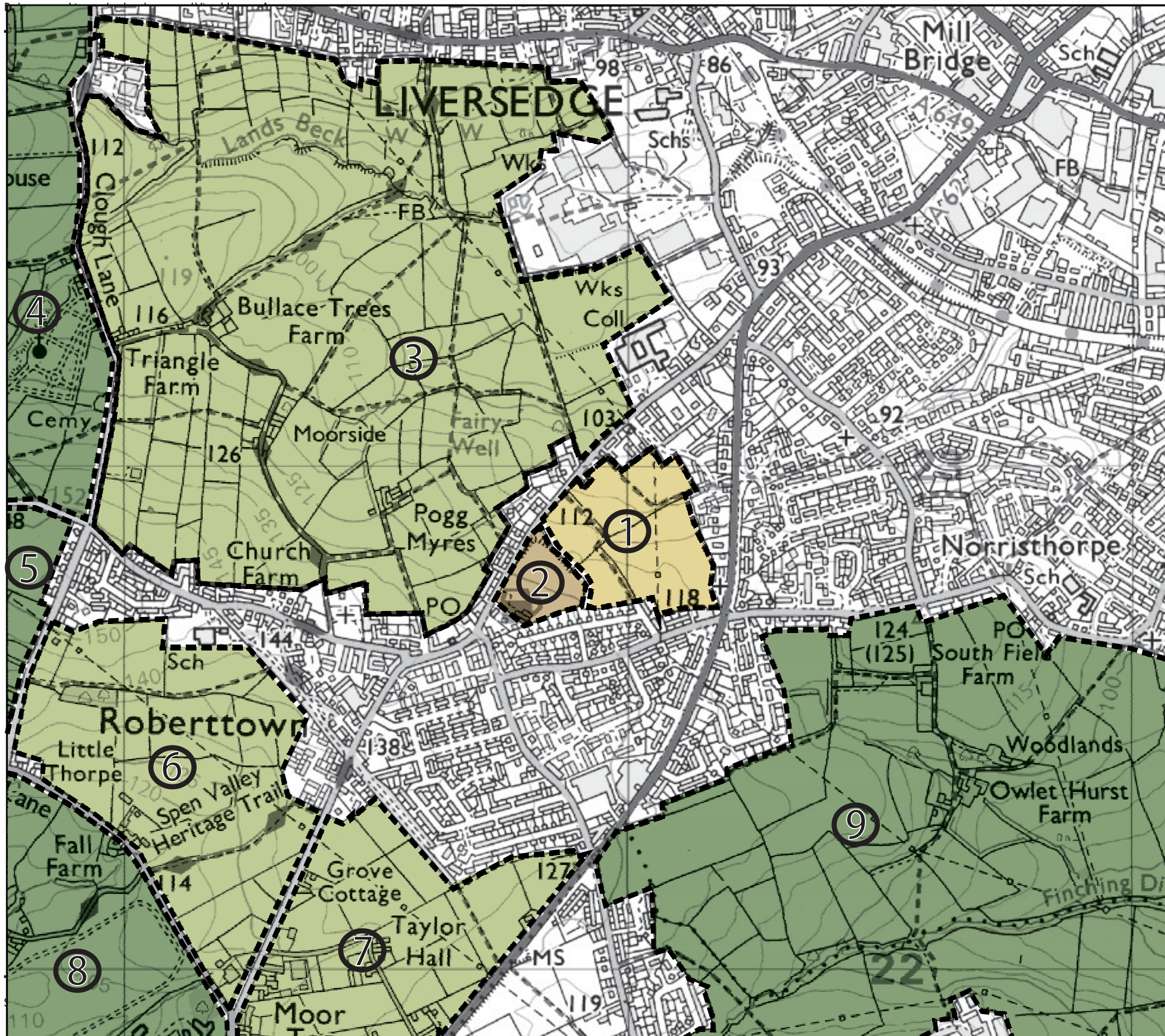
Landscape Character Areas









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Figure 3



ROBERTTOWN, LIVERSEEDGE



KEY

-  Green Belt Character Area Boundary
-  Green Belt Character - Sub -Urban
-  Green Belt Character - Urban Fringe
-  Green Belt Character - Agricultural Enclosed
-  Green Belt Character - Agricultural Open
-  Green Belt Character - Area Number



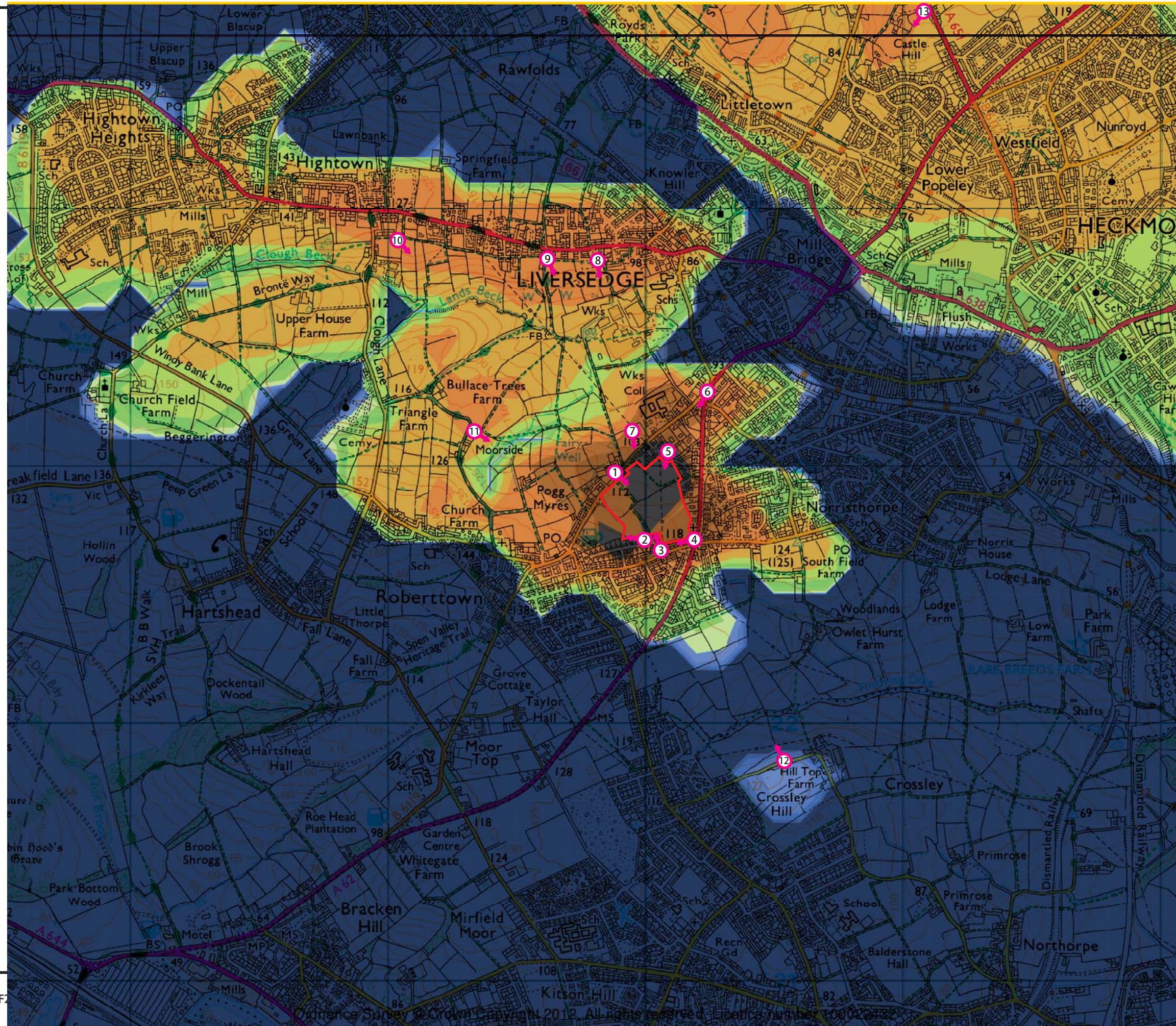
Green Belt Character Areas





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Figure 4



ROBERTTOWN, LIVERSEEDGE

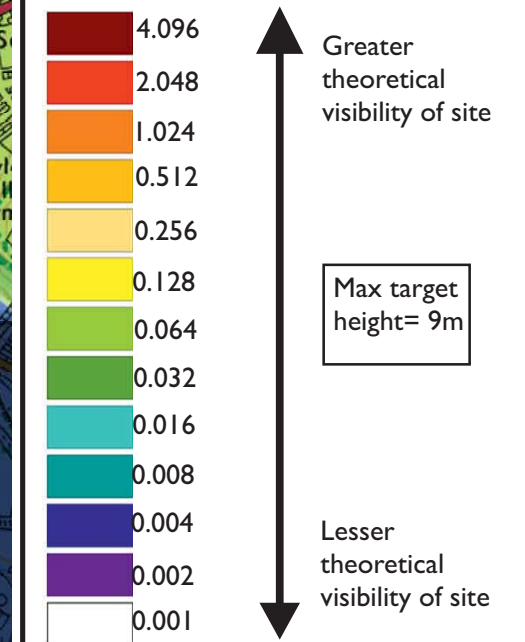


KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Viewpoint Location and Direction

ZTV Key

Vertical Subtended Angle



(See report appendix for more detailed explanation of ZTV process)



Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)



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Figure 5



