

GREEN BELT ANALYSIS

SITE H442, ROBERTTOWN LANE



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Figure I: Site location taken from Google Maps

Introduction

Smeeden Foreman Ltd has been commissioned to produce a partial Green Belt Review to be submitted as part of the consultation procedure supporting the development of the Kirklees Draft Local Plan. The consultation period will run from the 9th November 2015 to the 1st February 2016.

The report will assess the rejected option for housing, Site H442, against the five purposes of the Green Belt and will consider the wider landscape effects of development on the site. The following study is to be considered in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by Smeeden Foreman in June 2014. The LVIA assessed potential impacts upon the landscape were this site to be allocated for housing.

An analysis of other rejected and accepted options will be made to support a comparison between similar sites. The sites will be assessed based on the extent to which each parcel of land makes a contribution towards the Green Belt.

The report will include the following;

- **Context** - Local and national planning policy.
- **Methodology** - The process and criteria used to assess sites within this report.
- **Results** - Outcomes map and comparison tables.
- **Conclusion**



Image I: Roberttown Lane adjoining Site H442

Context

The following pages outline the relevant landscape planning context.

National Planning Policy Framework

The statements detailed below are copied directly from the **National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) [1]**.

Protecting Green Belt land

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

Green Belt serves five purposes:

1. “to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns 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.

Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.”

Reviewing Green Belt boundaries

- “ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;
- not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
- where necessary, identify in their plans areas of ‘safeguarded land’ between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
- make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;
- satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and
- define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.”

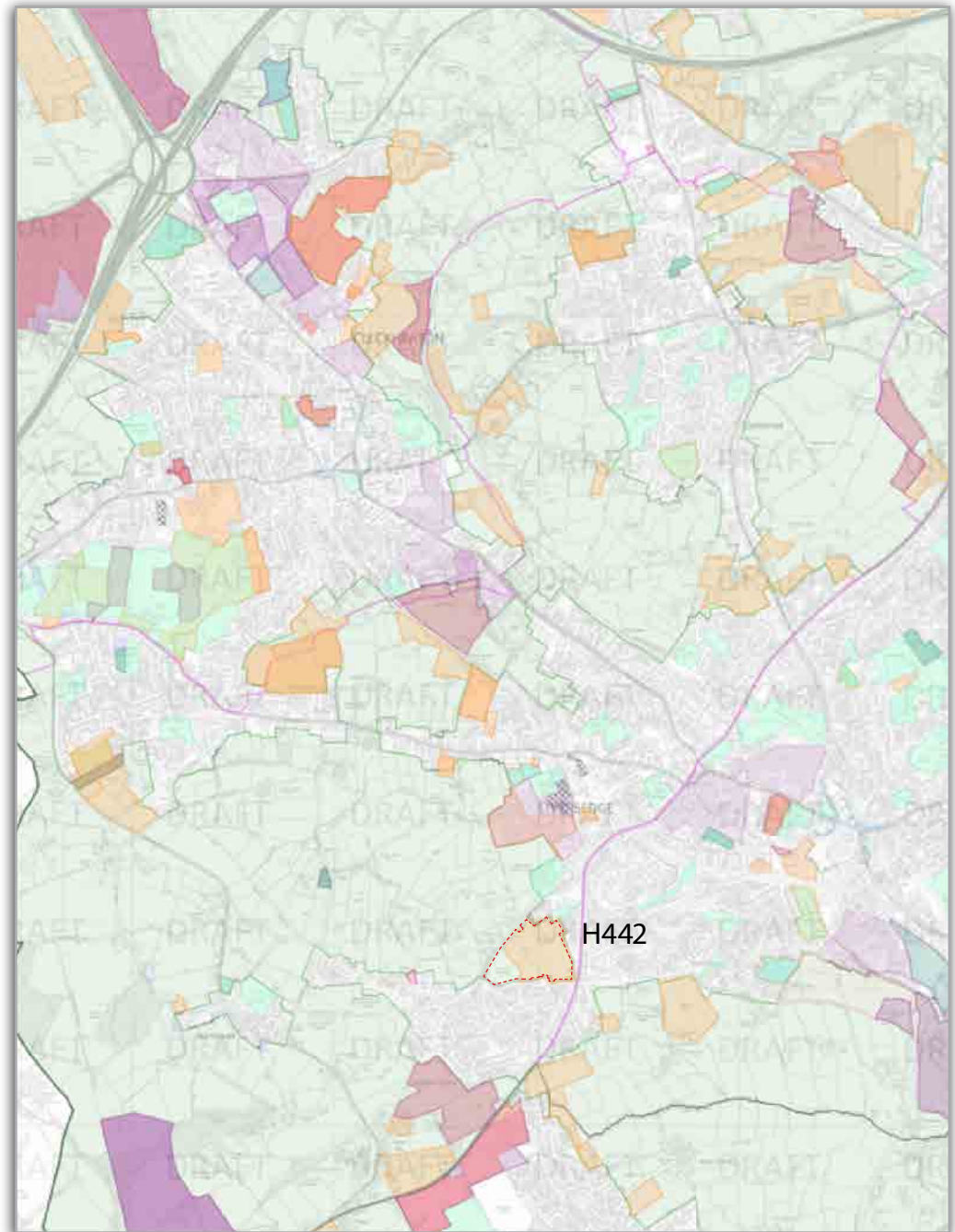


Figure 2: Extract from Kirklees Council's online map showing current extent of Green Belt <https://mapping.kirklees.gov.uk/connect/analyst/?mapcfg=Draft>

Kirklees Green Belt Policy

The statements detailed below are copied directly from the Draft Local Plan - Strategy and Policies [2].

“The green belt and network of open spaces within and around the towns and villages of Kirklees make a significant contribution to the character and attractiveness of the district and people’s quality of life.”

Policy DLP 55 - Development in the green belt

“The extent of the Kirklees green belt boundary is set out on the policies map. Inappropriate development in the green belt will not be approved except in very special circumstances in accordance with national policy.

Proposals for development within the green belt should in all instances;

- retain its character and openness;
- be designed to take into account and seek to enhance the landscape character of the area and be of a high quality of design and materials appropriate to its green belt setting;
- result in a good standard of amenity for new and existing users;
- retain and where possible enhance visual amenity and biodiversity;
- retain and where possible improve existing opportunities for outdoor recreation and access; and
- where possible result in the improvement of damaged or derelict land.

It is important that development which is appropriate, or where very special circumstances exist, is not harmful to the visual amenity of the green belt and the draft Local Plan sets out the issues that need to be addressed when any proposal for development in the green belt is being considered. These include the use of high quality materials, a design that is sensitive to its green belt setting, consideration of the amenity of neighbours and in all cases that any impact on openness is kept to a minimum.”

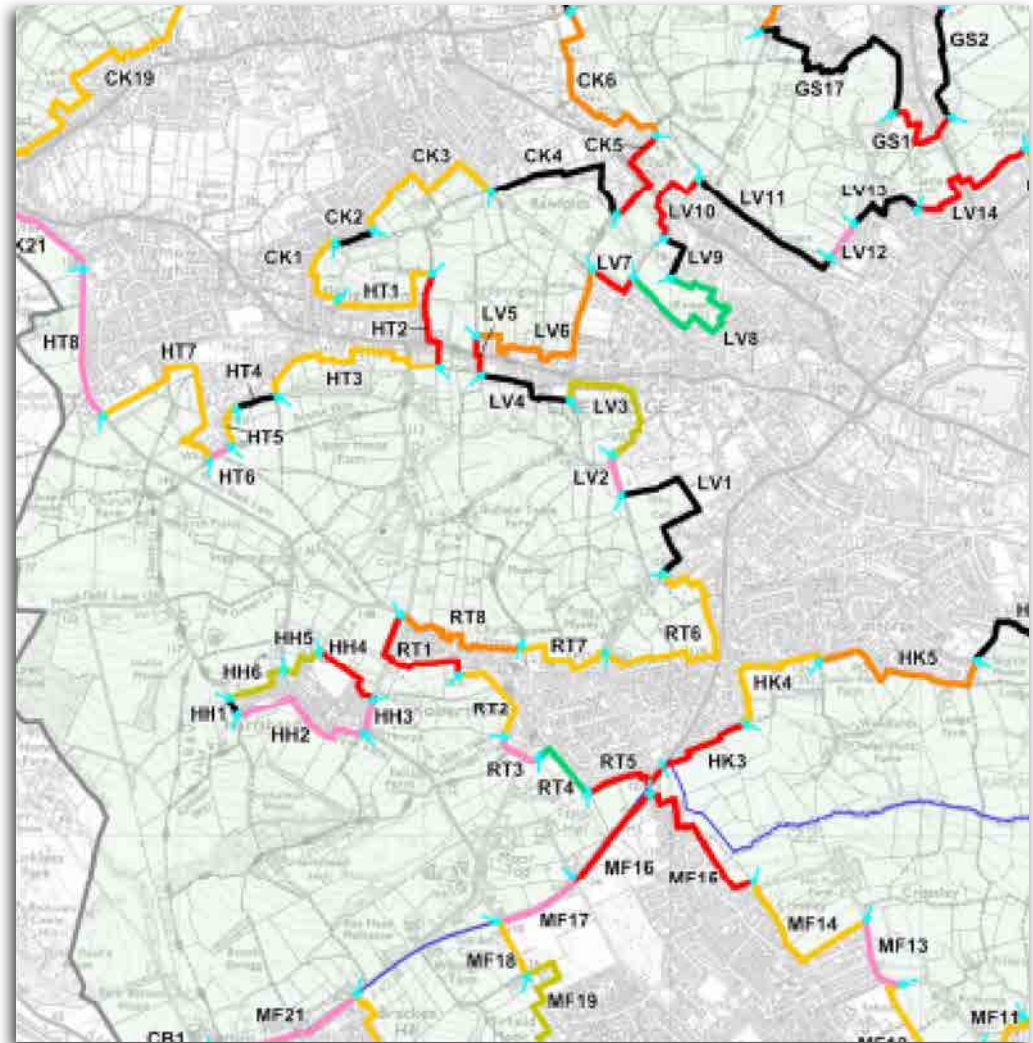


Figure 3: Extract from Kirklees Council’s Green Belt Edge Outcomes Map - Batley and Spenningshall

Methodology and Assessment Criteria

Overview of methodologies and criteria
used to assess the Green Belt

Methodology

Overview

For the purpose of this study, the methodologies of two separate Green Belt reviews, South Staffordshire and Sheffield, and elements of best practice were considered within a desk-based study. The two different approaches were compared with that outlined in the Green Belt edge review within the Kirklees Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report [3].

The general approach taken by Kirklees was to assess the degree of constraint along the Green Belt edge and its relationship between the adjoining Green Belt land. The methodology outlines a series of tests, and are as follows;

- Test 1 - Level of constraint at edge (topographical, physical and environmental)
- Test 2 - Degree to which an edge performed a Green Belt role (test included purposes one to four of the Green Belt)
- Test 3 - Assessed parcels of brownfield land and considered whether the parcels could be recycled, and if they were correctly included within the Green Belt.

The outcomes for Tests 1 and 3 were graded in colours red, amber, green to illustrate the degree of importance to the role of the Green Belt. Test 2 used a more complex approach and made a distinction between purpose one (preventing merging) with purposes two, three and four (checking unrestricted sprawl, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, and preserving the setting and special character of historic towns). The outcomes from the assessment of purposes two, three and four were combined in a matrix to give an overall score for those elements. The study by Kirklees places more weight on coalescence and that if the outcome of this test is 'severe' then the other purposes are not considered. The NPPF does not state that any of these purposes hold more weight in relation to the function of the Green Belt.

The Sheffield review [4] contained example methodologies within the appendix. Other examples were more broad and assessed the parcel of land rather than the physical edge. The scoring mechanisms in less complex models were considered to afford flexibility of complex issues. Various criteria used to assess purpose three (safeguarding the countryside) included analysing the extent to which the parcel of land contributed towards a positive landscape character, however, a review on behalf of South Staffordshire Review [5] states that;

“Green Belt is not a designation designed to protect nature and landscape character or the benefits they provide”.

Approach

For the purpose of this study, landscape value and character will be addressed separately, as this has been identified as an important consideration within the consultation summary for Kirklees that, “...any development respects the existing character of a place” [6]. As stated on page 5 of this document, Policy DLP 55 within the Kirklees Draft Local Plan places a strong emphasis on landscape character and visual amenity.

Purpose four (preserving the setting and special character of historic towns) will not be considered within this report as there are no historic towns within the study area. It will be noted however, if there are any historic features of significance influencing the site or parcel of land.

For continuity, the assessment criteria (outlined on page 9 of this report) used to make a comparison between the Green Belt sites, will be largely based on the methodology used by Kirklees with elements taken from other studies.

Assessment Criteria

NPPF GREEN BELT PURPOSES	CONSIDERATIONS	CONTRIBUTION TO THE GREEN BELT
PURPOSE 1 To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategic significance of the wider Green Belt. The width of the current Green Belt gap. Whether development could increase the perception that settlements have merged. 	Significant contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Partial contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Limited or no contribution to the Green Belt Purpose
PURPOSE 2 To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the development will encourage 'Ribbon Development'. The degree of containment with an adjoining built-up area. The perceived extension development may have of urban areas. 	Significant contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Partial contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Limited or no contribution to the Green Belt Purpose
PURPOSE 3 To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the land is part of open countryside or is separated or screened from the wider countryside by physical features. Whether the prominence of adjoining built-up edges give the impression of the urban fringe. Consideration of beneficial or appropriate Green Belt uses (as promoted by NPPF paragraph 82). 	Significant contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Partial contribution the Green Belt purpose
		Limited or no contribution to the Green Belt Purpose
LANDSCAPE VALUE To protect or enhance landscape character and local sense of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution to visual amenity Contribution a to distinctive and positive landscape character Contributes to 'openness' within the site and adjoining parcels of land. 	High
		Moderate
		Low

Site H442

The following observations are made in regards to the rejected option for Site H442 within the Kirklees Borough Council Draft Local Plan

Site Analysis

The parcel of land is located between the settlements of Roberttown, to the south west, Norristhorpe to the east, and Liversedge, to the north. Liversedge Cricket Club occupies the south western corner of the site, leaving the rest as grazed agricultural land. The parcel of land is considered to have a high degree of containment from all aspects by urban features.

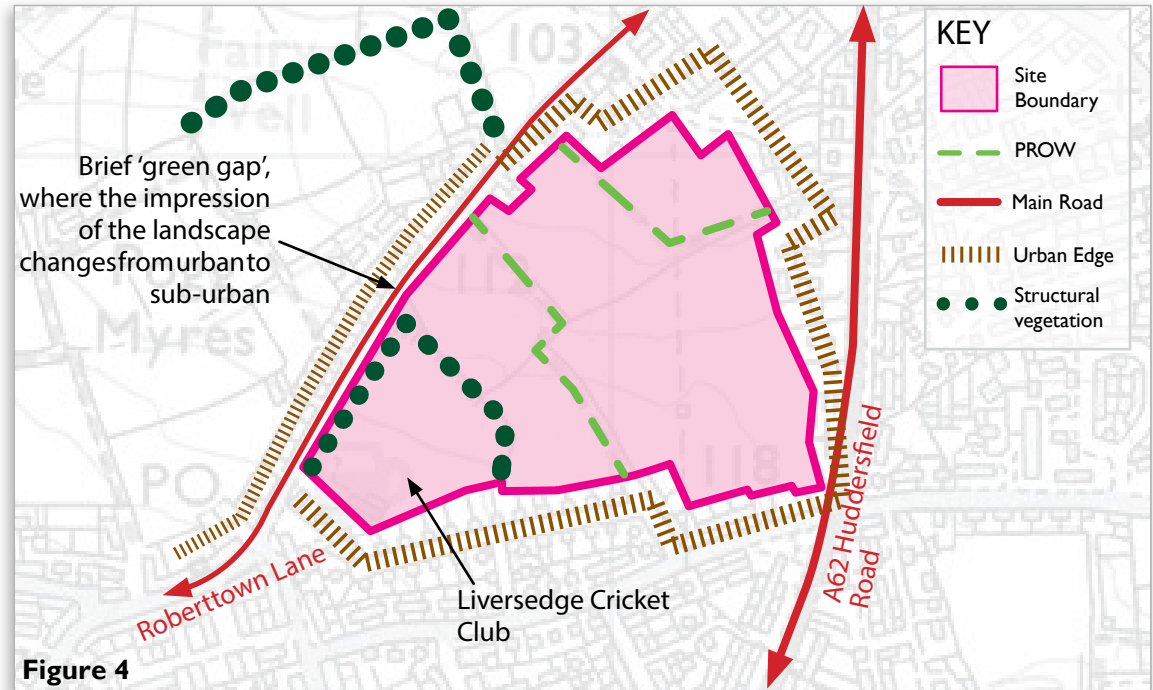
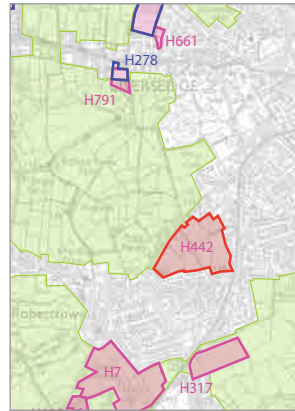


Image 2

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The character within the site is influenced by as a high degree of containment from adjacent urban features. The edge is considered to be strongly urban rather than the transitional character expected at the urban fringe. Views are limited by development and topography. There is a moderate landscape structure, however rural features, such as hedgerows and mature trees, are few.	The settlements of Roberttown, Liversedge and Norristhorpe have already merged as a consequence of Ribbon Development along Roberttown Lane and the A62. The coalescence between the settlements is evident when the site is viewed from the north and when travelling along the A62. There is a brief perception of separation as a result of a 'green gap' when travelling south along Roberttown Lane.	There is a high degree of containment as a consequence of a strong urban edge and road network. The cricket pitch to the south is also further separated from the rest of the site by landform and vegetation. Housing along Roberttown Lane separates the parcel of land from the adjacent Green Belt parcel.	There are significant urban influences within this site and existing housing surrounding the site diminishes the relationship to the wider countryside. The site contains land used for recreation and two PROW dissect the site.

Viewpoints

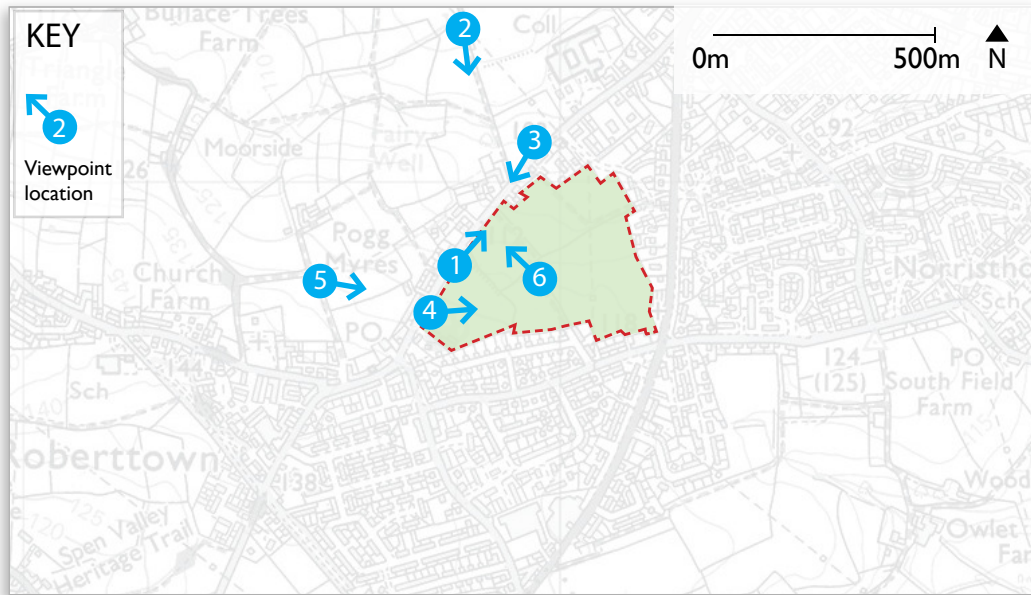


Figure 5: Map of viewpoints



Image 3: View north east along Roberttown Lane and 'green gap'



Image 4: View north from Public Right of Way



Image 5: View south from Roberttown Lane



Image 6: View across Site H442 from the Cricket Club



Image 7: Rear of houses along Roberttown Lane

Green Belt Edge Review

Outcomes from the Kirklees Green Belt Edge Review

Test 2a - Prevents merging

'Restricted gap to Liversedge. Settlements appear joined on Leeds Road'

Analysis from viewpoints demonstrate that Roberttown and Liversedge have already physically merged and the perception of separation has diminished when viewed from the north (Viewpoints 2 and 5) and from within the parcel of land (Image 8). The 'edge' shown in Figure 6 opposite is considered ineffective at retaining the separation of settlements.

Test 2b - Checks sprawl

'Development fronting Roberttown Lane provides containment.'

It is considered that housing on Roberttown Lane would provide a stronger more defensible boundary to the Green Belt. A suggested boundary to the Green Belt in this area is shown overleaf on page 14.

Test 2c - Safeguards from encroachment

'Development on rising ground could be prominent when viewed from the north.'

Viewpoints 2 and 5 illustrate the extent to which the parcel of land is obscured by intervening vegetation, built form and landform. Analysis of the local landscape character reveals that existing development pattern has been restricted to higher ground, leaving pockets of recessed 'countryside' between settlements.

Test 2d - Preserves setting and character

'No impact'

This study did not identify a significant impact on setting or character if this site was to be developed.

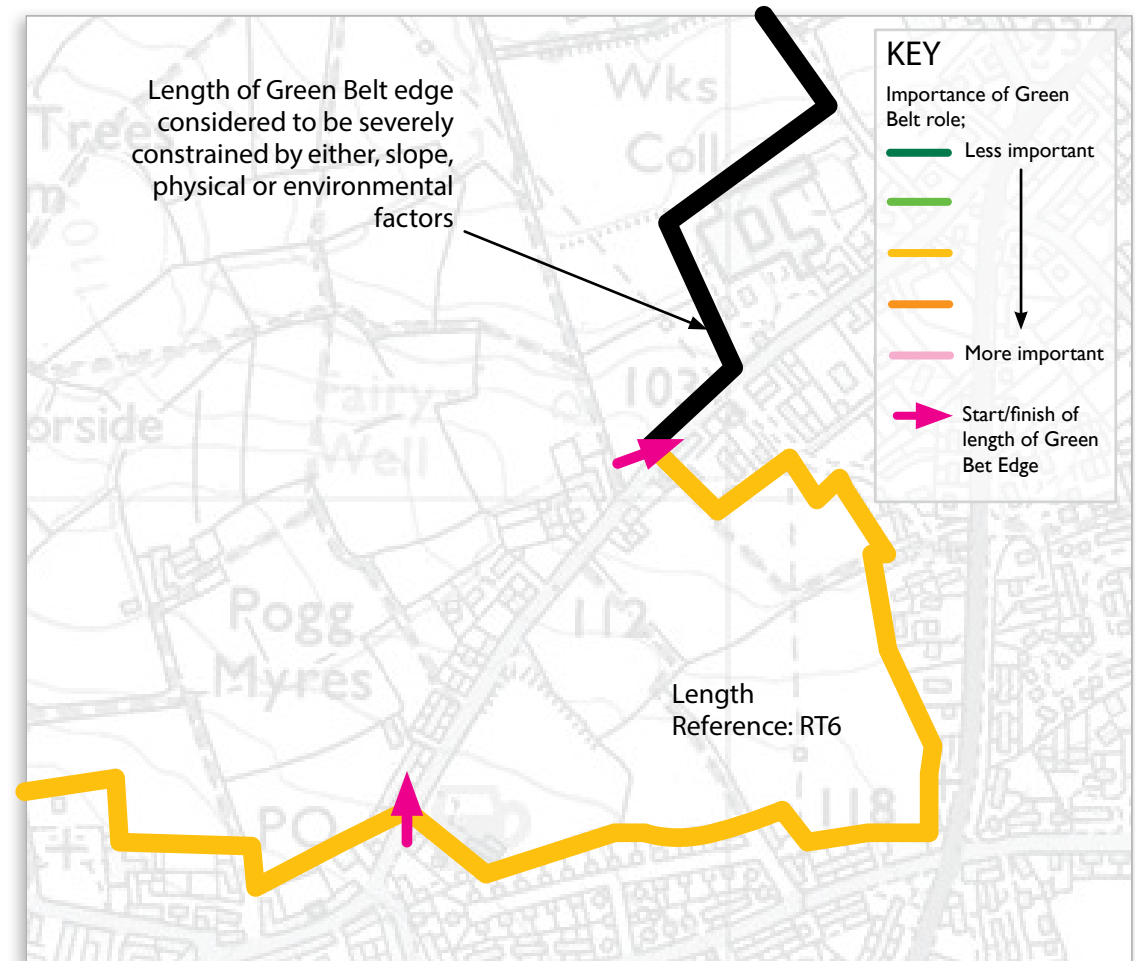


Figure 6: Reproduction of Green Belt Edge Review Outcomes Map for the length affecting H442



Image 8: Housing fronting Roberttown Lane

Green Belt Edge to Roberttown Lane

Outcomes from the Kirklees Green Belt Edge Review [3]

Conclusions for edge LVI:

'Severely constrained' from **'Playing fields for Spen Valley High School'**. (Marked 'black')

Conclusions for RT8;

'Development up to Bullace Trees Lane would be extensive relative to the size of the settlement. Field pattern provides few opportunities that would be well related to the existing settlement form.' (Marked 'dark yellow')

Conclusions for RT7;

'Development south of Bullace Trees track could have limited impact on openness but this would be greater than development of RT6.' (RT6 as shown on Figure 6). (Marked 'light yellow')

Proposal for adjusted edge RT6:

Using the same methodology as the Kirklees Green Belt Review and Outcomes, the proposed adjustment of RT6 has been marked as 'light yellow' for the following reasons;

- The edge does not have any significant topographical, physical or environmental constraints. **(None/Minor)**
- The edge does not prevent merging of settlements. **(Extensive gap)**
- Field boundaries and woodland to the north provide some containment. **(Moderate)**
- Development to the rear of houses fronting Roberttown Lane could be prominent when viewed from the west (see Image 7) and is not considered consistent with existing development pattern. The land to the north of Roberttown Lane has a high density of Public Rights of Way. **(Important)**

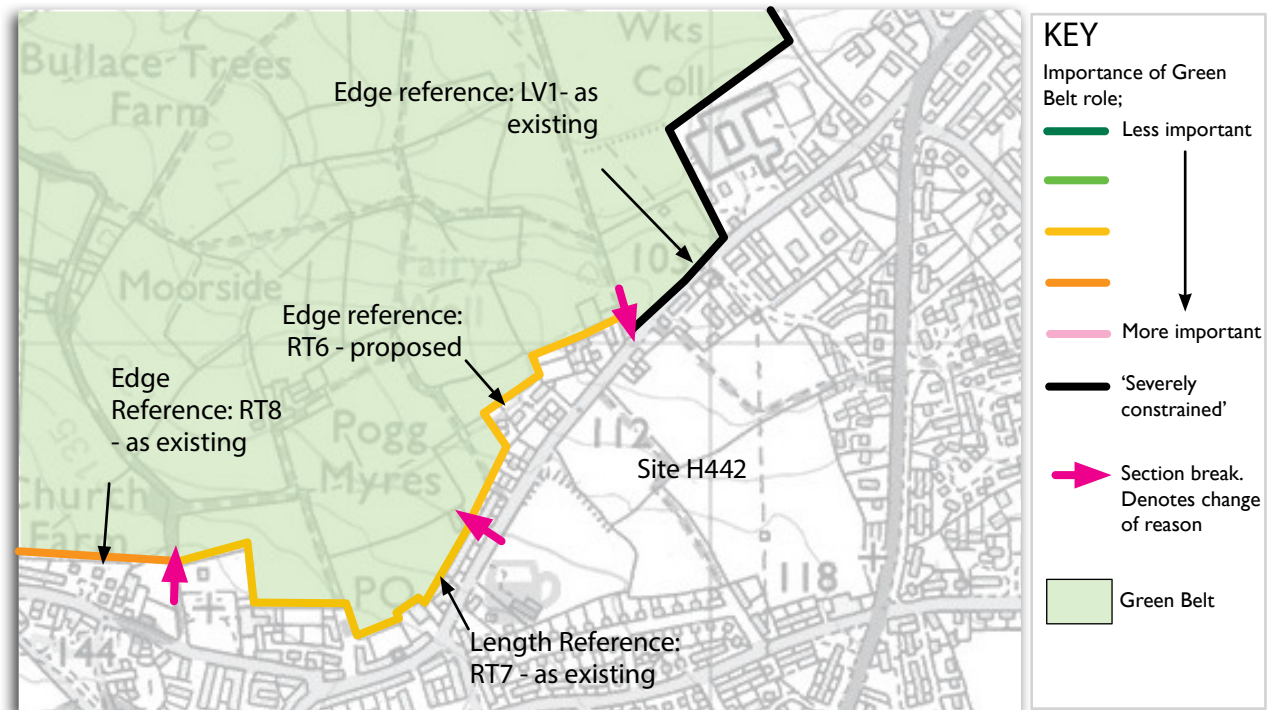


Figure 7: Proposal for changes to Green Belt Edge, RT6

Justification

Figure 7 (above) shows the proposed changes to the Green Belt edge, RT6. The proposals redefine the boundary to the rear of housing fronting Roberttown Lane. This new boundary follows an urban edge distinctly different from the adjacent land parcels to the north and continues the existing development pattern. The links between Site H442 and the Green Belt to the north have been severed by the road and housing, and subsequently prevents this land contributing to the wider Green Belt area. This boundary allows the release of land which would facilitate its re-use, while making a more distinct and defensible boundary to the retained Green Belt.

Comparison with other sites

The following pages outline the outcomes of assessments for comparison sites

Comparison Study Sites

There are 13 other rejected options within the Draft Local Plan that are located within the study area;

H193, H69, H193, H446, H552, H226, H1796, H1795, H246, H7, H155, H317, H104, and the study site, H442.

Further to these rejected sites there are 4 accepted options within the study area;

H218, H591, H489, and H564.

Some of the accepted and rejected options share boundaries. The locations of these site are shown on Figure 8 opposite.

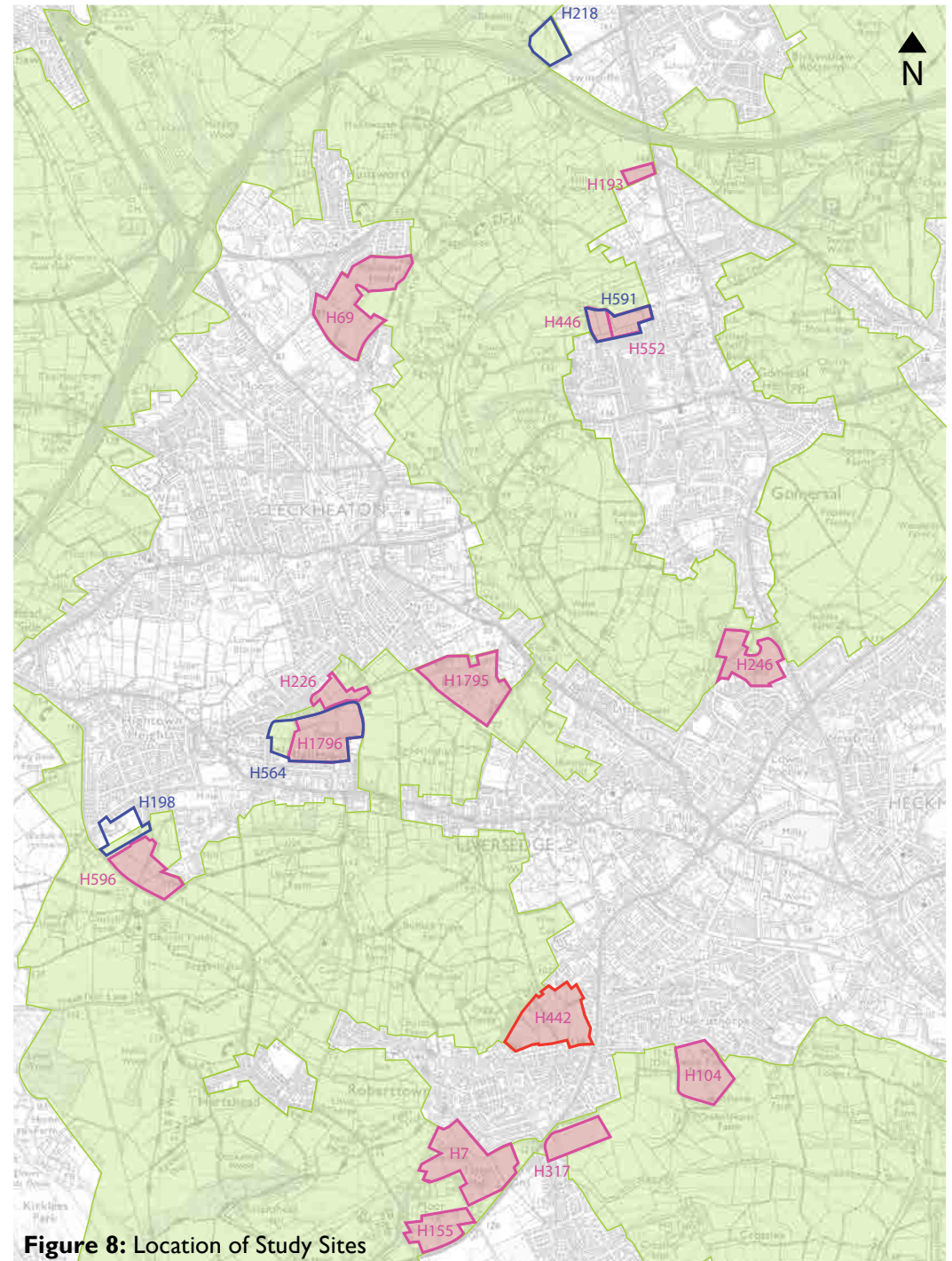
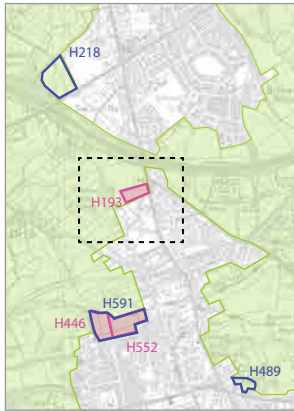


Figure 8: Location of Study Sites

H193



Site analysis

The site is located on agricultural land adjacent to the northern boundary of the village of Gomersal. The A651 runs adjacent to the eastern boundary and connects the villages of Gomersal and Birkenshaw.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development contained by Latham Lane would have limited impact on openness.’

This assessment partially agrees with this outcome, however, the narrow gap between Gomersal and Birkenshaw is considered significant within this study. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

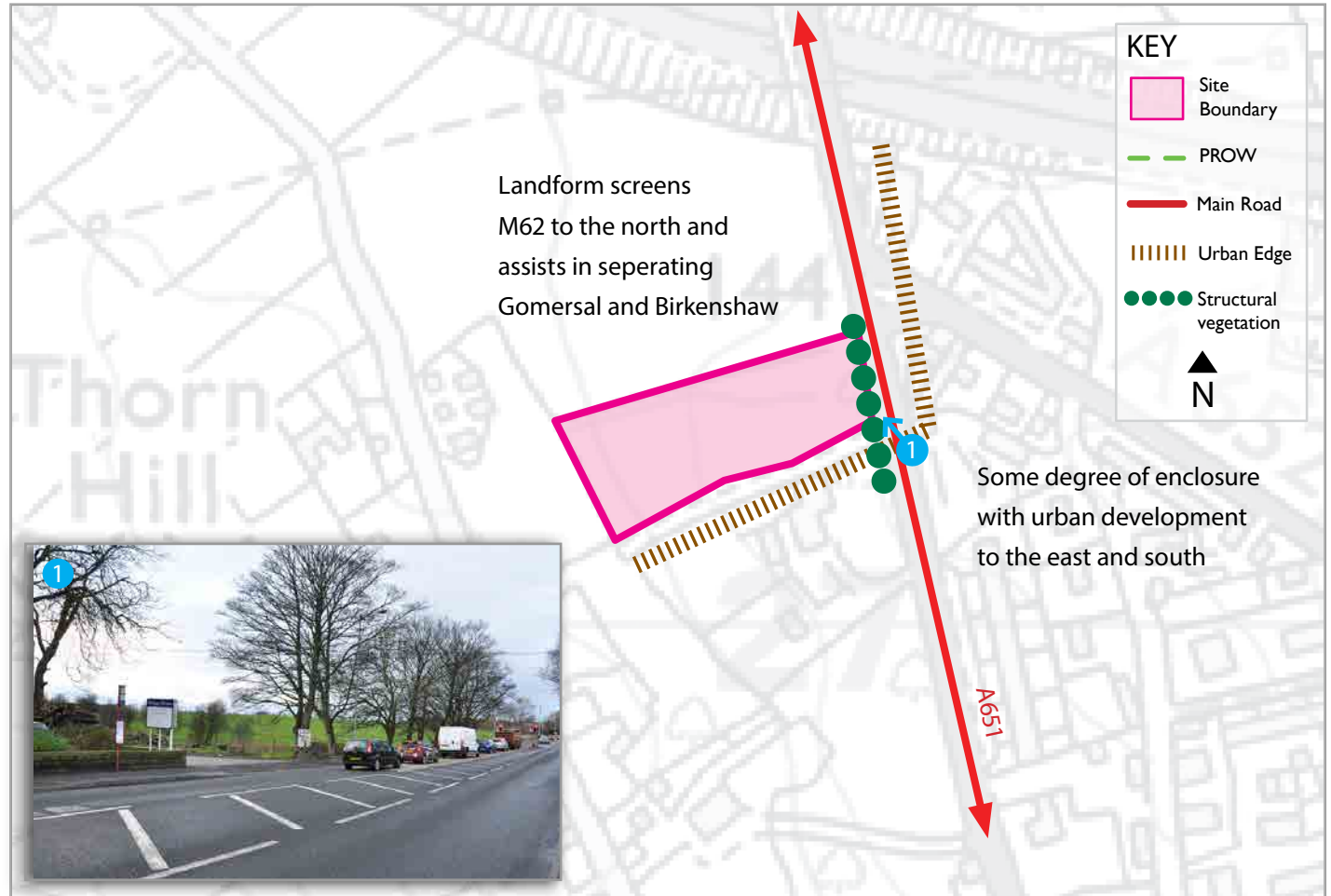
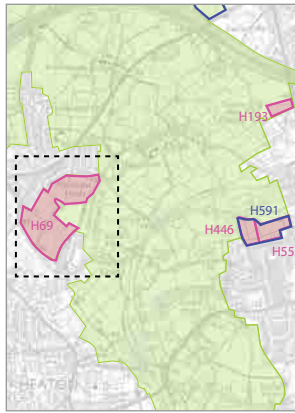


Figure 9

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The character of the site and surrounding area is sub-urban and views and land use are typical of that found at the periphery of a settlement. Glimpse views over Site H193 extend over the fields beyond and the topography of the gently sloping ground screen the M62.	Bridge over M62 provides clear and permanent distinction between the settlements of Gomersal and Birkenshaw. However, the gap is narrow and development within the site would further reduce the degree of physical and perceived separation between the settlements.	The site is contained by development to the south and the A651 to the east. The rising land form of surrounding land to the north and west aids containment. There is a limited risk of contributing to unrestricted sprawl.	The site already contains features considered to be consistent with the urban fringe. The site provides a visual transition between the urban development to the south and the open agricultural field to the north. The site does not contain any PROW.

H69



Site analysis

The site is located adjacent to the southern boundary of Hunsworth and the northern boundary of Cleckheaton.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that there is;

‘Development would have limited impact on openness. Significant potential for rounding off between Brookfield View and Mazebrook Avenue’

This assessment agrees with this outcome and it is considered that the parcel of land requires **further assessment** in order to determine whether it should be released from the Green Belt.

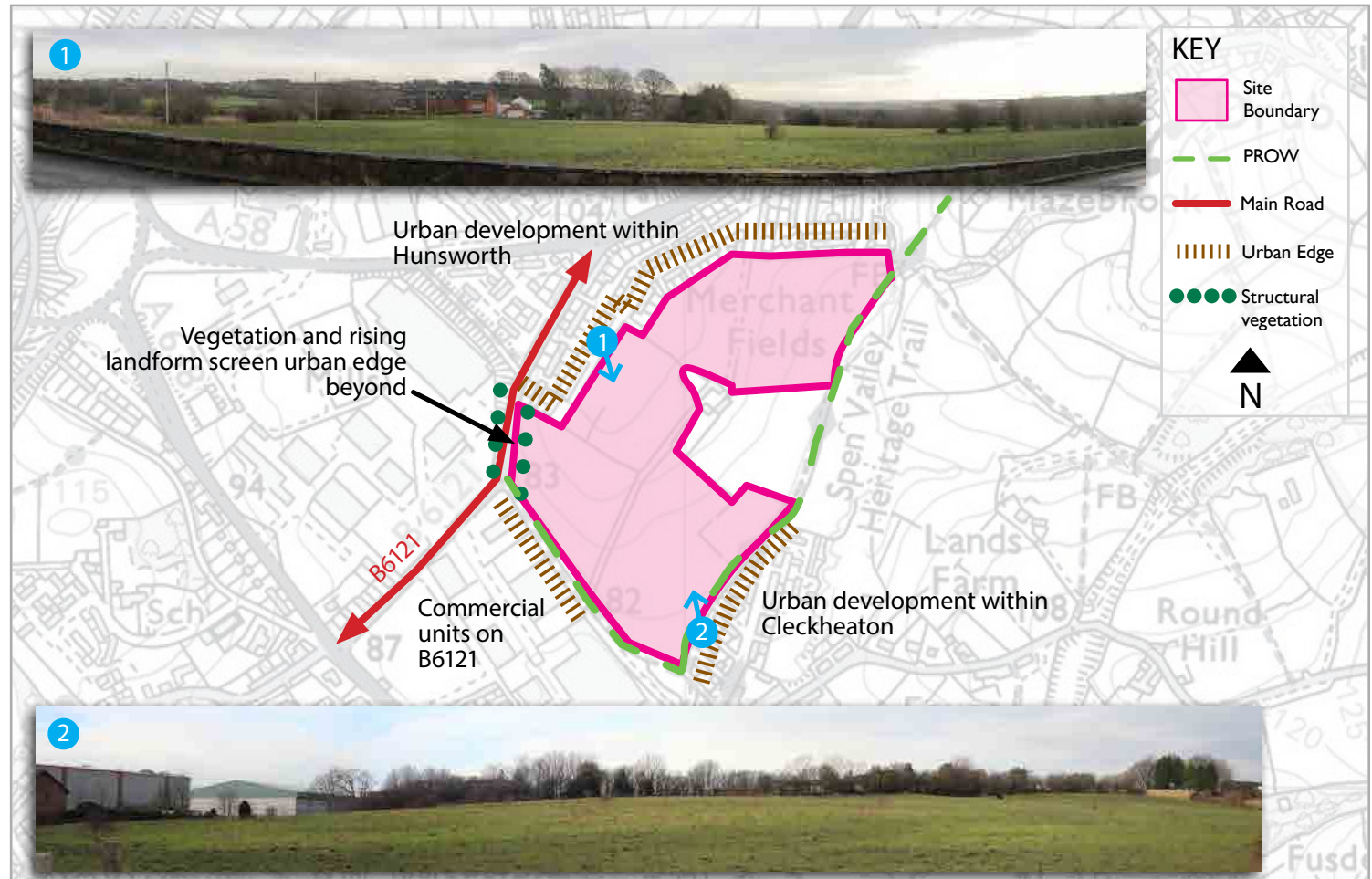
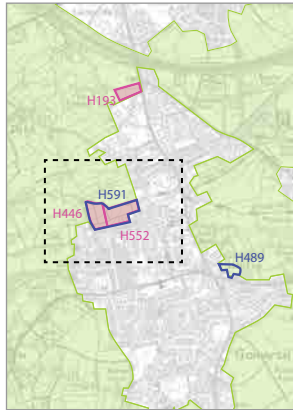


Figure 10

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The character varies between the northern and southern boundary of the site. When experienced from the rear of properties on Links Avenue (Viewpoint 1) the view is open, rural in character and visually connected to the wider countryside. From the south the site is much more enclosed with more dominant urban features.	The settlements of Cleckheaton and Hunsworth have already merged along Hunsworth Lane (B6121) with the development of industrial units. There is a brief visual gap, created by the vegetation and land form between the two settlements which can be appreciated when travelling north east along the B6121.	The parcel of land is well contained and has a strong urban edge encompassing the northern, southern and western boundary of the site. Development within the site would have a limited impact on the openness of adjacent land parcels.	The site boundary follows a small section of the Spen Valley Heritage Trail, however, there are no PROW within the site. The degree of enclosure is considered to be high as there is a strong urban influence.

H446, H552, and H591



Site analysis

The site is located on the wester periphery of Gomersal, where there is a wide gap between Cleckheaton to the west.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development especially south of Ferrand Lane would have limited impact on openness.’

This assessment agrees with this outcome and that this land should be **released** from the Green Belt.

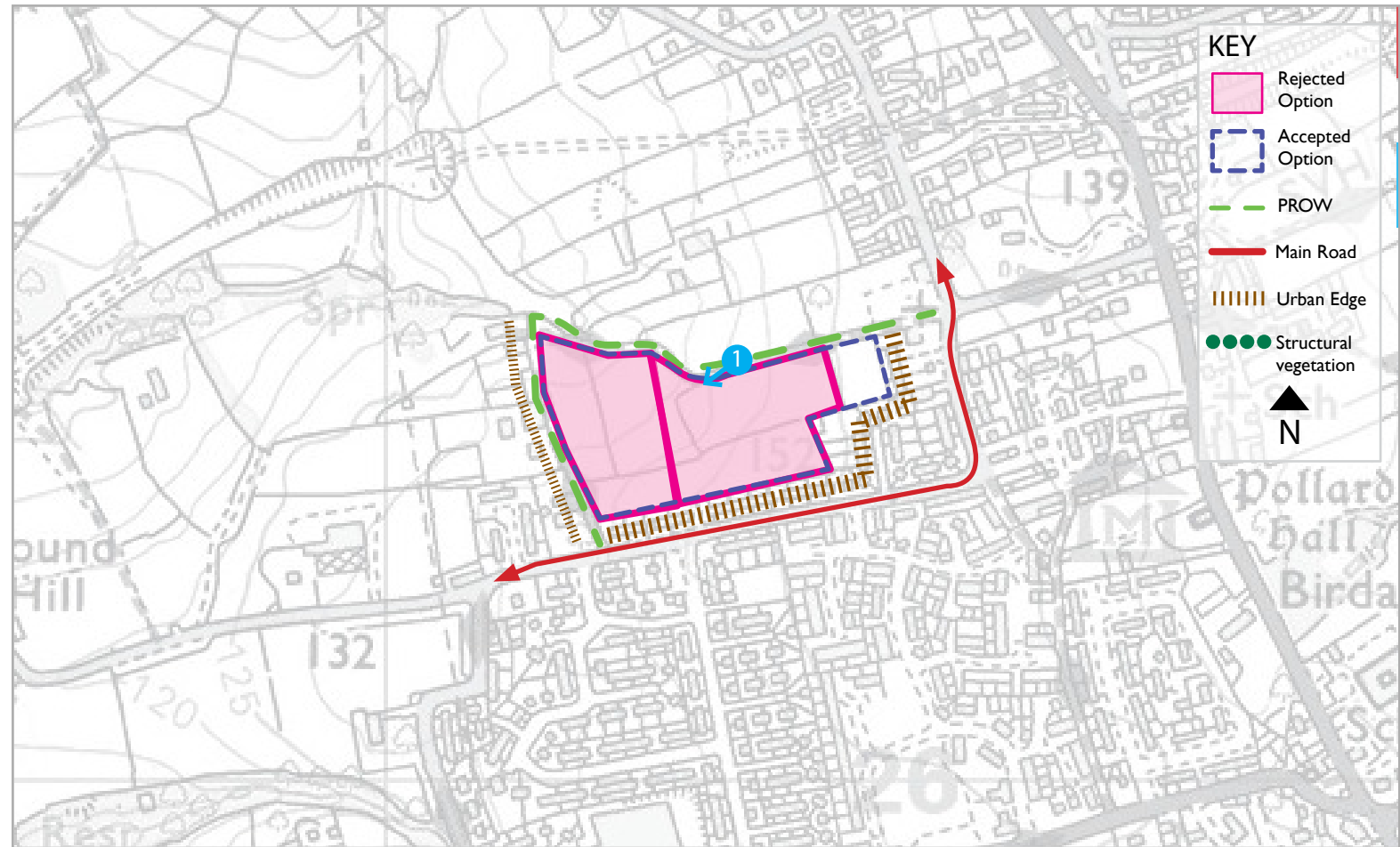
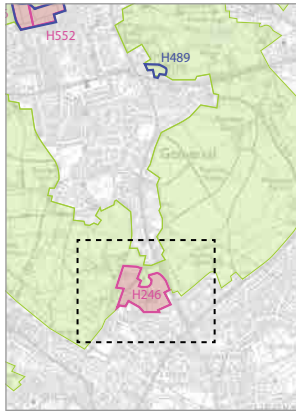


Figure 11

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
<p>Distinctive landscape pattern with small ‘strip’ like enclosures.</p> <p>The parcel of land is considered typical of a rural-urban fringe.</p>	<p>It is considered that there would be no actual or perceived merging of settlements.</p>	<p>The parcel of land is contained by a strong urban edge to the south. To the east there is containment provided by development considered more typical of the urban fringe. The north of the site is contained by a bridleway.</p>	<p>The land is currently grazed and contains facilities used by local groups (Scouts). There are some beneficial uses within this site.</p> <p>There is little visual relationship between with the wider countryside and considered that the openness of adjoining land parcel would not be affected by development.</p>

H246



Site analysis

The site is located on the northern edge of Heckmondwike, along the A651 Gomersal Road.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

'Development would reduce the narrow gap.'

This assessment agrees with this outcome and that this site should **remain** in the Green Belt.

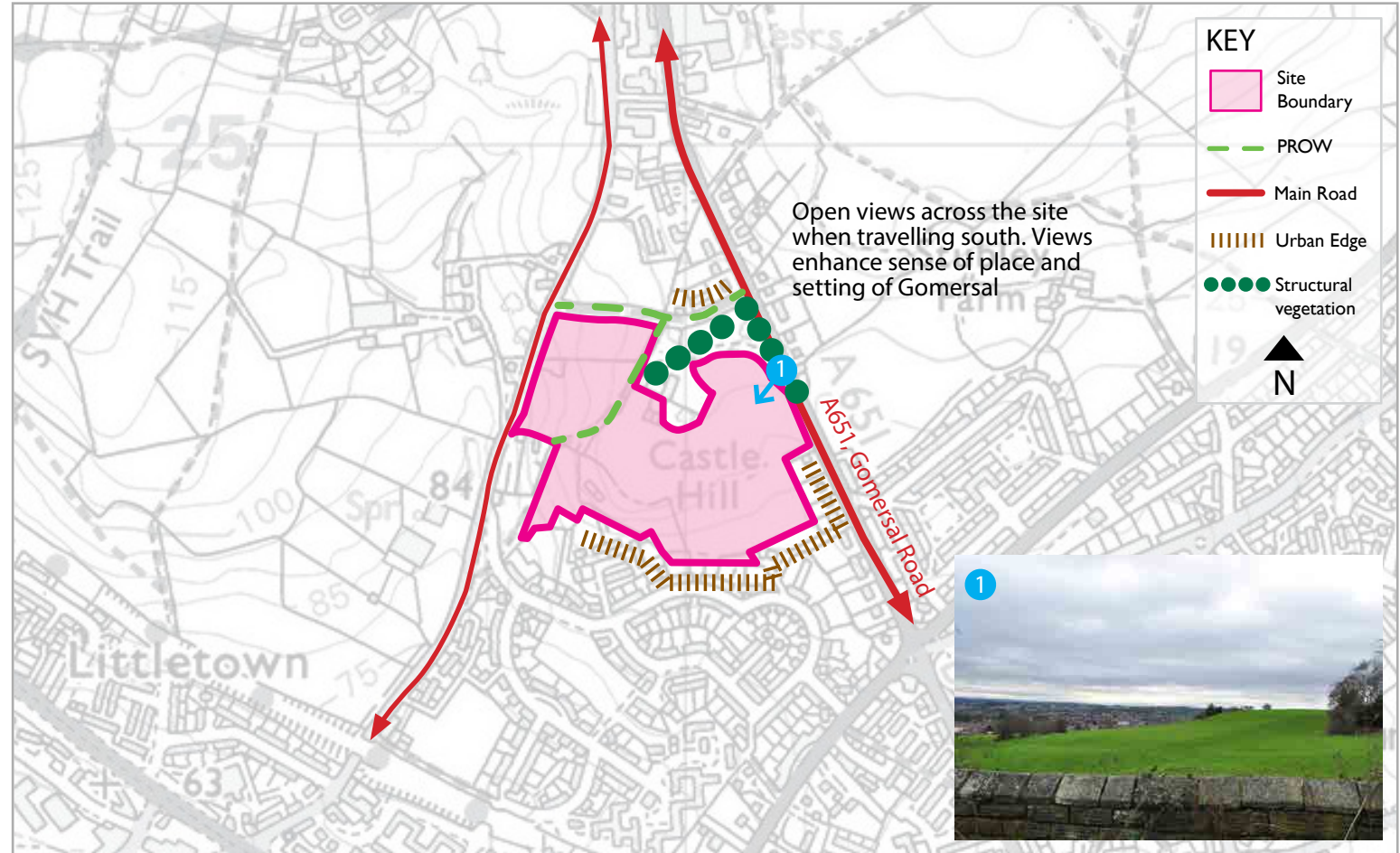
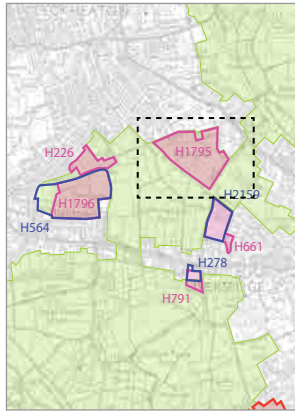


Figure 12

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The open views from this location contributes to a positive landscape character. The views enhance the sense of place experienced at this location.	The site occupies a parcel of land which, if developed, would result in the coalescence of Westfield to the south, and Gomersal to the north. Ribbon development along the A651 has already contributed to the narrow gap between the settlements.	The site is well contained between the urban development to the south and the roads adjacent to the eastern and western boundaries.	Development on this site would reduce visual amenity within the immediate area and result in a loss of connection to the wider landscape. The site contains a short section of PROW however, the contribution to beneficial uses is considered to be low.

H1795



Site analysis

The site is located to the south of Cleckheaton, on land behind existing industrial units on the A638, Bradford Road. The site and adjoining land is currently being used for agricultural purposes and predominantly equestrian use.

The field is large and open with boundary and vegetation and mature trees along the south and east boundary.

It is considered that the parcel of land requires **further assessment** in order to determine whether it should be released from the Green Belt.

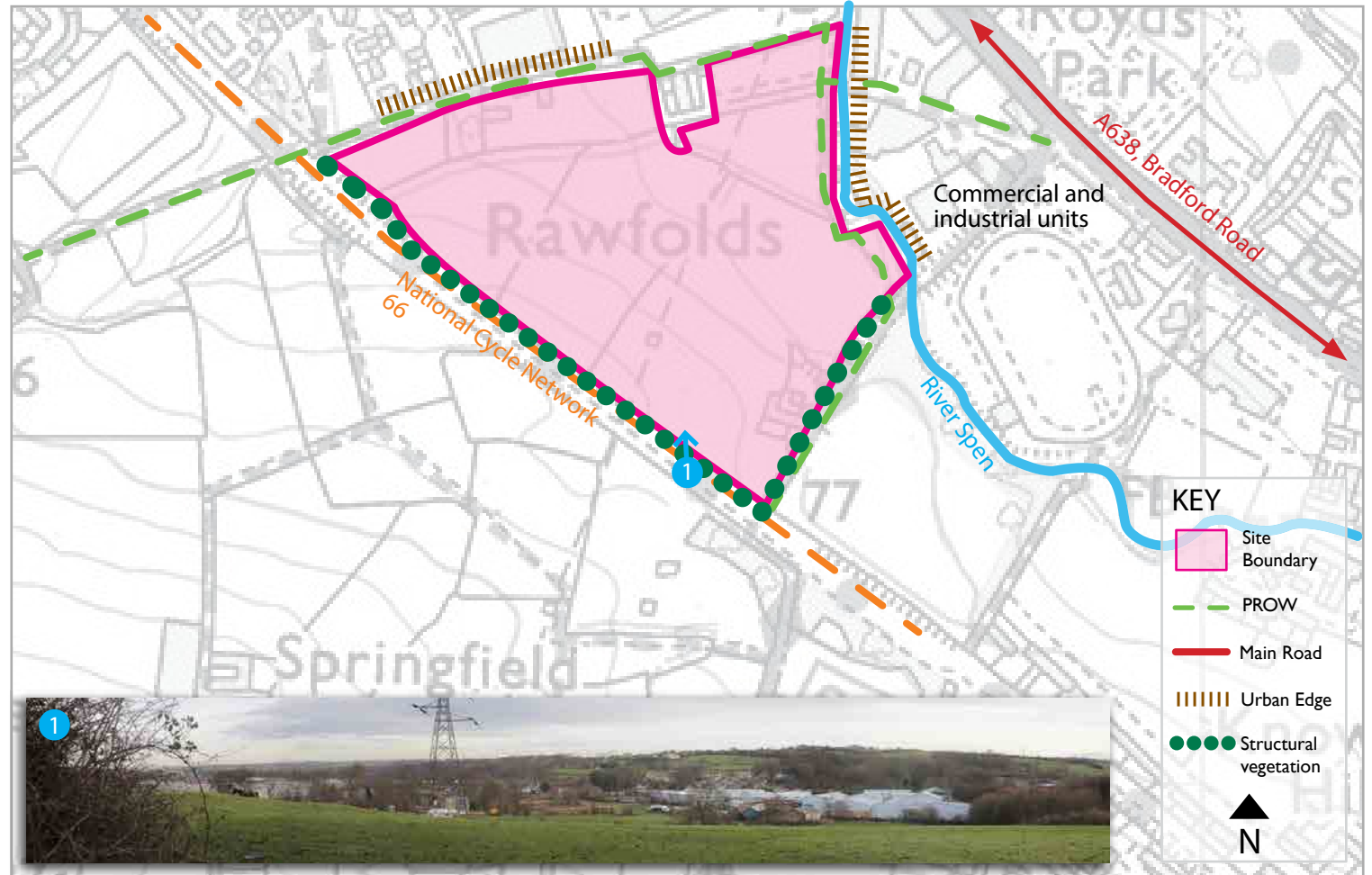
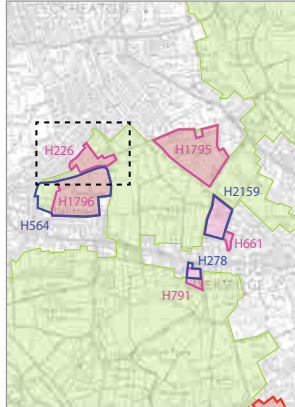


Figure 13

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The land is sub-urban in character and has dominant urban and detracting features. The gently undulating land form to the north allows open views of adjacent Green Belt land to the north east with contrasting long distance views to the north west over Cleckheaton. Views are considered to be aesthetically uninspiring.	The parcel of land comprises part of a larger, but contained, parcel of Green Belt located between Cleckheaton, Liversedge and Hightown. Development within this site would physically narrow the gap between these settlements, however the perception of this narrowing would not be appreciated from the road.	The parcel of land is well confined, with a strong urban edge and the River Spen to the north, the National Cycle Network 66 to the south, and strong field boundary to the east.	This area of land is considered to have a strong urban influence but open space remains the dominant character. The site is surrounded on all sides by PROW, however, the positive beneficial uses that the site contributes is considered to be low.

H226



Site analysis

The site is located to the south of Cleckheaton, on grazed land. The site and adjoining land is currently being used for agricultural purposes and predominantly equestrian use.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development south to watercourse would have limited impact on openness.’

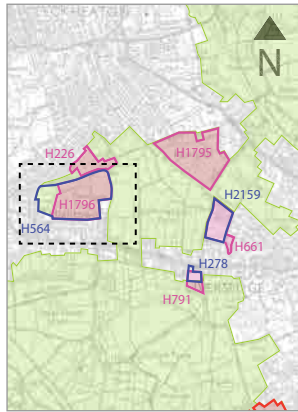
This assessment disagrees with this outcome as the combined landscape value of this land with adjoining parcels of land is high. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.



Figure 14

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The site is considered to have a positive character with a good landscape structure. Field boundaries are defined and are a mix of stone wall and hedgerow. Urban development is currently restricted to higher ground but is largely screened by landform and mature vegetation.	There is significant ‘ribbon development’ along Hightown Road, between the settlements of Cleckheaton and Hightown, and coalescence has already occurred. The site comprises a larger parcel of Green Belt which is contained by Cleckheaton, Littleton, Liversedge and Hightown. It is considered that this general area of Green Belt has an important strategic role.	The rear of housing along Hightown Road encloses the northern boundary with lower density housing enclosing the site to the north east. The land to the south of the site rises at a steady gradient up to Hightown and provides some natural containment. There are strong field boundaries comprising stone wall and hedgerow.	A PROW exists along the southern boundary of the site, however, there are none present within the site boundary. The undeveloped site contributes a degree of visual amenity to users of the PROW. Development would decrease the sense of openness from adjoining land parcels.

H1796 and H564



Site analysis

The site is located on sloping ground to the rear of properties on Laverhills, Hightown. The land is agricultural and is currently grazed for equestrian use.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development would have limited impact on openness.’

This assessment strongly disagrees with this outcome as development would introduce urban features to sloping ground, considered characteristic of more rural areas within the local area. The openness of adjoining land parcels would be negatively affected. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

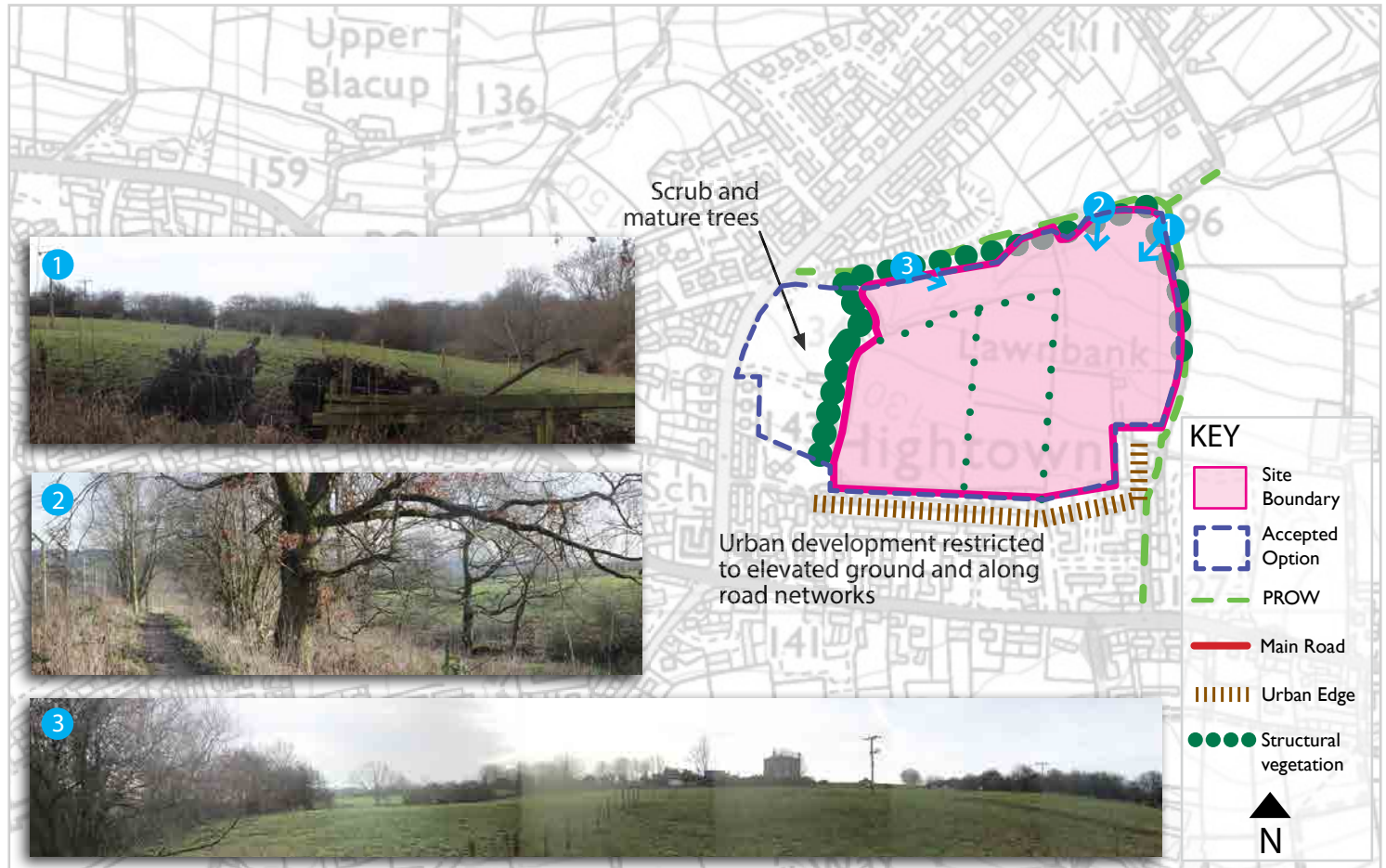


Figure 15

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The site has a good landscape structure with defined field boundaries marked by mature trees and vegetation. There are few detracting features as urban development is screened by landform and intervening vegetation. The site contains landscape features worthy of conservation.	As outlined in H226, coalescence has already occurred along the road networks. The site comprises a larger parcel of Green Belt which is contained by Cleckheaton, Littleton, Liversedge and Hightown. It is considered that this general area of Green Belt has an important strategic role.	There are strong boundaries to the north, south and west of the site which provide containment. Vegetation to the west forms a distinctive boundary and buffer to development to the west. Vegetation along the eastern boundary provide some containment but is reduced by the continuing fall of the landform.	There are no PROW within the site, however, there is a footpath adjacent to the northern boundary and a bridleway adjacent to the eastern boundary. The site contributes positively to the visual amenity of receptors using these PROW. The sloping and lower ground is characteristic of undeveloped land.

H596 and H198

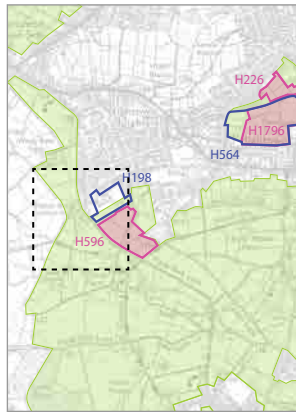


Figure 16

Site analysis

The site is located on agricultural land to the north of Windy Bank Lane.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development particularly west of Fern Croft would have limited impact on openness.’

This assessment does not agree with this outcome as urban influences to the north are characteristic of the rural-urban fringe and the land the south of this edge is strongly connected to the wider countryside. Windy Bank Lane does not provide strong visual containment.

It is considered that that H596 of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
Site H596 is characteristic of the urban fringe but becomes increasingly more rural when travelling south along Windy Beck Lane. The lane is narrow and has few associated urban features. Views from the road onto the site are largely unrestricted by boundary vegetation.	Development within the site would not result in the physical or perceived coalescence between settlements.	The site is partially contained by the road to the south but lacks strong boundary features to the north. Development within the site would increase the extent of the urban fabric and would damage openness within adjoining parcels of land. The site plays a role in preventing ribbon development.	The prominence of adjoining urban areas is considered to be low and the perception of surrounding countryside could be damaged if the site were to be developed.

H7

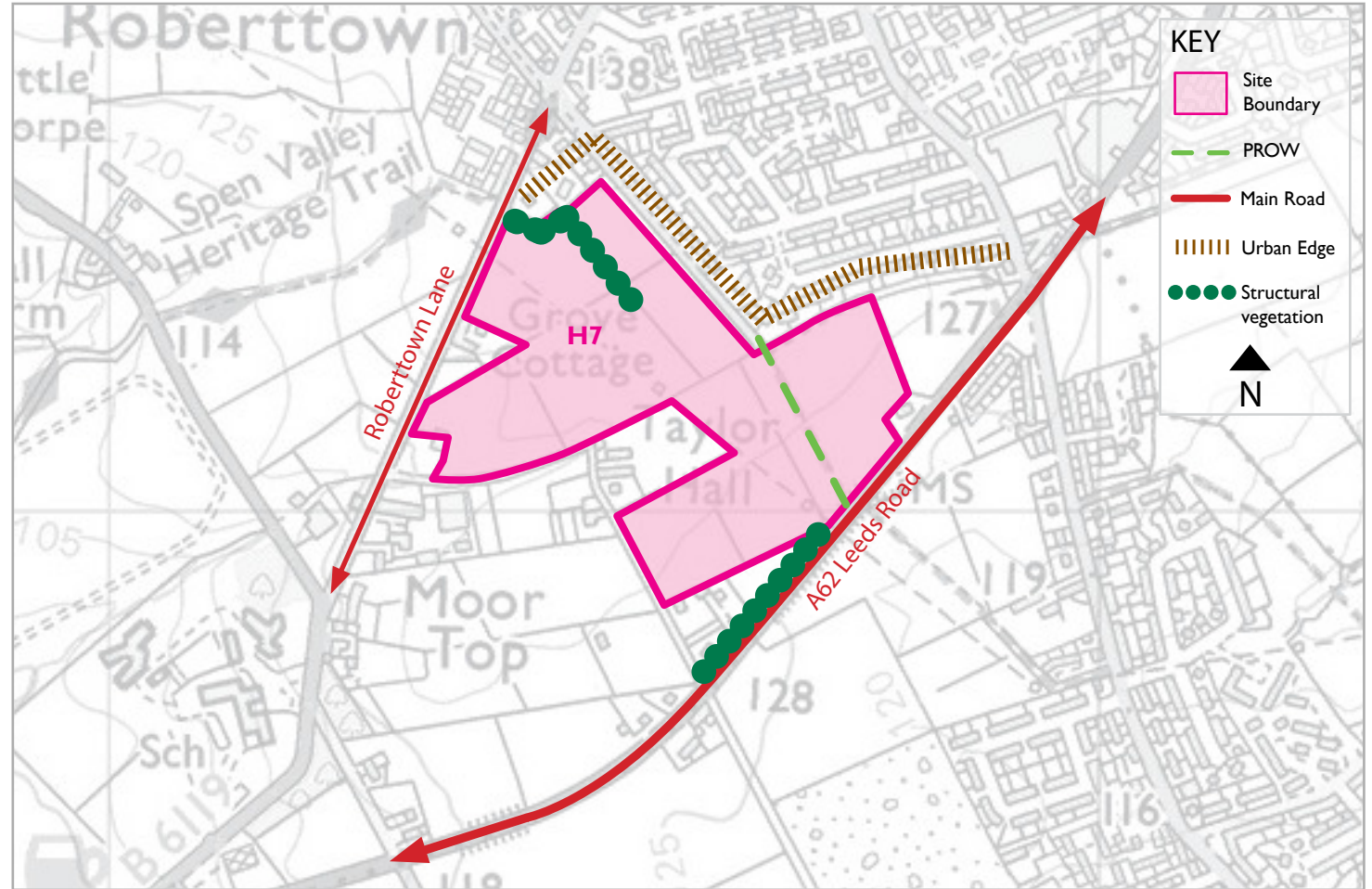
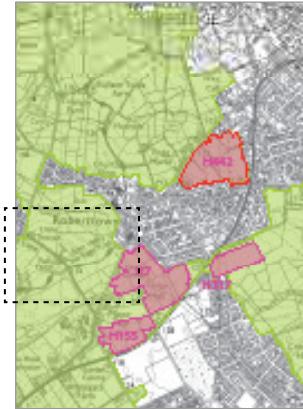


Figure 17

Site analysis

The site is located on agricultural land between the A62 Leeds road to the south east and Roberttown Lane to the north west.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

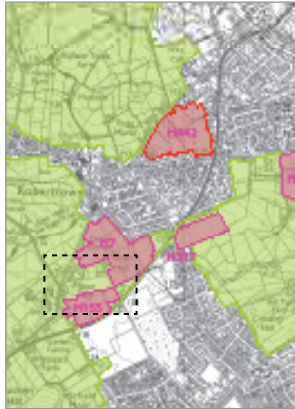
‘Development east of tree belt would have very limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt.’

This assessment does not agree with the outcome as development to east could lead to the perception of the settlements merging when viewed from the south. This parcel of land is considered important in preventing ribbon development.

It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
There are open and extensive views when travelling south along Roberttown Lane and a distinct change in character from urban to sub-urban. Urban features are present but not dominant and the undeveloped land contributes to setting and sense of place.	Development on the eastern proportion of the site could lead to perceived merging of settlements.	The site is significant in preventing ribbon development along Roberttown Lane and the A62 Leeds road. There is a strong urban edge to the north, but limited containment to the south.	The site is disconnected to the wider countryside on the eastern half of the site, however, the western half is considered important in terms of distinguishing the edge of Roberttown.

H155



Site analysis

The site is located to the north of the A62 Leeds Road on land which is currently grazed. The land is elevated above the A62.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development would breach the strong boundary along Leeds Road and risk encroaching onto Moor Top.’

This assessment agrees with this outcome. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

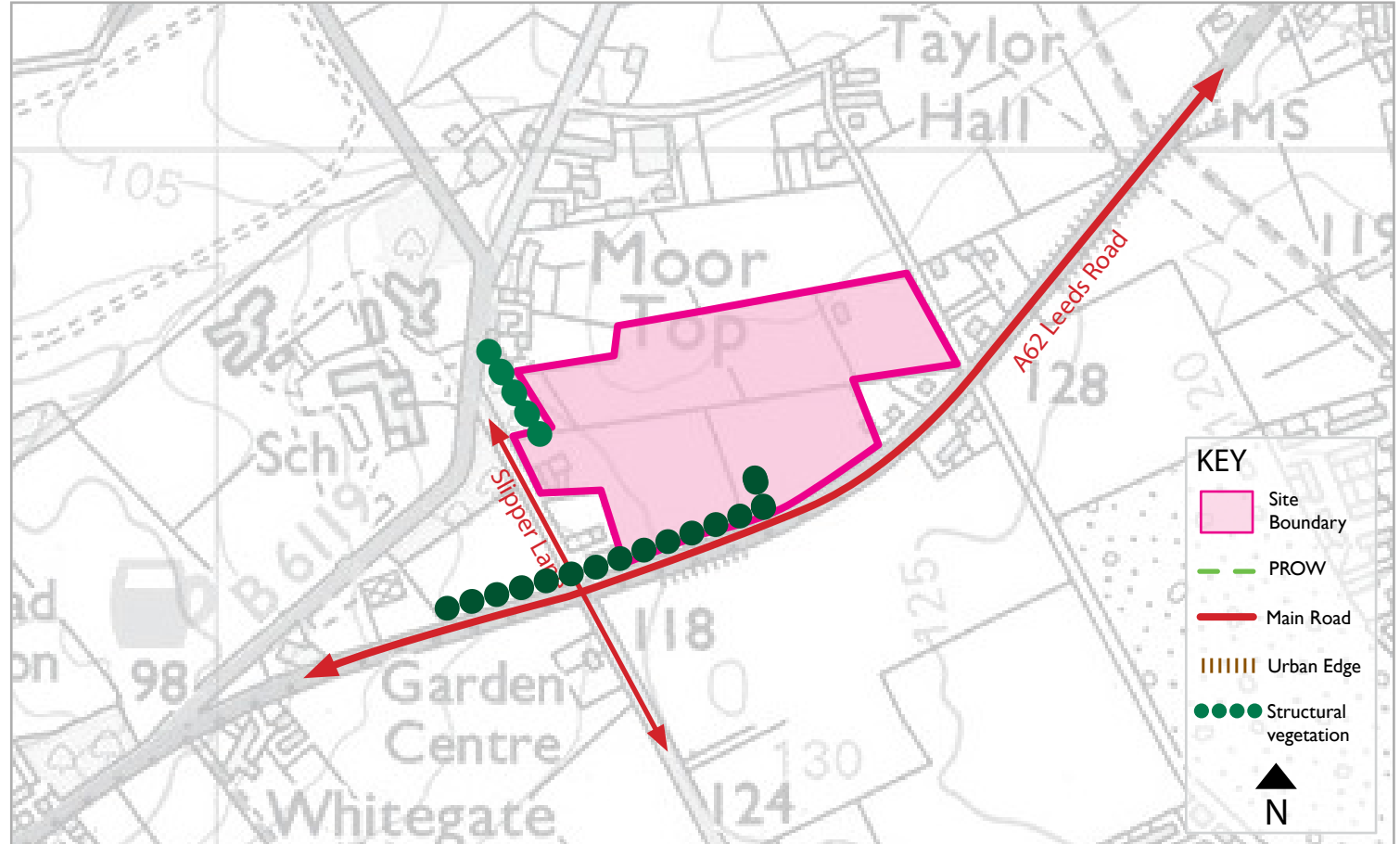
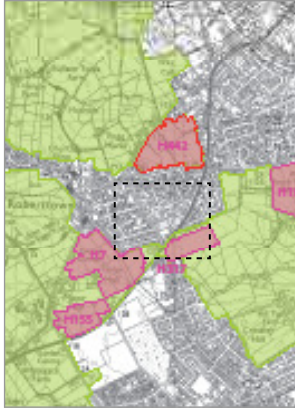


Figure 18

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The land is sub-urban in character due to the presence of urban features. There is a moderate landscape structure with some positive rural features. Vegetation channels long range views across the valley contributing to a sense of place.	Development within this site would not lead to the coalescence of neighbouring settlements.	There is a reasonable degree of confinement surrounding this site, especially by the A62 to the site. Development on this site has the potential to encourage ribbon development along the A62.	There are no PROW within the site and beneficial uses of the Green Belt are limited. There is little connection to the wider countryside but does change help to make a distinction between urban development to the north and sub-urban characteristics to the south.

H317



Site analysis

The site is located on a busy junction on agricultural land between Mirfield and Roberttown. The site is prominent from the A62 when travelling north and from the junction between Sunny Bank Road.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that;

‘Development would reduce the narrow gap between Roberttown and Mirfield.’

This assessment agrees with this outcome. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

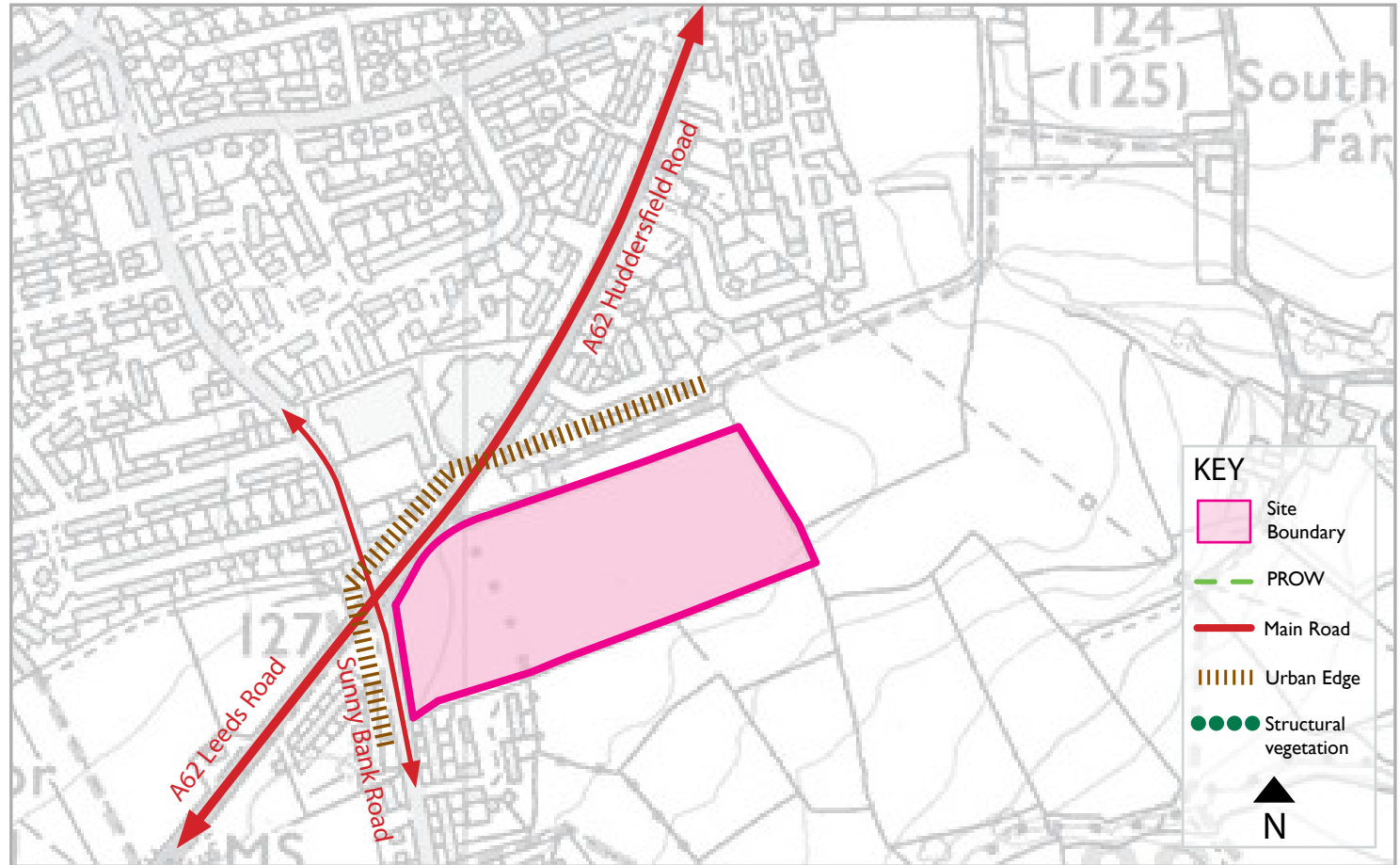
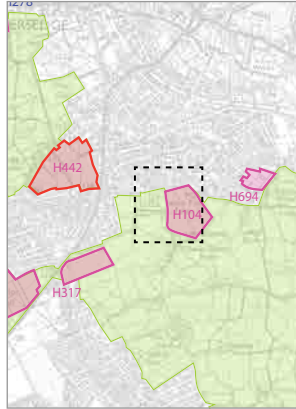


Figure 19

LANDSCAPE VALUE		GREEN BELT PURPOSES	
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The parcel of land is considered to be visually uninspiring and does not significantly contribute to a positive character. The land is sub-urban in character and is dominated by urban features to the north.	This parcel of land is considered critical in physically separating settlements to the north and south.	Containment is provided by the strong urban edge to the north and by development fronting Sunny Bank Road to the east. The site lacks restriction to the south and east as the landform falls away and the parcel of land is visually connected to the wider countryside.	The land is currently grazed, although does not contribute any other notable beneficial use of the Green Belt. Development within this site would reduce the sense of ‘openness’ of adjoining parcels of land.

H104



Site analysis

The site is located on agricultural land on the southern boundary of Norristhorpe. The land is surrounded by large irregular fields and dispersed farms. There is an area of woodland to the south of the site on sloping ground.

The conclusion drawn from the Kirklees Green Belt review is that there is;

'Limited potential for containment. Development could be prominent.'

This assessment agrees with this outcome. It is considered that the parcel of land **should remain** in the Green Belt.

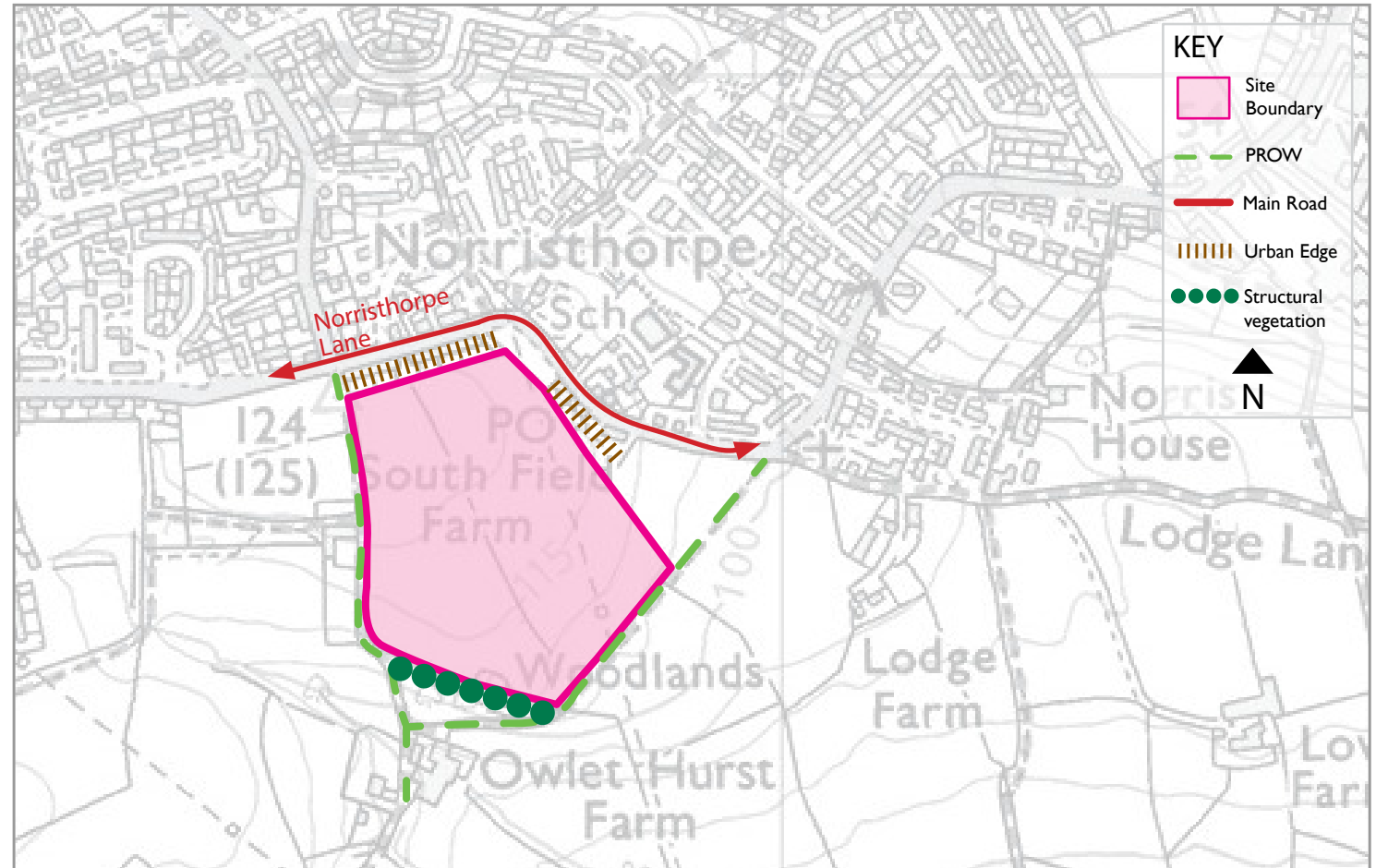


Figure 20

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
This parcel of land is considered typical of the rural-urban fringe. It is influenced by urban development but has features associated with more rural landscapes. This site functions as a transition between the wider countryside and the urban development of Norristhorpe.	This site does not contribute to this purpose of the Green Belt.	The site is partially contained to the north by urban development, however it is considered to be currently transitional in character. There is limited containment to the other aspects across the sloping ground. Views of this site are prominent when viewed on higher ground to the south.	The land is currently grazed and has two PROW running the lengths of the east and west boundary. Development on this site would have a negative impact on the sense of 'openness' on adjoining land parcels.

H218

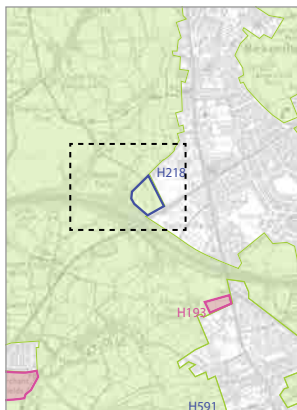


Figure 21

Site analysis

The site is located on agricultural land to the west of Birkenshaw. The site has been proposed for housing allocation by Kirklees Council.

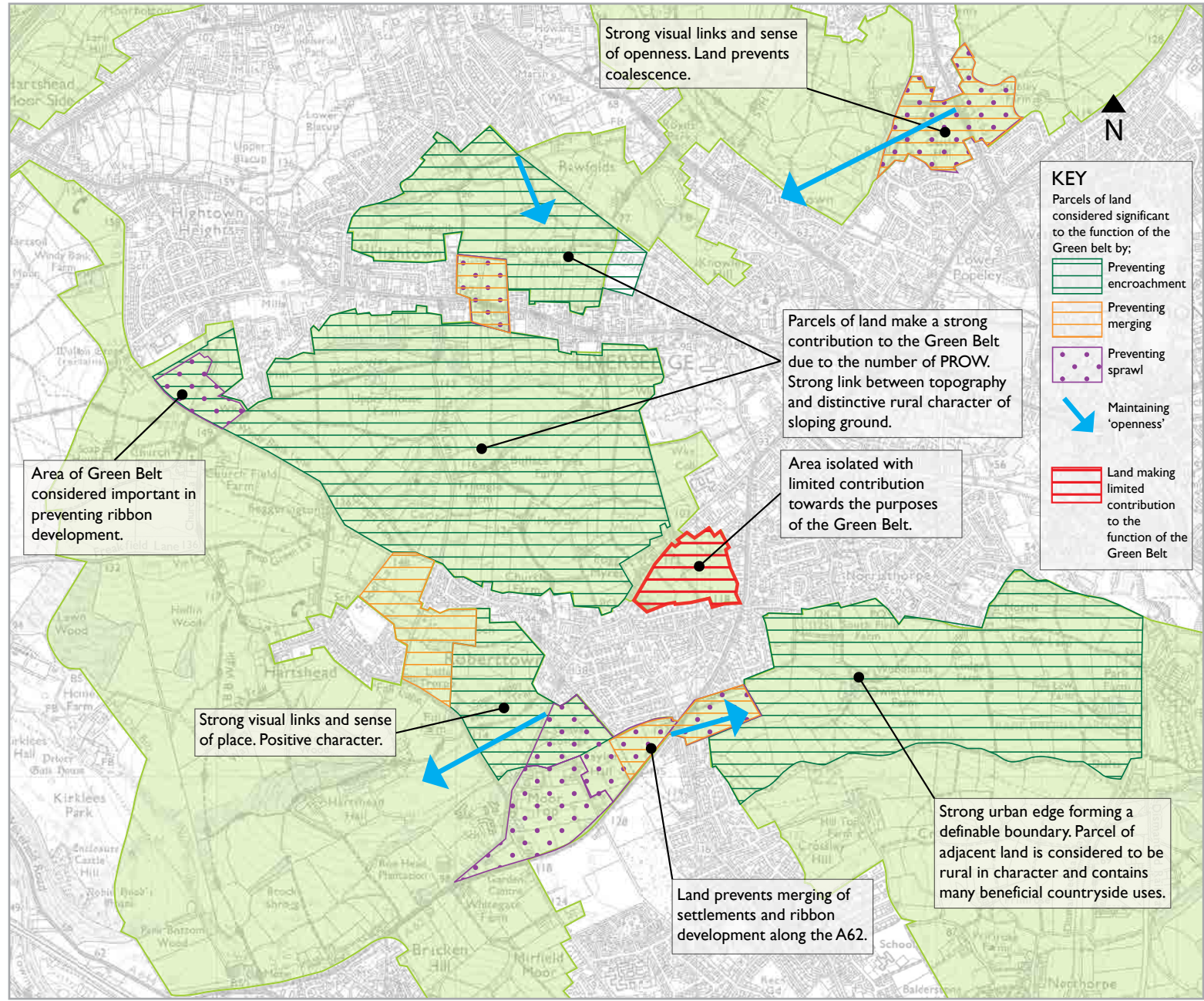
Further assessments into the visibility of potential development are required to make a full assessment of the sites contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt.

It is considered that the parcel of land requires **further assessment** in order to determine whether it should be released from the Green Belt.

LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES		
Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment
The site is influenced by urban development to the south but contains some visually positive features, for example the belt of trees to the west. The sloping nature of the site has the potential to increase its visibility within the wider countryside	The site does not assist in preventing merging.	To the west there is a strong boundary with the M62 and to Whitehall Road to the south. There is a weak boundary to the east adjoining a largely undeveloped parcel of land. The site does not have any visual links to other areas of housing.	The site could be highly visible from the surrounding countryside and roads. Development on this site could diminish the visual connection to the wider countryside from the west of Birkenshaw and have a negative impact on the setting of the village.

Conclusions

Outcomes Map



Map illustrating the parcels of land or areas within the Green Belt making a significant contribution to the Green Belt

Figure 22 illustrates the contributions of parcels of land considered to be significant to the Green belt within this study. It contrasts the approach by Kirklees where different 'lengths of Green Belt' were tested against a scoring criteria.

This study exposed limitations within the 'Edge Review' where housing options were located on land which contained several lengths graded at varying sensitivities.

For example, the edge review for Site H7, to the south of Roberttown, coded on edge as red (length RT5, critical importance), one dark green (RT4, less important), and one as pink (RT3, very important). The conclusion drawn in the summary table of the Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report was that the site 'would have very limited impact on openness ...'[3]. In some instances the edge review does not appreciate how adjacent parcels of land have an influence and interact to perform a strategic role.

Another important consideration highlighted when comparing the various methodologies used in other studies is that there are variations between the interpretations of the purposes of the Green Belt. There are also different focuses and weights given to the different purposes.

Figure 22

Comparisons Table

	LANDSCAPE VALUE	GREEN BELT PURPOSES			
SITE REFERENCE	Contribution to landscape character	Prevents merging	Checks unrestricted sprawl	Safeguards from encroachment	Considered for release from the Green Belt?
H442	Moderate	Limited contribution	Limited contribution	Limited contribution	Yes
H218	Moderate	Does not perform function	Limited contribution	Significant contribution	Need further study
H193	Moderate	Significant contribution	Partial contribution	Partial contribution	No
H69	Moderate	Limited contribution	Limited contribution	Partial contribution	Needs further study
H508	Moderate	Does not perform function	Limited contribution	Limited contribution	Yes
H246	High	Significant contribution	Significant contribution	Partial contribution	No
H1795	Low	Limited contribution	Partial contribution	Partial contribution	Needs further study
H226	Moderate	Limited contribution	Partial contribution	Significant contribution	No
H1796 and H564	High	Partial contribution	Partial contribution	Significant contribution	No
H446, H552, H591	Moderate	Does not perform function	Partial contribution	Limited contribution	Yes
H596	High	Does not perform function	Significant contribution	Significant contribution	No
H104	Moderate	Does not perform function	Partial contribution	Significant contribution	No
H317	Low	Significant contribution	Partial contribution	Partial contribution	No
H7	Moderate	Partial contribution	Significant contribution	Significant contribution	No
H155	Low	Does not perform function	Significant contribution	Partial contribution	No

Summary

The comparison table on page 32, illustrates the study sites that have been highlighted as having a potential to be released from the Green Belt.

Site H442 was the focus of this study and is intended to support a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by Smeeden Foreman in June 2014. The LVIA considered the potential impacts upon the local landscape character and the visual amenity of receptors if the site were to be allocated for housing.

The overall landscape value of H442, when taking these two studies into account, is considered to be moderate. This is accounted for by the detracting elements within the site, the degree of containment by urban elements and the limited nature of any views (visual links from the site and views into the site from potential receptors). Although the landscape quality of the site has been assessed as “moderate” this study has highlighted that the site has a very limited contribution to the Green Belt in terms of preventing settlements from merging, checking unrestricted urban sprawl, and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The site is considered disconnected from the surrounding areas of countryside and should be considered for release from the Green Belt.

During this report we have considered the extent to which our study supported or rejected the outcomes of a number of other allocated sites nearby, and within the Kirklees Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report. The conclusions drawn from the results of this assessment are that there were several sites proposed for housing, (Sites H564 and H218) that were located on land identified in our assessment as making a valid and in some instances important contribution to the function of the Green Belt.

Accepted site H564 is assessed as having a high landscape value, with rural features worth preserving. Development would conflict with existing settlement patterns and landscape character, which currently see urban development restricted to higher land. The site was judged to have positive influences on the surrounding parcels of land. Allocating this site for housing could be perceived as a considerable encroachment into the countryside and would further narrow the gap between settlements.

This study has identified two sites (H218 and H564) where there is an intention to remove the sites from the Green Belt and to seek an allocation for residential development. Both of these sites would impact upon the countryside to a greater extent than H442 and would serve useful Green Belt functions. In the light of this assessment H442 should be considered for allocation in preference to H218 and H564.

Within our report we have reassessed the Green Belt edge effecting H422 and proposed an alternative boundary (refer to page 14 of this document). Roberttown Lane and the associated housing provide a strong urban boundary. As a consequence, this feature severs links from H442 with adjacent Green Belt parcels to the north, and negates its importance and function in supporting the purposes of the wider Green Belt. Redefining the boundary, as shown on Figure 7, would allow the release of land not important to the Green Belt, while making a more distinct and defensible boundary to retained Green Belt areas.

Bibliography

- [1] National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
- [2] Kirklees Draft Local Plan
- [3] Kirklees Green Belt Review and Outcomes Report (November 2015)
- [4] Proposed Sheffield City Region Combined Green Belt Review (August 2014)
- [5] South Staffordshire Partial Green Belt Review (January 2014)
- [6] Shaping a Local Plan for Kirklees - Consultation Summary 2015

