
Greencroft Woodland

Landscape Character Appraisal and Parkland Plan





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--	Final draft. Updates to report to respond to comments and queries received, and addition of further information	WW/SL		30.05.24
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Section 1

Introduction

Southern Green and Pegasus have been commissioned by Pryor & Rickett Silviculture (PRS), on behalf of True North Real Asset Partners Ltd, to produce a Landscape Character Appraisal and Parkland Plan for Greencroft, following a brief provided by Forestry England.

The aim of this report is to advise on the capacity of the site, shown in Fig 1.1 overleaf, to accommodate a woodland creation scheme, and how this might be brought forward - considering key landscape and historic features, and sensitivities to this type of use.

The document initially collates information on the **Site Context**, reviewing existing designations within a 5km study area of the site, and providing an overview of the wider surrounding landscape. A more focussed **Analysis** of the landscape of the site and its historic evolution is then undertaken, highlighting key features, views and landscape character areas/ land parcels. The baseline information gathered during the analysis, and obtained through both desktop study and field work, informs the **Appraisal** of the site - advising on the capacity of it to the potential establishment of woodland areas within it. Findings of the appraisal, along with those in reports from other specialisms, are intended to inform the development of a **Woodland Concept Plan** which will illustrate how proposed woodland might be sensitively integrated into the fabric of the site and surrounding context.

Initial Woodland Concept Plans were included in the first draft of the report but this element of the study, including provision of visualisations to illustrate the scheme, is subsequently being developed by Pryor & Rickett Silviculture.

Legend

Site Boundary

Other Land in Client's Ownership



Figure 1.1
Site Location

Section 2

Site Context

The site is located to the north of County Durham, 1.5km to the south east of Consett, 1km south of Annfield Plain, and 0.1km north west of Lanchester.

The red line boundary on Figure 2.1 indicates the site area, with the blue line boundary noting other land within the clients ownership which is concentrated around the historic core of the site. The land within this latter area is not currently being considered for woodland creation.

The site occupies approximately 347ha of land on a south facing slope of the Browney Valley. It is bounded by Tower Road to the north, Gorecock Lane to the west, Howden Bank to the east and Stockerley and Smallhope Burns to the south. The A691 which is a main route between Consett, Lanchester and Durham travels east to west through the southern section of the site.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)

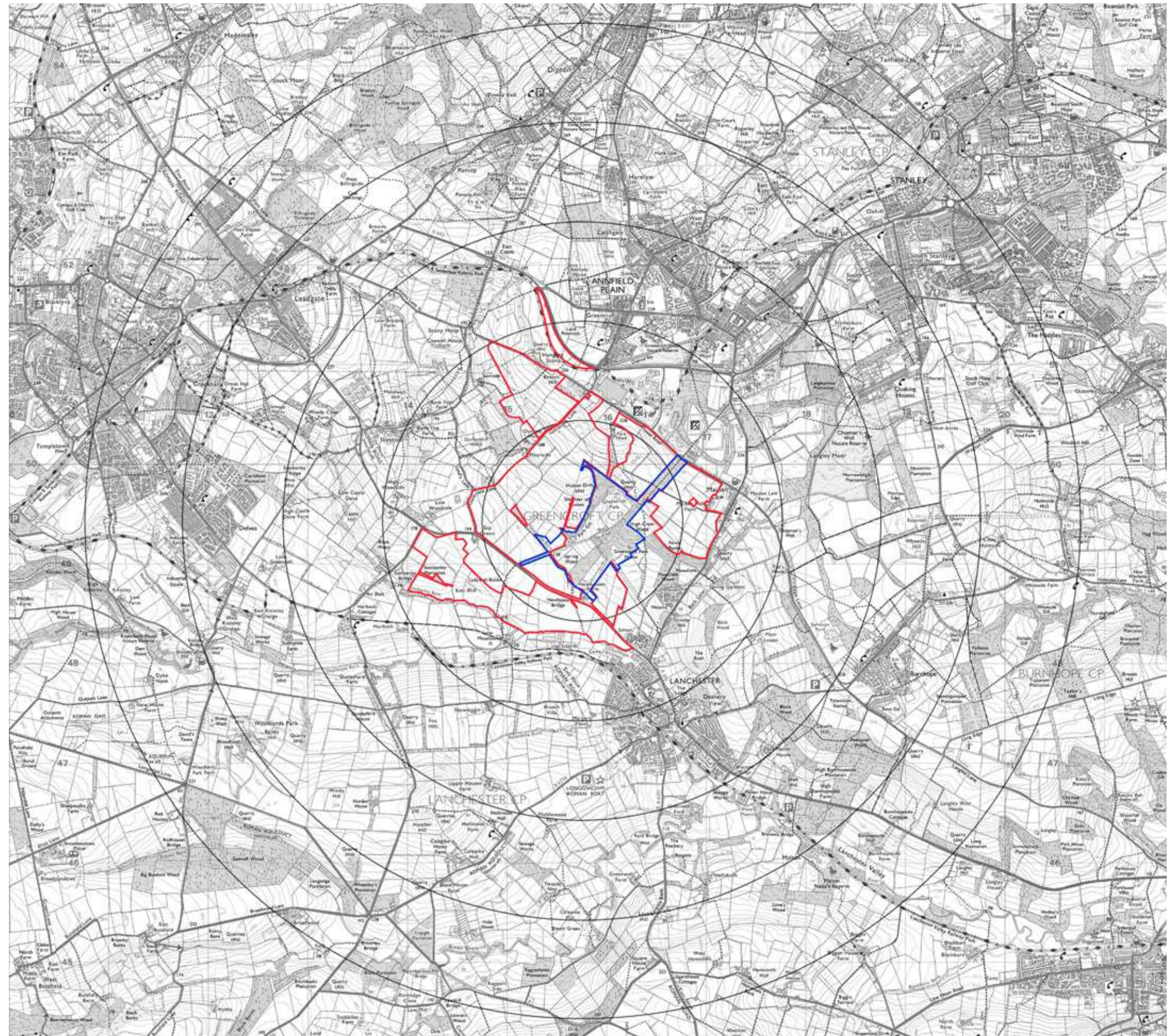


Figure 2.1
Site Location - Wider Context

Planning and Landscape Designations

Sites are designated Nationally and Locally for their importance in relation to landscape and/or content of it. Designations within the study area are shown on Figure 2.2, and described below.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

There are three SSSI's located within the study area, all noted as being Greencroft and Langley Moor SSSI. Two of these areas are located approximately 0.5km to the north of the site, on the southern edges of Annfield Plain, and the other is 1.5km to the north east - and associated with Chapmans Well Nature Reserve.

Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV)

A large section of the proposed site and surrounding landscape is designated as an AHLV. These are noted to ‘...*include attractive, mature and undeveloped landscapes in the major river valleys of the Tees, Wear, Browney, Derwent and Team, together with much of the Durham coast and a number of coastal denes.*’

Ancient Woodland

The closes Ancient Woodlands to the site are Durhamhill Wood to the west and Black Wood to the east. Larger areas of Ancient Woodland are noted within Knitsley Wood, 2.2km to the west of the site, within the Derwent Valley to the north west extents of the study area (Billingside, Bradley and Pontop Spring Woods) and along the River Browney to the south east. Other areas of Ancient Woodland are distributed throughout the study area and are primarily broadleaved, or mixed woodlands.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

The closest LNR to the proposed site is Greencroft Heath, located approximately 1.7km to the north. Chapman’s Well is located approximately 1.8km north-east of the site and Kyo Bogs is located 2.6km to the north, on the outskirts of Annfield Plain. Further LNRs are present at further distances from the site to the north and east.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

There are several Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within the study area. The closest LWS, Greencroft, is also designated as an LNR and SSSI, and is located approx. 0.5km to the north of the site. Other LWS within the wider area are listed below:

- Hurbuck Triangle;
- Stony Heap/ Batling Lime Kiln;
- Morrow Edge Heath and Quaking Houses Fell;
- Burnhope Pond;
- Whiteside Burn Wood;
- Ousterley Wood;
- South Stanley Wood;
- Barn Hill Heath;
- Harperley and Pea Woods;
- Kyo Bogs;
- Harelaw Cemetery Heath;
- Harelaw Heath;
- Ewehurst Wood;
- Delight Bank, Dipton;
- Pontop Fell;
- Stony Heap/Batling Lime Kiln;
- LovesWood & Malton;
- Greenwell Ford Meadow;
- Knitsley and High House Wood.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Area of High Landscape Value
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Ancient Woodland
- Local Wildlife Site
- Local Nature Reserve

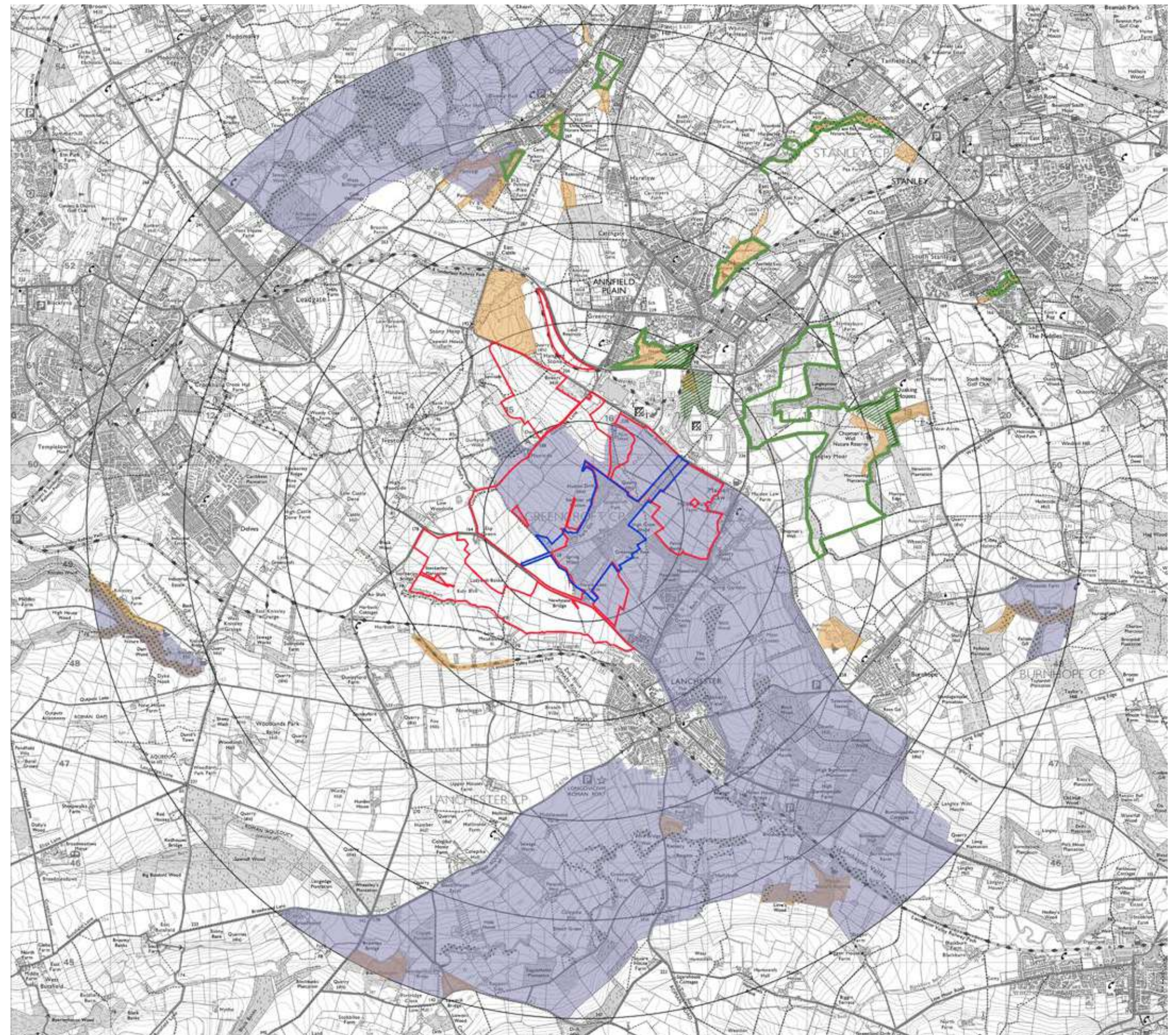


Figure 2.2
Landscape and Planning
Designations

Access and Circulation

There are numerous paths and routes throughout the study area which are shown overleaf, Figure 2.3, and described below.

Strategic Walking Routes

The Consett and Sunderland Railway Path is a long-distance route located approx. 1.35km north of the centre of the proposed site. This walking route connects the towns of Consett to the west and Stanley to the north east within the study area.

The Lanchester Railway Path is located approx. 1.9km to the south of the proposed site. This route connects the southern area of Consett through to Lanchester, approx. 2.5km south of the site, before continuing in a south easterly direction towards Langley Park. Both of these strategic walking routes are also designated as traffic-free cycle routes.

Public Footpaths and Bridleways

There are multiple public footpaths which extend through the proposed site itself. To the north west of the site a footpath extends from Tower Road near Hanging Stone in a south westerly direction down a landform know as Boxers Hill. This continues over farmland to meet Stoney Heap Lane to the east of Iveston. Two further footpaths enter the site from Tower Road, one utilising the track to Park Head farm and the other following the avenue into the historic core of the park. The one by Park Head farm follows the track past the farm and continues in a southerly direction along a small woodland. To the north of Greencroft Park this footpath splits with one route extending to the south west through farmland to the west side of Maiden Law, and the other generally carrying on in a southerly direction through farmland and woodland to meet the drive to Fenhall Lodge. Both these routes cross the northern (Tower Avenue) and footpath associated with this route. The Tower Avenue footpath extends in the same orientation to the north of Tower Road to Lanchester Road to the north.

From the west a footpath which begins at Iveston enters the site off Gorecock Lane and follows Newhouse Burn in a south easterly direction before terminating at the A691 near Newhouses Farm. Further west along the A691 a footpath travels south over farmland associated with Ladywell Banks and crosses Stockerley Burn before joining a bridleway near Low Meadows, which extends from Hurbuck Cottages to the west and Lanchester to the east, and also the Lanchester Valley Railway Path.

There is a strong network of other public rights of way in the wider study area, particularly to the north, east and west, providing links between settlements and farmsteads, and access routes to wider landscape features and areas.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Public Right of Way
- Bridleway
- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Traffic-Free Cycle Route
- Lanchester Valley Railway Path
- Consett & Sunderland Railway Path

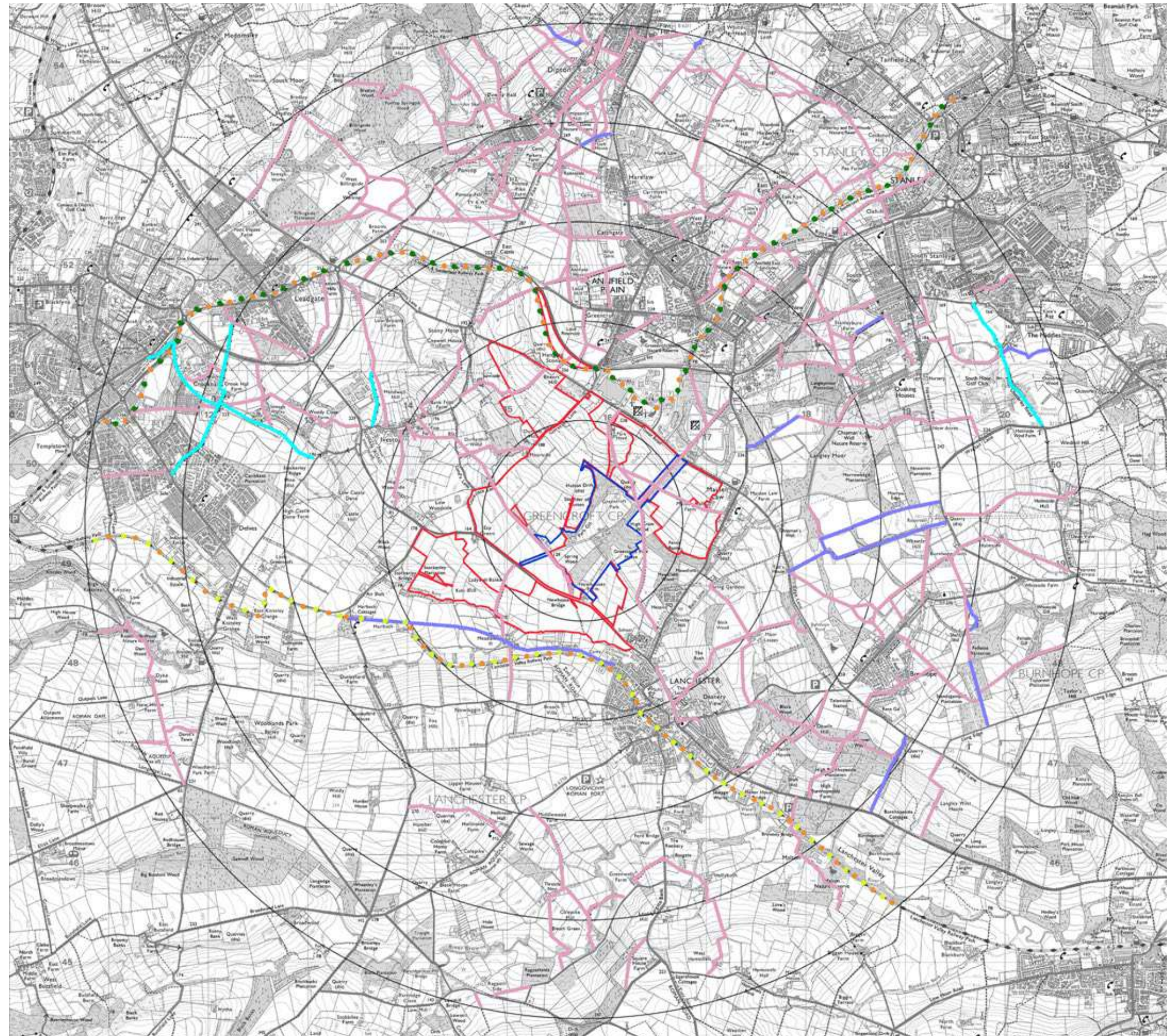


Figure 2.3
Access and Circulation

Heritage Designations

Sites and features are designated Nationally and Locally for their importance in relation to heritage. Designations within the study area are shown on Figure 2.4, and described below.

Scheduled Monuments

There are two Scheduled monuments within the study area, but none within the site boundary. The closest Scheduled Monument to the site is Lanchester Roman Fort (Longovicum) which is approximately 1.6km to the south of the site, and to the west of Lanchester. The other Scheduled monument is Colliery Chapel, located to the northernmost extent of the study area, to the west of Dipton.

Listed Buildings

There are numerous Listed Buildings within the study area and these are illustrated overleaf. Four of these are located within the site boundary – Greencroft Cottage, Dovecot north west of Greencroft Cottage, Ice House north west of Greencroft Cottage the bridge carrying drive to Greencroft Park over Newhouse Burn, and these are discussed in further detail later in the report. Fernhall Lodge, piers and walls south east of Fenhall Lodge are located just outwith the east boundary of the site, off Howden Bank.

Other Listed buildings within the study area are distributed relatively evenly in terms of orientation, with some associated with settlements, such as Leadgate War Memorial and the Public Library in Annfield Plain, and others associated with farmland areas, including Woodlands Hall and Little Holmeside.

Conservation Areas

Three Conservation Areas are evident within the study area. Lanchester being the closest of these to the south east of the site, with a small section of land within the site and parallel to the A691 being associated with this.

Iveston to the west of the site is covered by the Conservation Area designation as is the central core of Annfield Plain to the north of the site. The latter generally covers properties along the B6168 Durham Road between Shield Row Lane and Greentree Lane.

Locally Designated Historic Park

A study was undertaken in 2019 to review areas of local historic importance within County Durham. Greencroft Park was identified as a Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Local Interest with boundaries, key features and significance outlined in the report. The areas of this mainly fall within the area denoted as ‘Other land in Applicants ownership’ but also extends over fields to the south east of the site. This area is discussed in more detail in following sections of the report.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Conservation Area
- Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Local Interest (Greencroft Park)
- 01

Grade I Listed Building
- 02

Grade II Listed Building
- 02

Grade II* Listed Building

Listed Buildings:

1.

LEADGATE WAR MEMORIAL
2.

CHURCH OF ST IVES
3.

3NO. LISTED BUILDINGS IN IVESTON
4.

CHURCH OF OUR LADY AND ST JOSEPH
5.

3NO. LISTED BUILDINGS ON DIPTON FRONT ST.
6.

MEMORIAL OPPOSITE NUMBER 12 LOUD TERRACE
7.

5NO. LISTED BUILDINGS AT HARELAW
8.

ST PATRICK'S CONGREGATION WAR MEMORIAL, DIPTON
9.

WAR MEMORIAL
10.

PUBLIC LIBRARY
11.

WAR MEMORIAL IN ANNFIELD PLAIN PARK
12.

3NO. LISTED BUILDINGS ON SOUTH MOOR ROAD
13.

MIDDLES FARMHOUSE
14.

3NO. LISTED BUILDINGS OF HOLMESIDE HALL
15.

LITTLE HOLMESIDE
16.

BURNHOPE WAR MEMORIAL
17.

3NO. LISTED BUILDINGS OF BURNHOPESIDE HALL
18.

NEW FIELD HOUSE
19.

16NO. LISTED BUILDINGSIN LANCHESTER CENTRE, INCLUDING GRADE I LISTED CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS
20.

FENHALL LODGE, PIERS AND WALLS SOUTH EAST OF FENHALL LODGE
21.

GREENCROFT COTTAGE
22.

DOVECOT NORTH WEST OF GREENCROFT COTTAGE
23.

ICE HOUSE NORTH WEST OF GREENCROFT COTTAGE
24.

BRIDGE CARRYING DRIVE TO GREENCROFT PARK OVER NEWHOUSE BURN
25.

LOW WOODSIDE FARMHOUSE
26.

HURBUCK FARMHOUSE
27.

HOLLINSIDE TERRACE, MILESTONE OPPOSITE SOUTH END OF HOLLINSIDE TERRACE
28.

COLEPIKE HALL AND ATTACHED WALL, TERRACE WALL AND PIERS IN FRONT OF COLEPIKE HALL, WALLS AND PIERS IN FRONT OF GARDEN OF COLEPIKE HALL
29.

HUMBER HOUSE FARMHOUSE
30.

WOODLANDS HALL, GARDEN WALL NORTH EAST OF WOODLANDS HALL
31.

EAST KNITSLEY GRANGE FARMHOUSE

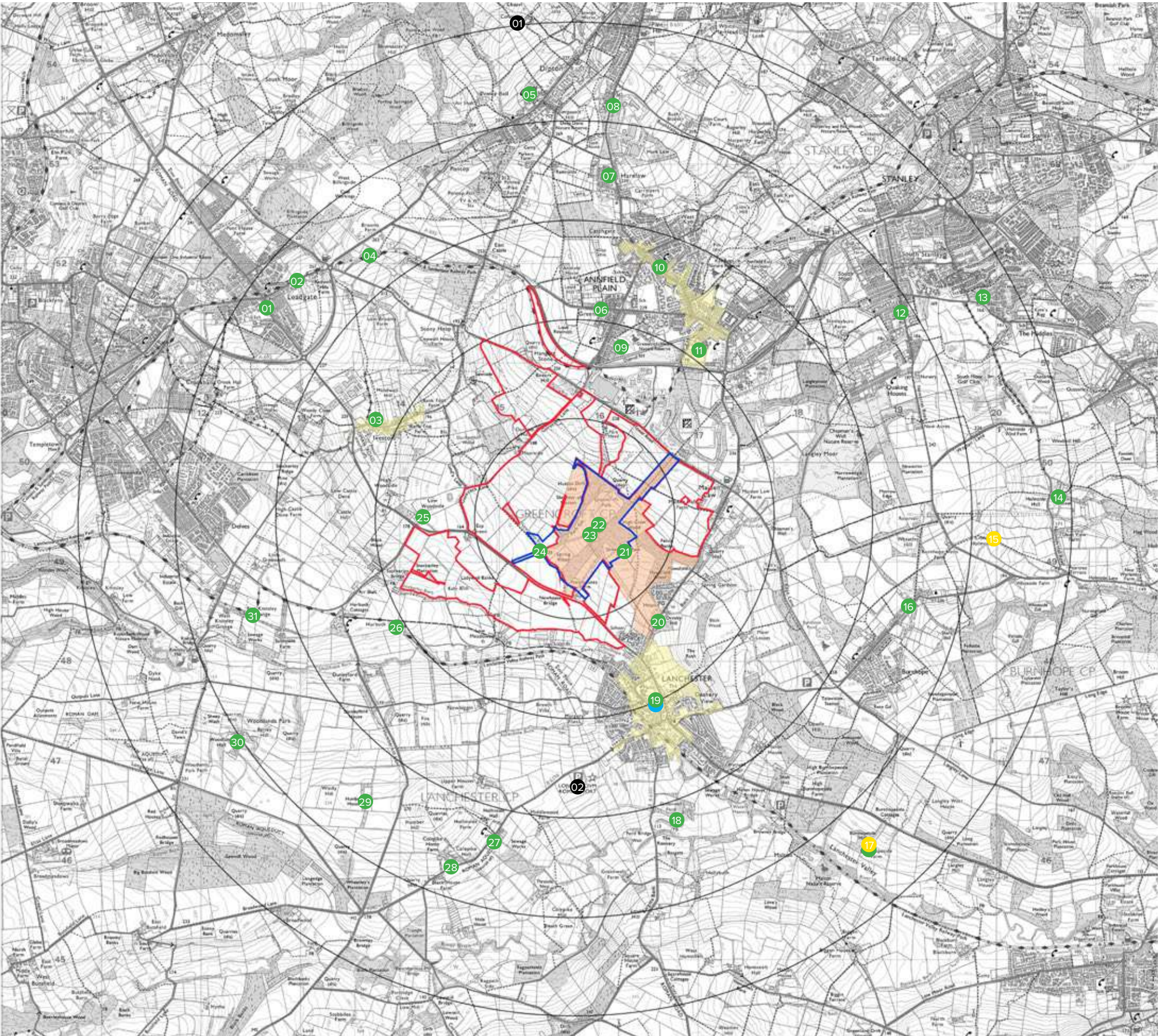
Scheduled Monuments:

1.

COLLIERY CHAPEL
2.

LANCHESTER ROMAN FORT (LONGOVICUM)

Figure 2.4
Heritage Designations



Landscape Character

National Character Areas

National Character Area mapping is carried out by Natural England. The study area is located within the single National Character Area of NCA16: Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe, which covers the entire site and study area.

County Level Character Type and Areas

The study area and land around the site lies within County Durham and the relevant Local Landscape Character Area classification is found in the County Durham Landscape Character Assessment (2008). This identifies that the site is within the West Durham Coalfield Landscape Character Area which has the following key characteristics:-

- *A rolling low upland landscape of ridges and valleys with a strong east-west grain.*
- *Soft and thinly bedded strata of Carboniferous sandstones, shales and coals give rise to gently rounded ridges with occasional steeper bluffs.*
- *Open ridges of pastoral farmland with regular grids of dry stone walls or gappy thorn hedges are crossed by straight enclosure roads and lanes. Fragments of heathland survive on infertile acidic soils.*
- *Valleys are broad with moderate slopes and occasional narrow floodplains. Agricultural land use is mixed with arable fields and improved pastures bounded by hawthorn hedges with scattered hedgerow oak and ash.*
- *Ancient oak woods are found in narrow steep sided denes, and along the banks of rivers and streams.*
- *Coniferous plantations are found on higher valley sides and ridges.*
- *Old agricultural villages lie on ridge tops or valley floors. Buildings are of local sandstone with roofs of stone or welsh slate.*
- *Mining villages of Victorian terraced housing of brick or stone and welsh slate and later estate housing are scattered across the valleys and ridges.*
- *Occasional parklands and wooded estates surround small country houses.*
- *Relics of the mining industry include disused railway lines and viaducts, old coke ovens and small spoil heaps.*
- *Opencast coal workings are locally prominent features. Extensive areas of land have been opencast or reclaimed and their landscape often lacks maturity.*
- *The landscape is broad in scale, defined within the valleys by the enclosing ridgelines, with panoramic views from higher ridges across adjacent valleys.*
- *A landscape heavily influenced by development with a semi-rural or urban fringe character in places.*

Two Broad Landscape Types (BLT's) are evident within the study area which are Coalfield Upland Fringe and Coalfield Valley and are illustrated on Figure 2.5 overleaf.

BLT: Coalfield Upland Fringe is located to the north of the study area and extends into the north of the site by approximately 0.5km, roughly parallel to

Tower Road.

The key characteristics of this BLT are defined as:

- *Broad ridges and shallow valley heads.*
- *Gently rounded topography of drift free, thinly bedded sandstones, mudstones, shales and coals.*
- *Occasional steep bluffs and incised denes.*
- *Heavy, seasonally waterlogged clay soils with pockets of peaty soils supporting heathland vegetation.*
- *Pastoral land use of improved or semi-improved pasture with some arable cropping on drier ridges.*
- *Regular grids of parliamentary enclosures bounded by dry stone walls or overgrown hawthorn hedges. Occasional older field systems.*
- *Few trees – scattered hedgerow oak, ash, rowan or birch.*
- *Sparsely wooded – scattered conifer plantations and shelterbelts.*
- *Isolated farms connected by straight enclosure roads – occasional old 'green' villages of local stone on ridge top sites.*
- *Scattered mining villages of stone and brick and occasional larger towns.*
- *Occasional relics of the mining industry including small spoil heaps, coke ovens and wagonways.*
- *Telecommunications masts and wind turbines prominent on some ridges*
- *Extensive areas of restored opencast land – often open and relatively featureless.*
- *A visually open landscape with commanding views across adjacent valleys to distant ridges.*

BLT: Coalfield Valley is located to the south of the study area, and covers the remaining areas of the site. The key characteristics of this BLT are:

- *Broad, well-defined valleys with occasional narrow floodplains and incised denes.*
- *Rounded topography of thinly bedded sandstones, mudstones, shales and coals overlain by glacial boulder clays.*
- *Heavy, seasonally waterlogged, clay soils.*
- *Mixed farmland of improved pasture and arable cropping.*
- *Sub-regular field patterns of old enclosures bounded by thorn hedges. Occasional regular Parliamentary enclosures.*
- *Scattered hedgerow Oak, Ash, Sycamore and Beech.*
- *Variable woodland cover – open in places but wooded elsewhere with ancient oak-birch woods in narrow denes and along watercourses, and blocky conifer plantations on valley sides.*
- *Scattered mining towns and villages connected by busy modern roads.*
- *Occasional older 'green' villages linked by narrow winding roads.*
- *Extensive areas of restored opencast land and reclaimed colliery land – often open and relatively featureless.*
- *Scattered relics of the mining industry – small spoil heaps, coke ovens and railway lines.*
- *Occasional ornamental parklands.*
- *An open landscape, relatively broad in scale but defined by enclosing ridgelines.*
- *A strongly rural landscape in places but with a 'semi-rural' or urban fringe quality in its more settled areas.*

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Coalfield Upland Fringe
- Coalfield Valley

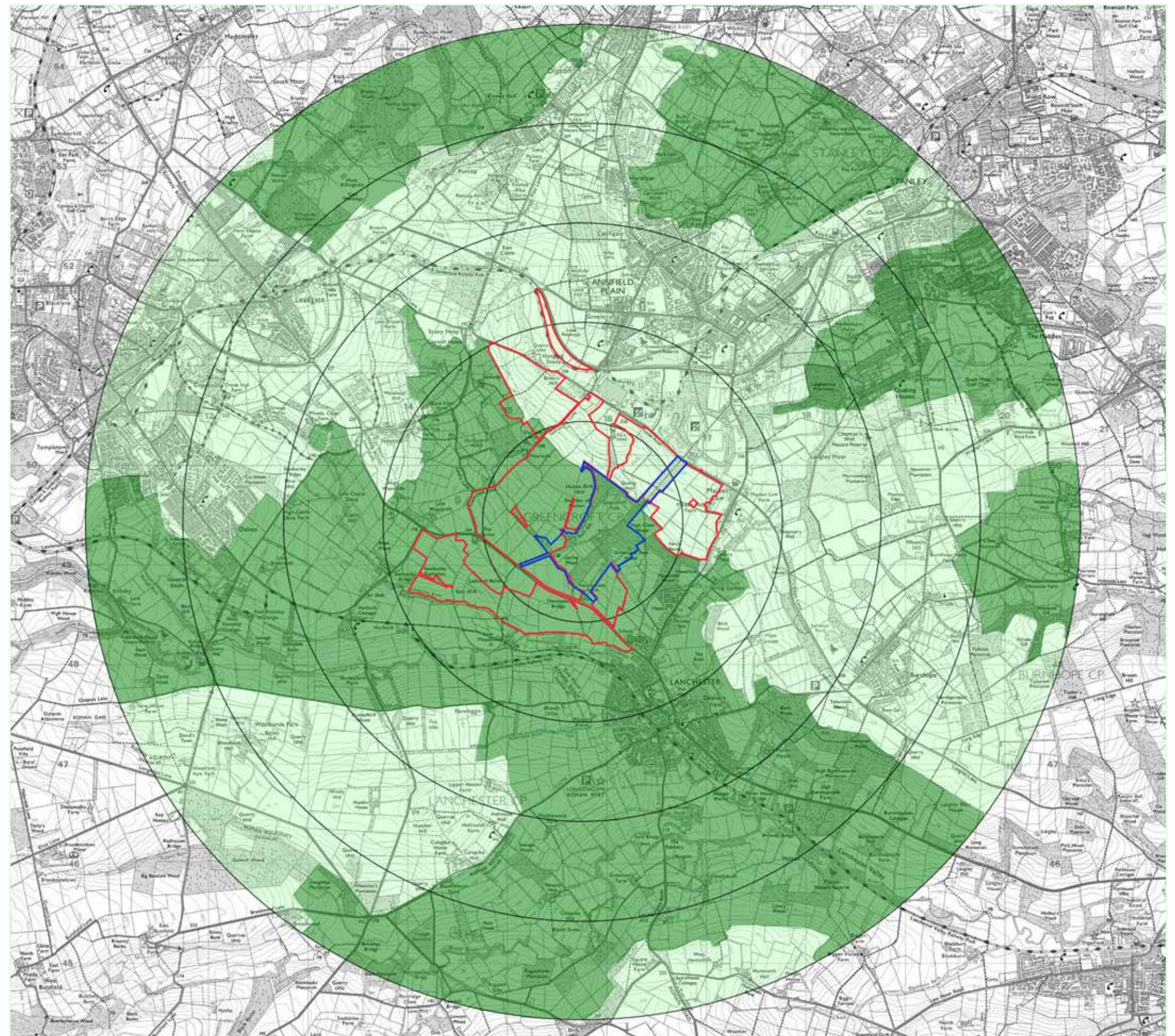


Figure 2.5
Broad Landscape Types

Broad Character Areas

Within the County Durham Landscape Character Assessment the LCT's are further divided into broad landscape character areas. Figure 2.6 overleaf identifies that the site itself lies within 'Northern Coalfield Uplands' to the north and 'Browney Valley' to the south. A very small area to the south east of the site, adjacent to Lanchester, is within 'Urban'.

The broad landscape character area Northern Coalfield Uplands is described as the following;

'Densely settled ridges between the northern coalfield valleys. Large mining & industrial towns and villages sprawl along the ridgelines connected by busy roads. Outside of the urban areas land use is largely pastoral. There are fragments of heathland at Chapman's Well and Annfield Plain. Field systems are regular and uniform, many dating from parliamentary enclosures of the 18th century, others from 20th century opencast coal mining and land reclamation. Field boundaries are a mixture of dry stone walls and overgrown hedges and wire fences. The ridges in the north are generally open in character with few trees or woodlands. Those in the south and west are heavily wooded with frequent large conifer plantations. Telecommunications masts are notable features of the skyline.'

The broad landscape character area Browney Valley is described as the following;

'A broad branching valley in which the Browney and its tributaries lie on narrow floodplains or in narrow, steep-sided denes. Valley sides are moderately sloping with occasional steeper bluffs. Arable and mixed farmland in the lower reaches of the valley gives way to pasture on higher ground. The valley is heavily wooded in places with large blocky conifer plantations, and broadleaved or mixed woodlands in areas of old parkland. Field systems vary in character with older hedges with scattered or abundant hedgerow trees in the valley bottoms, and areas of regular parliamentary enclosure on higher ground. Boundaries are mostly hedgerows with some dry-stone walls in the upper reaches. Large villages lie along the valley floor and the lower valley sides. Restored opencast land is found in many places on the upper slopes, and areas of reclaimed colliery land are found around some mining villages.'

A definition of Urban is explained as:

A variable type which covers a broad range of urban development - housing, industry, retail and commerce, community facilities and public open space. The landscape character assessment does not identify variations in character within the urban landscape at any level of detail but does identify a small number of basic subtypes.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Browney Uplands
- Browney Valley
- Kyo Burn Valley
- Derwent Valley
- Northern Coalfield Uplands
- Urban
- Stanley Burn Valley
- Cong Burn Valley
- Central Coal Uplands

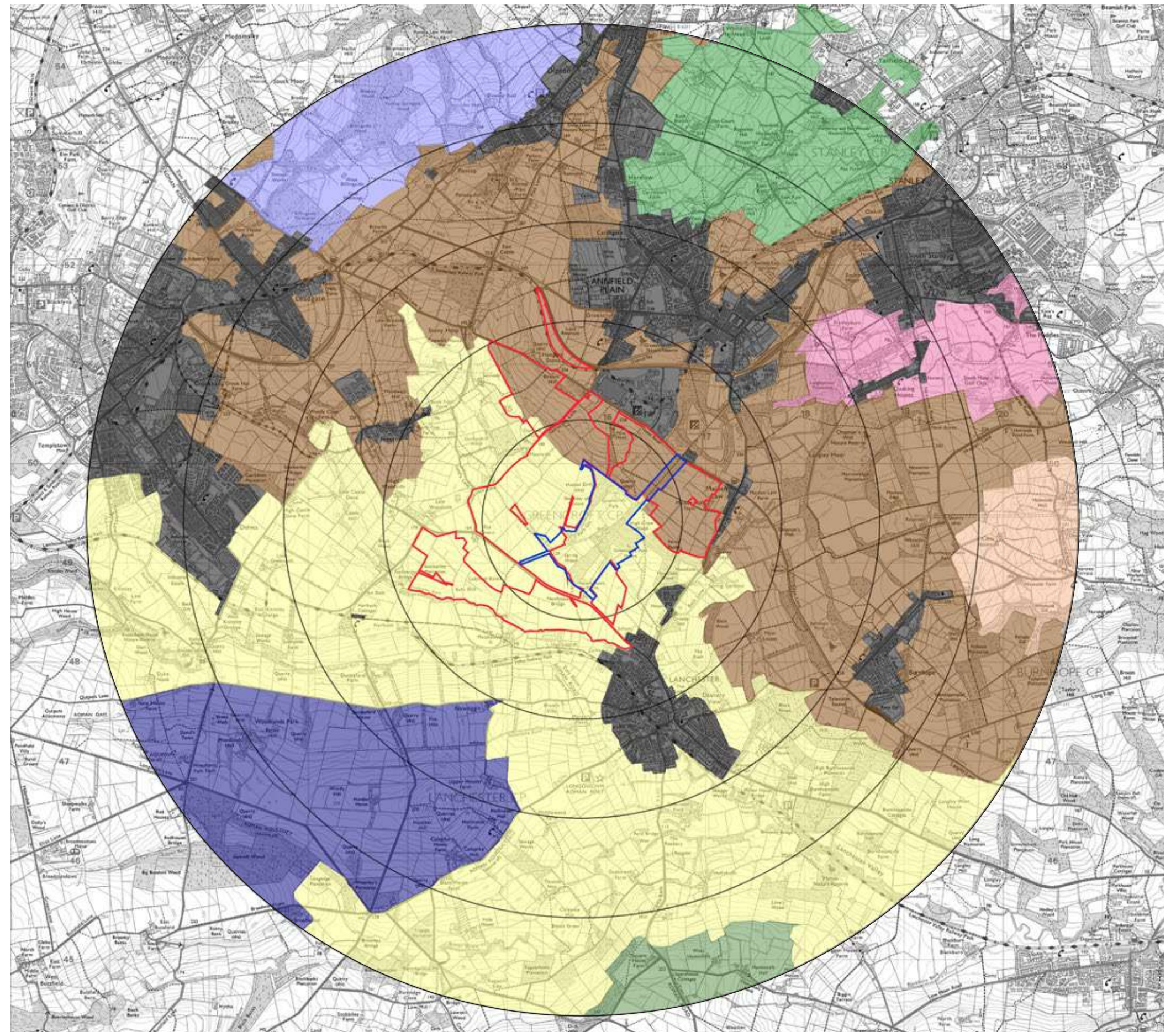


Figure 2.6
Broad Character Areas

Landscape Strategy

The County Durham Landscape Character Assessment also identifies Landscape Strategies for the different Broad Landscape Types, and highlights key sensitivities to certain types of developments or proposals. In relation to woodland and forestry it notes the following:-

The sensitivity of any landscape to new woodland planting depends partly on the contribution that woodlands already make to its character. Landscapes in which woodlands are important components of character are generally less sensitive to new woodland planting than those where woodlands are absent or uncharacteristic. Some landscapes where woodlands are sparse may be of lower sensitivity, and particularly if their openness is a product of recent forces like agricultural intensification or surface mineral working, or where wooded examples of the same landscape type can be found elsewhere. In some sensitive open landscapes there are local landscapes or landscape features which are less sensitive to woodland planting than their surroundings. For example the development of new native woodlands in moorland gills may enhance the character of the moorland landscape without compromising its general openness.

Sensitivity also depends greatly on the scale, type and location of new woodlands. Landscapes in which small woodlands are characteristic may not be sensitive to the development of similar woods but may be sensitive to the introduction of large woods. Sensitivity mapping can therefore only be carried out with a relatively broad brush. Guidance on the design of new woodlands in the county's different landscapes can be found in the County Durham Landscape Guidelines.

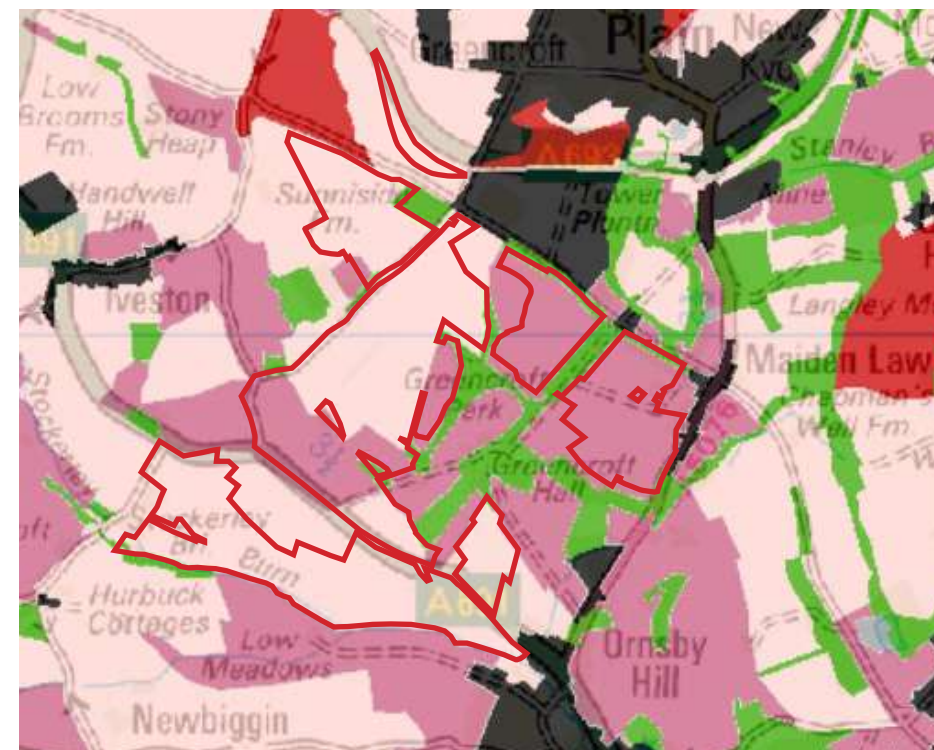
The Landscape Strategy identifies Highly Sensitive, Sensitive and Less Sensitive areas on the basis of the character of the local landscape type, and the presence of nature conservation and cultural heritage designations.

- *Highly Sensitive Areas* are those where landscape, nature conservation or heritage value is particularly high, and likely to be threatened by significant changes in land use. The strategy for these areas should be to broadly maintain the current balance of land uses. New woodland planting should only take place in exceptional circumstances.
- *Sensitive Areas* are those where the landscape has many valued characteristics but depends in part for its character on the presence of woodlands. New woodlands of an appropriate scale, type and location may strengthen landscape character and bring wider environmental

benefits. The strategy for these areas should be to increase woodland cover where it can make a positive contribution to landscape character and biodiversity, and particularly in Priority Areas.

- *Less Sensitive Areas* are those where new woodlands could generally be developed without adverse effects on landscape character or biodiversity provided that careful consideration was given to siting and design. The strategy for these areas should be to increase woodland cover, and particularly in Priority Areas.

An extract from of the sensitivity plan is shown below. Darker pink areas define the ‘sensitive’ areas and lighter pink areas define the ‘less sensitive’ areas.



Land Management Guidelines for Coalfield Upland Fringe BLT include:-

Trees, Woodlands and Forestry

- Protect and maintain existing hedgerow trees. Plant new field boundary trees (Ash, Sessile Oak, Rowan) – and particularly on restored opencast land – or tag saplings to replace the maturing stock.
- Conserve roadside trees and scrub – and particularly along enclosure roads.
- Plant new native oak or oak-birch woodlands along denes and steep valley side bluffs and alder woods along streamsides.
- Plant new medium or large scale mixed or broadleaved woodlands and particularly on former opencast land and close to settlement edges.
- Increase the proportion of locally native species when restocking plantations.
- Plant small woodlands and tree groups to screen larger modern farm buildings.

Cultural Features

- Protect archaeological features by avoiding overstocking or supplementary feeding on sensitive sites.
- Protect and conserve mining-related features such as old drifts, spoil heaps, coke ovens, waggonways and lime kilns. Avoid physical damage, removal or infilling. Consolidate important structures taking archaeological advice.
- Conserve and maintain traditional field barns and farm buildings.

Field Boundaries

- Protect, restore and maintain existing dry stone walls and hedgerows. Renovate overgrown and gappy hedges by laying or coppicing and gapping up.
- Reinstate hedges and walls where they have been replaced by fences – particularly in areas of older enclosure, along enclosure roads and lanes, and on reclaimed or restored opencast land.

Land Management Guidelines for Coalfield Valley BLT include:-

Natural Features

- Fence river and stream banks against livestock to prevent erosion and allow natural regeneration of riverside vegetation.
- Protect ponds from drainage or infilling. Restore former ponds and create new ponds on suitable sites taking ecological advice.
- Create reed beds (using Common Reed or Great Reedmace) to condition mine water or sewerage discharges.

Trees, Woodlands and Forestry

- Conserve and extend dene and riverside woods.
- Restore replanted ancient woodlands by felling and natural regeneration, or restocking with native species of local origins.
- Increase the proportion of locally native species when restocking plantations.
- Plant new native oak or oak-birch woodlands along denes, valley floors and steep valley side bluffs, and alder woods along streamsides.
- Plant new small and medium sized mixed or broadleaved woodlands and particularly on former opencast land and close to settlement edges.
- Protect and maintain existing hedgerow trees. Plant new field boundary trees (Ash, Sessile Oak, Common Oak), particularly on restored opencast land. Tag saplings to replace the maturing stock.
- Plant small woodlands and tree groups to screen larger modern farm buildings, sewerage works, substations etc.

Cultural Features

- Protect archaeological features including rigg and furrow from damaging activities such as cultivation, tree planting or poaching by stock.
- Protect and conserve industrial features such as old drifts, spoil heaps, coke ovens, waggonways, watermills and lime kilns. Avoid physical damage, removal or infilling. Consolidate important structures taking archaeological advice.
- Conserve and restore parklands, respecting designed elements and veteran trees.
- Conserve and maintain traditional field barns and farm buildings.

Field Boundaries

- Protect and maintain hedgerows and stone walls.
- Renovate overgrown and gappy hedges by laying or coppicing and gapping up.
- Allow trimmed hedges to grow higher and broader. Consider trimming every second or third year rather than annually.
- Reinstate hedges and walls where they have been replaced by fences, particularly in areas of older enclosure, along enclosure roads and lanes, and on reclaimed or restored opencast land.

Priorities for new planting in the West Durham Coalfield include:

- *Creating new native woodlands, and particularly where they would contribute to wildlife goals – for example by extending or linking isolated ancient woods.*
- *Increasing woodland cover and particularly in those areas affected by opencast mining, on reclaimed land, and in the urban fringe - The coalfield landscape as a whole is a priority area for new woodland planting due to its legacy of environmental degradation and its proximity to urban populations. It is a relatively robust and heterogeneous landscape with a long history of plantation forestry that can accommodate new commercial and multi-purpose woodlands as well as new native woodlands without weakening its character. There are some sensitivities in the landscape but many sites will be suitable for new woodland planting.*
- *Creating new community woodlands close to towns and villages.*
- *Creating new woodlands in the restoration of mineral workings.*

Planting Design

New woodlands should respect the linear grain of the landscape and where possible follow watercourses, minor valleys and steeper valley slopes. Linear shelterbelts and longer woodland edges running across the contours should be avoided. In areas with strong enclosure patterns, new woodlands should respect and interlock with the surrounding field pattern.

Species Selection

The coalfield has a long tradition of commercial forestry and plantations of both broadleaves and conifers are characteristic features of the landscape. Many of the priorities for new woodland planting are for new native woodlands. For these, existing native woodland types can be used as a guide to species selection.

On the more fertile soils of the lower coalfield valleys opportunities may exist for the production of good quality hardwoods with planting mixtures designed for silvicultural purposes. Where possible these should use the native broadleaved species found locally in native woodlands. In parts of the upland fringe, softwood plantations are a more characteristic feature of the local landscape, with Larch and Scots Pine the most commonly planted species. New softwood plantations should include a proportion of locally native broadleaved species and particularly along watercourses, margins and rides.

The Strategy provides various guidelines and objectives for different types of woodland which are noted below:-

Forest Design

Some forests and plantations established in the 20th century were designed with little regard to landscape character, biodiversity, water quality or archaeological interests. Opportunities now exist to improve forest design through restructuring as timber crops reach felling age. The adoption of Forest Plans and Forest Design Plans can assist in this process.

Objectives

- *To encourage the sensitive restructuring of plantations*
- *To encourage an increase in the proportion of locally native broadleaved species in plantations.*
- *To encourage the removal of trees or plantations from sites of ecological or archaeological importance damaged by recent planting.*
- *To encourage improvements in the design of plantations and shelterbelts during restocking to improve their ‘fit’ with the surrounding landscape.*

Existing Woodland

The pattern and extent of woodland cover varies considerably across the coalfield which is heavily wooded in places and very open in others. Linear ancient semi-natural woodlands lie in denes and steep riverside or valley-side bluffs where they have survived on land too steep for agriculture. Plantations are generally scattered thinly across the valley sides and ridgetops, although there are heavy concentrations in parts of the Browney, Deerness, Derwent, Wear and Pont Valleys. The southern edges of the large Hamsterley Forest also spread onto the coalfield. Secondary semi-natural woodlands are a common feature – including birch woodlands that have naturally colonised marginal upland fringe enclosures and heaths, or woodland sites felled during the Great War. More diverse and variable scrub communities are found on derelict land, abandoned railways lines and road verges.

Native woodlands on the coalfield tend to occur as relatively isolated fragments. Many have been modified by the planting of exotic or commercial species and a number were felled and replanted with conifers in the 1950s and 1960s. While some are managed under WGS contracts – including a number managed by local authorities, the Woodland Trust and the Wildlife Trust, many receive no active management.

Objectives for the area’s existing native woods include:

- *Conserving semi-natural woodlands and improving their management.*
- *Restoring replanted and modified ancient woodlands.*

Plantations

Many plantations on the coalfield have their origins in agricultural improvements of the 18th century and 19th century when many new plantations were established on recently enclosed fell land. During the same period many existing parklands were improved or extended and new parklands laid out. Many plantations from this period have been felled and replanted more than once in their history although some older trees, often beech or sycamore, survive. Other plantations were established in the post-war period when substantial areas were planted for taxation purposes on larger estates and a number of ancient woodlands were felled and replanted.

These are usually dominated by softwoods, particularly scots pine and larch, although some contain a proportion of broadleaved species such as beech and oak.

Objectives for coalfield plantations identified in the Landscape Strategy include restructuring commercial plantations to improve their relationship with the surrounding landscape and to restore damaged habitats like replanted ancient woodlands and planted heaths. Objectives for the area's plantations include:

- progressive conversion of some softwood plantations to native woodland – and particularly on replanted ancient woodland sites, in denes and riverside bluffs, and sites close to ancient woods, to expand the native woodland habitat resource;
- increasing the proportion of native broadleaved species in softwood plantations – and particularly along watercourses, margins and rides;
- removing planted woodland from sensitive habitats like blanket bog and heathland;
- reshaping woodlands and woodland edges to fit better with the valley topography – and particularly linear shelterbelt systems.

In relation to Woodland Design for new woodland the following is noted:-

General Principles

- Take advice. Forestry Commission woodland officers can provide valuable advice on woodland design.
- Take account of the character of the local landscape, or the broader landscape type to which it belongs, and in particular the scale and form of existing woodlands, field patterns and topographic features. The Character Areas Overview give guidance on design issue for new woodland planting in County Character areas.
- Fit margins and internal boundaries to the landform, and particularly where the topography is strongly expressed. In landscapes where field patterns are strong, ensure that woodland edges respect and interlock with the boundary network.
- Where the character of the landscape allows, try to make woodlands large enough to have robust woodland core habitats and to prevent edge conditions from dominating.
- Maintain locally important views or vistas.
- Incorporate designated and protected sites, and other features of historic or nature conservation value, sensitively into the design.
- Allow for 10-20% of open space within the woodland and design it to maximise biodiversity and amenity value. Relate it where possible to existing topographic or cultural features or features of conservation potential. Where none exist, use it to develop permanent internal or external edges in harmony with the landform and to create structural and habitat diversity.
- Ensure that the network of open space is well linked – both internally and externally to surrounding open habitats – to allow movement of light-loving species.
- Allow for the future effects of tree growth on open spaces, important views, designed landscapes and access routes.
- Design rides and utility wayleaves to compliment the landform and allow space for the development of edge habitats.

Existing Woodland Areas

The wider study area contains a variety of woodland types and sizes, including those located within the site boundary - as illustrated on Figure 2.7.

These are distributed relatively evenly throughout the study area and along the Browney Valley, with smaller woodlands often evident within settlements of Consett and Stanley to the west and north, and larger woodlands noticeable within valleys or ridges to the east, south west and north west.

The same distribution applies to the type of woodland with broadleaved typically being found within the settlement edges, and mixed and coniferous woodland evident as larger compartments, or within the valleys and ridges. Larger woodlands of this type are evident in the Derwent Valley to the north west of the study area, 2.5km from the site, and around Burnhope and Lanchester to the east and south east respectively, 1.5km from the site. A large coniferous woodland, Sawmill Wood, is also noted approximately 2.5km to the south east of the site.

Many of the broadleaved and mixed woodlands evident have relatively natural forms, working with topography and existing features within their local context. There are a few areas where some coniferous and smaller mixed woodlands are evident in more geometric forms, and these are often where they have been planted as shelterbelts or plantations, such as those extending south up the valley sides from the Lanchester Valley Railway Path, within farmland to the east of Consett, and on ridges to the east of Burnhope.

As illustrated on Figure 2.3 Landscape and Planning Designations, some of the woodlands within the study area are identified as Ancient Woodland.

Woodlands within the site itself are generally broadleaved or mixed, and are focussed around the historic core of the site, and extend from this east towards Maiden Law, and north toward Park Head Farm. Broadleaved woodlands are also associated with watercourses within the site area, and Stockerley Plantation - a medium broadleaved woodland - is evident to the east of Stockerley Bridge.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Ancient Woodland
- Coniferous
- Broadleaved
- Mixed
- Scrub, Bracken, Heath or Rough Grassland
- Boundary of Browney Valley Broad Character Area

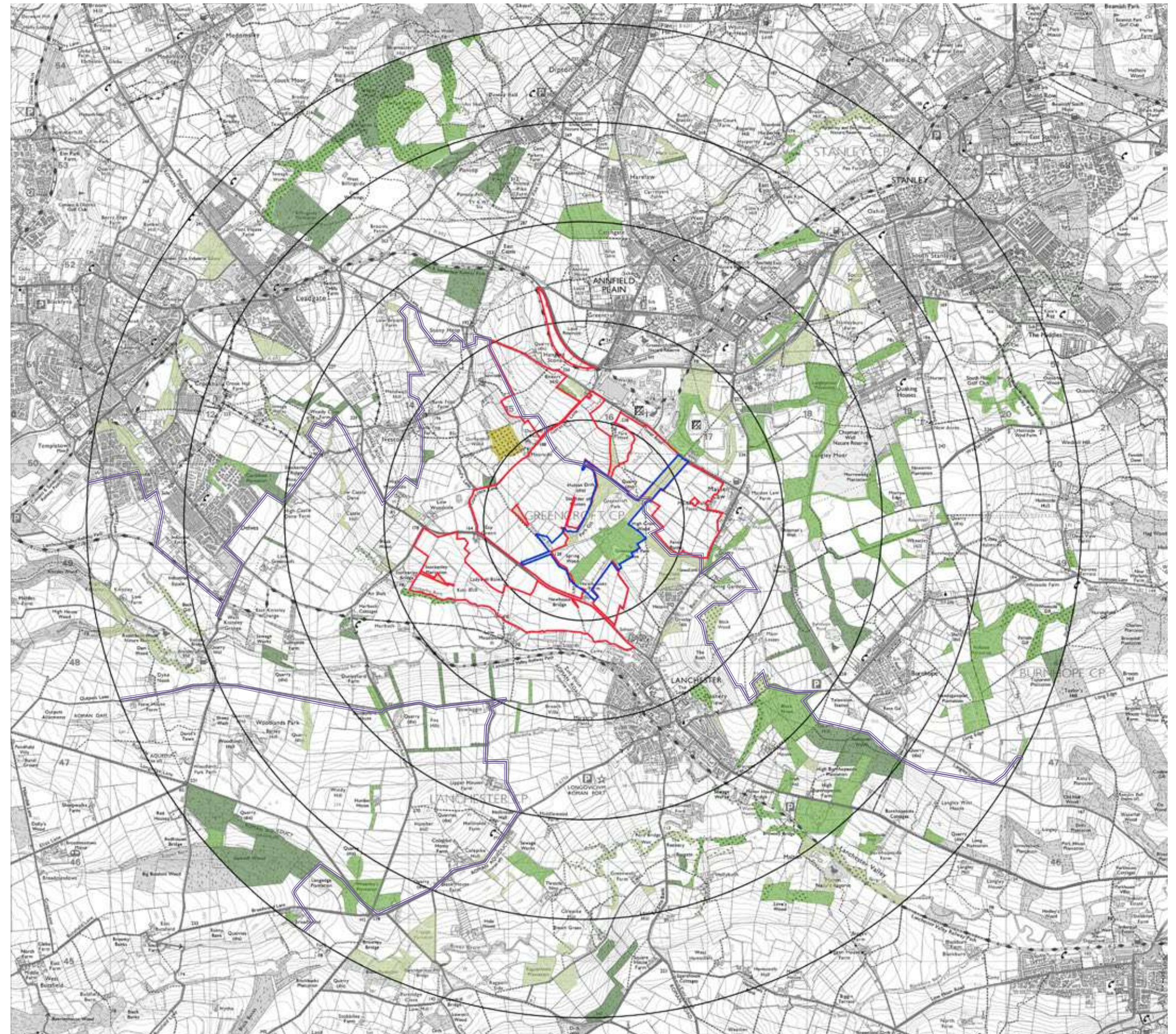


Figure 2.7
Existing Woodland Areas

Section 3

Site Analysis

This section of the report focusses on the site area and immediate context and gives an overview of the historic evolution, and its current uses and content.

Early History of Greencroft

A settlement at Greencroft is first recorded in the Bolden Book written in 1183 (Surtees, R, 1820, 321) and is later recorded in an ecclesiastical document setting out tithe arrangements in 1283 (Ibid, 309). The same series of Prebendary documents also refer to Greencroft in 1544 or 1545 (7th Edward VI; ibid, 309). The Bolden Book appears to refer to a mill-pool but this is not necessarily those that survive today.

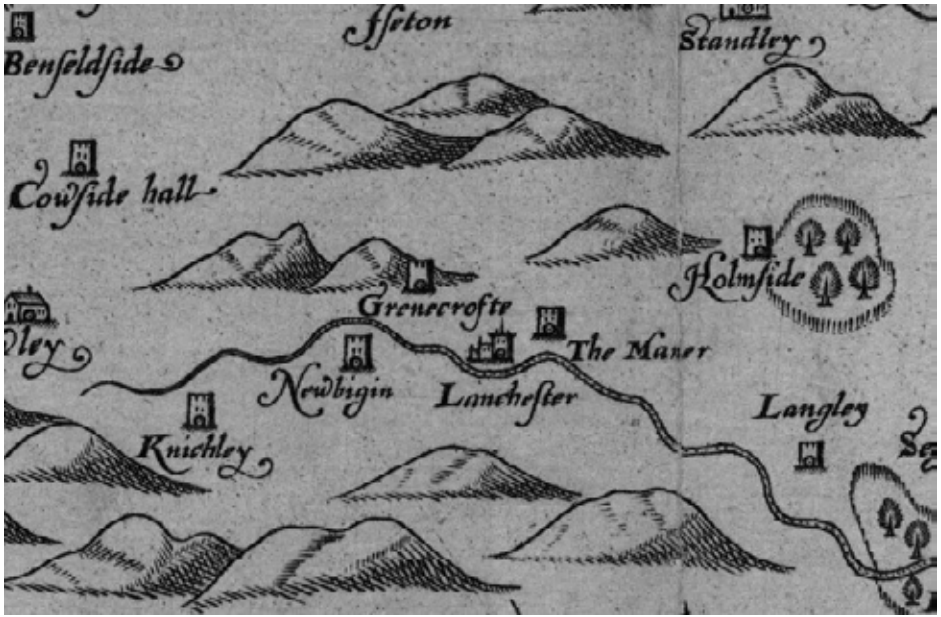
No park is recorded until a brief mention in 1473 (ibid 321) when a close called the Park is noted and recorded as consisting of 60 acres of woodland and pasture. This description is not inappropriate for a fairly modest Medieval deer-park. The deer-park is not referred to any other source subsequent to the 15th century. If it was present in the 15th century, then it appears to have decayed significantly and no longer to have operated as a deer-park by the late 16th century. There are many extant and former boundaries across the current parkland that may have had an origin as a boundary to a Medieval deer-park but none of these can definitely be described as a park-pale.

The nature of the settlement is obscure but the house at Greencroft was described by Bishop Tobias Mathew in the late 16th century (c 1583 – 1595; ibid, 322) as a house and that land that was farmed and that the house was ‘..nigh a pretty wood..’ and ‘..strongly built of newe..’ The Bishop also noted that tenant properties were close by the house. This suggests that the house the bishop saw was fairly new, in proximity to woodland (possibly ornamental) and with more modest cottages close by. It also suggests that the house was the centre of a farmed estate rather than an expansive, formal park.

The Clavering manuscripts held at the Barker Research Library in Durham include several parcels of papers relating to Greencroft and especially the Clavering family in the 18th and 19th century. Parcel MSS 372/4 includes a note written apparently in the mid-19th century that transcribes a now lost document of 1570 or 1571. The document described Greencroft as consisting of 4 cottages, 10 tofts, 10 gardens, 8 orchards, 100 acres of arable, 200 of meadow, 300 of pasture, 100 of wood, 100 of moor, 100 of turbary (peatland), 200 waste and 60 acres of river. The latter may refer to fields with access to a river.

A note copied from a later document of 1574 records that the manor of Greencroft was held by one Robert Hall (ibid, 372/7). His son, John Hall, is noted by Neasham (1882, 23) as owning an estate that included land in Greencroft and Consett in 1612.

The first known map to depict a house at Greencroft is the Christopher Saxton map of 1576 or 1579 (Sources differ). Significantly, it does not show a park nearby. Saxton usually depicted parks that were extant at the time of his survey, for example, that at Holmside c 4km east of Greencroft.



1576 Saxton map

Heritage Designations

There are five designated heritage assets within, or close to, the site and other land in the client's ownership. All of these are Grade II Listed Buildings and are related to the historic parkland. Listed Buildings are generally protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

These are recorded in National Heritage List for England (NHLE) as:

- Piers And Walls South East Of Fenhall Lodge (NHLE ref. 1185966);
- Bridge Carrying Drive To Greencroft Park Over Newhouse Burn (NHLE ref. 1116302);
- Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1185968);
- Ice House North West Of Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1299436); and
- Dovecot North West Of Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1116310).

Images for each of these features is provided on p24-25, and the grade II listed Fenhall Lodge (NHLE ref. 1116332) is just outside of the site boundary to the east.

Local Listing

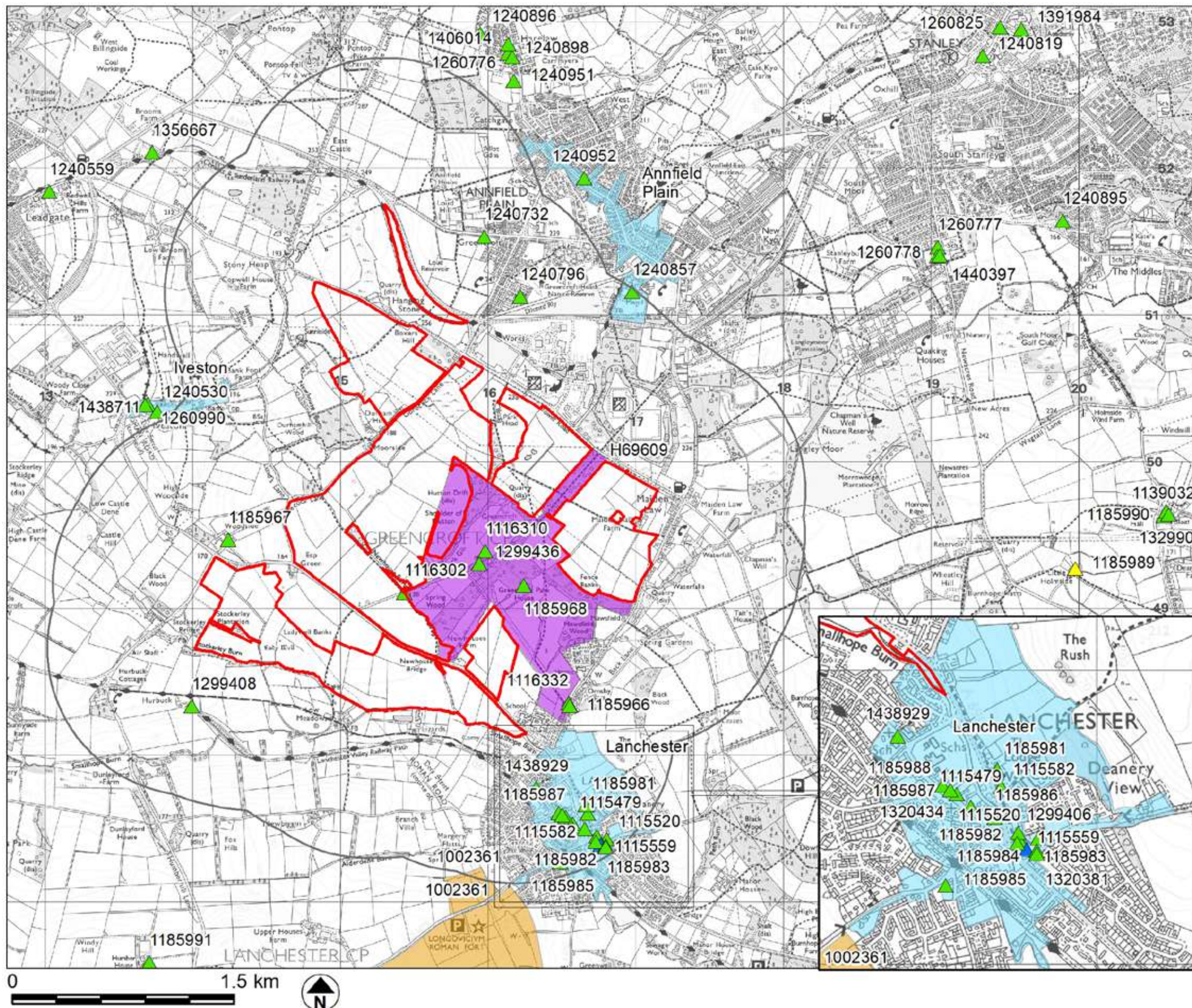
There is a local designation of the core area of the historic park, set out in Appendices 9 and 10 of the *County Durham Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, Durham County Council, 2019. The park is noted as ref. 34, Greencroft in Appendix 9 and mapped in Appendix 10.

A description of the park (p231 – 238) refers to its heritage significance as: *‘Despite the demolition of Greencroft Hall the structure of the parkland is easily discernible, surviving features include an ice house, dovecot, lodge, gatepiers, carriage drives and parkland trees. The site continues to reflect the status of the distinguished Clavering family and is of local historic interest.’*

The *County Durham Local List of Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes* is included within the evidence base of the County Durham Plan, which was adopted on 21 October 2020.

These designations are illustrated on Figure 3.1 overleaf.

Figure 3.1
Designated Sites and Non-
Designated Parkland



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PG 01 - Piers And Walls South East Of Fenhall Lodge (NHLE ref. 1185966), looking north



PG 02 - Bridge Carrying Drive To Greencroft Park Over Newhouse Burn (NHLE ref. 1116302)



PG 03 - Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1185968); looking north-west



PG 04 - Ice House North West Of Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1299436); looking south-west



PG 05a - Doorway in Dovecot North West Of Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1116310)



PG 05b - Dovecot North West Of Greencroft Cottage (NHLE ref. 1116310), looking south

Archaeological Context

Excluding Listed Buildings, there are 25 heritage features and 2 events recorded in the County Durham Historic Environment Record (HER) for the application area, and these are shown on Figure 3.2.

None of the HER records refer to Prehistoric archaeology within the application area. However, this is a reflection of the relatively low level of archaeological activity in the area rather than an indication that the application area does not have the potential to include Prehistoric archaeology. The mix of landscapes and topography within the area would have made this landscape attractive to Prehistoric exploitation and settlement.

The earliest archaeology recorded in the HER notes a find of a Romano-British artefacts (H3432) and the presence of the road known as Dere Street (H3042), running north-west to south-east across the valley floor, toward the Roman fort and settlement of Longovicium, c 1.2km south of the site. Part of the course of this road was detected in a geophysical survey (see below).

The HER records for the site are dominated by references to sites and events of the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. Records H1885 and H39533 note the possible presence of a Deserted Medieval Village to the north and north-east of the former house, itself recorded as H1858 and H69609. To the south of the park is the location of a possible Medieval well (H1881) close to Dere Street.

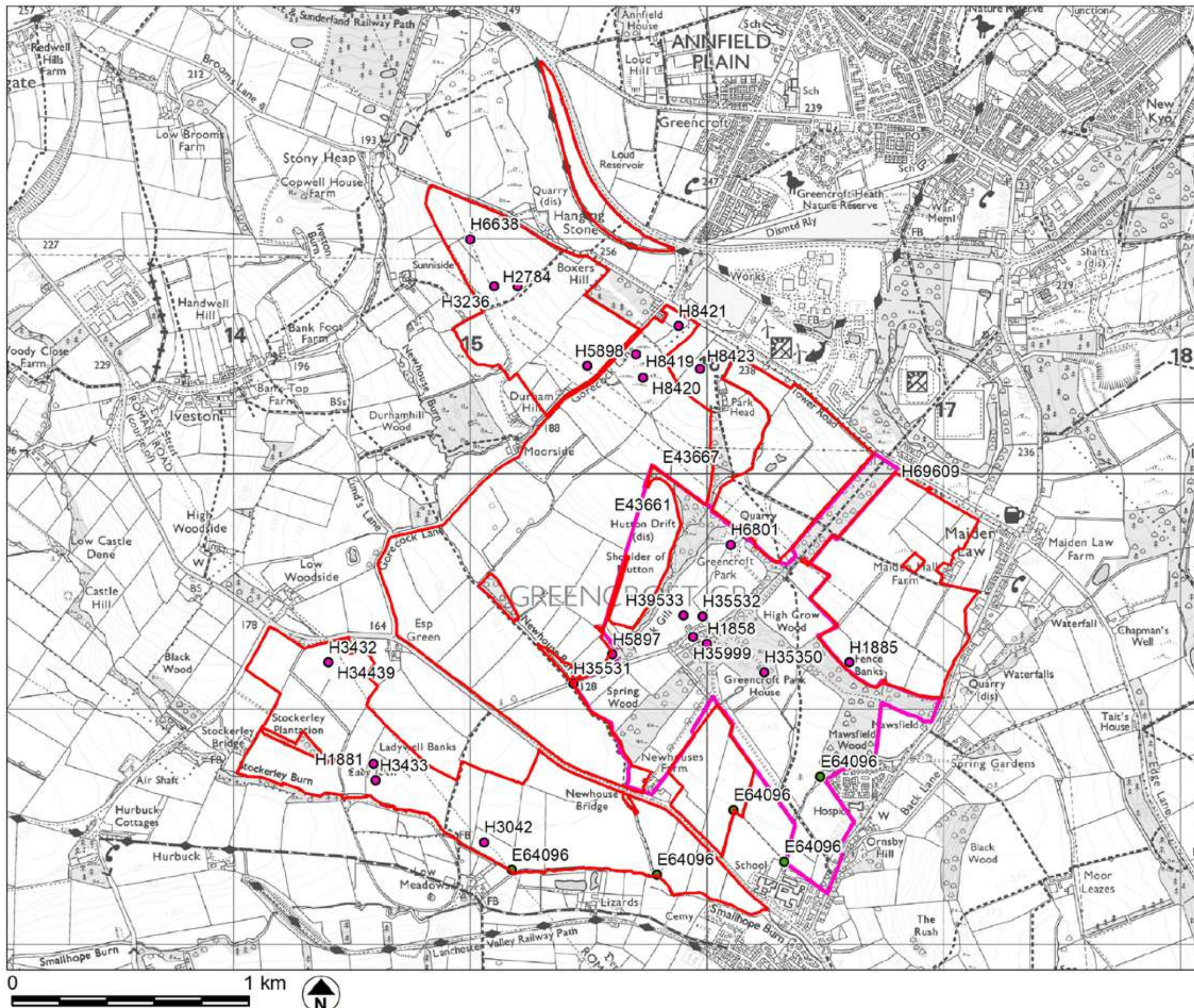
Post-Medieval buildings within the park are recorded as H35531, H35532, H35350, and H35999 with the site of the former mill noted as H5897. Other records of the period include those noting forming mines or quarries (H5898, H8419, H8420 and H8423) or features associated with them including a waggon-way (H8421). The complex of the former Greencroft Colliery beside the Gorecock Lane and within the site is a focus of these records.

There are several entries in the HER that do not record a possible date or period for the entry. These comprise references to possible archaeological sites noted on air photographs (H2784 and H3236). It is possible that these actually refer to historic colliery sites or associated features. One record is located west of Esp Green and refers to a rectilinear enclosure (H34439), the origin of which is unknown.

Record H6638 is a general reference to reference to the Annfield Plain, whilst H3433 refers to the findspot of a lead-alloy object in the shape of a deer head.

The two events recorded in the HER (E43667 and E43661) both refer to surveys undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s of the historic coalfields and are general references to the whole area.

Figure 3.2
Historic Environment Record Data



Historic Landscape Characterisation

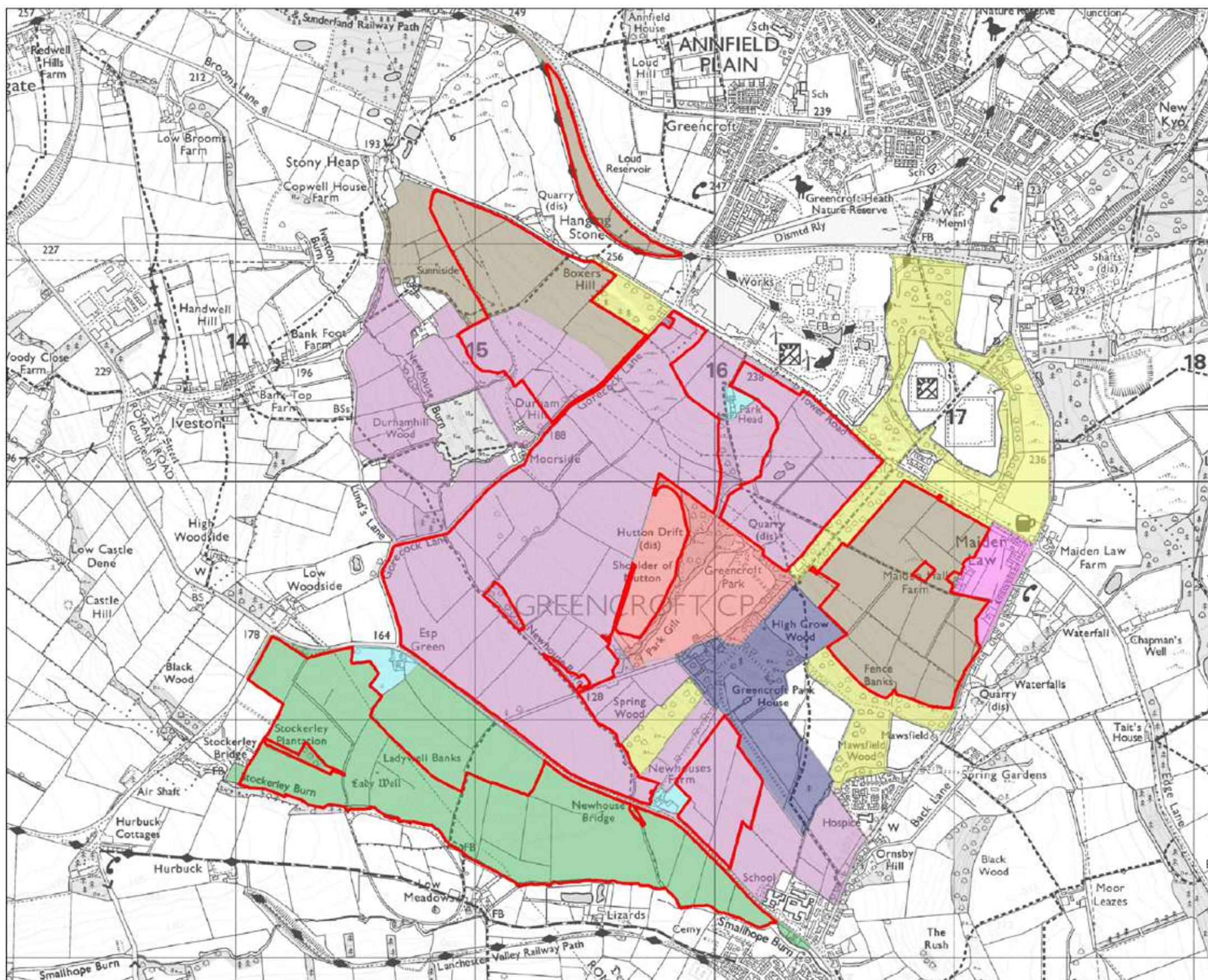
Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data for the park and its surroundings was obtained from Durham County Council’s Historic Environment Record and is illustrated on Figure 3.3.

HLC is compiled from old and modern maps, aerial photographs and other data including secondary sources. It is used to gain a basic understanding of how an area may have changed over time.

The HLC data depicts the park as of recreational and ornamental form, associated with a country house and woodland plantations. The farmland around the park is denoted as mainly consisting of land that has been enclosed in the past but with old boundaries removed in the Post-Medieval period, leaving large, open fields. Outlying areas are shown as farmland enclosed in the Post-Medieval period generally in small parcels of land that are likely to have been sub-divided in the 18th or 19th centuries as part of the broader enclosure movement widely undertaken throughout England.

The HLC data accords with the history and evolution of the parkland and surrounding landscape as detailed in this assessment.

Figure 3.3
Historic Landscape Characterisation



KEY

- Site
- Enclosed land | Enclosed farmland (post-medieval) | Postmed parliamentary planned enc
- Enclosed land | Enclosed farmland (post-medieval) | Postmed fossilised strips
- Enclosed land | Enclosed land (modern) | Modern field amalgamation
- Recreational and ornamental | Parks & gardens | Designed parkland
- Settlement | Rural | Country house (manor/estate)
- Settlement | Rural | Country house (manor/estate)
- Settlement | Towns and larger villages | 1951-1959 settlement (Ep5)
- Woodland | High forest | Post-medieval plantation

Revisions:
 First Issue - 13/02/2024 DS
 Second Issue - 30/04/2024 DS
 Third Issue - 03/05/2024 DS

Historic Landscape Characterisation

Greencroft

Client: Southern Green Ltd

DRWG No: P24-0057_B2

REV: 3

Drawn by: DS

Date: 03/05/2024

Scale: 1:25,000 @ A4



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Heritage Assets

Digital terrain model LiDAR data, at 1m resolution, is freely available from the Environment Agency. This was processed and multiple hill-shade and shaded-relief models were created, principally via adjustment of the following variables: azimuth, height, and 'z-factor' or exaggeration. The models created were colourised using pre-defined ramps and classified attribute data. A DTM shaded relief model, with azimuth 270 has been provided as Figure 3.4 for indicative purposes of overall site topography.

The data assists in understanding how the natural landscape has influenced the designed landscape of the parkland and how views may have been structured. Note here that the shape of the woodland known as 'Shoulder of Mutton' largely drives from the topography of the ravine down which the Park Head Gill flows. It is possible that much of this woodland was planted to use ground that was otherwise of relatively low value and to provide a degree of screening and shelter from weather from the north and north-west.

One new feature not recorded or identified elsewhere was noted. This is a series of broad, parallel ridges and shallow furrows around Park Head Farm. These are likely to be the eroded remains of Rig and Furrow ploughing, commonly used in the Medieval and Early Post-Medieval period to enable the cultivation, drainage and division of open, arable fields. These were not visible on the ground.

A geophysical survey of c 17.4ha of land in the south of the application boundary was surveyed by Magnitude Surveys in November 2023 . Two areas were subject to survey, Areas 1 and 2.

The survey used a fluxgate gradiometer and located anomalies possibly related to the course of the Roman road (Dere Street). The survey also located a former field boundary (located on historic maps) and evidence for modern ploughing and possible historic ploughing.

Other anomalies are less easy to interpret. These comprised shapes and signals in a variety of shapes and may be embankments or water management features, features of natural origin, or archaeological features.

What appears to be the course of the Roman road is defined by a series of probable flanking ditches seen in both Areas 1 and 2. These ditches lie to the south of the mapped road, in some cases up to c 120m south.

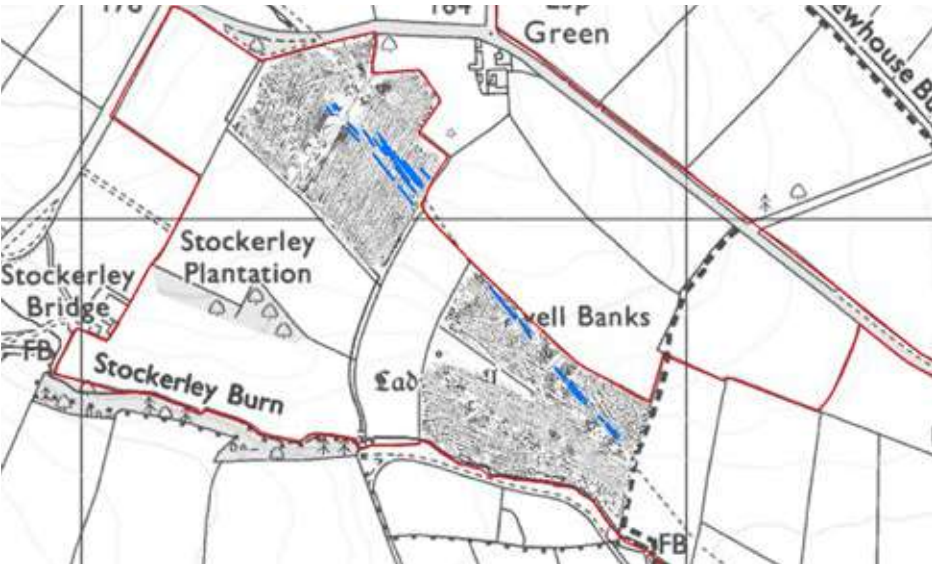
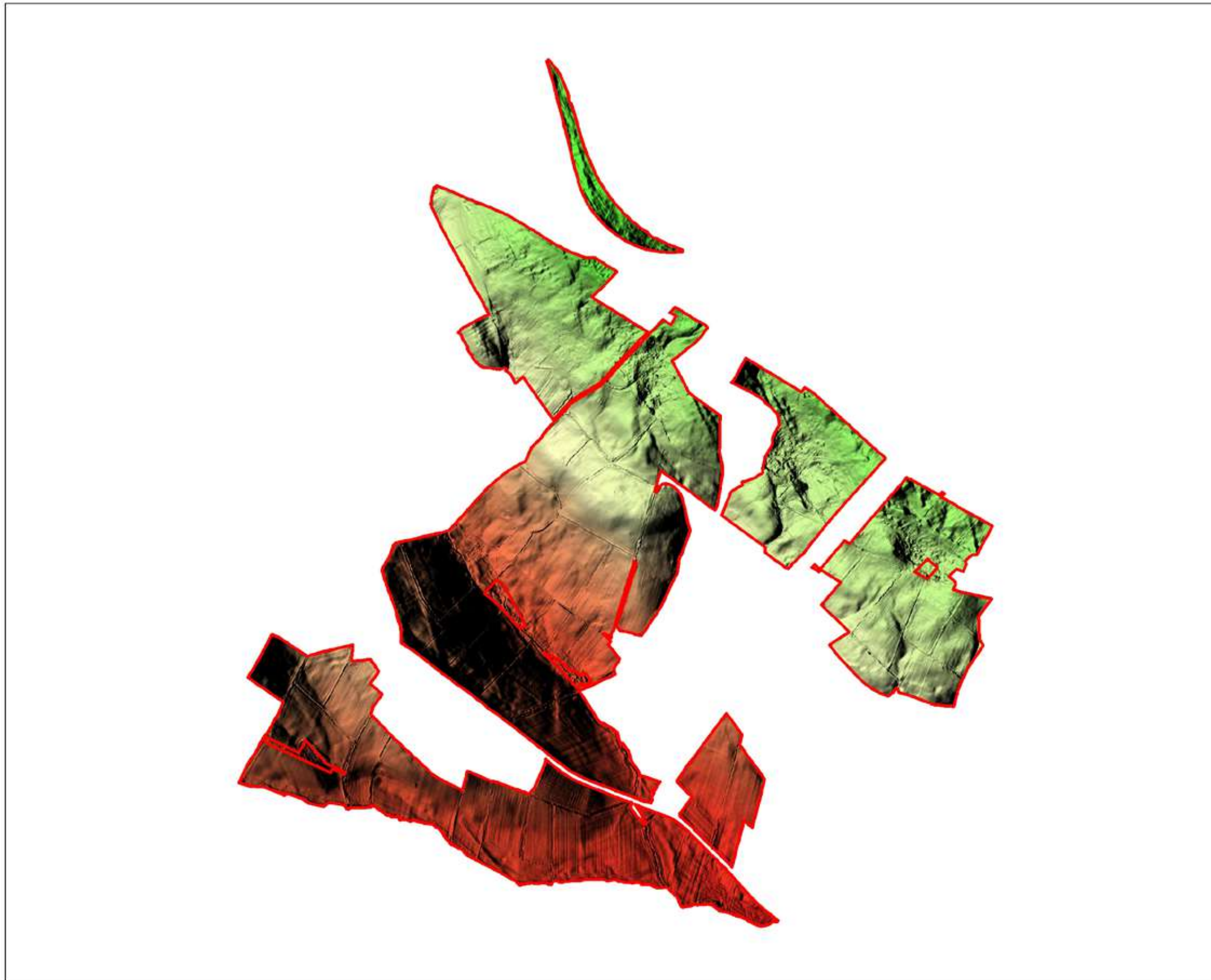


Figure 3.4
LiDAR Data



KEY
 Site

LiDAR data obtained from Environment Agency

Azimuth: 270
Altitude: 45
Z Factor: 20

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/02/2024 DS
Second Issue- 30/04/2024 DS
Third Issue- 03/05/2024 DS

LiDAR Data

Greencroft

Client: Southern Green Ltd

DRWG No: P24-0057_C

REV: 3

Drawn by: DS

Date: 03/05/2024

Scale: 1:25,000 @ A4



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History, Park Evolution and Surviving Features

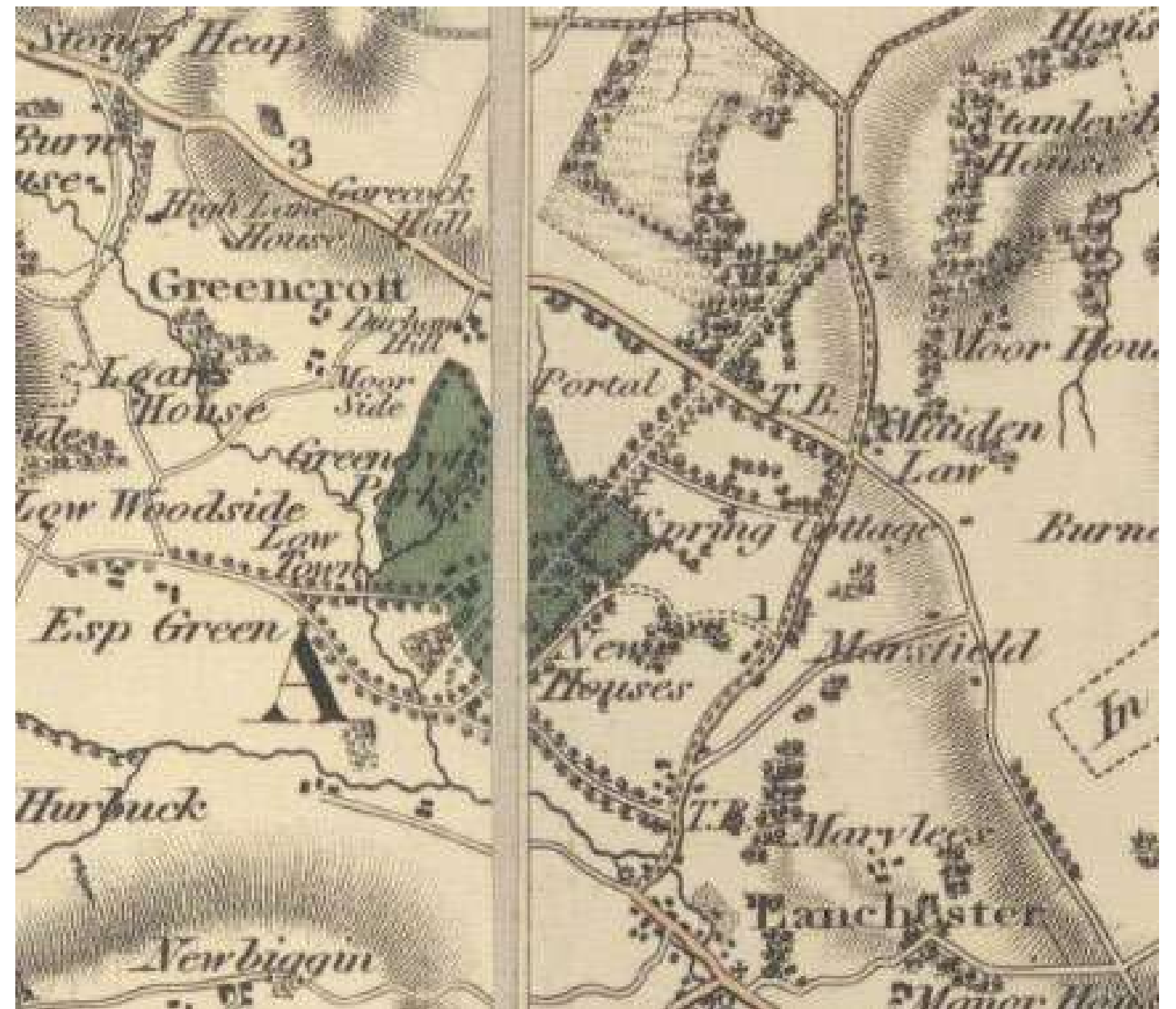
Early Maps

The first known map to depict a house at Greencroft is the Christopher Saxton map of 1576 or 1579 (Sources differ). Significantly, it does not show a park nearby. Saxton did usually depict parks that were extant at the time of his survey.

The Blaue map of c 1662 shows the house but no park.

The Jeffreys map of c 1771 shows both the house and Clavering's Tower. To the north and east of the house are shown woodland although it is not clear if this was parkland.

The earliest map that depicts the house and tower and what is clearly ornamental parkland is that of Greenwood, dated 1820. Woodland surrounds the house and there are avenues of planting radiating outward from the house to the north-east, the east, south-east, south-west and west. New Houses and Low Town are annotated. The avenue to the north-east passes through the Tower ('Portal') and continues beyond onto the moorland above. Belts of woodland are shown defining the edge of the parkland although not forming a continuous enclosure.



1820 Greenwood Map

A later map by Hobson (1840) is slightly less detailed but does depict the parkland extending further south to what is now the A369 Lanchester-Consett road. Mawsfield Wood is shown on this map but not denoted as parkland. The OS First Edition Six Inch map of 1861 depicts parkland extending south-east from the house as far east as the Howden Burn, the maximum extant of parkland is recorded on the OS map of 1898.



1840 Hobson Map

Tithe Map of 1842 and Apportionment of 1840

The first detailed map of the park seen for this study is the tithe map of 1842 which is supported by the apportionment of 1840. The apportionment records each individual field or plot of land. The lands denoted as 3, 3a, and 3b are recorded as 'in hand' and make it clear that the house was the centre of a farm, totalling c 482 acres; a substantial farm for the mid 19th century. All the other land recorded as belonging to the Claverings is leased out to tenants on the surrounding farms, totalling 21 different tenants across the broader estate.

The woodland and drives clearly indicate that there are two principal approaches to the house set within a designed landscape: the avenue running north-east and through the Portal Tower to what is now the Tower Road; and the drive running north-east from Fenhall Lodge. The other drives and entrances appear to be functional, permitting access to and from the mill, the rear of the house and the various service buildings, and New Houses.

This is the first depiction of the mill complex and the Dower House on the southern edge of High Crow Wood. The Shell House is not depicted but the scale of the map and the level of detail means that it may not have been practical or useful to show that feature.

Figure 3.5 illustrates the indicative changing extents of the parkland over time.

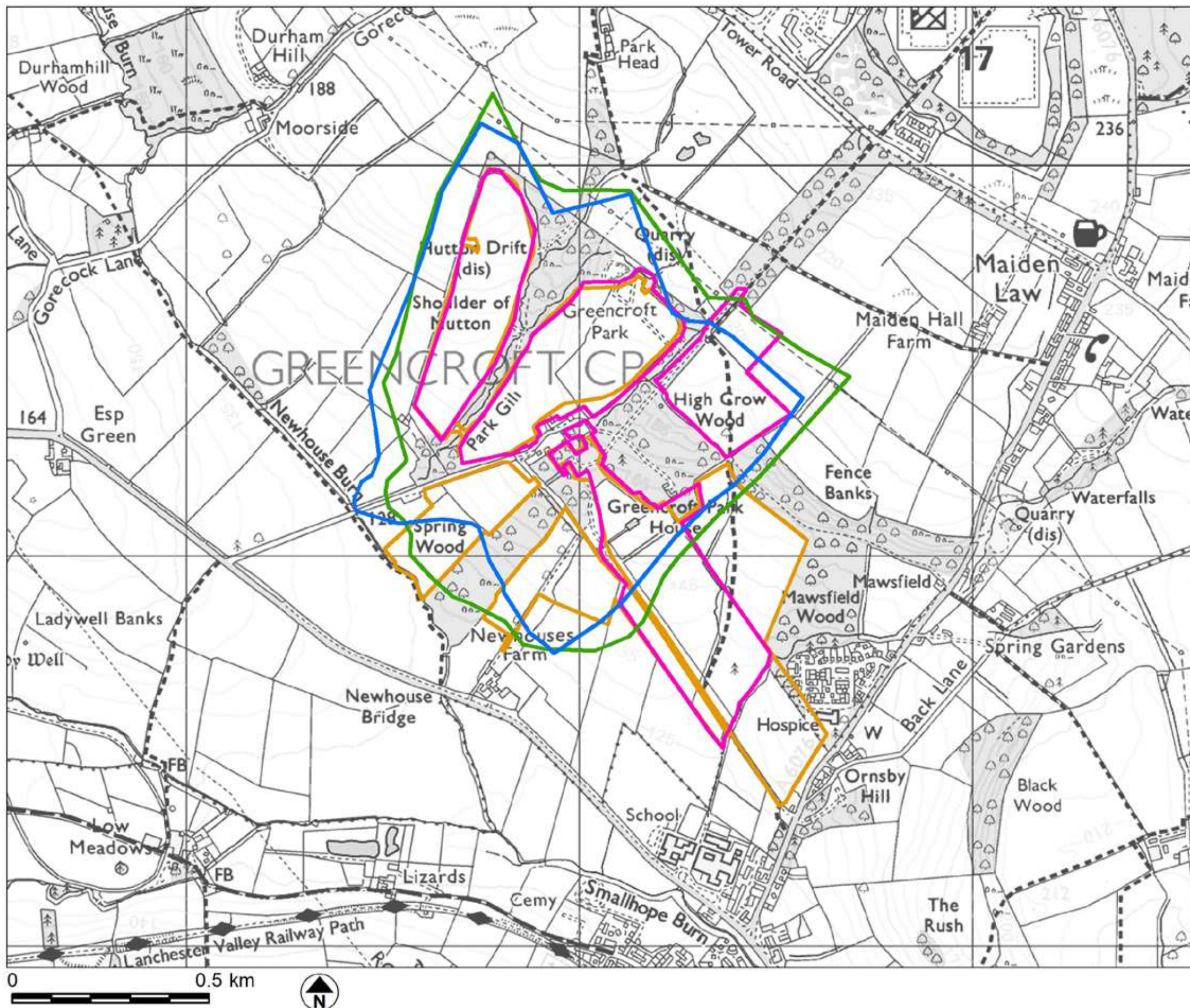


1861 OS Map



1896 OS Map

Figure 3.5
Historic Extent of Parkland



KEY

- Extent of Parkland on 1820 Greenwood map
- Extent of Parkland on 1840 Hobson map
- Extent of Parkland on 1861 OS mapping
- Extent of Parkland on 1923 OS mapping

Revisions:
First Issue - 08/02/2024 DS

Historic Extent of Parkland

Greencroft

Client: Southern Green Ltd

DRWG No: P24-0057_D

Drawn by: DS

Date: 08/02/2024

Scale: 1:15,000 @ A4

REV: 1

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Evolution of the Park

The evolution of the park can be divided into four phases for which we have varying degrees of evidence in written or graphic sources and survival/ legibility in the current landscape.

Phase 1: medieval deer park and 16th century house

A settlement at Greencroft is recorded in the late 12th century and appears to consist of a small village which may have had a mill and a manor house of some form. No church or chapel of ease is ever recorded for this settlement. A late 15th century document suggests the presence of a deer-park of c 60 acres but it had apparently decayed by the late 16th century and had been absorbed into the farmed landscape. A new manor house was built late in the 16th century in proximity to woodland that may have been at least in part ornamental and may have formed part of a ‘Little Park’. Cottages of manorial tenants were located close to the manor house.

Phase 2: 17th to early 19th century

The estate is bought by the Claverings in the late 17th century (by 1670) and a new house is constructed together with the Tower in the mid 18th century. The exact date of the construction of each is not clear but Sir James Clavering refers in a letter of 1739 to plans for a new house (DCRO ref. CLV 229) and in a letter of 1747 to ‘...a desirable Monument in the Gateway by the Plan you sent me.’ (DCRO ref. CLV 267). The Tower is depicted on the Jeffreys map of 1768. Whether the new house entailed the complete demolition of the late 16th century house is not clear. It is possible for a new build to reface, extend from and incorporate a previous structure, for example the complex structural history of the Vyne, Hampshire.

Later in this phase and probably in the late 18th or early 19th century the house is refaced and remodelled to produce the façade visible in historic photos of the house from apparently the late 18th or early 19th century.

It is very likely that this phase is the origin of the formal park: the angular, geometric design seen on the tithe map of 1842 is characteristic of that time frame, before the informality of mid 18th century landscape design. Note here that the geometric layout of paths or drives through the woodland appears to include a long-distance view to the south-west, along the axis of New Houses Lane.

Dyer (2018, 13) notes that another substantial property owned by the Claverings (Axwell Hall) had a landscape set around a house designed by James Paine (c 1768), and that Axwell Hall also had a fishpond, a Shell House, Walled Garden, circular Dovecote, Ice House, stables and farm.

This phase includes the layout and planting of the ornamental woodlands around the house to create structured views or vistas including the Tower Avenue to the north-east and the prospect to the south-east. Gardens were built and planted around the house and the tenants cottages were demolished to create a ‘polite’ environment. The tenants are likely to have been moved out to new premises built further out on the estate access routes at New Houses, Low Town and High Town. Ancillary buildings were constructed to the west of the house. This phase is likely to be the origin of the Dower House and the Shell House. The origin of the Summerhouse is uncertain but it may have been early to mid 19th century.

The principal polite entrance to the park is from the north-east along Tower Avenue with the other access routes being primarily functional to the estate, via Low Town and New Houses. Another access lane is evident on early mapping running west from Maiden Hall.



1820 Greenwood Map



1840 Hobson Map

Phase 3: mid to late 19th century

Between c 1842 and c 1857 the parkland is re-modelled to create a less formal landscape. The vista from the principal elevation of the house to the south-east is 'softened' by clearing woodland at the edges of High and Low Crow Wood, planting platoons down the centre of the vista and edges of the vista and adding a ha-ha and pond in the foreground (PG01-04). A platoon is shown on the OS map of 1859 on Orsnby Hill (outside the park and east of Fenhall Lodge) and the surviving woodland denoted as Lodge Plantation to the east of Howden Bank may be part of this later design phase. Other platoons are shown to the north-east of the Shell House, suggesting a designed view.



PG 06 - Island in centre of pond looking north-west



PG 07 - West end of pond, revetment and channel, looking north-east



PG 08 - West end of pond, looking north-east



PG 09 - Ha Ha east of pond, looking west

Dyer (2018, 23) suggests that the view south-east from the house may have been partly designed to include All Saints Parish Church in Lanchester. However, the church is definitely not the focus of that view, which appears to lead the eye up to Ornsby Hill, the plateau beyond and successive ridges of higher ground including Dowfit Hill. It may have been physically possible to see the tower of All Saints on the periphery of a view to the south-east of the house in the mid 19th century but development since then has blocked that view.

The rigid, geometric design is discarded in favour of wandering paths or drives through both High Crow and Low Crow Wood, and the apparent view south-west along New Houses Lane is blocked off at the edge of Low Crow Wood.

The drive from Fenhall Lodge is planted with additional trees and becomes a secondary polite entrance to the park, offering glimpsed views of the house and woodland when travelling west into the park. The house can be accessed from this drive through Low Crow Wood. The New Houses and Low Town Lanes appear now to be functional lanes serving the ancillary buildings of the park. The bridge across the Howden Burn (photo PG 05 and 06) may well date from this phase, as may the Grade II Listed bridge further west on Low Town Lane (photo PG 07).



PG 10 - Unlisted bridge over Howden Burn, looking north



PG 11 - Unlisted bridge over Howden Burn, looking south-west



PG 12 - Grade II Listed bridge on Low Town Lane, looking north

A plan prepared in 1857 is the basis of a figure reproduced in Dyer (2018, 13) that shows in details the house, gardens and ancillary buildings at the core of the estate. A rose-garden is located in front of the house within the carriage turning circle, with a rhododendron hedge flanking High Crow Wood. The turning circle appears to have been built on a raised platform slightly above the lawn extending out to the ha-ha (Photo PG 08).



PG 13 - Raised platform of turning circle, looking north-west

To the south-west of the House is shown a water-garden, which is very likely to have included paths along a series of terraces and channels running down-slope. Some of the terraces survive today with stone revetments (Photo PG 09) and what appears to be a conduit survives just below the top of the slope (Photo PG 10). The walled garden was laid out in four quadrants with a well at the centre, with greenhouses to the north-west (Photo PG 11). The walled garden is only visible today as an alignment of wall-footings and the well has disappeared (Photo PG 12). The ruins of barns, cottages, and other ancillary buildings survive today but in poor and hazardous condition.



PG 14 - Stone terraces in water-garden, looking north-east



PG 15 - Possible conduit in water-garden, looking north-east



PG 16 - Former buildings at northern corner of the walled garden, looking south-west



PG 17 - Garden wall footings, looking north-east

A pair of apparently ornamental ponds are shown on the OS map of 1861, flanking the Tower Avenue just to the south of Upper Greencroft. These are still visible today (PG 13, 14) but are very over-grown and have largely silted up. It is possible that these predated 1861 and were not recorded on the earlier tithe map of 1842.



PG 18 - Pond to east of Tower Avenue, looking south-west



PG 19 - Pond to west of Tower Avenue, looking north-east

Phase 4: late 19th century to the present day

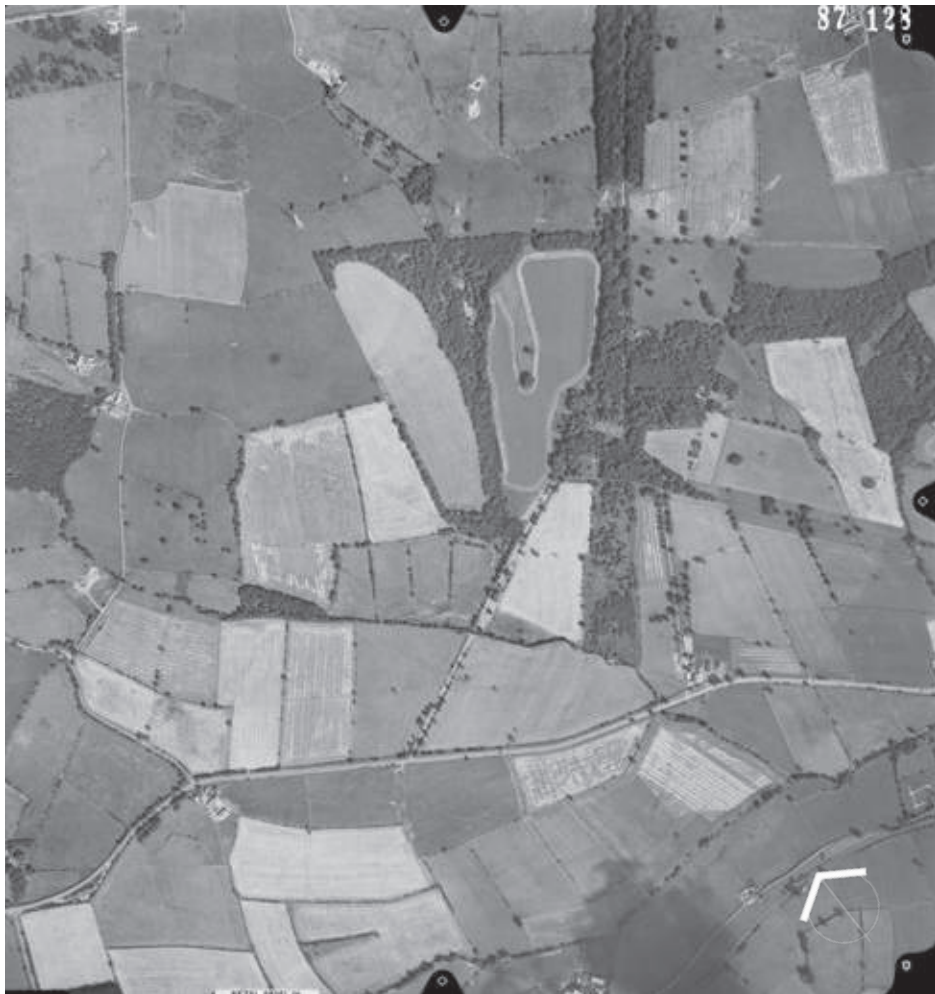
The estate passes to the French Baron de Montfaucon , following the death of Sir William Aloysius Clavering in 1872. Land on the estate continues to be leased to tenant farmers, the mansion house, park, pleasure grounds and plantations are recorded as leased to Thomas Taylor Smith in 1888 (DCRO ref. D/CG 7/3874). The house was occupied by tenants until the 1930s, occupied by the army during the 1940s and became derelict by the 1950s, being demolished in 1954 and the Tower demolished in 1955. The façade of the former stables building was removed in c 1973 and reconstructed at the Beamish Open Air Museum to become the entrance building to the museum complex.



Image of stables - copyright to check

Air-photos taken in October 1947 and March 1956 show that woodland in the park had been felled leaving only small clumps of specimen trees or shelter belts at Shoulder of Mutton, most of High Crow Wood, most of Mawsfield Wood, most of Parkhead Gill, all of Spring Wood and the southern part of High Crow Wood. The Shell House is not visible on these photos and appears to have been completely demolished by then, as does the Summer House in Mawsfield Wood and the complex of Mill buildings. A modern dwelling was built on the site of the Shell House between 1956 and 1987. There is no sign of any roses in the former rose garden and both the water garden and the walled garden appear abandoned and unused in 1947-56.

The buildings at High Town or Upper Greencroft had been demolished between 1947 and 1956, and the buildings at Low Town demolished between 1956 and 1987. The complex of buildings at New Houses was demolished also between 1956 and 1987 and new farm buildings erected in their place. An air-photo take in 1987 shows arable cultivation south of Mawsfield Wood, across the slopes to the east and west of Shoulder of Mutton and to the west of Spring Wood.



Aerial 1 - Undated



Aerial 2 - 14th October 1947



Aerial 3 - 3rd March 1956

The Estate

The Clavering papers give some indication of the scale of the farming economy focussed on the estate in the 17th and 18th centuries. One account records that income from rents in the year 1745 (MSS 363/2) totalled £1,899, 55 shillings and two pence. Annual rents varied between £90 and 10 shillings. However, the expenses of the family were as substantial as the income: an account of 1682 notes payments paid in rent by the Claverings for unspecified lands in Durham and Northumberland as at £85 every six months (Ibid, 348-352).

The impression given by the primary sources and the historic maps suggest that the Clavering estate was very much a working estate, with income derived from both farming and industry, or, at least, mining and quarrying.

Clearly some form of gardening was underway in the early 18th century although not necessarily in a formal walled garden. Claverings wife complains in a letter of 1710 that tenants had removed glass from her ‘cucumber beds’ and that she was grateful in 1711 for a good crop of asparagus (Dickinson 1967, 82, 186)

Mining and Quarrying

Although the Claverings had many other interests in the region the sources suggest that the estate or land close by was mined for coal, ironstone, pipe-clay and building stone from at least the 16th century. Neasham notes the extraction of ironstone in the late 16th century (1882, 45) and refers to a coal pit at Iveston working in 1611 (ibid, 160). Dickinson notes references to an unlocated coal pit and to leadmines between 1710 and 1714 (1967, 184), and the Clavering correspondence includes frequent references to coalmines in the early and mid 18th century and throughout the 19th century. Other references from the late 19th century (DCRO ref. D/CG 7/3886, 1891) refer to rights to extract coal, ironstone and fireclay from land at Iveston.

Two quarries are shown on OS 19th century mapping within the park, the large quarry in Shoulder of Mutton Wood and a smaller one further to the west next to a belt of woodland. The large quarry is substantial and still open today (Photo PG 15). The stone visible appears to be the same as that used for most of the extant, ruinous estate buildings, together with the walls, garden features and the pond. The walls of the Dower House have been rendered with pebbledash and so it is uncertain if this structure was built of the same stone. It is possible that the house itself was built at least partly from this stone but that is uncertain at present. Examination of the rubble pile on the site of the house does show such stone but also shows a finer grained stone that was used for some of the more ornamental elements including a pillar (Photo PG 16).



PG 20 - Large quarry in Shoulder of Mutton woods, looking north-west



PG 21 - Detail of rubble pile on approximate location of the house, showing fine-grained stone pillar section, looking north-west

Two other quarries are shown on the same mapping to the west and north of the park, near Park Head and in a field near Durham Hill House.

Within the park at the Shoulder of Mutton Wood is a former mine entrance now blocked (Photo PG 17). It is not known when this mine was worked or in what circumstances. A lease of 1839 held in the Durham County Record Office (ref. D/CG 7/1699) refers to “...31 years of coals at Greencroft Park Head, Maiden Hall, Fen Hall, New Houses, Low Town, Esp Green and Durham Hill.” It is possible that this mine is one of those noted in 1839 but it is small in comparison to the mine complex further north and west identified on OS mapping as Greencroft Mine.

The mine at Shoulder of Mutton Wood is accessed via a track running north toward Park Head alongside the Parkhead Gill (Photo PG 18) and there is a causeway over the gill to the south where the track continues to the edge of the wood. The OS mapping is not clear but this feature may have included some sort of pond, defined partly by the causeway or dam. If so, then this pond may have formed part of the larger complex of water management across the park that supplied the mill and possibly also the house and ancillary buildings with water.

The Greencroft Pit was located astride the Gorcock Bank and is shown on OS mapping (1864) as active and served by a wagon way running north to the Pontop Colliery complex. A pithead and a complex of buildings are shown, together with numerous earthworks in the surrounding fields. However, the OS map of 1896 denotes this complex as disused.

A ‘Level (Coal)’ is shown on the OS maps of 1861 and 1895 near the north-end of Mawsfield Wood and another further to the west, in open ground south-east of the Dower House. At the latter location survives an earthwork mound (Photo PG 19) of unknown origin.



PG 22 - Former mine-entrance in Shoulder of Mutton woods, looking north-east



PG 23 - Cart track on west edge of Park Head Gill, looking north-west



PG 24 - Earthwork on approximate location of coal level, looking north-east

The Mill

The Low Town or Greencroft Mill complex appears on historic mapping from the tithe map of 1842 to later OS mapping and was demolished by 1947. The mill is served by two ponds (Photo PG 20) to the north-west and by the Park Gill, which passes through a substantial causeway on the edge of the woods (Photo PG 21). The gill is here channelled into a managed course formed of concrete (Photo PG 22). The mill building has been completely demolished but a small, partially standing outbuilding on the track just to the south includes in its structure a piece of broken millstone (Photo PG 23). To the north-west runs the Mill Race, which serves the two mill-ponds. This is an artificial water-course as it runs contrary to the local topography, which drains roughly from north-east to south-west. It is depicted as a water-course on the Greenwood map of 1820 and possibly also on the Jeffreys map of 1768.

As noted above, the Bolden Book written in 1183 refers to a mill-pool at Greencroft. This is not necessarily the built complex which is mapped in the 19th century and survived until the mid 20th century but a Medieval precursor is quite possible.



PG 25 - Lower mill-pond, looking north-west



PG 26 - Causeway and channel above the mill, looking south-west

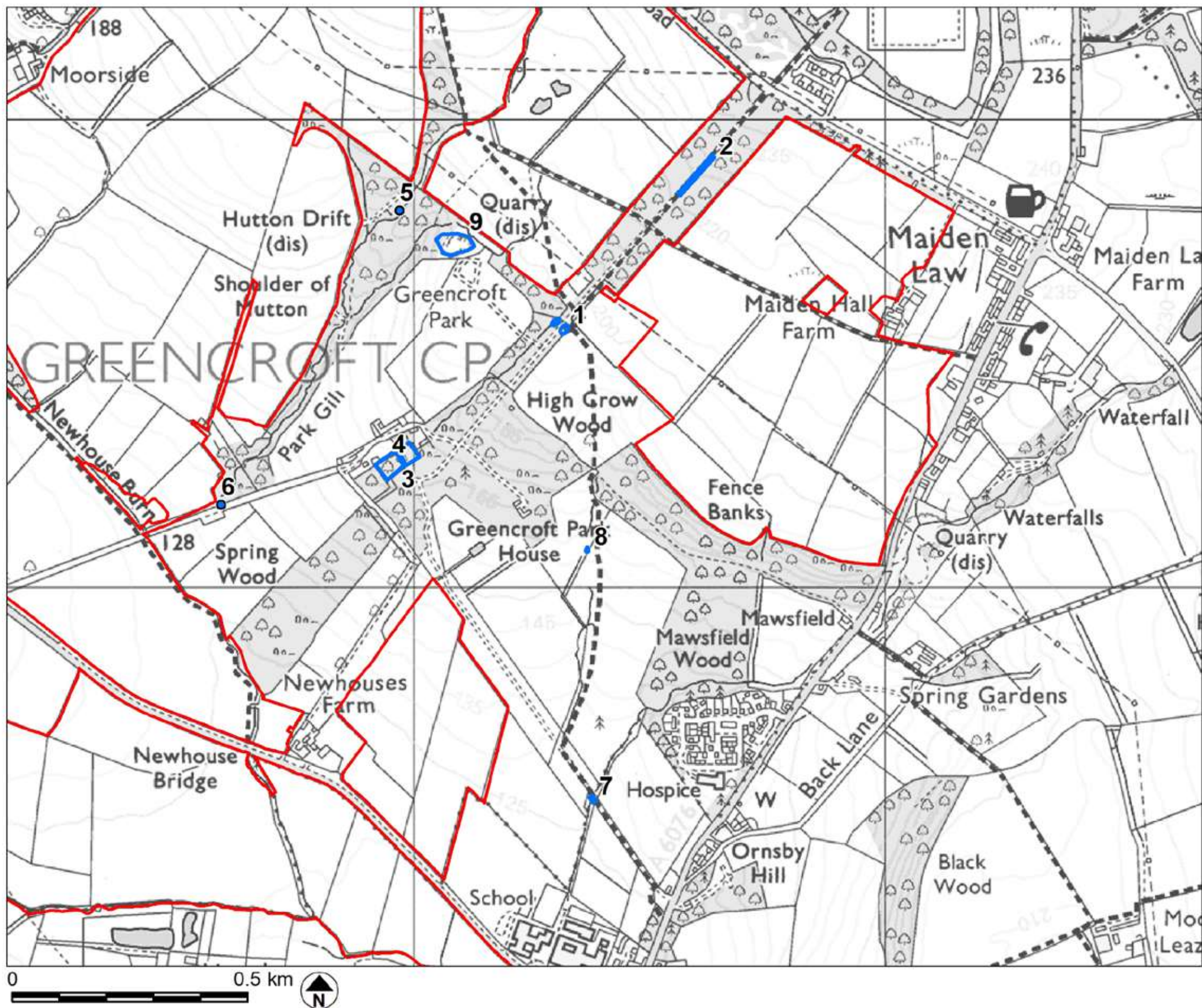


PG 27 - Water channels north of the causeway, looking north



PG 28 - Fragment of mill-stone in wall of outbuilding in mill complex , looking north-west

Figure 3.6
Features Noted During Site Visit



KEY

- Site
- Feature - Point
- Feature - Polygon

1. Ponds flanking Tower Avenue;
2. Embankment along part of Tower Avenue;
3. Rubble pile and cellars on location of demolished Greencroft Hall;
4. Conduit and terraces in former water gardens;
5. Mine entrance in Shoulder of Mutton Wood;
6. Millstone incorporated into stone wall of outbuilding at Low Town;
7. Bridge over the Howden Burn along the Fenhall Lodge Drive;
8. Earthworks near site of 'Level (Coal)' shown on the OS maps of 1861 and 1895; and
9. Large, open quarry in Shoulder of Mutton Wood.

Revisions:
First Issue- 13/02/2024 DS
Second Issue- 03/05/2024 DS

Features Noted During Site Visit

Greencroft

Client: Southern Green Ltd
DRWG No: P24-0057_F
Drawn by: DS
Date: 03/05/2024
Scale: 1:12,500 @ A4

REV: 2



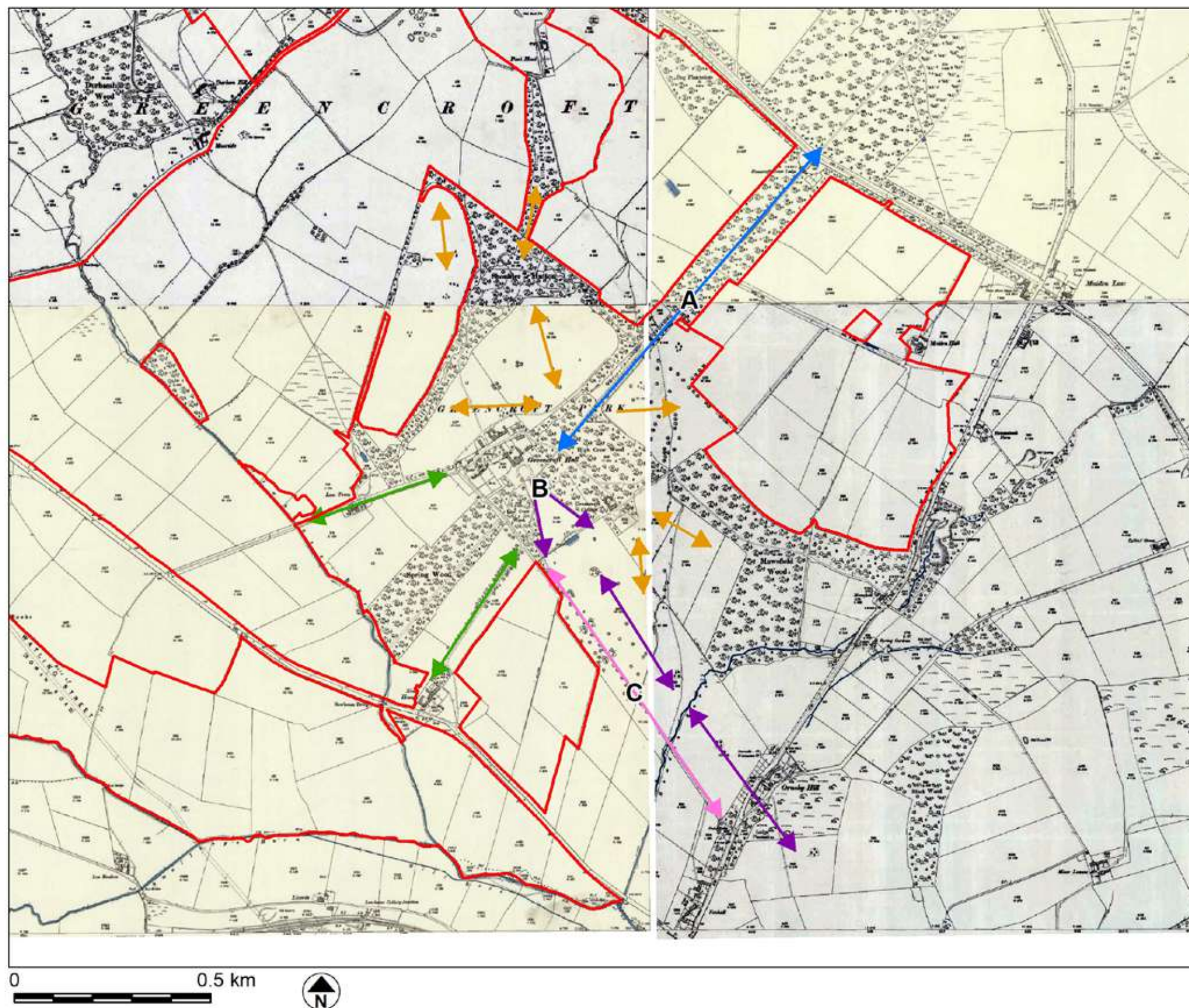
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Key Designed Views/Vistas

Greencroft Park includes three principal key views or designed vistas, two views along axis that are an element of the designed landscape, and several potential views within or to the parkland that may have been designed to some degree but where evidence of that design is lacking. These are illustrated on Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7
Designed Views



KEY

- Site
- ▶ View along Tower Avenue north to landscape beyond
- ▶ View NW-SE out as far as Ornesby Hill
- ▶ Views along and from carriage drive between Fenhall Lodge and house
- ▶ Potential short distance views within parkland
- ▶ Axial views to and from the core of the park along New Houses and Low Town lanes

Revisions:
First Issue - 08/02/2024 DS
Second Issue - 03/05/2024 DS

Designed Views

Greencroft

Client: Southern Green Ltd
DRWG No: P24-0057_1
Drawn by: DS
Date: 03/05/2024
Scale: 1:15,000 @ A4

REV: 2



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Principal Views

These comprise:

1. The view along the Tower Avenue, to and from the core of the park and extending out onto Annfield Plain;
2. The view to the south-east from the principal elevation of the former house across parkland, meadow and the Howden Burn, toward Ornsby Hill, with Dowfit Hill beyond; and
3. The view to and from the drive leading west into the park from Fenhall Lodge on Howden Bank.



PG 29 - North end of Tower Avenue, looking north-east over road and to high ground beyond

The Tower Avenue view appears to have two phases: an early phase with the construction of the Tower in the mid 18th century (built between 1747 and 1768) and a later phase from perhaps the early 19th century, when the view may have been more 'experiential' or 'kinetic' .

The early phase of this view is comprised of a long, straight drive or avenue running north-east from the core of the park, with the view channelled through the great arch of the Tower or Portal to a continuation of the drive north of the edge of the park (now defined by Tower Road) on to rising ground on the edge of Annfield Plain. The view is confined left and right by a belt of trees and rises and falls over the undulations of the gently rising ground to the north-east. This form of view with rigid geometry and tight, confined fields of view is characteristic of the later 17th century and early 18th century .

It is possible that this view was adapted in a second phase with the intention of reducing the emphasis on rigid geometries and creating instead a kinetic view as the observer moves through the landscape, most likely either on horseback or in a carriage. The flanking ponds toward the southern end of the Avenue may have been part of this kinetic experience, as may have been the wood platoons planted to the east of the Avenue. It is also possible that the flanking trees belts were selectively thinned to provide teasing views of the park and landscape beyond. A brook or small stream is shown running south from the western pond on OS mapping of 1861 and it is possible that the course of the brook was planted with vegetation to provide micro-views or little dells of colour and texture. The apparent informality and occasional intimacy of this phase of the designed landscape becomes more common from the mid 18th century onwards.



PG 30 - Central section of Tower Avenue, raised embankment, looking south-west



PG 31 - Embankment on Tower Avenue, looking south

The view to the south-east from the principal elevation of the former house varies over time. What appears to be the earliest iteration of this is shown on the tithe map of 1842, with the view to the south-east confined closely by the narrow perspective along the clearing to the south-west of the house, looking out over grassland or meadow in the foreground, defined to the south by the course of the Howden Burn. Although it does offer a long-distance view out toward Ornsby Hill that view is comparatively narrow and not apparently associated with any other landscaped elements. The drive from Fenhall Lodge is depicted on the 1842 map but does not appear to include any associated planting. However, the tithe map is fairly simple in approach and was prepared for a specific purpose. It may not have included features considered irrelevant to the purpose of the map or those modest in scale.

Looking at the later OS mapping from 1861 onwards it is apparent that the view south-east is considered more important and is re-designed with the edges of the woodland cut back to provide a broader splay, platoons planted along the centre of the view (and perhaps also on top of Ornsby Hill) and other platoons planted on the southern flank of the grassland and beside the drive from Fenhall Lodge. In the foreground a ha-ha is constructed and a raised pond built with a central island. How wide the view was intended to be is debateable but the flanking woodland and platoons to the south suggest that a view much further to the south were not considered a key element in this vista from the house and environs.



PG 32 - View south from the Dower House



PG 33 - Platoon in view south-east from hall, looking south-east



PG 34 - View south-east from edge of rose-garden platform out toward Ornsby hill. Pond in foreground, flanked by High and Low Crow Woods

The view to the south-east also forms a component of the Fenhall Lodge drive. The planting of the platoons on either side of the drive and the construction of the lodge and ornamental bridge over the Howden Burn help to support what may be regarded as another kinetic experience of the parkland and the landscape beyond. This experience would offer a range of views both open and more structured and may have been constructed with the purpose of also offering glimpses of the house in the distance, either arriving or leaving. The experience would encompass open grassland, substantial woodland and the slightly more formal landscape closer to the house defined by the ha-ha and pond. Note that the drive then moves north-east through the woodland to provide a 'reveal' view of the house and rose garden for the last 100m or so of the journey.



PG 35 - South-eastern part of Fenhall Lodge Drive, looking north-west toward the Hall. Howden Burn in middle ground



PG 36 - Fenhall Lodge Drive, looking south-east from near SE corner of Low Crow Wood



PG 37 - Fenhall Lodge Drive, looking north-west from near SE corner of Low Crow Wood

Axial Views

New House Lane and Low Town Lane to the south-west of the house and joining what is now the main road are depicted as within parkland on the Hobson map of 1840 and appear to have been flanked by trees planted to enhance the view along both these axes. The tithe map of 1842 suggests that a long view (or at least a track) existed at that time roughly from the location of the Shell House south toward the road. This view was interrupted by c 1861 with the replanting of Low Crow Wood. It is likely that both these lanes were regarded as functional and 'non-polite' components of the designed landscape right from its initial layout in the 18th century. These lanes serve to give access to Low Town, New Houses, the mill and the ancillary buildings at the rear of the house. It is very likely that formal visitors to the house were directed along either the Tower Avenue or the Fenhall Lodge drive.



***PG 38** - Axial view looking south-west along New House Lane*



***PG 39** - Axial view looking north-east along Low Town Lane*



***PG 40** - Axial view looking south-west along Low Town Lane*



***PG 41** - Axial view looking north-east along New House Lane*

Potential Views

Potential views within or to the parkland can be suggested here where the landscape of features within that landscape may have formed a view that was considered aesthetically pleasing or worthy in some context. These comprise:

- Views south and downslope from the top of the field below Shoulder of Mutton;
- Views across the open land west and north-west of the house over and shaped by Shoulder of Mutton;
- Views to the north-east of the Shell House, upslope toward Maiden Hall; and
- Views south and south-east from the Dower House across toward Mawsfield Wood, the approach to the Hall from the south-east, and Ornsby Hill beyond.

As noted previously, there is little firm evidence that these were necessarily designed views that may be considered key in supporting the significance of the parkland.



PG 42 - View south-east from Dower House towards Mawsfield Wood



PG 43 - View north towards open land



PG 44 - View across open land west towards Shoulder of Mutton



PG 45 - View south-east from Dower House towards Mawsfield Wood

Wider Visual Context

In order to explore the potential visibility of the proposed site, and any woodland planting proposed within it, a map has been generated using digital topographic mapping.

Visual Envelope

The visual envelope shown is the extent to which proposed woodland within the site could be seen from areas in the surrounding landscape – based on an establishing height of 15m. The visual envelope is shown as coloured areas on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Plans. The yellow area illustrates the ZTV with only the ‘bare land’ topography within the study area taken into consideration whereas the pink area refines the theoretical visual envelope further by broadly allowing for existing visual barriers, which might include both natural and man-made elements. These are treated as broad blocks, with existing buildings and areas of woodland/ trees assigned an average height of 8m. It is important to note that the ZTV mapping is not fully accurate but can help to build up an understanding of the overall visibility of the development when supported by inspections on site.

From the findings of the ZTV exercise, as shown on Figure 3.8, potential views are indicated to mainly be achieved within 2km of the site, with some further views evident from higher areas to the south of the Browney Valley, and to the north west where some landscapes are more open and undeveloped. Views from other aspects are generally restricted by the topography of the valley and built form associated with the larger urban areas such of Consett, Leadgate and Annfield Plain.

Visual Receptors

Key views of the site from within the defined ZTV were selected and visited in order to understand the likely visibility of the proposals from different directions, distances and receptor types, and provide an understanding of the baseline conditions and context of them in relation to the wider Browney Valley landscape.

A sample of these viewpoints are shown overleaf and contain those from Conservation Areas, Public Rights of Way, Strategic Routes and the local road network.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Study Area (1km radius intervals)
- Indicative areas from where the proposed woodland within the site may be visible (bare land - topographical information only)
- Indicative areas where the proposed woodland within the site may be visible (barriers)

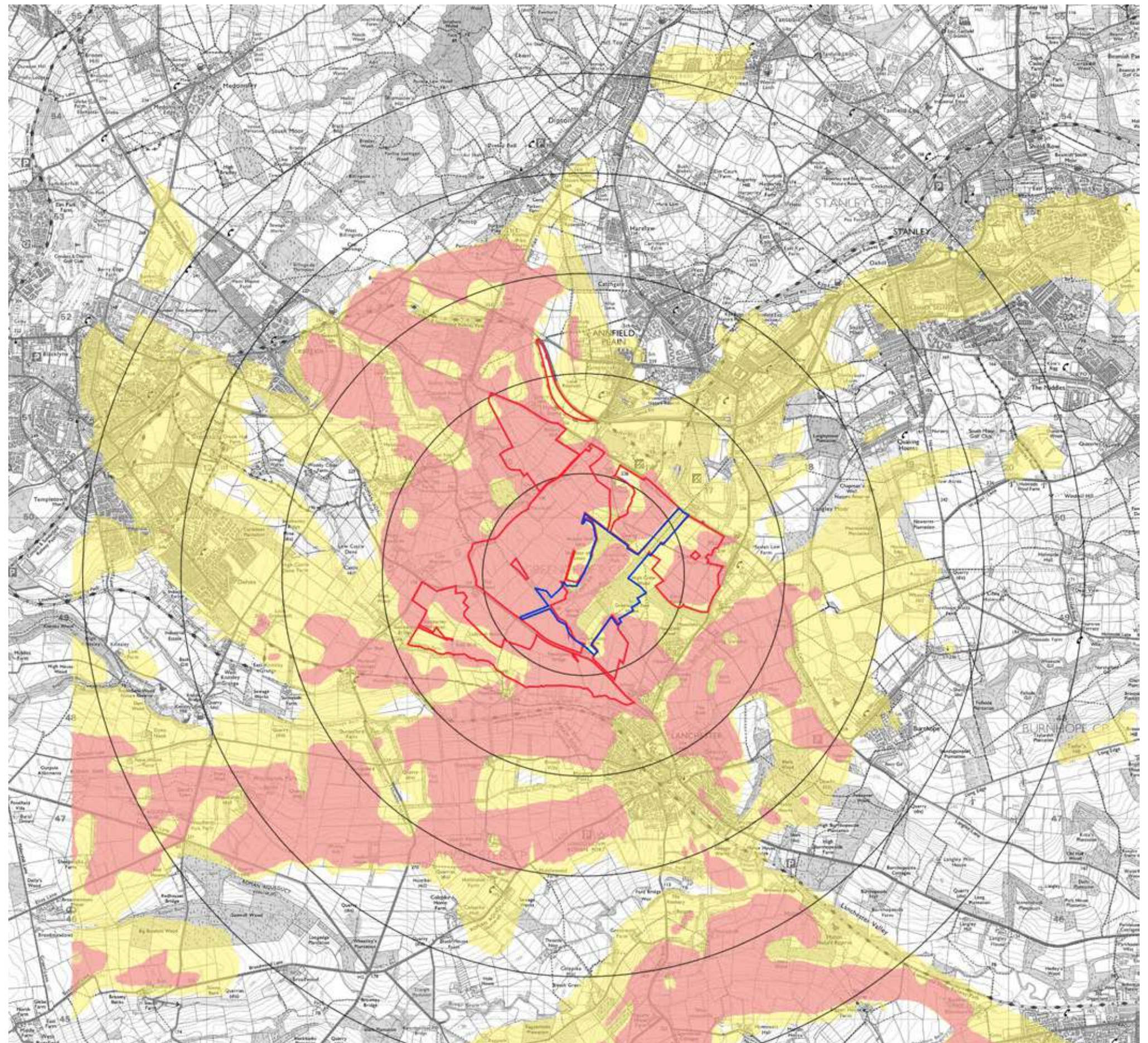


Figure 3.8
Zone of Theoretical Visibility



PG 46 - View east from Iveston public footpath



PG 47 - View north east from Lanchester Valley Railway Path



PG 48 - View north east from Gorecock Lane



PG 49 - View north east from Newhouse Burn



PG 50 - View south west from Maiden Hall Farm public footpath



PG 51 - View west from public footpath by Black Wood



PG 52 - View north west from public footpath along former carriage drive



PG 53 - View south east from site of former Greencroft Hall across parkland

Site Visual Context

Figure 3.9 overleaf explores the visibility of the site at closer range, reviewing transient views from the local road network along the site boundaries, more static views from residential areas and farmsteads and sequential views from the public rights of way network in and around the site.

Local Roads

Tower Road and Hangingstone Lane form the northern boundary of the site and separate it from other commercial and farmland uses on the opposite side of the routes. Views along the eastern sections of this road, close to Maiden Law, are relatively contained on both sides by roadside woodland belts which extend up to Tower Avenue. The tree belt to the south of the road less dense than that to the north, and contains more mature trees, allowing glimpsed views from the road towards Tower Avenue, and properties and gardens to the west of Maiden Law. To the west of Tower Avenue views become more open, with large commercial buildings associated with Greencroft Bottling Company dominating and restricting some views to the north. To the south the elevation of the road, and the topography and nature of the farmland adjacent to it, allows long distance open views to the west and south west, illustrating the valley landscapes. In the midground these views are interrupted by overhead powerlines which generally cross the site east to west.

Views from Howden Bank to the west are often restricted by built form, topography and woodland belts adjacent to it. Some glimpsed views are available at intervals where these features allow, often with the backdrop of woodland compartments of tree belts/ avenue, which restrict further views to the east.

To the west, the northern section of Gorecock Lane has views along the contours of the site to both the east and west, although views further east are generally restricted by the tree belts associated with Tower Avenue. As levels of this road fall towards Newhouse Burn they are further restricted by topography and woodland areas within Greencroft Park, although relatively open but oblique views can be obtained over farmland toward these features, Newhouse Burn and the A691.

The A691 crosses the southern part of the site from west to east, with levels of this road falling in a similar direction towards Lanchester. Oblique views of large parts of the site are available from this route, although not at the same time, with woodland areas associated with Greencroft Park, the wider site restricting views from different points.

Residential Areas

The main residential areas are located to the east and west of the site – Maiden Law, Lanchester and Iveston respectively. Properties within Maiden Law mainly front onto Howden Bank/ Lanchester Road, with back garden boundary treatments often filtering views west into the site. Some views of the site will be more likely from westerly facing windows in upper storeys. Views from many properties in Maiden View, further down Howden Bank, are restricted by Mawsfield Wood, although some to the south of this development, including the nursing home have views over the south eastern part of the site towards St Bedes School and the western edge of Lanchester.

Views of the from Lanchester are largely affected by topography and built form within the village. Those along the north western perimeter of the village have views towards some aspects of the east of the site, along with those on higher levels.

Due to the elevated position which Iveston occupies along a ridge views are available over the southern areas of the site. These are often from rear elevations though and filtered by garden features. The general aspect of properties within Iveston is south but oblique views will also be available along the contours the western area of the site, up to woodland associated with Greencroft Park.

Other farmsteads and individual properties around the boundaries of the site have varies views over different sections of the site, which differ in distance and character, and are often restricted by topography and woodland.

Public Rights of Way

The footpaths within the site allow the users to experience the different landscape characters evident with many of the routes extending over open farmland landscapes to areas more contained by woodland belts and tree planting, which often direct views to the surrounding area. All of the routes experience significant level changes, and links to Greencroft Park, adding to the experiential and sequential views available.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Public Right of Way
- Bridleway
- Viewpoint
- Glimpsed View



Figure 3.9
Key Views

Site Topography and Geology

The application site is located on the south-west facing slope of land that rises to Annfield Plain (c 243m AOD) and extends to the south-west to the valley below, at about 125m AOD. The lower ground comprises a re-entrant or side valley carrying the Newhouses Burn down to a confluence with the Stockerley Burn. A slight ridge separates the two burns to the west, rising to c 160m OD near Esp Green Farm.

The south-west facing slope is cut by the courses of two other burns, Parkhead Gill and Howden Burn, that sit in ravines, which in places are narrow and steep-sided.

The contours of the site illustrating these features are shown on Figure 3.10.

The Superficial geology of the application site is recorded as Devensian Till (Quaternary), overlying Solid geology formed by the Pennine Lower and Middle Coal Measures Formation .

The soil of the site is described as '*Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils*'.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Contours
- Watercourse



Figure 3.10
Site Topography

Land Use

The land use within the site is currently predominantly farmland which is utilised for both arable and pasture. Where land is identified as pastoral this is either grazed or grown as a meadow for hay crops. On higher contours to the north some of the pastoral land has a significant amount of native scrub cover.

Land to the east of Gorecock Lane is utilised as pasture, as is the majority of land between Maiden Law and Tower Avenue to the north east. Fields either side of Newhouse Burn to the south of the site are generally utilised for pasture as well with arable land higher up slope along the east of Gorecock Lane and south west of Park Head Farm.

Within the locally designated historic parkland within the site, to the south east, most land is pasture, although some fields adjacent to the boundary of St Bedes School are in arable use. To the south of the A691 land within the site more arable use is evident with some areas of pasture located centrally and to the east of this area.

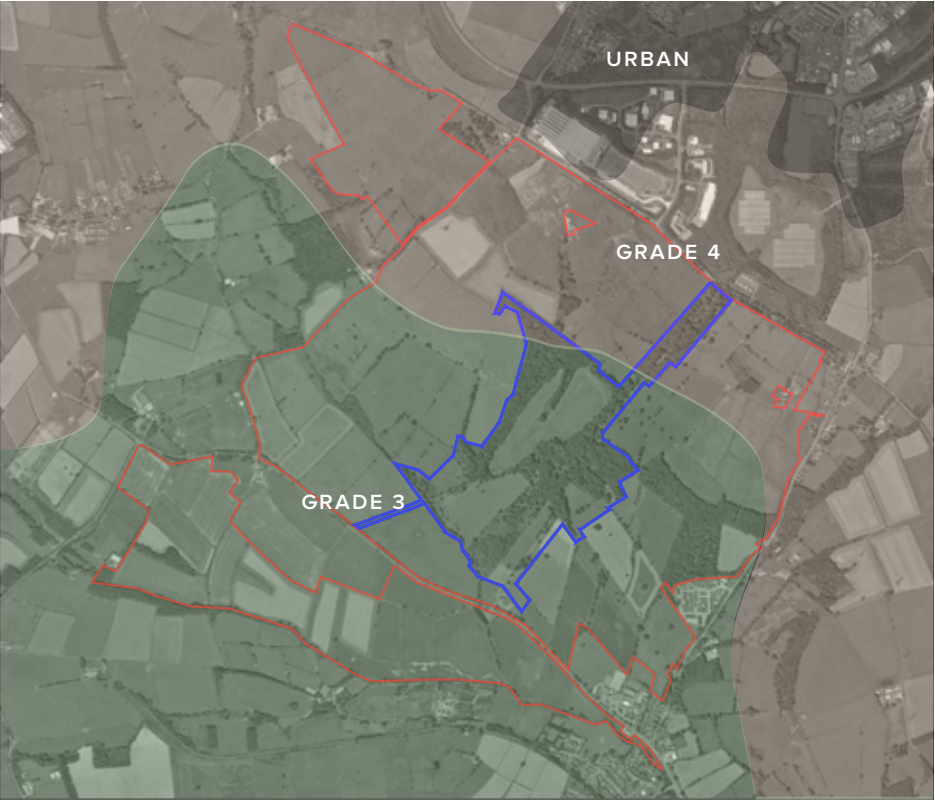
Fields throughout the site are generally medium in size with some smaller parcels noticeable within the local historic parkland to the south east, west of Maiden Law, and north of Newhouse Burn. There is evidence of previous smaller field patterns through remaining hedgerow trees, which now stand as occasional features within larger field parcels.

Woodland areas are also evident within the site, with larger compartments associated with Mawsfield Wood to the east. Other smaller woodlands within the site are located to the south of Park Head Farm, west of Maiden Law and Stockerley Plantation to the east of Stockerley Bridge Ribbons of tree planting are also associated with the watercourses within the site such as Newhouse Burn, Stockerley and Smallhope Burns.

Further, larger areas of woodland planting area found within the historic core of the site, within 'Other land in the Clients Ownership and further information on these is provided overleaf.

In relation to Agricultural Land Classification, Figure 3.11 indicates that land to the north of the site is Category 4 whilst land to the south is category 3.

Figure 3.11
Agricultural Land Classification



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Arable
- Pasture
- Scrub
- Woodland



Figure 3.12
Land Use

Site Vegetation

The site is predominantly farmland but some areas of woodland, scrub and hedgerow are evident within the site, often forming boundaries to field parcels and defining areas of parkland.

Woodland

The largest woodland area within the site is Mawsfield Wood to the east which forms a T-shape, extending down and across the contours from Howden Bank to Greencroft Park, and containing Maiden View and adjacent pastoral land. Other woodland areas are evident to the south of Park Head Farm, and east of Stockerley Bridge (Stockerley Plantation).

Other larger woodland areas are evident within Greencroft Park in ‘other land in clients ownership’. These are associated with the historic development of Greencroft Park, and although some of the woodlands have been felled at intervals, there is a strong structure of planting running north to south downslope and wrapping around the historic core of the park. Tower Avenue links to woodlands associated with the Shoulder of Mutton, and High Croft Wood, with Low Croft Wood and Spring Wood evident on the lower slopes.

Scrub

Native scrub appears to have naturally populated some of the areas of pasture to the north of the site, on higher areas to both the east and west of Tower Avenue. Some scrub is also evident along tracks and watercourses and forms boundary features along some sections of Tower Road.

Hedgerows

Figure 3.13 overleaf indicates the extent of hedgerows throughout the site which are often boundaries, or former boundaries, to field parcels. Hedges are generally native in content, apart from where more ornamental species are evident as garden boundaries.

Some of the hedges appear more defunct than others with some also being more species rich and biodiverse, especially where they are linked to other natural features or contain hedgerow trees.

Tree Groups/ Individual Trees

Larger tree groups are generally associated with the watercourses within the site, forming green corridors through the site. Other tree groups are evident to the south west and south east with strong links to Greencroft Park, referencing the ‘platoons’ discussed in relation to historic evolution and views within the site, or defining access points, such as the south avenue.

Individual trees are also evident within these areas, and groups of individual trees are also visible in pastoral fields to the west of the site, close to Gorecock Lane and Newhouse Burn, and are potentially remnant features of old field boundaries. Due to their presence a more parkland appearance is evident within the field parcels they are located within.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Intact Hedgerow Boundary
- Defunct Hedgerow Boundary
- Coniferous Woodland
- Deciduous Woodland
- Mixed Woodland
- Individual Trees/ Groups

Figure 3.13
Site Vegetation



National Vegetation Classification

E3 Ecology undertook a study of various areas of the site in line with the National Vegetation classification in 2023. The sites reviewed and their general content are summarised overleaf.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- ▤ National Vegetation Classification Area:
- 1 Grassland
- 2 Scrub
- 3 Swamp
- 4 Rush Pasture



Figure 3.14
 National Vegetation Classification

Landscape Character/ Land Parcels

Further to desktop study and field work undertaken the different landscape character areas of the site and areas have been able to be better understood.

Figure 3.15 overleaf illustrates the different site landscape character areas and land parcels identified which have been defined through consideration of the following characteristics:-

- **Natural factors** – landform, land cover, hydrology, soils etc;
- **Cultural** – land use, management, forces for change, associates etc;
- **Visual** – openness, extents, context etc;
- **Aesthetic** – scale, pattern, enclosure, pattern etc;
- **Perceptual** – tranquillity, naturalness, sense of place etc.

Further detail on each of these character areas/ land parcels is included in Section 4.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Contours
- Watercourse
- 1 Character Area



Figure 3.15
Landscape Character/ Land Parcels

Constraints and Opportunities

Findings of this section of the report have also enabled the compilation of constraints and opportunities within the site which will advise the development of woodland creation proposals. These include physical and natural attributes, historic and cultural elements and functional requirements – all which need to be considered in relation to the landscape character and features of the site.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Public Right of Way
- Watercourse
- Woodland Block
- Overhead Power Lines
- ||||| Course of Roman Road
- Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Local Interest (Greencroft Park)
- ↔ Key Views
- National Vegetation Classification
- Noted Features:
 1. Ponds flanking Tower Avenue
 2. Embankment along part of Tower Avenue
 3. Rubble pile and cellars on location of demolished Greencroft Hall
 4. Conduit and terraces in former water gardens
 5. Mine entrance in Shoulder of Mutton Wood
 6. Millstone incorporated into stone wall of outbuilding at Low Town
 7. Bridge over the Howden Burn along the Fenhall Lodge Drive
 8. Earthworks near site of 'Level (Coal)' shown on the OS maps of 1861 and 1895
 9. Large, open quarry in Shoulder of Mutton Wood



Figure 3.16
Constraints and Opportunities

Section 4

Landscape Character & Historical Appraisal

The Structure of the Park

The structure of the park as mapped in detail in the mid 19th century can be broken down into ten broad groups of physical and functional form or aesthetic design:

1. House – the former building and immediate grounds including the carriage-circle to the front
2. Gardens – the gardens to the south-west of the house including the rose garden, the walled or kitchen garden, and the water garden;
3. Woodlands – the woodlands across the park that have a primarily ornamental function and include specimen trees (Shoulder of Mutton, Parkhead, Tower Avenue, High and Low Crow Wood; Mawsfield Wood and Spring Wood);
4. Ancillary buildings – the buildings at the rear of the house and on the tracks leading to the house including stables, carriage house, cottages, the ice-house, dovecote and other support or farm buildings;
5. Dower House – the complex of buildings located on the edge of High Crow Wood;
6. Outlying buildings – complexes at Low Town, Upper Greencroft, Newhouses, the Fenhall lodge , the Tower, the bridge over the Howden Burn, the Shell House and the Summerhouse;
7. Access - routes accessing the park via Low Town, New Houses, Fenhall Lodge, Maiden Hall and the Tower Avenue;
8. Water management;
9. Farmland; and
10. Views and vistas.

These groups of features or aspects of the park formed the basis from which analysis of the historic environment proceeded and which informed the interpretation of the park, its evolution and history. These features also informed targets for the site survey and incorporation of new data into this synthesis.

Landscape Character Areas/ Land Parcels

Further detail on each of the Landscape Character Areas, expanding on Site Analysis and information included in Section 3 and illustrated on Figure 3.15 Landscape Character/ Land Parcels, is included on the following pages.

Please note that some of the Landscape Character Parcels extend beyond the red line boundary for the proposals as they illustrate the wider context of the parcels and how they relate to neighbouring ones.

CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 1

CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This parcel is generally triangular in shape and occupies part of the south west facing valley slope to the east of Tower Road. Levels generally fall from 255m AOD along the west boundary, to 195m AOD to the south boundary. Steeper changes in level are evident along parts of the east and west boundary as the slopes fall to Newhouse Burn. The landform to the east is known as Boxer's Hill. The land is generally in pastoral use and has been separated into relatively large field parcels with boundary treatments running down the slope. 1B differs due to it being very small parcels in comparison, possibly due to its proximity to the farmstead.
Natural Components	There are limited boundary treatments due to the size of the field parcels, and those that are present are generally dry stone walls. Hedgerows are evident, with fencing and dry stone walls, along Gorecock Lane and Tower Road, and a stand of trees is present to the east of the fields which appear to be of a single age structure. The smaller fields associated with 1B have more vegetation evident, along boundaries and ditches. Many of these appear to be mature hedge species with the appearance of individual trees rather than functioning hedgerows.
Human Influences	This character area contains evidence of past activity in the form of the former Greencroft Colliery which was located partially within this area and partially within Character Area 2. This character area contained the Pit Head and main colliery buildings, as well as a small row of terraced houses as seen on the 1896 Ordnance Survey Map. This area also contains evidence of cropmarks as recorded on the Durham Historic Environment Record (HER) though it is possible these are associated with the colliery workings.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	A footpath crosses the field parcels along one of the boundary walls allowing open, elevated views to be experienced over the fields. This provides a route from Hanging Stone in the north east to Sunnyside Farm and Newhouse Burn to the west. Visual detractors are present in the form of pylons and overhead cables which cross the lower contours of the fields, running almost parallel to the western boundary.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held within the association with the mining history and traditions of this area, which are no longer visible above ground but may remain below-ground in the form of archaeological deposits. The history of the colliery also survives within the written record and documentation associated with the colliery.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The HLC for Durham identifies this character area largely as Post-medieval Parliamentary planned Enclosure. The area of 1b is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth. This character area was likely agricultural land until the late 18th and 19th centuries when it was worked for coal and saw some minor settlement activity. This has all been removed and the land is now agricultural fields.
Historical, social and personal associations	There are no specific historic associations, with the exception of potential relatives of those who worked in this colliery and the collective memory of the coalfields of Durham during their heyday. The lack of above ground remains significantly reduces the levels of association.
Visual Qualities	Due to the elevated nature of the area, distant and open views are available over the valley landscapes and the village of Iveston to the west, and towards the woodlands associated with the Greencroft Locally Designated parkland to the south with more distant valley ridges evident beyond this. Derwent Valley ridges are just evident to the north. The visual qualities of the area itself are relatively uniform due to its use, with 1B having a more diverse appearance.





CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 2

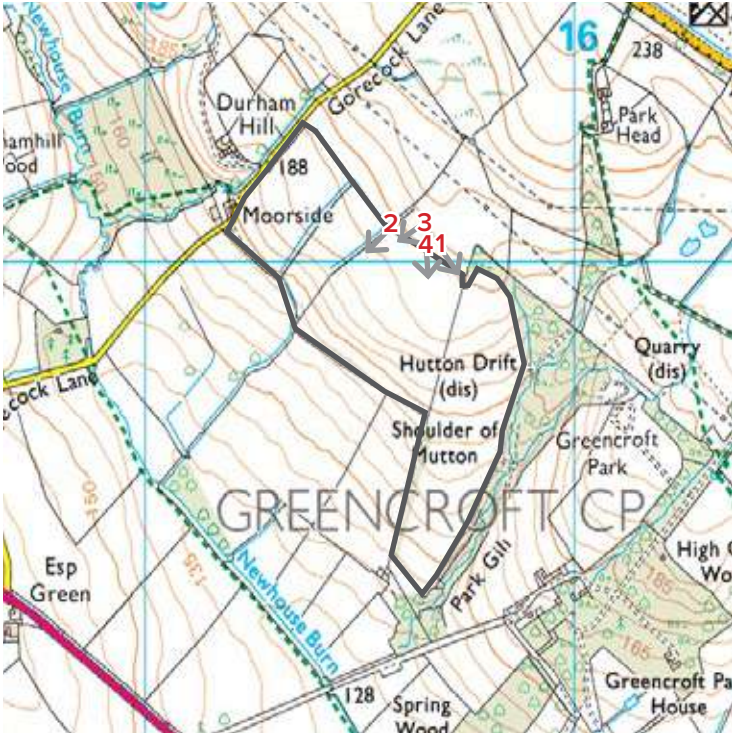
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	A more rolling landform is evident within this parcel with levels falling in a north east to south west direction - from 245m AOD at Tower Road to 200m AOD close to the Shoulder of Mutton. Fields are medium sized and irregular in shape, partially due to the presence of Park Head farm and associated access points/ tracks.
Natural Components	The fields within this character area are a mix of farmland in both arable and pastoral use, with mixed patches of scrubland evident throughout. Boundary treatments vary throughout the area with native hedgerows and some dry stone walling evident. Some more mature hedgerows along road edges, such as Gorecock Lane, limit views of the wider area. The woodland associated with Shoulder of Mutton is evident on the southern boundary, and a woodland group extends along a track and old mine workings to the south of Park Head. There are occasional mature boundary trees in fields on lower slopes.
Human Influences	This character area contains evidence of past activity in the form of the former Greencroft Colliery which was located partially within this area and partially within Character Area 1. This character area contained the Wagonway and a couple of terraced houses, as well as a double row of terraced houses, part of a larger grouping labelled as Greencroft Cottages which lined Tower Road as shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey Map. These cottages are no longer extant. This area also contains evidence of mining and quarrying as recorded on the Durham Historic Environment Record (HER).
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Human influences appear to be more evident in this area, whether it is remnants from past workings or current uses. There is also a contrast between the natural field boundaries and the more manicured appearance of garden hedgerows around Park Head. The landscape feels more complex with a wider range of uses and landscape typologies present.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held within the association with the mining history and traditions of this area, which are no longer visible above ground but may remain below-ground in the form of archaeological deposits. The history of the colliery also survives within the written record and documentation associated with the colliery. Wagonways are particularly valued heritage assets in this region, with many well-preserved examples being scheduled.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth. This character area was likely agricultural land until the late 18th and 19th centuries when it was worked for coal and saw some minor settlement activity. This has all been removed and the land is now agricultural fields.
Historical, social and personal associations	There are no specific historic associations, with the exception of potential relatives of those who worked in this colliery and the collective memory of the coalfields of Durham during their heyday. The lack of above ground remains significantly reduces the levels of association.
Visual Qualities	Open and distant views are available over the surrounding valley landscape from higher contours. The large buildings and infrastructure associated with Greencroft Industrial Estate are evident from the more elevated sections of this area, and the wind turbines linked to the Bottling Plant are visible from the lower slopes. Overhead cables and associated pylons also cross the lower slopes. Views of the western edges of the locally designated parkland and woodland features are visible intermittently, when topography and existing vegetation within the parcel allow





CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 3

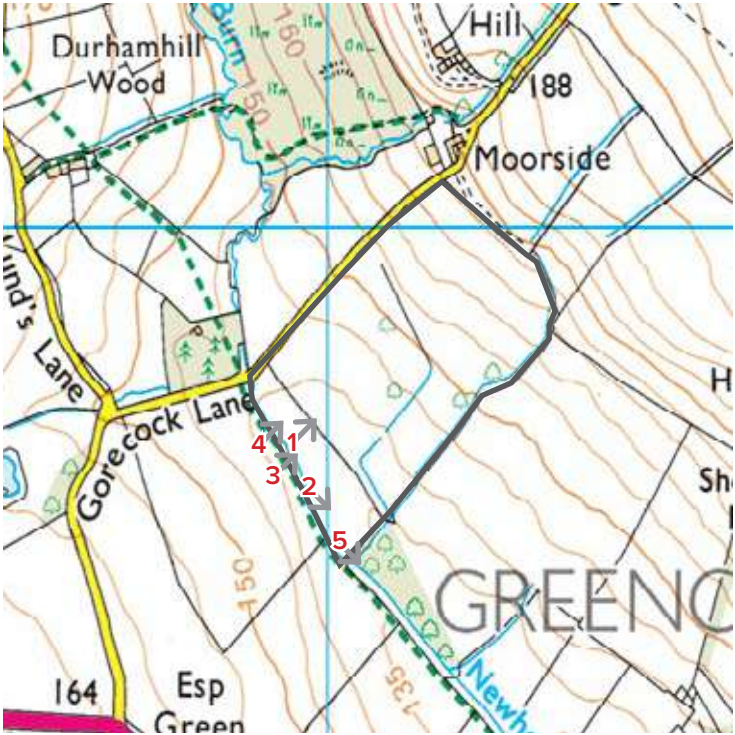
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	Levels generally fall from 200m AOD in the north east to 145m AOD to the south of the Shoulder of Mutton. There are localised variances in topography where tributaries are present, including Park Gill within the woodland along the east boundary. Gorecock Lane forms the boundary to the north west. Fields are medium sized with the one to the east, associated with the Shoulder of Mutton, evident as a much longer, narrow field with a regular gradient.
Natural Components	The fields are primarily in arable use and are separated by dry stone wall or fence boundaries which extend along or down the slopes. There is limited boundary vegetation with only occasional tree or section of scrub evident. The woodland associated with the Shoulder of Mutton is prominent on the eastern boundary of the area.
Human Influences	This character area contains evidence of past activity in the form of an old quarry mapped on the 1896 OS map at the western portion of this area. In addition, the eastern portion extended into the boundary of the Greencroft estate as mapped on the 1820 Greenwood map. Prior to this, the area was likely agricultural land and it is still used for this purpose today. It is possible this area formed part of a medieval deer park which may have existed here, though this is not proven.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	There is no public access over this area, Although the elevation is dropping down the valley side, open views are still available to the south and west with more or a relationship evident with the farmland around Iveston. The openness gives way to a more contained, isolated experience to the east due to the existing woodland belt and the levels which fall towards this in places.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held through the association with the Greencroft estate and the role the character area plays in understanding the evolution of the form parkland versus the agricultural lands surrounding the estate which would have provided the economic basis for much of the Clavering family's finances.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The majority of the character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth. The very eastern portion the part formerly within the parkland boundary is described as Designed landscape – reflecting its former position. The line of trees running northeast – southwest within this character area are on the line of the historic edge of the estate, delimiting the western boundary of the estate.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family who purchased the Greencroft estate in the 17th century and expanded the parkland, including part of this character area within it.
Visual Qualities	The woodland to the east of this parcel, associated with the Shoulder of Mutton, generally contains views further east from this parcel, but provides legibility and containment of the field adjacent to it which forms part of the locally designated parkland. The woodland and field to the east of this parcel form distinct features in the landscape when viewed from similar levels and higher in the surrounding area, highlighting the edges of the parkland.





CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 4

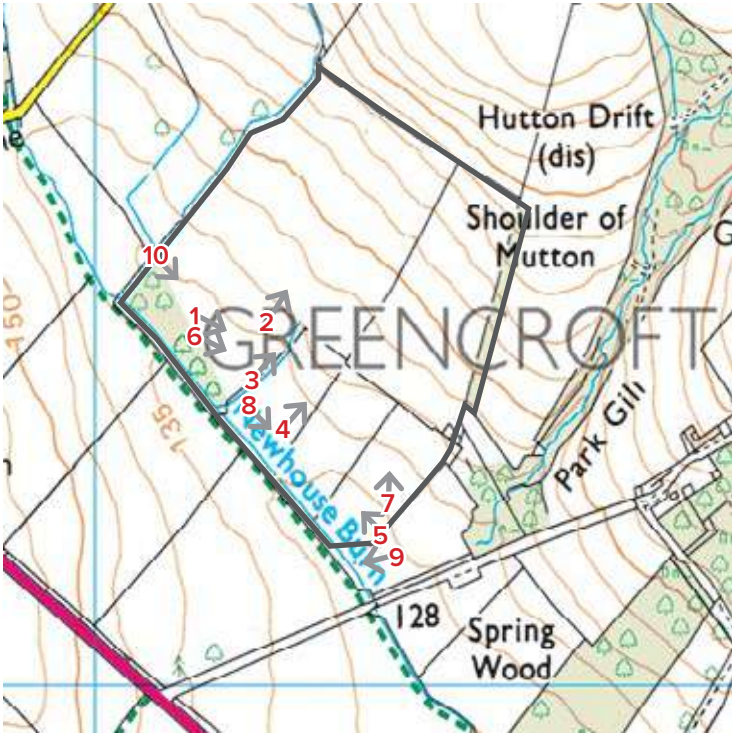
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This area is located on the lower extents of the south west facing valley side and is bounded by Gorecock Lane to the north west, a track from Moorside farm to the north east, a belt of trees following a tributary to the south east, and Newhouse Burn to the south west. Levels fall from 170m AOD at the highest point to 140m AOD by Newhouse Burn where levels form a plateau. The field is relatively large in size with irregular edges. A smaller compartment of the field is evident along Newhouse Burn.
Natural Components	The field is currently in arable use, with some pastoral in the smaller compartment to the south of it. Tributaries are evident on the eastern boundary and centre of the field, extending downslope to Newhouse Burn. Mature individual trees, or groups of them, are associated with these, or perhaps old boundaries. Field boundaries are typically dry stone walls or post and wire fences.
Human Influences	This character area contains evidence of past activity in the form of an old quarry mapped on the 1896 OS map at the western portion of this area. This area has likely always been agricultural land. It is possible this area formed part of a medieval deer park which may have existed here, though this is not proven.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	A public right of way follows the Newhouse Burn along the boundary of this area, allowing views from a more enclosed environment, due to the woodland along the Burn, up the slope towards a more open landscape, although still providing a degree of enclosure due to the topography. The irregular pattern of individual trees and tree groups within the field create a parkland appearance.
Cultural Values	This area has little cultural value other than as a former part of the wider Greencroft estate owned by the Clavering family as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has no specific associations other than the general association with the Clavering family, an association which is no longer extant.
Visual Qualities	The trees within the field are evident in views from Iveston and its associated conservation area to the north west and almost feel like they are the form the western approach to the parkland, although there is no evidence that these parcels are associated with the locally designated parkland, other than setting. These trees combined with woodland groups along field boundaries form the fore and mid ground of views before the parkland, creating a layering effect - with trees becoming denser in number closer to the parkland. On higher ground the landform associated with the Shoulder of Mutton. The rising topography to the north east prevents many of the buildings and features along Tower Road from being visible, but overhead cables, pylons and wind turbines are still evident.





CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 5

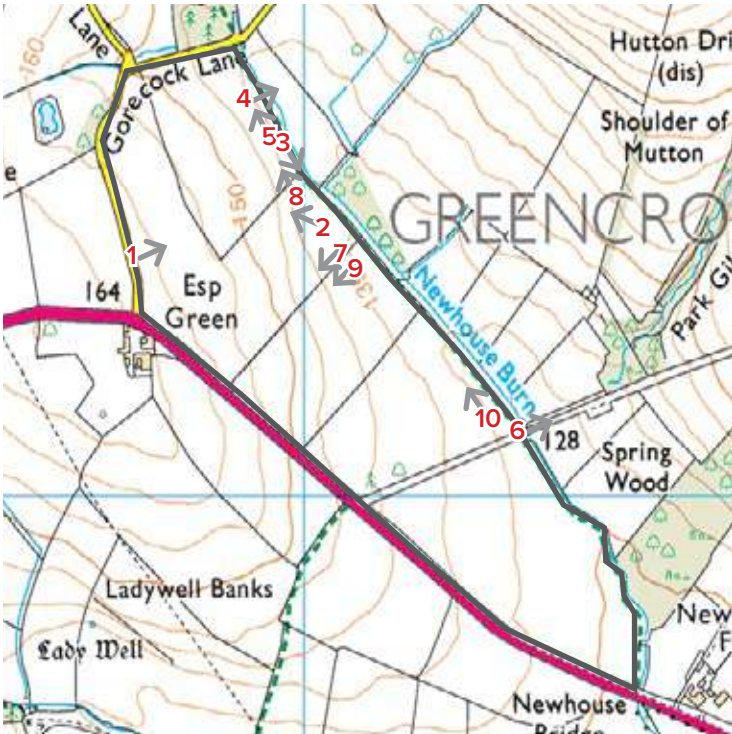
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This area is located on the lower extents of the south west facing valley side and is bounded by a tributary with associated linear tree group to the north west, a track from Moorside farm to the north east, the field and woodland group boundaries associated with Shoulder of Mutton to the north east, along with part of the access track to Greencroft from the A691, and Newhouse Burn to the south west. Levels fall from 170m AOD at the highest point to 130m AOD by Newhouse Burn. The area contains a mixture of large, medium and small fields.
Natural Components	The fields are generally in pastoral use but on the lower slopes a more varied mosaic of habitat types is evident in areas alongside Newhouse Burn, particularly where the landform is more level. These include woodland groups and individual trees, marsh ground with reeds and the old mill pond to the south of the area. Boundary treatments are generally post and wire fences with associated hedgerows. The hedgerows are in various conditions with many defunct and appearing as individual specimens rather than intact continuous hedgerows. Some larger individual trees are present in the hedgerows.
Human Influences	The eastern portion of this character area extended into the boundary of the Greencroft estate as mapped on the 1820 Greenwood map. Prior to this, the area was likely agricultural land and it is still used for this purpose today. It is possible this area formed part of a medieval deer park which may have existed here, though this is not proven.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The landscape is an interesting mix and blends the openness of the rest of the farmland to the east of the site, with more intimate scale of landscapes to the west - providing more enclosure and variety along the riparian corridor. Some of which is associated with past uses of Greencroft - such as the access route/ drive, listed bridge and mill pond.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held through the association with the Greencroft estate and the role the character area plays in understanding the evolution of the form parkland versus the agricultural lands surrounding the estate which would have provided the economic basis for much of the Clavering family's finances.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The majority of the character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family who purchased the Greencroft estate in the 17th century and expanded the parkland, including part of this character area within it.
Visual Qualities	Views from the area are limited by the surrounding scattered woodland to the south of the area, framing longer distance views to the east and west. The public right of way along Newhouse Burn provides access in close proximity to the character area with intermittent views available through vegetation along Newhouse Burn towards the locally designated parkland. As with the landscape of Character Area 4, the trees and hedgerows along field boundaries and Newhouse Burn create a layering effect in views along the contours from the north west, with density of features appearing to increase in density towards the woodland to the west of the parkland. Views into this area are limited from other aspects due to topography and vegetation, but glimpses are available of the higher areas from the A691.





CHARACTER AREA/ LAND PARCEL 6

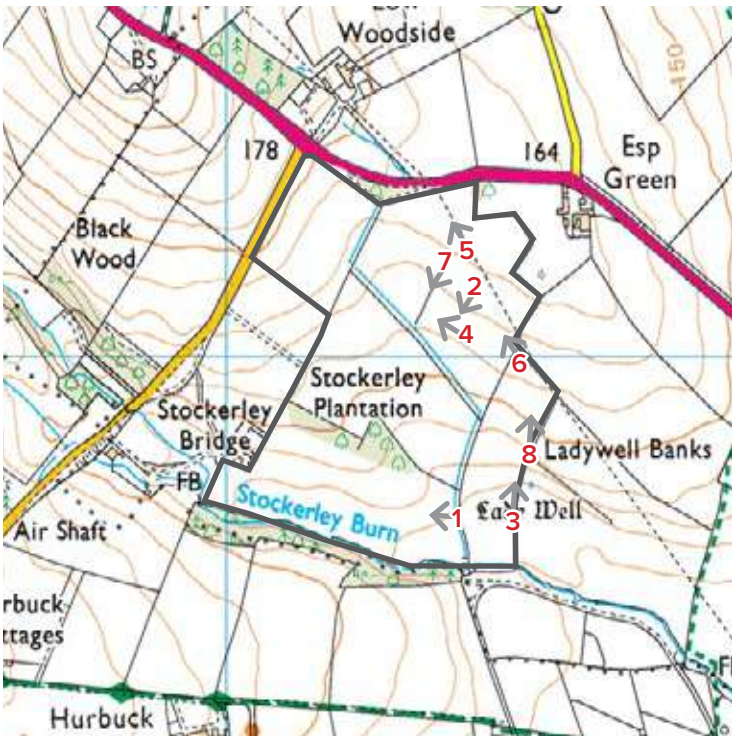
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This area is formed by field parcels along the north side of the A691. The north east boundary is formed by Newhouse Burn and the west boundary by Gorecock Lane. Levels generally fall from 165m AOD at the junction with the A691 and Gorecock lane to the west, to 125m AOD to east - south of Spring Wood. Fields are medium to large in size and quite regular in shape.
Natural Components	The fields are currently utilised as pasture, or for cutting hay. Field boundaries are generally hedgerows with associated fences extending from Newhouse Burn to the A691. The larger field to the east is dissected by one of the access tracks/ drives to Greencroft from the A691, and more continuous mature tree groups are present either side of this. Woodland groups are also evident along Newhouse Burn and intermittent tree groups also form the boundary along the A691 with fences and maintained intact hedges in some places.
Human Influences	There is no evidence of settlement within this area, or any evidence of any specific activity other than agriculture. This area may have fallen within the deer park which was supposedly part of the early Greencroft Estate though this is not proven. The line of the Roman road runs to the south of this area and it is possible there may be evidence associated with this but again, this is not proven.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The landscape to the south of Newhouse Burn is more uniform than that to the south but is interspersed with interesting features and landscape typologies - generally found along the Newhouse Burn and access track to Greencroft. The landscape is relatively open with the field boundaries providing some containment. The traffic on the A691 is notable from this area, in relation to both noise and visibility.
Cultural Values	This area has little cultural value other than as a former part of the wider Greencroft estate owned by the Clavering family as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The majority of the character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has no specific associations other than the general association with the Clavering family, an association which is no longer extant.
Visual Qualities	The public right of way along Newhouse Burn provides access in close proximity to the character area with intermittent views available through vegetation along Newhouse Burn towards the locally designated parkland. Further east along this route more interrupted views are available towards the core of the parkland over fields between woodlands associated with it. Due to the relatively open nature of the character area intermittent views are available from the A691 to the north west facing valley slope. Pylons and wind turbines associated with the higher areas are evident, but built form along Tower Road is only visible from the highest points of this area - off Gorecock Lane.





CHARACTER AREA 7

CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	The area is formed by field parcels along Stockerley Lane and Stockerley Bridge to the south of the A691. Stockerley Burn forms the boundary to the south. The fields are medium in size and irregular in shape due to land ownership and natural features on the boundaries. The land falls from 175m AOD to the north at the junction of the A691 with Stockerley Lane and falls at a regular gradient to 130m AOD to the south east, by Stockerley Burn.
Natural Components	The farmland is currently in arable production and field boundaries typically consist of raised verges, some with intermittent hedgerows evident. Larger tree groups associated with Stockerley Burn and Stockerley Plantation are notable to the south of the area and a small woodland group exists to the north of the area - along a layby off the A691. Tributaries are evident following the field boundaries from north to south to join the Stockerley Burn.
Human Influences	The northern portion of the character area coincides with the line of the Roman road as identified through geophysical survey undertaken for this project. It is noted the route of the road is, in fact further north than is mapped on the Ordnance Survey maps. In addition, records from the Durham Her also identify Roman artefacts, as well as cropmarks of a possible rectilinear enclosure. It is often the case that further Roman activity is located in proximity to the route of roads and as such, there is the potential for associated remains in the vicinity of this road. At present, the land is in agricultural use.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The landscape appears relatively open due to use, with a perimeter of mature trees evident - either in the form of woodland groups and broadleaved plantations, or mature trees and hedgerows along roadsides.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held through the information it contains about the Roman history of this area and the continued use of the valley as a communication route. The area has archaeological interest.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Enclosed farmland from the Post-medieval period. This HLC type has a greater time depth and legibility as it retains more of the field boundaries and smaller field parcels.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Roman road and the surrounding Roman assets.
Visual Qualities	This area has less visual connection with the locally designated parkland due to the vegetation evident restricting views. Where vegetation allows, views east and south over the site highlight the farmland character evident with similar uses and character seen on adjacent valley slopes above the woodland along Stockerley Burn.





CHARACTER AREA 8

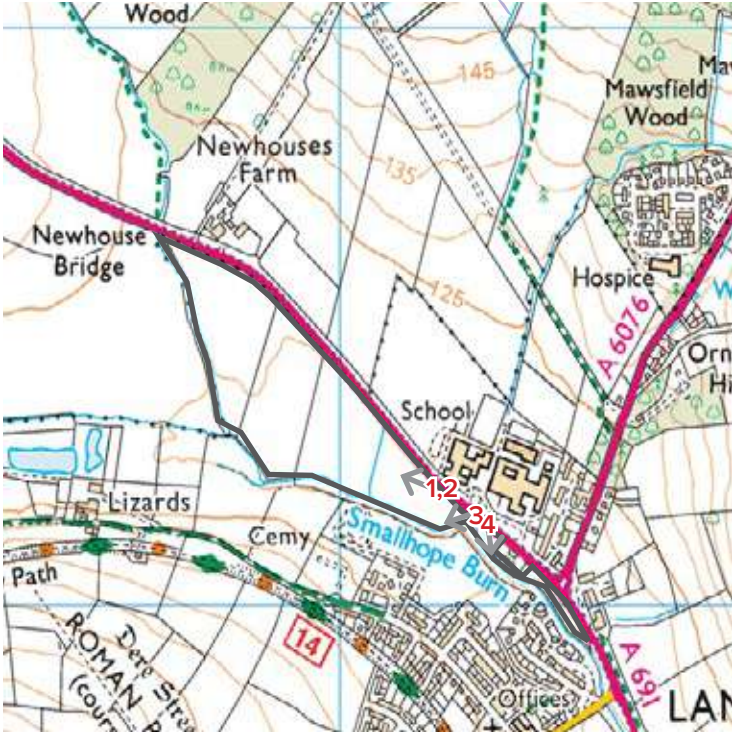
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	The farmland associated with this area is bound by the A691 to the north, Newhouse Burn to the east and Stockerley Burn to the south. Level changes within this parcel are less evident than those observed within Area 7, although a steeper section of land is noted to the west - identified as Ladywell Banks. Levels fall from 155m AOD in the north west, to 120m AOD to the south west - with much of this corner of the site being relatively level. The farmland is currently a mixture of arable and pastoral with some field utilised for hay cuts.
Natural Components	The fields within the parcel are medium to large in size, with field boundaries generally running north to south. Field boundaries are sparse and consist of defunct hedgerows and hedgerow verges. More dense continuous woodland groups are evident along the burns and intact hedgerows and occasional trees are present along the A691.
Human Influences	This character area contains the line of the Roman road as identified through geophysical survey undertaken for this project. It is noted the route of the road is, in fact further north than is mapped on the Ordnance Survey maps. In addition, records from the Durham HER also identify Roman artefacts, as well as cropmarks of a possible rectilinear enclosure. It is often the case that further Roman activity is located in proximity to the route of roads and as such, there is the potential for associated remains in the vicinity of this road.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The character of the area feels relatively uniform, although more variation and diversity is evident along the southern and eastern edges where Newhouse and Stockerley Burn introduce different characteristics and associated features. A public right of way runs north to south to the west of the parcel and offers open views over the farmland.
Cultural Values	The cultural values of this character area are held through the information it contains about the Roman history of this area and the continued use of the valley as a communication route. The area has archaeological interest.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Enclosed farmland from the Post-medieval period. This HLC type has a greater time depth and legibility as it retains more of the field boundaries and smaller field parcels.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Roman road and the surrounding Roman assets.
Visual Qualities	Due to topography falling away from either side of the A691 a lot of the lower areas of the rolling landscape of Greencroft cannot be appreciated until the footpath reaches higher levels. From here the woodland compartments can be appreciated extending up the south west facing slope. Human influences are evident throughout though with vehicles along the A691 in the midground and pylons over the higher areas of the site in the distance. Built form and turbines associated with Greencroft Industrial Estate are also visible. Views to the south and east are more contained or directed by the woodland groups along the burns.





CHARACTER AREA 9

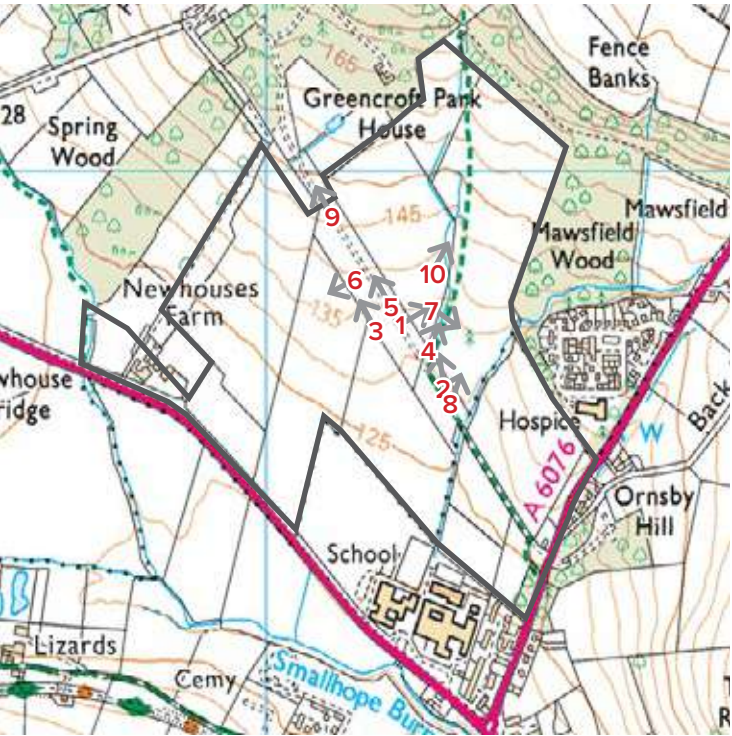
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	The area is roughly semi-circular in size with boundaries formed by the A691 to the north, Newhouse Burn to the west and Smallhope Burn to the south. Farmland evident is in a mixture of pastoral and arable use. Levels are relatively flat with barely a 5m fall in level from west to east.
Natural Components	The fields are medium to small in size and are generally separated by fence boundaries running north to south. Mature woodland groups follow the burns around the perimeter of the site and provide a level of containment, enhanced by the vegetation along the Lanchester Valley path which is on slightly higher levels to the south. Maintained continuous hedgerows, with occasional trees, form the boundary along the A691.
Human Influences	There is no evidence of settlement within this area, or any evidence of any specific activity other than agriculture. This area may have fallen within the deer park which was supposedly part of the early Greencroft Estate though this is not proven. The line of the Roman road runs to the south of this area and it is possible there may be evidence associated with this but again, this is not proven.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Due to the low lying nature and content of the area, and alignment of boundary treatments, this area feels like it has strong links to the areas to the north of the A691. Particularly as the field systems are generally bound by tree groups which is similar to the north side, although on a grander scale.
Cultural Values	This area has little cultural value other than as a former part of the wider Greencroft estate owned by the Clavering family as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The majority of the character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has no specific associations other than the general association with the Clavering family, an association which is no longer extant.
Visual Qualities	As mentioned above, there is some containment of the area by woodland groups, but views of higher areas in the surrounding landscape to the north and west are still achievable and give the impression of farmland within a woodland setting. Given this appearance, beyond the school grounds to the north this area, combined with area 10 to the north of the A691 very much feels like the gateway to the locally designated parkland on approach from the west of Lanchester. Views to the south and east indicate that filtered views of built form associated with Lanchester can be achieved.





CHARACTER AREA 10

CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This character area extends beyond the red line for the site as it illustrates the other field parcels of a similar character. The area is bounded by the A691 and the school boundary to the south, Mawsfield Wood to the north, Spring Wood and High Crow Wood to the west and Howden Bank to the east. Levels fall from north (170m AOD) to south (120m AOD), levelling off in the area by the school. There are a mixture of medium and small sized fields within this area.
Natural Components	The farmland is utilised for a mixture of arable and pastoral use, with some grasslands used for hay crops. These fields are distinguished by the mature groups of trees which are often found along their boundaries, and also individual or groups of trees within fields and along historic access routes to Greencroft from Howden Bank and the A691. Watercourses cross the character area providing localised variations in land form and landcover with areas of scrub often associated within them. The area is contained to the north and west by the woodlands associated with Greencroft.
Human Influences	This character area lies within the designed parkland of the Greencroft Estate and just outside the boundary to the east is the grade II listed Fenhall Lodge which was an entrance lodge for the road into the estate which runs through this character area. This lodge and entrance are shown on the 1820 mapping but not as within the formal parkland area. This area is included in the boundary by 1923. This area is, therefore, of importance in understanding the evolution and development of the Greencroft estate.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The public right of way which travels through the site from north to east provides the opportunity to travel through the differing landscapes within this area which are experienced as a series of views - from enclosed woodland opening out to higher areas of the farmland offering views over Lanchester to the valleys beyond, to crossing designed vistas and views, guided by groups of trees, to following the historic route in from the east which pass through a series of natural gateways provided by mature tree on field boundaries and water courses.
Cultural Values	The character area has cultural value in the historic associations with the evolution of the Greencroft estate and in the close proximity to the listed Fenhall Lodge. The surviving trees along the route provide further historic value.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields on the HLC – that is former enclosed land which has seen significant boundary removal in the modern period to create larger agricultural fields. These areas have little historic landscape legibility and time-depth.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	The area is very much contained to the north, east and west by the woodlands within Greencroft and those on Ormsby Hill to the east of Howden Bank. This containment is less obvious to the south, along the A691, as there is less tree cover which allows views over to area 9 on the opposite side of this route. The historic accesses into the site are accentuated by the lines of mature and often veteran trees which adds to the qualities of the view, especially when seen against, or leading to the woodlands. Urban influences become more apparent to the east of this area where the school and a relatively recent residential development are evident.





CHARACTER AREA 11

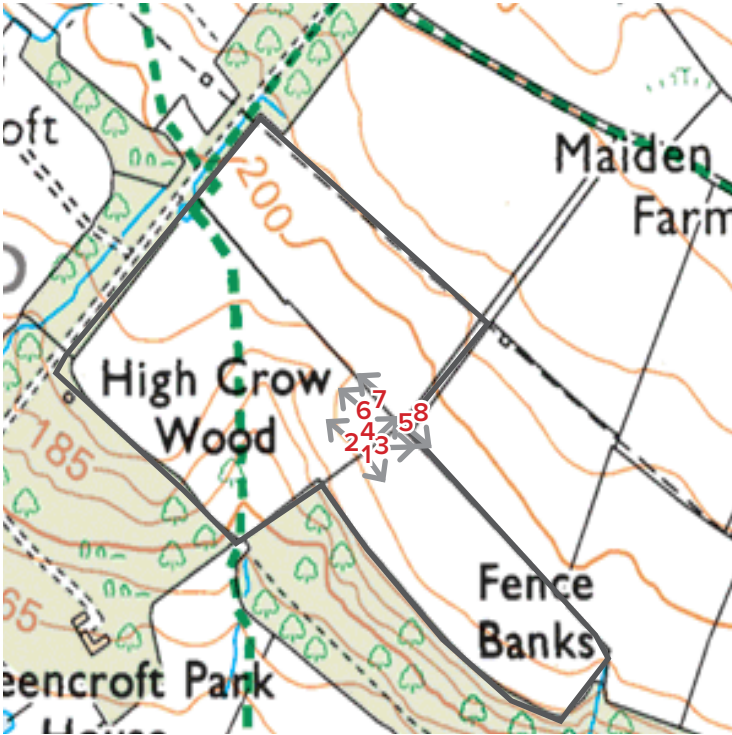
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	Mawsfield Wood does not fall within the current site boundary but was in a previous one, and is still discussed in this context due to its relevance as feature which forms the link between character areas to the south east and north west of the site. The woodland forms a distinct ‘T’ shape to the east of Greencroft and extends from High Crow Wood along a relatively steep ridge to Howden Bank, and also extends south, forming the northern boundary of the residential area to the east of Howden Bank. Levels within the woodland fall from approx. 190m AOD to 135m AOD
Natural Components	Mawsfield Wood is a mixed broadleaved woodland which has been subject to felling and restocking in the past, but is now mature and forms a characteristic feature and green corridor between woodlands within Greencroft and those to the east of Howden Bank
Human Influences	This character area contains Mawsfield Wood which is marked on the 1842 tithe map. This was an ornamental woodland planted as part of the designed estate. There are indications that a summerhouse was located in these woodlands but this is no longer extant. In addition, a coal level is recorded within the woodland.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Due to its elevation and shape it is a key feature of many views available into the south east area of Greencroft, and contains the differing character area to the north of this. At its junction with High Crow Wood the levels and vegetation allow a ‘gateway’ between the two different areas with views for the valley landscape to the south east framed by woodland and individual mature trees in the surrounding fields.
Cultural Values	This area has historic cultural value in the associations with the Clavering family and the Greencroft estate and the information it provides for the evolution of the estate and for garden landscape design of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Woodland plantation.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	The woodland forms a dominant natural feature in views from Howden Bank and associated residential areas, defining and containing the farmland which is adjacent to it due to its shape. It also defines the north eastern extents of the locally designated parkland and is distinguishable in more distance views towards this area from the east and south.

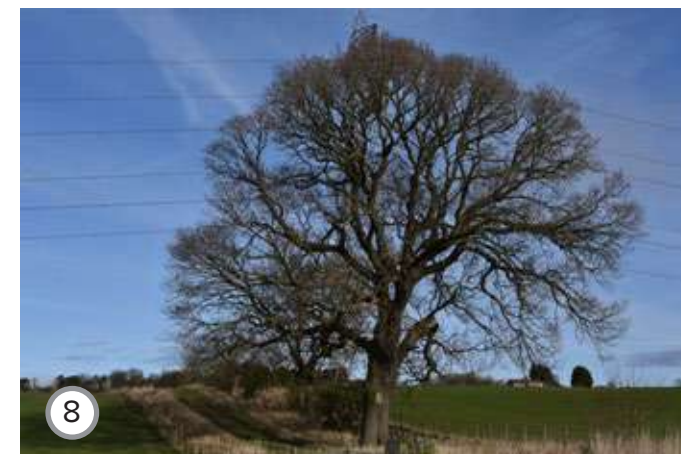




CHARACTER AREA 12

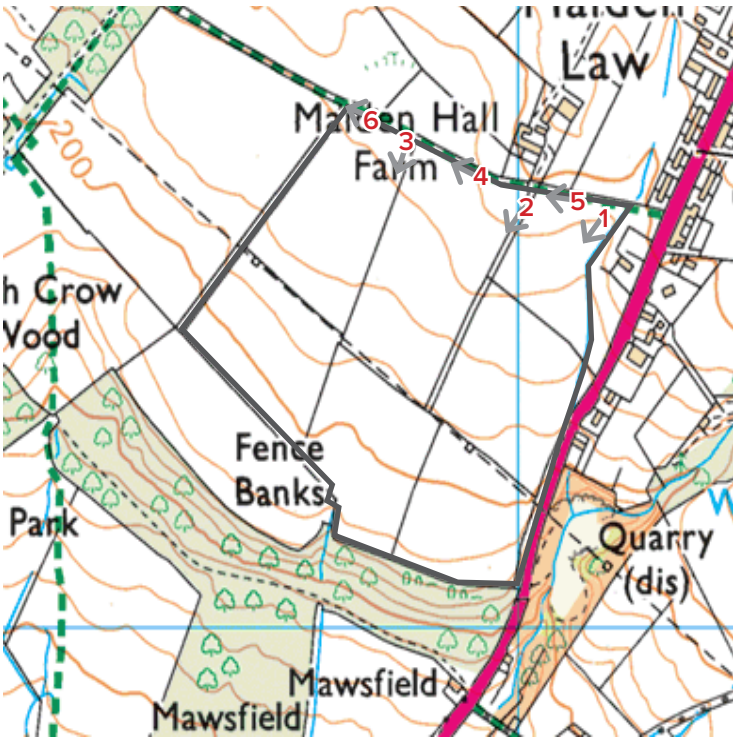
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This area consists of relatively small field parcels contained by Tower Avenue to the west, High Crow Wood and Mawsfield Wood to the south and further farmland and associated field boundaries to the north and east. These fields are characterised by their undulating and relatively steep level changes which go from approx 200m AOD in the north to 170m AOD to the south at the junction between High Crow Wood and Mawsfield Wood where a valley type feature within the field is directed to this point.
Natural Components	Boundaries with adjacent farmland are typically post and wire fences with some hedgerows. Mature broadleaved woodlands form the key features to the north, with thinner tree stands being evident in High Crow Wood. Individual mature trees or groups are present in the eastern field parcel and are often associated with the landforms evident within this.
Human Influences	This is a small character area just north of the boundary of the locally listed parkland of Greencroft, but has been part of the designed estate since at least the 1820 mapping. The area was likely part of the earlier deer park. Historic mapping shows this area had not particular function within the estate but it is dotted with specimen trees and parkland planting which show that the area was integrated into the designed parkland. It is also the case that historic footpaths crossed over this area which are maintained today.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	The public right of way crosses the eastern field from the prominent Tower Avenue and follows the valley landform leading to the ‘gateway’ between the larger woodland groups to the south referred to in character areas 10 and 11. The presence of the individual and groups of mature trees within the field and the level changes evident combine to emphasise the scale and stature of these.
Cultural Values	This area has historic cultural value in the associations with the Clavering family and the Greencroft estate and the information it provides for the evolution of the estate and for garden landscape design of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area as Country House manor/estate – however built form was never located within this area.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	Views are generally contained to the north and north east by topography, and to the north west and south by the woodland compartments associated with Greencroft, so views in and out of this are can only be experienced in close proximity. The visual diversity evident within such a small area increases the quality and value of this area.





CHARACTER AREA 13

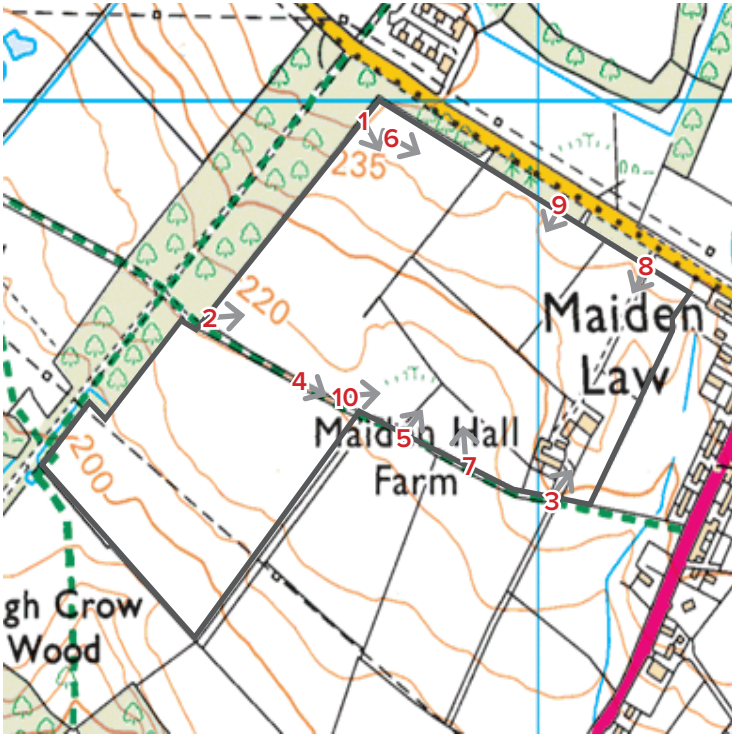
CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	The site is bound by Howden Bank to the east, and properties to the west of this route, a track to Maiden Hall Farm to the north, agricultural field boundaries to the west and partly south, and Mawsfield Wood to the south. Level changes in this area are relatively gentle falling from 220m AOD in the north to 190m AOD to the south. The fields are small to medium in size and relatively regular in size.
Natural Components	There are minimal natural features on field boundaries with the majority of them being post and rail fences. There are occasional hedgerows, often associated with tracks into the farmland, and some of these look to have been planted quite recently. A dry stone wall separates the area from Howden Bank to the east and a section of woodland extends up from Mawsfield Wood to the south of this feature. Garden landscapes are evident to the east.
Human Influences	This is a character area on the northeastern boundary of the site, southwest of Maiden Law. There is a record of a possible deserted medieval settlement at the very southern edge of this area, however no evidence exists to confirm this. The character area was located within the wider Greencroft estate as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Due to the elevated and relatively shallow gradients evident within the site, and lack of boundary treatments between fields the area has a feeling of openness. A public right of way travels along a track to the north of this area, allowing appreciation of this aesthetic, before continuing west to Tower Avenue.
Cultural Values	This area has historic cultural value in the associations with the Clavering family and the Greencroft estate.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Enclosed farmland from the Post-medieval period. This HLC type has a greater time depth and legibility as it retains more of the field boundaries and smaller field parcels.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	Although this area is relatively open, visually there is some containment provided by Tower Avenue, High Crow Wood and Mawsfield Wood within the site, and woodland to the east of Howden Bank in the midground of views. Due to the elevation, particularly to the north of the area where the footpath and residential properties are evident, distant views are available of the valley landscapes to the south and west. Overhead cables and pylons which extend east to west over the northern area of Greencroft are evident in views.





CHARACTER AREA 14

CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	This area is bounded by a mature woodland belt along the south side of Tower Road to the north, agricultural field boundaries to the east, Tower Avenue to the west and the track to Maiden Hall Farm and Tower Avenue from Howden Bank to the east. The topography across this area falls north to south, from 240m AOD to 195m AOD respectively. Fields are medium to large in size and irregularly shaped.
Natural Components	The farmland in this area is generally in pastoral use. Although the topography generally falls there are localised depressions within the fields where marshland patches and taller grasses are evident. Field boundaries are limited and are often post and wire fences. There is limited vegetation along these although mature trees and areas of scrub are present in places. Woodland groups are located to the east of Maiden Hall Farm and a square shaped compartment is located to the north of the farm track with an area of potentially a previously wooded area extending west from this.
Human Influences	This is a character area on the northern boundary of the Site, adjacent to the entrance treelined avenue into the estate. The character area was located within the wider Greencroft estate as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map. Historic mapping shows that farm buildings, later labelled as Maiden Hall Farm are located within this character area. These are extant but much extended.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Due to the localised landform within fields and layering of different landscape typologies within them, contained by woodland belts to the north and west, the landscape appears varied and diverse. This can be perceived from the public right of way which extends along the south of the area.
Cultural Values	This area has historic cultural value in the associations with the Clavering family and the Greencroft estate.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Enclosed farmland from the Post-medieval period. This HLC type has a greater time depth and legibility as it retains more of the field boundaries and smaller field parcels. The eastern portion is identified as settlement as this extends into the area of Maiden Law and also contains Maiden Hall Farm.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	The woodland along Tower Avenue and the south of Tower Road form visual containment and skyline features in views to the north and west. Localised landforms often interrupt and direct views, especially when combined with existing vegetation evident. Distant views are available to the south and east where vegetation allows and the mature appearance of the landscape of the area appears to seamlessly blend with the rolling valley landform beyond. Overhead cables and pylons are evident within views.





CHARACTER AREA 15

CHARACTER CATEGORY/ FEATURE	DESCRIPTION
Physical Attributes	Tower Road bounds the site to the north, with Tower Avenue forming the boundary of the site to the east. Woodlands to the north of Shoulder of Mutton provide the edge to the south and Park Head Farm, the access track to the north of it and the woodland to the south form the boundary to the west. Topography generally falls north (240m AOD) to south (195m AOD) although valley landforms are found associated with watercourses within the site which are relatively steep in places. Banksides to the north east of this area are also steep. Due to the landform and features in this area the fields are small to medium in size and have irregular boundaries.
Natural Components	The fields are predominantly in pastoral use. Field boundaries are often stone wall boundaries, or remnants of them, with some mature intermittent hedgerows and trees evident along them. Stone walls and ditches are a key features of the track which extends east to west over the south of the area. Tree cover is also a comment feature along the watercourses seen within the site and also along Tower Road. Scrub within the fields appears more frequently within fields on higher contours and in a localised relatively level area in the centre of the area two ponds are present.
Human Influences	This is a character area on the northern boundary of the Site, on the northern side of the entrance tree lined avenue into the estate. The character area was located within the wider Greencroft estate as demonstrated by the 1842 tithe map. Historic mapping shows that there was a reservoir in this area which is no longer extant.
Perceptual/ Experiential Qualities	Due to the localised landform within fields and layering of different landscape typologies within them, contained by woodland belts to the east, south and west, the landscape appears varied and diverse. This can be perceived from the public right of way which extends along the south of the area.
Cultural Values	This area has historic cultural value in the associations with the Clavering family and the evolution of the Greencroft estate.
Historical Landscape Classification Summary, land use, land management, settlement	The character area is covered by an area identified as Modern Fields meaning the area has little time-depth and historic legibility as many of the historic field boundaries have been removed.
Historical, social and personal associations	The character area has associations with the Clavering family through the Greencroft estate.
Visual Qualities	The woodland along Tower Avenue and north of Shoulder of Mutton form visual containment and skyline features in views to the east and south. Localised landforms often interrupt and direct views, especially when combined with existing vegetation evident. More open views are evident from higher sections of the area, and where gaps in vegetation along Tower Road are evident. Distant views are available to the west albeit interrupted by overhead cables and pylons which are quite dominant features in some views.





Context of Historic Landscape Appraisal

The following pages contain the information on the Historic Landscape Appraisal which is illustrated in Figure 4.1 (overleaf). This figure sets out a visual representation of the assessment of the heritage significance of this site, and the relative ‘sensitivity’ in heritage terms of the different land parcels. This figure is a distillation of the assessment, research, site visits and other detailed analysis undertaken to inform this scheme and is the outcome of professional, objective historic analysis of the site.

The figure identifies a number of parcels within the site boundary. These parcels have been identified due to the heritage characteristics they display and any intrinsic heritage significance, or lack of as may be the case. The table overleaf sets out the description of the heritage sensitivity of each numbered parcel within the figure, the reasoning for assigning that level of sensitivity and any options for further surveys to clarify or refine this.

In order to arrive at a finding or rating of heritage sensitivity, guidance has been utilised from the UK Forestry Standard (5th Edition 2023, Forestry Commission). Within this there is a section setting out the UKFS Requirements for Forests and the Historic Environment. This sets out requirements for different types of heritage asset, including Historic landscape character. Under this heading, its states:

“In some situations, new forests and woodlands can enhance or develop the historic character of the landscape, but in others they may be inappropriate and detract from it.”

There are two requirements to consider in this section:

1. *“Forests should be designed and managed to take account of the historical character and cultural values of the landscape.*
2. *Forests should be designed and managed to take account of policies associated with historic landscapes, battlefield sites, historic parks and gardens, and designed landscapes of historic interest.”*

Guidelines on the Historic Environment describe a number of factors to be taken into consideration with regards to forest and the historic environment. These include, but are not limited to:

- Historic Context;
- Evidence of the historic environment;
- Forest planning; and
- Open space.

Under each heading there is a general discussion of that factor together with guidelines. Under Historic Context, the text summarising this notes: *“All landscapes have intrinsic historical value and many have special cultural significance, as can the individual elements within them. The historic context provides the starting point in forest planning for the historic environment.”* Guidelines 2 and 3 of this section state:

2. *“Use the historic assessment/categorisation or any description given in a historic register or list, together with the Landscape Character Assessment, to inform the development of proposals.*
3. *Consider the impacts of forestry on the historical context and landscape character in forest management plans; consider opportunities to complement, enhance or re-create landscapes of historic interest.”*

Under Evidence of the historic environment, this document states: “Assessing the evidence is vital in establishing the historic environment value of a site.”

Guidelines 4 and 5 of this section state:

4. *“Take advice on the historical interest of the site from the historic environment services and by checking the historic environment records.*
- 5 *Look for indications of the historic environment on the ground and conduct further investigation where evidence is found; commission specialist surveys where evidence is significant.”*

Under the Forest Planning section, guideline 18 is clear is stating: *“New forests and woodlands should be located and designed to maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the landscape.”* Further, this section is clear in stating that *“In some situations, evidence of the historic environment will be compelling and forestry may be inappropriate. However, where features or areas of interest have been identified within a forest area, it will sometimes be possible to safeguard them as an area of open space within a forest management plan.”* It is noted that the application and remit of this quote is not limited to designated heritage assets.

This section also goes on to recognise the importance of the setting of all heritage assets (not only designated assets). The Standards states: *“The settings of features, in addition to the features themselves, may be relevant and will need to be considered in the forest management plan. Where groups of features occur adjacent to each other, a larger area of open space is preferable to a series of smaller spaces. Where features are prominent in the landscape, or have sight lines associated with their function, then the area to be excluded from planting will need to be larger to accommodate these visual qualities.”*

The Guidelines for this section set out a number of considerations:

- 10. *“Ensure the historic environment considerations are fully integrated into the forest planning process.*
- 11 *Plan an appropriate area of open space around features of historical significance; for Scheduled Monuments this will normally be a minimum of 20 m. Consider the setting as well as the individual features.*
- 12 *Where evidence suggests that significant historical remains may be present, but specific features have not been identified, identify these areas in forest management plans, restrict any planting to smaller trees or shrubs and minimise ground disturbance.*
- 13 *For new woods in areas where the landscape history is important, consider restoring tree cover on previously wooded sites.”*

Under the Open Space section, this identifies the importance of retaining open space within woodland to provide an appropriate setting for specific historic environment features and how keeping these areas free from woody vegetation can help to preserve the features, provide physical access and capture something of the visual context and spirit of a place.

The 5th edition of the Forestry Standard largely reinforces and restates the advice of the earlier versions – making clear that heritage assets requiring protection and consideration are not simply those which have a statutory designation.

The consideration of areas within the site which may be appropriate/less appropriate for woodland planting when considering the Historic Landscape have been arrived at taking into account guidance within the UK Forestry Standard documents, and relevant local and national planning policies. Of particular relevance to this scheme is the locally designated parkland of Greencroft – the history and evolution of which is set out in detail in this document – and the setting of this asset which contributes to the significance.

Definitions of the Heritage Sensitivity Ratings shown overleaf are as below:-

RED

Area of **High** heritage sensitivity
Woodland planting in this area is least preferable with a strong preference for the area to remain free from woodland planting.

AMBER

Area of **Medium** heritage sensitivity
Woodland planting could be accommodated within a considered framework of broadleaved planting and open areas.

GREEN

Area of **Negligible/ Low** heritage sensitivity
Introduction of woodland planting is unrestricted from a heritage perspective in these areas.

Historic Landscape Appraisal

Figure 4.1 overleaf highlights and summarises the understanding of heritage sensitivities within the site in relation to the potential creation of woodland areas within it. This has been determined through detailed site and desktop analysis, and appraisal of the Greencroft site and its evolution, as evidenced in previous sections of the report.

Ref.	Heritage Sensitivity	Sensitivity Type	Evidence Relating to Sensitivity	Options for Further Work/ Survey
1	High - Low/Negligible	Archaeological Historic Landscape	The area which is High sensitivity is the line of the former wagonway and footprint as derived from historic mapping of the Greencroft Pit. This has a 5m buffer around it to preserve the archaeological interest and setting of this asset. Archaeology relating to mining activity is highly valued within Durham and is considered at least of regional significance. The area of Medium Sensitivity relates to potential earthworks associated with the colliery - surface mining etc showing as pits on the historic mapping. It is considered that these are of lesser significance than the wagonway and colliery remains and some planting could be accommodated here.	Geophysical Survey, Detailed LiDAR survey,Local and mining records research
2	High - Low/Negligible	Archaeological Historic Landscape	As Area 1	Geophysical Survey, Detailed LiDAR survey, Local and mining records research
3	High - Medium	Historic Landscape	The High sensitivity relates to field to east of this parcel is associated with Shoulder of Mutton, and is located within the Locally Designated Parkland. The retention of this area as 'open' ground is key to the appreciation of the setting and context of the parkland, and the different features it contains. See Area 5 for information on Medium sensitivity within this area.	
4	Low/Negligible	N/A	N/A	
5	Medium	Historic Landscape	This has been assigned a Medium sensitivity as although the area is separate to the historic parkland and does not form part of an identified key view that contributes to the significance of the historic park, views of the parkland are achieved over these fields and they are part of the wider estate, protecting the 'shape' of the designed elements within the historic core. The area has some capacity for new planting and the use of native broadleaf species is recommended here due to the proximity of dwellings and the visibility of the parkland over this area.	
6	High - Low/Negligible	Historic Landscape	The High sensitivity area relates to entrances into the historic parkland, established in the 17th century. Planting to the edges of these driveways would remove key elements of the very earliest phases of the evolution of the parkland. The driveways were intended to form part of a journey, from open farmland, into the more enclosed woodland near to the core, then opening out into the hall and rose garden to the front. Planting would obscure and blur these edges, entirely removing their geometric and linear form - the original intent of the designer of this landscape. These elements make a key contribution to the significance of the locally designated parkland through setting. Loss through planting would result in heritage harm. See Area 5 for information on Medium sensitivity within this area.	
7	High and Low/ Negligible	Archaeological	The High sensitivity area relates to the route of a Roman road as identified by geophysical survey. A 20m buffer is provided either side of the line of this. This is a non-designated asset associated with the Roman fort further south east which is Scheduled	
8	High and Low/ Negligible	Archaeological	As Area 7	
9	Medium	Historic Landscape	As Area 5. This area is also evident as the setting to the locally designated parkland on approach from the west of Lanchester with many features feeding into it.	
10	High	Historic Landscape	As Area 6.	
11	High	Historic Landscape	Mawsfield Wood is part of the Locally Designated Parkland and has been classified as High sensitivity due to this, and its impact as a feature which frames the parkland, and views into it from the east	
12	Medium	Historic Landscape	See Area 5.	
13	Medium - Low/ Negligible	Historic Landscape	See Area 5 for information on Medium sensitivity within this area.	
14	High and Low/ Negligible	Historic Landscape	The area of High sensitivity relates to the Tower Avenue which is a key component of the former parkland. The buffer highlighted by the red area shown is the minimum required to allow appreciation of this element of the historic landscape and its contribution to the historic core of the parkland. To plant to the edge of this feature would remove entirely the crisp, geometric planting and design intention - a fundamental element of the early landscape design of the estate. These elements make a key contribution to the significance of the locally designated parkland through setting. Loss through planting would result in heritage harm.	
15	High - Low/ Negligible	Historic Landscape	As Area 14	
16	Low/Negligible	N/A	N/A	

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Character Area Boundary
- - - Historic Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Local Interest
- Negligible/ Low Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- Medium Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- High Sensitivity to Woodland Creation



Figure 4.1
Historic Landscape Appraisal

Context of Landscape Character Appraisal

The following pages contain the information on the Landscape Character Appraisal which is illustrated in Figure 4.2 (overleaf). This figure sets out a visual representation of the assessment of the landscape character of this site, and the relative ‘sensitivity’ i of the different land parcels. This figure summarises the work undertaken during the analysis and appraisal stages of the project with information gathered through desk top study and site visits. It also takes into consideration designations evident within the site area, and guidance on considerations for woodland creation schemes and their design - both nationwide and local.

The figure identifies the sensitivity of the different Landscape Character Areas/ Field Parcels identified within the site in Section 3 to the introduction of a woodland creation scheme. The table overleaf sets out the description of the landscape sensitivity of each numbered parcel within the figure, the reasoning for assigning that level of sensitivity and any options for further surveys to clarify or refine this, if required.

In order to arrive at a finding or rating of heritage sensitivity, guidance has been utilised from the UK Forestry Standard (5th Edition 2023, Forestry Commission). Within this there is a section for Forests and Landscape. This sets out how the understanding of landscape character is fundamental to planning for any landscape changes and informing design, and notes that:

‘Where available, formal LCA studies provide an essential starting point for forest design, and will inform how the siting, extent and composition of forests can be planned so that they make a positive contribution to the landscape. This is particularly important for significant areas of new woodland or large-scale felling and restocking (or regeneration)’

It notes that proposed changes should be assessed in terms of

- *Landscape sensitivity – natural heritage and cultural or historical associations all contribute to landscape and scenic value and may be supported by designation.*
- *Landscape character – an appreciation of the description of the current key characteristics of a local or regional landscape and how this may change as a consequence of the proposals is the starting point for the design process.*
- *Landscape visibility – determined by the prominence and topography of the landscape, the number of viewpoints, and the presence of elements which may screen or frame views*

- *Number of viewers – depends on the size of the local population, settlement pattern, and how the landscape is used by local people, those in transit and visitors.*
- *Nature of viewing experience – influenced by factors such as whether the view is seen from a moving vehicle or a neighbouring dwelling, or provides the backdrop to a visitor attraction, or is a view glimpsed through a forest opening*

In relation to Forest Design Principles it notes that:

‘The assessment of landscape context will inform how forest design principles should be applied to ensure that forests make a positive environmental contribution.’

Key considerations of design are listed as:-

- **Shape** - has a major influence on how we perceive our surroundings. The perception of a particular shape is influenced by its overall proportions, how edges are defined and the viewer’s position in the landscape. Compatible shapes achieve harmony in a composition, whereas shapes that are incongruous have a visually jarring effect.
- **Landform** - The most prominent landform features have the strongest visual forces, and lesser forces relate to the more minor features. Identifying visual forces and using them to help shape a forest design ensures landscape coherence and a more natural looking forest
- **Pattern of Enclosure** - An enclosure pattern refers to the network of hedges, walls, ditches, fences and trees that define field boundaries in most of the lowlands and upland fringes of the UK. Enclosure has a historical and cultural value and is a cherished and distinctive visual feature of the countryside
- **Scale** - has a major effect on perception. In landscape, it is defined as the relative size of one visual element to another, and the relative size of the whole landscape to the observer. The scale increases with the elevation of the observer and the expanse of the view. Scale is an important visual factor in fitting forests into the landscape.
- **Diversity** - the number of different elements in a landscape or design.
- **Unity** - when the component parts of a design contribute harmoniously to the whole and all the visual design factors work well together. In landscape, this is achieved when the elements fit together well and relate to the site context and landscape characteristics, and nothing looks out of place or unbalanced
- **Spirit of Place** - a term for the intangible factor that gives a specific location special character and makes it unique to people.

Definitions of the Landscape Character Sensitivity Ratings shown overleaf are as below:-

RED

Area of **High** landscape sensitivity

Woodland planting in this area is least preferable with a strong preference for the area to remain free from woodland planting.

AMBER

Area of **Medium** landscape sensitivity

Woodland planting could be accommodated within a considered framework of broadleaved planting and open areas.

GREEN

Area of **Negligible/ Low** landscape sensitivity

Introduction of woodland planting is unrestricted from a landscape perspective in these areas.

Landscape Character Appraisal

Figure 4.2 overleaf highlights and summarises the understanding of landscape character sensitivities within the site in relation to the potential creation of woodland areas within it. This has been determined through detailed site and desktop analysis, appraisal of the different character areas evident and an understanding of their visual and physical relationship to each other and the wider valley landscape.

Ref.	Landscape Sensitivity	Sensitivity Type	Evidence Relating to Sensitivity	Options for Further Work/ Survey
1	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The area which is Medium sensitivity is the smaller field to the south of this area which includes more diversity, Consideration of the treatment along the edges of the footpath through the larger less sensitive area will need to be considered.	
2	Medium	Visual Amenity	Open distant views are available from higher levels of this area to and from the Iveston Conservation Area, surrounding area and distant valley landscape. Views also available to the extents of the locally designated parkland.	
3	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The Medium sensitivity relates to field to east of this parcel, associated with Shoulder of Mutton, and is located within the Locally Designated Parkland and AHLV. Any proposals for this area must ensure that this landform and character as predominantly open ground is retained to allow the edges of the parkland to be identified both within the site, and from further afield.	Understand effects of any future felling/ restocking proposals associated with this woodland
4	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The Medium sensitivity areas is noted in the section that appears to have a parkland character and is important in allowing views along Newhouse Burn from areas to the west, to the parkland. Also designated as AHLV	
5	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	As Area 4.	
6	High - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The High sensitivity area relates to entrances into the historic parkland and associated features evidenced along Newhouse Burn which contribute to the varied character of this watercourse. This is also why the Medium sensitivity area has been defined along the north of this parcel	
7	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The Medium sensitivity area relates to the higher areas of this parcel where views are available over a mosaic of landscape types to the distant valley slopes. There should be consideration in any woodland design for some of these to be retained.	
8	Medium - Low/Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	As Area 7	
9	Medium	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	This area has links to the parkland associated with Area 10, both in relation to landscape character and intervisibility and appears to form a gateway to this and the wider valley landscape from the west of Lanchester.	
10	High	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	Much of this area is highlighted as both locally designated parkland and AHLV. The sections that are not designated as parkland have a similar character and feel very much a part of the parkland and wider setting, particularly due to their proximity to the historic access routes to this, and the containment of woodland compartments within it.	
11	High	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	Mawsfield Wood is part of the locally designated parkland and AHLV and has been classified as High sensitivity due to this. The sensitivity is enhanced due to its prominence within the east of the site and its identifiable character due to size, shape and content.	Understand effects of any future felling/ restocking proposals associated with this woodland
12	Medium	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	This area contains some features linked to the locally designated parkland and is also part of the AHLV. Its unique content within the site in terms of landform and vegetation provides a unique character which offers gateway views.	
13	High and Low/ Negligible	Visual Amenity	The High sensitivity relates to the public right of way route within this area. Distant views are currently available from this point over an open farmland landscape and the locally designated parkland. It is important that some of this character can be retained.	
14	High - Low/ Negligible	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	The area of High sensitivity relates to the Tower Avenue which is a key component of the former parkland and is also part of the AHLV. It is important that the narrative of the parkland and features within it are legible in character and views from the site and wider area.	
15	High - Medium	Landscape Character Visual Amenity	As Area 14. The Medium sensitivity areas identify those which have a more diverse landscape character with open views available.	
16	Medium	Visual Amenity	This is a roadside landscape but is also close to key recreational routes.	

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Character Area Boundary
- Negligible/Low Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- Medium Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- High Sensitivity to Woodland Creation



Figure 4.2
Landscape Character Appraisal

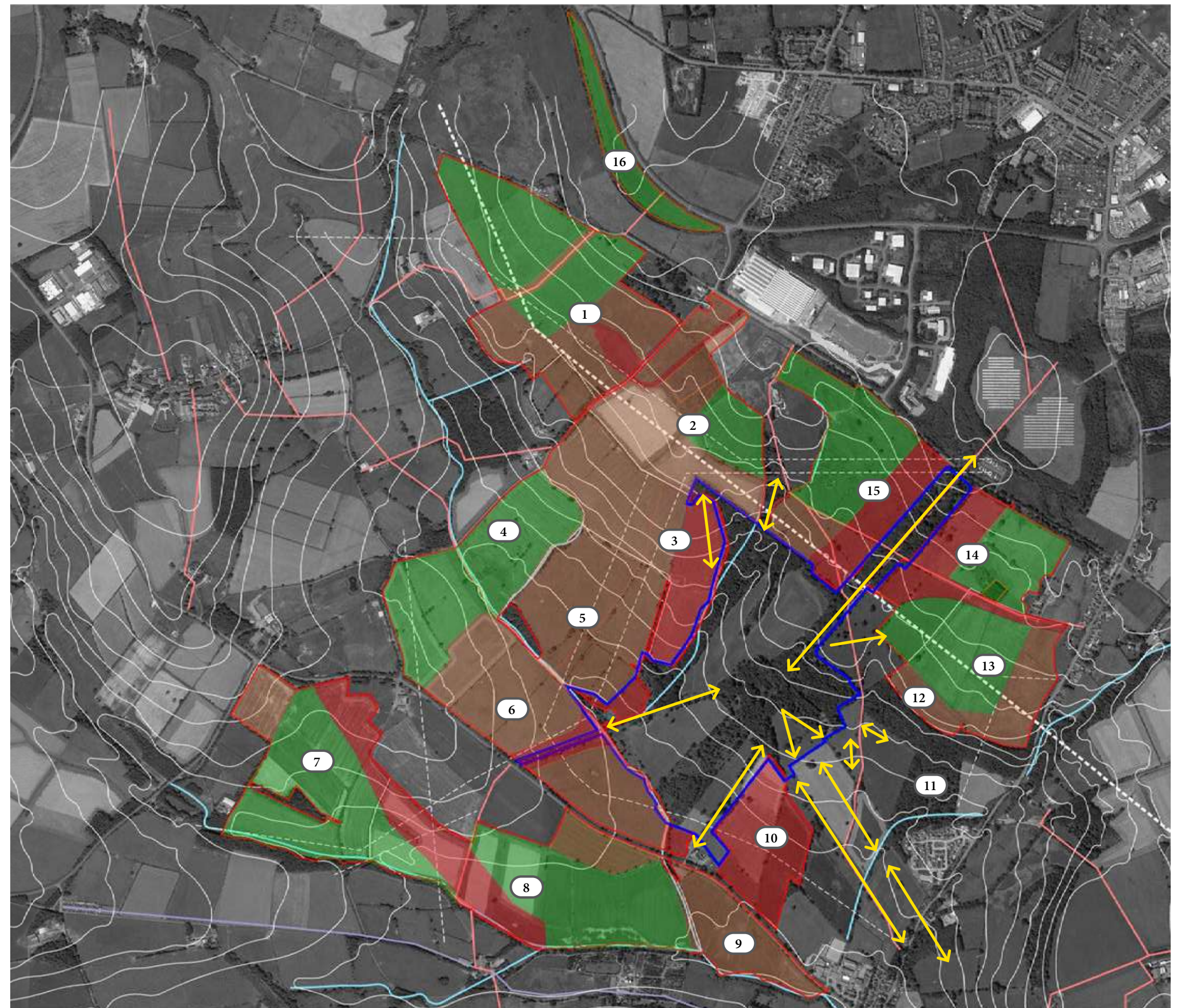
Overall Site Appraisal

Through understanding both the Landscape Character and Historic Landscape context and sensitivities of the site, as illustrated in the previous site appraisal plans, an overall Site Appraisal Plan has been developed which combines and balances the considerations of each.

Legend

- Site Boundary
- Other Land in Client's Ownership
- Character Area Boundary
- Overhead Power Cables
- Public Right of Way
- Watercourse
- ||||| Course of Roman Road
- Negligible/ Low Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- Medium Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- High Sensitivity to Woodland Creation
- ↔ Designed Views (Heritage)

Figure 4.4
Overall Site Appraisal Plan



Section 5

Summary and Conclusions

The findings of this report are intended to assist with the development of a Woodland Creation scheme for the site which is sensitive and responsive to its existing landscape character, content and context and also the historic landscape and how the site has evolved and been influenced by design.

The understanding of the various sensitivities of the site to proposed woodland creation have been illustrated and described in narrative, reflecting guidance available, both in relation to the UK Forestry Standard and local policies and guides. These sensitivities take into account the different phases of woodland development - both from initial planting, and potential felling and re-stocking of compartments.

It is recommended that any Woodland Creation Scheme is developed in accordance with the findings of the report, and with due consideration to the existing content and features within the site, and opportunities and constraints identified.

For this project the Woodland Creation Scheme is being developed by Pryor & Rickett Silviculture, taking due regard to findings from this report and information provided by other specialists. Please refer to the latest revision of their Concept Design, and the visualisations they are providing to support this, for further detail.



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