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Warrington Borough Council

Local Plan

Preferred Development Option

Regulation 18 Consultation

Standard Response Form

July 2017

1: Contact Details (Compulsory)

Title:

First Name:

Last Name:

Organisation (if applicable): Wainhomes (NW) Limited

Address: C/O Emery Planning, 2-4 South Park Court, Hobson Street, Macclesfield, SK11 8BS

(please mark correspondence: FAO [REDACTED])

Phone Number: [REDACTED]

E-mail: Support@emeryplanning.com

Which best describes you? (tick ✓ one option only)

Resident in Warrington

Resident from outside of Warrington

Business

Other, please specify



Land south of Lumber Lane, Burtonwood

Site-specific representations – Warrington Local Plan
Preferred Development Option 2017

for Wainhomes (NW) Ltd

EP Project Ref: 17-316



Project : 14-313
Site address : Land south of Lumber
Lane, Burtonwood
Client : Wainhomes (NW) Ltd
Date : September 2017
Author : [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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1. Site location and description

- 1.1 The site is located to the edge of Burtonwood, which is a settlement to the north-west of Warrington and falls within the administrative boundaries of Warrington Borough Council.
- 1.2 The site comprises fields and equates to a site area of approximately 10ha, and falls within the ownership of two interested parties. See the location plan at **EP1**.
- 1.3 In terms of its relationship with the wider area, the site adjoins the built-up area of Burtonwood to the southern and eastern boundaries comprising residential estates and an industrial estate. It is bounded by the Lumber Lane highway to the northern boundary and a field to the western boundary with residential development along Green Lane beyond.
- 1.4 The site comprises a logical and small-scale extension to the existing settlement of Burtonwood.
- 1.5 We have previously made representations with regard to this site through the Warrington Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation last year (December 2016).

2. Proposed allocation

- 2.1 It is considered that the site is capable of approximately 200 dwellings with a proportion comprising affordable/starter homes in accordance with planning policy requirements. Alternative employment, retail or community uses would also be considered by the client should such uses be required.
- 2.2 The Transport Technical Note prepared by SCP at **EP2** provides a sound basis for securing a masterplan that responds well to the surrounding area and contributes to the sustainable growth of this part of Warrington.
- 2.3 Baldwin Design has prepared a masterplan on behalf of the client and this is enclosed at **EP3**. This demonstrates that the site could be developed for a high quality residential development that relates well to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and secures attractive areas of on-site open space, desirable pedestrian linkages and retains ecological features such as the existing pond. The existing public right of way along the southern edge together with trees of significance would be retained.

2.4 We would suggest that a site-specific allocation of our client's site through the Warrington local Plan as follows:

- The provision of around 200 homes comprising an appropriate mix of sizes and tenures.
- The delivery of affordable housing in accordance with planning policy requirements.
- Appropriate access for vehicular traffic and pedestrians with the primary access via Lumber Lane and the submission of a Transport Assessment.
- Provision of a comprehensive landscaping plan for the retention and enhancement of landscape features, such as trees and hedgerows, and the provision of soft landscaped areas.
- Provision of on-site open space and a childrens play area.
- Contributions to local infrastructure where appropriate and in accordance with planning policy requirements.

3. Green Belt considerations

3.1 Our client's site has been assessed through parcel BW3 through the Warrington Green Belt Assessment (2016). The assessment concludes that the site makes a 'moderate' contribution to the openness and main purposes of the Green Belt. All of the other parcels assessed in Burtonwood are assessed as making a 'strong' contribution. Our client's site comprises the most logical for release from the Green Belt and development would have the least Green Belt impact in order to meet the housing needs of Burtonwood over the plan-period.

3.2 The parcel BW3 comprises a large parcel incorporating land beyond our client's site interest. A site-specific impact of our client's site by ARUP would conclude that this site has even less of a contribution to the openness and main purposes of the Green Belt.

3.3 Enclosed as **EP4** is a detailed assessment of the site by Tyler Grange. This scope of the report is to assess the potential development of the site going forward and provide a review of the suitability of the land for release from the Green Belt.

3.4 Tyler Grange set out in their conclusion that the site is considered capable of being developed without resulting in unrestricted urban sprawl or coalescence of urban areas and with respect to landscape and visual matters, this site should therefore be considered suitable for residential development and release from the Green Belt.

3.5 The Tyler Grange report assesses the site against the first four of the key purposes of the Green Belt as set out at paragraph 80 of the NPPF. We have not assessed the fifth as the need for Green Belt releases is accepted. Below is a summary Green Belt assessment of our client's site.

| Main purpose | Summary assessment undertaken by Tyler Grange |
|---|---|
| To check unrestricted urban sprawl | <p>The site is bounded by existing built development to the southern and eastern boundaries and the built-up area of Burtonwood. There is Lumber Lane to the northern boundary and residential development along Green Lane to the western boundary.</p> <p>These boundaries provide a robust, permanent and defensible edge such that development would not sprawl any further northwards, eastwards or westwards.</p> |
| To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another | <p>The physical barriers provided by Lumber Lane and the built-up area of Burtonwood would contain any future development, which would be viewed as a consolidated settlement edge to Burtonwood.</p> <p>There are no issues in terms of the merging of settlements.</p> |
| Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment | <p>Although the site is presently open and undeveloped, it is influenced by the adjacent built development within Burtonwood and the Lumber Lane highway. With planting carried to the edges of the site, any development will assimilate with the landscape.</p> |
| Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns | <p>The site does not play a role in the setting or significance of the historic settlements.</p> |

3.6 We consider that our client's site makes a 'weak' (i.e. the least harmful) contribution to the openness and main purposes of the Green Belt.

3.7 Paragraph 83 of the NPPF confirms that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. The release of Green Belt land for housing development is necessary in order to meet unmet and future housing needs of Burtonwood and the wider Borough. This comprises exceptional circumstances for the purposes of the NPPF.

3.8 The release of Green Belt land across Warrington should also be seen within the context of the following bullet points of paragraph 85 of the NPPF:

"When defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:

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

3.9 With regard to the bullet points set out above, the release of our client's site for housing development would help to meet the identified housing requirements for sustainable development.

3.10 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states that when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. We undertake an assessment below of our client's land with regard to the three roles of sustainable development as set out at paragraph 7 of the NPPF:

Economic: New housing development is required across the Borough to include areas of the designated Green Belt in order to ensure that the Borough and city-region has a stable workforce in terms of ability and age profile. The construction of new houses would also create construction jobs in the short term, and once occupied, new residents would boost householder spending on goods and services within the surrounding area. New housing development would also generate a New Homes Bonus for the city-region.

Social: Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that one of the requirements is the supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations. The release of our client's site for new housing development would help to ensure that the identified housing needs of the Borough in terms of market and affordable housing are met.

Environmental: The site is highly locationally sustainable with easy and convenient access to a wide range of local services and public transport options. The site is located at the edge of Burtonwood and is suitable for major new housing developments in terms of infrastructure requirements and landscape impact. The release of this site for housing development would comprise a logical urban extension with negligible impacts in relation to the main purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

3.11 The release of our client's site from the Green Belt for new housing development as part of the emerging local plan is considered to be fully justified with due regard for paragraphs 82 to 85 of the NPPF.

4. Masterplan and technical considerations

4.1 A masterplan has already been prepared for the site by Baldwin Design and this is appended at **EP3**. This masterplan demonstrates that the site could deliver a high quality and sustainable extension to the existing built-up area of Burtonwood. It shows:

- A low-density scheme appropriate to the existing urban edge of Burtonwood with houses sited such that they positively address the public realm.
- The opportunity for extensive tree planting to the edges of the development site.
- Provision of extensive areas of on-site play and open space and retention of ecological features such as a pond.
- Desirable linkages for existing and future residents through the site and the retention of the existing public right of way along the southern boundary.

4.2 The Warrington SHLAA has assessed the site (ref: 1534 and 2146) and found that there are no site-specific matters that would prevent this site from coming forward for development. We can confirm that the site is available and achievable.

4.3 The primary access point into the site is shown off Lumber Lane to the northern boundary. SCP have produced a Transport Technical Note at EP2, and this is summarised as follows:

- The site could accommodate up to 200 dwellings in highways terms with no unacceptable impacts.
- A single point of vehicular access would be sufficient to serve the site, although there are opportunities for a second access if required.
- There are opportunities for cycle and pedestrian linkages to Lumber Lane.
- The site is well connected to the urban area of Burtonwood and there is a convenience store, post office, primary school, nursery school, church, sports fields, hairdressers, hot food take-aways, and other shops and services, all within 1km of the site.
- There are two regular bus services within Burtonwood and further school and college buses. Service 141 connects Burtonwood to St Helens and Newton-le-Willows at a frequency of 60 minutes during the daytime. This service passes along the site frontage. Bus service 329 links St Helens to Warrington via Burtonwood and operates at a frequency of 30 minutes during the daytime.
- The development will provide a frontage along Lumber Lane that is more in-keeping with an urban speed limit and will assist in reinforcing the speed limit. There are no difficulties in terms of providing the requisite visibility splays.

Deliverability

- 4.4 The site is available for development. Wainhomes (NW) Ltd is a national housebuilder based in Birchwood and is very active across the region with a proven track record in the delivery of new homes. Subject to the land being released from the Green Belt, the site could make a significant contribution to the deliverable 5-year supply of housing. Wainhomes are well placed in terms of increasing and diversifying the supply of housing through the Warrington Local Plan in a sustainable manner.
- 4.5 Our client's site at EP1 is 'deliverable' within the short-term for new housing development for the purposes of paragraph 47 of the NPPF.

5. Local infrastructure

- 5.1 The site is located to the edge of the existing built-up area of Burtonwood with no fundamental constraints in terms of utilities and surface and foul water connections. It is in close proximity to existing key services such as schools and health facilities. Any planning application could secure the provision of developer contributions to local services such as education and health facilities where appropriate and in accordance with planning policy requirements and the tests set out through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 Our site-specific representations with regard to land to the south of Lumber Lane can be summarised as follows:
- We consider that the site makes a 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt, and ARUP conclude that the wider parcel of land of assessment only makes a 'moderate' contribution (the least contribution of any sites in Burtonwood).
 - the release of the land from the Green Belt for housing is fully justified with regards to paragraphs 82-85 of the NPPF;
 - there are no major constraints to development of the site in terms of site-specific considerations.
 - there are no obstacles to the delivery of this site for the quantum of residential development identified from a highways and transport perspective;

- the site is locationally sustainable in terms of access to key services and public transport.
- Wainhomes Developments Ltd is a national housebuilder based in Birchwood with a proven track record of delivery in the region – the site is 'deliverable' for new housing within the short-term and could make a meaningful contribution to the city-region's 5-year housing land supply position.

6.2 The allocation of our client's site for housing development would help to meet the identified development requirements within Burtonwood, the wider Borough through increasing and diversifying the supply of new housing and in accordance with the evidence base is the most logical and sustainable site for development at Burtonwood.

7. Appendices

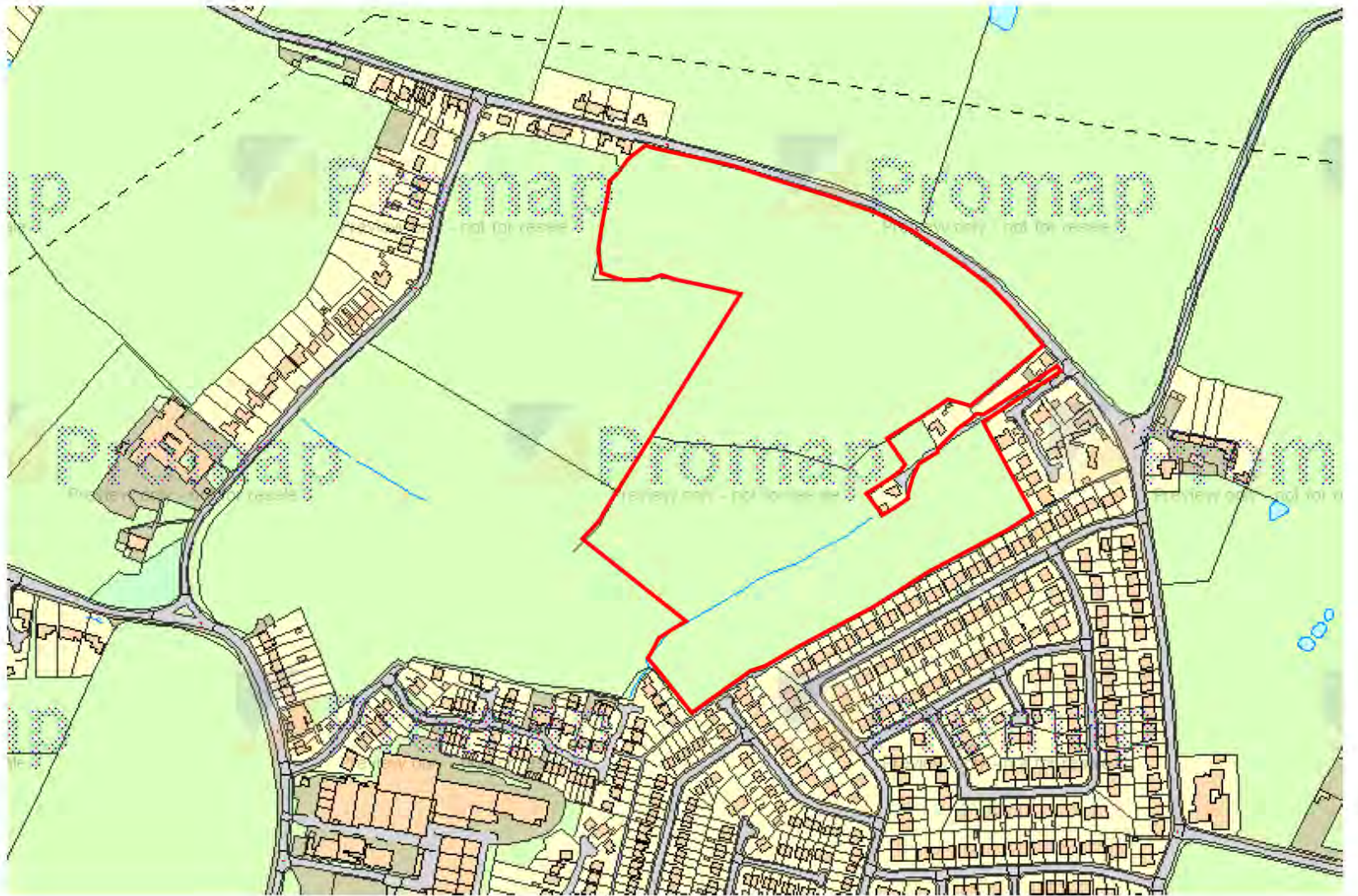
EP1 - Location Plan.

EP2 – Transport Technical Note (SCP).

EP3 – Masterplan (Baldwin Design).

EP4 – Tyler Grange Landscape Briefing Note and Green Belt Assessment

EP1



EP2

Proposed Residential Development

Lumber Lane, Burtonwood

DR/17368/TN01 - 15 September 2017

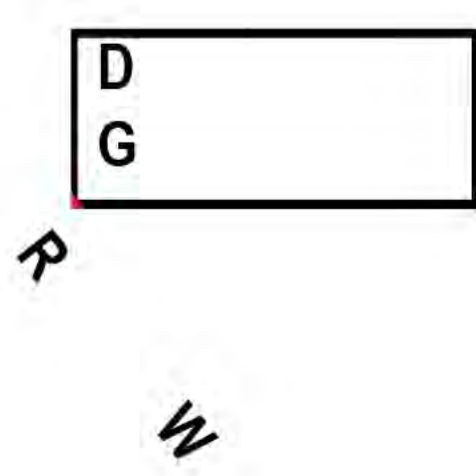
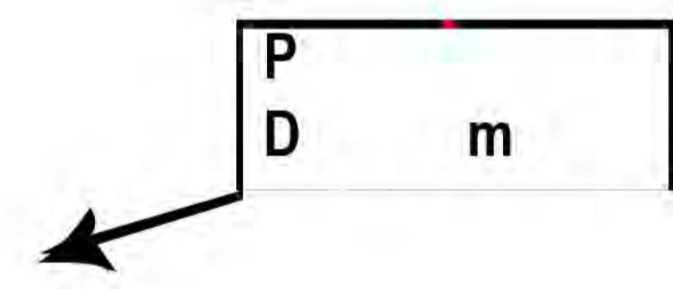
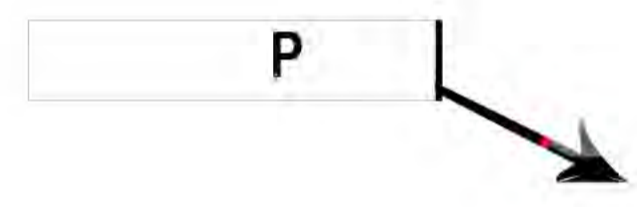
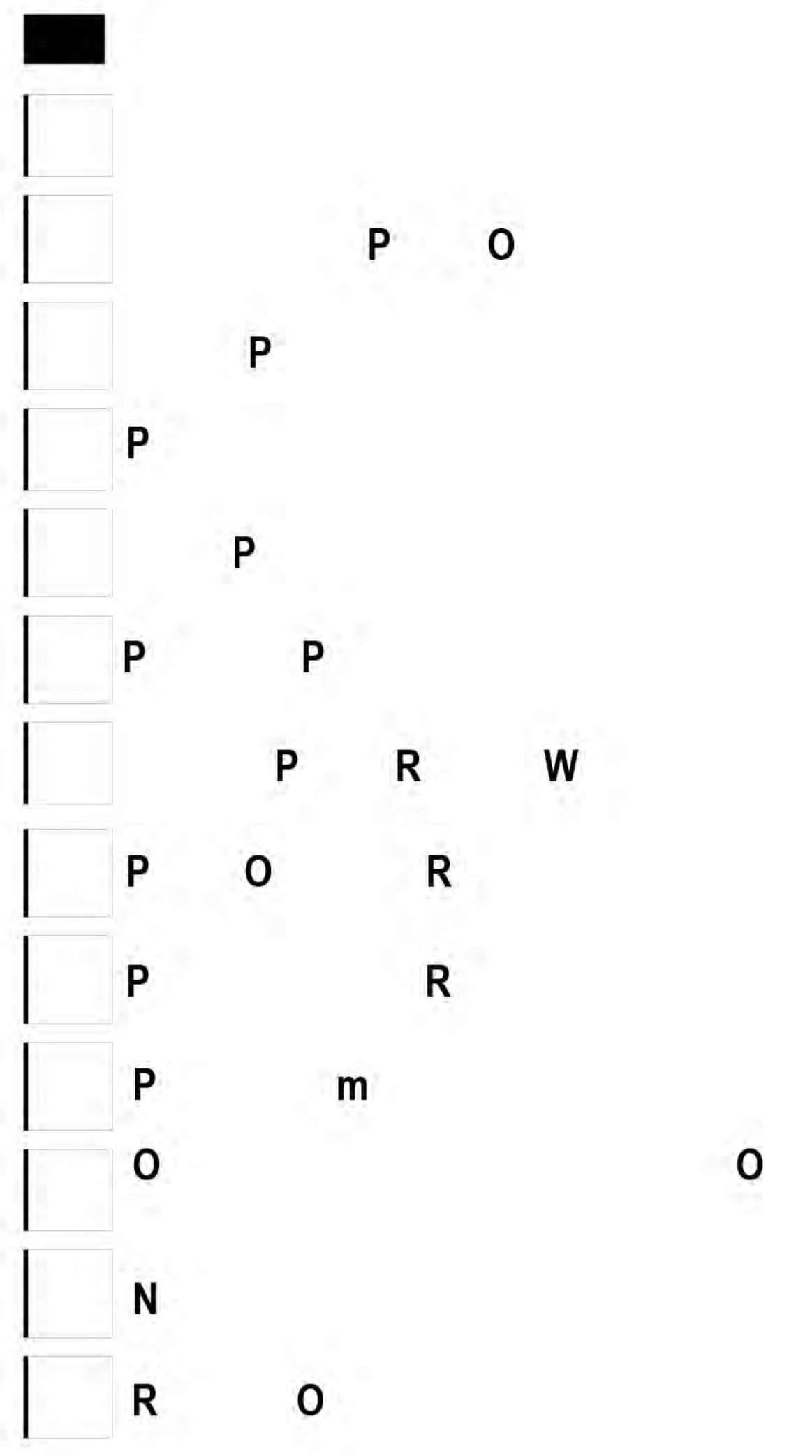
1. We are instructed to advise on the transport aspects of developing land situated at Lumber Lane, Burtonwood for residential development. The location of the site is shown on the aerial photograph below:



2. The site could accommodate up to 200 dwellings, after taking account of requirements for landscaping, open space and drainage attenuation requirements.
3. A single point of vehicular access would be sufficient to serve the site, although there are opportunities for a second access to be provided if necessary. There is a frontage of almost 400m to Lumber Road within which to create an access point with excellent levels of visibility.

4. There are opportunities to create further pedestrian and cycle links to Lumber Road, The Brambles, and a public footpath which forms the south-eastern boundary of the site. These pedestrian and cycle connections to Lumber Lane and The Brambles can also provide access for emergency vehicles if necessary.
5. The site is well connected to the urban area of Burtonwood. There is a convenience store, post office, primary school, nursery school, church, sports fields, hairdressers, hot food take-aways, and other shops and services, all within 1km of the site.
6. There are two regular bus services within Burtonwood and further school and college buses. Service 141 connects Burtonwood to St Helens and Newton-le-Willows at a frequency of 60 minutes during the daytime. This service passes along the site frontage. Bus service 329 links St Helens to Warrington via Burtonwood and operates at a frequency of 30 minutes during the daytime.
7. Lumber Lane is utilised as a local route which connects the eastern part of Burtonwood towards Earlestown and Newton-le-Willows. The road has a 30mph speed limit which is poorly observed by many drivers. A 30mph speed limit is associated with speeds within an urban area although, as can be seen from the aerial photograph above, in the vicinity of the site, Lumber Lane does not have a developed frontage, which is incongruous with the speed limit. The development will provide a frontage that is more in-keeping with an urban speed limit and will assist in reinforcing the speed limit. It would also be possible to introduce further traffic calming measures if there is a desire to reduce the speed of traffic in this area.
8. Within the frontage available to the site, there would be no difficulties in achieving visibility splays that would correspond with the speed limit (30mph requires 43m visibility splays) or correspond with vehicle speeds of up to 50mph (requiring visibility splays of 160m), although it should be reiterated that there should be an aim to reduce speeds to within the speed limit by better enforcement of the limit and other speed reducing features, to which the site can contribute.
9. Overall, the site is in a sustainable location, with access to both local facilities and nearby towns on foot, by cycle and by public transport. A safe vehicular access can be created to the site and the development would offer an opportunity to improve road safety by reducing vehicle speeds along the site frontage to reflect the current speed limit.
10. There are no transport reasons to resist the principle of a residential development on this site.

EP3



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EP4

Lumber Lane, Burtonwood

Landscape Briefing Note (11193/R01)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange LLP on behalf of Wainhomes North West following desktop analysis and preliminary fieldwork undertaken in September 2017.
- 1.2. The overview provides advice relating to landscape character and visual amenity at a high level to appraise the feasibility of the future residential development of land off Lumber Lane to the north of Burtonwood (hereafter referred to as 'the site').
- 1.3. The overview report does not constitute a full Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) / Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). It is intended that this work will inform potential development going forward and provide a review of the suitability of the land for release from the Green Belt.
- 1.4. The report should be read alongside the following plans which are contained at the rear of this report:
 - **Landscape Context Plan and Photoviewpoint Locations** (11151/P01);
 - **Landscape Opportunities and Constraints Plan** (11151/P02);
 - **Photoviewpoints 1-6** (11151/P03);

2.0 Site Context

*(See **Plan 1: Landscape Context Plan** (11151/P01))*

- 2.1 A site walkover survey was conducted on the 19th of September to assess the landscape character and visual amenity of the site. The weather was sunny/cloudy with clear views. A desktop study using available data sources was undertaken including national and local landscape designations and policies.
- 2.2 Burtonwood is a small village and civil parish within the Warrington borough of Cheshire, in North West England. It is situated approximately 5.6 miles north west of Warrington, 4.6km west of the M6 and 1.5km north of M62. The civil parish also incorporates Westbrook, which is a council ward and suburb of Warrington.
- 2.3 The site is an approximately 10.1 hectare area of greenfield land, centred on OS grid reference SJ 56815 93391. There are three fields within the site divided by ditches lined with scrubby vegetation and isolated trees. The largest field to the north is approximately 5.5 hectares and

Tyler Grange LLP, Ladyfield House, Station Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 1BB

Tel: 01625 525731 www.tylergrange.co.uk
Registered in England No. OC356615 Vat Reg. No. 994 2320 07
Registered Office: Marsden Estate, Rendcomb, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. GL7 7EX

is used as arable farmland, a central field of 2.5 hectares and a southern field of 2.1 are improved grassland. The site is adjacent to the residential edge of Burtonwood to the southeast. To the west are two other fields, separated from the site by a line of scrubby vegetation and trees. Beyond this to the west is Green Lane and an adjacent line of residential properties. Lumber Lane aligns to the northern site boundary, beyond which is agricultural land for approximately 1km up to the Sankey Brook and Sankey Canal.

The large flat fields create a generally open site, with some sense of enclosure created within the site by scrubby vegetation and trees. To the south and east the visual extents is defined by the residential edge of Burtonwood. To the west a number of suburban properties aligned to Green Lane create the visual extents. To the north longer distance views are available towards the riparian woodland aligned to the Sankey Brook and industrial buildings at the southern edge of Newton-le-Willows. The site is generally flat, sloping gently from a low point at the north of approximately 29m AOD to a high point in the south of 31m AOD.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1. Warrington Borough Council's Local Planning Framework currently consists of the Warrington Local Plan Strategy which was adopted on 21 July 2014. The Local Plan is being updated, in particular the housing policies, as part of this the Council is undertaking a review of the Green Belt to identify new land for development. The site is located wholly within the Green Belt and a review of the site's performance and suitability for release from the Green Belt is set out in this report.

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (Adopted July 2014)

- Policy CS 1 Overall Spatial Strategy - Delivering Sustainable Development;
 - Policy CS 2 Overall Spatial Strategy - Quantity and Distribution of Development;
 - Policy CS 5 Overall Spatial Strategy - Green Belt;
 - Policy CS 6 Overall Spatial Strategy – Strategic Green Links;
 - Policy QE 3 Green Infrastructure;
 - Policy QE 6 Environment and Amenity Protection;
 - Policy QE 7 Ensuring a High-Quality Place; and
 - Policy CC 2 Protecting the Countryside.
- 3.2. The Overall Spatial Strategy policies focus on sustainable development, managing the quantity and distribution, housing supply, the Green Belt and strategic Green Links. In relation to the Green Belt, the Strategic Vision for Warrington notes that: *“The focus on regeneration has limited outward growth of the town and has enabled the continued protection of the Green Belt.”* This links into Strategic Objective W2: *“To maintain the permanence of the Green Belt and the character of the countryside in the borough and protect them from inappropriate development.”*
- 3.3. Policy CS 1 states that *“development proposals that are sustainable will be welcomed and approved without delay”*. The policy goes on to list the criteria by which development should accord with alongside national and local planning policy frameworks and the material considerations in order to be considered sustainable. Specific material considerations relevant to the site and proposed residential development include:
- *“Priority afforded to the protection of the Green Belt and the character of the countryside;*
 - *The need to address the causes of and be resilient to the effects of climate change;*
 - *The need to safeguard environmental standards and residential amenity;*

- *The delivery of high standards of design and construction, that have regard to local distinctiveness and efficiency; and*
 - *The need to make the best use of existing transport, utility, social and environmental infrastructure within existing settlements, and ensure additional provision where needed to support development.”*
- 3.4. Policy CS 2 relates to the quantity and distribution of development. Principles in the policy relevant to the site and residential development include:
- *“The general extent of the Green Belt and the detailed boundaries as indicated on the Local Plan Core Strategy Policies Map will be maintained for as long as can be seen ahead and at least until 2032;*
 - *Within the Green Belt area, development will only be allowed where it is considered to be appropriate in accordance with national policy; and*
 - *All new development should where appropriate make provision for supporting infrastructure in accordance with Policy MP10.”*
- 3.5. Policy CS 3 states that:
- “Should monitoring indicate that an on-going, 5 years’ deliverable and a subsequent 5 years’ supply of developable housing land can no longer be sustained or where it can be demonstrated that housing need cannot be met within Warrington, the Council will review its housing land provision, and bring on-stream additional housing sites as required, with priority given to encouraging the reuse of previously developed land and avoiding sites in the Green Belt where possible.”*
- 3.6. In relation to Policy CS 5, planning permission for new buildings in the Green Belt *“will be approved where they accord with relevant national policy.”* The site is being considered for release from the Green Belt for the purposes of residential development in the emerging Warrington Borough Council’s Green Belt Review.
- 3.7. Policy CS 6 relates to Green Infrastructure and states that the Council *“is committed to supporting wider programmes and initiatives which seek to connect the borough’s Strategic Green Links with employment areas, residential communities, and Green Infrastructure Assets”*. Further requirements in relation to Green Infrastructure are set out in Policy QE3 which provides more detail on the criteria against which applications will be assessed.
- 3.8. Policy QE 6 considers the protection of environment and amenity within development. Areas taken into consideration relevant to site and residential development include:
- *“The quality of water bodies, including canals, rivers, ponds and lakes;*
 - *Land quality;*
 - *Levels of light pollution and impacts on the night sky; and*
 - *The need to respect the living conditions of existing neighbouring residential occupiers and future occupiers of new housing schemes in relation to overlooking / loss of privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight, overshadowing, noise and disturbance.”*
- 3.9. Policy QE 7 describes the Council's expectations in term of the quality of place in relation to development. Proposals which have considered the following aspects will be positively received:

- *“Be sustainable, durable, adaptable and energy efficient; create inclusive, accessible and safe environments;*
 - *function well in relation to existing patterns of movement and activity;*
 - *reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance the character, appearance and function of the street scene, local area and wider townscape;*
 - *harmonise with the scale, proportions and materials of adjacent and / or existing buildings;*
 - *maintain and respect the landscape character and, where appropriate, distinctiveness of the surrounding countryside;*
 - *use the density and mix of development to optimise the potential of the site without damaging the character of the area; and*
 - *be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and the inclusion of appropriate public space.”*
- 3.10. The remaining applicable landscape and visual related policies deal with improvements to the Green Infrastructure of Warrington Borough the retention of landscape features and recreational public routes, including cycleways, as well as the requirement for built form to complement the materiality of the locality in order to preserve local distinctiveness and the local character features to ensure the suitable assimilation of development proposals. The policies also direct development towards achieving high quality design within new development, and providing landscaping as an integral part of the overall design.
- 3.11. Policy CC 1 covers Green Belt Settlements.
- “Within these settlements development proposals will be subject to Green Belt policies set out in national planning policy. New build development maybe appropriate where it can be demonstrated that the proposal constitutes limited infill development of an appropriate scale, design and character in that it constitutes a small break between existing development which has more affinity with the built form of the settlement as opposed to the openness of the Green Belt; unless the break contributes to the character of the settlement.”*
- 3.12. The contribution the site makes to the Green Belt in landscape and visual terms is covered further in **Section 5** of this report.
- 3.13. Policy CC 2 supports development within the countryside provided that:
- *“the detailed siting and design of the development relates satisfactorily to its rural setting, in terms of its scale, layout and use of materials;*
 - *they respect local landscape character, both in terms of immediate impact, or from distant views;*
 - *unobtrusive provision can be made for any associated servicing and parking facilities or plant, equipment and storage;*
 - *they relate to local enterprise and farm diversification; and*
 - *it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on agricultural interests.”*
- 3.14. The remaining applicable landscape and visual related policies deal with improvements to the Green Infrastructure of Warrington Borough the retention of landscape features and recreational public routes, including cycleways, as well as the requirement for built form to complement the materiality of the locality in order to preserve local distinctiveness and the local character features to ensure the suitable assimilation of development proposals. The policies also direct development towards achieving high quality design within new development, and providing landscaping as an integral part of the overall design.

- 3.15. In addition to the above policies, the following Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) also need to be taken into consideration:

Supplementary Planning Documents

Environmental Protection SPD (May 2013)

- 3.16. This SPD supports Policy QE6 Environment and Amenity Protection and details the councils approach to dealing with environmental protection including light pollution. Development schemes which include street lighting proposals should adhere to the design principles set out in the SPD. Principles relating to landscape and visual include:

- *“Limiting the light levels to a designed uniformity;*
- *limiting the use of lighting schemes to identified uses or users;*
- *the retention of screening vegetation; and*
- *the use of planting and bunding to contain lighting effects.*

- 3.17. The SPD states that *“these conditions will be applied as necessary by the LPA to help reduce obtrusive light from new proposals, particularly glare and spillage, from areas of wildlife importance, open countryside and residential amenity.”*

Design and Construction (October 2010)

- 3.18. This document provides advice and guidance to developers about aspects of the design and construction process. The document states that *“A well designed landscape scheme should enhance the appearance and setting of any new development and its location. A successful scheme will have considered and correctly interpreted the landscape character of the location so as to produce the most appropriate design solution for the development.”*

Landscape Design Guide for New Developments

- 3.19. This document is to provide advice and guidance to developers who are required to submit landscape schemes as part of detailed planning applications.

- 3.20. The key objectives are:

- *Ensure high quality environments in which to live and work through excellent landscape designs in new developments;*
- *ensure the design of new landscapes feature at an early stage in the design process to ensure they are well integrated into new developments;*
- *ensure biodiversity and geological features are conserved and enhanced through landscape improvements;*
- *promote the health and wellbeing of the community through new landscape schemes*
- *promote quality landscape schemes which are sensitive to the locality and provide local distinctiveness; and*
- *ensure that the design of new landscapes do not increase fear of crime or give rise to criminal behaviour.*

Open Space and Recreation Provision (September 2007)

- 3.21. This policy details a number of key objectives for open space within the borough including:

- *“To ensure an adequate provision of open space in quantitative, qualitative and accessibility terms subsequently helping to ensure the creation of sustainable communities;*
- *to create opportunities for and enhance biodiversity;*
- *to create opportunities for travel by more sustainable modes such as by walking or cycling;*
- *to assist in maintaining and improving public health by providing opportunities for recreation and sport;*
- *to provide educational opportunities in the form of ‘outside classrooms’ through providing opportunities for contact with nature;*
- *to provide focal points for social interaction and community events;*
- *to contribute to local distinctiveness through helping to create a sense of place and belonging;*
- *to help secure safe and well-designed open spaces where the design has intended to deter crime; and*
- *to assist in tackling climate change through the plantation of trees and creation of green ‘breathing’ spaces.”*

Planning Obligations (September 2007)

3.22. This SPD details the councils approach to the use of planning obligations to facilitate decision making, relevant key objectives include:

- *“Ensure appropriate environmental and biodiversity protection and enhancement and mitigation measures where appropriate;*
- *Ensure no detrimental impacts on amenity (visual, residential, noise, flood risk, landscape);*
- *Ensure conservation of heritage assets and mitigation where appropriate.”*

Suitability of the Site for Release from the Green Belt

3.23. A review of the site’s performance and suitability for release from the Green Belt is summarised below in relation to the applicable principal Green Belt objectives as set out within the NPPF (the Framework) from a landscape perspective and in relation to the findings of the Warrington Borough Council Green Belt Assessment.

3.24. The NPPF framework sets out five key purposes for green belt:

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

3.25. Stage 1 of The Warrington Borough Council Green Belt Assessment (WBCGBA) marked out 24 General Areas based on common features and characteristics. Each area was then assessed against the NPPF five key purposes of green belt marked out above. The proposed site lies within General Area 18. Stage 2 involves defining smaller green belt parcels around settlements focussing on technical site assessments of the areas, looking at site constraints. The proposed site lies within BW3.

3.26. The sites are reviewed within the context of the NPPF Green Belt objectives below:

- ***To check unrestricted sprawl***

The WBCGBA defined General Area 18 as making a moderate contribution towards this objective. At a more detailed level land parcel BW3 is considered to make no contribution towards checking unrestricted urban sprawl, with the reason being that it is not adjacent to the Warrington urban area.

To the southwest, the site is bordered by residential properties and gardens. To the north is Lumber Lane and to the east are two fields. Beyond fields to the east are Green Lane and a number of houses aligned to the road.

The residential garden boundaries which line the site to the southwest could be considered vulnerable to urban sprawl due to being rear facing. Lumber Lane creates a more rigid boundary to the north and could be utilised together with appropriate development frontages and soft landscaping, to restrict development from spreading beyond this point into open countryside to the north.

The western boundary is currently aligned by two fields. Beyond this is Green Lane and an associated line of suburban houses (c.150-250m from the site boundary dependant on latitude of measurement). Despite Green Lane not being directly adjacent to the site, the boundary acts to perceptually separate the site from the wider countryside and act as a limit to development. Further to this, buffer planting could be developed along the western site boundary which would create a more robust edge.

- ***To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another***

General Area 18 is assessed to make a strong contribution towards this objective. At a more detailed level, land parcel BW3 is assessed within the WBCGBA to make a weak contribution to preventing towns merging into one another. It is assessed that this parcel forms a less essential gap between the Warrington urban area, Newton-le-Willows and St Helens. The assessment points out that whilst development in this area would reduce the actual gap to an extent, this would not reduce the perceived gap.

The site is located between Burtonwood, Newton-le-Willows, Bold and St Helens. The site's southwest boundary sits directly adjacent to Burtonwood. St Helens is c.2.2km northwest of the site, Bold is c.2km west of the site and Newton-le-Willows is c.1.35km north of the site. The distance between the development site and other surrounding settlements means this site can have little influence in preventing towns from merging.

Another consideration in terms of the merging of settlements, is the strength and permanence of existing boundaries. There are significant transport links and other boundaries that separate the afore mentioned urban areas from the site. Directly adjacent to the north of the site is Lumber Lane and beyond this Newton-le-Willows is separated by the Sankey Canal, Sankey Brook and an electricity transmission line. To the northwest, the railway line linking Newton-le-Willows to Liverpool and Manchester crosses between the site and St Helens. To the east Green lane, Back Lane and Bold Lane lie between Bold and the site, alongside industrial developments.

- ***Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment***

General Area 18 is deemed to make a moderate contribution to this green belt objective within the WBCGBA. At a more detailed level land parcel BW3 is deemed to make a strong

contribution towards safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The boundary between BW3 and Burtonwood is assessed as being non-durable, consisting of fenced/hedged garden boundaries, and therefore unable to prevent encroachment into this parcel long term. The assessment highlights that Green Lane and Lumber Lane create durable boundaries between the site and the wider countryside.

A relationship to Burtonwood is created through views available to residential properties at the southeast of the site as acknowledged by the WBCGBA. A relationship to a more rural character is created through views of countryside to the north and to two fields adjacent to the site to the west. The view north incorporates a line of pylons and larger transmission towers detracting from the countryside view.

The Warrington Landscape Character Assessment suggests key objectives for managing LCA 1E: Burtonwood are to reduce the negative views of pylons and to consider additional planting as an envelope to the village of Burtonwood. An attractively designed development could help to screen pylons for views looking north from Burtonwood, improving countryside views from these locations. Native planting around the edge of the development could assist in contribute to an attractive planted envelope at the settlement edge and further strengthen this boundary as robust to countryside encroachment.

As highlighted in the WBCGBA, whilst there is a connection to two fields adjacent to the site at the east, the site is separated from the wider countryside by Lumber Lane and Green Lane. The most vulnerable boundary to countryside encroachment in a developed site would be to these two fields to the west. Whilst there is some scrubby vegetation and trees which separate the site from these fields, this boundary could also be strengthened with a landscape buffer extending across the full eastern boundary. This would provide the opportunity to create a more characteristic settlement edge than exists at the northern edge of Burtonwood at present, and would enable a robust, defensible and permanent settlement edge to be created. Ultimately, Lumber Lane and Green Lane provide the most appropriate defensible edges to restrict encroachment into the countryside in this location and development of the site would be contained within the limits of these features.

- ***Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns***

General Area 18 is assessed within the WBCGBA as making a weak contribution towards preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and land parcel BW3 is assessed to make no contribution to this green belt objective. The assessment states that the parcel is not adjacent to a historic town and does not cross an important viewpoint of the parish church.

The site sits at the northwest edge of Burtonwood, lined with predominantly bungalow style housing. There is currently no conservation area status in Burtonwood suggesting the character of the town is not valued for its historic setting.

Towards the northeast is the grade II listed Bradlegh Old Hall, which sits in the visual envelope of the proposed development site. Hedgerows would be expected to filter views towards the site, which are also viewed in the context of other properties aligning Lumber Lane. Sensitive landscape design along the northern boundary of the site could create a village edge feel, creating attractive views to the site from the north.

Long distance views from the site are available to the grade I listed Sankey Viaduct and to the spire of the grade II listed church of St Mary and St John. Development at this site

would be expected to have little impact on the setting of these heritage assets due to the distance at which it would be viewed together with the presence of intervening vegetation.

Landscape Character Context

- 3.27. At the national level, the majority of the site sits within the 'Mersey Valley' Character Area (National Character Area 60). A small section of the north-west corner of the site is within Lancashire Coal Measures (National Character Area 56). At a local level, the site is identified within LCT 1: Undulating Enclosed Farmland and LCA 1E: Burtonwood as part of the Warrington Landscape Character Assessment.
- 3.28. Key characteristics of LCA 1E are noted as:
- *Exposed, open, large scale, arable fields*
 - *Good views to the east*
 - *Absence of, or highly-fragmented, hedgerows between fields*
 - *Change of landscape character immediately around the fringes of Burtonwood village due to horse grazing and suburban landscape*
 - *Noticeable appearance of pylons and telegraph poles*
 - *Dominant presence of the well-wooded Nine Arches embankment north-west of Burtonwood village and through the middle of Collins Green*
 - *Interesting, more varied, topography of Phipp's Brook valley*
- 3.29 Key elements of landscape sensitivity are:
- *Location of the village on crest line*
 - *Open landscape with sparsity of hedgerows and hedgerow trees*
 - *Exposed to views and weather*
- 3.30 Key objectives for managing this landscape character area are:
- *Restore and enhance remaining field patterns by additional hedgerow planting*
 - *Reintroduce hedgerow trees to the hedgerows to create shelter*
 - *Consider additional native planting as an envelope to the village of Burtonwood*
 - *Consider a visual impact study to reduce the negative views of pylons*
 - *Encourage traditional hedgerow management and protection within horse grazing paddocks*
 - *Retain open views towards Sankey Viaduct, together with selected longer views to the east and south*
 - *Consider stream associated native trees and shrubs to Phipps Brook through farmland to the confluence with Sankey Brook*
 - *Consider removal of privet hedges where possible and replacement with hawthorn, holly, etc.*
- 3.31. Whilst the character information set out above does provide some context relevant to the promotion of the site, it does not address the characteristics specific to the site. In response to fieldwork and desktop research, further observations have been made with regards the site and its immediate surroundings:

- The site is comprised of three fields of improved grassland and one containing arable crops. The fields are divided by ditches lined with scrubby vegetation and isolated trees.
- The site is bounded by vegetation to the west, Lumber Lane to the north and residential properties on the edge of Burtonwood to the east and south.
- The site is generally flat, the gradient falls approximately 2m from south to north.
- The visual envelope is created by the settlement edge of Burtonwood to the south and east, residential properties which line Green Lane in the west and longer distance views to the north including vegetation associated with Sankey Brook and the Liverpool-Manchester railway line.

3.32. It is evident from fieldwork, that the site has a high degree of openness, particularly towards countryside to the north, however the site's character is defined through a combination of more urban and rural characteristics due to the surrounding context. Urban factors making up the site's landscape character include the settlement edge of Burtonwood, properties aligning Green Lane, the adjoining road (Lumber Lane), electricity pylons which run north-south through the site and transmission towers running east-west past the north of the site. These all affect the degree to which the site can be considered rural, and whilst intervisibility with the wider Green belt is possible, the site itself is recognised in character terms as being more associated with the settlement edge than the wider countryside beyond Lumber Lane and Green Lane.

Visual Context

(See *Landscape Context Plan (11193/P01)* and *Photoviewpoints (11193/P03)*)

3.33. The site is broadly open due to its current usage. Views within the site are broken up by scrubby vegetation and woodland lining two ditches which run through the site, dividing the area into three fields. Residential properties at the edge of Burtonwood to the east and south are visible from within the site. Bungalows and ground floors are less visible behind a solid concrete panel fence which lies at the site boundary. There are views to two other fields towards the west beyond which is a line of properties adjacent to Green Lane. More long-distance views are available to the north across open countryside extending out to vegetation associated with the Sankey Brook and vegetation aligned to a railway line linking Newton-le-Willows to Liverpool and Manchester. Buildings in an industrial estate at the southern edge of Newton le Willows are also visible from within the site.

3.34. The approximate extent of the visual envelope (VE) is set out below:

- To the north - views are open across countryside extending approximately 1km out to riparian woodland associated with the Sankey Brook and trees aligned to a railway line linking Newton-le-Willows to Liverpool and Manchester. Buildings in an industrial estate at the southern edge of Newton le Willows are also visible. Some heritage assets are visible including the grade I listed Sankey Viaduct, a spire of the grade II listed Saint Mary's and St. John's Church and the grade II listed Bradlegh Hall.
- To the south-east and east - a mixture of bungalows and two storey properties at the edge of the settlement of Burtonwood create the visual extents. A concrete panel fence creates a solid visual barrier at ground floor level.
- To the south-west and west - two fields are separated from the site by scrubby vegetation and a line of trees. Beyond the fields is Green Lane. To the west of Green Lane is a line of properties, which create the visual extents. There is a row of houses to the north east of Phipps Lane that are visible from the site, beyond these properties landform and vegetation obscures views.

- 3.35. Overall, the site is visible from properties to the west, south and east and these properties form the visual extents containing the site from wider visibility. Views towards the north are longer distance and extend towards vegetation associated with the Sankey Brook and Manchester-Liverpool railway line. Characteristic features are visible including the Sankey Viaduct, the spire of St Mary's and St John's church and Bradlegh old Hall. Detracting elements also feature within views and include electricity transmission towers and the Newton-le-Willows industrial estate. The drains within the site and associated scrubby vegetation create some sense of enclosure to the large flat fields within the site. Views do not extend into Burtonwood beyond the adjacent settlement edge.
- 3.36. Potential visual receptors to development of the site include:
- Users of the Public Rights of Way-footpath Burtonwood 30 aligned to the south-east site boundary, and footpath Burtonwood 33 to the north of the site.
 - Private residents associated with the adjacent residential edge of Burtonwood to the southeast and south, residential receptors of properties aligned to Green Lane, residential receptors aligned to Phipps Lane, residential receptors aligned to Lumber Lane, residential receptors of the Grade II* listed Bradlegh Old Hall and residential receptors of New Bradley Hall Farm in the north east.
 - Mill Farm Cottage is connected by a private access track to Lumber Lane, other than this connecting access track it is surrounded by the site on all sides.
 - Highway views from vehicular users of surrounding roads including Lumber Lane, Melrose Avenue, Aldridge Drive, Winsford Drive, Green Lane and Hall Lane.
- 3.37. The above is not an extensive list of all Public Rights of Way within the local area but lists those where users would be likely to experience discernible change. Further Public Rights of Way are shown on the Landscape Context Plan 11151/P01.
- 3.38. Due to the relationship between the site and surrounding infrastructure, vegetation and settlement edge, the site appears separate visually from the wider Green Belt, despite the site's location on the settlement edge. There are opportunities to utilise and develop the screening provided by the framework of green infrastructure present at the site boundaries to develop the site sensitively in a way which does not impact upon the perceived openness of the wider Green Belt landscape. There are further opportunities to improve the landscape quality of the site in line with the management guidelines for this landscape character area.
- 3.39. A key consideration in terms of visual impact will be the visual amenity of the users of the Public Right of Way along the south-eastern boundary and residents at close proximity to the site. Their amenity will need to be respected through appropriate development offsets and to ensure existing screening vegetation is retained and built upon where appropriate to ensure the new development is not overbearing.

Landscape Conclusion and Recommendations

- 3.40. In response to the desktop and fieldwork undertaken, the following conclusions and recommendations are presented:
- The existing character of the site is somewhat open and agricultural in nature, Lumber Lane and Green Lane act as development boundaries to separate this parcel of land from the wider countryside and Green Belt;

- Views are available to countryside in the north, though at some locations within the site these views will be filtered by trees and vegetation and will be seen in the context of transmission towers passing east to west. A planted envelope around the northern boundary of the site would screen views to transmission towers and create a characteristic vegetated boundary to Burtonwood, meeting management guidelines set out in the Warrington Landscape Character Assessment. This would also contribute towards the strengthening of the northern edge of the site as a new Green Belt boundary;
- In terms of boundaries, the northern boundary of Lumber Lane is strong in Green Belt terms, although it could be strengthened with appropriate development offsets and soft landscaping to limit the visual influence of new development over the land to the north. The western and south-western boundaries are aligned to the existing settlement edge of Burtonwood. There is an opportunity to strengthen the western boundary utilising new soft landscaping to create a strong landscape buffer which could contain development visually and ensure the settlement edge does not encroach onto the adjoining agricultural land, Ultimately, development along Green Lane provides the most defensible edge to encroachment within the context of the site;
- In terms of receptors to change as a result of development, the main visual receptors will be users of the footpath along the south-eastern boundary and residential properties in close proximity to the site also to the south and south-east. The visual amenity of these receptors should be carefully considered in the development of the site through the incorporation of appropriate development offsets and new soft landscaping, in particular to ensure the visual amenity of users of the footpath adjoining the site are respected;
- As set out within this note, the existing settlement edge to the south-east has a visual and perceptible influence over the character of the site, and is not robust as a green belt boundary to restrict urban sprawl or encroachment as properties are rear facing over the adjoining landscape, with built form not filtered by any vegetation. This could be addressed within any future development proposals for the site through the strengthening of the existing vegetation as well as the incorporation of development offsets, layout considerations and landscape buffers to create a more defensible settlement edge; and
- Development of the site would be unlikely to affect the integrity of the wider Green Belt beyond the extent to which the existing settlement edge and detracting features within the landscape do; indeed, the site presents an opportunity to create a more appropriate and robust settlement edge, which is defensible to additional sprawl in the future, as well as to reduce the extent to which built form influences the wider open countryside and remaining Green Belt north of Lumber Lane and west of Green Lane.

3.41. Whilst it is appreciated that only a broad level assessment has been undertaken, this technical note has demonstrated that residential development within the site could be accommodated with reference to the site-specific conditions.

3.42. The site is considered capable of being developed without resulting in unrestricted urban sprawl or coalescence of urban areas. Although the site is currently somewhat open as an unused pastoral field, urban influences are present in the form of views towards the adjacent residential edge of Burtonwood and the presence of transmission towers and pylons in the locality.

3.43. The most likely adverse effects are deemed to relate to the change in views for users of the public footpath running alongside the south-eastern site boundary and for users of residential properties along the adjacent urban edge. These will need to be sensitively considered as part of future design proposals for the site, with development offsets, the consideration of appropriate screen planting and the provision of new soft landscaping.

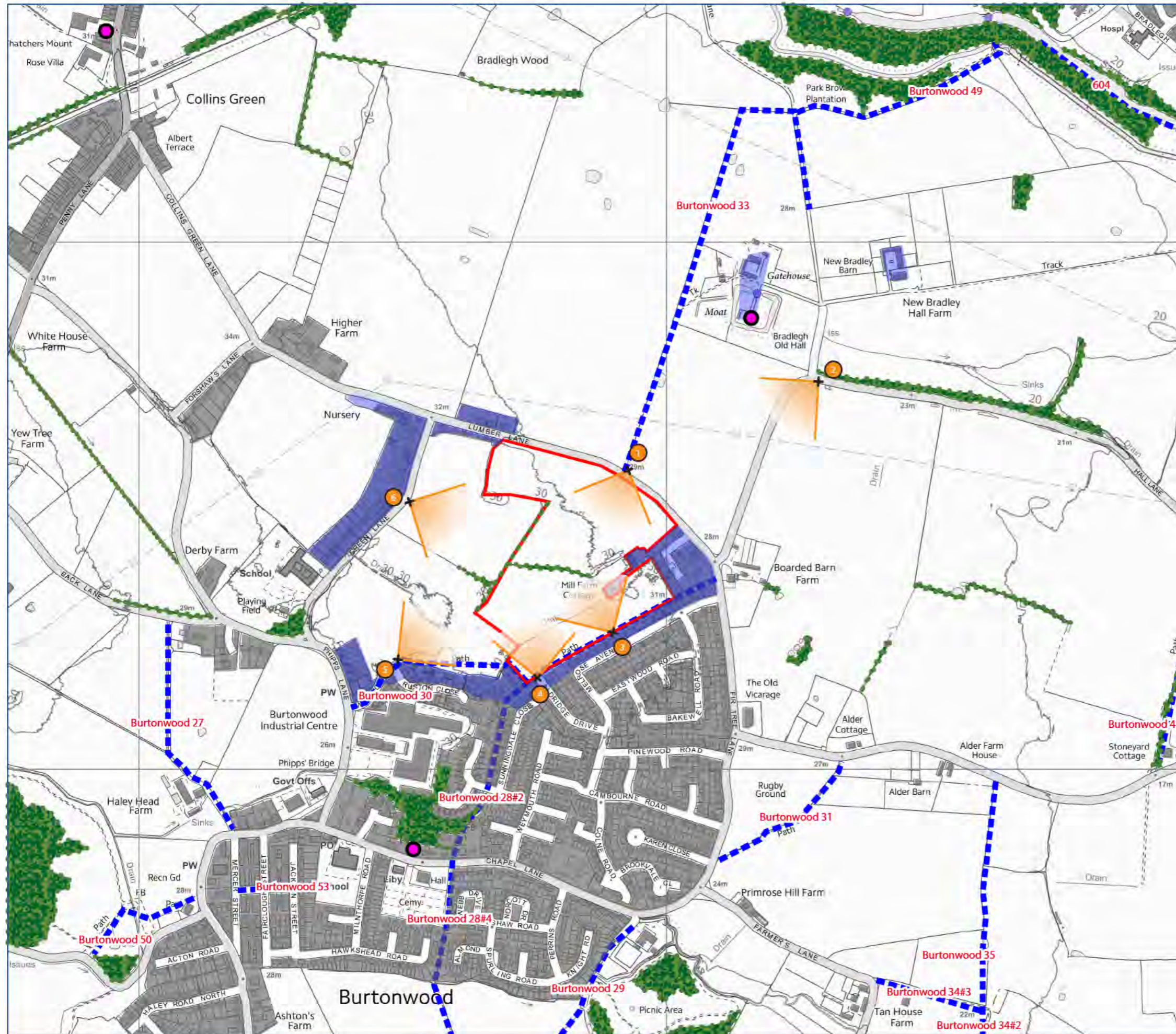
- 3.44. With the above conclusions taken into account and with respect to landscape and visual matters, this site should therefore be considered suitable for residential development and release from the Green Belt.









4.0 Plans and Photoviewpoints

Landscape Context Plan (11151/P01)

Opportunities and Constraints Plan (11151/P02)

Photoviewpoints 1-6 (11151/P03)



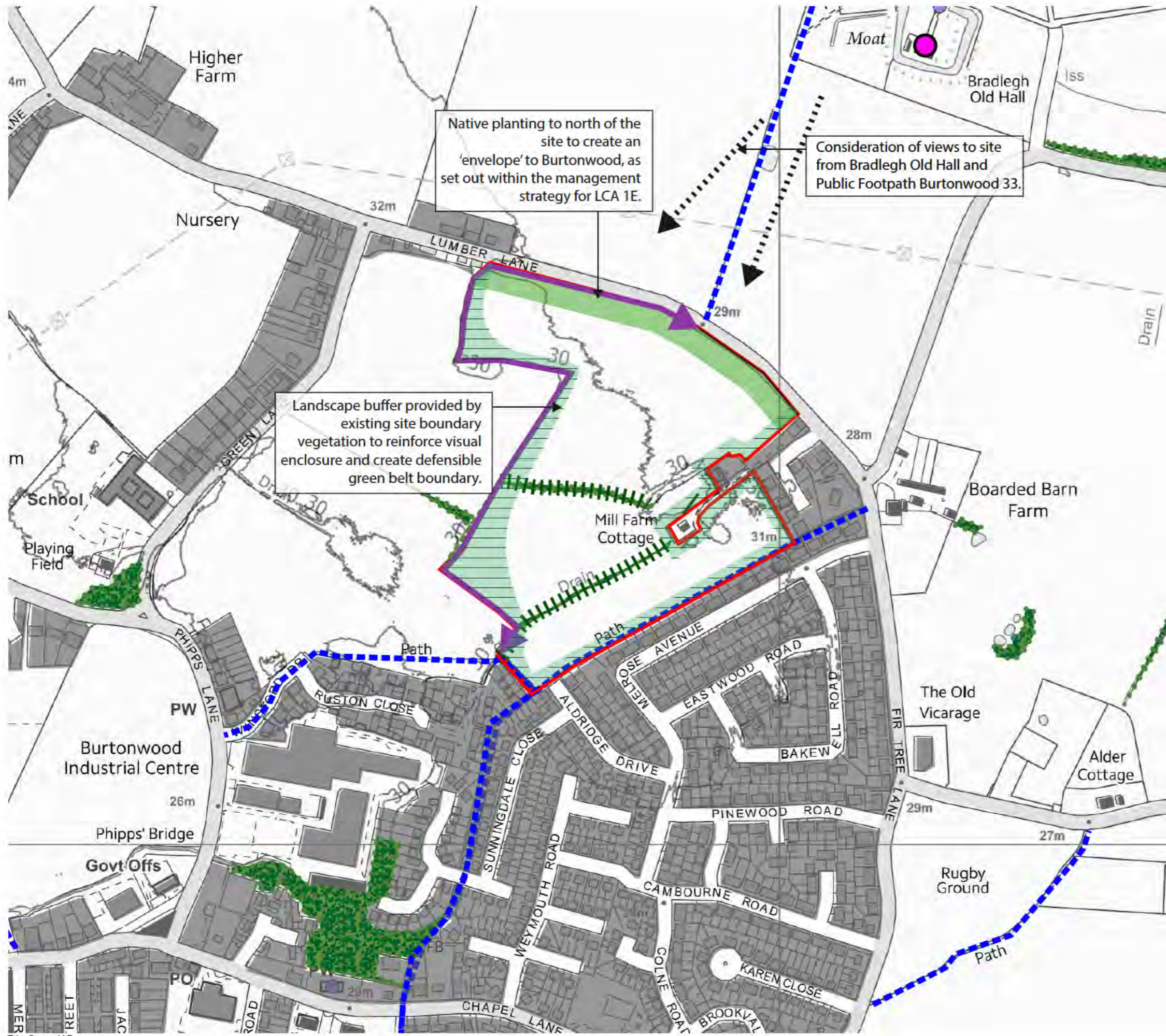
-  Site Boundary
-  Dwellings with Primary Views of the Site
-  Built Areas
-  Existing Woodland
-  Photoviewpoint Locations
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Listed Buildings
-  Contours



Project | Lumber Lane, Burtonwood, Warrington
 Drawing Title | Landscape Context Plan and Photoviewpoint Locations
 Scale | 1:7,500 @ A3
 Drawing No. | 11193/P01
 Date | September 2017
 Checked | HCTNC













Ladyfield House, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 1BB
 T: 01625 525 731 E: info@tylergrange.co.uk W: www.tylergrange.co.uk



Native planting to north of the site to create an 'envelope' to Burtonwood, as set out within the management strategy for LCA 1E.

Consideration of views to site from Bradlegh Old Hall and Public Footpath Burtonwood 33.

Landscape buffer provided by existing site boundary vegetation to reinforce visual enclosure and create defensible green belt boundary.

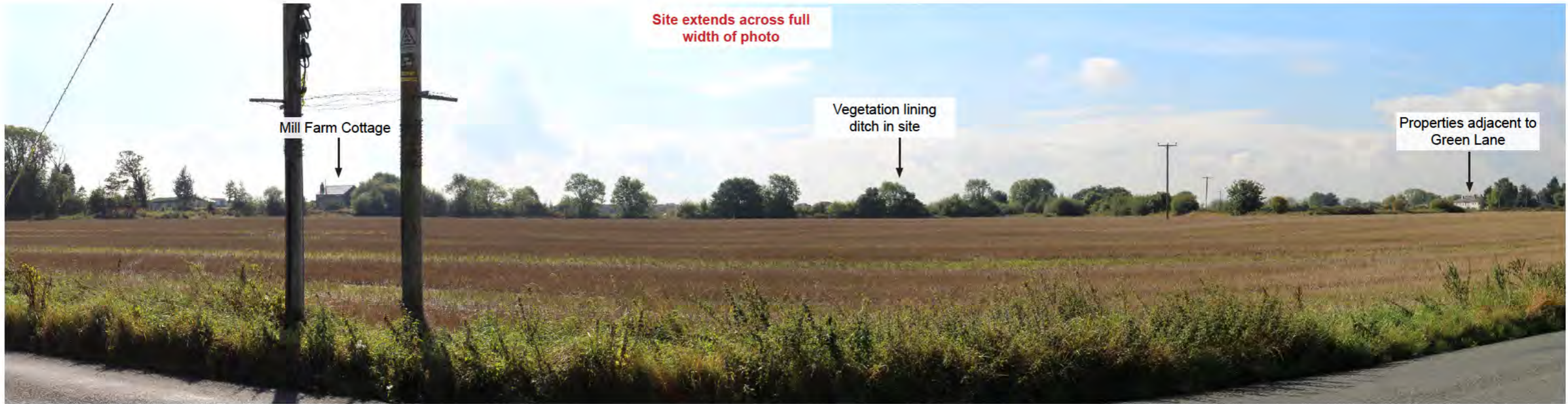
-  Site Boundary
-  Built Areas
-  Existing Woodland
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Grade II listed Bradlegh Old Hall
-  Green Envelope to Burtonwood
-  Landscape Buffer
-  Enhance Existing Vegetation in Site
-  Views to be Filtered
-  Potential recreational route to connect PRoW



Project Lumber Lane, Burtonwood, Warrington
 Drawing Title Landscape Opportunities and Constraints
 Scale As Shown (Approximate)
 Drawing No. 11193/P02
 Date September 2017
 Checked HCTNC



Ladyfield House, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 1BB
 T: 01625 528 731 E: info@tylergrange.co.uk W: www.tylergrange.co.uk



Photoviewpoint 1: View from Lumber Lane looking south



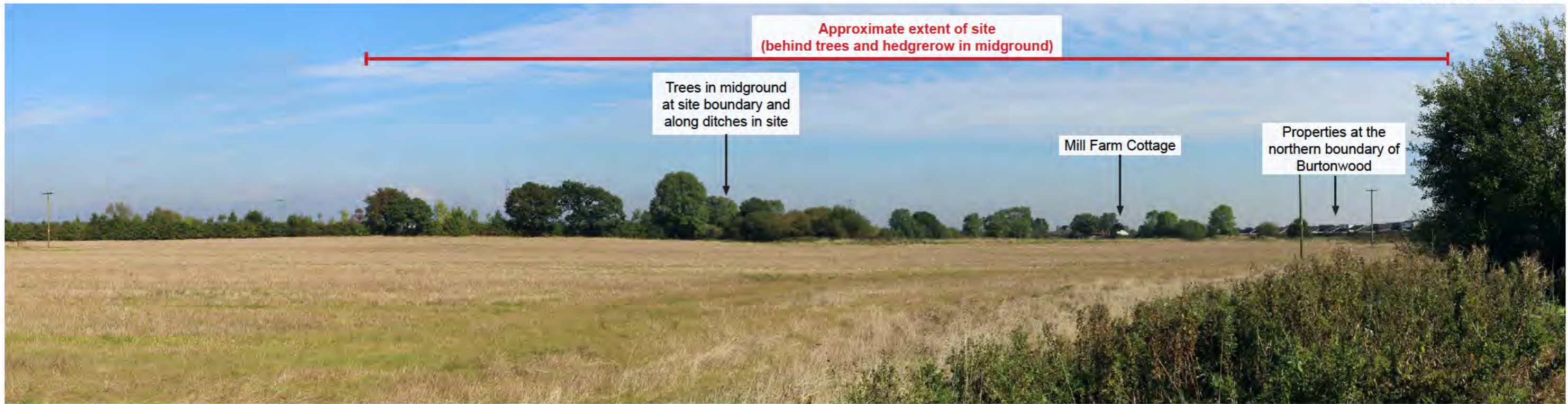
Photoviewpoint 2: View from Hall Lane near Bradlegh Old Hall looking south-west



Photoviewpoint 3: View from footpath Burtonwood 28 looking west



Photoviewpoint 4: View from footpath 28 looking north



Photoviewpoint 5: View from public footpath Burtonwood 30 looking north east



Photoviewpoint 6: View from Green Lane looking east