



Environmental Impact Assessment: Scoping Report

JPA 1.2 Northern Gateway
Residential-Led Development

On behalf of Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP
August 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 1.1 This Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report has been prepared on behalf of the Northern Gateway Development Vehicle LLP (NGDV) (the “Applicant”) in respect of a proposed residential-led development at the Simister Bowlee site, (the “Site”) which forms part of a major residential development allocation, known as ‘Northern Gateway’, in the adopted Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan.
- 1.2 The Site is situated within the administrative areas of Bury Council and Rochdale Borough Council. The forthcoming application will therefore be submitted to Bury Council (BC) and Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) as the local planning authorities (LPAs).
- 1.3 This Scoping Report has been prepared to accompany a formal EIA Scoping Request under Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (amended 2018)¹ (the ‘EIA Regulations’).
- 1.4 To ensure that all likely significant effects are identified and assessed, the EIA will consider the whole of the development project. This is considered to be the entire allocation, alongside supporting highways infrastructure. The whole of the comprehensive development project is referred to as the ‘Project for Assessment’. The spatial footprint of this is defined in **Appendix 1.1**. The boundary of the site is referred to as the ‘EIA Assessment Boundary’.

Site Context

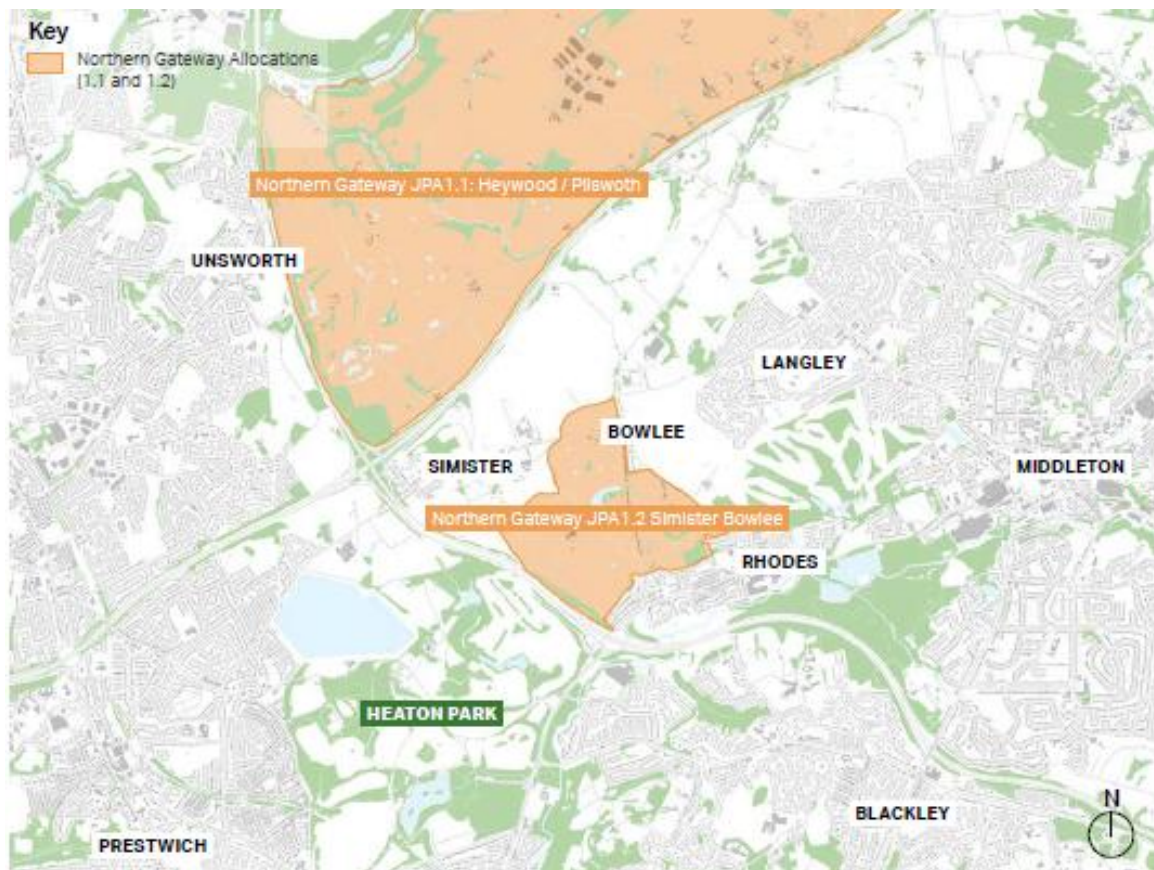
- 1.5 The Site is allocated for residential-led development under Policy JP Allocation 1.2 (“JPA1.2”) of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (“PfE”). Policy JPA 1.2 identifies the site as a residential-led development opportunity that is allocated to deliver up to 1,550 new homes, supported by community and other infrastructure.
- 1.6 The site forms part of the wider Northern Gateway development which incorporates a significant employment development opportunity to the north of the M62. This site is allocated under PfE Policy Allocation 1.1: Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway) (“JPA1.1”), and subject to a separate planning application that was submitted in April 2025 to RBC (reference: 25/00418/OUT); as well as the consented South Heywood

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (SI 2017/571).

development for 1000 homes, employment, a primary school and local centre (reference: 16/01399/HYBR)

- 1.7 Both the JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2 allocations are shown on the Image below.

Image 1.1: Plan showing Northern Gateway allocations JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2.



- 1.8 The Scoping Report seeks to agree the content of the forthcoming Environmental Statement (ES) to support an outline planning application for a residential-led development on the JPA 1.2 allocation. A description of the proposed development is provided in **Section 5** of this report.

Requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Process

- 1.9 The procedures for carrying out an EIA of a development project are set out within the EIA Regulations. The procedure is a means of drawing together, in a systematic way, an assessment of a project's likely significant environmental effects. It is a *"decision support tool to ensure that relevant environmental information is available to a decision-maker"*

before they decide whether to grant consent for a future development”². The document produced as a result of the EIA process is known as the Environmental Statement (ES).

- 1.10 EIA Regulations require that for certain projects, an EIA must be undertaken. Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations lists developments that always require EIA. Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations lists developments that may require EIA if it is considered that they could give rise to significant environmental effects.
- 1.11 The Proposed Development is not Schedule 1 development, for which EIA would be mandatory. However, developments such as the one proposed are classified as Schedule 2, Class 10 *‘Infrastructure Projects’, Subsection (b) Urban development project, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas.*
- 1.12 The EIA Regulations identify a series of thresholds for Schedule 2 projects to assist with establishing whether the potential for significant environmental effects exists such that an EIA would be required. The EIA Regulations state that for ‘Urban Development Projects’ an EIA may be required if:
- “(i) The development includes more than 1 hectare of urban development which is not dwellinghouse development; or*
- (ii) the development includes more than 150 dwellings; or*
- (iii) the overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.”*
- 1.13 The EIA Regulations therefore define ‘EIA Development’ as either “Schedule 1 development” or “Schedule 2 development likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location”.
- 1.14 Given the nature and scale of the proposals, which also exceed the thresholds in Schedule 2, the Applicant intends to submit an ES in support of the planning application. This is to determine if there is a likelihood for significant environmental effects, the content or ‘scope’ of which is set out and discussed throughout this document.
- 1.15 The EIA will assess all likely significant effects of the defined ‘development project’ in accordance with the EIA Regulations. This is considered to be the JPA 1.2 allocation,

² As defined by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Impact Assessment Guidelines: Implementing the Mitigation Hierarchy from Concept to Construction (August 2024).

including the Proposed Development for which planning permission is sought. As such, the EIA will assess the entire JPA1.2 allocation as the development project (referred to as the 'Project for Assessment'). The exact defined boundary of the future planning application is not finalised at this stage, but it is anticipated that it will largely reflect or be no greater than that of the allocation boundary.

1.16 Further detail on this approach is provided in **Section 3**.

Purpose of the Scoping Opinion Request

1.17 This Scoping Report has been prepared to accompany a formal EIA Scoping Opinion request under Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations 2017. The request is made to both BC and RBC given the cross-boundary nature of the application. Therefore, the purpose of the Scoping Opinion request is to seek a formal view from both BC and RBC (and other consultees where relevant) on the information to be contained within the ES which will accompany the forthcoming planning application on the site.

1.18 In accordance with Regulation 15(2), this Scoping Report contains:

- A plan sufficient to identify the land (refer to the EIA Assessment Boundary plan contained in **Appendix 1.1**);
- A brief description of the nature and purpose of the development, including its location and technical capacity (refer to **Sections 4 and 5** of this report);
- An explanation of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment. This has informed the subsequent topics to be 'scoped-in' to the EIA to be reported in the ES (refer to **Sections 8-15** of this report); and
- Such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make.

1.19 Specifically, this Scoping Report seeks to identify those likely significant environmental effects which could occur as a result of the Project for Assessment and are subsequently proposed to be assessed in the EIA process and reported within the resultant ES. Discussion and reasoned justification are also provided within this report on topics which are proposed to be 'scoped out' of the EIA process (refer to **Section 7**).

1.20 This Scoping Report is submitted to both BC and RBC as part of the formal request for a Scoping Opinion from each authority. Given the cross-boundary nature of the Proposed Development to which this request relates, it is anticipated that the Scoping Opinion to be

issued by BC and RBC will be co-ordinated. In doing so, it is expected that in forming the Opinion, BC and RBC will take a co-ordinated approach in liaising with statutory consultees and ensure that the same or similar Opinion is issued from each authority.

The Environmental Assessment Team

- 1.21 The ES will be compiled using a wide range of source with inputs from competent experts. The organisations and their roles in the project team are listed in Table 1.1 below.
- 1.22 Asteer Planning are also a corporate partner of the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), (formerly known Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)).



Table 1.1: The Environmental Assessment Team

Discipline	Organisation
EIA Project Management and Coordination	Asteer Planning
Ecology	Tyler Grange
Landscape and Visual	Tyler Grange
Transport	Tetra Tech
Air Quality	Redmore Environmental
Noise and Vibration	Sharps Redmore
Socio-economics and Health	Turley
Climate Change	Turley
Hydrology, Flood Risk and Water Quality	Tetra Tech
Built Heritage	Turley
Archaeology	Orion
Ground Conditions and Contamination	Tetra Tech
Soils and Agricultural Land	Land Research Associates

Structure of the Scoping Report

- 1.23 The remainder of the EIA Scoping Report will be divided into the following Sections:
- **Section 2: Topics to be 'scoped in' and Layout of the ES**
 - Each proposed environmental topic to be considered in the ES.

- **Section 3: The EIA Assessment Approach**
 - A summary of the relevant EIA legislation and EIA process.
- **Section 4: Site Description**
 - An overview of the Site and surrounding area.
- **Section 5: The Development Project and Alternatives**
 - An overview of the development project to be assessed and consideration of alternatives.
- **Section 6: Planning Policy Context**
 - A summary of the relevant planning policy and history
- **Section 7: Topics proposed to be 'Scoped Out' of the ES**
 - Each environmental topic not proposed to be considered in the ES is discussed in turn.
- **Section 8-15: Technical Chapters**
 - Individual discussions on each topic to be assessed within the ES, including information regarding specific methodology
- **Section 16: Structure of the Environmental Statement**
- **Section 17: Environmental Statement Scoping Summary**

2 TOPICS TO BE 'SCOPED-IN' AND LAYOUT OF THE ES

Environmental Topics

- 2.1 Regulation 4 of the EIA Regulations states that 'EIA' is "a process consisting of–
- (a) *the preparation of an environmental statement;*
 - (b) *any consultation, publication and notification required by, or by virtue of, these Regulations or any other enactment in respect of EIA development; and*
 - (c) *the steps required under regulation 26 ('consideration of whether planning permission or subsequent consent should be granted').*
- 2.2 It states that the "EIA must identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in light of each individual case, the direct and indirect significant effects of the proposed development on the following factors –
- (a) *population and human health;*
 - (b) *biodiversity, with particular attention to species and habitats protected under Directive 92/43/EEC (1) and Directive 2009/147/EC(2);*
 - (c) *land, soil, water, air and climate;*
 - (d) *material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape;*
- interaction between the factors referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (d)"*
- (3) *The effects referred to in paragraph (2) on the factors set out in that paragraph must include the operational effects of the proposed development, where the proposed development will have operational effects.*
- (4) *The significant effects to be identified, described and assessed under paragraph (2) include the expected significant effects arising from the vulnerability of the proposed development to major accidents or disasters that are relevant to that development"*
- 2.3 **Table 2.1** lists the environmental topics specified within the EIA Regulations as to potentially be considered as part of the EIA process. The table also summarises whether these topics are considered relevant to include within the EIA process, and where such topics will be considered within the ES where applicable. Where a topic has been scoped out from further assessment, the reasoning is fully explained within **Section 7**.

Table 2.1: Summary of Proposed ES Scope

EIA Topic (as defined by Regulation 4 (2) of the EIA Regulations)	Scoped In / Out	Where Addresses with ES (if applicable)
Population	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Socio-economics and Human Health Chapter
Human Health	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Socio-economics and Human Health Chapter
Biodiversity	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Ecology Chapter
Land (i.e. land take) and Soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing)	Scoped out	See Section 7 of this EIA Scoping Report. No significant effects considered likely due to the baseline nature of the site and therefore scoped out from further assessment.
Water (for example hydro morphological changes, quantity and quality)	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Hydrology, Flood Risk and Water Quality Chapter
Air	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Air Quality Chapter.
Climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation)	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Climate Change Chapter.
Material Assets	Scoped out	See Section 7 of this EIA Scoping Report. No significant effects considered likely and therefore Material Assets is scoped out from further assessment.
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological aspects)	Scoped out	See Section 7 of this EIA Scoping Report. No significant effects considered likely due to the baseline nature of the site and therefore scoped out from further assessment.
Landscape	Scoped in	To be assessed within the Landscape and Visual Chapter
Accidents and Disasters	Scoped out	See Section 7 of this EIA Scoping Report. No significant effects considered likely due to the nature of the application and therefore scoped out from further assessment.
Interrelationship between above factors	Scoped in	Within each topic chapter and / or in Summary chapter

2.4 In the context of the above environmental topics, it is proposed that the resultant ES will include the following disciplines / chapters each of which is discussed in this EIA Scoping Report:

- **Introduction**
- **EIA Scope and Methodology**
- **Site Description**
- **The Development Project and Alternatives**
- **Planning Policy Context**
- **Landscape and Visual Impact**
- **Ecology**
- **Transport and Access**
- **Air Quality**
- **Noise**
- **Hydrology, Flood Risk and Water Resources**
- **Socio-Economics and Human Health**
- **Climate Change**
- **Residual Effects and Mitigation Summary**
- **Glossary**
- **A separate Non-Technical Summary will also be provided.**

Introduction

2.5 This chapter of the ES will provide an introduction to the document and present details of the ES's structure and context, in addition to how consultees and members of the public can comment on the document or obtain additional copies.

EIA Scope and Methodology

- 2.6 This chapter provides a summary of the agreed scope of assessments to be considered within the ES, with reference to consultation responses and explains the methodology used to prepare the technical chapters, including reference to the general approach in determining significance. Information in relation to cumulative effects is also set out within this chapter, along with any limitations or assumptions used throughout the ES. Refer to **Section 3** for a description of the Assessment Approach.

The Site

- 2.7 This chapter will describe the Site's location, context, existing use and features. Refer to **Section 4** for an overview of the Site.

The Development Project and Alternatives

- 2.8 This chapter will provide a comprehensive description of the Project for Assessment, including the construction process, and any relevant details on assumed timescales and phasing.
- 2.9 The EIA will be based on a series of plans submitted for approval. It is currently assumed, these plans alongside the site extent, written description of development and construction information will form the basis of the assessment.
- 2.10 Refer to **Section 5** for a description of the Project for Assessment as known at this stage and a description of the proposed approach to the consideration of Alternatives.

Planning Policy Context

- 2.11 This chapter will provide a review of the relevant policy and guidance and will provide a planning history for the Project for Assessment.

Discipline Specific Chapters

- 2.12 Each discipline will be covered in an individual chapter with the further information on disciplines to be included and assessment methodologies are provided below in **Section 8 – 15**. Each chapter will also provide an assessment of cumulative effects where relevant to each individual assessment.

Summary Chapter and Non-Technical Summary

- 2.13 A chapter summarising each of the above discipline's findings will be presented. A separate Non-Technical Summary will also be provided in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

3 THE EIA ASSESSMENT APPROACH

3.1 In line with the requirements of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations set out above, the proposed approach to the EIA as to be reported in the ES will follow the process set out below in order to identify and assess likely significant environmental effects. The assessment approach as set out below, which specifically sets out the following:

- Description of the Development Project, including the full extent of development to be assessed (i.e. the Project for Assessment).
- The approach to the consideration of Alternatives.
- Description of the Baseline to ensure consistency across each technical assessment.
- Description of the factors likely to be significantly effected by the Development Project.
- The approach to assessing likely significant effects to ensure a consistent approach to adopted across each technical assessment and an outline of the scenarios for assessment.
- The approach to defining mitigation and residual effects.
- The approach to assessing cumulative effects.
- Confirmation of how the ES will be presented, including the Non-Technical Summary.

Description of Development

3.2 The EIA Regulations require that the ES provides “(a) a description of the development comprising information on the site, design, size and other relevant features of the development” (Regulation 13(3)). In addition, Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations provides further detail on what should be contained in the ES and outlines that it should contain:

“A description of the development, including in particular: (a) a description of the location of the development; (b) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land use requirements during the construction and operational phases; (c) a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production process), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used; (d) an estimate, by type and quantity, of

expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases”.

- 3.3 In adhering to the requirements of the Regulations set out above, the EIA must define what constitutes the ‘development project’ at an early design stage in order to identify, describe and assess potential “direct and indirect significant effects” on the environment. In defining the development project for assessment purposes, it is acknowledged that consideration needs to be given to all component parts of the project. This is referred to as the ‘Project for Assessment’ and includes the maximum extent of any permanent and temporary works associated with delivering the development project. This is further described in **Section 5** and includes;
- The Proposed Development for which outline planning permission is sought.
 - Potential highways infrastructure – including the site access works, upgrades to Blueball Lane and active travel improvements or measures.
 - Other works required to facilitate construction.
 - The extent of these works, as anticipated at this stage, are shown on the EIA Assessment Boundary plan [refer to **Appendix 1.1**].
- 3.4 Further consideration will also be given to mitigation that could be delivered outside of the EIA Assessment Boundary, which may include:
- Potential off-site highway infrastructure – such as junction improvements or active travel measures.
 - Additional land that may be required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
 - Off-site utilities infrastructure (such as water mains, foul or electricity infrastructure). At this stage it is assumed that such connections or extensions of services will be made to/from existing infrastructure and networks.
- 3.5 The ES will contain a detailed description of development which will form the basis of the assessment to be reported in the ES.
- 3.6 A high-level description of the Development Project is set out in **Section 5** of this Scoping Report.

Alternatives

3.7 Schedule 4 Paragraph 2 of the EIA Regulations require that the ES provide:

"A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects."

3.8 The EIA Regulations do not require an Applicant to consider alternatives, but where they have been considered, then these should be described.

3.9 Therefore, the ES will define the following types of alternatives considered by the Applicant:

- **The 'do nothing' alternative:** Consideration of the impacts in the absence of the development; and
- **Alternative layout and designs:** A description of the design evolution based on environmental constraints, potential effects and other considerations, with a description and account of the main reasons why alternative layouts were dismissed and why the preferred design option was selected.

3.10 There is no specific guidance on the methodology to be adopted for the assessment of alternatives nor the criteria to be used to inform the assessment of reasonable alternatives. Therefore, in outlining the Alternatives considered, the ES will be based on professional experience of similar projects and will draw on other application documents to be prepared to support the planning application, such as the Design and Access Statement.

Description of the Baseline

3.11 Schedule 4, Paragraph 3 of the EIA Regulations states that an ES should include:

"a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario)"

3.12 Likely significant effects as a result of the Project for Assessment will largely be described in the ES in relation to the deviation from the current baseline environment (i.e. the prevailing existing environmental characteristics and conditions of the site). Therefore, it is necessary to establish the existing baseline environmental conditions within relevant technical study areas, which will be based upon gathering data from sources such as from

site visits and surveys; desk-based studies and consultation with the relevant statutory consultees through the EIA process. The baseline characteristics will be defined by gathering relevant data during the assessment process using data collected between 2024 and 2026 from various sources as set out above.

- 3.13 The approach to data collection is further set out in **Sections 8-15** of this Scoping Report.

Consideration of the Future Baseline and Receptors

- 3.14 Schedule 4, Paragraph 3 of the EIA Regulations states that an ES should include:

'...an outline of the likely evolution thereof (without implementation of the development) as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge'.

- 3.15 The ES will set out a future baseline scenario under a 'do nothing' alternative, as set out above. However, the future baseline scenario will also be described within each of the Technical Chapters contained in the ES.
- 3.16 The assessments presented in the ES will largely be based on the deviation from the existing baseline scenario and future baseline conditions are presented to describe conditions in the absence of development. However, for a number of effects (predominantly effects relating to Transport, Air Quality and Noise), future assessment years are utilised to assess effects (refer to **Sections 8 – 15** below).
- 3.17 Consideration will also be given to future sensitive receptors of the Proposed Development (i.e. future residents). Although the consideration of such receptors is not specifically required by the EIA Regulations, these receptors have been considered to provide certainty to that the proposals are robustly assessed and mitigation provided where required as part of the design.

Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

- 3.18 The EIA Regulations require that the ES identifies '*likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the environment*'. It is recognised in the EIA Regulations however that not all environmental effects are considered significant.
- 3.19 The evaluation and determination of significant effects will be carried out using specific criteria defined within each of the technical chapters of the ES. Where available, published standards and guidelines will be used as the basis for the significance criteria.

3.20 The proposed methodologies for individual environmental topics are discussed in the subsequent section. However, in many disciplines the following basic approach is utilised:

- The sensitivity of the receiving environmental receptor is evaluated using defined criteria.
- The nature of the impact is established in terms of its duration, extent, frequency, likelihood of occurrence, reversibility, and compliance with recognised standards;
- The magnitude of the impact is determined. The magnitude of change is a consideration of how much the impact alters the baseline condition.
- The significance of the effect is determined by cross referencing the sensitivity of the receptor with the magnitude of change on the receptor.

3.21 An example of this 'matrix' process is indicated below in **Table 3.1**; however, it should be noted that this is provided as a general guide only. Discipline-specific methodology is often used rather than generic criteria, as it is recognised that broad criteria does not always cater for all disciplines, particularly where best practice and guidance require subtle differences. Therefore, the significance criteria to be adopted within each technical assessment will be clearly explained in each Technical Chapter to be contained in the ES.

Table 3.1: Example degrees of Significance based on Magnitude/Sensitivity

	Sensitivity of Receptor				
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor to Moderate	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor to Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

- 3.22 Schedule 4 Paragraph 5 of the EIA Regulations state that the description of significant effects include:

“Direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development”.

- 3.23 Therefore, the ES will consider likely significant direct and indirect or secondary effects are as a result of both the enabling works phase and construction phase (often short or medium term and /or temporary effects) and following completion of the development (often long term or permanent effects). Cumulative effects will also be considered (as discussed below) in accordance with the EIA Regulations. Given the nature and intended longevity of the development’s operational life, decommissioning is not appropriate to consider. Accordingly, the ES will focus on the potential likely significant effects, which can either be positive or negative as a result of the enabling and construction phase and the operational phase.

Assessment Scenarios

- 3.24 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, the likely significant effects associated with both the enabling and construction works (including site preparation and any preparatory earthworks) and the completed and operational phases of the Project for Assessment will be assessed. The following scenarios will therefore be assessed and reported in the ES:

- **Enabling and Construction Stage:** the assessment will include an assessment of the enabling and construction stage from commencement and to completion.
- **Operational Stage:** the assessment will include an assessment of the operational phase of development.
- **Decommissioning Stage:** Given the nature and intended longevity of the Proposed Development’s operational life, decommissioning effects are scoped out of the assessment. It is assumed that, if decommissioning takes place, an assessment of effects will be undertaken at that stage and if required, an EIA undertaken.

Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

- 3.25 Schedule 4 Paragraph 7 of the EIA Regulations require that the ES provide:

“A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any

proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post-project analysis). That description should explain the extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases”.

- 3.26 Regulation 26 states that when determining an application consideration should be given to *‘whether it is appropriate to impose monitoring measures’* including the parameters to be monitored and the duration of the monitoring.
- 3.27 Therefore, the ES will identify relevant mitigation measures which are required to reduce and avoid identified likely significant effects. Mitigation measures considered may include modification of the proposals i.e. primary mitigation, secondary mitigation (that which requires further action) or tertiary mitigation (actions that would occur with or without input from the EIA).
- 3.28 Each technical assessment will consider and define relevant primary (and if relevant tertiary) mitigation for each assessment scenario to inform the assessment of likely significant effects. Consideration will then be given to secondary mitigation for each likely significant effect identified. Any residual effects following the implementation of mitigation measures will be determined accordingly. The residual effects represent the overall likely significant effect of the Proposed Development on the environment having taken account of practicable/available mitigation measures.

Cumulative and In-combination Effects

- 3.29 Schedule 4 Paragraph 5(e) of the EIA Regulations ES must provide a description of the likely significant effects of a project on the environment resulting from *“...the culmination of effects with other existing and / or approved projects...”*
- 3.30 This is further supported by the Planning Practice Guidance which states *“There are occasions.... when other existing or approved development may be relevant in determining whether significant effects are likely as a consequence of a proposed development.”* (Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 4-024-20170728).
- 3.31 Regard will therefore be had to relevant *“existing and/or approved projects”*, which alongside the development of the proposals at the site, could potentially result in cumulative significant effects (discussed further below). It is relevant to note however that not all these projects will necessarily have the potential for cumulative effects.

- 3.32 It is also acknowledged that there may be other proposals which are considered as "reasonably foreseeable" as referred to within the European Guidance in relation to the definition of cumulative effects. It is important to recognise that it is not the role of the ES to assess all these types of potential developments and a staged approach in identifying which 'other sites' are relevant to consider is appropriate.
- 3.33 A review has therefore been undertaken of relevant "existing and/or approved projects" and other potential developments which have been subject to planning applications which may be consented during the time at which this ES is prepared. Committed or approved projects from the last five years, within 5km, have been taken into consideration which are above the Schedule 1 or 2 screening criteria thresholds set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations. In some instances, a wider search area has been used for consideration of larger schemes with the potential for cumulative transport effects. This review is set out in the table below. At this stage, planning applications which meet the search criteria are also listed, which will be monitored during the course of preparing the EIA. Planning applications which are approved during this time, will be scoped in to the cumulative assessment. Where developments are fully operational, these will be included in the baseline where relevant to the technical assessment. Whilst this Scoping Report seeks to identify relevant schemes to be considered, it is to be acknowledged that the extent to which schemes need to be considered within each environmental discipline will inevitably vary.
- 3.34 A review has been taken of Bury Council (BC) Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) and nearby councils (located in the search area) online register of projects. This included Oldham Council (OC) and Manchester City Council (MCC).
- 3.35 The below table summarises the above process and sets out the potential 'cumulative schemes' and whether these are considered appropriate to assess and in what manner.

Table 2.1 Cumulative Developments

No.	Application Reference	Description	Location	Status	EIA Development	Assessment Consideration
1	RBC 16/01399/HYBR	Part full/part outline planning application for the development of land at South Heywood, including the demolition of a number of existing on-site buildings and structures, construction of a new link road between Junction 19 of the M62 and Pilsworth Road, and the widening of part of Pilsworth Road, together with associated junction improvements. Outline consent for residential uses comprising up to 1000 dwellings (Class C3); employment uses (Classes B2/B8) comprising up to 135,460m2 Gross Internal Area (GIA); a new primary school (Class D1); Class A1/A2/A3/A5 uses comprising up to 2500m2 GIA which includes no more than 499m2 of A1 uses; together with associated landscaping, open space and sports pitches,	South Heywood Land Bound by Manchester Road, Hareshill Road and Pilsworth Road West of Junction 19 Of the M62 Rochdale 200m to the northwest	Approved 31/03/2020	EIA	Under construction – cumulative scheme only where development is not yet complete. Otherwise, forms part of baseline

No.	Application Reference	Description	Location	Status	EIA Development	Assessment Consideration
		drainage, ecological enhancements, cycleway and footpath linkages, infrastructure and other works ancillary thereto.				
2	RBC 21/00744/FUL	Residential development of 311 dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated infrastructure, landscaping and access	Land Off Don Street, Middleton 3.1km east	Approved 13/09/2022 S73 approved 20/11/2023	Not EIA	Under Construction - cumulative scheme
3	RBC 23/00650/HYBR	Hybrid planning application (EIA development) for a residential development of 233 dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated landscaping and access, and Outline planning permission with access for residential development of up to 1147 dwellings (Use Class C3), mixed-use development, land for primary school extension, local centre and MUGA, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure.	Land At Stakehill, Off Rochdale Road, Middleton 4.9km northeast	Pending Determination	EIA	To be kept under review through scoping
4	RBC 25/00381/OUT	Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except the means access) for the development of up to 314	Land North and East of Stakehill Industrial Estate, Middleton	Pending Determination	EIA	To be kept under review through scoping

No.	Application Reference	Description	Location	Status	EIA Development	Assessment Consideration
		residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and employment uses (Use Class B2/B8 including ancillary office space (Use Class E)) comprising up to 13,047sqm Gross External Area together with associated parking, highway infrastructure, works to public rights of way, areas of public open space, landscaping, drainage, ecological enhancements and other works ancillary thereto	5 km northeast			
5	RBC 24/00805/OUT	Outline application with all matters reserved for the development of land within Use Classes E(g)(iii) (industrial processes), B2 (general industrial), B8 (storage and distribution) and removal of existing structures and hard standing and associated works	Plot H4 Heywood Distribution Park Pilsworth Rd Heywood 200m north	Approved 20/05/2025	Not EIA	Construction not started – cumulative scheme
6	Proposed PfE site allocation (JPA 1.1) RBC 25/00418/OUT	Application for outline planning permission (all matters reserved) for a national-scale employment	Land bound to the north by Brightley Brook, Pilsworth Fisheries,	Pending determination	EIA	Considered as a cumulative scheme, together with the residual elements of

No.	Application Reference	Description	Location	Status	EIA Development	Assessment Consideration
		development, comprising Storage & Distribution (Use Class B8) and Industrial (Use Classes B2, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii)) uses (including, but not limited to, Logistics, Manufacturing Processes and Data Centres), with supporting ancillary uses including Hotel (Use Class C1), Commercial & Business & Service (Uses Class E(a - g)), Education (Use Class F1(a)), Local Community (Use Class F2(a - c) uses, Sui Generis uses (in accordance with the Uses Schedule), and associated demolition works, landscaping, drainage, ecological enhancements, highway works, cycleway and footpath linkages and other ancillary infrastructure.	Pilsworth Road & Heywood Distribution Park; to the west by Whittle Brook; to the east by Birch Industrial Park & fields; and to the south by the M62 corridor 600m northwest			the JPA 1.1 allocation.
<i>Nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP)</i>						
7	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project M60 / M62 /M66 Simister Island	Construction of a new free-flow link (northern loop) from the M60eastbound to M60 southbound carriageways. Realignment	M60 Junction 18, three miles south of Bury	Approved 09/09/2025	EIA	Construction not started – cumulative scheme

No.	Application Reference	Description	Location	Status	EIA Development	Assessment Consideration
		of the M66 southbound carriageway on the approach to the junction. Construction of a new two-lane free-flow road from the M60 northbound to the M60 westbound to replace the existing single lane and widen the M66 southbound to four lanes through junction 18. Conversion of the hard shoulder into a permanent traffic lane between M60 junctions 17 and 18, providing five lanes in both directions. Other works will include improvements to signage, signalling and drainage.	Located to the west of the Site.			

- 3.36 On review of recent planning approvals and planning application submissions in the surrounding area, the team is not aware of any other projects within the vicinity of the Site which would be required to be considered as part of a cumulative assessment, however the Applicant welcomes confirmation.

Cumulative Assessment Approach for Transport Effects

- 3.37 As part of the assessment of the JPA1.1 transport related effects, a 'development log' has been produced to inform the Transport Assessment submitted as part of planning application ref. 25/00418/OUT, which is based on assumptions about project timelines. Therefore, traffic related effects in that assessment have been based on a greater number of cumulative schemes than identified in that assessment. In addition, the projects included within the development log have been included in the baseline traffic scenarios (including future baseline). It is proposed that the same approach is adopted in the assessment of likely significant effects for the JPA 1.2 proposals. Therefore, a separate cumulative assessment is not required for the assessment of traffic effects associated with the JPA 1.2 proposals, as this is already inherent in proposed approach to the transport assessment. However, a separate cumulative traffic scenario will be assessed to consider the JPA 1.1 and JPA 1.2 in combination, given the relationship with both proposals and their inclusion in the Northern Gateway PfE allocation. This reflects the approach taken to the assessment of transport related effects associated with the JPA 1.1 proposals.

Preparation of the ES

- 3.38 In accordance with the Regulations, the ES will be prepared by "competent experts", as listed at the outset of this report. A statement outlining the relevant experience of the experts who have undertaken the assessment and drafted the technical chapters within the ES will be provided. For example, **Section 18** of the EIA Regulations state:

"(5) In order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental statement— (a)the developer must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts; and

(b)the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the developer outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts".

- 3.39 Asteer Planning are also a corporate partner of the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP), formerly known as 'The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment' (IEMA).

The Planning Application Package

3.40 The planning application will be supported by a range of other documents, plans and technical reports as required by the Local Planning Authority. This is likely to include the following and which will be agreed with BC and RBC as part of pre-application discussions;

- Planning Statement.
- Design and Access Statement and Design Code.
- Development Specification (defining the maximum development quantum's for each use).
- Agricultural Land Classification Report.
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment.
- Crime Impact Assessment.
- Health Impact Assessment.
- Economics Benefits and Social Value Statement.
- Heritage Statement.
- Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment.
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (including Metric and report).
- Minerals Safeguarding Assessment.
- Ground Investigation Report.
- Sustainability, Energy and Carbon Statement.
- Digital Connectivity Statement.
- Statement of Community Involvement

Co-ordination with Habitat Regulations Assessment

3.41 Regulation 27 of the EIA Regulations states:

'Where in relation to EIA development there is, in addition to the requirement for an EIA to be carried out in accordance with these Regulations, also a requirement to carry out a Habitats Regulation Assessment, the relevant planning authority or the Secretary of State, as the case may be, must, where appropriate, ensure that the Habitats Regulation Assessment and the EIA are co-ordinated'.

- 3.42 A number of ecological designated sites are present within 10km of the Site (refer to **Section 4**). Given the proximity of these sites, an assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the Habitat Regulations and will be co-ordinated with the EIA process. The planning application will therefore be supported by a 'Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment'.

4 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Site

- 4.1 The JPA 1.2 Site extends to approximately 98 ha. The location and extent of the site is shown on the Assessment Boundary Plan provided at **Appendix 1.1**.
- 4.2 The Site occupies a highly accessible location close to a strategically important motorway interchange where the M60, M62 and M66 converge. It lies immediately north of Junction 19 of the M60 and adjacent to Junction 18 of the M62 (Junction 4 of the M66). The Site extends across land on both sides of Heywood Old Road (A6045) and is situated between Whitefield and Prestwich to the west and Middleton to the east. Land allocated as JPA 1.1 lies immediately to the north beyond the M62.
- 4.3 Simister Roundabout is located to the north of the Site, with the M60 forming its southern boundary. The M62 and Junction 18 lie to the west. Heaton Park and Heaton Park Golf Course are located to the south and south-west beyond the M60.
- 4.4 The northern boundary of the Site comprises predominantly agricultural land to the south of Simister village, defined by established field boundaries and hedgerows. Agricultural land also extends to the northeast, beyond which lie North Manchester Golf Club and the built-up areas of Langley and Middleton. The settlement of Rhodes lies to the south and southeast of the Site.
- 4.5 Heywood Old Road (A6045) runs through the site on a broadly north–south alignment. A number of dispersed farmsteads and residential properties are located within the Site, together with existing properties fronting onto Heywood Old Road on both sides.
- 4.6 The Site is characterised by undulating topography, which generally rises towards the north. Surface water features include an unnamed watercourse flowing north to south through the Site, together with a fishing lake. The site generally slopes towards an unnamed weir.
- 4.7 Several Public Rights of Way cross the site, predominantly aligned in a north–south direction.

Overview of Environmental Designations

Ecological Designations

- 4.8 The Site is not located in, or within a 2km radius of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) or Ramsar.

- 4.9 The Site is located in the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the Rochdale Canal SSSI, which is located approximately 3.7km to the west of the Site. The scheme does not fall into one of the classifications for which consultation with Natural England is required. The Rochdale Canal is also designated as a SAC.
- 4.10 The South Pennine Moors SAC is located 14.9km to the west of the Site. Manchester Mosses SAC is located 15km east of the Site. Holcroft Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is also part of Manchester Mosses SAC.
- 4.11 Peak District Moors SPA is located 12km to the east of the Site.
- 4.12 There are two Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within a 2km radius of the Site; Blackley Forest, 0.5km to the south, and Alkington Woods, 1km to the east.
- 4.13 The Site is characterised by largely low-quality modified grassland associated with cattle grazing and silage with some areas of other neutral grassland. There are hedgerows across the Site, with ponds and a large fishing lake evident on land to the west of Heywood Old Road. A stream runs north to south through the central area of the western part of the site, featuring a riparian corridor in moderate condition. Additionally, a woodland block is adjacent to the M60. A Site of Biological Importance ("SBI") at Bradley Hall Farm, is located on the eastern part of the Site.

Heritage

- 4.14 There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wrecks within the Site or within a 1km study area.
- 4.15 There are nine Listed Buildings within 1km:
- Heaton Hall – Grade I – 910m south
 - Temple to Northeast of Heaton Hall – Grade II* - 720m south
 - Smithy Lodge to East of Heaton Hall – Grade II*- 530m south
 - Rhodes Schools – Grade II – 170m east
 - Dower House Cottage to North of Heaton Hall – Grade II – 820m south
 - Sundial in Front of Orangery of Heaton Hall – Grade II – 860m south
 - Church of St. George – Grade II - 350m to the west

- 31-37, Broad Street – Grade II – 320m to the east
- Church of All Saints War Memorial, All Saint's Church, Manchester Old Road. Middleton – Grade II – 130m to the southeast

4.16 There is one Registered Park and Garden within 1km of the Site, Heaton Park, which is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden located 80m to the south of the Site, separated by the M60.

Flood Risk

4.17 There are no main rivers within the Site. The Environment Agency flood maps identify that the Site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1, therefore at the lowest risk of flooding (assessed as having a lower than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding).

4.18 There is a generally low risk of surface water flooding across the Site. Small areas of low to medium surface water flood risk are associated with localised variations in topography and existing buildings at Heaton Farm. An increased risk of surface water flooding is present to the south of the Site in association with the M60, and within the central part of the Site in association with an existing weir.

4.19 There is a localised risk of groundwater flooding across the northern part of the Site adjacent to the unnamed watercourse which flows north south through the Site.

Landscape

4.20 The Site is located within National Character Area (NCA) 54 Manchester Pennine Fringe, with NCA 55 Manchester Conurbation located to the south.

4.21 The Site is not located within a National Landscape (previously known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

Air Quality and Noise

4.22 The Site is partly located within the Greater Manchester Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), with vehicle exhaust emissions from the M60 to the west, and to a lesser extent Heywood Old Road to the east, the principal sources of atmospheric pollution in the area

4.23 The closest Noise Important Areas are ID 6974, located 100m to the south of the Site along the M60 and ID 1659 located 150m to the east of the Site associated with the junction between Middleton Road, the A578 and Heywood Old Road, the A6045.

5 THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Project for Assessment

- 5.1 As set out in **Section 1**, the Site is allocated for residential-led development under Policy JP Allocation 1.2 (JPA 1.2) of the PfE Development Plan. Policy JPA 1.2 identifies the Site as a residential-led development opportunity that is allocated to deliver up to 1,550 new homes, supported by community and other infrastructure. The Simister Bowlee Development Framework has been developed to demonstrate how such proposals could be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the PfE policy. It is therefore proposed to create a new sustainable, high-quality neighbourhood, aligning with the vision as set out in the masterplan for the site.
- 5.2 The proposals are still developing and will be informed by technical assessments being undertaken, as well as local community and stakeholder engagement. At this stage, a preliminary description of development is provided to set out the likely maximum extent of the proposals for EIA Scoping purposes (i.e. the Project for Assessment). This is important in being able to provide flexibility for the emerging development proposals and to allow consideration of the likely significant effects as part of the assessment process. However, it is likely the planning application will seek outline permission for the following:
- Up to 1550 residential homes;
 - Supporting community facilities, including a 2 Form Entry ('FE') Primary School and local centre uses, which may include local retail, community and health facilities;
 - Open Space to include elements of play space, walking and cycle routes, ecological enhancements, retention of existing trees where possible and areas of new planting to align with biodiversity net gain requirements;
 - Points of vehicular access from Heywood Old Road and potential improvements such as widening and surface upgrades to Blueball Lane;
 - Public transport and active travel connections;
 - Other associated infrastructure (such as sustainable drainage measures), internal access arrangements, parking and pedestrian and cycle connections.
- 5.3 Further consideration will also be given to mitigation that could be delivered outside of the EIA Assessment Boundary, which may include:

- Potential off-site highway infrastructure – such as junction improvements or active travel measures.
- Additional land that may be required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

5.4 Off-site utilities infrastructure (such as water mains, foul or electricity infrastructure). The heights of buildings will reflect the residential led nature of the scheme. As such, no tall buildings are proposed. Given the topography of the Site, regrading of existing ground levels to form development plateaus will be required and therefore buildings heights will be taken from a proposed ground level.

Highways and Accessibility

- 5.5 The site comprises two areas on either side of Heywood Old Road. To the east of Heywood Old Road, it is proposed that this parcel will be accessed via two priority junctions with suitable footways to provide access for pedestrians and cyclists. To the west of Heywood Old Road two primary access points are proposed, with one providing access to the northern parcel of the site and one to provide access to the southern parcel, connected via an internal spine road. The southern access point is proposed to be designed to accommodate public transport access by bus. In addition, both emergency and pedestrian and cycle routes will also be provided to provide permeability.
- 5.6 Vehicle access is not proposed from the site through to Simister Village, which is instead likely to be restricted to provide bus and active travel access only, and access for Simister residents only. This is to be explored further within the planning application. There is thus an opportunity to provide an active travel and public transport (bus) only route, connecting from Heywood Old Road through to Simister Village via the proposed internal spine road. This may require infrastructure works outside of the JPA 1.2 Allocation to accommodate this as shown on the image below.
- 5.7 The access strategy will be informed by the EIA process, stakeholder and community engagement and through discussions with both highway Authorities and key stakeholders. As noted above, any off-site infrastructure works will form part of the Project for Assessment and fully assessed within the EIA and reported within the ES.

Image 5.1: Proposed points of Accessibility

Surface Water, Foul Drainage and Utilities

- 5.8 The proposals will incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) on-site to attenuate surface water runoff prior to discharging into the local watercourses. Detailed future designs for the development will ensure there is no increase to flood risk on the site or elsewhere as a result of the development.
- 5.9 Existing utilities connect to Heywood Old Road (surface water, water main, electricity, gas, and BT). Existing infrastructure includes a 15-metre-wide sludge main easement located in the northern section of the site, a localised gas main is located in the northern section of the Site, and a 275kV overhead line running east-west within the southern section of the Site. At this stage, it is anticipated that the proposals will connect to existing services and provide new on-site infrastructure where required to ensure sufficient capacity to accommodate the development.
- 5.10 A surface water and foul drainage strategy will be developed and inform the EIA process.

Enabling and Construction Phase Activities

- 5.11 At this stage, it is reasonable to assume for assessment purposes, that construction could commence 2029, with first occupation likely in 2030. Full site completion is anticipated to occur by c. 2046.
- 5.12 A programme of earthworks to facilitate suitable building platforms will likely be required given the existing topography and therefore outline details will be provided within the ES to ensure any consequential likely significant impacts can be identified.

Parameters for Assessment

- 5.13 Given the outline nature of the application, the EIA will be based upon a set of defined parameters, which will identify the extent of different land use areas, maximum heights of buildings and key landscape mitigation proposals integral to the scheme. Therefore, the assessment for EIA purposes will be parameter based, thus following the 'Rochdale Envelope' principle.
- 5.14 It is anticipated that the assessment parameters include the following:
- Site Location Plan;
 - Land Use Parameter Plan, including areas for built development and landscaping;
 - Maximum building heights Parameter Plan (taken from a proposed ground level);
 - Access Plan(s).
- 5.15 A Development Specification document is also intended to be submitted as part of the forthcoming planning application, which will set out the proposed land uses and a schedule of accommodation to be approved and assessed as part of the EIA.

6 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 This section provides a review of the planning policy context, including the adopted Development Plan.

Planning Background

- 6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 require planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for Bury and Rochdale.
- 6.3 Planning permission has not been granted for any significant uses within the allocation.
- 6.4 Within Bury, the adopted Development Plan comprises:
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039 ('PfE') (adopted 21 March 2024).
 - Saved policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan ('Bury UDP') (adopted 29 August 1997).
 - Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan ('GMJMP') (adopted 26 April 2013).
 - Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan ('GMJWP') (adopted 1 April 2012).
- 6.5 Within Rochdale, the adopted Development Plan comprises:
- PfE (adopted 21 March 2024).
 - Rochdale Core Strategy ('Rochdale CS') (adopted 19 October 2016).
 - Saved policies of the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan ('Rochdale UDP') (adopted June 2006).
 - Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan ('GMJMP') (adopted 26 April 2013).
 - Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan ('GMJWP') (adopted 1 April 2012).

National Policy

- 6.6 The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2024. Relevant NPPF policies are considered in **Sections 8-15** of this Scoping Report.

Other Considerations

- Adopted and emerging Supplementary Planning Documents ('SPD') and Guidance ('SPG'); particularly the Northern Gateway Development Framework ('NGDF') (JPA1.1) SPD (March 2025);
- The emerging Local Plans for Bury and Rochdale and the emerging Greater Manchester Joint Waste & Minerals Plan; and
- Simister Bowlee Development Framework (JPA1.2) SPD February 2026.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS WHICH ARE NOT SIGNIFICANT

Waste Materials and Assets

- 7.1 Construction of the proposals would lead to an increase in waste produced, which will be reused and recycled where possible. Construction waste would be managed in accordance with all applicable legislation and disposed of in line with best practice. Other sources of waste during the construction stage are assumed to relate to construction materials (including packaging). It is anticipated that waste produced during enabling and construction works phase would be controlled through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan ('CEMP'), secured by planning condition. The CEMP will be informed all applicable legislation and will set out the principles and legal requirements relating to waste (including hazardous waste). The CEMP will also describe how materials will be managed efficiently and disposed of legally during construction. It will also outline the aims, objectives and on-going management responsibilities, including management practices, to be implemented during the construction stage. Considering the volume of waste generation during the enabling works and construction phase and the implementation of management measures as described above, it is not considered that the proposals will generate significant waste and it is therefore scoped out of the ES.
- 7.2 Once operational, a quantity of domestic and commercial type waste will be generated. The proposals will not include for any land uses or activities that will give rise to particularly contaminative or hazardous waste materials. Operational waste would be disposed of in line with Council requirements and managed in accordance with all applicable legislation. Therefore, given the nature of the proposals, waste material is not considered significant and therefore does not warrant further assessment within the resultant ES.
- 7.3 Material assets in EIA is a very broad term which considers both physical and non-physical sectors that could be said to have material value. On review of the Site's location and context, it is not considered there are any further 'material assets' to those already addressed within other EIA topics, and therefore no further consideration of material assets is proposed within the EIA and resultant ES.

Lighting

- 7.4 Any new lighting proposed as part of the proposals will be in accordance with British Standards, The Institution of Lighting Professionals ("ILP") and The Chartered Institution

of Building Services Engineers ("CIBSE") which prescribes required lighting levels. Whilst temporary construction lighting would be used during construction, this would be controlled through the CEMP. Any lighting proposed as part of the completed development will adhere to the requirements with the above standards. The effect of artificial lighting on ecological receptors will be assessed in the Ecology Technical Chapter of the ES. As the Site is not situated within, or in proximity to, a designated Dark Sky Park or an associated buffer zone, is not located within a National Park or National Landscape, the effect of lighting on landscape and visual amenity is proposed to be scoped out of the EIA.

Major Accidents and Disasters

- 7.5 Schedule 4, Paragraphs 5 and 8 of the EIA Regulations require a description of the expected effects of the Proposed Development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to risks of major accidents and / or disasters that are relevant to the project concerned.
- 7.6 There is no recognised standard methodology for the assessment of major accidents and disasters within EIA. In September 2020, the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) now known as ISEP, in partnership with Arup, published 'Major Accidents and Disasters in EIA: A Primer' which is a risk assessment (using a source-pathway-receptor) based approach. Therefore, the assessment of Major Accidents and Disasters in relation to the proposals has been based on a combination of the IEMA Primer and professional judgement.
- 7.7 The IEMA Primer states that the major accidents and disasters topic can be scoped out of the EIA if it can be demonstrated that:

"1. There is no source-pathway-receptor linkage of a hazard that could trigger a major accident and/ or disaster or potential for the scheme to lead to a significant environmental effect; or

2. All possible major accidents and/or disasters are adequately covered elsewhere in the assessment or covered by existing design measures³ or compliance with legislation and best practice"

³ For instance, altering the internal spatial layout of a scheme to simply avoid a hazard could be embedded as a primary mitigation measure at the scoping stage.

7.8 In respect of the above, given the nature of the proposed uses, the proposals will not result in a significant environmental effect as a result of a hazard or accident. No Control of Major Accident Hazard or Hazardous Substance Storage has been identified for the site as a whole or within 250m of the boundary. However, the following hazards have been identified:

- **Presence of Power Lines:** High Voltage overhead cables (275kV National Grid Electricity Transmission) run from east to west through the southwest of the parcel, with three associated pylons. The proposals will respond to the presence of these power lines by retaining in-situ in appropriate easements.
- **Presence of other Utilities:** These include a 15-metre sludge main located in the northern parcel of and a gas main along a section of Simister Lane. The proposals will respond to the presence of these utilities through retention in-situ in appropriate easements.
- **Coal Mining:** The site falls within a Coal Mining Reporting Area however is not within a Development High Risk Area defined by the Mining Remediation Authority. No mine entries or outcrops are present on or close to the site in data sets available from the Mining Remediation Authority. The risk to the site from historic coal mining has been assessed as low.
- **Fishing Lake / Reservoir:** within the western parcel, there is a reservoir/ lake present, currently used as a fishing pond. The pond has been created by damming of a watercourse via an embankment constructed at the southwestern end of the pond. A breach analysis of this pond will be undertaken as part of the flood risk assessment.

7.9 There is very low potential for a major accident and disaster to occur from the identified potential hazards present within the Site. However, primary mitigation measures are taken into consideration to determine if, through them, the risk is adequately mitigated. In the relation to the proposals and given the embedded design measures, which includes adequate easements and standoff zones from the utility assets, the probability or likelihood is considered to be very low. It is acknowledged that other utility infrastructure is present within the site, but these can be either retained in situ or diverted in accordance with established legislative requirements. In relation to the presence of the fishing lake, an assessment of a potential breach will be undertaken and form part of the flood risk assessment and presented in the Hydrology, Flood Risk and Water Resources Technical Chapter of the ES. Therefore, it is proposed Major Accidents and Disasters is scoped out of the ES.

Wind

- 7.10 The proposals will not comprise buildings of a sufficient size and scale to affect wind flow and dynamics such that significant environmental effects could result. As such, due to the expectation of no potential for significant effects in relation to wind microclimate, this topic is proposed to be scoped out of the EIA.

Daylight and Sunlight

- 7.11 Development in densely urbanised locations or of a high-rise nature can cause impacts to the levels of light received by adjacent properties. The Proposed Development is in an open area of land and is not high-rise in nature. There would be no potential for issues of overshadowing or light obstruction to adjacent properties such that an assessment would need to be undertaken to quantify the impact and proposed mitigation. It is therefore proposed that an assessment of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing effects can be scoped out of the EIA.

Agricultural Land and Soils

- 7.12 Enabling and construction activities will result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. However, the site has been subject to a detailed Agricultural Land Classification survey carried out by Land Research Associates. The survey has concluded that none of the site is classified as Best Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (refer to **Appendix 7.1**). As there is no loss of BMV agricultural land, and the loss of lower quality agricultural land is not considered to be significant due to the land not being utilised for crop production. Therefore, loss of lower quality agricultural land will not be considered further in the EIA or reported in the ES.
- 7.13 Soil is a finite and valuable resource that provides a range of essential ecosystems functions and services. During the construction, there is the potential for damage to, or loss of topsoil if it is not handled and stored appropriately. To minimise these impacts, a Soil Resource Management Plan (SRMP) will be prepared as part of a Material Management Plan and form part of the CEMP, to be secured through a planning condition. The SRMP will identify the different soil types present on site, establish the most appropriate re-use strategy and set out procedures for the handling, storage and reinstatement of soils. The plan will seek to maximise the re-use of surplus soils within the design of open spaces and landscaped area, while maintaining soil quality through adherence to recognised good practice for soil handling and storage, including measures to avoid compaction. With these mitigation measures in place, soils will continue to perform their ecosystem functions and provide suitable medium for habitats, biodiversity

and landscape planting. Therefore, the loss or degradation of soils is not considered to be significant and is scoped out from further assessment in the ES.

Built Heritage

- 7.14 There are no designated heritage assets within the Assessment Boundary. A 1km Study Area and review of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) prepared by Tyler Grange (refer to Figure 8.3) have been used as tools alongside site visits undertaken between 2020 and 2024, to identify heritage assets beyond the Assessment Boundary, which may be effected by the proposals. As identified in **Section 4**, the designated heritage assets within that Study Area comprise nine Listed Buildings (of differing grades) and one Registered Park and Garden (Heaton Park RP&G, Grade II). In addition, there is one locally listed building within the Assessment Boundary (Little Nook) and a further eight within the 1km Study Area.⁴ The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted in February 2026. There are no monument and building entries within the Assessment Boundary and there are ten entries within 1km of the Site. Designated and non-designated heritage assets and entries on the HER (buildings and monuments only) are included on the Heritage Asset Plan (HAP) at **Appendix 7.2**.
- 7.15 An Initial Heritage Appraisal was prepared by Turley's specialist Heritage Team in 2020/21 in connection with the allocation of land at Northern Gateway (Site JPA 1.2 Simister/Bowlee) through 'Places for Everyone' and updated in August 2024 to inform the SPD and provides an evidence base for this ES Scoping Report, which is summarised below.
- 7.16 Heaton Park (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) is principally of significance for the quality and completeness of its 18th century redesign by William Emes (1729-1803) and John Webb (1754-1828). The principal building is Heaton Hall (Grade I Listed Building, HAP1) designed by James Wyatt for Sir Thomas Edgerton. The Temple to the Northeast of Heaton Hall (Grade II* Listed Building, HAP 2), Smithy Lodge to the East of Heaton Hall (Grade II* Listed Building, HAP 3), Dower House Cottage to North of Heaton Hall (Grade II Listed Building, HAP 4) and Sundial in front of orangery of Heaton Hall (Grade II Listed Building, HAP 5) are all within the 1km Study Area and located within the RP&G.
- 7.17 The extensive setting of the park has changed fundamentally since it was originally laid out and it is now almost entirely enclosed by the urban areas of Prestwich, Blackley and

⁴ Bury Council's local list is in draft - [Local list - Bury Council](#)

Middleton, comprising both urban and rural areas of Greater Manchester, with the M60 motorway immediately to the northwest. From within the designed landscape, views to the wider area are largely restricted by topography and trees. From the high point around Heaton Hall and the temple, long distance views are available to the south towards Manchester City centre where the towers in the urban core are visible. Views to the north are however more limited by the density of trees but available where gaps in the tree belts exist. Views from the northern part of the park (now the golf course) are available into the land to the north, but these are filtered by the varying topography and trees, and the M60 which forms a significant visual and physical barrier in the landscape. Setting therefore makes a limited contribution to the setting of the RP&G.

- 7.18 Of the nine listed buildings within the Study Area, only the Temple to the northeast of Heaton Hall has been identified as having potential to be effected by the proposals. It was designed by Samuel Wyatt (1795-1802) and is of significance as a good example of a late 18th century temple, which were often situated within the landscape to add incidence and interest, in conformity with the prevailing picturesque principles of landscape design typical of the period. The temple is experienced as part of a group of late 18th and early 19th century estate buildings within the parkland and this relationship contributes to their significance. Long distance views from the temple contribute to the significance of the temple as the intent of placing the temple within a landscape to add interest and to create a viewing point at an elevated position in the Hall's grounds remains legible, despite the presence of urban development in such views.
- 7.19 The Site is functionally and visually separated from much of the designated area by the motorway network and the dense trees within the northern part of the park. Notwithstanding, there is a break in the tree belt proximate to the temple which does allow some glimpsed views towards the Site. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) indicates very limited, and filtered potential intervisibility from the more significant parts of the RP&G. Where experienced, the proposals would be experienced alongside existing residential development and the visual and physical barrier of the M60 motorway, and as a small part of the park's expansive and varied setting.
- 7.20 Heaton Hall, the Smithy Lodge and the Dower House Cottage are all situated within Heaton Park which defines their setting. Due to the relative enclosure of that setting, the intervening distance, topography and development, it is concluded that their significance would not be effected by the proposals. The Sundial is functional in nature and experienced in a very localised setting that would not be effected by the proposals.

- 7.21 Outside of the RP&G, Rhodes Schools (Grade II Listed Building, HAP 6), Church of St George (Grade II Listed Building), 31-37 Broad Street (Grade II Listed Building, HAP 8) and the Church of All Saints War Memorial (Grade II Listed Building, HAP 9) whilst proximate to the Assessment Boundary, due to their location, and the intervening development and topography have no visual connection to the Site. There is also no known functional connection. For these reasons it is not considered that the proposals would not impact upon their significance.
- 7.22 The remaining heritage receptors are either locally listed buildings or entries included on the HER and therefore in EIA terms and in reference to **Table 3.1** are of low or negligible sensitivity. Only Little Nook (locally listed, HAP 17) is within the Site and would be retained as part of the proposals. Due to the intervening distance, landscape, topography and existing development, none of these receptors would experience change of a sufficient magnitude to result in significant environmental effects.
- 7.23 For the reasons set out above, no significant effects are anticipated in relation to heritage, and this topic will be scoped out of the forthcoming ES. As part of the planning application submission, a detailed Heritage Statement that meets the requirements of the NPPF and local planning policies relating to Built Heritage, will be prepared.

Archaeology

- 7.24 Preliminary archaeological conditions for the purposes of this scoping exercise have been established for a 1km search area from the site using the following sources:
- National Heritage List for England for designated heritage assets;
 - Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER) data; and
 - Historic mapping.
- 7.25 There are no designated assets of archaeological interest recorded within the 1km search area.
- 7.26 There are no HER records of prehistoric date located within the Site. Unsworth Moss (3878.1.0), a natural feature, may have potential for prehistoric and later archaeological remains.
- 7.27 A Roman settlement is suggested to be possibly located within the Site, identified by the cropmarks of enclosures, roundhouses, associated field systems and trackways. However, evaluation trench survey provide inconclusive results. The trenches revealed a

number of cut features, although one included a plastic bag in its fill, suggesting a modern date. A geophysical survey was also undertaken across the site, and this too did not identify anomalies that would otherwise suggest Iron Age or Roman settlement (ASWYAS 2020). The find spot of a brooch (MGM17742), identified towards the western extent of the search area, also dates to the Roman period.

- 7.28 The locations of a settlement have been identified on historic mapping towards the eastern extent of the Site, at Rhodes Green (5059.1.0). A settlement was also located at Bowlee (5058.1.0), immediately adjacent to the Site's eastern boundary and Rhodes (5228.1.0), c. 430m to the south-east of the Site. The line of the former Manchester to Rochdale Road (15977.1.0) extended through the south-western portion of the search area which likely had medieval origins. Further evidence of medieval activity across the search area includes the site of Heaton Hall (90.1.0) and the find spots of a spindle whorl (MGM17744) and a dagger (MGM17745).
- 7.29 There are no HER records of post-medieval to modern date located within the Site. The majority of records dating to these periods relate to buildings and structures, including a number associated with Heaton Park Registered Park and Garden (1000854), which is located c. 90m to the south-west of the Site. Some of the buildings also reflect an agricultural use of the search area during these periods, although the identification of sand pits (159531.0), mills (15958.1.0, 2002.1.0, 5324.1.0 & 9609.1.0), printworks (2411.1.0) and bleachworks (682.1.0) indicate some industrial activity.
- 7.30 An army camp was established in September 1914 in Heaton Park (15978.1.0) and was initially used to house and train battalions of the Manchester Pals, with training including firing practice and the digging of trenches. An aircraft dispatch centre (15979.1.0) was also located in Heaton Park during World War Two.
- 7.31 The historic landscape of the Site has been characterised as agglomerated fields, surveyed enclosure and farm complex. Cartographic evidence shows the Site as fields with the only noticeable changes on later maps relating to the removal and alteration of field boundaries. Copies of historic aerial photographs and satellite images held by the Historic England Aerial Photograph Explorer and Google Earth also indicate the agricultural nature of the Site.
- 7.32 Given the known archaeological potential of the Site, particularly in relation to possible Roman remains, together with evidence for medieval and later activity within the wider study area, any surviving archaeological assets within the Site are considered likely to be of no greater than medium (borough) to low (local) significance. Any archaeological

requirements arising from the Proposed Development can be appropriately addressed through a programme of archaeological investigation and mitigation, to be agreed with the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the NPPF, local planning policy and relevant industry guidance. The implementation of standard archaeological mitigation measures would ensure that the Project for Assessment would not result in significant environmental effects on the archaeological resource for the purposes of the EIA Regulations. Therefore, Archaeology is proposed to be scoped out of the EIA. Notwithstanding this, a standalone Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment will be prepared to support the planning application and inform any subsequent archaeological requirements.

Ground Conditions and Contamination

- 7.33 A preliminary assessment of ground conditions and contamination has been undertaken by Tetra Tech and is presented in document Geo-environmental and Geotechnical Desk Study for the Site (refer to **Appendix 7.3**).
- 7.34 The western parcel has comprised agricultural land since at least 1849. A reservoir in the centre of the two parcels of land and several small ponds across the western parcel have been mapped since 1894 and 1849 respectively and are still present today. The southwestern boundary was reprofiled in circa. 1974 as the M60 motorway was developed but the western parcel has otherwise remained largely the same since 1849.
- 7.35 The eastern parcel has comprised agricultural land since at least 1849. An historical road, Bagley Brown Road, ran north-south through the centre of the parcel until circa. 2001. Small scale localised sand/ gravel pits were mapped within the parcel from 1848 and are anticipated to have been infilled. A bleach works / chemical works was mapped immediately south of the site from 1849 to circa. 2001 when the land was redeveloped as residential housing.
- 7.36 The mapped superficial geology within the western parcel comprises Morainic Deposits across the entire parcel with a small area of Glaciofluvial Sheet Deposits in the south and Head Deposits associated with the route of the watercourse in the east of the parcel. The mapped bedrock geology comprises Pennine Middle Coal Measures (PMCM) in the west and the Pennine Lower Coal Measures (PLCM) in the east. The Chester Formation (CHES) and Manchester Marls formation are mapped in the southwest and southeast respectively. The level of top of bedrock, as indicated by the British Geological Survey (BGS), is expected to be between +60m OD in the south to +70m OD in the north. The western parcel is not within a groundwater source protection zone. The largest Superficial

aquifer (Morainic deposits) is designated as a Secondary Undifferentiated Aquifer with medium vulnerability. The PMCM and PLCM are designated as Secondary A Aquifers. The CHES is designated a Principal Aquifer; both have low vulnerability. A watercourse orientated northwest - southeast passes through the western parcel. The watercourse is located in a small valley and flows towards the southeast.

- 7.37 The mapped superficial geology in the eastern parcel comprises Morainic Deposits across the entire site. Head Deposits are mapped associated with the route of the watercourse in the southwest of the eastern parcel. The mapped bedrock geology comprises the Pennine Lower Coal Measures (PLCM). The level of top of bedrock, as indicated by the British Geological Survey (BGS), is expected to be between +60m OD in the south to +70m OD in the north. The eastern parcel is not within a groundwater source protection zone. The largest Superficial aquifer (Morainic Deposits) is designated as a Secondary Undifferentiated aquifer with medium vulnerability. The PLCM are designated as a Secondary A aquifer of low vulnerability. There are three small watercourses, all flowing southwest, within the eastern parcel.
- 7.38 The western and eastern parcels are within a Coal Mining Reporting area but not within a Development High Risk Area. No mine entries or coal outcrops are present within the parcels and there is no evidence of shallow coal workings. Risks associated with coal mining have been assessed as Low.
- 7.39 The potential risks from contamination to site users are considered to be Moderate / Low during the construction and operational phases. There has not been any significant historical development on either parcel of land and so contamination, most probably associated with Made Ground, is likely to be localised and neither vertically nor laterally extensive. A ground investigation report will accompany the planning application and include a risk assessment and a refined conceptual site model. If contamination linkages requiring mitigation are identified the mitigation works and associated verification process will be detailed in a remediation strategy. Remediation will be undertaken as part of the enabling works and development works as required. Remediation as part of the enabling works will include the removal of hotspots of contaminated soils, if required. Remediation during the development works will include measures relating to the development such as cover layers in landscaped areas, gas protection measures or the protection of water supply pipes, if assessment following ground investigation establishes that these are required. These are common practices for dealing with contamination and are not complex in nature.

- 7.40 Exposure to contamination during construction, including any sources associated with the construction process itself, will be mitigated through the implementation of a CEMP. The potential effects from exposure to contamination to future site users are not considered to be significant and it is considered that it can be scoped out of the EIA.
- 7.41 The potential risk of release / migration of contamination to controlled waters is considered to be Moderate / Low. Both parcels are predominantly used for pastoral farming / as grazing land. Potential contamination is likely to be associated with localised areas of Made Ground or hydrocarbon spills which are unlikely to be widespread and are unlikely to remain a significant source of contamination following periods of leaching. Furthermore, historical contamination from pesticides is not considered to be a significant risk since they are generally short lived. There are no abstraction licenses within 1km of the site and the Secondary A / Principal bedrock aquifers are considered to be of low vulnerability due to the approximately 10.00m of superficial deposits anticipated above them. As noted above, the ground investigation report to accompany the planning application will include a risk assessment and a refined conceptual site model. If contamination linkages requiring mitigation are identified the mitigation works and associated verification process will be detailed in a remediation strategy. Measures to prevent the release of contamination to controlled waters during construction activities will be controlled through the implementation of a CEMP in line with CIRIA C532 (2001) and may inform a Piling Risk Assessment if significant contamination is encountered. The risk to controlled waters from onsite contamination is not considered to be significant and it is considered that it can be scoped out of the EIA.
- 7.42 The potential risks from ground gas to site users and the built environment are considered to be Low. Ground gas may arise from significant deposits of putrescible Made Ground. Such deposits are unlikely to be present at the site. This is not considered to be significant, and it is considered that it can be scoped out of the EIA.
- 7.23 Un-engineered Made Ground may be present in historically infilled sand / gravel pits across both parcels of land and may present risks related to unstable and compressible ground (non-mining related) to site users and the built environment. These areas of the site will be targeted during ground investigation, and where mitigation is assessed to be required it will be designed into the earthwork's strategy and specification, and the foundation design. These mitigation measures would be considered an integral part of the development proposals and would likely comprise excavation and replacement with suitable engineered fill or re-engineering of the fill material if deemed suitable in line with Specification for Highway Works Series 600 Earthworks. Therefore, the risks from the

presence of unstable and compressible ground (non-mining related) on human health and the built environment are low. This is not considered to be significant, and it is considered that it can be scoped out of the EIA.

Summary

7.43 The environmental topics for which no likely significant environmental effects have been identified are:

- Waste Materials and Assets
- Lighting
- Major Accidents and Disasters
- Wind
- Daylight and Sunlight
- Agricultural Land and Soils
- Built Heritage
- Archaeology
- Ground Conditions and Contamination

8 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

Introduction

- 8.1 This chapter of the ES will assess the effects of the Project for Assessment on landscape character and visual amenity, both on site and within the surrounding area. The chapter will be produced by Tyler Grange Group Limited (TG).
- 8.2 The aim of the landscape and visual impact assessment will be to identify, as far as is reasonably practical, the nature of the landscape and visual changes that would arise from the proposals, to assess the significance of such changes, and to make appropriate recommendations for the future mitigation of any resulting effects.
- 8.3 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will be undertaken in accordance with the methodology and approach set out in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition* (2013), produced by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). This guidance is the most thorough and current in relation to the assessment of landscape character and visual effects.
- 8.4 In the context of this definition, the assessment process seeks to consider the likely significant effects of the Project for Assessment on landscape and visual receptors in an objective and systematic manner, whilst recognising the perceptual and therefore subjective response to the landscape. Whilst subjectivity can never be completely removed from the assessment process, by following a systematic and structured framework of assessment, a more robust assessment can be performed, and more rational and transparent conclusions drawn.

Relevant Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)⁵

- 8.5 The NPPF sets out three dimensions to achieving sustainable development that include economic, social and environmental considerations. It places an onus on the planning system to perform a role in relation to the environment that "*contributes to the protection and enhancement of our natural, built and historic environment...*" The NPPF goes on to note

⁵ [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-planning-policy-framework)

that sustainable solutions should take account of local circumstances and reflect the character of each area. This underpins the strategic guidance set out in the NPPF in relation to landscape and visual matters.

- 8.6 Sections 12 and 15 are of particular relevance to landscape and visual matters.

Planning Practice Guidance (February 2024)⁶

- 8.7 The PPG section on the 'Natural Environment' addresses green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape. Paragraphs 036 and 037 are of particular relevance to landscape and visual matters. The section on 'Light Pollution' is also of relevance.

Local Planning Policy

- 8.8 Relevant local planning policies include:

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039

- Policy JP-G1: Landscape Character
- Policy JP-G2: Green Infrastructure Network
- Policy JP-G7: Trees and Woodlands
- Policy JP-G9: The Green Belt
- Policy JP-P1: Sustainable Places
- Policy JP Allocation 1.2: Simister and Bowlee (Northern Gateway) (and associated Supplementary Planning Document)

Bury Council

Saved policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan (adopted 29 August 1997):

- Policy EN1 - Built environment
- Policy EN6 - Conservation of the natural environment
- Policy EN8 - Woodland and trees

⁶ [Planning practice guidance - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-practice-guidance)

- Policy EN9 - Landscape

Rochdale Borough Council

Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted 19 October 2016):

- Policy G4 - Protecting Green Belt land
- Policy G5 - Managing protected open land
- Policy G6 - Enhancing green infrastructure

Saved policies of the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan (adopted June 2006):

- No relevant saved policies

Guidance

8.9 Current technical guidance relating to LVIA's comprises:

- Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition* [GLVIA3];
- Landscape Institute (2024), *Technical Guidance Note 2024-01: Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition* [TGN 2024-01];
- Natural England, (October 2014), *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*;
- Landscape Institute (2019), *Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals* [TGN 06/19]; and
- Landscape Institute (2021) *Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations* [TGN 02/21].

Preliminary Assessment of Baseline Conditions

Landscape Character of the Site and Its Environs

- 8.10 The Site comprises approximately 98 ha of predominantly pastoral farmland between the settlements of Rhodes, Simister and Bowlee.
- 8.11 The land within the Site is made up of multiple fields, bounded by an arrangement of hedgerows with hedgerow trees and occasional tree belts and small woodlands. The boundary of the Site is generally similarly marked by hedgerows or tree belts. Surrounding

land use is a mix of settlements and settlement-edge farmland, and there are three golf courses to the east, southwest (part of Heaton Park), and northwest of the Site.

- 8.12 The undulating topography varies from approximately 75 -115m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), with a high point near Bowlee in the northern part of the Site. The surrounding topography is similarly undulating.
- 8.13 There are a number of small watercourses and ponds within the Site, with a slightly larger reservoir/fishing pond within Assessment Boundary to the west of Heywood Old Road.
- 8.14 There are four public footpaths (FPs) within the Site:
- Within the Bury Council area, FPs 30PRE and 46PRE cross the western parcel; and
 - Within the Rochdale Council area, FPs MidFP94 and MidFp93 cross the eastern parcel, connecting to RUPP (Road Used as a Public Path) 93a.
- 8.15 There are a number of other Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) within the wider surrounding landscape. The promoted Rochdale Way passes adjacent to the Site where it aligns with Ellis Lane/Boardman Lane.
- 8.16 Heywood Old Road (A6045) passes between the eastern and western parcels of the Site, and Ellis Lane/Boardman Lane follows the eastern boundary. The M60 motorway lies to the immediate southwest of the Site on a northwest-southeast alignment, while the M62 lies to the north of Simister on a southwest-northeast alignment. The intersection between the two motorways lies to the immediate west of Simister.
- 8.17 Beyond the adjoining settlements of Rhodes, Simister and Bowlee there are extensive urban areas within the Greater Manchester conurbation.
- 8.18 In summary, the Site predominantly comprises undulating farmland, intersected by riparian, hedgerow and woodland corridors. The surrounding area is more developed, mainly for residential and industrial uses, giving the Site a settled context.

Landscape Designations

- 8.19 The Site lies outside of any national/statutory or local/non-statutory landscape designations. The nearest such designations are:
- Heaton Park Registered Park and Garden (RP&G) lies to the immediate southwest of the M60, approximately 100m from the Site at its closest;

- The Alkrington Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR) lies approximately 475m to the east of the Site;
- The Blackley Forest LNR lies approximately 500m to the south of the Site;
- Listed Buildings (LBs):
 - A number of Grade I, II*, and II LBs within Heaton Park;
 - Three Grade II LBs in Rhodes, approximately 200-250m from the Site;
- Conservation Areas (CAs) at:
 - Birch, approx. 1.3km to the north-northeast of the Site;
 - Middleton Town Centre, approx. 1.75km to the east of the Site;
 - Manchester Old Road, approx. 1.1km to the east of the Site;
 - Higher Blackley, approx. 1km to the south of the Site.

8.20 The north-western part of the Site lies adjacent to the Greater Manchester Green Belt. Whilst not strictly a landscape designation, aspects of Green Belt policy do relate to landscape matters.

Published Landscape Character Assessments

8.21 The Site lies within or near the following published national character areas (NCA), landscape character types (LCTs), and Landscape Character Areas (see Figure 8.1 National and Regional Landscape Character Context and Figure 8.2 Local Landscape Character Context):

- National Character Areas:
 - NCA 54 - Manchester Pennine Fringe (host);
 - NCA 55 - Manchester Conurbation (to the south);
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (2018):
 - Urban Fringe Farmland LCT/LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green (host);
 - Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland LCT/LCA 19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands (to the southwest); and

- Mosslands and Lowland Farmland LCT/LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss (to the northwest);
- Bury Landscape Character Assessment (2009):
 - Fringe Settled Valley Pasture LCT/Castle, Whittle and Brightley LCA (host);

Views and Visual Amenity

- 8.22 The visual envelope is the area of landscape from which a proposed development would potentially be visible. It accounts for general judgements on the theoretical visibility of a site and sets a broad context for the study area within which to address landscape and visual impacts.
- 8.23 The extent of a visual envelope will be influenced by the physical landscape components of an area, such as topography, hedgerows, woodlands or buildings, and can also be influenced by distance from a site.
- 8.24 A preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled for the Proposed Development, with building heights set at 15m - see Figure 8.3. Much of the Project for Assessment would be lower than this, and the ZTV therefore illustrates the worst-case scenario for potential visibility. The ZTV has used LiDAR data (1m resolution, 2022 dataset) to include the screening effects of existing vegetation and built form. The ZTV has been modelled out to a radius of 2km from the Site to match the Study Area. Beyond this the Project for Assessment is unlikely to be discernible in the view, even with clear visibility conditions.
- 8.25 Based on the ZTV, the main visual envelope extends:
- approximately 1.5-2km to the north;
 - approximately 0.5km to the east;
 - approximately 0.5-1km to the south; and
 - up to approximately 0.75km to the west.
- 8.26 There may be some restricted/intermittent visibility beyond these distances in all directions.

Identification of Likely Significant Effects

- 8.27 The initial assessment findings have identified the following receptors which could be effected by the Proposed Development:

Landscape Receptors:

- Effects on the landscape character of the Site and its immediate environs, within:
 - Urban Fringe Farmland LCT/LCA 27: Simister, Slattocks and Healds Green; and
 - Fringe Settled Valley Pasture LCT/Castle, Whittle and Brightley LCA.
- Effects on the landscape character of the wider local landscape, within the above NCA, LCTs, and LCAs, and also within:
 - Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland LCT/LCA 19: Heaton, Prestwich, Whitefield and Stand Parklands (to the southwest); and
 - Mosslands and Lowland Farmland LCT/LCA 26: Prettywood, Pilsworth and Unsworth Moss (to the northwest).
- Effects on the non-statutory designated landscape of the Grade II RP&G at Heaton Park.

Visual Receptors

- Effects on views experienced by PRow users and recreational visitors:
 - users of PRowS within the Site, as detailed above;
 - users of restricted PRowS to the north of the Site, between the M62 and the A6045;
 - users of restricted PRowS to the west of the Site, including the promoted Rochdale Way;
 - users of restricted PRowS to the south of the Site;
 - visitors to Heaton Park, and users of the bridleway between the M60 and Heaton Park;
 - users of PRowS to the west of the Site, notably FP 29b PRE between the Site and Simister;
- Effects on views experienced by road users (including cyclists and pedestrians):

- users of Heywood Old Road (A6045) and Ellis Lane/Boardman Lane which run adjacent to the Site;
- users of Simister Lane, particularly the section to the east of Simister;
- users of restricted sections of the M60, M62 and M66;
- users of the northeastern end of A576 adjacent to Heaton Park;
- users of restricted sections of some other minor roads (typically glimpsed/fleeting views towards the Site only);
- Effects on views experienced by residential occupiers:
 - in certain properties in Simister;
 - in certain properties in Bowlee;
 - in certain properties on Old Heywood Road; and
 - in certain properties on the northern edge of Rhodes.

8.28 The proposals may also affect views from certain other rural or more isolated properties within the wider surrounding landscape, and from a very limited number of properties within the wider surrounding settlements.

8.29 It should be remembered that views from individual residential properties are not protected by UK planning law. The assessment of effects on visual amenity as experienced from residential properties will generally therefore be based on groups of properties in similar locations or with similar views, rather than individual properties. In line with GLVIA3, the assessment of such effects will be undertaken from publicly accessible locations, with reference to publicly accessible mapping and aerial imagery where appropriate.

Representative Viewpoints

8.30 21 representative viewpoints have been selected to aid the assessment of effects on visual amenity, as shown on **Table 8.1**. These are shown on the ZTV at Figure 8.3. The location and extent of representative viewpoints will be agreed through ES scoping process outlined within this document.

Table 8.1: Representative Viewpoints

VP No.	Location	Receptor(s)	Distance from Site	Direction of View
1	PRoW FP 30PRE on northwest edge of Site	PRoW users	Edge of Site	SE
2	PRoW FP 46PRE on eastern edge of western parcel	PRoW users Residential occupiers	Edge of Site	SW
3	PRoW FP 30PRE at junction with Heywood Old Road on northern edge of Rhodes	PRoW users Residential occupiers	Edge of Site	NW
4	Pedestrian/cycle bridge over M60	Pedestrians Cyclists	104m	N
5	PRoW Bridleway 27aPRE on bridge over M60	Bridleway users	61m	NE
6	Heaton Park Temple within Heaton Park RPG	Park visitors	767m	NE
7	PRoW FP 29bPRE near Nutt Lane to south of Simister	PRoW users	165m	E
8	Simister Lane at bridge over M60	Road users	691m	E
9	Simister Lane at eastern end of Simister village	Road users Residential occupiers	324m	SE
10	Blueball Lane between Simister and Bowlee	Road users	Edge of Site	S
11	PRoW FP 8WHI near Sandfield Farm and bridge over M62	PRoW users Residential occupiers	718m	S
12	PRoW FP 8WHI/RUPP MidRupp108 between A6045 and M62	PRoW users	509m	S
13	A6045 Old Heywood Road at entrance to Bowlee Community Park	Road users	1.04km	SW
14	PRoW RUPP MidRupp95 to south of Bowlee Park Golf Driving Range Part of the Rochdale Way	PRoW users	475m	SW
15	PRoW FP MidFp96 to northeast of Ellis Lane Part of Rochdale Way	PRoW users	130m	SW
16	Ellis Lane/Boardman Lane at junction with RUPP MidRupp93a	Road users PRoW users Residential occupiers	24m	S
17	Junction of RUPP MidRupp93a, FP MidFp94 and FP MidFp93 between Ellis Lane/Boardman Lane and Old Heywood Road	PRoW users Residential occupiers	Edge of Site	W

VP No.	Location	Receptor(s)	Distance from Site	Direction of View
18	Boardman Lane on northern edge of Rhodes Part of Rochdale Way	Road users Residential occupiers	15m	W
19	Wilton Street, Rhodes	Road users Residential occupiers	71m	NW
20	Pedestrian bridge over M60 between Higher Blackley and Rhodes	PRoW users	434m	NW
21	PRoW FP MidFp86 near Alkington Hall	PRoW users	1.53km	W

Non-Significant Effects

8.31 The initial assessment findings have identified the following effects which are not considered significant and therefore are scoped out from further assessment:

- Impacts on NCAs have been scoped out of the EIA on the basis that, given the scale and nature of the proposals, significant effects on NCA-level landscape character are not anticipated;
- Effects on receptors beyond the 2km radius study area; and
- Effects on people at their place of work.

Scope and Methodology of Assessment (including significance criteria)

Geographic and Temporal Scope

8.32 The study area for the LVIA will cover a 2 km radius from the Site, as it is considered that even with clear visibility there would be only limited visibility of the Project for Assessment beyond this distance.

8.33 Effects on landscape and visual receptors will be assessed during the construction phase, and during the operational phase at Years 1 and 15. The latter assessment will consider the effects (on landscape character and on views towards the Project for Assessment) of the growth and development of any proposed mitigation planting.

Approach

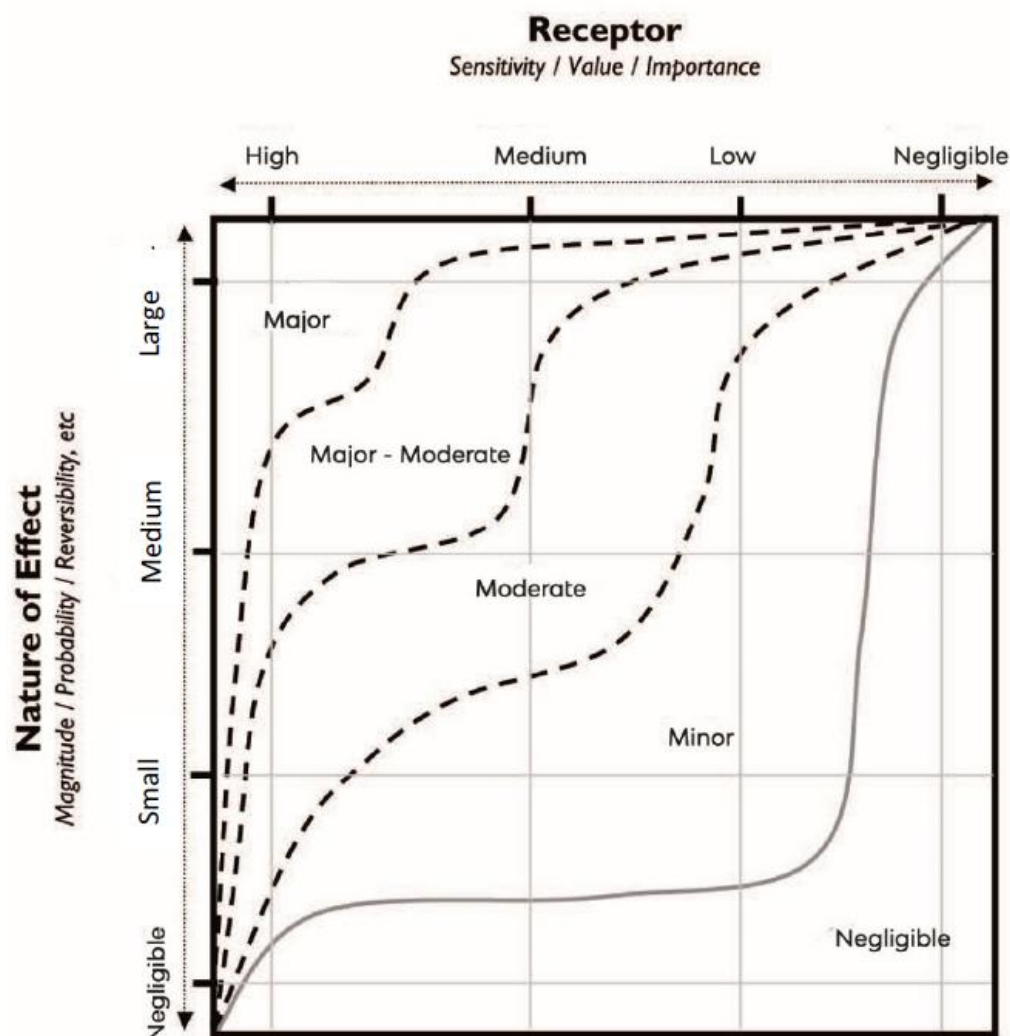
- 8.34 The LVIA will be written by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) with extensive experience of landscape and visual assessments across a range of development types.
- 8.35 Landscape and visual effects will be assessed through professional judgements on the sensitivity of landscape elements, landscape character, visual receptors and representative viewpoints combined with the predicted magnitude of change arising from the proposals. The landscape and visual effects will be assessed separately for:
- Effects on landscape character, including physical landscape features and elements; and,
 - Effects on visual amenity.
- 8.36 Landscape character is defined in GLVIA3 as the *"distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."*
- 8.37 The assessment of effects on landscape character considers how the introduction of new landscape elements physically alters the landform, landcover, landscape pattern and perceptual attributes of the site or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which the surrounding landscape character is perceived.
- 8.38 Direct effects on landscape features and elements are limited to within the Site and includes the direct physical change to the fabric of the land, such as the construction of the proposed plant.
- 8.39 Effects on visual amenity relate to perceived changes to views from different locations and routes, as experienced by different visual receptors (people).

Significance of Effects

- 8.40 Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as *"a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."*
- 8.41 Magnitude of change is defined in GLVIA3 as *"a term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration."* Various factors contribute to

the magnitude of change on landscape elements, landscape character, and visual receptors.

- 8.42 The approach used to determine receptor value, susceptibility and sensitivity, and the magnitude of change that would arise as a result of the Project for Assessment, will be set out in full in the detailed LVIA EIA methodology (see **Appendix 8.1**).
- 8.43 In order to consider the likely level of any effect, the sensitivity of each receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the level of effect. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the level of effect can be derived by using professional and reasoned judgement to combine the sensitivity and magnitude in line with Matrix 8.1:



Matrix 8.1: Significance of Effects (after IEMA, 2011⁷)

⁷ IEMA (2011) Special Report – The State of Environmental Impact Assessment Practice in the UK

- 8.44 GLVIA3 recognises that *"...professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements."* While the detailed LVIA methodology makes initial use of tables and matrices, the assessment will be refined using professional judgement.
- 8.45 The purpose of an LVIA when produced in the context of an EIA is to identify and describe any significant effects on landscape and visual amenity arising from the Project for Assessment.
- 8.46 Neither EC Directive 2011/12/EU nor the EIA Regulations 2017 define a threshold at which an effect may be determined to be significant. In certain other environmental disciplines, there are regulatory thresholds or quantitative standards which help to determine the threshold of what constitutes a significant effect.
- 8.47 The Tyler Grange LVIA EIA methodology sets out that effects of Major-Moderate and above are considered Significant.

Nature of Effects

- 8.48 GLVIA3 includes an entry that states: *"...effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity."* GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed, and it therefore becomes a matter of subjective judgement rather than reasoned criteria.
- 8.49 Due to inconsistencies with the assessment of negative or positive effects, a precautionary approach is typically applied to LVIAs that assumes all landscape and visual effects are considered to be negative or adverse unless specifically otherwise stated.

Preliminary Discussions of Potential Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

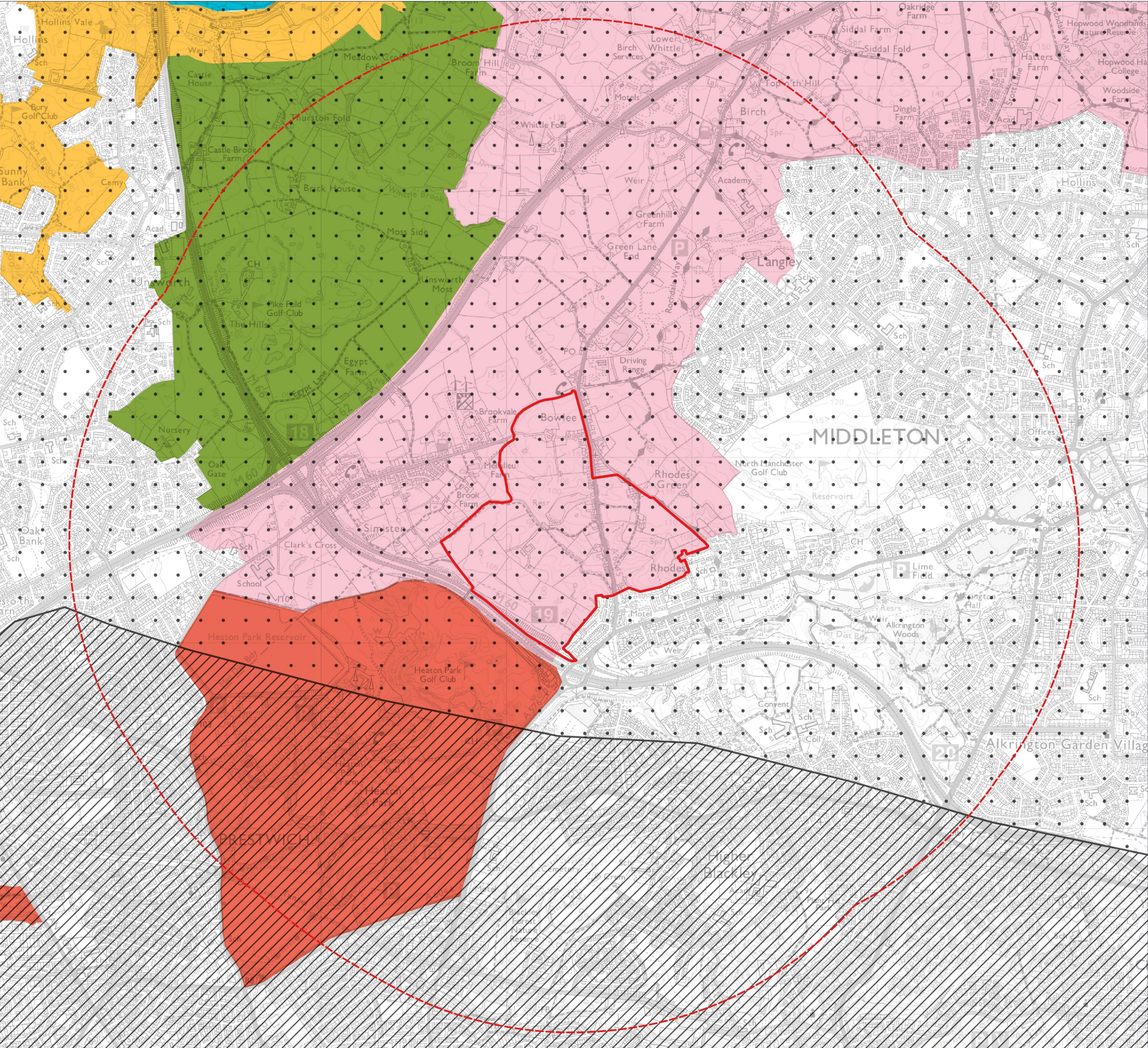
- 8.50 Existing landscape features will be protected where possible, such as safeguarding of the on-site Site of Biological Importance (SBI). This non-statutory designated site is identified for its ecological / local nature conservation value but as a physical feature of the Site. Landscape features to be retained, can be safeguarded during construction through best practice sensitive working methods which can be controlled through CEMPs, which can be secured through planning condition. Retained landscape features can be safeguarded during the operational phase of the development through targeted species planting to act as natural screening/ barriers (i.e. hedgerows) and fencing-off.

Approach to the Assessment of Cumulative Effects

- 8.51 Cumulative effects will be assessed within each topic chapter of the ES. This will assess the cumulative effects of the Project for Assessment in conjunction with any committed developments within the vicinity of the sites identified through the scoping process (refer to **Section 3**).
- 8.52 GLVIA3 Paragraph 7.13 advises that all existing or 'under-construction' schemes within the study area are considered as part of the baseline, rather than being considered as cumulative schemes. GLVIA3 also notes the need for cumulative assessments to be appropriate and proportionate to the proposed scheme under consideration. As advised in GLVIA Paragraph 7.5, the cumulative assessment will focus on likely significant cumulative effects, rather than considering every conceivable cumulative landscape and visual effect that might occur.
- 8.53 Cumulative effects will be assessed on the basis of 'additional cumulative effects', i.e., that the cumulative schemes would be constructed first, with effects arising from the Project for Assessment being in addition to this. This approach is considered to be in line with Paragraph 7(3) of LI TGN 2024-01.

Figure 8.1: Published Landscape Character





LEGEND

- Assessment Boundary
- 2km Buffer
- Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment - Landscape Characer Types**
 - Historic Parks and Wooded Estate Farmland
 - Incised Urban Fringe Valleys
 - Mosslands and Lowland Farmland
 - Reclaimed Land / Wetlands
 - Urban Fringe Farmland
- National Character Areas**
 - Manchester Conurbation
 - Manchester Pennine Fringe

Revision	Description
-	First Issue



00.51km

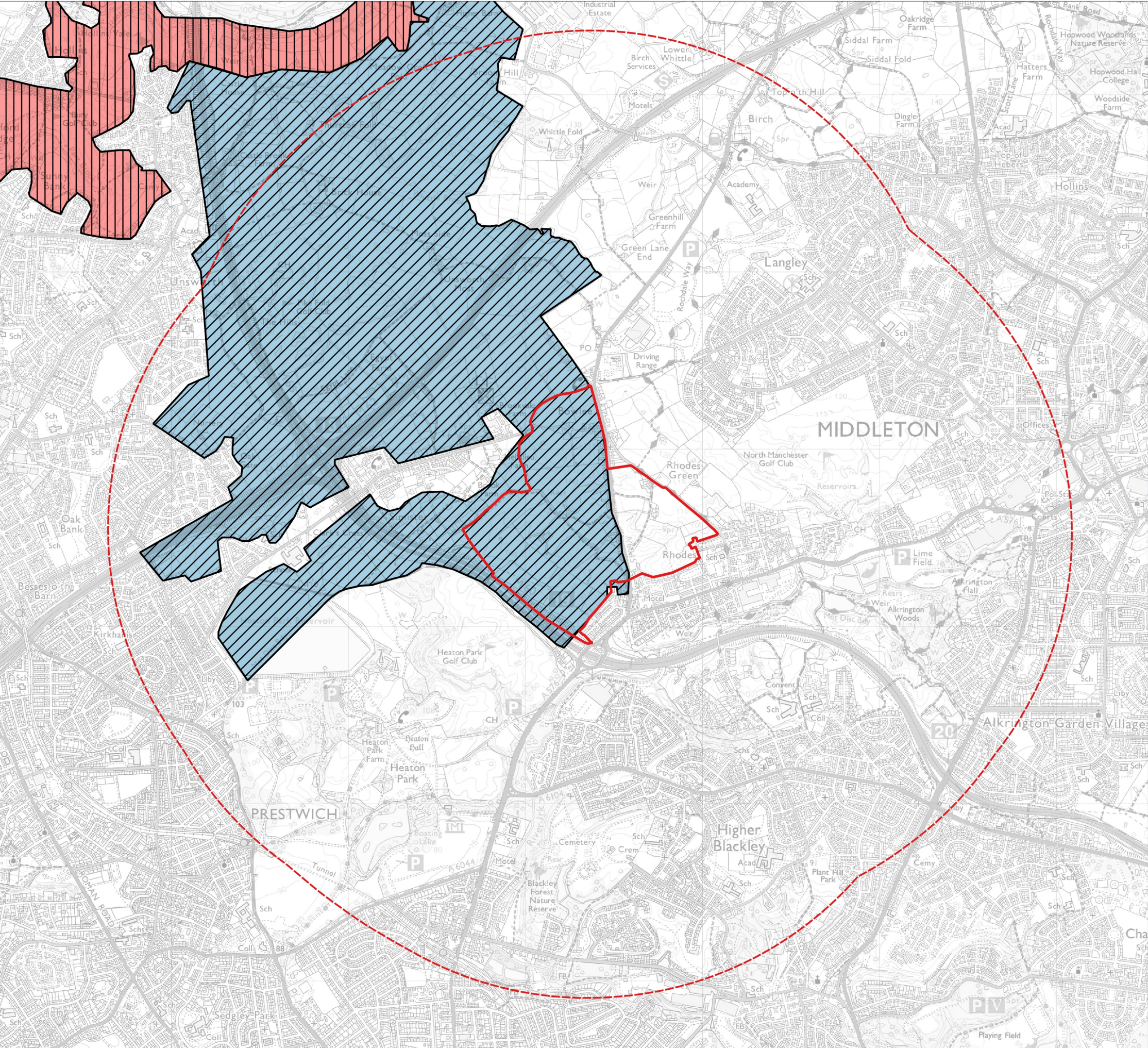
Project	Northern Gateway JPA 1.2
Title	Figure 8.1 Published Landscape Character
Scale	1:21,000 @ A3
Drawing No.	16552_P07
Date	July 2026
Checked	IJ/JJ



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Figure 8.2: Published Landscape Character





LEGEND

- Assessment Boundary
- 2km Buffer
- Bury Landscape Character Assessment - LCAs**
 - Fringe Industrial Brook
 - Fringe Settled Valley Pasture
- Bury Landscape Character Assessment - LCTs**
 - 54/1c Hollins & Parr
 - 54/2 Castle, Whittle, Brightley

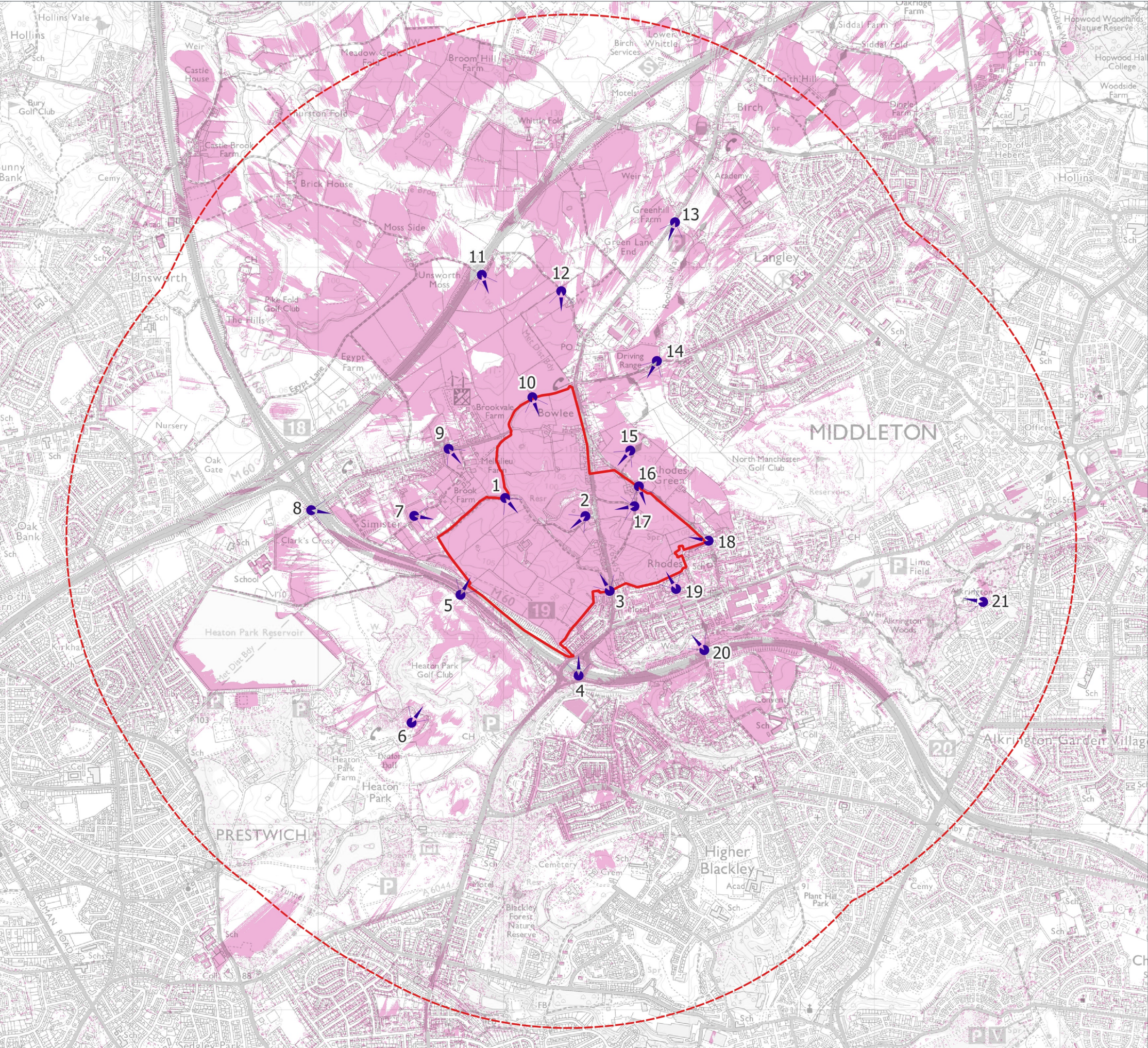
Revision	Description
-	First Issue
0 0.5 1 km	
Project	Northern Gateway JPA 1.2
Title	Figure 8.2: Published Landscape Character
Scale	1:22,000 @ A3
Drawing No.	16552_P13
Date	July 2026
Checked	IJ/JJ



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Figure 8.3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Photo Viewpoint Locations





LEGEND

Assessment Boundary

2km Buffer

Photoviewpoint Locations

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

Notes:
This ZTV illustrates the extent to which the development is potentially visible assuming a receptor with an eye height of 1.6m within a 5km radius. Building heights are set at 15m. The ZTV has been modelled using GIS computer software (QGIS) and LIDAR 1m DSM, and as such does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape. Field verification is required to refine the accuracy of the ZTV.

Revision

-

Description

First Issue

0

0.5

1 km

Project

Northern Gateway JPA 1.2

Title

Figure 8.3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Photoviewpoint Locations

Scale

1:21,000 @ A3

Drawing No.

16552_P03

Date

July 2026

Checked

EB/WL

Tyler Grange

9 ECOLOGY

Introduction

- 9.1 This chapter of the ES will assess the effects of the Project for Assessment on Ecology and Nature Conservation both on site and within the surrounding area. The assessment will be undertaken by Tyler Grange Group Ltd.

Relevant Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 9.2 Specific habitats and species receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:

- The Environment Act 2021;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997; and
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

- 9.3 The following section summarises National Planning Policy, which have relevance to ecology:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024

Local Planning Policy

- 9.4 The Site is situated within the administrative boundaries of Bury and Rochdale Councils. Within Bury, the relevant adopted Development Plan comprises:

- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039 ('PfE') (adopted 21 March 2024)

- Saved policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan ('Bury UDP') (adopted 29 August 1997)⁸

9.5 Within Rochdale, the adopted Development Plan comprises:

- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039 ('PfE') (adopted 21 March 2024)
- Rochdale Core Strategy ('Rochdale CS') (adopted 19 October 2016)⁹
- Saved policies of the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan ('Rochdale UDP') (adopted June 2006)¹⁰
- Simister Bowlee Development Framework SPD (February 2026)

9.6 The following PfE policies are relevant to both Bury and Rochdale:

- PfE Policy JP-Strat13 (Strategic Green Infrastructure)
- PfE Policy JP-G2 (Green Infrastructure Network)
- PfE Policy JP-G3 (River Valleys and Waterways)
- PfE Policy JP-G8 (A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity) aims
- PfE Policy JP Allocation 1.1 (Heywood / Pilsworth (Northern Gateway))

Preliminary Assessment of Baseline Conditions

9.7 The Study Area (Zone of Influence, Zoi) for the identification of designated sites follows best practice guidelines¹¹. Sites of International importance were considered at 10km

⁸ PfE Appendix A Table A.2 sets out the policies of the Bury UDP which have been superseded following adoption of PfE and are therefore no longer relevant.

⁹ PfE Appendix A Table A.5 sets out the policies of the Rochdale CS and Rochdale UDP which have been superseded following adoption of PfE and are therefore no longer relevant.

¹⁰ PfE Appendix A Table A.5 sets out the policies of the Rochdale CS and Rochdale UDP which have been superseded following adoption of PfE and are therefore no longer relevant.

¹¹ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine version 1.3. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

from the Site, with National, County and Locally designated sites being considered at 2km from the Site.

Statutory Designated Nature Conservation Sites

- 9.8 One site of international importance is present within the 10km ZoI, namely Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The SAC is located 4.3 km east of the Site and is designated for floating water plantain *Luronium natans*.
- 9.9 One site of national importance is present within the 2km ZoI, namely Rochdale Canal Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI boundary is coincident with the SAC boundary and therefore shall be included as part of the same assessment criteria.
- 9.10 There are two statutory designated Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), namely:
- Blackley Forest LNR, located 0.5 km south of the Site; and,
 - Alkington Woods LNR, located 1 km southeast of the Site.

Non-statutory Designated Nature Conservation Sites

- 9.11 There are seven non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the ZoI, they are detailed in **Table 9.1**.

Table 9.1: Ecological Designations

Designation	Designation Name and Distance from the Site	Ecological Importance
Non-statutory	Streams and flushes near Bradley farm Site of Biological Importance (SBI); Onsite	County
Non-statutory	Hazlitt SBI; 0.78 km West	County
Non-statutory	Heaton Park reservoir SBI; 0.74 km West	County
Non-statutory	Alkington woods and Rhodes lodges SBI; 0.94 km Southeast	County
Non-statutory	Lakeside woodland in Heaton Park SBI; 1km Southwest	County
Non-statutory	Boardman brook SBI; 1.4km Southeast	County

Non-statutory	Blackley forest and Heaton vale reservoirs SBI; 1.5 km Southwest	County
---------------	--	--------

- 9.12 The Site is located within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone of Rochdale Canal SAC, SSSI. However Natural England consider that the proposals do not match the criteria for the type and scale of development which could result in likely adverse effects (see Figure 9.1). Although consultation with Natural England is not required, due to the reasons outlined above, a Screening HRA, providing further evidence obtained from the Air Quality consultants should still be provided. As such, a HRA Screening report will be submitted with the application and co-ordinated with the assessment to be contained in the ES.

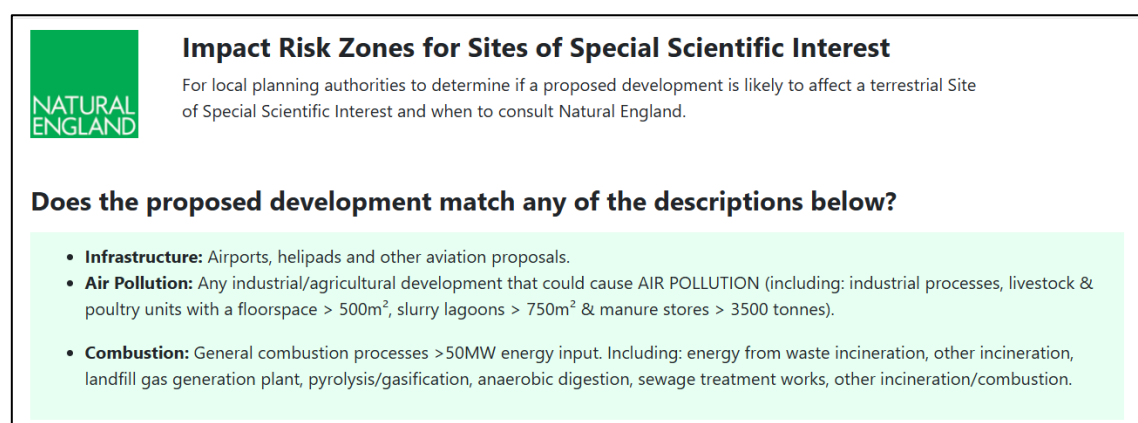


Figure 9.1: Extract from MAGIC Maps¹²

- 9.13 It should be noted that, although outside of the 10km Zol, the draft Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Places for Everyone (Pfe)¹³ scoped the Site (referred to as GMA1.2) in for potential impacts on the South Pennine Moors SAC from cumulative air pollution caused by increased traffic generation. An assessment undertaken by Ricardo as part of the Pfe HRA¹⁴ describes the potential for airborne ammonia, nitrogen and acid deposition to *“have only a marginal effect on the South Pennine Moors and would not result in any measurable reduction in the extent of blanket bog or other specified habitats”* for the

¹² MAGIC Maps [online] [Accessed 01/07/2026]:

[https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000430000¬es=&location=387670,439176%20%20\(IRZ%20polygon%20centre\)](https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0300000430000¬es=&location=387670,439176%20%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre))

¹³ Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, June 2021

¹⁴ Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan [online] [Accessed 01/07/2026] <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/5669/110301-pfe-hra-submission-2022.pdf>

PfE plan. Therefore, no impacts arising from airborne pollution during the construction and operational phases are anticipated.

- 9.14 Furthermore, The Draft South Pennine Moors Supplementary Planning Document¹⁵, which provides guidance on the implementation of the PfE policy, to ensure that new development will not result in an adverse effect on the South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC, states that:

"Since adoption of the PfE Plan, Natural England has now indicated that there is no credible risk to the habitats and species on the SAC and SPAs from recreation impacts. Consequently, Natural England considers that new development within the PfE area, specifically the three areas of Oldham, Tameside and Rochdale, does not need to provide mitigation in accordance with part 7c of JP-G5".

- 9.15 Therefore, due to being outside of the Zol, and the justification detailed above, the South Pennine Moors SAC, SPA are scoped out for further assessment.

Habitats

- 9.16 The site is characterised by largely species-poor modified grassland (negligible importance) associated with cattle grazing and silage with some areas of other neutral grassland (local importance) mainly located to the east of the Site. There are hedgerows (local importance) across the Site, with ponds (local importance) and a large fishing lake evident on land to the west of Heywood Old Road. An unnamed brook (local importance) runs north to south through the central area of the western part of the site, featuring a riparian corridor in moderate condition. Additionally, a plantation woodland block is adjacent to the M60, for the purpose of screening the motorway, with small pockets of semi-natural deciduous woodland (local importance) features around the Site. A Site of Biological Importance ("SBI") named Streams and flushes near Bradley Farm, is located within the eastern part of the Site. Invasive species (Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*) are present in pockets across the site, particularly found along the watercourse embankments, which are of negligible ecological importance, but require mitigation.

¹⁵ Draft South Pennine Moors Supplementary Planning Document. 24th September 2024. Director of Economy and Place.

- 9.17 Refer to Habitat Features Plan – Figure 9.1 for results of the habitat survey undertaken to date.

Fauna

- 9.18 Based on the habitats recorded at the Site, there is potential for the Site to support the following species:

- Amphibians;
- Badgers *Meles meles*;
- Bats;
- Birds (non-breeding and breeding);
- Brown hare *Lepus europaeus*;
- Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*;
- Invertebrates;
- Otter *Lutra lutra*; and
- Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius*;

Identification of Likely Significant Effects

- 9.19 The initial assessment findings have identified the following receptors which could be effected by the Project for Assessment, detailed in **Table 9.2**:

Table 9.2: Potential Effects scoped-in to the Assessment

Effect	Receptor(s)	Applicable Stage
Degradation through nitrogen deposition and recreational pressure	Rochdale Canal SAC and SSSI	Construction and Operation
Degradation through air quality, dust pollution and recreational pressure	Non-Statutory nature conservation sites (all SBI's listed in Table 9.1)	Construction and Operation

Effect	Receptor(s)	Applicable Stage
Overall loss of habitat and degradation of retained habitat	Deciduous woodland (loss) Hedgerows (loss) Neutral grassland (loss) Ponds (loss) Mixed scrub (loss) <u>Degradation</u> (retained habitats)	Construction and Operation
Risk of killing/injury/ loss of habitat and disturbance to populations of wildlife	Amphibians, badgers, bats, birds [non-breeding and breeding], brown hare, hedgehog, invertebrates, otter and water vole within the Site and +250m surrounding Site in the case of Great Crested Newt/Amphibians	Construction and Operation

9.20 The initial assessment findings have identified the following effects which are not considered significant and therefore are scoped out from further assessment:

- Reptiles have been scoped out of the assessment due to a lack of suitable habitat and no local records of reptiles returned from the local record centre.

Scope and Methodology of Assessment (including significance criteria)

9.21 The following background surveys have been/will be completed at the Site and are detailed in **Table 9.3**. At this stage, access has been permitted for all areas of the Site.

Table 9.3: Background Surveys Pending/ Confirmed

Survey/Study/ Analysis/ Evaluation	Methodology	Date of Completion
Statutory nature conservation sites ¹⁶	Statutory nature conservation sites are assessed in line with CIEEM EIA Guidelines, where a Zone of Influence (Zoi) from the development Site is assessed at geographical ranges from 10 km for Internationally designated sites, and	Ongoing

¹⁶ Impacts on the internationally important nature conservation sites will also be addressed through a Habitat Regulations Assessment. Initially, this will comprise a Stage 1 screening assessment, followed by a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment if Likely Significant Effects are anticipated.

Survey/Study/ Analysis/ Evaluation	Methodology	Date of Completion
	2 km for National, County and locally designated sites.	
Non-statutory nature conservation sites	An assessment of impacts on non-statutory sites will be undertaken.	Ongoing
Amphibians (including Great Crested Newt)	Surveys for great crested newt have been undertaken at all ponds within the Site and in adjacent land within 250m, where access permitted. There were 15 ponds either onsite or within 250 m of the Site. In June 2024, eight of those ponds were accessible, two were dry; eDNA samples were successfully taken from six ponds, all of which came back negative for GCN. eDNA surveys for four offsite ponds to the east of the site (Rhodes Green Farm) were carried out in June 2025. All four ponds were dry. Due to historic records of GCN at pond P11, a second eDNA sample was taken in June 2026, which also came back negative. The results of the GCN eDNA surveys concluded that all accessible ponds had negative results for GCN.	June 2024, June 2025 & June 2026
Badger	Badger surveys across the Site have been completed in 2025, with update surveys ongoing in 2026. Surveys undertaken in the appropriate season to identify setts and areas of foraging. A single badger sett was recorded to the north of the Site. The entrances and tunnels are on the opposite side of the embankment to the Site. Further bait-marking surveys may be considered if it is apparent that different badger territories occupy the Site.	June 2024, June 2025 & June 2026
Bats (roosting and foraging)	Preliminary roost assessment surveys of all buildings within the Site have been undertaken. Following this, further nocturnal surveys have been undertaken in line	May 2025 – September 2025 (bat roosts) & May 2025 – Ongoing (bat activity)

Survey/Study/ Analysis/ Evaluation	Methodology	Date of Completion
	with the building's suitability for bats¹⁷. An alternative approach of climbed assessments will be used for trees where this is deemed necessary or a more accurate/proportionate approach due to the transient nature of tree roots. In addition, the accessible land is generally perceived to offer moderate habitat quality for foraging and commuting bats owing to its predominant agricultural use. Certain areas (i.e. neutral grassland, watercourses) offer higher value, but in the general context of the wider site's suitability, an assessment of overall moderate habitat quality is considered proportionate. In line with this assessment, seasonal transect surveys of the Site are ongoing in the appropriate season (Spring, Summer, Autumn) and supplemented by static automated detector deployments once per month from April – September.	
Birds	Detailed breeding bird surveys have been undertaken at the Site. A full suite of breeding bird surveys, comprising a minimum of three early-morning visits have been undertaken, including a fourth nocturnal visit, to assess for nocturnal and crepuscular species, in line with best practice guidance¹⁸. Targeted barn owl surveys have been undertaken on the central farm buildings and horse stable. The breeding bird surveys found mostly common and widespread bird species, with few ground	Breeding Birds 2024-2026 Non-breeding Birds 2023-2024

¹⁷ Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, BCT, 4th Edition 2023

¹⁸ Bird Survey Methodology [online] [Accessed 01/07/2026]:

<https://birdsurveyguidelines.org/methods/survey-method/>

Survey/Study/ Analysis/ Evaluation	Methodology	Date of Completion
	nesting bird territories which may otherwise be expected in similar habitat types. A full suite of non-breeding bird surveys has been undertaken, comprising a minimum of five early morning surveys and one nocturnal survey in the appropriate season, to establish presence of overwintering bird species. The non-breeding bird surveys found mostly common and widespread over-wintering species, such as winter thrushes. No overwintering geese were recorded.	
Brown hare	Desk based records for this species will be included in the assessment, along with visual evidence noted during other protected species surveys such as wintering and breeding bird surveys and badger surveys, where the site is being covered during daytime and evening walkovers.	Ongoing – as part of other protected species surveys
Habitats	Detailed 'extended' phase one habitat survey and UK Habs survey has been undertaken at the Site. Condition assessments of each habitat, including hedgerows, as per Defra Metric guidance has been undertaken to inform Biodiversity Net Gain calculations¹⁹. Additionally, River MoRPH surveys have been undertaken to establish the baseline condition of the onsite watercourses. A draft Habitat Features Plan is accompanying this Scoping Report²⁰. It should be noted however that although the Assessment boundary (allocation boundary) remains fixed, the application redline	June 2024 & June 2025 & Update walkovers have been undertaken in May 2026

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

²⁰ 16552_P09_DRAFT Habitat Features Plan

Survey/Study/ Analysis/ Evaluation	Methodology	Date of Completion
	boundary may change. Therefore, a finalised Habitat Features Plan will accompany the EIA.	
Hedgehog	Desk based records for this species will be included in the assessment, along with visual evidence noted during other protected species surveys such as wintering and breeding bird surveys and bat surveys, where the site is being covered during dawn and dusk walkovers.	Ongoing – as part of other protected species surveys
Invertebrate	The neutral grassland fields in the Eastern area of the Site could support protected and notable invertebrates and therefore targeted surveys are being undertaken.	Ongoing
Otter/Water Vole	Although it is acknowledged that the Brooks / watercourses at the Site will be retained in any event, proximate development or crossings could incur adverse impacts. For this reason, surveys (one early season April – June and a second late season July – September) have been undertaken on the central (unnamed) watercourse	June 2025, September 2025

9.22 The methodologies and results of the surveys will be presented in the ES Chapter and associated Technical Appendices.

9.23 Standardised significance criteria used to describe the significance of effects is as follows:

- Major Beneficial;
- Moderate Beneficial;
- Minor Beneficial;
- Negligible;

- Minor Adverse;
- Moderate Adverse; and,
- Major Adverse.

9.24 The following terms have been used to define the level of the effects identified and these can be 'beneficial' or 'adverse':

- **Major effect:** where the Project for Assessment is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions and the receptor has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability or is of the highest sensitivity;
- **Moderate effect:** where the Project for Assessment is likely to cause either a considerable change from the baseline conditions at a receptor which has a degree of adaptability, tolerance or recoverability or a less than considerable change at a receptor that has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability;
- **Minor effect:** where the Project for Assessment is likely to cause a small, but noticeable change from the baseline conditions on a receptor which has limited adaptability, tolerance or recoverability or is of the highest sensitivity; or where the Project for Assessment is likely to cause a considerable change from the baseline conditions at a receptor which can adapt, is tolerant of the change or/and can recover from the change; and
- **Negligible:** where the Project for Assessment is unlikely to cause a noticeable change at a receptor, despite its level of sensitivity or there is a considerable change at a receptor which is not considered sensitive to a change

9.25 The duration of the effect has been assessed as either 'short-term', 'medium-term' or 'long-term'. Short-term is considered to be up to 1 year, medium-term is considered to be between 1 and 10 years and long-term is considered to be greater than 10 years.

Preliminary Discussions of Potential Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

9.26 Existing ecological features will be protected where possible, specifically in relation to safeguarding of the on-Site Site of Biological Importance (SBI). This non-statutory designated site is identified for its ecological nature conservation value but as a physical feature of the Site. Ecological features can be safeguarded during construction through best practice sensitive working methods which can be controlled through CEMPs, to be secured through planning conditions. These retained habitats can be safeguarded during

the operational phase of the development through targeted species planting to act as natural screening/ barriers (i.e. hedgerows) and fencing-off.

Approach to the Assessment of Cumulative Effects

- 9.27 Cumulative effects will be assessed within each topic chapter of the ES. This will assess the cumulative effects of the Project for Assessment in conjunction with any committed developments within the vicinity of the sites identified through the scoping process (refer to **Section 3**).
- 9.28 In line with EIA Regulations, the study area for the cumulative assessment will be the same as for the rest of the assessment, i.e., 10 km for international designated site and 2 km for nationally designated sites, non-statutory designated site and protected and notable species.
- 9.29 Cumulative effects will be assessed on the basis of 'additional cumulative effects', i.e., that the cumulative schemes would be constructed first, with effects arising from the Project for Assessment being in addition to this.

Figure 9.1: Habitat Features Plan

