

SMALLFORD WORKS,
SMALLFORD LANE, ST ALBANS,
HERTFORDSHIRE, AL4 0SA.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

OCTOBER 2019

FINAL REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Document

- 1.1 Ubu Design Landscape Architects were commissioned by Stackbourne Limited, to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment of an area of land identified for residential development at Smallford Works, Smallford Lane, St Albans, Herts.

Aims of the Assessment

- 1.2 This assessment seeks to assess the effects on the landscape character and visual amenity that may arise from the impact of a residential development on the existing industrial site. The assessment investigates the landscape and visual issues relating to the site and its setting through a combination of desktop research and field survey work.
- 1.3 The assessment aims to:
- Establish a clear understanding of the site and its setting in respect of landscape character and visual amenity;
 - Establish an understanding of the proposed development in terms of its relation to landscape character and visual amenity;
 - Identify potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed development upon the landscape;
 - Identify potential effects on visual receptors;
 - Determine mitigation measures where necessary to reduce/eliminate any potential adverse effect on the landscape or visual amenity arising as a result of the proposed development;
 - Identify opportunities for enhancement measures; and
 - Establish the likely residual effects of the proposed development.

Methodology

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Guidance Documents

- 1.4 The methodology used to carry out the landscape and visual assessment of the proposed development is primarily based upon that set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment – 3rd edition 2013).
- 1.5 The process follows a standard approach, namely establishing:
- The baseline conditions, i.e. the character, quality, value

and relative sensitivity of the landscape;

- The type and relative sensitivity of visual receptors;
- The sensitivity to change of the landscape in relation to the proposed development;
- The predicted magnitude of impact that the proposed development would bring, allowing for mitigation measures, upon the landscape and upon visual receptors; and
- Assessing the significance of effect that would occur, by aggregating the predicted magnitude of change with the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors respectively.

Site Visit and Equipment

- 1.6 A site visit was carried out on 6-7th June 2019, to undertake the assessment of the visual and landscape impacts of the proposed site. The conditions were generally bright with intermittent cloud and good visibility apart from some rain and drizzle on the morning of the 7th June.
- 1.7 The visits were preceded by a desk top study of landscape designations and analysis of the Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Field work focussed on the site and surrounding roads and footpaths.
- 1.8 The assessment was carried out during summer when the deciduous trees surrounding the site were in full leaf. This represents the best-case scenario in relation to the screening effects of vegetation. The screening effect of the deciduous trees, hedgerows and under-storey shrubs will decrease during the winter. However the extensive surrounding vegetation also contains a large mix of evergreen species which will therefore retain some of the screening effects during the winter months.

Landscape

- 1.9 During the visits the site and local area were assessed through observation, recording of observations and through photographs. The assessment reviewed the site and local landscape features, character and condition, and the key views into the site.

Visual Amenity

- 1.10 The viewpoints used in the assessment were selected in order to:
- Determine the extent of visibility of existing built structures;
 - Determine the visibility of the proposed development, utilising the results from the ZTV to guide field work;

- Gain further understanding of the components which create the landscape character; and
- Carry out the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

- 1.11 The following types of viewpoints were investigated:
- Representative viewpoints (for example representing views of users of a particular receptor, such as a public footpath);
 - Specific viewpoints (for example a key view from a specific residential dwelling or community asset);
 - Illustrative viewpoints (chosen to demonstrate a particular effect/specific issue); and
 - Any important sequential views (for example along key transport routes).
- 1.12 The potential visual receptors that would be affected at the chosen viewpoints include:
- Public footpath and cycle route users including pedestrians;
 - People living in, working in, or visiting the settlement and the neighbouring properties and farmsteads; and
 - People using roads.

Photography

- 1.13 Photographs were recorded using a Canon 50mm fixed lens to provide an overall 50mm focal length on a Canon EOS 600D 18mp digital camera mounted on a tripod.
- 1.14 Panoramic views were created by taking a series of overlapping photographs (overlapping by 15-30% as recommended in the Landscape Institute guidelines). These have been stitched together using Photoshop, employing the 'Realignment' method.

Description of study area

- 1.15 The study area for the assessment of landscape and visual effects of the proposed development is shown in the Figures and generally cover an area extending up to approximately 3km from the centre of the site. This is considered to be the maximum extent within which significant landscape and visual effects could occur for the type of development proposed.

Site location

- 1.16 Grid Reference: TL 19778 06851 (the approximate centre of the site). The site is located at Smallford Works which is currently a complex of yards and small scale industrial units. It lies to the west of Smallford Lane which is to the west of the Sleapshyde village and south of Smallford village, located between St Albans and Hatfield, Hertfordshire.

Development Description

- 1.17 The proposed development takes a design-led approach and provides 100 two storey new homes offering a range of different types of accommodation from 1 bed apartments through to 4 bedroom detached house with 40% of the housing proposed being affordable housing.
- 1.18 The development will sit within an existing robust landscape framework and the majority of boundary trees and vegetation will be retained apart from where it is necessary to provide access from Smallford Lane.
- 1.19 See Turner Architects and UBU Drawings in Appendix A for relevant layout plans, Landscape Layout and elevations which have been utilised to assess the extent of the effects in this report.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 1.20 The landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken within the context of relevant legislation, planning policies and guidance documents.

Legislation

- 1.21 The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore is subject to the legislation relating to the spatial designation. The implications of this are covered in Policy 1: Metropolitan Green Belt under Local Policy below.

National Policy

- 1.22 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides guidance relating to planning and new development in England and was revised in June 2019.

- 1.23 The planning principles of relevance to landscape and visual amenity have been considered throughout the assessment.

Local Policy

- 1.24 The site falls within St. Albans City and District Council and within the parish council of Colney Heath. There is currently no 'Made' Neighbourhood Plan for the area.
- 1.25 The following are key policies that relate to the landscape and visual issues. The accompanying Planning Statement identifies key planning policy that are of relevance to the application.

Relevant Policies

- 1.26 Draft policies:
- Policy S3 - Metropolitan Green Belt
 - L23 - Urban Design and Layout of New Development
 - Policy L24 - Development Amenity Standards
 - L29 - Green and Blue Infrastructure, Countryside, Landscape and Trees
- 1.27 Adopted Policies:
- Policy 1: Metropolitan Green Belt
 - Policy 69: General Design and Layout
 - Policy 70: Design and Layout of New Housing
 - Policy 74: Landscaping and Tree Preservation
 - Policy 75: Green Space within Settlements
- 1.28 The LVIA has taken account of these policies when considering the sensitivity of the site and surrounding area within the baseline study. It has also made reference to the policies within the landscape and visual effects section.

2. BASELINE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Site description

- 2.1 The site location and layout drawings by Turner Architects, Appendix A, illustrate that the application site is located within an industrial complex named as Smallford Works.
- 2.2 There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the application boundary, although there is a network of nearby footpaths, bridleways and cycleways that run to the east, west and south of the site.
- 2.3 These are demonstrated in Figure 1. These will remain open throughout the construction and operational periods.
- 2.4 Access to the complex is proposed from Smallford Lane as demonstrated in the Proposed 278 Works drawing by Pell Frischmann in Appendix B.
- 2.5 It should be noted that a now extant permission was granted in 2009 for a remodelled access into the site which would result in the loss of some of the existing vegetation on Smallford Lane and this was to be replaced by appropriate trees and hedges as illustrated in the Marks Heeley Brothwell approved drawing in Appendix B.
- 2.6 The Pell Frischmann design for the proposed development is based on this previously consented road alignment and the UBU Landscape Layout SMA1905_GA-100 incorporates the replacement planting as mitigation for the vegetation loss. For this assessment we have considered the consented highway scheme as the baseline condition to measure the effects on the setting of the site in this location.

Topography and Soils

- 2.7 The site is relatively level and Figure 6 demonstrates the topography within the study area.
- 2.8 Reference to the CSAI Soilscape Viewer identifies the site as being Soilscape 6: Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils, however, the majority of the land within the site is covered in buildings, yards and road infrastructure.

Landscape, ecological and historic designations

- 2.9 The site doesn't fall within any local or national landscape or environmental designated areas, but is located on Previously Developed Land within the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.10 There are no statutory or non-statutory heritage designations within the site boundary and the closest Grade II Listed Building is the Ye Olde House, along Sleepshyde Lane to the east of the site. This is demonstrated in Figure 4 - Landscape Designations.
- 2.11 There are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations within the site boundary. Figure 5 - Environmental Designations demonstrates the location of any designations within the study area.
- 2.12 Colney Heath Local Nature Reserve (LNR) lies approximately 1km south of the site. Natural England describe the LNR as 'One of the few remaining acid heathlands in Hertfordshire, this 60 acre site, bordering the river Colne, provides a haven for wildlife and a place for quiet relaxation for local people. Under the care of the Parish Council, since being acquired piecemeal in the 1950s and '60s, it is classed as a Hertfordshire Heritage site. It is managed to maintain the acid grassland, encouraging plants such as heather, as well as to retain the diversity of species in and around the grade 1 stretch of river.'
- 2.13 Potential links to the Colney Heath nature reserve can be achieved from within the proposed development.

National Landscape Character

- 2.14 The site lies within the National Landscape Area (LCA): 111 Northern Thames Basin (see Figure 2), as defined by Natural England, published in 2014 and superceding the previous Countryside Agency Character Area profile. In the following, key characteristics of the LCA are described.

LCA 111 Northern Thames Basin

- 2.15 Key characteristics of this NCA pertinent to the site context are defined as:
- The landform is varied with a wide plateau divided by river valleys. The prominent hills and ridges of the 'Bagshot Hills' are notable to the northwest and extensive tracts of flat land are found in the south.
 - Characteristic of the area is a layer of thick clay producing heavy, acidic soils, resulting in retention of considerable

areas of ancient woodland.

- Areas capped by glacial sands and gravels have resulted in nutrient-poor, free-draining soils which support remnant lowland heathlands, although these are now small. Areas that have alluvial deposits present are well drained and fertile.
- The water bearing underlying Chalk beds are a main source of recharge for the principal London Basin Chalk aquifer.
- A diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing the major rivers Ver, Colne and Lea, and slightly steeper valleys of the rivers Stour, Colne and Roman. Numerous springs rise at the base of the Bagshot Beds and several reservoirs are dotted throughout the area.
- The pattern of woodlands is varied across the area and includes considerable ancient semi-natural woodland. Hertfordshire is heavily wooded in some areas as are parts of Essex, while other areas within Essex are more open in character. Significant areas of wood pasture and pollarded veteran trees are also present.
- The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity. Informal patterns of 18th-century or earlier enclosure reflect medieval colonisation of the heaths. Regular planned enclosures dating from the Romano-British period are a subtle but nationally important feature on the flat land to the south-east of the area. In the Essex heathlands 18th- and 19th-century enclosure of heathlands and commons followed by extensive 20th-century field enlargement is dominant.
- Mixed farming, with arable land predominating in the Hertfordshire plateaux, parts of the London Clay lowlands and Essex heathlands. Grasslands are characteristic of the river valleys throughout. Horticulture and market gardening are found on the light, sandy soils of former heaths in Essex, particularly around Colchester, along with orchards, meadow pasture and leys following numerous narrow rivers and streams.
- The diverse range of semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, lowland heath and floodplain grazing marsh and provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter.
- Rich archaeology including sites related to Roman occupation, with the Roman capital at Colchester and City of St Albans (Verulamium) and links to London. Landscape parklands surrounding 16th- and 17th-century rural estates and country houses built for London merchants are a particular feature in Hertfordshire.
- The medieval pattern of small villages and dispersed

farming settlement remains central to the character of parts of Hertfordshire and Essex. Market towns have expanded over time as have the London suburbs and commuter settlements, with the creation of new settlements such as the pioneering garden city at Welwyn and the planned town at Basildon.

- *Brick-built dwellings are characteristic from the late 17th century onwards. Prior to this dwellings and farm buildings tended to be timber built with weatherboarding, now mainly painted white but traditionally black or tarred, and whitewashed plaster walls.*

Regional Landscape Character

East of England landscape Character

- 2.16 According to the East of England Landscape Framework, Smallford falls within the Landscape Character Type Lowland Settled Farmlands.
- 2.17 Key Characteristics are described as follows:
- 2.18 **Overall description:** This is a settled agricultural landscape, often with a recurring estate character, associated with fertile rolling lowlands, often around the coastal fringe.
- 2.19 **Location:** Occurs in northeast Norfolk, along the southern coastal fringe of Essex and in the central parts of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.
- 2.20 **Landform:** Low-lying, gently rolling topography associated with deposits of glacial sand and gravel, often associated with river valleys and adjoining areas of gently rolling ground.
- 2.21 **Natural/water features:** Well drained by a network of small streams and rivers.
- 2.22 **Ecological character:** A landscape of productive, free draining soils with little surviving semi-natural habitat. Some patches of ancient woodland survive in areas with wetter gleyed soils.
- 2.23 **Primary land use:** Predominately arable land use, with occasional damp meadows on lower ground in river valleys. Some mineral extraction (eg. for brick making in Marston vale) and recreational land uses (e.g. golf courses).
- 2.24 **Tree cover:** Widespread groups of trees and small plantations, with occasional ancient woodlands.

2.25 **Historic features:** Extensive network of hedged and occasionally sunken lanes. There are also numerous small parklands. Brickwork kilns and chimneys are also a distinctive feature in Beds.

2.26 **Enclosure pattern:** Field forms are generally medium sized and sinuous, but rectilinear patterns are also common in places, reflecting more planned, surveyor enclosures.

2.27 **Settlement pattern:** Rural settlement is dense and clustered with a mixture of riverside towns, small nucleated villages/hamlets and many individual farms. There are limited urban fringe influences in this landscape.

2.28 **Historic development:** A landscape with a mixed historical evolution, including both late enclosures from common field and heath in Norfolk and early co-axial field types in Essex & Hertfordshire.

2.29 **Tranquility:** Much of this landscape has a deeply rural character with a high degree of tranquillity. However, in areas of mineral extraction, tranquillity is often significantly reduced.

2.30 **Views:** A generally more enclosed landscape, with a complex mosaic of wooded and tree lined vistas, in places giving rise to an intimate character.

Local Landscape Character

2.31 Hertfordshire County Council in its 2000/2005 publication prepared as part of the part of the "Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment" identifies the site as part of the landscape area Colney Heath Farmland as demonstrated in Figure 3.

Colney Heath Farmland

Landscape Character

2.32 *A medium-scale landscape contained by adjacent urban areas and transport routes. There is a good network of hedges, field trees and tree belts to the urban areas that visually contain the largely arable character. Mineral extraction has created a number of disturbed and new landscapes that are still young. Areas of heath and semi-natural grassland are locally important at Colney Heath and Smallford gravel pits.*

Key Characteristics

- 2.33 The key characteristics are:
- *medium-scale arable farmland*

- *subtle gently undulating landforms*
- *severance by transport corridors, past and present*
- *areas of semi-natural restored mineral workings*
- *heath habitat at Colney Heath*
- *urban development contains area physically but visually largely concealed.*

Visual and Sensory Perception

2.34 *Views both from outside and within the area are generally well screened by roadside vegetation along both the narrow lanes and the dual carriageways. The A414 and A1(M) provide a major source of noise and disruption.*

Rarity and distinctiveness

2.35 *The landscape type is frequent with the heathy habitats being the most distinct features.*

Visual Impact

2.36 *The extent of built development within and on the perimeter of the area is generally well concealed by vegetation. Exceptions are some of the large industrial units and glasshouses at Smallford and the A414. There is some localised fly-tipping which is visually detrimental.*

2.37 The above key characteristics demonstrate that the overall character area contains a range of landscape features that are of varying value from rural elements to settlements. The sensitivity to change for the type of proposed development within the landscape character area is deemed to be **Medium**.

Site Landscape Character

2.38 The landscape character of the site's setting and context generally accords with the national and local landscape character assessments.

2.39 The site setting and boundaries is characterised by a flat topography and existing dense vegetational buffer that contains the site well. As a brown field and industrial site, landscape value is relatively low with the exception of existing hedgerows and trees along the site's perimeter.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 2.40 The sensitivity of the site to accommodate the change of use from an industrial zone to a residential complex with public open space is deemed to be **Low**. This is due to the description of the landscape condition and landscape value as described below combined with the susceptibility to change.

Landscape Condition

- 2.41 The current condition of the landscape elements within the site ownership boundary can be described as **Low**. The total land cover is hard standing comprised of roads, yards and permanent and semi-permanent buildings. These are bound by dense hedges and mature trees to the majority of the perimeter.

Landscape Value

- 2.42 The site doesn't lie within or adjacent to any other environmental or heritage designations. The fabric of landscape within the site represents a previously developed brownfield site and the value is considered to be **Low**.

Susceptibility to Change

- 2.43 The condition and value of the landscape within the site does not accord with the descriptions of the key characteristics of the national, regional and local landscape character assessments and therefore the lack of the determining features will result in a **Low** susceptibility to change.

3. BASELINE VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Potential visual receptors

- 3.1 From a review of the ZTV in Figure 7 and a desktop study, a series of representative viewpoints were chosen to provide coverage of potential views of the proposed development from a range of directions. The potential viewpoints were then tested through field study and those where no visibility of the development could be achieved were discounted. The selected viewpoints are representative of a range of receptors including residential, recreational, cultural and transport.

- 3.2 A number of potential visual receptors were identified to provide a detailed assessment of the visual effects of the proposed development.

Recreational receptors

- 3.3 Potential recreational receptors identified included the following public routes, which run in the vicinity of the site:
- National Cycle Route 61 (north of the site).
 - Public Footpaths and Bridleways surrounding the site including: Footpaths 22, 11, 19, 26, 39 and Bridleway 2.
 - National Trails: Watling Chase Timberland Trail.
- 3.4 There are a number of other promoted routes within the study area as illustrated on Figure 2. However, the field survey demonstrated that there were no views of the site from these routes due to existing vegetation and landform or the distance was too great to distinguish the site. These potential receptors are therefore scoped out of the assessment.

Residential receptors

- 3.5 Residential properties and other buildings in view of the site have been considered including those on the western settlement edge of Sleafshyde.
- 3.6 The nearest dwellings to the proposed development are located on Smallford Lane opposite the existing entrance to Smallford Works.
- 3.7 Further south there are a number of houses on Colney Heath Lane which have the rear of their properties facing the development site.
- 3.8 Due to landform and the presence of hedgerows and/or trees on the field boundaries, it is anticipated that any potential views would be negligible. Site investigations revealed that views from these dwellings are virtually screened by intervening layers of vegetation.

Transport Receptors

- 3.9 Travelling receptors include those using major and minor roads in close to the site. In this case the only road in close proximity to the site is Smallford Lane. The Watling Chase Timberland Trail also travels along Smallford Lane as part of its route.
- 3.10 Travelling receptors are considered to be low in terms of sensitivity to development.

Cultural receptors

- 3.11 There are number of listed buildings and scheduled monuments within the study area, these are demonstrated in Figure 4. The field survey demonstrated that due to landform, vegetation and the surrounding built environment, the proposed development will not be visible to the majority of the cultural receptors.

Viewpoint Descriptions

- 3.12 Figure 10 identifies the locations of all the recorded viewpoints and Figure 12 demonstrates the viewpoint photographs.

Viewpoint 01

- 3.13 Viewpoint 1 is located on the public footpath that crosses the tract of open land to the west of the proposed site. The view is looking south easterly towards the site boundary and some of the upper portions and roofs of the sheds and cabins are just visible above the vegetation line in the horizon.
- 3.14 The dense and high vegetation to the left of the view aligns the National Cycle Route 61 and demonstrates that generally little or no visibility of the site can be achieved from this recreational route.
- 3.15 The tall masts that can be seen on the horizon above the site are located some 7kms away Brookmans Park Transmitting Station.

Viewpoint 02

- 3.16 This viewpoint is located closer to the site on the same public footpath as Viewpoint 01 and shares a similar description. Some of the buildings on the western edge of the University of Hertfordshire are also visible on the horizon to the left of the site.

Viewpoints 03 and 04

- 3.17 These viewpoints are further east than Viewpoints 01 and 02 in proximity to one of the lakes that are present on the open space area. As with viewpoints 01 and 02 the majority of the site is mostly screened by dense vegetation adjacent to the site perimeter and within the open area.

Viewpoint 05

- 3.18 This viewpoint is located at the terminus of the public footpath and is close to the western edge of the site. Some of the larger sheds and perimeter fencing are visible from this location but the majority of the site is screened from view due to the extensive perimeter planting.

Viewpoint 06

- 3.19 This viewpoint is just north of the Smallford Farm complex and looks across the open land towards the site in an easterly direction. The site is mostly obscured by vegetation but the rooftop of one of the large sheds is just visible. The university buildings which are located approximately 2.2 kms away are also visible above the site.

Viewpoint 07

- 3.20 This viewpoint is located at the terminus of the public footpath adjacent to Smallford Farm and represents the residents visual amenity and the users of the footpath network.
- 3.21 The site is not visible from here due to the screening effects of the buildings and vegetation and viewers will only see the site when travelling further north and in the proximity of viewpoints 01 to 06 and therefore this viewpoint is not subject to further assessment.

Viewpoint 08

- 3.22 The ZTV suggested that it may be possible to view the proposed development from Colney Heath Lane and this viewpoint demonstrates that the extensive and dense roadside vegetation prevents any potential views. This viewpoint will not form part of any further assessment.

Viewpoint 09

- 3.23 The public footpath travels from Colney Heath Lane to the existing entrance of the site and Smallford Lane. Walkers on the path will experience slight to no views of the site due to the existing vegetation to the perimeter of the site and within the open space.

- 3.24 Some of the larger sheds are just visible from the footpath as are the rear faces of properties on Smallford Lane that back onto the open space.

Viewpoint 10

- 3.25 This viewpoint is located at the Smallford Lane end of the public footpath and looks towards the site entrance. The view demonstrates that the current uses of the site are commercial and light industrial and these lead to an overall poor visual experience for the viewer where views into the site can be achieved. However, the dense vegetation adjacent to Smallford Lane and the open space to the west ensure that the site is visually well contained from users of the public footpaths and the road.

Viewpoint 11

- 3.26 This viewpoint is located on Smallford Lane looking northwesterly towards the proposed access point. The road also forms part of the Watling Chase Timberland Trail. Generally, the eastern perimeter of the site is well vegetated with native trees and hedgerow planting and views of the site are effectively screened from Smallford Lane. There is a gap in the vegetation where the proposed road is to be introduced and there is a consented but now extant consent for a new access route into the Works. The consented plans allowed for the vegetation to be removed where it conflicted with the new road and its visibility splays and be mitigated with replacement instant hedges and trees to the perimeter. This is considered to be the visual baseline for this assessment.

Viewpoints 12 - 14

- 3.27 These viewpoints are located on the London Country Way which is public footpath to the east of the site and looks in a westerly direction. The roadside vegetation and light columns are visible in the view as are the rears of the houses on Sleafshyde Lane.
- 3.28 The site is barely visible from these locations apart from a glimpsed view of a blue container that is in the proximity of the proposed site access.

Viewpoint 15

- 3.29 This viewpoint is located on a historical track further east to viewpoints 12 -14 but has similar qualities of view. The site is not visible from this location due to the dense roadside vegetation on both sides of Smallford Lane and is therefore discounted from further assessment.

Viewpoint 16

- 3.30 This viewpoint is located on the London Green Belt Way and National Cycle Route 61 and generally demonstrates the lack of visibility of the site due to the dense vegetation on both sides of the former rail line. There are some occasional gaps in the vegetation along the route but none offer views of the site and therefore this receptor has been discounted from further assessment.

Viewpoint 17

- 3.31 This viewpoint is located on the pedestrian footpath that crosses the A141 (North Orbital Road) located to the south east of the site. The bridge forms part of the route for the Alban Way and Watling Chase Timberland Trail. The site is effectively screened from this elevated location due to mature and dense roadside vegetation and therefore has been discounted from further assessment.

Viewpoint 18

- 3.32 The ZTV suggests that some of the settlements to the west may experience some visibility of the site but extensive field survey concluded that this is not possible due to large blocks of woodland and buildings within the countryside. This viewpoint is located close to Tyttenhanger and generally demonstrates the lack of visibility of the site. The university buildings are just visible on the horizon nearly 4kms away but the site is obscured by trees. This viewpoint has been discounted from further assessment.

4. IMPACT ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Landscape Effects

- 4.1 The landscape impact assessment considers the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape as an environmental resource.
- 4.2 The sensitivity to change and magnitude of impacts on landscape receptors are classified and aggregated to determine the significance of effect. Table 4 indicates the assessment matrix used to determine the significance of the proposals impact on landscape receptors.

Landscape Receptors

- 4.3 The landscape receptors comprise the physical elements and combinations of those elements that are affected within the site boundary and by the setting of the proposed development.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.4 The sensitivity to change of a landscape receptor is reflected in the degree to which that area is able to accommodate change resulting from a proposed development without adverse effects on its character. This may be influenced by a number of factors including the physical quality and perceived value of the landscape in question, general visibility (influenced by topography and vegetation etc), scale (of both the landscape and of the development), and robustness of the characteristic landscape elements.
- 4.5 Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their sensitivity by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of development proposed and the value attached to the landscape.
- 4.6 Susceptibility factors are particular to the specific landscape and nature of the proposed development, and as such do not lend themselves to generic classification. However, Table 2 is shown opposite as an example of the type of assessment criteria employed. Judgements about susceptibility are tailored to the project and graded on an incremental scale from high to low.
- 4.7 Landscape quality refers to the physical condition and state of repair of the landscape, and its intactness. Landscape

Assessment of significance of effects

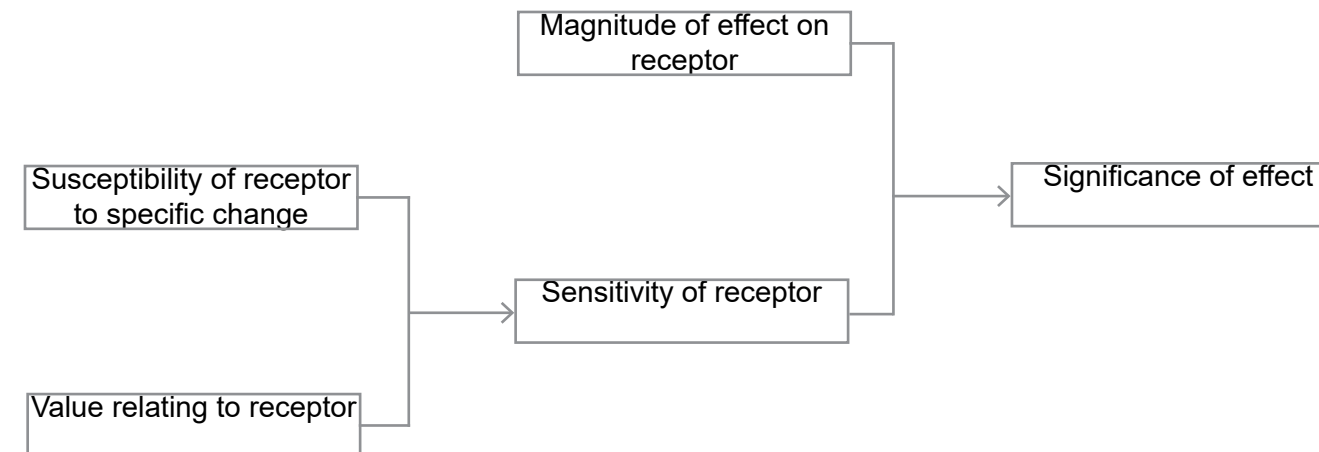


Table 1 - Landscape Receptor Quality/Value

| Landscape receptor type | Quality/value |
|---|------------------------|
| Areas of very strong positive character that are highly valued by virtue of their scenic beauty, cultural value. The quality and value of such landscapes is often recognised through statutory designation as a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). | Exceptional/ Very high |
| Areas that exhibit a positive character with valued features that combine to give an experience of unity, richness and harmony. These landscapes may be considered particularly worthy of conservation and which may be particularly sensitive to change if dealt with inappropriately. | High |
| Areas that exhibit positive character but which may exhibit evidence of alteration, degradation and erosion of features. Also applicable to areas with degraded features but which remain well used/highly valued. | Medium |
| Areas that are relatively bland or neutral in character with few notable or valued features and/or evidence of alteration, degradation and erosion of features, resulting in areas of variable character. | Low |
| Areas that have been subject to substantial alteration, degradation, or erosion of features resulting in generally negative character with ample scope for improvement. | Poor/ Very low |

Table 2 - Landscape Receptor Susceptibility

| Landscape receptor | Susceptibility to change |
|---|--------------------------|
| Unique or nationally scarce features or elements having particularly distinctive characteristics; or mature vegetation with provenance, i.e. features within an AONB or other statutory designated area, ancient woodland or feature parkland trees, national trails or cycle routes. | Very high |
| Features or artefacts (e.g. dry stone walls) that are scarce at regional level; or are locally distinctive; or mature vegetation that is in good condition; or regionally important footpaths or rights of way. | High |
| Features or artefacts that are locally distinctive but commonplace; or mature vegetation that is in moderate or poor condition or is readily replicated; or locally important footpaths etc. | Medium |
| Features or artefacts that are regionally or nationally ubiquitous and do not contribute to local distinctiveness; or poorly maintained vegetation (e.g. gappy hedgerows). | Low |
| Features or artefacts that detract from landscape character such as obtrusive man-made artefacts (e.g. power lines, large areas of hard-standing etc). | Very low |

value refers to the importance of the landscape to society, which may be due to a range of factors including its scenic beauty, cultural associations and tranquil or wild feel. Both are assessed on a five level scale as per Table 1.

- 4.8 The magnitude of impact of the development proposals on landscape receptors are assessed as per Table 3. The criteria take into account whether the change is temporary or permanent and also any contemplated mitigation measures.
- 4.9 For residual effects, planting mitigation measures are assessed at 15 years' post completion.
- 4.10 A significant effect is a Very Severe, Severe, Substantial, Major Effect and is highlighted in red on the significance tables. In EIA terms the Moderate effect is also considered to be significant but for this assessment we have highlighted it as amber to indicate it being on the lower threshold of significance. Minor, Slight and Neutral effects are not considered significant and are highlighted in green in the significance tables.

Table 3 - Landscape Receptor Magnitude of change

| Impact on landscape receptor | Magnitude |
|---|------------|
| Permanent removal of, or a significant change to, the characteristics of the landscape element in question that cannot be suitably replaced, reinstated or otherwise mitigated against. | Very large |
| Permanent removal of, or a significant change to, the characteristics of the landscape element in question. Limited scope for replacement, reinstatement or other mitigation. | Large |
| Partial removal of, or moderate changes to the characteristics of the landscape element in question. Also applies to complete removal that can be suitably mitigated against. | Medium |
| Small scale changes to a landscape element or loss of/change to a small proportion of an extensive feature. Larger scale losses that can be fully mitigated against through provision of equivalent replacement features. | Small |
| Very small scale changes to a landscape element or loss of/change to a small proportion of an extensive feature. The changes can be fully mitigated against through provision of equivalent replacement features. | Very small |

Table 4 - Landscape Effect Significance Assessment Matrix

| Landscape effect significance matrix | | Sensitivity to change of landscape receptor | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|---|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| | | Very high | High | Medium | Low | Very low |
| Magnitude of change | Very large | Very severe | Severe | Substantial | Major | Moderate |
| | Large | Severe | Substantial | Major | Moderate | Minor |
| | Medium | Substantial | Major | Moderate | Minor | Slight |
| | Small | Major | Moderate | Minor | Slight | Neutral |
| | Very small | Moderate | Minor | Slight | Neutral | Neutral |

Visual impact

- 4.11 A visual impact assessment analyses the potential effects resulting from a proposed development upon the population likely to be affected. It assesses the change in visual amenity undergone by specific receptors that would arise from any change in the nature of views experienced.

Sensitivity of receptors and magnitude of effects

- 4.12 The relative sensitivity of each visual receptor as per Table 5 is determined by the combination of the susceptibility of the receptor to change and the value or nature of the view experienced from that receptor.
- 4.13 The magnitude of visual effects are also considered and quantified as per Table 6. Factors considered may include the potential for weather conditions to restrict views, the principle aspect of the viewpoint/viewer, the proportion of any particular view affected, the potential for the development to attract the eye or to become a focal point in the view to the detraction/benefit of competing visual elements.
- 4.14 Where appropriate a commentary is provided to justify the reasoning for the magnitude and sensitivity criteria selected.
- 4.15 Once sensitivity to change and magnitude of impact have been classified, the two are aggregated as per the matrix shown in Table 7, to determine the significance of the impact experienced by each receptor.
- 4.16 Visual impacts may also either be adverse (negative), beneficial (positive), or neutral (of no material effect). This is a subjective judgment based on the individual perceptions of the assessor and is not directly related to significance of effect. For residual effects, planting mitigation measures are assessed at 15 years' post completion.
- 4.17 A significant effect is considered to be a very severe, severe, substantial, major or moderate effect.

Table 5 - Receptor Visual Sensitivity

| Receptor | Sensitivity |
|--|-------------|
| Public viewpoint of important cultural or aesthetic significance. | Very high |
| Public viewpoint in a recreational context with the expectation of a rural outlook. A valued community view or a development which changes the setting of a community. | High |
| Public view of less significance or a number of private views from principal living spaces. | Medium |
| Small number of private views visible from principal living spaces. | Low |
| Views from transport corridors, views from places of work. | Very low |

Table 6 - Magnitude Of Visual Impact

| Visual impact | Magnitude |
|--|------------|
| A total loss or major alteration to the existing visual elements, features or characteristics of the view. The introduction of prominent elements of a scale, form and colour uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. | Very large |
| Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the view. The introduction of prominent elements of a scale, form and colour distinct from the surrounding landscape. | Large |
| Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the view. Introduction of prominent elements that are not wholly uncharacteristic of the existing landscape. | Medium |
| Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the view. Introduction of minor features not uncharacteristic of the existing landscape. | Small |
| Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features or characteristics of the view. Introduction of elements of a form, scale and colour characteristic of the existing landscape. | Very small |

Table 7 - Visual Effect Significance Assessment Matrix

| Visual effect significance matrix | | Sensitivity to change | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| | | Very high | High | Medium | Low | Very low |
| Magnitude of change | Very large | Very severe | Severe | Substantial | Major | Moderate |
| | Large | Severe | Substantial | Major | Moderate | Minor |
| | Medium | Substantial | Major | Moderate | Minor | Slight |
| | Small | Major | Moderate | Minor | Slight | Neutral |
| | Very small | Moderate | Minor | Slight | Neutral | Neutral |

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Landscape effects assessment

LOCAL CHARACTER AREA

Landscape Type: Colney Heath Farmland

- 5.1
- At a local level, the application site lies within the landscape character type Colney Heath Farmland.
- 5.2
- The sensitivity of the overall landscape character is deemed to be **medium** due to the balance of landscape value and susceptibility to change as described in Section 2 above.
- 5.3
- Overall, the wider Local Character Area will remain intact with all characteristics remaining un-altered as a result of the introduced development. The magnitude of change is considered to be **small**.
- 5.4
- The significance of effects at the post construction stage will therefore be **minor neutral** and not deemed to be significant.
- 5.5
- The planting that will be introduced as part of the development will mature over time contributing to the overall quality of the scheme. This will lead to a reduced magnitude of change from small to **very small** and leading to residual effects of **slight neutral**.

Site features

- 5.6
- The landscape elements and features within the existing site boundary are not reflective of the key characteristics described for the overall landscape character area and therefore the sensitivity to change is deemed to be **very low**.
- 5.7
- The characteristics within the development will undergo a **very large** magnitude of change with the transformation of the current commercial and light industrial use to a residential development. This will lead to a **moderate** significance of effects which can be deemed to be beneficial due to the increased quality of the landscape within the development.
- 5.8
- The planting that will be introduced as part of the development will mature over time contributing to the overall quality of the scheme. This will lead to a reduced magnitude of change from very large to **large** and leading to residual effects of **minor** beneficial.

Table 8 - Landscape Effects Assessment

| Landscape Receptor | Sensitivity | Post construction | | Residual | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|
| | | Magnitude | Significance | Magnitude | Significance |
| Landscape Type Colney Heath Farmland | Medium | Small | Minor Neutral | Very Small | Slight Neutral |
| Site features | Very Low | Very Large | Moderate Beneficial | Large | Minor Beneficial |
| Setting of the site | High | Small | Moderate Adverse | Very Small | Minor Neutral |

Setting of The Site

- 5.9
- The site has two aspects, one adjacent to Smallford Lane to the east and the other adjacent to the open recreation area to the west. All of the existing boundaries are well vegetated with native trees and hedges. These effectively enclose the detracting features within the site boundary and therefore the sensitivity to change is deemed to be **High**.
- 5.10
- The proposals seek to retain and enhance as much of the existing perimeter vegetation as possible with the exception of where the new proposed access route will necessitate the removal of a portion of roadside vegetation to account for the carriageway and visibility splays. Any vegetation that is removed will be replaced with new instant native hedgerows and trees to the rear of the sight lines. This is in line with a previously consented application to remove the necessary quantum of vegetation to allow for the access and visibility splays. The proposed development will not alter this situation from the baseline condition.
- 5.11
- The setting of the site will remain mostly unaltered apart from the access and therefore the magnitude of change is deemed to be **small**. This will lead to a **moderate** significance of effects which can be deemed to be adverse due to the removal of the existing vegetation.
- 5.12
- The replacement planting that will be introduced as part of the development will mature over time to provide an attractive frontage to the access area of the development and contributing to the overall quality of the scheme. This will lead to a reduced magnitude of change from small to very small and leading to residual effects of **minor** neutral.

Landscape effects - Local Draft and Adopted Policy

Local Plan Policies

- 5.13
- The proposals forming this planning application will not have a significant detrimental impact to the local character of the landscape within the St. Albans City and District Council area.
- 5.14
- The following is a summary to demonstrate that there will be no likely significant effects on the policies of St. Albans City and District Council.

DRAFT POLICY:

Policy S3 - Metropolitan Green Belt

- 5.15
- The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of the Green Belt are its openness and permanence. The proposed development site is on Previously Developed Land which can be considered to be a Brownfield site due to its current industrial use. The replacement of the industrial character to a residential development will provide an improvement and benefit in terms of the enhanced landscape and ecological treatments that will also be introduced into the scheme.

Policy L23 - Urban Design and Layout of New Development

- 5.16
- The proposals for the new development are well designed to an appropriate and human scale and respond positively to its environmental context and is efficient in use of land.

Policy L24 - Development Amenity Standards

- 5.17 The proposed development will achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of both the new development and neighbouring buildings. The design has given high regard to privacy, outlook, aspect, sunlight / daylight and landscape quality.

Policy L29 - Green and Blue Infrastructure, Countryside, Landscape and Trees

- 5.18 The proposed development provides opportunity to enhance the existing green infrastructure as well as introducing trees and landscape into an area that is currently bereft of any valuable vegetation.

ADOPTED POLICY:

POLICY 1 - Metropolitan Green Belt

- 5.19 The proposed development site is on Previously Developed Land which can be considered to be a Brownfield site due to its current industrial use. The replacement of the industrial character to a residential development will provide an improvement and benefit in terms of the enhanced landscape and ecological treatments that will also be introduced into the scheme.

POLICY 69 - General Design and Layout

- 5.20 The proposed development has considered the appropriate materials and settlement pattern which has resulted in a scheme that is policy compliant.

POLICY 70 - Design and Layout of New Housing

- 5.21 The massing and siting of the proposed development has been designed to provide safe and attractive spaces at a human scale.

POLICY 74 - Landscaping and Tree Preservation

- 5.22 The proposed development will retain the majority of the existing perimeter trees and hedges and furthermore will enhance these with supplementary planting to the boundary and within the site.

POLICY 75 - Green Space within Settlements

- 5.23 The proposals will introduce a number of linked green spaces within the development as well as links to the surrounding countryside.

Table 9 - Visual Impact Assessment

| Receptor description | Sensitivity | Post construction | | Embedded mitigation | Residual | |
|---|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|--|------------|------------------|
| | | Magnitude | Significance | | Magnitude | Significance |
| Footpath 11 | High | Small | Moderate neutral | Garden planting will mature in time as well as existing boundary vegetation. | Very Small | Minor neutral |
| Footpath 22 | High | Small | Moderate neutral | Garden planting will mature in time as well as existing boundary vegetation. | Very Small | Minor neutral |
| Footpath 39 | High | Very Small | Minor Neutral | Garden planting will mature in time as well as existing boundary vegetation. | Very Small | Minor neutral |
| Bridleway 2 and Footpath 19 | High | Small | Moderate adverse | New hedgerows and planting will be installed to the re-aligned access junction and within front gardens. | Very Small | Minor Neutral |
| National Cycle Network 61 / The Alban Way | Very High | None | None | Not applicable | None | None |
| Medium and Long Range PRoW's | Medium | None | None | Not applicable | None | None |
| Residential Amenity | High | Small | Moderate beneficial | New hedgerows and planting will be installed to the re-aligned access junction and within front gardens. | Very Small | Minor beneficial |
| Transport Routes - Smallford Lane / Watling Chase Trail | Medium | Medium | Moderate adverse | New hedgerows and planting will be installed to the re-aligned access junction and within front gardens. | Small | Minor neutral |
| Colney Heath Lane / St Albans Way | Medium | None | None | Not applicable | None | None |

Visual impact assessment

PRoW Footpath 11

- 5.24 Viewpoints 01 - 05 represent users of the footpath 11 which travels from the Alban Way to the north and terminates just west of the site boundary. The path travels across open land which is grazed by ponies and other livestock and is populated by clumps of scrub and small blocks of native woodland. There are a few lakes present in the open recreation area. Views looking out to the east can be achieved with glimpses of the University of Hertfordshire and the masts of Brookman Transmitting Centre. The sensitivity of the view is considered to be **High** due to the likely value that is attached to the quality of views for the local community.

- 5.25 The proposed development intends to retain the western

boundary vegetation in its entirety but the upper portions and rooftops of some of the housing may be visible above the trees in places, especially in winter. The magnitude of change is deemed to be **small** as some existing buildings are visible from this public footpath.

- 5.26 The overall significance of effects is **moderate** and neutral.
- 5.27 The residual effects will **minor** neutral as the full effects of the garden planting has matured alongside further growth of the boundary planting.

PRoW Footpath 22

- 5.28 Public footpath 22 travels from Smallford Lane in a southwesterly direction linking to Colney Heath Lane. Viewpoint 09 demonstrates that users will experience a similar

quality of view and open space as described for footpath 11 and therefore the sensitivity is deemed to be **high**.

5.29 The magnitude of change from this footpath will be mostly **small** with the existing buildings being removed and replaced by housing. The upper storeys and roof lines of the latter are likely to be visible from certain locations. This may be increased in winter after leaf fall.

5.30 The overall significance of effects is **moderate** and neutral.

5.31 The residual effects will **minor** neutral as the full effects of the garden planting has matured alongside further growth of the boundary planting.

PRoW Footpath 39

5.32 This footpath is represented by Viewpoints 06 and 07 and links Colney Heath Lane, adjacent to Smallford Farm, to footpath 11. The quality of views provides the users with a sense of openness and rural tranquility as with footpaths 11 and 22 and therefore the sensitivity of the receptor is deemed to be **high**.

5.33 Only an occasional rooftop of the existing sheds on the site is visible from certain locations on this footpath and therefore the magnitude of change will be very small.

5.34 The overall significance of effects is **minor** and neutral.

5.35 The residual effects will also be **minor** neutral as the full effects of the garden planting has matured alongside further growth of the boundary planting.

PRoW Bridleway 2 and Footpath 19

5.36 Viewpoints 12 - 14 represent these two receptors and demonstrate the quality of views that can be achieved by the users. The footpaths travel across open rural agricultural land which is visually contained by mature hedgerows and trees. The sensitivity of the receptor is deemed to be **high** and this is especially true for equestrians who will achieve elevated views of the development.

5.37 The proposed site is currently well screened by the existing vegetation on Smallford Lane however, occasional glimpses of the containers on the site can be experienced and this may be increased after the removal of a section of vegetation to allow for the access. However, the magnitude of change is likely to be **small** as the remaining characteristics within

the view will remain unchanged.

5.38 The overall significance of effects will be **moderate** adverse.

5.39 The residual effects will be **minor** neutral on account of the new hedgerows and planting maturing for the re-aligned access junction and within front gardens ensuring an integration into the street scene and overall landscape.

Medium and Long Range Visual Receptors from PRoW

5.40 The footpath network further afield has been considered as part of the assessment and these are represented by viewpoint 18. The footpaths have been tested through field survey and generally, little to no views of the development are achievable and therefore it will have no significant effects on these receptors.

National Cycle Route NCN 61/The Alban Way

5.41 NCN 61 runs to the north of the site. This is demonstrated in viewpoint 16. This is also the route of the Alban Way (Not to be confused with St. Albans Way which travels along Colney Heath Lane to the south west of the site). The former railway line is heavily vegetated on both sides of the corridor and this effectively screens the proposed development from this receptor.

5.42 Viewpoint 16 is taken at a localised point on the trail where there is a gap in the vegetation but even here it is evident that the site is not visible due the roadside vegetation of Smallford Lane and the rising topography of the landscape. Therefore, there are no effects on this receptor.

Transport Routes

Smallford Lane / Watling Chase Trail

5.43 Smallford Lane is an A road that runs along the eastern boundary of the site linking the village of Smallford to the A414 to the south and the A1057 (Hatfield Road) to the north. It is well vegetated on both sides as demonstrated in Viewpoints 10 and 11 and the majority of the site is screened from view. Roads are usually considered as low sensitivity receptors but we have deemed this road to be **medium** sensitivity due to the Watling Chase Timberland Trail.

5.44 Part of the vegetation on the eastern boundary will be removed to provide a safe access and egress route into the development, however, this will be replaced and re-aligned as part of the landscape strategy and mitigation scheme for the proposals as a previously consented scheme. The magnitude

of change is likely to be **medium**.

5.45 The overall significance of effects will be **moderate** adverse.

5.46 The residual effects will be **minor** neutral on account of the new hedgerows and planting maturing for the re-aligned access junction and within front gardens ensuring an integration into the street scene and overall landscape.

Colney Heath Lane / Barley Mow Lane (St Albans Way)

5.47 The St Albans Way travels along Barley Mow Lane and connects to Colney Heath Lane at its junction and then travels south east crossing the A414 on the footbridge represented by Viewpoint 17. This viewpoint along with Viewpoint 08 demonstrates the roadside vegetation is very dense and mature alongside these transport corridors and views of the site are non-existent. Therefore, there are no effects on these receptors resulting from the introduction of the development.

Residential Amenity in vicinity of Smallford Lane

5.48 There are no immediate dwellings in the vicinity of the proposed development apart from a small row of four bungalows on the opposite side of the existing access on Smallford Lane and a row of houses south of Sleapshyde Lane. The sensitivity of the residential amenity is considered to be **high** to account for principal rooms facing the proposed development.

5.49 The magnitude of change is likely to be **small** as the larger changes occur further north at the new access point. The existing entrance opposite the bungalows will become a landscaped pedestrian link only and therefore should offer an improvement in visual quality as shown in Viewpoint 10.

5.50 The overall significance of effects is likely to be **moderate** beneficial leading to **minor** beneficial residual effects as the new planting at the existing access matures and integrates the scheme into the streetscene on Smallford Lane.

6. EMBEDDED MITIGATION

- 6.1 The permanent proposals have given rise to some moderate adverse visual effects at the Post Construction stage. These are at the lower end of the threshold of significance and can be reduced and offset with appropriate mitigation measures as described in the assessment in Section 5

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application site is located at Smallford Works, Smallford Lane, St Albans, Herts. The site is not within any environmental or landscape designation or a Conservation Area. The application site broadly consists of an industrial works complex which is comprised of road infrastructure, temporary and permanent buildings with service yards and storage areas on hardstanding.
- 7.2 Outline Planning permission is sought for 100 two storey new homes offering a range of different types of accommodation from 1 bed apartments through to 4 bedroom detached house with 40% of the housing proposed being affordable housing.
- 7.3 The development will sit within an existing robust landscape framework and the majority of boundary trees and vegetation will be retained apart from where it is necessary to provide access from Smallford Lane.
- 7.4 The findings of the landscape and visual impact assessment concludes that there will be no long term significant adverse effects arising as a result of the proposed residential development and it can be considered as being beneficial due to the landscape enhancements that will be brought into an industrial site which, apart from its retained boundaries, is currently bereft of any vegetation or ecological diversity.

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 7.5 The landscape and visual effects of the proposed development have been assessed and it has been found that they will result in a combination of minor and moderate beneficial and adverse effects at the Post Construction stage and these are reduced to minor, slight beneficial and neutral residual effects with the maturing of the planting introduced as mitigation measures.
- 7.6 Therefore, the overall conclusion is that the proposed development can be accommodated within the landscape character and visual amenity and is acceptable in terms of landscape and visual impact.

Landscape Effects Summary

- 7.7 The residual landscape effects will be slight neutral to the Landscape Type: Colney Heath Farmland.
- 7.8 The post construction stage will lead to moderate beneficial effects on the site and its setting due to the introduction of the proposed compound.
- 7.9 Following 15 years growth of the introduced mitigation measures to the development the residual landscape effects on the site features and the setting of the site will be minor neutral and minor beneficial respectively.

Visual Effects Summary

- 7.10 The main receptors that will experience minor to moderate significant visual effects at the post construction stage are those in the immediate proximity of the site. Locations further afield on the public right of way network experience no effects and are considered to be below the threshold of significance.
- 7.11 Post construction, the visual effects on the residential amenity will comprise of a small magnitude of change leading to moderate significance of effects which are beneficial when viewed in close proximity to the development.
- 7.12 Following 15 years growth of the mitigation provided by additional planting around the perimeter and within the development the views towards the site will become partially screened and softened. The short-range views will undergo a very small magnitude of change leading to minor neutral residual effects.
- 7.13 Therefore there are no significant visual effects on the nearby recreational, residential amenity, transport routes and other long range footpaths.

Local Policy

- 7.14 The development proposals are in accordance with SSt. Albans City and District Council's Local Plan policies regarding landscape and the Countryside. The proposed small scale development forming the planning application will not have a significant detrimental impact to the character of the landscape as the materials and planting selected have been designed to recognise and protect the local landscape and settlement within the context of the site.
- 7.15 Landscape mitigation features such as the planting around

the perimeter and within the site will enable the residential development to integrate into the character of the Colney Heath Farmland and provide visual benefits to the visual amenity.

8. REFERENCES

- 8.1 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, The Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013
- 8.2 Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002.
- 8.3 Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland: Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity. Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2004.
- 8.4 Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/04 as Amended (August 2008): Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment. The Landscape Institute, 2008.
- 8.5 National Character Area 110. Natural England (2013).
- 8.6 East of England Landscape Framework Character Assessments
- 8.7 Landscape Character of Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire County Council 2014.

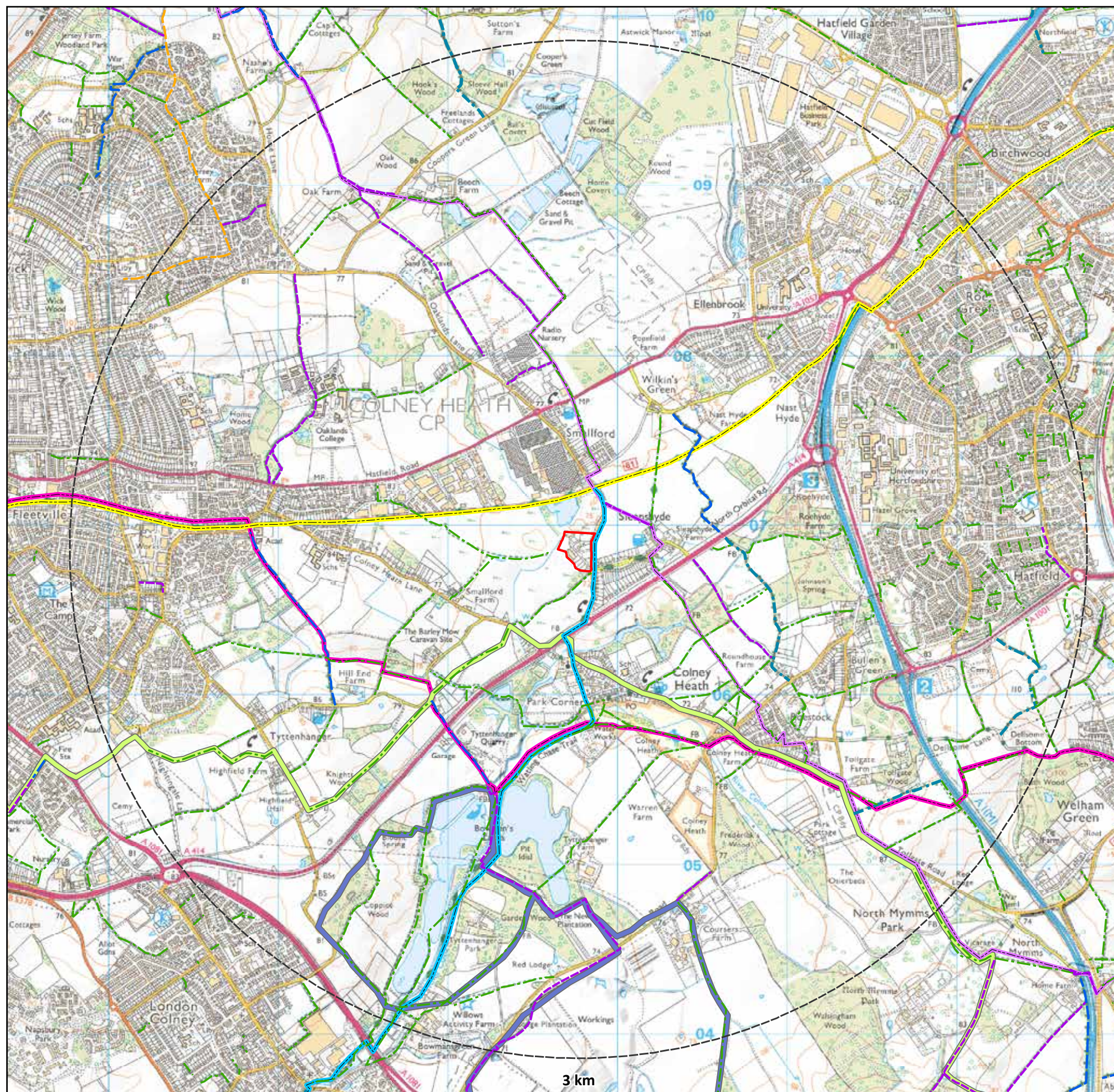
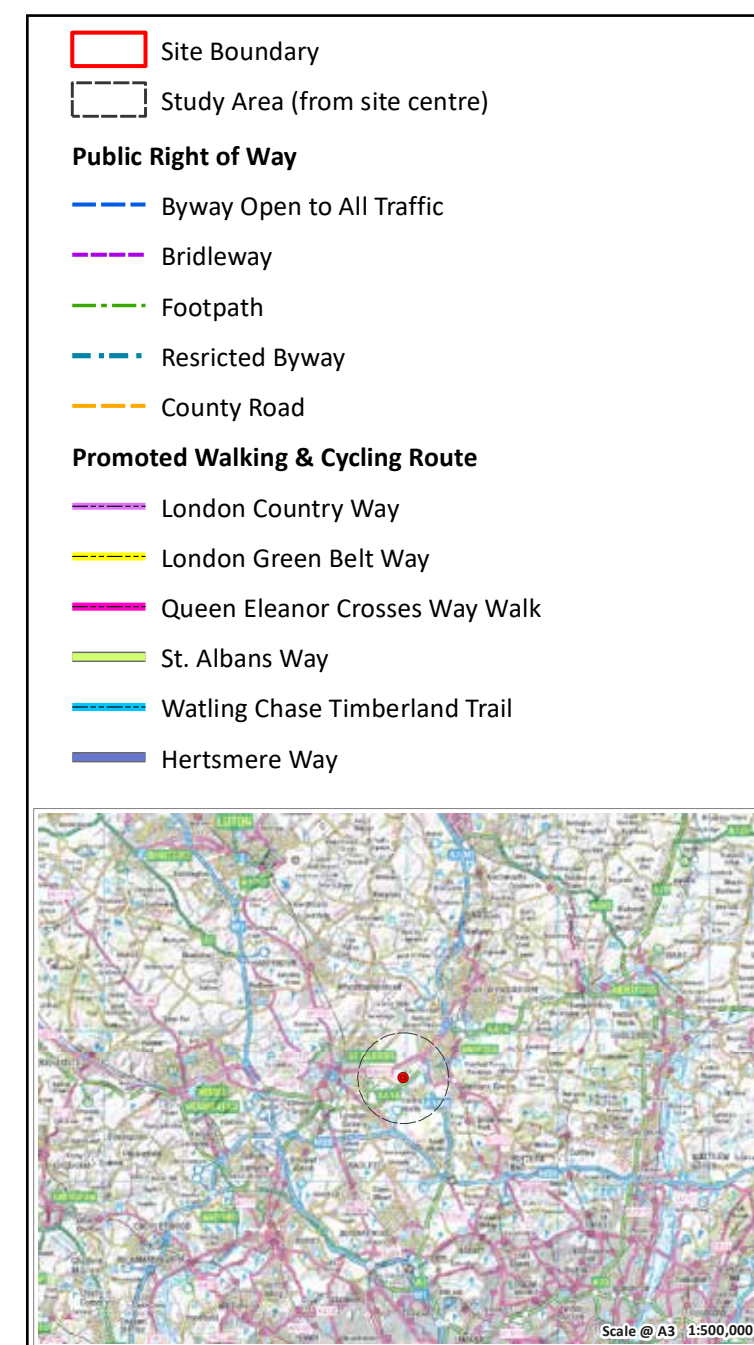


Figure 1: Access and Circulation -
Public Rights of Way and Promoted Routes
Scale 1:25,000



Scale @ A3 1:25,000
 0 0.25 0.5 1 km



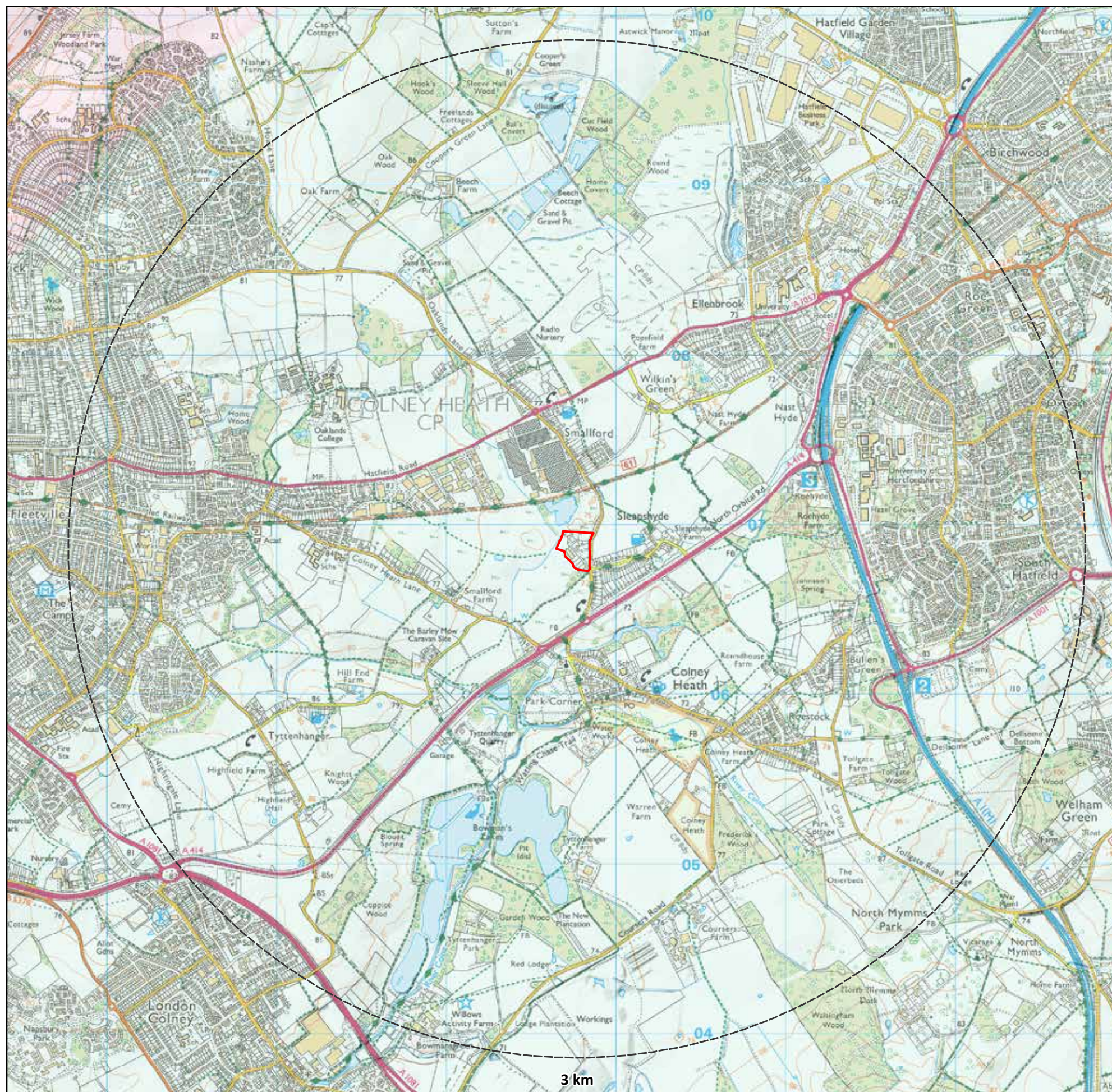


Figure 2: National Landscape Character

Scale 1:25,000

- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- National Landscape Character Type**
- Chilterns
- Northern Thames Basin



Scale @ A3 1:25,000
 0 0.25 0.5 1 km



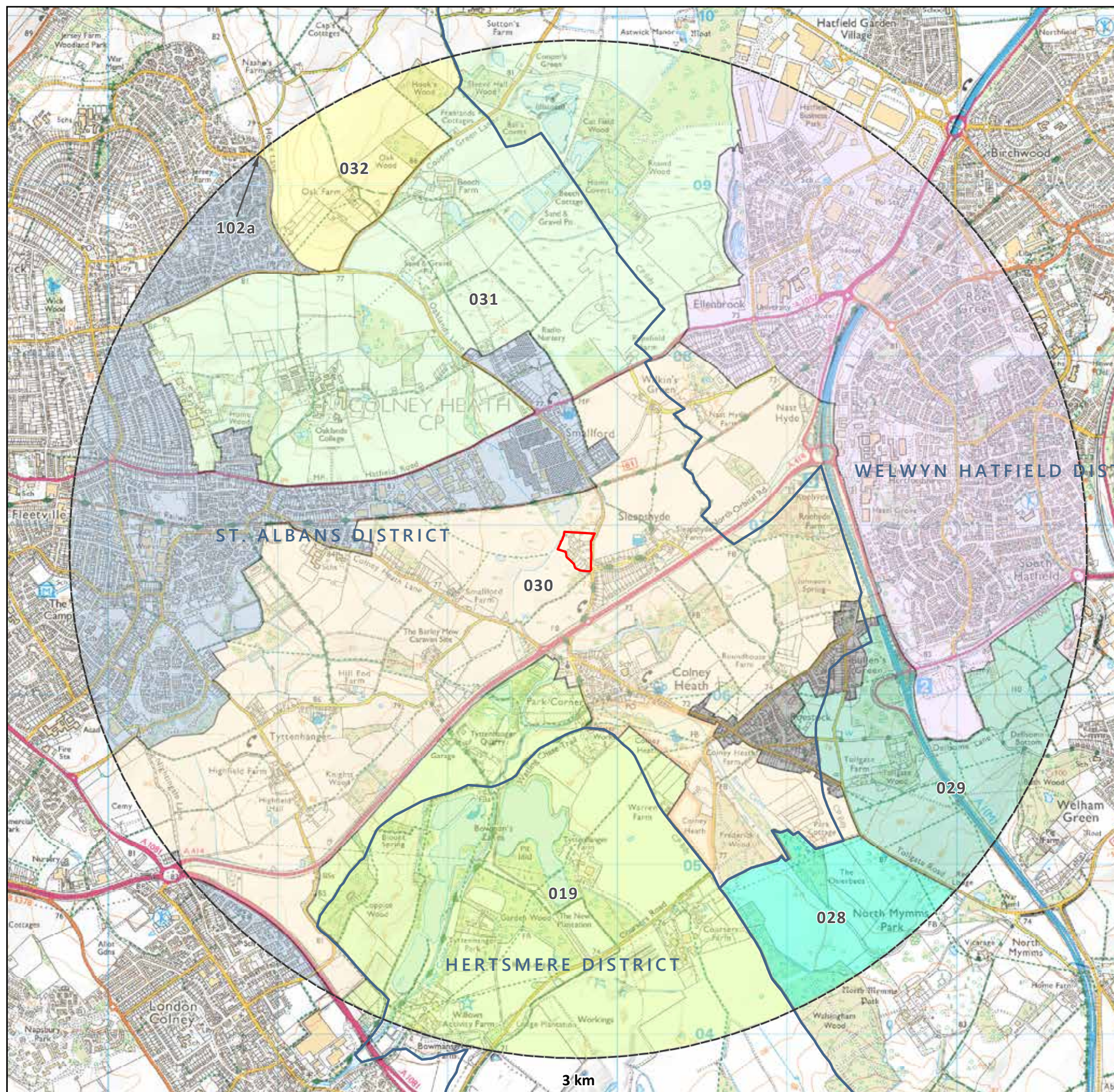
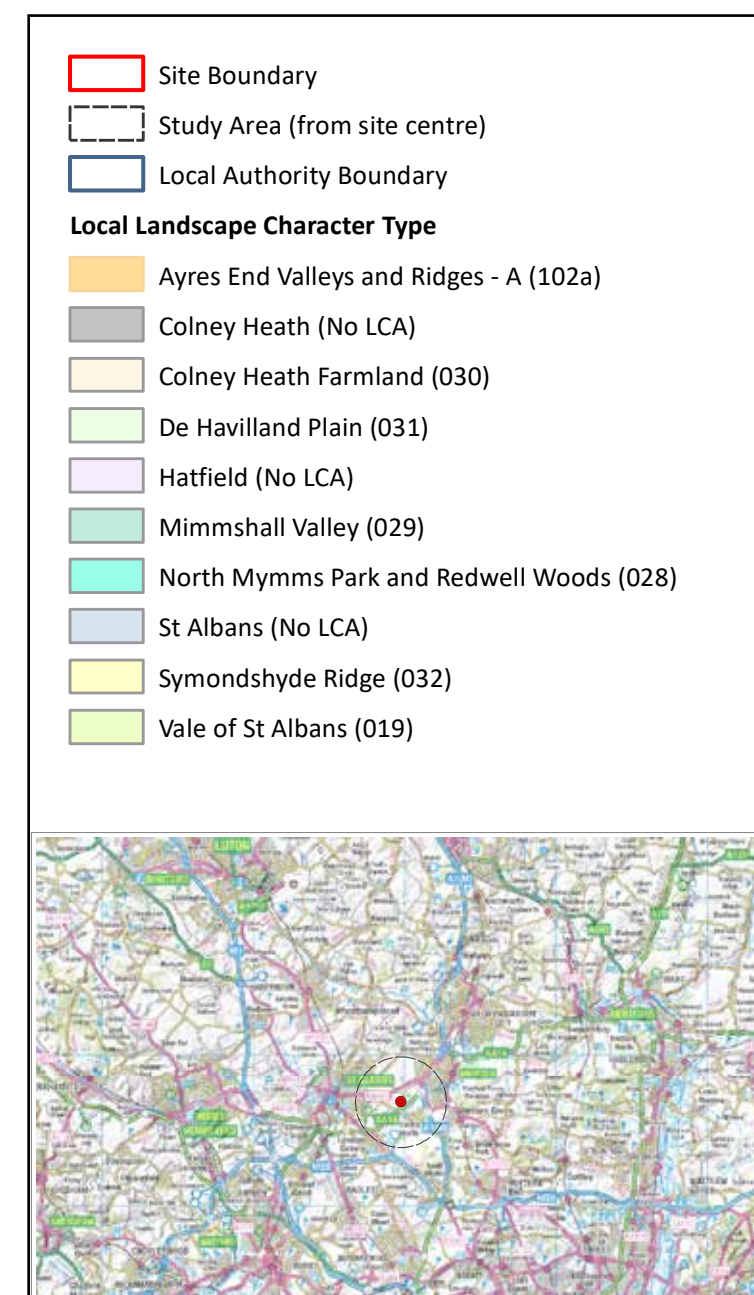


Figure 3: Local Landscape Character

Scale 1:25,000



Scale @ A3 1:25,000
0 0.25 0.5 1 km



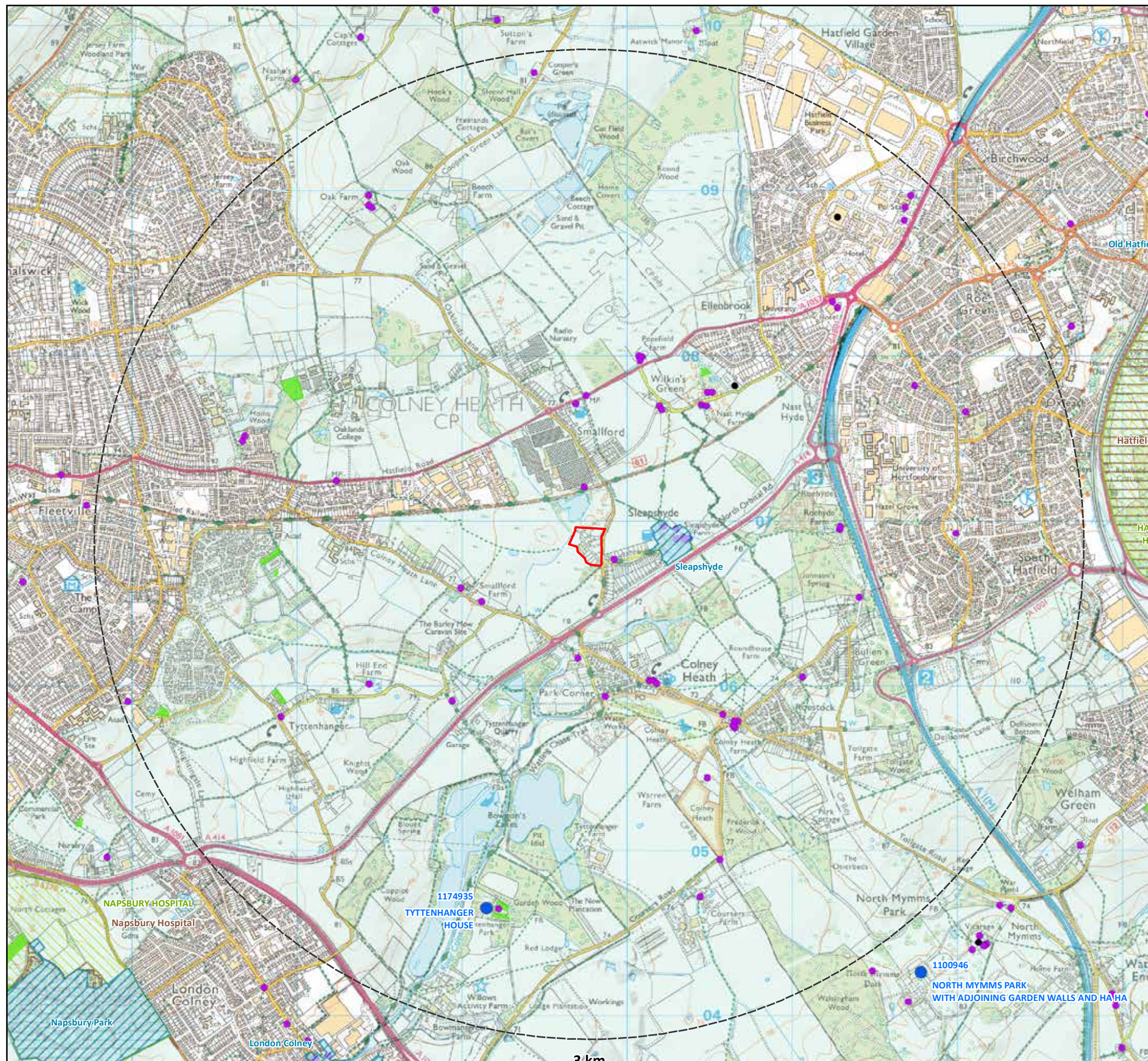
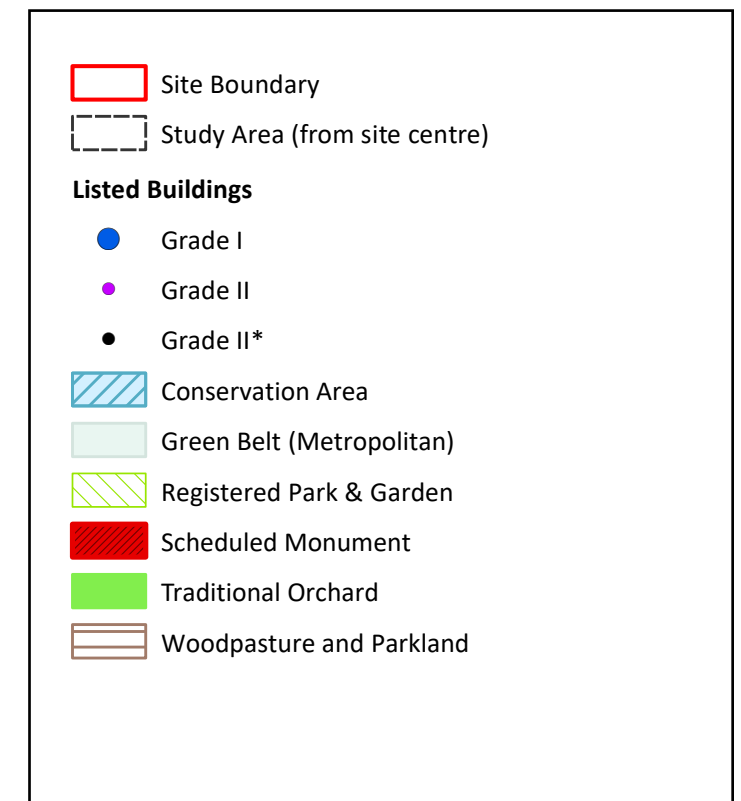


Figure 4: Landscape and Heritage Designations
Designations
Scale 1:25,000



Scale @ A3 1:25,000
 0 0.25 0.5 1 km



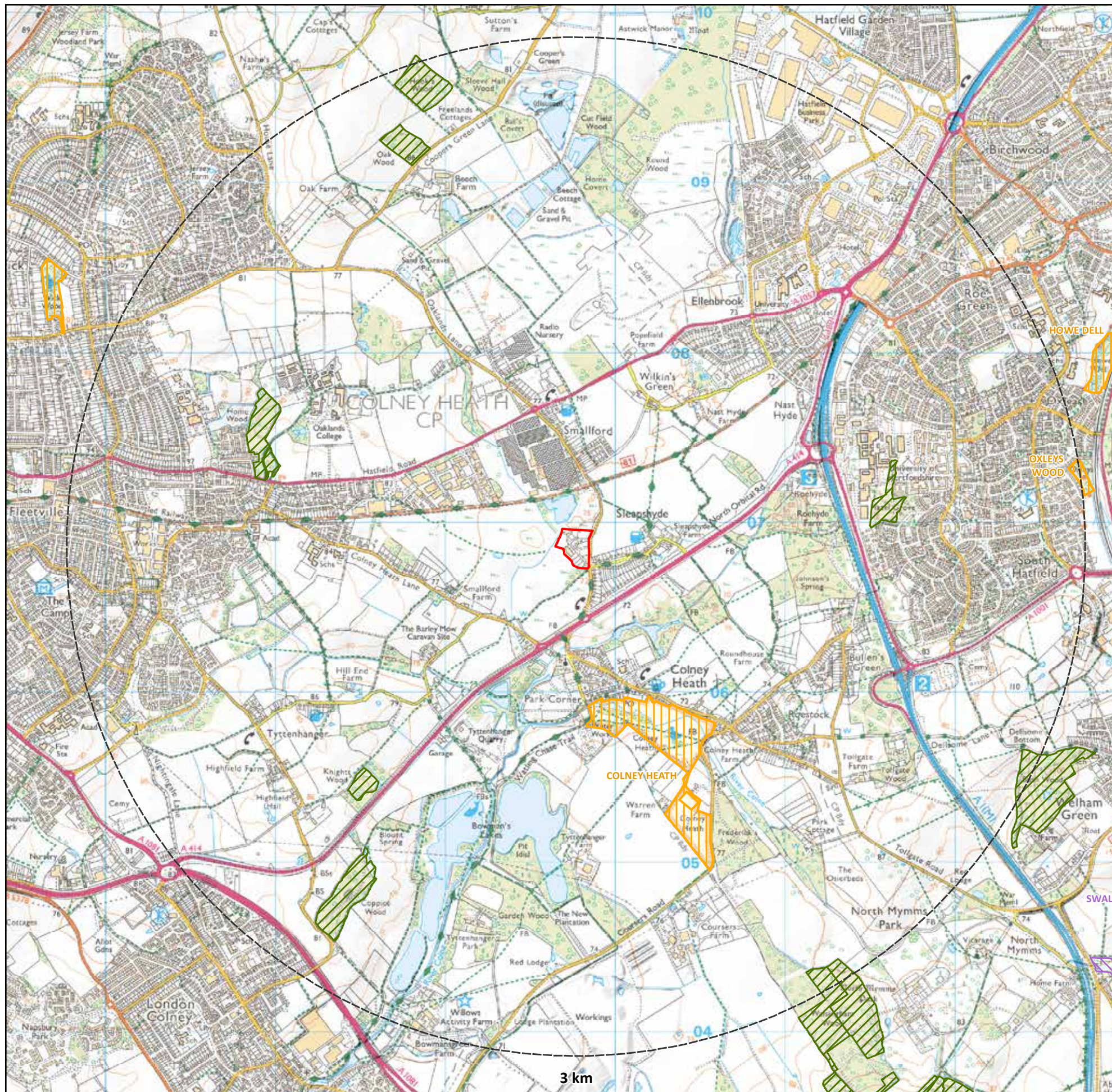


Figure 5: Environmental Designations

Scale 1:25,000

- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Ancient Woodland Inventory
- Local Nature Reserve
- Site of Special Scientific Interest



Scale @ A3 1:25,000

0 0.25 0.5 1 km



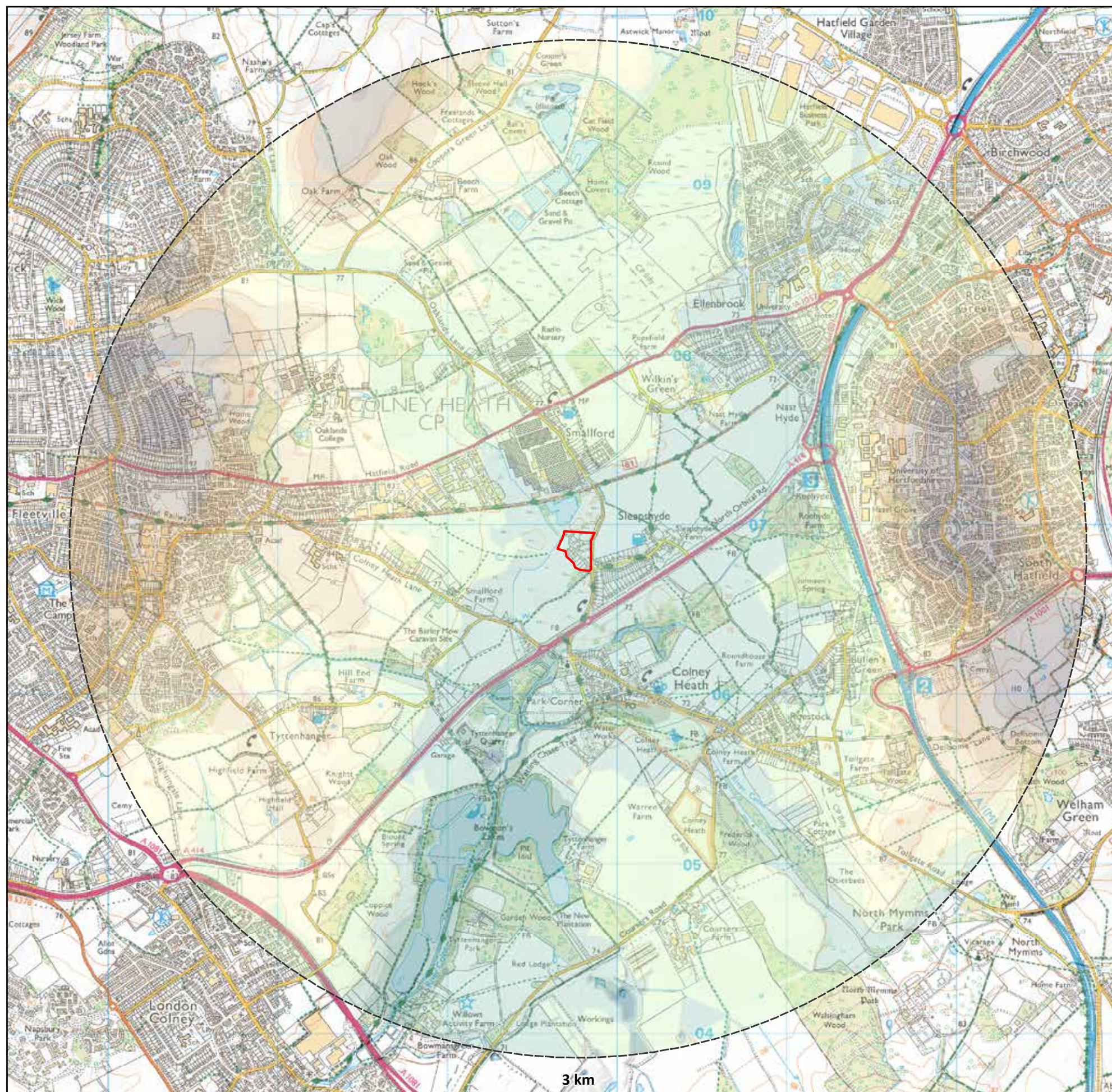


Figure 6: Topography

Scale 1:25,000

- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)

Height AOD

- 61m - 65m
- 66m - 70m
- 71m - 75m
- 76m - 80m
- 81m - 85m
- 86m - 90m
- 91m - 95m
- 96m - 100m
- 101m - 110m



Scale @ A3 1:25,000
0 0.25 0.5 1 km



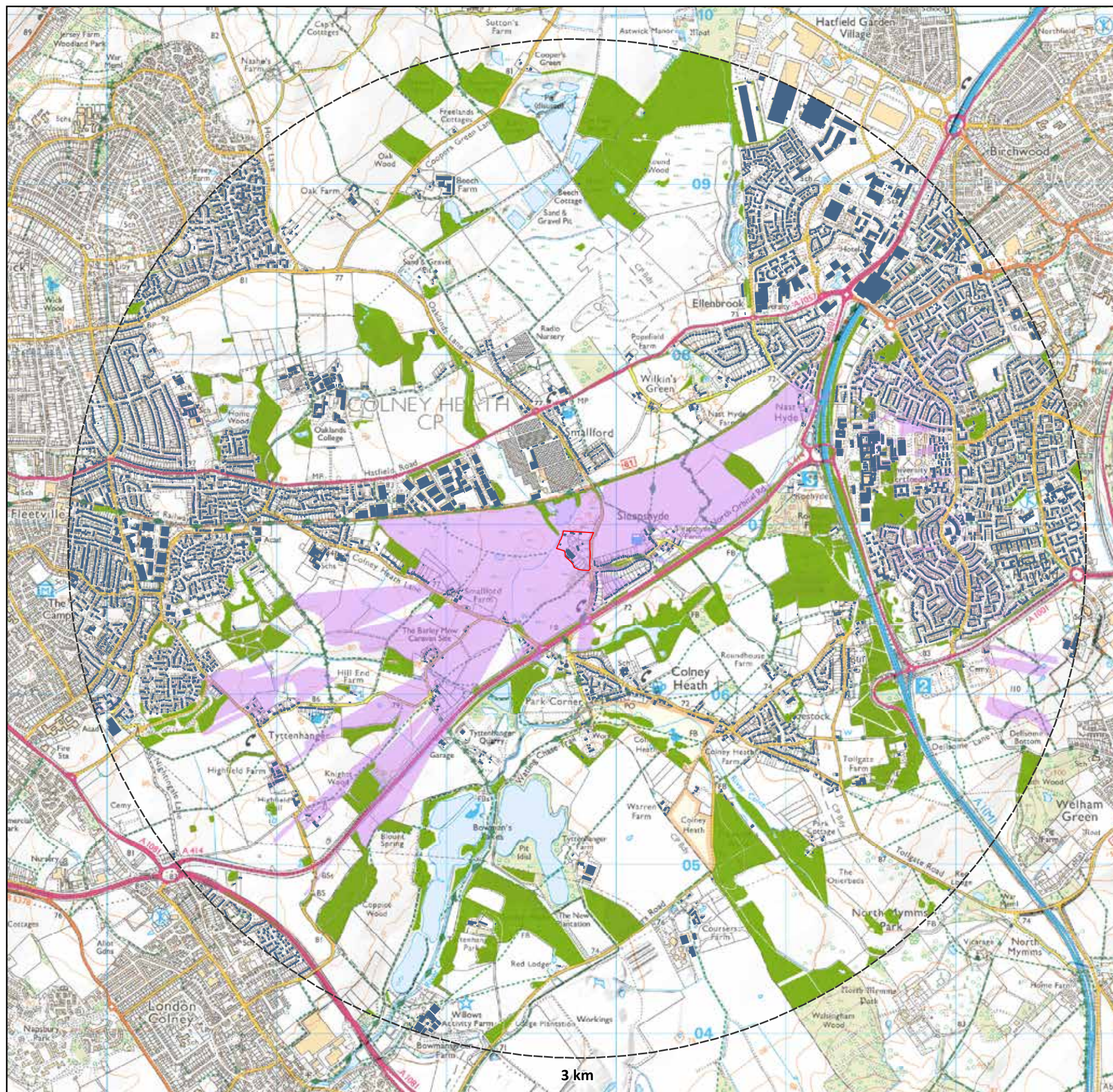
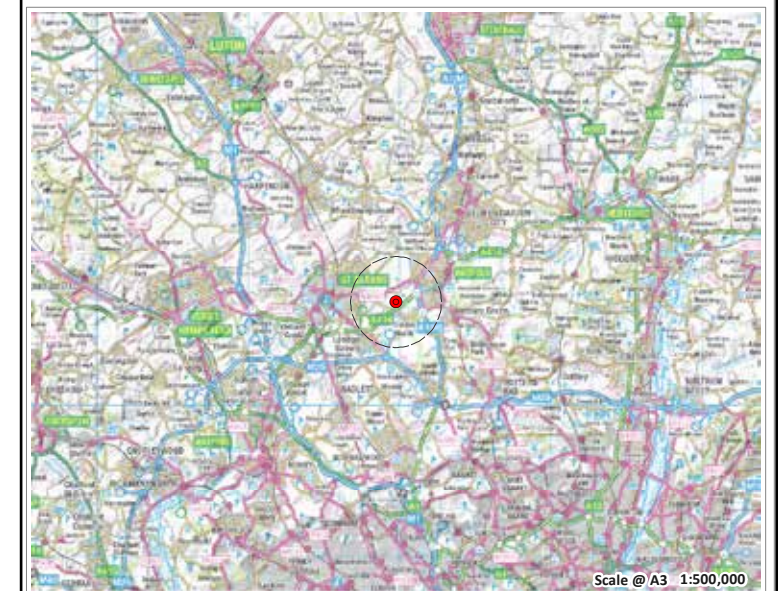


Figure 7: Zone of Theoretical Visibility 3 km Study Area with Settlements and Woodland

Scale 1:25,000

- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Building
- Woodland
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- Area where Development may be visible



The Zone of Theoretical Visibility is calculated using an Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 digital terrain model (DTM).

The development building height is 9 m from ground level, and observer height assumed to be 1.8 m. Visibility is calculated from the development boundaries.

OS Terrain 5 is a 'bare-earth' terrain dataset, and therefore does not account for the screening effect of any surrounding buildings or vegetation.

Buildings and woodland areas from the OS OpenMap Local dataset have been added to the DTM to indicate the potential screening effect of buildings and vegetation. Indicative heights used are 9m (approximately 2 storeys) for buildings and 15m for woodland.

Scale @ A3 1:25,000

0 0.25 0.5 1 km



ONSITE VIEW 01 LOOKING
NORTH EAST ON INNER ROAD



ONSITE VIEW 02
LOOKING EAST TOWARD
SMALLFORD LANE



ONSITE VIEW 03
LOOKING SOUTH



**ONSITE VIEW 04
LOOKING NORTHWEST**



**ONSITE VIEW 05
LOOKING NORTHWEST
FROM ENTRANCE**

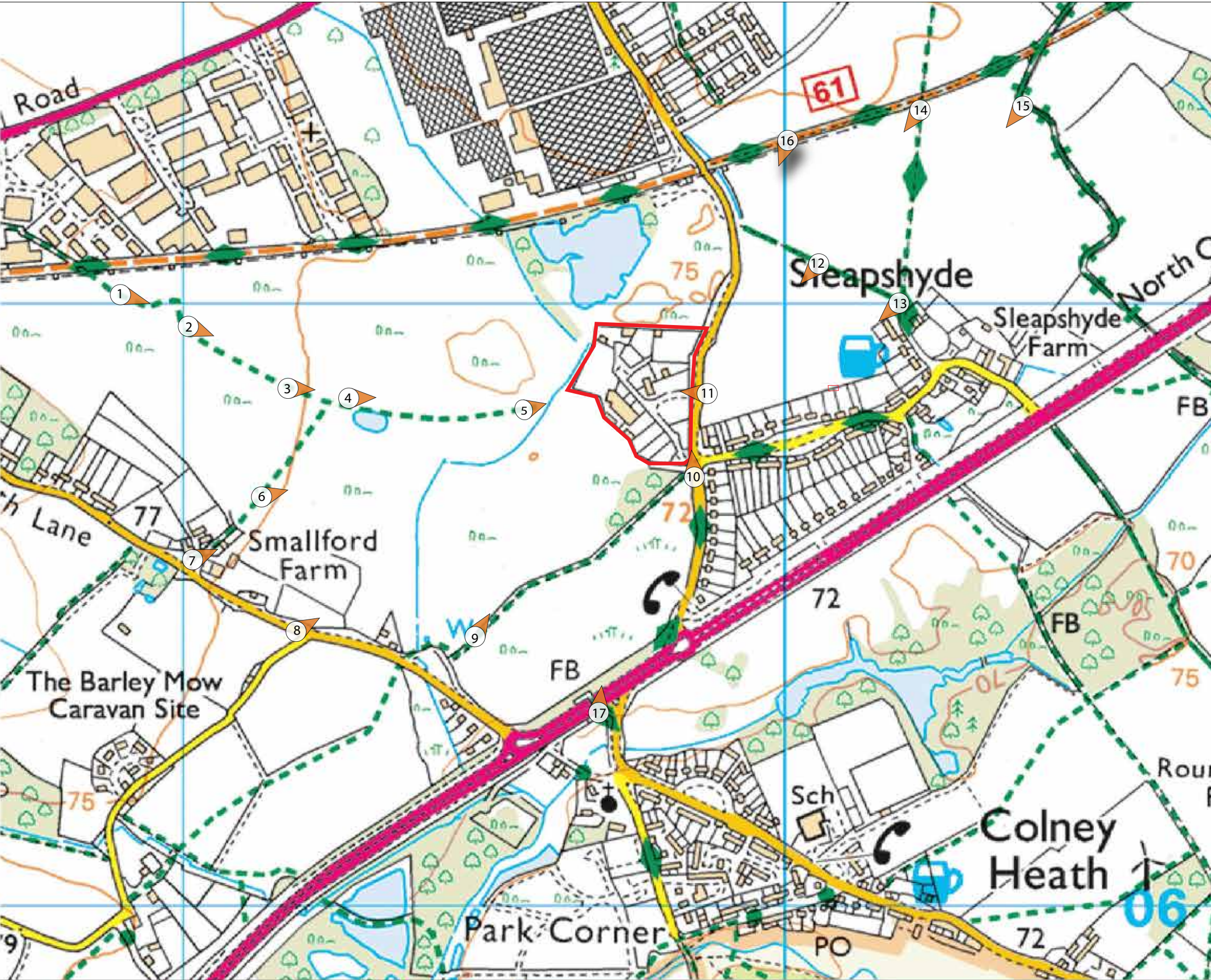


**ONSITE VIEW 06
LOOKING NORTHEAST**



Figure 9: Viewpoint location map

Not to Scale - Indicative Locations Only



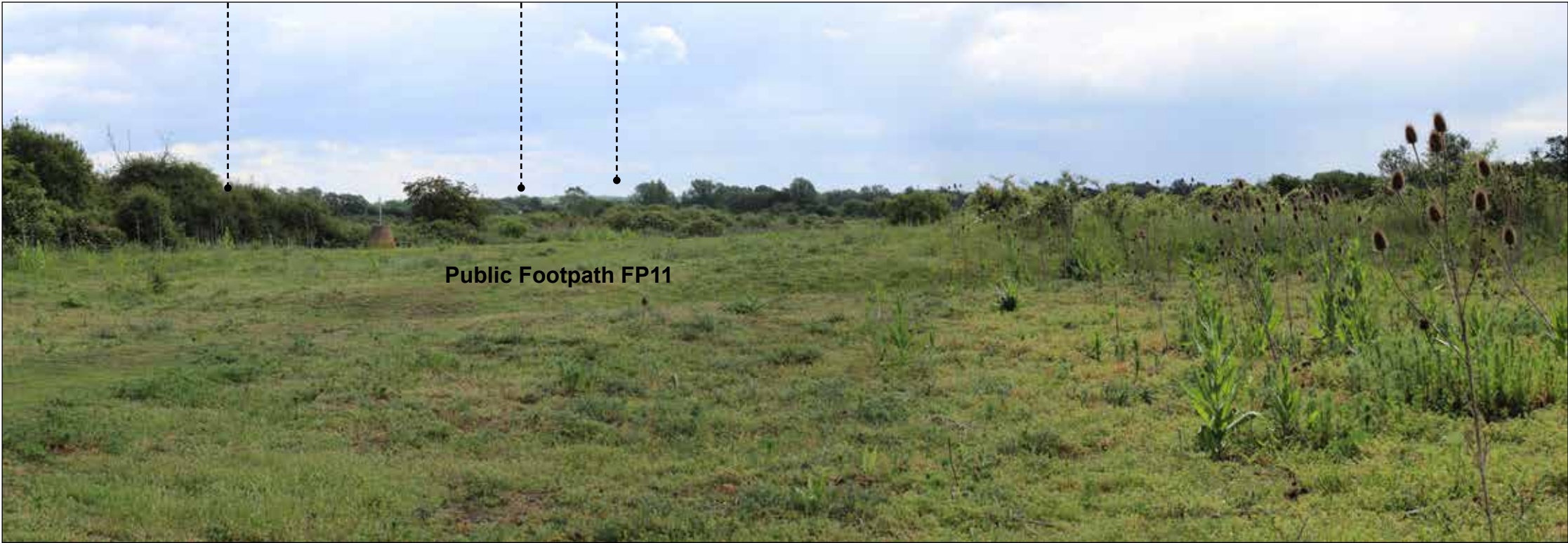
1 Viewpoint Location



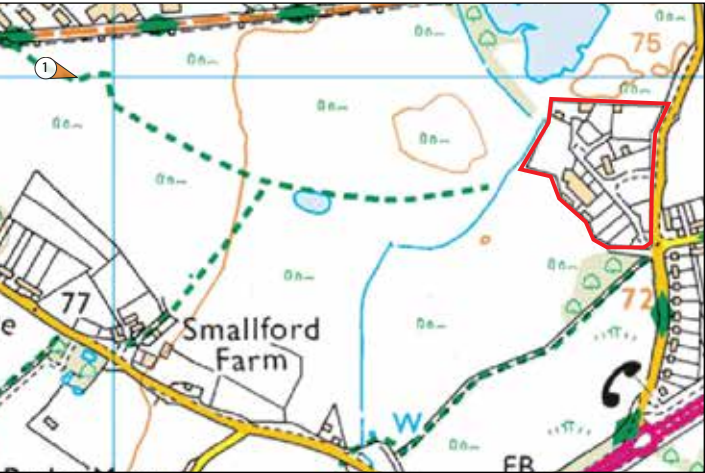
The Alban Way behind vegetation

Smallford Works

Masts - Transmitter Centre



| VIEWPOINT 01 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 11 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 18903 07010 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 77m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 760m |



Viewpoint 01

The Alban Way behind vegetation

University of Hertfordshire

Smallford Works



| VIEWPOINT 02 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 11 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19006 06960 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 76m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 650m |



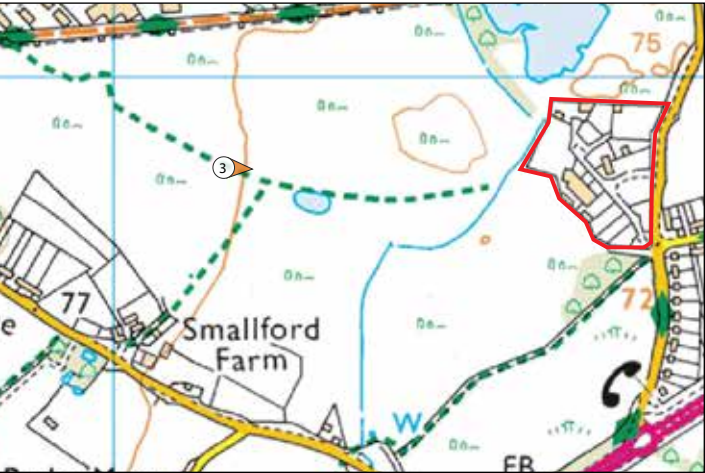
Viewpoint 02

The Alban Way behind vegetation

Smallford Works



| VIEWPOINT 03 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 11 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19159 06867 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 75.7m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 490m |



Viewpoint 03

University of Hertfordshire

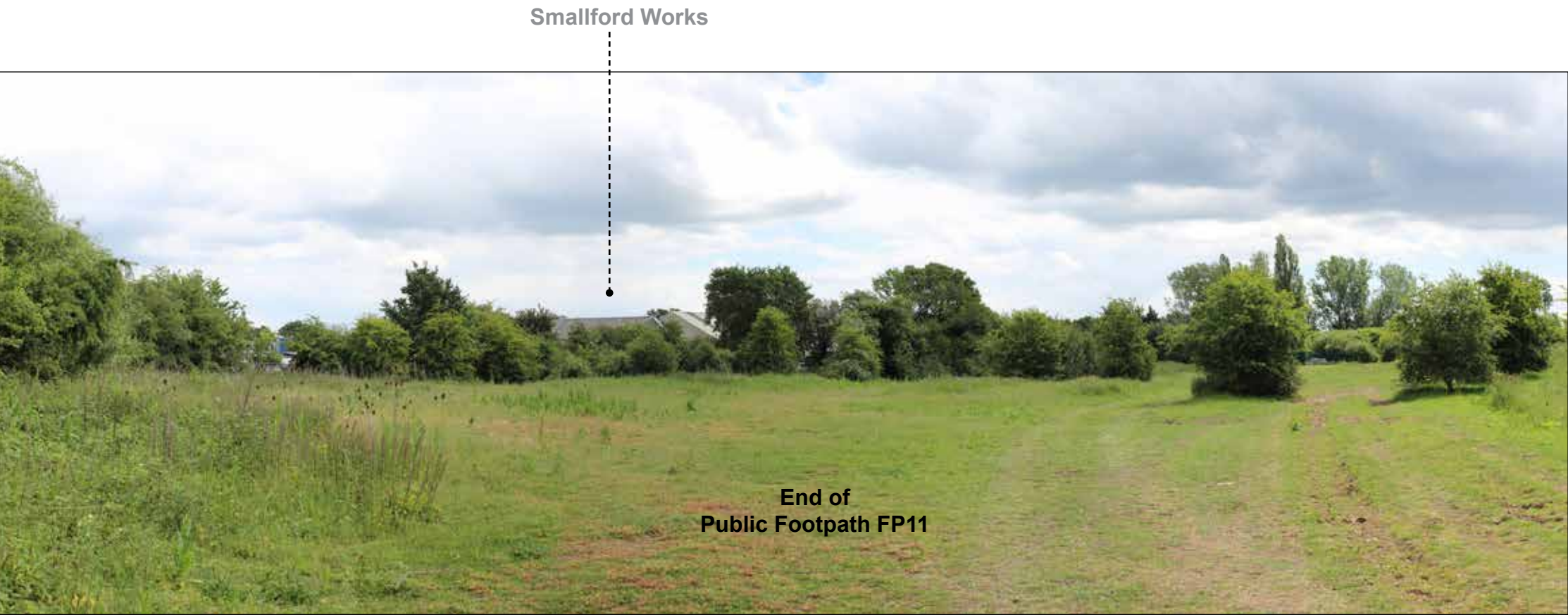
Smallford Works



| VIEWPOINT 04 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 11 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19271 06828 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 75.5m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 370m |

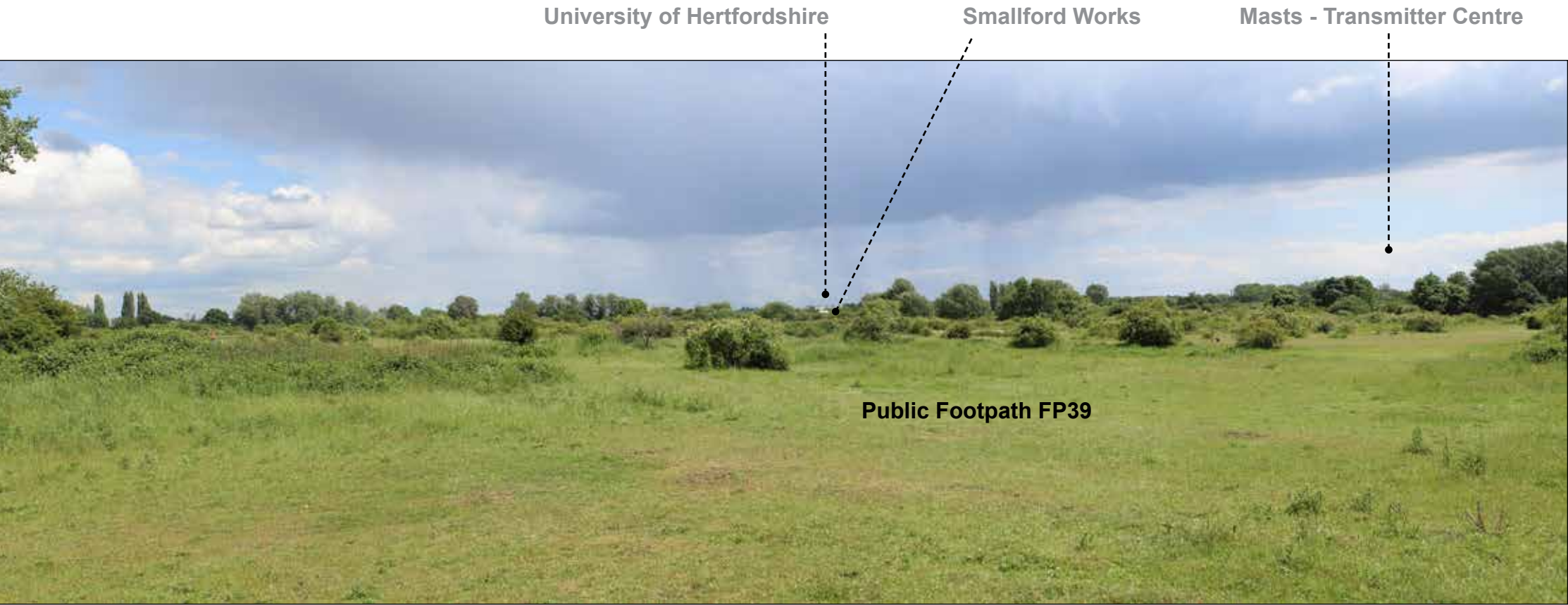
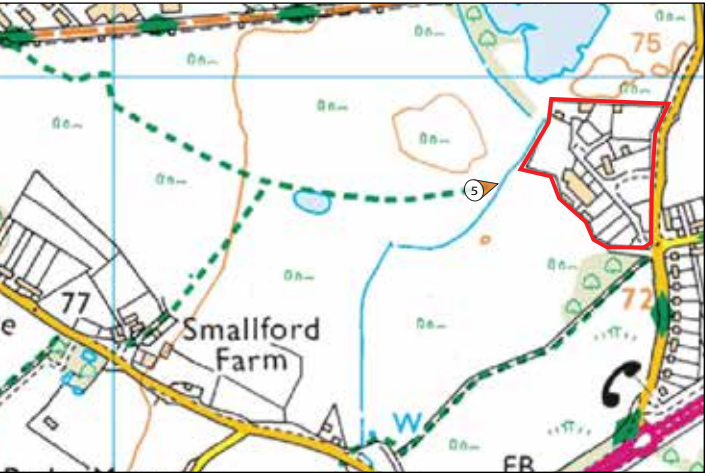


Viewpoint 04



Viewpoint 05

| VIEWPOINT 05 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 11 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19584 06823 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 74.7m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 70m |



Viewpoint 06

| VIEWPOINT 06 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 39 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19140 06692 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 75.6m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 540m |

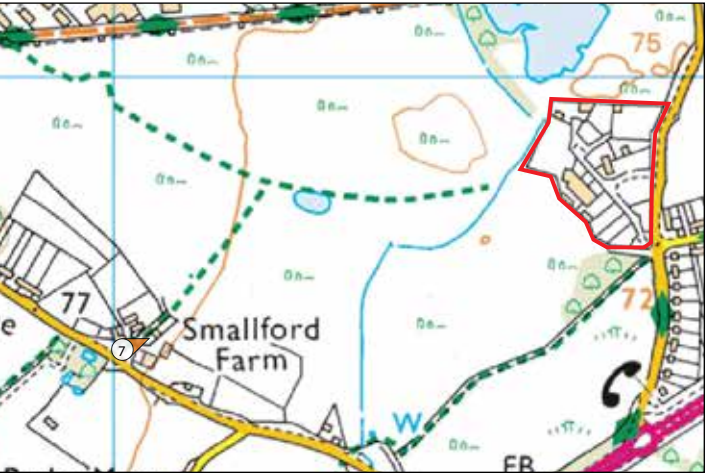


Smallford Farm



Viewpoint 07

| VIEWPOINT 07 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located at junction of Public Footpath 39 and Smallford Farm |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational/Residential |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19017 06578 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 75.5m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 690m |



Smallford Works screened by mature roadside vegetation



Viewpoint 08

| VIEWPOINT 08 | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Colney Heath Lane and Barlow Moor Lane |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Transport |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19192 06446 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 610m |

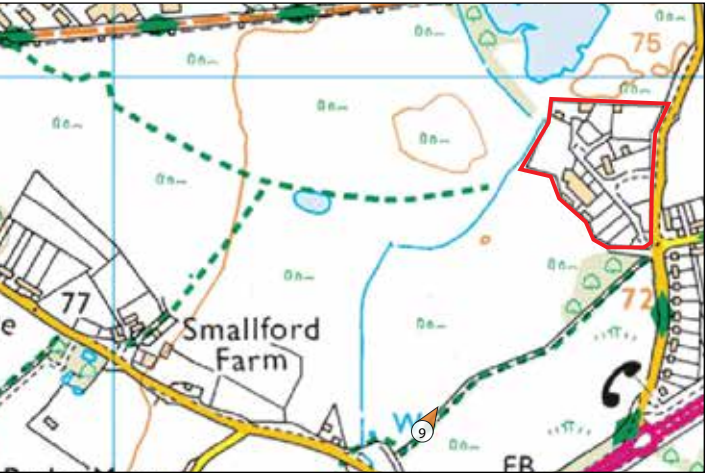


Smallford Works



Viewpoint 09

| VIEWPOINT 09 | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath 22 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19493 06453 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73.7m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 370m |



Viewpoint 10

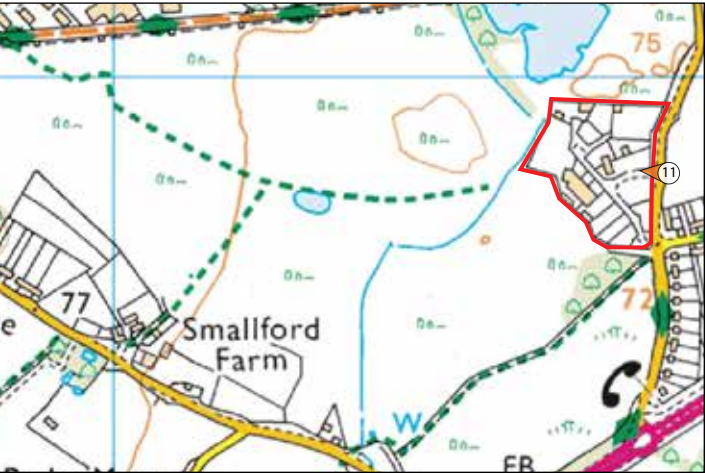
| VIEWPOINT 10 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Entrance to site and with Public Footpath 22 and Smallford Lane. |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational / Transport |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19839 06716 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 72.3mAOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 5m |



Proposed new access
point to development



| VIEWPOINT 11 | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Smallford Lane opposite proposed new access. |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Transport |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19864 06868 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 72.4m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 8m |



Viewpoint 11

Houses on Sleapshyde Lane Smallford Works Smallford Lane



| VIEWPOINT 12 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Public Footpath and Bridleway 2 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 20048 07063 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 72.7m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 220m |

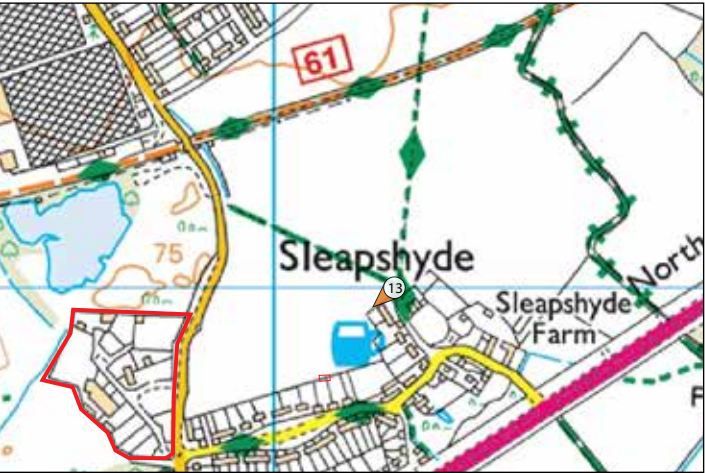


Viewpoint 12

Houses on Sleapshyde Lane



| VIEWPOINT 13 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located at junction of Public Footpaths 2 and 19 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 20194 06998 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73.8m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 350m |

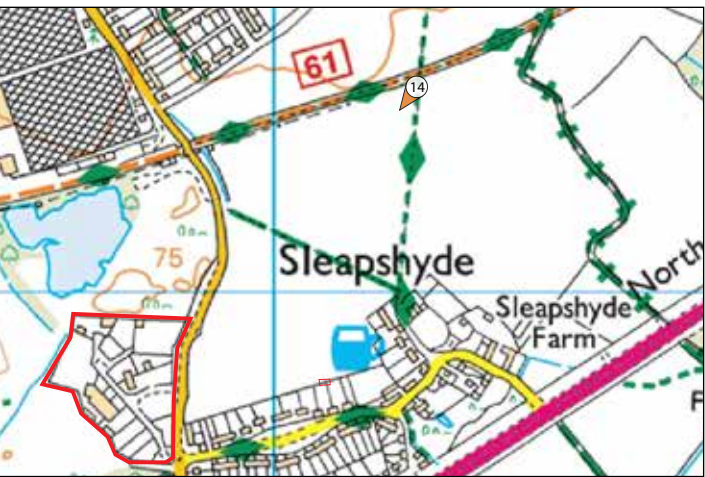


Viewpoint 13

Houses on Sleapshyde Lane



| VIEWPOINT 14 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Junction of Public Footpath 19 and National Cycle Trail 61 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 20227 07332 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73.9m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 500m |

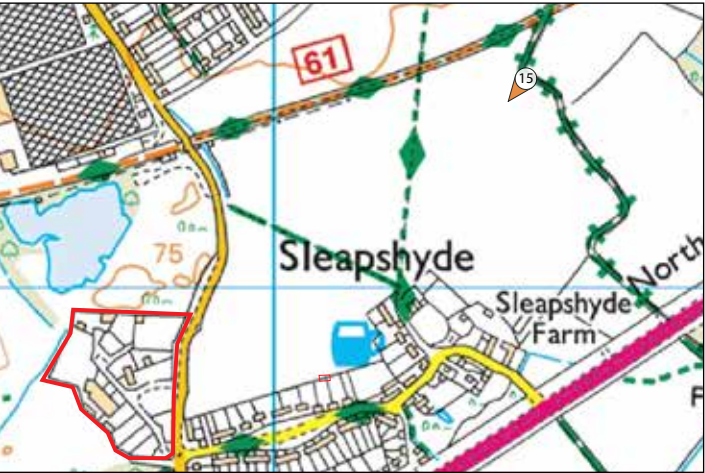


Viewpoint 14



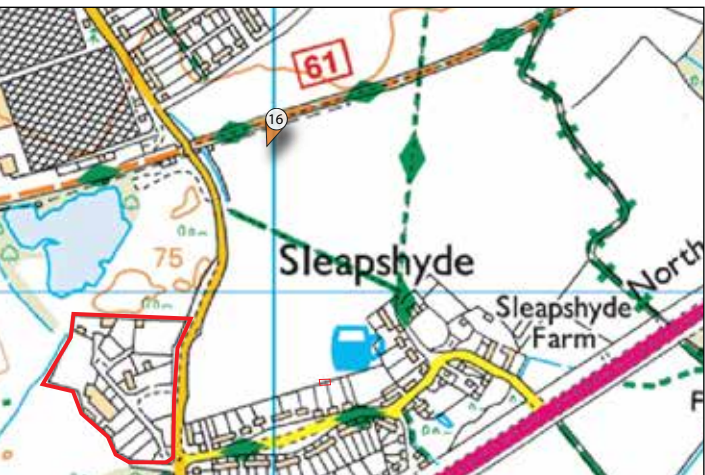
Viewpoint 15

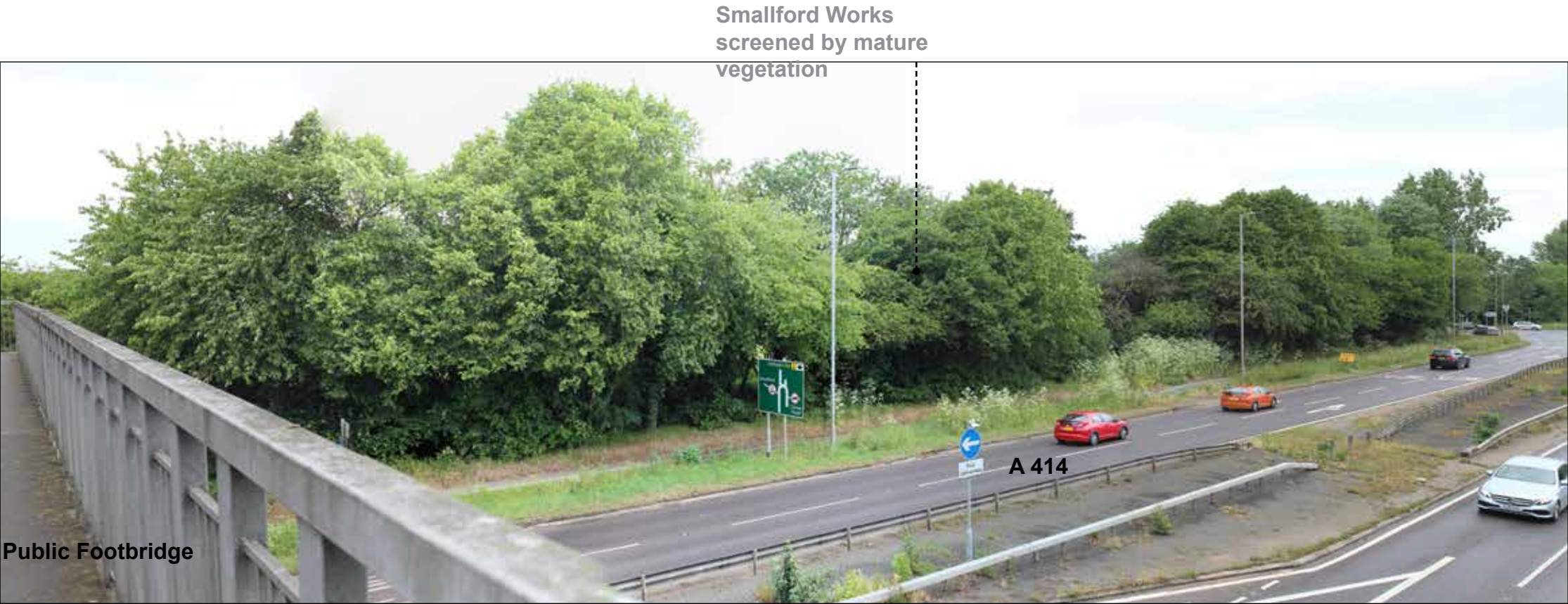
| VIEWPOINT 15 | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located at Historic Trail and Public Footpath 26 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 20392 07331 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73.7m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 620m |



Viewpoint 16

| VIEWPOINT 16 | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on National Cycle Route 61 |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 20002 07267 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 73.5 m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 340 m |

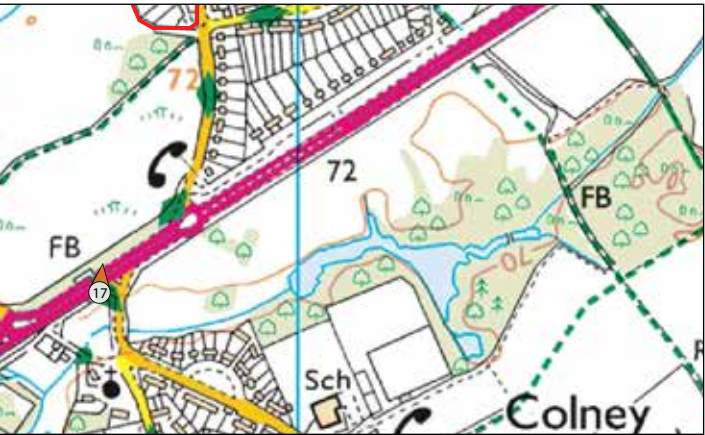




Public Footbridge

Viewpoint 17

| VIEWPOINT 17 | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on pedestrian bridge over A414 adjacent to Colney Heath Nature Reserve. |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Transport / Recreational |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 19689 06325 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 75m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 430m |



Viewpoint 18

| VIEWPOINT 18 | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| DESCRIPTION OF RECEPTOR | Located on Highfield Lane, Tyttenhanger |
| RECEPTOR TYPE | Recreational / Transport |
| LOCATION OS GRID | TL 17716 05996 |
| ELEVATION IN METRES | 85.8m AOD |
| APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FROM SITE | 2.1 kms |



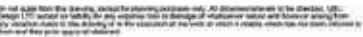
11. APPENDIX A

Architectural drawings
Landscape Layout



02-000-00 ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE

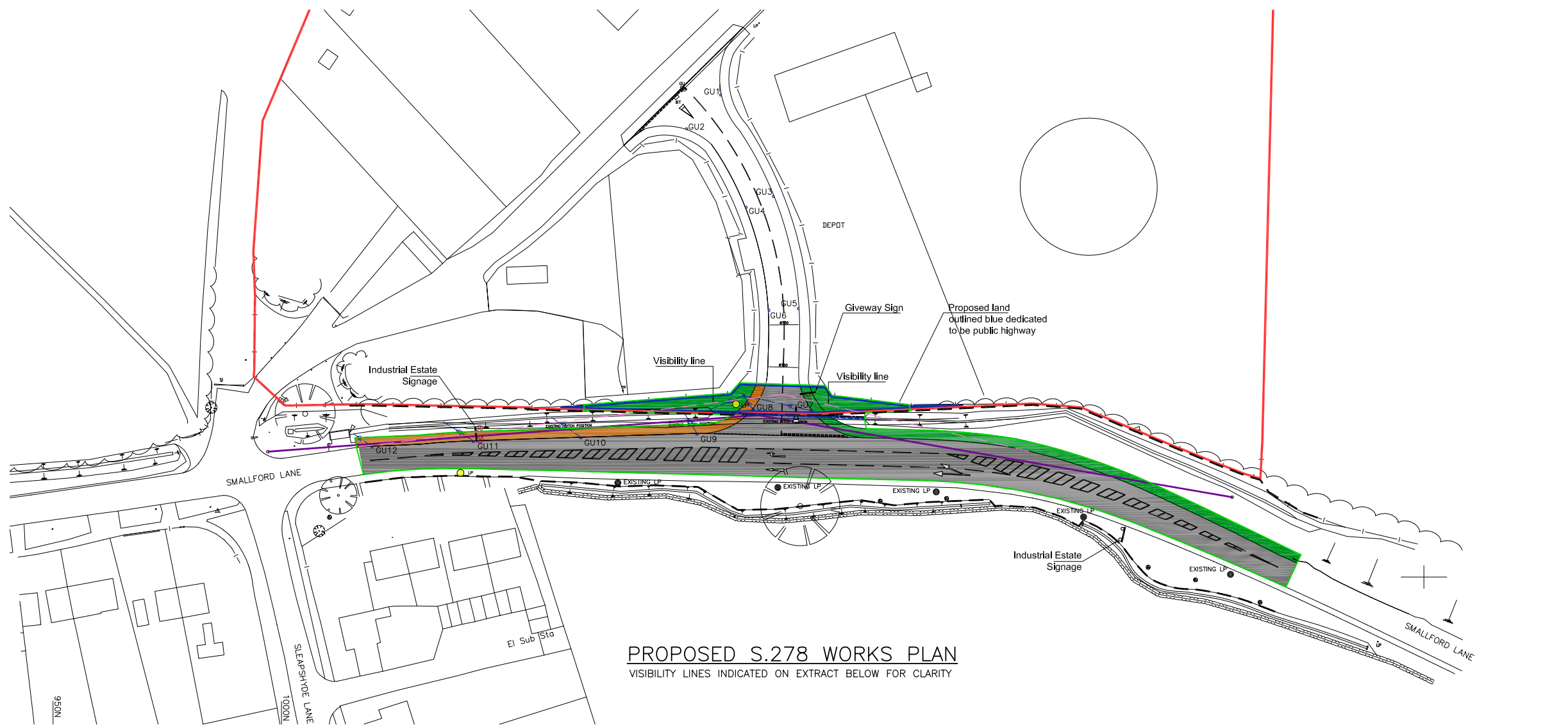
| UNIT TYPE | BUILDING TYPE | QUANTITY | AREA |
|------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Bed Unit | APARTMENT | 8 | 480 |
| | | 8 | 480 m² |
| 2 Bed Unit | SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE | 8 | 816 |
| | TERRACE HOUSE | 18 | 1,662 |
| | | 26 | 2,508 m² |
| 3 Bed Unit | DETACHED HOUSE | 16 | 2,308 |
| | END TERRACED HOUSE | 8 | 864 |
| | SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE | 20 | 2,320 |
| | TERRACED HOUSE | 12 | 1,308 |
| | | 56 | 6,700 m² |
| 4 Bed Unit | INTEGRATED GARAGE | 10 | 1,760 |
| | | 10 | 1,760 m² |
| | | 100 | 11,448 m² |



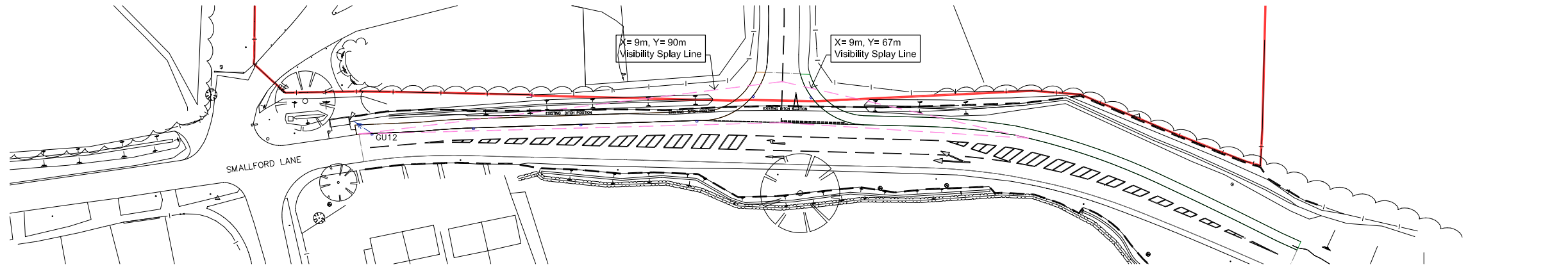
- Landscape plans should be submitted in conjunction with other technical reports such as: Watershed Park Tree Canopy Study, Ecology reports and Architectural Drawings.

ubu
design

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Business Park, Easton Lane,
Winchester, Hants, SO23 7RG
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www.ubu-design.co.uk



PROPOSED S.278 WORKS PLAN
VISIBILITY LINES INDICATED ON EXTRACT BELOW FOR CLARITY



EXTRACT SHOWING VISIBILITY LINES FOR CLARITY

- GENERAL NOTES:
1. This drawing is copyright (C).
 2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant drawings and specifications.
 3. This drawing shall not be scaled: use only figured dimensions. All dimensions are shown in millimetres and levels in metres above OS Datum.
 4. Dimensions and conditions shall be verified on site. Any discrepancies between this drawing and site conditions shall be brought to the attention of the Engineer for resolution prior to placing orders or construction.
 5. All work shall comply with the Building Regulations and the requirements of the Local Authority, current Codes of practice and British Standards.
 6. Dimensions indicated thus:- *are to be confirmed on site.
 7. Refer to drawing H7701/02 for section locations.
 8. For remainder of notes see drg. no.H7701/18

Key

- Site Boundary (Taken from H.M. Land Registry Title No. HD131971)
- Highways Extents (Taken from Hertfordshire County Council Highway and Boundaries Land Charges map, Date: 05/10/16)
- Extent of S.278 works
- Land to be dedicated
- Proposed new culvert
- Existing Storm Water Drainage
- Proposed Footway
- Proposed Verge
- Carriageway Crossover Works / Tarmac
- Proposed Road Signs
- Visibility Splay Lines

CONSTRUCTION

| | | | | |
|--|-----|---|------|-----|
| 26.03.18 | AF | DRAWING UPDATED TO COMMENTS | AF | F |
| 18.09.17 | JK | DRAWING UPDATED | MN | E |
| 13.12.16 | MN | REVISIONS SHOWN CLOUDED | NC | D |
| 18.05.11 | dif | ADOPTABLE STREET LIGHTING COLUMN CLOSEST TO SLEAPSHYDE LANE RELOCATED WITHIN FOOTPATH. HIGHWAY EXTENT MODIFIED TO SUIT. | NC | C |
| 17.05.11 | dif | NEW ADOPTABLE STREET LIGHTING COLUMNS OPPOSITE PROPOSED ENTRANCE INDICATED. HIGHWAY EXTENT MODIFIED TO SUIT. | NC | B |
| 01.02.11 | MEC | UPDATED TO REFLECT COMMENTS | GJN | A |
| DATE | BY | REVISIONS | CHKD | REV |
| COPYRIGHT THE CONTENTS OF THIS DRAWING MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE FIRM. | | | | |

MARKS HEELEY & BROTHWELL
THE STABLES
CANNONS MILL LANE
BISHOPS STORTFORD
TELEPHONE 01279 465900
FACSIMILE 01279 465999
EMAIL general@mhb.co.uk
CONSULTING STRUCTURAL AND CIVIL ENGINEERS

PROJECT
Smallford Works,
St. Albans

DRAWING DESCRIPTION
278 Agreement Plan
Site Plan

CLIENT
Stackbourne Ltd.

New hedge planting shall maintained by developers agent during which time the following operations shall be carried out:

Regular Visits
Monthly maintenance visits to include the following operations:

- Hand weed planted area
- Remove Litter
- Re-firm plant stock as necessary
- Re-mulch as necessary
- Check plant stock and report signs of pests, disease, death and damage.

Watering

Plant stock to receive 5 litres/plant on three occasions throughout growing season. Watering to be undertaken during the first 24 months.

Plant Replacements

All dead, drying and vandalised plant stock to be replaced with plants of the same species and height at the end of each growing season throughout the maintenance period.

CONSTRUCTION

| | | | | |
|----------|----|--|------|-----|
| 11.04.09 | MN | COMMENTS INCORPORATED | GN | C |
| 25.03.09 | AF | NOTE RE: SPACING OF HAWTHORNE HEDGE ADDED. MINIMUM NEW SAPLING HEIGHTS ADDED. | GN | B |
| 23.02.09 | MN | COMMENTS INCORPORATED | GN | A |
| DATE | BY | REVISIONS | CHKD | REV |

| | |
|-----------|--|
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|-----------|--|

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CONSULTING STRUCTURAL AND CIVIL ENGINEERS

| | |
|---------|--|
| PROJECT | |
|---------|--|

Smallford Works,
St. Albans

DRAWING DESCRIPTION

Proposed landscaping layout

CLIENT

Stackbourne Ltd.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------|---------|----------|--|--|--|--|-----|
| SCALE | DATE | DRAWN | CHECKED | A B C | | | | | REV |
| 1:200 ©A1 | FEB 2009 | MN | GN | H7701/20 | | | | | |

GENERAL NOTES:

1. This drawing is copyright (C).
2. This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant drawings and specifications
3. This drawing shall not be scaled; use only figured dimensions. All dimensions are shown in millimetres and levels in metres above OS Datum.
4. Dimensions and conditions shall be verified on site. Any discrepancies between this drawing and site conditions shall be brought to the attention of the Engineer for resolution prior to placing orders or construction.
5. All work shall comply with the Building Regulations and the requirements of the Local Authority, current Codes of practice and British Standards.
6. Dimensions indicated thus: - "are to be confirmed on site.
7. For remainder of notes see drg. no.H7701/18

