

# 05 LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

## SITE ANALYSIS



The diagram opposite summaries the key aspects of the site taken from the baseline assessment. This includes physical features, landscape character and visual issues, as well as statutory and local planning policy issues affecting the landscape. The key points to draw from the site analysis are:

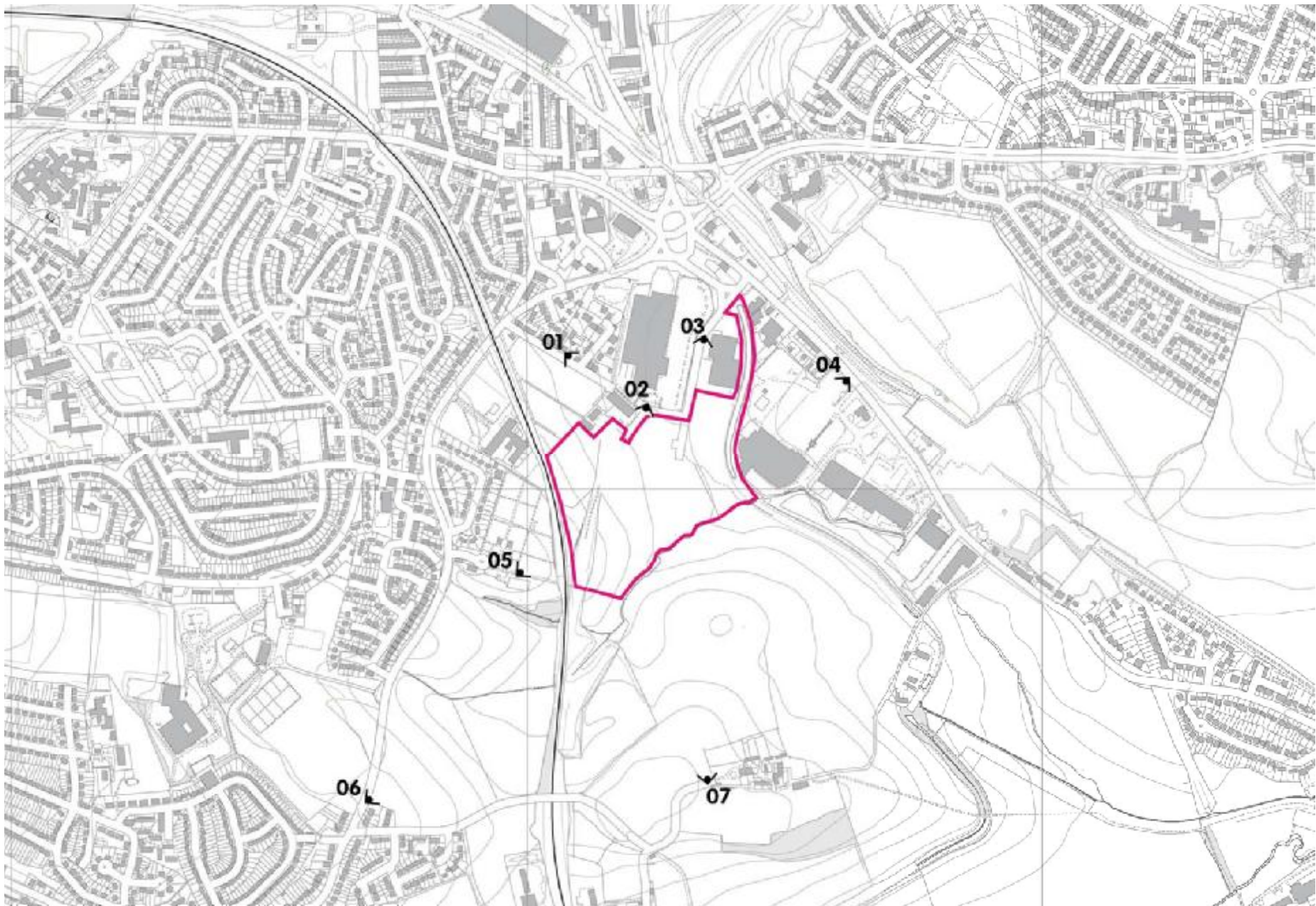
- Unmanaged appearance of the site, which is prone to fly-tipping and is inaccessible in parts
- Untidy and unattractive edges of the site facing onto the existing commercial units at Stairfoot Way and Bleachcroft Way
- Strong physical containment of the site from elsewhere in Stairfoot and Swaithe due to topography, the railway line and dense areas of vegetation
- Expansive views on site to the wider Stairfoot area

The considerations taken forward for the residential development proposals must include addressing the edge condition of the site facing the existing commercial units on Bleachcroft Way. Additionally, the development must consider how to create a more attractive entry into the site, particularly on foot or by bicycle, in order to improve site connections to the locality. Areas of existing vegetation must be managed to retain areas for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement, and provide attractive open space areas for residents.



# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

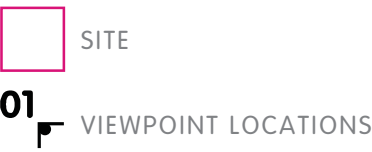


Development at Bleachcroft Way will have a visual effect within the surrounding landscape. Immediate views from Bleachcroft Way and Stairfoot Way will be more noticeable due to their close proximity to the site. Towards Worsbrough and Ardsley Cemetery, views of site may be reduced.

A number of viewpoints within a 1km radius from the centre of the site, have been chosen as typically representative views within the local area.

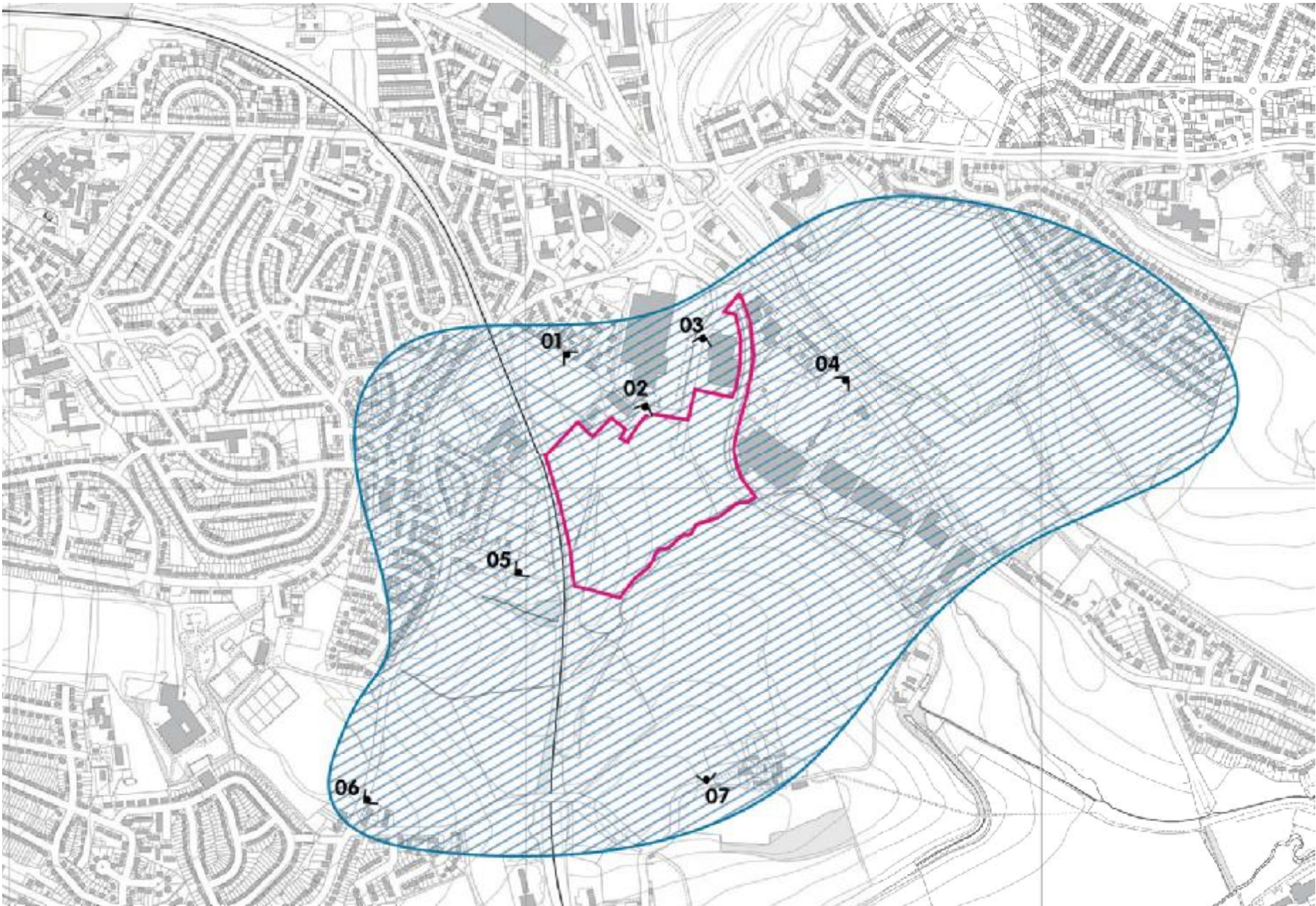
The photographic analysis on the following pages describes each view in respect of key visible characteristics and thus the likely effects on the view due to the proposed development. This assumes a typical residential housing development with dwellings of 2 storeys. The visual effects with landscape mitigation is then described.

It should be noted at this stage that the site has and is proposed to be designated for employment uses for commercial and industrial uses (Use Class B2/B8). The scale, in respect of building heights and massing, and the appearance of these uses would most likely result in a greater adverse visual effect from the viewpoint locations, with a requirement for more extensive landscape mitigation.



# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## ZTV



The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) demonstrates the theoretical area from which the site, and any development on it, may be visible. This potentially covers a large area because it includes for views from private properties which are not possible to achieve in the field.

The ZTV shown demonstrates there is the potential to see the site from properties at Stairfoot towards the north east. Similarly, there may be views of site and the proposed development from properties to the west of Hunningley Lane, within Kendray. The development proposals on site are likely to have a visual effect from these properties.

-  SITE
-  01 VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS
-  ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 1

VIEW EAST FROM NO.31 FIELD LANE



Existing view

### Existing view

The view looks down Field Lane towards the footpath link that connects with Stairfoot Way. The edge of the road is lined with a mixture of native hedgerow and fences to the Hunningley Lane Allotments. The rooftop of one of the warehouse buildings to Stairfoot Way is visible above the hedgerow to the allotments.

Distance from centre of site: 300m

### Proposed view: visual effects

In the proposed view the rooftops to the proposed residential development may be visible above the existing foreground hedgerow planting to Field Lane. Due to on-site topography sloping down away from the viewpoint, it is unlikely the new built form will be visible beyond the rooftops of the houses.

### Potential effects:

The edge of built development has a negligible effect on the view.

### Proposed mitigation

Buffer planting is proposed to the boundaries of the site. This includes native tree and shrub planting which will augment existing retained vegetation. Vegetation will be retained along the railway embankment edge and to the boundary of the allotments. It is unlikely this additional native tree and shrub planting will have a discernible effects on the view.

### Potential effects:

There will be negligible change in the view.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 2

### VIEW SOUTH FROM STAIRFOOT WAY



Existing view

#### Existing view

The view faces the site at the end of Stairfoot Way. To the right of the view, warehouse buildings are visible. To the background, the fence line of Ardsley Cemetery can be discerned. The treeline to the railway embankment punctuates the skyline. The site is dominated by overgrown vegetation in the middle ground of the view.

Distance from centre of site: 150m

#### Proposed view: visual effects

The new residential development will be visible in the middle ground of the view, obscuring some of the tree line and boundary to Ardsley Cemetery. The trees to the railway embankment will be visible above the roof tops of the proposed buildings.

#### Potential effects:

The edge of built development encroaches towards the viewpoint and fills the view.

#### Proposed mitigation

Native tree and hedgerow planting to the edge of the site will filter views to the proposed development and buffer the residential edge from the road and commercial units. Proposed tree planting will soften the outline of the new built form. Tree planting to residential streets within the development will further break up the mass of built form.

#### Potential effects:

Visual softening and screening of the built form, and visually containing the site from existing commercial development.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 3

### VIEW SOUTH FROM BLEACHCROFT WAY



Existing view

#### Existing view

The view looks down Bleachcroft Way towards the site. To the right of the view, amenity tree and shrub planting to the car park of B&Q is visible. To the left, the car park and warehouse unit along Bleachcroft Way is visible in the view. Farmland towards Swaithe is discernible above the treeline on site.

Distance from centre of site: 340m

#### Proposed view: visual effects

The residential development will be visible in the middle ground of the view, obscuring some of the tree line to the railway embankment and longer range views of the agricultural land towards Swaithe. The end of Bleachcroft Way will be more visible as an entrance point into the development. The treeline towards Swaithe will be visible to the background of the view above the rooftops.

#### Potential effects:

Visual encroachment of built form towards the middle ground.

#### Proposed mitigation

Native tree and hedgerow planting to the edges of the site will filter views of the development and buffer the residential edge from the road. The entrance to the site will be softened with tree and shrub planting. Tree planting to residential streets within the development will further break up the mass of built form.

#### Potential effects:

Visual softening and screening of the built form, and breaking up of built form within the development.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 4

### VIEW WEST FROM WOMBWELL LANE/TESCO SUPERSTORE



Existing view

#### Existing view

The Tesco Extra retail superstore and car park fills the middle ground of the view. To the left, the fields towards Swaithe and Worsbrough are visible to the side of the building. To the right, a small section of fence line to Ardsley Cemetery is visible. Behind the superstore, the treeline to the railway embankment can be made out.

Distance from centre of site: 490m

#### Proposed view: visual effects

In the proposed view, rooftops to the proposed residential development may be visible behind the superstore. The new development may obscure some of the tree line and boundary to Ardsley Cemetery. The trees to the railway embankment will be visible above the roof tops of the proposed buildings.

#### Potential effects:

The built development has a slight encroachment within the view.

#### Proposed mitigation

Retention and augmentation of existing vegetation to the site boundaries will soften and filter views of the proposed built form. Native tree and hedgerow planting to the edge of the site will filter views and soften the residential edge from the retail park.

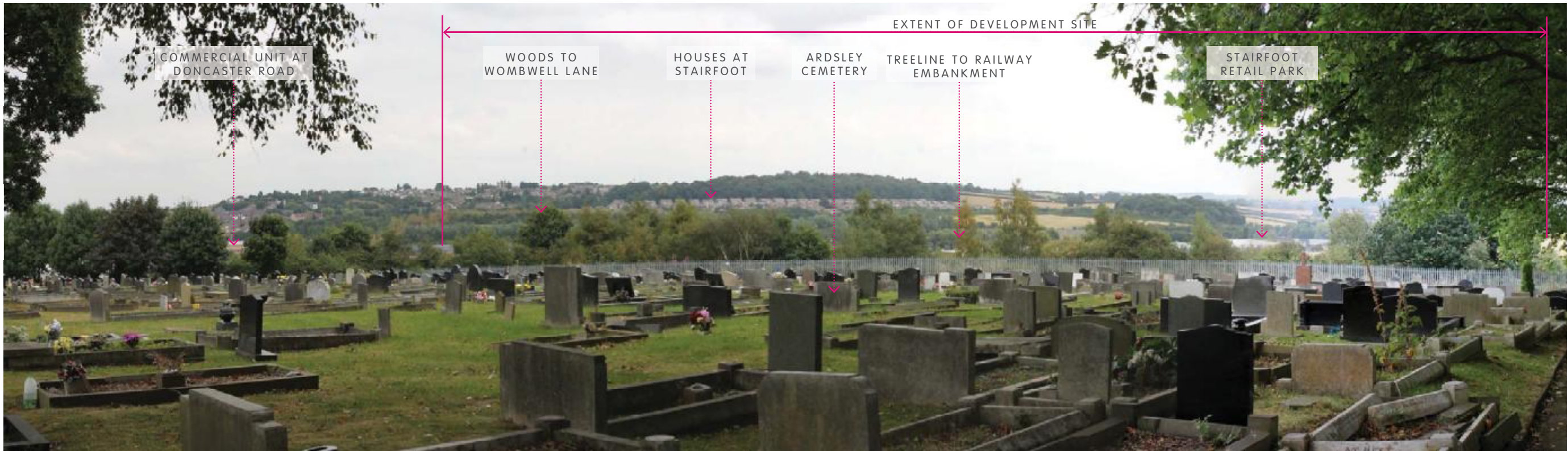
#### Potential effects:

Visual softening and screening of the built form, and visually containing the site from existing the retail development.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 5

### VIEW NORTHEAST FROM ARDSLEY CEMETERY



Existing view

#### Existing view

The view looks towards the site from the cemetery, with the fence line to the boundary of the cemetery in the middle ground, running across the view. The treeline to the railway embankment sits behind the fence. Between the trees to the left of the view, commercial units along Doncaster Road can be discerned. To the right, units at Stairfoot retail park are visible. In the background, houses at Stairfoot can be seen.

Distance from centre of site: 250m

#### Proposed view: visual effects

Glimpses of rooftops to the proposed development may be discernible in the view between the existing mature vegetation along the railway embankment. Views of Stairfoot Retail Park may be partially obscured in the view.

#### Potential effects:

There will be negligible change to the view.

#### Proposed mitigation

Native tree and hedgerow planting to the edge of the site will filter views to the proposed development and buffer the residential edge from the railway embankment. Proposed tree planting will soften the outline of the new built form. It is unlikely this additional native tree and shrub planting will have a discernible effects on the view.

#### Potential effects:

There will be negligible change to the view.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 6

VIEW NORTHEAST FROM 4 ARDSLEY ROAD, WORSBROUGH



Existing view

**Existing view**

The view looks over agricultural land towards Stairfoot. To the left of the view, the chapel to Ardsley Cemetery is visible amongst the treeline. The treeline descends across the middle ground of the view, forming part of the vegetated edge to Dob Sike. To the far distance across the valley, houses at Stairfoot are visible.

Distance from centre of site: 780m

**Proposed view: visual effects**

There will not be a distinguishable change to the existing view.

**Potential effects:**

There will be negligible change to the view.

**Proposed mitigation**

Additional native tree and shrub planting will have no discernible effects on the view.

**Potential effects:**

There will be negligible change to the view.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS: VIEW 7

VIEW NORTH FROM CAULK LANE, OUTSIDE SWAITHE HALL



Existing view

### Existing view

The view looks north from outside the grounds of Swaithe Hall towards Stairfoot. The treeline to the railway embankment is visible to the left of the view, and houses to Hunningley Lane on the far left. To the centre of the view, housing to Measborough Dike, north west of Stairfoot, can be discerned. To the centre right of the view, the rooftop of the former B&Q is visible, as well as the units to Stairfoot retail park to the far right. In the background it is possible to see the Ardagh Glass Works at Monk Bretton, north from Stairfoot.

Distance from centre of site: 650m

### Proposed view: visual effects

Glimpses of rooftops to the proposed development may be discernible in the view towards the B&Q superstore and Stairfoot Retail Park, however the level changes on site, and physical containment of the development away from the site edges results in a negligible change to the view.

### Potential effects:

There will be negligible change to the view.

### Proposed mitigation

Native tree and hedgerow planting to the edge of the site will filter views to the proposed development and buffer the residential edge from Dob Sike and the railway. Proposed tree planting will soften the outline of the new built form. It is unlikely this additional native tree and shrub planting will have a discernible effects on the view.

### Potential effects:

There will be negligible change to the view.

# 06 VISUAL ANALYSIS

## SUMMARY

The visual analysis considers the visual effects the development proposals will have from a number of representative views.

The views taken for the visual analysis are from publicly accessible areas, and identify the possible visual effects development on site may have in the surrounding area. All views are within 1km distance from the centre of the site.

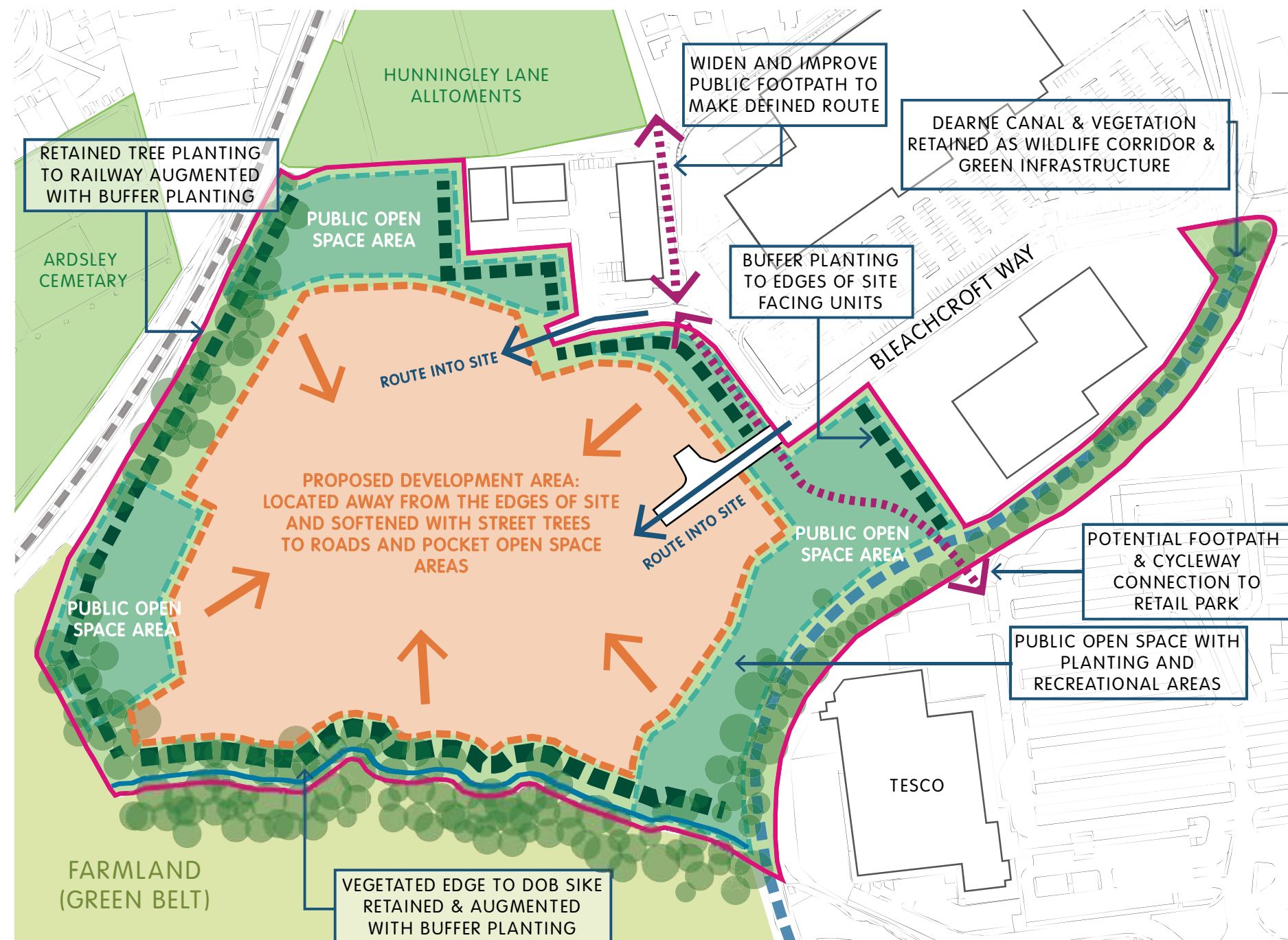
The analysis demonstrates the site has high level of visual containment, with several of the views having only slight or negligible visual effects from the proposed development. Topography, existing built form, and existing areas of mature vegetation filter or obscure views of the site from a number of locations.

Those views where visual effects are highest are closest to the site, looking from Stairfoot Way (view 2) and Bleachcroft Way (view 3). In all other views the development is filtered or obscured. Additional mitigation proposals such as new tree and hedgerow planting to the site boundaries and street tree planting amongst the residential development further filters and softens the visual effects within the views where development is discernible.

The photographic analysis demonstrates the site has the capacity to absorb some change without visual detriment to the surrounding context.

It should be noted that the visual effect of commercial development on this site for B2/B8 land uses would most likely be of a greater scale, in respect of building heights and massing, and the appearance of these uses would most likely result in a greater adverse visual effect on the surrounding landscape.

## 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK



The strategic landscape framework sets out how the key landscape issues can be addressed through the development of the masterplan for the site. The key elements are:

1. Locating the building proposals to the centre of the site, away from the site edges
2. Softening and greening up the development with street trees and pocket open spaces
3. Provision of large areas of public open space around the site
4. Creating buffer areas of planting to the edges of the site
5. Retaining a large proportion of existing vegetation to the site boundaries, particularly along Dob Sike and the railway embankment
6. Improving the existing public footpath to Field Lane, with the possibility of creating a pedestrian and cycle link through to the Stairfoot Retail Park
7. Using the current road connections from Bleachcroft Way for entry into the development



## 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

### STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES

The strategic landscape framework has several objectives relating to planning policies, landscape character and visual effects. It also considers key points from the Planning Inspectorate as described in the planning appeal notice (chapter 3).

The framework addresses the concerns raised in the planning appeal notice relating to edge conditions and connectivity. The treatment of the edges adjacent to Bleachcroft Way will be buffered and provide an attractive frontage to the development. The use of native planting and open space physically contains the development and moves it away from the edges of the site. Additionally, improved public footpath connections to Field Lane and the retail park encourage journeys to be taken on foot. Legible, safe pedestrian routes within the site encourage a walkable neighbourhood approach.

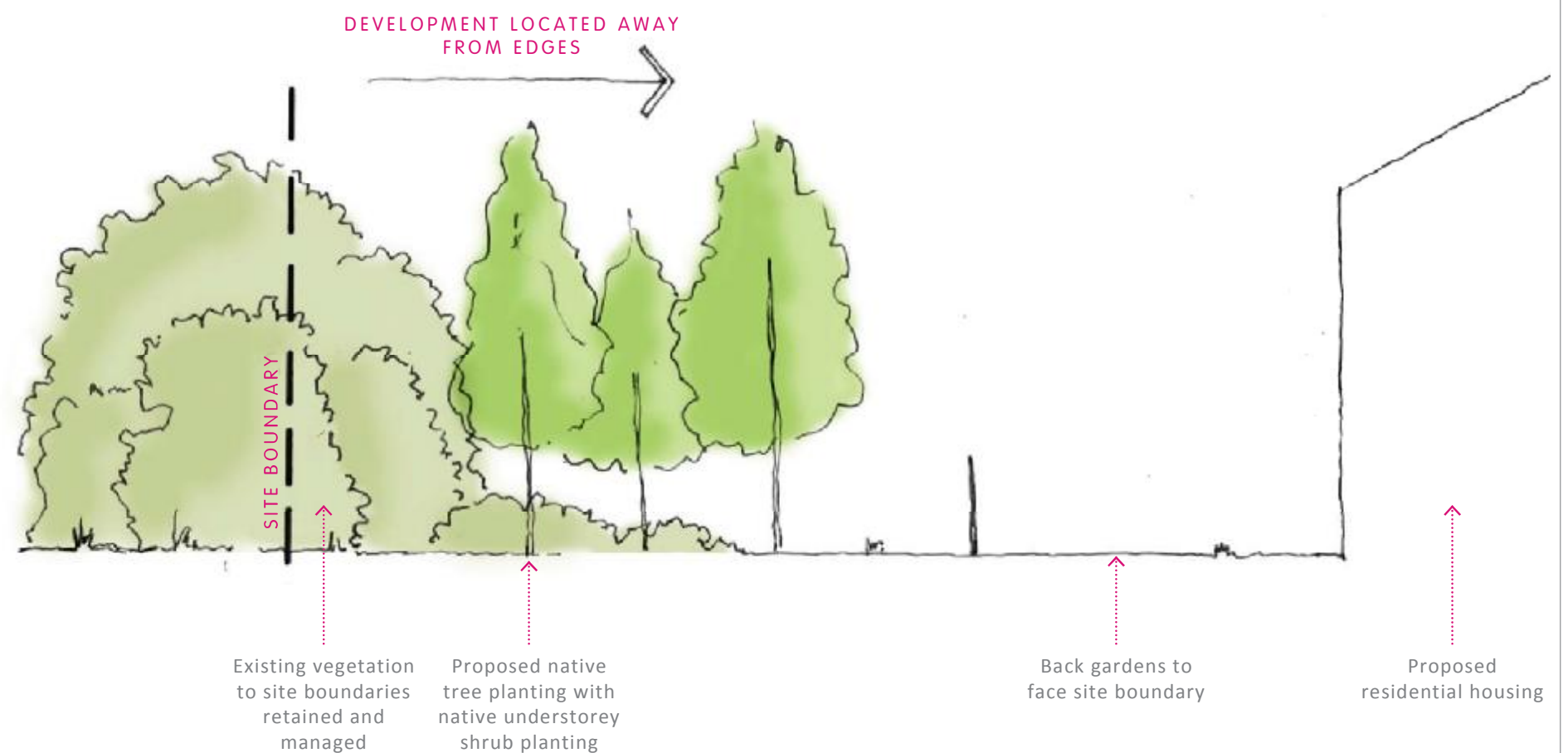
Key planning policies relating to green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement and open space provision are addressed through the establishment of open space areas around the site, and the retention of significant areas of existing vegetation, which can be managed to provide an attractive setting for the development.

Visually, the retention of tree planting and the creation of open space help break up the mass of built form within the site, and filter views from the surrounding local context (see chapter 6). In terms of landscape character, the site condition will be improved from its current state by better management of vegetation, and making a better connected to existing suburban areas at Kendray and Stairfoot.

### 1. DEVELOPMENT LOCATION IN CENTRE OF SITE

The proposed buildings should be located away from the boundaries of the site, towards the centre. By doing this as far as is reasonably possible, the development is less visible from surrounding areas, and is more protected from the existing edges to the railway, and large commercial development areas.

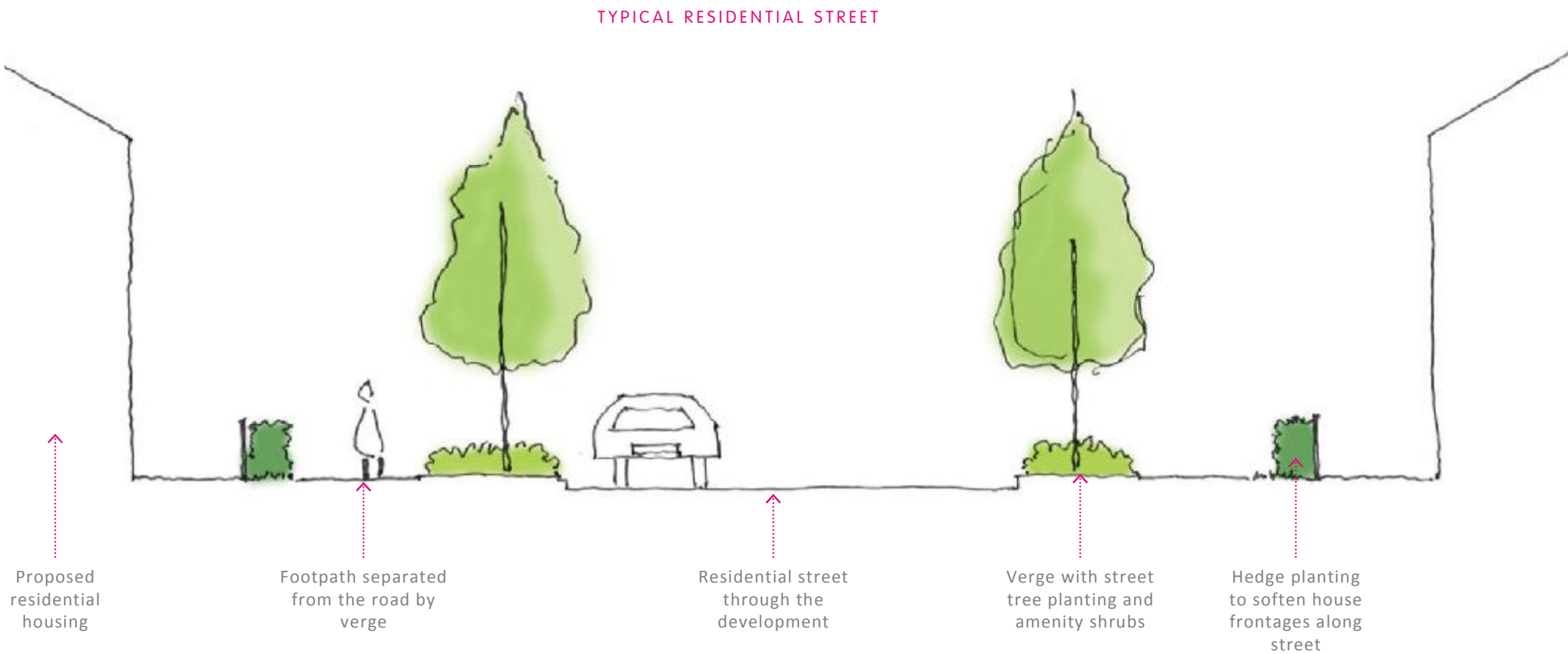
Vegetation to the boundaries of the site can be retained and better managed as an important contributor to green infrastructure on the site, and to provide physical and visual containment to the development.



# 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

## 2. GREENING THE DEVELOPMENT

Within the built up area, residential streets should be planted with street trees to soften the development and make more attractive, welcoming streetscapes. Small areas of open space, such as at street corners, or pocket parks within the housing area, also make a greener, more appealing neighbourhoods.



Residential street trees create a welcoming, attractive setting to the development

## 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

### 3. PROVIDING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The landscape strategy framework advocates large areas for public open space. This has several key objectives:

- Buffers the development from the surrounding context
- Provides recreation space and playgrounds as required by planning
- Allows large areas of existing trees and shrub planting to be retained and augmented with new planting
- Retains and strengthens green infrastructure and enhances biodiversity, contributing to the nature improvement vision for the Dearne Valley
- Creates an attractive place to live



Areas of public open space can include recreation areas and children's playgrounds, meeting planning policy requirements for residential developments

### 4. BUFFER PLANTING TO THE EDGES OF SITE

Site boundaries facing onto Bleachcroft Way and Stairfoot Way should be buffered with native tree and shrub planting to soften the visible edges of the adjacent commercial units and protect from noise and pollution from any vehicle movement to these areas.

In addition, buffer planting should augment existing retained vegetation to Dob Sike and the railway embankment to enhance green infrastructure to these boundaries and protect existing habitats.



# 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

## 5. RETENTION OF EXISTING VEGETATION

The railway embankment, Dob Sike and the Dearne Canal present opportunities to retain a large proportion of existing vegetation and protect existing habitats. This contributes to the vision of a nature improvement zone to the Dearne Valley.



Retaining and enhancing the boundaries of the site in combination with public open space areas and new planting adds social and ecological value to the development

## 6. IMPROVING FOOTPATH CONNECTIONS

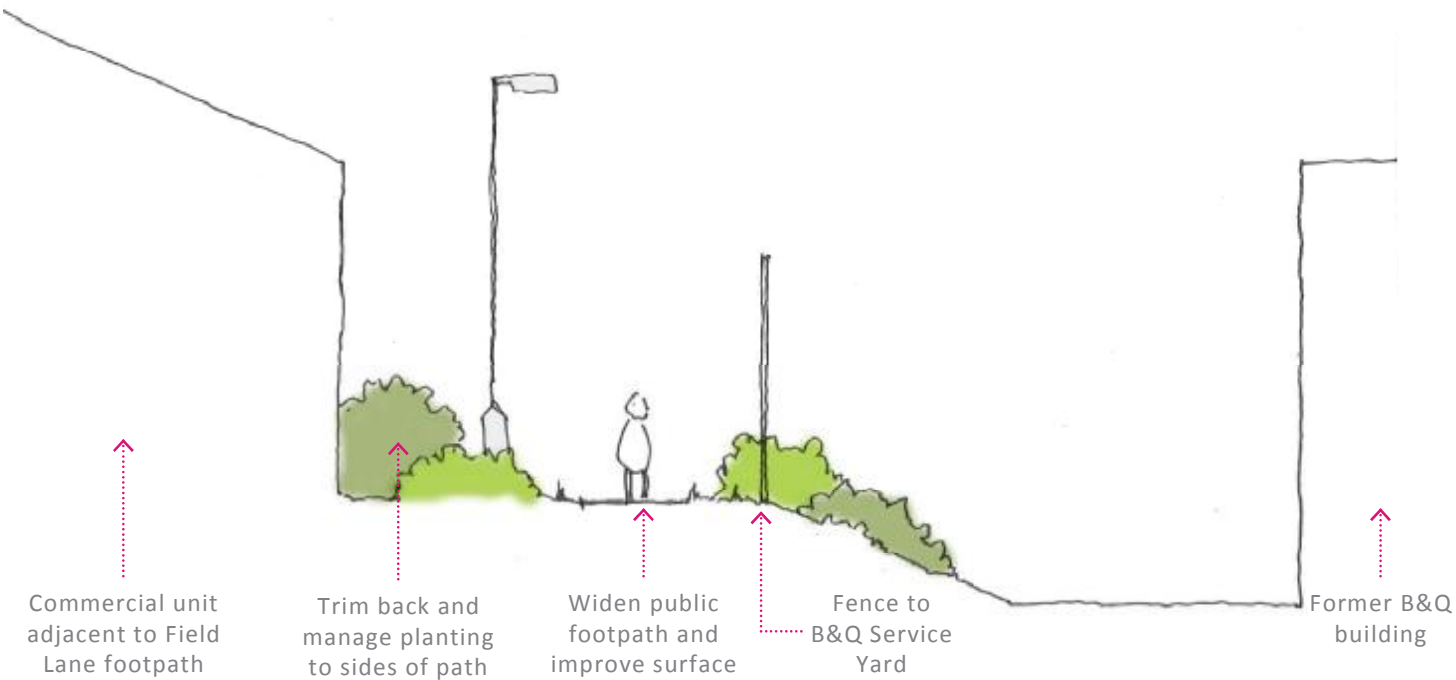
The existing public footpath through to Field Lane is currently a narrow, overgrown route. The public footpath should be managed as part of the landscape strategy, and improved by making it more visible, safe and signposted as a viable pedestrian route, and if possible, widening it to be more accessible for all users.

As part of improving footpath connections within the development, all residential streets should have pavements and prioritise pedestrian movement over vehicles.

Beyond the development, the potential to connect a footpath and cycleway across the Dearne Canal and into the back of the Stairfoot Retail Park should be considered to encourage local journeys on foot rather than by car. This route could be a viable link to the National Cycle Network route parallel to Wombwell Lane.



Making wide, clear footpaths which are lit and well-managed encourages journeys on foot



# 07 STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

## 7. USING EXISTING ROAD CONNECTIONS

The redundant portion of road off Bleachcroft Way is the natural entry point to the new development. The arrival to the development should be clear, attractive and provide comfortable navigation on foot or by bicycle.

A connection from Stairfoot Way is also proposed as a secondary entrance.



The arrival into site should be clear and welcoming, and set the tone for the residential streets within the development

# 08 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSIONS

### SUMMARY

The landscape appraisal and analysis has identified the baseline conditions and landscape character for the site at Bleachcroft Way. Existing planning policies, landscape character, and existing features have been reviewed, along with analysis of key views of the site, both in the immediate vicinity and over the wider area beyond the site.

From this baseline study, an in-depth landscape analysis and strategic landscape framework has been produced, which identifies the key elements of the landscape that should be carried forward into future development proposals.

### BASELINE ASSESSMENT

The site is currently unmanaged land at the end of Bleachcroft Way, with an area of 11 hectares. Large commercial units sit to the north and north east of the site, and the western boundary abuts the railway line into Barnsley. Agricultural land is found to the south of the site, separated by a heavily wooded beck, Dob Sike. Suburban residential development is found to the east and west of the site, and a footpath connection leads to Field Lane and the suburb of Kendray off Stairfoot Way, adjacent to the site.

The site consists of overgrown scrub and self-colonising trees, with areas of rough grass. It is subject to fly-tipping and has been barricaded off to deter travellers accessing the land.

The site slopes down to the disused Dearne Canal along the eastern edge of the site. The south western corner of the site is the highest point and affords views over Stairfoot and other suburbs of Barnsley.

The site is allocated as employment land in the Saved UDP. There are no other planning policy designations on site. The site is adjacent to the designated Green Belt, and is part of the Dearne Valley Nature Improvement Area in the Draft Local Plan.

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Landscape character analysis demonstrates the surrounding area has a mix of residential, commercial and agricultural use, and that the current landscape condition in the BMDC Landscape Character Assessment is described as ‘poor’. Desktop studies and field work further demonstrates the current key characteristics of the site:

- Existing poor-quality landscape of overgrown vegetation, rough grassland, often used for fly-tipping
- Stands of existing self-colonising trees which form a strong physical and visual containment of the site on three sides
- Unmanaged appearance of the site due to its poor quality, degraded character, and its location to the back of Bleachcroft Way, behind existing commercial developments
- Sloping landform on site allowing long-range views from the site

### VISUAL ANALYSIS

Key views of the site from the surrounding local area demonstrate the visibility of the site and potential visual effects of any proposed development on the site. The analysis concludes there will be some visual effects created by future development, however these will be filtered by areas of existing development and vegetation, and limited by existing topography. Only those views in close proximity to the site will have a high magnitude of change. Any change to longer distance views will be slight to negligible.

As mentioned above, the visual effects from the proposed residential development will be less than if the site came forward for commercial development.

### SITE SUITABILITY

The Appeal Decision Notice raises several issues about proposed residential development on the site at Bleachcroft Way. These are: the suitability of the site for residential development, as opposed to employment use; the edge conditions and setting of the site as a residential area; and the quality of routes and connections to and from the proposed development.

Assessment of the landscape character, visual effects, and the resulting strategic landscape framework addresses these concerns with the following key points:

- Residential development proposals will characterise the surrounding context, and be sympathetic to the suburban fringe and countryside setting. Furthermore, residential proposals provide integration of green infrastructure and retention of vegetation to boundaries, as well as more sympathetic treatment of topography, particularly in comparison to large-scale commercial development. Visually, residential development will be less obtrusive to the surrounding landscape, and the built form can be softened and broken up through use of open spaces and tree planting.
- Edge conditions can be improved through better management of existing retained vegetation, and careful landscape design which buffers from the adjacent commercial units and railway line. Such landscape treatment also creates a more attractive setting for the residential development within the site, and contributes to green infrastructure in the wider landscape.

# 08 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSIONS (CONT'D)

### SITE SUITABILITY (CONTINUED)

- Existing connections to the site will be improved by creating a strong, attractive arrival point to the proposed development from Bleachcroft Way and Stairfoot Way. Residential streets within the development will be clear and legible, with pedestrian-friendly layouts. The existing footpath connection to Field Lane should be accommodated in the proposals to allow a safe, clear route to Kendray. An proposed footpath and cycle connection to the Stairfoot Retail Park will connect to local businesses and provide a link to the national cycle network.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK

The site is currently of poor landscape quality and low visual sensitivity. Overall the opportunity exists through appropriate design to make a positive change to the landscape character of the site, improve the setting of Bleachcroft Way and the relationship with the surrounding suburban context. In respect of both landscape character and views, an appropriate strategy for impact avoidance, reduction and mitigation can be achieved through good urban design and the incorporation of well-connected green infrastructure in line with local plan policies and guidance, and to address the concerns from the Planning Inspectorate as described on the previous page.

While any development will inevitably have an effect on the landscape, the quality of any proposals and the use of existing policy guidance to inform these proposals will better integrate the development into the local landscape. The following recommendations will help to ensure the development is an attractive place to live, has a sense of place, and is well integrated into the local context, meeting with the requirements of the national (NPPF) and local planning policies.

The strategic landscape framework sets out the key elements to assimilate the future development to the existing landscape character and form. The framework sets out the following recommendations:

1. Locate the building proposals to the centre of the site, away from the site edges to visually contain and physical protect the development within surrounding context
2. Soften and punctuate the development with street trees and pocket open spaces
3. Provide areas of public open space around the site which contribute to green infrastructure
4. Create buffer areas of planting to the edges of the site, enhancing biodiversity and improving visual and physical containment, particularly those edges adjacent to existing commercial units at Bleachcroft Way and Stairfoot Way.
5. Retain existing vegetation to the site boundaries, particularly along Dob Sike and the railway embankment
6. Improve the existing public footpath to Field Lane, with the possibility of creating a pedestrian link through to the Stairfoot Retail Park
7. Use the current road connections from Bleachcroft Way for entry into the development, and create an attractive arrival space
8. Materials, height and massing of the proposed residential buildings should be considered as appropriate to the character of the local residential housing areas

# 09 REFERENCES

## CHAPTER 3:

### PLANNING APPEAL DECISION NOTICE

Planning Inspectorate, doc ref: APP/R4408/A/09/2115994  
(Decision date 31st March 2010)

### PLANNING POLICY

*National Planning Policy Framework*  
Department for Communities and Local Government,  
(March 2012)

*Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan*  
Adopted December 2000

*Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Core Strategy*  
Adopted September 2011

*Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Draft Local Plan*  
Currently under review, 2016

## CHAPTER 4: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

*National Character Area No.38*  
Natural England, 2014

*Barnsley Borough Landscape Character Assessment*  
Ecus & Land Use Consultants, May 2002

