

Land at Trowbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

including Green Belt Assessment

Undertaken by Clifton Emery design
April 2026

Report number	Status	Date	Revision	Author / checked
250310 R 04 01	Planning	April 2026	-	AP / PR

Contents

Foreword

Chapter 1: Landscape Baseline

Site Context

Baseline Assessment

Chapter 2: Visual Baseline

Visual Baseline Overview

Baseline Assessment

Chapter 3: Scheme Description

Summary of Proposals

Landscape Strategy

Mitigation Features

Chapter 4: Landscape & Visual Appraisal

Introduction

Appraisal of Landscape Effects

Appraisal of Visual Effects

Summary of Residual Effects

Chapter 5: Summary & Conclusions

Summary of Appraisal

Conclusions

Chapter 6: Green Belt Assessment

Appendix A: Methodology

Foreword

The assessment has been undertaken using a methodology based on guidance set out in the Third Edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) published jointly by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013.

It also draws on subsequent publications such as ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ from Natural England (2014), and has been refined and developed over a number of years to reflect emerging best practice, and tested through the planning appeal process.

A copy of the methodology can be found in Appendix A

The report has been prepared by Clifton Emery design in collaboration with Tapestry, a landscape architecture practice with extensive experience in the production of Landscape and Visual Assessments. It has been undertaken by, or under the guidance of, a suitably qualified and experienced Chartered Landscape Architect. Guidance emphasizes the responsibility of the landscape professional carrying out the assessment to ensure that the approach and methodology is appropriate for the particular development to be assessed.

The level of detail that has been provided is considered suitable to reasonably assess the likely significant effects of the proposed development, and in line with GLVIA3 guidance is considered to be appropriate and proportional to the scale and type of the development proposed.

The assessment should be read alongside all the technical reports and other planning application materials.



Figure 1.1 - Site Location Plan

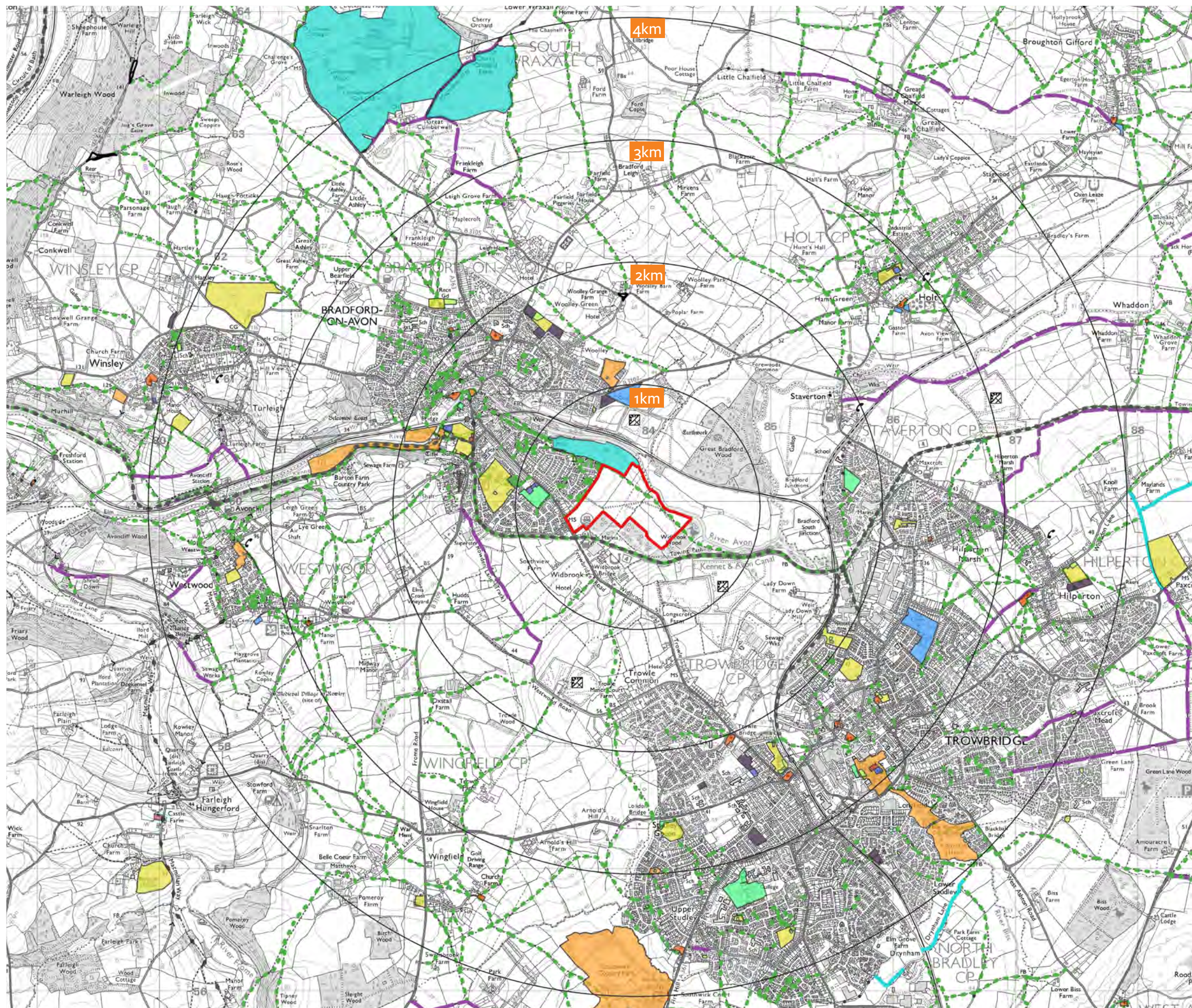


Figure 1.2
Site Location Context Plan

- Application site
- Ordnance Survey (2022) Open Green Spaces**
- Allotments or Community Growing Facility
- Bowling Green
- Cemetery
- Golf Course
- Other Sports Facility
- Play Space
- Playing Field
- Public Park or Garden
- Religious Grounds
- Tennis Court
- National Cycle Network
- Bridleway
- Byway
- Footpath
- Restricted Byway
- CROW 2000

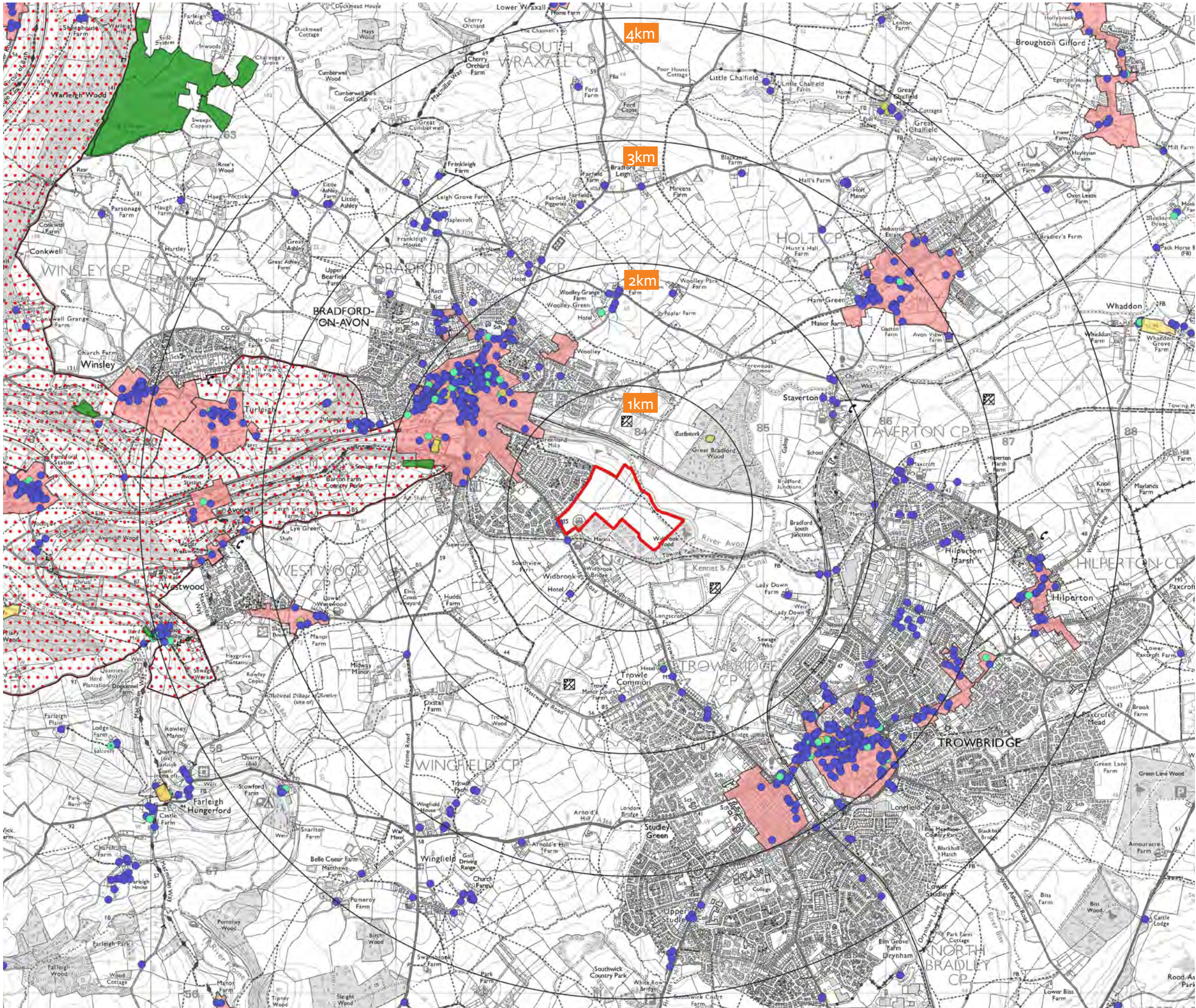


Figure 1.3
Landscape Planning Designations

- Application site

- Scheduled Monuments
- SSSI
- National Landscapes
- Conservation Areas
- Melksham Strategic Canal Route
- World Heritage Sites

- Listed Buildings
- Grade I
- Grade II
- Grade II*

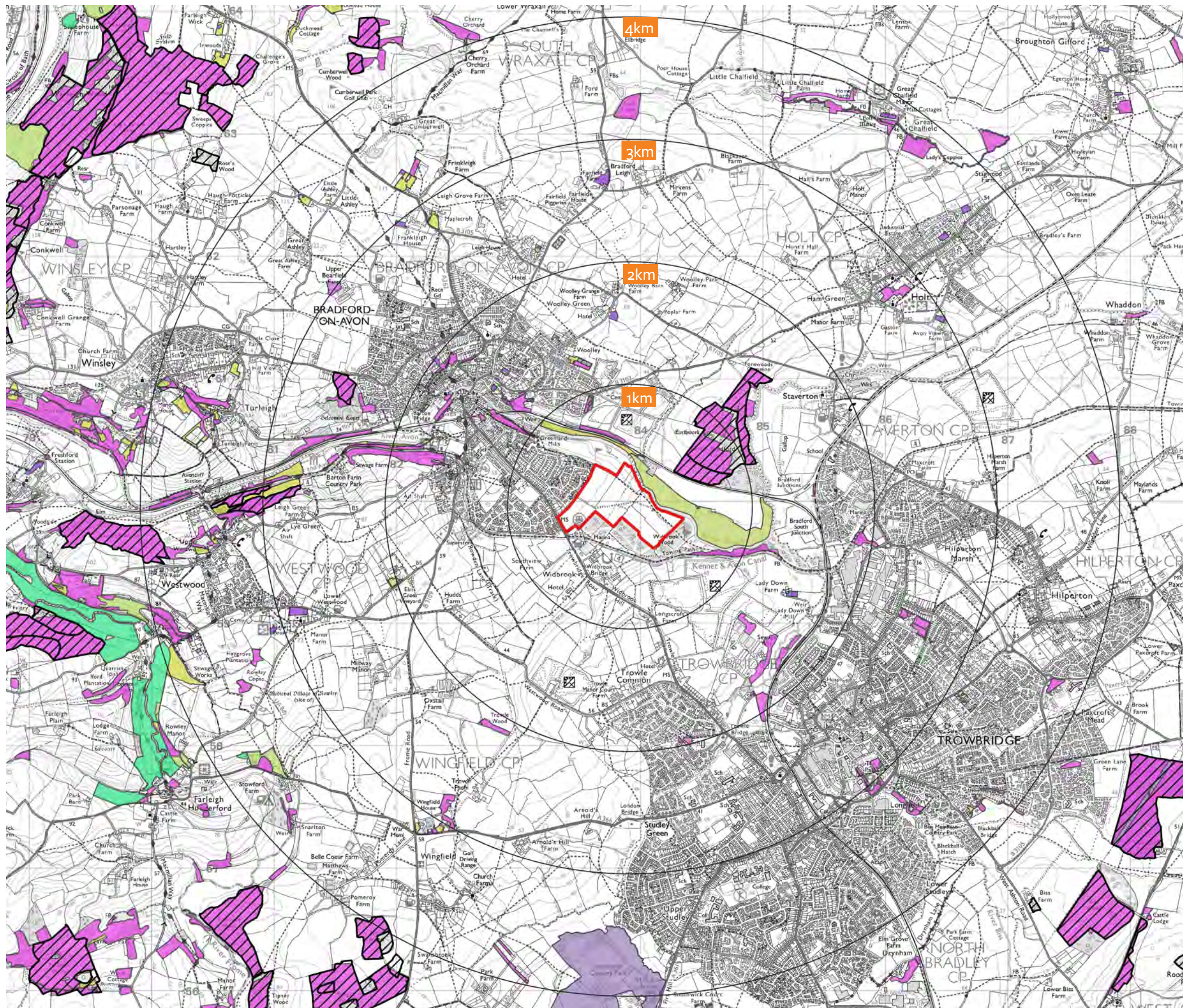


Figure 1.4
Environmental Areas

- Application site

- Priority Habitats**
- Coastal floodplain grazing marsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi improved grassland
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Traditional orchard

- Ancient Woodland
- Local Nature Reserve

- Nitrate Vulnerable Zones**
- Bitham Bk - source to conf Biss Bk NVZ
- S Bk - source to conf R Avone (Brist) NVZ

1.0 Landscape Baseline

1.1 Site Context

Clifton Emery design has been commissioned by Waddeton Park Ltd. to produce a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in support of an planning application for the delivery of residential development alongside substantive green infrastructure. The site is currently used for mixed use pasture and recreational activities.

1.1.2 Site description

1.1.3 The application site (the ‘Site’) is located approximately 1km south east (at its closest point) from Bradford-on-Avon town centre to the north side of Trowbridge Road. The 31.05ha Site encompasses a number of fields, which benefit from an existing agricultural access from Trowbridge Road. A number of the fields are regularly used for camping/caravanning, and bound by hedgerows. The northern edge of the site leads to the River Avon with areas of mature tree planting along the banks. In the eastern portion of the site, on the banks of the River Avon, is Bradford-on-Avon Sailing Club. The Site is generally flat and slopes gently to the north east in the direction of the River Avon.

1.1.4 The wider 4km study area is characterised by agricultural farmland on the rural edges between the settlements of Bradford-on-Avon (approximately 1km to the north west) and Trowbridge (approximately 2.6km to the south east). The site sits within the Avon Greenbelt with the southern tip of the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly AONB) being approximately 1.5km to the west of the site. There are conservation areas in Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge and a number of surrounding villages. There are two listed structures in close proximity to the site - the Grade II listed Widbrook Bridge (located approximately 60m west of the site), and a Grade II listed Milestone on Trowbridge Road immediately adjacent to the Site.

1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the adopted development plans for an area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.2.2. Planning applications in Bradford-on-Avon are subject to the following development guidance, in addition to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015
- Bradford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2026 (Made October 2017)

1.2.3 Bradford-on-Avon is mentioned in the Wiltshire Core Strategy as an area that is need of additional housing. It is noted that the housing strategy for Bradford-on-Avon is to provide growth at a modest scale and that there is a high need for affordable housing (Core Policy 7).

1.2.4 The site falls within the existing Western Wiltshire Green Belt, with its border along the site’s western edge. This Green Belt forms part a much more extensive Avon Green Belt around Bristol and Bath. Within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), it is the Green Belt which is identified as the sole reason for the site not being a suitable location for growth.

1.2.5 The site area identified within the SHLAA (Reference Wiltshire Housing Land Supply Statement 2022) has not previously been assessed as an option for growth, with the original Core Strategy. There are two allocated SHLAA sites within the 4km study area (Ref: W.18.24083 and W.15.2604).

1.2.6 The site falls partially within the Bradford-on-Avon Neighbourhood Plan area. The Plan has a number of policies relvant to design, but none of these policies directly impact the application, which is an outline application with design matters reserved.

1.3 Townscape features

1.3.1 Bradford-on-Avon contains a variety of housing types and sizes with a relatively dense settlement pattern and a larger proportion of detached or semi detached dwellings. (Local policy also sets out a desire for the retention of the traditional look of the conservation area).

- 1.3.2 There is:
- Mainly a use of local limestone (or Bath Stone) that is used in a majority of the older buildings in the centre of the town.
 - Limited render on the newer builds that is often coloured to be the same as the traditional bath stone.
 - Bare brick and stone is mostly shown on the exterior of the buildings.
 - In the historic town centre, the buildings are mainly built to be 2-3 storeys.
 - Newer residential builds towards the outskirts of the town and nearer to the site are mainly bungalows with the occasional 2 storey dwelling.

1.4 Landscape Designations

1.4.1 The national landscape character assessment places the site in NCA 117 Avon Vales and the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment places the site in character 12B Avon Open Clay Vale. The key relevant characteristics are:

- Level land form with wide open skies and views to ridges and downs.
- Pastoral land use with some arable.
- Large scale geometric fields with hedgerows or open drainage channels defining boundaries.
- Presence of rivers, tributaries, drainage channels and open water bodies.
- Watercourses lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows.

- Floristically rich hay meadows.
- Settlement pattern varies from large towns and small scattered villages to sparse farmsteads.
- Buildings in varied materials of brick, render and stone.
- Crossed by major transport corridors, and a network of minor roads linking settlements.
- Historic use for transport evident in canals.

1.4.2 The site also falls within the existing Western Wiltshire Green Belt, with its border along the site’s western edge. This Green Belt forms part of a much more extensive Avon Green Belt around Bristol and Bath.

1.4.3 The site area is identified in the SHLAA (Reference 285 and 1044), but has not previously been identified as an option for growth, with the Green Belt location identified as the sole reason for the site not being a suitable location for growth. The original Core Strategy site selection process, commenced in 2009, only considered two site options in Bradford-on-Avon – the now consented Kingston Farm, and the golf course – which was identified on P. 19 of Annex 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (October 2009). The golf course is located to the north / north west of this site, and has subsequently been identified as not deliverable.

1.4.4 The southern end of the Cotswolds National Landscape (NL) extends along the river valley from the west. The general presumption wihin planning guidance for the NL is that new development should not take place outside the settlement boundary. The designation is intended to help constrain unchecked development, as well as highlighting the quality of the landscape.

1.4.5 The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (the area lowest at risk of flooding); with the northern and eastern extent of the site subject to Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with the River Avon. Opportunities to deliver flood alleviation measures as part of natural catchment management within the green infrastructure could be explored which would benefit the wider town.

1.4.6 The site is not subject to any environmental designations. According to the Wiltshire’s Bat Guidance (2015), the site falls on the outer edge of the Lesser Horseshoe Bat Core Roost Buffer, and within the wider Greater Horseshoe Bat Buffer. The 31.05ha site provides significant opportunities to deliver on site mitigation and enhancement for bat species, alongside wider biodiversity benefits, including the enhancement of the River Avon corridor, and opportunities for enhanced habitat, for example woodland planting.

1.4.7 The River Avon, which is of nature conservation value on the site’s northern boundary, and Widbrook Wood, on its south-eastern boundary, are both Local Wildlife Sites. These are also in addition to the Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh on the northern boundary of the site, an English Priority Habitat. The reserve consists largely of woodland planted in 2000, with associated open habitats including small water courses.

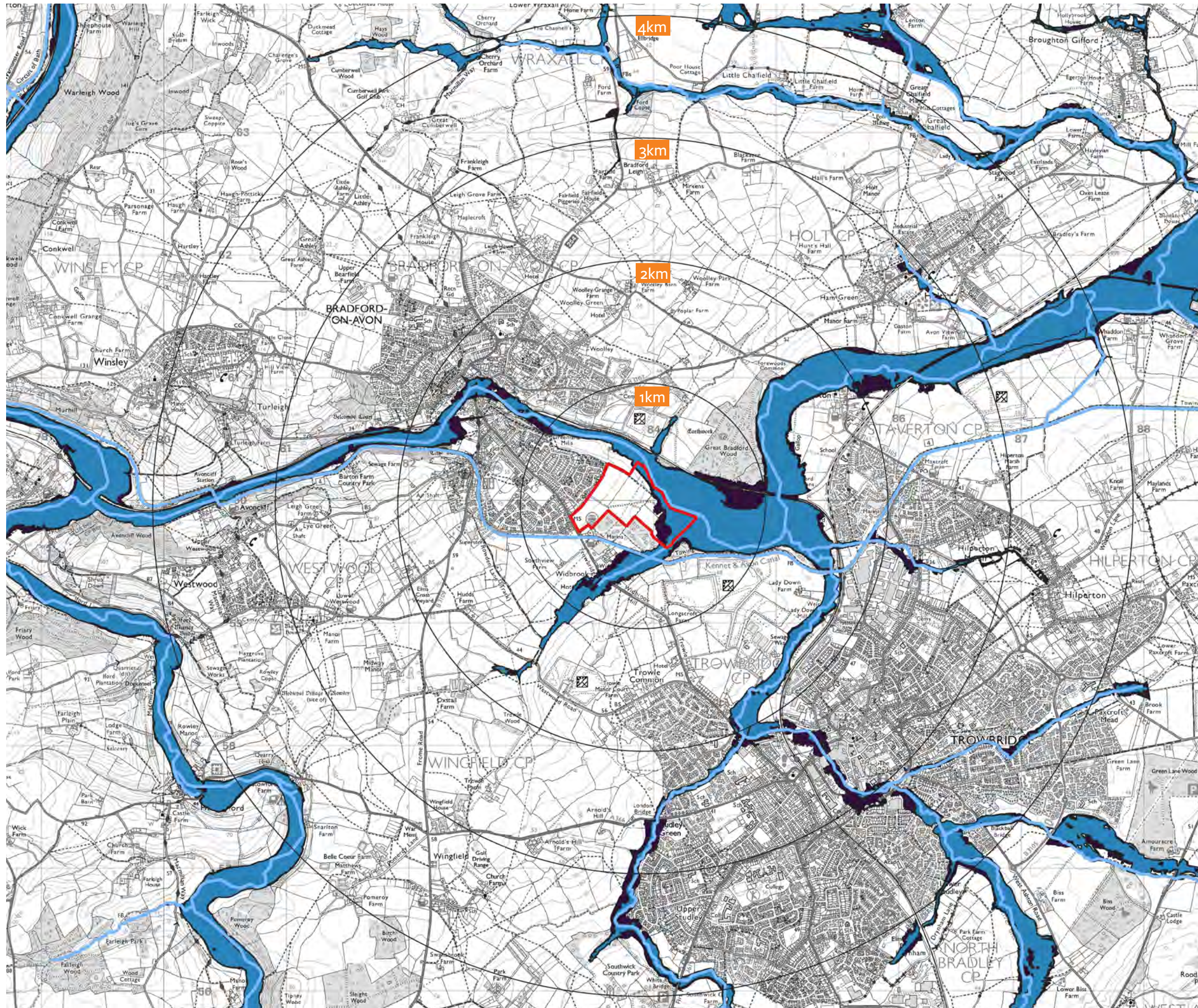


Figure 1.5
Flood Zone Plan

- Application site
- Flood zones
 - Zone 2
 - Zone 3
- Watercourse

1.0 Landscape Baseline

- 1.4.8
- Outside of the site boundaries, but important to consider, is Great Bradford Wood (ancient woodland) approximately 200m to the north-east and the Kennet and Avon Canal, approximately 50m to the south.
- 1.4.9
- There are no designated heritage assets within the site boundary. The Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area lies approximately 415m north from the site and is intersected with considerable post-war housing between the site boundary and conservation area boundary. It is considered unlikely that development within the site would significantly affect the significance of the designated area.
- 1.4.10
- The nearest listed building is the Grade II listed “*Milestone, approximately 150m north-west of Widbrook Bridge, Trowbridge Road A363*” on the sites western border with Trowbridge Road. The Milestone was erected around 1792.
- 1.4.11
- A Scheduled Monument (“*a late prehistoric earthwork enclosure*”) is situated in the woods to the north-east of the site. Given the woodland location of the enclosure, it is not considered that there would be significant inter-visibility with the site. A further Scheduled Monument (“*the monastic grange at Barton Farm*”) lies in the Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area. Considerable built form lies between it and the site. Adverse effects to the conservation area and scheduled monuments are not anticipated.
- 1.4.12
- A PRoW (BRAD18 / HOLT62) intersects the northern section of the site. It is likely that mitigation measures can be taken to retain the visual sensitivity of BRAD18 / HOLT62 for the path users as well as the retaining of the path as a whole in the first place.

1.5 Vegetation and ecology

- 1.5.1
- The site is bordered by a mixture of hedgerows and trees on its northern, eastern and southern boundaries. The north-western and northern boundaries of the site are bordered by river banks with intersecting trees.
- 1.5.2
- There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the site. There are landmark trees on the site but these are not covered by TPOs.
- 1.5.3
- An Ecology Report has been conducted by GE Consulting. Please refer to this report for detail on the ecology on the site.

1.6 Landscape character areas

- 1.6.1
- The national landscape character assessment places the site in NCA 117 Avon Vales and the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment as 12B Avon Open Clay Vale. The key characteristics are:
 - Level land form with wide open skies and views to ridges and downs.
 - Pastoral land use with some arable.
 - Large scale geometric fields with hedgerows or open drainage channels defining boundaries.

- Presence of rivers, tributaries, drainage channels and open water bodies.
- Watercourses lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows.
- Floristically rich hay meadows.
- Settlement pattern varies from large towns and small scattered villages to sparse farmsteads.
- Buildings in varied materials of brick, render and stone.
- Crossed by major transport corridors, and a network of minor roads linking settlements.
- Historic use for transport evident in canals

- 1.6.2
- The site is set within the Cotswolds National Character Area (NCA) 107 and the Avon Vales NCA 117 with the proposed development set to take place within the Cotswolds National Landscape. The Cotswolds National Character Area 107 stretches from Warwickshire and Worcestershire in the north to Wiltshire and Bath in the south. The scarp provides the backdrop to the expansive views across the Severn and Avon Vales to the west. The limestone is described to be particularly important in this NCA with it creating an important sense of place to visitors and residents alike. The key, relevant characteristics of the Cotswolds National Character Area 107 are:
 - The underlying jurassic limestone
 - Dry stone walls criss-crossing the farmed fields
 - Grassland habitats, beechwood forests and flower rich grasslands
 - Large areas of common land
- 1.6.3
- The Avon Vales National Character Area 117 is described as an undulating, low-lying landscape of mixed but predominately pastoral agriculture with small limestone. The Avon Vales are located primarily in the counties of Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, encompassing the valleys of the River Avon and its tributaries. Its relevant, key characteristics are:
 - Woodlands on steeper slopes
 - Smaller settlements and farmsteads, clustered around small streams and lesser rivers
 - Medieval churches, evidence of Saxon occupation and prehistoric hill-forts

- Numerous low ridges with local views over towns and villages
- Transport corridors along roads and watercourses, heavily influential on all development within the Avon Vales (NCA)
- Attractive stone-built centres to market towns that reflect the former agricultural productivity and wealth of the area.

1.7 Topography

- 1.7.1
- The landform of the site is relatively flat falling approximately 13m to the north east from the edge of Trowbridge Road (A363) and in to the River Avon. Higher ground at around 200m AOD.
- 1.7.2
- On the site itself, the topography is relatively level as it is within the River Avon Valley, with the highest point towards the western edges of the site being between 43-67m AOD compared to the northern and eastern edges towards the banks of the River Avon between 0-18m AOD.
- 1.7.3
- The site lies towards the top of an east facing agricultural field. The site’s highest point is 106m AOD in the north eastern corner and it’s lowest point is 86m AOD it’s south eastern corner. To the east the site is gently sloping with gradients of between 1:10 and 1:13, with the site becoming steeper it it’s eastern corner, which has an average gradient of 1:6.
- 1.7.4
- The variation in topography and the flood zone impacting half of the site for flood mitigation measures, biodiversity regeneration and enhancement to be integrated alongside development on the site.
- 1.7.5
- It is evident that the topography in the western area of the 4km site fits the description of the Cotswolds NCA 107 profile. The higher topography gives views onto the River Avon valley, evident from the declining topography towards the east of the site.
- 1.7.6
- The River Avon valley is shown from the topography where the land declines dramatically from Bradford-on-Avon towards Trowbridge. This is typical of the River Avon Valley NCA 117.

1.8 Land use

- 1.8.1
- The site is currently used for agricultural purposes, mainly for crop growing. In the summer, the north easterly field is used for camping. There is also a jetty into the River Avon, adjacent to the Bradford-on-Avon Sailing Club which has a boat storage area on the site. Additionally, a footpath (PRoWs BARD18 / HOLT62) runs through the site.
- 1.8.2
- A majority of the site has been given a Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification followed by a large portion of the northern extent of the site being classified as Urban and a small corner of the land being graded as Grade 4.

Figure 1.6
Site Context Photos



View taken from within the western parcel of the site looking south west towards the site entrance off Trowbridge Road



View taken from with the north western parcel of the site looking north east



View taken from the PRoW along the western edge of the site looking south



View taken from the PRoW passing through site

1.0 Landscape Baseline

1.9 Baseline Landscape Assessment

1.9.1 Identifying Landscape Receptors

- 1.9.1.1
- For the purposes of the landscape assessment, the landscape resource is considered through a three-tier structure comprising: landscape character, landscape features, and landscape qualities.
- 1.9.1.2
- This approach distinguishes between the broad character of the landscape, the individual elements that contribute to it, and the way in which it is experienced. It also aligns with good LVIA practice, and provides a clear and proportionate basis for the subsequent assessment of effects.

1.9.2 Landscape Character

- 1.9.2.1
- The site lies within National Character Area 117: Avon Vales and within the Wiltshire Landscape Character Area 12B: Avon Open Clay Vale. This landscape is characterised by a low-lying, predominantly pastoral vale, with a relatively level landform, open skies, and a strong influence from watercourses and associated vegetation. Field patterns are typically medium to large scale, defined by hedgerows and drainage features, with settlement ranging from larger towns to smaller villages and scattered farmsteads.
- 1.9.2.2
- At a local level, the site forms part of the River Avon valley landscape on the south-eastern edge of Bradford-on-Avon. The landform is gently sloping, falling towards the River Avon, and comprises a series of fields bounded by hedgerows and tree belts. The river corridor provides a strong natural edge to the site and contributes to the wider landscape structure.
- 1.9.2.3
- The surrounding landscape is influenced by the proximity of Bradford-on-Avon to the north-west and Trowbridge to the south-east, resulting in a transitional character between urban edge and open countryside. While the wider setting includes higher land associated with the Cotswolds to the west, the site itself does not exhibit the defining characteristics of that landscape and is more closely aligned with the open clay vale of the Avon corridor.
- 1.9.2.4
- Overall, the site is considered to be representative of the local landscape character, albeit influenced by its edge-of-settlement context and a mix of agricultural and recreational uses.
- 1.9.2.5
- The value of the landscape character receptor is assessed as **medium-high**, reflecting its contribution to the setting of Bradford-on-Avon. Its susceptibility to change is assessed as **medium**, as the landscape is not remote or intact and already accommodates a degree of human activity. The resulting sensitivity is therefore **medium-high**.

1.9.3 Landscape Features

- 1.9.3.1
- The site contains a number of landscape features which contribute to local distinctiveness and landscape structure. These include:
 - The River Avon and its associated riparian corridor along the northern boundary

- Field boundaries defined by hedgerows and mature trees
- Areas of woodland and tree belts, including connections to Widbrook Wood and Great Bradford Wood
- The Kennet and Avon Canal corridor in close proximity to the south
- A Public Right of Way (BRAD18 / HOLT62) crossing the northern part of the site
- Areas of priority habitat associated with floodplain grazing marsh and riverine environments

1.9.3.2 These features form a coherent green infrastructure network that defines the site and its relationship with the surrounding landscape. The river corridor and associated vegetation are particularly important in providing enclosure, ecological value, and visual structure. The PRoW contributes to the functional and experiential connectivity of the landscape, providing access through the site and linking it to the wider countryside.

1.9.3.3 However, the distribution of features across the site is not uniform. The northern and eastern parts of the site, associated with the river corridor and floodplain, are more constrained and sensitive, whereas the more central and western field parcels are relatively open and less structurally defined.

1.9.3.4 Overall, the landscape features receptor is assessed as being of **high value**, reflecting the presence of the river corridor, vegetation structure, and ecological and recreational features. The susceptibility of these features is assessed as **medium-high**, as many are integral to the landscape structure and not easily replaced without altering character. The resulting sensitivity is therefore **high**.

1.9.4 Landscape Qualities

- 1.9.4.1
- The perceptual qualities of the site are influenced by its position on the edge of Bradford-on-Avon and its relationship with the River Avon corridor. The site is experienced as an accessible and transitional landscape, combining elements of open farmland, riverside vegetation, and recreational use.
- 1.9.4.2
- There is a degree of openness across the site, particularly within the field parcels, with intermittent enclosure provided by hedgerows, trees, and woodland edges. The presence of the River Avon and associated vegetation contributes to a sense of greenness and local distinctiveness. Views are often filtered or contained by vegetation and landform, particularly from outside the site, reinforcing the contained nature of the landscape.
- 1.9.4.3
- The site does not exhibit strong characteristics of remoteness or tranquillity due to its proximity to existing development, roads, and recreational activity. However, the sense of tranquillity is not uniform across the site, and is greater in those parts of the Site that are further from built form. However, the Site does provide a locally valued landscape resource, particularly in relation to the PRoW, the river corridor, and its role as part of the rural setting to the settlement.

1.9.4.4 Overall, the perceptual qualities receptor is assessed as having **medium value**, reflecting its local importance and contribution to landscape experience. Its susceptibility is assessed as **medium**, as the perceptual qualities are influenced by existing urban edge conditions and are therefore capable of accommodating some change. The resulting sensitivity is **medium**.

1.9.5 Landscape Baseline Overview

- 1.9.5.1
- The site comprises a settlement-edge landscape within the Avon Vales, defined by a combination of open pastoral fields, a strong river corridor, hedgerow boundaries, and areas of woodland and vegetation. It forms part of the transitional landscape between Bradford-on-Avon and the wider countryside and contributes to the rural setting of the settlement.
- 1.9.5.2
- The three-tier assessment identifies that landscape features are the most sensitive component of the landscape resource, particularly the River Avon corridor, vegetation structure, and PRoW network. Landscape character has moderate to moderately high sensitivity, reflecting its representative nature and contribution to settlement setting and Landscape qualities have moderate sensitivity, reflecting a landscape that is locally valued but influenced by its urban edge context.
- 1.9.5.3
- Overall, the site is considered to have a moderate to high landscape sensitivity, with variation across the site. The highest sensitivity is associated with the northern and eastern areas adjoining the River Avon and associated habitats, while the more open field parcels to the west and centre are of comparatively lower sensitivity.

Landscape Baseline - Summary Matrix

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Landscape Character	Medium - High	Medium	Medium - High
Landscape Features	High	Medium - High	High
Landscape Qualities	Medium	Medium	Medium

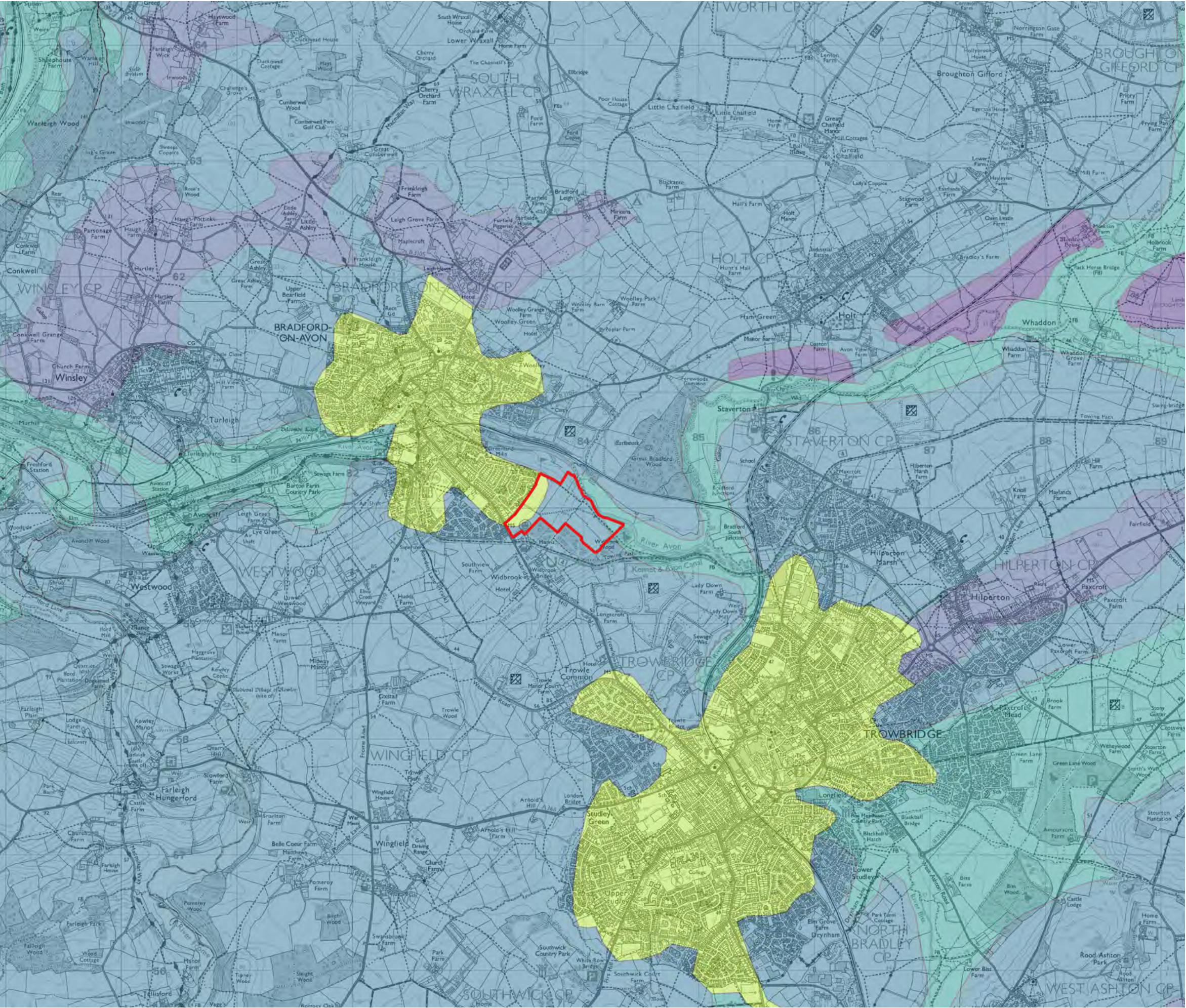


Figure 1.7
Agricultural Land Classification

- Application Site
- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3
- Grade 4
- Urban

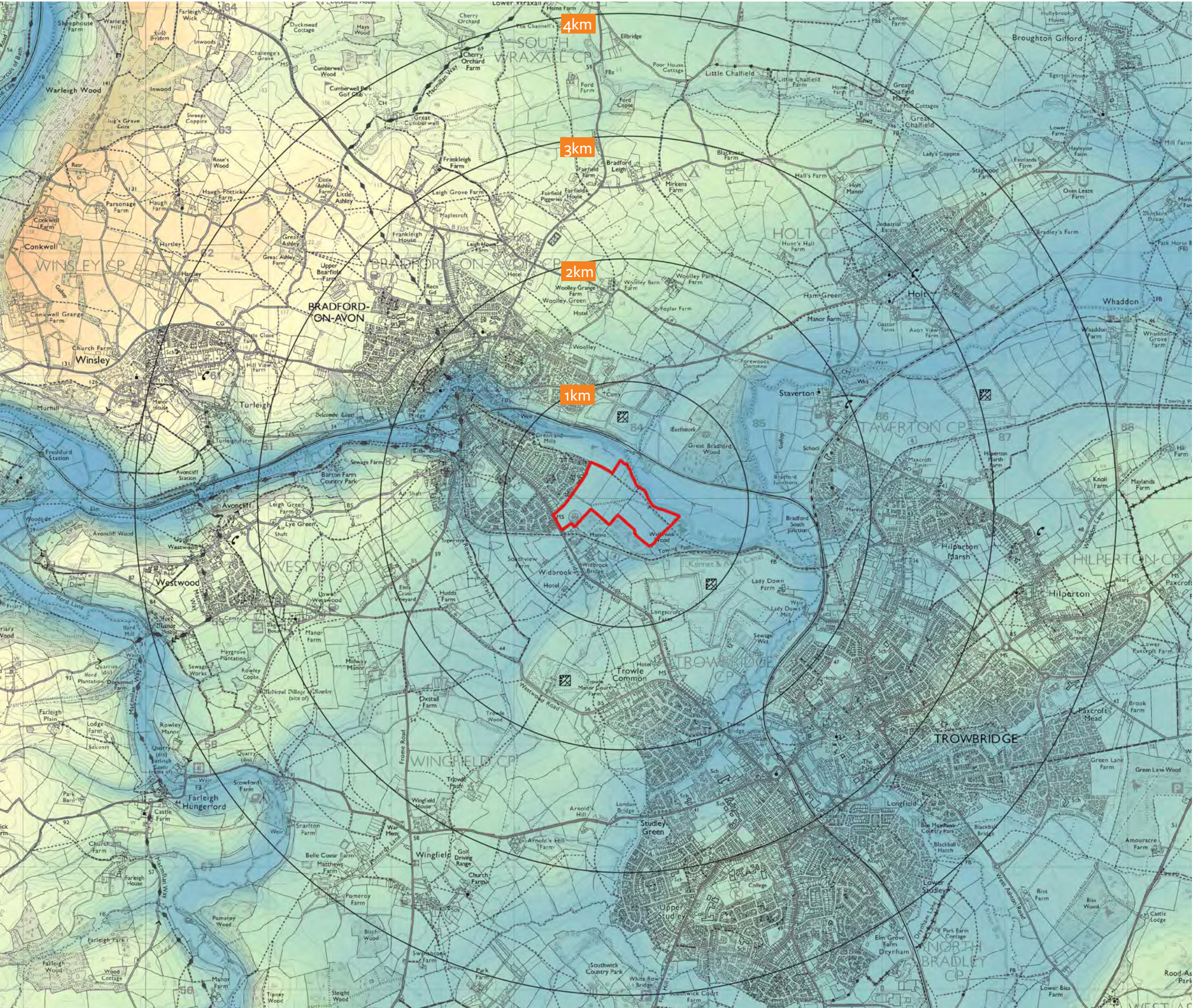


Figure 1.8
Topography

- Application site
- 185m - 204m
- 164m - 185m
- 140m - 163m
- 116m - 139m
- 92m - 115m
- 67m - 91m
- 43m - 66m
- 19m - 42m
- 0-18m

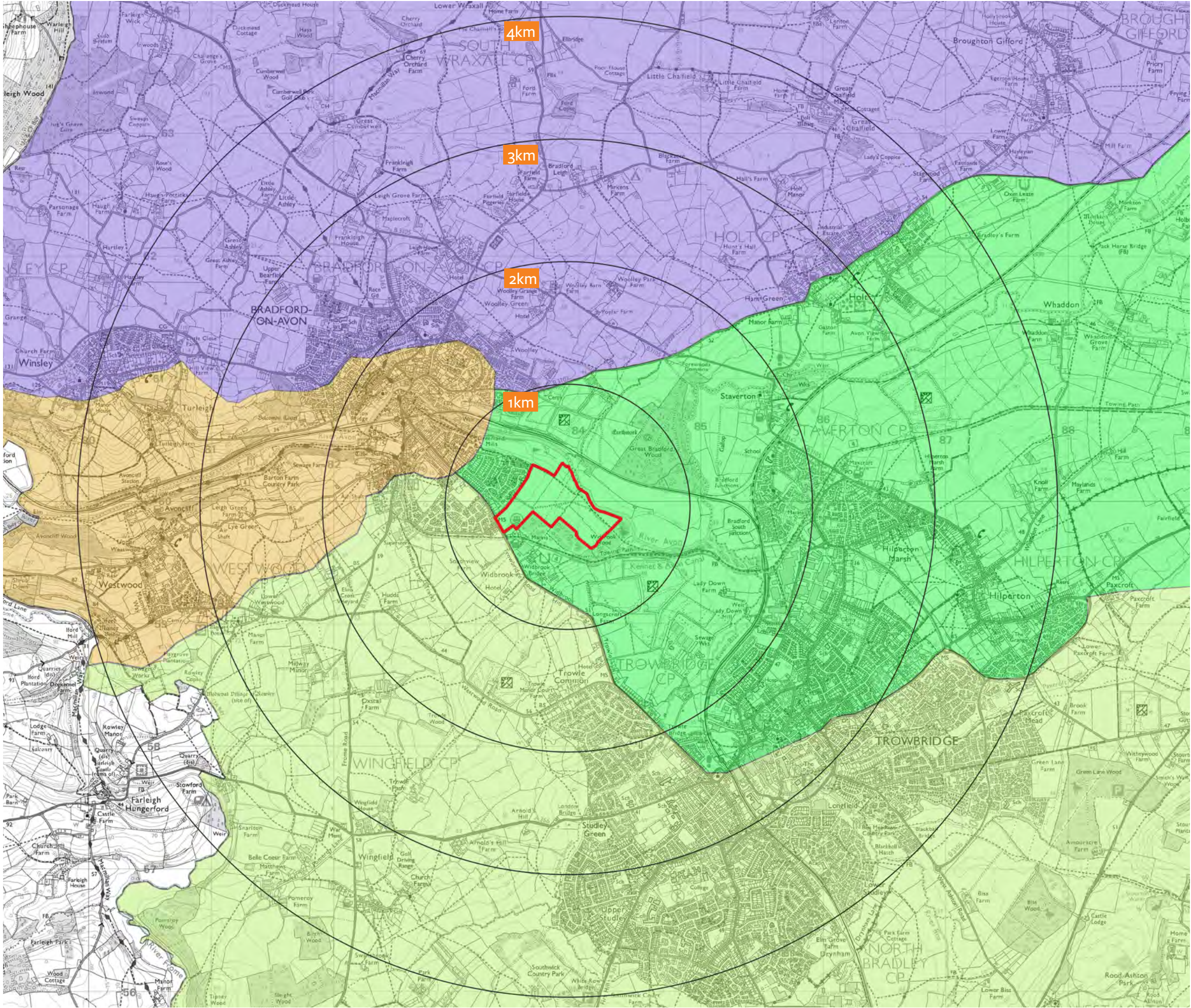


Figure 1.9
Landscape Character Areas

- Application site
- Landscape Character Area
- Limestone Lowland
 - Limestone Valleys
 - Open Clay Vale
 - Rolling Clay Lowland

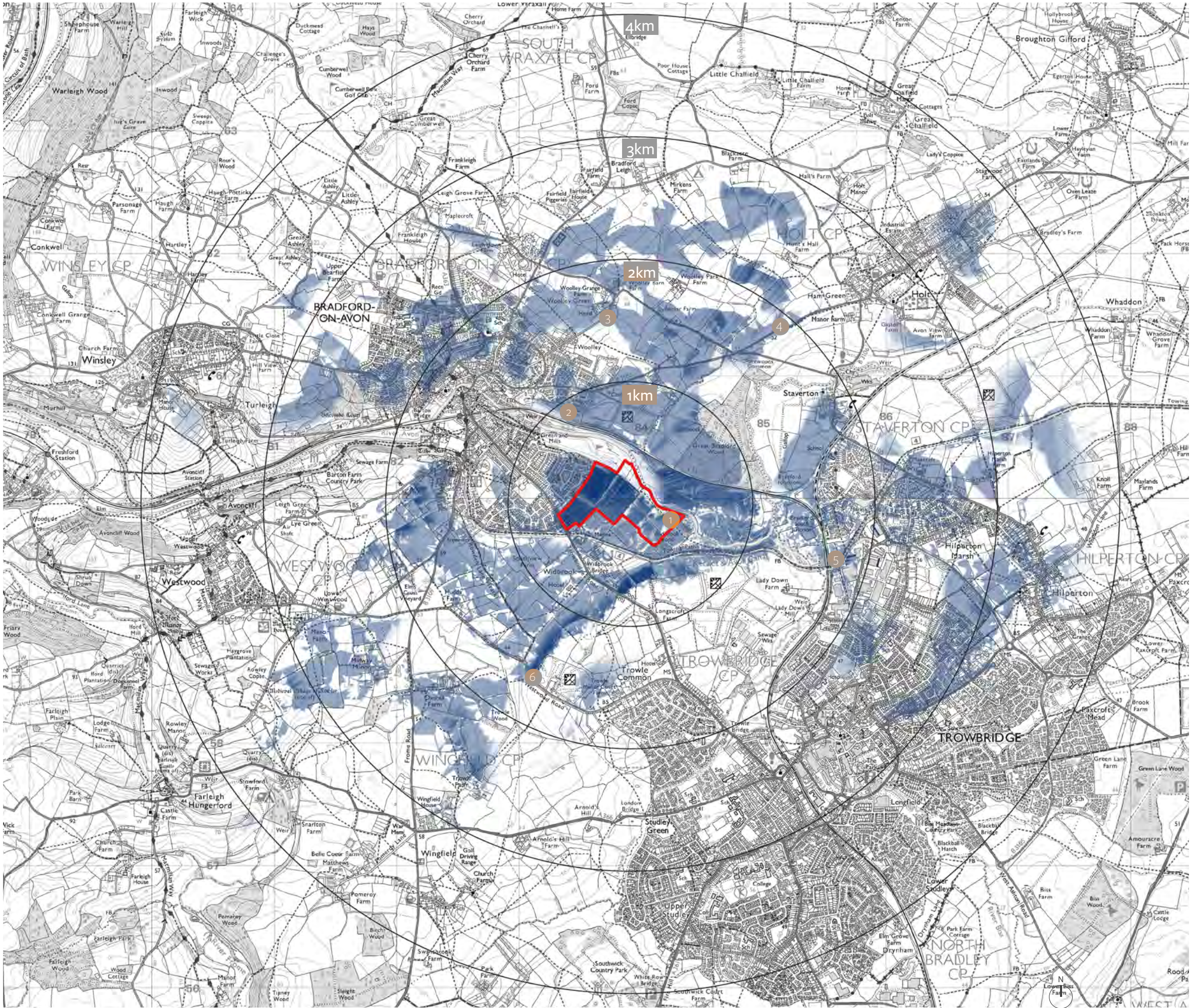


Figure 2.1
Zone of Theoretical Visibility
and Viewpoint Locations

- Site boundary
 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility DTM data
Potential visibility based on DTM data, which uses 5m “bare earth” OS contour data, which does not take into account screening by vegetation or existing built form. The true visual envelope of the site will be established through in-field analysis.
 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility DSM data
Potential visibility based on DSM data, which uses 1m National LiDAR Programme data (Composite, Last Return, 2022), provided by DEFRA (Open Government Licence v3.0).
 - 1 Representative Viewpoint Locations
(See Section 2.0)
- LiDAR - stands for Light Detection and Ranging and uses light pulses to capture natural and built features on the earth's surface.*
- This projection takes into account potential visibility based on existing vegetation and built form as captured by the 2022 DSM LiDAR data. The true visual envelope of the site will be tested through in-field analysis, and illustrated by representative viewpoint photographs.*
- The roof ridge height was set at 8.5m above ground level for the assessment.*

2.o Visual Baseline

2.1 Visual Baseline Overview

- 2.1.1
- Figure 2.1 illustrates the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), which has been used to identify the landscape that could potentially be affected by the development.
- 2.1.2
- A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was created using terrain and surface data, and potential viewpoints from this projection were then tested via in person site analysis.
- 2.1.3
- Where the site is visible in immediate views the site has been edged with an orange line and where the site is visible from more distant viewpoints this has been shaded in orange, to assist with identifying site extents.
- 2.1.4
- All potential visual receptors have been listed, however viewpoint sensitivity will be assessed based on the highest receptor grade e.g. viewers who are most sensitive to visual amenity.
- 2.1.5
- Representative viewpoints (RVPs) were selected and have been analysed to consider potential mitigation measures.

2.2 Photographic Study

- 2.2.1
- The following section provides a series of representative viewpoints, providing commentary on the composition of the view and likely visibility of the site and offers potential mitigation or design development considerations, where necessary.
- 2.2.2
- Photographs for the visual appraisal were taken using a Nikon D3300 DSLR camera at a focal length equivalent to 50mm on a conventional 35mm camera, in order to create the view, which is generally accepted as being closest to that seen by the human eye.
- 2.2.3
- The photographs were taken over two days day on Thursday 13 March 2025 and Friday 14 March 2025.
- 2.2.4
- Weather conditions were sunny with occasional overhead clouds.
- 2.2.5
- Photographs taken are representative of views with the naked eye. Any zoomed or wide angle, multi-photo images and panoramic views have been identified.
- 2.2.6
- No access was gained to private or residential ownerships surrounding the site.
- 2.2.7
- Where site field parcels are visible, these have been highlighted in orange. Where the site is obscured by intervening vegetation, the approximate extent and/ or location of the site has been identified.
- 2.2.8
- The photographs used are intended to be illustrative, giving an indication of the views discussed and are not meant to replace the experience of visiting the viewpoint in person.

2.3 Summary of views

- 2.3.1
- Visibility is generally limited to immediate and local views, particularly from within the site and along the Public Right of Way (PRoW) that passes through it. There are occasional filtered or partial views from the north-west and east, where gaps in vegetation allow glimpsed views, and very limited or no visibility from more distant locations, where vegetation, topography and built form provide effective screening
- 2.3.2
- The visual baseline is therefore characterised by a relatively contained visual envelope, with the site forming a perceptible component of views primarily at close range.
- 2.3.3
- Visual receptors have been identified based on the extent of potential visibility and the nature of receptor activity. These include:
 - Users of the PRoW (BRAD18 / HOLT62) within and adjacent to the site
 - Residents and recreational users on the edge of Bradford-on-Avon (including Kingston Farm)
 - Users of local roads (including Woolley Street and Bradford Road)
 - Users of the wider recreational network, including National Cycle Route 4 and PRoWs near the Kennet and Avon Canal
 - Walkers, cyclists and motorists in the wider study area
- 2.3.4
- In accordance with GLVIA3, visual receptor sensitivity is derived from a combination of receptor value (based on the importance of the view and any associated designations or qualities) and susceptibility (based on the activity of the receptor and their expectation of the view).

Visual Assessment Summary Table

RVP No.	Viewpoint	Visual Receptor/s	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
o1	View from the PRoW Holt 62 passing through site	Walkers on the PRoW	Medium	High	Medium - High
o2	View from the Kingston Farm Development	Walkers and Residents	Low	Medium	Medium - Low
o3	View from Woolley Street looking south towards the site	Walkers on the Road	Low	Low	Very Low
o3	View from Woolley Street looking south towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low
o4	View from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site	Walkers on the Road	Low	Medium	Medium - Low
o4	View from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low
o5	View from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west	Cyclists on NCN4	High	Medium - Low	Medium
o5	View from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west	Walkers on the PRoW	High	Medium	Medium - High
o6	View from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site	Walkers and Residents	Low	Low	Very Low
o6	View from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low

2.0 Visual Baseline

RVPo1 - View from the PRow Holt 62 passing through site

Distance: okm (Within site boundary)

Grid reference: ST 84253 59778

Elevation: 31m AOD

Description:
This viewpoint is representative of people using footpath BRAD18 / Holt62 travelling northbound towards Bradford-on-Avon and walking through the site. The site is visible throughout this whole view. Additionally, the boat yard and shed can be seen from this viewpoint. Additionally, the outskirts of Bradford-on-Avon can be seen from this viewpoint. The River Avon can also be seen from this viewpoint. There is also a dog walker visible in this viewpoint. Many of the views from out of the site are blocked by intervening vegetation such as mature trees and hedgerows.

The viewpoint is located within an area of regional importance, connecting the centre of Bradford-On-Avon to the Widbrook Wood Nature Reserve, although aside from being in the Green Belt, this is undesignated land. As such, the site is considered to be of **Medium** Value, reflecting its locaion as a locally important recreational route. As the visual receptors will be PRow users focusing on the landscape experience, suceptibility has been graded as **High** as most of the site is openly available to see. This is despite parts of the site also being perceived to be within an urban edge context.

Overall, therefore, walkers on the PRow are assessed as having **Medium - High** Sensitivity.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Walkers on the ProW	Medium	High	Medium - High



Above: Photograph 1 - Taken from the PRow passing through site

2.o Visual Baseline

RVPo2 - View from the Kingston Farm development

Distance: 0.5km (from the north west)

Grid reference: ST 83461 60699

Elevation: 53m AOD

Description: This view is taken from the southern edge of the recently built residential development of Kingston Farm and is representative of a walker or resident looking south west towards the site. The site itself is hidden by mature growth trees which leads down to the banks of the River Avon. Some rooftops are visible from the existing residential development off Trowbridge Road. Views of development are limited by rows of trees which bound the Golf Course and therefore the visible impact is considered minor. The backdrop is formed by the higher ground of Trowbridge and Wiltshire county.

Where the site is glimpsed, this has been highlighted in orange. Foreground hedgerow planting limits views across the landscape. It is likely that the seasons will affect the views of the site whereby it is likely that summer vegetation will stop views onto the site.

This viewpoint is associated within an everyday location that does not benefit from any designations or cultural associations, and as such, the receptor value has been assessed as **Low**.

As the majority of receptors will be residents, they will have a heightened susceptibility, although the views of the site from this location will be from when moving around in the public realm, rather than when at home. The Site is also not prominent in the view. As such, receptor susceptibility has been assessed as **Medium**.

Overall, therefore, the visual receptors are assessed as having **Low - Medium** Sensitivity.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Walkers and residents	Low	Medium	Medium - Low



Above: Photograph 2 - Taken from the recently completed Kingston Farm development

2.o Visual Baseline

RVPo3 - View from Woolley Street looking south towards the site

Distance: 1.2km (from the north)

Grid reference: ST 83736 61504

Elevation: 59m AOD

Description: This viewpoint looks south towards the site. This view is representative of users of Woolley Street. Views onto the undeveloped site are largely blocked by intervening hedgerows and trees. Within this viewpoint, multiple buildings are visible such as the *Five Zero Supercars* barns. Additionally, on the right side of the panel housing from the *Kingston Farm* Development can be seen.

This viewpoint has no special association and is from an everyday location - as such has a **Low** value.

As visibility of the Site is limited, and the viewpoint is not from within any areas of special quality, susceptibility is reduced. Moreover, other development and housing schemes can be seen from this viewpoint. Thus, the overall susceptibility from this viewpoint for walkers has been assessed as **Low**.

This viewpoint would also be partially representative for Motorists. However, because motorists are focusing on the road and the drive, their receptor value and susceptibility would also be **Low**.

Overall, therefore, both walkers and motorists on Woolley Street are assessed to have **Very Low** Sensitivity.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Walkers	Low	Low	Very Low
Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low



Above: Photograph 3 - Taken from Woolley Street looking south towards the site

2.o Visual Baseline

RVPo4 - View from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site

Distance: 2.1km (from the north east)

Grid reference: ST 85549 61546

Elevation: 46m AOD

Description: This viewpoint is representative of a walker looking south west from Bradford Road. The agricultural land that is visible in a majority of the frame is typical of the wider landscape character of 12B Avon Open Clay Valley Vale. The B3105 cuts through the centre of the frame and is a main road in and out of Bradford-on-Avon. This area of land extends to the north east of the site and is generally very open with hills that are often wooded. The site is mostly screened by Great Bradford Wood and the topography of the landscape. The landscape is rural in character, with very limited built form visible.

However, this is an everyday location and is not within any national, regional or cultural landscape designations. As such, the Receptor Value has been graded as **Low**.

Walkers are likely to be passing through and local, rather than actively engaged in recreation at this location. The site is also hard to identify within the view, so while development would be incongruous, it is unlikely to lead to adverse consequences for the viewer. For walkers, who are more likely to be aware of the change, susceptibility has been graded as **Low**, leading to an overall sensitivity of **Medium - Low**.

For motorists, their view will be more fleeting, and their chance to perceive the change greatly reduced. As such, their susceptibility is assessed as **Low** and their overall sensitivity is **Very Low**.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Walkers on the road	Low	Medium	Medium - Low
Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low



Above: Photograph 4 - Taken from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site

2.o Visual Baseline

RVPo5 - View from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west

Distance: 1.3km (from the east)

Grid reference: ST 85596 59455

Elevation: 39m AOD

Description: This viewpoint is representative of users of the PRow TROW64 and National Cycle Route 4 looking west towards the site from the footbridge across the Kennet and Avon Canal . The footbridge is also a Grade II listed structure (*Bridge to East of Aqueduct Over Railway*).

Adjacent to the bridge there is a bench at the lower towpath level with views that look down onto the canal, but from the bench the site is completely hidden behind dense mature vegetation.

This viewpoint is associated with a recreational corridor and includes seating (albeit at a lower level with no views of the Site) which means that its value is elevated. Taking these factors into account, the value is assessed as **High** for both Walkers and Cyclists.

As it is from a Grade II listed structure, receptor susceptibility is also increased. However, this is moderated by the fact that views are very much focused towards the Kennet and Avon Canal and surrounding vegetation, with open views in the other direction which will be the focus of most people. In addition, the site is largely screened by intervening tree cover.

For cyclists, due to their travelling speed, susceptibility is assessed as being **Medium - Low**. For pedestrians, it is will be higher and is assessed as being **Medium**.

Overall, therefore, the Visual Sensitivity for a cyclist using National Cycle Route 4 would be graded as **Medium**, and for a walker on the PRow it will be **Medium - High**.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Cyclists on NCN 4	High	Medium - Low	Medium
Walkers on the ProW	High	Medium	Medium - High



Above: Photograph 5 - Taken from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west

2.o Visual Baseline

RVP 06 - View from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site

Distance: 1.4km (from the south)

Grid reference: ST 83390 58330

Elevation: 54m AOD

Description: This view is representative of users of Westwood Road. This viewpoint is not associated with any national landscape designations. The urban extents of Bradford-on-Avon are visible from this viewpoint and dominate the background of the view, while the Trowle Solar Farm dominates the foreground. A combination of the solar farm and mature vegetation largely block views of the site.

This viewpoint is considered to be an everyday location and is not from any designated recreational route. As such, the value for both walkers / residents and motorists is assessed and being **Low**.

As the view is typical of an urban edge context, with limited scenic or perceptual value, and with the Solar Farm dominating the foreground, walkers and residents are unlikely to notice any small change that would arise from a residential development almost 1.5km from the location. However, as they are regular users of the area and they may experience the view for longer. Despite this, as the site is such a small part of the view, they are still assessed as being of **Low susceptibility**, and as a result **Very Low sensitivity**.

This viewpoint would also be partially representative for Motorists, who are focusing on the road ahead. It can therfore be determined that their susceptibility would be lower, but still categorised as **Low**. Subsequently, their sensitivity would also be assessed as **Very Low**.

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Walkers and residents	Low	Low	Very Low
Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low



Above: Photograph6 - Taken from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site

3.0 Scheme Description

3.1 Summary of Proposals

- 3.1.1 The proposed development comprises a residential-led scheme including up to approximately 224 dwellings, together with a residential care facility and a range of supporting community and recreational uses. The development is accessed from Trowbridge Road, with a defined primary access route extending into the site and connecting to an internal network of streets and green corridors.
- 3.1.2 The scheme has been structured to form a logical extension to the existing urban edge of Bradford-on-Avon, with built form concentrated in the western part of the site adjacent to existing development. This area accommodates a higher density core, transitioning to a lower density periphery toward the site edges, allowing the development to respond positively to the surrounding landscape context.
- 3.1.3 A comprehensive network of green infrastructure is incorporated throughout the site, including areas of public open space, a central green corridor, community allotments, a community orchard, and formal and informal play spaces (including LAP and LEAP provision). Recreational facilities are also provided in the form of playing pitches and associated changing facilities.
- 3.1.4 The eastern and northern parts of the site remain largely undeveloped and are structured around open space, ecological enhancement and drainage features, including attenuation ponds, swales and areas of wetland planting. These areas form part of a wider landscape framework linked to the River Avon corridor.
- 3.1.5 Pedestrian and cycle connections are integrated throughout the scheme, including links to the existing Public Right of Way network and connections toward the river corridor and surrounding landscape.

3.2 Landscape Framework

- 3.2.1 The landscape strategy is underpinned by the retention and reinforcement of the existing landscape structure, combined with the introduction of new green infrastructure to integrate the development into its setting and to enhance landscape character.
- 3.2.2 The scheme adopts a landscape-led approach, with built development focused toward the western portion of the site, allowing the eastern and northern extents to remain open and function as part of a continuous green corridor associated with the River Avon. This approach maintains a clear distinction between the built edge of Bradford-on-Avon and the wider river valley landscape.
- 3.2.3 A key component of the strategy is the provision of a central green corridor (green street) running through the development, which provides visual and physical connectivity, breaks up built form, and creates a structured transition between development parcels and open space. This corridor also integrates movement routes and contributes to legibility within the scheme.
- 3.2.4 The strategy incorporates a density gradient, with higher density development located adjacent to the existing settlement edge and lower density development toward the site margins. This assists in reducing the perceived scale of development in wider views and provides a more gradual transition into the surrounding countryside.
- 3.2.5 The eastern part of the site is characterised by open space, attenuation features and wetland planting, creating a multifunctional landscape that combines drainage, biodiversity enhancement and visual containment. This area reinforces the setting of the River Avon and contributes to the wider ecological network.
- 3.2.6 Structural planting, including new woodland blocks, tree belts and hedgerow reinforcement, is proposed along the site boundaries, particularly to the south-west, west and north-east. This planting framework is designed to integrate the development into the landscape, filter views, and strengthen connections with existing vegetation, including Widbrook Wood and the river corridor.
- 3.2.7 Publicly accessible green spaces, including allotments, a community orchard and recreational areas, are distributed throughout the site, contributing to both landscape character and community function.

3.3 Proposed Mitigation Features

- 3.2.1 A range of embedded mitigation measures are incorporated into the scheme design to reduce potential landscape and visual effects and to ensure that the development is appropriately integrated into its surroundings.
- 3.3.2 **Structural Planting and Buffers** - Proposed woodland buffers and reinforced planting along the site boundaries provide visual containment, particularly along the edges facing open countryside and the River Avon corridor. These buffers assist in filtering views of the development and reducing its prominence in the wider landscape.
- 3.3.3 **Retention and Enhancement of Vegetation** -Existing hedgerows, trees and vegetation are retained where possible and supplemented with additional planting to strengthen landscape structure and continuity. This contributes to maintaining local character and enhancing ecological value.
- 3.3.4 **Green Infrastructure Framework** - The provision of a central green corridor, open spaces, and a network of green routes breaks up the massing of built form and reduces the visual impact of the development. These spaces also provide visual relief within the scheme and contribute to a more permeable and legible layout.
- 3.3.5 **SuDS and Wetland Features** - Attenuation ponds, swales and wetland planting are integrated into the eastern part of the site. These features provide both functional drainage infrastructure and landscape mitigation, creating naturalistic features that reflect the character of the river valley and enhance biodiversity.
- 3.3.6 **Density and Layout Strategy** - The use of a higher density core and lower density edges reduces the perceived scale of development in sensitive locations and allows for a softer transition into the surrounding landscape. The arrangement of built form adjacent to the existing settlement edge further limits encroachment into the open countryside.
- 3.3.7 **Recreational and Access Integration** - The retention and integration of the PRow, along with new pedestrian and cycle connections, and both formal and informal play areas ensures that the site remains accessible and that recreational use of the landscape is maintained and enhanced. This supports the continued experiential value of the site.



Legend

- Application boundary
- Existing pipeline
- Access from Trowbridge Road
- Proposed mobility hub
- Residential care facility
- Primary access route
- Proposed community allotments
- Local Area of Play (LAP)
- Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)
- Changing facilities and associated pitches
- Pedestrian connection
- Proposed woodland buffer
- Central green street
- Community garden i.e orchard
- Higher density core
- Lower density periphery
- Wetland and marginal planting
- Proposed attenuation pond
- Proposed swales
- Drainage outfall
- Public Right of Way

Trowbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon		E
Illustrative Layout		CW / DH
250310 L 02 03	NTS @ A2	Feb 2026

CliftonEmerydesign

Bristol • Exeter • London • Plymouth
www.cliftonemerydesign.co.uk mail@cliftonemerydesign.co.uk

Drawing Status PLANNING

CONTRACTORS MUST CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE. ONLY FOURED DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE WORKED FROM. THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT.

4.0 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

4.0 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The assessment of landscape effects considers the consequences of the proposed development on the landscape resource identified in the baseline, structured around the three-tier approach of landscape character, landscape features and landscape qualities.
- 4.1.2 The appraisal has regard to the form of development shown on the illustrative plan, including the concentration of built form adjacent to the existing settlement edge, the retention of substantial open land to the east, and the incorporation of a landscape framework based on structural planting, open space and SuDS features.
- 4.1.3 The proposed development would give rise to a permanent and material change to the site, replacing open pastoral and recreational land at the edge of Bradford-on-Avon with a residential-led scheme set within a structured landscape framework.
- 4.1.4 The primary effects would be experienced at the site and immediate local level, where the introduction of built form within the western part of the site would alter existing landscape character, field pattern and the degree of openness currently experienced. Visual effects would be most pronounced for receptors within the site and along the Public Right of Way, where direct and sustained views of the development would occur.
- 4.1.5 In the wider context, effects would be more limited due to the relatively contained visual envelope, influenced by existing vegetation, landform and built form, and by the scheme’s landscape-led approach, which retains substantial areas of open land and incorporates structural planting and green infrastructure.
- 4.1.6 While these measures would, over time, assist in integrating the development into its surroundings and moderating effects, the change from open land to a developed settlement edge would remain clearly perceptible and irreversible.

4.2 Appraisal of Landscape Effects

Effects of Landscape Character

- 4.2.1 The site lies on the south-eastern edge of Bradford-on-Avon, within NCA 117 Avon Vales and Wiltshire LCA 12B Avon Open Clay Vale, and is influenced by the River Avon corridor, boundary hedgerows, woodland edges, a PRoW crossing the site and the wider Green Belt context.
- 4.2.2 The scheme would introduce a substantial area of built form into land that is currently experienced as part of the rural edge and river valley fringe of Bradford-on-Avon.

- 4.2.3 The greatest change would arise in the western part of the site, where open fields would be replaced by residential development, associated streets, parking, domestic curtilages and built infrastructure. This would result in the partial loss of the site’s present role as open pastoral land at the urban edge and would alter the balance between settlement and countryside in this part of the site.
- 4.2.4 That said, the degree of change to wider landscape character is moderated by the way the proposed scheme has been structured. Built development is focused adjacent to the existing urban edge rather than extending across the full site extent. The eastern and northern parts of the site remain predominantly open and are given over to open space including drainage features, wetland planting and landscape buffers, thereby retaining a substantial part of the site’s undeveloped relationship with the River Avon corridor. The proposed density gradient, with a higher density core closer to the existing settlement and lower density edges, would also assist in softening the transition from town to countryside.
- 4.2.5 At the scale of the local landscape character area, the development would not fundamentally alter the defining characteristics of the wider Avon Open Clay Vale, which is a broad vale landscape influenced by settlement, watercourses, vegetation structure and mixed land uses. However, it would noticeably alter the character of this particular parcel from edge-of-settlement pasture/recreational land to a more urbanised settlement edge with embedded green infrastructure.

- 4.2.6 As a result, overall the magnitude of effect on landscape character is assessed as **Medium**. As a result, the significance of effect will be **Moderate Adverse**, reducing over time to **Moderate - Minor Adverse** as planting and landscape structure establish.

Effects on Landscape Features

- 4.2.7 The scheme would affect a number of existing landscape features, most notably the open field pattern within the western part of the site and the present simple relationship between pasture, hedgerow boundaries and the settlement edge. The introduction of built form, roads and formalised open space would change this existing field structure and the character of the site’s western parcels.
- 4.2.8 However, the most sensitive landscape features identified in the baseline — namely the River Avon corridor, associated riparian vegetation, the stronger vegetation framework, and the more ecologically sensitive northern and eastern parts of the site — are largely retained and reinforced.
- 4.2.9 The illustrative plan shows these areas remaining open and being incorporated into a wider landscape and drainage framework, including attenuation ponds, swales, wetland and marginal planting, woodland

- buffers and pedestrian connections. This would preserve the strongest landscape structure at the site’s outer edge and, in places, may strengthen it.
- 4.2.10 The PRoW crossing the site would remain a defining landscape feature, although its setting would change materially where it passes through or alongside areas of development and formalised open space. Elsewhere, the route would continue to be experienced in association with open land and the river corridor. The proximity of Widbrook Wood and the wooded belts to the south and east would continue to provide a strong vegetated backdrop and enclosure.
- 4.2.11 Overall, the magnitude of effect on landscape features is assessed as **Medium** in the short term, reflecting the loss of part of the existing field structure and change to the setting of the PRoW, but the Significance is assessed as **Moderate Adverse** as the most sensitive landscape features in the north and east of the Site are retained,
- 4.2.12 Over time, this is likely to reduce to **Medium - Small** magnitude of effect, and thus reducing to **Moderate - Minor Adverse**, as the structural planting, SuDS features and woodland buffers mature.
- 4.2.13 In relation to the retained river corridor and associated habitat structure, effects are likely to be **Small** magnitude, and therefore **Minor Adverse to Negligible** significance, and potentially locally beneficial where planting and wetland creation strengthen the green infrastructure framework.

Effects of Landscape Qualities

- 4.2.14 The present perceptual qualities of the site arise from its role as an accessible, open and verdant edge-of-settlement landscape with a mixed agricultural, recreational and riverside character. The development would reduce the current sense of openness and rural separation across the western part of the site and would introduce more overtly urban characteristics, including built form, streets, activity and lighting.
- 4.2.15 This change would be most apparent in those parts of the site currently experienced as open land adjoining the existing settlement, where the transition from built edge to countryside would become more compressed. The sense of the site as informal urban fringe or open pastoral margin would be diminished in those areas.
- 4.2.16 Nevertheless, the scheme would retain a substantial open component across the eastern half of the site and along the River Avon edge. The incorporation of allotments, orchard, pitches, open space, wetland features and planting would mean that the scheme does not read as continuous urban expansion across the full red line. Instead, it would create a more managed and structured edge condition, with a combination of built development and open landscape.

4.o Landscape and Visual Appraisal

- 4.2.17
- The retained PRoW and pedestrian connections would preserve public experience of the site, albeit in a modified setting.
- 4.2.18
- Overall, the magnitude of effect on landscape qualities is assessed as **Medium - Small** in **Year o**, resulting in a **Moderate - Minor Adverse** significance of effect. This will reduce to **Small** magnitude and **Minor Adverse** in the longer term as the landscape framework establishes and the development becomes assimilated into a greener settlement edge.

Landscape Appraisal Summary

- 4.2.19
- Taken together, the proposals would result in a clear and permanent change to the character of the western part of the site, replacing open edge-of-settlement fields with residential development and associated infrastructure. The greatest effects would arise at site level, particularly in relation to field structure, openness and the present rural-fringe character.
- 4.2.20
- Those effects are moderated by the scheme’s landscape-led structure: development is contained largely to the western part of the site adjoining Bradford-on-Avon; substantial open land is retained to the east and north; the River Avon corridor is broadly preserved; and structural planting, SuDS and open space are embedded into the layout.
- 4.2.21
- On that basis, the likely significant landscape effects would be concentrated at the site and immediate local level, rather than extending across the wider landscape character area.

4.3 Appraisal of Visual Effects

- 4.3.1
- The visual appraisal considers the effects of the proposals on the visual receptors identified in the baseline, having regard to the actual visual envelope established through fieldwork in the existing LVIA material.
- 4.3.2
- That material indicates that the site is most visible from within the site and along the PRoW, with more limited, filtered or absent views from surrounding areas as a result of topography, vegetation and existing built form. The representative viewpoints include views from the PRoW within the site, Kingston Farm, Woolley Street, Bradford Road, the footbridge near Brick Lane / NCR4, and Westwood Road.

RVPo1 - PRoW within the Site

- 4.3.3
- Users of the PRoW crossing the site would experience the most substantial change. At present, the route passes through open land and allows direct appreciation of the site as a pastoral and riverside edge landscape. Under the proposals, parts of this route would become associated with development, formalised green space and a more managed landscape setting.

- 4.3.4
- Although the PRoW is retained and the illustrative plan indicates that it would remain integrated into a substantial green infrastructure framework, the current open-field character of the route would be materially altered, particularly where built form occupies the western part of the site. The route would, however, continue to benefit from nearby open space, planting, the eastern retained landscape and the River Avon corridor.

- 4.3.5
- The effect on walkers using the PRoW is assessed as **Large** in Year o, resulting in a **Major - Moderate Adverse** significance at opening year, reducing to **Medium** magnitude and **Moderate Adverse** as planting and zopen space mature.

RVPo2 - Kingston Farm Development

- 4.3.6
- From the edge of Kingston Farm, the baseline indicates that the site is largely screened by mature vegetation associated with the River Avon corridor, with only limited or filtered glimpses possible. The proposals would introduce built form into the site, but the extent of visibility from this location would remain moderated by vegetation and intervening landscape structure. Additional planting proposed within the scheme would further assist in filtering views.
- 4.3.7
- The effect on residents and walkers at this viewpoint is assessed as **Small**, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect, reducing to **Negligible** magnitude and **Negligible Neutral** significance over time.

RVPo3 - Woolley Street

- 4.3.8
- The baseline indicates that views from Woolley Street are screened by intervening vegetation, hedgerows and built form, and that the site does not form a perceptible component of the view.
- 4.3.9
- On the basis of the illustrative plan, there is no reason to conclude that the scheme would become materially more visible from this location, and any visibility would be limited and seasonal.

- 4.3.9
- The magnitude of effect on walkers and motorists from this viewpoint is therefore assessed as **Negligible**, and will have **Negligible Adverse** significance in Year o reducing to **Negligible Neutral** significance as landscape matures in Year 15.

RVPo4 - Bradford Road

- 4.3.10
- From Bradford Road, the baseline indicates that the site is screened by topography and woodland, including Great Bradford Wood, and does not contribute meaningfully to the view. The proposals would not alter that underlying relationship.

- 4.3.11
- The magnitude of effect on walkers and motorists from this viewpoint is therefore assessed as **Negligible**, and will have **Negligible Neutral** significance in Year o and Year 15.

RVPo5 - Footbridge near Brick Lane / NCN4

- 4.3.12
- This viewpoint is associated with recreational receptors and a listed structure, and therefore has higher baseline sensitivity. However, the existing baseline identifies the site as largely screened by intervening vegetation, with the view focused more strongly on the canal corridor and surrounding landscape.
- 4.3.13
- The proposals are unlikely to become a prominent or defining component of the view from this location, particularly given the retained vegetation structure and the concentration of built form toward the western part of the site.
- 4.3.14
- The effect on cyclists, who will experience the view more fleetingly, will be of a **Negligible** magnitude and **Negligible Adverse** significance reducing to **Negligible Neutral** significance over time.

- 4.3.15
- The effect on walkers and visitors to the bridge, which is only likely to be experienced in winter, is assessed as **Negligible**, resulting in a **Minor - Negligible Adverse** significance in Year o, reducing to **Negligible Adverse** (possibly Negligible Neutral) over time, as mitigation landscape matures.

RVPo6 - Westwood Road / Edge of Trowle Solar Park

- 4.3.16
- The baseline indicates that the site is not visible from this viewpoint, with views dominated by existing development, infrastructure, solar arrays and vegetation.
- 4.3.17
- The proposals would not materially alter this position, and it is anticipated that they are unlikely to be visible. If there are any fleeting, glimpsed views then they will be in the context of other development and will not be perceptable.

- 4.3.18
- As a result, the magnitude of effect is **Negligible** and the significance is **Negligible Neutral** for all receptors in both Year o and Year 15.

Visual Appraisal Summary

- 4.3.19
- The visual effects of the scheme would be strongly concentrated in the immediate local area, particularly for receptors within the site and on the PRoW that crosses it. That is where the site is presently most visible and where the greatest change from open land to development-backed green infrastructure would be experienced.

4.0 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

- 4.3.20

Beyond the site and its immediate edge, the visual envelope appears relatively contained. Existing vegetation, woodland, topography and built form limit visibility from the majority of surrounding viewpoints, and the illustrative layout — with development focused toward the existing settlement edge and open land retained toward the east and north — would assist in containing wider visual effects.
- 4.4

Overall Conclusions on Effects
- 4.4.1

On the basis of the illustrative scheme, the proposals would give rise to localised significant adverse effects on both landscape and visual receptors, principally on the site itself and its immediate character, and on walkers using the PRoW through the site.
- 4.4.2

Effects on the wider landscape and on most surrounding visual receptors are likely to be more limited, owing to the contained visual envelope, the retention of substantial open land to the east and north, and the embedded landscape mitigation shown on the illustrative plan.
- 4.4.3

Over time, establishment of the woodland buffers, wetland features, green corridor and associated planting would be expected to moderate both landscape and visual effects, although the change from open land to settlement edge development would remain permanent.

Landscape Effects - Summary Table

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Year 0		Year 15	
				Magnitude of Effect	Significance of Effect	Magnitude of Effect	Significance of Effect
Landscape Character	Medium - High	Medium	Medium - High	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Medium - Small	Moderate - Minor Adverse
Landscape Features	High	Medium - High	High	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Medium - Small	Moderate - Minor Adverse
Landscape Qualities	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium - Small	Moderate - Minor Adverse	Small	Minor Adverse

Visual Effects - Summary Table

RVP No.	Viewpoint name	Visual receptor/s	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Year 0		Year 15	
						Magnitude	Significance	Magnitude	Significance
01	View from the PRoW Holt 62 passing through site	Walkers on the PRoW	Medium	High	Medium - High	Large	Major - Moderate Adverse	Medium	Moderate Adverse
02	View from the Kingston Farm Development	Walkers and Residents	Low	Medium	Medium - Low	Small	Minor Adverse	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
03	View from Woolley Street looking south towards the site	Walkers on the Road	Low	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Negligible Adverse	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
03	View from Woolley Street looking south towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Negligible Adverse	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
04	View from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site	Walkers on the Road	Low	Medium	Medium - Low	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
04	View from Bradford Road looking south west towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
05	View from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west	Cyclists on NCN4	High	Medium - Low	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Adverse	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
05	View from the footbridge adjoining Brick Lane, Trowbridge. Looking west	Walkers on the PRoW	High	Medium	Medium - High	Negligible	Minor - Negligible Adverse	Negligible	Negligible Adverse
06	View from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site	Walkers and Residents	Low	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible Neutral
06	View from Westwood Road on the edge of Trowle Solar Park, looking north towards the site	Motorists	Low	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible Neutral

5.0 Summary & Conclusions

5.1 Summary of Appraisal

- 5.1.1 The assessment has considered the likely landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed residential-led development at land off Trowbridge Road, Bradford-on-Avon, having regard to the site's baseline characteristics, the nature of the proposals, and the sensitivity of identified receptors.
- 5.1.2 In landscape terms, the site currently forms part of an edge-of-settlement landscape within the Avon Vales, characterised by a combination of pastoral land, recreational use and a strong relationship with the River Avon corridor. The proposals would introduce built form into the western part of the site, resulting in a clear and permanent change to the existing landscape character at a local level. This would include the loss of part of the existing field pattern, a reduction in perceived openness, and the introduction of a more urbanised settlement edge.
- 5.1.3 However, the extent and nature of these effects are moderated by the structure of the scheme. Development is concentrated adjacent to the existing urban edge, with substantial areas of open land retained to the east and north, including the River Avon corridor. The incorporation of a comprehensive landscape framework, including structural planting, woodland buffers, open space, and SuDS features, would assist in integrating the development into its surroundings and reinforcing existing landscape structure.
- 5.1.4 As a result, landscape effects are assessed as moderate adverse at the site level, reducing to minor-moderate adverse over time, with effects on the wider landscape character area remaining very limited.
- 5.1.5 In visual terms, the assessment demonstrates that the site is most visible from within and immediately adjacent to its boundaries, particularly from the Public Right of Way that crosses the site. At this location, receptors would experience a substantial change in view, from open land to a development set within a managed landscape framework.
- 5.1.6 From the surrounding area, visibility of the site is generally limited by a combination of vegetation, topography and built form. As such, the majority of receptors experience either filtered, distant or no views of the site. The proposals would not materially alter this underlying pattern of visibility, particularly given the concentration of built form toward the western part of the site and the retention of open land and planting along the eastern and northern edges.

- 5.1.7 Visual effects are therefore assessed as major adverse for users of the PRow within the site, reducing to moderate adverse over time, and minor or negligible for the majority of receptors beyond the site.
- 5.1.8 Overall, the appraisal identifies that the most notable effects are localised, affecting the site itself and receptors in close proximity, with more limited effects on the wider landscape and visual resource.

5.2 Conclusions

- 5.2.1 The proposed development would result in a permanent change to the site, introducing a residential extension to Bradford-on-Avon in place of existing open land. This would give rise to adverse landscape and visual effects at the site and immediate local level, particularly in relation to landscape character, the setting of the PRow, and the experience of openness across the site.
- 5.2.2 These effects are, however, moderated by the design and layout of the scheme, which adopts a landscape-led approach. Built development is contained adjacent to the existing settlement edge, while substantial areas of open land are retained and enhanced, particularly in association with the River Avon corridor. The incorporation of structural planting, green infrastructure and SuDS features provides a framework for integrating the development into the surrounding landscape over time.
- 5.2.3 Beyond the site and its immediate context, effects are limited by the relatively contained visual envelope and the extent of existing screening provided by vegetation, landform and built form. The proposals would not give rise to widespread or extensive landscape or visual effects across the wider area.
- 5.2.4 Taking these factors into account, the scheme would result in locally significant adverse effects, particularly in the short term and for receptors within the site. However, these effects would reduce over time as the landscape framework establishes, and would not extend to the wider landscape context.
- 5.2.5 Overall, while the development would represent a clear and perceptible change to the site, it is considered that the proposed landscape strategy and mitigation measures would enable the scheme to be integrated into its surroundings, such that the effects are contained, moderated and largely localised in extent.

6.o Green Belt Assessment

6.o Green Belt Assessment

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The site is located wholly within the Western Wiltshire Green Belt (See Figure 6.2), which forms the eastern extent of the Avon Green Belt and completely surrounds Bradford-on-Avon. Its stated purpose includes maintaining the setting and preserving the character of the town by maintaining separation from nearby settlements such as Trowbridge, Winsley, and Westwood.
- 6.1.2 Housing development within the Green Belt has historically been regarded as “inappropriate development” under national planning policy. Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Such circumstances will only exist where the harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 6.1.3 Paragraph 154 of the NPPF sets out a list of forms of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt; however, these exceptions are limited in scope and do not typically include new housing. However, more recently, Paragraph 155 has introduced an additional pathway whereby certain housing proposals may not be regarded as inappropriate development, provided four specific criteria are all met (with additional “Golden Rules” applying to major schemes).
- 6.1.4 Fundamental to these criteria is the introduction of the concept of ‘grey belt’ land in the December 2024 NPPF. This represents a significant shift in national planning policy.
- 6.1.5 Grey belt is defined in Annex 2 as “... land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. ‘Grey belt’ excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.”
- 6.1.6 Paragraph 155 confirms that proposals within the Green Belt should be assessed to determine whether they fall within one of the categories of development that are not inappropriate. This forms a key part of the overall policy assessment, but does not displace the need to consider the development plan and other material considerations in the round.

- 6.1.7 Where a proposal satisfies the criteria in Paragraph 155, it is not treated as inappropriate development and there is no requirement to demonstrate very special circumstances. In such circumstances, Green Belt policy relating to inappropriateness is not, of itself, a reason for refusal. An assessment of the Proposed Development against Paragraph 155 is undertaken within the Planning Statement to establish whether it constitutes appropriate development in Green Belt terms.
- 6.1.8 However, the first requirement of Paragraph 155 (emphasis added) is that:
(a) The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- 6.1.9 Therefore, the first step in the assessment pathway is to understand if the Site can be considered grey belt land. Guidance and clarity around how to undertake an assessment to determine if land can be considered grey belt is provided in the February 2025 PPG on Green Belt, which also includes a diagram (See Figure 6.1, adjacent) which sets out in visual terms how the grey belt assessment works.
- 6.1.10 This shows that the assessment of if a site can be identified as grey belt is a two-part process. One must both assess the Site against Green Belt purposes A, B & D, and also review the Footnote 7 policies to ascertain if any (other than Green Belt) apply to the Site, as we are told in Annex 2 that if they do, then the land cannot be considered grey belt.
- 6.1.11 The PPG makes it clear that when assessing land to see if it can be considered grey belt, the assessment should be granular, so for the purposes of this assessment, we have taken into account the areas of the site where built form is proposed, and those which are within the red line, but which will be retained as green space in accordance with the parameter plans. The Site is assessed using our own criteria, based on those provided in the Government PPG, and as set out in Table 6.1.
- 6.1.12 This assessment benefits from the input of a Landscape Architect, as it is closely interlinked to the role that the Site plays in landscape and visual terms.

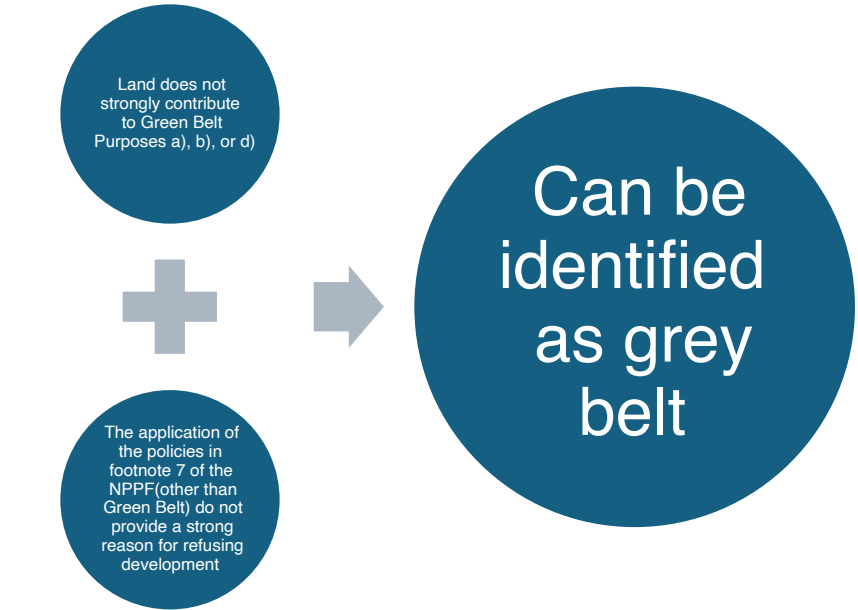


Figure 6.1 When can land be identified as grey belt (from Green Belt PPG, Figure 1).



Figure 6.2
Green Belt Area

- Application site
- Avon Green Belt

6.o Green Belt Assessment

Table 6.1 Criteria for Assessing Contribution of Site to Green Belt Purposes A, B & D.

Purpose	Contribution & Illustrative Features
Purpose A Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Strong: Land parcels are likely to make a strong contribution where they are largely undeveloped and are not clearly bounded by defensible, permanent features that would limit outward growth. In these circumstances, development would tend to be perceived as sprawl, particularly where the site lies adjacent or in close proximity to a large built-up area and where built form would project irregularly into the Green Belt, for example as a linear or “finger-like” extension that appears poorly integrated with the existing settlement pattern.
	Moderate: Land parcels are likely to make a moderate contribution where they adjoin or lie close to a large built-up area, but exhibit characteristics that provide some degree of containment or reduce the perception of outward encroachment. This may include the presence of identifiable physical boundaries, partial enclosure by existing built form, or the influence of existing development and other urbanising features. In such circumstances, development may still be perceived as sprawl, but to a lesser degree, as it would relate more closely to the existing settlement edge and be less likely to appear as a prominent or poorly integrated extension into the Green Belt.
	Weak or None: Land parcels are likely to make a weak or negligible contribution where they are either physically separate from any large built-up area, or where they are closely associated with it but are substantially contained by existing development. In these situations, the relationship with the wider Green Belt is limited, and any new development would be unlikely to be perceived as sprawl, as it would not represent a clear extension of the built-up area into open countryside.
Purpose B Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	Strong: Land parcels are likely to make a strong contribution where they are largely free from built or engineered form and read as open, undeveloped countryside forming a substantial component of the gap between settlements. In these circumstances, the land plays a clear role in maintaining visual and perceptual separation, and its development would be likely to materially diminish or erode the distinction between towns.
	Moderate: Land parcels are likely to make a moderate contribution where they lie within a gap between settlements but exhibit characteristics that reduce the extent of their role in maintaining separation. This may include the presence of existing built elements, a relatively limited proportion of the overall gap, or the ability for development to occur without materially affecting intervisibility due to screening from landform, vegetation, or nearby structures. In such cases, the contribution to separation remains evident, but is less definitive.
	Weak or None: Land parcels are likely to make a weak or negligible contribution where they do not form part of a meaningful gap between settlements, or where they do not contribute to visual or perceptual separation. In these situations, the land does not play a substantive role in preventing the coalescence of settlements, and development would be unlikely to affect their perceived distinction.
Purpose D Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Strong: Land parcels are likely to make a strong contribution where they are largely free from built development and form an integral part of the setting of a historic town. In these circumstances, the land makes a clear and substantial contribution to the town’s special character, whether through direct adjacency, visual prominence, or a strong physical and experiential relationship with its historic core and defining features.
	Moderate: Land parcels are likely to make a moderate contribution where they form part of the wider setting of a historic town but display characteristics that diminish the extent of that relationship. This may include separation from the historic core by intervening development or landform, the presence of existing built elements, or a more limited visual, physical, or experiential connection to key historic features. In such cases, the contribution to character and setting remains evident, but is less pronounced.
	Weak or None: Land parcels are likely to make a weak or negligible contribution where they do not form part of the setting of a historic town, or where any relationship is limited and does not materially influence its special character. In these situations, there is little or no meaningful visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town, and development would be unlikely to affect its setting.

6.o Green Belt Assessment

6.2 Footnote 7 Compliance

- 6.2.1 The Footnote 7 policies include:
- Habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - Land designated as Green Belt*, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast;
 - Irreplaceable habitats;
 - Designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and
 - Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change
- 6.2.2 The Site does not contain, nor is it close to, any habitats sites. The nearest SSSI is Gripwood Quarry - a geological SSSI which is approximately 1.15km to the north west of the Site, and which would not be affected by the Proposed Development. This and other SSSI in the area are shown on Figure 1.3, along with other landscape designations.
- 6.2.3 This also shows that the site is not within a National Landscape - the closest is the Cotswolds National Landscape which is approximately 1.5km to the west of the site (at its closest point) on the opposite side of Bradford-on-Avon. It is also not within or close to a National Park or Local Green Space.
- 6.2.4 Designated heritage assets are illustrated on Figure 1.3. There are no designated heritage assets within the site. The nearest designated heritage assets comprise a Grade II listed milestone on the A363 Trowbridge Road adjacent to the site, and the Grade II listed Widbrook Bridge approximately 40m south of the site, also on the A365.
- 6.2.5 The Proposed Development will not lead to harm to the heritage significance of the milestone, but will lead to a ‘lowest end of less than substantial harm’ effect on the listed bridge (see Historic Desk-Based Assessment and Geophysical Survey, Chapter 7).
- 6.2.6 Archaeological geophysical survey has been carried out in the site which has identified potential archaeological remains, which are being examined further by evaluation trial trenches in agreement with Wiltshire Council. Results of the surveys indicate that no remains of archaeological interest demonstrably of equivalent significance to a Scheduled Monument are situated within the site..
- 6.2.7 There is a Scheduled Monument (“a late prehistoric earthwork enclosure”) situated in the woods 750m to the north-east, but it has no direct visual or physical relationship with the Site.

- 6.2.8 The Bradford-on-Avon Conservation Area lies approximately 415m north from the Site and is intersected with considerable post-war housing between the site boundary and conservation area boundary.
- 6.2.9 Figure 1.5 shows flood zones, demonstrating that there is some flood zone 2 and 3 areas within the red line on the eastern side, but that the majority of the Site, and all of the proposed development area, is outside of these, demonstrating that development could be brought forward that avoided them, as is shown in the illustrative masterplan for the Site.
- 6.2.10 Therefore, overall, subject to appropriate specific assessments and mitigation, these Footnote 7 policies would not apply, and would not represent a strong reason for refusing development.

6.3 Assessment of Contribution to Green Belt Purposes

- 6.3.1 To be able to ascertain if the Site can be considered grey belt, we must assess the site against Green Belt purposes A, B and D as set out in paragraph 143 of the NPPF. However, Paragraph 155 states that for the proposal to be considered as ‘not inappropriate development’ it must satisfy all of the criterion, (a) to (d), listed in Paragraph 155.
- 6.3.2 Criterion (a) requires that the development, as well as utilising grey belt land, would not fundamentally undermine, the purposes, when taken together, of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole.
- 6.3.3 The PPG is clear that “...in reaching this judgement, authorities should consider whether, or the extent to which, the release or development of Green Belt Land would affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan from serving all five of the Green Belt purposes in a meaningful way”.
- 6.3.4 Therefore, it is necessary to review the Site against all five of the Green Belt purposes - Purposes A, B and D to ascertain if it can be considered grey belt, and the remaining Purposes C and E as part of the assessment required to comply with Paragraph 155 Criterion (a).
- Purpose A - Checking Unrestricted Sprawl of large built-up areas**
- 6.3.5 In relation to this purpose, the guidance clarifies that those sites likely to make a ‘strong’ contribution will involve sites next to large built up areas (“LBUA”) which are free of existing development and lack any physical features in reasonable proximity which could restrict and contain development.
- 6.3.6 No formal definition of LBUA is provided in the NPPF or PPG, however for the purposes of assessing Green Belt Purpose (a), “large built-up areas” are interpreted as the principal urban settlements identified within the

- adopted Local Plan settlement hierarchy, characterised by continuous built form and strategic service functions. Villages and smaller rural settlements are excluded in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance.
- 6.3.7 The Site is in the Green Belt between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge, so these are the relevant settlements, and it is clear that Trowbridge, as the county town for Wiltshire, should be considered a large built up area, but Bradford-on-Avon should not be - it is a smaller market town which is much lower in the settlement hierarchy.
- 6.3.8 Therefore, as the Site is adjacent to Bradford-on-Avon and not Trowbridge, it cannot be said to be checking the unrestricted sprawl of a LBUA, and it is assessed as making **No Contribution to Purpose A**.
- 6.3.9 If it is determined that Bradford-on-Avon should be treated as an LBUA, then the assessment becomes engaged in a more conventional way. In doing this, it is important to recognise that Purpose A is concerned with “unrestricted” sprawl, not all edge growth, and the proposal is a contained and plan-led edge consolidation. It is also to be factored in that Green Belt purposes are strategic and the site does not operate at a strategic scale. In this context, it must be considered against four factors:
- Relationship to the settlement edge*
- 6.3.10 If the site is adjacent to existing built form, it is already part of the urban edge condition, not a detached parcel preventing wider sprawl, in additions, the absence of substantial separation (e.g. no strong buffer of open land beyond) reduces its role in checking outward expansion.
- Containment characteristics*
- 6.3.11 The site is visually and physically contained (e.g. by field boundaries, vegetation, minor landform, and existing development edges), so it does not act as a strategic barrier to growth - as a result, the Green Belt function is already locally compromised or transitional, rather than forming a robust “stop line”.
- 6.3.12 There are also a number of other local physical features that could restrict and constrain further growth - for example the River Avon to the north and Widbrook Wood to the east; Trowbridge Road and the canal to the south-east.
- Nature of potential development*
- 6.3.13 Development limited to the western parcels so would effectively round off the settlement edge rather than extend it in a new direction, and would avoid creating a prominent finger of development into open countryside. This materially limits the risk of unrestricted sprawl, which is the core concern of Purpose A.

*But not for the purposes of assessing whether land is Grey Belt (see definition of Grey Belt in NPPF)

6.o Green Belt Assessment

Scale and influence

6.3.14 Even if Bradford-on-Avon is treated as “large”, the site would not enable strategic outward expansion or open up further land for subsequent incremental growth (i.e. it does not “unlock” a wider sprawl trajectory) nor does it result in an incongruous pattern of development (such as an extended “finger” of development into the Green Belt).

6.3.15 Taking all of these factors into account, the contribution to Purpose A would still fall into the Weak to Moderate range

Purpose B - Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging

6.3.16 The PPG guidance states that to contribute ‘strongly’ to this purpose, the site should form a substantial part of a gap between towns, and where it’s development would likely result in the loss of visual separation of towns.

6.3.17 The Site lies in a gap between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge which is about 2.25km wide. It is acknowledged that the prevention of coalescence between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge is one of the stated purposes of the Western Wiltshire Green Belt designation, and that this purpose is engaged at this location.

6.3.18 However, the proposed development strategy materially limits the extent to which the scheme contributes to coalescence risk. Built form is proposed only on the two field parcels in the north-western corner of the red line, comprising approximately 9.8ha immediately adjoining Bradford-on-Avon’s existing eastern settlement edge. The remaining approximately 20ha of the wider site is proposed as publicly accessible green infrastructure, which would be secured in perpetuity.

6.3.19 Critically, the built development parcel on the western edge of the Site does not extend into the mid-gap. The westernmost fields are closely related to the existing urban edge and are influenced by adjacent residential development, infrastructure, and urban edge characteristics.

6.3.20 A substantial area of open land would remain between the buildings and the Trowbridge settlement boundary (c. 1.5-2.0km), indeed, the illustrative masterplan shows that a scheme can be delivered which would not intrude further into the gap that the existing housing on the southwest side of Trowbridge Road, and importantly, someone moving along Trowbridge Road towards Trowbridge would not experience built form any closer to the Town than they currently do.

6.3.21 Similarly, moving towards Bradford-on-Avon along Trowbridge Road, due to existing vegetation and local buildings, you would not be aware of the edge of Bradford-on-Avon any sooner than at present, and not until you cross the canal bridge on the edge of the town - by which time you already have a sense of having arrived in the town.

6.3.22 Furthermore, the wider 30ha site - considered as a whole, including the green infrastructure - would not materially increase the risk of coalescence between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge, and would in certain respects enhance the gap’s function, as the proposed green infrastructure component positively reinforces the function of the gap by providing accessible, managed open land that strengthens rather than undermines the separation between the two settlements.

6.3.23 On this basis it is considered that the development parcel, assessed on its own merits, makes a **Weak Contribution to Purpose B.**

Purpose C - Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

6.3.24 With regards to Purpose C, encroachment is understood as the spread of built development into open countryside, resulting in the urbanisation of rural land and erosion of its open, undeveloped character. The Site comprises predominantly open agricultural land forming part of the rural landscape on the south-eastern edge of Bradford-on-Avon.

6.3.25 The fields are characterised by a simple agricultural pattern and are bounded in part by hedgerows and areas of woodland associated with the River Avon corridor. In this context, the site contributes to the perception of open countryside beyond the settlement edge and plays a role in maintaining the distinction between the built-up area and the wider rural landscape.

6.3.26 However, the strength of this contribution varies across the site. The westernmost fields are closely related to the existing urban edge and are influenced by adjacent residential development, infrastructure, and urban edge characteristics. These areas read as part of a transitional landscape between settlement and countryside, rather than as open countryside in their own right.

6.3.27 As such, their role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment is more limited. In contrast, the eastern parts of the site are more clearly associated with the wider rural landscape and exhibit a stronger sense of openness and separation from the settlement, thereby making a greater contribution to this purpose.

6.3.28 In conclusion, while the eastern fields make a stronger contribution to Purpose C, the westernmost fields of the Site where development is proposed are considered to only make a weak contribution, so overall the Site makes a **Moderate - Weak Contribution to Purpose C.**

Purpose D - Preserve the Setting & Special Character of Historic Towns

6.3.29 The NPPF does not provide any definition of what constitutes a Historic Town (although it does state that historic villages are excluded). For the

purposes of this assessment, it is recognised that Bradford-on-Avon is a historic town, and one of considerable architectural and townscape significance. However, it is the case that many parts of the town are not historic, and have limited architectural or heritage interest.

6.3.30 The historic core of Bradford-on-Avon is designated as a conservation area by the Council. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 this is defined as the area of ‘special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance’. The site lies approximately 420m outside of this area of special architectural and historic interest.

6.3.31 A Conservation Area Character Assessment of the designated area was produced by the former West Wiltshire District Council and adopted in March 2008. The Council’s assessment notes (page 15) that ‘*During the 1960’s 70’s and 80’s there was extensive new residential development, particularly on the edge of Bradford on Avon. Housing estates were built north of the river at Leigh Park and Berryfields, Churches and Grove Leaze, and to the south between the river and Trowbridge Road..... Despite these sizeable extensions to the town, the central area maintains its historic character due largely to the retention of most of the town centre buildings, walls and other urban features.*’

6.3.32 The Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment and Geophysical Survey includes an analysis of the role of the site in the setting of the conservation area, as the designated area of special architectural or historic interest. This includes consideration of ‘important’ and ‘glimpsed’ views identified in the Council’s Conservation Area Character Assessment, as well as other views and considerations.

6.3.33 The analysis finds that the site forms a part of the setting of the conservation area, as it is part of the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced. The NPPF clarifies that ‘elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral’.

6.3.34 However, between the Site and the Conservation Area is a large area of residential expansion, comprising the zone around Kingston Avenue, built in around the 1930s, and the large area of housing immediately west of the site around Widbrook View, built as piecemeal estates in the 1960s. Due to the presence of these areas, there is very limited visibility between the conservation area and the site, and as a result, the site is a part of the setting of the area of special architectural or historic interest which makes a very limited contribution to its special interest.

6.3.35 The Site mainly forms part of the wider landscape setting of the town, whose character is closely defined by its relationship with the River Avon valley and the surrounding landform.

6.3.36 The site occupies ground on the south-eastern side of the settlement and contributes to the transition between the built-up area and the open countryside beyond. In this respect, it plays a role in maintaining the legibility of the town as a compact settlement contained within a distinctive valley landscape, and the presence of open agricultural fields, combined with areas of strong vegetation structure along the valley edge, reinforces the rural context within which the historic core is experienced.

6.3.37 However, the strength of this contribution is not uniform across the site, and Government guidance on assessing the contribution Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes (where relevant to identifying grey belt land), is clear that assessments should be granular and broken into smaller parcels.

6.3.38 The western part of the site, which lies closest to the existing settlement edge, is more strongly influenced by the adjacent built form and exhibits characteristics of an urban fringe landscape. In these areas, the relationship with the historic core is more indirect, and the contribution to the appreciation of the town's special character is correspondingly reduced.

6.3.39 By contrast, the eastern parts of the site are more closely associated with the wider valley landscape and are likely to contribute more meaningfully to the setting of the town, particularly in views from the surrounding countryside where the transition from settlement to open land is more apparent.

6.3.40 Overall, the site performs a moderate role in preserving the setting and special character of Bradford-on-Avon. While it contributes to the perception of the town as a settlement contained within a rural valley landscape, this contribution is moderated by the site's partial containment by existing development and the extent to which parts of the land read as urban edge rather than open countryside.

6.3.41 The Illustrative Scheme and Parameter Plans show development limited to the two westernmost fields, and for these parcels, the site's contribution to Green Belt Purpose D is materially reduced. These fields are closely related to the existing settlement edge and are influenced by adjacent built form, infrastructure, and urban edge characteristics.

6.3.42 There is also no development proposed in the corridor of land on either side of the River Avon (which is outside of the red line), the southern edge of which is currently defined by the 20th-century residential areas of Kingston Avenue, and the large area of housing immediately west of the site on Widbrook View. The illustrative area of proposed residential development continues this established residential line, and will be experienced within that established context.

6.3.43 The majority of the site, including the corridor of land along the river that is within the red line, will comprise open green space. As a result, the very limited contribution that the site makes to the setting and special interest of the conservation area is not harmed; and the special architectural and historic interest of the designated area is preserved.

6.3.44 Furthermore, the areas where development is proposed do not form a key component of the wider valley setting of Bradford-on-Avon, nor do they play a significant role in maintaining the town's distinctive relationship with the surrounding landscape. The visual and perceptual connection between these fields and the historic core is limited, with the land reading primarily as part of the immediate urban fringe rather than as an integral element of the town's historic setting.

6.3.39 In this context, development confined to the western portion of the site would result in a more localised and contained change, affecting land that makes only a limited contribution to the preservation of the setting and special character of the historic town. The open parts of the site to the east, which are more closely associated with the wider valley landscape, would remain undeveloped and continue to perform their role in defining the rural context of the settlement.

6.3.40 Accordingly, when considered in the round, with development only proposed on western parcels, the site's overall contribution to Purpose D is diminished, and the resulting impact on the setting of Bradford-on-Avon is reduced to a **Moderate - Weak Contribution to Purpose D**.

Purpose E - Assisting in urban regeneration by encouraging reuse of derelict and other urban land

6.3.41 Purpose E operates at a strategic scale and relates to the role of the Green Belt in directing development toward previously developed land within urban areas. The site does not perform a specific or identifiable function in influencing patterns of land reuse or regeneration within Bradford-on-Avon or the wider area. Its release would not, in itself, undermine the broader objective of prioritising brownfield land, particularly given the scale of housing need and the limited availability of suitable previously developed sites within the settlement.

6.3.42 There is no evidence that the retention of the site within the Green Belt is necessary to secure the recycling of derelict or underused land elsewhere. The site does not form part of a strategic land reserve intended to constrain development in a manner that would actively promote regeneration. As such, its contribution to this purpose is indirect and limited, and development would not conflict in any material way with the objective of encouraging the effective reuse of land.

6.3.43 In conclusion, it is therefore assessed that the Site also makes a **Weak Contribution to Purpose E**.

6.4 Impact on wider Green Belt

6.4.1 As set out in paragraph 6.1.8, once land has been identified as grey belt, the relevant question under paragraph 155(a) is whether its release and development would materially erode the integrity of the wider Green Belt, having regard to the purposes taken together rather than in isolation. This requires a strategic judgement: not simply whether the site performs a role, but whether its loss would undermine the continued ability of the remaining Green Belt to fulfil its overall function across the plan area.

6.4.2 In this case, the site does not perform a critical or irreplaceable role in maintaining the essential characteristics of the Green Belt. Its contribution to the relevant purposes is limited and, importantly, not structurally important to the wider network of Green Belt land.

6.4.3 The remaining Green Belt would continue to perform its key functions — including preventing sprawl, maintaining separation, and safeguarding the setting of settlements — without material weakening. As such, the development of the site would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the Green Belt when considered in the round, and the strategic integrity of the designation would be preserved.

6.5 Conclusions

6.5.1 A summary table setting out the assessment of the Site in relation to all five purposes can be found at Table 5.2. This shows that the Site only makes a Moderate - Weak contribution to Purposes C & D, and a Weak contribution to Purposes B & E.

6.5.2 As it is assessed that Bradford-on-Avon is not a large built up area (LBUA), the site makes no contribution to Purpose A. However, even if Bradford-on-Avon were to be considered an LBUA, the site would only make a Moderate - Weak contribution.

6.5.3 When the proposed development, which is limited to introducing built form into the westernmost field parcels, is factored into the assessment, even those two purposes where it is assessed as Moderate - Weak are likely to fall at the Weak end of the spectrum.

6.5.4 As such, it is considered that the Site should be considered as grey belt, and as per the requirements of Paragraph 155(a), the development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.

Table 6.2 Site Assessment Summary Table - Green Belt Purposes

Purpose	Description	Site-Specific Assessment	Contribution
Purpose A	Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	The site lies within the Green Belt between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge, adjacent to the south-eastern edge of Bradford-on-Avon. As such, it is not associated with a large built-up area in Green Belt terms.	No Contribution*
Purpose B	Preventing neighbouring towns from merging	The site lies within the wider gap between Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge. However, it is positioned on the western side of that gap and does not occupy its narrowest or most sensitive part. Development of the site, if confined to the western fields, would be unlikely to materially reduce the perceived or physical separation between the two settlements.	Weak Contribution
Purpose C	Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The site comprises open agricultural land and contributes to the rural setting of the settlement. However, the western fields are closely influenced by the adjacent urban edge and read as transitional land rather than open countryside. The eastern parts of the site make a stronger contribution, and the site as a whole performs a moderate role in safeguarding the countryside, but for the western fields where development is proposed, the contribution is weak.	Moderate - Weak Contribution
Purpose D	Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns	The site forms part of the wider valley setting of Bradford-on-Avon. However, its contribution varies spatially. The western fields have a limited relationship with the historic core and are influenced by urban edge characteristics, while the eastern areas contribute more strongly to the town's landscape setting. Overall, the site makes a moderate contribution, but the western parts where development is proposed only make a weak contribution.	Moderate - Weak Contribution
Purpose E	Assisting in urban regeneration by encouraging reuse of derelict and other urban land	This purpose operates at a strategic scale and the site does not play a meaningful role in influencing patterns of urban regeneration. There is no evidence that retaining the site within the Green Belt would promote reuse of previously developed land elsewhere.	Weak Contribution

Purposes A, B & D form the basis of the grey belt assessment

Purposes C & E are factors in the Paragraph 155(a) assessment

**If Braadford-on-Avon were to be adjudged to be a large built up area, then the contribution would be Moderate - Weak*

Exeter • Bristol • Plymouth • London
www.cliftonemerydesign.co.uk

—