

APPENDIX 3

Land at Bleak House Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review

The Church Commissioners for England

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Site Appraisal Photographs (A-AC); and

Site Context Photographs (1-25).

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Landscape Character Extracts

Appendix B: Cannock Chase Green Belt Review Method

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Barton Willmore Landscape Planning and Design (BWLPD) were commissioned by the Church Commissioners for England to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review of Land at Bleak House ('the Site'), to the east of Wimblebury, Cannock, in response to the Cannock Chase Green Belt Review method 2014ⁱ (CCGBR).
- 1.2 The Cannock Chase Green Belt review is being undertaken in the context of the preparation of a new Local Plan for Cannock, for the period 2006-2028, which will include for the allocation of 5,300 (net) new homes within the District. The new Local Plan is being undertaken in two parts; with part one, the Core Strategy adopted in June 2014, and part two containing site specific allocations which through the development plan may change the Green Belt boundary within the District and re-allocate land released from the Green Belt for development.
- 1.3 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal undertakes separate but interrelated aspects:
- An appraisal of the existing landscape character and visual amenity of the Site, including for a review relevant landscape policies, designations and character assessments;
 - An assessment of the Site's existing contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, as stated in the National Planning Policy Frameworkⁱⁱ (NPPF);
 - An assessment of the capacity and sensitivity of the Site to identify opportunities and constraints to future development of the Site as part of a future Green Belt; and
 - To comment on the CCGBRM and the potential implications for the Site with regards to providing feedback by the 9th January 2015, as part of the CCGBR consultation process.
- 1.4 Information is presented on the following plans and photographs:
- Figure 1: Site Context Plan @1:10,000 scale A1;
 - Figure 2: Topographical Features Plan @1:10,000 scale A1;
 - Figure 3: Site Appraisal Plan @1:10,000 scale A3;
 - Figure 4: Visual Appraisal Plan @1:25,000 scale;
 - Figure 5: Development Principles Plan @1:12,500;
 - Site Appraisal Photographs (A-AC); and
 - Site Context Photographs (1-25).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Characteristics

2.1 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the current best practice guidelines, as set out in the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition, 2013ⁱⁱⁱ. This has included for a desktop assessment and field work in December 2014 to assess the:

- Site's existing landscape character, such as landform, vegetation cover, land use and scale;
- Overall quality and value, i.e. intactness, state of repair and representation of landscape character;
- Visual influence and inter-visibility with the surrounding area; and
- Landscape value, such as important designated landscapes and their setting, aesthetic elements such as tranquillity, remoteness and scenic beauty.

2.2 The assessment is based on the definition outlined in Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity^{iv}, whereby:

Landscape Sensitivity = Landscape Character Sensitivity + Visual Sensitivity

and;

Landscape Capacity = Landscape Sensitivity + Landscape Value

2.3 The assessment has been confined to an area up to approximately 3km from the site, based on the inter-visibility between the site and surrounding area, vegetation patterns, ridgelines and landform. This distance is considered a sufficient area to establish the landscape and visual baseline of the Site, and to allow the assessment of the Site and its contribution to the purposes and aims of the Green Belt.

2.4 A brief description of the existing land use of the area is provided, along with settlement patterns, transport routes, vegetation cover and local landscape designations with a more detailed landscape and visual appraisal of the Site. The field work was undertaken from within the site, surrounding Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including the Heart of England Way, residential areas and within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, including Castle Ring. The viewpoints chosen are not intended to be exhaustive, but representative to establish a broad understanding of the existing visual amenity in relation to the Site.

Assessment against the Purposes of the Green Belt

2.5 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF identifies that the **"fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence"**. The five purposes of the Green Belt are stated in NPPF Paragraph 80:

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

2.6 In defining new boundaries to the Green Belt, it must be ensured that these characteristics are not diminished for the areas remaining within the Green Belt designation as a direct result of development on the Site. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF lists a number of criteria local planning authorities should address when defining new Green Belt Boundaries:

"...define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent."

2.7 In addition the Site has been assessed in terms of its relationship to existing elements, such as roads, railways and water features, as well as visual barriers such as ridgelines, vegetation, tree belts and areas of woodland. This is to assist with the impacts of potential development at the Site upon the openness of the remaining Green Belt designated areas and to aid in identifying boundaries that may be considered permanent.

2.8 NPPF paragraph 87 states that:

"as with previous Green Belt Policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances."

Definitions

2.9 When considering the ability of the Site to meet each of the purposes of the Green Belt, the following definitions should be considered:

Openness

2.10 Openness is taken to be the degree to which the area is unaffected by built structures. It is considered that, in order to be a robust assessment, this should be considered from first

principles, i.e. acknowledging existing structures that occur within the area, rather than seeing them as being 'washed over' by the existing Green Belt designation.

Sprawl

- 2.11 This is taken to be disorganised and unattractive extension to developed areas (perhaps lacking coherent, robust or defensible boundaries).

Cannock Chase Green Belt Review (CCGBR)

- 2.12 The CCGBR (section 7 of this report) is based on a scoring method (value) for criteria specific to the District and related to the NPPF Green Belt Purposes. The CCGBR has divided the Site into four land parcels, which are considered to be too large a delineation, and very likely to be considered to make a considerable contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, given the structure of the CCGBR scoring method. Therefore the following site context and site appraisal sections aim to identify the opportunities and constraints development principles and those parts of the Site that have the opportunity for residential development, in the context of smaller parcels being identified across the Site within the CCGBR review and released from the Green Belt.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT

3.1 With reference to **Figure 1: Site Context Plan**, the Site is located to the east of Wimblebury and is predominantly within the Cannock Chase District. The two most southerly fields lie within the Lichfield District.

Landscape Policy

3.2 With reference to Cannock Chase Local Plan Part 1^v (adopted June 2014) which forms the principle basis for the promotion and control of development and **Figure 1: Site Context Plan**, the Site is within the Green Belt (Policy CP1), which covers 60% of the District. The function of the Green Belt:

"...serves to maintain the openness of the rural-urban fringe (with the West Midlands conurbation) as well and the District's separate urban areas and their identities." (page 26).

3.3 The District Strategy is stated as:

"...Focus development across the existing settlements of Cannock/Hednesford/Heath Hayes..." (page 8).

3.4 The Natural Environment and Landscape Character key implications for Cannock, Hednesford and Heath Hayes are:

"Developments to take into account impacts on international sites and provide appropriate mitigation. Conserve good landscape character to the north and strengthen landscape character to the east" (page 8).

3.5 It is also stated that:

"Consideration of landscape character will be required in all development. In particular sensitive development will be required in or near the Cannock Chase AONB guided by the AONB Management Plan." (page 13).

3.6 The Site is covered by District Wide Objective 7 – Provide well managed and appreciated environments, as an area for focus for landscape and biodiversity conservation and enhancements, (in the context of the Site being former coalfields). The priorities associated with Objective 7 are:

- ***"To protect, conserve and enhance the District's natural and historic environment assets, particularly the strategic Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding natural Beauty, via the***

appropriate management of development pressures and maximise opportunities for access and enjoyment;

- ***To conserve, expand and link natural habitats through habitat creation and improvement to ensure a robust, coherent network of sites that provides wildlife the opportunity to prosper;***
- ***To conserve and enhance significant elements of cultural heritage including designated sites and important elements of historic landscape character; and***
- ***To achieve new development designed to provide a high quality of built form and public realm which enhances the District's distinct natural and historic environmental assets." (page 76).***

3.7 Policy CP14 – Landscape Character and Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) aims to protect, conserve and enhance the District's landscape character via:

- ***"The consideration of landscape character in all development proposals in order to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities, rural openness and sense of place and maximise opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features including trees, woodland, canal corridors, sensitive edges of the rural areas and creating green infrastructure links in conjunction with new development...; and***
- ***Development proposals, including those for appropriate development within the Green Belt, and land management practices within the AONB and on its fringes including the Hednesford Hills, must be sensitive to the distinct landscape character and ensure they do not have an adverse impact upon their setting through design, layout or intensity..." (pages 129 and 130).***

Cannock Chase Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2014^{vi} (SHLAA)

3.8 The SHLAA is an evidence based document with a key role in identifying sites that have the potential for housing, although does not in itself determine whether a site should or should not be allocated for housing development. The Site was included within the SHLAA, as part of the Heath Hayes area, resulting in an assumed density of 15dph due to the combination of Green Belt and AONB constraints.

3.9 The north part of the Site, between PRoW no.72, residential properties in Wimblebury, Cannock Wood Road and the northern boundary of Cooper's Cottages is referenced in the SHLAA as site: C264, covering 65.5 hectares (ha) and capacity for 1,000 dwellings. The north-west part of the site, between residential properties adjacent to Wimblebury Road and Wimblebury Farm is referenced as site: C114, covering 46.3 ha and capacity for 750 dwellings, but was removed from the SHLAA as it overlapped with site: C264. The western and eastern parts of the Site, between PRoW no.72 and Cuckoo Bank are referenced as site:

C265, covering 141 ha, and capacity for 3,000 dwellings. The SHLAA assessed sites: C264 and C265 as "False" with regards to suitability and availability due to their Green Belt designation.

Lichfield District Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013^{vii}

- 3.10 The southern parts of the Site, (fields F30 and F31) are within Lichfield District and were not included in their SHLAA review.

Designations

- 3.11 The designations within the study area are illustrated on **Figure 1: Site Context Plan**. With the exception of the Green Belt, the Site is not covered by any landscape designations. Approximately 0.9km to the east of the Site is the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which extends north across Cannock Chase Forest. With reference to **Figure 3: Site Appraisal Plan** field F19, in the north-east part of the Site (between PRow no.72, Cooper's Cottages and Sevens Road) is designated a Site of Biological Interest within the Cannock Local Plan.
- 3.12 Approximately 0.2km to the north of the Site is Hednesford Hill, which is designated a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Cuckoo Bank, adjacent to the south of the Site is also designated a SSSI.
- 3.13 The Site is not within a Conservation Area and the nearest ancient monuments are Castle Ring approximately 1.7km the east of the site and Nuns Well.

Landscape Setting

Location and Settlement

- 3.14 As demonstrated in **Figure 1: Site Context Plan**, the Site is an irregular parcel of land, covering approximately 220ha on the eastern edge of Heath Hayes and Wimblebury, approximately 4km from the centre of Cannock. The majority of the site is within Cannock District, with two fields in the south-east of the Site (approximately 15 ha), within Litchfield District. The Site is part of a former coalfield, which extended to the south of the Site, and has been returned to agricultural use, characterised by a generally regular and geometric field pattern.
- 3.15 The northern part of the Site is bordered by mature vegetation (established on the alignment of a dismantled railway), residential properties adjacent to Littleworth Road and Chetwynd Park and Rawnsley cricket ground; the eastern part of the Site is also bordered by mature vegetation on the alignment of the dismantled railway, Cooper's Cottage and associated

grounds, Cannock Wood Road, Sevens Road, the southern edge of Prospect Village, woodland and agricultural fields; the southern part of the Site is bordered by Cuckoo Bank (SSSI), Sevens Road and mature roadside vegetation; and, the western part of the Site is bordered by mature woodland, Wimblebury Road and residential properties in Wimblebury.

- 3.16 Heath Hayes and Wimblebury are characterised as large scale mixed residential and industrial areas, situated predominantly to the west of Wimblebury Road and forming one of a number of parishes surrounding Cannock. The residential built form within Heath Hayes and Wimblebury is generally characterised by two storey terraced and semi-detached properties with off-street parking. Rawsley, adjacent to the northern part of the Site, is characterised by a number of small scale residential estates, with the settlement pattern being merged with Heath Hayes and Wimblebury so that there is a continuous residential pattern either side of Littleworth Road, to the immediate north of the Site.
- 3.17 The settlement pattern to the north-east of the site is characterised by small scale settlements clustered at road junctions, such as Cannock Wood. To the east of the Site there is a more intermittent settlement pattern, with a small number of properties between the dismantled railway and Cannock Wood Road, approximately 0.4km to the south of Littleworth Road; and a larger clustered settlement pattern at Prospect Village, between Cannock Wood Road and Ironstone Road. The built form within Prospect Village is characterised by interwar and modern residential properties with a small scale area of amenity space and community centre to the east, and a small number of terraced two storey properties to the west of Sevens Road. To the south-east of the site, on the east side of Sevens Road/Stables Way Road, there are residential properties which form the western edge of Burntwood. Approximately 0.7km from the southern edge of the Site, to the south of the A5190 is Norton Canes, a clustered settlement pattern.

Access and Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 3.18 The main roads bordering the Site are Littleworth Road to the north of the Site, characterised by its linear form and residential frontage. Cannock Wood Road, Sevens Road and Stables Way Road border the east of the Site, and are generally characterised by mature roadside vegetation. To the south of the Site, the A5190 links the southern part of Heath Hayes with Burntwood, a distance of approximately 1.7km. The A5190 is similarly characterised by its linear form, dense roadside vegetation and lighting columns. Wimblebury Road is to the west of the Site, characterised by its linear form and bordered by residential properties to the west and to the east by playing fields, agricultural fields, allotments and residential properties in Wimblebury.

- 3.19 In the wider area there are numerous main roads and smaller scale country lanes connecting smaller settlements and Cannock, and to the south of the site is the M6. Hayfield Hill forms another dominant linear road between Burntwood and Cannock Wood.
- 3.20 There is a strong network of PRoW in the wider area, including the Heart of England Way which crosses through Cannock Wood. Gentleshaw Hill and Hednesford Hill, to the east and north of the Site respectively have an extensive network of PRoW; in addition to areas of open access land. There are also PRoW to the immediate south of the site, within Cuckoo Wood.

Topography and Hydrology

- 3.21 The landform of the study area, including the Site, is illustrated in **Figure 2: Topographical Features Plan** and characterised by undulating and elevated terrain. The landform rises from Bentley Brook, Redmoor Brook and a number of unnamed streams to form a series of valleys to the north and east of the Site, culminating at Hednesford Hill (approximately 200m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)), Hayfield Hill (approximately 210mAOD), Gentleshaw Hill (approximately 205m AOD) and Castle Ring (approximately 230m AOD). This elevated and undulating landform forms a series of ridge lines to the north and east of the Site.
- 3.22 Heath Hayes and Wimblebury are located across undulating landform, between the base of Hednesford Hill, at approximately 180m AOD, then rising to approximately 220m AOD, before falling to approximately 175m AOD at the A5190. Prospect Village is situated across the falling landform of the Noddyfield Valley, between approximately 215m AOD and 150m AOD. Burntwood is located across generally level landform at approximately 170m AOD and Cuckoo Bank rises from the A5190 at approximately 175m AOD to 200m AOD. The landform across Norton Canes is generally consistent, falling gradually from 170m AOD to 145m AOD.

Vegetation and Soil Classification

- 3.23 The main vegetation types within the area are heathlands across Hednesford Hill and within the western parts of the Cannock Chase AONB and extensive mature coniferous and broadleaved woodlands within Cannock Wood, to the north-east of the Site. Cuckoo Bank, to the south of the Site, is characterised by extensive tracts of birch trees and young establishing native woodland.
- 3.24 Generally the country lanes are bordered by mature hedgerows and trees, while within Heath Hayes and Wimblebury there are localised, small formal rows of mature trees within small areas of amenity green space.

- 3.25 With reference to Natural England's Agricultural Land Classification^{viii} the majority of the Site is classified as Grade 4 (poor).

Published Landscape Character Assessments

- 3.26 A desktop assessment of published landscape character assessments has been undertaken against which to compare the Site appraisal.

National

- 3.27 Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct natural areas or National Character areas (NCA), with each being defined by a unique combination of features. The Site is within NCA 67: Cannock Chase & Cank Wood (NE347)^{ix}, with the key characteristics considered relevant to the Site and the study area as:

- A varied landscape ranging from the open heathlands and plantations of Cannock Chase, through towns, reclaimed mining sites and new developments, to dense urban areas; and,
- Away from the unenclosed landscape of Cannock Chase, fields generally have a regular pattern and are frequently enclosed by mature hedgerows with some hedgerow trees.

County

- 3.28 The site is covered by the Coalfield Farmlands Landscape Character Type^x and within the Minerals working and restoration (M) landscape character sub-type for which the landscape policy objectives are landscape restoration.

District

- 3.29 Cannock Chase Council undertook a Landscape Character Assessment of the District in March 2009^{xi}. The site is covered by Landscape Character Type CP21: Planned Coalfield Farmland and further sub-divided into Landscape Description Units CF21C and CF21D. Landscape Character Type CP21 is characterised by:

"...a complete transformation due to recent opencast coal mining activities. The original landscape has been largely destroyed and a new planted landscape superimposed..."

...The lack of dwellings and settlement creates a rather vacant landscape with few people evident. "

- 3.30 The key characteristics of Landscape Character Type CP21: Planned Coalfield Farmlands are:

- **"Restored opencast landscape with immature landscape features;**
- **Smooth topography and simple landforms;**
- **Patches of secondary woodland on older restored sites;**
- **A vacant landscape lacking in settlement;**
- **Wet heathland character in less disturbed areas;**
- **Well defined urban edges in sharp contrast to Green Belt land; and**
- **Large scale urban elements including pylons major roads and distribution warehouses."**

3.31 The condition (i.e. the measure of how far removed that landscape is from an 'optimal' state) of Landscape Character Type CP21: Planned Coalfield Farmlands is assessed as:

"A landscape in overall moderate to good condition with two parcels in poor condition and eight parcels in good condition. The visual impact of recent change following restoration is generally low, and the functional integrity of the landscape is typically weak as this is a planned immature landscape. The historic cultural pattern has largely been lost."

3.32 The sensitivity of the Landscape Character Type CP21: Planned Coalfield Farmlands is assessed as low, being a recent landscape and the visual sensitivity (i.e. openness of a landscape) is moderate due to the generally open nature of the rolling landscape.

3.33 The overall strategy for Landscape Character Type CP21: Planned Coalfield Farmlands is to strengthen and enhance. Specific opportunities are for new heathland, shelter woodlands and recreational opportunities, noting:

"...Plantation style shelter belt woodlands are also a feature of this otherwise open landscape, and woodland planting could be used to provide a buffer for future housing development on the edges of Heath Hayes." (page 41).

3.34 The north-west part of the Site is within Landscape Description Unit 21C: Prospect Village, characterised as a fragmented pattern of fields following opencast operations, with plantation woodland belts. The overall condition is assessed as good, noting:

"A modified landscape with the self contained settlement of Prospect Village at its centre. The old mineral line is a feature in the landscape." (page 42)

3.35 The majority of the Site is within Landscape Description Unit CF21D: Opencast area; characterised by a planned pattern of regular large fields, narrow shelterbelts and fences. The visual impact of recent change, following restoration is low, and the functional integrity of the landscape is moderate, due to the continuing establishment of a planned landscape. The overall condition of the landscape is assessed as moderate, noting:

"Any development would be highly visible, however the landscape is vacant due to the lack of settlement. Heathland would be appropriate in the medium term." (page 42)

Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2009-2014^{xii}

- 3.36 The parts of the AONB in proximity to the Site are classified as within Landscape Character Open Hills and Heaths Landscape Character. Key issues are noted as the encroachment of urban elements into the landscape; pressure for development, its quality and impacts that may change the character of the AONB landscapes and maintaining views.

4.0 SITE APPRAISAL

Landscape Appraisal

- 4.1 An appraisal of the Site is set out below and the location of the **Site Appraisal Photographs A-AC** demonstrating the characteristics and features on and within the immediate Site boundary are illustrated on **Figure 3: Site Appraisal Plan**. This illustrates the extent of existing vegetation, boundary features, buildings and roads on or in close proximity to the Site.
- 4.2 The appraisal has identified thirty-one field parcels within the Site. The main land use is arable, consisting of large scale field patterns, with several horse paddocks in the north-east part of the site in field F4, with areas of scrub and trees in field F18, adjacent to Cannock Wood Road. Built form within the Site comprises Wimblebury Farm in the north, in field F1 and a number of small scale single storey sheds and storage in the north-eastern part of the Site, within field F4.
- 4.3 The landform across the Site is varied; although overall it rises from its northern, eastern and southern edges to the central part of the Site, culminating in a ridge line, crossing east to west, between Wimblebury Road and Cooper's Cottage, broadly along the alignment of PRoW no.72, at approximately 235m AOD. This ridge line is a localised high point within the wider area to the north, from which the landform falls towards Wimblebury Farm, at approximately 185m AOD, before rising gradually to the dismantled railway on the northern boundary of the Site at approximately 200m AOD; and more gradually southwards towards Cuckoo Bank, at approximately 195m AOD. There are also ridge lines across the central and eastern parts of the Site due to the undulating surface landform. The combination of these ridge lines result in varying degrees of enclosures and inter-visibility across the Site and in relation to the wider area, and as such there is no location from which the entire Site is visible.
- 4.4 The Site is crossed by several PRoW; PRoW no.1 and no.26 in the northern part of the Site, between residential areas and Wimblebury Farm; PRoW no.11 and no.72 which cross the central part of the Site, along the central ridge line, between Wimblebury Road and Prospect Village; and PRoW no.0.327/0.328/0.332 which crosses the western edge of fields F30 and F31 and the eastern edge of field F27, connecting between Sevens Road and the A5190.
- 4.5 There are numerous ditches within the Site, with an unnamed stream in the northern part of the Site, coursing between fields F2 and F7 and connecting to a drainage channel adjacent to residential properties in Wimblebury. There is also a small scale water body on the eastern edge of the Site, to the south of fields F26 and 27.

- 4.6 The vegetation patterns within the Site are characterised by young hedgerows dividing the majority of the fields, which as they are not fully established do not enclose or fully define the field parcels; mature trees and vegetation bordering Wimblebury Farm; mature individual trees adjacent to PRow no.72 and the central ridge line crossing the central part of the site (east to west); areas of young woodland blocks in the central and southern parts of the site and areas of scrub and young trees on the eastern edges of the site. The vegetation patterns adjacent to Sevens Road are more established, including the field boundaries.
- 4.7 Starting in the northern part of the Site, the open arable character and pronounced rise in landform across field F1 and F2, is illustrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph A**, as the landform rises from the northern edge adjacent to residential properties in Wimblebury and Rawnsley, at approximately 185m AOD, to the central part of the Site, at approximately 236m AOD. The image also demonstrates the vegetated boundary of the disused railway line, the vegetation bordering Rawnsley cricket ground, and the prominence of mature trees on the ridge line within the Site, along PRow no.72 and surrounding Wimblebury Farm. Moving east across the northern part of the Site, **Site Appraisal Photograph B** also demonstrates the rising and undulating landform across fields F1 and F2, the relationship of the northern edge of the Site to the vegetation along the dismantled railway and to existing residential properties adjacent to Littleworth Road. The inter-visibility with Hednesford Hill to the north of the Site is also demonstrated.
- 4.8 The landscape character within the north-east part of the Site, fields F3 and F4, is demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photographs C and D**, and is characterised by areas of flatter landform adjacent to residential properties in Chetwynd Park, at approximately 205m AOD, before rising gently towards the boundary vegetation with Cooper's Cottage at approximately 230m AOD. The images also demonstrate the contrast in the boundary vegetation, with dense vegetation along the boundary of the Site, along the disused railway line, forming a defined edge to the Site and screening views of Cannock Wood Road, while the less established edge with Chetwynd Park enables views of the residential properties. The upper canopies of woodland at Castle Ring are also visible in the background of the view.
- 4.9 The open character of fields F1 and F2; the undulating landform screening Rawnsley cricket ground from the southern part field F2, and the hedgerow boundaries between field F2 and F4 are demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph E**. The image demonstrates that the low lying position of the northern part of the Site enables inter-visibility with residential properties in Wimblebury and the rising landform of Hednesford Hill to the north of the Site.
- 4.10 The visual separation between the northern part of the Site (fields F1, F2, F3, F4 and F7) and the central and southern parts of the Site, due to the rising landform and ridge line

across field F7 is demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph F**. The separation is due to the combination of the ridge lines and intermittent vegetation across the Site. The image also demonstrates the open character and extent of field F7, rising from approximately 200m AOD to the ridge line at approximately 235m AOD. Traversing field F7, **Site Appraisal Photograph G** is taken from the southern, elevated part of the field, looking north towards Hednesford Hill, Hayes and Cannock. The image demonstrates the large scale, open character of these fields in the northern part of the Site; the strong form of the ridge line; young boundary vegetation dividing the fields; the fall in landform towards Wimblebury Farm and the inter-visibility with residential properties in Wimblebury.

- 4.11 Moving west along PRoW 72 and the ridge line, **Site Appraisal Photographs H-K**, demonstrate the character of fields F5, F6 and F7, with falling landform and relationship to residential properties in Wimblebury, the mature vegetation enclosing Wimblebury Farm and the background views of Cannock Wood. **Site Appraisal Photograph I** demonstrates the varying land use either side of PRoW no.72, with arable fields and areas of heathland in the central part of the Site. The image also demonstrates the mature woodland bordering the Site which forms a strong edge to this part of the Site. **Site Appraisal Photograph L** demonstrates the mature vegetation which encloses Wimblebury Farm and the undulating landform.
- 4.12 The landscape character of the western part of the Site, (fields F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14 and F15) is demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photographs M-O**, comprising a falling landform from PRoW no.72, (approximately at 235m AOD) southwards to Cuckoo Bank (approximately 205m AOD). The fields are open in character, geometric in form and divided by post and wire fencing with very young, intermittent hedgerows. The combination of mature woodland bordering the western part of the Site and the falling landform provide a degree of enclosure to this part of the Site.
- 4.13 The landscape character of the central part of the Site is demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photographs P-R**, characterised by a falling and undulating landform of open arable fields, divided by young field hedgerows and bordered by young woodland planting. The ridge line and PRoW no.72 define the northern edge of the fields, with views of the upper canopies of Cannock Wood and electrical pylons to the south-east of the Site. **Site Appraisal Photograph Q** demonstrates the falling landform across the southern central part of the Site, within field F24 and how the ridge line encloses this part of the Site from the wider area. **Site Appraisal Photograph R** demonstrates the low lying position of the small water body at the eastern edge of the Site and the elevated landform of Hayfield Hill in the background of the view.

- 4.14 Field F27, in eastern edge of the Site is illustrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph S**, characterised by a triangular field, with mature boundary vegetation adjacent to Sevens Road. The low lying position of this field within the Noddyfield Valley enables inter-visibility with residential properties at close range to the Site, adjacent to Sevens Road, to the east of the site in Hayfield Hill and Gentleshaw Hill AONB. Similarly, field F29, illustrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph U** is also characterised by a triangular field parcel, with mature boundary vegetation adjacent to Sevens Road, but in a low lying position in relation to the wider landscape to the east.
- 4.15 **Site Appraisal Photograph T** is taken from the track crossing the eastern part of the Site, and demonstrates the ridge line between the eastern and central parts of the Site; the undulating landform within field F25; the mature woodland within Cuckoo Bank forming a defined boundary to the Site, and at the far right of the image, residential properties adjacent to Sevens Road in Prospect Village. **Site Appraisal Photograph V** demonstrates a similar character within field F23, with **Site Appraisal Photographs W and X** illustrating the eastern parts of field F23 adjacent to residential properties in Prospect Village. The ridge line in the eastern part of the Site, across field 21 is also demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photographs Y**, which in combination with the more established hedgerows results in a higher degree of enclosure.
- 4.16 Field 19 is designated as a Site of Biological Interest, and forms part of the eastern edge of the Site, adjacent to Sevens Road and mature vegetation adjacent to the dismantled railway. The field is illustrated in **Site Appraisal Photograph Z**, and is characterised by a steeply falling landform, from approximately 225m AOD to 115m AOD, towards Sevens Road, with clumps of shrub and young trees within the field. The relationship with the surrounding area is demonstrated by the inter-visibility with Proposed Village and residential properties across Hayfield Hill.
- 4.17 **Site Appraisal Photograph AA** is taken from PRoW no.72 and demonstrates the rectangular field pattern of field F17 and the mature vegetation along the ridge line. The ridge line across field F16 is also visible, resulting in a relatively high degree of enclosure to this part of the Site.
- 4.18 The enclosed character of the southern part of the Site, fields F30 and F31, is demonstrated in **Site Appraisal Photographs AB and AC**. Also evident within these images are the national grid pylons to the north of Burntwood and crossing between the two fields.

Landscape Appraisal Summary

- 4.19 The majority of the Site is characterised arable open fields of varying sizes, divided by a combination of post and wire fencing and young, establishing hedgerows. There are several

paddocks (fields F3 and F4) and a Site of Biological Interest (field F19) on the eastern edges of the Site, characterised by a more established hedgerow and vegetation structure, including mature trees. This landscape pattern is not considered to be of scenic value and reflects the District Landscape Character Assessment description of an establishing planned landscape.

4.20 The dominant landscape element within the Site is the undulating landform, which overall rises from the edges of the site, culminating in number of strongly defined ridge lines. These ridge lines, physically and visually separate the Site into five areas:

- A northern area between PRow no.72 and fields F1, F2 and F3, which is characterised by a falling landform from PRow no.72 to low lying and undulating fields adjacent to the existing settlement pattern with subsequent inter-visibility with surrounding residential properties and Hednesford Hill;
- A western area between fields F9 and fields F10, 13 and 15, which is characterised by a falling landform and a more enclosed character due to the proximity to mature woodland adjacent to the site and the ridge lines to the north and east;
- A central area between fields F16, F20, F22, F24, F25 and F26, characterised by undulating landform and varying degrees of enclosure;
- An eastern area between field F16 and F27, characterised by a falling landform towards Sevens Road and high inter-visibility with the wider landscape to the east; and
- Fields F30 and F31 in the southern part of the site, which are characterised by smaller scale fields, with a high degree of enclosure due to the combination of their low lying position and mature boundary vegetation.

4.21 The tranquillity varies across the site, being lowest in the northern part of the site due to the proximity to residential areas and audible noise from the surrounding road networks. Similarly in the eastern part of the site, there is audible noise from the road network and inter-visibility with a number of settlements across Hayfield Hill, albeit of a lower number due to the smaller scale settlement pattern compared to Wimblebury. The eastern part of the site has inter-visibility with Cannock Chase AONB. The western part of the site is enclosed, due to the falling landform towards mature woodland blocks and Cuckoo Chase which borders this part of the site. The ridge lines to the north and east limit the inter-visibility with the wider area, with the exception of Cuckoo Chase. The combination of the inter-visibility between parts of the Site and surrounding residential properties; audible noise from the surrounding road networks and views of pylons reduces the sense of remoteness within the Site.

4.22 The Site does not separate the settlement pattern between Wimblebury and Rawnsley, as these two areas are connected via residential properties adjacent to Littleworth Road. There

are a number of settlement patterns adjacent to the Cannock Wood Road, separated in part by the eastern edges of the Site, specifically field F3 separating Rawnsley from Cooper's Cottage and field F19 separating Cooper's Cottage from Prospect Village. To the south of the Site, Cuckoo Wood and agricultural fields, in combination with the linear form of the A5190 and its dense roadside vegetation provides a strong vegetated boundary between the Site, Burntwood and Norton Canes. The mature woodland bordering the western part of the Site provides a strong vegetated boundary to the southern part of Heath Hayes and residential properties adjacent to Wimblebury Road.

Landscape Value

- 4.23 The Site is not covered by any landscape designations, and is therefore considered to be of lower value than Cannock Chase AONB to the east and Hednesford Hills to the north. Overall the vegetation structure is weak, as the hedgerows and tree belts are still to mature, following the restoration of the site. The main exceptions to this are the mature trees adjacent to PRow no.72 and field 19 in the eastern part of the Site.

Visual Context

- 4.24 A visual appraisal was undertaken from publically accessible viewpoints to determine the visibility of the Site within the surrounding area. These views are shown in **Site Context Photographs 1-25**, with the locations identified on **Figure 4: Visual Appraisal Plan**.
- 4.25 The visibility of the northern part of the Site, its rising landform, and the relationship to existing residential properties within the view from the open space at Hednesford Hill, to the north of the Site, is demonstrated in **Site Context Photograph 1**. The view illustrates how the ridge line across the central part of the site screens the remaining parts of the site and that the site is seen in the context of residential properties within Wimblebury, including the dominant warehouse units within Cannock Wood Industrial Estate, and at a lesser scale across Hayfield Hill.
- 4.26 Moving north-east, **Site Context Photograph 2** is taken from Rawnsley and demonstrates that the combination of landform and existing residential properties screen the majority of the northern part of the Site. The exception is the upper parts of field F7, the ridge line and mature vegetation. A similar composition to the view is demonstrated from elevated receptors further to the north of the Site within Hazelslade in **Site Context Photograph 3**.
- 4.27 **Site Context Photograph 4** is also taken to the north-east of the site along Cannock Wood Road in Rawnsley; and represents how the combination of the low lying position of this part of the settlement, mature vegetation along the disused railway and existing residential properties between this part of Rawnsley screen the Site.

- 4.28 The view from residential properties adjacent to Cannock Wood Road is demonstrated in **Site Context Photograph 5**, to the north-east edge of the Site. The view demonstrates the linear alignment of Littleworth Road, and that the height of the vegetation along the dismantled railway and residential properties in Chetwynd Park screens views of field F3. Further south along Cannock Wood Road, **Site Context Photograph 6** is taken from adjacent to Windmill Service Station and demonstrates the rising landform on the eastern edge of the Site, the ridge line in field F19 and the separation between these properties and Prospect Village. **Site Context Photograph 7** is taken from Prospect Village and demonstrates the filtered views of field F19 due to the roadside vegetation.
- 4.29 **Site Context Photograph 8** is taken from Sevens Road and demonstrates how the intervening vegetation screens views of the Site.
- 4.30 Moving further to the east, **Site Context Photographs 9 and 10** are taken from Holly Hill Road, to the south of Castle Ring, and residential properties along Park Gate Road respectively. The images demonstrate the visibility of field F19 and a small part of the upper section of field F7, and how the ridge lines screen the remainder of the northern and western parts of the Site. The images also demonstrate the relationship of the Site to the existing settlement patterns within the Noddyfield Valley at Prospect Village and the relationship between the upper section of field F7 and Hednesford Hill.
- 4.31 **Site Context Photograph 11** is taken from Gentleshaw Hill, to the east of the Site, within the Cannock Chase AONB. The view demonstrates the visibility of the eastern edge of the site, fields F26 and F27 elevation of these fields above the Noddyfield Valley and the elevated position of the receptor. The image also demonstrates the generally wooded ridge line and relationship of the site to the agricultural landscape, which includes for residential properties across Hayford Hill.
- 4.32 **Site Context Photographs 12 and 13** are taken from the road network to the south-east of the southern part of the Site, on the edge of Burntwood. They demonstrate that although the boundary vegetation of the Site is visible, it screens views of fields F30 and F31 and the remainder of the Site.
- 4.33 **Site Context Photograph 14** is taken from within Cuckoo Wood, with views of the Site screened by the extent of vegetation bordering the PRoW, while there are open views from the northern edge of Cuckoo Bank.
- 4.34 **Site Context Photograph 15 and 16** are taken from the south of the western part of the Site, adjacent to Cuckoo Wood and PRoW no.65. They demonstrate that while there are close range views of this part of the Site, the rising landform screens views of the central and northern part of the Site.

- 4.35 Views from the A5190 Cannock Road, to the south of the Site are demonstrated in **Site Context Photographs 17 and 18**. The density of the roadside vegetation in combination with the rising landform across Cuckoo Bank screen views of the Site. The images also represent the linear form and undulating character of the road.
- 4.36 To the south-west of the Site, **Site Appraisal Photograph 19** is taken from Hednesford Road, representing the approach to Heath Hayes and Wimblebury. The image demonstrates that the Site is screened due to the combination of the intervening landform and vegetation. Moving closer to the Site, **Site Appraisal Photograph 20** is taken at the junction of Hednesford Road, the A5190 and Wimblebury Road. Similarly the Site is screened due to the combination of rising landform and mature coniferous woodland blocks. The view also demonstrates the linear form of both Wimblebury Road and the A5190.
- 4.37 **Site Appraisal Photograph 21** is taken from within the amenity space to the east of Wimblebury Road, and the south-west of the Site, and demonstrates how the rising vegetated landform screens views of the Site.
- 4.38 Moving northwards, **Site Appraisal Photographs 22, 23 and 24** are taken from locations along Wimblebury Road. They demonstrate the undulating landform and existing settlement pattern, which generally screens all but the ridge line. Similarly, **Site Appraisal Photograph 25**, taken to the west of the Site within Heath Hayes demonstrates how the extent of built form channel and screen views of the northern part of the site, with the only exception being the ridge line.

Visual Appraisal Summary

- 4.39 Due to the scale of the Site and the combination of undulating landform and intervening vegetation, there are no locations within the surrounding area from which the entire Site is visible. Similarly, there is no location within the Site that affords views over the entire Site, again due to the undulating landform. The northern and eastern parts of the Site are visible from within the surrounding area, although the extent of inter-visibility is limited.
- 4.40 The northern part of the Site is visible from close range locations, as it is in a low lying position in relation to residential and recreational receptors, which are in turn in elevated locations across Hednesford Hill. The northern part of the Site is seen in the context of existing settlement patterns surrounding the Site. However, from within longer distance views to the north of the Site, the intervening landform and vegetation patterns screen the northern part of the Site. The exception is the central ridge line, which is visible, although often a minor component of the view.

- 4.41 The eastern edges of the Site are visible from close range residential receptors and transport routes, although views are often filtered by the roadside vegetation. The extents of views are foreshortened from these close range locations due to the rising landform across the eastern part of the Site, which culminates in a localised ridge line. From longer distance locations to the east of the Site, views extend above this ridge line, however views do not extend across the whole central and southern parts of the Site, again due to the undulating landform within the Site. The longer distance locations are also elevated in relation to the Site and include the locations of Castle Ring and Cannock Chase AONB. From these locations, the Site is seen in the context of clustered small scale settlements, vehicles along Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road and electrical pylons to the north of Burntwood. The eastern part of the Site forms part of the wider arable landscape within these views.
- 4.42 From the south of the Site, there are partial views of the southern central and southern parts of the Site from the PRow network within Cuckoo Bank and adjacent to the Site. From these locations, the character of the view consists of open fields, culminating at a ridge line, which screens views of the remainder of the site. From locations further to the south of the Site, the Site is not visible, due to the combination of the intervening vegetation and landform.
- 4.43 To the east of the Site, views are generally screened by the combination of landform and mature coniferous woodland blocks adjacent to the Site. The main exceptions are from locations at close range to the Site, along Wimblebury Road and in mid-distance views within Heath Hayes, from which the elevated landform within the northern part of the Site are visible, although seen in the context of existing residential properties.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.44 While the land use across the Site is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses, the geometric and large scale pattern of the field contrasts with the surrounding generally smaller scale and irregular field patterns. The vegetation species and patterns within the Site are representative of the surrounding area, with field boundaries, heathland and areas of woodland; however with the exception of mature trees along part of PRow no.72 and surrounding Wimblebury Farm, the hedgerows are still young and are still to mature to establish the structure and enclosure characteristic within the surrounding landscape. The vegetation adjacent to the Site is mature, with woodland blocks and mature roadside vegetation, which aids in enclosing and containing the Site from a number of close range locations.
- 4.45 The contribution that the eastern edge of the Site makes to the wider landscape is as a series of small scale physical breaks between the existing settlement patterns adjacent to Cannock Chase Wood Road and Sevens Road. The surrounding residential settlement pattern

has already extended to the north of the Site, with the merging of Wimblebury and Rawnsley. The separation between Heath Hayes and Burntwood is defined by the defensible boundaries of the amenity space adjacent to Wimblebury Road and Cuckoo Wood. Therefore, due to the specific function in relation to development along the Cannock Chase Wood Road and Sevens Road, the landscape character sensitivity of the Site is **medium**.

- 4.46 The general visibility of the Site is high, due to the proximity of residential receptors to the northern part of the Site, the extent of the eastern edge of the Site visible from the wider landscape and that the southern part of the Site is visible from PRow. In addition, the site is crossed by a two PRow which enable close range open views of parts of the Site. However, from these locations, the site is either seen in the context of existing residential properties or the extent of views across the site are curtailed by the undulating landform and partially filtered by vegetation. In addition, the Site is screened from locations in the wider landscape to the south and south-west due to the combination of rising landform and vegetation. Additionally it is considered that there is the potential for mitigation through enhancing the existing vegetation structure and establishing new boundaries to further limit views of the Site from close range locations. Any foreshortening of views that such mitigation planting would result in, is considered to be reflected by the existing ridge lines which foreshorten views across the Site. Therefore the visual sensitivity of the Site is **medium**.
- 4.47 The combination of the medium landscape character sensitivity and medium visual sensitivity are considered to result in a **medium** overall landscape sensitivity of the Site.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 From the Site Appraisal and with reference to **Figure 5: Development Principles Plan**, the following design principles are recommended to ensure that any potential development within the Site responds positively to the landscape and visual considerations.

- There is the opportunity to maintain the separation between the existing settlement patterns along Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road by retaining the open character across the eastern edge of the Site in combination with protecting the views, setting and perception of the landscape from with Cannock Chase AONB;
- There is the opportunity to create a strong green infrastructure network across the Site, providing new access and recreation, in combination with new native structural planting, linking from Littleworth Road to Cuckoo Bank, in line with Objective 7 and Policy CP14 of the Local Plan;
- There is the opportunity to establish firm and defensible boundaries to any new built form through new structural planting;
- There is the opportunity to retain and enhance the existing vegetation through sensitive siting and layout of any development, in response to existing root protection areas;
- There is the opportunity to retain and enhance the existing watercourses, including for the inclusion of sustainable urban drainage systems; and
- There is the opportunity to implement high quality design of the new built form, public realm and new landscape, sensitivity designed and sited in accordance with Policy CP14 of the Local Plan.
- New built form should be located in the low lying western parts of the Site, in relation to visual screening provided by the ridge lines across the Site and the woodland blocks to the west of the Site;
- The height of residential development should comprise 2 to 2.5 storeys, to retain the relationship to the existing settlement patterns;
- Residential development should enhance the existing vegetation in accordance with the aims and objectives of the landscape character studies;
- New planting along the southern and eastern edges of the Site should ensure a firm and defensible boundary;
- The development should ensure existing vegetation within Wimblebury Farm and along PRoW no.72 is retained; and
- New planting should be located along all new internal road layouts to soften the character of development and further aid in integrating the built form.

5.2 The constraints of residential development at the Site are:

- Preventing the merging of residential development along the Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road, which can be addressed by retaining the open character of the eastern edges of the Site;
- Preventing adversely affecting Cannock Chase AONB, which can be addressed by not siting built form within the eastern part of the Site, and retaining the open character;
- The proximity of the southern part of the Site to PRoW within Cuckoo Wood, which can be addressed by new planting along the southern boundary of the Site to reflect existing views;
- The low lying position of the northern part of the Site and the visibility of new development, which can be addressed through new planting to break up the mass and scale of the new built form;
- The high inter-visibility of the most elevated parts of the Site, which can be addressed by avoiding locating new built form in these areas and implementing amenity space, ecological areas and green infrastructure, to retain their open character; and
- Retaining the existing mature vegetation within the Site and adjacent to the boundaries of the Site, which can be addressed by offsetting any development of change in level in response to root protection areas.

Landscape Capacity to Accommodate Residential Development

5.3 With the incorporation of the above design principles, it is considered that residential development, with associated infrastructure and amenities could be successfully accommodated within a number of zones across the Site. This is due to the low lying and localised enclosure of parts of the Site, the retention of existing vegetation and the potential connections to existing road networks and infrastructure. The extent and density of development within these zones would vary, and they could be further sub-divided following more detailed assessment. All development within the zones would be set within a robust landscape framework as follows:

- Development could be accommodated within the northern part of the Site, in a zone extending across fields F1, F2, F3, F4 and the lower parts of fields F6 and F7. This northern zone represents a low-lying part of the Site, adjacent to existing settlement patterns. Development would be in combination with new open space and a robust landscape framework to enhance the village character to the cricket ground and break up the new built form within existing views from elevated locations across Hednesford Hill. The overall extent of the northern is approximately 55 hectares;
- Development could be accommodated across the western parts of the Site, in a zone extending across fields F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15 and the central part of the

Site, in a zone extending across fields F16, F20, F21, F22, F24, F25 and F26. These parts of the Site are enclosed in relation to the wider landscape due to the proximity of mature woodland and undulating landform. Development would be in combination with new open space and a robust landscape framework including new planting along ridge lines and development edges. The overall extent of this zone would be approximately 100 hectares; and

- Development could be accommodated in the southern part of the Site, in fields F30 and F31, due to the high enclosure and low lying position of these fields. The overall extent of this zone would be approximately 8.5 hectares.

5.4 Development at the Site would evidently result in a direct change in land use, with the loss of fields and the introduction of new built form. However the retention of the open character across the eastern part of the Site would retain the open character and separation of settlements and in combination with new planting along this edge, reduce the inter-visibility with the surrounding area. The layout of the development zones responds positively to the landform across the Site, with the opportunity to increase the recreational and green infrastructure network and the introduction of new open space.

5.5 The Site is assessed as being of low landscape value, as it is not covered by any landscape designations; although crossed by some PRow localised to the northern and eastern parts of the Site; has a generally low tranquillity, remoteness and scenic value due to the proximity and inter-visibility to existing residential settlements, road infrastructure and pylons, the geometric field pattern and predominantly young vegetation structure.

5.6 The Site is considered, due to the medium landscape sensitivity and low landscape value, to have a **medium capacity** to successfully accommodate residential development. This residential development would need to be sensitivity designed through siting, layout, materials and massing, complemented by a landscape framework with green infrastructure, to limit landscape and visual effects on the surrounding area, including the Green Belt.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION OF THE SITE TO THE PURPOSES OF THE GREEN BELT

- 6.1 The extent of the Green Belt within the vicinity of the Site is illustrated on **Figure 1: Site Context Plan**. The Site is situated within the central part of the Districts' Green Belt, with the designation extending north and east, across Cannock Chase Woods, Rawnsley and Prospect Village to the District boundary; and south-east across the A5109 to the south of Heath Hayes to the A460 and Little Wyrley, south of the M6.
- 6.2 The CCGBR has already reviewed a small part of the Site, field F19, and judged it to make a considerable contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, the highest judgement rating. Given the scale the remaining CCGBR parcels delineating the Site, it is highly likely that the entire Site will be judged to make a considerable contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. This is not considered to be an appropriate assessment, given it will not achieve the intention of the Green Belt Review. Therefore the Site has been considered against the following sections (a) to (e) of the Green Belt as stated in paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework, to reflect against the CCGBR.

(a) To check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

- 6.3 The site comprises 31 field parcels surrounded by defined boundaries, comprising existing residential settlement to the north-west and north; mature vegetation, smaller scale settlements, Cannock Wood Road, Sevens Road and Stables Way Road to the east; Cuckoo Wood (SSSI) and the A5190 to the south; and, mature woodland blocks, amenity open space, allotments and Wimblebury Road to the east. These features separate the Site from the open countryside and establish defensible boundaries to the Site.
- 6.4 The northern part of the Site makes no contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of residential settlements as Wimblebury and Rawnsley have already merged along Littleworth Road. The eastern edge of the Site makes a contribution to preventing unrestricted sprawl of smaller scale settlements; specifically the potential coalescence of Prospect Village and Rawnsley. However this contribution is in combination with roadside vegetation, Cooper's Cottages and woodland along the dismantled railway, all of which are not within the Site boundary. The southern part of the Site makes no contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of residential settlements, as the gap between Heath Hayes and Burntwood is defined by amenity open space and Cuckoo Bank. The western part of the Site makes no contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of residential settlement along Wimblebury Road due to existing woodland blocks, fields, amenity space and allotments currently adjacent to

Wimblebury Road which are to the west of the Site. There is already settlement adjacent to the small part of field F5 which connects to Wimblebury Road.

- 6.5 Therefore the Site has the ability to absorb residential development, including for retaining the open character of the eastern edge of the Site, without contributing to an increase in the extent of unrestricted sprawl of the existing settlement patterns, in that it would not constitute a disorganised, unattractive extension of Heath Hayes, Wimblebury and Rawnsley, lacking a coherent, robust or defensible boundary, and nor would it reduce the ability of neighbouring land to meet this purpose of the Green Belt designation.

(b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

- 6.6 As identified, the existing settlement patterns to the north of the Site have already merged, and the strong vegetated framework to the west and south results in a high degree of enclosure to the Site. The retention of the open character on the eastern edge of the Site would retain the existing settlement pattern, preventing the merging of Prospect Village and Rawnsley.
- 6.7 Development at the Site would be contained within a new robust landscape framework, including new planting to provide a defined edge to the built form and new open space. The new landscape framework would enhance the existing vegetation patterns, retain the open character of the elevated and eastern edges of the Site and in combination with roadside vegetation adjacent to the Site, retain the physical break between existing settlements.
- 6.8 Furthermore, the existing Cuckoo Bank and amenity open space to the south of the Site would remain, such that developing the Site would not contribute to Heath Hayes and Burntwood merging along the A1590; nor would it reduce the ability of this neighbouring land to prevent settlements from merging and to meet this purpose of the Green Belt.

(c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 6.9 By avoiding development on the elevated parts of the Site and the eastern edge and siting development in the lower lying and more enclosed parts of the Site, the effects to the continuity with the surrounding countryside would be limited.
- 6.10 Residential development of the Site would result in a change in character, due to the change in land use; although set within a comprehensive landscape framework and retaining the open character of the eastern and elevated parts of the Site, including for enhancing the existing vegetation structure.
- 6.11 The loss to the countryside as a result of the development on the Site would be limited, due to the Site being bounded by settlement patterns, woodlands, Cuckoo Bank and road

networks. Residential development of the Site would not weaken the ability of neighbouring land to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and to meet this purpose of the Green Belt.

(d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 6.12 The Site is not in close proximity to Conservation Areas and therefore does not contribute to preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.

(e) To assist in urban-regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other land

- 6.13 Should the Site be brought forward for residential development, this would not prejudice other derelict land or urban land coming forwards.

Harm to the Green Belt

- 6.14 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that when considering any planning application:

"local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstance' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."

- 6.15 Residential development at the Site would result in a limited loss of countryside and a reduction in 'technical openness' compared with the existing character of the Site; although this would only be perceived from the immediate vicinity due to the ridge lines across the Site which physically and visually separate the extent of the Site from the wider area. As identified above, development of the Site would offer the opportunity to enhance the existing landscape character through substantial tree planting and heathland creation, provide increased recreation and access via new green infrastructure, public open space and improved habitat connectivity. This is in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF which notes that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should:

"plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land."

7.0 CANNOCK CHASE GREEN BELT REVIEW

7.1 As discussed previously, Cannock Chase will be undertaking a review of the Green Belt boundaries within the District in the context of required housing allocations, and the findings of their review could result in the amendment of the Green Belt boundaries and areas of land released for development. At this time, Cannock Chase are consulting on their proposed Green Belt review method, with feedback required by the 9th January 2015.

7.2 The Cannock Chase Green Belt Review method (CCGBR) comprises a number of tasks, and the CCGBRM has divided the Site into a number of land parcels which will be assessed for their value in contributing to the purposes of the Green Belt.

7.3 The following tasks relate to the staged approach of the CCGBR.

Task 1: Setting the context for the review (completed)

7.4 This stage of the CCGBR study provides the context to the Green Belt as defined within the NPPF and housing delivery quotas.

Task 2: Defining the study area (completed)

7.5 In addition to the Green Belt areas within the District, two additional categories were included for the CCGBR assessment:

- Selected land outside the Green Belt for possible future inclusion in the Green Belt; and
- Selected areas of land straddling the boundary between Cannock Chase District and neighbouring districts.

7.6 As a result, fields F30 and F31 are included within the review, although they fall within Litchfield District. The Litchfield District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment did not review these parcels.

7.7 Field F19 is covered by the designation of a Site of Biological Interest, which is not included in the criteria of the constraints mapping, and therefore field F19 remains within the review process.

Task 3: Land parcel identification (completed)

7.8 The CCGBR divides the Site into four land parcels for assessment:

- Parcel 1 - covers the majority of the site, extending from the northern part of the site, (fields F1, F2 and F3) to the southern part of the site, adjacent to Cuckoo Wood;
- Parcel 2 – covers Cooper’s Cottages and field F19 (between PRoW no.72, Prospect Village and Cannock Wood Road);
- Parcel 3 – covers fields F21 and F23 to the south of residential properties adjacent to Sevens Road; and
- Parcel 4 – covers fields F30 and F31 which are within Litchfield District and included as “areas of Green Belt straddling the boundary with neighbouring local authorities”.

7.9 These land parcels are stated as being based on a combination of the Local Plan Policies Proposals Map, OS maps and aerial images, so that:

“clear, robust boundaries around areas of the same or similar land use or character can be defined.” (para 1.28).

7.10 This LVA considers that the scale of these four land parcels is too large; and does not reflect the landform across the Site or the localised enclosure. It is recommended that the CCGBR undertakes field work across the Site to redefine the assessment parcels.

Task 4: Detailed assessment of land parcels adjacent to large built-up areas (to be completed)

7.11 The CCGBR is aiming to present the contribution of the land parcels based on the first four of the purposes of the Green Belt, in addition to specific considerations relevant to the District. This LVA recommends that the criteria and value associated of Item 1a Ribbon Development of the CCGBR are clarified as to the role of the parcel in preventing ribbon development.

7.12 The CCGBR will be undertaken firstly as a desk based exercise and if required a site visit to review the initial findings (Task 7).

7.13 In order to reach this conclusion, an overall judgement on the contribution of the land parcel will be based on a review of the individual judgements. However, no scoring method ratio is provided to define a threshold between the above contribution categories.

7.14 In addition, should a land parcel achieve a triple score (+++) against any purpose, then it will be judged automatically to make a considerable contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt and no further assessment of that land parcels will be required.

7.15 The results will be presented based on a land parcel making a:

- A considerable contribution to the Green Belt purposes;
- A contribution to the Green Belt purposes; and

- A more limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes.

7.16 This LVA considers that this is not an appropriate scoring method; particularly due to the likelihood of any site which is open in character, or large in scale receiving a +++ score. The LVA recommends that the CCGBR scoring system is revised to be based on a cumulative system with clearly defined thresholds, so that greater tolerance is included for, and a greater potential to achieve the aims of releasing land from the Green Belt.

Task 5

7.17 There is no task 5 stated; and this is assumed to be an omission. It is recommended that CCGBR clarify the status of Task 5.

Task 6: Interim report and progress meeting (to be completed)

7.18 CCGBR will present the above information and prepare an interim report. This LVA considers that the interim report should be made available to The Church Commissioners for England and to ensure that a Site visit of the land parcels is undertaken to fully understand the landform and the relationship of the various parts of the Site to the surrounding area and settlement patterns. A site visit and site access can be arranged via the Commissioners managing agents, Smith Gore.

Task 7: Site Visits (to be completed)

7.19 Due to the complexity of the landform across the Site, its scale and extent this LVA recommends that Site visits of the land parcels are undertaken; the aim being to identify smaller areas within the Site based upon the landform.

Task 8: Final Report (to be completed)

7.20 It is considered that the format of the final report is appropriate.

8.0 CANNOCK CHASE GREEN BELT REVIEW SITE ASSESSMENT

8.1 The CCGBR has identified four land parcels within the Site. These are assessed in the following section, based upon the CCGBR method.

8.2 With reference to the below table, Parcel 1 would be assessed as making a considerable contribution to Green Belt purposes, due to the requirement to measure distances between existing settlement patterns and the agricultural character land use resulting in a lack of urbanising influences.

NPPF Green Belt Purposes		Issues for Consideration		Criteria	Value
1	To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas	a	Ribbon Development	Does the parcel play a role in preventing ribbon development?	As parts of the parcel are adjacent to roads it plays a role in preventing ribbon development. ++
		b	Openness	Does the parcel protect an open area of countryside free from development?	The parcel contains Wimblebury Farm, therefore limited development. ++
2	To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	a	Location of parcel and distance between neighbouring settlements	What is the width of the gap between the settlements in which the parcel is located?	On the eastern edge of the parcel, Rawsley to the settlement adjacent to Cannock Wood Road is approximately 0.4km. +++
		b	Type and location of physical boundaries/separating parcels: motorways, railways, rivers or woods.	Are there existing natural or man-made features / boundaries that would prevent the settlements from merging with one another in the long term (These could be outside the parcel)	There are no significant boundaries. +++
3	To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	a	Significance of existing urbanising influences	Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanising built development, not including agricultural and forestry related development, within the parcel	The land parcel contains no urbanising influences and is open. +++
		b	Significance	Are there any	The ridge lines would form significant

			and permanence of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent encroachment	existing natural or natural man-made features / boundaries that would prevent encroachment in the long term (these could be outside the parcel)	boundaries. +
		c	Countryside access/recreation	Is there evidence of positive use of the countryside in this location (e.g. footpaths, bridleways, formal or informal sport and recreation) (Accessible countryside on the doorstep)	There are PRow within and adjacent to the parcel. ++
4	To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	a	Contribution of the parcel to setting and special character of settlement	Are there any features of historic significance in the parcel or visible from the parcel?	No. +
5	N/A				

Parcel 2 in relation to the CCGBR Method

8.3 With reference to the below table, Parcel 2 would be assessed as making a considerable contribution to Green Belt purposes, due to the requirement to measure distances between existing settlement patterns and agricultural character land use.

NPPF Green Belt Purposes		Issues for Consideration		Criteria	Value
1	To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas	a	Ribbon Development	Does the parcel play a role in preventing ribbon development?	As the north-east edge of the parcel is adjacent to a road it plays a role in preventing ribbon development. ++
		b	Openness	Does the parcel protect an open area of countryside free from development?	The parcel does not contain any development. +++
2	To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	a	Location of parcel and distance between neighbouring settlements	What is the width of the gap between the settlements in which the parcel is located?	Rawnsley is less than 1km to the north-west. +++
		b	Type and	Are there	There are no significant boundaries. +++

			location of physical boundaries/separating parcels: motorways, railways, rivers or woods.	existing natural or man-made features / boundaries that would prevent the settlements from merging with one another in the long term (These could be outside the parcel)	
3	To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	a	Significance of existing urbanising influences	Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanising built development, not including agricultural and forestry related development, within the parcel	The land parcel contains no urbanising influences and is open. +++
		b	Significance and permanence of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent encroachment	Are there any existing natural or natural man-made features / boundaries that would prevent encroachment in the long term (these could be outside the parcel)	The ridge lines would form significant boundaries. +
		c	Countryside access/recreation	Is there evidence of positive use of the countryside in this location (e.g. footpaths, bridleways, formal or informal sport and recreation) (Accessible countryside on the doorstep)	There are PRoW adjacent to the southern edge of the parcel. ++
4	To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	a	Contribution of the parcel to setting and special character of settlement	Are there any features of historic significance in the parcel or visible from the parcel?	No. +
5	N/A				

Parcel 3 in relation to the CCGBR Method (Detailed Assessment of parcel to the west of Prospect Village)

- 8.4 Parcel 3 has been assessed within the CCGBR and judged as making a considerable contribution to the Green Belt Purposes, as it is largely open land without significant boundaries preventing the settlements from merging. Item 2a of their review judges that Rawnsley Village is less than 1km to the west of Prospect Village, with a score rating of ++. However the value for a width of gap less than 1km is states a score rating of +++. Therefore it is not clear why they have reduced the score rating and how that would apply to other examples in the area.

Parcel 4 in relation to the CCGBR Method

- 8.5 With reference to the below table, Parcel 4 would be assessed as making a considerable contribution to the Green Belt Purposes, as it is open land without any development and in close proximity to existing settlements; specifically Prospect Village and Rawnsley.

NPPF Green Belt Purposes		Issues for Consideration		Criteria	Value
1	To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas	a	Ribbon Development	Does the parcel play a role in preventing ribbon development?	As the parcel is adjacent to a road it plays a role in preventing ribbon development. ++
		b	Openness	Does the parcel protect an open area of countryside free from development?	The parcel does not contain any development. +++
2	To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	a	Location of parcel and distance between neighbouring settlements	What is the width of the gap between the settlements in which the parcel is located?	The parcel is adjacent to Burntwood and Prospect Village is between 1km and 2km to the north. +++
		b	Type and location of physical boundaries/separating parcels: motorways, railways, rivers or woods.	Are there existing natural or man-made features / boundaries that would prevent the settlements from merging with one another in the long term (These could be outside the parcel)	The road network and Cuckoo Bank would prevent Burntwood merging with other settlements. +
3	To assist in safeguarding the countryside	a	Significance of existing urbanising influences	Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment	The land parcel contains no urbanising influences and is open. +++

	from encroachment			of urbanising built development, not including agricultural and forestry related development, within the parcel	
		b	Significance and permanence of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent encroachment	Are there any existing natural or natural man-made features / boundaries that would prevent encroachment in the long term (these could be outside the parcel)	The ridge lines would form significant boundaries. +
		c	Countryside access/recreation	Is there evidence of positive use of the countryside in this location (e.g. footpaths, bridleways, formal or informal sport and recreation) (Accessible countryside on the doorstep)	There are PRoW within the parcel and adjacent to the west, within Cuckoo Wood parcel. ++
4	To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	a	Contribution of the parcel to setting and special character of settlement	Are there any features of historic significance in the parcel or visible from the parcel?	No. +
5	N/A				

Summary of the Cannock Chase Green Belt Review Method

8.6 The review method is likely to judge that all the Land at Bleak Farm (divided into four CCGBR parcels) makes a considerable contribution to the purpose of the Green Belt. This judgement is due to the open character of the parcels and their measured distances between existing settlement patterns. The method does not provide enough flexibility to address the type of surrounding settlement patterns, the detail of the landform across the site and the vegetation structure. By the review method choosing to delineate the site into four parcels it has created very large areas which are highly likely to contribute to the Green Belt purposes, as opposed to trying to release smaller areas of land to balance additional housing within the District and the aims of the Green Belt.

- 8.7 The LVA has identified that the landscape structure is weak across the site, and that the northern and western parts of the site provide an opportunity for development set within a robust landscape framework. The effects of development in these parts of the site are considered to be localised, and in combination with retaining the open character of the eastern and southern parts of the site would not result in harm to the Green Belt, with the relationship between the existing settlement patterns adjacent to Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road being maintained.
- 8.8 Given the size of the parcel delineation, the review method is too broad to establish parts of the site which could be released from the Green Belt and therefore is detrimental to the purpose of the Green Belt review. Additionally, a cumulative scoring method would be more appropriate to reduce the automatic judgement of a land parcels being considered to make a considerable contribution on the basis of the triple plus score (+++).
- 8.9 It should be strongly requested that as part of the review process, field work of the site is undertaken to understand the landscape character across the site, and how the differing parts of the Site have the opportunity to successfully accommodate residential development within a robust landscape framework.

9.0 CONCLUSION

Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review

- 9.1 A landscape and visual appraisal of the Land at Bleak House has been undertaken to establish the landscape and visual sensitivity of the Site for residential development. The appraisal has included for a review of the published landscape character, landscape policy and visual amenity and field work to assess the landscape characteristics of the Site; its function in the wider landscape and its visibility and role within the surrounding area. The appraisal has also undertaken a strategic review of the Site in terms of its contribution to the NPPF purposes of the Green Belt, and any harm that may arise to the site from residential development of the Site; and a review of the proposed Cannock Chase Green Belt Review Methodology.
- 9.2 The Site comprises thirty-one field parcels across a varied landform covering approximately 220 hectares. The land use is predominantly agricultural, with some paddocks and areas of scrub, having been established on former coalfields. As a result the field pattern is predominantly regular (planned) and the majority of the vegetation and field boundaries are still to mature. The main areas of mature vegetation within the Site are along the central ridge line, adjacent to PRow no.72. The undulating landform across the Site results in a combination of ridge lines and areas of enclosure across the Site. The Site is surrounded by a strong linear pattern of road networks and settlement patterns; particularly the continuous residential development between Wimblebury and Rawnsley to the north of the Site.
- 9.3 The main function of the Site within the landscape is in relation to the eastern edge of the Site, which separates small scale settlements adjacent to the Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road. The separation between Heath Hayes and Burntwood, to the south of the Site is provided for by Cuckoo Bank (SSSI) and amenity green space adjacent to Wimblebury Road. Therefore the site is considered to have a **medium landscape character sensitivity**, due to the separation between settlements on the eastern edge of the site.
- 9.4 The visibility of the Site varies, due to the undulating landform within the Site itself and the subsequent ridge lines which curtail views across the whole of the Site, and in combination with the proximity of mature woodland adjacent to the western parts result in localised areas of enclosure. The northern and eastern edges of the Site are visible from the wider area, due to the proximity of residential properties to low lying parts of the Site, the PRow crossing the ridge lines within the Site, and the relationship to elevated landform to the east. The combination of the localised high visibility with the areas of enclosure within the Site, results in an overall **medium visual sensitivity**.

- 9.5 The combination of the medium overall landscape character sensitivity and the medium visual sensitivity result in an **overall medium landscape sensitivity** for the Site.
- 9.6 The Site is with the Green Belt, and one of the fields is designated a Site of Biological Interest. The Site is not covered by any landscape designations, conservation interest or cultural associations. The sense of tranquillity is reduced due to the proximity to existing residential properties, audible noise from the surrounding road networks and detracting features such as pylons within views. Therefore the site is assessed as being of **low landscape value**.
- 9.7 The combination of the medium landscape sensitivity and low landscape value is considered to result in a **medium capacity to successfully accommodate residential development**. This could be achieved by avoiding development on the more elevated parts of the Site and on the ridge lines, and along the eastern edge of the Site to sensitivity respond to Cannock Chase ANOB; designing development to reflect the existing surrounding settlement scale and mass; sensitively designing through siting, layout, materials and massing; and setting the design within a robust landscape framework which introduces new planting and Green Infrastructure. This is considered to result in limited landscape and visual effects on the surrounding area, including the Green Belt.
- 9.8 There are residential properties adjacent to the northern part of the Site, within Wimblebury and adjacent to Littleworth Road. There are also residential properties to the east and south-east of the Site, adjacent to Cannock Wood Road and Sevens Road. Cuckoo Bank separates the Site from the A5190, and fields and mature woodland to the west, separate the Site from the southern part of Heath Hayes. Therefore the only contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of existing settlement patterns is in relation to those adjacent to the eastern edge of the Site. The site also prevents the sprawl of Wimblebury eastwards towards Cannock Chase Wood Road.
- 9.9 New residential development would be limited to the northern, western and southern central parts of the Site, contained by the existing landform and new planting. Development at the Site would extend the settlement edge of Heath Hayes, Wimblebury and Rawnsley in the across the northern part of the Site; however this is considered to be contained from the wider landscape by the central ridge line across the Site. Development principles would include new public open space to maintain the relationship of the existing settlement adjacent to the eastern edge of the Site; a strong planted edge to the new built form.
- 9.10 Therefore the Site has the ability to absorb residential development without contributing to an increase in the extent of unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. Residential development would not constitute a disorganised unattractive extension to a developed area,

lacking a coherent, robust or defensible boundary, and nor would it reduce the ability of neighbouring land to meet this purpose of the Green Belt designation.

9.11 Furthermore, the existing open countryside to the east and south of the Site would remain, such that development of the Site would not contribute to the merging of nearby towns or settlements; nor would it reduce the ability of neighbouring land to prevent settlements from merging.

9.12 Proposed development of the Site would result in a change in character; with new built form, although this would be set within a comprehensive landscape framework. Development would not encroach beyond the containment provided by the surrounding road network; nor would it weaken the ability of the neighbouring land to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, and to meet this purpose of the Green Belt.

9.13 The Site is separated from Conservation Areas and therefore would not affect the setting of a Conservation Area; nor prejudice other derelict or urban land coming forward. Therefore a sensitively designed residential scheme within a robust landscape framework at the site would comply with Paragraph 80 of the NPPF, in that it would:

- Not result in the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- Would not result in nearby towns merging into one another;
- Would not encroach into the wider countryside beyond the site;
- Would not affect the setting or special character of an historic town; and
- Would not prevent the recycling of derelict or other land.

9.14 There would be a reduction in the 'technical openness' compared with the existing character of the site, but by avoiding built form on the most elevated parts of the site and along the eastern edge, the perception would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the Site. Development of the Site would allow for the beneficial use of Green Belt, in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 81, which notes that once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should:

"plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land."

Cannock Chase Green Belt Review Conclusion

9.15 The Cannock Chase Green Belt Review method has divided the Site into four parcels for assessment against the NPPF Green Belt purposes in combination with a number of issues for consideration. The review is likely to find that all four parcels make a considerable

contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, due to the existing open character and relationship of the Site to existing settlement patterns resulting in automatic judgments of a considerable contribution. The delineation of the land parcels is considered to be too large and does not reflect the variation in the landform across the Site, which visually separates parts of the Site. By the CCGBR method retaining the existing parcel delineation, it is not considered to achieve an appropriate assessment based on the landscape character of the Site, and will not achieve the intention of the Green Belt review, which needs to be undertaken at a more detailed level, based on the site being divided into smaller parcels. In addition, the CCGBR method of solely using the width of the gap between the Site and existing settlements as a scoring method, is not considered to reflect the issues of the perception, experience and the landscape character between existing settlements, which should be considered in combination with the issue of distance.

9.16 It is recommended as part of the consultation process with Cannock Chase District Council on their intended review method that the following points are raised:

- Clarify the criteria and value of Item 1a Ribbon Development;
- Reconsider the scoring method, so that a score of +++ does not automatically result in a considerable contribution to the Green Belt, and instead base it upon a cumulative scoring method;
- Clarifying the scoring method for item 2a of the detailed assessment of parcel to the west of Prospect Village;
- Reconsider the delineation of parcels, so that the basis for their alignment relates more directly to the ridge lines within the site. This would result in the northern, eastern, western and southern parts of the Site being identified individually and a greater opportunity to remove parts of the Site from the Green Belt;
- Consider the existing landscape character between existing settlement patterns, in combination with the measured width of the gap between settlements, to give a more balanced view on the relationship between settlements;
- Confirm the status of Task 5 of the review method; and
- Strongly recommend that field work is undertaken as part of the CCGBR review process as part of identifying zones and smaller land parcels within the Site.

ⁱ Cannock Chase Green Belt Review, Method Statement, prepared by LUC, November 2014, <http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/downloads/file/4891/green-belt-review-method-statement-071114>, accessed on-line 2014.

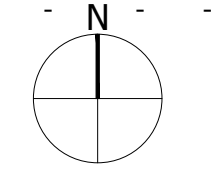
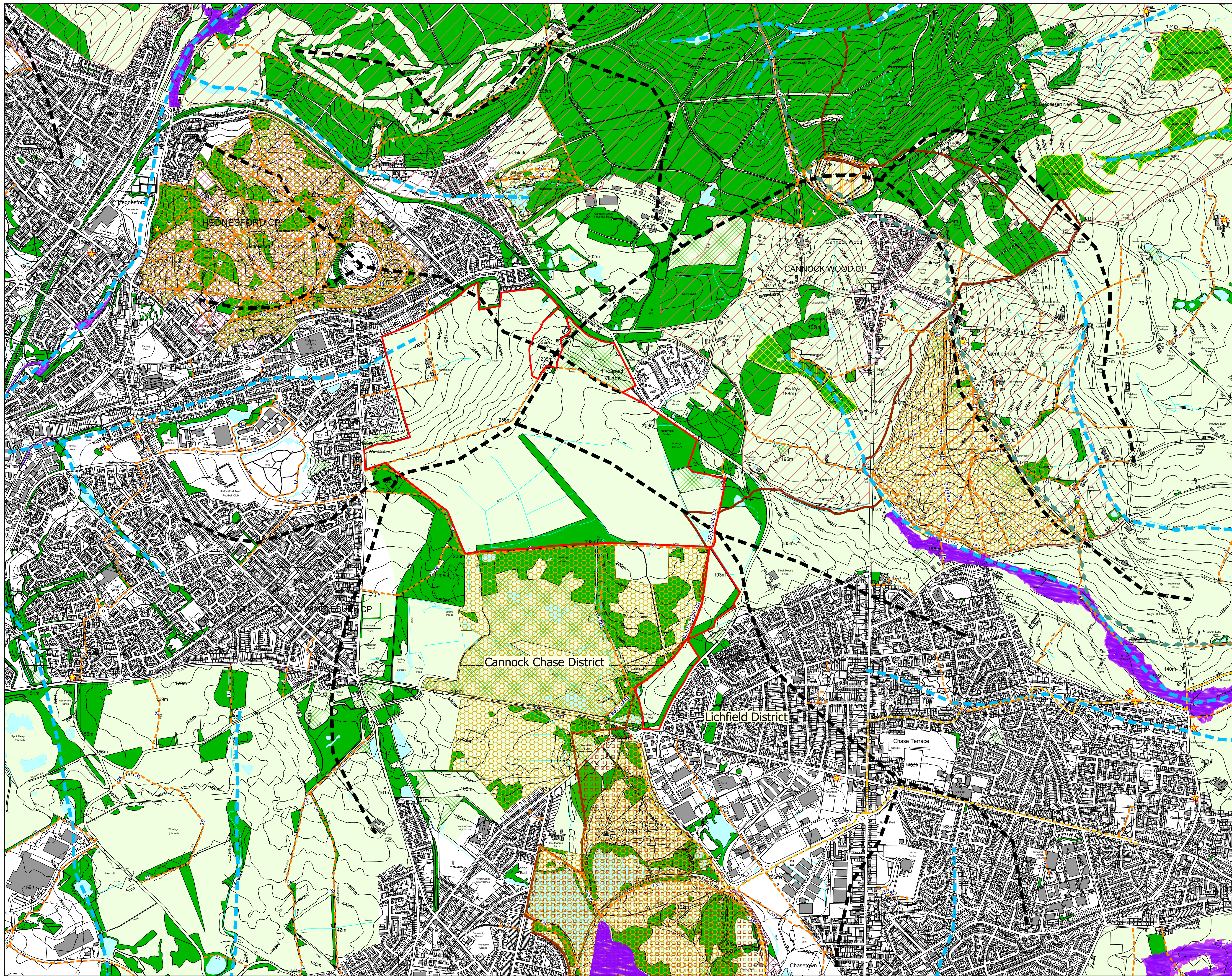
ⁱⁱ Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) National Planning Policy Framework, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>, accessed on-line 2014.

ⁱⁱⁱ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, (2013). 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition', Routledge, London.

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- iv Natural England, Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, 2002, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5601625141936128?category=31019>, accessed on-line December 2014.
- v Cannock Chase Council, Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014, http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/downloads/file/4746/cannock_chase_local_plan_part_1_2014, accessed on-line 2014.
- vi Cannock Chase Council, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- vii Litchfield District Council Strategic Land Availability Assessment, 2013 http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/downloads/file/5554/shlaa_2013_full_report.
- viii Natural England, Agricultural Land Classification Map West Midlands Region, 2011, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/130044?category=5954148537204736>, accessed on-line, December 2014.
- ix Natural England, NCA Profile: 67 Cannock Chase & Cannock Wood (NE347), August 2012, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2431343?map=true&category=587130>, accessed on-line, November 2014.
- x Stafford County Council, Staffordshire Planning for Landscape Change and Character Assessment, 2001, <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/eLand/planners-developers/landscape/NaturalEnvironmentLandscapeCharacterTypes.aspx>, accessed on-line, December 2014.
- xi Landscape Character Assessment of Cannock Chase District, Ashmead Price and Steven Warnock on behalf of Cannock Chase Council, March 2009, http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2052/landscape_character_assessment, accessed on-line December 2014
- xii Natural England, Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009-14, <http://www.cannock-chase.co.uk/assets/downloads/ManagementPlan2009web.pdf>, accessed on-line 2014.

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Figure 1: Site Context Plan 1:10,000 @ A1



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Existing Woodlands, Coppes and Tree Belts ^
- Existing Scrub ^
- Existing Water Courses ^
- Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^
- Local Planning Authority Boundary ^
- Ridgelines
- Valleys
- Public Rights of Way *
- Sustrans Cycle Route +
- Countryside Rights of Way Access Areas #
- Heart of England Way Long Distance Walk **
- Listed Buildings ~
- Scheduled Monument ~
- Ancient Woodland #
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest #
- Local Nature Reserve #
- Chasewater Country Park #
- Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty #
- Green Belt ++
- Flood Risk Zone 2 #
- Flood Risk Zone 3 #

National Landscape Character
 The whole extent of study area lies within Character Area 67, Cannock Chase and Cank Wood

Sources:
 * OS Mapping
 # Natural England GIS Data Set
 ~ English Heritage National Monument Record GIS Data Set
 + Sustrans National Cycle Network GIS Data Set
 * Staffordshire County Council PROW GIS Data
 ** Department for Communities and Local Government GIS Data Set
 OS Explorer 1:25,000 Scale

Figure 1

Project
**Land at Bleak House,
 Cannock Chase**

Drawing Title
Site Context Plan

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Project No 20485	Drawing No L1	Revision -	

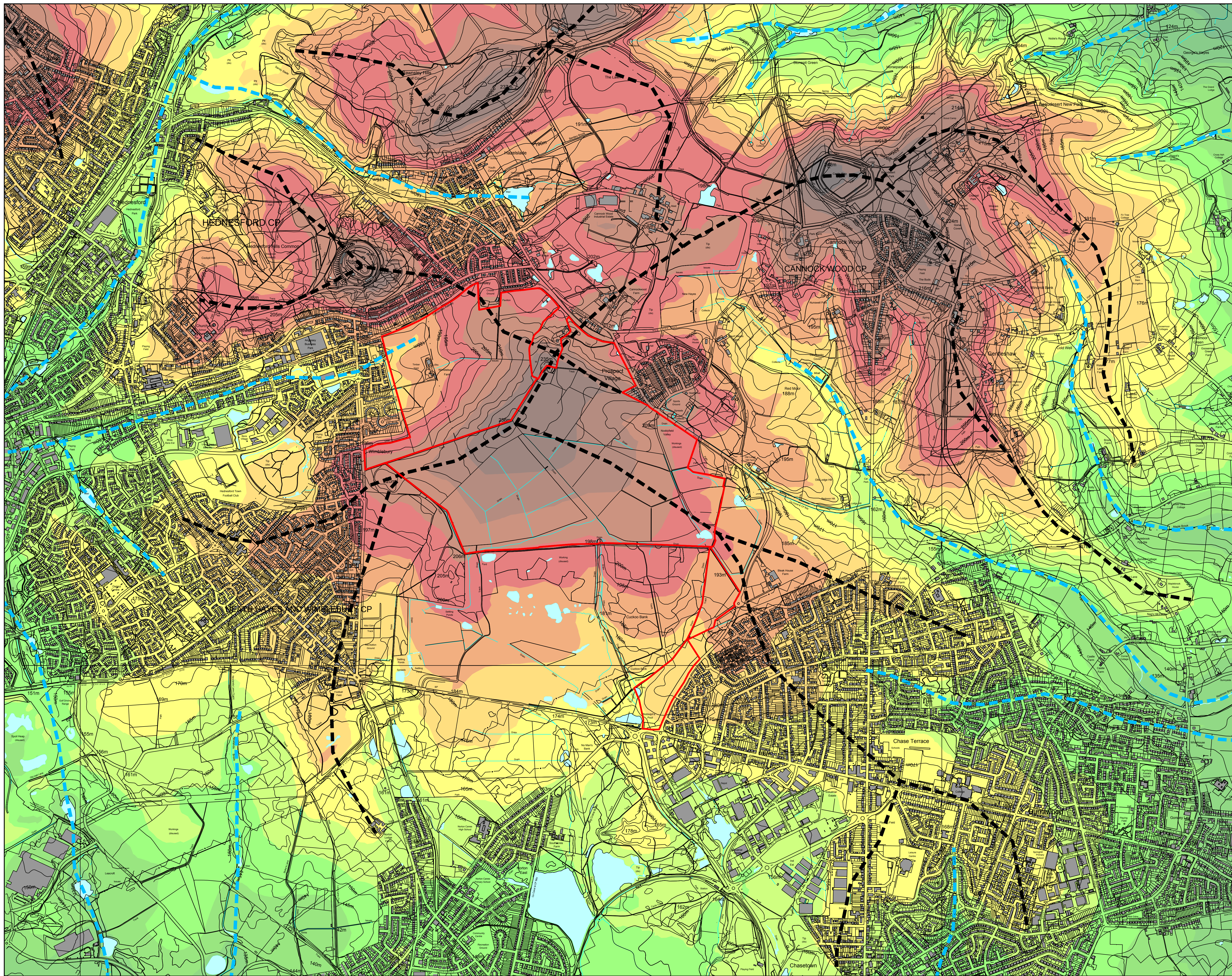
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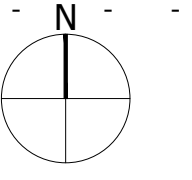
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Figure 2: Topographical Features Plan 1:10,000 @ A1



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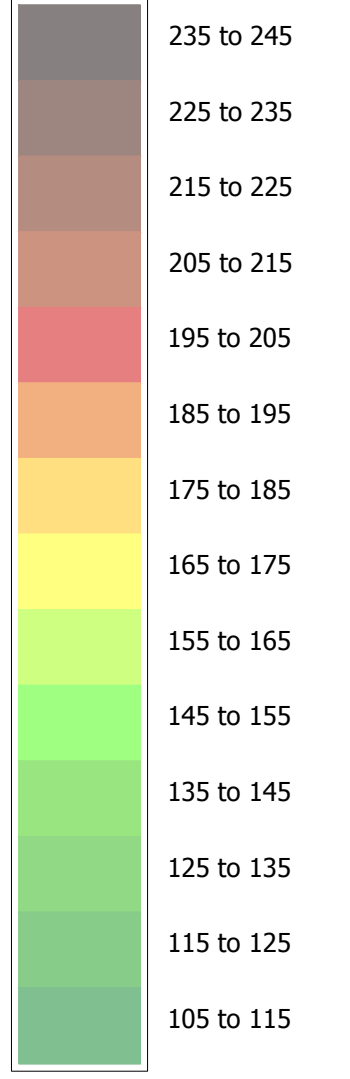
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Legend

- Site Boundary
- Existing Water Courses ^
- Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^
- Ridgelines
- Valleys

Elevation (Metres AOD)



Sources: ^ OS Mapping

Figure 2

Project
**Land at Bleak House,
 Cannock Chase**
 Drawing Title
Topographical Features Plan

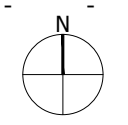
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Project No 20485	Drawing No L2	Revision -	









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Figure 3: Site Appraisal Plan 1:10,000 @ A1



LEGEND

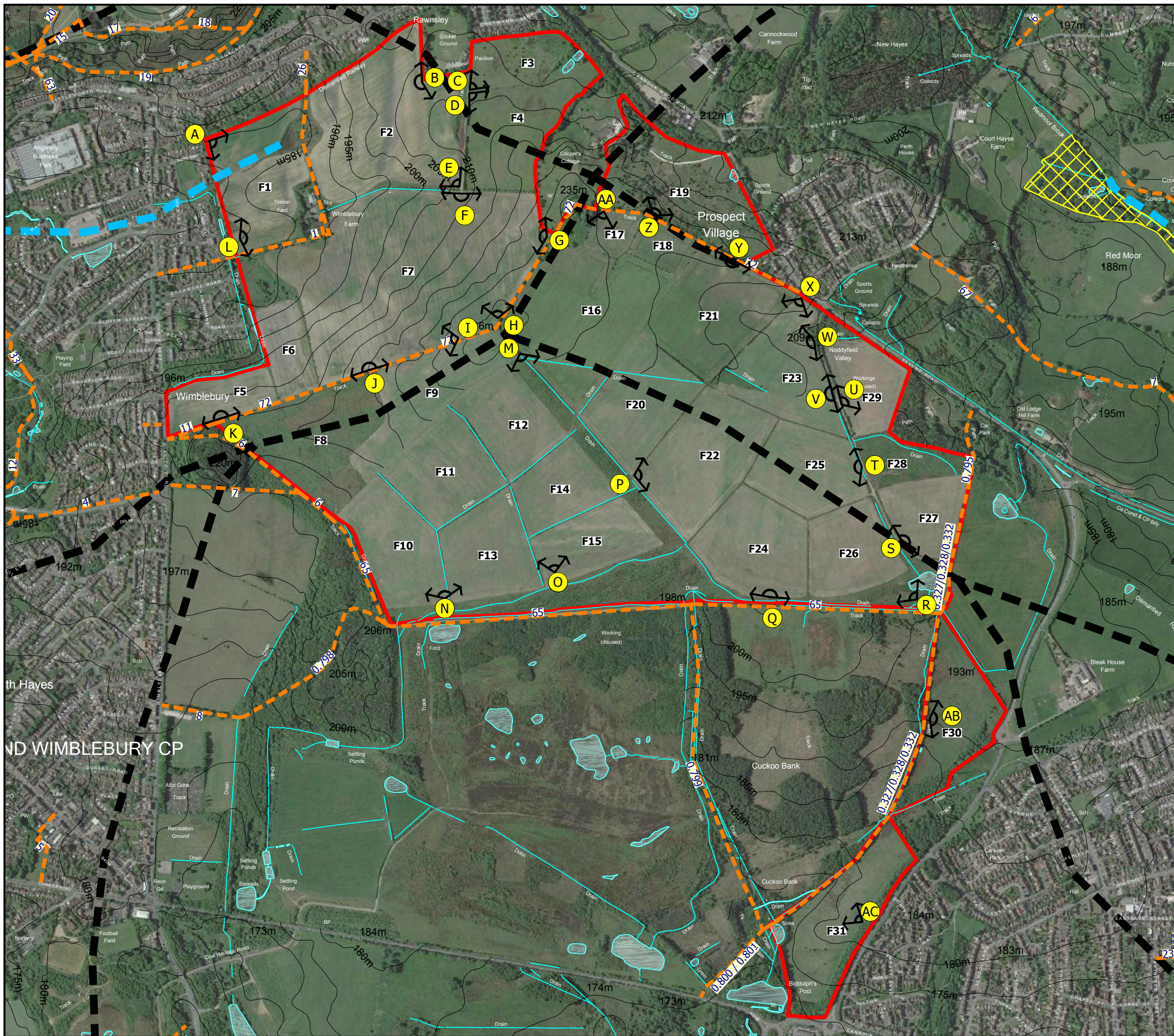
-  Site Boundary
-  Ancient Woodland #
-  Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^
-  Ridgeline
-  Valley
-  Existing Water Courses and Water Features ^
-  Public Rights of Way *
-  Location of Photographic Viewpoints (Site Appraisal Photographs A-AC)
-  Field Numbers (F1-F31)

Sources:
 ^ OS Mapping
 * Staffordshire County Council ProW GIS Data
 ~ English Heritage National Monument Record GIS Data Set
 # Natural England GIS Data Set

Figure 3

Project
Land at Bleak House, Cannock Chase
 Drawing Title
Site Appraisal Plan

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
11.12.2014	1:10,000 @A3	MN	RH
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
20485	L3	-	



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