

# Draft Settlement Break Review 2013



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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides a draft review of the city's Settlement Breaks (or 'green wedges'). The key role of this report is to provide supporting evidence to underpin the forthcoming new development plan for the city, the Local Development Framework (LDF).

1.2 All councils are required by law to prepare and maintain up-to-date development plans that set out a long-term blueprint for the future (normally over 15 to 20 years) of their area. The planning policies set out in these plans must be informed by robust evidence.

1.3 The current development plan for Sunderland, the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), was adopted in 1998. The current Settlement Break policy (contained in the UDP) is therefore 15 years old, and in need of update.

### 1.4 National policy background

The UK Government has embarked on an ongoing reform of the planning system. Fundamentally, it has sought to remove centralised controls and give local communities and areas greater control over their own futures. ***The Localism Act (2011)*** provides the main legislation by which this transfer of power has come.

1.5 National planning policy was previously set out in 25 separate themed policy statements. In March 2012, the ***National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*** was published. This has consolidated and simplified all national policies into a single document. The objective underpinning the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development whereby plans must support sustainable growth.

1.6 There is no specific reference to Settlement Breaks or green wedges in the NPPF. However, the Framework emphasises that Local Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, and must reflect the vision and aspirations of local communities whilst aligning to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It also advocates the need to plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.

### 1.7 The Local Development Framework (LDF)

A new Local Development Framework (LDF) is being prepared to replace the UDP. At the heart of this plan lies the Core Strategy, which says how the city will change by 2032 by setting out the spatial vision and aims and the strategic policies required to deliver that vision. Most policies in the Core Strategy are not site specific. Taking its lead from the Core Strategy, a city wide Allocations Plan will provide the site specific detail. This may also be supplemented by Neighbourhood Plans prepared by local community groups which relate to small distinctive localities.

1.8 The new LDF will provide a clear and consistent approach that will direct sustainable development across the city. Supporting evidence such as this Settlement Break Review is crucial to this approach, ensuring that policy is accurate, appropriate, realistic and up-to-date, enabling certainty for developers and communities as to how their proposals for development will be considered by the Council. By providing certainty, the Core Strategy will also enable the Council to attract more funding and attract more investment (from businesses, residents and visitors). This will naturally help to create more jobs, attract new residents and sustain and enhance essential services and facilities such as shops, schools, doctors.

**1.9 History and purpose of Settlement Breaks in Sunderland**

Settlement Break policy in Sunderland can be traced back almost 50 years. The Sunderland Periphery Town Map (1965) included policies to maintain the separate identity of Ryhope, Silksworth and Doxford Park by protecting the open land between. The Tyne and Wear Structure Plan also resisted intrusion into open countryside.

1.10 The 1998 UDP provides a specific Settlement Break policy, CN6:

**CN6**

***IMPORTANT OPEN BREAKS AND WEDGES WITHIN AND BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS WILL BE RETAINED AND ENHANCED.***

Settlement Breaks are identified in specific locations in South Sunderland and the Coalfield, relating to 'white land' countryside areas that are not afforded Green Belt protection.

1.11 The supporting text of the UDP also lists 3 key functions of Settlement Breaks, namely that they:-

- help to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the City's constituent communities
- assist in the regeneration of the older or poorer quality urban areas by focusing resources and investment into the built-up area
- provide open space lungs, sometimes incorporating leisure/recreational facilities which help to alleviate local deficiencies (e.g. the Ryhope-Silksworth crescent)

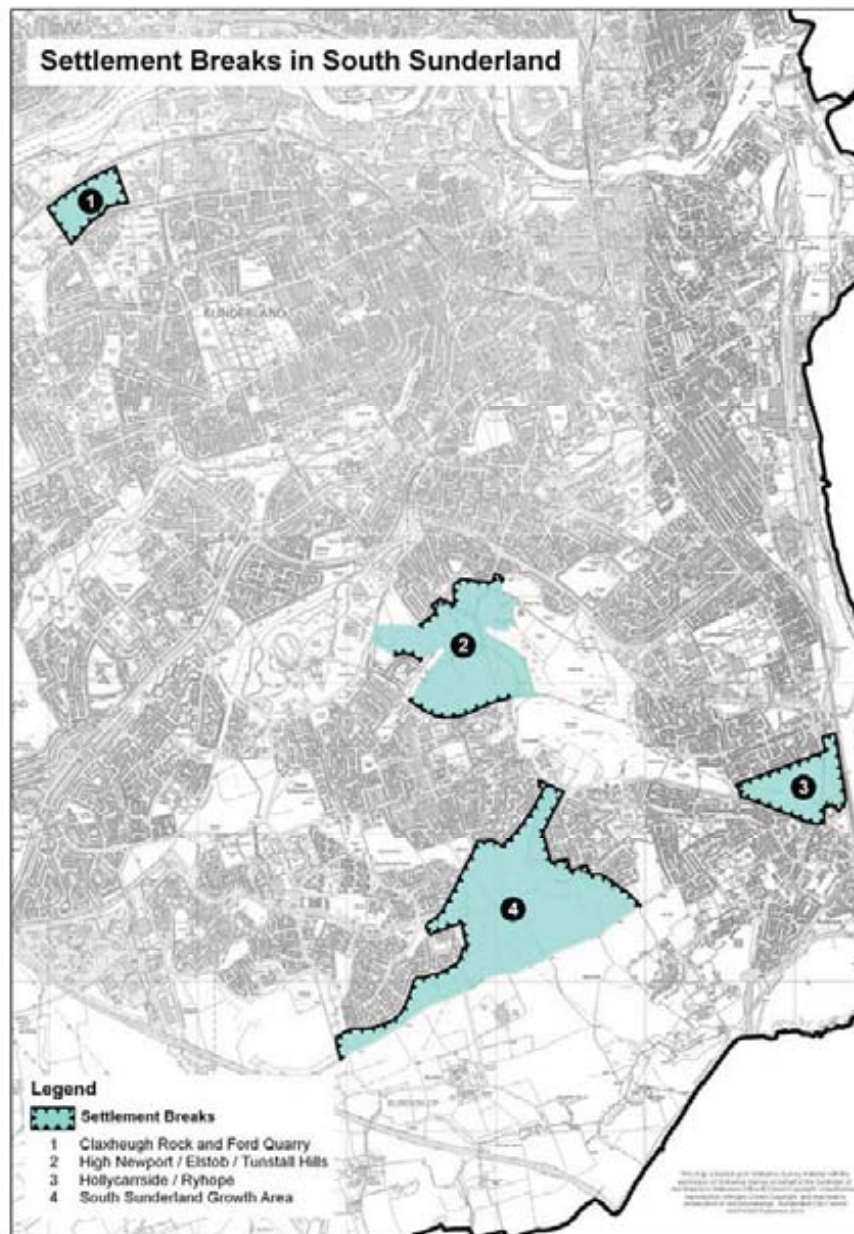
1.12 These functions are still broadly relevant. The use of Settlement Breaks to help ensure that new development is focused upon the existing built-up area is still of prime significance, and strongly relates to Spatial Objective 1 of the emerging Core Strategy. This in turn has helped to stem encroachment and retain the distinctiveness of many communities, if such distinction exists in the first place. The Settlement Breaks have also helped to preserve vital Green Infrastructure corridors across the city, although the necessity for these corridors to incorporate leisure and recreational facilities is not obvious.

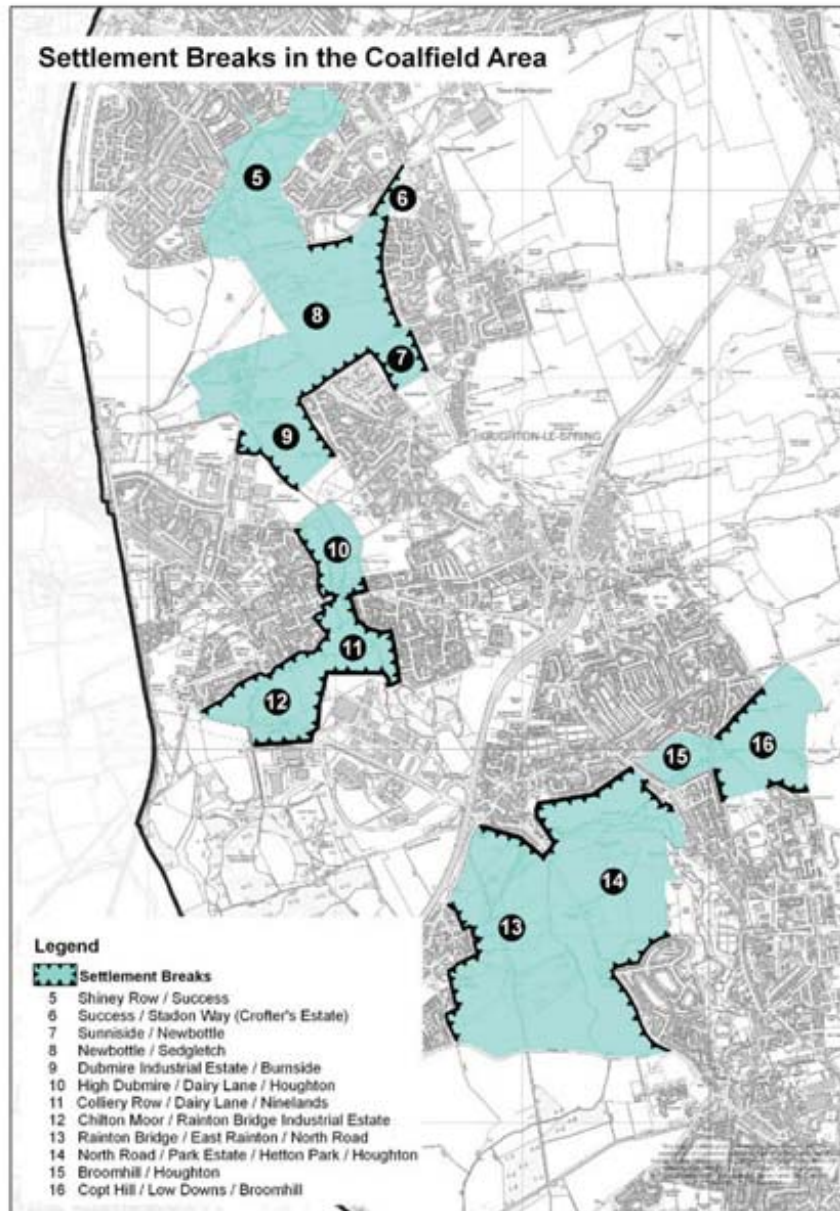
## Core Strategy Spatial Objectives

### 1. Spatial Development and Growth

Ensure an appropriate distribution and balance of employment, housing growth and other competing land uses in the context of maximising the reuse of previously developed land so as to minimise the urbanisation of greenfield land, whilst planning for sustainable growth of the city's population, including the retention of young economically active age groups.

- 1.13 However, the need for Settlement Breaks has to be balanced against a number of other factors, including the need for the city to identify sufficient land to meet its development needs, and recognising that there is a finite resource of brownfield / vacant land in built-up areas. There is also growing pressure for development within Settlement Break land. These issues need to be considered in light of the NPPF advocating the need to increase economic and housing growth delivering sustainable patterns of development and recognition of the fact that Settlement Breaks cannot be given the same level of protection as Green Belt land.





- 1.14 The key purpose of this Settlement Break review is to consider:
- Whether the Settlement Breaks still have a role
  - What justification there is for the retention of each Settlement Break
  - What contribution each Settlement Break has made in terms of providing Green Infrastructure
  - Whether any parcels of land within each of the Settlement Breaks could be released to provide opportunities for sustainable development.

### 1.15 Objectives and methodology

The report provides informed recommendations relating to the future way forward for each Settlement Break. These recommendations are based upon physical, natural and historic constraints affecting the area, the history of neighbouring settlements and the function of the Settlement Break itself. They are also guided by national and local policies, strategies and masterplans, including:

- The NPPF, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development
- The Sunderland Strategy and Economic Masterplan
- The vision and spatial objectives of the Core Strategy.

1.16 This review is the first known comprehensive assessment of each Settlement Break in the city, providing draft recommendations to be further considered in consultation. The assessment has involved site visits taking place using constraints maps and a proforma guide to gain an appreciation of each environment (see Appendix 1). Local publications, websites and historic maps were also used to depict the evolution of the settlements surrounding the Settlement Breaks. City Council reports including the Draft 2012 Greenspace Audit and Report and Sunderland Phase 1 Habitat Survey have also informed this assessment. Concluding comments have considered the appropriateness and strength of each area in terms of their Settlement Break role and in supporting green infrastructure, and recommendations are also made as to whether the breaks should be retained, partially retained or deleted. Further constraints advice provided by The Environment Agency is included in Appendix 2.

### Key findings

- 1.17 Overall, the majority of the Settlement Breaks have performed well. It is clear in most cases that settlement distinction and identity has been supported, whilst at the same time new development has been focused primarily on the urban area and often on brownfield land. These breaks have played a key role in helping to preserve Green Infrastructure corridors within and on the fringes of our built-up areas.
- 1.18 The South Sunderland Settlement Break (south of Doxford Park, Silksworth and Ryhope and north of the Burdon Green Belt) is a separate entity to the rest of the Settlement Breaks in that it was earmarked for longer-term development beyond the lifetime of the UDP. There are significant constraint issues influencing the area, including the need to retain green infrastructure north-south, and to preserve landscape features and views afforded by the Magnesian Limestone plateau. Nevertheless, the area as a whole provides a unique opportunity for the city for large-scale residential development.
- 1.19 Around 90% of land in the remainder of the city's Settlement Breaks is recommended for retention. Cumulatively, this land has a key green infrastructure role to play, and in many cases is affected by significant natural and physical constraints. They also continue to serve an important

role in defining urban area boundaries, supporting urban regeneration and settlement character.

1.20 The remaining 10% of land (approximately 40 hectares) has less cumulative constraints, and may have the potential for development, subject to careful and sensitive mitigation. These areas have less of a role to play in terms of settlement separation. There is also scope for appropriate constraints mitigation and minimising impacts to Green Infrastructure corridors.

1.21 These draft findings need to be further considered in line with public consultation responses, and emerging evidence such as the city's 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and 2012 Employment Land Update.

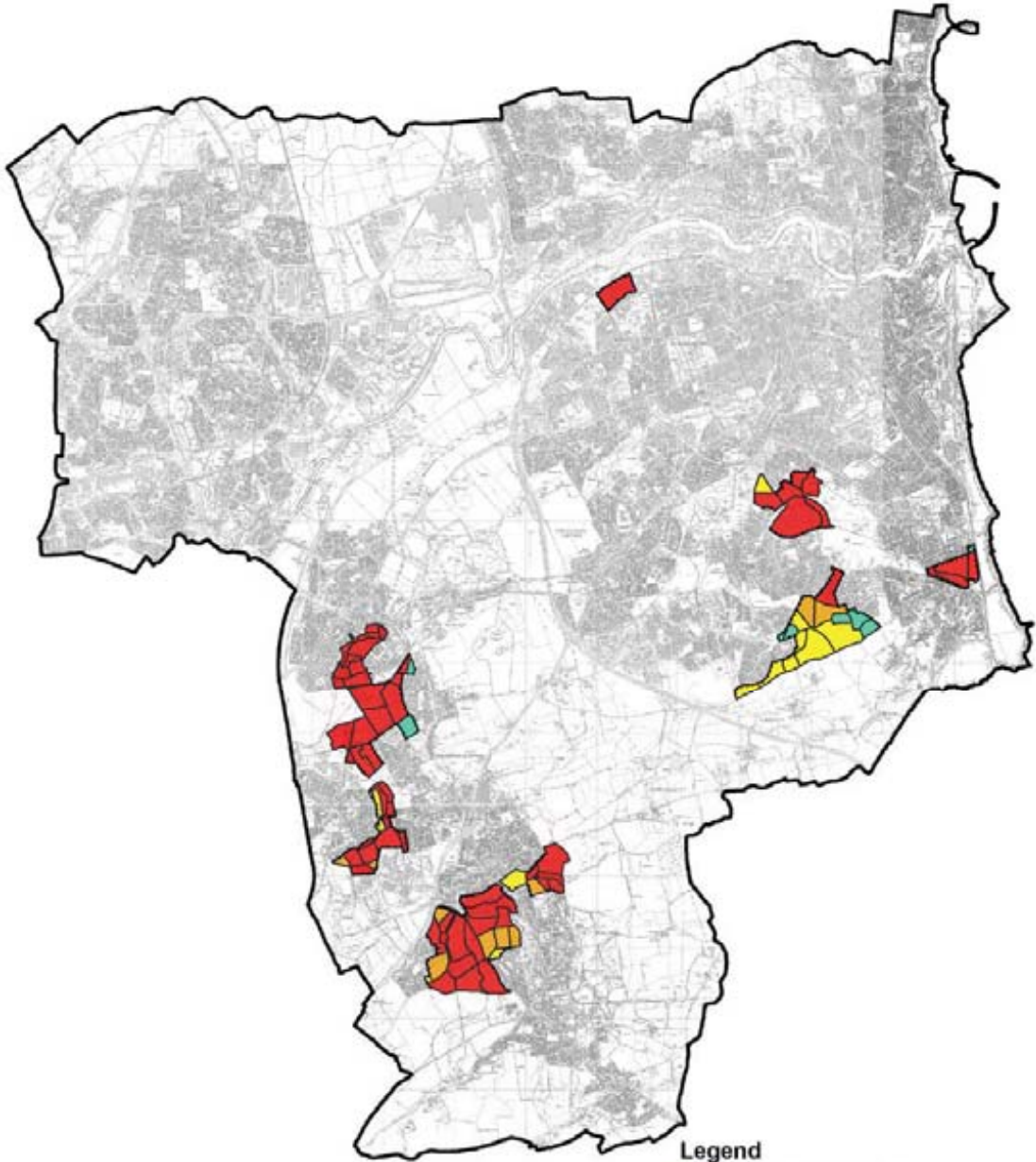
**1.22 Next steps**

Upon approval from Cabinet, the draft Settlement Break Review will be made available for public consultation (in line with Core Strategy consultation) in May. The consultation will enable the reports findings and recommendations to be considered and reviewed in line with further emerging Council evidence such as the SHLAA and Employment Land Update. In particular, it will provide opportunity for landowners and local residents to challenge the recommendations, put forward potential constraints mitigation or alternatively identify further constraints. Submitted development proposals should refer to Appendix 1 "Constraints and potential development proforma".






1.23 Post-consultation, the final revised report will be re-submitted to Cabinet for further consideration and adoption. The adopted report will provide key supporting evidence to the Core Strategy as well as informing site specific policies that will be set out in the forthcoming Allocations DPD, and inter-related reports and assessments, such as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and (proposed) Green Infrastructure Strategy.



## Indicative Development Potential



### Legend

-  No adverse impact, or positive beneficial impact
-  Minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
-  Moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
-  Moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
-  Major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation



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## 1) Claxheugh Rock / Ford Quarry



### Location

North of Ford Estate (St Luke's Road)  
South of Claxheugh Riverside and Metro line

West of Pallion West Industrial Estate  
East of former Quarry View School.

**Size and land ownership (if known)**

13.5 hectares  
Council-owned land

**What does it separate?**

It does not separate two or more settlements, and historically never has.

**Current use**

Mostly used to provide adult and junior football pitches (includes a changing room block), but also includes part of the Claxheugh Rock and Ford Quarry SSSI, plus a patch of woodland and informal amenity greenspace.

**Neighbouring settlement background**



In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the site was greenfield and was located within an undeveloped area, with the exception of Ford Paper Mills lying immediately to the north. As Ford Estate began to be developed in the 1930's the Settlement Break site was being quarried for limestone (long since ceased). Now, in complete contrast to the past, the site is bounded by greenspace to the north (beyond the Metro line), but largely surrounded by development to the west, east and south.

The only properties bounding the Settlement Break are along St Luke's Road (forming part of High Ford), and consist of early post-war link Council houses (now Gentoo homes). More recent homes have been built behind St Luke's Road, and

to the north-west on Estuary Way, South Hylton. Much of the nearby Ford Estate is now being demolished and being re-built. Along the eastern boundary of the break, Pallion Industrial Estate began development in 1938.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No, it remains undeveloped.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN20 (Site of Special Scientific Interest)
- UDP Policy L1, 7, 9 and B3 (existing greenspace over 1 hectare)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### **Category 1:**

- *Claxheugh Rock and Ford Limestone Quarry SSSI.*

A geological and botanical site in favourable condition.

SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. SSSI's are legally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. This legislation gives Natural England powers to ensure better protection and management of SSSIs and safeguard their existence into the future.

The NPPF (2012) states that:

*“Proposed development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either individually or in combination with other developments) should not normally be permitted. Where an adverse effect on the site’s notified special interest features is likely, an exception should only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest”.*

A Phase 1 Habitat survey was carried out in Sunderland in 2012. A key finding was that Sunderland's protected wildlife sites were a quarter of the size of national sites, and thereby significantly increases the fragility of habitat and species in that location. Recommendations not only include the continued protection and enhancement of wildlife sites but also measures to increase their size, and include buffer zones around sites. The survey, in line with the NPPF, recommends the creation of connected corridors of green infrastructure.

In the case of this particular SSSI, the designated area renders much of the site undevelopable, and the need for site buffering alone probably dictates that any development within this Settlement Break would be unrealistic.

## **Category 2:**

- *Greenspace – 1 Performance standard football pitch, and 1 further football pitch.*

One of the football pitches has been upgraded to Wearside League standard and is used by Sunderland West End FC (as of 2012-13 season). Facilities include new changing rooms. The 2012 Greenspace Report identifies a need to ensure that further football pitches are provided in Sunderland West ARF, and to ensure that existing facilities are maintained and enhanced. Furthermore, this Performance standard pitch provides the only such facility in West and East ARF's outside of Silksworth and Ryhope, and is therefore seen as a key facility to the area.

- *Woodland*

There are pockets of woodland on the fringes of the site. The 2012 Greenspace Report specifically identifies that Ford & Pallion have low woodland cover. The City Council will seek to protect and enhance the quality of existing woodland cover, and increase tree cover across the city, to support wider climate change and green infrastructure principles.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor.*

The site lies adjacent to the River Wear Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor, and also forms part of a proposed local green corridor which aims to better link the river to King George V park and to Silksworth. Any site alterations should consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including north-south walking and cycling links, and increased woodland cover, for example.

- *Landfill/waste site*

Much of the site has been used for landfill/waste. This would be a factor to take into consideration, should any development be proposed.

- *Surface water flooding*

There is a small area of 'medium' surface water flooding within the SSSI boundary.

## **Topography**

The site itself is mostly flat (providing football pitches), though the SSSI lies within a quarried area. Access to the site, however, is via a relatively steep bank. The site is enclosed and not easily viewed.

## **Accessibility**

The site is urban, though distanced from local facilities, and public transport access is limited. The nearest centre (Pennywell) is 1200m away (as the crow flies).

## **Conclusion**

The site is Council-owned. The Council should ensure that the entire site is protected from development, particularly given that the site contains a SSSI, 2 football pitches (1 of 'Performance' standard) and woodland plantations.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

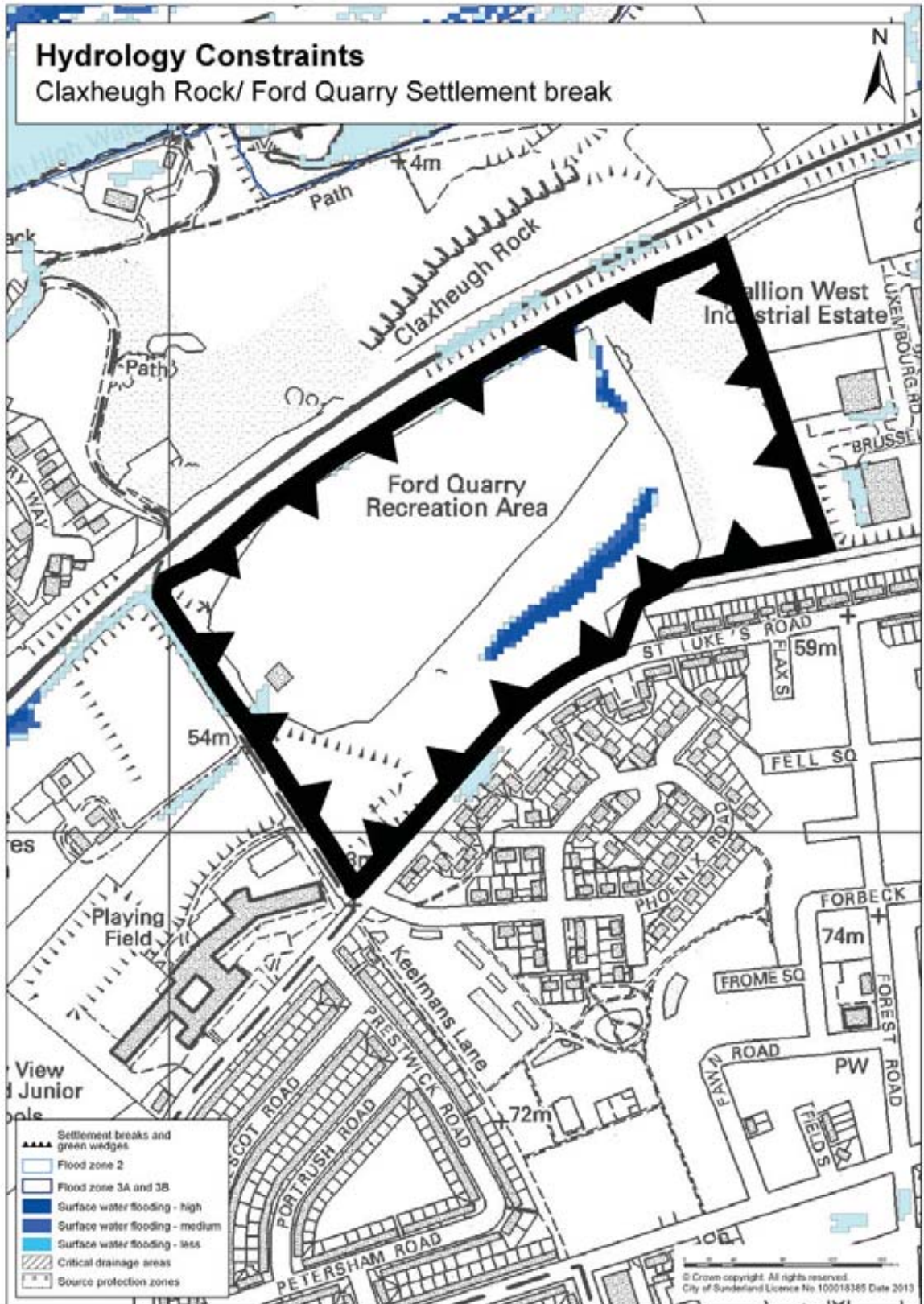
c) The policy should not be retained because the site does not form a Settlement Break. There is no clear history of settlement character being preserved and kept separate by the Settlement Break policy.

**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

Yes, the area should be protected in full for biodiversity/geology and greenspace purposes, and policy should also reflect the site's supporting role regarding enhanced connected green infrastructure.

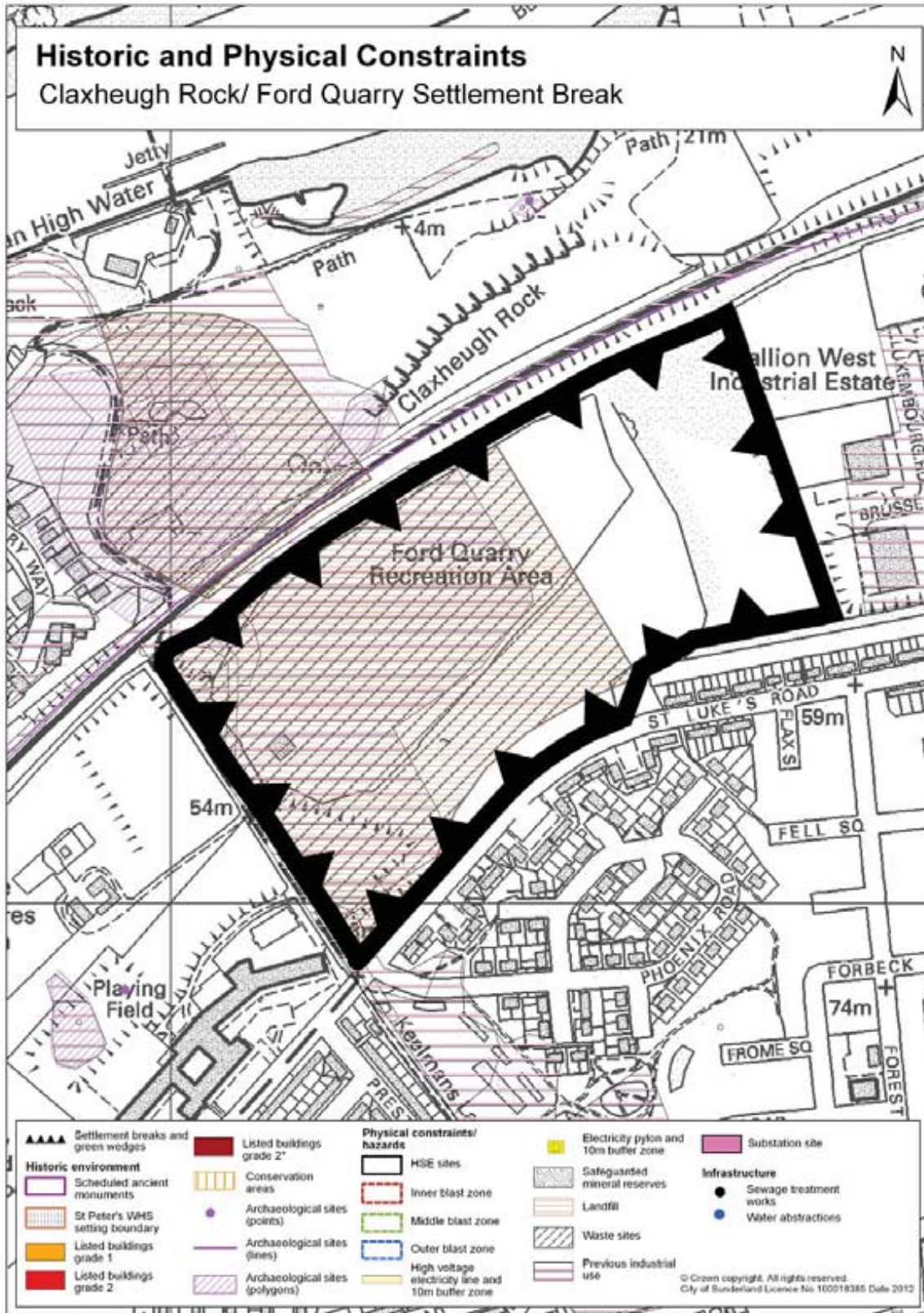
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

1) **major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation**

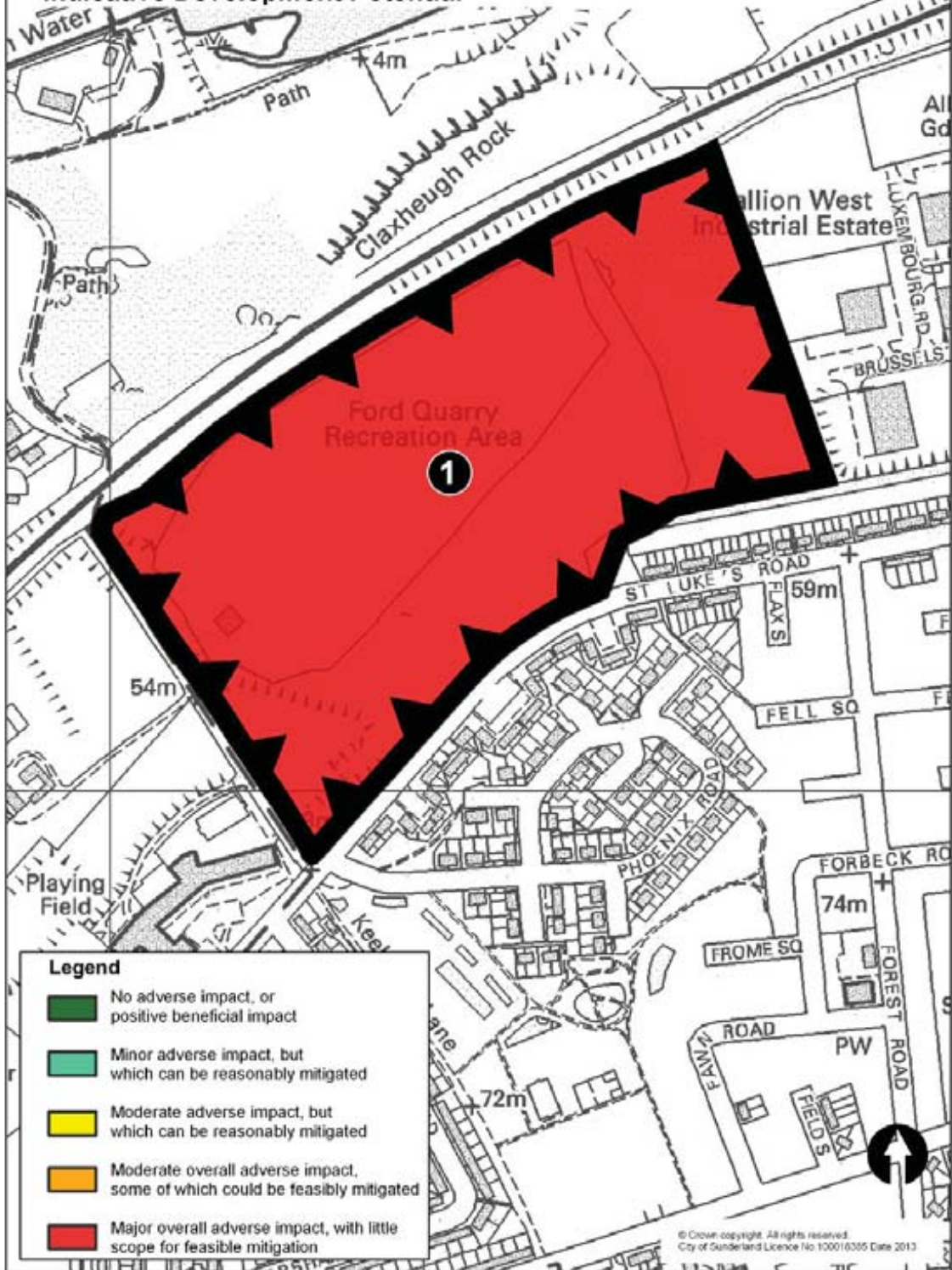








**Claxheugh Rock/ Ford Quarry Settlement Break  
Indicative Development Potential**



## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

#### Category 1:

- SSSI

#### Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	<b>Major overall adverse impact</b>

*Principal impacts: Direct impact onto Claxheugh Rock and Ford Limestone Quarry SSSI, and buffer zone.*

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

#### Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- Outdoor sports fields
- Amenity greenspaces
- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	<b>Major overall adverse impact</b>

*Principal impacts: Direct impact on outdoor sports pitches, including a Wearside League football 'performance' standard pitch. Also a direct impact on woodland and a Green Infrastructure corridor.*

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)

Field assessment

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Surface water flooding (medium and less vulnerability)

Field assessment

<b>A</b>	<b>No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses</b>
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

Field assessment

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 6) Physical constraints / hazards

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land

- Stability issues

**Field assessment**

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate impact, which can be mitigated</b>
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

*Principal impacts: former landfill and waste site.*

- 7) **Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

**Field assessment**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
<b>C</b>	<b>Partially supports findings</b>
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

- 8) **Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

**Field assessment**

<b>A</b>	<b>Isolated site / no nearby development potential</b>
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

- 9) **Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

**Field assessment**

<b>A</b>	<b>No role at all in keeping settlements distinct</b>
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

- 10) **Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

**Field assessment**

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
<b>C</b>	<b>Partial accessibility, partly remote</b>
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

## 2) High Newport / Elstob / Tunstall Hills

### Location

North of Silksworth  
South of Elstob  
West of Tunstall Hills  
East of Silksworth Recreation Centre

### Size and land ownership (if known)

58.8 hectares  
Private and council-owned land

### What does it separate?

Separates Silksworth from Elstob. Forms part of a Green Infrastructure corridor from the centre of Sunderland to the coast.

### Current use

Agriculture/pasture.



## Neighbouring settlement background



### ***New Silksworth***

Adjacent to the small mediaeval settlement of Silksworth (which incorporated Silksworth Hall and Doxford Park), the mining village of New Silksworth was established in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. New Silksworth consisted of approximately 400 people according to the Census of 1871, but this was to change after Lord Londonderry sunk a shaft to gain access to the rich coal reserves below. By 1879 the population had risen to 4707 covering the Silksworth and now Tunstall areas. The colliery houses of New Silksworth were packed tightly together, and had an informal confining boundary wall, much of which is still evident today.

New Silksworth was a stand alone settlement before WW2, and was part of Sunderland Rural District. There has been considerable expansion of the footprint of the Silksworth area since WW2. Large estates of semi-detached Council homes (now Gentoo-controlled) were built around all four sides of Silksworth. Private detached and semi-detached housing has also been developed (especially to the west and east), and the oldest pit rows were demolished and replaced. Today, (greater) Silksworth has a population of around 8,000. Yet despite all of this expansion, it still retains a physical separateness from Doxford Park, Farringdon, Ryhope and Elstob.

Silksworth retains a distinct local identity and has many facilities, including a library and customer service centre, supermarket and rows of shops, post office, pubs, churches and primary schools.



## ***Elstob***

Elstob is a post-war private and popular housing estate, entirely residential, consisting primarily of semi-detached dwellings.

The closure of Silksworth Colliery in 1971 enabled the expansion of the Green Infrastructure corridor to take place, and the site now forms Silksworth Recreation Centre. In addition to providing a Settlement Break, the greenfield corridor provides a key backdrop to the Tunstall Hills Local Nature Reserve, one of the most important landmarks in the city and a nationally important geological and botanical Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

## **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

## **Background policy considerations/history**

In the UDP, a 4 hectare site (Policy SA23.3) beside Elstob and Silksworth Lane was proposed for additional sports facilities (paragraph 19.113). A review of outdoor sports needs in the city is being carried out in 2013 and should clarify whether this additional 4 hectares is still required for sports purposes.

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridor)
- UDP Policy L1, 7, 9 and B3 (existing greenspace over 1 hectare)
- UDP Policy CN21 (Local Wildlife Site)
- UDP Policy B14 (Areas of Potential Archaeological importance)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

## **Key constraints**

### ***Category 1***

There are no Category 1 considerations, although it should be noted that the eastern boundary of the Settlement Break links to the Tunstall Hills Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and SSSI.

### ***Category 2:***

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

The Settlement Break forms a Green Infrastructure corridor from the centre of the Sunderland conurbation eastwards to the coast. This corridor was specifically identified in the 1998 UDP, and its physical retention since the 1960's has enabled the former stand-alone settlements of Silksworth and Ryhope to remain (in-part) separate to the rest of the city. The open countryside has supported the backdrop to the Tunstall Hills LNR, and crucially has connected the coast and Tunstall Hills to Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) at High Newport, and to the proposed LWS at Silksworth Recreation Centre. Any site alterations should consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Coastal Limestone Plateau, consisting of a rolling landscape, with prominent limestone outcrops and steep slopes. The area has an urban fringe

character and forms a significant green corridor that narrows towards the sea. It is typified by arable farmland of cereals and rape seed, interspersed with patches of woodland, and Magnesian Limestone Grassland (containing many nationally rare plants and invertebrates). The area also forms part of the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment which is considered to be the most important geological feature of the Sunderland area.

Priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore characteristic features of the landscape -species rich limestone grasslands, dene woodlands, old hedgerows, field ponds, coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *Local Geological Site*

The Newport Railway Cutting LGS follows the southern boundary of the Settlement Break and should be protected in full from development. The strata exposed in the cutting are Upper Permian dolomites belonging to the Ford Formation (formerly Middle Magnesian Limestone), and are exposed for about 300m along the cutting westwards. The cutting also provides National Route 1 cycleway, which runs the full length of the UK. The cutting was originally a mineral railway to the former Silksworth Colliery, and is recognised for its archaeological importance.

- *Local Wildlife Site*

Newport Dene LWS is a small site to the east of the Settlement Break, providing broadleaved woodland. Its proximity to the Tunstall Hills is important. The site (and a suitable buffer zone) should be protected in full from development.

- *Other woodland sites*

To the south-west of the LWS, Newport Dene woodland continues up to the built-up area. Although affected by vandalism, the site provides a continuous ribbon of woodland to the Tunstall Hills. The site should be protected in full from development.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This affects land beside Elstob and Silksworth Lane. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding (high, medium, less)*

A large swathe of land running south-east from Elstob to the former Ryhope Golf Course site is affected by 'medium' and 'high' levels of surface water flooding. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Panoramic viewpoint*

The top of the Tunstall Hills and Tunstall Hope Road provide panoramic views of south Sunderland and beyond. These views demonstrate how attractive and green the city is, remarkable given the central urban location. Retaining an attractive

green environment is seen as key in the city's Economic Masterplan to attracting inward investment.

- *Area of archaeological importance*

The Historic Constraints map indicates 'archaeological sites' in the eastern fields that flank the Tunstall Hills. These sites relate to prehistoric finds (human burials, flint tools, a bronze axe, cremations in urns, a tumulus and a cist (stone-lined grave), and should be deemed to be non-designated heritage assets (in line with the National Planning Policy Framework). Such remains should ideally be preserved in-situ. These fields should also be seen as forming part of the wider Tunstall Hills area which should be wholly considered as an area of archaeological importance.

- *Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Minor previous industrial use- historic limestone quarry (pre-1856 map) beside Tunstall Hope Road. Remains of post medieval lime kilns could potentially survive
- Track-bed of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Silksworth Colliery Railway borders the south side of the Settlement Break
- Grade 2 listed building, Tunstall Hope Lodge, beside Tunstall Hope Road
- Minor landfill area – east of Tunstall Hope Road, north of railway line.

### ***Topography***

Most of the Settlement Break slopes northwards. The north-eastern part of the break slopes southwards, which creates a low-lying area that is prone to surface water flooding.

### ***Accessibility***

The break is located within the conurbation. Nevertheless, the north and east parts of the break are distanced from local facilities and public transport. The southern fringe of the break is within walking distance to Silksworth Centre but would have little or no direct road access. The most accessible fields are adjacent to Silksworth Lane, with good public transport connections and some facilities at the Sainsbury's superstore.

### **Conclusion**

The Settlement Break has maintained an important Green Infrastructure corridor in the centre of the Sunderland conurbation, and has also enabled Silksworth in particular to generally retain its distinct identity. From a wildlife perspective, the corridor connects together a number of protected sites from Plains Farm eastwards to the coast, and supports the important setting of the Tunstall Hills SSSI and LNR. In terms of walking and cycling, the corridor provides good recreational opportunities through the area, and links to important routes to the City Centre, Doxford International and to the Green Belt.

The Settlement Break is widest at its eastern end, but this area has very limited access and has the highest accumulation of physical constraints. It also directly serves as the backdrop to the Tunstall Hills. The western part of the break is narrower and is more accessible. If there is any scope at all for development, it would be small scale, and directly beside Silksworth Lane.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

- b) Overall, the policy should be retained in order to keep:
- i) the physical separation between Silksworth and central Sunderland
  - ii) the quality of the Green Infrastructure corridor from Silksworth Recreation Centre eastwards to the coast
  - iii) the natural landscape backdrop to the Tunstall Hills.

Land adjacent to the western edge of the Settlement Break could be potentially released (explained below).

***Possible development adjacent to the Settlement Break***

Land that contributes to (but is immediately outside of) the Settlement Break (adjacent to Elstob and Silksworth Lane) is allocated in the UDP for additional sports facilities (paragraph 19.113). Further investigation is required to see if the 4 hectare site needs to be retained for this purpose. If the site was developed, the impact upon the intentions of the Settlement Break, the purposes of the GI corridor and the setting of the Tunstall Hills would be relatively limited. This proposal is strengthened by the site's urban location, having excellent public transport links, reasonable service accessibility and an absence of significant known site constraints. With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

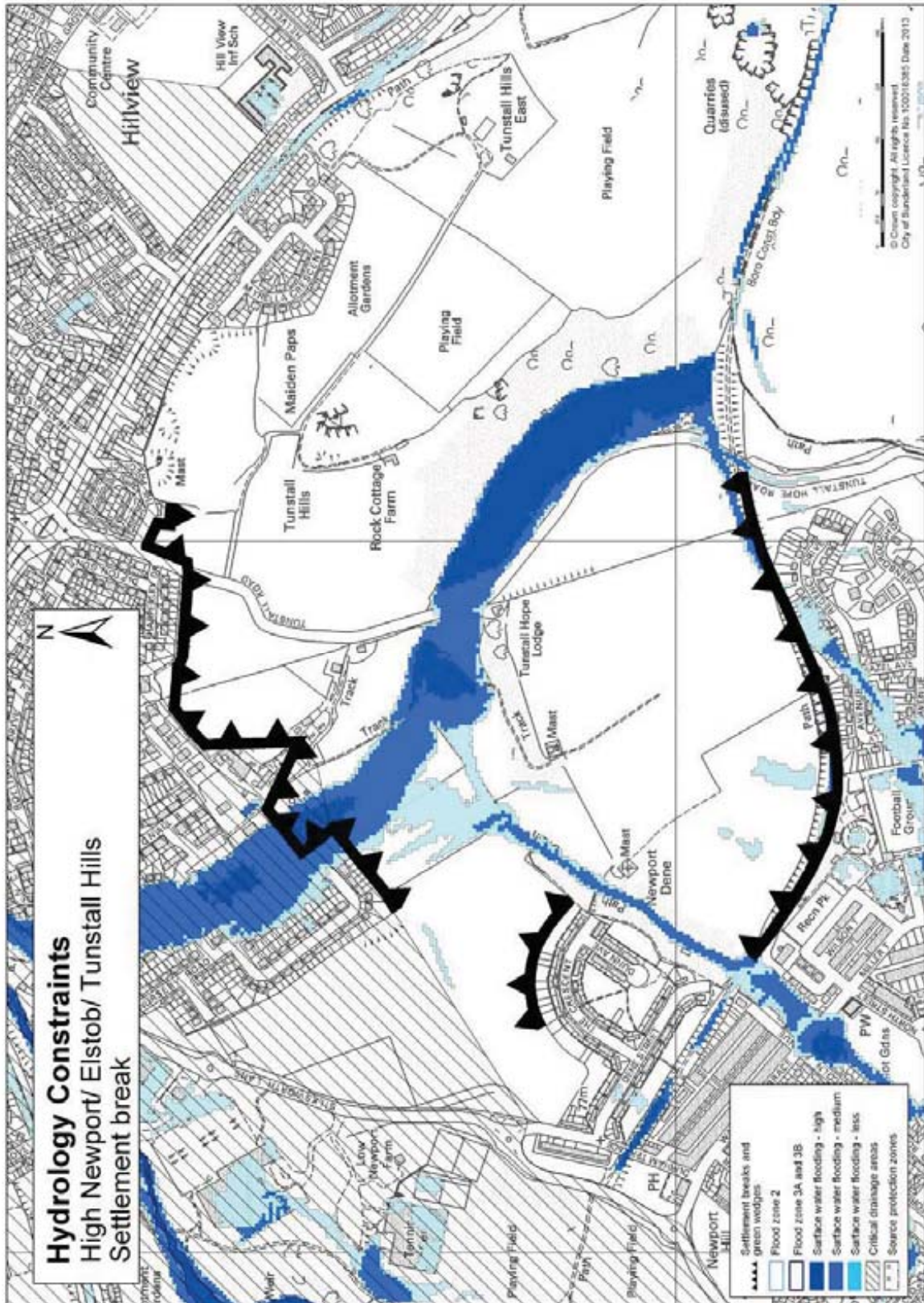
A further small site adjacent to High Newport Estate was identified in the UDP (Policy SA9.19) for residential development, and this is included in the 2012 SHLAA as a 6-10 year site.

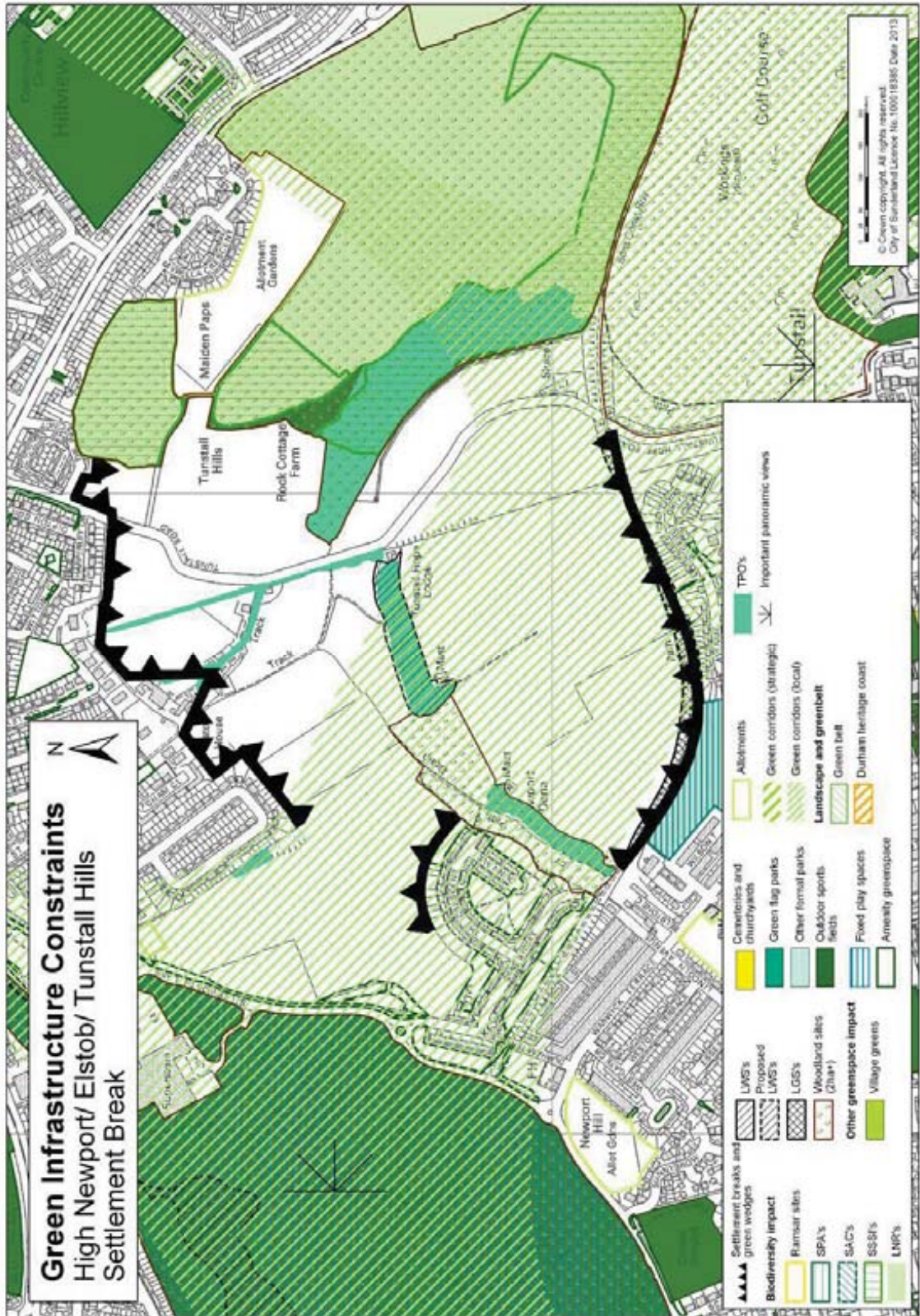
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

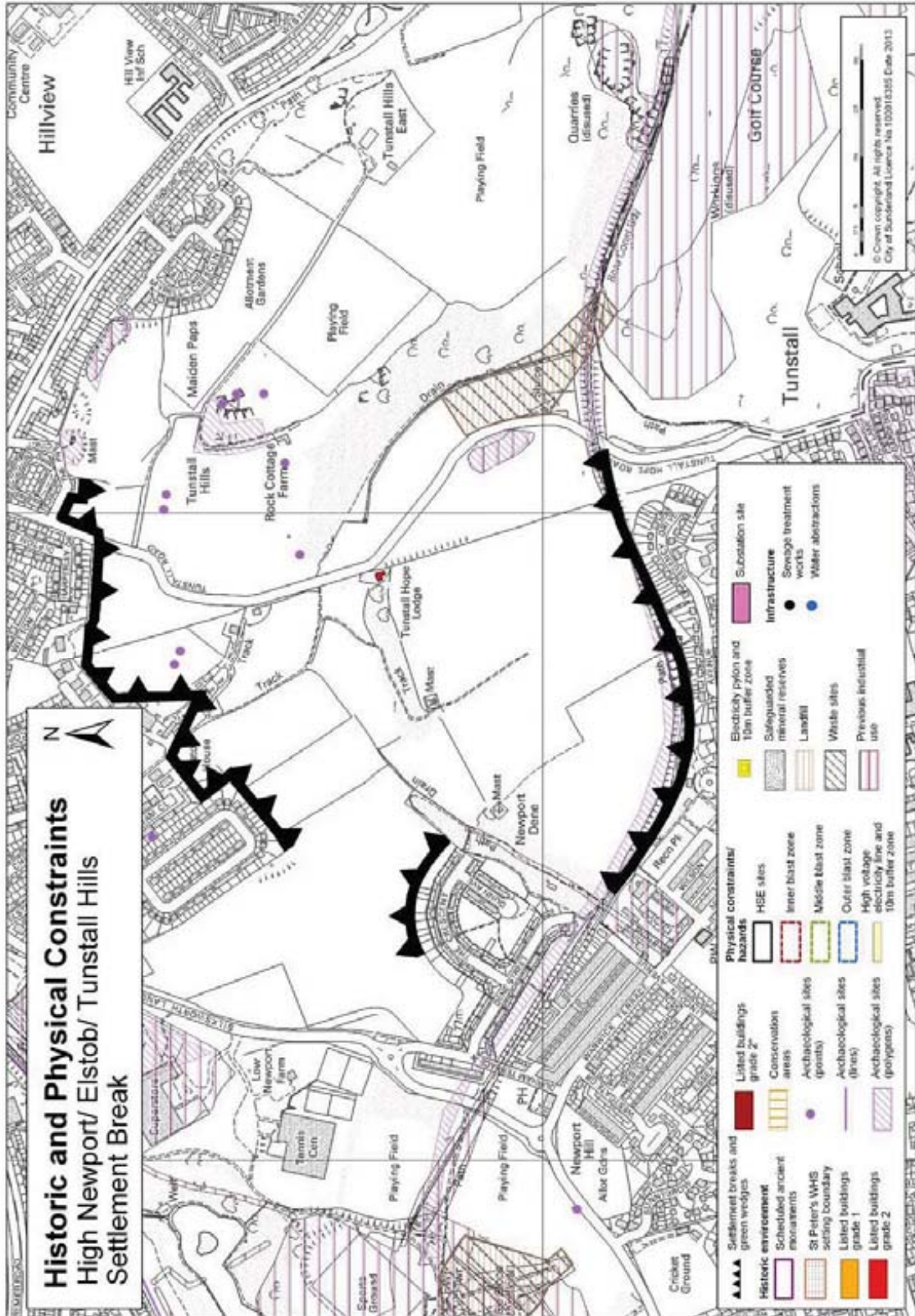
Yes, as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and where relevant for specific botanical, geological and greenspace significance.

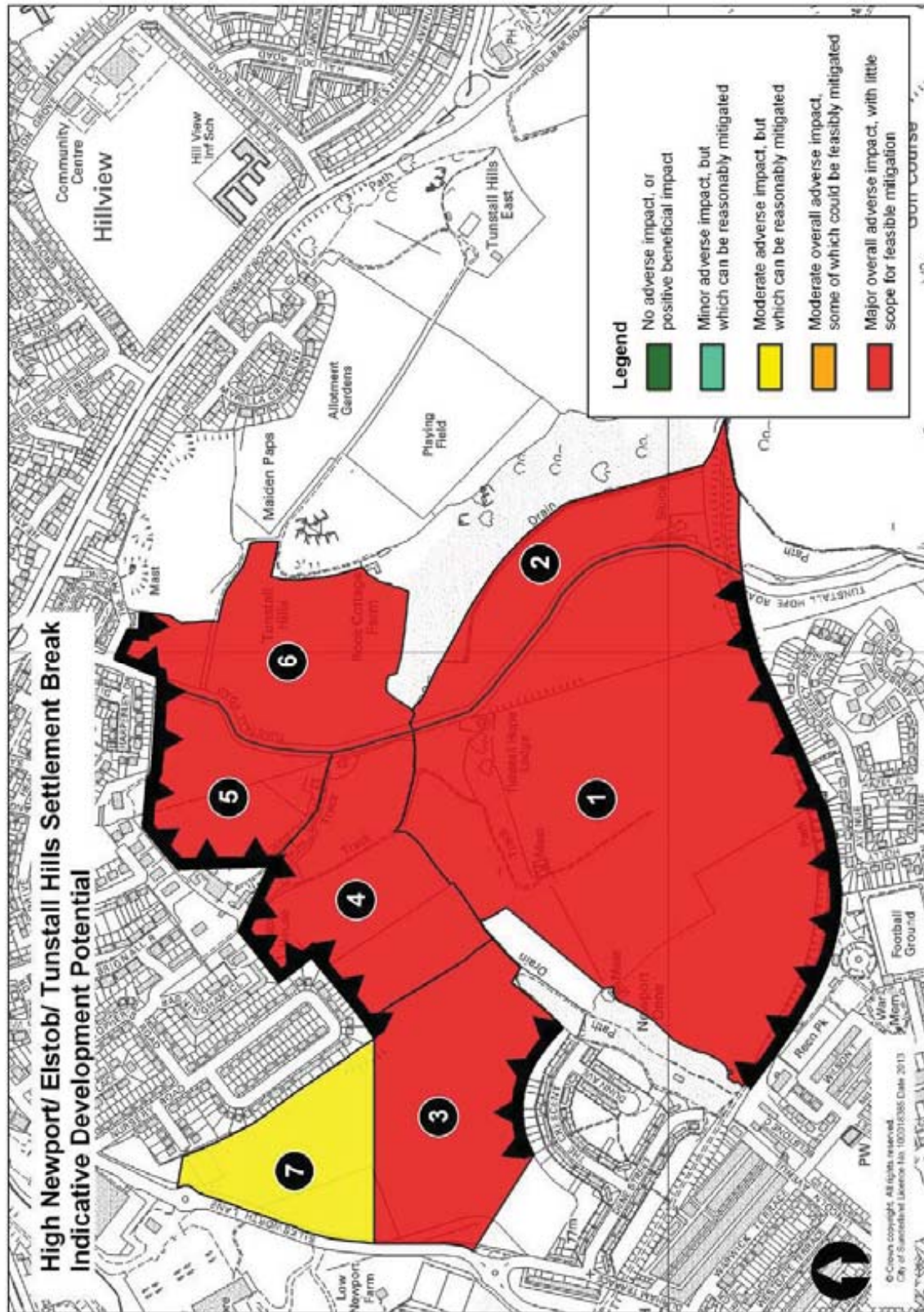
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 6) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 7) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

#### Category 1:

- Buffer zone to SSSI / LNR

#### Category 2:

- LWS / LGS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6D, 7B**

**Principal impacts: Buffer zone to Tunstall Hills SSSI, direct impact on LGS/LWS sites and woodland, direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Natural greenspaces
- Allotments
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5C, 6D, 7B**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)
- Recognised rural viewpoints
- Coastal Limestone plateau

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3D, 4E, 5E, 6E, 7C**

**Principal impacts: direct impact on the backdrop/setting and panoramic views of the Tunstall Hills; direct impact on wider landscape of the Coastal (Magnesian) Limestone Plateau.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1B, 2D, 3B, 4C, 5A, 6A, 7B**

**Principal impacts: incidences of ‘high’ surface water flooding beside Tunstall Hope Road.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Grade 2 listed building / structure and setting
- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5C, 6C, 7A**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- Stability issues
- Topographical issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3A, 4A, 5A, 6A, 7A**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, 6A, 7B**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3E, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D**

***Principal impacts: has played a very strong role in retaining settlement distinction, in safeguarding the setting of the Tunstall Hills, and preserving a key green infrastructure 'lung' into the heart of the main built-up area of Sunderland.***

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3B, 4D, 5E, 6E, 7B**

***Principal impacts: the eastern half of the Settlement Break in particular is remote from local centres and services and distanced from public transport services. Furthermore, the gradients/design of Tunstall Hope Road is not suitable to support development-generated traffic.***

### 3) Hollycarrside / Ryhope



#### Location

North of Ryhope Village  
South of Hollycarrside  
West of Durham Heritage Coast  
East of Ryhope Recreation Site

## Size and land ownership (if known)

16.8 hectares

85% private owned, 15% Council-owned land

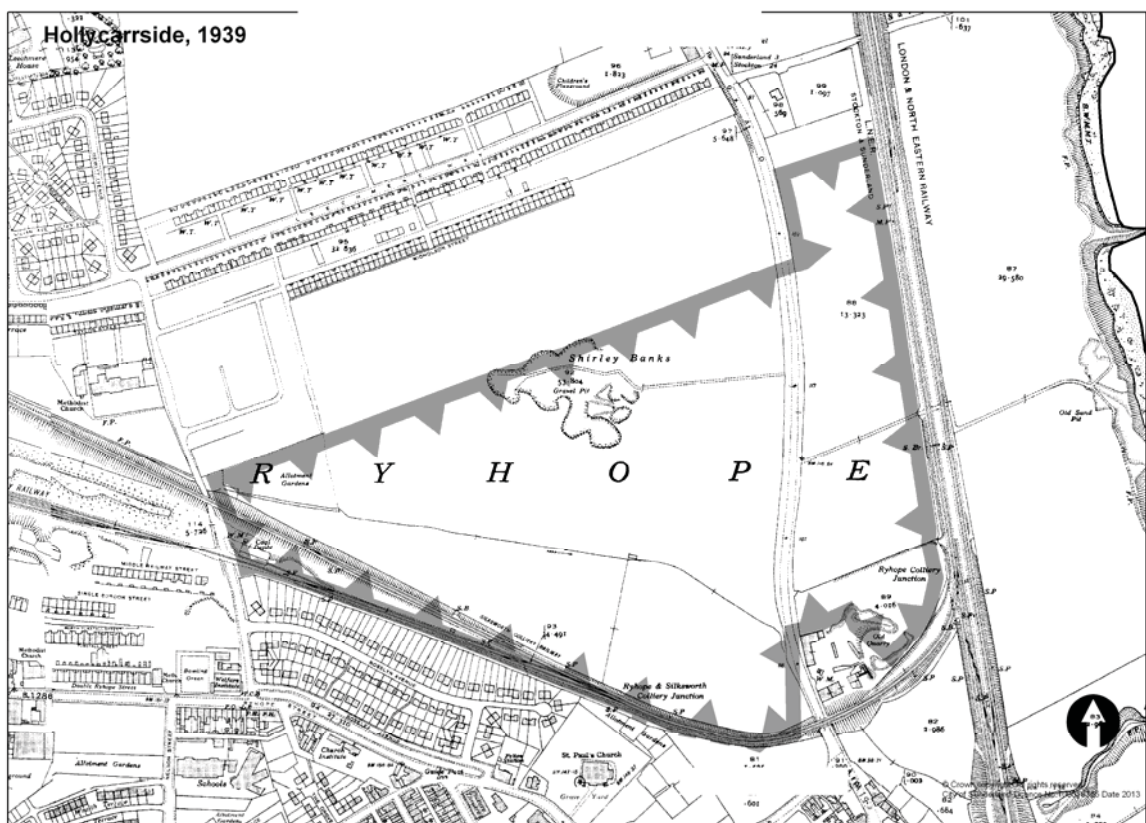
## What does it separate?

Separates Ryhope from Hollycarrside. Forms part of a Green Infrastructure corridor from the centre of Sunderland to the coast.

## Current use

Agriculture, amenity greenspace and sports fields (rugby).

## Neighbouring settlement background



## Ryhope

Ryhope is first mentioned in AD930. Located on the Durham coalfield, it was inevitable that Ryhope would follow the path of many other villages in the area, and abandon agriculture as the main employer in favour of coal. In 1859 a colliery was opened, causing huge changes in the geography of the village. The settlement of Ryhope extended west toward the area of Tunstall, creating two distinct areas of Ryhope; the 'Village' and the 'Colliery'. Railway lines were introduced to the area, linking Ryhope to Sunderland, Seaham and other Durham Coalfield mining villages. Now only a single railway line runs through the village, although there is no longer a station. The colliery was closed in 1966.

Ryhope Village was declared a Conservation Area in 1971 around the heart of the former medieval village in recognition of its architectural and historic interest. It can

be described as a 3-row village centred upon a large triangular village green that evolved from a typical agricultural settlement into a mining village and later into a residential suburb. The Village contains numerous fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century former farmhouses, barns and cottages, chapels, civic buildings and residential properties of various periods, including examples of 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraced colliery housing and latter 20th Century developments.

Beyond the Conservation Area is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties. Ryhope has many facilities, including a library and customer service centre, supermarket and row of shops, post office, pubs, churches, primary schools and a secondary school. Ryhope, like Silksworth was part of the Sunderland Rural District, and while it now forms part of the City of Sunderland, it retains a distinct and separate village character.

### ***Hollycarrside***

Immediately to the north of Ryhope Village (beyond the Settlement Break) is the neighbourhood of Hollycarrside. Most of the estate consists of council-built (now Gentoo homes) semi-detached properties, with private properties built to the south-east. There are a couple of shops.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

The Settlement Break remains intact, although rugby pitches have been created along the eastern edge (east of Ryhope Road).

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridor)
- UDP Policy B13 (Other Specific Sites and Monuments)
- UDP Policy SA48 (Strategic Multi-user Route)
- UDP Policy SA39.2, SA39.6, CN16, B1 (Tree Belts / Woodland)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### ***Category 1:***

- Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor.

The site is connected to the Durham Heritage Coast Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken by the City Council, providing further detailed information relating to the local area.

#### ***Category 2:***

- *District Green Infrastructure corridor*

The Settlement Break forms a Green Infrastructure corridor from the centre of the Sunderland conurbation eastwards to the coast. This corridor was specifically identified in the 1998 UDP, and its physical retention since the 1960's has enabled the former stand-alone settlements of Silksworth and Ryhope to remain (in-part) separate to the rest of the city. The open countryside has supported the backdrop to the Tunstall Hills LNR, and crucially has connected the coast and Tunstall Hills to Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) at High Newport, and to the proposed LWS at Silksworth Recreation Centre. The National Cycle Network (Route 1) follows the

full length of the corridor. Any site alterations should consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Coastal Limestone Plateau, consisting of a rolling landscape. The area has an urban fringe character and forms a significant green corridor that opens-up westwards to the Tunstall Hills. It is typified by arable farmland of cereals and rape seed.

Priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore characteristic features of the landscape -species rich limestone grasslands, dene woodlands, old hedgerows, field ponds, coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *Sports pitches (rugby)*

Ashbrooke Rugby Club has created new rugby pitches on land to the east of Ryhope Road. This has helped to address a deficit in outdoor sports pitches (and particularly rugby pitches) identified in the 2012 Greenspace Report. These sports pitches need to be retained in full.

- *Allotments*

A small allotment site beside Ridley Avenue provides 11 plots. The 2012 Greenspace Report identifies an overall deficiency in allotment provision in Sunderland East ARF. This site needs to be retained in full.

- *Surface Water Flooding (high, med, less)*

A small burn runs through the middle of the site. This is prone to more extensive 'high' and 'medium' level Surface Water Flooding. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity. It is recommended that the burn, together with the 'high' and 'medium' Surface Water Flooding associated with it be protected from development.

- *Panoramic viewpoint*

The top of the Tunstall Hills and Tunstall Hope Road provide panoramic views of south Sunderland and beyond. These views demonstrate how attractive and green the city is, remarkable given the central urban location. Retaining an attractive green environment is seen as key in the city's Economic Masterplan to attracting inward investment.

*Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Previous industrial use – gravel pit, opposite the eastern side of Callington Drive. Old quarry beside former Ryhope Colliery rail junction. Other unknown industrial uses in centre of site
- Archaeological sites – along south side of Settlement Break, the former Ryhope and Silksworth Collieries mineral line. The eastern boundary of the site is formed by the Londonderry, Seaham and Sunderland Railway (built 1852), later the North Eastern Railway, Durham and Sunderland branch
- Small waste site/landfill site – to the east of the gravel pit, near to Ryhope Road.



### **Topography**

Gently sloping site from north and south into burn.

### **Accessibility**

The Settlement Break has good public transport access from Ryhope Road and Black Road. Local facilities are a considerable walking distance away at Ryhope.

### **Conclusion**

The Settlement Break has maintained an important Green Infrastructure corridor in the centre of the Sunderland conurbation, and has also enabled Ryhope village to generally retain its distinct identity. From a wildlife perspective, the corridor connects together a number of protected sites from Plains Farm eastwards to the coast, and supports the important setting of the Tunstall Hills SSSI and LNR. In terms of walking and cycling, the corridor provides good recreational opportunities through the area, and links to important routes to the City Centre, Silksworth and Seaham.

Any development in the western half of the Settlement Break would be inappropriate due to the narrowness of the break itself and the detrimental effect this would have on the Green Infrastructure corridor. The break gradually widens towards Ryhope Road, and the north-east portion of land beside Hollycarrside appears to have least constraints. East of Ryhope Road, the northernmost portion of land (north of the rugby pitches) is hemmed-in by roads to the east and west, and contributes little to the Settlement Break or the natural environment.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

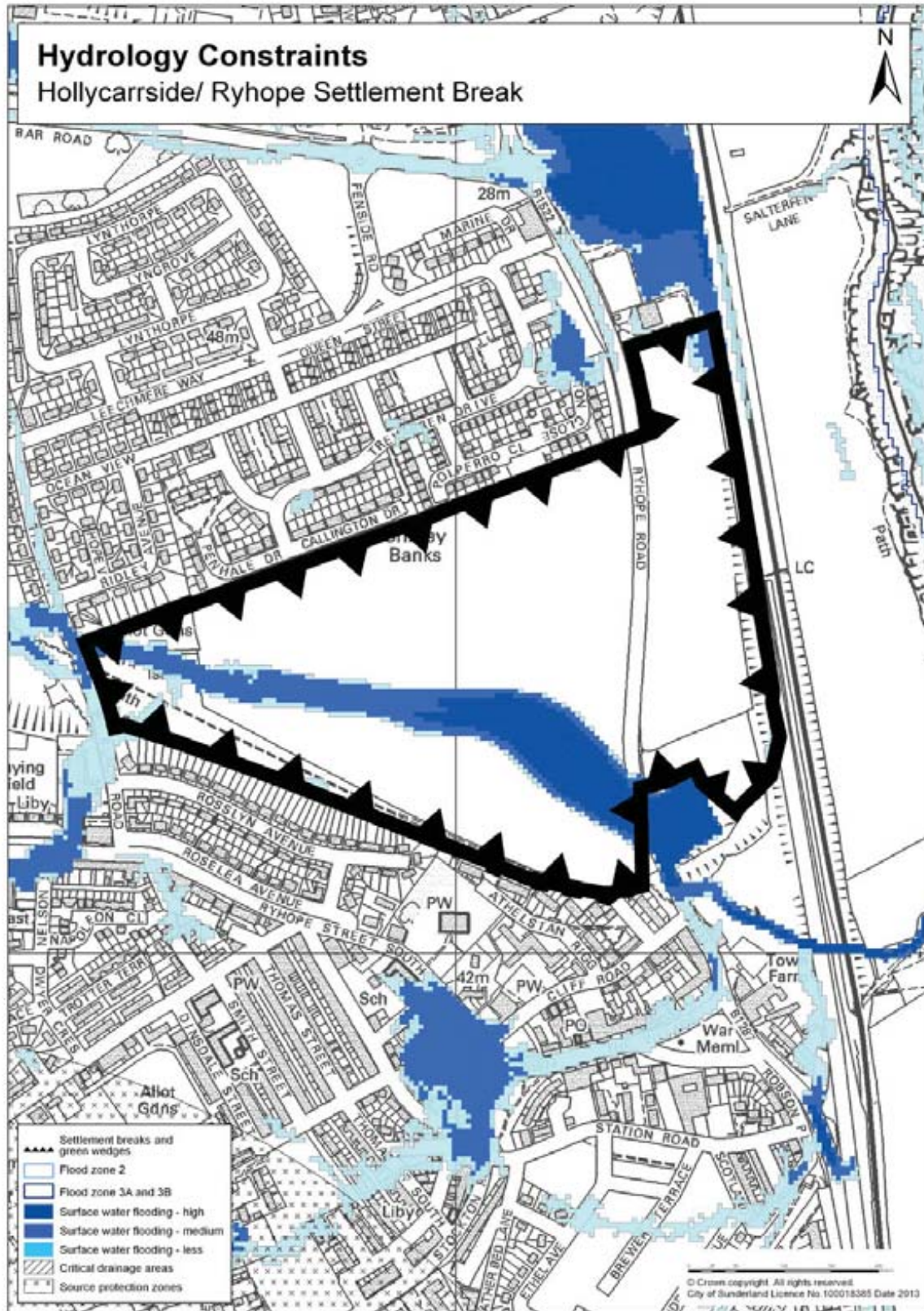
- (b) Primarily, the Settlement Break should be retained. A small parcel of land east of Ryhope Road (north of rugby pitches) could be considered as having general development potential, and would allow a straightening of the Settlement Break boundary.

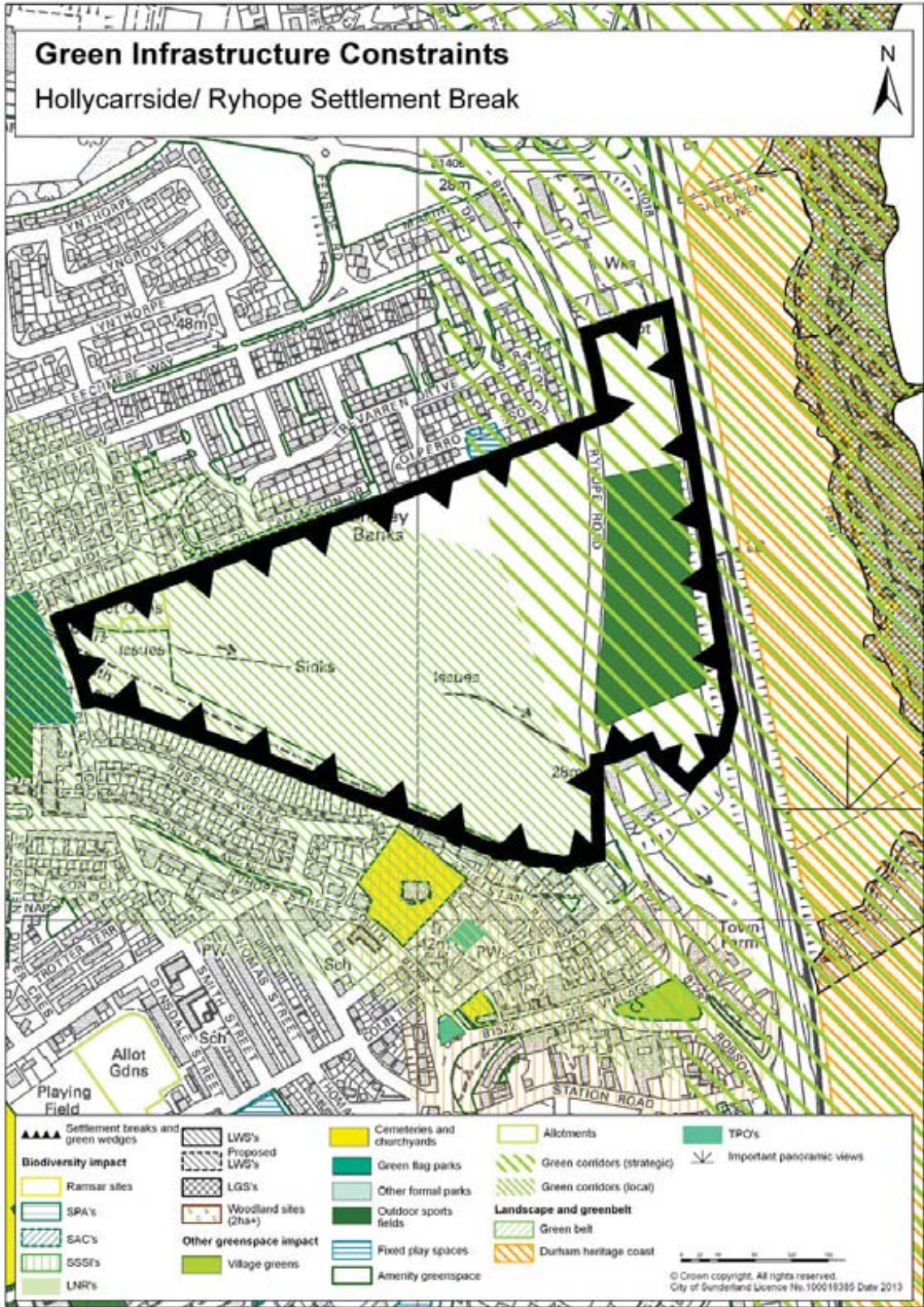
### **Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

Yes, as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and where relevant for specific botanical and greenspace significance.

### **Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated





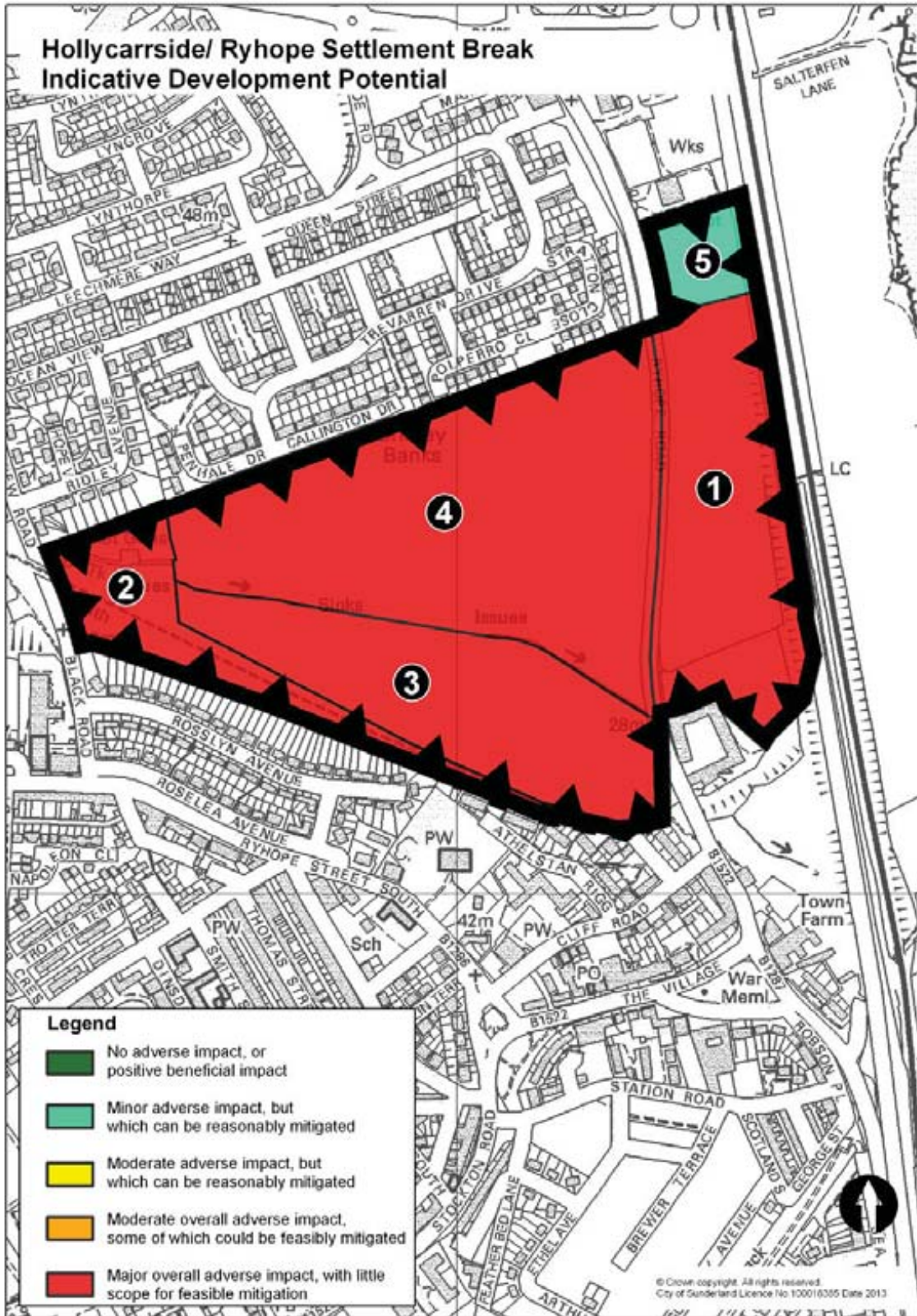
# Historic and Physical Constraints Hollycarrside/ Ryhope Settlement Break



Settlement breaks and green wedges	Listed buildings grade 2*	<b>Physical constraints/ hazards</b>	Electricity pylon and 10m buffer zone	Substation site
<b>Historic environment</b>	Conservation areas	HSE sites	Safeguarded mineral reserves	<b>Infrastructure</b>
Scheduled ancient monuments	Archaeological sites (points)	Inner blast zone	Landfill	Sewage treatment works
St Peter's WMS setting boundary	Archaeological sites (lines)	Middle blast zone	Waste sites	Water abstractions
Listed buildings grade 1	Archaeological sites (polygons)	Outer blast zone	Previous industrial use	
Listed buildings grade 2		High voltage electricity line and 10m buffer zone		

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## Hollycarrside/ Ryhope Settlement Break Indicative Development Potential



## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5B**

**Principal impacts: Site is connected to the Durham Heritage Coast and acts as an important wildlife corridor in its own right.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1:

- Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Outdoor sports fields
- Allotments
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3D, 4D, 5B**

**Principal impacts: Forms part of the Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor (Durham Heritage Coast) and acts as a District Green Infrastructure corridor in its own right. Rugby pitches provide an important sporting resource along**

*the eastern flank of the Settlement Break, whilst allotments are located at the pinch point to the west.*

### 3) Landscape

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Coastal Limestone plateau
- Recognised rural viewpoints

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment:** 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5B

**Principal impacts:** Provides a backdrop/setting to the Tunstall Hills; direct impact on wider landscape of the Coastal (Magnesian) Limestone Plateau.

### 4) Hydrology

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment:** 1A, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B

### 5) Historic Environment

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2C, 3C, 4B, 5A.**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- Stability issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3B, 4C, 5A.**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C.**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C**

**Principal impacts: Major new residential development proposed to the south and southwest of Ryhope.**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?



A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3E, 4E, 5C**

**Principal impacts: has played a very strong role in retaining settlement distinction, in safeguarding the setting of the Tunstall Hills, and preserving a key green infrastructure 'lung' into the heart of the main built-up area of Sunderland.**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B**

## 4) South Sunderland



### Location

North of Green Belt boundary  
South of Doxford Park, Tunstall Village, Tunstall Bank and Ryhope  
West of Cherry Knowle  
East of Doxford Park

### Size and land ownership (if known)

100 hectares  
Mostly private owned, partly Council owned.

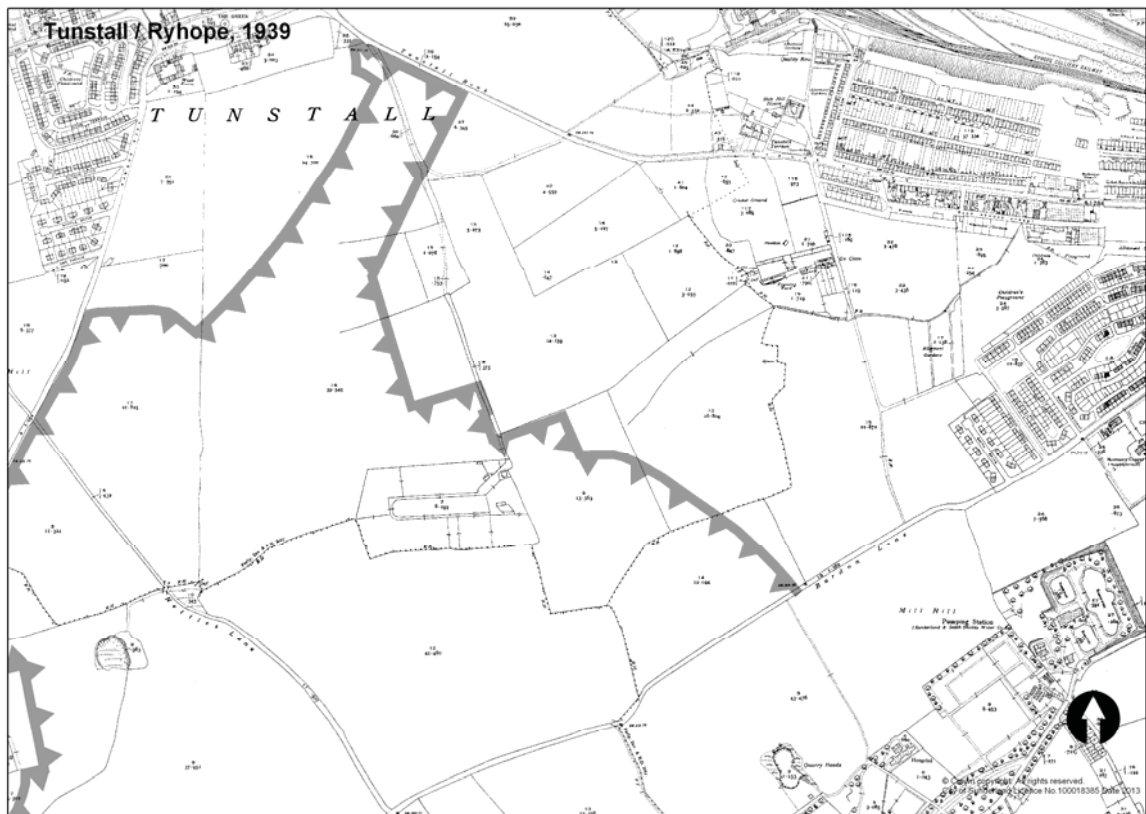
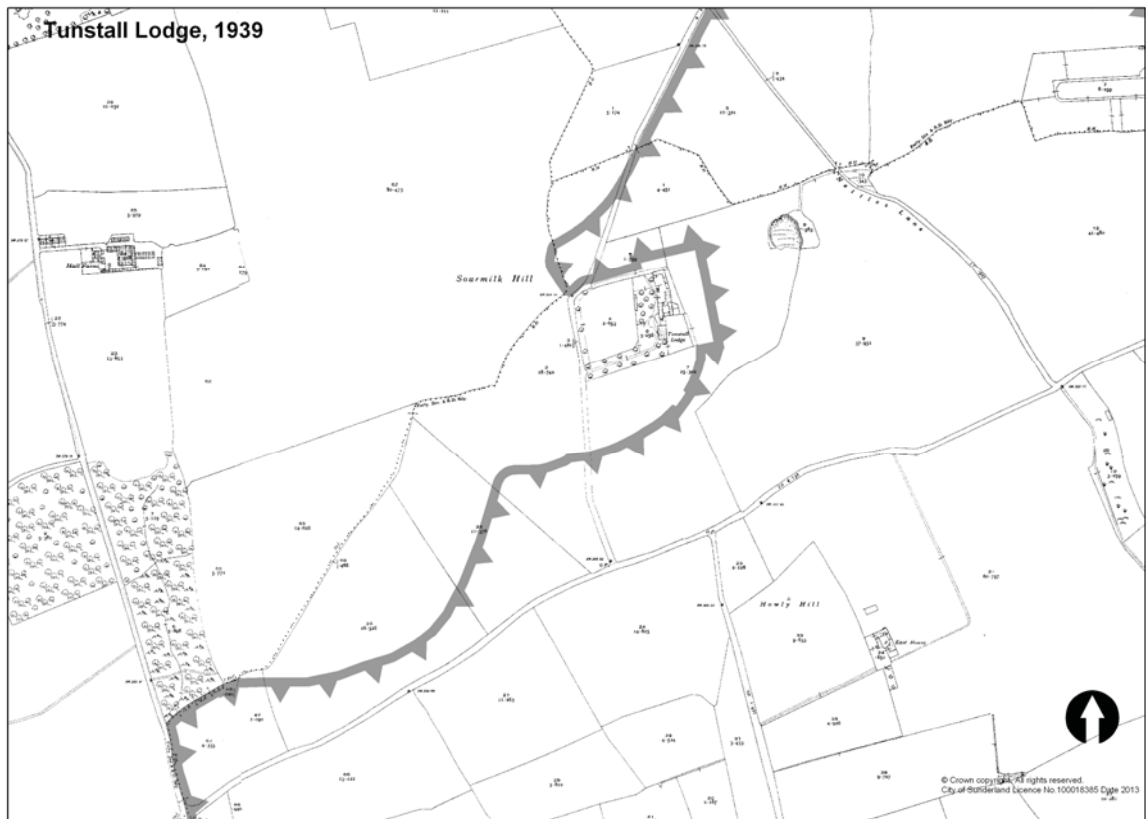
### What does it separate?

- Doxford Park from the Green Belt and to a lesser extent from Burdon Village and Ryhope
- Tunstall from Tunstall Bank
- Tunstall and Ryhope from the Green Belt boundary
- Forms part of a Green Infrastructure corridor from Warden Law to the coast.

### Current use

Agriculture and natural greenspace.

## Neighbouring settlement background



### ***Doxford Park***

Doxford Park is a suburb of Sunderland, located to the south-west of the city centre. Apart from the Conservation Area of Old Silksworth (a mediaeval village that incorporated Silksworth Hall) to the north of the area, Doxford Park has been built up in stages from the mid 1960s onwards. It is surrounded by the A19 and Doxford International Business Park to the west, Silksworth to the north, and settlement break to the south and east. In the centre of the village are Doxford Park shops, housing a major supermarket, library and row of shops. The village includes two primary schools.

Doxford Park consists of a variety of housing areas. Mill Hill is Gentoo controlled, and is being redeveloped. Private housing has been provided in Moorside, Hall Farm and Tunstall Lodge, offering a variety of flats, semi-detached and detached properties. The village is a mixture of a new town layout- with segregated footpaths using underpasses- and modern housing on cul-de-sacs, interspersed with mature woodland plantations.

Further residential development of Doxford Park is outlined in the 1998 UDP. The 'Chapelgarth' development area was originally identified to provide 860 dwellings, as well as open space and woodland. This area remains greenfield and already includes some woodland plantation that helps to screen the area away from the neighbouring A19 trunk road. A further thin belt of woodland screening also exists on the southern outskirts of Hall Farm, from Blakeney Woods to the west, to Tunstall Lodge in the east.

Less than a kilometre away to the south is the hamlet of Burdon, which is surrounded by Green Belt.

### ***Tunstall Village***

Standing high above the surrounding countryside beyond the Tunstall hills, this medieval agricultural hamlet was more prominent than its modern-day counterpart. Little survives from the middle ages except for the village green. Tunstall's cottages were arranged in two rows, facing across the green, their small tofts accessed from a back lane. The medieval form was still obvious in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but the settlement had by then contracted dramatically. By 1872, there were 15 houses and a population of 94.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the inter-war years witnessed an eastern expansion of Silksworth, that joined-up with the western edge of Tunstall Village. Ryhope remained physically separate and distanced, until the post-war development of Tunstall Bank Estate. By 1939, the south side of the village green was starting to be re-built with private homes. In the 1960's and 1970's, development saw both sides of the village green surrounded by housing, and a further development extended the area to the south with private properties. Today, Tunstall and Silksworth are closely linked, joined further together with the establishment of the Venerable Bede Church of England Secondary School being located to the east of the village green. The area had one shop, but this closed a few years ago, and residents thereby rely on facilities in nearby Silksworth, Ryhope and elsewhere in Sunderland.

### ***Tunstall Bank Estate***

Tunstall Bank Estate was built by Sunderland Rural District in the 1950's, consisting of semi-detached family homes, virtually identical in design to those built at Silksworth Vicarage Estate. These are now held by Gentoo homes. Further private link homes were built in the 1960's along the western edge. Within the last 10 years, a new link road has been built around the west and south of the estate, providing access to a new private estate of properties, consisting mainly of detached and town houses.

Tunstall Bank has limited facilities, except for a small supermarket, but has good transport connections. As Tunstall Village is linked to Silksworth, Tunstall Bank is linked to Ryhope, and the two are physically linked via the Welfare Park.

### ***Ryhope***

Ryhope is first mentioned in AD930. Located on the Durham coalfield, it was inevitable that Ryhope would follow the path of many other villages in the area, and abandon agriculture as the main employer in favour of coal. In 1859 a colliery was opened, causing huge changes in the geography of the village. The settlement of Ryhope extended west toward the area of Tunstall, creating two distinct areas of Ryhope; the 'Village' and the 'Colliery'. Railway lines were introduced to the area, linking Ryhope to Sunderland, Seaham and other Durham Coalfield mining villages. Now only a single railway line runs through the village, although there is no longer a station. The colliery was closed in 1966.

Ryhope Village was declared a Conservation Area in 1971 around the heart of the former medieval village in recognition of its architectural and historic interest. It can be described as a 3-row village centred upon a large triangular village green that evolved from a typical agricultural settlement into a mining village and later into a residential suburb. The Village contains numerous fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century former farmhouses, barns and cottages, chapels, civic buildings and residential properties of various periods, including examples of 19<sup>th</sup> Century terraced colliery housing and latter 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments.

Beyond the Conservation Area is a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties. Ryhope has many facilities, including a library and customer service centre, supermarket and row of shops, post office, pubs, churches, primary schools and a secondary school. Ryhope, like Silksworth was part of the Sunderland Rural District, and while it now forms part of the City of Sunderland, it retains a distinct and separate village character.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

There were no objections to the UDP policy (CN6); therefore it was not examined at the Public Local Inquiry (1997). As an aside, however, the issue of safeguarding land in the vicinity of Burdon Lane was raised by objectors. The Inspector to that Inquiry concluded that:-

*“10.6.9 I have concluded in para.10.4.18 of the report that the area of unallocated land between the proposed Green Belt to the south of Sunderland and the edge of the built-up area would provide future decision-makers with sufficient flexibility when assessing the need for further development in this area beyond the Plan period. The availability of significant areas of land outwith the Green Belt in other parts of the City provides additional flexibility when considering the long term needs of the City as a whole. In the light of this flexibility, the agricultural quality of the proposed safeguarded area, the longevity of RPG1 and the absence of any vigorous quantified assessment of development needs beyond the Plan period, I consider that there is insufficient justification to identify safeguarded land within the Plan at present, and that this issue would be better addressed at a detailed level after the update of RPG1. In the meantime, development of the land between the southern edge of the built-up area of Sunderland and the proposed Green Belt would be controlled by Policies CN1 and EN4, amongst others”.*

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy CN13, CN14, SA38.5 (Important Panoramic Views)
- UDP Policy T9, SA47.5 (Cycle routes)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, SA48.9, SA48.10 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy SA39.3, SA39.4, CN16, B1 (Tree Belts / Woodland)
- UDP Policy T13, T15, SA52.2 (Reserved for Transport Corridor)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

## **Key constraints**

### **Category 1**

There are no Category 1 constraints.

### **Category 2**

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

The Settlement Break acts as a Green Infrastructure corridor linking southwards to Green Belt, that links the coast inland towards Houghton-le-Spring. To the north, the Settlement Break forms a narrow corridor that links to the former Ryhope Golf Course and to the Tunstall Hills. The break also helps to maintain a further narrow corridor of greenspace separating Doxford Park from Silksworth. In 1998, the UDP sought to maintain these corridors via Settlement Break policy or through greenspace protection. These breaks help to maintain the physical separation of Silksworth from Ryhope and Doxford Park. Any site alterations would need to ensure that an appropriate width green corridor was retained, that linked to the two corridors to the north and the Green Belt to the south, including further biodiversity and access enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Coastal Limestone Plateau, consisting of a rolling urban fringe landscape predominantly of large arable fields and minimal tree cover. The sea is often visible and gives the area a strong identity. Tunstall Hills and Ryhope Pumping Station are also important landmarks. However, roads, electricity pylons

and the presence of the urban area make the landscape appear busier and less rural in quality. Recent residential development has created some abrupt settlement edges.

Any new development would require sensitive design to ensure it blends in with the surrounding landscape, and retains important views. Wherever possible, characteristic features of the landscape should be restored, including species rich limestone grasslands, old hedgerows, field ponds and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *Two high voltage electricity lines*

These are fairly small in scale and wooden- not pylons. Any development would need to consider relocation of these two lines.

- *Source Protection Zone*

The area lies above the Magnesian Limestone principal aquifer and within the source protection zone of a public water supply. It is therefore essential that any future development would not impact upon this important underground water resource

- *Panoramic views off Burdon Lane*

Burdon Lane offers panoramic views of the southern urban landscape, the sea and coast and the attractive urban area around Burdon Village. Characteristic and significant structures can be identified, which contribute to the distinctive urban form of the city. Any development would need to consider whether these views can be maintained.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This affects land between Hall Farm and Burdon Lane. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface water flooding*

The maps show only limited areas affected by surface water flooding. However, a 'medium' level flooding area exists at Lodgeside Meadow, Tunstall Lodge, and this is directly caused by run-off from Burdon Road and fields immediately to the south. The land north of Burdon Village slopes down to Hall Farm and Tunstall Lodge. A further area of 'medium' level surface water flooding exists to the north near to Burdon Road. The Sunderland SFRA states that for flood risk in South Sunderland, "large scale development on currently undeveloped land should consider flood flow routes along smaller drains or natural surface water flow paths. These should be left free of development and obstructions."

- *Woodland*

A thin shelter belt of trees exists to the south of Hall Farm and this links to Blakeney Woods to the west. From an ecology perspective, Blakeney Woods is a little isolated, and would benefit from further woodland and natural greenspace being retained directly to the south, to enhance linkages with the Green Belt as well as woodland beside Burdon Lane. The thin shelter belt of trees would benefit from

additional tree planting to strengthen the woodland belt, and this may help to mitigate any surface water flooding from the elevated fields to the south.

*Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Small archaeological sites – There are two small pre-1856 limestone quarries: one is to the east of Nettles Lane / North of Burdon Lane; the other lies to the east of Tunstall Lodge
- Improved multi-user route and cycle route access proposed across area
- A new transport corridor (Ryhope – Doxford Park Link Road) proposed across the northern part of the Settlement Break.

### **Topography**

The gently rolling topography enables a visually open landscape. The land slopes south-north from Burdon Village to Tunstall Lodge, but further east the land beside Nettles Lane falls gradually north-south towards Burdon Lane and eventually to Cherry Knowle Dene. Nearer to Tunstall the land is flatter.

### **Accessibility**

Very limited accessibility by public transport. No public transport links at all to Burdon Village. Nearest local centres are Doxford Park and Ryhope.

### **Conclusion**

A separation between Silksworth/Doxford Park and Ryhope should be maintained, including the preservation of green corridor connections linking the Green Belt, and open countryside beside Nettles Lane / Burdon Lane towards the Tunstall Hills to the north and Mill Hill to the north-west.

The remainder of the 'white land' does not specifically separate settlements, however, and development here would not unduly affect the separation of Doxford Park, Ryhope and Silksworth (apart from the portion of land between Tunstall Village and Tunstall Bank). Furthermore, the 1998 UDP Inspector's comments indicate thoughts at the time that this land as a whole should remain flexible when considering future development needs beyond the Plan period. It should be noted that development in this area would require significant new road infrastructure, dependent upon the scale of development proposed- namely the creation of the Ryhope-Doxford Link Road and further potential upgrades to the existing network.

In many respects, the Green Belt already provides a distinct settlement boundary (following Burdon Lane) and effectively provides a settlement break of its own, locally separating Burdon hamlet from Sunderland, and at a macro scale, separating Sunderland from Seaham in County Durham.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

b) The Settlement Break policy is not appropriate, it does not physically separate settlements. Development in the area could take place. A Green Infrastructure corridor must be maintained north-south linking to Tunstall Hills and Mill Hill (between Silksworth and Doxford Park). This should be much wider than the corridors it connects to, to the north.



Sensitive development would be necessary to preserve the landscape character of the south Sunderland boundary and Magnesian Limestone plateau, including the retention of panoramic viewpoints across Sunderland. Any development would need to mitigate for any potential impact with regards to the Source Protection Zone.

Any development in the vicinity of Hall Farm and Tunstall Lodge would need to address hydrological concerns, electricity lines and biodiversity enhancements mentioned above.

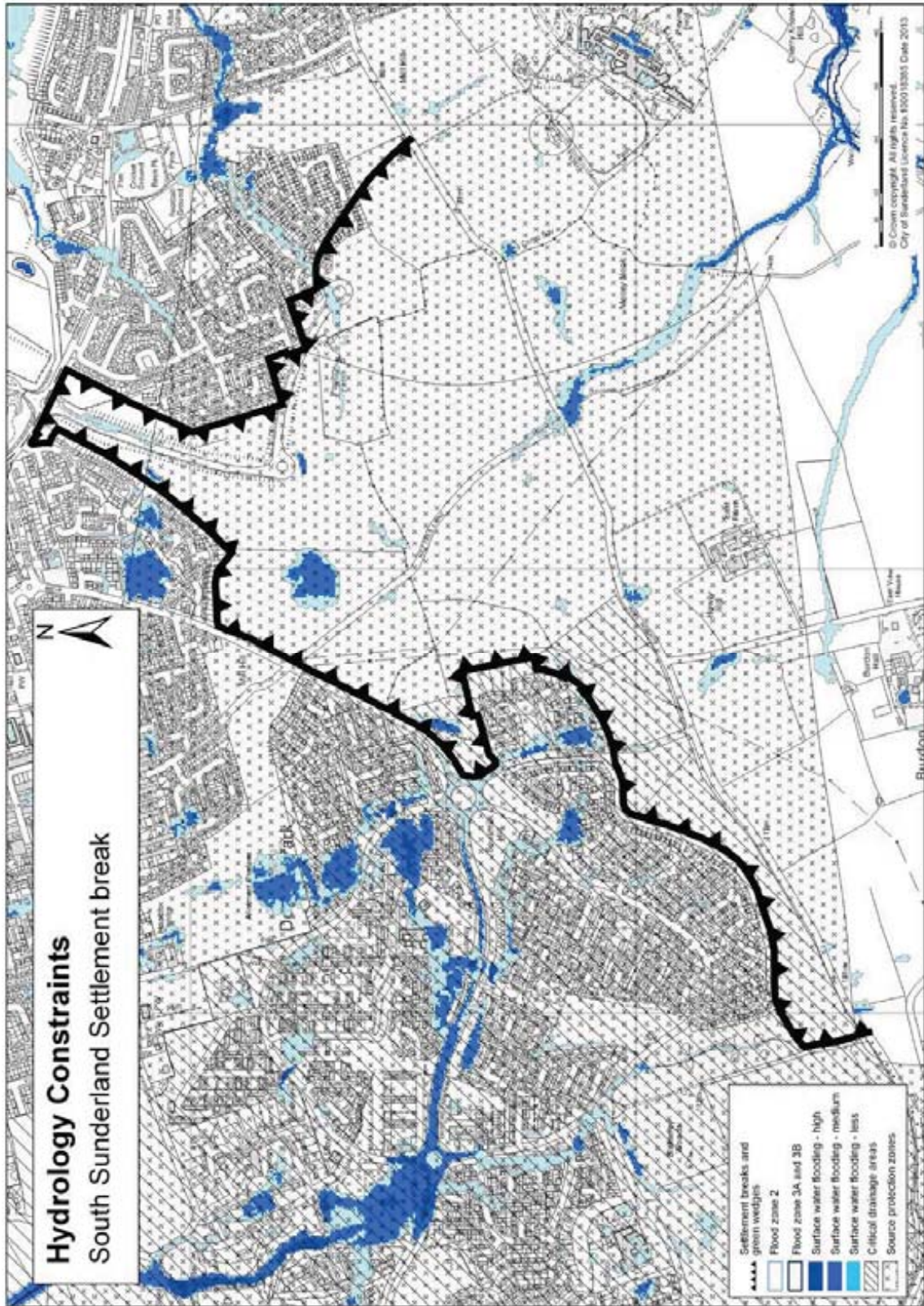
With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

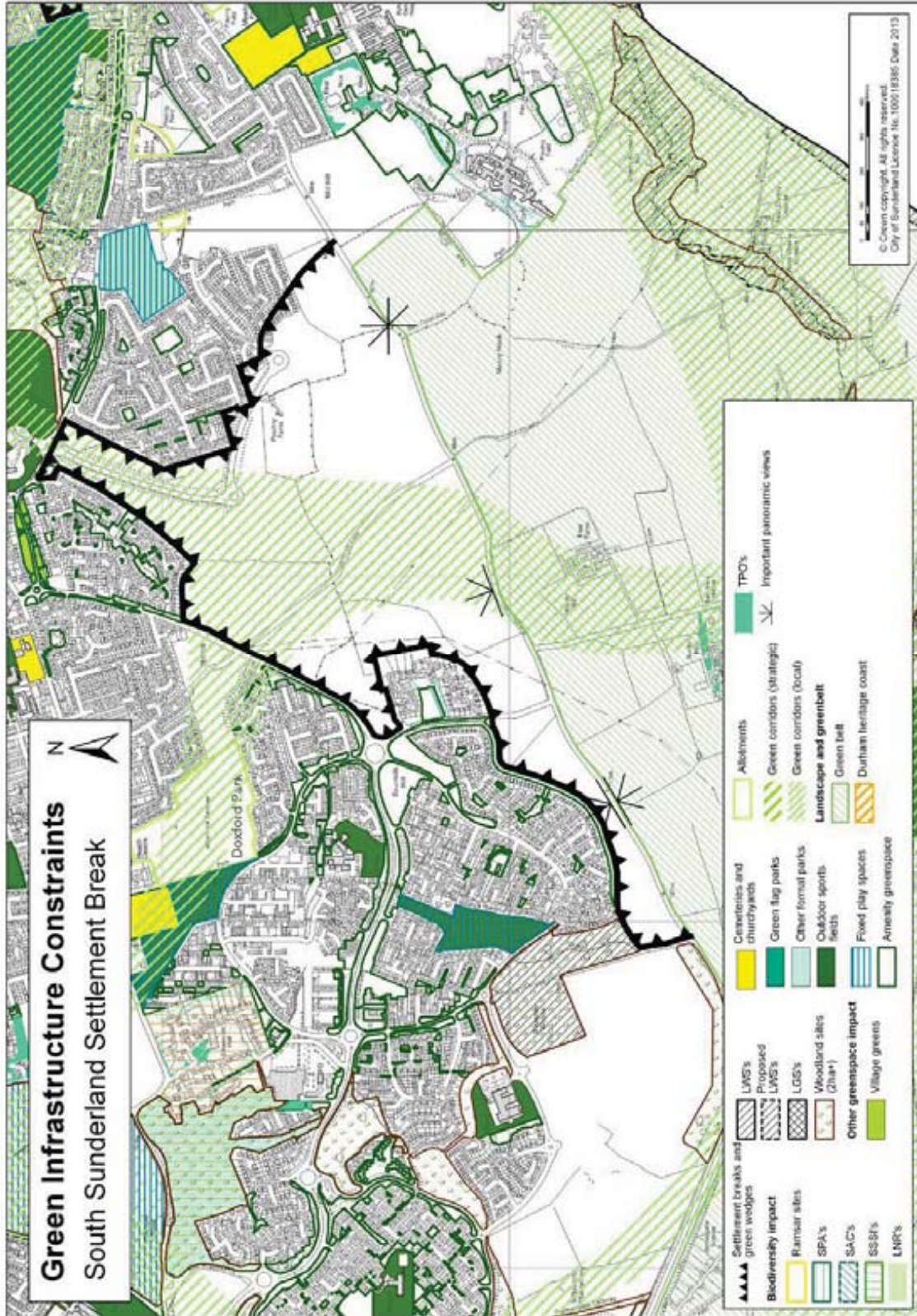
### **Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

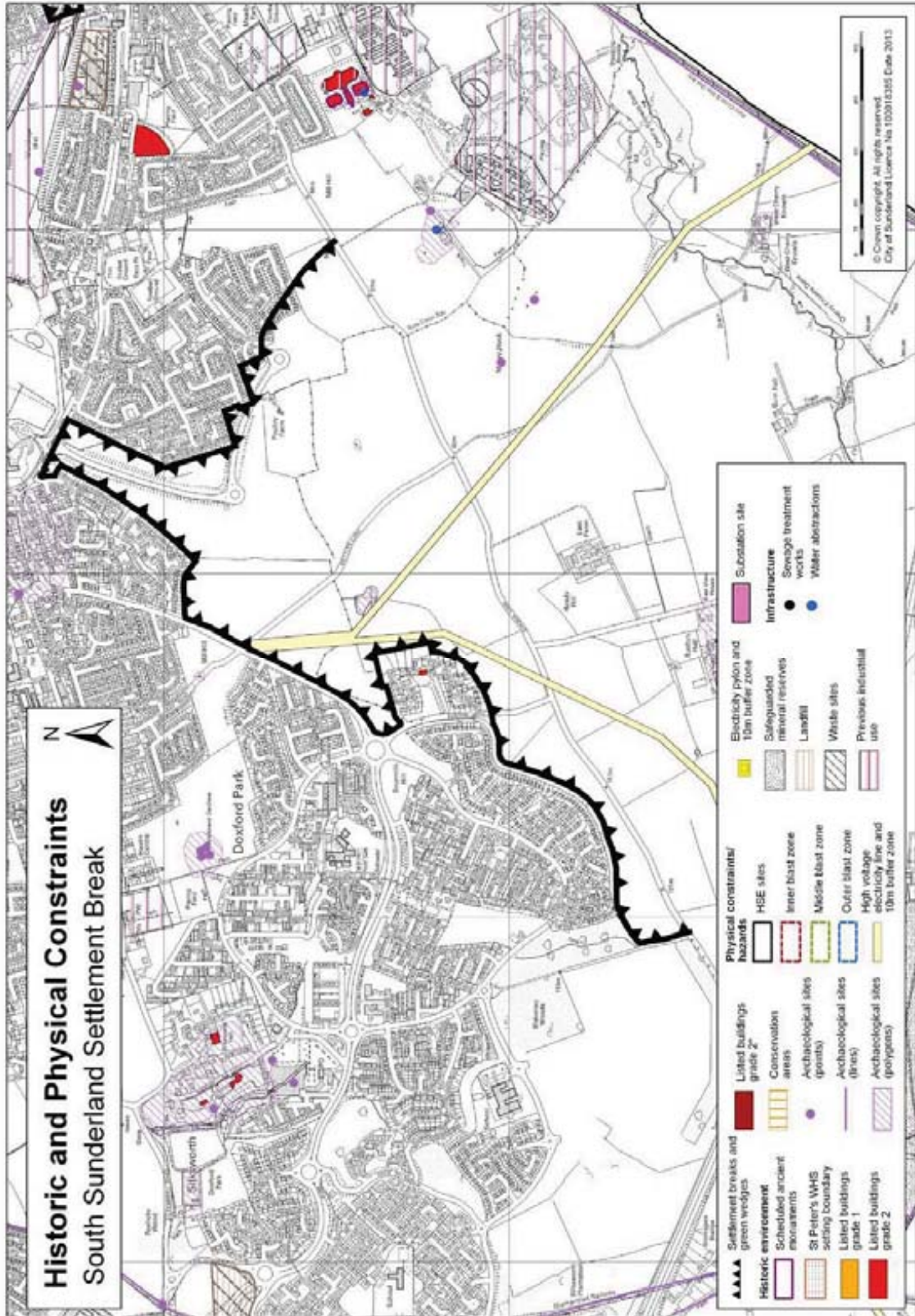
If development takes place in the area, the retained corridor of Green Infrastructure, together with wildlife and greenspace land will need to be separately protected.

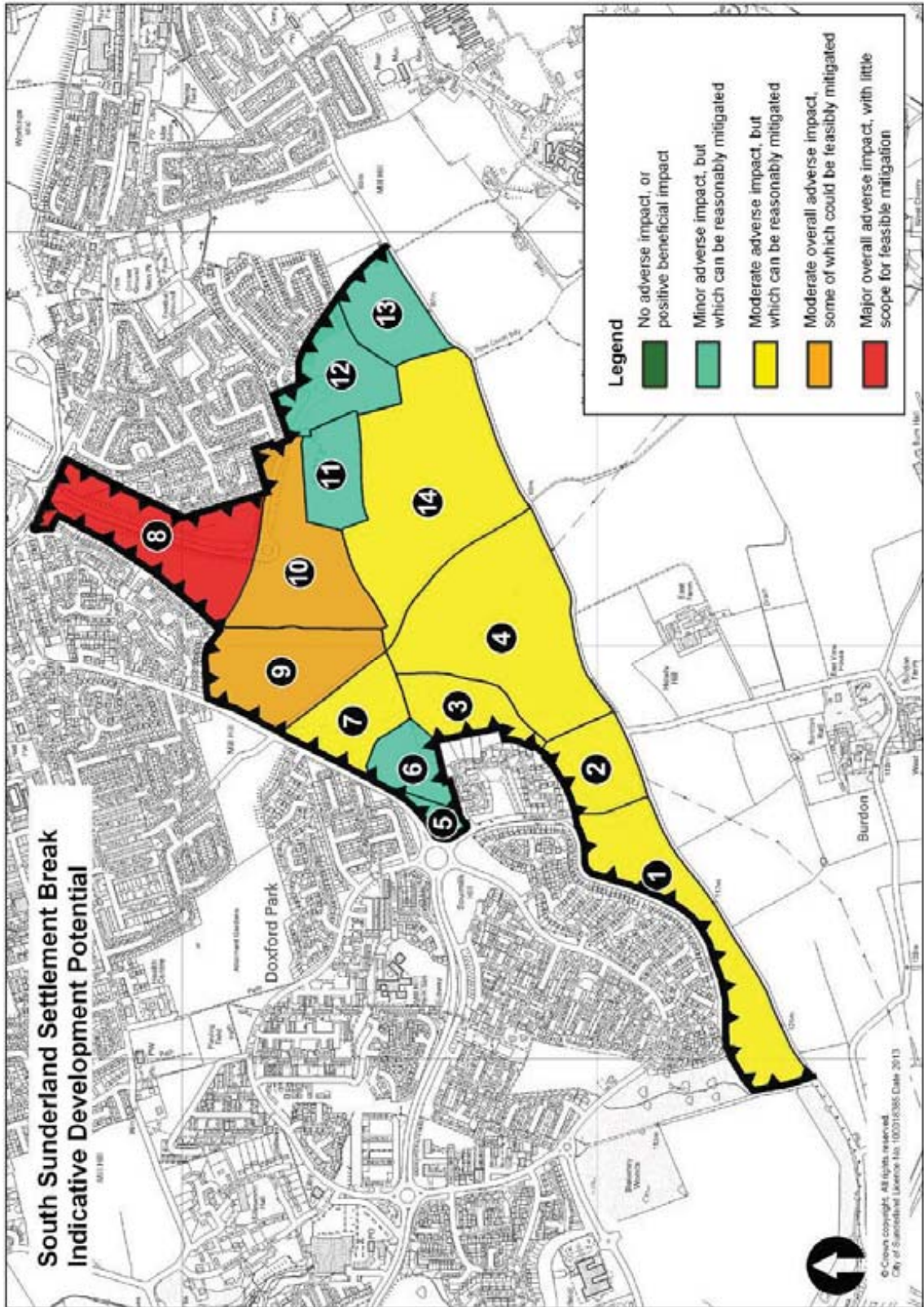
### **Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 2) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 3) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 4) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 5) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 6) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 7) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 8) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 9) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 10) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 11) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 12) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 13) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 14) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated









## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3B, 4C, 5A, 6A, 7B, 8D, 9C, 10C, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14C**

**Principal impacts: Impact on wildlife corridors to Green Belt, to Blakeney Woods LWS and associated buffer zone, towards Mill Hill and towards Tunstall Hills.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Natural greenspace
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3B, 4C, 5C, 6B, 7B, 8E, 9D, 10D, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14C.**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to north-south Green Infrastructure corridor, linking to Mill Hill and Tunstall Hills. Impacts also on natural greenspace near to Tunstall Bank. Impact on connectivity to Blakeney Woods LWS and associated buffer zone.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- Coastal Limestone plateau
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)
- Recognised rural viewpoints

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5B, 6B, 7C, 8B, 9C, 10C, 11C, 12C, 13C, 14C.**

**Principal impacts: direct impact on panoramic views of the southern urban landscape and coast; direct impact on wider landscape of the Coastal (Magnesian) Limestone Plateau.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- Surface water flooding (medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas
- Source Protection Zones

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3B, 4B, 5C, 6C, 7B, 8B, 9C, 10B, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14B.**

**Principal impacts: whole area is a Source Protection Zone, and western parts are also within a Critical Drainage Area. One area of medium surface water flooding located at north end of Nettles Lane.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3B, 4B, 5A, 6A, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A, 13A, 14B.**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5A, 6A, 7B, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A, 13A, 14A.**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C, 11C, 12C, 13C, 14C.**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7B, 8B, 9B, 10B, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14B.**



**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7C, 8D, 9C, 10C, 11B, 12B, 13B, 14B.**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5B, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C, 11C, 12C, 13C, 14B.**

**Principal impacts: The whole area is distanced from local facilities, and many areas are also distanced from public transport services. Existing road connections are poor to the south and southwest.**

## 5) Shiney Row / Success



**Location**

North of Elba Park  
South of Shiney Row Primary School  
West of Success  
East of Shiney Row

**Size and land ownership (if known)**

33 hectares  
Public and privately owned land

**What does it separate?**

Shiney Row and Success.

It seeks to preserve a corridor of natural greenspace alongside the Herrington Burn, linking Elba Park with Herrington Country Park.

**Current use**

Pasture, natural greenspace, amenity greenspace, allotments, playing fields.

**Neighbouring settlement background*****Shiney Row***

Shiney Row is positioned at a confluence of major roads leading from Chester le Street, Washington, Penshaw, New Herrington and Newbottle. In 1870-72 it was described as 'a small hamlet ...inhabited chiefly by coal miners.' The 1862 map shows a small Y shaped settlement with a ribbon of buildings running south-west to north-east along Chester Road and north-west along Barrack Row. Penshaw E pit, to the south west of the town, was sunk in 1792 and coal mining, quarrying and the railways were a source of employment for the town for many decades after, specifically at the nearby collieries at New Herrington, Philadelphia, and Newbottle and the Londonderry railway. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Shiney Row had a post office, a handful of public houses, a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel and a Wesleyan Reformers Chapel, two schools, a reading room with library and several shops. To the south of the area was Penshaw Foundry, which closed before WW1.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century the town began to expand south towards Boundary Houses and east towards Mill Pit. A row of twelve aged miners' cottages were built in 1906 for the Durham Aged Miners' Homes Association, now listed grade II, and St Oswald's Church was built nearby around 1910. The interwar housing estates were constructed around The Crescent and Windermere Crescent to expand the town further. By the 1970s Shiney Row had crept as far as Philadelphia and New Herrington and the 1980s saw it merge with Penshaw. However, whilst Shiney Row has expanded eastwards towards the edge of the Herrington Burn, land to the east of the burn has remained open, retaining a distinctive break between Shiney Row and Success.

A dominating feature of Shiney Row today is the roundabout, opened in 1975, constructed at the crossroads of the A183 Chester-le-Street to Sunderland road and the A182 Houghton-le-Spring to Washington road. To construct the roundabout two churches, two pubs and a number of streets of houses were

demolished and the War Memorial, unveiled in 1922 by Lord Joicey, had to be resited.



**Success (or Bunker Hill)**

The village of Success (originally the hamlet of Bunker Hill), for the most part, is a modern village, most of the housing built within the last 25 years. Bunker Hill settlement was present as early as 1839 (Newbottle tithe map). It was a colliery hamlet occupied by workmen from the nearby collieries. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Success consisted of little more than a couple of rows of pit houses close to the Success and Margaret pits. Only after WW2 did the semblance of a village begin to appear, with semi-detached housing being built between the pit rows. The pit rows were then demolished, and much more recently there has been considerable infill of private housing that now links the village to

Philadelphia. To the north lies the Shiney Row campus of the City of Sunderland College.

**Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

**Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy HA8.1 (Land allocated for educational purposes)
- UDP Policy HA11.1 (Success Colliery Reclamation Scheme)
- UDP Policy HA12.3 (Herrington Burn Linear Park)
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy HA25.2 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

**Key constraints**

**Category 1**

- *Flood Zone 3*

A narrow band of land beside the Herrington Burn falls within Flood Zone 3. This affects the central part of the Settlement Break at the north end, before following the western edge of the break to Elba Park. Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

**Category 2**

- *Flood Zone 2*

Flood Zone 2 deviates very little from the alignment of Flood Zone 3, alongside the Herrington Burn. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface water flooding (high, medium and less)*

Outside of the flood zones, there is very little surface water flooding recorded. A portion of land at Stott's Pastures is affected by 'medium' surface water flooding. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

The Settlement Break forms a Green Infrastructure corridor from Elba Park to Herrington Burn, and onward to Herrington Country Park. The UDP proposed that most of the Settlement Break should form a new linear park, but this has not materialised and will be reviewed once the Allocations DPD commences. Much of

the land area is already identified as greenspace, providing allotments, amenity greenspace, natural greenspace and playing fields. A multi-user route is proposed to link Elba and Herrington Country Parks but has not been implemented to date. A further east-west multi-user route is proposed to link Shiney Row and the north end of Success village. Any site alterations should consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands and a local green corridor between settlements. The area is a mixture of pasture, natural greenspace and more formal greenspace. The overall wider landscape priorities are to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland, restore old hedgerows and support coal and railway landscape features.

- *Natural and Amenity Greenspace*

Land to the west of Herrington Burn (almost 9 hectares) is identified as natural and amenity greenspace in the 2012 Greenspace Audit and Report. The natural greenspace is considered to be of high quality and should be retained in full. The area as a whole has below average quantities of amenity greenspace.

- *Sports pitches (football and school playing field)*

To the south-east of the Settlement Break are Shiney Row Playing Fields, providing 2 Senior football pitches. At the north end lies the playing fields belonging to Shiney Row Junior and Infants School. These sports pitches need to be retained in full.

- *Allotments*

North of Stott's Pasture are privately-owned allotments, providing approximately 30 plots. These allotments are identified as good quality by the 2012 Greenspace Audit and Report. This site needs to be retained in full.

- *Archaeological (coal waggonways), and coal washery*

Located in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century to the south-west of the Settlement Break was Penshaw Foundry, together with a spur of the Londonderry Railway. To the south-east of the break was Success Colliery, as well as Success Brickfield. These industries had all ceased before WW1.

- *Previous industrial use*

Contaminated land is feasible on the sites of former rail, coal and foundry working.

- *High voltage electricity line*

A small wooden-pole electricity line passes through the fields to the south of Stott's Pastures. Any development would need to consider relocation of this line.

### **Topography**

The break has an open aspect and is relatively flat.

### **Accessibility**

Public transport access is available along the A182 corridor and to a lesser extent along Golf Course Road. The northern half of the Settlement Break lies relatively close to Shiney Row village centre. The nearest town centre is Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

Although the settlements of Shiney Row and Success/Philadelphia are joined by a narrow ribbon of development along the A182, this Settlement Break has enabled the villages to retain a distinctive urban boundary, and it has also maintained an important Green Infrastructure corridor through the area. From a wildlife perspective, the corridor connects the area to the wider greenspace expanses of Elba Park and Sedgeleth. In terms of walking and cycling, the corridor provides excellent potential to link together Herrington Country Park and Elba Park.

Much of the land is identified as greenspace, providing school playing fields, senior football pitches, allotments, quality natural greenspace and amenity greenspace (in an area with below average provision). These allocations, together with the alignment of the Herrington Burn, severely limit any development opportunities within this break.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

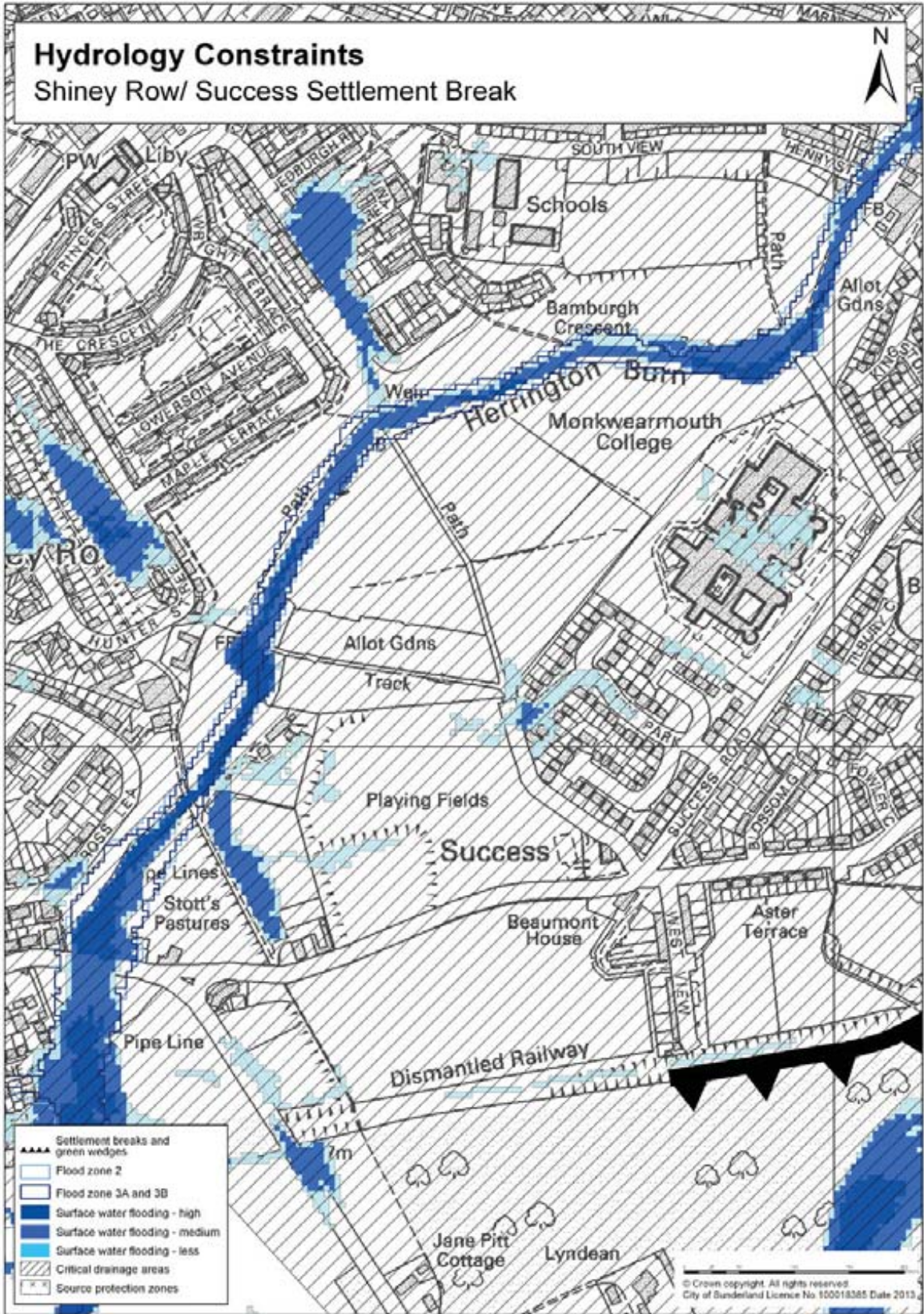
a) The policy should be retained in full. Whilst the settlement history may not be as distinctive as other nearby Coalfield villages, there is a clear building line that has endured for 40 years. It also acts as a functional floodplain and is part of a Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city. The Settlement Break acts as an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, linking to Elba Park and Sedgeleth.

### **Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

Yes, the area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor and retained for biodiversity and open space purposes. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

### **Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

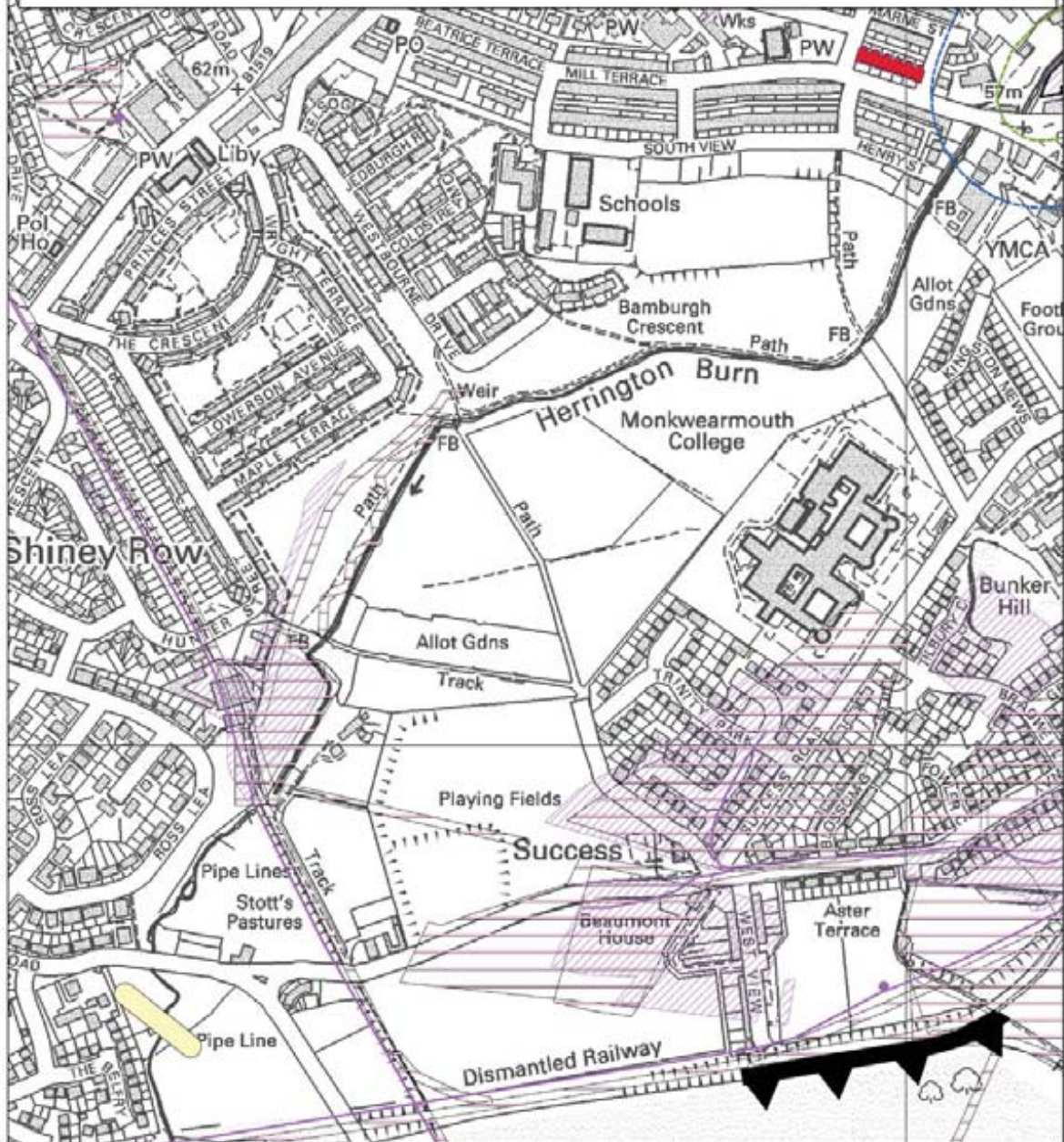
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- 10) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation





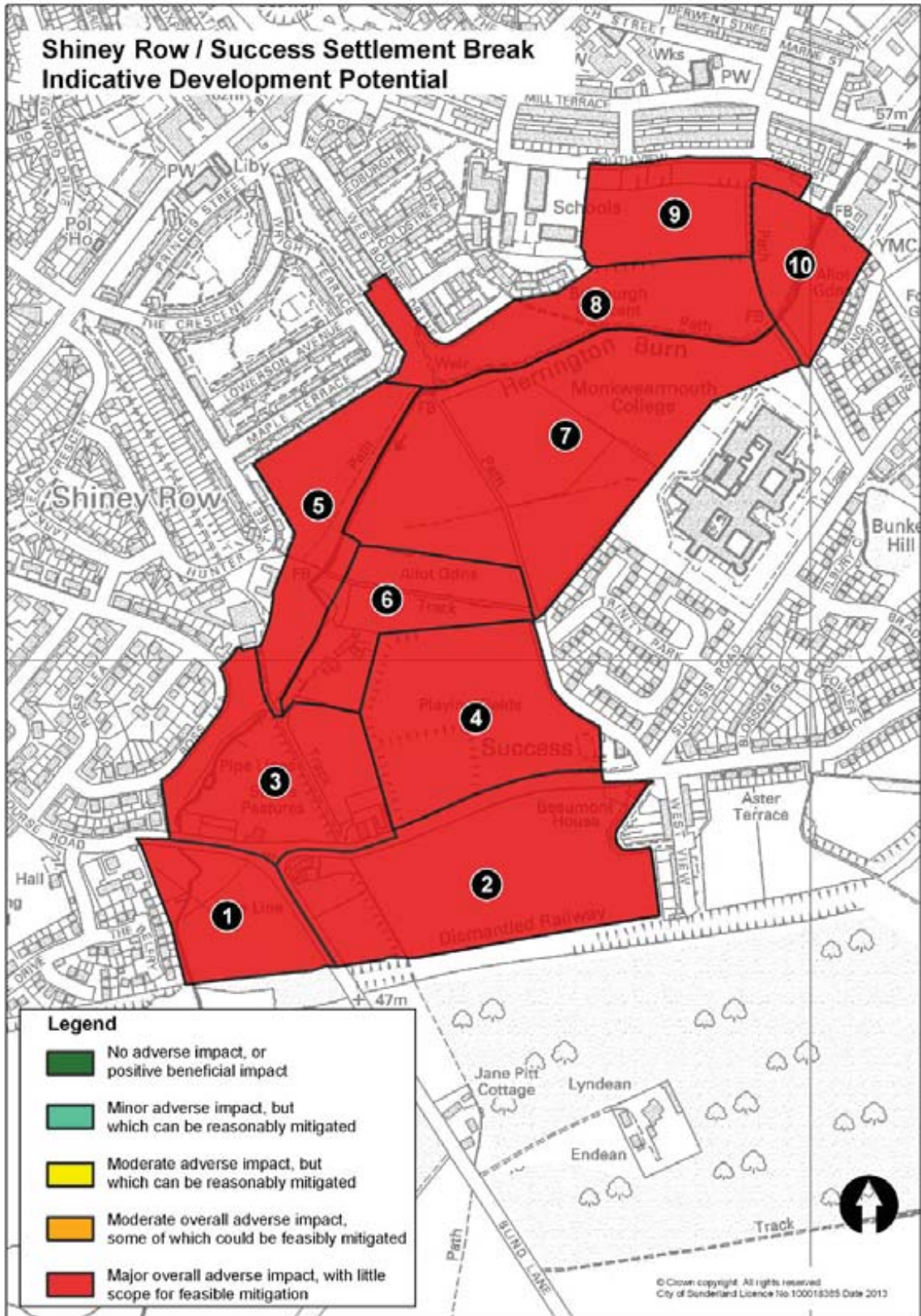


# Historic and Physical Constraints Shiney Row / Success Settlement Break



▲▲▲▲ Settlement breaks and green wedges	■ Listed buildings grade 2*	Physical constraints/hazards	■ Electricity pylon and 10m buffer zone	■ Substation site
Historic environment	■ Conservation areas	□ HSE sites	■ Safeguarded mineral reserves	Infrastructure
■ Scheduled ancient monuments	● Archaeological sites (points)	■ Inner blast zone	■ Landfill	● Sewage treatment works
■ St Peter's WHS setting boundary	— Archaeological sites (lines)	■ Middle blast zone	■ Waste sites	● Water abstractions
■ Listed buildings grade 1	■ Archaeological sites (polygons)	■ Outer blast zone	■ Previous industrial use	
■ Listed buildings grade 2		■ High voltage electricity line and 10m buffer zone		

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## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4B, 5C, 6D, 7C, 8C, 9B, 10C**

**Principal impacts: Wildlife corridor linking into Elba Park.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Outdoor sports fields
- Amenity greenspaces
- Natural greenspace
- Allotments
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4E, 5D, 6E, 7D, 8D, 9E, 10E**

**Principal impacts: Quality allotments, sports pitches, school playing fields, quality natural greenspace, and direct impact on a District Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4B, 5C, 6B, 7C, 8C, 9B, 10C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on Tyne and Wear Lowlands landscape.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1D, 2B, 3D, 4B, 5D, 6C, 7C, 8D, 9B, 10D**

**Principal impacts: Herrington Burn flood zones affect the west and north. Whole area is part of a Critical Drainage Area.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated

D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3A, 4B, 5B, 6A, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Contaminated land
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3A, 4B, 5B, 6A, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D, 8D, 9D, 10D**

**Principal impacts: the Settlement Break has enabled the villages to retain a distinctive urban boundary, and it has also maintained an important Green Infrastructure corridor through the area.**

#### **10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C**

## 6) Success / Staddon Way (Crofter's Estate)



### **Location**

North of Staddon Way  
South of Success  
West of Philadelphia  
East of Success

### **Size and land ownership (if known)**

7 hectares  
Privately owned land

### **What does it separate?**

Success Village and the Crofter's Estate (Newbottle).

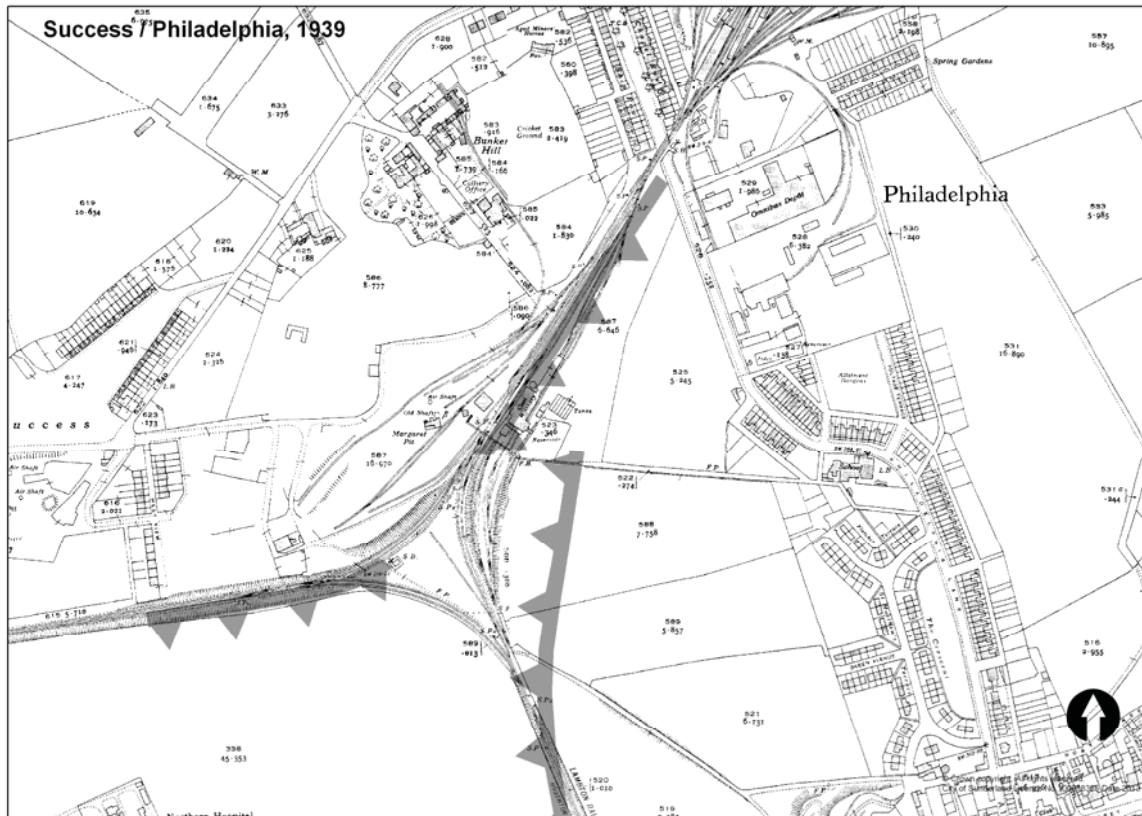
It primarily seeks to preserve a narrow corridor of land that once housed Margaret Pit, a coal washery and two colliery railways which linked Herrington Colliery and Houghton Colliery to the rest of the rail network at Penshaw.

### **Current use**

Pasture and natural greenspace.



## Neighbouring settlement background



The Settlement Break that exists today identifies a narrow linear gap between housing areas. At the end of WW2, however, the 'gap' was actually developed, consisting of a coal mine and coal washing facility, with numerous rail lines. To either side of this industry were open fields. The nearest settlement of note was Newbottle- a village with an agricultural background but influenced by coal mining activity.

### ***Success (or Bunker Hill)***

The village of Success (originally the hamlet of Bunker Hill), for the most part, is a modern village, most of the housing built within the last 25 years. Bunker Hill settlement was present as early as 1839 (Newbottle tithe map). It was a colliery hamlet occupied by workmen from the nearby collieries. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Success consisted of little more than a couple of rows of pit houses close to the Success and Margaret pits. Only after WW2 did the semblance of a village begin to appear, with semi-detached housing being built between the pit rows. The pit rows were then demolished, and much more recently there has been considerable infill of private housing that now links the village to Philadelphia. To the north, lies the Shiny Row campus of the City of Sunderland College.

### ***Crofter's Estate***

The Crofter's Estate consists of private detached dwellings, constructed in the 1990's. Although the housing physically connects to the western edge of Newbottle (and to the edge of the Newbottle Conservation Area), the estate is distinctively separate in terms of topography and access. Apart from a local play

area, there are no specific facilities within the estate, including public transport access which exists either at Coaley Lane or in Newbottle village itself. The development of the Crofter's Estate has physically reduced the separation of Newbottle village from Success to the north-west.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN16, B1, HA20.2 (Tree Belts / Woodland)
- UDP Policy HA28.3 Philadelphia to Coaley Lane road link
- UDP Policy HA25.2 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy B13 (Other Specific Sites and Monuments)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### **Category 1**

There are no Category 1 constraints.

#### **Category 2**

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

The Settlement Break forms a Green Infrastructure corridor from Elba Park to the Philadelphia Workshops, and on to Herrington Country Park. The corridor is incomplete at Philadelphia, but this could be rectified should any redevelopment take place. The corridor has limited wildlife appeal (to date). A multi-user route is partly in place, however, and footpath links connect Elba Park and Herrington Country Park. Ultimately, it is intended to create a cycle route through this area linking Chester-le-Street with Sunderland. Any site alterations should consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands and a local green corridor between settlements. The area is mostly pasture and natural greenspace, and is also used for informal recreation. The overall wider landscape priorities are to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland, restore old hedgerows, support coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is in flood zone 1 in a Critical Drainage Area. Therefore surface water management is a concern. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface water flooding (high, medium and less)*

The break is affected by 2 areas prone to surface water flooding. 'High' surface water flooding occurs in the northernmost part of the break, beside the A182. 'Medium' surface water flooding also affects the north-west corner of the Crofter's Estate. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Natural greenspace*

Lambton's Way is identified as quality natural greenspace in the 2012 Greenspace Audit and should be protected in full from development. Land at Philadelphia Junction is also identified as providing natural greenspace.

- *Archaeological (coal waggonways), and coal washery*

The break used to be fully developed, including the Margaret Pit, a coal washery and mineral lines. Margaret Pit was part of Newbottle Colliery, which opened in 1816 and closed in 1956. The Burnmoor-Philadelphia waggonway link was created in 1819, linking to the Lambton Waggonway that was built in 1815 by the Nesham family to provide direct rail access to the River Wear at Sunderland. A junction was also created, whereby coal trains accessed Houghton Colliery to the south. Both of these routes (once complete) will provide multi-user routes through the area. The railways provide rights of way and should be protected as such.

- *Archaeological site (agriculture)*

Ridge and furrow earthworks survive in the northern part of the Settlement Break.

- *Previous industrial use*

Contaminated land is feasible given the previous use of the land for coal and rail heavy industry.

- *New road*

Philadelphia – Coaley Lane link road proposed.

### **Topography**

The break has an open aspect and is relatively flat.

### **Accessibility**

Public transport access is available along the A182 corridor. The land is distanced from local services- the nearest town is Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

The creation of the Crofter's Estate in the 1990's has reduced this Settlement Break to little more than a narrow corridor (under 100m wide). The residential areas that are separated are post-war in nature, and depict the gradual spread of residential development in the area, which has continued over the last twenty years. It is therefore considered unfeasible to maintain and protect the gap specifically as a Settlement Break.

However, the Green Infrastructure corridor provides an important open break and link through the area, especially in its ability to link together Elba and Herrington Country Parks. If opportunities are taken at Philadelphia, this corridor will be

greatly improved, providing important local walking and cycling access, and opening-up opportunities for biodiversity. There is also opportunity to preserve and enhance the industrial history of this area, again linked to important sites such as the 18<sup>th</sup> Century wooden waggonways unearthed at Lambton (Elba Park).

The easternmost fields beside the A182 are seen as peripheral to the Settlement Break and were identified as a potential housing site in the 1998 UDP.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

c) The policy should not be retained. There is no clear history of settlement character being preserved and kept separate by the Settlement Break policy. The existing corridor is deemed to be too narrow to truly serve a Settlement Break function.

The housing site identified in the UDP (Policy HA4.6) needs to address the land that is subject to frequent ('high') surface water flooding. This site must also consider the impact to ridge and furrow earthworks, and take the setting of the listed power station into account, following English Heritage guidance on the setting of designated heritage assets.

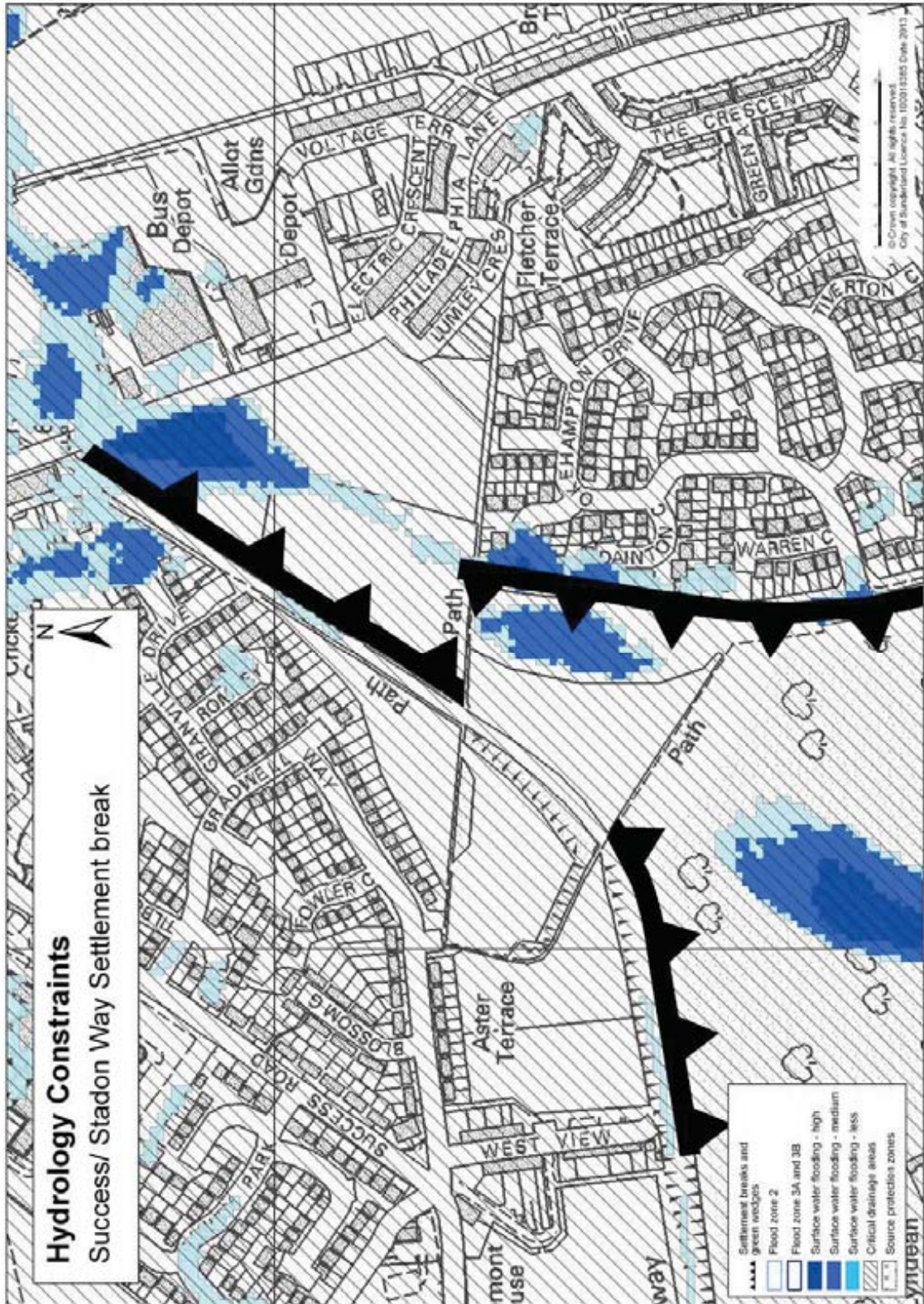
With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

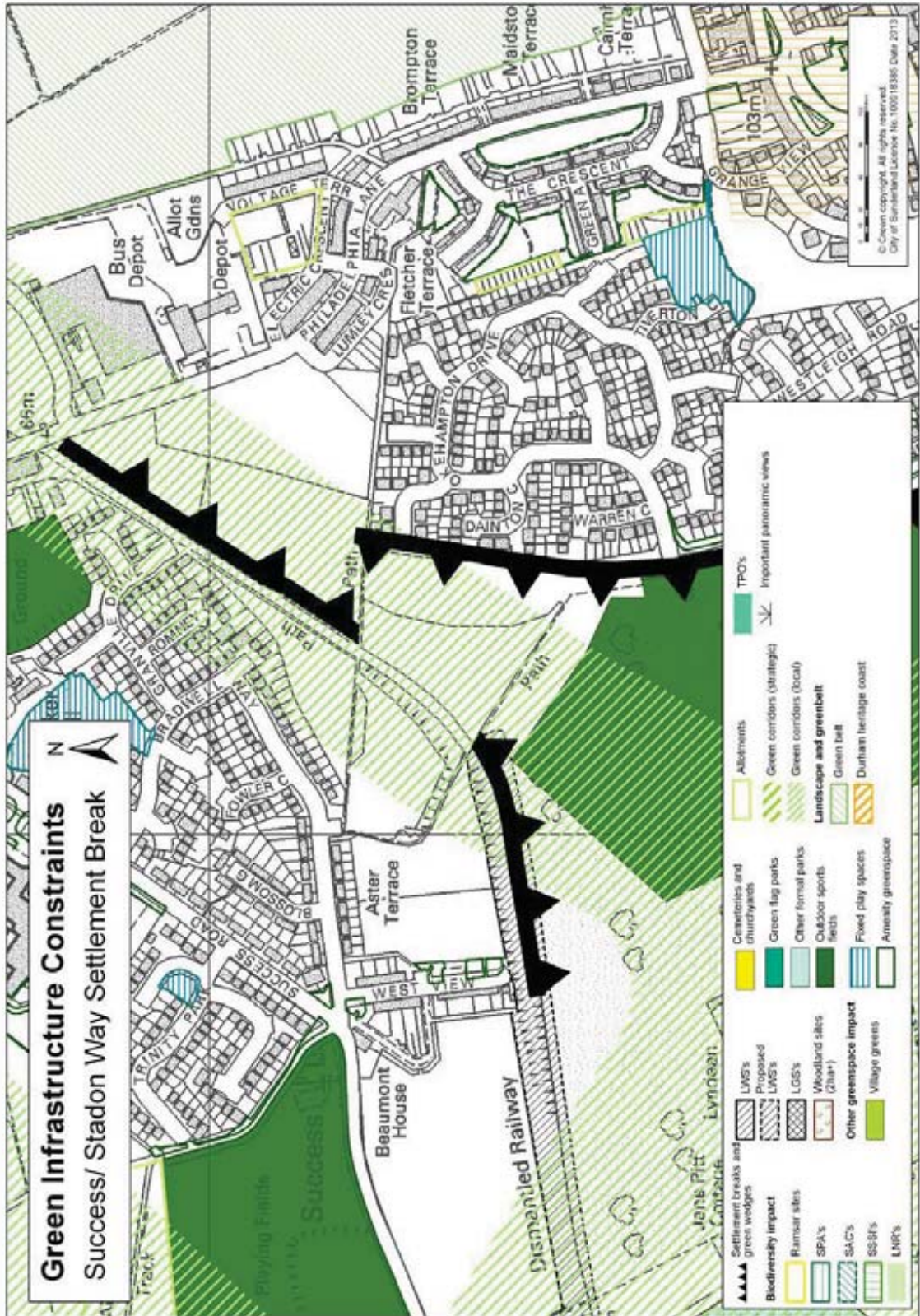
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

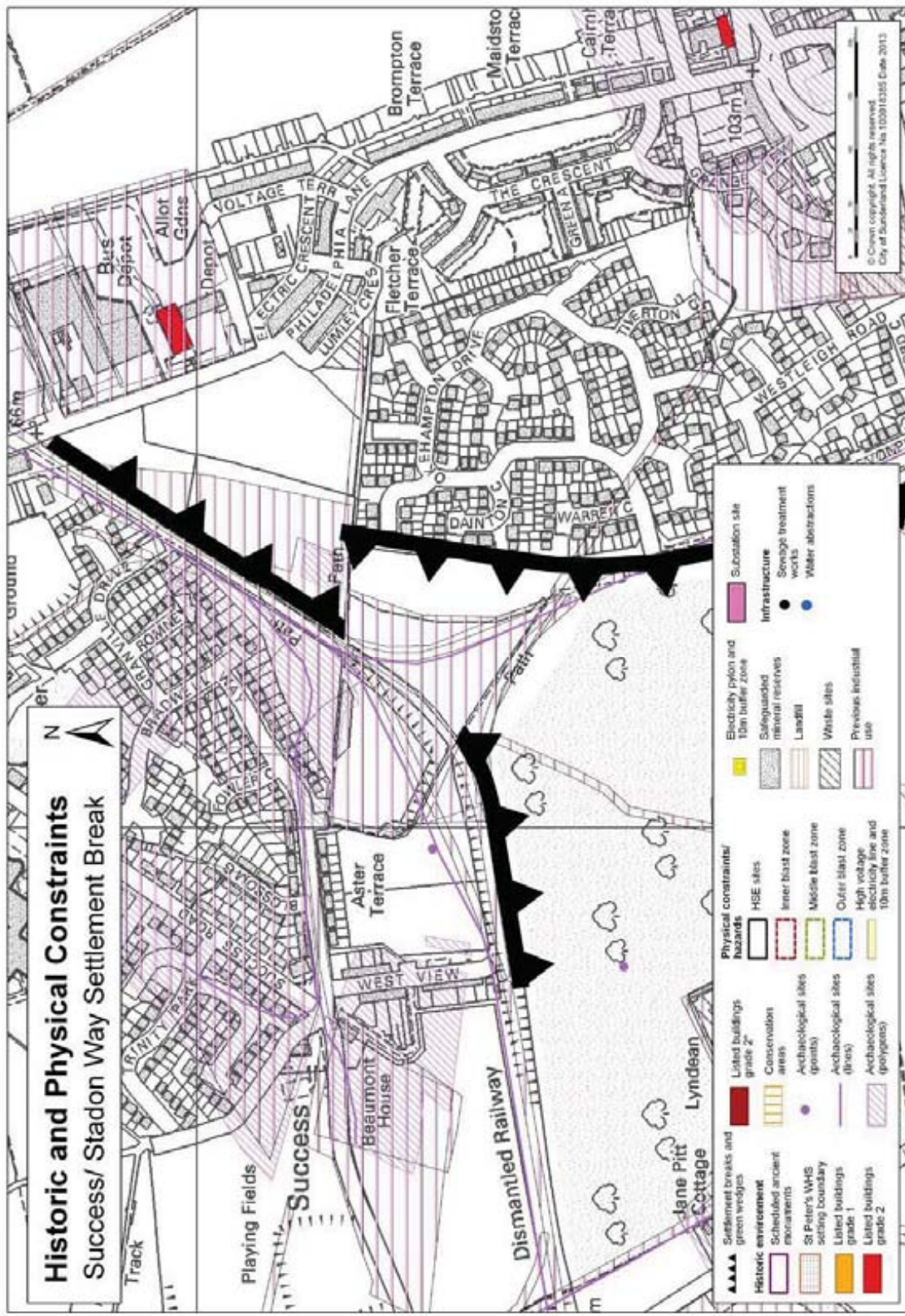
Yes, the area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor and retained for biodiversity/geology and open space purposes.

**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Natural greenspace
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2E, 3E**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor. Direct impact on natural greenspace.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

**Category 2:**

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Impact on the Tyne and Wear Lowlands landscape, including evidence of ridge and furrow.**

#### 4) Hydrology

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: incidences of ‘medium’ and ‘high’ surface water flooding, and all part of a Critical Drainage Area..**

#### 5) Historic Environment

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: direct impact on the alignment of the 1819 Lambton Waggonway, Margaret Pit, coal washery and mineral lines.**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Contaminated land

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impact: likely contamination from the previous industrial uses.**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3C**

## 7) Sunnyside / Newbottle



### **Location**

North of Sunnyside playing field  
South of Russell Foster junior football pitches  
West of Newbottle Primary School  
East of Sunnyside Estate

### **Size and land ownership (if known)**

5.7 hectares  
Privately owned land, cycleway to the east is Council-owned.

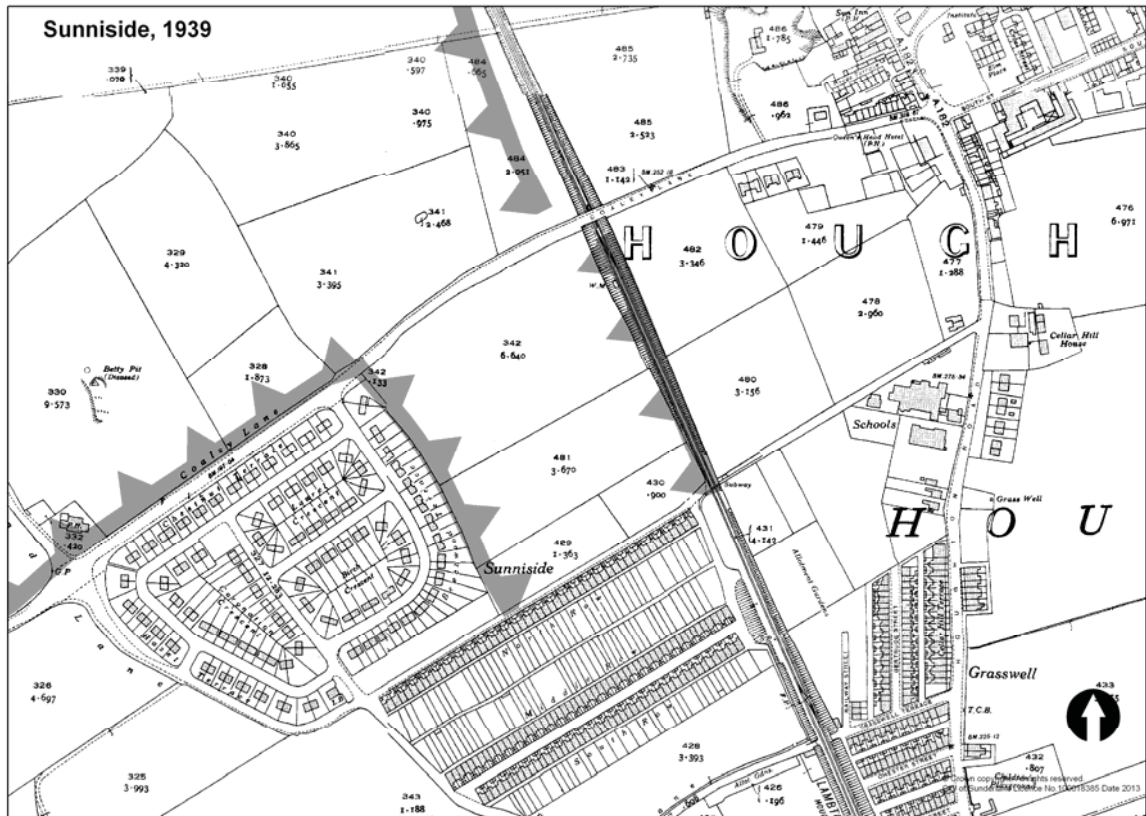
### **What does it separate?**

Sunnyside Estate from Coaley Lane housing at Newbottle.

### **Current use**

Agriculture and greenspace.

## Neighbouring settlement background



### **Newbottle**

Newbottle is a mediaeval settlement dating back to the 1100's, consisting of a two-row plan with a green. The village is one of a number of settlements forming a 'ribbon' of development along the stretch of the A182 between Houghton and Washington. The siting of the village, set high on a ridge with land falling away around it, allowed villagers a clear view of all their farmlands. As the land falls away on all sides of the village except the east, it is quite prominent from surrounding areas, especially the north and west.

Like the majority of English villages dependent on arable farming, the lands at Newbottle were originally laid out on the open-field system. There were three large arable fields (the North, West and East fields - the latter including land to the south of the village). Newbottle also had extensive rough pasture land ('moor') on the far west perimeter of the township, alongside the Herrington and Rainton Burns.

The enclosure of the fields of Newbottle took place and in 1671 the old 'moor' was enclosed and divided. By 1700 the village had a number of enclosed farms. The richer farmers of Newbottle, their lands enclosed and their holdings rationalised, were able to capitalise on their new opportunities and prospered. At about the same time Newbottle began to attract persons of wealth and became a favoured 'suburb' of both Houghton and Sunderland. This period resulted in the building of some stylish new houses and the rebuilding and enlarging of some older ones.

Whilst Newbottle remained a rural community at heart with its roots in agriculture

and related trades, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century there was an increasing industrial and working class presence in and around the village. Primarily, it was the increasing exploitation of coal in the surrounding areas during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that further changed the physical character of the village. Several small streets and rows of cottages were constructed in the centre of Newbottle to house the coal miners.

The decline of the mining industry during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century resulted in a number of the older miners' dwellings being demolished, though many of the more notable 18<sup>th</sup> Century properties survived. Newbottle Village was declared a Conservation Area in 1975 around the heart of the former medieval village in recognition of its architectural and historic interest.

The City Council's 2009 Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Conservation Area states that Newbottle remains a "genuine old English Village containing numerous fine 'listed' 18<sup>th</sup> Century houses alongside former farmhouses and barns set in an agricultural and rural context". However, it also notes that between the 1960's and 1990's, a number of quite large-scale modern housing developments have occurred in and about the Conservation Area that have generally 'failed to complement' the historic buildings and yet again changed the grain of the village. This presumably includes reference to the 'Hillview' housing south of Coaley Lane, along the eastern side of the Settlement Break.

A narrow ribbon of development joins Newbottle along the A182 to Philadelphia and Shiney Row to the north and to Grasswell and Houghton-le-Spring to the south. Green Belt separates the village to the east from Sunderland, and the Settlement Break (beyond the Crofter's Estate) retains a largely open aspect towards Elba Park. The village contains St Matthews Church (1850), one primary school, a couple of shops, pubs, a restaurant and a workingmen's club. The village is well served by public transport links along the A182.

### ***Sunniside (Holmelands Estate)***

Sunniside is a mining settlement that has gradually expanded from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to the north-west of the former Houghton Colliery. Initially, it consisted of three rows of colliery houses to the west of Grasswell. These were eventually demolished around 1970. New housing has been built on the western part of this site, while the eastern portion is retained by the Council as sports fields.

To the north of these houses, the Holmelands Estate was developed either side of WW2 by Houghton Urban District Council, consisting of semi-detached properties with gardens and communal greenspaces. This Estate has since been demolished by Gentoo homes, which plans to rebuild the area in phases.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

The City Council's 2009 Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Newbottle Conservation Area specifically notes that recent housing development has had an effect on the setting of the Conservation Area, housing

that has not necessarily complemented the historic character of the village. “New development” is cited as a specific issue in the CAMS, potentially posing “a significant threat to the historic environment”. It specifically mentions the sensitivity of infill developments from within the village. However, the setting is also important, and the western bluff/viewpoint at Grange View is specifically identified- indeed one of the key characteristics of Newbottle Village has been its hilltop prominence within the landscape, from all directions.

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy B13 (Other Specific Sites and Monuments).
- UDP Policy EN10 (‘White Land’).

## **Key constraints**

### ***Category 1***

There are no Category 1 constraints.

### ***Category 2***

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is in flood zone 1 in a Critical Drainage Area. Therefore surface water management is a concern. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

The site forms a very narrow green corridor which leads southwards towards Houghton Colliery. Primarily, the corridor has a recreational purpose and incorporates a partly-built cycleway and multi-user route that will eventually connect Shiney Row with Houghton town centre.

- *Greenspace to east (cycleway) and south (private allotment/overgrown greenspace)*

The strip of greenspace to the east follows the former mineral rail line to Houghton Colliery, and it is proposed to complete a multi-user route along this corridor linking Hetton and Houghton to the south with Shiney Row to the north. This greenspace should be retained in full.

Overgrown natural greenspace (scrub land) and private allotments (c. 4 pigeon crees) exist to the south. It is unclear whether this land is still used for greenspace purposes.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands and a local green corridor between settlements. The area is mostly agriculture, and is also used for informal recreation. The overall wider landscape priorities are to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland, restore old hedgerows, support coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.



### **Topography**

The land is visually open and slopes east-west.

### **Accessibility**

Coaley Lane provides direct public transport access to the Settlement Break. The land is distanced from certain local services- though some facilities exist at Newbottle, and the local Primary School lies adjacent. The nearest town is Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

This area does not resemble or act as a Settlement Break. The gap is very small and the history of settlement separation is negligible, as is the impact (in this particular location) to the setting of the Newbottle Conservation Area. It is feasible to argue that the land falls within the urban area, and if developed could support local facilities.

The east side of the Settlement Break provides a cycleway and very narrow Green Infrastructure corridor. This greenspace should be preserved and enhanced, with the potential to widen the corridor formally, should any development take place.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

c) Not at all.

The housing 'sprawl' between Newbottle and Sunnyside has mostly taken place, leaving a narrow and almost unnoticeable Settlement Break that separates relatively indistinct settlements. It could also be argued that any negative impact in this locality to the setting of the Newbottle Conservation Area has already occurred through housing development over the past 50 years.

Now that the Holmelands Estate has been demolished, any housing to the west of the Settlement Break will be modern, and will perhaps reflect a similar character to existing housing eastwards, either side of Coaley Lane.

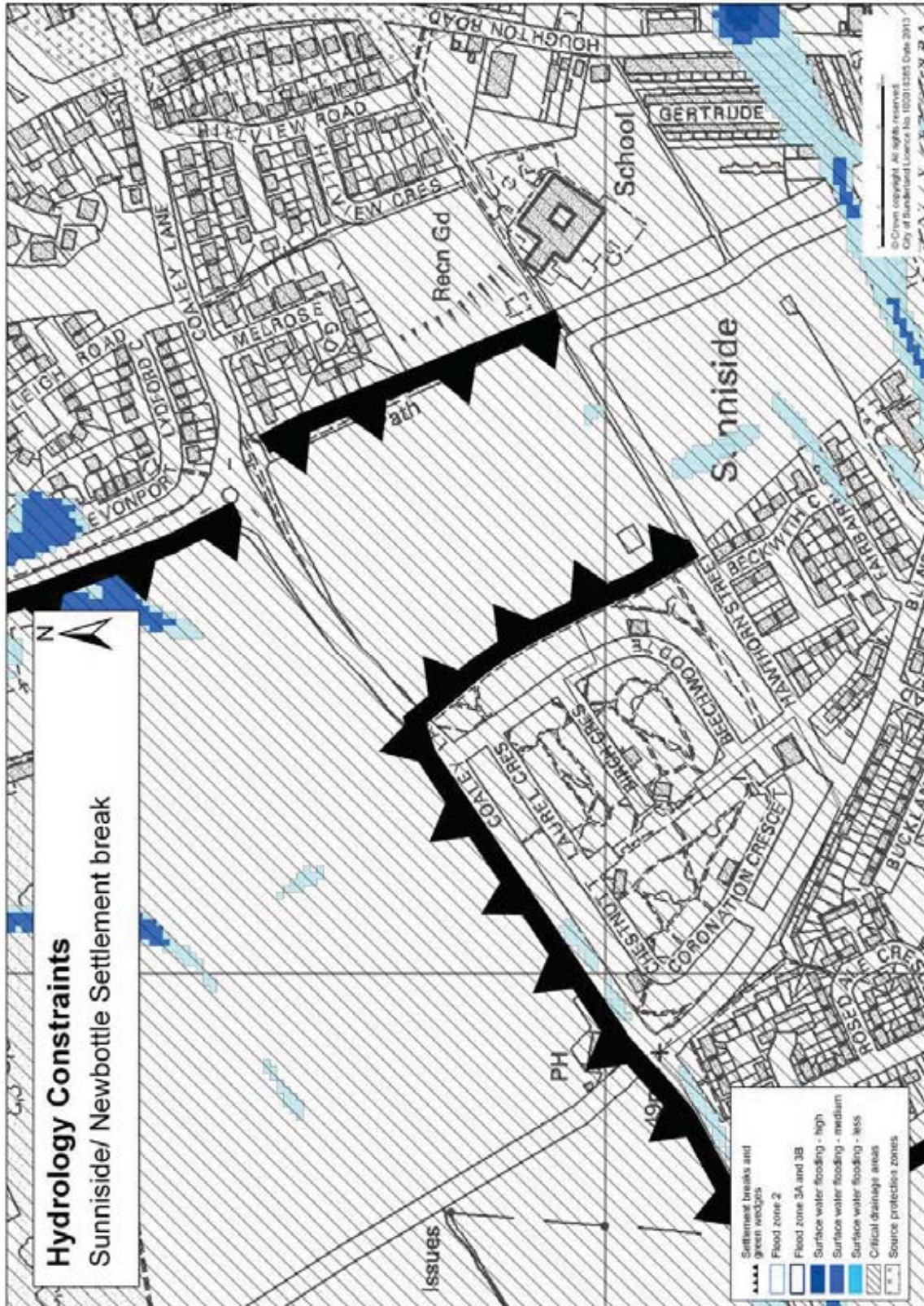
Any development on this land needs to preserve and enhance the multi-user route (green corridor) proposed to the east. With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

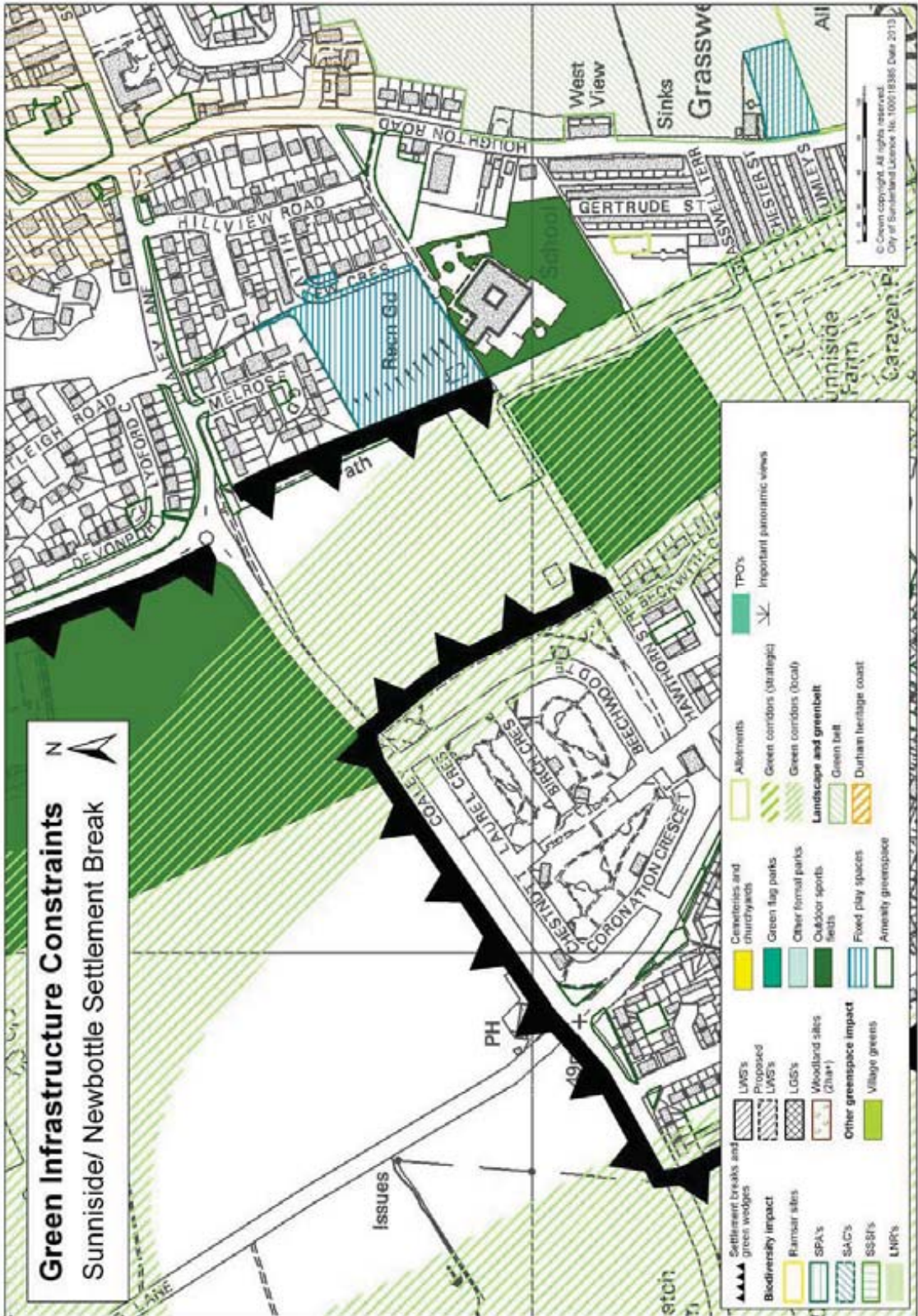
### **Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

If development on site takes place, the remaining land should be protected for greenspace purposes, including land to the east that would support an enhanced as a Green Infrastructure corridor.

### **Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

1) **minor adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated**

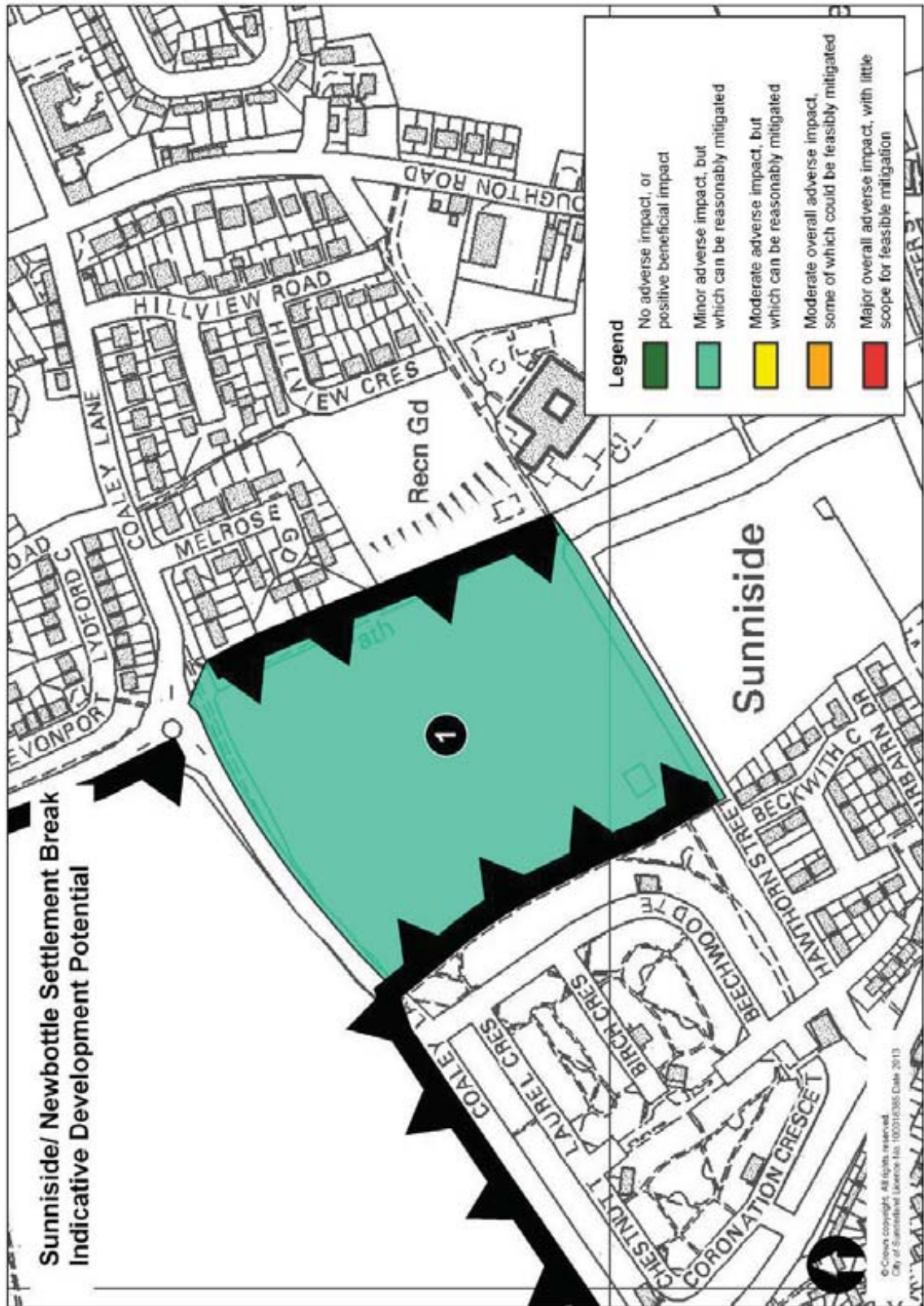




**Green Infrastructure Constraints**  
**Sunnyside/ Newbottle Settlement Break**

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## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Amenity greenspaces
- Allotments
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>

C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

#### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Critical Drainage Areas

##### Field assessment

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

#### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2: None

##### Field assessment

<b>A</b>	<b>Zero impact</b>
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

#### 6) Physical constraints / hazards

Category 1: None

Category 2: None

##### Field assessment

<b>A</b>	<b>Zero impact</b>
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

**Field assessment**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
<b>C</b>	<b>Partially supports findings</b>
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

**Field assessment**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate potential cumulative impact</b>
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

**Field assessment**

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
<b>B</b>	<b>Limited role in keeping settlements distinct</b>
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

**Field assessment**

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
<b>C</b>	<b>Partial accessibility, partly remote</b>
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access



## 8) Newbottle – Sedgeleth Settlement Break



### Location

North of Sunnyside Estate  
South of Success  
West of Crofter's Estate  
East of Elba Park

### Size and land ownership (if known)

60 hectares  
Privately owned land

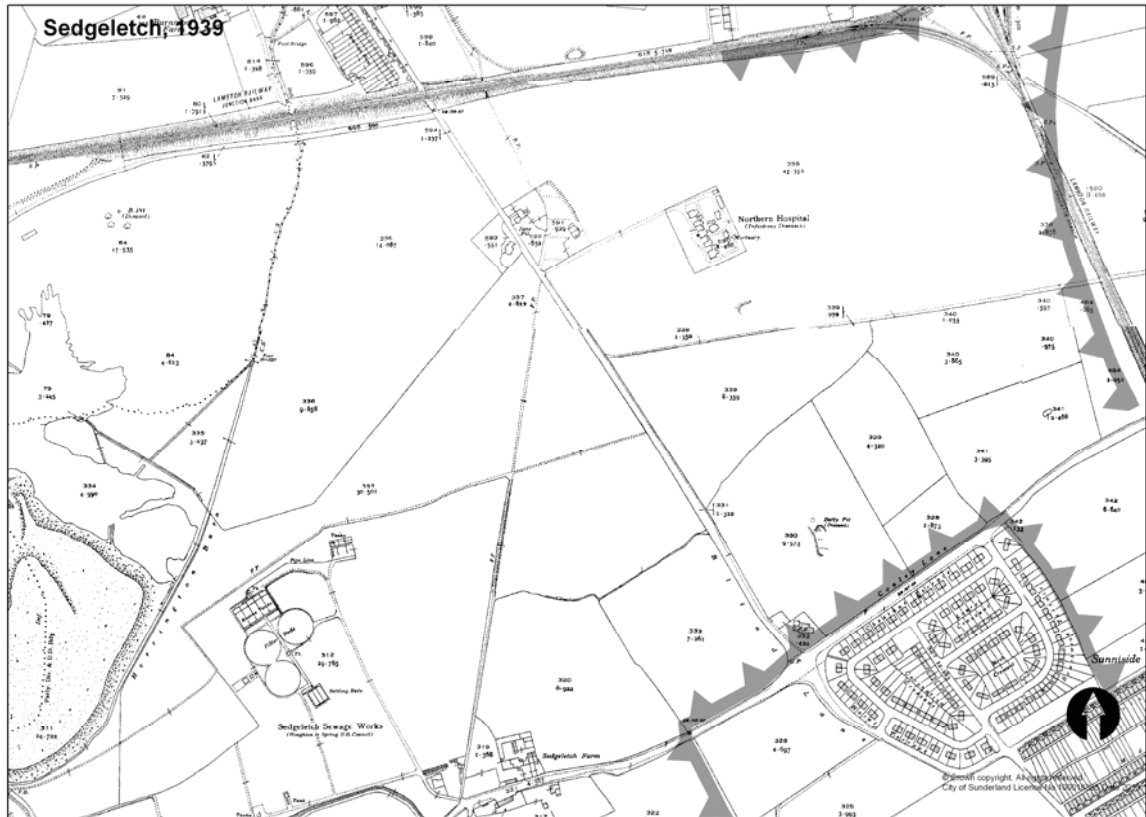
### What does it separate?

Success, Sunnyside and Crofter's Estate.

### Current use

Agriculture, sports pitches (football), woodland, sewage works.

## Neighbouring settlement background



### ***Success (or Bunker Hill)***

The village of Success (originally the hamlet of Bunker Hill), for the most part, is a modern village, most of the housing built within the last 25 years. Bunker Hill settlement was present as early as 1839 (Newbottle tithe map). It was a colliery hamlet occupied by workmen from the nearby collieries. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Success consisted of little more than a couple of rows of pit houses close to the Success and Margaret pits. Only after WW2 did the semblance of a village begin to appear, with semi-detached housing being built between the pit rows. The pit rows were then demolished, and much more recently there has been considerable infill of private housing that now links the village to Philadelphia. To the north, lies the Shiny Row campus of the City of Sunderland College.

### ***Crofter's Estate***

The Crofter's Estate consists mainly of private detached dwellings, constructed in the 1990's. Although the housing physically connects to the western edge of Newbottle (and to the edge of the Newbottle Conservation Area), the estate is distinctively separate in terms of topography and access. Apart from a local play area, there are no specific facilities within the estate, including public transport access which exists either at Coaley Lane or in Newbottle village itself. The development of the Crofter's Estate has physically reduced the separation of Newbottle village from Success to the north-west.

## **Newbottle**

Newbottle is a mediaeval settlement dating back to the 1100's, consisting of a two-row plan with a green. The village is one of a number of settlements forming a 'ribbon' of development along the stretch of the A182 between Houghton and Washington. The siting of the village, set high on a ridge with land falling away around it, allowed villagers a clear view of all their farmlands. As the land falls away on all sides of the village except the east, it is quite prominent from surrounding areas, especially the north and west.

Like the majority of English villages dependent on arable farming, the lands at Newbottle were originally laid out on the open-field system. There were three great arable fields (the North, West and East fields - the latter including land to the south of the village). Newbottle also had extensive rough pasture land ('moor') on the far west perimeter of the township, alongside the Herrington and Rainton Burns.

The enclosure of the fields of Newbottle took place and in 1671 the old 'moor' was enclosed and divided. By 1700 the village had a number of enclosed farms. The richer farmers of Newbottle, their lands enclosed and their holdings rationalised, were able to capitalise on their new opportunities and prospered. At about the same time Newbottle began to attract persons of wealth and became a favoured 'suburb' of both Houghton and Sunderland. This period resulted in the building of some stylish new houses and the rebuilding and enlarging of some older ones.

Whilst Newbottle remained a rural community at heart with its roots in agriculture and related trades, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century there was an increasing industrial and working class presence in and around the village. Primarily, it was the increasing exploitation of coal in the surrounding areas during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that further changed the physical character of the village. Several small streets and rows of cottages were constructed in the centre of Newbottle to house the coal miners.

The decline of the mining industry during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century resulted in a number of the older miners' dwellings being demolished, though many of the more notable 18<sup>th</sup> Century properties survived. Newbottle Village was declared a Conservation Area in 1975 around the heart of the former medieval village in recognition of its architectural and historic interest.

The City Council's 2009 Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Conservation Area states that Newbottle remains a "genuine old English Village containing numerous fine 'listed' 18<sup>th</sup> Century houses alongside former farmhouses and barns set in an agricultural and rural context". However, it also notes that between the 1960's and 1990's, a number of quite large-scale modern housing developments have occurred in and about the Conservation Area that have generally failed to complement the historic buildings and yet again changed the grain of the village. This presumably includes reference to the Crofter's Estate to the north of Coaley Lane, along the eastern side of the Settlement Break.

A narrow ribbon of development joins Newbottle along the A182 to Philadelphia and Shiney Row to the north and to Grasswell and Houghton-le-Spring to the

south. Green Belt separates the village to the east from Sunderland, and the Settlement Break (beyond the Crofter's Estate) retains a largely open aspect towards Elba Park. The village contains St Matthews Church (1850), one primary school, a couple of shops, pubs, a restaurant and a workingmen's club. The village is well served by public transport links along the A182.

### ***Sunniside (Holmelands Estate)***

Sunniside is a mining settlement that has gradually expanded from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to the north-west of the former Houghton Colliery. Initially, it consisted of three rows of colliery houses to the west of Grasswell. These were eventually demolished around 1970. New housing has been built on the western part of this site, while the eastern portion is retained by the Council as sports fields.

To the north of these houses, the Holmelands Estate was developed either side of WW2 by Houghton Urban District Council, consisting of semi-detached properties with gardens and communal greenspaces. This Estate has since been demolished by Gentoo homes, which plans to rebuild the area in phases.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

Yes, the eastern part of the site was planted with woodland, but much of this was replaced by junior football pitches, plus a changing block and car park.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

The City Council's 2009 Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Newbottle Conservation Area specifically notes that recent housing development has had an effect on the setting of the Conservation Area, housing that has not necessarily complemented the historic character of the village. "New development" is cited as a specific issue in the CAMS, potentially posing "a significant threat to the historic environment". It specifically mentions the sensitivity of infill developments from within the village. However, the setting is also important, and the western bluff/viewpoint at Grange View is specifically identified- indeed one of the key characteristics of Newbottle Village has been its hilltop prominence within the landscape, from all directions.

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy B13 (Other Specific Sites and Monuments).
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.4, HA25.2 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy HA20.2, CN16, B1 (Tree Belts / Woodland)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### ***Category 1***

- *Flood Zone 3*

The south-west corner of the Settlement Break (lying within Sedgeleth Sewage Works) falls within Flood Zone 3 (The Moors Burn). Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

## **Category 2**

- *Flood Zone 2*

The Sedgeleth Sewage Works site (and a further portion of land to the east) falls within Flood Zone 2. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding*

Minor areas of surface water flooding are identified to the west of the Settlement Break, adjacent to the Moors Burn Flood Zones. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Sewage Treatment Works*

Sedgeleth Sewage Works is located in the south-west corner of the Settlement Break. As well as being an operating sewage works, the site lies within Flood Zones of the Moors Burn, and part of the site is now proposed as Local Wildlife Site.

- *2 proposed Local Wildlife Sites*

Two proposed Local Wildlife Sites are located within the Settlement Break. As mentioned above, the western part of the Sewage Works has been identified, as has the former Burnmoor-Philadelphia railway, along the northern boundary. These sites should be fully protected from development.

- *Green Infrastructure corridors*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure junction, with corridor spurs towards Philadelphia and Herrington Burn to the north, Elba Park to the west, and Dubmire and Houghton Colliery to the south. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and floodplain within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of pony paddocks, meadows, wetlands, agriculture and incomplete hedgerows, and is used generally for informal recreation. The landscape has seen a lot of change, much of it regenerating from heavy industry- the most recent example being the reclamation of Lambton Cokeworks into Elba Park. There is evidence of natural regeneration as well as new woodland plantations. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas.

Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and

woodland, restore old hedgerows, support coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *Panoramic viewpoints*

The Newbottle Conservation Area Management Strategy (CAMS) specifically refers to the viewpoint and open setting that this Settlement Break affords to the Conservation Area.

- *Greenspace (junior football fields), natural greenspace*

The eastern part of the Settlement Break is now home to 20 junior football pitches, plus car park and changing rooms. This is classed as a 'Tier A' facility and is critical to junior football access in the Sunderland area. It should be protected in full from development.

- *Greenspace (Elba Park), woodland*

The northwest of the Settlement Break forms part of Elba Park. Prior to the park's creation, the land lay derelict and contaminated for a number of years. The areas with minimal/zero contamination are now being developed for housing, leaving the rest of the area to remain as 'country' parkland. This should be protected in full from development.

- *High voltage electricity line/pylon (south)*

There are wooden-pole electricity lines crossing the site. Any development would need to consider relocation of these two lines.

- *Various archaeological sites / previous industrial uses*

- There are 3 mineral lines in the area. To the north, the Bournmoor-Philadelphia waggonway linked (in 1819) into the Lambton waggonway that was built in 1815 to provide a direct rail link to the River Wear at Sunderland. To the east, the Houghton branch of Lambton Waggonway linked southwards to Houghton Colliery. Centrally, a pre-1856 waggonway ran north-south through the centre of the Settlement Break, linking to the Jane Pit.
- Two further pits (part of Newbottle Colliery) are also identified on the 1856 Ordnance Survey maps (and already closed)- Mary Pit (central location) and Betty Pit (south, beside Coaley Lane). The 3 railways all provide rights of way and should be protected as such.
- The site of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Northern Hospital for Infectious Diseases is located in the centre of the Settlement Break.

- *Small waste site*

The Northern Hospital for Infectious Diseases was located in the centre of this Settlement Break. It was built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and closed soon after WW2.

- *Contaminated land*

There is a likelihood that land formerly used for coal mining, railway and hospital uses will be contaminated.

## **Topography**

Open aspect to the Settlement Break, the land slopes westwards towards the Moors Burn.

## **Accessibility**

Public transport access restricted to the south (Coaley Lane), and no immediate access to facilities (nearest main centre is Houghton-le-Spring).

## **Conclusion**

Newbottle is recognised as a genuine old English village, and is largely protected as a Conservation Area. The City Council's 2009 Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (CAMS) for the Conservation Area notes that the location of Newbottle was deliberate to provide hilltop prominence which allowed farmers a clear view of their farmland. This specifically included the land to the west of Newbottle, recognised as rough pasture land known as the "moor". The CAMS Strategy specifically refers to the viewpoint and open setting that this land affords to the Conservation Area, as well as stating that recent housing development has already had a negative impact, and that further 'new' development could pose a significant threat to the historic environment.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. Land on the fringes of the break could be seen as being marginally accessible, but has considerable development constraints, most notably the sewage works located on the Moors Burn floodplain to the southwest, and the junior football pitches providing a key sporting facility, to the east. These sites also provide important Green Infrastructure corridor links.

Any development in the central portion of the Settlement Break would be seen as most detrimental to the protection of Green Infrastructure corridors (which additionally includes two proposed Local Wildlife Sites), detrimental to the setting of the Conservation Area and overall landscape character, and unsustainable in terms of accessibility.

It should also be noted that the entire area falls within a Critical Drainage Area (CDA). The cumulative impact of development within this CDA would need to be carefully evaluated.

## **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

### **a) in full**

The Settlement Break provides a key backdrop to the Newbottle Conservation Area, as well as an attractive lowland landscape to neighbouring settlements that were once dominated by heavy industry. Much of this land is already used as a Sewage Works and providing a major junior football resource to Wearside. The entire area acts as an important Green Infrastructure junction, linking to and supporting the Moors Burn floodplain, Elba Park, local woodland, and emerging walking/cycling corridors linking to Herrington and Houghton. The area also has significant industrial heritage that should be depicted further. These important considerations also need to be weighed against the fact that the entire area is part

of a Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city.

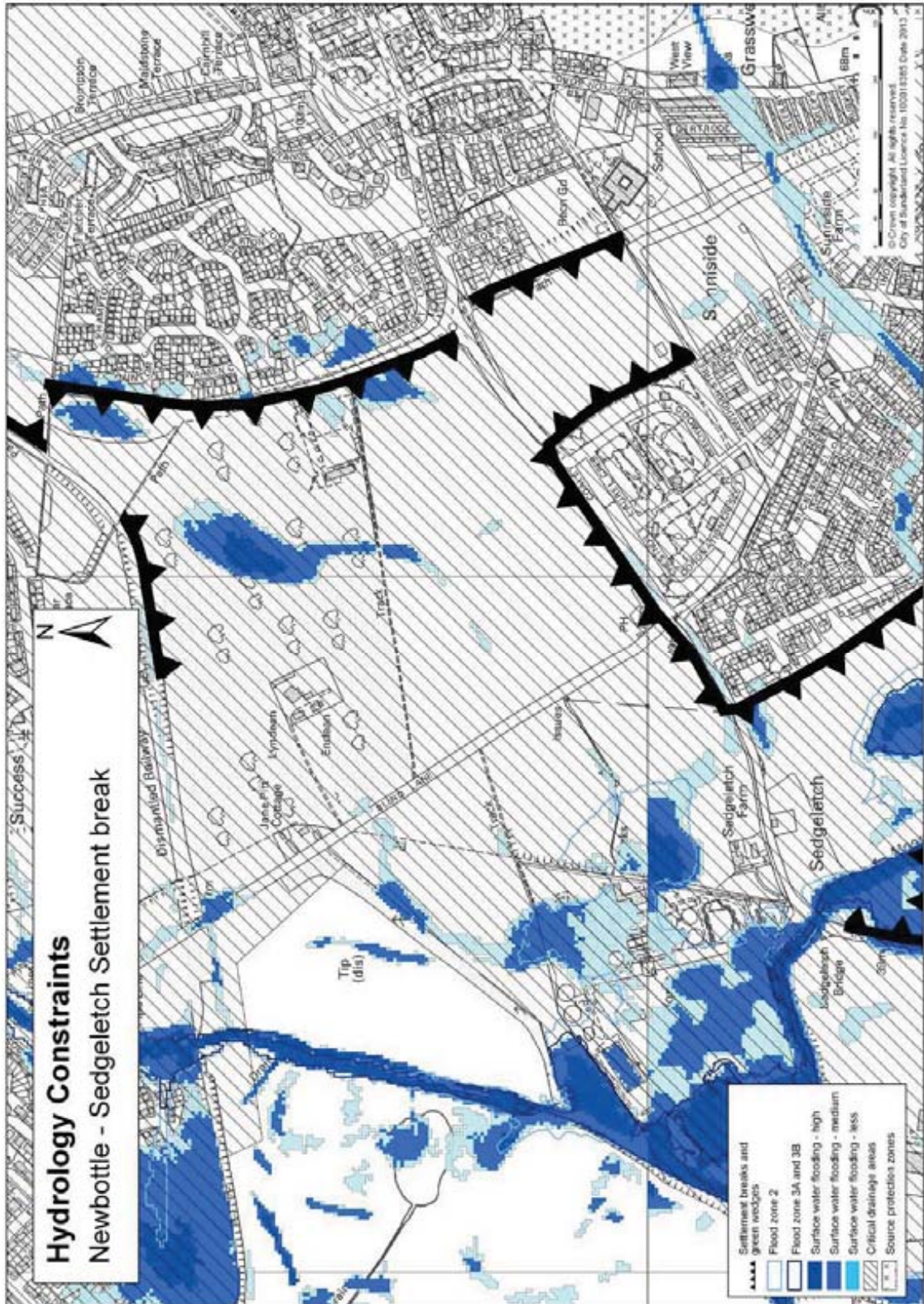
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

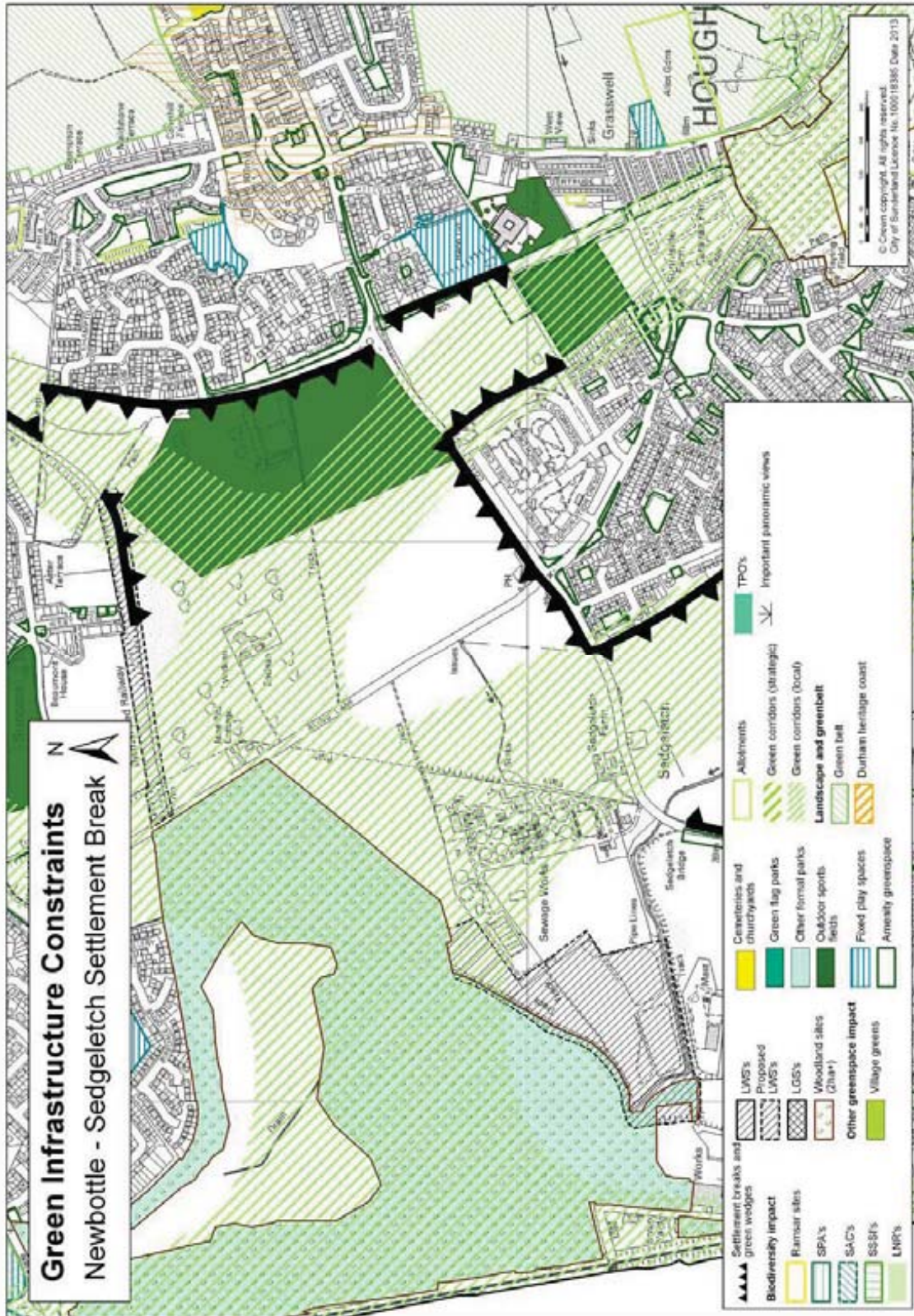
Yes, the entire area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and specific site protection should be given to Local Wildlife Sites and greenspace sites. The development of corridors of Green Infrastructure should also seek to preserve and enhance the landscape and historic character of the area, and hydrological issues. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

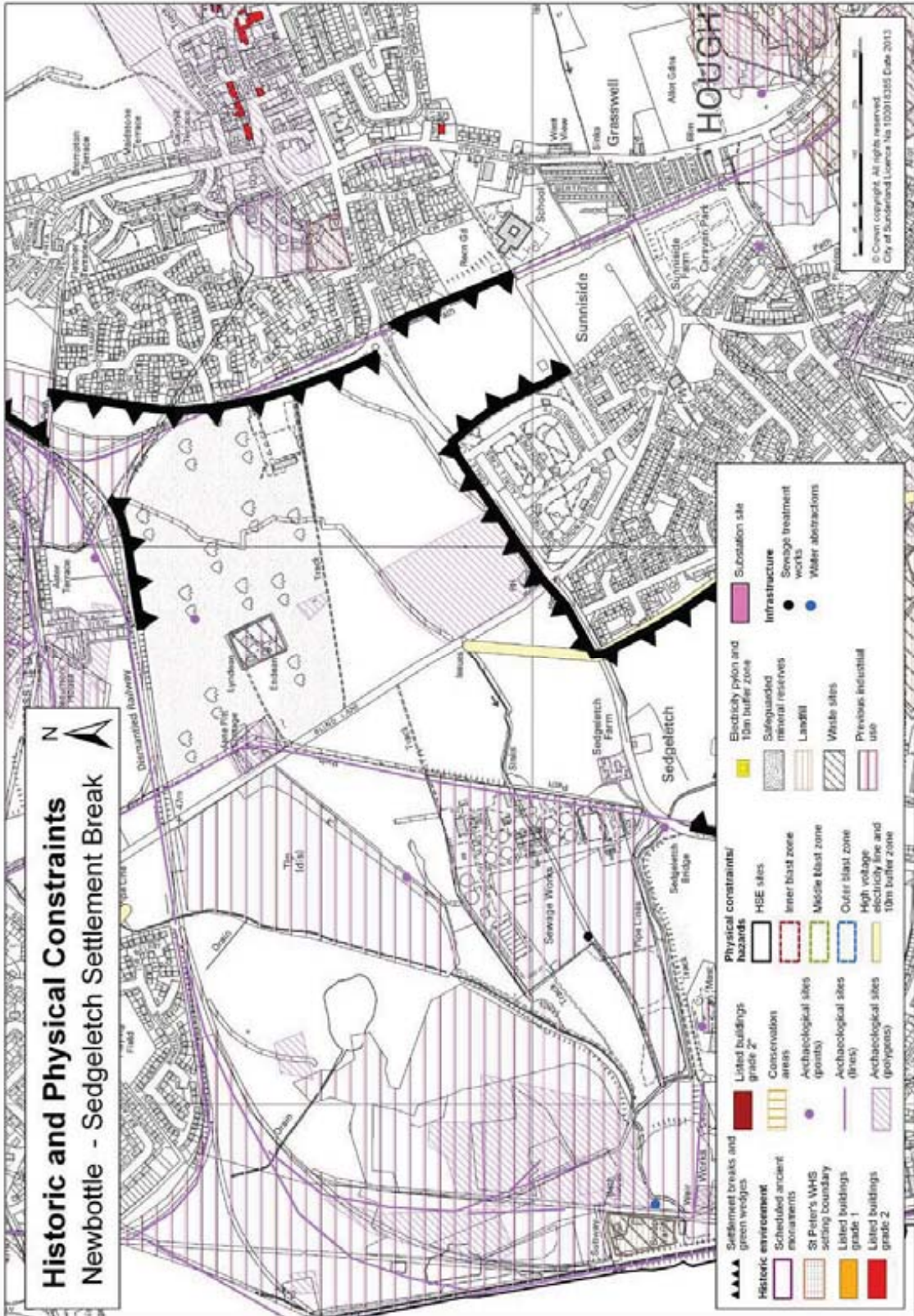
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

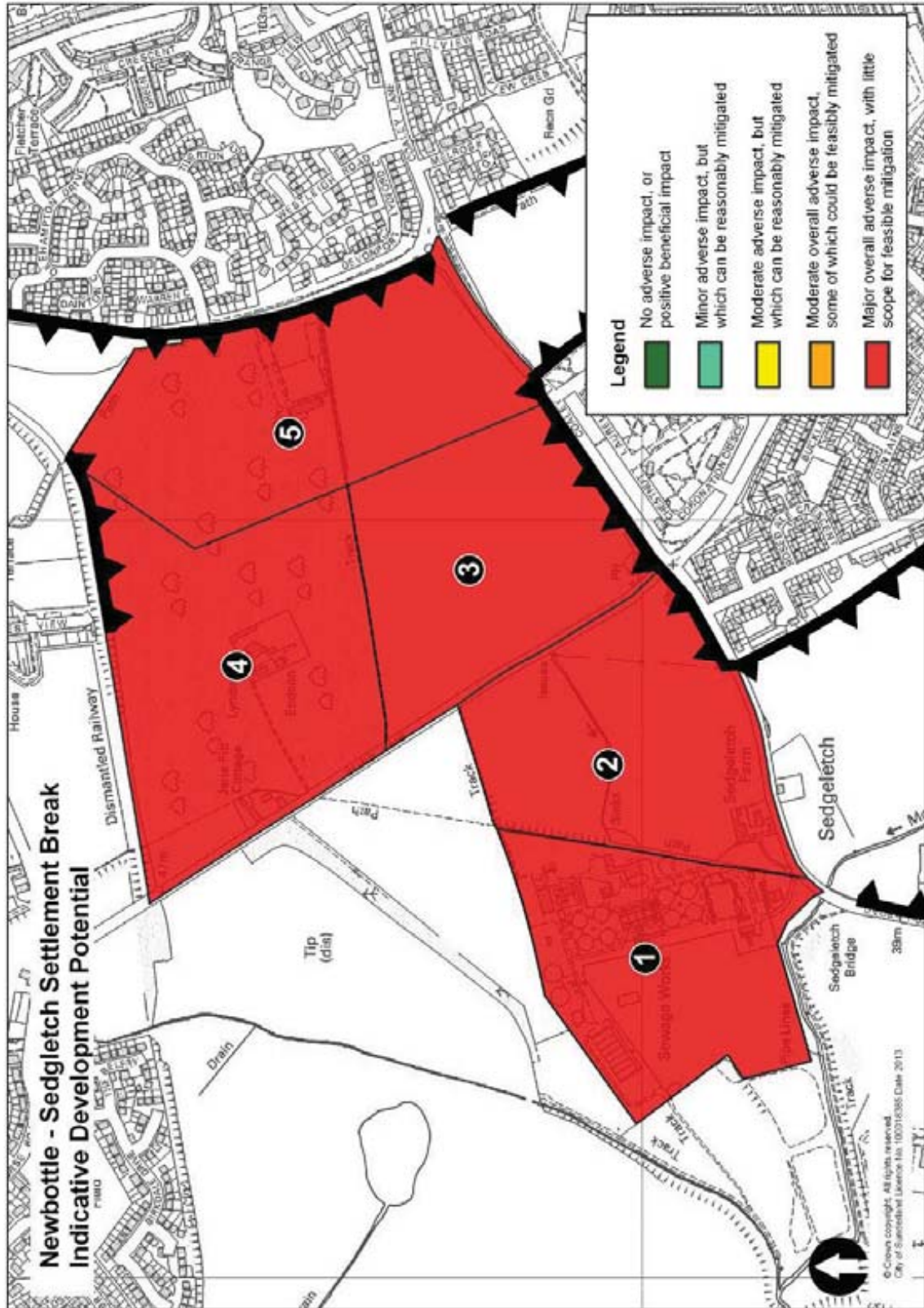
- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Proposed LWS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to buffer zones of two proposed Local Wildlife Sites that flank the Settlement Break. Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Other formal parks and country parks
- Outdoor sports fields
- Natural greenspaces
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2E, 3C, 4E, 5E**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor; direct impact to 'Tier A' junior football pitches.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)
- Recognised rural viewpoints

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C**

**Principal impacts: direct impact on the ‘moor’ and floodplain, part of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, and views from the Newbottle Conservation Area. Impact on woodland plantation.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas
- Sedgeleth Sewage Works

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1E, 2D, 3B, 4B, 5C**

**Principal impacts: Moors Burn functional floodplain at Sedgeleth Sewage Works; all land within Critical Drainage Area; ‘high’ and ‘medium’ incidences of surface water flooding beside Crofter’s Estate.**

## 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3C, 4C, 5B**

**Principal impacts: 3 former pits in the area, plus historic waggonways.**

## 6) Physical constraints / hazards

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)
- Stability issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B, 4C, 5A**

## 7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D**

**Principal impacts: retained a key backdrop to the Newbottle Conservation Area, as well as an attractive Green Infrastructure corridor and landscape to neighbouring settlements that were once dominated by heavy industry.**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3C, 4E, 5C**

**Principal impacts: distanced from local centres and services, very limited public transport links to the north and west.**



## 9) Dubmire Industrial Estate / Burnside



### Location

North of Dubmire Industrial Estate

South of Sedgeleth Sewage Works

West of Burnside Estate

East of Sedgeleth and Dubmire Industrial Estates

### Size and land ownership (if known)

14 hectares

Mostly private owned land, portion of Council-owned land.

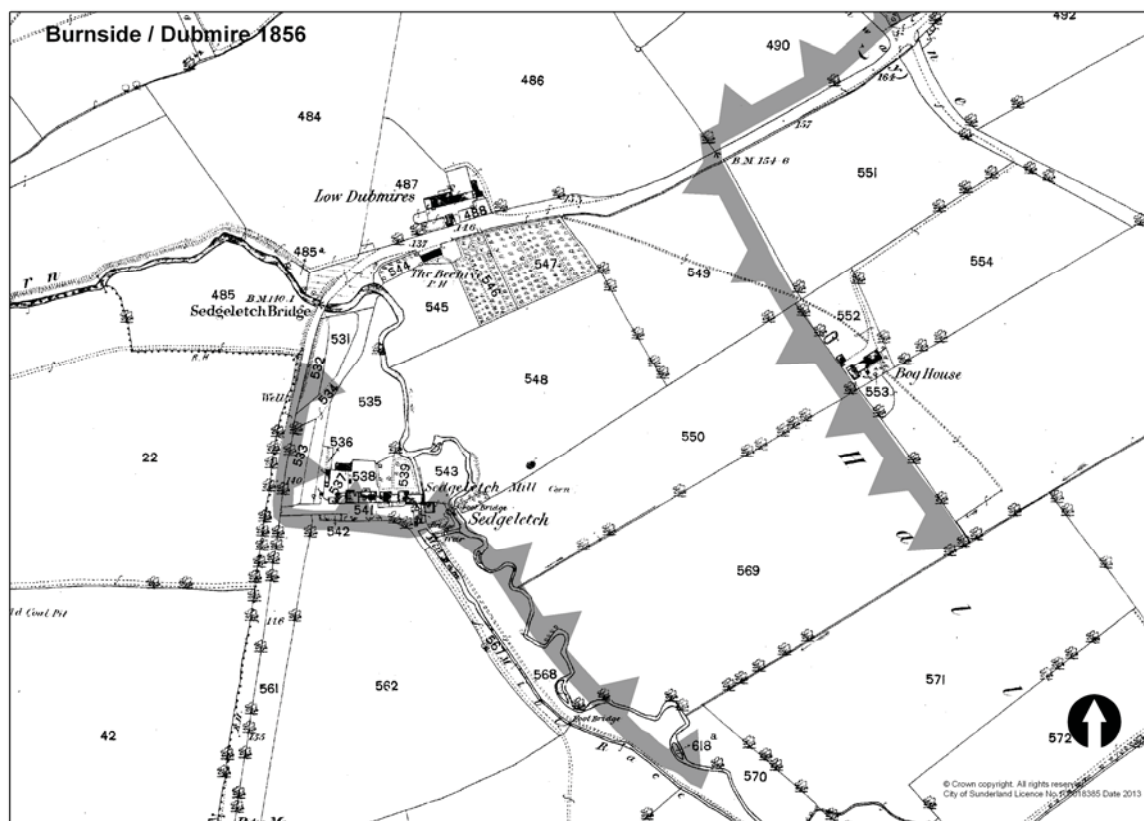
### What does it separate?

Burnside Estate (part of Houghton-le-Spring) and Dubmire Industrial Estate (part of Fencehouses/Chilton Moor).

### Current use

Agriculture and pasture.

### Neighbouring settlement background

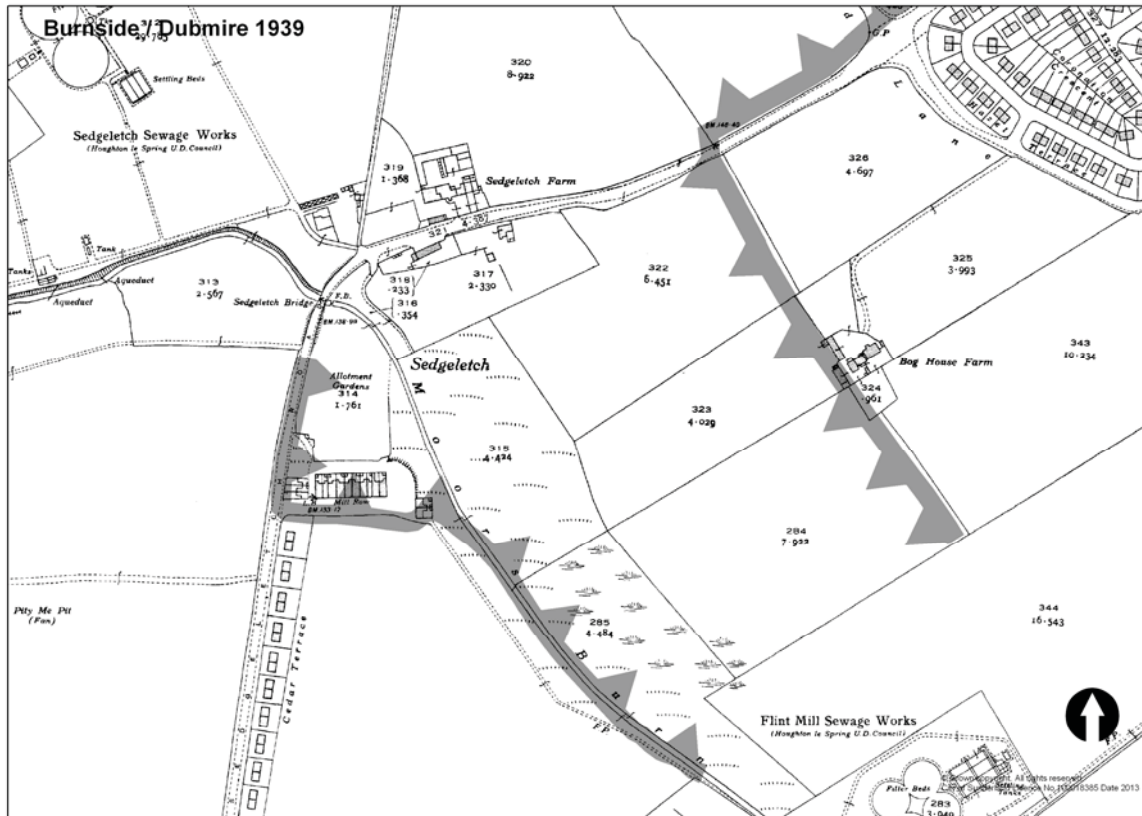


### Houghton-le-Spring

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.



The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).

Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

The current western residential boundary of Houghton-le-Spring was created post-WW2 with the creation of Burnside Estate, which consists of semi-detached homes and a primary school. Prior to WW2, there was virtually no development east of Sedgeleth Road and west of Houghton Colliery, apart from the Flint Mill (which later became the site of a sewage works) and Sedgeleth Mill. The Flint Mill was located at the junction of the Moors Burn and Houghton Burn, the latter being culverted eastwards to Houghton town centre in the 1930's. The distinct settlement boundaries of Burnside and Dubmire Industrial Estate (that surround the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn) have remained unchanged for 50 years. Sedgeleth Mill was located beside Osman Terrace and was closed before 1900. Importantly, a mill race was created off the meandering Moors Burn, and it would appear that the much straighter mill race alignment duly became the future alignment of the Moors Burn itself.

### ***Fencehouses and High Dubmire***

Fencehouses (or *Fence Houses*), together with the settlements of High Dubmire, Colliery Row and Chilton Moor, forms a large village to the west of Houghton-le-Spring, on the Sunderland City boundary with County Durham.

Fencehouses came into existence when Napoleonic prisoners were housed on the outskirts of Houghton-le-Spring. The prisoners were used as labour to cut a path through the hill at Houghton-le-Spring in order to get the troops from Durham to the coast at Sunderland. The land was originally part of the Grange (a large local manor house). A railway line was built (the 'Leamside Line'), providing a station (opened in 1836) and transport links from the local area to Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham. This also served as the rail station for Houghton-le-Spring. A post office opened in 1838, serving as a railway sorting office. The line eventually closed to passengers in 1964. Despite the introduction of the railway, by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century there was little further development, other than a hotel. Located further to the north were New Lambton Mill and Bournmoor Colliery, with pit rows and a public house. High Dubmire was separate to Fencehouses at the time, but consisted of only a few houses, a couple of pubs and an Iron Works.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, High Dubmire had expanded, with a series of terraced rows built near to the main road junction (Sedgeleth Road). Fencehouses began to expand in the Edwardian period with terraced rows being formed along Station Avenue. At this time, a tram link was also established from Fencehouses to Houghton and Sunderland, but this closed in 1925. Further terraces were created in the area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, together with facilities centred primarily at High Dubmire including schools, a reading room, 2 churches, shops and a sports field. To the west of the railway, Woodstone Village was also being established.

Post-war, the settlements fully merged. In about 1950, a modern housing estate was added to Fencehouses, called the Grange estate. Further small infill developments have taken place over time, one of the most recent being the creation of private detached housing on the south part of Dubmire Industrial Estate. The Bournmoor pit area to the north became Lambton Cokeworks, and when this

eventually closed the land remained contaminated for many years, though reclamation has now been completed and the site forms Elba Park.

The full Fencehouses and Chilton Moor area now totals around 5,000 inhabitants. With the completed reclamation of the Lambton Cokeworks site (and completion of opencasting at Rye Hill/Rainton Meadows) the surrounding landscape is now very attractive. There remain a range of facilities, including a new junior and infant school, a library, shops, pubs, restaurant, allotment gardens and equipped play park. It is clear that the layout of the area has evolved over time, rather than being planned, but it is also clear that the area as a whole forms a distinct settlement, still separate to Houghton-le-Spring.

### ***Dubmire Industrial Estate***

Originally named Houghton-le-Spring Industrial Estate, Dubmire Industrial Estate was established shortly after WW2. Within the last ten years, Dubmire has halved in size, the southern portion being redeveloped as housing. Today, the remaining employment area consists of single storey units of steel frame construction. Dubmire forms part of the wider Fencehouses / Chilton Moor settlement.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No, although land has been purchased by the City Council in preparation for the creation of the Central Route.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.4 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy T13, T15, HA28.1 (Reserved for Transport Corridor)
- UDP Policy EN11 (Flood Risk Areas)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### ***Category 1***

- *Flood Zone 3*

The west and central parts of the Settlement Break fall within Flood Zone 3 (The Moors Burn). Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

#### ***Category 2***

- *Flood Zone 2*

More than half of the entire Settlement Break area falls within Flood Zone 2. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding (all types)*

Virtually all of the surface water flooding identified lies within Flood Zone 2. An additional small area of 'medium' surface water flooding exists at the north end of the break, beside Coaley Lane. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure corridor, linking Elba Park and Herrington Burn to the north, with Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows to the south. This corridor (following the Moors Burn) has significant species and habitat interest. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further multi-user routes and biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and floodplain within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of meadows, wetlands, agriculture and incomplete hedgerows. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland and restore old hedgerows.

- *Archaeological sites*

Important archaeological sites to the north and west of the Settlement Break are Sedgeleth Farm, Sedgeleth Mill (possibly medieval in origin) and mill race, and Sedgeleth Bridge.

- *High voltage electricity line/pylon (south)*

There is a wooden-pole electricity line following the eastern boundary (Burnside Estate). Any development would need to consider relocation of this electricity line.

*Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Previous industrial use (small area located to the northeast of Dubmire Industrial Estate, east side of the Moors Burn)
- The Central Route (road) is proposed to run through the western part of the break.

### ***Topography***

Open Settlement Break, relatively flat.

### ***Accessibility***

Limited public transport access. No local facilities close-by. Nearest centres are at Fence Houses and at Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

Though both the full geographical areas of Fence Houses and Houghton-le-Spring have evolved and expanded over time, these two areas have remained distinct and physically separate. The boundaries of the Settlement Break have remained intact

and unaltered for 50 years, though it should be recognised that the physical constraints provided by flood risk have been influential. It is obvious that this Settlement Break works, providing an important green wedge separating the two communities.

It is also clear that the Settlement Break acts as a functional floodplain, and forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street. As a result, only a proportion of the land is actively cultivated- mirroring the fact that half of the Settlement Break lies within either Flood Zones 2 or 3. Though the burn has been physically altered, and is not specifically protected on biodiversity grounds, the break forms an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, and protected species are evidently using the corridor.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. The boundaries to the Settlement Break are well defined and no land within the area at all would appear appropriate for development.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

a) in full

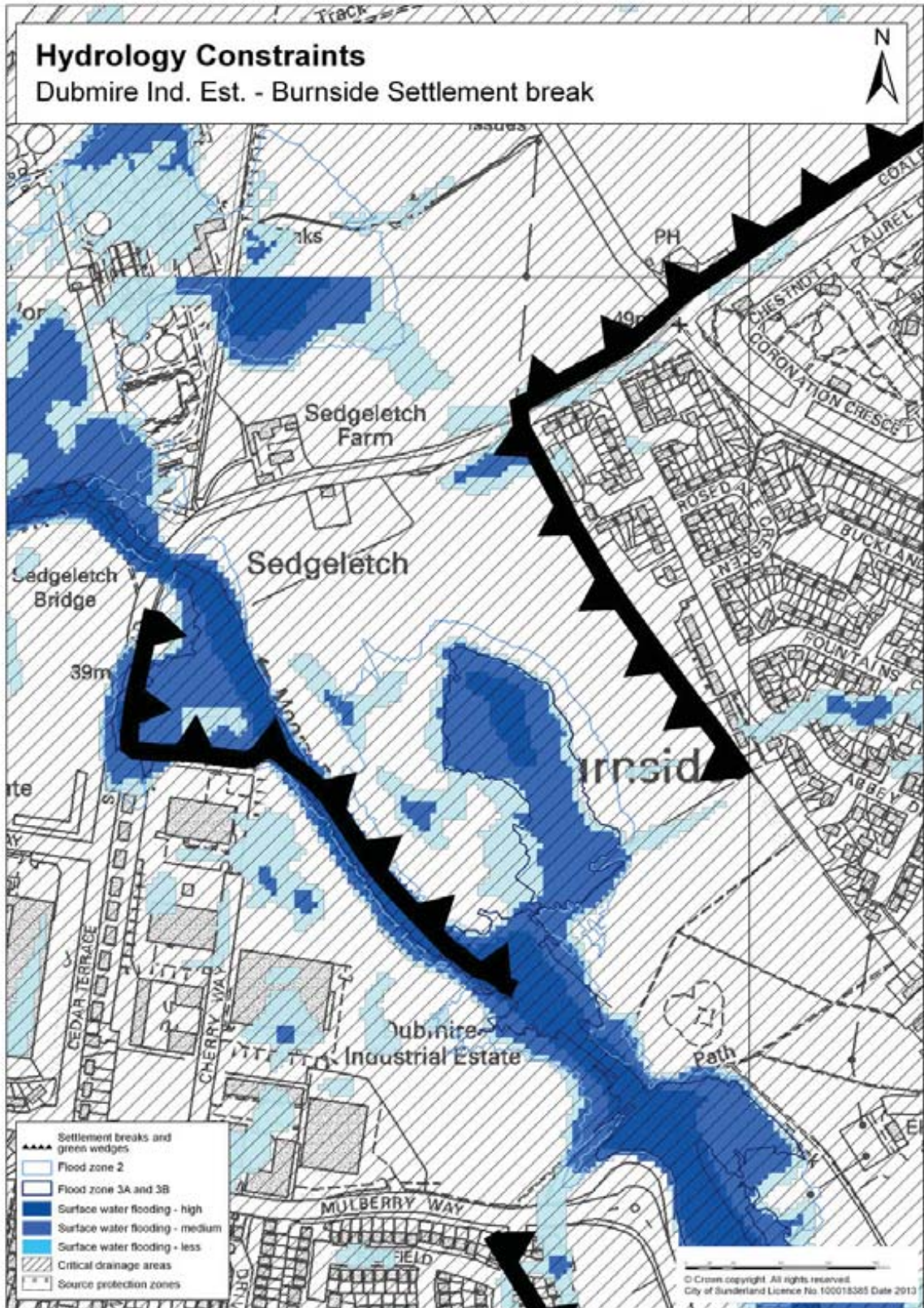
The Settlement Break is well defined and provides a clear gap between Fencehouses and Houghton-le-Spring. It acts as a functional floodplain and is part of a Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city. The Settlement Break acts as an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, linking to and supporting the Moors Burn floodplain, Elba Park and Herrington Burn, Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows.

**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

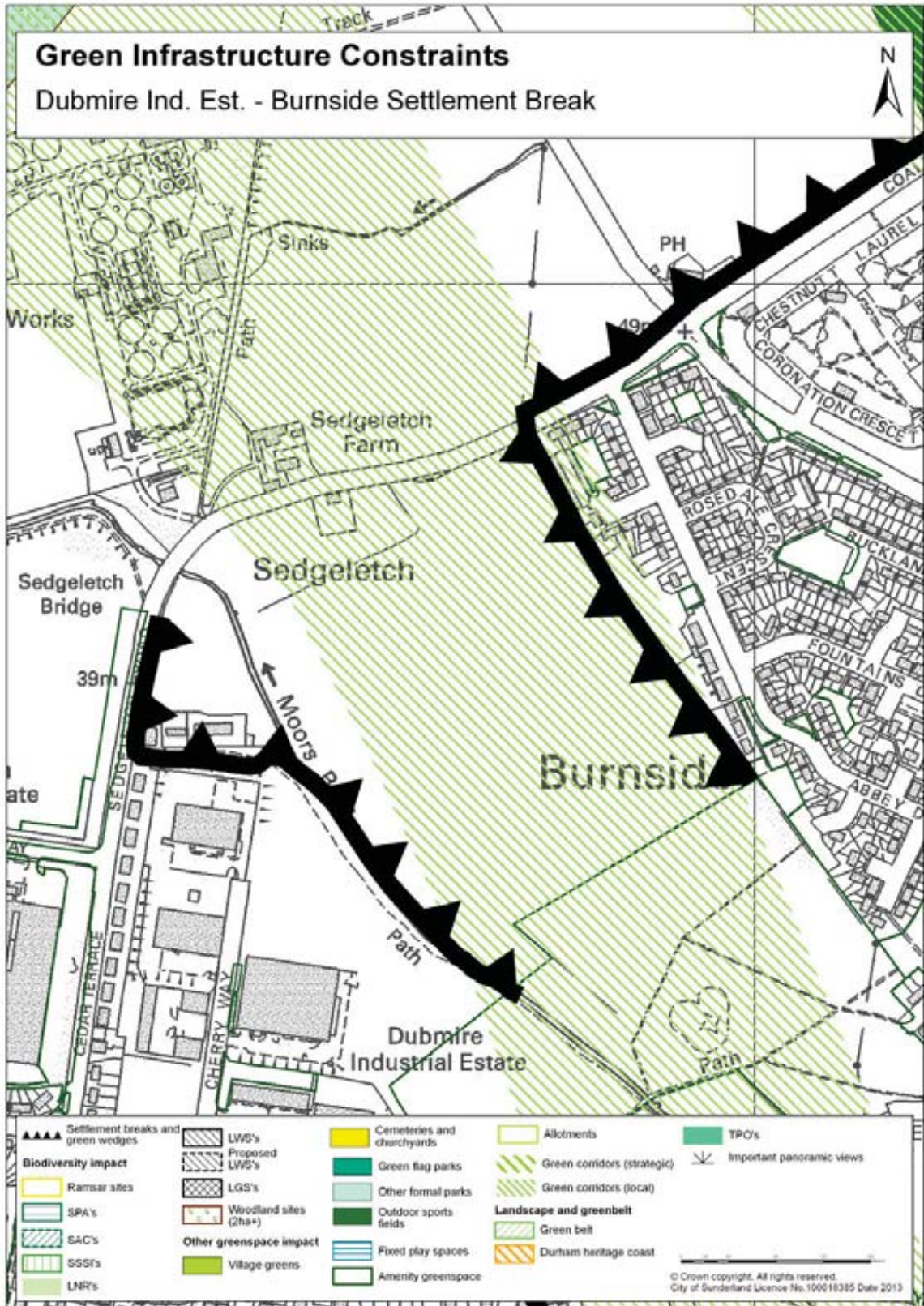
Yes, the entire area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, which should seek to preserve and enhance the landscape and historic character of the area, and hydrological issues. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

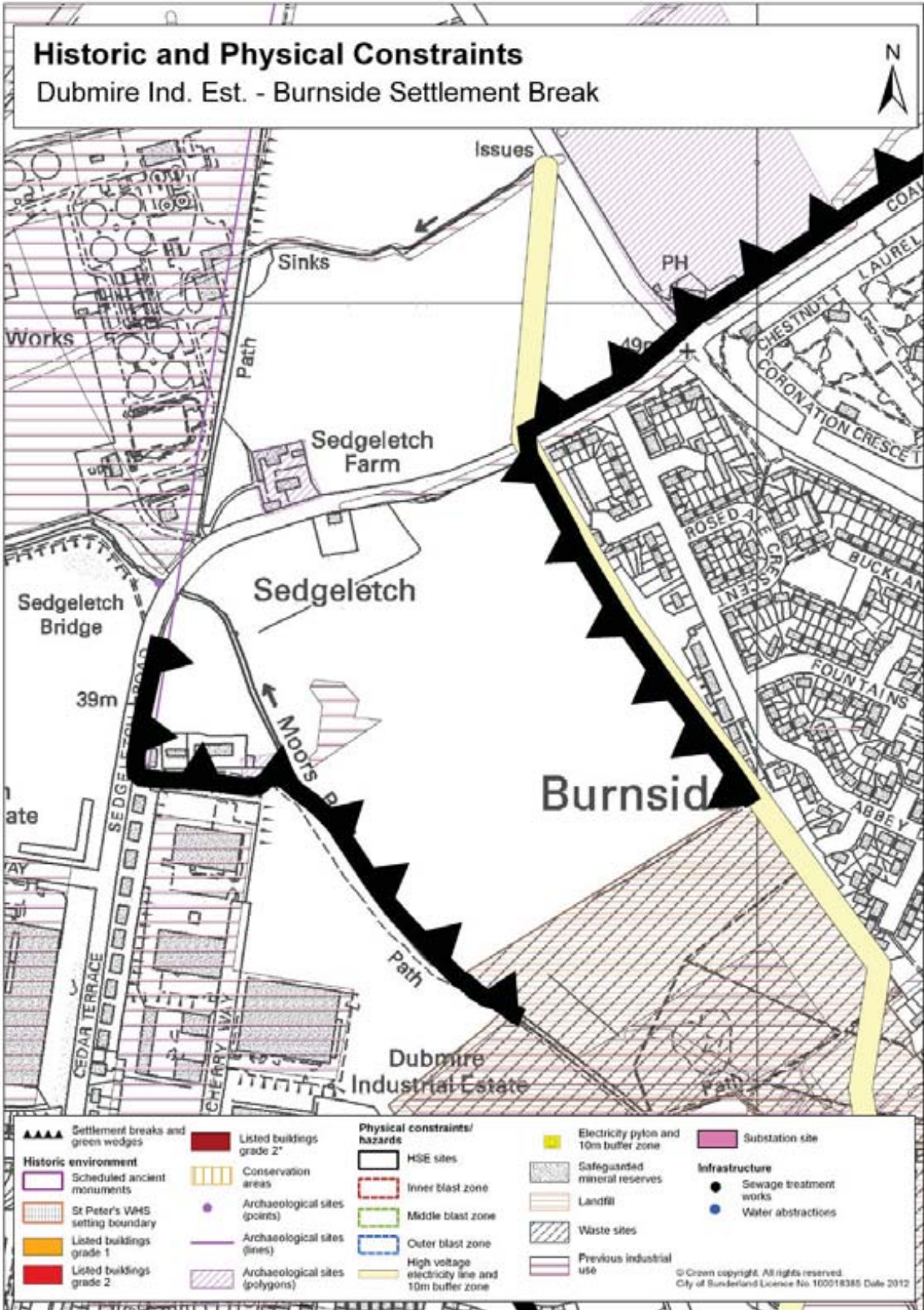
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

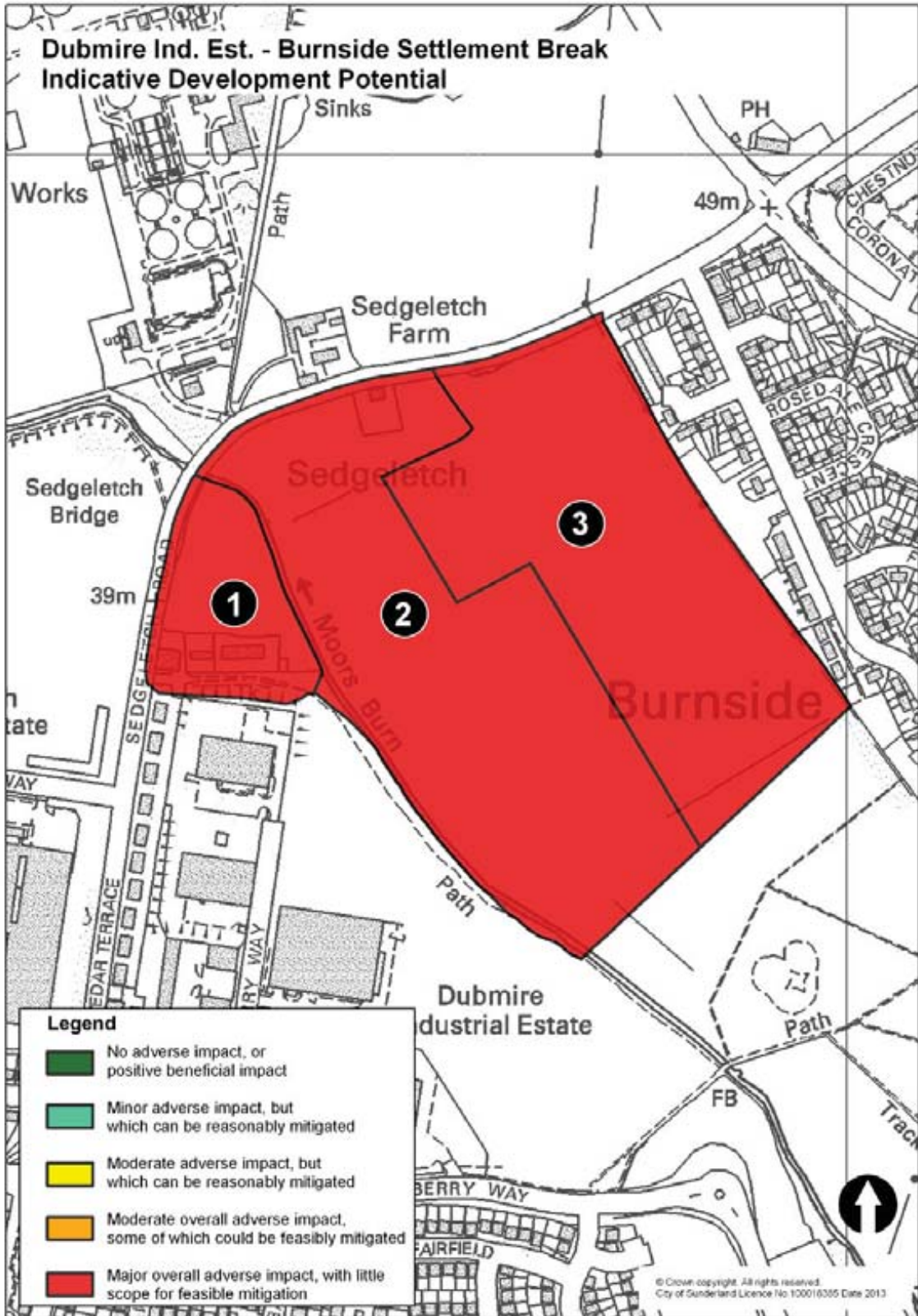
- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints  
Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2E, 3E**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on the floodplain landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands.**

#### 4) Hydrology

##### Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

##### Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3C**

**Principal impacts: within the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn and wholly within a Critical Drainage Area.**

#### 5) Historic Environment

**Category 1:** None

##### Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3A**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3B**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D**

**Principal impacts:** the Settlement Break has enabled the area to retain a distinctive urban boundary, and it has also maintained an important Green Infrastructure corridor through the area

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3D**

**Principal impacts:** distanced from local centres and services, very limited public transport links.

## 10) High Dubmire / Dairy Lane / Houghton



### Location

North of Dairy Lane  
South of Flint Mill greenspace  
West of Leyburn Grove sports field  
East of Fencehouses / Dubmire



## Size and land ownership (if known)

11.5 hectares

Privately owned land

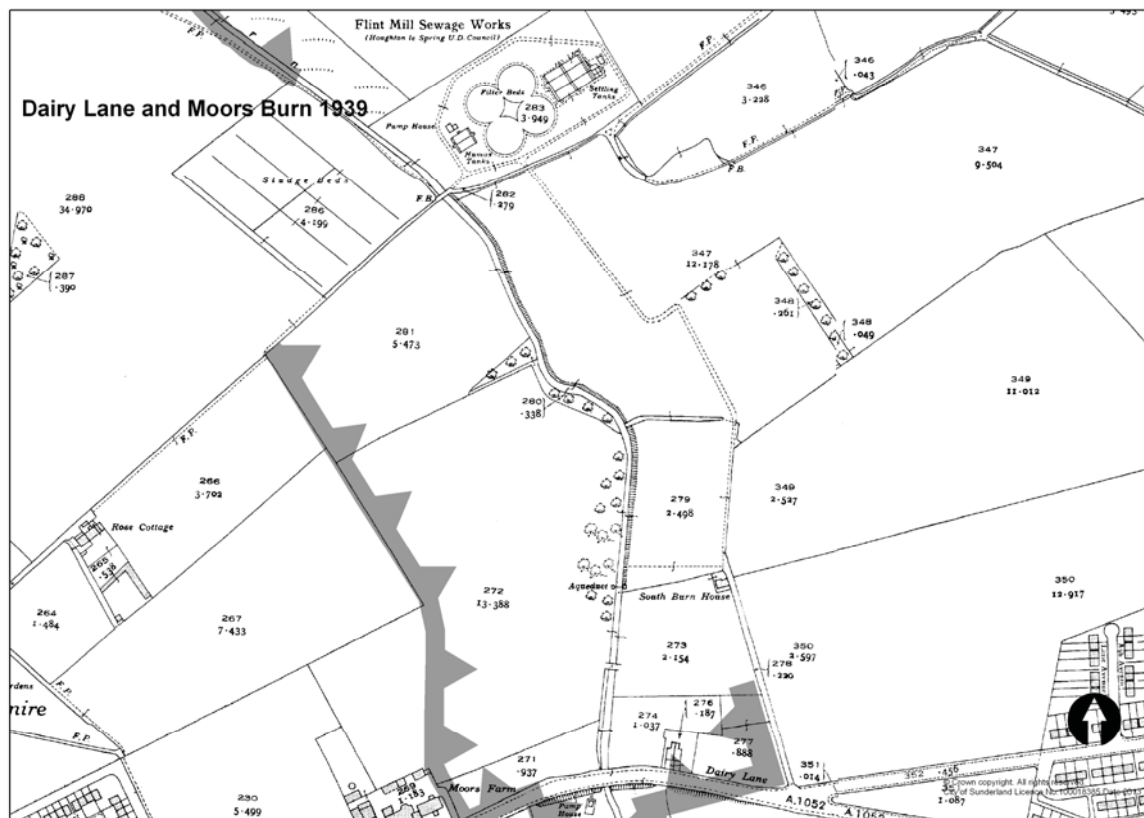
## What does it separate?

Fencehouses / High Dubmire with Houghton-le-Spring.

## Current use

Pasture and greenspace.

## Neighbouring settlement background



### **Fencehouses, High Dubmire and Colliery Row**

Fencehouses (or *Fence Houses*), together with the settlements of High Dubmire, Colliery Row and Chilton Moor, forms a large village to the west of Houghton-le-Spring, on the Sunderland City boundary with County Durham.

Fencehouses came into existence when Napoleonic prisoners were housed on the outskirts of Houghton-le-Spring. The land was originally part of the Grange (a large local manor house). A railway line was built (the 'Leamside Line'), providing a station (opened in 1836) and transport links from the local area to Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham. This also served as the rail station for Houghton-le-Spring. A post office opened in 1838, serving as a railway sorting office. The line eventually closed to passengers in 1964. Despite the introduction of the railway, by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century there was little further development, other than a hotel. High Dubmire was separate to Fencehouses at the time, but consisted of only a few houses, a couple of pubs and an Iron Works. Colliery Row, on the other hand,

already consisted of two long rows of pit houses, and included two chapels and a public house.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, High Dubmire had expanded, with a series of terraced rows built near to the main road junction (Sedgeleth Road). Fencehouses began to expand in the Edwardian period with terraced rows being formed along Station Avenue. At this time, a tram link was also established from Fencehouses and Colliery Row to Houghton and Sunderland, but this closed in 1925. Further terraces were created in the area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, together with facilities centred primarily at High Dubmire including schools, a reading room, 2 churches, shops and a sports field. To the west of the railway, Woodstone Village was also being established.

Post-war, the settlements fully merged. In about 1950, a modern housing estate was added to Fencehouses, called the Grange estate. Further small infill developments have taken place over time, one of the most recent being the creation of private detached housing on the south part of Dubmire Industrial Estate. At Colliery Row, Council houses were built to the north and south of North View Terrace (now Gentoo controlled). The Bournmoor pit area to the north became Lambton Cokeworks, and when this eventually closed the land remained contaminated for many years, though reclamation has now been completed and the site forms Elba Park.

The full Fencehouses and Chilton Moor area now totals around 5,000 inhabitants. With the completed reclamation of the Lambton Cokeworks site (and completion of opencasting at Rye Hill/Rainton Meadows) the surrounding landscape is now very attractive. There remain a range of facilities, including a new junior and infant school, a library, shops, pubs, restaurant, allotment gardens and equipped play park. It is clear that the layout of the area has evolved over time, rather than being planned, but it is also clear that the area as a whole forms a distinct settlement, still separate to Houghton-le-Spring.

### ***Houghton-le-Spring***

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.

The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).

Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

The current western residential boundary of Houghton-le-Spring was created post-WW2 with the creation of Burnside Estate, which consists of semi-detached homes and a primary school and housing around Burn Park Road. Prior to WW2, there was virtually no development east of Sedgelych Road and west of Houghton Colliery, apart from the Flint Mill (which later became the site of a sewage works). The Flint Mill was located at the junction of the Moors Burn and Houghton Burn, the latter being culverted eastwards to Houghton town centre in the 1930's.

The settlement boundary at Houghton has altered little in 50 years, the most notable exception being the creation of the Leyburn Grove sports field. The creation of the Dubmire Link Road north from Dairy Lane has potentially created a new settlement boundary to the west, with greenspace adjacent and new private housing located further west. These development lines bound the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn.

#### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

#### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.4 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy T13, T15, HA28.1 (Reserved for Transport Corridor)
- UDP Policy EN11 (Flood Risk Areas)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

## Key constraints

### Category 1

- *Flood Zone 3*

The central and south-eastern parts of the Settlement Break fall within Flood Zone 3 (The Moors Burn). Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

### Category 2

- *Flood Zone 2*

The north-eastern and south-eastern parts of the Settlement Break fall within Flood Zone 2. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding (all types)*

Most of the eastern half of the Settlement Break is affected by surface water flooding. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure corridor, linking Elba Park and Herrington Burn to the north, with Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows to the south. This corridor (following the Moors Burn) has significant species and habitat interest. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further multi-user routes and biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and floodplain within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of pony paddocks, meadows, wetlands, greenspace and incomplete hedgerows. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland and restore old hedgerows.

- *High voltage electricity line/pylon (south)*

There is an electricity substation in the northeast of the break, with a wooden-pole electricity line leading off northwards to the edge of Burnside Estate. Any development would need to consider the proximity of the substation and potential relocation of this electricity line.

*Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Previous industrial use (former sewage works) along eastern boundary of the Moors Burn
- Landfill/waste site (former Flint Mill, tile sheds, clay mill) beside Burnside Estate.

### **Topography**

Visually open Settlement Break. Gently slopes from west to the Moors Burn. Flatter topography to the east.

### **Accessibility**

Public transport access from Dairy Lane. No local facilities close-by. Nearest centres are at Fence Houses and at Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

Though both the full geographical areas of Fence Houses and Houghton-le-Spring have evolved and expanded over time, these two areas have remained distinct and physically separate, supported by this Settlement Break which provides an important green wedge between the two communities.

For the most part, land to the east of the Moors Burn acts as a functional floodplain. The whole Settlement Break forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street. Though the burn is not specifically protected on biodiversity grounds, the break forms an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, and protected species are evidently using the corridor.

The new road has made an obvious impact to the nature of the Settlement Break. The residential development at Greenmount has created a distinct settlement boundary. This has left a portion of land to the west of the road, which lies above the floodplain and is not specifically classed as amenity greenspace. It is not immediately clear what role this remaining greenfield land has, and though it lies within the Critical Drainage Area, its continued retention as greenfield land would not seem critical to the Green Infrastructure corridor. The new road could therefore form a new western boundary to the Settlement Break.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

#### **b) Partially**

The principle aim of the Settlement Break has worked. Whilst Fencehouses and Houghton-le-Spring have grown, they have retained distinct and separate identities, chiefly due to the physical separation by this Settlement Break, though it should be recognised that the physical constraints provided by flood risk have been influential.

Virtually all of the land to the east of the new road forms the floodplain to the Moors Burn, much of it within Flood Zone 2 or 3, or affected by surface water flooding. All of this land lies within the Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city. This portion of the Settlement Break in particular acts as an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, linking to and supporting the Moors Burn floodplain, Elba Park and Herrington Burn, Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows.

The new road has clearly impacted upon the western boundary of the Settlement Break, effectively separating a portion of greenfield land away from the Moors Burn floodplain. This land is elevated away from the floodplain itself. There is potential to consider development on this land which would create a new western boundary to the Settlement Break.

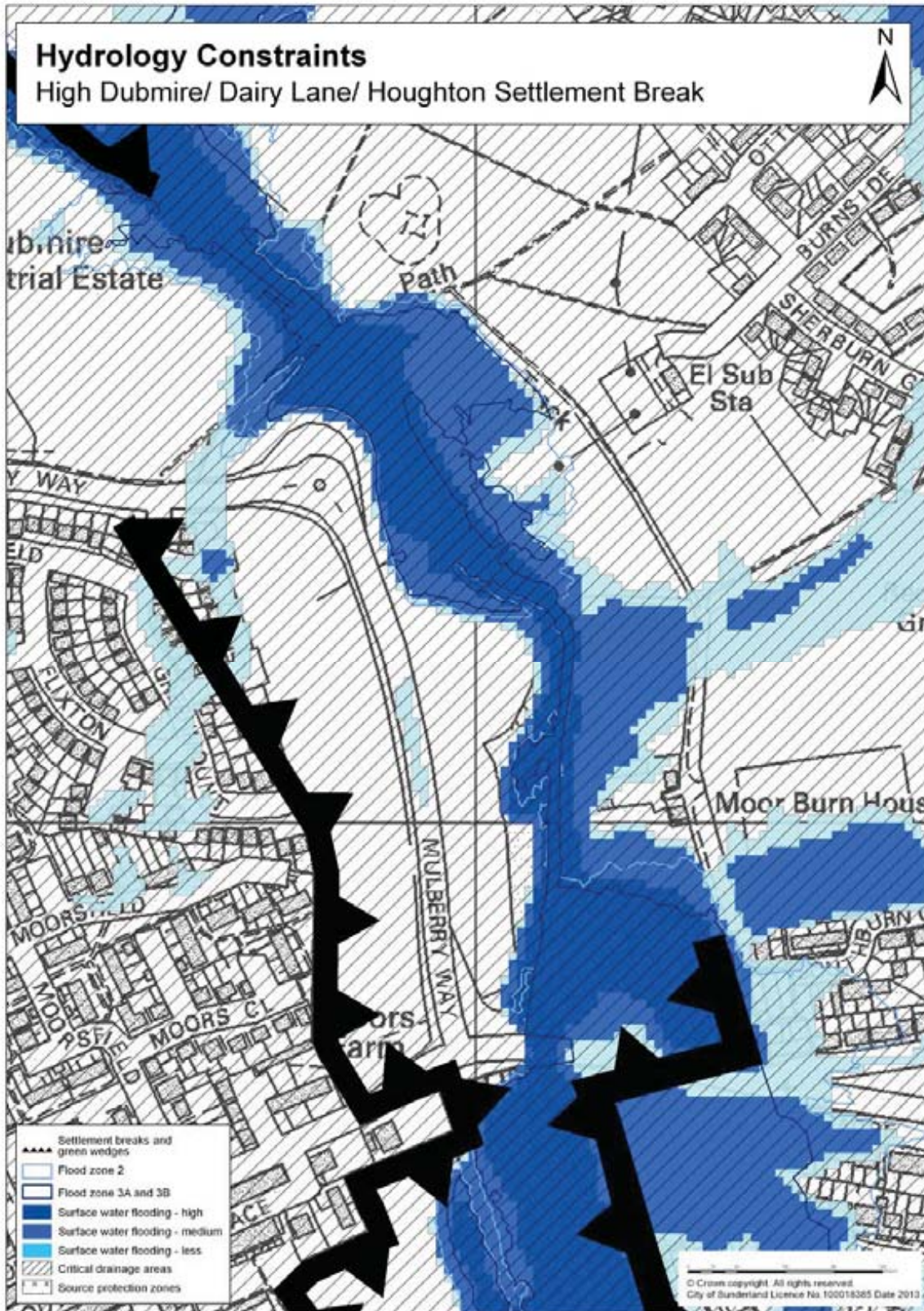
With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

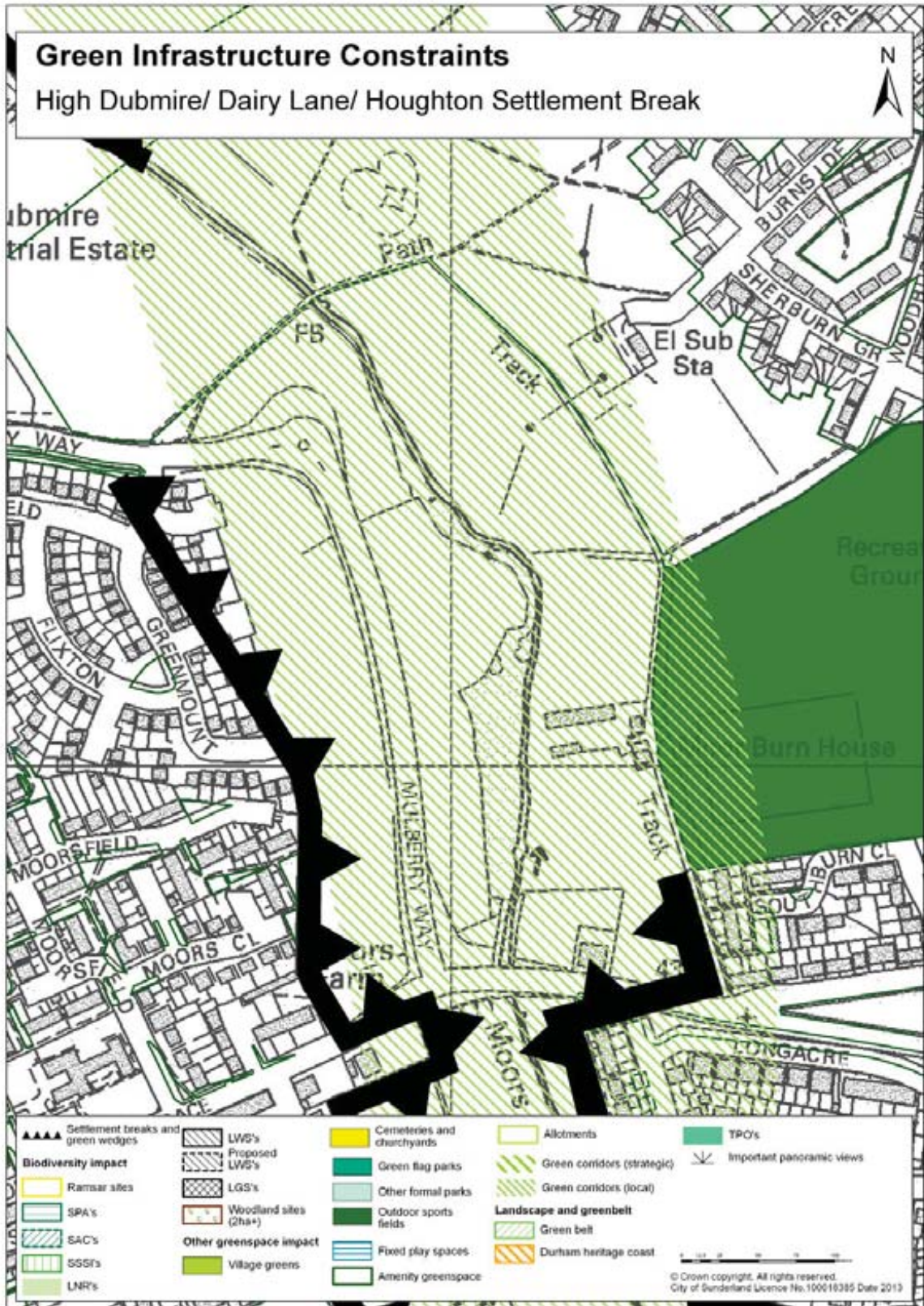
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

Yes, the Settlement Break area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, which should seek to preserve and enhance the landscape and historic character of the area, and hydrological issues. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

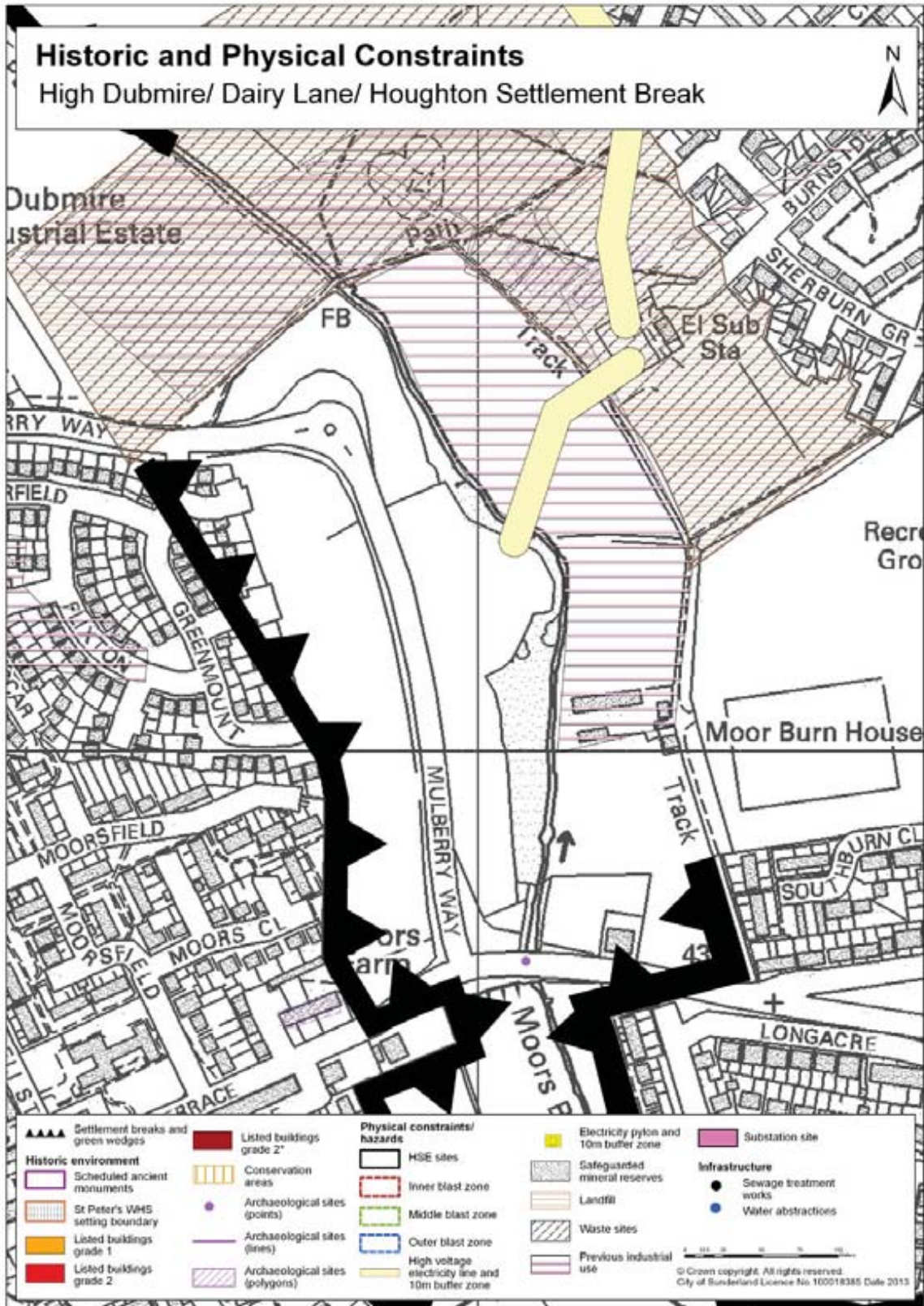
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

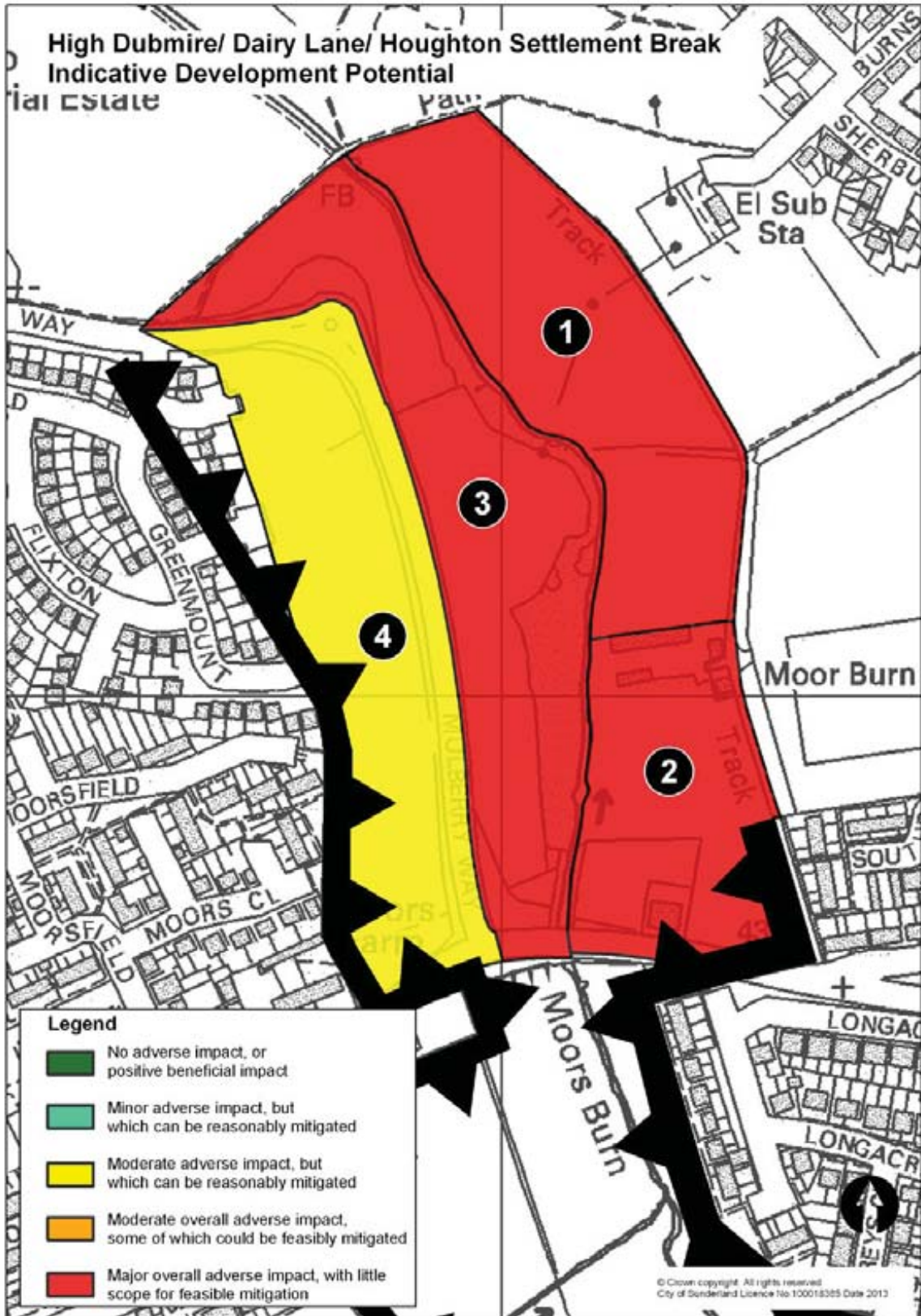
- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3E, 4C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on the floodplain landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands.**

#### 4) Hydrology

##### Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

##### Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3E, 4B**

**Principal impacts: within the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn and wholly within a Critical Drainage Area.**

#### 5) Historic Environment

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:** None

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)
- Stability issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2A, 3A, 4A**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction

E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction
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**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1D, 2C, 3C, 4C**

## 11) Colliery Row / Dairy Lane / Ninelands



### **Location**

North of Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate  
South of Dairy Lane  
West of Ninelands  
East of Colliery Row

### **Size and land ownership (if known)**

23 hectares  
Council and privately owned land.

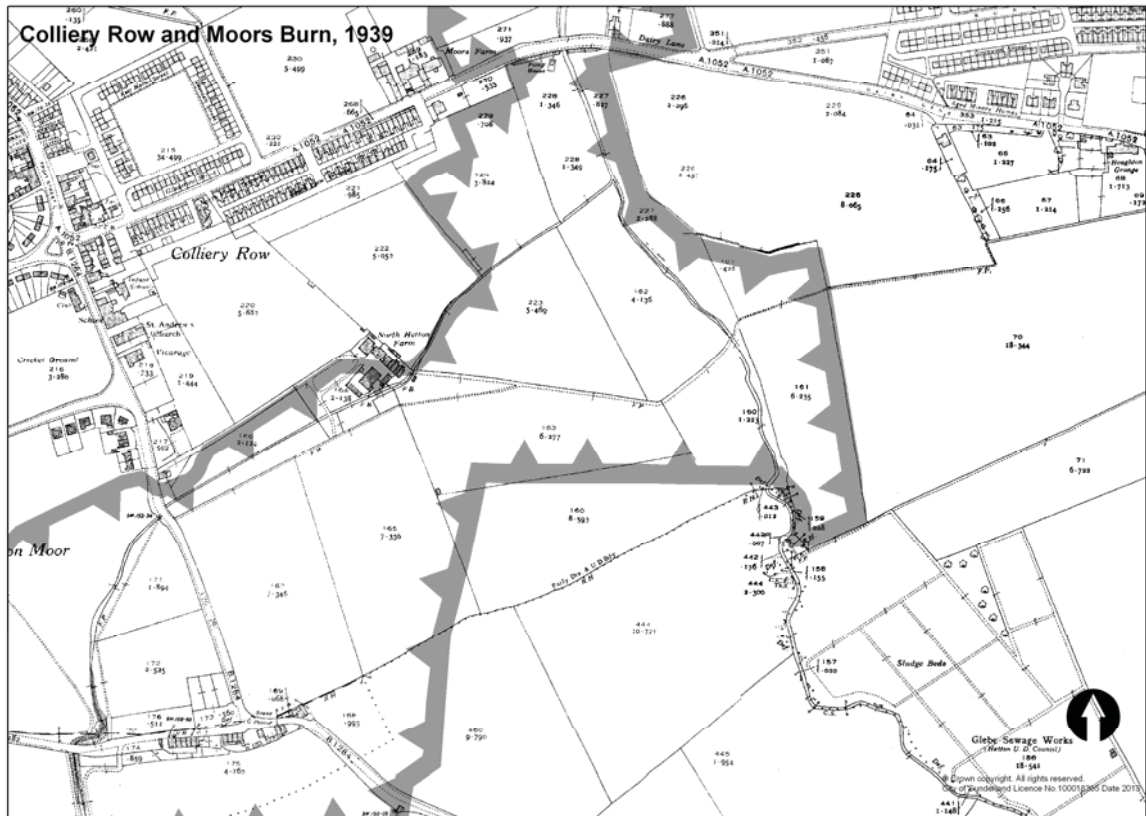
### **What does it separate?**

Colliery Row/Chilton Moor from Ninelands/Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Current use**

Pasture and greenspace.

## Neighbouring settlement background



### ***Houghton-le-Spring***

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.

The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-



le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).

Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

The settlement boundary at Houghton and Colliery Row has altered little in nearly 50 years, since the creation of private housing at Ninelands and the Gentoo-controlled housing south of South View Terrace. These development lines bound the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn.

### ***Fencehouses and Colliery Row***

Fencehouses (or *Fence Houses*), together with the settlements of High Dubmire, Colliery Row and Chilton Moor, forms a large village to the west of Houghton-le-Spring, on the Sunderland City boundary with County Durham.

Fencehouses came into existence when Napoleonic prisoners were housed on the outskirts of Houghton-le-Spring. The land was originally part of the Grange (a large local manor house). A railway line was built (the 'Leamside Line'), providing a station (opened in 1836) and transport links from the local area to Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham. This also served as the rail station for Houghton-le-Spring. A post office opened in 1838, serving as a railway sorting office. The line eventually closed to passengers in 1964. Despite the introduction of the railway, by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century there was little further development, other than a hotel. Colliery Row, on the other hand, already consisted of two long rows of pit houses, and included two chapels and a public house.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, High Dubmire had expanded, with a series of terraced rows built near to the main road junction (Sedgeleth Road).

Fencehouses began to expand in the Edwardian period with terraced rows being formed along Station Avenue. At this time, a tram link was also established from Fencehouses and Colliery Row to Houghton and Sunderland, but this closed in 1925. Further terraces were created in the area in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, together with facilities centred primarily at High Dubmire including schools, a reading room, 2 churches, shops and a sports field.

Post-war, the settlements fully merged. In about 1950, a modern housing estate was added to Fencehouses, called the Grange estate. Further small infill developments have taken place over time, one of the most recent being the creation of private detached housing on the south part of Dubmire Industrial Estate.

At Colliery Row, Council houses were built to the north and south of North View Terrace (now Gentoo controlled).

The full Fencehouses and Chilton Moor area now totals around 5,000 inhabitants. With the completed reclamation of the Lambton Cokeworks site (and completion of opencasting at Rye Hill/Rainton Meadows) the surrounding landscape is now very attractive. There remain a range of facilities, including a new junior and infant school, a library, shops, pubs, restaurant, allotment gardens and equipped play park. It is clear that the layout of the area has evolved over time, rather than being planned, but it is also clear that the area as a whole forms a distinct settlement, still separate to Houghton-le-Spring.

### ***Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate***

The southern boundary of the Settlement Break is formed by Rainton Bridge (North) Industrial Estate. This estate, which caters for offices, light and general industry, warehouses and storage, has gradually expanded southwards over the last 20 years, but has not encroached further upon the Settlement Break.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.4, HA25.3 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy T13, T15, HA28.1 (Reserved for Transport Corridor)
- UDP Policy EN11 (Flood Risk Areas)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### ***Category 1***

- *Flood Zone 3*

Land adjacent to Dairy Lane is within Flood Zone 3, as is a narrow band of land flanking the Rainton Burn, and a wider corridor flanking the Red Burn.

Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

#### ***Category 2***

- *Flood Zone 2*

Similar alignment to Flood Zone 3, but widens slightly south of Red Burn (east of B1284). Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding (all types)*

In addition to surface water flooding within Flood Zones 2 and 3, a further large area of high and medium surface water flooding exists south-eastwards leading from St Andrews to Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure corridor, linking Elba Park and Herrington Burn to the north, with Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows to the south. This corridor has significant species and habitat interest. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further multi-user routes and biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and floodplain within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of pony paddocks, meadows, wetlands and incomplete hedgerows, and is used generally for informal recreation. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland and restore old hedgerows.

- *High voltage electricity line/pylon*

There are two small wooden-pole electricity lines crossing the fields from Dairy Lane and Ninelands westwards to the B1284. Any development would need to consider the potential relocation of these electricity lines.

- *Archaeological site*

Alongside Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate is the site of Annabella Pit.

- *Amenity greenspace*

Amenity greenspace exists beside St Michaels, at the north end of the Settlement Break.

- *New road*

The Central Route (road) is proposed to run through the centre of the Settlement Break.

### ***Topography***

Visually open topography, flat.

### ***Accessibility***

Public transport access from Dairy Lane. No local facilities close-by. Nearest centres are at Fence Houses and at Houghton-le-Spring.

## **Conclusion**

Though both the full geographical areas of Fence Houses and Houghton-le-Spring have evolved and expanded over time, these two areas have remained distinct and physically separate. The boundaries of the Settlement Break have remained intact and unaltered for 50 years. It is obvious that this Settlement Break works, providing an important green wedge separating the two communities.

It is also clear that the Settlement Break acts as a functional floodplain, and forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street. None of the land is actively cultivated- mirroring the fact that much of the Settlement Break lies within either Flood Zones 2 or 3. Though the two burns are not specifically protected on biodiversity grounds, the Settlement Break forms an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, and protected species are evidently using the corridor.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. The boundaries to the Settlement Break are, for the most part, well established and, based upon the constraints considered above, there would appear to be very limited land that could be considered appropriate for development.

There is considerable scope to widen the Settlement Break to the west by realigning the boundary at Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

a) or b).

The principle aim of the Settlement Break has worked. Whilst Fencehouses and Houghton-le-Spring have grown, they have retained distinct and separate identities, chiefly due to the physical separation by this Settlement Break, though it should be recognised that the physical constraints provided by flood risk have been influential.

The Settlement Break boundary has a lot of twists and turns, narrow in some places and widening up in other areas. This is partly due to the existence of two burns, both of which follow the northern and eastern boundaries, and crucially alongside existing residential development. Most of the Settlement Break land to the north and east therefore is affected by Flood Zone 3 or 2.

A further complication is the proposed alignment of the Central Route, a longstanding proposal for a new road linking Rainton Bridge with Dairy Lane and north towards Shiney Row. This alignment affects a central portion of Settlement Break, including potential industrial land beside the industrial estate and the B1284.

All of this land lies within the Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city. The Settlement Break also acts as an important wildlife and Green Infrastructure corridor, linking to and supporting the Moors Burn floodplain, Elba Park and Herrington Burn, Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows.

There are two minor pockets of land that would have only a limited impact on the Settlement Break and on the Green Infrastructure corridor, and would avoid Flood Zones 2 and 3. To the north is Gentoo-owned amenity greenspace (to the east of St Michael's, south of South View Terrace and west of the proposed Central Route alignment). To the south is a small portion of land beside the B1284 and Rainton Bridge North Industrial Estate.

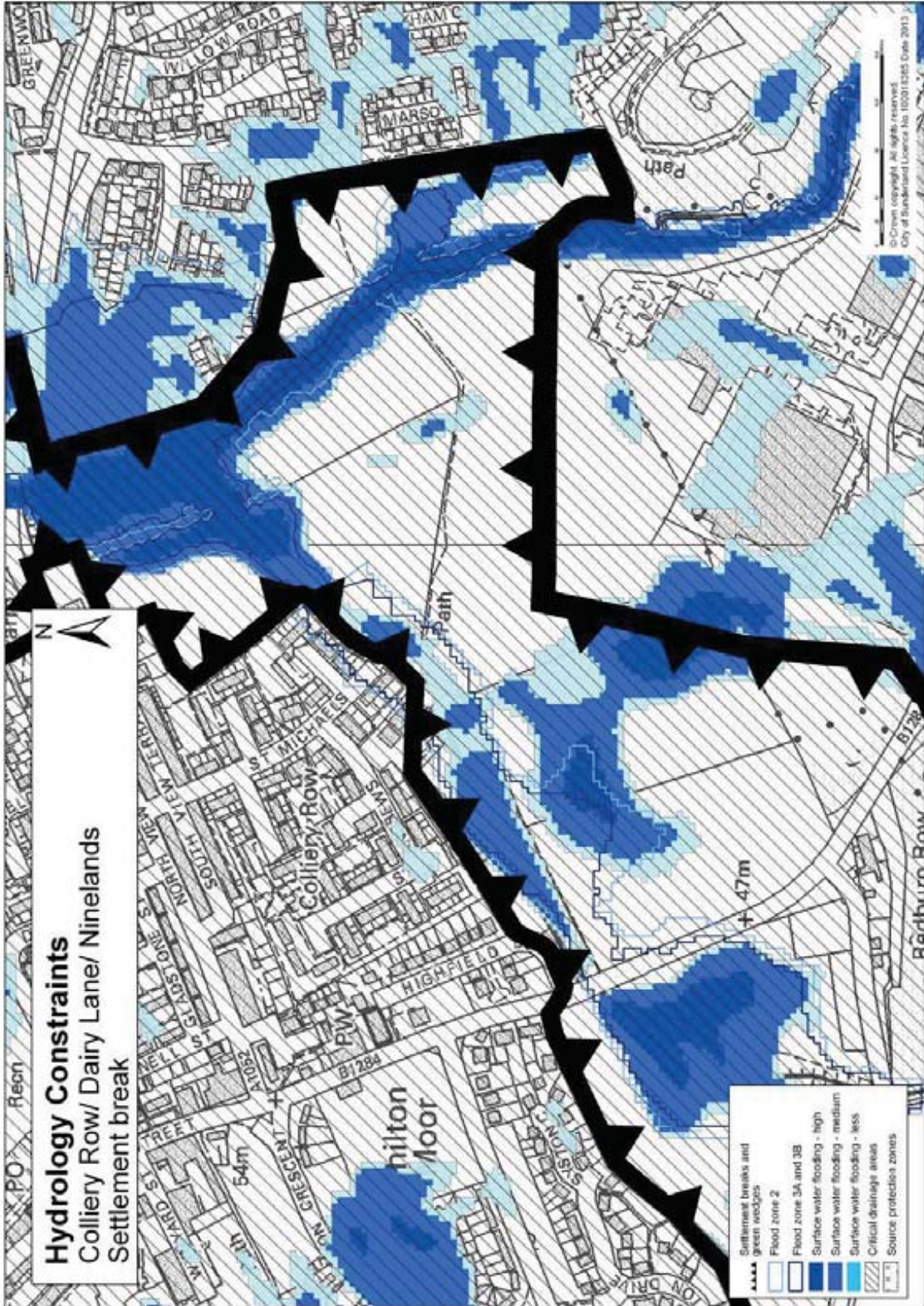
With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

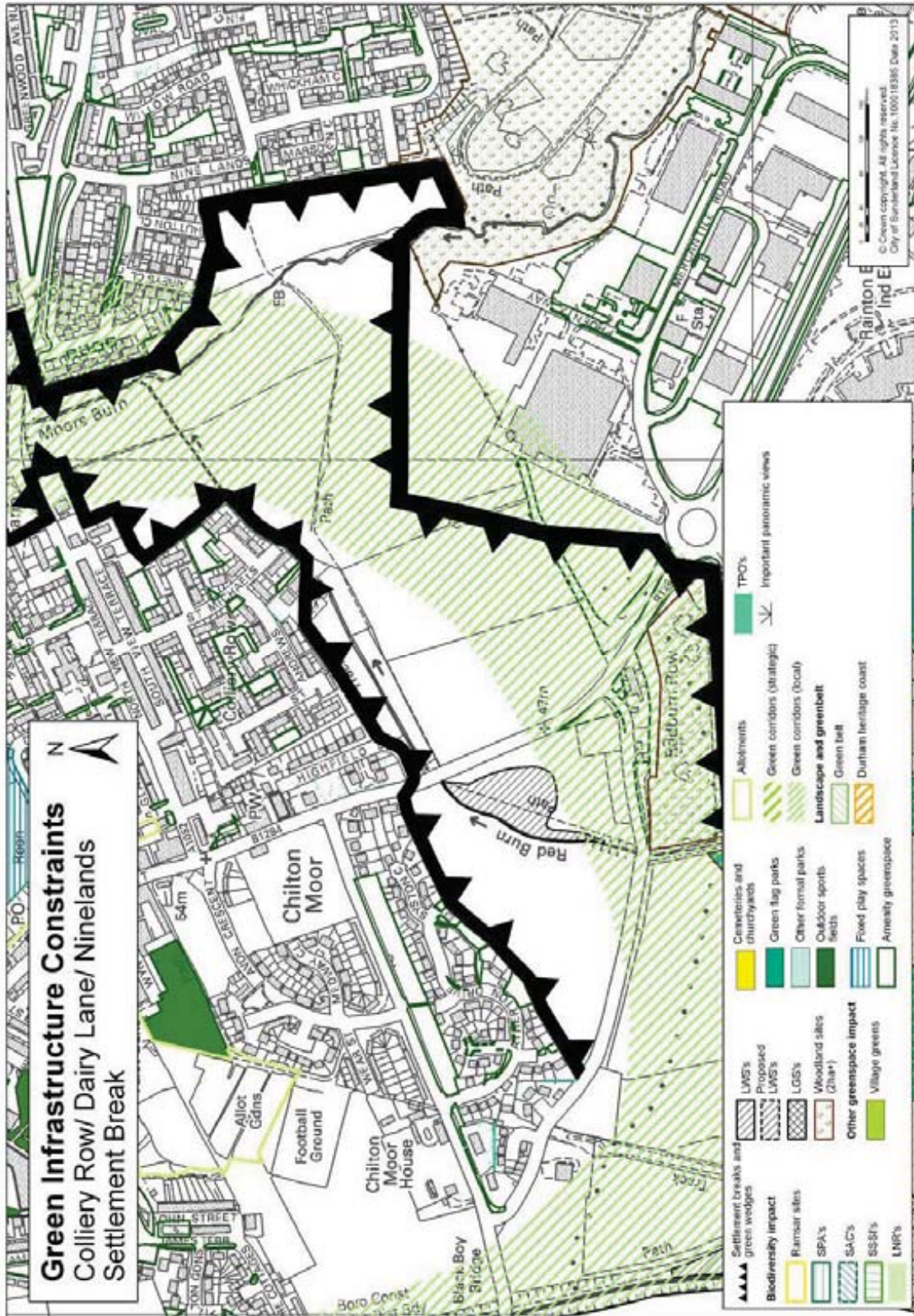
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

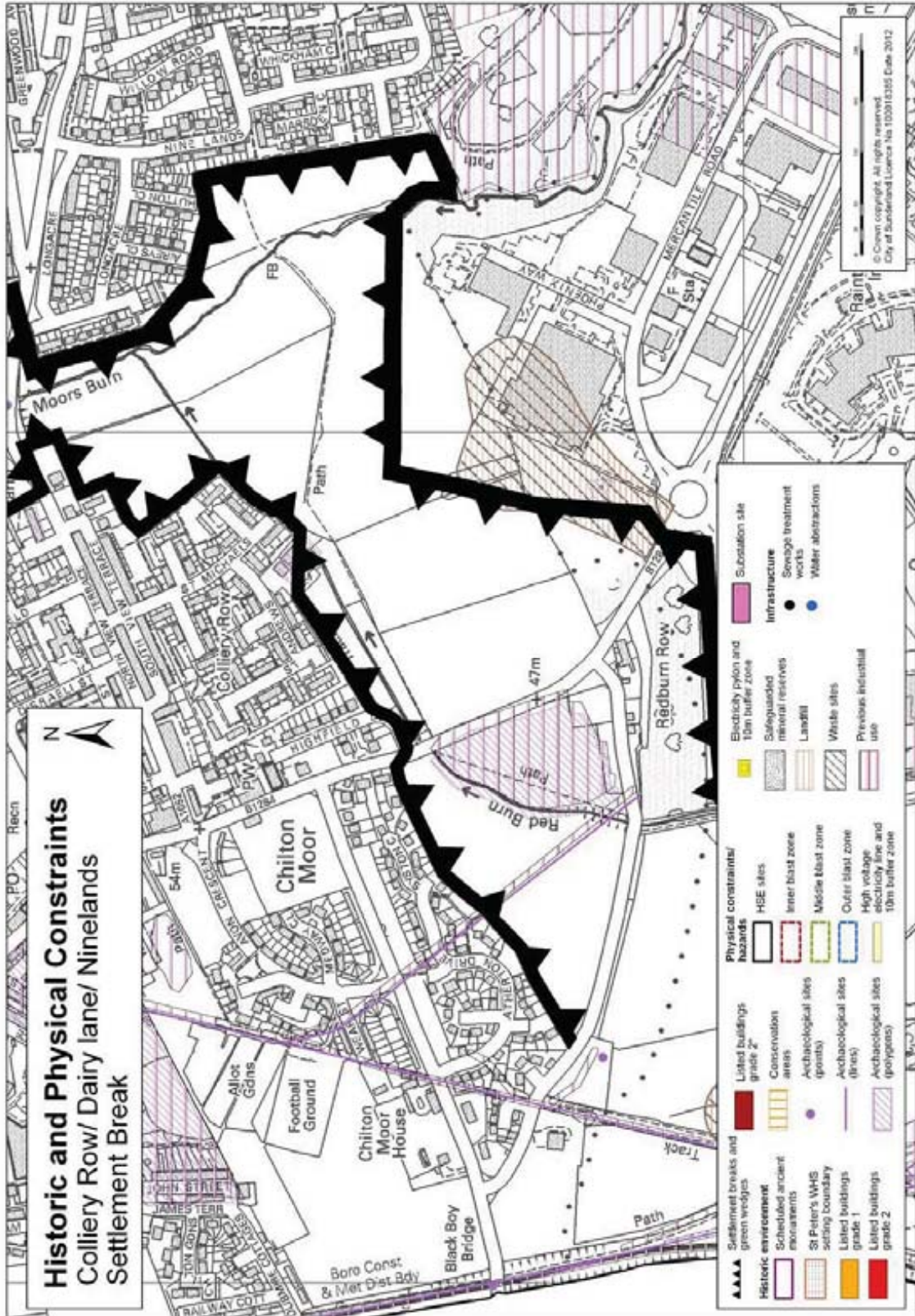
Yes, the Settlement Break area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, which should seek to preserve and enhance the landscape and historic character of the area, and hydrological issues. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

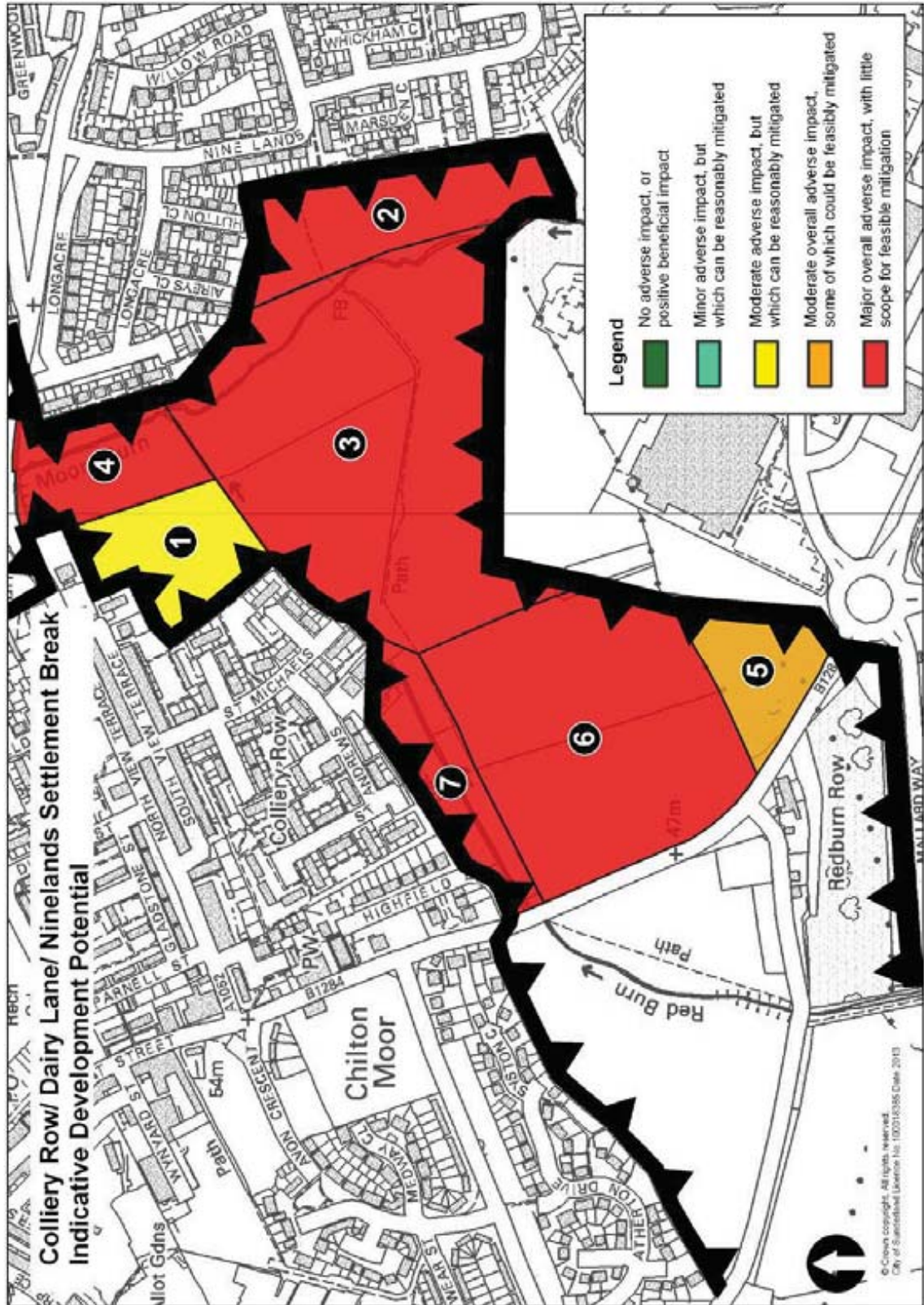
- 1) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 6) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 7) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints  
Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Amenity greenspaces
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3E, 4E, 5D, 6E, 7E**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

**Category 2:**

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**Principal impacts: Principal impacts: Direct impact on the floodplain landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands.**

#### 4) Hydrology

**Category 1:**

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

**Category 2:**

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3D, 4E, 5B, 6D, 7E**

**Principal impacts: within the functional floodplain of the Moors Burn and Red Burn and within a Critical Drainage Area. Major area of ‘high’ surface water flooding to the west.**

#### 5) Historic Environment

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5B, 6A, 7A**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5A, 6B, 7A**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve

D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1B, 2D, 3D, 4C, 5D, 6D, 7C**

**Principal impacts: the southern and eastern parts of the Settlement Break are remote from local centres and services and distanced from public transport services. The southeast has very poor road access.**

## 12) Chilton Moor / Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate



### Location

North of Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate  
South of Chilton Moor and Colliery Row  
West of Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate  
East of Chilton Moor (Redburn Row)

### Size and land ownership (if known)

11 hectares

Mostly private owned land, partly Council owned land.

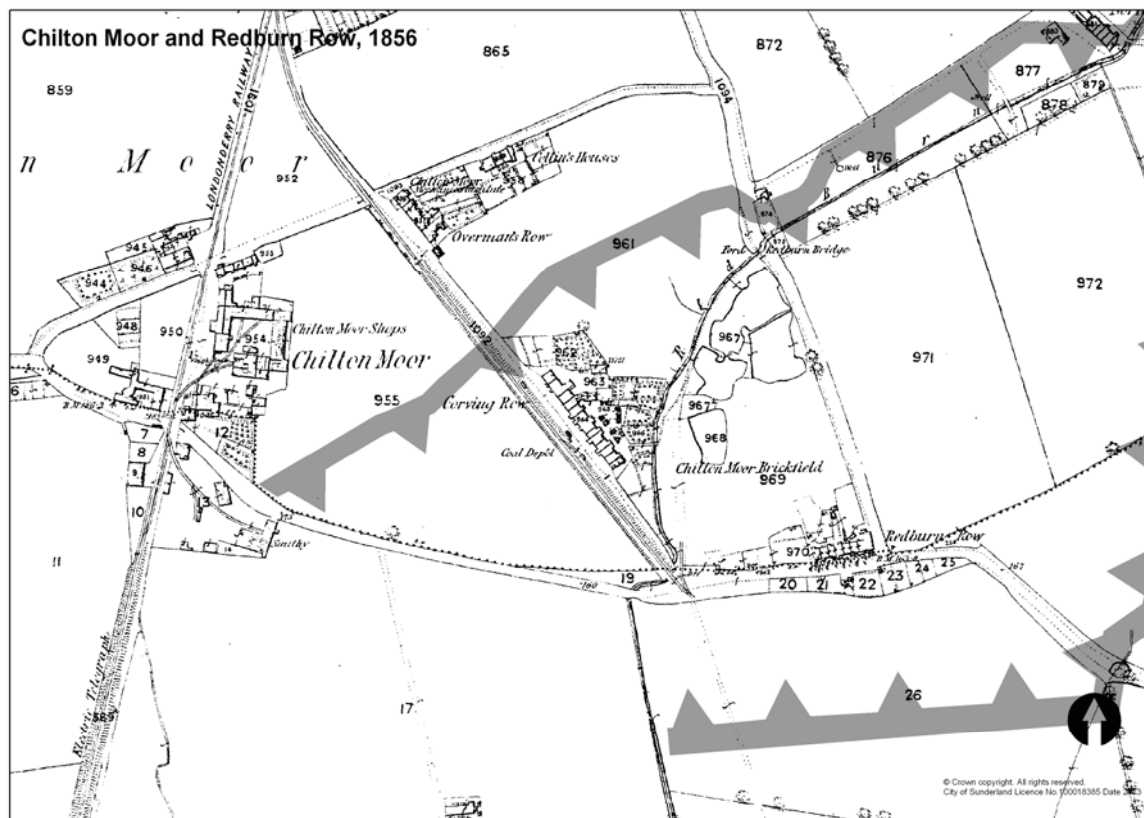
### What does it separate?

Chilton Moor and Colliery Row from Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate

### Current use

Pasture, wetland and woodland.

### Neighbouring settlement background



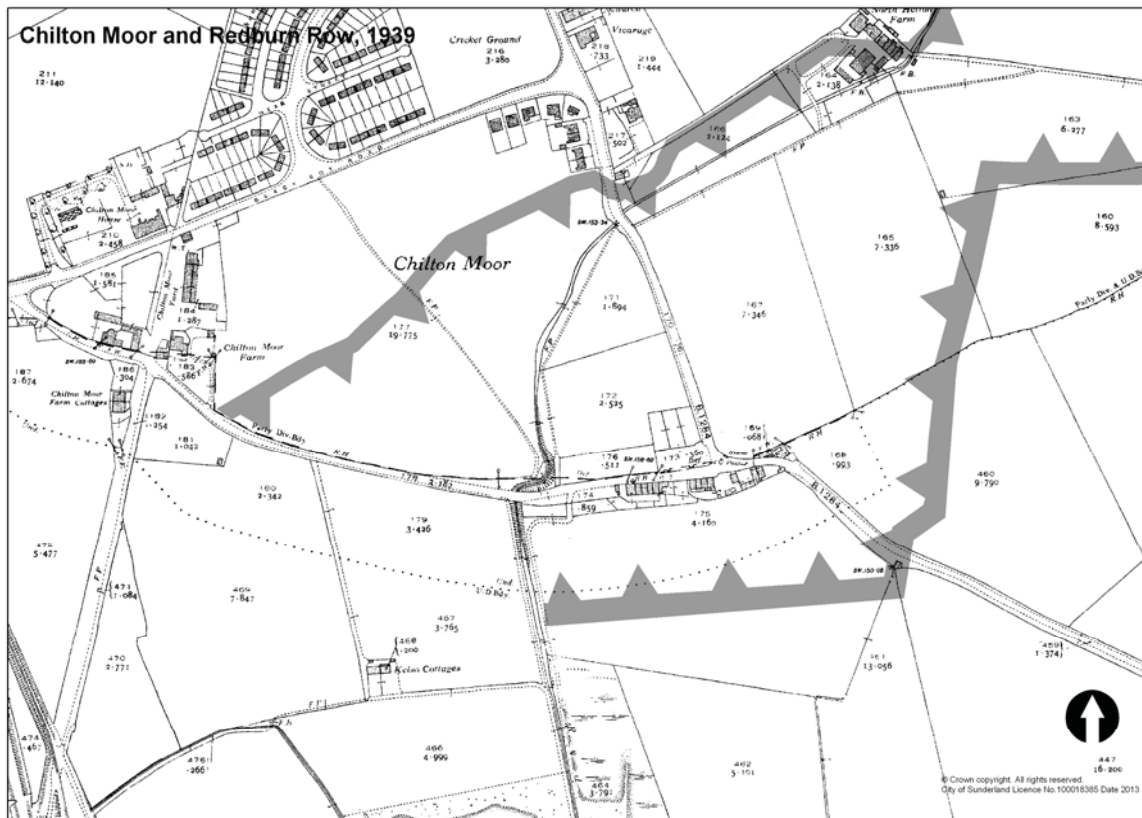
### Fencehouses and Chilton Moor

Fencehouses (or *Fence Houses*), together with the settlements of High Dubmire, Colliery Row and Chilton Moor, forms a large village to the west of Houghton-le-Spring, on the Sunderland City boundary with County Durham.

Fencehouses came into existence when Napoleonic prisoners were housed on the outskirts of Houghton-le-Spring. The land was originally part of the Grange (a large local manor house). A railway line was built (the 'Leanside Line'), providing a station (opened in 1836) and transport links from the local area to Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham. This also served as the rail station for Houghton-le-Spring. A post office opened in 1838, serving as a railway sorting office. The line eventually closed to passengers in 1964. Despite the introduction of the railway, by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century there was little further development, other than a hotel. Colliery Row, on the other hand, already consisted of two long rows of pit houses, and included two chapels and a public house. Further to the south-west, at Chilton

Moor there was a large house, farm, and two small rows of housing. These houses were located alongside a railway spur, which now forms a footpath across the Settlement Break between Black Boy Road and Redburn Row. One row of houses was called the Corving Row (demolished before WW2) and was located adjacent to the Red Burn.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, High Dubmire had expanded, with a series of terraced rows built near to the main road junction (Sedgeleth Road). Fencehouses began to expand in the Edwardian period with terraced rows being formed along Station Avenue. At this time, a tram link was also established from Fencehouses and Colliery Row to Houghton and Sunderland, but this closed in 1925. Council housing was then built linking Chilton Moor and Colliery Row together. Local facilities were established primarily at High Dubmire including schools, a reading room, 2 churches, shops and a sports field.



Post-war, the settlements fully merged. At Colliery Row, Council houses were built to the north and south of North View Terrace (now Gentoo controlled). At Chilton Moor, private housing is now located on the site of the farm, and this housing forms the Settlement Break boundary across to the B1284.

The full Fencehouses and Chilton Moor area now totals around 5,000 inhabitants. With the completed reclamation of the Lambton Cokeworks site and completion of opencasting at Rye Hill/Rainton Meadows, the surrounding landscape is now very attractive. There remain a range of facilities, including a new junior and infant school, a library, shops, pubs, restaurant, allotment gardens and equipped play park. It is clear that the layout of the area has evolved over time, rather than being



planned, but it is also clear that the area as a whole forms a distinct settlement, still separate to Houghton-le-Spring.

### ***Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate***

The southern boundary of the Settlement Break is formed in part by Rainton Bridge (South) Industrial Estate. This new estate, which caters for offices, light and general industry, warehouses and storage, is screened by woodland between Mallard Way and Redburn Row. The south-west of the Settlement Break is open, leading to Rainton Meadows Local Nature Reserve.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.3, HA25.4 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy CN21 (Local Wildlife Sites)
- UDP Policy HA10.3, HA21.2 (Rainton Meadows Local Nature Reserve)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

### **Key constraints**

#### ***Category 1***

- *Flood Zone 3*

Most of the eastern half of this Settlement Break lies within Flood Zone 3 (site of a former brickworks). Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

#### ***Category 2***

- *Flood Zone 2*

Very similar alignment to Flood Zone 3, restricted to land on the eastern side of the Settlement Break. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding (all types)*

Surface water flooding primarily occurs within Flood Zones 2 and 3. However, a further area of medium surface water flooding exists to the west of the Red Burn and close to Red Burn Row. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure corridor, linking Elba Park and Herrington Burn to the north, with Rainton Burn and Rainton Meadows to the south. This corridor has significant species and habitat interest, and part of the site has Local Wildlife Site protection. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further multi-user routes and biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and floodplain within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of woodland, meadows, wetlands and incomplete hedgerows, and is used generally for informal recreation. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, including opportunities to protect the floodplain, create new wetlands and woodland, restore old hedgerows and support coal and railway landscapes.

- *Local Wildlife Site (LWS)*

Redburn Marsh (within Flood Zone 3) is a protected Local Wildlife Site. This site should be fully protected from development. A 2012 Phase 1 Habitat Study for the City of Sunderland has recommended that buffer zones be placed around protected wildlife sites to support their longevity.

- *Woodland*

Between housing on Red Burn Row and Rainton Bridge South Industrial Estate is a dense woodland plantation. The woodland provides supporting natural greenspace to Rainton Meadows as well as screening to the industrial estate. It should be fully protected from development.

- *Archaeological sites/previous industrial use (rail line, brickworks)*

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, a mineral railway spur criss-crossed the Settlement Break from Chilton Moor to Red Burn Moor, serving the Chilton Moor brickfield and providing a small coal depot adjacent to a row of houses. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the railway and brickfield had closed, but the housing (the Corving Row) lasted until the inter-war years. The railway alignment is now a public footpath.

- *High voltage electricity line/pylon*

There are two small wooden-pole electricity lines crossing the fields from the B1284 to Red Burn Row. Any development would need to consider the potential relocation of these electricity lines.

*Other constraints to take into consideration:*

- Minor areas of Amenity Greenspace, located beside housing at Red Burn Row / B1284 junction.

### **Topography**

Visually open topography, very gently sloping west-east towards the Red Burn.

### **Accessibility**

Very limited public transport access. No local facilities close-by. Nearest centre is at Fence Houses.

## **Conclusion**

The Settlement Break does not separate two settlements, but rather acts as a break and a buffer between Fencehouses / Chilton Moor and Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate. Crucially, it maintains the connectivity of the Green Infrastructure corridor from Rainton Meadows northwards to Elba Park and Herrington Burn.

The Settlement Break also acts as a functional floodplain, and forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street. None of the land is actively cultivated- mirroring the fact that much of the Settlement Break lies within either Flood Zones 2 or 3. Part of the Red Burn is specifically protected (Redburn Marsh LWS), and as a whole the Settlement Break forms an important wildlife corridor, with protected species evidently using the corridor.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. The boundaries to the Settlement Break are, for the most part, well established and, based upon the constraints considered above, there would appear to be very limited land that could be considered appropriate for development.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

a) or b).

The principle aim of the Settlement Break has worked, though it should be recognised that the physical constraints provided by flood risk have been influential. Whilst Fencehouses has grown, it has retained a distinct and separate identity. The break has also acted as a buffer between housing and Rainton Bridge Industrial Estate, and secures an important Green Infrastructure corridor link into Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve.

Most of the eastern half of the Settlement Break either falls within Flood Zone 3 or provides dense woodland / shelter belt. This area should be fully protected from development.

All of the Settlement Break lies within the Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city.

The only portion of land where development could be considered would be to the far west of the break, on slightly higher ground away from Flood Zones and surface water flooding. However, the present Settlement Break boundary is well defined, and any development incursion here would significantly impact upon the width of the Green Infrastructure corridor between Rainton Meadows and Redburn Marsh. It would also impact upon any subsequent buffer zone that is recommended to be added to the city's protected sites, which are seen to be small in size and therefore fragile.

With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

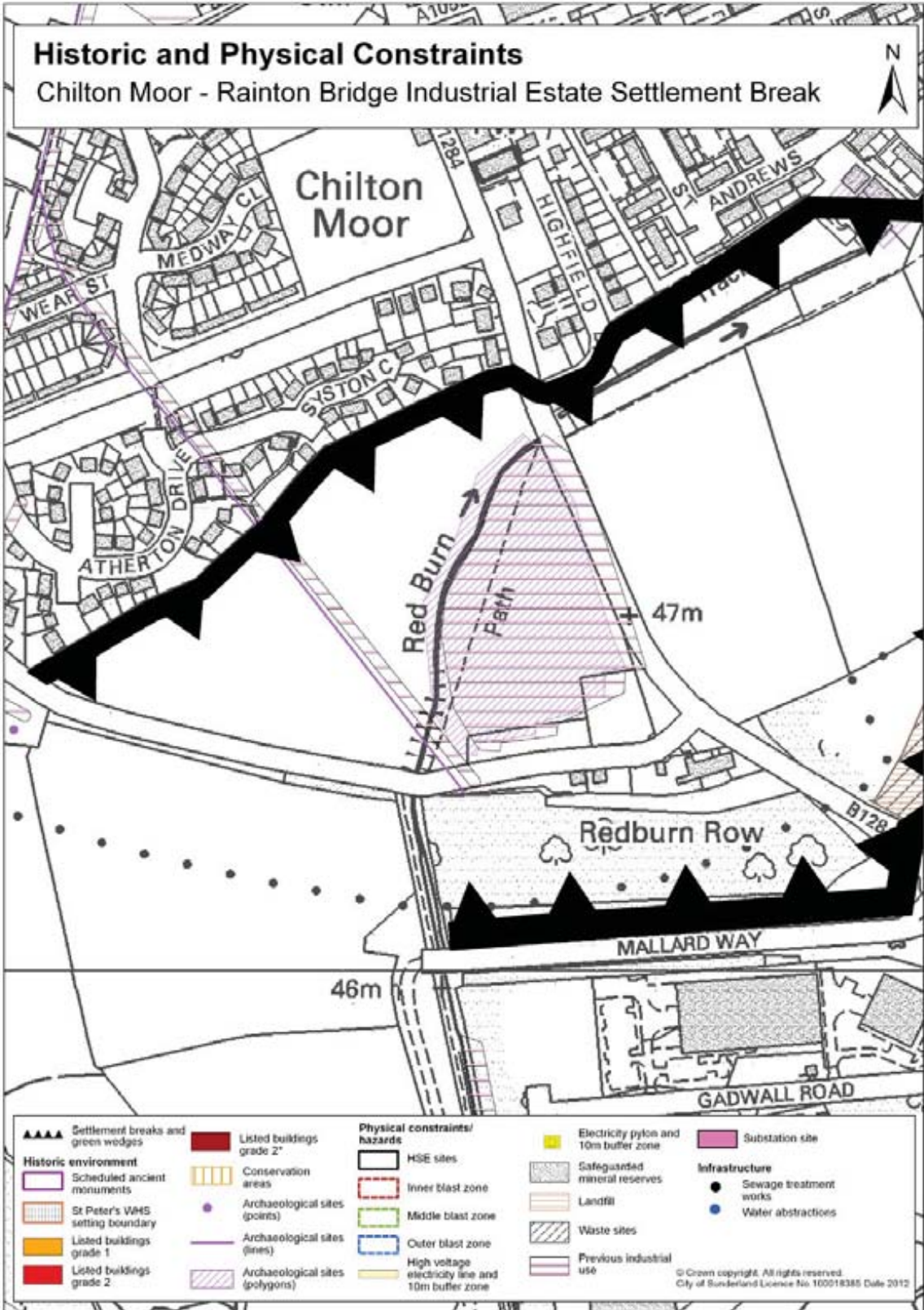
Yes, the entire area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and specific site protection should be given to Local Wildlife Sites and greenspace sites. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

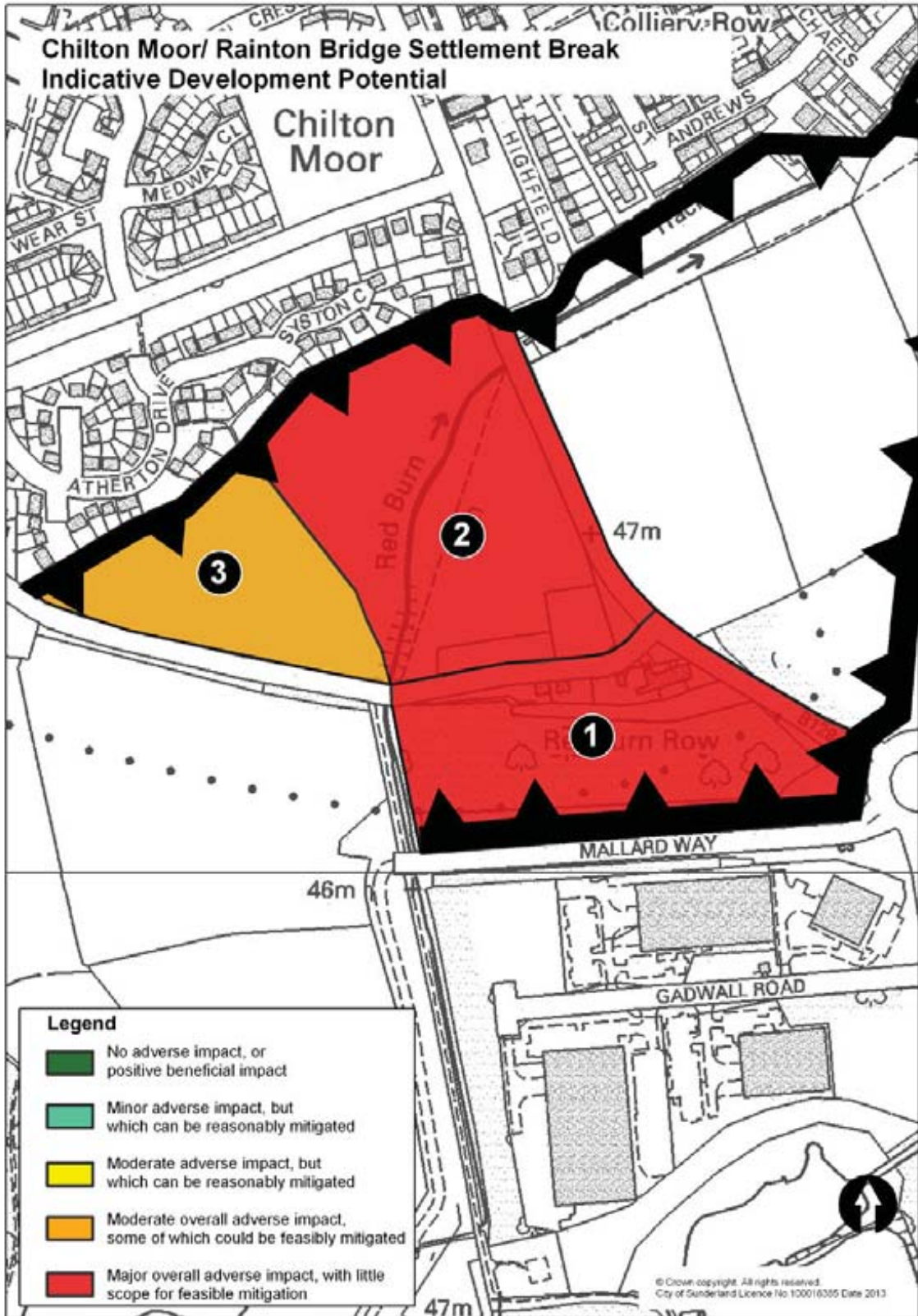
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints  
Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- LWS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1E, 2E, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on Local Wildlife Site and buffer zone,; direct impact on wildlife corridor; direct impact on dense woodland plantation.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Amenity greenspaces
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2E, 3D**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**Principal impacts: Principal impacts: Direct impact on the floodplain landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, direct impact on woodland plantation.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1B, 2E, 3C**

**Principal impacts: within the functional floodplain of the Red Burn and within a Critical Drainage Area. Area of 'medium' surface water flooding to the west of Red Burn, beside Red Burn Row (road).**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3B**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2B, 3A**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3C**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1E, 2D, 3D**

**Principal impacts: the area is remote from local centres and services and distanced from public transport services.**

### 13) Rainton Bridge / East Rainton / North Road



## Location

North of Hazard Lane and High Moorsley  
South of B1284 at Rainton Bridge  
West of B1284 North Road and Hetton-le-Hole  
East of East Rainton

## Size and land ownership (if known)

89 hectares  
Mostly private land, some Council-owned land.

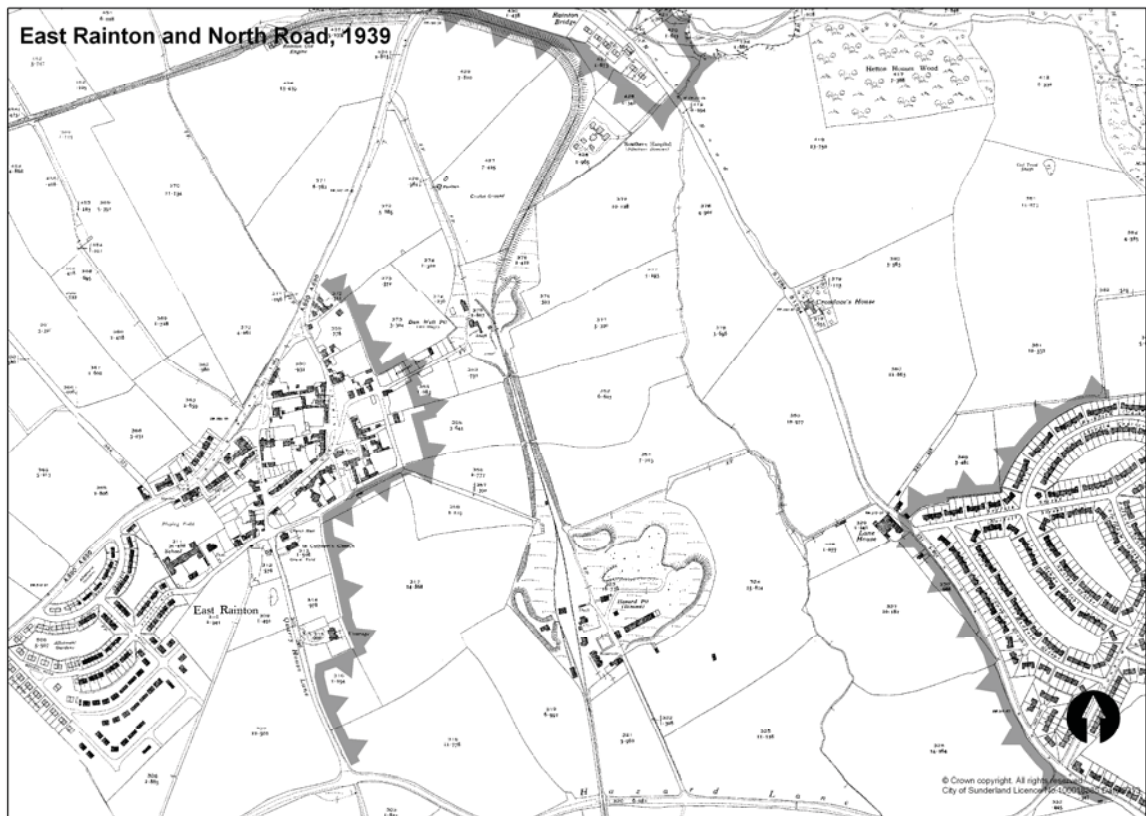
## What does it separate?

East Rainton village from Hetton-le-Hole and Rainton Bridge (Houghton-le-Spring).

## Current use

Agriculture, woodland and outdoor sport (cricket field).

## Neighbouring settlement background



## *East Rainton*

East Rainton is a mediaeval village dating back to at least the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. It belonged to the priory of Durham. It is located alongside the A690 road linking Sunderland and Durham City and originally served as a staging post on the old coaching road. The original road passes through the village.

By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the village had grown to around 1700 inhabitants, who mostly worked as miners. Numerous coal mines existed nearby, including Nicholson's Pit

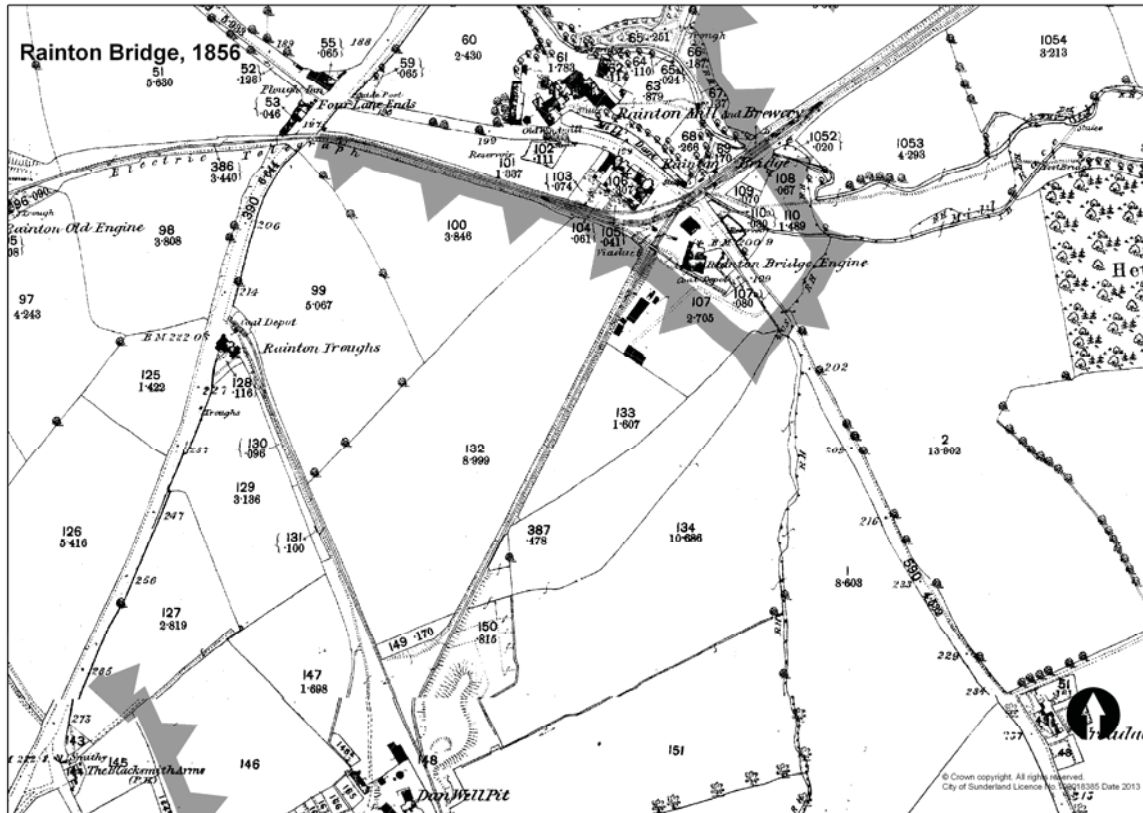
and Hazard Pit. The church of St Cuthbert was built in 1866. The village had 4 pubs, a village green, post office, reading room and cricket club.

As local mines (and quarries) ceased in the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, the village became more dormitory in nature. It expanded between the wars with a Council-estate built to the south-west of the village (now Gentoo homes). Further pockets of private housing were built post-war.

The village, though linked closely to Houghton-le-Spring, has retained its separate character, and like much of this local area tends to have stronger links with Durham City than to Sunderland. Today, the village retains a village shop, a pub, a village primary school, cricket club, church and chapel. It also contains the Highfield Hotel and Thai restaurant. The village is well served by buses linking it to Durham, Houghton and Sunderland.

### **Rainton Bridge**

Rainton Bridge forms the southern extent of Houghton-le-Spring, and lies 0.5 kilometres north of East Rainton. It now forms a quiet private residential area of semi-detached and detached homes. However, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century it was quite different, industrial in nature and bisected east-west by the Rainton-Seaham waggonway, taking coal to the port from more than a dozen pits in the Rainton area. Beside the waggonway was Rainton Mill and Brewery. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Southern Hospital (for Infectious Diseases) had also been built, together with a couple of rows of homes.



By the outbreak of the Second World War, Rainton Bridge had been transformed, the waggonway had been abandoned and the Mill closed. The semi-detached

houses along Mill Terrace had been built to replace the original dwellings. Housing to the north was just starting to bridge the gap to Houghton-le-Spring. Further post-war private housing has brought Rainton Bridge firmly into the urban footprint of Houghton.

### **Hetton-le-Hole**

A 'Hetton' is mentioned in the Boldon Book of 1183, but this may mean Hetton-on-the-Hill. Hetton-le-Hole probably came into existence in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century a change had come to this part of Durham, which was losing its wooded aspect and was seeing its agriculture decline quite rapidly. Local villagers were losing their holdings on the land as the great fields were enclosed. Sheep farming was carried on to help foster the country's wool trade, then its prime industry. By this time too industrialisation was beginning to occur, particularly coal mining.

Mining for coal had occurred for hundreds of years immediately to the west of Hetton, but the Magnesian Limestone at Hetton and further east restricted coal extraction until the early 1800's. Success came in 1822 when the Lyons deep mining colliery at Hetton was opened, supported by the Hetton Colliery waggonway which ran coal across Warden Law to the River Wear at Sunderland. These activities led to a great and rapid increase in the size of Hetton. Rail transport also came in 1836 when the Durham to Sunderland line was opened (eventually closed in 1953). The population rose from 200 in 1801 to 6,400 by 1861 and more than 12,000 by the turn of the century.

Coal extraction eventually ceased in the area in 1986. Sand is still quarried at Hetton Downs, however. Jobs in the locality are now much more limited, though Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate and Rainton Bridge Business Park are nearby.

Though part of the City of Sunderland, Hetton-le-Hole retains a strong local character, and tends to retain stronger links with Durham than with Sunderland. Hetton retains a good range of facilities, including a Town Council, primary schools, a secondary school, the Hetton Centre (incorporating the town library), swimming pool and leisure centre, a cemetery, Eppleton FC (which holds Sunderland Reserve games), 2 cricket grounds, Hetton Park, Hetton Lyons Country Park, a supermarket and variety of local shops.

Many of the Victorian pit houses and terraces have been replaced with new housing, though the Hetton Downs area is a focus for housing regeneration. At the north end of Hetton, Broomhill Estate was demolished in 2012 and replacement housing is planned. To the west, Park Estate lies 750m east of East Rainton, and consists of linked bungalows, mostly owned by Gentoo. There are no facilities on this estate and public transport connections here are limited.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No. Planning permission has been granted for a small residential development at Southern House Farm, Rainton Bridge, on the site of the former Southern Hospital for Infectious Diseases. The Settlement Break boundary would be altered to avoid this site.



## **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridors)
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T8, T9, T10, HA25.3 (Multi-User Routes)
- UDP Policy T13, T15, HA28.2 (Reserved for Transport Corridor)
- UDP Policy L1, L7, L9, B3 (Existing Open Space)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

## **Key constraints**

### **Category 1**

- *Flood Zone 3*

A small burn runs south-north through the site near to North Road. A narrow band of land falls within Flood Zone 3 along its course, only widening at Southern House Farm, Rainton Bridge. Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

### **Category 2**

- *Flood Zone 2*

A small burn runs south-north through the site near to North Road. A narrow band of land falls within Flood Zone 2 along its course (mostly mirroring Flood Zone 3), only widening at Southern House Farm, Rainton Bridge. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding*

Two minor areas of 'medium' surface water flooding are identified to the south of the Settlement Break, otherwise surface water flooding is restricted to within Flood Zone 3. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Green Infrastructure corridors*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure junction, with corridors linking to Rainton Meadows, Hetton Bogs and Copt Hill, and south into County Durham. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Greenspace (cricket field), natural greenspace*

The former Hazard mineral railway provides a wooded walkway and cycleway through the centre of the Settlement Break. The wooded area widens at the former locations of the Hazard and Dun Well (Rainton) Pits. To the north lies East Rainton

Cricket Club, with cricket field and natural greenspace to the rear. These greenspaces should be protected in full from development.

- *Landscape Character*

Gently rolling landscape within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, forming an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of agriculture, meadows, greenspace, woodland and incomplete hedgerows, and is used generally for informal recreation. The landscape has seen a lot of change, some of it regenerating from heavy industry. There is evidence of natural regeneration as well as new woodland plantations. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. The area relates to inland County Durham rather than to coastal Sunderland/Durham.

Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, creating new meadows and woodland, restoring old hedgerows and supporting coal and railway landscape features.

- *Archaeological sites / previous industrial (coal-related) uses*

The Hazard Railway line (belonging to the Rainton and Seaham Railway) connected North Hetton Colliery to Rainton Bridge, and linked to the Dun Well (Rainton) and Hazard Pits which are located within the Settlement Break area. A further rail spur ran to a small coal depot on Durham Road, near to the cricket field. These pits had all closed by the mid-1930's. These sites now provide a Right of Way/cycleway and natural greenspace, and should be protected in full.

- *Archaeological sites / previous industrial (other) uses*

To the north at Rainton Bridge, the Southern Hospital for Infectious Diseases was located. It was built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and closed soon after WW2. This site became Southern House Farm, and now the site has planning permission for housing.

- *Landfill / waste site (Hazard pit)*

The former Hazard Pit, located in the centre of the Settlement Break, is identified as a landfill/waste site.

- *New road*

The Hetton Link Road is proposed to run through the centre of the Settlement Break.

### **Topography**

Land slopes down from East Rainton towards Rainton Bridge to the north and towards the small burn and North Road to the east.

### **Accessibility**

Public transport access restricted to Durham Road, East Rainton. Some facilities (including a Primary School) exist at East Rainton, otherwise the nearest towns are Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

## **Conclusion**

The Settlement Break has helped to retain East Rainton's distinct character, and keep separate from the larger neighbouring towns of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

The Settlement Break has also acted to help preserve the attractive landscape of the Rainton Lowlands, boosted over time with the withdrawal of mining. Though none of the land is specifically protected, the Settlement Break forms an important wildlife corridor, with protected species evidently using the area. The area also forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could especially be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. The boundaries to the Settlement Break are, for the most part, well established and, based upon the constraints considered above, there would appear to be very limited land that could be considered appropriate for development.

### **Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

a) or b) full or partially.

The principle aim of the Settlement Break has worked. East Rainton has retained a distinct and separate identity. The Settlement Break has also stopped Rainton Bridge and Hetton-le-Hole from sprawling (in terms of development), focusing new development within the existing urban boundary wherever feasible.

The central and eastern parts of the Settlement Break should be fully maintained as they form an important wildlife corridor, providing both a continuous wetland and a woodland corridor north-south, linking to Hetton Bogs. North Road provides a strong boundary to development at Park Estate. All of the Settlement Break lies within the Critical Drainage Area, which is subject to considerable development pressure across the 'Coalfield' area of the city.

The northern part of the break beside Rainton Bridge is potentially affected by the alignment of the Hetton Bypass. This gap between Rainton Bridge and Hetton provides a link to Rainton Meadows, particularly for birds, and for walkers and cyclists who can use the A690 underpass.

The westernmost portion of the Settlement Break may have scope for some minor infilling. The Settlement Break is 750m wide between East Rainton and Hetton-le-Hole. The land is not subject to hydrology concerns or other significant constraints, other than the inclusion within the Critical Drainage Area. Moreover, small-scale development could help to retain local facilities, including the primary school.

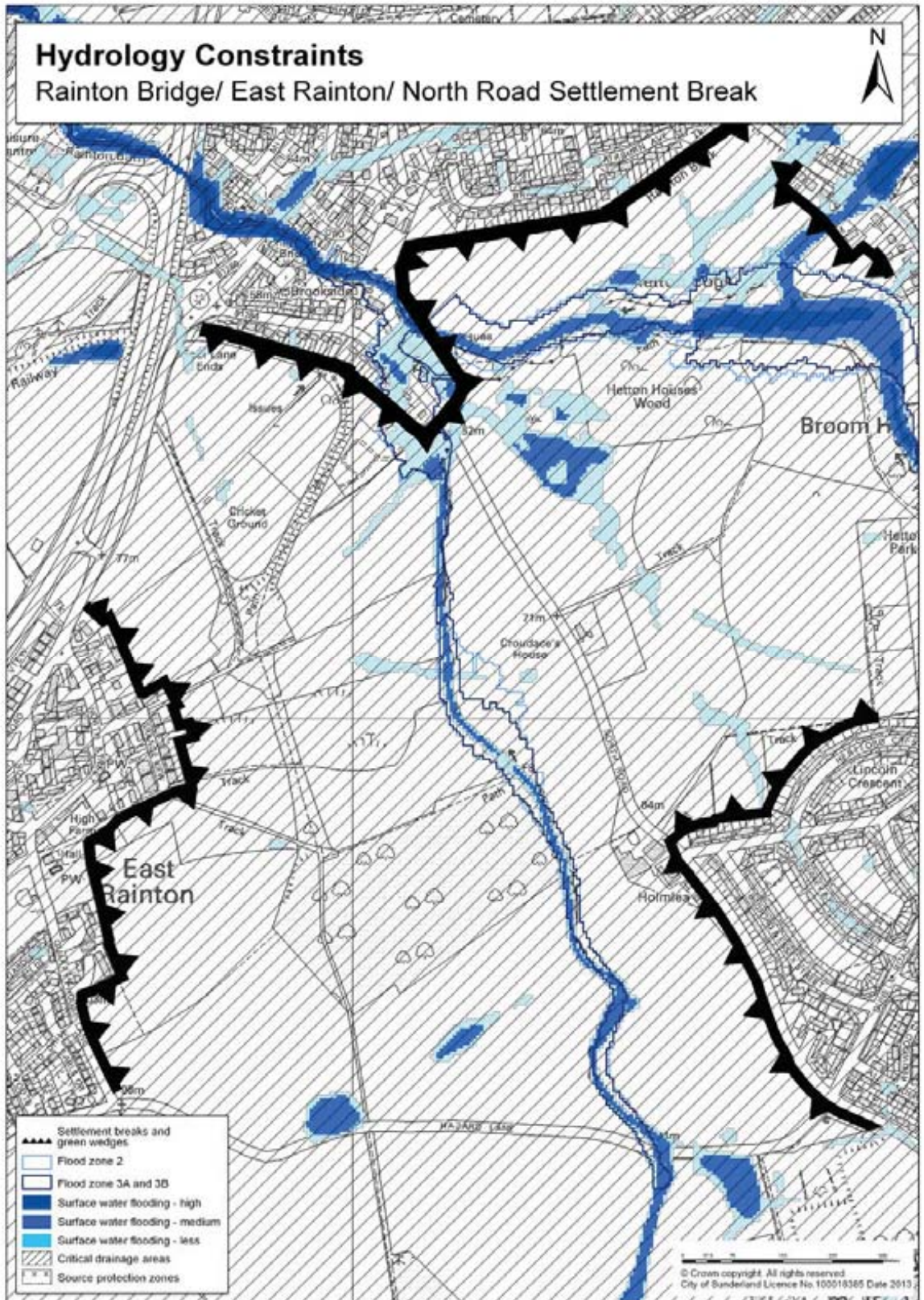
With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

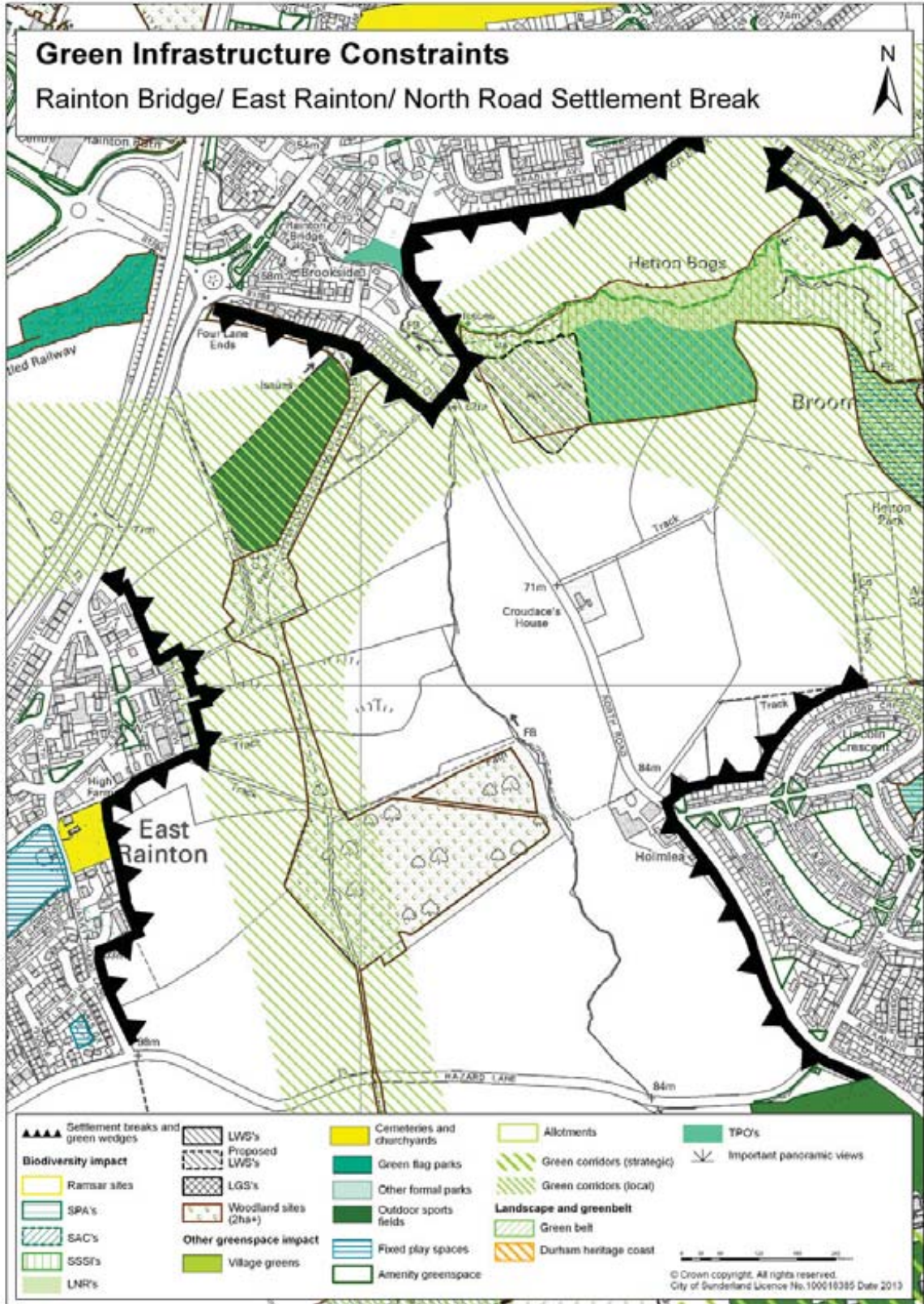
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

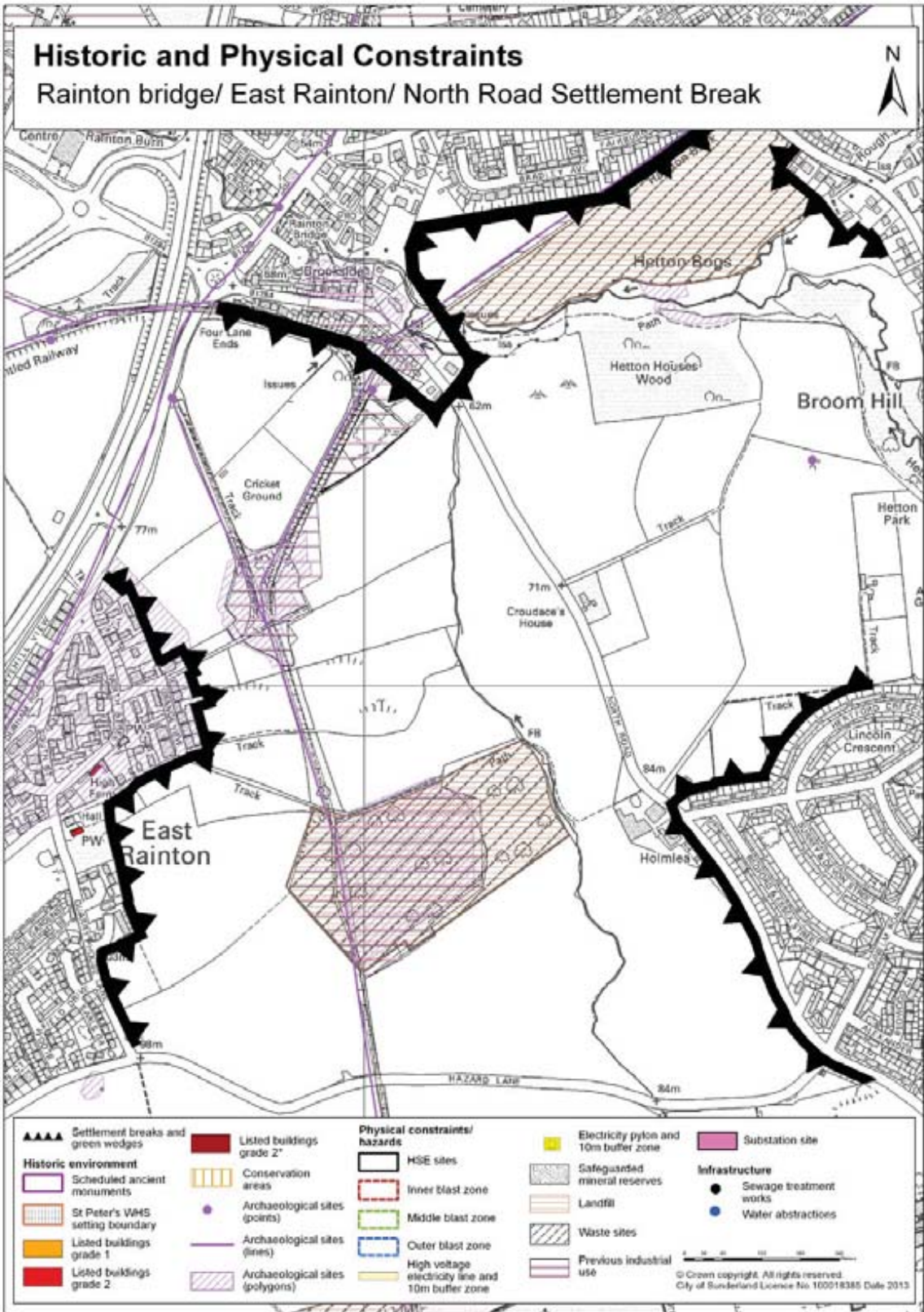
Yes, the entire area should be protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and specific site protection should be given to greenspace sites. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

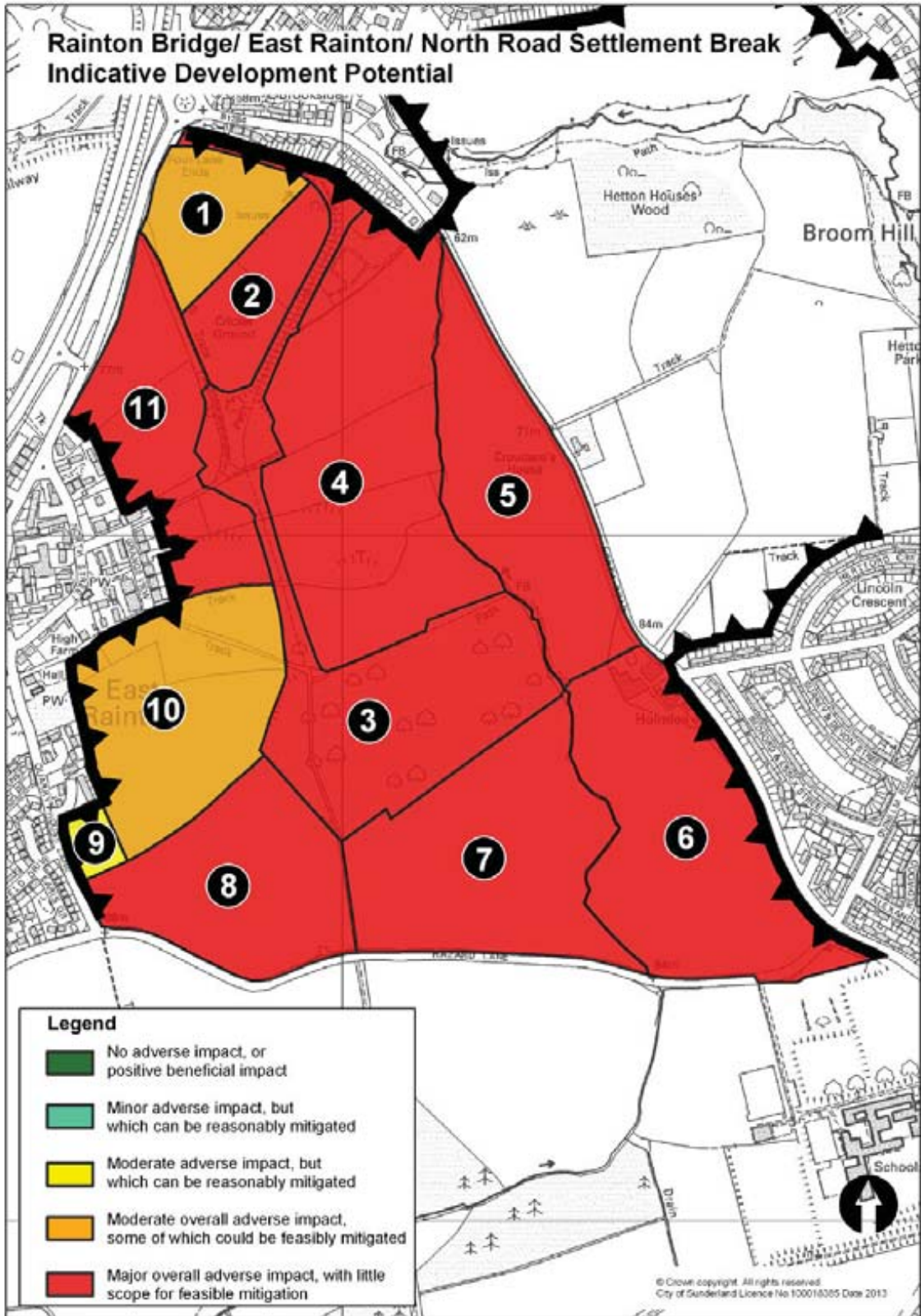
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 6) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 7) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 8) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 9) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 10) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 11) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation











## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints  
Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3D, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9B, 10C, 11C**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on wildlife corridor and woodland.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Outdoor sports fields
- Natural greenspace
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2E, 3E, 4D, 5E, 6D, 7E, 8D, 9B, 10C, 11D**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to cricket field, natural greenspaces and Green Infrastructure corridor.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3D, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C, 11C**

**Principal impacts: Principal impacts: Direct impact on the landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, direct impact on woodland plantations.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1B, 2B, 3B, 4C, 5C, 6B, 7B, 8B, 9B, 10B, 11B**

**Principal impacts: narrow flood zones alongside small burn to the west of North Road, widening at Southern House Farm, Rainton Bridge. Whole area within a Critical Drainage Area.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3C, 4B, 5A, 6A, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11B**

**Principal impacts: Hazard Pit, Dun Well Pit and associated waggonways.**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- Stability issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1A, 2A, 3D, 4B, 5A, 6A, 7A, 8A, 9A, 10A, 11A**

**Principal impacts: Landfill/waste at Hazard Pit.**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C, 11C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C, 9C, 10C, 11C**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D, 8D, 9D, 10D, 11D**

**Principal impacts: has played a very strong role in retaining settlement distinction and preserving a key Green Infrastructure corridor.**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3E, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7E, 8D, 9C, 10C, 11C**

**Principal impacts: the eastern half of the Settlement Break in particular is remote from local centres and services and distanced from public transport services. Furthermore, the gradients/design of Tunstall Hope Road is not suitable to support development-generated traffic.**

## 14) North Road / Park Estate / Hetton Park / Houghton



## Location

North of Park Estate  
South of Houghton-le-Spring  
West of Hetton Park  
East of North Road

## Size and land ownership (if known)

55 hectares  
Mostly private land, some Council-owned land.

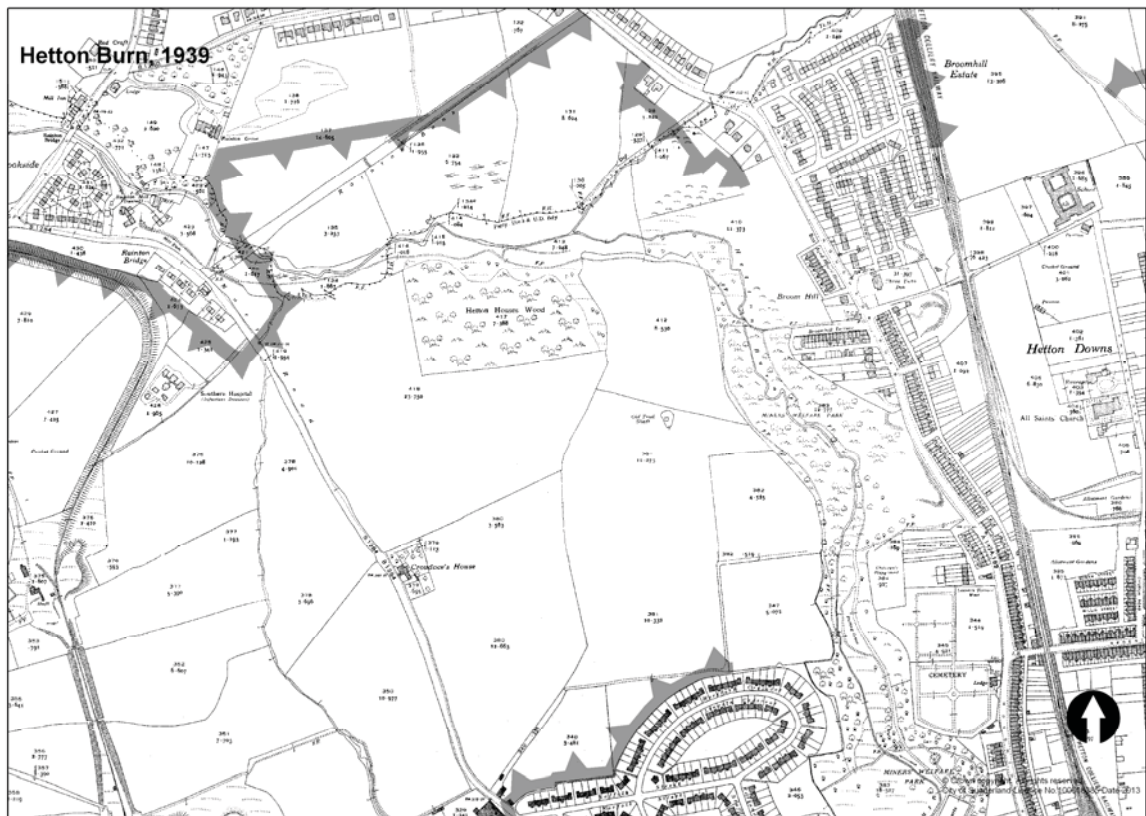
## What does it separate?

Primarily acts to separate Hetton-le-Hole from Houghton-le-Spring.

## Current use

Agriculture and Local Nature Reserve.

## Neighbouring settlement background



## Houghton-le-Spring

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.

The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).

Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

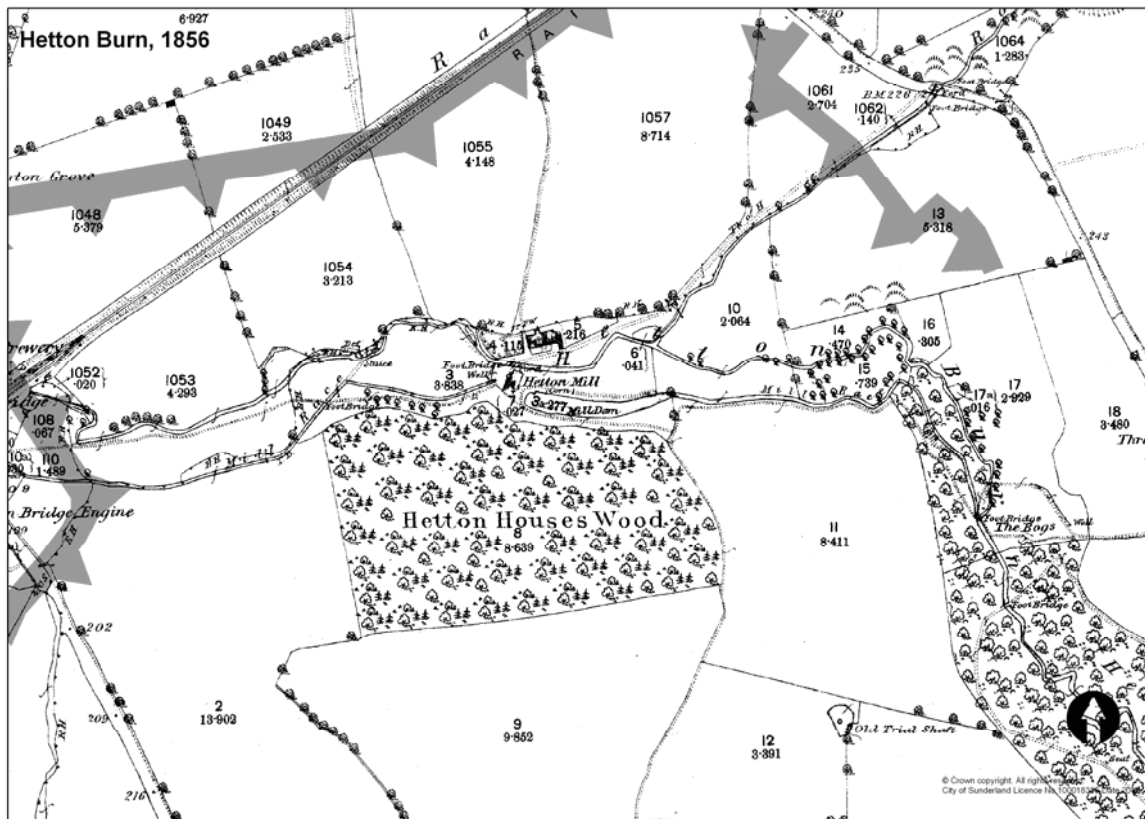
There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

Semi-detached private housing was developed to the south of Gillas Lane West (up to the line of the Settlement Break and former Rainton-Seaham waggonway embankment) soon after WW2. The land to the south of these homes, leading to Hetton Bogs has remained as an open Settlement Break, although Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole are linked by a single thread of inter-war homes along Hetton Road. Houghton retains a distinct identity in the area.

### ***Rainton Bridge***

Rainton Bridge forms the southern extent of Houghton-le-Spring, and lies 0.5 kilometres north of East Rainton. It now forms a quiet private residential area of semi-detached and detached homes. However, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century it was quite different, industrial in nature and bisected east-west by the Rainton-Seaham waggonway, taking coal to the port from more than a dozen pits in the Rainton area. Beside the waggonway was Rainton Mill and Brewery. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Southern Hospital (for Infectious Diseases) had also been built, together with a couple of rows of housing.

By the outbreak of the Second World War, Rainton Bridge had been transformed, the waggonway had been abandoned and the Mill closed. The semi-detached houses along Mill Terrace had been built to replace the original dwellings. Housing to the north was just starting to bridge the gap to Houghton-le-Spring. Further post-war private housing has brought Rainton Bridge firmly into the urban footprint of Houghton.



### Hetton-le-Hole

A 'Hetton' is mentioned in the Boldon Book of 1183, but this may mean Hetton-on-the-Hill. Hetton-le-Hole probably came into existence in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century a change had come to this part of Durham, which was losing its wooded aspect and was seeing its agriculture decline quite rapidly. Local villagers were losing their holdings on the land as the great fields were enclosed. Sheep farming was carried on to help foster the country's wool trade, then its prime industry. By this time too industrialisation was beginning to occur, particularly coal mining.

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Coal extraction eventually ceased in the area in 1986. Sand is still quarried at Hetton Downs, however. Jobs in the locality are now much more limited, though Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate and Rainton Bridge Business Park are nearby.

Though part of the City of Sunderland, Hetton-le-Hole retains a strong local character, and tends to retain stronger links with Durham than with Sunderland. Hetton retains a good range of facilities, including a Town Council, primary schools, a secondary school, the Hetton Centre (incorporating the town library), swimming pool and leisure centre, a cemetery, Eppleton FC (which holds Sunderland Reserve games), 2 cricket grounds, Hetton Park, Hetton Lyons Country Park, a supermarket and variety of local shops.

Many of the Victorian pit houses and terraces have been replaced with new housing, though the Hetton Downs area is a focus for housing regeneration. At the north end of Hetton, Broomhill Estate was demolished in 2012 and replacement housing is planned. To the west, Park Estate lies 750m east of East Rainton, and consists of linked bungalows, mostly owned by Gentoo. There are no facilities on this estate and public transport connections here are limited.

#### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

#### **Background policy considerations/history**

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridors)
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy T10, HA26.3 (Strategic Footpath)
- UDP Policy CN20, CN21, HA21.1 (Local Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest)
- UDP Policy L1, L7, L9, B3 (Existing Open Space)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

#### **Key constraints**

Category 1

- SSSI / LNR

Hetton Bogs SSSI and Hetton Houses Wood LWS jointly form a Local Nature Reserve which is located alongside the Rainton Burn. The city's 2012 Phase 1 Habitat Study stated that the city's protected wildlife sites are much smaller than the national average, and this makes sites more fragile. As a result, it is recommended for all protected wildlife sites to have buffer zones- especially important at Hetton Bogs which is used by water voles, otters and great crested newts. Whilst the LNR needs to be protected from development, it has yet to be determined how much of an additional buffer zone is required for the area.

- *Flood Zone 3*

Land affected by Flood Zone 3 flanks the Rainton Burn. Much of it lies within the LNR, though it consistently extends further north of the protected area, and south of Hetton Bogs (near to Hetton Park). Development within the functional floodplain should be resisted.

## **Category 2**

- *Flood Zone 2*

Flood Zone 2 varies very little to Flood Zone 3. Only certain types of development would be considered applicable in this zone.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding*

Most of the surface water flooding incidences occur within Flood Zones 2 and 3, except for 'medium' level surface water flooding identified alongside Rough Dene Burn and to the west of Hetton Houses Wood. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *2 x Local Wildlife Sites (Hetton Houses Wood and Hetton Park)*

Hetton Park Local Wildlife Site (LWS) provides the eastern boundary to the Settlement Break land. Hetton Houses Wood LWS is identified on the Inventory of Ancient Woodland, and provides a further area of protection adjacent to Hetton Bogs LNR. These sites, together with Hetton Bogs, provide a continuous corridor of woodland that leads westwards towards Rainton Bridge and Rainton Meadows. These areas should be fully protected from development.

- *Green Infrastructure corridors*

This area forms an important Green Infrastructure junction, with corridors linking to Rainton Meadows, Copt Hill, and south into County Durham. Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Low-lying valley and rolling landscape within the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, adjacent to the Magnesian Limestone Escarpment. It forms an important green corridor between settlements. The area is made up of pony paddocks, agriculture, meadows, wetlands, greenspace, woodland and incomplete hedgerows, and is used generally for informal recreation. Hetton Bogs in particular provides significant wetland landscape. There is a semi-rural feel to the area, despite the proximity of built-up areas. The area relates to inland County Durham rather than to coastal Sunderland/Durham.

Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore the landscape, creating new wetland, meadows and woodland, restoring old hedgerows and supporting historic industrial features.

- *Archaeological sites*

Located in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century within Hetton Bogs (opposite Hetton Houses Wood) was Hetton Mill (corn), complete with mill race. The mill race and mill were

removed by WW2. To the north lay Rainton Bank, carrying the Rainton and Seaham waggonway, in use in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century but abandoned by WW1. There is also an old coal trial shaft located within fields south of Hetton Bogs. Hetton Houses Wood is also included on the Inventory of Ancient Woodland.

- *Landfill / waste site (north of Hetton Bogs)*

The fields between Rainton Bank and Hetton Bogs are identified as landfill and waste sites.

- *Allotments*

Private allotment gardens are located in the south-east part of the Settlement Break.

### **Topography**

Visually open topography, sloping north-south from Houghton-le-Spring to Hetton Bogs, and south-north from Park Estate to Hetton Bogs.

### **Accessibility**

Very limited public transport access, except for the fields north of Hetton Bogs which are relatively close to the A182. No facilities within acceptable walking distance. Nearest centres are Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring.

### **Conclusion**

The urban areas of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole are joined by a narrow ribbon of housing along the A182, therefore in strict terms the towns are not 'separated' at all. The Settlement Break to the west of this road acts more as a green wedge, but has nevertheless helped to sustain and retain an impression of separateness and distinctiveness between the two communities.

Of critical importance is that the Settlement Break over the years has provided an informal buffer of undeveloped land around Hetton Bogs SSSI/LNR. Agricultural land and pasture might not provide ideal natural foraging areas, but it has nevertheless provided greenfield land that has severely restricted human presence. Sunderland's protected wildlife sites are only a quarter the average size of sites elsewhere in the UK, and as a result are more vulnerable to human pressure, and far less connected with other sites. Vulnerable species such as water voles, bats and newts (all on site) could easily be lost to the locality if sufficient buffer protection is not afforded to this nationally important site.

Hetton Bogs also provides a classic example of a wetland landscape (part of the Rainton Lowlands) and serves as a Green Infrastructure corridor junction connecting to the west and south, and also north-east via Rough Dene Burn towards the South Sunderland Green Belt. It should also be noted that the entire area forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street.

None of the land in the Settlement Break could be described as being sustainable in accessibility terms. The break to the north of Hetton Bogs is typically less than 200m in width and any development incursion into this area would hem-in the Local Nature Reserve and severely limit the size of buffer zone feasible. Land to the

south of the Bogs is wider (at least 475m wide). Any development in this locality (notwithstanding the accessibility concerns) would need to be restricted to close proximity to the Park Estate. Even then, development may only be feasible if very carefully designed to enable: appropriate highway upgrades to be made on North Road; an appropriate buffer zone to the LNR to remain; the Green Infrastructure corridor to continue unhindered, and; to improve rather than to impair drainage and flooding to the local and wider area. With any Greenfield site proposal there would need to be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

(a) or (b)

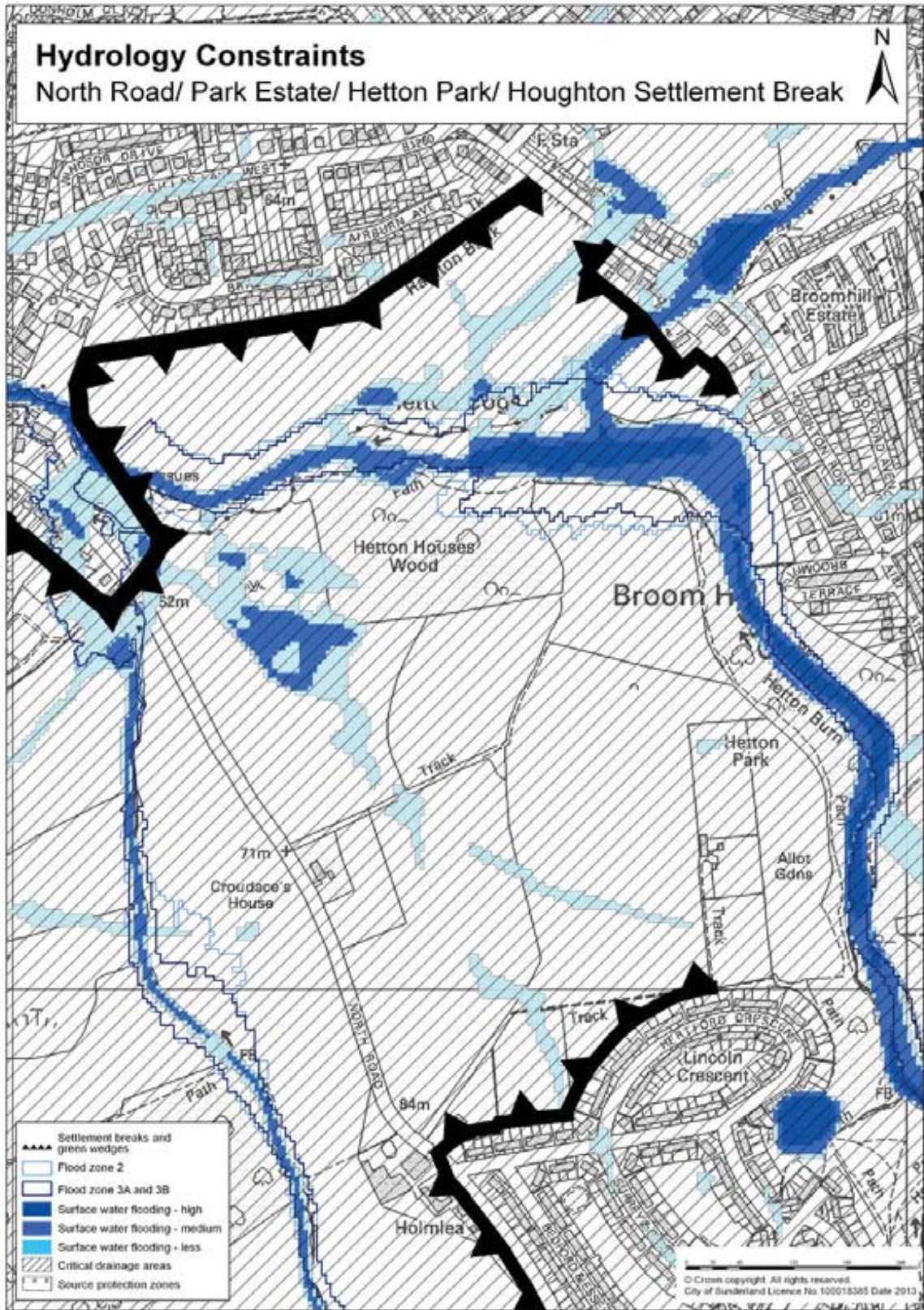
Of prime importance is the need to protect Hetton Bogs LNR and to provide appropriate buffer zone policy. Since the open land extends to barely 200m in width on the north side, it would be appropriate to extend this buffer to the existing housing boundary (Bradley Avenue). On the south side, however, the gap is nearly 500m, and an appropriate buffer zone width still needs to be established. In these southernmost fields there may be scope for limited development, if exceptional reasons can be justified and sensitive design can be achieved.

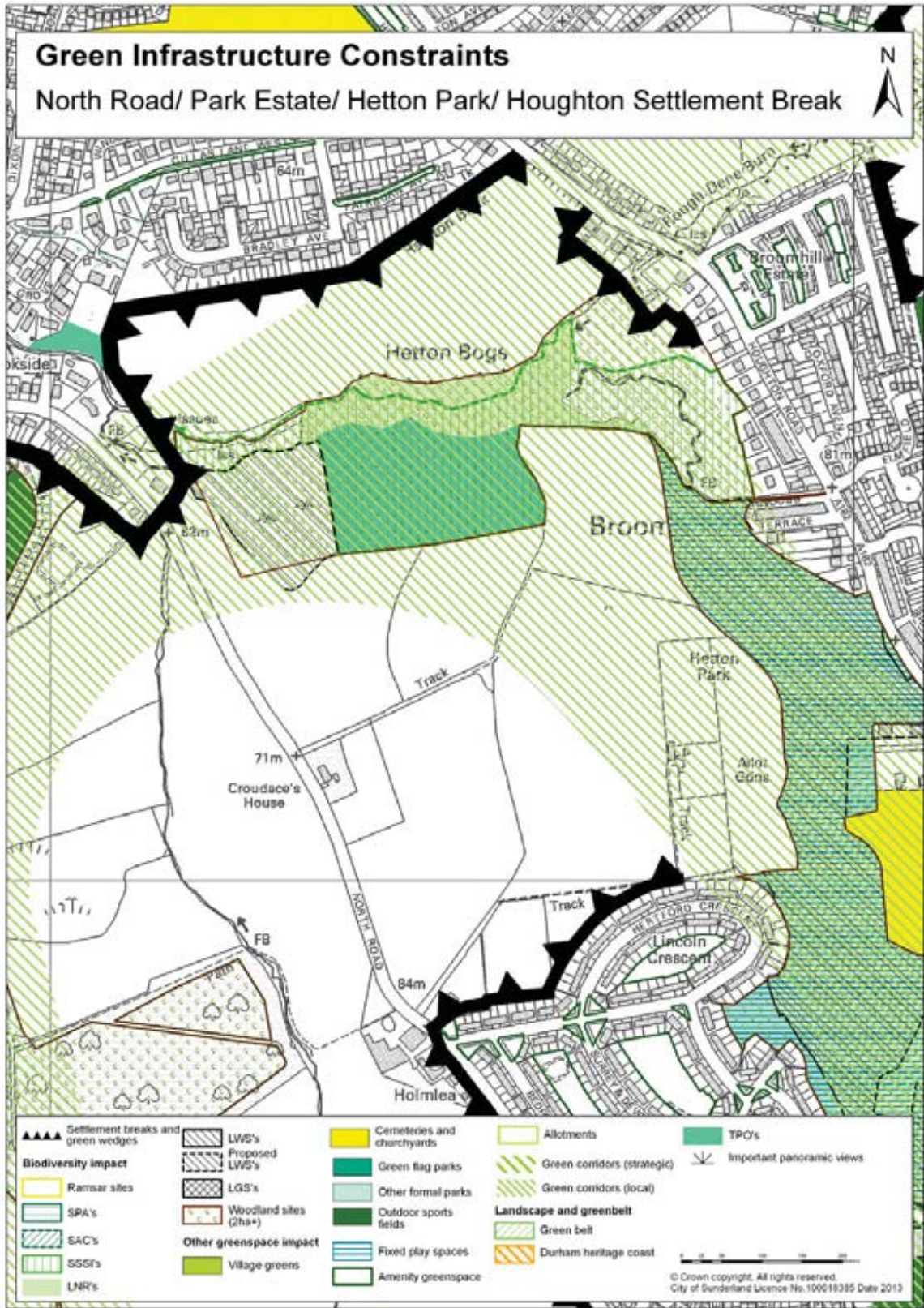
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

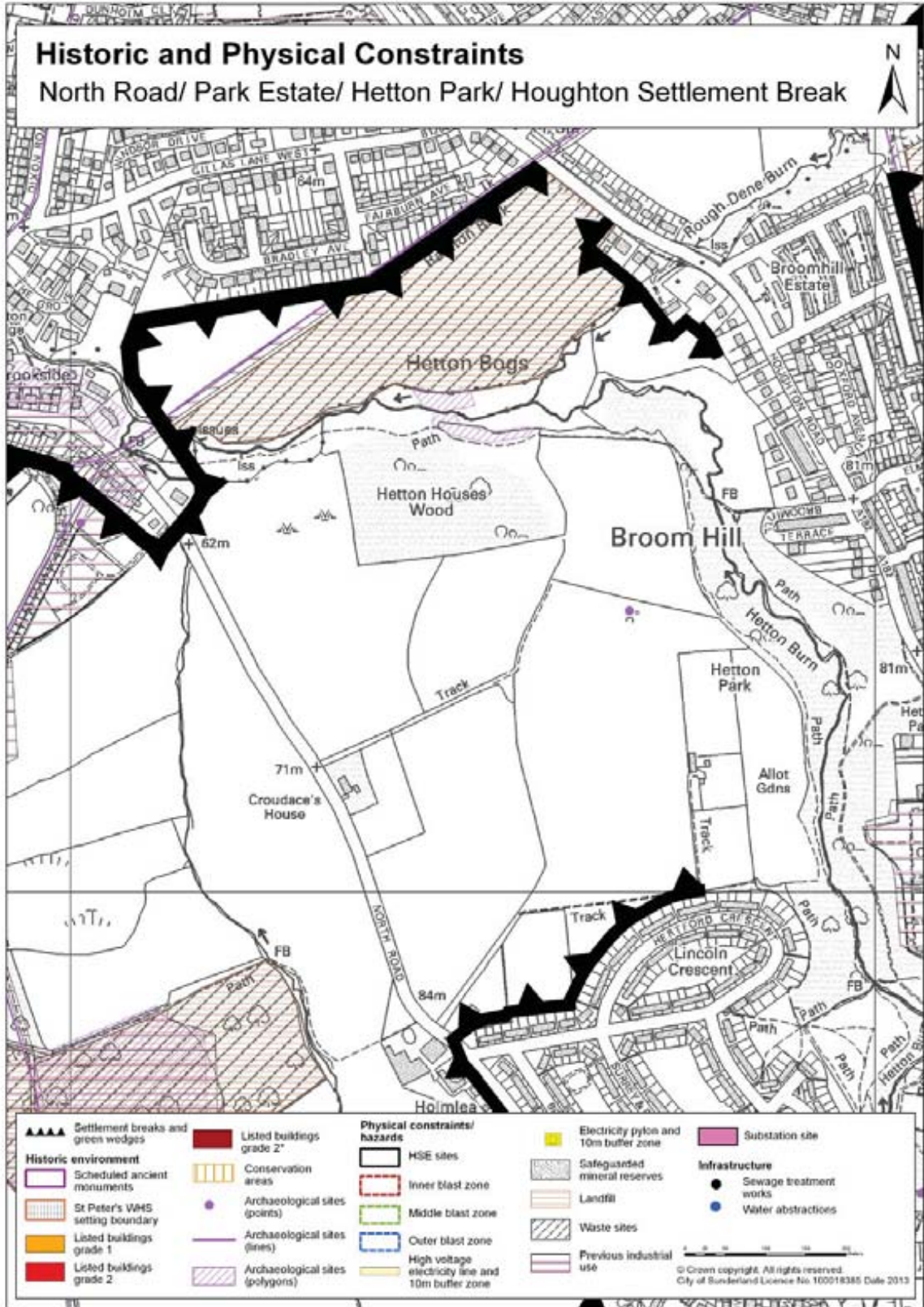
Yes, the protected wildlife sites and associated buffer zones should be specifically protected as a Green Infrastructure corridor, and site protection should also be given to other greenspace sites in the area. Area-wide policy may also be needed in relation to capping the overall amount of development proposed within the Critical Drainage Area.

**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

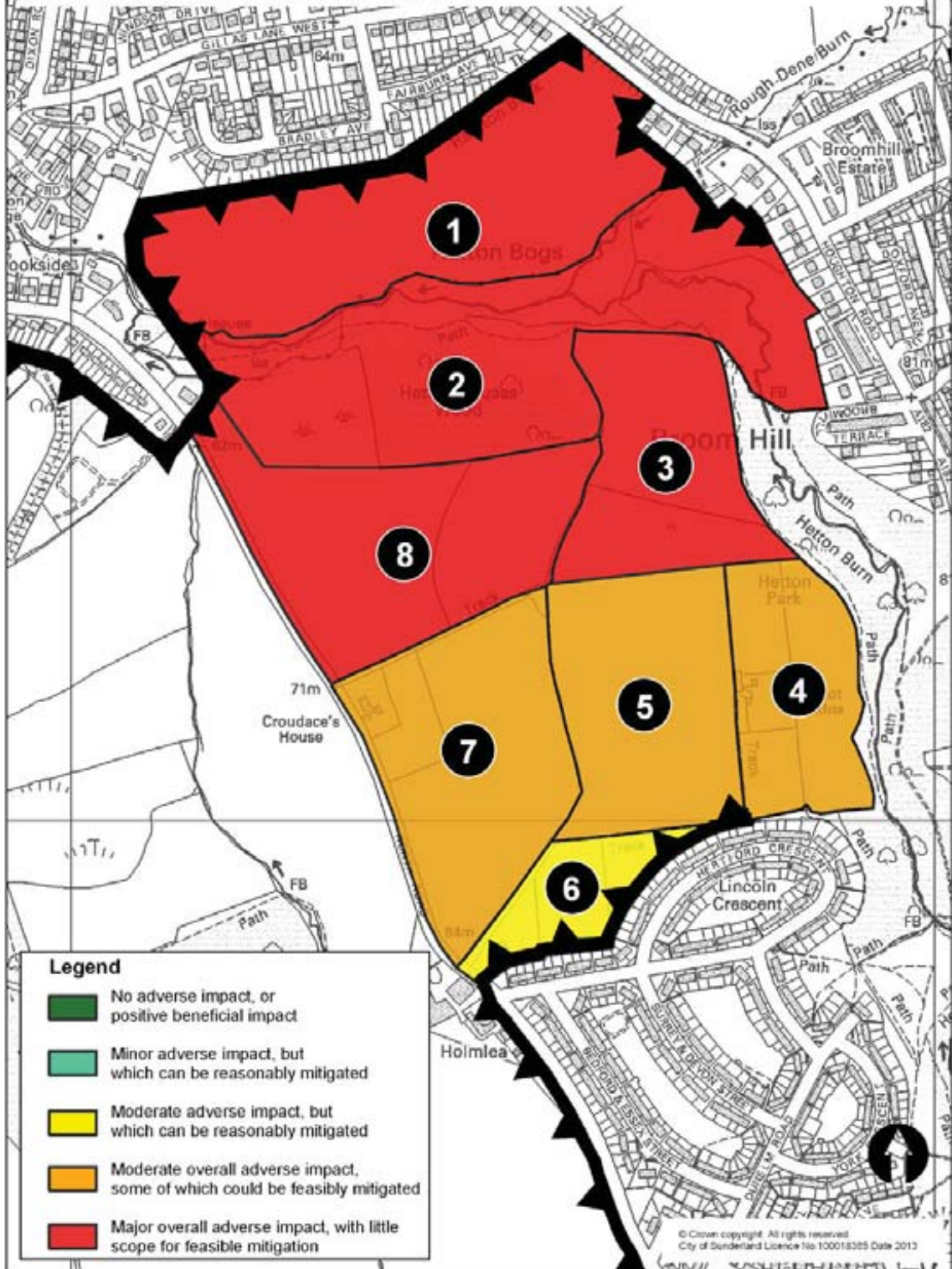
- 1) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 5) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 6) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated
- 7) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 8) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation







## North Road/ Park Estate/ Hetton Park/ Houghton Settlement Break Indicative Development Potential





## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

#### Category 1:

- SSSI / LNR

#### Category 2:

- LWS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2E, 3D, 4C, 5C, 6B, 7C, 8D**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact on Local Nature Reserve/SSSI and associated buffer zone. Direct impact on wildlife corridor.**

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

#### Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Other formal parks and country parks
- Allotments
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2E, 3D, 4D, 5C, 6C, 7D, 8D**

**Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor, natural greenspace and allotments.**

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Landscape – Tyne and Wear Lowlands
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2E, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C**

**Principal impacts: Principal impacts: Direct impact on the floodplain landscape of the Tyne and Wear Lowlands, direct impact on woodland plantations.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1C, 2E, 3C, 4B, 5B, 6B, 7B, 8C**

**Principal impacts: within the functional floodplain of the Hetton Burn and within a Critical Drainage Area. Area of 'medium' surface water flooding east of North Road.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3A, 4A, 5B, 6A, 7A, 8A**

## 6) Physical constraints / hazards

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- Stability issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, 6A, 7A, 8A**

## 7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C, 8C**

## 8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
D	Major potential cumulative impact

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D, 8D**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D, 8D**

**Principal impacts: has played an important role in helping to sustain and retain an impression of separateness and distinctiveness between Houghton and Hetton, and helped to preserve a Green Infrastructure corridor.**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D, 7D, 8D**

**Principal impacts: Hetton Park restricts access eastwards to the A182. Distanced from local centres and facilities. Limited bus service to the south.**

## 15) Broomhill / Houghton



**Location**

North of Broomhill Estate  
South of Houghton-le-Spring  
West of Copt Hill  
East of Hetton Road

**Size and land ownership (if known)**

7 hectares  
Privately owned land

**What does it separate?**

Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

**Current use**

Agriculture.

**Neighbouring settlement background*****Houghton-le-Spring***

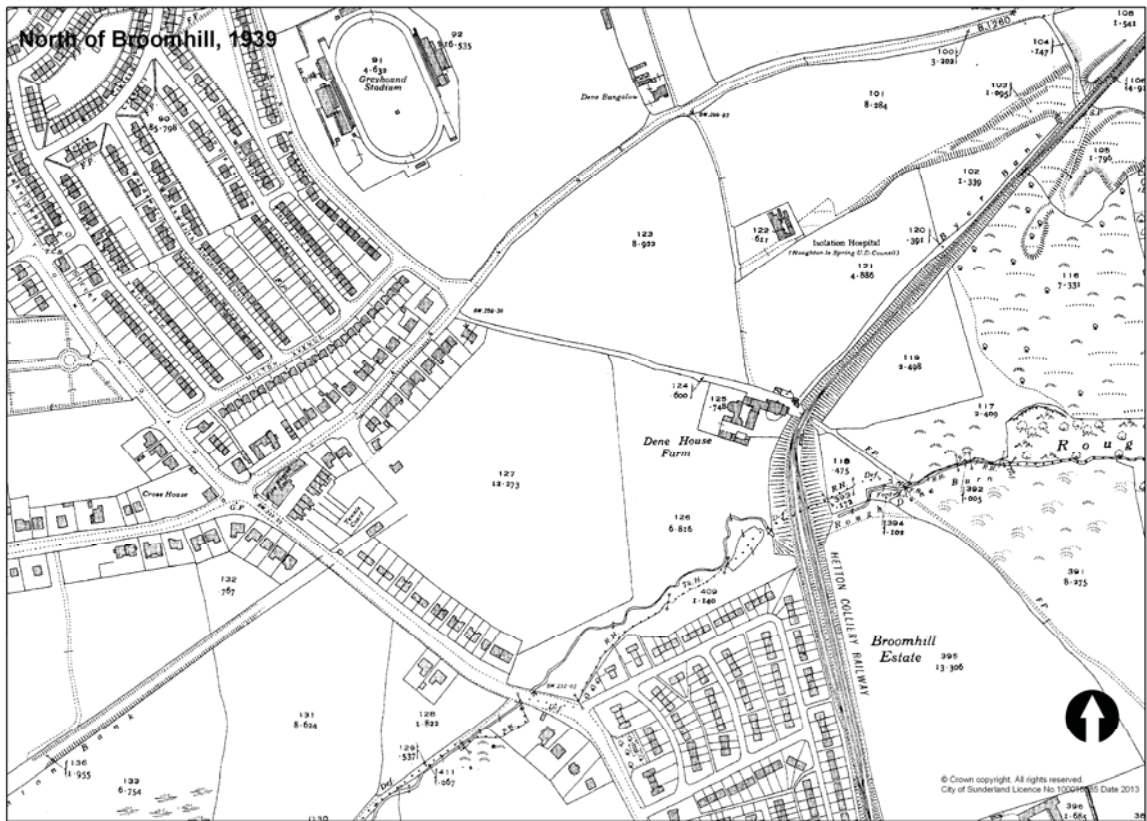
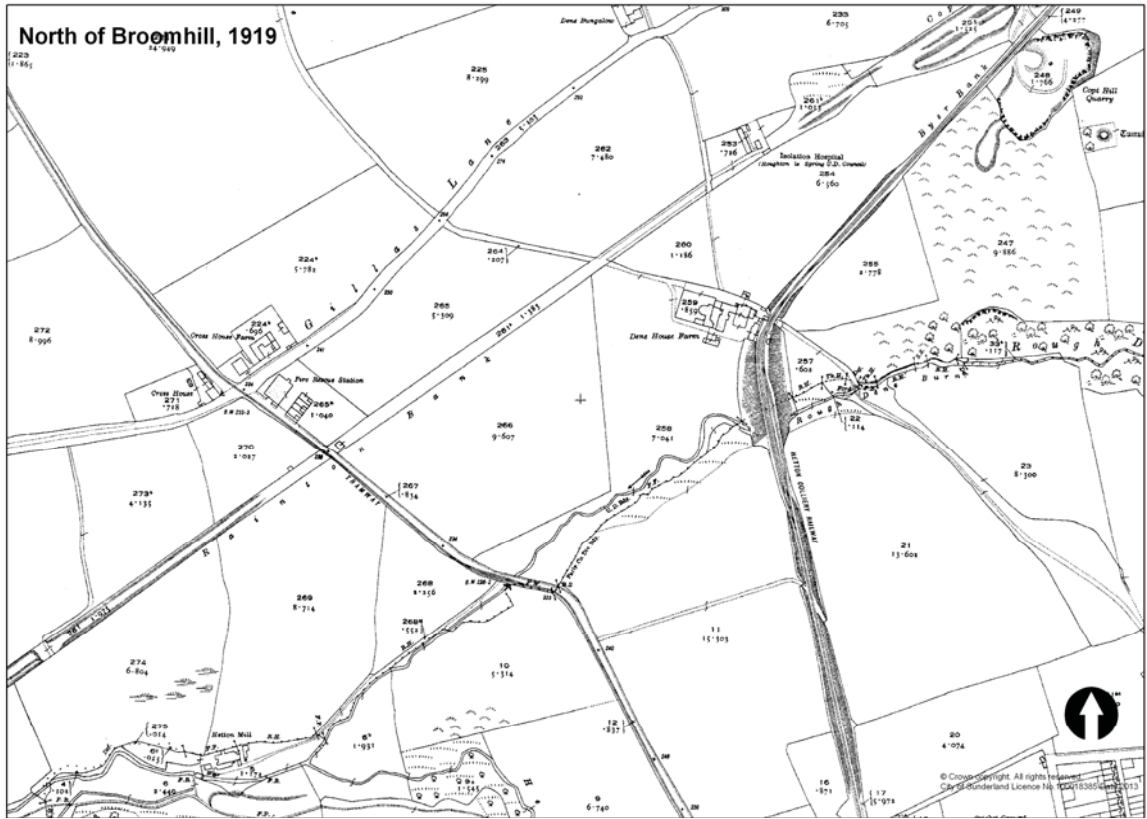
Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.

The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).



Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

In the inter-war years, the open break between Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole was reduced with the creation of Broomhill Estate, and a line of houses along Gillas Lane East. In 2001, a further street (Lingfield) narrowed the gap between the two settlements (although a link already existed by a row of inter-war homes along Hetton Road). Despite these developments, Houghton retains a distinct identity in the area.

### **Hetton-le-Hole**

A 'Hetton' is mentioned in the Boldon Book of 1183, but this may mean Hetton-on-the-Hill. Hetton-le-Hole probably came into existence in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century a change had come to this part of Durham, which was losing its wooded aspect and was seeing its agriculture decline quite rapidly. Local villagers were losing their holdings on the land as the great fields were enclosed. Sheep farming was carried on to help foster the country's wool trade, then its prime industry. By this time too industrialisation was beginning to occur, particularly coal mining.

Mining for coal had occurred for hundreds of years immediately to the west of Hetton, but the Magnesian Limestone at Hetton and further east restricted coal extraction until the early 1800's. Success came in 1822 when the Lyons deep mining colliery at Hetton was opened, supported by the Hetton Colliery waggonway which ran coal across Warden Law to the River Wear at Sunderland. These activities led to a great and rapid increase in the size of Hetton. Rail transport also came in 1836 when the Durham to Sunderland line was opened (eventually closed in 1953). The population rose from 200 in 1801 to 6,400 by 1861 and more than 12,000 by the turn of the century.

Coal extraction eventually ceased in the area in 1986. Sand is still quarried at Hetton Downs, however. Jobs in the locality are now much more limited, though Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate and Rainton Bridge Business Park are nearby.

Though part of the City of Sunderland, Hetton-le-Hole retains a strong local character, and tends to retain stronger links with Durham than with Sunderland. Hetton retains a good range of facilities, including a Town Council, primary schools, a secondary school, the Hetton Centre (incorporating the town library), swimming pool and leisure centre, a cemetery, Eppleton FC (which holds Sunderland Reserve games), 2 cricket grounds, Hetton Park, Hetton Lyons Country Park, a supermarket and variety of local shops.



Many of the Victorian pit houses and terraces have been replaced with new housing, though the Hetton Downs area is a focus for housing regeneration. At the north end of Hetton, Broomhill Estate was demolished in 2012 and replacement housing is planned. Broomhill Estate consisted of linked bungalows, mostly owned by Gentoo. There are no facilities on this estate, but good public transport connections along Hetton Road.

### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No. The UDP planned for the slight narrowing of the Settlement Break, which was duly built in 2001 (Lingfield).

### **Background policy considerations/history**

The UDP planned for the slight narrowing of the Settlement Break, which was duly built in 2001 (Lingfield). The remainder of the land was identified as a future local park (UDP policy HA12.10), and as such the land was not specifically identified on the map as a Settlement Break. The background description in the UDP, however, clarifies the intention that the new park would “reinforce the separation of settlements policy”.

The Draft 2012 Greenspace Audit and Report identifies a high quantity of parks provision in the Hetton area, and a deficiency of parkland at Houghton Racecourse. It is likely (through developer contributions) that this deficiency will be addressed by upgrading Kirklea Park to the appropriate standard. There will therefore be no need to seek further park creation on the Settlement Break in question.

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridors)
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy L2,3,4,5,7,8,9 B3 (New Open Space)
- UDP Policy EN10 (‘White Land’).

### **Key constraints**

#### **Category 1**

There are no Category 1 constraints.

#### **Category 2**

- *Green Infrastructure corridors*

This area forms a Green Infrastructure corridor, linking Hetton Bogs and the Rainton Lowland with the Limestone Escarpment and Houghton Green Belt. The corridor was recognised in the 1998 UDP. It is noted that there is a linear ribbon of housing along the A182 that severs the corridor and Settlement Break. This limits wildlife movement to the Rough Dene Burn (no limit for birds). Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Limestone Escarpment, which is considered to be the most significant geological feature in the Sunderland area. However, this area feels detached from the escarpment and is hemmed-in by development. The open land

forms part of a narrow green corridor linking the escarpment to Hetton Bogs, and consists of arable farmland, grazing paddocks and woodland alongside Rough Dene Burn.

Of key importance is the need to retain the green corridor and buffer alongside the burn, including improved access through the area. Wherever possible, characteristic features of the landscape should be restored, including species rich limestone grasslands, dene and valley-side ash woods, field and vale-floor ponds and old hedgerows.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

This site is fully within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding*

Most of the surface water flooding incidences are restricted to the narrow corridor of the Rough Dene Burn, to the south of the Settlement Break. A further area of 'medium' surface water flooding exists to the west of the break, with an additional minor band of 'less' surface water flooding running across the centre of the site. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Archaeological sites*

A geophysical survey of the area has been recently carried out and suggests that archaeological features may survive on this site.

### ***Topography***

Sloping site southwards to the Rough Dene Burn and the A182.

### **Accessibility**

Site has public transport access from the A182 and from the B1260. Limited services/facilities nearby, closest centres are Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

### **Conclusion**

The urban areas of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole are joined by a narrow ribbon of housing along the A182, therefore in strict terms the towns are not 'separated' at all. The Settlement Break to the east of this road acts more as a green wedge, but has nevertheless helped to sustain and retain an impression of separateness and distinctiveness between the two communities.

Unlike the land to the west of the A182, the Rough Dene Burn is not protected for biodiversity purposes and is also incised, which limits flood risk along the course of the burn. Nevertheless, this corridor provides an important link between protected watercourses, namely Hetton Bogs to the west, and Rough Dene Burn upstream beside Houghton-le-Spring Golf Course. It should also be noted that the entire

area forms an important part of a Critical Drainage Area, draining to the River Wear at Chester-le-Street.

Because of the public transport links along the B1260 and A182 the site has some degree of accessibility. Much of the site is agriculture and pasture, and its ability to support the wildlife corridor is limited to an extent. Nevertheless, any development in this locality would need to carefully consider whether any narrowing of the corridor would significantly damage wildlife movement and overall biodiversity, or whether a retained smaller proportion of enhanced corridor could provide sufficient mitigation. With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

Also critical would be whether any development within this Settlement Break would be seen to be detrimental to the feeling of openness and separateness between the towns of Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

b) or c) partially or not at all.

Despite the ribbon of housing along the A182, there is a distinct break between the two settlements of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole. This Settlement Break has played a supporting role to retaining the towns' separateness.

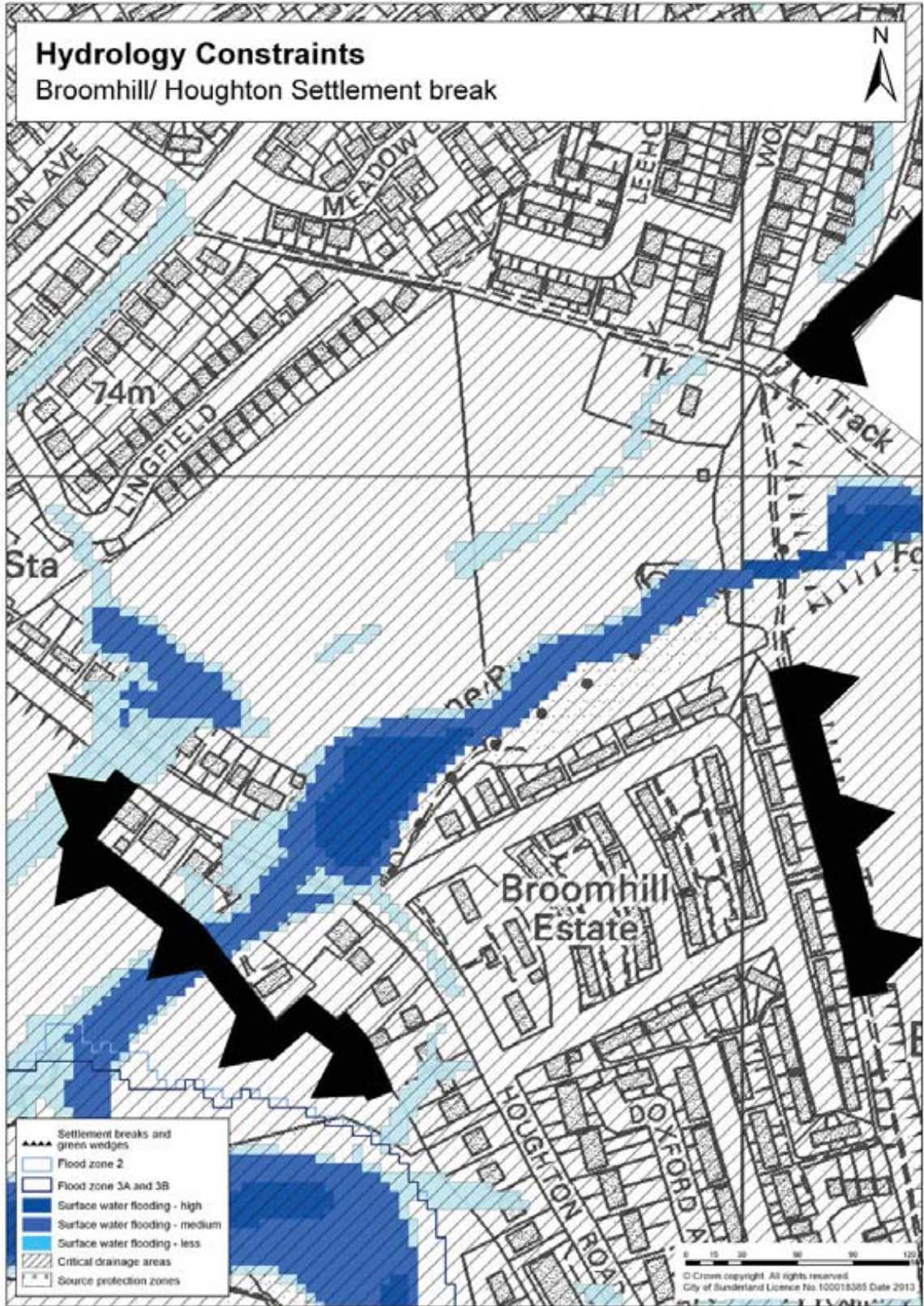
Whether any built development could take place within the Settlement Break without significantly affecting settlement character/ settlement merging or the functioning of the wildlife corridor still needs to be determined. If development is deemed appropriate, it may be more appropriate to accept that the Settlement Break in this location has gone and that the remaining land will be protected by other policy.

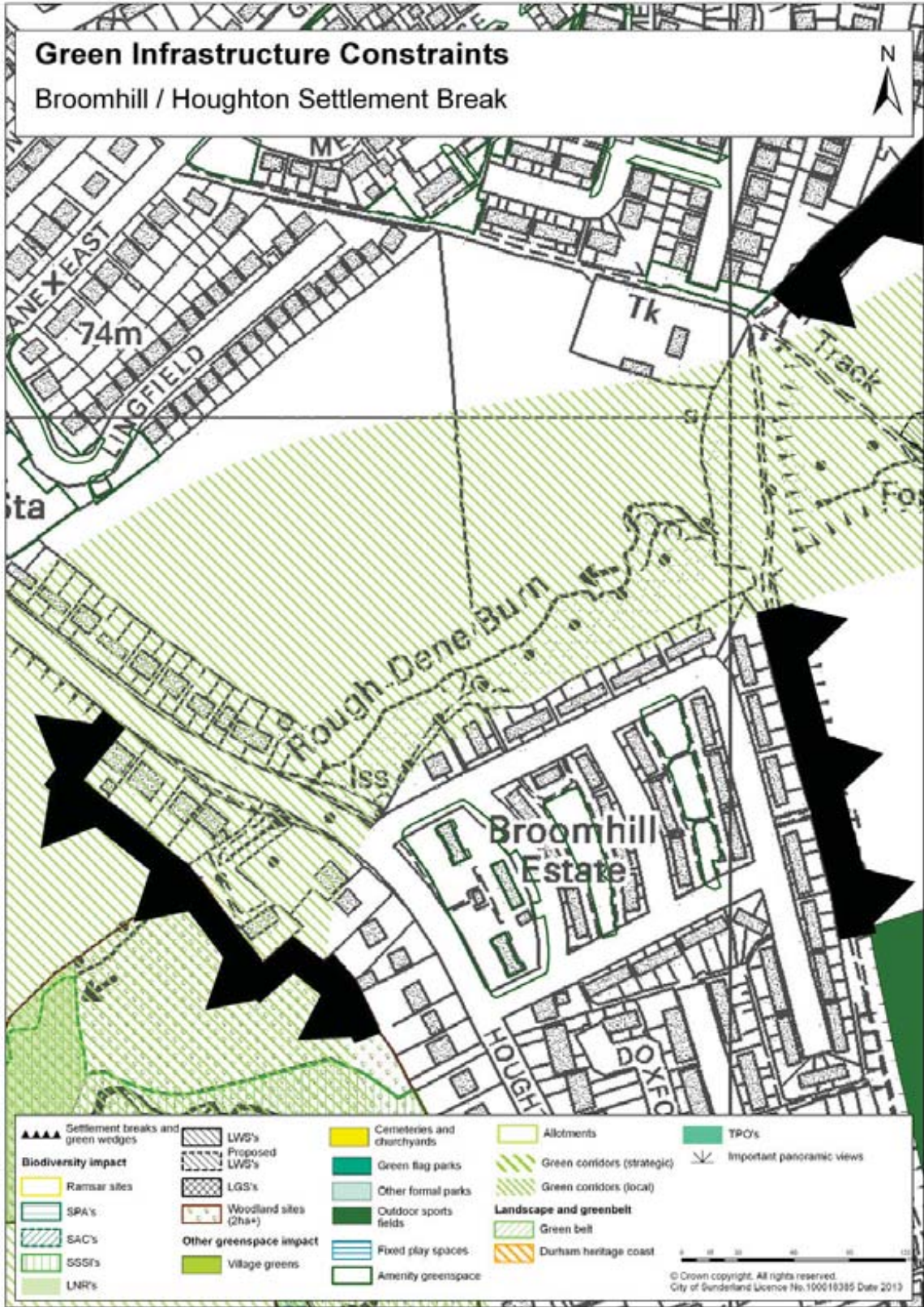
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

If development on site takes place, the remaining land should be protected for greenspace purposes and as a Green Infrastructure corridor.

**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) moderate adverse impact, but which can be reasonably mitigated





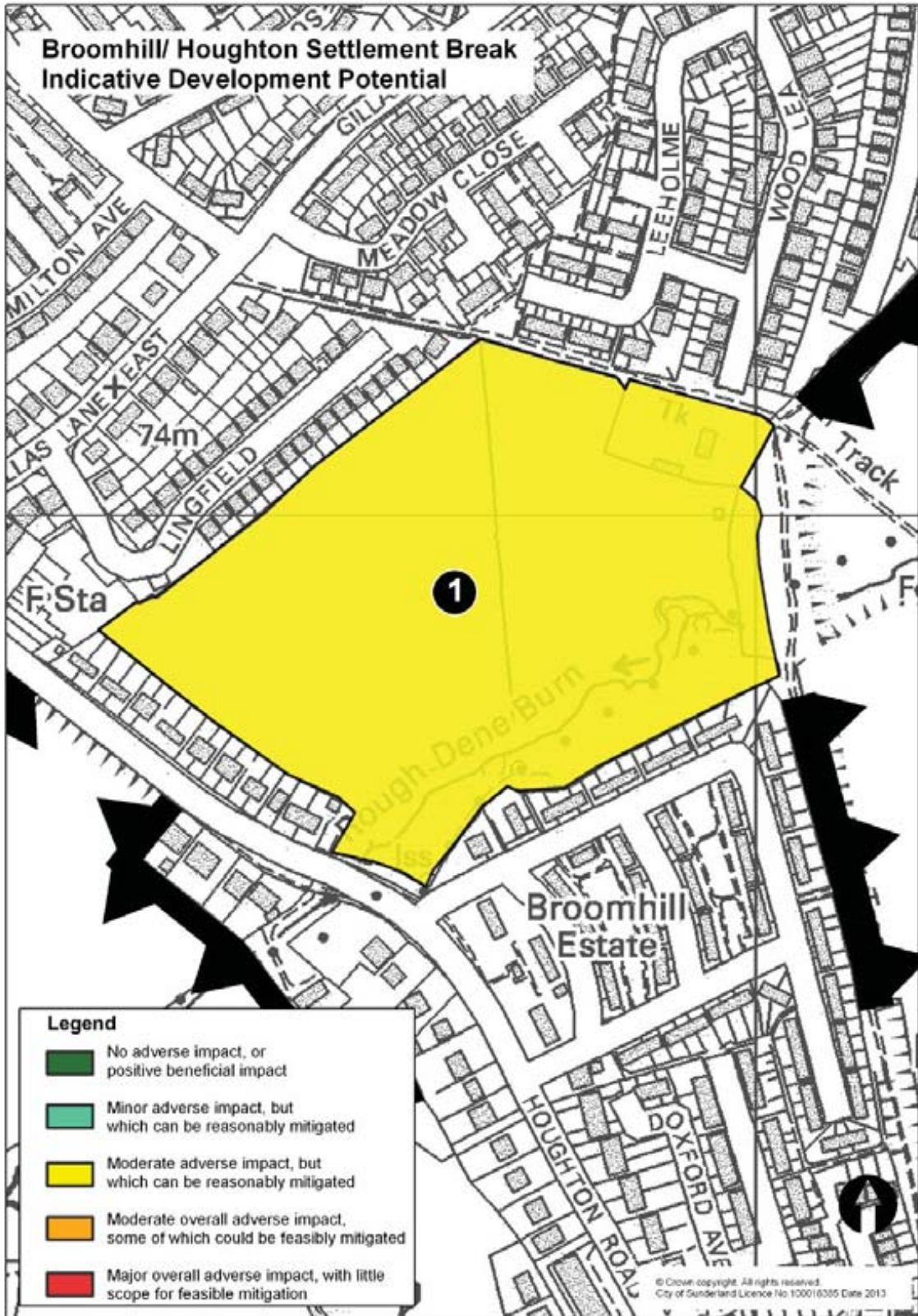
# Historic and Physical Constraints

## Broomhill/ Houghton Settlement Break



<p>▲▲▲▲ Settlement breaks and green wedges</p> <p><b>Historic environment</b></p> <p>▭ Scheduled ancient monuments</p> <p>▭ St Peter's VMS setting boundary</p> <p>▭ Listed buildings grade 1</p> <p>▭ Listed buildings grade 2</p>	<p>▭ Listed buildings grade 2*</p> <p>▭ Conservation areas</p> <p>● Archaeological sites (points)</p> <p>▭ Archaeological sites (lines)</p> <p>▭ Archaeological sites (polygons)</p>	<p><b>Physical constraints/hazards</b></p> <p>▭ HSE sites</p> <p>▭ Inner blast zone</p> <p>▭ Middle blast zone</p> <p>▭ Outer blast zone</p> <p>▭ High voltage electricity line and 10m buffer zone</p>	<p>▭ Electricity pylon and 10m buffer zone</p> <p>▭ Safeguarded mineral reserves</p> <p>▭ Landfill</p> <p>▭ Waste sites</p> <p>▭ Previous industrial use</p>	<p>▭ Substation site</p> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <p>● Sewage treatment works</p> <p>● Water abstractions</p>
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## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints

Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate impact, which can be mitigated</b>
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

*Principal impacts: Impact on Rough Dene Burn wildlife corridor.*

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- District Green Infrastructure corridor

#### Field assessment

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate impact, which can be mitigated</b>
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

*Principal impacts: Direct impact to Green Infrastructure corridor.*

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Limestone Escarpment

#### Field assessment



A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate impact, which can be mitigated</b>
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

*Principal impacts: impact on the limestone escarpment landscape.*

#### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas

**Field assessment**

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderate impact, which can be mitigated</b>
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

*Principal impacts: incidences of ‘high’ and ‘medium’ surface water flooding along Rough Dene Burn and to the west of the site.*

#### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)

**Field assessment**

A	Zero impact
<b>B</b>	<b>Minor impact, which can be mitigated</b>
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

#### 6) Physical constraints / hazards

Category 1: None

Category 2: None

**Field assessment**

<b>A</b>	<b>Zero impact</b>
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated

C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

**Field assessment**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
<b>C</b>	<b>Partially supports findings</b>
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

**Field assessment**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact
<b>D</b>	<b>Major potential cumulative impact</b>

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

**Field assessment**

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
<b>C</b>	<b>Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve</b>
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

**Field assessment**

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
<b>C</b>	<b>Partial accessibility, partly remote</b>
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

## 16) Copt Hill / Low Downs / Broomhill



## Location

North of Hetton Downs  
South of Coptleigh / Gillas Lane  
West of Houghton Golf Club / Rough Dene Burn  
East of Coptleigh / Broomhill.

## Size and land ownership (if known)

27 hectares  
Council and privately owned land.

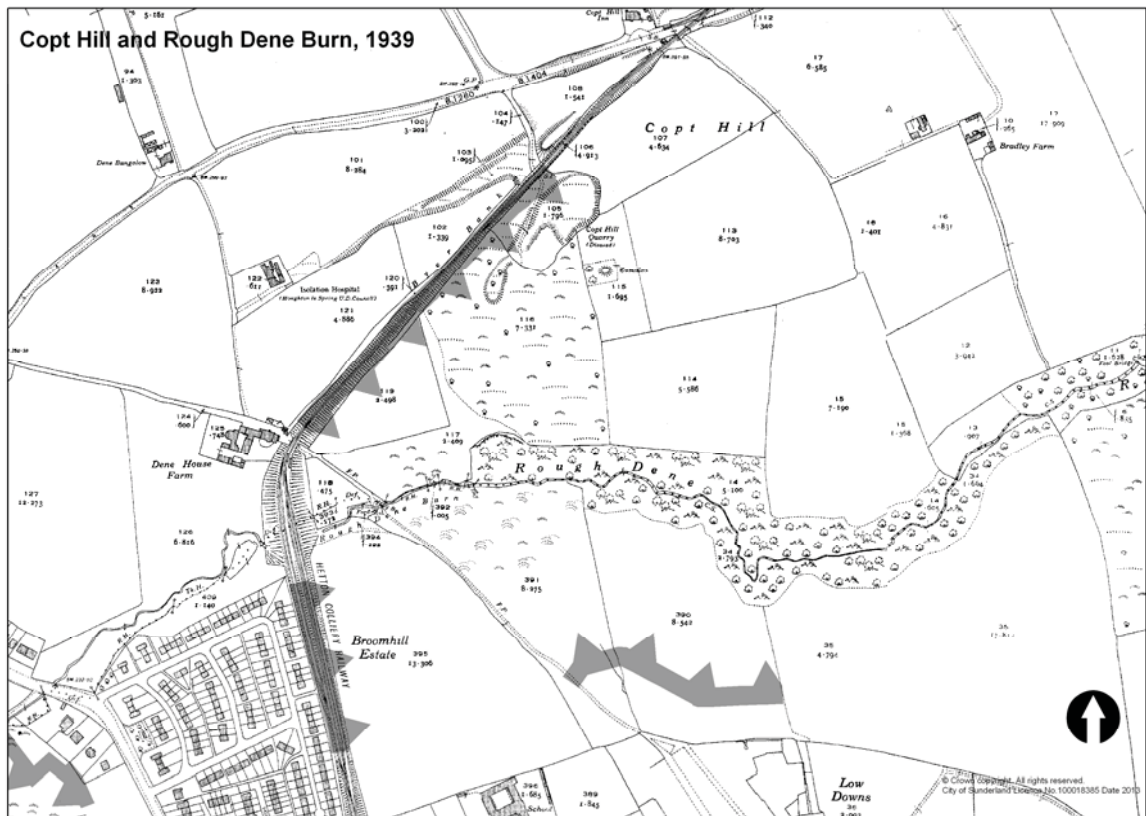
## What does it separate?

Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole.

## Current use

Natural and semi-natural greenspace.

## Neighbouring settlement background



## Houghton-le-Spring

Although there is no evidence of prehistoric occupation of Houghton-le-Spring so far, there are prehistoric burial sites at nearby Copt Hill and Warden Law. Large boulders recently found at Houghton Church have been suggested as being part of a prehistoric site, but this has not been proven. Roman stones have also been found re-used in Houghton Church. The scale and size of the Parish demonstrate that Houghton-le-Spring was of major importance in the early mediaeval eras. In the 1500s, Houghton-le-Spring was one of the largest parishes in England.

St Michael & All Angels church is the home parish and tomb of Bernard Gilpin, who is known as the 'Apostle of the North'. Gilpin was the rector of Houghton from 1557-83 (and is also associated with the revival of the Houghton Feast; an ancient festival that has its origins in the 1100s and is still an important local event).

In more recent times, Houghton was an active coal-mining town. The local mine began to sink its first shaft in 1823 and was active until its closure in 1981. At its peak in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the mine employed over 2,000 workers.

The town lies on the A690, which links Durham and Sunderland. Though it was never directly linked to the passenger rail network like Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton remained the largest town in the locality and acts as the main centre in the 'Coalfield' area of Sunderland.

The central hub of the town has shifted from the historic core of the original village centred on the Market Place area to the town centre that exists today. Houghton-le-Spring's main shopping area is located in Newbottle Street which includes a supermarket, a library and Customer Service Centre, a Post Office, public houses and various other outlets. Houghton also houses a Primary Care Centre serving the local area, as well as a local park, cemetery, primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre, golf course and sports pitches (football, cricket and rugby).

Houghton has many listed buildings and two conservation areas declared in 1975 centred around Nesham Place, an area of fine 18<sup>th</sup> Century private housing with a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Manor house, and St Michael's and All Angels Church, its rectory and Kepier Hall and Almshouses,

There is a reasonable variety of housing available in the town, Victorian and modern, with private housing primarily towards the south and south-west, and Gentoo estates at Houghton Racecourse in the east, and Burnside and Sunnyside to the north.

Post-war, the land sandwiched between Gillas Lane East and the Stephenson Trail has been gradually developed for private semi-detached and detached housing. The Stephenson Trail provides a clear boundary line to development, separating housing from the Seven Sisters barrow. Houghton retains a distinct identity in the area.

### **Hetton-le-Hole**

A 'Hetton' is mentioned in the Boldon Book of 1183, but this may mean Hetton-on-the-Hill. Hetton-le-Hole probably came into existence in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century a change had come to this part of Durham, which was losing its wooded aspect and was seeing its agriculture decline quite rapidly. Local villagers were losing their holdings on the land as the great fields were enclosed. Sheep farming was carried on to help foster the country's wool trade, then its prime industry. By this time too industrialisation was beginning to occur, particularly coal mining.

Mining for coal had occurred for hundreds of years immediately to the west of Hetton, but the Magnesian Limestone at Hetton and further east restricted coal

extraction until the early 1800's. Success came in 1822 when the Lyons deep mining colliery at Hetton was opened, supported by the Hetton Colliery waggonway which ran coal across Warden Law to the River Wear at Sunderland. These activities led to a great and rapid increase in the size of Hetton. Rail transport also came in 1836 when the Durham to Sunderland line was opened (eventually closed in 1953). The population rose from 200 in 1801 to 6,400 by 1861 and more than 12,000 by the turn of the century.

Coal extraction eventually ceased in the area in 1986. Sand is still quarried at Hetton Downs, however. Jobs in the locality are now much more limited, though Hetton Lyons Industrial Estate and Rainton Bridge Business Park are nearby.

Though part of the City of Sunderland, Hetton-le-Hole retains a strong local character, and tends to retain stronger links with Durham than with Sunderland. Hetton retains a good range of facilities, including a Town Council, primary schools, a secondary school, the Hetton Centre (incorporating the town library), swimming pool and leisure centre, a cemetery, Eppleton FC (which holds Sunderland Reserve games), 2 cricket grounds, Hetton Park, Hetton Lyons Country Park, a supermarket and variety of local shops.

Many of the Victorian pit houses and terraces have been replaced with new housing, though the Hetton Downs area is a focus for housing regeneration. At the north end of Hetton, Broomhill Estate was demolished in 2012 and replacement housing is planned. Broomhill Estate consisted of linked bungalows, mostly owned by Gentoo. There are no facilities on this estate, but good public transport connections along Hetton Road. Land to the east of Broomhill Estate has remained undeveloped.

#### **Has the Settlement Break altered since 1998?**

No.

#### **Background policy considerations/history**

In the 2007 Preferred Options Report for the Hetton Downs Area Action Plan, land to the east of Broomhill is proposed for residential development, including a new road link from Broomhill leading south into Hetton Downs itself.

Site is additionally subject to:

- UDP Policy CN23 (Wildlife Corridors)
- UDP Policy CN15 (Great North Forest)
- UDP Policy B14 (Areas of Potential Archaeological Importance)
- UDP Policy B12 (Scheduled Ancient Monuments)
- UDP Policy B13 (Other Specific Sites and Monuments)
- UDP Policy T8,9,10, HA25.6 (Multi-user Route)
- UDP Policy CN21 (Local Wildlife Sites)
- UDP Policy M5 (Eastern Limit of Shallow Coalfield Area)
- UDP Policy EN10 ('White Land').

## Key constraints

### Category 1

- *Scheduled Ancient Monument (Copt Hill)*

The Scheduled Ancient Monument on this site refers to the Neolithic (4000 to 2200 BC) Seven Sisters barrow. Copt Hill has a long history of activity. Mesolithic (10,000 to 4000 BC) flints have been found during fieldwalking, the primary burial was Neolithic in date. Subsequent burials and cremations were added into the barrow in the Bronze Age (2200 to 700 BC) and the last burial was added in the Early Medieval period. Geophysical survey has shown that a pit alignment ran up to the barrow. A smaller circular feature of unknown date and function is also known on the hill and possibly a cursus monument (linear monument defined by a low bank and surrounding ditches). This site must be protected in full from development.

- *Linked to a Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor*

The site is connected to the Houghton-Sunderland Green Belt Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken by the City Council, providing further detailed information relating to the local area.

### Category 2:

- *2 Local Wildlife Sites (Rough Dene Burn and Copt Hill Railway)*

The banks of Rough Dene Burn provide ancient woodland and is protected as a Local Wildlife Site. The Copt Hill Railway is recognised for botanical importance. These two sites should be protected in full from development. Buffer zones should also be considered.

- *Green Infrastructure corridor*

This area links the local Green Infrastructure corridor from Hetton Bogs to the Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor (mentioned above). Any site alterations proposed would need to consider ways to enhance the connectivity of the corridors proposed, including further biodiversity enhancements wherever feasible.

- *Landscape Character*

Forms part of the Limestone Escarpment, which is considered to be the most significant geological feature in the Sunderland area. The landscape contains hilltops and steep sided embankments, creating a varied landscape. There are pockets of ancient woodland at Copt Hill and Rough Dene. Copt Hill burial mound is an important cultural and historic landmark. Overall, the priority should be to conserve, enhance and restore characteristic features of the landscape -species rich limestone grasslands, field and vale-floor ponds, dene and valley-side ash woods, old hedgerows, coal and railway landscape features and abandoned limestone quarries.

- *4 Natural Greenspace sites*

- Natural greenspace surrounds and provides the setting to the Copt Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument. This role, together with providing high

- quality natural greenspace and supporting a green corridor affords the site high local value and should therefore be protected in full from development
- The alignment of the former Hetton Colliery Railway has been reclaimed into a walkway/cycleway and is classed as quality natural greenspace (part of it protected as a LWS). This was one of the first railways in the world. The site should be protected in full from development
  - Rough Dene Burn provides natural woodland, and as already stated should be protected in full from development
  - Land to the east of Broomhill is also identified as quality natural greenspace.

- *Critical Drainage Area*

The south-western part of the Settlement Break (beside Broomhill and Low Downs) is within a Critical Drainage Area. A site specific FRA in line with the requirements of the SFRA should be produced to show how surface water will be managed and demonstrate any proposed developments will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions in these critical areas.

- *Surface Water Flooding*

There is limited surface water flooding, mostly restricted to a very narrow corridor beside Rough Dene Burn. The other area to note contains 'medium' and 'less' surface water flooding in a complete link from Byer Square northwest to Rough Dene Burn. Natural England's 2009 Green Infrastructure Guidance recommends adapting such watercourses where feasible for SUDs to reduce flood risk and enhance biodiversity.

- *Source Protection Zone (east)*

The Copt Hill area lies above the Magnesian Limestone principal aquifer and within the source protection zone of a public water supply. It is therefore essential that any future development would not impact upon this important underground water resource.

- *Landfill/waste site*

The natural greenspace site east of Broomhill contains industrial and commercial waste. This would need to be addressed should any development on site take place.

- *Other archaeological sites*

As mentioned above, the Hetton Colliery Railway is nationally significant as it was the first complete railway line engineered by George Stephenson, opening in 1822 (closing in 1959). The alignment should be protected in full from development.

To the north of the Settlement Break is the site of Copt Hill limestone quarry, active in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and closed before WW2.

### ***Topography***

Copt Hill slopes steeply south to the Rough Dene Burn. Land to the south of the burn slopes gently northwards.



## **Accessibility**

Very limited public transport access, except from Gillas Lane East. No facilities within acceptable walking distance. Nearest centres are Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring.

## **Conclusion**

The urban areas of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole are joined by a narrow ribbon of housing along the A182, therefore in strict terms the towns are not 'separated' at all. The Settlement Break to the east of this road acts more as a green wedge, but has nevertheless helped to sustain and retain an impression of separateness and distinctiveness between the two communities.

Land to the north of Rough Dene Burn is high quality natural greenspace, incorporating the Seven Sisters Barrow and one of the inclines on the former Hetton Colliery Railway. This area must be fully protected from any development.

The central area of the Settlement Break contains the Rough Dene Burn Local Wildlife Site as well as land that forms the green corridor west towards Hetton Bogs. Again, this area must be protected in full from development.

The southwest part of the Settlement Break incorporates land that is under consideration for development. There are a number of issues to consider:

- In terms of Settlement Break impact, it can be argued that there would be no further decline in the overall gap since the Broomhill Estate already extends much further to the north, bridging the gap to some extent towards Houghton-le-Spring
- The green corridor would be narrowed, but no more so than to the north of Broomhill Estate
- The topography is suitable for development
- In accessibility terms the site is not ideal, but is located adjacent to a Primary School, and a new road proposed has potential to improve access to the A182 and into the centre of Hetton Downs
- The development of the site would improve overall area access and could act as a catalyst to area regeneration
- The land contains industrial and commercial waste, and there may also be stability issues which would require prior investigation
- The land is identified as quality natural greenspace, according to results from the 2012 Phase 1 Habitat Study
- There are surface water issues to the east.

Any development in this area would need to address: the landfill and stability issues; the impact on the green corridor and potential buffer zone needed for the Local Wildlife Site; surface water flooding, and; wherever feasible, to preserve the landscape character and best qualities of the existing natural greenspace. With any Greenfield site proposal there should be a programme of archaeological work undertaken to ascertain if there are buried archaeological features present and to determine if any of those remains warrant preservation in-situ.

**Should the Settlement Break policy be retained: (a) in full; (b) partially (c) not at all**

(b) partially.

Despite the ribbon of housing along the A182, there is a distinct break between the two settlements of Houghton-le-Spring and Hetton-le-Hole. This Settlement Break has played a supporting role to retaining the towns' separateness.

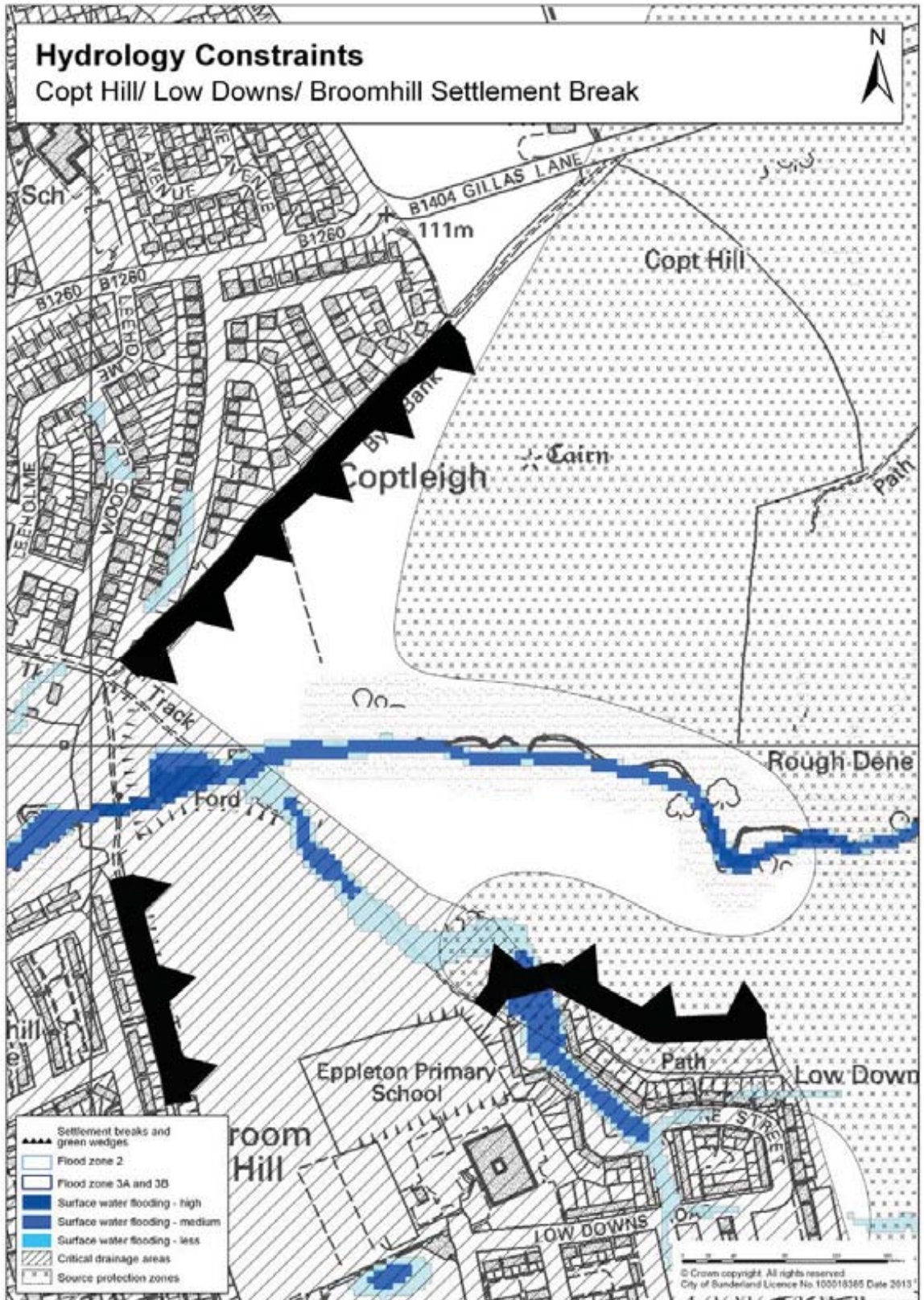
The boundary of the southern Settlement Break flows north-south and then west-east. A more natural alignment would be to continue the Settlement Break northwest from Byer Square to the northeast corner of Broomhill Estate. This alteration would coincide with the only potential land in the Settlement Break with development potential.

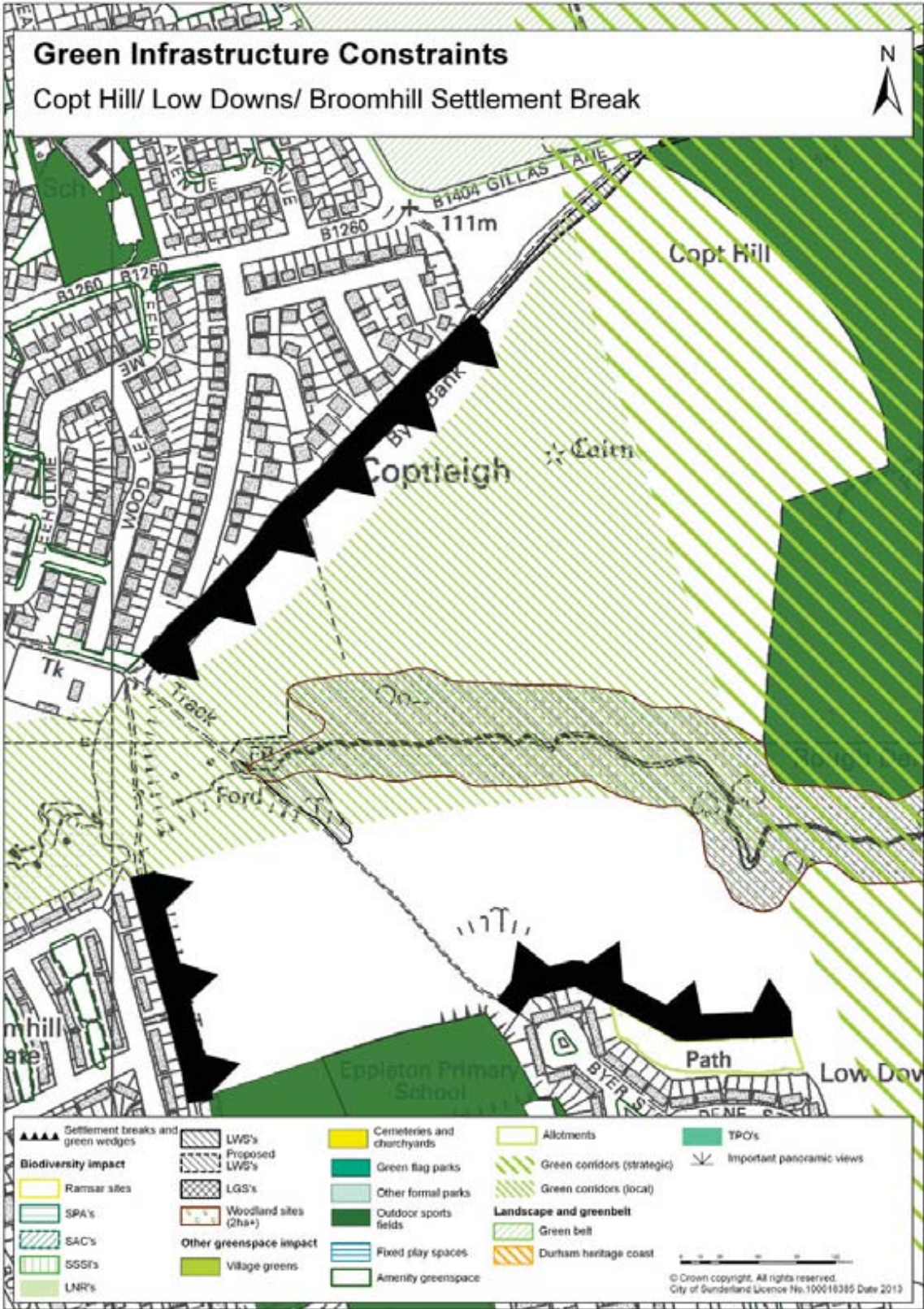
**Should the area be afforded alternative protection from development?**

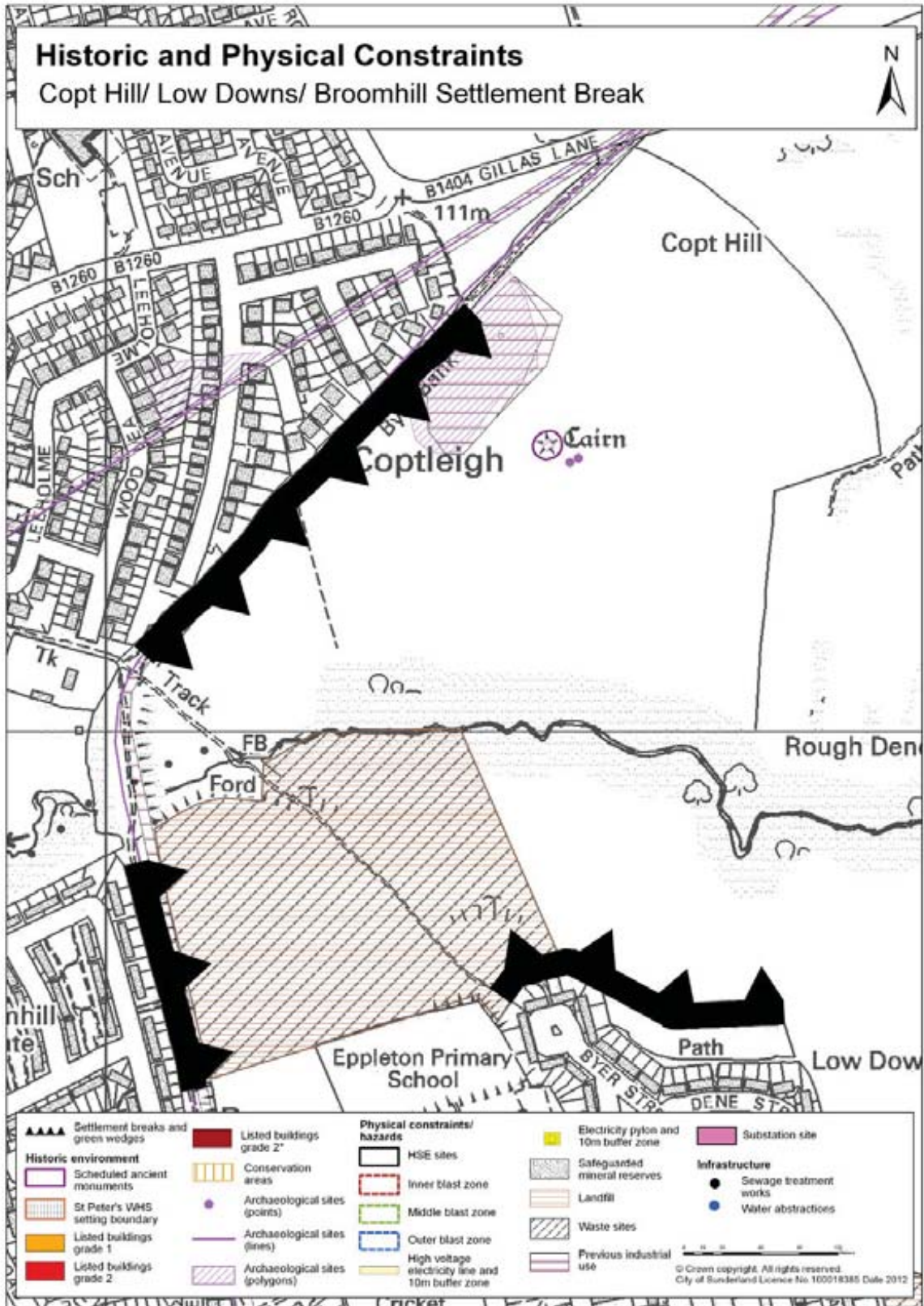
If development on site takes place, the remaining land should be protected for greenspace purposes and as a Green Infrastructure corridor.

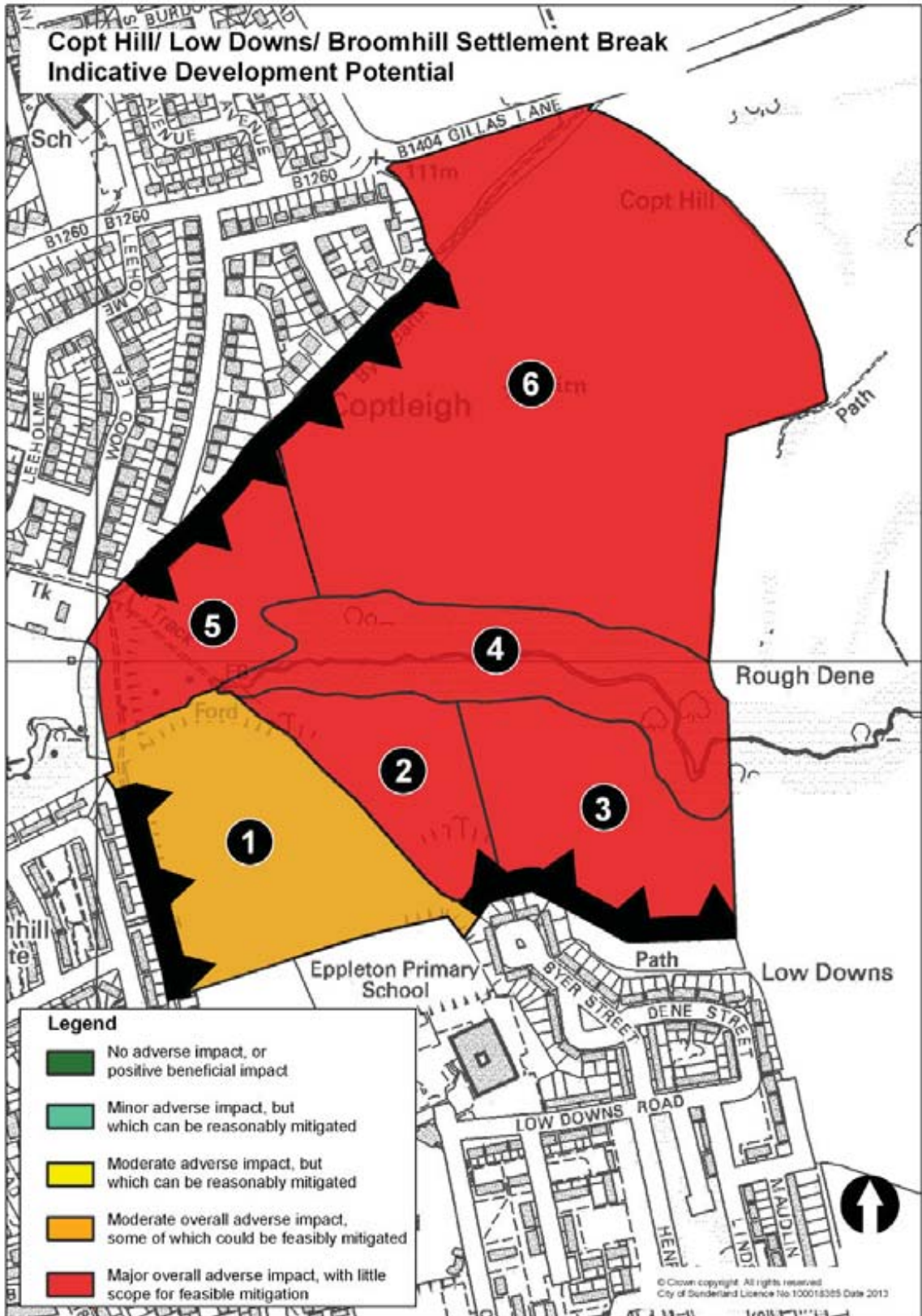
**Sub-division assessment of Settlement Break**

- 1) moderate overall adverse impact, some of which could be feasibly mitigated
- 2) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 3) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 4) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 5) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation
- 6) major overall adverse impact, with little scope for feasible mitigation









## Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

(Category 1 = highly significant constraints  
Category 2 = other constraints of considerable significance).

### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:** Constraints

- LWS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment:** 1C, 2D, 3D, 4E, 5D, 6D

**Principal impacts:** Direct impact on Rough Dene Burn LWS and associated buffer zone, and direct impact on wildlife corridor.

### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

**Category 1:**

- Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor

**Category 2:**

- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Natural greenspace
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment:** 1D, 2D, 3C, 4E, 5D, 6D

**Principal impacts:** Direct impact on natural greenspace and to Green Infrastructure corridor.

### 3) Landscape

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Limestone Escarpment
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)
- Recognised rural viewpoints

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4E, 5D, 6E**

**Principal impacts: direct impact on Limestone Escarpment landscape, on ancient woodland and historic landmarks.**

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1: None

Category 2:

- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas
- Source Protection Zones

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

**Field assessment: 1B, 2C, 3B, 4D, 5C, 6B**

**Principal impacts: incidences of 'high' and 'medium' surface water flooding beside Rough Dene Burn. Land to south-west part of a Critical Drainage Area. Land to the east part of a Source Protection Zone.**

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1:

- Scheduled Ancient Monument

Category 2:

- Archaeological site (known and potential)



A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5C, 6E**

**Principal impacts: Copt Hill Scheduled Ancient Monument; alignment of the 1822 Hetton Colliery Railway.**

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

**Category 1:** None

**Category 2:**

- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- Stability issues
- Topographical issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3A, 4A, 5A, 6B**

**Principal impacts: Landfill/waste site beside Broomhill.**

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
C	Partially supports findings
D	Minimal support
E	Would not support

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C**

**8) Does other nearby countryside development impact on this particular development? (e.g. a limit to development on a critical drainage area?)**

A	Isolated site / no nearby development potential
B	Minor potential cumulative impact
C	Moderate potential cumulative impact

D	Major potential cumulative impact
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**Field assessment: 1D, 2D, 3D, 4D, 5D, 6D**

**9) Settlement Break functionality (character)**

- How significant and applicable is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

A	No role at all in keeping settlements distinct
B	Limited role in keeping settlements distinct
C	Has kept communities separate, but limited settlement distinction to preserve
D	Has kept communities separate, and has moderately helped to preserve settlement distinction
E	Highly significant and applicable role in preserving settlement distinction

**Field assessment: 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C**

**10) Accessibility**

- How accessible is the Settlement Break allocation in terms of local shops and facilities, the public transport network, and in terms of connections to the local road network?

A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

**Field assessment: 1C, 2D, 3E, 4E, 5D, 6D**

**Principal impacts: the eastern half of the Settlement Break in particular is remote from local centres and services and distanced from public transport services.**

## Appendix 1:

### Constraints and potential development proforma

#### Part 1: Constraints that may affect all or part of a Settlement Break

*These constraints have been used to compile this Draft Report, prior to public consultation.*

##### 1) Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace Impact

Category 1: Significant constraints

- Ramsar site
- SPA / SAC / SSSI / LNR

Category 2: Constraints

- LWS / Proposed LWS / LGS
- Identified wildlife corridors (including BAP priority species/habitats)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

##### 2) Other Greenspace Impact

Category 1:

- Village Green
- Cemetery / churchyard
- Green Flag and/or strategic parks / open spaces
- Strategic Green Infrastructure corridor

Category 2:

- Other formal parks and country parks
- Outdoor sports fields
- Fixed play spaces
- Amenity greenspaces
- Allotments
- District Green Infrastructure corridor
- Public right of way / strategic cycleway

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 3) Landscape

Category 1:

- Grade 1 agricultural land

Category 2:

- Grade 2 or 3a agricultural land
- Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Other woodland plantations (without specific protection)
- Recognised rural viewpoints

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

### 4) Hydrology

Category 1:

- Zone 3B functional floodplain
- Zone 3A (high vulnerability)

Category 2:

- Zone 2 (medium vulnerability)
- Surface water flooding (high, medium and less vulnerability)
- Critical Drainage Areas
- Source Protection Zones

A	No flood risk – high ground remote / from water courses
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate impact / some mitigation feasible – adjacent to risk zone
E	Within functional floodplain

### 5) Historic Environment

Category 1:

- Scheduled Ancient Monument / World Heritage Site and setting (+candidate)
- Grade 1 or 2\* listed building/structure

Category 2:

- Grade 2 listed building / structure and setting
- Conservation Area
- Archaeological site (known and potential)

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**6) Physical constraints / hazards**

Category 1:

- Health & Safety Executive (HSE) COMAH Development Proximity or Inner Zone
- Electricity pylon (+10m buffer zone)

Category 2:

- HSE COMAH Middle or Outer Zone
- Minerals legacy (quarries or coal mining)
- Safeguarded Mineral Reserves
- Landfill sites, Contaminated land
- High voltage electricity line (+10m buffer zone)
- Stability issues
- Topographical issues

A	Zero impact
B	Minor impact, which can be mitigated
C	Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
D	Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
E	Major overall adverse impact

**7) Is this the right area to support development in relation to Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Employment Land Reviews?**

A	Key location to support findings
B	Important location to support findings
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E	Would not support

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A	Central location, highly accessible
B	Good accessibility, close to facilities
C	Partial accessibility, partly remote
D	Limited accessibility, mostly remote
E	Remote site, very poor access

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**Part 2: Scale of Potential Development**

*These questions will be considered during public consultation, in line with specific development proposals, to help gauge the potential severity of impact in line with the scale of development proposed. Part 1 questions will also be reviewed again.*

*Any development proposals submitted should consider these questions as well as providing background outline details, including the development location, size in hectares, density, type and tenure.*

**11) Settlement Break functionality (scale of development)**

- How does the development impact upon the Settlement Break's function in terms of helping to retain the distinct physical characteristics of the city's constituent communities?

Zero or positive impact
Minor adverse impact, which can be mitigated
Moderate adverse impact, which can be mitigated
Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
Major overall adverse impact

**12) How much does the development impact upon the Settlement Break or Green Belt width?**

The average width of the Settlement Break / Green Belt is maintained
The average width is reduced by up to 10%
The average width is reduced by 10-20%
The average width is reduced by 20-30%
The average width is reduced by 30-50%
The average width is reduced by 50%+

**13) Would the development help to define boundaries more clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent?**

Significant boundary improvement
Minor boundary improvement
Neutral impact / boundary is already clearly defined

**14) Impact on existing community viability**

- How will the development impact upon the viability of existing services and facilities in neighbouring villages and towns?
- Will the development create new services and facilities on-site or within neighbouring villages and towns in order to cater for new demand and to strengthen the locality?

Major positive impact
Positive impact
Zero impact
Adverse impact
Major adverse impact

**15) Infrastructure**

- Impact on the highway network
- Impact on water and sewerage
- Impact of site (in terms of viability and deliverability) – site clearance, remediation, legal covenants/hindrances, cessation of existing use

Zero impact / very minor impact, which can be mitigated
Minor impact, which can be mitigated
Moderate impact, which can be mitigated
Moderate overall adverse impact / some mitigation feasible
Major overall adverse impact

**16) Are landowners in support of the development? Are there ransom strips? Would development cause the fragmentation of any businesses (e.g. farming concerns)?**

Supportive of development / no concerns
Majority in support / minimal concerns
Some conflict/concern, but can be resolved
Major conflict/concern, conciliation difficult
Major conflict/concern, conciliation unlikely

**17) Potential to support city regeneration**

- What is the scale of the overall development proposed?

Potential to support over 3000 homes and/or jobs
Potential to support 1000<3000 homes and/or jobs
Potential to support 500<1000 homes and/or jobs
Potential to support 250<500 homes and/or jobs
Potential to support 100<250 homes and/or jobs
Potential to support <100 homes and/or jobs



## **Appendix 2: Environment Agency: Further issues to consider for all sites**

### **Fisheries and biodiversity**

Although the 15 sites have various issues associated with their potential development, The Environment Agency would expect protected species information from local and recent sources being carefully checked. The species of concern include Otter, Water Vole, Great Crested Newts, Atlantic Salmon, European Eel and Sea Lamprey.

Depending on the outcome of this process carefully planned and fully resourced mitigation and compensation measures need to be implemented as required. This may vary between sites, issues and species, for example, sites adjacent to the main River Wear, where development may involve piling, may need to take account of fish migration patterns. Any mitigation and compensation measures need to be in place before works begin.

Otter and Water Vole species or their habitats are formally protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and Natural England approval will be required. The Environment Agency would advise that adequate buffer strips are retained or developed in an effort to protect these species, where present. It is recommended that construction method statements are produced for all protected species and that all site operatives are aware of them and know how to react if the species is encountered.

Any bankside trees or vegetation within 10 metres of any watercourse, should be protected from development in order to promote conservation and preserve visual amenity. The buffer zone alongside watercourses, which shall be free from lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping; and could form a vital part of green infrastructure provision. Development that encroaches on watercourses has a potentially severe impact on their ecological value.

The Environment Agency would also anticipate that all measures will be taken to protect priority habitats listed in the UKBAP. This approach would also apply to brownfield land e.g. colliery grassland that may provide habitat for Dingy Skipper butterfly and where possible habitat creation to target species like this. The Agency is also aware of active and historic landfill or other waste disposal sites close to or on the proposed development sites and would encourage that all opportunities are taken to generate improved biodiversity during restoration of waste sites and/or remediation of contaminated land. In this case opportunities should be taken as part and parcel of development and built in from the earliest stage.

The delivery of multiple benefits is an important target for any strategic sites and sustainable development should underpin these proposals. Any confirmed development at these sites needs to integrate biodiversity, flood risk management and green infrastructure. Sustainable drainage systems can also contribute to this by mitigating surface water run-off.

The Agency is promoting the use of sustainable drainage techniques, such as

soakaways, swales etc. for the disposal of clean surface water to source allowing recharge of the underlying aquifer and also to limit surface water runoff. The Agency would therefore, recommend that if ground conditions are suitable, any development on the site should consider these alternatives to the more traditional drainage methods.

Any wetland habitat should be conserved and enhanced where constraints allow and all opportunities taken to create corridors or stepping stones between these sites. These integrated habitat networks can result in a more permeable landscape, therefore, facilitating better movement of wildlife through developed areas.

### **Flood risk**

All sites over 1ha in flood zone 1 will require a site specific flood risk assessment which covers surface water management.

Surface water run-off should be controlled as near to its source as possible through a sustainable drainage approach to surface water management (SUDS). SUDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near the site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. SUDS involve a range of techniques including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, green roofs, ponds and wetlands. SUDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting groundwater recharge absorbing diffuse pollutants and improving water quality. Ponds, reedbeds and seasonally flooded grasslands can be particularly attractive features within public open spaces.

Approved Document Part H of the Building Regulations 2000 establishes a hierarchy for surface water disposal, which encourages a SUDS approach. Under Approved Document Part H the first option for surface water disposal should be the use of SUDS, which encourages infiltration such as soakaways or infiltration trenches. In all cases, it should be established that these options are feasible, can be adopted and properly maintained and would not lead to any other environmental problems. For example, using soakaways or other infiltration methods on contaminated land carries groundwater pollution risks and may not work in areas with a high water table. Where the intention is to dispose to soakaway, these should be shown to work through an appropriate assessment carried out under Building Research Establishment (BRE) Digest 365.

The variety of SUDS techniques available means that virtually any development should be able to include a scheme based around these principles and provide multiple benefits, reducing costs and maintenance needs. Support for the use of SUDS approach to ensuring development does not increase flood risk elsewhere is set out in paragraph 103 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Sites with land contamination issues**

To prevent an objection to any development at the planning stage, a preliminary risk assessment (PRA) will be required. A PRA may conclude that site

investigation, risk assessment and potentially remediation may be required.

If reclamation/remediation works have been previously undertaken within the area, details of these works will be required including an assessment of whether previous works meet current environmental standards.

Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes (SUDs) may be inappropriate within this development unless it can be shown that there is no unacceptable risk of pollution to the underlying Magnesian Limestone principal aquifer.

The Environment Agency recommends that developers should:

- 1) Follow the risk management framework provided in CLR11, Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, when dealing with land affected by contamination.
- 2) Refer to the Environment Agency Guiding Principles for Land Contamination for the type of information that is required in order to assess risks to controlled waters from the site. The Local Authority can advise on risk to other receptors, such as human health.
- 3) Refer to our website at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) for more information.

#### **Sites within 250m of a historic landfill**

Developers may be required to carry out a comprehensive risk assessment due to the risks the former landfill site poses. The local authority's Environmental Health and Building Control departments would wish to ensure that any threats from landfill gas have been adequately addressed in the proposed development. This may include building construction techniques that minimise the possibility of landfill gas entering any enclosed structures on the site to be incorporated into the development. The following publications provide further advice on the risks from landfill gas and ways of managing these:

1. Waste Management Paper No 27
2. Environment Agency LFTGNO3 'Guidance on the Management of Landfill Gas'
3. Building Research Establishment guidance - BR 414 'Protective Measures for Housing on Gas-contaminated Land' 2001
4. Building Research Establishment guidance – BR 212 'Construction of new buildings on gas-contaminated land' 1991
5. CIRIA Guidance – C665 'Assessing risks posed by hazardous ground gases to buildings' 2007

#### **Infrastructure needs**

##### ***Sewage capacity***

For all sites, The Sewerage Undertaker should be consulted to demonstrate that the sewerage and sewage disposal systems serving the sites have sufficient

capacity to accommodate any additional flows, proposed by the site allocations, without causing pollution.

**Green infrastructure**

There may be opportunities to contribute towards green infrastructure, while delivering habitat improvements, improved amenity as well as water quality and flood risk management.

This is especially the case for sites close to the River Wear which are particularly valuable for wildlife and it is essential this is protected. On this basis careful consideration is required for any works required within and near watercourses.