



**SHAW &
JAGGER**
ARCHITECTS

PROPOSED PRIVATE DWELLING

Land Adjacent to Woodfold Park,
Blackburn

Design & Access Statement
October 2022

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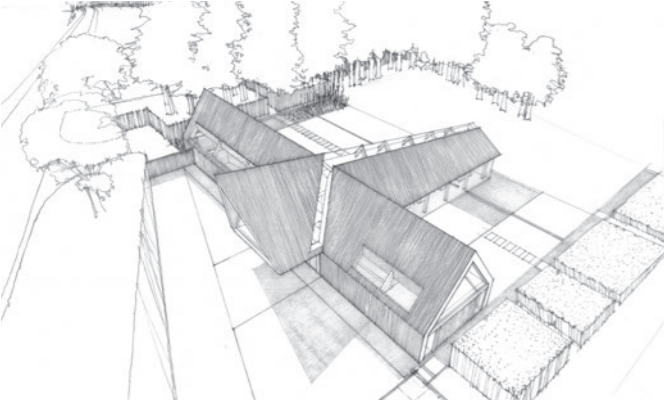
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Scheduled Monument to residential use, Scotland



Paragraph 55 House, Lancashire Green Belt



Paragraph 79 House, Bedfordshire



New Boathouse, Derwentwater, SSSI World Heritage Site



Ian Dieffenthaler
Heritage & Historic Landscape
Consultant



This Design & Access Statement has been prepared in light of the advice given in ‘Design and access statements how to write, read and use them’ published by CABE.

It is intended to set out the design principles and concepts behind the application for a new dwelling on land off Further Lane to the south-west of the village of Mellor. The application is made under the provisions of Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for a house of “exceptional quality”.

The statement and accompanying application documents are intended to set out the ideas and rationale that support the proposed scheme.

The scheme has been produced by the project team which has been assembled based upon their experience of designing new houses of exceptional quality and innovative design under the provisions of both Paragraph 80 and the preceding policies.

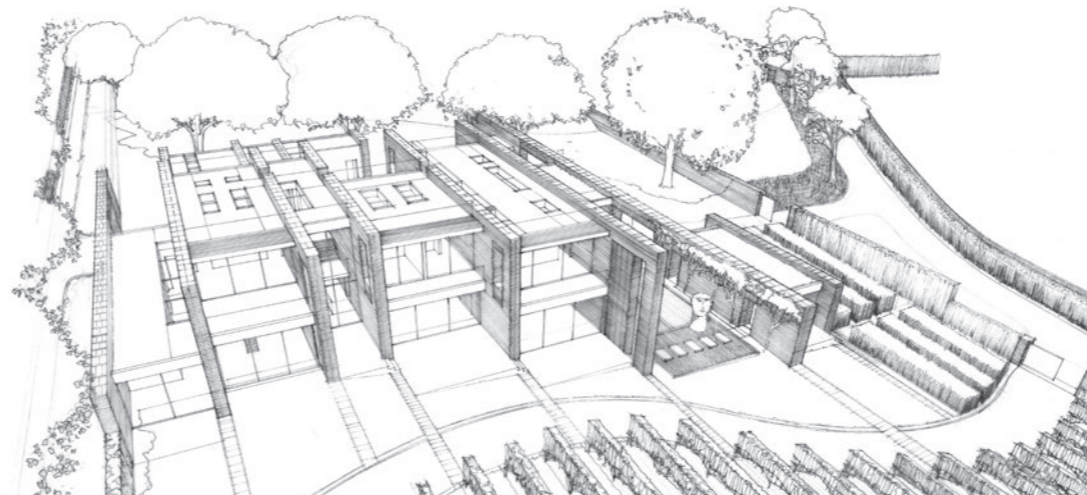
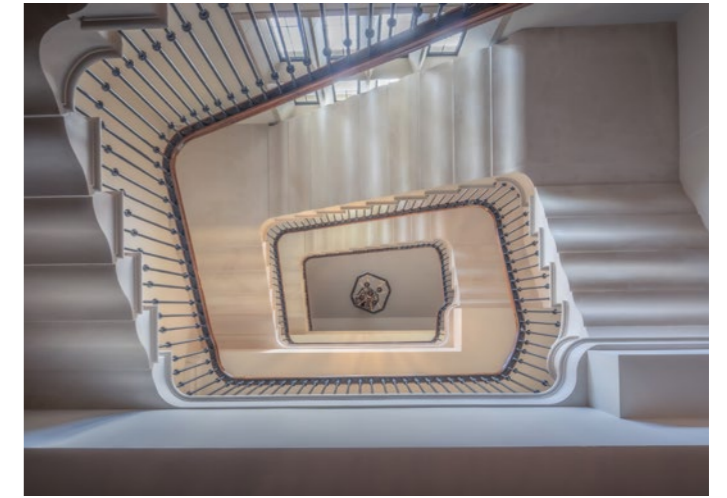
The site has been appraised via reports and surveys to establish an analysis of the land. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been produced by local ecologists CCNW along with a topographical survey carried out by Green World Surveys. These are attached to the application documents.

Shaw & Jagger Architects have been appointed for the design of both the house and Landscaping scheme. The project team comprises of Francis Shaw & Ed Jagger, both of which are chartered Architects and members of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The project team have a wealth of knowledge and experience in the residential sector within challenging environments across the country and were responsible for the first post-war conversion of a scheduled monument back to residential use in both England and Scotland and have gained several Paragraph 55 and 79 (now 80) consents within the open countryside and the Green Belt along with other challenging consents such as SSSI, AONB’s and World Heritage sites.

The landscape consultant, DRaW (UK) Ltd, is an established Landscape Architectural consultancy providing a comprehensive range of landscape design and assessment services to public and private sector clients. They are a registered practice of the Landscape Institute and pride themselves on their reputation and expertise. Their team of like-minded professionals share a passion for delivering imaginative project solutions and exceeding the expectations of their clients. They have an established track record in adding value to a wide range of projects both in the UK and overseas. DRaW have produced the Landscape visual assessments for the proposed scheme and have provided feedback on the Landscape and design proposals from Shaw & Jagger.

The planning consultant, Directions Planning, are an independent town planning consultancy based in Yorkshire. Having developed a close relationship with Shaw & Jagger over the years, they provide a wide range of planning related advice to private individuals, landowners and developers. They have a wealth of experience with sensitive sites and policy such as green belt and countryside.

James Strachan KC has an extensive practice in administrative and public law, planning and environment, major infrastructure & DCOs, compulsory purchase and compensation, local government, financial services and commercial regulatory law, human rights and privacy. He has a long-standing specialist practice in planning and environmental law with 26 years’ experience.



Top: Croston Hall & Wiswell Manor

Centre: Sundridge Park Mansion

Bottom: Paragraph 80 schemes



Top: Paragraph 80 schemes

Centre: Listed Buildings & SAM's

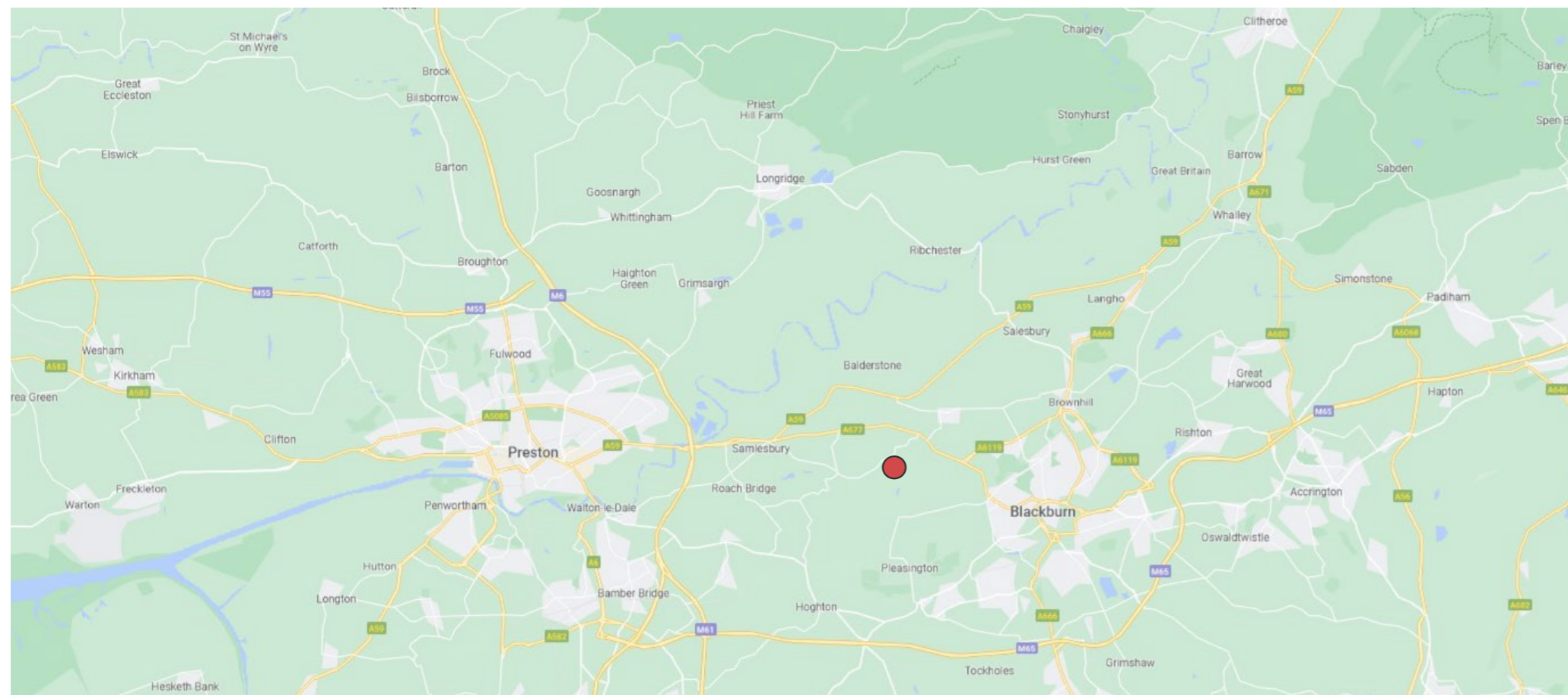
Bottom: Artwork, sculpture & craftsmanship commissions





Part 1

Site Analysis

Site Analysis - Part 1



-  Site Location
-  Application Boundary

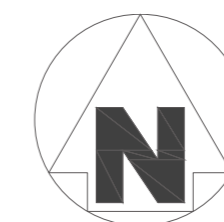
The site lies within the administrative jurisdiction of Ribbles Valley Borough Council, which in turn lies within the County of Lancashire. Ribbles Valley Borough Council is the relevant Local Planning Authority for the purposes of an application for planning permission for a new dwelling in this area.

The site is located approximately 1.6km southwest of Mellor and 3.9 km northwest of Blackburn. Woodfold Hall is located to the south of the proposed site. The approximate grid reference is: E363684, N429657.

The site lies within open countryside comprising an approximate area of 14.03 acres (5.68 hectares) of undeveloped land situated adjacent to the dwellings known as 'Woodfold Park Farm' and 'Huntsmans Cottages' to the south of Further Lane. There is an existing drive to the east of the proposed site accessing residential properties off Further Lane which is a minor road that spurs off the A677 accessing Nabs Head and Samlesby Bottoms to the south west.

The site itself is shaped as an irregular rectangle, aligned to the road and adjacent access road. There is an existing field gates access to the north west off Further Lane.

The site is bounded by a mix of mature and semi mature trees, hedgerows and post and rail fence. There are two trees within the site which are the subject of a tree preservation (TPO) along with the trees along the eastern boundary. These are highlighted on the topographical survey and within the landscape visual assesment that accompany this document.

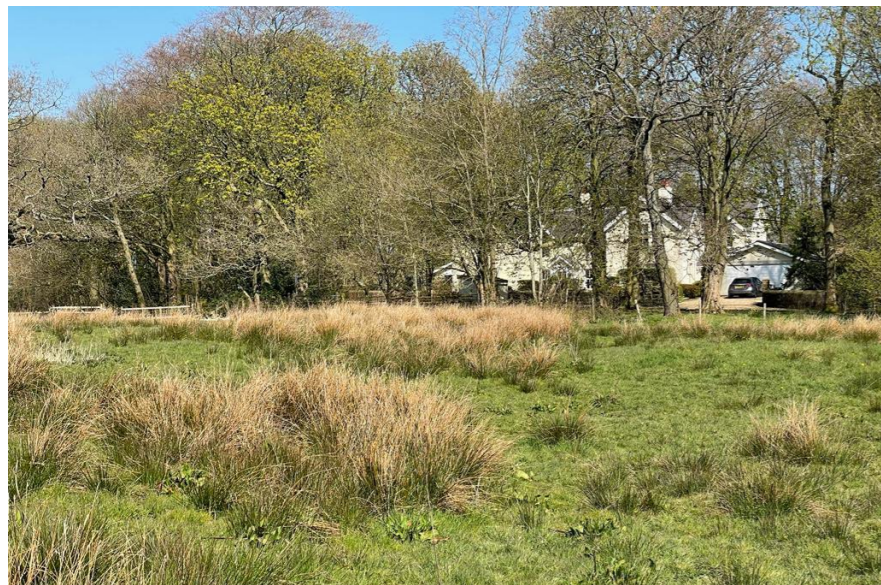




1: View across site towards the north



2: Looking south from eastern boundary of the site



3: View towards the east including Huntsman's Cottages



4: View to north west and long distance view



5: View to south of Woodfold Park Farm



6: Existing field gate entrance



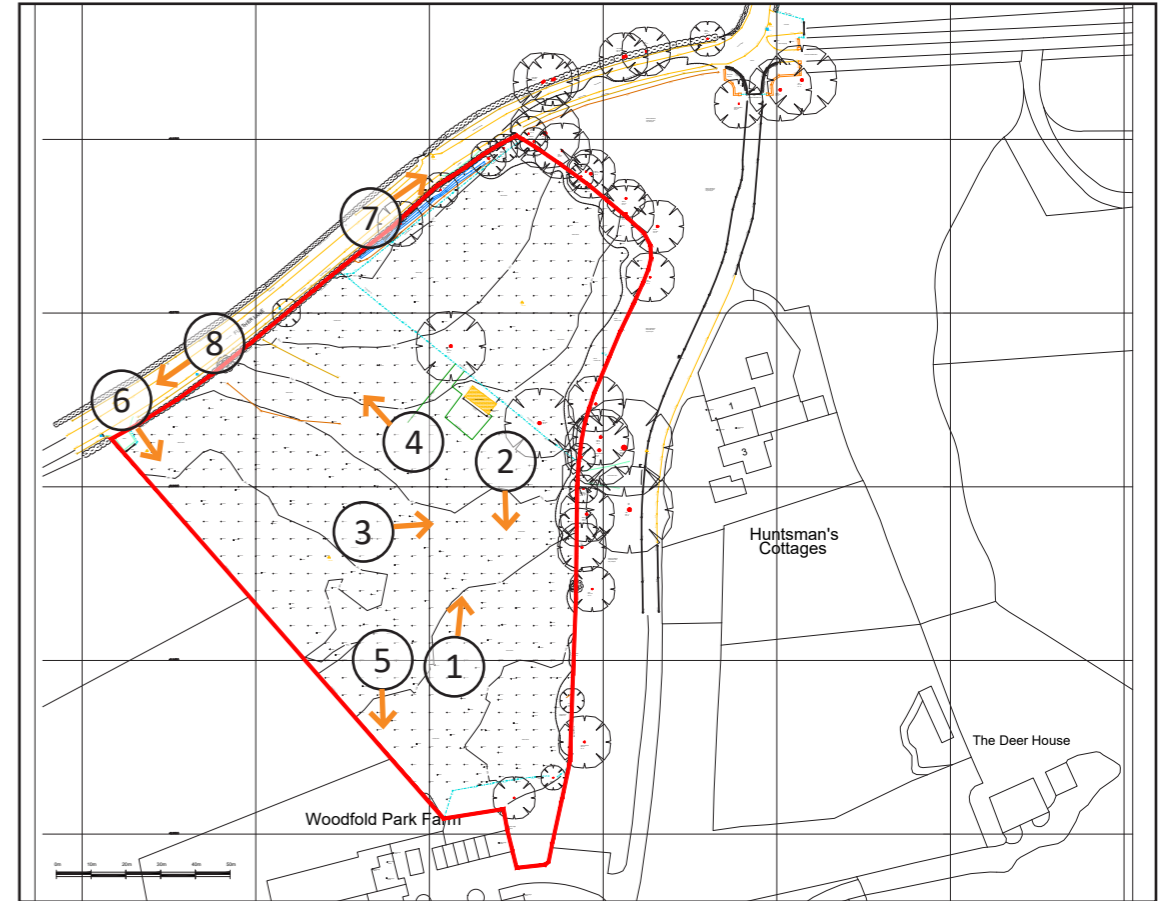
7: View east along Further Lane

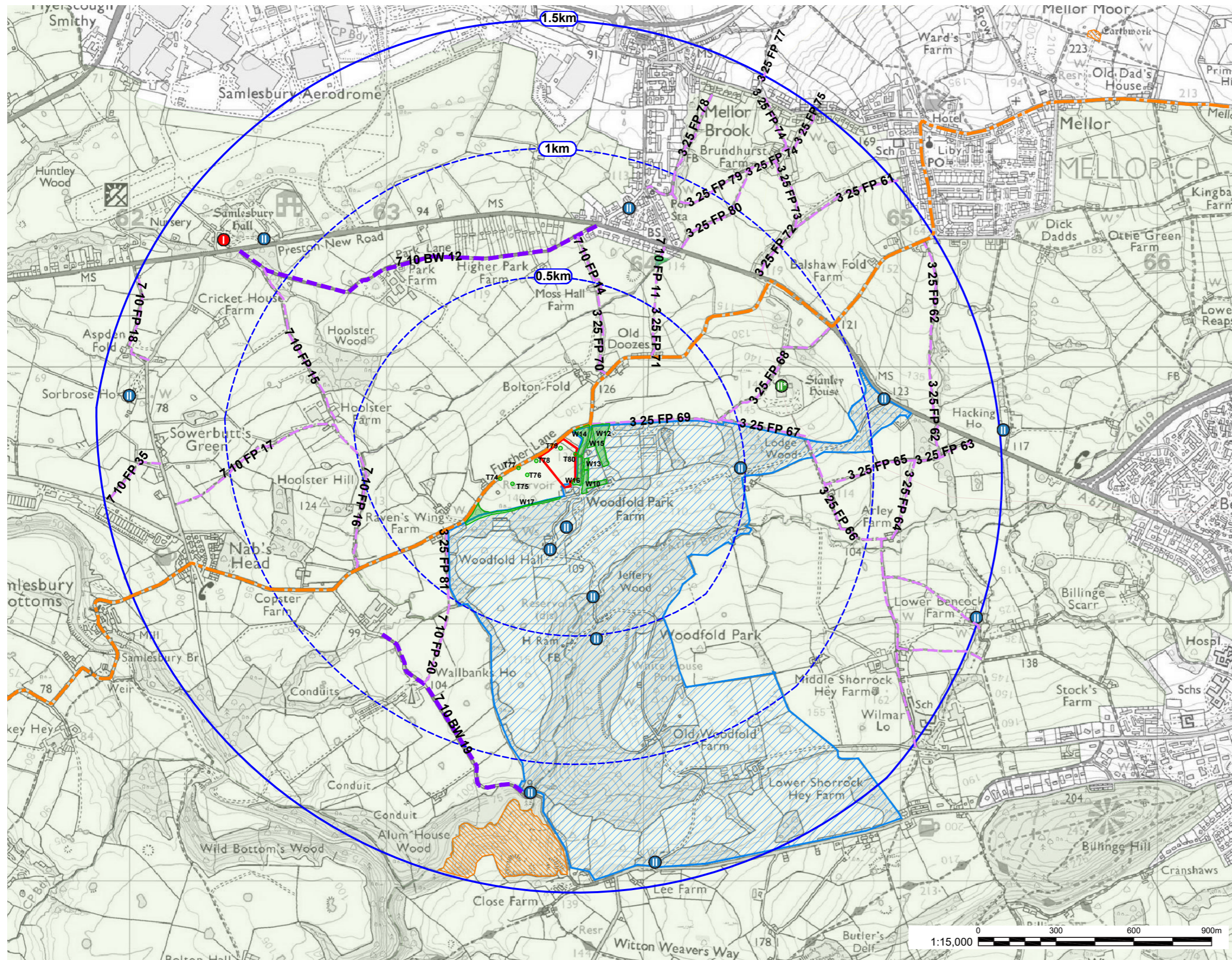


8: View west along Further Lane

The site is set on the edge of Woodfold Park near Mellor and is on a ridge approximately 136m AOD of medium height ground.

The site has impressive views from the its highest plateau. It has a shallow slope from the highest point at the southern end of the site, with a 3m difference from northern boundary bordering Further Lane. The site is bounded by a dense mature tree belt to the eastern side (which screens Huntsman's Cottages) and more sporadically to the south. The Southern boundary is dominated by the converted group of residences that form a development known as Woodfold Park Farm (which was originally built as stabling to the main Hall). The Western boundary are adjoining paddock land fenced off with post and rail fencing (subject of an option for the client) and the Northern boundary is hedged to Further Lane with some trees. The site has been used as paddock for some years and includes a stable block. The views show also the site entrance and along Further Lane.





The attached extract from the baseline LVA document highlights the local designations within a 1.5 km radius of the site. This illustrates the extent of the green belt, local footpaths and bridleways, Listed Buildings, Scheduled monuments and tree preservation orders. (Within the immediate proximity of the site).

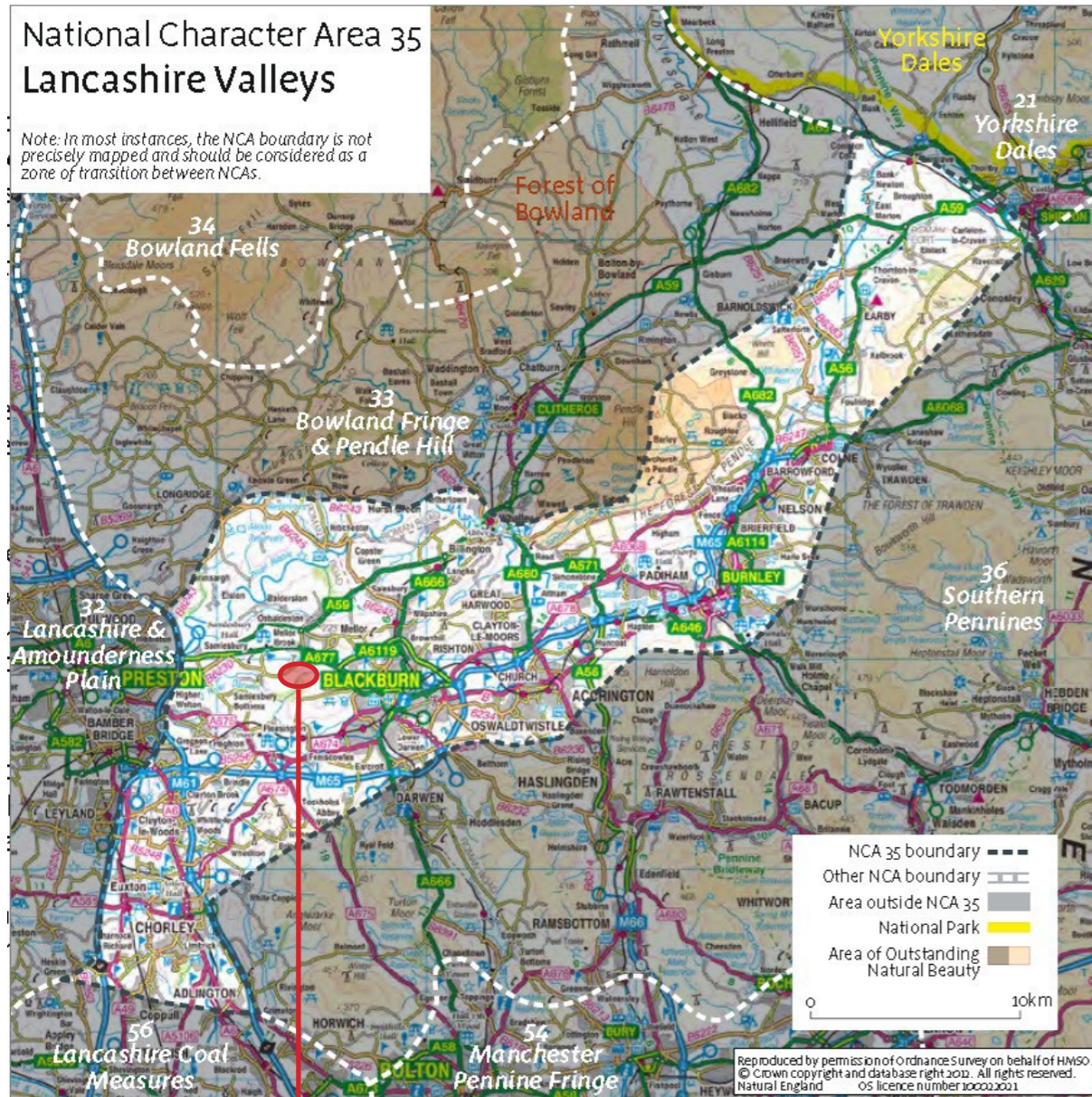
Legend

- Planning Application Boundary
- 1.5 km Study Area
- Public Footpath
- Bridleway
- Lancashire Cycle Way
- Grade I Listed Buildings
- Grade II* Listed Buildings
- Grade II Listed Buildings
- Registered Parks and Gardens, Woodfold Park
- Scheduled Monument, Pleasington Alum Works
- Green Belt
- Tree Preservation Orders closest to the site (Refer Appendix A for details)



National Character Area 35 Lancashire Valleys

Note: In most instances, the NCA boundary is not precisely mapped and should be considered as a zone of transition between NCAs.



Site Location

The site is located within The Lancashire Valleys National Character Area (NCA). This NCA identifies the key landscape characteristics of the site and wider area.

The Lancashire Valleys run north-east from Chorley through Blackburn and Burnley to Colne. The National Character Area (NCA) lies mainly in east Lancashire and is bounded to the north-west by the Bowland Fells fringe and the Millstone Grit outcrop of Pendle Hill, and to the south by the Southern Pennines. A small proportion of the area (5 per cent) lies in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Lancashire Valleys broadly consist of the wide vale of the rivers Ribble and Calder and their tributaries, running north-east to south-west between the natural backdrops of Pendle Hill and the Southern Pennines. This visually contained landscape has a strong urban character.

The Lancashire Valleys are underlain by Carboniferous rocks including limestone, Millstone Grit, shales and Coal Measures. The bedrock is largely covered by glacial and post-glacial deposits of sands, gravels, clays and alluvium. Localised surface exposures of bedrock have given rise to extractive industries, including stone quarrying and coal mining.

The Industrial Revolution saw the development and expansion of the major settlements, which include Blackburn, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and Colne. A small 'cottage' cotton and textile industry developed, first drawn to the area for its available water power. It developed rapidly but has been in steady decline since the 1920s. The towns are dominated by mills and Victorian-stone terraced housing. Numerous examples of the area's industrial heritage remain, and are matched today by substantial areas of contemporary industrial development.

Agriculture, once the major source of income before industrialisation, is now fragmented by the built environment, industry and housing. The remaining pockets of farmed land, used for extensive livestock rearing, are concentrated along the Ribble Valley, the fringes of Pendle Hill, the area to the west of Blackburn, and in the north around Skipton.

Opportunities for recreation activities are provided by a network of public rights of way, including key routes along the Pennine Bridleway and Pennine Way National Trails, while a series of country parks and local nature reserves also provide quality green space to encourage visitors to engage with and enjoy the local environment.

Statement of Environmental opportunity (SEO)

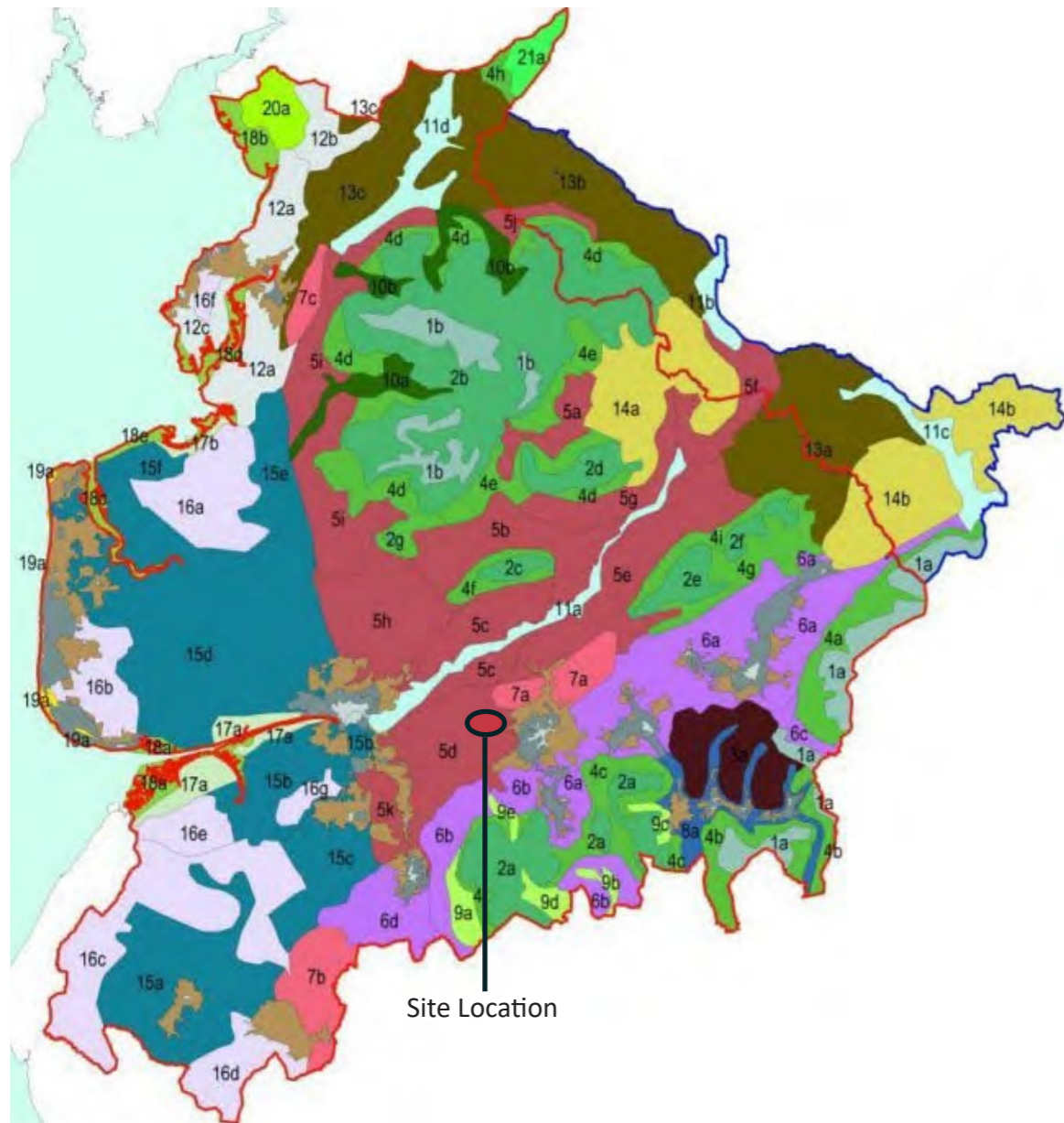
The National Character Assessment identifies a number of environmental opportunities that are specific to the local landscape:

SEO 1: Conserve and manage the Lancashire Valleys' industrial heritage to safeguard the strong cultural identity and heritage of the textile industry with its distinctive sense of place and history.

SEO 2: Increase the resilience and significance of woodland and trees, and manage and expand existing tree cover to provide a range of benefits, including helping to assimilate new infrastructure; reconnecting fragmented habitats and landscape features; storing carbon; and providing fuel, wood products, shelter and recreational opportunities.

SEO 3: Manage and support the agricultural landscape through conserving, enhancing, linking and expanding the habitat network, and manage and plan for the associated potential impact of urban fringe development, intensive agriculture and climate change mitigation.

SEO 4: Conserve and manage the distinction between small rural settlements and the densely urban areas and ensure that new development is sensitively designed to contribute to settlement character, reduce the impact of the urban fringe and provide well-designed green infrastructure to enhance recreation, biodiversity and water flow regulation.



Site Location

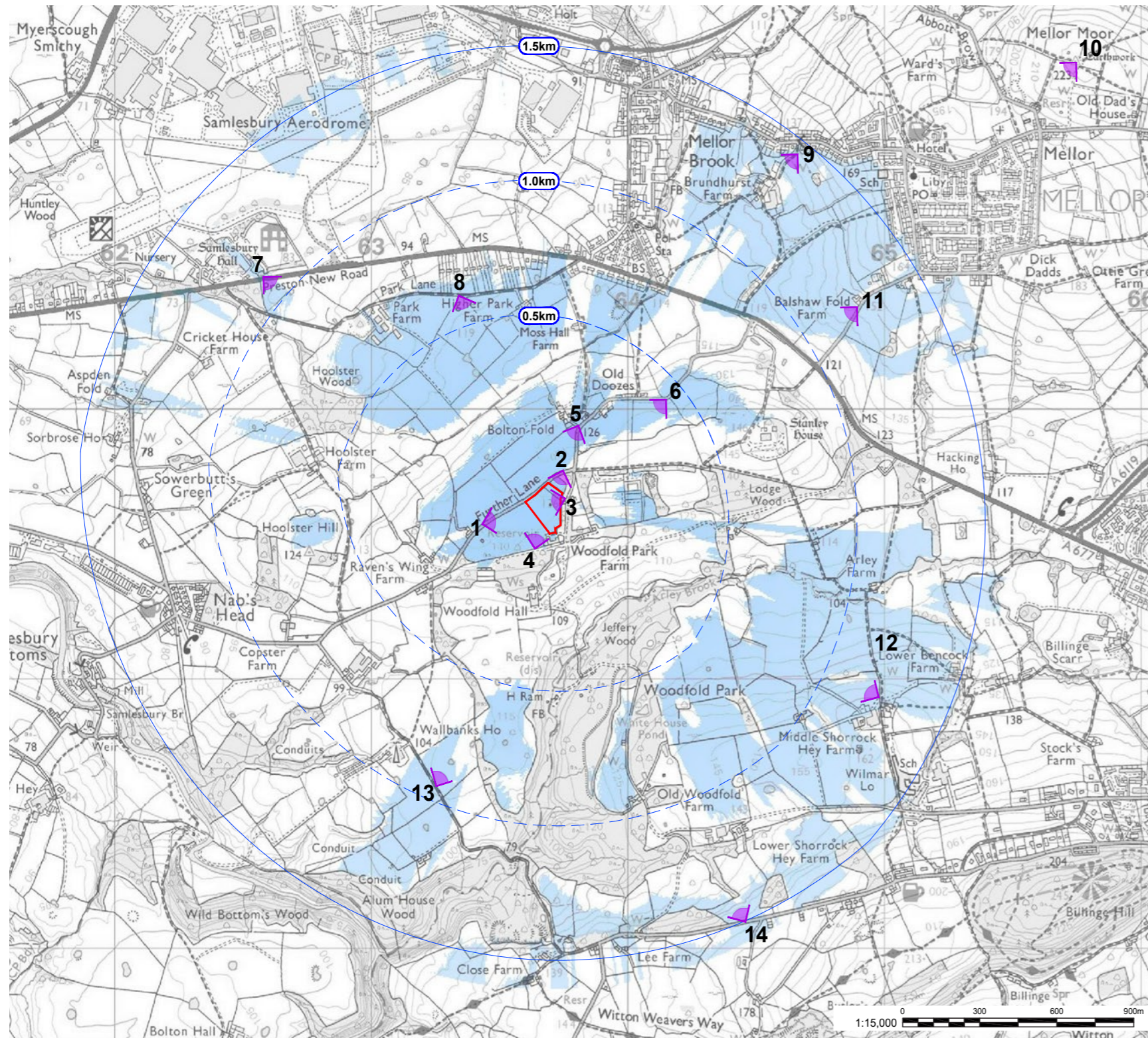
- | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Lancashire County: Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen Boundary | 5 Undulating Lowland Farmland | 10 Wooded Rural Valleys | 17 Enclosed Coastal Marsh |
| Craven Study Area | 5a Upper Hoddler Valley | 10a Wyre Valley | 17a Oulton and Hutton Marsh |
| Landscape Character Types & Areas | 5b Lower Hoddler and Loud Valley | 10b North Bowland Valleys | 17b Cockerham Coast |
| 1 Moorland Plateaux | 5c Lower Ribble | 11 Valley Floodplains | 18 Open Coastal Marsh |
| 1a South Pennine Moors | 5d Samlesbury-Withnell Fold | 11a Lower Ribblesdale | 18a Ribble Marshes |
| 1b High Bowland Plateaux | 5e Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn) | 11b Long Preston Reaches | 18b West Bank-Silverdale Marshes |
| 2 Moorland Hills | 5f Lower Ribblesdale (Gisburn to Hellifield) | 11c Aire Valley | 18c Wyre Marshes |
| 2a West Pennine Moors | 5g South Bowland Fringes | 11d Lune Valley | 18e Filling and Cockerham Marshes |
| 2b Central Bowland Fells | 5h Gascoigne-Withnigham | 12 Low Coastal Drumlins | 19 Coastal Dunes |
| 2c Longridge Fell | 5i West Bowland Fringes | 12a Camforth-Galgate-Cockerham | 19a Fylde Coast Dunes |
| 2d Woodington Fell | 5j North Bowland Fringes | 12b Warton-Barwick | 20 Wooded Limestone Hills and Pavements |
| 2e Pendle Hill | 5k Quarden-Euston | 12c Heysham-Overton | 20a Arnsdale and Silverdale |
| 2f White Moor/Burn Moor | 6 Industrial Foothills and Valleys | 13 Drumlin Field | 21 Limestone Fells |
| 2g Beacon Fell | 6a Calder Valley | 13a Gargrave Drumlin Field | 21a Lack Fell |
| 3 Enclosed Uplands | 6b West Pennine Foothills | 13b Berrham-Clapham | Urban Landscape Types |
| 3a Fossendale Hills | 6c Olney Gorge | 13c Docker-Kelley-Lancaster | Historic Core |
| 4 Moorland Fringe | 6d Adlington-Coppull | 14 Rolling Upland Farmland | Industrial Age |
| 4a Traiden Fringe | 7 Famed Ridges | 14a Staldburn-Giggleswick | Coastline |
| 4b Fossendale Moorland Fringe | 7a Mellor Ridge | 14b Lathersdale and Cringles | |
| 4c Blackburn Moorland Fringe | 7b Upholland Ridge | 15 Coastal Plain | |
| 4d Bowland Giltstone Fringes | 7c Langthwaite Ridge | 15a Omskirk-Latham-Rufford | |
| 4e Bowland Limestone Fringes | 8 Settled Valleys | 15b Langton-Bretherton | |
| 4f Longridge Fell Fringes | 8a Inwell | 15c Croston-Mawdesley | |
| 4g South Pendle Fringe | 9 Reservoir Valleys | 15d The Fylde | |
| 4h Lack Fell Fringe | 9a Rivington | 15e Forton-Garstang-Catterall | |
| 4i North Pendle Fringe | 9b Turton-Jumbles | 15f Knott End-Rilling | |
| 4j West Pennine Fringes | 9c Haslingden Grane | 16 Mosslands | |
| | 9d Belmont | 16a North Fylde Mosses | |
| | 9e Paddlesworth | 16b South Fylde Mosses | |
| | | 16c Martin Mere and South West Mosses | |
| | | 16d Skelmersdale Mosses | |
| | | 16e Tarleton Mosses | |
| | | 16f Heysham Mosses | |
| | | 16g Hable and Fairington Mosses | |

Country houses are a feature of the area and are often surrounded by parklands and well managed estates. They are evidence of the developing industrial enterprise and increasing wealth between the 16th and 19th centuries. Architecturally distinctive yeoman and gentry houses are also characteristic of this type and date from the 17th century onwards.

During the 17th century lime was used for land improvement in these lowland fringe areas and many small farm kilns remain in the landscape, along with the larger industrial kilns and quarries of the 19th and 20th century. The mining of Millstone Grit also proved to be important in this landscape type. Where suitable stone was available, querns and millstones could be quarried and manufactured to meet the needs of the population. Remains of 19th century millstone production near Quernmore can still be seen on the flanks of Clougha Pike. Lead and Silver were extracted in Rimington from the 17th century and mined and manufactured in places such as at Quernmore to meet the demands of the rapidly industrialising county.

Section 5d Samlesbury - Withnell Fold:

An area between the Ribble Valley to the north and the Industrial Foothills to the south. It is underlain by millstone grit and sandstone, but the landscape is influenced by the mantle of glacial till which covers the surface, producing a gently undulating landscape of large lush green pastures divided by low cut hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Dramatic steep sided wooded valleys wind their way through the landscape carrying the River Darwen and its tributaries. Designed landscapes and parkland associated with Samlesbury Hall, Woodfold Hall, Pleasington Old Hall and Hoghton Tower add to the overall woodland cover in this lowland landscape and Witton Country Park provides a countryside resource on the edge of Blackburn. It is also influenced by infrastructure (major road and rail routes), industrial works, the airfield at Samlesbury and built development on the edges of Preston.



Legend

- Site Boundary
- 1.5km Proposed 1.5km study area
- 8 Proposed Viewpoints (For Visual Assessment)

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- Extent of theoretical visibility

ZTV Parameters

Zone of Theoretical Visibility is generated using 'OS Terrain 5' (digital terrain data at 5 m resolution), assuming the following heights:

- Proposed development at 10 m (AGL)
- Viewer height of 2 m (AGL)

Notable woodland area and buildings were mapped as visual barriers using OS VectorMap District data (Heights of woodland are estimated using 'Google Earth' and field observations).

Visual barriers less than 3m high have not been mapped.

The ZTV identifies those areas from which the development may be theoretically visible. Due to the frequency of vegetation and structures less than 3m high (not included in the model) the actual visibility is likely to be less extensive than the drawing indicates.

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out by DRow Design and Assessment in order to appraise the site with the following aims:

- to identify the key landscape and visual issues associated with the proposed residential development, taking into account national planning policy relating to new dwellings in open countryside, as set out in Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and
- to identify the baseline characteristics of the site and its surroundings to inform the designs for the proposed dwelling.

The report is broken down into sections which cover various aspects of the site and surrounding area which are cross referenced in the document.

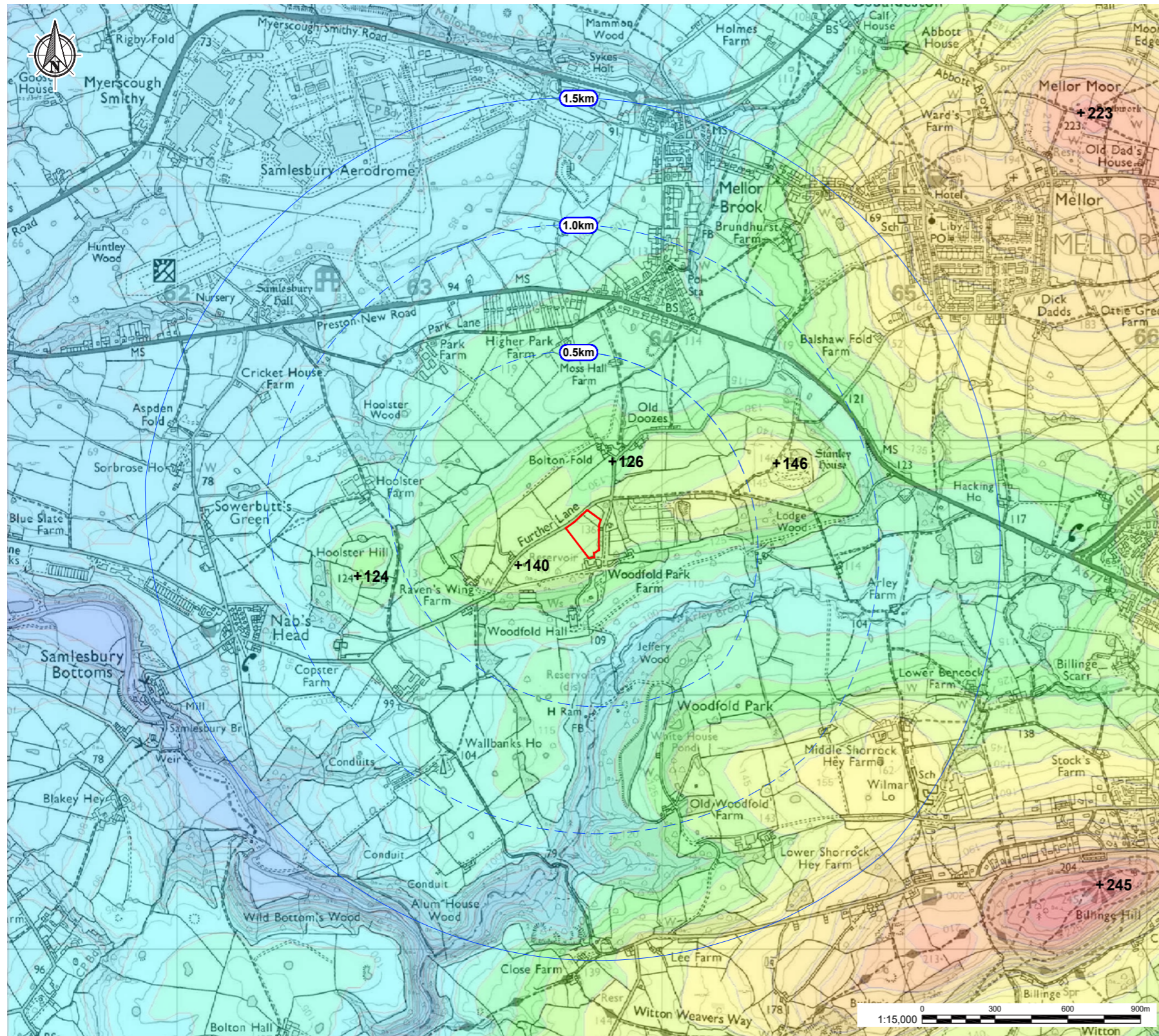
This section will highlight the findings of section 4 'Visual context' and discuss the visibility of the site within the local setting.

The report highlights a Zone of Theoretical visibility (ZTV) which is a computer generated map highlighting potential visual receptors based upon OS mapping data. The zone was generated on a theoretical building height of 10m which represents a mean height for local buildings which tend to be 2 or 3 storeys. The zone represents a worst case scenario as it does not take into account the screening created by trees, hedges and vegetation less than 3m high.

The drawing to the right indicates the ZTV and shows that theoretically due to the slightly elevated nature of the site in relation to the surrounding area, this area is rather extensive.

The ZTV diagram to the right also highlights key locations of potential visibility from public roads, footpaths and bridle ways within this theoretical zone. The LVA document contains a photo of each one of these views and a description which will be used as a benchmark for future testing.

The LVA notes that there are no protected views within the proximity of the site. The report also highlights that there are few residential properties that could be affected by the proposals; these are Huntsman's Cottage, Woodfold Park Farm, Deer Cottage, Cook's Farm and Bolton Fold. It was deemed unlikely that the development would result in a loss of sunlight, lack of privacy or would alter the views to such a magnitude that would make any neighbouring property an undesirable place to live, therefore it is unlikely that residential amenity would be an issue. Views from private properties are not usually a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

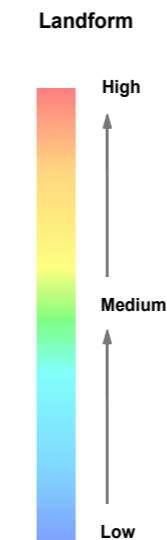


The site is situated at approximately 136m AOD on a ridge of medium height ground which extends on an east west axis from Stanley house in the east to Ravens wing farm in the west.

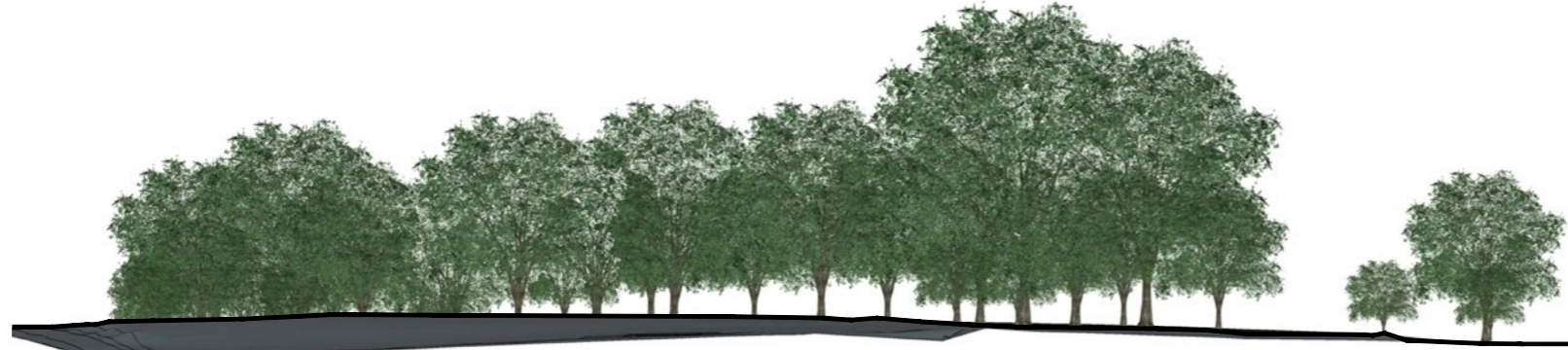
The wrap around of land from immediately north, around to the west and immediately south is all much lower, this is obscured to the south by the trees and buildings of Woodfold Hall and Woodfold Park farm, but impressive long distance views are afforded to the north and the west. To the east the land raises even further and extends in a valley between the high points of Mellor Moor to the north and Billinge Hill in the south.

The site itself follows the contours of the surrounding area with a highpoint of 135m to the centre of the site which slopes away to 131m to the northern boundary, this slope continues and therefore means Further Lane is well hidden from the centre of the site.

- Legend**
- Site Boundary
 - Proposed 1.5km study area
 - +140 Height above Ordnance Datum



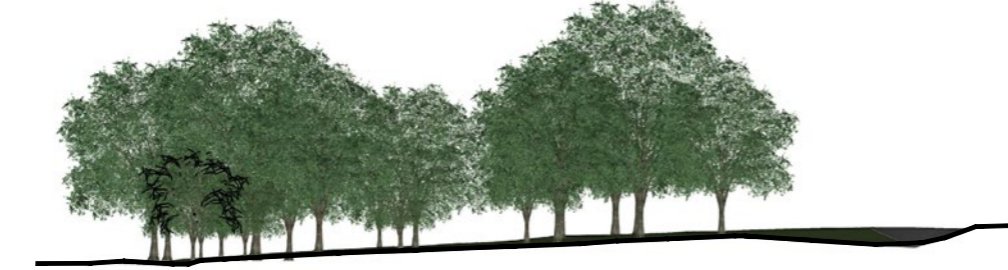
Topographical Map Produced by DRaW as Part of LVA Baseline Assessment



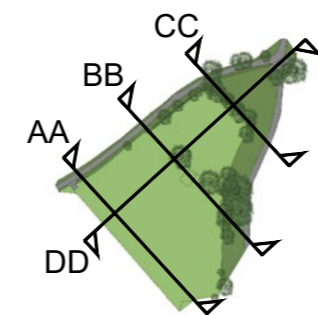
SECTION AA



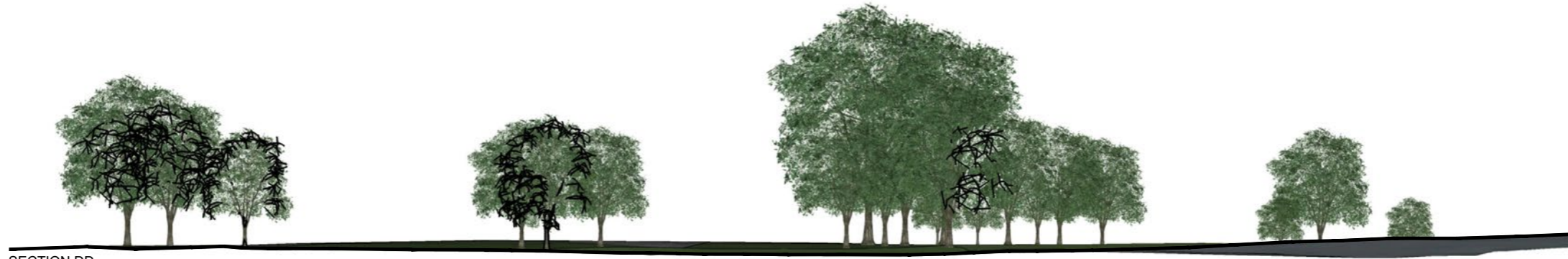
SECTION BB



SECTION CC

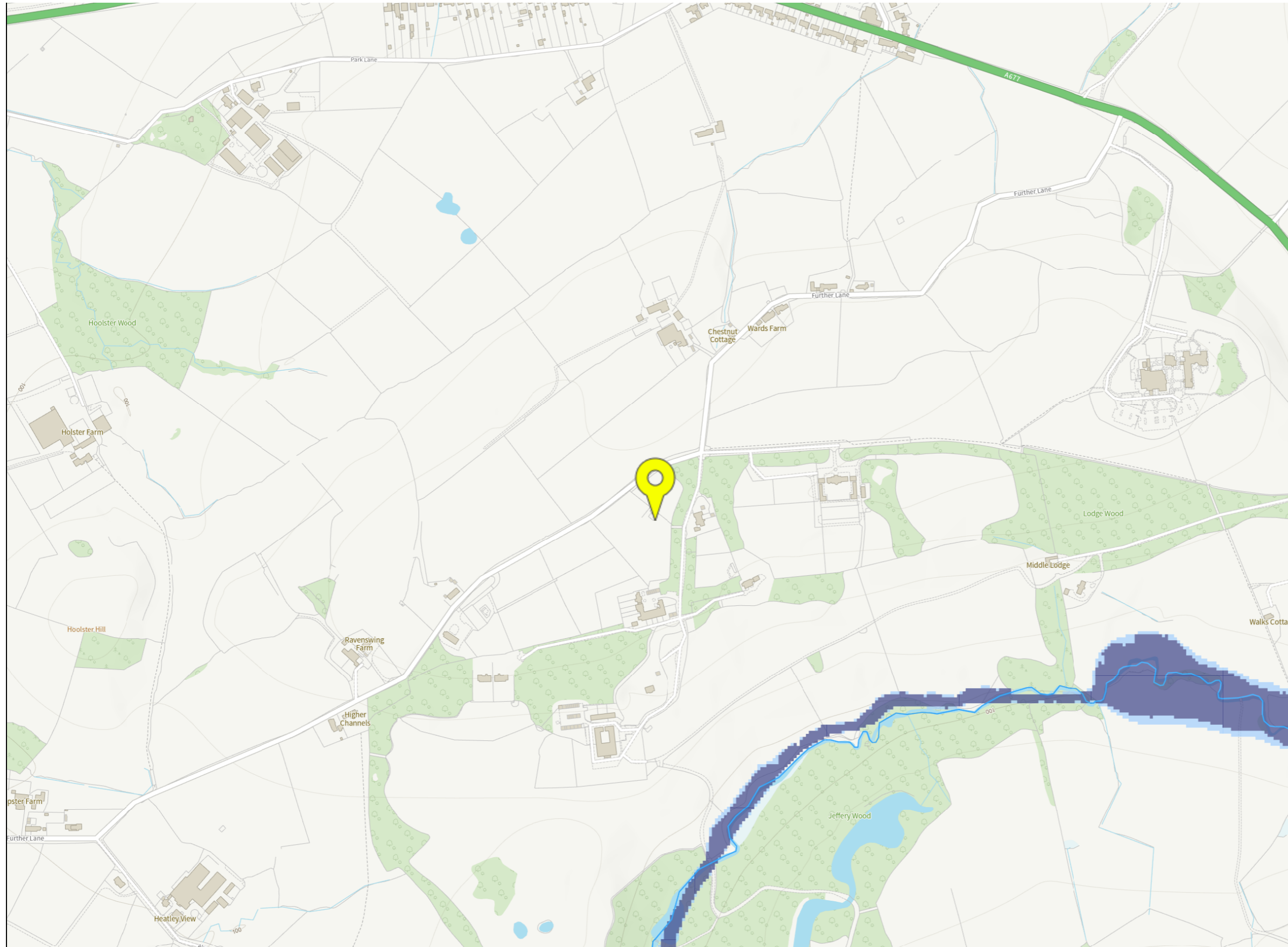


SECTION KEY (NTS)








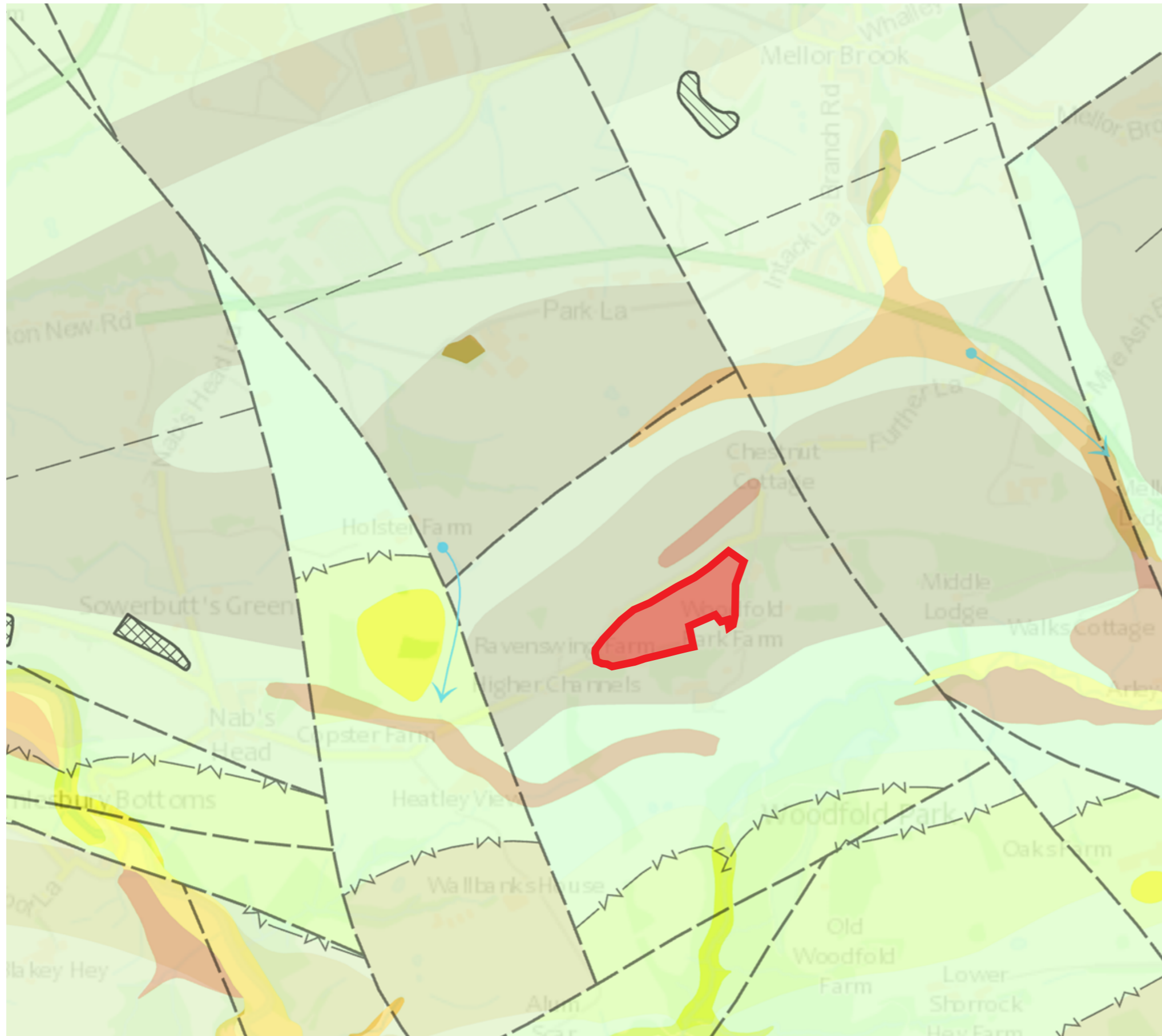
SECTION DD

Flooding



According to the Governments 'Long Term Flood Risk Information', the site is located in an area which is at 'very low risk of flooding' from rivers, reservoirs or surface water, i.e. Flood Zone 1.

-  Selected point
-  Flood zone 3
-  Flood zone 3: areas benefitting from flood defences
-  Flood zone 2
-  Flood zone 1
-  Flood defence
-  Main river
-  Water storage area



Map Key

Bedrock geology 1:50,000 scale

- [PENNINE LOWER COAL MEASURES FORMATION - MUDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND SANDSTONE](#)
- [ROSSENDALE FORMATION - MUDSTONE AND SILTSTONE](#)
- [BOWLAND SHALE FORMATION - SANDSTONE](#)
- [LOWER HASLINGDEN FLAGS - SANDSTONE](#)
- [PENDLE GRIT MEMBER - SANDSTONE](#)
- [MILLSTONE GRIT GROUP \(SEE ALSO MIGRI\) - MUDSTONE AND SILTSTONE](#)
- [BOWLAND SHALE FORMATION - MUDSTONE](#)
- [MARSDEN FORMATION - MUDSTONE AND SILTSTONE](#)
- [SHERWOOD SANDSTONE GROUP - SANDSTONE](#)
- [HEBDEN FORMATION - MUDSTONE AND SILTSTONE](#)
- [SILSDEN FORMATION - MUDSTONE](#)
- [PENDLETON FORMATION - MUDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND SANDSTONE](#)
- [DYNELEY KNOLL FLAGS - SANDSTONE](#)
- [LOWER KINDERSCOUT GRIT - SANDSTONE](#)
- [ALUM CRAG GRIT - SANDSTONE](#)
- [SAMLESBURY FORMATION - MUDSTONE](#)
- [COPSTER GREEN SANDSTONE - SANDSTONE](#)

Superficial deposits 1:50,000 scale

- [GLACIOFLUVIAL DEPOSITS, DEVENSIAN - SAND AND GRAVEL](#)
- [TILL, DEVENSIAN - DIAMICTON](#)
- [ALLUVIUM - CLAY, SAND AND GRAVEL](#)
- [HEAD - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL](#)
- [RIVER TERRACE DEPOSITS, 1 - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL](#)
- [ALLUVIAL FAN DEPOSITS - SAND AND GRAVEL](#)
- [LACUSTRINE DEPOSITS - CLAY, SILT AND SAND](#)
- [PEAT - PEAT](#)

Artificial ground 1:50,000 scale

- [MADE GROUND \(UNDIVIDED\) - ARTIFICIAL DEPOSIT](#)
- [WORKED GROUND \(UNDIVIDED\) - VOID](#)
- [INFILLED GROUND - ARTIFICIAL DEPOSIT](#)

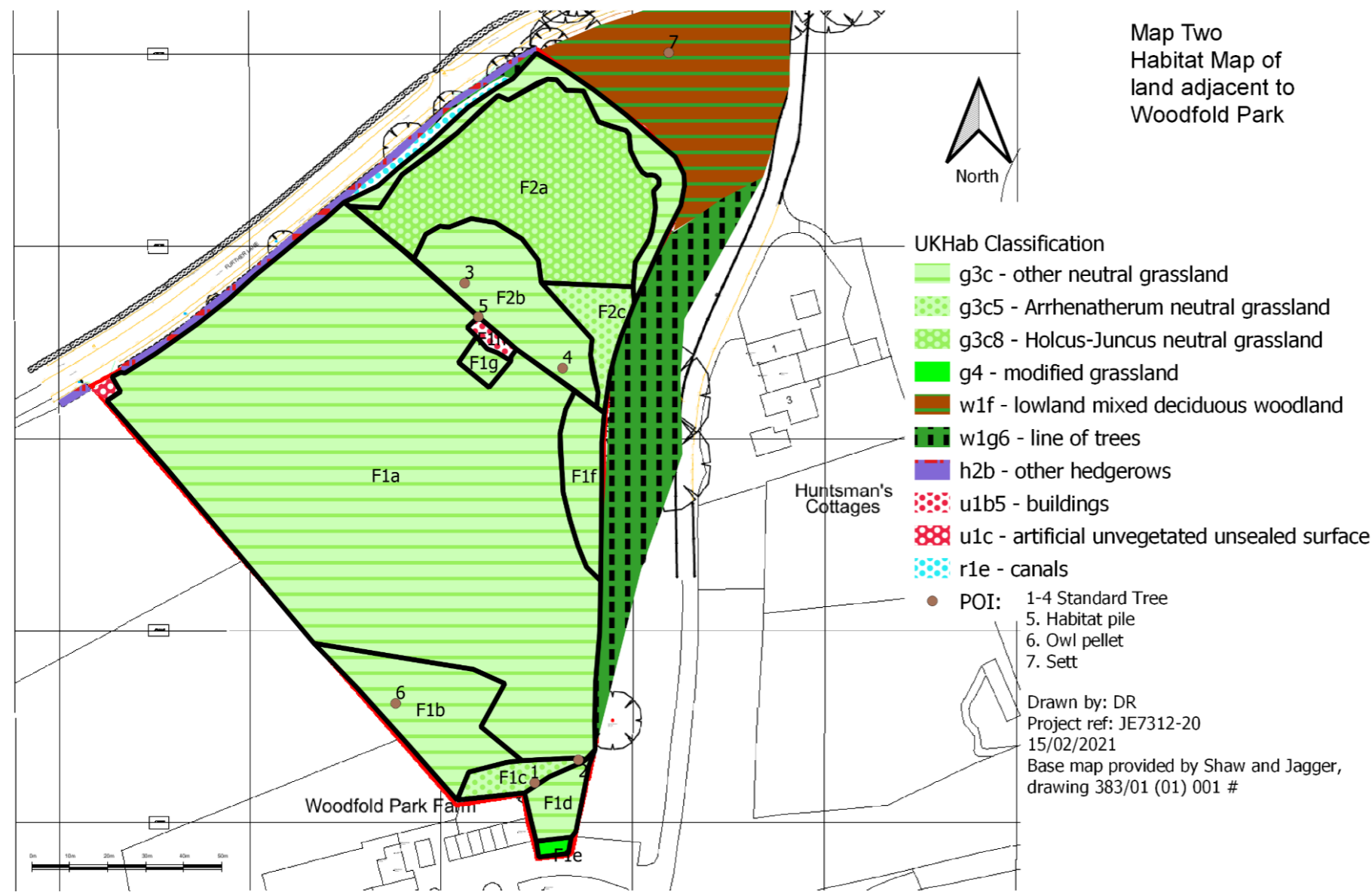
Mass movement deposits 1:50,000 scale

- [LANDSLIDE DEPOSITS - UNKNOWN/UNCLASSIFIED ENTRY](#)

Linear features 1:50,000 scale

- Coal_seam_Inf
- Coal_seam_Obs
- Fault_Inf_Crossmark_on_downthrow_side
- Fold_Anticline
- Fold_Syncline
- Glacial_meltwater_channel_Centre_Undiff
- Marine_band

Geological map of the site and surrounding area (Taken from sheet 185 OS Survey)



Habitat Map

A walkover survey was undertaken on the site in February 2021 by Conservation Contracts Northwest Ltd as part of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Extracts of this are highlighted below:

Results:

- The site is divided into two field units and their boundary features. These were identified as neutral grasslands with no UK priority habitats recorded.
- The boundary features on site were a single species failed hedgerow, a seasonal wet ditch, tree lines and agricultural/estate fencing. Off site boundaries were composed of woodland and lines of trees.
- On and off site boundary features could host nesting birds and ground-nesting birds could occur on the sites fields.
- A barn owl was using the site but the proximity of the nesting site was unknown.
- Badger evidence was found in on of the fields and a sett was discovered within 30m of the site.
- Desk studies reveal a small bat roost nearby but there were no suitable buildings for roost sites on site.
- Great crested newts were using ponds within 2km of the site but there are no ponds on site.

Enhancement Recommendations:

- There would be many opportunities for enhancements. The majority of the existing site made little contribution the area's biodiversity. Sensitive, largely native planting could complement the existing tree lines and the mature trees on site. The retention of dark corridors and planting to reduce light spill into these could maintain and create bat flight ways. The extension of the Further Lane hedgerow along the site's western boundary would further increase the connectivity of the site.
- The incorporation of a wildlife-friendly pond feature would further enhance the site attracting invertebrates, amphibians as well as birds and bats. Bird nesting boxes should also be considered for the site. These could be attached to either the new building or trees.

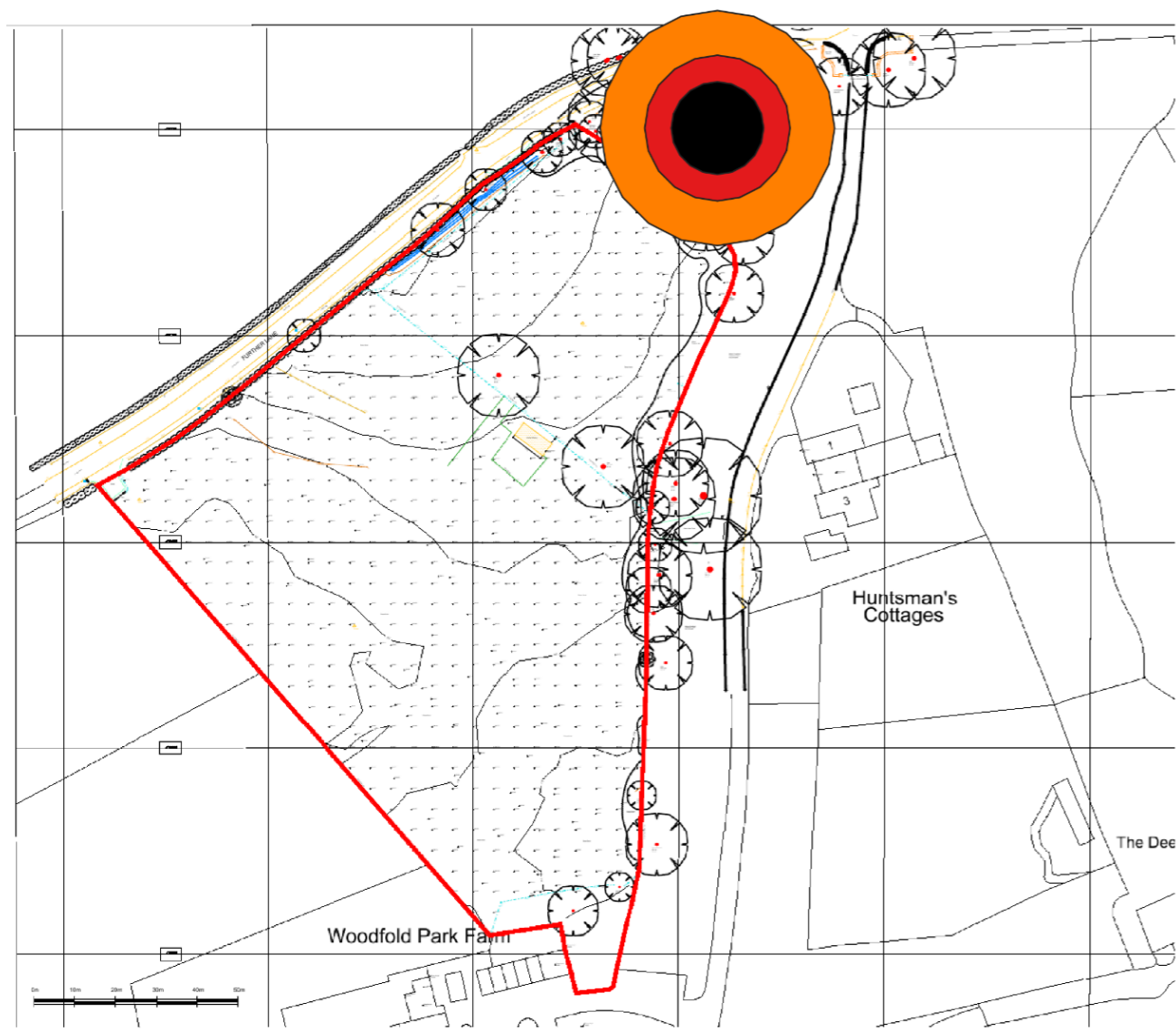
Conclusions and Recommendations:

I. The project site was largely composed of neutral grassland of poor to moderate condition. The constituent parts of the grassland were insignificant from a botanical and conservation perspective.

II. The site was bounded on three of its four sides by woodland, tree-lines and native hedgerow. Together these formed important habitat corridors connecting to more extensive and regionally significant woodland habitat to the east, west and south;

Recommendation: Retention of, and minimal disturbance during construction activities to, boundary features to maintain connectivity; and,

Recommendation: Hedgerow along Further Lane should aim to not have additional canopy gaps of >5m or cumulative gaps totalling >10% of length (bat activity surveys and compensatory planting would be required if these criteria were exceeded).



Map One: Badger Set Disturbance Buffers



- 10m buffer
- 20m buffer
- 30m buffer

Drawn by: DR
 Project Ref: JE7312-20
 17/02/2021
 Base Map provided by Shaw
 and Jagger
 Drawing 383/01 (01) 001 #

Badger Set Disturbance Map

III. Nesting birds and foraging/commuting bats would use the wooded boundary features and as such, disturbance through construction activities and post-construction lighting would need to be avoided along those features.

Recommendation: Nesting birds Method Statement; and,
Recommendation: Retention of 20m dark buffer around north and east boundary features; no more than 1lux light-spill within a further 20-30m buffer.

IV. Two, large, open-grown oak trees grew in the centre of the site. These contained several potential bat roost features, many niches for nesting birds and would provide habitat for a wide variety of invertebrates.

Recommendation: Retention of the two open-grown oaks; and,
Recommendation: Bat surveys of the oaks, if tree works or light spill likely

V. Locally distributed protected species (great crested newt, toad, hedgehog) could be using both grassland and boundary features of the site at any time of year.

Recommendation: Reasonable avoidance measures, through a Method Statements, to ensure they were not affected by construction activities.

VI. There was an active badger sett within 30m of the site

Recommendation: An appropriate graded disturbance-buffer would be required around a known badger sett; and,
Recommendation: Continued monitoring of and for badger setts would need to be prior and throughout any construction period.

VII. Moles hills were present in Field 1.

Recommendation: The humane removal of moles from the site before any earth works proceeded.

VIII. Sensitive development on the site could provide an opportunity to increase site connectivity and on-site native biodiversity through appropriate planting, habitat creation and nest/roost site provision.

Recommendation: Monitored landscape plan to have ecological input to ensure appropriate net-gain from the development.

IX. More information was required regarding the breeding status of barn owl on or adjacent to the site and of the potential nesting of birds covered by s41 NERC Act/BoCC.

Recommendation: Barn owl and breeding bird survey prior to final development plans.



Belmont Hall



Crag Hall



Lyme Park



Tabley House



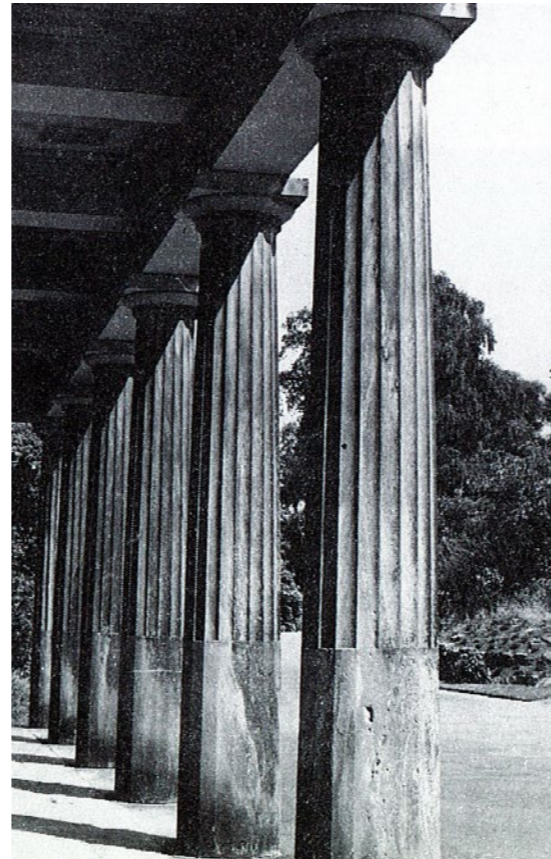
Tatton Park



Castletown House



Skirsgill



Allerton Grove



Bamford Hall



Downham



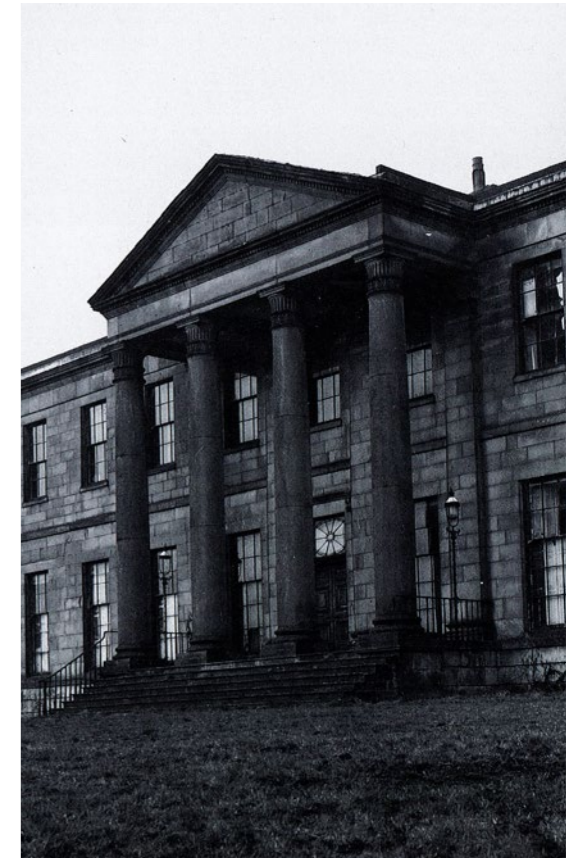
Graythwaite



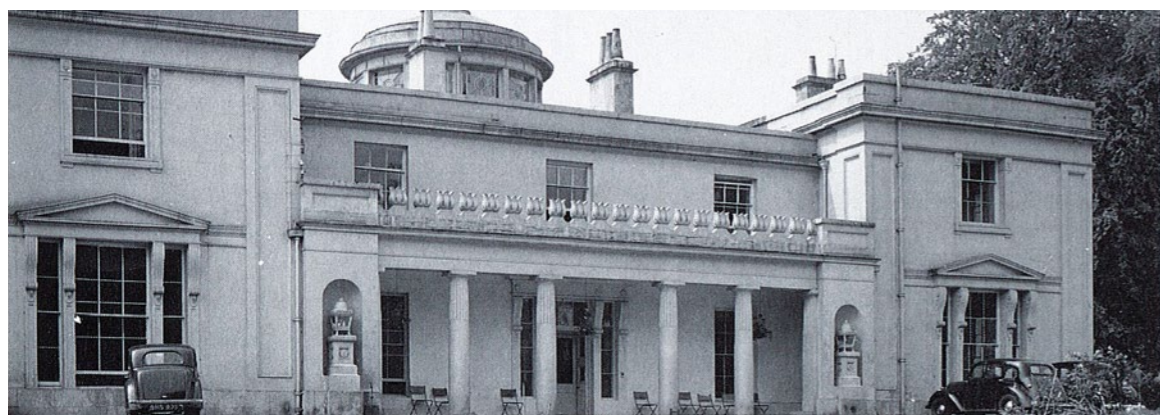
Haigh Hall



Heaton Hall



Woodfold Hall



Storrs Hall



Read Hall



Quernmore Park

Country Houses of the north-west



Part 2

Site History

Woodfold Park: James Wyatt or Charles McNiven designed Woodfold Hall for Henry Sudell?



Woodfold Hall, today

As part of our analysis, we researched the original owner who commissioned Woodfold Park and its Hall. In looking for an appropriate typology and character for the house it is important to understand the man behind the vision. Unfortunately, there are no estate records from the Sudell family, no account books or site plans and records of who built the hall. As such two possible theories have been postulated as to who was the architect. The current view is that Charles McNiven, (c1746-1815) a Scottish Architect/Engineer/Landscape Gardener, who was based in Manchester was responsible for the design. This belief is based solely upon one advert placed on the 26th October 1796 the following advertisement was inserted in the Blackburn Mail:

“To Masons, Joiners, Carpenters and Labourers. To be let, at St. John’s Tavern in Blackburn, in the County of Lancashire, on Monday, the 21st day of November next, at two o’clock in the afternoon, the Getting and Leading of the stones necessary for, and also for the walling of, a house intended to be erected within Mellor, and not far distant from Wood-fold.

The Ashlar-stones and those for hewing are proposed to be got in a delf now open at Abbot-brow, near Abbot-house, within Mellor, but the inferior stones will be met with very near the intended situation of the house.

And to be let, on the following day, at the same place and hour, the Joinery and Carpentry work of the said house.

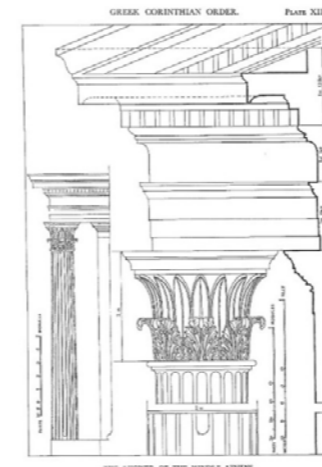
A plan of the intended building may be seen and every other necessary information had by applying to Mr. Thomas Eccles at Lower-Darwen (Agent to Henry Sudell, Esq.) or to Mr. M’Nevin in Manchester.

N.B. Every undertaker must come prepared to give good security (if required) for the due performance of his engagement.”

As such the previously held belief that the hall was designed by James Wyatt (1746-1813), (Pevsner (1969) 'Woodfold Hall by James Wyatt, 1798. Gutted, but it still has its beautifully smoothly ashlar facade of nine bays with a portico of four giant unfluted columns with Adam-ish (Spalatro) capitals. The sides have five bays, and the middle window is tripartite under a blank segmental arch. Good, large stables with tripartite lunette windows have been swept aside in favour of a Landscape gardener (Surveyors and Nurserymen) from Manchester. Charles had a nursery business along with his brother Peter. What is clear from contemporary records from the Manchester Guardian is that McNiven was a successful surveyor, he built canals, water features, owned a part share in a foundry and dealt in salt.



Woodfold Hall entablature



Adam spalatro capital

There is only one small plain house attributed to McNiven as 'Architect' (not a protected title until 1832) and as such his authorship of what is clearly a house from James Wyatt's pen should not be given credence. It is most probable that McNiven acted as a project manager or clerk of works and was most likely responsible for the landscape design (given his expertise) using Reptonian design principles. We can be reasonably confident that James Wyatt was responsible for the design of Woodfold Hall because Woodfold is part of a group of houses that mark a turning point in Wyatt's design philosophy, this group of houses. In 1782 Wyatt had been appointed Architect of the Ordnance, this was a major role with responsibilities to design works for the Arsenal, Armouries, Barracks, stores etc. As a result of this appointment, Wyatt is believed (according to John Martyn Robinson) to have upped his game post-1790 to be taken more seriously especially after succeeding Sir William Chambers in the post of Surveyor general in 1796. He sought to strip out frippery from his design and er towards a more austere classical language such as that propounded by the Abbe Laugier (Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-1769) best known for his 'Essay on Architecture' first published in English in 1755).

This quest for the austere aesthetic is best encompassed in Wyatt's designs for Castle Coole (County Fermanagh) c 1789-1797 is widely regarded as the finest Neoclassical house in Ireland. His design for Bowden House, Wiltshire c 1796 and Dodington Park 1794-1813 are equally are both masterpieces of neoclassical architecture. Woodfold Hall belongs to a group of houses and the design being most likely prepared in 1795-6 is at the point when Wyatt was first experimenting with the 'Roman composite order' or in this case the Spalatro Capital first used by Robert Adam and borrowed by Wyatt. It is possible that McNiven may have seen designs but it is unlikely. The designs for Castle Coole and Bowden were first exhibited in 1796 at the Royal Academy and published in the New Vitruvius Britannicus in 1808. Neither house is similar to Woodfold but shares the same Architectural language. Giles Worsley writes in his 'Architectural Drawings of the Regency period' (published 1991) about Jeffry Wyatt, later Sir Jeffry Wyatville, whilst working in his uncle James Wyatt's office...' Dinton shows Wyatville in the most restrained late classical manner of his uncle James Wyatt.



Castle Coole



Bowden House



Dodington Park

The design is very similar to that for Woodfold Hall, Lancashire, of 1798 on which he would have worked during his last year in James Wyatt's office. Ornament has been pared away to an absolute minimum, and even the columns of the giant ionic order are unfluted. A service wing to the left of the house, like that James Wyatt had used at Dodington Park, was disguised by shrubbery.' Dinton Park (now known as Philipps House) is a homage to Woodfold Hall, designed by his Uncle and drawn by Jeffry Wyattville. Whether Wyattville had any influence on the design is not known, however, Woodfold certainly influenced Wyattville's design for Dinton Park designed in 1813 the year his Uncle died.

What is also known about James Wyatt is that he was a poor businessman (he was made destitute after death leaving his wife penniless) and could not delegate (Robinson). His appointment as Surveyor General led to a significant increase in workload leading to poor administration of jobs and leading to Wyatt being sacked from valuable commissions. It was common that Architects worked with other partners that administered the works. Repton and Soane or Nash or Wyatt, Elliot and Nasmyth at Loudoun Castle. Many architects provided drawings to contractors acting as intermediaries. 1796 would seem to be a prolific year for Wyatt, whether he passed his scheme over to McNiven to execute the design, lost interest or was sacked is not recorded. Another reason for James Wyatt being appointed is that Wyatt was the most celebrated Architect of his day and in 1796 he became the King's Architect this would have been a desirable prospect for a rich young merchant to appoint the King's Architect to design his house. Henry Sudell was reputed to be a millionaire which now is equivalent to a billionaire such as Mike Ashley. In establishing James Wyatt as the Architect of Woodfold Hall it is then most likely any works carried out after his death would be designed by his nephew and assistant Jeffry Wyatt. (Sir Jeffry Wyattville).

Henry Sudell (1764-1856) and a History of Woodfold Hall

In his section of 'Blackburn Worthies,' George Miller starts the entry for Henry Sudell as follows:

"One fine August day in 1827 the people of Blackburn, rich and poor alike were startled by a rumour that Henry Sudell, merchant of Woodfold, Mellor, had filed his petition for bankruptcy. It seemed fantastic; incredible. Henry Sudell, lord of the manor of Mellor and leading citizen of Blackburn, by repute a millionaire, whose trading activities were worldwide and whose name was the synonym of stability and fair dealing. Henry Sudell, who for a quarter of a century had been the leader of the elite, patron of every local charity and arbiter of destiny for a whole generation of handloom weavers. Henry Sudell, whose every action had an aura of semi-regal splendour, had revived the old tradition of a manor court and re-established the reign of squirearchy by creating the Woodfold Hunt. Yet now it was whispered that he had left the district and taken up residence in Bath, rather than face the condolences of his fellow merchants and the bewilderment of his employees. It could not be true."

Henry Sudell was born on 4th May 1764 some five months after his father's death. Henry, until his marriage, lived with his mother at Sudell House in King St. This substantial house and one of the grandest in the town had been given to Henry and Alice upon their marriage by grandfather Henry. Both the Sudells and the Livesey's were of prosperous and wealthy yeoman stock, having been associated with Blackburn for some 400 years, owning land in the town, and linked with its development and sharing in its various activities.

The families soon became involved in the textile trade. As chapmen (dealers, particularly in cloth, fustians and later cotton), clothiers and calico printers, they were part of the emerging cotton merchant fraternity. They developed coal pits under their land in Over Darwen, and as Blackburn grew, granted ground rents on their town centre land for the building of houses warehouses etc. Great grandfather John Sudell, chapman, died in 1739. In his will, his real estate included land at Eccleshill, a house in Fish Lane, Blackburn, his dwelling house in Blackburn, Cob Wall property and at least two other houses in the town. He left legacies of two hundred and fifty pounds or five hundred pounds to his daughters-in-law and his numerous grandchildren. He also left money in trust to buy two bibles with the book of common prayer included to be given each year to two needy and devout children in Blackburn, to help them grow into responsible and pious citizens.

Henry's grandfather, also Henry, died in 1760. His will is an appendix. His real estate included two messuages in Eccleshill, a house in Fish Lane, Blackburn, two properties in Livesey, Overlockshey and Hoghton's, High House in Dilworth, a property in Pickup Bank, Hey Fold and Ellison Fold in Over Darwen, a new house in Friday Field, Blackburn, the house where he lived in Blackburn, the brickkill field and the Scarrs in Pleasington, and a share of the waterworks from a place called Rough Clough. This was a new project with two partners to bring water into the growing town. The location was later called Pemberton Clough and survives to-day as two ponds in Corporation Park. In 1721, he with William Baldwin and Henry Fielden jointly purchased the Manor of Blackburn. He left each of his three sons John, William and Henry property, stock in hand or cash to the value of four and a half thousand pounds each. Some of the legacies had already been given to his sons in his lifetime, such as the house in Sudell /King Street where Henry, a grandson was born. His son, Henry, died before his father, but grandfather Henry left his grandson Henry, his father's third share of his estate. Henry (grandfather) described himself as 'gent.' He is entered, with his sons, in the Preston Guild Roll, of 1742.

“Henry Sudell of Blackburn, gent, John, his son, of Blackburn, gent, William his brother, Henry his brother, James his brother.”

John died in 1785, he left his estate to his nephew Henry. He had expanded his land holdings and increased his personal wealth. His short and simple will reads:

“I, John Sudell, of Blackburn, merchant...give and devise unto my nephew Henry Sudell of Blackburn...all my messuages, Lands, tenements rents in the Townships or Hamlets of Pleasington, Blackburn, Livesey, Over Darwen and elsewhere to my nephew Henry. I bequeath all my ready money, cash securities for money, goods, chattels and personal estate and effects to my nephew, Henry, and appoint him executor.”

His real estate included the properties left to John by his father; Overlockshey and Hoghton’s in Livesey, High House in Dilworth, Heyfold and Ellison Fold in Over Darwen and at least two houses in Blackburn and Becket Bank in Pickop Bank. This last property known also as Becket Fold was later given by Henry as an endowment to the new St.John’s Church. Henry was an only child, and so inherited two fortunes, the two shares of his grandfather’s estate. In 1785, Henry, aged 21, was a rich young man, although of the middling and merchant class.

Formerly it had taken six hand spinners to produce enough yarn to keep one weaver supplied. Now with even primitive 6, 12 or 20 spindle machines, a weaver could get all the yarn he could weave. This led to the expansion of the ‘putting out’ system. Someone with capital, a middle man, such as Henry or his agent, would buy the yarn, put it out to the weavers ‘on his books’, and then collect and pay for the finished pieces of cloth. These were stored in the clothier’s warehouses, such as could be found at the rear of the big houses in King St. and transported in loads to Manchester. Henry owned a warehouse and sizing house (for finishing the cloth) on Ainsworth Street. It was a very practical system. Risk and investment were spread, and the clothiers did not usually have to build factories or provide equipment.

Henry’s inheritance included coal mines in Darwen, the Sudell area of the town. With rents from his land and mines, and his income as a ‘putter outer’, he was very well off, becoming the most influential merchant and manufacturer in the town, and a generous benefactor. It is said that his name headed every local appeal for relief or church building. The new church of St.John (possibly designed by James Wyatt) was built in Blackburn in 1788 at a cost of £8000, half of which was given by Henry. At Christmas time, until he left Woodfold, he donated a beef or ox to the town, for poor people’s Christmas dinner, with the instructions that money should be provided, if the supply of meat ran out, before all were catered for. The Blackburn Mail of December 25th 1795 wrote that Mr Sudell and some other gentlemen of this town and neighbourhood gave their annual donation of a piece of beef etc to several indigent persons to enable them to participate in the festivities customary at this season and we learn from Clitheroe Burnley etc that the gentlemen in and about those places have been extremely bountiful to the distressed inhabitants. It is also recorded that he bought sacks of potatoes to be sold to the needy at cost price.

Little is known about Sudell other than references to his generosity, a rare newspaper report, is in the Blackburn Mail of December 3rd. 1794. During the Napoleonic wars, troops of Local Defence Volunteers were recruited all over England, to help in case of invasion. Recruiting drives were held all over the country, one of which was the visit by Lieut-Col Clowes, to Blackburn for the Lancashire Fencibles. The report reads:

“And here with pleasure we notice the forward zeal of our worthy townsman, Henry Sudell, Esq., who after expressing the warmest attachment to every object of the meeting, with a flowing bumper in his hand, addressed himself to the young heroes, and to the well pleased and numerous crowd of spectators: ‘Here, my lads, the Town and Trade of Blackburn, by which I am resolved to stand or fall’

The enthusiasm of the crowd could no longer be restrained: he was instantly chaired, and supported by gentleman, and attended by the whole party was, amidst repeated huzzas, carried to his own house, where a profusion of excellent ale, distributed with the characteristic liberality of the donor, finished the business and sent every man home, glowing with loyalty and gratitude.”

It was not until 1798 that The Blackburn Loyal Local Association of Volunteers was formed, one of the commanders was Captain Henry Sudell of Woodfold Park.

In 1796, at the age of 32 years, he married his wealthy cousin Maria Livesey, just 18 years old. Maria’s father Thomas was the brother of Henry Sudell’s mother Alice. Plans were already in place for building a new mansion on the Woodfold estate, which Henry had inherited and added to over recent years. It was probably completed in 1798. An inspection of 1956 notes that there are two rainwater heads of lead embossed with initials and date ‘1798 H M S’

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N.B. Every undertaker must come prepared to give good security (if required) for the due performance of his engagement.”

For many years, James Wyatt was recognised as the architect of Woodfold. He had built Heaton Hall (1772), near Prestwich, some 20 miles south of Blackburn on the way to Manchester, for Sir Thomas Egerton. Sudell will have known of Heaton Hall and may have visited the house. Woodfold is in ‘the Wyatt style’; it had a central dome to the entrance hall similar to Heaton Park, and the staircase is almost identical to that designed by Wyatt for Thirklebury Hall, Yorks.

The attribution to Wyatt was not queried by previous authorities such as Pevsner. The recent attribution to McNiven is based solely on the above local newspaper advertisement. If McNiven did design Woodfold Hall, it is the only one he is credited with. He was heavily involved in The Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal scheme, which commenced in 1791; He is listed in the Manchester Directories of the time c1800 1814, variously as Architect, Ironfounder and Engineer. There was a Manchester iron foundry of ‘Brodie, McNiven and Orndrod’ near his house in Manchester. It is far more probable that McNiven was what we would now call ‘the clerk of works’, carrying out Wyatt’s plans. It is also possible that Sudell had already been acquainted with him via his coal mines in Darwen.

Another Building near Heaton with Wyatt-McNiven connections was Irwell House, Prestwich. Peter Drinkwater bought the ‘Fleams’ estate in 1788 and had constructed his new house by 1794. Irwell House is no more, after lying decayed and abandoned for many years, it was ‘fired’ in a Civil Defence exercise in 1958. Ian Pringle, a local historian in Prestwich, is of the belief that James Wyatt may have designed the house, as it contained two fireplaces very similar to nearby Heaton Hall. A plan of the ‘Fleams’ estate was however drawn by McNiven, dated 8 October 1790 (DDX 415, Lanc Rec.O).

Whoever the architect, it was a large palatial building.

The sale catalogue of May 1831 includes a ground floor plan and description of the ‘spacious, modern and elegant Mansion House of Woodfold,’

“Woodfold House, which was erected about 30 years since is a handsome structure; substantially built of excellent freestone, standing upon a fine lawn, which slopes towards the South, commanding interesting and extensive views, and possibly every requisite for the accommodation of a family of distinction; the Principal Entrance is under a portico of four columns and opens, through a mahogany door, into a Hall 30 feet by 22 1/4 feet, and 14 3/4 feet high, ornamented with a tessellated marble floor. The Breakfast-Room is 19 3/4 feet, by 24 1/2 feet, and 14 3/4 feet high;- the Music-Room is 19 1/2 feet, by 18 1/2 feet, and 14 3/4 feet high;- the Dining-Room is 33 feet by 22, and 14 3/4 feet high;- the Drawing-Room is 33 feet by 22, and 14 3/4 feet high;- the Billiard-Room is 20 feet by 24 3/4 feet and 14 3/4 feet high;- the Shooter’s Room is 18 1/2 feet by 19, and 14 1/2 feet high &c.

The principal apartments have mahogany doors, and mahogany window frames, with plate glass. The Grand Geometrical Stone Stair-Case stands within a Lofty Inner Hall, communicating with the entrance-hall by mahogany doors, and is much admired for the correctness and beauty of its proportions. The Bed-Rooms, Dressing-Rooms, &c are numerous, and several of them are floored with fine Dantzig Oak. The Kitchens, &c are spacious and fitted with large cooking ranges, and a variety of useful fixtures. The other offices are numerous and well arranged.

The Stables, Carriage-Houses, &c. are substantially built on a scale corresponding with that of the house...

The land immediately behind, and to the north-west of the Mansion-house has been laid out with great taste as a flower garden and pleasure ground, with warm and retired walks, sheltered by well-grown plantations and evergreen shrubberies."

The only known illustrations for the house were published in 1922 by the Blackburn Times and show part of the staircase and the glass dome over the landing.

Impressive though the house is, even more so, are the surrounding park and gardens. The site was chosen with great care, to have the maximum effect. Travelling along Billinge End Road, the house could be seen on rising land across the park for about half a mile before reaching the Lodge. The drive from the Lodge to the House was destined to impress and declare the wealth of its owner. The curving drive descended to Arley Brook via the 'White House', commonly called the Fishing House or Shooter's Box, past the Wood Farm, with Hot houses, Dog Kennels, fine wall and other fruit Trees, 'esculents', pine-stoves, vine peach and other Hothouses, several Fish Ponds, stored with tench, carp &c.

New plantations of woodland had been established to enhance the near and far views. The drive passed over a causeway between two fish ponds and then crossed Arley Brook, by a bridge contemporary with the hall, with rusticated voussiors, pilasters, moulded cornice and balustraded parapets. Over the years, those who have entered the parkland and woodland by the stream have noted Giant Hogweed, Horse Chestnut, Green Hellebore, Osier, Red Dogwood, Snowdrops, wild Daffodils, small-leaved lime and a beech fern; all species that would have been introduced to enhance the woodland walks. The whole was enclosed by a four-mile perimeter wall.

Woodfold truly was a prestigious home for a man who has been described as Blackburn's Merchant Prince.

A Mansion such as Woodfold would have required furniture of a standard fitting to the house. The leading cabinet maker in the area was Gillow of Lancaster, and it was he who made a number of articles for the house, in particular for the dining room, Mrs Sudell's bedroom and the hall. Copies of the surviving Gillow archives are held at Lancaster University, and Susan Stuart, an authority on Gillow, has most kindly sketched the furniture commissioned from the relevant books. Most of the items were ordered in 1800, a later order was for a Library Bookcase in 1805. It is likely that more furniture was ordered in later years, but there are no records for it.

Unlike their Blackburn contemporaries, Henry was not a Justice of the Peace, the only time he is listed on a jury is on a list of the grand jury at Lancaster, April 2nd. 1794; the Sudell family is not recorded as taking any part in social or public life. Such a house and lifestyle would seem to indicate a wide social and public circle, it is puzzling that there are no records to that effect. Mrs Sudell presented 'colours' to the Blackburn Fencibles on 4th June 1800. Henry is quoted as maintaining a tradition of unbounded hospitality, but there is no documentary evidence. Shaw describes his entry into Blackburn, as 'almost a state occasion.' 'A magnificent carriage drawn by four carefully matched horses, with postillions in livery of crimson and gold.' 1782 was a Preston Guild Year; John (uncle) Sudell of Blackburn, a merchant is on the roll of 'in-burgesses'; Henry is also enrolled. It is the last occasion for him to be enrolled among the burgesses, and he did not take up the right to enrol his sons. It is a matter of local pride and prestige to be in the guild, so once again there is an unexplained incident of Sudell's character. His contemporaries, the Fieldens of Blackburn are on the list of every Guild and taking part in the social events, balls, banquets and processions. As the son of Henry, and grandson of Henry Sudell who was on the Guild Roll, he had inherited that right.

Sudell or his agent held the Mellor Court Leet until 1827; a rare newspaper reference to the family is *"On Wednesday July 11th. 1827 at the 3rd. Meeting of the Blackburn Horticultural Society, Mrs Sudell won the Best, 3rd. And 4th. prizes for Geraniums and the Best, 2nd. and 3rd. Prizes for Greenhouse Plants. For Hardy Plants the Best was awarded to H Sudell, who also won the class for the heaviest bunch of grapes, the Best Couple of Cauliflowers and the Best Lettuces."*

There were six children of the marriage who grew to adulthood. Abram says that one daughter, Lydia, died at Versailles 4th July, 1825, and another daughter Maria, died at Cheltenham on 21st January 1823. We can only surmise that the family travelled a great deal, to France as well as to English resorts.

There are few records of their life in Blackburn. The late Hilda Makinson, local historian of Pleasington writes that the Miss Sudells opened a school for girls and a Sunday School in the Lodge near Temple End.

The trade recession during the Napoleonic wars affected Blackburn and the surrounding districts heavily dependent on the textile (now almost all cotton) trade. Sudell's reputation as a kind benefactor continued. He was said to be the last to cut wages and the first to raise them again. In August 1818, there was a large gathering (6000) of handloom weavers on Blakey Moor, Blackburn; they voted to set off for Woodfold to confront Sudell. He met them and agreed to an increase of 5% in wages. The other merchants were likely to follow him, as they had done on previous occasions. His own weavers were probably less than a thousand of the number. By 1820, the position in the cotton trade was getting more fraught. There were an increasing number of bankruptcies among the Manchester merchants, Sudell, who had been considered the equivalent of a millionaire was also affected.

The Manchester papers, The Courier, Gazette and Mercury all reported from 14th-18th August 1827, that meetings of the creditors of Henry Sudell had been held in Manchester, the balance sheet laid before the creditors showed debts of £131,793 and the assets available to the discharge of these claims was £60,434. At the second meeting, Mr Neville, Sudell's solicitor informed the creditors represented, that in the midst of various conflicting interests it had been suggested that the most prudent measure would be to issue a commission of bankruptcy against Mr Sudell. Further meetings were held in Blackburn in September, arrangements were made for the first of the Auction Sales of his estates to be held in December 1827.

The reaction in Blackburn has been quoted at the beginning of this biography. The feeling was that it could not be true. It was, Henry Sudell, and his family had left Blackburn, never to return. It was a tragedy for a family associated with the town for hundreds of years to cease the association in such a manner. Many merchants had been declared bankrupt, Henry Sudell could raise his head high, in time his creditors were all repaid at a rate of 95%, a matter of pride and integrity.

How had it happened? Many ideas come to mind. Had he overextended himself in the building of Woodfold Hall and its Park? It was certainly on a grander scale than that built by his contemporary Fielden at Witton. Was Maria's legacy and dowry less than expected? It is not known exactly how much she inherited, however, her settlement included the actual house, Woodfold and most of the Sudell lands in Mellor. Normally a wife's settlement is commensurate with her dowry. A copy of Maria Sudell's marriage settlement is listed in the Fielden archive catalogue. This is yet another instance of lost documents! The archive was formerly in Blackburn, on transfer to the Lancashire Record Office, it was found that various listed items were not actually among the documents transferred, one of them being the marriage settlement. Had Sudell been too generous and for too long to his home town.

There is evidence that financial affairs had not been healthy for a time. In 1818, Sudell had purchased the Hubbersty's estate in Samlesbury; however when the bankruptcy and auction sales were announced, Hubbersty came forward to show that the purchase money had never been paid, and his part of the Samlesbury estate was restored to him.

Abram writes that Sudell's downfall was 'the result of losing speculations on a large scale as a merchant in the German and American markets.' Once again there is no supporting evidence for this. It is another mystery; he had a large estate, with rents from his lands and coal mines, in addition to a ground rent income of some £850 per year, a very handsome income.

The first Auction Sale was held at The Hotel in Blackburn on 20th and 21st December 1827; this comprised the estates in Blackburn and Darwen, with the associated coal mines.

At The Old Bull Inn, Blackburn on 10th September 1828, the estates in Pleasington, Mellor and Samlesbury (with the exception of the settled land) were sold, to be followed on 6th October by the sale of all the Household Furniture, Silver Plate etc. the contents of Woodfold Park. It was described in the sale catalogue as a 5-day sale, which makes sad reading of what has been lost. Fortunately, Barbara Riding photocopied some pages from the catalogue, and she has generously made them available to me. How can such a wealth of silver and furniture, much of which must have been engraved with Sudell's initials or his crest, just disappear.



Library bookcase

The last sale was of the Mansion House of Woodfold and the estates in Mellor and Ramsgreave - the settled estate, was at the Hotel in Blackburn on 26th May 1831.

The Hotel was on King Street, Blackburn almost opposite the house where Henry Sudell had been brought up, and where he attended many functions; it was an ironic choice of venue.

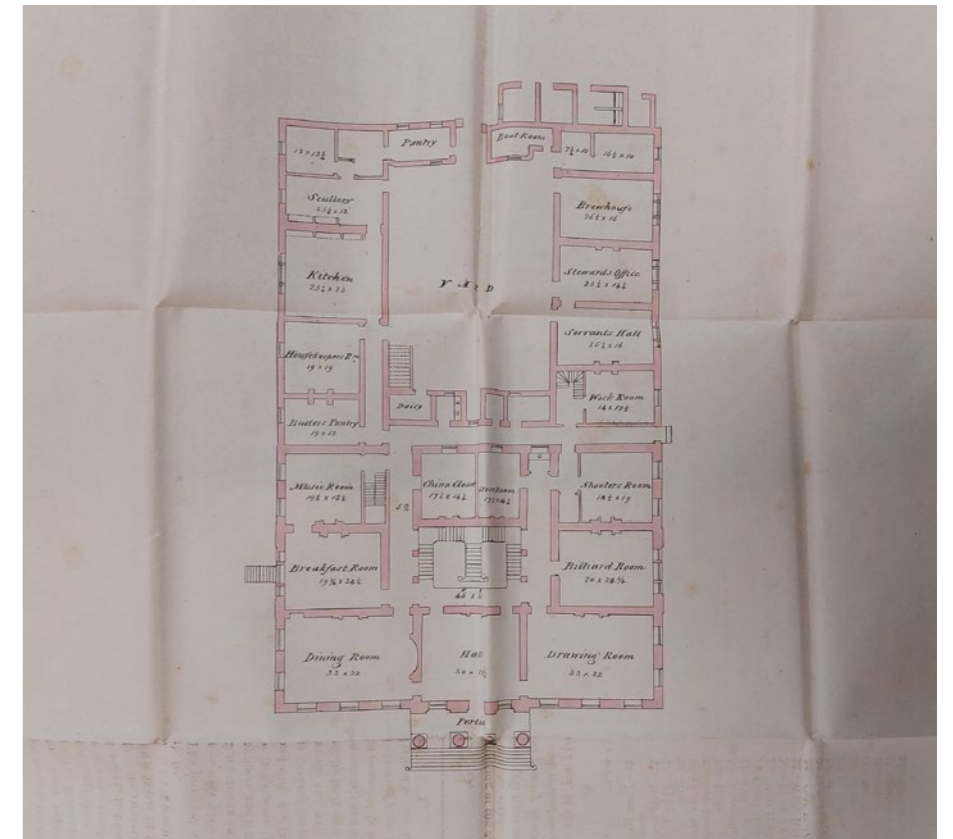
Henry Sudell, his wife Maria, sons Henry (born 1798) and Thomas (b Aug7th.1802), along with their surviving daughters Alice (b 1799) and Elizabeth (b 1809) went to live at Ashley House, Box, Wiltshire. Henry Sudell died on Jan.30th 1856.

What of Woodfold Hall, the magnificent Mansion. The Sudell estate and the hall were sold to John Foden Hindle and descended in his family until about 1878 when the estate was sold to Robert Daniel Thwaites of Blackburn. He died in 1888 and his only daughter Elma Mary inherited the estate and hall. She married Robert Armstrong in the same year. She had two sons Robert and Guy, both born at Woodfold. Guy died in 1827, two years later Robert was created Lord Alvingham. The estate was split between him and Guy's two sons. Mrs Yerburch lived at Woodfold until the outbreak of the Second World War, when she went to live at her Scottish home, Barwhillantry. The hall was lent during the war to elderly women evacuees from Liverpool. Following Mrs Yerburch's death in 1946, the house was found too big to live in and too expensive to run. There was neither mains electricity nor water, indeed the water supply had always been unreliable. Lord Alvingham couldn't give it away, he could not find any institution prepared to run it. The sale of the contents took place in 1949 and the house was abandoned.

By 1950, it was unoccupied and derelict; efforts were made to find alternative uses which met with unhelpful Lancashire County Council planning officials. In fact, the County Planning Officer reported that 'it was not considered of a sufficient architectural interest to take any action to preserve it' Apparently the County officials took very little interest in what was or should have been one of the 'jewels' of Lancashire. John Martin Robinson There is a listed Ice House, downstream of the 'rusticated bridge' on the Pleasington side of Arley Brook is not included in 'Ice Houses of Britain' by Sylvia Beamon and Susan Roaf, (1996). The listings for Lancashire were provided by the Planning Officer of the time, and omitted from the list he sent to the authors.



Woodfold Hall - 1831 Sales Particulars



Official permission was granted in December 1956 to strip the interior. The year before Murray's considered it 'a perfect example of late 18th-century design, probably the best and largest now surviving in Lancashire. In fact, some work had already been carried out, vandalism and theft included. Marble fireplaces had been broken when trying to remove them, and sales were held of the fittings. The

lead rainwater heads of the downspouts on the north wall, which had been noted by the listing inspector from English Heritage in 1951, and had the initials S H M and date 1798 are missing. John Martin Robinson describes the interior 'The interior was arranged round a top lit staircase hall reminiscent of James' Wyatt's at Heaton but lined with white and yellow marble. The principal rooms were embellished with excellent neo-Classical stucco work of which traces still remain in the ruins. The entrance hall had a Doric Frieze and was painted umber and white. The drawing-room was embellished with thin pilasters and general colour was bistre, white and gold. The Dining Room had an apse for the sideboard, a frieze with wheaten motifs and a blue and white colour scheme. The library frieze was composed of festoons and astrolobes. One of the bedrooms was Gothic with thin clustered columns and Prince of Wales capitals.

With the permission of the agent, Mrs Jean Haymes, 2 stained glass windows found homes in local farms, Woodfold Farm, the farmer Mrs Joan Moore and her father's home Mire Farm, Clayton-le-Dale, they depict Winter and Summer, the location in the hall is not known or indeed their date. Mrs Moore was able to provide photographs but the glass panels have now been removed and she did not know their current location.

The land behind the house described in the Sale Catalogue as 'laid out with great taste as a flower garden and pleasure ground, with warm and retired walks, sheltered by well-grown plantations and evergreen shrubberies' was overgrown, and the charming Orangery contemporary with the house was in a decrepit condition. Ironically, as the National Trust was planning to restore the Orangery at Gibside, planning permission was granted to convert the Woodfold one to residential purposes. Reilly Developments bought the derelict roofless hall and the surrounding parkland that was in Mellor township. Various schemes 'a golf course' another 'a training ground for race horses' both of which would lead to access problems, and eventually develop all the footprints on the side into residential units; the hall, stables, farm buildings, greenhouses, the deer house and the orangery. Only the original facade remains.

James Wyatt & Sir Jeffrey Wyattville

Had Henry Sudell not gone so spectacularly bankrupt we suppose that he would have inevitably built an 'Entertainment Villa'. As can be understood from Sudell's life he was a generous man that loved to entertain. Newspaper accounts refer to numerous reveries at Woodfold Park and a contemporary account records Maria, Sudell's wife being tired of finding drunken guests in the dining room the following morning. We have proposed, as part of our design ethos that if Sudell had not lost everything and ran away to Bath he would have carried on adding to his Park and a significant addition would have been a new Villa. We have chosen the last years of the Regency Era as these mark the period of change at Woodfold park from 1827-32. Woodfold along with all of Sudell's assets were sold off, Woodfold going to auction in 1828 and soon after in 1831 after the first purchaser Hindle passed away. It is around this time plans were sought for two lodges (unexecuted) to be sited outside of the Parkland.

We propose that Sir Jeffrey Wyattville would have been Sudell's ideal choice as the architect, firstly as he had worked on the designs for Woodfold Hall, secondly he was now one of the most celebrated Architects in England, working on Windsor Castle for the King (from 1824 and knighted in 1828).



Dinton Hall - Sir Jeffrey Wyattville



Part 3

Planning Policy Context

Paragrph 80(e) Narrative

The embarkation upon the journey to create an NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) Paragraph 80(e) house must not be underestimated. The wording is as follows:

80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

(Irrelevant bullet points removed)

e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:

- is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
- would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

It is more than likely a site may not be suitable or offer a rigorous narrative to justify the logic of building an exemplary house in the countryside.

The key decision-makers in this process, excepting the planning officer, are the Design Panel: a peer review process where the design can be judged by a panel of independent experts to assess the relative merits of the proposed scheme. There are also individual peer reviews for acknowledged national experts and in this case, we have engaged Jeremy Musson to give his considerable weight to the submission.

The setting of Listed Parkland: (See also Character Study by Ian Dieffenthaler)

The settings of Listed Parklands and Listed Buildings are planning/heritage/design concepts that many architects are not familiar with. The keywords in planning policy are ‘Benefit and Harm.’ What is crucial in any proposal that affects the setting of a park, building or artefact is that the benefits outweigh any harm. The siting of a new building in front of a listed park or structure is, by default, going to cause a measure of harm. The proposed structure will affect the interpretation of the site and its future significance. The key for any designer is that there is sufficient reason and benefit to merit a change to the existing setting.

Local and National Planning Policy: Green belt and landscape designation including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Outline from DRaW LVA

The site lies in the green belt designed to preserve the landscape from the expansion of Blackburn. The site and main part of the study area lie within land administered by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley (adopted in 2014) sets out the high-level policies for the administrative area in which the site is located.

Key Statement EN1: Green Belt

Key Statement EN1 states: *“The overall extent of the green belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation.”*

Key Statement EN2: Landscape

Key Statement EN2 states: *“The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.”*

The explanatory text in relation to this policy explains that 75% of the Ribble Valley is designated ANOB, although it goes on to explain that, *“the founding principle of landscape character is that all landscapes have a value. The Council considers that it is important to ensure development proposals do not serve to undermine the inherent quality of the landscape..... The Council will also seek to ensure that the open countryside is protected from inappropriate development.”*

Key Statement DMG1: General Considerations

Key Statement DMG1 states: *“in determining planning applications, all development must:*

Design

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the cobe/english heritage building on context toolkit).*
- 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. Particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*

Amenity

- 1. Not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area*
- 2. Provide adequate day lighting and privacy distances”*

Key Statement DMG2: Strategic Considerations

Key Statement DMG2 states: *“Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.”*

Key Statement DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodland

Key Statement DME1 States: *“There will be a presumption against the clearance of broad-leaved woodland for development proposes. The council will seek to ensure that woodland management safe guards the structural integrity and visual amenity value of woodland, enhances biodiversity and provides environmental health benefits for the residents of the borough. The council encourages successional tree planting to ensure tree cover is maintained into the future. The borough council will make tree preservation orders where important individual trees or Groups of trees and woodland of visual, and/or botanical and/or historical value appears to be under threat. The council will expect every tree work application for work to protected trees to be in accordance with modern arboricultural practices and current British Standards.”*

Key Statement DME2: Landscape and Townscape protection

Key Statement DMG2 states: *“Development proposals will be refused which significantly harm important landscape or landscape features including:*

- 1. Traditional stone walls*
- 2. Ponds*
- 3. Characteristic herb rich meadows and pastures*
- 4. Woodlands*
- 5. Copses*
- 6. Hedgerows and individual trees (other than in exceptional circumstances where satisfactory works of mitigation or enhancement would be achieved, including rebuilding, replanting and landscape management)*
- 7. Townscape elements such as the scale, form, and materials that contribute to the characteristic townscapes of the area.”*

The explanatory text supporting this policy goes on to say:

“The Council will seek, wherever possible, to enhance the local landscape in line with its key statements and development strategy. In applying this policy reference will be made to a variety of guidance including the Lancashire County Council Landscape Character Assessment.”

Key Statement DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets

Key Statement DME4 states: *“In considering development proposals the council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings. Including:*
3. Registered historic parks and gardens of special historic interest and other gardens of significant heritage interest. Proposals which cause harm to or loss of significance to registered parks, gardens or landscapes of special historic interest or other gardens of significant local heritage interest, including their setting, will not be supported.”

Key Statement DMH3: Dwellings in the Open Countryside and AONB

Key Statement DMH3 States: *“Within areas defined as open countryside..., residential development will be limited to:*

- 1. Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.”*

The explanatory text goes on to explain:

“The protection of the open countryside and designated landscape areas from sporadic or visually harmful development is seen as a high priority by the Council and is necessary to deliver both sustainable patterns of development and the overarching core strategy vision.”

Green Belt

The site and majority of the study area lie within Green Belt therefore Key Statement EN1: Green Belt of the Local Plan is applicable.

“The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence” (NPPF Para 137).

Para 138 of the NPPF States. *“Green Belt serves five purposes:*

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

Listed Buildings

There are a number of Listed Buildings within the study area, including:

- Samesbury Hall (Grade I), off the A677 approximately 1,400m northwest of the site; and
- Stanley House (Grade II*), approximately 870m north east of the site.

The closest Listed Buildings are located within Woodfold Park east and southeast of the site. These include:

- Woodfold Hall (Grade II), 260m south of the site, a ‘monumental Neoclassical mansion’ that has been described as an ‘accomplished and memorable design’ and ‘without question one of the finest late 18th century houses in northwest England’. Its character derives not only from its restrained but powerful appearance – with nine-bay façade dominated by a portico of giant columns with Adam-style capitals – but also its spectacular valleyside setting against a distant backcloth of woodland. The building was abandoned after World War Two and after decades of decay was rebuilt and converted to apartments in 2007’;
- The Orangery, 170m northeast of Woodfold Hall (Grade II);
- Middle Lodge with Gates and Railings (Grade II), 635m east of the site;
- Bridge Over Arley Brook (Grade II), 460m south southeast of the site; and
- Ice House In Old Woodfold Wood, Circa 100m West of White House Pond (Grade II), 615m south southeast of the site.

Registered Park and Garden

Woodfold Park (immediately east and southeast of the site) is Grade II Park of Historic Interest, laid out in the 1790s as the grounds to Woodfold Hall. The Historic England citation for the park is summarised below:

“Woodfold Park was laid out for Sudell at the time the hall was built; its designer is unknown. It extends to around 175 hectares, with the mansion sited at the north end above the steeply sloping valley

of the Arley Brook. Much of the park is bounded by a high stone wall, with three gated entrances. The principal entrance is from the A677 where there are lodges at the gateway (Mellor Lodge) and within (Middle Lodge). A second imposing entrance to the north, off Further Lane, (approximately 110m northeast of the application site) leads past Huntsman's Cottages to Woodfold Park Farm. The final drive is from Pleasington Road, which marks the southern boundary of the site.

The principal features of the park are its tree belts and perimeter planting, along with its lakes, Jeffrey Pond and White House Pond, created by damming the Arley Brook. The mansion itself is sited at the north end, in an open location designed to showcase the hall in magnificent, unchallenged isolation against a distant wooded backdrop. Set around 100 metres northeast of the hall, and screened from it by trees, is Woodfold Park Farm, which also comprises a coach house and stables. A further farm, Shorrock Green, originally lay beyond and preceded Huntsman's Cottages. The distance and screening of these farms from the hall reflects a spatial hierarchy that ensured the mansion's predominance was not compromised by service buildings. From the northern end of the park, towards the site, the ground falls away steeply to the south, offering long views along the valley of the Arley Brook to south and east. Much of the park is bounded by a high stone wall, which separates it from the surrounding farmland. Further Lane twice touches the park at its north-west corner and the southern boundary is formed by Pleasington Road."

Woodfold Park has appeared on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register since 2008. The 'At Risk' citation states: *"Park laid out in the 1790s providing the setting for a country house. The house is now subdivided into multiple ownership and various estate buildings have been converted into private dwellings. This progressive redevelopment has impacted significantly upon the historic character of the designed landscape in the immediate vicinity of the principal buildings. Management of the wider parkland for agriculture, principally dairy farming, is further diminishing the character of the landscape. The park is within both Blackburn with Darwen and South Ribble Local Authorities."*

Landscape Character

National Character Area 35: Lancashire Valleys

At a national level the site area falls within 'National Character Area Profile 35: Lancashire Valleys' (NCA 35), described as a visually contained landscape with a strong urban character. The area is bounded to the north-west by the Bowland Fells fringe and the Millstone Grit outcrop of Pendle Hill, and to the south by the Southern Pennines (see Figure 6 in DRaW's LVIA).

The NCA profile describes the area as follows:

"This is a visually contained landscape that would have once shared many characteristics with the rural valley of the River Ribble in the north. However, the development of industry and settlements has created a landscape with a strongly urban character. Agricultural land is now heavily fragmented by towns, associated housing, industry and scattered development. Major settlements occur within the Lancashire Valleys. There is a high proportion of built-up land which includes the towns of Blackburn, Accrington, Burnley, Nelson and Colne. The rapid expansion of these towns following the Industrial Revolution has also been aided by the development of dense transport and communications networks following the valley bottoms. These include the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Preston–Colne rail link, the M65 and the M6/M61 motorways running north–south at the western end.

The towns are dominated by a robust Victorian architecture with stone terraces and municipal buildings generally in good condition. Numerous artefacts and buildings associated with the area's development and industrial heritage remain and are reminders of the historical importance of local industrial development to the character of the landscape. There are substantial areas of contemporary industrial development which have replaced the traditional textile industries. Scattered villages and hamlets on valley sides are comprised of older sandstone grit buildings, often of the longhouse type, and isolated rows of stone terraced houses are perched at precarious angles on the steep slopes.

The proliferation of mills and associated residential development has created a fragmented landscape with a heavily industrialised character. Since the 1920s the textile industry has been in steady decline with many mills becoming derelict or being converted to other uses. Numerous large country houses with ornamental settings occur, particularly along the northern valley sides away from industrial towns. These substantial houses, parklands and barns, dating from the 16th century, attest to the wealth generated by the textile industry. Traditional building materials used are sandstone

grit and timber frame, brick was used from the 19th century with stone flag, and from the late 18th century Welsh slate roofs. In some areas, historic parklands have been subsumed within later enclosed farmland.

Private and public parks and gardens are also a significant feature of the more urban landscapes Sense of place/inspiration: Buildings, mainly Victorian-stone terraces, are well integrated into the landscape, while remaining agricultural land is highly fragmented by industry, with small, often ancient, woodlands constrained to narrow, steep-sided cloughs on valley sides. The area also has extensive areas of reclaimed land – a product of former quarries and coal mining – that is now generally well-vegetated, and grazed by sheep. There are also a considerable number of country houses and parklands on the northern valley sides, especially away from the main built-up areas. A strong sense of visual containment is provided by the surrounding hills which also serve as an important backdrop, dwarfing settlements in the valley bottom.

Sense of history: The history of the landscape is evident in its strong industrial heritage linked to the textile industry, with converted or redundant mill buildings, mill lodges and ponds, and the associated towns of Blackburn, Accrington and Burnley which expanded rapidly as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Some towns form part of earlier rural villages, retaining early buildings alongside stone terraces built to accommodate textile workers.

Evidence of older buildings, usually of sandstone grit, is also present in the scattered settlements on the valley sides. The historic character is also dominated by access and movement along the valleys, and is reflected in a Roman road and forts at Burwen Castle near Elslack and at Ribchester, and more recently by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.”

Under the heading Geodiversity the NCA includes: “Promote opportunities to use local building materials to repair, restore and build new developments and housing.”

A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment, and accompanying Landscape Strategy, 2000

The 2000 countywide wide assessment divides the landscape into a series of ‘Landscape Character Types’ (Refer Figure 7). These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. Wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, landform, drainage patterns, vegetation, and historical land use and settlement pattern. Each landscape character type is sub-divided into more localized ‘Landscape Character Areas.’ These are unique and geographically discrete areas of the landscape that share characteristics of the broader landscape type to which they belong.

The site lies within:

Landscape Character Type: 5 Undulating Lowland Farmland, and

Landscape Character Area: 5d Undulating lowland farmland, Samlesbury-Withnell Fold.

Selected extracts from the landscape LCT/LCA relevant to this site/development are set out below, and the boundaries of the Landscape Character Areas in relation to the site are shown on Figure 7 of DRaW’s report.

Landscape Character Type: 5 Undulating Lowland Farmland

Landscape Character Area 5 (LCA5) comprises the undulating lowland farmland, generally below 150m AOD, which lies between the major valleys and the moorland fringes. *“This lowland landscape is traversed by deeply incised, wooded cloughs and gorges. There are also many mixed farm woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees, creating an impression of a well wooded landscape from ground level and a patchwork of wood and pasture from raised viewpoints on the fells. Some of the most picturesque stone villages of the county occur within this well settled landscape type. The area also has many country houses whose boundary walls and designed landscapes add to the species diversity and visual appeal. There is a high density of farms and scattered cottages outside the clustered settlements, linked by a network of minor roads.”*

Under the heading Human Influences it describes how the *“country houses are a feature of the area and are often surrounded by parklands and well managed estates. They are evidence of the developing industrial enterprise and increasing wealth between the 16th and 19th centuries.” It goes on to say, “architecturally distinctive yeoman and gentry houses are also characteristic of this type and date from the 17th century onwards.”*

Landscape Character Area: 5d Undulating lowland farmland, Samlesbury-Withnell Fold

LCA5d provides a more detailed description of the landscape within which the site is located: “An area between the Ribble Valley to the north and the Industrial Foothills to the south. It is underlain by millstone grit and sandstone, but the landscape is influenced by the mantle of glacial till which covers the surface, producing a gently undulating landscape of large lush green pastures divided by low cut hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Dramatic steep sided wooded valleys wind their way through the landscape carrying the River Darwen and its tributaries. Designed landscapes and parkland associated with Samlesbury Hall, Woodfold Hall, Pleasington Old Hall and Hoghton Tower add to the overall woodland cover in this lowland landscape and Witton Country Park provides a countryside resource on the edge of Blackburn. It is also influenced by infrastructure (major road and rail routes), industrial works, the airfield at Samlesbury and built development on the edges of Preston.”

The Proposed Policy Narrative

The relevant policy affecting the site, its setting and impact on the green belt and countryside is detailed from Local and National Policy. The benefit of the Paragraph 80(e) policy is that the process allows for dealing with the applicable policy. The meeting of green belt policy requires “Very Special Circumstances” which are usually met with achieving high benchmark required of Paragraph 80(e) i.e. that “the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.” By definition, this paragraph requires the proposed building to be of exceptional quality and that the proposal is sensitive to the setting and its local area. Clearly, whilst the setting is not in an AONB, the site is considered to be significant and its immediate proximity to the listed park is clearly very sensitive and needs to be managed carefully.

The Design Review Process

As part of meeting the very high standards of NPPF paragraph 80e - the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. It is necessary to seek independent and authoritative advice, such advice is usually available from accredited design panels as a peer review of the design. For this particular proposal the design team decided to engage the services of the RIBA accredited Traditional Architecture Group (TAG) and an independent peer review by Jeremy Musson. The design team believed that the specialist knowledge of TAG and Jeremy Musson would inform the design process in more depth, in regards to an early 19th century villa, such depth of knowledge is not normally available from the more contemporary inspired review panels.

The local authority, Ribble Valley District Council Planning, were invited to attend the TAG Peer review which was held on the 19th May 2022 at 11am at Stanley House Hotel in Mellor. Unfortunately a council officer was unable to attend.

The Design Panel: 19th May 2022

The design review was attended by;

TAG Panel Members

Scot Masker - RIBA, Masker Architects- TAG Peer Review Panel Facilitator

Jan Maciag - RIBA, Folium Architects

Guy Horsley - RIBA, Horsley Townsend Architects

Eamonn Byrne - CMLI, Eamonn Byrne Landscape Architects

Project Team

Francis Shaw - RIBA, Managing Director, Shaw & Jagger Architects - Client's Agent

Ed Jagger - RIBA, Director, Shaw & Jagger Architects - Client's Agent

Nigel Rockliff - CMLI, DRaW Design and Assessment

Ian Dieffenthaler - RIBA, SCA, Heritage and Historic Landscape Consultant

Kathryn Jukes - RTPi, Directions Planning Consultancy

A site visit was attended by all at Further Lane, and the review was carried out at the Stanley House Hotel ending at 2:30pm

The meeting was very constructive and informative, the panels advice is contained in their report produced on the 31st May 2022 which is included as a separate document along with the follow up review of:

The design review feedback was very positive with the panel confirming that the proposed design:

“This is a design that reflects the highest standards of architecture and likely will fulfil the goals stated in NPPF Paragraph 80e for a project of exceptional quality.

The resultant scheme, deceptively simple, is a product of many iterations and a well-developed rational. It emerged from the gathered information and upon reflection on the local authority's thoughts about the site, and an initial design proposal, through a pre-application consultation.

The panel were very pleased to have available in the Design Statement and through the other consultants' reports a detailed and thorough analysis of the site and the process of an evolving design. The proposals are well supported by both analytical information and precedent for the design concept.

The architect has shown great skill in being versatile and able to conceive of an object building that sits well in the defined landscape setting and creates a unique living environment from the classical model; one that is fit for modern life and the specific demands of the clients.

This is a design that reflects the highest standards of architecture and likely will fulfil the goals stated in NPPF Paragraph 80e for a project of exceptional quality.”

The design panel recognised the damage caused by recent development and the deterioration of the parkland setting:

“The site of the proposed new house/annex is therefore in the original Estate but most definitely not part of the Park. It’s peripheral location and character has put what is now the northern edge of the old Estate in danger of piecemeal infilling. This is illustrated in recent developments.”

The design panel stressed the importance of the larger site ownership and felt it imperative that the site should incorporate the additional adjoining site which our clients have now optioned for purchase:

“It was a concern of the design review team that the proposed new house should have a garden setting of a size to match its quality.

In its original form and conception the proposed new house was restricted to a limited site. However, the Panel understood that there is more land available to the applicant towards the west and inclusion of this would make much better sense of the placement of the new dwelling. As a bonus, this will allow a suitable quantum of gain in terms of biodiversity and landscape improvement particularly along the site boundaries.

Furthermore, extending the site west to include Cook’s Farm will enable the creation of a suitable sized landscape setting for the proposed house and allow a seamless flow between the surrounding context and the new house. Extending its terrain would also have the added effect of completing and securing the estate’s historic northern edge onto Further Lane in an appropriate manner. The Panel felt, therefore, that the acquisition of Cook’s Farm is key to the success of the project.”

The design panel were very supportive of the scheme and its relationship to the designed landscape:

“The siting of the house, using existing mature woodland as a backdrop, is a masterstroke on many levels, not least giving the illusion that the site continues far into and beyond the woodland situated behind the proposed house.

The enhancement of planting along the southern boundary of the site and west into Cook’s Farm will improve the southern boundary and screen views to Woodfold Park Farm. The inclusion of clumps and individual trees will frame views to and from the house from Further Lane.

The house itself will be of very high quality and include finishes appropriate to the surrounding context. Therefore would complement any near or distant views towards the house and complement the setting of the adjacent Woodfold Park.

The landscape design for the site has been well considered within the Repton tradition and includes a sidelong driveway approach (which also continues past the house). This traditional device allows views of the house to burst open as one emerges through clumps of planting. As a finale, a series of floral displays in the Gardenesque style will be provided on terrace spaces next to the house with shrubbery walks continuing towards the lake.

The proposals bring the estate to the boundary with Further Lane, and consequently into the public realm. This is a strong planning benefit because it will allow the public to appreciate the park; something that is currently not possible.”

The design panel supported the design philosophy and narrative:

“Precedents are well established and used effectively to set the new house in a narrative of what might have been if the initial land owners and their descendants had been more fortunate. Given Henry Sudell’s enthusiasm for entertainment it is likely that this activity might have decamped the out of the main house (where it was not wanted) to another building on the estate.

This would most likely have occurred in the last years of the Regency in about 1827 to 32 and the design team have chosen a classical architectural style from this period as the external expression of the proposed new lodge/house. The design review panel are fully supportive of this narrative because it treats architectural style in an embracing and holistic manner. It also embodied the rather romantic retelling of history and acts as an atonement for the disgraceful way Woodfold Hall was treated by post war planning authorities.”

Recommendations by the design panel for improvements to the scheme proposals:

Other minor points / suggestions for minor revisions;

The subdivision of the dressing room and bathroom in the master bedroom (Bedroom 6) is a ‘more’ successful subdivision of the bay than its sibling bay at the other side of the house.

Glass roof of the orangery - Does this need to be fully glazed or is there a different configuration to reduce the amount of glass proposed?

The separation of orangery and pool house might be better expressed through a change in the parapet detailing. Possibly more solid parapet detail over the pool building. Perhaps the use of a solid parapet is an approach that will avoid having to re-consider the height of the orangery or pool building whilst demonstrating hierarchy or differentiation.

The separation of the pool from the main house (via the orangery) is arguably more successful on the east elevation than the west elevation. Might the detailing of the west elevation of the orangery be gently simplified to further emphasise the subservience of the single storey elements?

The architectural detailing is a sparse simple language done well but care must be taken as any tiny ‘mistakes’ will be prominent.

The roadside elevation should be extended to show new context, elements proposed in the grounds etc.

Local materials- where will these come from? Any application should be supported by a more detailed explanation of materials sources and craftsmanship that will be used.

Conclusion - The design panel first review:

“This is more than competent restrained design that should be able to achieve the requirements as set out in the paragraph 80e clause. In the next iterations and with the additional information suggested there should be no barrier to achieving this.

On first glance this is an apparently simple proposal. It is clear that the simplicity is just a polite face to a design of restrained elegance and sophistication; both as architecture and as landscape.

The proposal harmonises with the topography and wider setting to produce an exemplar example of its building type and, in its context, reflects the highest standards of architecture.”

Independent review by Jeremy Musson:

Shaw & Jagger Architects also consulted Jeremy Musson, an internationally known architectural historian, author and a design and historic buildings consultant, with a special expertise in the English country house. Jeremy Musson visited the site on the 12th August 2022 and toured the surrounding area to understand the wider context. The scheme was discussed with Mr Musson on 11th and 12th August, including pacing out the building on site. Mr Musson was given the full documentation of the scheme and the first panel review. We engaged Mr Musson's services so that he might advise on the scheme design prior to the design being put in front of the second TAG review. Mr Musson was very complementary in regards to the design, his primary advice was that the design of the orangery should be relatively simple, that we should not look to articulate the design by adding a raised feature at the far corners, such as 'bookend belvedere towers', which had been suggested at the design panel meeting although not included in their recommendations. Mr Musson believed the proposed design revisions, later presented to TAG in the 2nd review, met the requirements of NPPF paragraph 80e.

Jeremy Musson's confirms: *"I find that the design is 'of exceptional quality, in that it is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas."*

"Having reviewed the preliminary studies and reports, and the design documentation, and the TAG review, with some understanding of the work of Mr Shaw, and having visited the site and surrounding area, I now write in support of the current para 80e proposal for a new house, Woodfold Villa, which fulfils the criteria of NPPF para 80e guidelines.

Namely, I find that the design is 'of exceptional quality, in that it is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas'. There have been few neo-classical houses of this design ambition realised in the later twentieth and early twentyfirst century, and an exemplary project should be a reference point for new domestic work in traditional style.

It is also clear that the proposed house, with its fine stonework and detailing, and the carefully considered proposed new landscaping in the Reptonian spirit, 'would significantly enhance its immediate setting', which currently is a modest field with modern stables and a backdrop of trees, themselves the remnant of a planned park landscaping of a former era.'

By being built in locally quarried stone, and by placing the design in the long classical tradition associated with the north-east of England, it is evident it will be 'sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.'

As mentioned above, numerous classical country houses were sadly demolished across the county of Lancashire in the twentieth century, and part of the excitement of the current proposal is the opportunity is to create a new landmark building in this tradition, which does honour to those lost houses, once such an integral part of Lancashire heritage. Some 75-80 country houses are listed as demolished on the Lost Heritage website, and these include such prominent local classical houses as Fennisowles Hall and Pleasington New Hall, as well as other examples further afield in the county such as Aldington Hall, Hulton Park and Duxbury Hall (Woodfold Hall is also listed no doubt reflecting its sad history of decay and conversion in the twentieth century.

For the reasons set out above in this report, I would commend this project for approval."

Jeremy Musson, August 2022

The design was amended to reflect the advice from the TAG peer review and Jeremy Musson's input. A second design panel was carried out on the 30th September 2022 where the design revisions were acknowledged very positively.

Design Panel Second Review : 30th September 2022

Meeting attended by:

TAG Panel Members

Scot Masker - RIBA, Masker Architects- TAG Peer Review Panel Facilitator

Jan Maciag - RIBA, Folium Architects

Guy Horsley - RIBA, Horsley Townsend Architects

Eamonn Byrne - CMLI, Eamonn Byrne Landscape Architects

Project Team

Francis Shaw - RIBA, Managing Director, Shaw & Jagger Architects - Client's Agent

Matt Massarella-Gill – RIBA, Architect, Shaw & Jagger Architects

Ian Dieffenthaler - RIBA, SCA, Heritage and Historic Landscape Consultant

Kathryn Jukes - RTPI, Directions Planning Consultancy

Key Statements from the design panel review statement issued : 17th October 2022

Landscape, siting, setting and biodiversity:

“As before the Panel strongly supports the siting and treatment of the landscape setting. The applicant has obtained an option on the additional land to the east necessary to make the application as a Paragraph 80e proposal viable. The treatment of the landscaped areas as parkland and with the additional hedging proposed enhances the local area and creates the appropriate setting for a house of this quality.”

The Building

“The arrangement of axis sets out the formal volumes and symmetries of the building to produce an orderly and cohesive design of matching plans and convincing elevational treatments.

The ground floor plan has achieved the pleasing blend of classical formality with the needs of modern and culturally contextual requests from the client's brief. It is especially clever to see the central circular room, which in a renaissance building might have been the central point of circulation, re-purposed as the communal kitchen.

The design of the proposed new house is that of a villa in a parkland setting. It is quite correctly approached from an oblique angle revealing the adroit relationship between the principal west and the north elevations.

The stylistic direction is generated by envisioning the building as having been built on the Woodfold Hall Estate (as a separate villa) in the early part of the 19th century. It is unapologetically in the neo classical tradition of Sir William Chambers, James Wyatt & Sir Jeffrey Wyattville taking its feel and detail from the Roman tradition rather than the neo-Greek of Cockrell, Wilkins etc. The design statement offers many forerunners including Woodfold Hall itself.

This is a highly sustainable design as well as being an artistically accomplished one.”

Conclusion - The design panel second review:

“The overall is an exceptionally competent new neo-classical villa. The design stays true to the Roman and Renaissance architecture of its inspiration while accommodating the needs of modern life in what will be a visually comfortable and elegant home. It expands the repertoire of the neo classical in the combination of elements, through a long process that achieves a whole, seemingly without effort.

It will be a great asset to the surrounding area (including the historic context) and a marker of how acceptable rural development can proceed in the future.

As previously set out, this is a design that reflects the highest standards of architecture and will fulfil the goals stated in NPPF Paragraph 80e for a project of exceptional quality.

The proposal harmonises with the topography and wider setting to produce an exemplar example of its building type and, in its context, reflects the highest standards of architecture.”

Issued 17th October 2022.

James Strachan KC, 39 Essex Chambers: Opinion 19th October 2022

We would respectfully advise Ribble Valley Council Planning Officers to take due notice and cognizance of James Strachan KC opinion. This considered opinion clearly gives substantive weight to the merits and validity of the proposed application. The opinion addresses the pre-application advice given by Ribble Valley Council on the 25th January 2022. The extensive advice given by Mr James Strachan KC outlines that the application meets all of the requirements of Paragraph 80e, namely that ‘the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area’. That the application meets the ‘very special circumstances’ required to meet the requirements of development in the greenbelt.

Special Circumstances

“The examples of “special circumstances” given in the policy illustrate particular circumstances in which granting planning permission for an isolated dwelling in the countryside may be desirable or acceptable. But it considered that what is perfectly plain is that, under this policy, the concept of concentrating additional housing within settlements is seen as generally more likely to be consistent with the promotion of “sustainable development in rural areas” than building isolated dwellings elsewhere in the countryside. In short, it concluded that settlements are the preferred location for new housing development in rural areas.”

Paragraph 80

*“Paragraph 80 of the Framework is concerned with a general principle of national policy that sustainable development in rural areas includes, in particular, locating new housing geographically close to a **settlement**, as opposed to it being isolated in the countryside. The Court of Appeal identified this in Braintree, and has now confirmed it in Bramshill. The Council’s suggestion that the villa might not be “isolated” for the purposes of paragraph 80 because of the proximity of Woodfold Park Farm, or Huntsmans Cottages fails to address this. It is difficult to see how the Council could legitimately conclude that those dwellings comprise a settlement and the Council does not appear to have addressed its mind to the correct test.”*

Green Belt Policy

“In cases where (as here) there are other relevant policies engaged, such as the Green Belt, the fulfilment of the criteria in paragraph 80(e) is clearly capable of constituting “very special circumstances” under Green Belt policy, if it is necessary to demonstrate such circumstances in a particular case. I turn to address this question separately below. But by the very nature of the criteria in paragraph 80(e) (referring to the delivery of an “exceptional” design), satisfaction of paragraph 80(e) is clearly capable of constituting “very special circumstances” to outweigh any harm to the Green Belt and any other harm. In my view, the same is also necessarily true of an outstanding design for the purposes of paragraph 134 of the Framework. This would also be capable of constituting very special circumstances for the purposes of the Green Belt.

Even if the development is treated as “inappropriate development” for the purposes of Green Belt policy, it is very clear that the provision of a building that meets the exceptional standards for the criteria in paragraph 80(e) of the Framework is plainly capable of amounting to “very special circumstances” to outweigh any consequential harm to the openness of the Green Belt and any other harm for the purposes of paragraph 147-8 of the Framework.”

Paragraph 134

“Outstanding design within the meaning of paragraph 134 of the Framework is not only something to which significant weight should attach in accordance with that paragraph, but is also capable of constituting very special circumstances, regardless of paragraph 80(e) of the Framework (although there is obvious overlap in the two paragraphs).

Where a proposal meets the exception in paragraph 80(e) because of its exceptional design quality, in that it is truly outstanding reflecting the highest standards in architecture and raises the standards of design more generally in rural areas, and it would significantly enhance its immediate setting and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area, there is likely to be a very powerful case to make that “very special circumstances” exist to outweigh the inappropriateness of the development in terms of Green Belt. The nature of the exception in paragraph 80(e) of the Framework, with its high bar, is strongly indicative of “very special circumstances”. The same is true for outstanding design for the purposes of paragraph 134 of the Framework, given the importance that is attached to such design in the Framework.”

Heritage, Significance and Enhancing Setting

“In addition, it is relevant to note that paragraph 206 of the Framework specifically requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. It identifies that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset, or which better reveal their significance, should be treated favourably.

The assessment of the proposal in relation to heritage is a matter for those experts that have produced reports. It is clear from their conclusions that there is a strong case to make as to the way in which the proposal will not just conserve, but enhance the heritage assets in the vicinity. Such a result would be a matter which the Council should be expected to attach great weight to in the overall assessment of the proposal against relevant policy.

The success of the scheme that the Panel has independently assessed in terms of landscape, as well as in terms of design and heritage, is clearly relevant to the proper assessment of the scheme against the Local Plan and Framework requirements and provides a strong endorsement of the proposal in policy terms.”

Summary

- a. The Council's suggestion that the site of the proposed villa is not "isolated" such that paragraph 80(e) of the Framework is not engaged is likely to be based upon a misunderstanding of that term in the Framework; the expectation is that it would be engaged on the facts as described to me.*
- b. Even if the proposed villa is not in an "isolated" location, that would mean that it would enjoy different policy support from the Framework in terms of its sustainable location; but fulfilling the criteria in paragraph 80(e) of the Framework would continue to be relevant to an overall assessment of the merits of the proposal, as would providing outstanding design in light of paragraph 134 of the Framework.*
- c. The terms of paragraph 80(e) set a very high standard for exceptional design. The proposed scheme has achieved endorsement from an independent panel, as well as another independent expert, as to the way it has fulfilled the criteria. This represents powerful support for the case that paragraph 80(e) of the Framework is met, as well as the scheme representing outstanding design for the purposes of paragraph 134 of the Framework.*
- d. Green Belt policy deals with inappropriate development and appropriate development in the Green Belt. If the Council remain of the view that the site is not isolated, then there may well be a good case that this is not "inappropriate development" - that it may well be limited infilling in such a settlement. In any event, where it uses previously developed land and involves replacement of existing built form it may also not comprise inappropriate development. However, even if it were inappropriate development, that can be justified by the presence of "very special circumstances". Fulfilment of the criteria in paragraph 80(e) of the Framework is clearly capable of constituting "very special circumstances" to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The same is true of providing outstanding design within the meaning of paragraph 134 of the Framework.*
- e. The assessment of the effect of the development on heritage assets is important and a matter for expertise. In light of the material provided to date, there is clearly a strong case to be made that the proposal will not harm heritage assets, but in fact enhance them and their setting, and better reveal the significance of the setting of those assets.*
- f. The various studies that have been produced as part of the information provided to me clearly seek to address the Council's initial Pre-Application Response, including concerns regarding the heritage assets.*

The Council ought to have regard to the independent assessment of the proposal in terms of its architectural quality and effect on landscape."

National Planning Policy Framework: NPPF

Paragraph 80e

The policy outlined as being most applicable is paragraph 80e of the NPPF but the council should consider the relevant policies of the NPPF in their considerations. The pre application report of the 25th January 2022 by Adrian Dowd clearly acknowledges that meeting the requirements of a Paragraph 80e application would be sufficient to satisfy the very special circumstances of greenbelt and local policies in achieving a recommendation for approval. The conclusion of the pre-application (which was submitted without a proposal) was:

"Proposals to alter or renew the landscaping are more likely to be acceptable if the design is based on a sound and well-researched understanding of the building's relationship with its setting, both now and in the past (paragraph 55). NPPF paragraph 80 (b) would not appear relevant.' Therefore I do not consider paragraph 80e has been met because the proposal is harmful to the 'immediate setting' and is not sensitive to the 'defining characteristics of the local area' (see core strategy EN1, DS1,EN5,DME4 and DMG1). Furthermore, the NPPF 200 requirement for any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from the development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification' has not been met."

The clear guidance from this statement is that a well-researched and sensitive design would be supported as part of a submission that met the requirements of paragraph 80(b) and (e) and para 200 of the NPPF. What is important to note is that the pre-application response acknowledges that Woodfold Park is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk register 2021:

“The house is now subdivided into multiple ownership and various estate buildings have been converted into private dwellings. This progressive development has impacted significantly upon the historic character of the designed landscape in the immediate vicinity of the of the principal buildings.”

This harm has been caused by successive applications in recent history ie in the last two decades. The conversion of Woodfold Hall into apartments is very poor, no attempt has been made in following the original layout and internal spaces are bereft of detail. The conversion the orangery is quite frankly appalling. The conversion and extension of the old stables is also very poor, the new additions swamp the old building and have harmed the setting of parkland. All of this damage has happened under the watchful eyes of Ribble Valley District Council.

It is clear from the design panel review and work carried out by Shaw & Jagger and their consultant team, that the repairs to the landscape will go far in repairing the setting. The damage to Woodfold Park lies with the failure of Ribble Valley District Council to act to save the building in the 1950’s and to give clear guidance as to what would be an acceptable scheme of conversion. This proposal is designed to repair the boundaries of the parkland.

Paragraph 7 directs the council to approve sustainable development

7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.

Paragraph 8c directs the council to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment

8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 11 directs councils to approve sustainable development that promotes a sustainable pattern of development, that improves the environment, mitigate climate change and meets the development needs of the area.

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole. For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Paragraph 20 directs councils to approve schemes that promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for:

d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Paragraphs 38,39 and 42 direct councils to engage proactively with applicants, this means attending meetings such as peer review meetings and returning pre-applications in a timely manner. Unfortunately Ribble Valley have not attended the peer reviews and took approximately 6 months to process the pre-application.

38. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

39. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

42. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.

47. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

60. To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

Paragraphs 79 and 80 direct councils to support sustainable development where it will enhance and maintain the vitality of local communities and will help raise the standards of design and enhance its setting

79. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

80. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.**

112. Within this context, applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

120. Planning policies and decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;

Paragraphs 126,130,131 and 134 direct councils to approve good architecture and buildings that sympathetic to the character of the area, promote healthy living and effective landscaping

126. The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

130. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

131. Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.

134. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design⁵², taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. **Conversely, significant weight should be given to:**

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Paragraphs 147 and 148 direct councils to consider what are very special circumstances. Planning precedent has established that meeting the very high threshold of paragraph 80e application is sufficient to meet the ‘very special circumstances’ required by a greenbelt paragraphs 147 and 148.

147. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

148. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

149. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would: – not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or – not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Paragraphs 175 and 179b direct councils to consider development that enhances habitats

175. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

179. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraphs 195,197a,c, 200, 202,206 and 207 direct councils to support applications that enhance historic parkland and setting, it is clear from the peer review, the opinion of James Strachan, and the Character assessment of Ian Dieffenthaler, that the proposed scheme will repair the damage to the edge of the parkland. Will mitigate against the catastrophic intervention of council officers over many decades of poor decision making and lead to establishing a sense of hierarchy to the existing site.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

207. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.



Part 4

Character Study

Character Study: Ian Dieffenthaler

A Character study *'Site at Shorrock Green, Mellor: A Character Study'* was commissioned in order to provide a clear understanding of the history of the site, known locally as 'Shorrock Green'. This study analysed the historic development of the site, Shorrock Green pre-dating the establishment of an enclosed Parkland and Hall by Henry Sudell in the late 18th century circa 1796-1798. The study outlines that there was an existing house and setting of significance at Shorrock Green, with its own tree-lined access, now lost. The original Shorrock Green Hall was bought by Sudell and was later replaced with the 'Huntsman's Cottage' by a later owner most likely the Thwaite family.

Mr Dieffenthaler's report outlines the importance of the site.

"Having located the house in Reptonese fashion against a wooded hilltop, the landscape designer could have pushed the woodland back to Further Lane on the north side. Instead, he left the triangular remains of Shorrock Green as fields. The current site is part of that large triangle of land that at first glance for the modern observer appears to be left out of the park for no apparent reason. (See Fig 4a). The topography shows it to be part of the Stanley House – Shorrock Green – Hoolster Hill ridge and yet there appears to be a clear indent in the NW corner of an otherwise rectangular park on the first OS map of 1844. A closer look at the maps shows that the siting of the wall design (Fig 4b) and its shelterbelt clearly took account of Shorrock Green Hall, a house of standing, approached side-on in the C18 manner and the new woodland belts were in fact planted to maximise the setting of this house to incorporate it into the new park's north entrance. Even though this entrance was the secondary one, Sudell wanted to make the most of a visit to the offices. Thus the triangular green is a de facto part of the Park and should be included in the Registered Park and Garden."

The assessment of the significance of the site is important in the understanding of the placing of this 'triangular green' as being part of the hierarchy of the sense of arrival to the park. The placing of the original Woodfold Hall and its landscape setting are key design considerations for a proposed new house.

"If the house is in fact by James Wyatt, as Pevsner believed, one could be forgiven for thinking that the siting and layout of the grounds were by Repton. The house sits on what Repton called a "natural terrace," part the way up a hill and set against a backdrop of trees. This is classic Picturesque territory, in which reality aims to mimic classical painting and it was much argued over between Uvedale Price and Humphry Repton at the turn of the C19. Repton had his own style which did not entirely align with the ideas of Price, Richard Knight et al., and is credited with reintroducing the flower garden adjacent to the house. JC Loudon records that Sudell had a flower garden and employed a separate gardener to keep and supervise it. Historian Giles Worsley (p68 Architectural Drawings of the Regency Period 1991) suggests that Wyatt's nephew Jeffry authored the design which McNiven executed on site. The Wyatts worked with Repton and this might explain the ingenuity of the composition here."

Humphry Repton (1752-1818)

The reference to the partnership of the Wyatt family (one of the most influential Architectural families) and Repton is significant. As Mr Dieffenthaler points out, Repton had several working relationships the key being Sir John Soane, John Nash, James and Samuel Wyatt and later his own son. Repton's influence on landscape design and the placing of buildings is substantial in the late 18th, Regency and the later Victorian era of the United Kingdom and its colonies. The Key elements of Repton Design principles are the Woodland background forming a frame to the house set on a plateau, in front of the house are carefully arranged copses of trees and isolated trees framing views and forming focal points a philosophy that was pastoral and had been influenced by Capability Brown. As Repton matured his clientele changed to the suburban middle class. As Mr Dieffenthaler identifies Repton was never in line with the fundamentalist landscape aesthetes conceptual 'Savage Picturesque' as advocated by Payne, Knight and Price. These types of landscapes suited Aristocratic clients or the new wealthy merchant classes, such as Henry Sudell, who either had large estates or were buying up land to create one. Repton with his new clientele developed 'The Gardenesque' a garden-style suited to suburban landscapes. By 1816 Repton had turned his back on his Brownian influences stating 'that the tradition of surrounding a house by a naked grass field was a bald and insipid custom introduced by Brown.'

Humphry Repton



Courteenhall - flanked by Repton's tall trees



Sheringham Hall - Gardenesque with loggia



Endsleigh - Gardenesque



Trellised arbour over weir at Stoneleigh Abbey

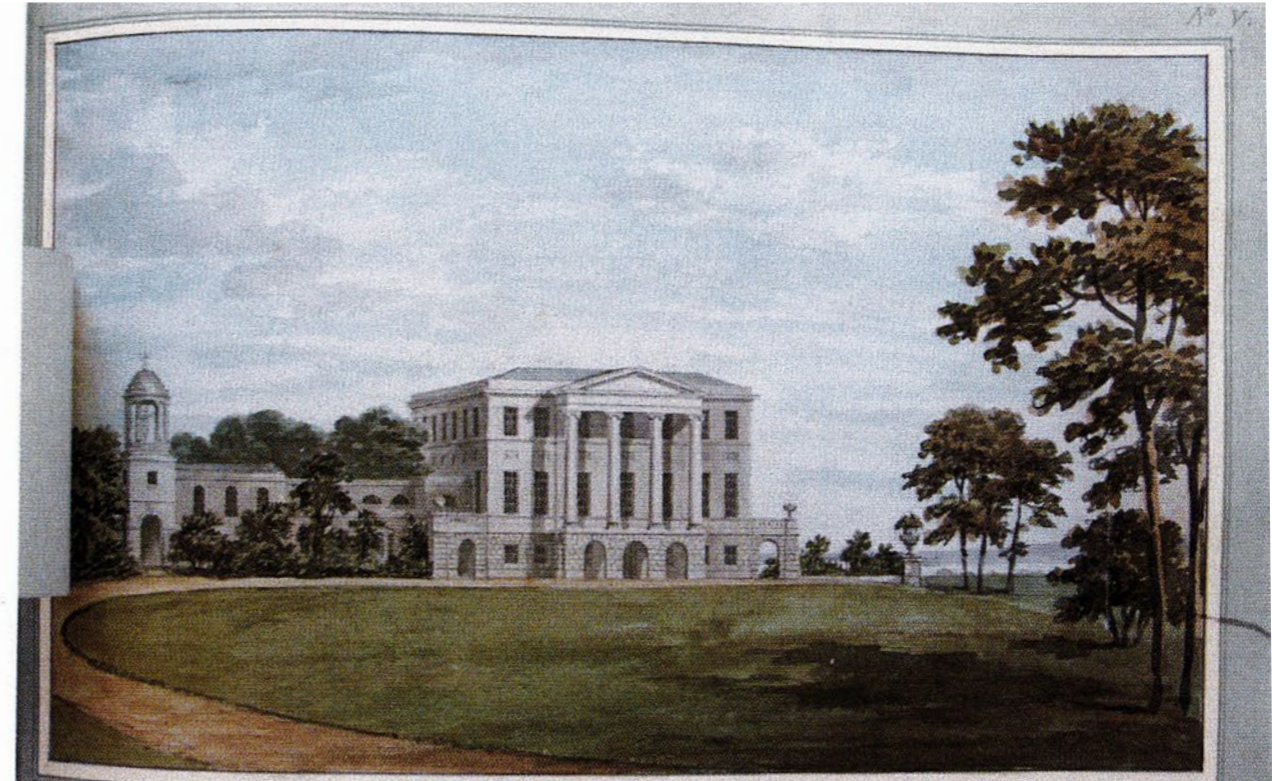
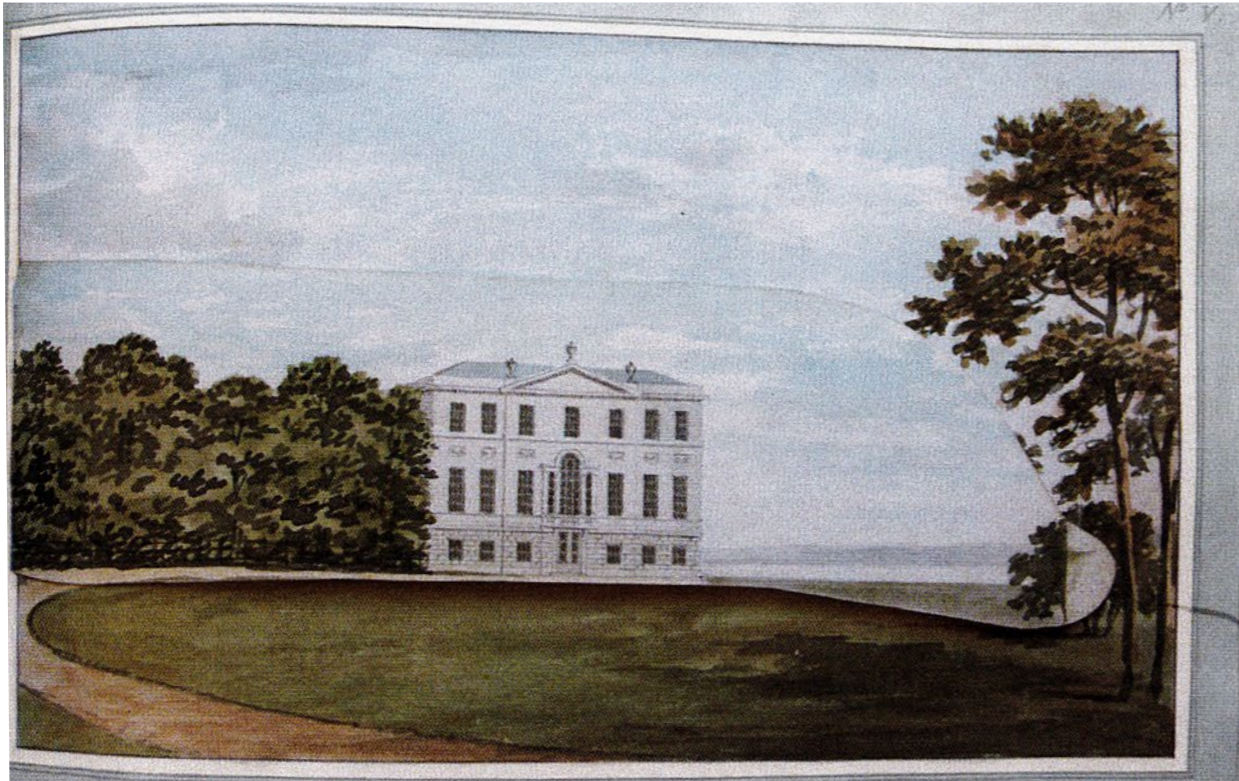


Courteenhall - with wild meadow



Rûg - With Repton's forest beyond, to dwarf the house

Humphry Repton - The Red Book



Hooton Hall, Cheshire - View of the house from the approach, with and without overlay.



Sketch for Sunderidge Park, Kent - old building sited in the valley, with overlay



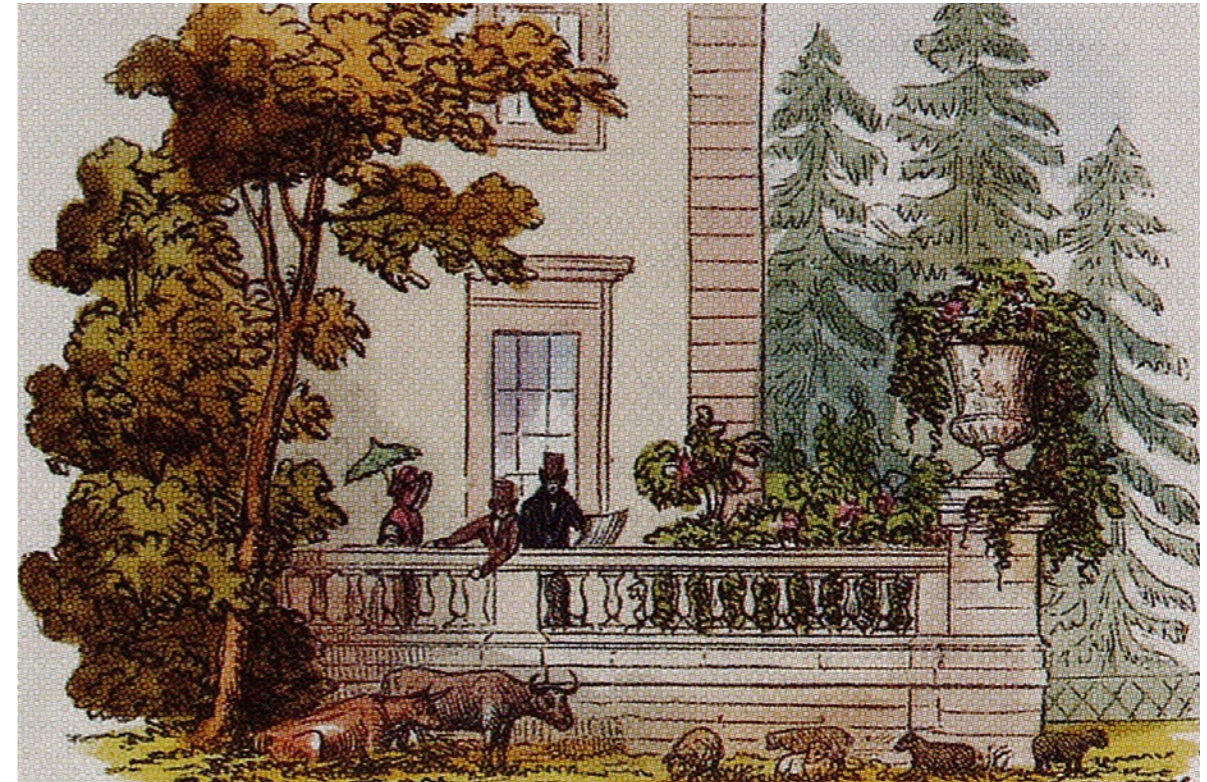
Sketch for Sunderidge Park, Kent - improved via new house on brow of a hill

This transition was a major influence on English garden design, such design championed by J C Loudon created the blueprint for garden Design for the next century. In 1832 Loudon argued;

“Mere picturesque improvement is not enough in these enlightened times: it is necessary to understand that there is such a character of art as the gardenesque, as well as the picturesque. The very term gardenesque, perhaps, will startle some readers; but we are convinced, nevertheless, that it is a term which will soon find a place in the language of rural art.”



Gardenesque improvements for Hooton Hall included viewing balconies, a pergola with blossoming climbers and a formal wall decorated with urns



The Italianate style of balustraded terraces phased naturally into the split-level shrubbery walks of the pleasure ground

The Gardenesque led to the advances in greenhouse technology allowing exotic plants to be reared more easily, and encouraging the interconnection between interior spaces and conservatories, James Wyatt’s design for Dodington Park c 1797-1816 is one of the first of such houses to integrate a ‘hot house’ into the building design. The influence of the gardenesque design principles created terraces around the house with planted beds forming borders around the house. Veranda’s, porches and trellising were encouraged to grow climbing plants up the previously sacred elevations. An early example of Repton’s change of philosophy can be found at Hooton Hall in Cheshire for Sir William Stanley. The New House c1802 was designed by Samuel Wyatt (James Wyatt’s brother) and the gardens were laid out by Repton. Hooton was regarded as one of the finest houses in the North West demolished in 1932. The illustration from Repton’s Red Book shows his design principles the house set in a planted terrace (still with a backdrop of trees) defining an edge with the parkland. Repton’s transformation of Endsleigh’s gardens in Devon c1816 is one of his most revolutionary the terraces and formal planting structure influencing much later landscape architects such as Thomas Mawson.

Any approach to using Reptonian design principles needs to take due regard to Shorrock Green. Mr Dieffenthaler states:

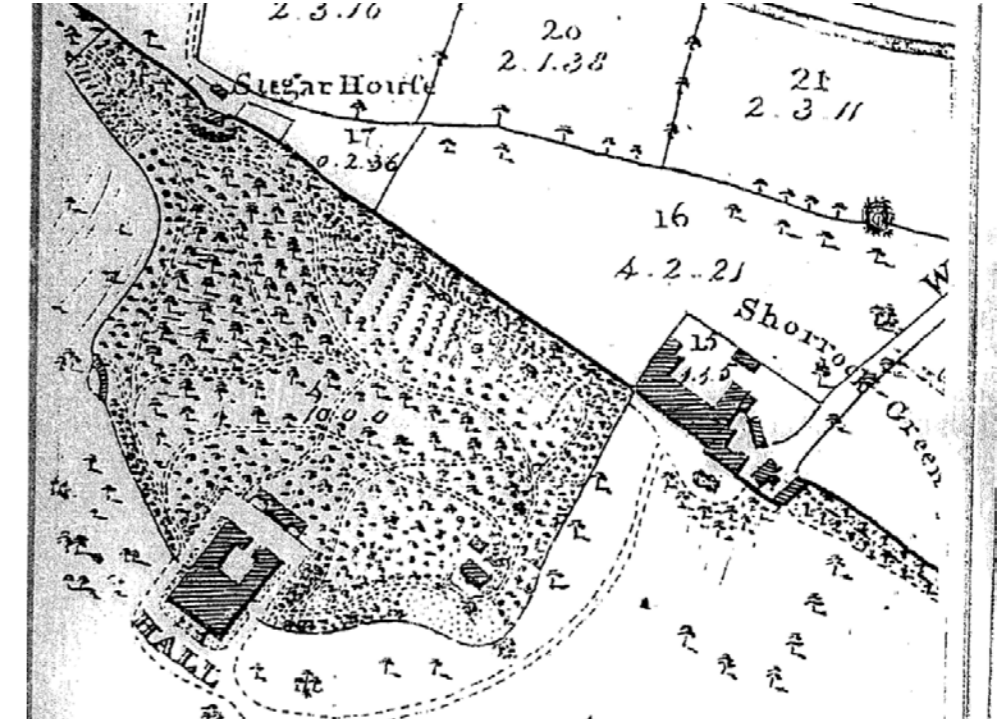
“The character of Shorrock Green is indelibly bound up with its setting as part of Sudell’s C18 park. Prior to the creation of Woodfold Hall, it was part of the pastoral and woodland holdings around Shorrock Green Hall. Having taken it into his possession, the landscape designer for the new hall has taken into account the importance of such historic places and woven it into his design. Thus it is useful to look at the process of arrival at Shorrock Green over the years.



1831 auction catalogue map – north entrance into Shorrock Green then offices



1844-8 OS – note avenue from Shorrock Green and new farm beyond the park wall



1831 auction plan coach house/stable/offices present (later called 'farm'). Site in Lot 2.

Arriving from the north when Woodfold Park house had been built would bring you first to the junction marked 1a on Further Lane. Through the gates to the park, you would see the north elevation of Shorrock Green Hall. Proceeding down the drive with avenue trees on your right and a woodland belt on your left you would swing past the Hall onto the semi-circular carriage sweep with a view down the avenue to the Sugar House on your right and one across fields to the new farm with its striking E-shape.

Passing the hall, views open up to the left down the Arley valley and close again at the woodland strip on the north of the park and entrance to the farm. Going through the gate past the farm, a striking falling view would open up then swiftly close as you entered the pleasure grounds and continued down to Woodfold Park house.

This is a cleverly designed entrance in the manner of Repton, making the best of the inherited hamlet of Shorrock Green, preserving the integrity of the Hall whilst showcasing the new farm and the marvellous location of the new house in its extensive grounds."

"As can be seen from the maps, there were many houses, cottages, grand farms, hothouses etc taken into the Woodfold estate. To contemplate another, the siting and type should be 'correct'. A latter-day Repton should be able to make a 'Red Book' and hand it to the owner of the estate and say 'there you go...make this.'"

Repairing the Historic Landscape

It should be born in mind that no estate is static, Woodfold Park has been subject to many changes since its inception, replacement buildings such as Shorrock Green (Now Huntsman's Cottage) more importantly the deliberate neglect, dereliction and attempted demolition of Woodfold Hall by Ribbles Valley Council led to the building being listed in 1956. It was nearly 50 years later when the conversion of the Hall into flats allowed the main structure to be saved. The rear of hall was demolished and replaced and there are no existing internal features. Such neglect led to the loss of many of the existing parkland features, the sugar houses, mills and water features. The conversion of the orangery is quite appalling, such neglect is not visible; the conversion of the existing Stables, subject to numerous applications and appeals, is visible from Further Lane. This conversion is also unsympathetic. The Historic character of the existing building has been overwhelmed by the numerous additions and the scale of the extensions. The impact of the alterations is quite substantial and is harmful to the setting of the listed parkland and to the listed curtilage walls and buildings. The failure to maintain the wall boundary and tree belt, has led to the current state of decay, where the extent of the park is now no longer visible and impacts upon its significance and understanding. Part of

any proposal should be to develop a design that repaired the boundaries to the parkland so that its context can be appreciated and to screen the conversion of the stables. It is disappointing that the council has presided over the extensive destruction of a listed building, Woodfold Hall, by failing to appreciate its importance, has allowed other buildings in the parkland to be mutilated harming both the setting and significance. Part of any very special circumstances for green belt design should be to preserve setting and special character (Paragraph 138(d)) by reinstating the parkland boundary.

The Proposed Narrative for Mr Hussain's site

From the Character Study carried out by Mr Dieffenthaler and the LVA by DRaW, there are reasonable grounds for the accepting creation of new dwelling as a positive contribution to the development of Woodfold Park. The Hall has lost its significance as the principal residence by being made derelict and converted to apartments. The clutter of new buildings around the hall, with no reference to its historic plan, have also diminished its significance. The studies outline a route to creating a sympathetic Reptonian influenced landscape as base for siting a new Hall. The proposed Hall should follow Repton's design ethos in siting and layout. As part of this narrative the typology of various housing/lodge types have been highlighted as suitable for the site. These are:

Buildings in a late eighteenth century park

Of the popular types of building found on country estates into the late eighteenth century, Historic England records the following:

Banqueting Houses: which enabled family and favoured guests to take refreshment whilst enjoying the view. These are among the garden and park buildings which sometimes had carefully fashioned interiors. The banqueting house as separate building became popular in the late 16th/ early 17th century such as the example at Weston near Otley. These buildings were influenced by earlier hunting lodges and were often two storey with the great hall at first floor. The Georgian form was usually a smaller single storey structure as that at Studley Royal Park.



Otley Banqueting House

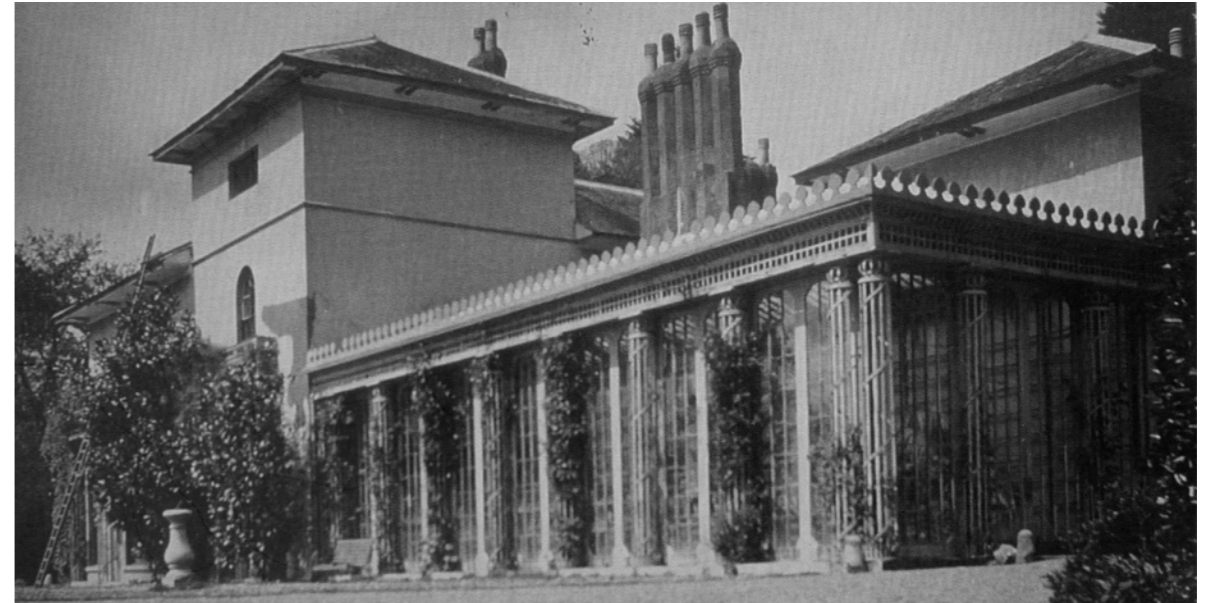


Studley Banqueting House

Belvederes: (from the Italian 'beautiful to see'), gazebos (from the bastard Latin for 'I will gaze') and summer-houses are often difficult to differentiate: typically, belvederes are prominently sited and highly visible while gazebos are smaller and stand at the corners of inner courts. Again, interiors can be elaborate. John Nash was an early proponent of such forms in the 'Italianate manner' his designs for Cronkhill 1802 (Shropshire) Sandridge Park 1804 (Devon) and Lissan Rectory 1807 (Co Tyrone) this group are known as 'The Claudean' series a reference to Nash's pursuit of creating the true 'Villa Rustica' of antique Rome typified by the paintings of imagined antiquity by the artist Claude (Claude Lorrain).



John Nash - Sandridge Park



John Nash - Sandridge Park

A Dower House: is another type of house on an estate available for use by the widow of the previous owner, the dowager, who would move in from the family house on the death of her husband. Royal dower-houses in London included Clarence House, Marlborough House, and Buckingham House while the Dukes of Devonshire kept Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire as a dower house from time to time after the 1st Duke moved the family seat to nearby Chatsworth House. The Dower house is typified by smaller estate houses such as the 'Dower House' at Heath near Wakefield and Gisburn Park.



Dower House - Heath



Dower House - Gisburn

The Villa: John Phibbs, the authority on C18 parks writes:

“In 1785 William Marshall listed the four main types of house (the principal residence, the villa, the hunting box, and the ornamental cottage). While all and any forms of pleasure ground might be found in a principal residence, each of the other types did affect the style of the pleasure ground, its size, and the scale of the components relative to each other. Villas can be defined in a number of ways, but they are essentially places whose immediate estate is not adequate to support the house, and by the time they were established as a form in their own right in the early nineteenth century their pleasure grounds had three basic forms. The first, where a number of houses shared a common space, may have its origins in the city squares of the eighteenth century, but should still be regarded as a nineteenth-century arrangement, and is not relevant here. The second echoed in miniature the layout of the principal residence. However, the third, incorporating components regarded by Loudon and others in the early nineteenth century as distinctive, will illustrate the particular character of the villa, which made up something like one quarter of the outputs of both Brown and Repton.”



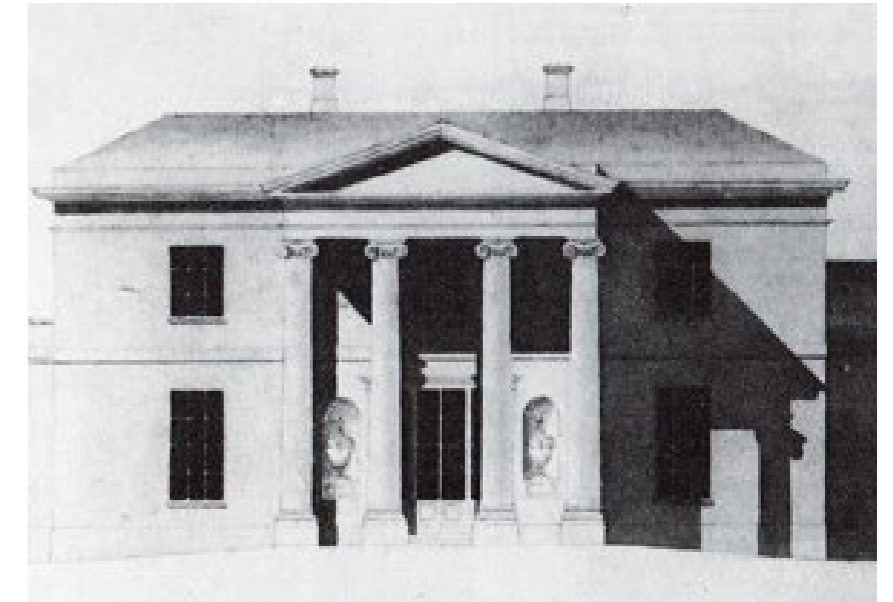
Marble Hill House



Chiswick House loggia



Chiswick House



Design for the north front of Stubton Hall

As the century wore on, houses became varied in size to suite the new merchant and middle classes. The late eighteenth century and early nineteenth saw the rise of the merchant and middle classes wanting to create their own rural idyl on the periphery of towns and cities and in some cases, such as Regent Park in London. John Nash and his pupil Decimus Burton created some of the finest late Georgian Villas as part of Regent's Park Development for James Burton, Decimus' father and builder. The Villa Rustica as championed by Payne, Knight and Price was set in ever increasing parkland to create the desired 'Savage Picturesque' as typified by Nash's Claudian Villas.



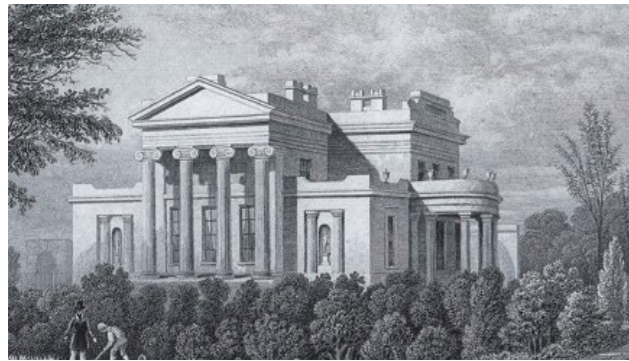
Part 5

Design Principles

The Proposed Narrative for the site

The design philosophy has evolved around the theoretical building of a Regency Villa for Henry Sudell, adding to his Country Park in the late 1820s and commissioning the celebrated architect Sir Jeffry Wyattville with Landscapes based upon the work of Humphrey Repton. Whilst this clearly did not happen, clearly, there was a case for such a building and a later owner considered building lodges to complement the Hall in the early 1830s. The design philosophy of creating an early 19th century Villa, therefore, seems a logical step and following the principles set down by Laugier and followed by Wyatt at Woodfold and Wyattville at Dinton Park would seem to be a natural evolution for the Parkland at Woodfold.

The client's brief for a weekend retreat is similar to Sudell's entertainment Villa. Both the client's family and Sudell are very successful businessmen from Blackburn escaping the city of work for the country. The client's desire for a traditional house has been justified by the narrative and whilst it would be also possible to justify a contemporary villa it would not form part of the narrative outlined. The design of the Villa should reflect early 19th-century design.



Burton/Nash Gardenesque Villa



Decimus Burton



The Grange Park



The Grange Park



The Grange Park

The Regency period was also notable for the rise of the detached and semi-detached villa. In the context of British domestic architecture, the term dated from the 1820s when Nash included picturesque villas in his development of Regent's Park although separate dwellings had been seen in St John's Wood as early as the 1790s. Villas were often given low pitched roofs of gabled or hipped construction with wide projecting eaves. Welsh slate was now the preferred roofing material and formed a striking contrast with the walls when these were of pale-coloured stucco.

Greek Revival architecture found its best expression in large public buildings but it also found its way into suburban 'villa' development where large detached and semi-detached houses were built with fluted pilasters and ionic capitals supporting pediments and window surrounds and porches dressed with delicately carved Greek-inspired motifs. Another strong influence which appeared from the 1820s was the 'Gothic' which had first appeared in the mid-eighteenth century. It was a style best suited to the small villa or cottage where a delightfully picturesque effect was achieved by placing doorways and windows in ogee or early Tudor, four pointed-arched openings. The windows were filled with delicate Gothic arched glazing bars and leaded lights. These styles were brought together and popularised by writers such as Francis Goodwin and John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843).

The villa and its siting would take its cue from the principles set up by Humphry Repton in the 1790s.

Generating Design Principles

Clearly, the principles generated by Wyatt/Wyattville and the McNiven's on the Woodfold site are still evident enough to be applied to the repair of the Park. And these hold good even for 'the other side' of a valley i.e. a northerly site rather than a southerly one. The original hall took the conventional Reptonian route, located on a 'natural terrace' on the slope above Arley Brook and nestled in a woodland backdrop which shielded a pleasure ground of some complexity and interest.



Sketches for Sunderidge Park

The foregoing discussion describes a designed landscape that McNiven would have generated according to modern principles, using his twin professions of architect and landscape designer with access to the best work of Repton, the advice of the Wyatts, the drawings of the Adam brothers, Nash et al. We can list some of the character elements of his chosen site and the principles embedded in his final design as follows:

Analysis of the character-defining elements - McNiven used, for instance:

- a tall, southerly slope with a good natural terrace and fantastic views
- ample water supply for decorative and functional use
- good-boned old buildings
- good source of building materials (stone, timber)

Design Principles

- On arriving at the junction of Further Lane, the entrance gate provided a view of *a focal point building* – Shorrocks Green Hall – which had some architectural status. Passing the hall with glimpses down its western avenue there were glimpses across the farm buildings and down the valley and park before descending into the pleasure grounds.
- The siting of Woodfold Hall itself took account of the natural terrace above the Arley Brook but allowing ample space for a *wooded backdrop* and an extensive pleasure ground – on the north side but on a south-facing slope.
- The buildings all took account of the *long views* and controlled those over ordinary buildings such as the farm, stables and cottages.
- The main approach was from the east (even in its original form); *side on* rather than 'point blank,' and appearing to continue on into an unending landscape.
- Overall, the access and egress arrangements took the visitor on a *journey* manipulated by buildings of status – the lodges and the old Shorrocks Green Hall, modulated by landscape belts.

These could be used to generate a site brief for any new work at Shorrock Green as follows:

Character

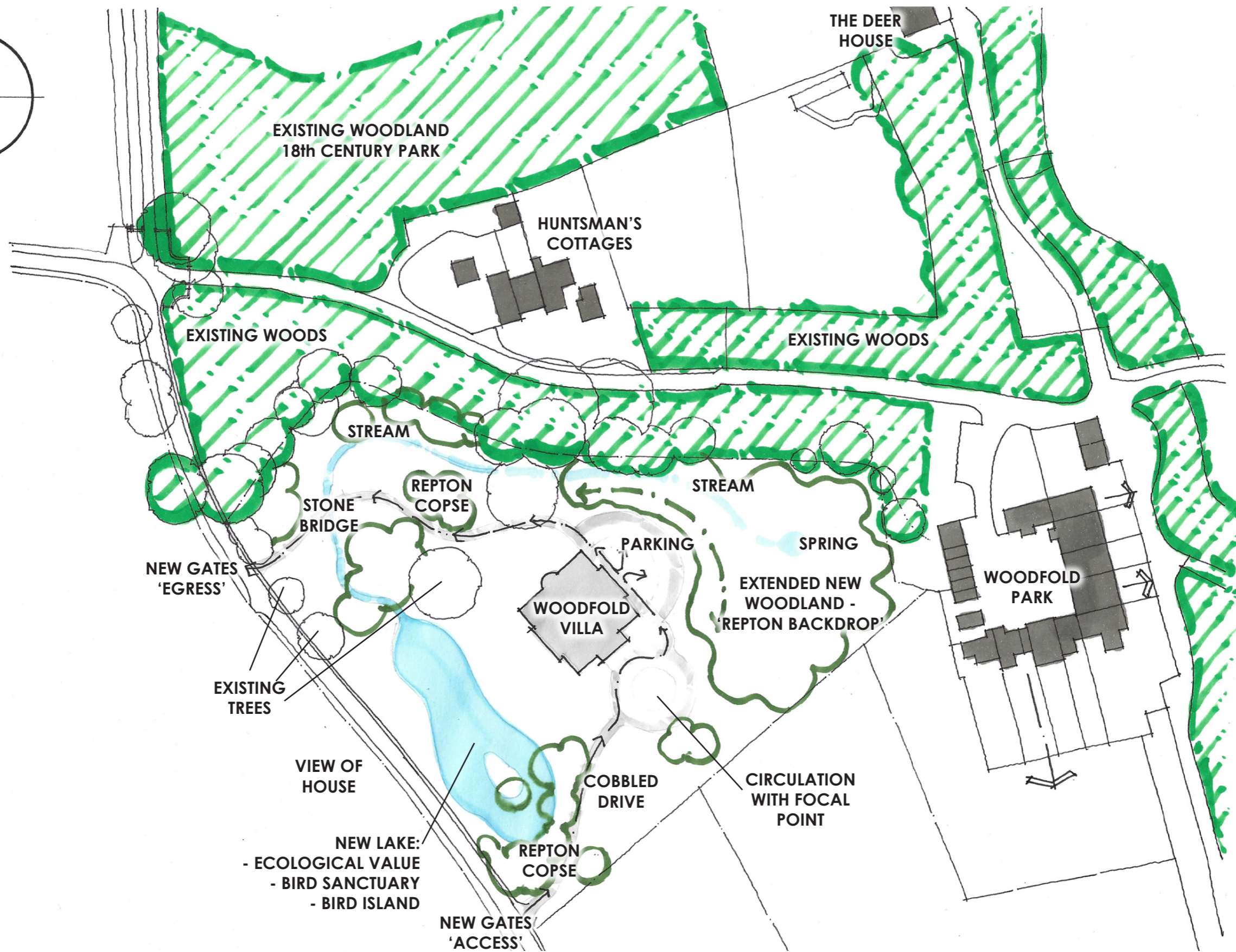
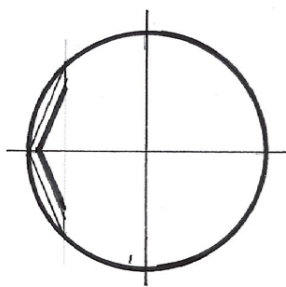
- Remnant of historic designed landscape
- Countryside setting with undulating topography and good isolated trees and hedges
- Natural terrace on the old avenue of Shorrock Green Hall
- Long view to Mellor Brook
- Woodland setting to the east
- Room to screen development to south
- Long hedge for access and egress to be separated = journey
- Deep site to facilitate side-on access
- A boggy section near the road for a natural pond/lake

Principles

- The site should have a focal point building to replace Shorrock Green Hall and allow glimpses of secondary buildings such as Huntsman's Cottages and Woodfold Farm to replicate the notion of the hamlet. An exemplary, compact villa generated from the principles of the time would be desirable.
- The siting should take account of the natural terrace somewhere along or just above the old avenue from Shorrock Green Hall.
- The new building should take account of the long views from the site and block most of the views to the modern farm redevelopment.
- The approach should be side-on rather than 'point blank' and appear to continue thereafter.
- The access and egress should take the visitor on a journey manipulated by landscape belts.

The following diagram has been prepared to illustrate these principles but the designer must make his or her own decisions based on the site principles and the interpretation of the character and the need to ameliorate the prominence of the now westward-facing Woodfold farm development thus repairing the heritage values of Woodfold Park:

- Woodland belt on the west of the site to lessen the impact of view of Farm development from Further Lane at Cooks Farm
- Entrance
- Damp area - could be a pond
- Exit; principal view; glimpse in on-axis with house
- Line of principal view
- Potential site on the 'natural terrace' with space on either side to conceal service areas
- Wooded backdrop
- Ridgeline of locality
- Potential later planting of tree clumps etc to filter the view of the farm from west





Part 6

Design Process

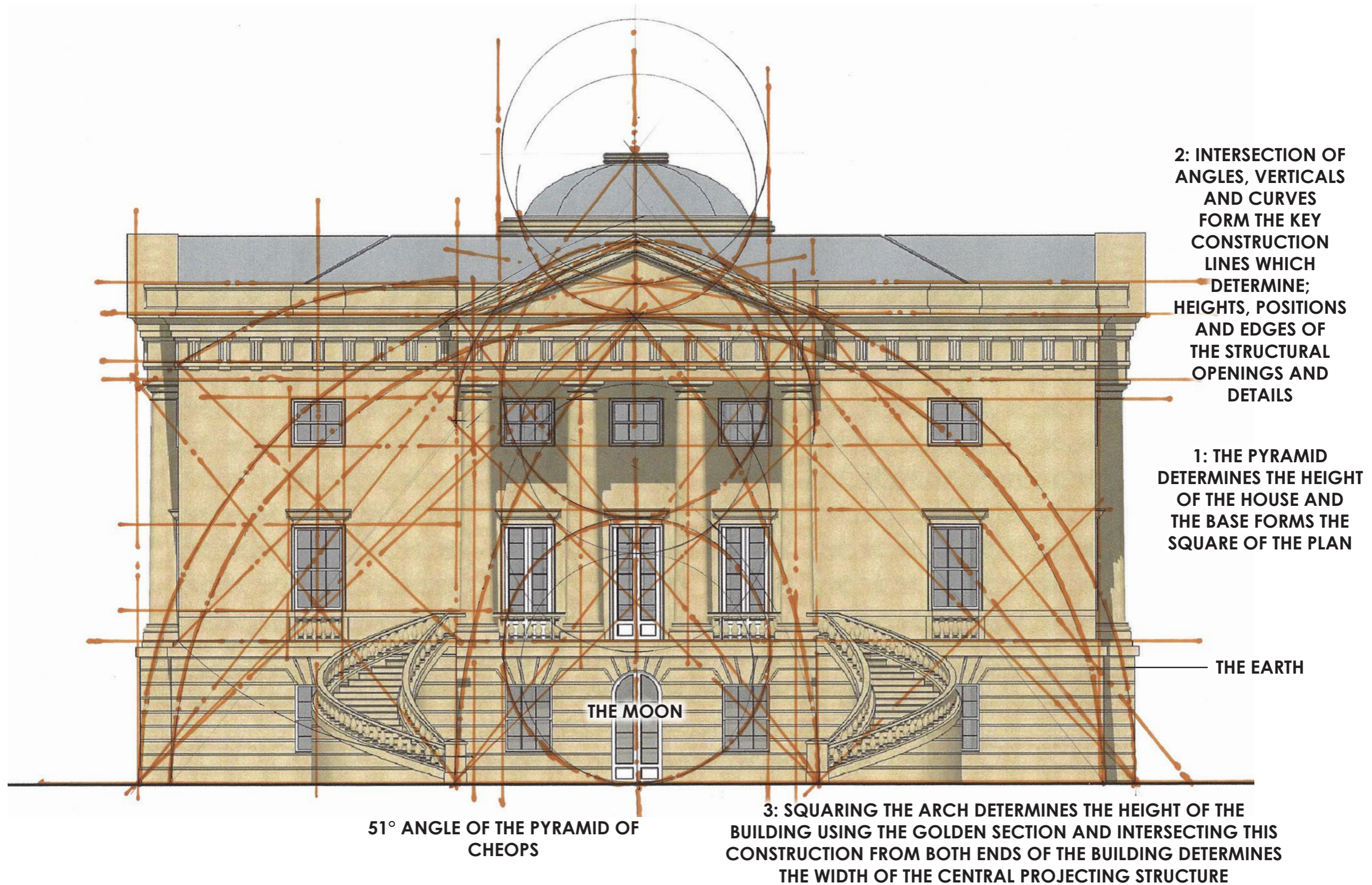
Design Development

The First Concept: 'Squaring the Circle'

The Design inspiration was originally focussed upon a 'Mathematical Villa', an essay in design geometry using 'squaring the circle' to define the plan, the great pyramid to determine the height of the building and the golden mean to define the elevations. The building was based upon the Architecture of John Carr with Constable Burton Hall being the main influence upon the design. The design was a compact Villa over three floors including a Piano Nobile floor with semi-circular 'stable block' forming garaging to the rear. This scheme was developed as an over enthusiastic response to the site and the design philosophy was submitted as part of the pre-application to Ribble Valley District Council. During the process of preparing the submission for the council we commissioned Ian Dieffenthaler to carry out a Character Study to complement the LVIA carried out by DRaW. The Character Assessment highlighted fundamental errors in the design process.

- 1) Firstly that any Villa would have been built post 1800 when Woodfold Hall had been completed and as such the proposed design would have been 'antiquated' in style.
- 2) Secondly by the late 18th Century Repton, Nash, Wyatt and Holland had influenced the Villa concept significantly by moving the principal rooms to the ground floor with designs becoming ever more irregular, ie stairs off a central axis and the house opening up to bring the countryside to the door.
- 3) Third that the villa should set at an angle to the road to allow views from two elevations creating a dilemma as to 'where the front door should be sited!'
- 4) Fourth by the 1820's many Architects were no longer concerned by purist geometrical exercises, the Villa was moving towards a more irregular plan and this was influenced by the multitude of styles that gained influence during the Regency period.

As a result of reviewing the concept against the design principles established by the Character study, it was clear that design did not meet the criteria established.



2: INTERSECTION OF ANGLES, VERTICALS AND CURVES FORM THE KEY CONSTRUCTION LINES WHICH DETERMINE; HEIGHTS, POSITIONS AND EDGES OF THE STRUCTURAL OPENINGS AND DETAILS

1: THE PYRAMID DETERMINES THE HEIGHT OF THE HOUSE AND THE BASE FORMS THE SQUARE OF THE PLAN

THE EARTH

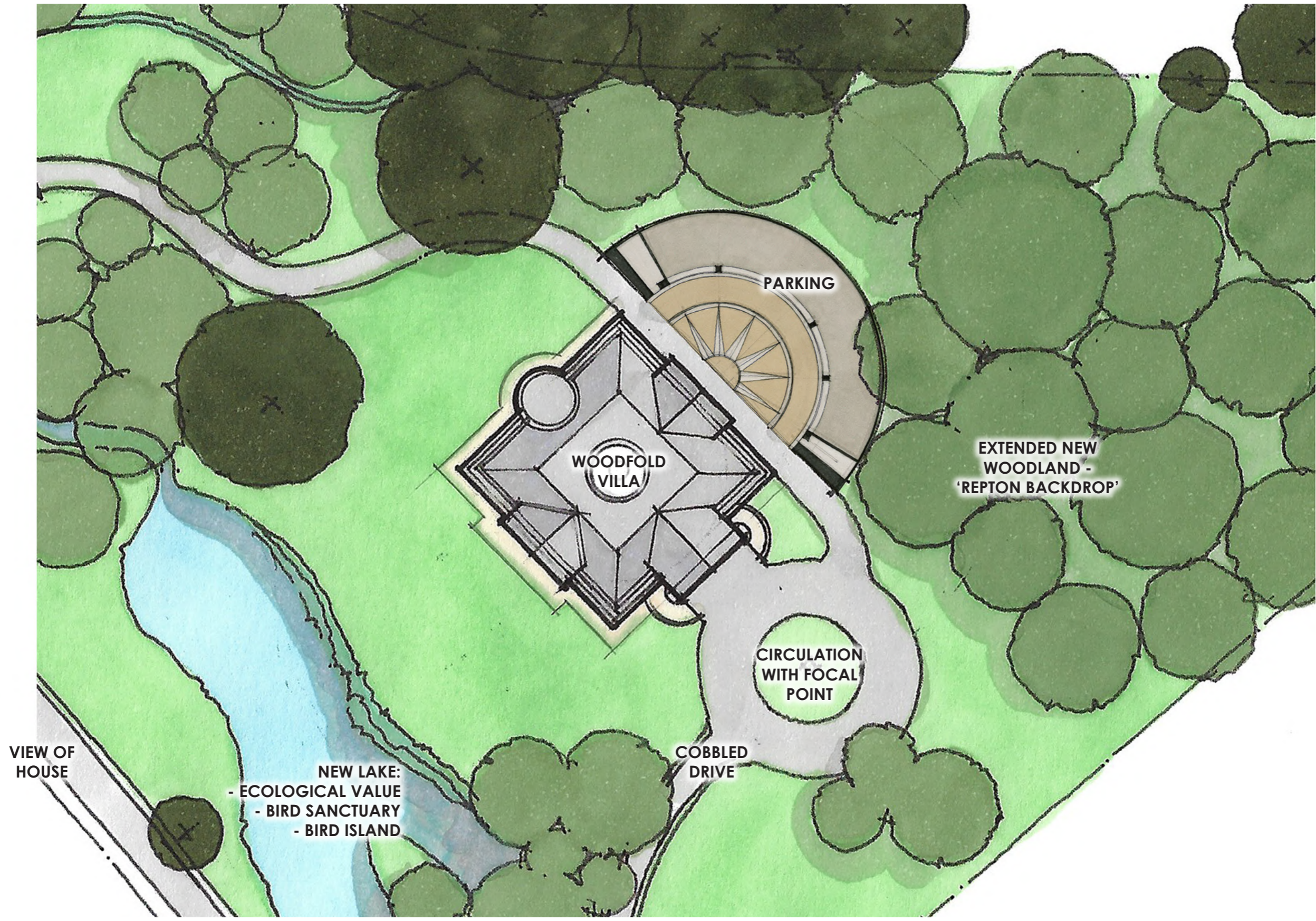
THE MOON

51° ANGLE OF THE PYRAMID OF CHEOPS

3: SQUARING THE ARCH DETERMINES THE HEIGHT OF THE BUILDING USING THE GOLDEN SECTION AND INTERSECTING THIS CONSTRUCTION FROM BOTH ENDS OF THE BUILDING DETERMINES THE WIDTH OF THE CENTRAL PROJECTING STRUCTURE



Initial Concept - 'Squaring the Circle'



Initial Concept - 'Squaring the Circle'