



EAST PARK ENERGY

East Park Energy

EN010141

Environmental Statement

Volume 2 – Technical Appendices

Appendix 3-2: Land Identification Report

Document Reference: EN010141/DR/6.2

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009: Regulation 5(2)(a)

September 2025

Version P01

EAST PARK ENERGY

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Environmental Statement Volume 2 – Technical Appendices

Appendix 3-2: Land Identification Report

APFP Regulation Reference:	Regulation 5(2)(a)
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference:	EN010141
Application Document Number:	EN010141/DR/6.2
Author:	Axis PED Ltd

Version	Date	Status
P01	September 2025	DCO Submission

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EAST PARK ENERGY

Land Identification Report

Version	Date	Status
01	June 2022	Draft

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Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
DCO	Development Consent Order
GW	Gigawatt
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LIR	Land Identification Report
MW	Megawatt
NIC	National Infrastructure Commission
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
SIR	Site Identification Report
DCO	Development Consent Order

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 RNA Energy Ltd ('RNA') has instructed Axis to prepare this Land Identification Report (LIR) to assist them in identifying a suitable site for a proposed solar farm (the 'Scheme') with a generating capacity of 400 megawatts (MW). The Scheme would be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) due to its generating capacity, and therefore would require a Development Consent Order (DCO) prior to construction.
- 1.1.2 Axis has previously completed a Site Identification Report (SIR) for RNA in January 2022, the purpose of which was to identify a preferred 'Search Zone' for the Scheme, taking into account planning, environmental and operational factors.
- 1.1.3 The recommendation reached by the SIR was that RNA should take forward a modified Search Zone B and seek to identify a landowner(s) that would be interested in developing a project.
- 1.1.4 RNA has subsequently approached landowners in Search Zone B and has a number of interested landowners such that there would theoretically be sufficient land to take forward the Scheme.
- 1.1.5 The purpose of this LIR is to take a high-level review of the land offered to RNA to establish constraints to development of the Scheme and refine the overall landholding to be taken forward.
- 1.1.6 The LIR is supported by figures which are appended to the end of this report.

2.0 APPROACH

2.1 Approach

- 2.1.1 There is no standard approach or statutory procedure for undertaking a LIR for a commercial solar development. However, it is important that any LIR follows a clear and transparent approach that is tailored to the specific sensitivities of the project to ensure that suitable site locations are identified.
- 2.1.2 The emerging Draft Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (2021) is expected to replace the Government's currently designated Overarching NPS for Energy (EN-1) that was published in 2011.
- 2.1.3 Draft NPS EN-1 provides guidance on criteria for '*good design*' in energy infrastructure (Section 4.6 of Draft NPS EN-1) and represents the Government's latest emerging position on design for renewable energy infrastructure. Therefore, whilst Draft NPS EN-1 is not yet formally designated, the guidance provided has taken precedence in preparing this Land Identification Report.
- 2.1.4 Draft NPS EN-1 states that (4.6.2) "*Design principles should be established from the outset of the project to guide the development **from conception to operation***" (emphasis supplied).
- 2.1.5 Paragraph 4.6.3 of Draft NPS EN-1 sets out that the Secretary of State should be satisfied that projects take into account functionality and aesthetics as far as possible, noting that "*whilst the Applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the appearance of the infrastructure, there may be opportunities to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, land form and vegetation*".
- 2.1.6 It is considered that at this stage of the project, early design principles should be adopted by RNA to guide decisions on Land Identification and ensure a landscape- and design-led approach to the Scheme.

- 2.1.7 It is unlikely that the ‘Early Design Principles’ would be the final design principles should the Scheme progress towards making an application for development consent, however, if the Scheme does progress then they should provide a basis for the final design principles on which such a Scheme is based; any final design principles should be seen as an evolution of the design principles set here at the conception of the project.

2.2 Achieving Good Design

- 2.2.1 The Government has set ambitious targets to significantly increase the delivery of solar photovoltaic renewable energy generation over the next decade, with the British Energy Security Strategy in April 2022 presenting the Government’s aim of achieving 70 GW of installed solar capacity by 2035; this equates to an increase of 56 GW from the installed capacity in 2022 of almost 14 GW. The achievement of solar generation at this scale will need to be delivered across roof and field at all scales, including large NSIP-scale schemes that are capable of making significant contributions to UK energy production and resilience in relatively short timescales.
- 2.2.2 The footprint of NSIP-scale solar schemes can be substantial, and it is important to appreciate this scale and ensure that the design of these schemes respond to their location as far as practicable in order to deliver for local communities, local places, and local biodiversity. The Scheme is therefore taking a strategic approach to design that seeks to integrate social, environmental and economic benefits to realise sustainable development.
- 2.2.3 To develop a strategic approach to design it is firstly important to establish what signifies good design, and what this means in practice. In addition to the guidance set out in Draft NPS EN-1, in 2020 the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) published the guidance document ‘*Design Principles for National Infrastructure*’ which identifies four design principles which should guide the planning and delivery of major projects:

- **Climate** – mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change;
- **People** – reflect what society wants and share benefits widely;
- **Places** – provide a sense of identity and improve our environment; and
- **Value** – achieve multiple benefits and solve problems well.

2.2.4 The guidance recommends that organisations and sectors should develop design visions for individual projects which embrace each of the four design principles. In doing so, everyone involved in a project should appreciate the wider context, engage meaningfully, and continually measure and improve.

2.2.5 The Landscape Institute similarly published their '*Infrastructure Technical Guidance Note*' in 2020 which also advocates identifying a common vision and purpose in scheme development, noting that "*achieving good design requires a collaborative approach, where all planning and design elements of the project are integrated*".

2.2.6 In this context, 'Good Design' for the Scheme is taken to be a project that evolves through a collaborative approach, bringing together a range of multi-disciplinary specialists behind a combined vision and set of design principles that can mature into a comprehensive and integrated scheme masterplan in consultation with stakeholders.

2.3 Design Vision and Principles

2.3.1 RNA has an early vision for the Scheme '*To provide a significant contribution towards national renewable energy targets, whilst being sensitive to its surrounding environment, and looking to deliver multiple environmental and social benefits.*'

2.3.2 This overarching vision has informed the establishment of the following 'Early Design Principles' intended to guide the Land Identification for the Scheme:

- The Scheme will seek opportunities to deliver solar development as efficiently as practicable to support national electricity network decarbonisation targets (*NIC Design Principle: Climate*);
- The Scheme will be sensitive to landscape and views, and how people perceive the landscape (*NIC Design Principles: People and Places*);
- The Scheme will be sensitive to heritage assets, looking to protect the most valuable assets that contribute to a sense of place (*NIC Design Principles: People and Places*);
- The Scheme will be sensitive to biodiversity, and look to provide enhancement where possible (*NIC Design Principles: People and Places*); and
- The Scheme will seek opportunities to leave a positive legacy through the delivery of multiple social and environmental benefits (*NIC Design Principles: People and Value*).

2.3.3 This report considers each of the above Early Design Principles in reviewing the land potentially available to the project and making decisions on the landholding to be taken forward.

2.3.4 The remainder of this report is structured around the following headings:

- 3. Opportunity Land** – defines the initial Opportunity Land offered to RNA;
- 4. Local Context** – provides an overview of the Opportunity Land's local context;
- 5. Appraisal of Opportunity Land Parcels** – reviews individual parcels of the Opportunity Land against the Early Design Principles and makes recommendations about which to take forward;
- 6. Further Review of Opportunity Land Parcels** – provides a further review of the Opportunity Land Parcels and applies any additional mitigation identified at Section 5.0 in order to define a Site Area.
- 7. Conclusion**

3.0 OPPORTUNITY LAND

- 3.1.1 Axis understand that RNA has contacted or attempted to make contact with numerous landowners within the Search Zone to gauge interest in the development of a large-scale solar farm. This exercise has been led by RNA and has been informed by land registry information supported by a land agent's local knowledge. Letters have been issued to relevant addresses in the area that related to areas of agricultural land, and follow-up attempts made to contact landowners where telephone numbers are known.
- 3.1.2 Figure 1 illustrates the landowners contacted as part of this exercise, and demonstrates that six positive responses were received from landowners whose land offering is at least partly in the Search Zone.
- 3.1.3 Land identified in grey on Figure 1 comprises land where the landowner declined the offer to get involved with the project, or no response was received from the letters or telephone calls.
- 3.1.4 The six positive landowners are shown on Figure 1 and differentiated as Landowner A through to Landowner F. Where the land offered to the project extends beyond the Search Zone this is because the landowner was contacted about land within the Search Zone, but the landowner has offered additional land beyond the Search Zone. This land has not been automatically rejected by RNA as the land may still be suitable for solar, or there may be constraints on the land within the Search Zone, or there may be benefits to limiting the number of landowners engaged with the project.
- 3.1.5 The total landholding (hereafter referred to as the 'Opportunity Land') that has potentially been offered to RNA is shown on Figure 2 and covers approximately 1,130 hectares.
- 3.1.6 Paragraph 2.47.2 of Draft NPS EN-3 states that:

“Along with associated infrastructure, generally a solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres for each MW of output. A typical 50MW solar farm will consist of

around 100,000 to 150,000 panels and cover between 125 to 200 acres, although this can vary significantly depending on the site and is also expected to change over time as the technology continues to evolve to become more efficient.”

- 3.1.7 Based on the above, as a starting assumption a 400 MW solar farm could be expected to require between 800 to 1,600 acres of land to deliver, which approximately equates to between 325 and 650 hectares.
- 3.1.8 The Opportunity Land is therefore almost double the land that could theoretically be required for the Scheme.

4.0 LOCAL CONTEXT

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The Opportunity Land sits within the south of the Search Zone identified in the SIR, extending beyond the boundary of the original Search Zone to the west and south. As set out in Section 3.0 this is because the extent of the landholdings put forward by landowners in the Search Zone have not at this stage been constrained by the Search Zone.
- 4.1.2 The Opportunity Land covers a broad area of landscape between Swineshead in the west and Moor Road at Great Staughton in the east. The landholding is formed by one large contiguous parcel with four smaller individual parcels sited in close proximity. Three of the smaller parcels are located around the village of Pertenhall, and one is located east of Little Staughton Airfield.
- 4.1.3 The approximate total areas of each landholding put forward by individual landowners are as follows:
- Landowner A – 414 hectares
 - Landowner B – 170 hectares
 - Landowner C – 304 hectares
 - Landowner D – 106 hectares
 - Landowner E – 105 hectares
 - Landowner F – 31 hectares
- 4.1.4 The Opportunity Land is almost entirely arable farmland interspersed with woodland belts or hedgerows.
- 4.1.5 This section of the report provides an overview of the Opportunity Land's local context, landscape character, historic environment, and ecological networks. The purpose of focusing on these areas is because they align with the Early Design Principles and therefore appropriate evidence can be reviewed against which an appraisal of the Opportunity Land can be made.

4.2 Context

- 4.2.1 The Opportunity Land is located on the south side of a broad shallow clay vale landform formed by the River Kym and Pertenhall Brook watercourses, which are west-east flowing tributaries of the River Great Ouse.
- 4.2.2 The majority of the Opportunity Land sits within the lower-lying part of this vale landform to the south of the River Kym and Pertenhall Brook, between Pertenhall in the west and Great Staughton in the east, and north of Little Staughton. This lower-lying land relates to the original Search Zone put forward in the Site Identification Report.
- 4.2.3 Several of the landholdings extend beyond the south-side of the vale landform and across more elevated and undulating topography to the south-west and south-east of Little Staughton. In addition, part of the west of the landholding sits across elevated land around Middle Lodge Buildings to the south-west of Pertenhall.
- 4.2.4 The landscape pattern across the area is broadly consistent comprising medium- to large-scale arable farmland interspersed with hedgerows and occasional blocks of woodland.
- 4.2.5 The settlement pattern around the Opportunity Land is dispersed and typically rural in character comprising distinct village settlements. From west to east the principal settlements around the Opportunity Land are Swineshead, Pertenhall, Keysoe, Keysoe Row, Little Staughton, and Great Staughton. Outside of these settlements there are a number of farm complexes in proximity to and within the Opportunity Land, and other individual properties dispersed along the road network.
- 4.2.6 There are several existing solar farms within the area, these are located to the south of Pertenhall and at Little Staughton Airfield. Other notable non-residential or arable land uses include the Sunny Farm poultry facility west of Pertenhall.

- 4.2.7 The area is crossed by a number of public rights of way including footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic. There are no long-distance recreational trails or national trails across the Opportunity Land, although the North Bedfordshire Heritage Trail passes adjacent to the southern boundary at Keysoe Row. There are occasional small areas of public space located around villages, but no common land or open access land within or adjacent to the Opportunity Land.

4.3 Landscape Character

- 4.3.1 The Opportunity Land is covered by the Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2020 and the recently adopted Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document 2022. These published landscape studies define the following landscape character areas (LCAs) which cover the Opportunity Land:

- Bedford LCA 1B Riseley Clay Farmland;
- Bedford LCA 1D Thurleigh Clay Farmland; and
- Huntingdonshire – Southern Wolds LCA.

- 4.3.2 The key characteristics, landscape and visual sensitivities, and landscape/development strategy guidelines for these LCAs have been reviewed and are set out in full in Appendix A and not summarised again here. The studies identify sensitivities and strategy guidelines which are broad and could apply to various forms of development, at various stages of the development process.

- 4.3.3 Not all of the sensitivities and strategy guidelines are of relevance at the inception of a project when the objective is to refine the land and select the most appropriate site. Informed by the published studies, the following specific guidelines have been identified for this site selection exercise:

- Seek to protect views towards tall church spires, which are visually prominent landmarks in the landscape and contribute towards creating a sense of place;

- Seek to protect the sense of openness, wide views and skylines with long views from elevated positions across the Kym valley;
- Seek to protect the pattern of dispersed farmsteads and rural villages with their distinctive structure of 'ends' and associated small irregular fields;
- Seek to protect hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Seek to protect the nature conservation value of the rivers, and protect and restore riverside meadows; and
- Seek to protect recreational access via rights of way network and the network of quiet lanes.

4.3.4 Consideration will be given to these guidelines when undertaking the appraisal of individual land parcels with regards to Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views.

4.4 Historic Environment

4.4.1 The Opportunity Land covers several statutory designated heritage assets, and is in proximity to a number of notable statutory designated heritage assets that should be considered at this land identification phase.

Scheduled Monuments

4.4.2 There are two scheduled monuments within the land area located along a ridgeline that extends east from Little Staughton. The scheduled monuments are shown on Figure 3 and comprise:

- Scheduled Monument 1 - The Old Manor House, Cretingsbury: a motte castle and moated manor house (Ref 1009590); and
- Scheduled Monument 2 - Two bowl barrows 900m and 1000m east of Old Manor Farm (Ref 1020486).

4.4.3 Scheduled Monument 1 is an upstanding monument the earthworks of which can still be appreciated in the landscape today. The listing for the monument notes that *"Although the monument now appears to be rather isolated, it lies on the postulated route of an ancient ridgeway running from Little Staughton*

in the direction of Hail Weston. Situated as it is on a natural high point, the monument commands an excellent view of the surrounding countryside. These strategic factors no doubt influenced the siting of the Norman castle."

- 4.4.4 The landscape setting of Scheduled Monument 1 relates to its position along the ridgeline with views out across the lower-lying landscape to the north.
- 4.4.5 Scheduled Monument 2 is formed of two bowl barrows approximately 100m apart, which are no longer prominent or notable features in the landscape. The western of the two bowl barrows has been reduced by ploughing, the eastern barrow has been partly reduced by ploughing and is partly overlain by a hedgerow. The position of the two mounds along the ridgeline likely influenced their siting, and the setting can still be appreciated.
- 4.4.6 The landscape setting of Scheduled Monument 2 relates to the position of the former barrows along the ridgeline, and the ability to appreciate this elevated position in a wider funerary landscape.

Listed Buildings

- 4.4.7 There are a large number of listed buildings in the landscape around the Opportunity Land, however none of these listed buildings are within the Opportunity Land Parcels. The most notable of the nearby listed buildings are the series of Grade I listed churches located at Great Staughton, Little Staughton, Pertenhall, Keysoe and Swineshead, as shown on Figure 3.
- 4.4.8 Four of the Grade I listed churches have tall spires that are prominent in a number of views from the wider landscape, with one of the churches (at Great Staughton) having a slightly less prominent tower. The visual setting of these churches is an important consideration, and they are noted in the landscape character assessments as contributing to the local sense of place.
- 4.4.9 Of particular note is the Grade I listed All Saints Church at Little Staughton which is sited on a ridgeline east of the village. The land slopes steeply, downwards from south to north along the ridge. As such when constructed, and in the modern environment, the church appears as a dominant,

individualistic building which is visible in all compass directions, with long range views of the church available from the north and south.

Conservation Areas

- 4.4.10 There are conservation area designations nearby at Great Staughton and Swineshead. Neither of the conservation areas has supporting conservation area appraisals.

Non-Designated Assets

- 4.4.11 There are a large number of non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site which have not been reviewed in detail at this stage, however, consideration will be given to non-designated assets where appropriate and necessary to inform the appraisal of Opportunity Land.

4.5 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

Designated Sites

- 4.5.1 The Opportunity Land is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations. The closest ecological designation is a non-statutory designation adjacent to Great Staughton Road to the north of Little Staughton. The Opportunity Land is not within any Impact Risk Zones for statutory designated sites where solar development is listed as having potential to result in impacts that would require Natural England to be notified.

Habitats

- 4.5.2 Natural England mapping identifies that the only priority habitat type within the land area is lowland mixed deciduous woodland. The remainder of the land comprises predominantly arable farmland subdivided by ditches and hedgerows. Hedgerows are likely to conform to the priority habitat description. It is assumed that all hedgerows, trees and woodland would be retained as part of any future solar development.

Species

- 4.5.3 It is not possible as part of this high-level appraisal to consider potential impacts to individual protected species without first undertaking ecology surveys. Protected species are therefore not considered further at this stage aside from a general assumption that more sensitive existing habitats would be protected.

4.6 Summary

- 4.6.1 The local context summarised above for the Opportunity Land focuses on matters of relevance to the identified Early Design Principles set out at Section 2.3.
- 4.6.2 There are key inter-relationships between landscape and heritage that contribute to a local sense of place and need consideration as part of this land appraisal exercise. Of particular relevance are the views towards the church spires from within the landscape.

5.0 APPRAISAL OF OPPORTUNITY LAND PARCELS

5.1 Opportunity Land Parcels

- 5.1.1 This high-level appraisal of the Opportunity Land is focused on the Early Design Principles. It takes the Opportunity Land as the starting point, with the overarching objective to identify the most suitable land to take forward for the Scheme. It is not expected that all impacts likely to result from possible development of the Opportunity Land can be avoided, but by reviewing the land in this way it should be possible to avoid areas likely to result in the greatest impacts.
- 5.1.2 The Opportunity Land has been sub-divided into a series of 'Parcels' for the purpose of this review. The Parcels have been identified based on the boundaries of the areas offered to the Scheme by landowners. In total there

are 32 Parcels of land as shown on Figure 4. Each Parcel has been assigned a unique ID based on which landowner the Parcel is attached to.

5.2 Early Design Principles

5.2.1 Each of the Opportunity Land Parcels has been reviewed at a high-level against the Early Design Principles, and with consideration to the baseline environmental information at Section 4.0.

5.2.2 An appraisal against each Early Design Principle for each Opportunity Land Parcel is tabulated in Section 5.3. The information used to inform judgements is summarised under each heading below.

Design Principle 1: The Scheme will seek opportunities to deliver solar development as efficiently as practicable to support national electricity network decarbonisation targets

5.2.3 The thrust of this Early Design Principle is to deliver as efficient as practicable a solar development through the use of technology, but with regards site selection is also taken to mean choosing land which comprises larger or connected field units. Having a large number of smaller individual fields dispersed across the landscape is less efficient to install and maintain than having fewer large, connected field groups.

5.2.4 South-facing slopes are generally preferable to north-facing slopes, however, north-facing slopes generally need relatively steep gradients before it is no longer commercially viable or suitably efficient to install ground-mounted solar.

Design Principle 2: The Scheme will be sensitive to landscape and views, and how people perceive the landscape

5.2.5 The baseline conditions identified earlier in relation to landscape character set out a series of guidelines that the Scheme should look to achieve to meet this Early Design Principle. These guidelines have formed the reference point for making judgements about the suitability of individual Parcels.

Design Principle 3: The Scheme will be sensitive to heritage assets, looking to protect the most valuable assets that contribute to a sense of place

- 5.2.6 The baseline conditions identified earlier in relation the historic environment have informed judgements about the suitability of individual Parcels. Greater consideration will be given to more sensitive assets such as Grade I or II* listed buildings, but specific sensitivities of other designated or non-designated heritage assets will be drawn out where appropriate. Judgements have been made based on whether a Parcel forms a key element to the setting of a heritage asset.

Design Principle 4: The Scheme will be sensitive to biodiversity, and look to provide enhancement where possible

- 5.2.7 The baseline conditions identified earlier in relation to biodiversity and nature conservation have informed judgements on biodiversity. It is assumed that the arable farmland within Parcels is not a sensitive habitat type, and that existing hedgerows, trees and woodland would be retained.

Design Principle 5: The Scheme will seek opportunities to leave a positive legacy through the delivery of multiple social and environmental benefits

- 5.2.8 Where appropriate, opportunities for enhancement at individual Parcels have been identified. Opportunities at this stage mostly relate to ecological enhancement, public rights of way and connectivity, and green space.

5.3 Appraisal of Opportunity Land Parcels

- 5.3.1 The appraisal of each Opportunity Land Parcel is tabulated over the following pages. Conclusions on whether a Parcel should be retained or omitted are identified in each table.

- 5.3.2 In some instances a conclusion of ‘*Retain – but further mitigation required*’ has been reached where there are clear opportunities to reduce the potential impact of development and make a Parcel potentially suitable.

Parcel A1

- 5.3.3 Parcel A1 is located partly within and partly outside of the Search Zone.

Parcel A1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A1 is a large area covering approximately 227 hectares. The topography is potentially suitable for solar with no limiting factors.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel A1 is sited across undulating land extending north and south of a ridgeline along which All Saints Church at Little Staughton and a Scheduled Monument are located.</p> <p>All Saints Church is a prominent visual landmark and the land sits within its direct visual setting, with views from public rights of way and from Great Staughton Road at its northern end towards the church on the ridgeline. There is limited vegetation across Parcel A1 and therefore there are open views from along the ridgeline across the Kym Valley to the north and the undulating farmland to the south.</p> <p>Development of this area would conflict with the identified guidelines and it is recommended the Parcel is omitted.</p>	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel A1 sits directly adjacent to the Grade I listed All Saints Church, and includes Scheduled Monument 1 identified earlier in this report. The open field pattern and position of the two heritage assets on the ridgeline is such that development within Parcel A1 would cause substantial harm to their setting.	Yes
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations and includes limited vegetation. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, however this could also restrict views of the church.	No

Decision:	Omit
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Parcel A2

5.3.4 Parcel A2 is located to the south of the original Search Zone at its eastern extent.

Parcel A2	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A2 covers approximately 29 hectares. The topography is potentially suitable for solar with no limiting factors.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel A2 covers a narrow valley landform formed by a small watercourse. The landform with hedgerow and tree cover to the north, south and east creates a more intimate landscape than the broader Kym Valley to the north.</p> <p>There is a footpath along the western and northern boundaries of Parcel A2 that allows views across the narrow valley. Development would need to be set back from these footpaths to retain the openness of routes and to avoid development across ridgelines.</p> <p>Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.</p>	No – but further mitigation required
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel A2 includes Scheduled Monument 2 along its northern edge sitting on a ridgeline, to the south side of the hedgerow that forms the northern field boundary. This scheduled monument is no longer visible in the landscape but the land would form part of its setting. The intimate nature of the narrow valley landform adjacent to the scheduled monument provides limited opportunity for further mitigation. It is recommended that Parcel A2 is omitted.	Yes

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A2 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Mature vegetation along the stream would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, and provide enhancement to the watercourse that passes through the valley	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel A3

5.3.5 Parcel A3 is located across the southern boundary of the Search Zone, central to its overall extent.

Parcel A3	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A3 is a large area covering approximately 67 hectares. The topography is north-facing but the gradients are gradual enough that this would not be limiting factor for solar irradiance.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel A3 is across north-facing slopes on the south-side of the broad Kym Valley, to the west of Little Staughton.</p> <p>A mature tree belt forms the eastern boundary of Parcel A3, and this visually separates it from most of Little Staughton. There are partial views into Parcel A3 from properties at Green End at the northern end of the village.</p> <p>Due to its elevated position, Parcel A3 is seen in the backdrop of some views from public footpaths to the north, however there are no landmarks around the Parcel that make it prominent in views locally. Development would need to be set back from the southern end of the Parcel to retain the openness of views across the Kym Valley.</p> <p>There are several public rights of way across Parcel A3 that allow open views across the Kym Valley to the north and the openness of these views should be protected.</p> <p>Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.</p>	No – but further mitigation required
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	<p>Parcel A3 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.</p> <p>The closest heritage asset is the Grade II listed The Cottage to the south, and the land forms part of the wider setting of this asset.</p>	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A3 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. In field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, and the possibility of creating green spaces in proximity to the village, whilst improving recreational access.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel A4

5.3.6 Parcel A4 is located outside of the Search Zone to its south.

Parcel A4	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A4 covers approximately 17 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel A4 comprises a single field to the north of West End (road) between Little Staughton and Keysoe Row. The field sits on a plateau on the southern edge of the Kyn Valley has open boundaries to its north, east and south. There are views from West End across the field and across the Kym Valley. Development would interrupt these views and break the skyline, reducing the sense of openness. This would conflict with the identified guideline to retain the openness of views across the Kym Valley. It would not be possible to mitigate this impact through setbacks, and therefore it is recommended the Parcel is omitted.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel A4 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A4 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel A5

5.3.7 Parcel A5 is located outside of the Search Zone to its south.

Parcel A5	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A5 covers approximately 53 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel A5 comprises two fields south of West End (road) between Little Staughton and Keysoe Row. The parcel has an open boundary to its north but with hedgerow and tree cover to its south and east. The Parcel is crossed by several public rights of way including two bridleways, and the North Bedfordshire Heritage Trail follows part of the southern boundary. Public rights of way should be retained and considered as part of a mitigation strategy. There are glimpsed views towards the spire of All Saints Church to the east beyond vegetation, however the spire is not a prominent feature. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel A5 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. The closest heritage asset is the Grade II listed The Cottage to the north, and the land forms part of the wider setting of this asset.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A5 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further review required due to position outside of Search Zone

Parcel A6

5.3.8 Parcel A6 is located across the southern boundary of the Search Zone, central to its overall extent.

Parcel A6	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel A6 covers approximately 20 hectares. The topography is east-facing but the gradients are gradual enough that this would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel A6 is across land with a gentle fall from west to east. There is partial vegetation cover around Parcel A6 that provides a degree of enclosure in views from nearby public rights of way, although a public footpath crosses through the area. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel A6 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel A6 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel B1

5.3.9 Parcel B1 is located within the south of the Search Zone.

Parcel B1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel B1 covers approximately 107 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel B1 is a broad area of flat land within the Kym Valley divided and enclosed by hedgerows and intermittent trees. There are a number of public footpaths across the Parcel that should be retained. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel B1 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. There are a number of non-designated assets with intervisibility to the outer extents of the land, however views could be mitigated.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel B1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations, however the watercourse to its west is of ecological value and should be protected. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are opportunities to enhance habitats alongside the watercourse, as well as opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel B2

5.3.10 Parcel B2 is located within the south of the Search Zone.

Parcel B2	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel B2 covers approximately 55 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel B2 is a broad area of flat land within the Kym Valley divided by hedgerows. The land is located north of the village of Little Staughton, with the southern edge of B2 adjoining Green End. Due to the vegetation pattern alongside roads and property boundaries north of Green End there would be limited intervisibility between the settlement and B2. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel B2 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. The development would be in the wider setting of the Grade I listed All Saints Church at Little Staughton, and may be visible in long-range views from the church, however the church would still be visible as intended along a ridgeline with any proposed development a modern feature in the wider landscape.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel B2 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel B3

5.3.11 Parcel B3 is located centrally within the Search Zone.

Parcel B3	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel B3 covers approximately 10 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel B3 is a single field bounded to the west and south by mature hedgerow, with more open boundaries to the north. The parcel is adjacent to The Kangaroo (a residential property) to the west however due to the vegetation on the boundary between The Kangaroo and Parcel B3 there would be limited intervisibility. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel B3 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. The non-designated 19th century Kangaroo Inn is located immediately to the west and is an example of a post-medieval roadside Inn in an agricultural landscape along a main routeway. The land adjacent, has historically been agricultural in nature significance primarily lies in its association with routeways.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel B3 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel C1

5.3.12 Parcel C1 is located within the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C1 covers approximately 66 hectares. The topography is generally flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel C1 is sited either side of the Pertenhall Brook, to the west of the village of Pertenhall. The landform gently falls towards the Pertenhall Brook, with intermittent hedgerows, and intermittent trees along field boundaries and the watercourse. There are several public footpaths across the area, including a route alongside the river that leads east towards St Peter's Church in Pertenhall. There are partial views of the church spire from along this route that should be retained, although the church spire is not a prominent landmark in these views. The orientation of the footpath is such that it should be practicable to retain uninterrupted views towards the church spire. There are opportunities to enhance the landscape condition alongside the brook.</p> <p>Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.</p>	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	<p>Parcel C1 does not overall form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.</p> <p>The eastern part of Parcel C1 would be within the setting of the Grade II listed buildings Hall Farmhouse and Chadwell Farm, and it is</p>	No – but further mitigation required

	recommended that development avoids this area.	
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations, however the Pertenhall Brook is of ecological value and should be retained. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are opportunities to enhance habitats alongside the Pertenhall Brook, as well as opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel C2

5.3.13 Parcel C2 is located within the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C2	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C2 covers approximately 21 hectares. The topography is generally flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C2 is sited to the north-west of a small hill, at the lower north-west facing slopes of the hill. It is a single field bounded partially by a hedgerow to the north and west, with several trees in the field boundary. There are public rights of way along the north, west and southern boundaries that should be retained. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No

Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C2 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C2 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel C3

5.3.14 Parcel C3 is located just outside the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C3	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C3 covers approximately 54 hectares. The topography is undulating and in part north-facing but the gradients are gradual enough that this would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C3 comprises the elevated part of a local hill along with the north and east-facing slopes. The field pattern is very open in character and this therefore forms an open and notable backdrop to a number of local views from the north-west around Swineshead, and from the east around Pertenhall. Development across this land could not be easily screened and would be visible from a wide area in several directions. It is recommended the land is omitted due to its topography and open character, such that it would likely conflict with the identified guidelines to protect the sense of openness and skylines.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C3 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets, but is part of the wider landscape setting to a number of assets at Pertenhall.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C3 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel C4

5.3.15 Parcel C4 is located outside of the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C4	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C4 covers approximately 30 hectares. The topography is predominantly flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C4 comprises a plateau on top of a local hill, bounded by a belt of poplar along its north-western edge that provides screening from the north and west. The southern edge of C4 is more open, however the parcel sits on the north side of a ridge with a gentle fall from south to north, such that it should be possible to provide effective screening of the parcel from views to the south. Due to the landform and potential for screening it is unlikely that the land would be seen along skylines, or affect the openness of wide views over the Kym Valley. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No – but further mitigation required
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C4 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C4 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further review required due to position outside of Search Zone

Parcel C5

5.3.16 Parcel C5 is located outside of the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C5	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C5 covers approximately 58 hectares. The topography slopes gently to the south but would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C5 comprises the elevated south-facing slopes of a local hill. The field pattern here is open in character and the land is therefore prominent in views from the south-east at Keysoe, including views from the land rear of St Mary's Church, Keysoe. A bridleway forms the northern edge of Parcel C5 and there are panoramic open views to the south-east including towards the church at Keysoe. It is recommended the land is omitted due to its topography and open character, because it would likely conflict with the identified guidelines to protect the sense of openness, skylines, and broad views across the Kym valley.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C5 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets, but would likely be visible in the wider landscape setting of a number of assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C5 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, in particular there may be opportunities to connect woodland habitats at the top of the hill with tree corridors at the bottom of the hill.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel C6

5.3.17 Parcel C6 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C6	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C6 covers approximately 5 hectares. The topography is generally flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C6 comprises a small field parcel located north of an existing solar farm, although it is separated from this solar farm by a mature tree and hedgerow belt. The small-scale of the field pattern and its relationship and intervisibility with Green End (at Pertenhall) is such that development would affect the character of the settlement. The mature tree belt to the south of this field forms a natural boundary to the solar farm to the south. It is recommended the land is omitted as it would likely conflict with the identified guidelines to protect the structure of 'Ends' in relation to the villages.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C6 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C6 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel C7

5.3.18 Parcel C7 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C7	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C7 covers approximately 15 hectares. The topography is generally flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C7 comprises a flat arable field directly adjacent to an existing solar farm (to its north), with hedgerows to the south and east. The parcel is crossed by a public footpath but is seen in the context of existing views of the adjacent solar farm. There is existing vegetation which provides partial screening between the parcel and the properties to the south. There is the opportunity for additional mitigation in this location. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C7 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C7 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel C8

5.3.19 Parcel C8 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel C8	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C8 covers approximately 27 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C8 comprises flat land with open boundaries to the north and west, and a watercourse to the east. There are several residential properties that directly overlook Parcel C8 along its northern edge. Properties to the west at The Grange benefit from vegetation in the property boundary that provide screening of the parcel. The properties to the north have open views across fields to the south, and the sense of openness for these properties would be affected by any development in the northernmost field. Consideration should be given to mitigating these views. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No – but further mitigation required
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C8 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No

Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C8 is not covered by any nature conservation designations, however the watercourse to its east is of ecological value and should be protected. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are opportunities to enhance habitats alongside the watercourse, as well as opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel C9

5.3.20 Parcel C9 is located in the south of the Search Zone.

Parcel C9	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel C9 covers approximately 27 hectares. The topography is undulating but the gradients are shallow enough that it would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel C9 covers land north-east of Keysoe. In the east of Parcel C9 the landform is undulating with a low ridgeline extending out from Keysoe across the parcel. This ridgeline is open in appearance and forms the skyline in views from the north, east and west. In the west of Parcel C9 the land is lower-lying and flat, but with some open views from properties at the northern end of Keysoe. Development should look to avoid proximity to the properties to the west, and avoid the ridgeline. Assuming this mitigation then development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No – but further mitigation required
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel C9 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. Parcel C9 is in the wider setting of Grade II listed The Cottage and Lavender Cottage and	No – but further mitigation required

	development should avoid the land closest to these assets.	
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel C9 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel D1

5.3.21 Parcel D1 is located in the east of the Search Zone.

Parcel D1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel D1 covers approximately 106 hectares. The topography is generally flat but rising slightly to the south, however the gradients are shallow enough that it would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel D1 comprises a broad area of arable farmland to the south of the River Kym located around New Wood. There is a short section of public footpath along the northern boundary of Parcel D1. The public footpath to the southern edge of D1 is on the south side of a hedgerow and not in Parcel D1.</p> <p>Parcel D1 would be of some visibility from public rights of way in the wider landscape, however these would be relatively distant views, and no key views towards notable landmarks should be interrupted. There would be views from within the land towards St Andrew's Church at Great Staughton, however there do not appear to be any key views towards the church that would be interrupted.</p> <p>Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and</p>	No

	therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Scheduled Monument 2 partly extends into Parcel D1 on its southern boundary, however the main extents of Scheduled Monument 2 are in the field to the south (Parcel A3). Scheduled Monument 2 is sited on the ridgeline and any development of Parcel D1 must avoid the scheduled monument and be set back from the ridgeline such that the setting of the monument can be appreciated. Parcel D1 does not form a key element of the setting of any other designated heritage asset.	No- but further mitigation required
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel D1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Suitable offsets should be taken from the River Kym, and vegetation along the river corridor protected. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to enhance habitats along the river to improve the nature conservation value and function as a habitat corridor. There are also opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel E1

5.3.22 Parcel E1 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel E1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E1 covers approximately 2.5 hectares and is located separate from the rest of the Opportunity Land. The cabling requirement to connect Parcel E1 with the remainder of the Opportunity Land is unlikely to be efficient for such a small developable area. It is	Yes

	recommended Parcel E1 is not considered further.	
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E1 comprises a single small arable field west of the village of Pertenhall. The land is flat and enclosed by hedgerows. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E1 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel E2

5.3.23 Parcel E2 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel E2	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E2 covers approximately 19 hectares and is located separate from the main part of the Opportunity Land. The cabling requirement to connect Parcel E2 with the remainder of the Opportunity Land is likely to be restrictive, but does not necessarily warrant omission. The land is south- and west-facing and the gradients would not be a limiting factor.	No

Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E2 covers elevated land that is open in character and prominent in the direct setting of the village of Pertenhall. A public footpath follows the eastern boundary of the parcel along a ridgeline which allows views towards the church in Pertenhall. Development of the parcel would notably affect views towards the church, such that it would conflict with the guideline to protect views towards church spires. It is recommended the parcel is omitted.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E2 forms part of the close agricultural setting of Wood Farm and Woodend Farmhouse to the north, and development would affect the setting of these assets. In addition development would be a visible change to the wider environment of the church and rectory. It is recommended the land is omitted.	Yes
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E2 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel E3

5.3.24 Parcel E3 is located in the west of the Search Zone.

Parcel E3	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E3 covers approximately 4 hectares and is located separate from the rest of the Opportunity Land. The cabling requirement to connect Parcel E3 with the remainder of the Opportunity Land is unlikely to be efficient for such a small developable area. It is recommended Parcel E3 is not considered further.	Yes

Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E3 covers steeply rising south-facing land at the southern end of a ridgeline that extends south from Pertenhall. There would be limited opportunities to screen Parcel E3, however it is a relatively modest parcel and is not crossed by any public rights of way. It is likely that with mitigation, development would not conflict with the identified guidelines.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E3 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset. The land is not intervisible with the listed Hoo Farmhouse to the east.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E3 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity. There are also possible opportunities to improve PRoW connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel E4

5.3.25 Parcel E4 is located in the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel E4	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E4 covers approximately 15 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E4 is a single field parcel open to its north, west and south, but with a mature hedgerow along its eastern boundary. The parcel is adjacent to New Farm to its south which has direct views onto the field. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds, however	No - but further mitigation required.

	mitigation should be provided to retain some open aspect to views from New Farm.	
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E4 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. The non-designated New Farm is located immediately to the south and development would be a change to its agricultural setting. Mitigation should be provided to retain agricultural land in front of New Farm.	No - but further mitigation required.
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E4 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel E5

5.3.26 Parcel E5 is located in the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel E5	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E5 covers approximately 15 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E5 comprises two fields sub-divided by a hedgerow on an east-west axis. A public footpath follows the eastern boundary of the parcel leading south towards the All Saints Church at Little Staughton. From north of the hedgerow views are more intermittent towards the church due to the close proximity of the hedgerow, however from south of the hedgerow views are more open. Views towards church spires are a key guideline and it is	No - but further mitigation required.

	recommended that the southern part of the parcel is omitted to retain clear views towards the church from the southern part of the Parcel.	
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E5 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets. Parcel E5 would be visible in longer-range views from the All Saints Church, although the church would still be appreciable as a building along a ridgeline with panoramic views. Development would be seen as a modern development in the wider landscape.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E5 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

Parcel E6

5.3.27 Parcel E6 is located in the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel E6	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E6 covers approximately 18 hectares. The topography is north-facing and the gradients in this field would potentially be a limiting factor, subject to further review.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E6 comprises north-facing slopes on the south side of the Kym Valley, due north of the All Saints Church at Little Staughton. Development of the field would conflict with the guidelines to protect views towards church spires. It is recommended the parcel is omitted.	Yes

Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E6 is in the direct setting of the Grade I listed All Saints Church and development across the field would notably reduce the ability to appreciate the Church as an individual building along the ridgeline.	Yes
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E6 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel E7

5.3.28 Parcel E7 is located in the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel E7	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E7 covers approximately 5.5 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E7 comprises a single small field parcel south of the All Saints Church at Little Staughton. Development of the field would conflict with the guidelines to protect views towards church spires. It is recommended the parcel is omitted.	Yes
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E7 is in the direct setting of the Grade I listed All Saints Church, and sits on land between the church and the Grade II listed Old Rectory. Development across the parcel would notably affect the setting of the church.	Yes
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E6 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Omit

Parcel E8

5.3.29 Parcel E8 is located to the south of the Search Zone.

Parcel E8	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E8 covers approximately 11.5 hectares. The topography is gently north-facing, however the gradients are shallow enough they would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E8 comprises a single field parcel to the north of Little Staughton Airfield. The field is on the south side of a narrow valley such that the landform with hedgerow and tree cover creates a more intimate landscape separate from the main Search Zone to the north. A public footpath follows the eastern boundary of Parcel E8 from which there are distant views towards All Saints Church, however the church is not a prominent feature in the views. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E8 is not a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset, however it does sit within the wider setting of All Saints Church, and the two Scheduled Monuments along the ridgeline to its north.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E8 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further review required due to position outside of Search Zone

Parcel E9

5.3.30 Parcel E9 is located to the south of the Search Zone.

Parcel E9	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel E9 covers approximately 13 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor. The cabling requirement to connect Parcel E9 with the remainder of the Opportunity Land is likely to be restrictive, but does not necessarily warrant omission.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel E9 comprises two fields in arable use, enclosed by hedgerows and blocks of woodland. The parcel is crossed by a public footpath but is otherwise not in any long-distance views. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel E9 is not a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset. There are six non-designated heritage assets recorded around Parcel E9 related to archaeological remains which may require further investigation prior to development.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E9 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further review required due to position outside of Search Zone

Parcel F1

5.3.31 Parcel F1 is located to the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel F1	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel F1 covers approximately 4.5 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel F1 comprises a single field to the north of Great Staughton Road, enclosed by hedgerows to each boundary. The field is of generally limited visibility. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel F1 is not a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset. The non-designated 19th century Kangaroo Inn is located to the east and is an example of a post-medieval roadside Inn in an agricultural landscape along a main routeway, however, its significance primarily lies in its association with routeways.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel F1 is not covered by any nature conservation designations, but is adjacent to a county wildlife site to its east. This designation relates to flora on the adjacent field which is in a different land use to Parcel F1. There would therefore be no direct impact and there are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, whilst new grasslands could provide an enhanced buffer to the county wildlife site.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel F2

5.3.32 Parcel F2 is located to the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel F2	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel F2 covers approximately 6.5 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel F2 comprises a single field to the south of Great Staughton Road, enclosed by hedgerows to field boundaries. The field is of generally limited visibility. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel F2 is not a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset. The non-designated 19th century Kangaroo Inn is located to the north-east and is an example of a post-medieval roadside Inn in an agricultural landscape along a main routeway, however, its significance primarily lies in its association with routeways.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel F2 is not covered by any nature conservation designations, but is close to a county wildlife site to its north. This designation relates to flora and is separated from Parcel F2 by the road. There would therefore be no direct impact and there are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity, whilst new grasslands could provide an enhanced buffer to the county wildlife site to the north.	No
Decision:		Retain

Parcel F3

5.3.33 Parcel F3 is located to the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel F3	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel F3 covers approximately 6.8 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	Parcel F3 comprises a single field to the south of Great Staughton Road, enclosed by hedgerows to field boundaries. The field is of generally limited visibility. Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.	No
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	Parcel F3 is not a key element of the setting of any designated heritage asset. There is some intervisibility with the non-designated Lodge Farm to its south however this could be readily mitigated.	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel F3 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No
Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No

Decision:	Retain
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Parcel F4

5.3.34 Parcel F4 is located to the centre of the Search Zone.

Parcel F4	Analysis	Omit land parcel from Site?
Design Principle 1: Efficiency	Parcel F4 covers approximately 13 hectares. The topography is flat and would not be a limiting factor.	No
Design Principle 2: Landscape and Views	<p>Parcel F4 comprises a single field enclosed by hedgerows to all boundaries. A public footpath to the west of the parcel leads south towards the All Saints Church at Little Staughton, but is separated from Parcel F4 by a hedgerow. The Parcel is therefore of limited visibility from around its boundaries, but can be seen from positions along the elevated ridgeline to its south including at the All Saints Church. It is recommended that similar to Parcel E5, the southern part of the Parcel is removed to provide an offset in views north from the ridgeline.</p> <p>Development in this area would not necessarily conflict with the identified guidelines, and therefore the Parcel should not be omitted on landscape and visual grounds.</p>	No - but further mitigation required.
Design Principle 3: Historic Environment	<p>Parcel F4 does not form a key element of the setting of any designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Parcel F4 would be visible in longer-range views from the All Saints Church, although the church would still be appreciable as a building along a ridgeline with panoramic views. Development would be seen as a modern development in the wider landscape.</p>	No
Design Principle 4: Nature Conservation	Parcel E5 is not covered by any nature conservation designations. Field boundaries would need to be retained. There are unlikely to be any constraints to development.	No

Design Principle 5: Environmental Opportunities and Legacy	There are possible opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover to improve habitat connectivity.	No
Decision:		Retain – but further mitigation required

5.4 Summary

- 5.4.1 Each of the 32 parcels of the Opportunity Land have been reviewed at a high level. Figure 5 illustrates the conclusion reached for each Parcel.
- 5.4.2 In total, of the initial 1,130 hectares of Opportunity Land offered to RNA:
- 245 hectares is considered suitable to be taken forward;
 - 444 hectares is considered possibly suitable to be taken forward subject to additional mitigation or further review; and
 - 441 hectares is considered not suitable to be taken forward.
- 5.4.3 The scheme requirements were to identify a site of approximately 325 to 650 hectares, and therefore the land considered 'suitable' without further mitigation would not achieve this in isolation. To ensure enough land is available for appropriate mitigation it is also the intent to secure a total land area closer to the upper threshold of 650 hectares.
- 5.4.4 The possible site area should therefore be formed by a combination of the land identified on Figure 6 as suitable or possibly suitable, which in total equates to 689 hectares. A further review of the Opportunity Land Parcels has been undertaken in Section 6.0 to reduce the possible site area in the context of the original Search Zone and any specific additional mitigation.

6.0 FURTHER REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITY LAND PARCELS

6.1.1 The Opportunity Land being taken forward for this further review is shown on Figure 6.

6.2 Opportunity Land Parcels outside of the Search Zone

6.2.1 The possible site area has firstly been reviewed against the original Search Zone identified at the conclusion of the SIR. Opportunity Land Parcels A5, C4, E8 and E9 are each located outside of the Search Zone, having been offered by landowners that have also offered land within the Search Zone.

6.2.2 The SIR was focused on finding an area of land suitable for solar in accordance with the 'Factors Influencing Site Selection' set out in Draft NPS EN-3. The Search Zone was identified based on a number of different factors, but was ultimately 'drawn' based on the wider potential for avoiding best and most versatile agricultural land, and with consideration to the underlying topography of the vale landform formed by the River Kym and Pertenhall Brook.

6.2.3 The Opportunity Land Parcels are predominantly sited within the broad vale formed by the River Kym and Pertenhall Brook. This vale landform topography would provide a degree of containment to the Scheme within the wider landscape. The ridgeline that extends east-west through Little Staughton is therefore a natural boundary for the Scheme, and it is considered that this should be enforced. Parcels A5, E8 and E9 are beyond this ridgeline and it is judged they should be removed. Removing Parcel A5 would have an additional benefit in reducing the overall impact to Little Staughton and the public rights of way to its west. Removing Parcels E8 and E9 would have additional efficiency benefits as both are relatively small parcels and not contiguous with the wider possible site area, possibly increasing the scope of access and cabling requirements to connect in with the wider site.

- 6.2.4 It is therefore recommended that Parcels A5, E8 and E9 are removed from the Opportunity Land, which reduces the total land available to approximately 612 hectares.
- 6.2.5 Turning to Parcel C4 which is also outside of the Search Zone. It is considered that despite Parcel C4's location it has the opportunity to be effectively screened due to the existing vegetation pattern along its west, north and north-east boundaries, such that providing screening along its south-eastern boundary could enclose the Parcel in views. Any planting would not be out of character with the existing vegetation pattern along this ridgeline. The Parcel is not separated from the remainder of the suitable Opportunity Land by a natural boundary in the same way as Parcels A5, E8 and E9, and the land is of a scale that it could make a meaningful contribution to the total development area. Access and cabling to Parcel C4 could be relatively easily provided from the adjoining land offered by Landowner C.
- 6.2.6 It is therefore recommended that Parcel C4 is retained subject to additional mitigation coming forward at a further stage of the development process.

6.3 Suitable Opportunity Land Parcels where specific additional mitigation is required

- 6.3.1 The appraisal of Opportunity Land Parcels at Section 5.0 identified that specific additional mitigation should be provided for a number of the Parcels within the Search Zone. These Parcels were identified as A3, C1, C8, C9, D1, E4, E5 and F4 and the specific additional mitigation is considered further below.

Opportunity Land Parcel A3

- 6.3.2 Specific additional mitigation identified for Parcel A3 was to set back from the southern end of the Parcel to retain the openness of views across the Kym Valley, and similarly consider the openness of views from public rights of way.

- 6.3.3 It is judged that these mitigation measures should be incorporated at a further stage of the development process subject to detailed environmental assessment, and do not warrant a change in the proposed site area at this stage.

Opportunity Land Parcel C1

- 6.3.4 Specific additional mitigation identified for Parcel C1 was to remove the eastern end of the Parcel to take development out of the immediate setting of the Grade II listed Hall Farmhouse and Chadwell Farm.
- 6.3.5 It is judged that these mitigation measures should be incorporated at a further stage of the development process subject to detailed environmental assessment, and do not warrant a change in the proposed site area at this stage.

Opportunity Land Parcel C8

- 6.3.6 Specific additional mitigation for Parcel C8 was to mitigate for the very open views across the Parcel from properties along the northern boundary at Great Staughton Road.
- 6.3.7 It is judged that the northern field of Parcel C8 should be removed from the proposed site area to retain an open aspect across the foreground of views from the properties, at least as far as the field boundary to their south. Further detailed environmental assessment as part of the development process should also be undertaken to refine the proposed site area.

Opportunity Land Parcel C9

- 6.3.8 Specific additional mitigation for Parcel C9 was to avoid proximity to the properties to the west both to reduce visual impact, and to reduce setting impacts to listed buildings.
- 6.3.9 It is judged that the western field of the Parcel should be removed from the possible site area to reduce the visual impact and setting impacts. Further

detailed environmental assessment as part of the development process should also be undertaken to refine the proposed site area.

Opportunity Land Parcel D1

- 6.3.10 Specific additional mitigation for Parcel D1 was to set back development from the ridgeline to reduce the setting impact on Scheduled Monument 2.
- 6.3.11 It is judged that these mitigation measures should be incorporated at a further stage of the development process subject to detailed environmental assessment.

Opportunity Land Parcel E4

- 6.3.12 Specific additional mitigation for Parcel E4 was to retain an open aspect to views from New Farm to the south, which has close direct views onto the field.
- 6.3.13 It is judged that part of the eastern extent of the field should be removed from the possible site area to reduce the visual impact and retain an open aspect onto a field to the north. Further detailed environmental assessment as part of the development process should also be undertaken to refine the proposed site area.

Opportunity Land Parcel E5 and F4

- 6.3.14 Specific additional mitigation for Parcel E5 and Parcel F4 was to omit the southern part of the parcel, south of the hedgerow, in order to retain clear views towards the church from part of the public footpath and reduce the impact on views from the Church.
- 6.3.15 The southern part of the Parcel should be removed as set out above. Further detailed environmental assessment as part of the development process should also be undertaken to refine the proposed site area.

6.4 Summary

- 6.4.1 Following further review of the Opportunity Land Parcels it has been established that Opportunity Land Parcels A5, E8 and E9 should be removed, Parcels A3 and C4 should be retained, and changes should be made to Parcels C8, C9, E4, E5 and F4. These changes are illustrated on Figure 7.
- 6.4.2 Accounting for the above changes the proposed site area covers approximately 580 hectares. This is towards the upper end of the target to achieve a site area of between 325 and 650 hectares.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 This LIR has undertaken a methodical approach to identifying the landholding to be taken forward for the Scheme based on guidance in Draft NPS EN-3 that Applicants should establish design principles from the very outset of a project.
- 7.1.2 The total Opportunity Land has been reduced from the initial approximately 1,130 hectares offered to RNA, to approximately 580 hectares. Based on guidance set out in Draft NPS EN-3 it is considered that this extent of land is likely to be suitable to achieve a 400 MW export capacity, however it is expected that RNA would need to review this to ensure the Site has suitable capacity. It is also the case that further detailed environmental assessment as part of the development process is likely to identify additional mitigation requirements that could reduce the developable area for the Scheme.
- 7.1.3 It is recommended that should RNA proceed with an Application for Development Consent for the Scheme, the land to be taken forward should be the 'Proposed Site Area' as illustrated on Figure 8.

APPENDIX A: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

Bedford LCA 1B: Riseley Clay and Farmland

This LCA is described within the Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment as “...a low lying landscape ranging from 30m to 90m AOD, with subtly varied topography... The area is dominated by arable farmland but scattered woodlands (some ancient) give variety, often crowning the horizon in long views across the level fields. The large and medium fields are bounded by hedges and ditches, the former in mixed condition. Smaller fields and occasional horse pastures are clustered around settlements. Hedgerow trees, usually ash or oak are present, many mature and sometimes within fields marking lost hedgerows... This is a peaceful, rural area with a dispersed but regular pattern of scattered farmsteads and small villages with frequent medieval earthworks and tall stone churches. The major trunk road of the A6 passes through the west of the area and here disused and untended plots of land give an air of neglect locally.”

The following points summarise the key considerations of this LCA in relation to the sensitivities of the landscape:

- i) The network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees which are vulnerable to further loss through lack of consistent maintenance and renewal of trees.
- ii) Fields close to settlement are vulnerable to subdivision for horse paddocks with consequent change of boundary character.
- iii) The field trees (remnants of former field boundaries) which may be lost due to over maturity and lack of appropriate management.
- iv) The pattern of dispersed farmsteads and rural villages with their distinctive structure of ‘ends’ which is vulnerable to infill and ribbon development along roads.
- v) Tall stone built churches forming landmarks and creating a sense of place.
- vi) The historic earthworks and moats often associated with current day settlements and the remains of historic parks which are vulnerable to lack of management.

- vii) High level of recreational access via rights of way network including the Three Shires Way.
- viii) Areas of ecological value including ancient woodlands and unimproved grassland which require sustained management.
- ix) The tranquil, rural nature of the landscape which is vulnerable to urban influence particularly along the A6 trunk road and around the renewable energy development, particularly on former airfields.
- x) Survival of irregular field pattern in assart areas and round historic settlements, often with earthwork remains.
- xi) Melchbourne Park and environs, comprising a significant survival of historic features.

In addition, the following points summarise the key considerations of this LCA in relation to the **visual** sensitivities of the landscape:

- i) *The sense of openness, wide views and skylines given variety by the subtly changing landform and the scattered woodlands which are vulnerable to the influence of large scale features including turbines and agri-industrial sheds.*
- ii) *The views to church spires, which are visually prominent landmarks in the landscape.*

The Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment states that the overall strategy for this LCA is to “*conserve the open rural landscape with its scattered small scale settlements and farmsteads, and historic earthworks, parks and ancient woodlands and grasslands of high biodiversity value (seeking to give expression to the aspirations of a connected GI network shown in the Bedford GI Strategy) while enhancing the elements of the landscape which are in declining condition or detract from the rural character, in particular the hedgerows and hedgerow and field trees, and the margins of the A6.*”

Bedford LCA 1D: Thurleigh Clay Farmland

This LCA is described within the Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment as a *“low lying landscape ranging from 30m to 90m AOD, with largely level topography founded on Oxford Clay overlain by Boulder Clay with subtly undulating tributary valleys to the east. It is dominated by arable farmland with a few scattered woodlands (including ancient woodland) giving some variety, and crowning the horizon in long views across the level fields. The large fields are bounded by hedges and ditches, the former sometimes in poor condition or lost altogether causing the visual merging of individual fields into large open areas.. Hedgerow trees, usually ash or oak are present, many mature and sometimes within fields marking lost hedgerows... A network of quiet rural lanes connects the settlements and provide an important resource for informal recreation. On the higher ground to the west, the presence of Thurleigh Airfield creates a less rural landscape with industrial fencing and large scale airfield buildings visible on the skyline plus extensive loss of field boundaries making a more open landscape”*.

The Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment states that the *“variable level of hedgerow cover in some instances creates long views across the character area, with variety and interest added by scattered woodlands and small tributaries, which create subtle topographic variation. An historic character is imparted at points by parklands (Bushmead Priory) and by moated settlements, as well as vernacular buildings/settlement, although large scale modern/industrial development is often prominent to skylines e.g. at Thurleigh Airfield”*.

- i) The following points summarise the key considerations of this LCA in relation to the sensitivities of the landscape:
- ii) The network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees which still survive in parts of the area is vulnerable to further loss through lack of consistent maintenance and renewal of trees.
- iii) The field trees (remnants of former field boundaries) which may be lost due to over maturity and lack of appropriate on-going management.

- iv) The pattern of dispersed farmsteads and villages with their distinctive structure of 'ends' and associated small irregular fields, which is vulnerable to infill within villages and ribbon development along roads.
- v) Tall stone built churches forming landmarks and creating a sense of place.
- vi) Earthworks of moated sites and shrunken settlements whose legibility is vulnerable to lack of management.
- vii) Bushmead Priory and environs, comprising a significant survival of historic features of various eras.
- viii) High level of recreational access via rights of way network and network of quiet rural lanes.
- ix) Areas of ecological value in particular ancient woodlands which require sustained management to maintain this diversity.
- x) The tranquil, rural nature of the landscape which is vulnerable to urban influence, particularly around Thurleigh Airfield.
- xi) Presence of ponds and brooks throughout the area.

In addition, the **visual** sensitivities of the landscape of this LCA include its "*sense of openness, and of wide views*".

The Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment states that the overall strategy for this LCA is to "*enhance the elements of the landscape which are in declining condition or detract from the rural character, in particular the hedgerows and hedgerow and field trees. At the same time conserving and enhancing the open rural landscape with its scattered small scale settlements and farmsteads, and historic earthworks and ancient woodlands of high biodiversity value.*"

Huntingdonshire LCA: Southern Wolds

The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document describes this LCA as incorporating "*the lower valleys of the River Kym and Ellington Brook. It completely encircles the Grafham Water landscape character area. The Southern Wolds forms a transition area between the Northern Wolds which lie to the north west and the Great Ouse*

Valley which is to the east. The Central Claylands is also situated to the north of part of this area.

The topography of the Southern Wolds is similar to that of the Northern Wolds in comprising ridges and valleys but given the greater scale of the rivers here it consists of just two broad valleys with very gently undulating ground divided by the steep ridge that contains Grafham Water. Settlements are more scattered in this area and parishes larger suggesting a more dispersed pattern of historic development. However, there are several ancient monuments including medieval moats and sites of Roman buildings.”

The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document states that the “strongest visual characteristic of the Southern Wolds is the extent of woodland cover, particularly on the central ridge which divides the Kym and Ellington valleys. For most of the area the River Kym meanders through a broad, shallow valley but around Kimbolton the valley sides become steeper creating a bowl around the village. Large fields of arable crops are interspersed with woodland and copses and separated by substantial hedgerows. This part of the Southern Wolds has a very rural character and benefits from long views over the surrounding countryside.”

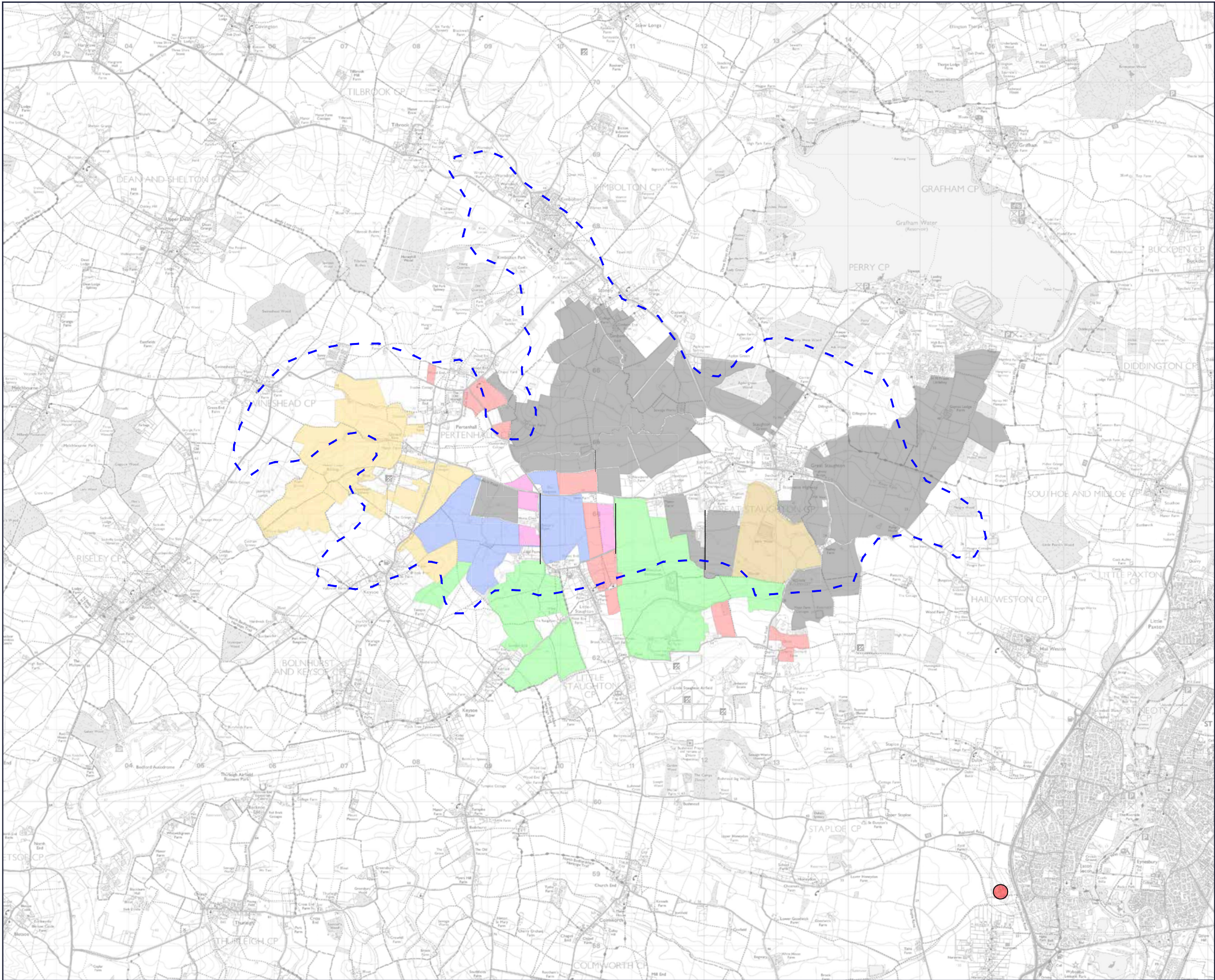
The following points summarise the key considerations of this LCA in relation to the sensitivities of the landscape:

- xii) Preservation and management of existing deciduous woodlands to maintain and enhance biodiversity.*
- xiii) Promotion of opportunities to integrate soft edges to existing developments and reduce the landscape impact of visually harsh or intrusive settlement edges.*
- xiv) Management of streams and rivers and their associated valley floors to maximise their ecological value.*
- xv) Protection and restoration of riverside meadows.*
- xvi) Protection of the rural character of long distance view from the Kym Valley.*

The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document states that development proposals should consider the following:

- i) Ensure high quality landscaping to soften the impact of any new building on the edges of settlements to improve integration with the surrounding countryside.*
- ii) Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its local character.*
- iii) Protect the rural character of long distance views of and from the Kym Valley.*
- iv) Promote opportunities for conservation and wildlife initiatives to support the area's contribution to biodiversity.*
- v) Improve the nature conservation value of the rivers and their immediate valley sides.*

FIGURES



- Point of Connection
- Search Zone
- Landowner declined, or no response from landowner
- Landowner A
- Landowner B
- Landowner C
- Landowner D
- Landowner E
- Landowner F

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Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 1

Figure Title

Contacted Landowners

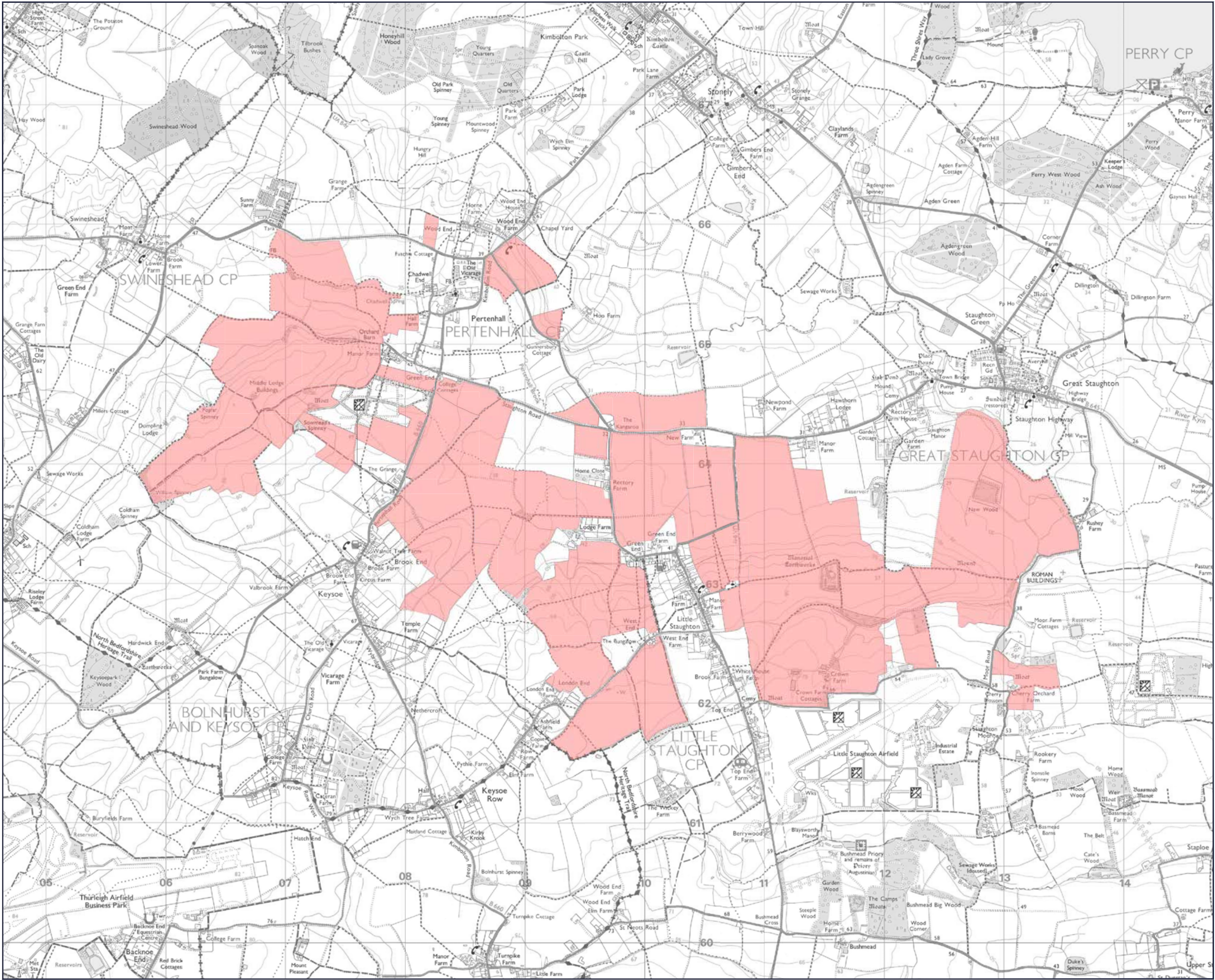
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Date

June 2022





Opportunity Land

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Project

East Park Energy
Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 2

Figure Title

Opportunity Land

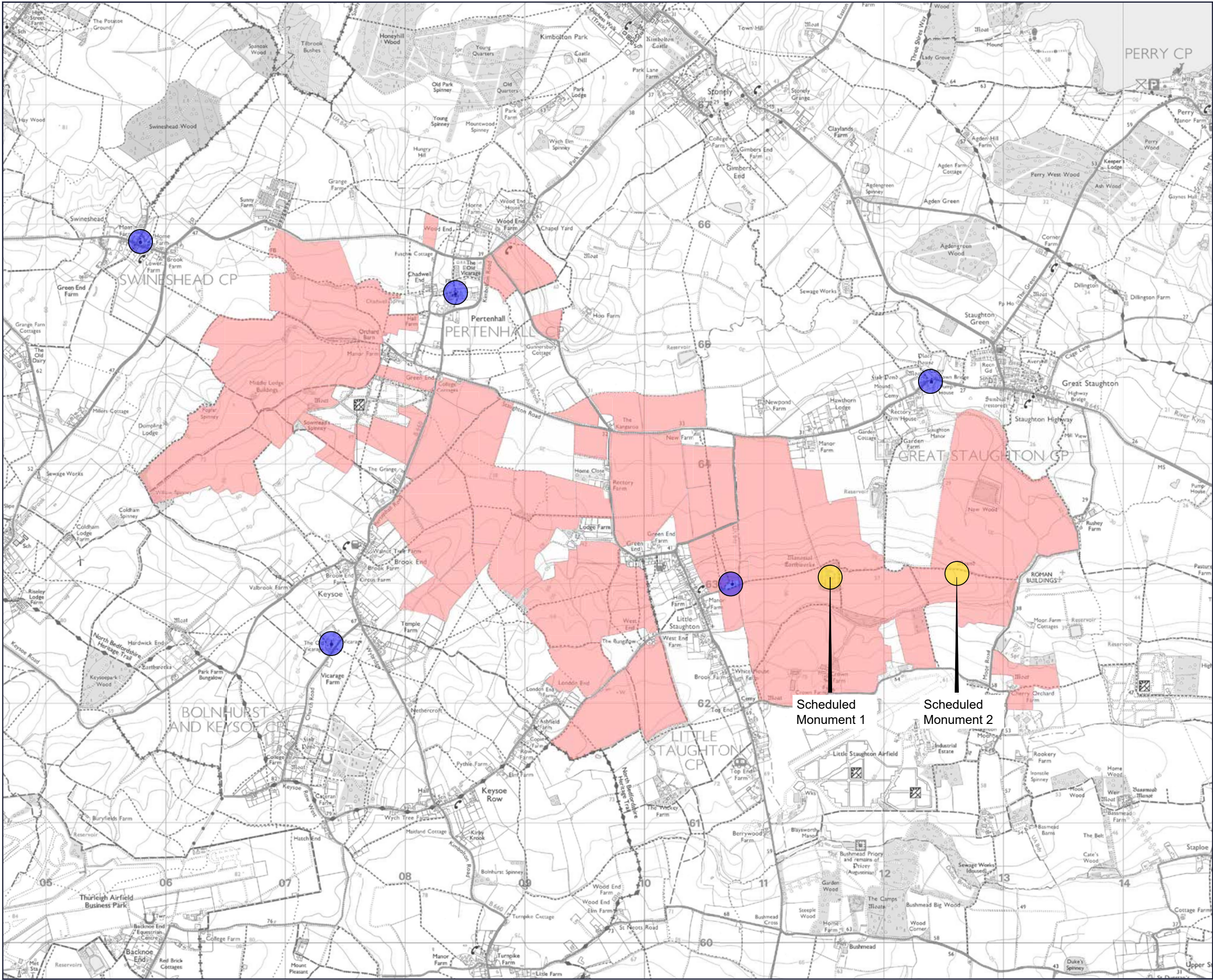
Scale

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Date

June 2022





- Opportunity Land
- Grade I Listed Church
- Scheduled Monument (legal extent not shown)

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Project

East Park Energy
Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 3

Figure Title

Heritage Assets

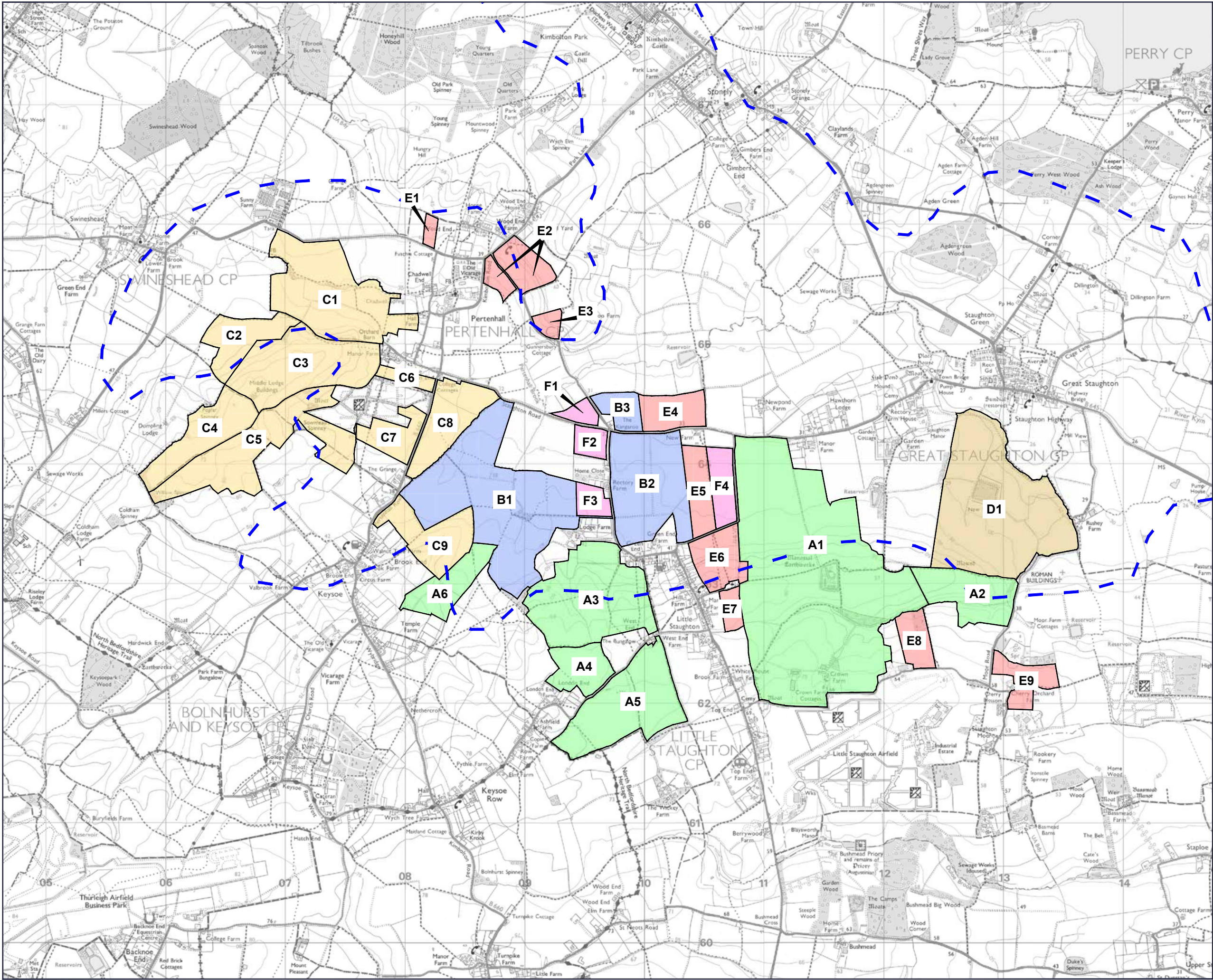
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Date

June 2022





- Landowner A
- Landowner B
- Landowner C
- Landowner D
- Landowner E
- Landowner F
- Search Zone

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Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 4

Figure Title

Opportunity Land Parcels

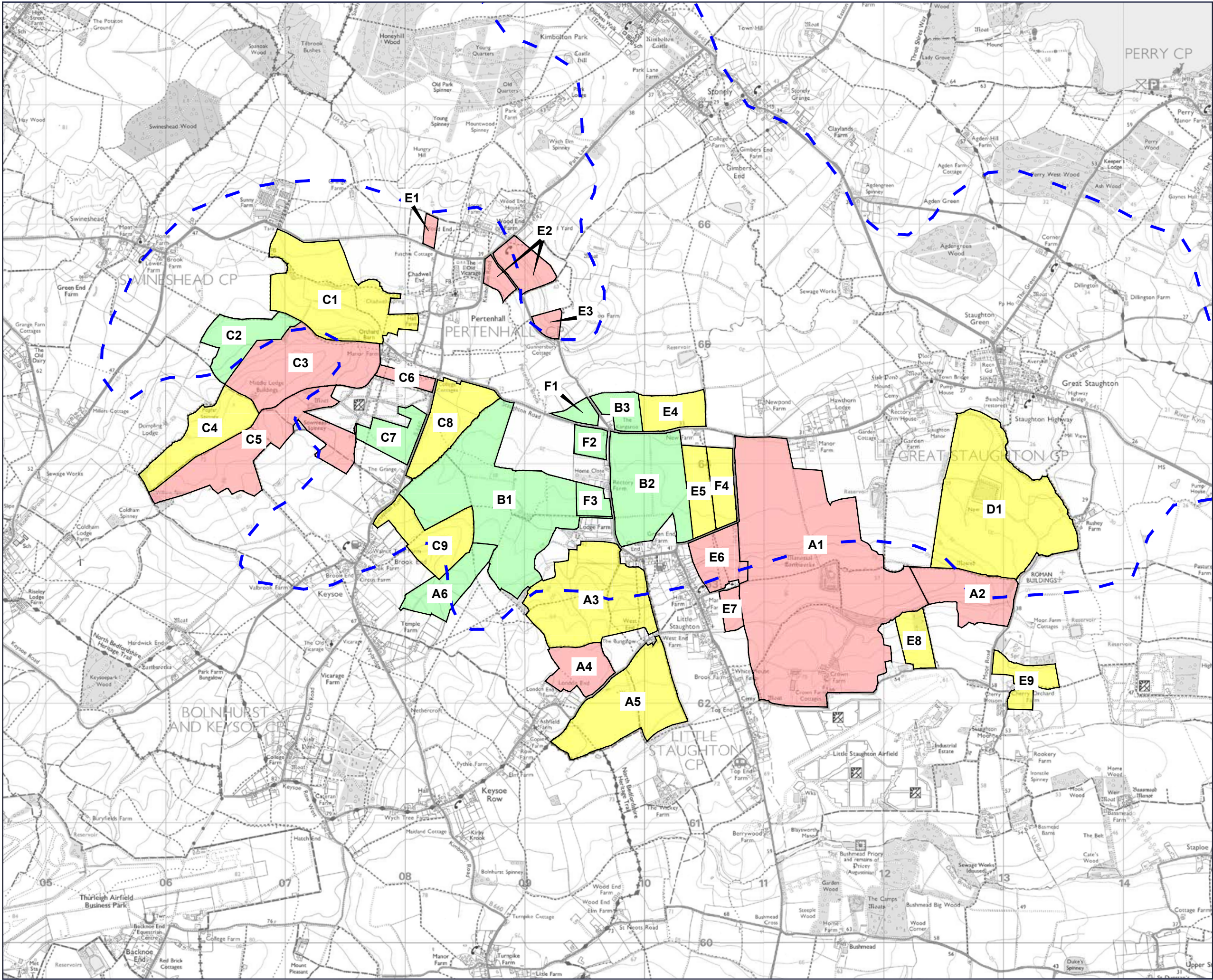
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Date

June 2022





- Search Zone
- Land considered suitable to be taken forward
- Land considered possibly suitable to be taken forward, subject to additional mitigation or further review
- Land considered not suitable to be taken forward

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Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 5

Figure Title

Status of Opportunity Land Parcels

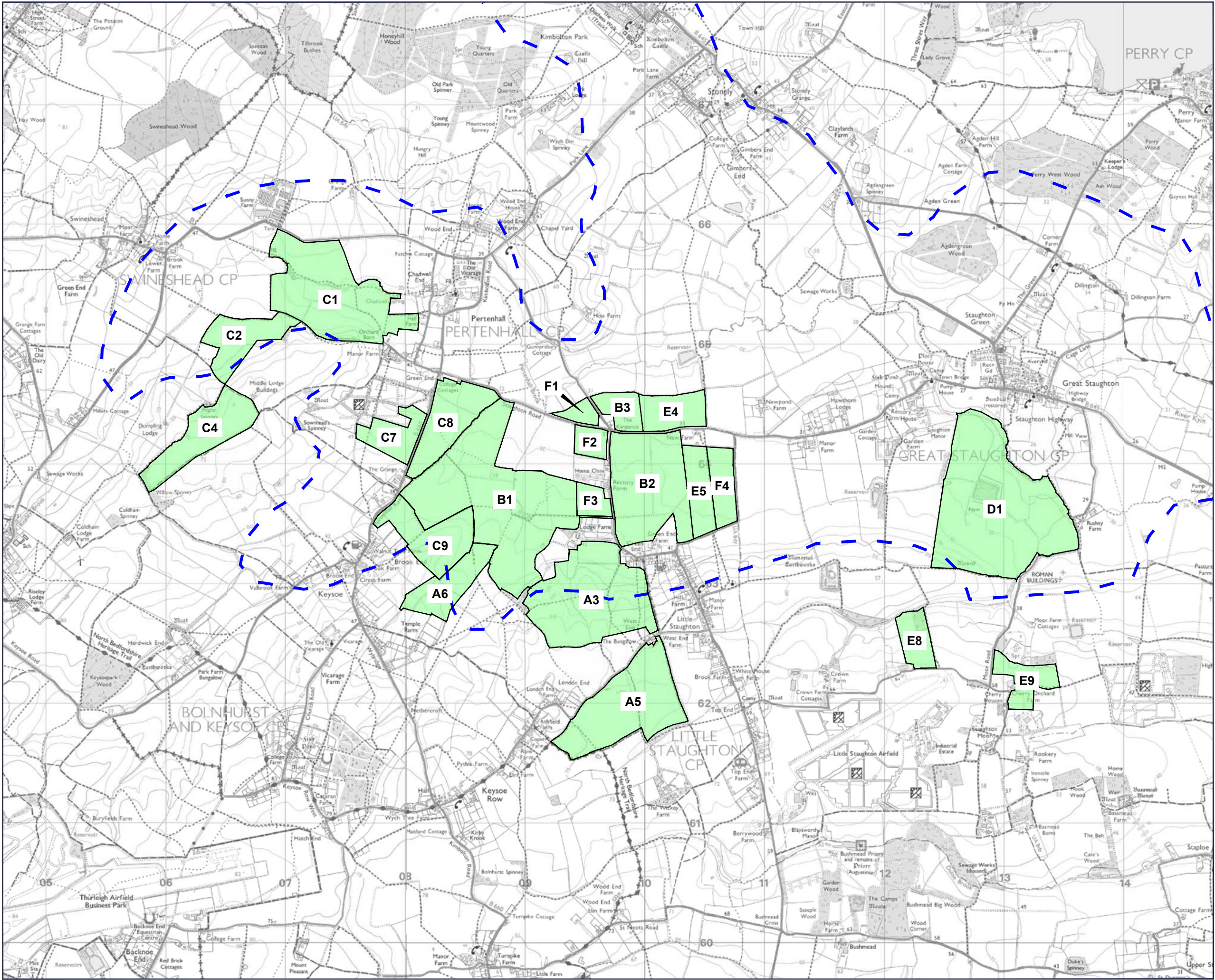
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Date

June 2022





Search Zone

Possible Site Area (Opportunity Land Parcels)

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Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 6

Figure Title

Possible Site Area

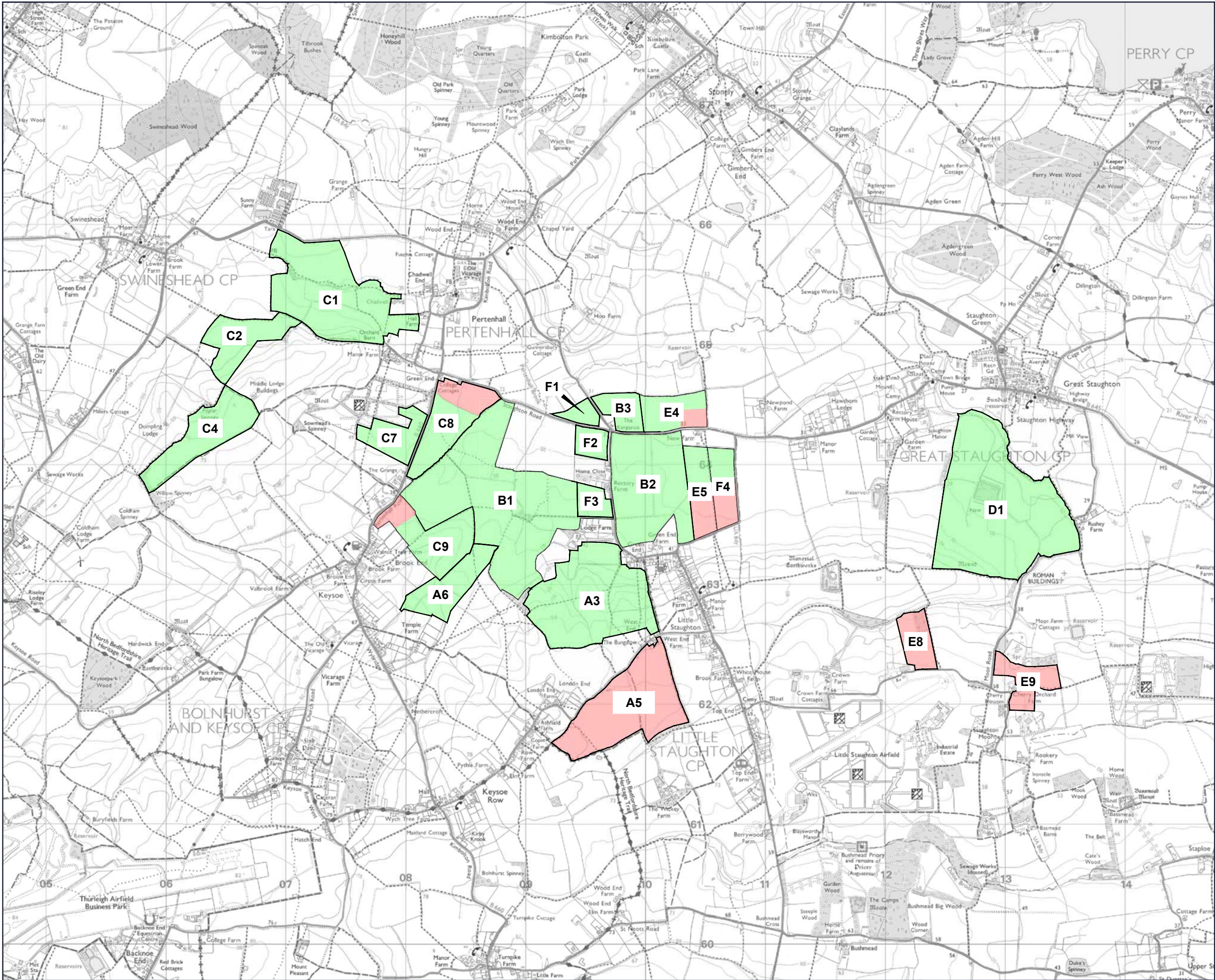
Scale

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Date

June 2022





Land considered suitable to be taken forward

Land considered not suitable to be taken forward

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Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 7

Figure Title

Changes to Possible Site Area

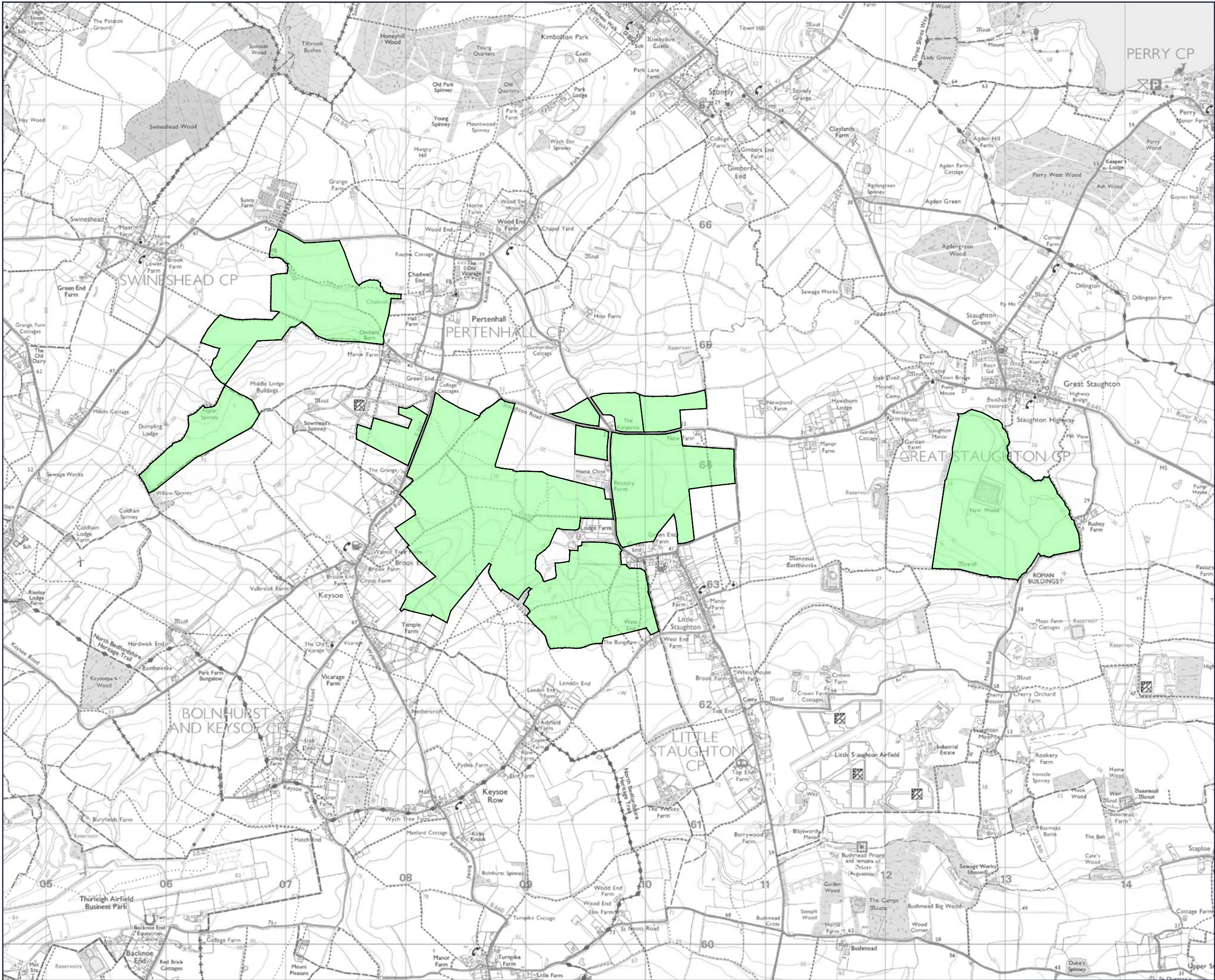
Scale

1:30,000 @ A3

Date

June 2022





Proposed Site Area

0344 8700 007

axis.co.uk



Project

East Park Energy Land Identification Report

Figure Number

Figure 8

Figure Title

Proposed Site Area

Scale

1:30,000 @ A3

Date

June 2022

