

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA03

Historic environment

MA03: Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

Historic landscape character areas

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA03

Historic environment

MA03: Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

Historic landscape character areas



Department for Transport

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited has been tasked by the Department for Transport (DfT) with managing the delivery of a new national high speed rail network. It is a non-departmental public body wholly owned by the DfT.

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited
Two Snowhill
Snow Hill Queensway
Birmingham B4 6GA

Telephone: 08081 434 434

General email enquiries: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

Website: www.hs2.org.uk

A report prepared for High Speed Two (HS2) Limited:

ARUP+ ERM | FOSTER + PARTNERS | JACOBS
RAMBOLL | TYPISA | COSTAIN

MWJV

Mott MacDonald | WSP

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited has actively considered the needs of blind and partially sighted people in accessing this document. The text will be made available in full on the HS2 website. The text may be freely downloaded and translated by individuals or organisations for conversion into other accessible formats. If you have other needs in this regard please contact High Speed Two (HS2) Limited.

© High Speed Two (HS2) Limited, 2022, except where otherwise stated.

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with High Speed Two (HS2) Limited.

This information is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 **OGL** or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.



Printed in Great Britain on paper containing 100% recycled fibre.

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Methodology	3
2.1	Introduction	3
2.2	Defining historic landscape character areas	3
2.3	Assigning value	4
2.4	Magnitude of impact	5
2.5	Significance of effect	5
3	List of acronyms	6
4	Historic landscape character area sheets	7

Tables

Table 1: List of acronyms	6
---------------------------	---

Figures

Figure 1: Pickmere Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA01: Pickmere)	8
Figure 2: Tabley Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA02: Tabley)	9
Figure 3: Mere Halls Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA03: Mere Halls)	10
Figure 4: Hulsheath Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA04: Hulsheath)	11
Figure 5: High Legh Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA05: High Legh)	12
Figure 6: Agden Historic Landscape Character Area (HLCA) sheet (MA03_HLCA06: Agden)	13

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This report is an appendix to the historic environment assessment. It presents a description of the historic landscape character areas (HLCA) that have been defined in the Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath area (MA03).
- 1.1.2 This appendix should be read in conjunction with:
- Volume 2, Community area reports;
 - Volume 3, Route-wide effects;
 - Volume 4, Off-route effects; and
 - Volume 5, Appendix (Summary gazetteer, impact assessment table and archaeological character areas, HE-002-0MA03).
- 1.1.3 Historic environment baseline data are set out in the following Background Information and Data (BID) reports:
- Historic environment baseline report (BID HE-001-0MA03¹), which includes the historic environment detailed gazetteer in Appendix A;
 - Historic environment field survey report (BID HE-004-0MA03²); and
 - Historic environment remote sensing report (BID HE-005-0MA03³).
- 1.1.4 Figures are included in this report that show the locations and extent of the identified HLCA.

¹ High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Background Information and Data, Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath, Historic environment baseline report*, BID HE-001-0MA03. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2b-crewe-manchester-environmental-statement>.

² High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Background Information and Data, Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath, Historic environment field survey report*, BID HE-004-0MA03. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2b-crewe-manchester-environmental-statement>.

³ High Speed Two Ltd (2022), High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester), *Background Information and Data, Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath, Historic environment remote sensing report*, BID HE-005-0MA03. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-phase-2b-crewe-manchester-environmental-statement>.

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The approach used for this assessment was a character-based method. Historic landscape character (HLC) mapping derived from National HLC data (NHLC) was used, in conjunction with data from the local and regional HLC projects, to determine broad HLCA. HLCA are areas of coherent or distinctive historic landscape characteristics.
- 2.1.2 HLCA are described below, in terms of their attributed value and assessment of impact, to determine the significance of effect of the Proposed Scheme on the HLCA in accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Scope and Methodology Report (SMR), see Volume 5 Appendix CT-001-00001.

2.2 Defining historic landscape character areas

- 2.2.1 HLCA were defined where the historic landscape displays demonstrable patterns of homogeneity and/or distinctiveness. There may be some areas defined as HLCA that, owing to the nature of recent land use, have limited or no heritage value.
- 2.2.2 Within the 2km study area, the boundaries of HLCA were determined by considering the nature and patterning of HLC types (e.g. extensive areas of parliamentary enclosure) and by information from other sources (see below). In some cases, a HLCA may extend beyond a community area boundary due to continuity of historic landscape character. Where this is the case, they will be described in the Historic landscape character area report for the community area in which the majority of the HLCA lies.
- 2.2.3 Some HLCA were influenced by factors such as topography and geology as these physical factors influence agriculture, industry and settlement. In these instances, a HLCA may align closely with the Landscape Character Areas (LCA) prepared by the landscape and visual assessment team.
- 2.2.4 HLCA can contribute to the historical dimension of corresponding LCA. There has been collaboration with the landscape and visual assessment team to ensure a common understanding of how historic processes have shaped the landscape and are expressed within it.

Defining historic landscape character areas

- 2.2.5 Defining the HLCA described below was primarily based on:
- HLC and NHLC mapping;
 - historic mapping, including tithe maps, estate maps and first edition Ordnance Survey;
 - Historic Environment Record (HER) data;

Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA03

Historic environment

MA03: Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

Historic landscape character areas

- aerial photography;
- project specific data drawn from historic air photographs, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data and site visits; and
- a review of existing LCA boundaries/typologies.

2.2.6 From the sources above, the boundaries and characteristics of the HLCA were determined and are described below, based on an analysis of overall historic development trends and the following factors:

- patterning (homogeneity or variance) of HLC types in terms of type, relationships⁴ and date;
- variation in apparent survival level⁵ of historic landscape features; and
- professional judgement.

2.3 Assigning value

2.3.1 The value of HLCA is described in line with the SMR. Key attributes that contribute to heritage value are defined as follows:

- historic interest – illustrative value (illustrating past events, places or people), communal value (commemorative or symbolic), and associative value (association with a notable person, event or movement);
- archaeological interest – evidential or research value;
- architectural and artistic interest – contemporary appreciation of the asset’s aesthetics;
- historical and cultural associations (links to historic interest) - relates to the value of a place’s association with important historical events and themes, eras, patterns of use and development or individual people. It incorporates the history of aesthetics, artistic and literary, architecture, archaeology, science and society, so it overlaps (or underlies) the other categories of heritage value; and
- research potential (links to archaeological interest) – value relates to the technical achievements associated with a place, or to its educational potential. It also encompasses places important to furthering the understanding of the natural and altered environment, and the embodiment of heritage research.

2.3.2 Each of the attributes contributed to defining the overall value of a HLCA.

⁴ That is the presence of types that are inherently related to on another such as assart fields and ancient woodland.

⁵ This is an aspect which can be initially evaluated from comparing recorded HLC type with aerial photography. Examples can include whether vegetation, particularly hedges, look to be denuded (survive poorly) or relatively intact (survive well), or ridge and furrow is extant and visible as earthworks (survive well) or are ploughed out (survive poorly).

Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA03

Historic environment

MA03: Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

Historic landscape character areas

2.4 Magnitude of impact

- 2.4.1 The magnitude of impact includes consideration of the elements of the Proposed Scheme that extend into a HLCA, and how these physically alter identified key elements of the HLCA which make a positive contribution to its heritage value. A judgement of the capacity of the HLCA to accommodate change as a result of the Proposed Scheme has also been considered. For example, a HLCA characterised by linear industrial features, such as major roads and canals, is likely to have a greater capacity to absorb additional linear development without experiencing a significant change to its heritage value. The assessment also considered the duration and reversibility of the impact; for example, where a temporary effect would occur during the construction phase, but land would be reinstated afterwards such as in the case of temporary construction compounds.

2.5 Significance of effect

- 2.5.1 The assessment of the significance of effect was undertaken using the method set out in the SMR.

3 List of acronyms

3.1.1 The following acronyms have been used in this report:

Table 1: List of acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BID	Background Information and Data
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
HLCA	Historic Landscape Character Area
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging Data
NHLC	National Historic Landscape Character
SMR	Scope and Methodology Report

Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA03

Historic environment

MA03: Pickmere to Agden and Hulseheath

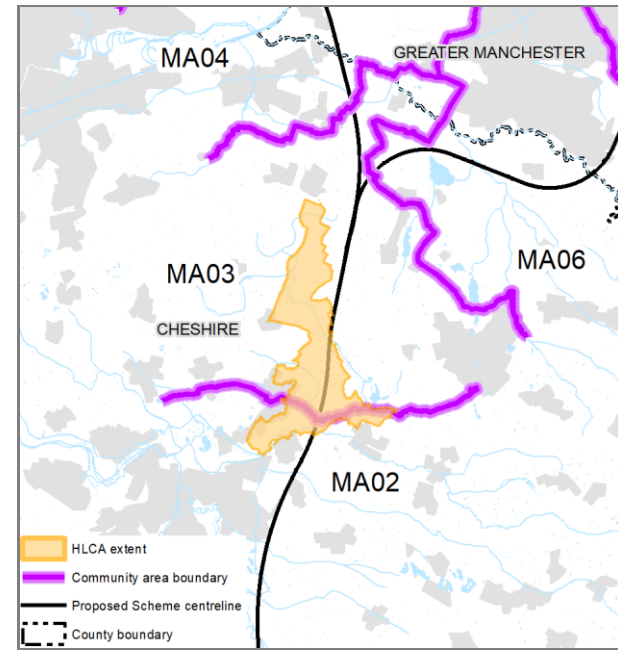
Historic landscape character areas

4 Historic landscape character area sheets

MA03_HLCA01: Pickmere

Key Characteristics

- Broadly rectangular fields of post-medieval enclosure with areas of larger fields with straight boundaries dating to late post-medieval and 20th century improvement.
- Mixture of hedged and wooded field boundaries.
- Marl pits evidence of agricultural improvement.
- Sinuous wooded features along watercourses including Wincham Brook, Smoker Brook, Arley Brook.
- Isolated brick built farmsteads.



HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

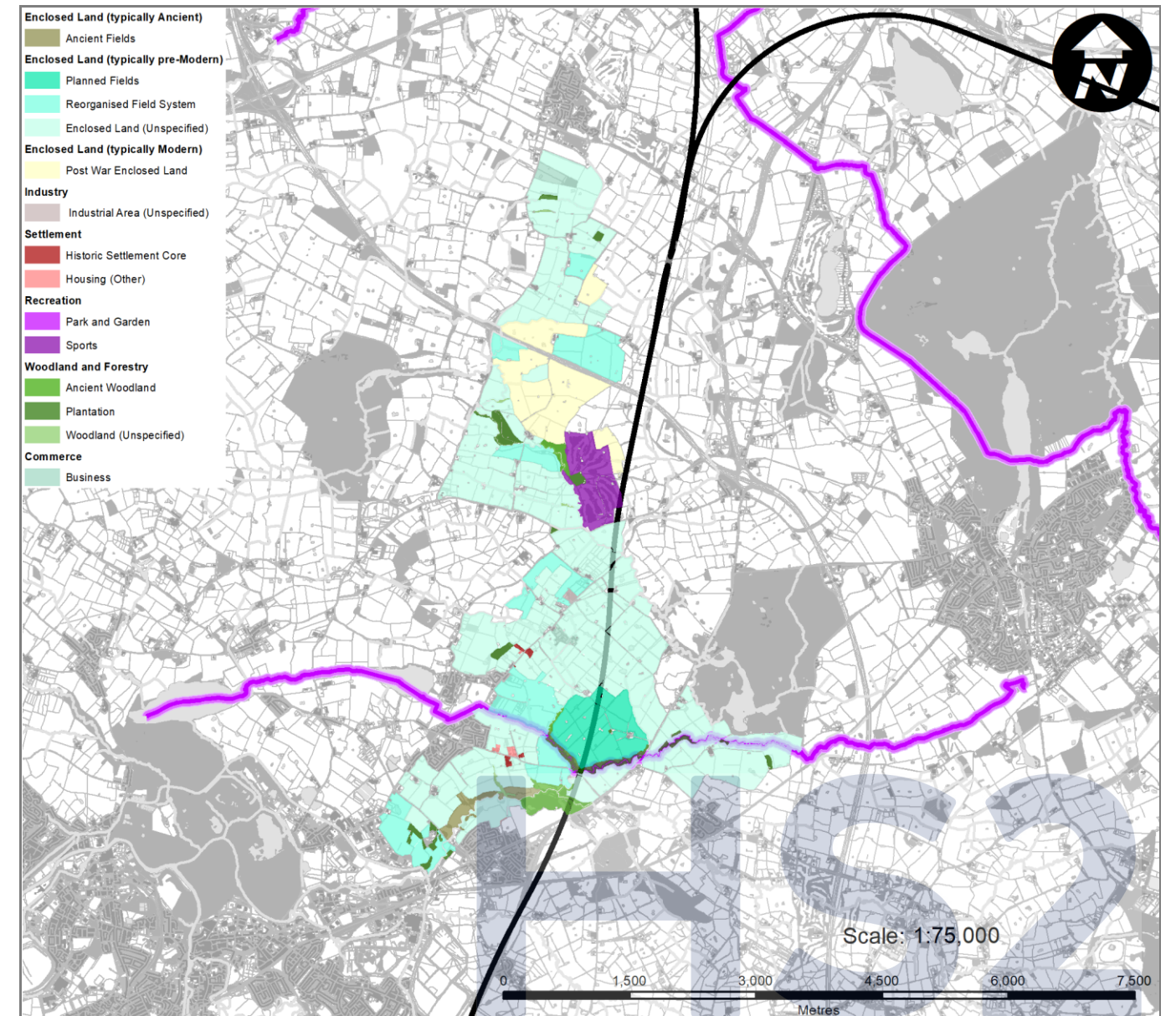
The HLCA consists of agricultural land with isolated farmhouses and dwellings with no villages. Major infrastructure is limited to the M6.

The majority of the fields within the HLCA are broadly rectangular in shape with mostly straight boundaries although some field boundaries are more sinuous. These fields appear to date to enclosure carried out in the late post-medieval period. There are also smaller areas of more regularly shaped fields which are larger in size and are the result of planned enclosure and 20th century rationalisation of field patterns. Boundaries between fields are formed by hedgerows, many of which include isolated mature trees. Trackways between the fields may be medieval in origin and link farms and settlements to the fields. There is some evidence of surviving ridge and furrow in the HLCA focused to the south of Providence Farm, North of Smoker Brook and north of Smoker Hill Farm. Marl pits are a common feature in the landscape, often bounded by trees. The marling of pasture and arable has been a significant method of improving soil fertility in Cheshire since at least the 16th century. Marl was a local resource, generally being dug from the field itself, creating small pits and ponds. They were left open to allow dairy cattle to drink from them.

Watercourses within the HLCA are bounded by areas of Ancient Woodland including Smoker Wood and Leonard's Wood and post-medieval plantation. These watercourses include Wincham Brook, Smoker Brook and Arley Brook. These sinuous lengths of woodland are a key characteristic of the area and grew up along watercourses where land was less suitable for cultivation.

There are no villages within the HLCA; farms and residential properties are scattered throughout the landscape. A number of brick-built post-medieval farmsteads are spread out across the HLCA, these include the Grade II listed Feldy Green and Gore Farmhouse. The highest concentration of properties is in the area of Pickmere Lane, Hall Lane and School Lane where there are a number of farmsteads and the occasional modern residential property.

Heyrose Golf Course is located towards the centre of the HLCA it was created out of agricultural land in the late 20th century. The M6 crosses the HLCA on an east-west alignment, the motorway was constructed in the 1960s and is a key transport corridor.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Low adverse
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Minor/Negligible adverse
Operation	Neutral

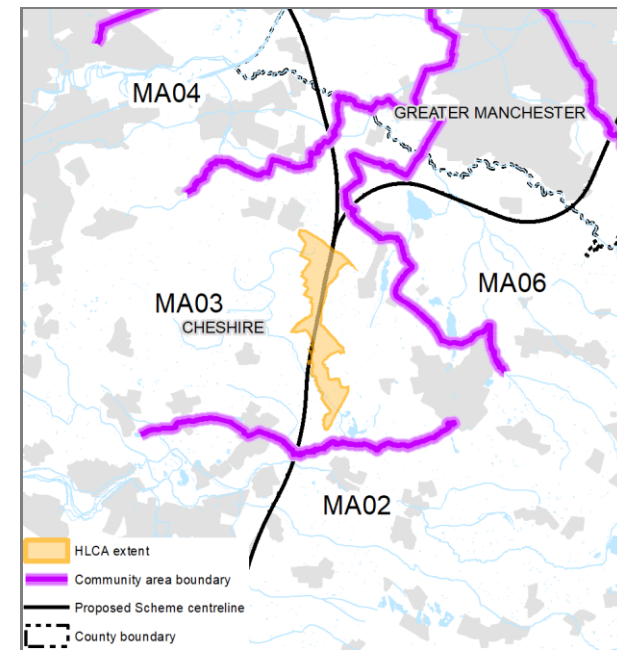
Commentary

The HLCA is of limited interest arising from its capacity to illustrate the development of patterns of local agriculture from the late post-medieval period onwards. Sections of ancient woodland will be removed as a result of the construction of the Proposed Scheme. However, the overall form of the woodland will remain legible within the landscape. The alignment of field boundaries within the footprint of the Proposed Scheme will be lost, impacting on the legibility of former field patterns. However, the majority of the HLCA will not be impacted and the overall capacity of the landscape to illustrate patterns of local agricultural development will remain largely unchanged.

MA03_HLCA02: Tabley

Key Characteristics

- Broadly rectilinear fields with irregular boundaries dating to medieval enclosure.
- Pockets of more regular fields with straight boundaries dating to late post-medieval enclosure and 20th century rationalisation.
- Field boundaries of mature hedgerows with trees.
- Marl pits, evidence of agricultural improvement.
- Isolated brick built farmsteads.
- Major roads include the M6 and the A50 Warrington Road/Knutsford Road and A556 Chester Road junction.



HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

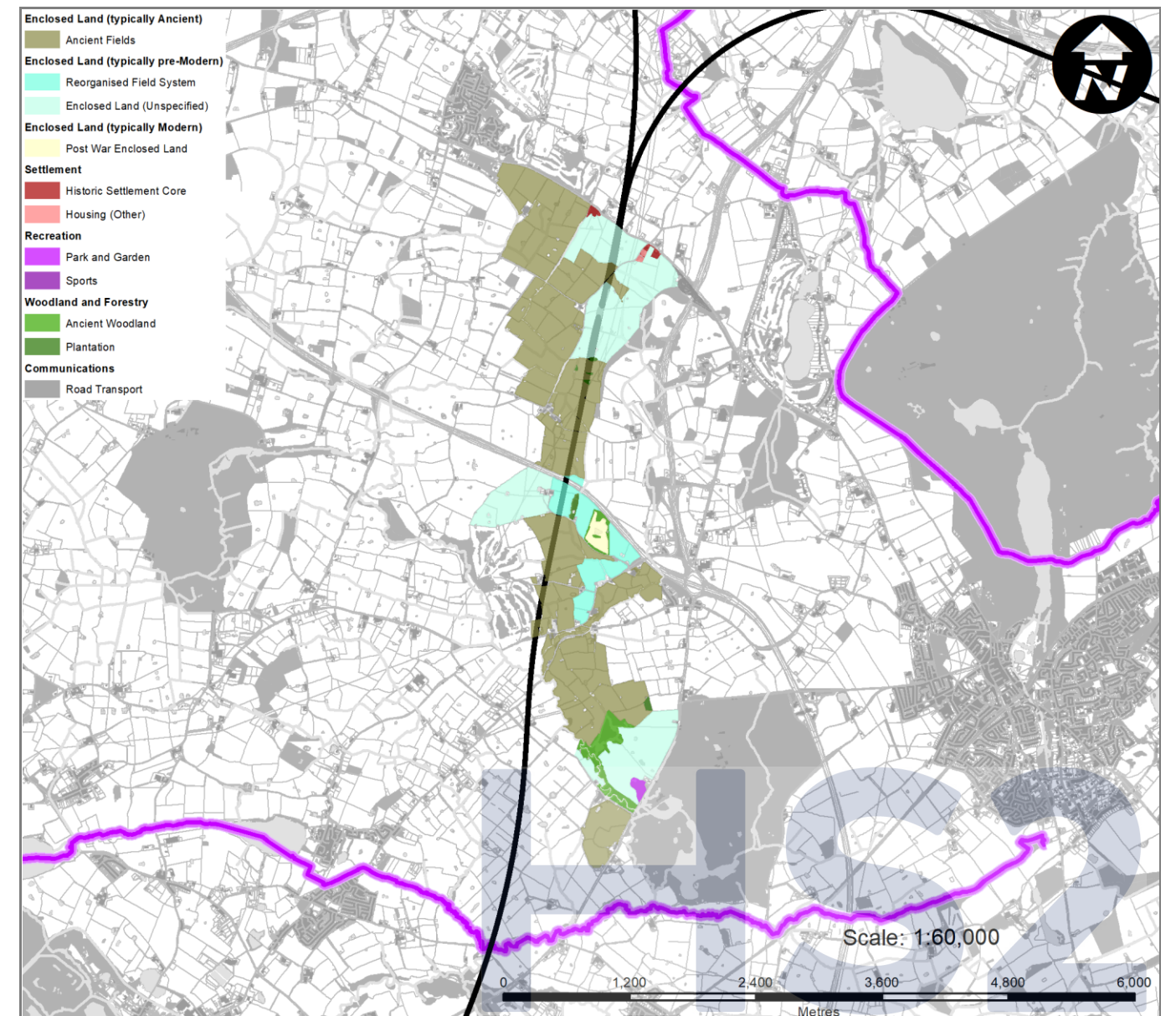
The HLCA comprises an area of agricultural land which displays a notably different field pattern from the surrounding landscape. Settlement consists of isolated farmhouses and dwellings with no villages. Major infrastructure includes the M6 and the A50 Warrington Road/Knutsford Road and A556 Chester Road junction.

The agricultural landscape is characterised by irregular rectilinear fields with sinuous boundaries dating to medieval enclosure. There are also some small pockets of larger regularly shaped fields with straight boundaries which are the result of 19th century enclosure and 20th century rationalisation of field patterns. Boundaries between fields are formed by hedgerows, many of which include isolated mature trees. Trackways between the fields may be medieval in origin and link farms and settlements to the fields. There is some evidence of surviving ridge and furrow within the HLCA focused to the north and south-east of the Winterbottom Farm. Marl pits are a common feature in the landscape, often bounded by trees. The marling of pasture and arable has been a significant method of improving soil fertility in Cheshire since at least the 16th century. Marl was a local resource, generally being dug from the field itself, creating small pits and ponds. They were left open to allow dairy cattle to water drink from them.

Within the southern tip of the HLCA there is an area of plantation clustered around Waterless Brook. This plantation and an area of agricultural land created in the 20th century were formerly part of the parkland of Tabley House. These areas of plantation are likely related to an increase in planting of woodland in Cheshire from the 18th century onwards. Immediately south of the M6 is an area of post-medieval plantation known as Neild's Rough and Tabley Wood an area of ancient woodland the centre of which was cleared during the 20th century to provide agricultural land.

There are no villages within the HLCA; farms and residential properties are scattered throughout the landscape. A number of isolated brick-built post-medieval farmsteads are spread throughout the HLCA, significant among these are the Grade II listed Hollow Wood Farm and Winterbottom Farmhouse. This pattern of isolated farmsteads is characteristic of the increase in dairy farming which occurred in Cheshire in the 17th century. The highest settlement concentration is in the area of Pickmere Lane, Budworth Road and Old Hall Lane where there are three farmsteads, cottages, modern residential properties and a nursery and kennel business.

The M6 crosses the HLCA on an east-west alignment, the motorway was constructed in the 1960s and is a key transport corridor. Its construction has resulted in the severing of field boundaries and the historic trackway between Hollow Wood Farm and Winterbottom Farm. The majority of the historic field pattern does, however, remain legible.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Moderate

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Medium adverse
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Moderate adverse
Operation	Neutral

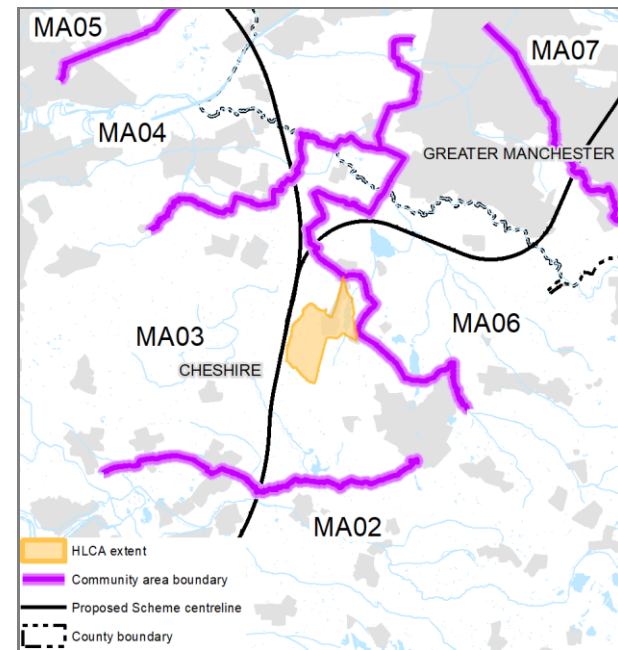
Commentary

The HLCA has interest due to its capacity to illustrate, and provide evidence for, historic agricultural practices and settlement patterns from the medieval period onwards. In comparison to the M6, which crosses the HLCA on an east-west alignment, the Proposed Scheme will impact on a broad swathe of the HLCA. Historic field boundaries, ridge and furrow and marl pits located within the footprint of the Proposed Scheme will be removed. Utility diversion will remove additional field boundaries. However, these will be reinstated. This represents a significant proportion of the surviving medieval field systems within the study area and will adversely impact on the legibility of the historic landscape.

MA03_HLCA03: Mere Halls

Key Characteristics

- Former area of parkland converted to agriculture and recreation in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Marl pits, evidence of agricultural improvement.
- Belts of woodland associated with former parkland.
- The Mere, an open body of water.
- Halls and associated buildings including Mere Old Hall, Mere New Hall and Old Tabley Hall.
- Large modern residential properties surrounding the Mere along Chester Road, Mereside Road and the A50.
- Major roads including the A556 Chester Road and M6 and the A50 Warrington Road/Knutsford Road junction.



HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

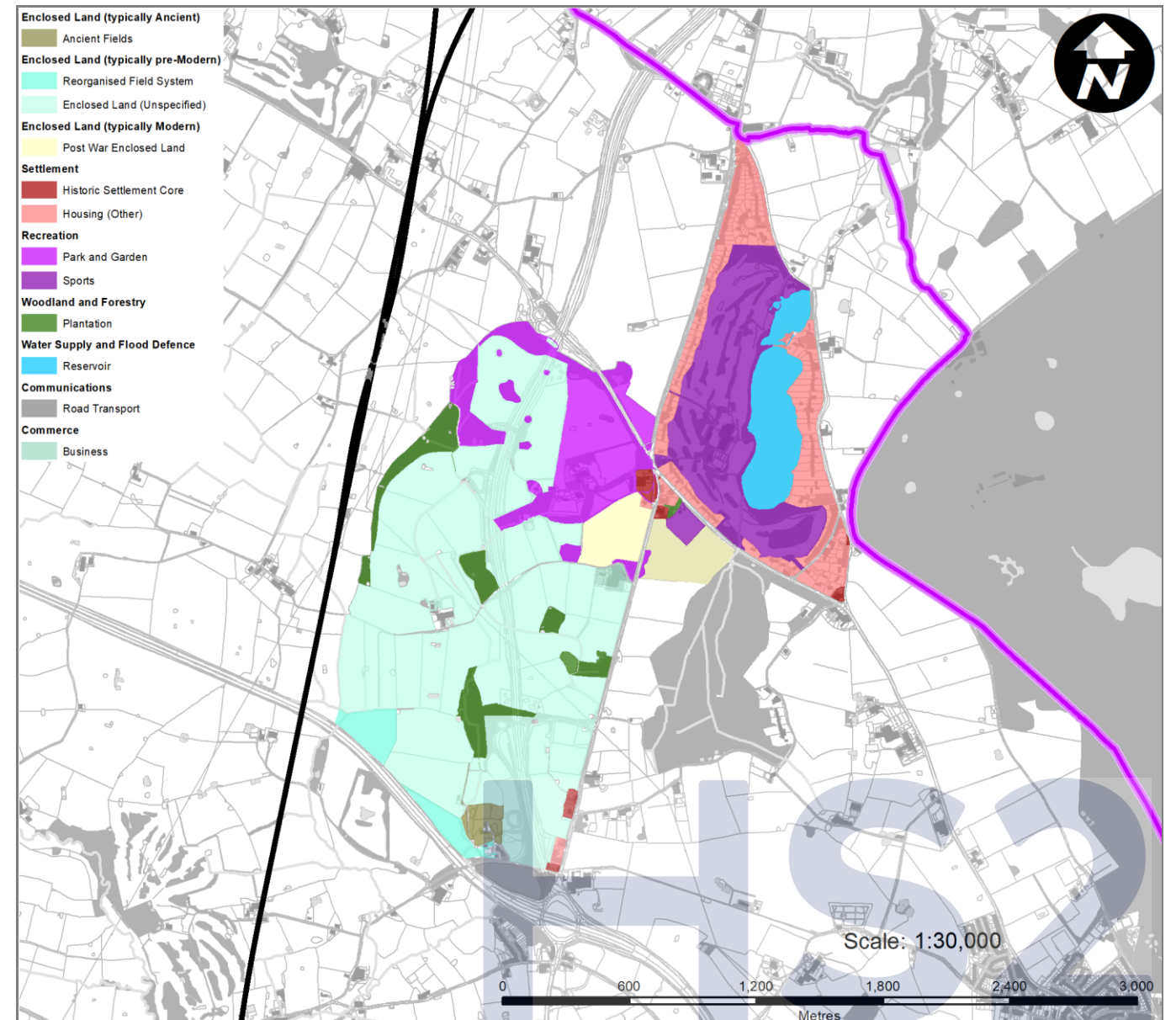
Description

The HLCA encompasses three historic halls and remnants of their associated parkland. These have been subject to significant alteration since the early 20th century and modern residential properties, leisure facilities and agricultural fields now dominate the HLCA.

Over Tabley Hall is located within the southern section of the HLCA. The legibility of the historic parkland of the hall has been adversely affected by the conversion of the parkland to agricultural land. This conversion has involved the introduction of field boundaries and the loss of the ornamental lakes which were located to the north and east of the hall. In addition to this, subsequent large scale highway construction has rearranged the landscape and severed field boundaries. This includes the construction of the M6 in the 1960s which created a visual and physical barrier between the hall and Tabley Wood. The construction of the A556 and realignment of Old Hall Lane in 2017 has caused further fragmentation of the former parkland landscape.

Mere Old Hall is located within the north-western section of the HLCA. Elements of the historic parkland survive in the curving belt of woodland which formed the north-western extent of the park. This woodland is known as Belt Wood, the northern section has been identified as an area of Ancient Woodland. However, sections of the southern portion of the belt reveal evidence of former ridge and furrow beneath the trees, suggesting these portions are later plantation over arable land. There are also further clumps of plantation dotted through the former parkland. These are evidence for an increase in plantation in Cheshire from the 18th century onwards. They were likely planted to provide a picturesque parkland and cover for field sports. A single area of surviving parkland survives in the north-eastern corner, bounding the A50 Warrington Road. The remainder of the parkland was converted to agricultural use by the clearing of trees and introduction of field boundaries during the 19th and 20th century. Work on the dual carriageway of the A556 was completed in 2017. This road has obstructed the visual and physical connection between Mere Old Hall and much of its former park, adversely impacting on the legibility of the parkland landscape.

The remains of Mere New Hall are located within the north-eastern section of the HLCA, the only substantial buildings which survive are the Stable and Entrance Gate. In addition, most of the historic landscape character of the former parkland has also been lost. The central area has now been converted to use as a golf course creating linear strips of woodland which define the fairways and greens of each hole. This creates a markedly different landscape to the formerly open parkland. The perimeter of the former park along the B5569 Chester Road, Mereside Road and A50 Warrington Road, which was previously lined with woodland is now given over to large modern residential properties. Clamhunger Wood in the south and the Mere itself are the only substantial remains of the former landscape.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Medium adverse
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Minor adverse
Operation	Neutral

Commentary

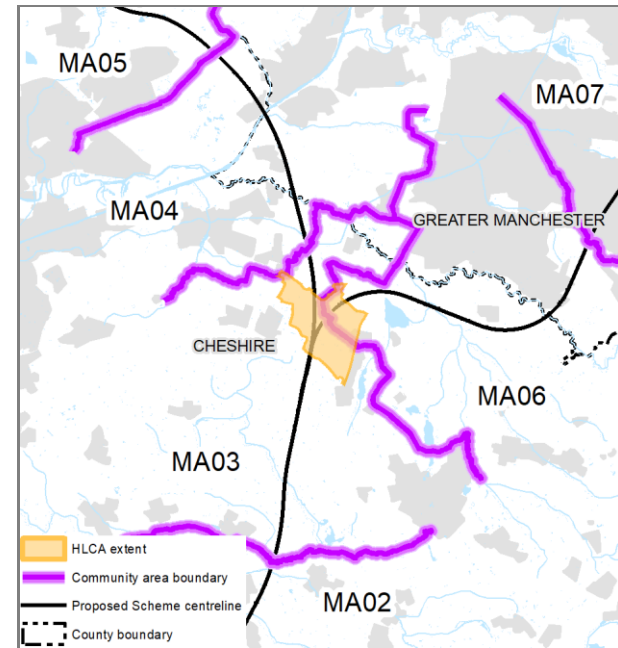
The interest of the HLCA arises from its capacity to illustrate development of Mere Old Hall, Mere New Hall and Old Tabley Hall. Evidence of former parks is preserved in woodland forms and road patterns. The value of the landscape is limited by poor preservation. Much of the former parkland character has been lost through 19th and 20th century developments.

The value of the HLCA will be adversely impacted by the construction of utility diversions for the Proposed Scheme through the former parkland which would alter surviving woodland forms and impact on the legibility of the landscape.

MA03_HLCA04: Hulseheath

Key Characteristics

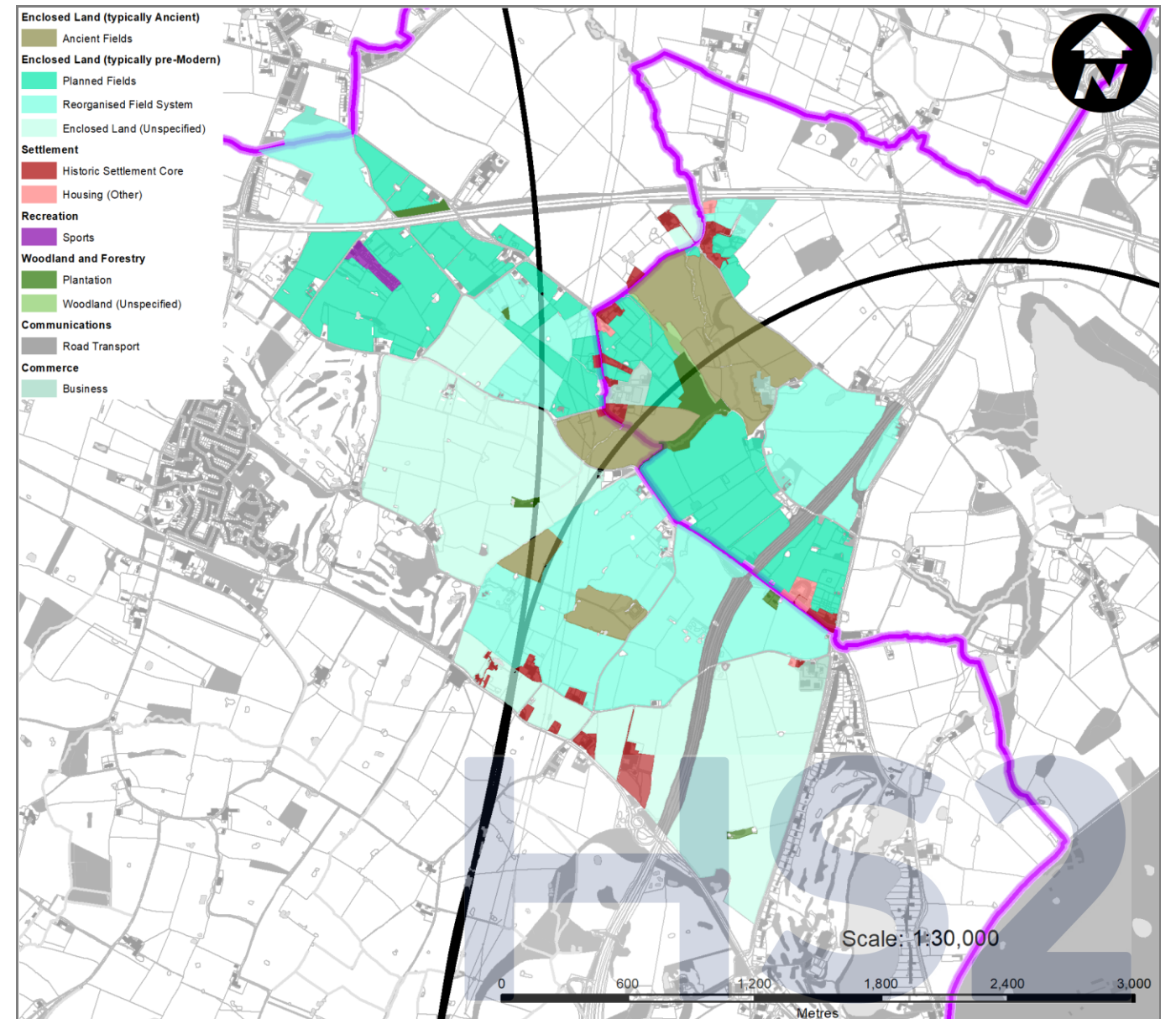
- Broadly rectangular fields of planned post-medieval enclosure with areas of larger fields with straight boundaries dating to the rationalisation of field boundaries in the 19th and 20th century.
- Pockets of irregularly shaped medieval field systems.
- Field boundaries of mature hedgerows with some trees.
- Marl pits, evidence of agricultural improvement.
- Moated sites.
- Isolated brick built farmsteads
- Settlement clusters of Hoo Green, Booth Bank and Hulseheath.
- Major roads including the A556 and M56.



HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

The HLCA consists of a largely agricultural landscape with scattered farmhouses and some small settlement clusters but no villages. Major infrastructure consists of the M56 and the A556. Fields within the HLCA are a mixture of fields patterns. Some are larger with straight regular boundaries. These date to post-medieval planned enclosure and late 19th and 20th century rationalisation of field boundaries. Others are smaller in size and have more irregular shapes with boundaries which often conform closely to topographical features. These fields date to the medieval period. They are clustered around Moss House Farm, Millington Hall and Booth Bank. Land parcels within the HLCA are commonly bounded by hedgerows. A minority of these hedgerows feature isolated trees. There is little surviving woodland, the exception is the Ancient Woodland at Millington Clough and adjacent plantations. Trackways between the fields may be medieval in origin and link farms and settlements to the fields. Marl pits are a common feature in the landscape, often bounded by trees. The marling of pasture and arable has been a significant method of improving soil fertility in Cheshire since at least the 16th century. Marl was a local resource, generally being dug from the field itself, creating small pits and ponds. They were left open to allow dairy cattle to drink from them. There are no villages within the HLCA. However, there is a moated manor site at Hough Hall Moated Site scheduled monument and a possible moated site at Broad Oak Farm. These sites are significant as a remnant of medieval settlement patterns. A number of isolated brick-built post-medieval farmsteads are spread throughout the HLCA, significant among these are the Grade II listed Lime Tree Farmhouse and Millington Hall. The pattern of farmsteads is characteristic of the increase in dairy farming which occurred in Cheshire in the 17th century. There is also a notable concentration of 17th century timber-framed cottages across the HLCA including the Grade II listed Ovenback Cottage and Denfield Cottage. The highest settlement concentration is in the area of Hulseheath, Thowler Lane and Booth Bank. The A50 Warrington Road forms the southern boundary of the HLCA. A number of residential and commercial properties are arranged along it, including the Grade II listed Mere Court Hotel which is complemented by formal garden located on former agricultural land. The M56 crosses the HLCA on an east-west alignment at the north-western tip of the HLCA. The motorway was constructed in the 1970s and is a key transport corridor. The A556 was completed in 2017, it crosses the HLCA on a north-south alignment in the eastern section of the HLCA. Both of these roads are substantial landscape features and have severed field boundaries, impacting on the legibility of historic field patterns.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Medium adverse
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Minor adverse
Operation	Neutral

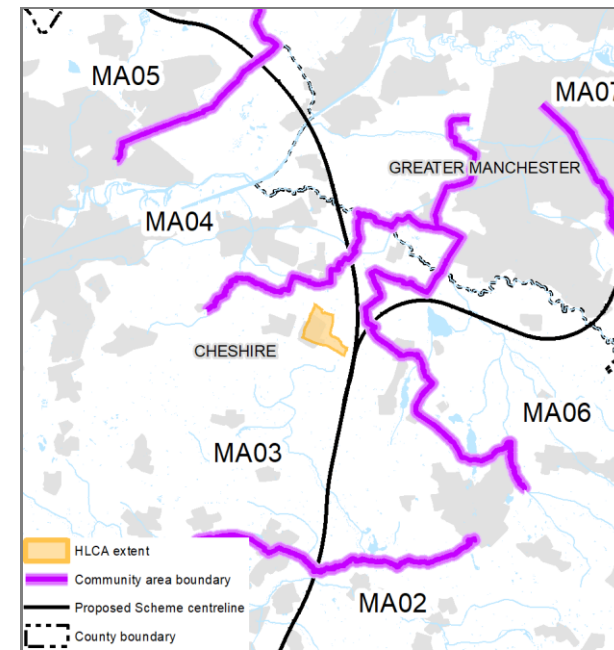
Commentary

The HLCA is of limited interest arising from the landscapes capacity to illustrate the development of local agricultural patterns. The value of the historic landscape is limited by the scale of late 19th and 20th century alterations to its field systems and the introduction of major transport infrastructure which reduces the coherency of the landscape. Historic field boundaries, woodland and marl pits located within the Proposed Scheme's footprint will be removed. This includes many of the surviving medieval fields within the HLCA. Utility diversions will also remove field boundaries. However, these will be reinstated. This will adversely impact on the legibility of the agricultural landscape within the HLCA.

MA03_HLCA05: High Legh

Key Characteristics

- Former late 18th century parkland and medieval deer park.
- Clumps of ancient woodland and post-medieval plantation including Park Belt, Park Covert and Peter's Covert.
- 20th century residential development.
- Late 20th century golf course.



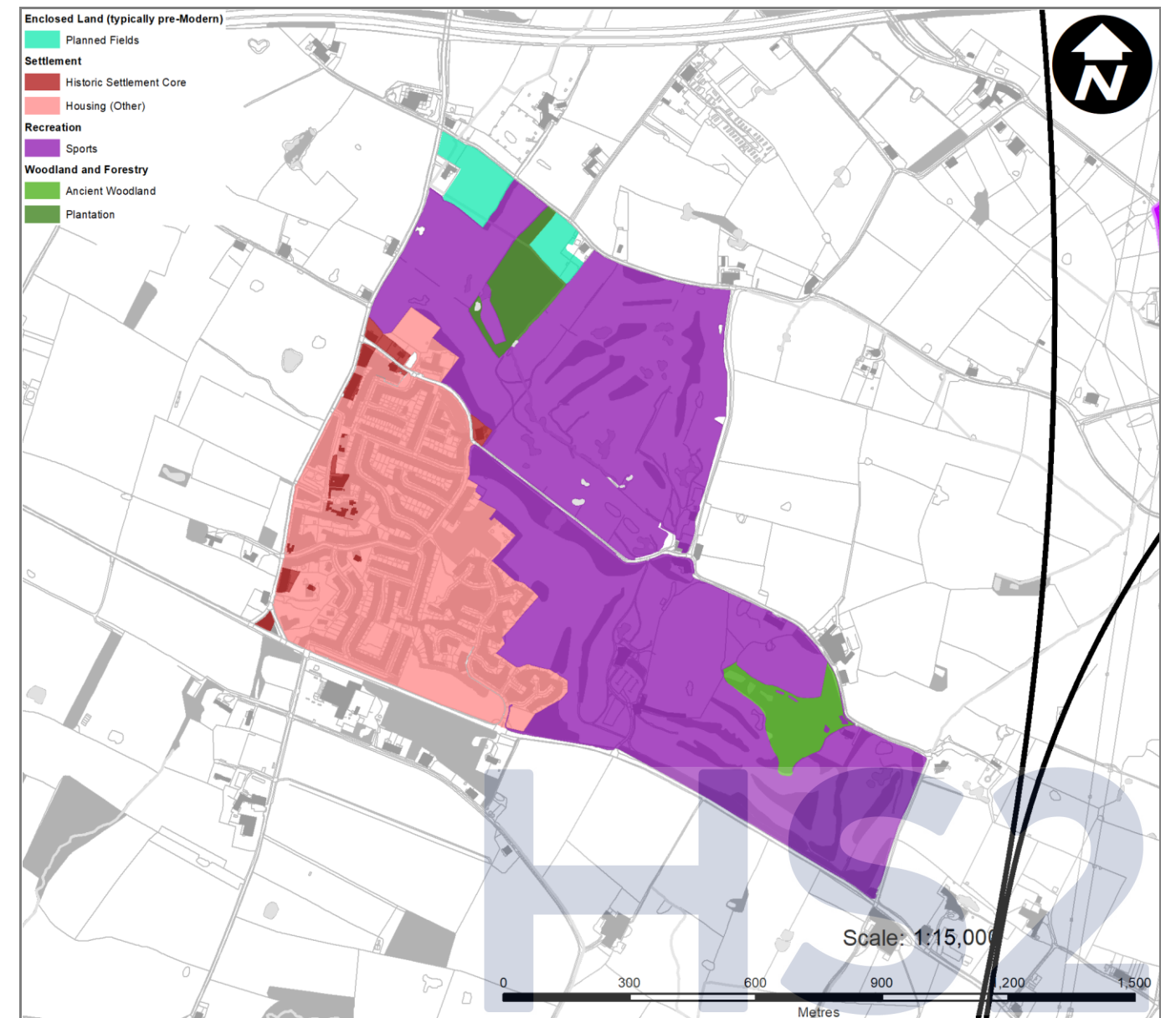
HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

The HLCA comprises the former parkland of High Legh Hall (east and west). The park was formerly a medieval deer park before being substantially redeveloped into a parkland landscape in 1791 by Humphry Repton. In the late 20th century the park was developed into residential housing and a golf course.

Remnants of the former parkland include areas of ancient woodland, Park Covert and post-medieval plantation which survive as features within the modern golf course. Sections of post-medieval plantation were likely planted as part of a wider trend of increasing woodland plantation in Cheshire from the 18th century onwards. This was linked to the increasing popularity of field sports during this period. Plantations also played an important role in the landscape design of the late 18th century and some of the surviving woodland is likely the result of the redesign by Repton.

A number of buildings associated with the former park also survive, including Front Lodge, the Chapel of St Mary, West Hall Farmhouse and the Church of St John. The former boundary of the park is legible in the alignment of surrounding roads including the A50 Warrington Road and West Lane. These were realigned as a result of the Repton landscaping project. The eastern section of the parkland was sold to housing developers in phases throughout the second half of the 20th century. The western section of the park was developed into a golf course in the late 20th century. The creation of fairways and greens has created divisions with linear emphases within the former parkland, altering the previous open character of the parkland. The area of the HLCA to the north of Wrenshot Lane formerly comprised of rectilinear agricultural fields which were the result of post-medieval planned enclosure. However, the area now forms an extension to High Legh Golf Course. Evidence of former field boundaries and tracks survive within this area in the form of sections of hedgerows and lines of trees.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	No change
Construction permanent	No change
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Neutral
Operation	Neutral

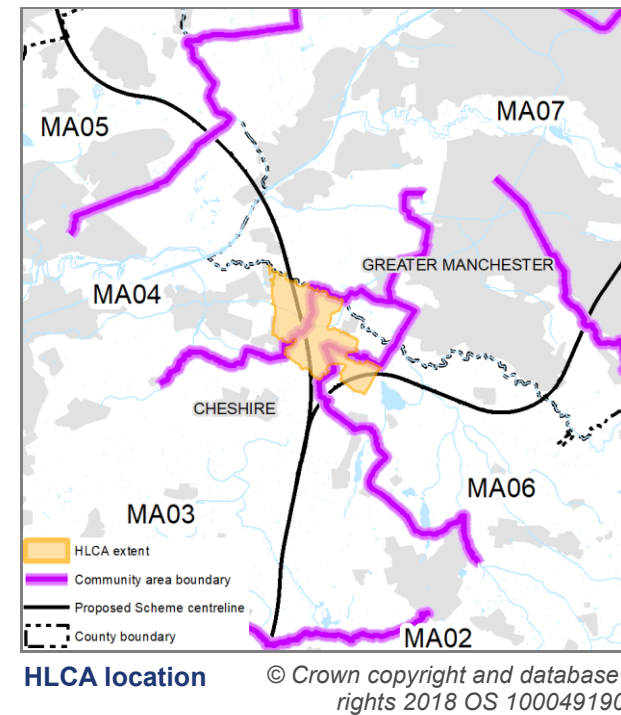
Commentary

The interest of the HLCA arises from its capacity to illustrate the development of High Legh Hall and yield evidence for a medieval deer park. Evidence of the former landscape is preserved in woodland forms, hedges and road patterns. The value of the landscape is limited by poor preservation with much of the former parkland character being lost through residential development and the creation of a golf course and no above ground evidence of the deer park has been identified. The Proposed Scheme is aligned to the east of the HLCA. The presence of the Proposed Scheme will not physically impact on evidence of the medieval deer park or 18th century parkland or affect our ability to perceive these elements.

MA03_HLCA06: Agden

Key Characteristics

- Regularly shaped fields with straight boundaries dating to late post-medieval enclosure and 19th and 20th century rationalisation of field boundaries.
- Hedged field boundaries.
- Wooded areas along Agden Brook.
- Isolated brick-built farmsteads.
- The Bridgewater Canal.
- The M56.



Description

The HLCA comprises an agricultural landscape with scattered farmhouses and some small hamlets but no villages. Major infrastructure is limited to the M56.

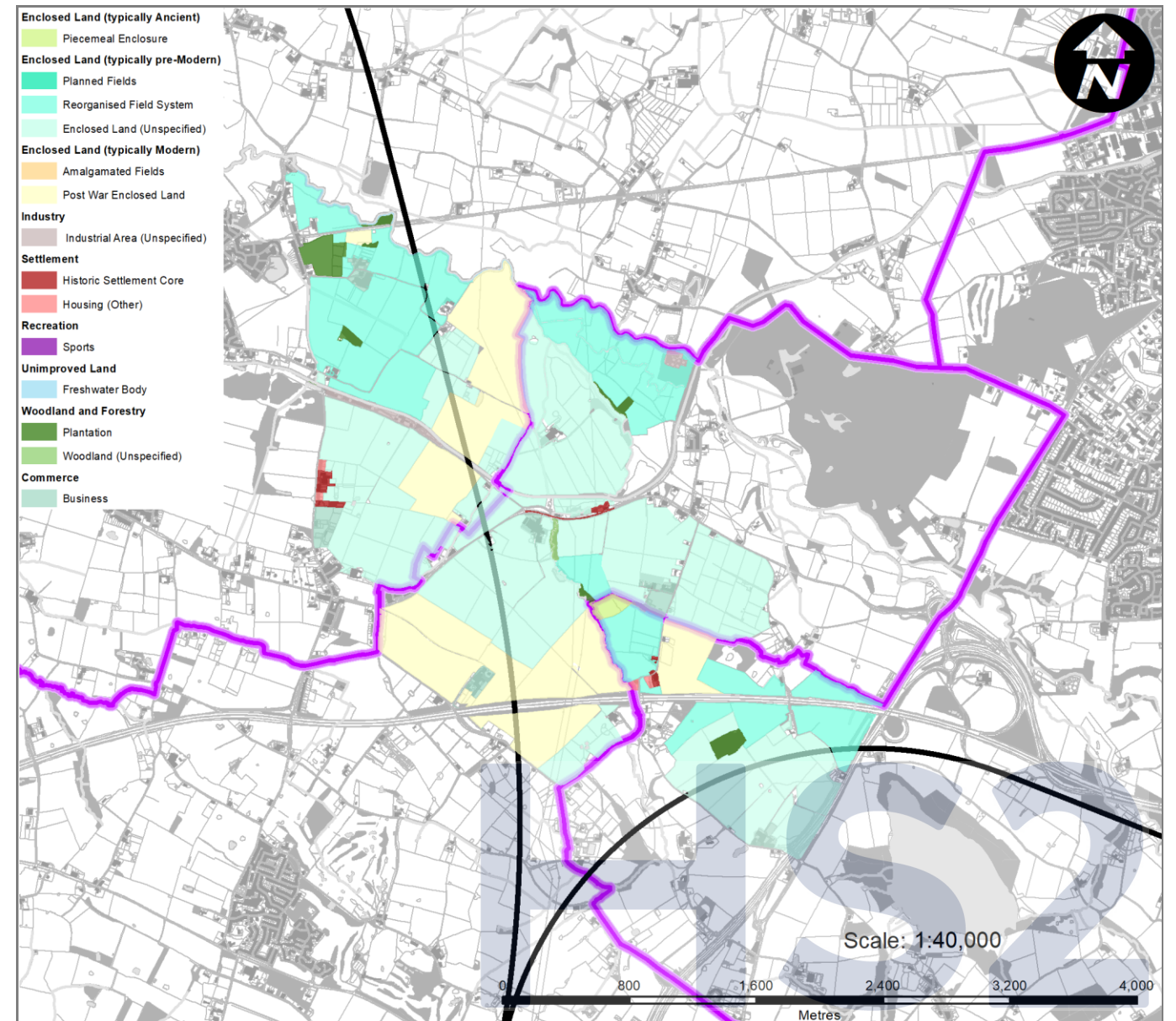
Fields are regular and rectilinear in shape with straight boundaries. The field pattern results from planned enclosure and rationalisation of field boundaries in the late 19th and 20th century. Fields are largely bounded by hedgerows.

Agden Brook is aligned north-south through the HLCA and is bounded by areas of post-medieval plantation. These linear strips were likely planted on marginal land as part of a wider trend of increasing woodland plantation in Cheshire from the 18th century onwards. The alignment of the brook has influenced the layout of surrounding fields.

There are no villages within the HLCA. A number of isolated brick-built post-medieval farmsteads are spread throughout the HLCA. Among these are the Grade II listed Burford Lane Farmhouse, Agden Brook Farm and Wolstencroft Farm. This spread out pattern of farmsteads is characteristic of the increase in dairy farming which occurred in Cheshire in the 17th century. The highest settlement concentration is in the area of Reddy Lane and Burford Lane where there are a number of residential properties.

The Bridgewater Canal is aligned through the northern portion of the HLCA. The canal was opened in the 1770s and remains in use today, mainly by pleasure craft. This stretch of the canal includes several associated features including the Grade II listed iron case to the waterpoint on the south bank, Burford Lane Warehouse and attached house, and Burford Lane Aqueduct. An example of the type of small scale industries which sprang up along the canal survives on the north side of Warrington Lane, including boat yards and garages.

The M56 crosses the HLCA on an east-west alignment. The motorway was constructed in the 1970s and is a key transport corridor. Its construction has resulted in the severing of field boundaries and trackways.



HLCA detail

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Minimal adverse
Construction permanent	Minimal adverse
Operation permanent	No change

Effect

Construction permanent	Negligible adverse
Operation	Neutral

Commentary

The HLCA is of interest as it illustrates how the Bridgewater Canal has shaped land use and field boundaries within the HLCA. The Proposed Scheme will be aligned against the grain of later post-medieval and modern fields.

A section of the Bridgewater Canal will be crossed by the Bridgewater Canal Viaduct which will involve the construction of embankments. However, the overall form of the canal within the landscape will be retained, it will continue to be navigable and the influence of the construction of the canal within the historic landscape will continue to be legible.

High Speed Two (HS2) Limited

Two Snowhill

Snow Hill Queensway

Birmingham B4 6GA

Freephone: 08081 434 434

Minicom: 08081 456 472

Email: HS2enquiries@hs2.org.uk