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Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Search for potential housing sites: Review of landscape sensitivity assessment

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Annex 2

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Sedbergh-Millthrop sites

August 2024

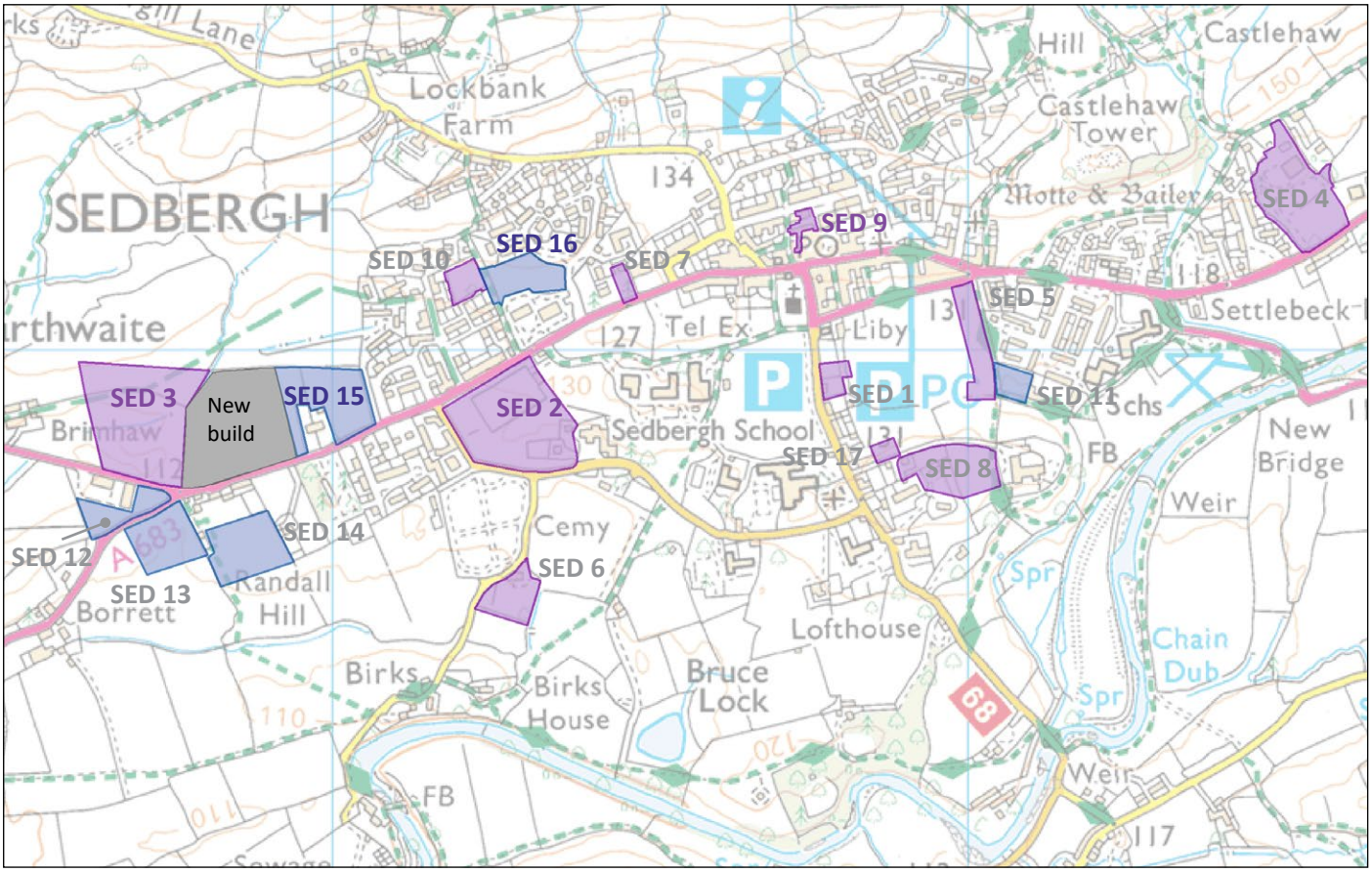
Reference no. 497/3/06.2
Revision 2.0

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

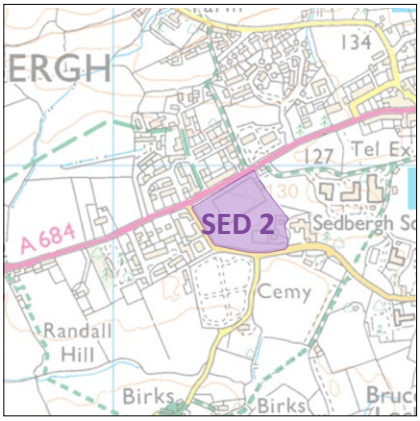
Local Service Centres

Sedbergh

Location of assessed sites



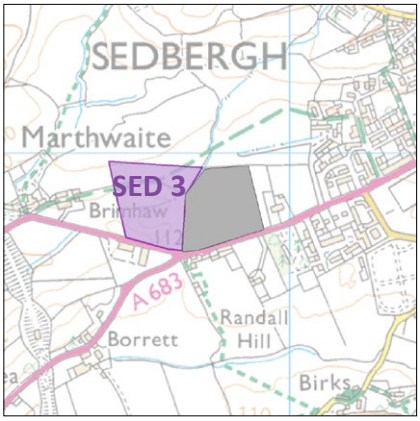
Possible site allocations identified via 'Call for Sites'		Possible site allocations identified by YDNPA	
SED 1	Land south of car park, Loftus Hill	SED 11	Land east of Vicarage Lane
SED 2	Land south of Station Road and east of Busk Lane	SED 12	Land south of Tollbar Workshops, Station Road
SED 3	Land north of Tollbar Workshops, Station Road	SED 13	Land south of A683 at Borrett Tollbar
SED 4	Land at the former Bailiol School, Cautley Road	SED 14	Land south of PFS, Station Road
SED 5	Land west of Vicarage Lane	SED 15	Land north of Queen's Drive, Station Road
SED 6	Land at Birksholme, Birks Lane	SED 16	Land west of Sycamore Avenue
SED 7	Land at Guldrey Workshop, Station Road		
SED 8	Land between Robertson House and Winder House		
SED 9	Land at King's Yard, Bainbridge Road		
SED 10	Land rear of Guldrey Terrace		
SED 17	Land adjacent to Mountain View		



Land south of Station Road and east of Busk Lane, Sedbergh
SED 2

Physical and natural character	Moderate-high
Site has a complex local topography, with smooth (drumlin-type) slopes rising directly from Busk Lane to the south and south west. There are also groups of mature trees which make an important contribution to local landscape and townscape character, including the double line of mature trees along the northern part of Busk Lane (close to its junction with Station Road) and the large group of mature trees in the centre of the site, which shelter and screen the existing buildings adjacent and to the south east of the site. It is particularly important that the integrity of the egg-shaped drumlin landform is conserved and retained intact, as a prominent local landscape feature, which contributes to the distinctive identity of Sedbergh. However, the northern/central part of the site (currently a formal sports pitch) has good potential for development fronting Station Road and (set-back behind the stands of mature trees) Busk Lane	
Settlement form and setting	Moderate-high
The site is at the western gateway to the historic town centre (and Sedbergh's Conservation Area). It is a sensitive location which demands an architectural facade that is carefully integrated with the surrounding townscape and historic settlement pattern. The latter has been shaped by the undulating glacial landforms that define this part of Sedbergh; it is characterised by tight groups of dense built development interspersed with undulating open greenspaces, which often have a textured 'rough' character that contrasts with the formal built terraces and courtyards. There is an opportunity for development here that continues and interprets this historic settlement form, fronting Station Road, set-back behind the mature trees along the north part of Busk Lane and overlooking the Rawthey Valley to the south. However, the slopes of the drumlin landform to the south of the site should be retained as informal grassland and woodland as development here would require an engineered, artificial landform that would not be appropriate within Sedbergh's distinctive and historic settlement form	
Views and recreational experience	Moderate
The site is prominent in views along Station Road and Busk Lane. There are no long views across the Rawthey Valley to the south and a high quality built frontage onto Station Road would potentially enhance local views at an important gateway to the historic town. However the existing views to the grass slopes of the drumlin landform from Busk Lane in the southern part of the site should be conserved. Filtered views through the existing mature trees to new development from the northern part of Busk Lane (to the west of the site) would be appropriate within the local townscape.	
Perceptual qualities	Moderate
The northern part of the site, fronting Station Road, seems fairly nondescript within the overall townscape as the artificial character of the grass tennis courts is perceived as a quiet 'green gap' within a neighbourhood that is dominated by trees and gardens. The houses on the north side of Station Road are relatively low and the townscape here seems one-sided, with houses and walled gardens facing the groups of larger buildings, mature trees and open spaces within the extensive grounds of Sedbergh School. By contrast, the meadow on the drumlin slopes and mature trees in the southern part of the site are perceived as part of the Rawthey Valley and the Sedbergh school grounds that drop away to the south of the town and which have a textured, parkland character. This part of the site should be conserved.	
Cultural and historical associations	Moderate
The site is designated as part of Sedbergh's Conservation Area and forms part of the landscape setting of the historic town. However there are no listed buildings or notable heritage features on or adjacent to the site. The existing mature trees and the natural sweep of the drumlin landform, which has been a significant constraint for built development over the past 200 years, contribute to the sense of time-depth	

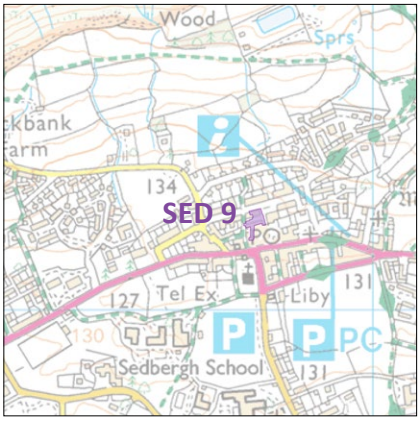
Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Moderate-high*
There is wide variation in the sensitivity of this extensive town centre. Built development on the northern part of the site (the sports pitch and the flatter area fronting the junction end of Busk Lane) could contribute positively to Sedbergh's townscape although it is important that the double stand of mature trees along Busk Lane in the north west part of the site is conserved, with development set back behind these trees. However, the southern part of the site, which is dominated by the drumlin landform, should remain undeveloped; the steep drumlin slopes to the south of the site should be carefully conserved, along with the groups of mature trees within the centre of the site.	



Land north of Tollbar Workshops, Station Road, Sedbergh
SED 3

Physical and natural character	Moderate
Site comprises gently rolling farmland which forms part of the slope to the low, rounded drumlins on the western fringes of Sedbergh. Landform rises slightly to the west and south, but more abruptly to the north, where part of the site comprises the lower slope to a steep, prominent drumlin landform on the lower slopes of Winder Fell. Development of this site would disrupt the existing field pattern because its northern boundary cuts across the existing field boundary. Although the site's rolling landform is relatively low, it forms part of the broad sweep of the prominent rounded drumlin forms on the lower slopes of Winder Fell. The dramatic sheer open slopes of Winder Fell and the Howgills are a stunning and distinctive backdrop to Sedbergh and contributes to an appreciation of the Howgills at close range (noted as one of the special qualities of the YDNP)	
Settlement form and setting	Moderate-high
The site forms part of the sweeping foreground to the rounded drumlin landforms on the lower slopes of Winder Fell and so makes a significant contribution to the overall view of the dramatic open Howgill Fells at this western gateway to Sedbergh. The existing long, open views to the scattered properties and trees on the western fringes of Sedbergh will change to a more abrupt built edge when the allocated adjacent residential development has been implemented, but the low rounded landform on the western fringes of the site forms a natural enclosing 'edge' to the town and built development that is visible in views beyond and to the west of this landform would 'break' this perceived gentle boundary and intrude within the semi-rural hinterland on the western approaches to Sedbergh. There is also a risk that development of this site would increase the perceived coalescence of the western edge of Sedbergh with the small hamlet of Marthwaite to the west of the town - a risk that is increased as a result of the allocated housing development to the east. However, the site is within the overall landscape setting to the west of Sedbergh, as described in the LCA, which is defined by the steep, curving embankment of the former railway to the west of the Brimhaw farmstead.	
Views and recreational experience	High
The open character of the site contributes to the sweeping views north and east to Winder Fell and the Howgills, and thus to the overall drama of Sedbergh's landscape setting at the foot of these fells and to the special qualities of the YDNP (which recognise the drama and distinctive profile of the Howgills). It is visually prominent and development would reduce the perceived scale and drama of views to the Howgills from the A684/A683 gateway to Sedbergh. At a more local scale, the slopes and ridge-top of the low rounded landform to the west of the site and the lower slopes of the higher drumlin to the north are highly sensitive within the gateway views to Sedbergh from the west. The development of housing on the adjacent field (to the east) increases the sensitivity of this site as it is the remaining foreground to the important fell slope views. There is a bridleway along the field boundary within the northern part of the site, which forms part of a circular walk to the north west of the town, avoiding the A684.	
Perceptual qualities	Moderate
The site feels part of the broader sweep of the scenic lower fell slopes at the foot of the Howgills and has an attractive, open farmland character. It is on the fringes of Sedbergh and is bordered by a busy road, with scattered small groups of built development (residential, agricultural and employment uses) alongside. It is therefore has some disturbance and does not have a tranquil setting.	
Cultural and historical associations	Moderate
The site does not have any specific historic or cultural interest, but forms part of a wider rural landscape which is characterised by a lower fell farmland landscape with traditional stone barns, farm buildings and walled fields.	

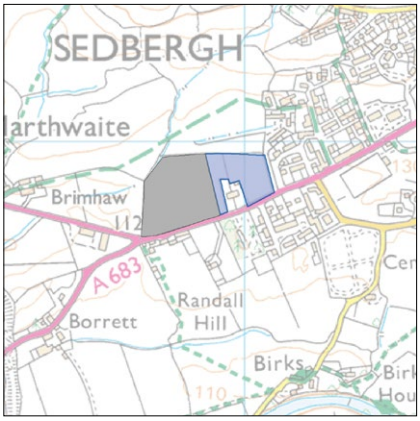
Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Moderate-high
This large, open site contributes to Sedbergh's dramatic landscape setting at the gateway to the town from the west, which is dominated by the smooth profile of the Howgills (one of the special qualities of the YDNP). It is sensitive to development because the open fields are seen from the A684 as the foreground to views northwards and eastwards to the steep, open slopes of Winder Fell; built development in this location would reduce the extent of the foreground in these views, diminishing the perceived sweeping huge scale of the fells which is the defining characteristic of Sedbergh's landscape setting. It would also increase the perceived coalescence of the western edge of Sedbergh with the small hamlet of Marthwaite to the west of the town. The allocated housing development on the land immediately to the east of the site increases the sensitivity of this site because there is an increased risk of perceived coalescence and reduced scale of view. This is a more sensitive site than the land to the east because it is visually contained by the low drumlin landform to the west and the west-facing slope of this ridge is more prominent and sensitive within gateway views from the A 684 to the west.	



Land at King's Yard, Bainbridge Road Sedbergh
SED 9

Physical and natural character	Low-moderate
This is a brownfield site in the heart of Sedbergh's historic town centre. It is an industrial yard off Main Street and Bainbridge Road which is one of a series of yards which housed the towns historic textile industries. It is tightly enclosed by the surrounding buildings and backstreets within a historic urban grain. However the buildings on the site are poor quality commercial sheds which are an eyesore in the context of their surroundings and there is an opportunity for a high quality housing scheme which is designed to integrate contemporary buildings within this historic townscape.	
Settlement form and setting	Moderate
The Sedbergh Conservation Area Appraisal describes the warren of industrial backstreets and yards off Main Street as follows: '*The yards remain a central feature of the town's layout and design*' (Sedbergh CCA p 10). This is an important opportunity site within a highly sensitive historic town centre. It will be important to conserve the tight, densely packed buildings, narrow winding pedestrian passages and odd, informal angles and groupings that are characteristic of this part of Sedbergh. Historic research will demonstrate whether the existing buildings follow the footprints of historic workshops or whether there is scope to start afresh.	
Views and recreational experience	Low-moderate
The site currently detracts from the quality of local views and the recreational experience and there is an opportunity for much improvement. A public right of way which follows a narrow urban passageway that connects Main Street with Fairholme on the fell slopes to the north is aligned along the western boundary of a narrow part of the site and the layout of new buildings and spaces should be designed to take account of this route.	
Perceptual qualities	Moderate
The site is perceived as a run-down industrial area in the heart of the historic town. The buildings are under used and parts of the area are semi-derelict. Its redevelopment would provide an opportunity to improve the perceived quality and distinctive character of the historic townscape in this area.	
Cultural and historical associations	High
This is a highly sensitive site in the heart of Sedbergh's conservation area. The layout and architectural design of a future re-development scheme should be based on historical research, with buildings carefully designed to be integrated within the tight historic urban grain. Given the industrial character of this backstreet yard area, it may be appropriate for housing to take the form of terraced blocks, with some integrated workspaces.	

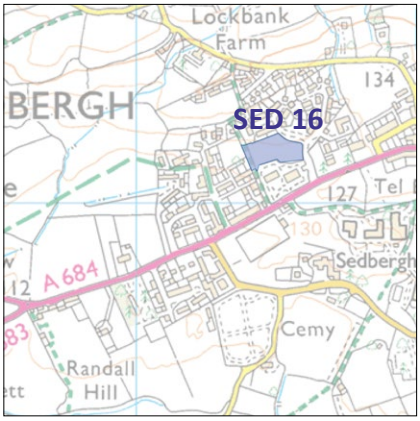
Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Low-moderate
This brownfield site provides an opportunity for redevelopment with a scheme that is sensitive to its historic townscape context. The layout and design of the scheme should be based on historical research and should conserve the tight, densely packed buildings, narrow winding pedestrian passages and odd, informal angles and groupings that are characteristic of this part of Sedbergh.	



Land north of Queen's Drive, Station Road, Sedbergh
SED 15

Physical and natural character	Moderate
The site forms part of the sweeping lower slopes of Winder Fell and is the rolling to the steep fell slopes to the north and is a foreground component of the dramatic views northwards from the Rawthey Valley to the bare, sculpted slopes of Winder Fell. It wraps around two central residential properties with large gardens. The landscape of this part of the Rawthey Valley is characterised by mounded glacial deposits which form undulating drumlin landforms: there are low but influential drumlin landforms across the site, but the northern part of the site slopes northwards, leading the eye towards the steep backdrop of Winder Fell. There are a few mature trees in the boundaries to the site, including the field boundary north of the central residential properties.	
Settlement form and setting	Moderate
This western part of Sedbergh is outside the historic market town and has a neat, 'edge of town' character with existing built development to the south of the road. The land adjacent and to the west of the site is already allocated for residential development and this site will therefore be surrounded on three sides by existing housing. It contributes to the landscape setting of Sedbergh but is not a defining component of it because the dramatic views to Winder Fell are available from multiple locations; the drumlin landforms to the west of this site and the higher slope to the north are the most sensitive parts of the site in the important gateway views from the A683/Station Road.	
Views and recreational experience	Moderate-high
The site forms the foreground to dramatic and attractive sweeping views northwards to Winder Fell from the A683/Station Road. These views would be compromised by built development, which would screen the foreground and so reduce the sense of drama and scale. However, this view is already compromised and 'squeezed' by the adjacent new housing and, if this site is development, the steep, bare slopes of Winder Fell would continue to provide a stunning backdrop to views from the A683/ Station Road. The site, and built development on it, would also be prominent in views southwards from the public right of way to the north of the site, but it is likely that the focus of those enjoying recreational walks along this route would be directed northwards, towards the Howgills rather than the edge of Sedbergh.	
Perceptual qualities	Moderate
The site feels part of the broader sweep of the scenic lower fell slopes at the foot of the Howgills and has an attractive, open farmland character. However, it is on the fringes of Sedbergh and is bordered by a busy road, with scattered small groups of built development (residential, agricultural and employment uses) alongside. It is adjacent to a large site that will be developed for housing and so will be surrounded by housing. This is therefore not a tranquil setting.	
Cultural and historical associations	Moderate
The site is opposite The Queen's Garden, a public memorial garden which was laid out as a memorial to Queen Victoria in 1906. The Queen's Garden is enclosed by mature trees and walls and seems 'self contained', so the site does not influence its landscape setting. The site does not have any specific historic or cultural interest, but forms part of a wider rural landscape which is characterised by a lower fell farmland landscape with traditional stone barns, farm buildings and walled fields.	

Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Moderate*
The site will soon be surrounded on three sides by development and its landscape context will change to a more urban setting. There are few constraints to built development. The principal sensitive landscape feature is the sweeping, long view from the A683 northwards to Winder Fell, which forms part of the gateway to Sedbergh from the west. Development of this site would compromise but not dominate these views, particularly if built development is concentrated towards the southern part of the site to form an indented softer edge in conjunction with the new housing to the west, keeping buildings away from the slightly steeper slope and more elevated land in the northern part of the site. The layout of development should respect the sensitivity of the interface between the built edge and Winder Fell, with an indented, soft northern edge.	



Land west of Sycamore Avenue, Sedbergh
SED 16

Physical and natural character	Moderate-high

The site is on the lower slopes of Winder Fell and has a fairly steeply sloping, smooth landform. It is a remnant pasture, which retains a meadow grassland character, with groups of mature trees to the south, west and east and a hedgerow along its western boundary. A large stand of Scots pine is a distinctive landscape feature jutting into the site towards its western boundary. It is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The site is bordered to the south by the Spar supermarket and car park and to the north by residential gardens. It abuts a smaller field (SED 10), which is also enclosed by houses, to the east. There are no specific environmental designations, but the landform and remnant 'lower fell slope meadow' character are valued landscape features. Together with the adjacent field, and the surrounding network of dense hedgerows and trees (including those within and bordering adjacent properties) the site is also an important component of local ecological networks that link the fell slope and valley through the centre of Sedbergh.

Settlement form and setting	Moderate-high

The town centre is densely packed with buildings, but the grain of built development reduces to 'fit' with the surrounding landscape and this field (the site) contributes to the 'layering' of built development and open fell on the edge of the town, which reveals the contours and helps to integrate built development with the fell slope. This field, in combination with the adjacent field to the west and the pasture to the north west of Sedbergh, forms a loosely connected 'finger' of fell slope landscape which extends into the town, helping to anchor the settlement within its landscape setting. The western part of the site, where the connection to this 'finger' of landscape is stronger, is particularly sensitive.

Views and recreational experience	Moderate-high

The dramatic open rounded summits of the Howgills are noted as one of the Special Qualities of the YDNP and provide a stunning backdrop to views throughout Sedbergh. The site provides a valuable gap in the settlement grain and, if developed, the upper storey and roof-lines of the buildings would be visible in northward views towards Winder Fell, reducing the proportion of tree cover and 'greenery' in the backdrop to these views.

A public right of way, connecting Sedbergh town centre with the route that leads up Winder Fell, is within the site and aligned along its western boundary. The site is highly visible in views from this footpath and there is a strong sense of walking through a semi-rural area. If developed, the quality of the recreational experience would change from a gentle urban-rural transition to a more abrupt edge. However, the eastern part of the site is visually less sensitive as it is screened in local views from Sycamore Avenue by existing vegetation.

Perceptual qualities	Moderate-high

The site brings a welcome splash of rural landscape and a significant gap between buildings which expresses the shape of the fell slope landform within the town. There is a perceived connection, via the existing remnant pasture to the west (SED 10), to the fell slopes of Winder Fell - a subtle but valuable reminder of the traditional dale landscape, which surrounds Sedbergh and contributes to the distinctively rural character of the town.

Cultural and historical associations	Moderate

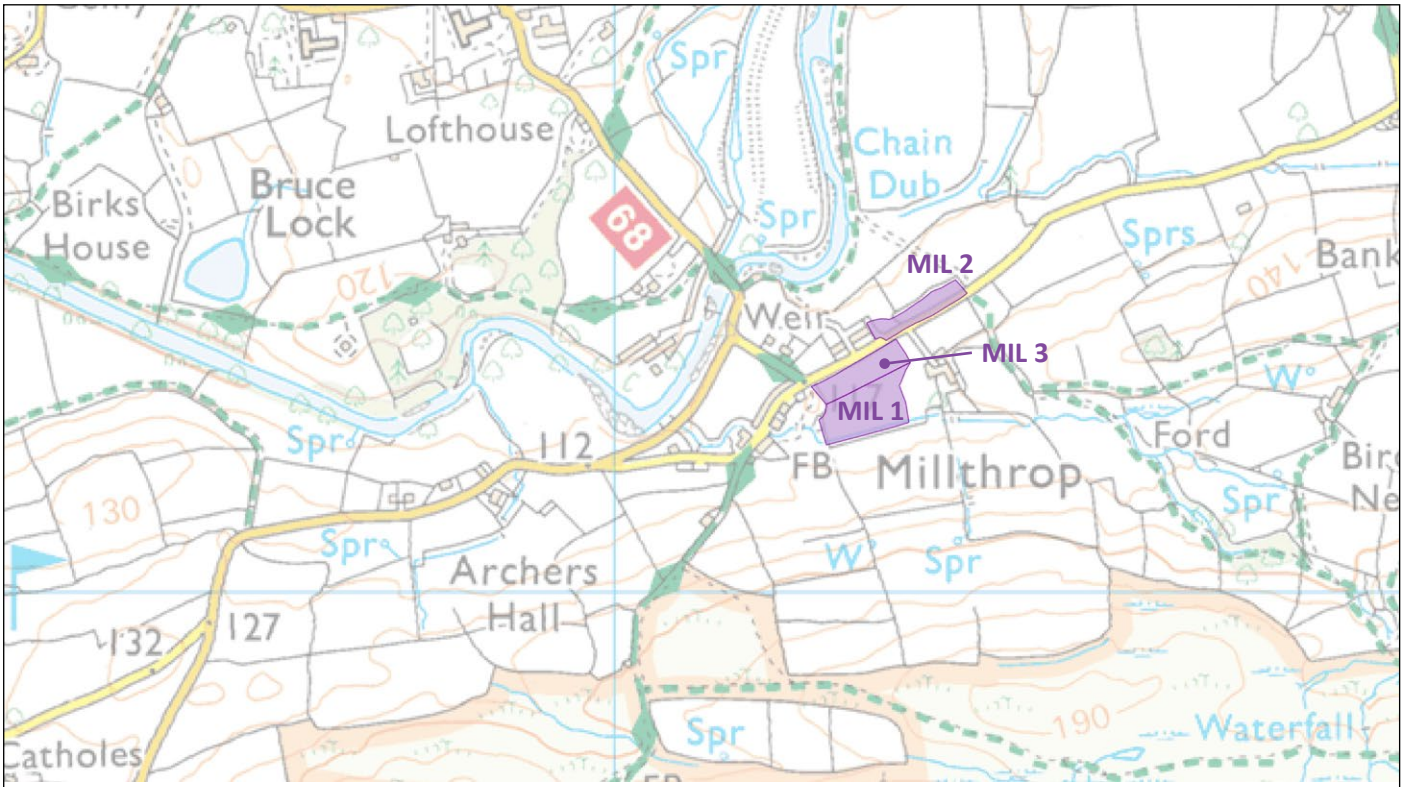
The site is within the designated Sedbergh Conservation Area. It does not have additional specific heritage designations but does contribute to the traditional rural landscape pattern and landscape setting of Sedbergh, which is of cultural and historical value.

Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Moderate-high*

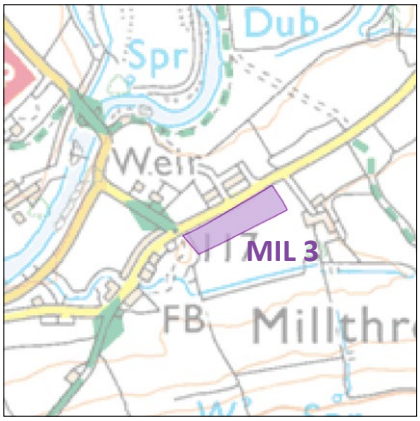
This site is a remnant pasture which contributes to Sedbergh's rural character and landscape setting, by helping to integrate built development and landscape at a particularly critical settlement edge, where the town meets the steep, open slopes of the Howgills and where there is a public right of way connection between town and Winder Fell. Built development across the whole of this site would fill in the existing valuable gap in the urban grain, reducing the sense that the landscape is infiltrating and blending with the town. However, if built development could be integrated if it were concentrated on the eastern, less visible part of the site, conserving the landscape setting of the public right of way, the existing trees and perceived landscape connection to the fell slope.

Millthrop

Location of assessed sites



Possible site allocations identified via 'Call for Sites'		Possible site allocations identified by YDNPA	
MIL 1	Land west of Blandses Farm		
MIL 2	Land east of Derry Cottages		
MIL 3	Land opposite Derry Cottages		



Land opposite Derry Cottages, Millthrop
MIL 3

Physical and natural character	Moderate

This site is on the gently rolling slopes of the Rawthey Valley at the foot of Burton Hill and the Frostrow Fells. It is part of an open pasture bordered by low stone walls which continue upslope in the traditional fell slope 'ladder' pattern to the south. The alignment of the Clatter Beck, a small tributary of the River Rawthey, is marked in the wider landscape by a line of mature trees. The site fronts onto the lane through the centre of Millthrop village. It is flat farmland adjacent to a row of 20th C houses and so is within a developed context. However, the open character of this farmland contributes to the local landscape setting of Millthrop and the transition in landscape pattern from wooded river floodplain to open fell within a part of the Rawthey Valley where the river is close to the fell-slope.

Settlement form and setting	Moderate-high

The site is directly opposite the line of houses that extends along the lane to the north east of Millthrop's historic village core and development here would continue Millthrop's characteristic linear road-side settlement form. However, this is a small, narrow village in which the lines of built development are anchored by two larger fields - one to the north west and one (containing the site) to the south east. The farmland landscape dominates and surrounds the settlement and there is a risk that built development on this site would alter the balance by creating a new 'street' (with housing on both sides of the road) which is as long as the original historic core of the village and 'competes' with it. It would fundamentally change the small-scale, rural character of Millthrop and would disrupt the subtle hierarchy of the village in which the only enclosed street is the historic main street.

Views and recreational experience	Moderate-high

Development on this site would be prominent in views from the gateway to the historic core of the village, close to the sharp turn junction between the lane to the north (towards Sedbergh) and the main street of the village. It would screen views to the foot of the fell-slope and would erode the small-scale rural character of Millthrop's landscape setting. Development here would also be visible from the promoted Dales Way footpath on the lower slopes of Burton Hill to the south of Millthrop and from the network of public rights of way that connect the Millthrop Lane with Frostow Fells to the south and east of the site.

Perceptual qualities	Moderate-high

The small scale, linear form of Millthrop village threads along the contours at the edge of the river floodplain and between the valley floor drumlins and the lower slopes of the Frostrow Fells. This narrow, short line of relatively small buildings is integrated into the folds of the rolling landscape, with the line of buildings dominated and surrounded by a much larger-scale landscape pattern. This seems particularly important in a situation where a mill village has evolved in response to a natural physical landscape feature - a fast-flowing tributary stream. There is a risk that built development across the whole of this site would transform the rural character of the village, by shifting the balance towards a more 'urban fringe' character. This balance is particularly at risk here because of the proximity to Sedbergh and the principal road to Dentdale.

Cultural and historical associations	Moderate

The site is adjacent to the historic core of an exceptionally attractive small mill village which is within the Sedbergh Conservation Area and development here would have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of the village. However, the site is not within the conservation area and does not influence the landscape setting of the listed buildings within Millthrop.

Overall landscape sensitivity - residential development	Moderate-high*

Development on this site could seem over-scaled and dominant within the landscape setting of a small mill village where a mill, farmstead and small lines of cottages have evolved with a narrow linear form in response to local landscape features. There is a risk that development here would unbalance its small-scale rural character in which lines of houses look directly out across open fields would disrupt the subtle hierarchy of the village in which the only enclosed street is the historic main street. However, the most sensitive part of this site is the south west part, where there is a view (over the field stone wall) close to the T junction between the main street and the road northwards towards Sedbergh. The landscape sensitivity of this site would be reduced if a portion of the site was conserved as open farmland, to retain this visual connection between hamlet and fell slope setting.

sheilsflynn

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

August 2024