

High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Environmental Statement

Volume 5: Appendix HE-003-0MA05

Historic environment

MA05: Risleigh to Bamfurlong

Historic landscape character areas

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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.

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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 Risley to Bamfurlong area (MA05).
- 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-002-0MA05).
- 1.1.3 Historic environment baseline data is set out in the following Background Information and Data (BID) reports:
- Historic environment baseline report (BID HE-001-0MA05¹), which includes the historic environment detailed gazetteer in Appendix A;
 - Historic environment field survey report (BID HE-004-0MA05²); and
 - Historic environment remote sensing report (BID HE-005-0MA05³).
- 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, Risley to Bamfurlong, Historic environment baseline report*, BID HE-001-0MA05. 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, Risley to Bamfurlong, Historic environment field survey report*, BID HE-004-0MA05. 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, Risley to Bamfurlong, Historic environment remote sensing report*, BID HE-005-0MA05. 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) informed 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, HLCA may align closely with the Landscape Character Areas (LCA) prepared by the landscape and visual assessment team.
- 2.2.4 The 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;

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- 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 heritage value of the 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 the HLCA.

⁴ That is the presence of types that are inherently related to one 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).

2.4 Magnitude of impact

- 2.4.1 The magnitude of impact includes consideration of the elements of the Proposed Scheme that extend into the 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
GCR	Great Central Railway
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
HLCA	Historic Landscape Character Area
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging Data
LNWR	London and North Western Railway
NHLC	National Historic Landscape Character
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
ROF	Royal Ordnance Factory
SMR	Scope and Methodology Report
WCML	West Coast Main Line

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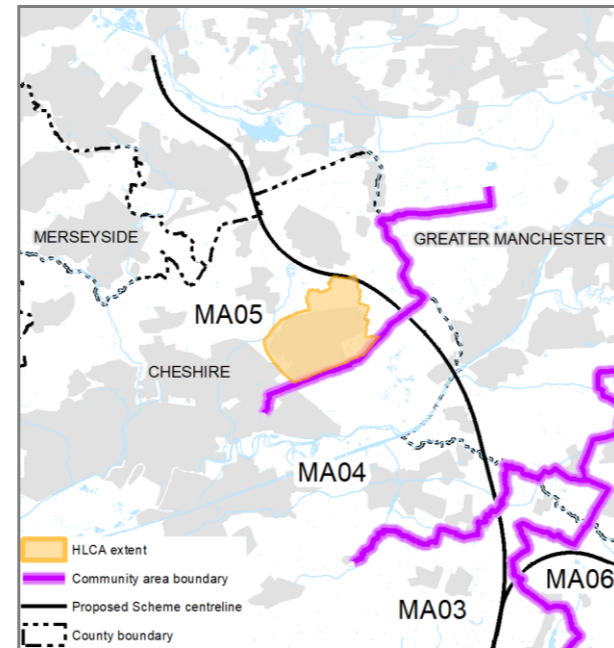
Historic landscape character areas

4 Historic landscape character area sheets

MA05_HLCA01: Risley and Birchwood

Key Characteristics

- Linear transport features which form the HLCA's boundaries; the M6 and M62 and the Liverpool to Manchester Line (via Warrington) Railway.
- Mid to late 20th century development, including residential and light industrial.
- 20th century industry, including a former ammunition works.
- Regenerated green space, used as a nature reserve.



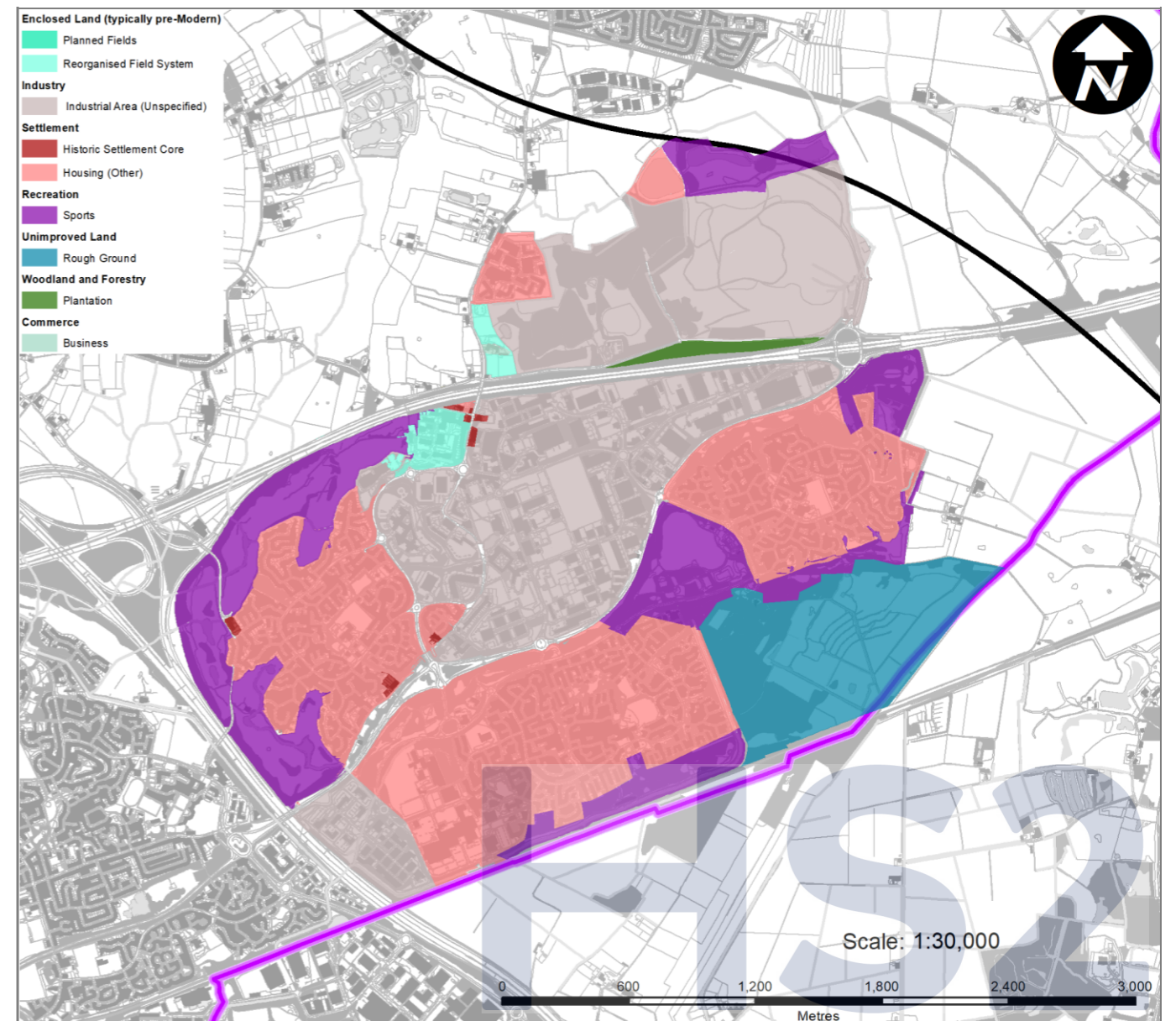
HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

The HLCA comprises the village Risley and town Birchwood and areas of mid-20th century development largely related to the construction of the motorway network. The HLCA is a mix of modern residential development, light industry and transport networks. The boundaries of the HLCA are formed by the M62, the M6 and the Cheshire Lines Railway. The M62 is aligned east to west to the north of the HLCA, and the M6 is aligned north-west to south-east on the west boundary of the area. The HLCA also contains a large former landfill site and an area of Risley Moss that was formerly a peat works. Both the landfill and the moss are now nature reserves.

The Birchwood Park area was previously the location of ROF Risley, a Royal Ordnance Factory munitions filling site, which was used during the Second World War. In the mid-20th century the ROF buildings became the headquarters of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. A number of the buildings relating to this are extant, although they have been subsumed within the industrial and housing estates that have since developed across the former site.

Settlement growth and the rapid expansion in the latter half of the 20th century has eroded any earlier historic landscape patterns, although there are some remnant field patterns in the north.



HLCA detail © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

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

Effect

Construction permanent	Negligible adverse
Operation	Neutral

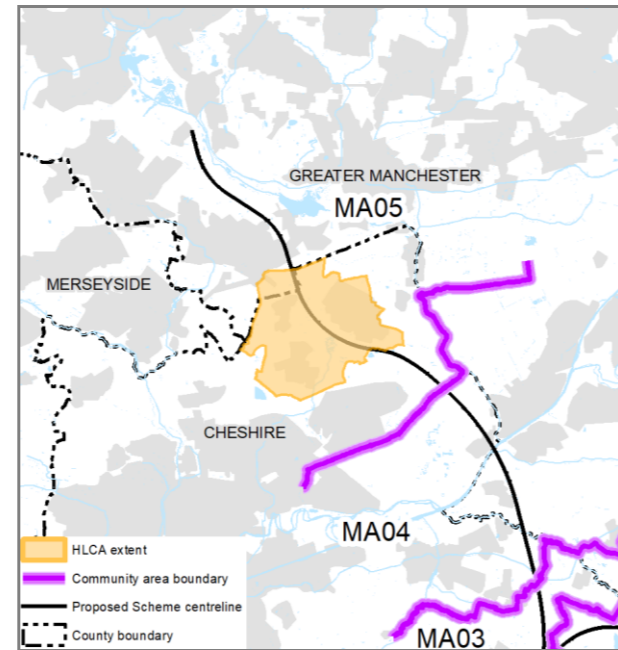
Commentary

The HLCA is of limited interest, characterised by largely mid to late 20th century development. The legibility of the historic villages and ROF Risley has largely been lost. The HLCA contains numerous linear transport features, the green spaces are largely regenerated from former industrial areas. The Proposed Scheme would traverse through the northern edge of the HLCA in an area of former landfill. The presence of the Proposed Scheme will not impact the value of the HLCA. This is due to the presence of other linear transport features and the Proposed Scheme is confined to the northern extent of the HLCA.

MA05_HLCA02: Culcheth and Croft

Key Characteristics

- Small villages of Culcheth and Croft.
- Isolated farmsteads.
- Post-enclosure field systems.
- Remnants of medieval strip fields.
- Linear transport features; M62, the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) and the Great Central Railway (GCR).

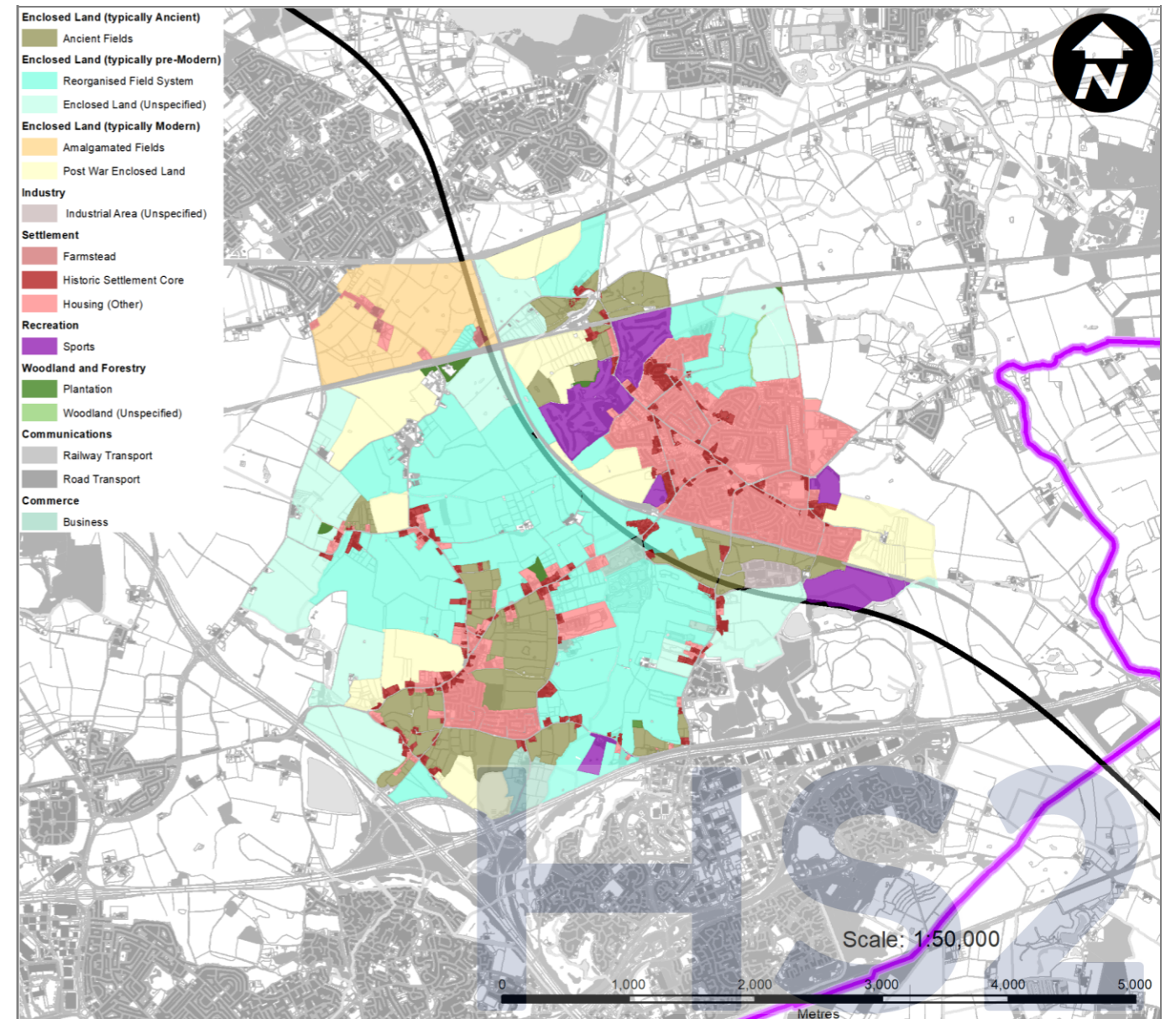


HLCA location © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 OS 100049190

Description

The HLCA comprises the villages of Culcheth and Croft and their associated field systems, several isolated farmsteads and small farming hamlets. Major linear transport routes include the M62 and the Liverpool and Manchester line of the London and North Western Railway (LNWR), both east/west aligned. The M62 forms part of the HLCA's southern boundary and separates the farmland of the HLCA from the large town of Warrington. The LNWR crosses the northern extent of the HLCA. The route of the former Wigan Junction Branch of the Great Central Railway (GCR) crosses the HLCA on a south-east/north-west axis and forms a southern boundary to residential development in Culcheth. The former railway has been converted into Culcheth Linear Nature Reserve. Other areas used for recreation include a fishery just to the south of Culcheth and a golf course to the north. The golf course has been created in part from the house and gardens of the Grade II listed Kenyon Hall. Although still relatively small village settlements, both Culcheth and Croft have expanded during the 20th century. The largely residential expansion contains historic farm buildings, such as the Grade II listed Brookhouse Farmhouse that have been absorbed into the village.

The majority of the HLCA is agricultural land, mostly large regular-shaped fields with straight boundaries indicative of 20th century reorganised field systems of enclosed land. Field boundaries are predominantly hawthorn hedges. The remnants of medieval strip fields are evident around both Croft and Culcheth although these have been mostly subsumed within the larger field systems. Where these are still present they are in the form of long narrow fields with mature hedged boundaries interspersed with large trees. The former presence of the fields is also noted in larger fields with short lengths of hedges or in-field trees. Areas of early field system are still apparent as cropmarks within larger post-enclosure field systems such as to the east of Culcheth. Areas of levelled ridge and furrow is apparent within the earlier fields which suggests that the landscape was utilised for arable agriculture during the medieval to early post-medieval period. This can be seen on both sides of the GCR which suggests that the construction of the former railway has separated Culcheth from much of its associated agricultural land.



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Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Low adverse
Operation permanent	Minimal adverse

Effect

Construction permanent	Minor/Negligible adverse
Operation	Negligible adverse

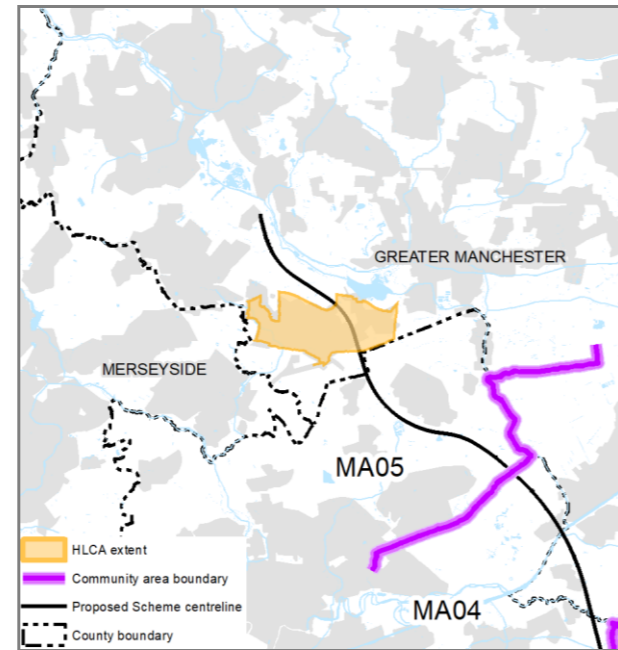
Commentary

The HLCA has interest as it demonstrates historic settlements and poorly preserved, field patterns of probable medieval origins. The alignment will remove several historic field boundaries. This will reduce the legibility of surviving elements of historic farmland south of Culcheth. The Proposed Scheme will run parallel to the former Wigan Junction Branch of the GCR on a south-east to north-west alignment. This follows the grain of existing infrastructure through the area without removing the former rail line. Due to its influence of other linear transport routes the overall character of the HLCA will only be partially altered by the Proposed Scheme.

MA05_HLCA03: Golborne and Lowton

Key Characteristics

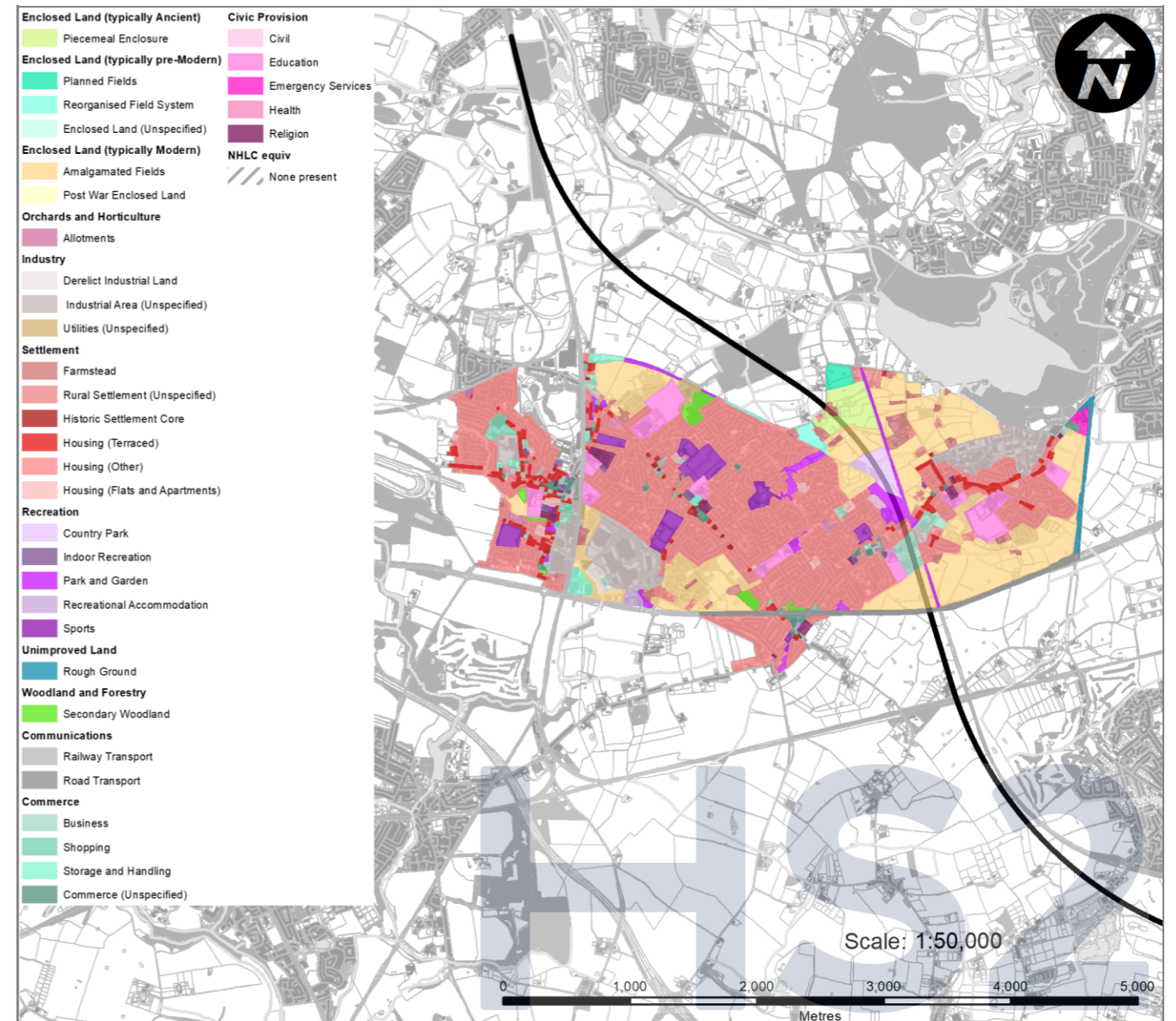
- Major transport links including the A580 East Lancashire Road and the West Coast Main Line (WCML).
- 20th century residential and industrial development.



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Description

The majority of the HLCA comprises mid to late 20th century residential development. Golborne is of medieval origin and was noted in the Domesday survey of 1086. Its major growth followed the construction of the London and North Western Railway (now the WCML) in 1837. Industrial works developed along the railway line whilst residential development extended out along the main roads. There are a number of former and current transport routes within the HLCA. The A580 East Lancashire Road is a prominent feature of the southern section of the HLCA. It forms the southern boundary of the HLCA, with just one small area of residential development extending to the south of it. The construction of the A580 East Lancashire Road in the 1930s altered the pattern of settlement. Previously development spread out along the main roads. The A580 East Lancashire Road created new landscape divisions in the south of Golborne which later became infilled with housing development. Development is also bounded by the routes of former railway lines such as to the north of Lowton where the disused St. Helens Branch of the Great Central Railway (GCR) forms the limit of residential development. Settlement growth during the 19th and 20th centuries and rapid expansion in the latter half of the 20th century has largely eroded earlier historic landscape patterns. However, the remnants of some earlier fields systems are visible to the north-east of Lowton as piecemeal enclosure and amalgamated fields. The boundaries of these fields are often defined by hedged boundaries interspaced with large trees. Areas of extant and levelled ridge and furrow is apparent within the earlier fields which suggests that the landscape was utilised for arable agriculture during the medieval to early post-medieval period. There are a small number of open green spaces within the residential developments. These are often former agricultural fields which have retained their original hedged field boundaries. On the fringes of the residential development areas, 20th century enlarged fields also retain evidence of earlier field boundaries.



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Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Minimal adverse
Construction permanent	Low adverse
Operation permanent	Minimal adverse

Effect

Construction permanent	Minor/Negligible adverse
Operation	Negligible adverse

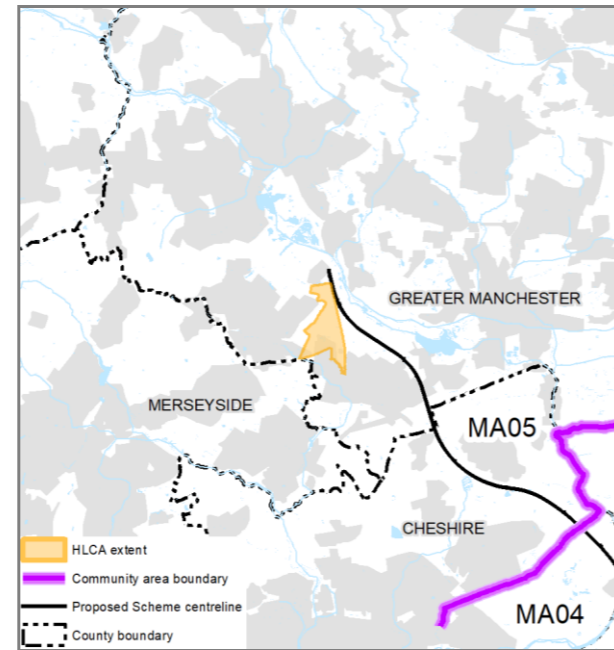
Commentary

The HLCA has historic interest as an example of the rapid development of Golborne in the mid to late 20th century. The Proposed Scheme will pass directly through the HLCA on a north to south alignment. This will remove field boundaries that are the surviving remains of early medieval fields within the HLCA. The Proposed Scheme will run parallel to former railway line. The overall character of the HLCA will only be partially altered as the presence of similar rail infrastructure means the historic legibility of the landscape will be retained.

MA05_HLCA04: Edge Green and Golborne Colliery

Key Characteristics

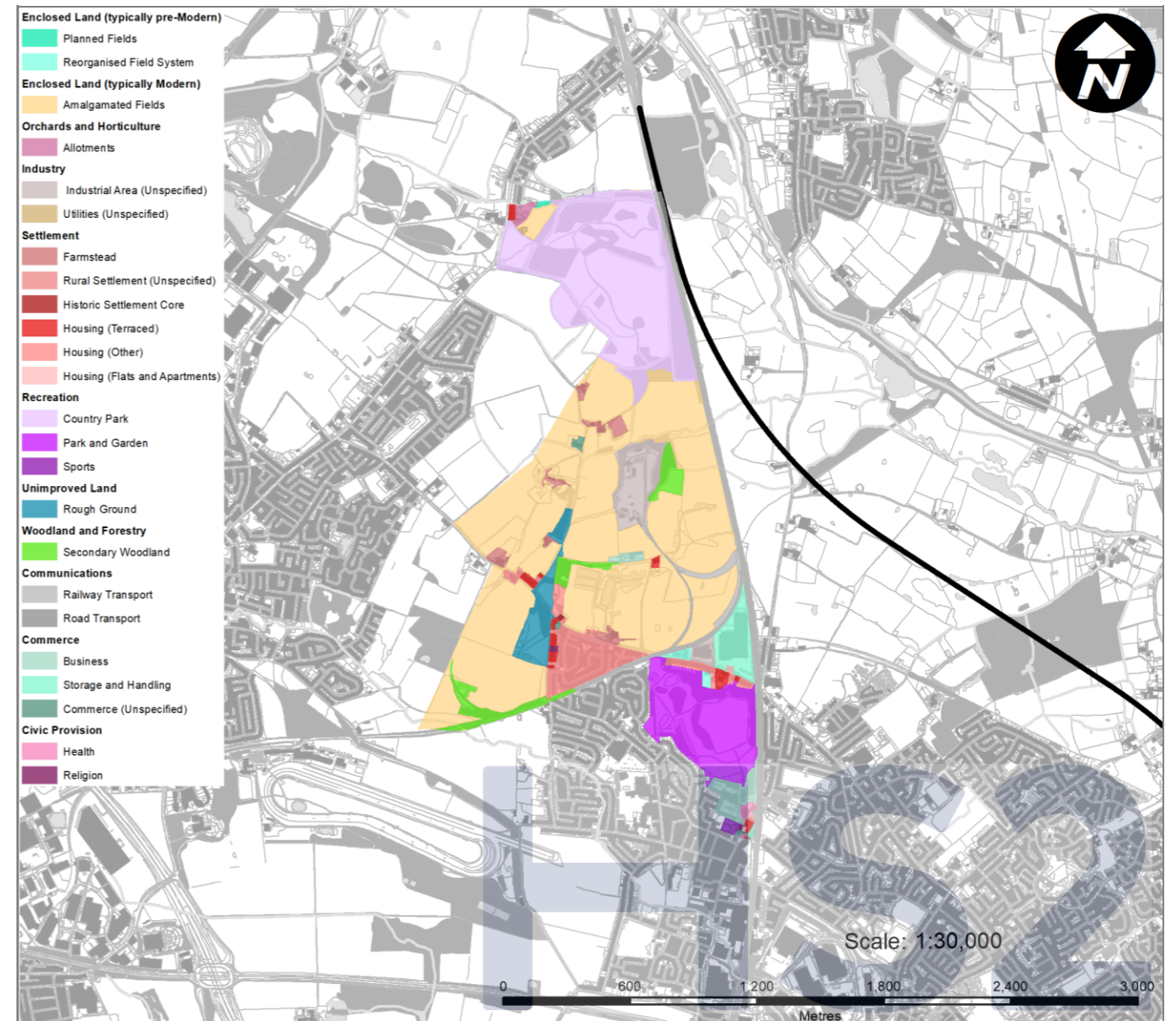
- Former colliery sites.
- 20th century field patterns.
- Isolated farmsteads.
- West Coast Main Line (WCML).
- Edge Green settlement.



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Description

The HLCA covers land previously utilised by Edge Green and Golborne Collieries. The colliery infrastructure is no longer in existence, with most of the land now returned to agricultural use and apparent in the HLCA as amalgamated fields. There are no visible remains of the collieries within the HLCA, although it is possible there are archaeological remains associated with the industry. The area of country park to the north of the HLCA represents the former land associated with the collieries. This land has been reclaimed and largely consists of scrubland with small copses of trees. Viridor Wood is a community woodland, planted on reclaimed colliery land after the levelling of the spoil heaps associated with the colliery. This site now has a number of habitats including woodland, mossland, water and wetland. The WCML runs north to south through the HLCA and forms its eastern boundary. The railway line was constructed in 1837 and linked to Edge Green and Golborne collieries through several rail links and sidings. Although these links are no longer apparent, the presence of the WCML within the HLCA serves as a reminder of its original links to the coal industry in this area. The agricultural land is mainly 19th century surveyed enclosure, characterised by large fields with straight hedged or fenced boundaries. However, in a number of places the hedged field boundaries follow the more sinuous routes of the former colliery sidings creating a more unusual field pattern. There are a small number of dispersed farmsteads across the HLCA, some of which predate the presence of the collieries including the Grade II listed Ashton Road Farmhouse which dates to 1704.



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Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

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

Effect

Construction permanent	Neutral
Operation	Neutral

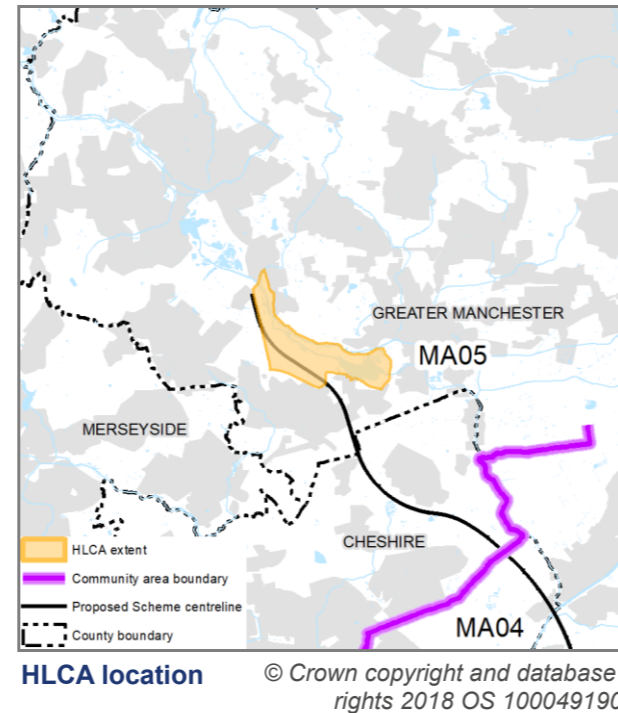
Commentary

The HLCA is of historic interest as it demonstrates evidence for former extractive industries that closed in the 20th century. Although the remains of the collieries are not apparent, the associated land parcels survive within a reclaimed country park. Other linear transport infrastructure, such as the WCML, is already located to the eastern extent of the HLCA and the Proposed Scheme will join the WCML in the north-east corner. Therefore the alignment and location of the Proposed Scheme will not directly impact the HLCA or limit the ability to appreciate its value as an area associated with former industries.

MA05_HLCA05: Hey Brook

Key Characteristics

- The Hey Brook.
- Medieval moated sites.
- Pennington Flash.
- Leeds and Liverpool Canal to the east and north of the HLCA.
- Dismantled rail lines.
- Former colliery spoil heaps reclaimed to create community woodlands.



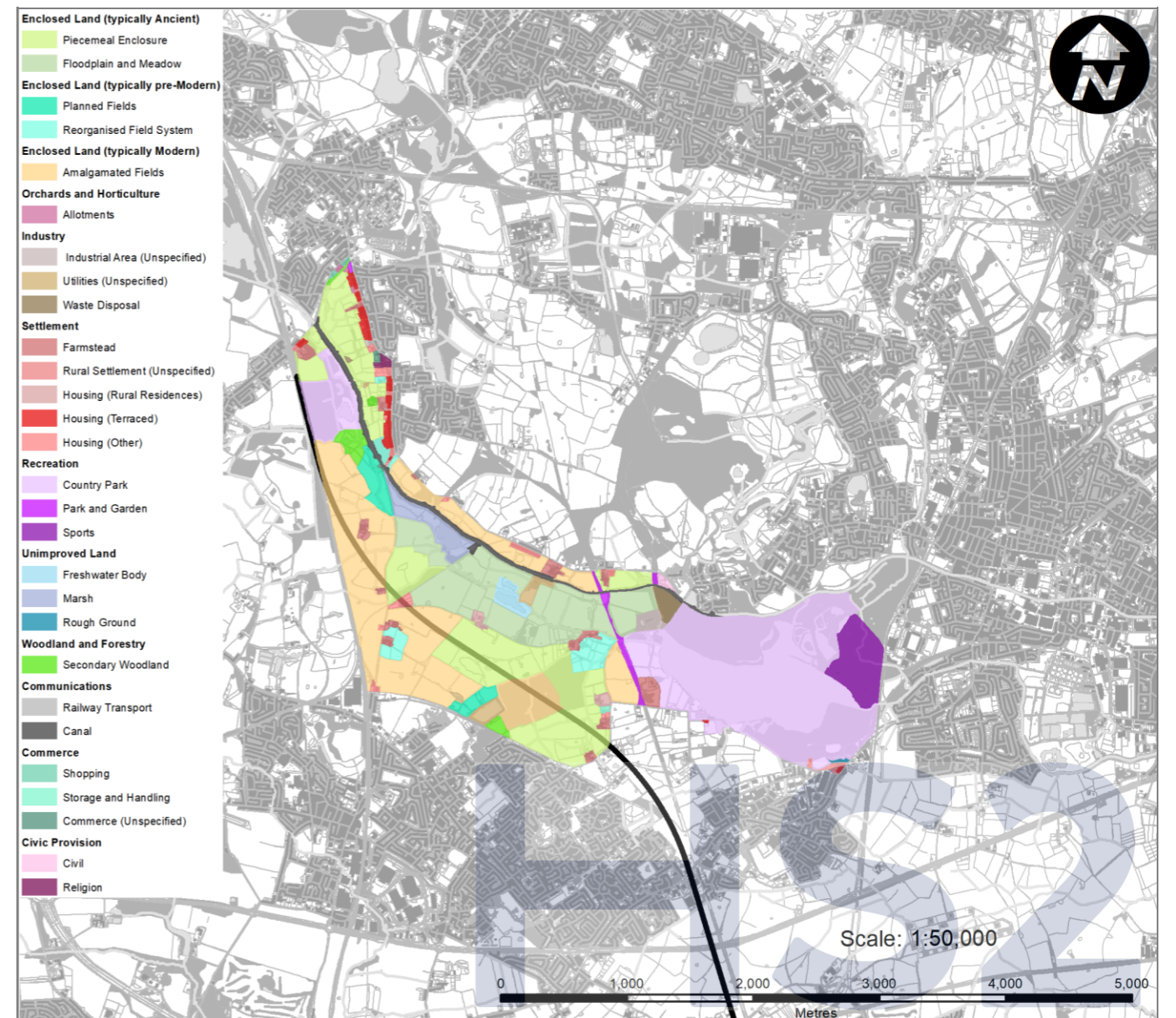
Description

The HLCA is formed by the Hey Brook and the surrounding agricultural land. There are also expanses of former industrial landscapes including Pennington Flash and Byrom Wood. Linear transport infrastructure includes the West Coast Main Line, the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the route of the former Wigan Junction Branch of the GCR. Settlement is limited to isolated farmsteads, such as the Grade II* Lightshaw Hall, and small concentrations of residential development along roads. There were a number of former railway lines and sidings within the HLCA servicing the collieries located further to the east, although their presence is now largely noted by hedgerows and footpaths. These railway sidings were constructed in the 1870s.

The HLCA includes Pennington Flash an area formed at the turn of the 20th century by mining subsidence when the waters of the Hey Brook inundated former agricultural land. The Flash is now a nature reserve. The previous industrial nature of the landscape is also noted to the west of Byrom Hall, where former spoil heaps created by mining activity have been reclaimed to create a community woodland. The Leeds Liverpool Canal is lined by woodland belts and is a notable linear feature in the HLCA.

Fields tend to have straight boundaries other than where these are formed by the Hey Brook or other water courses. The majority of the fields within the HLCA are relatively small and regular-shaped with hedged boundaries. The shape is suggestive of post-enclosure re-organisation. Larger fields, associated with 20th century re-organisation of earlier enclosures, are generally located further from the brook. Lower areas liable to flooding, on less reliable agricultural land, are generally meadows, areas of scrub or small woodland copses. There are remnants of some earlier fields systems throughout the HLCA, visible as piecemeal enclosure and amalgamated fields. The boundaries of these fields are often defined by hedged boundaries interspaced with large trees. Areas of extant and levelled ridge and furrow is apparent within the earlier fields, particularly around Aye Bridge Farm, which suggests that the landscape was utilised for arable agriculture during the medieval to early post-medieval period.

A notable feature of the HLCA is the number of medieval moated sites focused along the length of the Hey Brook. These include Bamfurlong Hall, Lightshaw Hall, Byrom Hall, the former Mossley Hall and a further site now lost to Pennington Flash. Although later re-builds, both Byrom Hall and Lightshaw Hall moated sites retain an associated residential building, and associated agricultural land. The presence of piecemeal enclosure of post-medieval fields and an area of post-medieval water meadows following the Hey Brook suggest that there are surviving elements of the historic landscape that can be associated with the development of Lightshaw Hall and Byrom Hall.



HLCA detail

Asset value Low

Magnitude of impact

Construction temporary	Low adverse
Construction permanent	Minimal adverse
Operation permanent	Minimal adverse

Effect

Construction permanent	Negligible adverse
Operation	Negligible adverse

Commentary

The HLCA has historic interest due to its post-medieval landscape of piecemeal enclosure, floodplain and water meadows around Lightshaw and Byrom Hall. The Proposed Scheme will pass through the HLCA on a north-west to south-east alignment similar to the existing canal and railway lines. Due to the other transport infrastructure in the area the introduction of other similar infrastructure will have a limited impact. The Proposed Scheme will cut through remnants of piecemeal enclosure, adversely impacting the HLCA by reducing the legibility of the post-medieval landscape. The overall character of the HLCA will only be partially altered by the Proposed Scheme, due to its influence by other linear transport routes.

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