

3.8 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CHARACTER

A landscape and visual impact assessment has been undertaken as part of the Environmental Statement (ES), to assess the character, value and sensitivity of the Site and the surrounding landscape (Refer to Chapter 9 of the ES for further details).

The Site lies within National Character Area 88 – Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands, and Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4.9 – Newton Longville – Stoke Hammond Claylands within local landscape character assessment (Aylesbury Vale Area). The Site is not located within a landscape that holds any statutory or non-statutory designation for landscape character or quality.

The Site is formed of arable farmland situated over two sides of a gently sloping east-west ridge along the top of which runs Weasel Lane, flanked on either side by hedgerow. The northern part of the Site is formed of small to medium rectilinear fields with hedgerows of varying density and maturity and some drainage ditches and blocks of woodland. The southern part of the Site is formed of larger, irregular shaped fields with sparser lengths of hedgerow. The urban influence of Milton Keynes is apparent across the Site by its audible and visual presence, especially in the northern parts.



View from southern edge of Bronte Avenue in Tattenhoe Park, looking south.



View from Whaddon Road on the bridge over the disused railway, looking north.



View from Bletchley Road, north of Newton Longville, looking north west.



View from access road to Hounslow Hall and Cowpasture Farm, south west of Newton Longville, looking north.

3.9 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the Site is undulating, and characterised by a ridge running across the centre of the Site from Whaddon Road to Buckingham Road, broadly along the route of Weasel Lane. The highest part of the Site is located at the point where Weasel Lane meets Whaddon Road, along the western boundary of the Site, at 120m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). From this point, the Site slopes down towards the northern and southern boundaries, reaching a low point in the south east of 92m AOD, and a low point in the north west of 103m AOD.

To the south of the Site, the landform continues to fall towards Longeville Hall, where it then rises again, with Newton Longville at a similar level to that of the central ridge within the Site. To the south of Newton Longville, the landform is generally undulating.

The landform rises to the north of the Site, in particular to the north west towards Whaddon.

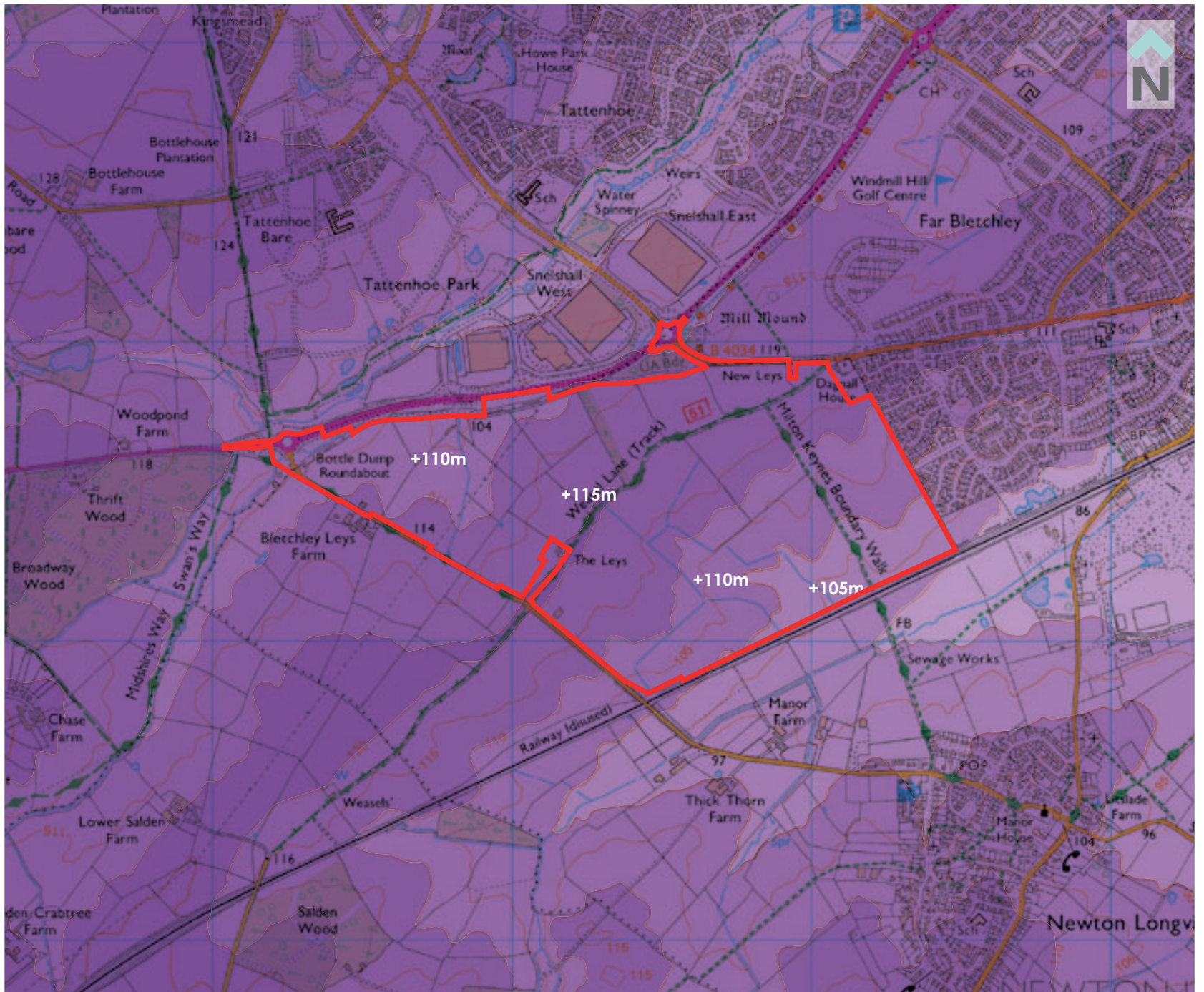










Figure 3.8: Topography Plan

3.10 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Weasel Lane is a restricted byway and Public Right of Way which falls within the boundaries of the Site, and forms part of the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk and National Cycle Route 51. It runs along the aforementioned central ridgeline in a south west to north east direction, from Whaddon Road to Buckingham Road.

There is also a public footpath which runs through the south eastern part of the Site. This footpath also forms part of the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk. The footpath runs in a north to south direction, and passes underneath the train line through an underpass, and continues towards Newton Longville.

There are also two further sections of public footpath which converge close to the north western corner of the Site, connecting to the wider rural area and Thrift and Broadway Woods.

	Site Boundary
	Public footpath
	Bridleway
	Milton Keynes Boundary Walk
	Midshire's Way/Swan's Way (Bridleway)
	Restricted byway
	Sustrans National Cycle Route (51)
	Redways

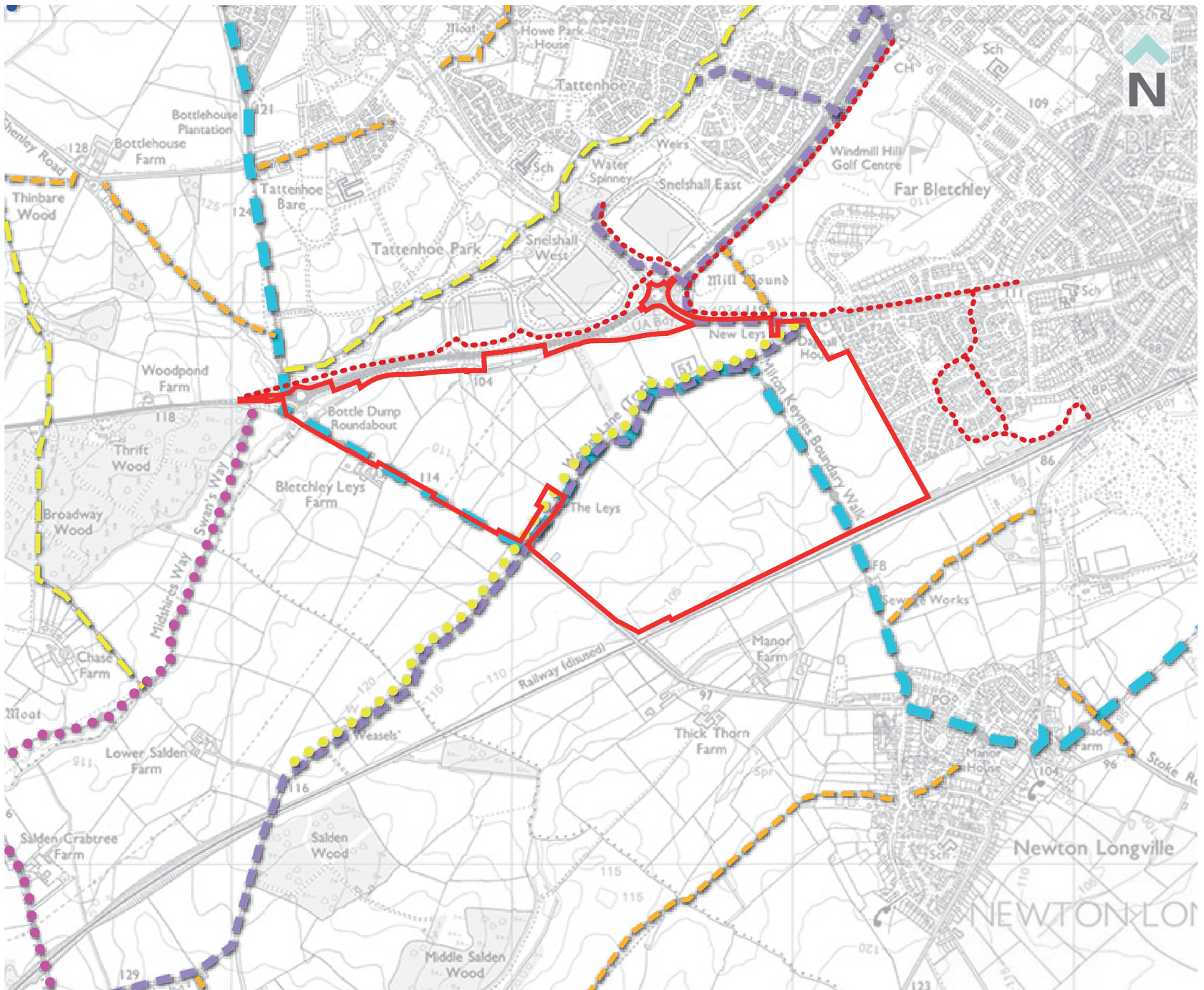


Figure 3.9: Public Rights of Way Map

3.11 ARBORICULTURE

The Assessment finds that the arboricultural resource of the Site is comprised of 149 items. The greater majority of this arboricultural resource is made up of individual trees, with a smaller number of tree groups and hedgerows.

The majority of individual trees (60%) were assessed as being of moderate-quality (Category B), with an estimated life expectancy of at least 20 years. A smaller proportion of the trees (35%) are of low-quality (Category C) with an estimated life expectancy of at least 10 years. Three trees (5%) of the individual trees on the Site are of high-quality (Category A) with an estimated life expectancy of at least 40 years. No trees were assigned to Category U (very poor quality, unsuitable for retention in the current site context).

The majority of tree groups (70%) were also assessed as being of moderate-quality (Category B). A single tree group is of high-quality (Category A) with an estimated life expectancy of at least 40 years. The remainder of the groups are low-quality.

Twenty-five hedgerows were identified with the vast majority (88%) being of moderate-quality (Category B). Three hedgerows were assigned to Category C.

The key findings of the survey are as follows:

- No veteran or ancient trees were identified during the survey.
- A number of significant and notable trees and groups (Category A) were noted during the survey.
- Checks undertaken of the relevant records held on the UK Government's MAGIC website have revealed there are no areas of Ancient or Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland present within, or adjacent to the site.

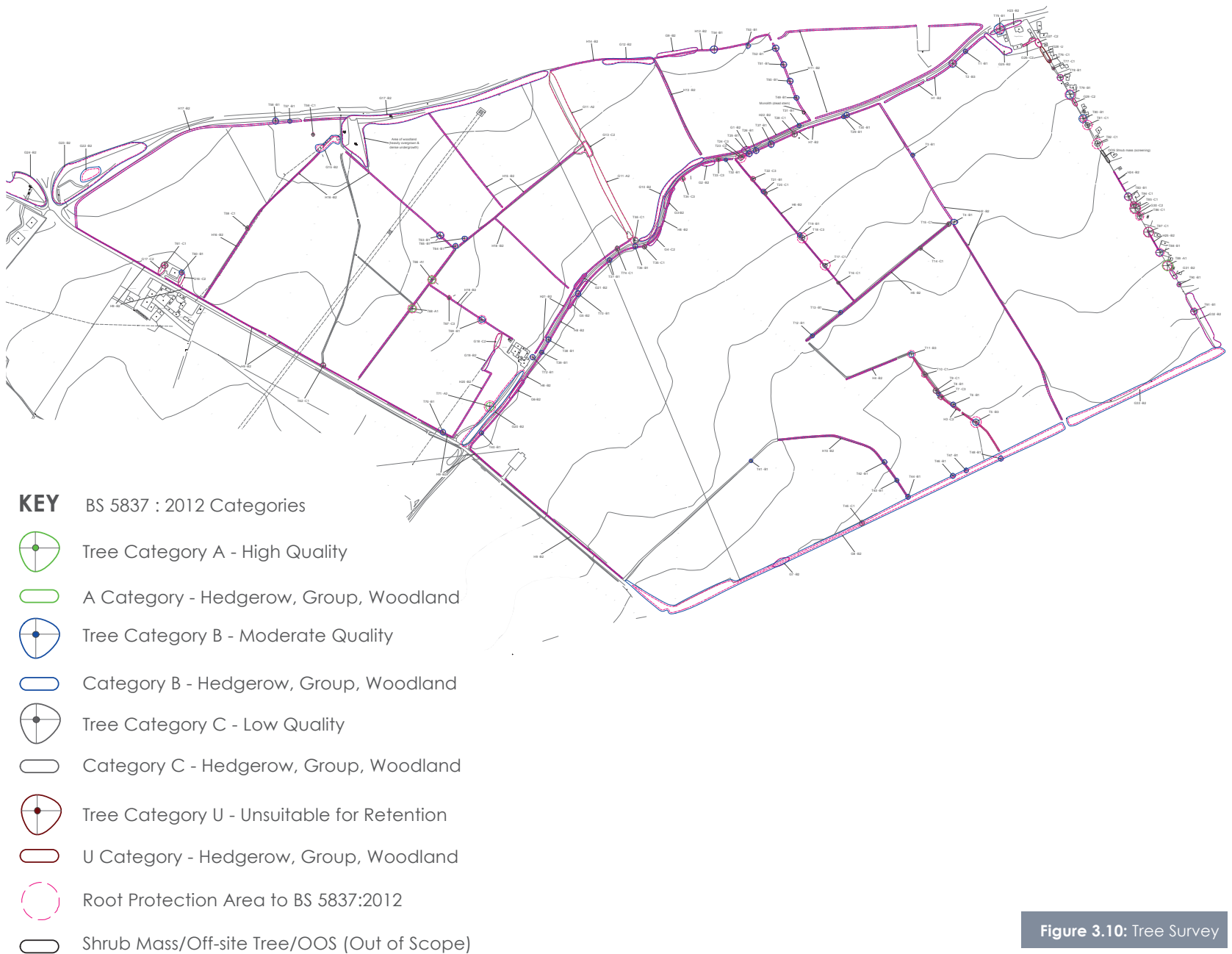


Figure 3.10: Tree Survey