

**Core strategy Green Belt Site Allocations, Bath
WHS Setting and AONB Updates**

November 2013

Addendum to Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment: Weston & Odd Down (October 2013)
*supplements previous Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, WHS and AONB Assessment work,
in particular CD9/CO7/1, CD9/LV/2, CD9/CO3/1, CD9/LV/3*

1 Weston Slopes

Summary

- 1.1 There is no change to the previous scoring of these sites. However for the site west of Lansdown Lane (Field C in Original Assessment) the previous assessment did not include the property and its garden immediately adjacent to Lansdown Lane. This additional area scores the same as the overall site but does contain a tree group which would be important to retain – see below. Suggestions for mitigation principles are set out below and on Plans 5 and 7 (Weston Slopes: WHS Setting & AONB Assessment Update; Mitigation Principles).
- 1.2 The site to the east of Lansdown Lane (Field D (road) in Original Assessment) is shown on the allocations plan to extend a little way beyond the current field boundary into the adjacent field to the east. This appears to be an illogical boundary and puts the existing hedgerow at risk. It is recommended that the site is contained within the one field.
- 1.3 The original conclusions for the Riding Centre Field (Field F in Original Assessment) are copied below and this assessment is unchanged:
- 1.4 Development comparable with the existing adjacent housing is relatively acceptable in the western third of the field with appropriate mitigation such as protection of existing field boundaries and importantly, tree planting in the central part of the field to mitigate for possible visual intrusion into the valley to the east. The central and eastern thirds of the field form part of or visually affect the landform of the important valley to the east. Development here would have unacceptably high impacts on this valley feature which could not be mitigated.

Mitigation Principles

Land West of Lansdown Lane

1. For optimal housing numbers combined with effective landscape mitigation the allocation site would be more effective if it extended a little further to the west to allow for screen planting (see **Plan 5**)
2. Existing trees with canopies overhanging site from properties on Napier Road should be protected during any development
3. Tree group within property adjacent to Lansdown Lane to be protected
4. Northern site boundary hedgerow adjacent to countryside to be enhanced with additional trees and should not form garden boundaries.

Land East of Lansdown Lane

1. Retain and enhance the existing hedgerow boundaries to the north and east. Existing hedgerow trees to be protected during development and additional trees to be planted in the hedgerows. In the event that access is taken off the access track to the north of the field then the large hedgerow tree indicated on **Plan 5** should be retained.

Equestrian Centre Area

Plan 7 illustrates some mitigation principles

1. No development in eastern third of field
2. Substantial tree belt on central north-south break of slope to ensure complete screening of built development from the valley to the east (setting of Beckford's Tower)
3. Retention of boundary hedgerows and trees as well as mature trees within the site where possible. Minimise breaching of hedgerow separating main field from narrow field in west of site

2 Odd Down

Summary

- 2.1 An Option 1 (site boundary contained to the west and either side of Sulis Manor) and Option 2 (site boundary to also include land adjoining the Wansdyke to the north) were tested. For both Option 1 and 2 the previous assessment remains unchanged. Sulis Manor is specifically included in both Options. This would score as high negative significance of effects in relation to both AONB and WHS Setting. The overall character of the site is of high quality mature woodland and it is a prominent local landscape feature. I have been unable to find any means in which a road could be taken through Sulis Manor to link the fields either side of it without significant loss of trees. It may however be possible to increase pedestrian access from the fields into the Sulis Manor site.
- 2.2 Given the difficulties of taking an access road through Sulis Manor, access into the western fields for both Options would need to be separate and be taken either from Burnt House Road or Combe Hay Lane. The preferred landscape option would be from Burnt House Road. Access off Combe Hay Lane would again come through the triangular field and require significant tree screening mitigation to reduce the impact of lighting associated with such a road junction.
- 2.3 Option 2 includes the **Lew Hill Playing Fields / Sports Ground** which has implications for the triangular field (West 2 in my previous assessment) adjacent to Combe Hay Lane. The previous assessment still applies. This field is particularly vulnerable to development effects causing visual impact on the WHS Setting and wider countryside beyond the site boundary to the south.

Effects of Playing field and Associated Infrastructure Development on Field Adjacent to Combe Hay Lane

- 2.4 This triangular field slopes gently towards the south with the steepness increasing gradually in the southern half of the field. As stated above the field is particularly vulnerable to development effects causing visual impact on the WHS Setting and wider countryside beyond the site boundary to the south. This is because there is a break in the mature woodland cover at the southern edge of the field and on the steep slopes which drop sharply down to the wider countryside beyond to the south.
- 2.5 At the very minimum playing fields would be surrounded by high fencing, have goal posts and changing facilities. Given the sloping nature of the field and its triangular shape there may well be the need for significant earth modelling to form level pitches. There would need to be significant additional woodland planting in the southern third of the field to have any screening impact on views from the wider countryside and it would be at least 10-15 years before such screening took effect. Indeed it is possible that such screening would not be effective due to the sloping nature of the field. Computer modelling would need to be undertaken to gauge the impacts of structures and lighting from the south.

- 2.6 With regard to floodlighting from playing fields there is already light pollution from the Park and Ride which affects views from the countryside to the south. Flood lighting from playing fields would compound that and have greater impact because of the lack of mature tree cover.
- 2.7 Overall the assessment of significance of effects of playing fields development in this field with or without additional infrastructure is high and negative. With the benefit of accurate computer modelling it is possible that this assessment might change slightly to medium to high negative significance.

Mitigation Principles

- 2.8 **Plan 6** (Odd Down: WHS Setting & AONB Assessment Update; Mitigation Principles) shows mitigation principles which apply to both options. It should be noted that until additional technical work has been undertaken it is not possible to specify exactly the acceptable southerly extent of development or acceptable building heights which will prevent visual intrusion into the WHS Setting to the south of the site. The dotted line shown on Plan 6 is therefore an indicative best guess.
- 2.9 Option 2 is preferred as it optimises potential for both development and mitigation.

**Bath and North East Somerset:
District Online**

Date: 8-10-2013

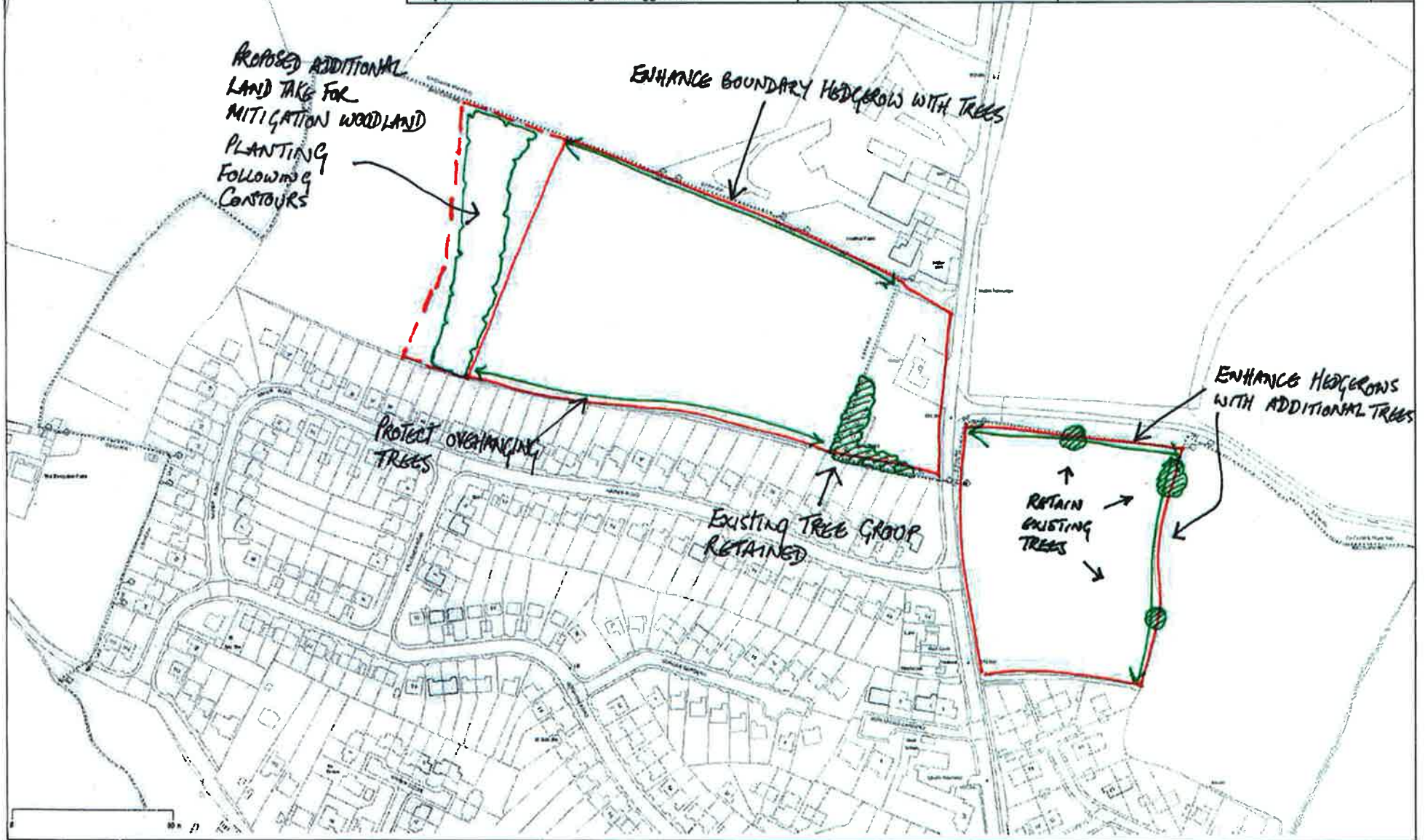
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~~Weston Slopes~~ **Weston Slopes PLAN 5**
Greenfield Site Allocations
~~Land Use and Planning Assessment~~ **WHS SETTING + ANNB UPDATE**
~~Key Features / Views and Mitigation Suggestions~~

Map Centre - easting / northing:
372381 / 167535



Odd Down

Greenbelt Site Allocations
Plan 6: WHS Setting and AONB Update

Scale : 1cm = 0.08281km

Date : 01/11/2013



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Legend

Likely extent of development

Existing tree belts to be retained

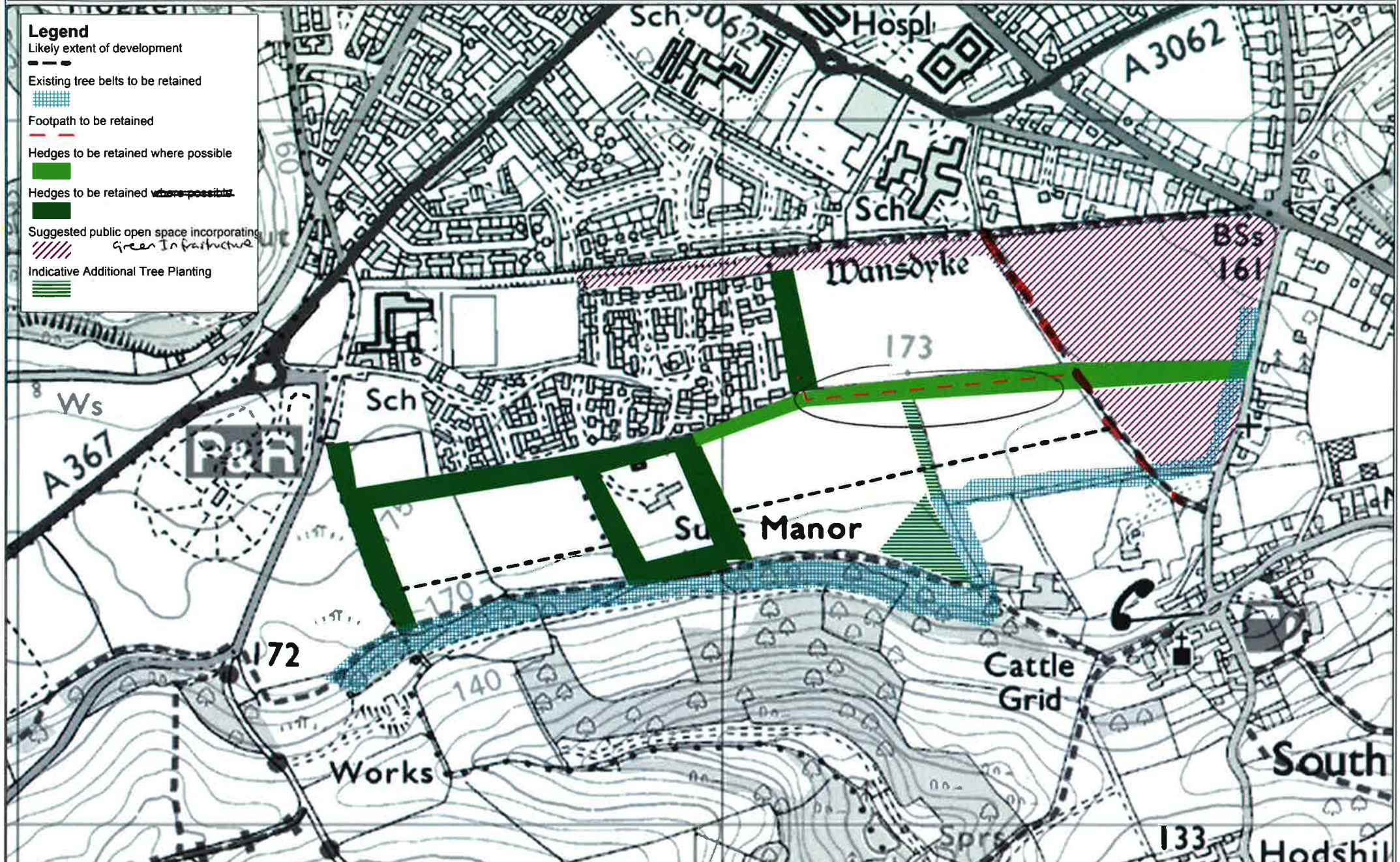
Footpath to be retained

Hedges to be retained where possible

Hedges to be retained ~~where possible~~

Suggested public open space incorporating
Green Infrastructure

Indicative Additional Tree Planting



Weston Slopes, Bath

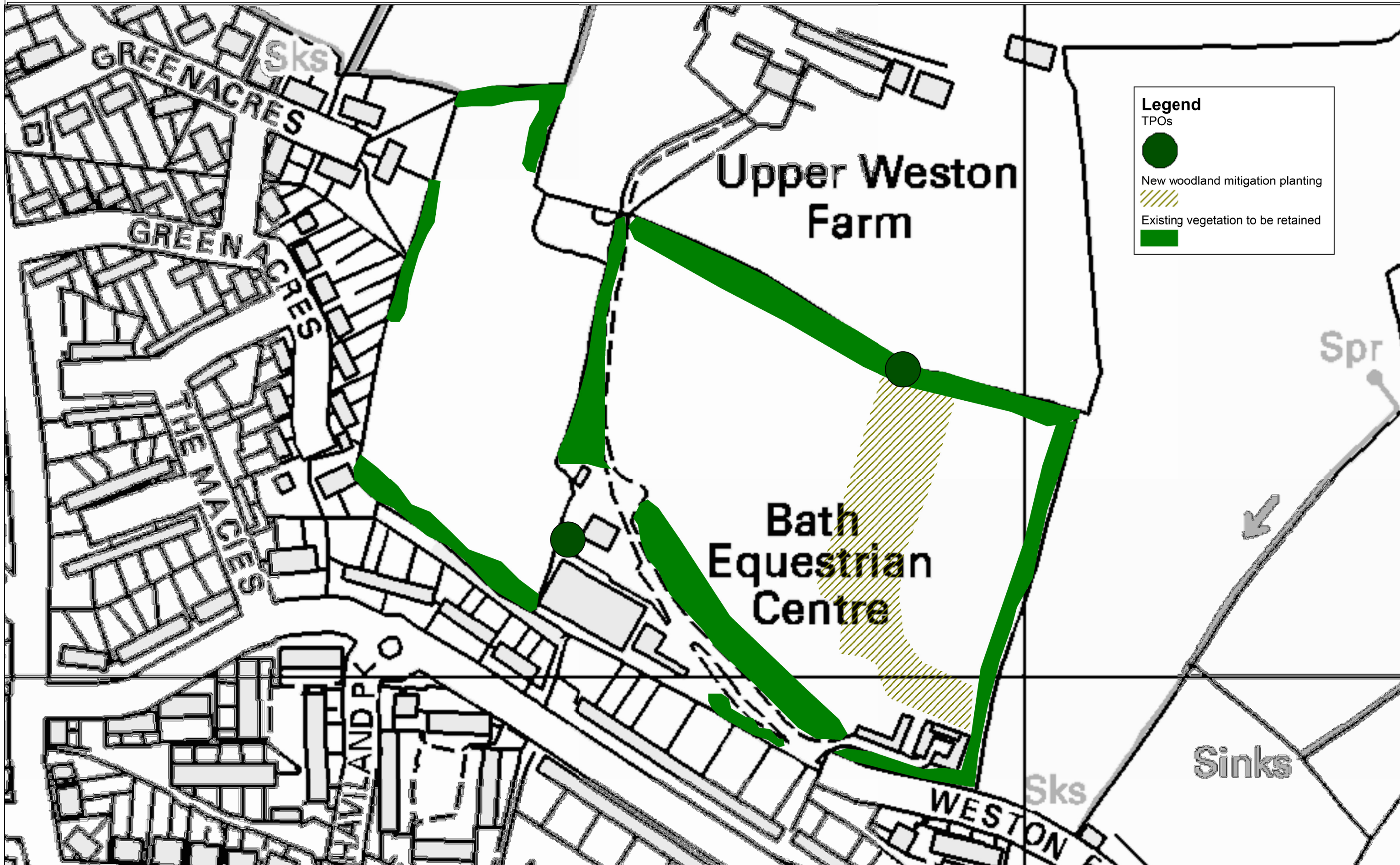
WHS & AONB Assessment Updates
and Mitigation Suggestions

Scale : 0.02380

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Legend

TPOs

- New woodland mitigation planting
- ▨ Existing vegetation to be retained