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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Mon, 25 Jan 2021 17:21:07 +0000ARC

To:

Subject: Proposed Local Development Plan Response - Carmichael Homes

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

[20210117 SBC Proposed Plan Response.pdf](#)

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find attached reponse to Proposed Local Development Plan, appendices to response are contained in subsequent 4 emails. I would appreciate if you could acknowledge receipt of this response and the following documents:

Proposed Plan Response

Appendix 1a – LVA

Appendix 1b – Flood risk Assessment

Appendix 1c – Ecological Assessment

Appendix 1d - Transport Statement

Appendix 1e – Road Safety Review

Appendix 1f – Landscape Masterplan

Appendix 1g – Tree Report

Appendix 2 – Location Plan

Appendix 3 HLA Comments

Regards,

Daniel P Harrington

MA (Hons) MRTPI

Director

Due to the Coronavirus situation, T.H.E. Architecture + Planning has deployed its Business Contingency Plan and all staff are working remotely. All services, processes and systems will be fully functional and I will be contactable via email and mobile phone as noted below as on any normal working day.

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Proposed Plan Representation

Scottish Borders Council

THE-20-0061

For Carmichael Homes Limited

January 17, 2021

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1 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Carmichael Homes in response to the Scottish Borders Proposed Local Development Plan. This report provides two responses to the Local Development Plan:

1. Planning for Housing P27-28 and Managing the Housing Land Requirement P193-202
2. Peebles Settlement Profile and Allocations

It is considered that the housing allocations within the Proposed Local Development Plan do not provide adequate supply within the locations identified forming part of the strategy for development. Specifically, Peebles, which is a high demand location, has a very limited supply of deliverable housing allocations with much of the land available constrained by infrastructure investment or land ownership issues. Much of the supply of housing is not in the locations that meets the arising demand placing pressure on affordability in these areas.

It is requested that a review of the housing land requirement is undertaken to ensure that the allocations made are likely to become effective within the plan period and fit with the development strategy for the authority. It is Carmichael Homes opinion that the supply is does not meet the Housing Land Requirements and a review should be undertaken to determine if additional allocations are necessary.

Carmichael Homes have submitted proposals for the inclusion of land at Venlaw, Peebles for the allocation for residential development of 22 homes. With the delay in progressing the Proposed Plan an application for Planning Permission (20/00753/FUL) has been submitted for the development of this site. Details of the proposal and the assessments undertaken have been attached to this response at Appendix 1 demonstrating that this is a deliverable site within a high demand location that fits with the strategy of the Local Development Plan.

The following modifications are requested to be made to the Proposed Local Development Plan:

1. Review the housing land supply to ensure that allocations are effective and fit with the development strategy.
2. Allocate land at Venlaw, Peebles as indicated on the location plan within Appendix 2. For residential development.

2 PLANNING FOR HOUSING

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) Requirement

Paragraph 30 of SPP expects that the development plan should both positively seek to meet the needs of the plan area and set out a spatial strategy which is both sustainable and deliverable, providing confidence to stakeholders that the outcomes can be achieved. It is these fundamental principles that the Proposed Plan fails to deliver.

The basic requirement is that local development plans should allocate land which will be effective up to year 10 from the expected year of adoption. The Council's Development Plan Scheme identifies that the predicted date of adoption is Spring 2022. Therefore, the expectation is that the LDP identifies allocations to meet the housing supply target inclusive of 2031/32. The Proposed Plan only considers the period to 2030/31 and requires to be extended.

Regional Planning Context- SESplan

The Proposed Plan adopts the strategy from the Strategic Development Plan noted on page 21 of the Proposed Plan.

The SESPlan was rejected and abandoned with The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. As confirmed in a Report to Scottish Borders Planning and Building Standards Committee on 2 September 2019 in relation to Housing Need and Demand the authority has taken the opinion that the HNDA has been confirmed as robust and credible and that the Wealth Distribution forecast was the most appropriate for the region.

The Proposed SESplan2 outlined the growth plan for the Scottish Borders for 2018-2030 and stated that all Strategic Growth should be directed towards three Strategic Growth areas, the locations are identified on Figure 3.5 of the Proposed SESplan – as shown in Figure 1, which have been outlined in red for clarity.

These areas are more defined to the settlements than indicated in Figure 3 of the Proposed Plan.

Peebles sits within the Western Borders area and will play a significant role in the growth between 2018 and 2030 as the largest town in that area.

The surrounding areas to these settlements were to be identified for Rural Growth beyond 2030. The housing allocations and strategy for development within the LDP that are

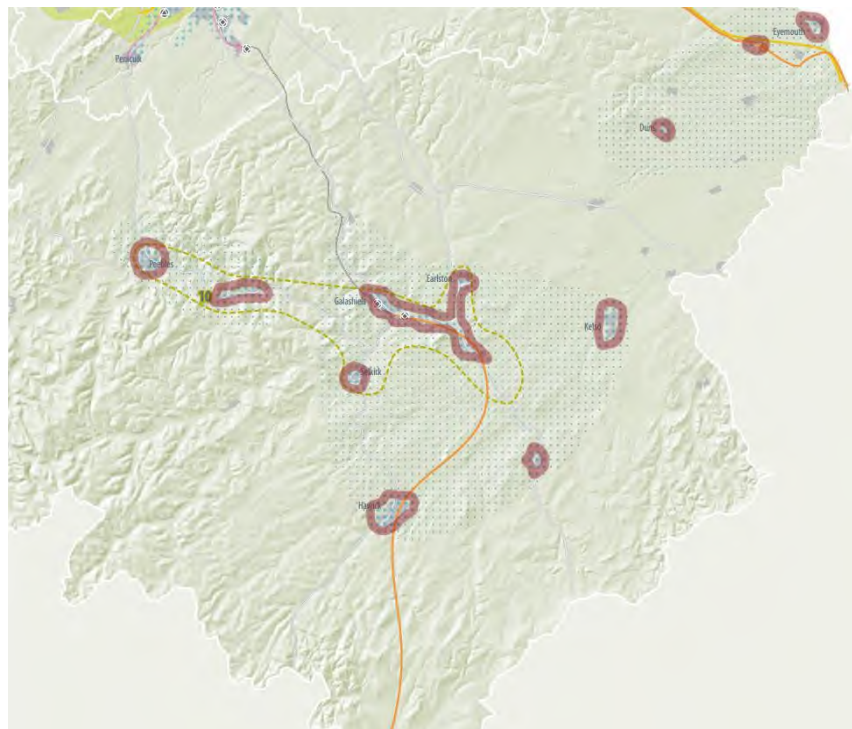


Figure 1: SESPlan2 Strategic Growth Areas

assessed within P193-202 do not take account of this strategy and include all housing allocations and potential for windfall development across the entire authority area. This assessment is not consistent with this strategy.

The City of Edinburgh is at the centre of the region and has significant influence on the surrounding areas. The HNDA identified that 11% of the sales in Scottish Borders were to purchasers from Edinburgh, placing pressure on house prices. This effect is greater on the radial routes, Peebles and Lauder are affected most from this as shown in Figure 2. Berwickshire is much less influenced by sales from Edinburgh.

The SESplan2 stated that, "SESplan member authorities will also consider deallocating sites carried over from multiple plan cycles where action taken has proved ineffective in making them deliverable over a number of plan periods" (SESplan2, 5.11). Thus, members of the SESplan area should not dwell on sites which are unlikely to deliver housing for the region, particularly now that regional policy requires development to be contained in the Strategic Growth areas outlined by SESplan2.



Figure 2: HNDA Edinburgh's Mobile Demand

Review of Housing Land Audit Sites

A review of all of the allocations, planning history and the likely effectiveness of the sites has been undertaken in accordance with the guidance in Planning Advice Note 2/2010. It is our client's opinion that there are a significant number of allocations that do not fit with the strategy and are not expected to be effective and or realistic that the full allocation will be delivered within this plan period. As with the Inverclyde Local Development Plan, it is necessary that the examination consider these matters in detail.

Comment on each of the sites listed within the established land supply have been made in Appendix 3 along with highlighting the age of the allocation and its fit with the development strategy.

In summary there are a significant number of old sites and a large proportion of smaller development sites within the Housing Land Audit. Much of the effective land supply is also located within smaller settlements that are unlikely to provide any significant contribution towards the housing land supply.

Windfall Assumptions

The Housing Appendix to the Proposed Plan identifies that there will be a contribution of 146 units p.a. for the first five years and 98 units p.a. for the remainder of the plan period. The information on windfall trends suggests that the average figure has been 99 units p.a. and there

is no justification to state why it is likely that the annual contribution will increase significantly. It is assumed that the Council consider the windfall proportion will increase as a function of increased delivery. It is also possible that the proportion of windfall sites is a large proportion is due to the constraints placed on the allocations in marketable locations. Through a well planned and researched development plan strategy it would be expected that the proportion of windfall (or unknown development opportunities) is likely to be much lower.

SPP Paragraph 117 states that “Any assessment of the expected contribution to the housing land requirement from windfall sites must be realistic and based on clear evidence of past completions and sound assumptions about likely future trends.” The figures presented are neither based on past trends or sound assumptions. With no evidence presented it cannot be assumed that windfall development will continue at the same rate that it has as this relies on brownfield or redevelopment opportunities becoming available that are not already allocated within the Local Development Plan, or that do not already have planning permission and listed within the extensive list of sites within the Housing Land Audit.

Table 5 on Page 196 of the Proposed Plan lists the effective supply (Years 1-5) as 3,679, but using the figures presented in the 2019 Housing Land Audit this would equal 3,086 units. It is not clear if there is double counting of windfall assumptions within this figure, but this requires to be clarified as it could result in a reduction in the short term supply of 593 units, more than is being provided by new allocations.

3 PEBBLES

Demand in Peebles

The demand in the Borders for housing is highlighted by increasing house prices and as shown in figure 1 below the house prices in Scottish Borders increased by the greatest proportion across all of Scotland, more than 10% over the year.

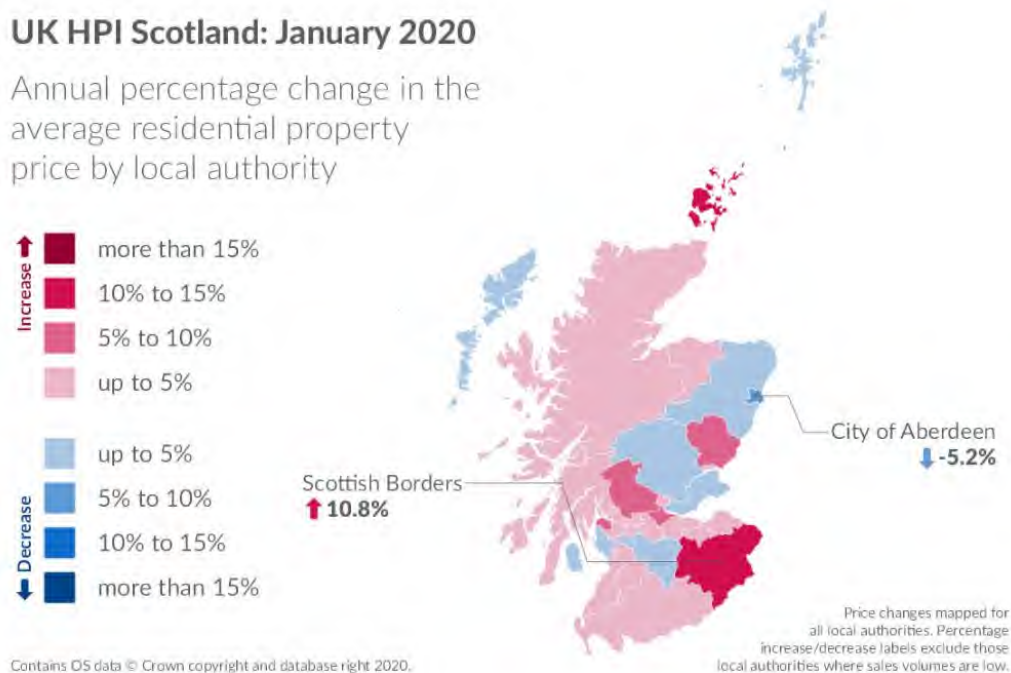


Figure 1: Extract from Registers of Scotland [UK House Price Index figures for January 2020 - Registers of Scotland \(ros.gov.uk\)](https://ros.gov.uk)

The SDP requires that Strategic Growth be directed towards the main settlements in the next plan period. Programming for Peebles has been reviewed to understand the outlook and attempt to forecast annual completion rates in the town up until 2031, the available supply is lower than what is required for a town which is going to play a vital role in the future growth of SBC. Given the location of Peebles within an area in demand from Edinburgh buyers, a lack of housing delivery in this location will increase pressure on affordability within the town. As indicated by the summary from the Housing Land Audit 2019 for Peebles there was one completion in 2019, two forecast for 2020 and a supply of between 25 and 50 per annum assuming that long standing sites in the latter part of the period become effective. Much of the low future supply relies on an allocation for redevelopment of the Caravan Park that is stated by the applicant as being unviable due to infrastructure requirements.

Site Ref. / Site Name		Site Area (ha)	Site Capacity	Completion		Est.	Eff.	20	21	22	23	24	Post 5 yr		Post 7 yr	Constrained	Units Not To Be Developed	LDP	WCA	Year Added (2003+)
PEEBLES																				
<i># Sites</i>																				
Large Sites Sub Total		8	21.24	419	69	1	350	180	2	25	50	55	48	55	35	80	0			0
				366	56		310	131	2	25	30	26	48	55	35	80	0			0
				53	13		40	49	0	0	20	29	0	0	0	0	0			0
Small Sites Sub Total		18	4.43	26	6	2	20	16												
Completed Sites 18/19 Sub Total¹		3			31															
PEEBLES																				
Total		26	25.67	445	75	34	370	196	2	25	50	55	48	55	35	80	0			0

Figure 2: HLA 2019 Extract

Evaluating past completions can provide evidence to consider the appropriateness of a development strategy, particularly in terms of deliverability. Looking at completions by housing market area and forecast completions within the Strategic Growth settlements shows that the Central Borders area has delivered the highest rates of development. Within the strategy there is a more significant focus on this area with major allocations. There is a reduction in the housing delivery in the Northern area despite the demand identified by the HNDA for this location. The table below sets out the historic housing completions for the Strategic Growth locations. The majority of development interest is focussed on Central Borders, but with the exception of affordable housing developments, rates of completions in the other settlements have been very low. Given past trends of below target housing completions, reducing supply in the Northern area will severely compromise delivery and it is considered that there should be a greater focus on development in Peebles to meet housing targets.

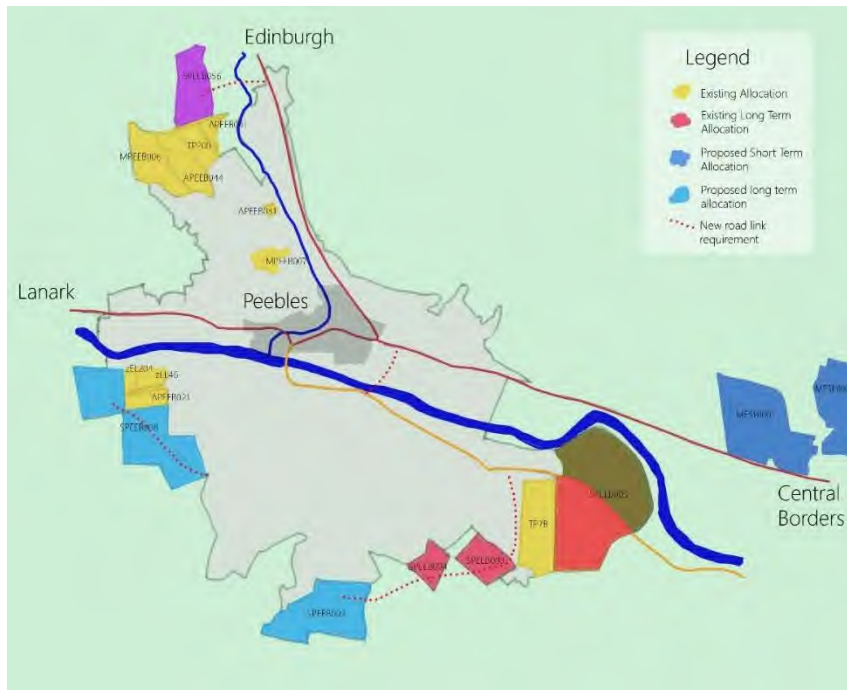
Completions in Main Strategic Settlements						
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Darnick	0	0	0	1	5	2
Duns	4	1	1	30	2	2
Eildon	1	0	0	0	0	0
Eyemouth	1	0	3	32	0	30

Galashiels	56	64	30	74	58	71
Gattonside	1	1	3	0	1	5
Hawick	14	14	4	17	38	0
Innerliethen	2	27	3	1	12	4
Jedburgh	0	1	5	0	2	3
Kelso	20	11	36	19	24	20
Melrose	9	8	10	15	4	9
Netown St Boswells	8	0	1	0	0	53
St Boswells	1	1	0	0	1	0
Peebles	57	33	47	74	17	1
Reston	1	0	0	0	0	0
Selkirk	2	4	3	3	1	2
Walkerburn	0	2	0	0	0	0
Source: Scottish Borders Housing Land Audit						

Whilst it is recognised the other towns may be attractive due to availability of land, they are not as marketable, they do not have the demand and will not deliver the housing units needed. There should be greater flexibility in the supply of housing land in a settlement such as Peebles that is integral to the strategy and is necessary to support local housing needs and demand.

Delivery in Peebles

The Settlement Statement for Peebles states that "It is the Council's opinion that Tweed Bridge does not have the capacity to serve any new development in the town, over and above the sites allocated in the Plan, with the exception of small infill proposals and other low traffic generating proposals which will be considered on a case by case basis... At this point in time there is no definitive date as to when the new bridge might be constructed and a feasibility study must be prepared in advance." There is no strategy to be able to deliver these allocations to support existing or future demand.



Allocation is made at APEEB056, which is noted for development of 150 units. It is considered that this development will be highly dense should it proceed with a capacity of 150 and not be in keeping with the surrounding area. The density proposed is 21 units per hectare. LUC stated that their brief from SBC was to locate sites for the upcoming development plan with a density of 30 dwellings per hectare, across a developable area typically 70% of a site. As a comparison the most recent development at Violet Bank included 40 units on a site of 2.6ha, a density of 15 per hectare, which is more appropriate in this context on the edge of the settlement.

The available and deliverable land in Peebles is significantly restricted as stated within the Settlement Profile for Peebles and there is no strategy set out in the Proposed Plan to resolve this situation. Consideration should be given to alternative housing options.

4 MODIFICATIONS AND PROPOSED ALLOCATION AT VENLAW

Due to a lack of supply in the right locations to meet housing need and demand it is requested that consideration is given to the land at Venlaw (Appendix 2) for housing to contribute to the overall housing land supply and delivery of housing in Peebles.

The site is deliverable and is subject to an application for Planning Permission. The application addresses the details around access, landscaping, design to provide a high quality development that minimizes its environmental impact.

The proposal aims to deliver 22 high quality residential properties with associated gardens and car-parking spaces within the existing rural context of Peebles. Peebles has a strong heritage, but the more modern nature of the more localised context provides little context on which is of value to replicate or encapsulate in the design. The design has been focussed on creating modern living accommodation with a holistic solution for housing in Peebles' naturally hilly landscape. The site is located to the north west of the settlement edge and forms part of a wider agricultural field which will be maintained with access available for residents and the surrounding community.

The proposed development is located on the edge of the settlement and is accessible to public transport, services and facilities in walking distance. This is a location that fits with the LDPs strategy for development. The site's location on the edge of the settlement maximises the potential to encourage sustainable travel, including accessible requirements. The development also makes efficient use of the landscape resource in this location.

The site also ensures that there is no flood risk created and the sustainable urban drainage is incorporated into the detailed design proposed. This is considered to be a sustainable development that fits with the strategy for development set out in the LDP.

The development proposal provides an attractive housing development that can be successfully integrated into the surrounding landscape of Peebles and has minimal effect on the setting of the town.



LANDSCAPE VISUAL APPRAISAL

Project: Venlaw Residential Development

Location: Peebles, Scottish Borders

Client: Carmichael Homes & Interiors



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Note: This report should be printed in colour at A3.
Front Cover: Aerial map of the local area by Google Earth, copyright Maxar
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01

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

erz Ltd have been commissioned by Carmichael Homes & Interiors Ltd to carry out a Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA) for the proposed residential development of on the site adjacent to the A703, Edinburgh Road at Peebles, in the Scottish Borders. This study considers the potential implications of the proposed development in terms of landscape character, together with effects upon a representative range of visual receptors.

The assessment, which is based on detailed development proposals, has been undertaken taking account of the context of the site within the settlement and the wider local area. The site lies out with the settlement boundary of Peebles as currently defined by the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016 (LDP). The site sits within both the Tweed Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) and the Venlaw Castle Designed Landscape in addition to the designed landscape there are cultivation terraces to the southern end of the site which are unscheduled archaeological features. The site is approximately 1.5km north west of the Upper Tweeddale National Scenic Area. Finally, the site is located within the Landscape Character Type 116; Upland Valley With Woodland.

Planning policies and guidance relating to the potential landscape and visual impact of proposed development are issued at national, regional and local levels. A full analysis of the proposals has been undertaken against the Scottish Border Planning Policies, including:

1. Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan (2016)
2. Landscape and Development SPG (2008)
3. Local Landscape Designations SPG (2012)

The overarching themes are to: safeguard landscape quality and assess the impact of proposed development, including visual impact and to manage land use at settlement edges, with specific reference to the landscape setting of proposed developments and their impact on the setting of designed landscapes.

The 2019 Scottish Natural Heritage Landscape Character Assessment identifies this landscape type, Upland Valley With Woodland (116) as being of:

- o Meandering river valley, strongly enclosed by uplands.
- o Flat valley floor, broad and open in places, narrow and more intimate in others.
- o Prominent terraces (haughlands) caused by fluvial and glacial action.
- o Strong influence of woodland, with extensive coniferous forest prominent on valley sides, and mature hedgerow tree lines, broadleaf, and mixed policy woodlands on valley floor.
- o Traditional dwellings, farmsteads and hamlets clustered at the foot of valley side slopes.
- o Mill towns prominent on valley floor and sides.
- o Tower houses and mansions common along river banks.
- o Prehistoric hillforts common on gently rounded hill tops.
- o Designed policies and parklands significantly contribute to woodland cover and character.

In this context, the landscape and visual impact of the proposal has been thoroughly examined through a structured process, as described in this document.

SITE PHOTOGRAPHY



Looking east to the site from Dalatho Crescent.



Looking east to the site from the A703.



Looking south along the A703 where the site access will be formed.



Looking east across the valley to the site.



Looking north from within the site to the elevated southern end of the site.

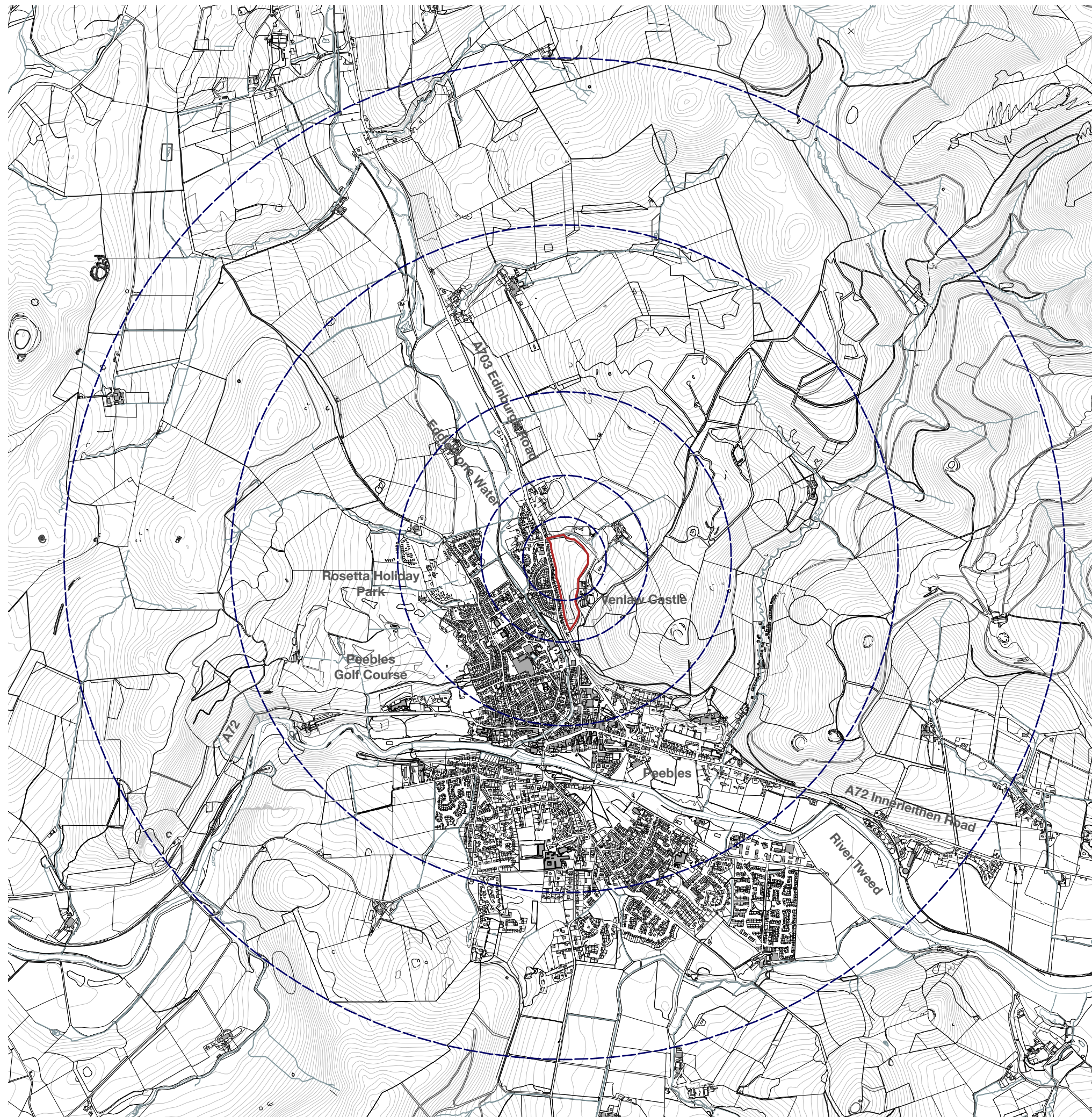


Castle Venlaw sitting above the site, currently undergoing refurbishment works.

LOCATION PLAN

WIDER CONTEXT

The proposed development site is located to the north of Peebles, approximately 20 miles south of Edinburgh. The local landscape is characterised by a mix of landscape typologies creating a varied and diverse area. Broad valley bottoms are created by meandering rivers which are bordered by a mix of agricultural fields and fragments of woodland with scattered designed landscapes. The sides of the valleys rise quite steeply to form uplands that are variously open moorland or forestry plantation. The settlement of Peebles is generally confined to the valley bottom.



Key

Site boundary

1:25,000

LOCATION PLAN

LOCAL CONTEXT

The site sits to the rear of properties along the A703, Edinburgh Road and approximately 1km to the north of the A72. These are locally and nationally important roads for both local and through traffic. To the north and east the access road for Castle Venlaw broadly follows the boundary of the site and is set in woodland. There is also a small burn to the north.

There is a line of single storey detached bungalows following the A703 to the immediate west of the site with more housing and commercial development between the A703 and the Eddlestone Water sitting in the valley bottom to the west.

To the edges of Peebles' settlement boundary are a number of different land uses including:

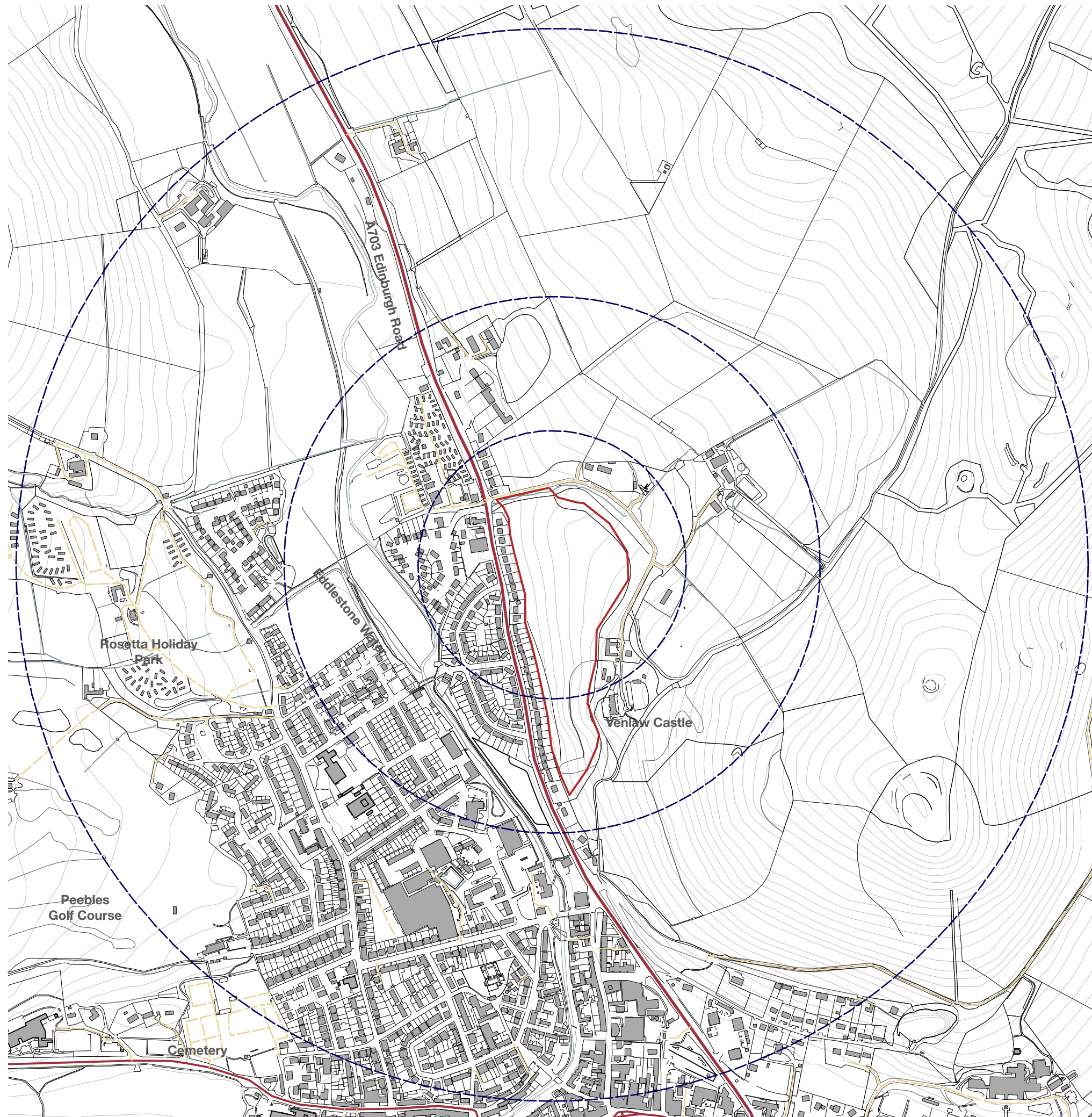
- Camping and caravan sites
- Golf course
- Schools
- Hotels
- Limited industrial/commercial units
- Cemetery

Historic plans show the site as forming part of the Castle Venlaw historic landscape and identify a similar open character since 1843, however this is not a designated 'Garden and Designed Landscape'. Castle Venlaw (category B listed) sits on the south east boundary of the site at a higher elevation. The access road to Castle Venlaw passes the northern boundary to the site with North Lodge (category C listed) situated at the junction between the access road and the A703.

Key

Site boundary

1:7,500



Key

Site boundary

1:7,500

PROPOSAL PLAN

The development of the site has been kept, as far as possible, to the lowest part of the slope to minimise impact on Peebles' existing landscape setting. On the whole the built fabric of Peebles is below the 190m contour, this precedent has been followed with the housing set below this level.

The landscape strategy embeds the development into the slope and uses planting to create a setting for the buildings that fits with the wider landscape context. The proposed built development, associated infrastructure and landscape works are focused within the lower portion of the site, with the remainder being preserved as open meadow with scattered trees. Woodland planting is proposed to the western boundary to screen the proposed dwellings from the existing housing along the A703.

A new vehicular access point will be formed off the A703 at the existing lane junction. The road will cross the burn over a culvert and will require a number of trees to be felled. This road initially rises quite steeply and then broadly follows the path of the 177m contour, rising gently along its length with a turning head at the southern end. Vehicle parking will be between the houses to minimise the impact of parked cars. There will be an accessible pedestrian route at the north of the site using both a 1:14/15 ramp and steps with the required landing points and handrails. Surface materials will be to an adoptable standard.

20no. Trees are proposed to be felled to create the site access and earthworks. 24no. semi-mature trees will be planted as replacements across the site. The 2no. Large trees to the south that are to be felled due to earthwork operations will be replaced with 4no. specimen trees planted to maintain the character of scattered trees in meadow. There will be a continuous belt of native woodland planting to the western boundary to filter views to the development.

The rear gardens of the properties are formed by cutting a series of terraces into the slope. The banks will be planted with an herbaceous/shrub mix with lawns on the terraces in between. Access to the gardens will be at first floor level with a paved area for seating. From here there will be a path and steps up to another paved area at the higher lawn level to make best use of the expansive views. In addition to this there are 69no. proposed trees which will be a smaller scale heritage fruit tree. The gardens will be divided by lines of beech hedging.

The slope created to the rear of the gardens will be seeded with a wildflower meadow to help blend proposals into the meadow that currently exists on the hillside. In addition to the meadow seeding, replacement specimen trees are proposed.

There is a proposed swale to the western edge of the proposed access road, to catch and treat surface water run off. This will be seeded with a wet meadow seed mix with additional native marginal species around outlets where soil is likely to remain wetter for longer. There will be another swale to the top of the slope at the eastern edge of the site to catch water running down the hill. This will be seeded with the same seed mix.

See plans and DAS for more information

Key

Softworks

- Specimen Tree: Specimen semi-mature tree: 25/30m girth, av. 6-7m tall
- Landscape Tree: Semi-mature tree: 20/25m girth, av. 4-5m tall
- Garden Tree: Heritage fruit tree: 1.8m standard, 120cm dbh, 80cm clear height; Native species: 250/300 multistem, rootballed
- Existing Tree Retained & Felled: See also 1.8.2.1 #05 for more information
- Existing Woodland Tree not surveyed
- Proposed Woodland Planting: 3 plants per stem, 100-125cm tall, bare-root; 6 plants per stem, 175-200cm tall, bare-root; Underseeded with wetland seed mix
- Shrub/Herbaceous planting: 6 plants per stem, 2.5m tall
- Lawn: Turfed with hard wearing sward
- Existing Meadow: Eastern field outside of main development - protected from construction works
- Proposed Meadow: Main development site - seeded with native wildflower meadow mix
- Swale/Wetland: Lined wetland area with marginal plant species, full cycle of 6:00 system, collects surface water from surrounding soft
- Hedge - Proposed: Rustic hybrid: double row, 2.5m high, 100cm tall; 2.5m high, 100cm tall; 2.5m high, 100cm tall; 2.5m high, 100cm tall

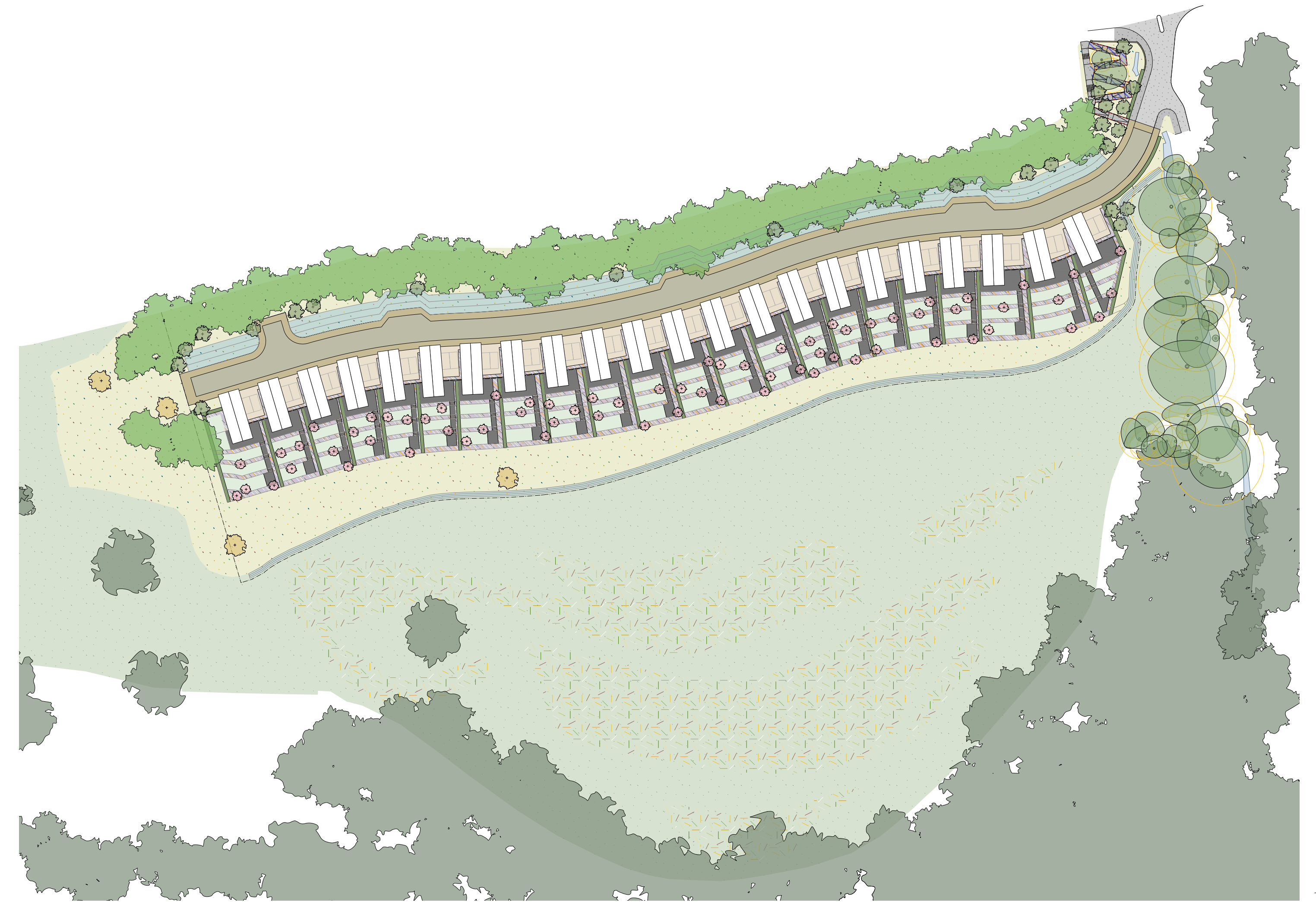
Hardworks

- Asphalt: To site entrance junction & pedestrian access path; Hatch signifies no dig construction
- Paved Concrete Pavers: To road and footway, product tbc, in an appropriate standard, contrasting colour
- Precast Concrete Pavers: To garden paths and carports, narrow gauge, herringbone, colour tbc
- Rein Board Gravel: To private driveway, Precast PCC, colour tbc

Boundaries

- Low Stone Wall: To site entrance, 1.2m high with posts to cap
- Retaining Wall: Between properties, to engineer's design and specification
- Balustrade: On top of retaining wall, glass balustrade to match architectural specification
- Steps: Precast concrete step units with visibility strips, colour tbc
- Handrails: To pedestrian entrance path, steel vertical bars, colour tbc
- Location for post and wire fence: To allow grazing of water meadow if required

Scale: 1:1,000





02

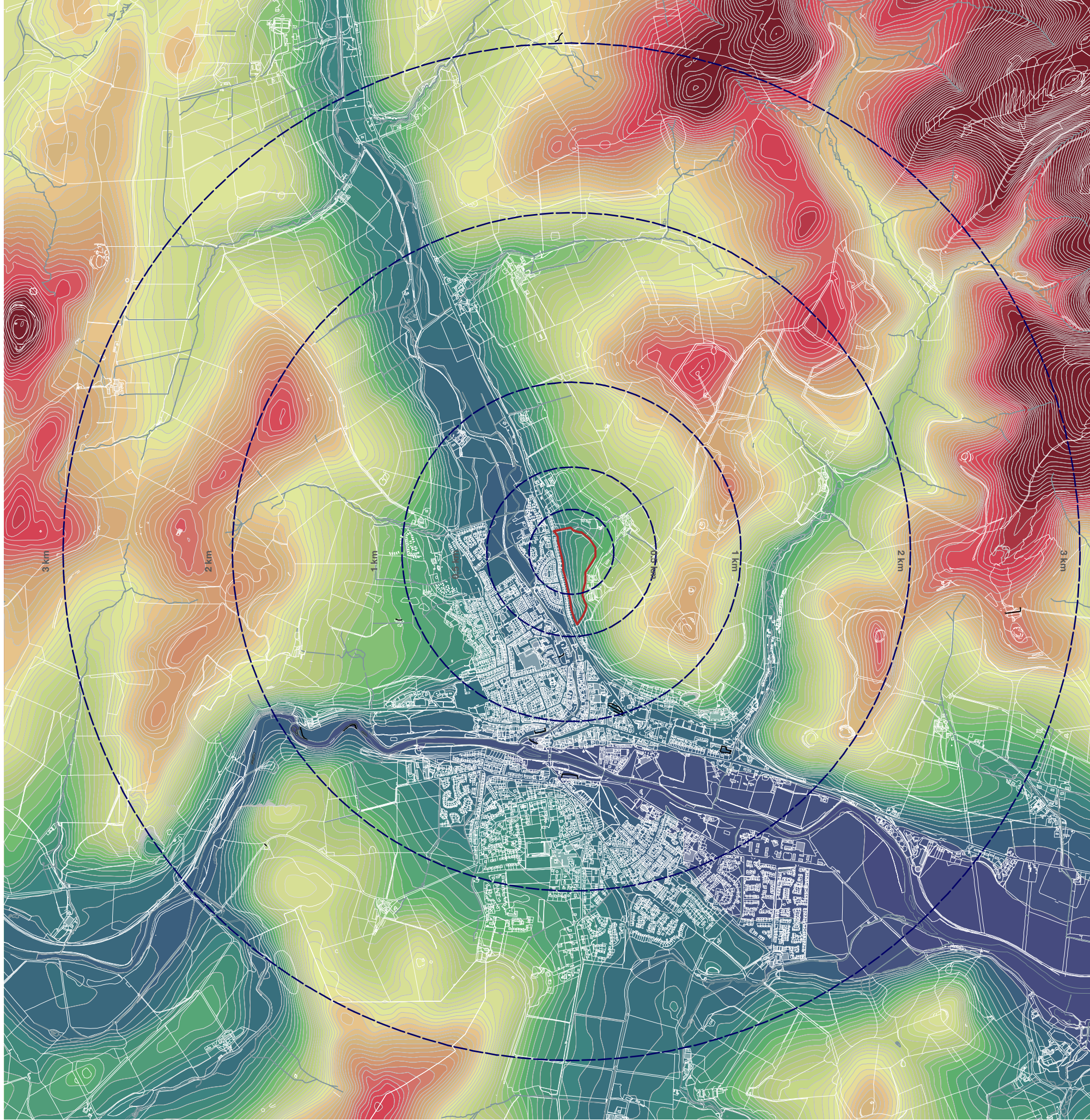
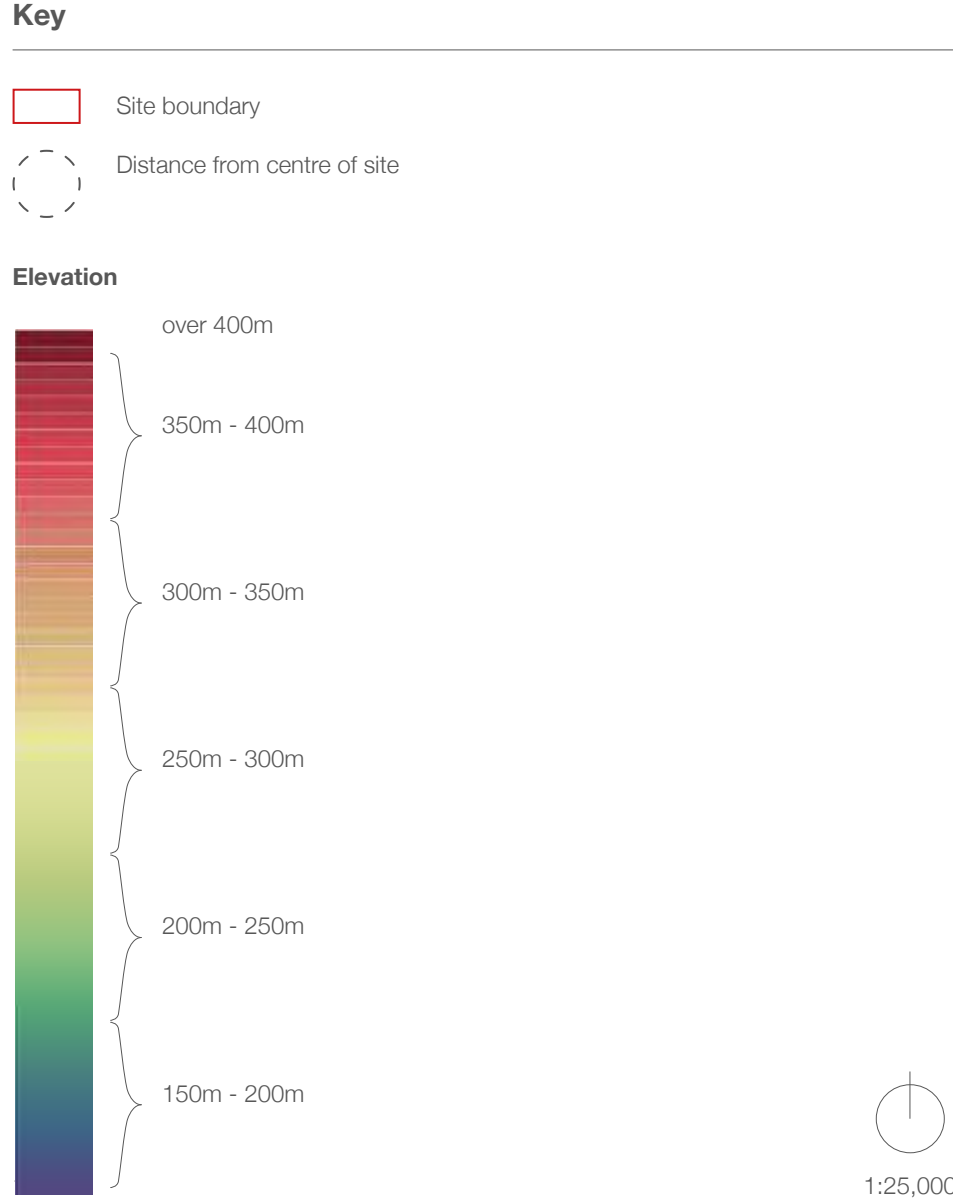
BASELINE ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS PLAN

TOPOGRAPHY: MACRO

The site sits at the foot of a field on the eastern slope of the Eddlestone Water valley. The land rises steeply from approximately 175m at the foot of the site and continues to rise to the surrounding upland hill summits which range from 380-580m, within the study area. The land on the western side of the valley rises to form a north-south ridge at a height of 350-370m. Beyond this ridge the land rises to summits ranging from 365-475m.

To the north the Eddlestone Water valley is wide and flat bottomed. Approximately 1km to the south it meets the Tweed river valley which runs west-east. Again the Tweed mostly sits in a wide flat bottomed valley flanked by steep sided hills extending to the south. Within the study area there is a pinch point to the west of Peebles where the valley becomes very narrow.

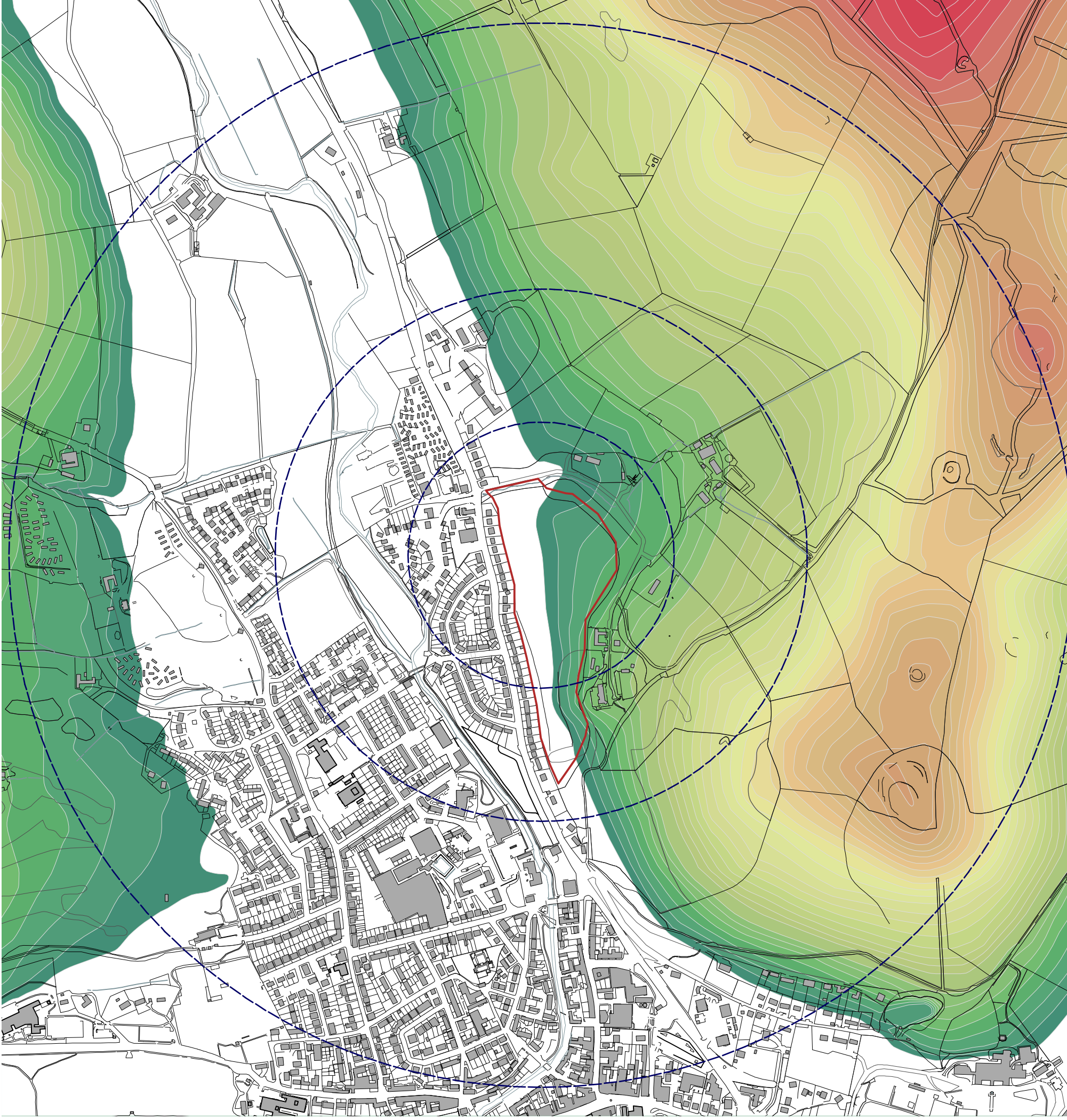
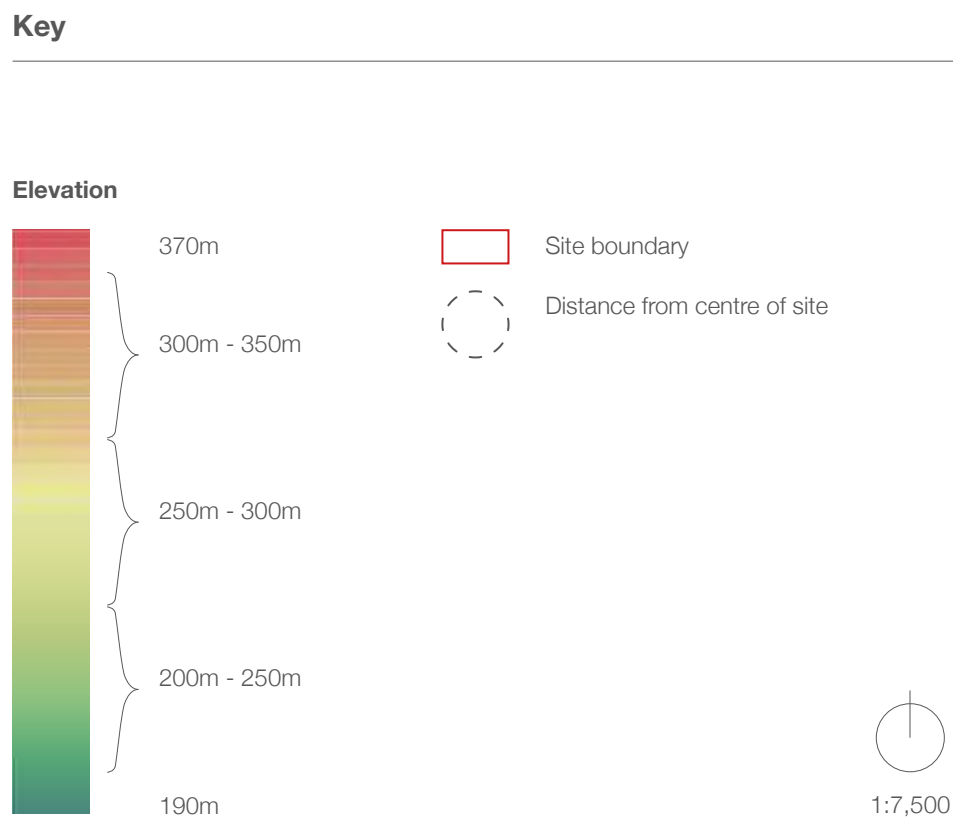


ANALYSIS PLAN

TOPOGRAPHY: MICRO

Locally the site occupies a steep field which rises from 175m to 210m. Castle Venlaw occupies a promontory of higher ground at a level of approximately 215m. The eastern side of the valley to the north rises steeply from the edge of A703. To the south of the site there is a promontory of higher ground where the Eddlestone and Tweed valleys meet. This land rises to a height of 325m and again rises steeply from the A703.

Peebles sits within the valley bottom and generally development is situated below the 190m contour, with some localised exceptions, for example around the Peebles Hydro Hotel. The adjacent diagram highlights the relationship of built development to the 190m contour by only shading land that sits above 190m.



ANALYSIS PLAN

WOODLAND STRUCTURE

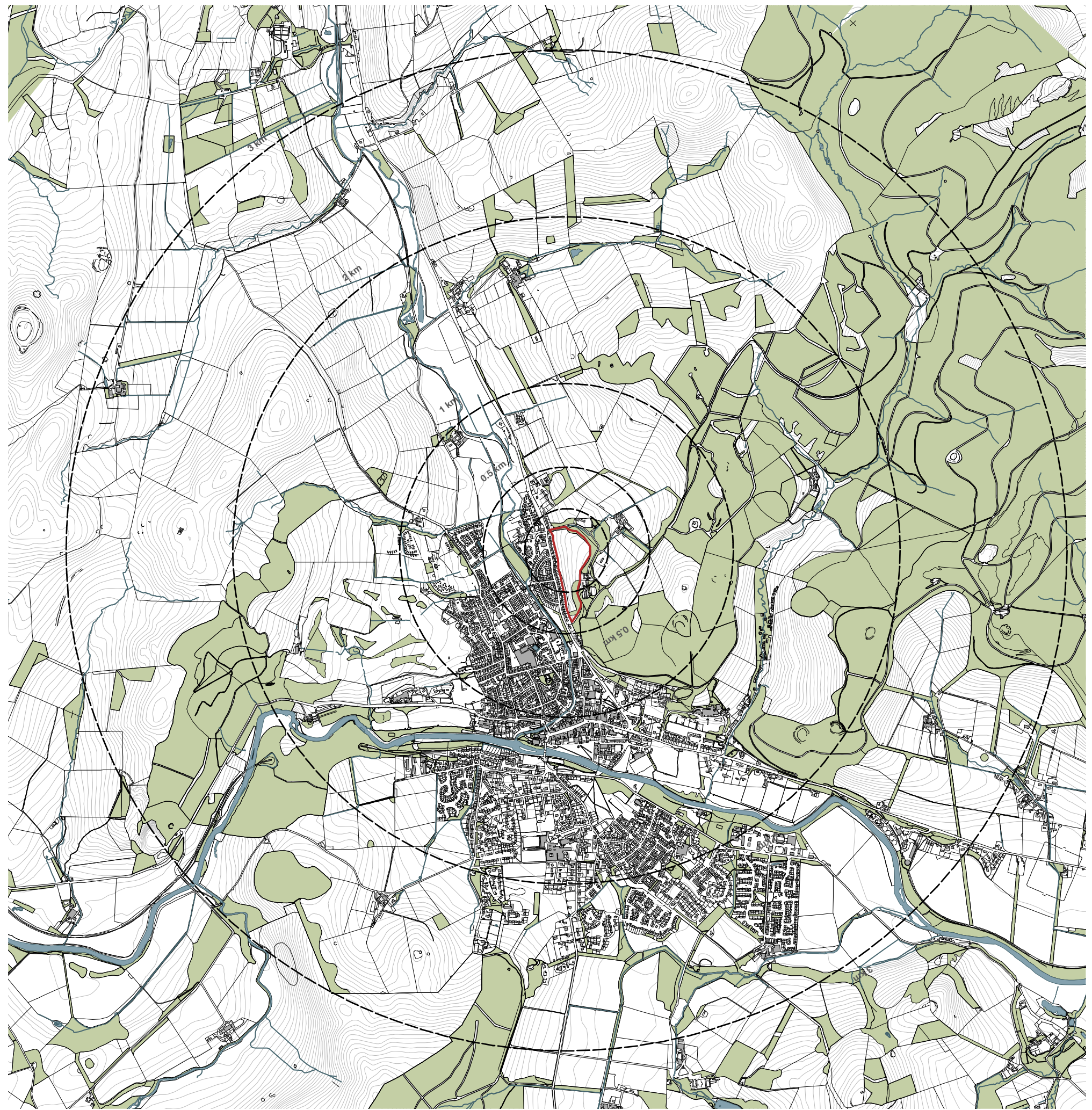
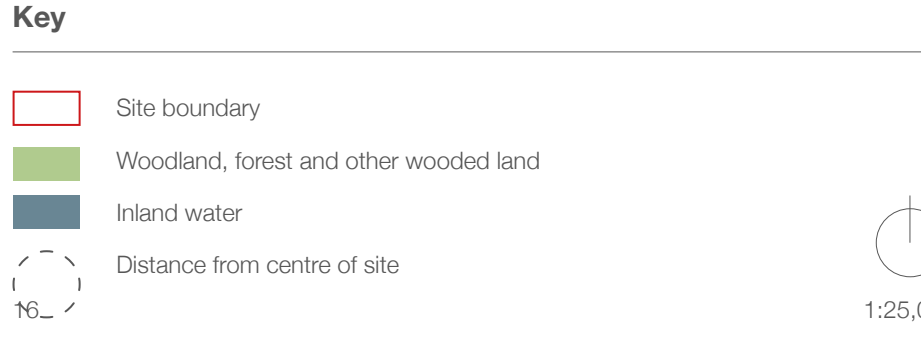
The local landscape is one of fragmented woodland (of both mixed deciduous and commercial forestry) and open moorland/upland farming. The bulk of the woodland to the east of the site is commercial forestry. There are also some blocks of forestry occupying higher ground to the west.

In the valley bottoms there are fragmented groups of mixed woodland that are often linear in nature following the rivers or field boundaries.

A band of mature deciduous woodland forms the site's northern and eastern boundaries. This woodland, along with other surrounding plantings, screens the site from the hills to the east. There are a larger number of bands of woodland on the eastern slope than on the western side of the valley. The western side of the valley is more open with a higher quantity of agricultural fields with forestry on the ridge.

The land to the south again demonstrates a mixture of fragments of woodland along field boundaries, roads and valley bottoms, combined with the larger forestry plantation of Cademuir Hill. Also, when viewed from a distance, Peebles itself has a large number of urban and garden trees which break up the urban character, visually blending it into the surrounding landscape

Overall this gives a character of blocks and bands of quite dense closed woodland which opens to fields creating a landscape that is varied and rich framed by open uplands rising above in the distance.



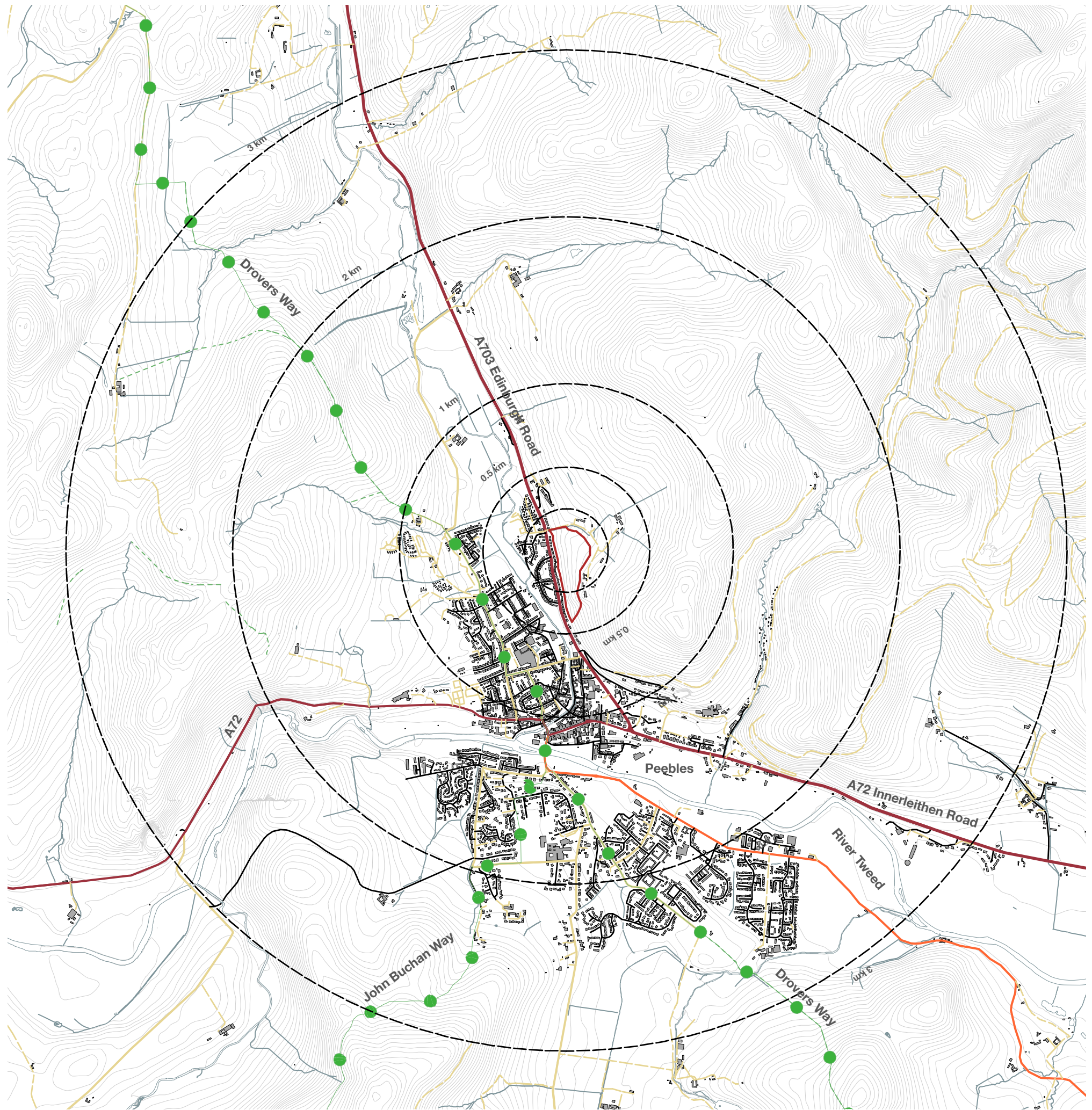
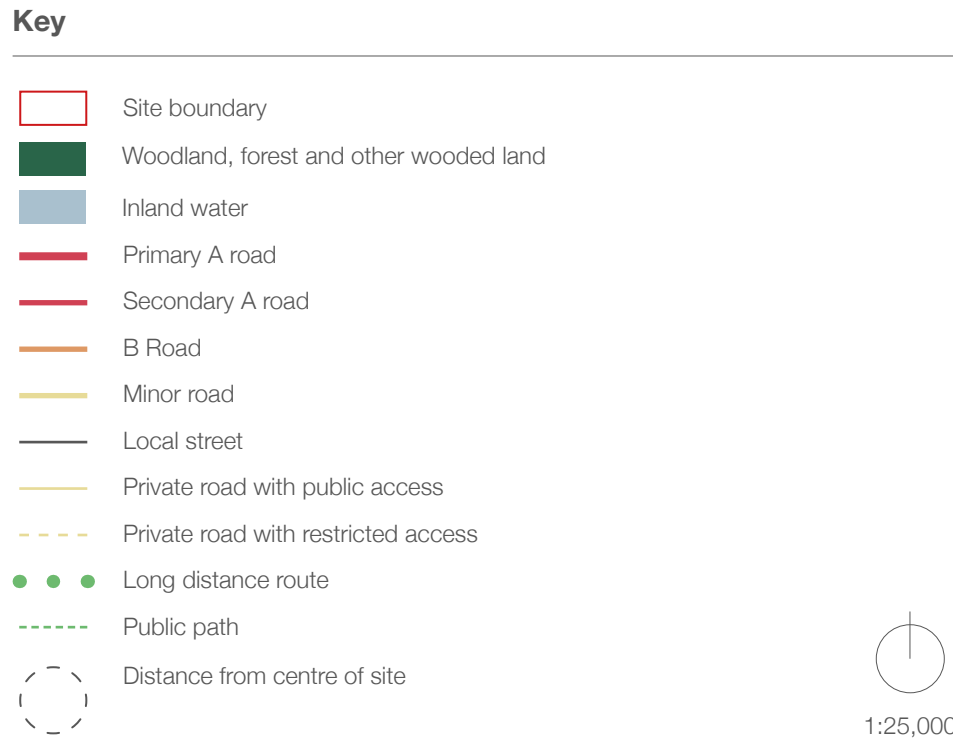
ANALYSIS PLAN

ROUTES AND ROADS

The adjacent plan highlights the various routes and roads that are accessible to the public and as such form the basis for the assessment of visibility. Whilst all open land is publicly accessible in Scotland, these routes were used as the focus for the assessment of visibility as most users will be concentrated on these routes.

In addition to the network of local rights of way, the John Buchan Way and Drovers Way, two long range paths run broadly north-south through Peebles.

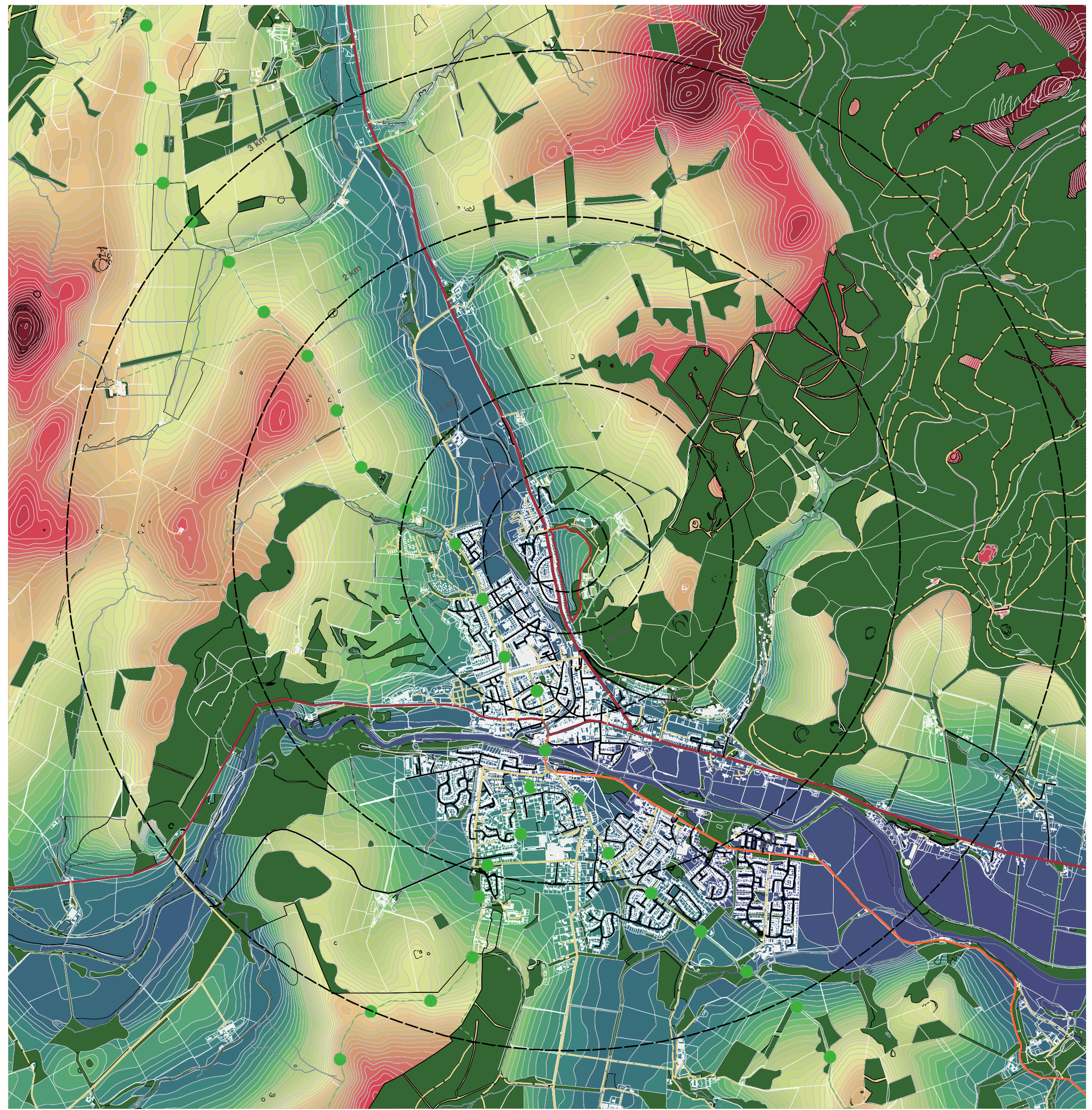
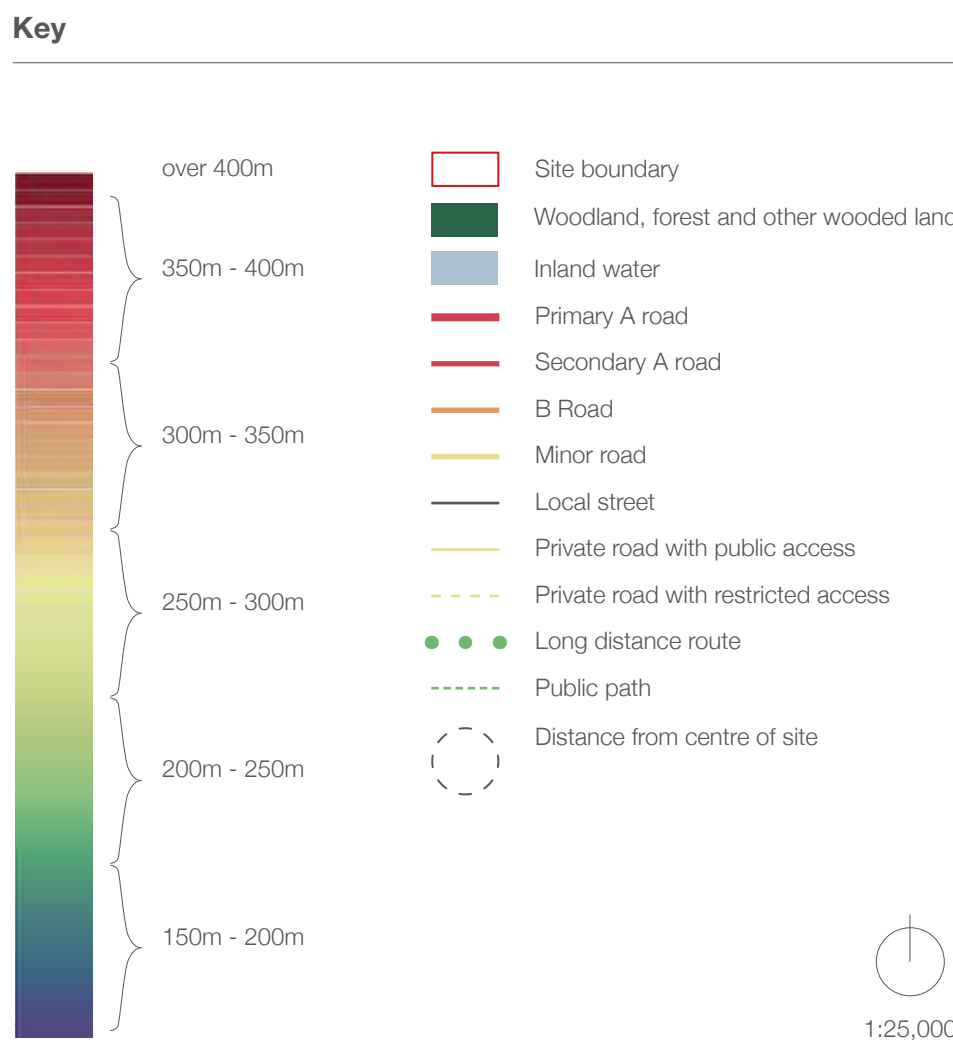
The two main roads in the study area are they A703 which runs north-south from Peebles to Edinburgh and the A72 running east-west to along the Tweed to Selkirk. In addition to this there is a limited network of small B roads and lanes, some of which are very narrow and singletrack in places.



ANALYSIS PLAN

INFORMATION OVERLAY

The adjacent plan shows topographic information overlaid with woodland structure and routes. The topography and woodland structure within 500m of the site largely contain visibility from the east and south east. As such based on the desk based analysis, it is anticipated that the development will be most visible from the west and south west.



VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS

LOCATION PLAN

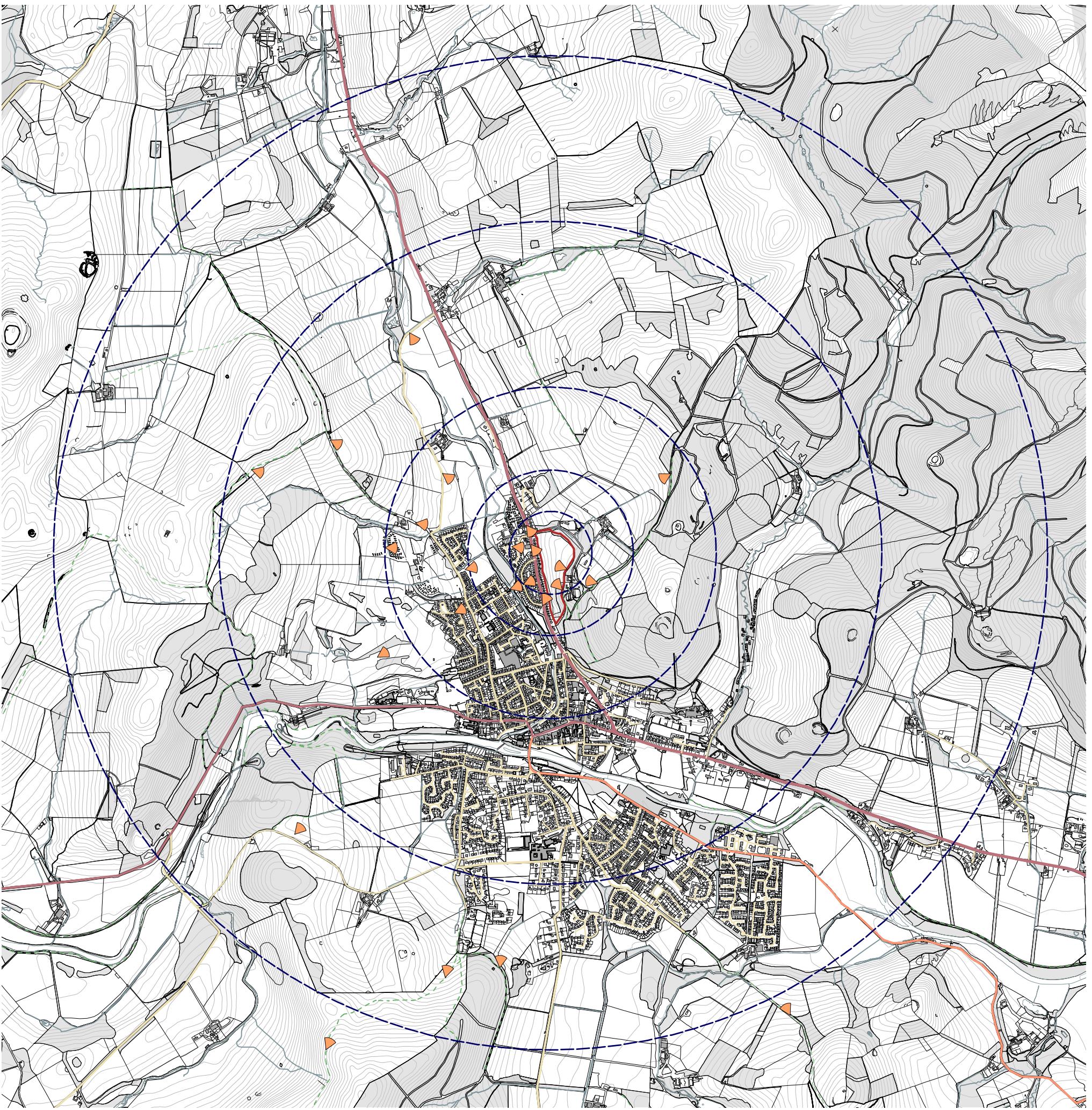
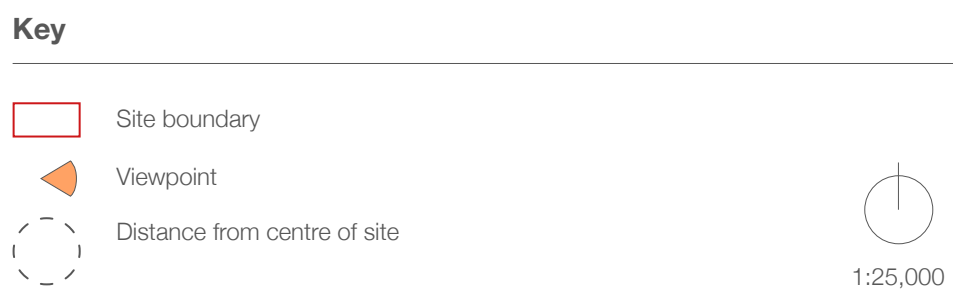
The desktop analysis helped to inform the initial scoping of viewpoints for consideration. In total 24 viewpoints were initially reviewed. The viewpoints were assessed to represent the likely or possible extents of visibility primarily within 3km of the site with a small number of long range viewpoints over 3km away.

As public routes border the site on three sides, viewpoints from each of these routes were selected. Viewpoints were also reviewed in residential areas in the local vicinity, the local golf course and caravan site. To the north, the roads within the valley bottom were reviewed. Multiple viewpoints were reviewed along the two long distance footpaths to the north west and south, and along a high level path to the west.

Viewpoints were scoped and recorded on 8th September 2020. The weather was overcast with good visibility, brightening in the afternoon. The purpose of the scoping exercise was to test current thinking and rationale, refining as required.

This initial scoping of viewpoints would go on to inform the selection of the final set of viewpoints, for more detailed assessment.

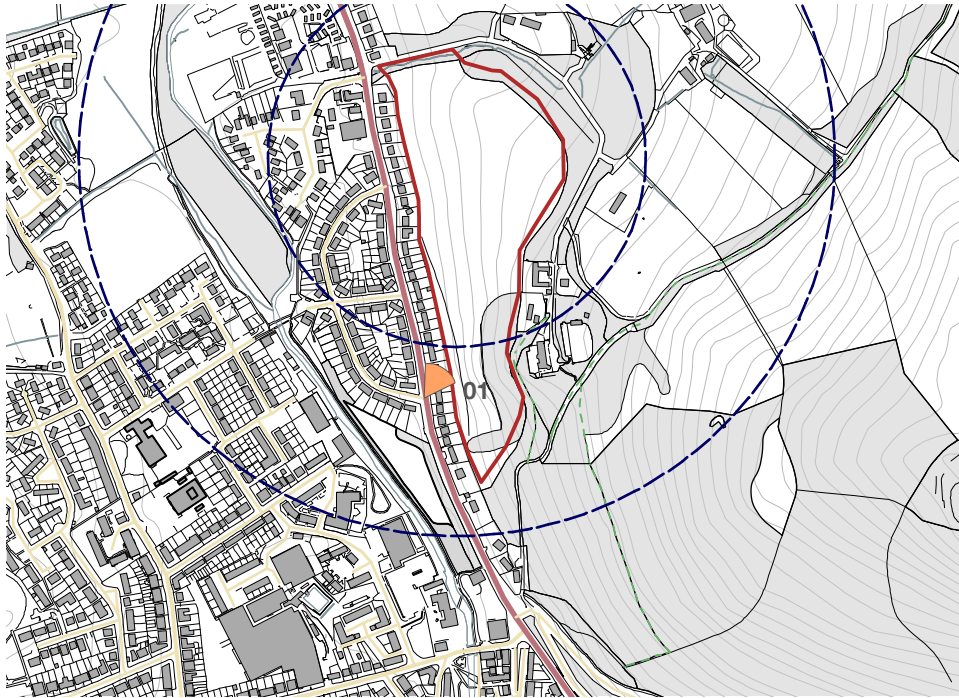
Viewpoints 01-07 are in close proximity to the site or within the site and, as will be described, impact on the existing views in different ways. However, this study does not undertake further investigation of impacts on these viewpoints due to their close proximity any visualisations would be too narrow in view to add anything further in terms of assessment of impacts.



VIEWPOINT 01

VP 01 was taken from the junction of Dalatho Crescent and A703. The development will be clearly visible to the rear of the housing along the A703 and will likely break the skyline. The proposals will impact on this stretch of the A703 but from this viewpoint the character of the A703 is of residential development to both sides and so the development will not fundamentally change the landscape type/character. From this viewpoint the meadow and wooded landscape beyond are not visible

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 02

VP 02 was taken adjacent to the car dealership on the A703, towards the northern end of the site. Again the development will be visible above the bungalows on the A703, but from this viewpoint the meadow and woodland are visible. The introduction of the proposed development will increase the visual density of development in this stretch of the A703 resulting in a more urban character, as opposed to the visually permeable low rise development that currently exists. The proposed development will have a visually significant impact at this point, entering Peebles from the north on the A703 increasing the visual density of development.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 03

VP 03 was taken from the A703, north of the site. The cottages in this image are the last of the continuous built development as one travels north out of Peebles before the A703 heads into a rural landscape. The access road to Castle Venlaw is visible, as is the Category C listed North Lodge, (listed for group value with the Castle). The proposed development will be set back from the bungalows that front onto the A703 and will be viewed obliquely. As such the proposed housing will add to the intensity of the urban character of this stretch of the A703 but won't fundamentally alter its character as the long views to the hills to the south will be maintained. However, the access road to the site will be taken over the burn in this view and a number of trees will be felled to accommodate this. The loss of these trees will locally impact on the character of the A703 entering the urban area of Peebles and will also impact on the setting of the North Lodge.



VIEWPOINT 04

VP 04 was taken from inside the site on the eastern boundary. The development will be visible to the base of the slope but will act as a foreground to already existing residential development in the valley bottom. From this height the long views to the west will be preserved. In addition to this, the access road to Castle Venlaw sits behind a bank of trees which will screen the development from this route.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 05

VP 05 was taken within the field below Castle Venlaw. At the time of the site visit, the castle was an active building site and so access was not permitted. This viewpoint was taken to infer the impact on views from the castle. The land slopes very steeply down to the A703 at this point and there are a number of mature specimen trees on this slope. The development would sit at the base of the slope, to the north of the castle. The orientation of the castle suggests that main views will not be impacted on due to the direction of view, elevated position and tree cover. The development is likely to be viewed obliquely and through the trees from the grounds. It is therefore suggested that the impact on the setting of the castle and views from the castle will only be slight and long distance views from the castle will be unaffected, although this could not be fully confirmed.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 06

VP 06 was taken from Dalatho Street looking east towards the A703, with the development site behind. Most of the development will be screened by the existing houses although it is likely it will be glimpsed through the gaps between, it will also sit low enough to obscure the tree line along the top of the hill. The most southerly proposed dwellings will be visible at the end of Dalatho Street. This, in turn with the loss of the mature tree, will impact on the view along the street as the character of the view will partly lose its agricultural/rural backdrop. Proposals stop just south of the mature tree and so the southern portion of the meadow is still visible.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 07

VP 07 was taken from Crossburn Farm Road looking east. The development will be visible beyond the current houses and fill in the gaps between them. However, from this viewpoint the existing dwellings already break the sky line and a number of other buildings are visible. The proposed development would not fundamentally alter the character of this view.

Viewpoints 01-07 are in close proximity to the site or within the site and, as has been described, impact on the existing views in different ways. However, this study does not undertake further investigation of impacts on these viewpoints. Due to their close proximity any visualisations would be too narrow in view to add anything further in terms of assessment of impacts.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 08

VP 08 was taken from the track east of Castle Venlaw, looking west towards the site. The site is entirely screened by woodland planting and the falling topography. We do not deem this viewpoint necessary for further consideration.

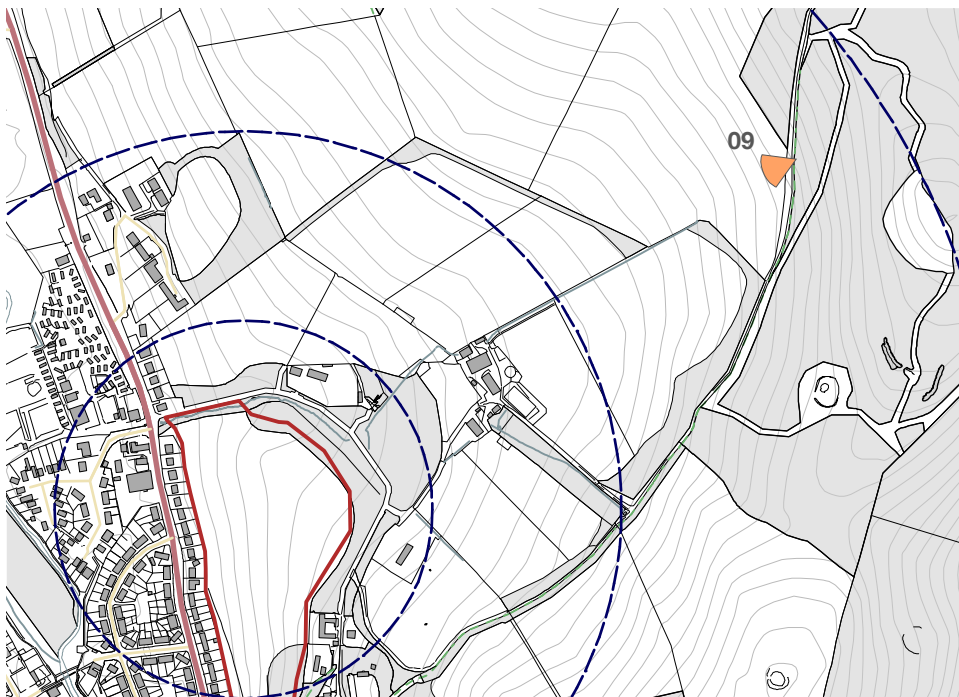
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 09

VP 09 was taken further up the track from VP 08 to ascertain if the site became visible as one gains height. Again, the site is entirely screened by woodland planting and the falling topography. We do not deem this viewpoint necessary for further consideration.

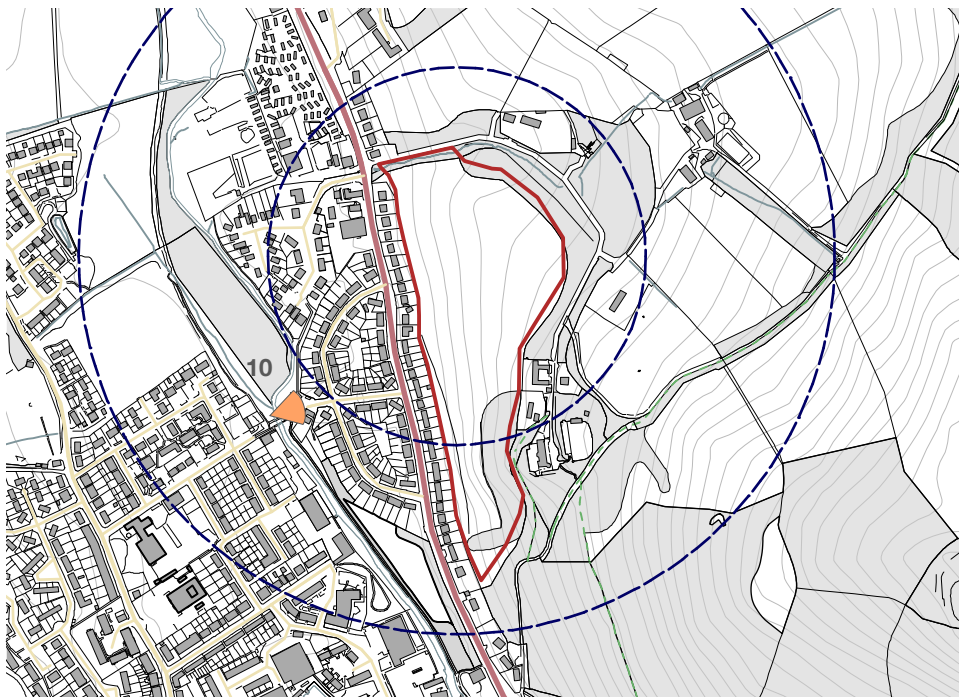
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 10

VP 10 was taken on the banks of the Eddlestone Water adjacent to the public foot bridge. Quite a large portion of the site can be seen rising behind the existing residential development. Further investigation is required to ascertain the extents of visibility and whether the development impacts on the views of the wooded ridge or whether it breaks the skyline.

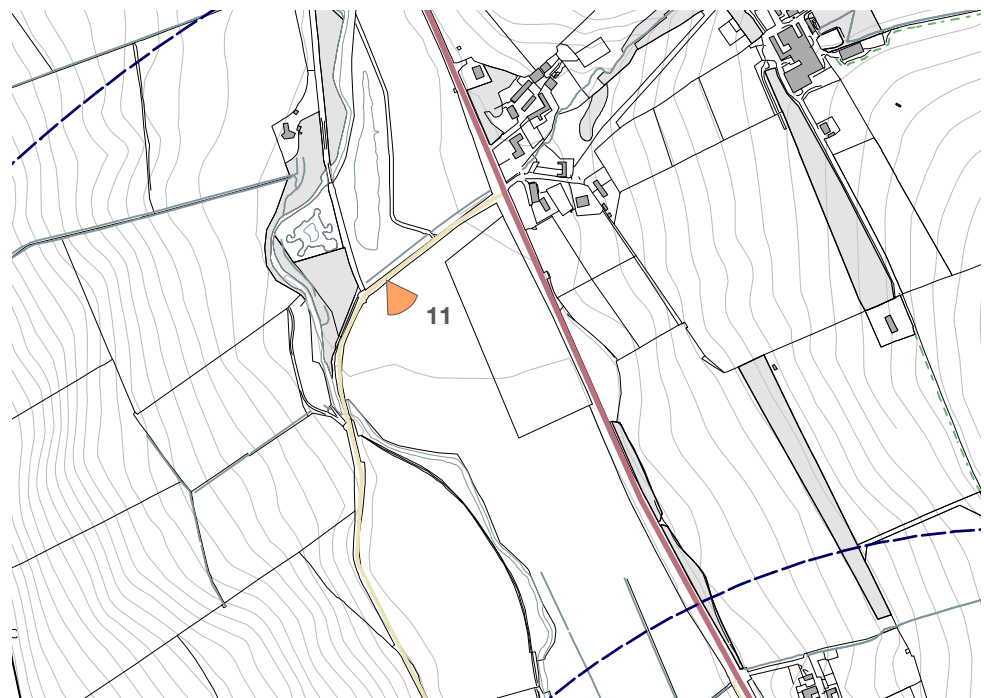
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 11

VP 11 was taken from an unnamed road off the A703 approximately 1.5km to the north of the site. The view looks south along the valley bottom and the site is visible on the side of the valley. Further investigation is required.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 12

VP 12 was taken from further south along the same unnamed road as VP 11. The site is visible across the river valley in what is a largely rural view. The caravan site is just visible amongst the trees in front of the site. Further investigation is required.

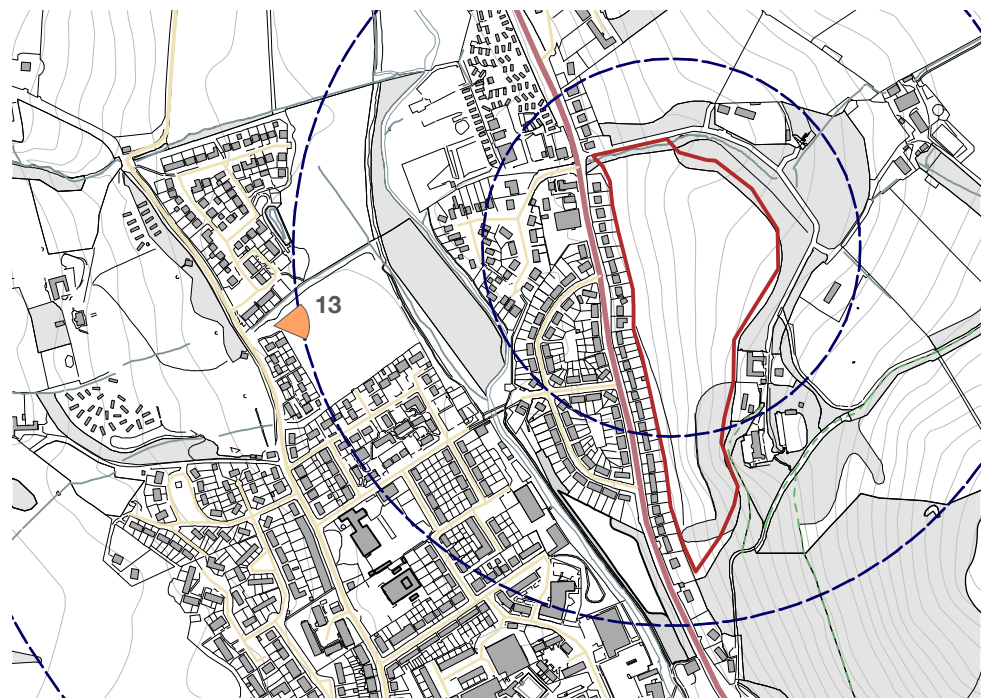
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 13

VP 13 was taken from playing fields off Standalane Way. This view will be typical for a number of residential properties adjacent. The site is clearly visible to the rear of the playing fields, across the valley. The site appears beyond a band of existing trees and so further investigation will be required to ascertain the visual impact.

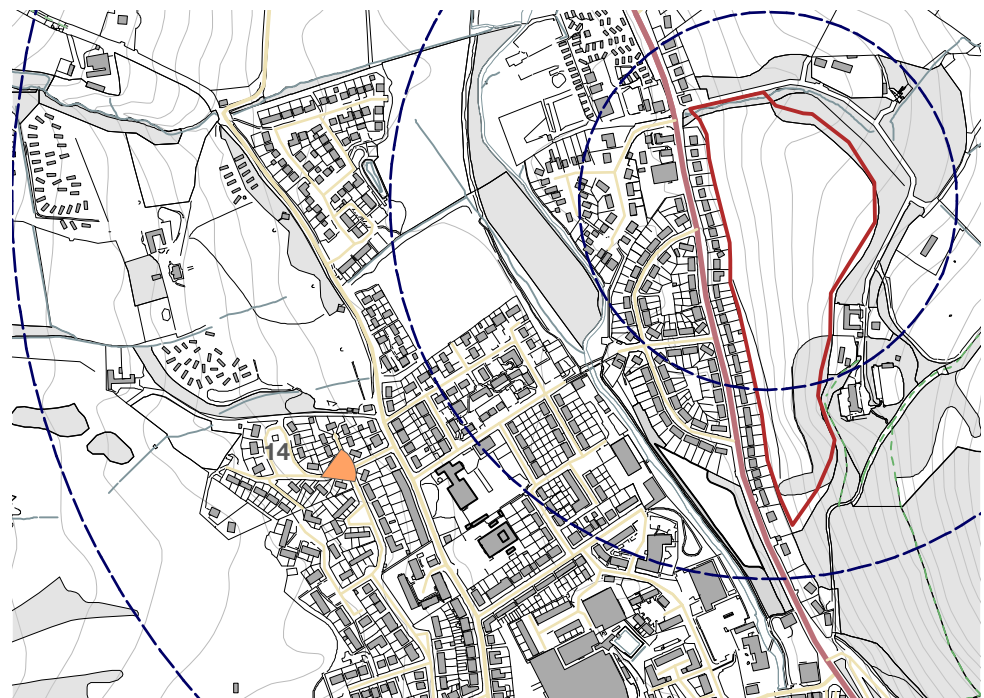
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 14

VP 14 was taken from Eliot's Park looking east. The viewpoint was not taken from the highest point of the street as the existing houses mostly screened the site. The viewpoint was taken at a bend in the road that allows for views across the valley to the site. This was thought to better illustrate the potential visual impact in this area. As the site is visible beyond existing houses, further investigation is required.

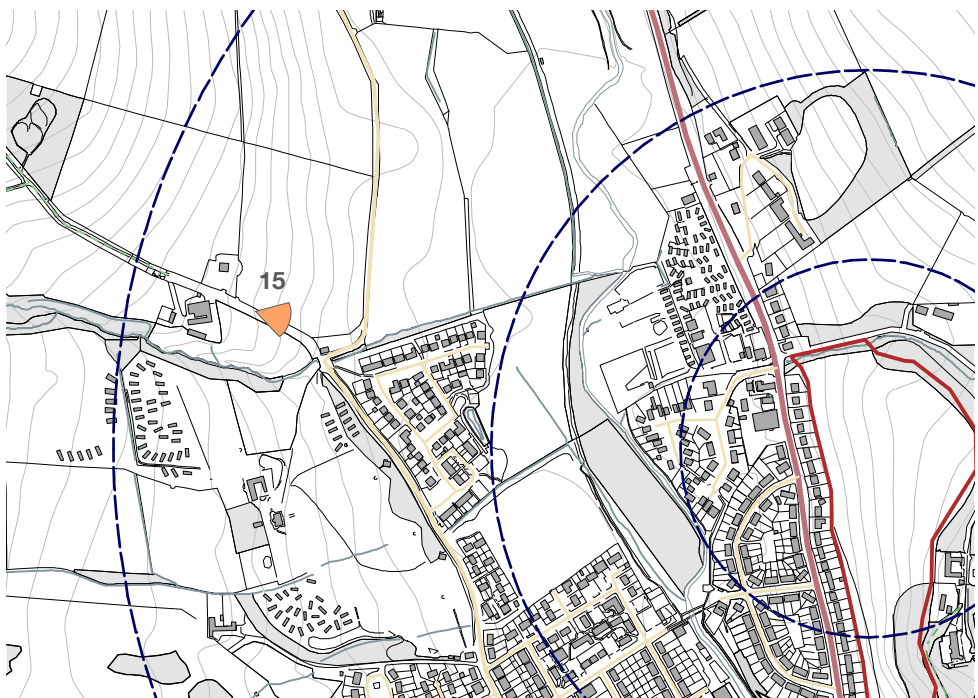
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 15

VP 15 was taken from Standalane Way, near Standalane Farm. This track forms part of the long distance Drovers Way and the site is visible across the valley beyond existing residential development. Further investigation is required

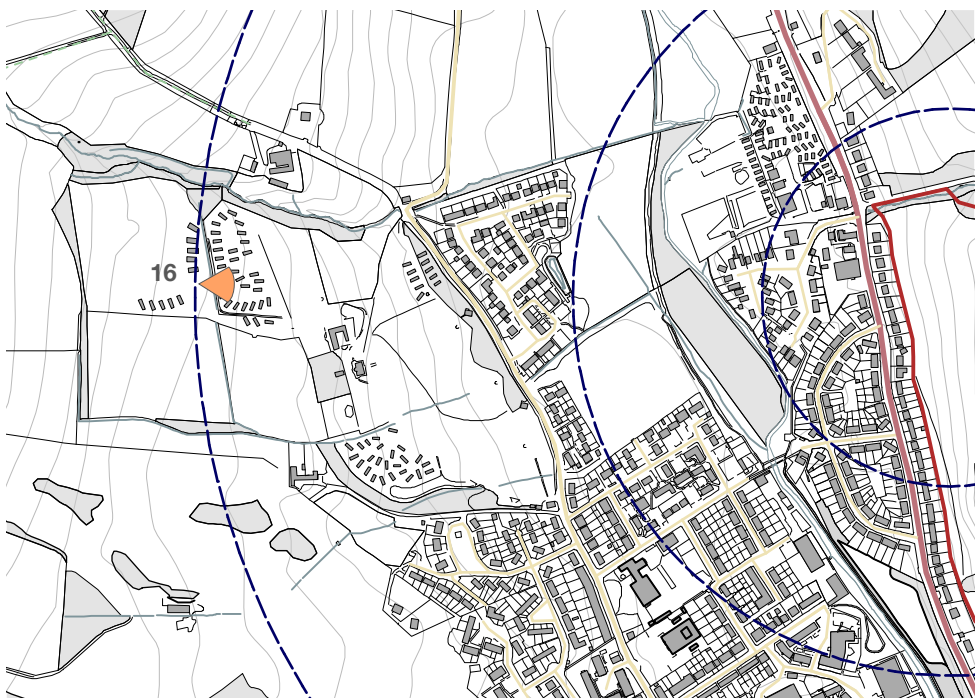
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 16

VP 16 was taken from the Rosetta Holiday Park, across the valley from the site. This viewpoint was taken from the lodges that are situated right at the top of the holiday park and the site is visible across the valley. However, the majority of the holiday park has scattered trees, hedges, walls, buildings and static caravans and as such has very limited long distance views. The proposals are unlikely to impact on most of the holiday park users but further investigation is required from the viewpoint as photographed.

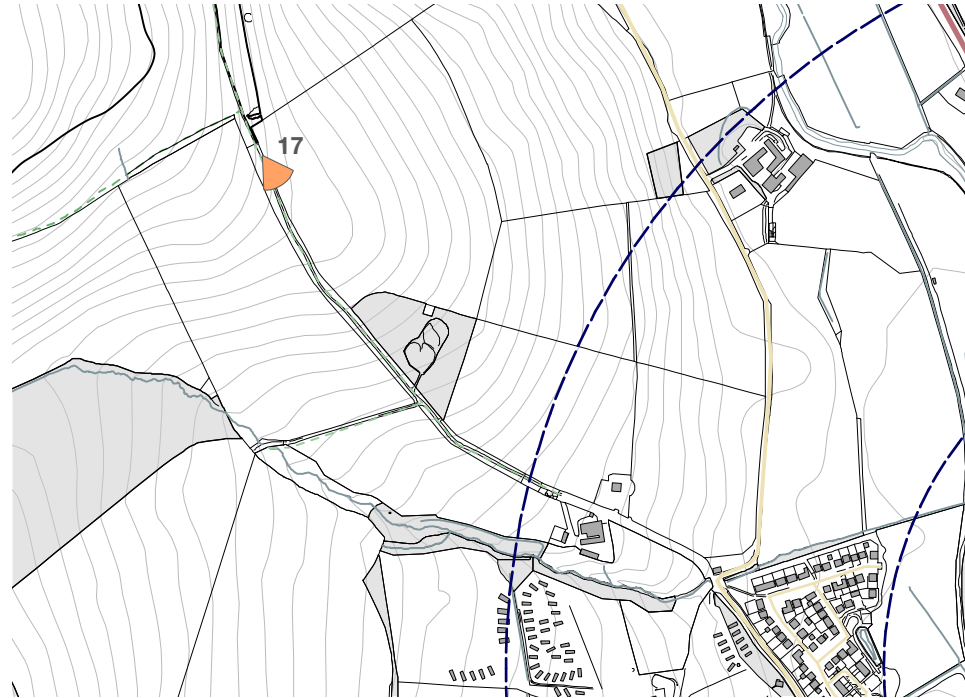
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 17

VP 17 was taken further along the Drovers Way, at a greater altitude than VP 15. From this point Peebles is becoming visible but the site is visually cut off from the main town by a block of woodland in the foreground. With the gain in elevation and the views of wider Peebles, the viewer can start to see how Peebles is situated fairly consistently in the valley bottom. Further investigation is required

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 18

VP 18 was taken from a footpath heading south west from the Drovers Way along the ridge, nearly 2km away from the site. From this height and distance all of Peebles is visible as a single built-up area. The site is clearly visible sitting above the existing low lying development. Further investigation is required.

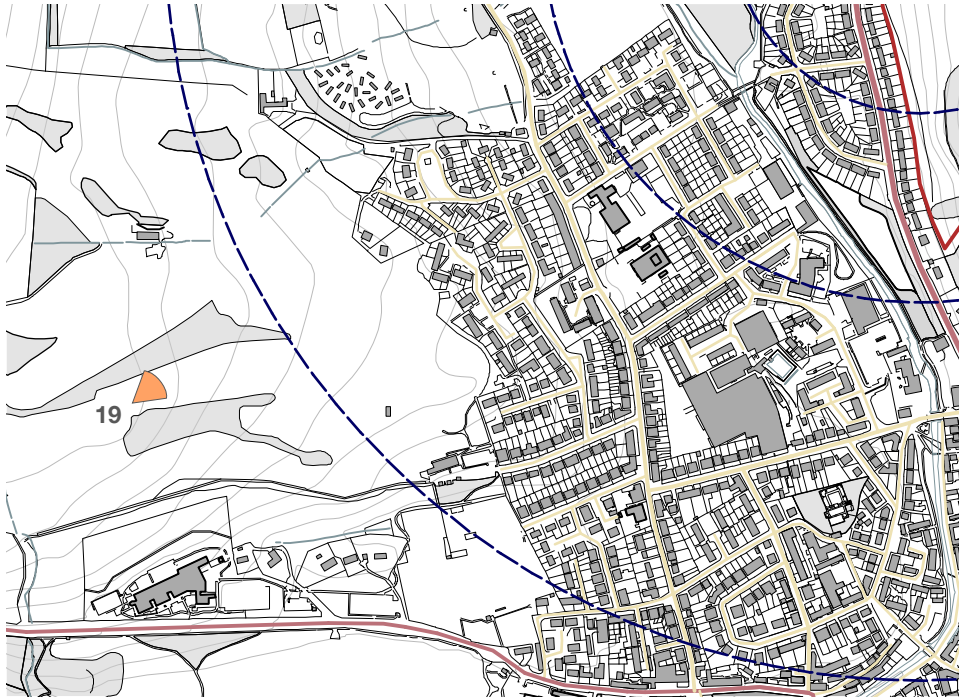
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 19

VP 19 was taken from the Peebles Golf Course. The internal woodland planting and scattered trees mean that views across to the site are obscured from the majority of the course. Whilst the field in which the development sits can be seen, it is generally the undeveloped southern portion. Any views of the development are likely to be minimal, obscured and fleeting, given the moving nature of users on a golf course. We do not deem this viewpoint necessary for further consideration.

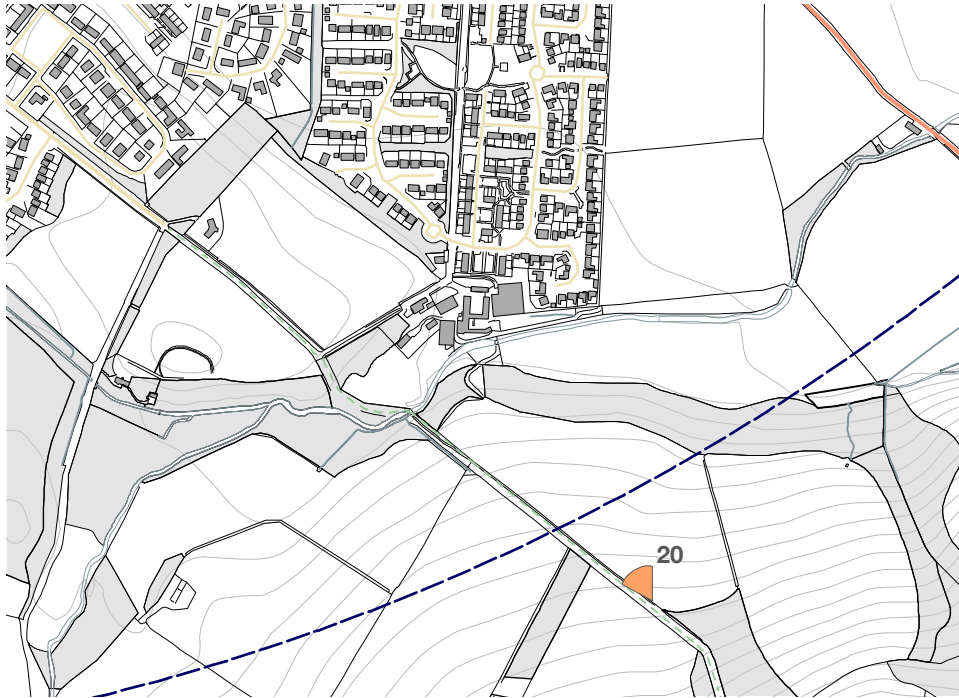
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 20

VP 20 was taken from the Drovers Way long distance path to the south east of Peebles. Due to the local topography and woodland cover, one is over 3km away from the site by the time long views open up. In addition to this, the site is obscured by a promontory of high ground. As such, we do not deem this viewpoint necessary for further consideration.

Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 21

VP 21 was taken from a path within the Cademuir Hill forest, approximately 1.5km from the site, looking north. Although Cademuir Hill is generally heavily wooded, there is a section of path where the views open up across fields to Peebles with the site visible beyond. Further investigation is required

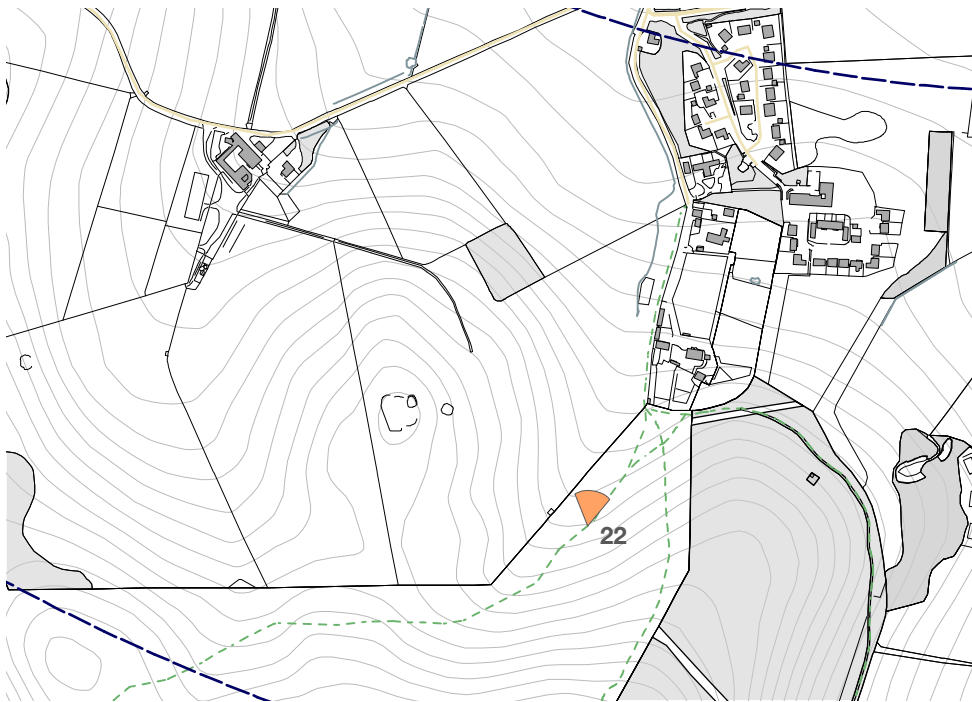
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 22

VP 22 was taken from the John Buchan Way, south of Peebles. From this point the landscape opens into upland moorland and starts to rise. The path heads south east, gaining height before turning beyond a ridge. Looking north, the site is visible beyond Peebles and this is the case all the way up the path until the ridge. From this viewpoint the Tintah estate is visible in the foreground with Peebles sitting beyond. This viewpoint is around 2.5km away from the site but further investigation is required.

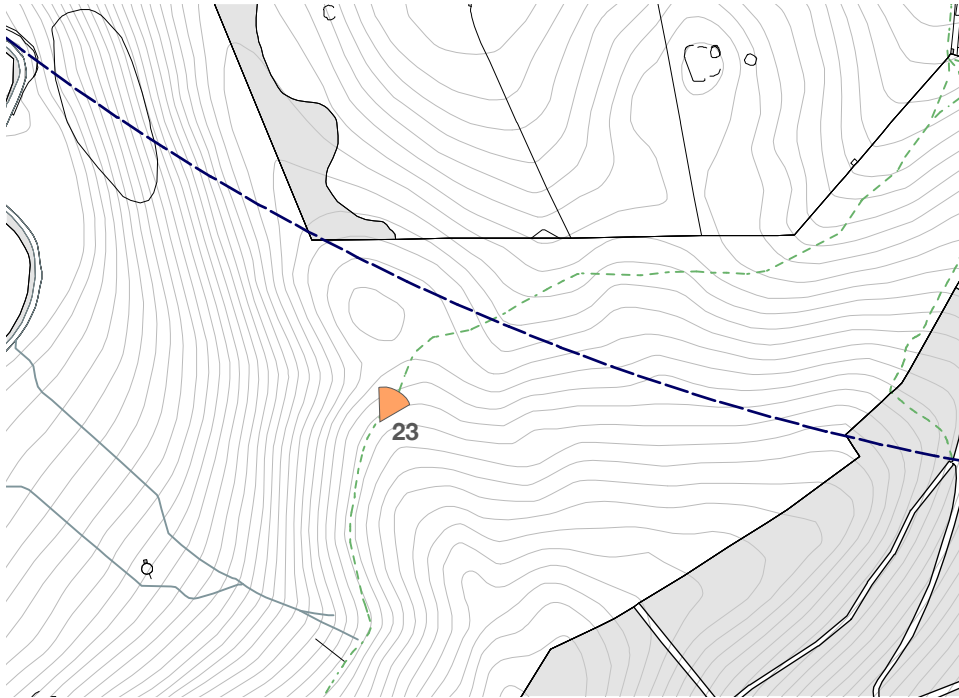
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 23

VP 23 was taken further up the John Buchan Way. This was taken from the greatest distance from the site before the path changes direction and turns behind a ridge. This is useful in demonstrating the extents of visibility but at approximately 3.3km away from the site, we do not deem this viewpoint necessary for further consideration.

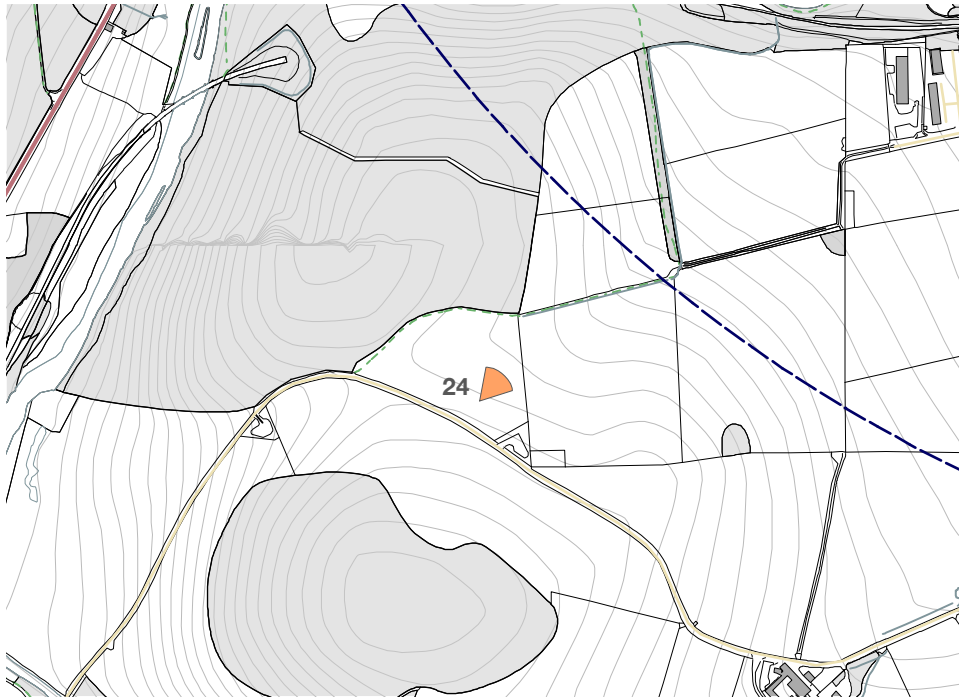
Viewpoint Location



VIEWPOINT 24

VP 24 was taken from the Manor Sware viewpoint. At the time of the visit the viewpoint itself was full of camper vans so the viewpoint was taken from the path running to the cabin in an adjacent field. Peebles can be seen sitting between two blocks of woodland to the north and the site is visible beyond. The viewpoint is 2.3km away from the site but as this is a designated public viewpoint further investigation is required.

Viewpoint Location

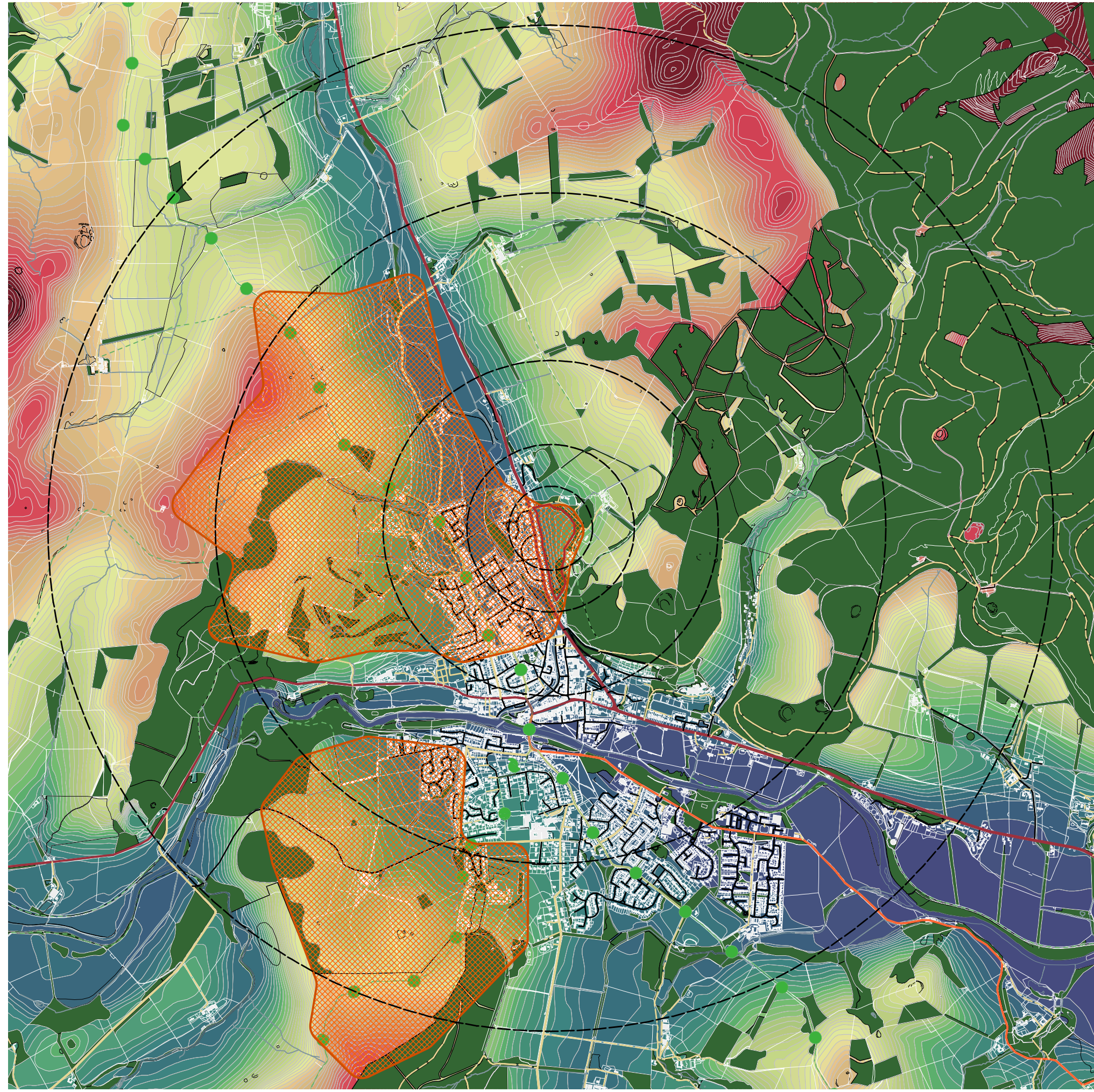
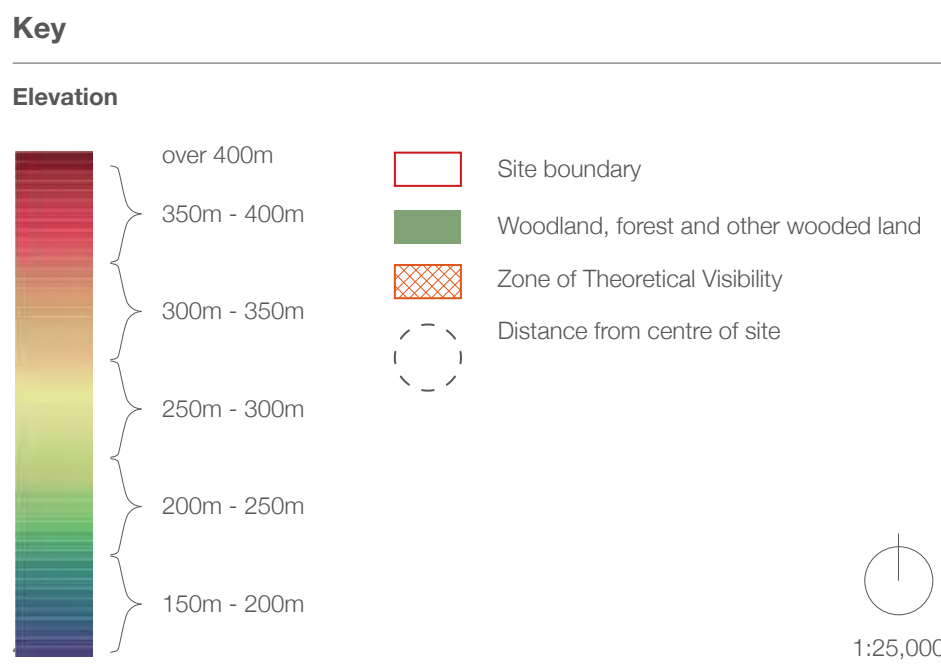


THEORETICAL VISIBILITY INFORMATION OVERLAY

Informed by the scoping site visit, the approximate zone of theoretical visibility of the development (based on site observations overlaid with topographic information and mapping of woodland) was determined. This is indicated by the red outline / hatched area in the adjacent plan. The visual envelope is split broadly into two areas. Immediately around the site the visual envelope extends west across the Eddlestone Water valley bottom and some way to the north along the valley bottom. This visual envelope also extends further up the western slopes of the valley until the high points on the ridge over 3km away. We do not believe that the site will be visible from the A703 until almost directly adjacent to it. The site is thought to not be visible from the majority of the Peebles Conservation Area.

In addition to this there is a secondary area of visibility along higher ground to the south of Peebles. This higher ground is generally open in character with agricultural fields and moorland. This area mostly sits between 1-3km from the site.

It should be noted that the development may be visible from higher ground further afield but given the size of the development and its proximity to existing built-up areas, any visual impact from this distance is regarded to be negligible.

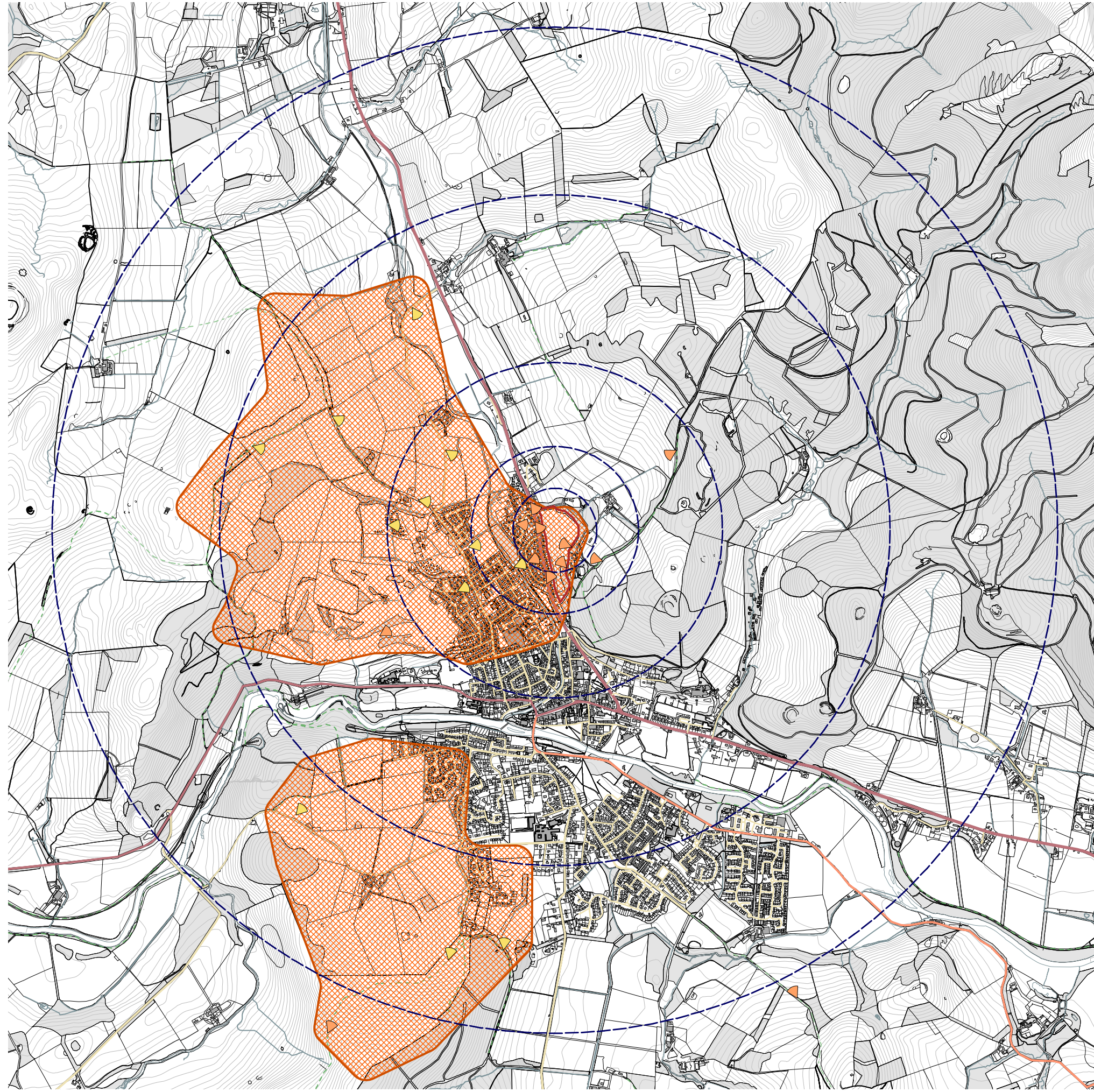
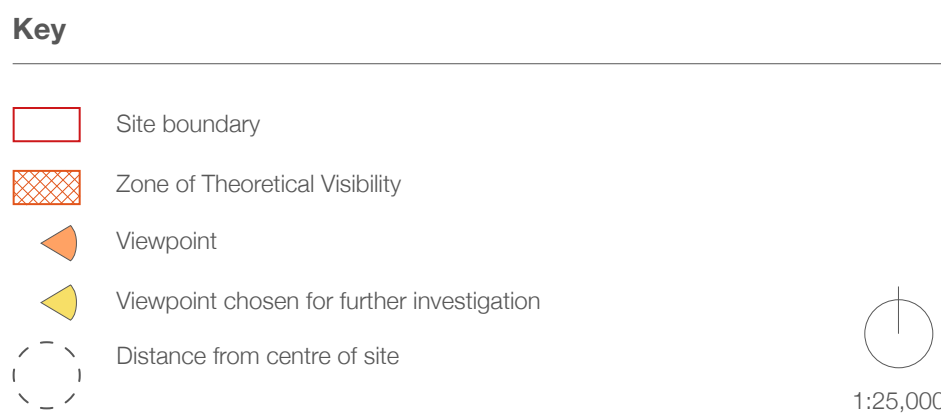


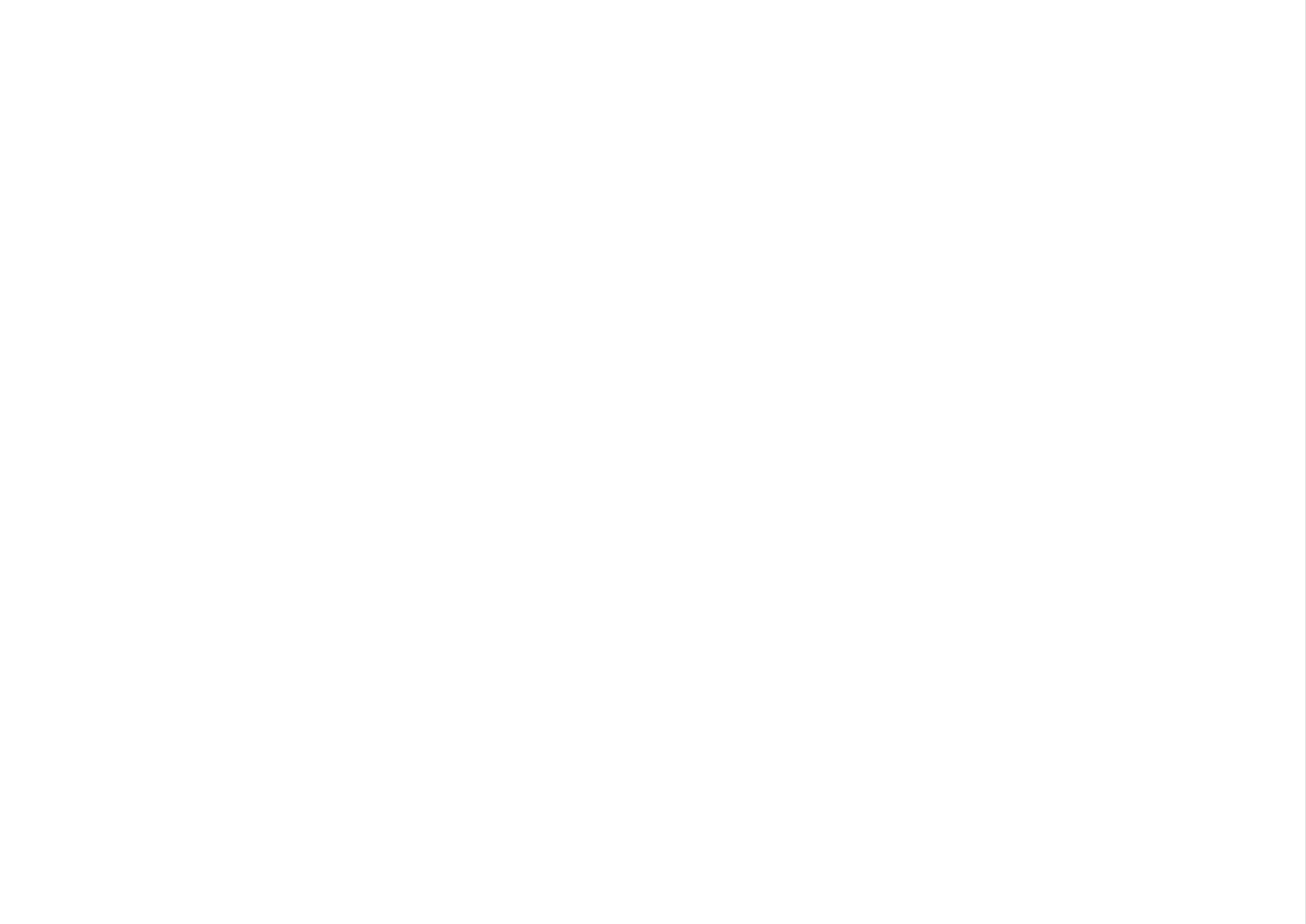
THEORETICAL VISIBILITY VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

Following the scoping site visit, the red outline / hatched area in the adjacent plan shows the approximate zone of theoretical visibility of the development based on site observations, overlaid on the viewpoint markers.

The markers highlighted in yellow are viewpoints that have been chosen for further investigation following site observations. This is covered in the following section of the report.

For viewpoints over 1km away from the site our approach is to investigate the landscape setting of the development using a visualisation showing only the massing of the built form, positioned in the existing landscape. For viewpoints within 1km we undertake this exercise, but also produce a secondary visualisation to show the impact of landscape mitigation measures and more accurate colours representing proposed materials used in the development.





03

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

VIEWPOINT 24

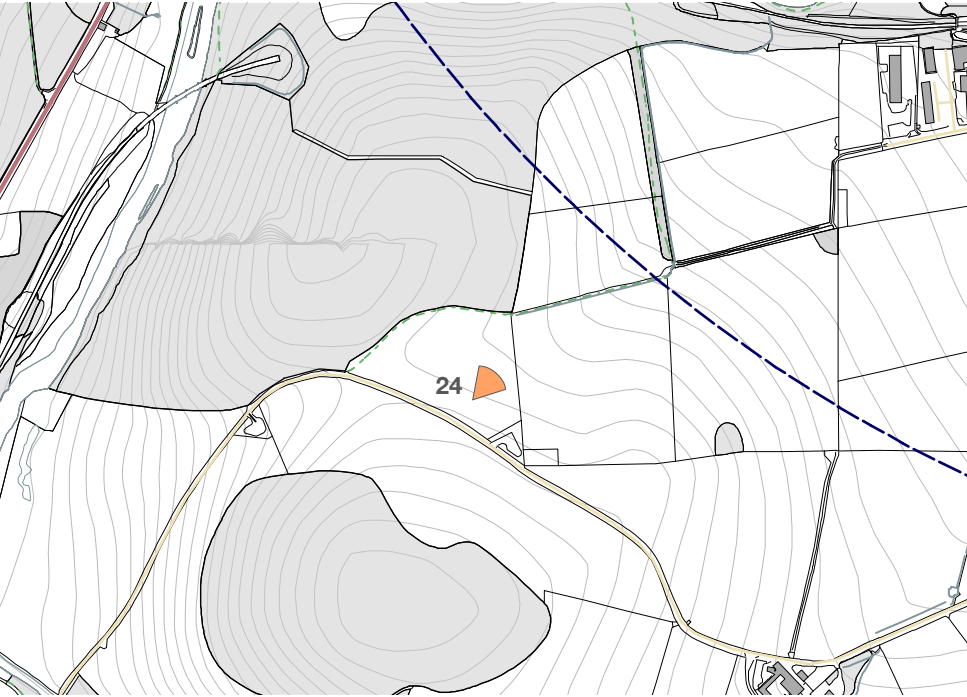
LANDSCAPE SETTING

VP 24 was taken from the Manor Sware viewpoint. The viewpoint is over 2km from the centre of the site but sits on open elevated land and is marked as a viewpoint with parking facilities.

The landscape setting shows the development would be visible. The buildings sit behind the built-up area of Peebles but would be viewed as an extension to the urban area without dramatically affecting the wider view. Also, the majority of the site will still remain as meadow with scattered trees, keeping its character intact. However, from this viewpoint, the development sits above immediately adjacent built development.

The proposed mixed native woodland planting strip to the west of the buildings and the muted colours of the material palette will help to reduce the visual impact to some degree. Whilst the development sits above immediate adjacent built development, due to the distance, the overall impact on the wider view is not considered to be significant.

Viewpoint Location



Note:
Development shown in white to highlight location and massing, this is not representative of proposed materials.



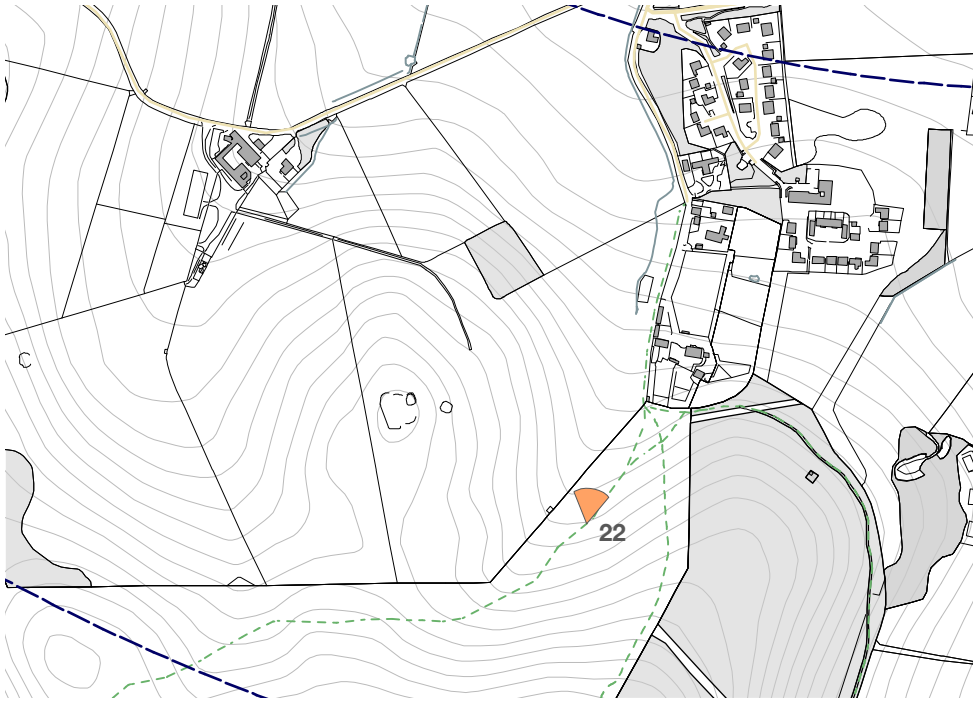
VIEWPOINT 22

LANDSCAPE SETTING

VP 22 was taken from the John Buchan Way, south of Peebles. The viewpoint is over 2.5km from the centre of the site but sits on open elevated land and is a part of a waymarked route.

From this viewpoint the development is clearly visible sitting to the rear of the main built-up area of Peebles. It reads as sitting higher than much of the urban area, but, from this viewpoint, it is also possible to see the higher existing dwellings along Venlaw High Road and Venlaw Quarry Road. This precedent reduces the visual impact of the proposed development as it is not viewed as the only buildings sitting in a slightly elevated position. The mitigation woodland planting would also help break up the mass of the proposed built development. Taking into consideration these factors, combined with the distance, the overall impact on the wider view is not anticipated to be significant.

Viewpoint Location



Note:
Development shown in white to highlight location and massing, this is not representative of proposed materials.



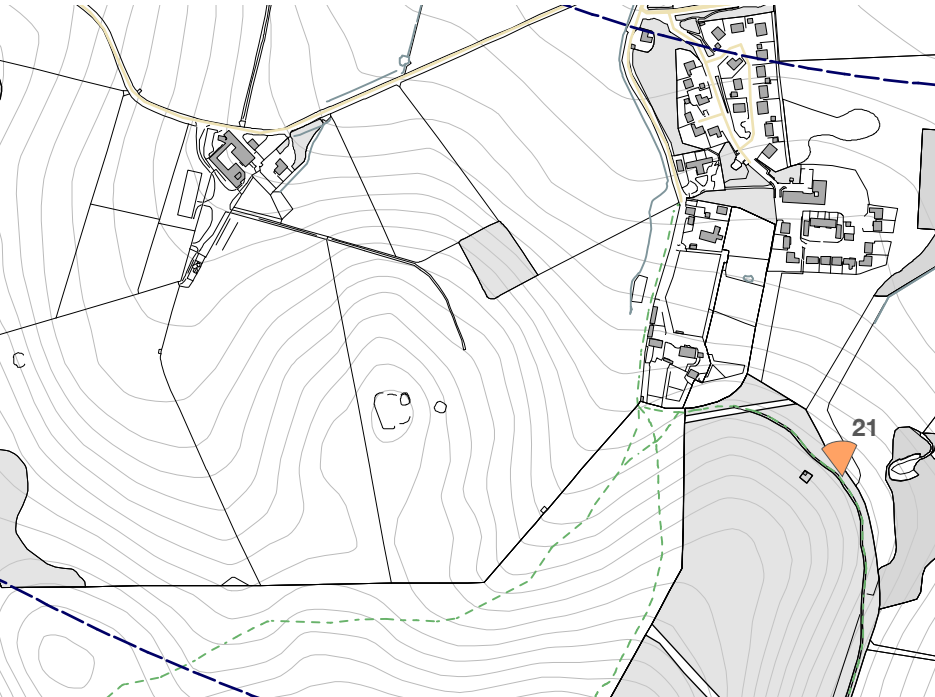
VIEWPOINT 21

LANDSCAPE SETTING

VP 21 was taken from a path within the Cademuir Hill forest, approximately 2.5km away. Along this path there is a relatively small break in the trees where the proposals will be visible from. The proposals are visible at an oblique angle sitting behind the main urban area of Peebles. The low level setting of Peebles is not as easily read from this viewpoint due to the view being broken up and framed by banks of trees. The proposals are visible at a higher level but are screened by existing tree planting, the proposed woodland planting will further add to this screening/filtering of views to the development.

Because of the angle the proposals are viewed from, the gaps between the dwellings are not visible which has the effect of increasing the apparent bulk of the proposals. However, due to the main area of Peebles sitting in the foreground, the distance from the viewpoint and the relatively small length of path the proposals would be visible from, we believe the proposals do not have a significant negative impact on this viewpoint.

Viewpoint Location



Note:
Development shown in white to highlight location and massing, this is not representative of proposed materials.



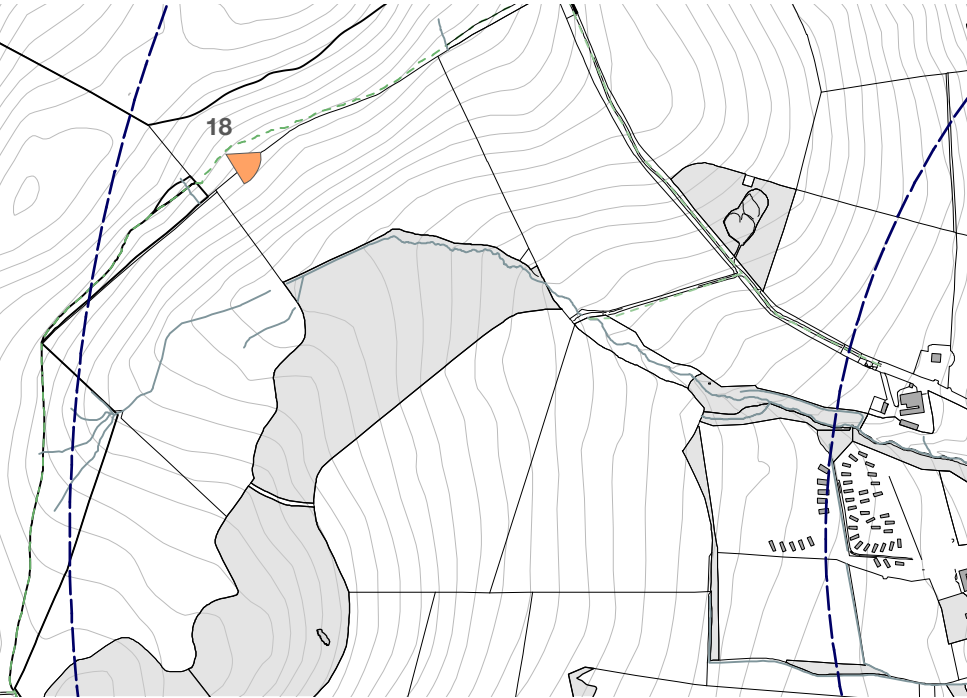
VIEWPOINT 18

LANDSCAPE SETTING

VP 18 was taken from a footpath heading south west from the Drovers Way along the ridge, nearly 2km to the west. The path is at around 330m elevation and as such has long range views over Peebles when looking east. The entire urban area of Peebles is visible sitting in the valley bottom and the proposals are clearly visible sitting above immediately adjacent built development.

Whilst the proposals are clearly visible and at a higher level, they appear as an extension to the wider built up area of Peebles. The mitigation planting in front of the development will also help break up/filter views of the proposed built development. Taking account of the proposed planting and the relative distance of the viewpoint, we do not believe that the proposals will significantly alter the character of the wider view.

Viewpoint Location



Note:
Development shown in white to highlight location and massing, this is not representative of proposed materials.

