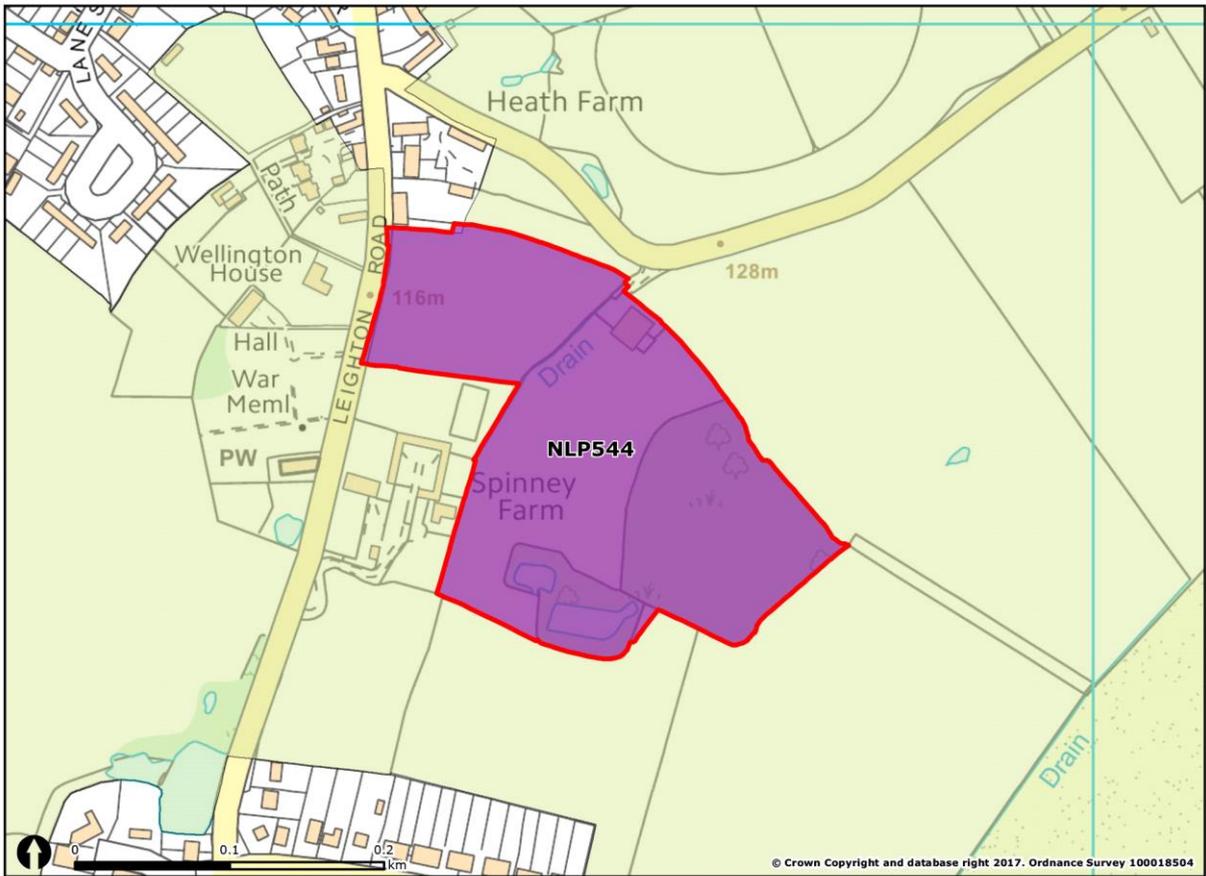


## Heath and Reach



Committed development Harm rating from release of whole site - High Moderate high Moderate Low moderate Low



**Site description**

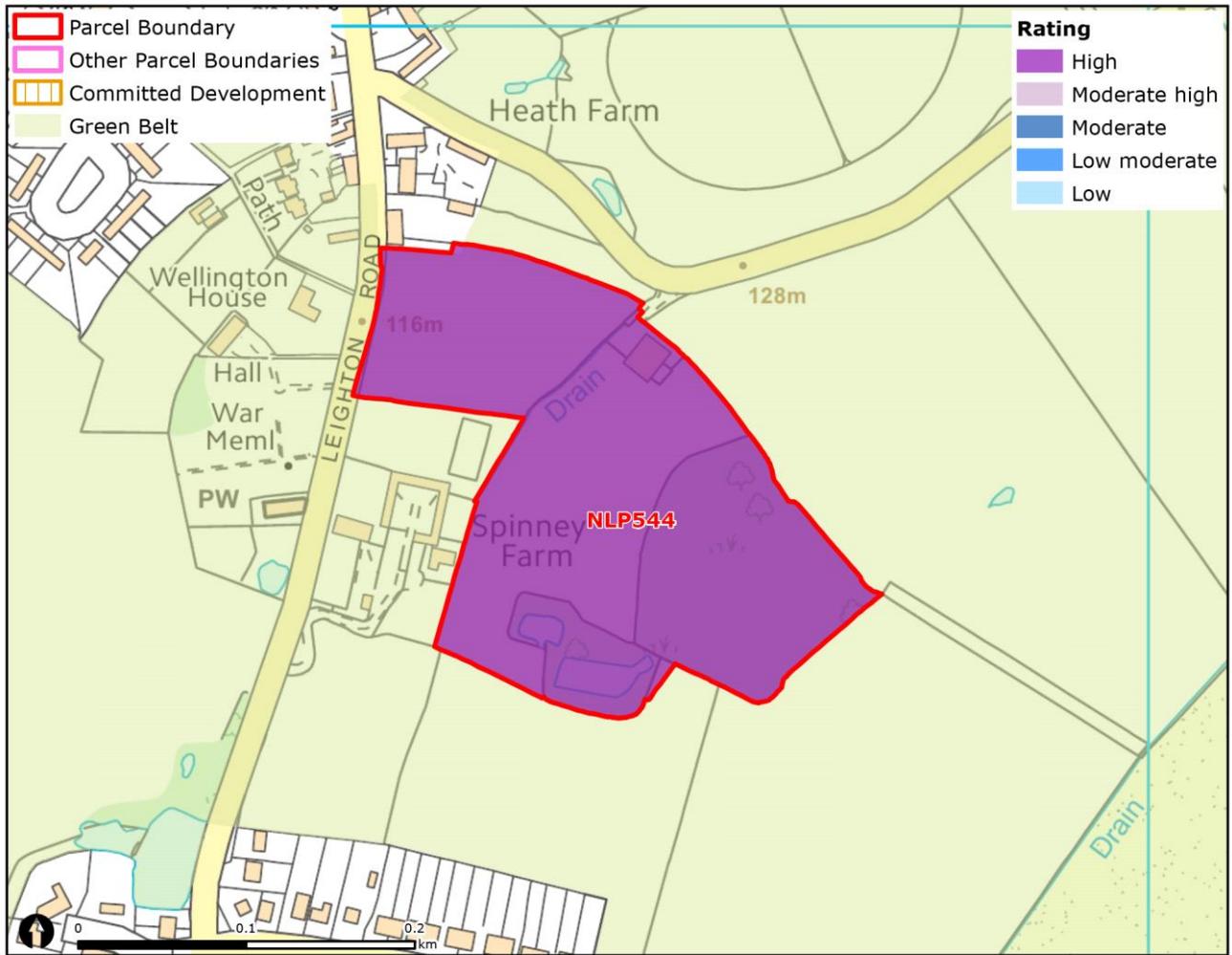
This site is located on the south-eastern edge of the inset village of Heath and Reach and a short distance to the north of the inset settlement of Leighton Linlade. It comprises two fields atop a gently sloping hill whilst a small woodland copse occupies the eastern portion of the site. A single barn is also located at the centre of the site at the top of the slope. The northern edge is partly defined by a public house and associated premises within the settlement of Heath and Reach, and a hedgerow defining the adjacent arable field which continues around to the east. Leighton Road partly runs along the western boundary with a hedgerow and hedgerow trees defining the remaining boundary and delineating the extent of an adjacent washed-over farmstead. An area of woodland and hedgerow marks the southern edge with further agricultural fields beyond.

**Relationship between site, settlement and countryside**

The parcel extends along Leighton Road from the south of Heath and Reach which together with the relatively open boundaries in the north west of the site around the public house creates a relationship with the settlement. This is compounded further by the limited visual relationship with the open countryside beyond by the landform which slopes gently up from the settlement edge and the adjacent farmstead along the southwestern edge. The rest of the site relates more strongly to the countryside as it is more open with the landform and intervening vegetation restricting intervisibility with Heath and Reach.

**Parcels**

This site is assessed as one parcel.



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Looking east from Leighton Road near to Axe & Compass Public House.

Parcel: NLP544 Parcel area (ha): 4.97

**Stage 1 assessment**

**Stage 2 assessment**

**Parcel:** LL6  
**Highest contribution:** Purpose 1 and 3 - Strong contribution

**Parcel:** n/a  
**Contribution:**

**Contribution to Green Belt purposes**

Purpose	Comments
<b>Purpose 1: Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large, built-up areas</b>	The parcel forms part of the open gap between Heath and Reach and Leighton Linlade. Due to the close proximity of Heath and Reach to Leighton Linlade, development of the whole of the site would increase the perceived coalescence between the two settlements.
<b>Purpose 2: Preventing the merger of neighbouring towns</b>	Development of this parcel would result in little or no perception of the narrowing of the gap between towns although it is acknowledged that there would likely be visual coalescence between Leighton Linlade and Heath and Reach.
<b>Purpose 3: Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	The parcel is open and undeveloped relating both to the settlement and the countryside. It is considered development here would represent encroachment on the countryside.
<b>Purpose 4: Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	The site makes a contribution to the historic setting of Leighton Linlade by retaining the separation from Heath and Reach, although this is limited due to the site's close physical relationship with Heath and Reach.
<b>Purpose 5: Assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</b>	All parcels are considered to make an equal contribution to this purpose.

**Spatial options**

The parcel is not located within an identified Potential Growth Location. However, the site's location on the edge of Heath and Reach and the absence of any landscape elements that could create clear separation between existing and new development mean that village extension is the only viable development scenario.

**Potential alternative Green Belt boundaries**

The adjoining properties within Heath and Reach form a weak existing Green Belt edge. The small woodland copse would constitute a strong defensible boundary to the east although the remaining boundaries would be relatively weak being formed of single hedgerows with a farmstead situated adjacent.

**Harm to Green Belt resulting from release**

Scenario	Comments	Rating
<p><b>Release of NLP544 in isolation</b></p>	<p>This parcel makes a contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of Leighton Linlade, preventing countryside encroachment, and preserving the historic setting of Leighton Linlade. Development here would result in the loss of woodland occupying much of the eastern area, which in turn would eliminate the perceived gap between Leighton Linlade and Heath and Reach. The introduction of urbanising development in the parcel would compromise the openness of the washed-over farmstead in the southwest which then has the potential to be perceived as sprawl from Leighton Linlade connecting with the whole village of Heath and Reach. Release of this parcel would also significantly weaken the contribution of the land immediately south.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p><b>Release of both fields up to the woodland edge</b></p>	<p>This parcel makes a contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of Leighton Linlade, preventing countryside encroachment, and preserving the historic setting of Leighton Linlade. Release of this parcel would still have an urbanising influence over Spinney Farm in the west. Development would relate more to Heath and Reach with woodland in the east containing the site from the wider countryside and providing a strong defensible boundary to development to the south.</p>	<p><b>Moderate high</b></p>
<p><b>Release of smaller field in the western half of the site</b></p>	<p>This parcel makes a contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of Leighton Linlade, preventing countryside encroachment, and preserving the historic setting of Leighton Linlade. It relates more strongly to the Heath and Reach with the adjacent farmstead and sloping topography providing containment from the wider countryside. The eastern edge would however be relatively weak, defined only by a post and wire fence and so would weaken the contribution of the larger field adjacent.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>

**Cumulative release scenarios**

This site lies adjacent to NLP545. NLP544 and NLP545 are assessed in isolation as causing moderate high harm. It is considered the harm resulting from their combined release would not be significantly greater than either in isolation. In addition, NLP545 is in close proximity to ALP066 and NLP074 which are considerably larger and more removed from the settlement. The release of sites ALP066, NLP074, NLP544 in combination with site NLP455 would not be significantly greater than that of ALP066 and ALP074 in isolation, which were both assessed as causing High Harm to the Green Belt.

**Harm to Green Belt resulting from release of site**

Scenario	Comments	Rating