
**South East
Milnthorpe Station**

**PLANNING
BRIEF**



AUGUST 1995




1. INTRODUCTION

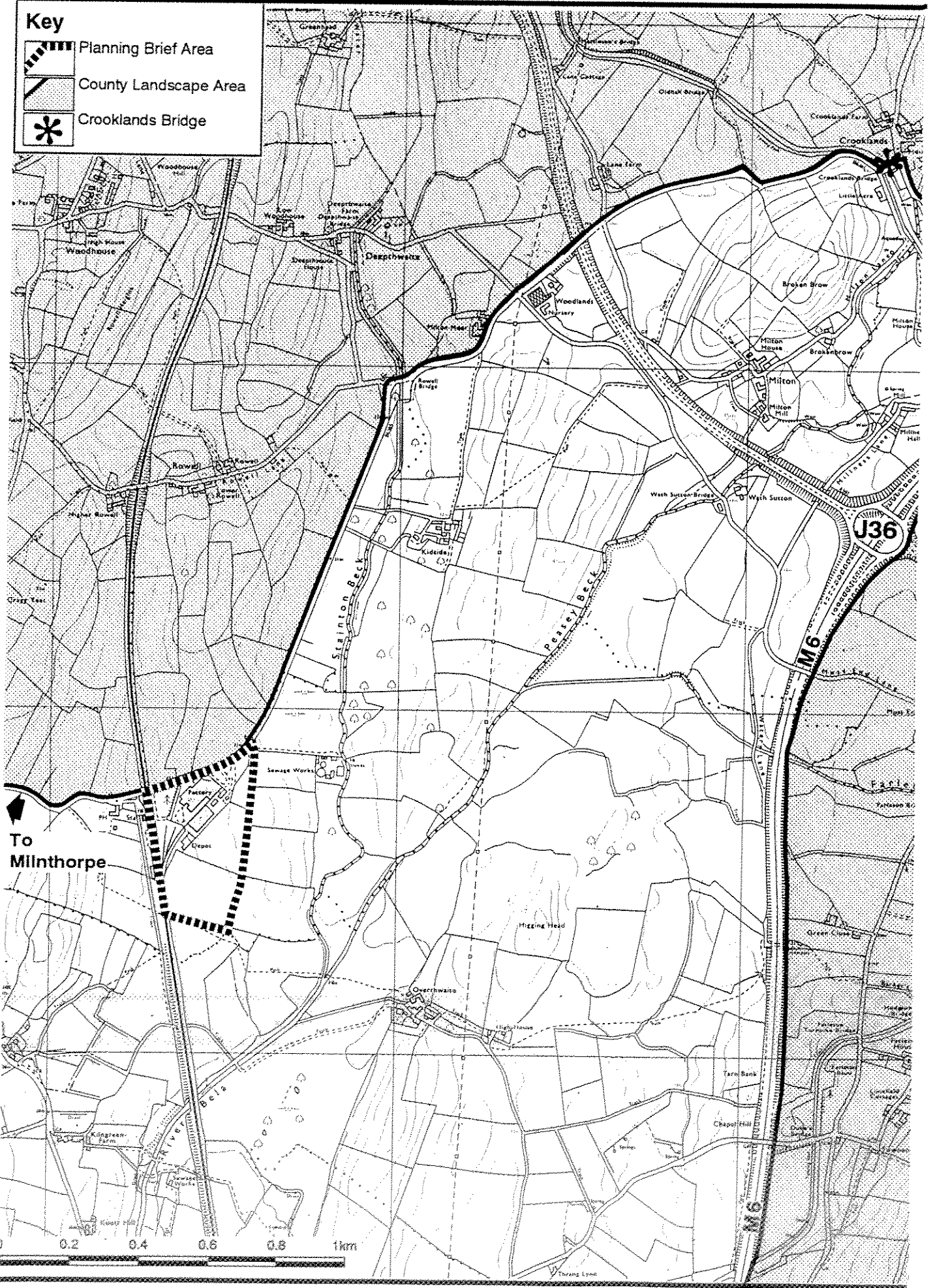
- 1.1 This draft brief has been prepared to guide the development and in part redevelopment of 8.5 ha of land and buildings at Libby's in Milnthorpe. The undeveloped land (6.0 ha) has been allocated for strategic employment uses (B1, B2 and B8) in Policy E2 of the South Lakeland Deposit Local Plan. The section to be redeveloped includes the Nestle Libby's factory due to be closed down shortly. Proposals for the site will be expected to conform with the general principles and requirements set out in this brief.
- 1.2 A strategic employment site is defined in the Cumbria and Lake District Structure Plan (para 4.16) as a large site with a minimum of 8 hectares close to the primary road network, principally aimed at large scale business, general industry and storage or distribution. Small scale commercial activities, such as garages and retail uses will not be appropriate.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND OWNERSHIP (See Map No. 2)

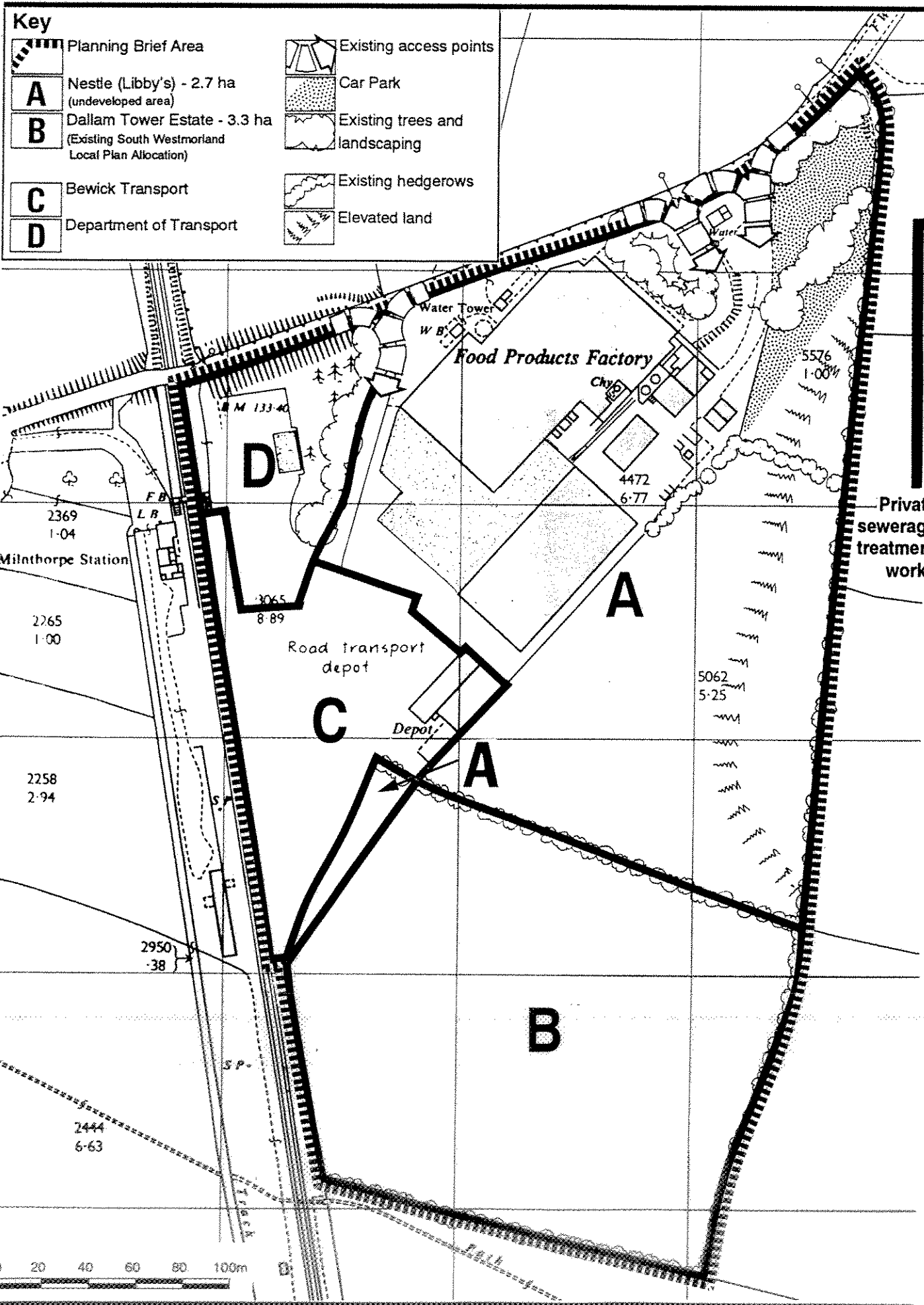
- 2.1 The site, located to the east of Milnthorpe village and 4.5 kms from Junction 36 of the M6 motorway, is set within an attractive rural landscape of gently contoured hills. The B6385 road forms the northern boundary of the site and the west coast railway line forms the western boundary. The land dominating views to the north of the site has been designated County Landscape in the Structure Plan (Policy 12) due to its distinctive character and quality. The site itself is classified as "undeveloped open countryside" (Policy 13), with no specific national or local designation. Development which can be satisfactorily sited alongside existing development is permitted in these areas (in accordance with other policies). Whilst the site is not immediately adjacent to any settlement, it is only a short distance from Milnthorpe, Holme and Burton, and is conveniently located to meet the employment needs of Kendal and its surrounding area.
- 2.2 On-site, the southern section of undeveloped land, owned by the Dallam Tower Estate is relatively flat with only minor levelling required. The rest of the undeveloped land (owned by Nestle) however, generally rises towards the east. In order to protect views from an easterly direction and minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding landscape, the more elevated part of the site should remain undeveloped.
- 2.3 The developed area of the brief site primarily consists of the red brick Libby's factory and numerous individual buildings exhibiting a variety of ages and styles. To the west, is the Bewicks road haulage depot which consists of a mixture of permanent and temporary buildings. A Department of Transport goods vehicle testing station is situated to the north west.
- 2.4 The site benefits from direct access onto the B6385 Milnthorpe to Crooklands road, which in turn affords excellent access to the national highway and motorway network (see Map No. 1). The Libby's factory is served by a satisfactory site access, whereas the road haulage depot and the DoT testing station are accessed

Key

-  Planning Brief Area
-  County Landscape Area
-  Crooklands Bridge



MAP 2: Existing Features and Ownership



by a more inferior, single track road which is deemed inadequate by the Highways Authority. This road is controlled by Bewicks.

3. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The field in the ownership of the Dallam Tower Estate (3.3 ha) is currently allocated for business and general industrial development in the South Westmorland Local Plan.
- 3.2 Full planning consent was granted in September 1992 to extend the Libby's factory eastwards to form a chemical store. In January 1990 permission was granted for Bewicks Transport Services to house a new warehouse, workshop and offices on land adjoining the depot, but this has now expired. Full permission was granted in December 1994 for the temporary siting of portacabins for the same use but on the depot site. They are due to be removed in December 1995.

4. SERVICES

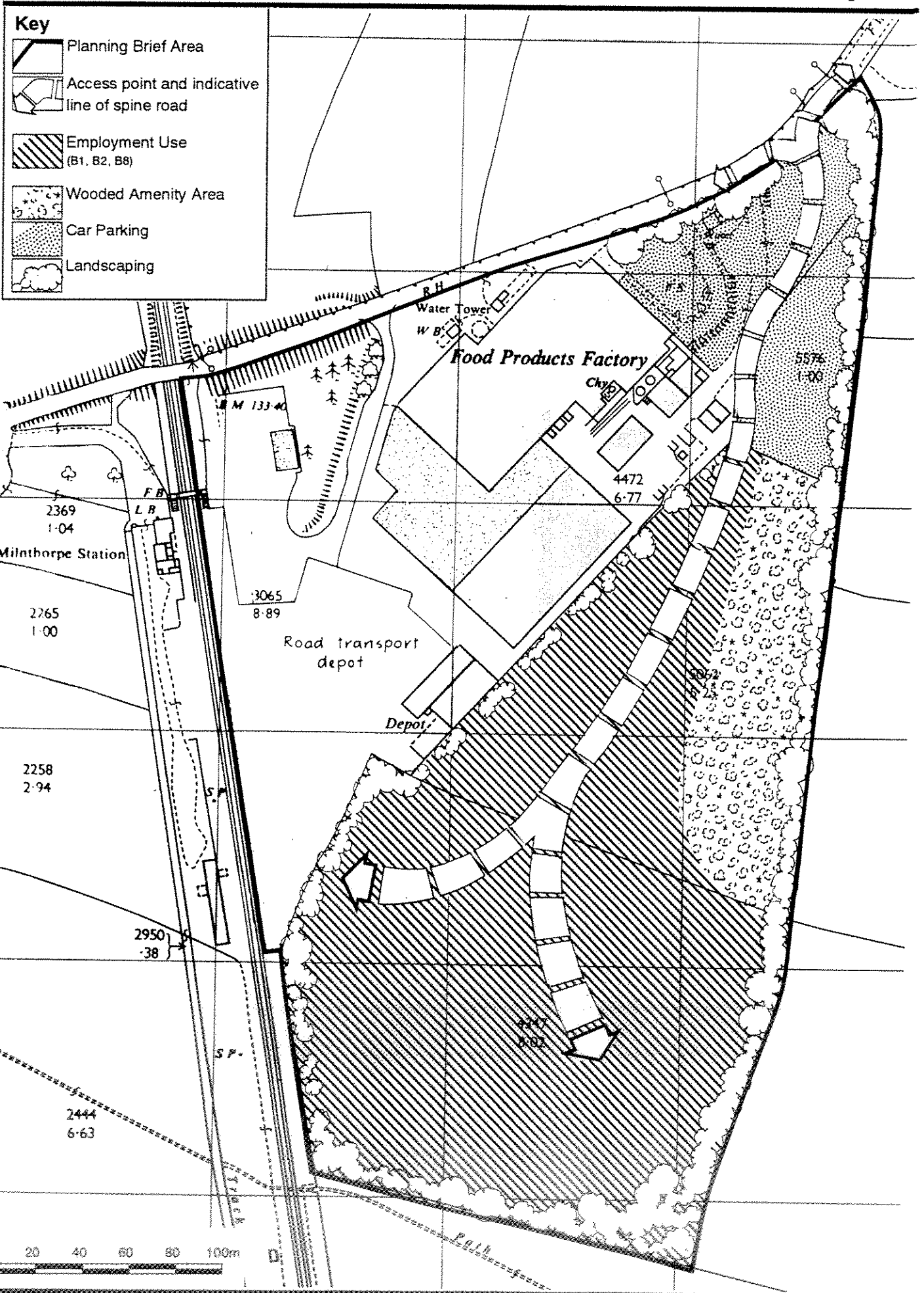
- 4.1 **Electricity:** There is a major substation at Whasset which links across to Crooklands and passes by in the vicinity of the site. As a result, it is not envisaged there would be any capacity problems in meeting any needs arising from the proposed industrial development. It is understood that the network available is sufficient and that no load difficulties are envisaged. Any high voltage cables which cross the site would have to be relocated underground. Contact: H. Marsh, Norweb - 01539 732750.
- 4.2 **Gas:** There is an existing gas supply to the Libby's factory and it is understood that a gas supply can be provided if necessary for the proposed development site. A 4" steel 7 bar main may be affected by the proposed spine road so construction details will be required. Contact: F. Clements, British Gas - 01524 65265.
- 4.3 **Water:** A water supply can be made available upon application to North West Water, but if any exceptionally high consumptions are expected, mains capacity would have to be tested. Contact: Territory Manager, North West Water - 01539 740066.
- 4.4 **British Telecom:** Given the location of the nearby plants, it is not envisaged that there would be any difficulty in providing such services. Existing BT apparatus will not be affected by the development, however, mechanical excavators or borers should not be used within 600mm of British Telecom apparatus. Contact: Mrs S. Edwards, British Telecom - 01772 265312.
- 4.5 **Foul Water Drainage:** The Libby's factory is served by a private sewage treatment works located alongside Stainton Beck to the east of the site. It is envisaged that the plant will have the capacity for additional effluent either as existing or with expansion, depending upon the type of development. Nestle would however, require further information with regard to the quantities and characteristics of the effluent to be discharged.

The foul drainage system should be sited so as not to cause pollution of any watercourse, well, borehole, spring or groundwater.

- 4.6 **Surface Water Drainage:** Details of the extent of new hardstanding and built development on site, means of surface water disposal, the disposal point and any restriction or attenuation measures would have to be submitted before full planning consent is granted. In addition, all surface water drainage from parking areas and hardstandings must be passed through an oil interceptor designed and constructed to have a capacity and details compatible with the site being drained. Roof water must not pass through the interceptor. Contact: Area Planning Liaison Officer, National Rivers Authority - 01228 25151.
- 4.7 **Land Drainage:** The site is on the edge of the River Bela flood plain.
- 4.8 **A Fire Hydrant,** constructed to BS 750, must be located adjacent to the proposed new site access. The minimum water main size recommended to provide adequate flow rates is 63mm internal diameter.

5. DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE (See Map No. 3)

- 5.1 This brief is not a blueprint for the future of the site, but rather a framework of development principles and requirements by which the District Council will be guided in assessing development proposals. However, many of the requirements below are contained in the South Lakeland Deposit Local Plan and shall be provided for by planning condition or obligation (Policy S1).
- 5.2 **Land Uses:** As shown on Map No. 3, there will be two uses on the site:
- 5.2.1 *Employment Use:* As stated in Policy E2, only development that falls within use classes B1, B2 and B8 will be permitted on the site. It is envisaged that as a "strategic employment site" it will accommodate large scale inward investment and encourage local expansion of existing firms, attracting both manufacturing and warehousing development. Retail warehousing will not be permitted. Also, in order to ensure that large plots are always available, small scale development, particularly commercial premises will not be allowed to break up the site.
- 5.2.2 *Amenity Space:* Policy E2 (b) states that development proposals on this site must be of a high quality and incorporate landscaping and amenity space. The amenity area should contain a woodland scheme to allow for simple maintenance. The location of the amenity area will avoid development on the higher part of the site, and woodland planting will soften the new development in the wider landscape context. Landscaping must of a high standard both for the initial scheme and its long term maintenance.
- 5.3 **Vehicular Access**
- 5.3.1 *On-Site Access:* The Highway Authority has indicated that a new access relocated eastwards, as shown on Map No. 3, would be necessary in order to satisfy visibility



standards. The access must be 6.3 m wide and requires the usual standard 90 x 4.5 m visibility splays and 15 m corner radii. The new road may be linked with the existing road leading up to the factory. Most of the car parking spaces will require relocation, as shown on Map No. 3, to accommodate the new access.

- 5.3.2 A spine road 6.3m wide, should run through the whole of the site. In order to achieve the comprehensive development of the undeveloped land in the Brief, it is essential that the spine road runs from the B6384 through Field 5062 and into Field 4347. Any planning permission granted will reflect the need for a comprehensive form of development. The Highways Authority has expressed a preference for the road haulage depot to be accessed from this new spine road, since its current access from the B6384, via the goods vehicle testing station, is inadequate.
- 5.3.3 As stated in Policy S8, all roads within the site must be designed and constructed to adoptable standards and conform to Highway Authority standards of safety and convenience. Where possible, a flexible approach to design, landscaping, materials and lighting should be adopted to enhance the area's environmental quality.
- 5.3.4 **Off Site Highway Improvements:** Although the development will inevitably result in a small scale increase in traffic through the centre of Milnthorpe, it is anticipated that most vehicles will be travelling to and from the site via Junction 36 of the M6 motorway and Crooklands. For this reason, the Highway Authority has indicated that the volume of traffic likely to be generated justifies the widening of the Grade II listed canal bridge at Crooklands by approximately 2m. Full permission was granted for the widening of the bridge, when the South Westmorland Showfield Committee were considering locating nearby (application no. 5/91/0009). Care should be taken to ensure that the improvements required do not harm its character or appearance.
- 5.3.5 The Highway Authority has advised that some road widening may be necessary to accommodate a new right hand turning lane for traffic entering the site.
- 5.4 **Footpath/Cycleway:** As required in Policies S9 and S10, a footpath/cycleway must be provided in order to link all parts of the development. Both must be designed and constructed to Highway Authority standard. At the present time there are no public rights of way over the site, although one runs adjacent to the southern boundary, linking the B6385 westwards, the A6070 at Farleton eastwards and the B6384 at Whasset to the south. It may be possible to link this footpath with the site.
- 5.5 **Parking:** A portion of the site already benefits from an existing use as a car park. The new designated areas for parking and vehicle standing space (for loading and unloading) must be provided in accordance with the District Council's approved Parking Standards as set out in Appendix E of the South Lakeland Deposit Local Plan. New parking spaces must be provided to compensate for those lost as a result of the new access and spine road.

5.6 Design and Layout

5.6.1 *Design:* Although it is recognised that the dimensions of the buildings will, to a large extent, be governed by the work process, particular care will have to be taken to ensure that the development is in scale with the setting and that long distance views across the site from the east are not spoiled. The industrial buildings must be constructed in sympathetic materials and colours chosen to match the landscape setting. In particular, they must be covered with dark coloured roofs, with a non-reflective finish.

5.6.2 *Layout:* The southerly part of the site is low lying, but the land rises to the north east. The slope at the narrow section of the undeveloped land adjoining the existing car park (see Map No. 2) should be excavated to become level with the fence currently surrounding the factory. This area will accommodate the new access and car parking. The central field rises steeply eastwards and in the main, is unsuitable for excavation. The location of the amenity space on the elevated area is considered to be appropriate as building on this section of land would spoil long distance views across the site from the east. The remainder of the field should be excavated also to become level with the perimeter fence of the factory. New development will be concentrated in the southerly part of the site and the lower lying section of the central field, where it will have the least visual impact in the surrounding landscape.

5.6.3 *Existing Buildings:* Although it is preferable that the red brick factory is retained, any proposal to redevelop the site will be considered, depending upon the design and layout of the new buildings. The other buildings within the factory grounds may be retained or redeveloped.

5.6.4 *Energy Conservation:* In accordance with Policy S18, the development should take account of opportunities to reduce energy needs in the siting and detailed design of buildings and the form of landscaping.

5.7 Landscaping

5.7.1 Policy S3 states that landscaping is to be provided to a high standard, both for the initial scheme and its long term maintenance. The site contains few existing landscaping features, but where possible, they should be integrated into the scheme. Unfortunately, most of the small garden area between the factory and the existing access, will be lost to accommodate the relocated car parking area, and some of the trees screening the existing car park will be lost to allow for the new access. However, mature trees must be retained where possible. New trees must be planted on the north western boundary to screen the new car park. In addition, the opportunity should be taken to screen the private sewage treatment works.

5.7.2 Hedgerows form the eastern and southern boundary of the site and these should be retained and incorporated within the development. These boundaries also require additional tree planting, and a 10 m wide belt (minimum) is considered to be appropriate in order to screen views into the site. The trees and shrub species used around the boundaries and in the proposed amenity area should be in-keeping with

the species currently to be found around the site. The use of peat or limestone pavement is discouraged in any proposed landscaping scheme. Any stone walls should be retained where practicable.

- 5.8 **Rail Link Opportunities** - The site adjoins the west coast main railway line and the opportunity to utilise part of the site as a railway freight depot is being pursued. The feasibility of laying down sidings off the main track into the site is currently being investigated with Railtrack. The best location for the sidings, the precise amount of land required and an indication of the cost of scheme has yet to be confirmed. The response so far from Railtrack has been favourable. It is considered that such a scheme will enhance the marketability of the site, given the increased opportunities for local businesses to improve links with the rest of Britain and Europe. Some environmental grant aid may be available from the Department of Transport (Freight Facilities Grant and Track Access Grant), although the eligibility criteria is strict. If the railway freight depot scheme was to go ahead, it would potentially mean the relocation of the road haulage depot and possibly the DoT testing station site within the brief area.

