

WICK BUSINESS PARK PHASE 2



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd's nan Eilean

Landscape and ecology

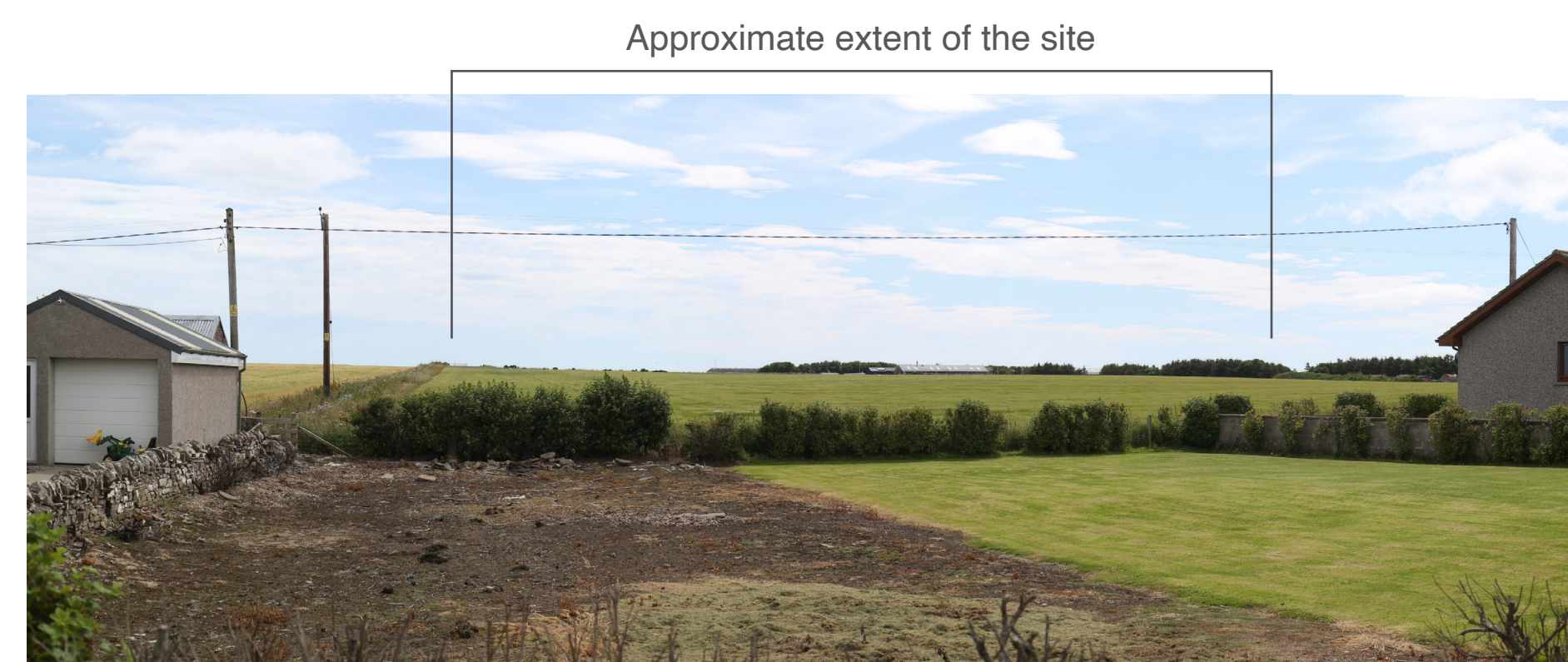
Landscape

The site for Phase 2 sits on land that was once part of Highland Airways' grass airfield and later RAF Wick. You can still see some remnants of its past - overgrown tarmac aircraft hard standings, for example.

It's bordered by Phase 1 of Wick Business Park to the south, agricultural land to the west and north, and lies close to the airport runway. A belt of mature trees wraps around Phase 1 and separates it from Phase 2. The ground gently rises from 31m to 35m and is naturally screened by the surrounding topography, which helps reduce visibility from most nearby areas.

Notable landmarks nearby include historic sites like Ackergill Tower, Sinclair Castle Girnigoe, Noss Head Lighthouse, airport structures and modern buildings such as the Noss Switching Station and retail facilities adjacent to the A99.

A landscape and visual appraisal has been carried out, and a landscape strategy is being prepared. Our aim is to use best practice construction and restoration techniques to integrate new buildings with the surrounding land - including reinstating natural landforms and encouraging vegetation to establish. Woodland planting to the northern and north-western boundaries would screen many of the new buildings as the planting establishes and matures.



Viewpoint - road to Ackergillshore

Ecology

A preliminary ecological survey was completed in July 2025. Although the site is not designated for its ecological value, we've taken a close look at local wildlife and habitats.

Several protected designations - including SACs, SPAs, MPAs and SSSIs - lie within 5km of the site. However, because of the distance and lack of connectivity, no significant effects are expected.

The Highland Biological Recording Group flagged sightings of otters, bats, hedgehogs and Japanese knotweed in the wider area. On site, habitats include grassland, arable fields, bare ground and commercial plots - most of which are in poor condition.

No badger activity was found, but we'll still apply precautionary measures. Ponds nearby aren't suitable for great crested newts, and there is little potential for nearby modern buildings to support bats. Even so, we'll include a lighting plan and look to retain and enhance habitat where we can.

Birds and reptiles like lizards and slowworms may be present, so we'll avoid vegetation clearance during nesting season and make sure any reptiles are left undisturbed.

No invasive non-native plants were found on site.



Viewpoint - Ackergill A99 Junction