Non-Technical Summary – Commonside Tip Preliminary Risk Assessment (2026)

The Council commissioned consultants AECOM to carry out a Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) at the Commonside landfill site (see attached plan). The aim of a PRA is to understand if there are any **potentially unacceptable risks** from contamination to people or the environment.

Identifying potentially unacceptable risks does not mean that harm or pollution is occurring. It means that further assessment would be needed to understand the significance of the risks.

Scope of the Preliminary Risk Assessment

To undertake the assessment, the report reviewed extensive information to build an understanding of the site environmental condition. This included:

- historical records and previous investigations (from 1979–2024)
- local geology (the ground conditions)
- groundwater and surface water features
- information supplied by residents
- new surface water sampling.

Site conditions – key information

<u>Former Commonside landfill</u>

The site was formerly a small steep sided valley, with a small stream through the middle. The site is in a rural location with some houses and businesses nearby.

The landfill was operational between 1956 and 1975. Records indicate that the landfill received a wide range of industrial wastes, including ash, lime, rubble, pipe lagging, paint and paint residues, wood, dye works waste, oil refinery waste, rubber and plastic. Potential contaminants of concern associated with such wastes include polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), hydrocarbons, asbestos, metals and volatile organic compounds.

Because the records are old, there is some uncertainty about the exact nature and amount of waste deposited.

<u>Foxhill Brook</u>

Foxhill Brook is located approximately 280m downhill and to the northeast of the landfill (see attached plan).

The brook has a strong chemical odour in places. Recent and historical water testing shows that contaminants associated with the landfill are present in the brook.

Historically, water draining from the landfill was carried north to the brook via a sub-surface drainage pipe. Now, water ponds at the northern end of the landfill. This indicates that this drainage no longer works as intended and water is likely to be migrating away from the landfill by other routes, such as flowing overland or via shallow groundwater.

Groundwater

The landfill is not lined, so it is possible that water from the landfill enters the shallow groundwater in the natural ground below. This water can then migrate away from the site.

The ground conditions indicate that there is a lower likelihood that contamination from the landfill will migrate downwards to the deeper groundwater. Near to the landfill site, groundwater is pumped from deep underground for drinking water. The utility provider has tested this water for PCBs and none were not detected.

Preliminary Risk Assessment - key findings

The report found that there are *potentially unacceptable risks* from contamination associated with the landfill. The key potential risks are summarised below:

Human health

There are potential **low to moderate** risks to human health. These risks are associated with possible exposure to impacted soils, water and sediments in Foxhill Brook and drainage ditches, as well as vapours and landfill gas.

Groundwater

Risks to shallow groundwater are **moderate.** This is a priority risk for further investigation. Risks to deeper groundwater are considered **low** but as the deeper groundwater is used for drinking water, further information and evidence is needed to better understand this risk.

Watercourses

There are **moderate to high** risks to Foxhill Brook and the ditches in the surrounding area. This is a priority risk for further investigation.

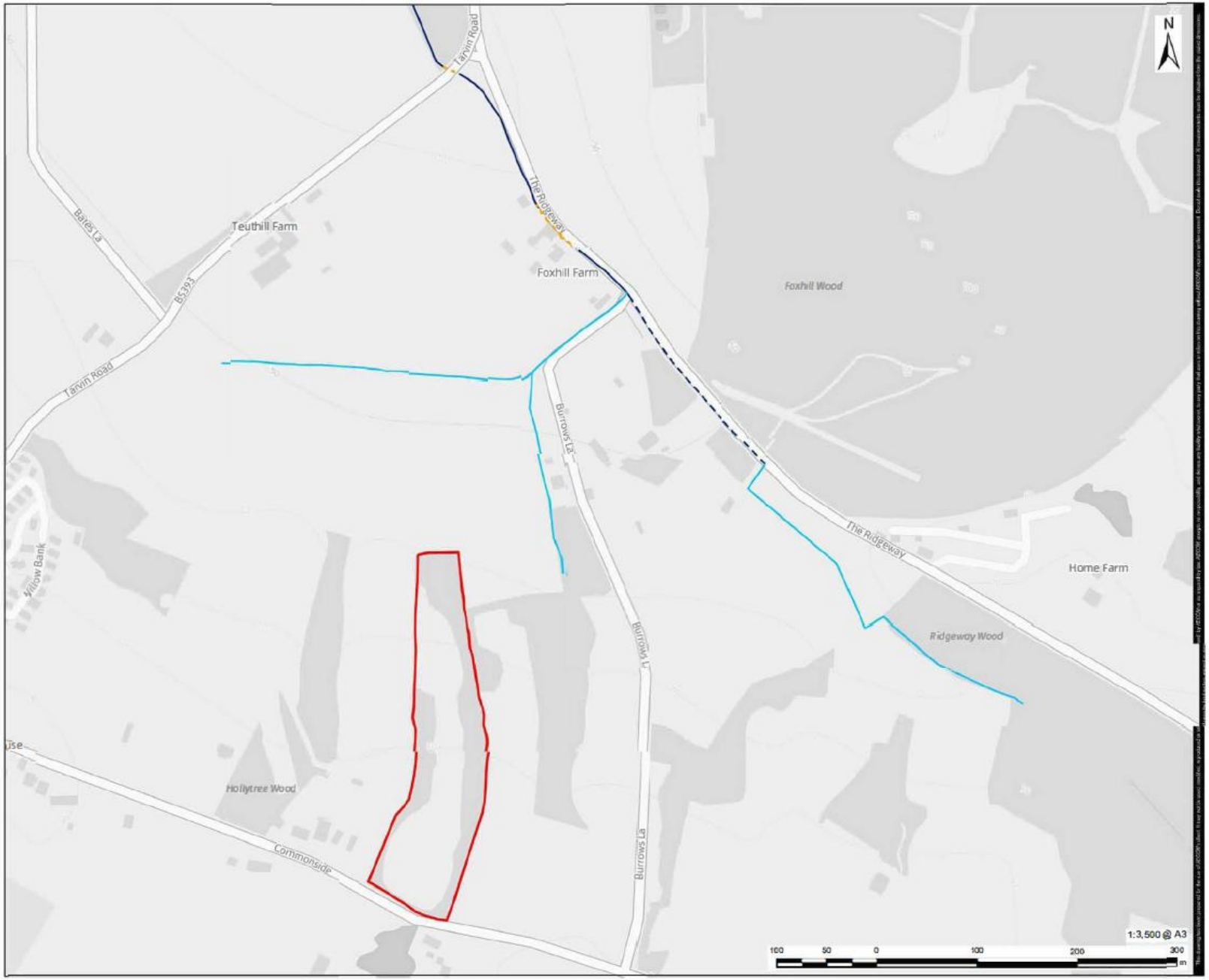
Next Steps

AECOM recommends a **Ground Investigation is undertaken.** This includes:

- Exploratory holes within and around the landfill
- Soil, groundwater and landfill gas monitoring
- Water and sediment sampling of Foxhill Brook and local drainage ditches

- Tracing water migration pathways from the landfill
- A full **quantitative risk assessment**.

This next phase of work should give the Council the evidence needed to decide whether Commonside Tip meets the definition of “contaminated land” under Part IIA.



AECOM

PROJECT

Commonside Tip CWCC Part II A.

CLIENT

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LEGEND

- Commonside Tip Boundary
- Foxhill Brook
- Likely continuation of Foxhill Brook
- Drainage Ditch
- Foxhill Brook Culverted Section

NOTES

ISSUE PURPOSE

FINAL

PROJECT NUMBER

60747912

FIGURE TITLE

Site Location Plan

FIGURE NUMBER

Figure 1