



Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

Motte & Bailey Public
House, Pirton,
Hertfordshire

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Non-Technical Summary

This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by HCUK Group, on behalf of the Cordage Group, to inform proposals for the construction of a single residential dwelling within the garden of The Motte & Bailey public house, Pirton, Hertfordshire (centred at NGR: TL 14568 31607).

The assessment has confirmed that the Site contains no designated archaeological assets such as scheduled monuments or registered battlefields – though the Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village scheduled monument (NHLE1012325) lies immediately to the east of the Site. The assessment identified 132 archaeological monument records, documented on the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HHER) within the 1km study area radius. Based on information held by the HHER, supplemented by historic mapping, LiDAR and Satellite Imagery and documentary research it has been determined that there is a high potential for archaeological remains dating to the Roman, Early Medieval, Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern periods, and a medium-high potential for Prehistoric remains to be identified within the Site.

Information recorded on the HHER shows that Prehistoric activity has taken place within close proximity to the Site from at least the Neolithic period onwards. The Neolithic and Bronze Age remains predominantly relate to pits and depositions of axe heads, whereas the Iron Age remains includes more pottery which suggests an increase in local, permanent, habitation. Further information recorded on the HHER shows clear evidence for Roman settlement activity within close proximity to the Site, particularly to the north and east. As such, there is a potential to encounter remains associated with Roman activity, such as pits, or possibly remains associated with occupation.

Early Medieval settlement has been shown to have existed within the study area throughout the period, beginning in the 5th century. An enclosed settlement existed to the north-west of the Site, and which expanded east to the north and north-east of the Site until around the 9th century. Further settlement continued in the area from this point onwards. The scheduled remains of Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village immediately to the east of the Site evidences a major episode of planned construction within Pirton around the early-12th century. Unusually, the castle contained a double bailey, and though the eastern bailey is included within the scheduled area and survives well as extant earthworks, the western bailey likely extended into the area which includes the Site itself. Pottery remains recovered from a test pit excavated in the south-eastern corner of the Site in 2011 show that evidence for Medieval activity is present.

Historic map regression, combined with newspaper research, has shown that the western and central part of the Site has functioned as a pub since at least the mid-19th century. Several former buildings are located within the Site and the pub itself was demolished and rebuilt in the early-20th century. The eastern end of the Site appears to have remained undeveloped during this time.

The scope of any further archaeological works would need to be discussed and agreed with the nominated archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1** This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by James Danter ACIfA of HCUK Group on behalf of the Cordage Group. The proposed development is for the construction of a single residential dwelling within the garden of The Motte & Bailey public house, Pirton.
- 1.2** The site in question is known as the Motte & Bailey Public House, Pirton, Hertfordshire (Figure 1), occupying an area of c.0.16ha and centred at NGR TL 14568 31607. It is hereafter referred to as the Site.
- 1.3** By way of introduction, the Site is formed of the early 20th century Motte & Bailey public house (formerly known as The White Horse), its car park, outdoor seating area, and garden space.
- 1.4** The purpose of this assessment is to determine and assess the archaeological potential of the Site and to assess the significance of any relevant heritage assets identified. The report is informed by site inspection, historical information, and by data relating to heritage assets. It seeks to provide sufficient information to allow an informed understanding of the potential impact of the proposed development on the significance of those assets, and to consider the need for solutions (design, engineering etc) where necessary. The report will not address designated or non-designated built heritage and which is addressed by a separate Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by HCUK Group.
- 1.5** The report considers heritage assets of archaeological interest, including finds/findspots of artefactual and ecofactual material (e.g. stone tools, bone), and locations, features or objects referenced from historic documents. Where appropriate, it refers to archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits, including sub-surface archaeological remains of features, buildings and structures.
- 1.6** This assessment has been prepared in accordance with Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment¹ published by the Chartered Institute

¹ CIfA 2022

for Archaeologists (CIfA). It takes into account the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other local planning policy and guidance where relevant.

1.7 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of digital data held by the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER) together with documentary research. It incorporates a map regression indicating the impact of change over time.

1.8 This data has been collected for an area comprising a 1km radius of the Site boundary, which is referred to as the 'study area'. This radius has been selected on the basis of professional judgment as being sufficient to determine the archaeological potential of the Site, taking into account its location, topography, and character.

Geology and Topography

1.9 The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying solid geology across the Site as being Zig Zag Chalk Formation – Chalk, which is a sedimentary bedrock formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. No overlying superficial geological deposits are recorded on the Site.²

1.10 The soils of the Site are classified as being within the Soilscape 3 class which is described as being 'shallow lime-rich soils over chalk or limestone'.³

1.11 The topography of the Site is level at c.76m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Site Visit

1.12 A site visit/walkover was undertaken on 25th July 2025 in clear, sunny conditions with good visibility.

1.13 No above ground archaeological remains were identified during the visit.

1.14 Photographs taken on the site visit:

² British Geological Survey. 2025.

³ Cranfield University. 2025.



Photograph 1: View north-east showing the frontage of the extant pub.



Photograph 2: View north-east showing the driveway leading to the pub car park.



Photograph 3: View north showing the garden space on the western edge of the Site.



Photograph 4: View north-east showing the car park in the centre of the Site.



Photograph 5: View north-west showing the centre of the Site and the rear of the pub.



Photograph 6: View west showing an outdoor space in the north of the Site.



Photograph 7: View north-west showing the surviving outbuilding shown on the 1881-2 Ordnance Survey map.



Photograph 8: View west showing concrete foundations of possible former structure.



Photograph 9: View south looking from the north-east corner of the Site and looking down the eastern boundary.



Photograph 10: View south-west from the north-east corner of the Site.



Photograph 11: View west from the north-east corner of the Site.



Photograph 12: View north from the south-east part of the Site.



Photograph 13: View east showing the south-east corner of the Site where the test pit was excavated in 2011.

2. Methodology

Sources

2.1 In preparing this assessment we have compiled readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources, primarily:

- Hertfordshire HER for known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots within 1km of the Site (i.e. the study area).
- Maps and documents held by Hertfordshire Record Office and online.
- The British Geological Survey (BGS) onshore digital maps at 1:50 000 scale.
- Soils Survey of England and Wales.
- The National Heritage List for England (Historic England).
- Air photographs held by Historic England and other sources.
- Other relevant books, journals and grey literature reports that were identified in the course of the data collection.
- LiDAR data.

2.2 The information gathered from the above sources has been verified and augmented as far as possible by assessment and site inspection, in order to arrive at conclusions on the significance of the various heritage assets and archaeological remains that have been identified.

Assessment

2.3 The assessment seeks to understand and define the significance of heritage assets identified from the sources above, taking into account the categories of special interest defined in the NPPF, primarily archaeological interest, historic interest, architectural interest and artistic interest.

2.4 The importance of a heritage asset is the overall value assigned to it based on its heritage significance, reflecting its statutory designation or, in the case of undesignated assets, the professional judgement of the assessor (Table 1).

Table 1: Criteria for Assessing the Importance of Heritage Assets

Importance of the asset	Criteria
Very high	World Heritage Sites and other assets of equal international importance
High	Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Battlefields, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, and undesignated heritage assets of equal importance
Medium	Conservation Areas, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens, Grade II Listed Buildings, heritage assets on local lists and undesignated assets of equal importance
Low	Undesignated heritage assets of lesser importance

2.5 The assessment also considers change to the setting and significance of heritage assets, where appropriate.

Archaeological Potential

2.6 The report includes:

- an assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site,
- an assessment of the significance of any archaeological remains that may be present, and
- an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed development on heritage assets, both in terms of physical impact and (where relevant) change to setting.

3. Relevant Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest.

3.2 Paragraph 216 of the NPPF describes the approach to be taken towards non-designated heritage assets, as follows:

"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

3.3 Footnote 75 of the NPPF, which is attached to paragraph 213, states that "Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets." Further guidance on non-designated heritage assets is contained in National Planning Practice Guidance, as revised in July 2019, notably paragraph 040 which states that "Irrespective of how they are identified, it is important that the decisions to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence", and paragraph 041 which in full reads as follows:

"What are non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest and how important are they?"

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies two categories of non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest:

(1) Those that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments and are therefore considered subject to the same policies as those for designated heritage assets (National Planning Policy Framework footnote 63). They are of 3 types:

those that have yet to be formally assessed for designation.

those that have been assessed as being nationally important and therefore, capable of designation, but which the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has exercised his/her discretion not to designate.

those that are incapable of being designated by virtue of being outside the scope of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 because of their physical nature.

*The reason why many nationally important monuments are not scheduled is set out in the document *Scheduled Monuments*, published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Information on location and significance of such assets is found in the same way as for all heritage assets. Judging whether sites fall into this category may be assisted by reference to the criteria for scheduling monuments. Further information on scheduled monuments can be found on the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's website.*

(2) Other non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest. By comparison this is a much larger category of lesser heritage significance, although still subject to the conservation objective. On occasion the understanding of a site may change following assessment and evaluation prior to a planning decision and move it from this category to the first.

Where an asset is thought to have archaeological interest, the potential knowledge which may be unlocked by investigation may be harmed even by minor disturbance, because the context in which archaeological evidence is found is crucial to furthering understanding.

Decision-making regarding such assets requires a proportionate response by local planning authorities. Where an initial assessment indicates that the site on which development is proposed includes or has potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants should be required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. However, it is estimated that following the initial assessment of archaeological interest only a small proportion – around 3% – of all planning applications justify a requirement for detailed assessment."

3.4 Paragraph 218 of the NPPF also makes provision for the recording of heritage assets that are likely to be demolished or destroyed by development.

Relevant Local Policies

3.5 The following local policies are relevant to the historic environment and this assessment. The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 which sets out the planning framework for the area.⁴

⁴ North Hertfordshire District Council. 2022.

Table 2: Local Policies

Local Plan	Relevant Policy
North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031	Policy HE4: Archaeology Permission for development proposals affecting heritage assets with archaeological interest will be granted provided that: a) Developers submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where justified, an archaeological field evaluation. b) It is demonstrated how archaeological remains will be preserved and incorporated into the layout of that development, if in situ preservation of important archaeological remains is considered preferable; and c) Where the loss of the whole or a material part of important archaeological remains is justified, appropriate conditions are applied to ensure that the archaeological recording, reporting, publication and archiving of the results of such archaeological work is undertaken before it is damaged or lost. Where archaeological sites have been assessed to meet the criteria for inclusion on adopted registers or maps of locally important heritage assets these shall be treated in the same way as archaeology areas and areas of archaeological significance. Areas of as yet, unknown archaeology may be identified during research, or through the planning or plan making process. These sites or areas should be treated in the same way as archaeology areas and areas of archaeological significance.
Pirton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031	Policy PNP 8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeological Heritage: Development Proposals will be supported where: • Proposals conserve or enhance the heritage assets of the Parish and their settings in a way that is appropriate to their significance. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets; • Development proposals on sites that include or have the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest and planning applications for development affecting the archaeology alert areas should be submitted with a desk top archaeological survey and where necessary a field evaluation undertaken by an appropriately qualified specialist so that the impact of the proposed development on the

	significance of the heritage assets can be assessed. This may indicate that further pre-determination field evaluation excavation and or mitigation secured by condition are required. Mitigation may take the form of further excavation, an archaeological watching brief, or the preservation in situ of significant archaeological remains. Proposals demonstrate that they have consulted and respected appropriate sources of information such as Hertfordshire County Council's Historic Environment Record. In addition to consultation with the archaeological planning advisory service and the Herts Historic Environment Record, specialists undertaking such surveys should consult with the Pirton Parish Council which holds local knowledge on these sites.
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4. Archaeological Background

Introduction

- 4.1** There are three designated archaeological monuments, such as scheduled monuments or registered battlefields within the wider 1km study area.
- 4.2** There are 132 archaeological monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km study area, of which one, the extant Motte & Bailey pub (MHT31506), lies within the Site itself. (Figure 3)
- 4.3** The HHER contains records of 86 previous archaeological investigations within the 1km study area, of which a number relate to test pits excavated throughout Pirton by the University of Cambridge between 2007 and 2011. One of these test pits was located within the Site itself. (Figures 4 and 11)
- 4.4** Assessment of potential impacts to non-designated or designated heritage assets of the built environment such as standing buildings are outside the scope of this archaeological assessment. However the location of these assets have been included for completeness.
- 4.5** Timescales used in this assessment:

Table 3: Timescales

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 12,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 12,000 – 4000 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4000 – 1800 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.1800 – 600 BC	
Iron Age –	c.600 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Early Medieval –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval –	1066 –1485	
Post Medieval Period –	1485 – 1901	
Modern –	1901 – Present	

Designated Archaeological Monuments

Scheduled Monuments

- 4.6** There are three Scheduled Monuments recorded within the 1km study area. These relate to:
- 4.7** Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken Medieval village at Pirton (NHLE1012325) and which is located immediately to the east of the Site. This monument constitutes the 12th-century castle motte remains as well as its eastern bailey and remains of a shrunken Medieval village. These remains survive as earthworks and which show features such as holloways and building platforms.
- 4.8** Anglo-Saxon settlement and probable Prehistoric ring ditches, west of Pirton village (NHLE1434415) and which is located c.200m to the north-west of the Site. This monument constitutes an enclosed Early Medieval settlement, with evidence of occupation from the 5th to the 9th-century. The monument also contains two probable Prehistoric ring ditches.
- 4.9** Moated site and associated enclosure at Rectory Farm (NHLE1009451) and which is located c.415m to the north-west of the Site. This monument constitutes a Medieval moated site with an unusual double island, likely for both habitation and horticulture. Remnants of the original structure survive and the ditches will retain socio-economic evidence relating to its inhabitants.

Listed Buildings

- 4.10** There are 50 Listed Buildings recorded within the 1km study area.
- 4.11** These constitute one Grade I listed building, five Grade II* listed buildings, and 44 Grade II listed buildings.

Conservation Areas

- 4.12** The Site lies within the Pirton Conservation Area (Figure 14) and which encompasses the historic core of the settlement.

Non-Designated Archaeological Monuments

- 4.13** There are 132 non-designated archaeological assets within the 1km study area.

Prehistoric

4.14 The HHER holds records for 19 monuments of Prehistoric date within the 1km study area, none of which lie within the Site itself.

Table 4: Prehistoric monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT1476	Iron Age, Roman and Medieval pottery, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT1713	Neolithic Stone Axe, Pirton/Holwell	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT1714	Neolithic Stone Celt, near Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT1716	Bronze Age axe, Danefield, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT18218	Iron Age ditch, Holwell Road, Pirton	Ditch; Field Boundary	Prehistoric
MHT195	Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon pot base, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT23484	Late Iron Age copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT31109	Ring ditches, Priors Hill, Pirton	Round Barrow?; Ring Ditch	Prehistoric
MHT31348	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age round house, Holwell Road, Pirton	Round House (Domestic)?	Prehistoric
MHT31349	Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age quarry pits, Holwell Road, Pirton	Pit; Cremation	Prehistoric
MHT31512	Earthworks, Shillington Road, Pirton	Findspot; Findspot; Earthwork	Prehistoric
MHT31515	Late Bronze Age & Early Iron Age features, Pollards Way, Pirton	Pit; Post Hole; Pit	Prehistoric
MHT31579	Late Saxon - Medieval features, Shillington Road, Pirton	Pit; Ditch; Pit	Prehistoric
MHT31580	Early Neolithic pit, Shillington Road, Pirton	Pit	Prehistoric
MHT553	Probable Bronze Age hoard, 'Hilly Fields', Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT6341	Bronze Age axehead, Cromwell Way, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric
MHT6369	Cropmark of ring ditch, Pirton	Round Barrow?; Ring Ditch	Prehistoric
MHT9780	Late Neolithic pits, Dane Field, Pirton	Pit	Prehistoric
MHT39138	Late Iron Age coin, Pirton	Findspot	Prehistoric

Palaeolithic

4.15 The earliest phase of the Prehistoric period is the Palaeolithic. This is considered the earliest known period of human culture and evidence from this period often consists of lithic scatters, found within river gravels and terraces. In approximately 46,000BC, during the Anglian Glaciation, there were major variations in climate which affected where people settled. During the beginning of the Upper Palaeolithic

(30,000-10,000 BC) Britain was still connected to Europe. No finds of Palaeolithic date are known within the Site or study area.

Mesolithic

- 4.16** During the subsequent Mesolithic period the ice sheets had receded, temperatures and sea-levels were rising, and Britain was still connected to the continent by land bridge. The hunter-gatherers who utilised the area were highly mobile, and due to the changing conditions often only settled seasonally. Finds from this period tend to come in the form of stray finds within disturbed deposits, and *in situ* settlement sites are a rare find. No finds of Mesolithic date are known within the Site or study area.

Neolithic

- 4.17** The subsequent Neolithic period in Britain is characterised by the advent of farming practices which signal a move away from the more itinerant hunter-gatherer type lifestyle of preceding periods. Although farming encouraged a more permanently, or at least seasonally, settled landscape during this period, this practice was still supplemented by the gathering and hunting of food in the wild.
- 4.18** The earliest recorded remains within the study area date to the Neolithic and indicates that human activity likely began in this area during this period. Two of these findspots relate to unstratified finds including an axehead (MHT1713) recovered c.795m to the south-west of the Site, and a stone celt (MHT1714) – a long and thin axe often used for woodworking or tree felling – found c.720m to the south-east of the Site.
- 4.19** Further Neolithic activity is evidenced through the discovery of various pits. One pit (MHT31579) c.375m to the north-west of the Site contained no finds but was radiocarbon dated to this period, whereas a nearby pit (MHT31580) contained flint lithics. Another pit (MHT9780) c.890m to the north-west of the Site, contained sherds of Peterborough Ware pottery.

Bronze Age

- 4.20** The Bronze Age saw a continuation of the shift towards more permanent settlement and with much less hunter-gatherer type activity. Funerary monuments such as round barrows begin to be constructed on a larger and more frequent scale and the

advent of bronze metalworking saw a technological revolution which permeated into many aspects of people's lives.

4.21 Evidence of potential funeral monuments within the study area can be seen through aerial photographs c.250m to the north-west of the Site (MHT31109) and c.405m to the south-west of the Site (MHT6369), visible as cropmarks of ring ditches. These ditches would once have enclosed a barrow containing one or more burials.

4.22 Other evidence of Bronze Age activity has been identified through findspots of axe heads. A hoard of four looped and socketed axe heads (MHT553) was found in an unknown location within Pirton. Two further axe heads (MHT1716, MHT6341) were found c.795m to the south-west of the Site.

Iron Age

4.23 It is during the Iron Age that activity within the study area appears to intensify and where evidence of more permanent occupation can be seen. Post holes indicative of a roundhouse (MHT31348) as well as a nearby cremation cemetery (MHT31349) were found c.710m to the north-east of the Site. Iron Age pottery has also been recovered from a number of cut features within the study area (MHT1476, MHT18218, MHT195, MHT31512 and MHT31515). Additionally, two findspots of Iron Age coins (MHT39138, MHT23484) have been found c.735m to the north-east of the Site, and c.800m to the south-west of the Site, respectively.

4.24 It is considered that the potential to encounter remains dating to the Prehistoric period is medium-high. This is due to the number of Prehistoric findspots recorded within the study area, the closest of which is c.175m to the north-east. If remains were to be found, they would likely be considered to be of *low (local)* to *medium (regional)* importance, depending on the nature of what was found.

Roman

4.25 The HHER holds records for 17 monuments of Roman date within the 1km study area, none of which lie within the Site itself.

Table 5: Roman monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT1474	Roman coin, Crabtree Farm, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT1475	Roman pottery, School Playground, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT1477	Romano-British pottery, Toot Hill, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT1478	Roman building, Bury Field, Pirton	Building	Roman
MHT1480	Romano-British spindle whorl, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT17170	Roman pit, Pirton Primary School, High Street, Pirton	Pit	Roman
MHT18649	Roman pit, Pollards Way, Pirton	Pit; Ditch	Roman
MHT20785	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20786	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20787	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20788	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20789	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20790	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT20791	Late Roman copper-alloy coin, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT21261	Roman steelyard weight, Burge End, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT31572	Roman, Saxon & Medieval pottery, Mill Field, Burge End, Pirton	Findspot	Roman
MHT6978	Roman settlement and Early Medieval occupation, Dane Field, Pirton	Farmstead; Occupation Site; Road	Roman

4.26 The HHER records evidence of Roman activity within the study area. Eight of these entries relate to findspots of coins. One of these (MHT1474) was found c.280m to the south-east of the Site, whereas the other seven (MHT20785, MHT20786, MHT20787, MHT20788, MHT20789, MHT20790, MHT20791) were found c.890m to the south of the Site.

4.27 Evidence of definitive Roman settlement within the study area can be found c.985m to the north-west of the Site through the presence of occupation debris and kilns associated with ironworking (MHT6978). Additionally, the floor of a Roman building as well as associated pottery (MHT1478) was found c.150m to the south-east of the Site. Two pits (MHT18649, MHT17170) were encountered c.185m to the north-west of the Site, and c.205m to the north of the Site, respectively.

4.28 A spindle whorl (MHT1480) was found c.175m to the north-west of the Site, a copper-alloy weight (MHT21261) c.760m to the north-west of the Site, and various

assemblages of pottery (MHT1475, MHT1477, MHT31572) have been found c.125m to the north of the Site, c.135m to the north-east of the Site, and c.730m to the north-west of the Site, respectively.

4.29 It is considered that the potential to encounter remains dating to the Roman period is high. Multiple remains are recorded on the HHER within close proximity to the Site. These remains, if encountered, are likely to be of *low (local) to medium (regional) importance*, depending on the nature of what is found.

Early Medieval

4.30 The HHER holds records for 17 monuments of Early Medieval date within the 1km study area, of which none lie within the Site itself.

Table 6: Early Medieval monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT11409	Saxo-Norman features, Little Lane, Pirton	Pit; Ditch; Building?	Early Medieval
MHT12426	Blacksmith's Pond (Common), Pirton	Common Land; Moat	Early Medieval
MHT12427	Great Green, Pirton	Common Land	Early Medieval
MHT12762	Undated pit, 16 Bunyan Close, Pirton	Pit	Early Medieval
MHT12824	Medieval ditches, Elm Tree Close, Pirton	Ditch	Early Medieval
MHT13757	Medieval pottery, Burge End Lane, Pirton	Findspot	Early Medieval
MHT1620	Spearhead, Possibly Early Medieval, Pirton	Findspot?	Early Medieval
MHT16620	Pirton Village	Village	Early Medieval
MHT31108	Anglo-Saxon settlement, Priors Hill, Pirton	Boundary Bank; Settlement; Ditch; Inhumation	Early Medieval
MHT31388	Saxon & Medieval Features, Pirton Primary School, High Street, Pirton	Pit; Ditch; Ditch; Pit	Early Medieval
MHT4715	Earthworks and ridge and furrow, Rectory Farm, Pirton	Ridge And Furrow; Farmstead?	Early Medieval
MHT9470	Anglo-Saxon penny of Offa, Pirton	Findspot	Early Medieval
MHT9676	Saxon, Medieval & Post-Medieval buildings, The Fox, Pirton	Occupation Site; Rubbish Pit; Building	Early Medieval
MHT9677	Saxo-Norman cemetery and possible church, Pirton	Church?; Inhumation Cemetery	Early Medieval
MHT9680	Medieval & later domestic settlement, Walnut Tree Farm, Pirton	Rubbish Pit; Occupation Site; Ditch	Early Medieval

MHT31642	Saxon and Medieval features, 17 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton	Ditch; Pit	Early Medieval
MHT31645	Anglo-Saxon features, Rear Of The Coach House, Shillington Road, Pirton	Pit; Ditch; Post Hole	Early Medieval

4.31 The HHER records considerable evidence for Early Medieval settlement and occupation within the village of Pirton (MHT16620). The earliest evidence relates to an unusual enclosed settlement (NHLE1434415, MHT31108) c.260m to the north-west of the Site. This settlement had its origins in the 5th-century and contained numerous pits, ditches, and postholes showing the presence of buildings. The grave of an older male was also encountered and was radiocarbon dated to 775-970 AD. Further activity contemporary with this early enclosed settlement can be found c.175m to the north of the Site where additional pits and ditches were found and which contained the bones of animals, such as cattle and horses, displaying butchery marks (MHT31388).

4.32 By the 7th-century, the focus of settlement in Pirton appears to have expanded to the east, c.260m to the north-east of the Site. Here, the remains of wall footings, enclosures, pits and postholes (MHT9676), as well as the find of a late 8th-century silver penny dating to the reign of King Offa of Mercia, all indicate further settlement activity. In the same area, a contemporary cemetery was found containing 40 individuals buried in east-west oriented graves within an enclosed graveyard (MHT9677). It was noted that the cemetery did not contain many grave goods, which may indicate Christian burials. A west-east oriented building associated with the cemetery has been hypothesised to be an early church.

4.33 This early settlement appears to have fallen largely out of use by the 9th-century but evidence of continued activity within the study area is evidenced through numerous ditches, pits and postholes (MHT31645, MHT31642, MHT11409, MHT12824) c.300m to the north-west of the Site, c.355m to the east of the Site, c.335m to the north-east of the Site, and c.400m to the north-east of the Site, respectively. Evidence for farmsteads located on the periphery of the settlement can be found c.285m to the south-east of the Site (MHT9680) and c.755m to the

north-west of the Site (MHT4715). The etymology of Pirton references the presence of farmsteads during this period and translates to 'Pear-tree farm'.⁵

4.34 The 1086 Domesday Survey shows that, at the time of the 1066 Norman Conquest, Pirton was in the possession of Canterbury Cathedral and had an annual value of £25.⁶

4.35 It is considered that the potential to encounter remains dating to the Early Medieval period is high. Extensive evidence of settlement can be found throughout this period and in close proximity to the Site. If remains were to be encountered, they would likely be of *medium (regional) importance*.

Medieval

4.36 The HHER holds records for 35 monuments of Medieval date within the 1km study area, of which none lie within the Site itself.

Table 7: Medieval monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT10549	Medieval features, 2 Davis Crescent, Pirton	Ditch; Pit	Medieval
MHT1487	Manor of Pirton	Manor	Medieval
MHT15903	Three Gables, 2 Bury End, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Open Hall House; Cross Wing House	Medieval
MHT15905	Docwra Manor (The Old Hall), Pirton	Timber Framed House; House; Public House	Medieval
MHT15906	28 Shillington Road, Pirton	Open Hall House; Cross Wing House; Timber Framed House; Farmstead; Timber Framed Barn	Medieval
MHT15907	Walnut Tree Farm, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Farmhouse; Farmstead;	Medieval

⁵ Survey of English Place-Names. 2025.

⁶ Open Domesday. 2025.

		Lobby Entry House; Timber Framed Barn; Cattle Shelter	
MHT15956	Cropmarks of ridge and furrow west of Pirton	Ridge And Furrow	Medieval
MHT20778	Medieval - Post-Medieval copper-alloy thimble, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT20781	Medieval - Post-Medieval copper-alloy token, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT20782	Medieval silver farthing, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT20783	Medieval silver farthing, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT20784	Medieval silver short-cross penny, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT21152	Medieval copper-alloy vessel lug handle, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT21262	Medieval to Post-Medieval lead token, Burge End, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT21263	Medieval copper alloy buckle, Burge End, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT21264	Medieval copper alloy strap loop, Burge End, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT2221	Moated site, Rectory Farm, Pirton	Moat	Medieval
MHT25797	Medieval buckle, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT27469	Medieval silver long-cross penny, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT31090	Remains of ridge & furrow, north of Hambridge Way, Pirton	Ridge And Furrow	Medieval
MHT31320	Medieval pit, The Dial, West Lane, Pirton	Pit	Medieval
MHT31353	Medieval or later chalk floor, 6 Bury End, Pirton	Floor	Medieval
MHT31510	Probable moated site, Wrights Farm, Pirton	Moat	Medieval
MHT31514	Medieval pottery and possibly Medieval earthworks, Doles Mead, Wrights Farm, Pirton	Earthwork; Findspot	Medieval
MHT31519	Ridge & furrow, Holwell Lane, Pirton	Ridge And Furrow; Field Boundary	Medieval
MHT31569	Medieval pottery, Lower Croft Field, Burge End Lane, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT31571	Medieval & Post-Medieval pottery scatter, south of Hammonds Farm, Burge End Lane, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval
MHT32	Toot Hill motte and bailey castle, Pirton	Motte And Bailey	Medieval
MHT4315	St Mary's Church, Pirton	Church	Medieval
MHT4513	Hammonds Farm, Pirton	Open Hall House; Farmhouse; Timber Framed House	Medieval
MHT6302	Medieval barn and Post-Medieval farm buildings at Rectory Farm, Pirton	Timber Framed Barn; Farmstead; Dovecote; Granary; Stable	Medieval
MHT746	Shrunken village and defensive earthworks, The Bury Field, Pirton	Bailey; Earthwork; Shrunken Village	Medieval
MHT7939	Cropmarks of ridge & furrow and associated Trackway, Pirton	Ridge And Furrow; Trackway	Medieval

MHT9059	Earthworks of ridge and furrow, Wright's Farm, Pirton	Ridge And Furrow	Medieval
MHT9471	Medieval seal die, Pirton	Findspot	Medieval

- 4.37** The 1086 Domesday Survey shows that Pirton had become the property of a landowner known as Ralph of Limésy and constituted 77 households. It contained c.2400 acres of ploughland, meadow for sheep grazing, woodland supporting 500 pigs, and four mills with an annual value to the lord of £20, making this a large and profitable settlement at the time.⁷ This further indicates the important nature of the settlement during the preceding period.
- 4.38** The Medieval period saw considerable change within Pirton on a planned scale. Immediately to the east of the Site boundary lies the scheduled remains of Toot Hill motte and bailey castle (NHLE1012325, MHT22184). This castle, which would have supported a timber palisade enclosing a tower at its summit, was constructed in the early 12th-century. Unusually, the castle had a double bailey to its east and west. The eastern bailey survives well as earthworks and forms part of the scheduled area, whereas the western bailey lies under part of the Modern village, including the area of the Site itself. The western bailey is not part of the scheduled area.
- 4.39** Within the eastern bailey lies the extant St Mary's Church (MHT22577) c.100m to the east of the Site and which also dates to the 12th-century. To the south of the church, but still within the eastern bailey, various earthworks denote the presence of a planned element of the Medieval village of Pirton (MHT25772) – now known as 'The Bury'. These earthworks shows housing platforms, holloways, ponds, as well as further defensive features associated with the castle bailey.
- 4.40** A test pit excavated within the south-east corner of the Site (EHT8476) in 2011 contained pottery sherds dating throughout the Medieval period.⁸ This test pit was part of a series of 104 test pits excavated between 2007 – 2011 and the results of which show considerable activity within Pirton between the early 12th and early 14th-century, but a clear reduction in activity from the late 14th-century. This likely settlement shrinkage is probably attributable to the effects of the Black Death in

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Lewis, C. 2016. pp 287

the mid-14th-century as well as changing economic patterns as a result in the subsequent years.⁹

- 4.41** Additional Medieval activity can be seen throughout the study area. A moated site (NHLE1009451, MHT2221) is located c.555m to the north-west of the Site and a second possible moated site (MHT31510) is recorded c.565m to the north-west of the Site. These sites are typically constructed between mid-13th century and mid-14th century and served both a defensive function as well as being high-status manorial centres.
- 4.42** On the periphery of the village, the HHER records ridge and furrow remains c.340m to the west of the Site (MHT15956), c.675m to the north-east of the Site (MHT31519), and c.595m to the south of the Site (MHT7939). LiDAR analysis also shows extant ridge and furrow remains c.640m to the north-west of the Site. These remains can be used to help identify agricultural areas beyond the settlement core during this period.
- 4.43** Within the village, there are several extant buildings that have their origins in the Medieval period (MHT15903, MHT15905, MHT15907, MHT15906, and MHT4513) c.85m to the south of the Site, c.125m to the south of the Site, c.300m to the south-east of the Site, c.415m to the north-west of the Site, and c.670m to the north of the Site, respectively.
- 4.44** It is considered that the potential to encounter remains dating to the Medieval period is high. The Site likely lies within the area which formed the western bailey of Toot Hill motte and bailey castle. Pottery recovered from a test pit excavated within the south-east corner of the Site in 2011 clearly shows Medieval activity within the Site itself. These remains, if encountered, will likely be considered to be of *medium (regional) importance*.

Post Medieval & Modern

- 4.45** The HHER holds records for 35 monuments of Post Medieval and Modern date within the 1km study area, of which one, the extant Motte & Bailey pub (MHT31506), lies within the Site itself.

⁹ Ibid.

Table 8: Post Medieval and Modern monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT10894	Late Post-Medieval Buildings, 77 High Street, Pirton	Pit; Ditch; Building	Post Medieval
MHT13426	7-13 Bury End, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Semi Detached House	Post Medieval
MHT154	Rectory Farm, Pirton	Manor House; Brewhouse	Post Medieval
MHT15902	Burge End Farm, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Lobby Entry House; Farmhouse; Farmstead; Timber Framed Barn	Post Medieval
MHT16304	Elm Tree Farm, Hambridge Way, Pirton	Farmhouse; Farmstead; Timber Framed Barn; Timber Framed House; Dovecote	Post Medieval
MHT16666	Hammond's Almshouses, 19-21 High Street, Pirton	Almshouse	Post Medieval
MHT16667	Methodist Chapel, High Street, Pirton	Wesleyan Methodist Chapel	Post Medieval
MHT17683	Hill Farm, Priors Hill, Pirton	Farmstead; Farmhouse	Post Medieval
MHT17684	Site of Baptist Chapel, Great Green, Pirton	Baptist Chapel	Post Medieval
MHT17753	4 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton	Timber Framed House	Post Medieval
MHT17754	Bury Cottage, 6 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton	House	Post Medieval
MHT18265	The Fox, 37 High Street, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Lobby Entry House; Public House	Post Medieval
MHT18773	Wright's Farm, Shillington Road, Pirton	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MHT20779	Post-Medieval copper-alloy buckle, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT20780	Post-Medieval copper-alloy buckle, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT21635	William & Mary silver coin, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT21636	William III halfpenny, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT21637	Fake sixpence of Elizabeth I, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT27334	Post-Medieval copper-alloy token, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT27335	Post-Medieval copper-alloy buckle, Pirton	Findspot	Post Medieval
MHT30146	Lavender Cottage, 21 Shillington Road, Pirton	Open Hall House; Timber Framed House	Post Medieval
MHT30752	Site of Littlegreen Farm, Royal Oak Lane, Pirton	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MHT30753	Site of The Shoulder Of Mutton PH, Hambridge Way, Pirton	Public House; Beer House	Post Medieval

MHT31036	Site of 19th century allotments, West Lane, Pirton	Allotment	Post Medieval
MHT31328	8-11 Great Green, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Hall House	Post Medieval
MHT31354	4-6 Bury End, Pirton	Timber Framed House; Lobby Entry House	Post Medieval
MHT31506	The Motte & Bailey (White Horse) PH, Great Green, Pirton	Public House	Post Medieval
MHT31509	Post-Medieval field boundary, Royal Oak Lane, Pirton	Field Boundary; Ditch	Post Medieval
MHT31511	Site of watermill, Wrights Farm, Pirton	Watermill; Wheel Pit	Post Medieval
MHT31570	Ashburn, Burge End Lane, Pirton	Findspot; Timber Framed House	Post Medieval
MHT5297	Post Box, Burge End, Pirton	Post Box	Post Medieval
MHT6300	Timber farm buildings at Hammonds Farm, Pirton	Dovecote?; Farmstead; Brewhouse; Timber Framed Barn; Granary	Post Medieval
MHT6301	Site of dovecote, Burge End Farm, Pirton	Dovecote	Post Medieval
MHT17685	Site of glove works, Priors Hill, Pirton	Glove Factory	Modern
MHT31032	Pirton war memorial, St Mary's Churchyard, Crabtree Lane, Pirton	War Memorial	Modern

4.46 All Post Medieval and Modern monument records within the 1km study area are not considered to contribute further to the archaeological potential of the Site. Therefore historic mapping has been analysed to further understand potential archaeological remains which could be present within the Site.

4.47 The 1881-2 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 15) shows the western and central part of the Site as being occupied by at least six buildings constructed around a central yard space. The building in the south-western part of the Site is labelled as 'White Horse (PH)' and shows that this was the pub and the other buildings likely functioned as ancillary buildings such as stabling and workshop space. A newspaper article in the *Hertford Mercury and Reformer* dated to 29th April 1843 shows that the White Horse pub was in operation from at least this time.¹⁰ The eastern part of the Site is shown to be separate from the pub land and is part of a larger field on the western side of the castle.

¹⁰ Hertford Mercury and Reformer, 29th April 1843

- 4.48** The 1901 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 16) shows that most of the ancillary buildings have been removed and that the main pub building has had a small extension on its north-east side. The eastern end of the Site is now included within the land associated with the pub following a change in the land boundaries.
- 4.49** The subsequent 1924 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 17) shows considerable change to the Site. The original pub building has been demolished and replaced by the extant structure (MHT31506) which is set back from the road. The southern part of the Site has been divided between two plots, and the ancillary building in the northern part of the Site has been slightly extended. The eastern end of the Site has been returned to how it appeared at the time of the 1881-2 map.
- 4.50** The 1980 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 18) shows that the pub has been slightly extended on its east and south-east sides. The 1995 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 19) shows further extension on its southern side as well as the eastern side of the Site now showing its boundary line as it is at the time of writing. This map is the first to show the pub as being called The Motte & Bailey. No further significant changes are noted from this time until the time of writing.
- 4.51** It is considered that the potential to encounter remains dating to the Post Medieval and Modern periods is high. Although historic map regression shows no evidence of activity in the eastern part of the Site where the proposed development is planned to take place, the western and central part of the Site has been utilised as a pub since at least the mid-19th century. If remains were to be found then these would likely be considered to be of *low (local) importance*.

Undated

- 4.52** The HHER holds records for nine Undated monuments date within the 1km study area, of which none lie within the Site itself.

Table 9: Undated monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km of the Site.

Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MHT1621	Cemetery, Danes or Dane Field, Pirton	Mixed Cemetery	Undated
MHT17192	Site of undated building, Burge End Farm, Pirton	Building?	Undated
MHT197	Possible Iron Age cemetery, Pirton	Mixed Cemetery	Undated

MHT2334	Cropmarks of a sub-rectangular enclosure, Pirton	Enclosure; Rectangular Enclosure	Undated
MHT6349	Cropmark of a linear ditch, Pirton	Linear Feature	Undated
MHT6508	Possible pit, Vicarage, Crabtree Lane, Pirton	Occupation Site?; Pit?	Undated
MHT9684	Undated features, Rectory Farm, Pirton	Ditch; Pit	Undated
MHT31609	Undated features, Priors Hill, Pirton	Ditch	Undated
MHT39812	Partial human skull, Late Saxon, The Coach House, Shillington Road, Pirton	Human Remains	Undated

Previous Archaeological Work

4.53 The HHER holds records for 86 previous archaeological investigation within the 1km study area.

Table 10: Previous archaeological investigations recorded on the HHER within 1km of the Site.

Event ID	Name	Event Type
EHT8659	Building appraisal at Wrights Farm, Pirton, 2019	Historic Building Recording
EHT3078	Air photo, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3079	Air photo, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3080	Air photo, Toot Hill, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3081	Air photo of motte and bailey castle, Toot Hill, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3082	Air photo, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3083	Air photo	Aerial Photograph
EHT3084	Air photo	Aerial Photograph
EHT1658	Air photo of cropmarks of a sub-rectangular enclosure, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT2603	Air photo of cropmarks of a ring ditch and linear ditch, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT1296	Test pits at St Mary's church, Pirton, 2003-4	Test Pitting
EHT9206	Monitoring at Pirton School High Street Pirton, 2022	Watching Brief
EHT7428	Evaluation at The Dial, West Lane, Pirton, 2013	Evaluation Trenching
EHT7653	Watching brief at The Dial, West Lane, Pirton, 2015	Watching Brief
EHT9352	Evaluation at Land off Holwell Road, Pirton, 2018	Evaluation Trenching
EHT5581	Evaluation at Elm Tree Farm, Pirton, 2006	Evaluation Trenching
EHT6790	Watching brief at Pirton Primary School, High Street, Pirton, 2010	Watching Brief
EHT6811	Evaluation at Burge End Farm, Pirton, 2010	Evaluation Trenching
EHT7865	Magnetometer survey of land at Priors Hill, Pirton, 2015	Geophysical Survey
EHT8220	Evaluation of land at Pollards Way/Priors Hill, Pirton, 2015	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8468	Watching brief at 19 Shillington Road, Pirton, 2017	Watching Brief
EHT5425	Evaluation at Elm Tree Farm, Hambridge Way, Pirton, 2004	Evaluation Trenching

EHT8111	Monitoring at 28 High Street, Pirton, 2016	Watching Brief
EHT8634	Evaluation at Pirton Court, 1 Priors Hill, Pirton, 2018	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8641	Strip and map at 14 High Street, Pirton, 2019	Excavation
EHT8874	Test pits and strip, map and record at 7 Royal Oak Lane Pirton, 2020	Test Pitting
EHT9016	Monitoring at 33a High Street Pirton, 2019	Watching Brief
EHT8371	Archaeological evaluation at Pirton School, High Street, Pirton, 2017	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8629	Excavation at Pirton School, High Street, Pirton, 2017	Excavation
EHT5576	Evaluation of land at 11-13 Bury End, Pirton, 2000	Evaluation Trenching
EHT9310	Monitoring at 1 West Lane Pirton, 2024	Watching Brief
EHT4332	Geophysical survey in Dane Field, Pirton, 1990	Geophysical Survey
EHT8353	Monitoring at 6 Bury End, Pirton, 2017	Watching Brief
EHT8657	Archaeological test pits at 11 Royal Oak Lane Pirton, 2018	Test Pitting
EHT3886	Photograph of St Marys Church and Toot Hill Castle, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3887	Photograph of St Marys Church and Toot Hill Castle, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT3888	Photograph of St Marys Church and Toot Hill Castle, Pirton	Aerial Photograph
EHT8016	Evaluation of land at Holwell Road, Pirton, 2015	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8352	Archaeological 'strip and map' excavation at Holwell Road, Pirton, 2016-17	Excavation
EHT8668	Evaluation at Land at Wrights Farm, Pirton, 2019	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8869	Monitoring at Land Adjacent To Elm Tree Farm, Hambridge Way, Pirton 2020	Watching Brief
EHT8902	Excavation at Land Rear Of 17 Walnut Tree Road Pirton, 2020	Excavation
EHT8932	Excavation at Land Rear Of 17 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, 2021	Excavation
EHT5319	Excavation on land at Little Lane, Pirton, 2001-2	Excavation
EHT7057	Evaluation at 6 Priors Hill, Pirton, 2011	Evaluation Trenching
EHT7102	Monitoring at 6 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, 2012	Watching Brief
EHT7310	Evaluation of land adjacent to Pollards Way, Pirton, 2012	Evaluation Trenching
EHT7817	Monitoring at 28 Shillington Road, Pirton, 2014	Watching Brief
EHT7821	2 Bury End, Pirton	Watching Brief
EHT7822	2 Bury End, Pirton	Watching Brief
EHT7824	Excavation and Monitoring on land adjacent to Pollards Way, Pirton, 2014-15	Excavation
EHT8041	Evaluation of land at 40 Royal Oak Lane, Pirton, 2016	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8630	Evaluation at Land Rear Of 17 Walnut Tree Road Pirton, 2018	Evaluation Trenching
EHT9109	Strip map and record at Ashburn Burge End Lane Pirton, 2022	Excavation
EHT8203	Evaluation at land adjacent to The Coach House, Shillington Road, Pirton, 2016	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8893	Excavation at land adjacent to The Coach House, Shillington Road, Pirton, 2017	Excavation
EHT8884	Strip and map and monitoring at 11 Royal Oak Lane Pirton 2021	Excavation
EHT8941	Evaluation and test pit at 12 Davis Crescent Pirton, 2021	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8952	Monitoring at 12 Davis Crescent Pirton, 2021	Watching Brief

EHT9088	Strip and map and monitoring at Springfields Bury End Pirton, 2022	Excavation
EHT9105	Monitoring at 17 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, 2022	Watching Brief
EHT9404	Evaluation at Pirton Sports And Social Club Walnut Tree Road Pirton, 2024	Evaluation Trenching
EHT4203	Excavation on land to the rear of The Fox PH, Pirton, 1995	Excavation
EHT4331	Fieldwalking in Dane Field, Pirton, 1990	Fieldwalking
EHT4333	Test pitting in Dane Field, Pirton, 1990	Test Pitting
EHT4334	Excavation in Dane Field, Pirton, 1990	Excavation
EHT6846	Evaluation of land at Holwell Turn, Holwell Road, Pirton, 2011	Evaluation Trenching
EHT8400	Evaluation at Land at Shillington Road, Pirton, 2017	Evaluation Trenching
EHT7979	Geophysical survey on land adjacent to Elm Tree Farm, Hambridge Way, Pirton, 2015	Geophysical Survey
EHT8202	Geophysical survey of land at Shillington Road, Pirton, 2016	Geophysical Survey
EHT8416	Geophysical survey of land off Holwell Road, Pirton, 2017	Geophysical Survey
EHT4188	Evaluation of land to the rear of The Fox PH, Pirton, 1993	Evaluation Trenching
EHT4209	Watching brief at Walnut Tree Farm, Pirton, 1996	Watching Brief
EHT4567	Watching brief at Rectory Farm, Pirton, 1996	Watching Brief
EHT4805	Observations at Barn 2, Walnut Tree Farm, Pirton, 1997	Watching Brief
EHT4816	Monitoring at 77 High Street, Pirton, 1998	Watching Brief
EHT5322	Watching brief at 14 Priors Hill, Pirton, 2002-3	Watching Brief
EHT7556	Building recording of the Great Barn, Rectory Farm, Pirton, 2012	Historic Building Recording
EHT7816	Monitoring of garden works at Bury Cottage, 6 Walnut Tree Road, Pirton, 2013	Watching Brief
EHT8914	Strip, map and record at The Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Pirton, 2021	Excavation
EHT8495	Evaluation at Land off Holwell Road, Pirton, 2018	Evaluation Trenching
EHT1206	Test pits in Pirton village, 2007	Test Pitting
EHT8473	Test pits in Pirton village, 2008	Test Pitting
EHT8474	Test pits in Pirton village, 2009	Test Pitting
EHT8475	Test pits in Pirton village, 2010	Test Pitting
EHT8476	Test pits in Pirton village, 2011	Test Pitting

4.54 Between 2007 and 2011, 104 test pits were excavated by the University of Cambridge throughout the village. One of these test pits (part of event EHT8476) was excavated within the south-east corner of the Site and which recovered numerous pottery sherds of Medieval date. Another test pit c.10m to the south of the Site also recovered Medieval pottery sherds.¹¹

¹¹ Lewis, C. 2016. pp. 287

Aerial Photographs

- 4.55** No historic aerial photographs of the Site have been identified.
- 4.56** A review of modern aerial photographs through Google Earth shows no significant change to the Site between 2000 and the time of writing.

LiDAR

- 4.57** LiDAR data (1m resolution from 2022, Figure 12) has been downloaded for the Site to enable interrogation through QGIS software using hillshade settings and variations of light angles and azimuth heights. This clearly shows the Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village immediately to the east of the Site. No remains are discernible within the Site itself.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

- 4.58** The Site contains two historic landscape characterisation (HLC) types. The majority of the Site is covered by the 'Built-Up Areas – Urban Development' type, whereas a small part of the south-eastern corner of the Site is included within the 'Historic Earthwork' type and which relates to the Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village. (Figure 13)

5. Impact Assessment

Proposed Development

- 5.1** The proposed development comprises the construction of a single residential dwelling within the garden of The Motte & Bailey public house, Pirton.

Factors Affecting Archaeological Survival

- 5.2** Archaeological remains can survive as earthworks and as below ground archaeological features, finds and layers. Part of the assessment process is to consider what factors may have affected archaeological survival. That is to say, what conditions would have enhanced the chances of survival and what conditions would have reduced the chances of survival.
- 5.3** The subject of archaeological preservation has been covered comprehensively elsewhere¹², and it is a subject which is subject to ongoing review as our understanding grows. The following addresses some familiar scenarios for assessment reports such as this, to allow the reader an insight into some 'typical' scenarios.
- 5.4** In rural locations, below ground remains are likely to be sealed by a relatively thin series of layers. Typically a topsoil of c.100-200mm and a subsoil of 100-300mm. Therefore, they may be sealed by 200-500mm of deposits. There are variations to this including landscapes affected by colluvial or alluvial deposits. Earthworks are most common in areas not subject to modern, mechanised ploughing, although earthworks can be preserved in hedgerows, wooded areas and even as plough-reduced remnants within arable fields.
- 5.5** Although the western and central parts of the Site have been subject to development from at least the mid-19th century onwards, historic map regression suggests that the eastern end of the Site, where the proposed development is planned to take place, has not been subject to known development. Archaeological survival could be relatively good in this area, and potentially lie close to the existing ground surface.

¹² Historic England 2016.

Assessment of Significance

5.6 This assessment of significance has been guided by the National Planning Policy Framework, which defines significance as:

*'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'*¹³

Furthermore it will be guided by Historic England's guidance *Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance*. This states:

*'heritage values that can be ascribed to place' can be grouped into four values: Evidential, Historic (illustrative or associative), Aesthetic and Communal.*¹⁴

5.7 Information recorded on the HHER shows that Prehistoric activity has taken place within close proximity to the Site from at least the Neolithic period onwards. The Neolithic and Bronze Age remains predominantly relate to pits and depositions of axeheads, whereas the Iron Age remains includes more pottery which suggests an increase in local, permanent, habitation. As such, there is potential to encounter additional finds or features within the Site. These remains would be of *evidential value* due to their ability to add to the existing corpus of evidence for Prehistoric activity within the area. They would also be of *historical illustrative value* as it would expand upon the known timeline of the Site. These remains, depending on what was found, would be considered to be of *local to regional significance*.

5.8 Further information recorded on the HHER shows clear evidence for Roman settlement activity within close proximity to the Site, particularly to the north and east. As such, there is a potential to encounter remains associated with Roman activity, such as pits, or possibly remains associated with occupation. These remains would be of *evidential value* as they would be able to help clarify the use of the landscape during this period as well as the possible continuation of activity between the Prehistoric and Roman periods. They would also be of *historical illustrative value* as it would expand upon the known timeline of the Site. These

¹³ MHCLG 2023

¹⁴ Historic England 2008

remains would be of either *local* or *regional significance*, depending on the nature of the remains found.

5.9 Early Medieval settlement has been shown to have existed within the study area throughout the period, beginning in the 5th century. An enclosed settlement existed to the north-west of the Site, and which expanded east to the north and north-east of the Site until around the 9th century. Further settlement continued in the area from this point onwards. These remains, if found, would be of *evidential value* as they would help to clarify the extent and function of this part of Pirton during this period. They would also be of *historical illustrative value* as it would expand upon the known timeline of the Site. These remains, if encountered, would be considered to be *regional significance*.

5.10 The scheduled remains of Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village immediately to the east of the Site evidences a major episode of planned construction within Pirton around the early-12th century. Unusually, the castle contained a double bailey, and though the eastern bailey is included within the scheduled area and survives well as extant earthworks, the western bailey likely extended into the area which includes the Site itself. Pottery remains recovered from a test pit excavated in the south-eastern corner of the Site in 2011 show that evidence for Medieval activity has previously been found within the Site. If remains were found, they would be of *evidential value* as they would help to clarify the extent and function of the western bailey of the castle, as well as this part of Pirton more generally during the period. They would also be of *historical illustrative value* as it would expand upon the known timeline of the Site. These remains, if encountered, would be considered to be of *regional significance*.

5.11 Historic map regression, combined with newspaper research, has shown that the western and central part of the Site has functioned as a pub since at least the mid-19th century. Several former buildings are located within the Site and the pub itself was demolished and rebuilt in the early-20th century. The eastern end of the Site appears to have remained undeveloped during this time. If remains were to be found, they would likely be of *evidential value* as they would help to clarify the use and function of the eastern end of the Site during this period. They would also be of *historical illustrative value* as it would be able to help plot a more precise timeline of the Site. These remains, if encountered, would be considered to be of *local significance*.

Potential Effects

- 5.12** There is a potential for direct physical impacts to non-designated archaeological remains during the construction phase of any future development of the Site, as any ground moving activities associated with the proposed works would have the potential to expose, damage or destroy hitherto unknown remains. Such activities could include but are not exhaustive of; ground investigations, piling, topsoil stripping, ground reduction, digging of service trenches and landscaping as well as the construction of temporary compounds.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The Site contains no known designated archaeological assets, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation *in situ* and against development.

6.2 Based on the information within the HHER, supplemented by historic mapping, the Site is considered to have a high potential for archaeological remains dating to the Roman, Early Medieval, Medieval, Post Medieval and Modern periods, and a medium-high potential for remains dating to the Prehistoric period.

6.3 The following table details the archaeological potential ascribed to the Site by period and an assessment of the likely archaeological importance of any remains of those periods should they survive.

Table 11: Assessed Archaeological Potential and Importance by period

Period	Archaeological Potential	Archaeological Importance
Prehistoric	Medium – High	Low (Local) to Medium (Regional)
Roman	High	Low (Local) to Medium (Regional)
Early Medieval	High	Medium (Regional)
Medieval	High	Medium (Regional)
Post Medieval	High	Low (Local)
Modern	High	Low (Local)

6.4 Information recorded on the HHER shows that Prehistoric activity has taken place within close proximity to the Site from at least the Neolithic period onwards. The Neolithic and Bronze Age remains predominantly relate to pits and depositions of axe heads, whereas the Iron Age remains includes more pottery which suggests an increase in local, permanent, habitation. As such, there is potential to encounter additional finds or features within the Site.

6.5 Further information recorded on the HHER shows clear evidence for Roman settlement activity within close proximity to the Site, particularly to the north and east. As such, there is a potential to encounter remains associated with Roman activity, such as pits, or possibly remains associated with occupation.

- 6.6** Early Medieval settlement has been shown to have existed within the study area throughout the period, beginning in the 5th century. An enclosed settlement existed to the north-west of the Site, and which expanded east to the north and north-east of the Site until around the 9th century. Further settlement continued in the area from this point onwards.
- 6.7** The scheduled remains of Toot Hill motte and bailey castle and shrunken village immediately to the east of the Site evidences a major episode of planned construction within Pirton around the early-12th century. Unusually, the castle contained a double bailey, and though the eastern bailey is included within the scheduled area and survives well as extant earthworks, the western bailey likely extended into the area which includes the Site itself. Pottery remains recovered from a test pit excavated in the south-eastern corner of the Site in 2011 show that evidence for Medieval activity has previously been found within the Site.
- 6.8** Historic map regression, combined with newspaper research, has shown that the western and central part of the Site has functioned as a pub since at least the mid-19th century. Several former buildings are located within the Site and the pub itself was demolished and rebuilt in the early-20th century. The eastern end of the Site appears to have remained undeveloped during this time.
- 6.9** On the basis of available evidence, it is considered that the proposed development accords with current legislation, the planning policies contained within the NPPF. The site has been subject to desk-based assessment and the archaeological potentials and importance have been assessed.
- 6.10** The scope of any further archaeological works would need to be discussed and agreed with the Archaeological Advisor to the local planning authority.

7. Bibliography

Primary Sources

1881-2 County Series Ordnance Survey map

1901 County Series Ordnance Survey map

1924 County Series Ordnance Survey map

1980 National Grid Ordnance Survey map

1995 National Grid Ordnance Survey map

2003 LandLine Ordnance Survey map

2023 Google Satellite Image

Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER)

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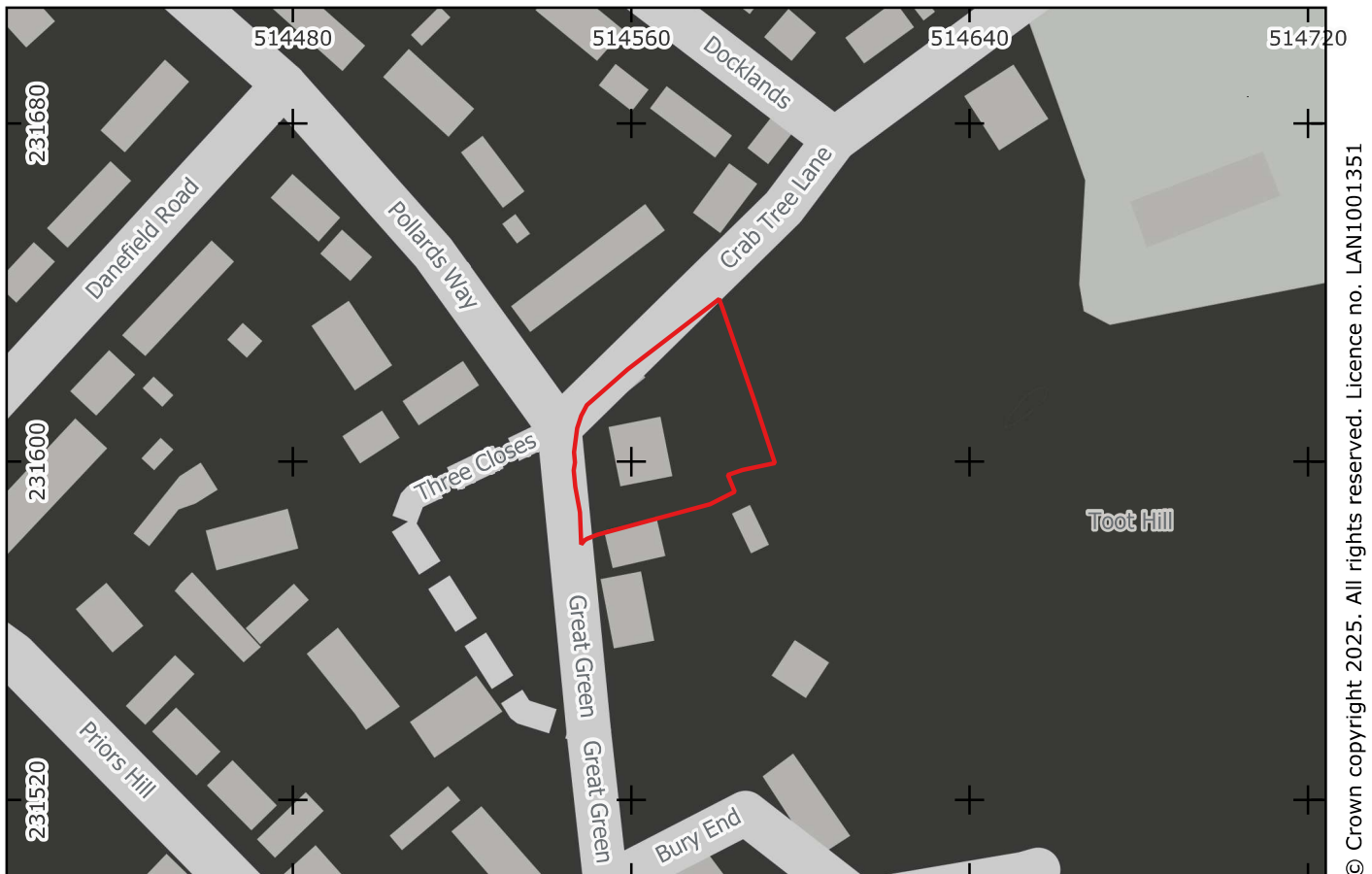
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8. Figures



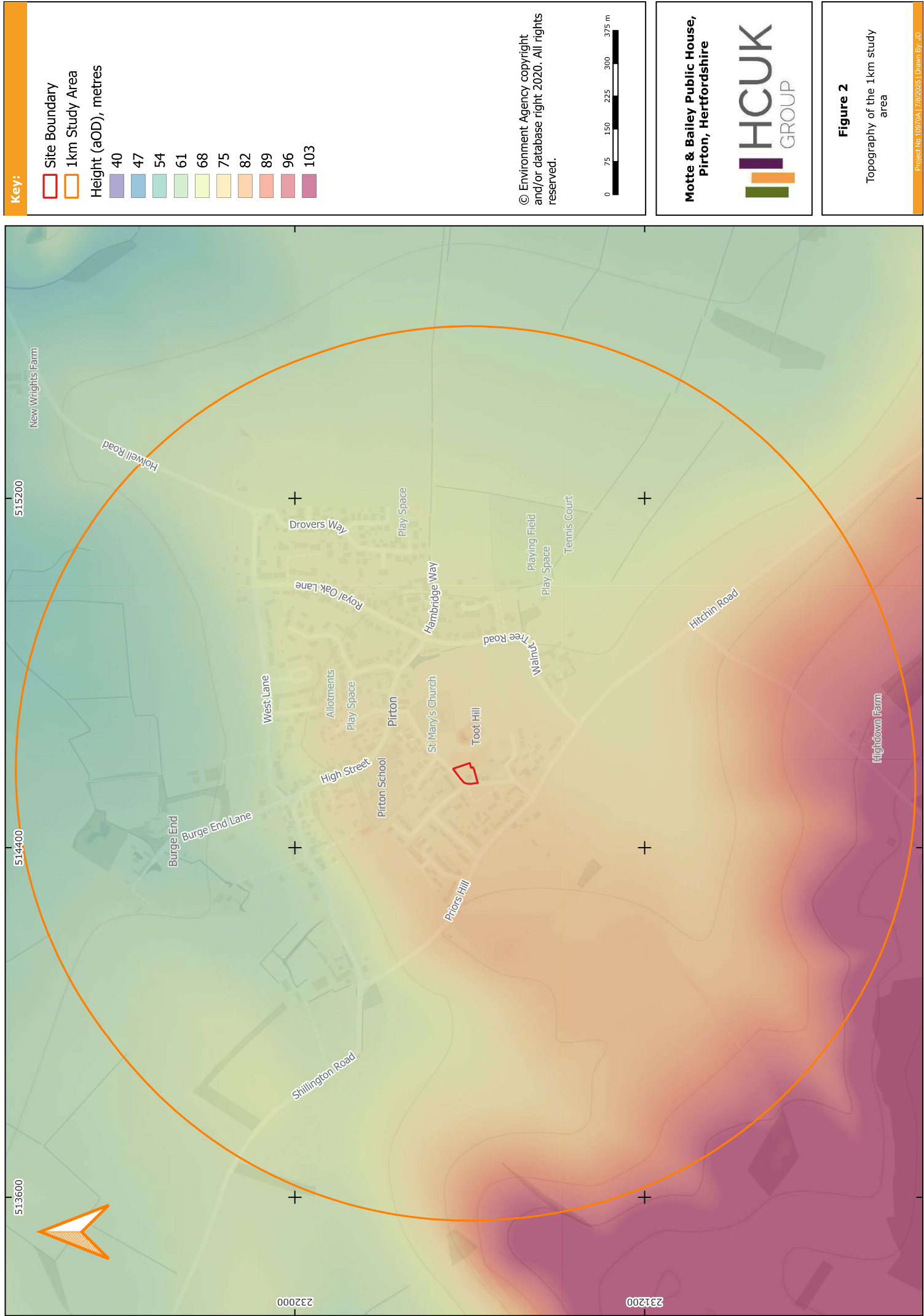
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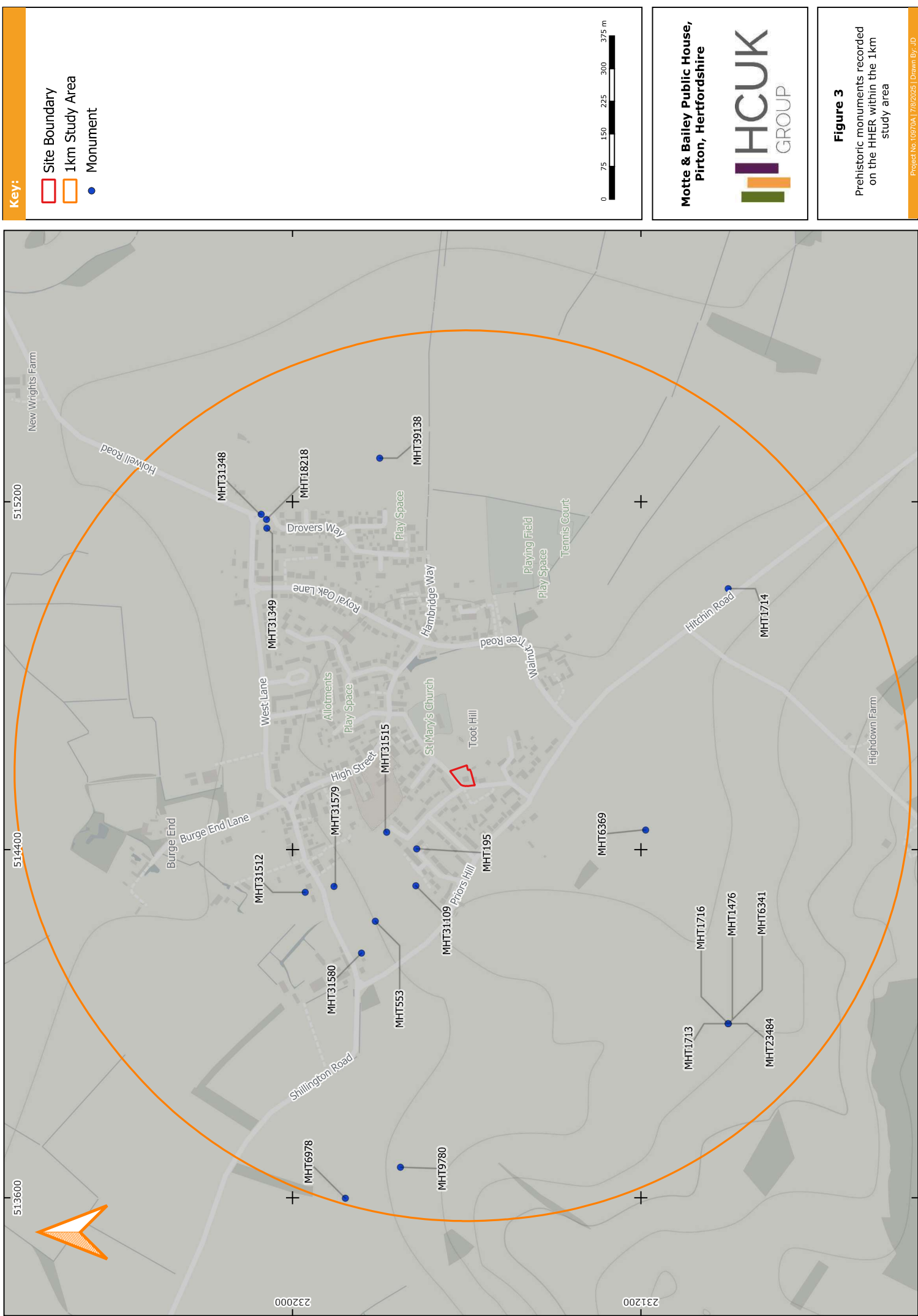
Figure 1: Site Location

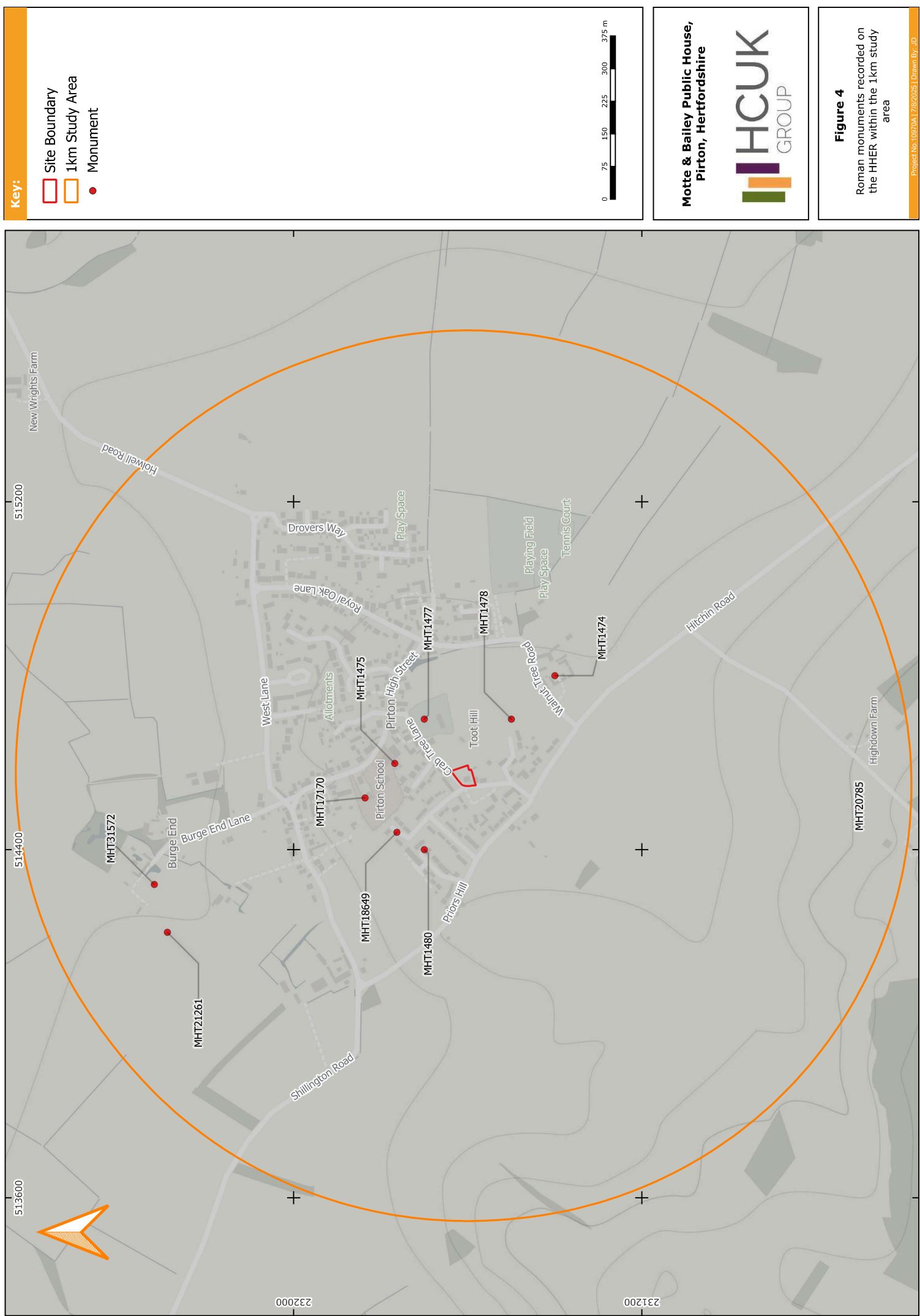
August 2025

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Pirton, Hertfordshire



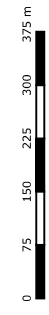






Key:

- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- Monument

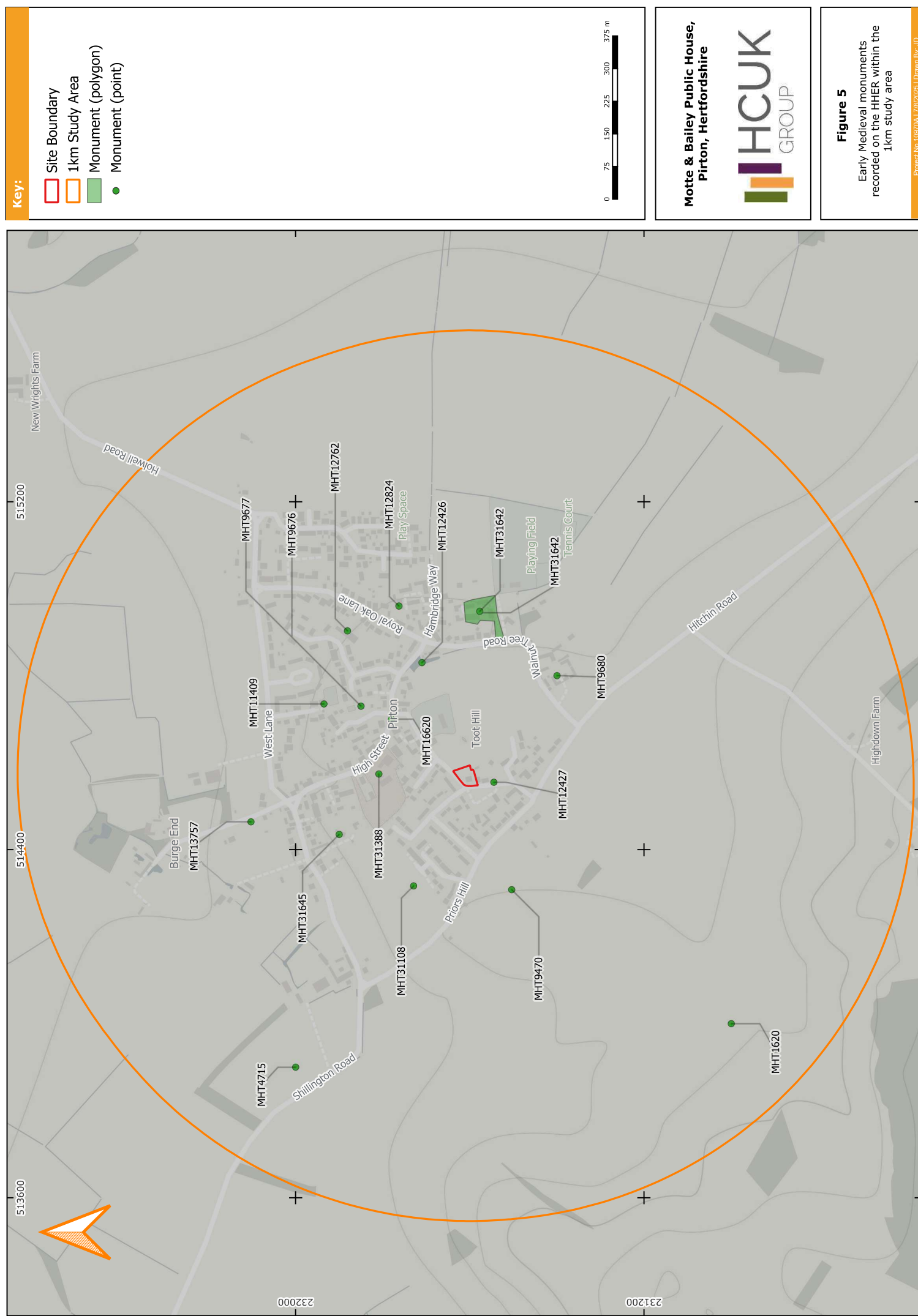


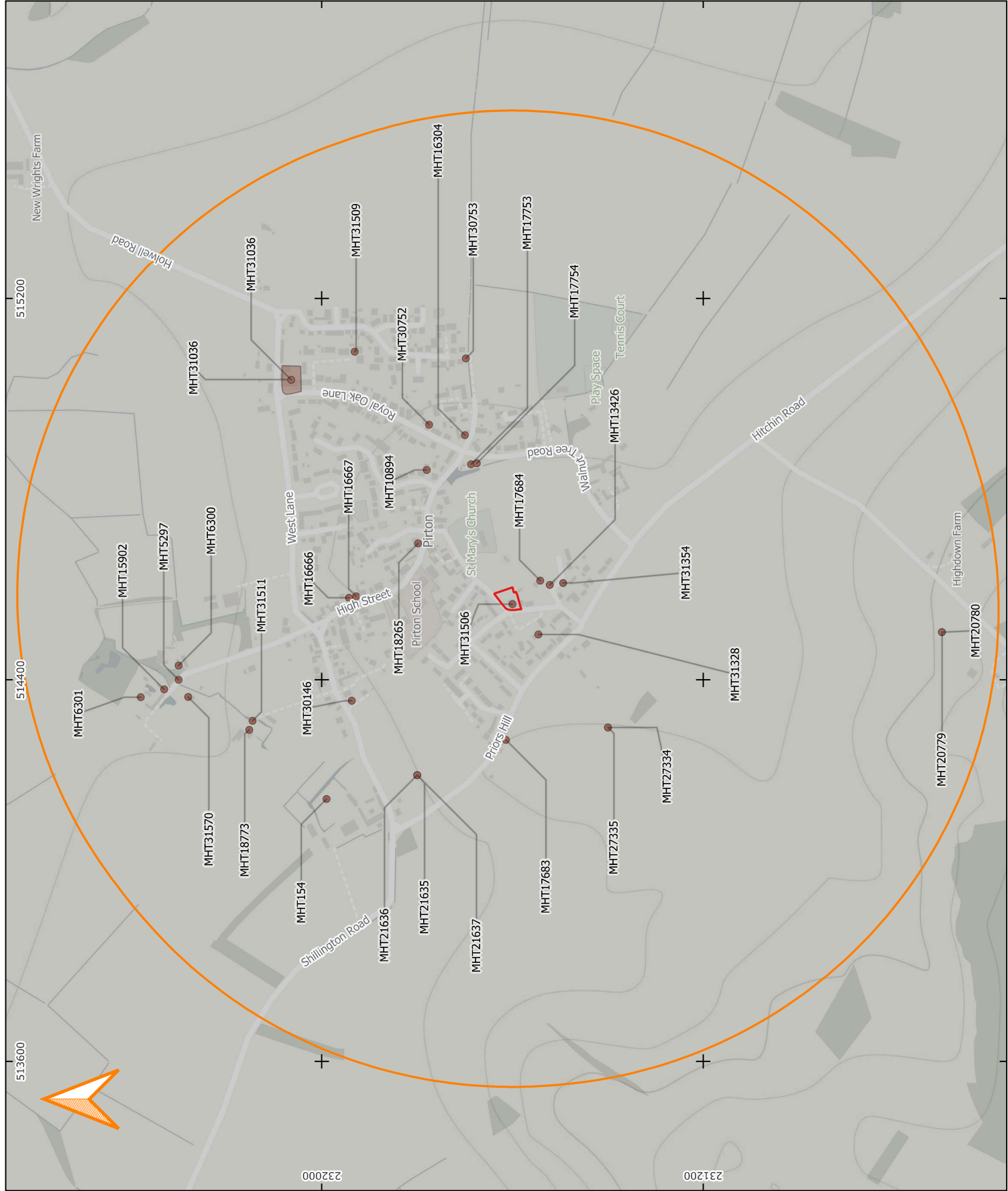
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Figure 4

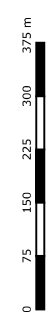
Roman monuments recorded on
the HHER within the 1km study
area





Key:

- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- Monument (polygon)
- Monument (point)

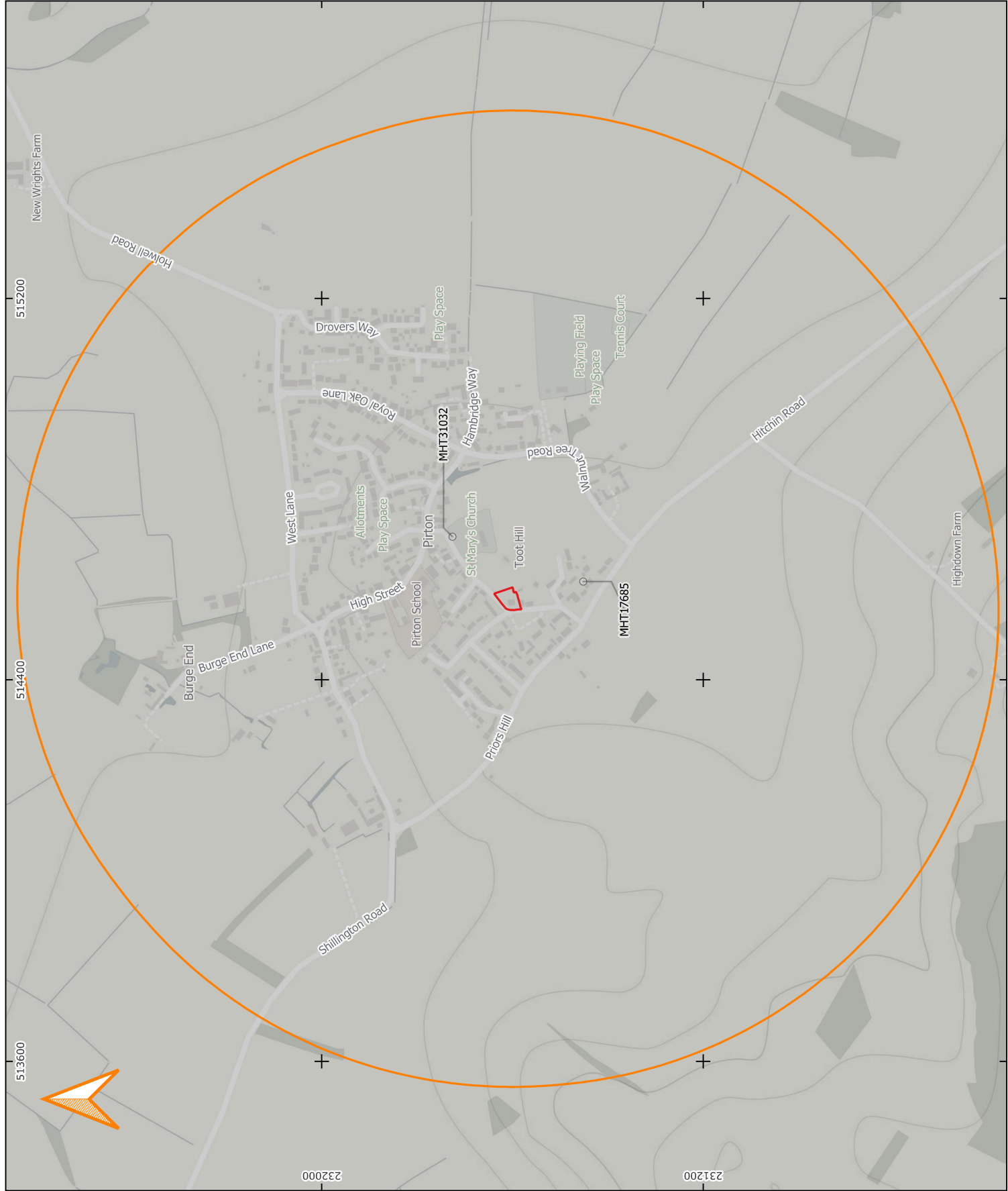


Motte & Bailey Public House,
Pirton, Hertfordshire



Figure 7

Post Medieval monuments
recorded on the HHER within the
1km study area



Key:

- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- Monument

0 75 150 225 300 375 m

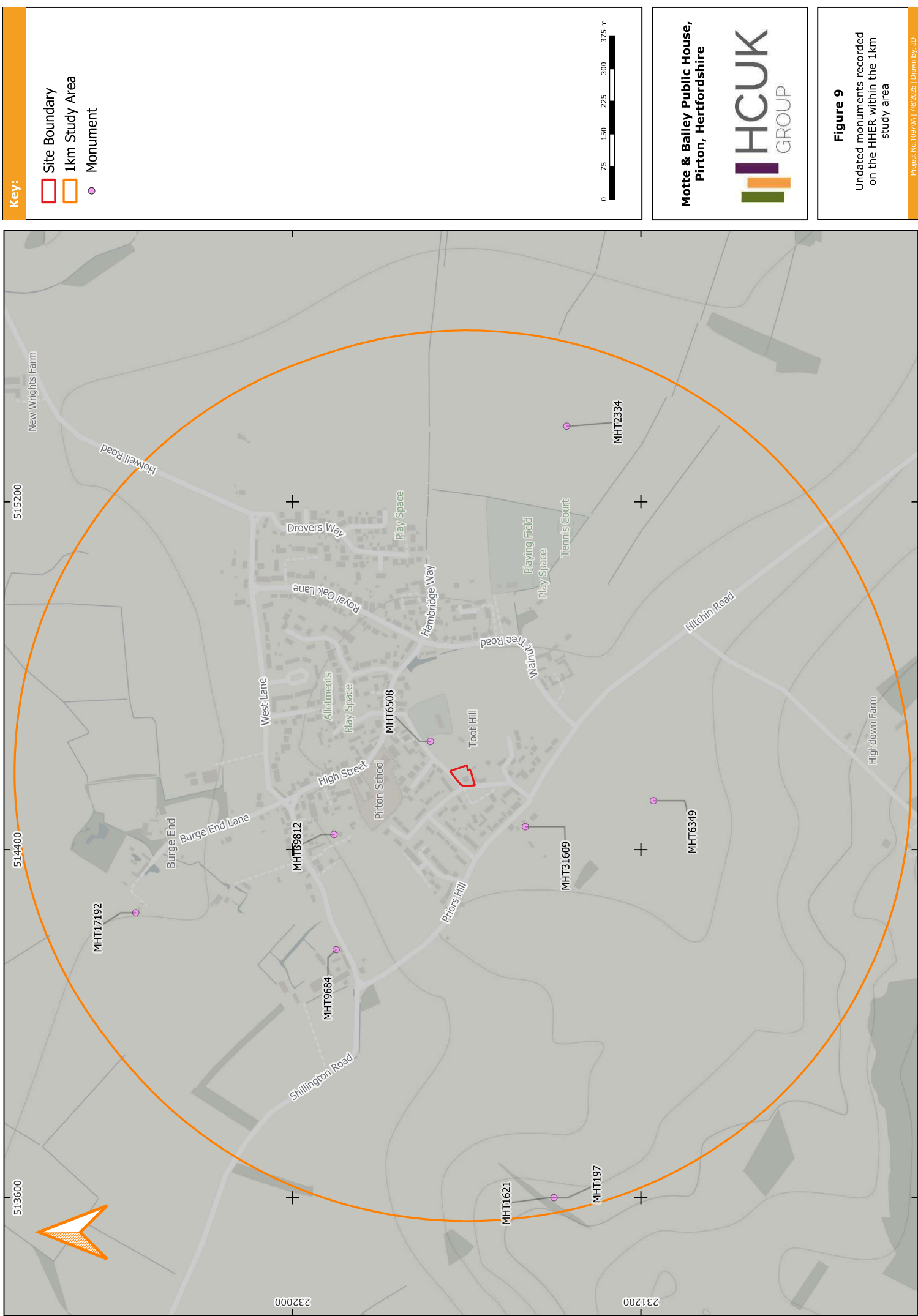
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Figure 8

Modern monuments recorded on the HHER within the 1km study area

Project No. 109704 | 17/02/2025 | Drawn By: JD





Key:

 Site Boundary

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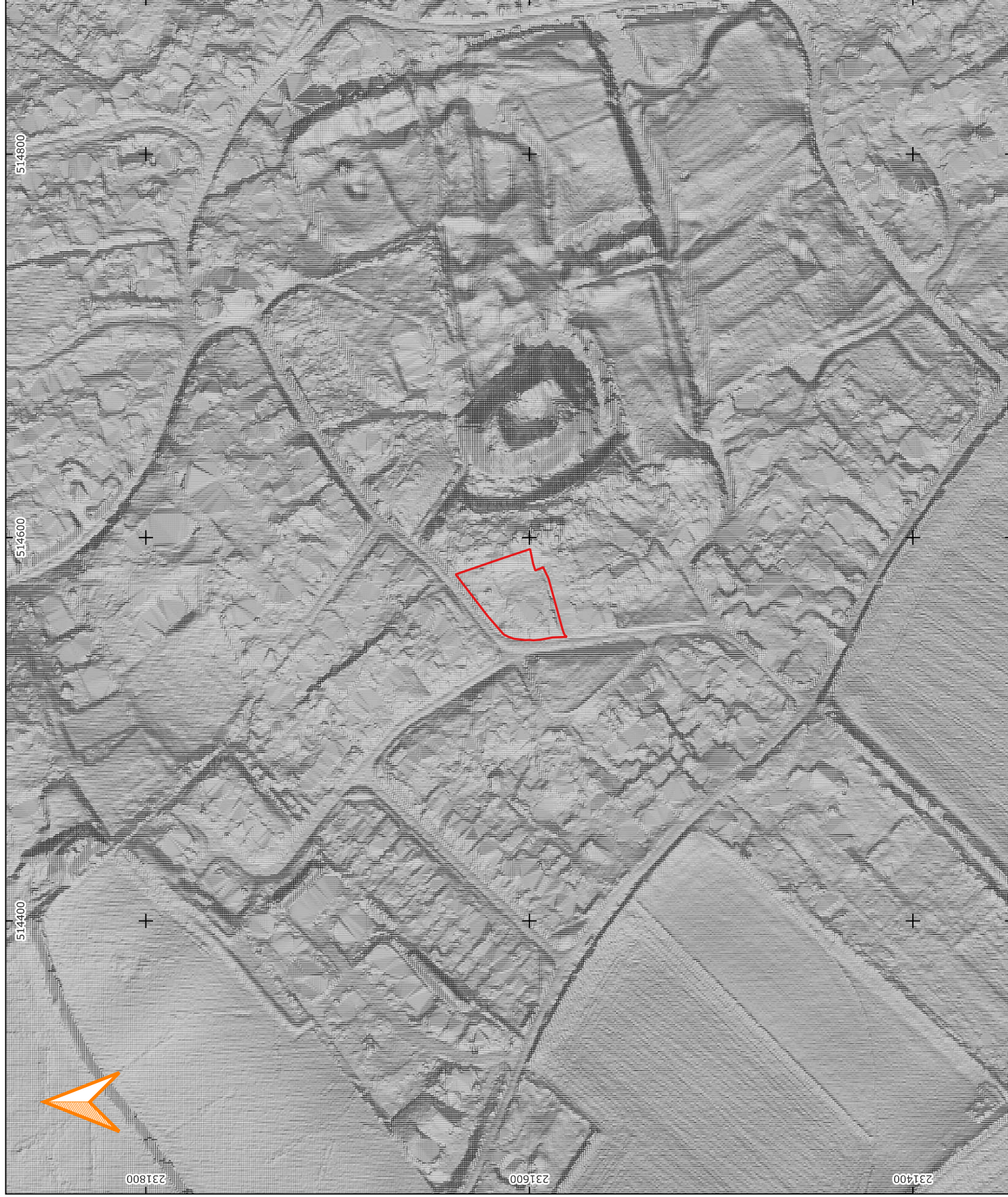
Motte & Bailey Public House,
Pirton, Hertfordshire

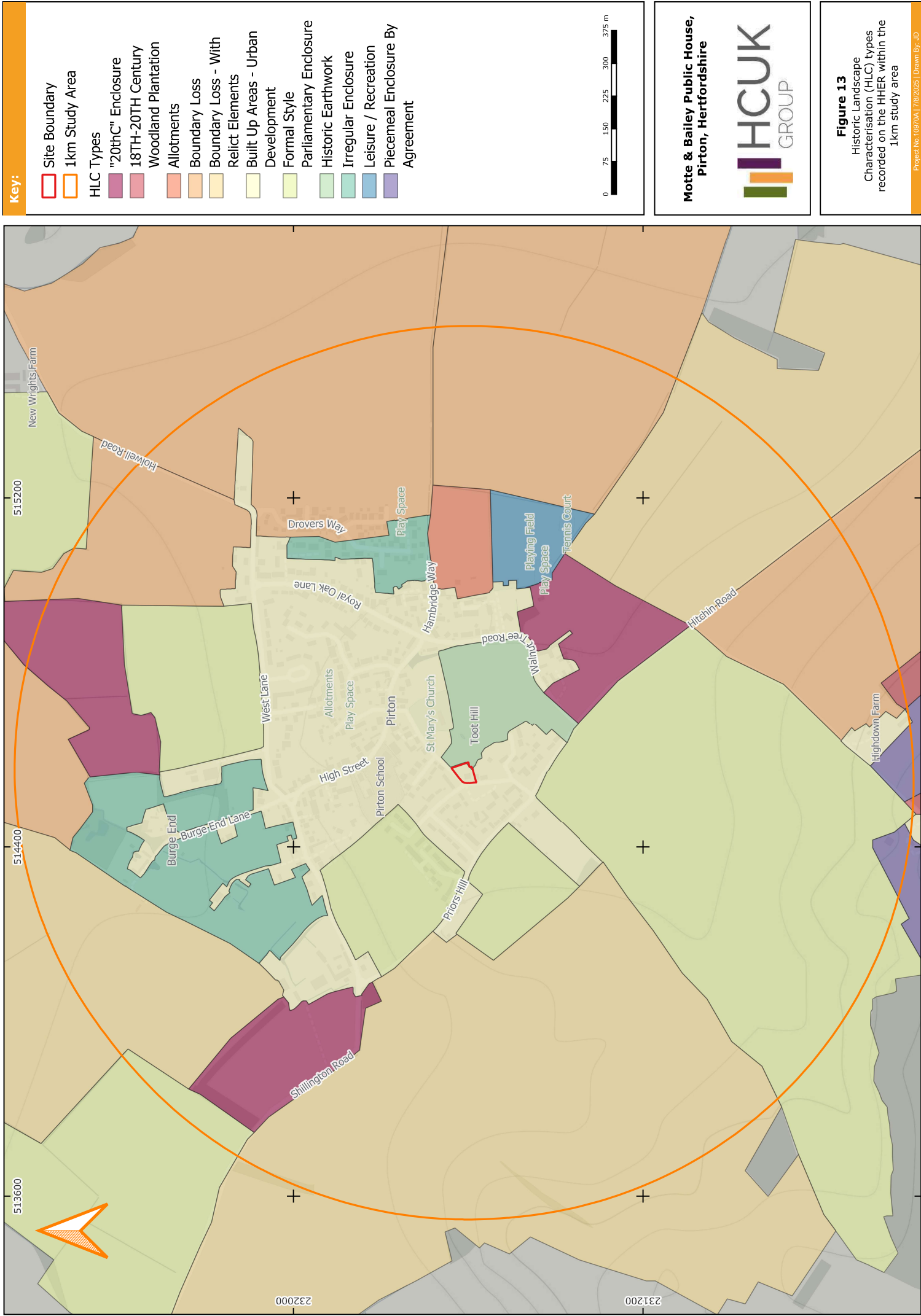


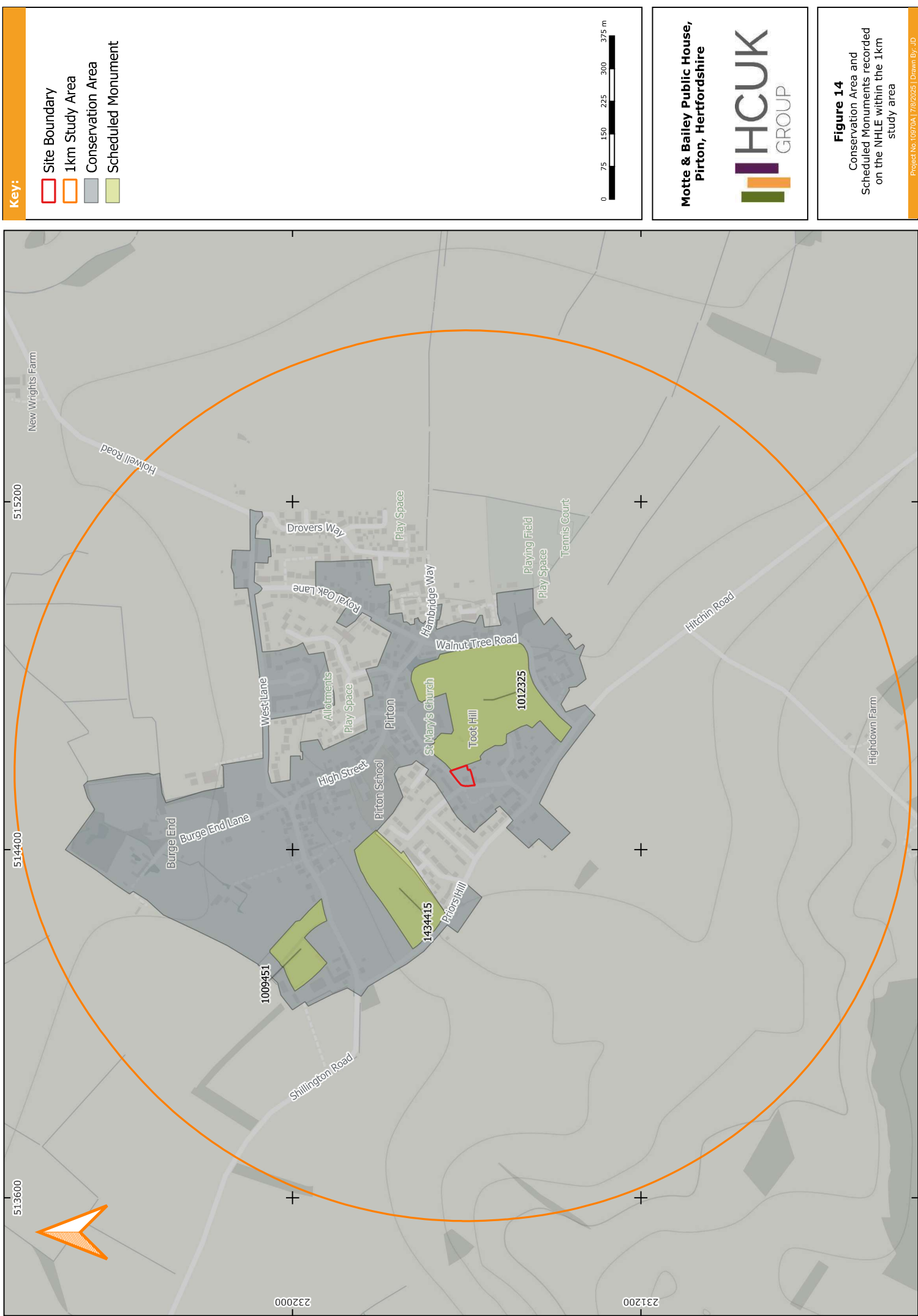
Figure 12

LIDAR coverage of the site

Project No. 109704 | 17/6/2025 | Drawn By: JD







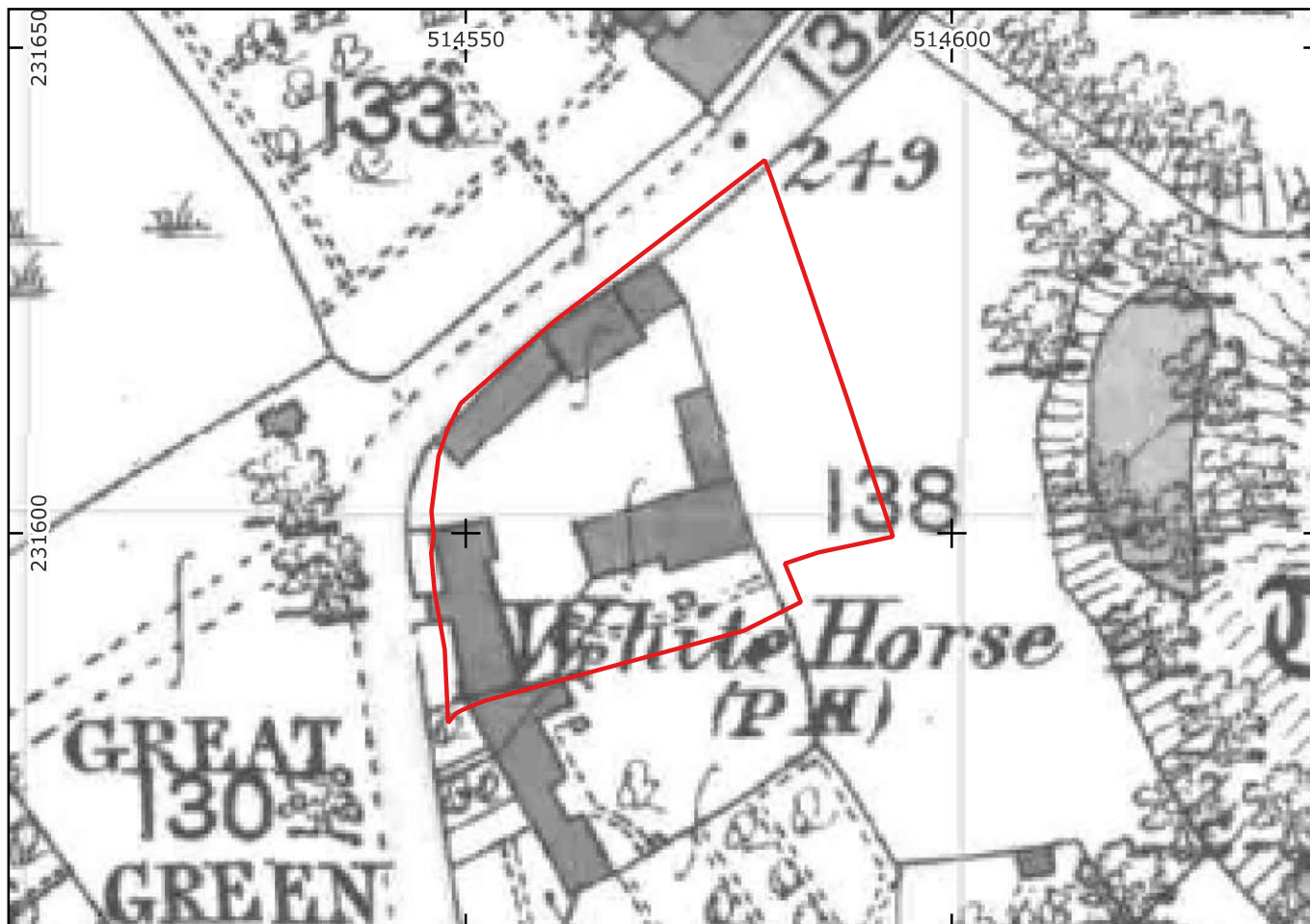


Figure 15: 1881-2 County Series Ordnance Survey map



Figure 16: 1901 County Series Ordnance Survey map

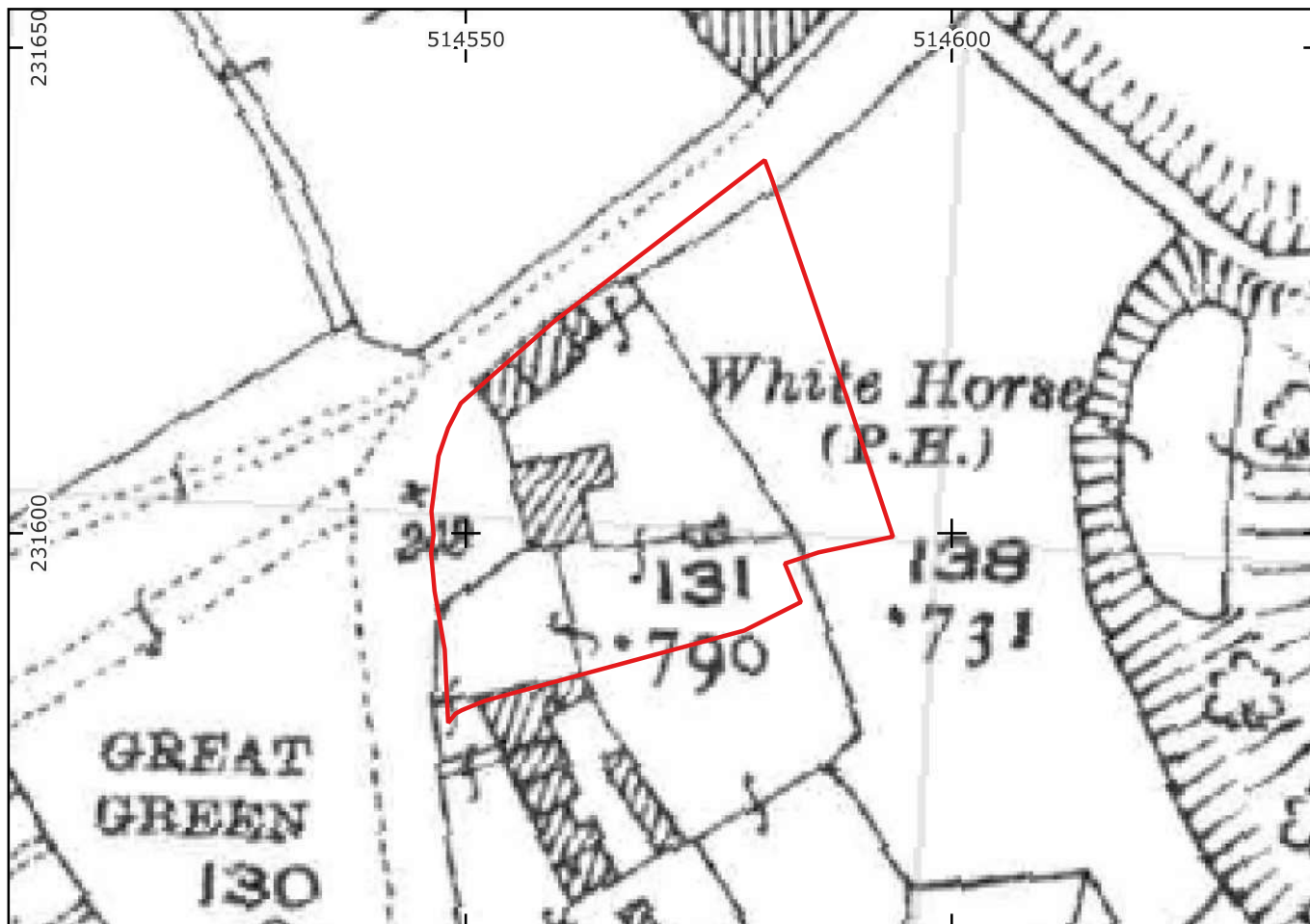


Figure 17: 1924 County Series Ordnance Survey map

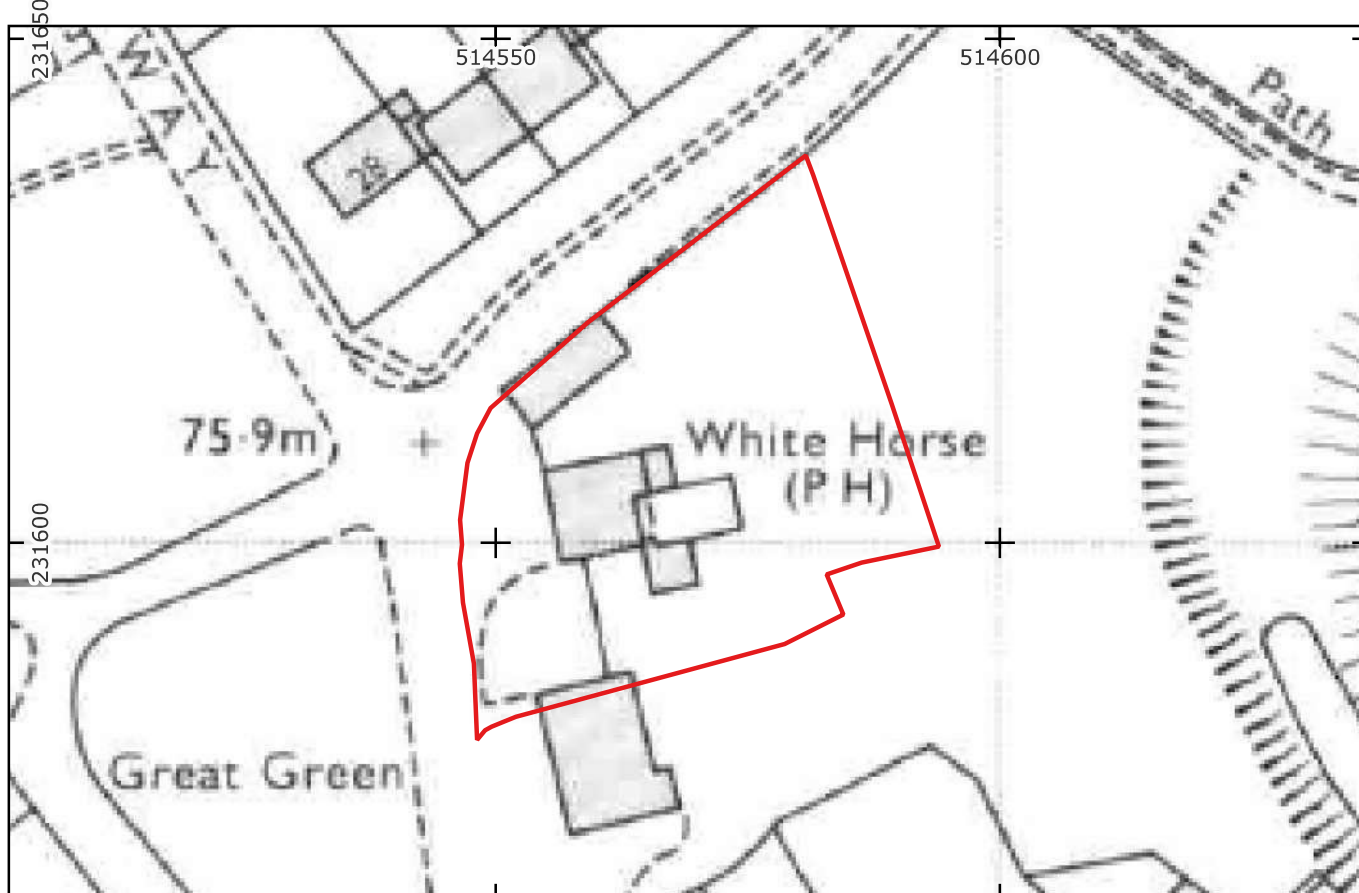


Figure 18: 1980 National Grid Ordnance Survey map

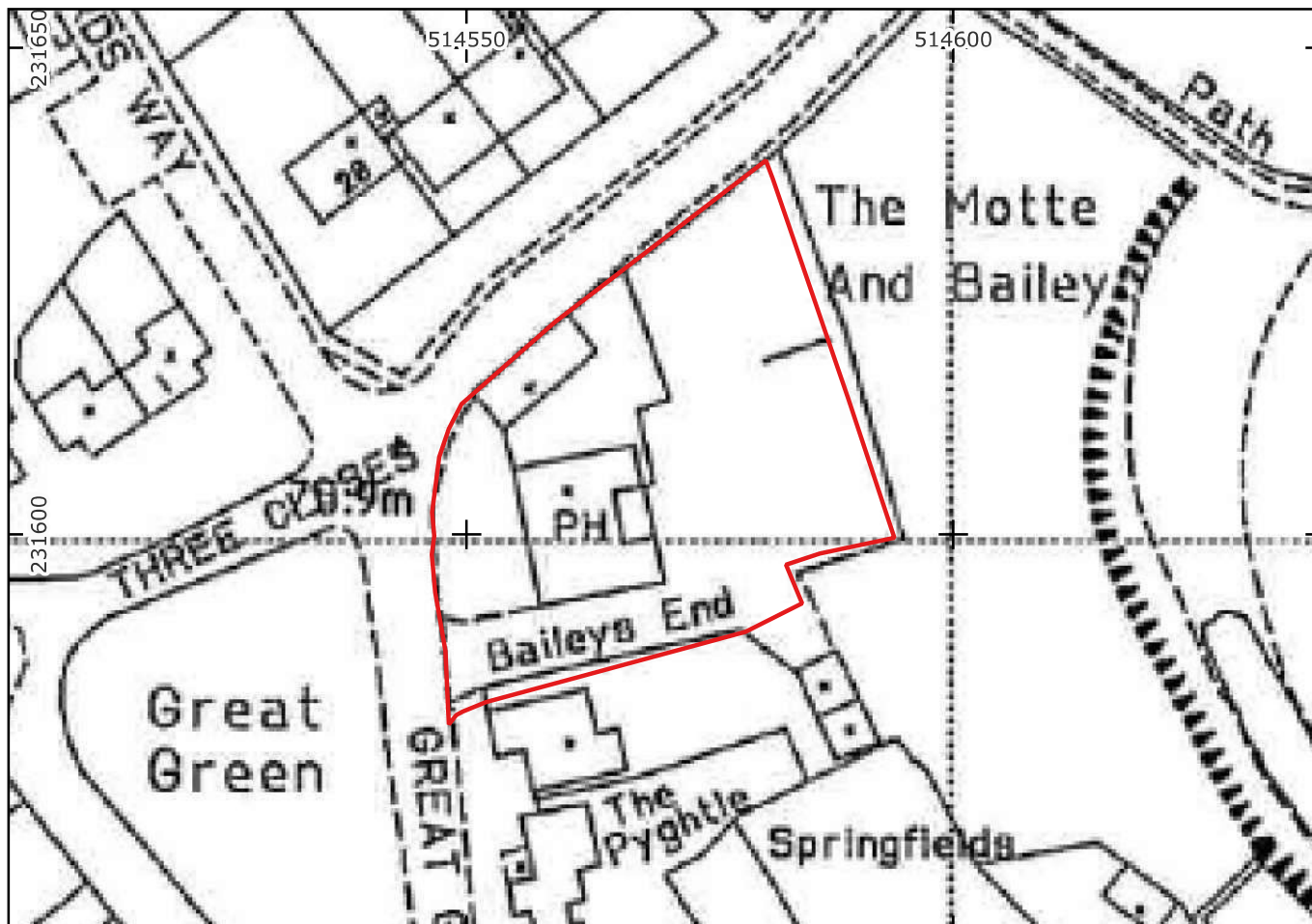


Figure 19: 1995 National Grid Ordnance Survey map



Figure 20: 2003 LandLine Ordnance Survey map

Key:

Site Boundary

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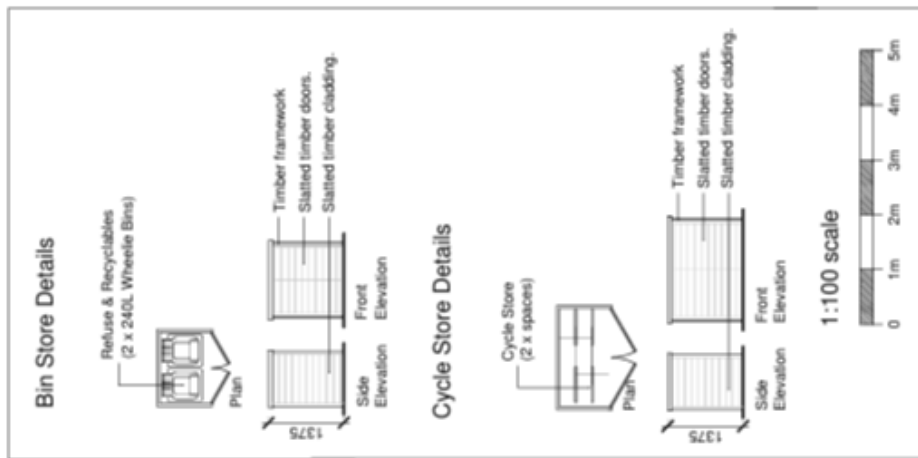
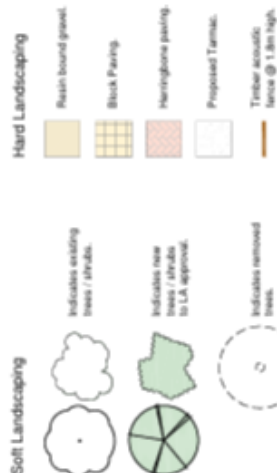
Figure 21

2023 Google Satellite image of
the site

Project No. 10070A | 17/02/2025 | Drawn By: JD



Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



	Est. 2015	Projected mean	95% CI
P4			
P3			
P2			
P1			

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