



Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

Wymondley BESS and Cable Route

Pivoted Power LLP (part of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd)

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Basis of Report

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Executive Summary

SLR Consulting were commissioned by Pivoted Power LLP (part of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd) to prepare a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment for a Site at Little Wymondley, Hertfordshire. The work has been undertaken to inform a planning application for the construction of a Battery Energy Storage Site and connecting cable route to Wymondley National Grid Transforming Station.

This assessment considers the known and potential heritage resource within the Site and the surrounding area which might be affected by the proposed development. The report assesses the significance of any identified heritage assets, including a consideration of the contribution of setting to that significance. Finally, the report sets out how the Site's development might affect that significance.

The Site does not contain any designated heritage assets. Furthermore, this assessment concludes that the development of the Site is not anticipated to materially impact upon the significance of any designated heritage asset within the area as a result of a change in setting.

This assessment has also identified known and anticipated archaeological remains within the Site and has assessed their significance in accordance with the NPPF (2024) paragraph 207. Potential remains within the Site relate to possible prehistoric findspots, Iron Age/Romano-British activity, and medieval or post medieval agricultural activity. However, the identified archaeological potential of the Site has not referenced a potential for the presence of remains of high importance. Should any remains be present, they would likely be of local, to perhaps regional, interest at best.

Therefore, it is unlikely that any archaeological remains within the Site would be of such significance as to preclude development nor would they require preservation in-situ. Any adverse effects to such assets should be weighed in the balance under the terms of the NPPF (2024) paragraph 216.

Overall, the proposals are considered to be consistent with the provisions of the Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), Section 66(i), the NPPF (2024), and the relevant provisions of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan.



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

aOD	Above Ordnance Datum
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HEDBA	Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment
DSM	Digital Surface Model
DTM	Digital Terrain Model
ha	Hectares
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
NG	National Grid
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
NMP	National Mapping Programme
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
OS	Ordnance Survey
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance



1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting was commissioned by Pivoted Power (part of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd) to prepare a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (HEDBA) in relation to a proposed development at Little Wymondley, North Hertfordshire, NGR: TL 21559 26727 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'; **Plate 1**).

The proposals for the Site consist of the construction of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated cable route connecting to the Wymondley National Grid (NG) Substation.

1.1 The Site

The BESS Site is located in the northern part of a large field, located north of Stevenage Road. Site elements comprise two large fields, the west field comprising crop and the east field comprising grass (**Plates 2 & 3**). The Site's environs comprise Titmore Green Village (adjacent to the south-west of the Site), agricultural land and woodland. The Wymondley Bypass (A602) is located immediately north of the Site. An Overhead Line (OHL) crosses the Site.

The connecting cable route is proposed to traverse immediately west of the Site, through agricultural fields, across Blakemore End Road and through the Wymondley Transforming Station compound (**Plates 4-6**). No access was given for the cable route footprint within the NG Wymondley Substation.

1.2 Scope of Report

This report presents the results of a HEDBA, which identifies known and anticipated heritage assets within the Site, and discusses their significance, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) Paragraph 207. This report also discusses the possible effect of the proposals upon the significance of heritage assets, both as a result of physical truncation and as a result of change to setting.

1.3 Standards

The HEDBA has been undertaken in accordance with all relevant statute, policy, and guidance, including the NPPF (2024), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (2020), Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017), and Statements of Heritage Significance (2019).

The assessment has been undertaken, and the report prepared, by Alice Sargent ACIfA, Associate Consultant – Archaeology and Heritage, SLR. The assessment has been reviewed, and the project has been managed, by Helen MacQuarrie MCIfA, Principal Consultant – Archaeology and Heritage, SLR.

SLR is a member of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME).

SLR is ISO 9001 certified and operates a quality management system to help ensure all projects are managed in a professional and transparent manner.



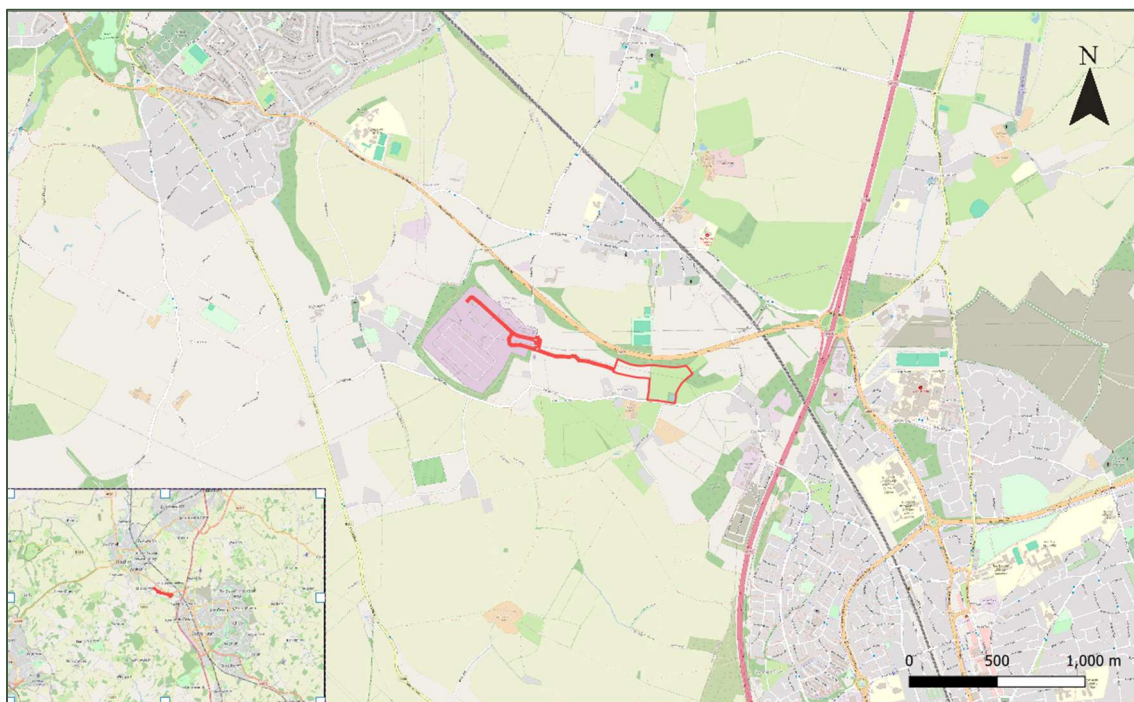


Plate 1: Site Location (shown in red)



Plate 2: View of the Site from south-west corner, looking north





Plate 3: View of the Site from north-east corner, looking south



Plate 4: Route of cable route west of the BESS Site, looking east.





Plate 5: Route of cable route westwards, looking west towards Blakemore End Road.



Plate 6: Cable route footprint crossing beneath Blakemore End Road (Horizontal Directional Drilled section), into Wymondley Substation (photo taken looking south down Blakemore End Road with access into substation on the right)



2.0 Methodology

Terminology to be referenced with due regard to the NPPF and the policy background against which this assessment has been prepared are presented within **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** of this report.

2.1 Baseline Procurement

2.1.1 Study Area

For the purposes of baseline data collection, a 1km study area was utilised for both archaeological remains and built heritage assets. This is considered appropriate to determine the archaeological potential and procure any potential setting impacts that may occur as a result of the proposed development.

2.1.2 Sources

The following sources were consulted:

- the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), for all records relating to designated heritage assets;
- Hertfordshire Council's Historic Environment Record (HER), for records relating to heritage monuments and events;
- the Hertfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), for information on historic land uses;
- the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) open access LiDAR data (DSM and DTM);
- historic cartographic sources, including tithe and Ordnance Survey mapping;
- aerial photography held by online depositories, e.g., Historic England, Cambridge Air Photos (CAP), and the National Collection of Aerial photography (NCAP);
- other online resources, including: the British Geological Survey (BGS); the Cranfield University Soilscape viewer; and the National Library of Scotland's online mapping database;
- the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) online catalogue for any relevant historic documentation;
- the North Herts District Council's (NHDC) online planning application portal, for relevant documentation submitted in relation to proximate applications; and
- grey literature relating to excavations within, and within proximity to, the Site.

2.1.3 HER Data

A proportionate level of HER data, sufficient to inform the assessment of archaeological potential, significance and potential impact presented in this report, was obtained. The HER data was reconciled and analysed within the context of the objectives of the present assessment.

Whilst all the HER data received has been reviewed and considered (see **Appendix C**), not all HER records (sites and events) are discussed further within this report, only those that are of relevance, to the determination of potential, significance, and potential impact.

Records / assets are referenced by their HER number (using their PrefRef reference number) or by their National Heritage List for England number (prefixed NHLE) for designated heritage assets.



2.1.4 LiDAR Data

Available LiDAR data, provided by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) data download portal,¹ was reviewed for this assessment. In this instance, the best data available was composite digital terrain model (DTM) LiDAR data captured at 1m resolution in 2022.

The data was acquired in raster format and was processed for better visual representations of the topography in both QGIS and Relief Visualization Toolbox (RVT) 2.2.1 (2019).

The output images from the RVT software were then imported into QGIS where further settings manipulation was undertaken to enhance the visualization for archaeological feature detection. This data formed the basis within this assessment and is illustrated on **Plate 14**.

2.1.5 Archives

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) was visited for this assessment; documents reviewed are noted in the bibliography.

2.1.6 Site Visit

A Site visit was undertaken in June 2024 to assess the Site within its wider landscape context, and undertake the field inspection aspect of the settings assessment, with photographs taken.

¹ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/DefraDataDownload/?Mode=survey> [accessed January 2025].



3.0 Archaeological Baseline

This section sets out the archaeological baseline relative to the Site and cable route and their immediate surrounds, in order to identify known archaeological heritage assets and to inform an understanding of the Site's broader archaeological potential. Historic Environment Data is depicted on **Drawings 1-3**.

3.1 Designated heritage assets

There are no designated heritage assets of an archaeological nature located within the Site boundary or cable route.

3.2 Topography & Geology

The Site and cable route are located within the relatively lower-lying landscape of North Hertfordshire, within the Hitchin-Stevenage gap formerly a glacial valley cut into the chalk geology of the Chilterns. On the retreat of the ice sheet, lakes formed in the hollows, including a large one beneath Hitchin (c.2.6km north-west of the Site), and numerous smaller ones south towards Stevenage (c.2.8km south-east of the Site). These lakes were gradually infilled with fine sediments.²

The Site lies on a south-facing slope to the north of Stevenage Road, which lowers in height from c.95m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to c.92m aOD. The cable route traverses west from the Site, at 95m aOD.

The Site and cable route are underlain by bed rock chalk of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation.³ Across the Site and majority of the cable route up to Blakemoor End Road, the overlying superficial comprises Lowestoft Formation Diamicton. The western end of the cable route is underlain by sand and gravel glaciofluvial deposits.

Soils within the Site and majority of the cable route are recorded as slightly acid loamy and clayey, with impeded drainage. The western end of the cable footprint is recorded as freely draining slightly acid loamy soils.⁴

3.3 Previous Fieldwork

Neither the land within the Site or cable route footprint have been subject to previous archaeological fieldwork noted on the HER. Relevant fieldwork in proximity and /or on similar geology / topography to the Site and cable route have been discussed below.

A programme of archaeological investigation was undertaken along the line of the Little Wymondley Bypass (A602) in 1990, to the north of the Site and cable route. The works, which included excavation, revealed prehistoric and Roman activity including a substantial Roman farmstead (HER EHT4211, EHT4238, 99 & 2607). Further evaluation work in 2001 showed that the settlement extended to the west (HER EHT4750 & EHT4933). The site is discussed further below in the Chronological Background.

A geophysical survey 85m to the north of the cable route, located north of Wymondley Bypass, confirmed that spoil from the construction of Wymondley Bypass has been spread across the southern half of this investigation area effectively 'masking' the response from any archaeological features that may be present in that area (HER EHT8785).⁵ In the northern half of this investigation area anomalies indicative of post-medieval and modern activity, mostly small-scale mineral extraction, were identified. The lack of archaeological features was confirmed in a subsequent trial trench evaluation.⁶

² Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020 *The Archaeology of the Wymondleys*

³ BGS geology viewer https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?_ga=2.10587763.658551373.1688996189-211233112.1688996189

⁴ Cranfield Soilscape View [Soilscape soil types viewer - Cranfield Environment Centre. Cranfield University \(landis.org.uk\)](#)

⁵ Headland Archaeology 2020 *Land south of Stevenage Road, Little Wymondley, North Hertfordshire; Geophysical Survey Report*

⁶ Cotswold Archaeology 2022 *Land south of Stevenage Road Little Wymondley Hertfordshire Archaeological Evaluation*



A geophysical survey followed by an archaeological evaluation was carried out 525m south-west of the Site (HER EHT8015 & EHT8977).^{7 8} Archaeological features were revealed within 9 of the 20 trenches opened, revealing a large amount of archaeological activity within the south-western area of the site, as well as small area of apparently localised activity within the south-east, and a lone hearth to the east. The dating evidence collected during the evaluation suggests two phases of activity on the site. Late Iron Age/early Roman (AD10-100) pits and ditches with possible residual middle Iron Age pottery located to the east of the probable trackway identified within the geophysical survey; and early Roman (AD50-120) located to the west of the possible trackway and consisting of post holes, occupation layers and rubbish pits.

A geophysical survey followed by eleven evaluation trenches was undertaken on land 500m south-west of the cable route which revealed archaeological remains including ditches, gullies and pits. A number of these, but not all, related to features identified by the geophysical survey (HER EHT8752, EHT8813 & MHT39735).^{9 10} Dating evidence suggested that the location had been in use from the middle Iron Age period, up to the mid-1st century AD. The settlement is described further below.

3.4 Chronological Background

3.4.1 Prehistoric

There are no prehistoric HER assets recorded within the Site or cable route footprint (**Drawing 2**).

Little Wymondley (and the Site) are located on the south-eastern edge of a former lake which now lies beneath the settlement of Hitchin.¹¹ Palaeolithic implements have been found within the fine sediments that infilled the former lakes, discarded by the inhabitants active around the edges. The nearest such findspot to the Site is recorded 765m south-east (HER 417). Two other examples lie 1.02km south-east and 1.3km north-west of the Site.

Scatterings of broadly dated prehistoric flint, Mesolithic flint and early Neolithic to early Bronze Age flints have been recovered across the study area indicating a general background of activity, although none are recorded within close proximity to the Site. These likely represent evidence for transient activity and reflect a general prehistoric hunter-gatherer presence across the area.

Four groups of cropmarks of possible late Neolithic to early Bronze Age barrows have been recorded within the study area, located 800m south-west (HER 6118-6121), 940m south (HER 4404 & 61123) and 905m north (HER 1030, 393 & 2515) of the cable route and 800m south of the Site (HER 4405 & 11533). With regards to the two groups to the south-west of the cable route, they are located on a west facing slope overlooking the Ippollitts Brook. Similarly, the northern group also lies on a west facing slope, overlooking Ash Brook. The southern group lies on a north-west facing slope in close proximity to possible enclosure of Iron Age date (discussed further below).

Beyond the 1km study area, finds recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) include various Bronze Age implements including a spearhead, sword and axehead.

3.4.1.1 Summary of prehistoric potential

Given the above, there is considered to be a low potential for prehistoric features within the boundary of the Site and cable route. The presence of Mid Pleistocene glaciofluvial deposits of silt and clay mapped by BGS across the area may indicate a potential for palaeolithic remains (such as unstratified or reworked artefactual remains) to be encountered, although such remains are rare. These deposits may also conceal and preserve earlier land surfaces of geoarchaeological potential. Later prehistoric

⁷ GSB Prospection 2015 *Geophysical survey report G15103: Stevenage Road solar farm, Hertfordshire*

⁸ Archaeology South-East 2016 *Archaeological Evaluation Report Land at Stevenage Lane Near St Ippolyt's Hertfordshire, SG4 7UW*

⁹ Sumo Survey 2019 *Geophysical Survey Report; Land off Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire*

¹⁰ Archaeology South-East 2020 *Archaeological Evaluation Report; Land off Stevenage Road, St Ippolyts, Hertfordshire.*

¹¹ Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020 *The Archaeology of the Wymondleys*



finds reflecting the flint assemblage of the locality may also be present. There is no indication for settlement or funerary activity within the Site.

3.4.2 Iron Age and Romano-British

The PAS records one late Iron Age / Roman and three Roman finds recovered from within the Site boundary and a further 15 found in close proximity to the cable route. These have been mapped by the Hertfordshire HER and are discussed by HER number below and mapped on **Drawing 2**. Generally, across the study area, the HER indicates a well-settled Iron Age/ Romano-British landscape.

Settlement activity of Iron Age date is noted within the study area, with evidence for continuation into the Roman period.

In close proximity to the Site, 65m north-east along the Wymondley Bypass, a series of ditches dated to the late Iron Age likely defined the limits of a small Iron Age settlement (HER 2607). Part of a cobbled surface and a single inurned cremation attest to the location of the occupation area. Evidence of continuation of the settlement in the wake of the Roman occupation of Britain comprised the remains of foundations representing buildings, worked stone, tile, tesserae, three cobbled surfaces and radiating ditches. This evidence indicates a substantial Roman settlement extending over 3ha, across a broad ridge of high ground (c.100m aOD) which slopes gently towards wide dry valleys to the south and east. The site forms part of an Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS) (**Drawing 2**). Associated pottery dates the occupation from late 1st to early 3rd centuries AD. Work in the vicinity of the Roman farmstead in 2001 showed the settlement extending westwards with a 3rd century circular building and a rectangular building with pottery of late 1st to early 2nd centuries recovered. Two possible sunken kilns or ovens predated the rectangular building (HER 2607). A scatter of Roman and medieval sherds (HER 2608), pits and an occupation surface were also observed during monitoring in 1975. Finds recovered from within the Site include a copper-alloy vessel escutcheon of early Roman date and two Roman coins (HER 21206, 21562 & 21713). Given the close proximity, these are likely associated to the occupation site, albeit there is no evidence for any associated structures or features extending within the Site.

A second settlement site dating from the middle Iron Age period has been recorded 475m south-west of the cable route (HER MHT39735). Dating evidence showed occupation from the middle Iron Age to mid-1st century AD. Middle Iron Age features and finds, likely constituting the start of the site's occupation, were restricted to the south-west of the site, and included seven ditches and seven pits. In the east, south and west of the site, three late Iron Age / early Roman ditches were excavated, which did not appear to relate to any of the middle Iron Age features. An east/west ditch has been interpreted as a continuous boundary or enclosure ditch, that is possibly a continuation of the prehistoric enclosure to the south of Sperberry Hill (HER 31052). Occupation was noted by the concentration of finds including an abundance of pottery, ceramic building material, burnt stone and animal bone. The pottery included many grog tempered wares, all likely to be locally manufactured, shell tempered fabrics and a small amount of unsourced sandy ware. Alongside these were a small quantity of imported wares including Gallo-Belgic white wares and a single example of South Gaulish Samian, typically imports of the mid-1st century AD.

Elsewhere, early Iron Age sherds have been recorded 185m north of the cable route (HER 464).

Late Iron Age to Roman finds within the Site comprise a copper-alloy bovine vessel escutcheon, found in the south-east of the Site (HER 21206). Iron Age coins have also been recorded from the adjacent southern field to the cable route (HER 28914 & 28915). Other Iron Age features within the study area comprise a ditch (HER 2606) 300m south-west of the Site.

Numerous Roman findspots comprising coins, weights and pendants have been recorded by PAS across the study area. Three of the artefacts (all Roman coins) have been recorded in the Site boundary; two in the north-east corner of the Site (HER 21652 & 21713), close to the Iron Age/ Romano-British settlement (HER 2607), and one in the south-west (HER MHT39718). The remainder of the PAS artefacts were recovered from the adjacent southern field to the cable route (HER 28913, 28916, MHT36258, MHT36263-MHT36268). These could represent causal loss or they could reference manure scatters.



3.4.2.1 Summary of Iron Age and Romano-British potential

There is a clear Iron Age / Romano-British presence upon the landscape. Settlement activity appears to have favoured higher ground, typically on south-facing slopes, which would have topographically been more advantageous with freer-draining soils. Finds have also been found within the Site and in close vicinity to the cable route which could be associated with the Roman farmstead or could reference manure scatters. As such, potential for later Iron Age/ Roman remains within the Site which is elevated and, on gravels, cannot be entirely discounted.

3.4.3 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

There are no HER assets of early medieval / Anglo-Saxon within the Site or cable route. The BESS Site is partially located within a medieval deer park associated with Wymondley Bury (HER 30814).

Anglo-Saxon remains are nationally rare, and it is often place-name and documentary evidence that can be tentatively used as a guide to identify likely population areas, albeit this should be used with caution. In the 1km study area, Sperberry Hill, 775m south-west of the cable route, translates as 'hill of speech' and may have been the location for the hundred moot (court) (HER MHT12596). The placename of Wymondley is first recorded in the 11th century as 'Wilmundeslea' meaning clearing belonging to Wilmund.¹²

Within the study area, the PAS records five late Saxon to medieval findspots comprising a brooch 950m north of the cable route (HER 20178), a mount 410m south of the Site (HER 24898), a stirrup 730m north of the Site (HER 27359), a mount 835m north of the Site (HER 29923) and a brooch 740m south of the Site (HER 26032).

The manor of Wymondley is recorded as 'Wimundeslai' by the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 (HER 2710). It is mentioned in four separate entries in the Domesday Book, with the largest landholding containing the village of Great Wymondley held by King William I and granted to Reginald de Argentine¹³. The separate settlements of Great Wymondley and Little Wymondley are not referred to until the late 12th century.

Medieval settlement activity within proximity to the Site is noted to the north, around Wymondley Bury (NHLE 1347446) a medieval moated manor house 320m north of the Site, and the Church of St Mary the Virgin (NHLE 1347444) 475m north, constructed in the early 12th century for the Argentine family. The Site is located within a medieval deer park associated to Wymondley Bury (HER 30814). In 1285 a licence of free warren was granted to Reginald de Argentine 'in all his demesne lands in Wymondley', and from 1299 the manorial court rolls refer to a park and warren. One of these records, dated 1369, notes the renewal of a fence between the park and the lord's hall.

The remainder of the medieval HER assets within the study area comprise numerous findspots including one found in the field to the south of the cable route (HER MHT36270).

3.4.3.1 Summary of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval potential

Given the above, there is considered to be low potential for late Saxon to medieval activity within the Site and cable route, likely evidence of agricultural practices, there being no evidence for settlement within the Site boundary.

3.4.4 Post Medieval and Modern

The historic settlement pattern of this area is one of dispersed, scattered farmsteads and strings of wayside hamlets such as Todds Green and Titmore Green, punctuated by larger settlements at Little Wymondley, Great Wymondley and St Ippolyts, which is reflected by the HER records and the historic maps.

¹² Mills 2011

¹³ Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020



A single record of a post medieval coin is noted within the south-west of the Site, likely representative of casual loss or manure scatters (HER MHT39719). No modern HER assets are recorded within the Site or cable route footprint.

The earliest mapping that shows detail of the Site and cable route comprises the 1811 enclosure map which records the Site within the parishes of Little Wymondley and Great Wymondley and a later 1816 enclosure map for St Ippolyts (**Plate 7**) which records the cable route. The Site was recorded across three enclosures, part of a wider area of land owned by 'Devisee of M. Heathcote deceased'. The cable route footprint passes through eight parcels of land, divided by three landowners comprising M. Heathcote, James Lucas Esquire and Edward Kitchiner.

By the time of the production of the 1884 Ordnance Survey (OS) map, some amalgamation of the small enclosures had occurred. The Site comprised two fields whilst the cable route comprised five parcels (**Plate 8**). Within the south-east corner of the Site, a small area of boggy land is indicated. There is also a footpath through the Site following the field boundary. Within the footprint of the cable route, a second footpath is noted aligned north to south and an undefined track is also recorded extending into the cable route footprint.

The 1898 OS map shows further amalgamation of the landscape with extensive fields now shown (**Plate 9**). The cable footprint extends across two fields. No change is noted within the Site.

The only changes on the 1924 OS map are the loss of the north-south orientated footpath through the cable route and the addition of an enclosure at the southern terminus of the cable route (**Plate 10**). No change was noted on the 1950 OS map (**Plate 11**).

During the late 20th century (and by 1981), the land to the west of Blakemore End Road was developed into Wymondley substation (**Plate 12**) which remains extant today.

3.4.4.1 Summary of Post Medieval and Modern potential

There is considered to be a high potential for post-medieval activity to remain within the Site and cable route to the west of Blakemore End Road which would most likely reflect agricultural practices. With regards to the cable route footprint to the east of the Blakemore End Road, modern groundworks associated with the construction of the substation have likely disturbed/ removed any earlier archaeological remains.



Plate 7: Little Wymondley and Great Wymondley 1811 Enclosure Map and St Ippolyts 1816 Enclosure Map



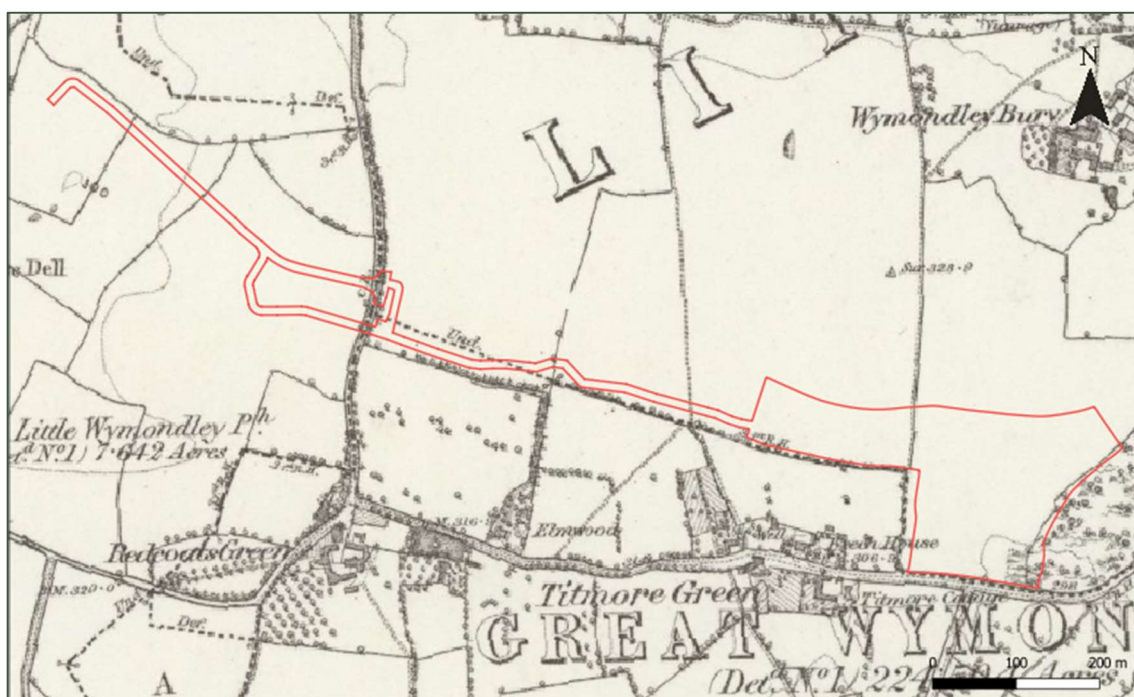


Plate 8: 1884 Ordnance Survey



Plate 9: 1898 Ordnance Survey





Plate 10: 1924 Ordnance Survey



Plate 11: 1950 Ordnance Survey



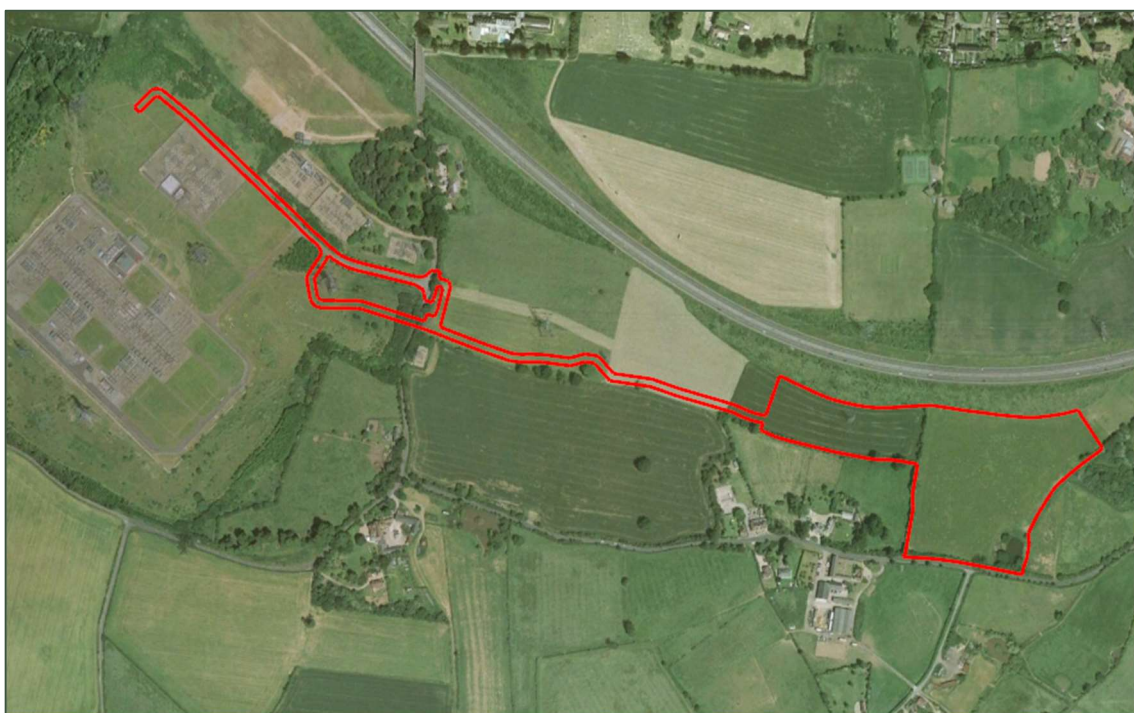


Plate 12: 2000 Google Earth

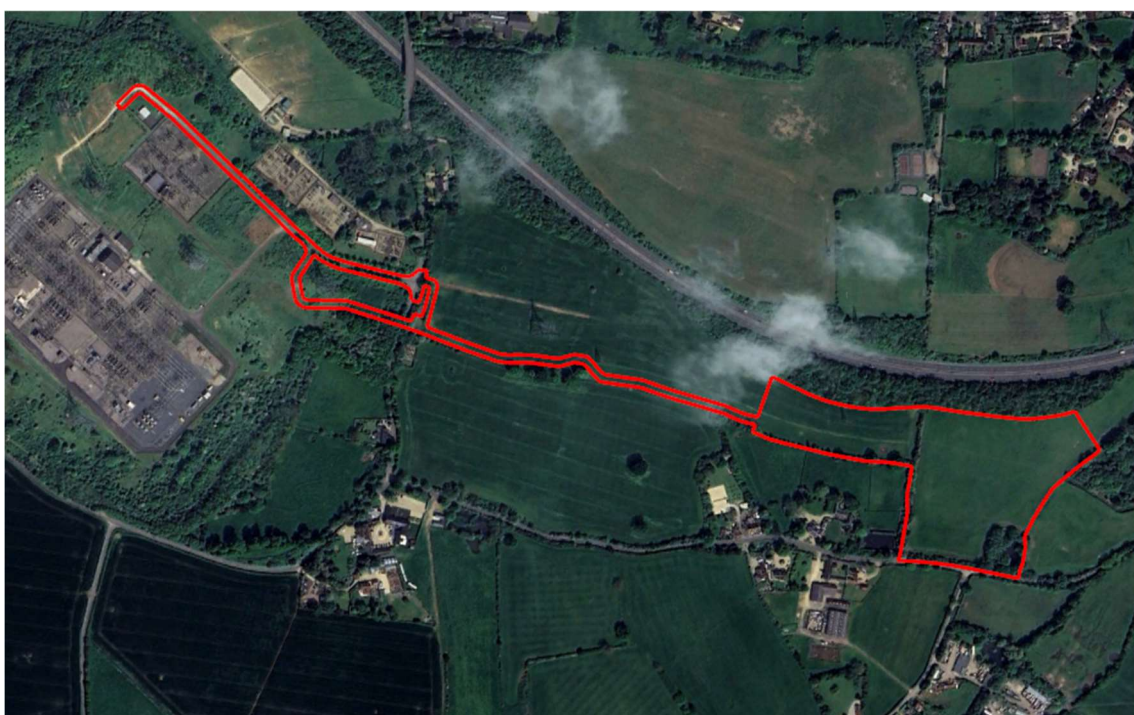


Plate 13: 2024 Google Earth

3.5 Lidar

The LiDAR did not show any earthworks / features of archaeological interest (**Plate 14**). Within the cable route footprint, the ground had been subject to disturbance and no features were noted.



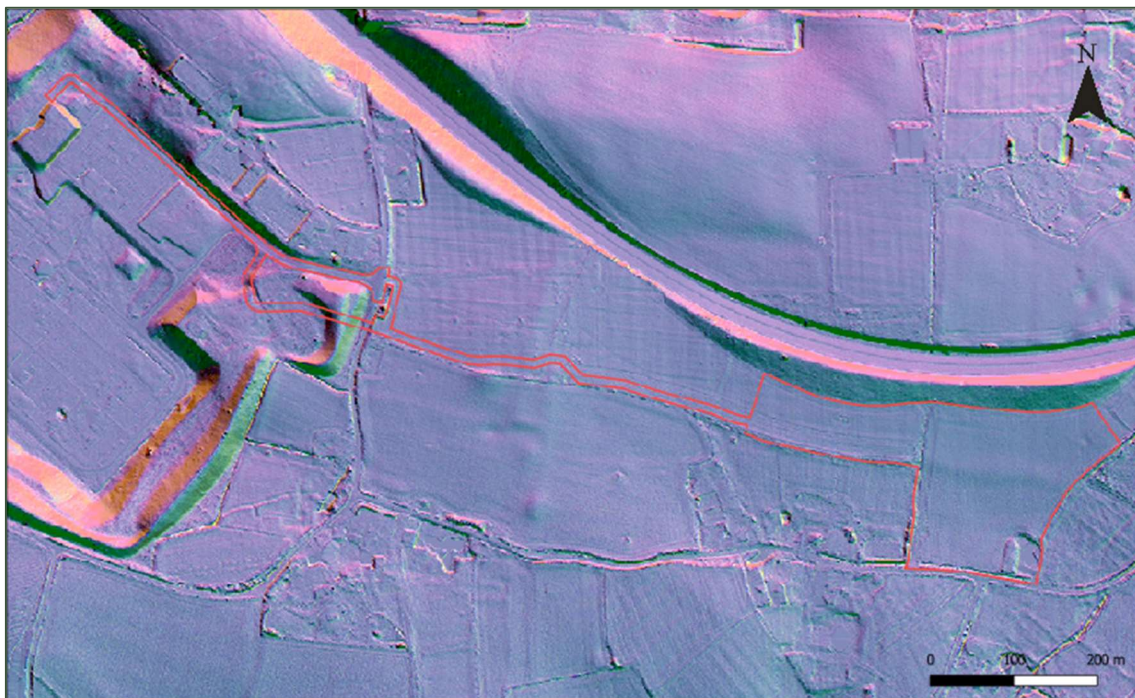


Plate 14: LiDAR DTM Data (National LIDAR Programme Environment Agency survey data; 1m resolution). Retrieved from DEFRA.

3.6 Summary potential

The archaeological potential lies within the Site and cable route footprint to the east of Blakemore End Road. Where the cable route footprint lies within the Wymondley Substation, it is considered that there is negligible potential due to the level of modern ground disturbance. Based on an understanding of the baseline provided above and any sequential events which may have affected potential from preceding periods, the summary potential for remains to be extant within the boundary of the Site and eastern section of the cable route footprint is as follows.

- **Prehistoric – Low.** A potential for prehistoric features within the Site is considered to be low. However, a flint assemblage cannot be entirely discounted and deposits of geoarchaeological potential may be present.
- **Roman – Low to Medium.** The foci of evidence available regarding the Romano-British period is centred around higher points in the landscape which may have included the Site, albeit ground disturbance during the construction of Wymondley Bypass to the north of the Site may have truncated and/ or removed remains.
- **Anglo-Saxon and Medieval – Medium.** Surviving remains, if present, are likely to reflect former medieval agricultural activity. There is no evidence to indicate settlement activity.
- **Post-Medieval – High.** Surviving remains are likely to reflect post-medieval agricultural activities.



4.0 Archaeology: Statement of Significance & Effects

4.1 Potential Remains

This assessment has identified that the following archaeological remains may be affected by the proposals:

- Potential for prehistoric residual artefacts associated with a flint assemblage.
- Below ground remains associated with Iron Age/Romano-British activity.
- Below ground remains associated with agricultural activity such as eroded remains of ridge and furrow and earlier field boundaries. Agricultural activity could date from the Roman period onwards.

4.2 Significance

Palaeolithic worked flints

Potential Palaeolithic remains would hold archaeological interest informing on potential knapping / working sites or areas of resources within the area, albeit it is considered that such remains would be rare.

Whilst an indicator of activity, such remains would be unlikely to be considered heritage assets of the highest significance under the terms of the NPPF and not anticipated to require preservation *in situ*.

Iron Age/Romano-British settlement remains

Remains associated with Iron Age to Roman settlements would illustrate occupation and agricultural expansion into a late / post prehistoric landscape. Any remains could inform on the construction of roundhouses and farmsteads and illustrate methods of enclosure, farming and small-scale industrial activity such as the making of pottery. Occupation remains would be anticipated to contribute to an understanding of regional patterns and would be of local to regionally significant. They would be unlikely to be considered heritage assets of the highest significance under the terms of the NPPF and would be unlikely to require preservation *in situ*.

Agricultural features and field systems

Remains associated with agricultural practices of Roman up to post medieval date would hold archaeological interest, albeit these would not represent remains of the highest significance. The archaeological interest of post medieval remains would be minimal.

Overall remains of agricultural activity would contribute towards an understanding of the agricultural economy and the managed enclosure/working of the land. They would be unlikely to be considered heritage assets of the highest significance under the terms of the NPPF and would be unlikely to require preservation *in situ*.

4.3 Development Effects

The proposed development would require groundworks, such that any archaeological remains within the Site and cable route footprint would be truncated, if not removed in their entirety. Ground disturbance may comprise but not limited to:

- Land formation/profiling
- Construction of foundations
- Landscaping
- Service trenches
- Soil stripping

In the worst case the proposed development would adversely affect significance through the removal of archaeological remains. Any adverse effect should be weighed in the planning balance consistent



with paragraph 209 of the NPPF however it is unlikely that any archaeological remains within the Site would be of such significance as to preclude development.



5.0 Heritage Baseline – Asset Selection

This assessment includes assets selected as per the search parameters set out in section 2.1.1. comprising designated assets in relation to the BESS Site. For the proposed cable route, indirect impacts to heritage assets through setting change have been scoped out due to the cable route being below ground.

Assets are listed below in Table 1. Assets located outside of the specified search area have been included at discretion due to their status or setting factors.

Table 1: Heritage Assets

Reference	Description	Status	Distance from Site/ cable route (CR)
1347411	Church of St Ippolyts (Church of England)	Grade I Listed Building	630m west of CR
1347446	Wymondley Bury		320m north of Site
1175903	Grade II listed Dovecote		
1102462	Redcoats Farmhouse Hotel	Grade II* Listed Building	270m south of CR
1102501	Wymondley Hall		830m north of Site
1175971	Wymondley House		580m north of CR
1347444	Church of St Mary the Virgin		475m north of Site
1175952	The dairy, Old Farmhouse and the Tudor House at Stebbing Farm		790m south-east of Site
1102463	Two barns and granary at	Grade II Listed Building	240m south of CR
1102464	at Redcoats Farm		
1102465			
1102466	Titmore Green Farmhouse		60m south of Site
1102468	The Elms including former barn range		665m north of Site
1102467	linked to east end and Barn range		
1102469	Plume of Feathers Public House		685m north of Site
1102470	Blacksmiths Cottages in Blacksmith's Yard		610m north of Site
1102471	The Croft		630m north of Site
1102472	Lower Titmore Farmhouse and outhouse		305m south of Site
1308100	attached on south and barn		
1102502	Beech House		95m south-west of Site
1102509	Park View 60 metres along lane beside the Cottage Loaf		600m south-west of CR
1102510	Brook End Farmhouse		760m west of CR
1175127	The Wyck		780m south of CR
1175140	Bridge over Ippollitts Brook in park 160 metres to east north east of St Ibbs Lodge		875m south-west of CR
1175336	Barn at Brook End Farm 35 metres to north east of house		740m west of CR
1175345	The Olive Branch		585m south-west of CR
1308097	Courtwyck		200m south of Site
1308120	Boro Cottages		620m north of Site
1295346	Foundry Cottage		880m west of CR
1347412	The Foundry House		865m west of CR
1347413	The Cottage Loaf		605m south-west of CR
1347464	The Laurels		685m north of Site
1347466	Thatched Cottage		550m south-east of Site
1102511	Jolly Tailors		525m east of CR
1347465	The Bucks Head Public House		625m north of Site
-	St Ippolyt	Conservation Area	490m east of CR

Of the assets listed in Table 1 it is anticipated that the asset types listed below would not be affected by the proposals (their significance is sustained). This is due to their significance lying wholly / predominantly within their fabric and / or the lack of change which the proposals would cause in respect to elements of setting which contribute towards their significance.



These types of assets, would not therefore be taken forward within the assessment, i.e. the types of assets listed below are considered scoped out of further assessment:

- assets in built up areas for which cones of view to / from are not significant;
- churches / chapels and associated rectories whose significance draws from its architecture and churchyard settings, where there are also limited or distant views which would not affect an appreciation or understanding of the asset;¹⁴
- industrial assets including former bakeries, public houses and former maltings, located within a built-up village area where understanding of function lies within the village setting;
- former / distant farmsteads, farmhouses and ancillary farm buildings to which an understanding and a perception of is restricted to the principal farmhouse, farmyard and / or the immediate rural backdrop which would be unaffected and / or with no historic links to the land within the footprint of the Site;
- distant cottages and houses to which rural setting is restricted with no historic link to the land within the footprint of the Site.

This excludes all but two of the designated heritage assets from assessment; those excluded are located beyond intervening areas of built development and / or screening provided by dense and mature vegetation with the elements of setting that contribute towards an understanding of their significance wholly unaffected by the proposals; the setting of the vast majority of the assets does not include the Site.

The identified heritage receptors considered sensitive to change by the proposed development are Beech House (NHLE 1102502) and Titmore Green Farmhouse (NHLE 1102466). In accordance with the Historic England Good Practice in Planning Advice Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017) and Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance' (2019), these were taken forward for further assessment.

¹⁴ 'Being tall structures, church towers and spires are often widely visible across land- and townscapes but, where development does not impact on the significance of heritage assets visible in a wider setting or where not allowing significance to be appreciated, they are unlikely to be affected by small-scale development, unless that development competes with them, as tower blocks and wind turbines may. Even then, such an impact is more likely to be on the landscape values of the tower or spire rather than the heritage values, unless the development impacts on its significance, for instance by impacting on a designed or associative view.' (Historic England 2015: 7).



7.0 Significance Statement

The special interest of the assets identified above in Section 6.0 is set out below. This is described in terms presented within the NPPF (2024). The contribution of setting towards the significance of the assets is also set out.

7.1 Beech House (NHLE 1102502)

7.1.1 Architectural and Historic Interest

The architectural interest of this 19th century house is derived from its Georgian characteristics. The house's original symmetrical façade, consisting of two storeys and three evenly spaced windows reflects the Georgian emphasis on balance and proportion (**Plate 15**). The prominent central entrance not only serves as a focal point but also underscores the importance of symmetry in Georgian architecture.

The house's south-facing aspect across a gravel entranceway enhances its aesthetic appeal and functional design, allowing for ample natural light.

In 1938, the building was extended to on the eastern end which notably disrupts the symmetry of the principal façade. It is of lesser interest, lacking the same historical and architectural merit.

Similarly, the rear range has been significantly added to with late 20th century additions and alterations such that the lack of coherence affects the legibility of the elevation.

7.1.2 Contribution of setting to significance

The house lies within a large plot of land comprising stables and paddocks, which extend to its north (rear), west and east. The principal façade of the building faces south, across the driveway and Stevenage Road, a visual remainder to those along Stevenage Road of the expression of Georgian affluence.

Important elements comprise:

- Relationship to Stevenage Road to the south from where the principal elevation of the house is best viewed; and
- Its surrounding grounds from where its architectural interest can be appreciated albeit its rear elevation has been subject to alteration such that its original features have been masked and does not contribute to significance.

7.1.3 The contribution of the Site to important setting elements

The Site lies 95m south-east of the house, adjacent to its grounds. A mature extensive treeline forms the dividing boundary between the Site and the grounds, which prevents views between the asset and the Site (**Plates 16 & 17**).

The Site does not contribute to any of the important setting elements set out above. It does not display any specific design intention intended to interact with the building and it is not located within an area which would be considered to provide the best views of the building, specifically views providing for an appreciation of its architectural interest (HEGPAN para 30: page 2). Furthermore, the house has no historical functional associations with the Site.

Overall, the contribution of the Site to setting elements of importance to Beech House is nil. The significance of the asset will not be affected by the proposed development.





Plate 15: Beech House, facing Stevenage Road



Plate 16: View towards Site from Stevenage Road adjacent to Beech House





Plate 17: View west of heavily vegetated western boundary which blocks views of Beech House

7.2 Titmore Green Farmhouse (NHLE 1102466)

7.2.1 Architectural and Historic Interest

The architectural interest of the farmhouse lies in its distinctive structural features that reflect various periods of construction and renovation. This late medieval hall house, with its origins likely tracing back to the 1600s, has notable characteristics including its H-plan layout, which is typical of medieval and early post medieval rural architecture. The timber frame construction, set upon a plastered brick sill, illustrates traditional building methods.

The design includes a symmetrical arrangement of windows and a prominent entrance, further providing architectural interest.

The alterations made in the late 17th century, including heightening the original building, inserting a floor, and adding a rear sidewall chimney, illustrate the adaptability of the farmhouse to changing needs and lifestyles. The conversion of the service room into a kitchen and the addition of storage spaces highlight the transition in domestic functions over time.

The house's principal elevation faces east, away from the farm buildings which are located to its rear (to the west) (**Plate 18**).

It also holds group value with the farm's outbuildings west and south.

7.2.2 Contribution of setting to significance

The house lies to the east of the farm outbuildings.

Important elements comprise:

- Relationship to Stevenage Road which provides access to the farmhouse and farm;
- Its immediate surrounding grounds from where its architectural interest can be appreciated;
- Its immediate agricultural backdrop; and



- Group value with the farm outbuildings.

7.2.3 The contribution of the Site to important setting elements

The Site lies 60m north of the house. The mature vegetation along Stevenage Road and the southern boundary of the Site helps to block views such that only glimpsed views of the building from the southern part of the Site are possible (**Plate 19**). No views from the northern part of the Site and the area of the proposed development are possible (**Plate 20**).

The Site does not contribute to any of the important setting elements set out above. It does not display any specific design intention intended to interact with the building and it is not located within an area which would be considered to provide the best views of the building, specifically views providing for an appreciation of its architectural interest (HEGPAN para 30: page 2). Furthermore, the farmhouse has no historical functional associations with the Site.

Overall, the contribution of the Site to setting elements of importance to the farmhouse is nil. The significance of the asset will not be affected by the proposed development.



Plate 18: Titmore Green Farmhouse, from Stevenage Road looking west close to site entrance





Plate 19: Glimpsed views of Titmore Green Farmhouse, from Site entrance



Plate 20: View from area of proposed BESS Site in the north of the Site, looking south. No views of Titmore Green Farmhouse possible.



8.0 Compliance with Statute and Policy

8.1 Archaeology

8.1.1 Statute

The proposals would not cause direct impact to a Scheduled Monument. The proposals would not engage consideration of the Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

8.1.2 National Policy

The assessment provided by this report has set out the significance of potential archaeological remains in full accordance with paragraph 207 of the NPPF. Due to the anticipated significance of remains, no predetermination field work is anticipated to be necessary to understand that remains would not preclude development.

8.1.3 Local Policy

This report complies with Policies HE3, HE4 and NE12 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and NHE9 from the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan which set out the archaeological impact of the development. In this case, it is not considered necessary for a field evaluation prior to determination. This is due to the identified archaeological potential of the Site which has not referenced a potential for the presence of remains of high importance.

In line with Paragraph 2016 of the NPPF (2024), a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

8.2 Heritage

8.2.1 Statute

In reaching the conclusions presented in this report, the need for the application to comply with Section 66 (1) and 72 (1) the Planning Act has been considered. It is considered that the proposals would be in compliance with these statutory conditions.

8.2.2 National Policy

No impact will occur to designated heritage assets, either through physical change or through setting change. The assessment provided by this report has considered the effect of the proposals on the significance of non-designated heritage assets in line with paragraph 207 of the NPPF. It is considered that the proposals would be in compliance with the NPPF.

8.2.3 Local Policy

No impact is anticipated on designated heritage assets. Therefore, Policies HE1 and NE12 from the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and NHE9 from the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan would not be engaged.



9.0 Conclusions

Overall, the proposed development will not result in any harm to any designated heritage assets. The development thus conforms with the relevant provisions of the NPPF (2024), The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Local Plan policies.

This assessment has also identified known and anticipated archaeological remains within the Site and has assessed their significance in accordance with the NPPF (2024) paragraph 207. Potential remains within the Site relate to possible prehistoric findspots, Iron Age/Romano-British occupation/agricultural activity, and medieval or post medieval agricultural activity. The identified archaeological potential of the Site has not referenced a potential for the presence of remains of high importance. Should any remains be present, they would likely be of local, to perhaps regional, interest at best.

Therefore, it is unlikely that any archaeological remains within the Site would be of such significance as to preclude development nor would require preservation in-situ. Any adverse effects to such assets should be weighed in the balance under the terms of the NPPF (2024) paragraph 216.

Overall, the proposals are considered to be consistent with the provisions of the Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), Section 66(i), the NPPF, paragraphs 200-206, and the relevant provisions of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan.



10.0 Bibliography

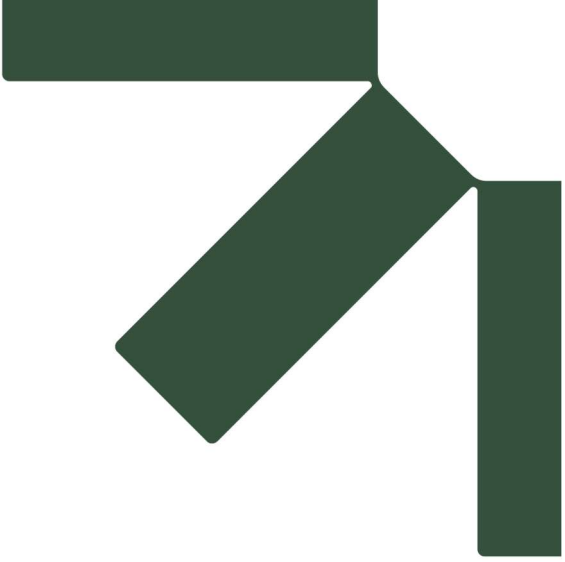
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Appendix A Significance and Assessment of Effects

A.1 Assessment of Heritage Significance

With reference to the policy contained within the (NPPF) 2024, the significance of heritage assets can be described in terms relating to their designated status. This essentially equates to assigning a descending level of significance as set out below.

- 1 **Designated heritage assets of the highest significance (importance)** are identified in Paragraph 213 of the NPPF as comprising Grade I and II* Listed buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments (as identified in footnote 75 of the NPPF).
- 2 **Designated heritage assets of less than the highest significance (importance)** are identified in Paragraph 213 of the NPPF as comprising Grade II Listed buildings and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens.
- 3 **Non-designated heritage assets** are defined within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as *'buildings, monuments, Sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets'*.¹⁵

However, whilst acknowledging that assets have varying levels of designated status (as set out above), understanding the effect of a proposal rests on achieving an understanding of where the 'significance' of an asset lies and the effect of the proposed development on this 'significance'. The NPPF defines 'significance' as:

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

The NPPF glossary and the PPG provides a definition for these interests as:

- **Archaeological interest:** *'there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.'*
- **Architectural and artistic interest:** *'These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.'*
- **Historic interest:** *'An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.'*

The guidance, *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12* (Historic England 2019), concurs with the use of this terminology and methodology, both of which are thus adopted for the purposes of this report.

With specific regard to the assessment of impacts to designated heritage assets as stated within the NPPF *"significance derives not only from the physical fabric of a heritage asset but also from its setting"* (MHCLG 2021, Annex 2, 72).

In respect of identifying the importance of setting to the identified significance of a heritage asset, Historic England's good practice guidance presented in *Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)* (Historic England 2017) will be utilised; specifically, the five-step approach to assessment:

- **Step 1** – Identify which heritage assets and their settings may be affected;

¹⁵ MHCLG, PPG, paragraph 039, reference ID: 18a-039-20190723.



- **Step 2** – Assess the degree to which settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
- **Step 3** – Assess if any change to the setting identified would affect the appreciation/ understanding of an asset's significance (there may be no change);
- **Step 4** – Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;
- **Step 5** – Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

A non-exhaustive list provided within the document (Historic England 2017, p. 11) identifies themes such as:

- physical surroundings:
 - o topography;
 - o aspect;
 - o functional relationships and communications;
 - o history and degree of change over time; and
- sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy, or privacy:
 - o experience;
 - o views from, towards, through, across and including the asset;
 - o intentional inter-visibility with other historic assets and natural features; and
 - o sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy, or privacy.

A.2 Assessment of Effects

An understanding of the presence / absence of heritage assets, their designated status and their significance provided by the above approach allows for a detailed and justifiable determination of how proposals would affect the archaeology and heritage resource. Once an understanding of significance has been achieved, the effect of proposals can be gauged on the basis of how the proposed development would affect the significance of the asset.

Potential development effects to designated heritage assets are discussed in terms of harm to significance. As clarified in the High Court, preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm.¹⁶ This is echoed in *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2* (Historic England 2015, 9), which states that “Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged”.

Where harm is identified, the NPPF, references the following levels of harm with respect to **designated heritage assets**:

- **‘Substantial harm or total loss’**

Being a level of harm that would “have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced; and

- **‘Less than substantial harm’**

Being any lesser level of harm than that defined above; recent case law has confirmed that this includes any level of harm (not considered substantial) regardless of its quantification, e.g., the finding of a ‘negligible’ level of harm must still be treated as less than substantial harm and be weighed in the balance under paragraph 209.

With reference to the broad parameters referenced above, the PPG provides that the category of harm identified for any given asset be ‘explicitly identified’, and that the extent of that harm be ‘clearly

¹⁶ *R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council* [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin).



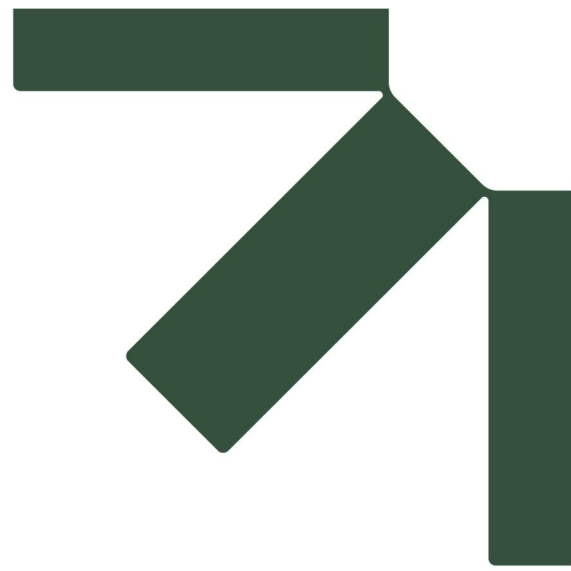
articulated'.¹⁷ For purposes of this assessment, this can be done with reference to a '*spectrum*', e.g., at the lower / upper end of the spectrum of less than substantial.

- **The NPPF does not provide that harm to non-designated heritage assets be categorised as 'substantial' or 'less than substantial', only that the scale of any harm or loss is articulated.**

The assessment of anticipated development effects can thus be seen to have been undertaken in accordance with a robust methodology, formulated within the context of current best practice, the relevant policy provisions, and key professional guidance.

¹⁷ MHCLG, *PPG*, paragraph 018, reference ID: 18a-018-20190723.





Appendix B Policy and Legislation

B.1 Statute

Designated heritage assets protected by statutory legislation comprise Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Nationally significant archaeological sites, monuments and structures are protected under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)**.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are protected under the **Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)**. In relation to development proposals, the legislation states that:

... in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the secretary of state shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. (Section 66).

With regards to Conservation Areas, it states that:

... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. (Section 72).

B.2 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

Applicable national policy comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), and specifically the following paragraphs:

Paragraph 207, which states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a Site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Paragraphs 212 and 213, which provide for designated heritage assets, and state respectively that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance; and

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck Sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

Paragraph 214, which relates to instances of 'substantial harm', and states that:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:



- a) *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the Site; and*
- b) *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) *conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the Site back into use.*

Paragraph 215, which relates to instances of 'less than substantial harm', and states that:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 216, which relates to non-designated heritage assets, and states that:

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.

Local Planning Policy

Local planning policy is provided in:

- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031¹⁸
 - Policy HE1 – Designated Heritage Assets
 - Policy HE3 – Non-designated heritage assets
 - Policy HE4 - Archaeology
 - Policy NE12 – Renewable and low carbon energy development
- Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031 (2019)¹⁹
 - Policy NHE9 – Historic Character and Heritage Assets

These policies are quoted below:

Policy HE1

Planning applications relating to Designated Heritage Assets or their setting shall be accompanied by a Heritage Assessment/Justification Statement that:

- I. Assesses the significance of heritage assets, including their setting;
- II. Justifies and details the impacts of any proposal upon the significance of the designated heritage asset(s); and
- III. Informs any necessary measures to minimise or mitigate against any identified harms.

Planning permission for development proposals affecting Designated Heritage Assets or their setting will be granted where they (as applicable):

- a) Enable the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance;
- b) Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and
- c) Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.

¹⁸ NHCC 2023a

¹⁹ NHCC 2023b



Where substantial harm to, or loss of significance, of a designated heritage asset is proposed the Council shall refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is necessary to deliver considerable public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss

Policy HE3

Permission for a proposal that would result in harm to, or the loss of, a non-designated heritage asset will only be granted provided that a balanced judgement has been made that assesses the scale of harm to, or loss of significance of the non-designated asset and, where the proposal results in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset:

- d) The replacement building contributes to preserving the local character and distinctiveness of the area; and
- e) Where the asset is located in a conservation area a continuous contract for the demolition and redevelopment of the site has been secured, unless there are justifiable grounds for not developing the site.

Policy HE4

Permission for development proposals affecting heritage assets with archaeological interest will be granted provided that:

- f) Developers submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where justified, an archaeological field evaluation.
- g) 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
- h) 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.

Policy NE12

... Proposals for other renewable and low carbon energy development which would contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions will be permitted subject to an assessment of the impacts upon:
iii. The historic environment, including the impact on the setting of historic assets; ...



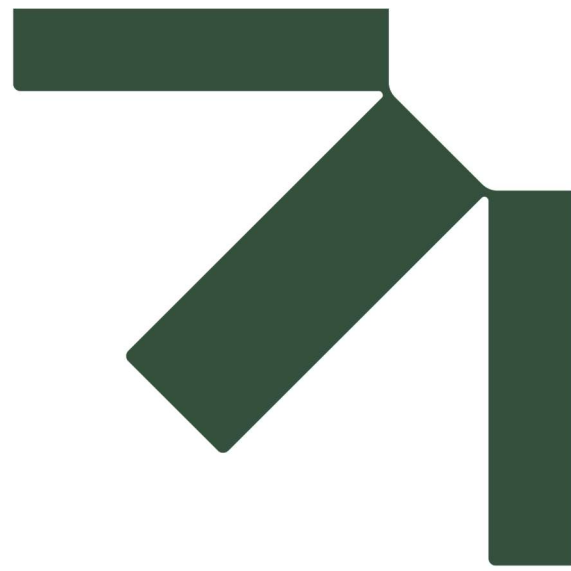
Policy NE09

Development proposals should reflect and where possible, enhance, the historic character of the area. Proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings including those with archaeological interest must comply fully with the requirements of National Planning Policy and the development plan.

To protect our natural and historic environment, and retain the rural character and intimate scale of Wymondley Parish any new development should:

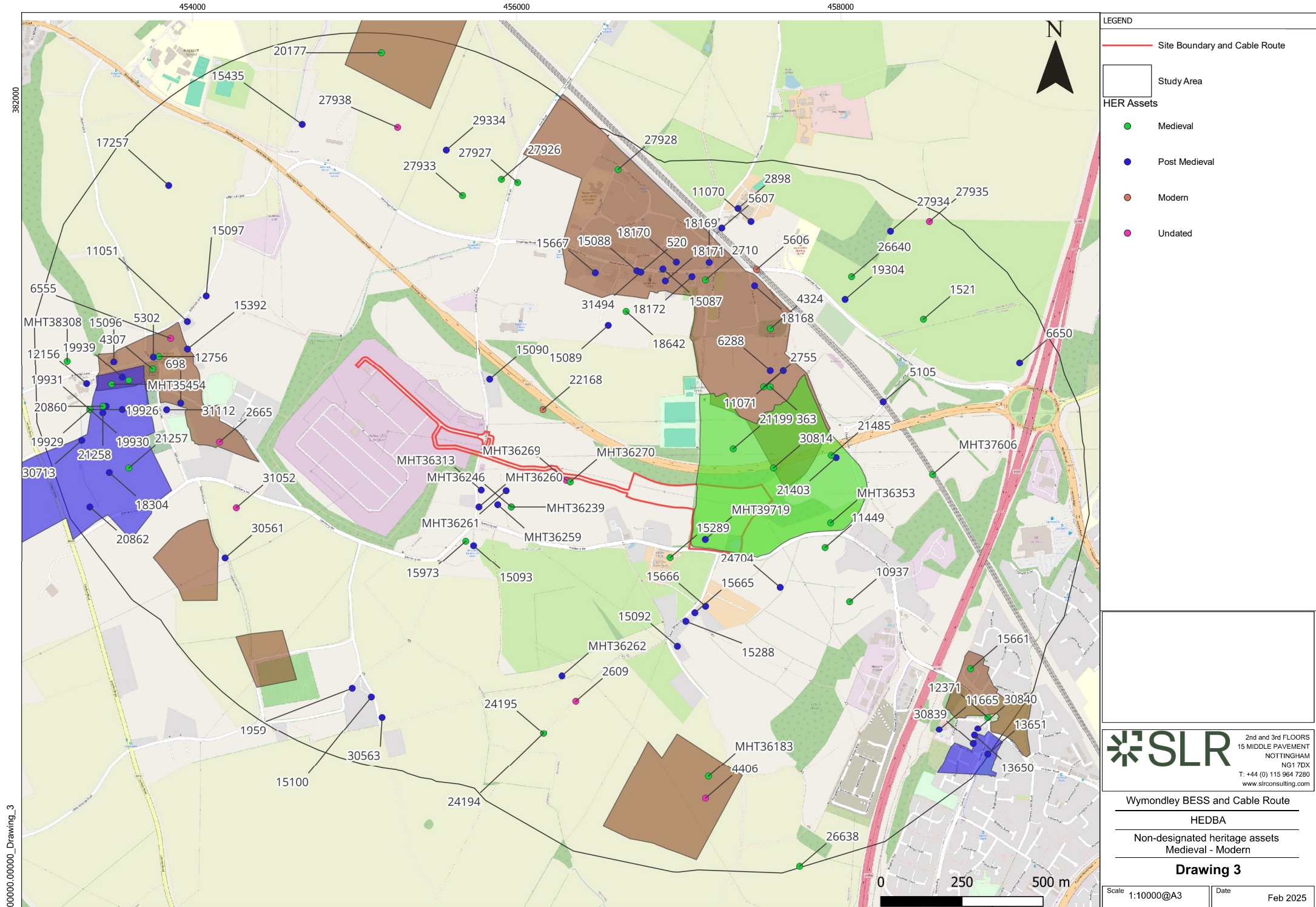
- be appropriately sited and of an appropriate scale, form and style;
- avoid visually intrusive locations such as upper ground where they would be visible from the skyline;
- avoid lighting that would create additional urbanising influences on the character of the area.





Drawings





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Making Sustainability Happen