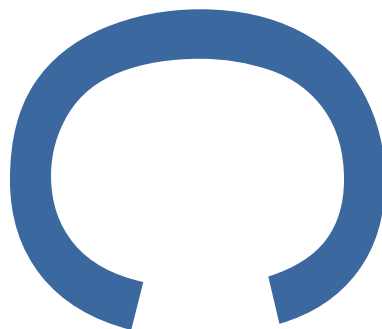


**HIGHOVER FARM, HIGHOVER WAY,
HITCHIN, HERTFORDSHIRE: A
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT DESK-
BASED ASSESSMENT.**

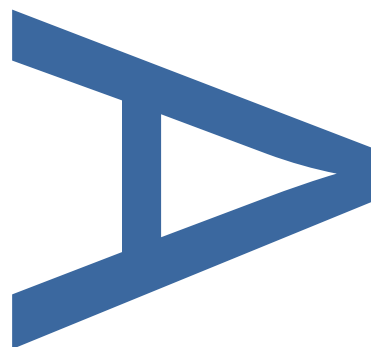


**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY: NORTH
HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBERS:
25/01420/FP**

REPORT NO.: R18029 V1



JULY 2025

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

Highover Farm, Highover Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire: A Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

Local Planning Authority: North Hertfordshire District Council

Planning Reference: 25/01420/FP

Central National Grid Reference: TL 19786 30691

Report No. R18029 V1

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Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.	
K Code	K9832
Report Number	R18029

	Name	Approved	Date
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Version Control			
Version No.	Name	Reason	Date
1	J Hulse	Initial Issue	28/07/2025

Non-technical summary

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Gill-Hudson Homes Ltd to undertake an historic environment desk-based assessment of Highover Farm, Highover Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, to provide supporting information for any future planning applications to re-develop the site.

The proposed development site is within the boundary of Highover Farm which has an interesting and long traceable history. Highover Farm is situated in the north-east corner of Hitchin and operated as a working farm from the Medieval period until 2022.

It is likely that the remaining farmyard buildings will have had a destructive effect on potential earlier archaeological features but given the density of archaeological remains in the surrounding area, there is a moderate potential that some remains may have survived between the foundations of existing buildings.

Overall, the archaeological assessment has established that the study area has a low potential for prehistoric and Roman remains and a moderate potential for remains of Medieval and Post Medieval periods. Any surviving remains may be of low to moderate significance, depending on their exact nature.

Re-development of the site would have a negative impact on any surviving archaeological features. For this reason, the local planning authority may require that a programme of archaeological fieldwork is carried out prior to development, in order to assess the surviving archaeological resource.

For example, an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching of areas likely to be impacted upon by the development may be recommended in order to quantify and characterise archaeological deposits that may survive on site. Dependent on the results of the evaluation exercise, further archaeological work may also be required.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) was commissioned by Gill-Hudson Homes Ltd partnership to undertake a historic environment desk-based assessment for land at Highover Farm, Hitchin.
- 1.1.2 A historic environment desk-based assessment (DBA) can be required as part of a planning application and accords with policies set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2024*. Section 16 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', which states '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' (para. 194).
- 1.1.3 A historic environment desk-based assessment is undertaken in order that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) may formulate an appropriate response to proposals which may impact upon any identified archaeological resource. This report aims to assess the archaeological potential of the site and to examine the likely impact of the proposals upon the archaeological resource.

1.2 The Site and Proposed Scheme

- 1.2.1 The site is located at Highover Farm, Highover Way, Hitchin, SG4 0RQ (NGR TL 19786 30691), and encompasses 0.742ha of land currently housing several former agricultural buildings, comprising a Grade II Listed Threshing Barn, non-listed courtyard buildings and a farmhouse.
- 1.2.2 The proposed development is an application for the change of use and external alterations to these buildings (25/01420/FP).

1.3 Report Objectives

- 1.3.1 This report has been written following guidelines issued by Historic England (2019) and in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020).

1.3.2 As defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020), an archaeological desk-based assessment aims to:

determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. Desk-based assessment will be undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of CIfA. In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact.

1.3.3 A desk-based assessment should consist of:

analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets and, in England, the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

1.3.4 The desk-based assessment is required in order to assess the merit of the archaeological resource and lead towards one or more of the following:

- *an assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study;*
- *an assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering, in England, their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests;*
- *strategies for further evaluation whether or not intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined;*
- *an assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings;*
- *strategies to conserve the significance of heritage assets, and their settings;*
- *design strategies to ensure new development makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and local place-shaping;*
- *proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research, whether undertaken in response to a threat or not. The degree to which archaeological deposits survive on site will depend upon previous land-use and so consideration is given to the destructive effect of past and present activity from a study of the information available. In order that the appropriate archaeological response may be identified the impact of the proposed development is also considered.*

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Geology

- 2.1.1 The underlying geology of the site is Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation: Chalk. This sedimentary bedrock formed between 100.5 and 89.8 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. This is overlain by a Lowestoft Formation – Diamicton, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 480 and 423 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period (British Geological Viewer 2025).

2.2 Topography

- 2.2.1 The site lies on the north-eastern limit of Hitchin, Hertfordshire and is c. 72m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). To its south the land falls gradually towards 50-60m AOD. The River Purwell lies c. 435m to the south of the site. The site is bounded by agricultural fields to the north and residential housing to the south.

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in September 2024. The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.

3.1.2 Chapter 16 of the NPPF concerns the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, with the following statements being particularly relevant to the proposed development:

194. 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.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

205. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible¹. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

- 3.1.3 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF.

3.2 North Hertfordshire Local Plan Adopted 2022

- 3.2.1 Policy SP13 Historic Environment states “The Council will balance the need for growth with the proper protection and enhancement of the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to the asset’s conservation and the management of its setting. We will pursue a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through:

- a) Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance;
- b) Identifying sites on the national register of Heritage at Risk or on the Council’s ‘At Risk’ register;
- c) Periodic reviews of Conservation Areas and other locally designated assets;
- d) Publication of detailed guidance.” (p 80)

- 3.2.2 Policy HE1: Designated heritage assets: “Planning applications relating to Designated heritage Assets or their setting shall be accompanied by a

¹ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

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);
- iii. Informs any necessary measures to minimise or mitigate against any identified harms.

3.2.3 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;
- 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." (p 168)

3.2.4 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;
- 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.
- d) 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.

e) 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.” (p 171)

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 In order to assess the potential of the archaeology within the development area, data of all heritage assets within a 1km radius from central point NGR TL 19786 30691 (Figure 2 and Figure 3) has been obtained from the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER, licence no: 049.25). The search area is called the 'study area' for the purposes of this assessment. All HER assets are mapped, and a listing of these entries is provided in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.

4.1.2 The purpose of the HER search is to identify known archaeological sites and finds in the vicinity in order to predict the likely archaeological conditions within the development area itself. It is important to understand that many of the entries on the HER result from chance discoveries, and therefore, at best, are a small and unrepresentative sample of the total buried heritage.

4.1.3 The information derived from the HER is supplemented by other archaeological, documentary and cartographic resources. Numbers in brackets in the following text refer to HER heritage asset numbers. Designated Heritage Assets are referred to by their National Heritage List for England² (NHLE) number. The results from the HER search are discussed chronologically below.

4.1.4 A walk-over survey of the site was undertaken on 10 July 2025 with the following aims:

- To consider the significance of any above-ground structures, historic buildings or historic landscape features present.
- To examine any areas of below-ground potential identified during research for the assessment, in particular with a view to gauging the possible survival or condition of any remains present.

² <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

- To assess issues of setting and views.

4.2 Designated Heritage Assets

4.2.1 Designated heritage assets are World Heritage Sites, Conservation Area designations, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Historic Battlefields or Historic Wrecks.

4.2.2 There are three Listed Buildings within the 1km study area. These are shown on Figure 2 and listed in Appendix 1.

4.2.3 The most relevant building for the development site is the Threshing Barn (NHLE 1452743, DHT11472) which lies directly within the development area. This is a Grade II listed building, constructed in the late 16th century or early 17th century and used into the 18th century. The barn is believed to have been for storing and threshing corn, however it is possible that it was constructed as a semi-aisled barn. It is understood that the north-west aisle was added in the 18th century (as evidenced by the red brick extensions to the flint gable walls).³

4.2.4 The threshing barn is of architectural interest:

- as a well-preserved example of a late 16th or early 17th century timber-framed threshing barn;

- for the legibility of the original plan form of the threshing barn;

- for the survival of a high proportion of the original queen-post roof structure, timber-framing, and flint and brick wall construction.

- of historic interest, as a key surviving example of English agricultural and tenurial practice, exhibiting the agricultural prosperity of Highover Farm in the late 16th or early 17th century.

4.2.5 Two further Listed Buildings were located within the study: 91 Woolgrove Road (NHLE 1347608, DHT7968) and Walsworth House (NHLE 1296215,

³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1452743?section=official-list-entry>

MHT12574).

- 4.2.6 91 Woolgrove Road (NHLE 1347608, MHT17201) lies c.415m south-west of the development site and is a Grade II listed building with elements dating to the 17th century or earlier.
- 4.2.7 Walsworth House (NHLE 1296215, MHT12574) lies c.780m south-west of the development site and is a Grade II listed building with elements dating to the 17th century.

4.3 Highover Farm

- 4.3.1 The proposed development site is within the boundary of Highover Farm which has an interesting and long traceable history (MHT17200/ NHLE 1452743/ DHT11472). Highover Farm is situated in the north-east corner of Hitchin and operated as a working farm from the medieval period until 2022. The following summary of Highover Farm is taken from Historic England.⁴
- 4.3.2 Highover Farm most likely has its origins as a Medieval farmstead and was first documented between 1287 and 1294. 'Highover' means the high bank or slope and accurately describes the location of its placement.
- 4.3.3 A deed of 1438 refers to tenements, lands, pastures and meadows with hedges and ditches in the hamlet of Highover, which were sold by John Poydras of Almshoe to John Pulter and Nicholas Mattok of Hitchin and Thomas Pulter, a canon of St Paul's Cathedral.
- 4.3.4 Manorial accounts of 1460 mention a messuage and a cottage at Highover, in addition to John Pulter's property there.
- 4.3.5 An inquisition post-mortem for 1488 refers to Highover as a manor, reflecting the wealth of the Pulter family as wool merchants.
- 4.3.6 In 1556 Edward Pulter is recorded as owning the farm called Highover with 20 acres of land for which he paid the lord of the manor 2lb of pepper a year as

⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1452743?section=official-list-entry>

well as a monetary rent. Pulter was also recorded as owning a copyhold tenement and cottage at Highover, and by 1676 these cottages had been absorbed into Highover Farm. The Pulter family did not live at Highover; for much of the C15 and early C16 they resided in the parsonage in Hitchin (now the site of Churchgate) which they leased from Elstow Abbey.

- 4.3.7 In 1690, Highover farmhouse, with its outbuildings, barns, stables, 400 acres of land and 36 acres of pasture in the parishes of Hitchin and Great Wymondley, were leased to William Maling.
- 4.3.8 In the 1750s Pulter Forester was required to sell some of the family's estates, and his son William sold Highover and his other property in Walsworth to the Reverend Thomas Whitehurst in 1766. Whitehurst obtained an Act of Parliament to enclose the open fields of Walsworth, and commissioned Thomas Bateman to map his estates in Walsworth in 1767 and Ickleford in 1771. The 1767 map shows a simpler but similar layout to what currently survives at Highover Farm, with the irregular form of the medieval farmstead, orchard and pond, surrounded by the straight lines of the new enclosures.
- 4.3.9 By the 1780s Whitehurst was in serious financial difficulties; in 1783 and 1786 he mortgaged parts of his Walsworth estate, and in 1791 the Walsworth estate was auctioned to repay his mortgages and debts. The sales particulars described the estate as 'three eligible farms' with 605 acres of rich, arable land, meadow and pasture 'in a beautiful and Sporting Part of the Country within One Mile of Hitchin (being one of the first Markets in the Kingdom)' and 'near a navigable River, which is expected to be continued through Part of the Estate'. Whitehurst's Walsworth estate was sold in 1803, and again in 1822.
- 4.3.10 The farmstead is shown on the 1844 tithe map as 'High-Over Farm', with the L-plan farmhouse at the south-east side of a rectangular-plan farmyard, stables and hay barn at the south-west side, threshing barn and attached farm building at the north-west side, and an L-plan farm building at the north-east side.
- 4.3.11 A report on Mr Wilshire's land at Walsworth in 1861 stated that 'Highover Farm has a very fair Homestead and a good House which is conveniently

placed, but the land although of good quality has been very much neglected’.

- 4.3.12 The following year Highover Farm (then with 420 acres) was let to Richard Pedder who was recorded in 1881 as farming 422 acres, employing 14 men and 10 boys, and having two resident female servants.
- 4.3.13 The 1881 Ordnance Survey (OS) map shows the farmstead with the same layout as the 1844 tithe map, with the exception that a store was added to the north-west corner between the hay barn and threshing barn; the building formerly attached to the north-east side of the threshing barn was replaced by a detached range of cart sheds; and the building to the north-east side of the farmyard was replaced by a linear range of cattle sheds. The layout of these buildings has not changed since the publication of the 1881 OS map, save the addition of a small number of farm buildings to the interior of the farmyard.
- 4.3.14 Alterations were carried out to the front elevation of the farmhouse about 1890, and a perpendicular two-storey extension was added to the north-east corner of the farmhouse around 1910.

4.4 The Threshing Barn at Highover Farm

- 4.4.1 The Threshing Barn (NHLE 1452743, DHT11472), as previously noted, is the only building on Highover Farm which is Listed (Grade II). It is likely that this barn was constructed in the late 16th or early 17th century. The barn for storing and threshing corn was one of the most important and impressive buildings on a farm and usually the largest.
- 4.4.2 Large farms and estates benefited from the great land sales that followed the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s to 1540s, and the resultant increase of average farm sizes, particularly in the most capital-intensive arable areas, was accompanied by a general increase in agricultural incomes and productivity.
- 4.4.3 The period between 1770 and 1870 was the most significant phase of farm building development throughout England. Rising grain prices from the 1760s into the early 19th century, and the impact of agricultural improvement,

brought about a significant change in the extent of arable production in the east of England, accompanied by further investment in farm buildings of all types, not only barns, but also stables, granaries and buildings and enclosures for livestock. The traditional threshing barn plan, comprising a threshing floor with opposing doors and flanking storage bays, remained comparatively unaltered between the 12th and early 19th century, although the gradual demise of large, cross-ventilated threshing bays followed the advent of the threshing machine in the late 18th century.

- 4.4.4 There is marked regional variation throughout the country, and in the arable areas of the south and east of England, threshing barns could be large, sometimes aisled, and were commonly built in groups to provide shelter to cattle yards. It is possible that the large threshing barn at Highover Farm was constructed as a semi-aisled barn, but more likely that the north-west aisle was added in the 18th century (as evidenced by the red brick extensions to the flint gable walls).

4.5 Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 4.5.1 The surrounding area of the proposed development site has been subject to archaeological evaluation and investigations. All investigations are mapped on Figure 3 and listed in Appendices 2 and 3. The main investigations are listed below, and the results are summarised in each relevant period section.
- 4.5.2 In 2018 a Trial Trench Evaluation was undertaken at land north and north-east of Highover Farm (EHT8665). This comprised 119 evaluation trenches across c. 37ha of farmland, with a quantity of the trenches located c.70-160m situated north, north-east and north-west of the proposed development site. The results of the evaluation stated the presence of Late Iron Age and Early Roman settlement features, comprising ditches, gullies and pits.
- 4.5.3 As part of the same project, two geophysical surveys were carried out to the immediate north, north-east and north-west of the proposed development site (Geophysics Survey of Bradford 2008 and Bartlett 2017) and detected a selection of anomalies, attributed to identifiable archaeological features such as ditches.

4.5.4 Other investigations within the study area were:

- Evaluation at the Anchor PH, 84 Cambridge Road, Walsworth, Hitchin, 2011 (EHT6927/ MHT18205) was located c.700m south of the proposed development site. Three trenches excavated revealed a prehistoric ditch, a late medieval or early post-medieval extraction/ refuse pit and two modern pits.
- Evaluation at Highover JMI School, Cambridge Road, Hitchin, 2012 (EHT7094) was located c.325m south-east of the proposed development site. Three evaluation trenches, before the construction of extensions, found no archaeological finds, features or deposits.
- Strip & record of embankment, haul road & compound for the Hitchin Railway Curve (Hitchin Rail Loop), 2011-12 (EHT7153) was located c.900m north-west of the proposed development site. This was a follow-up to a field-walking survey (EHT7112) and evaluation (EHT6924), which took place along the course of the new rail embankment, with investigation of the haul road and the works compound site at the eastern end. The archaeological results will be discussed below.
- Evaluation at the former North Hertfordshire College, Willian Road, Hitchin, 2016 (EHT8117/ MHT12577) was located c.600m south-east of the proposed development site. Five evaluation trenches revealed nothing earlier than early 20th century building activity associated with the construction of the College buildings.
- Aerial Photograph: Herts County Council 25" Vertical Photomaps. Cropmark of a sub-rectangular enclosure, Letchworth, PNO 3490 (EHT2165/ MHT4397) was located c.750m south-east of the proposed development site. This showed a cropmark of a small sub-rectangular enclosure: a single ditch with no apparent entrance, no internal features. The suspected dimensions are 30m x 20m.

4.6 Hitchin

- 4.6.1 Highover Farm is situated on the north-eastern edge of Hitchin, a town with deep historical roots. The name “Hitchin” derives from the *Hicce*, a local tribe mentioned in the 7th-century document known as the Tribal Hidage, which lists various kingdoms south of the River Humber. Hitchin’s origins, however, likely began during the Roman period. The region was then incorporated into the Kingdom of Mercia during the 7th century. The territory of the *Hicce* encompassed much of northwest Hertfordshire and was fully absorbed into Mercia by the 8th century.
- 4.6.2 Hitchin is a key example of a large Anglo-Saxon estate and minster territory, often referred to as a ‘great estate’; a significant landholding governed from a central location with subordinate settlements. The *Hicce*’s domain extended across much of Hertfordshire and into southern Bedfordshire. The likely central hub of the *Hicce* lay at the heart of the later Medieval town. After becoming part of Mercia, Hitchin remained an important administrative centre.
- 4.6.3 By the 10th century, the Hundred of Hitchin had been established, covering a substantial estate that includes the area of the proposed development. Before the Norman Conquest, the manor of Hitchin was a Royal Manor held by Earl Harold. After 1066, William I acquired it, and it was administered as part of a group of manors under the sheriff. The area had land for 38 ploughlands, comprising 7 lord's and 22 men's plough teams.
- 4.6.4 The Domesday Survey of 1086 describes Hitchin as a large and prosperous settlement, with 45 villagers, 17 smallholders, 12 slaves, and 29 cottagers. Resources included 2.5 lord's lands, meadowland equal to 4.25 ploughs, woodland sufficient for 600 pigs, 4 mills (valued at 2.66), and one church.
- 4.6.5 Over the medieval period, it grew into a prosperous market town, bolstered by trades such as grain, wool, cloth-making, and tanning. Despite setbacks like the Black Death, Hitchin's economic and religious institutions thrived, with establishments like Hitchin Priory and the Biggin Monastery. In the 13th century, William Rufus granted the manor to Bernard de Balliol and eventually to the Knights Templar and the Knights of St John.

- 4.6.6 According to The Victoria County History of Hertfordshire (Vol. 3), the parish of Hitchin comprised the town and three large hamlets, including Walsworth, which occupied 1,051 acres. The proposed development site lies within this hamlet. The common fields of Walsworth were enclosed in 1766–67.
- 4.6.7 During the Tudor and Stuart periods, Hitchin remained a prominent settlement, though religious upheaval from the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the English Reformation brought significant changes. The Priory and Gilbertine monastery were abolished, but new charities and institutions emerged, solidifying Hitchin's role as a civic centre. The town's economy continued to grow through malting, brewing, and farming, with Hitchin becoming well-known for its barley malt. The town maintained its significance during the English Civil War, contributing to the Parliamentary cause, and developed a strong non-conformist influence that persisted into the 18th century. By the 19th and 20th centuries, Hitchin evolved into a typical market town, benefiting from improvements in agriculture, communications, and industry. The arrival of the railway in 1850 spurred further economic growth, especially in grain, malt production, and engineering.

4.7 Early Prehistoric (Neolithic to Bronze Age)

- 4.7.1 A pit or post hole found along the course of the Hitchin rail loop (EHT6924) had in its upper fill sherds of early to middle Neolithic pottery (MHT30252). From the same evaluation (EHT6924), one Neolithic scraper and one barbed and tanged arrowhead were recovered from the topsoil of two evaluation trenches in close proximity (MHT17455). Two undated ditches were found in the trench which yielded the arrowhead (Trench 7). These were located c.900m north-west of the proposed development site.
- 4.7.2 A findspot of three flint figure stones dating to the Neolithic period were found c. 975m west of the development site (MHT295).
- 4.7.3 Approximately 12 worked flints from a rear garden, including 2 scrapers and several flakes dated as probably Neolithic, were found c.670m west of the development site (MHT11529).

- 4.7.4 Two flint scrapers (MHT28713 and MHT28714) and 16 waste flakes (MHT28712) dating to the Neolithic were found c.690m west of the development site.
- 4.7.5 Neolithic flint implements consisting of approximately 10 scrapers were found c.720m south-east of the development site (MHT291).
- 4.7.6 A probable roundbarrow, dating to the Late Neolithic/ Earlier Bronze Age is located c.930m north-east of the development site (MHT17881). It is a cropmark of a ring ditch measuring 17m across with the central mound visible as a pale area. However, it has not been confirmed by a geophysical survey carried out across the area (EHT5653 - GSB 2008).
- 4.7.7 This shows a presence of early prehistoric people moving through the landscape.

4.8 Iron Age to Roman

- 4.8.1 The investigations listed above, and other single findspots within the study area, revealed a landscape of widespread, predominantly Iron Age and Roman remains.
- 4.8.2 Most significantly to the proposed development site are the findings of the 2018 Trial Trench Evaluation at land north and north-east of Highover Farm (EHT8665). The broad results of the evaluation comprised Late Iron Age and Early Roman settlement features, plainly situating the proposed development site in the wider landscape of Late Iron Age and Early Roman activity. Notably, however, Trenches 1-8, 10, 11, 13, 18, 21-26 and 39 were located within a 250m radius of the proposed development site, and were devoid of any archaeological finds, features and deposits.
- 4.8.3 An evaluation at the Anchor Public House (EHT6927/ MHT18205) was located c.700m south of the proposed development site. MHT 18205 refers to a ditch found which contained in its fill three sherds from a later Bronze Age to earlier Iron Age decorated pot. A sherd of an early to middle Iron Age pot was found unstratified in the same evaluation trench.

- 4.8.4 Several findings from the investigations of the Hitchin Rail Loop, located c.900m north-west of the proposed development site, were also made. These came from the field-walking survey (EHT7112), trial trench evaluation (EHT6924) and strip and record excavations (EHT7153). Fieldwalking along the route of the proposed Hitchin grade separation found a concentration of Iron Age pottery (MHT17910). An intense group of pits, and cluster of probable four-post structures, containing pottery, animal bone and plant remains have been dated to the Middle Iron Age (MHT17448). Several Late Iron Age pits dug into an earlier Iron Age pit cluster, a ditch (MHT30251) and a probable quarry (MHT17449) were also revealed. A ditched enclosure (likely Late Iron Age/ Early Roman in date) was also discovered (MHT17452).
- 4.8.5 A Late Iron Age cemetery was discovered c.755m west of the proposed development site (MHT107). Eight cinerary urns were rescued by workmen at a chalk pit during the 19th century.
- 4.8.6 A Romano-British inhumation was found in 1937 at Cadwell Lane, Hitchin c.600m west of the proposed development site (MHT1428). It is suspected to date to the 3rd century AD due to the pottery assemblage, although Late Iron Age and Early Roman pottery sherds were also recovered.
- 4.8.7 About seventeen Roman coins were found with a metal detector on spoil heaps of a building site in 1976-77, c.925m south-west of the proposed development site (MHT460). The coins range from Gallienus (AD 253-68) to Helena (AD 337-41), and include one of Claudius II (AD 268-70), several barbarous radiates, and several of the House of Constantine.
- 4.8.8 Another find spot revealed a copper-alloy sesterlius of Marcus Aurelius as Augustus, c. 790m south of the proposed development site (MHT20242).
- 4.8.9 Another find spot revealed a coin, possibly Diva Faustina and was found in 1958, c.610m south of the proposed development site (MHT1416).
- 4.8.10 There are also reports of an 'Iron Age coin found at Walsworth, Hitchin, in 1879', c.460m south of the proposed development site (MHT130).

4.9 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- 4.9.1 Although no Anglo-Saxon and Medieval archaeological remains have been discovered in the study area to date, the town of Hitchin is known to have a documented history during the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods.

4.10 Post Medieval

- 4.10.1 The remains of Ridge and Furrow agricultural practices have been noted on geophysical surveys c.190m north and c.780m north-east of the proposed development site (MHT18640/ Barlett 2017/ EHT8481 and MHT17897/ GSB 2008/ EHT5653).
- 4.10.2 A Post Medieval lime kiln is known to have been situated at the site of the Greystone lime works c.755m north-west of the proposed development site (MHT11417).
- 4.10.3 A silk mill, owned by J and J Ransom from 1813 until perhaps c.1838, which later became a water-powered corn mill, and then a chamois leather dresser manufacturer, was located c.700m south-west of the proposed development site (MHT5768).
- 4.10.4 Several railway bridges are located within the study area (MHT5609, MHT5610, MHT5617 and MHT6790) and a river bridge (MHT12579).
- 4.10.5 Watercress beds are noted c.860m south of the proposed development site (MHT12573). These beds occupy an artificially widened stream from a spring at the edge of the grounds of North Herts College (Walsworth House), running into the river Purwell, located 230m to the north-west. This channel is visible on the earliest maps of the area (1818) but is narrower on 19th century maps. As watercress was a major industry in the county from the later 19th century, it is likely that the beds belong to this date. They are not, however, depicted on the later 19th century OS maps.
- 4.10.6 The previously mentioned Anchor Public House is a Post Medieval beer house, located c.660m south-east of the proposed development site (MHT16315).

4.10.7 Walsworth Farm is another farmstead, likely dating to the Post Medieval period and located 600m south-east of the proposed development site (MHT12577). It was remodelled in the 19th century Maps (the earliest dated to 1767) which show Walsworth Farm at the crossroads in this location. The 1844 tithe map shows a haphazard layout, typical of Post Medieval farmsteads, with barns and other buildings around an irregular yard. By 1881 it had been rebuilt as a Victorian planned farm, with the farmhouse relocated to the southwestern corner by the crossroads. By the 1950s, the farm buildings were in use by local firms including the Hitchin Rubber Works. In the 1970s these buildings were demolished for new office building, which in turn were converted into an arts centre in the 1990s. The farmhouse was demolished for road widening at the junction.

4.10.8 The 'Bedford & Hitchin Branch' railway is shown on the 1881 OS map, running in a straight line on the east side of the Bedford Road, north of Ickleford, and beyond the county boundary. This was built by the Midland Railway in 1857, as a route from Leicester to London via Bedford. It joined the Great Northern tracks just north of Hitchin station. The line closed in the 1960s and was dismantled, but its course is visible through its embankment, as well as a hedgeline, cropmarks and grassmarks delineating it at Ramerick Bottom (MHT18548).

4.11 Modern

4.11.1 A WWII pillbox is located c.780m south-west of the proposed development site (MHT6910). It is a Type 24 brick and concrete pillbox standing 20 yards to the east of the road/rail/river junction on Grove Road. Much of the outer brickwork has fallen off; the firing apertures are armoured with an unusually small 5" square hole; earth has been piled on the roof, and this has now grassed over.

4.12 Cartographic Sources

4.12.1 The earliest cartographic reference to Highover Farm is seen on the 1767 Walsworth Enclosure Map (Figure 4). The 1767 map shows a similar layout to what currently survives at Highover Farm, with the irregular form of the

Medieval farmstead. A pond is shown in the south of the proposed development area, and an orchard is depicted in the field to the east of the farm. The land surrounding the farm appears to be newly enclosed agricultural fields.

4.12.2 The Tithe map of 1844 shows that buildings in Highover Farm had been extended, with new buildings erected since the 1767 map (Figure 5). The pond to the south of the farm buildings was retained, although the duration of the orchard to the east is not known.

4.12.3 The first detailed Ordnance Survey map dates from 1881 (Figure 6). There appears to have been a major change to the farm buildings of Highover Farm, with the removal and rebuilding of several buildings and the addition of new outbuildings. Notably, the pond to the south of the farm buildings was filled and replaced by trees. A new pond was created to the east of Highover Farm, where the orchard was previously placed. There also appears to be some form of earthwork situated just outside of the farmyard's boundary.

4.12.4 The last map consulted is the National Grid map of 1964 which depicts the site in great detail (Figure 7). It shows the full extent of the farmyard buildings, still present and in similar layout to this day.

4.13 Previous Land Use

4.13.1 The proposed development site was once the hub of the farm, with the buildings on site used for both farming and domestic means. The surrounding land used was for primarily agricultural and pastoral from the Medieval period until 2022.

4.14 Contamination

4.14.1 There is no known contamination at the site. However, construction work may have led to some localised contamination, for example with asbestos, of some areas of the site. Any available test pit, borehole and/or contamination reports should be consulted prior to any archaeological excavation taking place.

4.15 Services

- 4.15.1 As the site has been built upon, it is to be expected that a number of services will be present on the site. All services should be clarified prior to any excavation taking place.

4.16 Modern Land Use and setting

- 4.16.1 The proposed development site is that of the Medieval farmstead, Highover Farm. The setting of the development site is a mix of modern housing and agricultural fields as it is surrounded by 20th century suburban residential development to the south and agricultural fields to the north. To the northeast, there is a planning proposal for the building of 700 residential homes (18/01154/OP). There is one designated heritage asset on the development site.
- 4.16.2 The Grade II Listed Threshing Barn currently sits within the proposed development area. The condition of the barn itself is poor; it is in a state of disrepair and moving towards dereliction. The northern view from the barn is a mixture of modern housing and agricultural fields (Plate 3). The southern view from the barn largely the associated farmyard buildings, which are also in poor condition, with the farmyard being abandoned since 2022 (Plate 4).

5 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.1 This section assesses the potential for the survival of potential archaeological heritage assets on the proposed development site and their significance, in the light of the evidence discussed above. Significance criteria are given in Appendix 4.
- 5.1.1 The proposed development site lies on the northeastern edge of the town of Hitchin. Within the study area there is good evidence for Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman settlement sites.
- 5.1.2 An evaluation immediately to the north and north-east of the proposed development site, revealed the presence of Late Iron Age and Early Roman settlement features, comprising ditches, gullies and pits (EHT8665). At the time of writing this assessment, these features are being investigated through open area excavations (Headland Archaeology, Pers. Comms.).
- 5.1.3 The current proposed development site is covered by existing farmyard buildings and a farmhouse, all in poor condition. It is likely that the foundations for those buildings would already have had a considerable negative impact on any potential archaeological remains. However, there are a few open areas like the farmyard forecourts and the farmhouse garden lawn in which archaeological remains may have survived. The Tithe Map of 1844 shows a pond across a large majority of the farmyard garden lawn (Figure 5).
- 5.1.4 Given the density of archaeological features in the surrounding area, there is a moderate potential that some remains, most likely dating to the prehistoric and/or Roman periods, are present and would have survived in those open areas or in-between foundations for existing buildings.
- 5.1.5 Overall, the survival of those remains would be piecemeal, but they could be set in context with the remains recorded in the wider study area. Overall, their significance could be low to moderate, depending on their exact nature.
- 5.1.6 There is also a moderate potential for any remains of the medieval period. If any were found, they are likely to relate to construction of Highover Farm and

aid in our understanding of the early agricultural activity undertaken on this site, and be of moderate significance.

5.2 Confidence Rating for the Current Study

- 5.2.1 This assessment carries a rating of reasonable confidence, but as a rule, desk-based assessments cannot be used as a predictive tool for the precise location and characterisation of sub-surface archaeological deposits. The nature of desk-based studies means that they rely on features and artefacts being reported and logged in the HER and information from intrusive investigations in the vicinity of the subject site. Further intrusive investigation would be required to precisely characterise the nature and survival of any potential archaeological features and deposits.

6 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 The proposed development

- 6.1.1 It is intended that the whole site of Highover Farm will be re-developed. This is to include the change of use and external alterations to the former agricultural buildings on the site, which comprises the Grade II Listed Threshing Barn and non-listed courtyard buildings.

6.2 Impact of the proposed development on buried archaeological deposits

- 6.2.1 Demolition of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings, necessitating the excavation of foundations, service trenches and landscaping will have an adverse impact upon any extant archaeological remains as it would lead to their destruction. However, the existing farmyard buildings and continuous re-development of the site has already negatively impacted on potential remains, so the proposed phase of re-development would only have a moderate negative impact.

6.3 Impact of the proposed development on setting

- 6.3.1 There is only one designated heritage asset on the proposed development site, that being the Threshing Barn. The proposed development site is already surrounded by modern residential housing to the south and a new housing development being built in the north-east.
- 6.3.2 Sympathetic development of the Grade II Listed Threshing Barn and the surrounding farmyard buildings and farmhouse is crucial for this development. Currently, all buildings are in a state of disrepair and sympathetic development of this site, including the conversion of many of the buildings such as the barn into residential dwellings, will ensure the preservation of the character of the structures.
- 6.3.3 Therefore, re-development of the farm site would have a positive impact on the setting of this designated heritage asset, allowing the Threshing Barn to be re-built and repurposed.

6.4 Mitigation

- 6.4.1 Given the density of archaeological remains within the surrounding study area, and the potential of further remains of low to moderate significance to survive in the open areas around the buildings of the current proposed development site, it is likely that the Local Planning Authority will require that any direct impact of the new development on potential buried archaeological remains will be mitigated by measures to investigate and record the presence/absence, nature and significance of any potential archaeological assets.
- 6.4.2 An appropriate evaluation and investigation strategy could be agreed and undertaken prior to the commencement of the development. This may either be required pre-planning or could be secured as a condition on any planning consent.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1.1 The review of HER data has shown that the Highover Farm site has low to moderate potential for prehistoric and Roman archaeological remains and moderate potential for remains of any other period. The remains may be of low to moderate significance, depending on their exact nature.
- 7.1.2 The Hertfordshire HER data, as well as the results of previous, archaeological investigations within the study area, show that the proposed development site lies in a landscape of prehistoric and Roman settlement sites, as well as dispersed pits, enclosures, trackways and isolated burials of the same periods. Evidence for the Medieval to Post Medieval periods indicates that the area was agricultural land.
- 7.1.3 An evaluation of land immediately to the north and north-east of the proposed development site found no archaeological remains in the trenches closest to the farm. However, open areas remain in-between farmyard buildings and the farmhouse garden lawn, in which survival of archaeological assets may be possible.
- 7.1.4 The proposed development is assessed as having an adverse impact upon any extant archaeological remains as demolition of existing buildings and the groundworks for new buildings would lead to the destruction of any potential surviving remains. Given the scale of the proposed development and the number and range of archaeological sites recorded in the vicinity, it is thought that an appropriate investigation strategy, to fully assess the potential impacts of the proposed development, may be required by the Local Planning Authority.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. would like to thank James Gill of Gill and Hudson Homes Ltd for commissioning this report. The author would like to thank the staff at Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record and at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies for their assistance with the historical and cartographic research. Gosia Krawczyk of PCA's CAD department produced the figures. This desk-based assessment was researched and written by Jenn Hulse and was managed for PCA by Michael Joyce.

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10 PLATES



Plate 1: Entrance to the proposed development area, view west.



Plate 2: Western corner of the Red Line Boundary with the Threshing Barn to the east, view north.



Plate 3: Line of site from the north-western side of the Threshing Barn, view west.



Plate 4: Line of site from the south-east of the Threshing Barn, view south-east.



Plate 5: The Threshing Barn, view west.

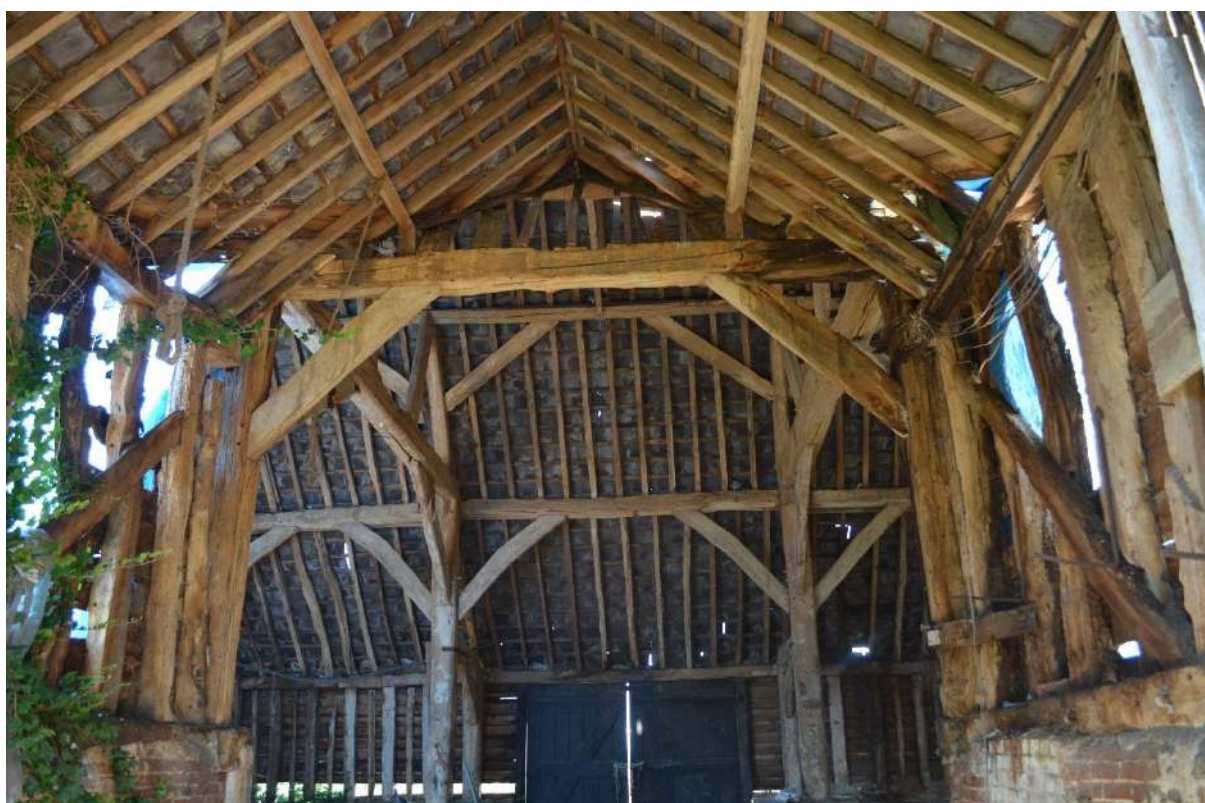


Plate 6: Interior shot of the Threshing Barn.



Plate 7: The Threshing Barn, view north.



Plate 8: Farmyard courtyard buildings, view north.



Plate 9: Exterior of Farmhouse, view East.



Plate 10: Exterior of Farmhouse, view north-west.

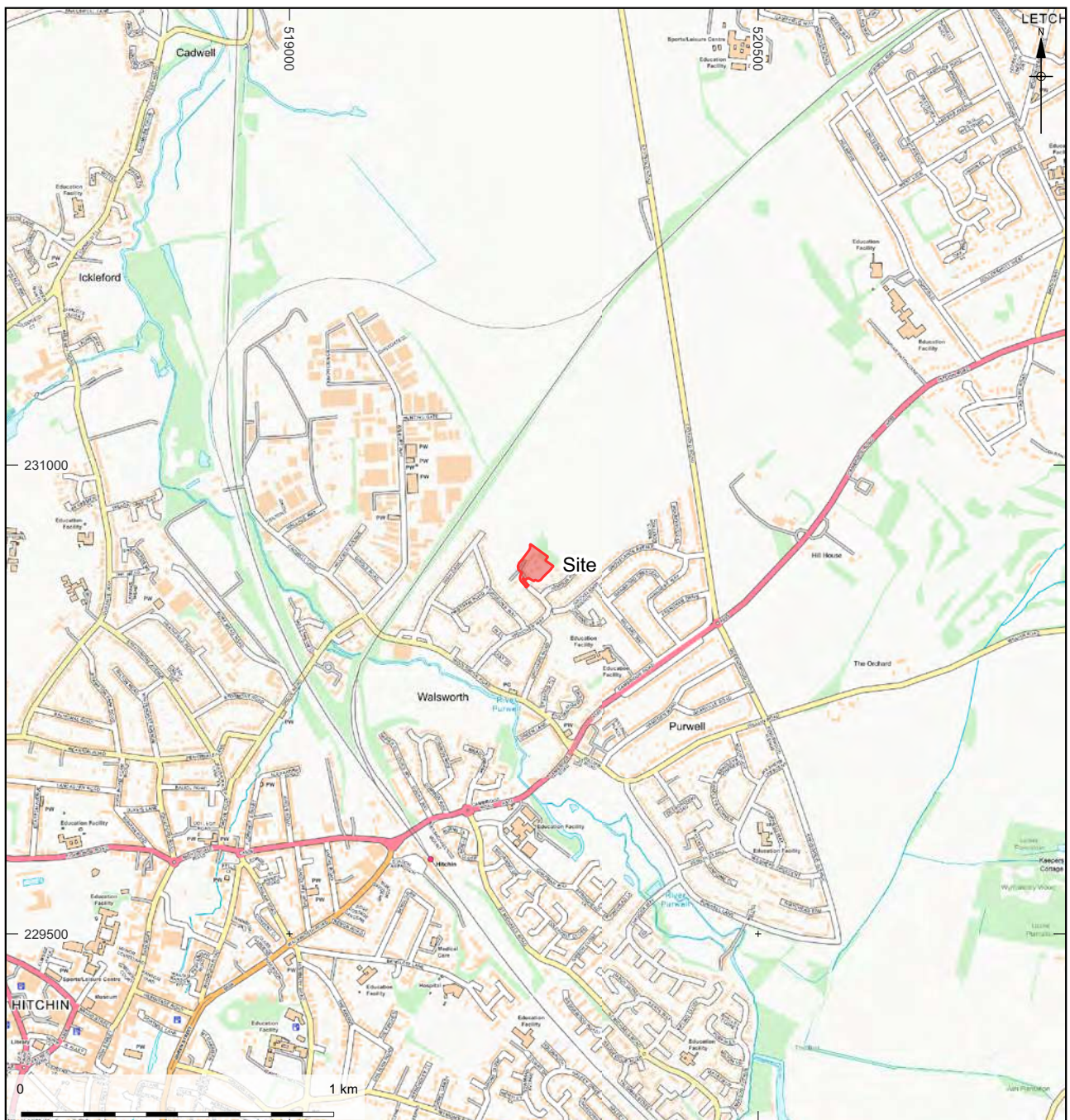
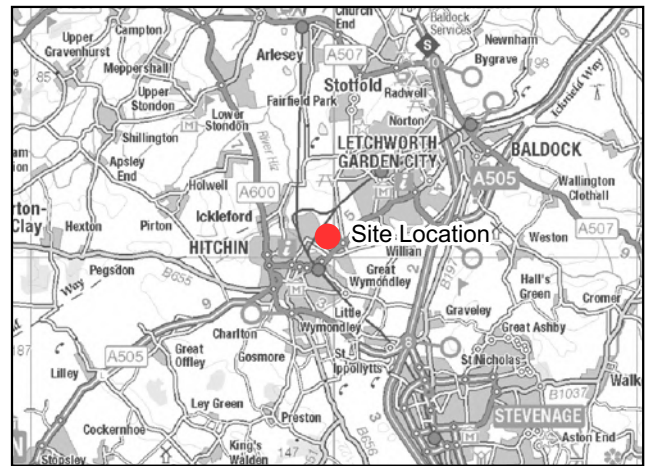


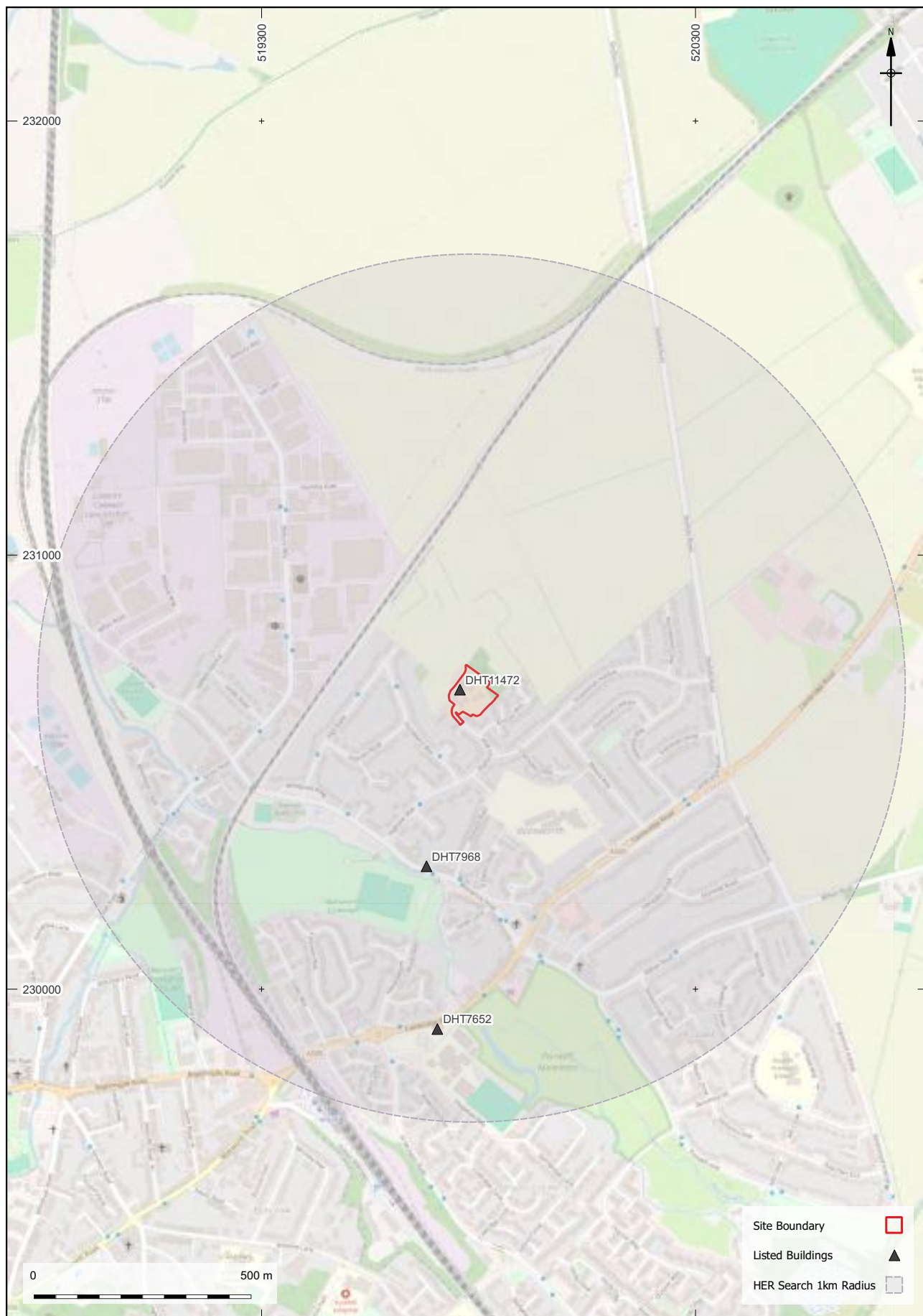
Plate 11: Farmhouse garden lawn/ open-area, view west.



Plate 12: Farmhouse garden lawn/ open area, view east.

11 FIGURES





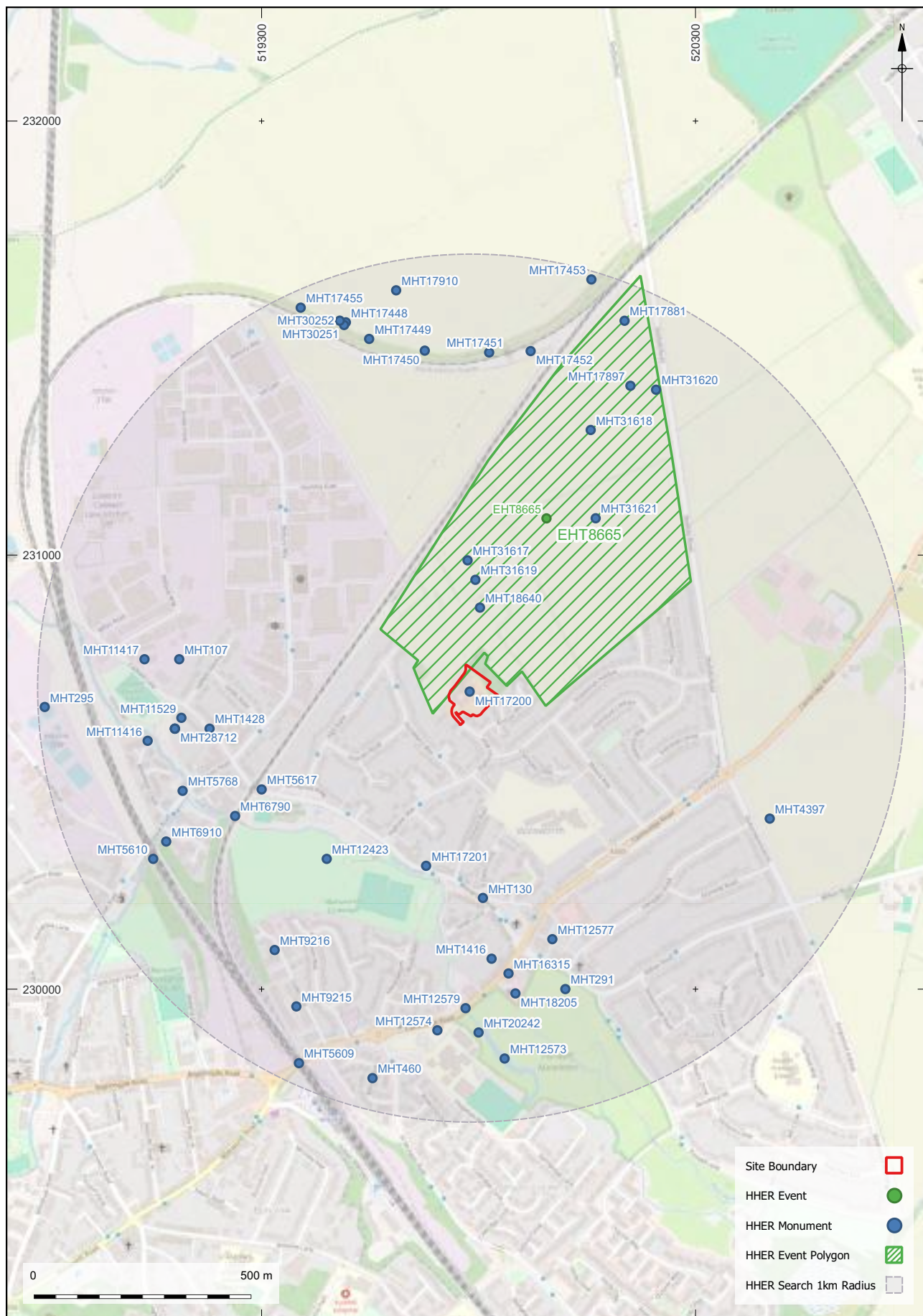


Figure 3
 Study Area with HHER Monuments and Events
 1:12,500 at A4



Figure 4
Highover Farm Shown on the Walsworth Enclosure Map of 1767 (ref: 58882)
1:5,000 at A4



Figure 5
 Highover Farm shown on the Hitchin Tithe Map of 1844 (ref: DEWS.P29)
 1:5,000 at A4

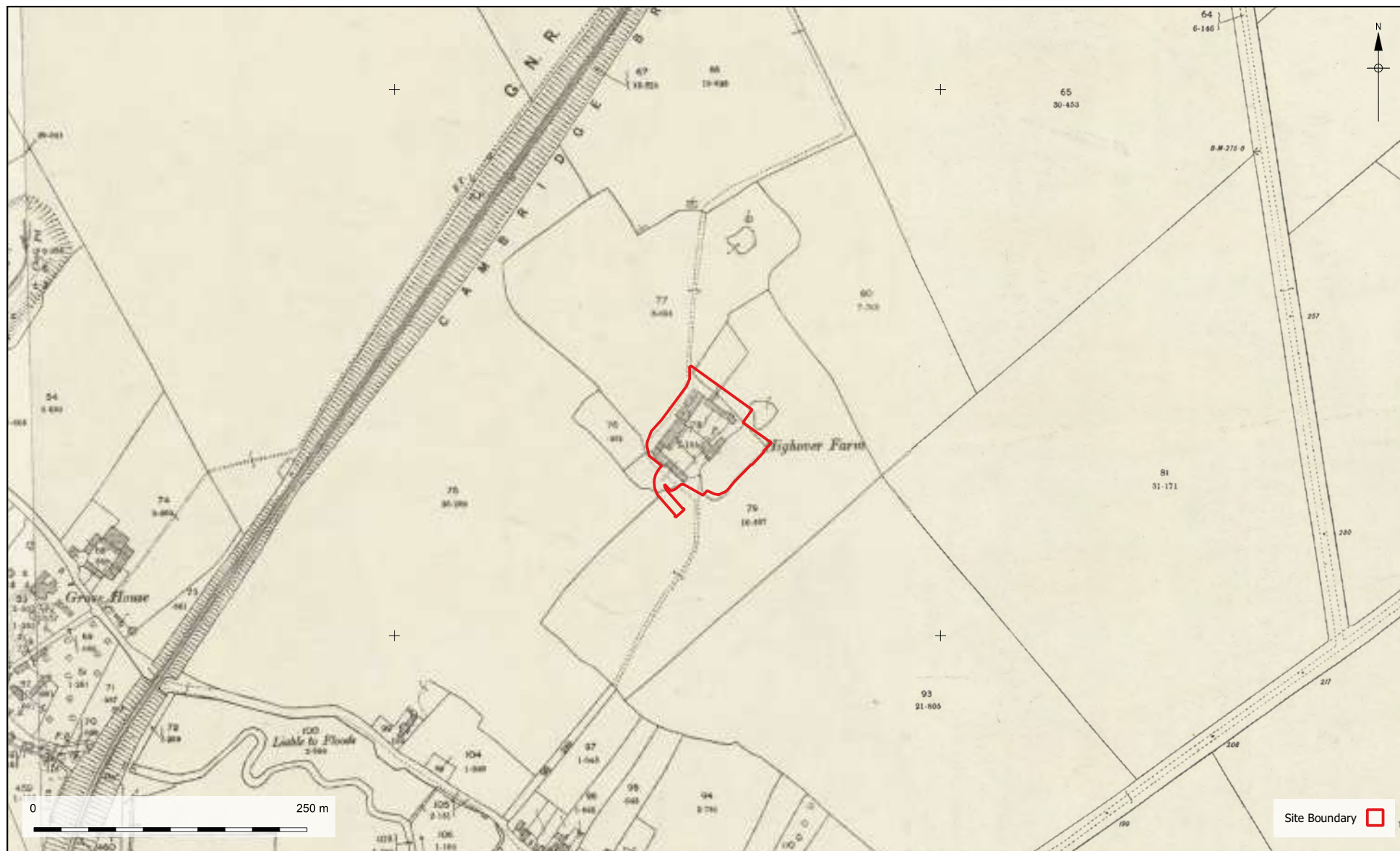


Figure 6
 Ordnance Survey 25 inch, Hertfordshire VII.14 , Surveyed: 1879, Published: 1881
 1:5,000 at A4

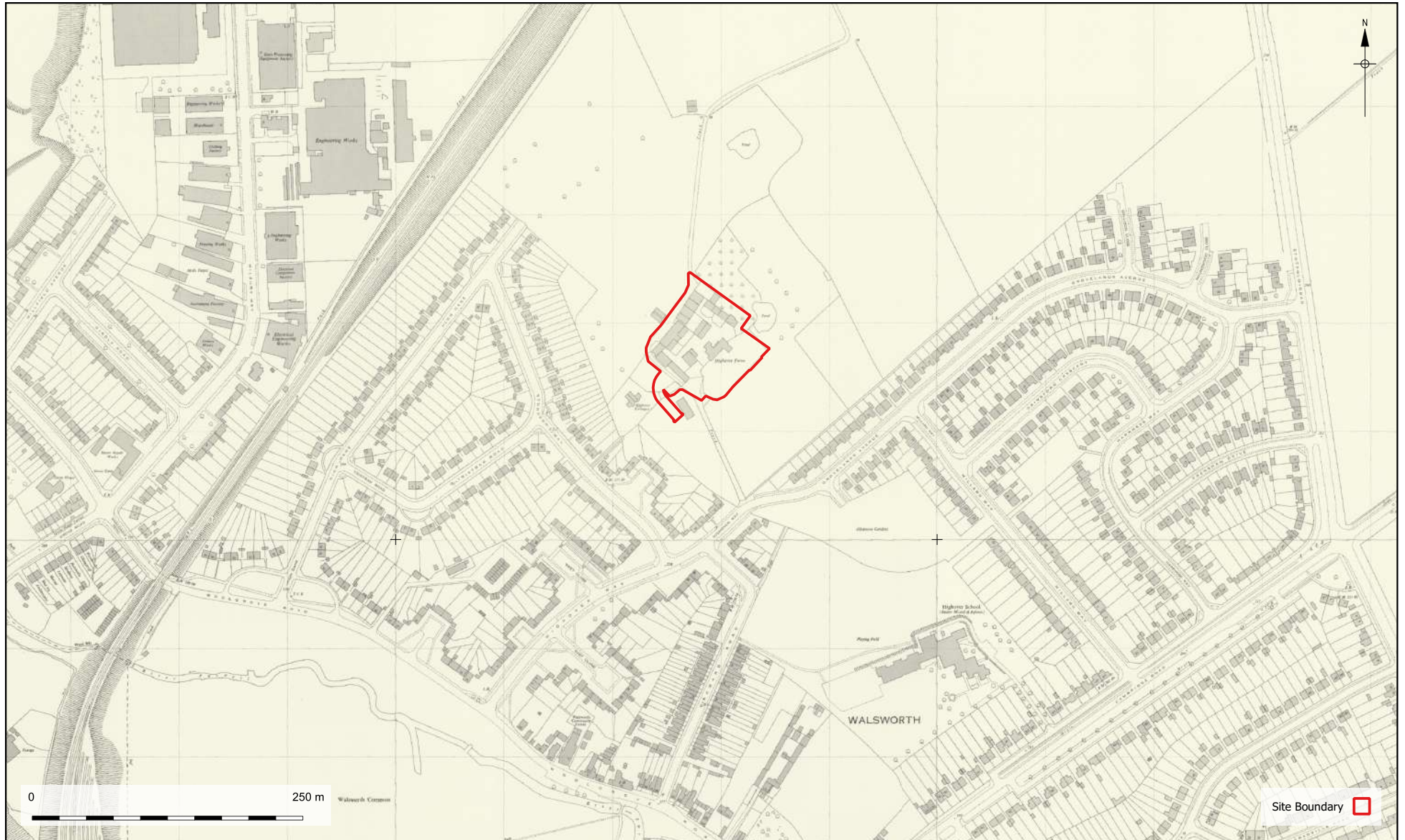


Figure 7
 Ordnance Survey 1:1250 Scale Map, TL1930NE - A, Surveyed: 1964, Published: 1964
 1:5,000 at A4

12 APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS

HER No.	Record Type	Name	Grade	National Reference
DHT11472	Listed Building	Threshing Barn at Highover Farm	II	1452743
DHT7652	Listed Building	Walsworth House	II	1296215
DHT7968	Listed Building	91 Woolgrove Road	II	1347608

13 APPENDIX 2: HER SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS

Mon I D	Record Type	Name	Summary	Mon Type	Period	Dates
MHT107	MON	LATE IRON AGE CREMATION CEMETERY, GROVE MILL, HITCHIN		CREMATION CEMETERY	Late Iron Age	-100 to 49
MHT11416	MON	SITE OF POSSIBLE MOAT, NORTH OF GROVE MILL, HITCHIN	Moat-like feature on the river Purwell, recorded on 19th century maps	MOAT?	Historic: period uncertain	410 to 1900
MHT11417	MON	SITE OF GREYSTONE LIME WORKS, CADWELL LANE, HITCHIN		LIME KILN	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT11529	FS	NEOLITHIC WORKED FLINTS, 35 CADWELL LANE, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Neolithic	-4500 to -2501
MHT12423	MON	WALSWORTH COMMON, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN		COMMON LAND	Historic: period uncertain	410 to 1900
MHT12573	MON	SITE OF WATERCRESS BEDS, PURWELL MEADOWS, HITCHIN		WATERCRESS BED	Twentieth Century	1901 to 2000
MHT12574	BLD	WALSWORTH HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	17th century house, which became North Herts College in the later 20th century	DETACHED HOUSE; TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT12577	MON	SITE OF WALSWORTH FARM, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, HITCHIN	Post-medieval farmstead, remodelled in the mid-19th century	MODEL FARM; FARMSTEAD	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT12579	BLD	ROAD BRIDGE OVER RIVER PURWELL, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	19th century bridge over the river	BRIDGE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT130	FS	LATE IRON AGE COIN, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Late Iron Age	-100 to 49
MHT1416	FS	ROMAN COIN, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Roman	50 to 409

Mon I D	Record Type	Name	Summary	Mon Type	Period	Dates
MHT1428	MON	ROMANO-BRITISH INHUMATION, CADWELL LANE, HITCHIN	Third century burial	INHUMATION	Late Roman	201 to 409
MHT16315	BLD	THE ANCHOR PH, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	Post-medieval beer house on one of the main routes out of Hitchin	PUBLIC HOUSE; BEER HOUSE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT17200	BLD	HIGHOVER FARM, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	Post-medieval farmstead with medieval origins, and 16th or 17th century farmhouse	FARMSTEAD; TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE; FARMHOUSE; TIMBER FRAMED BARN; STABLE; CART SHED	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT17201	BLD	91 WOOLGROVE ROAD, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	17th century house with later red brick front, in the hamlet of Walsworth	HOUSE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT17448	MON	EARLIER IRON AGE PITS & FOUR-POST STRUCTURES, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Intense group of pits, and cluster of probable four-post structures, containing pottery, animal bone and plant remains	PIT; POST HOLE	Earlier Iron Age to Middle Iron Age	-800 to -101
MHT17449	MON	POSSIBLE IRON AGE PIT, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Large irregular feature, possibly a chalk pit, and only uncertainly associated with Iron Age pottery	FINDSPOT; PIT; CHALK PIT?	Earlier Iron Age to Middle Iron Age	-800 to -101
MHT17450	MON	POST-MEDIEVAL FIELD BOUNDARY, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Probably 19th century boundary ditch	BOUNDARY DITCH	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT17451	MON	UNDATED QUARRY PIT, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN		PIT; DITCH	Historic: period uncertain	410 to 1900
MHT17452	MON	POSSIBLY ROMAN RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Large ditched enclosure, dated by a single Roman sherd	DITCH; RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE	Roman	50 to 409

Mon I D	Record Type	Name	Summary	Mon Type	Period	Dates
MHT17453	MON	POST-MEDIEVAL FIELD BOUNDARY, STOTFOLD ROAD, HITCHIN	Hedgeline removed in the 1860s when the railway was built	BOUNDARY DITCH	Historic: period uncertain	410 to 1900
MHT17455	FS	NEOLITHIC-EARLY BRONZE AGE WORKED FLINTS, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Neolithic disc scraper and a barbed and tanged arrowhead, both unstratified	FINDSPOT; DITCH	Early Neolithic to Earlier Bronze Age	-4500 to -1201
MHT17881	MON	CROPMARK OF A RING DITCH, S OF WILBURY HILL		ROUND BARROW?; RING DITCH	Late Neolithic to Earlier Bronze Age	-3000 to -1201
MHT17897	MON	RIDGE & FURROW, STOTFOLD ROAD, HITCHIN	Remnant medieval strip fields east of Hitchin	RIDGE AND FURROW	Medieval to Post Medieval	1066 to 1900
MHT17910	FS	LATE IRON AGE POTTERY SCATTER, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Late Iron Age	-100 to 49
MHT18205	MON	LATER BRONZE AGE/EARLY IRON AGE DITCH, CAMBRIDGE ROAD, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	Ditch, possibly alongside a hedge, in an open later Bronze Age to earlier Iron Age landscape	DITCH; HEDGE?	Later Bronze Age to Earlier Iron Age	-1200 to -401
MHT18640	MON	RIDGE & FURROW AND OTHER EARTHWORKS, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	Earthworks of medieval ploughing and other features, at a post-medieval farmstead which has medieval origins	LINEAR FEATURE; PLOUGH HEADLAND; RIDGE AND FURROW	Historic: period uncertain	410 to 1900
MHT20242	PAS	EARLY ROMAN COPPER-ALLOY COIN, HITCHIN	A copper-alloy sestertius of Marcus Aurelius as Augustus	FINDSPOT	Early Roman	162 to 163
MHT28712	PAS	MESOLITHIC TO NEOLITHIC STRUCK FLINTS, HITCHIN	16 waste flakes	FINDSPOT	Lower Mesolithic to Late Neolithic	-8500 to -2501
MHT28713	PAS	NEOLITHIC FLINT SCRAPER, HITCHIN	A flint scraper of probable early Neolithic date	FINDSPOT	Early Neolithic	-4500 to -3501
MHT28714	PAS	NEOLITHIC FLINT SCRAPER, HITCHIN	Probably early Neolithic end scraper	FINDSPOT	Early Neolithic	-4500 to -3501

Mon I D	Record Type	Name	Summary	Mon Type	Period	Dates
MHT291	FS	NEOLITHIC FLINT IMPLEMENTS, PURWELL, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Neolithic	-4500 to -2501
MHT295	FS	NEOLITHIC FLINT 'FIGURE STONES', BURY MEAD SEWAGE FARM, HITCHIN		FINDSPOT	Neolithic	-4500 to -2501
MHT30251	MON	LATE IRON AGE PITS, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Late Iron Age pits dug into an earlier Iron Age pit cluster, and a ditch	PIT	Late Iron Age	-100 to 49
MHT30252	FS	EARLIER NEOLITHIC POTTERY, EAST OF HITCHIN BUSINESS CENTRE, HITCHIN	Early to middle Neolithic pottery with burnt bone, possibly a cremation, disturbed by later features	FINDSPOT; CREMATION?; PIT	Early Neolithic to Middle Neolithic	-4500 to -2701
MHT4397	MON	CROPMARK OF A SMALL SUB-RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE, LETCHWORTH		ENCLOSURE; RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE	Unknown	Undated
MHT460	FS	ROMAN COINS, ST MICHAELS ROAD, HITCHIN	Late Roman coins found between the railway line and the College	FINDSPOT	Roman	50 to 409
MHT5609	BLD	RAILWAY BRIDGE, HITCHIN	1850 Great Northern railway bridge, much altered	BRIDGE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT5610	BLD	RAILWAY BRIDGE, GROVE MILL LANE, HITCHIN	1850 Great Northern railway bridge, much altered	BRIDGE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT5617	BLD	RAILWAY BRIDGE, WALSWORTH ROAD, HITCHIN		BRIDGE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT5768	BLD	GROVE MILL, HITCHIN	Early 19th century silk mill operated by J & J Ransom	CORN MILL; SILK MILL; LEATHER WORKING SITE; WATERMILL	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT6790	BLD	RAILWAY BRIDGE OVER RIVER PURWELL, HITCHIN		BRIDGE	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT6910	BLD	PILLBOX, GROVE ROAD, HITCHIN	Type 24 pillbox	PILLBOX	World War II	1939 to 1945
MHT9215	BLD	HERTS IRONWORKS, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	1886 iron and steel works	FACTORY; IRON WORKS	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900

Mon I D	Record Type	Name	Summary	Mon Type	Period	Dates
MHT9216	MON	SITE OF GAS WORKS, WALSWORTH, HITCHIN	1896 Hitchin Gas Company works	GAS WORKS	Post Medieval	1501 to 1900
MHT31617	MON	TRACKWAY, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	A possible trackway running northwest/southeast.	DITCH	Unknown	Undated
MHT31621	MON	LINEAR FEATURES, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	Two very long sinuous, roughly parallel linear anomalies detected by geophysical survey and confirmed by trial trenching.	DITCH	Earlier Iron Age to Late Roman	-800 to 409
MHT31619	MON	POSSIBLE ROMAN SETTLEMENT, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	Possible Roman settlement consisting of ditches, gullies which contained large amounts of Roman pottery.	GULLY; DITCH	Late Iron Age to Late Roman	-100 to 409
MHT31620	MON	PITS, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	Two pits of Neolithic or early Bronze Age, and Late Iron Age - early Roman date.	PIT	Early Neolithic to Late Roman	-4500 to 409
MHT31618	MON	ROMAN RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE, HIGHOVER FARM, HITCHIN	Roman rectilinear enclosure containing Roman pottery and animal bone.	DITCH	Roman	50 to 409

14 APPENDIX 3: PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Event ID	Name/Type	Organisation	Date
EHT5653	Geophysical survey for East Coast Main Line (ECML) Hitchin grade separation	Geophysics Survey of Bradford	2008
EHT7112	Fieldwalking survey for ECML grade separation project east of Hitchin	Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit	2008
EHT6924	Archaeological evaluation for the East Coast Main Line (ECML) Hitchin Grade Separation, Herts	Northamptonshire Archaeology	2008-2009
EHT6927	Evaluation at the Anchor PH, 84 Cambridge Road, Walsworth, Hitchin	Heritage Network	2011
EHT7094	Evaluation at Highover JMI School, Cambridge Road, Hitchin	Headland Archaeology	2012
EHT7153	Strip & record of embankment, haul road & compound for the Hitchin Railway Curve (Hitchin Rail Loop)	Archaeological Solutions Ltd	2011-2012
EHT8117	Evaluation at the former North Hertfordshire College, Willian Road, Hitchin	MOLA Northampton	2016
EHT8481	Geophysical survey of land north of Highover Farm, Hitchin	Barlett-Clark Consultancy	2017
EHT8665	Evaluation at Land North and North-East of Highover Farm	Thames Valley Archaeological Services	2018

15 APPENDIX 4: SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Significance	Definition
International (Very High)	Archaeological Sites or Monuments of International importance, including World Heritage Sites and Grade I listed buildings.
National (High)	Ancient Monuments scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, or archaeological sites and remains of comparable quality, assessed with reference to the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria (these are set out in PPG16, Annex 4 Grade II* Listed Buildings.
Regional (Moderate)	Archaeological sites and remains which, while not of national importance, fulfil several of the Secretary of State's criteria and are important remains in their regional context. Grade II Listed Buildings.
Local (Low)	Archaeological sites and remains that are of low potential or minor importance. Buildings of local heritage value.
Negligible	Areas in which investigative techniques have produced negative or minimal evidence for archaeological remains, or where previous large-scale disturbance or removal of deposits can be demonstrated. Buildings of no architectural or historical note.



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