



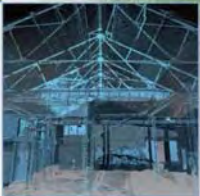
**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**  
**VOLUME 2**  
**APPENDIX 10.1 – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**  
**DESK BASED ASSESSMENT (HEDBA)**



# Great Wolf Development, Land Adjoining Bicester Hotel & Golf Club Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

*AOC Project Number: 24559*

*May 2019*



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

## Great Wolf Development, Land Adjoining Bicester Hotel & Golf Club: Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

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<b>National Grid Reference (NGR):</b>	<b>SP 54928 21731 (centre)</b>
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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## 1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Great Lakes UK Limited to undertake a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment with regard to a proposed development of a leisure and hotel facility on the western half of Bicester Hotel & Golf Club, Oxfordshire. This Desk Based Assessment has been undertaken in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation which was approved by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council.
- 1.2 The assessment has established that the Site was likely undeveloped, agricultural land prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when a small quarry was established along the northern boundary of the Site. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Chesterton Golf Course, now known as Bicester Hotel and Golf Club, expanded westwards onto the Site. The Golf Club became Bicester Hotel and Golf Club and major landscaping of the entire golf course including the Site was undertaken after 2002. With the exception of the creation of negative features such as golf ponds and bunkers, truncation across the Site has been reported by golf course staff as being limited to topsoil stripping to create the M40 embankment along the western boundary of the Site. Given the location of heritage assets away from the Site the potential for discovering relatively undisturbed and hitherto unknown archaeological remains within the Site cannot be discounted. On the basis of this assessment there is judged to be a Low potential for finds or remains dating from the prehistoric, Roman, early historic, medieval and post-medieval to be present on the Site, any remains would probably be of an agricultural nature, possibly in the form of truncated ridge and furrow. There is considered to be a Medium potential for finds or remains dating from the modern period to be present within the Site, particularly from the 20<sup>th</sup> century quarry along the A4095 and the creation of landscaping and drains associated with the golf course.
- 1.3 An assessment of the potential for indirect effects upon the settings of designated heritage assets undertaken as part of this assessment predicts that there will be Negligible effects upon the settings of the Listed Buildings and the Chesterton Conservation Area within 1.5km of the Site.
- 1.4 Any ground works within the Site boundary, could be considered to have the potential to highly impact any buried archaeological deposits that *may* be present. In accordance with national and local planning policies on heritage, it is advised that prior to development, that Cherwell District Council as advised by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), may require an archaeological investigation by non-intrusive and/or intrusive means to further investigate the potential for remains. The creation of positive features after 2002 such as landscaped, tree covered banks and negative features such as bunkers and/or water features will probably inhibit geophysical investigations and it is recommended that a targeted, phased archaeological evaluation may require to be undertaken. If significant archaeological remains are encountered, then the Planning Archaeologist may recommend further archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting, including publication. Any such requirement will be determined by the OCC Planning Archaeologist as the advisor to Cherwell Council.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Proposed Development Site

2.1.1 The proposed development site, hereafter referred to as “the Site”, is located in the western half of Bicester Hotel and Golf Club. The Site centres on NGR: SP 54928 21731 (Figure 1). The Site is bound by the M40 to the west, by the A4095 to the northeast, by Bicester Golf Club Clubhouse and the eastern half of Bicester Golf Course, comprising of nine holes, to the southeast and by agricultural land to the south.

### 2.2 Topographical & Geological Conditions

2.2.1 The British Geological Survey GeoIndex (BGS 2019) records the bedrock on the Site as part of the Cornbrash Formation. This is a limestone, sedimentary bedrock that was formed approximately 168 to 164 million years ago, during the Jurassic Period in a local environment dominated by shallow carbonate seas. There are no superficial deposits recorded on the Site.

2.2.2 The Site and its landscaping within the extant Bicester Golf Course occupies a relatively flat topography varying from 86m AOD in the northwest of the Site to 82m AOD along the side that is bound to the west by the M40. The eastern side of the Site varies from 85m AOD near the A4095 to 84m AOD in the southeastern corner.

2.2.3 The nearest boreholes were undertaken along the western boundary of the Site along the line of the M40 in 1979. Clay was recorded at a depth of 2.3m at 83.63 AOD in the northwest of the Site in borehole SP52SW26. In the southwest corner of the Site, along the line of the M40, borehole SP52SW23 recorded clay at a depth of 1.55m at 79.12m AOD.

### 2.3 Development proposal

2.3.1 Great Lakes UK Limited commissioned AOC Archaeology Group to undertake a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment of the Site proposed for development at land adjoining Bicester Hotel and Golf Club.

2.3.2 The proposed development involves the construction of a leisure facility and hotel. The Site is currently in use as a golf course and covers an area of nine golf holes. Bicester Hotel and a further nine golf holes adjoining the Site to the east are outwith the development and will remain operational.

### 2.4 Government and local planning policies and guidance

#### 2.4.1 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for development can be produced and assessed. Chapter 16 of the document is concerned with ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’. It identifies heritage assets as ‘an irreplaceable resource’ and notes that *‘they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’* (MHCLG 2019, Para 184).

2.4.2 Where designated assets are concerned great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be. Any harm to or loss of significance should require *‘clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*

- *grade II listed building or grade II parks or gardens should be exceptional;*
- *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’* (MHCLG 2019, Para 194).



- 2.4.3 With regard to proposals that are predicted to lead to substantial harm or the total loss of significance to a designated asset Paragraph 195 states that *'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'*. Where *'a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset'* Paragraph 196 states that *'this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use'* (MHCLG 2019).
- 2.4.4 Impacts upon non-designated heritage assets are also a pertinent planning consideration; Paragraph 197 states that *'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'* (MHCLG 2019).
- 2.4.5 Where a heritage asset is to be lost, either in part or in whole, as a result of the development, the local planning authority 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 accessible'* (MHCLG 2019, Para 199).
- 2.4.6 **Planning Practice Guidance (2014 updated 2018)**  
The DCLG published Planning Practice Guidance online in 2014, and this was updated by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government in February 2018, to expand upon the NPPF. The Guidance notes that *'conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest'*.
- 2.4.7 In relation to the proposed development on the Site, the key considerations are the sections on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and non-designated heritage assets.
- 2.4.8 The NPPF and the PPG identify a Listed Building as:
- *a building which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and (unless the list entry indicates otherwise) includes not only the building itself but also:*
    - *any object or structure fixed to the building*
    - *any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948*
- 2.4.9 The NPPF and the PPG identify a Conservation Areas as:
- *an area which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.*
- 2.4.10 The NPPF and the PPG identify two categories of non-designated sites of archaeological interest:
- *'Those that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments and are therefore considered subject to the same policies as those for designated heritage assets'* (PPG citing National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 194b, footnote 63); and
  - *'Other non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest. By comparison this is a much larger category of lesser heritage significance, although still subject to the conservation objective. On occasion the understanding of a site may change following assessment and evaluation prior to a planning decision and move it from this category to the first'* (PPG)

#### **Local Planning Policy – Cherwell District Council**

- 2.4.11 The Site lies within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council. Cherwell District Council's planning policy is contained within The Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031; Part 1 Adopted 20 July 2013. The Cherwell Local Plan

incorporates Policy Bicester 13 and was re-adopted on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016. The following policies are relevant to the proposed development on the Site:

*“Policy ESD15: the Character of the Built and Historic Environment*

- *Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non designated ‘heritage assets’ (as defined in the NPPF) including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated in accordance with advice in the NPPF and NPPG. Proposals for development that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset as set out in the NPPF and NPPG...*
- *Include information on heritage assets sufficient to assess the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Where archaeological potential is identified this should include an appropriate desk based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*

Additionally Cherwell District Council have identified *“specific features at Bicester noted for their value include those showing notable ‘time depth’”* (Cherwell District Council, 2016, Paragraph B.252) and Bignell Park to the north of the Site has been identified as one of these features.

*“Policy ESD13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement*

*Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:*

...

- *Harm the historic value of the landscape.*

## 2.5 Planning considerations pertaining to the Site

2.5.1 The Local Planning Authority are advised on all heritage and archaeological matters by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council. Any requirement for archaeological work either preceding or during development will be determined by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council acting as advisor to Cherwell District Council on archaeological matters.

2.5.2 No Scheduled Monuments are located within the Site or the 1.5km Study Area. Eight Listed Buildings of Grade II status and two Listed Buildings of Grade II\* status are located within the 1.5km Study Area.

2.5.3 The setting of designated assets is a competent planning matter. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines setting as *‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’* and the policy states that *‘setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral’*.

2.5.4 The Site is 465m to the west of Chesterton Conservation Area (centred Site 51). PPG (2018) defines a Conservation Area as:

*“an area which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”*

## 2.6 Limitations of Scope

2.6.1 This assessment is based upon data obtained from publicly accessible archives as described in the *Data Sources* in Section 4.2. All known heritage assets within 1.5km of the Site were identified. Data from the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record was obtained in March 2019. The information presented in the gazetteer regarding known heritage assets is current to this date.

2.6.2 It should be noted that the report has been prepared under the express instructions and solely for the use of Great Lakes UK Limited and their partners. All the work carried out in this report is based upon AOC Archaeology Group's professional knowledge and understanding of current (April 2019) and relevant United Kingdom standards and codes, technology and legislation.

2.6.3 Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice or recommendations given. AOC Archaeology Group does not accept responsibility for advising Great Lakes UK Limited or associated parties of the facts or implications of any such changes in the future.

### **3 OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The main objective of this assessment is to identify the cultural heritage value of the Site proposed for development at land adjoining Bicester Hotel and Golf Course. The evidence presented and the conclusions offered will provide a comprehensive basis for further discussion and decisions regarding heritage constraints on the future development of this Site and for the formulation of a further evaluation or mitigation strategy, should this be required. This will be done by examining a variety of evidence for upstanding and buried remains of heritage interest including World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and non-designated heritage assets within 1.5km of the Site.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Standards**

4.1.1 The scope of this assessment meets the requirements of current planning regulations set out in Planning Policy Guidance (2018); National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990; and local planning policy.

4.1.2 AOC Archaeology Group conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct, the CIfA Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, the CIfA Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessments, Field Evaluations and other relevant guidance.

4.1.3 AOC Archaeology Group is a Registered Archaeological Organisation of the CIfA. This status ensures that there is regular monitoring and approval by external peers of our internal systems, standards and skills development.

4.1.4 AOC is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, in recognition of the Company's Quality Management System.

### **4.2 Data sources**

4.2.1 The following data sources were consulted during preparation of this desk based assessment:

- Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record  
For Historic Environment Record data (including Historic Landscape Characterisation data);
- National Heritage List for England;  
For designated Heritage Asset data;
- Historic England Archives, Swindon;  
For National Record of Historic Environment vertical and oblique aerial photographs

- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs:  
For any LiDAR data covering the Site.
- Archives and Local Studies Centre – Oxfordshire History Centre, Oxford  
For historic maps and documents relating to the Site and the surrounding area;
- National Map Library (National Library of Scotland, Causewayside, Edinburgh):  
For old Ordnance Survey maps (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, small- and large-scale) and pre-Ordnance Survey historical maps.

### 4.3 Report structure

- 4.3.1 Each heritage asset referred to in the text is listed in the Gazetteer in Appendix 1. Each has been assigned a 'Site No.' unique to this assessment, and the Gazetteer includes information regarding the type, period, grid reference, HER number, protective designation, and other descriptive information, as derived from the consulted sources.
- 4.3.2 Each heritage asset referred to in the text is plotted on Figure 2 at the end of the report, using the assigned Site Nos; heritage assets within the Site are plotted on Figure 3. The Site is shown outlined in red.
- 4.3.3 All heritage assets located within a 1.5km radius of the Site have been included in the assessment. The aim of this is to identify the potential for direct impacts upon known archaeological remains and to help predict whether any similar hitherto unknown archaeological remains may survive within the Site. Designated heritage assets within 1.5km of the redline boundary have also been identified to allow for an assessment of the potential for impacts upon their settings.
- 4.3.4 All sources consulted during the assessment, including publications, archived records, photographic and cartographic evidence, are listed amongst the *References* in Section 7.

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

### 5.1 Prehistoric and Roman (8000 BC-AD 410)

- 5.1.1 There are no find or remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods within the Site.
- 5.1.2 A number of finds and features dating to the prehistoric period are recorded within the 1.5km Study Area. A Mesolithic Quartzite Macehead is recorded at Site 14, 465m to the west of the Site, however the accuracy of the location of this findspot is tentative. Therefore, the closest accurately plotted asset that has been identified as dating to the prehistoric period was recorded at Site 16, 960m to the south of the Site, on aerial photography and has been interpreted as a Bronze Age Ring Ditch.
- 5.1.3 Further Ring Ditches attributed to the Bronze Age have been identified from aerial photography at Site 5, situated 1.2km west of the Site and at Site 15, 1.2km to the northeast of the Site. A settlement dating to the late Iron Age was recorded during an archaeological evaluation in 2006 at Site 34, situated 1.2km to the northeast of the Site.
- 5.1.4 The Roman Akeman Street (centred Site 2) is situated 355m to the south of the Site. Akeman Street is associated with the Roman town of Alchester 2.2km to the southeast of the Site and the village of Chesterton. Akeman Street is believed to head through the southern half of Chesterton to the southeast of the Site on a southeast to northwest alignment before exiting Chesterton on the east to west aligned Green Lane.
- 5.1.5 A preliminary survey for the construction of the M40 in 1962 recorded potential features at Site 4, 720m to the southwest of the Site, on the west side of the M40 and along Akeman Street. A possible Roman trackway and associated structures, that may indicate a Roman villa site, has been suggested for the cropmarks at Site 4. It

should be noted that Site 4 is also close to RAF Weston-on-the-Green, although the possible trackway is on a slightly different alignment than the runway and taxiway infrastructure of Raf Weston-on-the-Green.

- 5.1.6 Twenty five coins dating from the late Roman period were found during metal detecting at Site 20, 1km to the south of the Site. It has been suggested that these coins could indicate the presence of a Roman villa or settlement within the vicinity of Alchester.
- 5.1.7 Further, potential evidence for the Roman period within the 1.5km Study Area has been recorded at Site 37, 590m to the east of the Site. Following geophysical investigations, an enclosure and boundary ditches were uncovered at this site in an archaeological evaluation conducted by Wessex Archaeology in 2017. No internal features were recorded during the evaluation and only one undiagnostic pottery sherd dating to the Roman period was found; therefore the identification of this site as dating to the Roman period must be considered to be tentative.
- 5.1.8 The nature of remains or potential remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods within the 1.5km Study Area suggests that they are located away from the Site. The distribution of these sites could indicate the nature of archaeological investigations. These archaeological investigations are focussed on the alignment of the M40 during its construction to the west of the Site; the Roman Akeman Street including any finds or remains that may be present along its alignment to the south of the Site, and development sites closer to Bicester, northeast of the Site. However, aerial photography does suggest that, overall, prehistoric sites are predominantly located to the west and northeast of the Site, whereas sites that potentially date to the Roman period are situated along the alignment of the Roman Akeman Street to the south of the Site or further east towards Chesterton and the Roman town of Alchester. Therefore the potential for finds or remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods to be present on the Site is considered to be Low.

## 5.2 Early Historic and Medieval (AD 410-1600)

- 5.2.1 No assets dating to the early historic and medieval period are present within the Site.
- 5.2.2 With the exception of the extant settlement of Chesterton, the closest asset dating to the early historic and medieval period is the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Bignell (Site 11), situated 750m northeast of the Site. The ruins of the chapel were recorded around 1700 and modern houses now cover the suspected Deserted Medieval Settlement. No significant, visible remains are now present at site of the settlement although faint traces were detected in cropmarks from aerial photography undertaken in 1961. Bignell was deserted sometime between 1350 and 1450.
- 5.2.3 It is likely that the Site remained part of the agricultural land to the west of Chesterton and southwest of the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Bignell (Site 11) throughout the medieval period. Although finds or remains of an early historic and medieval period within the Site cannot be ruled out, it is considered that the potential for finds or remains dating from the early historic or medieval periods to be present within the Site is Low.

## 5.3 Post-medieval (AD 1600-1900)

- 5.3.1 Early pre-Ordnance Survey maps of the Site tend to be schematic and lack detail. Saxton's map of 1579 (Figure 4) depicts the settlement of Middleton Stoney (labelled '*Middleton Stone*'), Chesterton and Bicester (labelled '*Burcester*'), however there are no further details on the map.
- 5.3.2 The Chesterton Pre-enclosure Map of circa 1764 to 1768 (Figure 5) is the first map to show detail with regard to the Site. The Site occupies an area marked '*Standle Leys*' which contains one prominent, green field labelled '*Standle Piece*'; the name of '*Standle Leys*' suggests that the Site was an area of land put down to grass or clover for either a season or a limited number of years during the years 1764 to 1768. The road layouts and individual buildings at Chesterton (labelled '*Great Chesterton*'), Little Chesterton and Bignell are clearly depicted. A road or

track labelled 'Northbrook High Way' (Site 58) can be seen between the fields of 'Upper Crop' and 'Lower Crop' on an irregular west to east alignment, this route accesses 'Standle Ley's from the west.

- 5.3.3 Stanley's Map of 1815 (Figure 6) depicts the settlement of Chesterton (labelled 'Chesterton Magne') to the east of the Site and there are buildings depicted at Bignell to the northeast of the Site. The Site itself is shown as comprising of the majority of one field with portions of two other fields in the eastern and southern portions of the Site. There is an entranceway depicted (Site 53) along the northern boundary of the Site. This is an unusual feature on Stanley's Map as few fields have been depicted which these entranceways. Stanley's Map suggests that an entranceway is the sole function of this feature, no other assets are identified with regard to structures or trackways with which this entranceway may be associated. Site 53 is still extant as a partially metalled gateway onto Bicester Golf Course. 'Northbrook High Way' (Site 58) is no longer extant follow the enclosure of the land around Chesterton.
- 5.3.4 The Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 (Figure 7) shows the Site as being made up of five fields. Two Public Footpaths enter the Site from its southern boundary and join up just below the middle of the Site; this combined Public Footpath exits the site on its northeastern side along the modern A4095. One of the field boundaries (Site 54) is still extant as a ditch and drainage feature within the Site on a southeast to northwest alignment (Plate 1).
- 5.3.5 The Site was clearly in agricultural use throughout the post-medieval period and any post-medieval remains which might survive on Site are likely to be agricultural in nature. Although finds or remains from the post-medieval period, other than those related to agricultural use, cannot be ruled out, the potential for such remains to be present is considered to be Low.

## 5.4 Modern (AD post 1900)

- 5.4.1 The Ordnance Survey maps in the modern period show that the Site remains relatively unchanged prior to the development of Chesterton Golf Club from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, a quarry is shown on the Site at Site 52 along the A4095 on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1923 (Figure 8). Although the quarry is still extant on the Ordnance Survey mapping of 1967 to 1968 (not illustrated), by the time of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1970 (not illustrated) the quarry is no longer depicted.
- 5.4.2 Chesterton Golf Course, to the east of the Site is first depicted on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1993 to 1996 (not illustrated). New features are depicted that indicate that the Site may have been part of the golf course at this time. A feature that appears to be a golf pond (Site 56) is depicted in the eastern portion of the Site, a golf water drain (Site 57) heads northwest from this pond (Figure 3). These two features are still extant on the present Bicester Golf Course. Despite the depiction of these features the extent of the landscaping undertaken within the Site to construct the golf course is unclear and the landscaping within the Site is unclear. However, information supplied during the walkover survey indicates that the topography of the Site was relatively flat until landscaping works for the golf course were undertaken around 2002.
- 5.4.3 Finds or remains from the modern period will likely consist of agricultural field boundaries, field drainage systems and the remains of the quarry at Site 52. There will also be the potential for landscaping and drainage from the construction of the original Chesterton Golf Course. Therefore, the potential for finds or remains dating from the modern period to be present within the Site is considered to be Medium.

## 5.6 Site Walkover

- 5.6.1 A walkover survey of the Site was conducted on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019 in dry, bright conditions. The Site is entirely occupied by the northwest portion of the Bicester Golf Club golf course (Plate 2), which comprises a roughly triangular plot of land bound to the west by the M40 motorway and to the northeast by the A4095. The hotel and clubhouse with associated buildings and parking (Plate 3) separates the Site from the remainder of the golf course

to the south and southeast. Part of the southeast boundary of the Site is formed by an access road to two residential properties, which also serves as access for deliveries to the hotel from the A4095.

- 5.6.2 The entire Site is heavily landscaped with areas of relatively mature trees (Plate 5) separating the mown fairways and greens of the golf course. Several artificial lakes (Plate 5 and 6) and bunkers (Plate 7) have been created throughout the Site. AOC Archaeology Group were informed during the Site walkover that the original Chesterton Golf Course was very flat before the present landscaping was created circa 2002. A high bank with trees planted on top has been created along the western boundary of the Site (Plate 8) with the M40 motorway (Plate 9) and a mature hedgerow with trees separates the Site from the A4095 to the northeast (Plate 10). A further hedgerow also separates the Site from the access road and residential properties beyond in the southeast corner of the Site (Plate 11).
- 5.6.3 Although ground conditions were dry at the time of the walkover survey, it was observed that the eastern portion of the Site is known to be more poorly drained. Evidence for disturbance associated with land drains can be clearly seen (Plate 12) together with several drainage ditches in this part of the Site (centred Site 55).
- 5.6.4 It is known that the depth of topsoil across much of the Site has been reduced in order to create the large bank adjacent to the M40 motorway. Further areas of raised landscaping appear to have been created using material excavated from the lakes, ponds and bunkers. Apart from the areas of the Site occupied by the lakes, ponds and bunkers, no significant reduction of the ground level, that may have truncated surviving archaeological remains, is evident.
- 5.6.5 It was observed during the walkover survey that there were no clear views between the Site and Listed Buildings within the 1.5km Study Area. Listed buildings in the village of Chesterton to the southeast (Sites 9 to 10, 24 to 26 and 28 to 30) cannot be seen from the Site and any views between the Grade II Listed Barn at Chesterton Fields Farm (Site 31) and the Grade II Gate Lodge at Oxford Lodge (Site 27) and the Site would be interrupted by the M40 motorway and the high bank running along the western boundary of the Site.
- 5.6.6 No archaeological finds or features were observed during the walkover survey.

## 5.7 Aerial Photographs

- 5.7.1 As part of this assessment both vertical and oblique aerial photographs, held by the Historic England Archives in Swindon, were examined. These photographs dated from 1943 to 2015 and a list of all photographs consulted is included in Section 7.4 and Figures 9 and 10 show the distribution of these photographs within the Study Area.
- 5.7.2 The earliest aerial photographs in the archives at Historic England were undertaken on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 1943 (RAF/16/A0638) and Frame 4024 clearly shows the extant quarry at Site 52 and that the Site was undeveloped, agricultural fields.
- 5.7.3 Sorties undertaken on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1946 (RAF/CPE/UK/1987: Frame 3320) (Figure 11) and the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1947 (RAF/CPE/UK/2013: Frame 4101) show a slightly irregular cropmark running west to east towards the Site. The assessment of the frames show that this irregular feature does not run into the Site. It's alignment closely approximates the Northbrook High Way (Site 58) and probably marks this former route.
- 5.7.4 The quarry at Site 52 is clearly visible in the aerial photography undertaken on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1946 (RAF/CPE/UK/1987: Frame 3320) (Figure 11). By the time of the aerial photography that was undertaken in 1961 (FLS/6125: Frame 12108), the quarry at Site 52 is no longer visible and has presumably been filled in; the rest of the Site remains undeveloped, agricultural fields.

- 5.7.5 The 20<sup>th</sup> century quarry (Site 52) and the route of the Northbrook High Way (Site 58) were the only heritage identified within the Study Area on aerial photographs that were not already included in the HER.
- 5.7.6 Aerial photographs also give insight into the development of the golf course on site. Chesterton Golf Course is first shown in the aerial photography undertaken on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1973 (OS/73251: Frames 154). The photograph suggests that Chesterton Golf Course was undergoing development. There appears to be lots of disturbance or a mound over the site of the former quarry at Site 52 suggesting that material was being brought in from elsewhere for landscaping. Landscaping features have been created within the southern half of the Site; however the photograph is confusing, and it is difficult to tell whether these features are golf ponds, bunkers or greens under construction. However the northern half of the Site appears to be under development at this stage.
- 5.7.7 Subsequent aerial photography on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 1984 shows Chesterton Golf Course fully laid out (OS/84243: Frame 1009). The features undergoing construction in 1973 are clearly resolved with the larger features identifiable as golf greens, the smaller depressions can be seen to be golf bunkers; the majority of which coincide with extant bunkers in the southern half of the Site. Chesterton Golf Course remains flat in topography and the northwestern corner of the Site remains an undeveloped field.
- 5.7.8 The M40 motorway has been constructed by the time of the aerial photography that was undertaken on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April 1991 (OS/01021: Frame 128). This has led to a loss of the southwestern corner of Chesterton Golf Course outwith the southwestern corner of the Site. The northwestern field within the Site remains undeveloped.
- 5.7.9 The northwest field remains undeveloped prior to the landscaping that was undertaken around 2002. However on the aerial photography undertaken on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1994 (OS/94213: Frame 31) and the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1996 (OS/96633: Frame 93) land drains can be seen being laid in the central portion of the Site.
- 5.7.10 Further aerial photography of the Site was undertaken after the major landscaping of Bicester Golf Club that was undertaken around 2002. As a result aerial photographs assessed at the Historic England Archives in Swindon confirmed that the layout of the Site has remained unchanged since 2002; the northwestern field has been added to the golf course and subject to the development of positive and negative landscape features such as banks, golf bunkers and golf ponds.

## 5.8 LiDAR Survey Data

- 5.8.1 The publicly accessible LiDAR datasets available on the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs' website were accessed to confirm the nature and extent of any publicly accessible LiDAR survey data. It was confirmed that the earliest LiDAR data available dates to 2003, the existing Bicester Golf Course with its current landscaping scheme is clearly visible. No LiDAR data showing the Site prior to the major 2002 landscaping was available.
- 5.8.2 All LiDAR datasets for the Site and the 1.5km Study Area were downloaded from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs' website for further interrogation and analysis. This analysis was undertaken in Relief Visualization Toolbox Version 1.3 using Hill Shading (Figure 12) and Sky View Factor (Figure 13) methods. For Hill Shading 16 directions were utilised in the analysis with a sun azimuth of 315 degrees and a sun elevation angle of 35 degrees. The Sky View Factor analysis utilised 16 search directions with a search radius of 10 pixels; there was no noise removal. The Hill Shading analysis proved to be more useful in assessing archaeological potential than the Sky View Factor analysis.
- 5.8.3 Analysis of the LiDAR datasets within the boundaries of the Site (Figure 14) clearly shows that the positive and negative features recorded on the Site correspond to the existing golf club features including bunkers, water features and low-lying embankments. The extent of the landscaping that was undertaken in 2002 in the form of negative features such as bunkers and water features compared to the rest of Bicester Golf Course is particularly noticeable. All features within the extent of the Site were confirmed as corresponding to extant and in-use



features of Bicester Golf Course. The northern portion of the Site has been subject to extensive truncation as the result of the creation of six ponds following the major landscaping of 2002 and this LiDAR analysis is corroborated by the assessment of the aerial photography and the walkover survey. In comparison the rest of the golf course that was already extant in 2002 shows less signs of truncation in the LiDAR data.

- 5.8.4 Within the 1.5km Study Area Hill Shade analysis of the LiDAR data (Figure 12) clearly showed the line of the 'Northbrook High Way' (Site 58) heading from west to east towards the Site. Site 58 fades in clarity as it approaches the M40 and this matches the Chesterton Pre-enclosure Map of circa 1764 to 1768 (Figure 5) where Site 58 is a clearly defined road or track until it enters an open area of agricultural land covered by the boundaries of the Site.
- 5.8.5 In the field immediately to the south of the Site, and west of the eastern portion of Bicester Golf Course which is outwith the Site, ridge and furrow Site 59 (Figure 12) can be discerned aligned south-southwest to east-northeast. Ridge and furrow is also present in the fields (Site 60) on the northern side of the modern A4095 aligned on a steeper northeast to southwest alignment. Further agricultural ploughing can be discerned in fields further to the southeast and the northwest. However, the earthworks discernible are narrower in nature indicating that this is probably modern ploughing. The remnants of ridge and furrow in fields in close proximity to the Site suggest that such remains may be present within the Site where it has not been truncated by the Golf Course. No other features of a definite archaeological nature were observed within the 1.5km Study Area in the LiDAR data.

## 5.9 Historic Landscape Characterisation Data

- 5.9.1 The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record data contains Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data that covers the Site and the 1.5km Study Area (Figure 15). This data was assessed by AOC Archaeology Group as part of this Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment. Within the 1.5km Study Area the HLC confirms the organisation of the agricultural landscape following enclosure with Bignell Park to the north, the M40 Motorway along the Site's western boundary and the village of Chesterton to the east. The HLC data for the Site records it as enclosed fields prior to the creation of the golf course. For ease of identification within Figure 15 the Broad Types and HLC Type fields of the HLC data have been amalgamated with shortened terms to show the predominant, historical characterisation.
- 5.9.2 The HLC data confirms the pattern of land use within the 1.5km Study Area that is corroborated in the HER data and the historic map regression. The HLC characterises the Site as a Planned Enclosure in the post-medieval period from circa 1540 to 1797 with a confidence rating of "Possible". The Site was subsequently reorganised as an enclosure between 1798 to 1920 with a confidence rating of "Certain". Its modern HLC Broad Type characterisation is as a "Recreation- Golf Course".

## 6 CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Direct impacts

- 6.1.1 Potential impacts on known or unknown buried archaeological remains which may survive within the Site relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing or destroying *in situ* remains and artefacts during demolition and groundbreaking works (including excavation, construction and other works) associated with the proposed development.
- 6.1.2 The assessment has established that the Site is located away from areas of prehistoric and Roman activity and that the Site would have been predominantly agricultural land to the west of Chesterton and southwest of Bignell prior to the development of Chesterton Golf Course in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The nature and extent of truncation from the golf course landscaping that was undertaken from 2002 is unknown, however with the exception of the creation of negative features such as golf ponds and bunkers it is reported that it was limited to topsoil stripping.

6.1.3 On the basis of current evidence, there is judged to be a Low potential for finds or remains dating from the prehistoric, Roman, early historic, medieval and post- medieval to be present on the Site, any remains would probably be of an agricultural nature and may potentially include truncated ridge and furrow, given that the assessment of LiDAR imagery has led to the identification of areas of ridge and furrow to the south and north-east of the Site. There is considered to a Medium potential for discovering finds or remains dating from the modern period within the Site. Based on the current understanding of the nature of the works employed to construct the golf course, there is potential for archaeological remains to survive undisturbed on the Site. However, review of aerial photography and processed LiDAR imagery indicates a significant area of truncation in the northern corner of the Site, which corresponds to the creation of several ponds here. Limited and discreet areas of truncation are also evident along the southern boundary of the Site where bunkers and ponds have been constructed. On this basis, archaeological survival is in general likely to be greater in the southern portion of the Site than in the northern corner. Landscaping work in the south of the Site appears to have been largely limited to topsoil stripping and building up of features, with the exception of the construction of ponds and bunkers as noted above.

## 6.2 Indirect impacts

6.2.1 In cultural heritage terms, an indirect impact refers to any change in the baseline condition of a heritage asset resulting from a development beyond the boundaries of the asset. Indirect impacts can have a variety of forms for instance if a development affects the water table, it could potentially damage the preservation of organic remains within buried archaeological contexts beyond its boundaries. However the majority of indirect impacts result from changes to the settings of heritage assets as a consequence of new development.

6.2.2 The NPPF is clear that the setting of an asset can contribute to its significance. Further, harm to that setting can adversely affect the significance of an asset. Historic England has provided guidance on the assessment of impacts upon setting in their Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) which is intended to explain how to apply the policies contained within the NPPF. The Historic England guidance states:

*'Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated... Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. (2017, para 9).*

*'The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.'* (2017: 2)

6.2.3 Eight Listed Buildings of Grade II status and two Listed Buildings of Grade II\* status are located within the 1.5km Study Area. Chesterton Conservation Area is also located within the 1.5km Study Area to the southeast of the Site.

6.2.4 There are no clear views between the Site and the Listed buildings in the village of Chesterton to the southeast (Sites 9 to 10, 24 to 26 and 28 to 30) and the Chesterton Conservation Area (Site 51). Any views between the Grade II Listed Barn at Chesterton Fields Farm (Site 31) and the Grade II Gate Lodge at Oxford Lodge (Site 27) and the Site is prevented by the intervening M40 motorway and the high motorway embankment that runs along the western boundary of the Site. Therefore, there is considered there would likely be a Negligible impact on the designated assets and the Chesterton Conservation Area (Site 51) in the 1.5km Study Area by the proposed development on the Site; however this would be dependent upon the final proposals.

### 6.3 Mitigation

- 6.3.1 National planning policies and planning guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (MHLG February 2019) and its accompanying Planning Practice Guide (MHLG 2018), as well as local planning policies contained within the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031; Part 1 Adopted 20 July 2013 (re-adopted on 19 December 2016) outlined in Section 2.4 of this report, require a mitigation response that is designed to take cognisance of the possible impacts upon heritage assets by a proposed development and avoid, minimise or offset any such impacts as appropriate.
- 6.3.2 The assessment has established that the Site was likely undeveloped, agricultural land prior to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when a quarry was established along the northern boundary of the Site. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Chesterton Golf Course, now known as Bicester Hotel and Golf Club, expanded onto the Site and required landscaping work which AOC understand was largely undertaken after 2002; the northwest field within the Site was not an active part of the golf course and remained undeveloped until 2002. The level of truncation across the Site by this landscaping is unknown, although evidence from LiDAR imagery and aerial photographs indicates that the level of truncation appears to be greater in the northern corner of the Site, where following this major landscaping several ponds were created. However, it is reported by golf course staff, that with the exception of the construction of golf ponds and bunkers, that most of the truncation was limited to topsoil stripping and as such there is potential for archaeological remains to survive. This assessment has judged there to be Low potential for find or remains dating from the prehistoric, Roman, early historic, medieval and post- medieval to be present on the Site. Any remains from these periods is likely to be of an agricultural nature and include the potential for truncated ridge and furrow to be present on the Site, given that LiDAR imagery indicates areas of ridge and furrow to the south and north-east of the Site. There is considered to a Medium potential for discovering finds or remains dating from the modern period within the Site, particularly from the 20<sup>th</sup> century quarry along the A4095 and the creation of landscaping and drains associated with the golf course.
- 6.3.3 An assessment of the potential for indirect effects upon the settings of designated heritage assets undertaken as part of this assessment predicts that there will be Negligible effects upon the settings of the Listed Buildings and the Chesterton Conservation Area within the vicinity of the proposed development. However, the level of impact will be dependent upon the scale and nature of the final proposals.
- 6.3.4 Any ground works within the Site boundary, could be considered to have the potential to highly impact any buried archaeological deposits that *may* be present. As noted above, given the extent of truncation in the northern corner of the golf course, the potential for survival of archaeological features is likely to be greater in the southern portion of the Site.
- 6.3.5 In accordance with national and local planning policies on heritage, it is advised that prior to development, that Cherwell District Council as advised by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council, may require an archaeological investigation by non-intrusive and/or intrusive means to further investigate potential remains. The creation of positive features after 2002 such as landscaped, tree covered banks and negative features such as bunkers and/or water features will probably inhibit geophysical investigations and a targeted, phased archaeological evaluation may require to be undertaken. If significant archaeological remains are encountered during the initial trial trenching, then the Planning Archaeologist may recommend further archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting, including publication. Any such requirement will be determined by the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council acting as advisor to Oxfordshire County Council on archaeological matters.

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*Vertical Aerial Photographs Consulted at Historic England Archive*

Sortie number/Ref no	Library/Film number	Frame number	Date
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	3096	10 AUG 1945

RAF/106G/UK/620	1	3097	10 AUG 1945
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	3098	10 AUG 1945
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	3099	10 AUG 1945
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	3150	10 AUG 1945
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	4151	10 AUG 1945
RAF/106G/UK/620	1	4152	10 AUG 1945
RAF/CPE/UK/1897	562	3317	12 DEC 1946
RAF/CPE/UK/1897	562	3318	12 DEC 1946
RAF/CPE/UK/1897	562	3319	12 DEC 1946
RAF/CPE/UK/1897	562	3320	12 DEC 1946
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4098	16 APR 1947
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4099	16 APR 1947
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4100	16 APR 1947
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4101	16 APR 1947
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4110	16 APR 1947
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	4111	16 APR 1947
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FSL/6125	1118A	12106	1961
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FSL/6125	1118A	12108	1961
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RAF/82/1006	1520	294	31 AUG 1954
RAF/82/1006	1520	295	31 AUG 1954
RAF/82/1006	1520	294	31 AUG 1954
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RAF/540/1400	1563	135	01 SEP 1954
RAF/540/1400	1563	136	01 SEP 1954

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OS/74264	15478	317	24 OCT 1974
RAF/540/673	15636	3442	12 FEB 1952

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RAF/540/673	15636	4386	12 FEB 1952
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OS/99329	23032	97	03 SEP 1999
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OS/99329	23032	99	03 SEP 1999
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OS/99329	23032	133	03 SEP 1999
OS/99329	23032	134	03 SEP 1999
OS/99329	23032	135	03 SEP 1999
OS/99329	23032	136	03 SEP 1999

*Oblique Aerial Photographs Consulted at Historic England Archive*

Ref no	Film number	Frame number	Date
SP 5321 / 1	HEA 29406	12	11 JUN 2015
SP 5321 / 2	HEA 29406	14	11 JUN 2015

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SP 5520 / 12	NMR 27793	38	08 JUL 2013
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SP 5621 / 1	CCC 8970	6765	17 MAR 1930

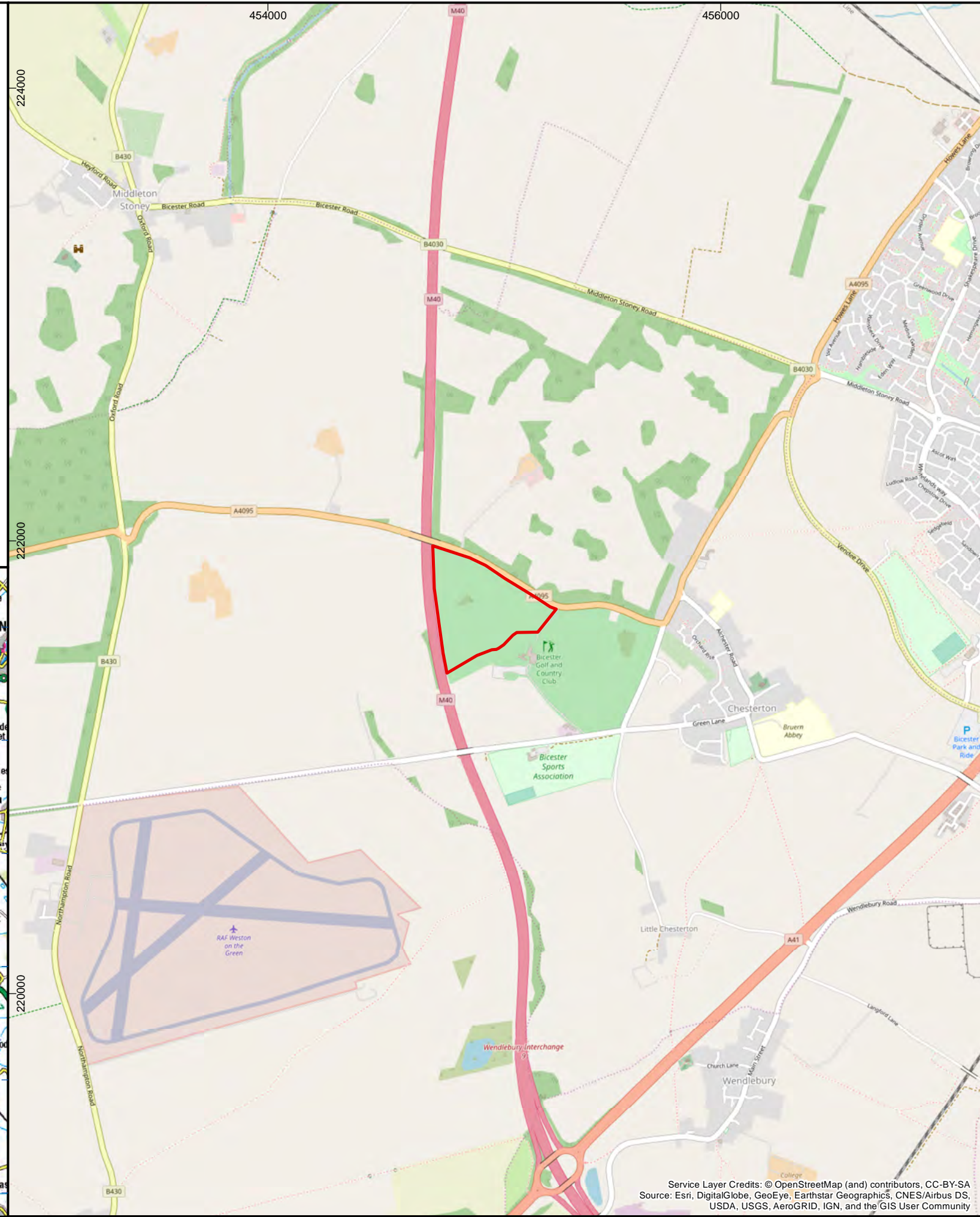
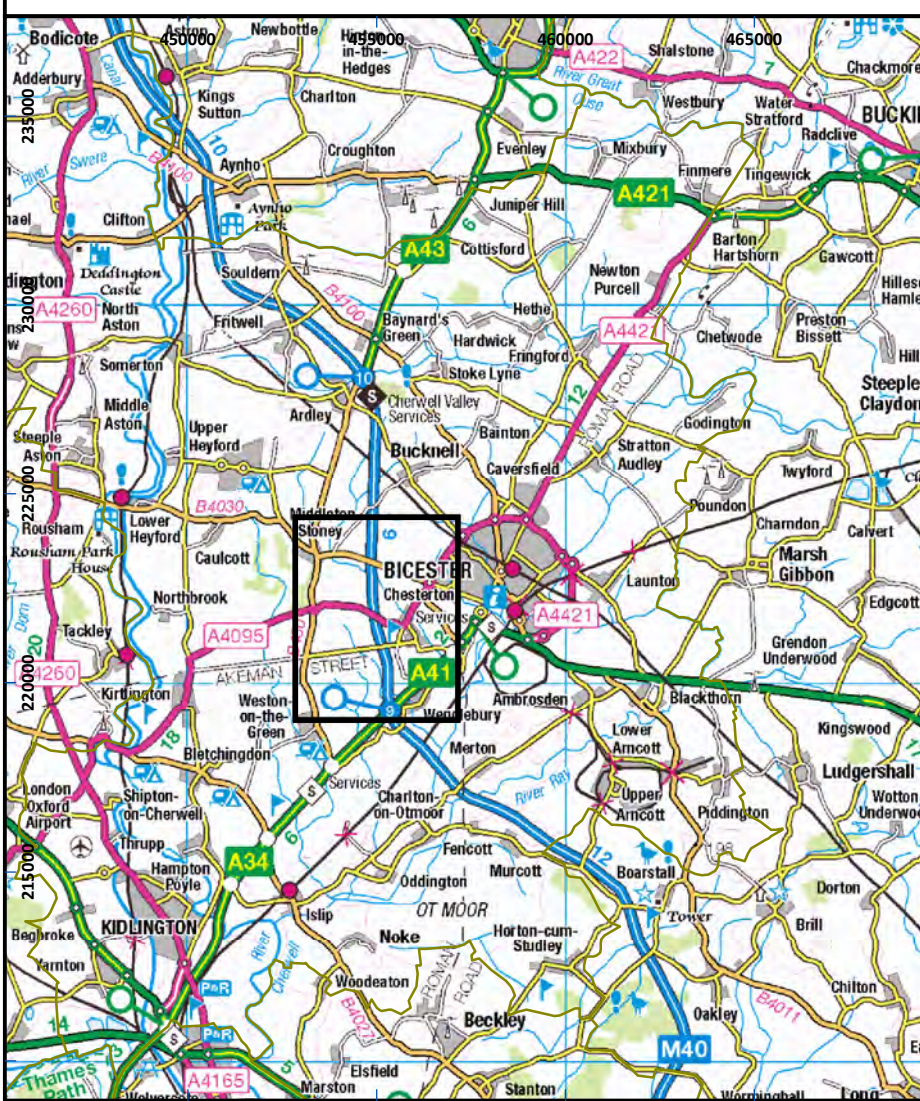
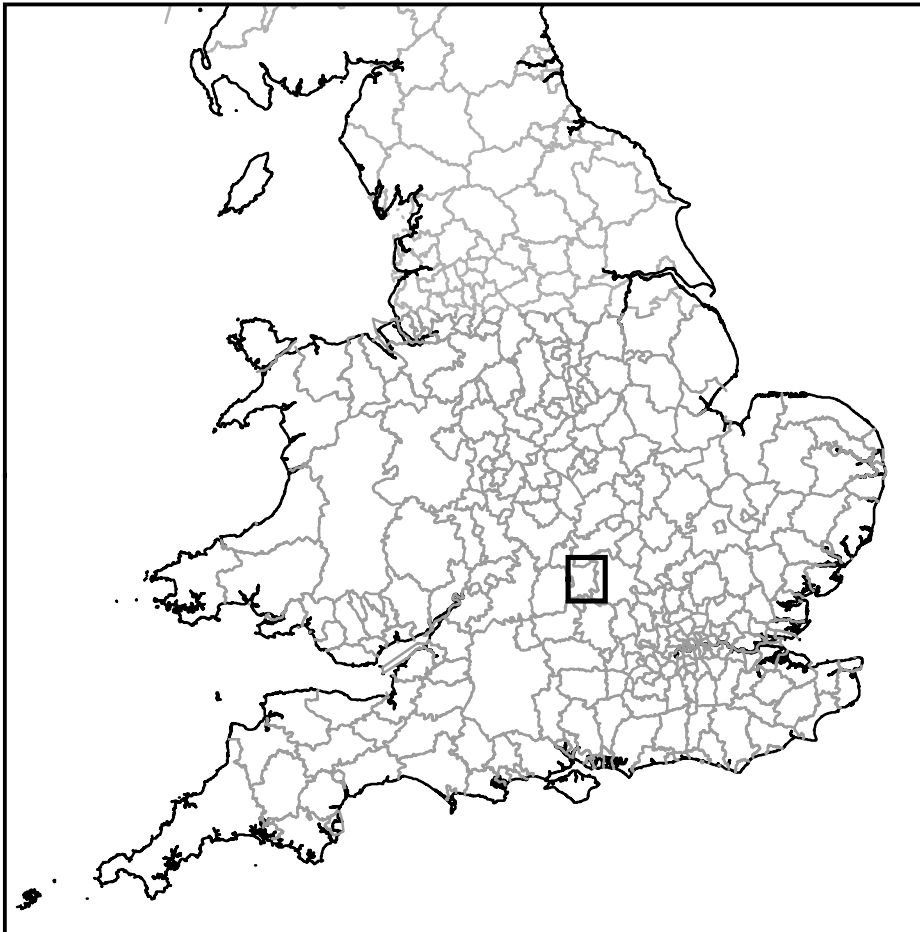


Figure 1

Site Location Map

**Key**  
 Site Boundary

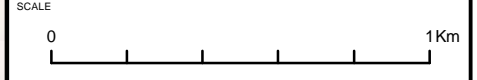
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 Great Lakes UK Limited  
 Suite 1  
 3rd floor 11-12 St James's Square  
 London  
 SW1Y 4LB  
 United Kingdom

Drawn/checked:	VO/SO
DWG no:	01/24559/DBA/01/01
AOC Project No.:	24559



SYSTEM  
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 Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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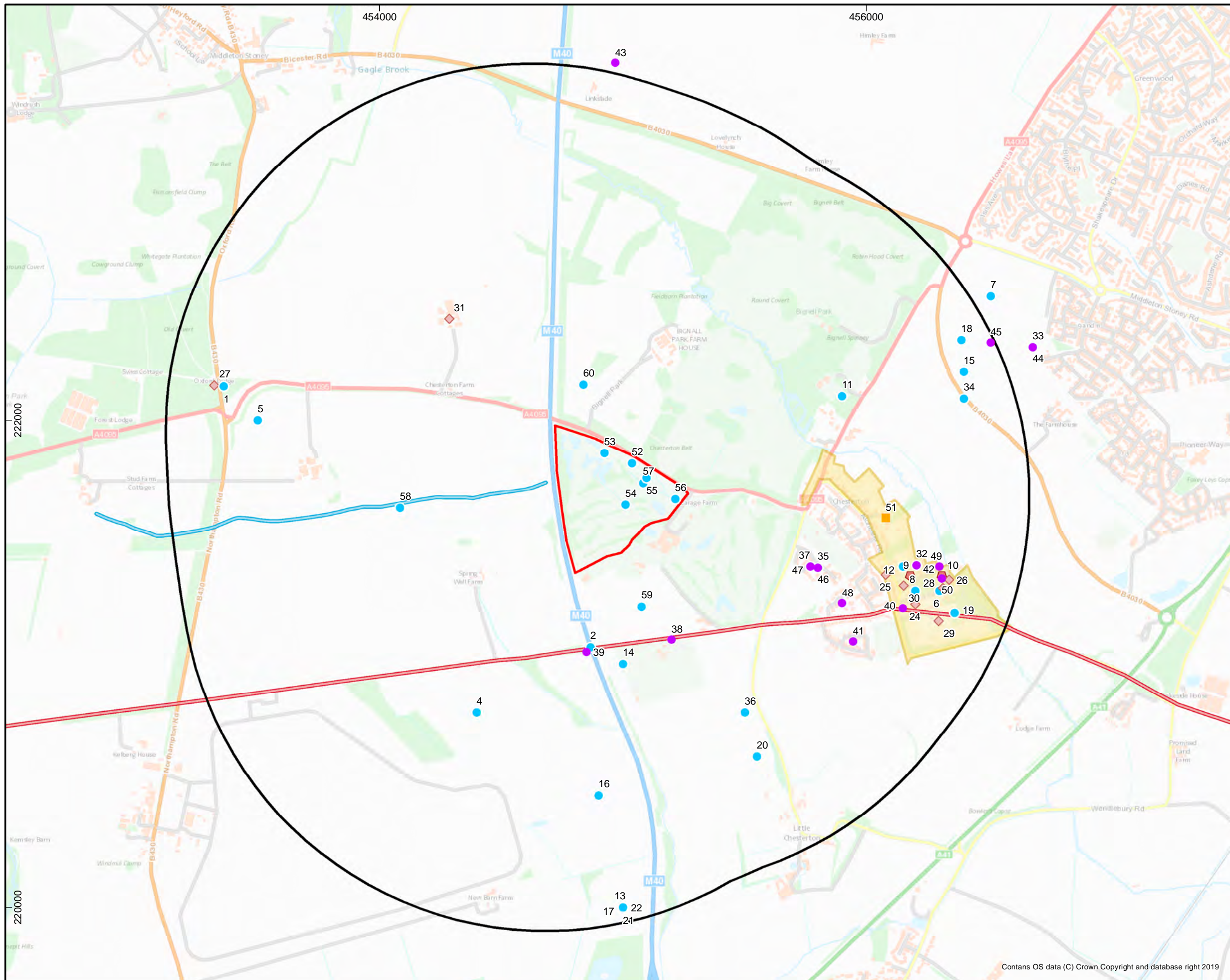


Service Layer Credits: © OpenStreetMap (and) contributors, CC-BY-SA  
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
 USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Heritage Assets Recorded within the 1.5km Study Area

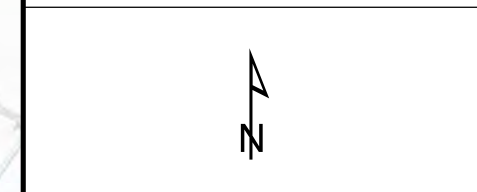
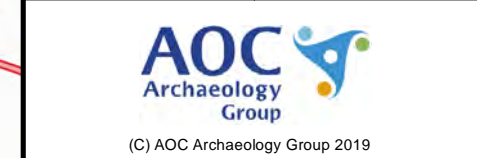
Key

- Site Boundary
- 1.5km Study Area
- Listed Building- Grade II\*
- Listed Building- Grade II
- Non designated
- Event
- Conservation Area
- Conservation Area
- HER Linear (Akeman Street)
- Non-designated Linear (North Brook High Way)



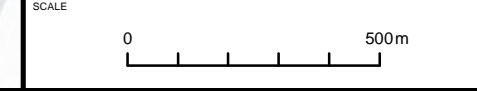
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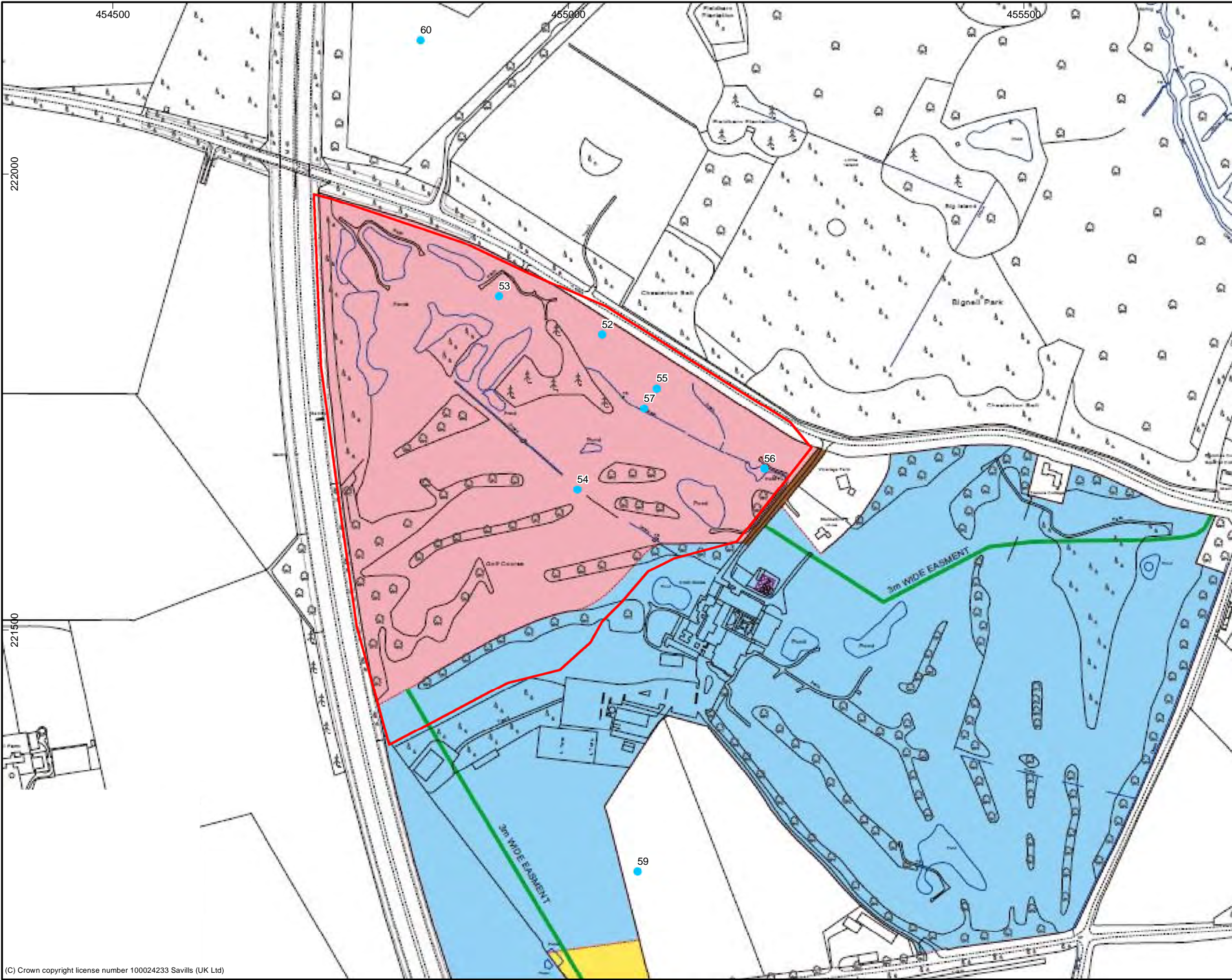
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Heritage Assets Recorded within the Site

- Key**  
■ Site Boundary  
● Non designated

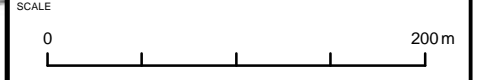
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SYSTEM  
 Coordinate System: British National Grid  
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 Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE 1:4,000 @ A3





Figure

4

Extract from Saxton Map of 1579

Key

 Approximate Site Location

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SCALE Not To Scale

SCALE





455000

456000

222000

221000

Figure 5

Extract from Chesterton  
Pre-enclosure Map,  
1764 - 1768

**Key**  
 Site Boundary

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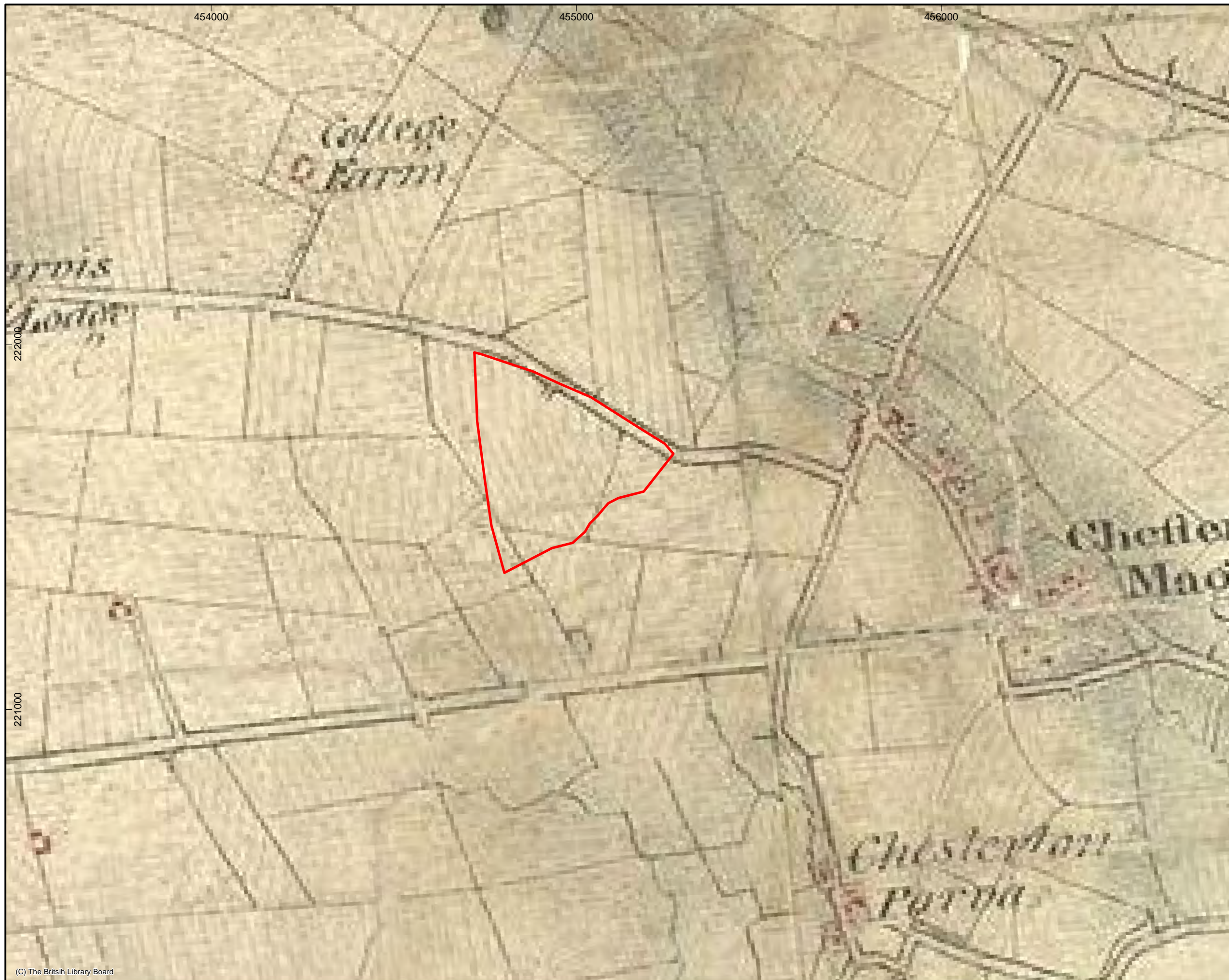
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SYSTEM  
 Coordinate System: British National Grid  
 Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE 1:6,000 @ A3





Figure

6

Extract from Stanley Map, 1815

**Key**

□ Site Boundary

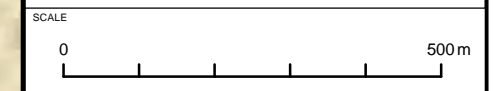
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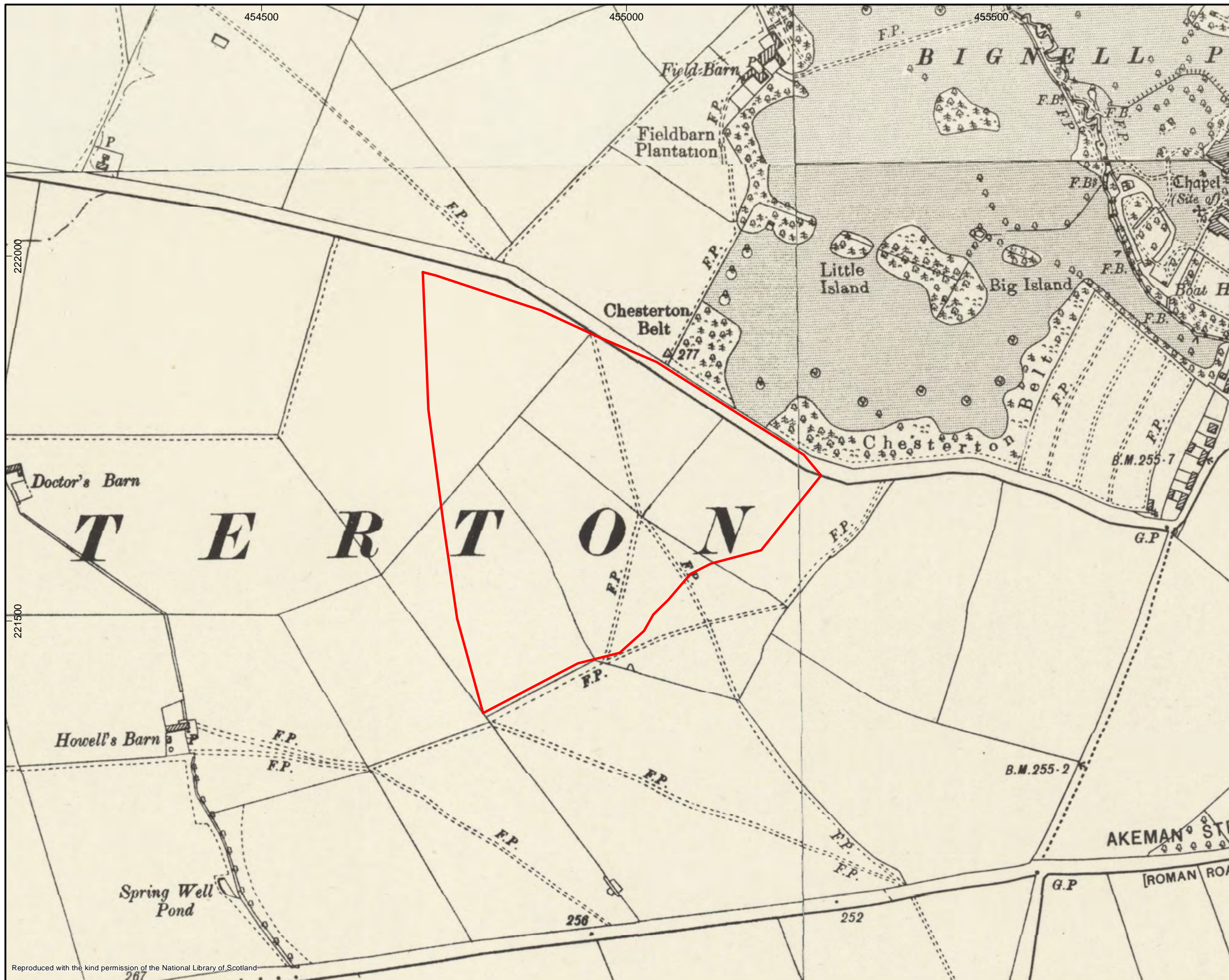
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Datum: OSGB 1936

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Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1900

**Key**  
 Site Boundary

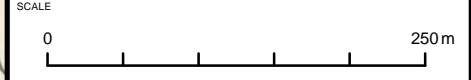
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SCALE  
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454500

455000

455500

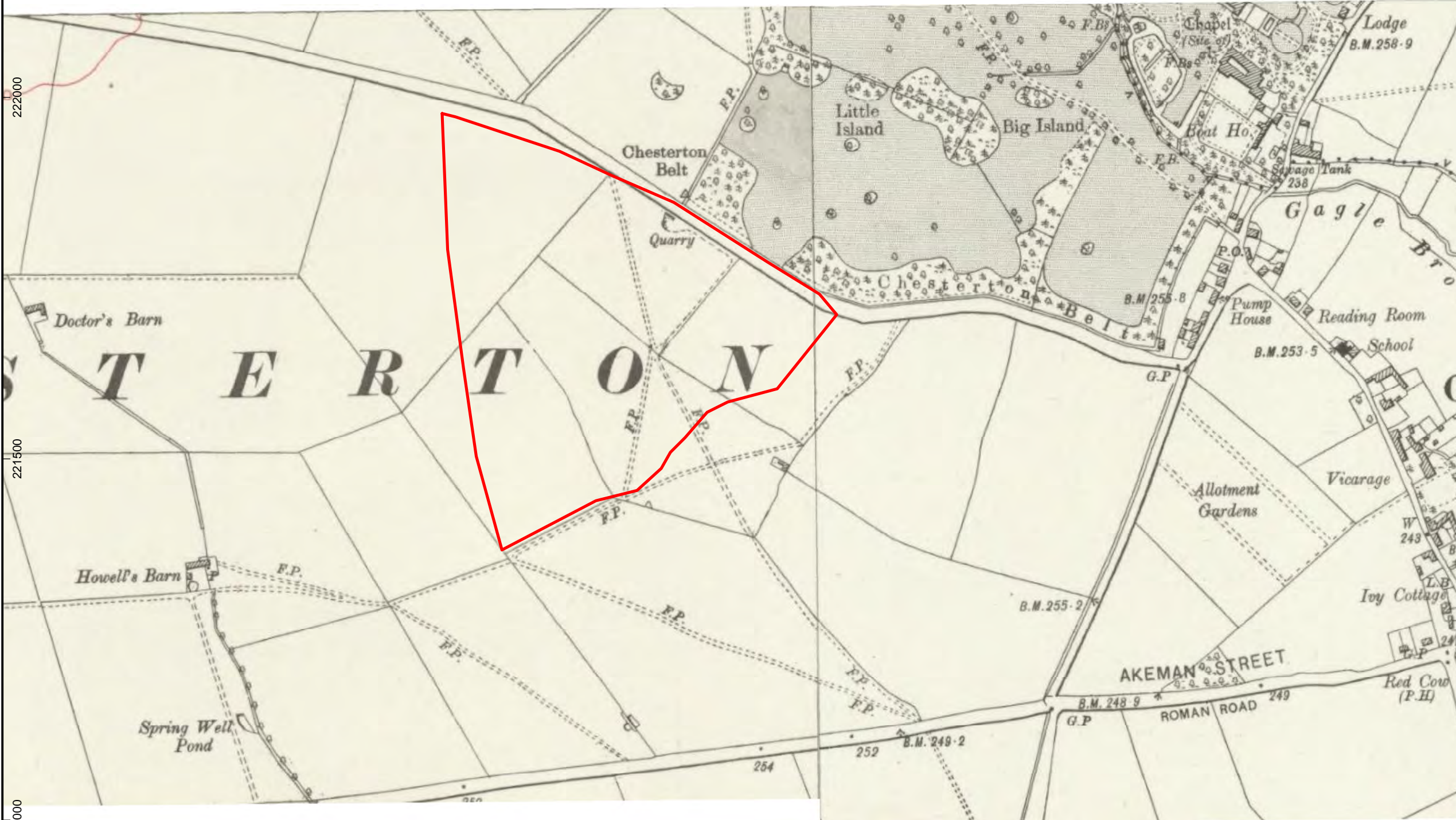
456000

Figure

8

Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1923

Key  
Site Boundary



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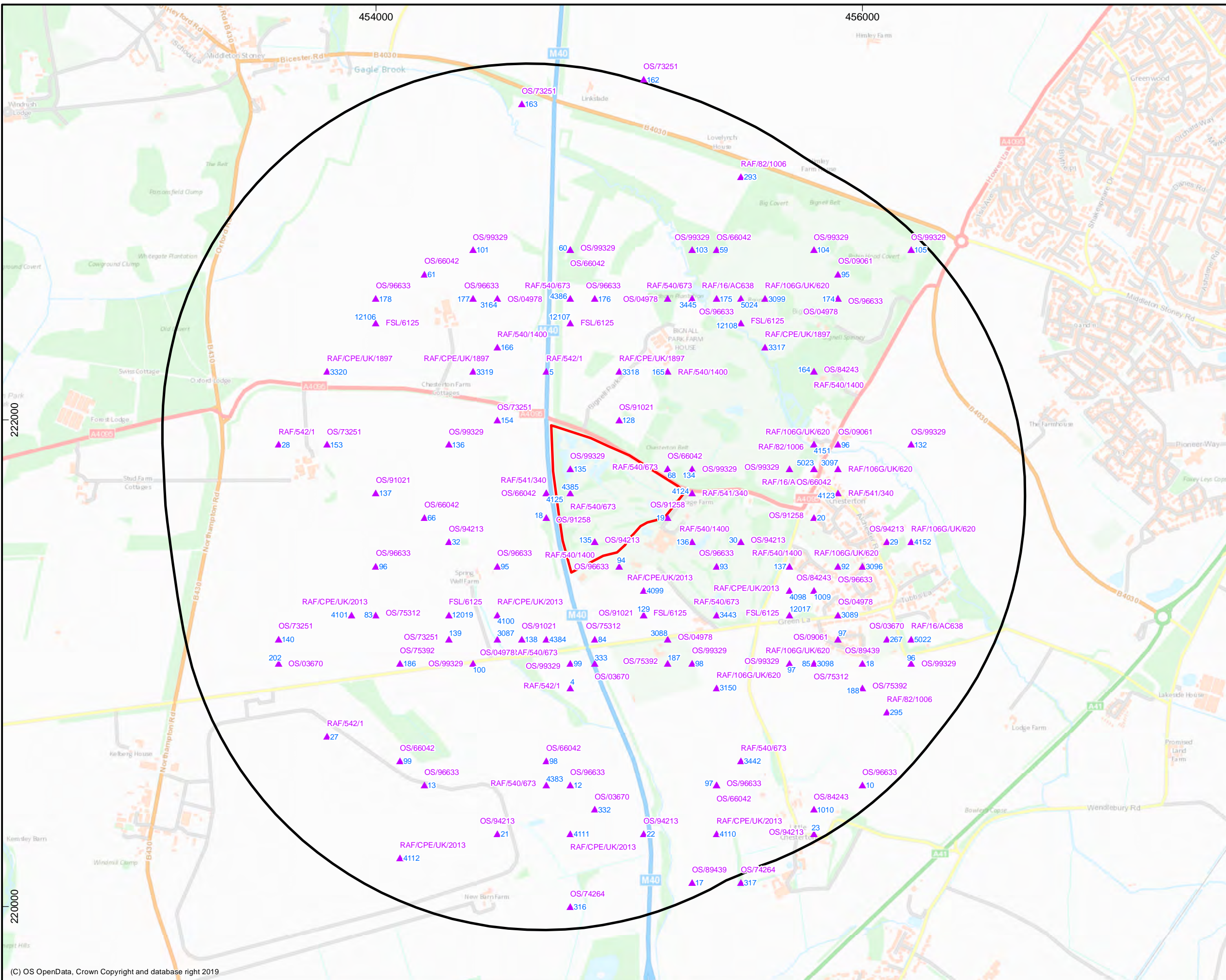
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Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: OSGB 1936

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Vertical Aerial Photographs within the 1.5km Study Area

- Key**
- ◻ 1.5km Study Area
  - ◻ Site Boundary
  - ▲ Vertical Aerial Photograph
  - ▲ Sortie Number
  - ▲ Frame Number



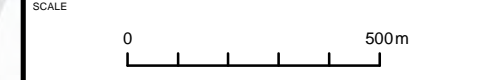
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AOC Project No.:	24559



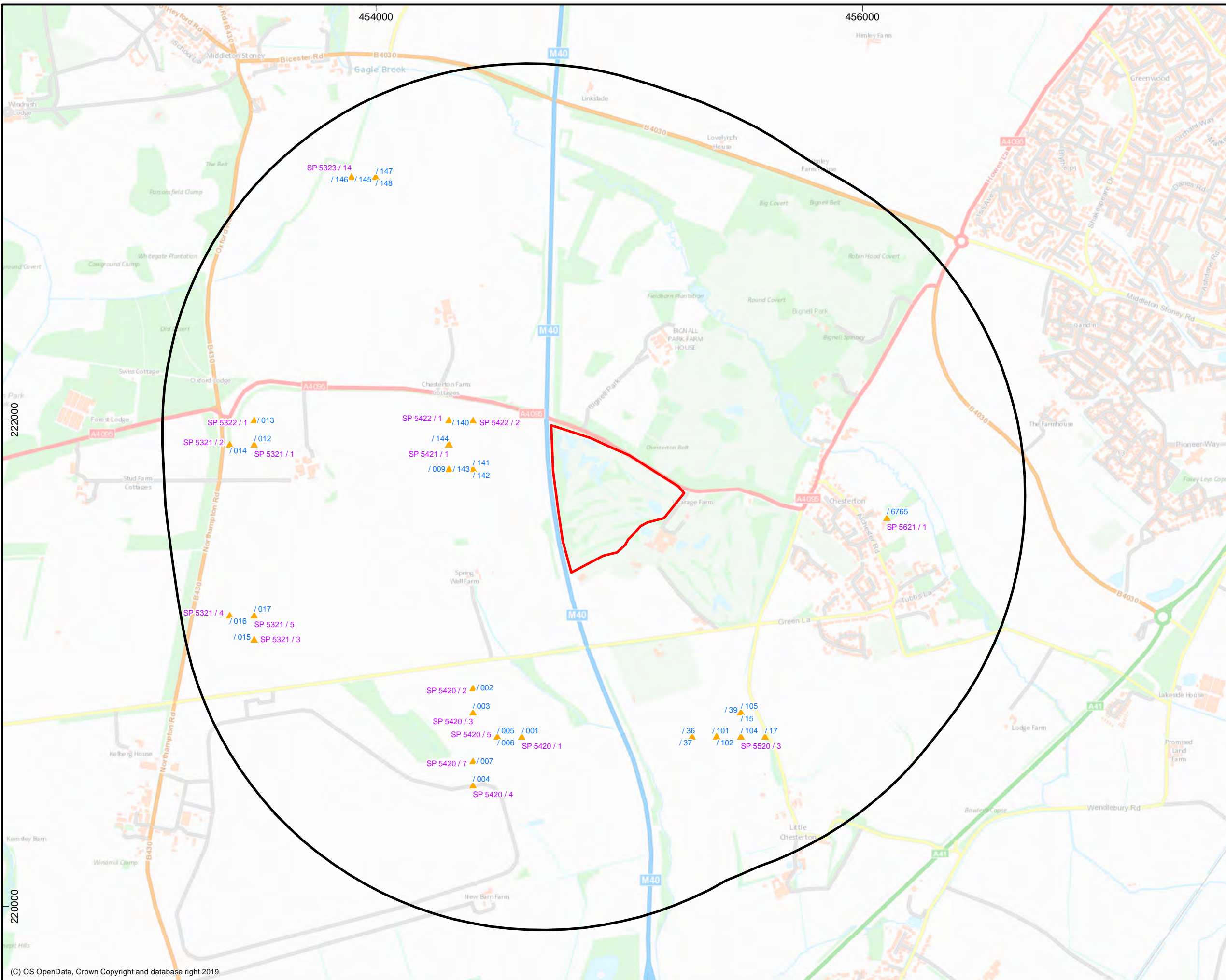
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Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: OSGB 1936

SCALE  
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Oblique Aerial Photographs within the 1.5km Study Area

- Key**
- ◻ 1.5km Study Area
  - ◻ Site Boundary
  - ◻ Oblique Aerial Photograph
  - ▲ Photo Reference
  - Frame Number



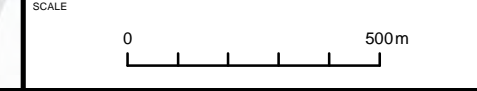
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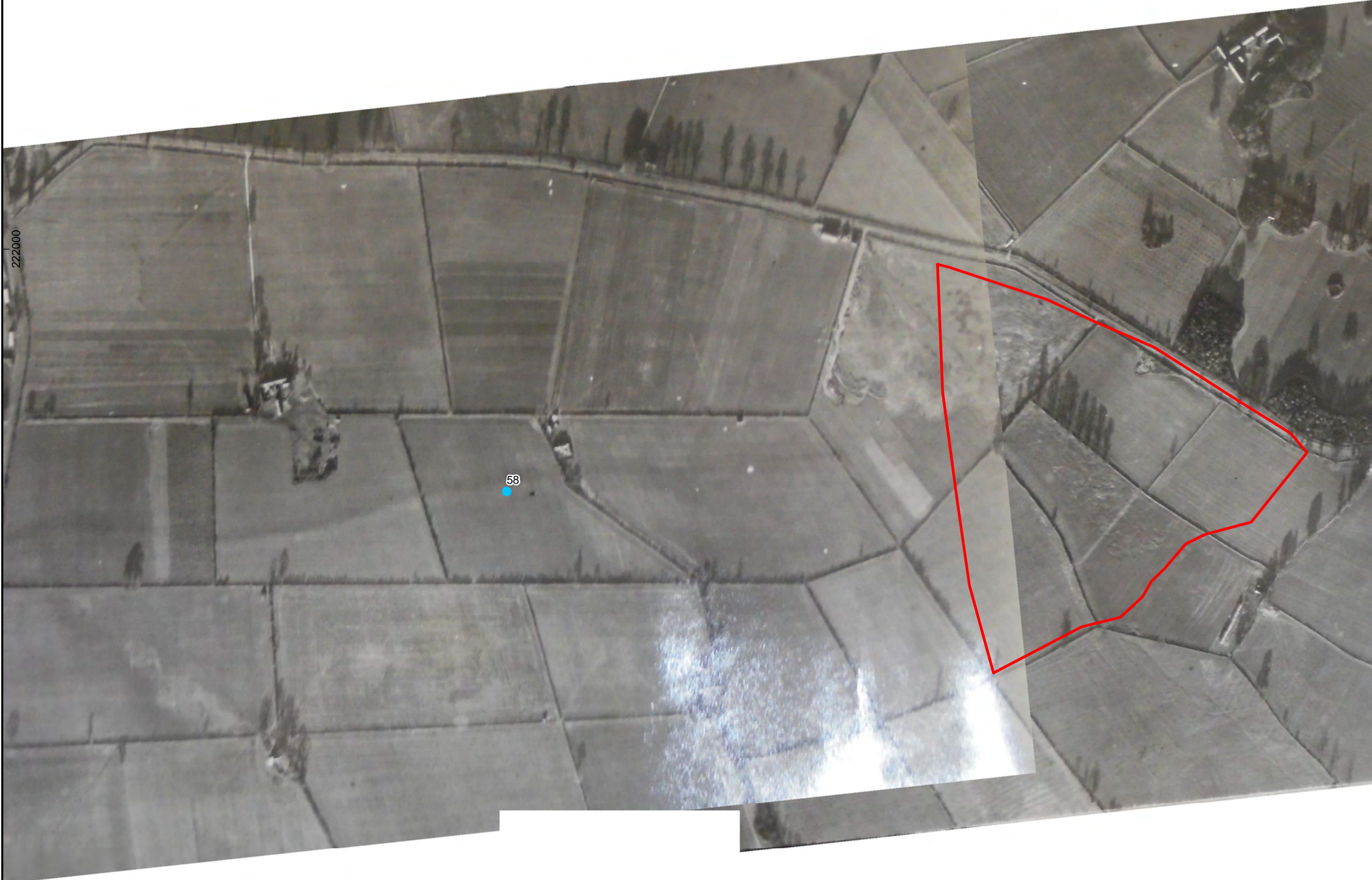


454000

455000

222000

221000



Figure

11

Extract from 1947 Aerial  
Photography,  
RAF/CPE/UK/1897,  
Frame 3320

**Key**

- Site Boundary
- Northbrook High way (Site 58)

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Datum: OSGB 1936

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SCALE





Hill Shade LiDAR Datasets within the 1.5km Study Area

**Key**  
 □ 1.5km Study Area  
 □ Site Boundary

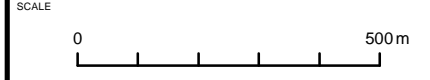
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SCALE 1:12,500 @ A3







Sky View Factor LiDAR Datasets within the 1.5km Study Area

- Key**  
■ Site Boundary  
 1.5km Study Area

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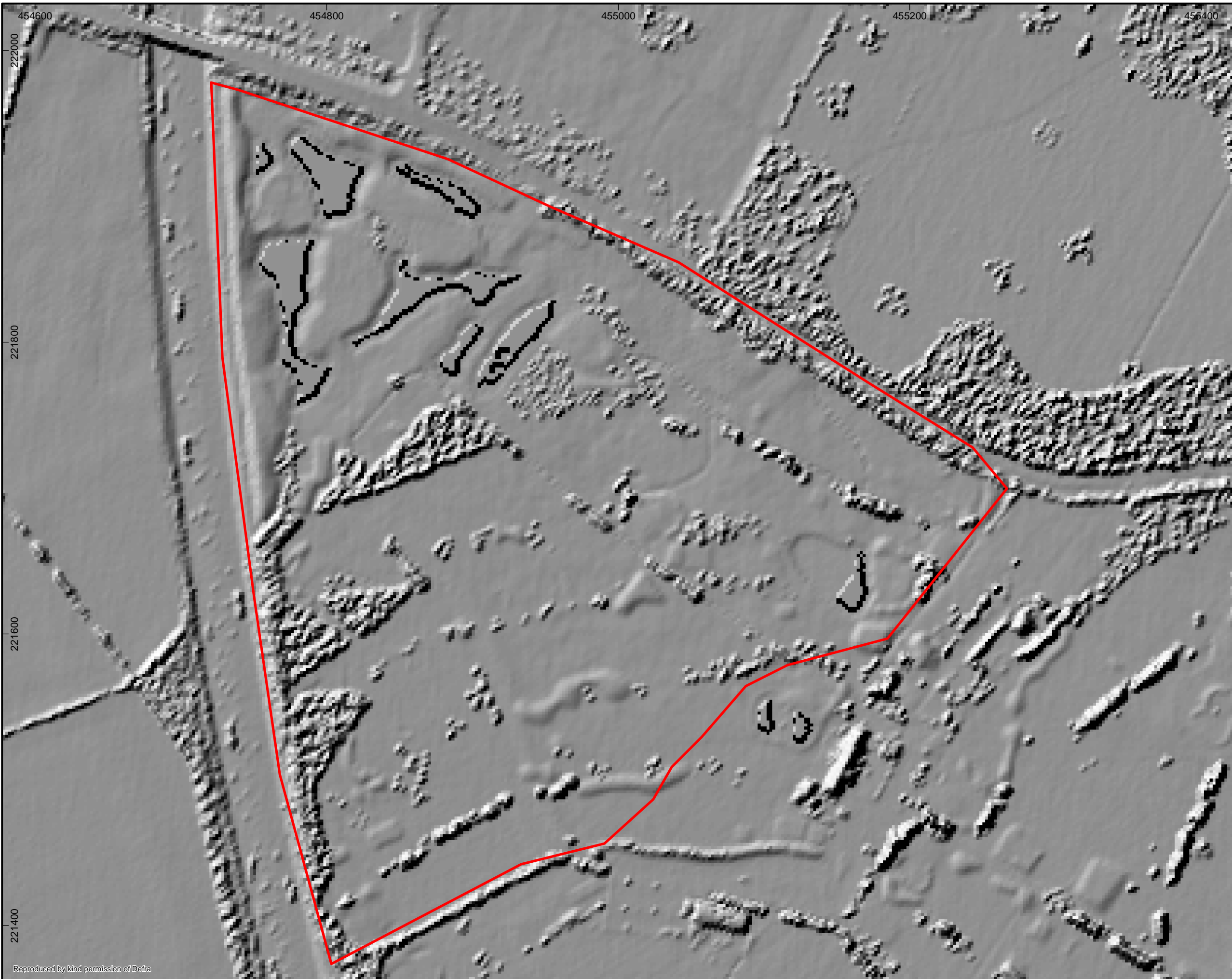
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 Projection: Transverse Mercator  
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SCALE  
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Figure

14

Hill Shade LiDAR  
Datasets within the Site

**Key**

- ▭ Site Boundary
- 1.5km Study Area

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SYSTEM

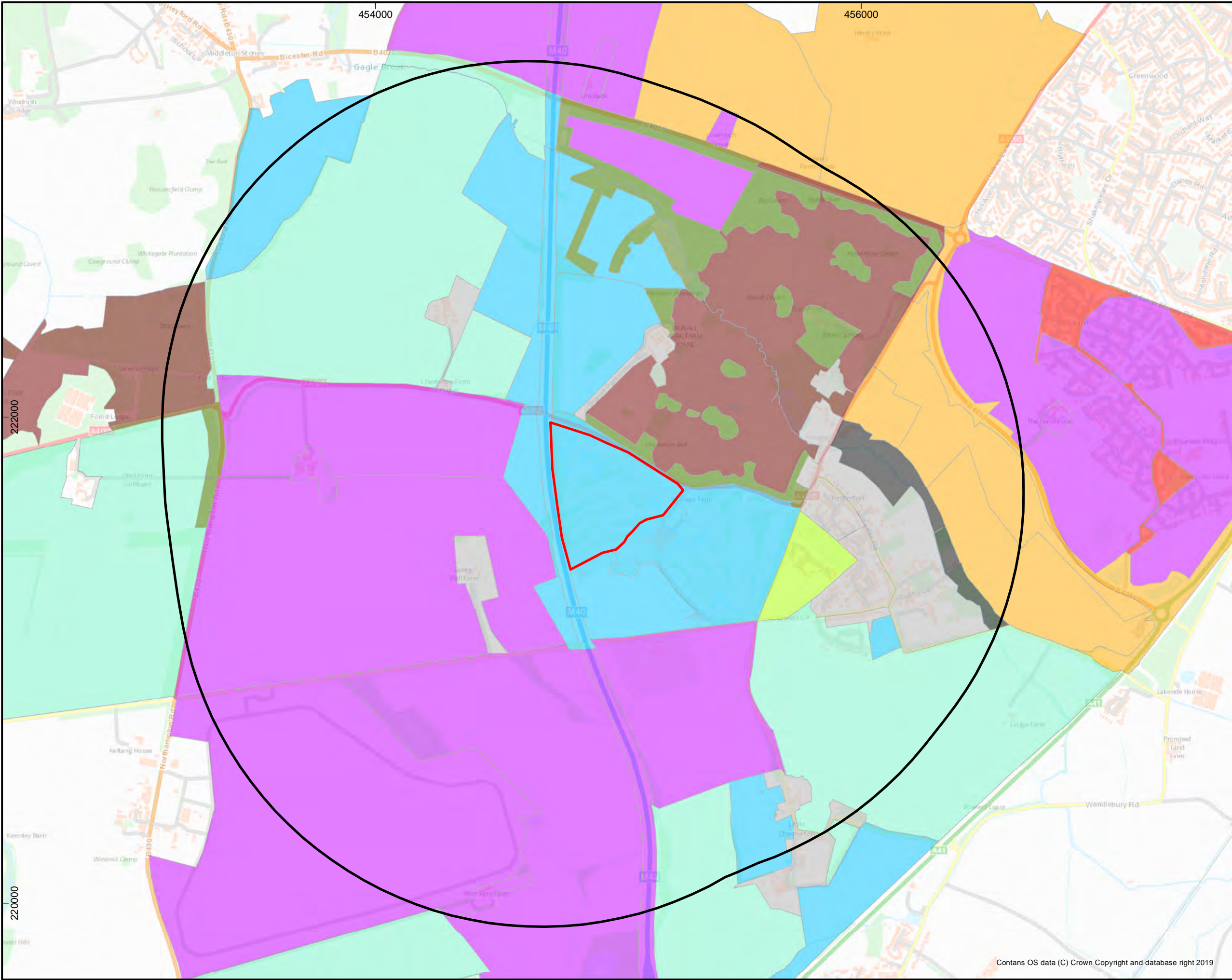
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Historic Landscape Characterisation within the 1.5km Study Area \*

- Key**
- Site Boundary
  - 1.5km Study Area
  - Historic Landscape Characterisation**
  - Planned Enclosure
  - Piecemeal Enclosure
  - Reorganised Enclosure
  - Amalgamated Enclosure
  - Open Field System
  - Pasture
  - Designed Landscape
  - Planned Woodland
  - Orchards and Horticulture
  - Rural Settlement

\*Note: HLC Attribute Field "Broad Types" and "HLC Types" have been amalgamated to show predominated historic characterisations, with shortened terms for Visual Clarity within this figure

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