



LAND OFF SOUTH NEWINGTON ROAD,
BLOXHAM, **OXFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP
ON BEHALF OF GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS LTD

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 PLANNING  DESIGN  ENVIRONMENT  ECONOMICS

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

LAND OFF SOUTH NEWINGTON ROAD, BLOXHAM, OXFORDSHIRE

ON BEHALF OF: GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA ACT 1979

Prepared by: Rebecca Gilbey, Heritage Consultant

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Summary

Pegasus Planning Group have been commissioned by Gladman Developments Ltd to prepare an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Land off South Newington Road, Bloxham, Oxfordshire.

No prehistoric or Roman period finds or features are recorded within the site or immediately adjacent to the site. Prehistoric activity is recorded in the wider vicinity to the north and east of Bloxham. Evidence of Roman period activity in the vicinity includes antiquarian records of Roman coins and a possible corn-drying oven c. 390m south of the site, and a Roman period cemetery and putative settlement c. 470m to the north. There is no current evidence to suggest prehistoric or Roman period activity was focused within the site.

The site contains truncated remains of ridge and furrow earthworks, most likely of medieval origin. These earthworks are considered to be of a significance commensurate to a non-designated heritage asset. Under the NPPF remains of this type do not preclude development, but harm to these assets should be taken into account in the planning balance in the determining of the application.

1. Introduction

1.1 Pegasus Planning Group have been commissioned by Gladman Developments Ltd to prepare an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Land off South Newington Road, Bloxham, Oxfordshire as shown on the Site Location Plan provided in Plate 1. The site is proposed for residential development.

1.2 The site is approximately 5.86 ha in area and is situated across two agricultural fields located to the south of Bloxham. The site includes a cow shed and a track within the southern boundary of the site.

1.3 This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment provides information with regards to the significance of the archaeological resource to fulfil the requirement given in paragraph 189 of the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF¹) which requires:

“an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.”

1.4 In order to inform an assessment of the acceptability of the scheme in relation to impacts to the archaeological resource, following paragraphs 193 to 197 of the NPPF, any harm to the historic environment resulting from the proposed development

is also described, including impacts to significance through changes to setting.

1.5 As required by paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the detail and assessment in this Report is considered to be *“proportionate to the asset’s importance”*.

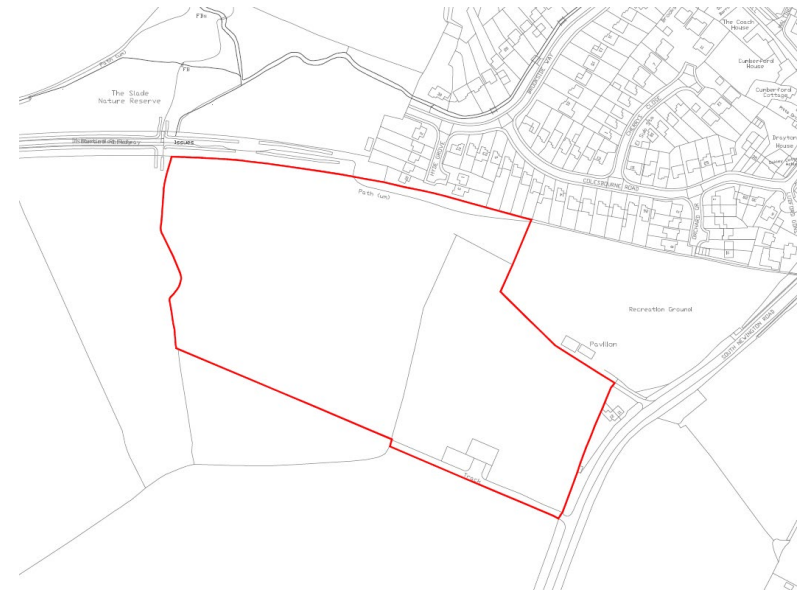


Plate 1: Site Location Plan (not to scale)

¹ NPPF, MHCLG, 2019

2. Methodology

2.1 The aim of this Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment is to assess the known and potential archaeological resource within the site.

Sources of information and study area

2.2 The following key sources have been consulted as part of this assessment:

- **The National Heritage List for England for information on designated heritage assets;**
- **The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) for information on the recorded heritage resource and previous archaeological works;**
- **Archival sources, including cartographic sources, held at the Oxfordshire Record Office; and**
- **Online sources including aerial photographs and satellite imagery.**

2.3 For digital data sets, information was sourced for a 1km study area. Following an assessment of this data, the study area was refined to 500m. Information gathered is discussed within the text where it is of relevance to the potential heritage resource of the site. A gazetteer of recorded sites and findspots is

included as Appendix 1 and maps illustrating the resource and study area are included at the end of this report.

2.4 Historic cartographic sources were reviewed for the site, and beyond this where professional judgement deemed necessary.

Site Visit

2.5 A site visit was undertaken by Pegasus Group on 4th November 2016 during which the site and its surrounds were assessed.

Assessment of significance

2.6 In the NPPF, heritage significance is defined as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance²”

2.7 Historic England’s *Historic Environment Good Practice advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*³ (henceforth referred to as ‘GPA 2:

² NPPF, MHCLG, 2019

³ Historic England, 2015, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*

Managing Significance) gives advice on the assessment of significance as part of the application process. It advises understanding the nature, extent, and level of significance of a heritage asset. In order to do this, *GPA 2: Managing Significance* also advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in Historic England's Conservation Principles⁴; **evidential**, **historical**, **aesthetic** and **communal**. These essentially cover the heritage 'interests' given in the glossary of the NPPF, which comprise archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest.

2.8 *Conservation Principles* provides further information on the heritage values it identifies:

Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This value is derived from physical remains, such as archaeological remains, and genetic lines.

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative. Illustrative value is the perception of a place as a link between past and present people and depends on visibility. It has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with and providing insights into past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place. By contrast, associative value need not necessarily be legible at an asset, but gives

a particular resonance through association with a notable family, person, event or movement.

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of conscious design or fortuitous outcome or a combination of the two aspects. The latter can result from the enhancement of the appearance of a place through the passage of time.

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. This can be through widely acknowledged commemorative or symbolic value that reflects the meaning of the place, or through more informal social value as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Spiritual value may also be part of communal value.

2.9 Significance results from a combination of any, some or all of the values described above.

2.10 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are generally designated for their special architectural and historic interest. Scheduling is predominantly, although not exclusively, associated with archaeological interest.

Levels of significance

2.11 In accordance with the levels of significance articulated in the NPPF, three levels of significance are identified:

⁴ English Heritage 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

- **Designated heritage assets of the highest significance**, as identified in paragraph 194 of the NPPF comprising Grade I and II* Listed buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields (and also including some Conservation Areas) and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, as identified in footnote 63 of the NPPF;
- **Designated heritage assets of less than the highest significance**, as identified in paragraph 194 of the NPPF, comprising Grade II Listed buildings and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens (and also some Conservation Areas); and
- **Non-designated heritage assets.** Non-designated heritage assets are defined within the Government’s Planning Practice Guidance as “*buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which are not formally designated heritage assets*”⁵.

2.12 Additionally, it is of course possible that sites, buildings or areas have **no heritage significance**.

Assessment of harm

2.13 Assessment of any harm will be articulated in terms of the policy and law that the proposed development will be assessed against,

⁵ MHCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, paragraph: 039 (ID: 18a-039-20140306, Revision date: 06 03 2014)

⁶ EWHC 2847, R MHCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council

such as whether a proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and articulating the scale of any harm in order to inform a balanced judgement/weighting exercise as required by the NPPF.

2.14 In order to relate to key policy, the following levels of harm may potentially be identified:

- **Substantial harm or total loss.** It has been clarified in a High Court Judgement of 2013⁶ that this would be harm that would ‘have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced’; and
- **Less than substantial harm.** Harm of a lesser level than that defined above.

2.15 It is also possible that development proposals will cause **no harm or preserve** the significance of heritage assets. A High Court Judgement of 2014 is relevant to this⁷. This concluded that with regard to preserving the setting of a Listed building or preserving the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, ‘preserving’ means doing ‘no harm’.

2.16 Preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm. *GPA 2: Managing Significance* states that “*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged*”. Thus, change is accepted in Historic

⁷ EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L’Isle

England's guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and environment. It is whether such change is neutral, harmful or beneficial to the significance of an asset that matters.

2.17 As part of this, setting may be a key consideration. For an evaluation of any harm to significance through changes to setting, this assessment follows the methodology given in *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, described above. Again, fundamental to the methodology set out in this document is stating 'what matters and why'. Of particular relevance is the checklist given on page 13 of *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*.

2.18 It should be noted that this key document states that:

"setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation"⁸

2.19 Hence any impacts are described in terms of how they affect the significance of a heritage asset, and heritage values that contribute to this significance, through changes to setting.

2.20 With regards to changes in setting, *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* states that "*conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change*".

2.21 Additionally, it is also important to note that, as clarified in the Court of Appeal⁹, whilst the statutory duty requires that special

regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a Listed Building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused.

Benefits

2.22 Proposed development may also result in benefits to heritage assets, and these are articulated in terms of how they enhance the heritage values and hence the significance of the assets concerned.

⁸ Historic England, 2017, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets*

⁹ *Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor* [2016] EWCA Civ 1061 (4th November 2016)

3. Planning Policy Framework

3.1 This section of the Report sets out the legislation and planning policy considerations and guidance contained within both national and local planning guidance which specifically relate to the application site, with a focus on those policies relating to the protection of the historic environment.

National Policy Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

3.1 National policy and guidance is set out in the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in February 2019. This updated the previous National Planning Policy Framework 2018, which in turn had amended and superseded the previous 2012 version. The NPPF needs to be read as a whole and is intended to promote the concept of delivering sustainable development.

3.2 The NPPF sets out the Government’s economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government’s vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore Local Plans, incorporating Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application, including those which relate to the historic environment.

3.3 The overarching policy change applicable to the proposed development is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This presumption in favour of sustainable development (the ‘presumption’) sets out the tone of the Government’s overall stance and operates with and through the other policies of the NPPF. Its purpose is to send a strong signal to all those involved in the planning process about the need to plan positively for appropriate new development; so that both plan making and development management are proactive and driven by a search for opportunities to deliver sustainable development, rather than barriers. Conserving historic assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms part of this drive towards sustainable development.

3.4 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the NPPF sets out three ‘objectives’ to facilitate sustainable development: an economic objective, a social objective, and an environmental objective. The presumption is key to delivering these objectives, by creating a positive pro-development framework which is underpinned by the wider economic, environmental and social provisions of the NPPF. The presumption is set out in full at paragraph 11 of the NPPF and reads as follows:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;**
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or**
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.****

For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or**
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the**

policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or**
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”**

3.5 However, it is important to note that footnote 6 of the NPPF applies in relation to the final bullet of paragraph 11. This provides a context for paragraph 11 and reads as follows:

“The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.” (our emphasis)

3.6 The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore, Local Plans, incorporating

Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application.

3.7 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including Local Listing)”

3.8 The NPPF goes on to define a Designated Heritage Asset as a:

“World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under relevant legislation¹⁰” (our emphasis)

3.9 As set out above, significance is also defined as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance¹¹”

3.10 Section 16 of the NPPF relates to ‘Conserving and enhancing the

historic environment’ and states at paragraph 190 that:

“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 into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”

3.11 Paragraph 192 goes on to state that:

“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;**
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and**
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness”**

3.12 With regard to the impact of proposals on the significance of a heritage asset, paragraphs 193 and 194 are relevant and read as follows:

¹⁰ NPPF Annex 2, DCLG, 2018

¹¹ IBID

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

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

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

3.13 Section b) of the above describing assets of the highest significance also includes footnote 63 of the NPPF, which states that non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

3.14 In the context of the above, it should be noted that paragraph 195 reads as follows:

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

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

3.15 Paragraph 196 goes on to state:

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

3.16 With regards to non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 of NPPF states that:

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

- 3.17 Non-designated assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument will be subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.
- 3.18 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so. Additionally, securing the optimum viable use of sites and achieving public benefits are also key material considerations for application proposals.

National Planning Guidance

- 3.19 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the planning practice web based resource in March 2014, accompanied by a ministerial statement which confirmed

that a number of previous planning practice guidance documents were cancelled.

- 3.20 This also introduced the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which comprised a full and consolidated review of planning practice guidance documents to be read alongside the NPPF.
- 3.21 The PPG has a discrete section on the subject of ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ which confirms that the consideration of ‘significance’ in decision taking is important and states:

“Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals¹²”

- 3.22 In terms of assessment of substantial harm, the PPG confirms that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the individual decision taker having regard to the individual circumstances and the policy set out within the NPPF. It goes on to state:

“In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an

¹² PPG, paragraph 009 (ID: 18a-009/20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting¹³.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm" (our emphasis)

Local Planning Policy

- 3.23 The Oxfordshire Structure Plan (adopted 2016) for the county sets out general policies regarding protecting and enhancing the historic environment. The Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2015) includes policies for the Cherwell District.
- 3.24 The Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 includes the following policies:

¹³ PPG, paragraph 017 (ID: 18a-017-20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

EN6 – Archaeology

There will be a presumption in favour of preserving in situ nationally and internationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings. Development affecting other archaeological remains should include measures to secure their preservation in situ or where this is not feasible, their recording or removal to another site.

- 3.25 The Cherwell Local Plan 2015 includes the following policy:

ESD15 – The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

Successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.

Local Plan Policies with regards to the NPPF and the 1990 Act.

- 3.26 With regard to Local Plan policies, paragraph 213 of NPPF states that:

"existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or

made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)."

- 3.27 In this context, where local plan policy was adopted before the NPPF, and does not allow for the weighing of harm against public benefit for designated heritage assets (as set out within paragraph 196 of the NPPF) or a balanced judgement with regards to harm to non-designated heritage assets (see NPPF paragraph 197) then local planning policies would be considered to be overly restrictive compared to the NPPF, thus limiting the weight they may be given in the decision-making process.
- 3.28 In this case, although the above policies are of relevance, they were adopted prior to the inception of the NPPF, and as so the weight which can be attributed to them will be determined by their consistency with the policy guidance set out within the NPPF. Since the above policies do not allow for a balanced judgement to be undertaken by the decision maker, the policies are not considered to reflect the guidance within the NPPF and therefore considered to be out of date. Thus, the weight which can be attached to them in the decision-making process is limited.

Emerging Policy

- 3.29 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2) is currently in preparation but no draft had been published at the time of writing this assessment.

4. The Historic Environment

- 4.1 This section provides a review of the recorded archaeological resource within the site and its vicinity in order to identify any extant archaeological heritage assets within the site and to assess the potential for below-ground archaeological remains.

Site Description

- 4.2 The site is situated across two agricultural fields to located to the south of Bloxham. The site was pasture at the time of the site visit and a cow shed is located in the south-eastern area of the site (Plate 3).
- 4.3 The site is bounded to the north by the line of the dismantled Banbury and Cheltenham Direct railway and residential development, to the east by a recreation ground and South Newington Road, and to the south and west by agricultural land.
- 4.4 The site includes a public right of way along its northern boundary, which crosses the site and continues to the west (Plate 2). Boundaries are predominantly hedgerow, with fenced boundaries along the north of the site adjacent to residential dwellings. Ground within the site is generally level at approximately 125m aOD.



Plate 2: View east of the western edge of the site from the public right of way



Plate 3: View north-west from the south-east corner of the site including the agricultural outbuilding utilised as a cow shed

Designated Heritage Assets

- 4.5 There are no designated heritage assets within the site.
- 4.6 Bloxham Conservation Area is located c. 150m north-east of the site. This contains 130 Listed buildings (comprising one Grade I Listed, one Grade II* Listed and the remaining Grade II Listed).
- 4.7 No Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or World Heritage Sites are located within

¹⁴ British Geological Survey, 2016. Geology of Britain Viewer. <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html?>

the vicinity of the site.

Previous Archaeological Works

- 4.8 No previous archaeological works are recorded within the site. Those recorded in the wider study area comprise:

- e) **Archaeological evaluation in 2011 at The Bungalow, Queen Street c. 360m north-east of the site (Fig. 1, EOX 3149). The evaluation comprised three trenches and two test pits which recorded Late Saxon/early Medieval ditches and late Medieval stone structures.**
- f) **Archaeological watching briefs at The Old School and Manor Hotel c. 450m north-east of the site in 1994 and 1996 (Fig. 1, EOX 781 and EOX 1863). No archaeological finds or features were recorded.**

Geology and the Palaeoenvironment

- 4.9 Solid geology within the eastern area of the site is mapped as Marlstone Rock Formation ferruginous limestone and ironstone. The western area of the site is mapped as of Whitby Mudstone Formation mudstone. No superficial deposits are mapped within the site (British Geological Survey, 2016)¹⁴.

Prehistoric and Romano-British

- 4.10 No prehistoric finds or features are recorded within the site or the 500m study area. In the wider area previous excavations to the north of Bloxham recorded evidence of Bronze Age activity, possibly indicative of a settlement; a single Neolithic polished axe has been recorded to the east of Bloxham, near Coate's Spinney (Fig. 1, MOX 4284); and Iron Age pottery has been found near Bloxham Grove to the north-east of Bloxham.¹⁵
- 4.11 No Romano-British finds or features are recorded within or immediately adjacent to the site. However, antiquarian sources record Roman coins and a structural feature, discovered in 1841 c. 390m south of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 3674). The structure is described as an arched brick flue or oven, potentially associated with a corn-drying oven or part of a dwelling¹⁶.
- 4.12 A Romano-British cemetery containing at least 30 inhumations was discovered while quarrying for ironstone in the 1930s c. 470m north of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 4266). This is also suggested as the putative location of industrial settlement, although evidence is inconclusive. In addition to the burials recorded finds and features include a stone-built well and quantities of Roman pottery, as quern fragments and animal bones¹⁶.

¹⁵ CgMs Consulting, 2005. *Land South of Milton Road, Bloxham Oxfordshire*.

¹⁶ Victoria County History of Oxford, 1929. Vol 1, p.333

Early Medieval and Medieval

- 4.13 The place name 'Bloxham' derives from the Anglo Saxon 'Blocc's Ham' (the home/village of Blocc). The settlement is thought to have been established in the 6th-century, on the banks of the Sor Brooks Tributary¹⁷. By the late Anglo-Saxon period, Bloxham was one of the estates of the earls of Mercia and was one of seven royal manors.
- 4.14 The site was historically located within the parish of Bloxham and potentially formed part of the agricultural hinterland to this settlement from at least the medieval period. Ridge and furrow earthworks are visible within the site and surrounding areas on satellite imagery (Plate 4). Within the site, blocks of earthworks are visible on different orientations, with some earthworks appearing to truncate an earlier phase of ridge and furrow. However, they do all display the reverse-S shape in plan, characteristic of medieval ridge and furrow, and the spacing, measuring approximately 8m from top-of-ridge to top-of-ridge, is also characteristic of a medieval origin. The site visit confirmed that surviving extant remains of earthworks, most apparent within the western area of the site (Plate 5), were heavily eroded and poorly preserved. Better preserved ridge and furrow survives within the agricultural fields immediately west of the site.

¹⁷ Cherwell District Council, 2007. *Bloxham Conservation Area Appraisal*. <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/5/pdf3085491584154085592.pdf>



Plate 4: Aerial imagery depicting the ridge and furrow earthworks within the site

4.15 The site is located within the study area utilised for *Turning the Plough*¹⁸, a study of ridge and furrow earthworks published in 2001. *Turning the Plough* identified 43 priority townships, considered to contain the most significant ridge and furrow earthworks in the Midlands. Remains of ridge and furrow within

¹⁸ English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council, 2001. *Turning the Plough: Midland open fields: landscape character and proposals for management*

the site is within the historic extent of the Bloxham Parish. Bloxham is not a priority township.



Plate 5: Remains of truncated ridge and furrow earthworks within the site

4.16 In the wider area, trial trench evaluation c. 360m north-east of the site (Fig. 1, EOX 3149) revealed a length of ditch containing 11th-century pottery and a number of other undated ditches, which may represent agricultural ditched enclosures associated with a nearby settlement (Fig. 1, MOX 23969). Remains of stone structures fronting onto Queen Street and Kings Road were also

recorded and dated to the late medieval period on the basis of associated pottery and brick, although the possibility that these were later structures incorporating reused material has also been suggested.

- 4.17 The findspot of a Saxon brooch is recorded c. 425m east of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 23918). Two crotal bells were recorded c. 215m and c. 245m east of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 23921 and MOX 23922). Crotal bells developed during the late 14th-century by casting the bells in two halves, which were then soldered together.

Post-medieval and Modern

- 4.18 The site is depicted on the 1801 Inclosure Map of Bloxham. This shows the site split across four fields, although at the time the map was surveyed some boundaries may have been proposed ownership divisions rather than extant boundary features (Plate 6).



Plate 6: Extract from the Bloxham Inclosure Photo Map 1801

4.19 The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1881 records the site situated across agricultural fields (Plate 7). The line of the Banbury & Cheltenham Direct Railway, under construction, is depicted along the northern boundary of the site. A U-shaped range of buildings, most likely agricultural (now demolished), is depicted within the north-eastern area of the site.

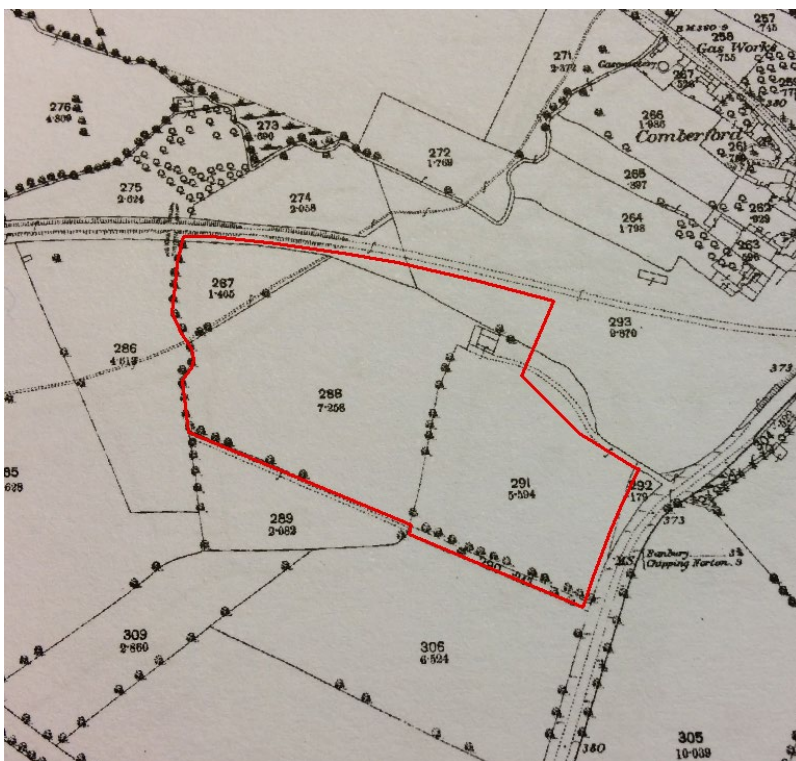


Plate 7: Extract from the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1881

4.20 The District Valuation survey was carried out between 1910 and 1915 across England and Wales. The District Valuation Map of Bloxham (based on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey mapping of 1900) shades the northern area of the site part of a plot associated with timber yard, the buildings of which were located to the east of the site (Plate 8). Nos. 11 and 12 South Newington Road, adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, are also depicted on this source (Plate 9 and Plate 11).

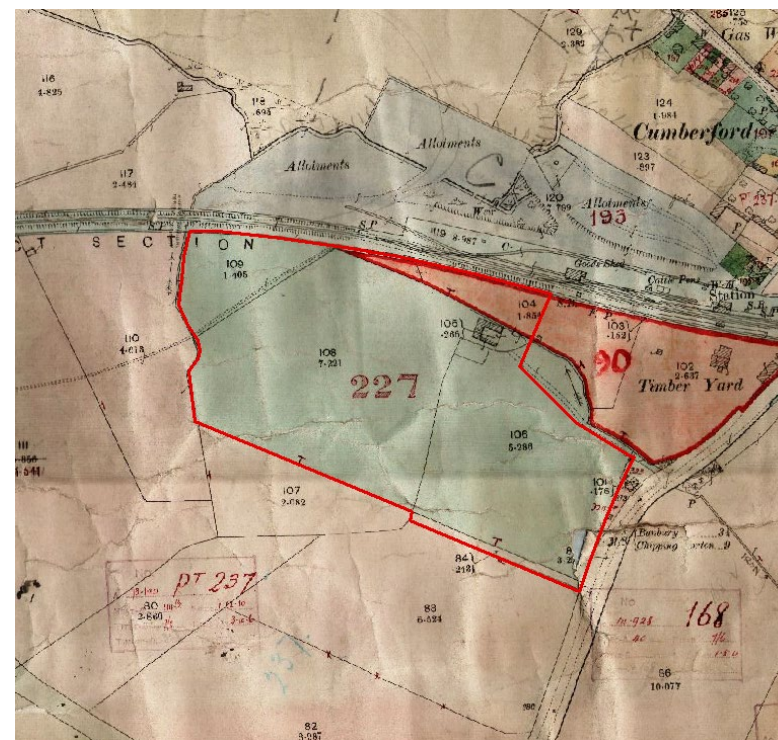


Plate 8: Extract from the Bloxham District Valuation Map 1910-1915



Plate 9: Extract from the District Valuation Map 1910-1915, depicting the dwellings 11 and 12 Stoke Newington Road

4.21 No major changes are depicted on the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1920 (Plate 10). The cow shed within the site was constructed in the later 20th-century. The buildings depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map were demolished in the later 20th-century, although their former location was apparent at the time of the site visit as a series of depressions (Plate 12).

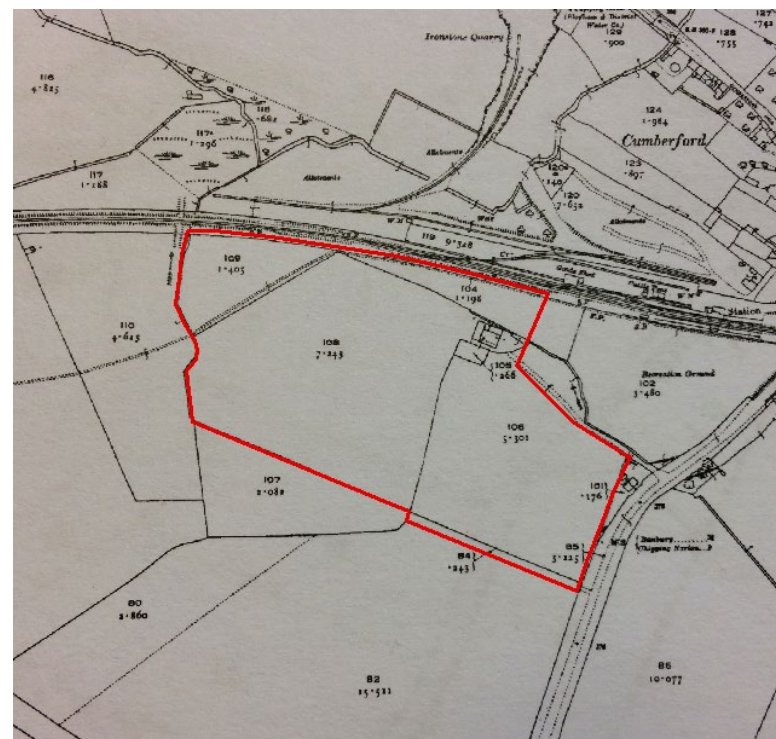


Plate 10: Extract from the Third Edition Ordnance Map 1920



Plate 11: View north-east from within the site including nos. 11 and 12 South Newington Road



Plate 12: The area within the site where a building once stood, view from the northern part of the site facing east towards the recreation ground

The wider study area

- 4.22 The Bloxham Toll House, marked on the 1823 Bryant Map of Oxfordshire, is located c. 170m north-east of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 4307).
- 4.23 Features associated with 19th-century ironstone mines were located while digging drainage connections c. 290m north-east of the site (Fig. 1, MOX 4287). Bloxham is within an area of ironstone hills and valleys, and a number of houses in the area are constructed out of this material. Further ironstone mining is recorded c. 330m north of the site, now under a housing estate, consisting of a vertical shaft with two tunnels branching off (Fig.

MOX 4367). A 20th-century pencast ironstone working area, visible on aerial photographs, is located c. 415m north of the site (Fig. MOX 24688).

- 4.24 The site of the WWII Dispersed Site 7, associated with RAF Barford St John, is located c. 330m east of the site (Fig. MOX 24786). It included a sick quarter, ambulance garage and mortuary building, a barrack hut, ablutions block and guardhouse as well as an air raid shelter and transformer station.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 No prehistoric or Roman period finds or features are recorded within the site or immediately adjacent to the site. Prehistoric activity is recorded in the wider vicinity to the north and east of Bloxham. Evidence of Roman period activity in the vicinity includes antiquarian records of Roman coins and a possible corn-drying oven c. 390m south of the site, and a Roman period cemetery and putative settlement c. 470m to the north. There is no current evidence to suggest prehistoric or Roman period activity was focused within the site.
- 5.2 The site contains truncated remains of ridge and furrow earthworks, most likely of medieval origin. These earthworks are considered to be of a significance commensurate to a non-designated heritage asset. Under the NPPF remains of this type do not preclude development, but harm to these assets should be taken into account in the planning balance in the determining of the application.
- 5.3 Any below ground remains of the buildings present on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1881 are not considered to be heritage assets.

6. Sources

Cartographic Sources

1801	Bloxham Inclosure Photo Map
1823	Bryant Map of Oxfordshire
1881	First Edition Ordnance Survey Map
1899	Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map
1910-1915	Bloxham District Valuation Map
1920	Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map

Bibliographic sources: see footnotes in the text

Appendix 1: Gazetteer of Heritage Data

Heritage Data

HER Event Data

EVUID	EVENTNAME	ORGANISATION	GRIDREF
EOX781	The Old School and Manor Hotel	Oxford Archaeological Unit	SP 4296 3552
EOX1863	The Old School and Manor Hotel, Bloxham: An Archaeological Watching Brief	Oxford Archaeological Unit	SP 43001 35526
EOX3149	The Bungalow, Queen Street	Oxford Archaeology	SP 42802 35571

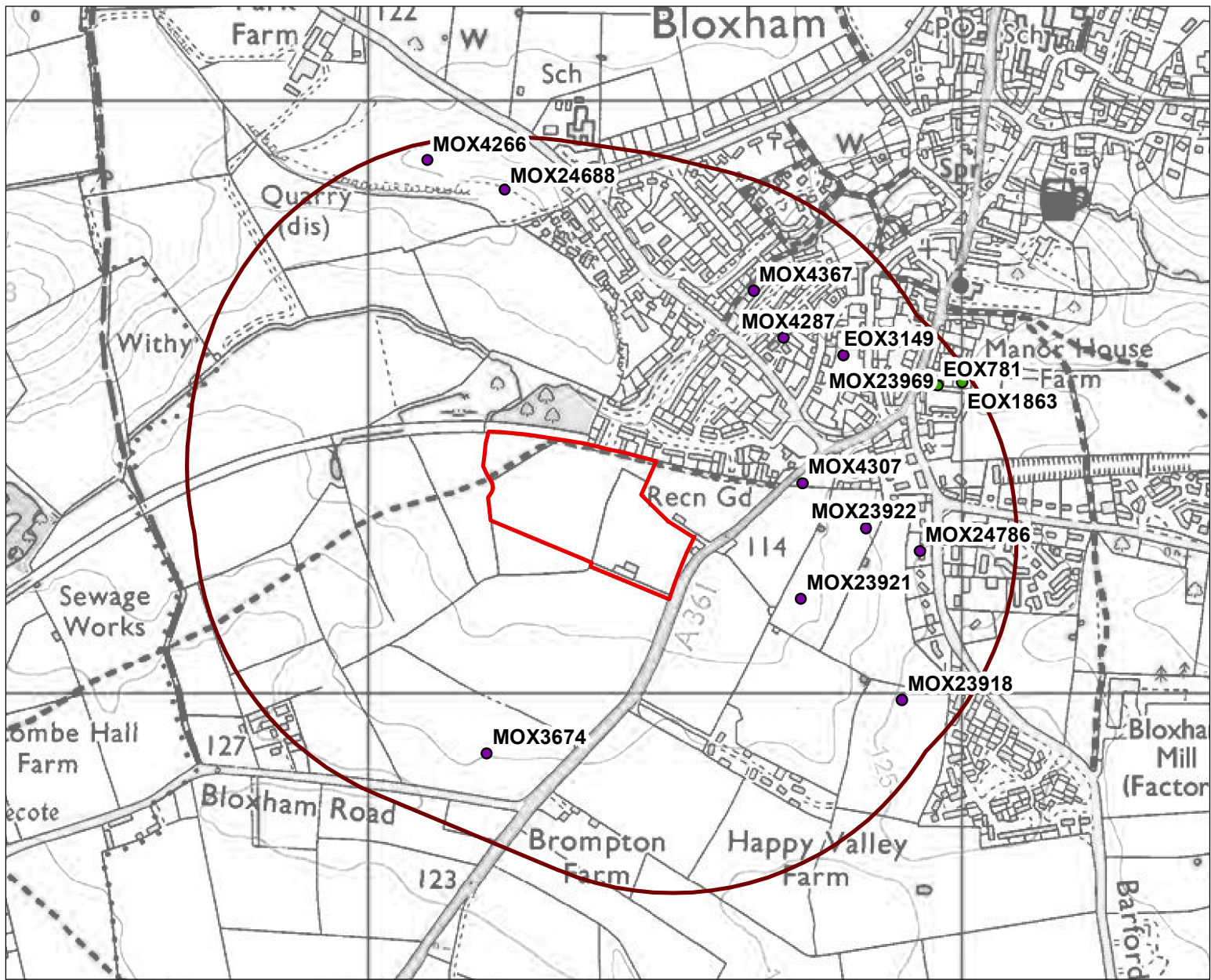
HER Monument Data

MONUID	MONRECORDT	PERIOD	MONTYPES	NAME	GRIDREF
MOX23918	Find Spot	Early Medieval/Dark Age	FINDSPOT	Saxon Small Brooch	SP 4290 3499
MOX23921	Find Spot	Undated	FINDSPOT	Crotal bell in a field SW of Bloxham	SP 4273 3516
MOX23922	Find Spot	Undated	FINDSPOT	Crotal bell	SP 4284 3528
MOX23969	Monument	Post Roman	DITCH, ENCLOSURE? BUILDING	Late Saxon/Early Medieval ditches and late Medieval/Tudor stone structures at Queen Street	SP 42802 35571
MOX24688	Monument	Post Medieval to Modern	TRAMWAY, QUARRY, IRONSTONE WORKINGS	C20 opencast ironstone working area	SP 4223 3585
MOX24786	Monument	Modern	BARRACKS, GUARDHOUSE, AIR RAID SHELTER, MORTUARY, SICK QUARTERS	RAF Barford St John Dispersed Site7	SP 42930 35241
MOX3674	Element	Roman	CORN DRYING OVEN? FINDSPOT	Roman Coins and possible Corn-Drying Oven, South Newington Road	SP 422 349
MOX4266	Monument	Roman	INHUMATION CEMETERY, FINDSPOT, WELL	Romano British Inhumation Cemetery	SP 421 359

MOX4287	Monument	Post Medieval	IRONSTONE MINE	Site of Ironstone Mines	SP 427 356
MOX4307	Monument	Post Medieval	TOLL HOUSE	Site of Toll House	SP 4273 3535
MOX4367	Monument	Post Medieval	IRONSTONE MINE, TUNNEL	Site of Ironstone Mines and Tunnels	SP 4265 3568

Appendix 2: Figures

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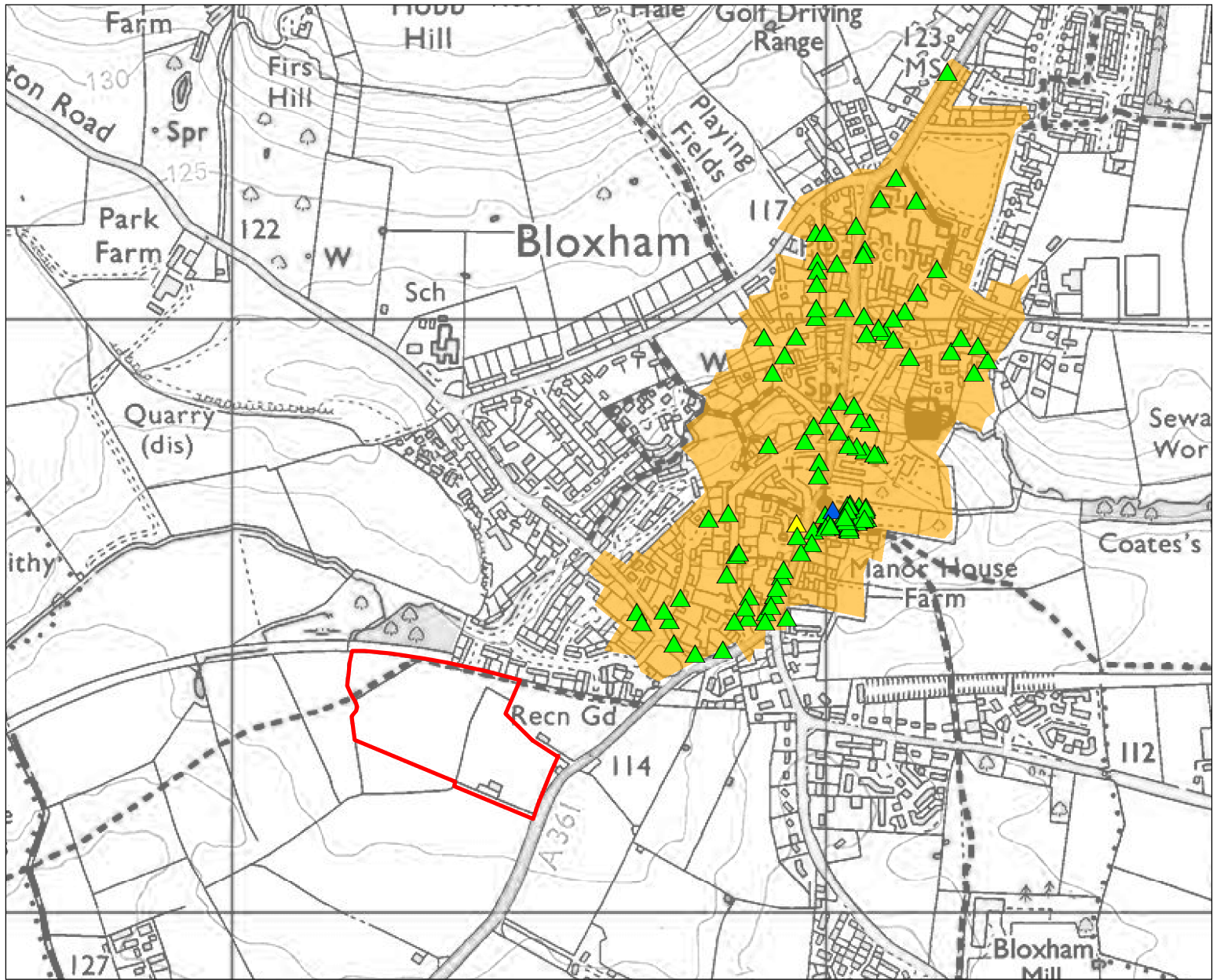
- KEY**
- Site
 - Study Area
 - HER 'Monument'
 - HER 'Event'

Revisions:
 First Issue- 07/11/16 RG
 Second Issue- 03/02/17 RG

**Figure 1: Oxfordshire
 HER Data**
 Land off South Newington
 Road, Bloxham, Oxfordshire

Client: Gladman Developments Ltd
 DRWG No: P16-0883 Sheet No: - REV:-
 Drawn by: RG Approved by: RME
 Date: 03/02/17
 Scale: 1:10,000 @ A4

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KEY

- Site
- ▲ Grade I Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II* Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II Listed Building
- Conservation Area

Revisions:
 First Issue- 07/11/16 RG
 Second Issue- 03/02/17 RG

Figure 2: Designated Heritage Assets
 Land off South Newington Road, Bloxham, Oxfordshire

Client: Gladman Developments Ltd
 DRWG No: P16-0883 Sheet No: - REV: -
 Drawn by: RG Approved by: RME
 Date: 03/02/17
 Scale: 1:10,000 @ A4



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