



Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

The Beeches, Steeple
Aston, Oxfordshire

March 2019 | Project Ref AC00977A

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Executive Summary

This archaeological assessment has been prepared by Archaeology Collective, on behalf of Mr Adrian Shooter, to inform proposals for residential development on land adjacent to his house known as The Beeches, which is situated on the southeastern outskirts of the village of Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire. The application site lies within Cherwell District.

The purpose of this assessment is to consider the archaeological potential of the land in question and to highlight any areas of known or suspected archaeological potential or significance. It will not consider the built heritage (i.e. listed buildings, conservation areas, Registered Parks & Gardens or locally listed buildings), which are dealt with in a separate heritage report.

The application site does not contain any designated archaeological heritage assets such as World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments or registered battlefields, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ and against development.

There are no designated archaeological heritage assets such as World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments or registered battlefields in the 1km study area, and therefore a consideration of impacts on setting has not been necessary.

The application site lies within an Archaeological Constraint Priority Area. A single non-designated archaeological heritage asset, a skeleton (undated), was found in 1926 at an unspecified location within the eastern part of the driveway, close to Heyford Road, which may be linked with prehistoric and Roman remains found on the opposite (east side) of the road.

However, archaeological monitoring carried out at The Beeches in 2003 in advance of the construction of a dining room extension on the west side of the house, an enclosed swimming pool, various outbuildings and service trenches north and northeast of the house, together with topsoil stripping and cuttings associated with the layout of the narrow gauge railway track which encircles the garden and paddock to the west of the house, recorded no archaeological remains or deposits.

Consequently it is concluded that there is a medium-high potential for encountering further burials of possible Roman date within the eastern part of the drive closest to Heyford Road, and a low potential for encountering archaeological remains of other periods within the remainder of the application site.

This assessment provides sufficient archaeological information to inform the determination of a planning application.

The conclusions of this assessment are in accordance with both local and national planning policy.

1.0

1. Introduction

Project Background

- 1.1** This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by Dr Anne Johnson BA (Hons) PhD FSA MCIfA, Archaeologist at Archaeology Collective, on behalf of Mr Adrian Shooter. Documentary and cartographic research was carried out by the author. A site visit was made on 22nd February 2019.
- 1.2** The subject of this assessment, **hereafter referred to as the 'application site'**, comprises the garden and paddock at The Beeches, which lies west of Heyford Road on the southeastern edge of the village of Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 447648, 225239. Steeple Aston is situated within the northeast part of the county of Oxfordshire c.22km north-northwest of Oxford and c.15km south of Banbury (Figure 1.1). The application site lies within Cherwell District.
- 1.3** The proposal is for an outline planning application for the erection of up to 8 dwellings in the domestic curtilage of The Beeches.
- 1.4** The purpose of this assessment is to consider the archaeological potential of the land in question and to highlight any areas of known or suspected archaeological potential or significance. It will not consider the built heritage (i.e. listed buildings, conservation areas, Registered parks & Gardens or locally listed buildings), which are dealt with in a separate heritage report.¹
- 1.5** To set the application site in a wider local context, this desk-based assessment also considers known archaeology within a 1km radius of its centre point. This **buffer zone is referred to in the present report as the 'study area'**.
- 1.6** The report considers only designated and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest as recorded in statutory or non-statutory repositories of historic environment data. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Finds/findspots of artefactual material (e.g. stone tools);
 - Finds/findspots of ecofactual material (e.g. animal bone);
 - Locations, features or objects referenced from historic documents;
 - Archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits;

¹ Davis 2019.

- Sub surface archaeological remains of features, buildings or structures;
- Scheduled monuments; and
- Registered Battlefields

1.7 This assessment is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the procedures set out in **the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's (CIfA) 'Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment'**.²

1.8 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of evidence on the Oxfordshire County Historic Environment Record (HER) together with a range of archives. The report incorporates the results of a comprehensive map regression exercise in order to review the impacts of existing and previous development on potential underlying archaeological deposits.

1.9 The assessment thus enables all relevant parties to assess the archaeological potential of the application site and to consider the need for design, civil engineering and archaeological solutions to the potentials identified.

Geology & Soils

1.10 The British Geological Survey identifies the solid geology as sandstone (Horsehay Sand Formation within the western half of the site, west of the house, and Northampton Sand Formation to the east (Figure 2.1).³ However, archaeological monitoring at several locations within the application site in 2003 identified Cornbrash limestone overlain by subsoil varying in thickness from 120-300mm **(thicker to the west) comprising 'compact pale orange brown slightly clayey silt with 15-20% content of small limestone'** overlain by a 200-280mm thick topsoil layer comprising **'compact mid orange brown very slightly clayey silt'**. The parking area adjacent to the north side of the house (gravel and tarmac) was found to directly overlie the Cornbrash bedrock.⁴

1.11 The soils are recorded as freely draining slightly acid sandy soils, which are low in fertility, generally supporting habitats of acid dry pasture, acid deciduous and coniferous woodland, with potential for lowland heath.⁵

² CIfA 2017.

³ British Geological Society online viewer <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/>

⁴ Moore 2003.

⁵ <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

Location, Site Conditions & Topography

- 1.12** The application site comprises a rectangular plot of land including the gardens of The Beeches on the south, north and east sides of the house, a parking area on the north side accessed by a c.55m long driveway from Heyford Road, together with a grass paddock to the west; the whole plot covers an area of c.1.3ha. The site lies just beyond the southern outskirts of the village of Steeple Aston, c.435m north of the Heyford Bridge crossing of the River Cherwell. Beeches House is a detached house which was built **in the 'Arts and Craft's style in 1908.**⁶ A dining room extension, swimming pool, outbuildings, and a narrow gauge railway track were constructed in 2003-4.
- 1.13** The railway runs on a narrow gauge 610mm (2ft) track. There is a total 1.6km length of track following a figure-of-eight configuration around the perimeter of the site, with a crossing in front of a station which stands in the centre of the site, on the west side of the house. The railway is themed on the Indian Darjeeling Himalayan Railway; the station is a galvanised iron clad building known as '**Rinkingpong Road**'. To the south of the station stand two modern engine sheds with associated sidings and a water tower. There are two further outbuildings (brick-built and rendered) northeast of the house (on the north side of the drive), and another (timber-built) within the paddock to the west, close to the northern circuit of the track (Figure 1.3).
- 1.14** The application site lies on the west side of the valley of the River Cherwell, the ground sloping steeply south- and southeast-wards down to the river (Figure 2.2). There are spot heights of 105.5 AOD on Heyford Road just north of the entrance to The Beeches, decreasing to 98m AOD close to the southeastern angle of the neighbouring property, Orchard House. There is a gradient of 1 in 10 on the road as it approaches Heyford Bridge, which stands at 74m AOD.
- 1.15** Construction of the railway track has resulted in significant landscaping within the application site. The track runs on an embankment, ranging from c.1.5–2 m in height, as it climbs from the drive on the southeast side of the site around the southern boundary of the garden (Images 4 & 5), and curves northwards towards the engine sheds and water tower (Images 6 & 7). Further west, within the paddock, the track runs in a cutting, to a maximum depth of c.1m as it approaches the southwest angle of the circuit, continuing around the western edge of the circuit before decreasing in depth east of the outbuilding (Images 8 & 9). There is a steep incline on the north side of the track from this outbuilding down towards the two outbuildings north of the drive (northeast of the house) (Image 11). Seven steps (c.1.4m in total height) lead up from the parking area north of the house to the engine sheds and station beyond (Image 12).

⁶ <https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/a-walk-around-steeple-aston/>

Site Photographs



Image 1: Looking southwest up the drive to The Beeches from Heyford Road.



Image 2: Outbuildings northeast of the house.



Image 3: Looking northwest showing the railway track crossing the top of the drive between the house and outbuildings.



Image 4: The railway track running on an embankment around the southeast side of the garden.



Image 5: Looking southwest along the embankment, with the main garden on the right hand side.



Image 6: Engine sheds situated on the southwest and west sides of the house.



Image 7: Looking east-southeast, showing the station (left) and the track down to the engine sheds and the southeast angle of the site (right).



Image 8: Looking west up the incline towards the southwest angle of the site.



Image 9: Looking east showing the cutting on the northern boundary of the site.



Image 10: Looking from the station across the paddock towards the southwest angle of the site.



Image 11: Looking east-southeast down to the outbuildings (left) and the curve / crossing to the station (right).



Image 12: The western edge of the parking area north of the house showing 7 steps up to the engine sheds and station beyond (centre rear).

2.0

2. Archaeological and Historical Background

Introduction

- 2.1** This assessment considers the archaeological potential of the proposed development. It does not consider built heritage aspects (listed buildings, locally listed buildings and conservation areas), or registered parks and gardens.
- 2.2** The application site does not contain any designated assets of archaeological interest, such as scheduled monuments or registered battlefields where there would be a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ* and against development proceeding.
- 2.3** There are no designated archaeological heritage assets such as World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments or registered battlefields in the 1km study area.
- 2.4** The Beeches lies within an Archaeological Constraint Priority Area (DOX168888).⁷
- 2.5** A single non-designated archaeological heritage asset has been recorded within the application site: the discovery of a skeleton (undated) found in 1926 and donated to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford in 1949, which is mapped by the HER within the eastern part of the driveway to The Beeches, close to Heyford Road (HER4210).
- 2.6** There are an additional 94 non-designated archaeological assets within the wider (1km radius) study area (Figure 3.1): 2 prehistoric, 4 Roman, 7 medieval, 77 post-medieval (73 of which mainly relate to standing village buildings, together with garden features and statues associated with Rousham House and Park), 1 modern (war memorial), and 2 undated (Figure 3.1).
- 2.7** The application site lies within Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) area 'rural: village'.

Previous archaeological work

- 2.8** The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) records 9 archaeological investigations in advance of redevelopment within the 1km radius study area

⁷ <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/3783/steeples-aston>

(Figure 3.2). This work has comprised 3 trial trenching evaluations, two of which were followed by further excavation, 4 watching briefs (archaeological monitoring of groundworks), one field visit and recording exercise, and one standing building survey.

- 2.9** Within the application site, a programme of archaeological monitoring (watching brief) carried out in 2003 in advance of the construction of a dining room extension on the west side of the house, an enclosed swimming pool, various outbuildings, and service trenches north and northeast of the house, together with topsoil stripping and cuttings associated with the narrow gauge railway track which encircles the garden and paddock to the west of the house, recorded no archaeological remains or deposits (EOX1098).⁸
- 2.10** Archaeological investigations comprising trial trenching followed by more extensive archaeological excavation in 1997 in advance of building development at Lawrence Fields, c.250m north of the application site, set back from the west side of Heyford Road, on the southeastern outskirts of the historic core of the village, located evidence for prehistoric and Roman settlement, including at least 5 inhumation burials, whose findings will be discussed further where relevant in the period descriptions below (EOX116, EOX117 & EOX1363).⁹
- 2.11** An inhumation thought to be of possible Roman date was recorded following the report of human remains having been found during the construction of a patio at 'Burlands', on the western edge of the village (EOX2142).
- 2.12** Archaeological investigations on land adjacent to the village hall in advance of the construction of a games area found no archaeological remains; the land had been previously topsoil stripped and landscaped (EOX2119).
- 2.13** Other archaeological investigations within the 1km study area relate to a standing building survey at Manor Farm Barns (EOX2749) and watching briefs at Heyford Manor (EOX5659) and St Mary's Church, Lower Heyford (EOX1753), which have no direct relationship with the application site.

Designated Heritage Assets of Archaeological Interest

- 2.14** The identification of relevant designated archaeological assets within and beyond the application site that potentially could be affected by the proposed development (Step 1 of the HE guidance¹⁰) was determined, in the first instance through an

⁸ Moore 2003

⁹ Muir 1997; Oxford Archaeology 1998; Cook & Hayden 2000.

¹⁰ HE 2017

initial desk top analysis. In the present case, there are no designated archaeological heritage assets such as World Heritage sites, scheduled monuments or registered battlefields within the application site or the 1km study area, and therefore a consideration of impacts on setting has not been necessary.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets of Archaeological Interest

2.15 This section considers the archaeological finds and features from within the 1km radius study area, held within the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a map regression exercise charting the history of the application site from the mid-18th century to the present day.

2.16 Timescales used in this section are as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Prehistoric | | | |
| Palaeolithic | 450,000 | - 12,000 | BC |
| Mesolithic | 12,000 | - 4,000 | BC |
| Neolithic | 4,000 | - 1,800 | BC |
| Bronze Age | 1,800 | - 600 | BC |
| Iron Age | 600 | - AD 43 | |
| Historic | | | |
| Roman | AD | 43 | - 410 |
| Saxon/Early Medieval | AD | 410 | - 1066 |
| Medieval | AD | 1066 | - 1485 |
| Post Medieval | AD | 1486 | - 1800 |
| Modern | AD | 1800 | - Present |

2.17 The HER map and list are included in this report showing the distribution of entries within the 1km study area.

HER Baseline

Prehistoric

- 2.18** Oxfordshire HER holds two records of prehistoric assets within the 1km study area; none are recorded within the application site.
- 2.19** An Iron Age (later prehistoric) 'habitation site' is recorded c.200m east-northeast of the application site (HER4211). The HER gives scant details for this record apart from: '*Found 15.2.49*' and '*Local informant as main provider of information. Recorded on SMR¹¹ c.1970s. No name or date supplied*'.
- 2.20** In contrast, archaeological trial trenching and a more extensive archaeological excavation carried out in 1997 in advance of residential development at Lawrence Fields, on the west side of Heyford Road, c.250m north of the application site, revealed evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity (HER16024). The earliest evidence from this site relates to the Neolithic period (New Stone Age) dating from c. 4,000 BC, a period which is characterised by the first farming communities, who carried out large-scale woodland clearance to provide land for the cultivation of crops and animal rearing. These settled communities were the first to build large earth and stone-built monuments for burial and probable ceremonial and ritual functions. Pottery vessels appeared for the first time alongside the continued refinement of earlier prehistoric traditions of flint tools and weapons. Neolithic pottery sherds and flintwork were found in two pits or possible tree-throw holes; it is uncertain as to whether this material was *in situ* or redeposited in later features.¹² Later occupation was represented by Early Iron Age pit groups, tree-throw holes possibly representing a land boundary, storage pits and the ditches of a possible enclosure, continuing into the Middle Iron Age, activity represented by further pits and at least two postholes, and continuing into the later prehistoric (late Iron Age) period, characterised by further ditches and pits and a possible trackway running on an approximate northwest-southeast alignment. Human remains were present in several of the pits and ditches.
- 2.21** Middle to Late Iron Age shell-tempered pottery sherds were identified during fieldwalking within the site of allotments on the opposite (east) side of Heyford Road, c.100m northeast of the entrance to The Beeches (HER16346).
- 2.22** The only HER records for prehistoric activity within the 1km radius study area lie on the southeast side of the village, in proximity to Heyford Road, within a distance of 200-250m from the application site. Although the location and character of the closest of the two records is uncertain, archaeological evaluation c.250m to the

¹¹ Sites and Monuments Record – a precursor of the present Historic Environment Record.

¹² Muir 1997; Cook & Heyden 2000.

north of the application site has confirmed early prehistoric (Neolithic) material, with more extensive domestic activity throughout the Iron Age and into the later prehistoric (Pre-Roman Iron Age) period. The southern boundary of this settlement is uncertain, although it seems unlikely to have extended as far as The Beeches, as no evidence for any archaeological activity was observed during archaeological monitoring of groundworks both close to the present house and within the paddock to the west in 2003. Consequently the potential for encountering archaeological remains of very high, high or medium significance from this period within the application site is considered to be low.

Roman

2.23 The application site lies almost equidistant from the Roman towns of Alchester (10.8km to the southeast) and Kings Sutton (11.7m to the north-northeast). The Roman road linking these towns, known later as 'The Portway', which ran almost directly northwards from its junction with the east-west Roman road (Akerman Street) at Kirtlington, passing through Great Heyford, followed the eastern bank of the River Cherwell, 2.4km east of the application site.¹³

2.24 The remains of a Roman villa were found in October 1658 in the course of ploughing at an unknown location within the parish of Steeple Aston. The Oxfordshire antiquary, Anthony Wood recorded in his diary that the remains were found *'by a man who was plowing a vault underground and on the top of it where the plow struck was a Romane urne or two. This va(u)lt was all paved with little bricks as big as half-crownes laid in a fine cement, some with flower-de-liz on them. They were all in the fashion of lozenges, etc. – This I gave Dr. Plot'*.¹⁴ Wood's description indicates the discovery of a 'pavement' formed of small ceramic or stone cubes set into a cement floor [tessellated or mosaic floor] supported by the pillars of an underfloor heating system [hypocaust], thus giving the impression of a 'vault'. The antiquarian Dr Robert Plot, in his *Natural History of Oxford-Shire*, published in 1677, provided a little more detail of the 'pavement' as comprising *'squares of divers colours, and set in curious figures ... oblong squares set perpendicular to the Horizon'*.¹⁵ Neither antiquary gave any indication as to the location of this pavement. The local historian William Wing, writing in 1875, stated that the site was *'somewhat less than a quarter of a mile from the NW. boundary of the parish of Rousham, where also till recently were traces of a Romano-British bath, the water of which being of the purest description and on high ground, is utilized for the supply of Mr. Dormer's mansion, at the distance of at least a mile'*, adding that when this *'field was subdivided into plots for spade husbandry, many skeletons of full-grown men and women were discovered, at depths varying from 1*

¹³ Margary 1973: Route 161A; Henig & Booth 2000.

¹⁴ Clark 1891:264.

¹⁵ Plot 1677: 327.

to 2 ft. from the surface'.¹⁶ This description appears to place the villa close to Rousham's northwest parish boundary, i.e within a distance of c.400m from Hopcrofts's Holt, whilst the associated burials at Hopcrofts Holt have subsequently been identified as being pre-Roman in date.¹⁷

2.25 In an attempt to locate the villa on the south side of the village, fieldwalking was undertaken in 2000 by the North Oxfordshire Field Group on the site of allotments 100m northeast of the entrance to The Beeches. A scatter of Roman pottery sherds of mainly 2nd-3rd century, with some early 4th century sherds, was identified, together with fragments of red hypocaust tiles (pillars supporting an underfloor heating system) (HER16346). However, the nature and volume of the finds indicated a 'smaller lower class site', probably a farmstead. The location of the villa remains unknown.

2.26 Roman remains have been recorded at four further locations within the village. Archaeological trial trenching at Lawrence Fields, on the west side of Heyford Road, c.250m north of the application site, revealed evidence for a Roman trackway running on a northwest-southeast alignment, probably following a prehistoric precursor, with an associated ditch containing 3 inhumation burials, with a further burial close by (HER16024). An inhumation burial with the head to the north, with a pair of bronze bracelets on the wrists, was found in 1875 on the site of the infant school, northeast of the church, c.885m north of the application site (HER1708), and a Roman coin of Tacitus (AD 275-276) was found in a garden close by (HER1707). A further inhumation burial, thought to be Roman in date, was exposed at a depth of 0.4m beneath ground surface in the course of removing large flat stones during the construction of a patio at 'Burlands' on the southwest edge of the village, 660m northwest of the application site (HER26108).

2.27 The location of the Roman villa uncovered by the plough in 1658 in Steeple Aston remains unknown. Fieldwalking on the east side of Heyford Road, c.100m northeast of the entrance to The Beeches has indicated the presence of a probable farmstead in the vicinity, which may be associated with a trackway excavated on the opposite (west) side of the road further north at Lawrence Fields. The extent of this activity is uncertain. There is insufficient information to determine the precise findspot of the undated inhumation recorded close to the entrance to The Beeches from Heyford Road in 1926. By analogy with other burials found in the study area it is likely to be Roman in date and may relate to a burial ground on the edge of the Roman farmstead/settlement on the opposite side of the road. Consequently the potential for encountering further burials within the eastern part of the driveway is considered to be medium-high.

¹⁶ Salzman 1939.

¹⁷ Salzman 1939.

- 2.28** Within the wider application site, no evidence for any archaeological activity was observed in 2003 during archaeological monitoring of groundworks both close to the present house and within the paddock to the west, and consequently the potential for encountering archaeological remains of very high, high or medium significance from this period is considered to be low.

Medieval

- 2.29** There are no Saxon/early medieval HER entries within the 1km study area around the Site. The Norman taxation document, written in 1086 and referring back to the Conquest of 1066, known today as Domesday Book, reveals that Steeple Aston (*Estone*) was a medium sized manor. The place-name derives from the Old English '*tun*' meaning village. The steeple element of the place-name, referring to the church steeple, was first documented in 1220.¹⁸

- 2.30** The Domesday manor was held in 1086 by Humfrey, the tenant of Adam son of Hybert de Ryes:

Humfrey holds of Adam the son of Hubert in Estone 5 hides¹⁹. There is land for 9 ploughs. Now in demesne [lordship] (there are) 4 ploughs and 6 serfs [slaves]; and 12 villeins [villagers] with 2 bordars [smallholders] have 6 ploughs. There (are) 29 acres of meadow. It was worth £10; now £14.²⁰

- 2.31** The earliest part of the medieval settlement is presumed to have lain lay on the high ground on the north side of a small steep valley of a small tributary of the River Cherwell, adjacent to the church (HER5087), c.850m north of the application site. The earliest fabric of the parish church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul dates from the 13th century. The shaft of a 14th-15th century limestone cross stands in the churchyard, c.8m south of the church (HER5083). Rectory Farmhouse and Manor Court Cottage, situated on the opposite (south) side of the street, retain fabric of the 14th century manor house (HER5981).

- 2.32** Heyford Bridge, which stands c.480m south of the application site, was first documented in 1255 (HER2412). A measured survey in 1979 showed that elements at the east end of the stone bridge are of 13th century date, and further work in 1980 showed that two of the four arches still retain their medieval form and vaulting ribs.

¹⁸ Crossley 1983.

¹⁹ The hide was nominally the amount of land which could be ploughed by a single plough and an eight-ox team in a year. This measurement was variable, according to the land quality, and could vary between 60 and 180 acres.

²⁰ Morris 1978: 7,45; Crossley 1983.

- 2.33** The earthwork remains of three medieval fishponds survive on the north bank of a tributary of the River Cherwell, immediately northwest of the bridge (HER4214).
- 2.34** The remainder of HER entries of medieval period relate to the church and manor house at Lower Heyford: the Church of St Mary (HER4684) and the adjacent manor house (HER5955).
- 2.35** As the application site lies c.850m distant from the medieval core of the village, close to the southeastern boundary of the parish, and no material of medieval date is known from within or in close proximity to it, the potential for encountering archaeological remains of very high, high or medium significance from this period within the application site is considered to be low.

Post-medieval and Modern

- 2.36** South Side represents a post-medieval (16th century) expansion of the village to form the present almost square street layout bounded by Water Lane to the west and Paines Hill to the east, on either side of the valley of the small steep valley of a tributary of the River Cherwell.²¹
- 2.37** There are 77 post-medieval HER entries within the 1km radius study area. Seventy three of these entries mainly relate to standing village buildings, together with garden features and statues associated with Rousham House and Park. The remainder relate to a former brickyard, kiln and clay pit (HER214), an ice house at Rousham Park (HER3353), the weigh bridge on the Oxford Canal at Lower Heyford Wharf (HER4111) and a former quarry (HER4212). The single modern entry relates to the war memorial which stands on the road frontage on the west side of Heyford Road, immediately north of The Crescent (HER18735). As none of these records relates to the application site, they will not be discussed further in this document.
- 2.38** The Steeple Aston Enclosure Map of 1767 is the earliest to show sufficient detail of the application site (Figure 4.1).²² The application site lies within the southern part of one of the fields (No 99) on the southeast side of the village, allotted to Mr. Jacob Watson, who was one of the principal farmers in the village, having been allocated 116 acres, almost one quarter of the manor, at Enclosure.²³
- 2.39** Subsequent maps show that the application site remained farmland until the early 20th century (Figures 4.2-4.3).

²¹ Crossley 1983.

²² Oxfordshire History Centre PAR251/16/P/1.

²³ Lane 2013.

- 2.40** The Beeches was built in 1908.²⁴ The 1922 Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in 1919, shows the house and gardens, occupying an area of 1.823 acres, with a small field/paddock, 1.506 acres in area, to the west (Figure 4.4). The house, with the curving turning/parking area was flanked by conifers to the north, with a further stand of conifers to the west; the drive was also flanked by conifers. Outbuildings were present to the northeast of the house.
- 2.41** By 1973 the outbuildings to the northeast of the house had been extended as far as the northern boundary of the application site. By this date the adjacent house to the southeast, known as Hillside, had been built, together with a pair of semi-detached houses on the west side of Heyford Road (Nos. 25-28) and The Crescent (Figure 4.5).
- 2.42** The railway circuit and associated buildings including the station were built in 2003-4. The current Ordnance Survey map shows the layout albeit at a very small (1:25,000) scale (Figure 4.6). Figure 4.7 shows a locomotive approaching the station (Rinkingpong Road) in 2014. A 2017 satellite image (Figure 4.8) shows the current layout.
- 2.43** Map regression has shown that the application site was open farmland throughout the majority of the post-medieval and modern periods until The Beeches was built in c.1908. Consequently, there is a low potential for encountering archaeological remains of the post-medieval period.

²⁴ <https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/a-walk-around-steeple-aston/>

3.0

3. Site Conditions and the Proposed Development

Site Conditions

- 3.1** The subject of this assessment comprises the garden and adjacent paddock at The Beeches, approached by a 55m long drive from the west side of Heyford Road, on the southeastern edge of the village of Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire, c.850m south of the historic core of the village.
- 3.2** No designated archaeological remains have been recorded within the application site or the wider 1km radius study area.
- 3.3** A single non-designated archaeological asset, a skeleton (undated), has been recorded at an uncertain location within the drive, close to Heyford Road.
- 3.4** Historic map regression from the middle of the 18th century has demonstrated that the application site has been farmland throughout the post-medieval and modern periods until the construction and layout of gardens and outbuildings of The Beeches in c.1908, and the addition of the narrow gauge railway track with ancillary buildings in 2003-2004.
- 3.5** The foundations and services of the existing buildings and access routes, garden layout and the railway track which runs through a cutting within the western half of the site, will have already impacted underlying deposits.

Proposed Development

- 3.6** The proposal is for the erection of up to 8 dwellings in the domestic curtilage of The Beeches. An indicative Site Plan (372A01-101_C) is appended to this document.
- 3.7** Residential development will, typically, mean the cutting of new foundation trenches, utility trenches and also stripping for new roads and the widening of the current driveway. These activities will remove sub-surface deposits. If archaeological remains are present on the site then these may be impacted.

4.0

4. Conclusions

- 4.1** Residential development is proposed within the gardens and grounds of The Beeches, Steeple Aston, Oxfordshire.
- 4.2** In line with the policies of the local planning authority and national government guidance as set out in the NPPF, an archaeological desk-based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the archaeological potential of the application site and assess the level of impact the development proposals may have on any archaeology present.
- 4.3** This archaeological assessment concludes that the application site does not contain any designated archaeological heritage assets such as World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments or registered battlefields where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation *in situ* and against development.
- 4.4** The application site lies within an Archaeological Constraint Priority Area. This is not a statutory designation, but does mean that any planning applications within this area are more likely to require archaeological scrutiny.
- 4.5** Based on the information within the HER, supplemented by historic mapping from the middle of the 18th century onwards and documentary research, it is considered that there is a medium-high potential for encountering burials of Roman date within the eastern part of the driveway, closest to Heyford Road. Apart from this part of the driveway, based upon previous archaeological monitoring within the application site there is a considered to be a low potential for encountering remains of other periods within the remainder of the application site.
- 4.6** On the basis of available evidence, it is considered that the proposed development accords with current legislation, the planning policies contained within the NPPF and those Cherwell District Council policies which relate to archaeology.

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British History online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

Cherwell District Council Village Analysis March 2017: Steeple Aston

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/3783/steeple-aston>

Google Earth www.googleearth.co.uk

Historic England Britain from above <https://britainfromabove.org.uk>

Historic England Heritage Gateway <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

Historic England Pastscape <http://www.pastscape.org/>

Historic England planning advice

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/planning-system/>

Magic Map Application <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/home.htm>

Natural England (DEFRA) <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

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The Beeches Light Railway https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beeches_Light_Railway

The Branch Line Society (Andrew Murray 2018) <https://www.branchline.uk/album-new.php?id=388>

5.0

5. Methodology

Archaeological Assessment Methodology

- 5.1** This report has been produced in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2017). These guidelines provide a national standard for the completion of desk-based assessments.
- 5.2** The assessment principally involved consultation of readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information comprised:
- Information held by the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record on known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots within 1km of the application site;
 - Oxfordshire History Centre;
 - Maps and documents online;
 - The Bodleian Library, Oxford;
 - The British Library;
 - The National Archives; and
 - The National Heritage List for England curated by Historic England.
- 5.3** This report provides a synthesis of relevant information for the site derived from a search area extending up to 1km **from its boundary, hereafter known as the 'study area', to allow** for additional contextual information regarding its archaeological interest or potential to be gathered.
- 5.4** In addition, the report also considers the nature and significance of any effects arising beyond the boundary of the application site, i.e. through potential changes to the settings of designated heritage assets, as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF (see below).
- 5.5** The report concludes with (1) an assessment of the site's likely archaeological potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines, and (2) an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed development upon designated and undesignated archaeological assets, whether direct or indirect.

Assessment of Heritage Significance and Importance

5.6 Heritage assets are assessed in terms of their significance and importance, following the requirement in NPPF paragraph 189, and taking account of Historic England's guidance in *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA2)*. Significance, in relation to heritage policy, is defined by the NPPF 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.'

5.7 As noted above, setting is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

'The surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.'

5.8 Where potential impacts on the settings of a heritage assets are identified, the assessment of significance includes 'assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)', following Step 2 of the staged approach to setting recommended in Historic England's guidance in *The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3)*. Attributes of an asset's setting which can contribute to its significance are listed on page 9 of GPA3.

5.9 The importance of a heritage asset is the overall value assigned to it based on its heritage significance, reflecting its statutory designation or, in the case of undesignated assets, the professional judgement of the assessor (Table 1). Historic England guidance also refers to an asset's 'level of significance' (GPA2, paragraph 10), which in this usage has the same meaning as importance. Nationally and internationally designated assets are assigned to the highest two levels of importance. Grade II Listed Buildings and Grade II Registered Parks & Gardens are considered of medium importance, reflecting the lower level of policy protection provided by the NPPF (paragraph 194). Conservation Areas are not assigned to either level of importance by the NPPF but their status as local designations and their omission from the National Heritage List justifies their classification here as assets of medium importance. Other non-designated assets which are considered of local importance only are assigned to a low level of importance. Following the NPPF (Annex 2), a historic feature which lacks 'a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest' is not

considered to be a heritage asset; it may also be said to have negligible heritage importance.

Table 1: Criteria for Assessing the Importance of Heritage Assets

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

Potential for unknown heritage assets

5.10 Archaeological features are often impossible to identify through desk-based assessment. The likelihood that significant undiscovered heritage assets may be present within the application site is referred to as archaeological potential. Overall levels of potential can be assigned to different landscape zones, following the criteria in Table 2, while recognising that the archaeological potential of any zone will relate to particular historical periods and types of evidence. The following factors are considered in assessing archaeological potential:

- The distribution and character of known archaeological remains in the vicinity, based principally on an appraisal of data in the [HER];
- The history of archaeological fieldwork and research in the surrounding area, which may give an indication of the reliability and completeness of existing records;
- Environmental factors such as geology, topography and soil quality, which would have influenced land-use in the past and can therefore be used to predict the distribution of archaeological remains;

- Land-use factors affecting the survival of archaeological remains, such as ploughing or commercial forestry planting; and
- Factors affecting the visibility of archaeological remains, which may relate to both environment and land-use, such as soils and geology (which may be more or less conducive to formation of cropmarks), arable cultivation (which has potential to show cropmarks and create surface artefact scatters), vegetation, which can conceal upstanding features, and superficial deposits such as peat and alluvium which can mask archaeological features.

5.11 In light of the above, the assessment of heritage significant heritage within Sections 2 and 3 of this report has been prepared in a robust manner, employing current best practice professional guidance and giving due regard to the methodology detailed above.

Table 2: Archaeological potential

| Potential | Definition |
|------------|---|
| High | Undiscovered heritage assets of high or medium importance are likely to be present. |
| Medium | Undiscovered heritage assets of low importance are likely to be present; and it is possible, though unlikely, that assets of high or medium importance may also be present. |
| Low | The study area may contain undiscovered heritage assets, but these are unlikely to be numerous and are highly unlikely to include assets of high or medium importance. |
| Negligible | The study area is highly unlikely to contain undiscovered heritage assets of any level of importance. |
| Nil | There is no possibility of undiscovered heritage assets existing within the study area. |

Setting Assessment Methodology

5.12 The assessment process has given due consideration to Historic England guidance on setting as set out in Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets.²⁵

²⁵ Historic England 2017

- 5.13** When assessing the impact of proposals on designated heritage assets, it is not a question of whether there would be a direct physical impact on that asset, but **instead whether change within its 'setting' would lead to a loss of 'significance'**.
- 5.14** In simple terms, **setting is defined as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'**. The Historic England Good Practice Advice guidance on setting **establishes that it has a 'twin role' in both contributing to significance, and allowing heritage significance to be appreciated**. It therefore must be recognised from the outset that **'setting' is not a heritage asset, and cannot itself be harmed**. Its importance relates to the contribution it makes to the significance of the designated heritage asset and the extent to which it allows that significance to be appreciated.
- 5.15** Historic England guidance²⁶ identifies that **'change to heritage assets is inevitable, but it is only harmful when significance is damaged.'**
- 5.16** In that regard, **'significance' is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF 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.'**
- 5.17** As such, when assessing the impact of proposals on designated heritage assets beyond the boundary of a development site, it is not a question of whether setting would be affected, but rather a question of whether **change within an asset's 'setting' would lead to a loss of 'significance' or the ability to appreciate 'significance' based on the above 'heritage interest' as defined in the NPPF**.
- 5.18** Set within this context, where the objective is to determine the impact of proposals on designated heritage assets beyond the boundary of a development site, it is necessary to first define the significance of the asset in question - and the contribution made to that significance or the ability to appreciate that significance by its 'setting', in order to establish whether there would be a loss, and therefore harm. The guidance identifies that change within a heritage asset's setting need not necessarily cause harm to that asset - it can be positive, negative or neutral.
- 5.19** In light of the above, the assessment of potential setting effects, arising from the proposed scheme, has followed the guidance set out in **'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets'** published by Historic England in 2017. Part 1 of this guidance reproduces the definition of setting as outlined in the Glossary of NPPF, which observes that the setting of a heritage asset is:
- 'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting*

²⁶ Historic England 2015

may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.'

5.20 The guidance states that the importance of setting '*lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate that significance.*'

5.21 It goes on to note:

'All heritage assets have significance, some of which have particular significance and are designated. The contribution made by their setting to their significance also varies. Although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate it.'

5.22 Whilst identifying that elements of an asset's setting can make an important contribution to its significance the guidance states that: '*Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated*'. It continues by adding that: '*Conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive...*'

5.23 On a practical level, the Historic England guidance²⁷ identifies an approach to assessing setting in relation to development management which is based on a five-step procedure; i.e.:

- 1 Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- 2 Assess the degree to which these setting make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
- 3 Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
- 4 Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
- 5 Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

5.24 As far as Step 2 is concerned, the guidance makes the following observations:

'The second stage of any analysis is to assess whether the setting of an affected heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution; both setting, and views which form part of the way a setting is experienced, may be assessed additionally for the degree to which they allow

²⁷ Historic England 2017

significance to be appreciated. ...this assessment should first address the key attributes of the heritage asset itself and then consider:

- *The physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets;*
- *the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use*
- *the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use; and*
- *the asset's intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use.'*

5.25 Thereafter, the guidance notes that '*...this assessment of the contribution to significance made by setting will provide the baseline for establishing the effects of a proposed development on significance, as set out in 'Step 3' below.'*

5.26 Having established the baseline, the following guidance is provided in respect of an assessment of the effect upon 'setting'; i.e.:

'In general...the assessment should address the key attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

- *location and siting;*
- *form and appearance;*
- *wider effects; and*
- *permanence.'*

5.27 Appeal decisions, e.g. Javelin Park, Gloucestershire (Ref 12/0008/STMAJW), have clarified the interpretation of existing guidance, establishing that the ability to see a proposed development, either from the heritage asset itself or from within its setting, should not be equated with harm to the significance of the asset. The key issue is whether and to what extent the proposed development would affect the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset.

6.0

6. Legislation and Planning Framework

Introduction

- 6.1** This section sets out existing legislation and planning policy, governing the conservation and management of the historic environment, of relevance to this application.
- 6.2** In terms of '*effects on the historic environment*', the following paragraphs summarise the principal legislative instruments and planning policy framework.

Current Legislation

Scheduled Monuments

- 6.3** The relevant legislation concerning the treatment of scheduled monuments is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (HMSO 1979).
- 6.4** This act details the designation, care and management of scheduled monuments, as well as detailing the procedures needed to obtain permission for works which would directly impact upon their preservation. The Act does not confer any statutory protection on the setting of scheduled monuments, with this considered as a policy matter in Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.5** The balancing exercise to be performed – between the harm arising from a proposal and the benefits which would accrue from its implementation – is then subsequently presented in Paragraphs 195 and 196 of the NPPF.

National Planning Policy

- 6.6** The NPPF sets out the government's approach to the conservation and management of the historic environment, through the planning process, with paragraph 185 of Section 16 emphasising the need for local authorities to set out a clear strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment,

where heritage assets are recognised as a finite and irreplaceable resource, to be preserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.7 Paragraph 184 states that:

'Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance...'

6.8 Paragraph 189 concerns planning applications, stating that:

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

6.9 Designated assets are addressed in Paragraphs 193 and 194. Paragraph 193 states that:

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

6.10 Paragraph 194 states that:

'Any harm to or loss of 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.'*

6.11 Footnote 63 then goes on to state 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.'

6.12 With regard to the decision making process, paragraphs 195 and 196 are of relevance. Paragraph 195 states that:

'Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or 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 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.'*

6.13 Paragraph 196 states that:

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

6.14 The threshold between substantial and less than substantial harm has been clarified in the courts. Whilst the judgement cited relates specifically to the impact of development proposals on a listed building, Paragraphs 24 and 25 of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 2847²⁸ remain of relevance here in the way they outline the assessment of 'harm' for heritage assets:

'What the inspector was saying was that for harm to be substantial, the impact on significance was required to be serious such that very much, if not all, of the significance was drained away.'

6.15 Plainly in the context of physical harm, this would apply in the case of demolition or destruction, being a case of total loss. It would also apply to a case of serious damage to the structure of the building. In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which

²⁸ Paragraphs 24 and 25 of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 2847.

would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either '*vitiated altogether [i.e. destroyed] or very much reduced.*'

In other words, for the 'harm' to be 'substantial' – and therefore require consideration against the more stringent requirements of Paragraph 195 of the NPPF compared with Paragraph 196; the proposal would need to result in the asset's significance either being '*vitiated altogether or very much reduced.*'²⁹ Quite evidently, this represents a very high threshold to be reached.

6.16 Paragraph 200 advises that:

'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.'

6.17 With regard to non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 197 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 affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

6.18 Finally, paragraph 199 states that:

'Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage asset 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) publically accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.'

6.19 Footnote 64 then states:

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

²⁹ Paragraphs 24 and 25 of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2013] EWHC 2847*.

Local Policies

Cherwell District Council

6.20 The following policy from the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) (July 2015) is relevant to this assessment:

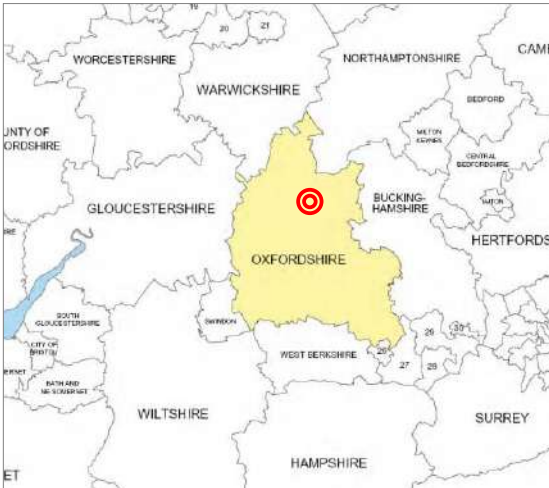
Policy ESD 15- The Character of the Built and Historic Environment.

New development proposals should:

*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*Draft Thanet Local Plan to 2031 is still at a consultation stage, and consequently saved policies from The Thanet Local Plan 2006 are still in force. Two saved policies relate to archaeology.

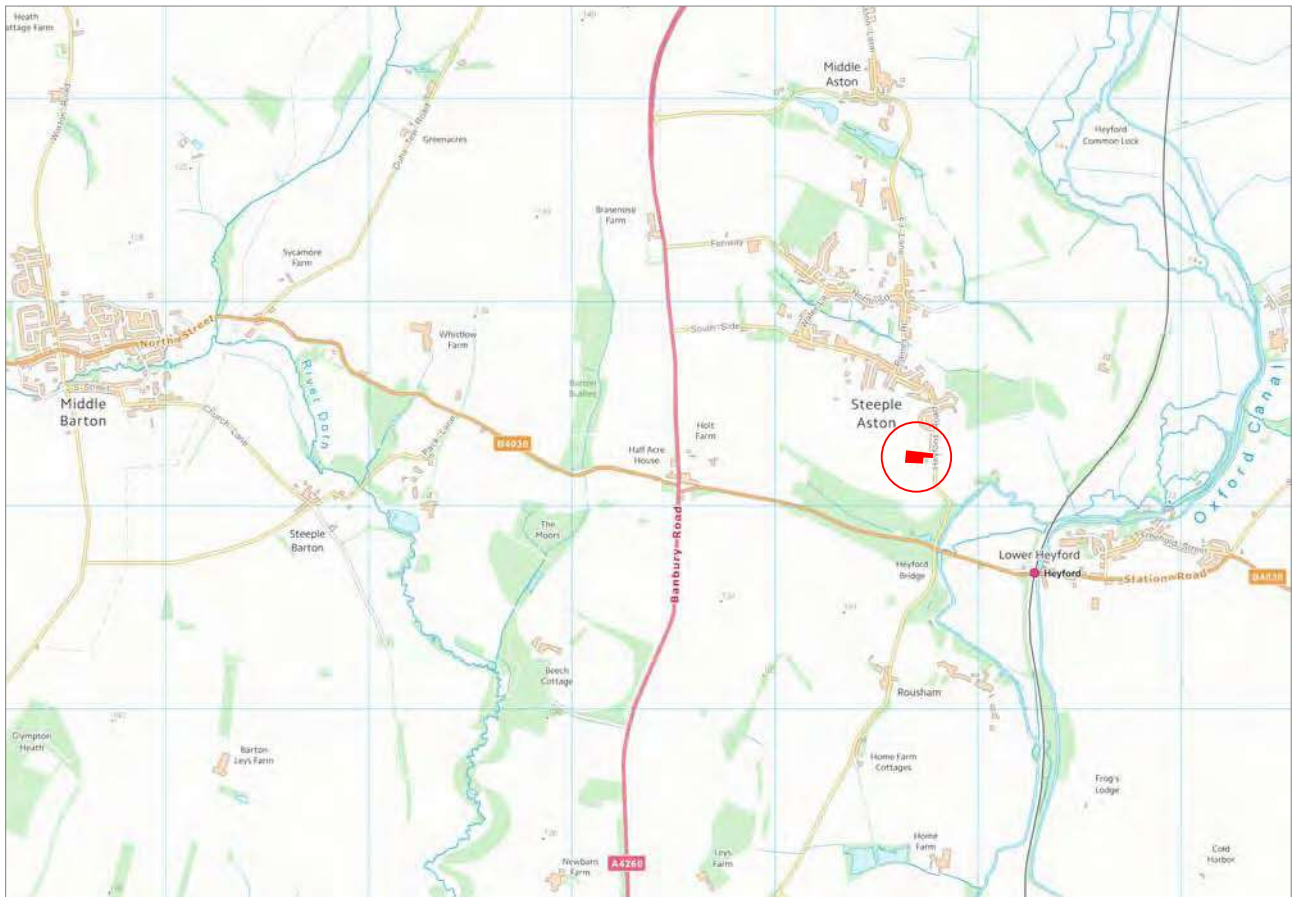
6.21 The above Acts, Regulations, plans and policies have been taken into account in the preparation of this assessment.

Figures



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Figure 1.1: Site Location.



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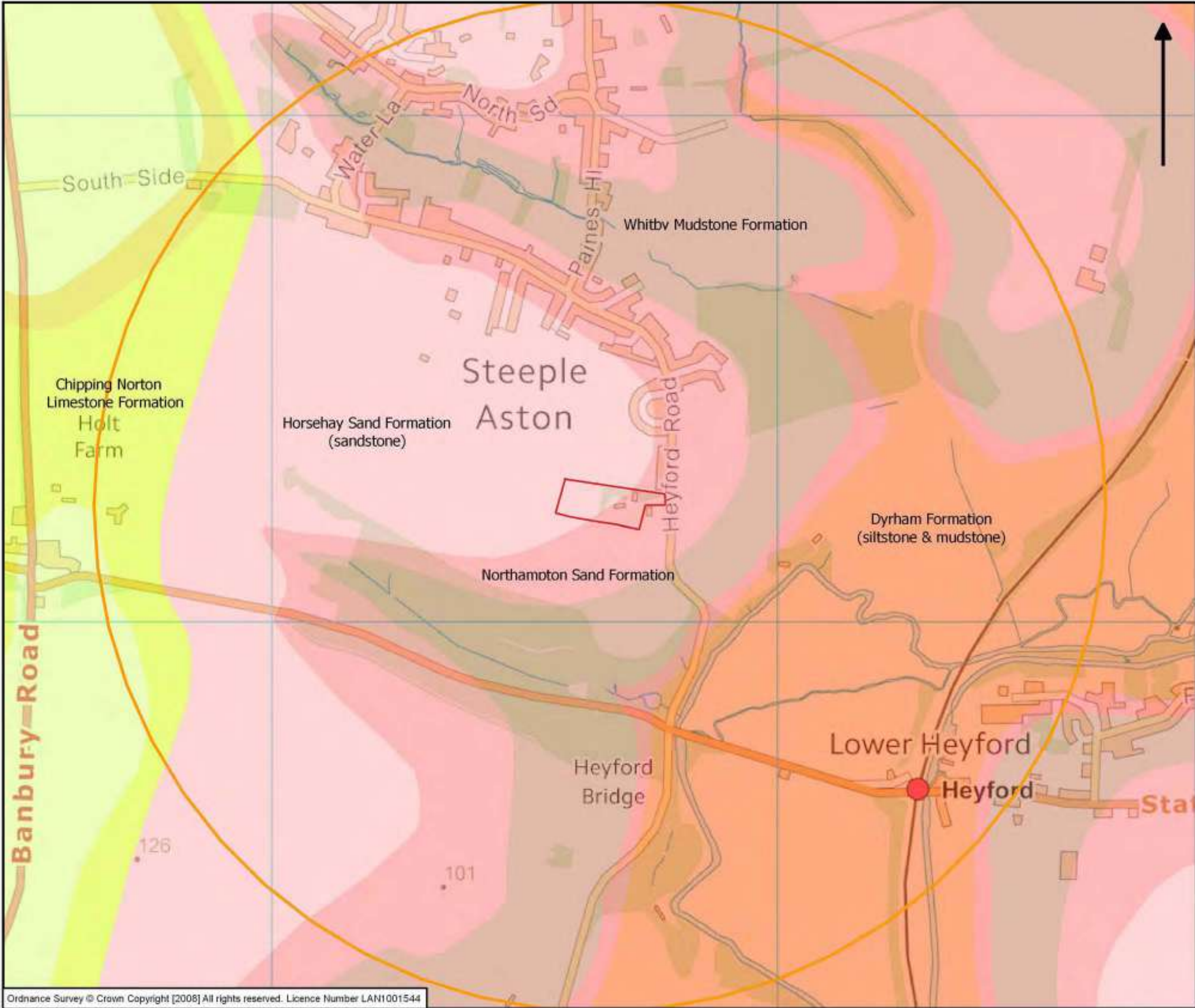


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Figure 1.2: Site Location & Layout.



Figure 1.3: The Beeches. Existing Site Layout.



Legend

- Application Site
- 1km Study Area

0 100 200 300 m

Site Name:
The Beeches, Steeple Aston,
Oxfordshire

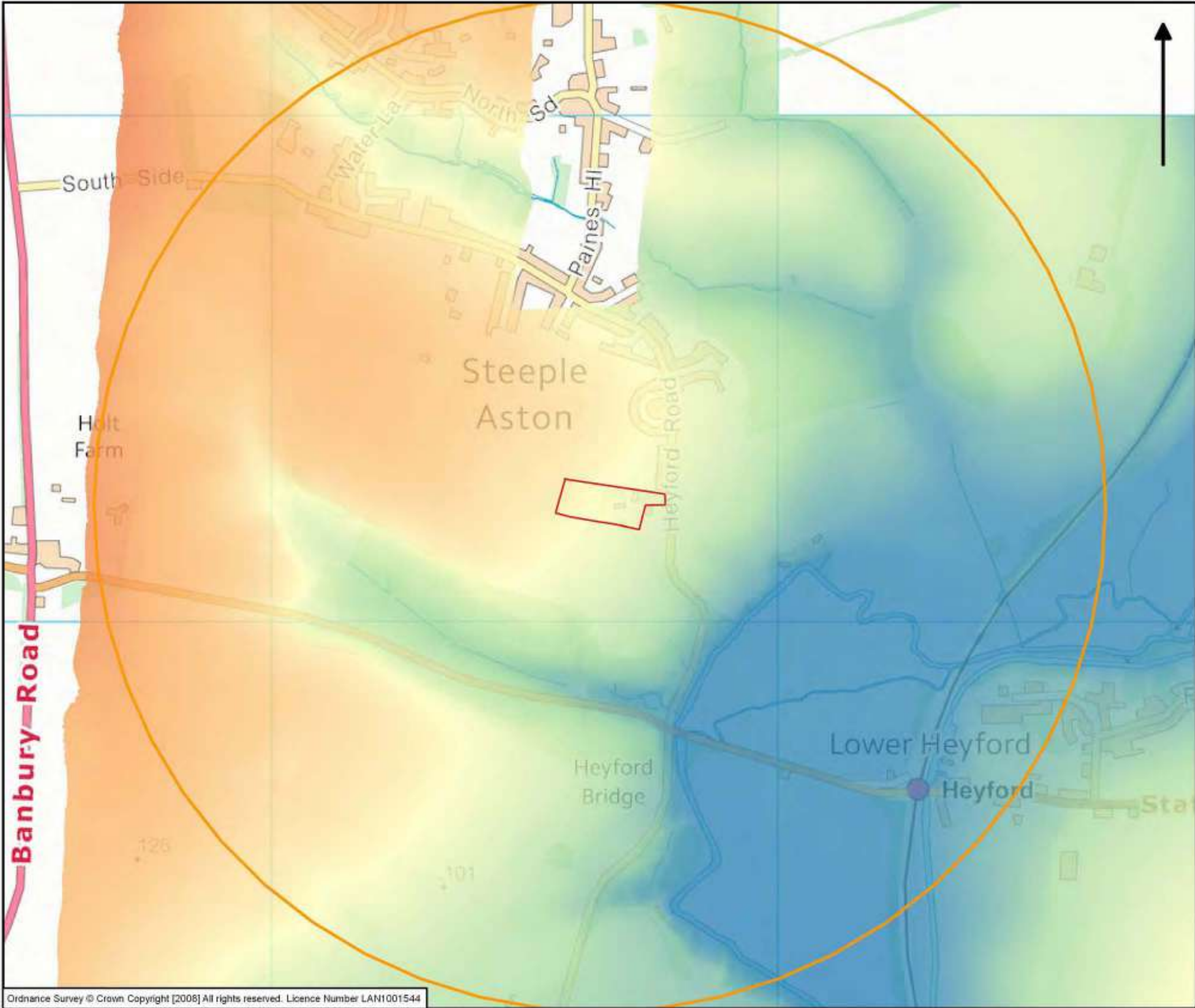
Scale @ A3:
1:7,000

On Behalf of:
Mr Adrian Shooter

Archaeology
Collective
www.archaeologycollective.co.uk

Figure 2.1
Solid Geology

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Date: March 2019 | Revision: v.1 |
|---------------------|------------------|



Legend

- Application Site
- 1km Study Area

Height (metres AOD)

- 70
- 90
- 110
- 130
- 150

0 100 200 300 m

Site Name:
The Beeches, Steeple Aston,
Oxfordshire

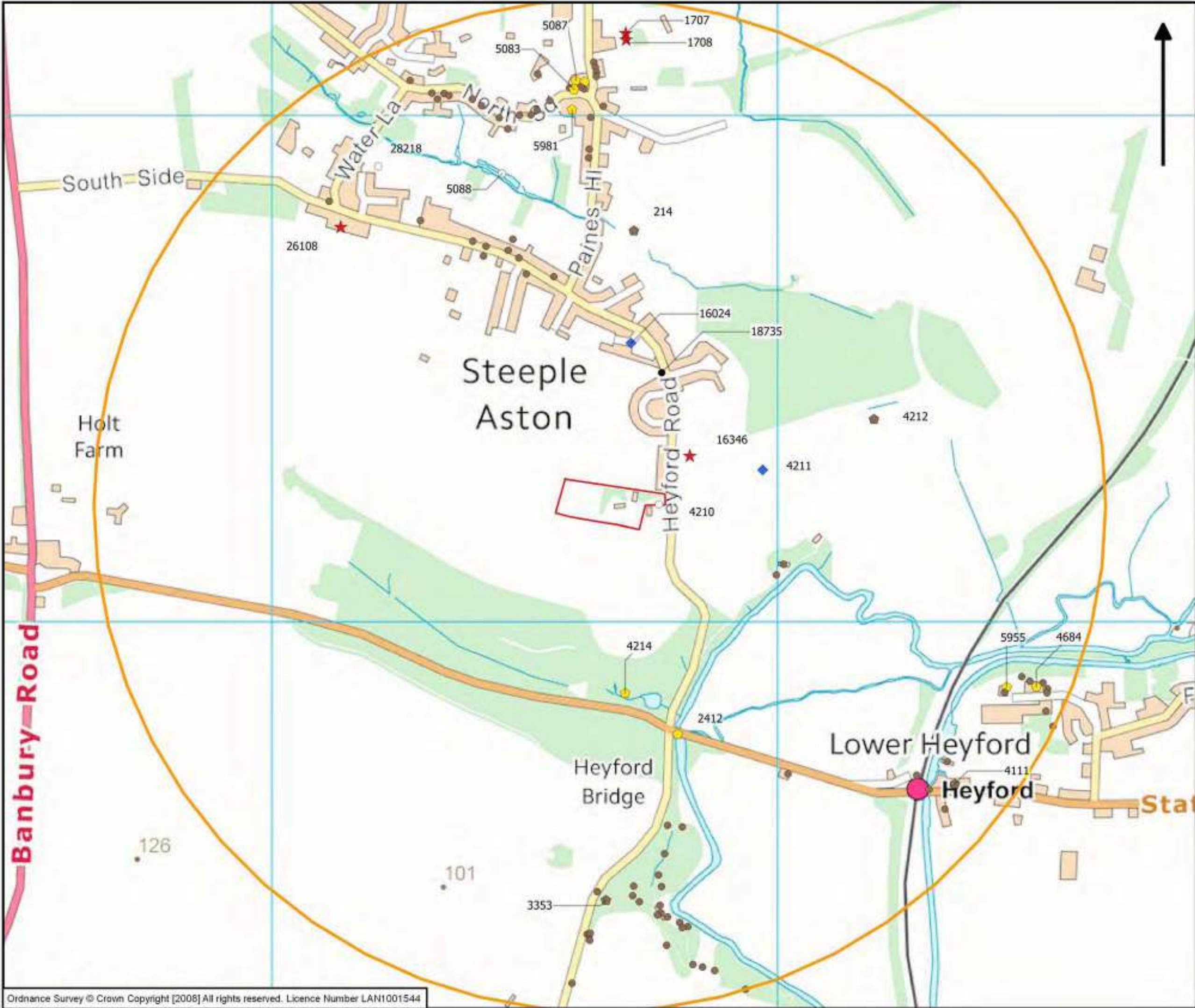
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1:7,000

On Behalf of:
Mr Adrian Shooter

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Figure 2.2
Local Topography

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Date: March 2019 | Revision: v.1 |
|---------------------|------------------|



- Legend
- Application Site
 - 1km Study Area
- Asset
- ◆ Prehistoric
 - ★ Roman
 - Medieval
 - Post-medieval
 - Post-medieval standing building/garden feature
 - Modern
 - Undated



Site Name:
The Beeches, Steeple Aston,
Oxfordshire

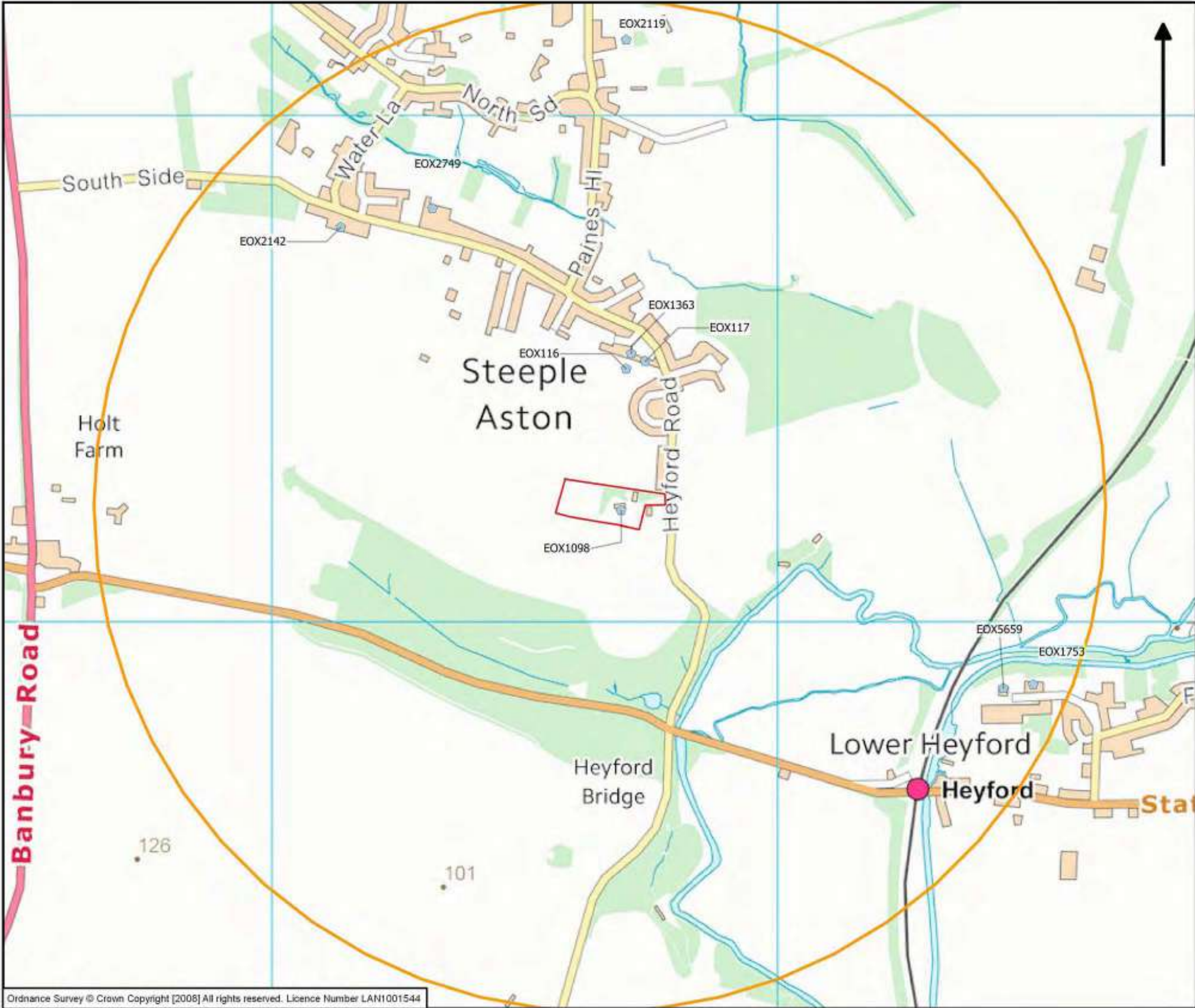
Scale @ A3:
1:7,000

On Behalf of:
Mr Adrian Shooter

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Figure 3.1
Archaeological heritage assets

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Date: March 2019 | Revision: v.1 |
|---------------------|------------------|



Legend

- Application Site
- 1km Study Area

0 100 200 300 m

Site Name:
The Beeches, Steeple Aston,
Oxfordshire

Scale @ A3:
1:7,000

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Mr Adrian Shooter

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Figure 3.2
Archaeological Investigations

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Date: March 2019 | Revision: v.1 |
|---------------------|------------------|

Oxfordshire Historic Environment Records (HER)

Monuments & Findspots

| Pref Ref | Record Type | Name | Monument Type | Easting | Northing |
|---------------|-------------|---|--|---------|----------|
| Prehistoric | | | | | |
| 4211 | MON | Iron Age Habitation Site | SETTLEMENT | 447970 | 225300 |
| 16024 | MON | Prehistoric and Roman Settlement at Heyford Road | PIT; FIELD BOUNDARY; ENCLOSURE?; DITCH; INHUMATION | 447710 | 225551 |
| Roman | | | | | |
| 1707 | FS | Roman Coin | FINDSPOT | 447699 | 226163 |
| 1708 | MON | Roman Burial with grave goods | INHUMATION | 447700 | 226150 |
| 16346 | MON | Roman pottery scatter from allotment south of village | VILLA? | 447826 | 225327 |
| 26108 | MON | Possible Roman Inhumation at Burlands | INHUMATION | 447136 | 225780 |
| Medieval | | | | | |
| 2412 | BLD | Heyford Bridge, River Cherwell | BRIDGE | 447802 | 224778 |
| 4684 | BLD | Church of St Mary, Church Lane | CHURCH | 448511 | 224872 |
| 4214 | MON | Medieval Fishponds | FISHPOND | 447698 | 224859 |
| 5083 | BLD | Churchyard Cross, St Peter's Church, North Side | CROSS | 447597 | 226052 |
| 5087 | BLD | Church of SS Peter and Paul, North Side | CHURCH | 447600 | 226070 |
| 5955 | MON | Site of Medieval Manor House | MANOR HOUSE | 448452 | 224871 |
| 5981 | BLD | Rectory Farmhouse and Manor Court Cottage, North Side | MANOR HOUSE | 447593 | 226012 |
| Post-medieval | | | | | |
| 214 | MON | Brick Yard, Kiln and Clay Pit | BRICKYARD; KILN; CLAY PIT | 447715 | 225773 |
| 1901 | BLD | Nos 1 & 2, Almshouses, North Side | ALMSHOUSE | 447489 | 226001 |
| 1902 | BLD | The Old School, North Side | SCHOOL | 447512 | 226002 |
| 1903 | BLD | Former Methodist Chapel | CHAPEL; SHOP | 447503 | 225688 |
| 3353 | MON | Icehouse, Rousham Park | ICEHOUSE | 447660 | 224450 |
| 4110 | BLD | Canal Wharf Buildings | CANAL WHARF | 448334 | 224724 |
| 4111 | MON | Weigh Bridge, Lower Heyford Wharf | BRIDGE | 448350 | 224680 |
| 4212 | MON | Old Quarry | QUARRY | 448190 | 225400 |
| 4213 | BLD | Cuttle Mill | WATERMILL; MILL HOUSE; HOUSE | 448011 | 225114 |
| 5345 | BLD | Bridge at Junction with Station Road, plus Approach Walls, Oxford Canal | CANAL BRIDGE | 448299 | 224669 |

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----|---|--|--------|--------|
| 5540 | BLD | Boat-builders, Canal Wharf | INDUSTRIAL SITE; CANAL WHARF | 448330 | 224630 |
| 5950 | BLD | Site of Heyford Railway Station | RAILWAY STATION | 448274 | 224697 |
| 5953 | BLD | Heyford House, Church Lane | VICARAGE; HOUSE | 448530 | 224824 |
| 5956 | BLD | Manor House, Church Lane | MANOR HOUSE | 448448 | 224861 |
| 5957 | BLD | Toll House | TOLL HOUSE | 448020 | 224700 |
| 18702 | BLD | FIR COTTAGE, FIR LANE | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447636 | 226106 |
| 18703 | BLD | FIR LANE COTTAGE, FIR LANE | HOUSE; SITE | 447639 | 226096 |
| 18706 | BLD | MERLINS, FIR LANE | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447655 | 226019 |
| 18707 | BLD | CANTERBURY HOUSE, FIR LANE | VICARAGE; VICARAGE; HOUSE; SITE | 447525 | 226083 |
| 18671 | BLD | BARRETT MEMORIAL APPROXIMATELY 8 METRES SOUTH EAST OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, CHURCH LANE | CHEST TOMB; SITE | 448532 | 224860 |
| 18672 | BLD | GROUP OF 2 HEADSTONES APPROXIMATELY 4 METRES SOUTH EAST OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, CHURCH LANE | GRAVESTONE | 448533 | 224868 |
| 18673 | BLD | MIN MEMORIAL APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES NORTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, CHURCH LANE | GRAVESTONE; SITE | 448524 | 224880 |
| 18674 | BLD | KING MEMORIAL APPROXIMATELY 8 METRES NORTH OF TOWER OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, CHURCH LANE | CHEST TOMB; SITE | 448498 | 224883 |
| 18675 | BLD | NO 16 (MANOR COTTAGE) AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDING, CHURCH LANE | HOUSE; HOUSE; OUTBUILDING; SITE | 448482 | 224892 |
| 18676 | BLD | WALLED GARDENS APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES SOUTH EAST OF HEYFORD HOUSE, CHURCH LANE | GARDEN WALL; WALLED GARDEN; SITE | 448544 | 224794 |
| 18689 | BLD | CANAL COTTAGE AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, STATION ROAD | CANAL WORKERS COTTAGE; WHARFINGERS COTTAGE; SITE; GATE PIER; WALL; RAILINGS | 448347 | 224677 |
| 18701 | BLD | CUTTLE MILL, STABLE APPROXIMATELY 20 METRES TO SOUTH WEST | STABLE; COACH HOUSE; SITE | 447997 | 225093 |
| 18704 | BLD | JASMINE COTTAGE, FIR LANE | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447641 | 226086 |
| 18705 | BLD | CHANCEL COTTAGE, FIR LANE | HOUSE; HOUSE; STABLE; SITE | 447641 | 226078 |

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----|--|--|--------|--------|
| 18708 | BLD | EAST GRANGE AND SOUTH GRANGE AND WEST GRANGE, GRANGE PARK ROAD | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447273 | 226070 |
| 18710 | BLD | HIX MEMORIAL APPROXIMATELY 8 METRES SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, NORTH SIDE | GRAVESTONE; SITE | 447617 | 226053 |
| 18711 | BLD | GROUP OF 4 HEADSTONES APPROXIMATELY 7,8,9 AND 11 METRES SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, NORTH SIDE | GRAVESTONE; GRAVESTONE; SITE | 447610 | 226057 |
| 18715 | BLD | CEDAR LODGE, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE; SERVICE WING | 447466 | 225974 |
| 18716 | BLD | CEDAR COTTAGE, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447449 | 225996 |
| 18717 | BLD | OLD TOMS, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447414 | 226020 |
| 18719 | BLD | SUNNY BANK, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; GARAGE; SITE | 447350 | 226040 |
| 18720 | BLD | HOLLY COTTAGE, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; DATE STONE; SITE | 447340 | 226044 |
| 18721 | BLD | HOUSE AT THE GAP APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES SOUTH WEST OF HOLLY COTTAGE, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; DATE STONE; HOUSE; SITE | 447327 | 226033 |
| 18722 | BLD | HOUSE AT THE GAP APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES WEST OF HOLLY COTTAGE, NORTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447316 | 226045 |
| 18723 | BLD | CHESTNUT HOUSE, PAINES HILL | HOUSE; SITE | 447630 | 225997 |
| 18724 | BLD | PAYNE'S HILL HOUSE, PAINES HILL | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447627 | 225934 |
| 18725 | BLD | FAIRVIEW, PAINES HILL | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447626 | 225917 |
| 18726 | BLD | TOWN HOUSE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447557 | 225682 |
| 18727 | BLD | ACACIA COTTAGE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; READING ROOM; MANOR; SITE | 447488 | 225719 |
| 18728 | BLD | ORCHARD LEA HOUSE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SERVICE WING; SITE | 447467 | 225734 |
| 18729 | BLD | SUMMERHOUSE APPROXIMATELY 40 METRES TO NORTH OF ORCHARD LEA HOUSE, SOUTH SIDE | SUMMERHOUSE; SUMMERHOUSE; SITE | 447476 | 225756 |
| 18730 | BLD | STAITHE COTTAGE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; HOUSE; SITE | 447423 | 225742 |
| 18731 | BLD | GRANGE COTTAGE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; HOUSE; | 447397 | 225752 |

| | | | SITE | | |
|-------|-----|---|--|--------|--------|
| 18732 | BLD | MANOR FARMHOUSE, SOUTH SIDE | FARMHOUSE; FARMHOUSE; FARMHOUSE; GRANARY; DOVECOTE; SITE | 447293 | 225793 |
| 18733 | BLD | BRUNSTONE, SOUTH SIDE | HOUSE; SITE | 447418 | 225723 |
| 18734 | BLD | RED LION CORNER, SOUTH SIDE | INN; HOUSE; SITE | 447113 | 225831 |
| 24615 | BLD | WALL ATTACHED TO PALLADIAN GATEWAY AND EXTENDING ALONG ROAD TO HEYFORD BRIDGE TOGETHER WITH GATES AND GATEPIERS, ROUSHAM PARK | GATE; PARK WALL; GATE PIER; GATE; RAILINGS; WALL; SITE | 447643 | 224467 |
| 24616 | BLD | WALL AND RAILINGS APPROXIMATELY 60 METRES SOUTH SOUTH WEST OF PALLADIAN GATEWAY AND 215 METRES WEST SOUTH WEST OF ROUSHAM HOUSE, ROUSHAM PARK | GATE; RAILINGS; PARK WALL; SITE | 447593 | 224286 |
| 24622 | BLD | HERM APPROXIMATELY 86 METRES NORTH NORTH EAST OF ROUSHAM PARK AND AT NORTH EAST CORNER OF BOWLING GREEN, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | HERM; SITE | 447875 | 224311 |
| 24623 | BLD | STATUE OF LION AND HORSE APPROXIMATELY 85 METRES NORTH OF ROUSHAM PARK AND AT NORTH END OF BOWLING GREEN, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447851 | 224318 |
| 24624 | BLD | HERM APPROXIMATELY 86 METRES NORTH OF ROUSHAM PARK AND AT NORTH WEST CORNER OF BOWLING GREEN, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | HERM; SITE | 447832 | 224323 |
| 24625 | BLD | Ha-ha running between Rousham House & lodge adjoining Palladian Gateway, Rousham Park Gardens | HA HA | 447780 | 224361 |
| 24626 | BLD | STATUE OF DYING GAUL APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES SOUTH WEST OF BALUSTRADE OF PRAENESTE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447762 | 224421 |
| 24627 | BLD | PRAENESTE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | HERM; GARDEN BUILDING; GARDEN SEAT; LOGGIA; SITE | 447769 | 224425 |
| 24628 | BLD | URN APPROXIMATELY 3 METRES FROM NORTH EAST CORNER OF PRAENESTE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | URN; SITE | 447767 | 224440 |

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|-------|-----|---|--|--------|--------|
| 24629 | BLD | URN APPROXIMATELY 3 METRES FROM SOUTH EAST CORNER OF PRAENESTE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | URN; SITE | 447782 | 224417 |
| 24630 | BLD | PALLADIAN GATEWAY, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | WALL; GATE; STATUE; SITE | 447623 | 224383 |
| 24631 | BLD | URN APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES EAST NORTH EAST OF PALLDIAN GATEWAY, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | URN; SITE | 447629 | 224385 |
| 24632 | BLD | URN APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES EAST SOUTH EAST OF PALLADIAN GATEWAY, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | URN; SITE | 447627 | 224381 |
| 24633 | BLD | LODGE APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES SOUTH SOUTH EAST OF PALLADIAM GATEWAY, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | LODGE; COW HOUSE; SITE | 447628 | 224371 |
| 24634 | BLD | STATUE OF PAN IN VENUS VALE, TO EAST SOUTH EAST OF UPPER CASCADE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447726 | 224447 |
| 24635 | BLD | UPPER CASCADE INCLUDING STATUES OF VENUS AND SWANS IN VENUS VALE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT; ANIMAL TOMB; STATUE; CASCADE; SITE | 447713 | 224459 |
| 24636 | BLD | STATUE OF FAUN IN VENUS VALE, TO EAST NORTH EAST OF UPPER CASCADE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447715 | 224478 |
| 24637 | BLD | RETAINING WALLS TO THE COLD BATH, OCTAGON POOL AND WATERY WALK, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | GARDEN FEATURE; POOL; REVETMENT; POND; STREAM; SITE | 447764 | 224500 |
| 24638 | BLD | GROTTO APPROXIMATELY 4 METRES WEST OF THE COLD BATH, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | GROTTO; SITE | 447776 | 224542 |
| 24639 | BLD | TEMPLE OF ECHO, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | GARDEN TEMPLE; SITE | 447782 | 224598 |
| 24640 | BLD | STATUE OF APOLLO AT END OF LONG WALK AND APPROXIMATELY 12 METRES SOUTH EAST OF THE TEMPLE OF ECHO, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447811 | 224595 |
| 24641 | BLD | LOWER CASCADE IN VENUS' VALE ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | CASCADE; SITE | 447770 | 224477 |
| 24642 | BLD | STATUE OF BACCHUS IN BRIDGEMAN'S AMPHITHEATRE, | STATUE; SITE | 447806 | 224406 |

| | | | | | |
|---------|-----|---|----------------------|--------|--------|
| | | ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | | | |
| 24643 | BLD | STATUE OF MERCURY IN BRIDGEMAN'S AMPHITHEATRE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447811 | 224396 |
| 24644 | BLD | STATUE OF CERES IN BRIDGEMAN'S AMPHITHEATRE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | STATUE; SITE | 447822 | 224398 |
| 24645 | BLD | THE PYRAMID HOUSE, ROUSHAM PARK GARDENS | GAZEBO; GAZEBO; SITE | 447936 | 224274 |
| Modern | | | | | |
| 18735 | BLD | WWI and WWII War Memorial | WAR MEMORIAL | 447770 | 225492 |
| Undated | | | | | |
| 4210 | MON | Undated Skeleton | INHUMATION? | 447765 | 225232 |
| 5088 | MON | Undated Fishpond | FISHPOND | 447455 | 225886 |
| 28218 | MON | Possible enclosure | ENCLOSURE | 447210 | 225900 |

Archaeological Investigations

| EvUID | Record Type | Name | Organisation | Easting | Northing |
|---------|-------------|---|--------------------------------|---------|----------|
| EOX116 | PEA | Land near Upper Heyford Road | Oxford Archaeological Unit | 447750 | 225550 |
| EOX117 | EV | Heyford Road | Oxford Archaeological Unit | 447788 | 225565 |
| EOX1098 | WB | The Beeches, Heyford Road, Steeple Aston | John Moore Heritage Services | 447695 | 225225 |
| EOX1363 | EX | Land near Upper Heyford Road | Oxford Archaeology | 447715 | 225535 |
| EOX1753 | WB | Watching Brief at St Mary's Church | Oxford Archaeology | 448505 | 224876 |
| EOX2119 | WB | Land Adjacent to the Village Hall | Oxford Archaeology | 447700 | 226150 |
| EOX2142 | FO | Roman ? inhumation found at Burlands, Steeple Aston | County Archaeological Services | 447136 | 225780 |
| EOX2749 | BS | Manor Farm Barns, South Side | John Moore Heritage Services | 447317 | 225817 |
| EOX5659 | WB | An Archaeological Watching Brief at Heyford Manor | John Moore Heritage Services | 448445 | 224869 |



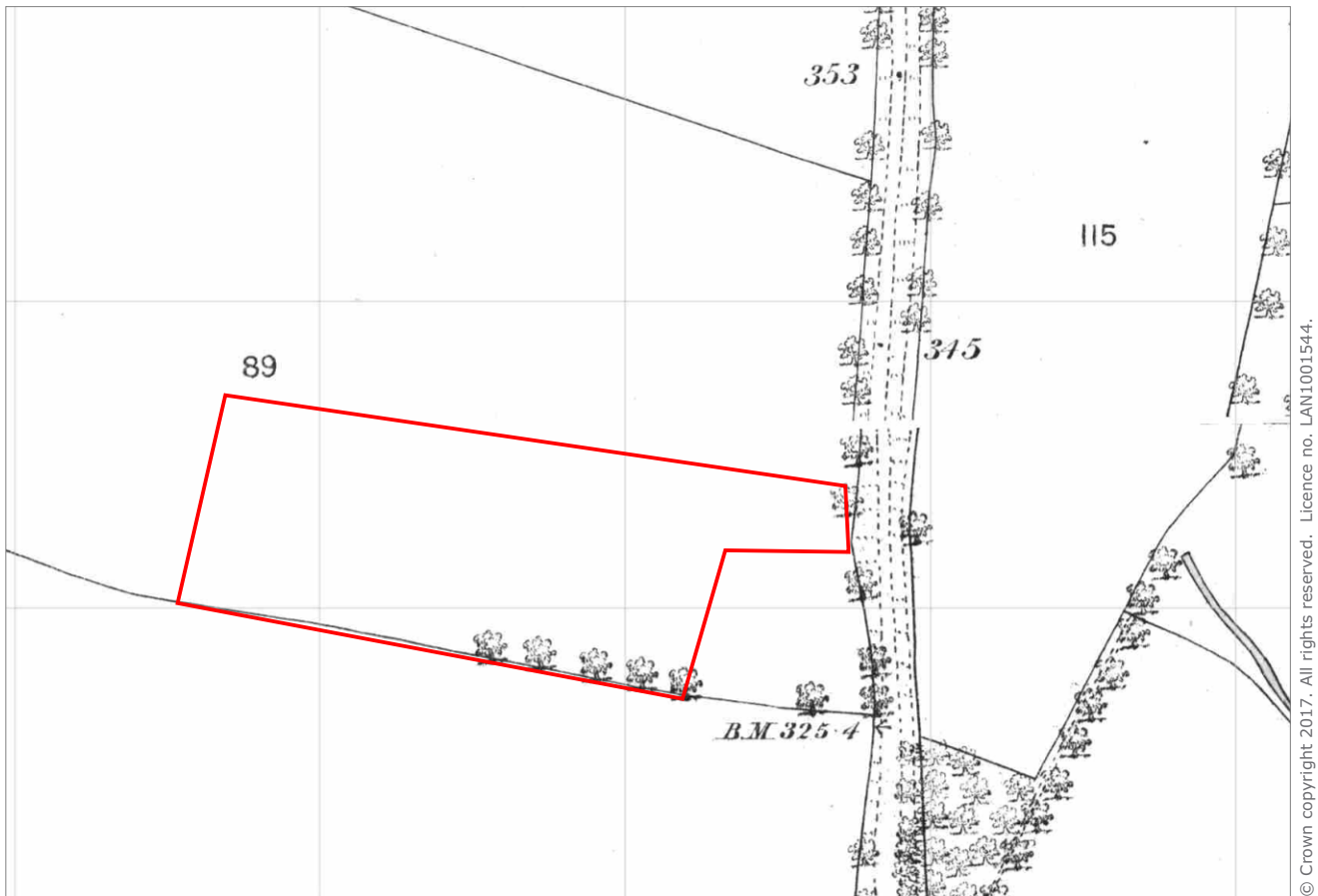
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Figure 4.1: 1767. Steeple Aston Enclosure Map.



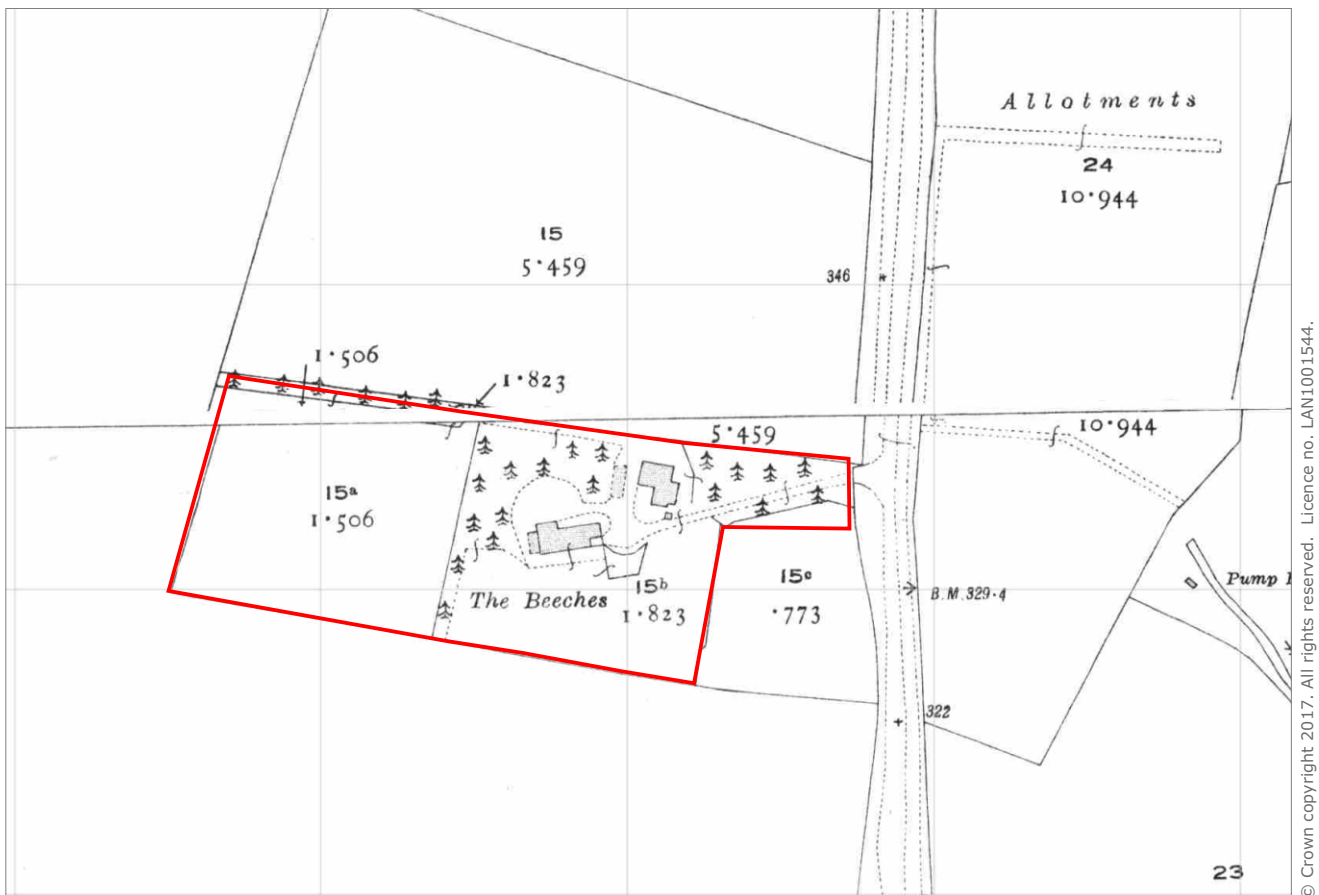
© British Library (OSD 223/22).

Figure 4.2: 1815. Ordnance Surveyor's Drawing.



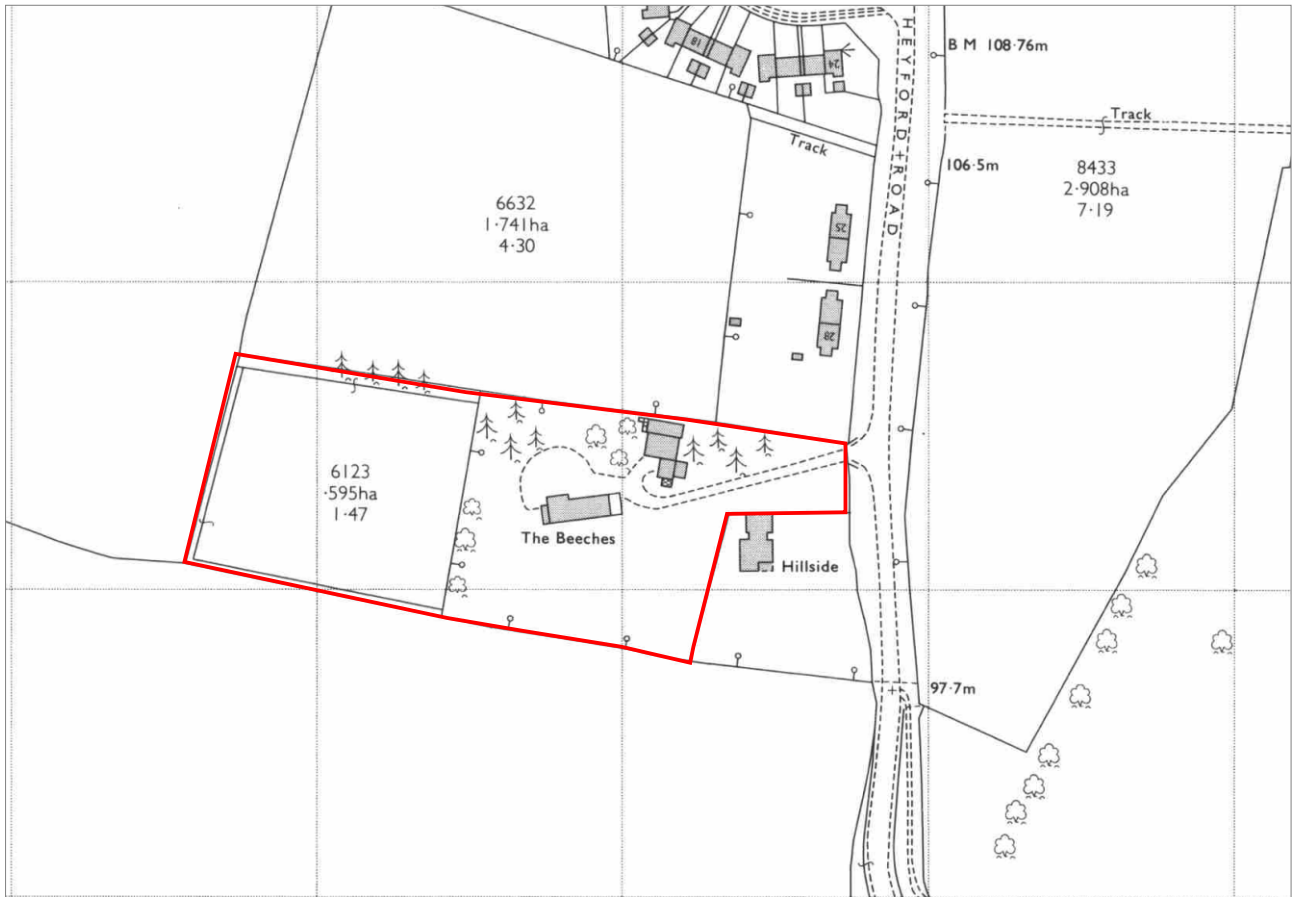
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Figure 4.3: 1881. Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500 scale).



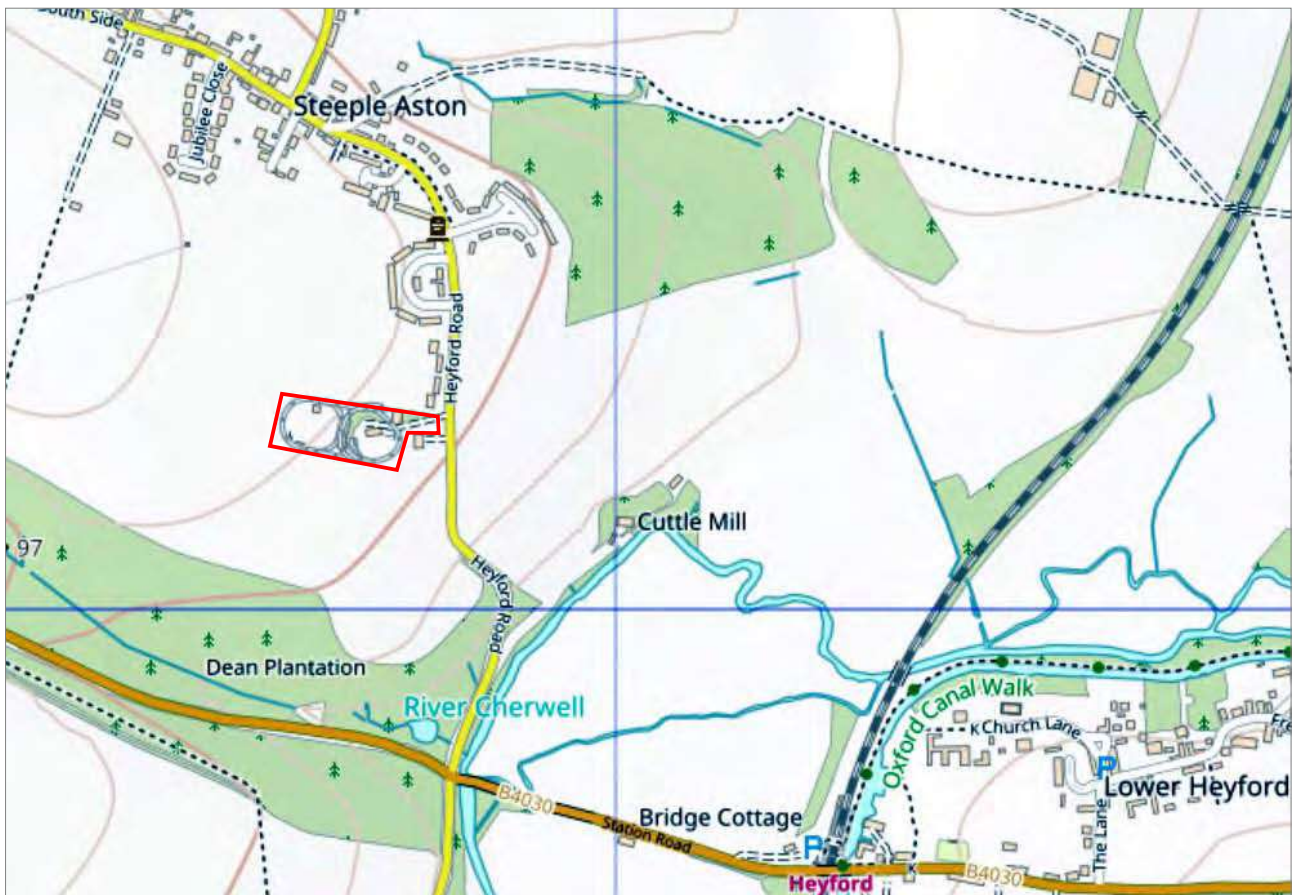
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Figure 4.4: 1922 (surveyed in 1919). Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500 scale).



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Figure 4.5: 1973. Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500 scale).



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Figure 4.6: 2011-2019. Ordnance Survey Map (1:25,000 scale).



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Figure 4.7: 2014. The Beeches Light Railway at Rinkingpong Station.

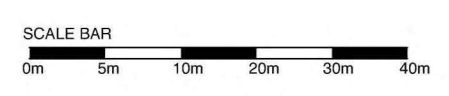


© Google Earth (4th September 2017).

Figure 4.8: 2017. Satellite image.

Appendix 1: Development Proposals

To Steeple
Aston &
Banbury



| Rev | Amendments | Date |
|-----|-----------------------------------|------------|
| A | Revised to OCC Highway's Comments | 30.04.2019 |
| B | Layout revised to 8no. plots | 20.06.2019 |
| C | Layout revised to 8no. plots | 26.07.2019 |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Client | | |
| Mr & Mrs Shooter | | |
| Project | | |
| The Beeches Steeple Aston | | |
| Drawing | | |
| Indicative Site Plan | | |
| Date | Purpose | |
| Feb 2019 | Planning | |
| Scale | Drawing Size | |
| 1:500 | @ A2 | |
| Project No. | Drawing No. | Revision |
| 372A01 | 101 | C |

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Architecture | Design | Conservation



Key:

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Site Boundary | No dig construction | Proposed Replacement Tree Planting |
| Site entrance | Existing Cat A Trees | Proposed new planting/ boundary reinforcement |
| Existing Footpath | Existing Cat B Trees | Existing Trees Proposed to be Removed |
| Existing Buildings | Existing Cat C Trees | Root Protection Areas |
| Existing buildings/ structures to be removed | Existing Cat U Trees | Pumping Station - refer to drainage strategy |
| Proposed New Dwellings | Existing Trees Proposed to be Removed | Bin Collection Point - 18no. wheelie bins |
| Existing Access Drive Widened | Root Protection Areas | Allocated on-plot parking spaces |
| Proposed New Roads (Permeable surface with below ground surface water attenuation - subject to civil eng's advice) | | Unallocated visitors parking spaces |
| New/existing private gravel driveways | | New fencing protecting buffer to site boundary |

NOTE: Retention of trees T73 & T76 subject to feasibility of providing adequate root protection during demolition of existing adjacent buildings. Should retention not prove feasible replacement trees to be provided as part of detailed landscape scheme.

INDICATIVE SITE PLAN
THE BEECHES, STEEPLE ASTON

To Oxford