



New Barns Farm, Stourport, Worcestershire - Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Barratt West Midlands

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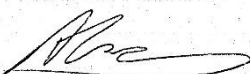
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Executive Summary

Ecus Ltd was commissioned by Barratt West Midlands in September 2019 to update an archaeological desk based assessment prepared in December 2018 to support an outline planning permission for housing on land at New Barns Farm, Pearl Lane, Stourport (hereafter 'the site'). The site is situated at National Grid Co-ordinate 379644 269900. The proposed scheme is for the development of the land to incorporate a new housing estate with internal highways, open green space and soft landscaping.

An assessment was undertaken to identify the known and potential heritage assets that may have the potential to receive effects from the proposed development. It is considered as part of this assessment there are no known overriding heritage or archaeological constraints to prevent development within the site.

The site is located in Astley Cross approximately 1.5 km south west of Stourport-upon-Severn. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and measures approximately 15.09 hectares in size. It is located with Pearl Lane to its east and Dunley Road to its north. The site is currently used as agricultural farm land and is bordered by mature trees and hedgerows.

The site is situated in the Worcestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation type profile of 'Fields and Enclosed Land'. The proposed scheme has been assessed to remove the key characteristics of the HLC profile type. The site in its current form is poor representative of 'parliamentary enclosure' which has been assessed as common across Worcestershire. It can therefore be considered that the change in use of the land would contribute a negligible- low impact on the overall HLC profile type.

A salvage excavation in 1991 identified the remains of a large potentially aisled, agricultural building of Romano-British date. The remainder of the site yielded limited remains including prehistoric flint scatters. Further trial trenching in 2019 confirmed the presence of further ditches near to the known area of Romano-British activity in the northern area of the site. The investigations also confirmed the archaeological remains are limited and not extensive within the site.

It is anticipated that the scheme's groundwork's have the potential to impact on any archaeological remains that are present within the site. Despite this, it is considered this should not prevent development within the site. If deemed necessary further archaeological work could involve archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping in the northern area of the site and secured as a planning condition.

The site is situated approximately 570 m north east of Dunley Hall (Grade II Listed, NHLE: 1155871). There is limited intervisibility and no historic connection between the listed building and the site. As a result of this, along with the distance from the site, it is considered the site makes no contribution to the heritage significance of Dunley Hall. Therefore development within the site will have no impact to the designated heritage asset.

Due to the distance between the site and other listed buildings within a 600 m study area, it is considered there are no designated heritage assets that will be affected by development within the site.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Ecus Ltd was commissioned by Barratt West Midlands in September 2019 to update an archaeological desk-based assessment prepared in December 2018 to support an outline planning permission for land at New Barns Farm, Pearl Lane, Stourport, Worcestershire (hereafter 'the site'). The site is situated at National Grid Co-ordinate 379644, 269900. The proposed scheme is for the development of the land to incorporate a new housing estate with internal highways, open green space and soft landscaping.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The site is located in Astley Cross approximately 1.5 km south west of Stourport-upon-Severn, Worcestershire. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and measures to approximately 15.09 ha in size. It is located with Pearl Lane to its east and Dunley Road to its north. The site is currently used as agricultural farm land and is bordered by trees and hedgerows (**Plates 1-2**). Additional agricultural fields and woodland areas bound the site to its north, west and south whereas its eastern border is situated next to the villages of Astley Cross and Areley Kings.
- 1.2.2 The site has a varying topography with a height of 38 m above ordnance datum (aOD) in the south rising up to a height of 51 m aOD in the north of the site. The natural bedrock geology is recorded as interbedded sandstone and conglomerate of the Triassic rocks group. Superficial deposits comprise sand and gravel from river terrace deposits (BGS 2018).



Plate 1: Looking north across the site



Plate 2: Looking south west across the site

1.3 Aims and Objectives

1.3.1 The purpose of this archaeological desk-based assessment is to determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records and observations, an understanding of the archaeological resource within and surrounding the application area in order to formulate:

- An assessment of the potential for heritage assets to survive within the area of study;
- An assessment of the significance of the known or predicted heritage assets considering their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests;
- Strategies for further evaluation intrusive or non-intrusive, where the nature, extent or significance of the resource is not sufficiently well defined;
- An assessment of the impact of proposed development or other land use changes on the significance of the heritage assets and their settings; and
- Proposals for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.

2. Regulatory and Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 There is national legislation and guidance relating to the protection of, and development on, or near, important archaeological sites or historical buildings within planning regulations as defined under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In addition, local authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system.

2.2 Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953

- 2.2.1 Historic England is enabled by the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 (as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983) to maintain a register of parks, gardens and battlefield sites which appear to Historic England to be of special historic interest. Registration in this way makes the effect of proposed development on the sites and their settings a material consideration. Historic England are a statutory consultee in relation to works affecting Grade I/II* Registered Parks and Gardens.

2.3 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- 2.3.1 Scheduled Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Interest are afforded statutory protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as Amended) and the consent of the Secretary of State (Department of Culture, Media and Sport), as advised by Historic England, is required for any works.

2.4 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.4.1 Works affecting Listed Buildings or structures and Conservation Areas are subject to additional planning controls administered by LPAs under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In considering development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the LPA shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Section 66). In considering Conservation Areas the planning authority has a general duty to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area (Section 72).
- 2.4.2 The statutory criteria for listing are the special architectural or historic interest of a building. Buildings on the list are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest (DCMS, 2018, para 7, page 4):
- Grade I: Buildings of exceptional interest;
 - Grade II*: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest;
 - Grade II: Buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.
- 2.4.3 Historic England is a statutory consultee in relation to works affecting Grade I/II* Listed Buildings.

2.5 Hedgerow Regulations 1997

- 2.5.1 Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, as amended by The Hedgerows (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002, hedgerows are deemed to be historically Important if they are over 30 years old and either: incorporate, or are associated with, a scheduled archaeological feature or site; marks the boundary of a pre-1600 estate or manor recorded at the relevant date in a Sites and Monuments Record; or form an integral part of a pre-1845 field system.
- 2.5.2 Para 5a may determine that a hedgerow is important regardless of the current completeness of the historic field system. A hedgerow so recorded would still be important if it is now the only remaining part of the pre-1845 field system.

2.6 Local Plan

- 2.6.1 The site is situated within the administrative boundaries of Wyre Forest District Council who adopted the Wyre Forest District Council Allocations and Policies Local Plan (2006-2026) in July 2013. The Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy (2006-2026) was adopted December 2010. The following policies concern the historic environment.

Wyre Forest District Council Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan 2006 - 2026

Policy SAL.UP6 Safeguarding the Historic Environment

1. Heritage Assets

Any development proposal affecting the District's heritage assets, including their setting, should demonstrate how these assets will be protected, conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. The District's heritage assets include:

- *Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments.*
- *Building and Structures on the Local Heritage List.*
- *Landscape features including ancient woodlands and veteran trees, field patterns, watercourses, and hedgerows of visual, historic or nature conservation value.*
- *Archaeological remains and non-designated historic structures recorded on the County*
- *Historic Environment Record.*
- *Historic parks and gardens.*

Developments that relate to a Heritage Asset should be accompanied by a Heritage Statement. Where proposals are likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, the Heritage Statement should demonstrate an understanding of such significance and in sufficient detail to assess any potential impacts. This should be informed by currently available evidence.

When considering a development proposal which may affect a Heritage Asset, or when preparing a Heritage Statement, applicants should have regard to the following points:

- *i. To ensure that proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the significance of a Heritage Asset or its setting and to identify how proposals make a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the area.*
- *ii. Any harm or loss of significance will require clear and convincing justification.*
- *iii. The re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where this is consistent with the conservation of the specific heritage asset.*
- *iv. Proposals which secure the long-term future of a heritage asset at risk will specifically be encouraged.*
- *v. That repairs, alterations, extensions and conversions of heritage assets take into account the materials, styles and techniques to be used and the period in which the asset was built.*
- *vi. The installations of fixtures and fittings should not have a detrimental impact on a heritage asset, should be inconspicuously sited and proportioned and be designed sympathetically.*
- *vii. In considering new development that may affect a heritage asset, proposals will need to identify how the scale, height and massing of new development in relation to the particular feature, and the materials and design utilised, does not detrimentally affect the asset or its setting.*

Development proposals that would have an adverse impact on a heritage asset and/or its setting, or which will result in a reduction or loss of significance, will not be permitted, unless it is clearly demonstrated the following criteria are met:

- *a. There are no reasonable alternative means of meeting the need for development appropriate to the level of significance of the Heritage Asset.*
- *b. The reasons for the development outweigh the individual significance of the Heritage Asset, its importance as part of a group and to the local scene, and the need to safeguard the wider stock of such Heritage Assets.*
- *c. In the case of demolitions, that the substantial public benefits of the development outweigh the loss of the building or structure; or the nature of the asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; or the loss of the heritage asset is outweighed by the benefits of bringing the site back into use. Redevelopment proposals should provide design which mitigates appropriately against the loss of the heritage asset in proportion to its significance at a national or local level.*

Where material change to a heritage asset has been agreed, recording and interpretation should be undertaken to document and understand the asset's archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance. The scope of the recording should be proportionate to the asset's significance and the impact of the development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made publicly available, as a minimum, through the relevant Historic Environment Record.

2. Conservation Areas

When development is proposed in, or adjacent to, a Conservation Area, proposals should accord with the existing (or draft) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and seek to enhance or better reveal the significance of the area. Development

should not adversely affect views into, within, or out of the Conservation Area.

Proposals for the demolition of a building or structure in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that:

- i. It has no significance in itself or by association, and no value to the significance of the Conservation Area.*
- ii. Its demolition or replacement would benefit the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.*
- iii. Proposals include detailed and appropriate proposals for redevelopment, together with clear evidence redevelopment will proceed.*

Proposals that affect shop fronts within a Conservation Area should have regard to the Council's Shop Front Design Guidance.

Wyre Forest District Council Core Strategy (2006-2026)

2.6.2 The Adopted Core Strategy (2010) sets out 13 development objectives including one of particular relevance to the historic environment:

"to conserve and enhance the District's heritage assets."

CP11: Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness

- New development should sensitively connect to the surrounding streets, spaces and communities.*
- Where appropriate, proposals should incorporate strong links to nearby town centres and local centres.*
- Design measures which help to improve sustainable transport including pedestrian, cycling and public transport links should be integral within scheme designs.*
- The emphasis on the creation of successful places will start with a careful consideration of movement routes based on well planned streets and spaces. New developments and their layouts should take into account heritage assets and where possible utilise historic streets, buildings, spaces and infrastructure as an integral part of the scheme design. Subsequent DPDs which allocate sites will take full account of the heritage assets within the landscapes and settlements.*
- The positive management of the District's historic environment and heritage assets will be taken forward through the development of appropriate SPDs.*
- Designs should combine active frontages and secure private areas and, where appropriate, the suitable integration of mixed uses complemented by attractive buildings and landscaping that is an integral part of the overall scheme design.*
- It is essential that new buildings and spaces are fit for purpose and capable of future adaptation.*
- Buildings and spaces will themselves need to be well-designed to complement the layout through the appropriate use of scale, mass, proportions and materials coherently brought together as part of a bespoke architectural approach.*

- *'Design quality', reflecting a thorough understanding of site context, must be demonstrated as part of any proposal. The authority will require the submission of an accompanying Design and Access Statement that has regard to the latest Supplementary Planning Guidance or Document(s).*
- *Developers will be required to demonstrate how their proposals address community safety and crime prevention in Design and Access Statements.*

CP12: Landscape Character

Landscape Character

- *New development must protect and where possible enhance the unique character of the landscape including the individual settlement or hamlet within which it is located. Opportunities for landscape gain will be sought alongside all new development, such that landscape character is strengthened and enhanced.*
- *The Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape Characterisation will be used when determining applications for development within the rural areas. The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Landscape*
- *Characterisation will form the basis for the development of supplementary guidance relating to landscape character.*
- *Where it is considered appropriate to the landscape character, small scale development which can reasonably be considered to meet the needs of the rural economy, outdoor recreation, or to support the delivery of services for the local community will be supported subject to it meeting all other relevant criteria within the LDF.*

Caravan, Mobile Home and Chalet Developments

- *Applications for further mobile home, caravan and chalet developments within the District's rural areas will be resisted due to the collective impact which the existing sites have on the landscape.*

Severn Valley Regional Heritage Park

- *The establishment of a Severn Valley Regional Heritage Park to link the historic towns and landscape from Stourport-on-Severn to Ironbridge will be supported and promoted during the plan period.*

2.7 National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.7.1 Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's current planning policy in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The key requirements are summarised below.
- 2.7.2 Applicants are required to provide proportionate information on the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets affected by the proposals and an impact assessment of the proposed development on that significance. This should be in the form of a desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (NPPF, 189).
- 2.7.3 LPAs are required to take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the desirability of new

development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place (NPPF, 185/192).

- 2.7.4 In determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets - World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas designated under the relevant legislation (NPPF, 193/194).
- 2.7.5 In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (NPPF, 197).
- 2.7.6 LPAs should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their significance and the impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible and any archives deposited with a local museum or other public depository (NPPF, 199).

3. Methodology

3.1 Standards

- 3.1.1 This assessment is undertaken in accordance with:
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk based assessment (CIfA, 2017).
 - Historic Environment (revised July 2019), published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), providing advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment ; and
 - Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (2015a, 2015b, 2017).

3.2 Scope of Assessment

- 3.2.1 Baseline conditions are established through consideration of recorded heritage assets within a 600 m study area around the site and desk-based review of existing sources of publicly accessible sources of primary and synthesised information, comprising:
- The Worcestershire HER (WHER), comprising a database of all recorded archaeological sites, find-spots, and archaeological events within the county.
 - National heritage datasets including The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), Images of England, PastScape, Viewfinder, NMR Excavation Index, and Parks and Gardens UK.
 - Historic manuscripts and maps held at the Worcestershire Records Office.

- Relevant primary and secondary sources including published and unpublished archaeological reports relating to excavations and observations in the area around the site were studied.

3.2.2 A site visit was undertaken during September 2019 in order to assess the general character of the site, to identify heritage assets not identified through desk-based review and assess possible factors which may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets

3.3 Assumptions and Limitations

3.3.1 This report is compiled using secondary information derived from a variety of sources, only some have been directly examined. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.

3.3.2 In addition, the records held by WHER represent a record of a wide range of information derived from historical sources and previous archaeological discoveries and does not preclude the subsequent discovery of further elements of the historic environment that are, at present, unknown.

3.4 Assessment of Significance

3.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework recommends that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting (NPPF paragraph 189).

3.4.2 The significance of heritage assets is defined in terms of their value to this and future generations because of their heritage interest, deriving not only from their physical presence, but also from their setting. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (NPPF, Annex 2):

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

3.4.3 The heritage interest of an asset's physical presence is assessed in terms of

attributes identified in statutory criteria, general principles for selection (DCMS 2013 and 2018), selection guides published by Historic England, and regional research agendas.

- 3.4.4 The heritage interest of an asset's setting is assessed in accordance with Step 2 of Historic England's The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017), which considers the physical surroundings of the asset (including its relationship with other heritage assets); the way in which the asset is appreciated, and the asset's associations and patterns of use. Attributes of 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 (NPPF Annex 2).
- 3.4.5 The overall significance of a heritage asset is the sum value of its interest, expressed within this report on a 6-point scale of Very High, High, Medium, Low, Negligible and Unknown using the criteria presented in Table 1.
- 3.4.6 The contribution of a given site or application area to an asset's significance is assessed in order to provide a basis for assessing the sensitivity of the heritage asset to change within that specific area. The criteria for this assessment are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Criteria for determining the significance of heritage assets

Heritage Significance	Criteria
Very High	World Heritage Sites and the individual attributes that convey their Outstanding Universal Value, or non-designated heritage assets of demonstrable international heritage interest.
High	Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings (Grade I, II*, II), Conservation Areas, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (Grade I, II*, II), Registered Battlefields, Protect Wreck Site, or non-designated heritage assets of demonstrable national importance due to their heritage interest.
Medium	Locally Listed Buildings and Landscapes, or non-designated heritage assets of demonstrable regional importance due to their heritage interest.
Low	Non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably limited heritage interest.
Negligible	Non-designated heritage asset of very limited heritage interest, typically due to poor preservation, survival or restricted contextual associations.
Unknown	The significance of the heritage asset cannot be ascertained from available evidence.

Table 2: Criteria for valuing the contribution of the site to the significance of heritage assets

Contribution of Site	Criteria
High Contribution	The site possesses attributes that make a strong positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance.
Medium Contribution	The site possesses attributes that make some positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance.
Low Contribution	The site possesses attributes that make little positive contribution to the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance.
Neutral Contribution	The site does not contribute to the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance
Negative Contribution	A site detracts from the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that define the significance of a heritage asset.

4. Historic Environment Baseline

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following section identifies known heritage assets that may have the potential to receive effects from the proposed development, compiled from sources listed in Section 3.
- 4.1.2 WHER features are listed by their HA (Heritage Asset) number detailed in **Appendix 1** and depicted in **Figure 2**. There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields, or Registered Parks and Gardens situated within the 600 m study area. There are five Grade II Listed Buildings located within the study area beyond the site boundary. These are listed by their National Heritage for England (NHLE) entry number detailed in **Appendix 1** and depicted in **Figure 2**.

4.2 Historic Environment Character

- 4.2.1 The character of the landscape within the site has been assessed as part of the Worcestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project (Worcestershire County Council 2012). The project covers the area within Worcestershire but excludes the city of Worcester. The project identified eleven HLC types, and the site has been characterised as part of the Fields and Enclosed Land profile type (**Figure 3**). The HLC identifies this type as areas of field used as some form of agriculture. There is likely to be a close association with open field systems and areas of nucleated settlement.
- 4.2.2 The site is mostly associated with 'Parliamentary Enclosure' which is characterised by regular, small and large rectangular fields with "ruler straight" boundaries. It reflects the planned nature of enclosure undertaken by surveyors during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This layout will have likely overwritten any prior landscape enclosure pattern. Alternatively in Worcestershire many Parliamentary Enclosure fields were modifications of earlier existing "piecemeal enclosure" and therefore were more irregular in shape and patterning.
- 4.2.3 The Fields and Enclosed Land broad group includes the largest HLC type in Worcestershire as it comprises 68.72% of the County's land area. The site is associated with parliamentary enclosure which comprises 7.89% of the broad type and is the third largest of the Fields and Enclosed Land type. The land within the site has therefore been assessed as common.
- 4.2.4 The site comprises two large fields bounded by a hedgerow and is currently used as agricultural land for growing cereals (**Plate 3**). There have been some alterations to the earlier field pattern in the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to agglomerate six fields into the present two. Due to this agglomeration, it can be considered that the site is not a good representation of the original parliamentary enclosure.



Plate 3: Looking south across the site, note the historic hedgerow to the west

4.3 Archaeological and Historical Baseline

Previous Studies

- 4.3.1 A total of 12 archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the 600 m study area. These primarily consisted of salvage recording for the Astley to Blackstone aqueduct but also included geophysical surveys and excavations. Five archaeological investigations were conducted within the site boundary and all relate to the salvage recording of the Blackstone to Astley aqueduct.

WSM29962 Salvage Recording in 1991, Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct, Stourport (1991)

- The archaeology section of Hereford and Worcester County Council carried out salvage excavations on the route of Severn Trent Water's Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct during 1991. Across their study route, fields had their topsoil stripped and the fields were subsequently intensively field walked at 3m intervals. Several features were revealed including flint scatters of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age date. Three sites of greater importance were excavated and included a potential Roman farm building (**HA1**, WSM34408), a potential domestic waste assemblage of Beaker Pottery and a palaeochannel of the River Severn dating to the third millennium BC. The generally low concentrations of finds and buried features elsewhere on the route could be attributed in part to destructive effects of modern agriculture (Dinn 1992).

WSM34408 Salvage Excavation in 1992 in Northern Part of Field West of Dunley Road (1991)

- A scatter of Roman pottery was observed during field walking on the line of the Blackstone to Astley aqueduct. After machine stripping a clear concentration of pottery could be seen. The site was cleaned and several features excavated. A series of cobble filled features were probably post-pads for a large building, perhaps aisled. They were cut into a buried ploughsoil. Underlying this plough soil were postholes and shallow charcoal-filled pits. A ditch, 15 m to the south of the features, may have enclosed the area. Six phases were identified within the excavated area, indicating a long-lived Roman site (Hemingway and Buteux 1992).

WSM11086 Salvage Recording in 1991, Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct, Stourport (1991)

- The field walking recovered scattered Roman finds including a coin, slag, tile and pottery. The density of Roman material decreased the further away from the excavated area of the Roman building (**HA1**, WSM34408). A sparse flint scatter was also recorded.

WSM11087 Salvage Recording in 1991, Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct, Stourport (1991)

- The salvage recording produced very few finds which comprised an early Mesolithic to late Bronze Age lithic implement, five shards of pottery, three shards of slag and a fragment of iron.

WSM11088 Salvage Recording in 1991, Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct, Stourport (1991)

- The salvage recording recorded only three pieces of pottery fragments of unknown date and an early Mesolithic to late Bronze Age lithic implement.

Prehistoric

- 4.3.2 The WHER returned no records dating to the prehistoric era. Despite this, evidence of limited activity in the area is identified from at least the Mesolithic. The salvage recording conducted to investigate Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct in 1991 (WSM11088) identified limited scattered finds within the site and study area. These related to low levels of lithic implements dating between the Mesolithic to Bronze Age. Very limited scattered finds of flint were discovered within the 600 m study area which indicated human presence in the area but also suggested the scatters were stray losses (Dinn 1992).

Romano-British

- 4.3.3 In the north of the site a salvage recording and excavation identified a series of features and scatters of Roman pottery. After further investigation the site was revealed to be a long-lived Roman site with at least six phases of occupation (**HA1**). A ditch contained Roman pottery which was abundant in the upper fills. Barley and other cereals were present in the environmental samples of the ditch fills. A total of 743 sherds of Roman pottery were discovered at the site and including fragments of domestic storage jars, cooking pots and bowls. The site contained a series of cobble-filled features which were probably post-pads for a large agricultural building which was potentially aisled.

- 4.3.4 The activity on the site was agricultural in character through most of its phases, although the size and character of the pottery assemblage of phase 4 suggested that there was domestic occupation nearby in the late 3rd to 4th centuries. Across Hereford and Worcester there are very few Roman agricultural sites. In addition there is very little evidence for aisled buildings in the West Midlands (Hemingway and Buteux 1992). Decreasing in density away from the building were scatters of Roman material including a coin, slag, tile and pottery.
- 4.3.5 Generally there are few Roman sites known within the surrounding area. A Romano-British farmstead which overlay an Iron Age hut was excavated at Larford approximately 3 km from the site and two further undated enclosure sites were identified on aerial photographs at SO805697 and SO813691 (Hemingway and Buteux 1992).

Medieval

- 4.3.6 The WHER returned no records of archaeological activity dating to the medieval period. The nearest place recorded in Domesday Book is Mitton (Palmer, Powell Smith 2018). It was a very small village under the manor of Kidderminster approximately 1 km away.

Post-medieval

- 4.3.7 The town of Stourport-on-Severn was created around the canal basins at the Severn terminus of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal which was completed in 1768 (Buteux 2005). On the completion of the junction between the Staffordshire and Worcestershire and the Birmingham Canal in 1772, Stourport became one of the principal distributing centres for goods to and from the West Midlands (Buteux 2005). After the deliberation of housing for the workers of the dock, Stourport's population rapidly grew from approximately 12 in the 1760s to 1300 in 1795 (Porteous 1977). The peak of Stourport's prosperity was in the early nineteenth century and the town expanded from its origins around the canal basins.
- 4.3.8 The completion of the Worcester and Birmingham canal in 1816 caused the revenue of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal to sharply decrease. Between 1812-21, the population of Stourport scarcely rose as many male workers left the town (Porteous 1977, 100). The opening of the Severn Valley Railway in 1852 brought no advantage to Stourport as it was unsuitable for the transportation of heavy goods. An increase in industrial employment and house building by the industrialists was the prime cause of Stourports continued growth in the nineteenth century.
- 4.3.9 Astley Cross is a village in Worcestershire located on the outskirts of Stourport-on-Severn. The locality of 'Astley Cross' was mentioned at least as early as 1854, when John Noake described the area in the third volume of his work, *'The Rambler in Worcestershire'* (Noake 1854). He mentions that it is at Astley Cross that the road to Worcester from Bewdley is supposed formerly to "have left the line to the Redstone Ferry at Astley" (Noake 1854: 318). However, a settlement at Astley Cross was evident earlier than this time but with unknown origin dates. At least one two-storey timber-framed house was built on Redhouse Lane in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century (**HA15**). Small houses were also constructed outside the village along the roads, including the Grade II Listed Ford Cottage (NHLE: 1155863) and Tudor Rose Cottage (NHLE: 1082713). Both date to the seventeenth century and are timber-framed with brick infill, demonstrating

the local vernacular of the time.

- 4.3.10 Scattered across the countryside were farms and their associated land (**HA2, HA3, HA8, HA9, HA10, HA11 and HA12**). Abutting the southern border of the site is a nineteenth century farmstead (**HA 3, HA11, HA12**) which has been assessed as part of the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project as a historic farmstead (WSM59132). The 1838 Tithe Map (**Figure 5**) records the land to belonging to a Thomas Crane. Other farmsteads constructed in the nineteenth century have also been assessed to be historic farmsteads (**HA9, HA10 - WSM61624; HA2, HA11- WSM61704**). The historic farms are considered to make a significant varied contribution to the rural building stock, local distinctiveness of the west midlands and the rural economy (Historic England 2010). Arable farmland was common in the area west of Astley Cross in the nineteenth century. The 1838 tithe map (**Figure 5**) shows the site as divided into six sections and predominantly used as arable land with a small section used as pasture. All of the land was owned by a Daniel Zachary.
- 4.3.11 With the expansion of the village in the nineteenth century new amenities were created for the community. The former School House, Areley Centre & The Old School (**HA18**) was constructed for education of the community's children. The Areley King's Methodist Church was built as a single-storey building as a focal point for the community of Areley King (**HA4**). A small park (**HA19**) is shown on the 1883 edition OS (not reproduced) and was part of an estate which was sold in 1923. By this time the estate only amounted to eighteen acres and two fields of pasture which formed the park. The area has now been developed for housing.
- 4.3.12 The expansion also included the construction of public houses for travellers and the community. In 1840, the Kings Arms Public House (**HA6**) was constructed on the main thoroughfare between Redstone Ferry and the road to Bromyard. In the same year, another public house was constructed along Cross Roads and initially appeared as The Cross (**HA7**). The Squirrel Inn was constructed in 1855 as a public house. It was originally a single building which has been extended and remodelled in the following years (**HA5**).
- 4.3.13 To accommodate the growing population new buildings were constructed throughout the nineteenth century. These predominantly consisted of houses (**HA14 and HA17**) and shops (**HA16**) constructed out of red brick. This expansion included the construction of 9-13 Ivy Cottages which were terraced properties built in the mid-nineteenth century along King Arms Lane. In addition a timber-framed house was built on Pearl Lane although its date of construction is uncertain (**HA13**).

Modern

- 4.3.14 In 1900, the Incorporated Church Building Society granted the village of Astley Cross money to build a mission church. St Luke's Mission Church is an iron building constructed at a cost of £400 to seat 160 persons (UKGenealogyArchives 1988).
- 4.3.15 A Defence of Britain site report documented the location of road blocks established by the home guard during the Second World War (**HA20, HA21 & HA22**). These were located along the A451, B4194, Areley Common and Rectory Lane and were created in response to the Germans making extensive use of the road network in France. The road blocks were established as an anti-invasion strategies and semi-permanent defences.

Undated

- 4.3.16 The WHER returned one record of undated activity. A palaeochannel which is no longer visible on modern OS maps was identified on LiDAR imagery and aerial photographs as following the line of a field boundary (**HA23**, WHER). The line of the palaeochannel was visible on the 1883 OS map (not reproduced) and was labelled “sluice”.

Recent Studies

Geophysical Survey 2018 (Beaverstock 2018)

- A geophysical magnetometer survey was conducted on the site in August 2018. The results revealed weak linear anomalies as well as a small square positive anomaly within the site. The weak linear anomalies in the northern area of the site were concluded to potentially represent the remains of a Romano-British agricultural field system first identified in the 1990s excavations (Hemingway and Buteux 1992). The other weak linear anomalies were thought to relate to modern field enclosures. The rectangular anomaly in the centre of the southern field was thought to potentially be the remains of a small structure of indeterminate date.

Evaluation Trenching 2019 (Snape and Schenck 2019)

- Following the results of the geophysical survey conducted in 2018, an archaeological evaluation was conducted on the site between 27th August and 6th September 2019. A total of 27 trenches were opened revealing six ditches which were predominantly situated at the north of the field. Approximately 35 sherds of pottery dating from the 2nd to 4th century AD were recovered from two of the ditches in the northern part of the site. All of the features correlated with geophysical anomalies and appeared to suggest the presence of a later Roman field system. The location of the main area of archaeology and the type of pottery found is consistent with the previous excavation in 1992 (Hemingway and Buteux 1992).

5. Summary of Heritage Constraints

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 In line with current planning policy, a description of heritage assets directly affected by the proposed development, based on the current level of available information, is summarised below.

5.2 Designated Heritage Assets and Non Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.2.1 Dunley Hall (Grade II Listed, NHLE: 1349461) is a late sixteenth century house which was re-fronted and altered in the mid-nineteenth century with a lower wing added in the late eighteenth century. It has a timber-framed core, with a plastered brick re-fronting and a tiled roof. At the time of the 1838 Tithe Map, the house was owned by an Edward Crane and occupied by a Thomas Wheeler. The house is located south of Dunley Road (A451), with twentieth century houses to its east, and an associated historic barn and modern care homes to its south and west.



Plate 4: View looking south towards Dunley Hall (Grade II Listed, NHLE: 1349461)

- 5.2.2 Dunley Hall is considered to hold high heritage significance as a result of its historic and architectural interests which is attributed by the survival of areas of its original core as well as its ability to demonstrate the developing vernacular across the sixteenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- 5.2.3 The building's main façade faces south east towards its garden and former historic grounds. It draws historic context from this associated land and in particular from the Barn South of Dunley Hall (Grade II Listed, NHLE: 1155871), a contemporary barn constructed in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. As a result, its setting is defined by its relationship with its associated grounds as well as its position next to Dunley Road which despite modernisation helps to provide context

for its position in the historic landscape.



Plate 5: A zoomed-in view looking south west towards Dunley Hall from the site. There is very limited intervisibility with the Dunley Hall as a result of the twentieth century house to its east.



Plate 6: View looking south west showing the twentieth century development adjacent to Dunley Hall

- 5.2.4 The site is situated approximately 570 m north east of Dunley Hall. The topography of the surrounding landscape rises towards the south west, resulting in an elevated position of the listed building. Despite its elevated position there is very limited to no intervisibility between Dunley Hall and the site. This is a result of the mid-late twentieth century houses immediately adjacent to the listed building as well as established tree cover within the grounds of Dunley Hall which obscures views eastwards towards the site (**Plate 6**). As there is limited intervisibility, along with the distance from the site, and no historic connection between the listed building and the site, it is considered the site makes no contribution to the heritage significance of Dunley Hall.
- 5.2.5 The assessment undertaken in section 4 has identified no other known designated or non-designated heritage assets that would be directly affected by the proposed scheme. The distance between the site and the nearest listed buildings as well as the surrounding landscape including hedges and vegetation results in no intervisibility between designated heritage assets and the site.

5.3 Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 5.3.1 The site is primarily characterised by fields and enclosed land, specifically parliamentary enclosure. Any development within the site has the potential to affect the historic landscape character of the area.
- 5.3.2 It is noted that the hedgerows which border the north and eastern edge of the field are likely to form an integral part of a pre-1845 field pattern and as such will need to be considered in regards of the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations.

5.4 Archaeological Potential

- 5.4.1 A salvage excavation in 1991 recorded the remains of a large, potentially aisled, agricultural building of Romano-British date. These findings were significant as agricultural buildings, and aisled buildings in particular, are considered rare across Hereford and Worcester. Despite the salvage excavation only revealing significant remains to the north of the site, and a limited amount of finds in the remainder of the site, there is still potential for buried archaeological remains to reside in the remainder of the whole site. This is due to the recording only including the methods of stripping top soil and field walking within a 20 m corridor along the route of the proposed aqueduct which resided in the centre of the site in a broadly north west to south east direction.
- 5.4.2 The archaeological evaluation conducted on the site in 2019, recovered the remains of six ditches. Two of these ditches contained the presence of Romano-British pottery. As a result, the remains were considered to represent a Romano-British field system situated near to the remains identified in the salvage excavation in 1991. The investigations confirmed the archaeological remains within the site are limited and not extensive.

5.5 Previous Impacts

- 5.5.1 In recorded history, the majority of the site has remained undeveloped and characterised as enclosed fields with little change in land boundaries since at least 1954. Despite this, the general shape of the site has been present since at least 1838 (**Figure 5**) with only land division within the site changing to form two fields

instead of six.

- 5.5.2 A water pipe relating to the Severn Trent Water's Blackstone to Astley Aqueduct runs in a south west direction through the centre of the site. A 20 m corridor following the line of this aqueduct was excavated as part of the salvage excavation in 1991 and therefore there would be no archaeological remains present within this area.
- 5.5.3 The site is currently used as agricultural land for growing cereals. The salvage excavation recorded the site to have thin topsoil and therefore there is a potential that archaeological remains may have been disturbed by agricultural processes. Archaeological remains are considered to be focused to the northern part of the site as identified through the trial trenching evaluation in 2019.

6. Statement of Impact

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This section sets out a brief description of the scheme and provides an assessment of impact with regard to historic environment constraints.

Scheme Proposal

- 6.1.2 The proposed scheme is for the development of the land to incorporate a new housing estate with internal highways, open green space and soft landscaping. A master plan is currently being developed for the proposed scheme.

6.2 Assessment of Proposal

Effects during Construction

- 6.2.1 The potential for impacts to the historic environment to arise during the construction phase relates primarily to the potential for excavations and groundworks to affect any below ground archaeological remains that may be present within the footprint of works. The proposed work within the site is likely to comprise:
- The creation of roads and footpaths;
 - The creation of new drainage and service connections;
 - The removal and/or alteration of existing boundaries; and
 - Groundworks associated with the phased construction of new houses.
- 6.2.2 Groundworks will result in a direct physical impact to any surviving, archaeological remains. Remains are considered to be focused in the northern extent of the site and have been assessed to be of low heritage significance.
- 6.2.3 A direct impact will also occur through the partial removal of hedgerows on the eastern boundary which form part of a pre-1845 field pattern.

Effects during Lifespan of Development

- 6.2.4 The majority of the effects on the historic environment would occur during the construction phase of the scheme. Impacts during the lifespan of the scheme, which could have an effect on the historic environment, comprise:
- Loss of context of the historic landscape character
- 6.2.5 Due to the distance between Dunley Hall and the site along with the existing well established tree cover and intervening development, there is no intervisibility between the listed building and the site. It is considered there would be no impact to the setting or heritage significance of the listed building.

7. Discussion

- 7.1.1 The site occupies an area of agricultural land east off Pearl Lane in Astley Cross. The site comprises two fields with hedgerow boundaries currently used for growing cereals. The proposed scheme is for the development of the land to incorporate a new housing estate with internal highways, open green space and soft landscaping.

7.2 Statement of Impact

Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 7.2.1 The proposed scheme has been assessed to remove the key characteristics of the HLC profile type associated with 'Fields and Enclosed Land'. The site in its current form is representative of 'parliamentary enclosure' which has been assessed as common across Worcestershire. Due to the agglomeration of the fields during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it can be considered the site is not a good representation of the original enclosed landscape. It can therefore be considered that the change in use of the land would contribute a negligible-low impact on the overall HLC profile type.

Archaeological Potential

- 7.2.2 A salvage excavation in 1991 identified the remains of a large, potentially-aisled, agricultural building of Romano-British date. The remainder of the site yielded limited remains including prehistoric flint scatters.
- 7.2.3 A trial trenching evaluation in 2019 identified six ditches predominantly in the northern extent of the site. Two of the ditches contained Romano-British pottery, and as a result the ditches were identified to form part of a Romano-British field system.
- 7.2.4 It is anticipated that the scheme's groundwork's have the potential to impact on any archaeological remains that are present within the site. These remains are likely to be focused to the northern extent of the site and are considered to be of a low heritage significance.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 7.2.5 Due to the distance between the site and the identified listed buildings, it is considered there are no designated heritage assets that will be affected by development within the site.

7.3 Conclusion

- 7.3.1 It is considered as part of this assessment there are no known overriding heritage or archaeological constraints to prevent the development within the site. If deemed necessary further archaeological work could involve archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping in the northern area of the site and secured as a planning condition.

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Appendix 1: Tables

Gazetteer of Nationally Designated Heritage Assets

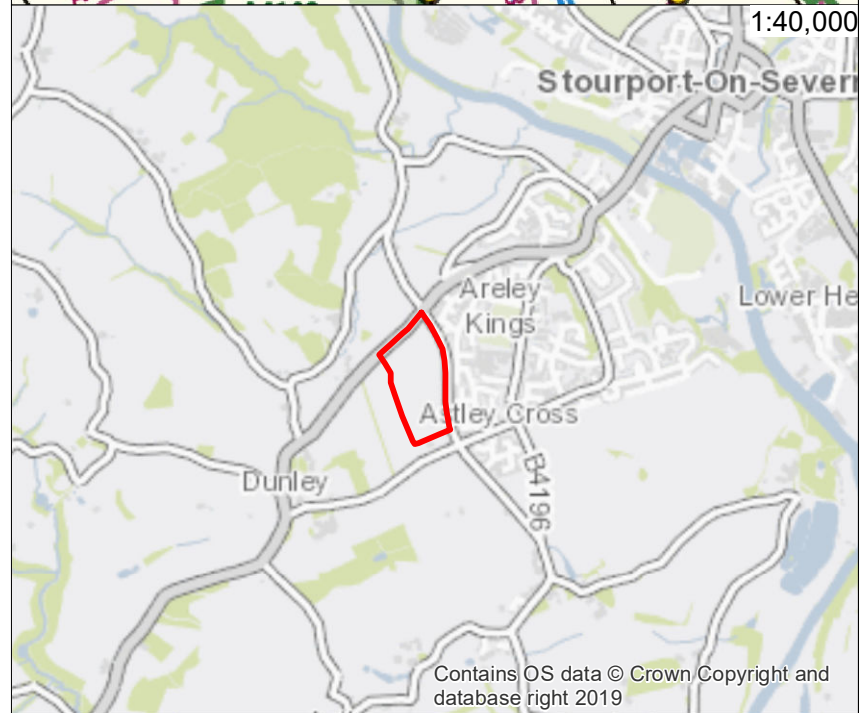
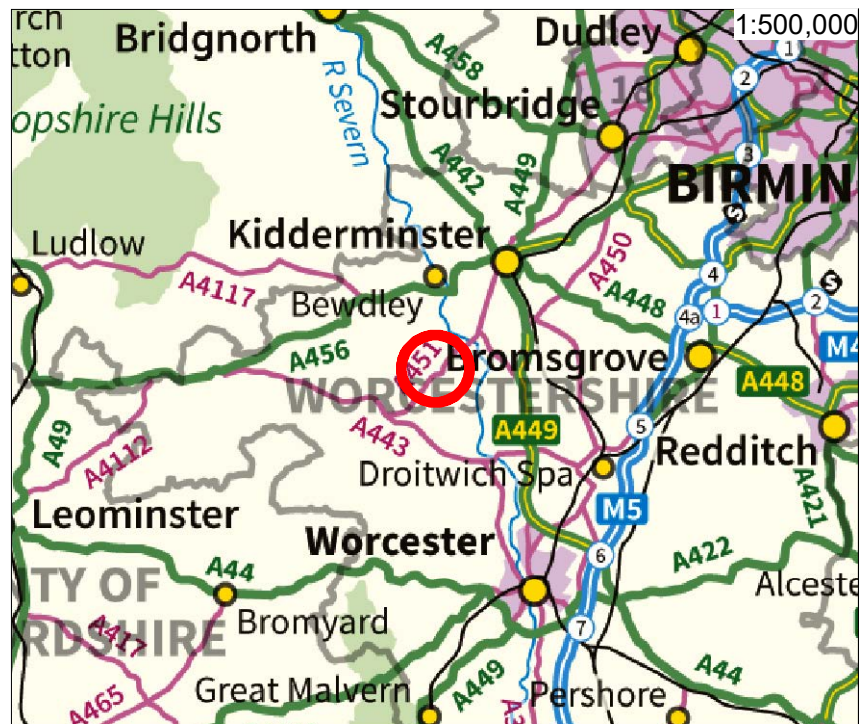
NHLE	Name	Designation	Easting	Northing
1082713	Tudor Rose Cottage	Grade II Listed	379252	269917
1155863	Ford Cottage	Grade II Listed	378947	269889
1349461	Dunley Hall	Grade II Listed	379022	269556
1155871	Barn south of Dunley Hall	Grade II Listed	379037	269507
1082687	The Red House	Grade II Listed	379163	269249

Gazetteer of Heritage Assets

HA	Period	Name	WHER Ref.	Easting	Northing
1	Romano-British	Site of Roman Building, Dunley Road, Areley Kings, Stourport	WSM01136	379616	270062
2	Post Medieval	Site of farm buildings at Areley Farm, Astley and Dunley	WSM70423	379083	270227
3	Post Medieval	Site of farm building at New Barns Farm, Stourport	WSM70427	379819	269591
4	Post Medieval	Areley King's Methodist Church, Areley Common, Astley cross.	WSM15041	380172	269705
5	Post Medieval	Squirrel Inn, Areley Common, Stourport	WSM34533	380180	270030
6	Post Medieval	Kings Arms Public House, Red House Lane, Stourport	WSM34635	380021	269618
7	Post Medieval	The Astley Cross Inn, Cross Roads, Astley Cross	WSM34864	380146	269669
8	Post Medieval	Outfarm south east of Areley Villa, Stourport	WSM51482	379452	270644
9	Post Medieval	Farm building associated with an outfarm south east of Areley Villa, Stourport	WSM70417	379462	270683
10	Post Medieval	Farmhouse at Areley Farm, Astley and Dunley	WSM54054	379098	270213

HA	Period	Name	WHER Ref.	Easting	Northing
11	Post Medieval	Converted farm buildings at New Barns Farm, Stourport	WSM53974	379699	269556
12	Post Medieval	Farmhouse at New Barns Farm, Stourport	WSM70426	379794	269565
13	Post Medieval	1 Commonside, Pearl Lane, Areley Kings	WSM70432	380031	269364
14	Post Medieval	9-13 Ivy Cottages, Kings Arms Lane, Areley Kings	WSM70434	380040	269576
15	Post Medieval	2 Redhouse Lane, Areley Kings	WSM70435	380096	269681
16	Post Medieval	63 (West View House) Areley Common, Areley Kings	WSM70436	380186	269950
17	Post Medieval	40-42 Areley Common, Areley Kings	WSM70437	380149	270002
18	Post Medieval	School House, Areley Centre & The Old School, Abberley Avenue, Areley Kings	WSM34540	380032	270375
19	Post Medieval	Park at Areley Court, Stourport on Severn	WSM28897	380110	270682
20	Modern	Road Block, A451/B4194, Areley Kings, Stourport	WSM36458	379976	270506
21	Modern	Road Block, Areley Common, Stourport	WSM21078	380155	269920
22	Modern	Road Block, Rectory Lane, Areley Kings	WSM36462	379902	270639
23	Undated	Palaeochannel, Burnthorne Brook, Stourport on Severn	WSM56798	379647	270718

Figures

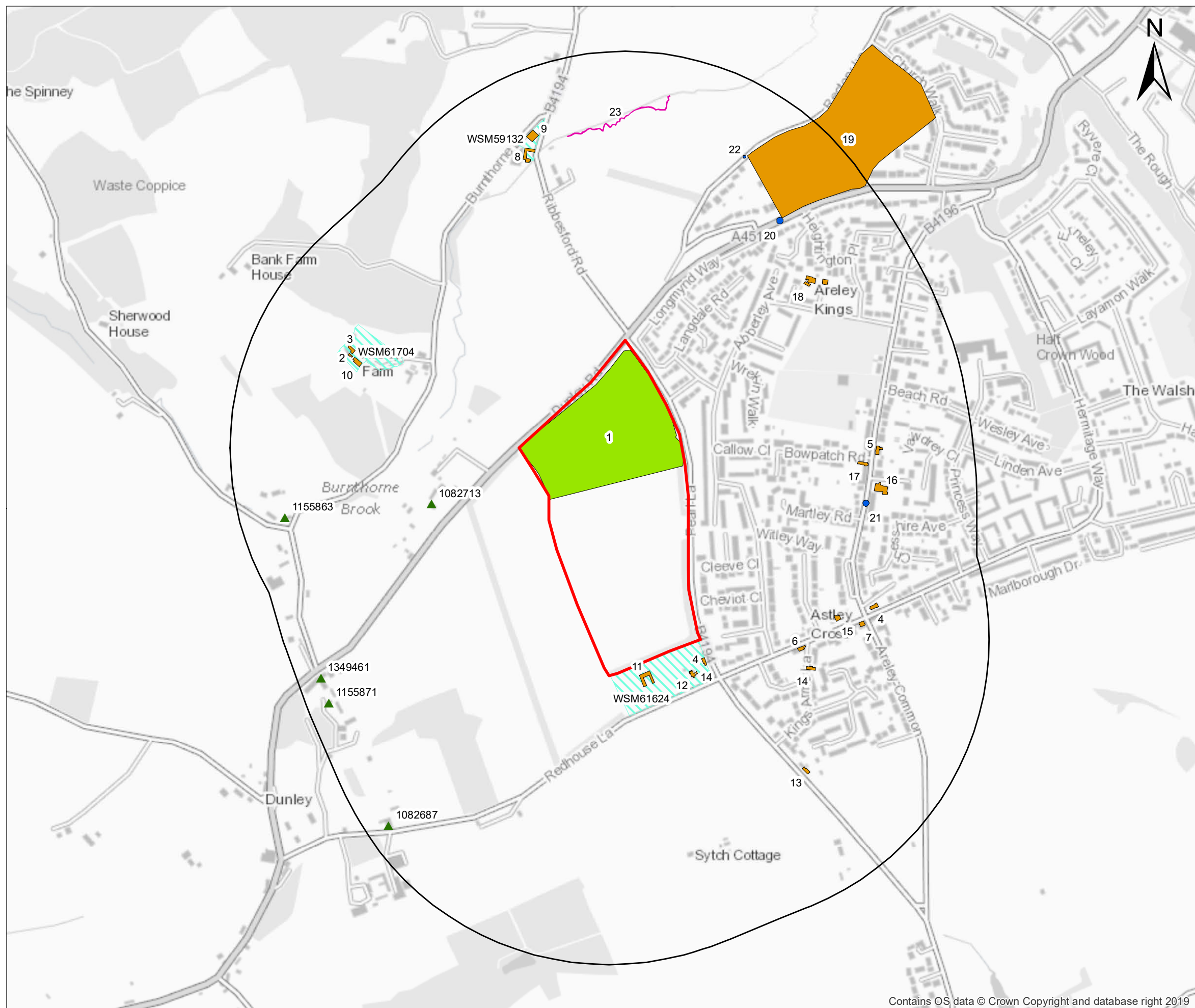


 Site

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Pearl Lane, Stourport – Archaeological
Desk-Based Assessment

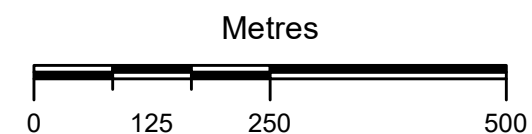
Figure 1: Site Location

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- Site
- 600 m Study Area
- Designated Heritage Assets**
 - ▲ Grade II Listed Building
- Non Designated Heritage Assets**
 - Romano-British
 - Post Medieval
 - Modern
 - Undated
 - Historic Farmsteads and Outfarms

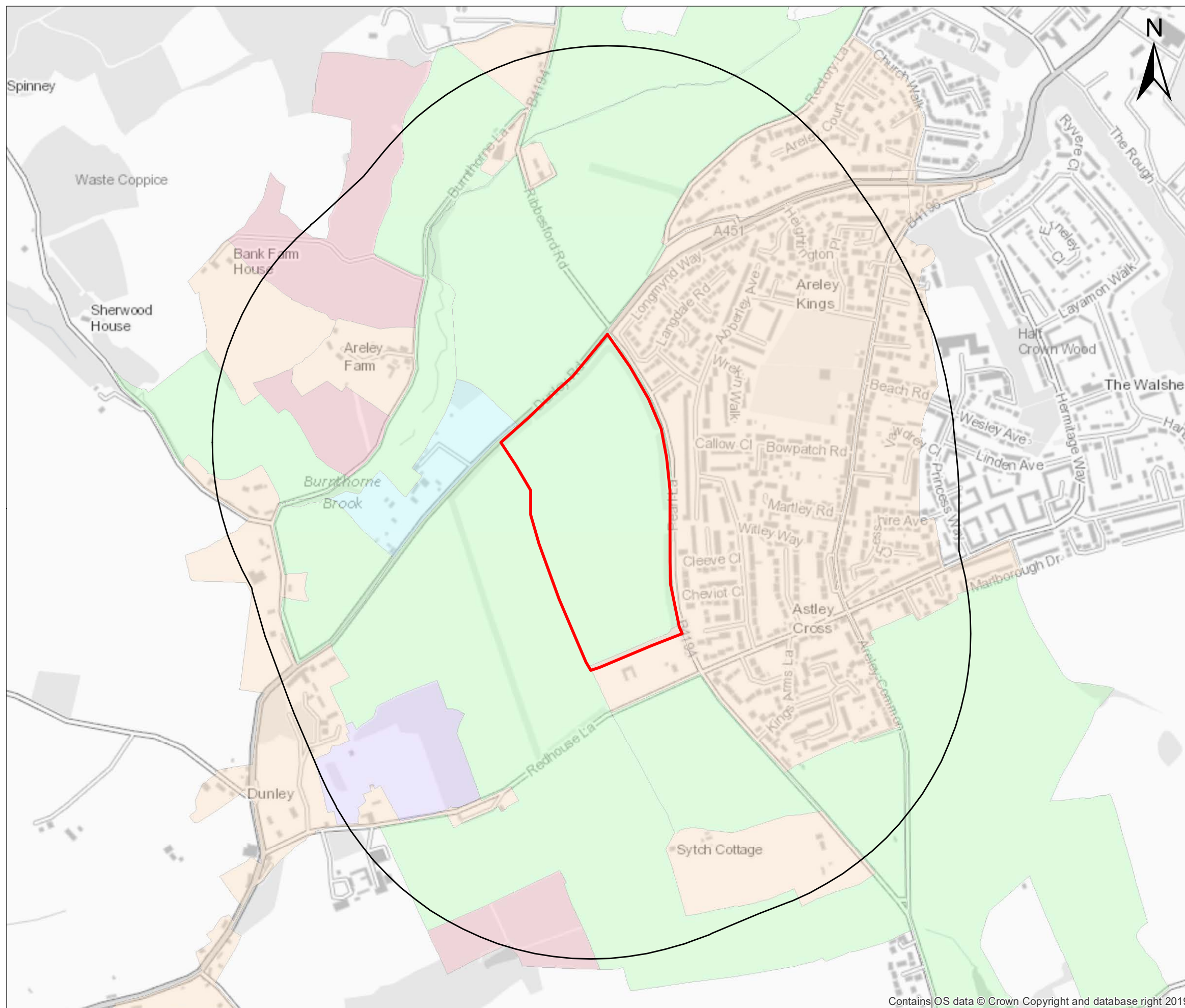
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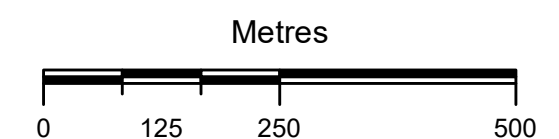
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Figure 2: Heritage Assets and Historic Farms within 600 m study area

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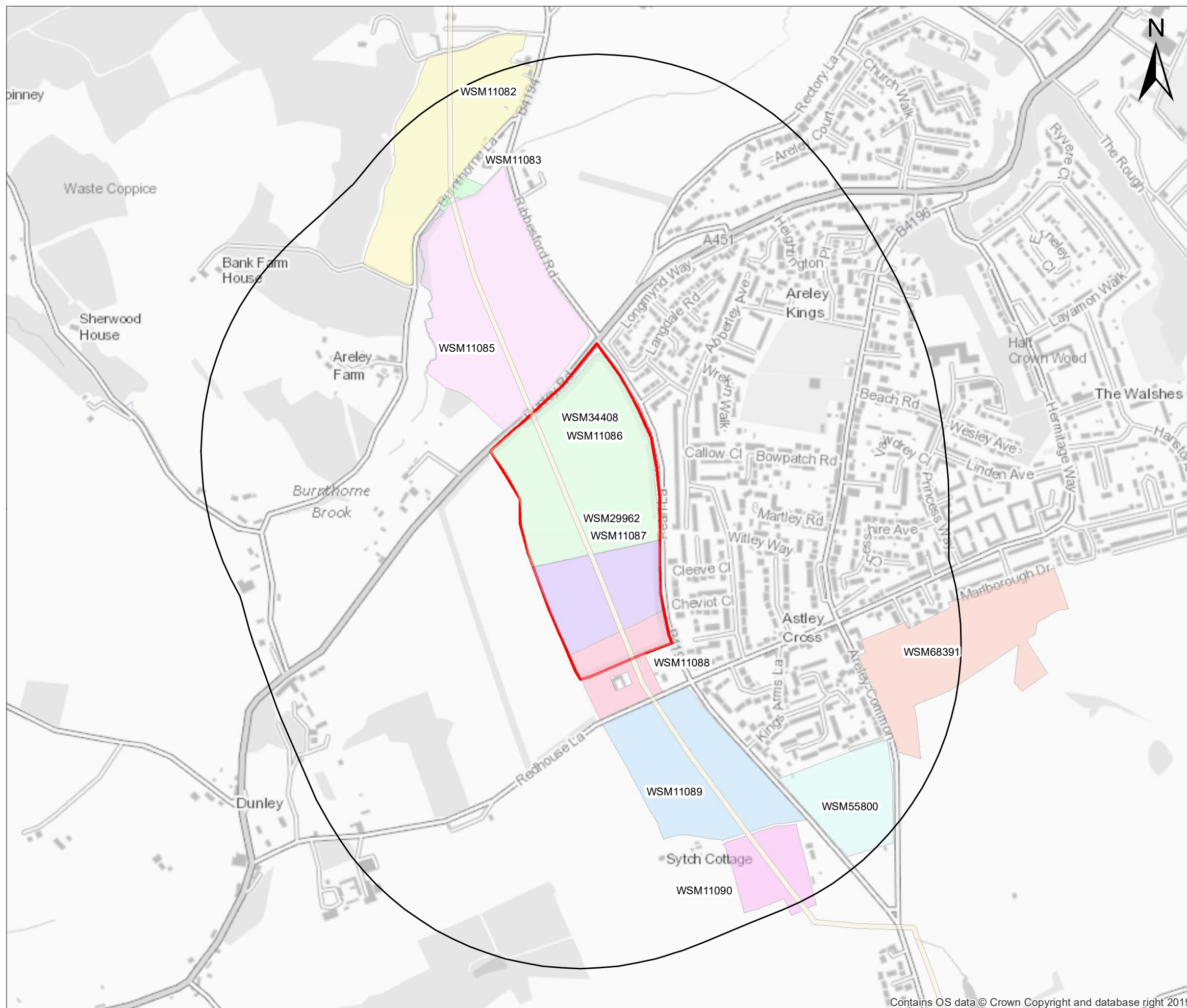
- Site
- 600 m Study Area
- Historic Landscape Character
 - Fields and Enclosed Land
 - Orchard/Horticulture
 - Ornamental, Parkland and Recreational
 - Settlement
 - Woodland



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Pearl Lane, Stourport – Archaeological
Desk-Based Assessment

**Figure 3: Historic Landscape
Characterisation**

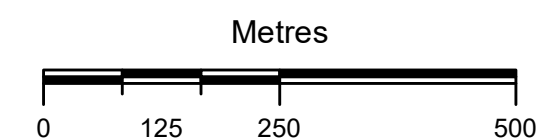
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- Site
- 600 m Study Area

Archaeological Investigations

- WSM11082
- WSM11083
- WSM11085
- WSM11086
- WSM11087
- WSM11088
- WSM11089
- WSM11090
- WSM29962
- WSM34408
- WSM55800
- WSM68391



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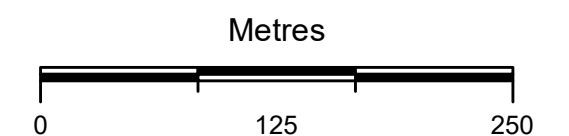
Pearl Lane, Stourport – Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 4: Archaeological Investigations

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 Site



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Desk-Based Assessment

Figure 5: 1838 Tithe Map

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