

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington, Oxfordshire

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Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington,  
Oxfordshire  
V.1.0  
1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Land at Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington, Oxfordshire has been assessed for its below ground archaeological potential. Built heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas are beyond the scope of this assessment.
- Six Scheduled Monuments are present within the 1km study area. The study site is not considered to contribute to the significance of five of the Scheduled Monuments. There will be no physical impact on the Scheduled Monument adjacent to the study site (Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh), although the study site does contribute to the significance of the monument. However, this contribution is very much secondary to the significance of its physical remains. The current development proposals leave the area immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument untouched and the completed development will retain a sense of the current rural farmstead. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will have no more than a negligible impact on the significance of the Scheduled Monument itself.
- Based on current evidence, a high archaeological potential has been established for the Medieval and Post Medieval periods, being immediately adjacent to the Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh. A low potential has been assigned to all other periods.
- It is likely that Medieval and early-Post Medieval agricultural practices and construction of the 19th century buildings of Asterleigh Farm would have had an adverse impact upon any archaeological remains which may be present within the study site.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This below ground archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by Neil Wright and Richard Smalley of RPS for Edgars Ltd.
- 1.2 The subject of this assessment, also known as the study site, is land at Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington, Oxfordshire and measures approximately 2ha, centred on NGR 440259 222256.
- 1.3 Built heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas are beyond the scope of this assessment.
- 1.4 In accordance with relevant policy and guidance on archaeology and planning and in accordance with the 'Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, updated October 2020), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, topographic and land-use information, to clarify the archaeological potential of the study site.
- 1.5 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of evidence on the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and other sources, including the results of a comprehensive map regression exercise and site visit.
- 1.6 The assessment thus enables relevant parties to assess the archaeological potential of the study site and to consider the need for design, civil engineering and archaeological solutions to the archaeological potential identified.

## 2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 National legislation regarding archaeology, including scheduled monuments, is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002, and updated in April 2014.
- 2.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and it was last updated in July 2021. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014, with the guidance on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment last updated 23 July 2019. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>).
- 2.3 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

### National Planning Policy

- 2.4 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled Conserving and enhancing the historic environment provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development;
  - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
  - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
  - Recognition that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.5 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 194 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.6 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.
- 2.7 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 2.8 A *Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 2.9 *Significance (for heritage policy)* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

- 2.10 *Setting* is defined as: 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 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.
- 2.11 In short, government policy provides a framework which:
- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets;
  - Protects the settings of such designations;
  - In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions;
  - Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit *in-situ* preservation.
- 2.12 The NPPG reiterates that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Importantly, the guidance states that if complete, or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance and make the interpretation publicly available. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Additionally, it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed. The level of 'substantial harm' is considered to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF. Importantly, harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may be more extensive than the curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.13 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

## Local Planning Policy

- 2.14 The study site is situated within the jurisdiction of West Oxfordshire District Council. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan was formally adopted on 27 September 2018 and sets out the overall planning framework for the district from 2011 to 2031. The Local Plan contains the following policies relevant to this assessment:

### **POLICY EH9: Historic Environment**

**All development proposals should conserve and/ or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire's historic environment, including the significance of the District's heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation, in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance for the historic environment.**

**In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving and/or enhancing the significance of designated heritage assets, including:**



- the outstanding universal values for which Blenheim Palace and Park is inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS), as guided by its WHS Management Plan (see also Policy EW9);
- the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, with regard to their character, fabric and their settings;
- the special architectural and historic interest, character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance;
- the special archaeological and historic interest of nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not), both with regard to their fabric and their settings;
- the special cultural, architectural and historic interest of Registered Parks and Gardens, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historical significance.

Significant weight will also be given to the local and regional value of non-designated heritage assets, including non-listed vernacular buildings (such as traditional agricultural buildings, chapels and mills), together with archaeological monuments that make a significant contribution to the District's historic environment.

All applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to:

- a) use appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets, their setting and historic landscape context of the application site, at a level of detail proportionate to the historic significance of the asset or area, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, original survey. This shall be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character;
- b) demonstrate that the proposal would, in order of preference:
  - avoid adverse impacts on the significance of the asset(s) (including those arising from changes to their settings) and, wherever possible, enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset(s);
  - minimise any unavoidable and justified (by the public benefits that would accrue from the proposed development – see below) adverse impacts and mitigate those impacts in a manner proportionate to the significance of the asset(s) and the nature and level of the impact, investigate and record changes to or loss of physical fabric, features, objects or other remains and make the results publicly available.
- c) demonstrate that any new development that would result in the unavoidable and justified loss of all or part of a heritage asset would proceed within a reasonable and agreed timetable that makes allowance for all necessary safeguarding and recording of fabric and other remains, including contingencies for unexpected discoveries.

#### ***Designated Assets***

Proposals which would harm the significance of a designated asset will not be approved, unless there is a clear and convincing justification in the form of substantive tangible public benefits that clearly and convincingly outweigh the harm, using the balancing principles set out in national policy and guidance.

#### ***Non-designated Heritage Assets***

When considering proposals that affect, directly or indirectly, the significance of non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be made having regard to:

- the scale of any harm or loss;
- the significance of the heritage asset; and
- the public benefits of the development. If it is determined through the relevant evidence that currently non-designated buildings, structures, historic landscapes or archaeology are of national significance, those elements of this policy for designated heritage assets will apply.

#### *Record and Advance Understanding*

Where development that would result in substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a heritage asset is permitted, developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of that asset, in a manner appropriate to the nature of the asset, its importance and the impact, and publish that evidence and make it publicly accessible.\*

\*(For the avoidance of doubt, the ability to mitigate loss of significance through investigation and recording will not contribute to the balancing judgement of whether such a loss is justifiable under this policy.)

#### POLICY EH13: Historic Landscape Character

In determining applications that affect the historic character of the landscape or townscape, particular attention will be paid to the following:

- the age, distinctiveness, rarity, sensitivity and capacity of the particular historic landscape or townscape characteristics affected
- the extent to which key historic features resonant of the area's character, such as hedgerows, watercourses and woodland, will be retained or replicated
- the degree to which the form and layout of the development will respect and build on the pre-existing historic character (including e.g. street and building layouts)
- the degree to which the form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development conserves or enhances the special historic character of its surroundings.

#### POLICY EH15: Scheduled Monuments and Other Nationally Important Archaeological Remains

Proposals for development that would affect, directly or indirectly, the significance of Scheduled Monuments or non-scheduled archaeological remains of demonstrably equal significance will be permitted where the proposals would conserve or enhance the significance of the Monument or remains, including the contribution to that significance of the setting of the Monument or remains. Nationally important archaeological remains (whether scheduled or demonstrably of equivalent significance) should be preserved in situ.

Any unavoidable harm to or loss of Scheduled Monuments or nationally important archaeological remains (justified in accordance with the principles set out in national planning policy and Policy EH9), should be:

- minimised through: careful design, including modifying building footprints; the use of appropriate construction methods and temporary works; avoiding damaging landscaping proposals; seeking engineering design solutions; and
- mitigated by a programme of archaeological investigation, recording and analysis.

### **POLICY EH16: Non-designated Heritage Assets**

When considering proposals that would affect, directly or indirectly, non-listed buildings, non-scheduled, non-nationally important archaeological remains or non-Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, as such assets are also irreplaceable, the presumption will be in favour of the avoidance of harm or loss. A balanced judgement will be made having regard to this presumption, the significance of the heritage asset, the scale of any harm or loss, and the benefits of the development. Proposals will be assessed using the principles set out for listed buildings, scheduled monuments and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens in Policies EH11, EH15 and EH14.

## **Hedgerow Regulations**

- 2.16 Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, as amended by The Hedgerows (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002, hedgerows are deemed to be historically important if they are more than 20m long and over 30 years old and if they meet at least one of these criteria:
1. They mark all or part of a parish boundary that existed before 1850;
  2. They mark an archaeological feature of a site that is a Scheduled Monument or noted on the Historic Environment Record;
  3. They mark the boundary of an estate or manor or looks to be related to any building or other feature that is part of the estate or manor that existed before 1600; and
  4. They are part of a field system or looks to be related to any building or other feature associated with the field system that existed before the Enclosure Acts (that is before 1845).
- 2.17 In practice (and following case law) hedgerows are deemed important under the above regulations if they can be demonstrated to exist on the appropriate pre-1845 parish tithe or enclosure map.
- 2.18 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk-based assessment seeks to clarify the study site's archaeological potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

## 3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

### Geology

- 3.1 The study site is wholly situated upon solid geology of limestone of the White Limestone Formation. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS: *accessed 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022*).

### Topography

- 3.2 The ground slopes downward from its highest point at the northernmost end of the study site, ranging from c. 146m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to c. 134m aOD at the southernmost end (Elevation Finder: *accessed 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022*).
- 3.3 The River Glyme runs approximately north-west to south-east, c. 600m east of the study site.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Timescales used in this report

#### Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000 -	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
Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval	AD 410 -	1066
Medieval	AD 1066 -	1485
Post Medieval	AD 1486 -	1799
Modern	AD 1800 -	Present

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter reviews the available archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological/historical background of the general area, and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the potential for any as yet to be discovered archaeological evidence on the study site.
- 4.2 What follows comprises a review of known archaeological assets within a 1km radius of the centre point of the study site (Fig. 2), also referred to as the study area, held on the Oxfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The online Historic England Archive (HEA) and the Oxfordshire County Record Office catalogue was also consulted.
- 4.3 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions and whether the proposed development will impact the theoretical archaeological potential identified below.

### Previous Archaeological Work

- 4.4 No previous archaeological events are recorded by the HER within the 1km study area.

### Prehistoric

- 4.5 No archaeological evidence from this period is recorded on the HER within the study site itself.
- 4.6 Three Scheduled sections of Grim's Ditch are present within the 1km study area (NHLE 1012903, NHLE 1012904, NHLE 1012905), the closest of which is situated approximately 250m south of the study site. Grim's Ditch is a series of discrete linear earthworks of Iron Age date which make up a circuit between the valleys of the Rivers Evenlode, Glyme and Windrush.
- 4.7 A rectangular earthwork enclosure in Hill Wood, 650m south-east of Grimsdyke Farm, is designated a Scheduled Monument (HE 1016329). The monument has been reclassified as an

earthwork enclosure of Iron Age date; possibly of agricultural or pastoral use, and is situated approximately 800m south of the study site.

- 4.8 These Scheduled Monuments will be discussed further, later in this assessment.
- 4.9 A scatter of late-Iron Age/Romano-British material was found during fieldwalking at Pump Close, c. 300m south of the study site (HER MOX24072). It was discovered between 1997 and 2004 and included tile fragments, greywares, reduced and oxidised sand-tempered and sooty buff fabrics and two secondary flint flakes.
- 4.10 Current evidence indicates that the wider local landscape was utilised during the Prehistoric period. However, recorded activity is located at least 250m from the study site. As such, a low potential is identified for the presence of significant Prehistoric archaeology, such as settlement activity, within the study site itself.

## Roman

- 4.11 There is no archaeological evidence from this period recorded on the HER within the study site itself.
- 4.12 The site of Pump Copse Farmstead is designated a Scheduled Monument (HE 1003242, HER MOX32) and is situated c. 430m south of Asterleigh Farm, and approximately 165m west from the lane leading south from the farm (also part of the site boundary). It is a ditch-enclosed farm, probably of Roman date, which was revealed by aerial photographs. This Scheduled Monument is discussed further, later in this assessment.
- 4.13 The route of a Roman road is recorded immediately north-east of the entrance to the study site (HER MOX28032). The Roman road extending from Wootton to Hanwel, partially on the line of the current A44, has been deduced from documentary evidence and fieldwork. The line of the Roman road is situated c. 400m from Asterleigh Farm itself.
- 4.14 A fragment of Roman rotary quern was recovered at Pump Copse, c. 375m south of the study site (HER MOX24070). It was found within ploughsoil on the site of a largely ploughed-out rectangular enclosure during field walking between 1997-2004. Romano-British pottery sherds, food bones and a file have been found on the south side of Grim's Ditch, c. 400m south of the study site (HER MOX1209).
- 4.15 Due to the available evidence a low potential has been established for heritage assets of the Roman period to be present within the study site.

## Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval

- 4.16 There is no evidence from these periods recorded on the HER within the study site or 1km study area. Asterleigh is not mentioned in Domesday and the earliest documentary evidence comes from the early 13<sup>th</sup> century (see below).
- 4.17 Due to the paucity of evidence a low potential has been established for heritage assets of these periods to be present within the study site.

## Medieval

- 4.18 There is no archaeological evidence from this period recorded on the HER within the study site.
- 4.19 The documentary history of the settlement of Asterleigh extends from the early 13<sup>th</sup> century to 1466 AD. In 1466 the parish was joined to Kiddington, due to poverty, depopulation and prevalence of epidemics (E M Jope in Oxoniensia, 1948). The site of the former village is now rough ground except for a single farm, as it was in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (ibid.). Asterleigh is not mentioned in Domesday, although a settlement here may have been included under the entry for Over Kiddington (ibid.).

- 4.20 The Scheduled Monument of Asterleigh Medieval Settlement (HE 1020966, HER MOX45) is situated immediately west of the study site. Medieval pottery from unauthorised ploughing in 1998 at Asterleigh Deserted Medieval Village has been recorded approximately 150m west of the study site (HER MOX24103). This Scheduled Monument is discussed further, later in this assessment.
- 4.21 As noted above, and discussed further in 4.34-4.36, a former Medieval settlement is recorded immediately to the west of the study site. It is considered possible that remains contemporary with this settlement may extend eastwards into the study site. Therefore, a high potential is identified for Medieval archaeological remains within the study site.

## Post Medieval/Modern

- 4.22 There is no archaeological evidence from these periods recorded on the HER within the study site.
- 4.23 A possible undated trackway has been interpreted from aerial photographs, immediately north of the study site (HER MOX907). The Post Medieval Ditchley Park is situated c. 375m south of the study site (HER MOX927).
- 4.24 The shrunken village of Over Kiddington is situated c. 400m north-east of the study site (HER MOX1211). It consists of a hollow way and possible slight traces of enclosures within the park. Buildings are visible on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map, but not on Davis map of 1797.
- 4.25 In these periods understanding of settlement, land-use and the utilisation of the landscape is enhanced by cartographic sources, which can give additional detail to data contained within the HER.
- 4.26 Although lacking much detail, the 1768 Jeffrey's Map (Fig. 3) and 1785 Kitchin Map (Fig. 4) show the study site occupying featureless, undeveloped land. The 1815 Ordnance Survey drawing (Fig. 5) first shows Asterleigh Farm buildings occupying the main part of the study site, with the two access tracks crossing enclosed fields and an area of woodland to the immediate north of Asterleigh Farm.
- 4.27 The 1922 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 6) shows greater detail of Asterleigh Farm buildings within the main part of the study site, with further additions and development of these buildings by 1974-6 (Fig. 7). The arrangement of buildings within the main part of the study site has remained relatively unchanged up to the present day (Figs. 8-10).
- 4.28 It is likely that the study site occupied agricultural land during the early-Post Medieval period, with the construction of Asterleigh farm originating in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Evidence of Post Medieval/Modern domestic activity related to the farm is likely to be present on the study site.

## LiDAR

- 4.29 Environment Agency LiDAR data held by RPS does not cover the area of the 1km study area.

## Historic Landscape Characterisation (Fig. 2b)

- 4.30 The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) records the main part of the study site as '*Asterleigh Farm: Rural – Farmstead*' of Post Medieval date (HER HOX10794). Both access tracks into Asterleigh Farm are recorded within '*Planned Enclosure*' (HER HOX10798) of Post Medieval date.

## Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets)

- 4.31 Existing national policy guidance for archaeology (the NPPF as referenced in section 2) enshrines the concept of the 'significance' of heritage assets. Significance as defined in the NPPF centres on

the value of an archaeological or historic asset for its 'heritage interest' to this or future generations.

4.32 Built heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas are beyond the scope of this assessment.

4.33 A number of Scheduled Monuments are located within 1km of the study site, including:

- Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh (NHLE 1020966)
- Pump Copse earthwork (NHLE 1003242)
- 380m section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch (NHLE 1012904)
- 145m section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch (NHLE 1012905)
- Section of Grim's Ditch 350m ENE of Ditchley House (NHLE 1012903)
- Rectangular earthwork enclosure in Hill Wood (NHLE 1016329)

### **The Medieval Settlement and Church of Asterleigh**

4.34 The Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh (NHLE 1003242) is located immediately adjacent to the study site's western boundary. The monument includes the remains of the Medieval settlement of Asterleigh and the associated site of St Peter's Church, two Post-Medieval kilns and Medieval quarry workings. It is roughly east-west aligned following a main street which can still be seen as an earthwork of a hollow way. The village remains include at least ten platforms, and the remains of the church and churchyard, the site of which reportedly presents as a rectangular earthwork (the earthwork could not be discerned during the site visit due to overgrowth in the woodland). Pottery from the monument and documentary records show that the village was in use from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. The church continued in use until it was abandoned in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century (List Entry description 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022).

4.35 The Medieval settlement is considered by Historic England as a good example of the local settlement pattern. It is of interest due to its state of preservation and because it was abandoned at a relatively early date, partly as a result of the Black Death. The monument will contain archaeological and environmental evidence relating to the habitation of the settlement, the reasons for its abandonment and its subsequent changes of use. Taken with evidence from other Medieval settlement sites in the region, the remains at Asterleigh will provide an insight into the economic and agricultural forces which led to villages such as these being abandoned in favour of other sites within the region as a whole (List Entry description 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022).

4.36 The study site is located immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument and is considered to lie within its setting. As a rural farmstead, the study site makes a contextual contribution to the significance of the monument in that it represents the development of the settlement at Asterleigh from its Medieval origins within the Scheduled area, through to the Post-Medieval farmstead in use after the abandonment of the original village. The setting therefore contributes to the monument's significance by demonstrating its development over time. However, this contribution is secondary to the physical remains of the former settlement.

### **Pump Copse Earthwork**

4.37 The Scheduled remains at Pump Copse (NHLE 1003242) are located approximately 430m south of Asterleigh Farm, and approximately 165m west from the lane leading south from the farm (also part of the site boundary). The monument comprises a ditch-enclosed farm, likely of a Roman



date. The monument was identified through aerial photography. The name of the monument is misleading as no earthwork remains are present.

- 4.38 Asterleigh Farm is not visible from the monument, it being screened by Pump Copse itself. There is no known contextual or historical relationship between the study site and the Scheduled Monument. Therefore, Asterleigh Farm is not considered to be part of the setting, nor contribute to the significance of, the Pump Copse Earthwork. The southern access to Asterleigh Farm is visible from the monument but is not considered to contribute to its significance.

### Sections of Grim's Ditch

- 4.39 The Scheduled remains of Grim's Ditch (NHLE 1012903, NHLE 1012904, NHLE 1012905) are located over 250m south and south-west of the study site's southern limits.
- 4.40 The north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch is a series of discrete linear earthworks of Iron Age date which make up a circuit between the valleys of the Rivers Evenlode, Glyme and Windrush. The area enclosed is 12km<sup>2</sup> and the earthworks were built in open country leaving gaps in previously forested areas. Where visible the monument includes a rampart of earth and stone, a berm and an outer ditch. In places a narrow-palisaded trench was included. It is believed that Grim's Ditch served to enclose land and provide control over access through the landscape.
- 4.41 There is no intervisibility between the study site and sections of the Scheduled Monument due to dense, mature vegetation and changes in topography. There is no known contextual relationship between the study site and Grim's Ditch. Therefore, the study site is not considered to lie within the setting of, or contribute to the significance of, the Scheduled sections of Grim's Ditch.

### Rectangular earthwork enclosure in Hill Wood

- 4.42 The Rectangular Enclosure in Hill Wood (NHLE 1016329) is located approximately 865m south-east of the study site. The monument includes a roughly rectangular earthwork enclosure believed to be of an Iron Age origin. The enclosure lies on a steep east-facing slope, and measures approximately 115m x 55m.
- 4.43 There is no intervisibility between the study site and the Scheduled Monument due to dense, mature vegetation and changes in topography. There is no known contextual relationship between the study site and the enclosure. Therefore, the study site is not considered to lie within the setting of, or contribute to the significance of, the Scheduled enclosure in Hill Wood.

## Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets)

- 4.44 As identified by desk-based work, archaeological potential by period and the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present is summarised in table form below and mapped where possible on Figure 2:

Period:	Identified Archaeological Potential	Identified Archaeological Significance
Prehistoric	Low	Low (Local/Regional)
Roman	Low	Low (Local/Regional)
Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval	Low	Low (Local/Regional)
Medieval	High (adjacent settlement SM)	Moderate (Regional/National)
Post Medieval	High potential for Post Medieval domestic evidence relating to the farm	Low (Local/Regional)

- 4.45 Based on current evidence, a high archaeological potential has been established for the Medieval and Post Medieval periods. All other periods have been assigned a low potential.
- 4.46 Should Medieval remains be present within the study site, they may be considered to be of elevated significance if related to the adjacent Scheduled Monument. Any archaeological evidence for other periods is likely to be of no more than local interest.

## **5 SITE CONDITIONS & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS**

### **Site Conditions**

- 5.1 A site visit was carried out in May 2022 (see Plates 1-9).
- 5.2 The study site comprises a small farmstead surrounded by fields. Access is from the A44 to the east, and a small lane leads southwards to the single-track road that leads to Ditchley. No finds or features of an archaeological interest were noted on the study site itself.
- 5.3 The site visit confirmed that the study site is visible from the Scheduled remains of Asterleigh Medieval village. Asterleigh Farm is not visible from the Scheduled Roman site near Pump Copse, but the southern lane is visible. There is no intervisibility with any of the Scheduled sections of Grim's Ditch.
- 5.4 Built Heritage assets are assessed in a separate report.

### **Review of Potential Development Impacts on Designated Archaeological Assets**

- 5.5 The study site is not considered to contribute to the significance of the following Scheduled Monuments:
- Pump Copse earthwork (NHLE 1003242)
  - 380m section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch (NHLE 1012904)
  - 145m section of the north Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch (NHLE 1012905)
  - Section of Grim's Ditch 350m ENE of Ditchley House (NHLE 1012903)
  - Rectangular earthwork enclosure in Hill Wood (NHLE 1016329)
- 5.6 Therefore, the proposed development of the study site will have no impact on their significance.
- 5.7 There will be no physical impact on the Scheduled Monument adjacent to the study site.
- 5.8 The study site does contribute to the significance of the Scheduled remains at Asterleigh Farm in that it provides context on the development and decline of the Medieval settlement. However, this contribution is very much secondary to the significance of the physical remains of the monument themselves. The current development proposals leave the area adjacent to the Scheduled Monument untouched and the completed development will retain a sense of the current rural farmstead. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will have no more than a negligible impact on the significance of the Scheduled Monument.

### **Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Assets**

- 5.9 Based on current evidence a high potential has been established for the Medieval and Post Medieval periods. All other periods have been assigned a low potential.
- 5.10 It is likely the Medieval and early-Post Medieval agricultural practices and construction of the 19<sup>th</sup> buildings of Asterleigh Farm would have truncated any earlier archaeological remains.

## 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The study site has been assessed for its below ground archaeological potential.
- 6.2 Built heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas are beyond the scope of this assessment.
- 6.3 Six Scheduled Monuments are present within the 1km study area. The study site is not considered to contribute to the significance of five of the Scheduled Monuments. There will be no physical impact on the Scheduled Monument adjacent to the study site (Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh), although the study site does contribute to its significance. However, this contribution is very much secondary to the significance of its physical remains. The current development proposals leave the area immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument untouched and the completed development will retain a sense of the current rural farmstead. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development will have no more than a negligible impact on the significance of the Scheduled Monument itself.
- 6.4 Based on current evidence, a high archaeological potential has been established for the Medieval and Post Medieval periods, being immediately adjacent to the Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh. A low potential has been assigned to all other periods.
- 6.5 It is likely that Medieval and early-Post Medieval agricultural practices and construction of the 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings of Asterleigh Farm would have had an adverse impact upon any archaeological remains which may be present within the study site.

# Sources Consulted

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Oxfordshire County Council Historic Environment Record

## Internet

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Domesday Online – <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/>

Elevation Finder – <https://www.freemaptools.com/elevation-finder.htm>

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E M Jope Recent Mediaval Finds in the Oxford Region. In *Oxoniensia*. Vol XIII, 1948

## Cartographic

1768 Jeffreys Map (not to scale)

1785 Kitchin Map (not to scale)

1815 Ordnance Survey Map (not to scale)

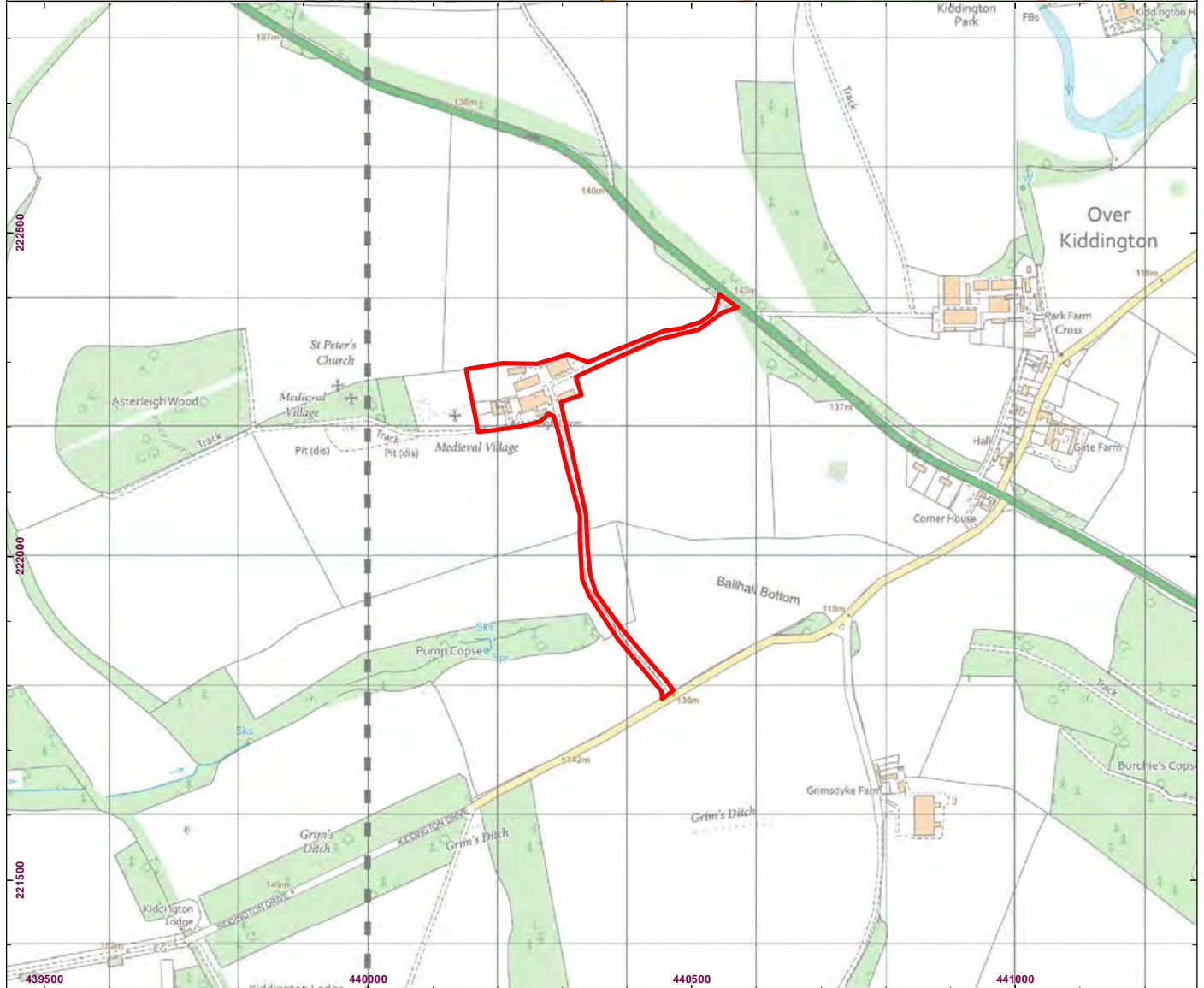
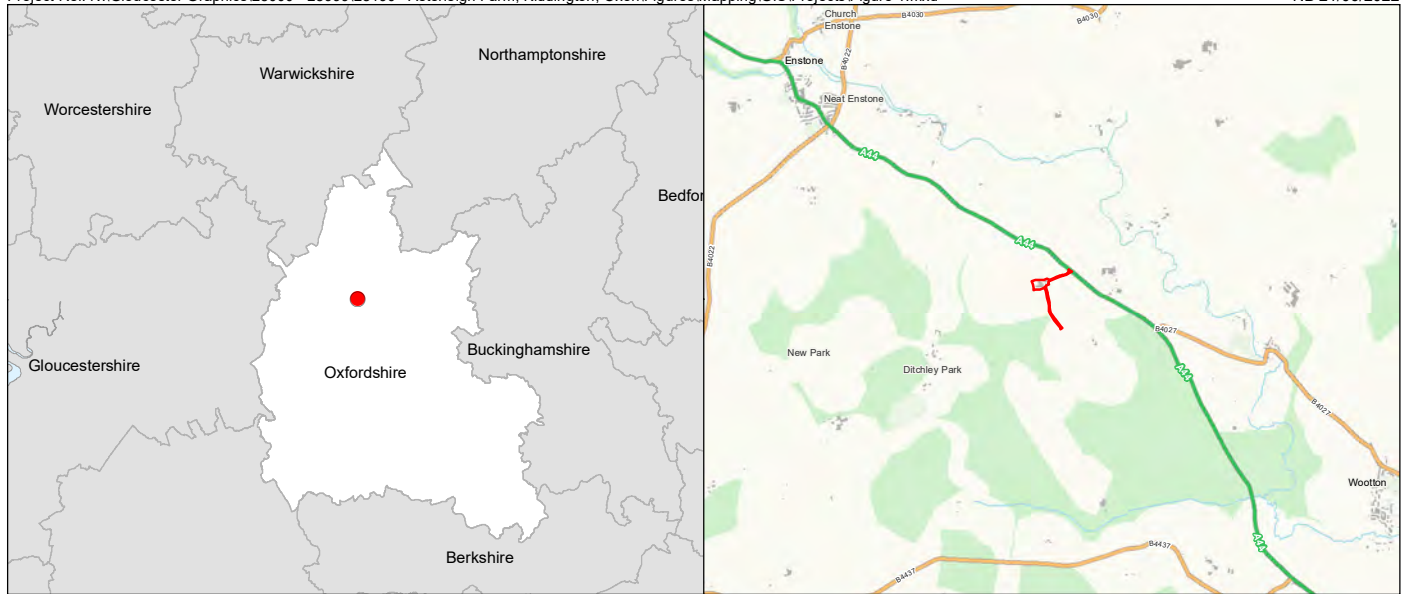
1881 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500

1884 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560

1899 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500  
1900 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560  
1922 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500  
1923 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560  
1949 Ordnance Survey Aerial Photograph 1:10,560  
1955 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,000  
1974-6 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500  
1979 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,000  
1994 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500  
1999 10k Raster Mapping 1:10,000  
2006 10k Raster Mapping 1:10,000  
2021 VectorMap Local Map 1:10,000

A stylized graphic of a hand holding a pen. The hand is a light beige color with rounded corners, and the pen is a dark maroon color. The pen is held in a way that it points towards the top right. The word "FIGURES" is written in a dark maroon, bold, sans-serif font in the upper right corner of the hand.

**FIGURES**



 Site Boundary



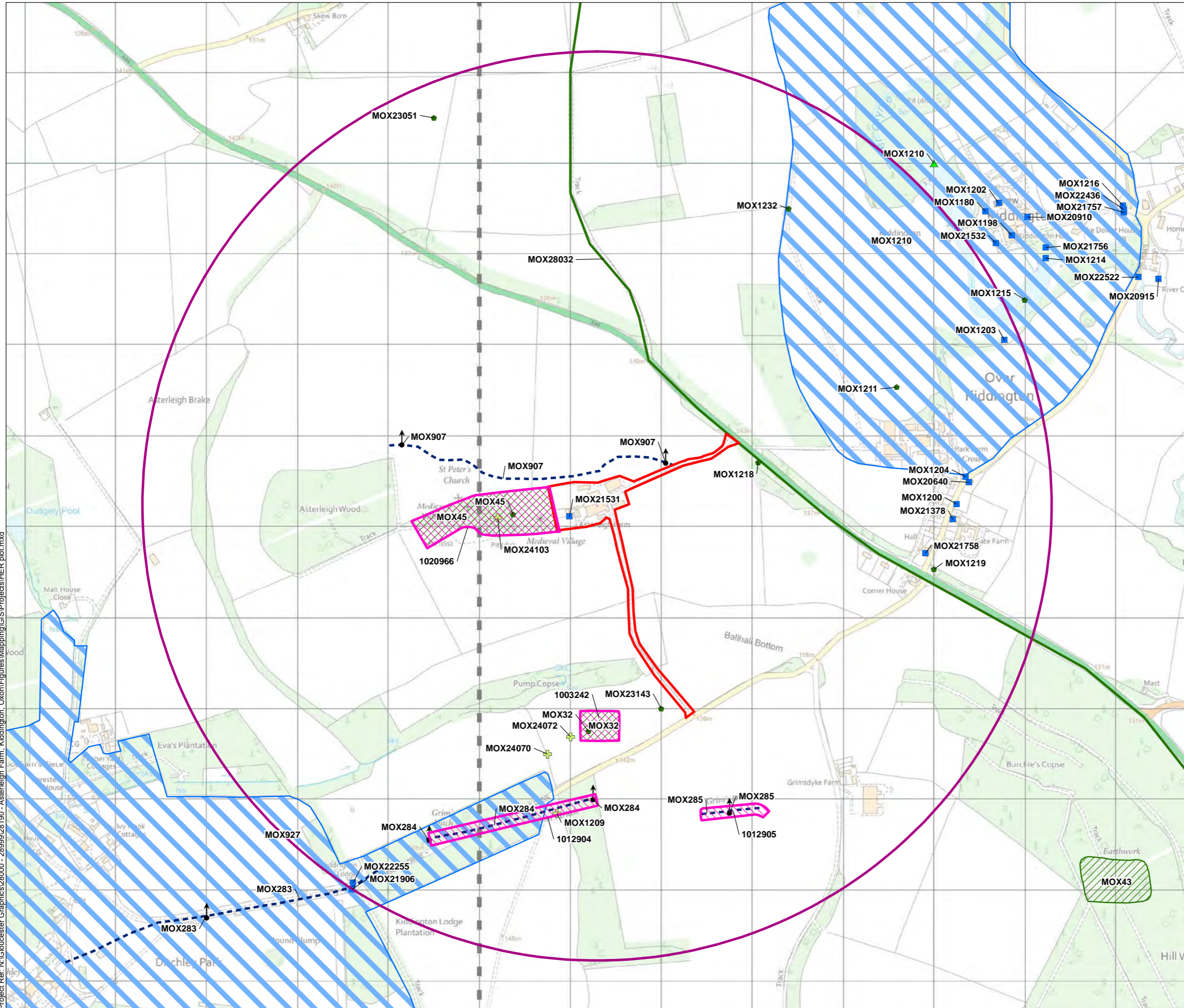
0 100 200m  
Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 1  
Site Location



Project Ref: N:\Goucester Graphics\28000 - 28999\28190 - Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington, Oxon\Figures\Mapping\GIS\Projects\HER\plot.mxd



**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- 1km search radius

**Designated Heritage Assets:**

- Scheduled Monuments

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:**

**HER Records Points**

- Monuments
- Findspots
- Buildings
- Linear
- Land

**HER Records Lines**

- Monuments
- Linear

**HER Records Polygons**

- Monuments
- Land

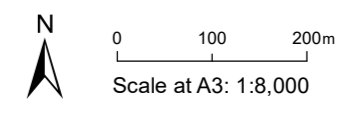
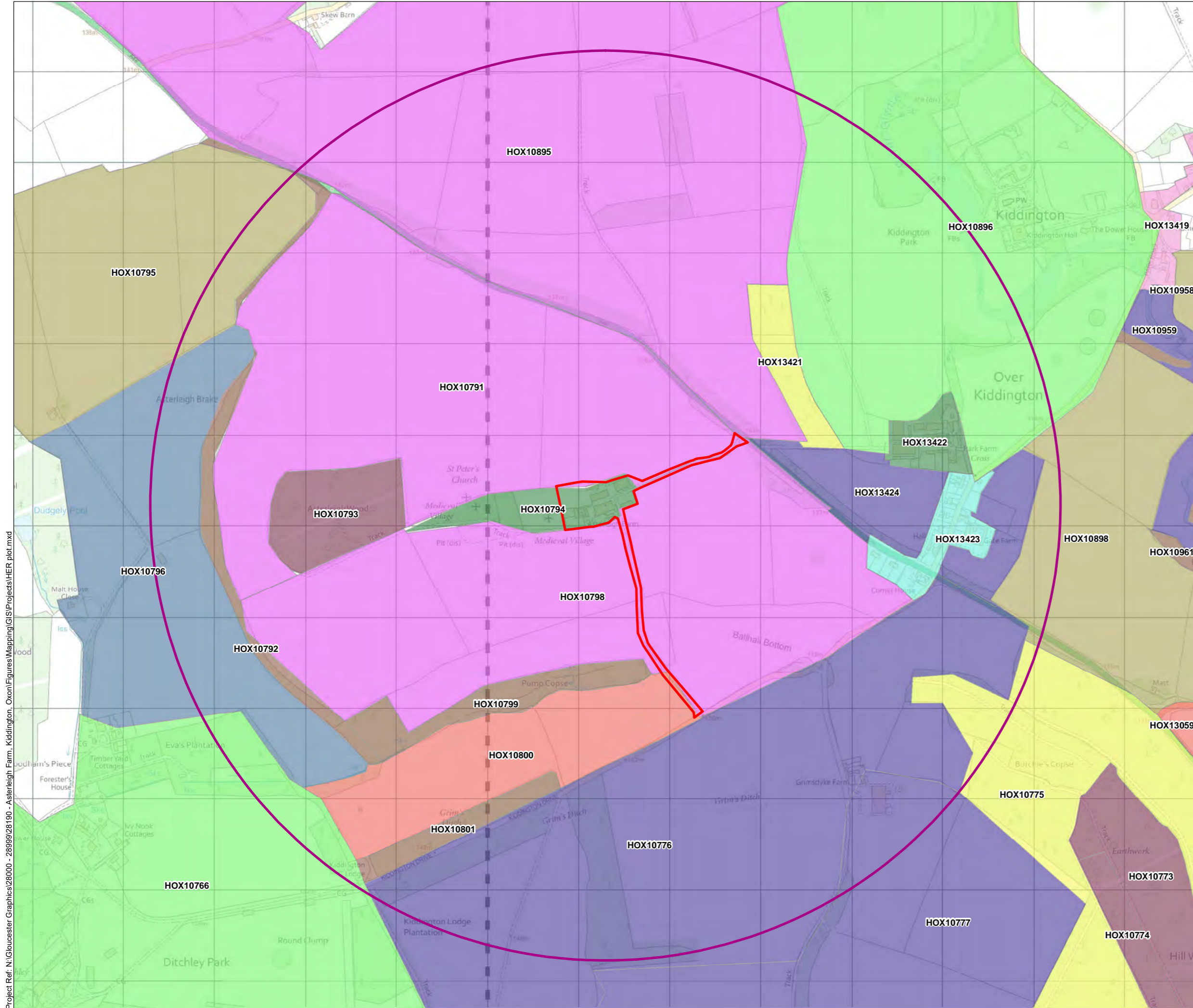


Figure 2a  
HER Plot



**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- 1km search radius

**Historic Landscape Characterisation:**

- Ancient Enclosure
- Orn-Parkland / Designed Landscape
- Piecemeal Enclosure
- Planned Enclosure
- Prairie / Amalgamated
- Reorganised Enclosures
- Rural - Hamlet
- Rural - Village
- Rural - Farmstead
- Woodland - Ancient
- Woodland - Plantation
- Woodland - Secondary Woodland

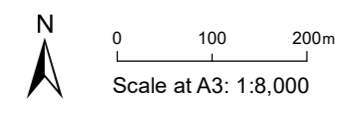


Figure 2b  
HLC Plot

Project Ref: N:\Goucester Graphics\280000 - 28999\28190 - Asterleigh Farm, Kiddington, Oxon\Figures\Mapping\GIS\Projects\HER\plot.mxd



Approximate site location



Not to Scale  
Illustrative Only



Figure 3

1768 Jeffrey's Map



Approximate site location



Not to Scale  
Illustrative Only



Figure 4

1785 Kitchin Map



 Site Boundary

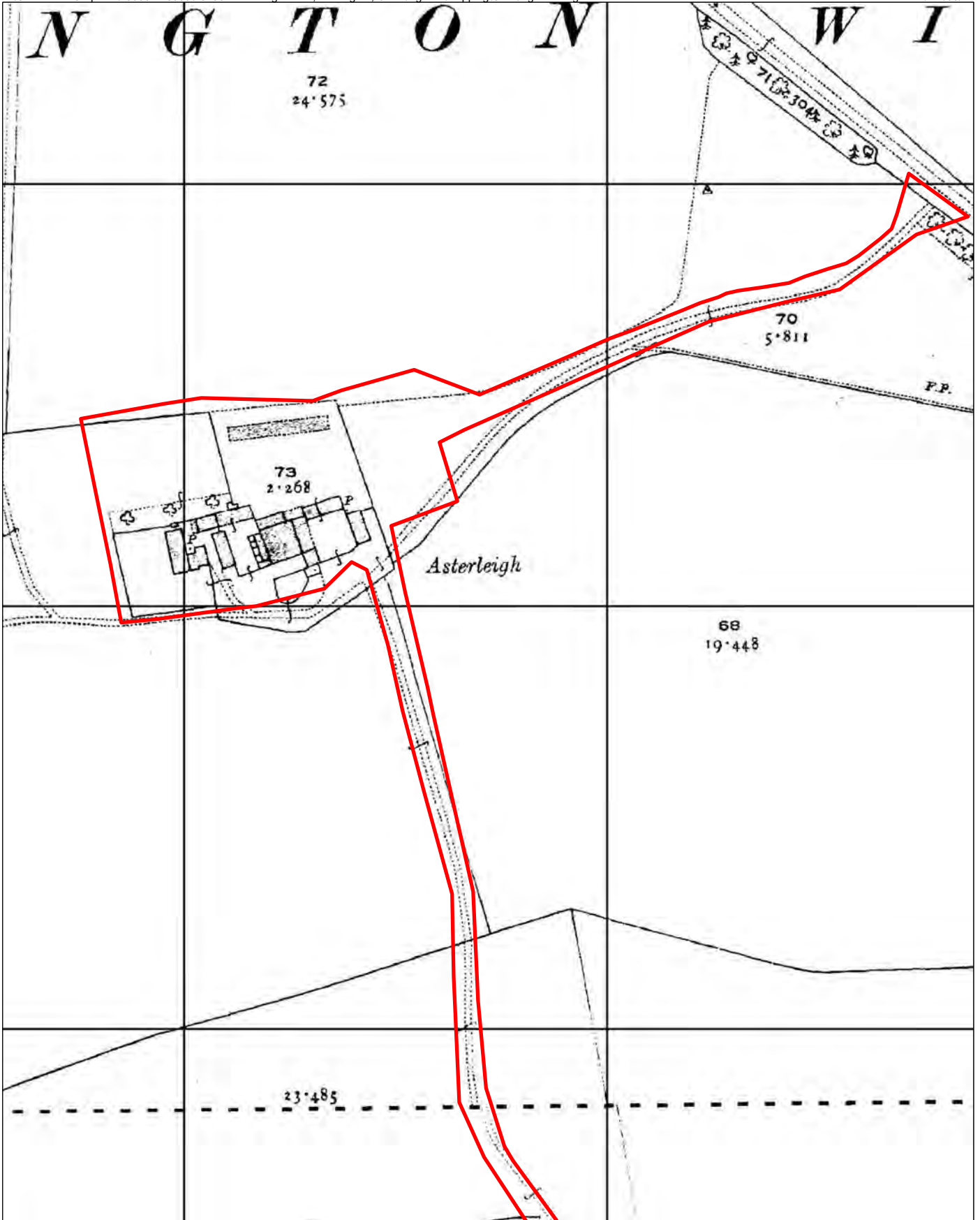


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Scale at A4: 1:10,000  
(approximate)



Figure 5

1815 Ordnance Survey Drawing



 Site Boundary

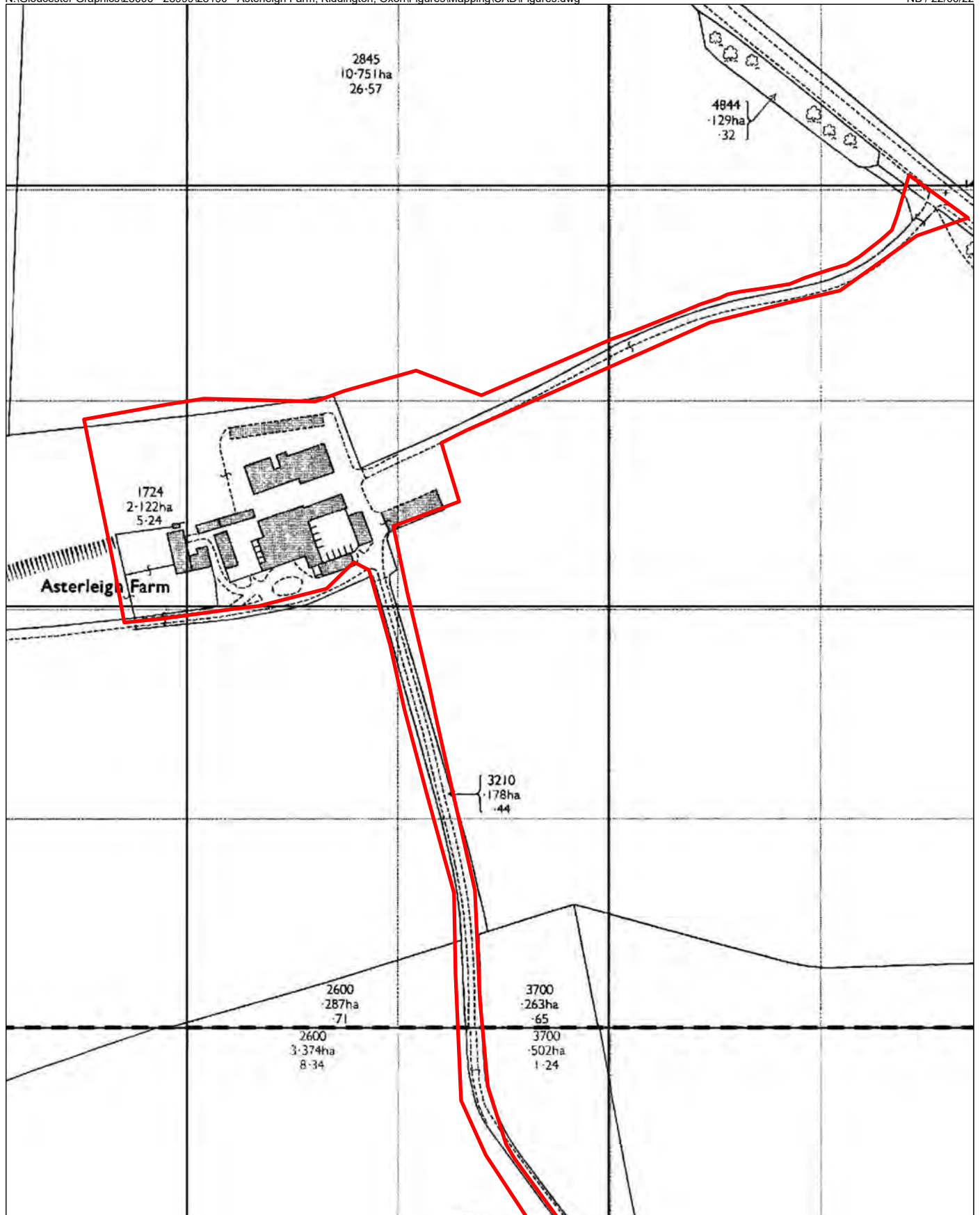


0 25 50m  
Scale at A4: 1:2,500



Figure 6

1922 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



0 25 50m  
Scale at A4: 1:2,500



Figure 7

1974-1976 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



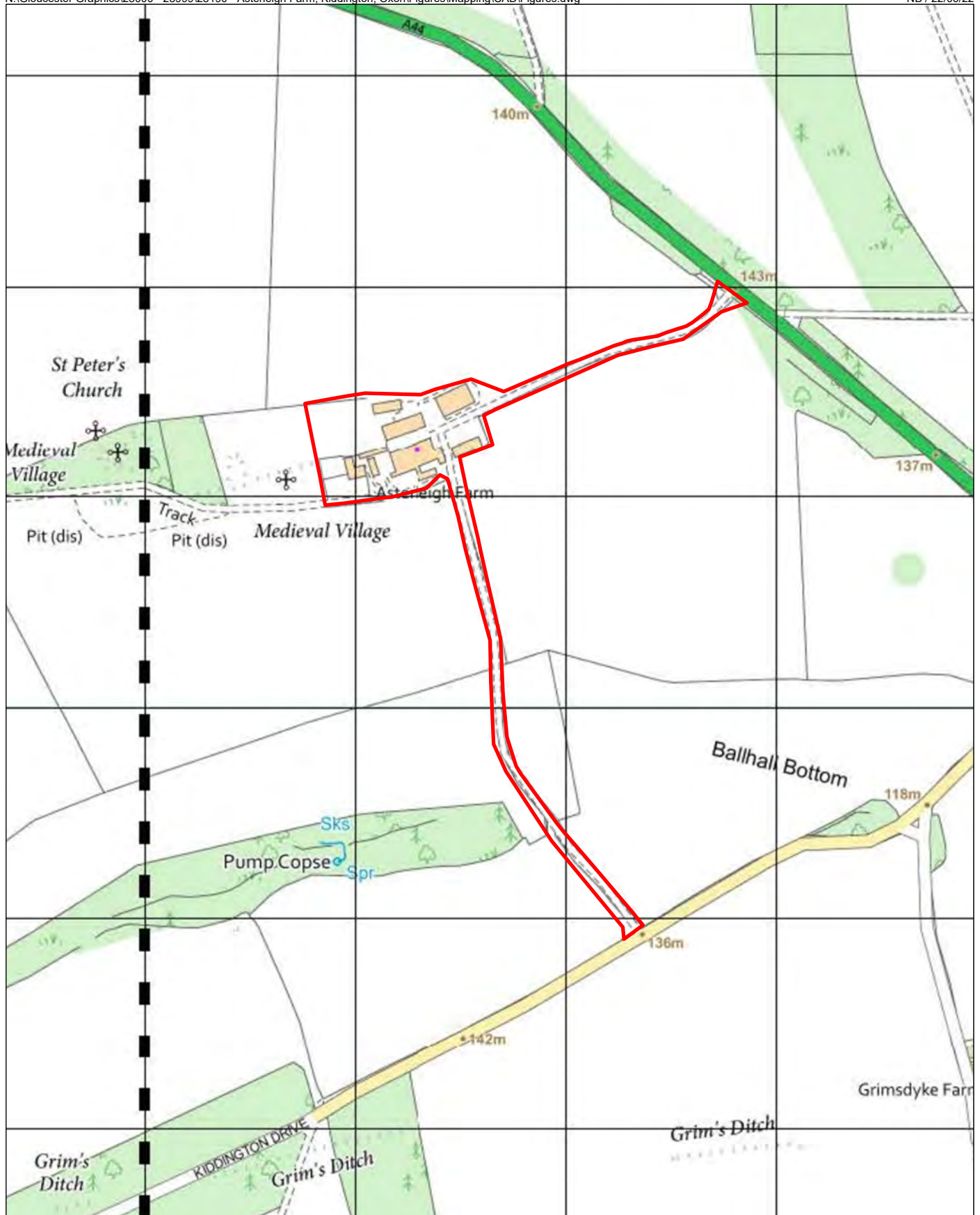
0 25 50m  
Scale at A4: 1:2,500



Figure 8

1994 Ordnance Survey Map





 Site Boundary



0 50 100m  
Scale at A4: 1:5,000



Figure 9  
2021 VectorMap Local Map



 Site Boundary



0 30 60m  
Scale at A4: 1:3,000



Figure 10

2021 Satellite Imagery



PLATES



Plate 1: View from north-eastern access, looking south-west towards Asterleigh Farm



Plate 2: View from within Asterleigh Farm buildings, looking south-west



Plate 3: View from within Asterleigh Farm buildings, looking north-east along north-eastern access



Plate 4: view from northern part of Asterleigh Farm, looking south-east towards the main farm buildings



Plate 5: View from within western part of adjacent Medieval Settlement SM, looking east towards Asterleigh Farm



Plate 6: View from within Asterleigh Farm, looking west towards Medieval Settlement SM



Plate 7: View from southern access, looking north-west towards Asterleigh Farm (right) and Medieval Settlement SM within woodland (left)



Plate 8: View from mid-way of southern access, looking north towards Asterleigh Farm



Plate 9: View looking north towards Pump Copse woodland, with Site of Pump Copse Farmstead SM in the foreground





## APPENDICES

**HER**      **Monuments**

ID	Type	Description	Location
MOX32	Farmstead	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1003242)</b> . <i>Site of Pump Copse Farmstead</i> . Ditch-enclosed farm, probably ROMAN. Revealed by APs. Site misleadingly termed "earthwork" in original scheduling. No Roman finds on site	165m W
MOX43	Enclosure	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1016329)</b> . <i>Rectangular earthwork enclosure in Hill Wood, 650m south east of Grimsdyke Farm</i> . Site reclassified as earthwork enclosure of IRON AGE date; possibly of agricultural or pastoral use. The monument includes a roughly rectangular earthwork enclosure, believed to be Iron Age in date	800m SE
MOX45	Deserted Settlement	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1020966)</b> . <i>Asterleigh Deserted Medieval Village</i> . Consisting the earthwork remains of a church within a massive embankment, a quarry, two round structures (possibly later kilns), and the village with a street, well and various banks visible. No trace in Domesday Survey. MEDIEVAL	Imm. W
MOX283	Linear Earthwork	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1012903)</b> . <i>Grim's Ditch: Section 350m ENE of Ditchley House</i> . North Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch section. Survives as earthwork and cropmark (Trench dug in 1991). IRON AGE	650m S
MOX284	Linear Earthwork	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1012904)</b> . <i>Grim's Ditch: Section ENE of Kiddington Lodge</i> . Consists of 380m section of the North Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch 200m ENE of Kiddington Lodge, running broadly E to W. Includes a bank, berm, ditch and palisade ditch. IRON AGE	350m S
MOX285	Linear Earthwork	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1012905)</b> . <i>Grim's Ditch: Section West of Grimsdyke Farm</i> . Consists of 145m section of the North Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch 200m W of Grimsdyke Farm. Ditch runs W to E downslope before forming the NE turn of the ditch system where it probably abutted the edge of a contemporary wood. Survives as cropmark and earthwork. IRON AGE	250m S
MOX286	Linear Earthwork	<b>Scheduled Monument (HE 1012906)</b> . <i>Grim's Ditch: Section from Out Wood to Berring's Wood</i> . Consists of 1km section of the North Oxfordshire Grim's Ditch running downhill from NW to SE, from Out Wood to Berring's Wood. Includes bank, berm, ditch, and outer palisade trench. Butt ends clearly visible. IRON AGE	>1km
MOX907	Trackway	Possible Trackway North of Asterleigh. Revealed by AP's as pair of parallel dark lines following a sinuous curved course from NE corner of Asterleigh Wood eastwards for some 670m. UNDATED	Imm. N
MOX927	Park	Ditchley Park. POST MEDIEVAL	375m S
MOX1198	Country House	Kiddington Hall and Orangery, built c. 1850, by Charles Barry, with a core of 1673. Stables, now partly flats. POST MEDIEVAL ( <i>also Listed Building</i> )	200m NE
MOX1200	Well House	Village Well House. Not shown on 6" OS map. Photograph by George Powell shows C19 structure dated 1869 with semi-circular vault. POST MEDIEVAL	500m E
MOX1209	Findspot	ROMANO-BRITISH pottery sherds, food bones and a file(?) found on south side of Grim's Ditch (HE 1012904)	400m S
MOX1210	Park	Kiddington Park. Mid-C18 landscape park by Lancelot Brown with formal gardens dating to c. 1850 by Charles Barry ( <i>also Registered Park and Garden</i> )	750m NE
MOX1211	Shrunken Village	Over Kiddington. Consists of hollow way and possible slight traces of enclosures within park. Buildings visible on 1st Edition OS map but not on Davis map of 1797. POST MEDIEVAL	400m NE
MOX1215	Lake	Kiddington Park. Located c. 75m SSE of the house. Formed by damming the River Glyme by Capability Brown. POST MEDIEVAL	700m NE
MOX1218	Milestone	Type E. POST MEDIEVAL	75m E
MOX1219	Toll House	Site of Over Kiddington Toll House. POST MEDIEVAL	600m E
MOX1232	Kitchen Garden	Possible Kitchen Garden (west side of Kiddington Park). Consists of rectangular enclosure with traces of internal building platform which could be a kitchen garden. Identified from 1981 AAS and 1961 FAS AP's. POST MEDIEVAL	550m NE

MOX23051	Cropmarks	Cropmarks of a rectangular enclosure and associated linear features. UNDATED	800m NW
MOX23143	Enclosures	Possible ROMAN enclosures near Pump Copse villa (HE 1003242) identified during routine aerial review. Curved linear features and possible rectilinear enclosure found in same field as Pump Copse villa. Identified as white (foundation marks?) lines on AP in same field as villa; possibly extending into adjacent field. Fieldwork by R Hingley in 1981 over the site produced small quantities of tile and some early ROMAN pottery. Some of the pottery could be early-IRON AGE	50m S
MOX23157	Findspot	Nineteenth century find of ROMAN coin hoard at Kiddington. Account given by G Busby to Percy Manning regarding find on Assarts Farm, near Hill Wood. Hoard consisted of 80 ROMAN coins, silver brooch and silver bit, found with broken pottery container in ploughed soil which had just been reclaimed from woodland. Reported in 1899; notes to Manning in Ashmolean	>1.4km
MOX24070	Findspot	Fragment of ROMAN rotary quern at Pump Copse. Found in ploughsoil on site of largely ploughed-out square enclosure during field walking between 1997 and 2004	375m S
MOX24072	Findspot	Scatter of Late-IRON AGE/ROMANO-BRITISH material at Pump Close. Found during field walking between 1997 and 2004. Finds included tile fragment, greywares, reduced and oxidised sand-tempered and sooty buff fabrics and two secondary flint flakes	300m S
MOX24103	Findspot	MEDIEVAL pottery from Asterleigh DMV. Found while field walking between 1997 and 2004. Sand-tempered sherds and green-glazed creamware in ploughsoil. Unauthorised ploughing in Spring 1998	150m W
MOX28032	Roman Road	Roman road extending from Wootton to Hanwel deduced from documentary evidence and field work	Imm. NE



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