



**Wilderness Park, Land
North of Wilderness
Lane, Great Barr**

**Heritage Impact
Assessment**

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On behalf of:
Wain Estates (Land) Limited

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been researched and prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) for Wain Estates (Land) Limited, to inform and support the preparation, submission and then determination of residential development proposals for Wilderness Park, Land North of Wilderness Lane, Great Barr; i.e. the 'site'.
- 1.2 The development proposals for the site focus on an Outline planning application that covers the following.

"Outline planning application (with the exception of access) for the development of up to 150 new dwellings, a countryside park and associated works."
- 1.3 The aims of this report are to identify and define the significance of any archaeological or heritage assets that would be of potential sensitivity to the implementation of the proposed development, identify and assess the impact(s) of the development proposals upon those archaeological or heritage assets (both direct or indirect in terms of their setting) and define any mitigation or compensation measures that could then be employed to eliminate, reduce or offset any loss of significance (or harm).
- 1.4 In that respect, the site does not contain or include any 'designated' heritage assets and neither does it include any part of such an asset, defined in Annex 2 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (September 2023).
- 1.5 The site does contain a number of features identified in the local archaeological databases and therefore holding the potential to meet the definition of 'non-designated' heritage asset which is detailed in the Government's *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG).
- 1.6 A number of 'designated' heritage assets (including several listed buildings) are located in the site's wider surroundings, where its development could indirectly affect them through changes within their setting.

SITE EXTENT, LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

- 1.7 The 27 hectare (ha) site comprises 14 irregularly shaped low grade agricultural fields at the north end of Sandwell Borough in the West Midlands, at the boundary with the Metropolitan Borough of Walsall to the north and centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 039 954, where it is positioned to the west of the A34 dual carriageway.
- 1.8 The site is located west of Wilderness Lane and residential houses on Peak House Road to the east, and the boundaries to the south, west and north comprise a hedged track running towards Rushall Canal and a variety of sports pitches and other associated facilities representing the Aston University Recreation Centre respectively.

TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND LAND USE

- 1.9 The land at the site generally slopes relatively steeply downwards from east to west and from north to south, from a maximum of c.160 metres above Ordnance Datum (aOD) to a low point of c.130 metres aOD.
- 1.10 The solid geology at the site is identified by SUMO (2020) as a mixture of Enville Member sandstone and conglomerate, siltstone and mudstone; Coalbrookdale Formation mudstone and Rubery Sandstone Member sandstone, but there are no superficial deposits.
- 1.11 SUMO (2020) records the solid geology (see above) as being overlain by “*slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acid but bas-rich loamy and clayey soils*” and notes that the principal land use comprises pastoral farmland. There are no buildings within the boundaries of the site, other than some dilapidated horse stables in the far north-east corner.

Section 2 Legislation and Planning Guidance

- 2.1 This section sets out relevant legislation and planning policy, governing the conservation and management of the Historic Environment.

LEGISLATION AND CASE LAW

- 2.2 The *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* of 1990 is the principal legislative instrument addressing the treatment of listed buildings through the planning process in both England and Wales.

- 2.3 Section 66(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* of 1990 sets out the statutory duty of the decision-maker, where proposed development would affect a listed building or its setting:

“...in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State 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.”

- 2.4 Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act covers development within conservation areas and states the following: *“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

- 2.5 This ‘special regard’ duty has been tested in the Court of Appeal and confirmed to require that *“considerable importance and weight”* should be afforded by the decision-maker to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting or the character or appearance of a conservation area. The relevant Court judgement is referenced as *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants DC, English Heritage and National Trust [2014] EWCA Civ 137*.

- 2.6 However, it must be recognised that s66(1) of the 1990 Act does not identify that the local authority or the Secretary of State *must* preserve a listed building or its setting, or equally the character or appearance of a conservation area.

- 2.7 Neither is it the case that a proposed development that does not ‘preserve’ is unacceptable and should be refused. It is for the decision-maker to evaluate and determine.

- 2.8 Although relating to the setting of a listed building, the discussion of ‘harm’ is of relevance in the judgement in respect of *R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin)* also makes this clear at paragraph 49, when it states that:

“This does not mean that an authority’s assessment of likely harm to the setting of a listed building or to [the character or appearance of] a conservation area is other than a matter for its own planning judgement. It does not mean that the weight the authority should give to harm which it considers would be limited or less than substantial must be the same as

the weight it might give to harm which would be substantial. But it is to recognise, as the Court of Appeal emphasised in Barnwell, that a finding of harm to the setting of a listed building or to [the character or appearance] of a conservation area gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. The presumption is a statutory one. It is not irrebuttable. It can be outweighed by material considerations powerful enough to do so. But an authority can only properly strike the balance between harm to a heritage asset on the one hand and planning benefits on the other if it is conscious of the statutory presumption in favour of preservation and if it demonstrably applies that presumption to the proposal it is considering.”

- 2.9 This key point is also made in paragraph 54 of *Forest of Dean DC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 4052; i.e:

“...Section 66 (1) did not oblige the inspector to reject the proposal because he found it would cause some harm to the setting of the listed buildings. The duty is directed to ‘the desirability of preserving’ the setting of listed buildings. One sees there the basic purpose of the ‘special regard’ duty. It does not rule out acceptable change. It gives the decision-maker an extra task to perform, which is to judge whether the change proposed is acceptable. But it does not prescribe the outcome. It does not dictate the refusal of planning permission if the proposed development is found likely to alter or even to harm the setting of a listed building.”

- 2.10 In other words, it is up to the decision-maker (such as a local authority) to assess whether the proposal which is before them would result in “acceptable change”.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 2.11 National planning guidance for England is set out in the NPPF, where Section 16, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, sets out national planning guidance of relevance here (revised in September 2023).

- 2.12 In terms of an application, paragraph 194 identifies that: *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”*

- 2.13 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF is of relevance when it states that:

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

- a. *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

- b. *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c. *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

Designated Heritage Assets

2.14 Paragraph 199 states that: *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”*

2.15 Paragraph 200 then adds that:

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

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

2.16 Paragraph 202 highlights the following in respect of the identification of ‘harm’ which is assessed to be ‘less than substantial’ harm: *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

2.17 Under the heading Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, the Government’s *Planning Practice Guidance* highlights the following details in respect of the identification of substantial harm:

“Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later

inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all.

2.18 The key points are that ‘substantial harm’ is a “*high test*” that “*may not arise in many cases*”, highlighted by the example whereby “*partial destruction*” may not necessarily result in there being substantial harm. It is a question of whether that “*adverse impact seriously affects a key element of [the specific listed building’s] special architectural or historic interest*” and so its contribution to the building’s significance is an important question.

2.19 In this context, the Secretary of State’s agreement (04 July 2022) with the approach taken by the Inspector in their report (IR) on the Edith Summerskill House Inquiry (04 April 2022), referenced as APP/H5390/V/21/3277137, is of course noteworthy.

2.20 The key paragraphs in the IR are paragraphs 12.49 and 12.50, where in the first, the Inspector highlights that:

“Essentially, substantial harm is set at a high bar, such that a good deal (or all) of the significance of a designated heritage asset would have to be removed for it to be reached. That means that the range for a finding of less than substantial harm is very wide indeed, from a harmful impact that is hardly material, to something just below that high bar.”

2.21 This leads to the important observation in paragraph 12.50 of the IR, when the Inspector identifies the approach to be taken to the assessment of where on this broad spectrum of ‘less than substantial harm’ an individual impact is located:

“In cases where the impact is on the setting of a designated heritage asset, it is only the significance that asset derives from its setting that is affected. All the significance embodied in the asset itself would remain intact. In such a case, unless the asset concerned derives a major proportion of its significance from its setting, it is very difficult to see how an impact on its setting can advance a long way along the scale towards substantial harm to significance.”

2.22 The Planning Inspector subsequently sums up their approach to the identification of harm through changes within the setting of heritage assets in paragraph 12.54, when they clearly articulate the following judgement:

“It is often argued that such an approach leads to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset being underestimated. However, what is under consideration is the impact of change on the significance of a designated heritage asset. If that change would come about as a result of development in the setting of that asset, then it is only the component of significance that the asset derives from its setting that would be affected. This is the outcome of the approach the Framework takes.”

2.23 The decision to grant planning permission in accordance with the Planning Inspector’s recommendation was made by the Minister of State for Housing, Stuart Andrew MP, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and this is set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Decision Letter.

- 2.24 The Minister of State's consideration and assessment of the heritage issues identified by the Inspector is set out in paragraphs 11 to 15 of the Decision Letter, with paragraph 13 being of specific relevance to the above:

"For the reasons given at IR12.46-12.54, the Secretary of State agrees with the Inspector that the Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury does derive something of its significance from its setting, but the overwhelming proportion is locked into its form and fabric (IR12.51) and that the harm that would be caused to the setting and thereby the significance of the church would be less than substantial, and very much at the lower end of the scale (IR12.52). He further agrees that the harm that would be caused to the setting and thereby significance of the Central Fulham Conservation Area as a result of the proposal would be very minor indeed and even further toward the bottom of the scale of less than substantial harm than would be caused to the significance of the church (IR12.53). The Secretary of State attaches great weight to the harm to the Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury and the Central Fulham Conservation Area."

- 2.25 In short, the Secretary of State clearly endorses the approach that the Inspector sets out for the identification and assessment of harm caused to designated heritage assets by the development proposals.
- 2.26 In other words, the Secretary of State agrees with the Inspector's reasoning that, where the majority of a heritage asset's significance is bound up in its physical form and fabric, the harm which would be caused to that asset by development proposals that affect only its wider setting (and leave that physical form and fabric unchanged), are likely to be towards the lower end of the spectrum of 'less than substantial harm' as a consequence.
- 2.27 Finally, paragraph 206 of the NPPF identifies that: *"Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."*

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 2.28 Annex 2 of the NPPF (2023) does not specifically define a 'non-designated' heritage asset, but it does define a 'heritage asset' as: comprising:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."

- 2.29 Nevertheless, the Government's PPG, which in respect of the historic environment was last updated on 23 July 2019, defines a non-designated heritage asset in the following terms:

"Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets."

2.30 The 'consideration of impacts', in determining development proposals that would affect the conservation of a non-designated heritage asset, is then dealt with in paragraph 203 of the NPPF, which advises the following:

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

2.31 So, in other words, in determining planning proposals, the decision-maker will have to make a 'balanced judgement' and have regard to; (1) the scale of any harm or loss caused to the non-designated asset, and (2) the asset's heritage significance.

2.32 Of course, it must also be borne in mind that 'harm' to a non-designated heritage asset is not covered by footnote 7 and does not disapply the presumption in favour of sustainable development identified in paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

2.33 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's (SMBC's) Development Plan includes the Black Country Core Strategy, adopted in February 2011. It includes one policy (Policy ENV 2) which focuses on the conservation and management of the historic environment in general terms:

"All development should aim to protect and promote the special qualities, historic character and local distinctiveness of the Black Country in order to help maintain its cultural identity and strong sense of place. Development proposals will be required to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality.

All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the historic aspects of the following locally distinctive elements of the Black Country:

- a. The network of now coalesced but nevertheless distinct small industrial settlements of the former South Staffordshire Coalfield, such as Darlaston & Netherton;*
- b. The civic, religious and commercial cores of the principal settlements of medieval origin such as Wolverhampton, Dudley, Wednesbury & Walsall;*
- c. Surviving pre-industrial settlement centres of medieval origin such as Tettenhall, Aldridge, Oldbury and Kingswinford;*
- d. Areas of Victorian and Edwardian higher density development which survive with a high degree of integrity including terraced housing and its associated amenities;*
- e. Areas of extensive lower density suburban development of the mid 20th century including public housing and private developments of semi-detached and detached housing;*

- f. *Public open spaces, including Victorian and Edwardian municipal parks, often created upon and retaining elements of relict industrial landscape features;*
- g. *The canal network and its associated infrastructure, surviving canal-side pre-1939 buildings and structures together with archaeological evidence of the development of canal-side industries and former canal routes (see also Policy ENV4);*
- h. *Buildings, structures and archaeological remains of the traditional manufacturing and extractive industries of the Black Country including glass making, metal trades (such as lock making), manufacture of leather goods, brick making, coal mining and limestone quarrying;*
- i. *The Beacons shown on the Environment Key Diagram and other largely undeveloped high prominences lying along:*
 - *the Sedgley to Northfield Ridge, including Sedgley Beacon, Wrens Nest,*
 - *Castle Hill and the Rowley Hills (Turner's Hill);*
 - *the Queslett to Shire Oak Ridge (including Barr Beacon);*
 - *including views to and from these locations.*

In addition to statutorily designated and protected historic assets particular attention should be paid to the preservation and enhancement of:

- *locally listed historic buildings and archaeological sites;*
- *historic parks and gardens including their settings;*
- *locally designated special landscape areas and other heritage based site allocations.*

Development proposals that would potentially have an impact on any of the above distinctive elements should be supported by evidence included in Design and Access Statements which demonstrates that all aspects of the historic character and distinctiveness of the locality have been fully assessed and used to inform proposals. In some instances local authorities may require developers to undertake detailed Historic Landscape Characterisation studies to support their proposals."

2.34 A statement that is provided on SMBC's website provides the following update on the status of the Black Country Plan 2039:

"The four Local Planning authorities in the Black Country have been working together on a joint plan for the area to 2039. It is with regret that we are unable to reach agreement on the approach to planning for future development needs within the framework of the Black Country Plan.

Local Plans for the four Black Country Councils will now provide the framework for the long-term planning of Black Country. The Black Country Plan 2039 work programme will end and we will now transition to a process focused on Local Plans. The issues of housing and

employment land need will now be addressed through individual Local Plans for each of the authorities. The Councils will co-operate with each other and with other key bodies as they prepare their Local Plans.”

2.35 SMBC’s Development Plan also includes the Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (SADDP) which was adopted in December 2012.

2.36 Policy SAD HE1: Listed Buildings states that: *“The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity, control over the use of adjacent land, and where appropriate, by preservation of trees and landscape features.”*

2.37 Policy SAD HE2: Conservation Areas states that *“Proposals which will impact on the setting of the conservation area should also demonstrate that they will preserve or better reveal the positive elements of the conservation area.”*

2.38 Policy SAD HE4 covers registered parks and gardens and other undesignated green spaces, and states that:

“The Council will also protect the setting of registered parks and gardens from inappropriate development which will include sites adjoining the park. Applications should clearly demonstrate that such proposals either make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset.”

2.39 Finally, SAD HE5: Archaeology and Development Proposals sets out the following guidance in terms of the approach to the investigation, assessment and preservation of archaeological features and remains:

“In Areas of Potential Archaeological Importance (APAI) and any other areas where the Council considers there to be archaeological potential, the local planning authority will require archaeological information (derived, if necessary, from archaeological evaluation), prior to the determination of planning applications. This information will be needed to assess the archaeological implications of the development proposals and to identify requirements for archaeological preservation or investigation.

Referral of applications for development will also disclose sites or areas where archaeology or conservation is necessary before redevelopment or demolition is permitted to take place.

In considering proposals for development, the Council will seek to ensure that special heritage assets of national or possibly high regional importance are identified as being particularly worthy of preservation in situ. Other heritage assets will be preserved wherever possible, but where it would be unreasonable to withhold planning permission for the development of such sites, provision will be made through agreements and conditions of planning permissions for an appropriate level of archaeological evaluation and recording (preservation by record), prior to damage or destruction through development. Evaluations and recordings will be included within the Sandwell’s Historic Environment Record.

It is essential that heritage assets and their settings are preserved and enhanced so as to fully exploit their archaeological, recreational and educational value, and, where appropriate, made attractive to visitors.”

- 2.40 The Council’s Proposals Map identifies the site as part of an Area of Potential Archaeological Importance, which extends to the west and the south-west also, so hence the first paragraph of this Local Plan policy (at least) is relevant to the evaluation and then determination of the planning application for this site.
- 2.41 The legislation and policies above have all been taken into account during the preparation of this assessment.

Section 3

Methodology

- 3.1 This section of the report outlines the methodology that was employed in the identification and assessment of potential impacts from development.
- 3.2 This assessment has also been researched and drafted in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* prepared by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2020).
- 3.3 These best practice professional guidelines provide a national standard for the completion of assessments addressing the built aspects of the Historic Environment.

ARCHIVE RESEARCH

- 3.4 The starting point for the project was the identification and consideration of archive material to understand the site's history and archaeological interest, prior to the commencement of the site visit/walkover.
- 3.5 A broad range of background sources were checked at the relevant repositories, following receipt of an instruction. They included the following:
 - The Sandwell Historic Environment Record (SHER);
 - The Wolverhampton and Walsall Historic Environment Record (WWHER);
 - Relevant books and journals;
 - Previous grey literature reports;
 - The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) curated by Historic England (HE);
 - Historic Ordnance Survey (OS) map extracts from Envirocheck;
 - Online historic map sources;
 - Historic aerial photographs from the Historic England Archive (HEA); and
 - The SMBC planning website.

FIELDWORK

- 3.6 Having collected, collated and then reviewed the background sources, the site and its wider surrounding area were visited and inspected by a highly experienced surveyor, specialising in the investigation and assessment of historic landscapes.

- 3.7 The site visit was undertaken in mid-December 2022, in order to (1) understand the origins, chronological development and significance of the historic landscape at the site, (2) identify the location(s), nature and heritage significance of any archaeological features or remains within the site and (3) set out whether and to what extent the land at the site represents an aspect of the setting of heritage assets located in its wider surroundings that contributes to their specific significance.
- 3.8 With respect to paragraph 3.7(2) and 3.7(3) above, careful consideration was then given to whether the assets' significance would remain the same, be enhanced or be reduced as a result of the proposals for development of the site being taken forward and implemented, as a means to assess the impact of the proposed development in that respect.
- 3.9 A second site visit and walkover survey was subsequently completed by the same surveyor in May 2023, in order to review and update the results of the first visit/walkover and to do so in different weather conditions; in this case in fine sunshine.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING

- 3.10 As far as the assessment of the heritage assets' 'significance' is concerned, reference is made (where appropriate) to English Heritage (2008) *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* in this assessment, but the identification of 'significance' will be based on the definition outlined in Annex 2 of the NPPF (as follows):

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

- 3.11 With this in mind, the 'significance' of a heritage asset could therefore be derived from its archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest.
- 3.12 The nature and magnitude of potential effects on off-site heritage assets were identified in line with current HE guidance set out in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (HE, 2017, Second Edition), where the results from the desktop study and site walkover were fed back to the project team and accounted for in revisions to the proposals.
- 3.13 Accordingly, this assessment has been prepared using best practice professional guidance and is therefore considered to provide a robust basis for an evaluation of the development, which is proposed at the site, in respect of heritage matters.

Section 4 The Baseline Position

- 4.1 This section of the report will set out the baseline position against which any impacts arising from the proposed development will be assessed.
- 4.2 It identifies the heritage assets that would be affected by the proposed development of the site and (where relevant) describes and analyses their settings to understand whether, how, in what way(s) and to what extent they make a contribution to their significance. In doing so, this section addresses Steps 1 and 2 of GPA 3 (2017).

DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.3 The site does not contain a ‘designated’ heritage asset and neither does it contain any part of a designated heritage asset within its redline boundaries.
- 4.4 As **Plan EDP 1** illustrates, a relatively small and limited scatter of designated heritage assets is located within the site’s wider surroundings; these primarily being listed buildings, as well as a Registered Park and Garden (RPG).
- 4.5 The listed buildings within the wider surroundings of the site are listed in **Table EDP 4.1**, which shows that none of them are located less than 250 metres from its boundary.

Table EDP 4.1: Listed Buildings within the Surroundings of the Site.

List UID	Name	Grade	Location	Description
1076383	Walsall (or Merrion’s) Lodge	II	235m N	Lodge which is dated 1854 and attributed to George Gilbert Scott; a single storey building of rendered brick with sandstone dressings and a tiled roof.
1077126	Hill Farm bridge, Brackenhall Drive, Rushall Canal	II	315m SW	Accommodation bridge over the Rushall Canal, which was opened in 1847.
1077130	Pool house, junction of Pool Road and Arran Close	II	425m SE	House, now offices, possibly dating from the early 18 th century and comprising a three-storey building of pebble-dashed brick with a tiled roof.
1215680	Great Barr Vicarage	II	400m E	Vicarage (of 1847) by Ewan Christian; two storeys with attics and built from a mixture of red and blue brick with sandstone dressings and steep, tiled roofs.

- 4.6 The land at the site is not considered to form a part of the wider setting of any of these four Grade II listed buildings.
- 4.7 Hence, insofar as Step 1 of GPA 3 is concerned (HE, 2017), none of the four listed buildings would be affected by the proposed development of the site and there would be no harm to their heritage significance.
- 4.8 None of the four Grade II listed buildings have a relationship with the site; whether tangible or intangible (i.e., historic/functional); that bears upon and contributes to their significance in a positive way. They are not considered to represent sensitive heritage receptors in terms of the residential development of the site and thus they are not considered further in the completion of the assessment report.

Great Barr Hall RPG/Great Barr Conservation Area

- 4.9 At its closest, the Grade II Great Barr Hall RPG (List UID 1001202) is located c.35 metres from the site and separated from its north-eastern corner by the A34 dual carriageway and an area of existing housing along its north side.
- 4.10 The RPG was first designated on 01 July 1986 and the citation (on the NHLE) provides the following description:

“An C18 landscape park associated with a country house; associated with Humphry Repton and John Nash and George Gilbert Scott, and possibly with William Shenstone.”

- 4.11 The Historic England citation then adds that:

“Great Barr lies c 5km south-east of Walsall, the former Great Barr park forming a green valley corridor between the housing estates of Great Barr to the west and of Pheasey and Queslett to the east. The north boundary of the site is formed by Chapel Lane, and that to the south by the A4041. The west boundary now follows the line of the M6 motorway, which truncates the south-west tip of the park. The east boundary follows the line of the lakes. It bounds a housing estate built in the early C21 on the horse-shoe shaped site of the hospital buildings that occupied this former part of the park (not included in the registered area). The registered site comprises c 105ha.”

- 4.12 In terms of ‘entrances and approaches’ to Great Barr Park, the citation states the following information:

“Since the C17 there have been numerous approaches contrived to the Hall, some direct and others designed to show off the park. The Hall is approached from the north-west down Sutton’s Approach, lined with later C20 horse chestnuts. This drive was laid out in the 1840s, at the same time Sutton’s Bridge being built at the north end of the Upper Lake. The drive enters the grounds off Chapel Lane, the public road past Great Barr church; Chapel Lodge (c 1856) which stood on the west side of the drive has been demolished. Opposite the lodge site, on the north side of Chapel Lane, is Avenue Lodge, a red-brick lodge with blue diaper work of c 1856, probably by Gilbert Scott. Iron gate piers of the same date stand at the end of the Walsall Approach drive of 1797, now a footpath, which runs for 1km west

through Merrion's Wood. At the end of that path is the mid C19 Walsall (or Merrion's) Lodge of 1854 (listed Grade II); it too has iron gate piers to one side."

4.13 In terms of 'the Park', the HE citation notes that:

"Merrion's Wood, the western arm of the park, is between 50m and 200m wide and 1km long. It comprises mature deciduous woodland through which runs a broad footpath along the line of the former drive, the whole managed as a public amenity by the local authority via a trust. Merrion's Wood was added to the estate by purchase in 1796."

4.14 It also states that *"The main feature of the park is the two lakes which lie along the valley bottom"* and further observes that:

"As with the garden, the wider landscape around what was still then called Nether-house Farm began to be ornamented in the mid C18 by John Scott (mostly c 1744) and by the 1750s there was a cascade on the stream 200m north-west of the house and close to that cascade a botanic garden, while Big Pool had been created 500m to the south of the house. An early C19 tradition states that William Shenstone (1714-1763), later a kinsman of the family, helped lay out these improvements.

The work undertaken to the designs of Humphry Repton and John Nash in c1797, included laying out new approaches from the north (Walsall), south (Handsworth), and south-east (Queslett), constructing the Upper Pool, and making or enlarging the park's woodland, which was cut through with walks: High Wood, Fox's Plantation, and that down the west side of the lakes. The next and last main phase of work took place in the later 1850s when many buildings and features in the park were rebuilt to designs by Gilbert Scott."

4.15 The principal building within the RPG is Great Barr Hall (Grade II* listed) that:

"Stands central alongside the east boundary of the registered park, and has since the closure and demolition of St Margaret's Hospital been vacant and in poor condition. Built in 1777 for Joseph Scott, it is a rendered, gothick style building. It is set on relatively low ground, facing west towards its lake, and with a wooded bank rising immediately behind it. The main part of the Hall has a nine-bay front, with ogee-headed windows, buttresses done as octagonal turrets, and battlements. At the south end of the Hall is a red-brick with blue diaper work building of 1863 attributed to George Gilbert Scott, constructed as a chapel but never consecrated and used subsequently as a billiard room."

4.16 Great Barr Hall is located c.1.35 kilometres from the eastern boundary of the site, from which it is separated by a north-south ridge of elevated ground and residential housing occupying the eastern and northern sides of the A34 on its curving trajectory from the M6. The House stands at a height of c.140 metres aOD, from where the land rises steadily to a height of c.168 metres aOD on the eastern side of the A34 dual carriageway and then slopes down towards the site's eastern fringe.

4.17 The site does fall within the setting of the Grade II RPG, insofar as there are views to and from the fields at the northern end (across the A34 dual carriageway) that take in the mature woodland of Merrion's Wood which marks the north-western extent of the Park and defines

the passage of George Gilbert Scott's mid-19th century drive south-east towards the House from the lodge on the eastern side of the A34.

- 4.18 There is no tangible relationship with other aspects of the Park because of the intervening topography and the existing housing estates that line the course of the A34 and the same assessment can be applied to Great Barr Hall Grade II* listed building, which is located no less than 1.35km away and occupies relatively low-lying land sandwiched between the eastern side of Upper Lake and the early 21st century residential estate which occupies the former St. Margaret's Hospital site.
- 4.19 In light of this 'tangible' relationship, Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG will be subject to Step 2 of GPA 3 (2017) in order to establish whether the site represents an element of this asset's wider setting which contributes to its significance, and also whether it represents a sensitive heritage receptor in terms of proposals for the residential development of the site. This can be found in **Section 5** of this report.
- 4.20 As **Plan EDP 1** illustrates, the Grade II RPG also forms part of the larger and more extensive Great Barr Conservation Area, which not only includes the now redeveloped St Margaret's Hospital complex, but also the Great Barr Golf Course and the adjacent farmland and areas of woodland that run eastwards across Beacon Lane to reach Aldridge Road, the north side of the A4041 and Beacon Hill in the east, south and north respectively.
- 4.21 Notwithstanding the more extensive and diverse landscape of the Great Barr Conservation Area (designated by WMBC), its relationship with the land at the site is as limited by the intervening topography and existing housing development as the Great Barr Hall RPG above. As such, it is only the western edge of the conservation area as it runs out to adjoin the north-eastern frontage of the A34 dual carriageway that possesses any tangible relationship with the site. The central and eastern areas of the designation are not assessed as being potentially sensitive to development of the site and in reality, it is only through the proximity of Merrion's Wood that the conservation area possesses any interaction with the land contained therein.
- 4.22 In view of the commonality with the RPG (above), it is therefore considered that the potential impact of residential development within the site on the setting and significance of the Great Barr Conservation Area can be identified and assessed in parallel with the identification and assessment of potential impacts upon Great Barr Hall RPG (as described above). These two assets will thus be addressed in paragraphs 4.161 to 183 of this report.

NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Previously Recorded Information

- 4.23 The following paragraphs summarise the known archaeological background to the site and thereafter set out information which informs our understanding of its archaeological interest and/or potential. This is also illustrated on **Plans EDP 1** and **2**.

Local (Non-statutory) Designations

4.24 The site contains one local (non-statutory) designation and also forms a part of a second, more extensive local designation. These are as follows:

1. Archaeological Priority Area (APA) 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site; and
2. Area of High Historic Landscape Value (AHHLV) 25: Peak House Farm Field System.

4.25 With regard to the above (Paragraph 4.24), APA 24 is wholly focused within Field 13 in the south-eastern corner of the site and the ditch that separates Fields 9 and 12. AHHLV 25 takes in all of the land at the site area and also extends southwards beyond the Q3 Academy Great Barr, in order to reach the northern side of the M6 motorway.

4.26 Both of these two local (non-statutory) designations derive from the completion of the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study: Final Report in October 2019 on behalf of Sandwell and Dudley Metropolitan Borough Councils, City of Wolverhampton Council and Walsall Council (see OA, 2019).

4.27 In terms of background, Paragraph 1.1.2 of the Final Report (OA, 2019) details the following information:

“The current evidence base [for the Black Country] includes the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) study (completed in 2009). This study was based on mapping that is now nearly 20 years out of date. The BCA have commissioned a new Historic Landscape Character assessment to build upon the existing work within the Black Country in order to provide a consistent and up-to-date assessment of the historic environment within the Black Country. This report will form part of the evidence base for the updated Core Strategy.”

4.28 In terms of its aims and objectives, Paragraph 1.2.1 thereafter notes that: *“The project will use a methodology based upon the Dudley Borough-Wide Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation (2016) and informed by a project brief prepared by the four Black Country Authorities, to provide a comprehensive strategic assessment of locally distinctive places, buildings and structures of historic quality and character in the Black Country, covering both urban and non-urban areas. This methodology has been adopted to provide a consistent approach for the identification of areas of historic environment significance across the four BCA areas’. Hence, the subsequent paragraph (1.2.2) states that ‘The study will consider areas within the BCA administrative boundaries where HLC information is weak, out-of-date or missing and areas that have not previously been considered for housing, specifically in the Green Belt. This is in order to create a strategic landscape level understanding of the historic character and environment of the Black Country.”*

4.29 With regard to the ‘existing evidence base’, Pages 20 and 21 present a summary of the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation of 2009, with the first two paragraphs detailing the following information:

“The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (BCHLC) was carried out by City of Wolverhampton Council in 2009 on behalf of the four Black Country Authorities. The aim of

the project was to produce a tool for understanding the current landscape of the Black Country by placing it within the context of its historical development. The BCHLC was produced to inform the Joint Core Strategy of the area in the period up to 2026.

The BCHLC covers the whole Black Country at a relatively broad level of detail, identifying a range of locally distinctive character elements. It divided the landscape into 52 Character Areas (10 in Dudley; 16 in Sandwell; 14 in Walsall and 12 in Wolverhampton)...These areas are considered to capture the distinct feature or features representative of particular landscapes within the Black Country area. The Black Country HLC Character Areas look at the landscape in a finer level of detail than the NCAs [National Character Areas] and are based primarily upon current features within the landscape, the period of origin of a landscape and its historical development.”

- 4.30 Figure 5: Black Country Character Areas of the Final Report (OA, 2019) clearly illustrates that the site falls within SD02: Newton, Hamstead and Great Barr, where the description provided in paragraphs 4.2.49 to 50 is as follows:

“This Character Area is situated in the north-east of the Borough and is situated on sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate, with coal measure only accessible at some depth. The modern character of the area is dominated by 20th century residential housing, with areas of surviving fields in the north-west of the character area that continue beyond the Borough boundary into Walsall (WL09).

Until the 20th century this area was largely agricultural, crossed by the Tame Valley Canal which opened in 1844. The only colliery in the Character Area was at Hamstead and the discovery of coal in this area prompted the expansion of the settlement of Hamstead in the 1880s. The eastern part of the Character Area was originally part of the Great Barr estate, and was taken over by the Walsall and West Bromwich Guardians in the 20th century. Some of this area has been developed for housing and the rest is now part of Walsall. The Red House Park is a public park in the centre of the Character Area.”

- 4.31 In that regard, it is worth repeating Paragraphs 4.2.22 to 4.2.25, which collectively set out the following for WL09: Barr Beacon and Aldridge Fields:

“This Character Area is situated in the east of the borough and is the most rural landscape in Walsall, with field systems covering 66% of its area. It has a mixed geology situated on mudstone and limestone in the west, sandstone, mudstone and conglomerate in the centre and sandstone in the east. Rushall Hall in the west lies on coal measures.

The modern character of the area is defined largely by agricultural land and dispersed farms. The area also includes modern recreational land (golf courses), woodland, two areas of settlement, and an area of surviving ancient heathland (Barr Beacon).

Historically the Character Area was in use as medieval open fields associated with Walsall, Aldridge, Rushall, Stonnal and Great Barr. In the centre of the Character Area there were several medieval moated sites and many of the trackways and roads in this area are likely to be medieval in origin. The earliest settlements in the area are Great Barr, which was mentioned in a charter of AD 957 and Rushall, which was recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

The surviving field systems in the Character Area were enclosed by either piecemeal enclosure in the late medieval/early post-medieval periods from open field or were enclosed out of Aldridge Heath by Parliamentary Act.”

- 4.32 Section 5 of OA (2019) identifies a number of ‘recommended’ designations, which include APAs and AHHLVs. The former is described as follows:

“Sites with a high potential for archaeological remains of regional or national significance that have not been considered for designation as scheduled monuments, or where there is insufficient data available about the state or preservation of any remains to justify a designation. APAs are likely to have high archaeological and historic interest.”

- 4.33 AHHLVs are defined in Paragraph 5.1.2 on page 54 of the Final Report (OA, 2019), which notes that they:

“...recognise the quality of the wider landscape and their relative values. The significance of these areas arises from the natural and historic features contained within them (e.g., woodland, watercourses, hedgerows, and archaeological features)” and then moves on to clearly highlight that *“The significance of these areas is likely to be derived from their archaeological and historic interests”*.

- 4.34 As far as AHHLVs are concerned, Paragraph 5.2.1 states that they *“are areas that contains landscape features (both historic and natural) which are considered to make a significant contribution to the historic landscape character of the Black Country”* and Paragraph 5.3.2 similarly highlights that:

“Archaeological Priority Areas are sites with a high potential for archaeological remains of regional or national significance that have not been considered for designation as scheduled monuments, or where there is insufficient data available about the state or preservation of any remains to justify a designation.”

- 4.35 The subsequent paragraph (Paragraph 5.3.2) then observes that:

“The areas selected for this designation are considered to contain particularly rare or well preserved examples of archaeological remains within the Black Country, or monument types that are particularly at risk locally. Their significance is likely to be derived from their high archaeological and historic interest. It should be noted that the selection of APAs does not imply that other areas do not have archaeological or historic value.”

- 4.36 Appendix B of the Final Report (see OA, 2019) then moves on to provide descriptions of the Proposed Green Belt Historic Environment Area Designations.

APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site

- 4.37 Paragraph B.6.1 of the Final Report (OA, 2019) provides the following information in respect of the identification and designation of APA 24:

“The APA contains the remains of a possible moated site. The Environment Agency LiDAR shows the earthwork remains of a moat and a possible building platform within the APA.

There is no building at this location on the 1817 OSD map, or 1st-4th edition OS maps, suggesting that the moated site is of medieval or early post-medieval date. The APA has the potential to contain below-ground archaeological remains associated with the manor house and the moat. The moat may contain waterlogged deposits, which would provide insight into land use in the area during the medieval period.

4.38 The same paragraph of OA (2019) then continues by stating that: *“The surviving earthworks provide evidence of water management practices associated with the creation of the moat. While other such sites survive within the Black Country, they are rare, and many examples have been destroyed by later industry and development”.*

4.39 The text also then offers the following commentary in respect of the vulnerability of this site in paragraph B.6.2; i.e.:

“Unsympathetic development i.e., groundworks; would detrimentally affect archaeological remains within the APA.”

4.40 It is noted that no commentary is provided in terms of the setting of the APA and in terms of its vulnerability to development.

AHHLV 25: Peak House Farm Field System

4.41 Paragraph B.4.1 starts by stating that: *“The AHHLV contains a well-preserved example of a pre-enclosure field system. Evidence of ridge and furrow is visible across the site as cropmarks (but no earthworks appear to survive). Prehistoric finds have been recovered within this area and cropmarks indicative of below-ground archaeological remains have also been identified, highlighting the archaeological potential of the area. Many of the field boundaries are marked by drainage ditches linked to the moated site to the south (APA 23) and a number of hedgerows are recorded as ancient hedgerows. LiDAR shows a small mound in the AHHLV (NGR 403764 295377).”*

4.42 Paragraph B.4.2 then adds that: *“The field system is well preserved and contains cropmark remains and findspots suggestive of archaeological potential from Roman or prehistoric times. Drainage ditches in field boundaries link to a possible moated site.”*

4.43 Thereafter, Paragraph B.4.3 considers its rarity and concludes that: *“The AHHLV contains a locally rare example of early non-parliamentary field pattern. Prehistoric deposits as indicated by the cropmark remains are rare within Sandwell as is the possible moated site which lies in the southern part of the AHHLV.”*

4.44 Going further and delving into the data demonstrates that there are some 27 HLC polygons of the same type as the site (Fie-IRREG). It is defined as follows:

“For other fields systems which do not fit the planned or piecemeal enclosures, but include assarting & enclosure of waste at an unknown period, but probably pre 1750.”

4.45 As well as showing the extents of this HLC character type, **Plan EDP 3** shows its distribution and depicts that it can be found primarily around the fringes of the Black Country. This most probably derives from the fact that it was formerly a relatively common and widespread form of agricultural enclosure that has become scarcer, more fragmented and more peripheral

as a result of the intensification and the expansion of development in the Black Country in the last hundred years or so.

- 4.46 There are some 12,689 polygons in total, spanning 134 different character types. Based on areas for the Fie-IRREG polygons derived by geographic information system (GIS), the total area of the Fie-IRREG character type is 483ha. A review of satellite images suggests that some 13.5ha of this has since been 'lost' to development since the report was issued, therefore leaving approximately 469.5ha intact.
- 4.47 The Wilderness Lane site covers 27ha in extent, which therefore equates to c.5.75% of the extant Fie-IRREG area.
- 4.48 Therefore, it is reasonable to assess that the field system within AHHLV 25 is of interest at the 'local level' and so too is the possible moated site within APA 25, although it is arguable that the latter could be of regional importance. The heritage significance that these local and non-statutory designations possess must be assessed in that context as a result.
- 4.49 For both local designations (and AHHLV 24 more particularly), their heritage significance is derived from the archaeological and historic interests of the physical form and fabric, which is experienced and appreciated above ground in the contemporary landscape in the case of AHHLV 24, but less so for the moated enclosure because much of the asset is made up of archaeological features, deposits and remains preserved below-ground.
- 4.50 The archaeological and historic interest of AHHLV is perhaps most obviously manifest in the boundaries separating and defining the patchwork of fields. However, there is also a degree of interest in the relationships between the field boundaries and the information they offer in respect of the field system's origins and chronological development, an assessment that also clearly applies to the enclosed farmland's potential to preserve archaeological remains from earlier periods.
- 4.51 Whilst the majority of APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site's significance is assessed as being held by its physical form and fabric (much of which is now preserved below ground), it is nevertheless recognised that GPA 3 (2017) states that all heritage assets have a setting and so appropriate consideration will be given to whether, to what extent and in what way(s) the APA's setting contributes to its significance in Paragraphs 4.184 to 4.202 (below). The same will be done for AHHLV 25 in Paragraphs 4.203 to 4.211.

Sandwell and Wolverhampton HER Information

- 4.52 The following summarises the 'known' archaeological background to the site, based on data from within a study area extending for 1.0km from the boundary gathered from the Sandwell HER and the Wolverhampton HER (see also **Plan EDP 2**).
- 4.53 For clarity, Sandwell HER references carry the prefix 'MBL' and Wolverhampton HER entries have been given the prefix WHER in the following text and also on **Plan EDP 2**.

Prehistoric and Roman

- 4.54 A single prehistoric 'entry' is recorded within the site on the SHER. This is **MBL2608**, which refers to the find of a polished stone axe of Neolithic date at Peak House Farm. No further

information on the context and provenance of this artefact is provided, but in any event, the most likely scenario is that this derives from chance or causal loss in transit and does not indicate or suggest the presence of more permanent activity of Neolithic date within the site such as settlement or industrial production.

- 4.55 Whilst this findspot does indicate a local presence in the Neolithic period, it is considered to be unlikely that associated archaeological features or deposits will be present at the site or that additional artefacts of this nature will be present.
- 4.56 Taken as a whole, the recorded evidence indicates that the site has only a **low** potential to contain significant prehistoric or Roman archaeological features, deposits and/or remains. There is no recorded evidence for a local presence in the latter part of the period and limited evidence for anything more than transient and temporary activity in the earlier parts.

Medieval

- 4.57 The SHER records the 'moat at Peak House Farm' in the south-east of the site as **MBL 2711** and provides the following description of its form and appearance:

"Fields named 'Great Moat Piece' & 'Little Moat Piece' (SP041953). On Aldridge Tithe Map, field in which site lies is Hockett Meadow. Great Moat piece is field to its north-east. {1}. No certain trace of moat seen but south-west boundary of 'Great Moat Piece' is a marshy hollow, 9m wide, 0.8m deep, possible remains of north-east arm of homestead moat. Extending at right angles south-west from south end of this, but separated from it by narrow causeway, is dry depression (30m long, 6m wide, 0.6m deep) in pasture field. Surface of field very uneven. {2}. Waterfilled trough aligned north-west-south-east, some 70m long, 9m wide. South-east end dammed up by spoil. Possible 1 arm of homestead moat but now no trace of any other side. {3}. National Grid Reference revised from SP04069533. Wilderness Lane: enclosure 80m X 40m, possibly a medieval moated site. {5}. Surface indications show deep wet ditch along field boundary on north-west side, curving away from it at north end. Slight depression at south end turning to north-east. Parallel linear depression to south-east. Features show clearly on 1969 Aerial Photograph (51/69/030, West Bromwich survey). Under light snow cover, north-east side of enclosure is visible as linear depression, entrance gap halfway along it (1991 Aerial Photograph). Sub-rectilinear, c80m x 40m. Predates surrounding field boundaries. Possible medieval moat or earlier enclosure. Rectilinear pond to north-east approximately 80 x 10m possible fish pond. <6>. Earthwork survey 12/12/91. Form & dimensions suggest medieval moated site. This would be consistent with location in area of medieval enclosed fields. 2 causeways across enclosure possible original entrances. Possible sites of buildings represented by hollows. Pond probably fish pond contemporary with moat. <7>"

- 4.58 The SHER also identifies a number of the hedgerows within and around the site on the basis of a survey by the Urban Wildlife Trust. It labels them as follows:

- **MBL2969** – Ancient hedgerow, possible woodland relic;
- **MBL2970** – Ancient hedgerow, possible woodland relic; becomes double hedgerow at the western edge, contains a damp ditch and exhibits ground flora that is considered indicative of ancient woodland along its length;

- **MBL2971** – Ancient hedgerow, possible woodland relic; includes a stream running through a double hedgerow, with ground flora that is considered to be indicative of ancient woodland along its length;
 - **MBL2972** – Ancient hedgerow, possible woodland relic; hedgerow becoming damp towards the Rushall Canal and showing ground flora considered to be indicative of ancient woodland too; and
 - **MBL2973** – Ancient hedgerow, possible woodland relic.
- 4.59 In a similar vein, **MBL3090** records the site’s western boundary, observing that “*in places it forms an almost linear strip of woodland, esp at the NE end where there are many mature oaks*”, before going on to add the following:
- “south west end – fairly deep ditch and bank with running water, ground flora indicative of ancient woodland.”*
- 4.60 The ‘ancient’ hedgerows along and beyond the western fringe of the site are also noted on the Wolverhampton HER as WHERs **4264, 4265, 4266, 6424** and **6425 (Plan EDP 2)**.
- 4.61 A further ‘ancient’ hedgerow is noted by the SHER as running along the embankment of the canal to the west of the site (**MBL3091**) and the WHER (see WHER **10327**) also identifies the hedgerows defining Skip Lane, north-east of the site, as being of comparable date.
- 4.62 Areas of ridge and furrow cultivation (identified from historic aerial photographs) are noted in the surroundings of the site by the WHER; notably WHERs **10389, 10755, 15239, 6360, 6366, 6388, 6389, 6395** and **6396**.
- 4.63 Beyond the Rushall Canal (in the north-west of the study area), WHER **10754** records a field system believed to be of medieval or post-medieval formation.
- 4.64 To the south-west of the site’s boundary, **MBL2988** records ‘Cattle Grid Wood’, which is identified as being an area of ancient woodland classified as a plantation.
- 4.65 To the south-east of the site area (largely beyond the course of the M6), **MBL3076** records the ‘later medieval’ origins and development of Snails Green. In a comparable vein to this entry, WHER **5830** records the medieval origins of the settlement at Great Barr and notes that it is identified in the Domesday Survey of 1086 AD.
- 4.66 The moated enclosure at Shustoke Farm (north of the site) is recorded as WHER **15409** and WHER **3168**. The fishponds on the north side are recorded as WHER **10424**, whilst another homestead moat is identified to the east at Great Barr Park and recorded as WHER **2689**. WHER **2892** identifies the recovery of medieval pottery from close to the Chapel Lane moat noted above, thus supporting the date which is proposed for this site.
- 4.67 Another medieval settlement site is recorded to the east of the site (beyond the A34), where WHER **6358** notes that Chapel Farm (see also below) was a former manor house that has since been destroyed by the formation of Great Barr Park in the 18th century.

- 4.68 Located to the east of the site, the SHER attributes an earthwork bank which runs down the eastern side of Chapel Lane to the medieval origins and development of the deer park that is first mentioned at Great Barr in 1335 (see also WHERs **8820** and **2681**).
- 4.69 Setting aside the possible moated enclosure (locally designated as an APA), it is considered that the site possesses no more than a low potential to contain significant archaeology from the medieval period. Taken as a whole, the evidence suggests that the site represents the remains of a field system derived from the enclosure of land out of woodland during the late medieval or early post-medieval period.
- 4.70 The possible moated enclosure in Field 13 is the only indication or evidence for settlement within the site in the medieval period and (otherwise) all of the HER data points towards the site being arranged, managed and exploited for farming purposes from at least the Middle Ages and therefore having a generally low potential for significant archaeological features or deposits beyond the area of the possible moat.
- 4.71 Whilst Field 13 could contain archaeological features and deposits representing settlement, along with a range of related activities from the Middle Ages; it is assessed that elsewhere, the likelihood is that any archaeological remains are likely to be from agricultural practices and be of limited interest; such as former field boundaries etc.
- 4.72 Archaeological features, deposits and/or remains confirming the existence of the medieval moat would be assessed as being of between low and moderate significance, given that it is considered likely to be of either local or regional interest.

Post-medieval and Later

- 4.73 In terms of the post-medieval period (and later), the SHER records Peak House Farm east of the site area (**MBL1302**), which it notes was first identified as Pig Lane Farm and is first named on the first edition OS map of 1886.
- 4.74 Other features of the 19th century landscape recorded around the site include **MBL1303** on the western side of the A34 and noting the location of St Margaret's School on Chapel Lane. It is recorded that the school supposedly dates from 1856 and is first depicted on the first edition OS map.
- 4.75 To the west of the site, the Grade II listed accommodation bridge over the Rushall Canal is recorded as **MBL3056** and represents a cast iron structure with sandstone abutments. It dates from the middle of the 19th century.
- 4.76 **MBLs 3187** and **3188** (on the south-west edge of the study area around the site) both also identify the positions of canal bridges that date from the middle of the 19th century; in this case relating to the construction of the Tame Valley Canal.
- 4.77 In a similar vein, WHER **13004** (to the north of the site) records the location of Bell Wharf, which is depicted on the historic OS maps.
- 4.78 Great Barr Park (see above) is recorded as **MBL1816** on the SHER (and also WHER **3952**). The Grade II RPG is stated to date from the 18th century and includes the work of well-known and celebrated architects of the calibre of Humphry Repton and George Gilbert Scott.

- 4.79 WHER **13073** records the site of a former farm in Great Barr (shown on a 1798 map), whilst WHER **13074** records an early road alignment through the historic park.
- 4.80 In addition, WHERs **13075, 13076, 13577, 13781, 14023, 14033, 15105, 1520, 1535, 4502, 4504, 4506** and **6383** all refer directly to features within Great Barr Park or associated with Great Barr Park that would not be affected by residential development of the site.
- 4.81 Of comparable date, Pool House (at the junction of Birmingham Road and Arran Close) is recorded on the HER as **MBL2811** and is designated as a Grade II listed building. It is dealt with in more detail above.
- 4.82 Further west, the former site of 'Hill Farm' (possibly shown on a map of 1775) is identified on the HER as **MBL3214**. It is now beneath the course of the M6.
- 4.83 The Grade II listed Great Barr Vicarage (see above) is also identified as **MBL2603**; the HER noting that it dates from 1847 and was designed by Ewan Christian.
- 4.84 To the north of the site, WHER **10271** notes the site of a 19th century cottage on Skip Lane and WHER **10272** also identifies the location of a nearby fishpond of similar date.
- 4.85 Historic farm buildings are also recorded on Chapel Lane, where WHER **15198** identifies the site of Chapel Farm, where the historic maps suggest they date from the 1700s. The WHER also ascribes WHER **6132** to a characteristic barn at the complex.
- 4.86 Features of the 20th century landscape (beyond the site) include Red House Park in West Bromwich (**MBL3134**), which was established in 1928 according to the SHER, and two brick built air raid shelters identified on Chapel Street (**MBL3176**).
- 4.87 None of the known and recorded information identified above indicates or suggests that the land at the site has any more than a 'low' potential to include significant features, deposits or remains of post-medieval or later date.
- 4.88 The available HER information supports the view that the site has comprised an expanse of undeveloped agricultural farmland from the post-medieval period down to the present day and so the likelihood is that any features or deposits from this period will derive from its management and exploitation, such as field boundaries, ploughsoils and the like. These remains are assessed as being unlikely to be of archaeological significance.

Undated

- 4.89 A cropmark of three linears joining existing field boundaries (**MBL2994**) is recorded by the SHER in Field 10 in the west of the site. No date or origin is suggested for these features. A second cropmark linear is also identified on the SHER in the far south-west of the site and recorded as **MBL3075**.
- 4.90 In the west of the site (Field 2), SHER entry **MBL3202** identifies the find of 'undated' coins, but in the absence of additional contextual information or a date for the artefacts, it is hard to assess this record's heritage significance.

- 4.91 In terms of 'undated' entries, the SHER records **MBL2993** in the field south of the site. It identifies a cropmark west of Dartington School, comprising a 170m-long straight line, a possible trapezoidal enclosure and another oblique linear. No date is provided or suggested, but it could be of prehistoric origin.
- 4.92 Further afield, **MBL3170** records two ditches which appear to be cut by the course of the Rushall Canal that was opened in 1847 and in addition **MBL3215**, on the southern fringe of the wider study area, records an area of woodland and a pool known as 'Hermit's Cave'. WHER **15238** also notes the identification of cropmarks in fields north of Walstead Road, in the north-western corner of the study area around the site.
- 4.93 Taken as a whole, the 'undated' HER entries within and around the site do little to indicate or suggest that the site has any more than a low potential to contain significant archaeology in the form of below-ground features and deposits.
- 4.94 **MBL2993** is the only undated record from within or immediately around the site boundary which infers 'non-agricultural' activity, and even then, it could still be a stock enclosure and not automatically associated with settlement or industrial production. There is also nothing to suggest that it would be of any greater than local interest, and also no evidence to suggest either that the features continue into the site or that comparable or associated features are present within the site.

Previous Field Investigations

- 4.95 **MBL3021** records the observation of trenches for a house extension to the east of the site which identified no archaeological remains and encountered only the natural substrate. A similar situation arose at numbers 29 to 33 Wilderness Lane, where a watching brief identified no archaeology of interest or significance.
- 4.96 The results of these two 'events' underline that (aside from the possible medieval moat), the site possesses no more than a low potential for the presence of archaeological features, deposits or remains of significance.

HISTORIC MAPS

- 4.97 The Aldridge Tithe Map of 1841 (**Plan EDP 4**) shows that, at that time, the site was made up of 17 complete or partial agricultural fields in the angle formed by Wilderness Lane, Peak House Road and the curving course of the A34 main road in the north.
- 4.98 The arrangement of fields broadly reflects the existing pattern within the site, but Field 10 was apparently divided in two and likewise Field 9. The map additionally illustrates an east-west orientated boundary through Field 2; thus illustrating that the site was historically composed of a larger number of smaller field parcels in comparison with the existing pattern which is visible today.
- 4.99 The map shows few features of potential archaeological interest or potential, with the linear pond between Fields 13 and 14 being a clear stand-out. A sub-circular pit is depicted in the middle of Field 11, whilst a small pond is illustrated on the north side of Field 4, but for the

most part, the Tithe Map illustrates an undeveloped agricultural landscape which was made up of irregularly shaped enclosures.

4.100 Information from the Aldridge Tithe apportionment is summarised in **Table EDP 4.2**, which shows that the site was subject to a mixed agricultural regime for the most part and where settlement was focused to the east.

Table EDP 4.2: Summary of Information from the Aldridge Tithe Apportionment

Parcel	Field	Name	Use	Owner(s)	Occupier(s)
1467	04	House, outbuildings, yards and garden	Gdn Pa	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1468	06	Brain Croft	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1469	07	Pickings Croft	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1471	08	Pickings Croft	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1473	14	Great Moat Piece	Me	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1474	13	Hockett Meadow	Pa	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1475	12	Wilderness Leasow	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1480	11	Poors Meadow	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1481	10	Far Moor	Pa	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1482	09	Thistley Leasow	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1483		Pickings Lower Field	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne
1484	05	Moor Meadow	Me	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1485	03	The Meadow	Me	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1486	01	Clarkes Piece	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1494	02	Hill Piece	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1495		Dumble Hole Piece	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	Elizabeth Terry
1496	10	Poors Leasow	Ar	Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott	William Osborne

***Notes:**

Ar	Arable
Pa	Pasture
Me	Meadow
Gdn	Garden

- 4.101 The only field name which suggests the presence of potentially significant archaeological features or remains is Great Moat Piece (1473), which suggests the presence of a medieval moated enclosure. However, it is perhaps noteworthy that this field is to the east of the field containing the earthworks and identified by the HER as being the site of the medieval moat and an APA.
- 4.102 The only indication of anything other than agricultural use comes from the north-east corner and Land Parcel 1467, which represents 'a house, outbuildings, yards and garden'. The house was apparently located outside the site boundary to the east and the land use noted within the site appears to have comprised pastoral cultivation.
- 4.103 The first edition 6" OS map (see **Plan EDP 5**) shows a very similar pattern of land use to the earlier (1841) Tithe Map, illustrating a patchwork of irregular enclosures to the north of Wilderness Lane and where the nearest evidence of occupation comprises the buildings making up Pig Lane Farm outside the north-eastern corner.
- 4.104 The 1903-04 and 1920-21 revisions of the 6" OS map (not reproduced) show few changes of potential interest, although the former does illustrate some loss of boundaries between the enclosed fields comprising the site; notably in Fields 2 and 10. These maps and the edition of 1938 (also not reproduced) clearly show the farmland of the site represented one area of an extensive tract of similar farmland stretching west and north from the A34 main road. Even so, the edition of 1938 is notable for the fact that it depicts the commencement of residential development at the junction of Peak House Road and Wilderness Lane, as well as along the eastern side of Wilderness Lane.
- 4.105 The 1955-56 edition of the 6" OS map (not reproduced) is the first map in the Ordnance Survey series to show the expansion of residential development northwards along the western side of Peak House Road (from the junction with Wilderness Lane), albeit otherwise the only noteworthy change since the 1930s comprised the re-naming of the farm located adjacent to the north-eastern corner to Peak House Farm.
- 4.106 The 1971-72 edition of the 6" OS map (not reproduced) illustrates the intensification of development around the site, with a school constructed on land to the south and residential estates on land to the east and south-east, as well as on land to the west bordering Rushall Canal and serving to create a wedge-shaped area of retained agricultural farmland stretching north to meet Walstead Road and take in Shustoke Farm in the process. It was defined in the west by the course of the canal running north to south.

- 4.107 The 1980-82 edition of the 6" OS map (**Plan EDP 5**) shows the M6 running east-west to the south of the site, as well as the continued development of the land around the site's fringes. This includes the formation of the Aston University sports facilities on land that adjoined the northern boundary of the site and then stretched north to take in most of the irregular agricultural enclosures up towards Walstead Road. Shustoke Farm is not identified.
- 4.108 The 1992 edition of the 25" OS map (not reproduced) is the first edition which illustrates the groups of agricultural structures at the east end of Field 3 and in the north-eastern corner of Field 5; these being the only buildings within the site boundaries.
- 4.109 The 1999 edition of the 6" OS map (not reproduced) illustrates the site and its surroundings in much the same way they appear at the moment. The buildings of the Q3 Academy are illustrated to the south and the pitches and associated structures of the Aston University Recreation Centre now separate the irregular enclosures within the site from the remaining area of very similar enclosures further north, in the angle of the junction of Walstead Road and the A34 Birmingham Road. Some elements of this once more extensive and unbroken field system can also be seen amongst the sports pitches of the Recreation Centre; in this case, taking the form of retained field boundaries and woodland patches.
- 4.110 The 2022 edition of the 6" OS map (not reproduced here) is the first OS edition not to label Peak House Farm east of the site's north-east corner.
- 4.111 None of the historic OS map editions (either 6" or more detailed 25") identify or label the medieval moated enclosure that is believed to be present in Field 13, although an historic aerial photograph held by Envirocheck and taken in 1999 does appear to show rectilinear features in this agricultural field parcel.
- 4.112 Whilst the available historic maps illustrate the development of the landscape surrounding the site from the middle of the 20th century onwards, leading to the loss and fragmentation of this once more extensive tract of irregular agricultural enclosures and resulting in the site coming to comprise an isolated area of fields amongst a mixture of residential, educational and leisure uses; in themselves, they do not identify or illustrate the presence of features or deposits of likely archaeological interest within its redline boundary.
- 4.113 For the most part they show that the site has remained undeveloped agricultural farmland from at least the 1830s and that changes have primarily involved the loss of field boundary features to create a smaller number of enlarged parcels.

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

- 4.114 The collections of historic and recent aerial photographs held by HE at the HEA were accessed and analysed as part of this investigation, in order to determine the presence or likely presence of hitherto unrecognised or unrecorded archaeological remains.
- 4.115 The earliest available vertical image (dated 09 March 1948) depicts the site as part of a fairly large area of similar irregular, hedged agricultural enclosures stretching southwards beyond Wilderness Lane, as well as to the west and north.

- 4.116 The curving course of the A34 dual carriageway is visible in the north and so are the houses along the southern extent of Peak House Road to the east. Other localised and limited areas of development are visible further north.
- 4.117 There is no evidence for the presence of potentially significant archaeology within the site, but the image does show an area of disturbance in the north-east of Field 10 and buildings defining the eastern side of Field 5 and in Field 6 (towards the north-east corner of the site). A small barn is possibly also visible on the east side of Field 2.
- 4.118 Vertical images dated 13 May 1948 and 19 July 1951 indicate the intensification, and also expansion, of the building activity towards the north-east corner, within Fields 4, 5 and 6. It seems to be agricultural in nature, but the detail is sparse.
- 4.119 The activity in the north-east of the site (see above) appeared to cease by 30 July 1963 and the vertical image which was taken on that day in fact shows the completion of the housing development that separates the site from the western side of Peak House Road.
- 4.120 This photograph is also noteworthy for the way that it illustrates the continued reduction in the extent of the agricultural fieldscape around the site in the middle of the 20th century. In particular, it illustrates areas of residential development west of the canal, north of the A34 and to the south of Wilderness Lane.
- 4.121 The vertical image dated 30 July 1963 does not show the possible barn in Field 2 and so this structure must have been demolished by that date. Another photograph, which has the date 01 June 1969, illustrates a small group of buildings along the east side of Field 3 at this time, but otherwise just an extensive area of disturbed ground in Fields 6 and 4 adjacent to the east and suggesting an episode of clearance and remodelling.
- 4.122 The most recent photograph (none of the available obliques are of the land at the site) dates from 06 September 1988 and it only covers the northern fields. It appears to show an area of intensive activity in Field 6, which is divided in two by a track running north-east, as well as the north-south aligned building group towards the east end of Field 3. The image is more noteworthy though for the fact it illustrates the creation of the sports pitches and associated structures at Aston University's Recreation Centre for the first time.
- 4.123 The photograph is of interest for the way in which it depicts the development of the former agricultural landscape around the site, leaving it as something of an isolated relic in an area of relatively mixed mid to late 20th century development. The photograph is also of interest for the way that it shows the neighbouring development retained and worked with at least some of the hedgerows which characterised the farming landscape before the construction of the sports facilities by Aston University in the 1980s.
- 4.124 They are not reproduced here due to copyright restrictions, but Google Earth images taken since December 2000 appear to illustrate a number of rectilinear features within Field 13, in the south-east of the site, with the clearest of them apparently taken in April 2016 and appearing to depict the south and west arms of a ditched enclosure in the centre of the field and with other 'internal' features also visible.

- 4.125 The precise origin, date and nature of the features within Field 13 are hard to determine with either precision or confidence from the Google Earth images which are available. Even so, a medieval or post-medieval origin is not inconceivable and at face value, the evidence is not inconsistent with the HER's identification of this as a moated enclosure.

LIDAR DATA

- 4.126 Airborne LiDAR data (light detection and ranging) was utilised as a source of primary data for the current assessment. LiDAR scanning records height data and has applications in the recording of archaeological earthworks.
- 4.127 A Digital Terrain Model (DTM) for the site was acquired from the Environment Agency Data available online. Resolution of the data is at one data point for each 1m², a low resolution which, for archaeological prospection, has fairly limited application, aside from in the identification of larger earthworks.
- 4.128 The DTM was processed using the Relief Visualisation Toolbox (ver. 1.3 ZRC SAZU, 2016). This software allows for a range of visualisation techniques to be applied to the data. Different techniques have varying degrees of successful application, depending on the nature of the environment where the data was collected. As such, the whole suite of visualisations was produced and then, the individual images appraised as to their usefulness in the current context. This appraisal identified that of the visualisation techniques, multiple direction hill-shades produced the best quality and most useful imagery for the archaeology assessment.

Multiple Direction Hill-shades

- 4.129 Relief shading or hill-shading is the most commonly used LiDAR visualisation technique. It illuminates the DTM from a certain angle, imitating the sun and producing the most 'natural' and intuitively readable imagery. However, it is limited in that areas facing directly towards or away from the illumination source are saturated (homogeneously bright or dark) and little detail can be perceived and features lying parallel to the light source can be imperceptible.
- 4.130 This effect can be overcome by combining hill-shades from different directions in three different colour bands into a single image. This technique is used to produce useful images for the site assessment process and it also provides an additional source of data on the site's archaeological interest and/or potential (**Plan EDP 6** and the paragraphs below).

Results of the Analysis (see Plan EDP 6)

- 4.131 The LiDAR data clearly identifies the rectilinear earthwork features of the possible moat in the south-east corner of the site (Field 13). The earthworks appear to be contained entirely within this one field and there is no surface indication that they continue outwards into the adjoining fields.
- 4.132 Elsewhere, a sub-circular depression is visible in the south-east corner of Field 9 and could well be a partially infilled pond or pit associated with agricultural management, whilst areas of more general ground disturbance in Fields 3, 4, 5 and 6 most probably reflect the use of

the fields in association with Pig Lane Farm in the 19th and 20th centuries and documented by the historic maps and aerial photographs (above).

- 4.133 Evidence for ploughing (for past arable cultivation) can be seen in most of the fields within the site area and it will doubtlessly have had an adverse impact on the preservation of any archaeological features or remains that are present.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SITE

- 4.134 The land within the site has been subject to two phases of archaeological field evaluation alongside the collection, collation and assessment of desktop data, in order to understand and elucidate its archaeological interest (**Plan EDP 6**).

Geophysical Survey (SUMO 2020)

- 4.135 The land within the site area was subject to the completion of a geophysical (magnetometer) survey undertaken by SUMO between November and December 2020. The report which was prepared as a result is reproduced as **Appendix EDP 2** to this report and referenced from henceforth as SUMO (2020).

- 4.136 The ‘summary of results’ on Page 2 of SUMO (2020) states that “*A detailed magnetometer survey was conducted over approximately 25 hectares of land at Great Barr. No definite features of archaeological interest have been identified, although a number of linear and curvilinear trends of uncertain origin have been mapped. These could have an archaeological, agricultural or natural explanation. Former field boundaries, evidence for ridge and furrow and land drains indicate that the site has a largely agricultural past. An underground service is visible in the data, along with small areas of natural variation.*”

- 4.137 This point is further emphasised at Paragraph 5.1.1 (in terms of ‘results’), when it succinctly reports that:

“No magnetic responses have been recorded that could be interpreted as being of definite archaeological interest.”

- 4.138 A number of ‘uncertain’ magnetic responses are identified in paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.5 of the SUMO report (SUMO, 2020) and these are focused primarily in Areas (Fields) 3, 9 and 10 and hence in the north, centre and south-west of the site area.

- 4.139 Paragraph 5.3.1 of SUMO (2020) identifies linear anomalies representing two former field boundaries in Fields 2 and 9 of the site and Paragraph 5.3.2 of the report then records the following assessment:

“Several further linear anomalies [10-14] are mapped across the site, each of which is thought to be related to a former field boundary that is not visible on historic maps; hence their conjectural interpretation.”

4.140 This information is brought together in Paragraph 7.1 of the SUMO report (SUMO, 2020), which offers this conclusion:

“The survey at Great Barr has not identified any features of definite archaeological interest. A number of linear and curvilinear response of uncertain origin have been mapped, including a curvilinear response corresponding with an undated cropmark feature; it could have an archaeological or natural explanation. Two corroborated historic field boundaries have been identified, along with a number of conjectural field divisions. Evidence for former ridge and furrow is present across the site, while the remaining responses are natural or modern and include land drains and an underground service.”

4.141 Despite the limited results of the non-intrusive geophysical survey, it was concluded to be nevertheless desirable to undertake a phase of intrusive trial trench evaluation at the site in order to investigate the ‘uncertain’ responses identified and hence identify whether they represent potential archaeological constraints to its proposed residential development.

Trial Trenching (Trent & Peak Archaeology, 2021)

4.142 In light of the geophysical survey results (see above), the land at the site was subject to an intrusive trial trench evaluation by Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) in May 2021 and where the results of the investigation are summarised in a report reference as TPA (2021). A copy is reproduced as **Appendix EDP 3**.

4.143 The fieldwork involved the machine excavation of 16 trial trenches that measured between 30m and 50m in length.

4.144 Reflecting the results of the preceding geophysical survey, Paragraph 7.1.4 of TPA (2021) reports that nine of the 16 trial trenches which were excavated contained no archaeological features or deposits of significance.

4.145 TPA (2021) notes that Trenches 5 (Field 2), 7 (Field 9), 10 and 11 (Field 10), 12 (Field 11) and 15 and 16 (Field 13) were the only ones found to contain any features or deposits of potential archaeological interest.

4.146 In the north-west of the site, Trench 5 recorded three ‘possible’ furrows and a possible pit cutting through the natural clay and a ditch on a different alignment that cut the overlying subsoil and therefore probably represents a later phase of agricultural activity.

4.147 No dateable finds were recovered from any of the features in this trench and the same was true of the earlier ditch identified in Trench 7 further to the south-east, although overlying clay deposits did produce 19th century ceramics and suggest that it was infilled and hence out of use by this time. A similar sequence was confirmed for the single ditch in Trench 11 to the south-west and once again, an agricultural function appears likely.

4.148 In the same centre-west area of the site, Trench 10 identified two curving ditches positioned some 4.0m apart, where the evidence suggests that they represent the remains of a double ditched field boundary which was infilled during the 20th century based on the finds.

- 4.149 In the south-west of the site, Trench 12 was found to contain a pit, a gully and a ditch which were sealed by the topsoil and cut through the natural clay. None of the features contained any dateable finds and Paragraph 7.6.5 of TPA (2021) states that each of them is believed to have silted up naturally over time and were not deliberately backfilled/reinstated.
- 4.150 Paragraph 7.7.1 of TPA (2021) notes that *“Trench 15 was positioned within the field to the east, which contained undulating earthworks and was the potential location of a [medieval] moated site”* and the subsequent paragraphs summarise a series of features which appear to corroborate its existence. They include two worn cobbled surfaces and a possible beam slot, which appear to indicate the presence of domestic occupation in this area of the site; the analysis of environmental samples additionally suggesting a medieval date.
- 4.151 Slightly further to the east, Trench 16 identified *“three small, overlapping ditches”* on a north-east to south-west alignment (TPA, 2021). Paragraph 7.8.4 of TPA’s report states that:

“The function of these ditches were [sic] unclear, as was any potential association with a possible moat or moated manor site. Ditches [1603], [1605] and [1609] were not deemed large enough to suggest a moat, however they could have been used to demarcate specific zones within the site or used as a form of drainage.”
- 4.152 In light of the above, Paragraph 10.1 of TPA (2021) concludes that *“The majority of trenches excavated at Birmingham Road, Great Barr did not contain any archaeological features, although most of the trenches contained land drains or modern services.”*
- 4.153 Paragraph 10.3 of TPA (2021) identifies that Trenches 15 and 16 were excavated to target a possible medieval moat that is recorded by the HER. It does not identify the features that were found in these two trenches as representing the remains of the moated enclosure or as confirming the identification of the field by the HER.
- 4.154 However, the features do appear to illustrate archaeological activity in this area of the site, with environmental samples also suggesting a medieval date and so TPA (2021) therefore advises that further investigation is required.
- 4.155 In more general terms, Paragraph 10.4 of TPA (2021) states the following with regard to the limited results of the archaeological trench evaluation:

“It is likely that the fields in the eastern part of the site have been heavily ploughed over the last few centuries leading to the truncation of archaeology. A major landscaping event seems to have also taken place in the 19th or 20th century across the site, as evidence by the homogenous and sharply contrasting topsoil directly above the archaeology and natural substrate and full of 19th and 20th century pottery. It may be that this is the time when the fields were given over to pasture.”
- 4.156 Paragraph 10.5 of TPA (2021) attributes a degree of archaeological interest to the cluster of undated features in Trench 12, largely on the basis that they were devoid of finds, but a fragment of burnt bone was recovered from the environmental samples.

4.157 Paragraph 10.6 suggests that the ditch found beneath 19th century deposits in Trench 7 of the trial evaluation could represent a boundary ditch (albeit of unknown date). Nevertheless, paragraph 10.7 concludes as follows:

“The occurrence of archaeological features was relatively sparse in the trenches and the majority of geophysical anomalies appear to represent field drains, whilst in other cases features were not observed in locations where geophysics indicated they might be present. The most substantial archaeological features were in Trenches 15 and 16, potentially associated with a medieval moated site. Further archaeological features, of unknown character and date, were present in Trenches 07 and 12. Further works would be needed within these areas to establish the function and dating of this feature.”

4.158 So, together the geophysical survey and subsequent trial trench evaluation have confirmed that the site holds little archaeological interest away from Field 13 in the south-east corner and Field 11 to the west. Elsewhere, the features and deposits identified by the two phases of archaeological evaluation above appear to derive from the management and exploitation of the agricultural landscape from the Middle Ages onwards.

4.159 In the case of the ditch in Trench 7, the evidence is that it was infilled during the 19th century, having been identified on the Tithe Map of 1841 (**Plan EDP 4**), but it could well have been formed in the medieval or post-medieval periods.

SITE VISIT AND WALKOVER

4.160 The site and its wider surroundings were visited in mid-December 2022, in order to identify any potentially sensitive archaeological or heritage receptors that could be affected by the development of the farmland within its boundaries.

Designated Heritage Assets

4.161 As set out above (for which see Paragraphs 4.9 to 4.22 of this report), the western edge of Great Barr Hall (Park) Grade II RPG and Great Barr Conservation Area are located 35m from the north-west corner of the site.

4.162 Hence, it is considered (in line with Step 1 of GPA 3) that these designated heritage assets could be affected by the development of the site, thereby warranting further assessment in line with Step 2 of GPA 3 to establish whether the land at the site represents an element of their setting which contributes to their significance.

4.163 These overlapping assets are assessed as deriving the majority of their heritage significance from the historic, architectural and archaeological interests which manifest in their physical form and fabric.

4.164 These interests are manifest in the buildings they contain; most notably the Grade II* listed Great Barr Hall and the gate lodges marking and characterising the driveway approaches from the south (Handsworth) and north-west (Merrion’s). The two are Grade II listed and so too is the Church of St Margaret and a number of other historic structures associated with Great Barr Park and now contained within the extensive conservation area.

- 4.165 They are also manifest in the spaces within the designations and the relationships between the structures that they contain, with the designed landscape of the Grade II RPG including the two ponds, the pleasure grounds focused on the House and the surrounding parkland formed and developed from the 18th century onwards under the auspices of architectural luminaries including Humphry Repton and George Gilbert Scott in particular.
- 4.166 The involvement of these notable figures undoubtedly makes a positive contribution to the historic interest of the RPG and conservation area. The assets' archaeological interest can primarily be ascribed to the way in which the landscape within the RPG and in its environs can inform and enhance our understanding of the Park's origins in the Middle Ages and its evolution during the post-medieval period and into the 19th century. The SHER and WHER both contain a number of entries recording documentary and physical evidence for a deer park at Great Barr in the medieval period, as well as information on the arrangement and management of the surrounding farming landscape supporting the estate.
- 4.167 The setting of these assets is assessed as making up the smaller (minority) portion of their significance, particularly given the extent to which the areas bordering them have become developed for a mixture of residential housing and transport infrastructure in the course of the 20th century.
- 4.168 So, for instance, the west side of the RPG and conservation area, which is closest to the site and of greatest relevance to its development, is defined for most of its length by either the M6 in the south, the A34 dual carriageway running northwards or the residential housing estates that front onto the eastern side of this arterial route into Birmingham City Centre from the north.
- 4.169 Aside from the narrow north-western projection of Merrion's Wood, the two designations are also defined on the western side by the natural topography, where the ridge of high ground east of the A34 generally restricts views out to the west and limits the interaction between the RPG in particular and the wider landscape.
- 4.170 As far as Merrion's Wood is concerned (specifically), its wider setting is assessed as making no particular contribution to its heritage significance and therefore also in the same way to the Grade II RPG or the conservation area. The experience of Merrion's Wood is now as a Local Nature Reserve that contains an expanse of mature woodland bordering the eastern side of the A34 and separated from this busy main road by a railing along the rear edge of the broad pavement.
- 4.171 There are areas of 20th century residential housing to the north on Skip Lane and south on Merrion's Close, whilst insofar as there are views outwards to the west, they primarily take in the sports pitches and associated buildings and spaces of Aston University's Recreation Centre along the western side of the dual carriageway. These elements make no positive contribution to the significance of the Grade II RPG and conservation area, but arguably they do not detract from it either because of their separation by the A34.
- 4.172 In that sense, the land at the site is also assessed as representing an element of the two assets' setting that makes no positive contribution to their significance; in other words, it is wholly neutral and does not contribute one way or the other.

- 4.173 Photographs that illustrate this assessment and contextualise the paragraphs which follow are reproduced as **Images EDP A1.1 to A1.5**.
- 4.174 The experience of the RPG and conservation area from the site is of an area of mature woodland flanked by 20th century residential housing to the south and separated by a busy main road carrying vehicular traffic in and out of Birmingham.
- 4.175 Aside from Merrion's Lodge, some distance to the north and not visible from the site, there is nothing in the form or appearance of Merrion's Wood to indicate that it is not semi-natural woodland or possesses any ornamental or designed characteristics which might tie it to the Great Barr Park concentrated over the ridge further to the east. The experience of the RPG and conservation area from within the site's boundary does not facilitate an understanding or appreciation of their heritage interest.
- 4.176 Likewise, insofar as there is an experience of the wider landscape looking out west from the RPG and conservation area, it is principally focused on the modern townscape that occupies the edges of the A34 dual carriageway and the associated transport paraphernalia. As such, there is nothing more than a very limited visual association between the two heritage assets and the fields in the northern end of the site, sandwiched between the adjacent residential estates and the Aston University Recreation Centre to the east and west respectively. These very limited and localised views out towards the northern fringe of the site area are therefore not assessed as making a positive contribution to their heritage significance.
- 4.177 As a result, it is assessed that the site does not represent an aspect of the wider setting of Great Barr Park RPG or Great Barr Conservation Area that makes a positive contribution to their significance. Therefore, neither of these designated heritage assets is considered to represent a sensitive heritage receptor for the proposed development of the site and it is concluded to be highly unlikely that either of them would receive an adverse impact in that respect or experience harm to their significance.

The Historic Relationship Between the Site and Great Barr Hall and Park

- 4.178 The apportionment for the Aldridge Tithe Map of 1841 (see **Plan EDP 4** and **Table EDP 4.2**) records that all of the land at the site was within the ownership of Edward Thomas Foley and Sir Edward Dollman Scott.
- 4.179 It is recorded that Sir Edward Dollman Scott succeeded to the Baronetcy of Great Barr and inherited the estate of Great Barr Hall in 1828. He was MP for Lichfield, also High Sheriff of Staffordshire and Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire and Sussex.
- 4.180 Edward Thomas Foley is believed to be of Stoke Edith in Herefordshire, a Tory politician and the High Sherriff of Herefordshire.
- 4.181 This means that there is an historic, functional relationship between the farmland within the site boundaries and the Great Barr Estate that boasted the Grade II*listed Great Barr Hall as its administrative focus and was ornamented by the Grade II RPG, established during the course of the 18th century and re-worked in the subsequent century.
- 4.182 However, this historic, functional relationship is assessed as making no contribution to the significance of Great Barr Park (the Grade II RPG) and being insufficient, in itself, to bring

the site into the setting of Great Barr Hall Grade II* listed building in a way or to an extent which would make a positive contribution to its significance. This assessment is made on the basis of the following:

- There is nothing in the form or the appearance of the enclosed fields of agricultural farmland within the site to identify or elucidate a functional connection between it and the Great Barr Estate;
- The land at the site is no longer in the ownership of the Great Barr Estate and has not been for at least eight years, hence there is no continued connection between the farmland and either the Grade II RPG or Great Barr Hall that historically comprised its administrative focus and is now itself statutorily designated a Grade II* listed building;
- There are no distinctive features; such as gates, stiles or consistent building forms or architectural treatments; to connect the farmland at the site with the Grade II RPG or the Great Barr Hall (Grade II*) as the principal administrative building within it; and
- There are no visual inter-relationships between the farmland and the Grade II* listed Hall with which to make this intangible historic connection a tangible inter-relationship that can be identified, understood and appreciated in the field today, as a result of the screening effect of the intervening topography and residential housing estates along the margins of the A34 to the east of the site's boundary.

4.183 In any event, history is inalienable and hence it will always be a fact that the land at the site formed part of the wider agricultural estate controlled by Great Barr Hall, whatever land use it is subject to. This relationship is not based on the physical form or appearance of the land at the site and thus it would also not be destroyed or diminished by the development of the site for residential dwellings.

Local (Non-statutory) Designations

APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site

4.184 Peak House Farm Moated Site (APA 24, SHER Ref. **MBL2711**) is located in the south-east of the site in Field 13 and also extends away to the north-west as a narrow, but relatively deep ditch in between Fields 9 and 12 (see **Plan EDP 1**).

4.185 The asset occupies a well-defined and contained area, enclosed by mature hedgerows on four sides and with that to the south on the north side of Wilderness Lane. It is demarcated on its eastern side by an elongated (north-south aligned) water-filled pond which is believed to be the remnants of a medieval fishpond and not one side of the moated enclosure.

4.186 Instead, the remains of the possible moated enclosure are believed to be contained within Field 13 and here an area of rectilinear earthworks is easily visible in the surface of the field of permanent pasture, as well as in the LiDAR data and on some aerial photographs.

- 4.187 The earthworks are well defined on the ground, but even the geophysical survey (2020) and the trial trench evaluation (2021) were unable to determine the moat's position and form with any degree of confidence. Moreover, the trial trenching demonstrated that some of the archaeological remains of this site are likely to be preserved only as below-ground features and/or deposits requiring field investigation to define their origin and their significance.
- 4.188 The trial trench evaluation (see **Appendix EDP 3**) showed that archaeological remains can be expected to survive reasonably well, with the desktop sources suggesting that this field has not been ploughed in recent times.
- 4.189 For the most part, the significance of this 'site' is assessed as deriving from the historic and archaeological interest of the above- and below-ground remains identified within Field 13 and along its associated ditch to the north-west.
- 4.190 There is no indication or evidence that this 'site' possesses either artistic or architectural interest from the available information.
- 4.191 In terms of that significance, in excess of 8,000 moated sites are now known and identified in England by Coveney (Coveney, 2014), albeit Historic England (HE), in its *Settlement Sites to 1500 Scheduling Selection Guide* published in 2018, states that "*roughly 6,000 moated sites are known*". In any event, they consist of wide ditches that were often or seasonally water-filled and either partly or entirely enclosed one or more islands of dry land that were occupied by domestic buildings.
- 4.192 The majority of moated sites served as high status homes and where the provision of a moat was intended as a status symbol rather than for practical military defence. The peak period during which moated sites were built in England was between about 1250 and 1350 and by far the greatest concentration lies in the lowlands of central and eastern England.
- 4.193 Even so, moated enclosures were built throughout the medieval period, are widely scattered throughout England and exhibit a high level of diversity in their forms and sizes. They form a significant class of medieval monument and are important for the understanding of the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside during the Middle Ages. Many examples provide conditions favourable to the survival of organic remains.
- 4.194 The most well attested and best-preserved moated enclosures are generally designated as Scheduled Monuments and this recognises the national importance of the archaeology that they retain. In terms of designation, the Historic England guidance (2018) sets out that for moated sites so many are already documented that "*some additional scheduling guidance is desirable, especially for areas where they are fairly commonplace, such as parts of East Anglia. Factors which may favour designation include good quality earthworks; the demonstrable or likely survival of medieval archaeological deposits; the presence of listed medieval buildings within the moat; diversity of features, such as the presence of fishponds; contemporary (that is, medieval) documentation – although this should not be expected, as many sites were occupied by freeholders who generally did not make records; and where a site stands within a wider, contemporary (medieval), landscape, say of associated ridge and furrow*". There is no evidence to suggest or infer that the Peak House Farm enclosure is of national importance and indeed OA (2019) suggests local or regional importance for this

feature, no doubt recognising the limited information we have on its morphology, date of construction, use and condition.

- 4.195 Whilst the majority of the significance will be held in the archaeological features, deposits and/or remains that make up APA 24, it is however, assessed that the remaining minority portion is drawn from its wider setting within the contemporary landscape.
- 4.196 Photographs that illustrate this assessment and contextualise the paragraphs which follow are reproduced as **Images EDP A1.6 to A1.11**.
- 4.197 In that sense, the development of the mid-late 20th century residential housing estates to the north-east along Peak House Road and to the south-east along Wilderness Lane, as well as the school to the south-west, represent elements of this asset's wider setting that serve to detract from its heritage significance as they have eroded the farming landscape around it and introduced a sense of enclosure, and also significant noise, into its experience.
- 4.198 Likewise, the construction of the M6 to the south and the A34 dual carriageway a little further to the east have served to introduce significant traffic noise into the modern experience of APA 24 and in the process, have made it hard to miss the fact that the moated enclosure (assuming that's correct and established) occupies a suburban position which is demonstrably different to the surroundings in which it was first developed.
- 4.199 Nonetheless, at the same time, the possible moat occupies an area of enclosed agricultural fields which seem to date from the later medieval or early post-medieval period and denote the remnants of an expanse of farmland that was enclosed ('assarted') out of woodland and used for cultivation. These fields (which themselves are locally designated as AHHLV 25), to the west and north in particular, represent an aspect of APA24's wider setting which makes a contribution to its significance.
- 4.200 It is hard to understand (at least with any confidence) the choice of this site for the possible moated enclosure and the form and character of its original/historic surroundings. Equally, the fact that this asset exists wholly as a well-contained area of slight earthworks and below-ground archaeological remains limits its experience to a very limited area of the site, which in fact comprises this one field and adjacent areas of adjoining fields. There is no experience of the possible moat from the public rights of way.
- 4.201 Even so, whilst it may be difficult to appreciate the significance of this asset, at least without being granted formal access to the privately owned farmland, it seems reasonable to state that (1) its general 'openness' and (2) the availability of views outwards across the declining topography to the west are aspects of its surroundings that also make a contribution to its overall significance.
- 4.202 Hence, this non-designated heritage asset is assessed as comprising a potentially sensitive heritage receptor that could be affected by the residential development of the site; not only directly, but also indirectly through changes to its 'setting'.

AHHLV 25: Peak House Farm Field System

- 4.203 The site comprises a patchwork of agricultural fields enclosed and divided by hedgerows of a variety of forms and characters. These enclosures are more regular and rectilinear in the

north-east (Fields 1, 3, 4, 6, 7) but become more irregular in form and character elsewhere to the west and south.

- 4.204 Photographs that illustrate this assessment and contextualise the paragraphs which follow are reproduced as **Images EDP A1.12 to A1.17**.
- 4.205 The hedgerow boundaries are augmented by a variety of banks and ditches, with those in the west being particularly and notably substantial. The western side of Field 2 is a case in point and exhibits a linear bank and an associated ditch and, likewise, the ditch that defines the eastern side of Field 2 and separates it from Fields 5 and 10 adjacent is a substantial feature, forming something of a ravine as it drops towards the south-west corner.
- 4.206 By way of comparison, the boundaries towards the north-eastern corner of the site are more limited and less substantial (in some cases lacking ditches and exhibiting only banks). This is the case with the field boundaries between Fields 1 and 3 and between Fields 9 and 8/14 in the north-eastern corner and along the eastern margin respectively.
- 4.207 Although it is comparatively rare in the Black Country (see Paragraphs 4.42 to 4.48), this form of 'irregular' medieval/post-medieval agricultural enclosure is not rare nationally and so therefore OA's suggested attribution of 'local' interest to this area of late medieval/post-medieval fields appears entirely reasonable and realistic.
- 4.208 Certainly, the available historic maps (see **Plans EDP 4 and 5**) suggest that this form of field system was commonplace and widespread locally in the 19th century and was then steadily lost through the course of the 20th century, as adjacent areas were developed for a range of land uses such as residential estates and educational and leisure facilities.
- 4.209 It is not intrinsically associated with this location, but instead appears to have survived here in this area as a relict patch, in contrast with the surrounding landscape which has become increasingly built up through the 20th century and urbanised through the continued growth of Birmingham and the Black Country as an economic centre.
- 4.210 Its significance is bound up in the archaeological and historic interests of its physical form and fabric, most obviously illustrated by the hedgerow boundaries. Its contemporary setting within the wider surrounding townscape is not assessed as making a particular contribution to its significance.
- 4.211 Hence, this non-designated heritage asset is assessed as comprising a potentially sensitive heritage receptor that could be affected by the residential development of the site, through direct physical impacts to its form and character.

OTHER NON-DESIGNATED ARCHAEOLOGY

- 4.212 The site visit did not identify any hitherto unidentified or unrecorded archaeological features or remains of actual or potential significance. The only archaeological feature within the site identified during the completion of the walkover survey was a former pit or pond in Field 11, which is depicted on the Tithe Map and likely to be of at least post-medieval formation. This feature is shown in **Image EDP A1.18**.

- 4.213 The site comprises 14 fields of pasture, which are not subject to the cultivation of arable crops and hence ploughing. The only building within the site boundary is the disused stable block located at the east end of Field 3 and this is not assessed as being of any interest or heritage significance.
- 4.214 Finally, it is assessed that the majority of hedgerows within and around the site boundaries would be considered to be *important* under the archaeological and heritage criteria of the *Hedgerows Regulations 1997*.

Section 5 Impact Assessment

- 5.1 This section of the report identifies and assesses the nature and magnitude of any impacts arising from proposals for development of the site on the significance of the heritage assets which were discussed in the preceding section.
- 5.2 In doing so, it specifically addresses Steps 3 and 4 of HE's 'setting' guidance, which is known as GPA 3 (HE, 2017).

THE LIST OF SENSITIVE HERITAGE RECEPTORS

- 5.3 The following list identifies the archaeological and heritage 'receptors' that are assessed as being of potential sensitivity to the proposed development:
- Great Barr Hall (Park) Grade II RPG and Conservation Area;
 - APA 24: Peak House Moated Site;
 - AHHLV 25: Peak House Farm Field System; and
 - Other non-designated archaeological features, deposits and/or remains.
- 5.4 The impact(s) of the proposed development (both 'direct' and 'indirect') on these receptors will be identified and assessed in the paragraphs which follow.

SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.5 The development proposals for the site; which have been reviewed and amended in light of the identification of both landscape and archaeological/heritage constraints at the baseline stage; focus on the delivery of the following.

"Outline planning application (with the exception of access) for the development of up to 150 new dwellings, a countryside park and associated works."

- 5.6 The identification and assessment of potential impacts from the proposed development is based on the following reports and illustrations (**Appendix EDP 4**):
- Development Framework Plan, reference: 09364-FPCR-XX-ZZ-DR-L-0010-P11 (27 July 2023)
 - Illustrative Masterplan, reference: 09364-FPCR-XX-ZZ-DR-L-0012-P07 (18 August 2023)
 - Building Height Parameters, reference: 09364-FPCR-XX-ZZ-DR-L-0013-P01 (25 August 2023)
- 5.7 The following key aspects and features of the proposed development are depicted on the illustrative masterplan, as well as being picked up in more detail in the DAS and they should therefore be consulted for more information in that regard:

- Built development would be confined to the easternmost and northernmost 4.7ha of this 25ha site (Fields 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 14) adjacent to the Birmingham Road in the north, Wilderness Lane in the south and the properties on Park House Road in the east;
- New buildings within the residential areas would be of typical two-storey construction, in common with the surrounding area in the south and west, especially in the fields which are closest to the possible medieval moat;
- There would be areas of up to 2.5 storey development (up to 10.5m ridge height) in the centre-north of the developed area, next to the existing residential dwellings on the west side of Peak House Road;
- There would be an area of up to three storey development (up to 12m to ridge) at the northern end of the site, to the south of Birmingham Road;
- There will be one point of access for vehicles, which would be from Wilderness Lane in the far south-east corner;
- Insofar as possible, the existing hedgerows would be retained and maintained, with any removal to form the road access limited;
- The fields in the west and south (Fields 2, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) would not be subject to residential development and instead retained undeveloped as Public Open Space;
- A new pumping station would be built in the north west corner of Field 5 to service the residential development;
- New hedgerow boundaries would be planted in Fields 2, 9 & 10 to reinstate boundaries that are shown on the historic maps and have been taken out;
- A Local Equipped Area of Plan (LEAP) would be provided in the open space on the east side of Field 5 to service and support the development; and
- New drainage features would be created adjacent to the built development, including a series of new basins in the retained open spaces.

5.8 The impacts arising from the implementation of these proposals will therefore be identified and assessed in the paragraphs which follow.

NATURE AND MAGNITUDE OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

5.9 The following paragraphs identify and assess the likely impacts arising from the proposed development, as described in the preceding paragraphs.

Great Barr Hall RPG and Conservation Area

5.10 In line with Paragraph 4.177 (above), it is assessed that there would be no impact from the implementation of the proposed development on Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG or the wider

Great Barr Conservation Area. There would be no loss of significance from either designation and there would be no 'harm' caused in terms of the NPPF.

- 5.11 Insofar as the wider setting of the two statutory designations currently makes a contribution to their significance, this contribution would not be reduced by the implementation of the Outline development proposals forming the current application.
- 5.12 Historic England were contacted (via email) 07 August 2023 to obtain their views on the proposed development of the site in terms of heritage assets within their focus.
- 5.13 Sam Lester, Business Officer (Midlands Region) responded via an email on 17 August 2023 to set out that *"Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice, as we need to target our engagement and in this instance we have no comments to offer. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application"*.
- 5.14 Notwithstanding the limited nature of the written response, Historic England do not identify any harm in respect of Great Barr Park or suggest that the assessment that the proposals for development would cause no harm is inaccurate.

Archaeological Priority Area [APA] 24: Peak House Moated Site

- 5.15 Although it is retained within the redline boundary, the entirety of this non-statutory (local) designation is outwith the extents of the residential development. Likewise, it would not be subject to any other construction activities that are necessary to support the development proposals; i.e. drainage basins. It is hence concluded that the proposals' approval and then implementation would not cause a 'direct' impact on this non-designated asset, although it is recognised that there would be change to its setting.
- 5.16 In line with Paragraphs 4.184 to 202 (above), it is assessed that the proposed development would result in a **loss** of this non-designated asset's significance if it is taken forward and implemented because of the change it would cause to its wider setting. These changes are considered to result from the following aspects of development:
- The loss of some 4.7ha (17%) of the surrounding field system, albeit only to the east and thus leaving the northern and western sides of the enclosure adjoining retained open space areas within the site;
 - The reduced sense of openness and separation from the existing developed edge of Birmingham to the east; and
 - The introduction of increased noise and lightspill into the immediate surroundings of this possible medieval moated enclosure.
- 5.17 However, it also has to be recognised that the development proposals focus the residential elements on the eastern and northern areas of the site that are already closest to existing residential development and therefore already affected by noise and light from houses etc. It also has to be acknowledged that in the order of some 83% of the field system within the

site would be left undeveloped and managed as open space for use by the new and existing residents within the local area.

- 5.18 The proposed development also leaves the areas of the site to the west and north of this non-statutory designation undeveloped, so that views will be retained outwards across the surroundings and so these open and agricultural elements of its wider setting continue to contribute positively to its significance.
- 5.19 Therefore, when taken in the round, it is considered that the proposed development would generate a loss of significance from this non-designated asset and that would hence result in harm in terms of the NPPF. However, when properly contextualised in terms of the overall contribution which the asset's setting makes to the totality of its heritage significance, this loss of significance would be no more than **small** or **limited**.

Area of High Historic Landscape Value [AHHLV] 25: Peak House Farm Field System

- 5.20 As set out above in Paragraph 5.7, the development proposals envisage the retention of the existing hedgerows within and around the site insofar as that is possible and subject to the need for vehicular access into the site and between field parcels.
- 5.21 Likewise, it is also proposed (see the Illustrative Masterplan at **Appendix EDP 4**) that there would be provision of new hedgerow planting in the circa 22.3ha of retained open space as a means to reinstate historic field boundaries which have been removed and for which there is a mixture of cartographic and archaeological evidence.
- 5.22 Taken as a whole, it is therefore assessed that the loss of historic hedgerows from the site as a result of the development proposals would be fairly restricted and wholly concentrated in the east and in the north. The west and south are intended to be retained and managed as public open space and hence here no hedgerow loss is either needed or proposed and in fact additional new hedgerow planting is expected.
- 5.23 Nonetheless, the implementation of the proposed development would result in the loss of circa 4.7ha of AHHLV 25 and hence also the loss of 4.7ha from the remaining 469.5ha of Fie-IRREG polygons in the Black Country study area. This constitutes 9.4% of the AHHLV and c.1% of the remaining Black Country resource of irregular enclosures.
- 5.24 This constitutes an adverse impact on this non-statutory designation and therefore some loss of its significance as a non-designated heritage asset in terms of the Framework. This would however still be relatively small because of (a) the extent to which the proposals for development retain and work with the hedgerows in order to maintain a sense of this field system's historic shape and character, (b) the extent to which the hedgerow network outside the area of residential development would be retained and enhanced with new planting to reinstate lost features shown on the 19th century maps and (c) the extent of the AHHLV that is beyond the site's boundary to the south and would be unchanged and unaffected by the approval and implementation of this residential development.
- 5.25 At the same time, it is noted that this form of field system is not rare nationally, something which is recognised by Oxford Archaeology (2019) when they conclude AHHLV 25 as being of no more than 'local' interest.

Other Non-designated Archaeological Features, Deposits and/or Remains

- 5.26 The geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation (SUMO, 2020, TPA 2021) identified very little of potential archaeological interest within the eastern areas of the site boundaries that would be subject to residential development.
- 5.27 Trenches 1, 2 and 3 in the north identified nothing of archaeological interest or potential and Trenches 6, 7 and 8 in the centre recorded just a single linear feature (Trench 7) and it most probably represents the linear field boundary identified on the 19th century maps. It is not assessed as of any more than negligible archaeological interest.
- 5.28 It is possible that the site could contain hitherto unidentified and unrecorded archaeological features, deposits or remains, but it is considered to be unlikely that they will be significant and instead the most likely scenario is that any features, deposits or remains will relate to the origins and development of the field system within the site area from the Middle Ages onwards to the present day. Indeed, it is assessed that there is a low potential for features, deposits or remains of prehistoric or Roman date to be present within the site based on the available information.
- 5.29 It is expected that any hitherto unidentified/unrecorded archaeological remains within the areas proposed for residential development and its supporting infrastructure (i.e. drainage) would be destroyed, but (a) it is unlikely they will be of greater than low interest and (b) this accounts for only a small area (c.17%) of the site. Therefore, it is anticipated that much of the site's archaeological resource would be left intact and unaffected by the proposals' implementation, whilst the archaeological deposits that might be lost to development would have no greater than limited potential to enhance the archaeological record or to enhance our understanding or appreciation of past human activity in this area.
- 5.30 Hence, taken as a whole, it is assessed that the development proposals would give rise to no more than a small and non-significant impact on non-designated archaeological remains if it is approved and implemented.

PROPOSED MITIGATION/COMPENSATION MEASURES

- 5.31 The following paragraphs outline the scope and content of any mitigation or compensation measures that are either necessary or desirable to address the impact(s) of development on the archaeological and heritage assets assessed in the preceding paragraphs.

Great Barr Hall RPG and Conservation Area

- 5.32 As there would be no adverse impact on either of these two statutory designations, there is no need for mitigation or compensation measures.
- 5.33 No mitigation or compensation measures are therefore proposed in respect of either Great Barr Hall RPG or Great Barr Conservation Area.

Archaeological priority Area [APA] 24: Peak House Moated Site

- 5.34 Paragraph 38 on Page 14 of GPA 3 (HE, 2017) identifies the following measures as being ways of achieving enhancement:
1. *removing or re-modelling an intrusive building or feature*
 2. *replacement of a detrimental feature by a new and more harmonious one*
 3. *restoring or revealing a lost historic feature or view*
 4. *introducing a wholly new feature that adds to the public appreciation of the asset*
 5. *introducing new views (including glimpses or better framed views) that add to the public experience of the asset, or*
 6. *improving public access to, or interpretation of, the asset including its setting.*
- 5.35 In terms of compensation for the small or limited loss of significance from APA 24; the preparation, agreement and implementation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) as a condition of outline planning permission would respond to and address at least the final two bullet points from Paragraph 5.34 as elements of a wider programme of conservation, management and interpretative works.
- 5.36 These 'enhancements' would flow from the provision of public access to the asset; whereas there is no formal access currently; as well as the addition of interpretation boards detailing the history and significance of the possible moat and thus providing greater enjoyment and appreciation of the historic environment for visitors to the site.
- 5.37 The enhanced conservation, management and interpretation of this heritage asset would form part of the more wide-ranging programme of works for the retention, management and use of the circa 22.3ha of undeveloped field parcels to the west of the built development for a mixture of public recreation and biodiversity enhancements which are to be secured and thereafter delivered by either condition or the Reserved Matters Application(s).
- 5.38 This would therefore go some way to offset and reduce the already 'small/limited' impact that the development is likely to have on Archaeological priority Area [APA] 24: Peak House Moated Site through changes to its wider setting. Hence, the proposed development would have no more than a 'very small' impact on the significance of this non-designated heritage asset if the proposals are taken forward in full and then implemented.

Area of High Historic Landscape Value [AHHLV] 25: Peak House Farm Field System

- 5.39 There are no mitigation measures which can be applied to eliminate or reduce the impact of the proposals on this non-designated heritage asset.

- 5.40 The development proposals so, however, offer some compensation for this impact through the retention and management of the enclosed fields in the west and south of the site as publicly accessible open space.
- 5.41 In common with the APA (above), the provision of public access (hitherto not available) and the creation of new views and installation of new interpretation; as one part of a programme of wider works to deliver biodiversity and recreational benefits from the undeveloped space in the west and south of the site's boundary; would meet the definition of enhancement set out in Paragraph 5.34 above and reproducing HE's advice in GPA 3 (2017).
- 5.42 Hence, the improved management of the circa 22.3ha of retained, undeveloped fields, as well as the opportunities for enhanced engagement with and also enjoyment of this non-designated heritage asset resulting from the implementation of the proposed development needs to be set against the loss of some 4.7 hectares of the wider field system in the north and east to residential dwellings.
- 5.43 Overall, it is considered that there would still be a residual loss of significance from this non-designated asset and that has to be weighed in the planning balance. Nevertheless, it is assessed as representing no more than a small impact.

Other Non-designated Archaeological Features, Deposits and/or Remains

- 5.44 The 'small' impact identified in respect of the proposed development on the conservation status of hitherto unrecognised/unknown non-designated archaeological features, deposits and/or remains at the site could be adequately addressed through the agreement and then implementation of an appropriate programme of investigation and recording, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), prior to or during construction.
- 5.45 This programme of archaeological work should be proportionate to the significance of the archaeological remains it is likely to encounter and sufficient to secure their preservation by record and publication prior to or during development.
- 5.46 There would be no long-term residual impact on non-designated archaeological features, deposits and/or remains within the development site if this proposed approach to mitigation is adopted and implemented.

Section 6 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been researched and then prepared by EDP for Wain Estates (Land) Limited, in order to inform and support the preparation, submission, validation and positive determination of residential development proposals for the site.
- 6.2 The aims of this report are to identify and define the significance of any archaeological or heritage assets that would be of potential sensitivity to the implementation of the proposed development, identify and assess the impact(s) of the development proposals upon those archaeological or heritage assets (both direct or indirect in terms of their setting) and define any mitigation or compensation measures that could then be employed to eliminate, reduce or offset any loss of significance (or harm).
- 6.3 In that regard, **Section 5** of this report identifies the following impacts (direct and indirect) upon the designated and non-designated assets discussed in **Section 4** in respect of their heritage significance.
- 6.4 There would be no impact on (and therefore no loss of significance from) either the Great Barr Hall Grade II RGP or Great Barr Conservation Area as a result of changes within these asset's wider setting, and indeed it is assessed overall that the site's proposed development would not give rise to an adverse impact upon a designated heritage asset as a result of it being taken forward and completed.
- 6.5 In terms of 'non-designated' heritage assets (as per the NPPF), it is concluded that there would be just 'very small' or 'small' impacts on the following through the approval of the proposals which form the basis of the current Outline planning application:
- APA 24: Peak House Moated Site;
 - AHHLV 25: Peak House Farm Field System; and
 - Other non-designated archaeological features, deposits and/or remains.
- 6.6 Each of these impacts needs to be considered against Paragraph 203 of the NPPF and any relevant Local Plan policies. However, it is important to note that none of the likely impacts of the proposed development requires to be evaluated against the more stringent paragraphs of the NPPF dealing with designated heritage assets (i.e. Paragraphs 199 - 202) and equally important to underline that 'harm' to a non-designated heritage asset is not covered by footnote 7 and it does not disapply the presumption in favour of sustainable development identified in paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
- 6.7 In that regard, paragraph 203 of the NPPF (2023) states that:
- "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

- 6.8 There is nothing to show that any of the heritage assets which that would be affected by the site's proposed residential development is of any more than local significance, even if it is noted that the possible medieval moated enclosure [APA 24] could potentially be of regional significance.
- 6.9 Likewise, there is nothing in the Sandwell MBC's Development Plan policies which suggests that development of the site should be precluded or restricted on the basis of the impacts identified for non-designated assets in paragraph 6.5 (above). The Black Country Core Strategy (adopted in February 2011) advises that "*...all proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the historic aspects of the following locally distinctive elements of the Black Country*". Thereafter, the policy also adds that "*...particular attention should be paid to the preservation and enhancement of:*
- *locally listed historic buildings and archaeological sites;*
 - *historic parks and gardens including their settings;*
 - *locally designated special landscape areas and other heritage based site allocations*".
- 6.10 However, the Policy does not either state or infer that proposals that would not sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the historic aspects of these heritage assets should either be refused or assessed as unacceptable. In that regard, it is (needless to say) anticipated that the 'balanced judgement' which is set out in Paragraph 203 of the NPPF would be applied in determining the acceptability of the planning application.
- 6.11 Furthermore, consideration is given to Policy SAD HE5 of Sandwell MBC's Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document (SADDP) which was adopted in December 2012. This adopted Policy states that:
- "In considering proposals for development, the Council will seek to ensure that special heritage assets of national or possibly high regional importance are identified as being particularly worthy of preservation in situ. Other heritage assets will be preserved wherever possible, but where it would be unreasonable to withhold planning permission for the development of such sites, provision will be made through agreements and conditions of planning permissions for an appropriate level of archaeological evaluation and recording (preservation by record), prior to damage or destruction through development".* It then subsequently adds that "*It is essential that heritage assets and their settings are preserved and enhanced so as to fully exploit their archaeological, recreational and educational value, and, where appropriate, made attractive to visitors.*"
- 6.12 It is concluded that the development proposals for the site conform to the provisions of the Council's Development Plan (insofar as archaeology or heritage matters are concerned) and likewise there is nothing in the paragraphs of Section 16 of the NPPF that would preclude the positive approval of this outline planning application when it is submitted for evaluation and determination. There is no archaeological or heritage reason why the application ought not to be treated favourably by the Local Authority and planning permission granted for this proposed residential development.

Section 7 Bibliography

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Appendix EDP 1 Images



Image EDP A1.1: View of the Grade II listed Walsall (or Merrion's Lodge) from the north and looking south in the general direction of the site. This mid-19th century gate lodge marks the start of the northern approach towards Great Barr Hall and also the north-west corner of the RPG.



Image EDP A1.2: View looking south-east along the A34 dual carriageway from the western edge of Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG and the Great Barr Conservation Area, highlighting the form and character of these assets' setting and their relationship with the site that can just about be identified up the hill in the background.



Image EDP A1.3: View from the south-west corner of Merion's Wood, which comprises the north-western extent of Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG; here illustrating its wider setting and its relationship with the land at the site, which is represented by Field 1 that contains the mobile communications mast beyond the A34.



Image EDP A1.4: View looking out from the northern boundary of the site (Field 1) towards Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG on the opposite side of the A34 Birmingham Road; here illustrating the form and character of Merrion's Wood as well as its current setting.



Image EDP A1.5: View of Great Barr Hall Grade II RPG from within the site; in this case from the western end of Field 1.



Image EDP A1.6: View looking north from the south-east corner of Field 13 and showing the nature of the earthworks which comprise APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site, as well as the sense of enclosure resulting from the surrounding hedgerow boundaries.



Image EDP A1.7: View looking north along the eastern boundary of Field 13 and showing the form of the probable water-filled fishpond included in APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site.



Image EDP A1.8: View looking east across Field 13 towards the houses on Wilderness Lane and showing the earthworks of APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site. This image also serves to illustrate the current setting of this non-designated heritage asset.



Image EDP A1.9: View looking north across Field 13 from the south-east corner close to Wilderness Lane and here illustrating the earthworks that together make-up APA 24: Peak House Farm Moated Site and the character of its wider setting.



Image EDP A1.10: View of APA 24: Peak House Moated Site from outside the site boundary; in this case looking north from the south-east side of Wilderness Lane.



Image EDP A1.11: View of APA 24: Peak House Moated Site from outside the site boundary; in this case looking west from the south-east side of Wilderness Lane.



Image EDP A1.12: Close-up of the field boundary on the west side of Field 2, here illustrating the combination of the low bank and ditch beyond.



Image EDP A1.13: Close-up of the field boundary separating Fields 2 and 10 (from the north-west) and here illustrating the depth and breadth of the ditch.



Image EDP A1.14: View looking east from the west end of Field 3 and showing the former stable range at the eastern end and the rectilinear form of this enclosure.



Image EDP A1.15: Close-up of the field boundary separating Fields 8 and 9 (from the east) and here illustrating that it is embanked and there is no associated ditch.



Image EDP A1.16: View looking east across Field 8 and showing the line of mature oaks with a low bank and ditch defining the southern boundary between this field and Field 14 beyond.

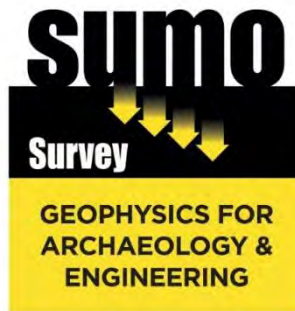


Image EDP A1.17: View looking east along the north end of Field 11 and showing the hedgerow boundary between it and Field 9 to the north.



Image EDP A1.18: Close-up of the scrub-filled pit or pond at the north end of Field 11.

Appendix EDP 2
SUMO Geophysics Report



GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY REPORT

Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

Client

Lanpro

Survey Report

01178

Date

December 2020



Survey Report 01178: Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

Survey dates	30 November - 4 December 2020
Field co-ordinator	Robert Knight MA
Field Team	Oliver Thomas
Report Date	18 December 2020
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4	INTRODUCTION	2 - 3
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Appendix A Technical Information: Magnetometer Survey Methods, Processing and Presentation

Appendix B Technical Information: Magnetic Theory

1. LIST OF FIGURES

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Figure 02	1:3000	Magnetometer Survey - Greyscale Plots - Overview
Figure 03	1:3000	Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation - Overview
Figure 04	1:2000	Magnetometer Survey - Greyscale Plots - North and East
Figure 05	1:2000	Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation - North and East
Figure 06	1:2000	Magnetometer Survey - Greyscale Plots - South
Figure 07	1:2000	Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation - South
Figure 08	1:3000	Minimally Processed Data – Greyscale Plots

2. SURVEY TECHNIQUE

Detailed magnetic survey (magnetometry) was chosen as the most efficient and effective method of locating the type of archaeological anomalies which might be expected at this site.

Bartington Grad 601-2
Bartington Cart System

Traverse Interval 1.0m
Traverse Interval 1.0m

Sample Interval 0.25m
Sample Interval 0.125m

3 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- 3.1 A detailed magnetometer survey was conducted over approximately 25 hectares of land at Great Barr. No definite features of archaeological interest have been identified, although a number of linear and curvilinear trends of uncertain origin have been mapped. These could have an archaeological, agricultural or natural explanation. Former field boundaries, evidence for ridge and furrow and land drains indicate that the site has a largely agricultural past. An underground service is visible in the data, along with small areas of natural variation.

4 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1 **SUMO Geophysics Ltd** were commissioned to undertake a geophysical survey of an area outlined for development. This survey forms part of an archaeological investigation being undertaken by **Lanpro**.

4.2 Site details

NGR / Postcode	SP 039 954 / B43 7AH
Location	The site lies to the north-west of Great Barr and is bounded to the north-west by pitches forming part of Aston University sports facility. The A34 dual-carriageway lies to the north-east, with agricultural land to the south-west.
HER	Sandwell and Walsall
Metropolitan Borough	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough
Metropolitan District Ward	Great Barr with Yew Tree
Topography	Steeply sloping downwards from east to west, from c. 160m AOD to 130m AOD.
Current Land Use	Pasture
Geology (BGS 2020)	Solid: Enville Member - sandstone with subordinate conglomerate, siltstone and mudstone is recorded across the majority of the area. Two bands of Enville Member - sandstone extend into the site from the south, while Coalbrookdale Formation - mudstone and Rubery Sandstone Member - sandstone are recorded in the west of the area. Superficial: none recorded.
Soils (CU 2020)	Soilscape 18: slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but bas-rich loamy and clayey soils.
Archaeology (BSA 2014)	No designated archaeological assets have been identified as lying within or close to the site other than Great Barr Registered Park and listed buildings of post-medieval date; only one of the records held by either HER for the study area is pre-medieval, being to the find of a Neolithic axe in the northern tip of the site. The field arrangement has an irregular form which may reflect quite early enclosure and possibly 'assarting' or the creation of fields from land which had been wooded. Great Barr was certainly settled and farmed by the medieval period and there is field name evidence and water bodies which suggest that a moat lay in a field on the eastern side of the site, by Wilderness Lane. Such sites tend to be discrete and not necessarily associated with related settlement activity. A number of cropmarks have been recorded from aerial photographs, and one of these does appear to indicate ditches including one which has the appearance of a late prehistoric enclosure. Other marks are more likely to reflect either slighted field boundaries or natural features.
Survey Methods	Magnetometer survey (fluxgate gradiometer)

Study Area c. 25 ha

4.3 **Aims and Objectives**

To locate and characterise any anomalies of possible archaeological interest within the study area.

5 **RESULTS**

The survey has been divided into fourteen survey areas (Areas 1-14) and specific anomalies have been given numerical labels [1] [2] which appear in the text below, as well as on the Interpretation Figure(s).

5.1 **Probable / Possible Archaeology**

5.1.1 No magnetic responses have been recorded that could be interpreted as being of definite archaeological interest.

5.2 **Uncertain**

5.2.1 Two curving parallel linear anomalies [1] have been detected in Area 10 and have an uncertain origin. They could be associated with former ditches, though they do not extend into the fields to the north or south, suggesting they could be an earlier alignment of former boundary [14].

5.2.2 Additional linear anomalies [2] in Area 9 are also of uncertain origin but are also thought more likely to have an agricultural explanation.

5.2.3 A possible rectilinear feature and discrete anomalies [3] in Area 3 could be of archaeological interest, though the nature of the responses indicates that they are natural or associated with the former ridge and furrow evident in the field.

5.2.4 Tentative curvilinear and linear trends [4] have been detected in the north of Area 9. The curvilinear response corresponds in location of the undated cropmark (BSA 2014) meaning an archaeological explanation cannot be ruled out entirely; however, the responses are weak making further interpretation difficult.

5.2.5 Several other linear trends [5], [6], [7], are mapped across the site and have an undetermined origin. It is possible that they are a result of former ditches, though they lack clear shape or form and are equally likely to have an agricultural or natural explanation.

5.3 **Former Field Boundary**

5.3.1 Two linear anomalies [8], [9], are visible in Areas 2 and 9; both can be corroborated with the locations of former field boundaries visible on historic Ordnance Survey maps of the site.

5.3.2 Several further linear anomalies [10-14] are mapped across the site, each of which is thought to be related to a former field boundary that is not visible on historic maps; hence their conjectural interpretation.

5.4 ***Agricultural – Ridge and Furrow / Land Drains***

- 5.4.1 Widely spaced parallel linear anomalies are present in the data across much of the site and are indicative of former ridge and furrow cultivation.
- 5.4.2 Similar linear anomalies, forming 'chevron' type patterns are visible in Areas 2 and 8. Though their magnetic response is comparable to that of the former ridge and furrow, the shape and form of the anomalies suggests that they are a result of land drains.

5.5 ***Natural / Geological / Pedological / Topographic***

- 5.5.1 Amorphous areas of enhanced magnetic response have been detected in several areas of the site. These are likely to be of natural origin, reflecting the complex underlying geology of the site.

5.6 ***Ferrous / Magnetic Disturbance***

- 5.6.1 A strong bipolar linear anomaly can be seen running along the south-eastern edge of Areas 12, 13 and 14. It is indicative of an underground service, such as a pipe or cable.
- 5.6.2 Ferrous responses close to boundaries are due to adjacent fences and gates. Smaller scale ferrous anomalies ("iron spikes") are present throughout the data and are characteristic of small pieces of ferrous debris (or brick / tile) in the topsoil; they are commonly assigned a modern origin. Only the most prominent of these are highlighted on the interpretation diagram.

6 **DATA APPRAISAL & CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT**

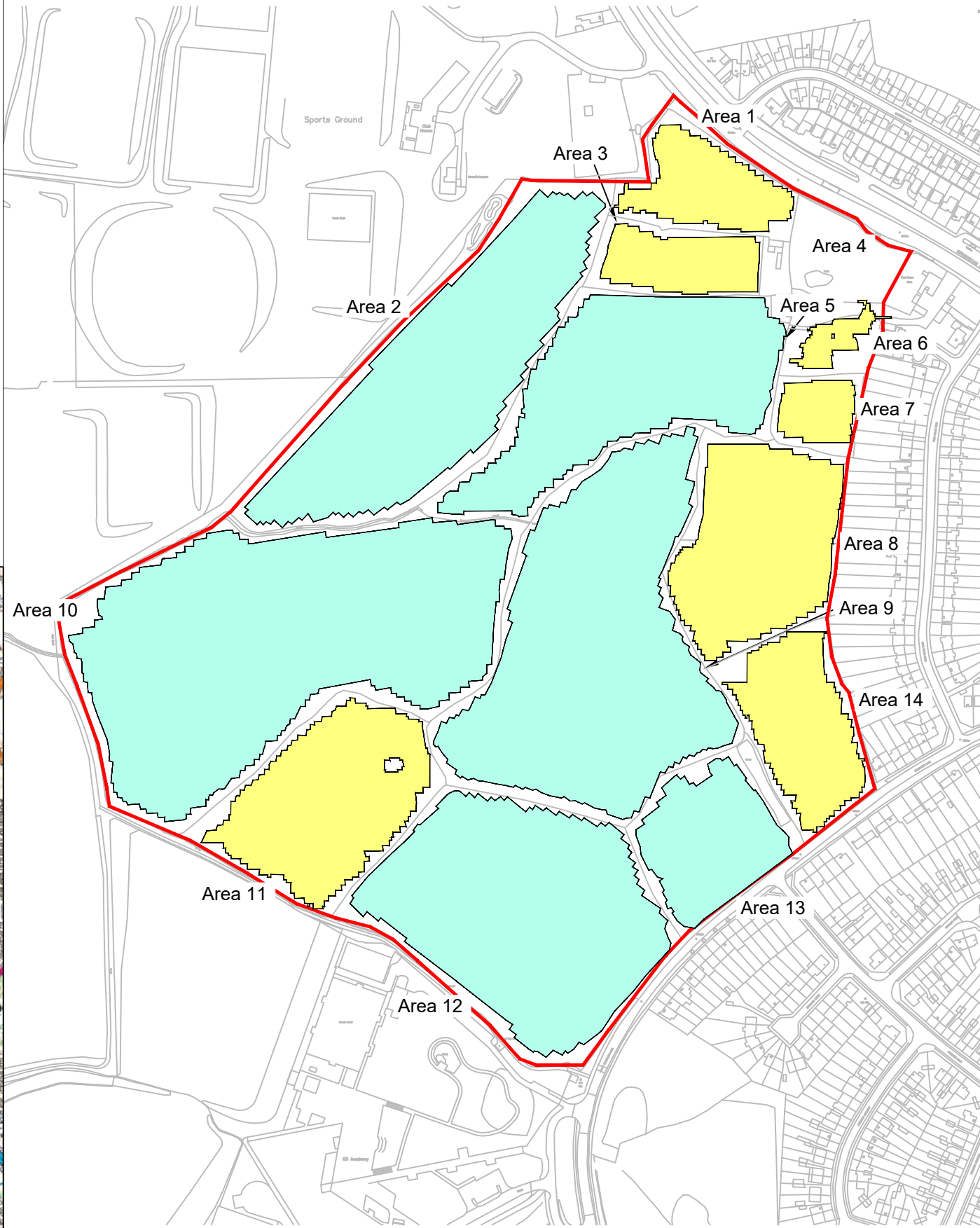
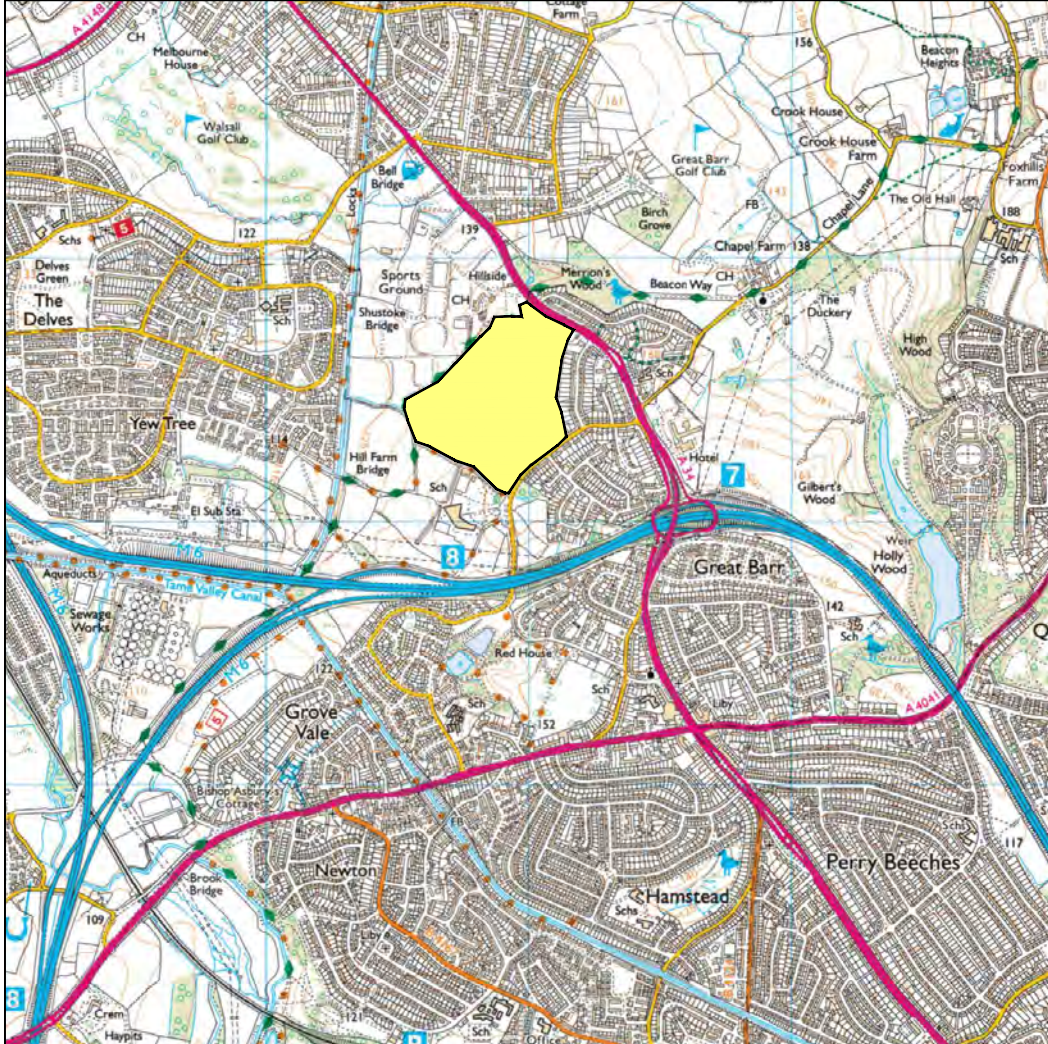
- 6.1 Historic England guidelines (EH 2008) Table 4 states that the typical magnetic response on the local soils / geology is variable. The results from this survey indicate the presence of linear anomalies of uncertain origin, along with several former field boundaries. There is no *a priori* reason to suggest that archaeological features would not have been detected, should they be present.

7 **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The survey at Great Barr has not identified any features of definite archaeological interest. A number of linear and curvilinear responses of uncertain origin have been mapped, including a curvilinear response corresponding with an undated cropmark feature; it could have an archaeological or natural explanation. Two corroborated historic field boundaries have been identified, along with a number of conjectural field divisions. Evidence for former ridge and furrow is present across the site, while the remaining responses are natural or modern and include land drains and an underground service.

8 REFERENCES

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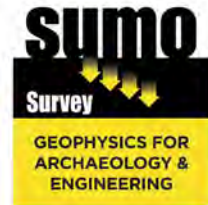
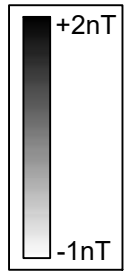


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- Survey Areas - hand-held
- Survey Areas - cart-collection



Title:	Site Location
Client:	Lanpro
Project:	01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands
Scale:	NOT TO SCALE
Fig No:	01



Title: Magnetometer Survey - Greyscale Plots - Overview

Client: Lanpro

Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

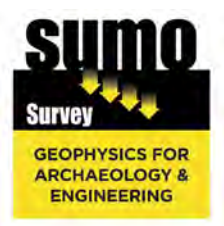
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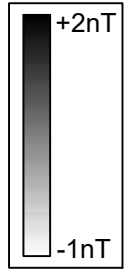


KEY

	Uncertain Origin (discrete anomaly / trend)
	Former field boundary (corroborated)
	Former field boundary (conjectural)
	Agriculture (ridge and furrow)
	Possible land drain
	Natural (e.g. geological / pedological)
	Service
	Ferrous



Title:	Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation	
Client:	Lanpro	
Project:	01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands	
Scale:	0 metres 150	Fig No: 03
	1:3000 @ A3	



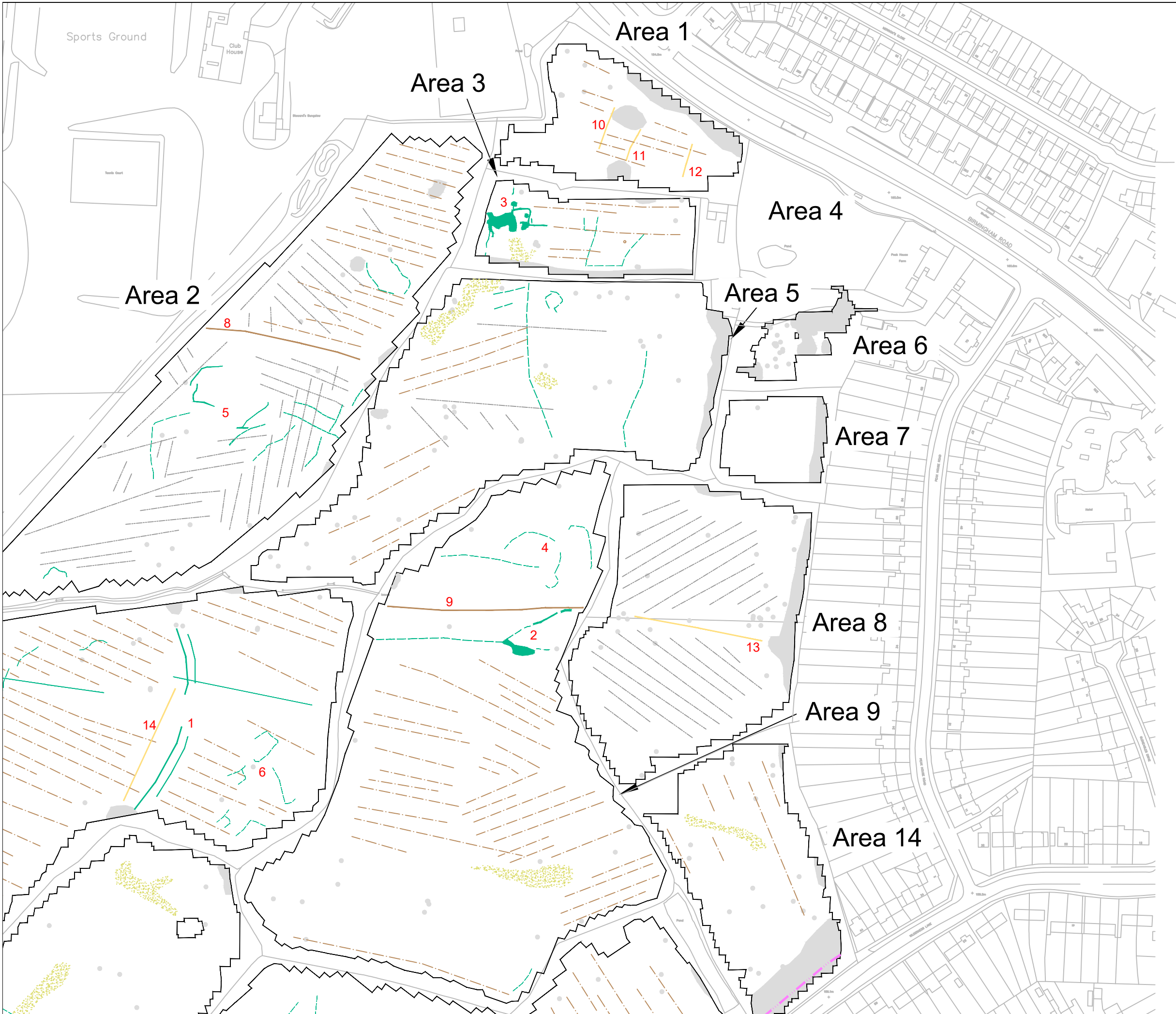
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Client: Lanpro

Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

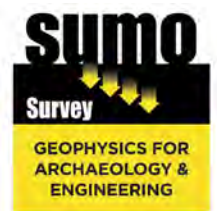
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Fig No: 04



KEY

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	Former field boundary (conjectural)
	Agriculture (ridge and furrow)
	Possible land drain
	Natural (e.g. geological / pedological)
	Service
	Ferrous



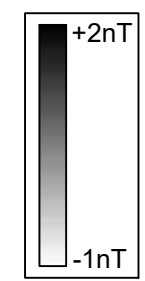
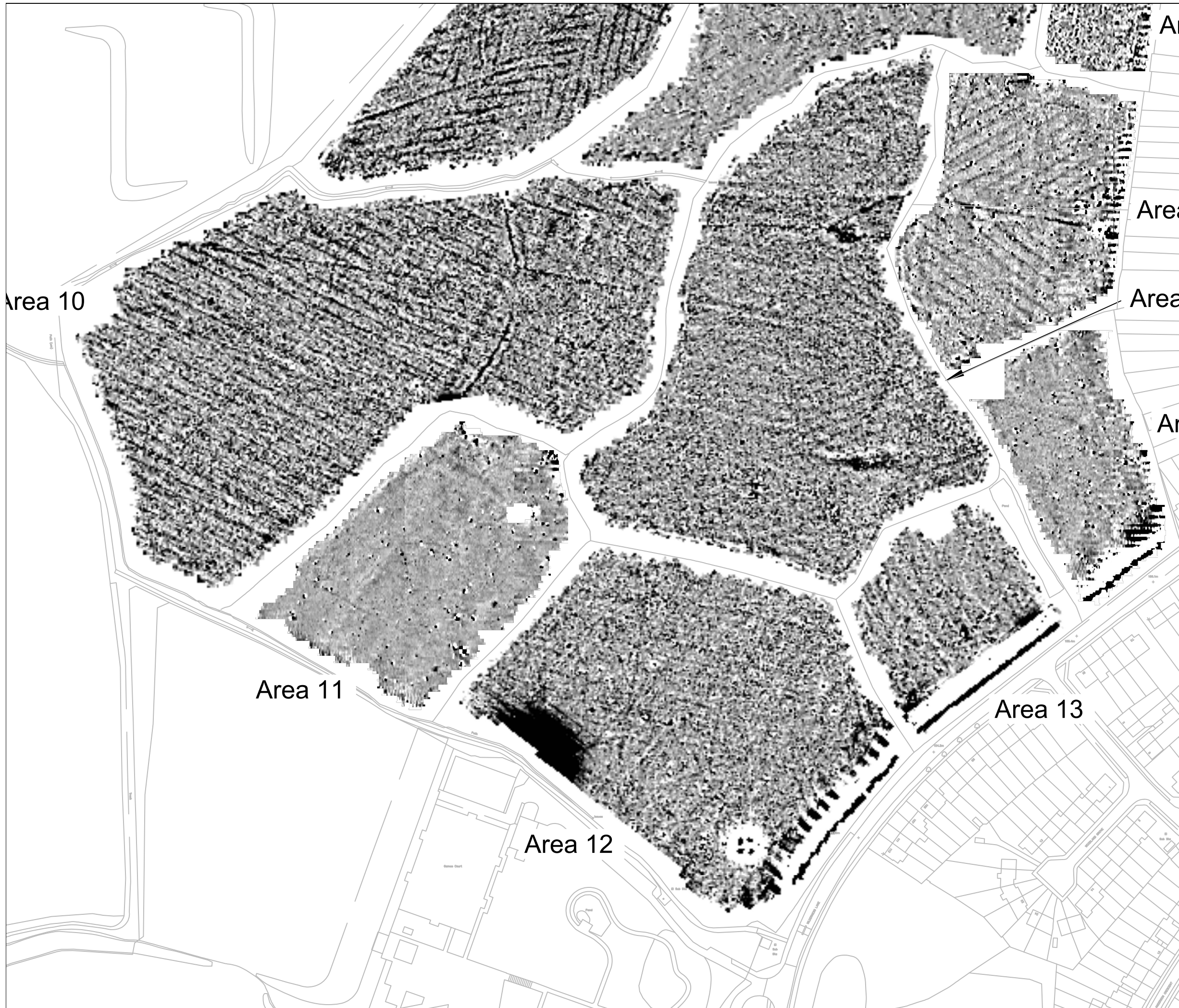
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Client: Lanpro

Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

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Fig No: 05



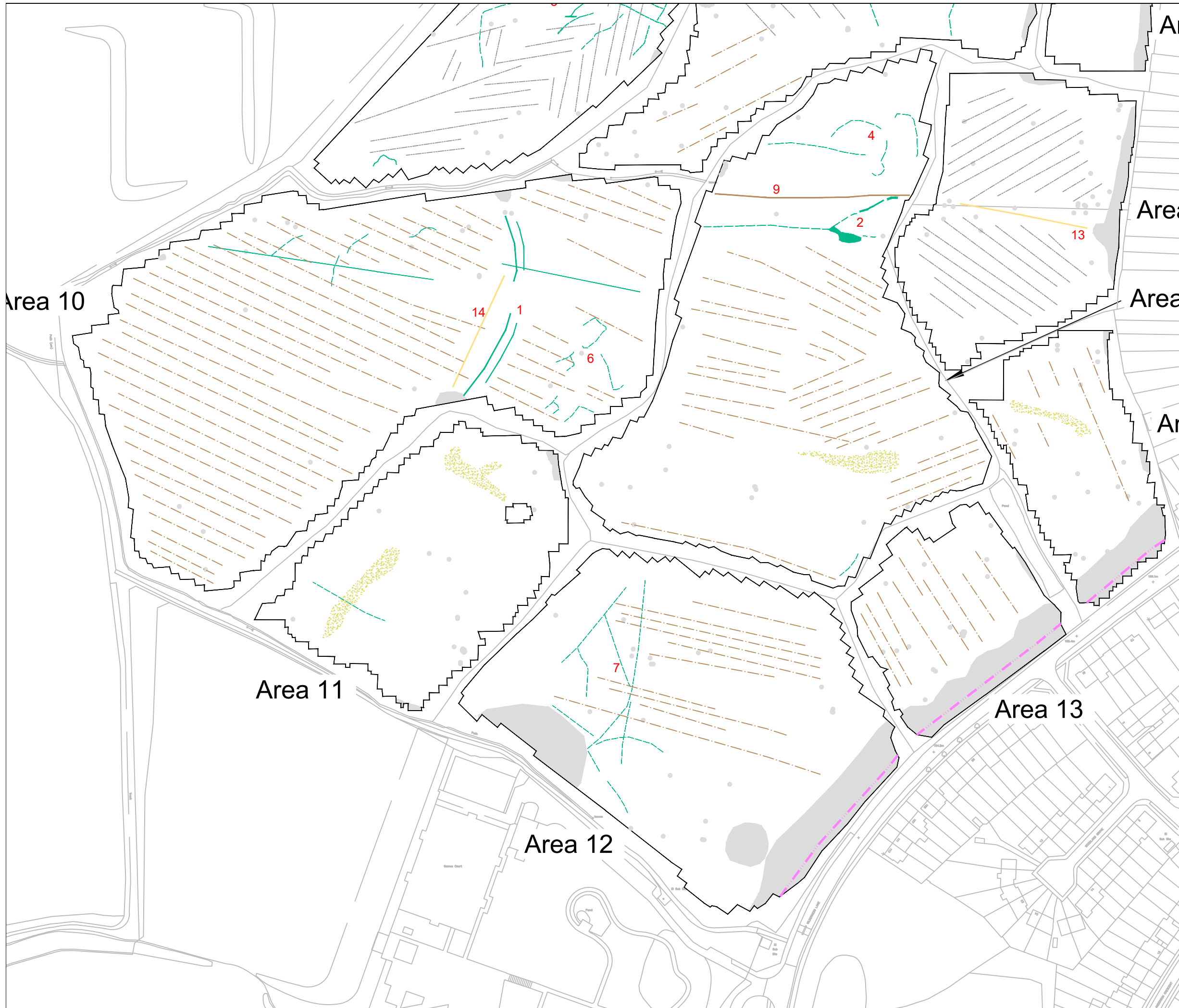
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Client: Lanpro









Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

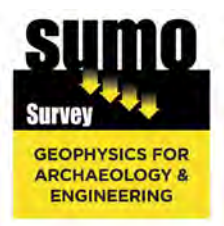
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Fig No: 06



KEY

	Uncertain Origin (discrete anomaly / trend)
	Former field boundary (corroborated)
	Former field boundary (conjectural)
	Agriculture (ridge and furrow)
	Possible land drain
	Natural (e.g. geological / pedological)
	Service
	Ferrous



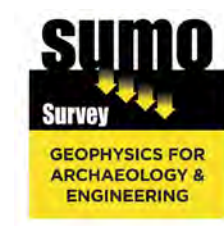
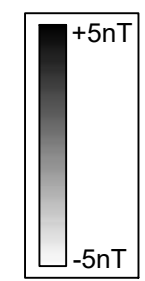
Title: Magnetometer Survey - Interpretation - South

Client: Lanpro

Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands

Scale: 0 metres 100
1:2000 @ A3

Fig No: 07



Title: Minimally Processed Data - Greyscale Plot	
Client: Lanpro	
Project: 01178 - Land at Great Barr, Sandwell, West Midlands	
Scale: 0 metres 150 1:3000 @ A3	Fig No: 08

Standards & Guidance

This report and all fieldwork have been conducted in accordance with the latest guidance documents issued by Historic England (EH 2008) (then English Heritage), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and the European Archaeological Council (EAC 2016).

Grid Positioning

For hand held gradiometers the location of the survey grids has been plotted together with the referencing information. Grids were set out using a Trimble R8 Real Time Kinematic (RTK) VRS Now GNSS GPS system.

An RTK GPS (Real-time Kinematic Global Positioning System) can locate a point on the ground to a far greater accuracy than a standard GPS unit. A standard GPS suffers from errors created by satellite orbit errors, clock errors and atmospheric interference, resulting in an accuracy of 5m-10m. An RTK system uses a single base station receiver and a number of mobile units. The base station re-broadcasts the phase of the carrier it measured, and the mobile units compare their own phase measurements with those they received from the base station. This results in an accuracy of around 0.01m.

Technique	Instrument	Traverse Interval	Sample Interval
Magnetometer	Bartington Grad 601-2	1m	0.25m

Instrumentation: **Bartington Grad 601-2**

Bartington instruments operate in a gradiometer configuration which comprises fluxgate sensors mounted vertically, set 1.0m apart. The fluxgate gradiometer suppresses any diurnal or regional effects. The instruments are carried, or cart mounted, with the bottom sensor approximately 0.1-0.3m from the ground surface. At each survey station, the difference in the magnetic field between the two fluxgates is measured in nanoTesla (nT). The sensitivity of the instrument can be adjusted; for most archaeological surveys the most sensitive range (0.1nT) is used. Generally, features up to 1m deep may be detected by this method, though strongly magnetic objects may be visible at greater depths. The Bartington instrument can collect two lines of data per traverse with gradiometer units mounted laterally with a separation of 1.0m. The readings are logged consecutively into the data logger which in turn is daily down-loaded into a portable computer whilst on site. At the end of each site survey, data is transferred to the office for processing and presentation.

Data Processing

Zero Mean	This process sets the background mean of each traverse within each grid to zero.
Traverse	The operation removes striping effects and edge discontinuities over the whole of the data set.
Step Correction (De-stagger)	When gradiometer data are collected in 'zig-zag' fashion, stepping errors can sometimes arise. These occur because of a slight difference in the speed of walking on the forward and reverse traverses. The result is a staggered effect in the data, which is particularly noticeable on linear anomalies. This process corrects these errors.

Display

Greyscale/ Colourscale Plot	This format divides a given range of readings into a set number of classes. Each class is represented by a specific shade of grey, the intensity increasing with value. All values above the given range are allocated the same shade (maximum intensity); similarly, all values below the given range are represented by the minimum intensity shade. Similar plots can be produced in colour, either using a wide range of colours or by selecting two or three colours to represent positive and negative values. The assigned range (plotting levels) can be adjusted to emphasise different anomalies in the data-set.
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Presentation of results and interpretation

The presentation of the results includes a 'minimally processed data' and a 'processed data' greyscale plot. Magnetic anomalies are identified, interpreted and plotted onto the 'Interpretation' drawings.

When interpreting the results, several factors are taken into consideration, including the nature of archaeological features being investigated and the local conditions at the site (geology, pedology, topography etc.). Anomalies are categorised by their potential origin. Where responses can be related to other existing evidence, the anomalies will be given specific categories, such as: Abbey Wall or Roman Road. Where the interpretation is based largely on the geophysical data, levels of confidence are implied, for example: Probable, or Possible Archaeology. The former is used for a confident interpretation, based on anomaly definition and/or other corroborative data such as cropmarks. Poor anomaly definition, a lack of clear patterns to the responses and an absence of other supporting data reduces confidence, hence the classification Possible.

Interpretation Categories

In certain circumstances (usually when there is corroborative evidence from desk-based or excavation data) very specific interpretations can be assigned to magnetic anomalies (for example, *Roman Road, Wall, etc.*) and where appropriate, such interpretations will be applied. The list below outlines the generic categories commonly used in the interpretation of the results.

<i>Archaeology / Probable Archaeology</i>	This term is used when the form, nature and pattern of the responses are clearly or very probably archaeological and /or if corroborative evidence is available. These anomalies, whilst considered anthropogenic, could be of any age.
<i>Possible Archaeology</i>	These anomalies exhibit either weak signal strength and / or poor definition, or form incomplete archaeological patterns, thereby reducing the level of confidence in the interpretation. Although the archaeological interpretation is favoured, they may be the result of variable soil depth, plough damage or even aliasing as a result of data collection orientation.
<i>Industrial / Burnt-Fired</i>	Strong magnetic anomalies that, due to their shape and form or the context in which they are found, suggest the presence of kilns, ovens, corn dryers, metal-working areas or hearths. It should be noted that in many instances modern ferrous material can produce similar magnetic anomalies.
<i>Former Field Boundary (probable & possible)</i>	Anomalies that correspond to former boundaries indicated on historic mapping, or which are clearly a continuation of existing land divisions. Possible denotes less confidence where the anomaly may not be shown on historic mapping but nevertheless the anomaly displays all the characteristics of a field boundary.
<i>Ridge & Furrow</i>	Parallel linear anomalies whose broad spacing suggests ridge and furrow cultivation. In some cases, the response may be the result of more recent agricultural activity.
<i>Agriculture (ploughing)</i>	Parallel linear anomalies or trends with a narrower spacing, sometimes aligned with existing boundaries, indicating more recent cultivation regimes.
<i>Land Drain</i>	Weakly magnetic linear anomalies, quite often appearing in series forming parallel and herringbone patterns. Smaller drains may lead and empty into larger diameter pipes, which in turn usually lead to local streams and ponds. These are indicative of clay fired land drains.
<i>Natural</i>	These responses form clear patterns in geographical zones where natural variations are known to produce significant magnetic distortions.
<i>Magnetic Disturbance</i>	Broad zones of strong dipolar anomalies, commonly found in places where modern ferrous or fired materials (e.g. brick rubble) are present.
<i>Service</i>	Magnetically strong anomalies, usually forming linear features are indicative of ferrous pipes/cables. Sometimes other materials (e.g. pvc) or the fill of the trench can cause weaker magnetic responses which can be identified from their uniform linearity.
<i>Ferrous</i>	This type of response is associated with ferrous material and may result from small items in the topsoil, larger buried objects such as pipes, or above ground features such as fence lines or pylons. Ferrous responses are usually regarded as modern. Individual burnt stones, fired bricks or igneous rocks can produce responses similar to ferrous material.
<i>Uncertain Origin</i>	Anomalies which stand out from the background magnetic variation, yet whose form and lack of patterning gives little clue as to their origin. Often the characteristics and distribution of the responses straddle the categories of <i>Possible Archaeology / Natural</i> or (in the case of linear responses) <i>Possible Archaeology / Agriculture</i> ; occasionally they are simply of an unusual form.

Where appropriate some anomalies will be further classified according to their form (positive or negative) and relative strength and coherence (trend: weak and poorly defined).

Appendix B - Technical Information: Magnetic Theory

Detailed magnetic survey can be used to effectively define areas of past human activity by mapping spatial variation and contrast in the magnetic properties of soil, subsoil and bedrock. Although the changes in the magnetic field resulting from differing features in the soil are usually weak, changes as small as 0.1 nanoTeslas (nT) in an overall field strength of 48,000 (nT), can be accurately detected.

Weakly magnetic iron minerals are always present within the soil and areas of enhancement relate to increases in *magnetic susceptibility* and permanently magnetised *thermoremanent* material.

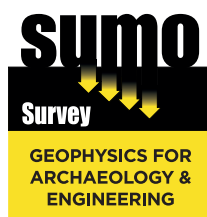
Magnetic susceptibility relates to the induced magnetism of a material when in the presence of a magnetic field. This magnetism can be considered as effectively permanent as it exists within the Earth's magnetic field. Magnetic susceptibility can become enhanced due to burning and complex biological or fermentation processes.

Thermoremanence is a permanent magnetism acquired by iron minerals that, after heating to a specific temperature known as the Curie Point, are effectively demagnetised followed by re-magnetisation by the Earth's magnetic field on cooling. Thermoremanent archaeological features can include hearths and kilns; material such as brick and tile may be magnetised through the same process.

Silting and deliberate infilling of ditches and pits with magnetically enhanced soil creates a relative contrast against the much lower levels of magnetism within the subsoil into which the feature is cut. Systematic mapping of magnetic anomalies will produce linear and discrete areas of enhancement allowing assessment and characterisation of subsurface features. Material such as subsoil and non-magnetic bedrock used to create former earthworks and walls may be mapped as areas of lower enhancement compared to surrounding soils.

Magnetic survey is carried out using a fluxgate gradiometer which is a passive instrument consisting of two sensors mounted vertically 1m apart. The instrument is carried about 30cm above the ground surface and the top sensor measures the Earth's magnetic field whilst the lower sensor measures the same field but is also more affected by any localised buried feature. The difference between the two sensors will relate to the strength of a magnetic field created by this feature, if no field is present the difference will be close to zero as the magnetic field measured by both sensors will be the same.

Factors affecting the magnetic survey may include soil type, local geology, previous human activity and disturbance from modern services.



- Archaeological
- Geophysical
- Laser Scanning
- Measured Building
- Topographic
- Utility Mapping

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Appendix EDP 3 Trent & Peak Trenching Report

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at Birmingham Road, Great Barr, Birmingham



For HIMOR

Prepared by L. Parker

Report Number: 085/2021

TPA Project Code: BGB

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Non-Technical Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA), a division of York Archaeological Trust, were commissioned by Lanpro on behalf of their client, HIMOR, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land to the southwest of Birmingham Road, Great Barr, West Midlands.
- One field in the eastern part of the site was recorded on the Wolverhampton and Walsall Historic Environment Record (under number HER 2824) for the possible presence of a medieval moat. The field also had a long pond running along its northern boundary and other features were visible from aerial images. A magnetometry survey carried out in 2020 recorded a number of anomalies of unknown origin. However, the survey did not detect any trace of the potential moat or ditch in the eastern field.
- The general aims of the fieldwork were stated as:
 - To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any future works taking place on site.
 - To attempt to quantify any such archaeological remains which are encountered by identifying, for example, their form, nature, date and preservation.
 - To investigate potential features identified by the geophysical survey.
 - To investigate the moated site.
- The evaluation was undertaken between 17th and 25th May 2021. A total of 16 trenches were excavated within the 25ha site. Of these, seven were found to contain archaeological features and deposits.
- Trench 05 revealed three furrows believed to be post medieval in date. A pit and narrow gully were also observed, however no finds were recovered and therefore their ages and function remained unknown.
- A possible boundary ditch of unknown age and function was recovered in Trench 07. Truncated by 19th century deposits, it was not fully excavated due to its depth within the trench.
- Two 19th to 20th century ditches were excavated in Trench 10. The geophysical survey showed these two features to curve slightly, suggesting a curved boundary or driveway. A third similar ditch was revealed in Trench 11.
- The features revealed in Trench 12 were different to all features observed in other trenches. A large ditch was revealed, identified by the geophysical survey, with a smaller linear gully and a pit also observed. There was no clear function or age to these features due to the lack of finds, suggesting that these could be older in date. The discrete pit and narrow gully, were not identified in the geophysical survey, suggesting that there could be more archaeology in the vicinity that would need investigating before future works take place.
- Trenches 15 and 16 revealed evidence of a possible moated manor site within the eastern fields containing visible earthworks. Trench 15 revealed a substantial area of cobbling, whilst trench 16 contained evidence for landscape alteration. A series of ditch re-cuts were also revealed in trench 16. They were not of a size to suggest a moat, but could have been earlier features filled in and levelled with redeposited clays. Further investigation would be required within this area. Trench 15 also revealed a square feature that continued beyond the limit of excavation. It was believed to be related to a structure. The mixed cereals and cultivated legumes recovered from the feature were indicative of medieval deposits.
- A large number of wide field drains were revealed, some were observed as anomalies within the geophysical survey data.

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The project was managed by Ed Taylor (TPA), and the site work was undertaken by Laura Parker, Tristan Cousins, Eleri Davies and Kath Bentley. Post-excavation was managed by Kris Poole and Alison Wilson.

All figures were compiled by Michael Hughes.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) were commissioned by Lanpro on behalf of their client, HIMOR, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation of land to the south-west of Birmingham Road, Great Barr, West Midlands (herein referred to as “the site”) (centred on SP 03915 95491) (Figure 01).
- 1.2 The work was required to assess the potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains to be present on the site and to evaluate any geophysical anomalies identified by a magnetometry survey conducted by SUMO in December 2020 (Figure 02). The Sandwell HER designated all of the site and also adjacent land to its south as ‘an area of potential archaeological interest’. This is a Borough designation which highlighted the area as worthy of further archaeological investigation should development proposals come forward for the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was conducted between 17th and 25th of May 2021 and involved the excavation, monitoring and recording of 16 trenches ranging in length between 30 and 50m. The trenches were excavated to depths ranging from 0.4-1.14m deep.
- 1.4 The evaluation was conducted in line with the approved methodology produced by TPA (Taylor, 2021). All archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation analysis will be carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standards and Guidance for an archaeological field evaluation (CIfA 2020).

2 Topography and Geology

- 2.1 The site comprises approximately 25ha of fifteen irregular sized and shaped fields which are covered in long grass or rough pasture. The fields are bounded in large part by well vegetated hedgerows, with some field boundaries also demarcated by ditches with running water. The hedgerows are particularly well established in the west and south of the site. It is located to the north-west of Great Barr in the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell. The site sits at approximately 160m AOD in the north east end of the site, and slopes steeply down to 130m AOD in the west-southwest end of the site.
- 2.2 The site is bounded by Birmingham Road (A34) to the north, by Peak House Road and Wilderness Road to the east and by school and university owned sports pitches to the south and east.
- 2.3 The bedrock geology across much of the site is Enville Member sandstone with Coalbrookdale Formation mudstone and Rubery Sandstone Member sandstone in the western part of the site. (British Geological Survey 2020). The overlying soils are slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute 2020).

3 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 The following is a summary of an archaeology and heritage statement that was produced for the site by BSA Heritage (Stephenson 2014) and is also held within the methodology document produced by TPA (Taylor 2021). It drew on a range of sources, including the Sandwell and Walsall Historic Environment Records (HER) (set out below with the prefix HER, followed by its number), the National Heritage List for England and documentary resources.

Prehistoric

- 3.2 The earliest find or record for the site is of a broken polished stone axe dating to the Neolithic (HER 1721) found in the north-eastern tip of the site.
- 3.3 Several linear marks were seen on aerial images which appeared to form an enclosure in a field to the south of the site (HER 4756). The Sandwell HER notes that this feature now lies under a running track, presumably part of the Q3 Academy. There is no information on any archaeological investigations completed as part of the construction of either the Academy, or the sport pitches north of the site.

Medieval

- 3.4 One field in the south-eastern part of the site, adjoining Wilderness Lane, is recorded (HER 2824) for the possible presence of a medieval moat. This record is based partly on fieldname evidence; two fields are recorded as Great and Little Moat Piece to its north east. The field also has a long pond running along its north-eastern boundary and other depressions and linear features were visible from aerial images. It is possible that the extant linear pond represents a fishpond, rather than an arm of the moat and this feature is noted as earlier than the hedgerows around it.
- 3.5 A large number of the Sandwell HER records for the area are based on an ecological survey of hedgerows in the area completed by the 'Urban Wildlife Trust'. Within or on the edge of the site, a number of hedgerows were defined as 'ancient' given their flora (HER 4262, 4264, 4266 and 6424). The survey also concluded that the hedgerows might be woodland remnants, suggesting the fields might have been created from woodland through a process known as assarting. 'Ancient' might suggest a medieval or even early post-medieval origin to the field system. The field pattern within the site is believed to be a rare survival of a possibly medieval landscape within this part of the West Midlands conurbation. Ditches and banks are also noted in places (HER 4264 and 6424) and beyond the site to the west, record an ancient wood and hedgerow respectively (HER 6425 and 4500).

Post-medieval and Modern

- 3.6 Immediately east of the site lies Peak House Farm (HER 10273). The HER notes that it was marked as 'Pig Lane Farm' on the first edition Ordnance Survey map.
- 3.7 Although Wate's 1775 map and early 19th century maps of the area show Wilderness Lane and the road to the north, the earliest detailed map for the site is the 1852 Aldridge Tithe map. The field layout at this time was almost identical, although three of the larger fields were subdivided (Figure 1). The fields in the east have subsequently been truncated by development along Peak House Road and those in the north by the A34.
- 3.8 The aerial images also confirm the development of the surrounding area and show farming activity within the site, with arable cultivation across much of the land in the post-war period, including the moat field at times.

Undated

- 3.9 HER 9083 notes the find of 'undated' coins reported by the farmer, within the western part of the site, however they shed little light on the potential of the site.

Geophysical Survey

- 3.10 A magnetometry survey carried out in 2020 (SUMO 2020) recorded a number of weak anomalies of unknown origin which could be of archaeological interest. One of these correlated well with an undated curvilinear cropmark. The survey did not however detect any trace of the potential moat or ditch in the eastern field.

4 Aims and Objectives

4.1 The overall aims of the archaeological evaluation were to identify the presence of any archaeological remains likely to be affected by any intrusive aspects of future development and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 189 (2019).

4.2 The general aims of the fieldwork were stated as:

- To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any future works taking place on site.
- To attempt to quantify any such archaeological remains which are encountered by identifying, for example, their form, nature, date and preservation.
- To investigate potential archaeological features identified by the geophysical survey.
- To investigate the moated site.

4.3 The general objectives of the fieldwork were stated as:

- To ensure preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered during the archaeological field evaluation.
- To recover any archaeological artefacts and ecofacts revealed by the excavations.
- To prepare a report on the findings of the archaeological evaluation.

5 Regional Research Framework

- 5.1 The evaluation may reveal evidence that allows research priorities highlighted by regional research frameworks to be investigated.
- 5.2 The *Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011) guides archaeological research objectives on projects throughout the West Midlands. Any evidence uncovered by the investigations should be considered with the guidance provided by the framework in mind. If the evidence significantly contributes to a research question raised by the framework, this should be stated in the final report.
- 5.3 Particularly relevant to the evaluation was:

6. The Medieval Period

6.6 Honors and Manors

6.6.2 Moated sites and Manorial Complexes

6 Methodology

- 6.1 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation* (2020). The work followed the Site Methodology (Taylor 2021), and was carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeologist selected from TPA's supervisory staff.
- 6.2 A total of 16 trenches were excavated across the site according to locations determined by the geophysical survey and HER survey. Four trenches measured 50m and 12 trenches measured 30m in length. The trenches targeted features of possible archaeological origin as identified by the geophysical survey. Trenches 15 and 16 were positioned to investigate the location of the possible moated site, which was not detected by the geophysical survey.
- 6.3 The trenches were located using a GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS prior to excavation. All soil removal was carried out using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision so that a clean surface was exposed.
- 6.4 Topsoil and subsoil were excavated in spits no greater than 250mm and were kept separate during removal to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 6.5 Trenches were excavated to a level at which archaeological deposits or the natural substrate were present.
- 6.6 Any features identified were hand-cleaned and were sample excavated sufficiently to determine their plan and form, and to recover any dateable artefacts.
- 6.7 Feature fills were removed by contextual change (the smallest usefully identifiable unit of stratification) and/or in spits no greater than 100mm. If encountered, substantial features were to be hand excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m, or a perceived said depth if the sides are unstable.
- 6.8 All excavations were recorded at an appropriate scale by photography. Site photography was undertaken with the use of a high resolution DSLR camera.
- 6.9 Trenches were hand cleaned where appropriate and a minimum of one representative section of each trench was photographed, and drawn at 1:50/1:20 (recording increased with the presence of archaeological deposits). The position of each trench was located using a GPS with reference to the OS grid. Where the GPS signal could not be maintained, trenches were hand planned at a scale of 1:100.
- 6.10 Plans of all contexts including features were surveyed using a GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS. Sections were drawn on drafting film at a scale of 1:10/1:20/1:50. The location of all sections were surveyed.
- 6.11 Where appropriate features were identified, soil samples were retrieved in order to undertake palaeoenvironmental sampling. The sampling of features followed procedures set out within *Historic England Guidance for Environmental Archaeology and Geoarchaeology* (HE 2011, 2015). Samples were 40 litres if possible and were processed within the TPA Environmental Lab, under the supervision of TPA Environmental Officer Stacey Adams.
- 6.12 On completion of fieldwork the trenches were backfilled by machine; this did not include specialist reinstatement.

7 Results

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 A total of 16 trenches were excavated within the site. Of these, six were found to contain archaeological features and deposits. The trenches comprised a total area of 1008m².

General stratigraphy (Plates 04-06) (Figure 11)

7.1.2 Machine removal of the modern topsoil, averaging c 0.3m in thickness across the site, exposed a clayey or alluvial subsoil, which varied in its detailed composition and presence across the site. However, it can be broadly characterised as forming a layer of reddish-brown silty clay within trenches 03-05, 07, 09-11 and 16, strong orange brown in trenches 06 and 08 or grey yellow clay in trench 01 and 02. Trench 12-15 contained no subsoil layer. The subsoil varied in depth between 0.04m within trench 10 and 0.24m within trench 08.

7.1.3 The natural geological substratum (hereafter referred to as 'natural') comprises Enville Member sandstone with Coalbrookdale Formation mudstone and Rubery Sandstone Member sandstone in the western part of the site). The natural was revealed at its shallowest within Trench 12 at 0.2m below ground level, dropping to 0.7-1m in Trenches 07 and 08.

Blank trenches (Plates 01-08, 15-16, 24-25, 39-42) (Figures 03-06, 09)

7.1.4 A total of nine trenches were observed to contain no features, layers or finds of archaeological significance, these comprised trenches 01-04, 06, 08, 09, 13 and 14 (although trench 08 contained a field drain). These were subject to standardised TPA recording methods (TPA 2015) for sterile trenches, but do not form part of the stratigraphic narrative detailed below. Full logs of these trenches are supplied below in Appendix 1.

Field drains (Plates 17-23)

7.1.5 Trenches 07 - 11 revealed field drains within ditches of such a significant size that they were at first believed to be archaeological features. A number of these were excavated using both hand tools and machine bucket where the field drain itself was not visible in plan, in order to confirm their function. One example was excavated in trench 08. Field drain [0804] was backfilled with large fragments of red sandstone and redeposited natural and silty clays (0803), (0805) and (0806). Because of their sizes and fills, it is likely that most of these features were observed during the geophysical survey and assumed to be archaeological features. The field drains were located in plan and can be compared with the survey results in Figure 05.

7.2 Trench 05 (Plates 09-14) (Figure 04, 11)

7.2.1 Within this trench, the natural clay (0502) was truncated by three possible furrows [0503], [0505] and [0507], a possible pit [0509] and a shallow ditch [0511].

7.2.2 The north-west to south-east aligned furrows measured between 0.52m to 0.65m wide with a gap of approximately 3.5m between [0503] and [0505] and approximately 11m between [0505] and [0509], suggesting these to be of a post medieval date. They all measured 0.08m deep and were filled with a light reddish clay silt (0504), (0506) and (0508). It is likely that furrow [0505] is the same as one of the linear anomalies shown on the geophysical survey, but the other two furrows did not appear to correspond with any of the features found in that survey.

7.2.3 Possible very shallow sub-rounded pit [0509] measuring 0.52 x 0.3m in plan was observed in the north-eastern end of the trench. With a flat base and steep, shallow edges, it measured only 0.03m deep and was filled with light brown clay silt (0510). No finds were recovered and so its dating and function are unknown.

7.2.4 All of the features described above were covered over by light reddish-brown clay subsoil (0501).

7.2.5 Immediately to the south-west of pit [0509] was north-east to south-west aligned linear feature [0511] measuring at least 4.5m long, 0.3m wide and 0.1m deep. Heavily truncated and concave

in profile, it was filled with mid grey brown silty clay. It was on a different alignment to furrows [0503], [0505] and [0507] and was found to cut subsoil layer (0501) suggesting it may represent a later phase of agricultural activity. No finds were recovered.

7.3 Trench 07 (Plates 17-20), (Figures 05, 11)

7.3.1 Trench 07 was excavated to a depth of 1.14m to reveal one side of east to west orientated linear ditch [0709], which measured at least 2.5m long, 0.8m wide and 0.2m deep. It was not fully excavated and so a full profile could not be obtained. It was filled with light grey clay (0708) and an upper fill of mottled redeposited natural (0707). No finds were recovered from the ditch fills, however it was overlain by light pink grey clay deposit (0705), below orange pink redeposited clay (0704). Due to the presence of 19th century transfer print and whiteware pottery within these fills, both deposits were thought to have been used to backfill a hollow within the landscape in the 19th century. This suggests ditch [0709] is likely to be older than the 19th century. It appears to correspond to a linear feature identified during the geophysical survey.

7.3.2 Deposit (0704) was in turn was cut by large field drain [0710] filled with redeposited clay (0703) containing 19th – 20th century transfer print and whiteware pottery (not retained). This feature appears to correspond with a possible area of disturbance shown on the geophysical survey.

7.4 Trench 10 (Plates 26-29) (Figures 07, 11)

7.4.1 The excavation of Trench 10 revealed two modern ditches and a large field drain, all observed as anomalies on the geophysical survey. North to south orientated ditch [1002] measured 0.9m wide, 0.8m deep and continued beyond the edges of the trench. The edges of ditch [1002] were convex to vertical with a rounded base. It was filled with a primary fill of sand mottled redeposited clay (1004) and an upper fill of mid brown silty sand with clay mottles (1003). Fill (1003) contained pottery and glass indicating a 19th-20th century date.

7.4.2 South-south-west to north-north-east orientated ditch [1005] was revealed 4m to the north-west of ditch [1002]. It measured 1.5m wide, 0.56m deep and continued beyond the edges of the trench. Concave and slightly asymmetrical in profile, ditch [1005] was filled with dark brown grey loamy clay (1006) found to contain modern pottery, indicating a 19th-20th century date.

7.4.3 Ditch [1005] would seem to broadly correspond with the line of a field boundary shown on the 1886 Six-inch Ordnance Survey map, but which had been removed by the 1904 OS Map. The relation of [1002] to this field boundary is uncertain, as it had a very different profile and slightly different alignment. It appears to roughly correspond to a geophysical anomaly parallel to the field boundary and other boundaries around the site are double-fenced on these maps. These features may therefore represent fences or ditches either side of a hedgerow, which were later removed.

7.5 Trench 11 (Plates 30 - 32) (Figures 07, 11)

7.5.1 Trench 11 contained a single ditch [1103], orientated north-west to south-east, directly below topsoil (1100) in the western end of the trench. Asymmetrical in profile, it measured 1.2m wide, 0.5m deep and continued beyond the edges of the trench. It was filled with a number of deposits, that suggested that the ditch was left to silt up naturally for a time (fills (1105), (1106), (1108), (1109)) before being deliberately backfilled to level the area (fills (1104) and (1105) which contained modern pottery that was not retained). Light brown clay (1107) shows signs of animal burrowing through the silted material within the ditch after it had fallen out of use. It is possible that the animal burrowing has cut into the base of ditch [1103], suggesting a reason for its uneven base.

7.6 Trench 12 (Plates 33-38) (Figures 08, 11)

7.6.1 Three features, pit [1023], gully [1025] and ditch [1027], were found directly below topsoil (1201) and cut into the natural substrate (1202) within Trench 12.

7.6.2 Subrounded pit [1203] was revealed in the western end of the trench. Continuing into the north facing section, it measured 1.3m long, at least 0.41m wide and 0.1m deep. With an even profile

and flat base, it was filled with light greyish-yellow silt clay (1204). No finds were retrieved from the fill and therefore a date is unknown.

- 7.6.3 North-north-west to south-south-east gully [1205] was revealed 1.2m to the east of pit [1203]. It measured 0.34m wide, 0.22m deep and continued beyond the edges of the trench. Even and 'V' shaped in profile, it was filled with light yellow brown silty clay (1206). No finds were retrieved and therefore its age was unknown.
- 7.6.4 South-west to north-east orientated linear ditch [1207] was observed 7m to the east of gully [1205]. Revealed in the geophysical survey, ditch [1207] measured 1.66m wide, 0.24m deep and continued below the edges of the trench. In plan, ditch [1207] seemed to turn slightly as it continued beyond the northern edge of the trench. Even and 'U' shaped in profile, it was filled with light yellowish-brown silty clay (1208). No finds were retrieved and therefore a date is unknown. It is possible that it represents a field boundary (although not shown on mapping) or drainage feature.
- 7.6.5 All of these features seemed to have silted up over time rather than being subjected to deliberate backfilling. Trench 12 was situated at the bottom of the hill, approximately 140m AOD, therefore hill wash and fluctuating ground water would have likely filled in these features if they were not maintained.

7.7 Trench 15 (Plates 43-47) (Figures 10, 11)

- 7.7.1 Trench 15 was positioned within the field to the east, which contained undulating earthworks and was the potential location of a moated site. Upon removal of topsoil (1500), a cobbled surface (1502) was revealed at the south-eastern end of the trench. The cobbled surface measured approximately 0.1m deep, and was set into a layer of trampled and redeposited natural (1501). It spread the width of the trench and was observed to continue for 4.9m. It was likely truncated during the excavation of the topsoil due to its shallow depth. The surface consisted of a mix of small to medium sized sub rounded and sub angular stones, with larger rough sandstone blocks to its north-western extent. These larger stones may not have been a part of the continuation of the cobbles, but could refer to some sort of structure that was in the vicinity.
- 7.7.2 Towards the centre of the trench, a further 16m of intermittent cobbling (1503) was observed. This area consisted of a higher frequency of small to medium sub rounded stones with fewer sub angular stones when compared to surface (1502). Its full dimensions were not investigated but the cobbles did seem to continue beyond the width of the trench. The clear absence of stones between the two surfaces suggests that they were not necessarily joined at one point to form a larger cobbled surface, but they are still likely to be contemporary. No finds were found associated with either surface, therefore the date of these remained unknown. Both areas of cobbling seemed to concentrate on raised sections of the earthworks, with a dip or hollow-way in between them where no cobbles were recorded.
- 7.7.3 Further to the north-west of cobbles (1503), a squarish pit or linear ditch [1504] was revealed continuing into the south-west facing section. Heavily truncated by the topsoil above, feature [1504] measured 1m wide and 0.15m deep. It measured 0.9m in length before continuing beyond the trench edge. With steep sides, a flat base and even profile, it was filled with mixed brownish-red and dark grey-brown sandy clay (1503). Large red sandstone fragments, the same as those found at the edge of cobbled surface [1502] were recorded within the fill, with one large piece found on the base of feature [1504]. These inclusions suggest an attempt at deliberate backfilling mixed with natural silting over time. The squarish or possibly even rectangular natural of the feature could suggest it is the remains of a structural feature, such as a beam slot, but further work would be needed to establish its true function. No finds were retrieved from the fill, however, the mixed cereals and cultivated legumes found during the archaeobotanical analysis were indicative of medieval deposits, suggesting that the feature may be of this date or later.

7.8 Trench 16 (Plates 48-52) (Figures 10, 11)

- 7.8.1 The excavation of trench 16 within the eastern field, the site of a potential moat, revealed three small overlapping ditches. Ditch [1603] was orientated north-east to south-west, continuing from the south facing section and seemed to terminate before reaching the north facing section. Straight but asymmetrical in profile, the ditch measured at least 1.6m long x 0.6m wide x 0.34m deep. It was filled with dark reddish-grey silty clay (1604) suggesting the ditch had silted up naturally. No finds were recovered from the fill of the ditch.
- 7.8.2 Ditch [1603] was cut by north-north-east to south-south-west linear ditch [1609] at the terminus end. Ditch [1609] measured 0.55m wide, 0.1m deep and was visible for 1.1m before being truncated by ditch [1605] and continuing beyond the north facing section. With a slightly rounded and even profile, it was filled with pink grey clay (1610) suggesting the ditch had silted up naturally. No finds were recovered from the fill of the ditch.
- 7.8.3 Ditch [1605] appeared curvilinear in plan and partially truncated ditch [1609] along its western edge. It was orientated north-north-east to south-south-west, but curved around to the south west and measured 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep. It continued beyond both edges of the trench. Regular in profile, it was filled with light greyish red silt clay (1605) suggesting the ditch had silted up naturally. No finds were recovered from the fill of the ditch.
- 7.8.4 The function of these ditches were unclear, as was any potential association with a possible moat or moated manor site. Ditches [1603], [1605] and [1609] were not deemed large enough to suggest a moat, however they could have been used to demarcate specific zones within the site or used as a form of drainage.
- 7.8.5 All three ditches were covered by a thick layer of mottled, greyish-pink, redeposited natural clay (1608). The deposit extended for 7m along the length of the trench and measured 0.2m deep. It was clearly redeposited, due to the presence of large, fragmented, red sandstone inclusions, similar to those found in trench 15. It was possible that this deposit was used to level this part of the site. The ditches were found at the base of a small slope forming a low banked earthwork to the east, the redeposited natural (1608) would have levelled the area of the ditches to match the height of the natural forming this earthwork.
- 7.8.6 Deposit (1607) was revealed in plan towards the eastern end of the trench. Originally believed to be a ditch, a slot was excavated, revealing instead deposit (1607) to be friable dark grey silty clay infilling a slight depression in the landscape. Finds recovered from the deposit were dated to the 18th – 19th century.

8 Finds

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The finds retrieved from the excavations at Great Barr consisted of pottery fragments dating to the post-medieval period (17th century onwards), clay tobacco pipes and glass fragments. The overall summary of these finds can be found below in table 1.

Material	Quantity	Weight
Post-medieval pottery	19	86g
Clay tobacco pipe	3	9g
Glass	4	6g

Table 1: Finds summary

8.2 Pottery

Analysis by Dr Anne Irving

Introduction

8.2.1 All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Barclay *et al* (2016). A total of 19 sherds from a minimum 16 vessels, weighing 86g was recovered from the site.

Methodology

8.2.2 The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive of the pottery is included in Table 2.

Results

Tr	Cxt	Cname	Full name	Fabric	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Part	Description
03	0301	PEARL	Pearlware		Hollow	2	2	3	BS	Abraded; one blue transfer print; one blue hand paint
03	0301	BL	Black-glazed wares	MP Type	Jug/ Jar	1	1	27	BS	Late 17th to 18th
10	1006	WHITE	Modern whiteware		Open	1	1	10	Rim	Scalloped rim
10	1006	ENGS	Unspecified English Stoneware		Fluted straight sided jar	1	1	8	BS	
10	1003	WHITE	Modern whiteware		Hollow	2	2	6	BS	Very abraded
10	1003	ENPO	English Porcelain		?	2	1	2	Base	Same vessel?
10	1003	CREA	Creamware		Hollow	1	1	1	BS	Flake
10	1003	WHITE	Modern whiteware		Jug/ Jar	1	1	2	BS	Blue and green slip bands
10	1003	ENGS	Unspecified English Stoneware		Jar	1	1	6	Rim	
16	1607	PEARL	Pearlware		Hollow	3	1	9	BS	Very abraded; moulded

Tr	Cxt	CName	Full name	Fabric	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Part	Description
										form
16	1607	CREA	Creamware		Hollow	1	1	7	Rim	Abraded
16	1607	SWSG	Staffordshire White Saltglazed stoneware		Hollow	1	1	1	BS	
16	1607	PEARL	Pearlware		Hollow	1	1	3	BS	Blue transfer print
16	1607	PEARL	Pearlware		Tea cup/ bowl	1	1	1	BS	Flake; blue hand paint
					TOTAL	19	16	86		

Table 2: Archive of the Pottery

Context Dates

8.2.3 The dating in Table 3 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Tr	Cxt	Date
03	0301	Late 18th to 19th
10	1006	19th to 20th
10	1003	19th to 20th
16	1607	Late 18th to 19th

Table 3: Spot dates

Abbreviations

BS	Body sherd	NoV	Number of vessels
CXT	Context	PMD	Press Moulded Dish
LHJ	Lower Handle Join	TR	Trench
NoS	Number of sherds	W <g>	Weight <grams>

8.3 Clay tobacco pipe

Analysis by Alison Wilson

8.3.1 Three fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered during the watching brief: part of a large upright bowl with a cut rim in ditch [1005] fill (1006), and 2 unmarked stems with a 2mm bore diameter in layer (1607). In the absence of any identifying features such as makers stamps or decoration, the stems have been dated using bore hole diameter (early clay pipes have a bore diameter of 3mm, decreasing over time until stems by the middle of the 18th century had a bore of less than 2mm). All the clay tobacco pipe fragments recovered were of an 18th – 19th century date. Discard is recommended.

8.4 Glass

Analysis by Alison Wilson

8.4.1 4 fragments of glass were recovered. Ditch (1002), fill (1003) contained 3 fragments of early modern glass: 1 fragment of cream coloured opaque glass, probably part of a decorative vessel such as a vase, 1 clear plain glass fragment and the body of a small aqua coloured bottle, probably for medicinal use. Layer (1607) also contained a small fragment of modern brown bottle glass. Discard is recommended.

9 Environmental Samples by Stacey Adams

9.1 Introduction and Methodology

- 9.1.1 Five bulk environmental samples were taken from ditches, a gully and a squarish feature during archaeological investigations at Birmingham Road, Great Barr for the recovery of environmental remains such as plant macrofossils, charcoal, faunal remains and mollusca as well as to assist finds recovery. The bulk environmental samples, ranging from 5 to 30 litres in volume, were processed, in their entirety, by flotation tank using a 500µm mesh for the heavy residue and a 250µm mesh for the flot. The residues were sorted, by hand, for environmental and artefactual remains (Appendix 2, Table 1). The flots were scanned, in their entirety, under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications 7x-45x and their contents recorded in Appendix 2, Table 2. Identifications were based on gross morphology and surface cell structure and nomenclature follows Stace (1997) for wild plants and Zohary and Hopf (1994) for cereals. Ten fragments of charcoal were identified from samples containing >3g of charcoal from the >4mm fraction of the heavy residue. Fragments were identified by comparing suites of anatomical features under an incident light microscope at magnifications 50x to 400x and are detailed in Appendix 2, Table 1. Nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

9.2 Results and Discussion

- 9.2.1 The environmental samples largely contained ecofactual material of charcoal, charred plant macrofossils and small fragments of burnt bone in ditch [1207]. A single fragment of CBM from ditch [1605] represented the only artefactual material from the samples. The flots predominantly consisted of modern roots with occasional charcoal flecks. Ditch [1605] contained an indeterminate cereal caryopsis and four weed seeds, two of which were of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) and one of dead-nettle (*Lamium* sp.). Squarish feature (1505) contained frequent charred plant macrofossils largely of weed seeds of stinking mayweed, nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), mayweed (*Tripleurospermum* sp.), corn chamomile (*Anthemis arvensis*), rushes (*Juncus* sp.), thistles (*Carduus/ Cirsium*) and bromes/ fescues (*Bromus/ Festuca*). The weeds were accompanied by occasional cereal caryopses of rye (*Secale cereale*), oat (*Avena* sp.), hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) along with the cultivated variety of common vetch (*Vicia sativa*). The dominance of small weed seeds in squarish feature (1505) likely represent the charred biproduct of a fine-sieved mixed cereal crop. The mixed cereals and cultivated legumes are indicative of medieval deposits.
- 9.2.2 The charcoal identified from squarish feature (1505) was poorly preserved with a number of the fragments indeterminate likely due to thermal degradation caused during the charring process. Identifiable fragments of oak (*Quercus* sp.) and poplar/ willow (*Populus/Salix*) were present indicating the exploitation of potential riverine environs possibly along the local River Tame.
- 9.2.3 The recovery of charred plant macrofossils indicate the likely future retrieval of similar archaeological remains during any further works at site. It is likely that more evidence for crop processing exists within the vicinity. Further work at the Birmingham Road site should include full analysis of the charred plant macrofossils from squarish pit or ditch terminus (1505). The charcoal from this same deposit is not recommended for analysis due to its poor preservation.
- 9.2.4 Upon completion of the project the ecofactual and artefactual material can be discarded due to the paucity of remains and its low significance. Only the analysed charred plant macrofossils from squarish pit or ditch terminus (1505) need form part of the site archive.

10 Discussion and Conclusions

- 10.1 The majority of trenches excavated at Birmingham Road, Great Barr did not contain archaeological features, although most of the trenches contained field drains or modern services. Some of these drains were substantial, measuring up to a metre wide, and a metre deep. Many of these drains fitted with the geophysical data, suggesting that features interpreted as potential archaeological features were revealed to be field drains.
- 10.2 However, there was not always close correspondence between the geophysical anomalies and the archaeological features observed in the trenches. In a number of cases, no archaeological features were found in areas where the geophysical anomalies were recorded (for example, trenches 01, 04, 06, 13, and 14), whilst in other cases, features were found during the evaluation which did not appear on the geophysical survey data (for example, trenches 12, 15 and 16). Features that do not comprise field drains or agricultural furrows are discussed below.

Possible location of a moated manor site

- 10.3 Trenches 15 and 16 were located to target the suggested presence of a potential medieval moated site. No geophysical anomalies had been identified, but features were revealed including one or more cobbled surfaces, set into redeposited clay, a possible beam slot and a series of intercutting linear features. The narrow and shallow ditches recovered in trench 16 were not of a size to suggest a moat, but could be earlier features filled in and levelled with redeposited clay. The small fragment of CBM from the archaeobotanical samples taken from the ditches could pertain to this. Further investigation would be required to provide evidence for this hypothesis.
- 10.4 It is likely that the fields in the eastern part of the site have been heavily ploughed over the last few centuries leading to the truncation of archaeology. A major landscaping event seems to have also taken place in the 19th or 20th century across the site, as evidenced by the homogenous and sharply contrasting topsoil directly above the archaeology and natural substrate and full of 19th and 20th century pottery. It may be that this is the time when the fields were given over to pasture.

Other archaeological features of uncertain date/function

- 10.5 The features observed in trench 12 were different to all features observed in other trenches. There was no clear function or age due to the lack of finds, suggesting that these could be older in date. The presence of burnt bone within the archaeobotanical sample from ditch [1207] was of particular interest. The more discrete features, namely the pit and narrow gully, were not identified in the geophysical survey.
- 10.6 The large ditch revealed in Trench 07 was found below clear 19th century deposit and features. Due to its depth within the trench, it was not completely revealed. It is possible that it was a boundary ditch, but the date is currently unknown.

Conclusions

- 10.7 The occurrence of archaeological features was relatively sparse in the trenches and the majority of geophysical anomalies appear to represent field drains, whilst in other cases, features were not observed in locations where geophysics indicated they might be present. The most substantial archaeological features were in trenches 15 and 16, potentially associated with a medieval moated site. Further archaeological features, of unknown character and date, were present in trenches 07 and 12. Further works would be needed within these areas to establish the function and dating of this feature.

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12 Plates



Plate 01: Trench 01 oblique. Scales = 1m. Looking north-east.



Plate 02: Trench 01 representative section. Scale = 1m. Looking north north-west.



Plate 03: Trench 02 oblique. Scales = 1m. Looking north.



Plate 04: Trench 02 representative section. Scale = 1m. Looking south-east.



Plate 05: Trench 03 in plan. Scales = 1m. Looking north-west.



Plate 06: Trench 03 representative section. Scale = 1m. Looking north north-east.



Plate 07: Trench 04 oblique. Scales = 1m. Looking south south-west.