

CULTURAL HERITAGE DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

Land west of Norwood Lane, Hook Green, Meopham, Kent, DA13 0YE



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Draft
Land west of Norwood Lane,
Hook Green, Meopham, Kent
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CULTURAL HERITAGE DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Land west of Norwood Lane, Hook Green, Kent has been assessed for its Cultural Heritage potential.

The Study Site is proposed for a development of up to 150 dwellings (Use Class C3), including affordable dwellings, and associated landscaping, public open space and infrastructure works.

The Study Site comprises an agricultural field. The Study Site lies immediately west of Norwood Lane and to the east of the modern built area of Hook Green.

In accordance with relevant government planning policy and guidance, a desk-based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the Cultural Heritage potential of the Study Site. There are considered to be no built heritage or archaeological constraints that would preclude the suitability of the Site for residential development. Further archaeological work could be secured by appropriately worded conditions attached to any future planning permission.

Archaeology

In terms of relevant designated archaeological heritage assets, no Scheduled Monuments, World Heritage Sites, Registered Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens or Historic Wreck sites lie within the Study Site or its immediate vicinity.

No designated archaeological heritage asset has been identified as relevant to this assessment for the potential of the proposed development to affect its significance through the alteration of its setting. This is a result of intervening distance and visual and other experiential barriers precluding the proposed development from altering the way in which any designated archaeological asset is experienced or understood.

The Study Site is likely to have been cultivated from the Medieval period onwards. The Study Site is likely to contain evidence of historic cultivation in the form of plough soils and below ground evidence of land division. It is considered that the Study Site has high potential for archaeological evidence of agricultural use dating to the Medieval and post-Medieval/Modern periods. A low potential is identified for the presence of all other forms of archaeological evidence relating to all past periods of human activity.

A moderate but widespread below ground impact is identified as arising from the historic and modern agricultural use of the Study Site. The Study Site has not previously been subject to built development and is considered to retain its archaeological potential.

Any archaeological evidence present within the Study Site is most likely to be of low (local) significance only.

A geophysical survey of the Study Site has been carried out in March 2025 (Appendix 1) and detected:

- Anomalies of natural origin. Modern interference in the form of magnetic disturbance is limited to the metal fences seen along the north and northwestern site boundaries,
- Agricultural spread due to differing land use in the north of the survey area,
- Undetermined amorphous anomalies in the south of the survey area, which are likely as a result of natural chalk weathering processes, but an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out.

The Local Planning Authority is anticipated to require further archaeological information in this instance. An archaeological evaluation represents a proportionate response to the archaeological potential identified. Any such archaeological works could follow the granting of planning consent and be secured by an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition.

Built Heritage

By virtue of Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage assets which may be affected by a proposed development, including any contribution made by their setting. This report fulfils these requirements.

The Study Site does not contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets.

No non-designated built heritage assets have been identified as relevant to this assessment.

In terms of relevant designated built heritage assets, the Grade II* Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351), the Grade II Northwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912), the Grade II Bailiff's House (NHLE ref.105233), the Grade II Camer House (NHLE ref. 1052357), and the Grade II Building Approximately 30 Metres to West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234) are considered relevant to this assessment for their potential to be affected by the proposed development through the alteration of their settings.

The Study Site has a historical relationship to the Grade II Camer House and Grade II Bailiffs House through a mutual owner in the earlier-mid 19th century. This specific past relationship is now legible only through reference to historical documentary sources.

The proposed development is considered to represent an overall low degree of harm to the significance of the Grade II Bailiffs House on the spectrum of less than substantial harm through the erosion of the building's wider rural-agricultural setting with which it has a historical-functional relationship. The proposed development is not considered to affect the significance of the Grade II Camer House or the Grade II building approximately 30m west of Camer House as a result of intervening visual and experiential barriers. The proposed development is considered to represent a low degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II* Listed Church of St Mildred through change to a long range viewing corridor from the Site by which this building can be appreciated as a local landmark of historical origin within a historically rural-agricultural landscape context.

In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF any degree of less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY.....	7
2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK.....	8
National Planning Policy.....	8
Local Planning Policy	12
3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	15
Geology.....	15
Topography	15
4 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Previous Archaeological Investigation and Multi-Period Evidence	18
Undated.....	18
Prehistoric	19
Roman	19
Anglo-Saxon and Medieval	19
Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)	19
Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets)	21
Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets).....	34
5 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS	35
Site Conditions	35
Proposed Development.....	37
Review of Potential Development Impacts on Designated Cultural Heritage Assets.....	38
6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	39

Figures

Figure 1	Site Location
Figure 2a	Kent Historic Environment Record Data
Figure 2b	Historic Landscape Characterisation Data
Figure 2C	Built Heritage Assets Plot
Figure 3	1769 Andrews and Dury Map of Kent
Figure 4	1797 Ordnance Survey Drawing
Figure 5	1840 Meopham Parish Tithe Map
Figure 6	1867 Ordnance Survey Map
Figure 7	1895 Ordnance Survey Map
Figure 8	1936 Ordnance Survey Map
Figure 9	1955 Ordnance Survey Map
Figure 10	1977 Ordnance Survey Map

- Figure 11 1990 Aerial Photograph (Google Earth)
- Figure 12 2024 Aerial Photograph (Google Earth)
- Figure 13 LiDAR (Light Detecting and Ranging Data)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Geophysical Survey, Magnitude Surveys Limited, March 2025

1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This cultural heritage desk-based assessment has been prepared by Anthony Brown and edited by Edward Hawkins of RPS Consulting Services limited on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land.
- 1.2 The subject of this assessment, referred to as the Study Site, comprises a parcel of land west of Norwood Lane, Hook Green, Meopham, Kent (Fig.1). The Study Site is approximately centred on NGR TQ 64791 67145
- 1.3 In accordance with central and local government policy and guidance on archaeology and planning, including paragraph 207 of the NPPF, and in accordance with the 'Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessments' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists January 2021), Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land has commissioned RPS Consulting Services Ltd to undertake this cultural heritage desk-based assessment. This assessment also makes reference to Historic England's Guidance, particularly *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Dec. 2017).
- 1.4 In terms of designated archaeological assets, no World Heritage sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Historic Wreck sites are identified within the Study Site or a 1km radius of it. No designated archaeological asset has been identified as being relevant to this assessment.
- 1.5 In terms of relevant Built Heritage Assets, the Grade II* Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351), the Grade II Northwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912), the Grade II Bailiffs House (NHLE ref.105233), the Grade II Camer House (NHLE ref. 1052357), and Grade II Building Approximately 30 Metres to West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234 are considered relevant to this assessment due to the proposed development having the potential to affect their significance through the alteration of their settings.
- 1.6 The Study Site has a historical relationship with the Grade II Camer House and Grade II Bailiffs House through an early-mid 19th century mutual owner, William Masters-Smith. Masters-Smith owned Camer House, many of the surrounding fields, (including the Study Site) and the Bailiffs House.
- 1.7 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of evidence on the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) and other sources, together with the results of a comprehensive historic map regression exercise.
- 1.8 This document draws together the available archaeological, topographic, and land-use Information in order to clarify the cultural heritage potential of the Study Site and to consider the need for design, civil engineering, and archaeological solutions to the archaeological potential identified.

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 National legislation regarding archaeology, including scheduled monuments, is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002, and updated in April 2014.
- 2.2 The relevant Built Heritage legislation in this case extends from section 16 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act which states that special regard must be given by the decision maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting.
- 2.3 The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts in recent cases, including the Court of Appeal's decision in relation to Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council [2014] EWCA Civ 137.
- 2.4 The Court agreed within the High Court's judgement that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give 'considerable importance and weight' to the desirability of preserving (i.e. keeping from harm) the setting of listed buildings.
- 2.5 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and it was last updated in December 2024. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014 and is regularly updated (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>).
- 2.6 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

National Planning Policy

- 2.7 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
 - Delivery of sustainable development;
 - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
 - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
 - Recognition that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.8 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.9 Under 'Considering potential impacts' the NPPF emphasises that 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential impact equates to total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets.

2.10 Paragraph 214 states that where a development will result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 215 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

2.11 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.

2.12 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

2.13 A *Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

2.14 *Significance* (for Heritage Policy) is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

2.15 *Setting* is defined as: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

2.16 In short, government policy provides a framework which:

- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets;
- Protects the settings of such designations;
- In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions;
- Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit *in-situ* preservation.

2.17 The NPPG reiterates that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Importantly, the guidance states that if complete, or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance and make the interpretation publicly available. Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Additionally, it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, which is to be assessed. The level of 'substantial harm' is considered to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF. Importantly, harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may be more extensive than the curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be

proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

2.1 The PPS5 Practice Guide was withdrawn in March 2015 and replaced with three Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs) published by Historic England. *GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans* provides guidance to local planning authorities to help them make well informed and effective local plans. *GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Making* includes technical advice on the repair and restoration of historic buildings and alterations to heritage assets to guide local planning authorities, owners, practitioners and other interested parties. *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* replaces guidance published in 2011. These are complemented by the Historic England Advice Notes in Planning which include *HEA1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (February 2016), *HEA2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016), *HEA3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans* (October 2015), and *HEA4: Tall Buildings* (December 2015).

GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015)

2.2 This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice echoes the NPPF by stressing the importance of formulating Local Plans based on up-to-date and relevant evidence on economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

2.3 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and
6. Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017)

2.4 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

2.5 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as '*the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve*'. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

2.6 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset's setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.

2.7 This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.

2.8 The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

2.9 Historic England recommends using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:

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

HEAN12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019)

2.10 The purpose of this advice note is to provide information on how to assess the significance of a heritage asset. It also explores how this should be used as part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal(s).

2.11 Historic England notes that the first stage in identifying the significance of a heritage asset is by understanding its form and history. This includes the historical development, an analysis of its surviving fabric and an analysis of the setting, including the contribution setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.

2.12 To assess the significance of the heritage asset, Historic England advise to describe various interests. These follow the heritage interest identified in the NPPF and PPG and are: archaeological interest, architectural interest, artistic interest and historic interest.

2.13 To assess the impact to the significance of a heritage asset Historic England state that it is necessary to understand if there will be impacts to built fabric or the setting of a heritage asset and how these contribute to the heritage asset's overall significance. Where the proposal affects the setting, and related views, of a heritage asset, or assets, it is necessary to clarify the contribution of the setting to the significance of the asset, or the way that the setting allows the significance to be appreciated.

2.14 This enables an assessment of how proposals will affect significance, whether beneficial or harmful. It also states that efforts should be made to minimise harm to significance through the design process, with justification given to any residual harm.

Local Planning Policy

2.15 The Gravesham Local Plan First Review was adopted in 1994. Many of its policies have been saved by the Secretary of State in a Direction letter issued in September 2007. Some of these saved policies have been replaced in whole or in part by policies in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy.

2.16 The following policies have been 'saved' from the 1994 Local Plan and are relevant to this assessment:

Policy TC2: Policy for Listed Buildings

The Borough Council will adopt the following approach to applications affecting listed buildings:-

- (i) *Proposals which involve the demolition of listed buildings will not be granted consent unless the applicant is able to demonstrate substantial and overriding reasons why such consent should be forthcoming. In those few cases where the Borough Council is satisfied that there is no alternative but to grant consent for such demolition, all available means will be used to secure early and appropriate redevelopment.*
- (ii) *In the case of applications for development involving alterations or extensions to listed buildings or affecting the setting of listed buildings, the primary consideration of the Borough Council will be the maintenance of the integrity of the original listed building. Proposals will also need to be sympathetic to the listed building in terms of massing, scale, appearance and materials.*
- (iii) *Applications for the change of use of listed buildings will be considered on their merits, in relation to the land use policies set out in this Written Statement. A major consideration will be whether the character or appearance of the listed buildings will suffer as a result.*

Policy TC7: Other Archaeological Sites

Throughout the Borough Plan Review area, development on important archaeological sites will not normally be permitted. On archaeological sites where permanent preservation is not warranted, applications will normally be refused unless arrangements have been made by the developer to ensure that time and resources are available to allow satisfactory archaeological investigation and recording of, by an approved archaeological body to take place in advance of or during development. The specification and programme of work for the archaeological investigation, including its relationship to the programme of development are to be submitted to and approved by the Borough Council. In order to determine a planning application the Borough Council may require the developer to provide additional information, in the form of an assessment of the archaeological or historic importance of the site in question and the likely impact of development. In certain cases, such an assessment may involve an evaluation excavation. Planning permission may be refused without adequate

assessment of the archaeological implications.

2.17 The relevant Core Strategy Document was adopted in September 2014 and forms part of the Local Plan for the Borough of Gravesham. The Core Strategy sets out the overarching policies for the provision of new development.

2.18 The relevant policy from the Borough of Gravesham Core Strategy comprises:

Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

The Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. Particular attention in this regard will be focused on those heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. Securing viable, sustainable and appropriate futures for such assets at risk will need to be reconciled with the sensitivity to change that many present.

Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough. These include:

- *Gravesend Town Centre, its development as a heritage riverside town, and its setting;*
- *The Borough's urban and rural conservation areas; and*
- *Surviving built features and archaeology relating to the Borough's maritime, military, industrial and transport history.*

When considering the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset, the weight that will be given to the asset's conservation value will be commensurate with the importance and significance of the asset. For non-designated assets, decisions will have regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

2.19 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk-based assessment seeks to clarify the cultural heritage potential of the Study Site, the likely significance of that potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

2.20 The Archaeology and Development team of KCC Heritage Conservation Service (KHCS) provides strategic archaeological advice services within the County to nearly all of Kent's Local Planning Authorities (LPAs). The KHCS also manages the County's Historic Environment Record (KHER) (her@Kentcc.gov.uk).

2.21 The KCC Heritage Conservation Service (KHCS) Kent County Council adopted the *Kent Heritage Conservation Strategy* in March 2022. This strategy sets out a vision for the future direction of Kent County Council's approach to heritage conservation as implemented by the Heritage Conservation Service. It presents the context within which KCC operates, its strategic aims and objectives for the service, and the means by which it proposes these will be delivered. The strategy requires that '*archaeological contractors who undertake archaeological assessments or fieldwork on KCC projects to be Registered Archaeological Organisations*'. RPS is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA).

2.22 The Vision for Heritage Conservation is to: '*Realise the substantial benefits and opportunities of Kent's rich heritage through its conservation, enhancement, and enjoyment by all.*'

<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/heritage-conservation-strategy>

2.23 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk-based assessment seeks to clarify the archaeological and cultural heritage potential of the Study Site, the likely significance of that potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Geology

3.1 The British Geological Survey Online (BGS, March 2025) does not record any superficial geology deposits within the Study Site. The bedrock geology of the Study Site is recorded by the BGS as being entirely comprised of Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation, Newhaven Chalk Formation, Culver Chalk Formation and Portsdown Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) - Chalk.

Topography

3.2 The topography of the Study Site broadly slopes from c.93m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the west to c.104m AOD in the east.

3.3 No natural watercourses are present within the Study Site or immediate vicinity.

4 CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Timescales used in this report

Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000	-	12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000	-	4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000	-	2,500 BC
Bronze Age	2,500	-	800 BC
Iron Age	800	-	AD 43

Historic

Roman	AD	43	-	410
Saxon/Early Medieval	AD	410	-	1066
Medieval	AD	1066	-	1485
Post Medieval	AD	1486	-	1799
Modern	AD	1800	-	Present

Introduction

4.1 This chapter reviews the available Cultural Heritage information for the Study Site and the archaeological/historical background of the general area, and, in accordance with the NPPF, considers the potential for any as yet to be discovered archaeological evidence to be present within the Study Site, and the potential for built heritage impacts.

Archaeology

4.2 What follows comprises a review of known archaeological finds and investigations within a 1km radius of the Study Site (Fig.2a), referred to as the Study Area, held on the Kent Historic Environment Record, together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the Study Site from the 18th Century until the present day.

4.3 In terms of designated archaeological assets, no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields, or Historic Wrecks are identified within the Study Site, or within a 1km radius of the Study Site. No designated archaeological assets have been identified as being relevant to this assessment.

4.4 Figure 2c gives the available Historic Landscape Characterisation data. The Study Site is denoted as “Fields predominantly bounded by tracks, roads and other rights of way”.

4.5 There have been few archaeological investigations within the Study Area. As a result of the very limited nature of past archaeological investigation within the Study Area, any conclusions on the archaeological potential of the Study Site are somewhat uncertain.

4.6 The available LiDAR (Light Detecting and Ranging) Data (Fig.13) shows plough marks and furrows consistent with agricultural use. No features of apparent archaeological interest are indicated by the LiDAR data.

4.7 A geophysical survey of the Study Site has been carried out in March 2025 (Appendix 1). This detected:

- Anomalies of natural origin. Modern interference in the form of magnetic disturbance is limited to the metal fences seen along the north and northwestern site boundaries,
- Agricultural spread due to differing land use in the north of the survey area,
- Undetermined amorphous anomalies in the south of the survey area, which are likely as a result of natural chalk weathering processes, but an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out.

4.8 The geophysical surveying of the Study Site does not indicate the presence of extensive or significant archaeological features.

4.9 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the conditions of the Study Site and whether the proposed development will impact the archaeological potential identified below.

Identification of Built Heritage Assets: Designated Built Heritage Assets

4.10 A plot of all designated built heritage assets within a 1km radius of the Study Site is given as Figure 2b. This radius is proportionate to the size of the Study Site and scale of the proposed development and is sufficient to identify potentially relevant built heritage assets. Not all built heritage assets shown on Figure 2b however have the potential to be affected by the proposed development.

4.11 The proposed development is not considered to have the potential to affect the significance of a built heritage asset where:

- The Site has been identified as making no contribution to the significance of that asset; **and**
- The Site forms no appreciable element of the experience of that asset within its setting; **and**
- The proposals have been assessed as not having the potential to change the way in which that asset is experienced or understood within its setting, as a result of significant intervening distance and/or intervening visual and experiential barriers.

4.12 Three II listed buildings are located in close proximity to the Study Site on Camer Road:

- The Grade II Bailiff's House (NHLE ref.1052333), c.75m west of the Study Site.
- The Grade II Camer House (NHLE ref.1052357), c.160m west of the Study Site.
- The Grade II Listed Building Approximately 30 Metres to West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234), c.200m west of the Study Site.

4.13 The Study Site has a historical relationship to Camer House and Bailiffs House through their mutual ownership in the early-mid 19th century by the landowner William Masters-Smith.

4.14 A fourth relevant Grade II listed building Norwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912) is located c.260m north of the Study Site on Norwood Lane.

4.15 The Grade II* listed Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351) is located over 1km to the north of the Study Site, however, the church tower is visible across the Study Site in northerly views. The Study Site forms part of the wider setting of the church, which is an important local landmark, and this listed building is therefore also carried forward for further assessment.

4.16 Intervening distance and/or modern development and other experiential barriers preclude the proposed development from having any potential to cause a change to the way in which any other designated built heritage asset shown on Figure 2b is experienced or understood within its setting.

Identification of Built Heritage Assets: Non-Designated Built Heritage Assets

4.17 Gravesham Borough Council has not adopted a 'local list' of non-designated built heritage assets. The publication of a formal local list and/or the inclusion of a building/structure on such a list, is not a pre-requisite for the identification of a building/structure as a non-designated built heritage asset that may be a material consideration in the planning process.

4.18 Desk based research and a walkover of the vicinity of the Study Site has not identified any structures or buildings that may reasonably be identified as potential non-designated built heritage assets.

4.19 No non-designated built heritage assets have been identified as being relevant to this assessment.

Previous Archaeological Investigation and Multi-Period Evidence

4.20 Past archaeological investigations are recorded as 'Event' data by the Kent Historic Environment Record and is shown on Figure 2a.

4.21 A geophysical survey of the Study Site has been carried out in March 2025 (Appendix 1). This detected:

- Anomalies of natural origin. Modern interference in the form of magnetic disturbance is limited to the metal fences seen along the north and northwestern site boundaries,
- Agricultural spread due to differing land use in the north of the survey area,
- Undetermined amorphous anomalies in the south of the survey area, which are likely as a result of natural chalk weathering processes, but an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out.

4.22 The geophysical surveying of the Study Site does not indicate the presence of extensive or significant archaeological features.

4.23 An archaeological excavation was carried out by the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit near Meopham parish church, c.1km southwest of the Study Site in 1988. No archaeological evidence was recorded, although the archaeological evaluation is linked to a Historic Environment Record 'monument record' relating to a Romano-British site (TQ 66 NW 146).

4.24 The Study Site is not considered likely to contain extensive or significant archaeological evidence. Any archaeological evidence within the Study Site is likely to be of local significance only.

Undated

4.25 The position of an undated sarsen stone is recorded c.700m to the south of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 42). Sarsen stones are naturally formed sandstone blocks moved and positioned for various purposes, including use in stone circles or other religious or monumental purposes, or as boundary markers since prehistory. This archaeological record is not considered to be relevant to the specific archaeological potential of the Study Site.

Prehistoric

- 4.26 Eight unstratified Palaeolithic hand axes are recorded as being found together c.200m to the west of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 62). These finds were made within an area of head - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel geological deposits that do not extend into the Study Site (BGS Online, March 2025).
- 4.27 No archaeological evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic or Bronze Age date has been recorded within the Study Area.
- 4.28 A single instance of Iron Age archaeological evidence has been recorded within the Study Area, comprising a copper alloy toggle, recorded as being found c.800m to the south of the Study Site (MKE95448).
- 4.29 Based on the available information, the Study Site is considered to have a low-uncertain potential to contain archaeological evidence relating to any Prehistoric period of human activity.

Roman

- 4.30 No archaeological evidence relating to the Roman period has been recorded within the Study Area.
- 4.31 The Study Site is not located in the vicinity of any known Roman road or settlement.
- 4.32 Based on the available information, the Study Site is considered to have a low potential to contain archaeological evidence of Roman date.

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- 4.33 Meopham is recorded as a taxable manorial settlement of 113 households in the Domesday Survey of 1086 AD.
- 4.34 The site of a small grouping of wooden buildings, thought to date to the Anglo-Saxon period has been recorded c.600m to the south of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 56). This findspot is recorded without detailed information on the nature of the evidence encountered.
- 4.35 Archaeological evidence relating to the Medieval period recorded within the Study Area is limited to a single copper alloy token, recorded as being found c.650m to the northwest of the Study Site (MKE67488).
- 4.36 The Study Site is likely to have been in agricultural use since at least the Medieval period but is set away from local centres of local settlement in that period.
- 4.37 Based on the available information, the Study Site is considered to have a high potential to contain evidence of Medieval agricultural activity in the form of plough soils and below ground evidence of land division. The Study Site is considered to have a low potential to contain archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon or Medieval settlement.

Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.38 Numerous post-Medieval farmsteads are recorded across the Study Area, including in the immediate vicinity of the Study Site (MKE84309, MKE84310, MKE84228, MKE84233, MKE84232, MKE84234, MKE84227, MKE88660, MKE88839, MKE88576, MKE84226). These records relate to the increasingly intensive use of the landscape from the early post-Medieval period onwards.
- 4.39 The site of the former Camer Park, an 18th Century park of unknown size is recorded to the immediate south of the Study Site (TQ 66 NE 201).

4.40 The Railway Tavern civil defence vehicle park and first aid post is recorded c.900m to the east of the Study Site (TQ 66 NE 179). A Second World War emergency mortuary was also c.700m to the northwest of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 110) and a further mortuary was located c.300m to the west of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 110).

4.41 A Second World War anti-aircraft searchlight position is recorded c.900m to the east of the Study Site (TQ 66 NE 178). A Second World War barrage balloon site is recorded as having been positioned c.450m to the west of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 114).

4.42 The former Sole Street rail station is recorded c.900m to the east of the Study Site (TQ 66 NE 54). The line of the Chatham and Dover Railway (opened 1853) is recorded c.500m to the north of the Study Site (TQ 85 SE 300).

4.43 A telephone bunker of probable Cold War date is recorded as having been positioned c.100m to the west of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 118).

4.44 A George VI pillar (post) box, dating from 1938 to 1950 is recorded c.350m to the southwest of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 126).

4.45 A National School, Longfield Road, Meopham, established c.1862 is recorded c.400m to the southwest of the Study Site (TQ 66 NW 141).

4.46 A post-medieval milestone is recorded as being positioned c.400m to the southwest of the Study Site on Wrotham Road, Meopham (TQ 66 NW 122).

4.47 An early post-Medieval Venetian coin is recorded as having been found c.400m to the south of the Study Site (MKE110567).

4.48 A post-Medieval cast lead gaming piece is recorded as having been found c.400m to the south of the Study Site (MKE110610).

4.49 Two post-Medieval dew ponds are recorded c.550m east of the Study Site (MKE126484, MKE126485; TQ 6534 6701).

4.50 A post-Medieval copper alloy circular mount depicting a griffin is recorded as having been found c.600m to the south of the Study Site (MKE110609).

Map Progression Exercise

4.51 In the post-Medieval period cartographic sources are useful for understanding the historic land use and phases of built development in the Study Site and Study Area.

4.52 The 1769 Andrews and Dury Map of Kent (Fig.3) illustrates the Study Site as forming part of the agricultural bounds of Hook Green and Camer. The approximate routes of Norwood Lane and Green Lane, to the north and south of the Study Site respectively, are shown on this map.

4.53 Little change is indicated on the 1797 Ordnance Survey Drawing (Fig.4), which illustrates the Study Site as comprised of irregular agricultural fields to the immediate west of the hamlet at Camer. The Site is separated from the historic built core of Hook Green by agricultural land.

4.54 The 1840 Meopham Parish Tithe Map (Fig.5) shows the Study Site as being formed of three plots, 1117, 1112 and 1116 all of which are recorded by the accompanying tithe apportionments as being owned and occupied by a William Smith-Masters. The Study Site is recorded as being in arable and wood use at this time. The Grade II listed Bailiffs House and Grade II Camer House with their related ancillary buildings to the east of the Study Site are also recorded as being owned and occupied by William Smith-Masters at this time. The Site therefore has a historical ownership relationship with the Bailiff's House (NHLE ref. 1052333), Camer House (NHLE ref. 1052357) and building approximately 30 meters to the west of Camer House (NHLE ref. 1350234) listed buildings.

4.55 The 1867 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.6) indicates that the Study Site had undergone a process of field boundary amalgamation in the mid-19th Century. The Study Site remains characterised by agricultural use and retains a small area of woodland, known as Churchway Wood. In the vicinity of the Study Site there is little indication of built expansion to either Hook Green or Camer. The character of the area is that of an extensive agricultural landscape populated by small villages and scattered farmsteads. No notable change is shown on the 1895 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.7).

4.56 By 1936 (Fig.8) the agricultural land to the immediate west of the Site had been further sub-divided, possibly indicating a nursery use. To the immediate north of the Study Site on Norwood Lane, the construction of a number of cottages is shown. Other new built development is shown at the junction of Norwood Lane and Wrotham Road.

4.57 The 1955 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.9) shows further small increases in the built area of Hook Green. No apparent change is shown within the Study Site or to the east at Camer.

4.58 The 1977 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig.10) illustrates a substantial increase in the size of the Hook Green built area. The Study Site now lies at the immediate eastern edge of the settlement, but remains in agricultural use.

4.59 Comparison of the 1990 aerial photograph (Fig.11) and 2024 aerial photograph (Fig.12) shows no notable change within the Study Site or the immediate vicinity in recent decades.

4.60 Based on the available information, the Study Site is considered to have a low potential to contain archaeological evidence relating to the post-Medieval period.

Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets)

Archaeology

4.61 Existing national policy guidance for archaeology (the NPPF as referenced in section 2) enshrines the concept of the 'significance' of heritage assets. Significance as defined in the NPPF centres on the value of an archaeological or historic asset for its 'heritage interest' to this or future generations.

4.62 In terms of designated archaeological assets, no World Heritage sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Historic Wreck sites are located within the Study Site or a 1km radius of it. No designated archaeological assets have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposed development.

Built Heritage: Grade II Listed Norwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912)

4.63 The Grade II listed Norwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912) is located north of the Study Site, towards the northern section of Norwood Lane.



Plate 1: The Grade II Listed Norwood Farmhouse as seen from Norwood Lane



Plate 2: The view of Norwood Farmhouse looking north along Norward Lane which leads to the Study Site

Significance

4.64 Northwood Farmhouse (NHLE ref.1039912) is listed at Grade II for its architectural and historic interest in a national context. The building comprises redbrick exterior with a tiled, half-hipped roof. It has five sashes with glazing bars, and small pediment hood on brackets to the front door. The Farmhouse is a good example of the local construction of farmhouses in the 17th Century, and is illustrative of the materials, architectural design and craftsmanship of such buildings. The significance of the building is recognised in its listing at Grade II.

Setting

4.65 The 17th Century Norwood Farmhouse sits among modern 20th Century residential development at the eastern edge of Hook Green. This listed building sits on the east side of Norwood Lane and is set back from the roadside within its private grounds, which are lawned and bound by fencing and trees and hedges. Modern yard spaces and residential development lie to the immediate north and south of the farmhouse's grounds, with modern yard spaces extending to the northeast and east of the building's grounds. Immediately west of the listed building's plot is Norwood Lane, across which is extensive modern residential development. Wooded spaces east of the listed building's grounds and, together with the bounding modern yard spaces, separate the farmhouse from remaining agricultural spaces to the east of the Hook Green built area. The Farmhouse lies over c.250m to the east of the Hook Green, Meopham Conservation Area and is separated from that designation by extensive intervening modern built development. The Site lies over c.230m to the south of this listed building, beyond intervening modern built development.

Contribution of Setting, Including the Site, to the Significance of Norwood Farmhouse

4.66 Norwood Farmhouse has become divorced from its original agricultural context and is now experienced as being embedded within the extended, modern built area of Hook Green. This surrounding modern built development makes no contribution to the significance of the listed building. The remaining agricultural spaces to the east of the listed building do not form part of the way in which its architectural or historic interest is appreciated or understood, but are considered by virtue of their proximity to make a very limited, low contribution to the significance of the building due to the movement possible between the listed building's immediate setting and the remaining agricultural spaces to the east of it along a public footpath located a short distance south of the former farmhouse.

4.67 The Site does not form any part of the way in which Norwood Farmhouse is appreciated or understood within its close-immediate setting. The Site, unlike the remaining agricultural spaces to the east of the listed building, is separated by over c.230m of intervening modern development. The Site has no visual or experiential relationship with this designated heritage asset, nor does it have any functional or historical relationship with the building. The Site is considered to make no contribution to the significance of Norwood Farmhouse.

Potential Impacts to the Significance of Norwood Farmhouse

4.68 The proposed development will not result in any change to the way in which the Grade II Norwood Farmhouse is appreciated or understood within its close or immediate setting. No change will occur to the intrinsic architectural or historic interest as a result of the proposed development.

4.69 The proposed development is assessed as having no impact (causing no harm) to the significance of the Grade II Norwood Farmhouse.

Built Heritage: The Grade II Listed Bailiff's House (NHLE ref. 1039912), the Grade II Listed Camer House (NHLE ref.1052357), and the Grade II Listed Building Approximately 30 Metres West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234)

4.70 The Grade II Camer House (NHLE ref.1052357), the Grade II Building Approximately 30 Metres to West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234), and the nearby Grade II Bailiffs House (NHLE ref.105233) are jointly assessed in this section due to their proximity, legible historical association and group value.



Plate 3: The view of Grade II Bailiff's House Site as seen from Camer Park Country Park looking northwest towards the Study Site.



Plate 4: The view of Grade II Camer House looking north from Camer Park Country Park.



Plate 5: The wall to the left is the walled boundary of Camer House, which also houses the adjacent Grade II building. The photo looks west towards the Study Site.



Plate 6: The fence visible on the left of the photo is the northern boundary of the Bailiff's House. The green field that can be seen left of centre the Study Site.

Significance

4.71 Camer House (NHLE ref.1052357) is listed at Grade II for its architectural and historic interest in a national context. The building dates to the 17th Century and comprises five bays constructed in red brick, with a hipped-tilted tiled roof accompanied by a parapet. A large bay and staircase were added to the building in the late 18th Century. Further additions to the building comprise an extension and two front doors. In the 20th Century, the building was converted to multiple occupancy of 6 individual dwellings. While converted, the building retains a high architectural and historic interest as a good example of 18th Century house construction at the upper end of the local social scale. The building is representative of the polite architectural styles of smaller country house construction in the period to which it belongs, with its materiality and craftsmanship being of high quality.

4.72 This group of listed buildings includes a 19th Century building of unknown original function, but which is known to have previously served as a granary. This building is and is separately listed at Grade II (NHLE ref.1350234) for its architectural and historic interest in a national context. This building is situated c.30m west of Camer House and is constructed in flint with brick dressings over two floors with a hipped tile roof.

4.73 The Bailiff's House (NHLE ref.105233) is also separately Grade II listed, reflecting its individual architectural and historic interest in a national context. This 18th Century red brick house comprises two floors, with cast iron casement windows and a small gabled porch. This house represents a secondary residence to Camer House, occupied historically by the estate manager. The legibility of the socio-functional relationship of these buildings is an important element of their significance and imparts an evidential value to them for understanding the construction and arrangement of smaller estate centres. The building retains much of its historic fabric and has a high architectural and historic interest for understanding the design, materials and construction of houses that would have been at the middle of the local social scale in the period to which it belongs.

4.74 These three Grade II listed buildings share a legible historical and functional relationship that remains part of the way in which they are experienced and understood in the present. This relationship imparts a group value to these three designated heritage assets that enhances their significance beyond their individual architectural and historic interest.

Setting

4.75 These three listed buildings lie on the southern side of Green Lane, which flanks the Study Site's southern boundary and has a rural character, being generally flanked by hedges and agricultural land. The three listed buildings are generally set back from the south side of Camer Road by between c.46m and c.79m and are set within a landscaped grounds space that is characterised by later ancillary structures, and to the north of the listed buildings, open lawned spaces interspersed with trees and hedges. The grounds of Camer Hose include modern features, such as a swimming pool. The buildings' grounds spaces southward of the listed buildings are generally wooded. These wooded spaces are traversed from the west, off the junction of Green Lane and Camer Road, by an unnamed private access road. Wooded and open spaces within the Camer Park Country Park lie to the south of the private grounds of the listed buildings and extend southwards to large, enclosed arable fields lying to the east of Camer Park Road. North of the three listed buildings, on the south side of Camer Road is a cluster of converted buildings in residential use. The extensive area of grounds and wooded spaces on the south side of Camer Road form the close-immediate setting of these listed buildings. Only the Grade II Bailiffs House is visible from Camer Road, the Grade II Camer House and the Grade II ancillary building being appreciable only from within the enclosed confines of their grounds. On the north side of Camer Road is open arable land that is bound by trees and hedgerows. The Site forms one of these arable fields flanking Camer Road and lies west of the junction of Norwood Lane and Camer Road. The Bailiffs House is the closest listed building to the Study Site, lying just over 75m to the east of the Study Site boundary. Plate 7 demonstrates that as a result of an intervening modern structure and treelines, the Site affords no views to this listed building. Only very limited, partial views to the uppermost part of Camer House are possible from the Site. There are no views from the Site taken to the Grade II ancillary building c.30m from Camer House. The later, converted ancillary buildings to the north of the three relevant listed buildings can be seen from the Site. The Site is readily visible in views taken westward past the Grade II Bailiffs House on Camer Road (Plate 10).



Plate 7: View from Site looking southeast in direction of Grade II Camer House and associated Grade II listed buildings.



Plate 8: View east-southeast in direction of group of Grade II listed buildings south of Camer Road from junction of Camer Road and Norwood Lane.



Plate 9: View south to Grade II Bailiffs House from Camer Road, at position to the east of junction of Camer Road and Norwood Lane.

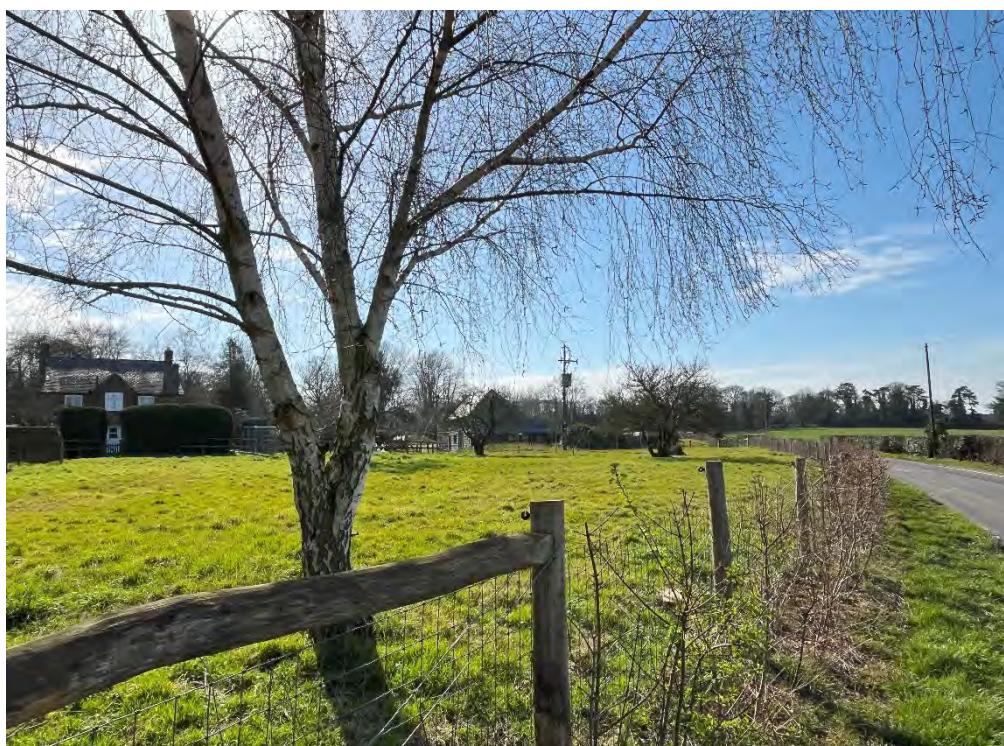


Plate 10: View west in direction of Site on Camer Road past Grade II Bailiffs House.

Contribution of Setting, Including the Site to Significance

4.76 The architectural and historic interest, and group value, of the Camer House group of three Grade II listed buildings is appreciated and understood primarily from the generally enclosed, close-immediate setting formed of their private grounds; which forms a legible historically and functionally related space around them. Only the Grade II Bailiffs House is readily visible in views taken southwards from Camer Road. The close-immediate setting of the three relevant listed buildings, comprising the area between Camer Road in the north and Camer Park Country Park in the south, is therefore considered to make a high contribution to their significance.

4.77 As a result of the enclosed nature of close-immediate setting of these three related listed buildings, opportunities to appreciate their group value and architectural and historic interest are more limited across their wider setting. Views to Camer House and the Bailiffs House are possible (from the south of these listed buildings, looking north) from the northern edge of the Camer Park Country Park. Limited, partial or glimpsed views are possible to Camer House from some sections of Camer Road and the Bailiffs House is readily appreciable from the directly opposing section of Camer Road. The extent to which the group value of these buildings is appreciable in their wider setting varies widely between moderate and negligible. Opportunities to appreciate the architectural and historic interest of these buildings, and their group value, from within their wider setting are limited to a low number of individual views from specific vantage points in relative proximity to the buildings. However, it remains that the general rural-agricultural character of the northern wider setting of these buildings, and the wooded-parkland character of their southern wider setting contributes to their significance. Some parts of the wider surrounds of these buildings have a specific historical and functional relationship with them through past ownership relationships, though the past extent of the Camer Estate is now understood primarily through reference to documentary sources such as early 19th Century tithe mapping. The contribution of these wider setting elements is considered to be generally low, occurring through these spaces being broadly representative (though not unchanged) of the buildings' wider surrounds historically and their legibility as the inter-related centre of a small estate. The contribution of these buildings wider setting to their significance rises to moderate where there are specific views taken by which their significance can be appreciated.

4.78 The Site forms part of the wider setting of these buildings, lying just over 75m from the closest listed building (Bailiffs House). The Site historically formed part of the Camer Estate, though this specific relationship is identified through documentary sources. The Site does not afford any notable opportunity to appreciate or understand the architectural or historic interest of this group of listed buildings, with only very limited, partial views to the uppermost part of Camer House possible from the Site (Plate 7). In views taken directly past the Grade II Bailiffs House (Plate 10), the Site forms part of the rural-agricultural context of this building. The contribution of the Site to the significance of this group of three Grade II listed buildings is considered to be low-moderate, making a low-moderate contribution only to the significance of the Grade II Bailiffs House and a low contribution to the significance of the Grade II Camer House and the Grade II 19th Century structure approximately 30 metres west of Camer House.

Potential Impacts to the Significance of the Grade II Listed Baillif's House (NHLE ref.1039912), the Grade II Listed Camer House (NHLE ref.1052357) and the Grade II Listed Building Approximately 30 Metres to West of Camer House (NHLE ref.1350234)

4.79 The proposed development will not alter any part of the intrinsic architectural or historic interest of this group of three Grade II listed buildings as derived from their built fabric. No notable existing opportunity by which their architectural or historic interest, or group value, can be appreciated will be lost as a result of the proposed development.

4.80 The proposed development will be readily visible in views taken westwards on Camer Road past the Grade II Bailiffs House (Plate 10). This will represent a notable visual change to the way in which this specific listed building is appreciated and understood. The proposed development will erode the

wider rural-agricultural character of the wider setting of this group of listed buildings, though only the Grade II Bailiffs House has a notable visual relationship with these wider surrounds to the north.

4.81 The proposed development is considered to represent an overall low degree of harm to the significance of the Grade II Bailiffs House on the spectrum of less than substantial harm. The proposed development is not considered to affect the significance of the Grade II Camer House or the Grade II building approximately 30m west of Camer House. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF any degree of less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Built Heritage: Grade II* Listed Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351)

4.82 Grade II Listed Church of St Mildred lies just over 1km north of the Site. The church tower of St Mildred's is a prominent local landmark and is widely visible across a broad area around the church. The church is visible from the Site, though there are no return views to the Site from the church's churchyard or its immediate surrounds.



Plate 11: View of the Church of St Mildred and its churchyard looking south.



Plate 12: The view from the south of St Mildred's churchyard looking south southeast towards the Study Site. The Study Site is not visible due to the intervening trees and headline of field boundaries.



Plate 13: The view of the Church of St Mildred's tower from the footpath crossing the Study Site.

Significance

4.83 The Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351) is listed Grade II* due to its more than special architectural and historic interest in a national context. The church is of probable 15th Century date, and so a later Medieval origin, and is constructed with flint and ragstone, though the west tower is of ragstone only. The church has a braced trussed rafter rood without tie beams, and buttresses on the north and south walls. A vestry and the north porch were added during the 19th Century. A church on or near this location is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 AD. The present church is an important example of the later Medieval design and construction of parish churches and is of particularly high architectural and historic interest. The building also derives significance from its role as a prominent local historic landmark.

Setting

4.84 The Church of St Mildred is located north of Hook Green, set with a rural-agricultural setting. The church's associated churchyard surrounds the church to all sides, with grave plots situated throughout. The main section of churchyard is located in the north, with the east, west and southern sections considerably shallower in width between the church and associated boundary. Immediately south of and east of St Mildred's church is open arable fields. Immediately west of the church lies a few fully detached residential properties, and such is the case immediately north of the church. The road that services the church, notably Nurstead Church Lane, runs from the church's northern boundary, heading westbound past the residential properties, before ceasing at its junction with Wrotham Road/A227. As Nurstead Church Lane heads eastbound from the church, it becomes a typical country lane. Two roads run north from Nurstead Church Lane, near to the church's location. The one furthest east and closest to the Wrotham Road junction, services Nurstead Court Farm, a former farmstead which is now used commercially by a number of independent companies. The church's wider setting is predominantly rural-agricultural, although c.365m south of the church are the modern built spaces of Hooks Green.

Contribution of Setting, Including the Site to Significance

4.85 The church has a highly legible historical and functional relationship with its churchyard, which forms its close setting and makes a high contribution to its significance. The immediately surrounding wooded spaces and agricultural fields, though modernised to support mechanised cultivation, reflect the historically rather isolated and rural-agricultural location of this church in relation to nearby centres of local settlement. Within the immediate-wider setting of this church to the north are important historical survivals comprising the Grade I listed Nurstead Court and Grade II Nurstead Lodge. This immediate-wider setting extends as far as Nurstead Court to the north and the modern built area of Hooks Green in the south and makes a moderate contribution to the significance of the church.

4.86 As a result of local topography and the height of the church tower of St Mildred's, this building is an important local landmark with a very broad extended setting that encompasses large parts of the surrounding landscape and from within which, very long distance views to the church tower are possible. Within these long views the specific later Medieval architectural and historic interest of the church is not readily apparent, though it is easily appreciable as a landmark of historical origin. The character of these long views is much defined by the rural-agricultural character of the area east of the modern built area of Hooks Green and are considered to make a generally low-moderate contribution to the significance of the building that varies with the degree to which its particular architectural and historic interest is appreciable. One such view corridor includes the Site (Plate 13), from which views to the church are possible, though there are no return views from ground level around the church towards the Site. The Site therefore forms part of the extended setting of this listed building, and is considered to make a low contribution to its significance. This contribution of the Site to the building's significance is made only through the appreciation possible of the church

as a local landmark of historic origin, while intervening distance limits appreciation of its specific architectural interest.

Potential Impacts to the Significance of the Grade II* Listed Church of St Mildred (NHLE ref.1096351)

4.87 No change to the intrinsic architectural or historic interest of the church, as derived from its built fabric, would occur as a result of the proposed development. No change would occur as a result of the proposed development to any part of the experience of being within the close, immediate, or wider setting of the church encompassed by its churchyard, adjoining agricultural and wooded spaces and extending northwards to the Grade I Nurstead Court and southwards to the modern built area of Hooks Green.

4.88 Change within the extended landscape setting of the Church would be limited to the alteration of one viewing corridor to the building, which would be altered from a rural-agricultural space to a built-landscaped space. The proposed development incorporates mitigation by design through the retention of a view corridor northwards from the southern end of the Site towards the church. The church would therefore remain visible from the Site, but would be seen in a modern built-landscaped context from this specific position, rather than an open arable field. This change is considered to represent a low degree of harm to the significance of the building on the spectrum of less than substantial harm. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF, any degree of less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets)

Archaeology

4.89 Any archaeological evidence present within the Study Site is considered likely to be of low significance and be similar to the finds previously made within the Study Area.

4.90 As identified by desk-based work, archaeological potential by period and the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the Study Site is summarised in table form below:

Period:	Identified Archaeological Potential	Identified Archaeological Significance
Palaeolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Mesolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Neolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Bronze Age	Low	Low (Local)
Iron Age	Low	Low (Local)
Roman	Low	Low (Local)
Anglo-Saxon	Low	Low (Local)
Medieval	High for evidence of cultivation, low for all other evidence.	Low (Local)
Post-Medieval	High for evidence of cultivation, low for all other evidence.	

5 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS

Site Conditions

- 5.1 The Study Site is likely to have come into agricultural use in the Medieval period. The Study Site has been in agricultural use throughout its recorded history and has not been subject to built development.
- 5.2 The Study Site is considered to have undergone a moderate but widespread impact as a result of historic and modern agricultural use.
- 5.3 The Study Site is considered to retain its archaeological potential.
- 5.4 Geophysical surveying of the Site (Appendix 1) does not suggest the presence of significant or extensive archaeological features.



Plate 14: View across the northern section of the Study Site, with modern development visible at Study Site's northern boundary visible in the distance.



Plate 15: The view looking northwest across the Study Site, with the modern development visible to the north, and treeline to the northwest.

Proposed Development

5.5 The Study Site is proposed for a development of up to 150 dwellings (Use Class C3), including affordable dwellings, and associated landscaping, public open space and infrastructure works (Plate 10).



Plate 16: Illustrative Masterplan Layout

Review of Potential Development Impacts on Designated Cultural Heritage Assets

- 5.6 No designated archaeological assets are located within the Study Site or a 1km radius.
- 5.7 No designated archaeological assets have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposed development.
- 5.8 The proposed development is considered to represent an overall low degree of harm to the significance of the Grade II Bailiffs House on the spectrum of less than substantial harm through the erosion of the building's wider rural-agricultural setting with which it has a historical-functional relationship. The proposed development is not considered to affect the significance of the Grade II Camer House or the Grade II building approximately 30m west of Camer House as a result of intervening visual and experiential barriers. The proposed development is considered to represent a low degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II* Listed Church of St Mildred through change to a long-range viewing corridor from the Site by which this building can be appreciated as a local landmark of historical origin within a historically rural-agricultural landscape context.
- 5.9 In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF any degree of less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Cultural Heritage Assets

- 5.10 It is considered that any archaeological evidence present within the Study Site will most likely be of low significance, similar to that identified locally.
- 5.11 The Local Planning Authority is anticipated to require further information in this instance. It is recommended that an archaeological evaluation represents a proportionate response to the archaeological potential identified. Any such archaeological works could follow the granting of planning consent and be secured by an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition.
- 5.12 No non-designated Built Heritage assets have been identified as being relevant to this assessment.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The Study Site has been assessed for its cultural heritage potential.

6.2 In terms of designated archaeological assets, no World Heritage sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields or Historic Wreck sites are identified within the Study Site or a 1km radius of it.

6.3 The Study Site is considered to have undergone a moderate below ground impact as a result of historic and modern agricultural and landscaping. The Study Site is considered to retain its archaeological potential. A geophysical survey of the Study Site (Appendix 1) does not indicate the presence of extensive or significant archaeological features.

6.4 As identified by desk-based work, archaeological potential by period and the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present is summarised in table form below:

Period:	Identified Archaeological Potential	Identified Archaeological Significance
Palaeolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Mesolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Neolithic	Low	Low (Local)
Bronze Age	Low	Low (Local)
Iron Age	Low	Low (Local)
Roman	Low	Low (Local)
Anglo-Saxon	Low	Low (Local)
Medieval	High for evidence of cultivation, low for all other evidence.	Low (Local)
Post-Medieval	High for evidence of cultivation, low for all other evidence.	Low (Local)

6.5 The Local Planning Authority is anticipated to require further information in this instance. It is recommended that an archaeological evaluation represents a proportionate response to the archaeological potential identified. Any such archaeological works could follow the granting of planning consent and be secured by an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition.

6.6 The proposed development is considered to represent an overall low degree of harm to the significance of the Grade II Bailiffs House on the spectrum of less than substantial harm through the erosion of the building's wider rural-agricultural setting with which it has a historical-functional relationship. The proposed development is not considered to affect the significance of the Grade II Camer House or the Grade II building approximately 30m west of Camer House as a result of intervening visual and experiential barriers. The proposed development is considered to represent a low degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II* Listed Church of St Mildred through change to a long range viewing corridor from the Site by which this building can be appreciated as a local landmark of historical origin within a historically rural-agricultural landscape context.

6.7 In accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF any degree of less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

Sources Consulted

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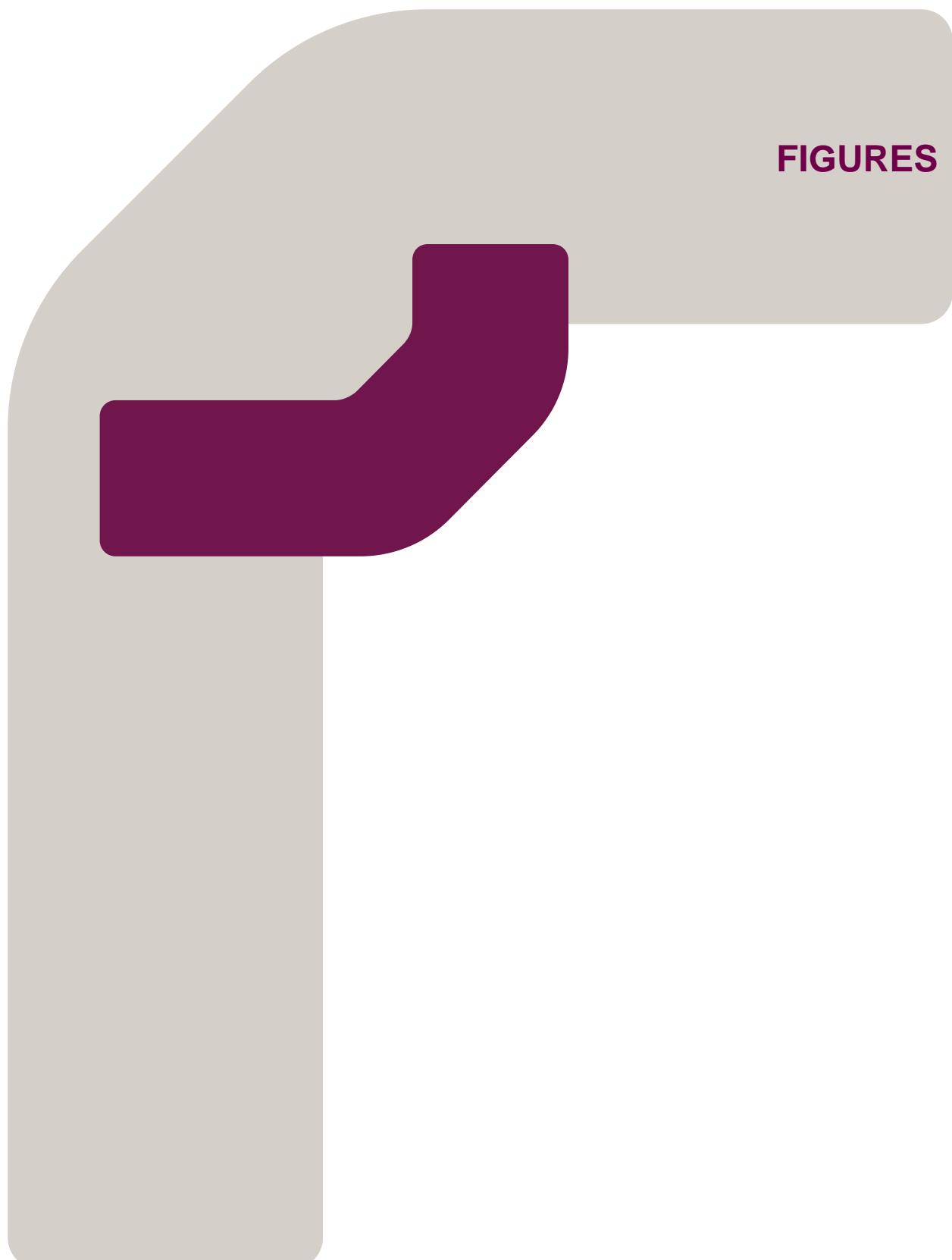
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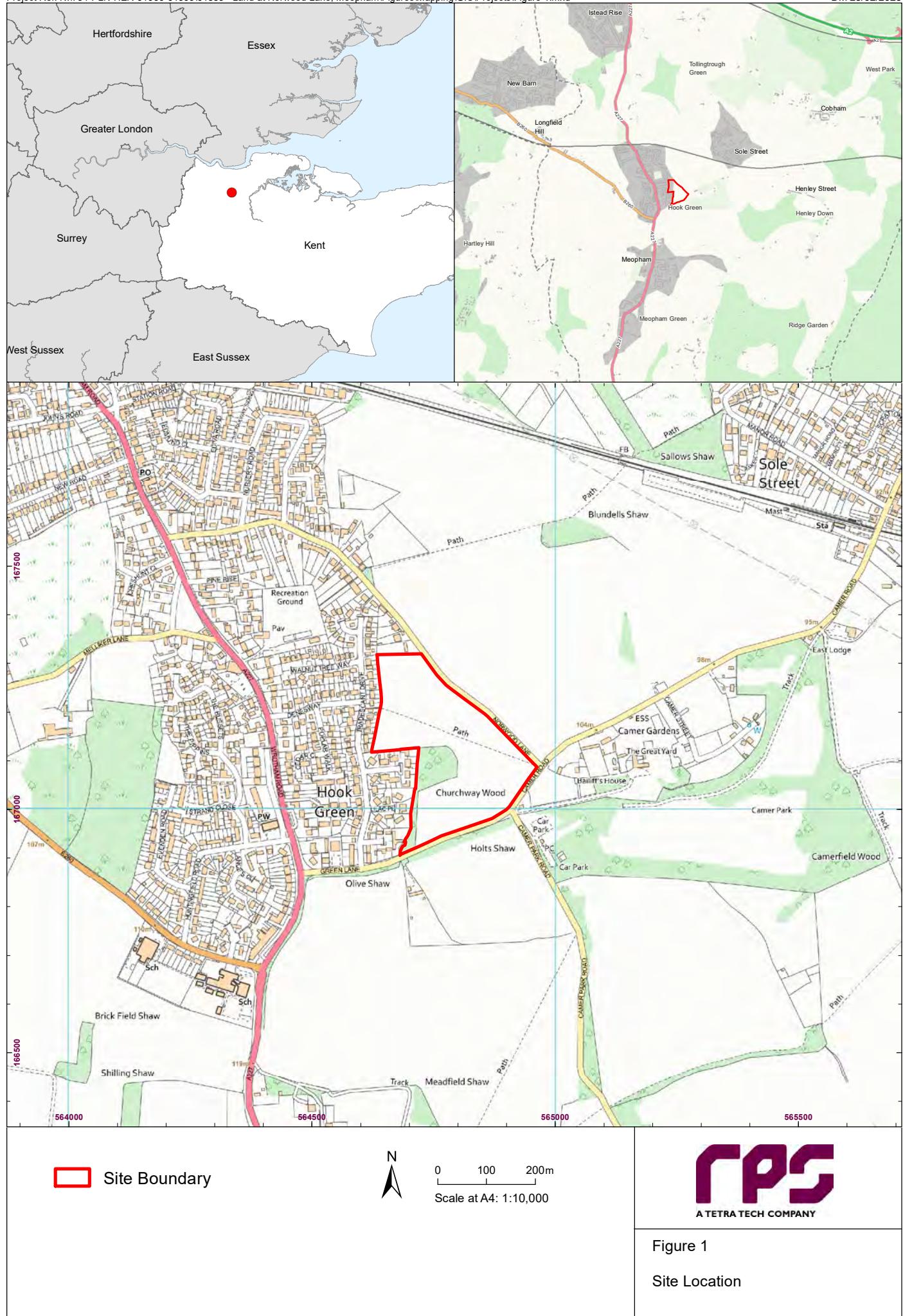
Mills, A.D. *A Dictionary of British Place Names* 1991

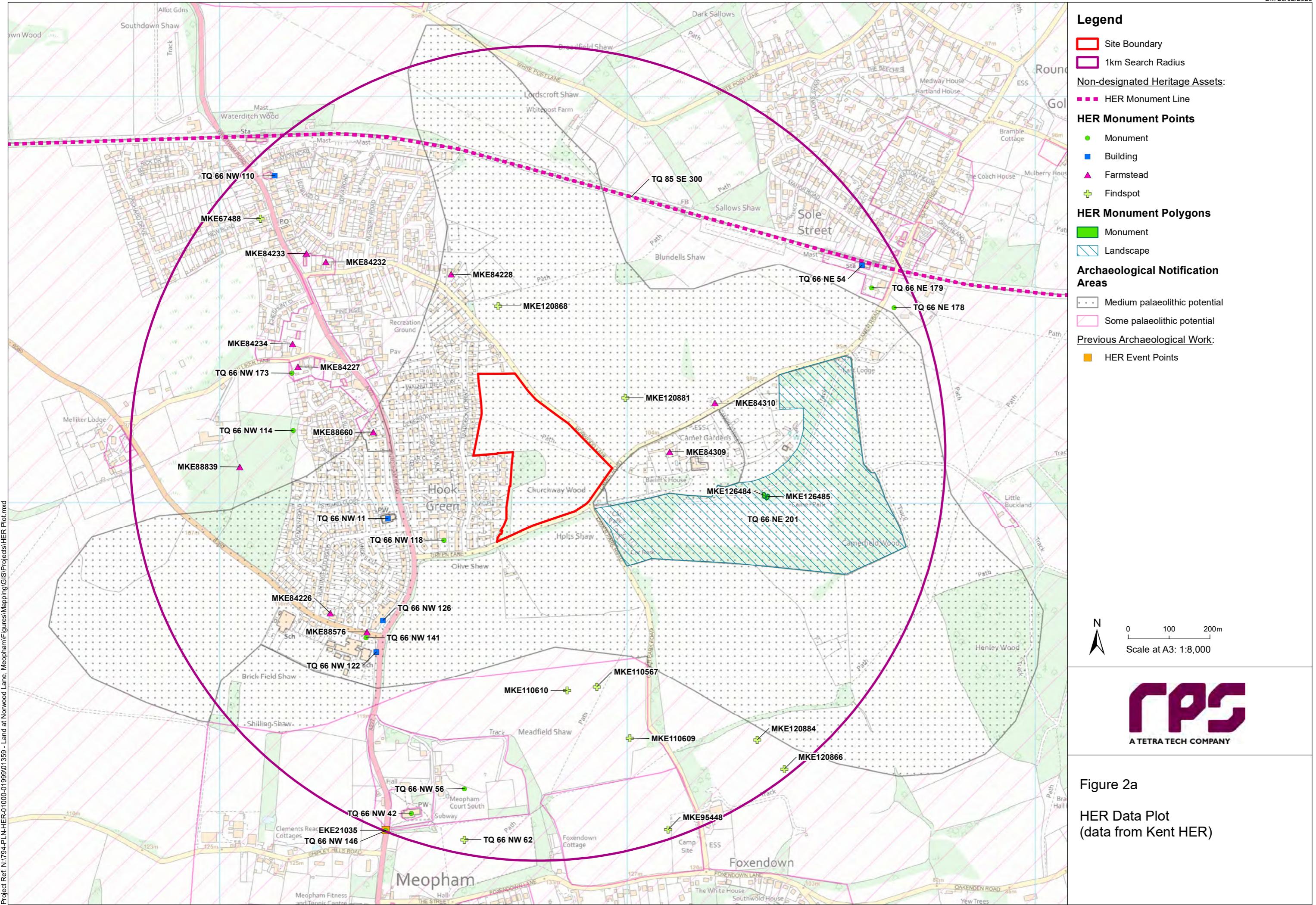
Cartographic

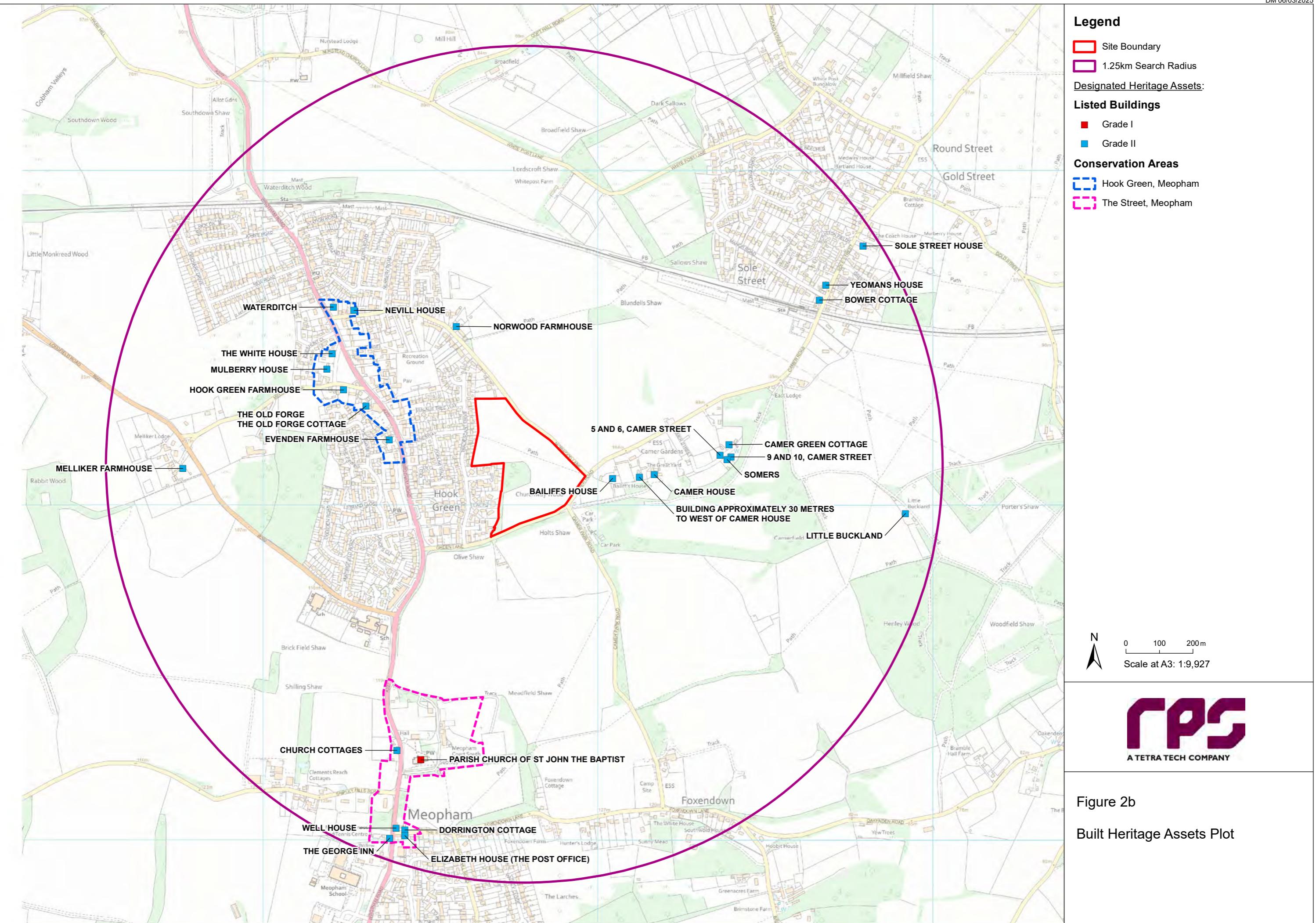
- 1797 OSD Map
- 1838 Kent Tithe Map
- 1865 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1906-1908 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1938 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1940 Aerial Photography GE
- 1955 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1960 Aerial Photograph GE
- 1978-1983 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1990 Aerial Photograph GE
- 1993 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500
- 2003 Aerial Photograph Google Earth
- 2015 Aerial Photograph Google Earth
- 2023 Aerial Photograph Google Earth

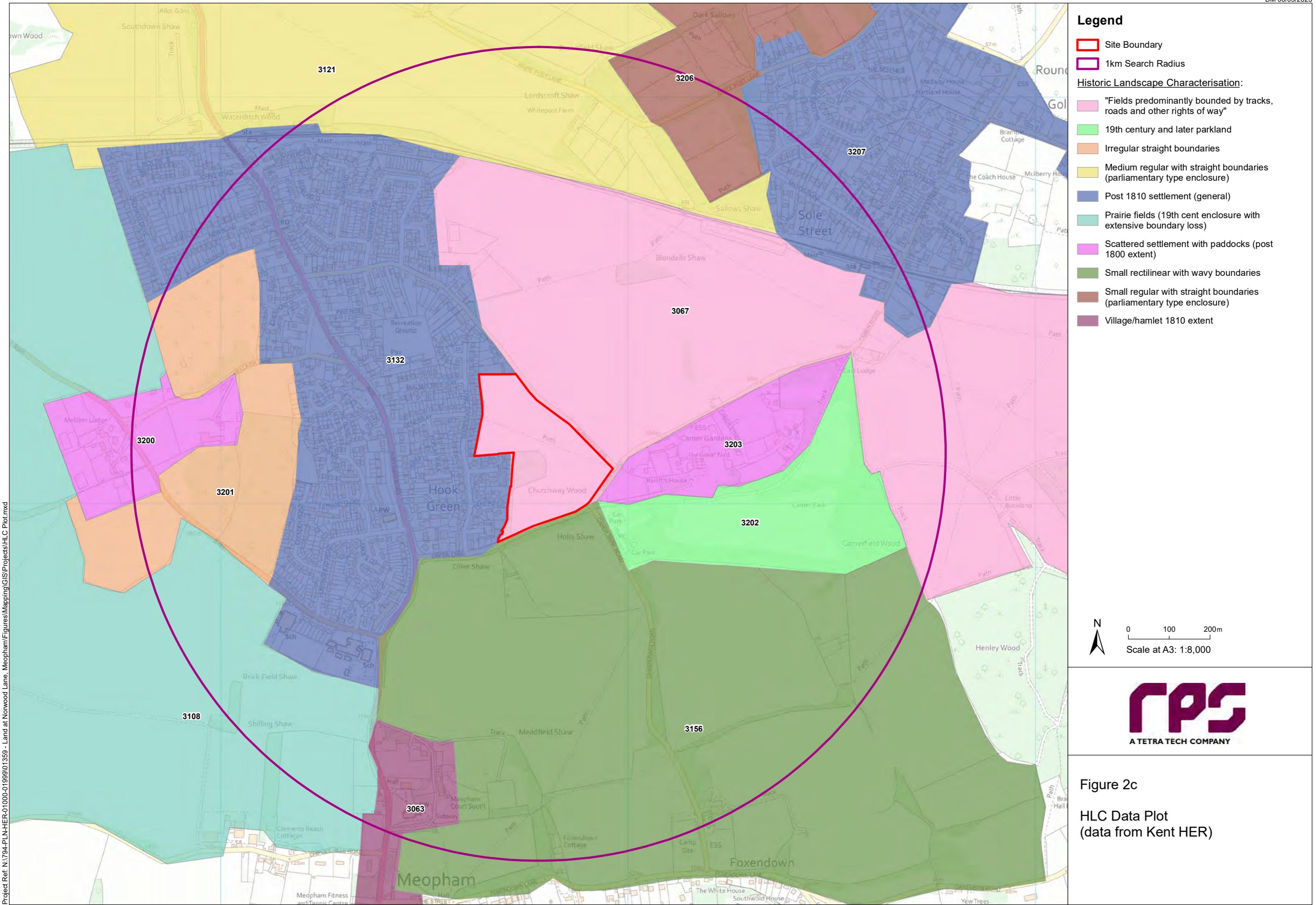
FIGURES











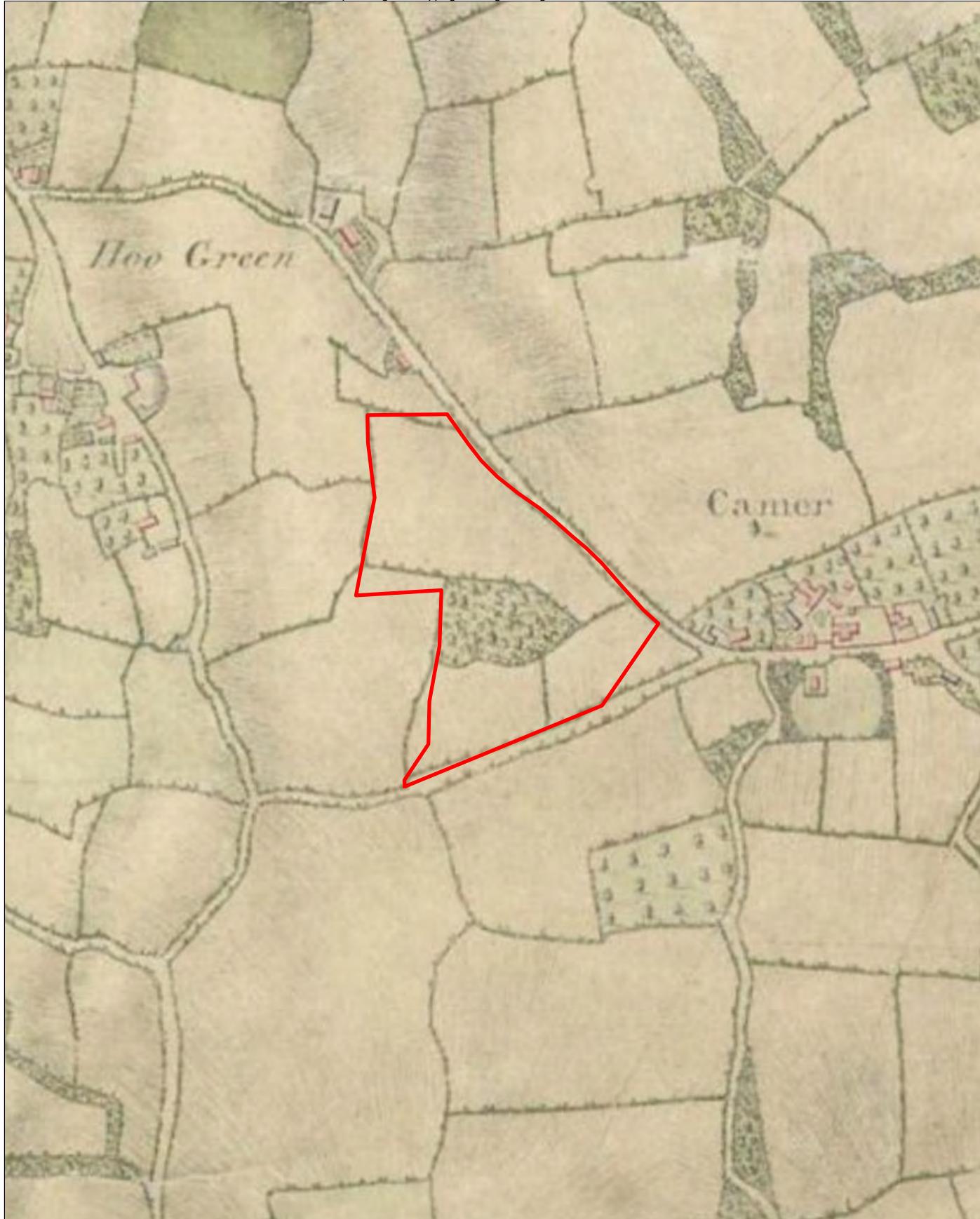


Site Boundary (approximate)

Not to Scale:
Illustrative Only

Figure 3

1769 Andrews and Dury Map of
Kent

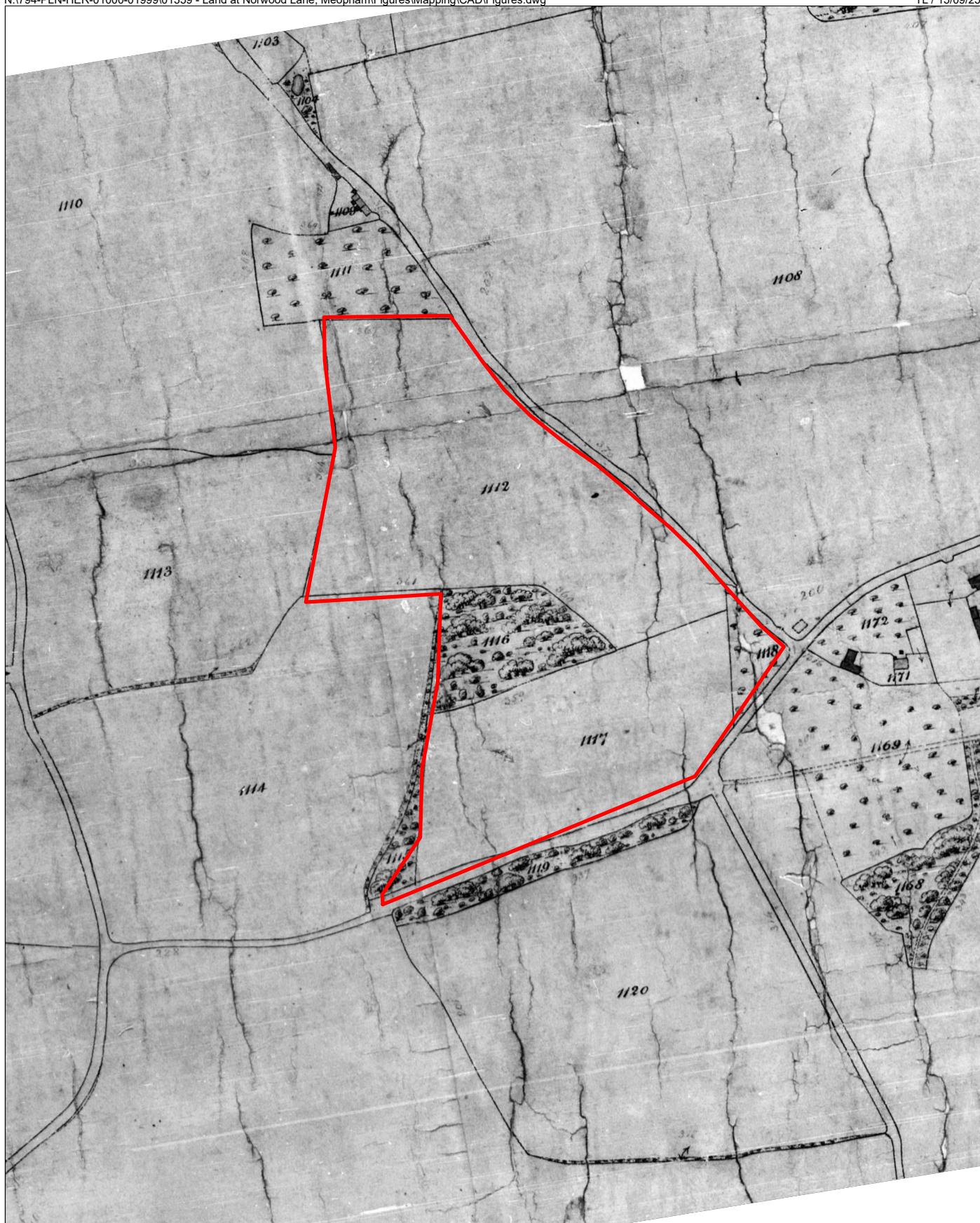


Site Boundary (approximate)

Not to Scale:
Illustrative Only

Figure 4

1797 Ordnance Survey Drawing



Site Boundary (approximate)

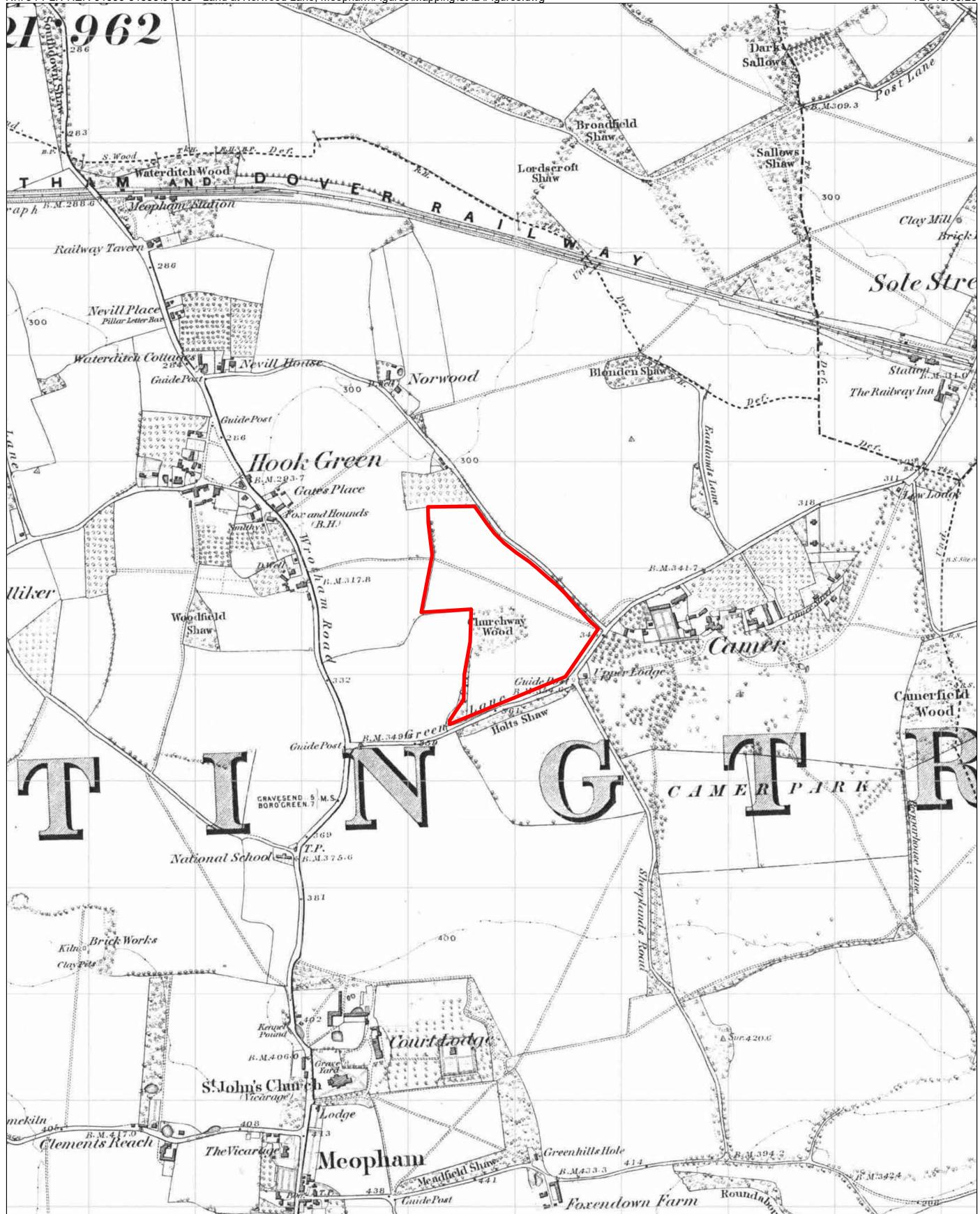


Not to Scale:
Illustrative Only



Figure 5

1840 Meopham Parish Tithe Map



Site Boundary

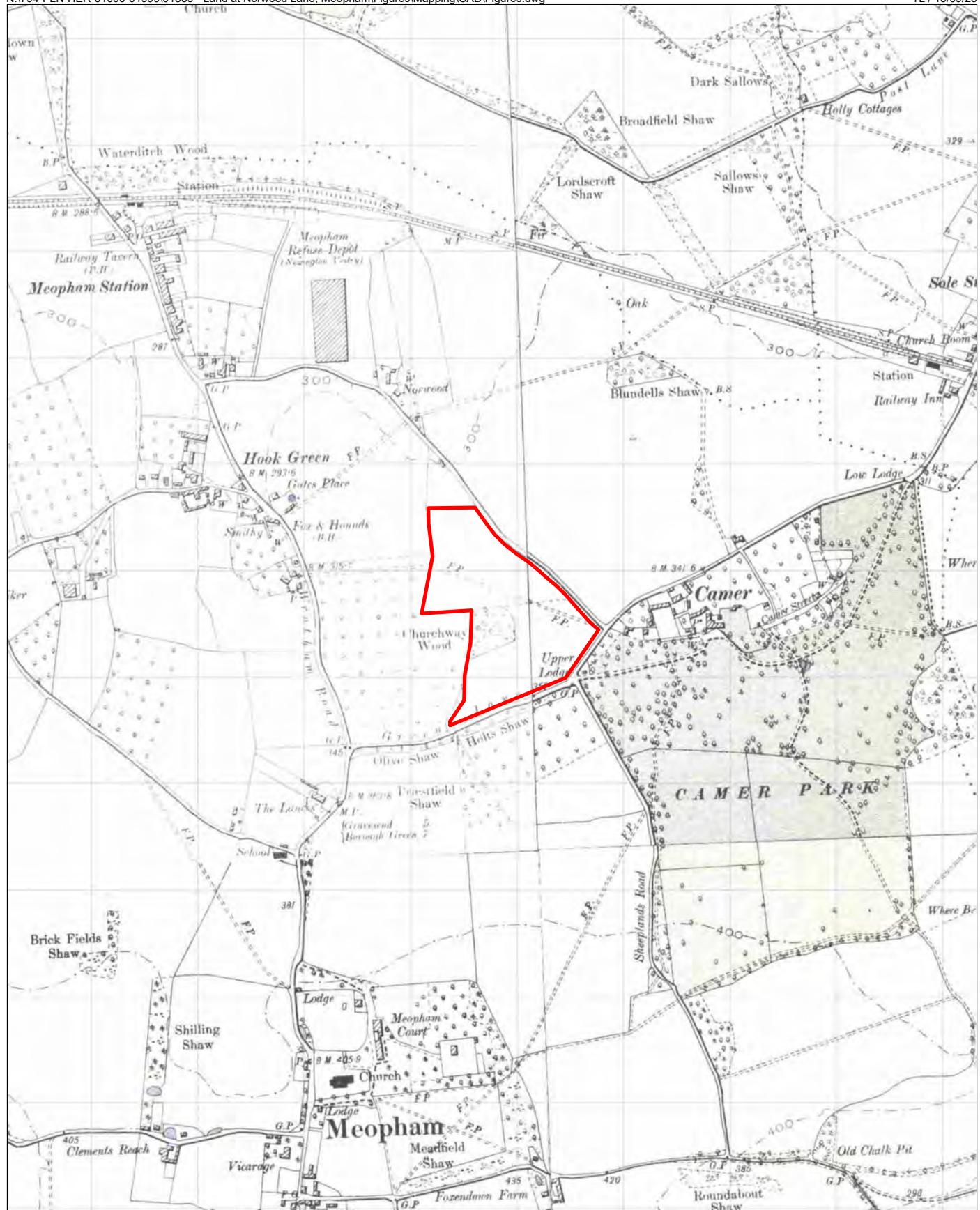


0 100 200m
Scale at A4: 1:10,000

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Figure 6

1867 Ordnance Survey Map



Site Boundary

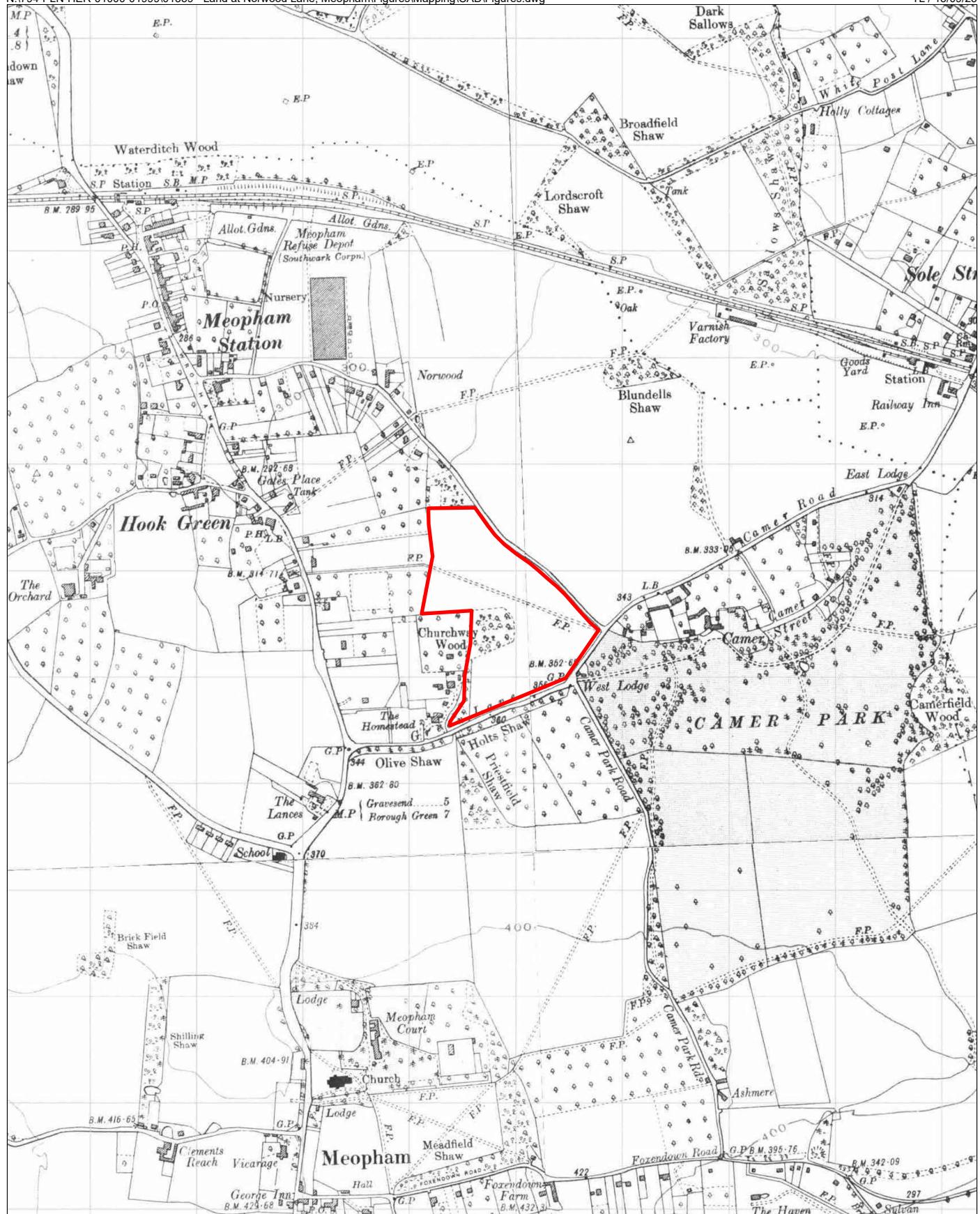


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Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 7

1895 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary

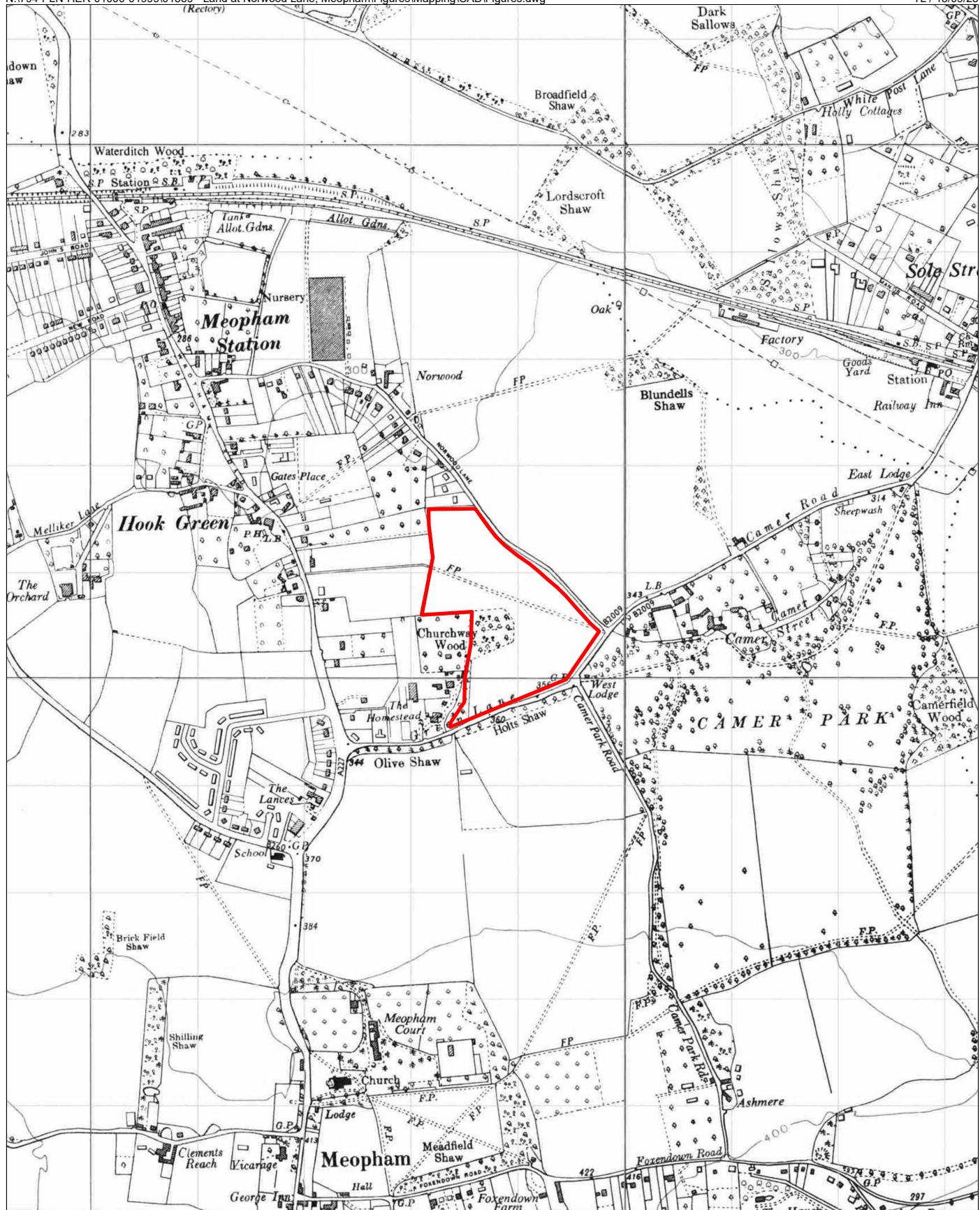


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Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 8

1936 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary

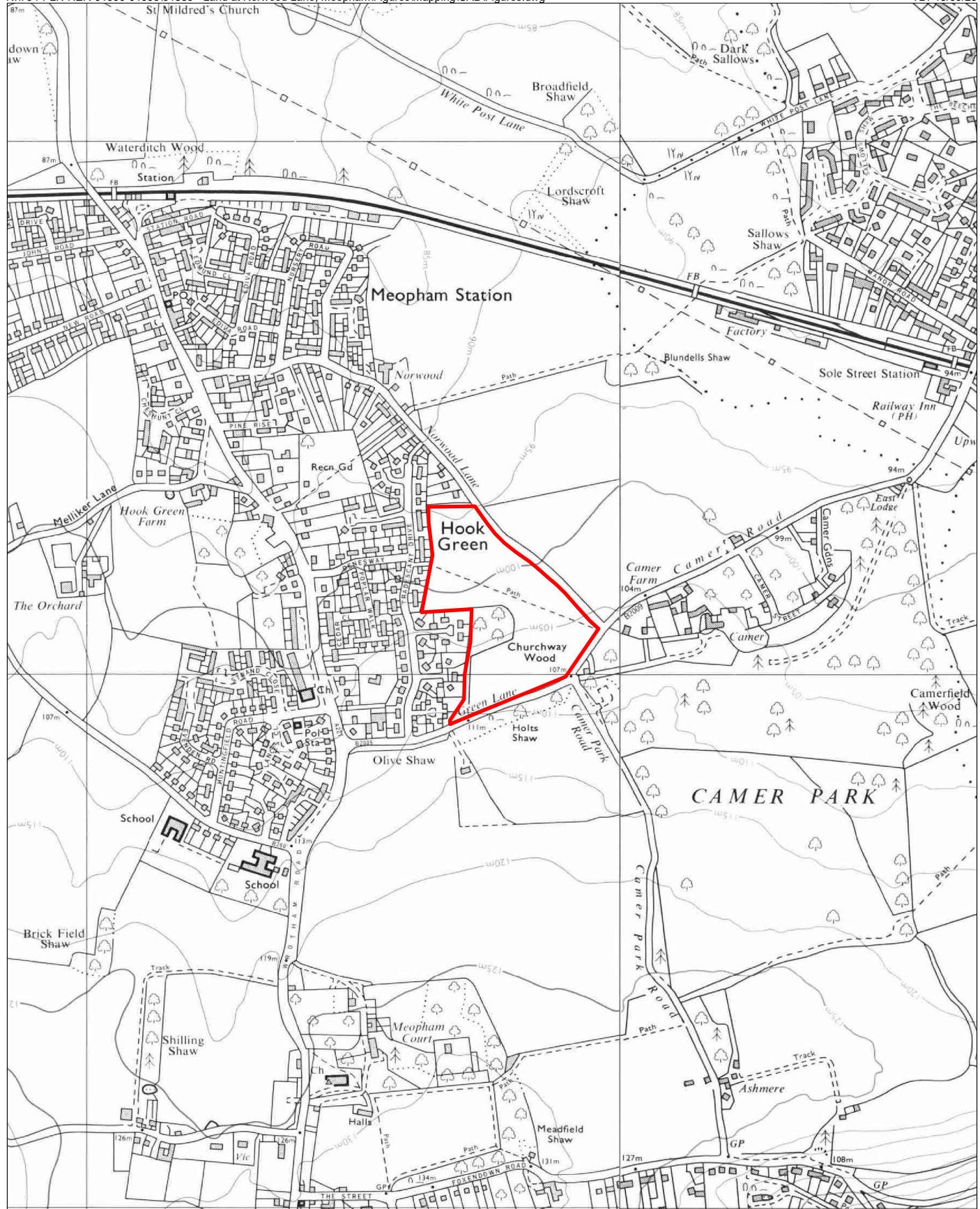


0 100 200m
Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 9

1955 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



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



Figure 10

1977 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



0 50 100m
Scale at A4: 1:4,000



Figure 11

1990 Aerial Photograph
(Google Earth Image)



 Site Boundary



0 50 100m
Scale at A4: 1:4,000



Figure 12

2024 Aerial Photograph
(Google Earth Image)



 Site Boundary



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



Figure 13

Proposed Development

**Legend**

Site Boundary

LiDAR DATA

Source:
Environment Agency

Data Type: DTM

Resolution: 1m

Date Captured:
29.01.2018 - 07.02.2018

Processing:
Multi-direction Hillshade overlaid on
simple Local Relief Model

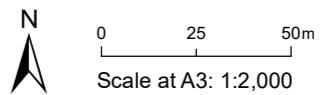


Figure 14

LiDAR Plot



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