

# Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, Thakeham

Project Reference  
794-PLN-HER-02039

Version 3

February 2026

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

Document status					
Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
1	First Draft	Craig Halsey	Gillian King	Gillian King	January 2026
2	Updated with client comments	Craig Halsey	Gillian King	Gillian King	January 2026
3	Updated red line boundary	Craig Halsey	Gillian King	Gillian King	February 2026

Approval for issue		
Craig Halsey		10 <sup>th</sup> February 2026

---

© Copyright RPS Group Limited. All rights reserved.

The report has been prepared for the exclusive use and benefit of our client, and for the sole and specific purpose for which it is provided. R P S Group Limited, any of its subsidiaries, or a related entity (collectively 'RPS') does not accept any liability if this report is used for an alternative purpose from which it is intended. The report does not account for any changes relating the subject matter of the report, or any legislative or regulatory changes that have occurred since the report was produced and that may affect the report.

RPS does not accept any responsibility for any documents or information supplied to RPS by others. It is expressly stated that no independent verification of any documents or information supplied by others has been made.

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by RPS no other party may use, make use of, or rely on the contents of this report. RPS does not accept any responsibility or liability for loss whatsoever to any third party caused by, related to, or arising out of any use or reliance on the report.

---

Prepared by:

Prepared for:

**Tetra Tech Consulting Ltd**

**Bellway Homes Ltd (Strategic Land)**

Craig Halsey

Technical Director

20 Farringdon Street  
London, EC4A 4AB

**T** +44 7716 084405

**E** craig.halsey@rps.tetrattech.com

---

### Executive Summary

- The Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, West Sussex, has been assessed for its below ground archaeological potential. In accordance with relevant government planning policy and guidance, a desk based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the archaeological potential of the study site.
- The proposals comprise the demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site as a residential led development comprising 150 dwellings including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
- In terms of relevant nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Historic Wreck or Historic Battlefield sites have been identified within the study site.
- An evaluation undertaken on the northern part of the site identified evidence of possible pits, post holes and stake holes. Although these features were undated, they were postulated to form an extension of the Saxon settlement activity identified at South Hill Farm just to the north of the site. The remains were encountered in trench 18, located directly adjacent to the site's northern boundary. This part of the site falls within an Archaeological Notification Area, as designated by the Local Authority.
- Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of the previous evaluation, the site is considered to hold a moderate to high potential for evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement activity and a low potential for all other periods. However, it should be noted that evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity is likely to be limited to the northern part of the site. Remains associated with the former 20<sup>th</sup> century nursery can also be anticipated, but are not considered to hold any heritage significance.
- The residential and commercial part of the development will be located within the southern and central part of the site. This part of the site has been occupied by various structures associated with the former nursey since the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Foundations, ground works and site stripping activities associated with this complex of former horticultural buildings are likely to have had an adverse and wide spread impact on any shallow archaeological remains that may have been present.
- The northern part of the site, where archaeological remains of a possible Anglo-Saxon date were identified, is to be retained as open ground. Assuming that no major landscaping works, including extensive tree planting, are proposed for this part of the site, the archaeological remains identified are unlikely to be impacted upon by the development, and could potentially be mitigated by implementing a strategy for preservation in situ, agreed with the Local Authority.
- The Local Authority's Archaeological Officer provided a consultation response for the previous application under Planning reference DC/24/0021 (Nick Truckle, dated 5/2/2024). The response stated;

*The northern part of the site is within an Archaeological Notification Area - DWS8558 Roman, Early Medieval and Medieval Occupation Activity, Thakeham. The application is supported by a desk based archaeological assessment by RPS that confirms that archaeological investigations in the north of the site in 2010 revealed evidence of pits and post holes thought to be an extension of a settlement dated from the 6th- 8th centuries recorded during the 1930s.*

*The area of the recorded archaeology is to be retained as public open space which will ensure that any archaeological remains are preserved in situ, as long as no intrusive landscaping or tree planting is proposed. The remainder of the site will have been disturbed to some extent by its past horticultural use but there is still potential for archaeology to be present and so a programme of archaeological work, commencing with a field evaluation, is appropriate for the central and southern areas of the site.*

*Archaeological deposits are both fragile and finite and the following condition is therefore recommended for the application in accordance with the National Planning Policy.*

- 1) *No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

- II) The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition [i] and that provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. Reason: This matter is fundamental as the site is of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*
- Considering this updated desk-based assessment has identified no change to the baseline, and the previous advise provided by the Surrey Archaeological Officer, it is recommended that any archaeological investigations required by the Local Planning Authority could be implemented under an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition applied to the development following planning consent.

# Contents

---

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION &amp; SCOPE OF STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 PLANNING BACKGROUND &amp; DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>2</b>
National Planning Policy .....	2
Local Planning Policy .....	3
Relevant National and Local Designations .....	5
<b>3 GEOLOGY &amp; TOPOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Geology .....	6
Topography .....	6
<b>4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL &amp; HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Timescales used in this report .....	7
Prehistoric.....	7
Historic.....	7
Introduction.....	7
Previous archaeological investigations .....	7
Prehistoric .....	8
Roman.....	9
Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval & Medieval .....	9
Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise).....	10
Historic Landscape Characterisation .....	11
LiDAR .....	11
Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets).....	11
Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets).....	11
<b>5 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT &amp; REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Site Conditions .....	13
Proposed Development.....	13
Review of Potential Development Impacts on Designated Archaeological Assets .....	13
Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Assets .....	13
<b>6 SUMMARY &amp; CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>14</b>

### Figures

- Figure 1: Site Location
- Figure 2a: HER Plot (data from West Sussex HER)
- Figure 2b: HLC Plot (data from West Sussex HER)
- Figure 3: LiDAR Plot
- Figure 4: Previous Archaeological Evaluation Works (DAS, 2010)
- Figure 5: 1724 Budgen Map of Sussex
- Figure 6: 1795 Gardener and Gream Map of Sussex
- Figure 7: 1806 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 8: 1841 Thakeham Tithe Map
- Figure 9: 1875-76 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 10: 1909 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 11: 1946 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 12: 1957 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 13: 1976-80 Ordnance Survey
- Figure 14: 2001 Google Earth Image
- Figure 15: 2022 Google Earth Image
- Figure 16: Proposed Development Plan

### Appendices

- Appendix 1: Location of previous evaluation trenches (Development Archaeology Services, 2010)

# 1 Introduction & Scope of Study

- 1.1 This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by Tetra Tech Consulting Ltd on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (Strategic Land) (“the Applicant”) to support a planning application for the redevelopment of the Former Monaghan Mushroom Farm, Thakeham, West Sussex. The site is formerly known as the Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, Thakeham. The site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ 10050 17242 and covers an area c 13.45 hectares in extent. The site is located within the administrative area of Horsham District Council. This document forms an update to the desk-based assessment (DBA) submitted for a previous application.
- 1.2 The Applicant has commissioned Tetra Tech Consulting Ltd to establish the archaeological potential of the site and to provide guidance on ways to address any archaeological constraints identified.
- 1.3 In accordance with relevant policy and guidance on archaeology and planning, and in accordance with the ‘Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments’ (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists October 2020), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the archaeological potential of the site.
- 1.4 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of information held on the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (GLHER) and other sources, and includes the results of a comprehensive map regression exercise.
- 1.5 In any desk-based assessment a degree of uncertainty is attached to the baseline data sources. This includes:
- *The Historic Environment Records (HER) can be limited because it often depends on “random” opportunities for research, fieldwork and discovery;*
  - *Lack of dating evidence for sites;*
  - *Documentary sources are rare before the medieval period and many historic documents are inherently biased; and*
  - *The extent of truncation caused by previous development impacts and landscaping works cannot be fully ascertained.*
- 1.6 HER data has a time limit of 12 months from the original search date and cannot be relied on after that. The HER data was received on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 (WSCC HER reference number: 202526-074).
- 1.7 This assessment thus enables relevant parties to assess the archaeological potential of various parts of the Site and to consider the need for design, civil engineering, and archaeological solutions to the archaeological potential identified.

## 2 Planning Background & Development Plan Framework

- 2.1 National legislation regarding archaeology, including scheduled monuments, is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002, and updated in April 2014.
- 2.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently updated in February 2025. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014 and has since been periodically updated.
- 2.3 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

### National Planning Policy

- 2.4 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled Conserving and enhancing the historic environment provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development;
  - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
  - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
  - Recognition that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.5 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 states that local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by their development proposal, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.6 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, Site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.
- 2.7 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 2.8 A *Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 2.9 *Significance (for heritage policy)* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

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

## Local Planning Policy

- 2.14 The relevant Development Plan framework for the site is provided by the Horsham District Planning Framework, which was adopted in November 2015. The document contains the following policy relevant to archaeology.

### Policy 34

#### Cultural and Heritage Assets

The Council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and as such the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. Applications for such development will be required to:

1. Make reference to the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;
2. Reflect the current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and Conservation Area Character Statements;

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

3. Reinforce the special character of the district's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design; including the use of traditional materials and techniques;
4. Make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensuring that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas;
5. Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials;
6. Secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through continued preservation by uses that are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset;
7. Retain and improves the setting of heritage assets, including views, public rights of way, trees and landscape features, including historic public realm features; and
8. Ensure appropriate archaeological research, investigation, recording and reporting of both above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required, with any assessment provided as appropriate.

2.15 The council is currently developing a revised Local Plan (Regulation 19) which sets out the Councils strategy between 2023 to 2040. The weight afforded to the emerging Local Plan is limited at this moment. The document includes the following draft policy relevant to heritage matters.

### Strategic Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

1. The Council will preserve and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings. Applications for such development will only be supported if they:

- a) Make reference to, and show an understanding of, the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;
- b) Take account current best practice guidance produced by Historic England and Conservation Area Character Statements, Appraisals and Management Plans;
- c) Make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensure that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas;
- d) Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, including traditional architectural form, proportion, detailing, materials and, where appropriate, landscape features including trees;
- e) Demonstrate that the use(s) proposed are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset whilst securing its viable and sustainable future and continued preservation, especially any assets on Historic England's At Risk Register. Changes of use must be compatible with, and respect, the special architectural or historic interest of the asset and setting; and
- f) Demonstrate that any proposal in the vicinity of a heritage asset with, or has the potential to include, archaeological interest is accompanied by appropriate archaeological research, including the investigation, recording and reporting of both above and below-ground archaeology. This will, as a minimum, include a desk-based assessment, and where deemed necessary by the Council, a field evaluation will also be required. If necessary, the Council will require assets to be preserved in situ or excavated.

2. Proposals which affect a heritage asset, or the setting of a heritage asset, will only be supported where accompanied by a Heritage Statement.

3. Proposals which would cause substantial harm to, or loss of, a heritage asset will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits gained would outweigh the substantial harm or total loss of the asset and that any replacement scheme makes an equal contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Applicants must show an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset to be lost, either wholly or in part, and demonstrate how the heritage asset has been recorded.

4. Proposals which would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and will only be supported where public benefit is considered to outweigh the harm.

- 2.16 The Thakeham Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2017. There are no policies directly referencing below ground archaeological matters are included.

## Relevant National and Local Designations

- 2.17 In terms of relevant designated heritage assets, as defined above and as shown on Figure 2, no designated World Heritage sites, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Battlefield or Historic Wreck sites lie within the vicinity of the study site.
- 2.18 In terms of local designations, the northern half of the site does lie within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) as defined by the Local Authority (HER ref: DWS8558). The area is defined as an ANA due to excavations in the grounds of South Hill Farm undertaken in 1934, which revealed evidence of Saxon occupation dating from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. The evidence consisted of a grubenhaus (sunken floored building) or sunken pit dwelling, found in association with charcoal and pottery fragments. Other finds included fragments of Roman tile and pottery, medieval pottery and a partly ground and polished Mesolithic chert adze.
- 2.19 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk based assessment seeks to clarify the Site's archaeological potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

## 3 Geology & Topography

### Geology

- 3.1 The solid geology underlying the study site consists of the Fittleworth Member, which comprises sandstone and mudstone. This sedimentary deposit is of a Cretaceous age and formed within warm shallow seas approximately 113 to 126 million years ago (BGS online, 2023).
- 3.2 There are no superficial deposits of Quaternary age within the area of the site.
- 3.3 No site-specific geotechnical reports are available for the site. However, the previous evaluation undertaken across the northern part of the site provides an indication on the likely depth and characteristics of the sub surface deposits (Development Archaeological Services, 2010). Within the evaluation trenches the solid geology was encountered at depths ranging from 0.5 to 0.7m below ground level, overlain by a subsoil and topsoil horizon.

### Topography

- 3.4 The proposed development site lies approximately 300m to the south-west of the village of Thakeham, and to the immediate west of the modern B2139 road from Storrington to Coolham. The proposed development site along with the village of Thakeham is located within an undulating upland area to the north of the Sussex South Downs, at heights of approximately 45-60m OD (Ordnance Datum).

## 4 Archaeological & Historical Background with Assessment of Significance

### Timescales used in this report

#### Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000 -	12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000 -	4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000 -	1,800 BC
Bronze Age	1,800 -	600 BC
Iron Age	600 -	AD 43

#### Historic

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

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter reviews the available archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological/historical background of the general area, and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the potential for any as yet to be discovered archaeological evidence on the site.
- 4.2 The assessment comprises a review of known archaeological assets within a 1.5km radius of the study site, also referred to as the study area, held on the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the late 18th century onwards until the present day.
- 4.3 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions and whether the proposed development will impact the theoretical archaeological potential identified in Chapter 4.

### Previous archaeological investigations

- 4.1 There have been a number of archaeological investigations undertaken within the site's study area, one of which was undertaken within the site boundary. Investigations relevant to the site are summarised below.
- 4.2 In 2010 Development Services Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation, comprised of twenty seven trial trenches (HER ref: EWS1500, MWS12050, TQ 1008 1726; Development Archaeology Services Ltd, 2010). The evaluation trenches were placed in four separate proposed development areas (designated Areas A-D). Area A was located within the northern half of the site itself. Area B was located c 100m to the north west of the site boundary, while Area C was located directly adjacent to the site's western boundary. Area D lay c 500m to the west of the site. The works were carried out in advance of the proposed construction of new growing tunnels, aerated bunkers, a pond/reservoir and a balancing pond on land at the Chesswood Nursery site. The investigation areas

are illustrated on Figure 4 with further details (extracted from the Development Archaeology Services Ltd 2010 report) presented in Appendix 1.

- 4.3 Within three of the areas (D – balancing pond), B – pond/reservoir, and C – aerated bunkers), there was an absence of any archaeological activity. The exception to this was Trench 18 in Area A, which was located in close proximity to the mid Anglo-Saxon settlement activity to the north of the site. Trench 18 revealed a significant number and density of possible archaeological features, comprising pits, postholes and stake holes. Three parallel extensions were subsequently excavated to the south-west to further define the potential extent of this activity. The remains were thought to define the south western extent of the Anglo-Saxon settlement activity identified further to the north in 1934. However, the excavators noted that given the apparent randomness and density of the archaeological features it was impossible to arrive at any definitive interpretation concerning the nature of any structural activity and to a lesser extent, pitting activity.
- 4.4 The report on the investigations concluded that in order to define the extent and nature of the settlement activity a strip, map and sample exercise should be undertaken to mitigate the impact on the remains. However, it appears the development did not proceed and no mitigation works were undertaken.
- 4.5 A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken at Abingworth Nursery located to the south east of the site (HER ref: EWS1853, TQ 10417 16867). The works involved the investigation of three area (Area A, Area B west, and Area B east). Area A, located directly to the south east of the site's boundary (HER ref: MWS14579), consisted of four evaluation trenches. This identified a simple deposit sequence of a topsoil/ploughsoil horizon overlying a natural horizon of 'brickearths' (a periglacial loess deposit). Several land drains of 19th century origin and several modern services were also identified. No archaeological activity or finds were identified in this area.
- 4.6 Archaeological investigations at South Hall Farm in 1934, located c 80m to the north west of the site, recorded a mid Anglo-Saxon grubenhaus (sunken floored building), found in association with pottery and charcoal (HER ref: EWS261, MWS1153, MSW405, MSW406, TQ 10397 17419). It was thought that this activity may have formed the focus of the original settlement of Thakeham. Roman tile and pottery, and Medieval pottery fragments were also recovered during the investigations.

## Prehistoric

- 4.7 No evidence of prehistoric occupation has been recorded on the site and no evidence of in situ settlement evidence has been recorded in the wider vicinity, although this could be due to a generally limited amount of archaeological fieldwork in the area.
- 4.8 An isolated and residual Mesolithic chert adze was found during the 1934 archaeological investigations at South Hill Farm, approximately c 80m to the north of the site (HER ref: MWS407, TQ1039717419).
- 4.9 A Neolithic leaf shaped arrowhead was found in Thakeham, but the precise provenance is unknown (HER ref: MWS5635 TQ100160, MWS403 TQ100170). Two arrowheads were found during ploughing close to the edge of High Bar Wood approximately 600m to the south west of the study site (HER ref: MWS2951 TQ09411623).
- 4.10 A Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead and seven flint scrapers were found at depth during groundworks approximately 1.2km to the south west of the study site (HER ref: MWS2950, TQ 0896 1698). The HER also records the site of two possible Bronze Age barrows, inferred from documentary evidence, at West Chiltington Common, located c 1.4km southwest of the site (HER ref: MWS6577, TQ 08760 1700).
- 4.11 The scatter of isolated finds recorded in the vicinity of the site suggests low level prehistoric activity in the area, but due to the site's location some distance from any natural water course; which would have been a favoured location for occupation during these periods, the study site is considered to

hold low potential for prehistoric settlement evidence. However, isolated and residual finds could occur within the site.

### Roman

- 4.12 No heritage assets of Roman origin are recorded within the study site and no evidence of in situ settlement evidence has been recorded in the wider vicinity, although this could reflect the generally limited amount of archaeological fieldwork undertaken within the study area.
- 4.13 Isolated Roman pottery sherds and tiles were discovered during archaeological investigations at South Hill Farm, approximately 80m north of the study site, suggesting occupation close by (HER ref: MWS405, TQ1039717419). Roman pottery sherds are also recorded at Old House Farm. The precise provenance is unknown but the HER records it as c 100m to the south west of the study site (HER ref: MWS404, TQ100170).
- 4.14 A section of the Hardham to Barcombe Mills Roman road is projected to run through the very southern part of the site's study area, on a roughly north west to south east orientation (HER ref: MWS3786, TQ 23068 15459). A zone around the projected road defines an Archaeological Notification Area (HER ref: DWS8725).
- 4.15 Although some evidence of Roman activity has been identified to the north of the site at South Hill Farm, previous investigations within the site in close proximity to South Hill Farm (HER ref: EWS1500, MWS12050, TQ 1008 1726; Development Archaeology Services Ltd, 2010), did not identify any evidence for Roman settlement or occupation. Therefore, the site is considered to hold a low potential for Roman settlement activity, although isolated and residual finds could conceivably be present.

### Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval & Medieval

- 4.16 An Anglo Saxon settlement site was identified in 1934 during excavations in the grounds of South Hill Farm, located approximately 80m north-west of the study site (HER ref: MWS1153 TQ1039717419). The remains were found during the excavation of a swimming pool, and consisted of a possible sunken floored building (a 'grubenhau'), along with charcoal and pottery dated from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. Residual Medieval pottery was also encountered during the archaeological excavations (HER ref: MWS406 TQ10397 17419).
- 4.17 An evaluation undertaken on the northern part of the site (HER ref: MWS12050, TQ 1014 1723) identified evidence of possible pits, post holes and stake holes. Although these features were undated, they were postulated to form an extension of the Saxon activity identified at South Hill Farm. The remains were encountered in trench 18, located within the site just adjacent to the site's northern boundary. Plans showing the location of the interventions are included in Appendix 1. The evaluation trench locations, in relation to the existing site mapping, are also shown on Figure 4. The area around the findings of these investigations within the site and also at South Hill Farm define an Archaeological Notification Area (HER ref: DWS8558, TQ 10321 17399), as designated by the Local Authority (Figure 2a).
- 4.18 The first recorded mention of the parish of Thackham stretches back to 1073, when it was referred to as 'Takaham', and then in 1167 when it was referred to as 'Tacheham' (Thackham History online, 2023). The name is thought to derive from 'thatched homestead', which may be a reference to the thatch dwellings of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. Thakeham is also recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it had a recorded population of 43 households, placing it within the largest 20% of settlements recorded in the Domesday survey (Domesday online, 2023). The land at this time was held by William of Braose.
- 4.19 Given the close proximity of the Anglo-Saxon features at South Hill Farm, and the evidence of possible, albeit undated, Saxon remains on the northern part of the site; overall the site can be

considered to hold a moderate to high potential for evidence of Saxon activity. Evidence of Saxon activity is most likely to occur along the northern periphery of the site. Evidence for late Medieval activity is less compelling, and therefore the site’s potential for this period is considered low.

## Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.20 A number of Post Medieval farmsteads have been recorded on the HER within a 1.5km radius of the site, but as they provide no evidence for archaeological activity on the site itself, they are not on discussed further here.
- 4.21 During the later Post Medieval and Modern periods, the understanding of settlement, land-use and the utilisation of the landscape is enhanced by cartographic and documentary sources, which can give additional detail to data contained within the HER.
- 4.22 The 1724 Budgen Map of Sussex shows the site occupying open land, with Thakeham annotated to the north west of the site (Figure 5). The 1795 Gardner and Gream Map of Sussex (Figure 6) provides more detail, showing the site occupying several enclosed land parcels located just to the north of ‘Furze Common’. A precursor of the B2139 can be seen to the east of the site.
- 4.23 The 1806 OS map (Figure 7) shows little change to the site, with the site still occupying several enclosed land parcels. The 1841 Thakeham Parish Tithe Map provides more details on the ownership and land usage of the site. The tithe map describes the ownership, land use and tenants as follows.

Land Parcel	Landowner	Occupant	Description	Land Use/Cultivation
235	Miss Cordelia Shelley	Edward Fuller Upperton	Mitchells Nine Acres	Arable
236	Miss Cordelia Shelley	Edward Fuller Upperton	Mitchells Four Acres	Arable
237	Miss Cordelia Shelley	Edward Fuller Upperton	Mitchells Three Acres	Arable
258	Moses Richardson	Moses Richardson	House Plat	Pasture
259	Moses Richardson	Moses Richardson	Long Meadow	Pasture
260	Moses Richardson	Moses Richardson	Further Meadow	Pasture
269	William Courthope Mabbott Esq.	Edward Fuller Upperton	Long Town Field	Arable
270	William Courthope Mabbott Esq.	Edward Fuller Upperton	Malthouse Field	Arable

- 4.24 The tithe map demonstrates that the land was utilised as arable land or pasture. The site of the ‘Old House’, a historic farmstead dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (HER ref: MWS12703, TQ 10003 17076), can be seen directly to the south of the site. The site of Townhouse Farm (HER ref: 13811, TQ 10285 17577) can also be seen directly to the north of the site.
- 4.25 By 1875 (Figure 9) reorganisation of the field boundaries had occurred, with the vast majority of the site now amalgamated into one single field. This map shows the site of Townhouse Farm and the Old House clearly annotated. The 1909 OS map (Figure 10) shows another reorganisation of the field boundaries with the large single field subdivided into five parcels.
- 4.26 The 1946 OS map (Figure 11) shows substantial change to the site with structures associated with the Chesswood Nursey established across the central and southern parts of the site. A number of buildings, which probably represent greenhouses and growing sheds, are clearly visible on the mapping. By 1957 (Figure 12) some reconfiguration of the nursery layout had occurred, with larger structures constructed across the southern part of the site, replacing a series of smaller buildings. Further changes are visible across the site on the 1976-80 OS map (Figure 13). The small rectangular structures across the northern part of Chesswood Nursery had been replaced by larger

structures, with additional buildings constructed within the southern part of the site, and to the west beyond the site boundary. A sewage works had also been constructed further to the west of the site. A square shaped reservoir can also be seen to north of the Chesswood nursery complex.

- 4.27 The 2001 aerial image (Figure 14) demonstrates further alteration to the nursery complex with additional buildings constructed along the eastern side of the nursery, and towards the north west of the nursery complex. By 2022 (Figure 15) many of the buildings on the western side of nursery complex had been demolished, along with reservoir, which is no longer depicted to the north of the site.
- 4.28 The cartographic evidence suggests the site existed as agricultural land, until the construction of Chesswood Nursery on the central and southern parts of the site by the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The nursery appears to have undergone several phases of reconfiguration and rebuilding during the latter parts of 20<sup>th</sup> and earlier part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The archaeological potential for significant settlement evidence dating to the Post-medieval period is therefore considered to be low. Remains associated with the former nursery can be anticipated, but are not considered to hold any heritage interest.

## Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 4.29 In terms of Historic Landscape Characterisation almost the entire site is characterised as 'Nursery(s) with Greenhouse(s)' (Ref: HW3024). A fraction of land along the site's western border is defined as 'Informal fieldscapes' (Figure 2b). Both these types are considered to be of post-medieval to modern date, and relate to the nursery industry that developed across the site by the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## LiDAR

- 4.30 Lidar data (light detection and ranging) is available for the site (Figure 3). The imagery clearly shows the existing complex of nursery buildings occupying the southern and central parts of the site. Possible former field boundaries are just visible across the northern part of the site.

## Assessment of Significance (Designated Assets)

- 4.31 Existing national policy guidance for archaeology (the NPPF as referenced in section 2) enshrines the concept of the 'significance' of heritage assets. Significance as defined in the NPPF centres on the value of an archaeological or historic asset for its 'heritage interest' to this or future generations.
- 4.32 There are no designated archaeological assets on the site.

## Assessment of Significance (Non-Designated Assets)

- 4.33 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of the evaluation undertaken in 2010, the site is considered to hold a moderate to high potential for evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement activity and a low potential for all other periods. Remains associated with the former 20<sup>th</sup> century nursery can also be anticipated, but are not considered to hold any heritage significance. However, it should be noted that evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity is likely to be limited to the northern part of the site, as suggested by the 2010 investigations.
- 4.34 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:

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

<b>Period</b>	<b>Identified archaeological potential</b>	<b>Identified archaeological significance</b>
Prehistoric	Low	Low (Local)
Roman	Low	Low (Local)
Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval	Moderate to High	Low (Local)
Medieval	Low	Local
Post Medieval	Low	Local
Modern	High	Negligible

## **5 Site Conditions, The Proposed Development & Review of Potential Development Impacts on Archaeological Assets**

### **Site Conditions**

- 5.1 The northern part of the site occupies a single large arable field bordered to the west, east and north by mature hedgerows and trees. The southern and central areas are occupied by buildings associated with the former mushroom farm facility.
- 5.2 Past ploughing and other agricultural activity across the site is likely to have had a widespread below ground archaeological impact. Any soil stripping, the cutting of footings and services and subsequent site clearance in association with the site's horticultural use, will have caused a more cumulative below ground impact.

### **Proposed Development**

- 5.3 The proposals comprise the demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site as a residential led development comprising 150 dwellings including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
- 5.4 The development proposals are shown on Figure 16.

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

- 5.5 The proposed development would not impact any designated archaeological assets.

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

- 5.6 The development will be located across the southern and central parts of the site. This part of the site has been occupied by various structures associated with the former nurseys since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Foundations, ground works and site stripping activities associated with this complex of former horticultural buildings are likely to have had an adverse impact on any shallow archaeological remains that may have been present.
- 5.7 The northern part of the site, where archaeological remains of a possible Anglo-Saxon date were identified, is to be retained as natural open. Assuming that no major landscaping works, including extensive tree planting, are proposed for this part of the site, the archaeological remains identified are unlikely to be impacted upon by the development.
- 5.8 Based on the available evidence and the extent of past ground disturbance it is considered unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant or widespread below ground archaeological impact.

## 6 Summary & Conclusions

- 6.1 The Former Thakeham Mushroom Site, West Sussex, has been assessed for its below ground archaeological potential. In accordance with relevant government planning policy and guidance, a desk based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the archaeological potential of the study site.
- 6.2 The proposals comprise the demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment of the site as a residential led development comprising 150 dwellings including affordable housing, land for the community land trust, works to public right of way and associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure.
- 6.3 In terms of relevant nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Historic Wreck or Historic Battlefield sites have been identified within the study site.
- 6.4 An evaluation undertaken on the northern part of the site identified evidence of possible pits, post holes and stake holes. Although these features were undated, they were postulated to form an extension of the Saxon settlement activity identified at South Hill Farm just to the north of the site. The remains were encountered in trench 18, located directly adjacent to the site's northern boundary. This part of the site falls within an Archaeological Notification Area, as designated by the Local Authority.
- 6.5 Based on the available evidence and in particular the results of the previous evaluation, the site is considered to hold a moderate to high potential for evidence of Anglo-Saxon settlement activity and a low potential for all other periods. Remains associated with the former 20th century nursery can also be anticipated, but are not considered to hold any heritage significance. However, it should be noted that evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity is likely to be limited to the northern part of the site.
- 6.6 The residential and commercial part of the development will be located within the southern and central part of the site. This part of the site has been occupied by various structures associated with the former nursely since the mid 20th century. Foundations, ground works and site stripping activities associated with this complex of former horticultural buildings are likely to have had an adverse and wide spread impact on any shallow archaeological remains that may have been present.
- 6.7 The northern part of the site, where archaeological remains of a possible Anglo-Saxon date were identified, is to be retained as open ground. Assuming that no major landscaping works, including extensive tree planting, are proposed for this part of the site, the archaeological remains identified are unlikely to be impacted upon by the development, and could potentially be mitigated by implementing a strategy for preservation in situ, agreed with the Local Authority.
- 6.8 The Local Authority's Archaeological Officer provided a consultation response for the previous application under Planning reference DC/24/0021 (Nick Truckle, dated 5/2/2024). The response stated;

*The northern part of the site is within an Archaeological Notification Area - DWS8558 Roman, Early Medieval and Medieval Occupation Activity, Thakeham. The application is supported by a desk based archaeological assessment by RPS that confirms that archaeological investigations in the north of the site in 2010 revealed evidence of pits and post holes thought to be an extension of a settlement dated from the 6th- 8th centuries recorded during the 1930s.*

*The area of the recorded archaeology is to be retained as public open space which will ensure that any archaeological remains are preserved in situ, as long as no intrusive landscaping or tree planting is proposed. The remainder of the site will have been disturbed to some extent by its past horticultural use but there is still potential for archaeology to be present and so a programme of archaeological work, commencing with a field evaluation, is appropriate for the central and southern areas of the site.*

*Archaeological deposits are both fragile and finite and the following condition is therefore recommended for the application in accordance with the National Planning Policy.*

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

- III) *No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*
- IV) *II) The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the archaeological site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition [i] and that provision for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. Reason: This matter is fundamental as the site is of archaeological significance and it is important that it is recorded by excavation before it is destroyed by development in accordance with Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

6.9 Considering this updated desk-based assessment has identified no change to the baseline, and the previous advise provided by the Surrey Archaeological Officer, it is recommended that any archaeological investigations required by the Local Planning Authority could be implemented under an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition applied to the development following planning consent.

## Sources Consulted

### General

British Library  
West Sussex Historic Environment Record  
The National Archive

### Internet

British Geological Survey – <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>  
British History Online – <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>  
Domesday Online – <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/>  
Historic England: The National Heritage List for England – <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>  
Portable Antiquities Scheme – [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)  
Thakeham's History – <https://thakehamparish.co.uk>

### Bibliographic

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard & Guidance for historic environment desk based assessment 2014, revised 2020.

Development Archaeological Services Ltd (DAS) 2010 An Archaeological Evaluation at the Chesswood Nursery Site, Thakeham, West Sussex

Development Archaeological Services Ltd (DAS) 2015 Summary Report on the results of the Phase 1 Archaeological Evaluation at Abingworth Nursery Site, Storrington Road, Thakeham, West Sussex

Department of Communities and Local Government *National Planning Policy Framework* 2012 (revised February 2019)

Department of Communities and Local Government/Department of Culture Media and Sport/English Heritage *PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* 2010

Historic England *Archaeological Priority Area Guidelines* July 2016 unpublished document

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment 2008 (new draft 2017)

Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1 The Historic Environment in Local Plans July 2015 unpublished document

Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment July 2015 unpublished document

Historic England Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets December 2017 unpublished document

### Cartographic

1724 Budgen Map of Sussex  
1795 Gardener and Gream Map of Sussex  
1806 Ordnance Survey  
1841 Thakeham Tithe Map

## Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

---

1875-76 Ordnance Survey

1909 Ordnance Survey

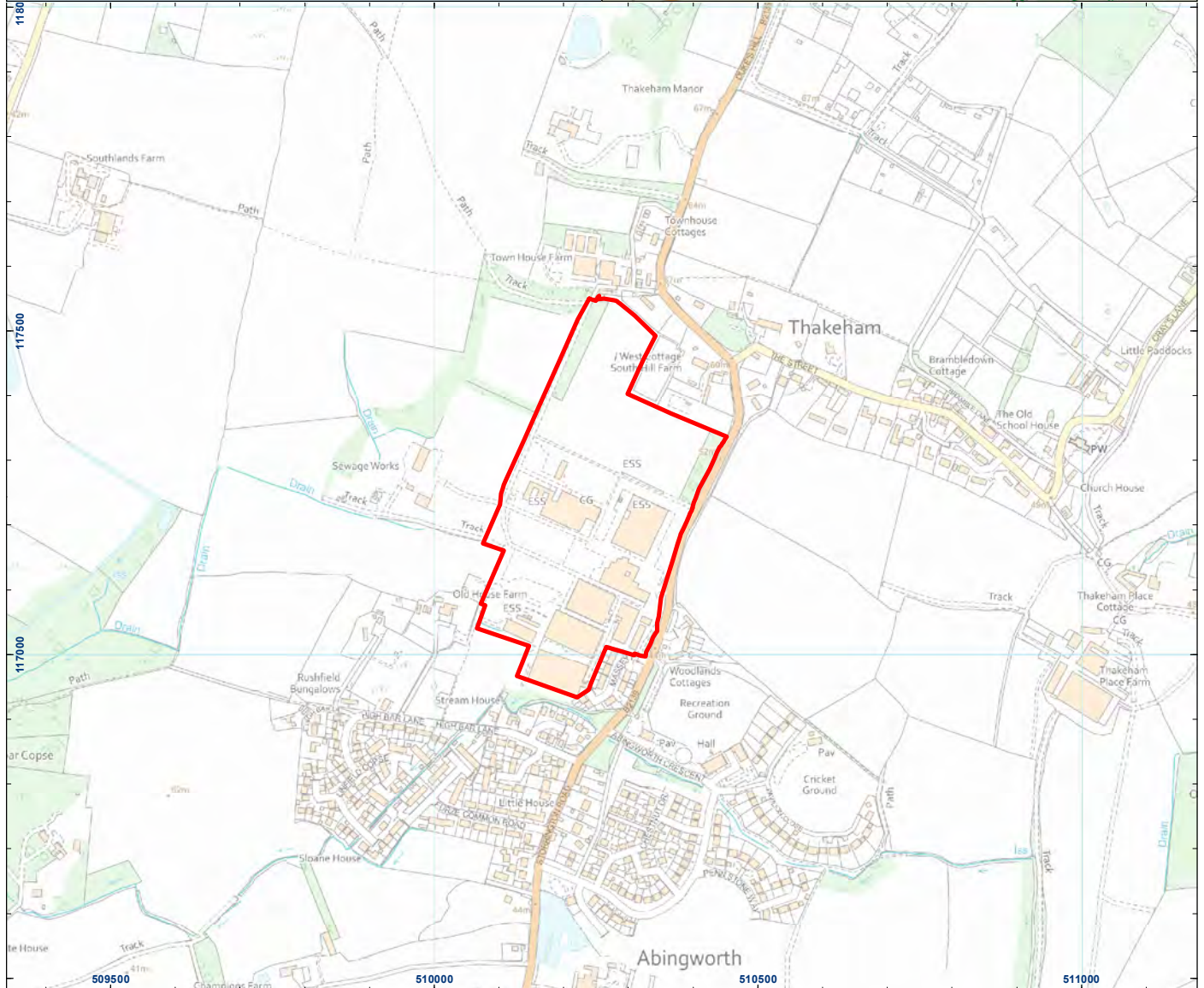
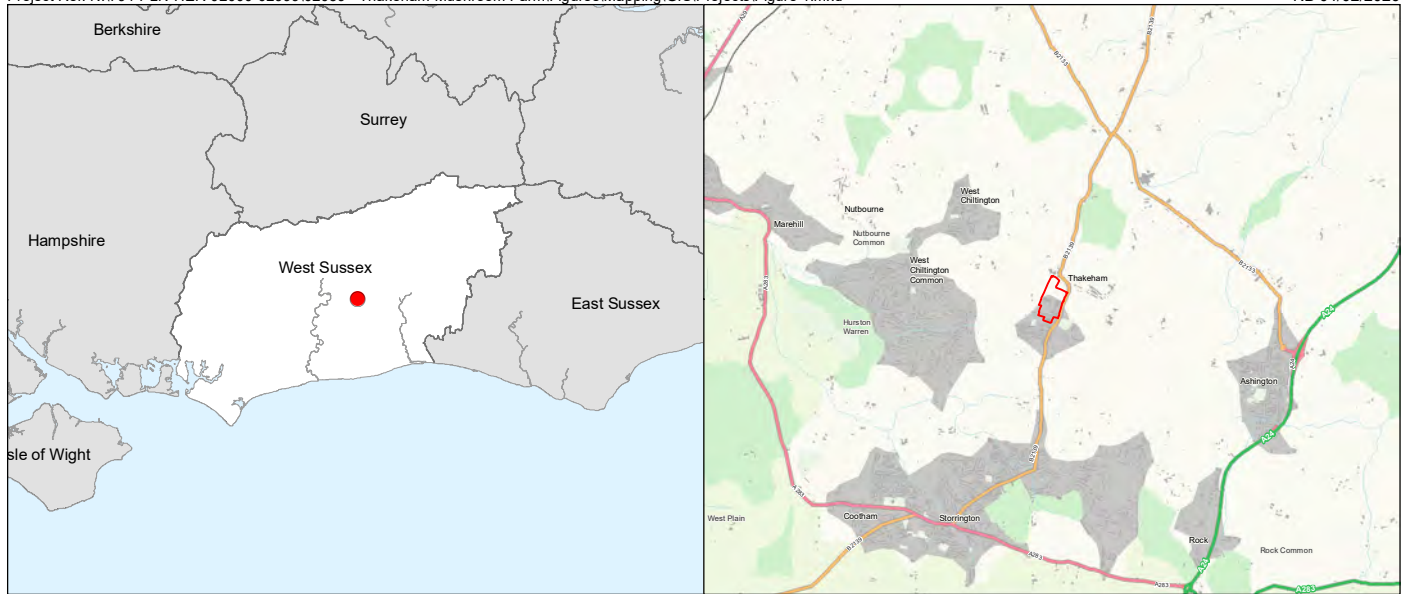
1946 Ordnance Survey

1957 Ordnance Survey

1976-80 Ordnance Survey

2001 Google Earth Image

2022 Google Earth Image



 Site Boundary

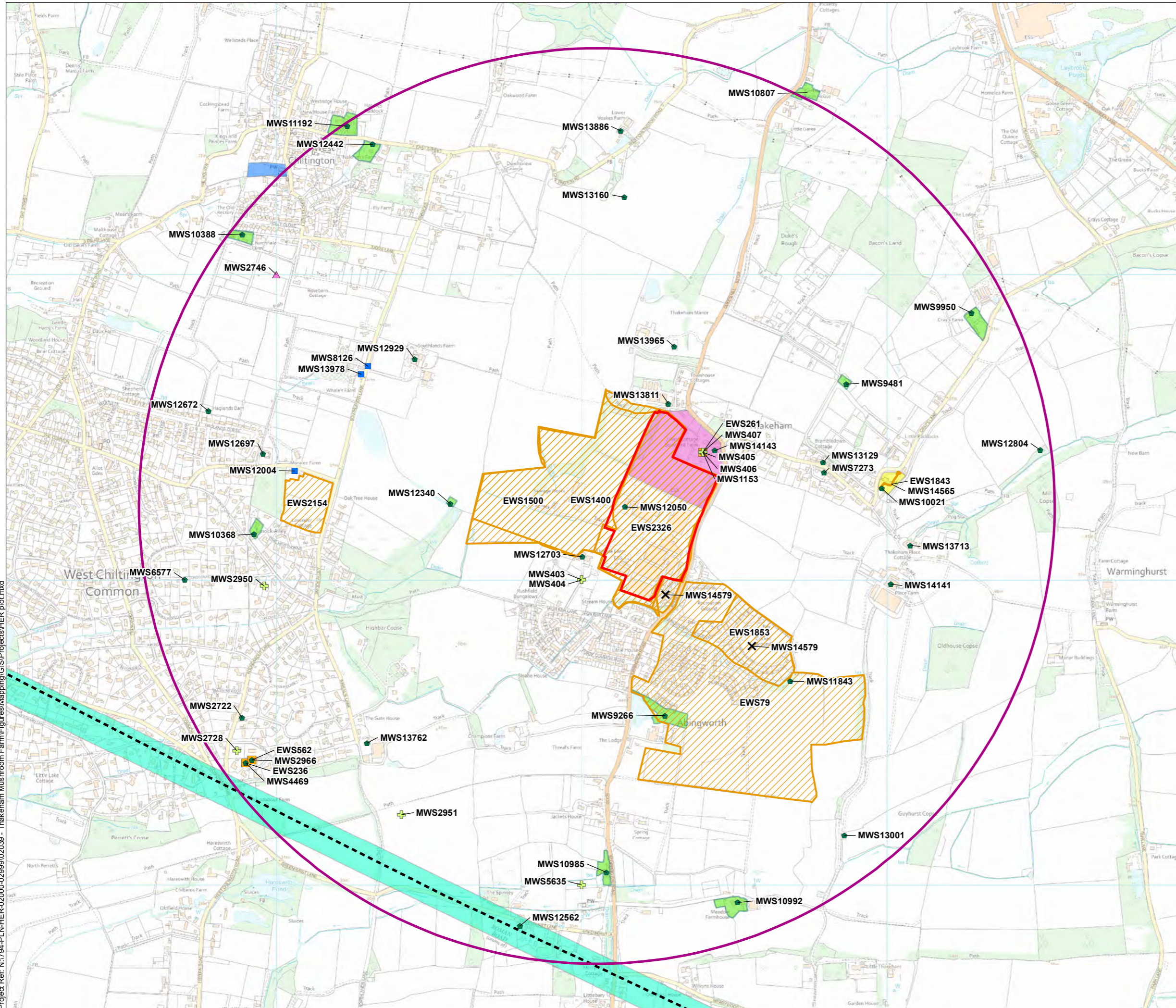


0 100 200m  
Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 1  
Site Location

Project Ref: N:\1794-PL\NHER-02000-02999\02039 - Thakeham Mustroom Farm\Figures\Mapping\GIS\Projects\HER\plot.mxd



**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- 1.5km search radius

**Non-designated Heritage Assets:**

**HER Records Points**

- Monuments
- + Findspots
- Buildings
- ▲ Landscapes
- ✕ Negative Evidence

**Projected Roman Road**

- MWS3786 - Barcombe Mills to Hardham Roman Road

**HER Records Polygons**

- Monuments

**Archaeological Notification Areas**

- DWS8558 - Roman, Early Medieval and Medieval Occupation Activity, Thakeham
- DWS8725 - Section of the Hardham to Barcombe Mills Roman Road through the Districts of Horsham and Mid Sussex
- DWS8557 - The Parish Church of St Mary, Thakeham
- DWS8560 - The Parish Church of St Mary, West Chiltington

**Previous Archaeological Work:**

- HER Events Points
- HER Events Polygons

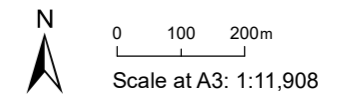
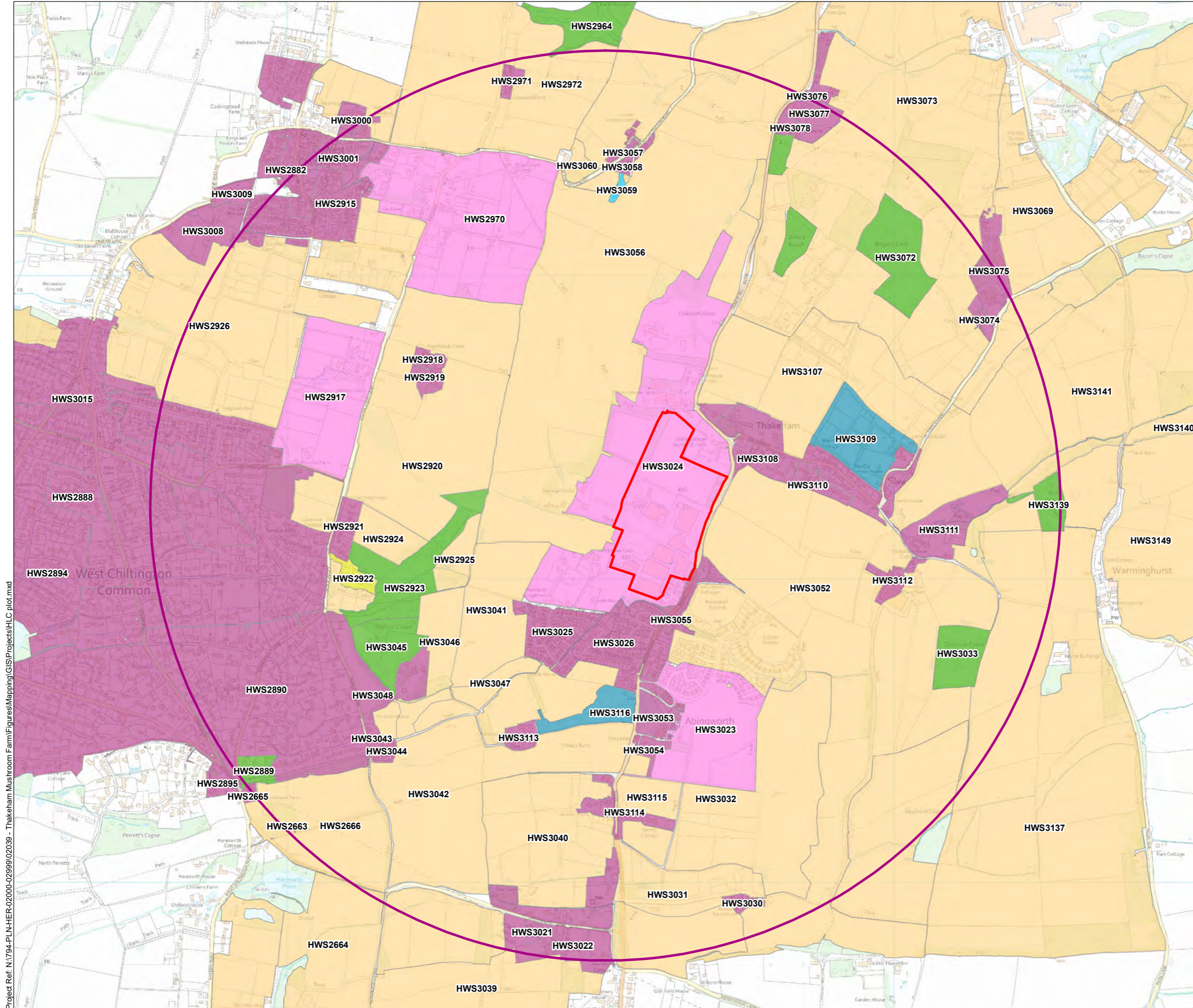


Figure 2a

HER Plot



**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- 1.5km search radius

**Historic Landscape Characterisation:**

- Designed Landscapes
- Fields
- Horticulture
- Industry
- Settlement
- Water
- Woodland

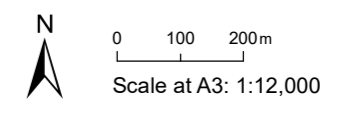


Figure 2b  
HLC Plot

Project Ref: N1794-PLN-HER-02000-02999-02039 - Thakeham Mushroom Farm Figures Mapping (GIS) Projects HLC plot.mxd



**Legend**

 Site Boundary

**LiDAR DATA**

Source:  
Environment Agency

Data Type: DTM

Resolution: 1m

Date Captured:  
19.12.2014 - 20.12.2014

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

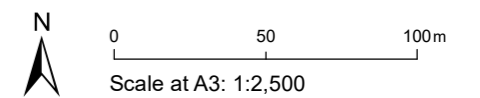
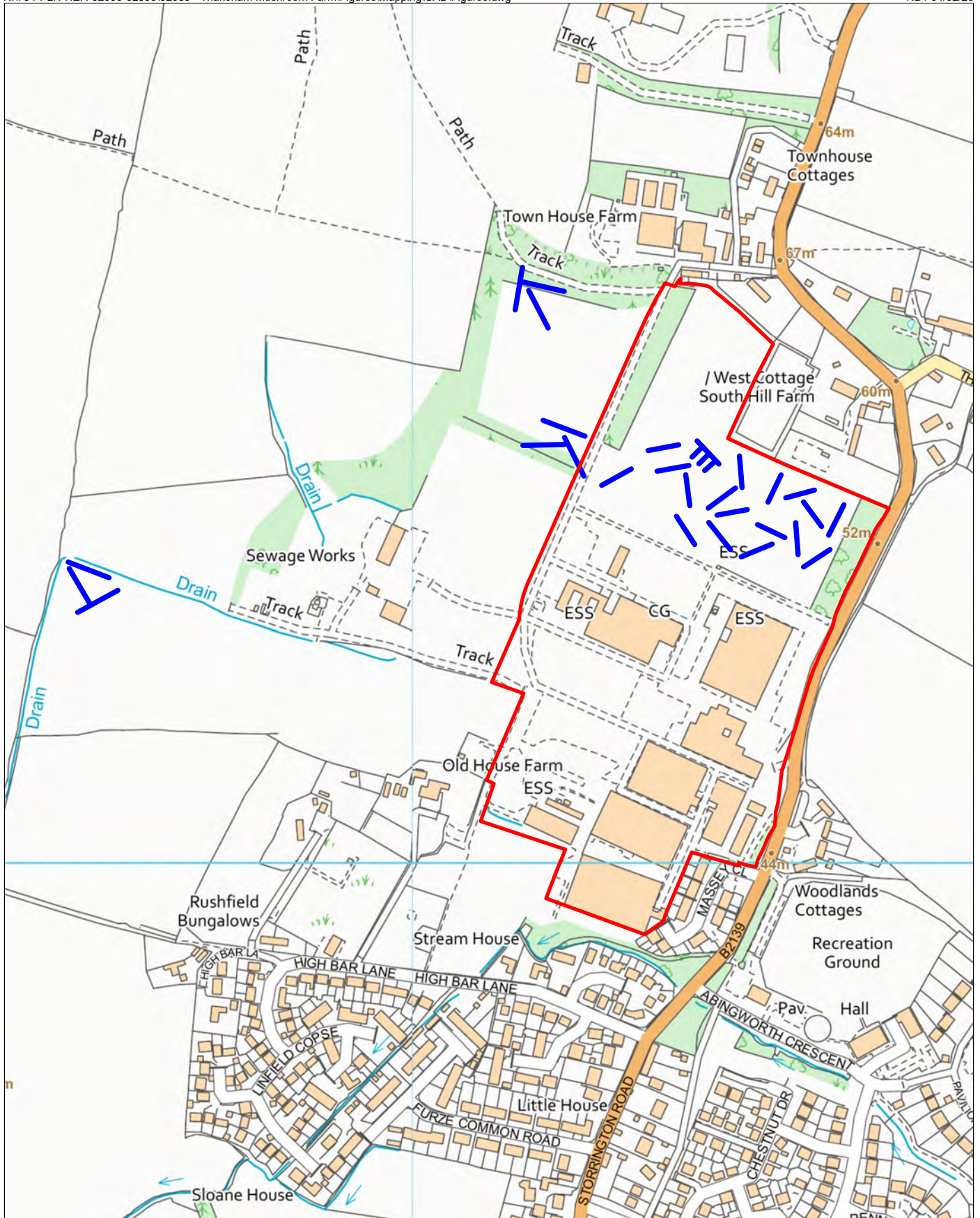




Figure 3

LiDAR Plot



-  Site Boundary
-  Previous Trial Trench




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



Figure 4

Previous Archaeological  
Evaluation Works (DAS 2010)



 Approximate site location



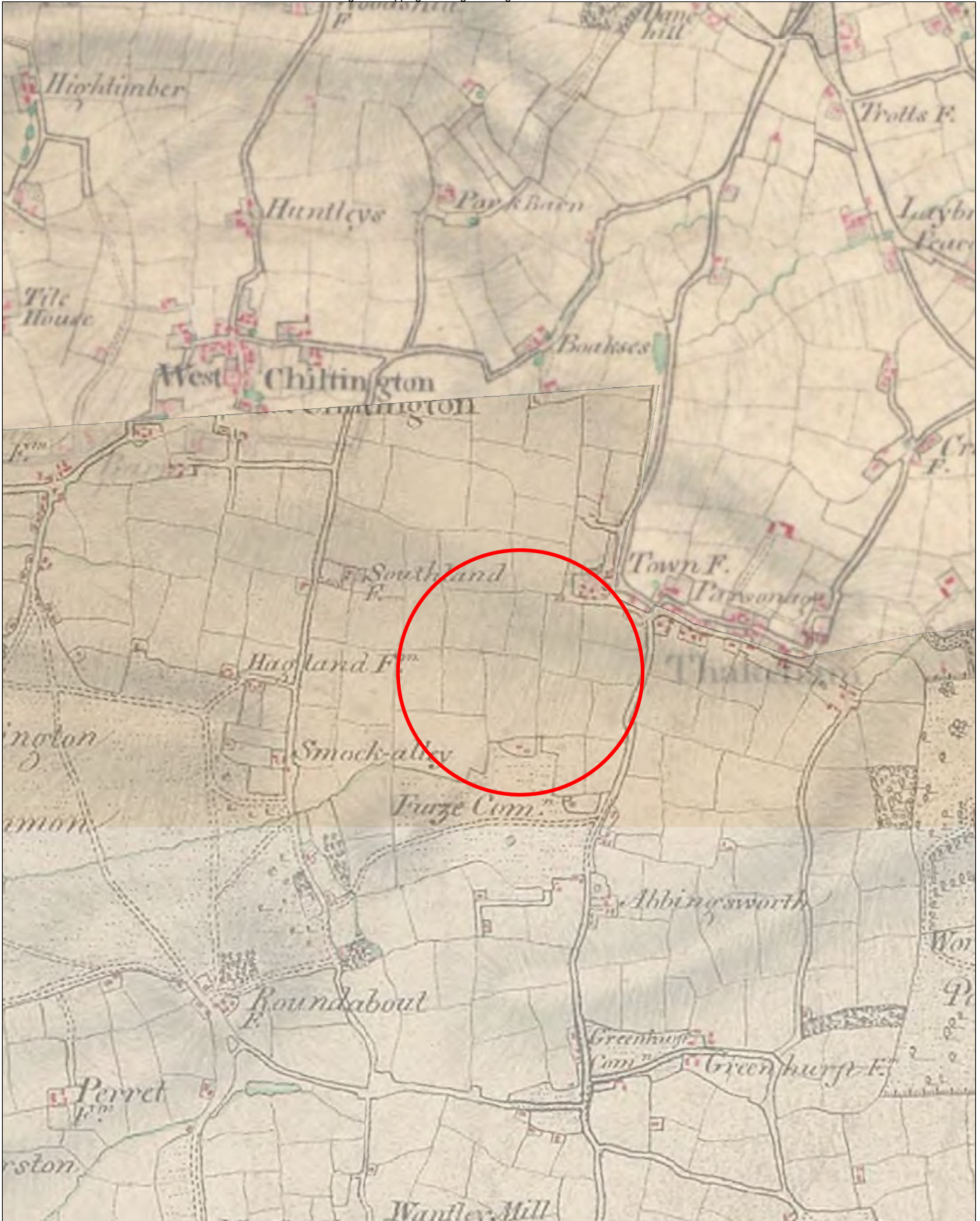
Not to Scale  
Illustrative Only



Figure 5

1724 Budgen Map of Sussex





 Approximate site location

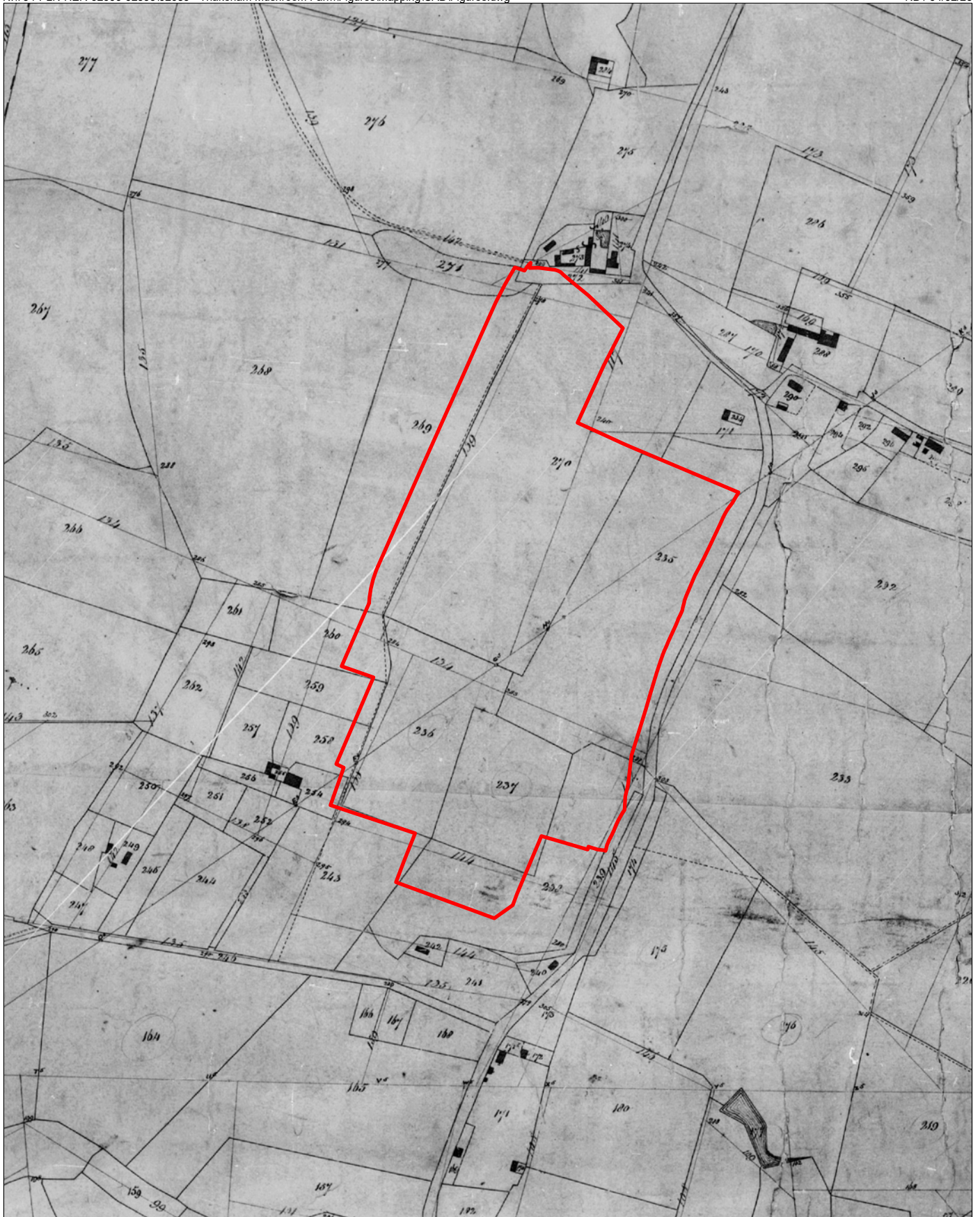


Not to Scale  
Illustrative Only



Figure 7

1806 Ordnance Survey Drawing



 Site Boundary

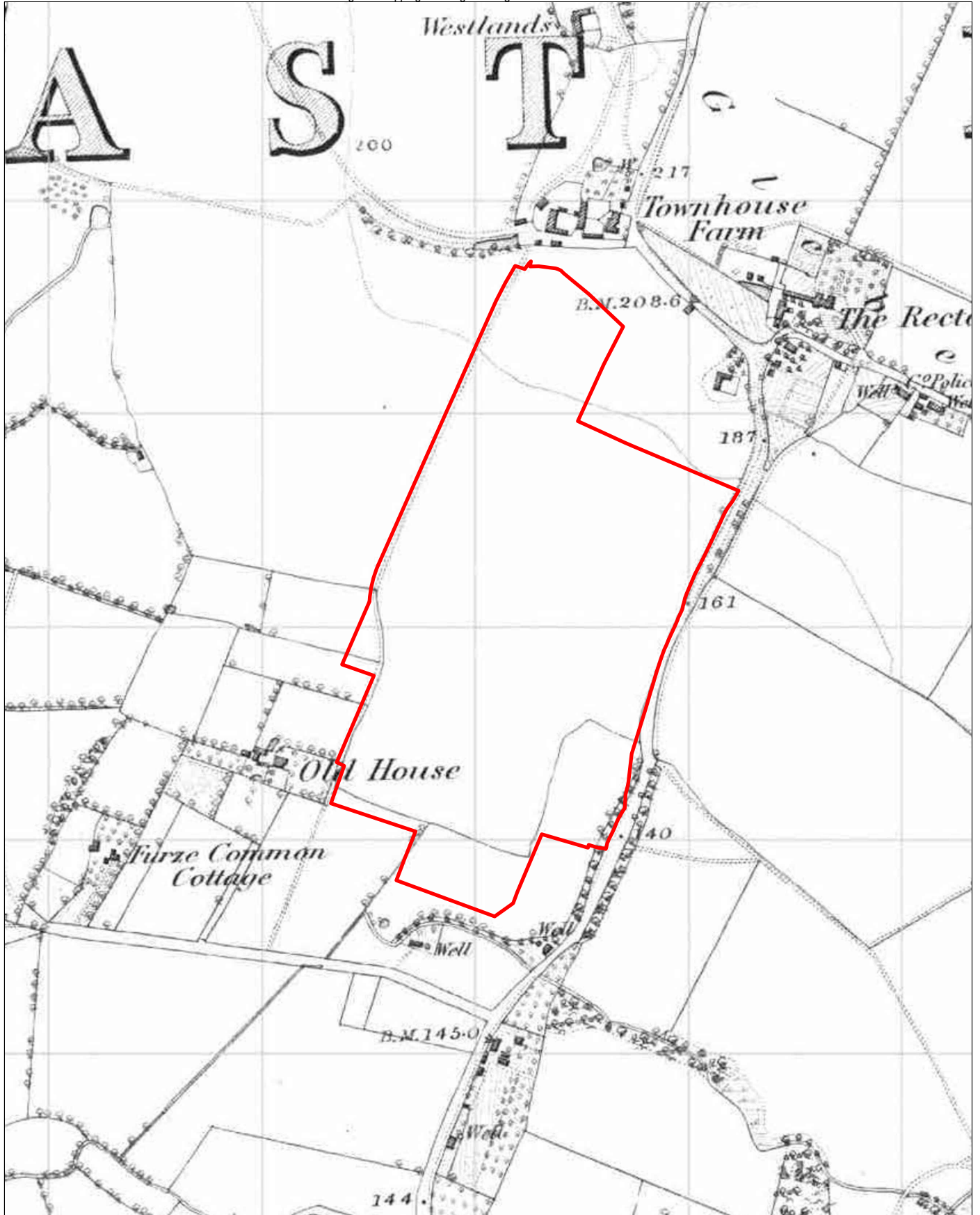


0 50 100m  
Scale at A4: 1:5,000



Figure 8

1841 Thakeham Parish Tithe Map



 Site Boundary

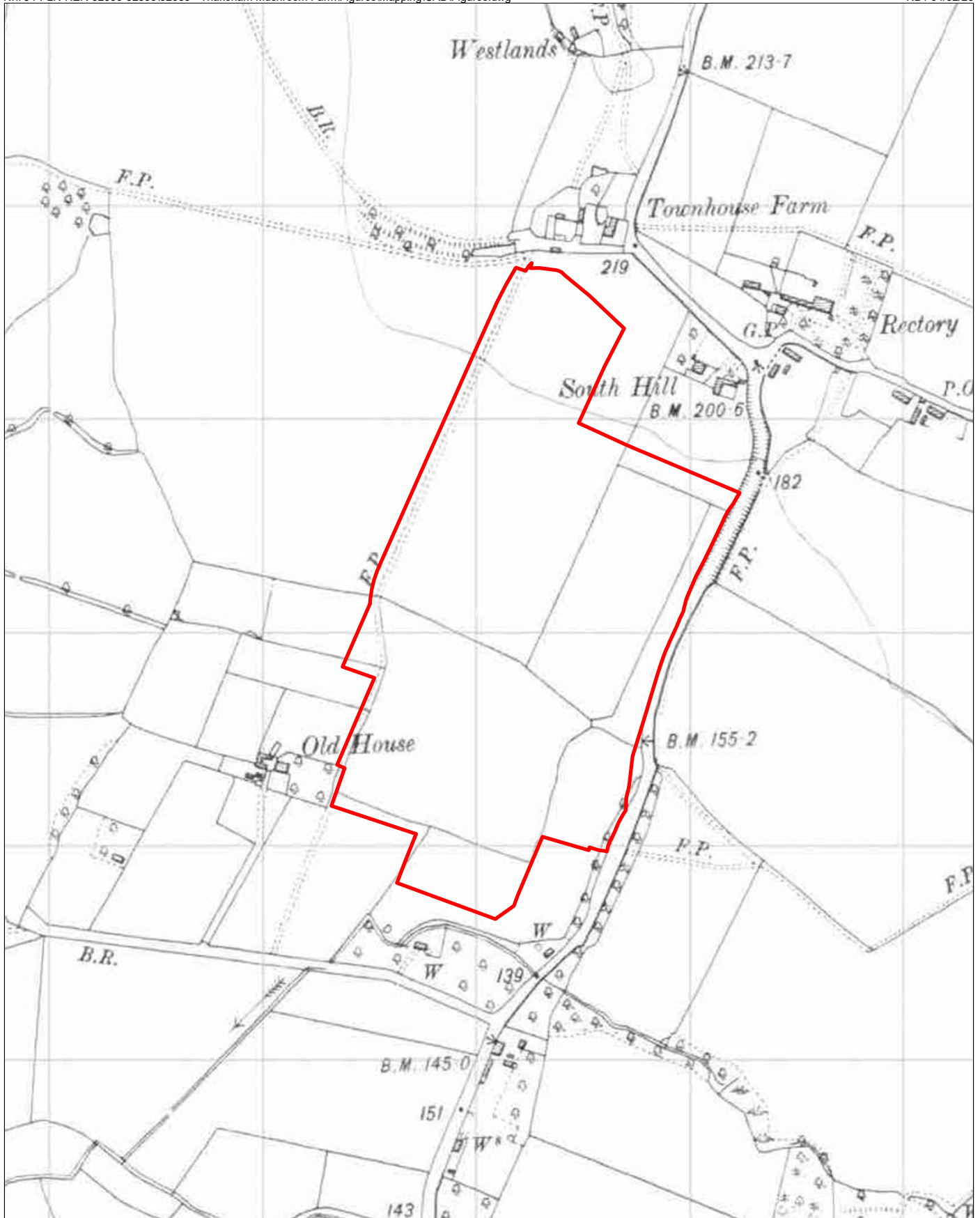


0 50 100m  
Scale at A4: 1:5,000



Figure 9

1875-1876 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary

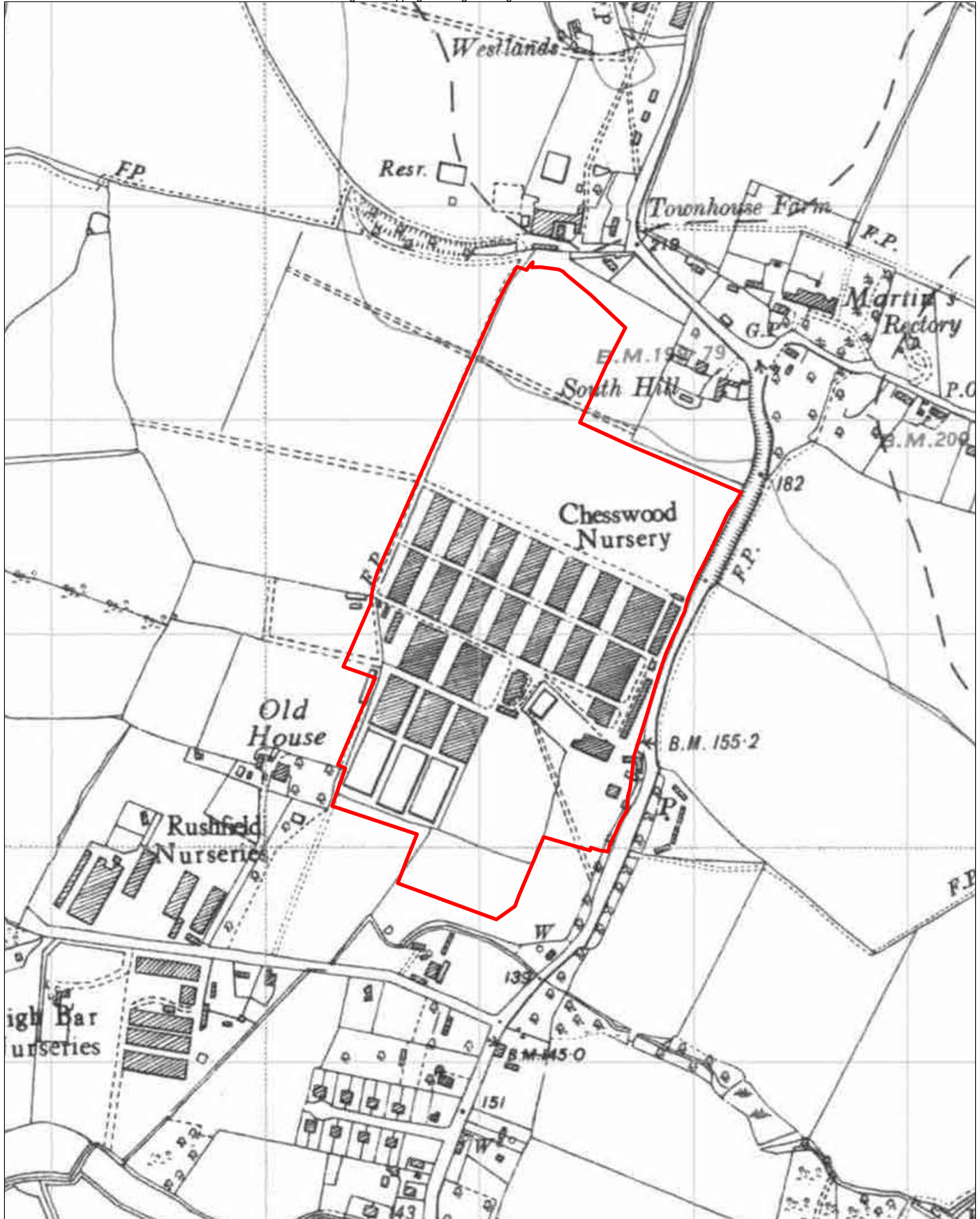


0 50 100m  
Scale at A4: 1:5,000



Figure 10

1909 Ordnance Survey Map



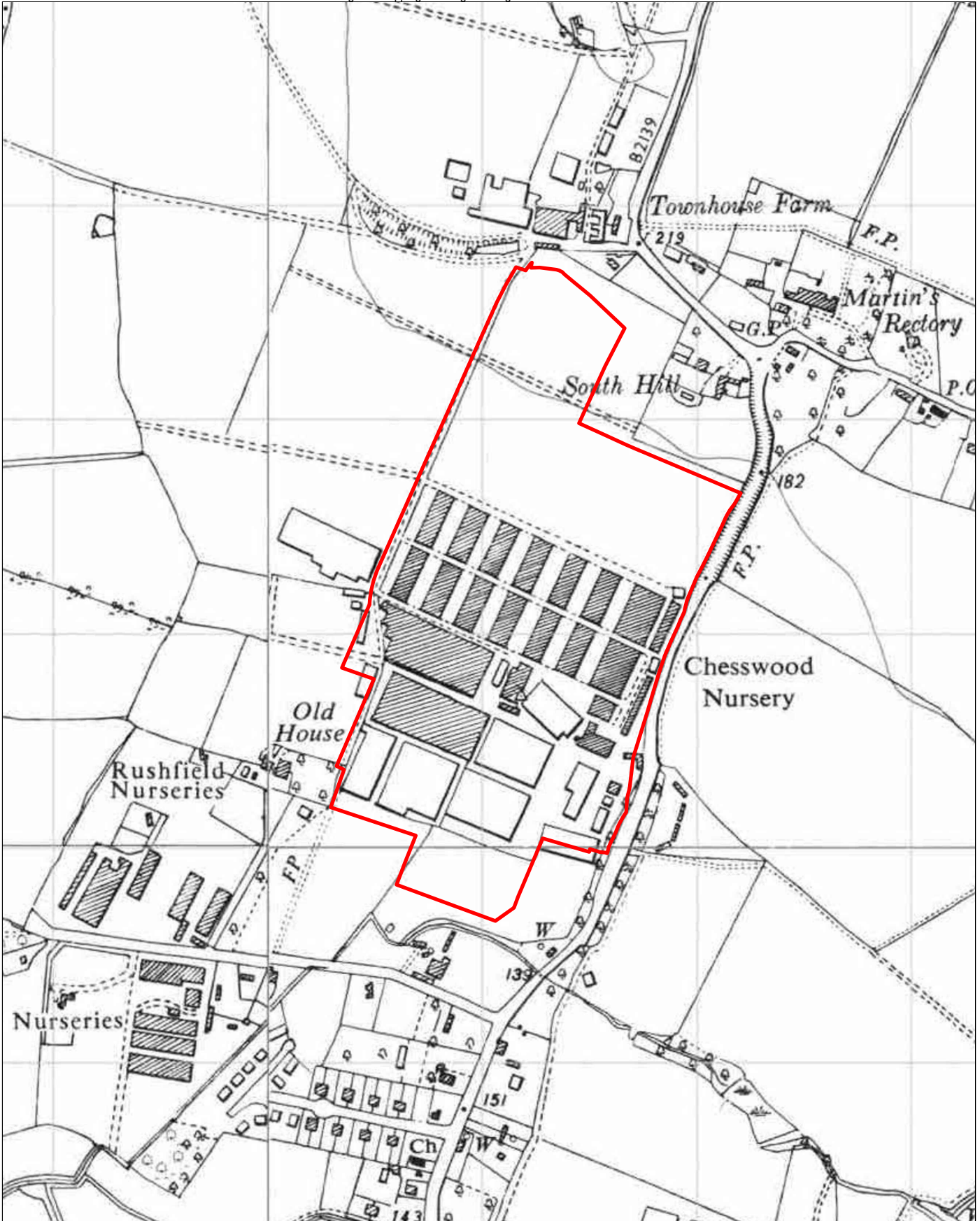
 Site Boundary



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



Figure 11  
1946 Ordnance Survey Map



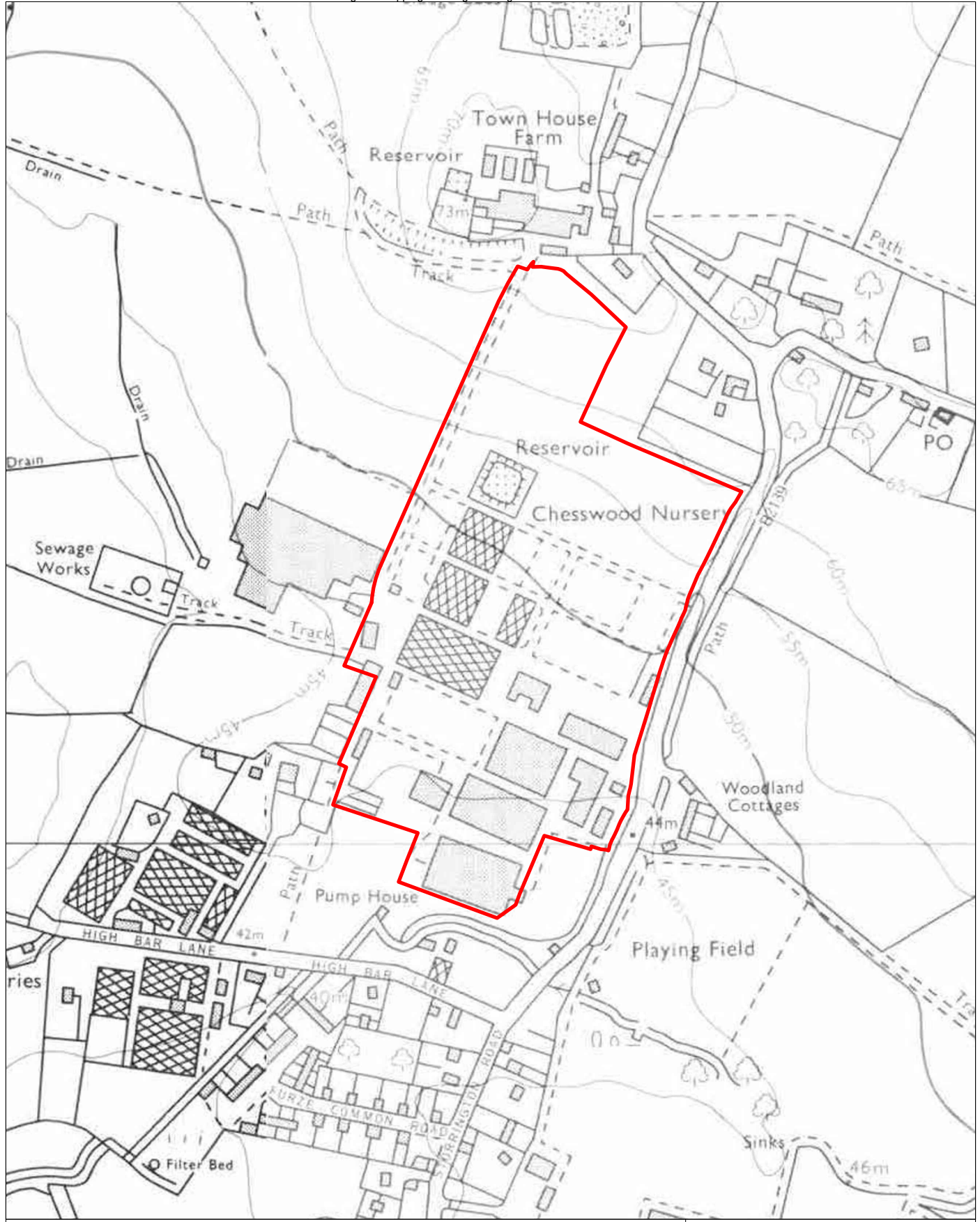
 Site Boundary



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



Figure 12  
1957 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



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



Figure 13  
1976-80 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



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



Figure 14

2001 Google Earth Image



 Site Boundary



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



Figure 15  
2022 Google Earth Image



Site Boundary



0 20 40 60 80 100m  
Scale at A4: 1:3,000

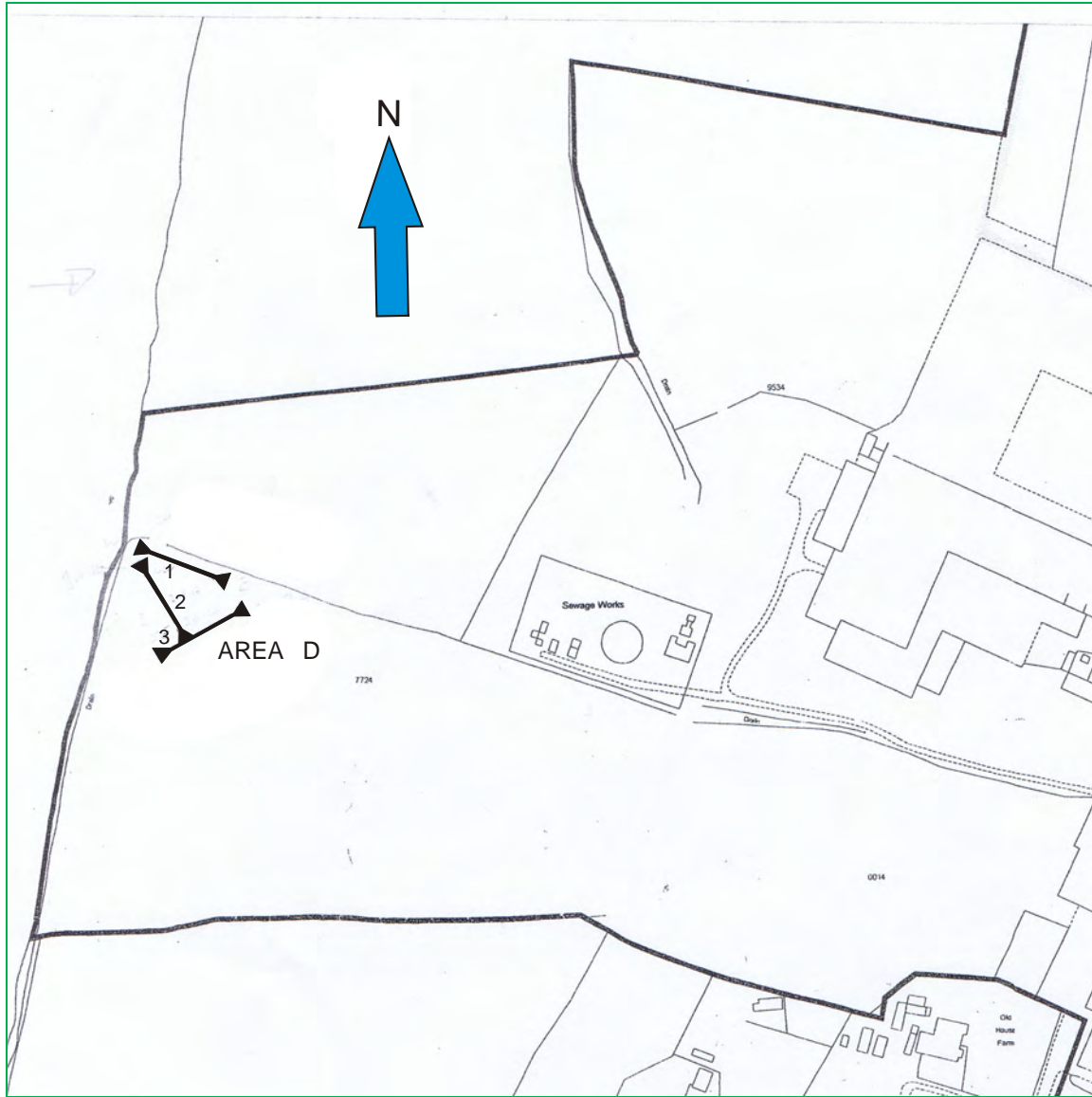


Figure 16  
Proposed Development

## Appendix 1

Location of previous evaluation trenches (Development Archaeology Services, 2010)





**Figure 2:** Plan of the Layout of **Trenches 1-3** (**Area D**) at an original scale of 1:2,500 at A4