



Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

Land East of
Mousdell Close,
Ashington,
Pulborough, West
Sussex, RH20 3GS



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Non-Technical Summary

This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by HCUK Group, on behalf of Penn Garden Properties Ltd, ahead of a proposed residential development including 75 residential dwellings with associated landscaping, services, and access routes (centred at: NGR TQ 12503 16352)

The assessment has confirmed that the Site contains no designated archaeological heritage assets such as scheduled monuments or registered battlefields. The West Sussex Historic Environment Record (WSHER) records 45 archaeological monuments within the 1km study area. Furthermore there are 12 previous archaeological investigations recorded as being carried out within the 1km study area, none of these have taken place within the Site itself.

The Site is considered to have a high potential to contain archaeological remains associated with the Post Medieval and Modern use of the Site. Such remains would likely relate to the agricultural use of the Site and/or a structure depicted on Modern aerial photographs. Furthermore there is a moderate potential for Early Medieval, Medieval and/or Roman archaeological deposits, and a low to moderate potential for Bronze Age remains and a low potential for remains of other Prehistoric periods to be identified within the Site.

The scope of any further archaeological works that would be needed in advance or during development of the Site would need to be discussed and agreed with the Historic Environment Team at West Sussex County Council.

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 This archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by Emma Cooper MCIfA of HCUK Group on behalf of Penn Garden Properties Ltd. The proposed development comprises 74 dwellings and associated landscaping, access routes and services (Appendix 1).

1.2 The site in question is known as Land East of Mousdell Close, Ashington, Pulborough, RH20 3GS (Figure 1), occupying an area of 2.19ha and centred at NGR TQ 12503 16352. It is hereafter referred to as the Site.

1.3 By way of introduction, the Site is formed of a roughly rectangular plot of land bounded by Rectory Lane to the north, Chanctonbury House and its environs to the east, other residential properties to the west, and woodland to the south. The Site is an empty field, with no existing structures.

1.4 The purpose of this assessment is to determine and assess the archaeological potential of the Site and to assess the significance of any relevant heritage assets identified. The report is informed by site inspection, historical information, and by data relating to heritage assets. It seeks to provide sufficient information to allow an informed understanding of the potential impact of the proposed development on the significance of those assets, and to consider the need for solutions where necessary. The report will not address designated or non-designated built heritage.

1.5 The report considers heritage assets of archaeological interest, including finds/findspots of artefactual and ecofactual material (e.g. stone tools, bone), and locations, features or objects referenced from historic documents. Where appropriate, it refers to archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits, including sub-surface archaeological remains of features, buildings and structures.

1.6 This assessment has been prepared in accordance with Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment¹ published by the Chartered Institute

¹ CIIfA 2020

for Archaeologists (ClfA). It takes into account the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other local planning policy and guidance where relevant.

1.7 This desk-based assessment comprises an examination of digital data held by the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (WSHER) together with documentary research. It incorporates a map regression indicating the impact of change over time.

1.8 This data has been collected for an area comprising a 1km radius of the Site boundary, which is referred to as the 'study area' and is shown on Figure 1. This radius has been selected on the basis of professional judgment as being sufficient to determine the archaeological potential of the Site, taking into account its location, topography, and character.

Geology and Topography

1.9 The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying solid geology across the Site as being mudstone of the Weald Clay Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed between 133.9 and 126.3 million years ago during the Cretaceous period.²

1.10 Furthermore superficial geological deposits have been identified across the Site as Head deposits made up of clay, silt, sand, and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposits formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.³

1.11 The soils of the Site are classified as being within the Soilscape 18 class, which are described as 'Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils.'⁴

1.12 The Site occupies a total area of c.2.1ha. The Site slopes down slightly to the south-west with the north-eastern corner lying at c.29.1m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) sloping down to c.26m aOD in the south-western corner.

1.13 A small stream runs east-west approximately 20m south of the Site, south of the woodland.

² British Geological Survey 2024

³Ibid

⁴ Cranfield University 2024

Site Visit

1.14 A site visit was undertaken on Monday 21st July 2025 by Jessica Reeves, Archaeological Clerk of Works at HCUK Group. No archaeological features were identified during this visit.

1.15 The Site consists of a single, irregular field, and was entered via a metal swing gate in the north-eastern corner. The ground directly inside the gateway was covered with a recent dump of Type 1 aggregate, presumably to provide a firm surface for access onto Site.



Photograph 1: North-east-facing view of the Site entrance off Rectory Lane, the area around the gate is covered with Type 1 aggregate.

1.16 The Site is currently not in use, and is an area of scrubland covered with mixed vegetation. The ground surface across the Site is loose and broken-up, it appears that the land was either landscaped, or ploughed, or similar before being left for a period of time. A spread of plant stalks/sticks across the Site also points to some sort of disturbance of the ground surface.



Photograph 2: South-facing view across the Site.



Photograph 3: View of the disturbed ground surface with scattered plant stalks/sticks.

1.17 The northern end of the Site is separated from Rectory Lane to the north by a row of dense trees along the northern boundary. The spindly appearance of these trees suggests that they were originally a hedgerow which has been left unmanaged and allowed to grow. A mixture of hedgerows and fences enclose both the eastern and western boundaries of the Site: a handful of residential properties with extensive rear gardens border the eastern side of the Site, whilst Penn Gardens housing

estate borders the western side. A new housing estate is currently under construction just beyond the hedgerow in the south-east corner of the Site.



Photograph 4: East-facing view of the house and garden which borders the eastern side of the Site.



Photograph 5: North-west-facing view of the housing estate which borders the western boundary of the Site.

1.18 The Site slopes downwards towards its southern boundary which borders an area of woodland. A ditch runs east to west along the southern boundary of the Site, it's

uniform sides and lack of vegetation suggest that this is a recent feature dug by a mechanical excavator. This ditch may have been dug to assist with water management on the Site, as there is a waterlogged area in the south-western corner which has been torn up by heavy machinery. There is a similarly affected area in the north-western portion of the Site.



Photograph 6: North-facing view of the south-facing slope within the Site.



Photograph 7: South-west-facing view of the machine dug ditch along the southern boundary of the Site.



Photograph 8: North-facing view of the waterlogged area in the south-western corner of the Site, deep machine tracks can be seen disturbing the ground in this area.

1.19 A number of small machine dug test pits are scattered across the Site, along with a number of areas of recently disturbed ground that likely indicate more backfilled holes. It's possible that these test pits relate to some form of ground testing.



Photograph 9: View of a small machine dug test-pit, one of several across the Site.



Photograph 10: View of a small area of newly disturbed earth, likely a backfilled test-pit.

1.20 The Site is very enclosed due to the high vegetation on all sides, and the flat nature of the surrounding landscape. From within the Site, very little is visible beyond the immediate properties, the exception being a hill which is visible over the hedgerow in the south-eastern corner of the Site. This hill represents part of the northern edge of the South Downs National Park.



Photograph 11: South-east-facing view of part of the northern edge of the South Downs National Park which can be seen from the Site.

2. Methodology

Sources

2.1 In preparing this assessment we have compiled readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources, primarily:

- West Sussex Historic Environment Record (WSHER) for known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots within 1km of the Site (i.e. the study area);
- Maps and documents held by online resources;
- The British Geological Survey (BGS) onshore digital maps at 1:50 000 scale;
- Soil Survey of England and Wales;
- The National Heritage List for England (Historic England); and
- Other relevant books, journals and grey literature reports that were identified in the course of the data collection.

2.2 The information gathered from the above sources has been verified and augmented as far as possible by site inspection by assessment and Site inspection, in order to arrive at conclusions on the significance of the various heritage assets and archaeological remains that have been identified during the course of this assessment.

Assessment

2.3 The assessment seeks to understand and define the significance of archaeological heritage assets identified from the sources above, taking into account the categories of special interest defined in the NPPF⁵, primarily archaeological interest, historic interest, architectural interest and artistic interest.

2.4 The importance of a heritage asset is the overall value assigned to it based on its heritage significance, reflecting its statutory designation or, in the case of undesignated assets, the professional judgement of the assessor (Table 1).

⁵ MHCLG 2025

Table 1: Criteria for Assessing the Importance of Heritage Assets

Importance of the asset	Criteria
Very high	World Heritage Sites and other assets of equal international importance
High	Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Battlefields, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, and undesignated heritage assets of equal importance
Medium	Conservation Areas, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens, Grade II Listed Buildings, heritage assets on local lists and undesignated assets of equal importance
Low	Undesignated heritage assets of lesser importance

2.5 The assessment also considers change to the setting and significance of heritage assets, where appropriate.

Archaeological Potential

2.6 The report concludes with:

- an assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site;
- an assessment of the significance of any archaeological remains that may be present; and
- an assessment of the likely effects of the proposed development on heritage assets, both in terms of physical impact and (where relevant) change to setting.

3. Relevant Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of February 2025 as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of the heritage asset can also contribute to its significance.

3.2 The assessments of setting and significance (and the assessments of impact) are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of special significance identified in the NPPF.

3.3 Paragraph 216 of the NPPF describes the approach to be taken towards non-designated heritage assets, as follows:

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

3.4 Footnote 75 of the NPPF, which is attached to paragraph 213, states that "Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets." Further guidance on non-designated heritage assets is contained in National Planning Practice Guidance, as revised in July 2019, notably paragraph 040 which states that "Irrespective of how they are identified, it is important that the decisions to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence", and paragraph 041 which in full reads as follows:

"What are non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest and how important are they?

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies two categories of non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest:

(1) Those that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments and are therefore considered subject to the same policies as those for designated heritage assets (National Planning Policy Framework footnote 63). They are of 3 types:

those that have yet to be formally assessed for designation.

those that have been assessed as being nationally important and therefore, capable of designation, but which the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has exercised his/her discretion not to designate.

those that are incapable of being designated by virtue of being outside the scope of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 because of their physical nature.

The reason why many nationally important monuments are not scheduled is set out in the document Scheduled Monuments, published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Information on location and significance of such assets is found in the same way as for all heritage assets. Judging whether sites fall into this category may be assisted by reference to the criteria for scheduling monuments. Further information on scheduled monuments can be found on the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's website.

(2) Other non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest. By comparison this is a much larger category of lesser heritage significance, although still subject to the conservation objective. On occasion the understanding of a site may change following assessment and evaluation prior to a planning decision and move it from this category to the first.

Where an asset is thought to have archaeological interest, the potential knowledge which may be unlocked by investigation may be harmed even by minor disturbance, because the context in which archaeological evidence is found is crucial to furthering understanding.

Decision-making regarding such assets requires a proportionate response by local planning authorities. Where an initial assessment indicates that the site on which development is proposed includes or has potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants should be required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. However, it is estimated that following the initial assessment of archaeological interest only a small proportion – around 3% – of all planning applications justify a requirement for detailed assessment.”

3.5 Paragraph 214 of the NPPF also makes provision for the recording of heritage assets that are likely to be demolished or destroyed by development.

Relevant Local Policies

3.6 The following local policies are relevant to the historic environment and this assessment. The Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park), adopted in November 2015, sets out the planning framework for the

area⁶ A new Local Plan is currently being created but the date for its adoption is not known at the time of writing this report.

Table 2: Local Policies

Local Plan	Relevant Policy
Horsham District Planning Framework	<p>Policy 34 Cultural and Heritage Assets</p> <p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 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

⁶ Horsham District Council.2015

	above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required, with any assessment provided as appropriate.
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4. Archaeological Background

Introduction

- 4.1** There are no designated archaeological assets, such as scheduled monuments or registered battlefields, within the Site. There are two scheduled monuments in the wider 1km study area, this are shown on Figure 3
- 4.2** There are nine Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs) within the 1km study area, none of these are within the Site. They are depicted on Figure 4.
- 4.3** There are two Historic Parklands within the 1km study area, none of which are within the Site, they are depicted on Figure 5.
- 4.4** There are 45 archaeological monument entries within the 1km study area, none within the Site. The map depicted on Figure 6 shows the distribution of WSHER monument entries within this study area.
- 4.5** There are 12 previous archaeological investigations recorded on the WSHER within the 1km study area. The distribution of these entries is depicted on Figure 7.
- 4.6** Assessment of potential impacts to non-designated or designated heritage assets of the built environment such as standing buildings are outside the scope of this archaeological assessment. However the location of these assets have been included for completeness.

Timescales

4.7 Timescales used in this assessment:

Table 3: Timescales

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 12,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 12,000 – 4000 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4000 – 1800 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.1800 – 600 BC	
Iron Age –	c.600 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Early Medieval –	c. AD 410 – AD 1066	
Medieval –	1066 – 1485	
Post-Medieval –	1485 – 1901	
Modern –	1901 – Present	

Designated Heritage Assets

Scheduled Monuments

4.8 There are two Scheduled Monuments within the 1km study area, depicted on Figure 3.

Roman building 200yds (180m) NW of Spring Copse (NHLE 1005826)

4.9 The building survives as below-ground archaeological remains, c.550m south of the Site, and is located on gently sloping ground above a stream. The building dated from the 2nd century AD and associated with a number of earthworks. A geophysical survey confirmed the location of the building and the extensive nature of the building indicates that it was probably a minor Roman villa.⁷

⁷ Historic England 2025a

Moated site and associated earthworks north west of West Wolves Farm, Ashington (NHLE 1011854)

4.10 The Scheduled Monument lies c.880m north of the Site, on low lying ground adjacent to the water meadows of a tributary of the Lancing Brook and includes an oval moated site with two associated pond bays.⁸

Listed Buildings

4.11 There are 20 Listed Buildings within the 1km study area, comprising one Grade I, one Grade II*, and 18 Grade II. None of these are within the Site.

Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs)

4.12 These are areas recorded by West Sussex County Council as indicating the existence, or probable existence, of archaeological heritage assets. There are nine Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA) within the 1km study area (Figure 4), none of these lie within the Site itself.

Table 4: Archaeological Notification Areas recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description
DWS8554	Roman Settlement Activity, a Medieval Moated Site, Church Farm Historic Farmstead and the Medieval Hamlet of Ashington
DWS8555	Bronze Age Settlement, Medieval Farmstead and Post-Medieval Iron Working sites, Ashington
DWS8556	The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Warminghurst
DWS8706	Moated Site and associated earthworks west of West Wolvesarm, Ashington
DWS8872	West Wolves Farm 17th Century Historic Farmstead, Ashington
DWS8873	Holmbush Farm 17th Century Historic Farmstead, Ashington
DWS8874	Yard to the east of Broadbridge Farm Medieval to Post-Medieval Historic Farmstead, Ashington

⁸ Historic England 2025b.

DWS8904	Jinkes Farm 17th Century Historic Farmstead, Ashington
DWS8906	Mitchbourne Farm Medieval to Post-Medieval Historic Farmstead, Ashington

4.13 The Roman Settlement Activity, a Medieval moated site, Church Farm historic farmstead, and the Medieval hamlet of Asington ANA (DWS8554) lies c.400m south of the Site. This area includes the Roman building Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1005826).

4.14 The West Wolves Farm 17th Century Farmstead ANA (DWS8872) lies c.500m north-east of the Site.

4.15 The Church of the Holy Sepulchre ANA (DWS8556) lies c.750m north-west of the Site.

4.16 The Mitchbourne Farm ANA (DWS8906) lies c. 770m south of the Site.

4.17 The Holmbush Farm 17th Century Historic Farmstead ANA (DWS8873) lies c.815m north-east of the Site.

4.18 The Moated Site and associated earthworks west of West Wolvesarm ANA (DWS8706) lies c.880m north of the Site. This ANA covers the Moated Site Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1011854).

4.19 The Bronze Age Settlement, Medieval Farmstead and Post Medieval Iron Working sites ANA (DWS8555) lies c.890m east of the Site. The ANA consists of late Bronze Age settlement debris, a Medieval farmstead, and Post Medieval iron working sites and possible kilns.

4.20 The Jinkes Farm 17th Century Historic Farmstead ANA (DWS8904) lies c.980m south-west of the Site.

4.21 Yard to the east of Broadbridge Farm Medieval to Post-Medieval Historic Farmstead ANA (DWS8874) lies c.990m south-east of the Site.

Archaeological Assets

4.22 There are 45 archaeological assets recorded on the WSHER within the wider 1km study area, none of these are within the Site itself (Figure 6).

Prehistoric

4.23 The WSHER holds records for four assets of Prehistoric date within the 1km study area, none of these are within the Site.

Table 5: Prehistoric assets recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MWS14415	Middle Bronze Age Palstave, Church Farm, Ashington	Findspot	Prehistoric
MWS3756	Late Bronze Age settlement – North-west of America Wood	Settlement; Enclosure; Findspot	Prehistoric
MWS6354	Land adjacent to Rectory Close, Ashington - Watching Brief	Flint Scatter; Ditch	Prehistoric
MWS7037	Bronze Age Activity - East of London Road	Occupation Site; Hollow; Ditch; Stake Hole; Post Hole; Building?	Prehistoric

4.24 The earliest phases of the Prehistoric (Palaeolithic and Mesolithic) comprised highly mobile hunter-gatherers. Finds from these periods tend to come in the form of stray finds within disturbed deposits and *in situ* settlement sites are a rare finds. There is no evidence from either of these periods recorded with the Site and wider 1km study area.

4.25 The Neolithic period is characterised by increasingly permanent settlements and subsequent woodland clearance around settlement sites. It was during this period that arable farming practices began and the utilisation of clay deposits to create pottery. The period is perhaps best defined by the large ceremonial funerary

monuments which littered the landscape. There is no evidence for activity from this period within the 1km study area.

4.26 The Bronze Age is characterised by the use of metal and the subsequent development of tools and weapons as a result. The technological advances seen during this period were mainly due to an influx of new settlers from the continent. During the middle and late Bronze Age period great field systems were seen in the landscape and more permanent settlement were established.

4.27 Bronze Age settlement activity (MWS3756, MWS7037) has been identified c.800m east of the Site. Excavations in 1999 identified a hollow containing Late Bronze Age pottery, a post-hole alignment, a possible building, a ditch, and a cluster of stake holes around a post-hole. Further excavations in 1993 (EWS425) identified further features containing late Bronze Age finds.

4.28 A Middle Bronze Age copper alloy palstave (MWS14415) was found in 2008 .260m south-east of the Site.

4.29 The final Prehistoric period, the Iron Age, sees more technological advancement with the use of iron to create weapons and tools. This period is also characterised by the large defensive hillforts, and evidence of ritual offerings of military equipment, suggest a shift in culture with an emphasis of the warrior aristocracy and the emergence of tribal territories.⁹ There is no evidence within the 1km study area for activity from the Iron Age.

4.30 An archaeological watching brief was carried out c.530m east of the Site on the land adjacent to Rectory Close, Ashington and identified a potential flint-working area (MWS6354). There is no definite date for this activity other than Prehistoric.

4.31 There is evidence that the area in which the Site lies was subject to some later Prehistoric settlement activity. As a result it has been determined that there is a low to moderate potential for activity dating to the Bronze Age period and a low potential for all other Prehistoric periods. Such remains would be considered of local (low) importance.

⁹ English Heritage. 2025.

Roman

4.32 The WSHER records four archaeological monument records of Roman date within the 1km study area.

Table 6: Roman assets recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MWS1290	Roman Building, Ashington	Occupation Site; Ditch; Building; Villa?	Roman
MWS15027	Possible Bath House Structure located East of the Spring Copse Roman Villa, Ashington	Bath House?; Kiln?; Oven?; Furnace?; Field System?; Ditch?; Pit?	Roman
MWS4033	Roman 'material' - Church Farm	Occupation Site?	Roman
MWS4968	Archaeological watching brief - Pipeline	Post Hole; Findspot	Roman

4.33 During the Roman period there was extensive corn growing across the South Downs and as a result transport links were established. The Greensand Way (Margary 140), which runs approximately 1.5km south of the Site, is one of these transport links. The road runs almost 25 miles from Barcombe Mills, in the east, to Hardham-on-Stane Street, to the west.

4.34 A possible Roman bath house structure (MWS15027) is recorded c.530m south-east of the Site. A magnetometry survey was conducted of approximately 2.5ha of land. The survey identified a number of anomalies including a structure. Thermoremanent anomalies indicate kilns, ovens or even a furnace.

4.35 Evidence of a Roman building (MWS1290) is recorded on the WSHER c.550m south of the Site, in close proximity to the bath house structure discussed above. The

evidence includes bricks, roof tiles, pottery glass, vitrified flints, and a coin. This could relate to the nearby structure.

4.36 Roman material (MWS4033) was identified c.480m south-east of the Site. The WSHER entry does not record what this material included but describes it as 'occupation debris' and discusses two very worn coins held at Worthing Museum which were 'from the villa site at Church farm'.

4.37 During a watching brief on a pipeline c.900m north-west of the Site a piece of possible Roman pottery (MWS4968) was recorded.

4.38 There is solid evidence that the Romans occupied the area which later becomes Ashington however the known activity lies in the southern extent of the 1km study area. Therefore there is moderate potential for remains of a Roman date to be identified within the Site. Such remains would be considered of local (low) importance.

Early Medieval and Medieval

4.39 The WSHER holds six monuments of Early Medieval and Medieval date within the 1km study area, none of these are within the Site itself.

Table 7: Early Medieval and Medieval monuments recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MWS31	Medieval park - Warminghurst	Park	Medieval
MWS3757	Medieval farmstead – North-west of America Wood	Farmstead; Field System; House	Medieval
MWS3772	Moated Site and associated earthworks west of West Wolves Farm	Moat; Pond Bay; Ridge And Furrow; Occupation Site	Medieval
MWS408	Site of Ashington Watermill, Ashington	Watermill	Medieval
MWS4254	Moated site - Church Farm	Moat	Medieval

MWS7038	Archaeological Evaluation and Gradiometer Survey on Land West of Ashington	Ditch; Pit?	Medieval
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4.40 The Site lies within the boundaries of what was the Andredsweald, a dense forest which stretched across the south-east between the parallel chalk escarpments of the North and the South Downs. The forest is described by Bede in c. 731 as 'thick and inaccessible; a place of retreat for large herds of deer and swine.'¹⁰ The forest covered an area 120 miles long and 30 miles wide and appears to have been sparsely populated.

4.41 Following the Norman Conquest the Andredsweald, although smaller in size due to clearance, became a vast Medieval deer park. Ashington is first recorded in 1073 as *Essington*, the name likely deriving from Old England meaning 'Farm/settlement of Aesc's people.'¹¹ This suggests that by this point the forest in the area of the Site had been cleared.

4.42 Following the Conquest the lands were granted to William Braose, lord of the Rape of Bramber, who resided at Bramber Castle, c.7.5km south-east of the Site. Prior to the Norman Conquest Ashington was held by Godwine, Earl of Wessex and father of King Harold II.

4.43 The 1086 Domesday Survey records the manor, which lay within the hundred of Easwrithe, in the hands of William Braose. The Survey records eight households and a small amount of ploughland, no church is mentioned.¹²

4.44 The earliest elements of the grade II* listed parish Church of St Peter and St Paul (NHLE 1027442) date to the 13th century. The village was originally a chapelry of Washington, so it was unlikely that there an earlier church within the village, though it was a separate rectory by 1190.¹³

¹⁰ Ashdown Forest, 2021

¹¹ University of Nottingham. 2025

¹² Williams, A. and Martin, G.H. 1992.

¹³ Sussex Parish Churches. 2025.

4.45 A gradiometer survey (EWS1987, MWS7038) was carried out across an area c.125m south-east of the Site. This identified a number of extremely weak linear anomalies and several possible pit forms, many of these were interpreted as agricultural features. A subsequent evaluation (EWS1988) identified shallow drainage ditches with the only dating evidence being a sherd of 13th century cooking pot.

4.46 A possible Medieval moated site (MWS4254) is located c.490m south-east of the Site. This is based on the 1st edition OS map. Another moated site (MWS3772) is recorded at West Wolves Farm c.920m north of the Site.

4.47 The site of Ashington watermill (MWS408) is located c.715m south-east of the Site.

4.48 A Medieval farmstead (MWS3757) or possible settlement site is recorded c.850m east of the Site. The farmstead was identified during an excavation (EWS425) in 1993.

4.49 A Medieval park (MWS31) is mentioned in 1331 c.620m west of the Site. The park is recorded as being owned by the Crown.

4.50 The Church of Holy Sepulchre (NHLE 1027448) lies c.800m north-west of the Site. The Grade I listed church is 12th century in origin with some alterations in the 13th, 16th, and 18th centuries.

4.51 The Site was likely subject to the clearance of the Andredsweald during the Early Medieval period. Later the Site appears to lie between settlements within the open field systems which surrounded the local villages of Ashington and Warminghurst.. Therefore the potential for archaeological remains of an Early Medieval and/or a Medieval date is considered to be moderate, and would likely relate to agricultural activities. If identified such remains would be considered of local (low) importance.

Post Medieval & Modern

4.52 The WSHER records 27 monument records of Post Medieval and Modern date within the 1km study area.

Table 8: Post Medieval and Modern assets recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MWS11672	Holmbush Farm Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS11960	Site of Leward Barn Historic Outfarm, Ashington	Outfarm	Post Medieval
MWS12331	Manor Farm Yard Historic Farmstead, Thakeham	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS12344	Martins Farm Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS12391	Mitchbourne Farm Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS13105	Site of Historic Outfarm South of West Wolves Farm, Ashington	Outfarm	Post Medieval
MWS13285	Park Barn Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS13400	Rectory Cottage Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead; Farmhouse	Post Medieval
MWS13808	Town and Park Farm Historic Farmstead, Thakeham	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS14074	Yard East of Broadbridge Farm, Ashington	Outfarm	Post Medieval
MWS14076	Yard East of Church Farm, Ashington	Outfarm	Post Medieval
MWS14970	Land South-East of Martins Farm, Ashington - Watching Brief	Ditch	Post Medieval
MWS32	Parkscape - Manor House Buildings	Park	Post Medieval
MWS409	Windmill - Ashington	Windmill	Post Medieval
MWS410	Post House? - Ashington	Coaching Inn?	Post Medieval
MWS4802	Brickworks on the East side of London Rd	Brickworks	Post Medieval

MWS6352	Ivy Close , Ashington - Excavation	Ironstone Workings	Post Medieval
MWS6363	Land North of Ivy cottage	Ditch; Ironstone Workings	Post Medieval
MWS6375	Land North of Ivy Cottage - Undetermined finds	Findspot;	Post Medieval
MWS6377	Land Fronting London Rd, Ashington	Findspot; Ditch	Post Medieval
MWS7032	Watching Brief, Mill Mead, Ashington	Boundary	Post Medieval
MWS7033	Watching Brief, London Road - Ashington	Field Boundary	Post Medieval
MWS7034	Watching Brief - Ivy Cottage - Ashington	Findspot	Post Medieval
MWS7036	An Archaeological Evaluation at Land Fronting London Road, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS9510	Broadbridge Farm Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead	Post Medieval
MWS9764	Church Farm Historic Farmstead, Ashington	Farmstead; U Shape Plan; L Shape Plan	Post Medieval
MWS7035	Watching Brief at Rectory Close	Findspot	Modern

4.53 Ashington remained as a small hamlet until the enclosure of the common land which surrounded it in the early 19th century. The settlement developed along the drove road (later the A24) and depended heavily on agriculture and horticulture. In 1802 with the construction of the toll road, which ran across the common, the village developed as a staging post.¹⁴ Nearly all of the Post Medieval records documented on the WSHER relate to agricultural buildings and farmsteads.¹⁵

¹⁴ Sussex. 2025.

¹⁵ White's Directory of Nottinghamshire 1832

4.54 Any further Post Medieval or Modern monument record within the 1km study area is considered not to contribute further to the archaeological potential of the Site. Therefore historic mapping has been analysed to further understand potential archaeological remains which could be present within the Site.

Historic Map Regression

4.55 Joan Bleau's 1662-5 *Svthsexia, Vernacule Svssex* map (Plate 1) shows the general location of Ashington within Bramber Rape.



Plate 1: *Svthsexia, Vernacule Svssex* by Joan Bleau, 1662-5

4.56 The 1749 *An Accurate Map of the County of Sussex* (Plate 2), by Bowen, shows the Site to the west of Ashington. There are no features depicted within the Site.



Plate 2: *An Accurate Map of the County of Sussex by Bowen, 1749*

4.57 A topographical map of the county of Sussex (Plate 3) shows the Site to the west of Ashington. The area in which the Site lies is undeveloped and an organised field system.



Plate 3: *A topographical map of the county of Sussex by Gardner and Yeakell, 1795*

4.58 The 1806 Steyning Ordnance Survey drawing (Plate 4) is the first plan to show the Site in some detail. This lies in an area which comprises enclosed parcels of land to the west of Ashington.



Plate 4: Steyning Ordnance Survey drawing, 1806

- 4.59** The 1847 Ashington Tithe Plan (Figure 10) depicts the Site as sitting within one plot, plot 97. This plot is undeveloped and the accompanying tithe apportionment, dated 14th July 1847, lists the plot as being arable land and called 'Summer Field'.
- 4.60** The apportionment is owned by Sir Charles Merrik Burrel. The Burrel family were a large landowner in West Sussex and resided at Knepp Castle House, which lay c.3.5km north-west of the Site. Burrel was elected MP for New Shoreham and held the seat until his death in 1862.
- 4.61** The occupier is listed as Walter Peachy and the 1851 Census states that he was a 'farmer of 150 acres' and lived at Church Farm, c.470m south-east of the Site.
- 4.62** The 1875 1:2500 County Series Ordnance Survey map (Figure 11) shows the Site as undeveloped. Rectory lane runs east-west along the northern boundary of the Site and the Site is surrounded by other undeveloped fields.
- 4.63** There is no change to the Site or its immediate surroundings until the 1937-1939 1:2500 County Ordnance Survey plan (Figure 12). This map shows residential dwellings have been constructed immediately east and west of the Site. There are no further changes to the Site, on later mapping after 1937-1939.

4.64 There was little change to the Site throughout the Post Medieval period with the Site lying between nucleated settlements and it being utilised for agriculture. There is a high potential for archaeological remains associated with the Post Medieval or Modern periods to be identified within the Site, and these would likely relate to agricultural activities and would be considered of local (low) importance.

Unknown

4.65 The WSHER records four monument records of Unknown date within the 1km study area.

Table 9: Assets of unknown date recorded on the WSHER within 1km of the Site

Preferential Reference Number	Name/Description	Monument Type	Period
MWS14972	Land adjacent to the BP Filling Station, Ashington - Watching Brief	Negative Evidence	Unknown
MWS3755	Undated kilns - south of Martins Farm	Kiln	Unknown
MWS7039	Watching Brief at Well House, Ashington	Negative Evidence	Unknown
MWS7274	Archaeological evaluation - Church Close	Negative Evidence	Unknown

4.66 These include three records relating to negative archaeological evidence during archaeological investigations. None of these are within close proximity to the Site.

4.67 Two undated kilns (MWS3755) are recorded c.790m east of the Site.

Previous Archaeological Work

4.68 The WSHER holds 12 records for previous archaeological investigations having been carried out within the wider 1km study area (Figure 7). None of these were carried out within the Site.

Table 10: Previous Archaeological Investigations recorded on the WSHER within the 1km Study Area

Event ID Number	Name
EWS410	Part Excavation - Roman Building, Ashington
EWS425	Part excavation, Priestley-Bell G, 1993
EWS786	Land at Ashington, Horsham - Desk Based Assessment
EWS1383	Church Farm, Ashington - Geophysical Survey
EWS1728	Land at Ashington Mill, Ashington - Desk Based Assessment
EWS1924	Church Farm - Site of a Roman Villa, Ashington - Geophysical Survey
EWS1939	Land South-East of Martins Farm, Ashington - Watching Brief
EWS1941	Land adjacent to the BP Filling Station, Ashington - Watching Brief
EWS1987	Gradiometer Survey on Last West of Ashington
EWS1988	Archaeological Evaluation on Land West of Ashington
EWS1990	Geophysical Survey at Land East of the Roman Building at Ashington, West Sussex
EWS1992	Ashington Site 5 and Site 6 - Heritage Assessment

4.69 These investigations include four geophysical surveys, two archaeological desk-based assessments, two excavations, two watching briefs, one heritage impact assessment, and one trial trench evaluation.

4.70 One heritage assessment (EWS1992) was carried out on a parcel of land immediately south of the Site.

Aerial Photographs

4.71 There is one historic aerial photograph which shows the Site (raf_58_3012_f22_0178 – taken 8th July 1959). This shows the Site as undeveloped.

4.72 An aerial photograph taken in 2001 shows the Site utilised as pasture and a small structure is depicted in the north-eastern corner of the Site.

4.73 The most recent aerial photograph of the Site (Figure 13), taken May 2025 shows the Site as entirely undeveloped and used as arable land.

LiDAR

4.74 LIDAR data (1m resolution from 2024, Figure 9) has been downloaded for the Site to enable interrogation through QGIS software using hillshade settings and variations of light angles and azimuth heights. This shows no obvious archaeological features within the Site. There is some evidence for ploughing activity however this appears to be modern.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Types

4.75 There is one Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) broad type for the land within which the Site lies (Figure 8): Formal Enclosure – Planned Private Enclosure, this is classed under the *Fieldscapes* Broad Type. The HLC Report states:

Planned private enclosures are those fields which show all the characteristics of Parliamentary Enclosure but for which there is no formal act. They are regular shaped fields of medium to large size with strong regular pattern and bounded by straight hedges.¹⁶

¹⁶ https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/1776/sussex_hlc_volume_4.pdf

5. Impact Assessment

Proposed Development

5.1 The proposed development comprises 74 residential dwellings, with associated landscaping, services, and access routes (Appendix 1).

Factors Affecting Archaeological Survival

5.2 Archaeological remains can survive as earthworks and as below ground archaeological features, finds and layers. Part of the assessment process is to consider what factors may have affected archaeological survival. That is to say, what conditions would have enhanced the chances of survival and what conditions would have reduced the chances of survival.

5.3 The subject of archaeological preservation has been covered comprehensively elsewhere¹⁷, and it is a subject which is subject to ongoing review as our understanding grows. The following addresses some familiar scenarios for assessment reports such as this, to allow the reader an insight into some 'typical' scenarios.

5.4 In rural locations, below ground remains are likely to be sealed by a relatively thin series of layers. Typically a topsoil of c.100-200mm and a subsoil of 100-300mm. Therefore, they may be sealed by 200-500mm of deposits. There are variations to this including landscapes affected by colluvial or alluvial deposits. There are also Peat rich area where soil deposits can be significantly deeper. Earthworks are most common in areas not subject to modern, mechanised ploughing, although earthworks can be preserved in hedgerows, wooded areas and even as plough-reduced remnants within arable fields.

5.5 Pasture/grassland provides a relatively static condition for archaeological remains. Whilst areas which have undergone mechanised ploughing especially of deep rooting crops (e.g. Sugar Beet) have a higher probability of some truncation to below ground archaeological deposits.

¹⁷ Historic England 2016.

5.6 Hydrology has a significant role to play in the preservation of remains and proximity to watercourses and wetlands should be considered as it affects the variety and type of artefacts/ecofacts that could be present on a site. Drainage for agricultural or mineral extraction reasons can affect hydrology and therefore remove the conditions in which waterlogged remains may survive.

Assessment of Significance

5.7 This assessment of significance has been guided by the National Planning Policy Framework, which define significance as:

*'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'*¹⁸

Furthermore it will be guided by Historic England's guidance *Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance*. This states:

*'heritage values that can be ascribed to a place' can be grouped into four values: Evidential, Historic (illustrative or associative), Aesthetic and Communal.*¹⁹

5.8 Previous archaeological investigations, recorded on the WSHER, document evidence for Bronze Age settlement within the Ashington area. The focus of activity appears to have been in the eastern extent of the study area however it is likely that those who lived there utilised the wider area. If remains associated with this period were to be identified within the Site then these would yield significance due to their *evidential* value as they would identify the extents of this settlement activity.

5.9 The WSHER records Roman activity within the 1km study area and the Site lies c.530m north of a Scheduled Monument which covers the remains of a probable Roman bathhouse (NHLE 1005826). Therefore which settlement activity seems to focus further south there is a potential that the Site lay within the hinterland which surrounded such settlements, and was often utilised for agricultural purposes. Archaeological remains associated with activity from this period would yield

¹⁸ MHCLG 2021

¹⁹ Historic England 2008

significance due to their *evidential* value as they would expand the known extents and nature of Roman activity within the area.

5.10 Based on historic mapping, LiDAR analysis, and data supplied by the WSHER the Site lies within the hinterland that lies between the settlements of Warminghurst and Ashington. The area has likely been utilised for agricultural activities, such as ploughing, land division and drainage, throughout the Medieval and Post Medieval periods. Such remains would yield significance due to their *evidential* value as they would help identify how the land was divided and farmed during these periods.

5.11 The potential for previously unknown archaeological remains to survive within the proposed development area should not be discounted, and any such remains will have significance due to *evidential* value, as they would provide proof of earlier unknown human activity, and would possess illustrative historical value, as such remains would expand the current historical timeline of the area. The significance of such remains cannot be assessed without field evaluation.

Potential Effects

5.12 There is the potential for direct physical impacts to heritage assets during the construction phase of any future development of the Site, as any ground moving activities associated with the proposed works would have the potential to expose, damage or destroy hitherto unknown archaeological remains. Such activities could include piling, topsoil stripping, ground reduction, digging of service trenches and landscaping.

5.13 The scope of any further archaeological works that would be needed in advance or during development of the Site would need to be discussed and agreed with the Archaeological Advisor to the local planning authority.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The development proposals are for 74 residential dwellings, with associated infrastructure, services, and landscaping.

6.2 Based on information held by the WSHER, supplemented by historic mapping, the Site is considered to have a high potential for archaeological remains relating to the Post Medieval and Modern periods, which would likely relate to agricultural activities such as ploughing, land division and drainage and a structure shown on modern aerial photographs. There is also a moderate potential for archaeological remains associated with similar Medieval agricultural activities and Roman deposits. Additionally the Site's proximity to Bronze settlement activity suggests there is a low to moderate potential for archaeological remains from this period.

6.3 The following table details the archaeological potential ascribed to the Site by period and an assessment of the likely archaeological importance of any remains of those periods should they survive.

Table 11: Assessed Archaeological Potential and Importance by period

Period	Archaeological Potential	Archaeological Importance
Prehistoric	Low to Moderate	Local
Roman	Moderate	Local
Early Medieval/Medieval	Moderate	Local
Post Medieval/Modern	High	Local

6.4 On the basis of available evidence, it is considered that the proposed development accords with current legislation, the planning policies contained within the NPPF and the policies of the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework. The site has been subject to desk-based assessment and the archaeological potentials and importance have been assessed. The proposals do not impact on any designated archaeological sites or areas of archaeological importance highlighted within the Horsham District Planning Framework.

6.5 The scope of any further archaeological works that would be needed in advance or during development of the Site would need to be discussed and agreed with West

Sussex Historic Environment Team at West Sussex County Council who are the nominated Archaeological Advisors to the local planning authority.

7. Bibliography

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1875 1:2500 County Series Ordnance Survey plan

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2025 Google Satellite Image

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8. Figures

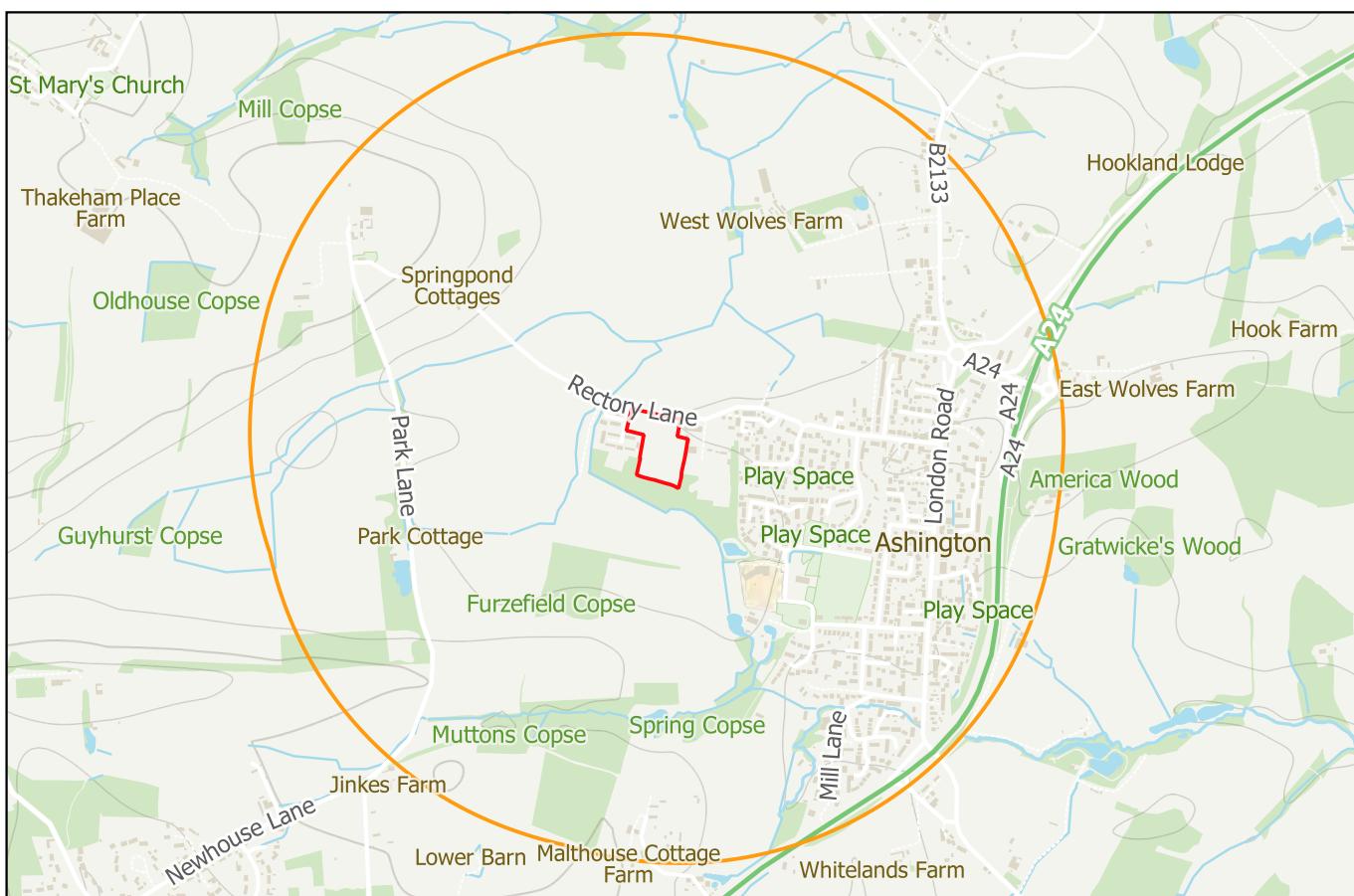
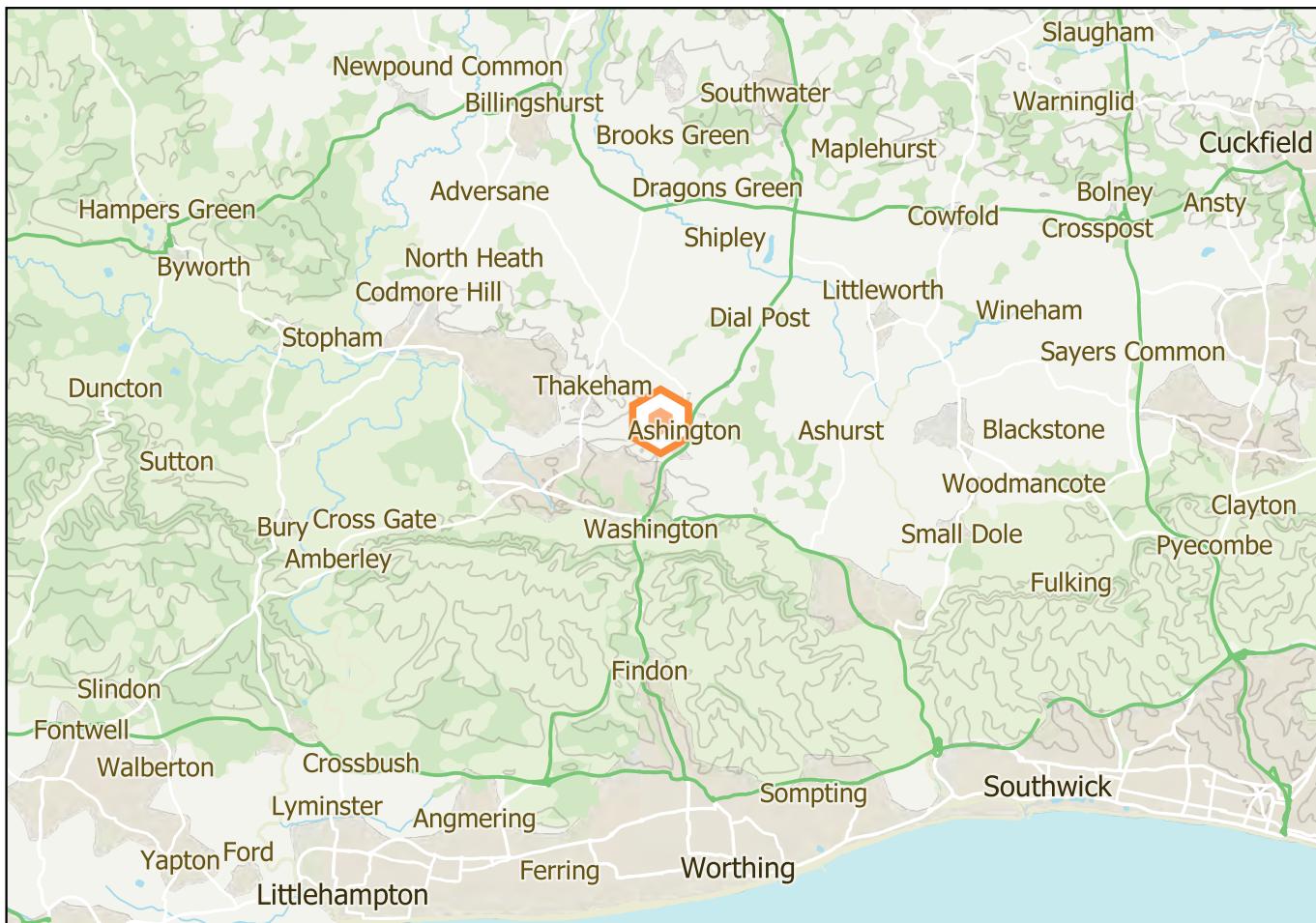
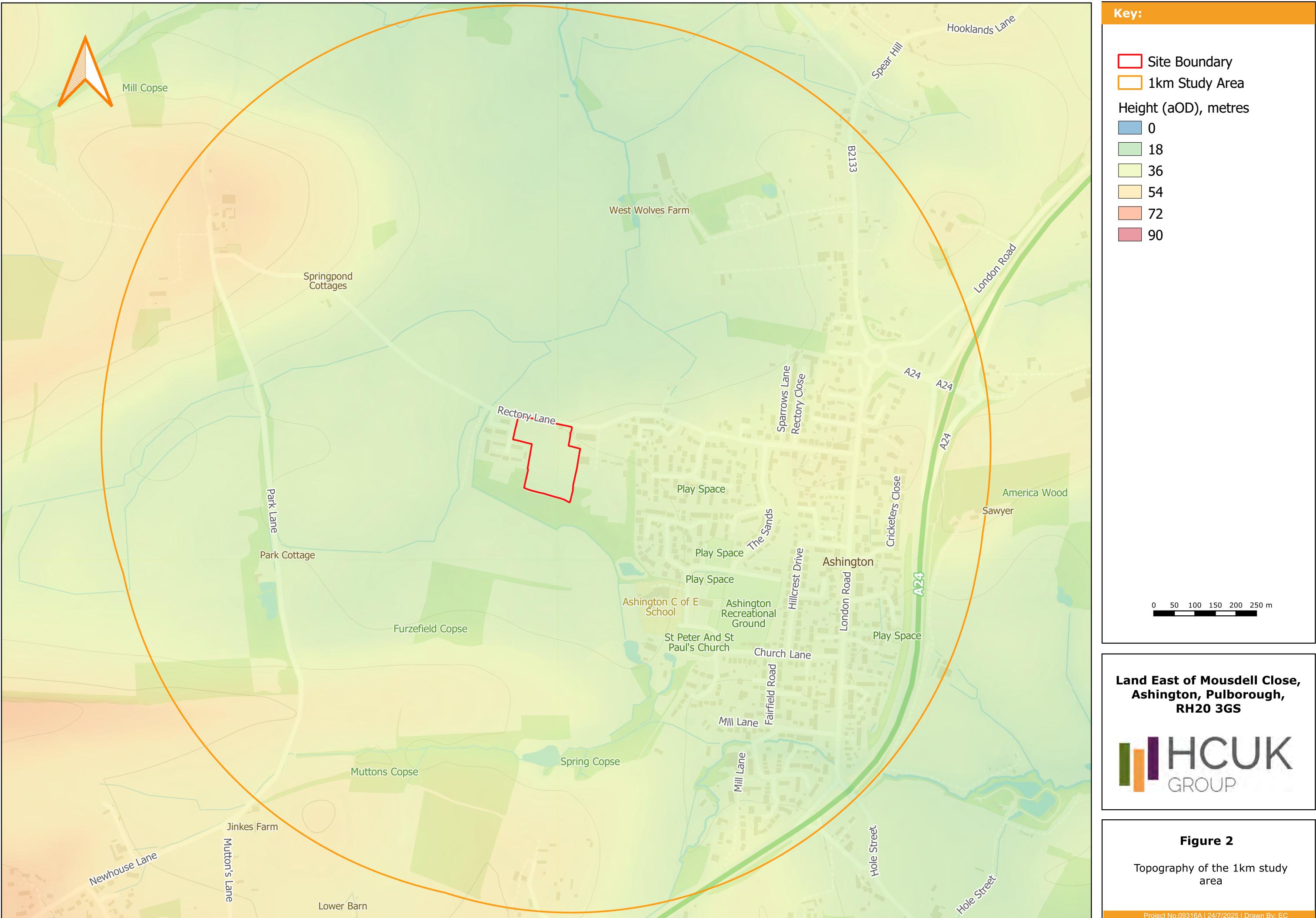
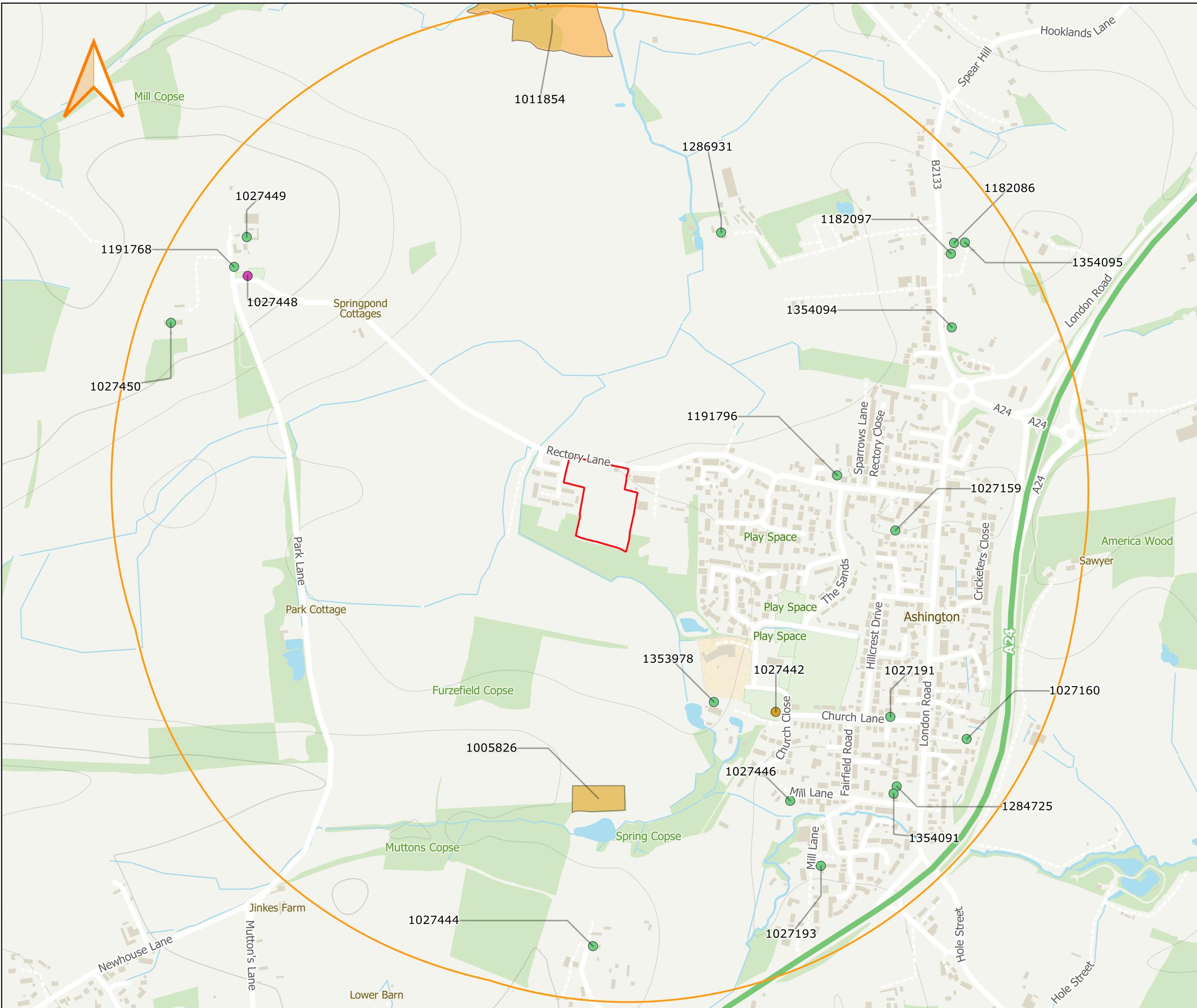


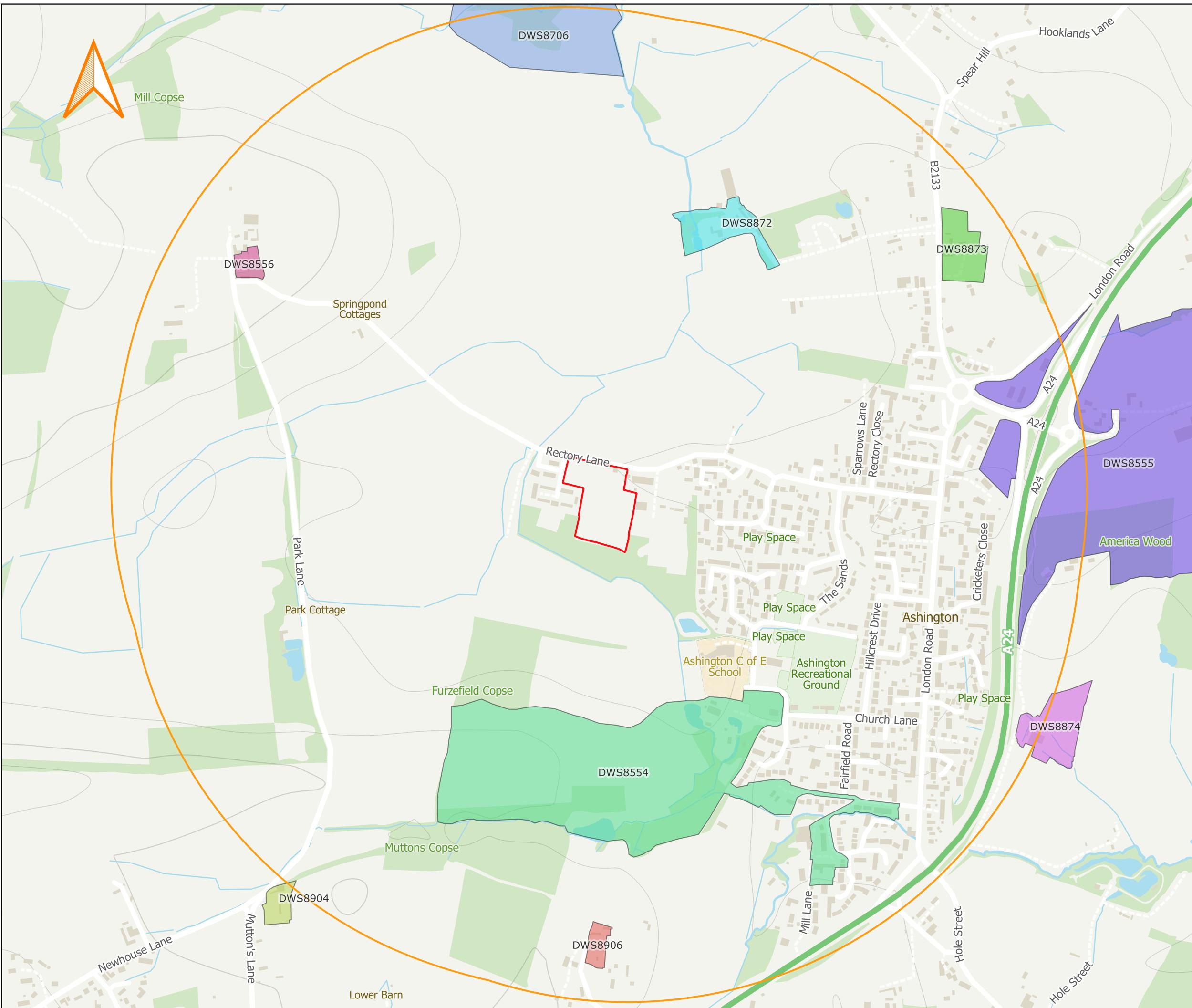
Figure 1: Site Location

July 2025

Land East of Mousdell Close,
Ashington, Pulborough, RH20
3GS





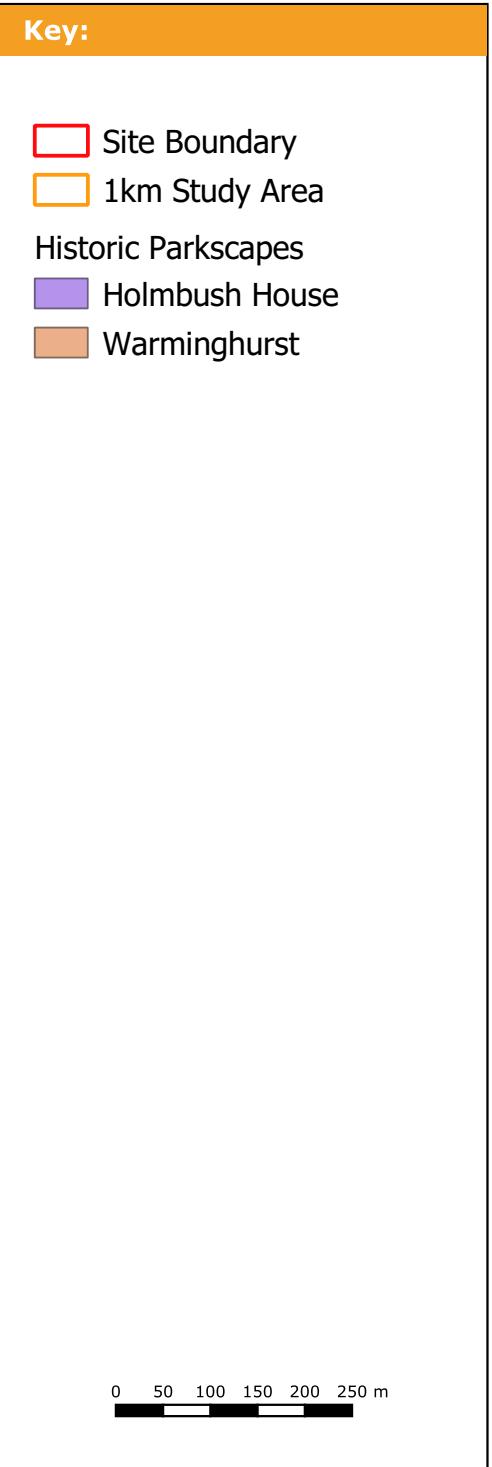
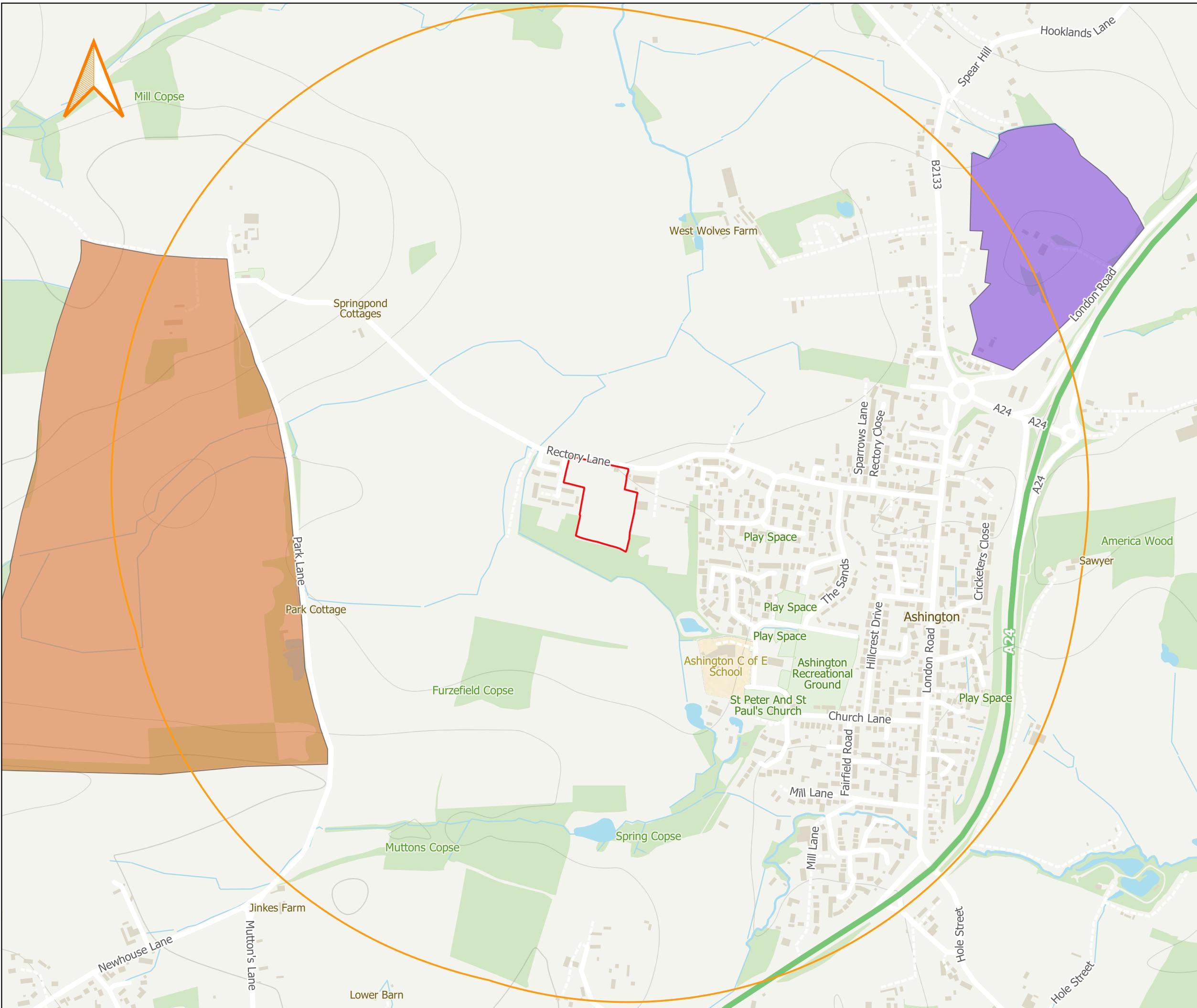


**Land East of Mousdell Close,
Ashington, Pulborough,
RH20 3GS**



Figure 4

Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs) recorded on the WSHER within the 1km study area



**Land East of Mousdell Close,
Ashington, Pulborough,
RH20 3GS**



Figure 5

Historic Parkscapes recorded on the WSHER within the 1km study area