

Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

February 2026

Summary

BlackOnyx Group Ltd has commissioned TCMS Heritage LTD to prepare an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for the Site of Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, West Sussex RH13 6LR. The assessment considers the archaeological potential of the Site and establishes any potential archaeological constraints in advance of development.

In terms of relevant, nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Wrecks or Historic Battlefields lie within the Site or in its immediate vicinity. The Registered Park & Garden of Leonardslee, Lower Beeding is located c.670m to the south-east of the Site. This also corresponds to a locally designated Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA).

Based on available information, including results from nearby archaeological investigations, the Site is anticipated to have a low potential for all periods of human activity.

The proposed development is unlikely to have a negative impact on any underlying archaeological assets. If encountered, these would likely be localised and considered of low (local) significance.

It is therefore concluded that archaeology should not constitute an impediment for development. If required by the LPA, any further archaeological work, could follow the granting of planning consent secured by an appropriately worded archaeological condition.

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Quality Management

Version	Status	Authored by	Review by	Issue date
01	Draft issue	Serena Ranieri Associate Director TCMS Heritage MCiFA	Susana Parker Technical Director TCMS Heritage MCiFA	27.02.2026
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1. Introduction

Scope of Report

- 1.1. This Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has been prepared by TCMS Heritage Ltd, on behalf of BlackOnyx Group, as part of a planning application for the site of Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, West Sussex RH13 6LR (hereafter the 'Site'). This is to consider the Site's archaeological potential and to establish any archaeological constraints that may be present in advance of development.
- 1.2. The Site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 21878 27195, within the administrative area of Horsham District Council and includes Cedar Cottage and open land to the rear.
- 1.3. The proposals comprise the erection of residential housing, with associated landscaping, open space, infrastructure, and access off Sandygate Lane.
- 1.4. The methodology employed during this assessment was based upon relevant professional guidance, including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (revised October 2020).
- 1.5. The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment will comprise an examination of evidence from the West Sussex Historic Environment Records (HER) within a 1km radius of the Site, and other sources, including the results of a comprehensive map regression exercise.

Geology, Topography and Site Description

- 1.6. The Site measures *circa* 1.08ha and includes Cedar Cottage and an irregular plot of land located immediately to the south/south-west. It is bound by Sandygate Lane to the north and the gardens of surrounding properties to the east, south and west.
- 1.7. Ground levels gently slope from north to south between c. 100m AOD and .96m AOD. The nearest watercourse is the Leechpond Gill stream, along with the Leechpond, located .120m south of the Site.
- 1.8. The British Geological Survey (BGS Online 2026) shows the underlying bedrock geology as Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand-Sandstone and siltstone, with a band of Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand-Mudstone running across the centre of the Site. Both bedrock types were formed 133.9–139.4 million years ago. There are no superficial geological deposits recorded at the Site.

2. Legislative and Planning Policy 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.

National Planning Policy & Guidance

- 2.2. In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which most recently revised in December 2024, with updates in 2025. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), with the guidance on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment last updated in July 2019.
- 2.3. The NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and that effective conservation delivers wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits. Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled '*Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*', sets out the principal national guidance on the importance, management and safeguarding of heritage assets within the planning process (paragraphs 202-221).
- 2.4. The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: of which the second edition of *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* relevant for this assessment, was published in December 2017.

Local Planning Policy

Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015)

- 2.5. The Local Plan is known as Horsham District Planning Framework. Policy 34 relates to cultural and heritage assets with point 8 relating specifically 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;***
- 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.

- 2.6. This DBA has been prepared in accordance with government guidelines and current best practice standards at early stages of a planning application process in order to inform all parties of any archaeological concerns that may affect the development of the Site.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1. This section comprises a review of the known archaeological assets within a 1km radius of the Site, also referred to as the study area, held on the West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER), as shown on Figure 2. This also considers any previous archaeological work at the Site and surrounding areas, together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the nineteenth century onwards until the present day.
- 3.2. In terms of relevant, nationally significant designated heritage assets, no Scheduled Monuments, World Heritage Sites, Historic Wrecks or Historic Battlefields lie within the Site or in its immediate vicinity. The **Registered Park & Garden of Leonardslee, Lower Beeding** is located 670m to the south-east of the Site (Figure 2). This also corresponds to a locally designated Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA).
- 3.3. The West Sussex Historic Environment Record contains no record-entries of Monuments or Events on the Site.

Previous Archaeological Work

- 3.4. No fieldwork investigations have been carried out on the Site to date. An archaeological evaluation consisting of 9 trenches took place immediately to the north, on the opposite side of Sandygate Lane (DC/22/0708). No archaeological finds or features were present (ASE 2023).

Early Prehistory (Palaeolithic and Mesolithic)

- 3.5. During the Palaeolithic, known for its climate instability, archaeological remains are typically found within Pleistocene geological deposits and usually comprise stone tools, faunal remains and paleoenvironmental data. When assets are encountered are often residual and *in situ* sites of tool manufacture or butchery are consequently very important, but rare (Wymer 1968). The HER contains no record entries in association with this period from within the study area.
- 3.6. With climatic improvement at the end of the last glaciation (c 18,000 BC), during the Mesolithic, mobile hunter-gatherer communities developed new exploitation strategies and thus different tools, including axes and tiny projectile points or microliths. Evidence of human activity is largely characterised by finds of flint tools and waste, and possibly faunal remains. During this period, the Weald would have been thickly covered with glacial primary forest, with localised clearance undertaken at this time, possibly to encourage game (ASE 2013).
- 3.7. One of the most relevant discoveries carried out within the wider landscape surrounding the Site, relates to evidence of a short stay ‘occupation’ exposed at Wickhurst Green in Broadbridge Heath, c.7.5km to the north-west of the Site. The flint assemblages recovered, contained numerous tools which suggest that a broad range of activities was occurring, such as hide preparation, as well hunting/fishing and resource gathering (ASE 2013). However, no record entries associated with the Mesolithic period is contained in the HER in relation to the 1km study area.
- 3.8. Based on a total lack of evidence of the Early Prehistoric periods in the HER from the study area, a low potential for the Palaeolithic and the Mesolithic is anticipated at the Site.

Late Prehistoric (Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age)

- 3.9. During the Late Prehistory, settlements continue to favour areas within the river valleys, with a steady increase of woodland clearance and agricultural exploitation, especially from the Bronze Age onwards.
- 3.10. The Weald is characterised by historically high densities of settlement dispersion, likely linked to the prevalence of woodland, unrewarding soils and a history of pastoralism rather than arable

farming. There is very little evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age activity within the wider area around the Site and any “occupation” would have largely been on a seasonal basis and perhaps, would have included mostly hunting (ASE 2013). As in the Mesolithic period, the region’s rivers may have provided highways into the interior from the coast.

- 3.11. In the Iron Age, however, this region became to be more utilised and more stable occupation began to appear. A large-scale excavation undertaken along the course of the River Arun at Wickhurst Green, in Broadbridge Heath, has shown evidence of a Mid-Late Iron Age settlement formed of roundhouses and enclosures, including a spiral gully-structure, possibly in use as workshop and/or livestock shed (ASE 2013).
- 3.12. HER data for the 1km study area record the presence of circular soilmarks in a field c.800m north-east of the Site. The marks are visible on 1970s aerial photography and could potentially represent a ring ditch or barrow of Bronze Age date (MWS3412). In the same field further cropmarks of two parallel ditches are recorded as being present on 1989 aerial photography (MWS4049). These are concluded to be of unknown date.
- 3.13. No other evidence of Late Prehistoric archaeology is present in the study area and no activity of this period was observed during archaeological investigations to the north of the Site. As such, a low potential is considered for any archaeological remains from the period.

Roman (43 – 410 AD)

- 3.14. The emerging settlement pattern of the Weald in the 1st century AD seems to be one of a dispersed nature. Small rectilinear enclosures existed in either low-lying or slightly elevated positions with access to watercourses, routeways and long-distance boundaries. The post-Roman Conquest landscape appears to have been a direct continuation of preceding Late Iron Age patterns. Apart from roadside settlements and rare villas, rural Roman activity largely consisted of the modification of landscape features founded during the preceding phase, with the land mainly utilised for organised pastoral and arable activity. This pattern would appear to gradually decline after the 1st century AD (Margetts 2018).
- 3.15. The alignment of Stane Street, the Roman Road from London to Chichester runs c.12km to the west of the Site, roughly following the course of the A29, which retains the same name. Archaeological remains of the former Roman road were identified during archaeological works in 1984 and 2004 in proximity of Billingshurst, and Roman coins, pottery and *tesserae* were found along Billingshurst High Street, which follows the line of the former Roman Stane Street. Evidence of a Late Iron Age-Roman settlement, which underwent two major phases of reorganisation between the 1st and 2nd century AD, and later in the 3rd century, was also observed just outside Billingshurst, c.2.7km south-west of the Site (ASE 2015).
- 3.16. The HER data records no evidence of Roman activity in the study area, the Site was likely covered in woodland. Therefore, it is considered to have a low potential for archaeological remains of the Roman period.

Early Medieval-Saxon/Medieval (410 – 1540 AD)

- 3.17. There is no evidence of Early Medieval/Saxon–Medieval activity or finds from the study area and the Domesday Book of 1086 contains no record of settlement in the vicinity of the Site. The area is likely to have been part of St. Leonard’s Forest for much of the period, which was a mix of both woodland and heath with little given over as common land (Baggs et al, 1987).
- 3.18. A low archaeological potential is considered at the Site for any archaeological remains of the Early Medieval-Saxon/Medieval periods.

Post Medieval and Modern (1540 – present day)

- 3.19. During the later Post Medieval and Modern periods, our 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.
- 3.20. The village of Lower Beeding developed in the 19th and 20th centuries (Baggs et al, 1987). The 1874–5 OS map (Figure 3) shows the Site to the west of the settlement. The northern part of the Site is within the land of Sandygate Cottages, in what appears to be an orchard. The southern portion of the Site is within an open field. Some 130m east of the Site is a brickyard at Plummers Plain (MWS5140/MWS9496) which produced bricks and tiles between 1803 and c1882. A further brickyard (MWS4862) is recorded to the east in use between the 1890s and 1930s. The Grade II listed Parish Church of the Holy Trinity (MWS9466) was constructed in 1840 and is located 170m north east of the Site. Other HER record entries from the 19th century in the study area largely include several historic farms (MWS12575, MWS9799, MWS10060, MWS10437, MWS13724, MWS13739). The Archaeological Notification Area: Leonardslee Registered Park & Garden, Lower Beeding is located 670m to the south-east of the Site and covers the area of a landscaped garden with early 19th century origins.
- 3.21. The 1909 OS map (Figure 4) shows that the northern part of the Site has been subdivided by this point with a cottage partially within its boundary. The southern part of the Site remains part of an open, if smaller, field. By 1962 (Figure 5) the Site sits within two plots of land. The northern part is within the grounds of a small property just to the east and the south of the Site remains within an open field. Lower Beeding is a touch more developed by this point and more properties exist along the south of Sandygate Lane.
- 3.22. Figures 6–8 show the development and alterations to Cedar Cottage house and associated outbuildings in the north of the Site. The cottage was initially constructed between 1962 (Figure 5) and 2001 (Figure 6). An additional building within the southern area of the Site, is shown from the 2015 imagery (Figure 7).
- 3.23. Based on the above, the Site is considered to have low potential for any archaeological evidence of the Post Medieval period, although presence of former boundaries cannot be completely excluded, especially in the north of the Site. Localised truncation is to be anticipated within the footprint of existing and past development, as seen on Google imagery (Figures 6–8).

Summary of Potential and Significance

- 3.24. 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.
- 3.25. Based on available information, the Site is anticipated to have a low potential for all periods of human activity.
- 3.26. As identified by this assessment, archaeological potential by period and the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present is summarised in the table below. The significance of those remains that may be present would be derived from their evidential value and contributions that could be made towards local, regional and national research agendas.

PERIOD:	IDENTIFIED ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE (IF PRESENT):
PREHISTORIC (PALAEOLITHIC AND MESOLITHIC)	LOW POTENTIAL; LOW (LOCAL) SIGNIFICANCE.

LATER PREHISTORIC (NEOLITHIC, BRONZE AGE & IRON AGE)	LOW POTENTIAL; LOW (LOCAL) SIGNIFICANCE.
ROMAN	LOW POTENTIAL; LOW (LOCAL) SIGNIFICANCE.
SAXON & MEDIEVAL	LOW POTENTIAL; LOW (LOCAL) SIGNIFICANCE.
POST MEDIEVAL AND MODERN	LOW POTENTIAL; LOW (LOCAL) SIGNIFICANCE. LOCALISED TRUNCATION IS TO BE ANTICIPATED WITHIN THE FOOTPRINT OF EXISTING AND PAST DEVELOPMENT.

4. Proposed Development and Review of Potential Development Impacts

Site Conditions

- 4.1. The Site is irregular in shape and includes Cedar Cottage and a plot of land immediately to the south and south-west of Cedar Cottage. A building is also present in the north-eastern corner of the southern part of the Site. The Site measures 1.08ha in area. Localised truncation is to be anticipated within the footprint of existing and previous buildings as seen on Google imagery (Figures 6–8).

Proposed Development and Review of Potential Development Impacts

- 4.2. The proposals comprise the erection of new dwellings, with associated landscaping, open space, infrastructure, and access off Sandygate Lane.
- 4.3. Based on available information, the Site is anticipated to have a low potential for all periods of human activity.
- 4.4. The proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on any underlying archaeological assets. If encountered, these would likely be localised and considered of low (local) significance.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1. BlackOnyx Group Ltd has commissioned TCMS Heritage LTD to prepare an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for the Site of Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, West Sussex RH13 6LR. The assessment considers the archaeological potential of the Site and establishes any potential archaeological constraints in advance of development.
- 5.2. In terms of relevant, nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Wrecks or Historic Battlefields lie within the Site or in its immediate vicinity. The Registered Park & Garden of Leonardslee, Lower Beeding is located c. 670m to the south-east of the Site. This also corresponds to a locally designated Archaeological Notification Areas (ANA).
- 5.3. Based on available information, including results from nearby archaeological investigations, the Site is anticipated to have a low potential for all periods of human activity.
- 5.4. The proposed development is unlikely to have a negative impact on any underlying archaeological assets. If encountered, these would likely be localised and considered of low (local) significance.
- 5.5. It is therefore concluded that archaeology should not constitute an impediment for development. If required by the LPA, any further archaeological work, could follow the granting of planning consent secured by an appropriately worded archaeological condition.

6. Sources Consulted

West Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER)

Online

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/>

Historic England: <https://researchframeworks.org/>

Portable Antiquities Scheme – www.finds.org.uk

Bibliographic

A P Baggs, C R J Currie, C R Elrington, S M Keeling, A M Rowland, 'Bramber Rape (North-eastern Part)', in *A History of the County of Sussex: Volume 6 Part 3, Bramber Rape (North-Eastern Part) Including Crawley New Town*, ed. T P Hudson (London, 1987), British History Online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol6/pt3/pp1-4> [accessed 18 February 2026].

ASE 2013, Post Ex Assessment and Updated Project Design Report: 'Wickhurst Green', Broadbridge Heath, West Sussex, unpublished document

ASE 2015, Post Ex Assessment and Updated Project Design Report: Land East of Billingham, West Sussex, unpublished document

Archaeology South-East, 2023: Archaeological Evaluation Report: Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, Horsham, W Sussex

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

Department of Communities and Local Government *National Planning Policy Framework* 2012 (revised December 2024)

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 (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: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets December 2017 unpublished document

Margetts 2018, *A World of Summer and Autumn: The Romano-British to Early Medieval Weald and Signs of Continuity*. Archaeology International, 21(1).

Cartographic

1874–5 Ordnance Survey Map

1909 Ordnance Survey Map

1962 Ordnance Survey Map

2001 Google Satellite Imagery

2015 Google Satellite Imagery
2025 Google Satellite Imagery

FIGURES

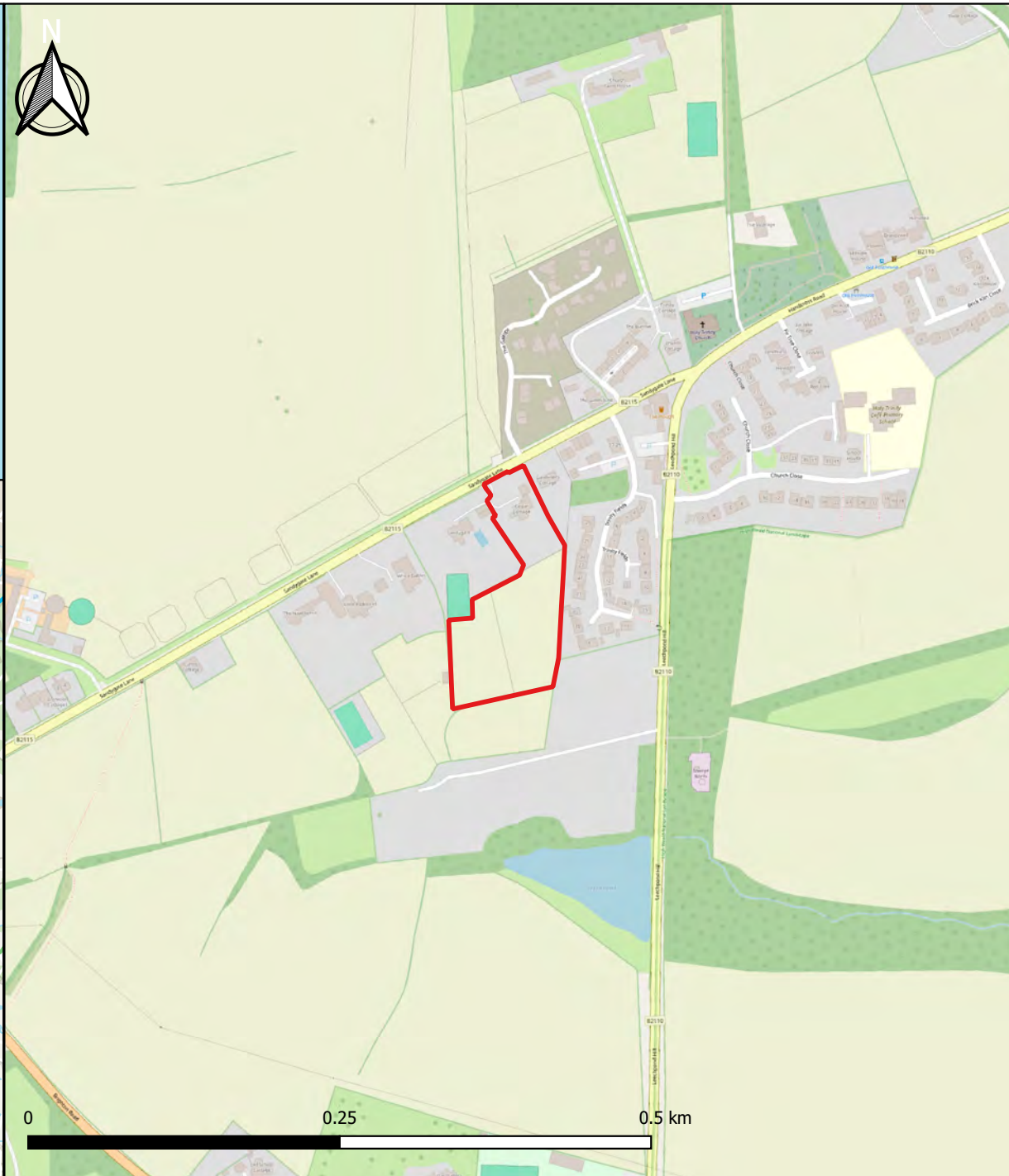


Figure 1
Site Location

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301



TCMS
HERITAGE

- Monument Points
- Monument Polygons
- ▨ Archaeological Notification Areas

Figure 2
HER Data

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301

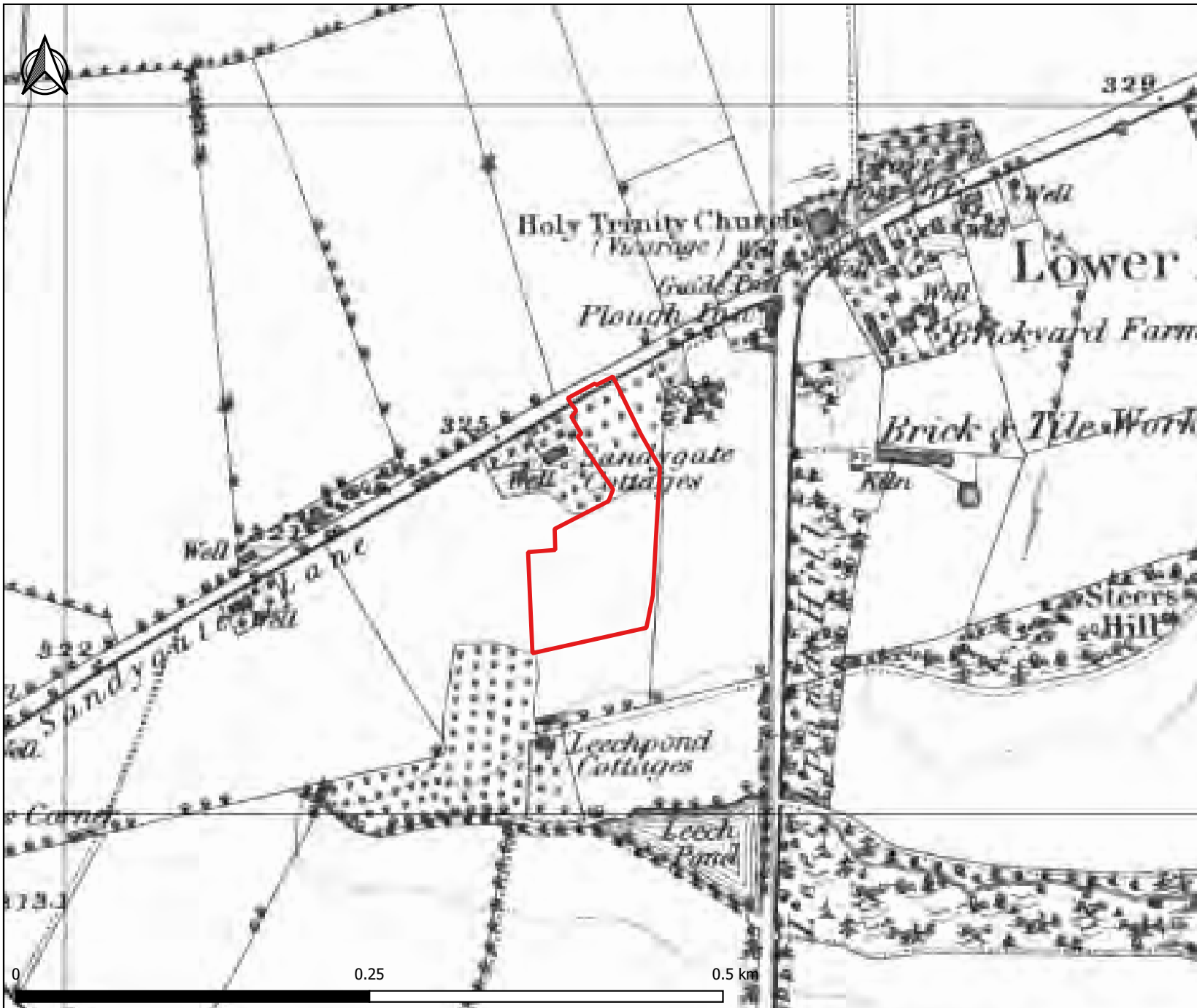


Figure 3
1874-5 OS Map

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301

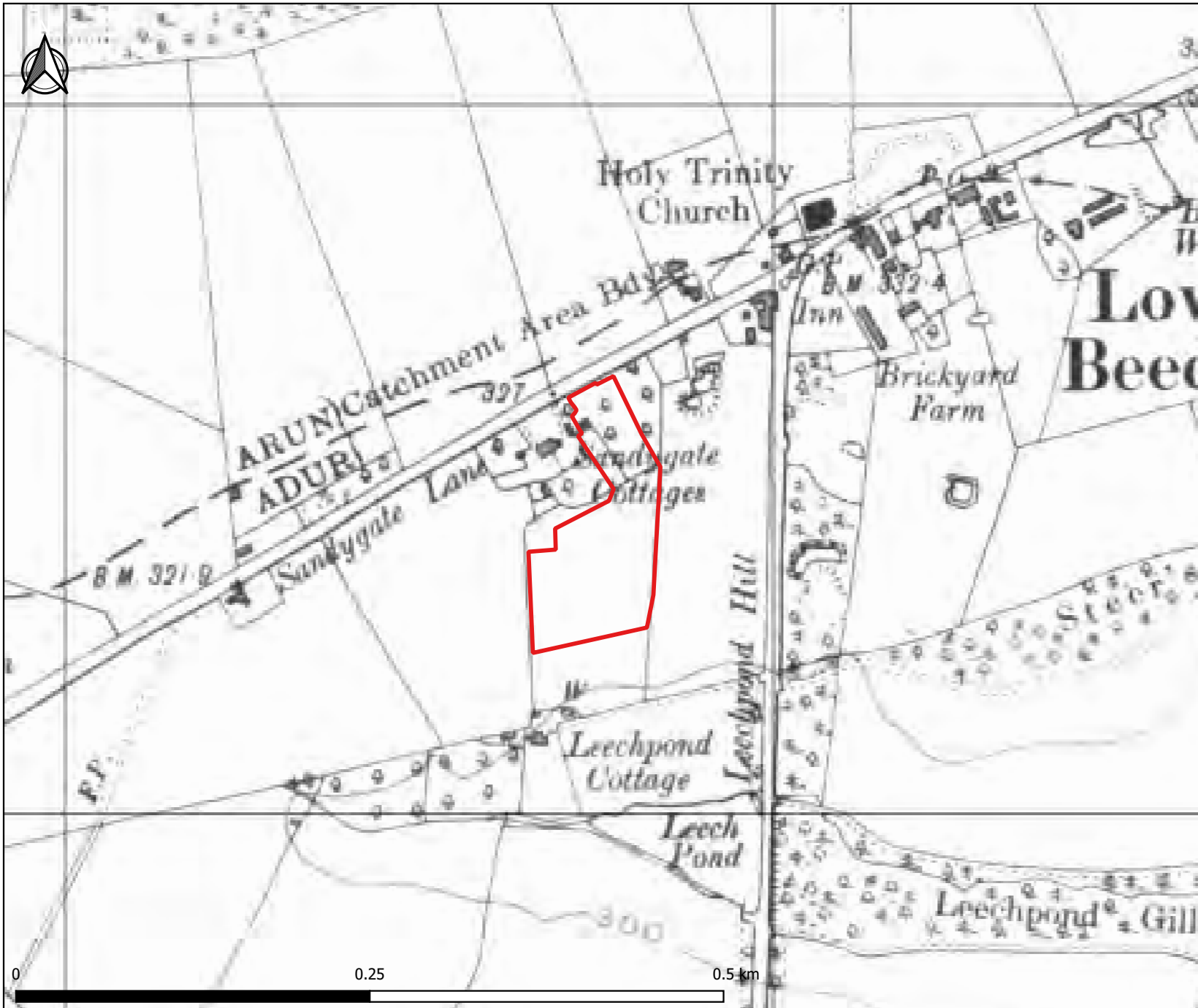


Figure 4
1909 OS Map

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301

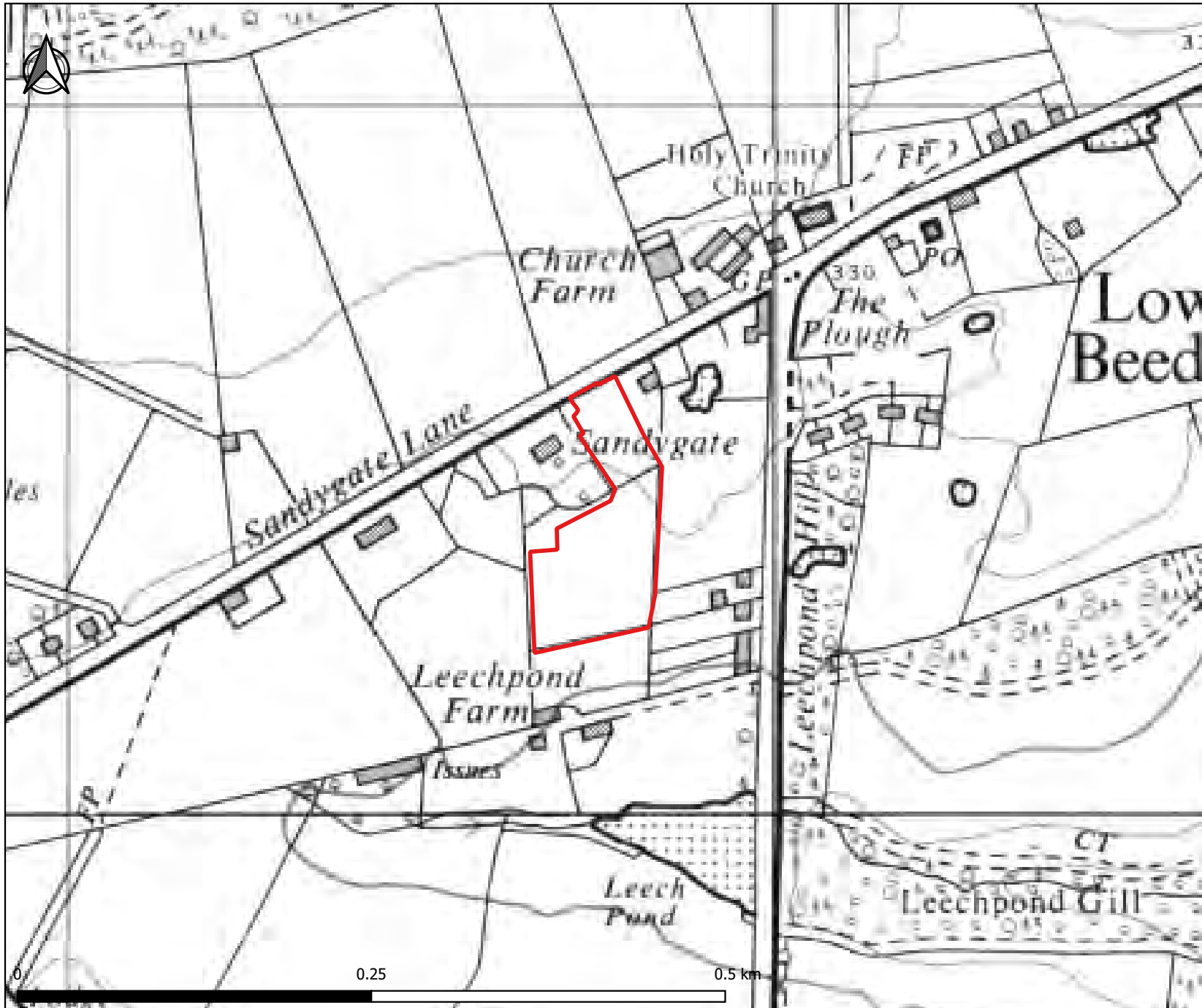


Figure 5 1962 OS Map	
Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301



Map Data: Google, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky

TCMS
HERITAGE

Figure 6
2001 Google Satellite Imagery

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301



Map Data: Google, Airbus

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HERITAGE

Figure 8
2025 Google Satellite Imagery

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301



Map Data: Google, Maxar Technologies

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Figure 7
2015 Google Satellite Imagery

Version	1
Date	12.02.2026
Job	3301

Cedar Cottage, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding

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