

# BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY - CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Land west of Ratcliffe Road, Sileby, Leicestershire

JAC27506

Built Heritage and  
Archaeology - Constraints  
and Opportunities

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**BUILT HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES REPORT**  
**LAND WEST OF RATCLIFFE ROAD, SILEBY, LEICESTERSHIRE**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Constraints and Opportunities assessment has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Redrow Homes East Midlands. It provides an assessment of potential heritage impacts and an overview of the constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed development of land west of Ratcliffe Road, Sileby (also referred to as the 'site').
- 1.2 A summary of the heritage sensitivities of the site is provided in Section 5 (Conclusions) which can be used to input to the Vision Document.
- 1.3 The c. 45 ha site is located to the south-eastern edge of Sileby and is centred at NGR SK 613 143 (Figure 1). It comprises a series of fields between Ratcliffe Road to the north-east and the railway line to the west. The site is adjacent to residential development to the north-west and will be separated from the built edge to the north-east by a field (consented residential development is presently underway, planning ref: P/17/1578/2). Part of the southern boundary of the site is formed by Blackberry Lane (a public right of way), with the rest of the boundary to the south-east bound by fields to the south.
- 1.4 This report is based on the review of listing citations for the site and surrounding area, search data obtained from the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER), a site visit made on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and the application of professional judgement.

## 2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 2.1 The current framework for the site is provided by the 'Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy' (adopted 2015). The policy relevant to heritage is Policy CS 14 – Heritage.
- 2.2 Consultation on the emerging 'Charnwood Local Plan 2021-37 Pre-Submission Draft' (2021) is currently ongoing. The draft heritage policy is Policy EV8 – Heritage.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND BUILT HERITAGE APPRAISAL

#### Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the site (Figure 2).
- 3.2 A search of National Heritage List for England and Local Authority datasets show that there are 28 Listed Buildings (3 Grade II\* and 25 Grade II) and 2 Conservation Areas within a 1km search area. There are no other designated heritage assets (Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks & Gardens or Registered Battlefields) within the search area.
- 3.3 Ten of the Listed Buildings are located within the historic core of Sileby – around c.475m to the north-west of the Site; the core of the village is also designated as the Sileby Conservation Area. The Site is separated from these built heritage assets by the modern residential development along Ratcliffe Road, The Banks and Cossington Road. This built development in conjunction with the intervening vegetation and changes in topography means there is no inter-visibility between the Site and any of the designated heritage assets located within Sileby. There is also no evidence of a historic functional association between any of the assets and the site. As such, the site is not considered to form part of the setting of these designated heritage assets and does not contribute to their respective significance.
- 3.4 A further sixteen of the Listed Building are located within the Cossington Conservation Area, c.465m to the south-west of the site. The modern residential development to the east of the Conservation Area visually and physically separates these heritage assets from the wider undeveloped landscape to the west. The railway line, changes in topography and intervening vegetation also preclude inter-visibility between these heritage assets and the Site and there is no evidence of a historic functional relationship. The Site is therefore not considered to form part of the settings of these designated heritage assets and provides no contribution to their respective significance.
- 3.5 There is no inter-visibility between the remaining two Listed Buildings within the search area (Wreake House Farm c.1km to the south-east and Ratcliffe College located c.780m to the north-east) and no evidence of a historic functional association between either of them and the site. The site therefore does not contribute to their respective significance as part of their settings.
- 3.6 It has therefore been established that the site does not form part of the settings of any designated heritage asset and does not contribute to their respective significance. No designated heritage asset would be harmed by the development of the site and paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF would not be engaged.

#### Non-Designated Heritage Assets & Archaeological Appraisal

- 3.7 A search of the Leicestershire HER for the site and a surrounding 1km search area was commissioned in support of this document (received 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021) (Figures 3 & 4). There are no non-designated heritage assets recorded on the HER within the site.

#### Built Heritage Assets within the Search Area

- 3.8 As shown by Figure 3, the HER data identifies a number of 'historic buildings' within the search area; these broadly correspond with the identified Listed Buildings as well as those recorded on Charnwood's Local List (non-designated heritage assets).

##### *Brook Farm, Cossington Road*

- 3.9 Of the buildings identified on Figure 3, Brook Farm (HER ref: MLE23561, also included on the Local List) is the only non-designated built heritage asset considered to be sensitive to the development of the site. It is located c.410m to the west of the site.

- 3.10 The heritage significance of Brook Farm is principally vested in its built form. Its immediate setting comprising the agricultural field directly to the rear (east) of the farmstead is also considered to provide the most important contribution to its significance as part of its setting. This will not be affected by the development.
- 3.11 It is likely that development within the site will be visible as part of Brook Farm's wider surroundings. However, this will be perceived distantly beyond the intervening field and railway line and there will be no changes to how Brook Farm is experienced along Cossington Road. The residential development of the site will also appear consistent with the housing already established within the wider setting of Brook Farm to the north and north-east.
- 3.12 As such, it is considered that the site comprises a neutral element of the setting of Brook Farm. Whilst development within the site will result in a change within its wider setting, this is not considered to cause harm to its significance. The visibility of the proposed housing within the site can also be softened/minimised through planting along the western boundary.
- Barn Lodge Farm, Blackberry Lane*  
*Humble Farm, Blackberry Lane*  
*Blossom Farm, Cemetery Road*
- 3.13 These three farmsteads are located c. 10m, 15m and 118m respectively from the site. They are not included on the Local List or HER but are all evident on the 1883 Ordnance Survey map. As they date from at least the late-nineteenth century and due to their proximity to the site, it would be prudent to assess them as non-designated heritage assets.
- 3.14 Barn Lodge Farm and Humble Farm are highly inter-visible with the south-western part of the site and it is likely there is a functional association between them and the site, particularly with regard to Barn Lodge Farm. As historic farmsteads, the present agricultural qualities of the site positively contribute to their significance. This contribution is also reinforced by the rural qualities of Blackberry Lane and the relative separation of the assets from the built settlements of Sileby and Cossington.
- 3.15 It is considered that Barn Lodge Farm is the most sensitive to the proposed development as the southern boundary of the sites runs adjacent to the north-east of the farm and it comprises a relative in-tact example of a typical vernacular farming complex. The impact of the development on its significance will be dependent on the proximity of housing to the farm; retaining an area of undeveloped land to the rear of Barn Lodge Farm and extending this along the boundary with Blackberry Lane will minimise/avoid any harm to its significance. The interface between these farms and the built edge can also be softened by sensitive landscaping. These measures will also reduce/avoid any impact on Humble Farm.
- 3.16 With regard to Blossom Farm, the site is considered to provide only a negligible contribution to its significance as part of its wider agricultural setting. The farm is relatively contained by existing vegetation to the south-west and south-east and the consented development to the north-west has eroded its isolated setting. Some set back of the built form from the boundaries closest to Blossom Farm will help to mitigate the negligible impact of the development in addition to sensitive planting.
- 3.17 It is therefore considered that the proposed development of the site has the potential to cause harm to Barn Lodge Farm, Humble Farm and Blossom Farm and the test of paragraph 203 of the NPPF will be engaged. The level of harm to the non-designated heritage assets will be dependent on the proximity of the housing to the assets but would not be anticipated to exceed minor in respect of Barn Lodge Farm and Humble Farm, and negligible with regard to Blossom Farm.
- 3.18 Notwithstanding this, subject to appropriate mitigation the likely overall low impact from the development on the non-designated heritage assets will be afforded limited weight in the planning balance.

## Archaeology

- 3.19 There are no archaeological investigations recorded on the HER within the site.
- 3.20 The closest archaeological investigations to the site comprise fieldwalking and metal detecting (ELE2287) 40m south-west of the site, and fieldwalking (ELE2710) in a field 100m south-east of the site.
- 3.21 Fieldwalking to the south-west of the site has recovered a small collection of **Mesolithic to Late Bronze Age** flint (MLE549). Further Mesolithic finds (MLE7000) have been found 950m south-east of the site. A concentration of Neolithic/Bronze Age flint (MLE7407) is recorded 435m south-east of the site.
- 3.22 A **Bronze Age** site (MLE22956) was recorded 500m east of the site, comprising a ring gully, postholes, stake-holes and pits. A dispersed Bronze Age barrow cemetery (MLE21343) is known on the floodplain at the confluence of the rivers Soar and Wreake. Five barrows have been identified, with the potential for more to be buried under alluvium. Three of these barrows, (MLE527; MLE 538 & MLE 540 - located c. 1.2km south-west of the site) have been excavated and dated to the Early Bronze Age. A Bronze Age cremation cemetery (MLE21339) was identified immediately outside Barrow 1 (MLE540). Three probable Prehistoric pit alignments (MLE537; MLE21341) are recorded in the vicinity of the north-westernmost barrow (Barrow 3; MLE538). A further Early Bronze Age cremation cemetery (MLE852) is known to the south of Shipley Hill, 1.2km south-east of the site.
- 3.23 Possible **Iron Age** activity (MLE9069) was identified by excavation to the north-west of Cossington Grange, 925m south-west of the site, comprising ditches, pits, post holes and gullies, whilst a probable Iron Age farmstead (MLE853) was identified by evaluation to the south of Shipley Hill, 1.2km south-east of the site.
- 3.24 The search area saw considerable activity during the Prehistoric period, particularly during the Bronze Age, with evidence for widespread funerary and settlement activity. Although the location of the funerary activity seems to directly relate to the rivers, with the Cossington cemetery in the confluence of the rivers Soar and Wreake and Shipley Hill cemetery further along the Wreake, the roundhouse located 500m east of site suggests settlement activity may well be less directly linked to landscape. Accordingly, the site is considered to have a moderate to high potential for significant Prehistoric evidence, particularly dating to the Bronze Age.
- 3.25 The projected route of the Fosse Way **Roman** Road (MLE1380), which connected Leicester (*Ratae Corieltauvorum*) with Lincoln (*Lindum Colonia*), is located 950m east of the site at its closest point. Fieldwalking to the south-west of the site has recovered a small collection of Roman finds (MLE550), and further Roman finds (MLE860; MLE949; MLE953), comprising coins and pottery, have been recovered from across the search area. A possible Roman settlement site (MLE23294), located west of Highgate Lodge, and defined by ditches, trackways and pits has been identified by geophysical survey, 940m north-west of the site. A possible Roman site (MLE533) is recorded at Dunbar Acres, 950m south-east of the site, on the basis of Roman pottery and tile found, whilst Roman pottery and metalwork (MLE8468) found west of Marshdale Farm, 1km south-west of the site, may suggest some sort of occupation site. Although Roman activity is recorded within the search area, it is fairly widespread and not particularly dense; consequently, the site's potential for significant remains from this period is assessed to be low to moderate.
- 3.26 Barrow 3 (MLE538) in the Cossington Barrow cemetery was re-used in the **Anglo-Saxon** period with at least four 'warrior burials' inserted into the mound (MLE9066). A Saxon strap end (MLE6102) was recovered to the south-west of the site, and a large 6th/7th century hanging bowl escutcheon (MLE10224) was found 125m south-west of the site. A Possible Anglo-Saxon site, MLE534, is recorded at Dunbar Acres 950m south-east of the site, whilst excavation carried out north-west of Cossington Grange, 1km south-west of the site, identified Anglo-Saxon activity (MLE21344) comprising a sunken-featured building and associated pits, post holes and linear features. Although

there is Saxon evidence within the search area, and immediately beyond, it does not suggest any great density of activity within the vicinity of the site; consequently, the site is considered to have a low to moderate potential for significant Saxon remains.

- 3.27 The site is located at a significant distance from the known extents of the historic settlement cores of Sileby (MLE959 - 500m north-west of the site), Cossington (MLE551 - 450m south-west of the site) and Ratcliffe (MLE861 – 1.1km east of the site). A **Medieval** moated site (MLE545) is known 700m south-west of the site and a curvilinear ditch and a possible small pit or ditch terminus (MLE20079) were identified by excavation 700m south-west of the site. The scarcity of Medieval evidence within the vicinity of the site, and its distance from known settlement centres suggest that the site has a low potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) evidence dating to the Medieval period.
- 3.28 The Midland Counties Railway MLE16078, which was opened in 1840, forms the site's south-western boundary, whilst in the vicinity of the site a number of clay pits and brickworks are recorded (MLE2371; MLE22368; MLE22369; MLE23290). The remaining **Post-Medieval and Modern** sites recorded on the HER within the search area relate to buildings/monuments of a well-defined extent and nature that generally add little to the understanding of the site's archaeological potential and are therefore not discussed in any further detail. Given its distance from known settlement centres, the site is considered to have a low potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) evidence dating to the Post-Medieval and Modern periods.

### **Archaeological Appraisal**

- 3.29 The site contains no known archaeological remains.
- 3.30 The potential for as-yet-to be discovered archaeological assets within the site has been assessed within this document. Based upon the HER data the site is considered to have a moderate to high potential for significant Prehistoric evidence, particularly dating to the Bronze Age, a low to moderate potential for significant evidence dating to the Roman and Saxon periods and a low potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) evidence dating to the Medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern periods. Any such remains are likely to be of local to regional interest and would be significant for their archaeological interest and potential to contribute to regional research agendas.
- 3.31 It should be noted that a limited amount of intrusive archaeological work has been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the site and as such, the site's theoretical potential is qualified by the limitations of the understanding of the study area.



## 4 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.1 This Constraints and Opportunities assessment has established that there are no designated heritage assets within the site. From a review of a 1km search area, the site also does not form part of the settings of any designated heritage assets.
- 4.2 The report has identified that the site forms a neutral element of the wider setting of Brook Farm, Cossington Road (non-designated heritage asset). Whilst the development of the site is likely to result in a visual change within this part of its setting, this will not cause harm to the significance of Brook Farm.
- 4.3 There are a further three non-designated farmsteads identified within the vicinity of the site that are sensitive to the development and will require consideration in the masterplanning process; Barn Lodge Farm, Humble Farm and Blossom Farm. However, the level of harm to these heritage assets will be dependent on the proximity of the housing to the assets and subject to appropriate mitigation, it is not anticipated to exceed minor in respect of Barn Lodge Farm and Humble Farm, and negligible with regard to Blossom Farm.
- 4.4 The following mitigation measures should be considered in the masterplanning of the site to minimise/avoid built heritage impacts as far as possible:
- Planting along the western boundary of the site (to minimise visibility of the proposed housing from Brook Farm);
  - Retention of open space within the south-western part of the site and along the boundary with Blackberry Lane (to minimise/avoid harm to Barn Lodge Farm and Humble Farm);
  - Sensitive landscaping and planting strategy within the southern part of the south to soften/filter the proposed built form (to minimise/avoid harm to Barn Lodge Farm and Humble Farm); and
  - Set back of the proposed housing from the north-western edge adjacent to Blossom Farm and appropriate landscaping/planting.
- 4.5 Based upon the HER data the site is considered to have a moderate to high potential for significant Prehistoric evidence, particularly dating to the Bronze Age, a low to moderate potential for significant evidence dating to the Roman and Saxon periods and a low potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) evidence dating to the Medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern periods. Any such remains are likely to be of local to regional interest and would be significant for their archaeological interest and potential to contribute to regional research agendas.
- 4.6 It should be noted that a limited amount of intrusive archaeological work has been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the site and as such, the site's theoretical potential is qualified by the limitations of the understanding of the study area. The Local Planning Authority are likely to require archaeological evaluation of the site, comprising as a minimum an archaeological geophysical survey. Depending on the results of the geophysics, a subsequent programme of trial trenching may also be required to inform any future planning application.
- 4.7 This assessment has established that the proposed development of the site is in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act (1990) and will not engage paragraphs 201 or 202 of the NPPF as no designated heritage asset will be affected. With regard to the test of paragraph 203, the impact on the non-designated farmsteads will carry limited weight in the overall planning balance.
- 4.8 There are therefore no heritage constraints to the allocation of the site.

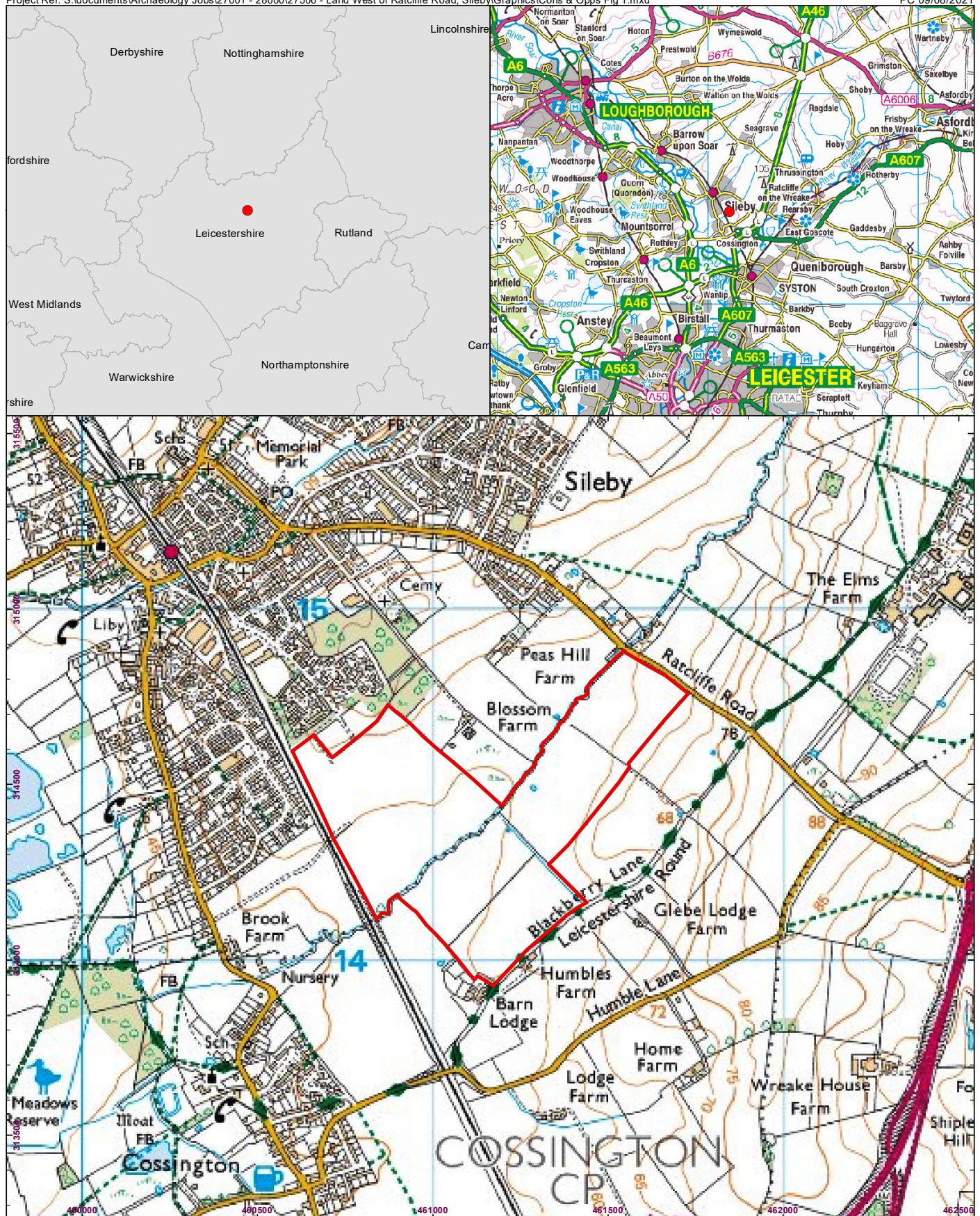
## 5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 RPS have undertaken an initial appraisal of the extent and nature of known heritage assets within the site and surrounding area, providing relevant and up-to-date evidence to underpin the allocation of the site. This appraisal has found no built heritage or archaeological constraints to the development of the site that would need to be resolved in advance of the allocation.
- 5.2 There are no designated heritage assets within the site and the site does not form part of the settings of any designated built heritage assets. The masterplanning of the site can be sensitively undertaken to protect the significance of the non-designated farmsteads to the south of the site as far possible.
- 5.3 In line with the Charnwood Core Strategy and the NPPF, any forthcoming planning application for the site would be required to demonstrate an understanding of any known or potential heritage assets which may be affected by the development. In light of this, a Built Heritage Statement and an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment will need to be prepared in support of any forthcoming planning application for the site. It is also likely that the LPA will require further archaeological assessment by way of geophysical survey in advance of determination of the planning application. Depending on the results of the geophysics, it is possible that a programme of trial trenching will also be required.



# FIGURES





 Site boundary



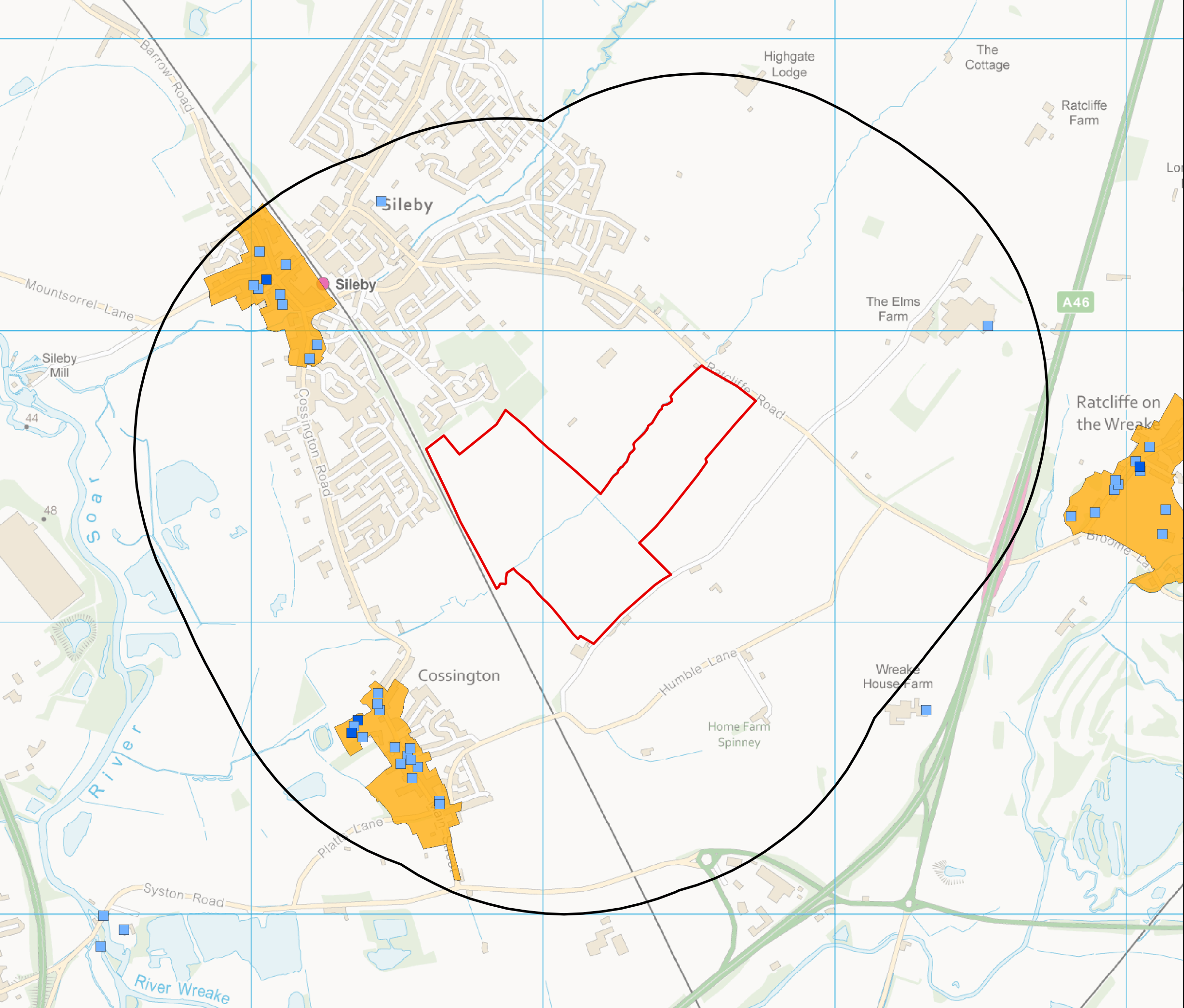
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Figure 1  
Site Location



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Site boundary

Search area

Listed Building Grade

■

I

■

II\*

■

II

Conservation Area

N

0

160

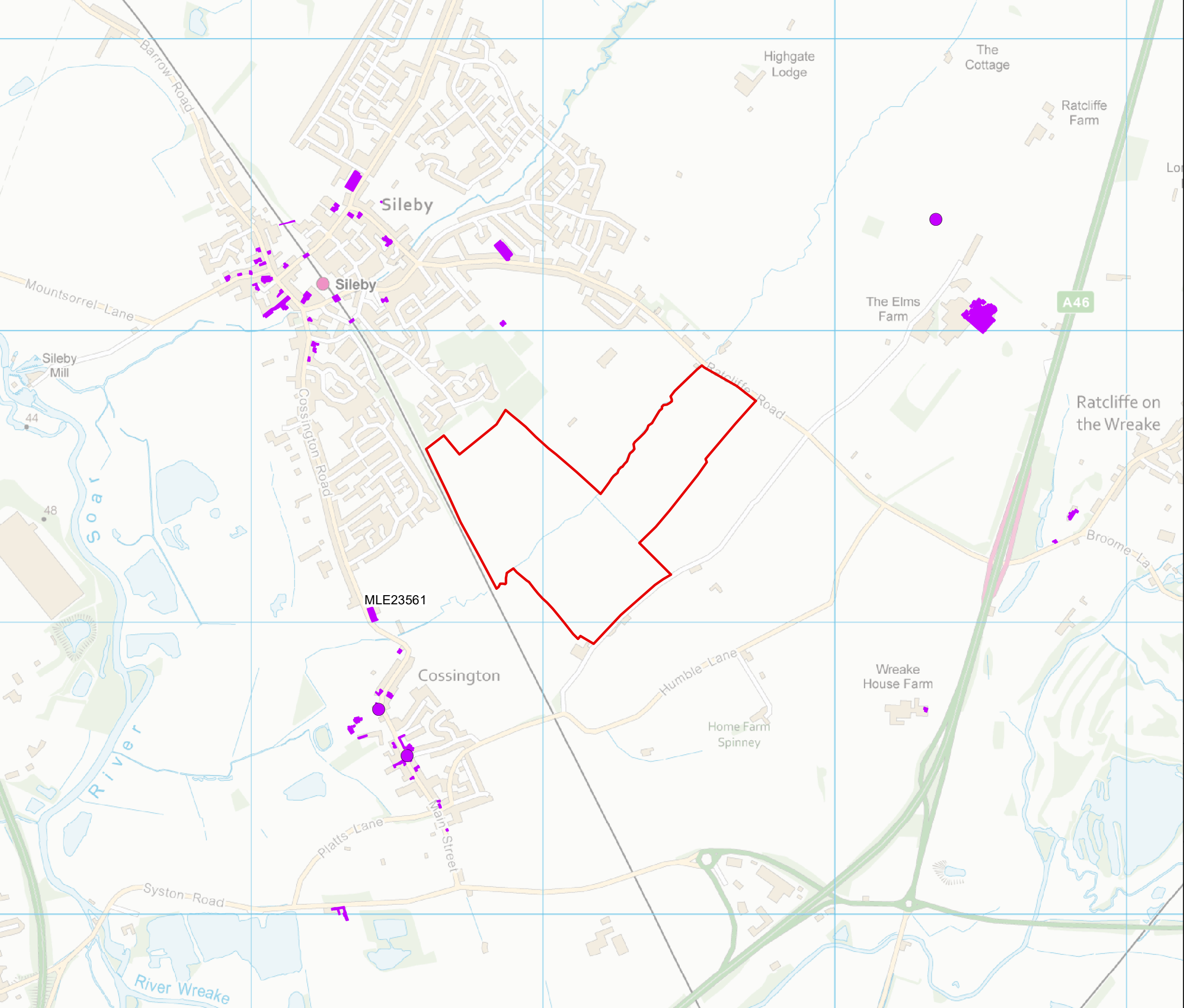
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Scale at A3: 1:12,500



Figure 2  
Designated Heritage Assets

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-  Site boundary
-  HER Historic Buildings

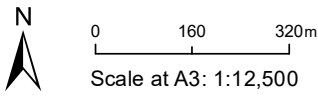


Figure 3  
HER Historic Buildings



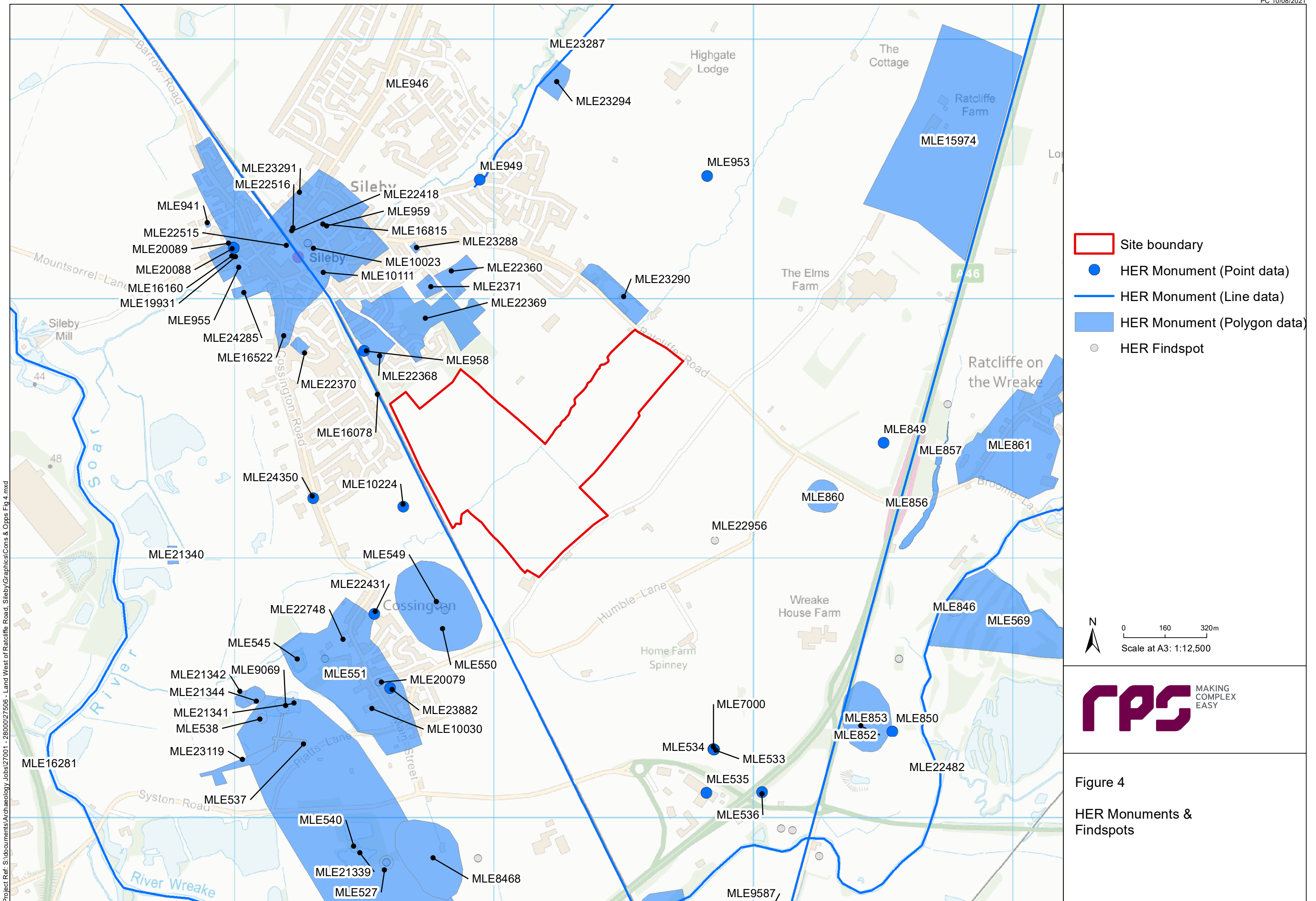


Figure 4

HER Monuments & Findspots

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