



Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

Archaeological and Heritage Assessment

Prepared by:
The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd

On behalf of: Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

November 2021 Report Reference: edp4685\_r001d

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# **Non-technical Summary**

- This report has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd, and presents the results of an archaeological and heritage assessment of the land north of Barkby Road, Syston, Leicestershire. The purpose of this report is to inform planning proposals for an outline application for residential development within the site.
- This report concludes that the site does not contain any designated heritage assets, such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or listed buildings, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical retention and/or preservation *in situ* and against development.
- The historic and modern settings of each of the designated and non-designated heritage assets (i.e. locally listed buildings) within the application site's wider zone of influence have been assessed, and it is determined that the significance of these assets would in no way be adversely affected by the form of development proposed within the site, either in terms of an effect on their physical form/fabric or through changes within their settings.
- As such, the development will comply with the statutory duty laid out in Section 66 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* and Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will also comply with Policy CS 14 of the Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan 2011 2028.
- There are no previously recorded non-designated heritage assets within the site, as recorded on the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER). Previous archaeological evaluation undertaken both to the west and east of the site has failed to identify any archaeological remains of note. Parts of the site have been the subject of fieldwalking, which did not identify a heightened archaeological potential.
- The available evidence suggests that the site is located in an area of very low potential for archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to early medieval periods, with any remains of these dates (if present), likely to comprise nothing more than stray finds. Medieval and later activity is likely to be represented by nothing more than 'low value' features such as buried furrows, plough soils and former boundaries.
- Therefore, this assessment should provide sufficient information to determine a planning application, when submitted. No further archaeological works should be required prior to determination of that application. This position has been confirmed by the archaeological advisor.

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# Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd, and presents the results of an archaeological and heritage assessment of the land north of Barkby Road, Syston, Leicestershire. The purpose of this report is to inform planning proposals for an outline application for residential development within the site.
- 1.2 The first aim of this assessment is to consider the available historical and archaeological resources for the site and to establish its likely potential in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG, 2021) and local planning policy.
- 1.3 In accordance with best practice guidance, desktop sources have been augmented through the completion of a site walkover survey, undertaken initially in October 2014, and then revisited in October 2021 in order to establish any changes to the site. This assessment was originally undertaken in June 2018, however has been updated in October 2021 with regard to the most current planning policies and heritage data held by the relevant bodies.
- 1.4 The second aim of this assessment is to identify and assess possible changes within the settings of surrounding designated heritage assets as a result of the proposed development, and to determine whether, and to what extent, those changes will affect their heritage significance.

#### **Location and Boundaries**

- 1.5 The site is located along the eastern edge of the town of Syston, c.2.5km east of the A46, c.1.2km north of the village of Barkby and c.1.3km south of the village of Queniborough. The site comprises two fields of arable with the southern half of the site separated by a hedgerow.
- 1.6 The site measures c.8.3 hectares (ha) in area, it is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SK 63773 11093 and its location and layout are shown on **Plan EDP 1**.
- 1.7 By virtue of its current land use, the site predominantly comprises arable land and is surrounded by hedging and a small number of trees. The site is bound to the east by Queniborough Road, to the north by amenity grassland, to the west by modern residential housing along Hallaton Drive, John Frear Drive and Empingham Drive and to the south by Barkby Road.
- 1.8 Modern development is also present to the south of Barkby Road, south-west of the site. A public right of way runs through the site, between the most northernly parcel of

the site and the two more southernly fields. Further arable fields lie to the east of Queniborough Road.

## **Geology and Topography**

1.9 The solid geology consists of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation, which was formed under a hot desert environment. No superficial deposits are recorded within the site (www.bgs.ac.uk). The site is positioned on an area of high ground which slopes slightly down to the south. At its highest point the site is c.62m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

# **Proposed Development**

1.10 This Archaeological and Heritage Assessment has been prepared to support an outline planning application of up to 195 new dwellings, together with open space, landscaping and drainage infrastructure, with all matters reserved except for access into the site from Barkby Road.

# Section 2 Legislation and Planning Guidance

2.1 This section sets out existing legislation and planning policy, governing the conservation and management of the historic environment, of relevance to this application.

#### **Current Legislation**

- 2.2 In terms of "effects on the historic environment", the following paragraphs summarise those principal legislative instruments and planning policy frameworks of relevance to this application.
- 2.3 Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)* Act set out the duties of Local Planning Authorities in respect of the treatment of listed buildings and conservation areas through the planning process.
- 2.4 Section 66(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)* Act of 1990 sets out the statutory duty of the decision-maker, where proposed development would affect a listed building or its setting.
- 2.5 The "special regard" duty of the 1990 Act has been tested in the Courts and confirmed to require that "considerable importance and weight" is afforded by the decision-maker to the desirability of preserving a listed building along with its setting.
- 2.6 Furthermore, insofar as conservation areas are concerned, Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act identifies the following:
  - "In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area".
- 2.7 Once again, it must be recognised that: (1) there is **no** statutory duty to enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area the Courts have confirmed that development that 'preserves' them is acceptable; and (2) the statutory duty only covers development that is within a conservation area –the 'setting' of a conservation area is addressed by planning policy.
- 2.8 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (DCLG 2021) transposes Section 66(1) of the 1990 Act into national planning policy.
- 2.9 The balancing exercise to be performed between the harm arising from a proposal and the benefits which would accrue from its implementation is then subsequently presented in paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF.

## **National Planning Policy**

- 2.10 The NPPF was revised in July 2021. Section 16 sets out the government's approach to the conservation and management of the historic environment, including both listed buildings and conservation areas, through the planning process. The opening paragraph, 194, recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner proportionate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 2.11 Paragraph 194 concerns planning applications, stating that:

"...local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation".

2.12 Designated assets are addressed in paragraph 199, which states that:

"...when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".

## 2.13 Paragraph 200 continues:

"Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings and grade I and II\* registered parks or gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."
- 2.14 With regard to the decision-making process, paragraphs 201 and 202 are of relevance. Paragraph 201 states that:

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse

consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."
- 2.15 Paragraph 202 states that: "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use".
- 2.16 The threshold between substantial and less than substantial harm has been clarified in the courts. Whilst the judgement relates specifically to the impact of development proposals on a listed building, paragraphs 24 and 25 of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 2847 remain of relevance here in the way they outline the assessment of 'harm' for heritage assets:

"What the inspector was saying was that for harm to be substantial, the impact on significance was required to be serious such that very much, if not all, of the significance was drained away.

Plainly in the context of physical harm, this would apply in the case of demolition or destruction, being a case of total loss. It would also apply to a case of serious damage to the structure of the building. In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether [i.e. destroyed] or very much reduced."

- 2.17 In other words, for the 'harm' to be 'substantial' and therefore require consideration against the more stringent requirements of paragraph 201 of the NPPF compared with paragraph 202; the proposal would need to result in the asset's significance either being "vitiated altogether or very much reduced". Quite evidently, this represents a very high threshold to be reached.
- 2.18 With regard to non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 203 states that:

"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 affect directly or indirectly 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."

#### **Local Planning Policy - Charnwood Borough Council**

- 2.19 On 09 November 2015 the Charnwood Local Plan for the period 2011 to 2028 was formally adopted. The local plan for Charnwood is composed of the Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 core strategy (2015) and saved policies from the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004).
- 2.20 The vision for Charnwood in 2028 provides the basis for a strategy that delivers the homes and jobs that are needed whilst delivering the infrastructure that is needed and protecting the environment. It states a need for heritage assets and the historic environment to be understood, conserved and enhanced for their own value and for their contribution to the sense of place and quality of life of those who live in Charnwood:

#### Policy CS 14 - Heritage

"We will conserve and enhance our historic assets for their own value and the community, environmental and economic contribution they make. We will do this by:

- requiring development proposals to protect heritage assets and their setting;
- supporting development which prioritises the refurbishment and re-use of disused or under used buildings of historic or architectural merit or incorporates them sensitively into regeneration schemes;
- working with our partners to prepare Conservation Area Character Statements, Landscape Character Assessments and Village Design Statements;
- supporting developments which have been informed by and reflect Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Landscape Character Appraisals and Village Design Statements;
- supporting developments which incorporate Charnwood's distinctive local building materials and architectural details;
- supporting the viable and sustainable use of heritage assets at risk of neglect or loss, providing such development is consistent with the significance of the heritage asset, especially where this supports tourism or business development; and
- securing improvements to the following 'at risk' heritage assets through our major developments:
  - the Temple of Venus, Garendon Park, Ashby Road, Loughborough;

- o the Triumphal Arch, Garendon Park, Ashby Road, Loughborough;
- o Roman villa north of Hamilton Grounds Farm, Barkby Thorpe;
- o Garendon Park, Ashby Road, Loughborough;
- o Shepshed Conservation Area; and
- o Taylor's Bell Foundry, Freehold Street, Loughborough."
- 2.21 The plans and policies identified above have been considered in the preparation of this assessment.

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# Section 3 Methodology

#### **General Assessment and Data Collection Methodology**

- 3.1 This report has been produced in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA, 2020). These guidelines provide a national standard for the completion of desk-based assessments.
- 3.2 The assessment involved consultation of readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information comprised:
  - Records of known archaeological sites, monuments, findspots and previous archaeological events within the vicinity of the site maintained by the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER);
  - Historic mapping held by the Record Office of Leicestershire and Rutland and online sources;
  - The National Heritage List for England curated by Historic England; and
  - Aerial photographs held by the Historic England Archive (HEA).
- 3.3 This report provides a synthesis of relevant information for the site derived from a search area extending up to 1km from its boundary, hereafter known as the 'study area', to allow for additional contextual information regarding its archaeological interest and/or potential to be gathered.
- 3.4 The information gathered from the repositories and sources identified above was checked and augmented through the completion of a site visit and walkover. This walkover considered the nature and significance of known and/or potential archaeological assets within the site, identified visible historic features and assessed possible factors which may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets.
- 3.5 This report thereafter concludes with an assessment of the site's likely archaeological potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines.
- 3.6 In addition, this report also considers the nature and significance of any effects arising beyond the boundary of the site, i.e. in terms of the settings of designated heritage assets, as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF.

- 3.7 In that regard, the site walkover considered, where appropriate, the contribution (if any) made by the land within the site to the settings of designated heritage assets situated within its wider zone of influence.
- 3.8 The setting assessment process employed current Historic England guidance which is set out in: *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (HE 2017 Second Edition). This provides best practice guidance for the identification and assessment of potential setting issues in the historic environment.
- 3.9 This Historic England guidance is clear in stating that change within a heritage asset's setting need not be harmful; the implementation of development proposals within a heritage asset's setting can be positive, negative or neutral.
- 3.10 HE (2017) sets out an approach to setting and development management based on a five-step procedure:
  - 1. Identify which heritage assets are capable of being affected;
  - 2. Assess whether, how and to what degree setting makes a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
  - 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
  - 4. Explore ways of maximising enhancement and avoiding or minimising harm; and
  - 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.
- 3.11 As such, this report provides a synthesis of relevant information for the site and thereafter concludes with: (1) an assessment of its archaeological interest and potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines; and (2) an assessment of the likely effect of the proposed development upon designated assets, whether direct or indirect.

# Section 4 Existing Information

#### Introduction

- 4.1 The site does not contain any designated heritage assets, such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens or registered battlefields; nor does it fall within a conservation area.
- 4.2 All designated heritage assets located within the wider 1km study area were assessed to gauge the potential for, and significance of, indirect ('setting') impacts from the proposed development of the site. These consist of seven Grade II listed buildings and two conservation areas, the locations of which are shown on **Plan EDP 1**.
- 4.3 There are no previously recorded, non-designated heritage assets within the site, as recorded on the Leicestershire HER. There are 28 records in the wider 1km study area, indicating activity dating from the prehistoric to modern periods, this includes three locally listed buildings within the vicinity. Their locations are also identified on **Plan EDP 1**.

#### **Designated Heritage Assets**

- 4.4 There are no designated heritage assets within the boundary of the site, where there would be a presumption in favour of physical preservation *in situ*.
- 4.5 The identification of designated heritage assets that may potentially be affected by the proposed development (Step 1 of the HE guidance (HE 2017)) was determined, in the first instance, through an initial map analysis, then subsequently augmented and confirmed through a field visit.

#### **Conservation Areas**

- 4.6 Only a fraction of the Syston Conservation Area lies within the 1km study area, located c.850m north-west of the site boundary. The conservation area is surrounded by a buffer of 20th and 21st century development and therefore cannot be experienced from the site. For this reason, the site does not contribute to the setting of the conservation area and it will not be affected by the development proposals.
- 4.7 Barkby and Barkby Thorpe Conservation Area is located c.970m south of the site, only a fraction of the conservation area is included within the 1km study area surrounding the site. The conservation area at Barkby is surrounded by a large buffer of agricultural fields. Due to the lack of association and distance from the site, it is considered that there will be no effects on the conservation area from the proposed development.

4.8 As such, there will be no effect from the development of the site on either of the aforementioned conservation areas, and they are not discussed further within this assessment.

#### **Listed Buildings**

- 4.9 There are no listed buildings located within the proposed development site, although consultation with the National Heritage List for England has established that there are seven Grade II listed buildings situated within the wider study area located to the north-west of the site.
- 4.10 The listed buildings within 1km of the site were all located within Syston Conservation Area and comprise six 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century residential buildings exhibiting period features such as sash windows and slate roofs (**1307347**, **1361176**, **1177742**, **1307309**, **1074469**, **1074464**) and one public house, possibly two former dwellings, of 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century origin with a cart entry and slate roof (**1307294**).
- 4.11 The positions of these listed buildings, not only in relation to the site, but also in relation to their surroundings, are such that it is considered highly unlikely that they would experience a loss of significance as a result of the proposed development scheme being implemented.
- 4.12 In each case, their functions, forms and locations are such that they clearly do not possess any inter-relationships of potential significance or inter-visibility with the site. Indeed, on completion of the site visit/walkover, it was determined that none of these listed buildings are of relevance to the current development proposals; on the basis that they are neither situated within the application site boundary, or located sufficiently close to it, that they could potentially experience an indirect effect from the development, as a result of change within their 'setting'.
- 4.13 The site visit confirmed that due to intervening settlement comprising the modern expansion of Syston, vegetation and/or topography, none could be 'experienced' from within the site, nor does the site form any part of the experience of the listed buildings themselves. As such, and considering the definition of setting as "the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced" (Annex 2 NPPF), it is clear that the site does not form part of any of their setting and therefore their significance would not be harmed through residential development in this location. Consequently, they are not considered further within this assessment report.
- 4.14 The Grade I listed Church of St Mary (**1074500**) is located within the Barkby and Barkby Thorpe Conservation Area 1.2km to the south of the site. The listing citation notes that the church is mainly late 13<sup>th</sup> century with some Victorian restoration work. Its significance lies within its architectural and historic interest, which is primary invested within the fabric of its standing remains which forms the tangible manifestation of its significance.

- 4.15 In terms of its setting, the church is set within its own church yard within its village setting of Barkby. It is from these areas that its significance is best appreciated and, as such, they make a positive contribution to its significance.
- 4.16 Due to its landmark qualities, the upper part church tower is visible from the site, therefore it forms part of its setting in terms of Annex 2 of the NPPF. However, an assessment of effects in heritage terms means that there has to be an impact on its significance. In this regard, it is considered that the site is located some distance and with no historical or associational connections.
- 4.17 At this distance, the significance of the church (i.e. its architectural and historic interest) cannot readily be understood. Therefore, the sole relationship between the site and church is through this incidental and partial visibility; such instances are discussed with specific regard to church towers and spires within *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA 3; HE 2017):

"Being tall structures, church towers and spires are often widely visible across land- and townscapes but, where development does not impact on the significance of heritage assets visible in a wider setting or where not allowing significance to be appreciated, they are unlikely to be affected by small-scale development, unless that development competes with them, as tower blocks and wind turbines may. Even then, such an impact is more likely to be on the landscape values of the tower or spire rather than the heritage values, unless the development impacts on its significance, for instance by impacting on a designed or associative view."

- 4.18 In other words, the ability to see a church, in this instance, does not necessarily mean that it contributes to the significance of that asset; consequently the loss of such views does not necessarily result in an impact on significance. Given that no historical or contextual associations between the site and the church are identified, it is concluded that the site forms only a peripheral element of the setting of the Church of St Mary and is not considered to contribute to, or allow appreciation of, the listed building's significance.
- 4.19 Furthermore, any proposals within the site would be seen within the context of the recently developed site adjacent and to the south-west, so appearing as an extension to the urban form of Syston. Given this, and the lack of contribution made to the significance of the church by the site, it is considered that there will be no harm to the significance of the Grade I listed Church of St Mary as a result of the scheme proceeding.

#### **Non-designated Heritage Assets**

#### **Locally Listed Buildings**

4.20 There are no locally listed buildings within the site although there are three within the wider area.

- 4.21 Syston Grange Farm is an 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead (**MLE23363**) that is located c.90m south-east of the site. The farmhouse originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century whilst the associated barns are thought to have originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the associated barns may have been converted into residential dwellings.
- 4.22 Charnwood Council hold records relating to this building, the citation for the local listing states:
  - "Farmhouse and Barns. Farmhouse, C19. Plain Gothic Revival styling. Barns, arranged round yard, perhaps originally C18 but with C19/20 alterations and additions. Vernacular styling. Generally, mellow red brick. Slate pitched roofs. Farmhouse ?L? shaped on plan with pitched dormers and deep gables. Ridge and eaves stacks with corbelled heads. Some barns possibly converted to residential accommodation".
- 4.23 The significance of the building is invariably held within its architectural interest, also with some historic interest as illustrating past human activities in farming. The farm group is well contained with its private gardens to the west and associated farm buildings forming its immediate setting (**Image EDP 1**). It also has a positive relationship with the roadside to the north, and farmland to the south, as well as, to a more minor extent, the wider agricultural landscape.
- 4.24 A visit to the asset in October 2021 confirmed that the property is well contained by mature vegetation and conifer trees, with a dense boundary enclosing the farm from the Queniborough Road. As such, there are only filtered and oblique views towards the site from upper floor windows, any views towards the farmstead from the site are limited to glimpsed views of its taller aspects, including the chimneys, and thus there is only a limited visual relationship between the two (**Images EDP 2** and **3**). The traffic lights and overhead services form part of its setting in the intervening area between the site and the house. Therefore, the rural agricultural setting of the farmstead is predominantly experienced through the group value of its buildings, as well as through glimpsed views to the agricultural land to the north, east and south; these elements thus only contribute to a minor degree to the significance to the asset.
- 4.25 Although the proposals will result in a change to the wider environs of the farm, it is considered that, due to the intervening distance, vegetation, roads and traffic lights, that the site does not contribute to the significance of the farm and as such there will be no harm in this regard.
- 4.26 The second locally listed building is a pair of cemetery chapels, recorded as **MLE23770**. The chapels are located c.425m west of site. The citation for the local listing states: "Cemetery Buildings. Mid C19, First pointed Gothic Revival. 'H' plan paired chapels. Transverse link with centre gable contains ceremonial pointed arch entrance to both chapels and burial ground. Red brick. Stone dressings and hood moulds to pointed arch openings. Steep pitched Swithland slate roofs with terra cottage ridge".

- 4.27 The significance of the chapels stems from their architectural and aesthetic value, reflecting the styles of the period, as well as some historic interest illustrating the organisation and practice of Christianity within the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.28 Within the cemetery, a second building is locally listed (**MLE23768**). This comprises the 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery lodge at No. 115 Barkby Road, c.490m west of site. The citation for the local listing states:
  - "Lodge adjoining cemetery. Built 1879, (date plaque on centre gable). Domestic Vernacular Revival styling. Red brick with moulded brick string courses and decorative terra cotta tiles in apex of gables. Steep pitched Swithland slate roofs. Terra cotta ridge. Tall gable stacks. 2 gabled bays to cemetery facade. Projecting bay on L with dormer roof and half timbering carried over GF on timber corbel brackets. Full height gable on R with corbelled raking string course under eaves. Generally small paned casement windows under shallow brick arched openings."
- 4.29 The lodge derives its significance predominantly from its architectural value, illustrating the vernacular traditions of the period.
- 4.30 The chapel buildings and lodge are well contained by vegetation, with a positive relationship to their immediate setting within the surrounding cemetery. Beyond this, the experience from the assets is within the context of the built form of Syston, with much of this modern development intervening between the historic buildings and the site. A visit to the buildings confirmed that there are no views ascertained between the site and the assets and no historical associations identified between them; the site therefore does not contribute to the significance of the two locally listed buildings and as such there will be no harm in this regard.

#### Palaeolithic-Iron Age (c.500,000 BC-AD 43)

- 4.31 No Palaeolithic-Iron Age heritage assets are recorded by the Leicestershire HER within the site, there are six recorded within the wider 1km study area.
- 4.32 A double-ditched cropmark, running north-northwest to south-southeast, was noted on aerial photography in the 1980's (**MLE783**), c.290m north of the site. A possible enclosure was also noted on the aerial photography in the same location. They have both been recorded with possible prehistoric origin, although there has been no dating to confirm this, and could be relating to the agricultural exploitation of the land in the area.
- 4.33 Further cropmarks noted c.760m north of the site (**MLE785**), near Lodge Farm, were considered to be two or three adjoining rectangular enclosures of possible Iron Age origin.
- 4.34 The possible site of a long barrow was identified at Barkby (**MLE438**), c.630m east of the site. Flints were discovered in an adjacent field and identified as Neolithic/Early Bronze Age.

- 4.35 An early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead (**MLE6295**) was discovered in 1990 in the garden of no.29, Hungarton Drive, c.320m west of the site. A second findspot comprising a flanged Bronze Age axe (**MLE6286**) was discovered in 1993 at the Syston Rugby Club, approximately 850m north-east of site. A third find spot (**MLE24678**), comprising a small diametered cast bronze ring was found in 2001 via metal detecting, located c.850m north of the site boundary.
- 4.36 None of the suspected enclosures or cropmarks mentioned above have been investigated further or have had any form of definitive dating. Considering this, the relatively low spread of prehistoric archaeology in the 1km study area surrounding the site and lack of evidence for prehistoric archaeology in the surrounding area, the potential for prehistoric archaeology to be present within the site is considered to be low.

#### Romano-British (AD43-410)

- 4.37 As for Romano-British remains, there are no finds recorded within the site by the Leicestershire HER and three finds recorded within the wider 1km study area.
- 4.38 The finds consist of a Roman brooch (**MLE18292**) found c.680m east of the site during trial trenching ahead of developments south of Ridgemere Lane in 2009 (**ELE7249**, see **Plan EDP 2**). The brooch was not associated with any archaeological features of note.
- 4.39 A Roman coin (**MLE7734**) was recorded by a journal record within 'The History and Antiquities of Leicestershire', printed in 1800, to have been found at Moody Bush, approximately 950m east of the site (Nichols, 1800). A second coin (**MLE7784**) was found in the garden of 7, Barry Drive in 1989, approximately 850m north-west of the site. The copper alloy coin was identified as an 'unofficial copy' of an 'AE4' Roman coin, dating to the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.40 The HER also records the route of potential Roman road 'Le Strete', following the route of the current Melton Road, approximately 800m north-east of the site boundary (MLE8839). This route is attested by documentary evidence which notes that in 1396 the main road from Melton to Leicester was called 'Le Strete', the Glebe Terrier of 1612 also makes this mention. Physical evidence of the road, although currently not excavated, is indicated by earthworks visible through LIDAR survey, as well as geophysical survey undertaken in 2011 which suggests the route of the road near Kirby Bellars, a further 9km north-east of site.
- 4.41 Although the potential Roman road indicates a level of activity within the area, this is located a large distance away from the site and no further evidence of Roman settlement has been recovered from archaeological investigation within the landscape. Considering this lack of Roman archaeology within the vicinity, the potential for Romano-British archaeology to be present within the site is considered to be low.

#### Early Medieval and Medieval (AD 410 -1485)

- 4.42 There are no records relating to early medieval or medieval activity within the site, as recorded by the Leicestershire HER and eight records recorded within the 1km study area of the site.
- 4.43 Two records within the HER relate to the historic settlement cores of villages Syston (**MLE1008**) and Barkby (**MLE430**), situated c.850m north-west and 950m south of the site respectively. The medieval and post-medieval historic cores of these villages have been deduced by using historic maps and entries; both villages are recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, although they are known then Sitestone and Barcheberie.
- 4.44 Further documentary evidence indicates the presence of a medieval windmill, located approximately 950m south-west of the site (**MLE431**); the windmill is noted on the Merton College estate map of 1635, however it is not depicted on the subsequent maps of 1609, 1780 or 1847, and no remains are visible extant. A second potential windmill is noted c.450 north-west of the site boundary (**MLE1004**), indicated on Syston's enclosure award and map by the notation of two closes named 'Windmill Close'.
- 4.45 Documentary evidence also indicates the location of a medieval 'moot site', approximately 950m east of the site boundary (**MLE437**). The site is marked on the 1609 and 1635 Barkby estate map as 'Mute Bush' and 'Moote Bush' respectively. The HER further notes that the site is described in 'The History and Antiquities of Leicestershire' in 1800 as the stone where The Court of Goscote Hundred met (Nichols, 1800); the stone is recorded by the HER as still extant.
- 4.46 Findspot (**MLE20394**) comprises three sherds of medieval pottery recovered at Barkby Camp Field, c.950m south-west of the site, during a programme of fieldwalking in 2009 (ELE8307).
- 4.47 A possible moated site and building are recorded, c.610m east of the site, during a geophysical survey, (ELE5769, see Plan EDP 2), south of Ridgemere Lane in 2009 (MLE17316, MLE17317). However, following evaluation (ELE7249) of the sub rectangular anomalies, no trace of the moated enclosure could be found and the anomalies were concluded to be of probable natural origin. A sub square anomaly was also recorded on the same geophysical survey, c.680m east of the site. Again, the evaluation work recorded no features consistent with the anomalies seen on the geophysical report and the anomalies were therefore considered to be natural.
- 4.48 The site is located away from any known settlement areas and probably consisted of agricultural land, as suggested by historic mapping. Therefore, potential for uncovering early Medieval or Medieval assets within the site is considered to be low.

#### Post-Medieval to modern (AD 1485 - present)

4.49 There are no records relating to heritage assets of these periods within the site as recorded by the Leicestershire HER, although there are eight recorded within 1km.

- 4.50 These assets include the site of a former brickworks (**MLE23362**) located directly north of the site and marked as 'old brick yard' on the 1904 Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping. Syston Grange Farm is a 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead (**MLE23363**) that is located c.70m south-east of the site. The farmhouse originated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century whilst the associated barns are thought to have originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This has been discussed above.
- 4.51 The site of a cemetery and lodge (**MLE23361**) dating to 1879, c.350m west of the site, is shown on OS mapping from 1884. The lodge is recorded itself as a locally listed building (**MLE23768**) and the cemetery includes the locally listed chapel (**MLE23770**), both of which are discussed above. The cemetery and lodge have continued in use up to the present day although their surroundings have changed significantly with the addition of residential dwellings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The site of a Primitive Methodist Chapel is also recorded by the HER, located on Melton Road, c.925m west of site (**MLE25629**). The chapel was constructed in 1887, replacing an earlier chapel in the village. In 1897 it was extended to the rear to incorporate a schoolroom and was later demolished in the 1960s.
- 4.52 Other post-medieval to modern assets within the study area include the site of a windmill on historic mapping from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (**MLE787**).
- 4.53 Fieldwalking undertaken in 2009 at Barkby Camp field, c.950m south-west of the site, (ELE8307) recovered 144 sherds of post-medieval pottery, as well as 8 pieces of clay pipe (**MLE20395**). Further fieldwalking in 2009 (ELE8303), undertaken north of Barkby Holt Lane, c.970m south-west of the site, recovered 147 sherds of post-medieval pottery, 19 pieces of clay pipe and 3 fragments of glass.
- 4.54 The relative prevalence of post-medieval and modern assets in the area indicates that there is a moderate potential for further assets within the site. However, due to the lack of above-ground evidence for these assets, any archaeology is likely to be of low value, e.g. agricultural association, or associated with the former brickworks to the north of the site.

#### Undated

4.55 Beyond the assets which have been discussed in the period specific sections above, the Leicestershire HER has two further records for undated assets. This comprises two anomalies that were recorded during a geophysical survey at land adjacent to Barkby Brook in 1999 (ELE6934, see Plan EDP 2), these were thought to represent a square structure, possibly made of stone (MLE8733), and a ditch running east to west (MLE8732). No associated features were recorded during the survey. Due to their value and location these assets do not present any constraints to the development.

## **Previous Archaeological Investigations**

4.56 The following paragraphs provide a summary of the previous archaeological investigations recorded within the wider study area, where they have not been included in the period specific baseline sections above.

- 4.57 The Leicestershire HER has two records for previous archaeological investigations within the site (as mentioned below). Forty archaeological investigations have been recorded within the 1km study area, 25 of which consist of fieldwalking surveys performed by the Barkby Fieldwalking Group.
- 4.58 The fieldwalking surveys were performed over five years from 2009-2013 and covered the land within the site as well as land to the east, south and west of the site. The fieldwalking surveys within the site (**ELE10015**, **ELE10016**, see **Plan EDP 2**) were performed in 2011 and discovered finds including 6 flint flakes, 12 pieces of late Medieval pottery and 144 sherds of post-Medieval pottery. These finds are typical of a fieldwalking survey in an agricultural setting and do not affect the archaeological potential of the site. A large number of finds, such as pottery sherds and flint fragments, were also recovered during the numerous surveys within the study area. Similarly, nothing unusual was recovered and the finds remain typical of an agricultural setting.
- 4.59 The land directly to the west of the site, to the north of Barkby Road, was examined by a geophysical survey followed by an archaeological evaluation and an archaeological assessment (**ELE6933**, **ELE6937** and **ELE6931**, see **Plan EDP 2**). The only finds from the evaluation were two sherds of post-Medieval pottery and the results of the examinations displayed a lack of evidence for settlement activity in the immediate vicinity of the site, suggesting that the site was not the focus of occupation during any period and that the land was probably limited to agricultural use.
- 4.60 A watching brief was commissioned, prior to a residential development, by Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd in 2014 at the land off Barkby Road, Syston (**ELE9365**, see **Plan EDP 2**) directly to the south of the site. No archaeological features or artefacts were discovered during the course of the watching brief. It was noted that the 'lack of archaeological material suggests that the site lay at some distance from any settlement.' and, due to this lack of evidence for settlement, it is likely that the land was limited to agricultural use.
- 4.61 Those investigations immediately adjacent to the site have failed to encounter any archaeological remains of note, suggesting that there is a very low potential for significant archaeological remains of any period within the site.

## **Cartographic Sources**

- 4.62 Maps held online were consulted to inform this assessment. The earliest detailed coverage of the site examined was Prior's Map of 1779. OS maps from 1887, 1904 (not illustrated), 1930 (not illustrated), 1950 and 1989 (not illustrated) were also studied (**Plan EDP 3** and **4**).
- 4.63 On the 1779 Prior's Map, the site can be seen to comprise of agricultural land, along with the surrounding fields. The town of Syston is well developed to the west of Melton Road, some 800m west of the site. However, the land to the east of Syston, between Melton Road and Queniborough Road, appears to comprise entirely of agricultural land. The site

itself can be seen to be formed of at least three separate fields, the boundaries not being consistent with the present-day field boundaries.

- 4.64 By the time of the OS mapping of 1887, it is evident that much change has occurred to the town and its surroundings. The town has expanded to the east of Melton Road to include a cemetery and further residential properties. A brickyard has been established on the land to the north of the site and Syston Grange farmstead has been built to the south-east of the site. The boundaries of the site have changed to resemble the current day boundaries further.
- 4.65 The 1904 Edition OS mapping indicates little change on the site or surroundings aside from further residential housing to the east of Melton Road. The brickyard to the north of the site is now labelled 'old brick yard' suggesting it is no longer in use. No further changes are evident.
- 4.66 The 1930 Edition OS mapping (not illustrated) shows the further expansion of Syston in the building of rows of new development to the east of Melton Road. Aside from this, there are no further changes to the site or the surroundings.
- 4.67 The 1950 OS map shows more residential properties are built to the west of the site, along the eastern edge of Melton Road, and a handful of structures are evident directly along the western edge of the site. The brickworks is no longer recognised on the OS mapping, suggesting the complete disappearance of any associated structures.
- 4.68 Further residential development to the west of the site is evident on the 1989 Edition OS mapping (not illustrated), this development has again been expanding to reach the western boundary of the site, although later mapping is not available online to display this change. This most recent development to the west of the site has formed what are the current site boundaries.
- 4.69 The assessed maps have demonstrated that from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the site comprised agricultural land and has remained as such until the present day. They also show that the former brickworks is clearly identified and well contained, with no evidence to suggest it extended to within the site itself.

## **Aerial Photographs**

- 4.70 A total of 62 vertical aerial photographs and 8 oblique aerial photographs, covering the site and its immediate environs, were identified within the collection maintained by the HEA in Swindon. None of the photographs are reproduced here due to copyright restrictions.
- 4.71 The available images span the period from March 1944 to September 2004 and confirm the land use and development sequence shown on those historic maps available online.

- 4.72 The aerial photographs show cropmarks related to former ridge and furrow cultivation across the majority of the site. This confirms the agricultural use of the site from at least the medieval period. Having consulted later aerial photographs, it is evident that the ridge and furrow earthworks were entirely ploughed out by the early 1990s.
- 4.73 Other than the ridge and furrow cropmarks, the photographs show no other features that were not depicted on the historic OS maps discussed above, rather they confirm what is shown on these maps.

#### **Historic Landscape Characterisation**

- 4.74 The Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) records the entirety of the site as re-organised piecemeal enclosure.
- 4.75 In terms of time depth attributed to this character type, the HLC study notes that:
  - "This HLC Type has been formed primarily through changes in agricultural practice which begin during the late 19th century and continue through much of the 20th."
- 4.76 Evidence from the historic mapping has demonstrated that the boundaries have changed further during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. This type of landscape, along with planned enclosures, represents the most common type of landscape in the wider area.

#### Site Walkover

- 4.77 The site was visited in October 2014 to assess the current ground conditions and topography, as well as to confirm the continuing survival of any known archaeological remains and to identify any hitherto unknown remains. A second visit was undertaken in October 2021 to ascertain whether there had been any changes, particularly with regard to the impact of current land use on the condition of any below ground archaeological assets that might be present.
- 4.78 The site comprised largely flat, arable land, with a slight downwards slope identified in the south-west corner, and a rise to a high point of the site to the north-eastern boundary (**Image EDP 4**). No features of archaeological interest were visible within the site on either site visit, and there is no evidence for ridge and furrow or earthworks associated with the brickworks.
- 4.79 Both site visits also considered the potential change to the wider setting(s) of designated heritage assets, as well as those of the locally listed buildings, as discussed above.

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# Section 5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This Archaeological and Heritage Assessment has been prepared to satisfy national planning policy set out in the NPPF and local planning policy, and concludes that the site does not contain any designated heritage assets such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or conservation areas.
- 5.2 Potential impacts upon the settings of the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the wider study area have been considered, and this assessment concludes that the implementation of the proposed development will not result in an adverse impact on, harm to, or loss of significance from any of the identified designated heritage assets, either in terms of an effect on their physical fabric or through changes to their wider setting(s).
- 5.3 This assessment also concludes that, with regard to the locally listed buildings, the development will result in no adverse effects to their physical fabric nor the elements of their setting which contribute to their significance. Although the proposals will result in a change to the wider environs of the Syston Grange Farm, the significance of the asset predominantly stems from the group value of its associated buildings and its enclosed immediate setting. Due to this secluded setting, with merely glimpsed views towards the site, the site is not considered to form part of the setting of the asset which contributes to its significance and, as such, there is assessed to be no harm in this regard.
- 5.4 The NPPF states that, with regard to the setting of heritage assets, where proposals preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset, they should be treated favourably. This is considered to be applicable to the proposed development, which will not result in any harm to the significance of any designated heritage assets in its zone of influence.
- 5.5 There is considered to be low potential to encounter archaeological remains from the prehistoric, Roman and early medieval periods within the site. Medieval and later activity is likely to be represented by nothing more than 'low value' features such as buried furrows, plough soils and former boundaries.
- 5.6 This potential is supported by evaluations directly to the south and west of the site which failed to identify any archaeological features of note, and the presence and subsequent truncation of ridge and furrow within the site as displayed by historic aerial photography.
- 5.7 On the basis of the above conclusions, which demonstrate an overall limited potential for significant archaeological artefacts or features to be present within the site, there is no reason to believe or expect that it will contain archaeology of such significance that it would require or warrant preservation *in situ*.

5.8 As such, it is considered that no further archaeological works should be required in relation to this application. This position was confirmed by the archaeological advisor during the course of a previous application within the site (**Appendix EDP 1**).

# Section 6 Bibliography

Charnwood Borough Council, 2015. Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028. Charnwood.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA), 2020. Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments. Reading.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 2021 The National Planning Policy Framework. London.

Historic England, 2017, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)

#### **List of Consulted Websites**

https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/ http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/

#### List of Consulted Maps

Prior's Map of 1779 1887 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1904 Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1930 Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1950 Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1989 Edition Ordnance Survey Map This page has been left blank intentionally

# **Images**



**Image EDP 1**: View south-west from the 19<sup>th</sup> century Syston Grange farmstead, locally listed on the HER. Illustrating that the farmstead is well enclosed by vegetation, with its immediate setting formed by private gardens. (Taken October 2021)



**Image EDP 2**: View west from the 19<sup>th</sup> century Syston Grange farmstead, locally listed on the HER. Illustrating that the farmstead is well enclosed by vegetation, with views towards the site screened by boundaries as well as the road and traffic lights. (Taken October 2021)



**Image EDP 3**: View south-east towards the 19<sup>th</sup> century Syston Grange farmstead, locally listed on the HER. The farmstead is located in the centre of the image and, although visible, it is obvious that the buildings are well screened by intervening vegetation. (Taken October 2014)



**Image EDP 4**: View north across site, comprising arable land and illustrating its largely flat nature with a highpoint to the north. (Taken October 2021)

# Appendix EDP 1 Consultation Response from the Archaeological Advisor

Land North of Barkby Road, Syston Archaeological and Heritage Assessment edp4685\_r001d

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From: **Fennell Mark** To: **Harriet Sharp** Ed Oakley Cc:

RE: Syston Archaeology NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED Subject:

Date: 13 April 2018 09:45:46

Attachments: image001.png

image002.jpg

#### NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

#### Harriet

I have now had chance to look at the site and agree that further archaeological investigation will not be necessary. Could you ensure that the evidence you have gathered and your conclusions are submitted with the planning application.

# Kind regards

#### Mark

Mark Fennell

Team Leader Natural & Built Environment

Charnwood Borough Council

Southfields Road

Loughborough

Leicestershire

LE11 2TN

Tel: 01509 634748

**From:** Harriet Sharp [mailto:harriets@edp-uk.co.uk]

Sent: 08 March 2018 11:59

To: Fennell Mark Cc: Ed Oakley

Subject: Syston Archaeology

Dear Mark,

We have been looking into a site on behalf of our client to the east of Syston (see attached plan) in relation to a potential residential development. We are in the process of undertaking a deskbased assessment of the site and have obtained information from the HER, aerial photographs, a site visit and historic mapping.

Our research has shown that there are no previously recorded non-designated heritage assets within the site, as recorded on the Leicestershire HER. Previous archaeological investigations undertaken both to the west and south of the site, has failed to identify any archaeological remains of note. Instead, evidence for agricultural practice (buried ridge and furrow) was encountered via historic aerial photography of the site. Furthermore, fieldwalking within the site undertaken by the local society has not found any signs of significant archaeological activity.

The available evidence suggests that the site is located in an area of very low potential for significant archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric to early medieval periods, with any remains of these dates (if present), likely to comprise nothing more than stray finds. Medieval and later activity is likely to be represented by nothing more than 'low value' features such as buried furrows, plough soils and former boundaries.

As such, we would consider that there is no need for the application to be supported by any further archaeological investigation but we would appreciate your thoughts on this matter.

Kind Regards,

**Harriet Sharp** *BSc, MA, PClfA*Assistant Archaeology and Heritage Consultant



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# **Plans**

Plan EDP 1 Heritage Assets

(edp4685\_d002d 04 November 2021 VMS/EB)

Plan EDP 2 Archaeological Events

(edp4685\_d003d 04 November 2021 VMS/EB)

Plan EDP 3 Prior's Map 1779 and 1887 Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping

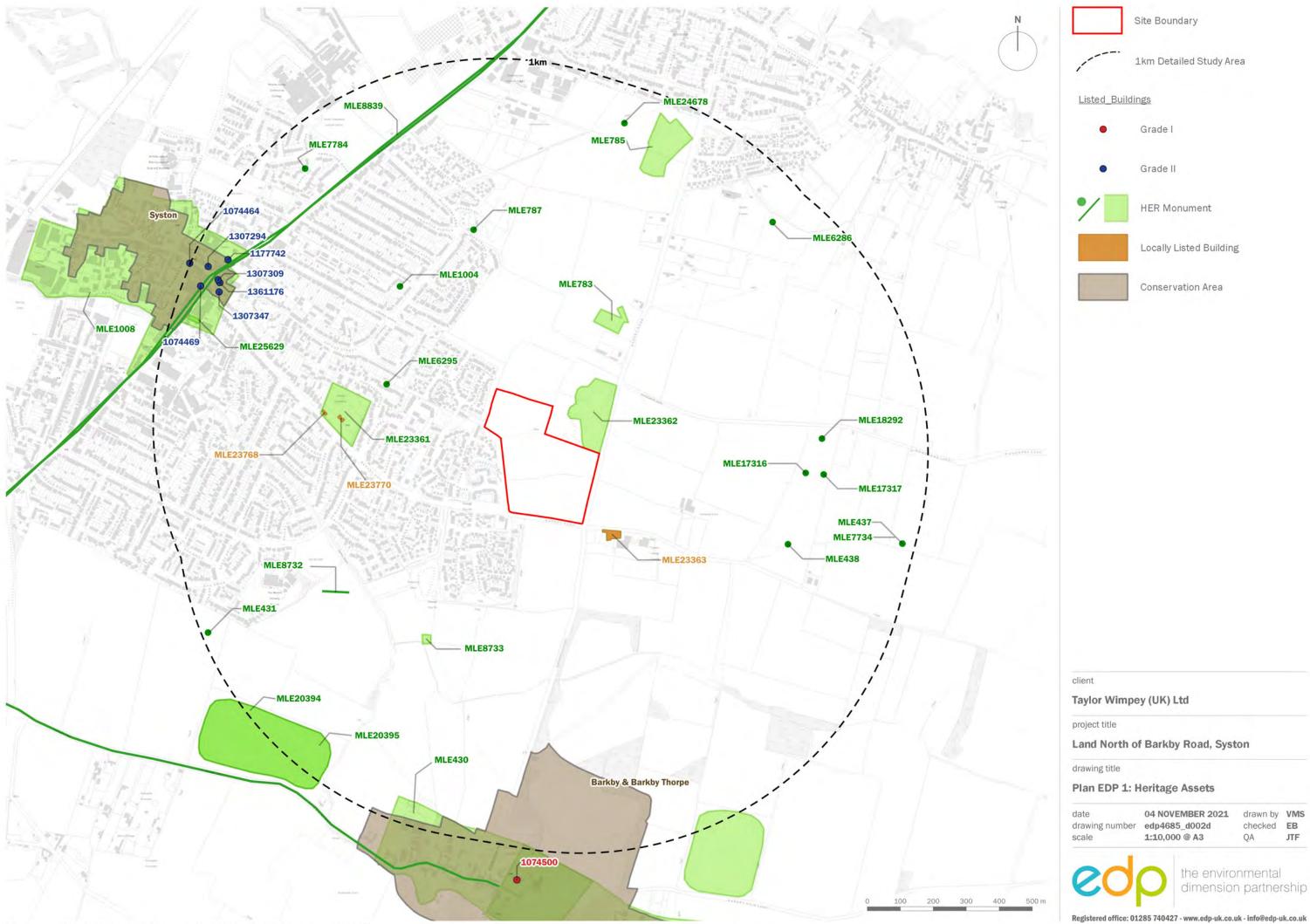
(edp4685\_d007c 04 November 2021 GY/HS)

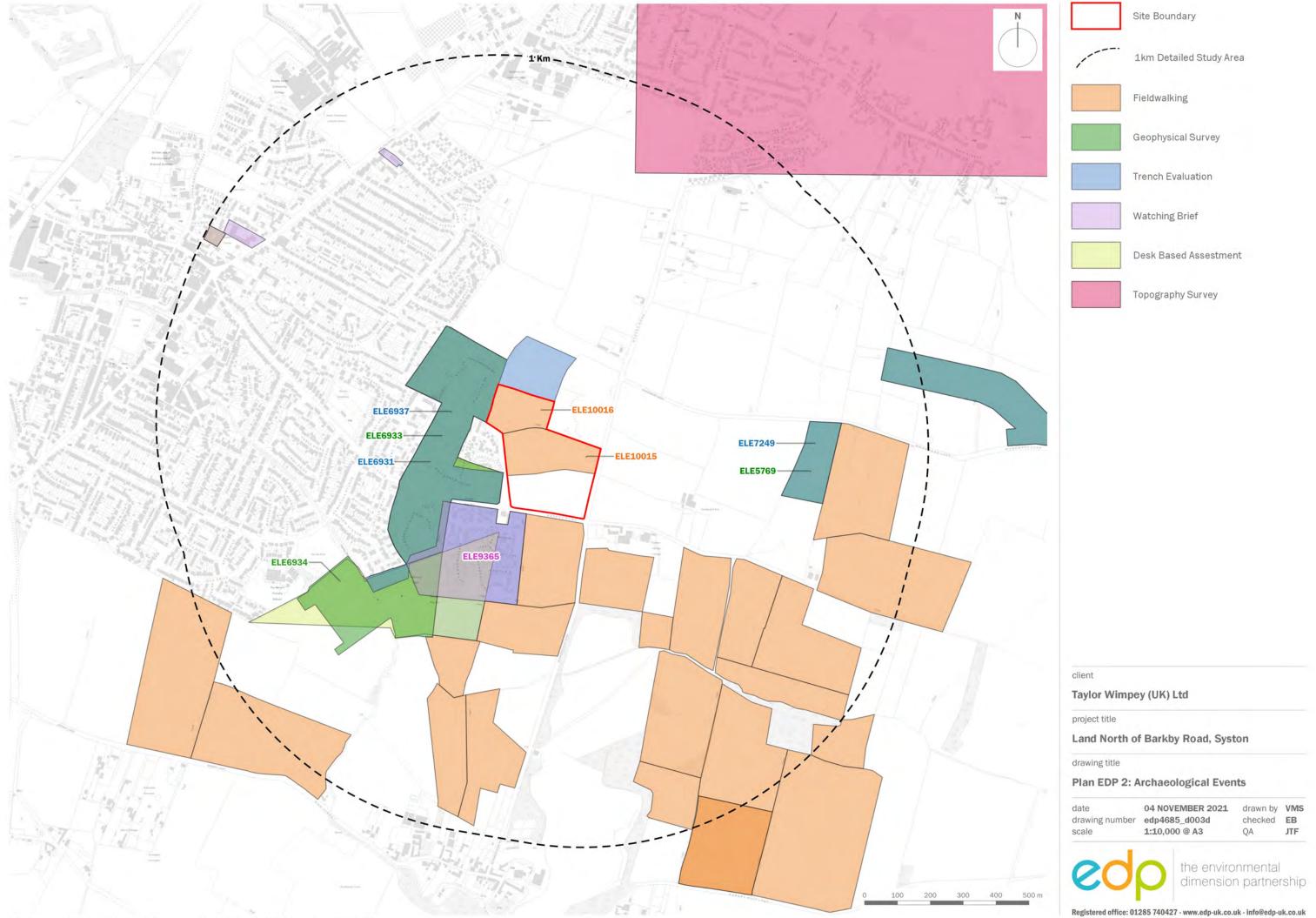
Plan EDP 4 1950 Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping

(edp4685\_d008c 04 November 2021 GY/HS)

Land North of Barkby Road, Syston Archaeological and Heritage Assessment edp4685\_r001d

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Prior's Map 1779



1887 Ordnance Survey

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## Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title

# Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

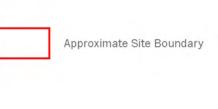
drawing title

# Plan EDP 3: Prior's Map 1779 and 1887 Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping

date 04 NOVEMBER 2021 drawn by GY checked HS scale Not to scale @ A3 QA JTF



the environmental dimension partnership





client

Taylor Wimpey (UK) Ltd

project title

Land North of Barkby Road, Syston

drawing title

Plan EDP 4: 1950 Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping

date 04 NOVEMBER 2021 drawn by GY checked HS scale Not to scale @ A3 QA JTF



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