

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT

Land to the rear of Burston Garden Centre, St Albans, Herts

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Land to the rear of Burston
Garden Centre, St Albans
Version 2 Final
December 2020

Quality Management

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Land to the rear of Burston Garden Centre, St Albans, Hertfordshire has been reviewed for its below ground archaeological potential.
- The proposed development will not impact on any designated archaeological assets. The study site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance related to the Medieval Burston Manor.
- This assessment considers that there is a high archaeological potential at the study site for evidence dating to the Saxon and Medieval periods, with a low to moderate potential identified for Roman period remains. A low archaeological potential is considered for all other past periods of human activity. If present, archaeological features and finds would likely be of local significance, although it is possible that well-preserved extensive Saxon or Medieval settlement remains could be of regional significance.
- Past below ground impacts at the study site are likely to have been widespread as a result of the construction of garden nursery buildings, possible extraction activity, and agricultural/horticultural activity. It is possible that archaeological remains at the site will have been truncated as a result of these impacts, however this impact is generally likely to have been fairly shallow and limited to the upper fills of any archaeological features that may be present.
- Overall, given the high archaeological potential of the study site, development at the study site would have the potential to impact upon archaeological remains of probable local and perhaps regional significance.
- Due to the high archaeological potential and likelihood of archaeological survival, it is anticipated that a phased programme of archaeological works will be required in advance of development at the site. These works could initially comprise a geophysical survey across open areas of the site outside areas of later development. Further archaeological works may be required depending on the results of this survey.

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1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This updated below ground archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared by James Archer, and approved by Duncan Hawkins of RPS Heritage on behalf of CastleOak Group.
- 1.2 The subject of this assessment, also known as the study site, is and to the rear of Burston Garden Centre, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The site is approximately 5.8ha in extent and is centred at TL 13618 03690 (Fig. 1) within the administrative area of St Albans City & District Council.
- 1.3 An archaeological desk based assessment was prepared in 2017-18 for a previous development planning application at the site (CgMs 2018, now RPS). A revised planning application is now being submitted. Accordingly, CastleOak Group has commissioned RPS Heritage to establish the archaeological potential of the site and to provide guidance on ways to address any archaeological constraints identified.
- 1.4 In accordance with relevant policy and guidance on archaeology and planning, and in accordance with the 'Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments' (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists October 2020), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the archaeological potential of the site.
- 1.5 This desk-based assessment comprises an updated examination of evidence on the Hertfordshire & St Albans Historic Environment Record (HER), and other sources, and includes the results of a comprehensive map regression exercise. A site visit was previously carried out in July 2017.
- 1.6 This assessment thus enables relevant parties to assess the archaeological potential of various parts of the site and to consider the need for design, civil engineering, and archaeological solutions to the archaeological potential identified.

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 National legislation regarding archaeology, including scheduled monuments, is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002, and updated in April 2014.
- 2.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently revised in June 2019. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014 and has since been periodically updated.
- 2.3 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

National Planning Policy

- 2.4 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development;
 - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
 - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
 - Recognition that heritage makes a contribution towards our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.5 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 189 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.6 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 2.7 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 2.8 A *Nationally Important Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
- 2.9 *Significance* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

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

Local Planning Policy

St Albans City & District Council

- 2.14 The Local Plan framework is provided by the City and District of St. Albans District Local Plan Review, adopted in 1994. The Plan contains the following saved policies relating to archaeological matters:

POLICY 109 - SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT A SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, WILL BE REFUSED ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUNDS UNLESS PRIOR SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. IF SCHEDULED MONUMENT CONSENT HAS BEEN GRANTED, THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PRESERVE THE AMENITY OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

BY RESISTING PROPOSALS WITHIN SCHEDULED AREAS WHICH WOULD DETRACT FROM THEIR CHARACTER.

POLICY 110 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES FOR LOCAL PRESERVATION

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE REMAINS WITHIN, OR THE CHARACTER OF, THE SITES FOR LOCAL PRESERVATION AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP. DEVELOPMENT MAY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, FOLLOWING EVALUATION, IF THE COUNCIL IS SATISFIED THAT IMPORTANT REMAINS WOULD NOT BE DESTROYED OR THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE ADVERSELY AFFECTED. THE EVALUATION, WHICH MAY INVOLVE LIMITED EXCAVATION OR OTHER WORK (EG. GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY) IS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL OR AN ARCHAEOLOGIST APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL. PLANNING PERMISSIONS WILL NORMALLY BE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS REQUIRING FACILITIES FOR THE COUNCIL TO RECORD REMAINS BY EXCAVATION IN ADVANCE OF CONSTRUCTION AND/OR DURING CONSTRUCTION.

VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS WILL BE SOUGHT (EG. UNDER SECTION 106) TO COVER THE COST OF THE WORK, INCLUDING ANY INITIAL EVALUATION, AND TO ENSURE THAT FINDS MADE DURING THE COURSE OF SUCH WORK ARE DONATED TO THE COUNCIL. VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS WILL ALSO BE SOUGHT TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF IMPORTANT REMAINS.

POLICY 111 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WHERE PLANNING PERMISSIONS MAY BE SUBJECT TO A RECORDING CONDITION

WITHIN SITES LISTED BELOW AND DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL NOT NORMALLY REFUSE PLANNING APPLICATIONS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUNDS. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING EVALUATION, PLANNING PERMISSIONS MAY BE SUBJECTED TO A CONDITION REQUIRING FACILITIES FOR THE COUNCIL TO RECORD REMAINS BY EXCAVATION IN ADVANCE OF CONSTRUCTION AND/OR DURING CONSTRUCTION. THE EVALUATION, WHICH MAY INVOLVE LIMITED EXCAVATION OR OTHER WORK (EG. GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY), IS TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNCIL OR AN ARCHAEOLOGIST APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS WILL BE SOUGHT (EG. UNDER SECTION 106) TO COVER THE COST OF WORK, INCLUDING ANY INITIAL EVALUATION, AND TO ENSURE THAT FINDS MADE DURING THE COURSE OF SUCH WORK ARE DONATED TO THE COUNCIL.

- 2.15 The Council were in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period 2020 to 2036, noting the St Albans City & District Local Plan Publication Draft was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in March 2019. However, on recommendation of the inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State to examine the Plan on grounds of legal compliance and soundness it is understood there is a very strong possibility that the plan will be withdrawn. At this stage no weight should be applied to the policies contained within it.

Draft policy L30-Historic Environment is therefore noted below for reference purposes only

Policy L30 - Historic Environment

The character of the District's historic environment, which greatly contributes to a distinctive local 'sense of place' and a high quality of life for residents, businesses and stakeholders, will be preserved and, where possible, enhanced.

Aspects of the historic environment; referred to as 'heritage assets'; can be both designated and undesignated. Heritage assets include Scheduled Monuments, statutory Listed

Buildings, Registered Parks and, Gardens, Registered Battlefields, Locally Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and areas of archaeological interest.

Known heritage assets are recorded on Local Information Service (Public GIS).

Heritage assets

Heritage assets will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Great weight will be given to the conservation of the District's designated heritage assets. Currently undiscovered / undesignated heritage assets with equivalent interest will be similarly valued and conserved.

Heritage assets worthy of conservation include the District's high level of above and below ground archaeology, locally listed buildings, locally listed historic parks and gardens and other locally recorded features of heritage significance.

Development affecting heritage assets

Development that will affect heritage assets, including their setting, must have regard to the significance of the heritage asset. All submissions must include a Heritage Statement giving proportionate but sufficient information to enable full understanding of the proposals and their impact on the heritage assets significance.

New development must respect the wider context of the asset, with particular regard to important views of the District's built heritage and landscapes. Overall townscape character should be preserved and enhanced. Long views are particularly important in conservation of the historic City Centre of St Albans as the historic roofscape of the City is considered to be an important element of the Conservation Area's significance.

Development must seek to preserve, enhance or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset. This may include that arising from its setting, including any important views to or from the asset.

Where development leads to unavoidable change to a heritage asset, or provides an opportunity to increase knowledge of the affected asset, conditions or planning obligations will be used to ensure effective recording and museum archiving of the records created.

Development affecting heritage assets will be assessed in relation to the following considerations:...

... f) Archaeology: Planning permission for development which would adversely affect the significance of, or fail to preserve or enhance, a designated or known archaeological site (including a Scheduled Monument) will be refused.

Development may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, following evaluation, if important remains would not be destroyed or the character of the site adversely affected.

Any archaeological work must be carried out by an appropriately qualified archaeologist approved under a planning condition...

Relevant National and Local Designations

2.16

In terms of relevant designated heritage assets, as defined above and as shown on Figure 2a, there are no designated archaeological assets within the study site or the immediate vicinity. The Grade II* Listed Building 'Burston Manor House' and Grade II Listed Building 'Outbuilding to East of Burston Manor House' are located immediately north of the study site. Built heritage assets are not discussed further in this assessment and are addressed in separate reporting by RPS.

- 2.17 In terms of relevant local designations, the study site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance related to the Medieval Burstun Manor and possible shrunken village, as defined by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 2.18 In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk based assessment seeks to clarify the site's archaeological potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Geology

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS Online 2020) records the solid geology of the study site as undifferentiated elements of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation. Superficial deposits of Lowestoft Formation (Diamicton) are recorded across the study site, which are formed from glacial till and are geologically unsorted.
- 3.2 Whilst no site specific geotechnical data is currently available, British Geological Survey boreholes immediately south east of the study site recorded Boulder Clay, over clay and flinty gravels, overlying the chalk bedrock (BGS Online 2020).

Topography

- 3.3 The study site is generally level and located on a small plateau at c.86m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), before sloping down towards the River Ver to the east.
- 3.4 The River Ver is located c.1km east of the study site. The moat at Burston Manor immediately north of the study site is now an infilled pond whilst a further pond is located north of the manor house.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Timescales used in this report

Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000 -	12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000 -	4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000 -	2,500 BC
Bronze Age (including Chalcolithic)	2,500 -	800 BC
Iron Age	800 -	AD 43

Historic

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

Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter reviews the available archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological/historical background of the study site and surrounding area, and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the potential for any as yet to be discovered archaeological evidence on the study site prior to any assessment of any later development or below ground impacts.
- 4.2 What follows comprises a review of known archaeological assets within a 1.25km radius of the study site (Figs. 2a-b), also referred to as the study area, held on the Hertfordshire & St Albans Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the 18th century onwards until the present day.
- 4.3 The map regression exercise demonstrates that the study site lay within the agricultural hinterland of Burston Manor since at least the 18th century through to the construction of the garden centre in the late 20th century. It is possible that the southern area of the study site was subject to extraction activity.
- 4.4 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions, later development and below ground impacts, and whether the proposed development is likely to impact archaeological assets and potential archaeological assets identified below.

Early Prehistoric – Palaeolithic, Mesolithic & Neolithic

- 4.5 A number of Palaeolithic handaxes are recorded by the HER within an area c.450m east of the study site (HER Refs: 9750, TL 1440 0343; 9752, TL 1415 0366; 9764, TL 1416 0345).
- 4.6 The presence of Palaeolithic material can be notoriously difficult to predict and is typically dependent upon the presence of an appropriate underlying geology sequence (such as terrace gravels or brickearth), as well as suitable topography and access to nearby resources and water. The

underlying geological sequence comprises undifferentiated chalk overlain by Lowestoft Formation superficial deposits. These Lowestoft deposits are formed of glacial till, which is derived from the erosion of material by the movement of glacial ice, which is then redeposited along the route of the glacier. This sequence is not considered conducive to the survival of in situ Early Prehistoric artefacts.

- 4.7 No finds dating to the Mesolithic period are recorded by the HER. A single residual flint implement found c.1km south west of the study site is the sole find dated to the Neolithic (HER Ref: 2928, TL 146 030).
- 4.8 A collection of prehistoric worked flint was found during a fieldwalking exercise on the planned route of the M25 c.1km south west of the study site (HER Ref: 9757, TL 1270 0300).
- 4.9 Given the paucity of evidence related to the Early Prehistoric periods, the archaeological potential of the study site for these periods is considered to be low, although isolated residual artefact finds cannot be entirely ruled out.

Later Prehistoric – Bronze Age & Iron Age

- 4.10 Archaeological work at the Park Street Roman villa c.1.1km south east of the study site uncovered a shallow Bronze Age pit, post hole and probable contemporary stake holes (HER Ref: 603, TL 1469 0305). Further to this, a group of seven pits has been identified at Junction 21a of the M25, which were thought to have been a mix of quarries, waterholes and smaller pits. These were dated to the late Bronze Age (HER Ref: 31449, TL 1268 0290).
- 4.11 Middle Iron pottery sherds were found redeposited in the hypocaust system of the same Roman villa (HER Ref: 198, TL 1469 0305). A Late Iron Age occupation site is recorded in the same location, including rectangular buildings, imported pre-Roman pottery, a slave chain and various coins (HER Ref: 149, TL 1469 0305). A further Iron Age coin is recorded in this area by the Portable Antiquities Scheme.
- 4.12 Within the area circa 1km to the south west of the site at the M25, several pottery kilns were identified within a late Iron Age field system comprising boundary ditches and droveways. It was found that the kilns produced a red-surfaced grog-tempered fine wares of forms familiar in Verulamium to the north (HER Ref: 31450, TL 12818 02892).
- 4.13 Archaeological evidence within the study area for the Bronze Age and Iron Age is concentrated away from the study site. Therefore, the archaeological potential of the study site for these periods is considered to be low.

Roman

- 4.14 The study site was located c.2.7km to the south of the Roman town of Verulamium (St Albans). This was one of the primary towns within the Roman province and was located within a densely occupied landscape.
- 4.15 Watling Street, the road between London and St Albans, lies c.1.2km east of the study site (HER Ref: 14339, TL 15875 00319 & Margary 1955). In addition, it is believed that a Roman road between St Albans and Laleham, left Watling Street south of St Albans at St Julians and headed south west towards Bricket Wood, potentially within the area to the south west of the study site (HER Ref: 4579, TL 12931 03018).
- 4.16 The Park Street Roman villa is located c.1.1km to the south east of the study site and is described as a corridor villa which probably lasted into the later 4th century (HER Ref: 1469, TL 1469 0305). The villa complex included a separate bath building, further masonry buildings and a cemetery (HER

Refs: 9269 & 9769). The villa may represent a continuation of Later Prehistoric occupation at this site.

- 4.17 A 4th century tile kiln is recorded c.100m east of the study site (HER Ref: 880, TL 1378 0385) and a small timber framed structure set within isolated fields was identified circa 1km to the south west within the same area as the late Iron Age kilns (HER Refs: 31451, TL 12649 02904; 31450, TL 12818 02892) An isolated Roman tile was found during fieldwalking in the same area to the south west of the site (HER Ref: 9758, TL 1270 0320), whilst a further isolated coin is recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme c.900m north east of the study site (HER Ref: MHT20609).
- 4.18 Given the study site's proximity to the Roman roads within the study area, and the Park Street villa to the east, it is likely that the study site lay within a settled agricultural landscape during the Roman period. As such, a low to moderate archaeological potential is identified for this period.

Anglo-Saxon/Early Medieval & Medieval

- 4.19 Very little is known about post-Roman St Albans despite the amount of archaeological investigation on the Roman city (Niblett & Thompson, 2005). However the focus of Saxon and Early Medieval settlement would most likely have been centred on the early Saxon church and subsequent St Albans Cathedral, located c.3km to the north of the study site.
- 4.20 Whilst there are no Anglo-Saxon remains recorded within the study area by the HER, Offa, King of Mercia, made a grant of lands and towns to the monastery of St Albans c.795, which probably included the lands of Burston (VCH 1908), indicating that the manor of Burston originated during the Anglo-Saxon period.
- 4.21 Burston Manor is not recorded by the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Domesday Online 2020), although this may be because it was recorded under the lands of the monastery of St Albans. The nearest recorded Domesday estate is c.2km to the north west.
- 4.22 The moated manor house is located immediately north of the study site and dates to the 12th century (HER Refs: 4265, TL 13533 03713; 2613, TL 1352 0371). A shrunken settlement is recorded at the site of Burston Manor, although there is nothing to suggested nucleated settlement and if there was, it could not have been larger than a hamlet (HER Ref: 1003, TL 135 037). Agricultural activity, including possible ridge and furrow, linear features and enclosures, are recorded within the vicinity of the manor house (HER Ref: 10353, TL 1326 0348).
- 4.23 A possible late Medieval farmhouse is recorded at Noke Farm c.1km west of the study site (HER Ref: 9736, TL 1252 0377).
- 4.24 Local tradition holds that a resting place for pilgrims to St Albans Abbey was located at Park Street on Watling Street c.1km east of the study site during the Medieval period (HER Ref: 9702, TL 1482 0395). The Medieval cottages here were demolished in the 19th century and a late 15th and early 16th century coin hoard was found in the timbers of one of these cottages (HER Ref: 4722, TL 1482 0395). A late Medieval hall house is also recorded in this area (HER Ref: 9500, TL 14815 04017).
- 4.25 The Portable Antiquities Scheme records an isolated Medieval coin c.700m south of the study site.
- 4.26 The study site was located within the immediate vicinity of the Anglo-Saxon/Medieval manor at Burston and may have been utilised for an agricultural purpose. Therefore, a high archaeological potential is considered at the study site for these periods, with remains perhaps most likely to generally comprise evidence for field systems and drainage within an agricultural hinterland of Burston Manor.

Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.27 A number of the HER records within the study area refer to Post Medieval and Modern archaeological remains which are not discussed in detail here unless relevant to the study site.
- 4.28 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.
- 4.29 A substantial farmstead developed immediately north of the Medieval Burston Manor during the Post Medieval period (HER Ref: 17833, TL 13528 03760).
- 4.30 The 1766 Andrews and Dury Map of Hertfordshire (Fig. 4) shows the study site in open land immediately south of the unnamed Burston Manor, whilst the proposed access road would be located to the west of the manor. An access road to the manor is shown within the vicinity of the study site, running from the manor to a small settlement to the south east.
- 4.31 The study site is shown on more detail on the 1805 Ordnance Survey Drawing (Fig. 5), in land south of 'Burston's'. Access roads are shown within the study site, and two areas of woodland are depicted bordering the southern and eastern boundaries of the study site. A similar situation is shown in 1822 (Fig. 6).
- 4.32 The 1838 St Stephen Tithe Map (Fig. 7) depicts the study site in a similar situation. The moat and a pond at Burston's are located partially within the area of the proposed access road, although later mapping appears to contradict the location of the moat and locate it immediately adjacent to the proposed access rather than within the study site boundary. The southern field (401) may have been subject to clay extraction as inferred by the name of the field given in the associated 1838 Tithe Award. The Award describes the land parcels within the study site as:

Land Parcel	Description	Cultivation
401	Little Clay Pits	Arable
402	Great Orchard	Grass
404	Little Orchard	Grass
404a	Burston Lane	N/A
405	Horse Pond Field	Grass
406	Hither Cowleys	Grass
411	Almond Field	Arable

- 4.33 Only a minor field boundary change is shown to the study site by 1872 (Fig. 8). Burstons is now named as 'Burston Manor Farm' and a number of probable footpaths are shown within the study site. A property has been constructed in the woodland to the south of the study site.
- 4.34 The 1898 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 9) shows only that the pond which extended into the proposed access has been reduced in size and is no longer shown with the study site boundary.
- 4.35 The 1924 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 10) shows no change to the majority of the study site. The pond in the northern area is now depicted within the area of the proposed access road, although it is unclear if this is a cartographic error or whether the 1898 map contained a cartographic error. Burston Manor Farm has been expanded with a number of new buildings.
- 4.36 The 1938 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 11) shows the further possible extension of this pond into the study site. A number of buildings at Burston Manor Farm have been demolished, whilst a major road has been constructed immediately north of the farm. Residential development can be seen to the south and north of the study site.

- 4.37 By 1960 (Fig. 12), the pond again appears to have been reduced in size and is no longer evident within the study site boundary. Residential development is shown throughout the wider area.
- 4.38 The 1975 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 13) shows the removal of the field boundaries from within the study site and the construction of Burston Nurseries adjacent to the western boundary. There is a probable warehouse building located within the study site, south of the Burston moat.
- 4.39 By 1999 (Fig. 14), Burston Nurseries has expanded, and the majority of the study site is being utilised for horticulture. The eastern area remains open pastoral land whilst Burston Garden Centre is shown to the west. No further change is shown to the study site (Fig. 15).
- 4.40 The study site has remained agricultural or horticultural land throughout the Post Medieval and Modern periods until the construction of the Burston Nurseries in the late 20th century. It is possible that the southern area of the study site was subject to extraction activity as inferred by the name of the field given in the 1838 Tithe Award. Therefore, the archaeological potential of the study site for these periods is considered to be limited to agricultural activity associated with Burston Manor Farm.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 4.41 The available Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data records the study site within an area of Nursery with Glass Houses (Fig. 2b).

LiDAR Plot

- 4.42 The available Environment Agency LiDAR data covers the south eastern majority of the site, with no coverage available for the north western part of the site and the proposed access road (Fig. 3).
- 4.43 Evidence for agricultural anomalies is shown on the data, in particular Modern horticultural activity matches the area of garden centre plant bedding (see Figure 15). Various nursery buildings are also shown.
- 4.44 An earthwork spoil bund is shown at the south eastern boundary of the site, which is likely to be Modern in origin as it is first shown on the 1999 aerial photograph (Figure 14).

Undated Evidence

- 4.45 A number of undated linear features are visible on aerial photographs immediately west of the study site (HER Refs: EHT3522; 10350, TL 1353 0357; 10351, TL 1337 0366; 10352, TL 1327 0354).
- 4.46 Further linear features are visible on aerial photographs 700m west of the study site (HER Ref: 18042, TL 12744 03577) and faint cropmarks of curvilinear ditched features are visible on aerial photographs at Tippendell Lane 750m north of the study site (HER Ref: 17337, TL 14099 04234).

Negative Evidence

- 4.47 A small excavation on the site of a telecom mast immediately south of the study site recorded made ground over natural clay only (HER Ref: EHT1132, Crawley 2006).

Assessment of Significance

- 4.48 Existing national policy guidance for archaeology (the NPPF as referenced in section 2) enshrines the concept of the 'significance' of heritage assets. Significance as defined in the NPPF centres on the value of an archaeological or historic asset for its 'heritage interest' to this or future generations.
- 4.49 No relevant nationally significant designated archaeological assets as defined in the NPPF are recorded within, or within the vicinity of, the study site.

- 4.50 The study site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance related to the Medieval Burston Manor and possible shrunken village, as defined by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 4.51 Based on current evidence, the study site is considered to have a high archaeological potential for the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods and a low to moderate potential for the Roman period. A low archaeological potential is identified for all other past periods of human activity.
- 4.52 The significance of any archaeological remains which may be present would be derived from their evidential value and contributions that could be made towards local and potentially regional research agendas.
- 4.53 Whilst it is possible that archaeological remains could be present within the site, on the basis of the above, any remains, should they occur on the study site, would in the context of the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria for Scheduled Monuments (DCMS 2013) generally be of local significance, although evidence for well-preserved extensive Saxon/Medieval settlement could be considered of regional significance.
- 4.54 As identified by desk based work, archaeological potential by period and the likely significance of any archaeological remains which may be present within the study site is summarised in table form below:

Period:	Identified Archaeological Potential and Likely Significance (if present):
Early Prehistoric (Palaeolithic, Mesolithic & Neolithic)	Low potential, Low (Local) Significance;
Later Prehistoric (Bronze Age & Iron Age)	Low potential, Low (Local) Significance;
Roman	Low to moderate potential for evidence of a settled agricultural landscape, Low (Local) Significance;
Anglo-Saxon & Medieval	High potential (most likely to comprise evidence for land division and agricultural activity rather than settlement), generally Low (Local) Significance although evidence for settlement activity related to the adjacent Burston manor and conjectured hamlet could be of regional significance;
Post Medieval & Modern	Low potential (likely to be entirely invested in evidence of ground consolidation, land division, extraction activity, agricultural activity, and modern development), likely to be of Negligible to Low (None/Local) Significance.

5 SITE CONDITIONS, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS

Site Conditions

- 5.1 The study site currently comprises horticultural land to the rear of Burston Garden Centre, St Albans, and includes plant nurseries and storage buildings (Fig. 15 & Plates 1-13).
- 5.2 Modern development associated with the garden centre buildings and facilities can be considered to have had a localised negative archaeological impact.
- 5.3 The southern area of the study site may have been subject to extraction activity as inferred by the name of the field given in the 1838 Tithe Award (see Section 4.32), and this would have had a severe localised archaeological impact.
- 5.4 Agricultural and/or horticultural use of the study site can be considered to have had a moderate, widespread archaeological impact.

Proposed Development

- 5.5 Development proposals comprise the demolition of all existing buildings, structures and hardstanding and redevelopment of the site to provide a new retirement community comprising assisted living bungalows and apartments, with community facilities together with associated access, bridleway extension, landscaping, amenity space, car parking and other associated and ancillary works (Fig. 16).

Review of Potential Development Impacts on Archaeological Assets

- 5.6 The proposed development will not impact on any designated archaeological assets.
- 5.7 The study site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance related to the Medieval Burston Manor and possible shrunken village, as defined by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.
- 5.8 This assessment considers that there is a high archaeological potential at the study site for evidence dating to the Saxon and Medieval periods, with a low to moderate potential identified for Roman period remains. A low archaeological potential is considered for all other past periods of human activity. If present, archaeological features and finds would likely be of local significance, although it is possible that well-preserved extensive Saxon or Medieval settlement remains could be of regional significance.
- 5.9 Past below ground impacts at the study site are likely to have been widespread as a result of the construction of garden nursery buildings, possible extraction activity, and agricultural/horticultural activity. It is possible that archaeological remains at the site will have been truncated as a result of these impacts, however this impact is generally likely to have been fairly shallow and limited to the upper fills of any archaeological features that may be present.
- 5.10 Overall, given the high archaeological potential of the study site, development at the study site would have the potential to impact upon archaeological remains of probable local and perhaps regional significance.

6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Land to the rear of Burston Garden Centre, St Albans, Hertfordshire is under consideration for residential development. Therefore, in accordance with relevant government planning policy and guidance, a desk based assessment has been undertaken to clarify the below ground archaeological potential of the study area.
- 6.2 There are no designated archaeological assets within the study site or the immediate vicinity. The study site is located within an Area of Archaeological Significance related to the Medieval Burston Manor.
- 6.3 Based on current evidence, the study site is considered to have a high archaeological potential for the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods and a low to moderate potential for the Roman period. A low archaeological potential is identified for all other past periods of human activity. If present, archaeological features and finds would likely be of local significance, although it is possible that well-preserved extensive Saxon or Medieval settlement remains could be of regional significance.
- 6.4 Past below ground impacts at the study site are likely to have been widespread as a result of the construction of garden nursery buildings, possible extraction activity, and agricultural/horticultural activity. It is possible that archaeological remains at the site will have been truncated as a result of these impacts, however this impact is generally likely to have been fairly shallow and limited to the upper fills of any archaeological features that may be present.
- 6.5 Overall, given the high archaeological potential of the study site, development at the study site would have the potential to impact upon archaeological remains of probable local and perhaps regional significance.
- 6.6 Due to the high archaeological potential and likelihood of archaeological survival, it is anticipated that a phased programme of archaeological works will be required in advance of development at the site. These works could initially comprise a geophysical survey across open areas of the site outside areas of later development. Further archaeological works may be required depending on the results of this survey.

Sources Consulted

General

British Library
Hertfordshire & St Albans Historic Environment Record
Hertfordshire Record Office
The National Archive

Internet

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Cartographic

1766 Dury & Andrews Map of Hertfordshire

1805 Ordnance Survey Drawing

1822 Bryant Map of Hertfordshire

1838 St Stephen Tithe Map

1872 Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500)

1898 Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500)

1924 Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500)

1938 Ordnance Survey Map (1:2500)

1960 Ordnance Survey Map (1:10560)

1975 Ordnance Survey Map (1:10000)

1999 Google Earth Image

2005 Google Earth Image

2006 Google Earth Image

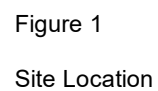
2009 Google Earth Image

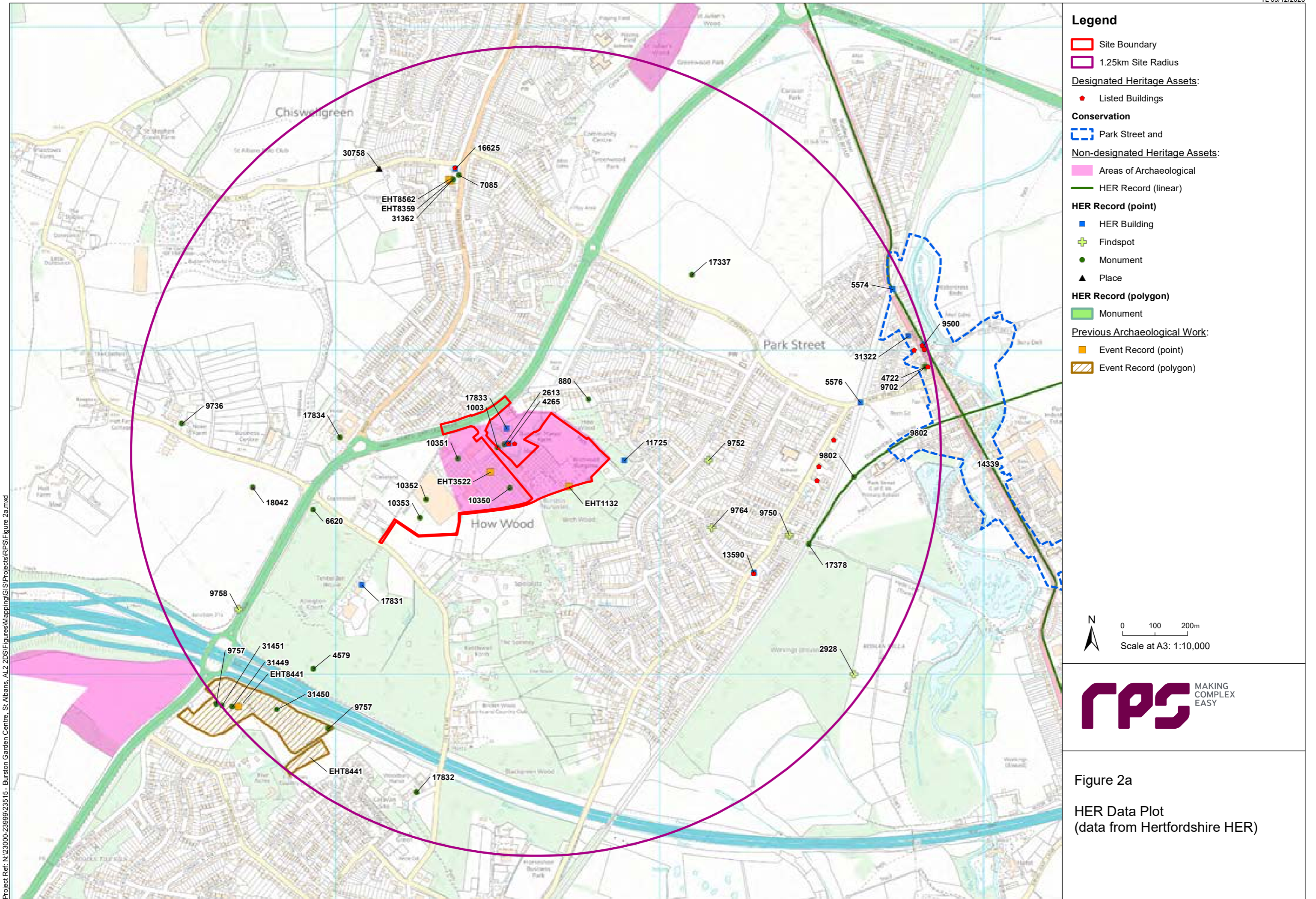
2013 Google Earth Image

2017 Google Earth Image

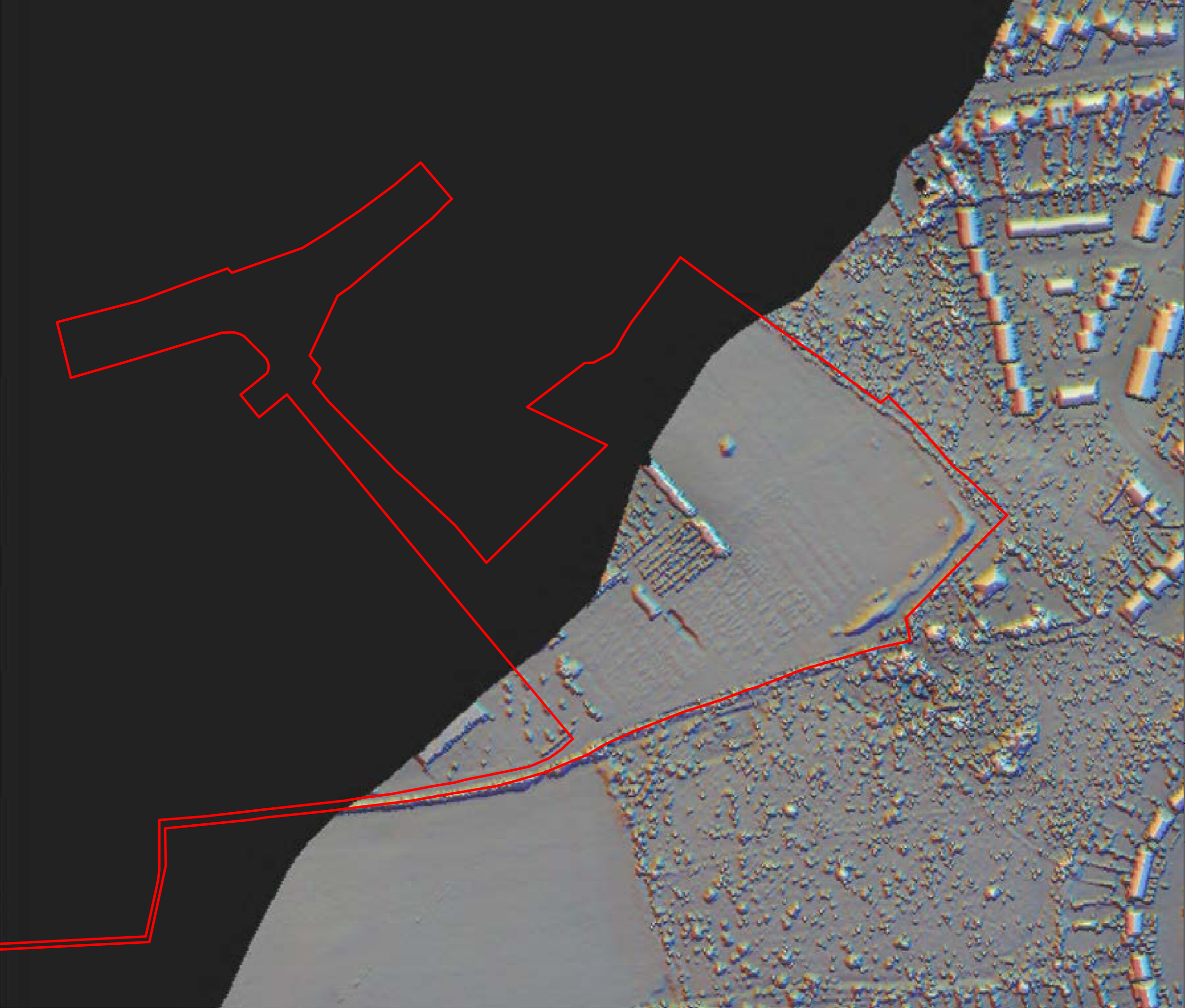
2018 Google Earth Image

FIGURES





Project Ref: N123000-239999\23515 - Burstons Garden Centre, St Albans, AL2 2DS\Figures\Mapping\GIS\Projects\RPS\Figure 3 LiDAR.mxd



Legend

 Site Boundary

LiDAR DATA

Source:
Environment Agency

Data Type: DSM

Resolution: 1m

Date Captured:
30/03/2009

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




0 40 80m
Scale at A3: 1:2,000



Figure 3

LiDAR Plot



 Approximate site location

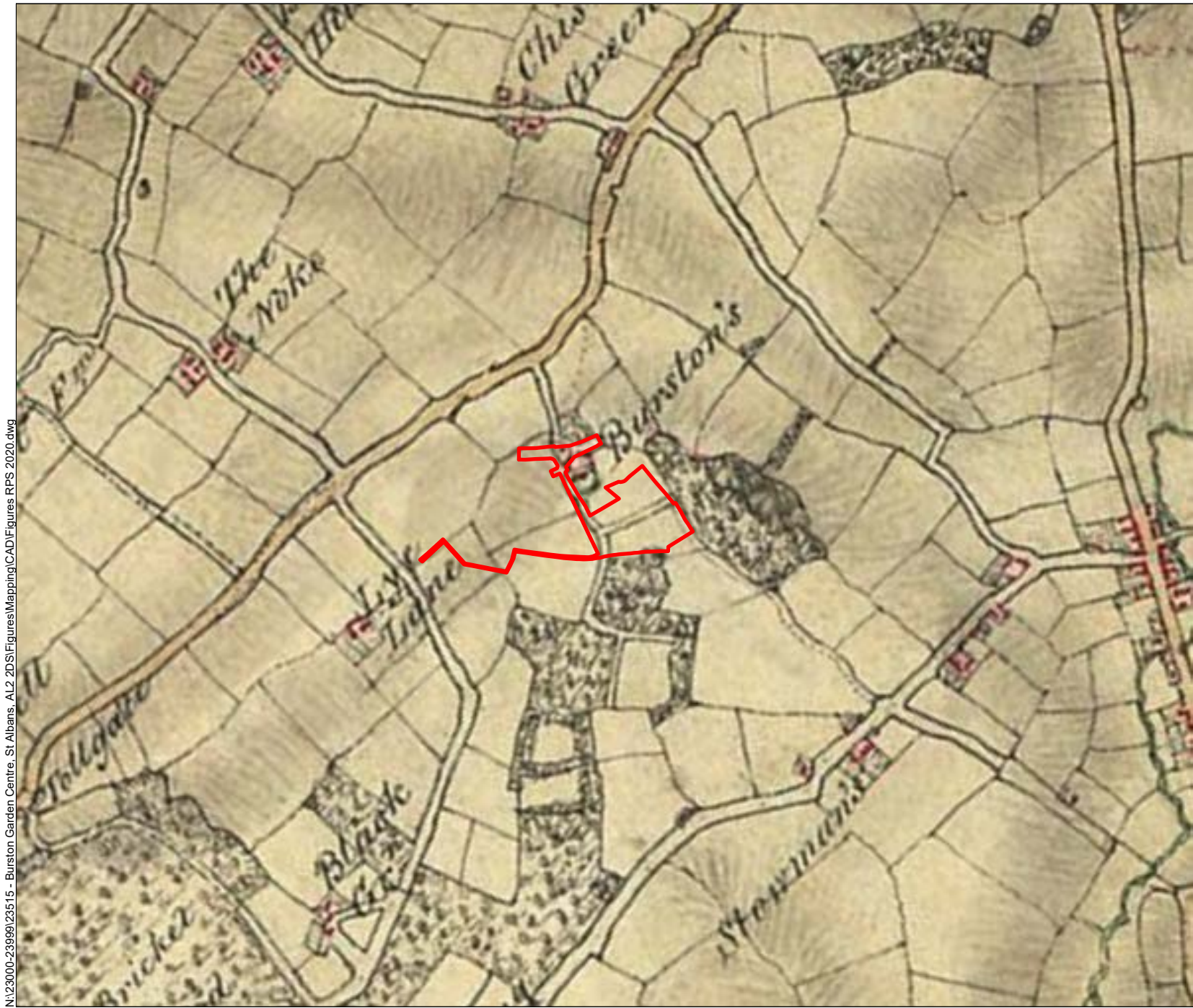


Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 4

1766 Andrews and Dury Map of
Hertfordshire



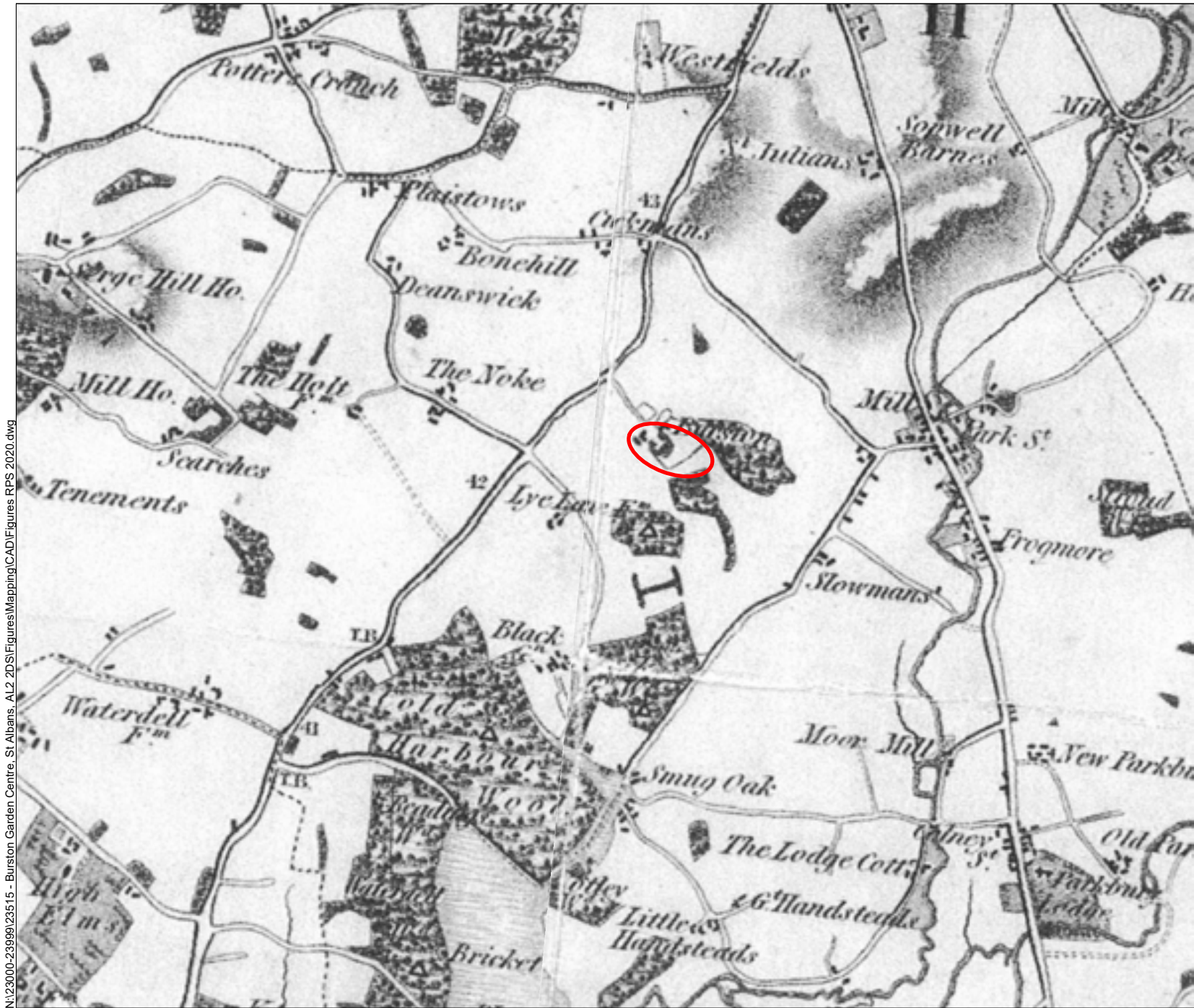
 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 5
1805 Ordnance Survey Drawing



○ Approximate site location



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 6
1822 Bryant Map of Hertfordshire

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 Site Boundary



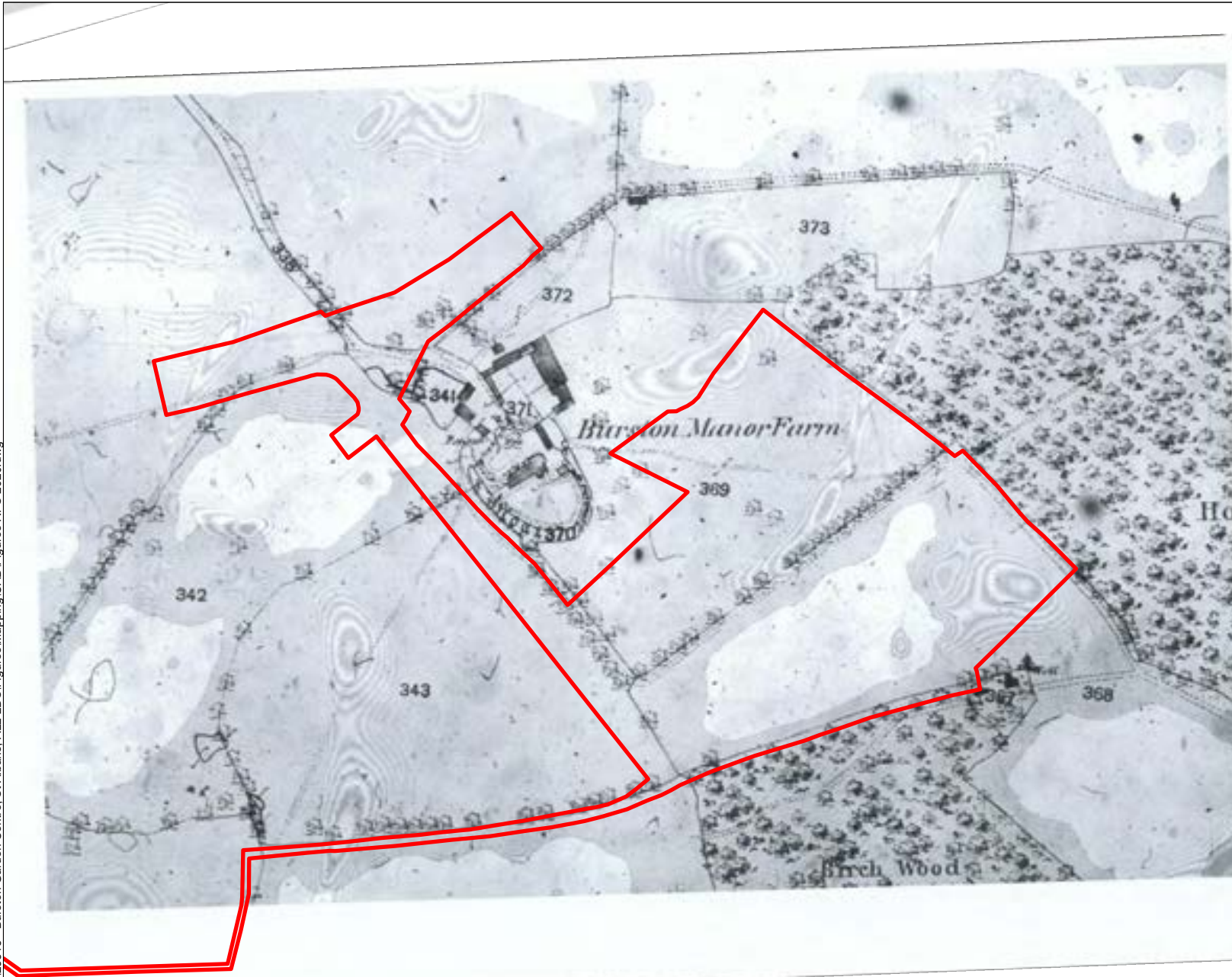
Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 7

1838 St Stephen Tithe Map

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 Site Boundary

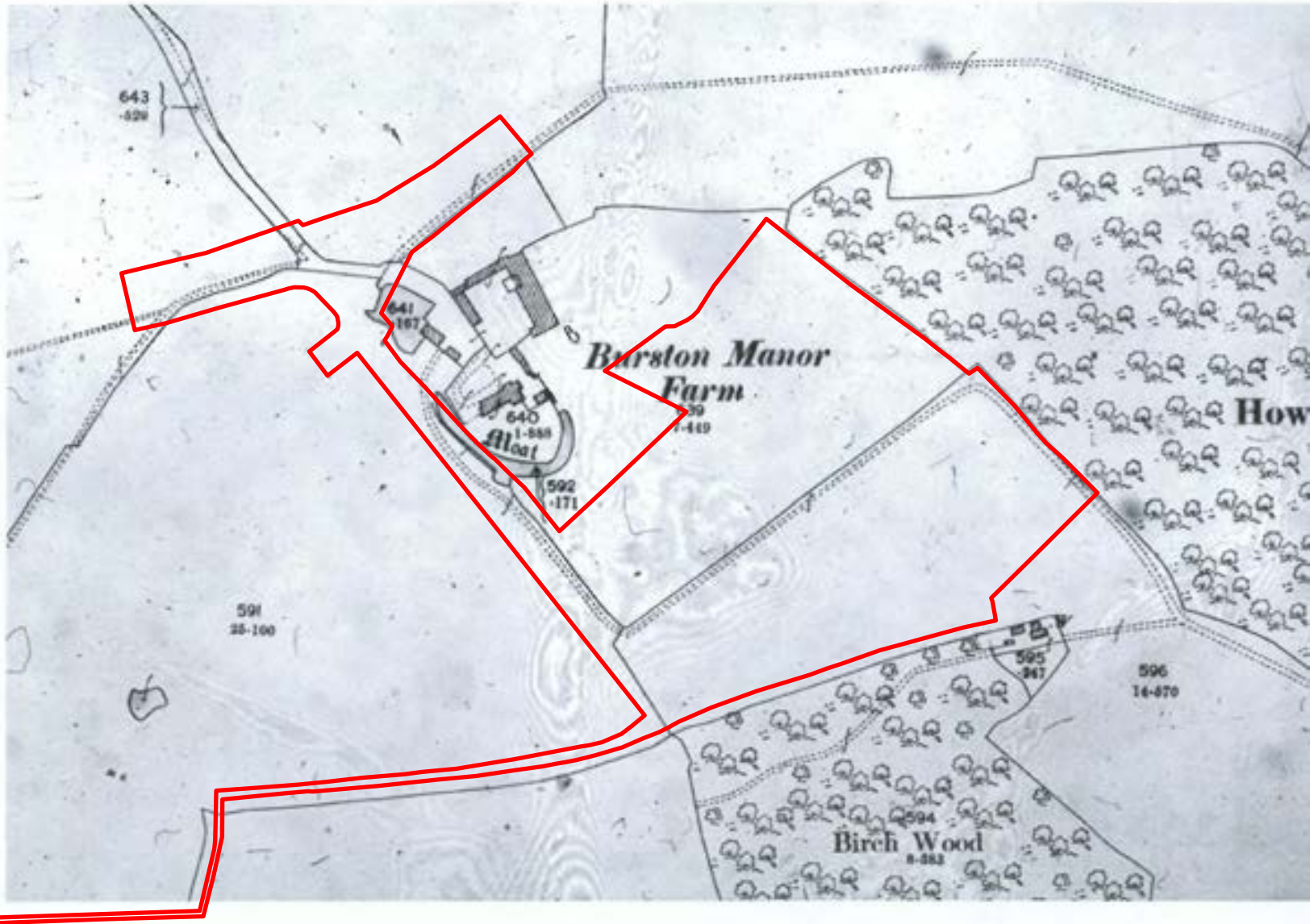


Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 8
1872 Ordnance Survey Map

 Site Boundary

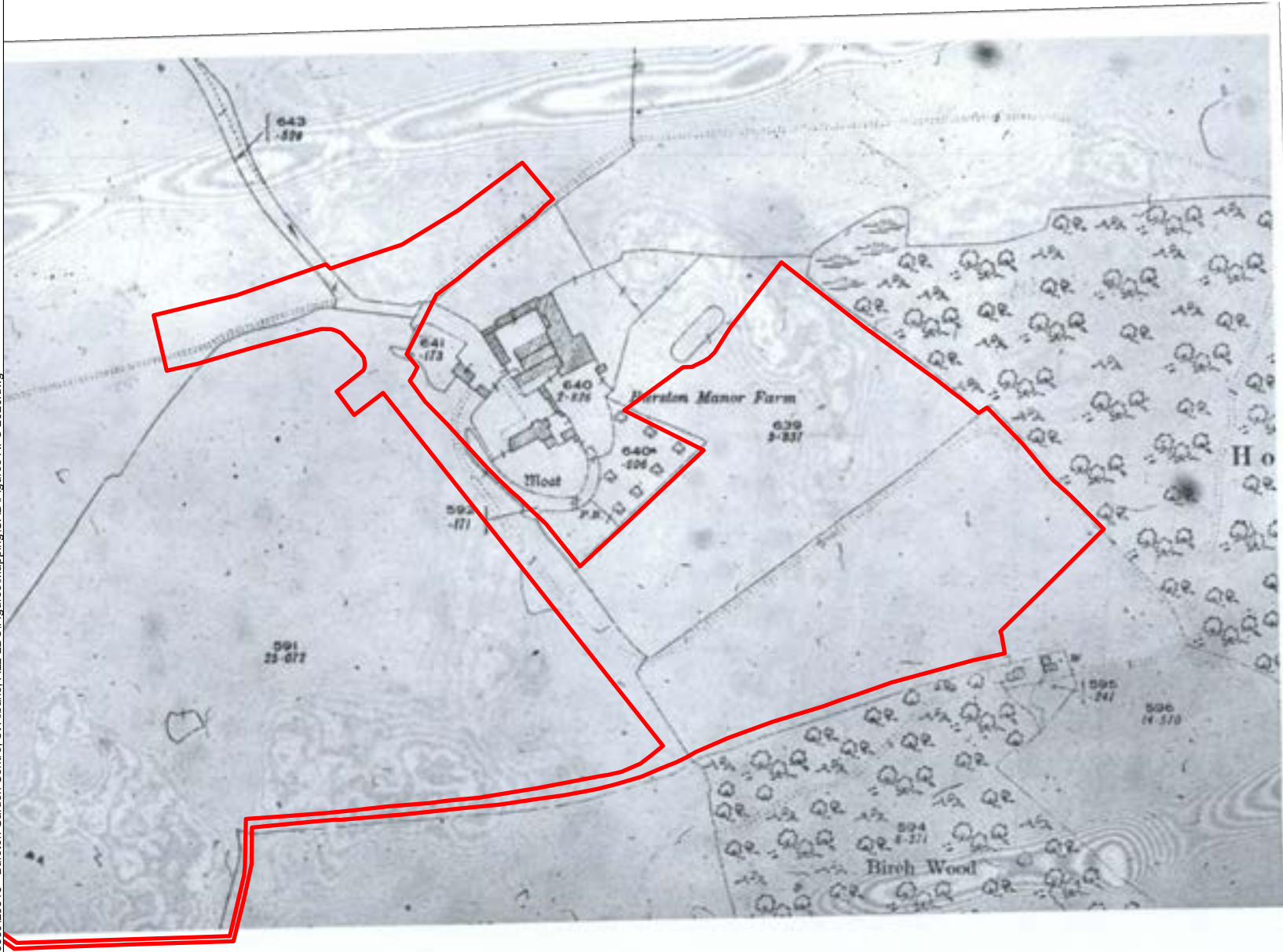


Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 9
1898 Ordnance Survey Map

 Site Boundary

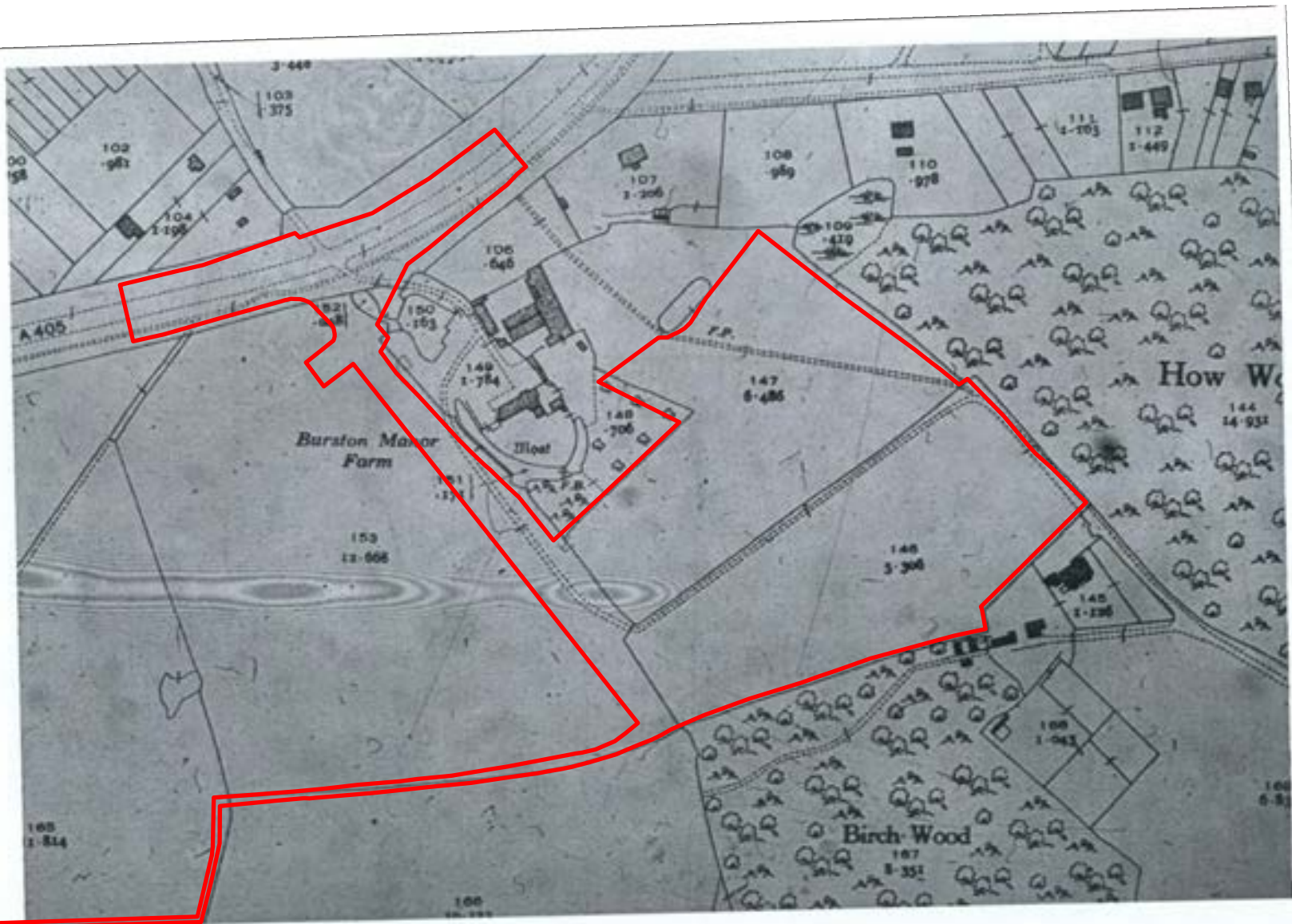


Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 10
1924 Ordnance Survey Map

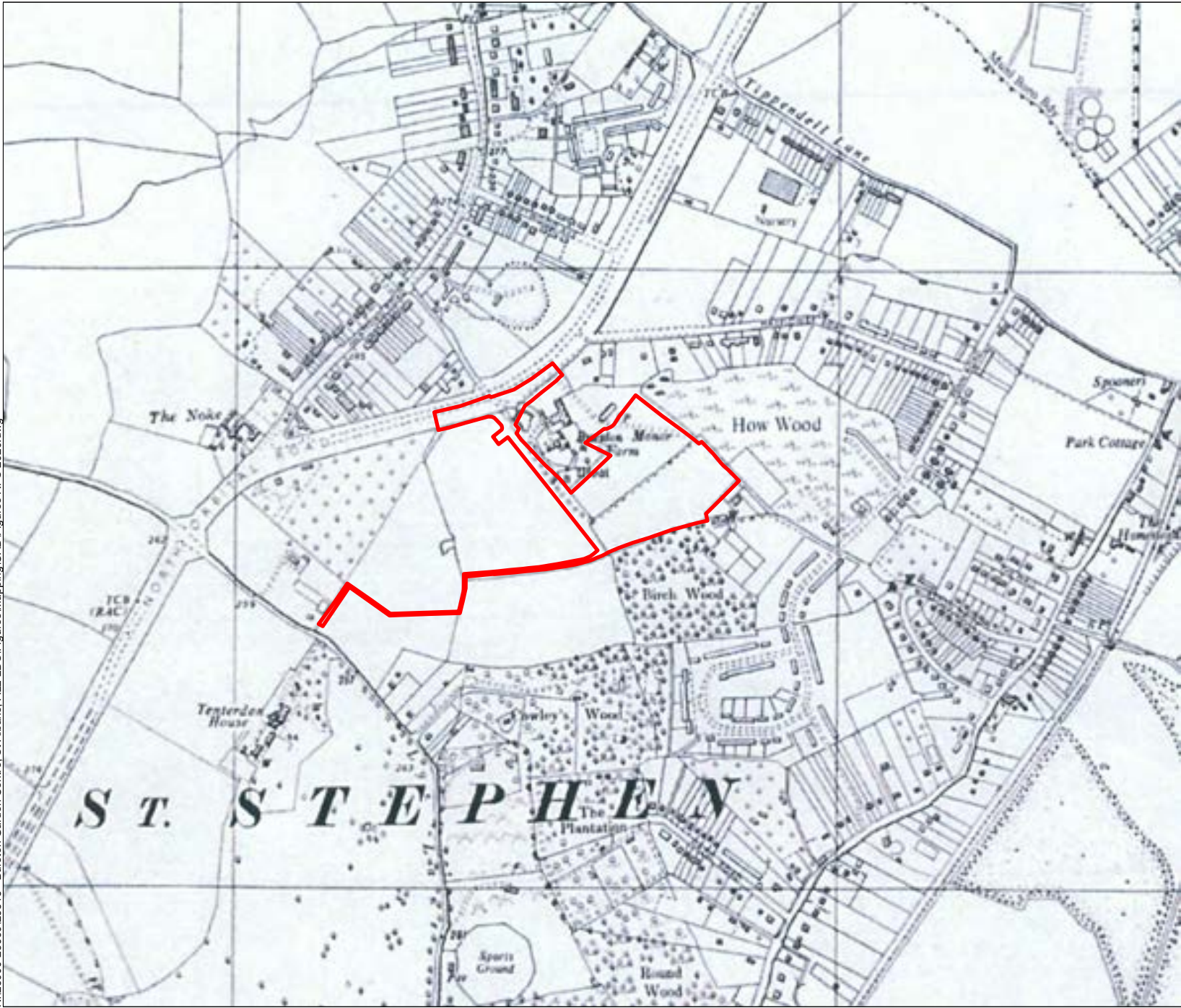
 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 11
1938 Ordnance Survey Map



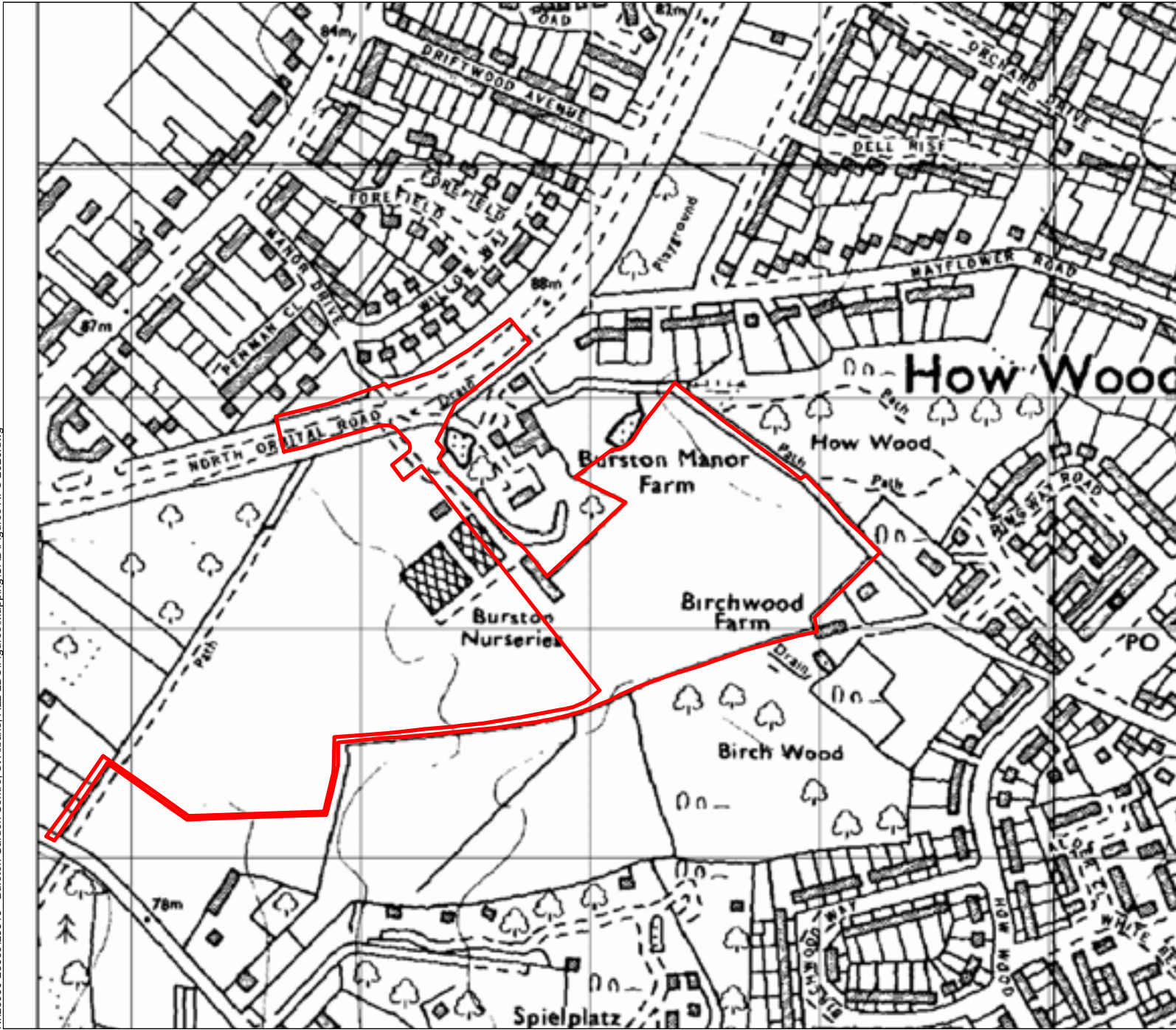
 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 12
1960 Ordnance Survey Map



 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
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Figure 13

1975 Ordnance Survey Map

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 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 14

1999 Google Earth Image



 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 15

2018 Google Earth Image



 Site Boundary



Not to Scale
Illustrative Only



Figure 16
Redevelopment Proposals Plan



PLATES



Plate 1: View of study site from south east corner facing west



Plate 2: View of study site from north east corner facing south



Plate 3: View of site access facing north



Plate 4: View of buildings in west of study site facing north



Plate 5: View of western boundary of study site facing south



Plate 6: View of western boundary of study site facing north



Plate 7: View from south west corner of study site facing north



Plate 8: View from south west corner of study site facing east



Plate 9: View of buildings in west of study site facing east



Plate 10: View of glasshouses in centre of study site from southern boundary facing north



Plate 11: View of work area in centre of study site from southern boundary facing north



Plate 12: View of eastern area of study site facing south east



Plate 13: View of northern boundary of study site facing west



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