

Land South East of Desford
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
July 2026

**Land South East of Desford
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
July 2026**

© Orion Heritage Ltd 2026

No part of this report is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information, however, Orion Heritage Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies within 3rd party data supplied to Orion and referred to within this report.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the controller of HM Stationery Office.
Licence No: AC0000829241

Report

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Site

Land South East of Desford

Client

Bellway Homes Ltd

Date

July 2026

Planning Authority

Hinkley and Bosworth District Council

Grid Reference

SK 48393 02983

Prepared By

Harry Twining MA BA and Dr Rob Smith MCIfA

Approved By

Dr Rob Smith MCIfA

Report Status

FINAL

Orion Ref

PN4736

Orion QA Ref

RQA-01195

Contents

Executive Summary

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Aims, Objectives & Methodology
- 3.0 Statutory and Planning Policy Framework
- 3.0 Archaeological & Historic Baseline
- 4.0 Proposed Development and Potential Impact on Heritage Assets
- 5.0 Summary and Conclusions

Sources Consulted

Appendix A: Gazetteers

Appendix B: Magnitude Surveys Geophysical Survey 2025

List of Illustrations

- Figure 1- Site Location Map
- Figure 2- Designated Heritage Assets
- Figure 3- HER Monuments
- Figure 4- HER Events
- Figure 5- 1665 Joan Blaeu Map of Leicestershire
- Figure 6- 1787 John Cary Map of Leicestershire
- Figure 7- 1814 Map of Desford
- Figure 8- 1845 Tithe Map of Desford
- Figure 9- 1885 OS Map
- Figure 10- 1904 OS Map
- Figure 11- 1931 OS Map
- Figure 12- 1955 OS Map
- Figure 13- 1966 OS Map
- Figure 14- 1982 OS Map
- Figure 15- 2006 OS Map
- Figure 16- 2025 OS Map

List of Plates

- Plate 1:** Overlooking the study site from its centre, looking north
- Plate 2:** Overlooking the study site from its east extent, looking west
- Plate 3:** Overlooking the study site from its north east extent, looking south west
- Plate 4:** Overlooking the study site from its north west extent, looking east
- Plate 5:** Overlooking the study site from its north west extent, looking south
- Plate 6:** View of St Martins Church from the north west/central extent of the study site, looking north

Timescales Used in This Report

Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	450,000 -12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000 - 4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000 - 2,200 BC
Bronze Age	2,200 - 700 BC
Iron Age	700 - AD 43

Historic

Roman	43 - 410AD
Saxon/Early Medieval	410 - 1066AD
Medieval	1066 - 1485AD
Post Medieval	1486 - 1901AD
Modern	1901 - Present Day

Executive Summary

This archaeological desk-based assessment considers Land South East of Desford (hereinafter referred to as the “Study Site”). In accordance with government policy (National Planning Policy Framework 2024), this assessment draws together the available archaeological, historic, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the study site.

This report concludes that the study site contains no more than a *negligible/low* potential to contain as yet undiscovered archaeological remains dating to any period (with the exception of the post-Medieval), with any such remains that do survive belonging to these periods being considered of at least *regional* heritage significance. There is a *high* potential for post-Medieval archaeological remains to survive within the site, also of a *local* heritage significance.

Any groundworks associated with the proposed development would likely truncate and/or destroy any archaeological remains below ground within their developmental footprint, which have significance ranging from *local* to *regional*. This would cause permanent adverse impact without appropriate mitigation.

However, due to the *negligible/low* potential for archaeological remains of any significance to survive within the study site, further archaeological investigation and/or mitigation within the study site is not recommended as necessary.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** This archaeological desk-based assessment (ADBA) considers Land South East of Desford, Leicestershire (Figure 1). It has been researched and prepared by Orion Heritage on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd. The site (hereinafter referred to as the “Study Site”) is located at grid reference SK 4f8393 02983. It has been prepared in advance of the submission of an outline planning application. The formal description of this is as follows;

“Outline planning application for residential development, including provision of a primary healthcare facility and district centre [E Use Class]; sports facilities; public open space; access from Peckleton Lane and Leicester Lane with a connecting road; sustainable drainage; and associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access.”

- 1.2** In accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2020), the assessment draws together available information on designated and non-designated heritage assets, topographic and land-use information so as to establish the potential for non-designated archaeological assets within the study site. The assessment includes the results of a site survey, an examination of published and unpublished records, and charts historic land-use through a map regression exercise. The assessment also considers the setting of heritage assets and provides an assessment of how their settings contribute to their significance.
- 1.3** Furthermore, a geophysical survey was undertaken by Magnitude Surveys in September 2025, to further investigate the potential for archaeological remains to survive within the study site. This report can be found appended to this ADBA (Appendix B).
- 1.4** The assessment enables relevant parties to assess the significance of heritage/ archaeological assets on and close to the study site and considers the potential for hitherto undiscovered archaeological assets, thus enabling potential impacts on assets to be identified along with the need for design, civil engineering or archaeological solutions. It also provides an understanding of any constraints to development of the study site due to the presence of nearby heritage assets and provides an assessment of the potential impact development would have on the significance of heritage assets and also provides design responses that would serve to reduce that impact in line with local and national policy.
- 1.5** The study area used in this assessment is a 1km radius from the centre of the study site (Figures 2 and 3).
- 1.6** A site visit was undertaken on 6th August 2025, when the conditions were sunny and visibility clear.

Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.7 The study site is located immediately south east of the settlement of Desford, itself located c.10km to the west of Leicester city centre. The study site is bounded to the west by residential new builds, to the north by Bosworth Academy, partially to the east by Leicester Lane, and partially to the west by Peckleton Lane. The remainder of the study sit is bounded to the south by arable fields. The site itself also comprises similar fields divided into at least 10 plots, with minor sporadic tree cover and some agricultural tracks.
- 1.8 An overview of the study site is shown in Plates 1-5 below.
- 1.9 The solid geology of the study site comprises largely Edwalton Mudstone member, which was deposited c.237-227.3 million years ago. However, there is also a minor deposit of Cotgrave Sandstone (also deposited at this time) to the east extent of the study site. Beyond this (comprising the very east extent of the study site) is a slightly larger deposit of Gunthorpe Mudstone, laid down c.246.7-237 million years ago.
- 1.10 There are superficial deposits of glacialfluvial sand and gravel across the southern extent of the study site, deposited c.800,000-115,000 years ago.



Plate 1: Overlooking the study site from its centre, looking north



Plate 2: Overlooking the study site from its east extent, looking west



Plate 3: Overlooking the study site from its north east extent, looking south west



Plate 4: Overlooking the study site from its north west extent, looking east



Plate 5: Overlooking the study site from its north west extent, looking south

2.0 Aims, Objectives & Methodology

2.1 The principal aims of the desk-based assessment are to:

- Gain an understanding of the archaeological potential of the study site;
- Identify any archaeological constraints to the development of the study site; and to
- Assess the likely impact of the proposed development.

2.2 The results of the archaeological desk-based assessment will inform an archaeological strategy for further on-site assessment and formulation of a mitigation strategy, as appropriate to the archaeological potential of the study site.

2.3 This desk-based assessment conforms to the requirements of current national and local planning policy (including *National Planning Policy Framework 2024*) and it has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice, and the appropriate national and local standards and guidelines, including:

- Management of Recording Projects in the Historic Environment: MORPHE (English Heritage 2006);
- Code of Conduct (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists [CIfA] [revised edition] 2014); and
- Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (CIfA January 2020).

2.4 It is noted that the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists defines desk-based assessment as:

“a programme of study of the historic environment within a specified area or site on land, the inter-tidal zone or underwater that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. It consists of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets and, in England, the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.”

2.5 The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard for desk-based assessment states that:

“Desk-based assessment will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. Desk-based assessment will be

undertaken using appropriate methods and practices which satisfy the stated aims of the project, and which comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of ClfA. In a development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so) and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact.”

Methodology

2.6 The archaeological desk-based assessment will include:

- Map regression based on Ordnance Survey maps and tithe/enclosure maps and apportionments held at Leicestershire Record Office;
- Examination of material currently held in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record, including Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Consultation of the National Heritage List for England; and
- Site inspection.

2.7 The report will also include a consideration of LiDAR and aerial photography for the study site.

3.0 Planning Background and Development Plan Framework

Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- 3.1** The Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended) protects the fabric of Scheduled Monuments but does not afford statutory protection to their settings.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) & National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 3.2** Government policy in relation to the historic environment is outlined in Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. This 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 of the contribution that heritage assets make to our knowledge and understanding of the past.

- 3.3** 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. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). In relation to the historic environment, paragraph 18a-001 states that:

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

- 3.4** Paragraph 207 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.5** A key aspect of NPPF paragraphs 212-215 is whether a proposed development will result in substantial harm or less than substantial harm to a designated asset. However, substantial harm is not defined in the NPPF. Paragraph 18a-017 (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723) of the PPG provides additional guidance on substantial harm. The following quote refers to listed

buildings but the same principles applies to archaeological designated heritage assets. It states:

“Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196 now para 212-215 in the 2024 NPPF) apply.”

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

*Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. **It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.** The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. (emphasis added).*

- 3.6** Paragraph 215 of the NPPF outlines that where a proposed development results in less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, the harm arising should be weighed against the public benefits accruing from the proposed development. Paragraph 18a-020 of the PPG (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723) outlines what is meant by public benefits:

“Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.”

- 3.7** No harm occurs where a proposed development will have no direct physical effects on heritage assets and/or where a proposed development is outside of the setting of a designated heritage asset. In such instances, there will be no adverse effects on the significance of designated heritage assets.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.8** Paragraph 216 requires the decision-maker to take into account the effect on the significance of non-designated heritage assets and to take a balanced

judgement having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the asset(s) potentially affected.

NPPF Definitions

- 3.9 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 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).
- 3.10 *Archaeological Interest* is defined as a heritage asset which holds, or potentially could hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
- 3.11 *Designated Heritage Assets* comprise: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Parks and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Areas designated under the relevant legislation.
- 3.12 *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.
- 3.13 *Setting* 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.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.14 The Local planning policy is provided by the adopted Hinkley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006 to 2026. The Local Plan 2006 to 2026 is made up of a series of documents, with supporting maps where relevant, which help us to achieve the above, including the four key development plan documents. Policies are provided in the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 3.15 The Core Strategy (2009) has a number of overarching policies, but none are specific to heritage or archaeological assets and so are not relevant to this assessment.
- 3.16 The DPD (2016) has the following policies relevant to this assessment:

DM11 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

The Borough Council will protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment throughout the borough. This will be done through the careful management of development that might adversely impact both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

All development proposals which have the potential to affect a heritage asset or its setting will be required to demonstrate:

- a) An understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting; and*
- b) The impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset and its setting, including measures to minimise or avoid these impacts; and*
- c) How the benefits of the proposal will outweigh any harm caused; and*
- d) Any impact on archaeology in line with Policy DM13.*

DM12 – Heritage Assets

All development proposals affecting heritage assets and their setting will be expected to secure their continued protection or enhancement, contribute to the distinctiveness of the areas in which they are located and contribute to the wider vibrancy of the borough.

All development proposals affecting the significance of heritage assets and their setting will be assessed in accordance with Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment and will require justification as set out in this policy.

All development proposals will need to accord with Policy DM10: Development and Design.

Listed Buildings

Proposals for the change of use, extensions and alterations of listed buildings and development affecting the setting of listed buildings will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposals are compatible with the significance of the building and its setting.

Conservation Areas

Development proposals should ensure the significance of a conservation area is preserved and enhanced through the consideration and inclusion of important features (as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan) including, but not limited to the following:

- a) Appropriate boundary treatments which reflect the local style and materials which are characteristic of the conservation area;*
- b) The preservation and enhancement of key views and/or vistas in and out of the Conservation Area;*
- c) The replacement of dead or dying important trees and hedgerows with those of the same or similar species;*
- d) Reinforce or mirror the historic street pattern and plan form where feasible;*
- e) The use of sensitively styled street furniture;*
- f) The use of natural building materials, preferably locally sourced; and,*
- g) The retention of key spaces within the conservation area.*

Proposals which seek to improve identified neutral and negative areas inside designated conservation areas, which also lead to the overall enhancement of the conservation area, will be supported and encouraged.

All applications which include the demolition of buildings and means of enclosure within a Conservation Area must propose an adequate replacement which enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. Conditions will be imposed to ensure demolition does not occur until immediately prior to the redevelopment or remediation.

Historic Landscapes

Proposals affecting historic landscapes, their features or setting should have regard to their significance and be justified in line with Policy DM11.

Development proposals within or adjacent to the historic landscape of Bosworth Battlefield should seek to better reveal the historic significance of the area.

Proposals which adversely affect the Bosworth Battlefield or its setting should be wholly exceptional and accompanied by clear and convincing justification. Such proposals will be assessed against their public benefits.

Particular regard will be had to maintaining topographical features, archaeological remains or to the potential expansion of the Battlefield.

Proposals which seek to enhance the educational or tourism provision associated with the Bosworth Battlefield will be encouraged where they comply with other policies in the Local Plan.

Scheduled Monuments

Proposals which adversely affect a scheduled monument or its setting should be wholly exceptional and accompanied by clear and convincing justification.

Locally Important Heritage Assets

Assets identified on the Locally Important Heritage Asset List should be retained and enhanced wherever possible. The significance of the assets illustrated in the List and the impact on this significance should be demonstrated and justified in line with Policy DM11.

DM13 – Preserving the Borough’s Archaeology

Where a proposal has the potential to impact a site of archaeological interest, developers should set out in their application an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where applicable, the results of a field evaluation detailing the significance of any affected asset.

Where applicable, justified and feasible the local planning authority will require remains to be preserved in situ ensuring appropriate design, layout, ground levels, foundations and site work methods to avoid any adverse impacts on the remains.

Where preservation of archaeological remains in situ is not feasible and/or justified the local planning authority will require full archaeological

investigation and recording by an approved archaeological organisation before development commences.

- 3.17** The District is in the process of reviewing and updating the local plan for the period 2016 to 2036. Currently the local plan review is consulting on the 'New Directions for Growth', with no policies published at the time of writing.

Guidance

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice In Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015)

- 3.18** The purpose of this document is to provide information to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF and NPPG. It outlines a six-stage process to the assembly and analysis of relevant information relating to heritage assets potentially affected by a proposed development:
- Understand the significance of the affected assets;
 - Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
 - Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
 - Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
 - Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and
 - Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

4.0 Archaeological and Historic Baseline

Archaeological Heritage Assets

- 4.1** The heritage assets under consideration have been identified by means of a review of the following resources:
- Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) Data;
 - The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) held by Historic England
 - Historic England Archive
 - Pastscape;
 - Local studies and record office research; and
 - Review of historic mapping.
- 4.2** This resource has been used to provide an understanding of the heritage assets which may be affected by the proposed development. This chapter will describe the heritage assets which may be affected and assess their significance.

Previous archaeological investigations

- 4.3** The study site underwent a geophysical survey in September 2025 (Magnitude Surveys 2025), the report of which can be found appended to this ADBA (Appendix B). The survey recorded anomalies suggestive of Modern ploughing trends and known field boundaries, with some possible early Modern/post-Medieval ridge and furrow ploughing. The report concluded that such anomalies lacked the clarity and context to suggest surviving archaeological remains of any significance within the study area.
- 4.4** Several other investigations have been recorded within the immediate surroundings of the study site. For instance, a desk-based assessment (DBA) (ELE5002) to the immediate north of the study site found some potential for archaeological remains. This was supported by a subsequent geophysical survey (ELE5677), which recorded several probable anthropogenic anomalies, including a possible surface and several ditches.
- 4.5** This area to the immediate north of the study site then underwent archaeological trial trenching (ELE5633), which recorded a dense focus of intercutting later prehistoric features, including pits and ditches. Considerable evidence for Romano-British occupation was also recorded, dating largely to the 2nd-4th century.
- 4.6** An archaeological DBA (ELE5001) was also undertaken to the immediate west of the study site, although this found limited potential for the survival of remains. A subsequent programme of trial trenching (ELE5650) and a watching brief (ELE5655) in this area found no dateable archaeological remains of any real significance.
- 4.7** A DBA (ELE5666) to the immediate south west of the study site recorded no real potential for archaeological remains, and the subsequent trial trenching

(ELE5669) and watching brief (ELE5673) found no dateable remains of significance.

- 4.8** However, a watching brief (ELE5674) situated along the west of the original coverage of the ELE5666 DBA recorded a pit filled with burnt stones and animal bones. Comparison to other sites in the area dated this activity to possible the Anglo-Saxon period of the early Medieval.

Undated

- 4.9** There are no undated features within the study site itself. However, undated cropmarks of an enclosure are recorded to the immediate south (MLE2734) and a gully and/or pit to the immediate west (MLE9265). Further afield, c.600m to the north east, an undated earthwork bank is recorded, possibly related to a longer Medieval earthwork. To the south west, cropmarks suggest an undated field system (MLE2728, MLE9263), whilst a rectilinear enclosure (MLE8531) is situated c.620m to the south east of the study site.

Prehistoric

- 4.10** There are no archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric recorded within the study site itself.
- 4.11** To the immediate south of the site, a late Neolithic worked flint (MLE7557) was recorded as an isolated findspot. Various other findspots of Mesolithic (MLE9264), Neolithic (MLE7233), and Bronze age (MLE9266) were also recorded across the south extent of the study area, on average c.400m-500m south of the site. Situated c.500m to the south east of the study site are the cropmarks of a possible ring ditch, which may suggest a Bronze age barrow in this area, and so funerary activity. However, this requires further investigation to confirm. A Bronze age flint (MLE9267) was also recorded c.170m to the north west.
- 4.12** As noted above in section 4.4, focused later Iron age occupation was also recorded (MLE9267), with a large enclosure and post holes (with possible evidence for metalworking) dating to the 1st century BC, suggesting some form of continuation of occupation within the landscape.
- 4.13** An Iron age site (MLE8383) was also recorded c.650m to the south of the study site, with remains comprising sub circular pits containing sherds of pottery, with one containing three large loom weights, suggesting a domestic settlement in this area.
- 4.14** Overall, there is evidence for particularly later prehistoric occupation of the wider landscape, with a focus to the immediate north west of the study site. Considering this proximity, one might conclude some potential for similar archaeological remains to survive within the study site. However, the results of the geophysical survey do not record any anomalies that would suggest the survival of archaeological remains of any significance. This reduces potential for this period to *negligible/low*.

- 4.15 There are no archaeological remains dating to the Roman period recorded within the study site itself, and relatively few within the wider study area.
- 4.16 The closest to the study site are situated c.350m to the south east, in the form of an isolated findspot of Roman pottery and tile (MLE2732). Situated c.630m to the north west of the study site, a Roman kiln (MLE2742) was noted during Modern development, whilst further examples of pottery (MLE7927) were found some 130m to the south west of the kiln.
- 4.17 Overall, there is a limited archaeological record for the Roman period within the wider landscape of the study site, pointing to some minor settlement with associated industrial activity, focused some way to the north west of the site. Furthermore, the results of the geophysical survey do not record any anomalies that would suggest the survival of archaeological remains of any significance. This reduces potential for this period to *negligible/low*.

Saxon and early Medieval

- 4.18 There are no records of early Medieval archaeology within the study site on the LHER, although the site is immediately on the border of the location of the old Leicester forest (MLE22664), which is thought to date back to the later 11th century and likely underwent exploitation and management by local peoples. Although the LHER records the Medieval deer park (MLE17057) to the immediate north west of the site as 12th century in origin (and so not early Medieval), the name Desford is thought to have Old English origins in *deor-ford* ('Deer's Ford' or more literally 'Animals' Ford' (Nottingham University 2025). This suggests the deer park may have older Saxon origins, possibly into the 11th century.
- 4.19 At this time, Desford was a settlement in the hundred of Guthlaxton and the county of Leicestershire. It had a recorded population of 1 household in 1086, putting it in the smallest 20% of settlements recorded in Domesday. The Lord and tenant-in-chief in 1086 was Hugh of Grandmesnil (Open Domesday, 1086).
- 4.20 Actual evidence for early Medieval activity and occupation, however, is limited to residual pottery (some dating to late Saxon) found within later Medieval pits and gullies (MLE20694), situated c. 535m to the north west of the study site. In this area, it is thought that there may be early Medieval origins to the Grade II* Listed Church of St Martin (NHLE1361378), yet this is not confirmed by direct archaeological evidence.
- 4.21 Overall, it appears the study site formed part of an agricultural hinterland of a minor early Medieval settlement at Desford, set on the edge of an ancient woodland. As such, little non-agricultural activity likely occurred within the site itself. Furthermore, the results of the geophysical survey do not record any anomalies that would suggest the survival of archaeological remains of any significance. This reduces potential for this period to *negligible/low*.

Medieval

- 4.22** There are no records of Medieval archaeology within the study site on the LHER. However, an isolated findspot of a Medieval cauldron leg (MLE20307) is noted to the immediate north of the study site, suggesting at least some domestic activity within the immediate environs of the site. Likewise, the site of a later Medieval timber cruck house (MLE23883) is recorded to the immediate west of the site.
- 4.23** However, the main focus of activity within the study area during this period is within the historic core of Desford, centred c.600m to the north west of the study site. As noted above in section 4.19, later medieval pits and gullies (MLE20694) are recorded within this core, broadly dated to the later Medieval period (c.14th-15th centuries). Situated c.60m to the north west of this activity, broadly contemporary pits and post holes (MLE25372) have been recorded, likely associated with activity within the land behind properties lining the Main Street around and along which Medieval Desford developed.
- 4.24** Situated c.480m to the north west of the site, the aforementioned Grade II* Listed Church of St Martin (NHLE1361378) was constructed as it stands in present day in the later 13th century, with some developments during the 14th century. Along with the associated burial ground (MLE21811), the church appears to form the centre of the Medieval core of Desford. It is noted that the church is visible from within the study site (see Plate 6 below).



Plate 6: View of St Martins Church from the north west/central extent of the study site, looking north

- 4.25** Although the exact location of the Manor House of Desford is uncertain, it seems likely to be at the site of the later Old Hall Farm, c.375m to the north west of the study site. Hugh de Grantmesnil was granted the manor of Desford after the Norman conquest and was created Baron of Hinckley and Desford. After his death in 1093, it passed to Robert de Beaumont, Count of Meulan who later became the first Earl of Leicester. When his great-grandson Robert de Beaumont, 4th Earl of Leicester died in 1204, the manor (and earldom, *suo jure*) passed to his sister, Amice, who left it to her son Simon de Montfort, 5th Earl of Leicester. His son Simon de Montfort, 5th Earl of Leicester inherited the manor but was killed in the Battle of Evesham leading the Barons' forces against the loyalist army. This ended the line and the manor passed to the Crown.
- 4.26** The lands of the Earldom, including Desford, were then given by Henry III to his son, Edmund Crouchback, who was created Earl of Leicester. The manor of Desford passed through the generations until 1399, when Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster, Earl of Leicester and Lord of the Manor of Desford, became King Henry IV and all his lands were merged with the Crown (Victoria County History, 1907).
- 4.27** The manor stayed as property of the monarch in their capacity as Duke of Lancaster until as late as 1899 (The Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, 2D71/1692).
- 4.28** During this time, the study site appears to have continued to form part of the settlements agricultural hinterland. Some other outskirt activity appears to have taken place at this time, with earthworks (MLE17058) recorded as extending from the east boundary of the site to the north east. They appear to have defined trackways in this direction, as at present day they follow established hedged field boundaries. The remains of Medieval fishponds (MLE2748) are also noted c.120m to the north of the study site, demonstrating a relatively varied local economy besides agricultural exploitation.
- 4.29** Overall, the record shows a clear development of the settlement of Desford, with the site forming an agricultural landscape associated with established trackways. However, the results of the geophysical survey do not record any anomalies that would suggest the survival of archaeological remains of any significance. This reduces potential for this period to *negligible/low*.

Post Medieval

- 4.30** As noted above in section 4.3, some ridge and furrow ploughing is noted within the study site by the geophysical survey (Magnitude Survey 2025), confirming its agricultural use from at least the post-Medieval period. Previous field drains and boundaries noted across historic mapping were also noted by this survey (*ibid.*).
- 4.31** The 1665 Joan Blaeu Map of Leicestershire (Figure 5) depicts Desford as *Defforde*, immediately to the north west of Leicester Forest (MLE22664),

showing this large woodland was still present during this part of the post-Medieval period.

- 4.32** At this time in the 17th century, the historic core of Desford underwent some built development (centred c.420m to the north west of the study site). This comprised the construction of several timber framed buildings to form what is now referred to as Old Hall Farm, including a manor house (Grade II*, NHLE1074078), attached barn (Grade II*, NHLE1074078), and dovecote within the manor grounds (Grade II, NHLE1074079). This development occurred where the town's Main Street meets the road to Leicester, seemingly a prominent position within the settlement. Other timber cruck buildings (such as MLE10648) are also noted to the west of the farm, showing some continuing outward growth of the settlement.
- 4.33** The 1787 John Cary Map of Leicestershire (Figure 6) no longer depicts the forest to the south east of the study site, suggesting it has been cleared and replaced with agricultural fields. By this point, common lands had largely been hedged and enclosed as private fields. This pushed much of the population to other forms of employment, with a significant framework knitting cottage industry developing. This is first recorded in 1704 and continued into the 19th century. In the 1851 census, more than 100 individuals are listed as framework knitters (Desford Heritage, 2025).
- 4.34** Buildings depicted on the map suggest the settlement has also grown to the south beyond the road to Leicester (which is by this point recorded as a toll road (MLE21277, now High Street and Leicester Lane), as well as to the north up the old Main Street. This is possibly accounted for by the growth of the aforementioned cottage industry. The study site itself is not recorded in any detail, but it can be assumed that it comprises agricultural fields.
- 4.35** During the later 18th century, this built development is shown by the record of various houses of this period focused along the Main Street and Toll Road, including a cottage (Grade II, NHLE1361381), a redbrick house (Grade II, NHLE1074077), and a Manor Farmhouse on the outskirts to the east of the cross roads (Grade II, NHLE107476). There is also evidence for the development of stables within the town centre, shown by excavated remains of flooring and wall foundations associated with pottery sherds at 18th century clay tobacco pipes (MLE20695).
- 4.36** By the end of the 18th century, a windmill is recorded c.555m to the west of the study site, further highlighting the still agricultural focus of the area.
- 4.37** The OS Map of 1814 (Figure 7) goes on to show further built development along the Main Road curving west and around the toll crossroads. The latter point is now depicted as having a 'toll gate'. This development is demonstrated on the LHER by the building of a Baptist Chapel (MLE27003) c.375m to the north west of the study site, as well as possibly a new house on the Main Street (MLE15283), c.500m to the north west of the study site.
- 4.38** The fields depicted on the 1814 map as within the study site have a very similar layout to that seen today, with the exception of slightly fewer divisions.

- 4.39** The OS map of 1885 (Figure 9) continues to show the growth of Desford, with the fields within the study site in almost the exact same layout that they are in the present day, a layout obviously reflected in the later OS Maps. The 1885 map depicts a sheepfold within the centre of the site. This is depicted until the map of 1966 (Figure 13), and the remains are not visible today. The geophysical survey (Magnitude Survey 2025) did not record any anomalies consistent with surviving remains.
- 4.40** A school (MKE15283) had been established c.660m to the north west of the study site by this time, reflecting the changing needs in education of the population. Diversification of the agricultural economy is also shown in the depiction of Forest Farm c. 555m to the east of the site, a well-known horse stud breeding complex.
- 4.41** A railway station opened in Desford in 1832. It was originally constructed to transport coal to Leicester but also served as a passenger line until 1964.
- 4.42** Towards the end of the 19th century, coal mining became a major employer. After an initial attempt to sink a mine in the parish failed in 1875, Desford pit became a major employer from 1902 until its closure in 1984.
- 4.43** By the OS Map of 1904 (Figure 10), little appears to have changed within Desford or the study site. During the First World War (1914-1918), a large airfield (MLE15965) was founded to the immediate south west of the study site, covering nearly 90ha of land. During this time, houses continued to be built within the core of Desford, such as the 1 Kirkby Road (MLE26624) in the domestic Revival style of the Edwardian period.
- 4.44** The OS Map of 1931 (Figure 11) shows the extension of domestic plots along wharf lane to the east, a development which has also occurred to the immediate west of the settlement by the map of 1955 (Figure 12). This pattern of residential expansion is also depicted in the map of 1966 (Figure 13) and beginning to border the study site to the north west, when a series of large buildings denoted as 'Works' (with associated bungalows) is developed to the immediate west of the study site.
- 4.45** These works (later depicted as 'Factory') grow considerably as depicted on historic mapping up to present day (Figures 14-16). The mapping also shows the residential expansion of Desford into previously agricultural land, particularly to the south west of the town. This population growth is met with development of a primary school (MKE21346) c.50m to the north of the study site by the mapping of 1982.
- 4.46** Considering the above (particularly the mapping and results of the geophysical survey), there is a *high* potential for archaeological remains dating to the post-Medieval period to survive within the study site.

- 4.47 Analysis of processed LiDAR DTM data shows some faint linear anomalies within the north west and central fields of the study site, suggesting possible former field boundaries which are not depicted on the OS maps of the 19th century. A large curvilinear anomaly is also noted within the northmost field of the site. Such a feature is not depicted on any mapping, and it may show an earlier feature, such as part of a prehistoric enclosure. However, it is more likely that this is a natural earth bank as part of the study site's topography.
- 4.48 Further to this, a complex anomaly with a broadly square shape can be found at the west end of the field's access road. There are no features depicted on the historic mapping which match this. However, some excavation is visible on the aerial photographs taken from 2011 to 2017, suggesting this is simply Modern disturbance.
- 4.49 Aerial photography of the site from Google Earth (dating between 1985 and 2025) shows little change within the site itself. However, the large curvilinear anomaly noted above is clearly visible as a cropmark in dry conditions.

Summary of Archaeological Potential and Assessment of Significance

- 4.50 A review of the available evidence (including the 2025 geophysical survey) has confirmed that the study site has a *negligible/low* potential for remains dating to any period with the exception of the post-Medieval, which has a *high* potential.
- 4.51 Any remains that do survive dating to the prehistoric, Roman, or early Medieval periods are likely to be of a least *regional* heritage significance, due to their potential contribution to the understanding of the development of Desford and the surrounding landscape. Evidence for the transition of later prehistoric to Roman occupation within the area would be of particular evidential value. However, the potential for such is *negligible/low*.
- 4.52 However, any remains belonging to the Medieval or post-Medieval periods would be of only *local* heritage significance, owing to their likely agricultural nature (field boundaries etc.).

5.0 Proposed Development and Potential Impact on Heritage Assets

Site Conditions

- 5.1** As stated above in section 1.6, the study site is located immediately south east of the settlement of Desford, itself located c.10km to the west of Leicester city centre. The study site is bounded to the west by residential new builds, to the north by Bosworth Academy, partially to the east by Leicester Lane, and partially to the west by Peckleton Lane. The remainder of the study site is bounded to the south by arable fields. The site itself also comprises similar fields divided into at least 10 plots, with minor sporadic tree cover and some agricultural tracks.

The Proposed Development

- 5.2** The proposed development comprises residential development residential (approximately 550 dwellings). The formal description is as follows;
- “Outline planning application for residential development, including provision of a primary healthcare facility and district centre [E Use Class]; sports facilities; public open space; access from Peckleton Lane and Leicester Lane with a connecting road; sustainable drainage; and associated infrastructure. All matters reserved except for access.”*

Potential Archaeological Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- 5.3** As outlined above in Section 4.47-4.49, the study site contains no more than a *negligible/low* potential to contain as yet undiscovered archaeological remains dating to any period (with the exception of the post-Medieval), with any such remains that do survive belonging to these periods being considered of at least *regional* heritage significance. There is a *high* potential for post-Medieval archaeological remains to survive within the site, of a *local* heritage significance.
- 5.4** Any groundworks associated with the proposed development would likely truncate and/or destroy any archaeological remains below ground within their developmental footprint (for instance, the footprint of any housing unit), as would any groundworks associated with the development of the access roads and community building.
- 5.5** This potential truncation and/or destruction of archaeological remains would be considered a permanent adverse change to these potential heritage assets. The resultant overall impact upon would depend on the heritage significance of those remains affected, which has been judged above as likely ranging from *local* to *regional*.
- 5.6** Due to the *negligible/low* potential for archaeological remains of significance to survive within the study site, further archaeological investigation and/or mitigation within the study site is not recommended as necessary.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1 This archaeology desk-based assessment considers land at Land South East of Desford, which is proposed for residential (approximately 550 dwellings) and community development.
- 6.2 The study site contains no more than a *negligible/low* potential to contain as yet undiscovered archaeological remains dating to any period (with the exception of the post-Medieval), with any such remains that do survive belonging to these periods being considered of at least *regional* heritage significance. There is a *high* potential for post-Medieval archaeological remains to survive within the site, also of a *local* heritage significance.
- 6.3 Any groundworks associated with the proposed development would likely truncate and/or destroy any archaeological remains below ground within their developmental footprint, which have significance ranging from *local* to *regional*. This would cause permanent adverse impact without appropriate mitigation.
- 6.4 However, due to the *negligible/low* potential for archaeological remains of any significance to survive within the study site, further archaeological investigation and/or mitigation within the study site is not recommended as necessary.
- 6.5 This would satisfy policies 'DM11 – Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment' and 'DM13 – Preserving the Borough's Archaeology' of the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD of the Hinkley and Bosworth Local Plan.

Sources

General

British Library

The National Archives

Cartographic

1665 Joan Blaeu Map of Leicestershire

1787 John Cary Map of Leicestershire

1814 Map of Desford

1845 Tithe Map of Desford

1885 OS Map

1904 OS Map

1931 OS Map

1955 OS Map

1966 OS Map

1982 OS Map

2006 OS Map

2025 OS Map

Websites

Archaeological Data Service – www.ads.ahds.ac.uk

British History Online – <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/>

British Geological Society Geology of Britain Viewer -
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Desford Heritage: <https://www.desfordheritage.org/>

Historic England National Heritage List for England -
<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Heritage Gateway - www.heritagegateway.org.uk

Key to English Place Names- <http://kep.n.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place>

MAGIC - www.magic.gov.uk

Pastscape - www.pastscape.org.uk

Bibliographic

DCMS, 2013. Scheduled Monuments & nationally important but non-scheduled monuments. DCMS

Department of Communities and Local Government. 2019. Planning Practice Guidance

Department for Communities and Local Government. 2024. National Planning Policy Framework DCLG

Historic England 2015. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment
Historic England. 2017. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets
The Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, 2D71/1692).
Victoria County History. 1907. *A History of Leicestershire* in A History of the County of Leicester. London Constable. [Online]. [Accessed 7 August 2025]. Available from: <https://archive.org/details/victoriahistory04pageuoft>

APPENDIX A – GAZETTEERS

GAZETTEER OF HERITAGE ASSETS

In order to understand the nature and extent of the surrounding archaeological resource, a study area of a 1km buffer of the site was adopted. The following gazetteer represents all of the entries from the Leicestershire HER (LHER).

PREFREF	NAME	PERIOD
MLE2725	Undated bank west of Park House Farm, Desford	Unknown
MLE2728	Undated linear cropmarks, Peckleton Common, Desford	Unknown
MLE2734	Cropmarks of two possible enclosures north of Forest View, Desford	Unknown
MLE8531	Undated possible rectilinear enclosure north of Alder Hall, Peckleton	Unknown
MLE9263	Undated features north-west of the Caterpillar Works, Desford	Unknown
MLE9265	Undated features recorded south of Bambrooke Close, Desford	Unknown
MLE2725	Undated bank west of Park House Farm, Desford	Unknown
MLE2728	Undated linear cropmarks, Peckleton Common, Desford	Unknown
MLE2734	Cropmarks of two possible enclosures north of Forest View, Desford	Unknown
MLE8531	Undated possible rectilinear enclosure north of Alder Hall, Peckleton	Unknown
MLE9263	Undated features north-west of the Caterpillar Works, Desford	Unknown
MLE9265	Undated features recorded south of Bambrooke Close, Desford	Unknown
MLE8383	Iron Age site at the Caterpillar Works, Desford	Iron Age
MLE8383	Iron Age site at the Caterpillar Works, Desford	Iron Age
MLE9267	Iron Age/Roman site, Leicester Road, near Old Manor Farm, Desford	Iron Age to Roman
MLE9267	Iron Age/Roman site, Leicester Road, near Old Manor Farm, Desford	Iron Age to Roman
MLE2742	Roman pottery kilns, Main Street, Desford	Roman
MLE2742	Roman pottery kilns, Main Street, Desford	Roman
MLE20694	Medieval remains, 23, Main Street, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Medieval

PREFREF	NAME	PERIOD
MLE20694	Medieval remains, 23, Main Street, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Medieval
MLE22664	Leicester Forest Area D	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE25372	Medieval/post-medieval remains, rear of 35, Main Street, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE2748	Medieval fishpond earthworks, Bullockhall Barn, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE2751	Historic settlement core of Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE17057	Barrons/Desford/Barns Park, medieval park, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE22664	Leicester Forest Area D	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE25372	Medieval/post-medieval remains, rear of 35, Main Street, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE2748	Medieval fishpond earthworks, Bullockhall Barn, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE2751	Historic settlement core of Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE17057	Barrons/Desford/Barns Park, medieval park, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Post Medieval
MLE11219	CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN, CHURCH LANE (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Saxon/Early Medieval to Modern
MLE21811	St Martin's Church burial ground, Church Lane, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Modern
MLE11219	CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN, CHURCH LANE (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Saxon/Early Medieval to Modern

PREFREF	NAME	PERIOD
MLE21811	St Martin's Church burial ground, Church Lane, Desford	Saxon/Early Medieval to Modern
MLE17058	Earthworks at Barons Park, Desford	Medieval
MLE17058	Earthworks at Barons Park, Desford	Medieval
MLE21277	Turnpike Road, Foston Lane to Osbaston	Post Medieval
MLE11217	DESFORD SCHOOL, 54, MAIN STREET, DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11220	THE GRANGE, 17, CHURCH LANE (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11222	DESFORD POST OFFICE, 19, 21, 23, HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11741	MANOR FARMHOUSE, 53, HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11742	16 HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11743	IVY HOUSE, 26, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11744	OLD MANOR HOUSE & SERVICE BLOCK, 32, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11745	BARN ATTACHED TO OLD MANOR HOUSE, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11746	PIGEONCOTE AT NO. 32, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11750	50 MAIN STREET (EAST SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE15283	22 MAIN STREET, DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE16048	18, High Street (South side), Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE26151	Site of Baptist Chapel, 44, High Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE26622	Stud Farm complex, Leicester Lane, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern

PREFREF	NAME	PERIOD
MLE26623	The 29 Steps, Leicester Lane, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE27003	C19th burial ground, Strict Baptist Chapel, High Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE29057	37, High Street and 2a, Main Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11217	DESFORD SCHOOL, 54, MAIN STREET, DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11220	THE GRANGE, 17, CHURCH LANE (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11222	DESFORD POST OFFICE, 19, 21, 23, HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11741	MANOR FARMHOUSE, 53, HIGH STREET (NORTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11742	16 HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11743	IVY HOUSE, 26, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11744	OLD MANOR HOUSE & SERVICE BLOCK, 32, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11745	BARN ATTACHED TO OLD MANOR HOUSE, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11746	PIGEONCOTE AT NO. 32, HIGH STREET (SOUTH SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE11750	50 MAIN STREET (EAST SIDE), DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE15283	22 MAIN STREET, DESFORD	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE16048	18, High Street (South side), Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE20695	Post-medieval remains, 23, Main Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE26151	Site of Baptist Chapel, 44, High Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern

PREFREF	NAME	PERIOD
MLE26622	Stud Farm complex, Leicester Lane, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE26623	The 29 Steps, Leicester Lane, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE27003	C19th burial ground, Strict Baptist Chapel, High Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE29057	37, High Street and 2a, Main Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE20695	Post-medieval remains, 23, Main Street, Desford	Post Medieval to Modern
MLE21346	Bosworth Academy, Leicester Lane, Desford	Modern
MLE23191	Desford County Primary School, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26624	1, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26625	3, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26645	Debdale (now Topsham Nursery), Peckleton Lane, Desford	Modern
MLE26646	20 & 22, Station Road, Desford	Modern
MLE15965	Desford Airfield, Desford/Peckleton	Modern
MLE21346	Bosworth Academy, Leicester Lane, Desford	Modern
MLE23191	Desford County Primary School, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26624	1, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26625	3, Kirkby Road, Desford	Modern
MLE26645	Debdale (now Topsham Nursery), Peckleton Lane, Desford	Modern
MLE26646	20 & 22, Station Road, Desford	Modern
MLE15965	Desford Airfield, Desford/Peckleton	Modern

GAZETTEER OF PREVIOUS EVENTS

The following gazetteer represents all events recorded by the LHER within the 1km study area.

EVENT ID	NAME
ELE10276	Project Gargoyle, Church of St. Martin, Church Lane, Desford
ELE11234	2020 excavation, Barns Way, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11237	2019 geophysical survey, land at Barns Way, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11279	2019 trial trenching, 51, Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11318	2020 excavation, 51, Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11346	2019 trial trenching, Barn's Way, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11769	2021 watching brief, Strict Baptist Chapel, between 44 & 50, High Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11851	2021 trial trenching, Bosworth Academy, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE11930	2019 desk-based assessment, land at Barns Way, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE12430	2023 trial trenching, Griffin Park, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE12528	2000 watching brief, Manor Farm, 26, High Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE12623	2024 geophysical survey, land at Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5001	1999 desk-based assessment for land east of Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicestershire (SK 4800 0295)
ELE5002	1999 desk-based assessment for land off Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire (SK 480 019)
ELE5003	1997 desk-based assessment for land at Old Manor Farm, High Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5005	2000 desk-based assessment of land to rear of Manor Farm, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5458	2008 building survey of an outbuilding group situated within the curtilage of 21, High Street, Desford
ELE5632	1999 excavation on land off Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5633	1999 trial trenching on land off Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5650	2000 trial trenching on land east of Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5652	2000 trial trenching on land to the rear of 26, High Street, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5655	2000 watching brief of land east of Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5666	1999 desk-based assessment for Project Delta Phase 11 Caterpillar (UK) Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5669	2000 trial trenching at Desford Caterpillar Leicestershire, Delta Phase 11

EVENT ID	NAME
ELE5671	1997 watching brief during groundworks at Caterpillar (UK) Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5672	1999 watching brief during groundworks at Caterpillar (UK) Peckleton Lane Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5673	1999 watching brief during groundworks at caterpillar (UK) Peckleton Lane Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5674	2001 watching brief during groundworks at Caterpillar (UK) Ltd. Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE5677	1999 geophysical survey of land off Leicester Lane, Desford, Leicestershire
ELE7856	1998 desk-based assessment for Caterpillar (UK) Ltd site, Desford
ELE8297	1989 geophysical survey, north-west of The Rectory
ELE8554	2013 trial trenching, 23, Main Street, Desford
ELE873	1960 salvage recording, bungalow south of the Manor House Garage, Desford
ELE9551	1996 historic buildings survey of Manor Farm, Desford



**Geophysical Survey Report
Land South-East of Desford**

**For
Orion Heritage**

Magnitude Surveys Ref: MSSK2219

OASIS reference: magnitud1-536937

December 2025



3 Captain Street

Bradford

BD1 4HA

01274 926020

info@magnitudesurveys.co.uk

Report By:

Matthew Stead BA (Hons) MA ACIfA

Report Approved By:

Leigh A. Garst BFA MSc MCIfA

Issue Date:

12 December 2025

Abstract

Magnitude Surveys was commissioned to assess the subsurface archaeological potential of a c. 41ha area of land southeast of Desford, Leicestershire. Agricultural activity has been identified in the form of mapped former field boundaries, ridge and furrow cultivation and modern ploughing trends, and drainage features. Natural variations were identified, likely associated with glaciofluvial deposits and stratified bands of sand and gravel. Anomalies of an undetermined origin were also detected. These anomalies lack defined shapes and contextual evidence to support a more definitive interpretation. Green waste was detected in parts of the survey area, which may have masked any weaker anomalies should they be present.

Contents

Abstract.....	2
List of Figures	4
1. Introduction	5
2. Quality Assurance	5
3. Objectives.....	5
4. Geographic Background.....	6
5. Archaeological Background.....	7
6. Methodology.....	7
6.1. Data Collection	7
6.2. Data Processing	8
6.3. Data Visualisation and Interpretation	8
7. Results.....	9
7.1. Qualification	9
7.2. Discussion	9
7.3. Interpretation	10
7.3.1. General Statements	10
7.3.2. Magnetic Results - Specific Anomalies	10
8. Conclusions	11
9. Archiving	12
10. Copyright.....	12
11. References	12
12. Project Metadata	13
13. Document History	13

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Geophysical Survey Location	1:25,000 @ A4
Figure 2:	Geophysical Survey Areas	1:5,000 @ A4
Figure 3:	Magnetic Gradient Overview (Areas 1-9)	1:3,500 @ A4
Figure 4:	Magnetic Interpretation over Historical Mapping and Satellite Imagery (Areas 1-9)	1:3,500 @ A4
Figure 5:	GNSS Trace (Areas 1-9)	1:3,500 @ A3
Figure 6:	Magnetic Gradient (Areas 2, 3, and 4 (North))	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 7:	Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 2, 3 and 4 (North))	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 8:	XY Trace Plot (Areas 2, 3 and 4 (North))	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 9:	Magnetic Gradient (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 10:	Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 11:	XY Trace Plot (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 12:	Magnetic Gradient (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 13:	Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 14:	XY Trace Plot (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 15:	Magnetic Gradient (Areas 1 and 6)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 16:	Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 1 and 6)	1:1,500 @ A3
Figure 17:	XY Trace Plot (Areas 1 and 6)	1:1,500 @ A3

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Magnitude Surveys Ltd (MS) was commissioned by Orion Heritage to undertake a geophysical survey over a c. 41ha area of land south-east of Desford, Leicestershire (SK4841602996).
- 1.2. The geophysical survey comprised quad-towed, cart-mounted GNSS-positioned fluxgate gradiometer survey. Magnetic survey is the standard primary geophysical method for archaeological applications in the UK due to its ability to detect a range of different features. The technique is particularly suited for detecting fired or magnetically enhanced features, such as ditches, pits, kilns, sunken featured buildings (SFBs) and industrial activity (David *et al.*, 2008).
- 1.3. The survey was conducted in line with the current best practice guidelines produced by Historic England (David *et al.*, 2008), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2020) and the European Archaeological Council (Schmidt *et al.*, 2015).
- 1.4. It was conducted in line with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by MS (Terry, 2025).
- 1.5. The survey commenced on 23rd September 2025 and took five days to complete.

2. Quality Assurance

- 2.1. Magnitude Surveys is a Registered Organisation of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), the chartered UK body for archaeologists, and a corporate member of ISAP (International Society for Archaeological Prospection).
- 2.2. The directors of MS are involved in cutting edge research and the development of guidance/policy. Specifically, Dr Chrys Harris has a PhD in archaeological geophysics from the University of Bradford, is a Member of CIfA and was the Vice-Chair of the International Society for Archaeological Prospection (ISAP); Finnegan Pope-Carter has an MSc in archaeological geophysics and is a Fellow of the London Geological Society, as well as a member of GeoSIG (CIfA Geophysics Special Interest Group); Dr Paul Johnson has a PhD in archaeology from the University of Southampton, is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and a Member of CIfA, has been a member of the ISAP Management Committee since 2015, and is currently the Chair of the Archaeological Prospection Community of the European Archaeological Association.
- 2.3. All MS managers, field and office staff have degree qualifications relevant to archaeology or geophysics and/or field experience.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. The objective of this geophysical survey was to assess the subsurface archaeological potential of the survey area.

4. Geographic Background

4.1. The survey area was located immediately southeast of Desford, Leicestershire (Figure 1). Gradiometer survey was undertaken across nine fields under arable cultivation. The survey areas were bordered by Bosworth Community and Sports College to the north, the B582 to the east, and further arable fields and residential properties to the south and west (Figure 2).

4.2. Survey considerations:

Survey Area	Ground Conditions	Further Notes
1	Flat arable land.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides.
2	Arable land with a slight uphill slope towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges in the northeast and south, with drainage ditches in the southeast and west. A metal gate was present in the middle of the eastern boundary and a trackway crossed the survey area from east to west.
3	Arable land with slight uphill slope towards the west.	The survey area was bordered by hedges along the northern, southern, and western boundaries, with a drainage ditch along the northern and eastern boundaries. No physical boundary was present in the southeast. A hedgerow projected from the northern boundary partway into the survey area.
4	Arable land with slight upward slope towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides. Overhead cables with a telegraph pole crossed from northeast to southwest.
5	Arable land with slight uphill towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides except a small area in the southeast with no physical boundary. A footpath was present in the middle of the field oriented from northeast to southeast.
6	Arable land with slight uphill towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides except the southeast, which had no physical boundary and a footpath in the middle, oriented from northwest to southeast. An electricity pylon with overhead cables was situated along the southeastern border.
7	Arable land with slight uphill towards the south.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides, except a small gap in the southeast with no physical boundary.

8	Arable land with slight uphill towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges on all sides with a small gap in the southeast, with no physical boundary.
9	Arable land with slight uphill towards the southwest.	The survey area was bordered by hedges and wire fences on the eastern, southern, and western sides with no physical boundary to the north. Storage containers were present in the middle of the western boundary. Overhead cables crossed the north of the survey area, oriented from northeast to northwest.

4.1. The underlying geology comprised Edwalton Member mudstone across the majority of the survey area, a band of Edwalton Member dolomitic siltstone in the west of Area 5, and zones of Cotgrave Sandstone Member sandstone and Gunthorpe Member mudstone across Area 2, and the north of Areas 3, 4 and 9. Glaciofluvial deposits of mid Pleistocene sand and gravel are recorded in Area 1, and the south of Area 6, Oadby Till Member diamicton in the east of Areas 6 and 9, and alluvial clay, silt, sand and gravel in the north of Areas 2 and 3. No other superficial deposits were recorded within the survey area (British Geological Survey, 2025).

4.2. Across the majority of the survey area, the soils mainly comprise slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acidic but base-rich loamy and clayey soils. A zone of loamy soils with naturally high groundwater is recorded in the south of Area 6 (Soilscapes, 2025).

5. Archaeological Background

5.1. Awaiting DBA or similar document from client.

6. Methodology

6.1. Data Collection

6.1.1. Magnetometer surveys are generally the most cost effective and suitable geophysical technique for the detection of archaeology in England. Therefore, a magnetometer survey should be the preferred geophysical technique unless its use is precluded by any specific survey objectives or the site environment. For this site, no factors precluded the recommendation of a standard magnetometer survey. Geophysical survey therefore comprised the magnetic method as described in the following section.

6.1.2. Geophysical prospection comprised the magnetic method as described in the following table.

6.1.3. Table of survey strategies:

Method	Instrument	Traverse Interval	Sample Interval
Magnetic	Bartington Instruments Grad-13 Digital Three-Axis Gradiometer	1m	200Hz reprojected to 0.125m

6.1.4. The magnetic data were collected using MS' bespoke quad-towed cart system GNSS-positioned system.

- 6.1.4.1. MS' cart system was comprised of Bartington Instruments Grad 13 Digital Three-Axis Gradiometers. Positional referencing was through a multi-channel, multi-constellation GNSS Smart Antenna RTK GPS outputting in NMEA mode to ensure high positional accuracy of collected measurements. The RTK GPS is accurate to 0.008m + 1ppm in the horizontal and 0.015m + 1ppm in the vertical.
- 6.1.4.2. Magnetic and GPS data were stored on an SD card within MS' bespoke datalogger. The datalogger was continuously synced, via an in-field Wi-Fi unit, to servers within MS' offices. This allowed for data collection, processing and visualisation to be monitored in real-time as fieldwork was ongoing.
- 6.1.4.3. A navigation system was integrated with the RTK GPS, which was used to guide the surveyor. Data were collected by traversing the survey area along the longest possible lines, ensuring efficient collection and processing.

6.2.Data Processing

- 6.2.1. Magnetic data were processed in bespoke in-house software produced by MS. Processing steps conform to the EAC and Historic England guidelines for 'minimally enhanced data' (see Section 3.8 in Schmidt *et al.*, 2015: 33 and Section IV.2 in David *et al.*, 2008: 11).

Sensor Calibration – The sensors were calibrated using a bespoke in-house algorithm, which conforms to Olsen *et al.* (2003).

Zero Median Traverse – The median of each sensor traverse is calculated within a specified range and subtracted from the collected data. This removes striping effects caused by small variations in sensor electronics.

Projection to a Regular Grid – Data collected using RTK GPS positioning requires a uniform grid projection to visualise data. Data are rotated to best fit an orthogonal grid projection and are resampled onto the grid using an inverse distance-weighting algorithm.

Interpolation to Square Pixels – Data are interpolated using a bicubic algorithm to increase the pixel density between sensor traverses. This produces images with square pixels for ease of visualisation.

6.3.Data Visualisation and Interpretation

- 6.3.1. This report presents the gradient of the sensors' total field data as greyscale images. The gradient of the sensors minimises external interferences and reduces the blown-out responses from ferrous and other high contrast material. However, the contrast of weak or ephemeral anomalies can be reduced through the process of calculating the gradient. Consequently, some features can be clearer in the respective gradient or total field datasets. Multiple greyscale images of the gradient and total field at different plotting ranges have been used for data interpretation. Greyscale images should be viewed alongside the XY trace plot (Figures 8, 11, 14, & 17). XY trace plots visualise the magnitude and form of the geophysical response, aiding anomaly interpretation.

- 6.3.2. Geophysical results have been interpreted using greyscale images and XY traces in a layered environment, overlaid against open street maps, satellite imagery, historical maps, LiDAR data, and soil and geology maps. Google Earth (2025) was also consulted, to compare the results with recent land use.
- 6.3.3. Geodetic position of results – All vector and raster data have been projected into OSGB36 (ESPG27700) and can be provided upon request in ESRI Shapefile (.SHP) and Geotiff (.TIF) respectively. Figures are provided with raster and vector data projected against OS Open Data.

7. Results

7.1. Qualification

- 7.1.1. Geophysical results are not a map of the ground and are instead a direct measurement of subsurface properties. Detecting and mapping features requires that said features have properties that can be measured by the chosen technique(s) and that these properties have sufficient contrast with the background to be identifiable. The interpretation of any identified anomalies is inherently subjective. While the scrutiny of the results is undertaken by qualified, experienced individuals and rigorously checked for quality and consistency, it is often not possible to classify all anomaly sources. Where possible, an anomaly source will be identified along with the certainty of the interpretation. The only way to improve the interpretation of results is through a process of comparing excavated results with the geophysical reports. MS actively seek feedback on their reports, as well as reports from further work, in order to constantly improve our knowledge and service.

7.2. Discussion

- 7.2.1. The geophysical results are presented in combination with satellite imagery and historical maps (Figure 4).
- 7.2.2. The fluxgate gradiometer survey responded well to the environment of survey area with anomalies of agricultural, natural, undetermined, and modern origin detected. Large zones of green waste have been identified within Areas 4, 5, and 9, which may have obscured any weaker anomalies, should they be present. Further magnetic disturbance was restricted to field boundaries.
- 7.2.3. Anomalies of an agricultural origin were identified across the survey area. Linear anomalies corresponding to former mapped field boundaries were identified in Areas 1 and 6. Across Area 6, closely spaced, parallel curvilinear anomalies typical of ridge and furrow cultivation were detected (Figures 15 & 16). Further linear anomalies were identified that correspond to modern ploughing trends visible on satellite imagery of the survey area (Figure 4). Linear anomalies were also detected and interpreted as drainage features in the north and middle of Areas 6 and 7.
- 7.2.4. An amorphous anomaly was detected in the south of Area 6 and is likely to be the result of an accumulation within the superficial glaciofluvial deposits resulting from topographic variations (Figures 15 & 16).

- 7.2.5. A linear anomaly interpreted as being of modern origin was detected along the eastern edge of Area 2 and continues toward the central western boundary. This corresponds to a trackway noted at the time of survey and visible in satellite imagery (Figure 4).
- 7.2.6. Linear and curvilinear anomalies of undetermined origin were identified in the northern, northeastern, and southwestern parts of Area 7, as well as in the southeastern part of Area 1 (Figure 3). These anomalies lack sufficient diagnostic criteria to allow for a confident interpretation.

7.3. Interpretation

7.3.1. General Statements

- 7.3.1.1. Geophysical anomalies will be discussed broadly as classification types across the survey area. Only anomalies that are distinctive or unusual will be discussed individually.
- 7.3.1.2. **Ferrous (Spike)** – Discrete dipolar anomalies are likely to be the result of isolated pieces of modern ferrous debris on or near the ground surface.
- 7.3.1.3. **Ferrous/Debris (Spread)** – A ferrous/debris spread refers to a concentration of multiple discrete, dipolar anomalies usually resulting from highly magnetic material such as rubble containing ceramic building materials and ferrous rubbish.
- 7.3.1.4. **Magnetic Disturbance** – The strong anomalies produced by extant metallic structures, typically including fencing, pylons, vehicles and service pipes, have been classified as ‘Magnetic Disturbance’. These magnetic ‘haloes’ will obscure weaker anomalies relating to nearby features, should they be present, often over a greater footprint than the structure causing them.
- 7.3.1.5. **Undetermined** – Anomalies are classified as Undetermined when the origin of the geophysical anomaly is ambiguous and there is no supporting contextual evidence to justify a more certain classification. These anomalies are likely to be the result of geological, pedological or agricultural processes, although an archaeological origin cannot be entirely ruled out. Undetermined anomalies are generally distinct from those caused by ferrous sources.

7.3.2. Magnetic Results - Specific Anomalies

- 7.3.2.1. **Agricultural (Weak)** – Weakly enhanced linear anomalies have been identified across the middle of Areas 1, 6, and 9. These anomalies correlate to mapped former field boundaries, visible on historical mapping of the 1880s (Figure 4).
- 7.3.2.2. **Agricultural (Trend)** – Linear anomalies with weak magnetic signals were detected in Areas 6 and 7. These anomalies correspond to modern ploughing trends visible on satellite imagery. An indicative sample have been drawn. These trends are oriented from northwest to southeast (Figure 3).

- 7.3.2.3. **Drainage Features** – Linear anomalies have been detected in the north and middle of Areas 6 and 7, oriented from northeast to southwest. One of these aligns with a cropmark visible on satellite imagery (Figure 4).
- 7.3.2.4. **Ridges and Furrow (Trend)** – Numerous weakly enhanced linear and curvilinear anomalies with a separation of c. 6m to c. 8m have been detected in Area 6, oriented from northwest to southeast. The spacing and morphology of these anomalies are characteristic of ridge and furrow cultivation (Figures 15 & 16).
- 7.3.2.5. **Natural (Spread)** – An amorphous weakly positive anomaly was detected in the southeast of Area 6. These align with the edge of the zone of glaciofluvial superficial deposits and may be accumulations resulting from topographic variations (Figures 15 & 16).
- 7.3.2.6. **Modern/Industrial (Spread)** – Strongly positive linear and curvilinear anomalies were detected to the east of Area 2, extending westward into Area 4 (Figures 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, & 16). These anomalies align with a trackway visible on satellite imagery.
- 7.3.2.7. **Undetermined (Weak)** – Anomalies with weak magnetic signals have been detected in the southeast of Area 1, northeast and southwest of Area 6, and north of Area 7. These anomalies do not seem to correspond with any historical features and lack a distinct morphology to support a more definite categorisation.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. A fluxgate gradiometer survey has been successfully completed across the survey area. The survey has detected anomalies of agricultural, natural, undetermined, and modern origin. Magnetic disturbance was limited to field boundaries and green waste.
- 8.2. Agriculture activity has been detected in the form of ridge and furrow cultivation, drainage features, modern agricultural trends, and field boundaries.
- 8.3. Natural anomalies were also detected and are likely due to variations within the underlying glaciofluvial deposits.
- 8.4. Anomalies of a modern origin have been identified and align with a trackway visible at the time of survey.
- 8.5. Several anomalies across the survey area lack sufficient contextual evidence or diagnostic characteristics for confident interpretation and have therefore been classified as undetermined.

9. Archiving

- 9.1. MS maintains an in-house digital archive, which is based on Schmidt and Ernenwein (2013). This stores the collected measurements, minimally processed data, georeferenced and un-georeferenced images, XY traces and a copy of the final report.
- 9.2. MS contributes reports to the ADS Grey Literature Library upon permission from the client, subject to any dictated time embargoes.

10. Copyright

- 10.1. Copyright and intellectual property pertaining to all reports, figures and datasets produced by Magnitude Services Ltd is retained by MS. The client is given full licence to use such material for their own purposes. Permission must be sought by any third party wishing to use or reproduce any IP owned by MS.

11. References

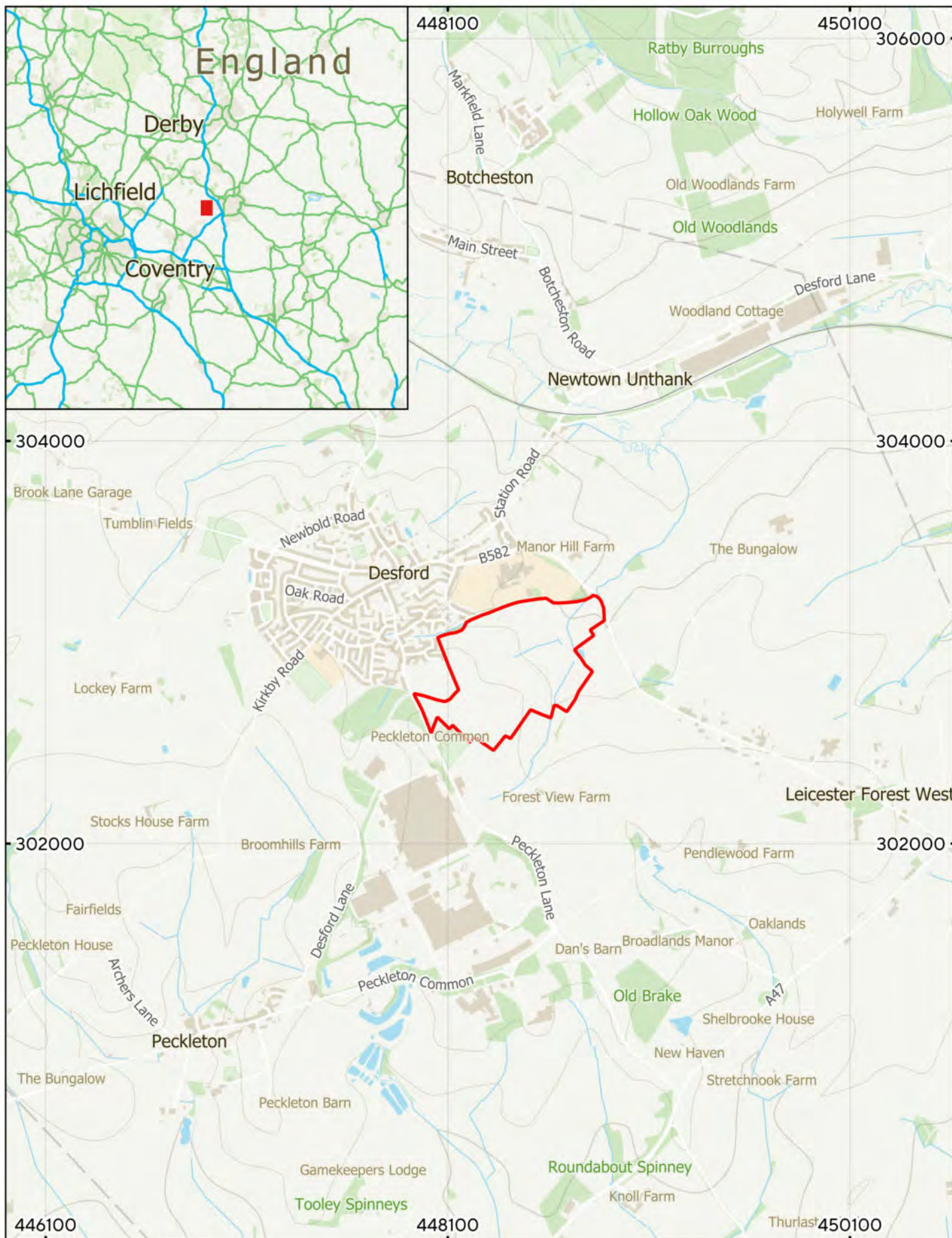
- British Geological Survey, 2025. Geology of Britain. Desford, Leicestershire.
[<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html/>]. Accessed 26/11/2025.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2020. Standards and guidance for archaeological geophysical survey. CIfA
- David, A., Linford, N., Linford, P. and Martin, L., 2008. Geophysical survey in archaeological field evaluation: research and professional services guidelines (2nd edition). Historic England.
- Google Earth, 2025. Google Earth Pro V 7.1.7.2606.
- Olsen, N., Toffner-Clausen, L., Sabaka, T.J., Brauer, P., Merayo, J.M.G., Jorgensen, J.L., Leger, J.M., Nielsen, O.V., Primdahl, F., and Risbo, T., 2003. Calibration of the Orsted vector magnetometer. Earth Planets Space 55: 11-18.
- Schmidt, A. and Ernenwein, E., 2013. Guide to good practice: geophysical data in archaeology (2nd edition). Oxbow Books: Oxford.
- Schmidt, A., Linford, P., Linford, N., David, A., Gaffney, C., Sarris, A. and Fassbinder, J., 2015. Guidelines for the use of geophysics in archaeology: questions to ask and points to consider. EAC Guidelines 2. European Archaeological Council: Belgium.
- Soilscapes, 2025. Desford, Leicestershire. Cranfield University, National Soil Resources Institute.
[<http://landis.org.uk>]. Accessed 26/11/2025.
- Terry, I., 2025. Written Scheme of Investigation for a Geophysical Survey of Land South-East of Desford. Magnitude Surveys Ltd.

12. Project Metadata

MS Job Code	MSSK2219
Project Name	Land South-East of Desford
Client	Orion Heritage
Grid Reference	SK4841602996
Survey Techniques	Magnetometry
Survey Size (ha)	41ha (Magnetometry)
Survey Dates	2021-10-05 to 2021-10-15
Project Lead	Matthew Stead BA (Hons) MA ACIfA
Project Officer	Matthew Stead BA (Hons) MA ACIfA
HER Event No	N/A
OASIS No	magnitud1-536937
S42 Licence No	N/A
Report Version	0.2

13. Document History

Version	Comments	Author	Checked By	Date
0.1	Initial draft for Project Lead to Review	ZR	MS	27 November 2025
0.2	Sign off	MS	LAG	16 December 2025



MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford

Figure 1 - Geophysical Survey Location

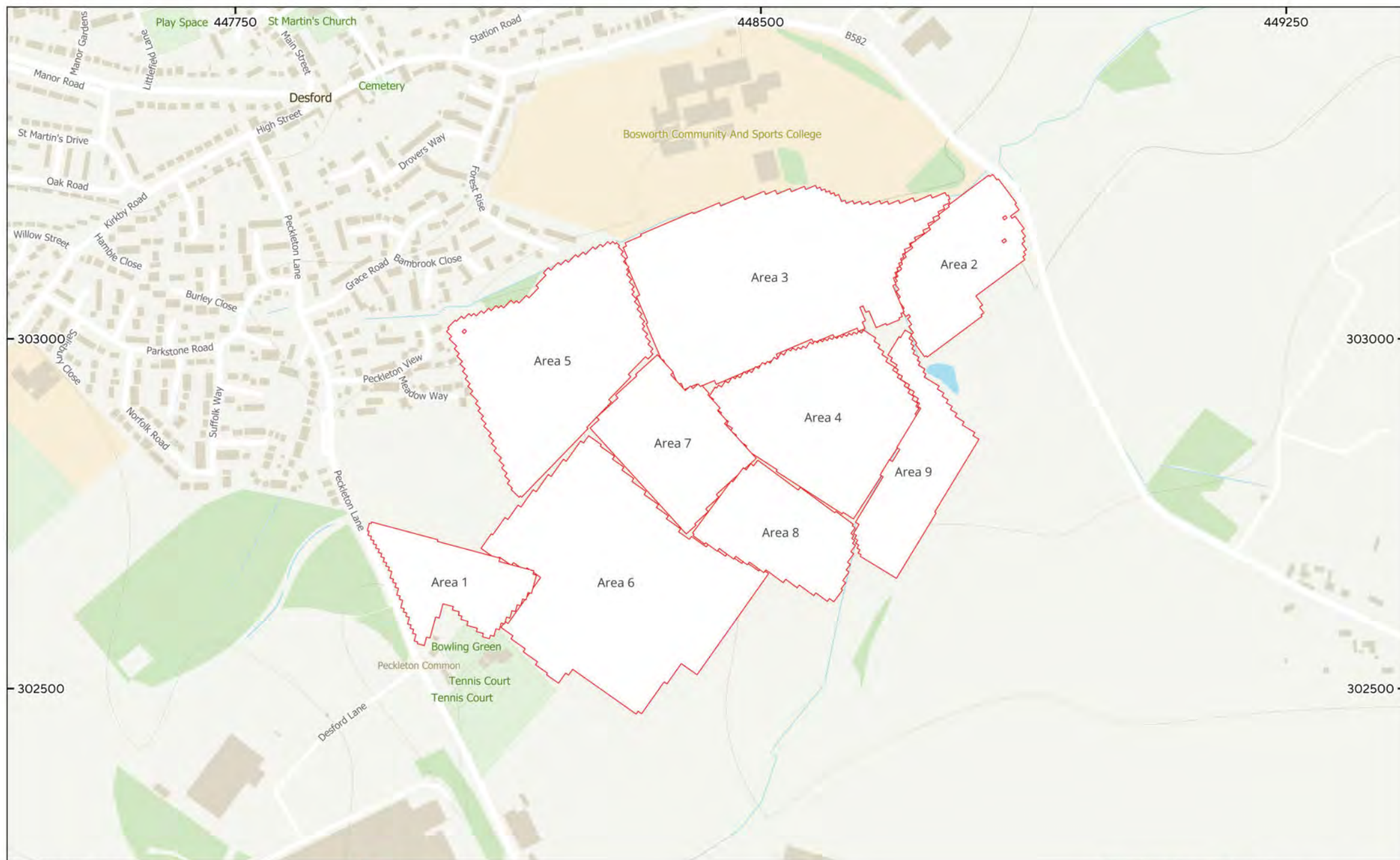
1:25,000 @ A4

© Magnitude Surveys Ltd 2025

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2025

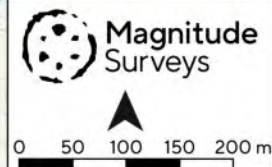
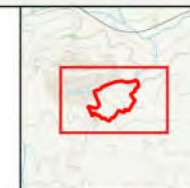
Geophysical Survey Areas

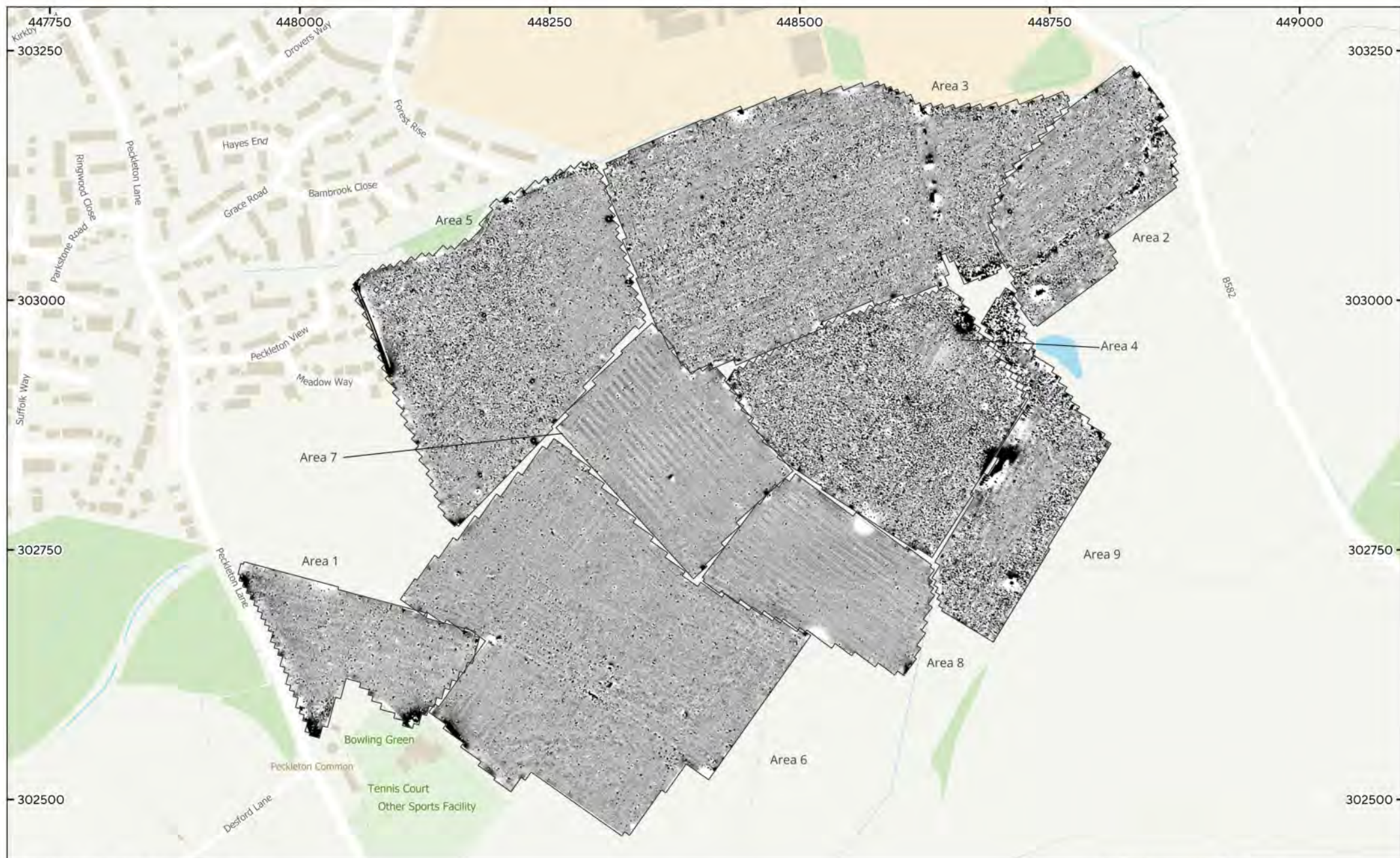




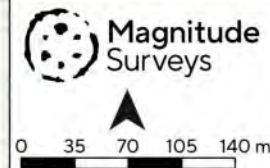
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 2 - Geophysical Survey Areas
 1:5,000 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

Survey Extent





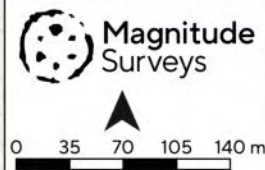
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 3 - Magnetic Gradient Overview (Areas 1 - 9)
 1:3,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025





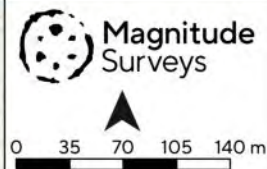
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 4 - Magnetic Interpretation over Historical Mapping
 and Satellite Imagery (Areas 1 - 9), 1:3,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains historical mapping © CLS Data 2025; Ordnance
 Survey, 6" 2nd edition c. 1882-1913
 Contains satellite imagery © Bing Satellite 2025

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Agricultural (Weak) | Magnetic Disturbance | Ridge and Furrow (Trend) | Ferrous (Spike) |
| Natural (Spread) | Ferrous/Debris (Spread) | Agricultural (Trend) | |
| Modern (Spread) | Undetermined (Weak) | Drainage Feature | |



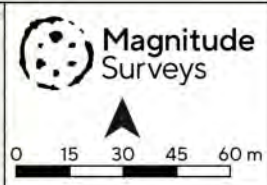
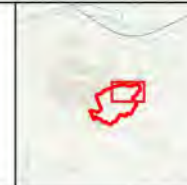


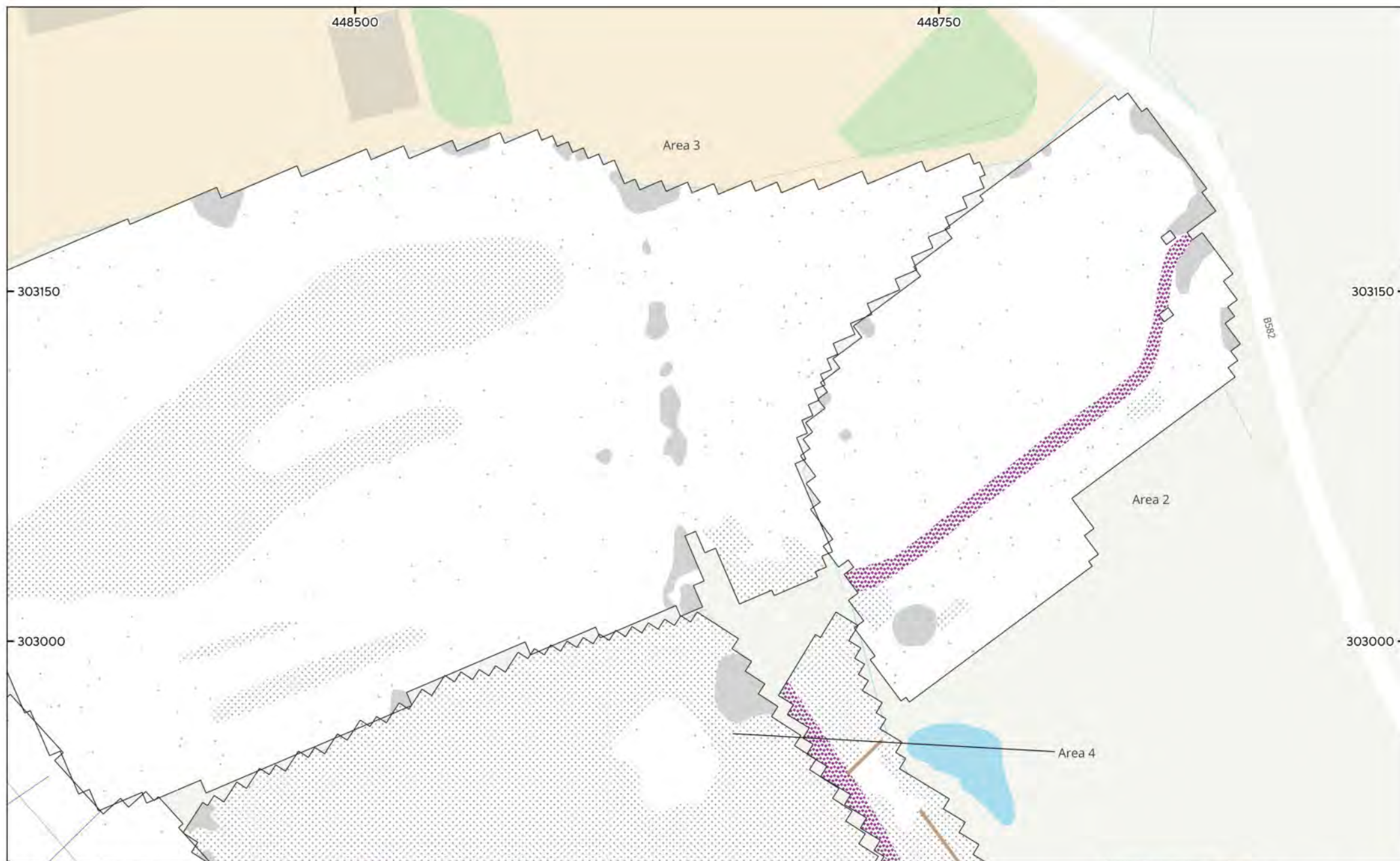
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 5 - GNSS Trace (Areas 1 - 9)
 1:3,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025





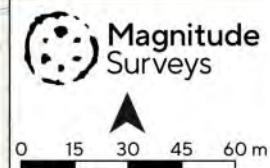
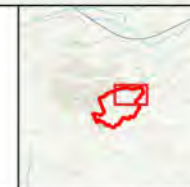
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
Figure 6 - Magnetic Gradient (Areas 2, 3 and 4 (North))
1:1,500 @ A3
© Magnitude Surveys 2025
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
database right 2025

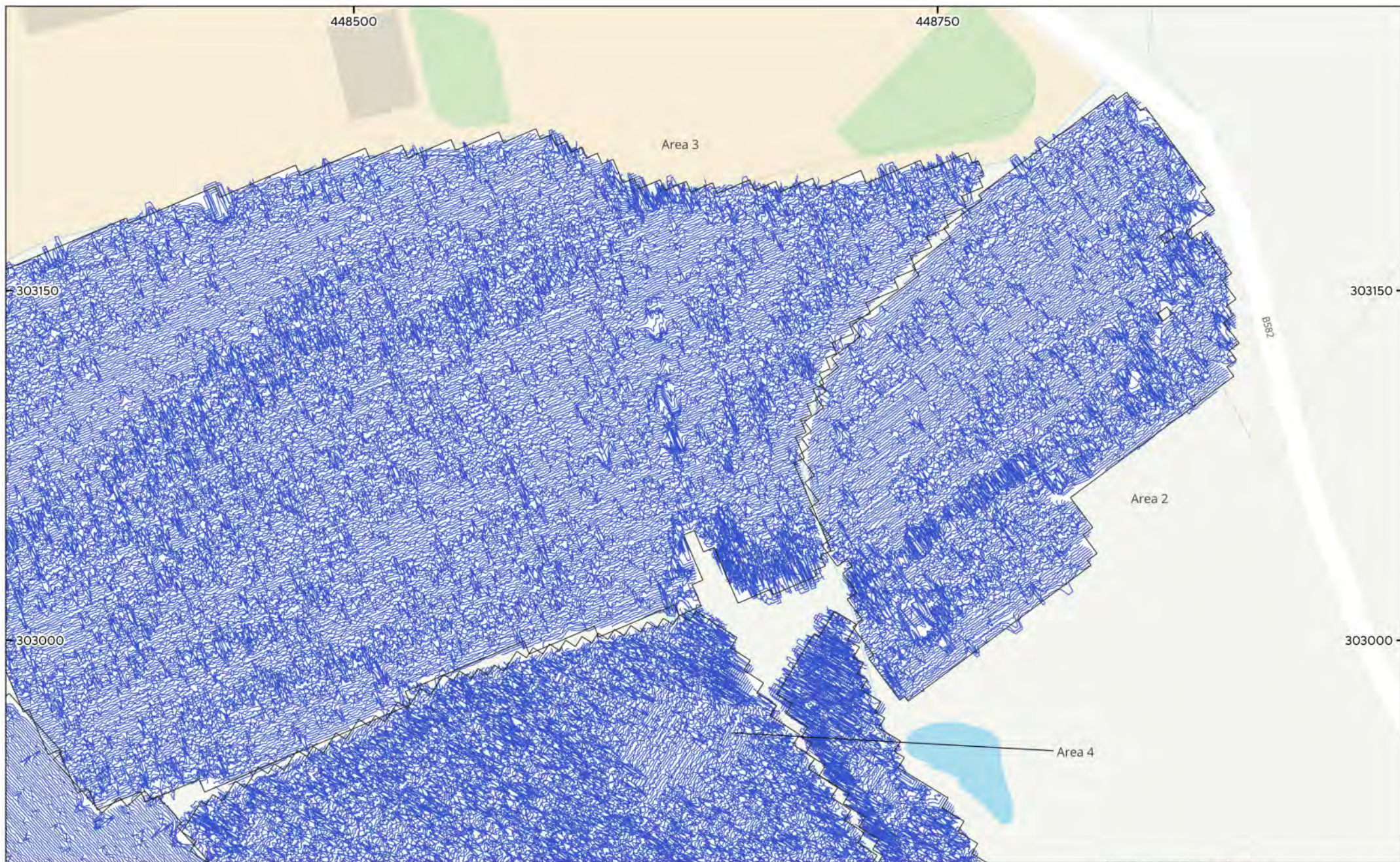




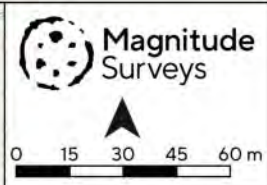
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 7 - Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 2, 3 and 4 (North))
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Agricultural (Weak) | Ferrous/Debris (Spread) | Drainage Feature |
| Modern (Spread) | Undetermined (Weak) | Ferrous (Spike) |
| Magnetic Disturbance | Agricultural (Trend) | |





MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
Figure 8 - XY Trace Plot (Areas 2, 3 and 4 (North))
30nT/cm at 1:1,500 @ A3
© Magnitude Surveys 2025
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
database right 2025





MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 9 - Magnetic Gradient (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025



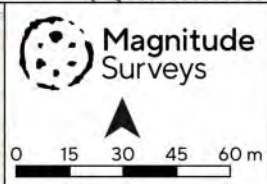
Magnitude Surveys

0 15 30 45 60 m



MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 10 - Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| ■ Magnetic Disturbance | — Ridge and Furrow (Trend) | • Ferrous (Spike) |
| ■ Ferrous/Debris (Spread) | — Agricultural (Trend) | |
| ■ Undetermined (Weak) | — Drainage Feature | |





MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 11 - XY Trace Plot (Areas 3, 5, 7 and 8)
 30nT/cm at 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

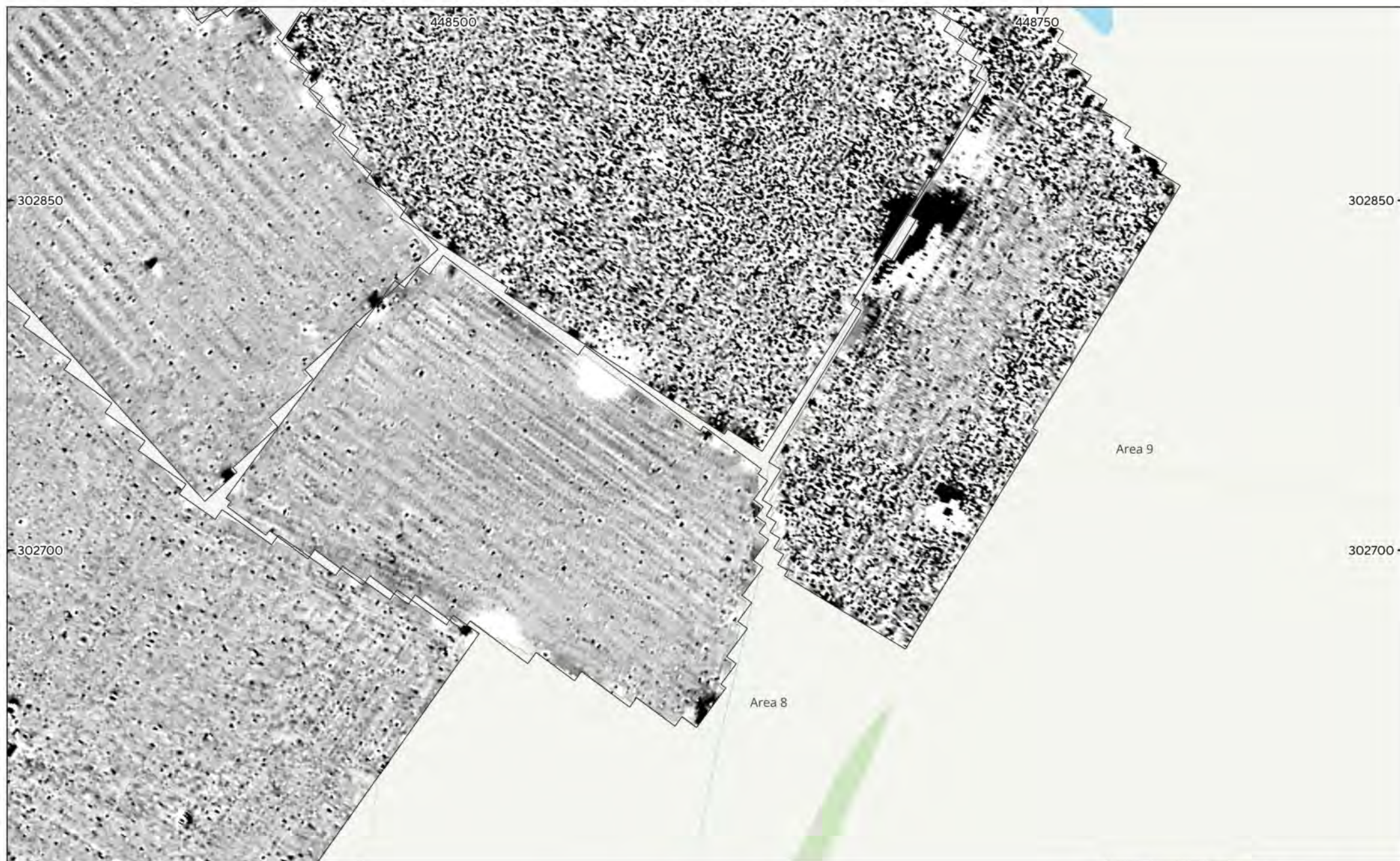




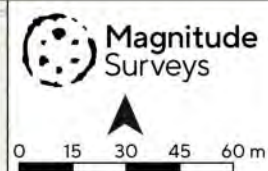
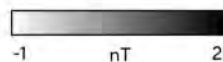
**Magnitude
Surveys**



0 15 30 45 60 m



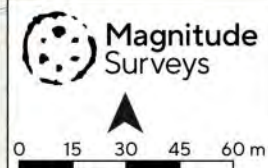
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
Figure 12 - Magnetic Gradient (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)
1:1,500 @ A3
© Magnitude Surveys 2025
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
database right 2025





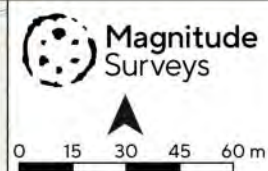
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 13 - Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

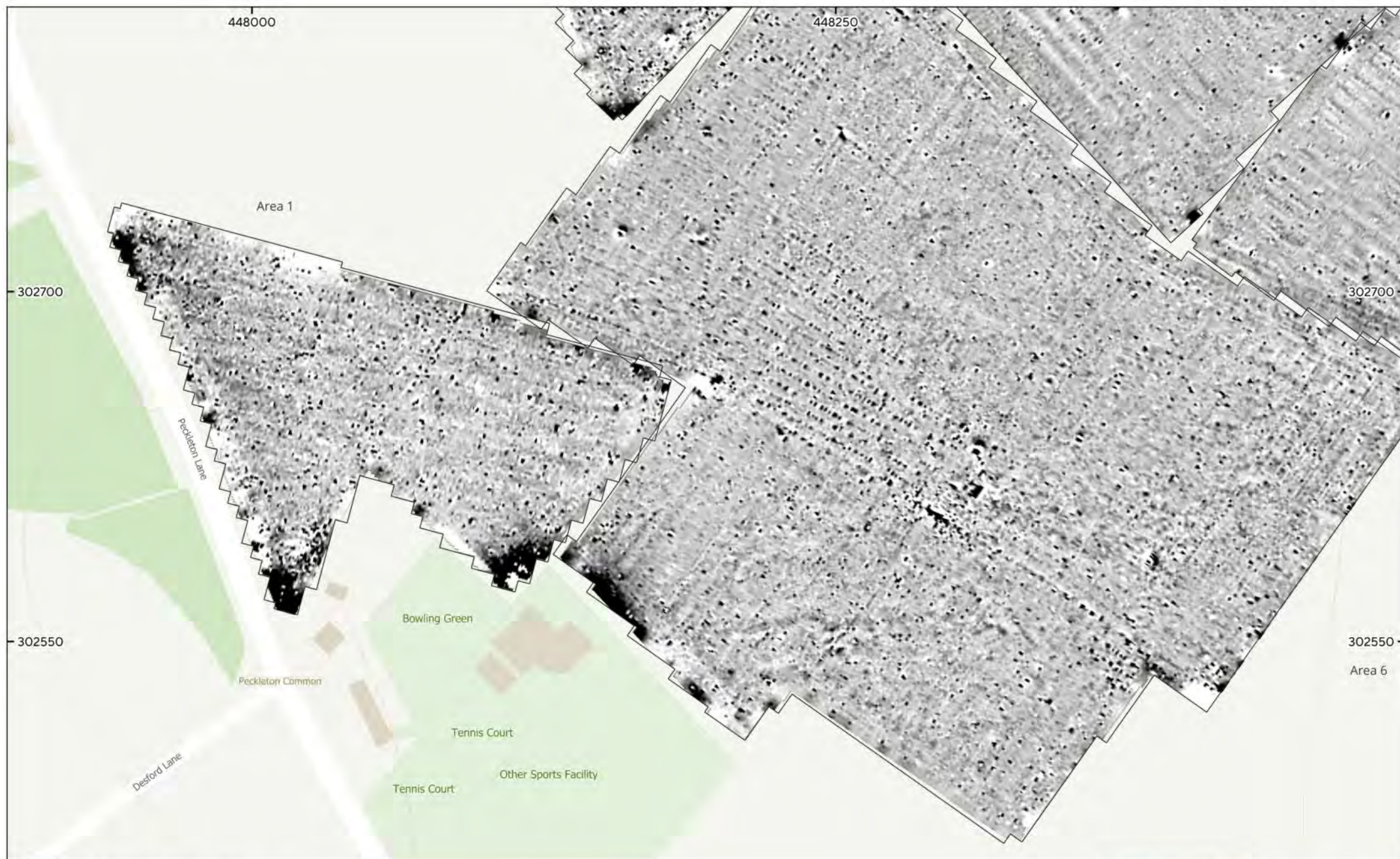
- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Agricultural (Weak) | Ferrous/Debris (Spread) | Drainage Feature |
| Natural (Spread) | Undetermined (Weak) | Ferrous (Spike) |
| Modern (Spread) | Ridge and Furrow (Trend) | |
| Magnetic Disturbance | Agricultural (Trend) | |



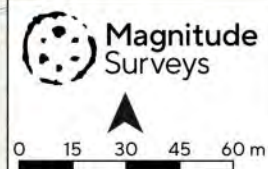
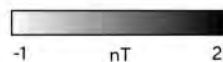


MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
Figure 14 - XY Trace Plot (Areas 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9)
30nT/cm at 1:1,500 @ A3
© Magnitude Surveys 2025
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
database right 2025





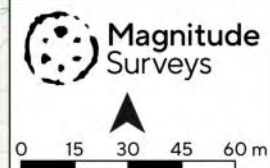
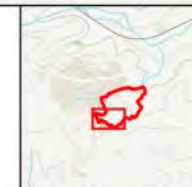
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 15 - Magnetic Gradient (Areas 1 and 6)
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

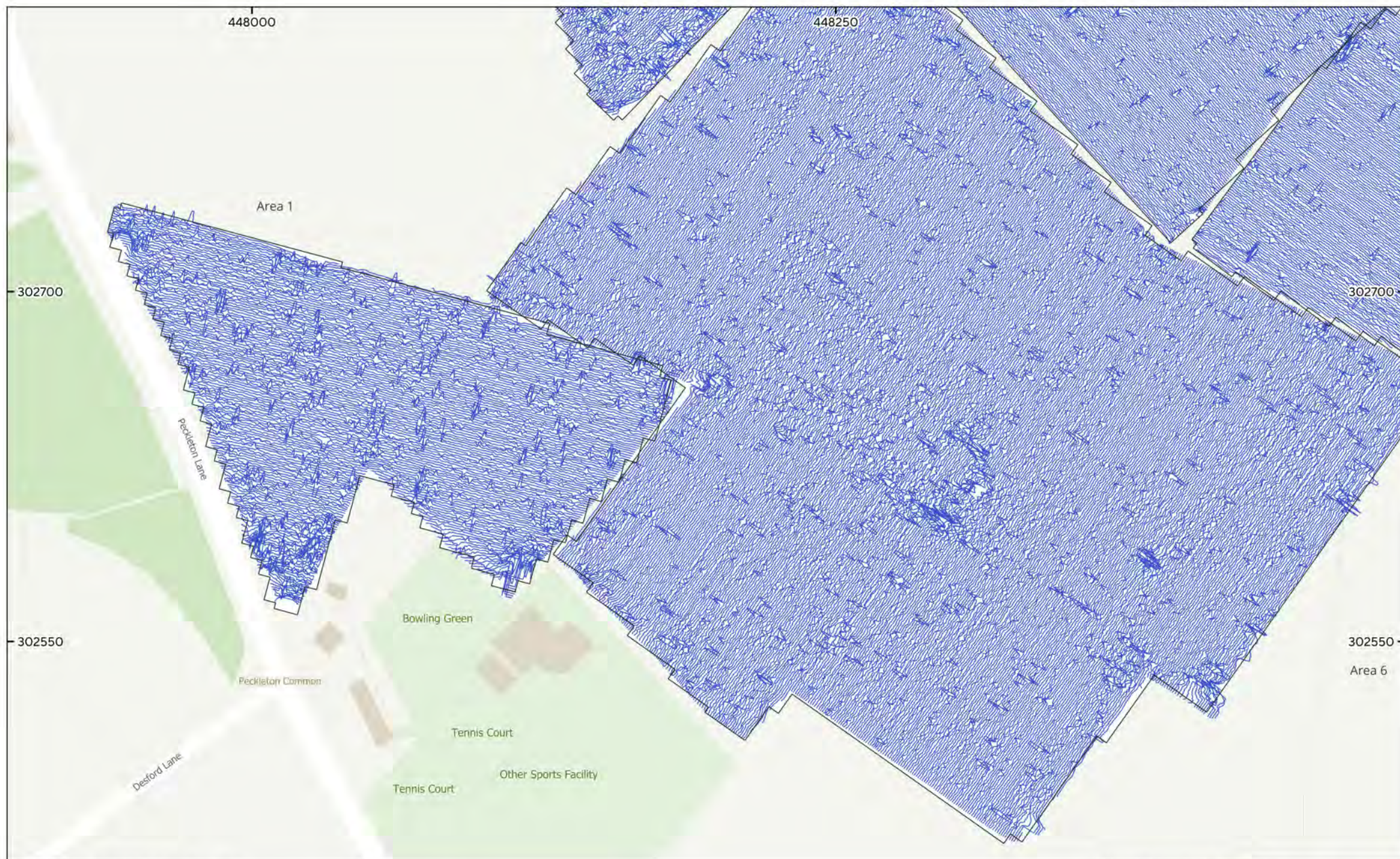




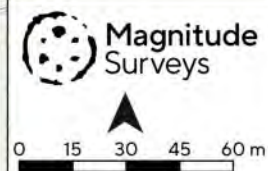
MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
 Figure 16 - Magnetic Interpretation (Areas 1 and 6)
 1:1,500 @ A3
 © Magnitude Surveys 2025
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
 database right 2025

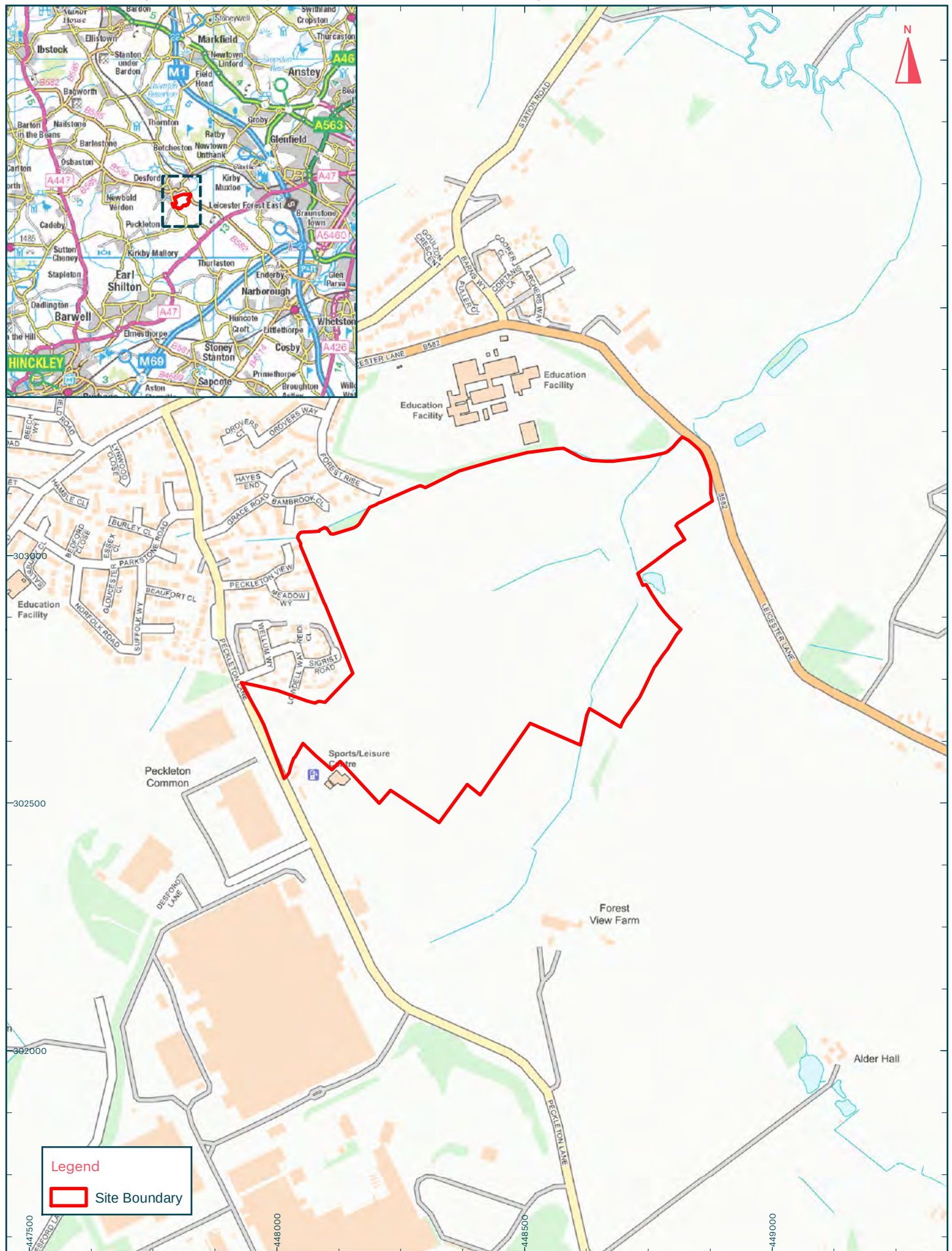
- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| Agricultural (Weak) | Undetermined (Weak) | Drainage Feature |
| Natural (Spread) | Ridge and Furrow (Trend) | Ferrous (Spike) |
| Magnetic Disturbance | Agricultural (Trend) | |





MSSK2219 - Land South-East of Desford
Figure 17 - XY Trace Plot (Areas 1 and 6)
30nT/cm at 1:1,500 @ A3
© Magnitude Surveys 2025
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and
database right 2025



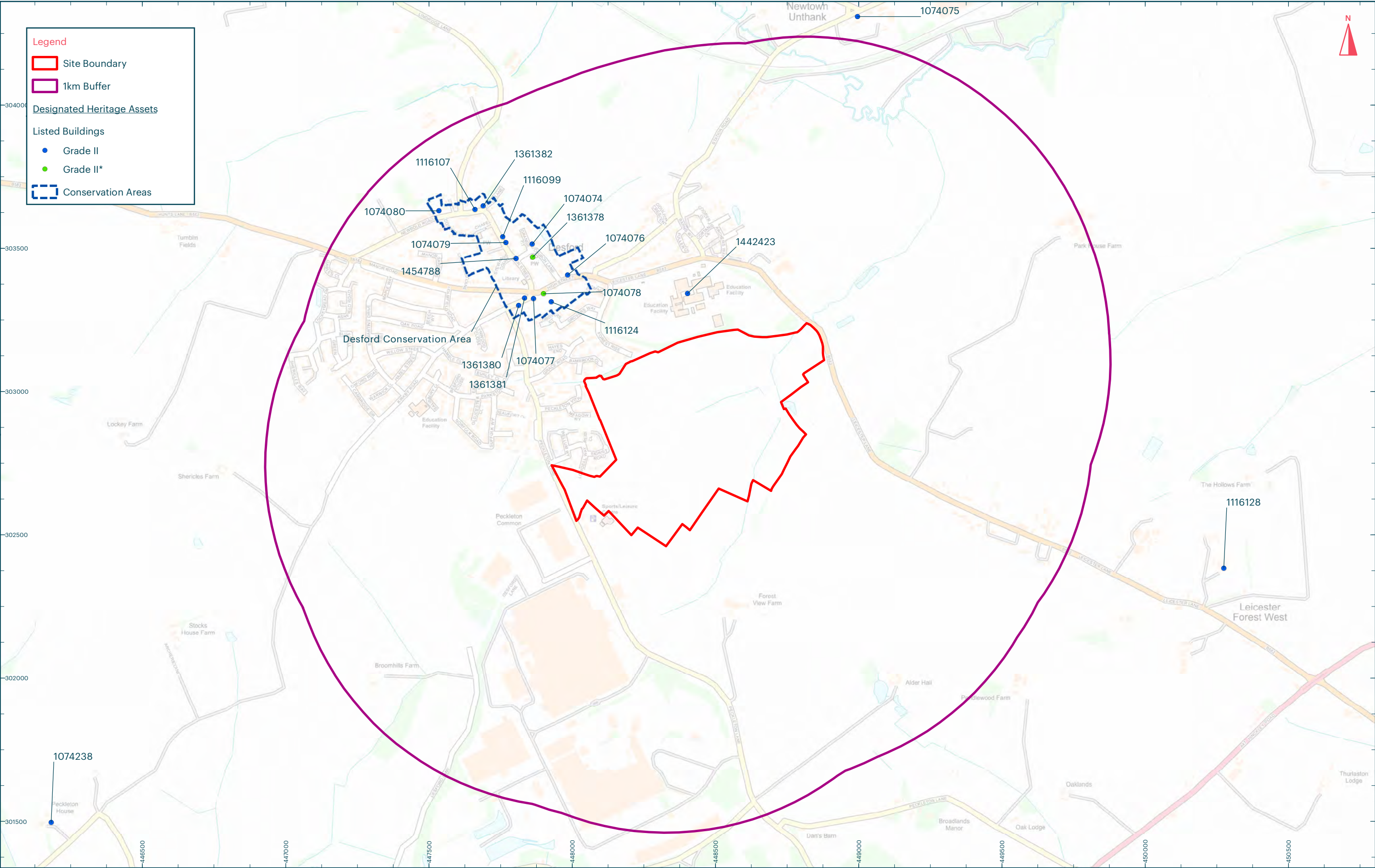


Title:
Figure 1: Site Location
Address:
Land South East of Desford

Scale at A4: 1:10,000



orion.



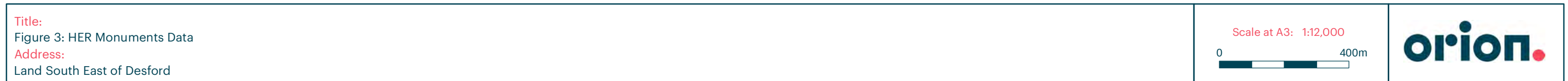
Title:
Figure 2: Designated Heritage Assets

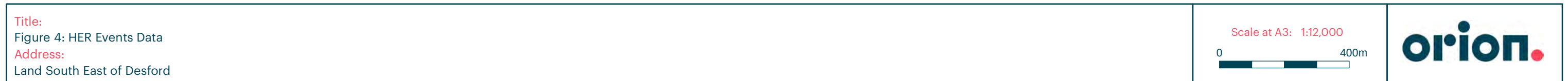
Address:
Land South East of Desford

Scale at A3: 1:12,000

0 400m

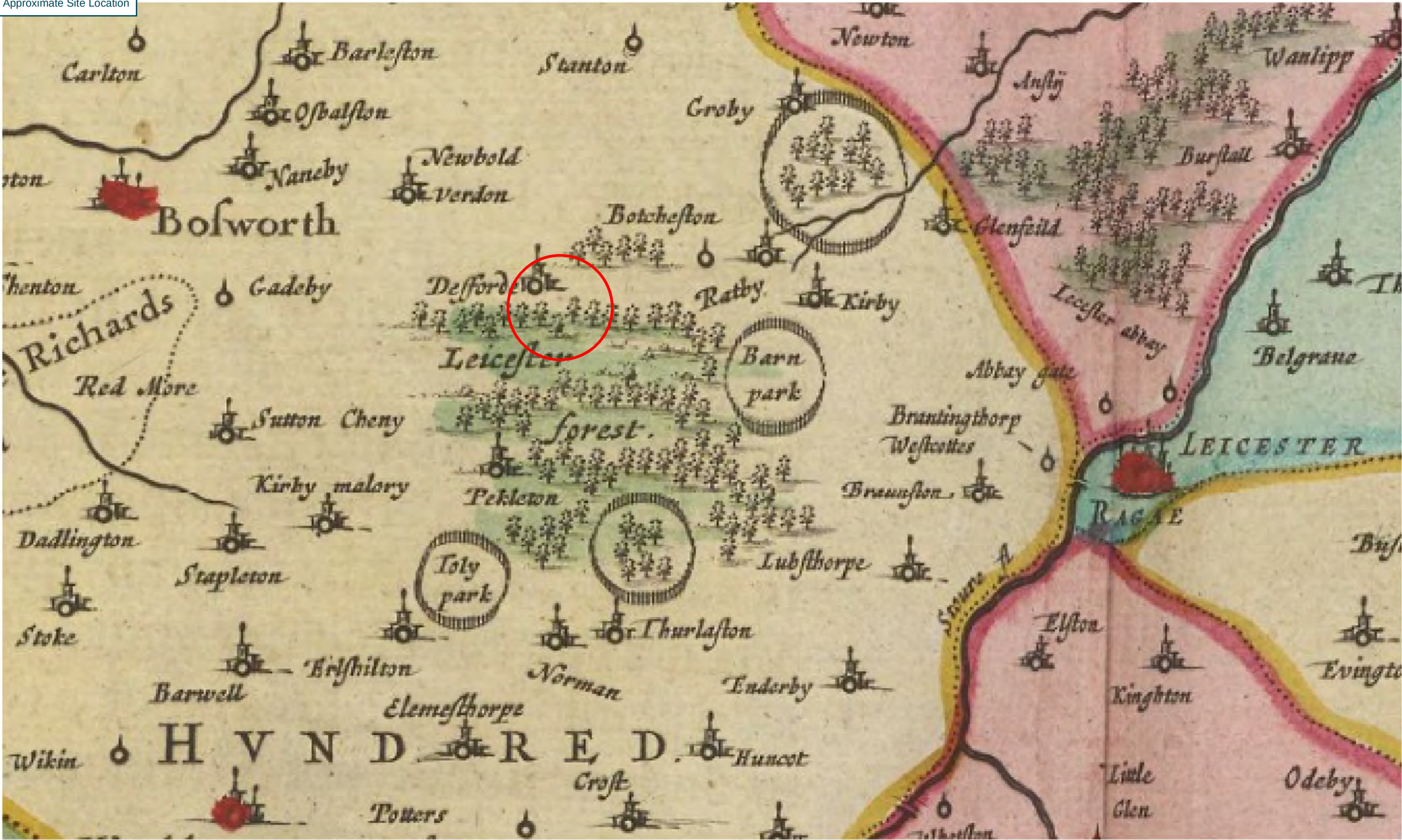






Legend

Approximate Site Location



Title:
Figure 5: 1665 Joan Blaeu Map of Leicestershire

Address:
Land South East of Desford

Not To Scale:
For Illustration Only





Title:
Figure 6: 1787 John Cary Map of Leicestershire

Address:
Land South East of Desford

Scale at A3: 1:50,000

0 1,000m





Title:
Figure 7: 1814 Ordnance Survey Drawing Map of Desford

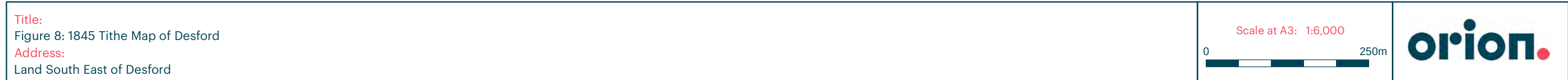
Address:
Land South East of Desford

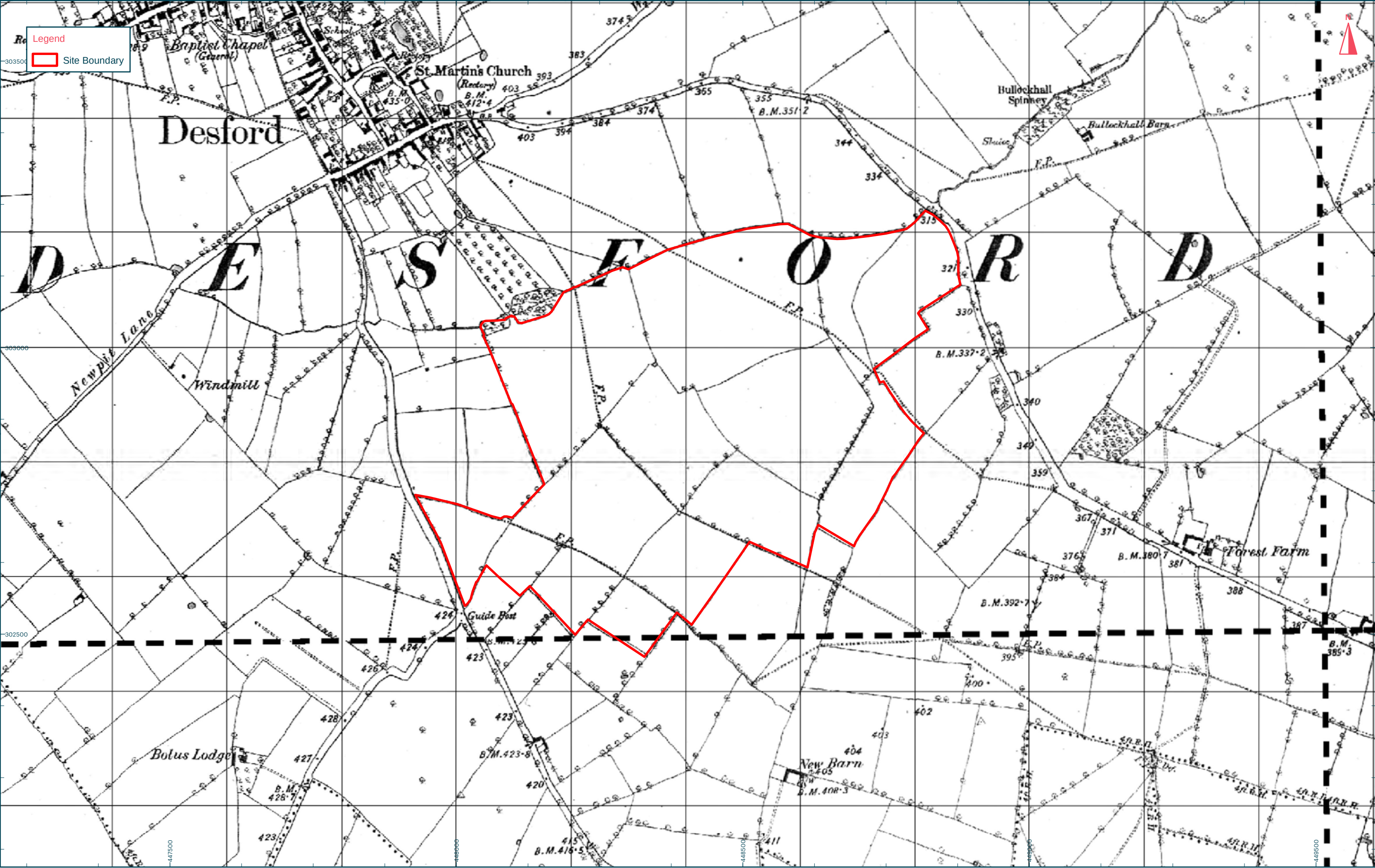
Scale at A3: 1:10,000

0

250m

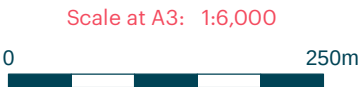




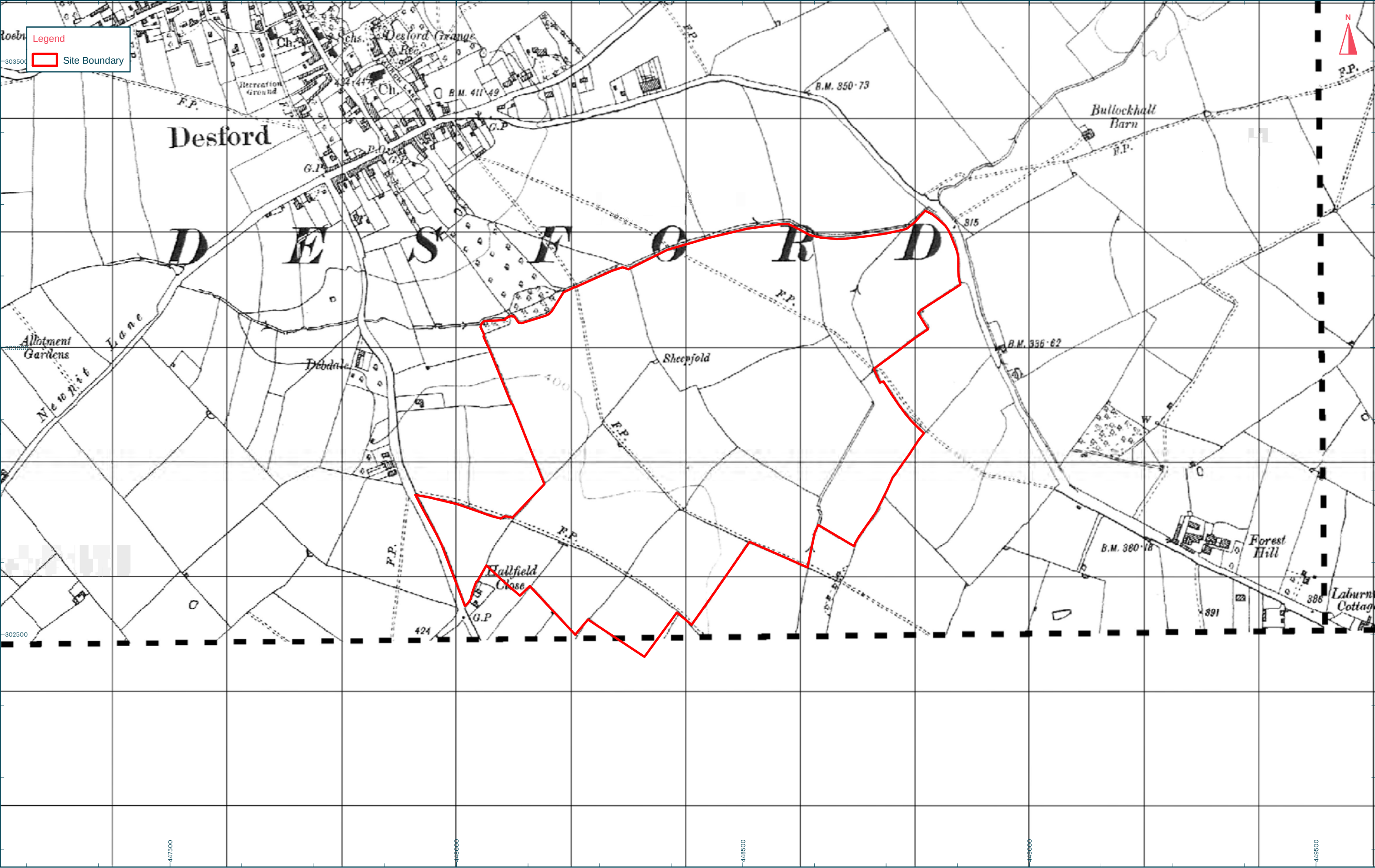


Title:
Figure 9: 1885 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey Map

Address:
Land South East of Desford

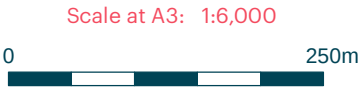


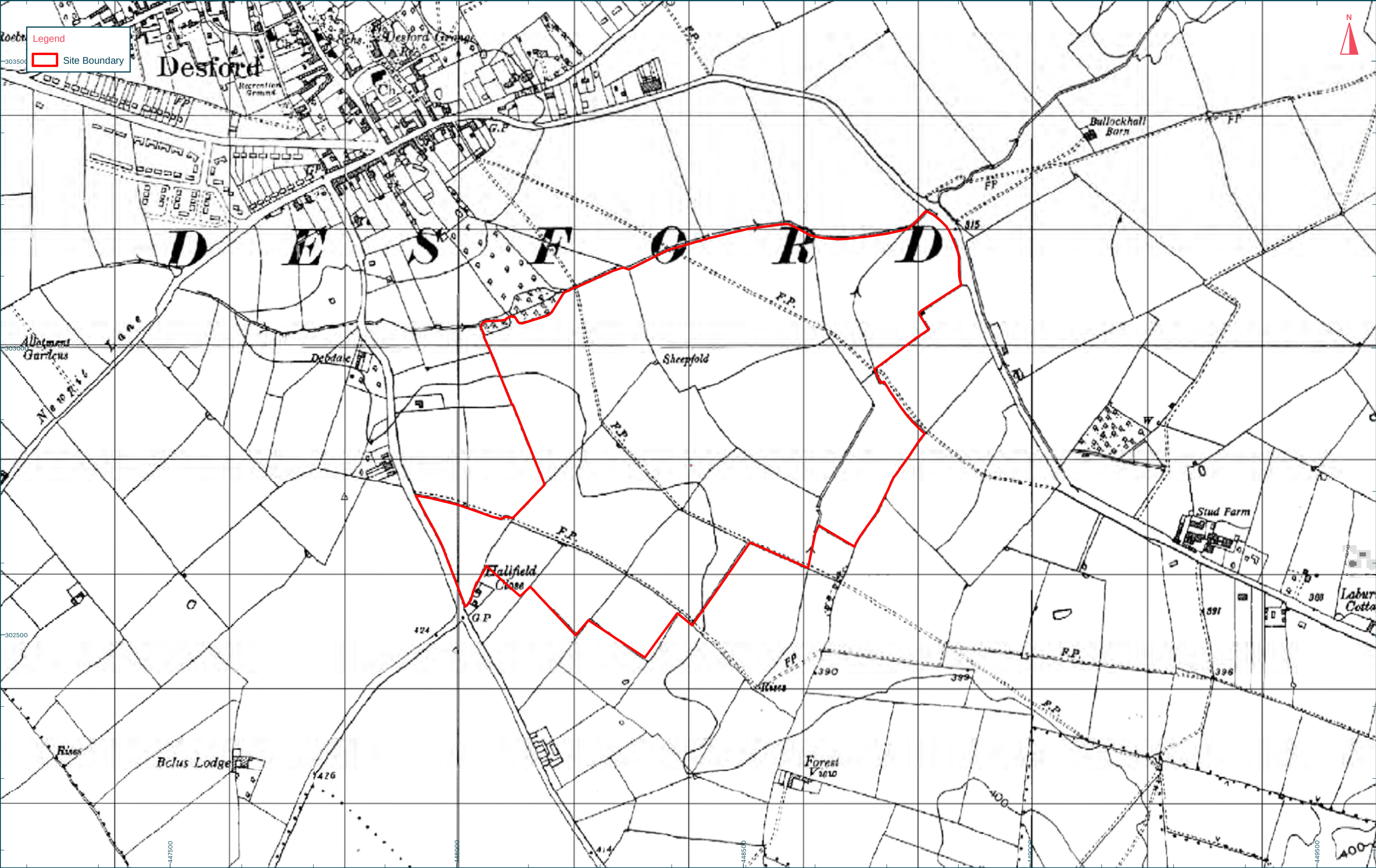




Title:
Figure 11: 1931 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey Map

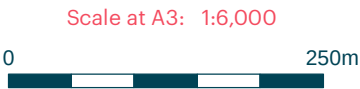
Address:
Land South East of Desford



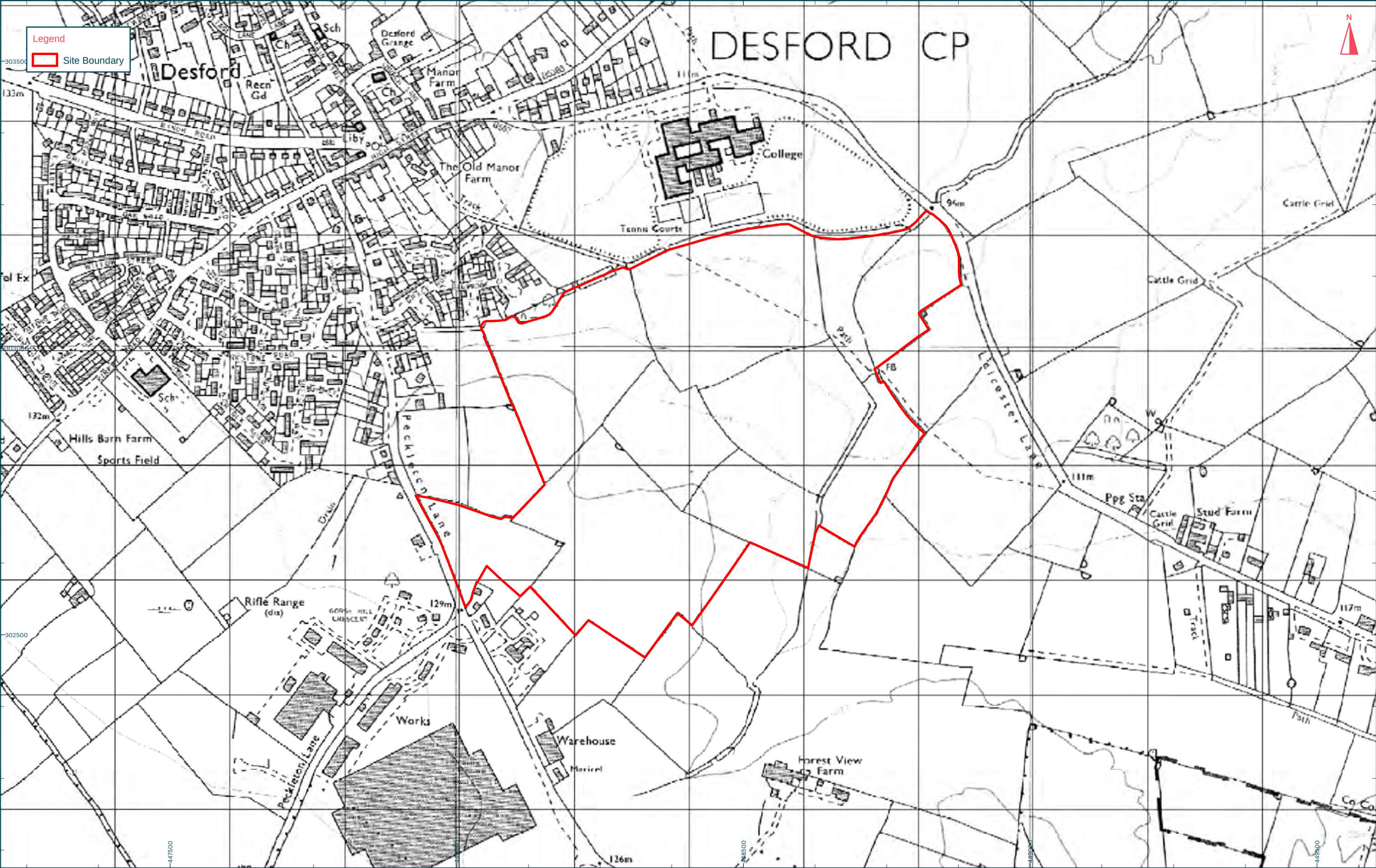


Title:
Figure 12: 1955 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

Address:
Land South East of Desford

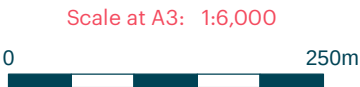


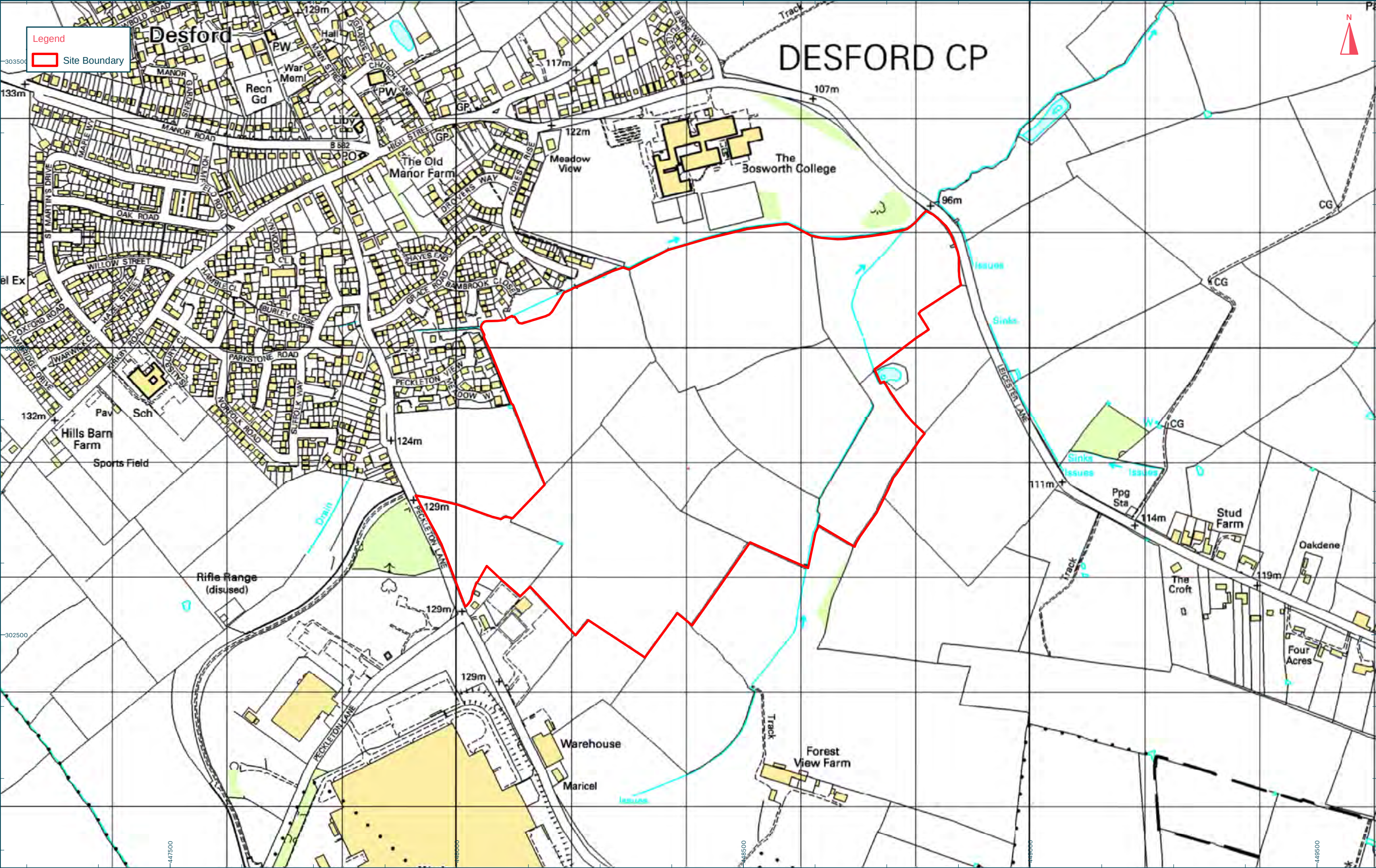


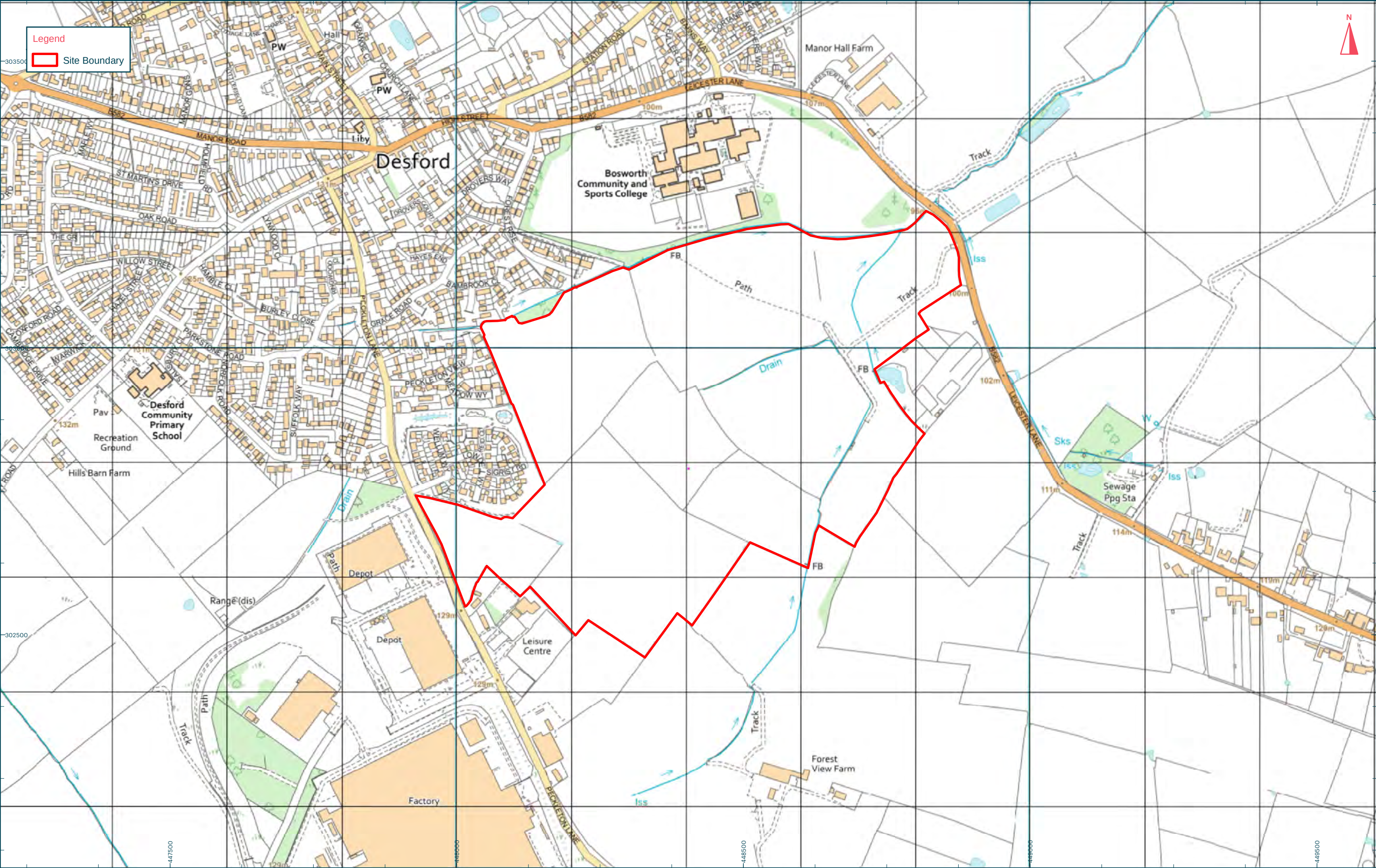


Title:
Figure 14: 1982 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

Address:
Land South East of Desford







Title:
Figure 16: 2025 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey Map

Address:
Land South East of Desford

