

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire

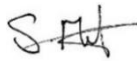
794-PLN-HER-01595  
Archaeological Desk-Based  
Assessment: Ratby Lane,  
Markfield  
5  
June 2025

### Quality Management

Version	Status	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
1	Draft	AT	PC	PC	12.05.2021
2	For Client Review	AT	MF	MF	12.05.2021
3	Final	AT	PC	MF	24.06.2021
4	Final	AT/AJ	SM	SM	06.05.2025
5	Final	AT/AJ	SM	SM	02.06.2025

### Approval for issue

Simon Mortimer



2 June 2025

The report has been prepared for the exclusive use and benefit of our client and solely for the purpose for which it is provided. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by RPS Group Plc, any of its subsidiaries, or a related entity (collectively 'RPS') no part of this report should be reproduced, distributed or communicated to any third party. RPS does not accept any liability if this report is used for an alternative purpose from which it is intended, nor to any third party in respect of this report. The report does not account for any changes relating to the subject matter of the report, or any legislative or regulatory changes that have occurred since the report was produced and that may affect the report.

The report has been prepared using the information provided to RPS by its client, or others on behalf of its client. To the fullest extent permitted by law, RPS shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the client arising from fraud, misrepresentation, withholding of information material relevant to the report or required by RPS, or other default relating to such information, whether on the client's part or that of the other information sources, unless such fraud, misrepresentation, withholding or such other default is evident to RPS without further enquiry. It is expressly stated that no independent verification of any documents or information supplied by the client or others on behalf of the client has been made. The report shall be used for general information only.

Prepared by:

**RPS**

Adrian Jacklin ACIfA  
Senior Consultant - Archaeology

Sherwood House, Sherwood Avenue  
Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 1QQ

T +44 1636 642 707

E [adrian.jacklin@rps.tetrattech.com](mailto:adrian.jacklin@rps.tetrattech.com)

Prepared for:

**Taylor Wimpey UK Limited**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by RPS for Taylor Wimpey UK Limited to support an planning application with all matters except access reserved, for the erection of up to 135 dwellings, amenity space, areas for outdoor play, landscaping and all associated infrastructure. It considers 6.39 ha of land, currently covered by scrub, located at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire (centred at NGR SK 4976 0949).

The assessment provides a description of heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development of the site and addresses the information requirements of Government's National Planning Policy Framework in relation to heritage.

The archaeological potential of the development site and the significance of archaeological assets within the site has been assessed through desk-based review of existing archaeological information, including previous archaeological work undertaken in the vicinity of the study site.

There are no designated heritage assets within the proposed development site. There are no designated heritage assets assessed as sensitive to development outside of the site.

The southern boundary of the study site forms the northern extent of the Post-Medieval deer park of Groby Park. The site visit revealed that no upstanding remains of the park pale survive within the study site. Geophysical survey of the site did not identify any features potentially relating to the park boundary and it would seem likely that, should any formal boundary ever had existed, it lies beyond the limits of the study site.

Geophysical survey of the site undertaken in support of the previous planning application did not identify any anomalies indicative of significant archaeological features.

Based on the geophysical survey results, archaeological data including LiDAR for the site and the surrounding area, the site is considered to have a low/negligible potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) remains of all periods.

There are no archaeological or heritage constraints to the proposed development. The Senior Planning Archaeologist's consultee response to the pre-application enquiry submitted by the client (23/10154/PREMAJ – dated 21st November 2023), recommended a programme of archaeological mitigation conditioned to the planning consent, including an initial phase of trial trenching, followed, as necessary by intrusive and non-intrusive investigation and recording.

## Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>2</b>
National Planning Policy .....	2
Local Planning Policy .....	3
<b>3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Geology .....	6
Topography .....	6
Site Conditions .....	6
Review of Geophysical Survey and LiDAR data .....	6
<b>4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Timescales used in this report.....	8
Introduction .....	8
Designated Heritage Assets .....	8
Non-designated Heritage Assets.....	9
Previous Archaeological Work .....	9
Prehistoric / Roman .....	9
Saxon/Early Medieval/Medieval .....	9
Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise) .....	10
Assessment of Significance (Designated and Non-Designated Assets).....	11
<b>5 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT &amp; REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Proposed Development .....	12
Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Assets.....	12
<b>6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>FIGURES .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PLATES.....</b>	<b>25</b>

## Figures

Figure 1: Site Location.....	17
Figure 2: Designated Heritage Assets.....	18
Figure 3: HER Data Events .....	19
Figure 4: HER Data Monuments .....	20
Figure 5: LiDAR Data.....	21
Figure 6: 1884 Ordnance Survey Map .....	22
Figure 7: 1957 Ordnance Survey Map .....	23
Figure 8: 2018 Google Earth Imagery .....	24

## Plates

Plate 1: View east across the site from the western boundary.....	26
Plate 2: View north-west across the site from the south-eastern corner of the site .....	26
Plate 3: View north-east across the site from the south-western boundary .....	27
Plate 4: View east across the field to the south of the location of the proposed surface drainage route...	27

## Appendices

Appendix 1 Gazetteer of HER Entries	
-------------------------------------	--

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by RPS for Taylor Wimpey UK Limited to support a planning application for a residential development on land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire (centred at NGR SK 4976 0949 - Figure 1).
- 1.2 The site, also referred to in this report as the study site, is located on the south-eastern edge of Markfield, Leicestershire. It comprises 6.39 ha of land, consisting of a scrub field and a narrow strip of land to the south proposed for surface water drainage. The main site area is bounded by Ratby Lane to the north-west, the rear of properties on Jacqueline Road to the north-east, and by woodland to the south-east and south-west.
- 1.3 This document has been prepared in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework, to identify and provide a description of the significance of archaeological heritage assets on the site and the likely effects of future development. This study concentrates on identifying any archaeological interest in the site to provide the archaeological heritage assessment required by local planning policy.
- 1.4 This report comprises an update to a previous Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment prepared by RPS for the site and client in June 2021. This report uses the HER data and site visit information from the 2021 report. A new HER search or site visit was not carried out as part of this report.
- 1.5 The assessment comprises an examination of evidence in the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) and online resources. Information regarding Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Listed Buildings was obtained from the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record and Historic England's National Heritage List for England. Information on Conservation Areas was sought from Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. The assessment incorporates published and unpublished material, including the results of a geophysical survey undertaken in support of the previous planning application, and charts historic land-use through review of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century map resources. A site inspection was undertaken on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- 1.6 The study provides an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site and the significance of any archaeological assets within and around the site. As a result, the study enables relevant parties to identify and assess the impact of the proposed development and identify any necessary mitigation measures.

## 2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 National legislation regarding archaeology, including scheduled monuments, is contained in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, amended by the National Heritage Act 1983 and 2002, and updated in April 2014.
- 2.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently updated in December 2024. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014 and has since been periodically updated.  
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>)
- 2.3 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

### National Planning Policy

- 2.4 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled Conserving and enhancing the historic environment provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development;
  - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
  - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
  - Recognition that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.5 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.6 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.
- 2.7 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 2.8 A *Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 2.9 *Significance (for heritage policy)* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

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

## Local Planning Policy

- 2.14 The current Local Plan 2006-2026 contains the Core Strategy DPD (adopted 2009) which identifies protection of the borough's archaeological heritage as part of 'Spatial Objective 10 Natural Environment and Cultural Assets', as well as the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (adopted 2016).
- 2.15 A new Local Plan (2020 to 2039) is under review by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council but currently does not carry weight in the planning process.
- 2.16 The policies relevant to archaeology and heritage replace the previously saved policies within the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (Policies BE12 - BE16) and are listed below.

## Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document

- 2.17 The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document was adopted in July 2016 and allocates land to deliver the development requirements outlined in the



Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy. The Development Management Policies relating to archaeology and heritage are DM11-DM13:

**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.*

2.18

In line with relevant planning policy and guidance, this desk-based assessment seeks to clarify the site's archaeological potential and the likely significance of that potential and the need or otherwise for additional mitigation measures.

### 3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

#### Geology

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS) 1:50,000 records the geology within the site as Diorite belonging to the South Charnwood Member. Superficial deposits of Diamicton of the Oadby Member overlie the solid geology across the majority of the site, other than in the north-west and south-eastern tip of the site where outcroppings of the solid geology are found.  
(<https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>)
- 3.2 The Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute identifies the soils across the majority of the study site as slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Soilscape 17), other than along the north-western boundary, which is recoded as having slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acidic but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Soilscape 18; <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales>).

#### Topography

- 3.3 The study site is located on the south-eastern edge of Markfield to the south-east of Ratby Lane.
- 3.4 The site lies within an undulating landscape on relatively high ground with a gentle south facing aspect. The ground within the study site rises from c.175m AOD along the southern boundary to c.180m AOD in the north.
- 3.5 The nearest major watercourse to the site is the River Soar, located c.11.5km to the east of the site.

#### Site Conditions

- 3.6 A site visit was undertaken on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021 for the previous Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. The weather conditions and level of visibility were good and there were no access constraints.
- 3.7 The site comprises one scrub field (Plates 1-3). The narrow strip of land required for surface water drainage outfall to the south falls within the modern woodland and outlying field to the south of the site (Plate 4).
- 3.8 The former Groby park boundary is mapped along the southern site boundary. However, no earthwork features that may have been associated with a Pale (no ditch or bank) or any other archaeological features were visible on the site.

#### Review of Geophysical Survey and LiDAR data

- 3.9 A geophysical survey, carried out by Stratascan (January 2015) in support of a previous planning application for the site, identified anomalies relating to a former field boundary and a strong magnetic response likely to relate to the geology of the site. Although it cannot be totally ruled out that these strong responses could be obscuring weaker archaeological features, the identification of the former field boundary does give some confidence that significant archaeology would be visible in the data. The remaining features are modern in origin and relate to areas of scattered magnetic debris, areas of magnetic disturbance caused by nearby ferrous metal objects such as fences, and magnetic spikes that are likely to be modern rubbish.
- 3.10 A review of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data was conducted, using the Open Survey Data 1m spatial resolution dataset for the site (Figure 5).

- 3.11 The data shows a series of north-east to south-west aligned linear features in the centre of the site. The most pronounced corresponds with the former internal field boundary located on the site, visible on the 1884 OS map (Figure 6) and identified in the geophysical survey. The associated linears are likely to represent former drainage routes or the remains of ploughing regimes.
- 3.12 The raised areas shown in the south-west of the site correspond with a spoil heap visible on the 2018 GoogleEarth image (Figure 8).
- 3.13 No features of significant archaeological interest are discernible within the site on the LiDAR data.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND WITH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Timescales used in this report

#### Prehistoric

Palaeolithic	900,000	-	12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000	-	4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000	-	1,800 BC
Bronze Age	1,800	-	600 BC
Iron Age	600	-	AD 43

#### Historic

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

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter reviews the available archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological/historical background of the general area, and, in accordance with NPPF, considers the potential for any as yet to be discovered archaeological evidence on the study site.
- 4.2 What follows comprises a review of known archaeological assets within a 1km radius of the study site (Figs. 2 and 3), also referred to as the search area, held on the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER), together with a historic map regression exercise charting the development of the study area from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards until the present day.
- 4.3 Chapter 5 subsequently considers the site conditions and whether the proposed development will impact the theoretical archaeological potential identified below.

### Designated Heritage Assets

- 4.4 Data obtained from Historic England and the Local Planning Authority confirms that there are no designated heritage assets within the study site (Figure 2).
- 4.5 There are six listed buildings within the search area including two Grade II\* listed buildings- the Stables and Kennels to Bradgate House (c.800m to the east of the study site) and the Church of St Michael (c.1km north-west of the study site). The remaining Listed Buildings are Grade II listed. None of the Listed Buildings are intervisible with the study site (Plates 1, 2 and 3) and are not considered sensitive to development within the study site.
- 4.6 The Markfield Conservation Area is focused on the historic core of Markfield, c.800m to the north-west of the study site (Figure 2). Development within the study site will have no impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area as it is screened by extant development and the land form (Plate 2).

- 4.7 There are no other designated heritage assets within the search area.

## **Non-designated Heritage Assets**

- 4.8 The data provided by the HER contains no non-designated heritage assets within the main body of the study site. The former Post-Medieval Deer Park (Groby Park MLE2779) is located adjacent to the southern boundary of the main body of the study site and within the proposed surface drainage route.
- 4.9 A gazetteer of HER records is included in Appendix 1. Their locations are shown on Figure 4.

## **Previous Archaeological Work**

- 4.10 A full detailed geophysical survey of the study site has been conducted in support of the previous application (Stratascan 2015; ELE9335). The survey identified a former field boundary as the only feature of archaeological origin.
- 4.11 The geophysical survey was commissioned alongside a desk-based assessment of the site (CgMs 2015; ELE9336) which concluded the site had a low/negligible potential for significant archaeological remains of all periods.
- 4.12 The data obtained from the HER includes 19 'event' records within the search area (Figure 3) including the DBA and geophysics undertaken on the site.
- 4.13 The only other archaeological evaluations recorded in the search area comprise a geophysical survey (ELE7279) and trial trench evaluation (ELE8439) undertaken at Grange Farm c.500m to the west of the study site. Neither of the investigations identified any significant archaeology.
- 4.14 The remaining events refer to desk-based assessments, building surveys and LiDAR analysis which add little to assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.
- 4.15 The previous archaeological investigations are recorded within the gazetteer of HER records included in Appendix 1 and shown on Figure 3.

## **Prehistoric / Roman**

- 4.16 There are no HER records of Prehistoric or Roman date within the study site and no anomalies indicative of Prehistoric or Roman features were identified by the geophysical survey on the site.
- 4.17 There are no records of any finds or features dating from the early to mid-Prehistoric period within the search area.
- 4.18 A single quern stone of possible Iron Age or Roman date was found c.900m to the north-east of the study site (MLE6546).
- 4.19 A Roman quarry (MLE8338) is recorded c.280m to the south of the development area of the study site. The Roman quarry site utilised a natural outcrop of slate (Ramsey 2007). However, slate does not outcrop within the study site and it is highly unlikely that any further evidence of Roman quarries would be present on the site.
- 4.20 Based on the results of the geophysics and the lack of evidence for Prehistoric and limited Roman evidence in the surrounding area, this assessment considers there to be a low/negligible potential for significant archaeological evidence dating from these periods within the site.

## **Saxon/Early Medieval/Medieval**

- 4.21 The HER contains no records of Saxon or Medieval activity on the site.



- 4.22 The Saxon and Medieval historic settlement core of Markfield (MLE5940) is located c.740m north-west of the site, focused around St Michael's church with a narrow band mapped along Main Street towards the north. The settlement is recorded as *Merchenefeld* in Domesday Book (1086), roughly translating to *the open country of the Mercians*. The most likely explanation of this name is that at the time of early Anglo-Saxon settlement this was a stretch of open land which formed a boundary between the Middle Angles and the Mercians (Bourne 2003).
- 4.23 The findspot of a Saxon pendant (MLE25339) depicting Thor's hammer is recorded on the Portable Antiquities Data, south of Markfield. The precise location of the findspot is unknown.
- 4.24 A Medieval slate quarry (MLE9513) is shown on a 1757 Estate map, c.200m south of the study site. It is recorded that slate from here was used in the construction of Kirby Muxloe Castle. Based upon the LiDAR data (Figure 5) the extent of the Medieval quarry appears to lie beyond the site and proposed drainage route, to the south.
- 4.25 A former Medieval Deer Park (Groby Park MLE2754) is first recorded in the 13th century and was located c.450m to the south of the study site. The park expanded over its lifespan before being disparked in 1622 (MLE2754; see para 4.30), Squires and Humphrey 1986). It is not entirely clear how long it took the park to reach its final size and the HER suggests that the given boundary is based upon field patterns rather than any definitive plan.
- 4.26 An earthwork bank and internal ditch (MLE2785), representing the boundary bank to the early Medieval/Post-Medieval Lawn Wood is also recorded c.270m north-east of the site. There is no indication that the earthwork extends into the site, or that the site formed part of Lawn Wood.
- 4.27 The parish boundary (MLE22303), a significant earthwork ditch and bank, between Newton Linford and Groby is located c.630m north-east of the site.
- 4.28 Based on the geophysics and archaeological data, it would appear likely that the site was located within the agricultural hinterland of the Saxon/Medieval settlement of Markfield. The potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) Saxon & Medieval remains is therefore, considered to be low/negligible.

## Post Medieval & Modern (including map regression exercise)

- 4.29 The HER contains a record of a former Post-Medieval Deer Park (Groby Park MLE2779) immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of the study site and within the proposed surface drainage route. The putative park boundary is located along the base of a slope running from the north of the field to the southern boundary. Topographical features were often used when defining park boundaries and therefore the location shown by the HER along the southern boundary of the study site would seem a likely position, assuming that the park did extend this far. However, no evidence of the former park was identified on the geophysical survey and no extant earthworks associated with the putative park boundary were visible on site during the site visit (15<sup>th</sup> April 2021).
- 4.30 The remaining Post-Medieval records relate to buildings/monuments, transport routes or quarry sites of a well-defined extent and nature that generally add little to the understanding of the study site's archaeological potential and are therefore not discussed in any further detail.

### *Historic map regression*

- 4.31 Although Markfield is depicted on Robert Morden's Map of Leicestershire in 1695 and John Prior's Maps of Leicestershire dated to 1777 and 1787 (maps not reproduced), the detail is not sufficient to identify the specifics about the location and land use of Groby Park or the study site.
- 4.32 The first map to show the site in any detail is the 1847 tithe map of the Parish of Markfield (not reproduced) which is exactly as shown on the First Edition 1884 OS map (Figure 6). The maps show the site divided into two fields, with the drainage route to the south crossing two additional fields.

The internal field boundary was the only archaeological feature to be detected by the geophysical survey and is also visible on the LiDAR data. The south-eastern field of the site is listed on the 1847 map as pasture and the south-western field as arable.

- 4.33 The 1884 OS map also shows a small pond, or marl pit in the south-west corner of the site (Figure 6). To the north of the study site are two fields with a further two fields to the east. The easternmost field of the group of six fields is depicted as having a northwest to southeast aligned avenue of trees which aligned with a track located within the Bradgate House grounds.
- 4.34 Between the 1950's and 60's residential development was constructed on the two fields to the north of the study site, whilst the fields to the east of the study site were planted with woodland (Figure 7). However, no changes are recorded to have occurred on the site.
- 4.35 Between 1968 and 1980 (map not reproduced), the internal field boundary was removed. The pond/marl pit was also removed by c.1985, resulting in the site's current layout. No further changes are depicted on the site on the historic mapping.
- 4.36 A satellite image of the site from 1999 (Google Earth; not reproduced) shows the adjacent eastern fields to be planted with trees in strict northeast to northwest lines, suggesting that the trees had been planted using a deep plough. The site visit revealed that this wood is now dense and obscures any views of land to the east.
- 4.37 Between 2000 and 2006 woodland to the south of the site was also planted and in c.2018 (Figure 8) the south-west corner of the site was used for spoil, which is also depicted on the LiDAR data (Figures 8 and 5).
- 4.38 The map review demonstrates the study site has remained as agricultural land through the Post-Medieval/Modern period and its potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) Post Medieval/Modern archaeology is considered to be negligible.

## Assessment of Significance (Designated and Non-Designated Assets)

- 4.39 There are no designated heritage assets on the study site. None of the designated heritage assets within the search area are intervisible with the study site as they are screened by landform, residential development and mature forestry.
- 4.40 The potential tree avenue depicted on the first edition OS map would have created a view from Bradgate House towards the study site. The avenue ends at its western point at a slight hillock to the east of the study site. It appears as though the avenue utilised this high point to mark the limit of its reach and view from Bradgate House. Any views from Bradgate House or Stables of the study site would have been obscured by this hillock which is now planted with mature woodland (Plate 1).
- 4.41 Later mapping shows that the avenue had been removed by the early 1900's and subsumed within a late 20th century forestry plantation. This plantation has removed the significance the avenue would have given to Bradgate House.
- 4.42 The HER records that the southern boundary of the study site forms the northern extent of the Post-Medieval deer park of Groby Park. A site visit revealed that no upstanding remains of the park pale survive within the study site. The geophysical survey of the site did not identify any features potentially relating to the park boundary and it would seem likely that, should any formal boundary ever had existed, it lies beyond the limits of the study site.
- 4.43 Based on the geophysical survey of the site, the archaeological data and LiDAR for the site and the surrounding area, the site is considered to have a low/negligible potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) remains of all periods.



## 5 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS

### Proposed Development

- 5.1 This report has been prepared to support an outline planning application with all matters except access reserved, for the erection of up to 135 dwellings, amenity space, areas for outdoor play, landscaping and all associated infrastructure.
- 5.2 A concept masterplan has been supplied by the client (drawing no. CSA/2550/118).

### Review of Potential Development Impacts on Non-Designated Assets

- 5.3 The HER records that the southern boundary of the study site forms the northern extent of the Post-Medieval deer park of Groby Park. A site visit revealed that no upstanding remains of the park pale survive within the study site. The geophysical survey of the site did not identify any features potentially relating to the park boundary and it would seem likely that, should any formal boundary ever have existed, it lies beyond the limits of the study site. Consequently, development within the study site will not impact upon the significance of this asset.
- 5.4 Based on the geophysical survey, archaeological data and LiDAR for the site and the surrounding area, the site is considered to have a low/negligible potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) remains of all periods. If any remains were present they are likely to be of local interest and would be significant for their archaeological interest and potential to contribute to relevant research agendas. The constructional techniques employed in modern development are such that any buried archaeological remains now present on the study site will not survive the development process.
- 5.5 A pre-application enquiry was submitted by the client (23/10154/PREMAJ – dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023). The Senior Planning Archaeologist's consultee response noted that although the available evidence indicates a low potential for archaeological remains, the topography enhances the potential for Prehistoric remains within the site. Therefore, a programme of archaeological mitigation (*'including an initial phase of exploratory trial trenching, followed, as necessary by intrusive and non-intrusive investigation and recording'*) should be conditioned to the planning consent.

## 6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared by RPS for Taylor Wimpey UK Limited to support an outline planning application with all matters except access reserved, for the erection of up to 135 dwellings, amenity space, areas for outdoor play, landscaping and all associated infrastructure. It considers 6.39 ha of land, currently covered by scrub, located at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire (centred at NGR SK 4976 0949).
- 6.2 The assessment provides a description of heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development of the site and addresses the information requirements of Government's National Planning Policy Framework in relation to heritage.
- 6.3 The archaeological potential of the development site and the significance of archaeological assets within the site has been assessed through desk-based review of existing archaeological information, including previous archaeological work undertaken in the vicinity of the study site.
- 6.4 There are no designated heritage assets within the proposed development site. There are no designated heritage assets assessed as sensitive to development outside of the site.
- 6.5 The southern boundary of the study site forms the northern extent of the Post-Medieval deer park of Groby Park. The site visit revealed that no upstanding remains of the park pale survive within the study site. Geophysical survey of the site did not identify any features potentially relating to the park boundary and it would seem likely that, should any formal boundary ever had existed, it lies beyond the limits of the study site.
- 6.6 Geophysical survey of the site undertaken in support of the previous planning application did not identify any anomalies indicative of significant archaeological features.
- 6.7 Based on the geophysical survey results, archaeological data including LiDAR for the site and the surrounding area, the site is considered to have a low/negligible potential for significant (i.e. non-agricultural) remains of all periods.
- 6.8 There are no archaeological or heritage constraints to the proposed development. The Senior Planning Archaeologist's consultee response to the pre-application enquiry submitted by the client (23/10154/PREMAJ – dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023), recommended a programme of archaeological mitigation conditioned to the planning consent, including an initial phase of trial trenching, followed, as necessary by intrusive and non- intrusive investigation and recording.

## Sources Consulted

### General

Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record

Google Earth

LiDAR

### Internet

British Geological Survey – <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

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

Domesday Online – <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/>

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

Soilscape – <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>

The Genealogist – <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>

### Bibliographic

Bourne, Jill 2003 *Understanding Leicestershire & Rutland Place Names*, p.62-63

CgMs 2015 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment Land south of Jacqueline Road, Markfield*

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

Department of Communities and Local Government *National Planning Policy Framework* 2012 (revised February 2019)

Historic England (formerly English Heritage) *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* 2008 (new draft 2017)

Historic England *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* July 2015 unpublished document

Historic England *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets* December 2017 unpublished document

Ramsey, D. 2007. *Early slate quarries of north-west Leicestershire*. P4-6

Squires, A.E., and Humphrey, W., 1986. *The Medieval Parks of Charnwood Forest*. Sycamore Press.

Stratascan 2015 *Geophysical Survey Report Markfield, Leicestershire* (J7860)

Welding, J.D., 1984. *Leicestershire in 1777: an edition of John Prior's Map of Leicestershire* with an Introduction and commentary by members of the Leicestershire Industrial History Society. Leicester: Leicestershire Libraries and Information Service.

Youngs, F.A., 1979. *Guide to the Local Administrative Units of England Volume I: Southern England*. London: Royal Historical Society.

### Cartographic

1695 Robert Morden's Map of Leicestershire

1777 John Prior's map of Leicestershire

1787 John Prior's map of Leicestershire

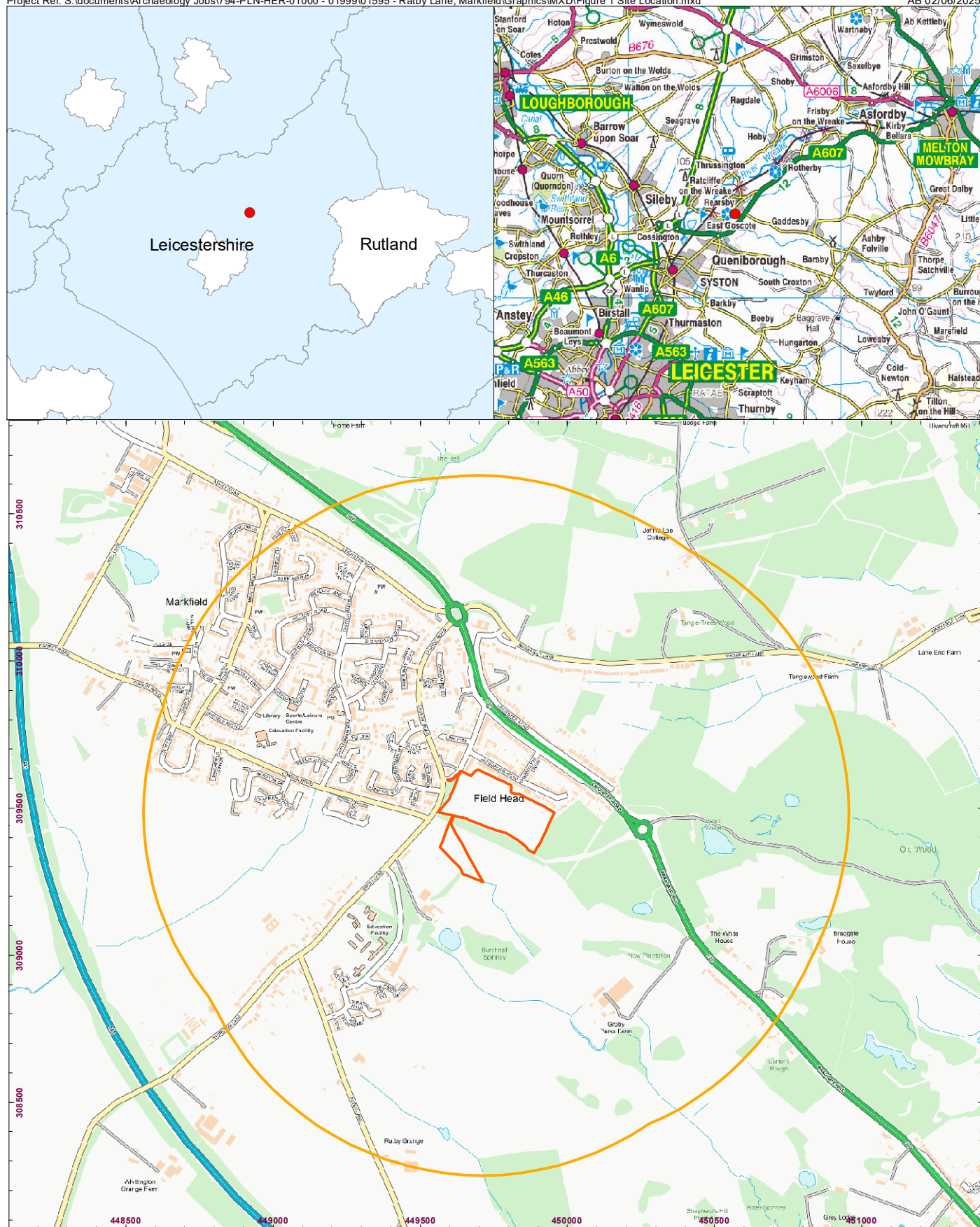
1849 Tithe map of the parish of Markfield (Leicestershire Record office (Ti216/1)



Ordnance Survey 1:2500 editions: 1884, 1903, 1929, 1959, 1967, 1972, and 1982

Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 / 1:10,560 editions: 1888-9, 1903-4, 1930, 1955, 1964-8, 1973-80, and 1985-93

Google Earth Imagery            1999, 2000, 2006, 2010, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020

FIGURES



-  Site Boundary
-  1km Search Area



0 150 300m  
Scale at A4: 1:18,000

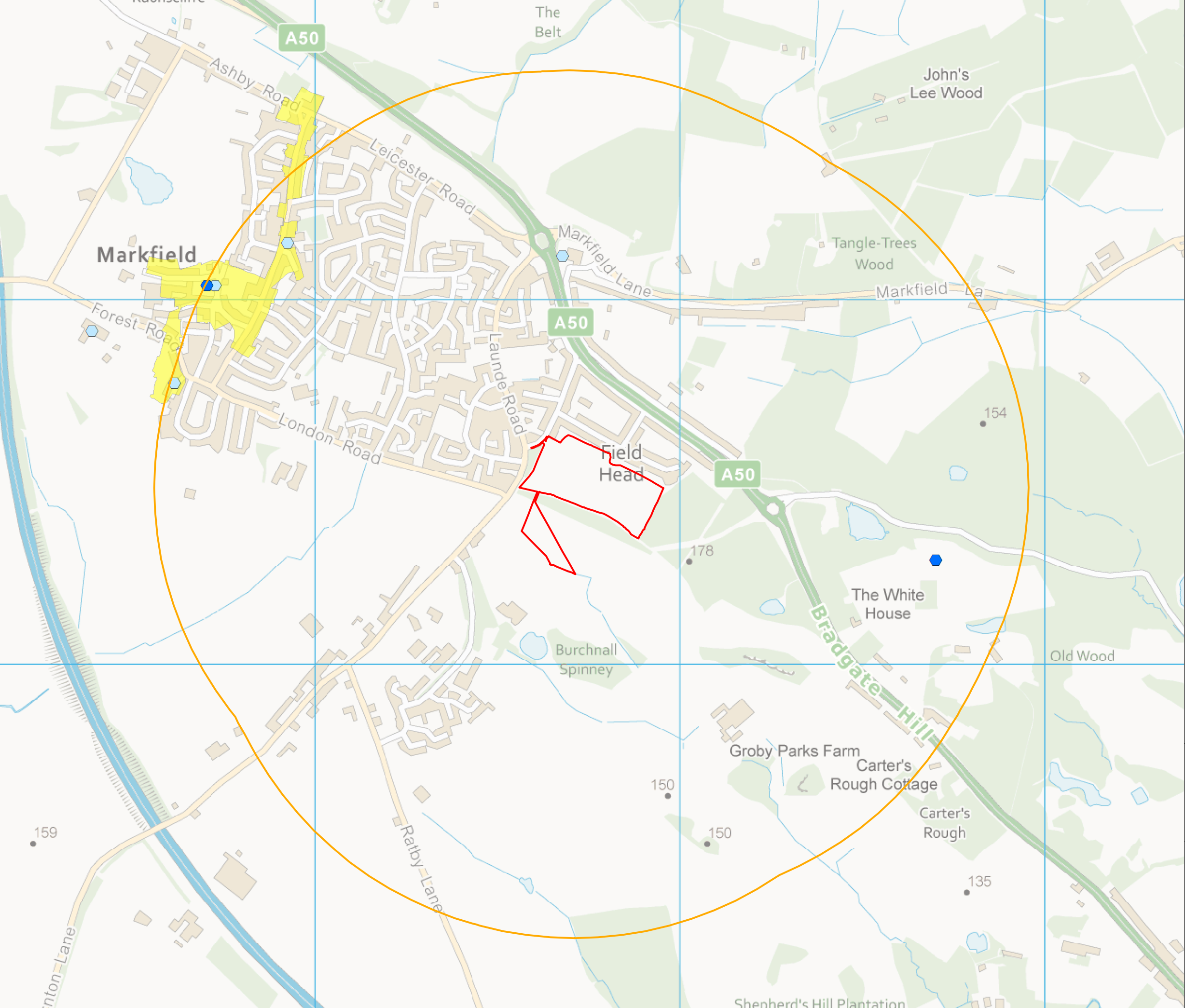
**rps** MAKING COMPLEX EASY

Figure 1  
Site Location

Illustrative Purposes Only



Project Ref: S:\documents\Archaeology\_Jobs\794-PLN-HER-01000 - 01999\01595 - Ratby Lane, Markfield\Graphics\MXD\Figure 2 Des Ass.mxd



Site Boundary

Search Area

Listed Buildings

Grade

I

II\*

II

Markfield Conservation Area

Illustrative Purposes Only

N

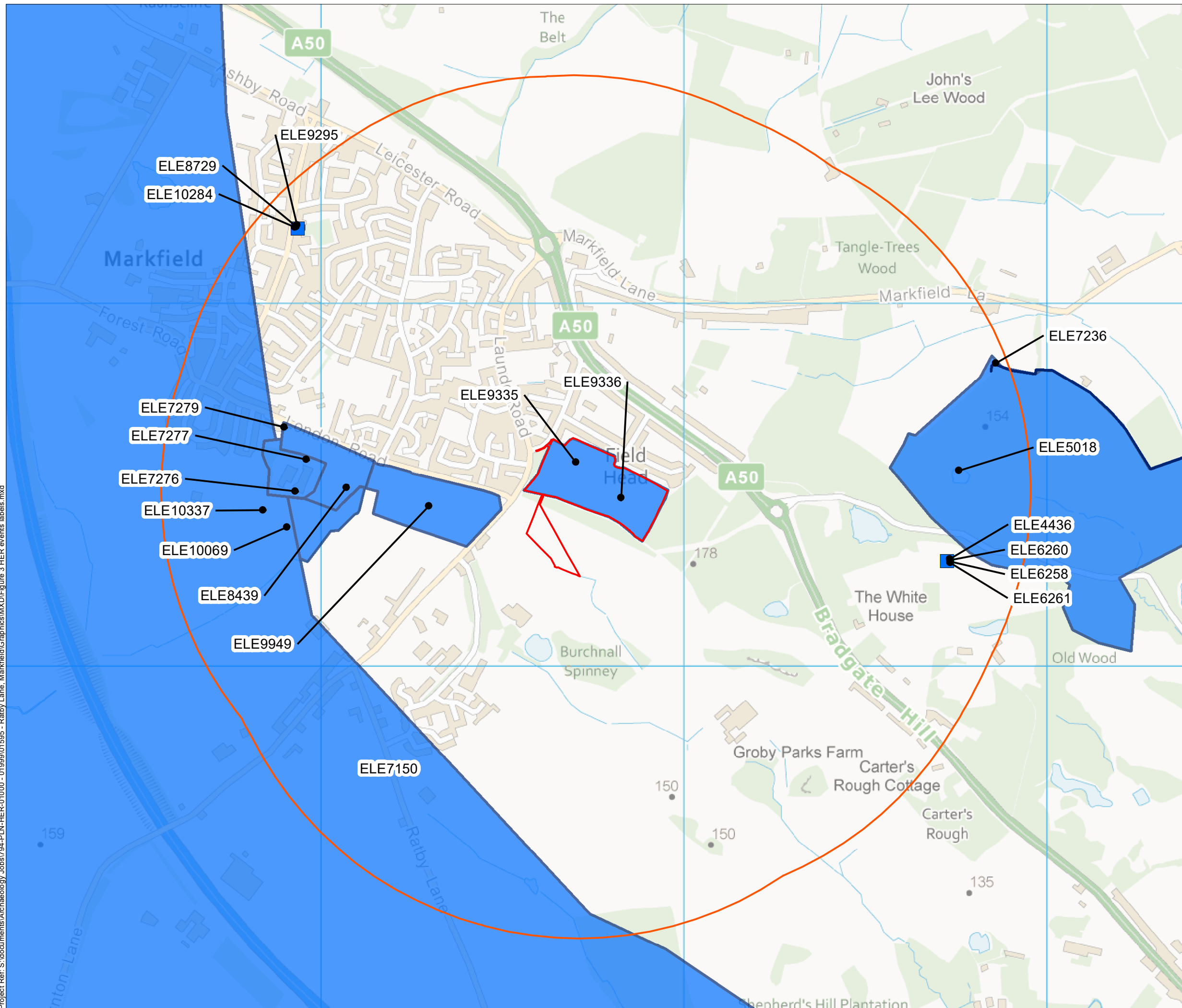
0 125 250m

Scale at A3: 1:10,000



Figure 2  
Designated Heritage Assets

Project Ref: S:\documents\Archaeology\_Jobs\794-PLN-HER-01000 - 01999\01595 - Ratby Lane, Markfield\Graphics\MXD\Figure 3 HER events labels.mxd



-  Site Boundary
-  Search Area
-  HER Events Data

Illustrative Purposes Only

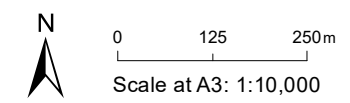
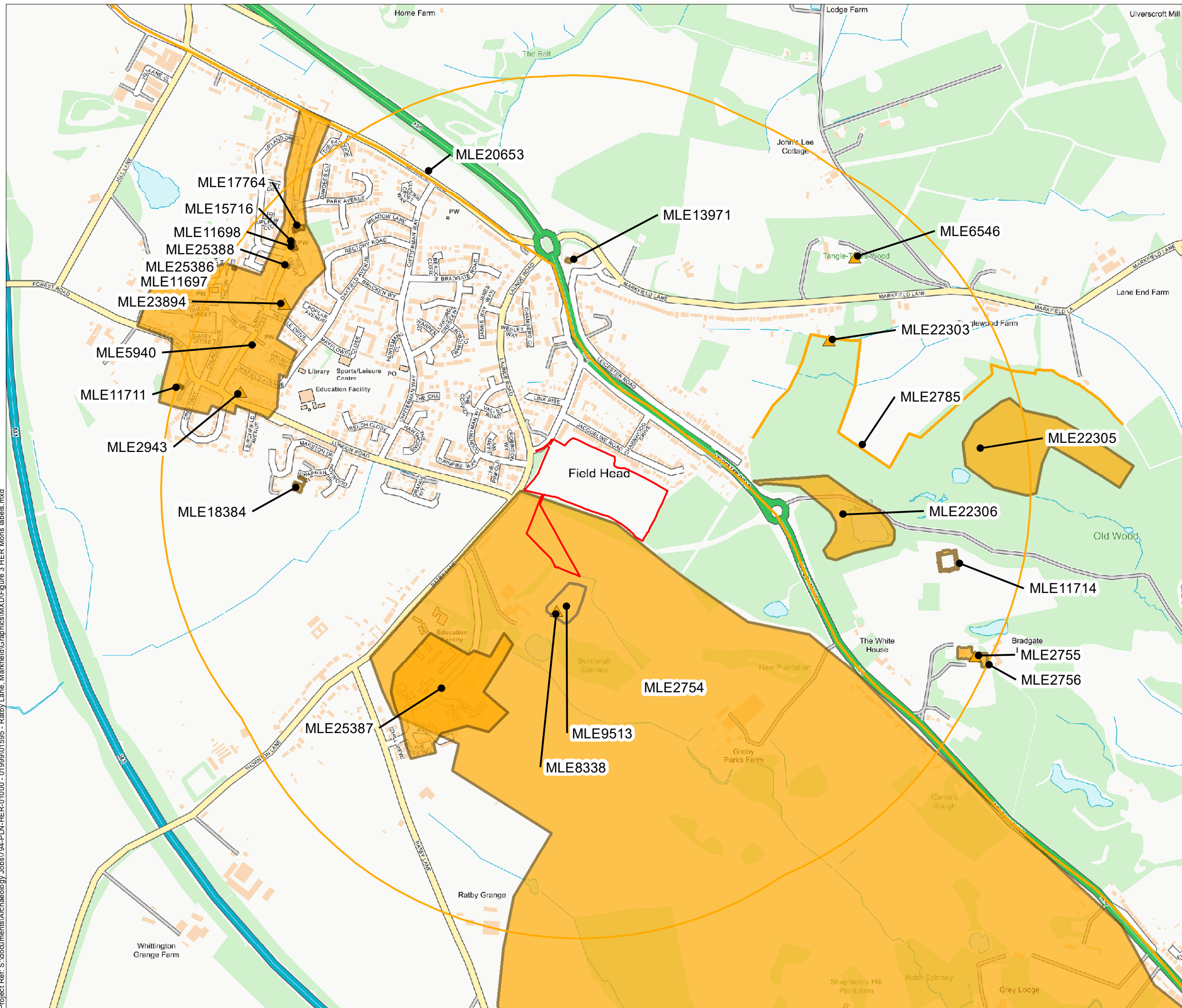


Figure 3  
HER Data Events



Project Ref: S:\documents\Archaeology\_Jobs\794-PLN-HER-01000 - 01999\01595 - Ratby Lane, Markfield\Graphics\MXD\Figure 3 HER Mons labels.mxd



- Site Boundary
- 1km Search Area
- HER Monuments

Illustrative Purposes Only

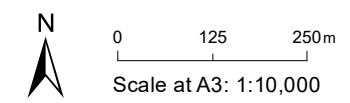
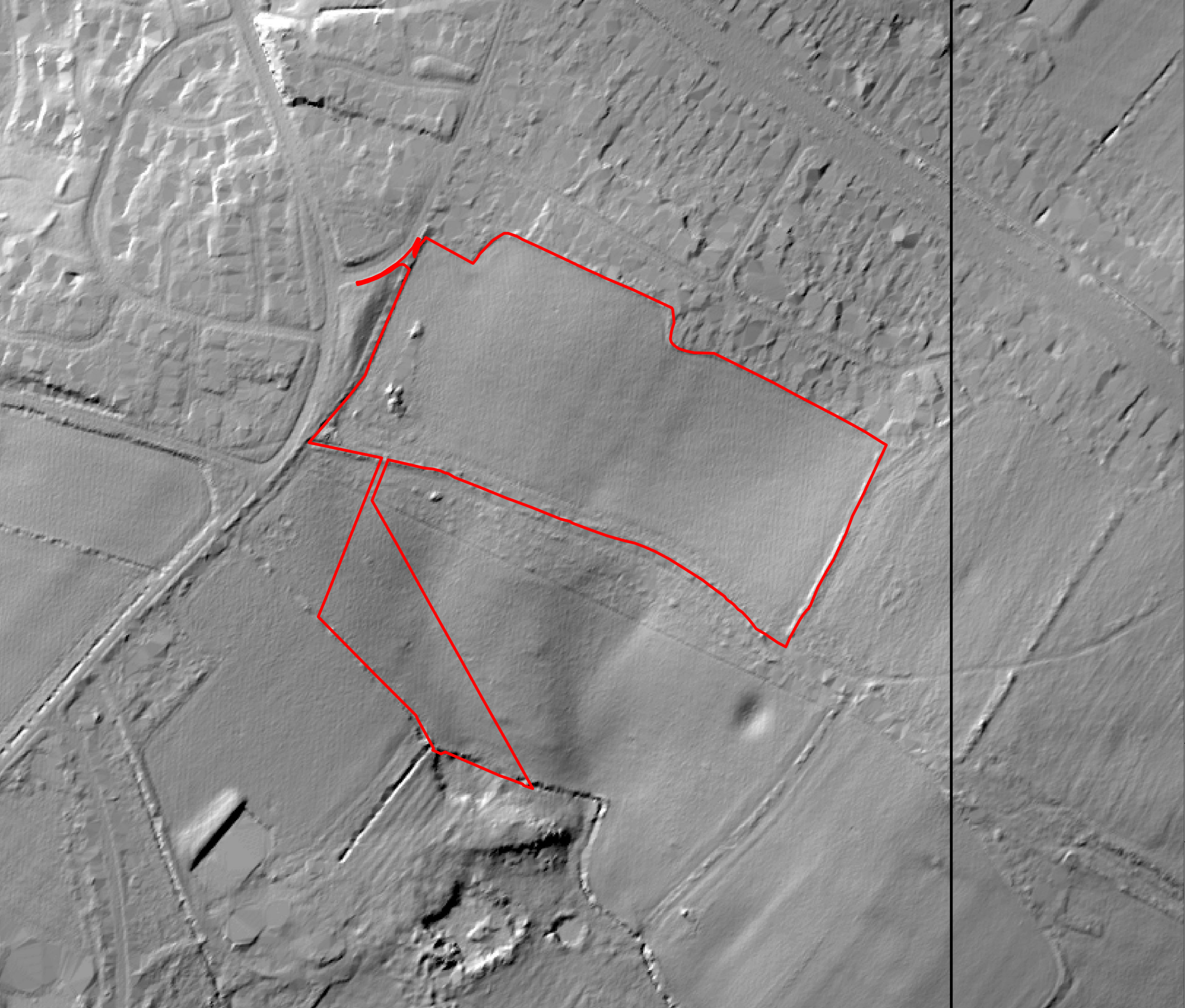


Figure 4  
HER Data Monuments



Project Ref: S:\documents\Archaeology\_Jobs\794-PLN-HER-01000 - 01999\01595 - Ratby Lane, Markfield\Graphics\MXD\LIDAR.mxd



 Site Boundary

Illustrative Purposes Only

**LiDAR DATA**

Source:  
Environment Agency

Data Type: DTM

Resolution: 1m

Date Captured:  
2019

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

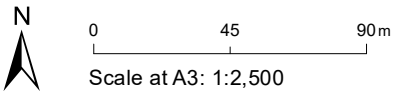
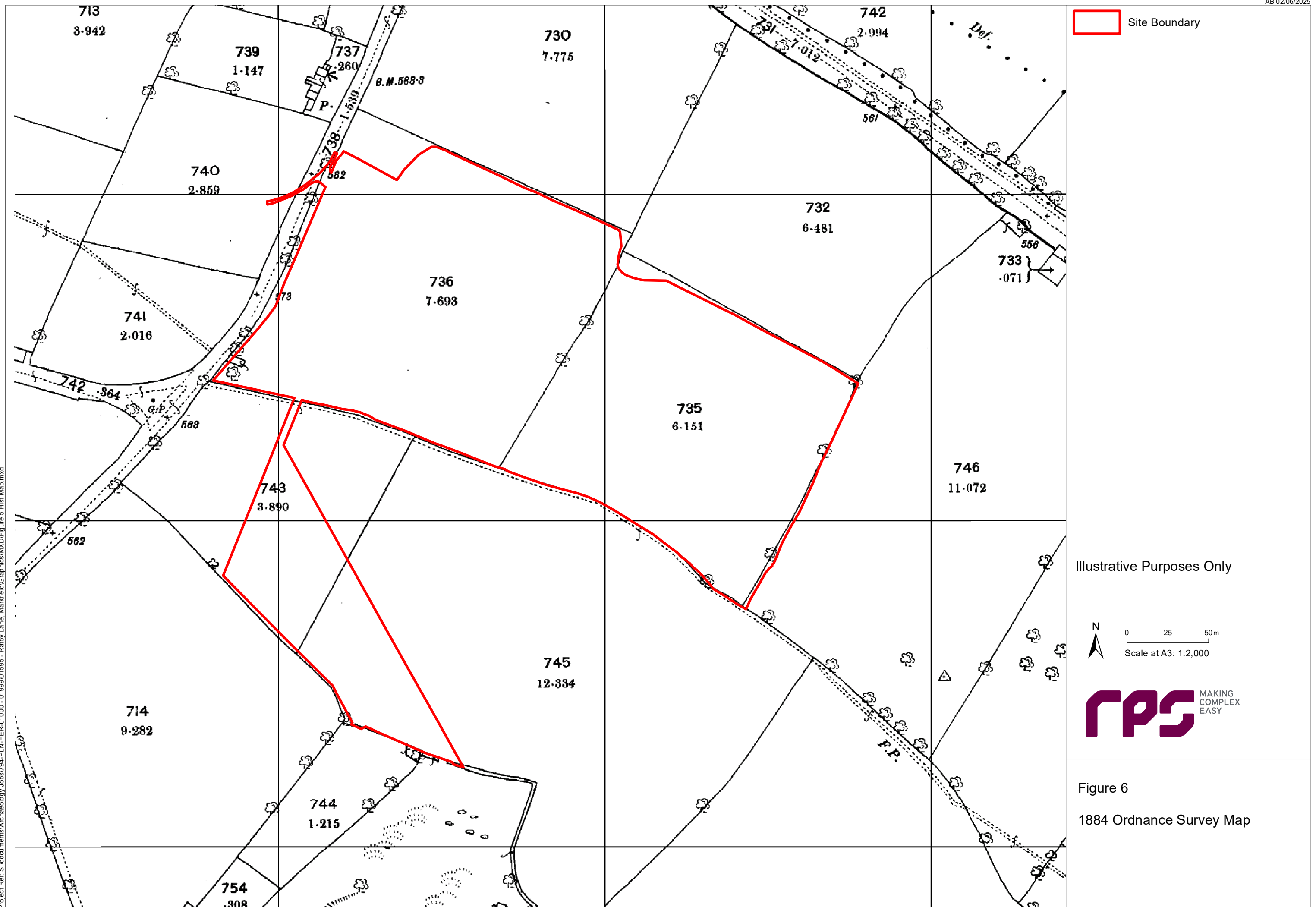
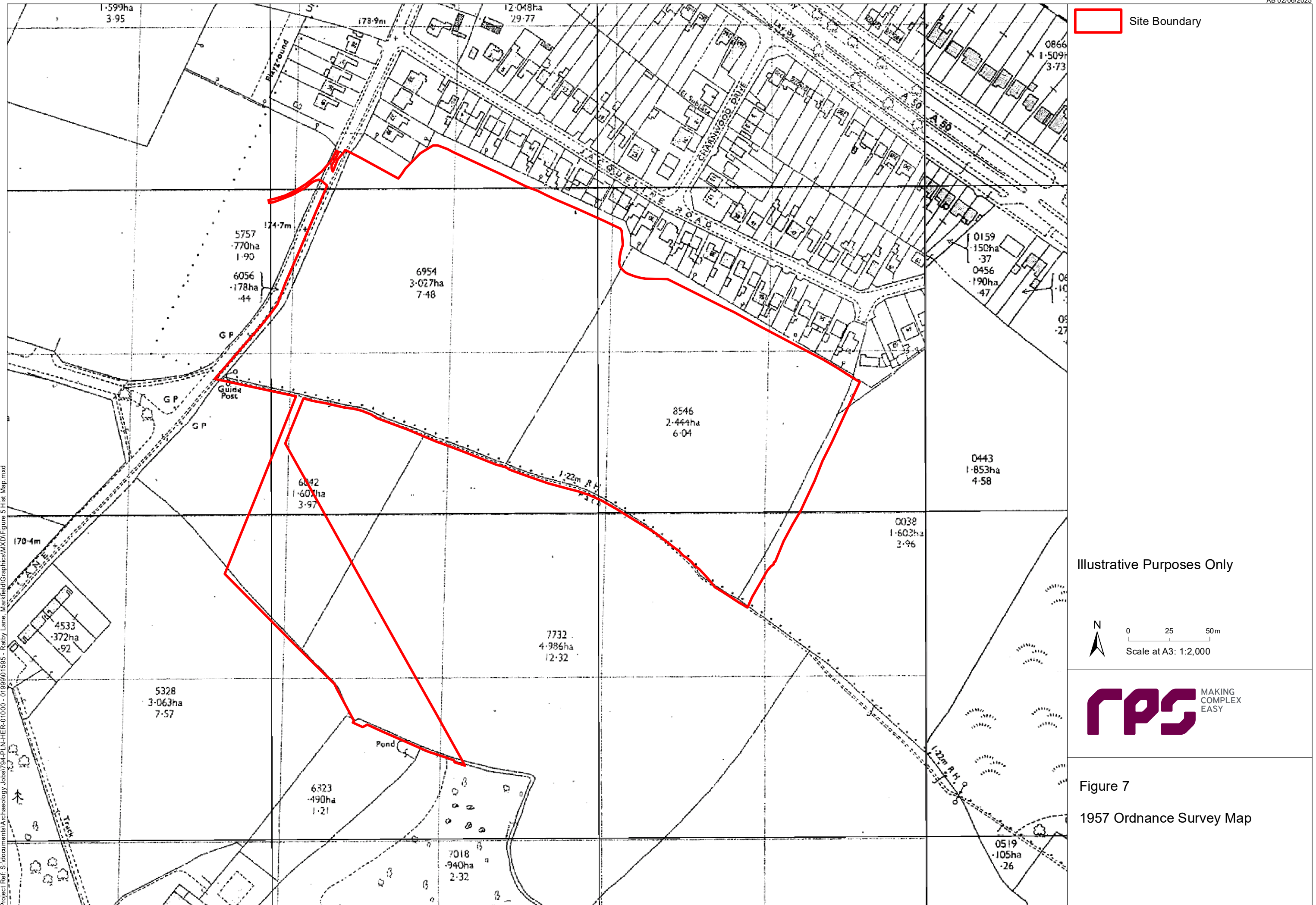


Figure 5

LiDAR Data











Site Boundary

Illustrative Purposes Only



0 25 50 m  
Scale at A3: 1:2,000



Figure 8  
2018 Google Earth Image





**PLATES**



Plate 1: View east across the site from the western boundary



Plate 2: View north-west across the site from the south-eastern corner of the site





Plate 3: View north-east across the site from the south-western boundary



Plate 4: View east across the field to the south of the location of the proposed surface drainage route



## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

### Gazetteer of HER Entries

*Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record*

HER No.	Name	Location	Date
	Monuments		
MLE2754	Early extent of Groby Park	SK 50 08	Early Medieval to Late Medieval
MLE2755	Stewards Hay	SK 508 090	Late Medieval to Late Post-medieval
MLE2756	Bradgate House	SK 507 090	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE2779	Later extent of Groby Park	SK 50 08	Early Post-medieval
MLE2785	Wood bank at Lawn Wood, north edge	SK 506 097	Early Medieval to Early Post-medieval
MLE2943	Fishponds north-west of Allotment Gardens	SK 487 097	Early Medieval to Late Post-medieval
MLE5940	Historic settlement core of Markfield	SK 487 101	Late Anglo Saxon to Late Post-medieval
MLE6546	Iron Age/Roman quern stone, Tangletrees Farm	SK 50 10	Late Iron Age to Early Roman
MLE8338	Roman slate quarry north-east of Groby Upper Parks Farm	SK 496 091	Roman
MLE9513	Medieval slate quarry north-east of Upper Parks Farm, Groby	SK 496 091	Late Medieval
MLE11697	GATES ON EAST SIDE OF CHURCHYARD OF ST. MICHAEL, THE GREEN (EAST SIDE), MARKFIELD	SK 487 100	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE11698	THE OLD RECTORY, THE NOOK, MARKFIELD	SK 489 101	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE11711	STEPPING STONE FARMHOUSE, FOREST ROAD (OFF), MARKFIELD	SK 486 097	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE11714	STABLES AND KENNELS TO BRADGATE HOUSE, BRADGATE HILL (NORTH-EAST SIDE), GROBY	SK 507 092	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE13971	FIELD HEAD FARMHOUSE, MARKFIELD LANE (N.) FIELD HEAD	SK 496 101	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE15716	Congregational Church, 112, Main Street	SK 489 101	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE17764	Memorial and Miners Welfare Institute, 128, Main Street	SK 489 102	Modern
MLE18384	Lower Grange Farm, London Road	SK 489 095	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE20653	Turnpike Road, Leicester to Ashby-de-la-Zouch	SK 470 111	Late Post-medieval
MLE22303	Parish boundary south of Markfield Lane	SK 503 099	Early Medieval to Modern
MLE22305	Possible old quarries, Lawn Wood	SK 5100 0960	Post-medieval
MLE22306	C20th quarrying, Lawn Wood	SK 5038 0941	Modern
MLE23894	Site of a cruck barn, Markfield	SK 489 100	Post-medieval
MLE25386	Former Methodist Chapel, 58, The Green	SK 4876 1010	Late Post-medieval to Modern
MLE25387	County Sanatorium and Isolation Hospital, Ratby Lane, Markfield	SK 4936 0891	Modern
MLE25388	Congregational Church Hall, 104, Main Street	SK 4890 1010	Late Post-medieval to Modern

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT: RATBY LANE, MARKFIELD, LEICESTERSHIRE

	Events		
ELE4436	2006 building survey, Bradgate Stables, Groby	SK 50725 09292	
ELE5018	1995 desk-based assessment for quarry extensions at Groby Quarry and at Bradgate-Lawnwood Quarry in the parish of Groby, Leicestershire	SK 51019 09560	
ELE6258	1991/2 historic buildings survey, Bradgate House stables, Bradgate Park, Groby, Leicestershire	SK 5072 0929	
ELE6260	1995 feasibility study into the re-use of Bradgate stables	SK 5072 0929	
ELE6261	1996 Bradgate Stables Feasibility Study	SK 5072 0929	
ELE7150	2007 LIDAR analysis, M1 Junction 21-30 widening	SK 4855 1517	
ELE7236	2009 earthwork survey of a bank adjacent to the north-east edge of Lawn Wood, Newton Linford	SK 509 098	
ELE7276	2010 historic building assessment of buildings at Lower Grange Farm, Markfield	SK 489 094	
ELE7277	2010 desk-based assessment for land at Lower Grange Farm, London Road, Markfield	SK 489 095	
ELE7279	2010 geophysical survey, land adjacent to Lower Grange Farm, Markfield	SK 490 095	
ELE8439	2011 trial trenching at Lower Grange Farm, Markfield	SK 490 095	
ELE8729	2013 building recording of Markfield Memorial and Miners Welfare Institute	SK 4893 1020	
ELE9295	2014 Heritage Statement, Markfield Memorial & Miners Welfare Institute, 128, Main Street, Markfield	SK 4893 1020	
ELE9335	2015 geophysical survey, Markfield	SK 4975 0948	
ELE9336	2015 desk-based assessment, land east of Ratby Lane, Markfield	SK 4975 0948	
ELE9949	2015 desk-based assessment for land at London Road, Markfield, Leicestershire	SK 4931 0945	
ELE10069	2016 desk-based assessment for land south of London Road, Markfield, Leicestershire	SK 4890 0940	
ELE10284	2017 building survey, The Memorial and Miner's Welfare Institute, 128, Main Street, Markfield	SK 4893 1020	
ELE10337	2017 geophysical survey, land off London Road, Markfield, Leicestershire	SK 4890 0940	



[rpsgroup.com](http://rpsgroup.com)