

P23-061



HORIBA MIRA WORKSHOP EXTENSION

Archaeological Risk Appraisal

for HORIBA MIRA Ltd

09/03/2023

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March 2023

Ver 2.0

PROJECT INFORMATION:

HA JOB NO.	P23-061
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PARISH	Higham on the Hill
COUNCIL	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

PROJECT TEAM:

PROJECT MANAGER, AUTHOR & GRAPHICS	Kate Brown
APPROVED BY	Andy Towle
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RISK APPRAISAL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1. This report was commissioned by Barton Willmore on behalf of HORIBA MIRA Ltd and presents the results of an archaeological risk appraisal on a proposed extension to an existing workshop building at HORIBA MIRA Works and Proving Ground, Higham on the Hill, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire, CV10 0UA. (NGR 436204, 295389, Illus 1). The assessment has been informed by a rapid review of baseline heritage data for the site and a wider study area of 1 km buffered from the centre of the Proposed Development Area (PDA).
- 1.1.2. The historic environment comprises archaeological sites, historic buildings, gardens and designed landscapes, historic battlefields and other sites, features or places in the landscape that have the capacity to provide information about past human activity, or which have cultural relevance due to associations with folklore or historic events. Sites of cultural heritage interest may also derive some, or all, of that interest from their setting within the wider landscape.
- 1.1.3. The historic environment is a material consideration in the planning process and it is therefore prudent to review potential constraints for individual sites. Heritage risk comes in different forms and is discussed below with reference to the specific circumstances of the site and the proposed development.

1.2. SITE LOCATION

- 1.2.1. The PDA is located within the southern portion of the wider MIRA estate, on the northern side of Watling Road (Illus 1), which comprises approximately 340ha of test track facilities and a range of associated workshops and buildings relating to employment and research and development uses. The existing crash test facility workshop is bounded on both sides by existing workshop buildings and is serviced by an internal access road.
- 1.2.2. The PDA comprises an irregular area of landscaped grassland with hedgerows to the western and eastern sides. The eastern end of the PDA extends into an area of hardstanding and also includes a small area of arable farmland at the western end. The existing crash test facility workshop will be extended to the northern and western end of the buildings, predominantly constructed on greenfield area.
- 1.2.3. The PDA is flat at 86 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

1.3. GEOLOGY

- 1.3.1. The British Geological Survey¹ records the bedrock within the PDA as Mercia Mudstone Group – Mudstone, a sedimentary bedrock that formed between 252.2 and 201.3 million years ago during the Triassic period.
- 1.3.2. No superficial deposits are recorded within the PDA, however directly north and south of the PDA are recorded areas of Anker Sand and Gravel, a sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.

¹ British Geological Survey, 2023

2. LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

2.1. STATUTORY PROTECTION

2.1.1. The relevant heritage legislation in the context of the present site is described in the table below.

Table 1. Historic Environment Statutory Legislation

Legislation	Key Issues
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)	The 1990 Act is amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 to introduce additional controls for works to listed buildings. Section 1 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to compile and maintain lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The principal statutory duty under the Act is to preserve the special character of these heritage assets, including their setting. Buildings on the list are assessed and graded against the criteria of architectural and historic interest. Buildings listed at Grade I are defined as those considered to be of exceptional interest. Grade II* listed buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest, while Grade II listed buildings are of special interest.² This may include the extent to which the exterior of a building contributes to the interest of a group of buildings, i.e. 'group value'. Relevant Statutory Tests of the Act are as follows: Section 66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions. <i>(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.</i> <i>(2) Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provisions of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal Act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.</i> Section 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions. <i>(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.</i>
Treasure Act (1996)	The 1996 Act defines 'Treasure' as any object that is at least 10% gold or silver, associated with coins or groups of coins which are over 300 years old, objects formerly classed as 'treasure trove' (i.e. deliberately deposited items with a high content of gold or silver) and any objects found in association with the above. Any find of 'Treasure' must be reported to the local Coroner.

² <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>

Legislation	Key Issues
Burial Act (1857)	Under Section 25 of the 1857 Act, it is generally a criminal offence to remove human remains from any place of burial without an appropriate licence issued by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), although recent legislative changes indicate that some cases are exempt from this requirement.
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953) National Heritage Act (1980, amended 1983 & 1997)	The 1983 Act created the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission (HBMC) – now Historic England, a non-departmental public body, given the broad remit of managing the historic built environment of England. The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 authorises Historic England to compile a register of “gardens and other land” situated in England that appear to be of special historic interest.

2.2. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021³) confirms that the historic environment, including archaeological remains, constitutes a material consideration in planning decisions, requiring applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets potentially affected by the development, including any contribution made by their setting.

- 2.2.2. Heritage and conservation forms one of the core planning principles of NPPF:

(189) “[Planning should conserve heritage assets] in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for this and future generations.”

- 2.2.3. This report contributes to meeting the following Policies on the historic environment contained in the document (paragraph numbers in bold text)⁴.

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

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

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1004408/NPPF_JULY_2021.pdf It is noted that there is proposed reforms to the NPPF which is expected be updated in spring 2023, however it is understood there are no planned updates for Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

4 Government guidance on the application of the policies contained within the NPPF is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

(footnote 68) [Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.]

(202) Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

(203) The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

(206) Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

2.3. NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG)

- 2.3.1. In March 2014, the Government published the NPPG. This guidance is intended to sit alongside and provide clarity to NPPF policy. The NPPG provides guidance on a range of topics including Heritage.
- 2.3.2. The NPPG provides additional guidance on conserving and, where appropriate, enhancing the historic environment further to the framework set out in the NPPF. It clarifies what is meant by ‘significance’ and ‘harm’, why it is important in decision making, and how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets.
- 2.3.3. It also defines what is meant by the ‘setting’ of a heritage asset. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/ physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which an asset is experienced in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors (paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723).
- 2.3.4. Any harm to designated heritage assets is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, as set out in the NPPF paragraph 195. The NPPG describes how public benefits could be anything that delivers economic, social, or environmental objectives as described paragraph 8 of the NPPF. 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 (paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723).
- 2.3.5. The NPPG defines non-designated heritage assets as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets (paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723).

2.4. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 2.4.1. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council’s (2020) *Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2020 – 2039: Consultation Draft Plan*⁵ contains policy HE03 Preserving the Borough’s Archaeology, which states:

‘Where an initial assessment indicates that the site on which development is proposed includes or has potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants are required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment with their application and, where applicable, the results of a field evaluation detailing the significance of any affected asset.

⁵ https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5295/site_allocations_and_development_management_policies_dpd_-_adopted_july_2016.pdf

Where applicable, justified, and feasible, the Borough Council 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 Borough Council will require full archaeological investigation and recording by an approved archaeological organisation before development commences.'

- 2.4.2. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's (2016) *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies*⁶ contains PolicyDM13 Preserving the Borough's Archaeology, which states:

'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.'

2.5. GUIDANCE

- 2.5.1. This report has been prepared with reference to the ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2014, revised 2017 and 2020⁷) and *Code of Conduct* (2014, revised 2019⁸), in addition to *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning GPA3, 2017⁹), and IEMA, IHBC and ClfA's July 2021 publication *Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK*¹⁰. This document presents the principles of and suggests good practice for assessment of the impact of a development proposal on cultural heritage assets.

⁶ https://www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5295/site_allocations_and_development_management_policies_dpd_-_adopted_july_2016.pdf

⁷ https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS%26GDBA_4.pdf

⁸ https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2019_0.pdf

⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

¹⁰ https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/j30361_iema_principlesofchia_v8.pdf

3. BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 3.1.1. This section characterises the known historic environment baseline conditions within the PDA and a surrounding 1 km study area. The location of the designated heritage assets within the study area are shown on Illus 2 (see page 12.)

3.2. DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 3.2.1. There are no designated heritage assets located within the PDA. There is a single designated asset located within the wider study area: the remains of a Medieval chapel within Lindley Park (1005075, Scheduled Monument) approximately 480 m north east of the PDA. First mentioned in the Matriculus of 1220 and dedicated to St John the Baptist, the chapel was rebuilt in 1444 and 1623. By 1793 it was described as a substantial ruin used for agricultural purposes.

3.3. NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 3.3.1. There are no non-designated heritage assets located within the PDA.
- 3.3.2. 90 m to the south west of the PDA is an area where Roman remains were found (MLE18946) during trial trenching in 2011. Evidence of Roman roadside occupation comprising pits, postholes, tiles, more than 270 sherds of pottery, a rotary quern, and a stone layer which may be the remains of a trackway were recorded.
- 3.3.3. 180 m north west of the PDA is a possible Iron Age or Roman ditch and small pit (MLE19861). A fragment of Roman pottery was recovered, although the presence of a saddle quern may suggest an earlier date.
- 3.3.4. There are 42 further non-designated assets noted in the online Leicestershire and Rutland HER and Warwickshire HER data in the wider study area, comprising:
- Prehistoric flint flakes and core;
 - Palaeolithic tools, a handaxe, and two chopper cores;
 - An Iron Age rectilinear enclosure;
 - Roman features and pottery;
 - A Roman occupation site;
 - A Deserted Medieval Village (DMV) at Lindley;
 - A Medieval hamlet,
 - A Medieval cropmark enclosure, linear features, and ridge and furrow;
 - Medieval pottery scatters and sherds;
 - A Post-Medieval marl pit;
 - Lindley Park;
 - A sub-circular enclosure;
 - A farmstead;
 - Multiple pottery sherds and clay pipe pieces;
 - A bridge;
 - An interwar period landing ground;
 - A WWII control tower, Nissen huts, aircraft hangar, and a blast shelter at former RAF Nuneaton;
 - An undated ring ditch cropmark;
 - An undated enclosure; and
 - An undated metal detecting findspot.

3.4. HISTORIC MAPPING

- 3.4.1. Historic mapping shows that the PDA has been in agricultural usage throughout the late Post-Medieval period. A historic field boundary marks the eastern end of the PDA, and this could first be observed in the late 1800s. The fields around the PDA may have formed part of Lindley Grange at this time. In the late 20th century a works was recorded adjacent to the eastern boundary of the PDA, with a sports ground, tennis courts and pavilion also shown.

3.5. PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

- 3.5.1. The wider study area has been the subject of multiple previous archaeological investigations, however this is only available as point data online. As such it has not been possible to determine if any previous work has been carried out within the PDA. These investigations in the general area comprise:

- A DBA was carried out on land at MIRA by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in 2010, however further detail of this report is not available;
- An archaeological evaluation on land at MIRA by ULAS in 2010 recorded two areas of Roman roadside occupation. Other remains included an undated stone spread, a ditch, a pit, and brick built structures connected with the airfield;
- Fieldwalking was carried out over 45 ha of land at MIRA by ULAS in 2011. No significant artefact concentrations were identified;
- An archaeological standing building survey (Level two) of two Nissen huts and a photographic record of a WWII blast shelter at former RAF Nuneaton was carried out by ULAS in 2011 in advance of the structures demolition as part of proposed redevelopment of the site;
- A Level 2 historic building survey was carried out by ULAS in 2012 on the former airfield control tower at MIRA;
- An archaeological evaluation was carried out at MIRA by ULAS in 2014 within the footprint of a proposed new-substation comprising two trial trenches. No features were identified and no artefacts recovered;
- Trial trenching was carried out at MIRA on Wood Lane by ULAS in 2014. A ditch was identified, and a single sherd of transitional Roman pottery and a secondary flint flake were recovered from excavated sections through the ditch;
- Trial trenching was carried out on land at MIRA by ULAS in 2014 in advance of a planning application for a new building known as the Flatpack Building. No archaeological features or deposits were found;
- Trial trenching carried out at MIRA Business Technology Campus by ULAS in 2014 found one discrete area of Roman roadside occupation adjacent to Watling Street;
- An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) and watching brief were carried out by Wessex Archaeology in 2015 in association with a new water pipeline. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered;
- Trial trenching was carried out at MIRA on land proposed for a new building (MAB3) by ULAS in 2015. Traces of Medieval ridge and furrow, modern field drains and two undated tree throws were recorded;
- Trial trenching was carried out prior to construction of the MAB4 building on land a MIRA by ULAS in 2016. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.

4. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 4.1.1. Effects on the historic environment can arise through direct physical effects, effects on setting or indirect effects. Direct physical effects describe those development activities that directly cause damage to the fabric of a heritage asset. Typically, these activities are related to construction works (e.g., open cut trenching, ground level reduction for tie in pits, HDD pits), and are only likely to occur within the proposed development area.

4.2. DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.2.1. There is a single designated heritage asset located within the wider study area: The remains of a Medieval chapel within Lindley Park (1005075, Scheduled Monument) approximately 480 m north east of the PDA.
- 4.2.2. This asset is all well screened from the proposed development by intervening vegetation and no potential settings impacts have been identified.

4.3. NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 4.3.1. There are no known non-designated asset located within the PDA.
- 4.3.2. 90 m to the south west of the PDA is an area where Roman remains were found (MLE18946) during trial trenching in 2011. 180m north west of the PDA is a possible Iron Age or Roman ditch and small pit (MLE19861). Due to the proximity of these non-designated assets it is possible that previously unknown archaeological remains associated with Iron Age or Roman activity in the local area could be encountered during any intrusive groundworks. Any remains are likely to be confined to isolated features and stray artefacts which may have been disturbed through later agricultural activity.

4.4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 4.4.1. The site was agricultural land prior to the establishment of the WWII airfield to the east of the PDA. It has not been subject to intensive development during its use as either an airfield or subsequent vehicle testing site. This means that there is a potential for the survival of previously unknown archaeological remains at the site if they were ever present.
- 4.4.2. The background “noise” of proven archaeological activity is predominantly prehistoric artefacts (flint tools), Romano-British roadside settlement and evidence for medieval agriculture. Remains of this type can be considered to be of local or regional interest and therefore not of the highest order of importance (although this does not preclude the possibility of more important remains being present).
- 4.4.3. The wider study area has been the subject of frequent archaeological investigations, employing a range of techniques (desk-based research, field walking, building recording, and trial trenching). This means that archaeological professionals can have a higher level of confidence in the emerging picture of archaeological potential than might be the case for other sites which have not been subject to such levels of investigation.
- 4.4.4. The potential for prehistoric archaeological remains to be present at the site is considered to be low to medium, most likely to be in the form of stray artefacts redeposited in later ploughsoils, but potentially field systems. There is currently no evidence for the presence of settlement or cemeteries in the vicinity of the site from these periods.
- 4.4.5. The potential for archaeological remains dating to the Roman period to be present at the site is considered to be medium. Any remains are likely to be to isolated features and stray artefacts associated with roadside occupation and field systems in the local area, which may have been disturbed through later agricultural activity.
- 4.4.6. There is no evidence for early Medieval archaeological remains within the PDA, and subsequent nearby Medieval archaeological activity takes the form of ridge and furrow and field systems. There is no evidence for important archaeological remains at the site dating to these periods.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. HERITAGE RISK

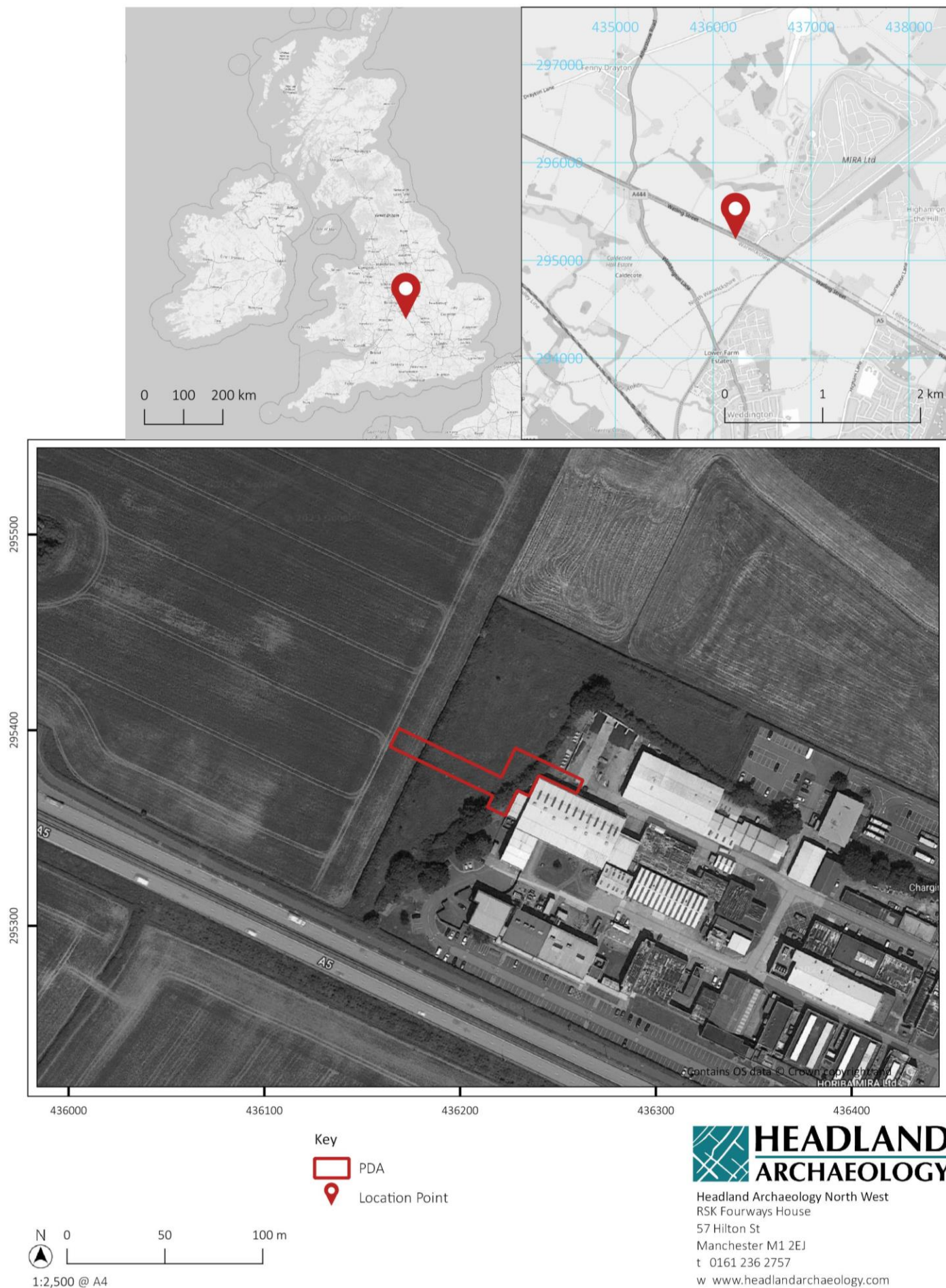
- 5.1.1. There are no known archaeological remains within the PDA.
- 5.1.2. Heritage risk to development of the PDA is principally located in two areas: the potential for the presence of previously unknown archaeological remains to be present at the site and the local planning authority's requirements for investigations to either establish the presence/absence of remains and how it will respond to evidence for any archaeological remains.
- 5.1.3. Visual impacts on the settings of nearby heritage assets is not considered to be an issue for this scheme.
- 5.1.4. At present there is no direct evidence for the presence of archaeological remains at the site- although there remains a potential since the site has not been heavily disturbed by previous land use.
- 5.1.5. The large number of previous archaeological investigations in the wider study area suggests that the planning authority has an appetite for requesting investigations as part of the planning process. This typically takes the form of either pre-determination investigations, or programmes of work secured as a condition of consent. The results of recent investigations have not been particularly productive (see above). The NPPF and local policies empower the LPA to request information and investigation either pre-determination or as a conditioned programme of works.
- 5.1.6. In the absence of evidence for important archaeological remains, it is possible to argue that there are unlikely to be remains present of sufficiently high importance to prevent development of the site. There is a potential for there to be remains at the site which might reasonably be investigated, and development impacts subsequently ameliorated with appropriate mitigation actions.
- 5.1.7. The approach of the LPA archaeological advisor to understanding, investigating, and mitigating impacts on archaeological remains will be critical in how heritage constraints bear upon the proposed scheme.
- 5.1.8. The potential for the presence of important archaeological remains at the site is considered to be low (see above) with a medium potential for remains of less importance. The range of techniques to investigate the presence/absence/character of remains includes: desk based assessment; field walking of freshly ploughed arable land; building recording; metal detecting; and trial trenching. In the event of remains being identified, there are a range of possible mitigation options, typically including: redesign to secure preservation in situ; watching brief on construction ground works in areas of potential; advance excavation and recording where impacts cannot be avoided.

5.2. MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE

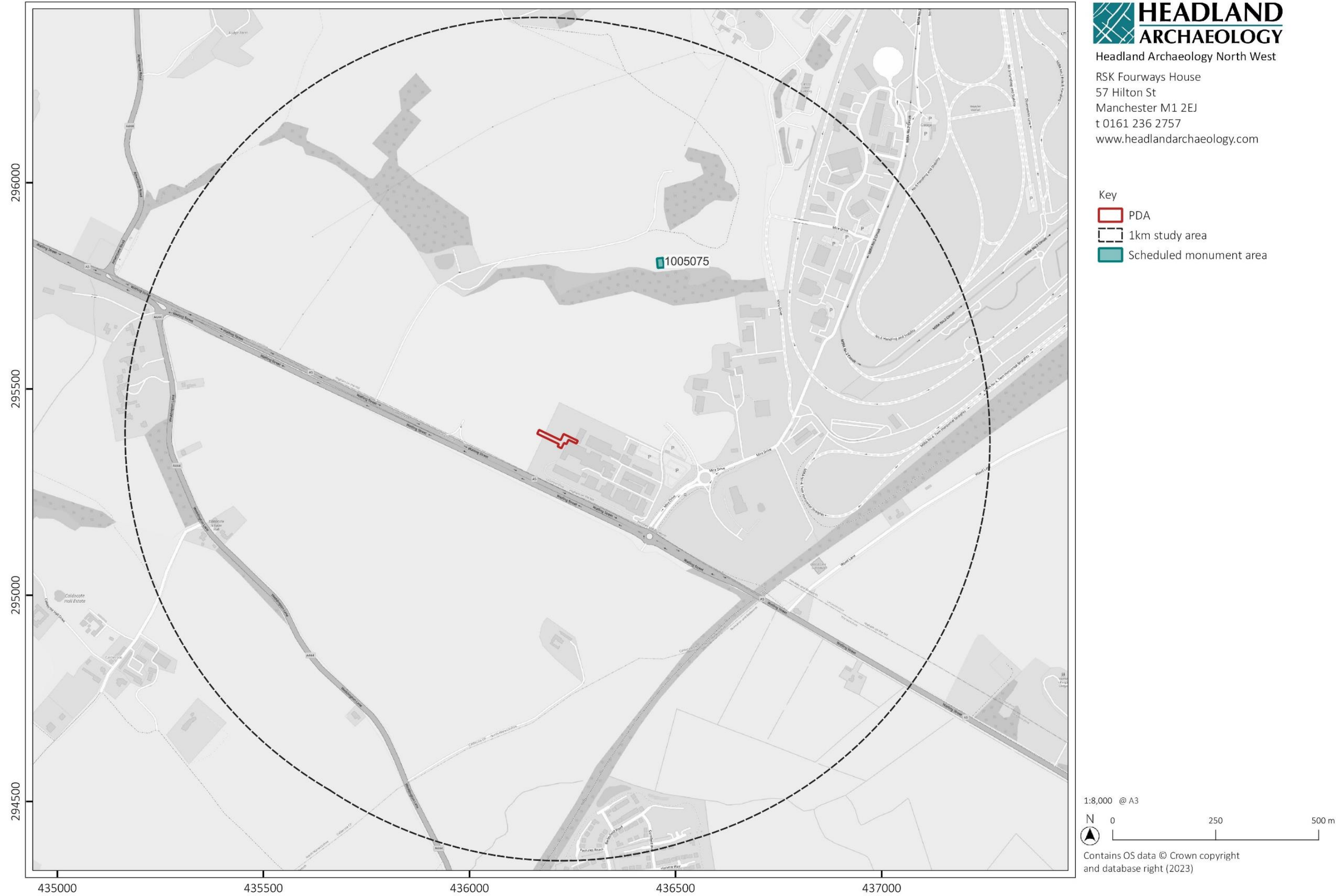
- 5.2.1. Headland Archaeology recommends early engagement with the LPA archaeological advisor to gauge their approach to managing archaeological constraints. Opening negotiating helps the client understand what the risks to programme and cost might be and how to respond most effectively. This is often a negotiated process and clients who engage positively often secure the best outcome and minimise constraints.
- 5.2.2. Archaeological constraints and commitments can be set out for all parties in several types of document, such as Written Schemes of Investigation (specifying methodology for archaeological activity) or mitigation strategies confirming a developer's commitment and LPA requirements to secure a programme of works.

6. REFERENCES

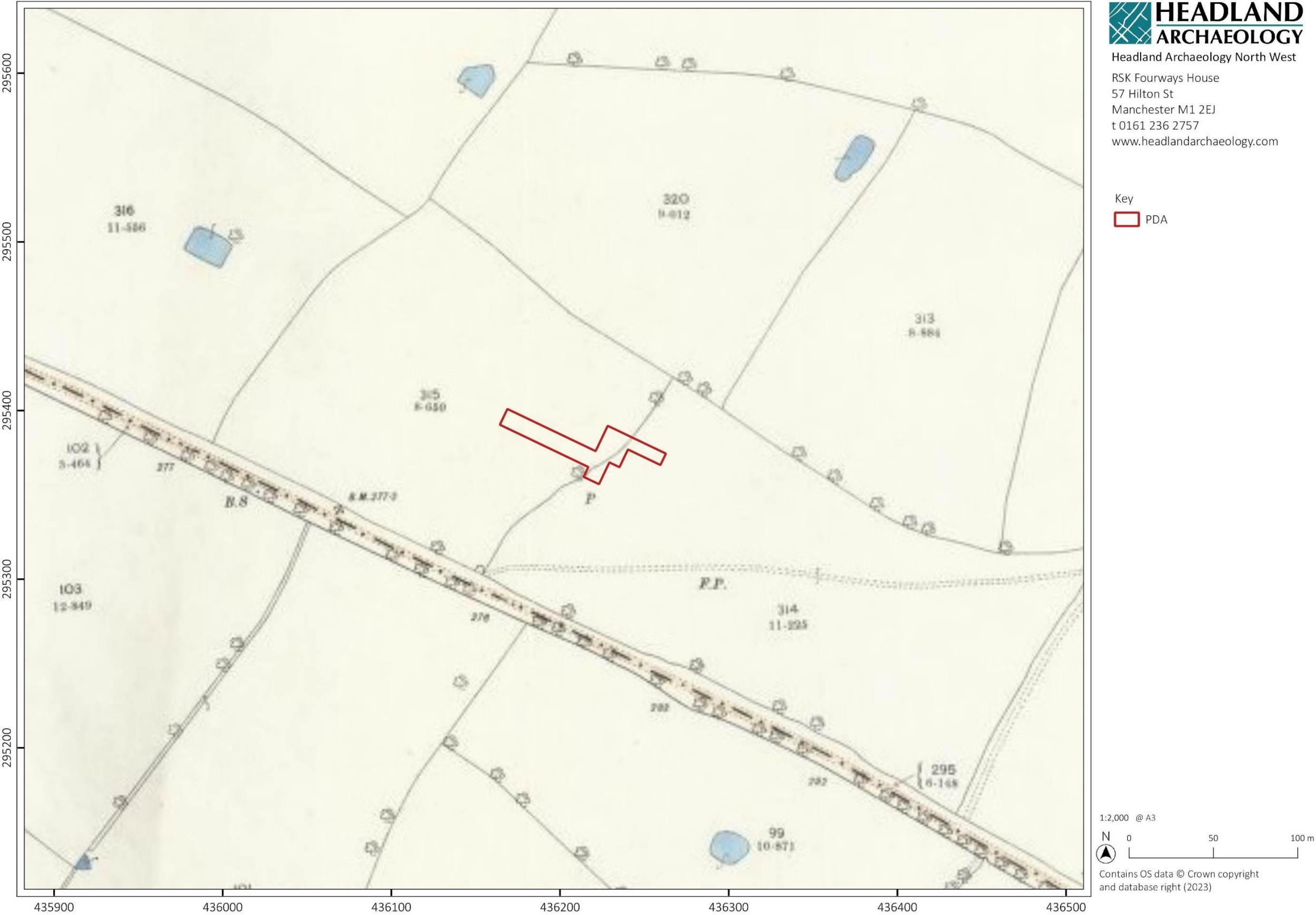
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Illus 1. Site location and layout



Illus 2. Designated heritage constraints



Illus 3. 1888 OS 25 inch England and Wales Leicestershire XLII.1



Illus 4. 1968 OS National Grid 1 to 10560 Leicestershire - Warwickshire SP39 NE - A



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Headland Archaeology Scotland
13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE
t 0131 467 7705
e scotland@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology Yorkshire & North
Units 23–25 & 15 | Acorn Business Centre | Balme
Road Cleckheaton BD19 4EZ
t 0127 493 8019
e yorkshireandnorth@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology South & East
Building 68C | Wrest Park | Silsoe
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS
t 01525 861 578
e southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology Midlands & West
Unit 1 | Clearview Court | Twyford Rd
Hereford HR2 6JR
t 01432 364 901
e midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

Headland Archaeology North West
Fourways House | 57 Hilton Street
Manchester M1 2EJ
t 0161 236 2757
e northwest@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com