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Technical Report

Heritage Impact Assessment

Yardley Road Solar Farm Limited

Yardley Road Solar Farm

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1. Introduction

AOC Archaeology Group has undertaken a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to support an application for Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act for a solar farm on land north and south of Yardley Road, Northamptonshire (the 'Proposed Development' as shown on Figure 1).

The Proposed Development site, hereafter referred to as "the Site", is situated predominantly in the parish of Potterspury, the modern settlement of which lies c.500m to the southwest. The modern parish includes the former parish of Furtho which lay immediately to the south of the Site.

A single field in the northern part of the Site lies in the parish of Yardley Gobion with the modern settlement lying c.100m to the north. The Site, an irregular area measuring c.77 hectares (ha) in size, is centred on NGR: SP 770 439 and is comprised of arable fields with hedged boundaries and occasional trees.

The total area of the Proposed Development including the cable route is 89.60ha.

The Site lies to the west of the A508 Northampton Road and is largely bound by hedged field boundaries which in part forms the parish boundary between Potterspury and Yardley Gobion. Small parts of the boundary run through the centre of fields or are formed by sections of Yardley Road (which again marks the parish boundary and crosses the north centre part of the Site) and Beech House Drive. The south and east of the Site is bound by small watercourses, the latter forming the parish boundary with Cosgrove to the east.

1.1 Proposed Development

The Proposed Development comprises the installation and operation of a ground-mounted solar PV farm and associated infrastructure. On-site infrastructure includes solar photovoltaic (PV) panels fixed to a dual-axis solar tracking system, and associated infrastructure including access roads, substation, cabling, inverter platforms, control room; a Distribution Network Operator (DNO) station; storage containers; security fencing and CCTV; and temporary construction compound. The planning application also includes the grid connection cable route.

A proposed grid connection route would exit the Site via Yardley Road, briefly follow Beech House Drive, then run along the boundaries of several field parcels. It would partially follow the line of Furtho Lane before joining a bridleway and connecting to Watling Street, c. 875m southwest of the Site. An alternative route has also been proposed, which continues west along Furtho Lane, connecting to Poundfield Road c. 775m southwest of the Site, before eventually linking to Watling Street further to the northwest. From either of these two points on Watling Street the grid connection route will follow existing roads to the southeast of the Site including Towcester Road, London Road, Queen Eleanor Street, Stratford Road, V5 Great Monks Street, H3 Monks Way, and Alston Drive. The grid connection exits Alston Drive following the line of an unmarked lane where it terminates, c. 6.3km southeast of the Site.

1.2 Topographical and Geological Conditions

The broadly flat topography of the Site gently descends, in the southern half, from a height of c. 98m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to c. 75m AOD at the southern boundary which is marked by a west-east aligned watercourse. In the southeast part of the Site a second watercourse runs east from Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243) and then turns south, forming the Site boundary, until it joins the first. The combined watercourse, Dogsmouth Brook, then heads c.2.5km to the southeast until it

joins the Great Ouse. The Grand Union Canal and the River Tove lie c. 900m and c. 1.2km east of the Site respectively, both on a broad northwest – southeast alignment.

The British Geological Survey (BGS 2025), at 1:50000 scale, records that the majority of the Site is underlain by Blisworth Limestone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock which formed approximately 166 to 168 million years ago in the Jurassic Period in a local environment previously dominated by shallow carbonate seas. The southernmost part of the Site lies across three bands of bedrock as it slopes down to the watercourse; Rutland Formation – Mudstone which formed approximately 166 to 170 million years ago in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas; Stamford Member Sandstone and Siltstone which formed approximately 166 to 170 million years ago in a local environment dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas and the Whitby Mudstone Formation which formed approximately 174 to 183 million years ago in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas.

Superficial deposits across the majority of the Site consist of Oadby Member diamicton, which formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary period in a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. A band of Calcareous Tufa, which formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by rivers, lies on the southeastern edge of the Site on a north to south alignment. One small area where no superficial deposits are recorded lies in the centre of the Site and a second on the southwestern edge.

Mapping of the extent of superficial geological deposits by the BGS is not always accurate due to the discontinuity in distribution of these deposits and difficulties in accessing below ground data.

The BGS (2025b) does not record any boreholes within the Site. Two, however, lie a short distance to the south, on the other side of the stream at Manor Farm, Furtho (Ref No's. SP74SE175 and SP74SE176). Both boreholes were sunk to a depth of 100ft or 30.48m and identified 25ft (7.62m) of Boulder Clay and 75ft (22.86m) of 'clean clay'.

1.3 Landscape Character

The Site is located on the northwest edge of the western area of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands National Character Area (NCA) (Natural England, 2014). The NCA *'is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys that gradually widen as they approach The Fens NCA in the east... Views of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA and its large-scale arable farmland can be seen in most directions, from the elevated ground of the Yardley Whittlewood Ridge, Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge, East Anglian Chalk and Chilterns NCAs (NCA, p.3).*

Predominantly an arable and commercially farmed landscape, a wide diversity of seminatural habitats are also present within the NCA.... The River Great Ouse and its tributaries meander slowly and gently across the landscape (ibid.).

The majority of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA is sparsely populated. Settlements are generally located along the river valleys and more recently along major road and rail corridors. A feeling of urbanisation is brought by the numerous large towns, including Milton Keynes, Bedford, Cambridge, Huntingdon and Peterborough, and major transport routes, including the M1, A1 and A14 and the Midlands and East Coast mainline railways (ibid.).

Tranquillity within the NCA has declined, affected by visual intrusion, noise and light pollution from agriculture, settlement expansion and improvements in road infrastructure. Many areas, however, retain a rural feel and there are numerous opportunities for nearby urban communities to enjoy

quiet, informal recreation. A sense of place and history is provided by the area's rich geology and archaeology as well as historic features....' (ibid.).

The Site lies within The Tove Catchment (6a) of the Undulating Claylands character area (6) of Northamptonshire, as described by the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (NCC undated, 72-78). The assessment states that this area *'appears as a wide belt of rolling countryside' and 'is deeply rural and sparsely settled, with small villages and farmsteads scattered throughout the undulating topography'*. Key characteristics include;

- *Boulder Clay deposits overlie almost the entire landscape, revealing little surface expression of the varying underlying solid geology;*
- *Broad, elevated undulating landscape that is more elevated to the west shelving eastwards and drained by numerous broad, gentle convex sloped valleys;*
- *Wide panoramic views across elevated areas, though the undulating landform creates more contained and intimate areas;*
- *A productive rural landscape with an equal balance of arable and pastoral farming with the former predominating on more elevated land and often larger in scale...;*
- *Hedgerows are often low and well clipped emphasising the undulating character of the landscape with scattered hedgerow oak and ash trees;*
- *Numerous villages located throughout the landscape with varying morphology;*
- *Settlement beyond the villages include scattered Enclosure age farmsteads and isolated dwellings, located at the end of short access tracks and adjacent to the roadside;*
- *A long settled landscape with evidence dating back to the Bronze Age and evidence of Roman occupation; and*
- *Many historic remnants evocative of the medieval period, including rural villages, moated sites, and extensive areas of ridge and furrow'.*

1.4 Consultation

The Site lies within the local authority administrative area of West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), a new unitary council which includes the former district council of South Northamptonshire. WNC is advised internally on archaeological and heritage matters.

Pre-application advice was sought from WNC, and a written response received on the 15th of December 2021. In that response the Council's Archaeological Advisor stated that:

"The application [...] should provide sufficient information to allow a proper assessment of the site's archaeological potential to be made. For a site such as this the assessment should comprise fieldwalking (if the ground conditions are suitable), geophysical survey and trial trenching. This will enable recommendations for appropriate mitigation to be made at an early stage and thus reduce uncertainty about the impact of the proposals on below ground archaeological deposits".

AOC undertook further direct consultation with the Council's Archaeological Advisor between July 2023 and July 2024. This consultation provided the Council's Archaeological Advisor with the results of the geophysical survey undertaken at the Site and thereafter focussed on agreeing the scope of the trial trenching requested.

This Heritage Impact Assessment incorporates the results of desk-based research and walkover survey, as well as a magnetometer survey conducted by Archaeological Research Services (Appendix 3 (Lester & Goodchild 2023)). A trench plan was agreed with the Council's Archaeology

Advisor, and it has been proposed that trenching will be carried out pre-commencement, following determination of the application.

The anticipated impact of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage assets has been assessed, both in terms of direct physical impacts on known and possible archaeological remains that may survive within the Site, and any anticipated impacts on the settings of designated heritage assets in the surrounding 2km Study Area.

2. Methodology and Guidance

2.1 Legislative Framework

Parliamentary legislation for Listed Buildings is provided by the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and legislation for Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological remains is provided by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The most recent legislation, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, includes provision for designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens, as well as placing a Statutory duty on Local Planning Authorities to maintain Historic Environment Records (HERs).

With regard to World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Protected Wrecks and “*other area[s] of land included in a register maintained by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England [Historic England]*”, Section 102 of the 2023 Act amends Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to include a new section, Section 58B, which states that:

In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for the development of land in England which affects a relevant asset or its setting, the local planning authority or (as the case may be) the Secretary of State must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting (Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 58 as amended by LURA 2023, Section 102).

However, it should be noted that for the recent Hamilton Hill Solar Farm appeal decision, the Inspector commented that this amendment “*is not in force by Royal Assent and secondary legislation is required for it to come into force*” (Thompson 2024, 2, Para 8).

Therefore, whilst weight should be attached to Section 102 of LURA, until the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act is amended, the legislative framework remains as set out in Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the 1990 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act which covers Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas respectively.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, requires contractors, and their supply chains, to consider not only cost when commissioning or procuring services but also how they can make a positive economic, social and / or environmental impact and suppliers are required to set out their proposals for delivering social value that results in positive benefits to communities through a development. In terms of heritage and archaeology, social value can also be referred to as “*public benefit*” (DLUHC & MHCLG Live Document; ClfA 2021a; Mann 2023).

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and last updated in February 2025. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a

framework within which locally prepared plans for development can be produced and assessed. Chapter 16 of the NPPF is concerned with 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.

It identifies heritage assets as “an irreplaceable resource” and notes that they “*should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations*” (MHCLG 2025, para 202).

Where designated assets are concerned, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Any harm to or loss of significance that is predicted to result from either a direct physical impact upon a designated heritage asset or a change to its setting should require:

“Clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- 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” (ibid., para 213).*

In respect of proposals that are predicted to lead to substantial harm to or the total loss of significance to a designated asset, Paragraph 214 states that; “*...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss*” (ibid., para 214).

Where; “*...a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset*” Paragraph 215 states that; “*...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*” (ibid., para 215).

Impacts upon non-designated heritage assets are also a pertinent planning consideration; Paragraph 216 states that: “*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*” (ibid., para 216).

Where a heritage asset is to be lost, either in part or in whole, as a result of the development, the local planning authority 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*” (ibid., para 218).

The NPPF sets out three objectives to achieving sustainable development: economic, social; and environmental (ibid., para 8). Proposals for social value/public benefit can contribute to developments achieving these objectives. In terms of heritage and archaeology: “*Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats*” (ibid., para 203). Any proposal for a social value/public benefit strategy should take into account:

- “a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*

- c) *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- d) *Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place” (ibid.).*

2.3 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in 2016 to expand upon the NPPF and is updated periodically, though the section on the Historic Environment was last updated on the 23 July 2019.

Section 18a of the guidance is concerned with; *“...enhancing and conserving the historic environment”*. The Guidance notes 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 everyday use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest”* (DLUHC & MHCLG Live Document).

PPG requires assessments to consider the potential for harm of a Proposed Development on heritage assets in order to understand the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. Where designated heritage assets will be impacted upon, the PPG requires the assessment to clearly state whether that harm will be substantial or less than substantial (*ibid.*, para 18).

When considering whether a proposal would cause substantial harm to a designated asset the PPG observes that:

“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.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings’ significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting” (ibid.).

PPG provides a definition and guidance for public benefit where a development can achieve sustainable objectives (*ibid.*, para 20) and where there is the potential for harm to heritage assets. PPG states that that:

“Public benefits should flow from the proposed development” and that benefits “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” (ibid.).

2.4 Setting Guidance

The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset 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”* (MHCLG 2025, Glossary).

Historic England (HE) also provide guidance on setting:

“The “setting of a heritage asset” is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset’s significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its on-going conservation” (Historic England 2017, 4).

2.5 Local Planning Policy

The Site lies within the former administrative area of South Northamptonshire Council (SNC), now a part of the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) unitary authority.

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) Part 1, which was adopted in 2014 by the West Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee: “...sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the whole of the area covered by Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire Councils for the plan period up to 2029, including strategic policies for steering and shaping development”.

Chapter 10 of the WNJCS Part 1 concerns the Built and Natural Environment, stating that; “...there is a pressing need to preserve and enhance many of the features [of the landscape], such as the biodiversity, ancient woodlands, heritage assets, townscapes and rural settings” (WNJPU 2014, para 10.2).

Policy BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape is relevant to this assessment and states:

“Designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings and landscapes will be conserved and enhanced in recognition of their individual and cumulative significance and contribution to West Northamptonshire’s local distinctiveness and sense of place.

In environments where valued heritage assets are at risk, the asset and its setting will be appropriately conserved and managed.

In order to secure and enhance the significance of the area's heritage assets and their settings and landscapes, development in areas of landscape sensitivity and/ or known historic or heritage significance will be required to:

1. *Sustain and enhance the heritage and landscape features which contribute to the character of the area including:*
 - a) *Conservation Areas;*
 - b) *Significant historic landscapes including historic parkland, battlefields and ridge and furrow;*
 - c) *The skyline and landscape settings of towns and villages;*
 - d) *Sites of known or potential heritage or historic significance;*
 - e) *Locally and nationally important buildings, structures and monuments.*
2. *Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their setting in order to minimise harm to these assets; where loss of historic features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for recording and the production of a suitable archive and report.*
3. *Be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features, design styles and materials in order to contribute to a sense of place.*

The retention and sensitive re-use of disused or underused heritage assets and structures is encouraged in order to retain and reflect the distinctiveness of the environment, contribute to the sense of place and promote the sustainable and prudent use of natural resources.

Proposals to sustain and enhance the area's understanding of heritage assets, for tourism and historic interest as part of cultural, leisure and green networks will be supported" (WNJPU 2014, 121-122).

In March 2023 West Northamptonshire Council adopted the Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) 2011-2029. This builds on the WNJCS and was prepared to help further guide planning decisions in the area. It forms part of the Development Plan for the district, along with the WNJCS and "made" neighbourhood plans. The Local Plan (Part 2) replaces all of the remaining saved policies of the 1997 South Northamptonshire Local Plan and supersedes Policy H2 and Policy H6 of the WNJCS.

A key objective of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 2011-2029 is:

"Objective 1: To achieve high quality design that takes account of and improves local character and heritage and provides a safe, healthy and attractive place for residents, visitors and businesses" (WNC 2023, 36).

Objective 6 concerns Heritage, stating that the council will; *"...conserve, and where possible, enhance through carefully managed change, the heritage assets and their settings, and to recognise and elevate their role in providing a sense of place and local distinctiveness"*(WNC 2023, 37).

Chapter 10 of the Local Plan concerns the built heritage and natural environment. It states that;

"...heritage assets, which can range from landscapes and historic street patterns to modest tombstones, make a positive contribution to the character of a place. Their protection and enhancement can stimulate regeneration, resulting in economic and environmental benefits derived in part from people's capacity to access, enjoy and learn. They are a finite non-

renewable resource which can be irreparably damaged by insensitive change to the asset or its setting” (WNC 2023, 109 & 110).

Policy ENV6: Protection and enhancements of designated and non - designated heritage assets of the Local Plan states:

The Council will require development proposals to conserve and enhance the historic environment and designated and non-designated heritage assets, including historic landscapes, by:

- i) Ensuring that development proposals demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and its setting, and the impact the scheme will have on that significance*
- ii) Ensuring that this enhanced understanding has been considered and incorporated into the development proposal demonstrating how the scheme preserves and/ or enhances the asset*
- iii) Requiring a clear and convincing justification for any harm or loss of an asset, supported by demonstrating how harm is outweighed by public benefits*
- iv) Supporting high quality proposals which positively considers Northampton’s local distinctiveness including aspects associated with siting, scale, massing, layout, form, materials and architectural detailing*
- v) Having regard to guidance from Historic England and heritage best practice*

Proposals which will result in an increased and/ or improved accessibility to heritage assets will also be supported” (WNC 2023, 110 & 111).

The New West Northamptonshire Local Plan is due to replace the above policies in 2025. A draft of the plan was consulted on in spring of 2024. Policies BN1 to BN4 will be relevant to this assessment once adopted (WNC 2024).

2.6 Methodology

The scope of this assessment meets the requirements of current planning regulations set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (DLUHC & MHCLG Live Document); National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2025); Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 and Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, 2023; and local planning policies.

This assessment has been supported by a detailed zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV), which has been used to identify assets intervisible with the Proposed Development and/or where the Proposed Development would appear in key views to and from assets.

It is also important to note that a proposed grid connection route extends from the Site to approximately 6.3 km to the southeast. As most of the route follows existing roadways, this assessment focuses only on the section within the 1 km Study Area, where the route passes through a predominantly agricultural landscape.

AOC Archaeology Group conforms to the standards of professional conduct outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2022), the *CIfA Standard and Guidance for Commissioning Work or Providing Consultancy Advice on Archaeology and the Historic Environment* (CIfA 2020a), the *CIfA Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessments* (CIfA 2020b), the *CIfA Regulations for Professional Conduct* (CIfA 2021b), and other relevant guidance.

AOC Archaeology Group is a Registered Organisation of the CIfA. This status ensures that there is regular monitoring and approval by external peers of our internal systems, standards, and skills development.

AOC is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, in recognition of the Company's Quality Management System.

2.7 Data Sources

The following sources were consulted during the preparation of this assessment:

- National Heritage List for England (NHLE) for designated heritage asset data downloaded from HE's online NHLE for statutory designations;
- The Northamptonshire County Council HER for records of designated and non-designated assets and previous archaeological interventions (events);
- Northamptonshire County Council for details of any relevant Conservation Areas;
- Historic Maps held by the British Library and the National Library of Scotland;
- Archaeological Data Service (ADS) for heritage data including grey literature reports, archaeological journals, and the Excavation Index for England;
- Aerial photography images from HE, the Britain from Above website, the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP) website and the Cambridge Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP) website;
- The Environmental Agency for any available LiDAR imagery of the Site;
- Google Earth Pro for current and historical satellite imagery of the Site;
- The Genealogist website for relevant parish Tithe maps and apportionment details;
- British Geological Survey (BGS) data for information about the geological character of the Site;
- East Midlands Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment;
- Northamptonshire Archives for any available pre-Ordnance Survey mapping and other relevant documentary sources; and
- Other online resources.

2.8 Report Structure

Each heritage asset referred to in the text is listed in the Gazetteer in Appendix 1. Each has been assigned an 'Asset No.' unique to this assessment, and the Gazetteer includes information regarding the type, period, grid reference, NLHE number, HER number, designation, and other descriptive information, as derived from the consulted sources.

Each heritage asset or event referred to in the text is plotted on the Figures 2, 3 and 4 at the end of the report, using the assigned Asset/Event Nos. The location of the Site is shown outlined in red on all figures with the Grid Connection Route depicted in blue, and the Study Areas are outlined in black.

The 1km Study Area includes all known heritage assets and archaeological events within 1km of the Site in order to form the heritage baseline. The aim of this is to identify the potential for direct physical impacts upon known heritage assets and to help predict whether any similar hitherto unknown archaeological remains are likely to survive within the Site. Designated heritage assets within 2km have also been identified to allow for an assessment of potential impacts upon their settings.

A geophysical survey has been undertaken to inform this assessment and is presented in Appendix 3.

All sources consulted during the assessment, including publications, archived records, photographic and cartographic evidence, are listed in the bibliography in Section 8.

2.9 Assessment Criteria

The assessment aims to identify the known and likely archaeological potential of the Site and the relative value or importance of such a resource / asset. The criteria for assessing these factors are laid out in detail in Appendix 2.

The criteria for assessing archaeological potential are expressed in this report as ranging between the scales of High, Medium, Low and Uncertain, criteria for which are also noted in Appendix 2.

Levels of importance in the report are expressed as ranging between the scales of High, Medium, Low, Negligible and Unknown. The importance of heritage assets is determined firstly by reference to existing designations, for example Scheduled Monuments are already classified as Nationally Important and therefore of High importance.

For assets where no designation has previously been assigned, the likely importance of that resource has been based upon the available evidence and professional knowledge and judgement.

The likely magnitude of the impact of the Proposed Development works is determined by identifying the degree of change from the Proposed Development upon the 'baseline' conditions of the Site and the heritage resource identified in the assessment. This impact can be either adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral and is ranked according to the scale of high, medium, low, negligible or neutral.

2.9.1 Assessment of Setting Impacts

The setting assessment has been undertaken in line with the requirements of NPPF and HE setting guidance.

The NPPF defines setting 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" (MHCLG, 2025, Glossary).

In December 2017, HE published an updated guidance document on setting as part of their Good Practice Advice Notes intended to explain how to apply the policies contained in the NPPF. This document states:

"Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance" (HE, 2017, 4).

The HE guidance states:

"A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it" (ibid, 2).

The guidance sets out the ways in which setting may contribute to the significance of a heritage asset. It advocates a five-stage approach which comprises:

"Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;

Step 3: Assess the effects of the Proposed Development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes” (ibid, 8).

The guidance provides a checklist of potential attributes of setting which may contribute to or make appreciable the significance of the asset in question. HE acknowledges that the checklist is non-exhaustive and that not all attributes will apply in all cases.

The assessment of the impact on setting undertaken for this assessment has followed the staged approach outlined in the HE guidance on setting. It has had regard to the checklist therein but, in the interest of being proportionate to the importance of the asset and the potential magnitude of impact, only discusses those attributes which apply to the asset and the potential impacts.

Site visits were undertaken to all designated heritage assets within the 2km Study Area and within the ZTV, insofar as they were publicly accessible and safe to access. Where assets were not directly accessible assessments were made from the most appropriate publicly accessible locations.

These site visits established the current setting of the assets, how setting contributes to the significance and appreciation of the assets and how the Proposed Development could potentially impact upon setting, such that it could cause harm and affect significance.

It is noted that, in many cases identified impacts upon setting are ‘neutral’ and as such, it is not always necessary or appropriate to propose mitigation or enhancement measures. Where relevant, mitigation and enhancement measures are identified as part of this assessment.

2.9.2 Assessment of Direct Physical Impacts

The assessment of direct physical impacts will be undertaken in line with the assessment criteria noted above and in Appendix 2. This will be done by establishing the historic environment baseline through examination of the data sources outlined in Section 2.7, a walkover survey and a geophysical survey. The Proposed Development will be assessed against the established historic environment baseline, and potential direct physical impacts on known and unknown heritage assets will be identified.

2.9.3 Assessment of Harm

PPG (DLUHC & MHCLG: Live Document, Historic Environment Section para 18), where designated heritage assets are concerned, requires an assessment to be made as to the level of harm which could be caused to designated heritage assets by a Proposed Development.

It requires a judgement to be made as to whether that harm is “*substantial*” or “*less than substantial*” (MHCLG, 2025, Para 212) and the level of harm predicted establishes the planning test to be applied (*ibid*, Paras 214 and 215).

HE defines harm in their Conservation Principles (2008) as a ‘*change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage values of a place*’ (HE 2008, 71).

The PPG (DLUHC & MHCLG, Live Document) notes that “*substantial*” harm is a “*high test*” and that as such it is unlikely to result in many cases. What matters in establishing whether harm is “*substantial*” or not, relates to whether a change would seriously adversely affect those attributes or elements of a designated asset that contribute to, or give it, its significance (DLUHC & MHCLG, Live Document, Historic Environment Section - Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723).

There are no designated heritage assets within the Site and as such would be no direct physical impacts upon designated heritage assets and no harm as a result of direct physical impacts. In the case of the Proposed Development the potential for harm upon designated heritage assets relates solely to potential impacts upon their settings.

Assessment of harm resulting from impacts upon the setting of designated heritage assets, will relate to whether a change would seriously adversely affect those attributes or elements of the setting of a designated asset that contribute to, or give it, its significance resulting in change for the worse. This will be considered in line with criteria for magnitude of impact in Appendix 2.

However, it should be noted that change will not always lead to harm and that there is potential for beneficial as well as neutral impacts. Where there are beneficial, neutral or no impacts, there will be no harm.

2.10 Limitations of Scope

This assessment is based upon data obtained from publicly accessible archives as described in the Data Sources in Section 2.7. Data from the NHLE was downloaded in March 2025 and an extract from the Northamptonshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) was obtained on 17th March 2025. The information presented in the gazetteer regarding known heritage assets is current to these dates.

It is also important to note that a proposed grid connection route extends from the Site to approximately 6.3 km to the southeast. As most of the route follows existing modern roadways, this assessment focuses only on the section within the 1km Study Area, where the route passes through a predominantly agricultural landscape and along field edges.

It should be noted that the report has been prepared under the express instructions and solely for the use of Atmos Consulting and their partners. All the work carried out in this report is based upon AOC Archaeology Group's professional knowledge and understanding of current (April 2025) and relevant United Kingdom standards and codes, technology, and legislation.

Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice and/or recommendations given. Atmos Consulting Limited and AOC Archaeology Group do not accept responsibility for advising Atmos Consulting Limited, Solar2 Ltd or associated parties of the facts or implications of any such changes in the future.

3. Archaeological and Historical Evidence

3.1 Prehistoric (500,000 BC-AD 43)

A geophysical survey (centred Event 482) was carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (see Appendix 3). The survey successfully identified several features, some of which may be attributed to the prehistoric period. These include:

- A cluster of strong magnetically enhanced anomalies in Field 3 (Figure 1) which suggests the presence of postholes or pitting (Asset 485; Figure 3);
- A well-defined prehistoric ring ditch in Field 7 (Asset 488);
- A possible prehistoric boundary ditch in Field 9 (Asset 490), and
- A possible prehistoric boundary system in Field 10 (Asset 491) (Lester and Goodchild 2023).

Within the 1km Study Area, the HER has identified several potential prehistoric features. Aerial photography has identified features such as three ditches (Assets 202 and 73) located c. 360m east

of the Site, two of which may represent a trackway; a large rectangular enclosure of possible late prehistoric date (Asset 312), located c. 870m east of the Site, and a D-shaped enclosure (Asset 313) located c. 780m northwest of the Site.

Two findspots are recorded including prehistoric flints and undated pottery sherds (Asset 87), recovered c. 990m northwest of the Site, and a pebble hammer (Asset 175) of brown quartzite (Dix 1985, p.148) which was retrieved c. 140m north of the Site.

Additionally, a possible prehistoric enclosure (Asset 226), is located c. 90m north of the Site and a possible long barrow and mound (Asset 114) and a possible prehistoric funerary site (Asset 55) are located c. 1km northwest of the Site.

A possible prehistoric site (Asset 227), is recorded c. 100m to the north of the Site and a possible late Iron Age or Roman settlement (Asset 65), is located c. 500m west of the Site, although no further information is provided on these assets. Two tumuli (Assets 88 and 89) are recorded in a field adjoining Moor End Castle (RCTHME 1982, p.177), located c.1km to the northwest of the Site.

Prehistoric features have also been recorded across several investigations across the 1km Study Area. These include sherds (Asset 97) of late Iron Age and 1st century Romano-British (Belgic sherds) which were revealed during building work, located c. 590m west of the Site. They were retrieved from the foundations of a bungalow and are now held by Milton Keynes Archaeological Society (RCTHME 1982, p.118).

A geophysical survey, located c. 1km to the south of the Site, identified several features of potential archaeological significance including curvilinear and linear anomalies (Asset 247) (Stratascan 2015). A subsequent evaluation recorded several curvilinear ditches, which most likely represent small enclosures and/or roundhouses. Pottery dating from the Iron Age was recovered from the silted fills of these ditches.

Broadly contemporaneous boundary ditches, containing pottery dating to the Iron Age, were also identified (Asset 247). These features probably relate to settlement activity and land division, focused on the northeastern end of the site (Brown 2015).

Finds included pottery dating to the mid-late Iron Age, slag, fired clay, crucible fragments and fragments of hearth/furnace lining and a flint flake. The finds indicate metal working activity was being carried out nearby, possibly within the enclosure (*ibid.*).

A watching brief (Event 402), located c. 340m north of the Site, was conducted during the construction of a bypass in 1987. A small early Iron Age pit (Asset 121) was uncovered in a newly excavated drainage ditch near the Pottersbury turn, while a deep ditch (Asset 122), likely dating from the late Iron Age to early Roman period, crossed the new carriageway just east of Manor Farm.

Additionally, a buried surface was recorded 1.5 meters below the modern surface, consisting of a silty loam layer approximately 0.15-0.20 meters thick. This material contained a late Iron Age rim sherd (Jackson 1987).

An archaeological trial trench excavation (Event 316) was undertaken in 2018, located c. 360m northeast of the Site. An area of probable late Iron Age to Roman settlement was identified in the northern extent of the site (Asset 311), possibly a small, enclosed farmstead. Two trackways, one aligned north-south and the other northwest to southeast, also dated to the same period and may be related to an associated field system (Coyne 2018).

Lastly, three shallow pits were observed during trial trenching at 6 Church Lane (Event 320), Pottersbury, located c. 720m west of the Site. One contained no artefacts, one a single sherd of Iron

Age pottery (Asset 309) and the other a single sherd of 13th century Potterspury Ware (Carlsson 2016).

There is judged to be a **High** potential for prehistoric remains to survive within the Site boundary. The geophysical survey (Event 482), carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023, successfully identified several features of probable prehistoric date including an enclosed settlement in Field 10 (Figure 1), a ring ditch in Field 7, and potential post holes and pits in Field 3.

It is also worth noting that there are several prehistoric enclosures in close proximity to the Site. The more ephemeral anomalies recorded as possible archaeology within the survey north of Yardley Road may also be associated with Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement activity.

3.2 Roman (AD 43-410) Evidence

As discussed above, a geophysical survey (Event 482) carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Service's in 2023 (Appendix 3) established several features of likely prehistoric date. However, an enclosed settlement located in Field 10 (Figure 1; Asset 491) may represent a Romano-British farmstead, with rectilinear features inside the enclosure potentially representing in-situ structural remains.

Although it should be noted these features could also indicate a prehistoric boundary system (Lester and Goodchild 2023).

Watling Street (A5 Trunk Road) (Asset 60), and Watling Street Margary Routes 1e and 1f (Asset 78), represent the line of a Roman road, the nearest point of which is located c. 950m southwest of the Site. Towcester, located 6.4km to the northwest of the Site, developed on either side of Watling Street, the Roman road which ran from southeastern England to the northwest of the country.

In the Roman period the road from Alchester and Dorchester entered Towcester at the southwestern corner and joined Watling Street just north of the present Park Street.

It has been suggested that the intersection of these two early military routes may have been the main reason for the siting of the town. Watling Street was the primary road through the town around which the rest of its communications networked developed during the later first and second centuries AD (Taylor *et al.*, 2002).

Five findspots of Roman origin are recorded within the 1km Study Area. These include:

- Pottery sherds (Asset 97; Brown 1966), located c. 590m west of the Site;
- A Romano-British coin of Gratian (Asset 104; Brown 1975), located c. 690m north of the Site;
- A worn sestertius of Trajan (Asset 182) found in May 1991, located c. c. 570m north of the Site;
- A Roman coin found in 1974 (Event 424), located c. 630m north of the Site; and
- Another Roman coin was found in a garden (Event 400), located c.400m north of the Site.

Additionally, three areas of potential Roman activity have also been recorded in the Study Area including a possible Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British Settlement (Asset 65), located c. 500m west of the Site, a possible Roman site (Asset 181), located c. 570m north of the Site, and a possible Romano-British Field System (Asset 228), located c.480m north of the Site.

Roman features have also been recorded across several investigations across the 1km Study Area. A watching brief (Event 402), located c. 340m north of the Site, recorded a probable late Iron Age/early Roman date ditch (Asset 122) and Roman pottery sherds (Asset 309). These were

recovered from a subsoil layer which sealed earlier pit features during an evaluation (Event 320) on land at 6 Church Lane (Carlsson 2016), located c. 410m southwest of the Site.

Trial trenching at Brownsfield Road in 1997 (Event 382), located c. 550m north of the Site, discovered evidence of a possible Roman quarry and evidence of a field system (Asset 145). A field system was interpreted due to the amount of Roman pottery scattered through the subsoil and retrieved from a series of small ditches (Asset 146), invariably filled with deposits identical to the subsoil (Ivens 1997).

Trial trenching in 2018 (Event 316), located c. 300m to the east of the Site, identified an area of probable late Iron Age to Roman settlement activity (Asset 311), potentially representing a small, enclosed farmstead. Two trackways, one aligned north-south and the other northwest-southeast, also dated to the same period and may be related to an associated field system (Coyne 2018).

A small enclosure (Asset 313) is also visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs taken in July 2010 as part of the annual English Heritage annual reconnaissance programme. The programme identified a D-shaped feature (or alternatively a triangular feature with curving corners), which could be prehistoric or Roman in date.

There is judged to be a **High** potential for Roman remains to survive within the Site boundary. A geophysical survey carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (Appendix 3) identified an enclosed settlement in Field 10 (Figure 1).

This has been interpreted as a potential Romano-British farmstead, with rectilinear features inside the enclosure potentially representing in-situ structural remains. Although it should be noted these features could also indicate a prehistoric boundary system.

3.3 Early Medieval Evidence (AD 410-1066)

The Site is located within the parishes of Potterspury and Yardley Gobion. Potterspury derives from the Old English “pirige”, meaning pear-tree, and “pottere” the Old English for pot-maker, indicating an apparent significance for pottery making in the area.

Yardley Gobion (Asset 64), located c. 480m to the north of the Site, has Late Saxon origins, its name deriving from the Anglian “gerd”, meaning a twig or rod or spar, and Old English “lēah” meaning a forest, wood, glade or clearing, later a pasture or meadow, so “rod wood/clearing”.

Gobion is derived from Henry Gubyun who held land here in 1228. The adjacent settlement of Furtho derives from the Old English “ford” or “forð” meaning “in front” or “before” and “hōh” meaning “heel” or “sharply projecting piece of ground”, so “before the hill-spur” or “ford hill-spur” (The Institute for Name-Studies 2025).

There are several assets recorded within the 1km Study Area that can be attributed to the early medieval period including the Church of St Nicholas (Asset 76), and associated Churchyard (Asset 291), located c. 330m southwest of the Site, the Churchyard of St Bartholomew’s (Asset 229), located c. 100m south of the Site, and the London to Derby Road (Asset 81), located c. 30m east of the Site.

Furthermore, ditches containing Saxon-Norman and medieval pottery (Asset 147) were recorded during an evaluation at Brownsfield Road (Event 382), located c. 550m north of the Site (Ivens 1997) and metal detecting surveys have uncovered a significant number of late Saxon and medieval finds (Asset 245) found on fields to the south of Potterspury (Carlsson 2016), located c. 1km southwest of the Site.

Two trial trenches (Event 320), located c.720m west of the Site, also uncovered frequent Saxon pottery.

Whilst occupation of the wider area in the early medieval period is clear, this appears to have been concentrated around villages and churches, and the majority of evidence appears to come from limited artefactual evidence. On this basis there is considered to be medium potential for early medieval finds to survive on the Site but there is judged to be a **Low** potential for substantial remains from this period to survive within the Site.

3.4 Medieval Evidence (AD 1066-1540)

The pre-Conquest origins of Potterspury are evidenced by the Domesday Survey. In 1086, Potterspury was recorded as a settlement of 42 households, putting it in the largest 20% of settlements recorded in Domesday. The land was owned by two owners, Henry of Ferrers who owned 10 ploughlands, three lord's plough teams, and seven men's plough teams, and the Earl Tosti (Powell-Smith, n.d.).

The HER also reflects an agricultural landscape during the medieval period, exemplified by areas of ridge and furrow both in the Site (Asset 246 and Event 482); within Field 4 (Asset 486), Field 6 (Asset 487), Field 8 (Asset 489), and Field 10 (Asset 491) and within the 1km Study Area (Assets 112, 118, 204-216, 225, 307).

Additional rural medieval features within the Study Area include an animal husbandry site (Asset 63), Deer Park (Asset 68), an orchard (Asset 134), a Rabbit Warren (Asset 75), and four Hollow Ways (Assets 193, 195-197), which are sometimes associated with drovers' trails for the movement of livestock to new pastures or to market (Templeton 2021).

While the HER records the ridge and furrow as medieval, a post-medieval date cannot be dismissed until additional investigations are undertaken.

Within the Site, located towards the west extent, lays Potterspury Water Mill (Asset 238), and associated industrial activity (Asset 237), which potentially have their origins in the medieval period.

A geophysical survey within the Site, carried out by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (Event 482) (Appendix 3), also recorded some magnetic disturbance in this area suggesting some remnants of the mill may still exist (Asset 485). Another water mill (Asset 79), likely contemporaneous, is located c. 650m to the northwest of the Site.

Apart from milling, the other industry in the parish whose history can be traced from the medieval period is the manufacture of pottery, which accounted for the use from the late 13th century of the alternative name 'Potterspury' for what had previously been Pury or East Pury (Riden and Insley 2002).

During the 1960s, fieldwork in north Buckinghamshire demonstrated that a fine sand-tempered ware, sometimes slightly gritty, generally buff to pink in colour with a grey core, had a distribution area with Potterspury roughly at its centre, which appears to be the obvious site for its production, although other kilns have been found in both Buckinghamshire and south Northamptonshire.

Gardens in Potterspury have also produced a quantity of sherds of this ware and the excavation of a post-medieval kiln yielded sherds from a medieval level. The idea that the industry did not begin in the Potterspury area before the mid-13th century (as the place-name evidence suggests) is also supported by the absence of any recognisable earlier forms in this ware among examples so far examined (Riden and Insley 2002).

Pottery production is well represented in the HER with three pottery production sites (Assets 80, 222, and 235) centred on the village of Potterspury, which is located c. 460m southwest of the Site, with six further associated pottery kiln sites recorded in the village (Assets 99, 130, 166, 169, 174, 232,

and 234). A pottery production site (Asset 92) is also located in Yardley Gobion, located c. 650m north of the Site, with four associated pottery kilns (Assets 91, 99, 130, and 141).

Industrialisation of the area in the medieval period is further evidenced in the HER by a well feature (Asset 94), located c. 600m north of the Site, two extraction pits (Assets 101 and 124), located c. 300m southwest of the Site, and 100m north of the Site, respectively, and a quarry site (Asset 148), located c. 480m north of the Site.

Of note, a medieval moat (Asset 110; 83) and bailey (Asset 183), including associated Gatehouse (Asset 108) and Castle Walls and Towers (Asset 109), are located c. 680m to the northwest of the Site. This monument is known to have been the site of Moor End Castle, and associated chapel (Asset 111), which belonged to Edward III.

Between 1363 and 1369, the king spent almost a thousand pounds on the repair and improvement of the castle and lived there for part of his reign (Kenyon 2008). The sub-rectangular island is surrounded by a water-filled ditch 17m-25m wide and forming a large pond 90m by 50m on the southeast side (RCTHME, 1982, p.175).

Also associated with the moat is a leat (Asset 133), additional medieval ponds located to the northwest of the monument (Assets 106 and 236), and the earthworks of two building platforms (Asset 107). However, it is uncertain whether the buildings are part of the castle complex or other settlement remains (RCTHME 1982, p.175).

Medieval activity has also been recorded from several investigations undertaken across the 1km Study Area. A watching brief undertaken in 1995 (Event 386), located c. 380m southwest of the Site, identified a medieval ground surface liberally covered with pot sherds and pieces of broken kiln material (Asset 126). The quantity of pottery and the presence of a fragmented baked kiln structure, including firebars, indicates that a kiln was present (Woodfield 1995).

A trial trench excavation was undertaken in 1997 (Event 376) at Kerry Farm, located c. 660m north of the Site. Traces of two stone-packed gullies were discovered (Assets 137 and 140), potentially representing the footings of a timber building or buildings (Asset 138), which were truncated by a medieval feature. A large shallow semicircular feature with a slightly deeper central pit (Assets 139 and 168) was also recorded, with the feature containing large pieces of medieval pottery.

Further trial trenching was carried out on this site in 2001 (Event 364). A possible medieval/post-medieval ditch was recorded (Assets 167 and 179) which was interpreted as a medieval boundary, or possibly a street frontage, potentially indicating a shift in alignment of Moorend Road.

However, the recovery of 17th century pottery in the fill suggests that the ditch may have remained in use much later than was originally thought. A gully and pit were also recorded during the excavation, similar to those recorded in 1997.

A kiln was discovered during an excavation in 1998 on Woods Lane (Event 372), c. 410m southwest of the Site. The kiln (Asset 136) showed evidence of several phases of rebuilding and measured c. 3.3m in diameter, with a central pedestal. The front of the kiln consisted of an unusual, coursed stone façade wall, which had a low flue set behind a thin clay wall at the rear.

An assemblage of 6,000 sherds were recovered from the primary fill, the sherds consisted of a limited range of late medieval and early post-medieval type of wares (Woodfield and Ivens 1998-9, pp. 160-2). A large dump of medieval pottery (Asset 233) was also recorded c. 360m southwest of the Site during a watching brief (Event 368). A later post-medieval kiln was recorded cutting this material (Ivens 2000).

Furthermore, trial trenching at Brownsfield Road in 1997 (Event 382), located c. 550m north of the Site, uncovered a heavily robbed single stone wall of possible medieval date (Asset 149).

Four sherds of medieval pottery (Asset 217) were found during a watching brief on Grafton Road (Event 348), located c. 700m north of the Site (Ivens 2005), and a single trench and 33 test pits (Event 373) were excavated close to the frontage of the High Street, located c. 530m southwest of the Site. This investigation revealed remains of a pottery kiln, pits and ditches dating from the medieval period (Assets 168-172) (Masters 1998).

Several features have also been identified through aerial photography. These include a possible motte (Asset 184), located c. 750m northwest of the Site, a moat, fishpond (Asset 188), macula and mound (Asset 189), located c. 1km southwest of the Site, and a fishpond and linear system (Asset 194), located c. 70m southeast of the Site. Three potential enclosures (Assets 198-200), and a macula and mound (Asset 201), located to the immediate south of the Site were also identified.

Additional features of note recorded within the HER include:

- A deserted medieval village at Furtho (Asset 67) and Furtho Manor House (Asset 230), located c. 100m south of the Site;
- A medieval hamlet at Moor End (Asset 70), located c. 730m northwest of the Site
- Yardley Manor (Asset 82), located c. 480m north of the Site;
- The former Chapel of St Leonard (Assets 85 and 96), located c. 600m north of the Site;
- A possible medieval close (Asset 115), located c. 600m north of the Site;
- A possible medieval or post-medieval building (Assets 129), located c. 580m north of the Site;
- A deserted hamlet (Asset 131), located c. 960m south of the Site;
- A dovecote (Asset 102), located c. 150m south of the Site; and
- The possible site of Yardley Manor (Asset 95), now destroyed by modern housing estate, located c. 480m north of the Site.

Additional features include two communication sites (Assets 69 and 71), a ditch and pit (Asset 219), and several findspots of pottery sherds (Assets 90, 116, 135, and 239).

Although the medieval period is well represented within the HER, much of the evidence is isolated and mainly located within the villages of Potterspury and Yardley Gobion. However, a geophysical survey (Event 482) carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (Appendix 3) did record ridge and furrow features of possible medieval date across Field 4 (Asset 486), Field 6 (Asset 487), Field 8 (Asset 489), and Field 10 (Asset 491).

Therefore, there is judged to be a **High** potential for the survival of medieval agricultural remains on the Site, and a Low potential for other medieval remains. Any such agricultural remains (e.g. ridge and furrow, plough headlands) are likely to be of no more than **Low** importance.

3.5 Post-Medieval Evidence (AD 1540-1900)

As discussed above, a geophysical survey (Event 482) carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 recorded ridge and furrow features of possible medieval date across Field 4 (Asset 486), Field 6 (Asset 487), Field 8 (Asset 489), and Field 10 (Asset 491), although some of these features may also have a post-medieval origin.

Archaeological evidence recorded by the HER also shows that the wider landscape remained mainly an agricultural area throughout the post-medieval period, which is exemplified by a boundary ditch

(Asset 180), located c. 660m north of the Site, ruins of a possible barn (Asset 221), located c. 435m southwest of the Site, and a field boundary (Asset 244), located c. 820m southwest of the Site.

Early maps tend to be schematic and lacking in detail and often only record settlements at the county level. A map produced by Blaeu in 1644 (Figure 5), depicts the settlements of Potterspury, “*Pottersperye*”, Yardley Gobion, ‘*Yardley Gobon*’, Grafton Regis, ‘*Grafton*’, and Towcester, which is depicted as a major settlement towards the northwest of the Site. The map also depicts geographical features such as the River Tove, located to the north and east of the Site.

Unfortunately, due to the Site’s unique location between the parishes of Potterspury and Yardley Gobion to the west and north of the Site, and a small watercourse which bounds the Site to the east and south of the Site, which forms a parish boundary with Cosgrove, there is no Tithe map that depicts the location of the Site itself. The southern boundary of the Site is shown on an 1850 Tithe map showing Furtho Manor Farm (not depicted) and the 1846 Potterspury Tithe map (Not depicted), to the southwest of the Site, shows the village of Potterspury and several buildings including the Church of St Nicholas (Asset 28).

The OS map surveyed in 1885 (Figure 6) shows the Site within 15 parcels of land. Potterspury W. Mill (Asset 238), located within the Site towards the west extent, is depicted on the map and annotated as ‘Windmill (Corn)’. Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), also located within the Site to the southeast, is annotated ‘Cheley Well’, and a footpath leads from the well, running across the Site in both directions on a northwest-southeast orientation.

Two more footpaths lead from Beech House (Asset 445), a substantial limestone farmhouse located just beyond the Site boundary to the southwest, and traverse across the Site to the northeast and northwest. Several of the boundaries are sporadically lined with mature trees and an unmarked lane, what is now Yardley Road, dissects the Site, roughly through its centre.

A small watercourse which defines the southern boundary of the Site is clearly marked, and a foot bridge is marked close to the Site boundary, although exact location is not clear.

Yardley Gobion Conservation Area (Asset 2) is located c. 330m to the north of the Site and it encompasses the Grade II Listed Church of St Leonard (Asset 37), and several post-medieval Grade II Listed Buildings including cottages (Assets 10, 13, 14, 35, 38, 39, 41, 49, 50, 51, and 52), houses (Assets 8, 9, 12, 34), a farmhouse (Asset 11), and a chapel (Asset 40). St Leonards Church formed a key feature within the streetscape of the village during the Victorian period, as it does today.

The buildings are predominately limestone and date from the 17th to 18th centuries (South Northamptonshire Council 2013). The main portion of Cosgrove Conservation Area (Asset 164) is located c. 1.6km southeast of the Site and includes several Grade II Listed post-medieval buildings including houses (Assets 152 and 155), a dovecote (Asset 156), a stable block (Asset 158), and a lodge (Asset 159).

Most of the properties within the Conservation Area are constructed in a local limestone and several retain their original thatch roofs, although slate appears to dominate the roofscape. Extending partly through Cosgrove Conservation Area, at its east extent, lays the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area (Asset 3), which meanders beyond the Site boundary to the east and north.

Canal Bridge Numbers 63 (Asset 36) and 58 (Assets 53 and 446), and a former farmhouse (Asset 7), also lay within this Conservation Area, located along the length of the canal (South Northamptonshire Council 2014).

This assessment has established that the Site has been sited within agricultural land throughout the post-medieval period, with evidence of ridge and furrow identified in Field 4 (Asset 486), Field 6

(Asset 487), Field 8 (Asset 489), and Field 10 (Asset 491), which may date from the post-medieval period if not earlier.

The HER also records Potterspurty W. Mill (Asset 238), located within the Site towards the west extent, and Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), located to the southeast extent of the Site, although the latter is undated it is suggested this feature could be much earlier in origin.

Given the evidence there is judged a **High** potential for further post-medieval remains to survive on the Site. Agricultural remains would generally be considered to be of Low importance (Appendix 2), and Potterspurty W. Mill (Asset 238) would potentially be considered to be of **Low to Medium** importance.

3.6 Modern (AD 1900-present day) Evidence

This assessment has identified no previously recorded modern heritage assets within the Site, and 65 non-designated heritage assets of modern date within the 1km Study Area.

No major changes to the Site are observable on OS maps dating 1900 and 1926 (Figures 7 and 8), other than the northeastern most parcel is now annotated as 'Allotments' and the mill (Asset 238) is no longer depicted. The footbridge, to the southern extent of the Site is now clearly marked and is located just outside the Site boundary. The wider landscape remains predominantly rural, with little change to the villages of Potterspurty and Yardley Gobion from the 1885 OS map.

An OS map dating 1952 (Figure 9) shows little change to the Site except the allotment area located towards the north extent of the Site has been reduced in size. Modern satellite imagery (Figure 1) dating 2004 shows the Site across 11 field parcels, all of which are in agricultural use.

Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), located within the southeast of the Site, is shown as an area of trees as identified on a Walkover Survey (Section 4), and Beech House (Asset 45), located just beyond the Site to the west, has expanded slightly with additional infrastructure to the north of the farmhouse. The Site remains unchanged on satellite imagery up to present day.

The HER records several modern non-designated heritage assets of modern date within 1km of the Site including:

- The route of The Grand Junction Canal (Asset 84), located c. 1km to the north of the Site;
- Greystone Lodge (Asset 128), located c. 820m southwest of the Site;
- Probable modern drainage systems (Assets 190 and 224), located c. 750m southwest of the Site;
- A toll road (Asset 218), located c. 170m east of the Site;
- A modern industrial site (Asset 223), located c. 1km west of the Site;
- St. Leonard's Churchyard (Asset 231), located c.540m north of the Site;
- A weir (Asset 242), located c. 280m southwest of the Site;
- A possible lace factory (Asset 292), located c. 540m southwest of the Site;
- A modern farm (Asset 249) and animal shed (Asset 248), located c. 630m north of the Site; and
- A boundary wall (Asset 277), located c. 510m southwest of the Site.

The HER has also identified 40 modern walls across the Study Area (Assets 250- 276, and 278 – 290), and 13 modern houses (Assets 292-305).

Given the relative paucity of modern archaeological remains recorded within the Study Area there is judged to be a **Low** potential for artefacts and remains from this period to survive on the Site. Any such remains that do survive are likely to represent continued agricultural use of the Site and be of **Negligible** importance.

3.7 Undated Assets

Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), located within the southeast of the Site, is recorded as undated within the HER. However, it is noted as the site of the hundred meeting place, dating back to at least 1076 (Gover 1933). Furthermore, a natural spring may be a sacred well, potentially dating to the prehistoric period. The well or spring is currently filled in and appears to have been used as a bottle and rubbish dump since 19th century (HER 2025).

Additional undated assets which may have prehistoric origins include an unstratified quern stone (Asset 144), located c. 480m west of the Site, ring ditches seen as cropmarks (Asset 143, 185, 191, and 192), located c. 600m southwest of the Site, c. 130m northwest of the Site, and c. 925m south of the Site, respectively.

The HER also records:

- Four undated sites or settlements of no description (Assets 57, 58, 62, and 72);
- A transport and communication site (Asset 74) and road route (Asset 77);
- A possible metalled surface (Asset 86);
- An unstratified pottery scatter (Asset 105) and stone scatter (Asset 120);
- Three undated ditch features (Assets 113, 186, 187);
- Three possible ditched enclosures (Assets 308, 56, 203);
- Two ponds (Assets 240 and 241);
- A possible structure (Asset 178); and
- A possible cemetery (Asset 132).

3.8 Previous Archaeological Investigations (Events)

The HER records 138 events within the 1km Study Area. Of these, 26 events simply represent undated metal detecting finds which were recorded from sometime between pre-1980 to 2010 (Events 331-338, 340-342, 346-347, 349-353, 357, 360, 363, 378, 399, 414, and 439 to 440).

Also recorded are several desk-based assessments (Events 377, 380-381, and 383), four building surveys (Events 314, 328, 391, and 443), one measured survey (Event 395), and five geophysical surveys (Events 317, 323, 396, 401, and 482; see also Section 5). Additionally, three photographic recordings (Events 243, and 266-267), nine aerial photography surveys (Events 384, 406-407, 409, 411-413, 433, and 444), and five walkover surveys (Events 344, 392, 422, 478, and 479) are recorded.

The HER also notes 10 observations (Events 374, 389, 417, 420, 429, 435, 436-437, and 441-442), one MPP assessment (Event 477), three graveyard surveys (Events 418, 419, and 421), two documentary surveys (Events 388 and 438), one earthwork survey (Event 405), and one ploughing event (Event 427). Several findspots are also recorded as events (Events 400, 403-404, 408, 410, 415-416, 424, 426, and 430).

Twelve trial trench events are recorded in the HER:

- At Badger's Farm in 2018 (Event 316; Coyne 2018), located c. 430m east of the Site, a possible late Iron Age/Roman settlement or farmstead was identified.
- At Rose Cottage in 2016 (Event 320; Carlsson 2016), located c. 400m southwest of the Site, frequent finds of medieval, Saxon, Romano-British, and Iron Age pottery were recovered.
- A 19th-century structure was recorded at 43 Watling Street in 2014 (Event 324; Ladocha 2014), located c. 790m southwest of the Site.

- At Plot 3, Woods Lane (Event 361; Woodfield 2002), located c. 375m southwest of the Site, a pit and ditch and several pottery sherds dating from the medieval period to the 18th century were identified.
- At Kerry Farm (Event 364; Ivens 2001), located c. 620m north of the Site, evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity was observed.
- At 47–53 High Street (Event 373; Masters 1998), located c. 520m southwest of the Site, a pottery kiln, pits, and ditches dating from the medieval period were recorded.
- At Brownsfield Road (Event 382; Ivens 1997), located c. 450m north of the Site, a Roman field system, quarrying activity, and traces of a stone building were uncovered.
- At 25a Church Street (Event 385; HER 2025), located c. 400m southwest of the Site, 18th and 19th-century finds were recorded.
- No finds were observed during trenching at Kerry Farm in 1998 (Event 375) or 21 Wood Lane in 1997 (Event 379), and no information is available for trenching at Kerry Farm in 1997 (Event 376).

The HER lists 26 watching brief events:

- Several revealed no features or only modern material (Events 315, 318, 321, 322, 326, 327, 330, 345, 348, 354, 355, 362, 365, 370, 390, 394, 397, 398, and 423).
- At St. Bartholomew's Church in 2007 (Event 339; Soden 2007), located c. 100m south of the Site, foundations of the former nave's west wall were recorded.
- At 47–53 High Street in 2004 (Event 359; Byard 2004), located c. 600m southwest of the Site, a kiln, medieval pottery, and animal bone were found.
- A series of medieval pottery kilns were discovered at 28 High Street (Event 368; Ivens 2000), located c. 610m southwest of the Site, and another kiln was recorded at Potterspury Coachyard (Event 371; Woodfield 1999), located c. 350m southwest of the Site.
- At 19 Woods Lane (Event 369; Hindmarch 1999), located c. 420m southwest of the Site, a large medieval ditch or pit and the remains of a later stone wall were identified.
- At Rose Cottage (Event 386; Woodfield 1995), located c. 416m southwest of the Site, a substantial amount of pottery and fragments of a kiln structure were uncovered.
- A mixed layer of ash, rubble, and pottery dating to the 17th and 19th centuries was found at 73a High Street (Event 387; HER 2025), located c. 500m southwest of the Site.
- At the Yardley Gobion bypass in 1987 (Event 402; Jackson 1987), located c. 250m north of the Site, a small Iron Age pit, a possible Iron Age or Roman ditch, and evidence of medieval quarrying were also recorded.

Additionally, two test pit investigations are recorded in the HER. A 1m square trial pit (Event 356) was excavated to test a theory that The Maltsters, located c. 370m southwest of the Site, originally had a fourth bay.

A mortar bed relating to a possible return wall was recorded. At 13 Sanders Lane, located c. 610m southwest of the Site, 2m square test pits were excavated. A late post-medieval pit, possibly a clay pit, and residual sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recorded (HER 2025).

3.9 Aerial Imagery and LiDAR

Aerial Photography

Britain from Above (<https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>) holds no available aerial photographs of the Site or Study Area (accessed 08/04/2025).

The Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography website (CUCAP, <https://www.cambridgeairphotos.com>, accessed 08/04/2025) holds eleven photographs of the Site and its immediate vicinity although only one (Catalogue No. XT36) is available to view online. This image, an oblique, southeast facing, view over the Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29) and Furtho Manor Farm shows the southernmost part of the Site's southern field in the foreground.

There are no visible features or cropmarks of interest within the visible part of the Site, but the photograph does show the former layout of the mid-20th farmstead. Both Listed Buildings, Church of St. Bartholomew (Asset 29) and Dovecote at Manor farm (Asset 21) are obscured by trees.

Six photographs were identified via a standard search from the Archive Services at Historic England, Swindon. Digital copies of six photographs were purchased and consulted as part of this assessment on the 27/03/2025. A 1999 oblique photograph (OS/91168) shows the village of Yardley Gobion, and the northern extent of the Site.

Beech House (Asset 445) and Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243) are clearly visible, with the fields surrounding these assets in agricultural use. The southern portion of the Site is visible on a 1968 vertical photograph (OS/68241). This image shows the Site much as it is depicted on the 1952 OS map (Figure 9). The remaining four photographs from Historic England were either unclear or did not show the Site in any detail. No new features were observed across these images.

LiDAR

The National LIDAR Programme was undertaken by the Environment Agency on behalf of the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs. The product aims to provide elevation data at 1m spatial resolution for all of England by the end of 2021. The country has been divided into approximately 250 blocks, each around 25km². Each block is divided into 5km tiles for download.

Up to 4 winter flying seasons of data have been released, totalling 180 blocks. The LIDAR data has mainly been gathered for flood risk mapping to better understand flood risk, focusing on high-risk areas first, and places where there's the greatest need for up-to-date topographical data, such as flood plains, urban areas and the coastal zone. The data can be downloaded here: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/DefraDataDownload/?Mode=survey>.

For this assessment, 50cm spatial resolution Digital Intensity Model, Digital Surface Model (DSM) and Digital Terrain Model (DTM) have been produced through LiDAR Point Cloud processing and subsequently enhanced by implementing different visualisation techniques.

Analytical Hillshading (x16), Sky View Factor (SVF), Visualisation for Archaeological Topography (VAT), Simple Local Relief model (SLRM), PCA, Laplacian Filter and VAT & Analytical Hillshading (x16) have been produced by using the software Relief Visualization Toolbox 2.2.1 and SAGA GIS.

The extant field boundaries are clearly visible in the LiDAR data (Figure 10). Former boundaries are also present as very slight banks and/or ditches that correspond to the features shown on historical mapping. The exaggeration of the vertical plotting scale serves to emphasise the remains of ridge and furrow within the surrounding fields, but little evidence across the Site itself. A small water course is also very prominent which marks the southern boundary of the Site.

There is no indication of the anomalies identified through the geophysical survey, except for a potential mineral extraction/watering hole (Asset 489) within Field 8, which is shown as a large depression. A water course, or spring, associated with Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243) is also a prominent feature within the Site, to the southeast extent.

No additional previously unrecorded heritage assets have been identified from the LiDAR data.

4. Walkover Survey

A walkover survey of the Site was conducted on the 2nd of May 2022 and on the 3rd of April 2025 to assess the current land use and potential for heritage constraints within the Site as well as the potential impacts of the Proposed Development upon the settings of surrounding heritage assets. Conditions were dry and bright at the time of the visit.

The Site is comprised of several arable fields, which lie on the north and south side of Yardley Road. The northern portion of the Site occupies an area of higher ground to the west of Yardley Gobion (Plate 1) and slopes down gently towards Yardley Road. To the west of the Site, the ground slopes more steeply down towards Potterspury (Plate 2). The northern part of the Site comprises regular fields separated by gapped hedgerows (Plate 3).

Yardley Road (Plate 4) separates the northern part of the Site from the southern portion, which comprises further arable fields separated by hedged boundaries and occasional trees. This part of the Site continues to slope down to the south. A footpath leads along field boundaries from Yardley Road towards Furtho (Plate 5), with large arable fields on both sides (Plates 6 to 8) divided by hedgerows (Plate 9).

A wooded area marks the location of the natural spring and former Hundred meeting place of Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), which was dry at the time of the visit. From here, a drain along a field boundary (Plate 11) carries a stream to the edge of the Site, where it then runs along the eastern boundary of the Site to meet another watercourse at Furtho (Plate 12).

Where accessible, the proposed grid connection route was assessed from its entry point at the Site, off Yardley Road, to its junction with Watling Street to the southwest. From Yardley Road to the north, the route follows Beech House Drive, then follows several boundaries through five field parcels. From Furtho Lane, it continues along a bridleway before running along the edge of another field parcel, ultimately connecting to Watling Street. An alternative route has also been proposed, which continues west along Furtho Lane, connecting to Poundfield Road c. 775m southwest of the Site, before eventually linking to Watling Street further to the northwest.

Apart from Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243), no other historic or archaeological features were observed within the Site, or along the proposed grid connection route, at the time of the visit.

5. Geophysical Survey

A geophysical survey was carried out across the Site by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (Appendix 3).

The survey successfully identified several features indicating the validity of the survey method and approach. Several magnetic anomalies were identified that are certainly related to archaeological deposits. An enclosed settlement (Field 10), a ring ditch (Field 7) and the presence of field boundaries (presenting as ditches) along with other features, such as historic ridge and furrow, suggest the Site lies within a multiphase agricultural landscape.

The features are not particularly dense across the Site although where they do occur, they present as well-defined features with good geophysical responses providing a high degree of certainty of their presence.

It should be noted that, given the presence of several prehistoric enclosures near the Site, the more ephemeral anomalies recorded as possible archaeology north of Yardley Road may be associated

with Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement activity. It can be assumed that a large number of the individual ferrous anomalies are related to that of modern deposition and agricultural waste.

6. Setting Assessment

6.1 Setting Assessment Criteria

This section considers the potential for the Proposed Development to result in impacts upon the settings of designated heritage assets within 2 km of the Site. This includes consideration of whether any such change would constitute an adverse impact (diminishment) to those attributes of the designated assets which directly contribute to their significance rather than simply being an alteration to, or addition of a new element to the existing settings of these assets.

Where a new development may be located within the setting of an asset but does not diminish the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate that significance, it may have a neutral impact. This is in line with the NPPF definition of setting which states that: *“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”* (MHCLG, 2025, Glossary).

Where accessible, site visits were undertaken for designated and selected non-designated heritage assets which the ZTV suggested would have intervisibility with the Proposed Development (Figure 2). Consideration was also given to designated assets located outside of the ZTV, where key views towards these assets would include the Proposed Development.

Heritage assets which had no potential intervisibility with the Proposed Development or did not include the Proposed Development within key views towards such assets, were scoped out of further assessment. The assessment has been informed by ZTV modelling and site visits.

ZTV analysis and mapping have been used to identify those assets that could potentially be affected by changes to their settings during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. The ZTV was modelled at 3.1 m height above ground level.

In addition to the ZTV, all the designated heritage assets within the 2 km study area were subject to an assessment of their key characteristics and key views. Where no intervisibility was identified during site visits these assets have been scoped out of further assessment.

The assets that have been carried forward for detailed setting assessment are presented in **Table 1** below. In most cases intervening topography, built structures, and/or vegetation was noted to completely obscure any potential intervisibility with the Proposed Development.

Table 1: Heritage assets considered for assessment

Asset Number	Plate(S)	Asset Name	Status	Elements Affecting Intervisibility	Distance from Site	Magnitude of Impact
2	25	Yardley Gobion	Conservation Area	The ZTV indicates that there would be some potential visibility of the Proposed Development from the southeastern area of the Conservation Area. No intervisibility with Site was identified during the site visit due to modern infrastructure. This includes the Grade	c.360m north of the Site	None

Asset Number	Plate(S)	Asset Name	Status	Elements Affecting Intervisibility	Distance from Site	Magnitude of Impact
				II Listed Buildings 8, 9, 11, 33, 40, 41, and 49.		
3	26	Grand Union Canal	Conservation Area	The ZTV indicates that there is potential, and discontinuous varying degrees of intervisibility with the Proposed Development from along the length of the Conservation Area to the east of the Site. No intervisibility with Site was established during the site visits, although it cannot be discounted that there may be distant glimpses of the Proposed Development. The canal occupies lower ground to the east of the Site. This includes Grade II Listed bridges (Assets 36 & 446).	c.620m northeast of the Site as closest point	Neutral
4, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48	23	Grade II Listed Buildings within Potterspurty	Grade II Listed Buildings	<p>The ZTV shows that there are varying degrees of theoretical visibility with the Proposed Development from Potterspurty, with theoretically more visibility to the northwestern extent of the settlement with less theoretical visibility to the southeast.</p> <p>There was no direct visibility of the Site from these buildings identified during the site visits due to intervening infrastructure.</p> <p>Potterspurty is located in low-lying terrain, with the land rising to the north and east, which further limits the views. It should also be noted that the spire of Church of St Nicholas (Asset 28) can be seen from various points within the Site, however visits confirmed no visibility of the Site from the Church.</p>	Nearest point to Site is c. 165m to the southwest (Asset 26). Furthest point from Site is c. 960m to the west (Asset 4).	None
17	17	The Old Vicarage	Grade II Listed Building	The ZTV suggests that there may be some visibility with the Proposed Development.	c. 300m southwest of the Site	Neutral

Asset Number	Plate(S)	Asset Name	Status	Elements Affecting Intervisibility	Distance from Site	Magnitude of Impact
				Potential intervisibility with the Site from the garden of the Old Vicarage		
21	13, 14	Dovecote at Manor Farm	Grade II* Listed Building	The ZTV indicates that there may be some visibility of the Proposed Development. Possible intervisibility with southern portion of Site, although intermittently through gaps in trees	c. 140m south of the Site	Low Adverse
29	15, 16	Church of St Bartholomew	Grade II* Listed Building	The ZTV indicates that there may be some visibility of the Proposed Development to the north and west of the Church but none from the central location of the Church building. Although well screened by a band of trees to the north portions of the southern extent of the Site were visible through gaps within the trees.	c. 95m south of the Site	Low Adverse
142 and 243	10	Cheley Well	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Located within the Site	Located within the Site, towards the southeast extent and would be surround by solar panels.	Low Adverse
150 & 153	-	Potterspury Lodge (Rudolf Steiner School), pair of gatepiers to forecourt; Potterspury Lodge	Grade II Listed Buildings	ZTV indicates some visibility with the Proposed Development at the lower end. However, buildings to the immediate east and southeast of the Listed Buildings along with mature trees are likely to obscure any views towards the Proposed Development.	c.1.57m northwest of Site	None
154	-	Castlethorpe Mill	Grade II Listed Building	ZTV indicates some visibility, at the middle end of the scale. Trees surrounding the mill building and along the adjacent watercourse and the River Tove may partially screen views.	c. 1.79km east of the Site	Neutral
161	24	Elms Farmhouse	Grade II Listed Building	The ZTV indicates the lowest level of theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development from the	c. 1.7km southeast of the Site	None

Asset Number	Plate(S)	Asset Name	Status	Elements Affecting Intervisibility	Distance from Site	Magnitude of Impact
				Listed Building. No intervisibility with Site was established during the site visits. Views were blocked due to modern infrastructure to the west of the area, and rising topography to the west.		
163 and 157	22	Wakefield Lodge Park (Asset 163) and Walled Garden at Wakefield Lodge (Asset 157)	Registered Park and Garden and Grade II Listed Building	The ZTV suggest that there is the potential for visibility of the Proposed Development from the eastern extent of the Registered Park and Garden including from the Listed Building. No intervisibility with Site was established during the site visits due to modern infrastructure along the length of the A5, trees, and hedgerow. Access to the Walled Garden was restricted due to a private road.	c.1.2km southwest of the Site	None
164	21	Cosgrove	Conservation Area	The ZTV indicates that there may be a discrete area of visibility of the Proposed Development from the towards western extent of the Conservation Area. No intervisibility with Site was established during the site visits. Views were blocked due to modern infrastructure to the west of the area, and rising topography to the west.	c.1.6km southeast of the Site	None
445	18, 19, 20	Beech House	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	The ZTV indicates that the Proposed Development would be visible from Beech House. The Proposed Development would be clearly visible from the house, although slightly screened to the south by trees within its grounds	c. 140m west of the Site	Low Adverse

For all of the assets in the above table with an assessed magnitude of impact of none, no impacts upon their settings or character are predicted. As a result, no harm to these assets is predicted, and the policy tests as set out in the NPPF are not invoked and therefore will not be discussed further in

this assessment. The assets where some magnitude of impact is predicted are discussed in more detail in the following section.

6.2 Assets Considered for Setting Assessment

6.2.1 Grand Union Canal (Asset 3)

The Grand Union Canal is located c.620m northeast of the Site at the closest point. As a Conservation Area, the asset is of Medium Importance. Bridge Number 63 (Asset 36) and Bridge Number 58 (Asset 446) along the canal are Grade II Listed and are also considered to be of Medium Importance.

The original setting of the canal would have been variable as a transport route as it would have run through both industrial areas and countryside. The Conservation Area Appraisal indicates that the section of the canal which runs past the Site lies within Character Area 6: Stoke Bruerne to Cosgrove. It further indicates important views east and west from Bridge 58 (Asset 446).

No important views are indicated from Bridge Number 63 (Asset 36) and important views between this bridge and Elm Tree Farm (where the canal lies within the ZTV) all appear to be orientated towards the east and away from the Proposed Development (South Northamptonshire Council, 2014).

The Conservation Area Appraisal (*ibid.*) further notes that the key positive features of Character Area 6 to be:

- *'The gently winding Canal, meandering along the contour through a largely rural setting*
- *Tranquil character with little outside noise*
- *Attractive landscape of trees and fields, mostly used for growing wheat*
- *The River Tove valley, which is overlooked by the Canal for much of this Character Area*
- *Notable bridges, mostly c1800 although only one (Bridge No 63) is listed [note Bridge 58 is also listed and mentioned later in this section of the appraisal]*
- *Two 1920s bridges, also of interest (Nos 61 and 62)*
- *The best preserved group of historic buildings are at Old Wharf Farm, near Yardley Gobion'* (*ibid.*, 39).

Mature trees line much of the canal between Bridge 63 (Asset 36) and Elm Tree Farm where the ZTV (Figure 2) indicates visibility.

Whilst glimpses of the Proposed Development cannot be discounted as one moves along the canal, the distance between the asset and Proposed Development would mean that the overall character of the canal would remain rural and tranquil. The Proposed Development would also not feature directly in any of the key views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and would not interrupt the relationship of the canal with the River Tove valley.

For much of the length of the canal that lies within the Study Area, there would be no visibility of the Proposed Development. On this basis there is considered to be **Neutral** impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area. There would be **no harm** to the significance of the asset.

6.2.2 The Old Vicarage (Asset 17)

The Old Vicarage is located c. 300m southwest of the Site. As a Grade II Listed Building, the asset is of Medium Importance.

The house dates to the latter half of the 17th century. Its earliest form was a two-storey, three-bay stone and thatched structure with attics, accompanied by a two-bay barn. In the early 18th century, a link bay was added between the barn and the house, creating the current L-shaped layout.

Additional changes were made in 1849. In 1865, the Duke of Grafton exchanged the property, including the house and four acres of glebe land, for the new Vicarage (now 27 Church End) and three and a half acres of its paddock. The last significant modifications occurred in 1869, when a two-storey accommodation bay was added to the east of the main house, followed by an extension to the rear range later in the century (Conlon 2005).

The significance of The Old Vicarage lies in its architectural and historic value. Architecturally, the building represents a fine example of 17th century rural residential design with later modifications. It also has historic significance due to its use as the vicarage for the nearby parish church (Asset 28) and its role in the social and religious life of Potterspurty.

Furthermore, the building's location on Church End forms part of the village's historic core. The setting of the property is heavily influenced by its proximity to village houses, and surrounding countryside.

While recent changes in the village, such as new housing and infrastructure, are visible from parts of the vicarage's grounds, these developments do not dominate the views from the building or harm its immediate historical and visual context. However, the increasing urbanisation of the surrounding area could have a long-term impact on the overall setting, particularly regarding the peaceful rural atmosphere that contributes to the building's significance.

The site visit found that the majority of Church End does have any visibility with the Site. However, glimpses of the Site can be seen from the road through gaps in the trees, as well as from the garden of the Old Vicarage, indicating some intervisibility.

Although elements of the Proposed Development would be visible from the building the key relationships of the vicarage to the Church opposite and to the village would be unaltered. As a result, the Proposed Development would be a perceptible change which would not affect the significance of the Listed Building. The magnitude of impact is considered **Neutral** and there would be **no harm**.

6.2.3 Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21)

Dovecote at Manor Farm is located c. 140m to the south of the Site. As a Grade II* Listed Building, the asset is of High Importance.

The dovecote has its origins in the late 15th century and was restored in 1917 and 1990. The restoration is evidenced by a plaque located on the east side of the building which states "*The Lords of the Manor repaired this dovecote tower AD 1917. R.S Mylne, BCL*". Constructed from coursed limestone rubble with a plain tiled roof, it features a circular plan with batter and a conical roof with a hipped square lantern open to all sides.

The dovecote stands within a farmyard, and its setting is ultimately characterised by its proximity to other farm buildings, including a granary. The immediate area around the dovecote, and association with the medieval settlement of Furtho (Asset 67) to the south, is integral to its historical function and significance.

The site visit has established that parts of the southern portion of the Proposed Development would be visible intermittently through a tree line which bounds a pond feature located to the north of the structure.

The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) that accompanies the planning application proposes that the area between the Site and the Dovecote is included in the biodiversity and green infrastructure enhancements including planting to enhance field margins, native scrub woodland and wildflower meadows. These landscape enhancements may screen, in part, visibility of the Proposed Development, especially in summer.

Although elements of the Proposed Development would be visible (towards the south extent of the Site), it is considered that they would be readily legible as the latest addition to an already somewhat modernised landscape in terms of agricultural practices and infrastructure, such as modern buildings to the west and southwest of the dovecote, and large industrial buildings (The Modern Lawn Company and The Car Workshop) which are located to the immediate east of the structure.

The Proposed Development to the north would not impact the inter-relationships of the Dovecote within the farmyard nor its historical association to the south. The Proposed Development would be theoretically visible to the north, and based on Plate 14 would be partially visible at a distance and in relatively lower lying ground.

The Proposed Development is unlikely to have an effect on the architectural value of the Listed Building and is also unlikely to affect its associative value with the rest of Manor Farm. However, given the proximity of the Proposed Development and the fact that it would be visible on agricultural land that was likely historically associated with Manor Farm to the north, it is considered that the Proposed Development would somewhat erode the agricultural setting of the dovecot.

The magnitude of impact would be **Low Adverse**. The level of harm is judged to be **less than substantial** and at the lower end of the scale.

6.2.4 Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29)

The Church of St Bartholomew is located c. 195m to the south of the Site, and c. 80m to the northeast of Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21). As a Grade II* Listed Building, the asset is of High Importance.

The church, which is built of local limestone, is small and compact but has existed in its rural setting for at least 800 years. Furtho village (Asset 67) became deserted when the main Northampton to Old Stratford Road was diverted away from it, leaving behind only a farm, a dovecote (Asset 21), and the church itself.

Like many other English churches, the chancel would have stood in isolation originally, with additions to the church being made through time. The existing building is said to be c. 1620 in date. It was rebuilt by Edward Furtho (RCHME 1982, p.119).

The Church is situated in a rural setting near Furtho Manor Farm. The immediate physical environment includes the churchyard, which traditionally would have been a place of burial and a space for the congregation.

The church's proximity to the farm further enriches its historical setting, as it suggests a long-standing connection between the church and the surrounding agricultural community. The church is located on relatively low-lying land, with the surrounding landscape gradually rising to the north and east. This topographical feature restricts expansive views from the church, emphasising its rural and somewhat isolated setting.

The visual setting of the church is shaped by its rural surroundings, including fields, farm buildings, and hedgerow, and a wooded area to the immediate north of the church. These natural features frame the church and provide visual context to its location.

From certain vantage points, the church may be seen against a backdrop of farmland, creating a scene that reinforces its role as part of the agricultural landscape. Although the church is well screened by the trees to the north, portions of the southern extent of the Site were visible through gaps within the tree line.

Although elements of the Proposed Development would be visible (towards the south extent of the Site), it is considered that they would be readily legible as the latest addition to an already somewhat modernised landscape in terms of agricultural practices and infrastructure, such as modern buildings to the south of the church, including industrial buildings (The Modern Lawn Company and The Car Workshop).

The Proposed Development is unlikely to have an effect on the architectural value of the Listed Building and is also unlikely to affect its associative value with the rest of Manor Farm.

However, given the proximity of the Proposed Development and the fact that it would be visible on agricultural land to the north, which contains historic footpaths which previously would have given access to the church, it is considered that the Proposed Development would somewhat erode the agricultural setting.

The magnitude of impact would be **Low Adverse**. The level of harm is judged to be **less than substantial** and the lower end of the scale.

6.2.5 Cheley Well (Asset 142 and 243)

Cheley Well is an undated non-designated heritage asset located within the Site, towards its southeast extent. While its precise historical dating remains uncertain, the asset has historical value, including its role as a potential hundred meeting place with a history dating back possibly to at least 1076. This meeting place would have been important in facilitating social, legal, and ceremonial gatherings, which were characteristic of hundred meeting places during the medieval period.

The well is thought to have originated as a natural spring, which may have been regarded as a prehistoric sacred well, reflecting its long-standing importance in the landscape. The well is currently filled in and surrounded by trees and has been used as a bottle and rubbish dump since the 19th century (Gover *et al.*, 1933), which has affected its physical state and somewhat diminishes its visibility and understanding as a historical asset.

The Well is currently located within trees along a field boundary. The historic setting of the well is difficult to determine beyond its location along a field boundary as shown on Ordnance Survey maps as the surrounding area is dominated by post-medieval and modern agricultural field patterning.

The Proposed Development would retain the tree stand and the natural resource and thus the immediate setting would be unchanged, whilst the land use to the north, east, south and west would change from agricultural to energy production land use. The archival and documentary resources about the Well would be retained.

The magnitude of impact is a change to setting to the Well which would not alter its physical properties, which is considered **Low Adverse**, and harm to the significance of the asset would be **limited**.

6.2.6 Castlethorpe Mill (Asset 154)

Castlethorpe Mill is located c. 1.79km east of the Site. As a Grade II Listed Building it is considered to be of Medium Importance.

The asset comprises the remains of an 18th century corn mill and millhouse with a mill race either side. The List Entry notes that much of the mill machinery remains. The mill lies to the east of a watercourse that flows from the River Tove to the north and back into it to the south.

It is orientated on a roughly northeast to southwest alignment and the water wheel would have originally been located at the southwest elevation of the mill. It is currently surrounded by mature trees and agricultural fields.

Much of the significance of the asset is contained within its architectural and historical value, and the elements of setting which contribute most to an appreciation of its significance is its relationship to the adjacent water course, which it would have used for power, and its location amongst agricultural fields which it would have been which it would have been sited to serve.

Whilst there may be some limited views of the Proposed Development from the mill, these would not change the immediate rural and agricultural character of the mill and would not disrupt its relationship with the adjacent water course or the River Tove. On this basis it is considered that, whilst forming a distant new feature in the wider landscape, the Proposed Development would not affect the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate that significance.

The impact is judged to be **Neutral** and there would be **no harm**.

6.2.7 Beech House (Asset 445)

In addition to the designated assets above, consideration has also been given to the potential impacts of the Proposed Development upon the setting of Beech House (Asset 445), located c. 140m west of the Site. Beech House (also known as the Beeches) represents a substantial limestone farmhouse built as part of the Wakefield Lodge Estate in the 19th century (HER 2025).

It is surrounded by a walled garden and associated with ranges of 19th century and modern farm buildings to the north and west (Riden 2002, pp. 289-345). The house is not statutorily or locally listed and is not recorded by the Northamptonshire HER as a non-designated heritage asset.

As a relatively unaltered Victorian farmhouse in a prominent location, however, it is considered to fulfil the assessment criteria set out by West Northamptonshire Council (Section 1Aii, Section 1Bi, and Section 1Di; West Northamptonshire Council 2025) to be considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The setting of The Beeches contributes to its significance, with its interrelationships between farm residential and agricultural buildings and structures ranging in dates from the 19th to 20th centuries, as well as its relationship to the surrounding agricultural landscape, the Wakefield Lodge Estate, and the surrounding rural area being key components.

The farmhouse's setting reflects its 19th-century origins and its connection to the rural economy and estate life. Although some modern developments have encroached on the area, the farmhouse retains a strong connection to its landscape, and the agrarian and rural character of its setting remains largely intact.

However, its association with the rest of the Wakefield Lodge Estate (centred Asset 163) has largely been lost in the surrounding landscape. The views, topography, and agricultural context contribute to the building's overall significance and its value within the historic landscape.

The Proposed Development would not alter the interrelationships between the buildings at The Beeches. The Proposed Development would be visible from the house (Plate 18), although slightly screened to the south by existing trees within the farmyard (Plate 19).

The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) that accompanies the planning application proposes that hedgerows to the north and east of The Beeches are infilled and managed to screen the Proposed Development from The Beeches.

The Proposed Development, as a modern industrial development would alter the current dominant landscape type from rural and agrarian to energy production to the north and east. The Proposed Development would alter views towards the farmhouse, particularly from the public footpath which runs through the Site (Plate 20; example LVIA Figure 8d), from other areas within the Site and from the farmhouse itself.

Given the proximity of the proposed solar panels to the house and that they would alter the currently largely agricultural setting of the asset, it is assessed that the Proposed Development would reduce the ability to fully appreciate the farmhouse's historic interest, including its historic setting from the surrounding landscape.

It must be considered that the interrelationships of the buildings would be unchanged, near agricultural setting would remain unchanged, and that the historic setting would be appreciable on archival material.

Therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered to be **Low Adverse**, representing a change to the setting and a limited encroachment into the character of a historic landscape. The fields immediately surrounding the house would be maintained and would help retain the agricultural character of the area, thus harm to the significance of the asset would be **limited**.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Direct Impacts

Potential impacts on known or unknown buried archaeological remains which may survive relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing, or destroying in situ remains and artefacts during ground-breaking works (including excavation, construction, and other works associated with the Proposed Development) on this Site.

Given the typical construction methods associated with solar farms, entailing relatively limited ground intrusion in proportion to the overall site area, the potential for substantial direct impacts is generally constrained. However, where ground disturbance does occur, it retains the capacity to result in direct physical impacts of High magnitude, as they could potentially result in the destruction or removal of any archaeological deposits which may be present.

Known heritage assets within the Site include Potterspurty Mill (Asset 238) and an associated industrial site (Asset 237), located towards the northwest of the Site, a well and spring (Assets 142 and 243), located towards the southeast extent of the Site, and an area of ridge and furrow located towards the south limits of the Site (Asset 246).

A geophysical survey carried out across the Site (Event 482) in 2023 has also identified:

- A series of faint linear features in Field 1 (Asset 483);
- Two curvilinear features with suspected ridge and furrow in Field 2 (Asset 484);
- Linear ditching, possible pitting and suspected ridge and furrow in Field 3 (Asset 485);
- Evidence of ridge and furrow surviving as ditches in Field 4 (Asset 486);
- A number of anomalies and evidence for ridge and furrow in Field 6 (Asset 487);
- A circular ring ditch and the suspected remains of a Romano-British field system in Field 7 (Asset 488);

- A possible mineral extraction/watering hole in Field 8 (Asset 489);
- A possible prehistoric field boundary system and ridge and furrow in Field 9 (Asset 490); and
- The remains of a suspected Romano-British farmstead with likely associated features and ridge and furrow in Field 10 (Asset 491).

Details of these and their importance, as per the criteria set out in Appendix 2, are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Table of Direct Impacts

Asset Number	Asset Name	Status	Importance
238	Potterspury W. Mill	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Low to Medium
237	Medieval/post medieval industrial activity	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Low
142 and 243	Cheley Well	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Medium
246	Ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
483	Linear features with ferrous anomalies	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Uncertain
484	Two curvilinear features with suspected ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
485	Linear ditching and possible pitting alongside a number of identified ferrous anomalies with suspected historical ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
486	Natural and ferrous anomalies with suspected historical ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
487	A number of ferrous anomalies and evidence for ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
488	Circular ring ditch accompanied by ferrous anomalies and suspected remains of a Romano British field system.	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Medium
489	Probable mineral extraction/watering hole alongside probable geological features	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Uncertain
490	Possible Prehistoric field boundary system and historic ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Negligible to Low
491	Remains of a suspected Romano-British farmstead with a high concentration of ferrous and geological anomalies and historic ridge and furrow	Non-Designated Heritage Asset	Medium to High

Based on existing evidence, the potential for further prehistoric remains to survive within the Site is considered High. A geophysical survey in 2023 identified several probable prehistoric features, including an enclosed settlement in Field 10, a ring ditch in Field 7, and possible post holes and pits in Field 3. Additionally, nearby prehistoric enclosures and potential Bronze Age/Iron Age settlement activity to the north of Yardley Road further highlight the potential for prehistoric remains.

The potential for further Roman remains is also considered High. The geophysical survey identified an enclosed settlement in Field 10, which may represent a Romano-British farmstead, with structural remains possibly within the enclosure which is considered likely to be of Medium to High importance. However, these features could also indicate a prehistoric boundary system.

For the medieval period, ridge and furrow features of possible medieval date were recorded across multiple fields:

- Field 4 (Asset 486)
- Field 6 (Asset 487);
- Field 8 (Asset 489);
- Field 9 (Asset 490);
- Field 10 (Asset 491); and
- Field 11 (Asset 246).

This suggests a High potential for the survival of medieval agricultural remains, though other medieval remains are less likely. Agricultural remains are likely of negligible to low importance.

The potential for further post-medieval remains is also considered to be High, with ridge and furrow evidence across the Site and the presence of features such as Potterspury Mill (Asset 238). Post-medieval agricultural remains are generally of Negligible importance, while the mill (Asset 238) and associated industrial activity (Asset 237) is considered Low to Medium importance.

There is also judged to be a Low potential for modern non-agricultural archaeological remains to survive on the Site.

The identified assets are likely to experience a High magnitude of impact, as they are located within the proposed solar array layout, except Cheley Well (Asset 142 and 243). The location of Potterspury Mill (Asset 238) and associated medieval/post-medieval industrial activity (Asset 237) are located between the solar array and a fenceline.

These assets have only been recorded as point data and any buried remains associated with Assets 237 and 238, potentially those identified as magnetic disturbance by geophysical survey, are likely to extend around those points into the solar array and the fenceline.

As such there is judged to be a High magnitude of impact. Cheley Well (Asset 142 and 243) well lays outside the solar array and no ground level landscape plans are proposed and as such the asset would not be directly impacted by the Proposed Development.

7.2 Setting Impacts

All designated heritage assets within the 2km Study Area were considered for potential impacts to their setting as a result of the Proposed Development.

This includes consideration of whether any such change would constitute an adverse impact (diminishment) to those attributes of the designated assets which directly contribute to their significance rather than simply being an alteration to, or addition of a new element to the existing settings of these assets. The setting assessment was undertaken in line with the requirements of NPPF and Historic England setting guidance.

There is likely to be no impact on the setting of the majority designated assets within the 2km Study Area. Three designated assets including Grand Union Canal (Asset 3), The Old Vicarage (Asset 17) and Castlethorpe Mill (Asset 154), are expected to experience Neutral impacts on their settings.

Low Adverse impacts have been predicted on the setting of the Grade II* Listed Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21) and on the setting of the Grade II* Listed Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29), as well as on the settings of the non-designated heritage assets at Beech House (Asset 445) and Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243). These impacts are considered to be less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale.

7.3 Mitigation

National planning policies and planning guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2025), Planning Practice Guidance (DLUHC & MHCLG Live Document), as well as local plan policies, require a mitigation strategy that is designed to take cognisance of the possible impacts upon heritage assets by a Proposed Development on the Site and avoid, minimise, or offset any such impacts as appropriate.

It is noted that the NPPF states that a local planning authority 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*” (MHCLG 2025, para 218).

Given the known heritage assets on Site, as well as the assessed archaeological potential and in accordance with national and local planning policies on heritage, an archaeological programme of works will be required in advance of the construction of the Proposed Development, as previously advised by the local authority’s archaeological advisor.

Such works would initially take the form of a proportionate archaeological evaluation by trial trenching of the Site of areas that would be affected by the Proposed Development. These works should be informed by the geophysical survey carried out by Archaeological Research Services in 2023 (Appendix 3), which highlighted several potential archaeological features across the Site.

If significant features are found, further mitigation is likely to be required and may include mitigation by design by either designing out areas or use of ‘no dig’ construction techniques. If avoidance cannot be accommodated then any significant remains may require full excavation to be followed by a programme of post-excavation analysis including publication, if appropriate.

However, the full scope and scale, as well as the timing of these works will need to be agreed with West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), as guided by an archaeological advisor, via a written scheme of investigation.

The Public Services (Social) Act 2013 states that development proposals should provide positive benefits to communities through developments. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 notes that where heritage assets are to be impacted a consideration should be given to “enhancing” heritage assets. ClfA and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) (Mann 2023) have also recently noted the need for public benefit in archaeology.

In this case, if a programme of public engagement and/or enhancement were to be considered, engagement could include a digital platform or on-site boards with archaeological and historic information of the area as well as interpretation and dissemination of information resulting from any archaeological investigation undertaken on Site. The scope and requirement of any public benefit should be agreed by the Applicant and be undertaken in consultation with archaeological advisors to WNC.

For many designated assets considered in this assessment, the impacts on their setting are extremely limited or none, and as such, no mitigation is deemed necessary. However, for Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21), the Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29), Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243) and Beech House (Asset 445), the potential impacts are greater, the magnitude of impact is judged to be **Low Adverse** in these cases. Appropriate mitigation measures should be implemented to reduce any adverse effects on their settings and historical value.

For Cheley Well (Asset 142 & 243), the Proposed Development could impact its setting, particularly by reducing visibility and disrupting its spatial context as a historically significant meeting place.

However, this is difficult to appreciate in its current setting and the original setting of the asset is difficult to appreciate beyond the location of its original natural resource as a natural spring.

The assets are currently located within trees, which form part of a field boundary, and this field boundary and tree stand will be maintained as part of the Proposed Development and as such the immediate setting will be unchanged.

For Beech House (Asset 445), the Dovecot at Manor Farm (Asset 21) and the Church of St Bartholmew (Asset 29) the Proposed Development would be partially visible, although the maintenance and enhancement of hedgerows and planting of trees along the boundary of the Site would in part screen the Proposed Development from views and help to minimise impacts upon the setting of these assets.

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- Ordnance Survey map, 1885. Buckinghamshire Sheet IX. Surveyed: 1881, Published: 1885.
- Ordnance Survey map, 1900. Buckinghamshire Sheet IX.NW. Revised: 1898, Published: 1900. Available at: [View map: Ordnance Survey, Buckinghamshire IX.NW \(includes: Cosgrove; Old](#)

[Stratford; Potterspury; Yardley Gobion.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952](#) (Accessed 09/04/2025).

Ordnance Survey map, 1926. Buckinghamshire Sheet IX.NW. Revised: 1924, Published: 1926. Available at: [View map: Ordnance Survey, Buckinghamshire IX.NW \(includes: Cosgrove; Old Stratford; Potterspury; Yardley Gobion.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952](#) (Accessed 09/04/2025).

Ordnance Survey map, 1952. Buckinghamshire Sheet IX.NW. Revised: 1950, Published: 1952. Available at: [View map: Ordnance Survey, Buckinghamshire IX.NW \(includes: Cosgrove; Old Stratford; Potterspury; Yardley Gobion.\) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952](#) (Accessed 09/04/2025).

The following Tithe map and apportionment information was consulted via The Genealogist website (<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>):

Tithe Map, 1850. *Furtho Manor Farm, Furtho, Northampton.*

Tithe Map, 1846. *Potterspury, Northampton.*

8.2 Aerial Photography

A search of the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP, <https://www.cambridgeairphotos.com>) for aerial photographs of the Site and its immediate vicinity has identified eleven records as shown in the table below. One photograph (XT36) is available to view online and is discussed in Section 3.9.

Table 3: Aerial Photographic References

CUCAP	Type	Grid Reference	Subject	Date
GW72	Oblique	SP 7730 4360	"Hundred Meeting Place", Cheley Well, Potterspury	17/07/1951
GW73	Oblique	SP 7730 4360	"Hundred Meeting Place", Cheley Well, Potterspury	17/07/1951
LN36	Oblique	SP 7740 4300	Deserted medieval village, Furtho	26/04/1953
LN37	Oblique	SP 7740 4300	Deserted medieval village, Furtho	26/04/1953
RC8HI238	Vertical	SP 7645 4393	Buckingham County Survey	12/03/1985
XT35	Oblique	SP 7740 4300	Deserted medieval village, Furtho	28/03/1959
XT36	Oblique	SP 7740 4300	Deserted medieval village, Furtho	28/03/1959
ZknJW216	Vertical	SP 7599 4368	Milton Keynes	18/07/2000
ZknJW216	Vertical	SP 7599 4368	Milton Keynes	18/07/2000
ZknJW217	Vertical	SP 7728 4369	Milton Keynes	18/07/2000
ZknJW217	Vertical	SP 7728 4369	Milton Keynes	18/07/2000

The below aerial photographs have been identified via a standard search from Archive Services at Historic England, Swindon. The photographs closest to the Site were selected for further assessment. Digital copies of the photographs were purchased and consulted as part of this assessment. Consulted photographs are also discussed in section 3.9.

Date	Sortie	Frame Number	Scale	Library Number
13/04/1947	RAF/CPE/UK/1 994	3053	1:9800	596
30/06/1968	OS/68241	97	1:7500	10904
16/08/1999	OS/91168	99	1:8200	13857
11/07/1990	SP 7544 / 1	NHC 11930/ 07	N/a	N/a
17/07/1982	SP 7643 / 2	NHC 2060/ 11	N/a	N/a
21/09/1976	SP 7643 / 3	NHC 16035/ 11	N/a	N/a

Appendix A. Figure List

Figure 1: 2017 Satellite Imagery with Field Numbers

Figure 2: Designated Heritage Assets within 2km of the Site and Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure 3: Non-Designated Heritage Assets within 1km of the Site

Figure 4: Events within 1km of the Site

Figure 5: Extract from Blaeu's 1644 Map

Figure 6: Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1885

Figure 7: Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1900

Figure 8: Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1926

Figure 9: Extract from Ordnance Survey Map, 1952

Figure 10: Visualisation of LiDAR DTM data

Appendix 1: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Events

Please refer to Yardley Road Solar Farm R12: Gazetteer of Heritage Assets and Events

Appendix 2: Assessment Scope and Criteria

9. Assessment Scope and Criteria

9.1 Scope of the Assessment

This report details the results of a Heritage Impact Assessment and aims to identify and map the nature of the heritage resource within the site and surrounding Study Area. Where possible, the assessment will evaluate the likely impact from Proposed Development, upon the known and potential heritage resource.

This report will include recommendations for mitigation measures and / or further archaeological works; where the archaeological potential of the site warrants, or where additional information on the site is required.

Further works could include additional research, monitoring of geotechnical investigations, programmes of archaeological surveying and / or field evaluation. The results of any further studies can be used to inform the nature of any subsequent mitigation measures (if required) and provide advice upon the scope and design of the Proposed Development.

The assessment has used the sources listed in the main text to identify and map heritage assets and other relevant find spots or evidence within the site and defined Study Area. Heritage assets are defined in national planning guidance and can include designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings etc.), standing, buried or submerged remains, historic buildings and structures, parks and gardens and areas, sites and landscapes - whether designated or not.

9.2 Assessment Criteria

Archaeological Potential

Consideration of archaeological potential will be informed by the number, density and distribution of known heritage assets of a specific period and/or type within the Study Area. The proximity of such assets to the Site and/or the similarities/dissimilarities in topographical location between the Site and the location of known assets will also be a factor in determining potential.

Previous land use on the Site will also be a consideration in assessing potential, as later disturbance may have removed or damaged earlier buried archaeological remains and therefore may have reduced the potential for archaeological remains to survive on Site. Consideration will also be given to evidence from landform change in the Study Area and the possibility that natural deposits such as colluvium or alluvium may have buried archaeological remains. The potential for surviving archaeological evidence of past activity within the Site is expressed in the report as ranging between the scales of:

- High – The available evidence suggests a high likelihood for past activity within the site and a strong potential for archaeological evidence to survive intact or reasonably intact.
- Medium – The available evidence suggests a reasonable likelihood for past activity within the site and consequently there is a potential that archaeological evidence could survive.
- Low – The available evidence suggests archaeological evidence of activity is unlikely to survive within the site, although some minor land-use may have occurred.
- Uncertain - Insufficient information to assess.

Buried archaeological evidence is, by its very nature, an unknown quantity which can never be 100% identified during a desk-based assessment. The assessed potential is based on available evidence but the physical nature and extent of any archaeological resource surviving within the site cannot be confirmed without detailed information on the below ground deposits or results of on-site fieldwork.

Where known heritage assets are identified, the importance of such assets is determined by reference to existing designations where available. For assets where no designation has been assigned, an informed assessment has been made of the likely historic, artistic, or archaeological importance of that resource based on professional knowledge and judgement.

Adjustments to the classification (Table 2, below) are occasionally made, where appropriate; for some types of finds or assets where there is no consistent value, and the importance may vary. Levels of importance for any such areas are generally assigned on an individual basis, based on professional judgement and advice.

Table 4: Assessing the Importance of a Heritage Assets

HIGH	Assets of high importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a national level., e.g. Scheduled Monuments (or non-designated assets of schedulable quality and importance), Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Garden and Registered Battlefields. Well preserved historic landscapes, whether inscribed or not, with exceptional coherence, time depth, or other critical factor(s)
MEDIUM	Assets of medium importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a regional level. Designated or non-designated assets including Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas; well preserved structures or buildings of historical significance, historic landscapes or assets of a reasonably defined extent and significance, or reasonable evidence of occupation / settlement, ritual, industrial activity etc. Examples may include burial sites, deserted medieval villages, Roman roads and dense scatters of finds.
LOW	Assets of low importance and rarity and those considered to be important at a local level. Locally listed buildings or non-designated assets with some evidence of human activity which have the potential to contribute to local research objectives, structures or buildings of potential historical merit. Examples include assets such as historic field systems and boundaries, agricultural features such as ridge and furrow, etc.
NEGLIGIBLE	Assets of very low importance which are common. Heritage assets with very little or no surviving archaeological interest or buildings and landscapes of no historical significance. Examples include destroyed antiquities, buildings of no architectural merit, or relatively modern landscape features such as quarries, field boundaries, drains and ponds etc.
UNKNOWN	Insufficient information exists to assess the importance of a feature (e.g. unidentified features on aerial photographs).

The likely magnitude of the impact of the Proposed Development works is determined by identifying the level of change from the Proposed Development upon the 'baseline' conditions of the Site and the heritage resource identified in the assessment. This effect can be either adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral. The criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 5: Criteria for Determining Magnitude of Impact

LEVEL OF MAGNITUDE		DEFINITION
ADVERSE		
HIGH		Considerable impacts fundamentally changing the baseline condition of the receptor, leading to total or considerable alteration of the asset or its setting – e.g. complete or almost complete destruction of the archaeological resource; dramatic visual intrusion into the setting of the asset resulting in considerable adverse change; significant increase in noise or changes in sound quality; extensive changes to use. Considerable impacts to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Battlefields, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, and World Heritage Sites.
MEDIUM		Impacts changing the baseline condition of the receptor materially but not entirely, leading to partial alteration of the asset or its setting – e.g. a large proportion of the archaeological resource damaged or destroyed; visual intrusion into key aspects of the setting of the asset; and changes in noise levels or use of an asset that would result in detrimental changes to character.
LOW		Detectable impacts which alter the baseline condition of the receptor to a small degree – e.g. a small proportion of the surviving archaeological resource is damaged or destroyed; minor severance, change to the setting or structure or increase in noise; and limited encroachment into character of a historic landscape.
NEGLIGIBLE		Barely distinguishable adverse change from baseline conditions, where there would be very little appreciable impact on a known asset, possibly because of distance from the development, method of construction or landscape or ecological planting, that are thought to have no long term effect on the significance of the asset
NEUTRAL		
NEUTRAL		A change to the asset or its setting which does not result in harm or benefit. This may occur where there is a perceptible change but that change does not diminish or enhance the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate its significance
BENEFICIAL		
NEGLIGIBLE		Barely distinguishable beneficial change from baseline conditions, where there would be very little appreciable impact on a known asset and little long term effect on the significance of the asset.
LOW		Minimal enhancement to an asset or its setting, such as removal of minor inappropriate features, limited improvements to setting or reduction in severance; slight changes in noise or sound quality; minor changes to use; resulting in a small improvement which would lead to enhancement of the ability to appreciate the significance of an asset.
MEDIUM		Changes to key to an asset or its setting resulting in material enhancements which allow for greater appreciation of the asset and/or its setting. For example, removal of an inappropriate later addition allowing for the asset's significance to be revealed; removal of an inappropriate feature in an asset's setting allowing the contribution of setting to the asset's significance to be better understood or substantial reductions in noise or disturbance such that the significance of known asset would be enhanced.
HIGH		Substantial positive changes to an asset and key elements of its setting which would greatly enhance its significance and the ability to appreciate that significance; this might result from the removal of adverse or considerably distracting features from the setting of an asset; significant decrease in noise or changes in sound quality; changes to use or access.

In certain cases, it is not possible to confirm the magnitude of impact upon a heritage resource, especially where anticipated buried deposits exist. In such circumstances a professional judgement as to the scale of such impacts is applied.

Appendix 3: Geophysical Survey

Please refer to Yardley Road Solar Farm R13: Geophysical Survey Report

Appendix 4: Plates



Plate 1: South-facing view from the northern corner of the Site



Plate 2: Southeast-facing view along the western edge of the northern part of the Site



Plate 3: East-facing view of the central field within the northern part of the Site



Plate 4: Northeast-facing view along Yardley Road between the northern and southern parts of the Site



Plate 5: Southeast-facing view along footpath through the southern part of the Site from Yardley Road



Plate 6: Southeast-facing view from footpath near the centre of the southern part of the Site



Plate 7: Southwest-facing view from footpath near the centre of the southern part of the Site



Plate 8: South-facing view towards Furtho from Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243)



Plate 9: Northwest facing view of field boundaries near the centre of the southern part of the Site



Plate 10: South-facing view of Cheley Well (Assets 142 and 243)



Plate 11: Northwest-facing view along stream that runs through the Site from Cheley Well



Plate 12: South-facing view towards Furtho from the southernmost field within the Site



Plate 13: South-facing view of the Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21) in Furtho



Plate 14: Northwest-facing view towards the Site from the Dovecote at Manor Farm (Asset 21)



Plate 15: Northeast-facing view towards the Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29) in Furtho



Plate 16: North north-west-facing view showing the Site from the Church of St Bartholomew (Asset 29)



Plate 17: East-facing view towards the Old Vicarage (Asset 17) and the Site from Church End, Potterspury



Plate 18: Southwest-facing view of Beech House (Asset 445) from within the Site



Plate 19: Northwest-facing view of Beech House (Asset 445) from within the Site



Plate 20: Southwest-facing view towards Beech House (Asset 445) from footpath through the southern part of the Site



Plate 21: Northwest facing view towards Site from northern edge of Cosgrove Conservation Area (Asset 164)



Plate 22: East-northeast facing view towards Site from eastern edge of Wakefield Lodge Park (Asset 163), and within the vicinity of the Walled Garden (Asset 157)



Plate 23: North facing view towards Site from 1, Church End (Asset 26)



Plate 24: West northwest facing view towards Site from Elms Farmhouse (Asset 161)



Plate 25: South facing view towards Site from southern extent of Yardley Gobion Conservation Area (Asset 2)



Plate 26: South facing view towards Site from Grand Union Canal Bridge Number 58 (Asset 446), towards the north extent of the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area (Asset 3)
