

Report



Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: Tittesworth Visitor Centre, Staffordshire

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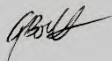
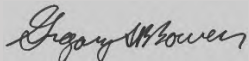
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Revision History

Revision	Date	Amendment
00	15.10.2025	First Issue for Client Review

Non-Technical Summary

Fisher German have commissioned RSK ADAS Limited to assess the potential impact that the redevelopment of an existing overspill car park at Tittesworth Visitor Centre would have on the archaeological resource.

The Site currently comprises open grassland and is used as an informal, temporary overspill car park for the Tittesworth Visitor Centre. The Proposed Development will involve the installation of new drainage around the perimeter of the car parking area and small areas of shallow excavation and improvements to the existing ground level. The aim of the proposals is to create a more accessible, usable area which will maintain the natural surface.

Based on the conclusions of this assessment, there is a low potential for groundworks associated with the Proposed Development to have an impact on the archaeological resource. Any archaeological remains which may be present would likely of low significance. This report will assist the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority to make an informed decision on the need for further archaeological work on the Site, in advance of any consented development.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In August 2025 RSK ADAS Limited were commissioned by Fisher German LLP (henceforth 'the Client') to assess the potential impact that a Proposed Development on land known as Tittesworth overspill car park (NGR: 399424 360374) (henceforth 'the Site') would have on the archaeological resource (Figure 1). A Study Area of 1 km (referred to henceforth as the 'Study Area') around Site has been identified in order to assemble the data for this assessment.
- 1.2 The objective of the assessment is to identify the nature and significance of the recorded archaeological resource on the Site and its immediate environs, and to undertake an assessment of the effect the Proposed Development may have upon designated and non-designated heritage assets which may be present on the Site.
- 1.3 This report is suitable for submission as a validation document to inform a planning application and is consistent with national and local planning policy regarding to consideration of the historic environment in the planning process.
- 1.4 This assessment has also been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA, 2020) and the CIfA *Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology* (CIfA, 2022).

2 Site Location, Description of Development and Geology

Site Location

- 2.1 The Site is an area of open grassland with a small patch of shrubland to the north. It is located immediately north of the Tittesworth Visitor Centre, with further car parking facilities and Tittesworth reservoir situated to the east. The site is bound to the north and west by greenfield land parcels.
- 2.2 Ground levels across the Site are recorded at a height of between 202.49 – 204.54 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Description of the Development

- 2.3 The Proposed Development, as illustrated in Figure 8, will comprise:
 - Minor groundworks to raise the existing ground level by between 0.02 – 0.59 m across the eastern half of the Site.
 - A ridge will be constructed to a maximum height of 204.40 m aOD to aid drainage.

- Two small areas will be excavated in the southern and eastern part of the Site, to a maximum depth of 0.05 m below ground level (bgl).
- Drainage will be installed around the perimeter of the car parking using filter trenches and inspection chambers. The inspection chambers will be installed to a depth between 0.55 to 1.46 m bgl and will measure approximately 0.45 m in diameter.
- The entire car park area to the south of the existing woodland will be covered in a grass reinforcement mat and reseeded.

Geology

- 2.4 There is no recent geotechnical data available for the Site.
- 2.5 British Geological Survey (BGS) mapping records the underlying bedrock geology of the Site as Morridge Formation Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone. This is overlain by a superficial deposit of Devensian Till (BGS, 2025).
- 2.6 LandIS records the overlying soils as slowly permeable, seasonally wet, acid loamy and clayey soils (LandIS, 2025).

3 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The overarching aim of this desk-based assessment is to establish the known and potential historic environment resource within the Site.
- 3.2 The specific aims of this desk-based assessment are:
- To establish the location and extent of any known heritage assets at the site and surrounding area;
 - To determine the potential for, and survival of, previously unknown archaeological remains within the Site;
 - To assess the archaeological impacts of the Proposed Development; and
- 3.3 To inform any mitigation strategy that may be required to enable any archaeology present on the Site to be appropriately recorded.
- 3.4 Based on the information obtained during the preparation of this desk-based assessment, conclusions and recommendations are provided regarding:
- The potential for hitherto unknown archaeological sites within the study area, based on the evidence examined;

- Any likely impacts on the known historic environment resource (buried archaeology, earthworks and historic buildings) resulting from the Proposed Development; and
- The outline scope of any further archaeological or historic building assessment and/or mitigation work that may be required.

4 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

National Policy

- 4.1 There is national legislation and guidance relating to the protection and treatment of the historic environment within the development process. These identify the historic environment as a non-renewable, fragile and finite resource and place a priority on its conservation. This includes the setting out of appropriate assessment to ensure that any damage or loss to the resource is permitted only where it is justified.

Statutory Protection

- 4.2 The key pieces of legislation are the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* (1979) and the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* (1990). The application of these laws and the over-arching national policy covering the effects of development on the historic environment is outlined in the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. Elements of this legislation and guidance of relevance to the present development are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of key legislation and planning policy relating to the historic environment

Title	Content
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)	The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 covers the registration of Listed Buildings (that is those buildings that are seen to be of special architectural or historic interest) and the designation of Conservation Areas (areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance). A Listed Building may not be demolished or altered or extended in any manner, which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest without Listed Building Consent being granted. There are three grades of Listed Building (in descending order): Grade I: buildings of exceptional interest;

Title	Content
	Grade II*: particularly important buildings of more than special interest; and Grade II: buildings of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them
Treasure Act 1996	The 1996 Act defines 'Treasure' as any object that is at least 10% gold or silver, associated coins or groups of coins which are over 300 years old, objects formerly classed as 'treasure trove' (i.e. deliberately deposited items with a high content of gold or silver); any group of two or more metallic objects of prehistoric date and any objects found in association with the above. Any find of 'Treasure' must be reported to the local Coroner.
Burial Act 1857	Under Section 25 of the 1857 Act, it is generally a criminal offence to remove human remains from any place of burial without an appropriate licence issued by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), although recent legislative changes indicate that some cases are exempt from this requirement
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 202	Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value⁷³. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and 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 generations⁷⁴.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 203	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. This strategy should take into account: d) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; e) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; f) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

Title	Content
	g) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 204	When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 205	Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to: a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 206	Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.
Proposals Affecting Heritage Assets	
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 207	In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 208	Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting

Title	Content
	the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 209	Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 210	In determining planning applications, local planning authorities 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 positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
NPPF Chapter 16, Paragraph 211	In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.
Considering Potential Impacts	
NPPF Chapter 16, Paragraph 212	When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
NPPF Chapter 16, Paragraph 213	Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

Title	Content
	a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁷⁵.
NPPF Chapter 16, Paragraph 214	Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, 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, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use
NPPF Chapter 16, Paragraph 215	Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 216	The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 217	Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable

Title	Content
	steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 218	Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible ⁷⁶ . However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 219	Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 220	Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 221	Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Non-statutory Protection

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

- 4.4 As stated within Paragraph 207 of the NPPF, where a site includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets of archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, results of a field evaluation.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.5 Local Authorities are responsible for the protection of the historic environment within the planning system and the formulation of policies to support this obligation.
- 4.6 Treatment of the historic environment within the planning process relevant to the Proposed Development is covered by policies DMC5 and DMC7 contained in the Peak District National Park's Development Management Policies (2019) and Core Policy L3 contained in the Peak District National Park's Core Strategy Development Plan (2011). These policies are reproduced in Table 2.

Table 2: Local planning policies relevant to the consideration of the historic environment.

Policy No	Description
DMC5 Assessing the impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings	A. Planning applications for development affecting a heritage asset, including its setting must clearly demonstrate: i) Its significance including how any identified features of value will be conserved and where possible enhanced; and ii) Why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary B. The supporting evidence must be proportionate to the significance of the asset. It may be included as part of a Heritage Statement or Design and Access Statement where relevant. C. Proposals likely to affect heritage assets with archaeological and potential archaeological interest should be supported by appropriate information that identifies the impacts or a programme of archaeological works to a methodology approved by the Authority. D. Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments will be considered in accordance with policies for designated heritage assets. E. If applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effect of the development on the significance, character and appearance of the heritage asset and its setting, the application will be refused. F. Development of a designated or non-designated heritage asset will not be permitted if it would result in any harm to,

	or loss of, the significance, character and appearance of a heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), unless: i) For designated heritage assets, clear and convincing justification is provided, to the satisfaction of the Authority, that the: a) Substantial harm or loss of significance is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss; or b) In the case of less than substantial harm to its significance, the harm is weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. ii) For non-designated heritage assets, the development is considered by the Authority to be acceptable following a balanced judgement that takes into account the significance of the heritage asset.
DMC7 Listed Buildings	A. Planning applications for development affecting a Listed Building and/or its setting should be determined in accordance with the policy DMC5 and clearly demonstrate: i) How their significance will be preserved; and ii) Why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary. B. Development will not be permitted if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effect on the significance and architectural and historic interest of the Listed Building and its setting and any curtilage listed features. C. Development will not be permitted if it would: i) Adversely affect the character, scale, proportion, design, detailing of, or materials used in the Listed Building; or ii) Result in the loss of or irreversible change to original features or other features of importance or interest. D. In particular, development will not be permitted if it would directly, indirectly or cumulatively lead to: i) Removal of original walls, stairs, or entrances, or subdivision of large interior spaces; ii) Removal, alteration or unnecessary replacement of structural elements including walls, roof structures, beams and floors;

	iii) The unnecessary removal, alteration or replacement of features such as windows or doors, fireplaces or plasterwork; iv) The loss of curtilage features which complement the character and appearance of the Listed Building (e.g. boundary walls, railings or gates); v) Repairs or alterations involving materials, techniques and detailing inappropriate to a Listed Building vi) The replacement of traditional features other than with like for like, authentic or original materials and using appropriate techniques; vii) Extensions to the front of Listed Buildings; viii) Extensions of more than one story to the rear of listed small houses or terraced properties; ix) Inappropriate impact on the setting of the Listed Building. Unless justified to the satisfaction of the Authority, that the proposed changes, loss or irreversible damage, and/or addition of new features to the Listed Building and its setting are: a) Less than substantial in terms of impact on the character and significance of the Listed Building and its setting; and b) Off-set by the public benefit from making the changes, including enabling optimum viable use, and net enhancement to the Listed Building and its setting. E. Where change to a Listed Building is acceptable, an appropriate record of the building will be required to a methodology approved in writing by the Authority prior to any works commencing.
Core Policy: L3: Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance	A. Development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings, including statutory designations and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest; B. Other than in exceptional circumstances development will not be permitted where it is likely to cause harm to the significance of any cultural heritage asset of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance or its setting, including statutory designations or other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest; C. Proposals for development will be expected to meet the objectives of any strategy, wholly or partly covering the

National Park, that has, as an objective, the conservation and where possible the enhancement of cultural heritage assets. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the Cultural Heritage Strategy for the Peak District National Park and any successor strategy.

Technical Guidance

- 4.7 This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the *ClfA Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (ClfA, 2020) and the *ClfA Code of conduct: professional ethics in archaeology* (ClfA, 2022).
- 4.8 Further guidance on the assessment of significance as part of the planning application process is contained in the document *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (Historic England, 2015) and the document *Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2019).

5 Assessment Methodology

- 5.1 This archaeological desk-based assessment will focus on the impacts the Proposed Development will have on buried archaeology, earthworks, and historic buildings within the Site boundary. The potential impacts of the development on the settings of designated heritage assets such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Locally Listed Buildings are outside the scope of this report.

Terminology

- 5.2 **Designated heritage asset:** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
- 5.3 **Heritage asset:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 5.4 **Setting of a heritage asset:** 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.
- 5.5 **Significance (for heritage policy):** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or

historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

- 5.6 **Archaeological site:** Archaeological remains may consist of surface and/or sub-surface remains, features, deposits and/or material relating to past anthropogenic activity.
- 5.7 **Archaeological interest:** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 5.8 **Palaeoenvironmental/geoarchaeological potential:** Study of the palaeoenvironment and geoarchaeology combines multi-disciplinary approaches which use the techniques and subject matter of geography, geology and other geosciences to address archaeological aims.
- 5.9 The focus of geoarchaeological fieldworks and palaeoenvironmental assessment can be split into two main areas:

Archaeological

- Using geoarchaeological assessment through the knowledge of landforms and geological processes combined with the modelling of sub-surface data to predict and evaluate the location of deposits which may bury or contain significant archaeological sites and/or material.
- Looking at organic deposits preserved within archaeological remains to provide detailed information on processes carried out at that site, or leading to their presence.

Palaeoenvironmental

- Using a similar set of techniques – to predict and evaluate the location of deposits with high palaeoenvironmental potential, not necessarily in direct association with archaeological sites. Such deposits, often alluvial, can be targeted for sampling and lab work, thus providing detailed information on the changing environment over time.

- 5.10 These techniques directly relate to practical archaeological investigation in two ways:

- Providing a process by which to determine the likelihood of construction impacts to deposits with archaeological potential; and
- Providing interpretation of depositional context for archaeological remains.

Study Area

- 5.11 A Study Area of 1 km around Proposed Development Site has been identified in order to assemble the data for this assessment (Figure 1). All designated and non-designated heritage assets recorded by Historic England, the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (SHER) and the Peak

District National Park Authority have been assessed within this Study Area (Figures 2 – 3). It is considered that information from the Study Area may inform the assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development and the archaeological resources which may be present within the Site boundary.

Sources

- 5.12 The following publicly accessible sources of primary and secondary information were consulted.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.13 Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE) datasets of designated heritage assets were consulted in September 2025. These datasets contain information on all recorded World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, and Registered Battlefields. If present, all designated heritage assets are referred to in the text by a unique reference number (1), (2), etc. A comprehensive list of all assets can be found in Appendix A and the locations of these assets can be seen on Figure 2.

Historic Environment Records

The Site lies within an area covered by the Staffordshire HER. This database of recorded archaeological sites, findspots and events, was consulted for information relating to the Study Area in September 2025 (HER Order Reference OLF-209188-4350). All heritage assets are referred to in the text by a unique reference number (1), (2), etc. A comprehensive list of all assets can be found in Appendix B and the locations of these assets can be seen on Figure 3.

Cartographic Sources

- 5.14 Information from Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and earlier historic mapping can assist in the assessment of archaeological potential in the following ways: highlighting previously unrecorded features, enabling an understanding of how the land has been managed in the recent past, and identifying areas where development is likely to have removed or truncated below-ground archaeological deposits. All maps consulted are listed in the References section below.

Aerial Photographs

- 5.15 Historic England's Aerial Photo Explorer was consulted in September 2025 (Historic England 2025a). Information provided by aerial photography can assist the assessment of archaeological potential by highlighting previously unrecorded features, enabling an understanding of how the land has been managed in the recent past.

Documentary Sources

- 5.16 Other primary and secondary sources relating to the Study Area were obtained from Historic England and from online sources. The sources consulted are listed in the References section below.

Assumptions and limitations

- 5.17 Much of the information used by this study consists of secondary information compiled from a variety of sources. The assumption is made that this information is reasonably accurate.
- 5.18 The SHER is a record of known archaeological and historic features. They are not an exhaustive record of all surviving historic environment features and do not preclude the existence of further features which are unknown at present.

Consultation

- 5.19 The Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team, who provides historic environment advice to the Local Planning Authority has not been consulted up to the date of the submission of this report for client review.

6 Results

Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.1 Historic England's NHLE, the SHER and Peak District National Park Authority record no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I Listed Buildings, Designated Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within the 1 km Study Area (Figure 2).
- 6.2 Designated heritage assets most relevant to the archaeological interpretation of the Site are described in detail by period in the Archaeological and Historical Background section below.

Historic Environment Record Heritage Assets

- 6.3 The SHER records a total of 18 (11-28) heritage assets within the Study Area (Figure 3).
- 6.4 Heritage assets most relevant to the archaeological interpretation of the route of the Scheme are described in detail by period in the Archaeological and Historical Background section below (any HER Heritage Assets which were also recorded as Designated Assets have been omitted from Appendix B for clarity).

Previous Archaeological Events

- 6.5 No previous intrusive archaeological interventions are recorded by the SHER within the Site or Study Area.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Data

- 6.6 The Historic Landscape Characterisation of the Site is described by the SHER as *a post-medieval small rectilinear field system* (SHER, 2025).

7 Archaeological and Historical Background

Chronology

- 7.1 Where referred to in the document, the main archaeological periods are broadly defined by the following date ranges:

- Palaeolithic 650,000 - 8500 BC
- Mesolithic 8500 - 4000 BC
- Neolithic 4000 - 2400 BC
- Bronze Age 2400 - 700 BC
- Iron Age 700 BC - AD 43
- Roman AD 43 - 410
- Early Medieval AD 410 - 1066
- Medieval AD 1066 – 1539
- Post-medieval AD 1540 - 1799
- 19th century AD 1800 - 1899
- Modern AD 1900 - present

Prehistoric (650,000 BC - AD 43)

- 7.2 The SHER contains one record attributed to the prehistoric period for the Study Area, a possible Bronze Age barrow (16) recorded approximately 700 m east of the Site (SHER, 2025).
- 7.3 Given the paucity of evidence within the Study Area, there is a low potential for remains dating to the Prehistoric period to be present on the Site.

Romano-British (AD 43 - 410)

- 7.4 The SHER contains no records attributed to the Romano-British period for the Study Area.
- 7.5 The closest evidence of Roman occupational activity within the wider environs of the Study Area is represented by two Roman camps, situated approximately 3 km to the northwest and southeast of the Site, respectively.

- 7.6 The available archaeological evidence suggests there is a low potential for Romano-British archaeological artefacts or deposits to be present within the Site.

Early Medieval (AD 410 - 1066)

- 7.7 The SHER contains one record attributed to the early medieval period for the Study Area.
- 7.8 A settlement is recorded at Meerbrook (14), located approximately 500 m northwest of the Site. It is thought to date from the Anglo-Saxon period and was fully established by the 13th Century (SHER, 2025).
- 7.9 The available archaeological evidence suggests there is a low potential for early medieval archaeological artefacts or deposits to be present within the Site.

Medieval (AD 1066 - 1539)

- 7.10 The SHER contains two records attributed to the medieval period for the Study Area.
- 7.11 The most relevant of these is the former site of the *New Grange* (12) at the Dieulacres Abbey in Leekfrith, located approximately 250 m south of the Site. No upstanding remains of the former building are visible (SHER, 2025).
- 7.12 The available archaeological evidence suggests there is a low potential for medieval archaeological artefacts or deposits to be present within the Site.

Post-medieval (AD 1539 - 1799)

- 7.13 The NHLE and SHER contain eleven records for the post-medieval period for the Study Area, with majority of the assets located on land of the eastern bank of the Tittesworth reservoir. There are four Grade II Listed Buildings (2, 3, 5, 6) and seven HER heritage assets (18-20, 24, 26-28).
- 7.14 The most relevant Listed Building is Marsh Farmhouse and its attached outbuildings (3) which are located approximately 45 m north of the Site. The farmhouse was constructed in the late 18th century with later 19th century alterations (NHLE, 2025).
- 7.15 The most relevant of the HER heritage assets are the two former New Grange farmsteads (19, 20) located on land approximately 200 m south of the Site. They were in use from 1666 but later demolished during the construction of the reservoir in the 1960s. The (SHER, 2025).
- 7.16 The available archaeological evidence suggests there is a low potential for post-medieval material to be present on the Site which would be of archaeological significance.

19th century (AD 1800 – 1899)

- 7.17 The NHLE and SHER contain six 19th century heritage assets within the Study Area. There is one Grade II* Listed Building (1), three Grade II Listed Buildings (4, 7, 8) and three HER heritage assets (21-23).
- 7.18 The closest of these is the Methodist Chapel (4) to the southwest of Meerbrook, located approximately 350 m northwest of the Site.
- 7.19 The available evidence suggests there is a low potential for 19th century material to be present on the Site which would be of archaeological significance.

Modern (AD 1900 - present)

- 7.20 The NHLE and SHER contains four records for heritage assets attributed to the Modern period within the Study Area. There is one Grade II Listed Building (9) and three HER heritage assets (11, 15, 16).
- 7.21 The closest of these is a Second World War pillbox (15) located approximately 300 m south of the Site, although it is recorded to be largely demolished (SHER, 2025).
- 7.22 The available evidence suggests there is a low potential for Modern material to be present on the Site which would be of archaeological significance.

Undated

- 7.23 The SHER contains one record which is undated within the Study Area. This is a probable earthwork mound (25) located approximately 900 m east of the Site (SHER, 2025).

Historic and Modern Mapping

- 7.24 The 1887 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Figure 4) shows that location of the Site within a large parcel of agricultural land. The current eastern boundary of the Site corresponds to historical land boundaries and the road to the north. There are a small copse of trees shown to the northeast of the Site, however, no other features are visible within the Site boundary. The surrounding landscape is predominantly agricultural, with the River Churnet and its tributaries located to the south and west of the Site (Figure 4).
- 7.25 The 1900 OS map (Figure 5) and 1926 OS map shows no discernible changes to land-use or layout. The surrounding landscape remains largely agricultural with small clusters of buildings to the northwest and south of the Site.
- 7.26 The 1976 OS map (Figure 6) shows the Site has been redeveloped as a car park serving the Tittesworth Reservoir Amenity Area. The previous large land parcel depicted has been divided

into a thin rectangular plot, bordered by a road along its the western boundary. The eastern and northern boundaries appear to remain unchanged. The surrounding area to the south of the Site has been subject to major redevelopment, with the construction of the Tittesworth Reservoir. The previously depicted small buildings, roads and tributaries of the River Chernet are no longer visible. A new road bridge to the northwest of the Site has been constructed over the Tittesworth Reservoir linking to Meerbrook.

Aerial Photographs

- 7.27 The earliest distinguishable aerial photographs were taken in 2003, depicting the Site in operation as a car park. The majority of the Site appears as a mowed grass area and a small plot to the north appears to be left as shrubland. The Site is bordered by trees along the western boundary, while a small hedgerow is present along the eastern boundary which borders the agricultural fields (Google Earth, 2025).
- 7.28 Aerial photography from the summers of 2006 and 2018 illustrate feather-shaped land drains in the eastern part of the Site, which extend into the neighbouring field. These are likely part of the same drainage system. (Google Earth, 2025).
- 7.29 Aerial photographs from between 2006 and 2025 show a footpath extending from the southwestern corner of the Site to the southeastern corner. However, there are no other discernible changes to the land-use or layout of the Site or immediately surrounding area (Google Earth, 2025).

8 Impact Assessment

Previous Impacts

- 8.1 The available archaeological, documentary, and cartographic data suggests that the location of the Site has been undeveloped open land until the modern period. Historic mapping and aerial photography show that the Site has remained in agricultural use until its use as an overspill car park in the 1970's.
- 8.2 Aerial photographs suggests a series land drains are present across the Site, although the date of their installation and full extent of their impact is unknown. Existing impacts on the Site may have also resulted from agricultural activity prior to the Site's current use.

Impacts Associated with the Proposed Development

- 8.3 The formation level of the proposed car park drainage inspection chambers will be between 0.55- 1.46 m bgl. There will be two small areas of excavation within the southern and western parts of the Site to a depth of 0.05 m bgl.
- 8.4 Other groundworks consist of raising the existing ground level by between 0.02- 0.59 m to develop a ridge along the eastern half of the Site.
- 8.5 Any impacts on heritage assets resulting from the Proposed Development are discussed below.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 8.6 There are no designated World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I Listed Buildings, Designated Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens on the Site or immediately adjacent to the Site. There will be no physical impact to any of these types of designated heritage assets from the development.
- 8.7 There is one Grade II* and nine Grade II Listed Buildings within the Study Area although none are within the Site and as a result will not be physically impacted.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 8.8 The SHER records a total of 18 heritage assets within the Study Area, however none are recorded within the site itself.
- 8.9 Based on the archaeology recorded in the Study Area and nature of the Site's topography, geology, and archaeological and historical background , there is a low potential for currently unknown archaeological remains to be present within the Site. In areas of the Site which have been previously undisturbed, there is some potential for archaeological artefacts and features to survive. Such remains would likely be associated with sparse agricultural activity dating from the post-medieval period onwards and would considered to be of low archaeological significance.

9 Conclusions

- 9.1 The Proposed Development will comprise groundworks to redevelop the existing overspill car park for the Tittesworth Visitor Centre. This will include below ground intrusions with potential to impact on any archaeological remains which may be present.
- 9.2 The sources examined show that the Site has been in agricultural use from at least the 19th century until its redevelopment as an overspill car park in the 1970s.
- 9.3 Based on the conclusion of this desk-based assessment, the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority will make an informed decision on the need for further archaeological

investigation, if planning permission is granted. The decision will be taken with consideration to National and Local Planning Policy relating to the historic environment.

Acknowledgements

- 9.4 This assessment was commissioned by Fisher German LLP and thanks are due in this regard. The report was written by Georgina Bolton. The supporting maps and illustrations were prepared by Georgina Bolton and verified by Greg Bowen.

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Ordnance Survey Maps

Small Scale

OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:10,560 (1887)

OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:10,560 (1900)

OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:10,560 (1926)

OS Plan map of Staffordshire 1:10,000 (1976)

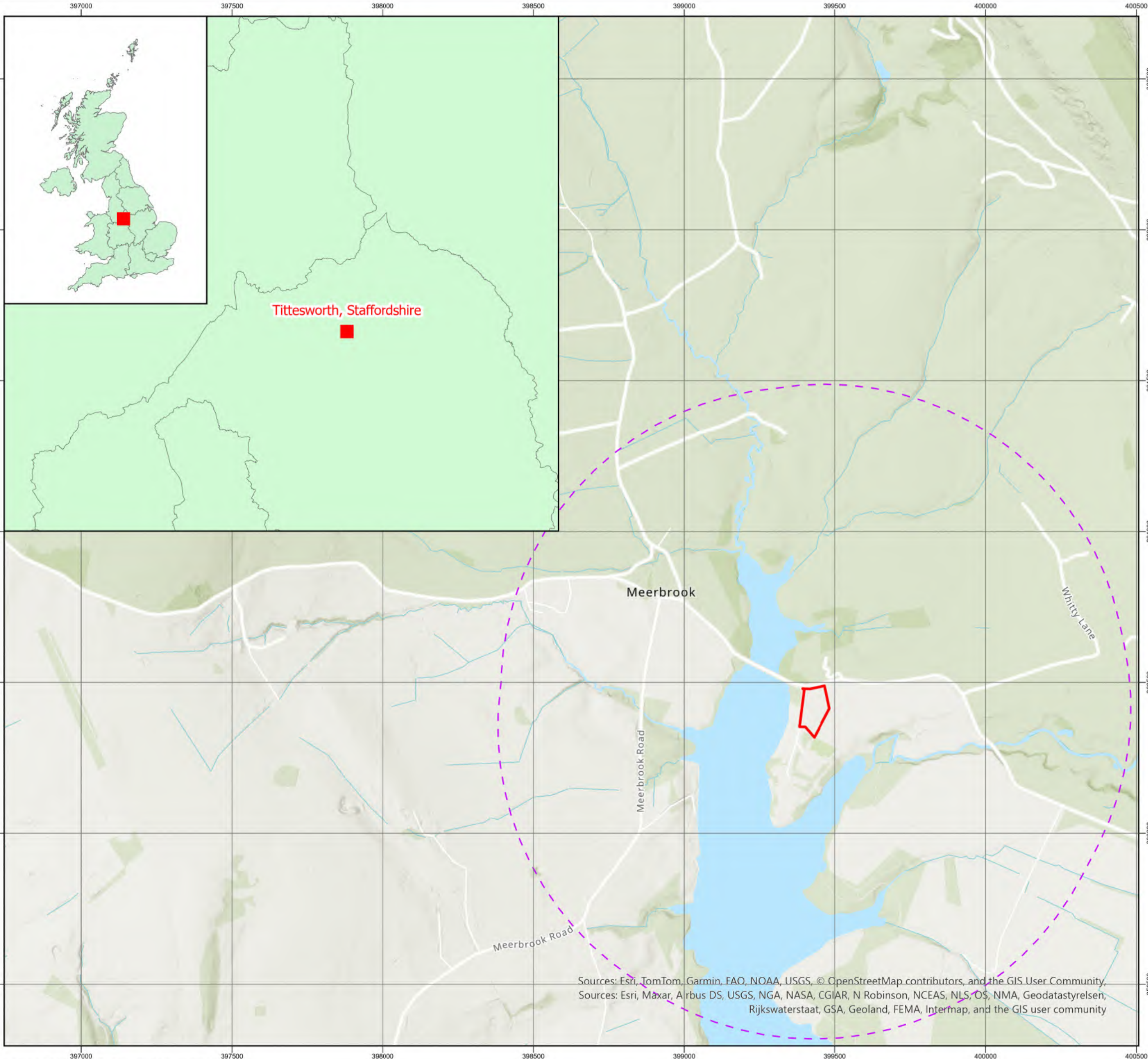
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Appendix A: Designated Heritage Assets within the Study Area

Map No	HE/LAA No	Monument Name	Designation	Grid Ref
1	1374745	CHURCH OF ST MATTHEW	Grade II* Listed Building	SJ 98907 60834
2	1037796	FRITH BOTTOM FARMHOUSE	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 99322 61323
3	1037797	MARSH FARMHOUSE AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDINGS	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 99467 60536
4	1037801	METHODIST CHAPEL	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 99107 60679
5	1191037	BARN APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES NORTH EAST OF FRITH BOTTOM FARMHOUSE	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 99336 61342
6	1191048	MIDDLE HULME FARMHOUSE	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 99932 60422
7	1293466	CONDLYFF MEMORIAL APPROXIMATELY 3 METRES SOUTH OF CHURCH OF ST MATTHEW	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 98893 60824
8	1293471	SCHOOL AND SCHOOL HOUSE	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 98968 60783
9	1360970	K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK	Grade II Listed Building	SJ 98954 60770
10	DST5746	Meerbrook Conservation Area	Conservation Area	398780 360927

Appendix B: HER Heritage Assets within the Study Area

Map No	HER No	Monument Type	Description	Period
11	MST18171	Aircraft crash site	Aircraft Crash Site, Leekfrith	Modern
12	MST18338	Monument	Site of New Grange, Leekfrith	Medieval
13	MST20186	Monument	Finger Post, Meerbrook Road, Meerbrook, Leekfrith	Modern
14	MST3662	Settlement	Meerbrook (Settlement)	Early medieval
15	MST6579	Structure	Pillbox, Tittesworth Reservoir	Modern
16	MST339	Monument	Bowl Barrow, Near Middle Hulme, Leekfrith	Bronze Age
17	MST255	Monument	Linear Earthwork, Leekfrith	Medieval
18	MST14425	Farmstead	Frith Bottom (Farm), North-East of Meerbrook, Leekfrith	Post-medieval
19	MST18339	Farmstead	Site of New Grange Farm, Leek	Post-medieval
20	MST18340	Farmstead	Site of New Grange Farm, Leek	Post-medieval
21	MST21497	Farmstead	The Hollies (Farm), West of Blacksaw Moor, Leekfrith	19th century
22	MST21570	Farmstead	Lower Lea Farm, Meerbrook, Leekfrith	19th century
23	MST21571	Farmstead	Lea Farm, Meerbrook, Leekfrith	19th century
24	MST22124	Farmstead	Middle Hulme Farm, Whitty Lane, Leekfrith	Post-medieval
25	MST2305	Monument	Burnt Mound, Middle Hulme, Leekfrith	Unknown
26	MST2306	Farmstead	Farmstead Middle Hulme, Leekfrith	Post-medieval
27	MST5711	Monument	Ridge and Furrow, Leekfrith	Post-medieval
28	MST5905	Structure	Well, Leekfrith	Post-medieval



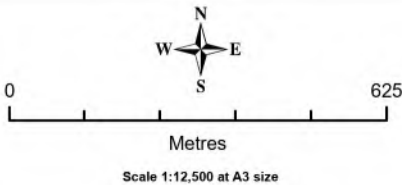
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Figure 1: Location of the Proposed Development

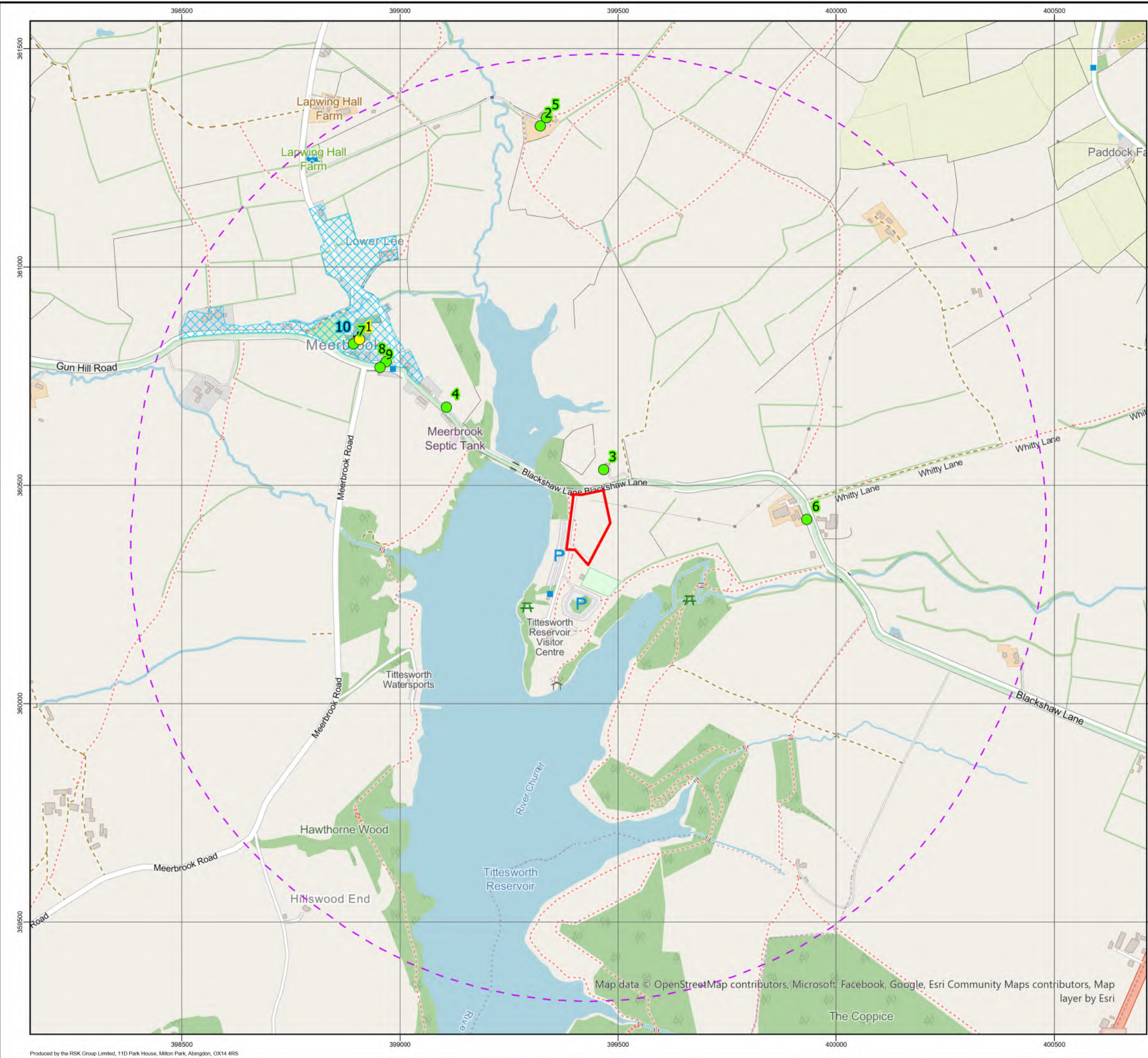
- Site Boundary
- Study Area

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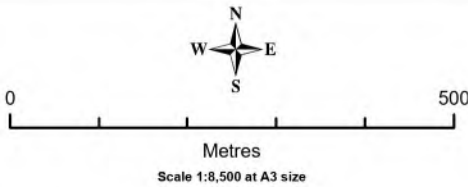
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Figure 2: Designated Heritage Assets within the Study Area

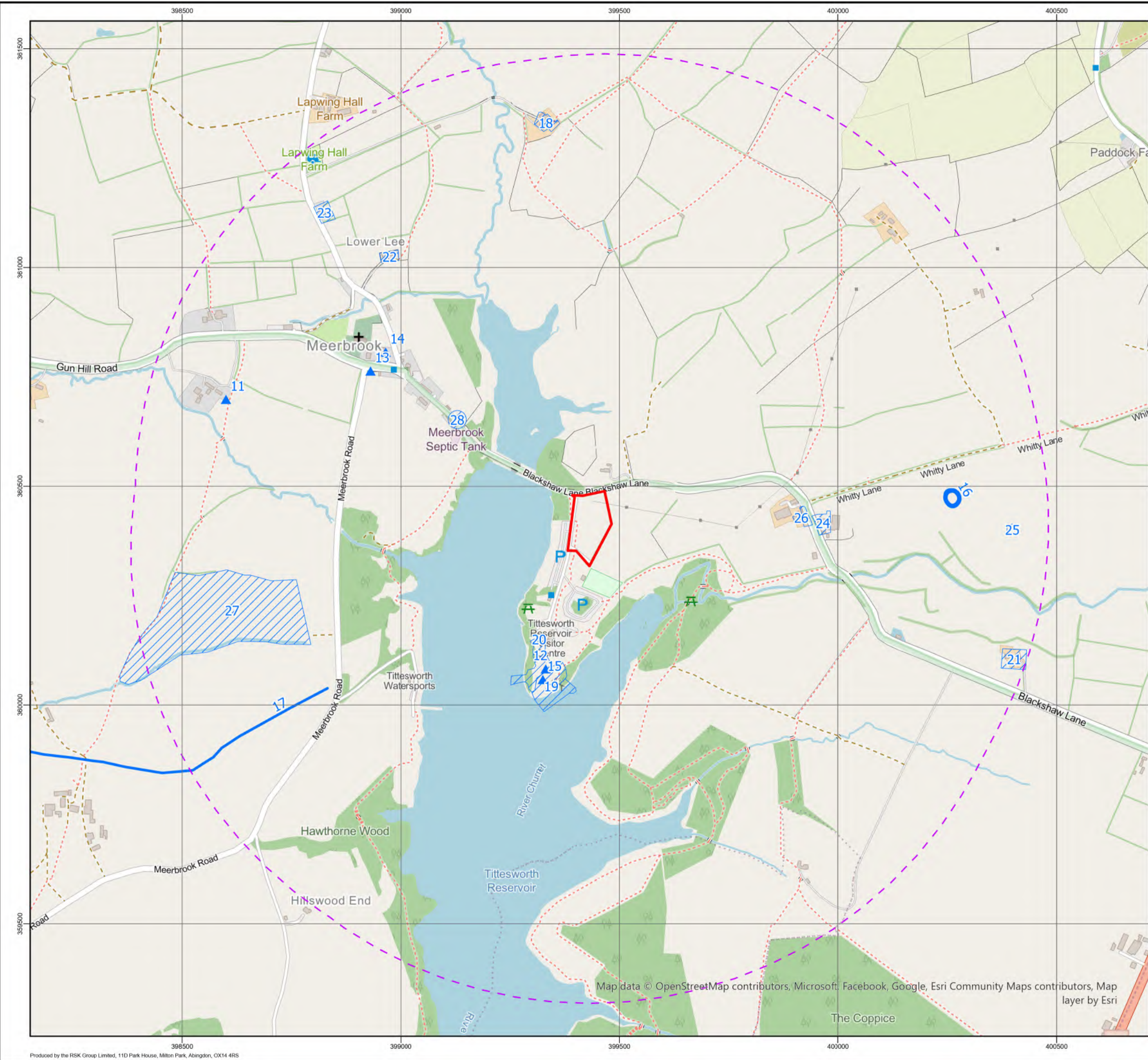
- Site Boundary
- Study Area
- Grade II* Listed Building Point
- Grade II Listed Building Point
- Conservation Area

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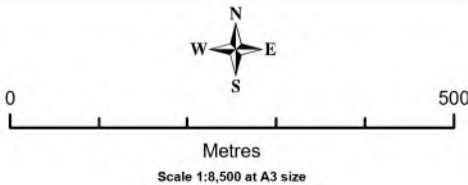
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Figure 3: HER Heritage Assets within the Study Area

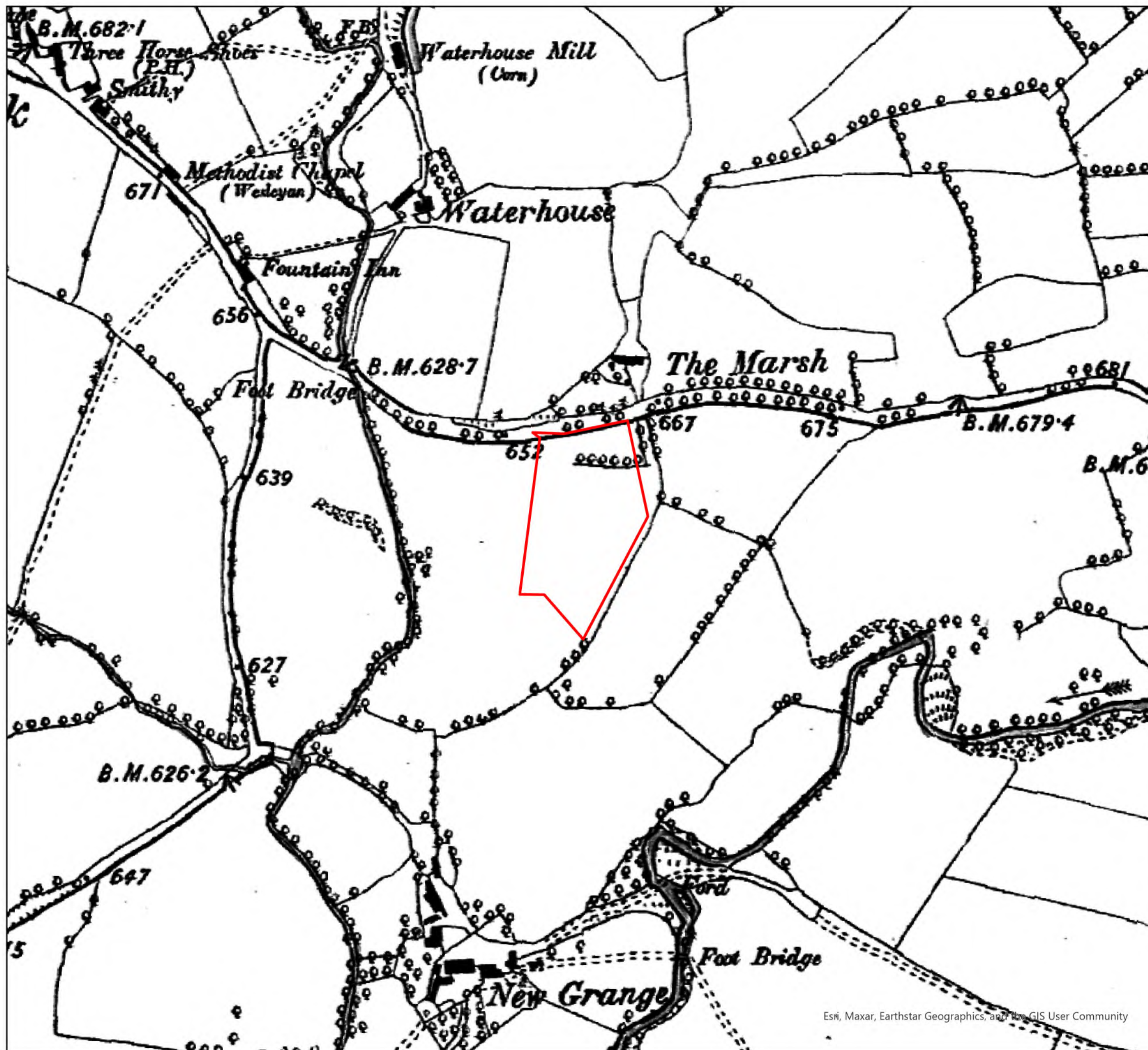
- Site Boundary
- Study Area
- HER Heritage Asset Point
- HER Heritage Asset Polyline
- HER Heritage Asset Polygon

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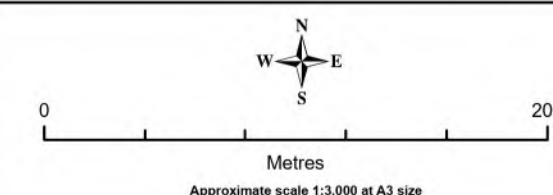
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Figure 4: Site Location on the OS County Series: Staffordshire 1:10,560 map of 1887

Site Boundary

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