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**BUILT HERITAGE  
ASSESSMENT**

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**LAND AT GORCOTT HALL  
REDDITCH**

**Planning Authority:  
STRATFORD UPON AVON  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**Site centred at:  
408363,268251**

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**Approved by:**

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FINAL**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Simon Roper-Pressdee of CgMs Consulting on behalf of The Gorcott Estate Settlement Trust (The Trust).
- 1.2 The amendment to the report (November 2014), including the more detailed assessment of impact arising from potential development, has been prepared on behalf of Stoford Developments who have been appointed on behalf of The Trust and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) as their preferred Development Partner.
- 1.3 It is prepared in response to an initial consultation response from English Heritage, and concerns from Bromsgrove and Stratford on Avon District Councils, on the potential for impact on the significance and setting of the Grade II\* Gorcott Hall.
- 1.4 The report assesses the impact of such proposed development this heritage asset, adhering to the English Heritage methodology of assessment, and is in line with the requirements set out within The Setting of Heritage Assets, following discussions with both English Heritage and Stratford upon Avon District Council.
- 1.5 It is acknowledged that Bromsgrove District Council has prepared an assessment of the historic setting of Gorcott Hall (Setting of Heritage Assets report – Assessment of historic setting of Gorcott Hall, 2014), which examines the potential for development for part of the Site. However, the latter report purely focuses on land within Bromsgrove, and therefore does not consider the setting as a whole. To this end, the following assessment examines the potential for impact across the whole Site on Gorcott Hall, irrespective of in which Local Authority areas of the Site lies within. The updated report has also been discussed with English Heritage, Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council, and a meeting was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December with English Heritage, the salient points of which are covered in Section 3.0.
- 1.6 Comments were also received from Bromsgrove District Council on the updated report, again the salient points of which are covered in Section 3.0. Whilst it is recognised that there remains some discrepancy between the Bromsgrove District Council report and this report, the author of this report remains of the view that the analysis contained within this report indicates that the whole site remains capable of sustaining some

development, and that the development control process is sufficiently robust to consider the details of any development, including scale, massing, materials, and detailed design – a view supported both by Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council.

## **2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

- 2.1 Legislation regarding buildings and areas of special architectural and historic interest is contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act).
- 2.2 The pertinent Sections of the Act extends to Section 66, which states that special regard must be given by the decision maker (in this case the Inspector) in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their settings. In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which replaced national policy relating to heritage and archaeology (Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment).
- 2.3 In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 2.3.1 Section 12 of the NPPF, entitled *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 12 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development
  - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment
  - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, and
  - Recognition that heritage contributes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.3.2 Section 12 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 128 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be *no more than sufficient* to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.

2.3.3 *Heritage assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority.

2.3.4 A *Designated heritage asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

2.3.5 *Significance* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

2.3.6 In short, government policy provides a framework which:

- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets (which include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas).
- Protects the settings of such designations.
- Provides for a proportionate level of recording of buildings and areas not significant enough to merit total preservation.

2.4 English Heritage has published guidance and methodology for assessing heritage significance within views, "Seeing The History In The View" (May 2011), which provides a consistent base-line for assessing the impact of development on heritage significance within views. They have also published further guidance on assessing the importance of the setting of assets, "The Setting of Heritage Assets" (October 2011). Both sets of guidance have been taken in to account in preparing this report.

2.5 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the policy framework set by government policy, in this instance NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

- 2.6 As the sites falls across the boundaries of both Bromsgrove District and Stratford District, policies from both local plans must be considered.
- 2.7 Local Plan Policy in Bromsgrove District is currently provided by the emerging Bromsgrove District Plan and to a lesser degree the 'saved' policies in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (2007).
- 2.8 The District's relevant 'saved' policies within the Local Plan relating to built heritage state:

**S39 ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS**

**CAREFUL ATTENTION WILL BE PAID TO ANY PROPOSAL AFFECTING THE CHARACTER OF A LISTED BUILDING OR ITS SETTING. ANY PROPOSAL FOR ALTERATION OR EXTENSION OF A LISTD BUILDING, WHETHER OR NOT INVOLVING A CHANGE OF USE, WILL BE THOROUGHLY ASSESSED BEFORE CONSENT IS GIVEN. THE CHANGE OF USE OF LISTED BUILDINGS MAY BE ACCEPTABLE IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT AN ALTERNATIVE USE WOULD ENSURE RETENTION OF THE BUILDING(S). THE ADVANTAGE OF KEEPING A BUILDING IN ACTIVE USES WILL BE WEIGHED CAREFULLY AGAINST ANY IMPACT ON THE SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST OF THE BUILDING.**

- 2.9 The policy within the emerging Bromsgrove District Plan relevant to this site are listed below, with Policies BDP5, BDP13 and BDP14 relating to bringing the site forward for development, and BDP20 relating to the protection of the historic environment:

**BDP5B**

**TABLE 3 BELOW HIGHLIGHTS DEVELOPMENT SITES WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO HOUSING NEEDS IN BROMSGROVE DISTRICT FOR THE PERIOD 2011-2030. THE TABLE IDENTIFIES THE POTENTIAL CAPACITIES ON EACH SITE AND SITES WHICH HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED PLANNING PERMISSION**

<b>Table 3: Scale of Development</b>					
<b>Development Sites</b>	<b>Map No. [not included here]</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>Suitable Use</b>	<b>Potential Capacity</b>	<b>Received permission</b>
<b>Alvechurch Land adjoining Crown Meadow</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>Housing</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>



<b>Table 3: Scale of Development</b>					
<b>Development Sites</b>	<b>Map No. [not included here]</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>Suitable Use</b>	<b>Potential Capacity</b>	<b>Received permission</b>
Birmingham Road/ Rectory Lane	2	1.06	Housing	25	25
Barnt Green	3	5	Housing	88	88
Catshil	4	6.04	Housing	80	80
Frankley	9	6.6	Open space/ Housing	66	-
Hagley	5	21.9	Mixed use – community leisure/ employment. Residential	301	283
Ravensbank expansion site (for Redditch's needs)	8	10.3	Employment	-	-
Wagon works/ St Godwalds Road	6	7.8	Housing	181	181
Wythall, Selsdon Close	7	3.1	Housing	76	76
Bleakhouse Farm	7	6.3	Housing	178	178
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>68.7</b>		<b>1022</b>	<b>938</b>

**BDP13.1**

**THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO MAINTAIN A BALANCED PORTFOLIO OF SITES BY PROMOTING THE FOLLOWING:**

**A. NEW TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES AT BROMSGROVE TECHNOLOGY PARK AND LONGBRIDGE**

**B. OFFICE AND MIXED USE SCHEMES WITHIN BROMSGROVE TOWN CENTRE**

**C. A RANGE AND CHOICE OF READILY AVAILABLE EMPLOYMENT SITES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

**D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN BROMSGROVE TOWN AND LARGE SETTLEMENTS INCLUDING WITHIN THE TOWN EXPANSION SITES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT SITES IDENTIFIED AS SUITABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT USE IN BDP5A AND B**

**E. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH PROPORTIONATE EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUSINESS OR CONVERSION OF RURAL BUILDINGS TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE OPENNESS AND THE PURPOSES OF INCLUDING**

THE LAND IN GREEN BELT. PROPOSALS THAT CAN DEMONSTRATE SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND/OR COMMUNITY WILL BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY F.THE ACCOMMODATION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES WITHIN DESIGNATED EMPLOYMENT SITES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WASTE CORE STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

G APPROPRIATE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND THE CREATION OF JOBS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AS PART OF THE PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT SITES.

BDP14.1 THE REGENERATION OF THE DISTRICT WILL CONTINUE THROUGH MAINTAINING AND PROMOTING EXISTING EMPLOYMENT PROVISION IN SUSTAINABLE, ACCESSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS (AS IDENTIFIED ON THE POLICIES MAP).

BDP14.2 PROPOSALS FOR THE EXPANSION, CONSOLIDATION OR EXTENSION TO EXISTING COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES IN NON GREEN BELT WILL NEED TO ENSURE THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THE ACTIVITY IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE AREA IN WHICH IT IS LOCATED.

BDP14.3 BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD EMPLOYMENT AREAS THAT:  
A) ARE WELL LOCATED AND LINKED TO THE MAIN ROAD AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK; AND  
B) PROVIDE, OR ARE PHYSICALLY AND VIABLY CAPABLE OF PROVIDING THROUGH DEVELOPMENT, GOOD QUALITY MODERN ACCOMMODATION ATTRACTIVE TO THE MARKET; AND  
C) ARE CAPABLE OF MEETING A RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT USES TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL ECONOMY.

BDP14.4 PROPOSALS THAT RESULT IN THE LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND FOR NON-EMPLOYMENT USES, SUCH AS HOUSING, WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY UNLESS APPLICANTS CAN ADEQUATELY DEMONSTRATE THAT:

- I) THE PROPOSAL WOULD NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT UPON THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF EMPLOYMENT LAND WITHIN THE LOCAL AREA; AND
- II) THERE WOULD BE A NET IMPROVEMENT IN AMENITY (E.G. 'NON CONFORMING' USES CLOSE TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS); AND
- III) THE SITE HAS BEEN ACTIVELY MARKETED FOR EMPLOYMENT USES FOR A MINIMUM PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS, PROVIDING FULL AND DETAILED EVIDENCE OR WHERE AN INFORMED ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN MADE AS TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SITE AND/OR PREMISES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE EMPLOYMENT LAND PORTFOLIO WITHIN THE DISTRICT (AS PART OF THIS ASSESSMENT, CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE APPROPRIATENESS FOR SUBDIVISION OF PREMISES); OR
- IV) THE NEW USE WOULD RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT, TO ACCESS AND HIGHWAY ARRANGEMENTS, OR SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PATTERNS WHICH OUTWEIGHS THE LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND; AND

**V) THE SITE/PREMISES ARE NOT VIABLE FOR AN EMPLOYMENT USE OR MIXED USE THAT INCLUDES AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT. A DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL SHOULD ACCOMPANY PROPOSALS TO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE WHY REDEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES IS NOT COMMERCIALY VIABLE.**

**BDP14.5 IN LINE WITH THE NPPF, PLANNING POLICIES SHOULD AVOID THE LONG TERM PROTECTION OF SITES ALLOCATED FOR EMPLOYMENT USE WHERE THERE IS NO REASONABLE PROSPECT OF A SITE BEING USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. WHERE THE ABOVE CRITERIA IS JUSTIFIED AND THERE IS NO REASONABLE PROSPECT OF A SITE BEING USED FOR THE ALLOCATED EMPLOYMENT USE, APPLICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE USES OF LAND OR BUILDINGS WILL BE TREATED ON THEIR MERITS HAVING REGARD TO MARKET SIGNALS AND THE RELATIVE NEED FOR DIFFERENT LAND USES TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

**BDP20.1**

**THE DISTRICT COUNCIL ADVOCATES A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THE PROACTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WHICH ENCOMPASSES ALL HERITAGE ASSETS RECOGNISED AS BEING OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THEIR HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, ARCHITECTURAL OR ARTISTIC INTEREST.**

**BDP20.2**

**THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS INCLUDING THEIR SETTING. THIS INCLUDES:**

**A.DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS, INCLUDING LISTED BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS, SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS, REGISTERED PARKS AND GARDENS.**

**B.NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) THOSE IDENTIFIED ON THE LOCAL LIST AND ASSETS RECORDED IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD.**

**C.THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE OF THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE SETTLEMENT PATTERNS, FIELD SYSTEMS, WOODLANDS AND HISTORIC FARMSTEADS.**

**D.DESIGNED LANDSCAPES, INCLUDING PARKS AND GARDENS, CEMETERIES, CHURCHYARDS, PUBLIC PARKS AND URBAN OPEN SPACES.**

**E.ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF ALL PERIODS FROM THE EARLIEST HUMAN HABITATION TO MODERN TIMES.**

**F.HISTORIC TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING ROADS, TRACKWAYS, CANALS AND RAILWAYS.**

**BDP20.3**

**DEVELOPMENT AFFECTING HERITAGE ASSETS, INCLUDING ALTERATIONS OR ADDITIONS AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS, SHOULD NOT HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE OR SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET OR HERITAGE ASSETS.**

**BDP20.4**

**APPLICATIONS TO ALTER, EXTEND, OR CHANGE THE USE OF HERITAGE ASSETS WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO DEMONSTRATE HOW THE PROPOSALS WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE ASSET'S CONSERVATION WHILST PRESERVING OR ENHANCING ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING.**

**BDP20.5**

**IN CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS REGARD WILL BE PAID TO THE DESIRABILITY OF SECURING THE RETENTION, RESTORATION, MAINTENANCE AND CONTINUED USE OF HERITAGE ASSETS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT THE SENSITIVE REUSE OF REDUNDANT HISTORIC BUILDINGS, AND WILL ENCOURAGE PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR HERITAGE ASSETS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AT RISK.**

**BDP20.6**

**ANY PROPOSAL WHICH WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HARM OR LOSS OF A DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET WILL BE RESISTED UNLESS A CLEAR AND CONVINCING JUSTIFICATION OR A SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC BENEFIT CAN BE IDENTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT LEGISLATION AND NATIONAL POLICY.**

**BDP20.7**

**CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE DESIGNATION OF NEW CONSERVATION AREAS. IN ORDER TO DEFINE AND PROTECT THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF CONSERVATION AREAS, THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL PRODUCE AND REGULARLY REVIEW CHARACTER APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR DESIGNATED CONSERVATION AREAS, AND WHERE NECESSARY INTRODUCE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS BASED ON AN ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL IDENTITY AND UNIQUENESS.**

**BDP20.8**

**WHERE A DETAILED CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL MANAGEMENT PLAN HAS BEEN ADOPTED, IT WILL BE A MATERIAL CONSIDERATION IN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THAT CONSERVATION AREA**

- 2.10 Local Plan policy in Stratford on Avon District Council is provided by the emerging Core Strategy, and to some extent the policies within the Local Plan 1996-2011 (adopted 2006). The following policies are relevant to the site, with REDD 2 referring to the policy proposing the allocation within Stratford:

<b>PROPOSAL REDD 2: GORCOTT HILL, MAPPELBOROUGH GREEN</b>	
Where is it to be delivered	Land north of A4023 and west of A435 Approx 7 hectares (gross)
What is to be delivered	Employment within Class B1, B2 and B8 uses
When is it to be delivered	By 2031
How is it to be delivered	Private sector
Specific requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for a minimum of 15% of total floorspace within Class B1(a) office and Class B1(b) research and development uses</li> <li>• Vehicular access of A4023</li> <li>• Protect character and setting of Gorcott Hall</li> <li>• Retain mature hedgerows and trees on the site</li> <li>• Traffic management and mitigation measures on A435 as appropriate</li> <li>• Pedestrian and cycle links across A4023 to adjacent residential areas.</li> </ul>

**POLICY CS.8 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

**A. PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT**

**THE DISTRICT'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE PROTECTED AND ENHANCED FOR ITS INHERENT VALUE AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS. THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AS A CATALYST FOR ENHANCING THE VITALITY OF THE DISTRICT. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE WIDE RANGE OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ASSETS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER AND IDENTITY OF THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING:**

**(1) DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS SUCH AS LISTED BUILDINGS, CONSERVATION AREAS, REGISTERED GARDENS, THE BATTLE OF EDGEHILL HISTORIC BATTLEFIELD, SCHEDULED MONUMENTS, AND SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE, AND THEIR SETTINGS;**

**(2) NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS;**

**(3) STRATFORD-UPON-AVON'S HISTORIC TOWNSCAPE AND STREET SCENE, AND SITES ASSOCIATED WITH WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, TO MAINTAIN THE TOWN'S INTERNATIONAL AND CULTURAL IMPORTANCE;**

**(4) THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE MARKET TOWNS, VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, INCLUDING THEIR SETTINGS, TOWNSCAPES, STREETS, SPACES AND BUILT FORM;**

**(5) FEATURES THAT REFLECT THE HISTORIC INTERACTION OF HUMAN ACTIVITY ON THE LANDSCAPE, INCLUDING LOCAL VERNACULAR BUILDING STYLES AND MATERIALS, TRADITIONAL FARM BUILDINGS, AND HISTORIC FEATURES ASSOCIATED WITH CANALS, NAVIGATIONS AND RAILWAYS;**

**(6) WORKING WITH THE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDERS TO ENSURE WORKS TO STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM DO NOT DETRACT FROM THE HISTORIC VALUE OF THE STREET SCENE; AND;**

**(7) SEEKING TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF HERITAGE ASSETS AT RISK**

**B. PROPOSALS AFFECTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A HERITAGE ASSET**

**WHERE PROPOSALS WILL AFFECT A HERITAGE ASSET, INCLUDING INVOLVING ITS HARM OR LOSS, THEY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. APPLICANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE AND PROVIDE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ASSET USING A PROPORTIONATE LEVEL OF DETAIL RELATING TO THE LIKELY IMPACT THE PROPOSAL WILL HAVE ON THE ASSET'S**

**HISTORIC INTEREST. IN ASSESSING WHETHER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES EXIST, THE**

**FOLLOWING FACTORS WILL BE CONSIDERED:**

**(1) WHETHER IT IS PRACTICAL TO CONTINUE THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS USE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET AND WHETHER THERE ARE ANY OTHER VIABLE ALTERNATIVE USES.**

**(2) THE IMPACT OF THE HARM OR LOSS OF THE HERITAGE ASSET ON THE STRUCTURE OR SETTING OF ANY OTHER HERITAGE ASSET, INCLUDING THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA. (3) WHETHER THE RELOCATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HERITAGE ASSET IS APPROPRIATE AND CAN PRACTICABLY BE ACHIEVED, EITHER ONSITE OR ELSEWHERE.**

**(4) THAT A SUITABLE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN ARRANGED AND AGREED TO RECORD THOSE FEATURES OF HISTORIC INTEREST THAT WOULD BE LOST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL.**

**C. APPRECIATION, DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT**

**PROPOSALS WILL BE HIGH QUALITY, SENSITIVELY DESIGNED AND INTEGRATED WITH THE HISTORIC CONTEXT. THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE INFORMED BY AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORIC ASSET AND ENVIRONMENT. BOTH DESIGNATED AND NON-DESIGNATED HISTORIC FEATURES SHOULD BE RETAINED IN SITU. CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE THAT HELPS TO SECURE THE CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE ASSETS AND INTEGRATES NEW DEVELOPMENT INTO THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT WILL BE ENCOURAGED WHERE IT IS SYMPATHETIC TO THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCAL AREA. THE POSITIVE MANAGEMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES AND MEASURES WILL BE ENCOURAGED, INCLUDING THE USE OF CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS, HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS.**

**WHERE APPROPRIATE, OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN TO ASSIST PEOPLE'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF THE ASSET BY SUCH MEASURES AS PERMITTING PUBLIC ACCESS AND THE PROVISION OF INTERPRETATION DISPLAYS. THIS WILL BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IF THE ASSET HAS RELEVANCE TO THE DISTRICT'S SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATION'S LITERARY AND CULTURAL HISTORY.**

2.11 The following saved policies are within the Local Plan 1996-2011:

**POLICY EF.4 HISTORIC LANDSCAPES**

**THE PROTECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE WILL BE SOUGHT THROUGH THE CAREFUL ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS. IN PARTICULAR, PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER. OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE SUCH FEATURES AS PART OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS OR THROUGH SPECIFIC INITIATIVES WILL BE PROMOTED**

**POLICY EF.14 LISTED BUILDINGS**

**THE PRESERVATION OF BUILDINGS LISTED AS BEING OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST, AND THEIR SETTINGS, WILL BE SECURED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEANS:**

- (a) APPLYING THE PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF THE PRESERVATION OF LISTED BUILDINGS;**
- (b) ENSURING THAT PROPOSED ALTERATIONS, EXTENSIONS OR CHANGES OF USE TO LISTED BUILDINGS, OR DEVELOPMENT ON ADJOINING LAND, WILL NOT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF SUCH BUILDINGS OR THEIR SETTINGS;**
- (c) REQUIRING APPLICATIONS FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT TO INCLUDE FULLY DETAILED AND ACCURATE DRAWINGS OF THE EXISTING BUILDING AND THE PROPOSED SCHEME;**
- (d) TAKING ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO RECTIFY UNAUTHORISED AND UNACCEPTABLE WORKS TO LISTED BUILDINGS; AND**
- (e) TAKING MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT NEGLECTED LISTED BUILDINGS ARE REPAIRED**

2.12 Under Annex 1 of the NPPF, local authorities may continue to give **full weight** to relevant local policies adopted since 2004 for a period of 12 months from the publication of the NPPF (March 2012), even if there is a limited degree of conflict with the policies contained in the NPPF. Following this 12-month period (i.e. from March 2013 onwards), **due weight** should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

2.13 Since the publication of the NPPF, local authorities have been empowered to give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given); the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

2.14 Although the saved Local Plan policies of both Bromsgrove and Stratford upon Avon relating to built heritage are broadly in line with the NPPF, they never-the-less fail to

provide a mechanism for assessing the degree of harm on built heritage arising from potential developments and fail to provide any mechanism for off-setting any such harm against the public benefit of a scheme.

- 2.15 It is therefore considered here that there is significant discrepancy between saved policies within Local Plan policy and the NPPF and thus the weight that should be afforded to these policies should be considerably reduced. Therefore the policies should be considered as being out date. The weight that should be afforded to these policies should be considerably reduced and the provisions within the NPPF should be given more weight.



### **3.0 CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 Throughout the preparation of this report, consultation has been undertaken with English Heritage, Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council.
- 3.2 The first draft of the report was submitted to English Heritage during June 2013, for their initial comments. The response arising from this consultation was that the report, as it stood at that time, had not fully covered the stepped process for assessment of setting of heritage assets, as indicated in "The Setting of Heritage Assets", and that the lack of images prevented a complete assessment of the impact. Although not specifically stated, this consultation response thus indicated that the initial draft report did not comply with the requirements contained within Paragraphs 128, 129, 132 and 141 of the NPPF.
- 3.3 This consultation response was echoed by the response from Bromsgrove District Council, who also raised concerns over the indicative plans prepared at that time.
- 3.4 To this end, the report has been revisited and a completed stepped process of assessment has been undertaken in line with English Heritage guidance. Furthermore, a set of photographs have been included within this report (Appendix 1).
- 3.5 In addition to this, AJA Architects have prepared a revised set of drawings, to be used as illustrative parameter plans for the site, including a schematic illustration of height parameters across the site, together with existing sections, and indicative sections showing the maximum ridge height of development across the site, following the height parameters set out in the schematic drawing. These are included (albeit at a reduced scale from A0 to A3) as Figures 6, 7 and 8 of this report.
- 3.6 The amended report was then provided to English Heritage, Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council for their comments in November 2014, following the release of the Bromsgrove District Council Assessment, of which it also took account of.

- 3.7 During a meeting with English Heritage on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014, no objections were provided with regards to the compliance of the report with the English Heritage guidelines, and they agreed that the report was prepared using appropriate expertise and provided an assessment sufficient to enable a decision to be made.
- 3.8 However, they also recognised that there remained a difference between the Bromsgrove District Council assessment and this assessment, with particular regard to potential for development across the north-eastern part of the site proposed to be allocated through the Bromsgrove District Local Plan.
- 3.9 Bromsgrove District Council also provided further comments, which included the updating of the policy section to reflect the up-to-date Submitted Policies, the illegibility of photographs due to their small-scale (4no. per A4 page), and a reiteration of the difference in professional opinion relating to the site, in particular the north-eastern part of the site proposed to be allocated through the Bromsgrove District Local Plan.
- 3.10 It remains our view that, as stated in the Introduction of this report, these differences of professional opinion are such that this should not prevent the alteration to the Policy, but are elements which can be appropriately and sufficiently considered through the development control process.
- 3.11 The report therefore is submitted without further alteration, save for the amendment to Section 2 and the inclusion of this Section of the report.

## **4.0 HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT APPRAISAL**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 In order to respond to the concerns from English Heritage, and to a lesser extent Stratford-upon-Avon District Council and Bromsgrove District Council regarding the potential impact of development and subsequent mitigation of this site, this report examines the potential for impact on Gorcott Hall, taking into account its inclusion in the Statutory list, its setting, its significance, and the degree to which the surrounding land forming the site forms an essential part of this setting and significance.

4.1.2 In order to ensure the report addresses the requirements of concerned parties, as described above, contact with both the planning department at Stratford upon Avon District Council, and with English Heritage has been made, which confirmed the processes and targets for the report.

### **4.2 Existing Site**

4.2.1 The Site (Figure 5) is formed by fields sitting to the north of the Coventry Highway, the A4023, and abutting the eastern edge of Redditch, adjacent to the Moons Moat North Industrial Estate. It is currently in fallow, and has a footpath which bisects the southern half of the Site following the hedge-line and brook, and which then cuts back through the Site, further to the west. The fields are bounded by mature hedging and trees.

4.2.2 The landscape falls away south from Gorcott Hall with a c.30m fall between the Hall and the southern edge of the Site. Hedgerows and tree cover, together with the falling land to the south of the hall all provide considerable visual separation between the Hall and the southern half of the Site, whilst the degree of planting, tree cover and hedgerow give good visual protection between the Hall and the northern half of the Site.

### 4.3 **Built Heritage Assets – Description, Setting and Significance**

4.3.1 This description will primarily focused on Gorcott Hall, although it will not give an in-depth description of the building as this is not considered as necessary to understanding the impact of proposed development on the site, and pass on the setting and significance of the building. It will instead provide a brief description of the Hall, but will concentrate on the setting and significance of the Hall, and the degree to which the Site forms part of the setting and significance of the Hall.

#### Description

4.3.2 The Plates in Appendix 1 provide graphic illustration of the surroundings and setting of the Hall, as well as providing views from the upper floors of the hall facing toward the Site. These should be referred to throughout when reading this section.

4.3.3 Gorcott Hall is a country house with origins in the 15th century, together with further alterations and extensions dating from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Constructed in a mix of timber frame and red brick the various phases of the building are relatively easy to identify. With earlier ranges constructed in timber framing, the style of which varies according to the period of its construction, and with a mix of red brick nogging, and lime render infill panels, and later ranges and extensions constructed in red brick, the building presents a sprawling historic development.

4.3.4 The Hall is part of a wider group of buildings all aligned on a north-west by south-east axis, forming a courtyard, with a single storey red brick barn with high pitched tiled roof c.7m to the west and linked by a low stone wall, with further barns and stables to the north-west. Although originally a working farm, this area has been heavily formalised, and now forms part of the wider formal gardens of the Hall. The land to the south is formal garden, with lawns and specimen trees, whilst a 1.5m high brick wall creates the physical curtilage of the Hall. Beyond this wall, a ring of trees to the north-west provides a further layer of visual boundary, which is further enhanced by the hedge-line to the south-west forming the boundary between the non-formal garden and the field systems beyond.

- 4.3.5 A line of mature fir trees, and poplars have been planted along the boundary to the A435, which runs to the east of the house, and severs the relationship of the house to the wider countryside to the east. This provides a definite and rigid visual boundary between the Hall and the road, which further severs this relationship to the wider rural landscape to the east and south.

#### Setting

- 4.3.5 Setting is defined in the NPPF 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.”

- 4.3.6 As well as playing an important part in creating the *significance* of an asset as discussed below, the *setting* of a heritage asset is important in its own right. Paragraph 114 of the PPS5 Practice Guide sets out the elements which are considered to contribute to setting, which are the visual considerations; the environmental factors; spatial associations; and the understanding of historic relationships. These are discussed below.

- 4.3.7 The Setting of Heritage Assets, in assessing the contribution which setting makes to significance, recognises that the degree of public access to areas where setting may be compromised should not be a consideration, but also that:

“any proper evaluation of the effect of change within the setting of a heritage asset will usually need to consider the implication, if any, for public appreciation of its significance.”

*Visual considerations*

- 4.3.8 As described above, the Hall is the principal building in a group of buildings forming an historic farmstead, although they have been heavily formalised and domesticised. Any meaningful direct views of the Site from the Hall are largely prevented by virtue of the barn to the rear of the house, together with the planted landscape surrounding the Hall to all sides.
- 4.3.9 Although glimpses of the south-western part of the Site can be gained from the southern elevation of the Hall, these are largely incorporated into the rural landscape, and views beyond are limited by virtue of the A4023. However, views of the fields directly to the south of the Hall, forming the eastern half of the Site, appear to be more visible on plan, the mature planting surrounding the Hall forms a visual boundary between the Hall and the Site, which is greatly emphasised by the existing topography, with land falling away from the Hall providing further separation between the two ensuring that the hall and its curtilage are seen as distinct elements away from the Site.
- 4.3.10 Examining the visual considerations of looking at the Hall from its wider surroundings, although the Hall has severed relationships with the rural landscape and its remnants to the east and south through the creation of the modern highways, the public footpath running along the centre of the Site gives some public views of both the Site and the Hall, although it is only the eastern section of the Site which is seen in the same view as the hall from this location. However any meaningful views of the Hall are greatly limited by virtue of the degree of mature and rural landscaping between the Hall and the majority of the Site, and the landscaping surrounding the Hall of the trees, all of which is further strengthened by the topography of the landscape, with the land rolling upwards from the Site toward the Hall.
- 4.3.11 Elsewhere, the degree to which this visual relationship of the Hall and the Site is perceived by the public will be limited and esoteric, as this will be predominantly from the A435 where potential views will be transient. Due to the existing natural and designed landscape, this lack of perception is further enhanced by the existing landscaping, both as part of the rural landscape, and as part of the landscaped gardens of the Hall.

4.3.12 The Hall is heavily visually protected from the road through the existing tree and hedge planting, which also provides a visual separation between the Site and the Hall. This further reduces the degree to which the Site is visually perceived as the important setting of, or relating to the heritage asset from the road.

4.3.13 It is therefore considered that there is little significance to be attributed to the visual relationships or considerations, between the Site and the Hall.

#### *Environmental factors*

4.3.14 There have been considerable environmental factors to the setting of the Hall which have been introduced during the last century, predominantly arising from the modernisation of the A435 and to a lesser degree the creation of the Coventry Highway, the A4023. Noise, dust, and vibrations from traffic have significantly and substantially reduced the tranquillity of the Hall and its setting.

4.3.15 The Site remains within an unaltered element of landscape, with no such environmental factors impacting upon the Hall, but as with the degree of visual considerations, the Site forms only one part of the landscape, and is separated from the Hall by planting, fields and boundaries, reducing the overall level of significance of the Site in considering such factors to one of moderate significance.

4.3.16 Although an industrial estate lies beyond the Site to the north-west, the degree to which any environmental impacts arising from this industrial estate impact upon the setting of the Hall is negligible, resulting in a nil level of environmental impact arising from this industrial estate.

#### *Spatial associations*

4.3.17 The Site and the Hall are separated by planting and field boundaries, but there is some degree of spatial awareness of the two, in particular from the footpath running through the centre of the southern extent of the Site. Although views of the treescape surrounding the Hall are gained from this footpath, the Hall is not seen, in particular through the topography of the landscape to the south of the Hall, forming the eastern

part of the Site, where the changes in land height considerably reduces the visibility of the Hall, or the ability to recognise the presence of the designated heritage asset. Thus the degree to which any inter-relationship of the Site and the Hall is understood or perceived from this location is negligible,

4.3.18 The Site does also contribute to the wider rural and historic landscape associated with the Hall, as mentioned above. Although it does form part of this wider rural landscape setting, the degree to which this is experienced in any meaningful fashion is minimal, due to the presence of field boundaries, trees and informal gardens between the two, the degree of natural and designed landscaping, and the presence of more important and wider views and spatial associations. Instead, areas of land to the north play a more integral part in understanding the rural setting and context of the Hall, and provide more complete, and wider spatial associations.

4.3.19 It is therefore considered that, although there are some spatial associations between the Site and the Hall, these are not as high as those between the Hall and the landscape to the north, where higher quality and less interrupted spatial associations are identifiable. The degree of significance of such element of setting is therefore considered to be moderate.

#### *Historic relationships*

4.3.20 It is clear that the surrounding landscape, including that of the Site, has formed part of the wider landscape setting of the Hall, in particular with the Hall historically forming the principal residence within the hamlet. With the Site previously in the ownership of the Hall, at least since the Inclosure of 1817/1824, there is also some degree of significance through historic relationship, although considering the extent of land owned by the Hall, in particular following the Inclosure, this is considered to be only of minor significance. Much of the land historically associated with the Hall in the vicinity has remained in agricultural use, thus retaining the relatively low level of significance of the Site when considering the wider historic relationship of the Hall and its surrounding rural landscape.



## Significance

- 4.3.21 Assessing 'significance' is the means by which the cultural importance of a place, its purpose and its component parts is identified and compared. This is not merely academic; it is essential for effective conservation and management, because the identification of areas and aspects of higher and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a place and its purpose, enables policies and proposals to be developed which protect, respect and where possible enhance its character and cultural values.
- 4.3.22 The concept of 'significance' is at the heart of the planning process, and is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) as:

**The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.**

- 4.3.23 The English Heritage document 'Conservation Principles' (2008) identifies a series of 'values' that make up the significance of a heritage asset. Importantly, these values are intended to capture not just architectural and historical importance, but the full spectrum of cultural meaning embodied in a building or place:

**Evidential value** derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. It can be natural or man-made and applies particularly to archaeological deposits, but also to other situations where there is no relevant written record.

**Historical value** derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It can be illustrative (illustrative some aspect of the past) or associative (where a place is associated with an important person, event, or movement).

**Aesthetic value** derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour, or they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time.

**Communal value** derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects. Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it. Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Spiritual value attached to places can emanate from the beliefs and teachings of an organised religion, or reflect past or present-day perceptions of the spirit of a place.

- 4.3.24 In terms of this assessment, the Hall will be assessed against these values, as will the degree to which the Site contributes to them.

*Evidential*

- 4.3.25 The Hall has intrinsic evidential value, through its continued use and development from its origins to the present day. Materially, the building has evolved, together with its curtilage structures, with elevation, extensions, additions and alterations all being visible, and readable. The differing construction materials and techniques present within the house are of considerable significance and are considered to be a major element of the significance of the Hall. The Site plays no part in this element of evidential value, and as such is considered as having a nil level of significance here.
- 4.3.26 The wider remaining landscape, in particular to the north, also provides some evidential value for the Hall, in particular providing it with rural context for the Hall and its out-buildings. The Site does play some role in this, although as described under Spatial Associations above, this is considered only as part of the wider landscape, the more important and uninterrupted elements of which are focused to

the north of the Hall. It is therefore considered that the Site provides a minor degree of evidential value in understanding and appreciating the wider landscape in which the Hall sits, which in turn is considered as of lesser importance than that of the immediate setting and curtilage of the Hall.

#### *Historic*

- 4.3.27 The Hall has considerable historic value, both in its architectural styles and methods utilised through the phases of its construction. Its sprawling nature increases this value, with easily readable phases and construction methods being utilised, dating from at least the fifteenth century through to the last century. The existing use of the Hall has contributed further to this history, ensuring that the Hall is retained in good condition. The Site does not contribute to this element of historic value.
- 4.3.28 Socially, as the principal dwelling of the hamlet and the local community, the Hall also provides some historic value in being the centre of the hamlet. In particular, when considering later history, including the Inclosure of the surrounding area in the late eighteenth century, the Hall owned much of the surrounding land, of which the Site was part. There is therefore some degree of historic value attributed to the Site, but when considering the proportion of such land formed by the Site, in comparison to other areas of undeveloped rural landscape, this is not considered as high, but as a low to moderate level of significance.

#### *Aesthetic*

- 4.3.29 The Hall has considerable aesthetic value, again through the visible extent of development through its life-time. The presence of various construction methods, many of which present distinct phasing of the Hall contribute highly to this element of significance. As with other elements of significance, the Site does not contribute to this distinct value at this level.
- 4.3.30 Through creating part of the wider setting, it is possible that some degree of sensory and intellectual stimulation can be gained from the Site when experiencing the Hall, but the degree to which this is real, rather than perceived and esoteric, is marginal, predominantly due to the level of visual and sensory separation between the Site and

the Hall. This separation is in particular created through the existing landscape features, both natural (such as the topography with land falling away to the south away from the Hall, giving limited views of the Hall and its surroundings) and more designed (such as field boundaries and planting associated with the Hall). It is therefore considered that the Site only plays a marginal element in this part of the aesthetic value.

### *Communal*

- 4.3.31 The Hall has considerable intrinsic communal value, both historically through its centre of the hamlet, and focal of activity in particular for the farming community in the vicinity, and more recently, through the use of the Hall and its buildings as a wedding venue.
- 4.3.32 Whilst the former, that of the historic communal value, can be considered as a moderate level of significance, the existing use can be considered as having major communal value, through this existing use. The Site plays not direct part in forming this latter communal value, although through the relationship of the Site with the surrounding landscape, it does have a minor degree of communal value in historic terms, but this is at a purely immediate and local level of the hamlet and its surroundings. Therefore, although the modern use can be seen as having high communal value, the historic use can be considerably reduced in terms of its communal value.

## **5.0 Proposed Development**

- 5.1 As it is the principal of the Site for allocation which is being considered at this stage, no details of proposed development have been prepared. However, in order to facilitate a greater understanding and appreciation of the issues, position, landform and parameters of the Site, Figure 6 shows suggested parameters for the Site, taking into account the existing topography (Figure 7), and indicative alterations to levels (Figures 8 - 10) across the Site.

## **6.0 Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 This section of the report will assess the impact of proposed development of the Site on the setting and significance of Gorcott Hall, utilising Steps 3 and 4 of the English Heritage guidance contained within "The Setting of Heritage Assets". As stated in the guidance, those potential attributes of proposed development and of the Site that have been identified as having potential relevance to the overall understanding of impacts have been used for the assessment.

### **Development Attributes**

#### Location and Siting of Development

##### *Proximity to Asset*

- 6.2 The proposed Site lies in part, adjacent to the heritage asset, although the degree to which this proximity is, or will be, experienced is considerably reduced, due to the existing topography and visual cover provided by existing planting. It is probable that elements such as massing, height and colour of any proposed development will result in differing impacts. However, as already stated and is covered further below, the topography of the landscape together with some terracing of the landscape, will result in the Site lying considerably lower than the Hall. The resulting effect of the proximity of the Site and development within it, will result in negligible to minor adverse impact on the setting of the Heritage Asset. Whether the impact is negligible or minor adverse will depend on details of development, including the extent of reduction in levels, the heights, axis, materials and colour of buildings across the Site, all of which can be controlled through the Development Control process. The Indicative Final Levels plan shows one example of how reduced levels and potential height of buildings across the Site can be encompassed with negligible harm.

##### *Extent of Development*

- 6.3 The extent of development is a matter for a Planning Application, and thus not entirely relevant to this assessment. However, this assessment does examine the extent of development for the Site that is likely to be acceptable, and indicate areas of relative

sensitivity. It is also recognised that the BDC report presents some conclusions on potential development areas, but this is limited in respect of both, examining the Site as a whole, as well as perhaps not allowing for a necessary reduction in land levels and differing heights and massing of buildings.

- 6.4 Whilst the topography of the land does present considerable natural mitigation, it is not of such a nature that it would mitigate all forms of development across the whole of the Site. Furthermore, due to the nature of the topography with and sloping to various degrees away from the Hall, as well as taking into consideration that some parts of the Site lie more distant from the Hall than others, it is considered that a range of heights and massing of buildings can be encompassed, the detail of those elements varying according to the degree of existing natural mitigation.
- 6.5 As already stated, whilst the BDC Assessment identifies areas for development, and highlights areas which it considers as not suitable for development, it does not appear to take into account the need for terracing of land for development. As illustrated in the indicative sections, with an appropriate level of terracing, it is possible that development can be encompassed within this area, subject to final floor levels, the massing, scale and axis of buildings, and a suitable level of additional planting, sympathetic to the character of the rural surroundings and woodland

#### *Position relative to Landform*

- 6.6 The Site lies on the slope of land falling away from the Hall, with a sharp fall immediately to the south of the Hall, and the land then rolling away, resulting in an overall fall across the Site of c30m. However, in order to facilitate development on a level platform, some reduction in levels would be necessary ensuring that ridge heights across the Site could vary. Figures 6 & 10 presents an **indicative** illustration of how this may be achieved, and the final floor levels across the Site.

#### *Isolation of Asset*

- 6.7 The heritage asset is already isolated from existing development, both physically and visually, with rural landscape to the north, south (with the A4023 Coventry Highway lying further to the south) and west, and the A435 to the east. This isolation can be

considered as a part of its significance. The development of the Site will not increase the isolation of the Hall, and the majority of the existing rural landscape will remain unaltered, leaving the essential elements contributing to the isolation of the Hall intact, and the relationship to the agricultural and rural landscape to the north will be retained. There will be some closing of urban form to the Hall, but the degree to which this will be experienced from the Hall is considered to be negligible, in particular to the topography, both existing and proposed. This topography will also assist in retaining the separation and perception of the isolation of the Hall, albeit with a vertical emphasis rather than horizontal one.

#### *Position in relation to Key Views*

- 6.8 As indicated in the photographs, there are few key views from the heritage asset to the Site, partially as a result of the existing tree cover, as well as the existing topography. Even when looking from upper floors of the Hall, views are either of the immediate foreground of the Hall, of the formal gardens to the south, or of longer vistas of the Cotswold Hills to the south-east. Views of the Site are not gained from the Hall, partially due to the topography and partially due to the existing screening from landscaping within and forming the domestic curtilage of the Hall.
- 6.9 There are no key views from within the domestic curtilage of the Hall, although glimpses of the Site can be gained from certain points, such as positions in the gardens to the south of the brick wall (see all Plates). These are not considered as key views, as they do not form important or essential views, but are considered as views which are incidental or of secondary importance. Whilst the height of industrial units will be argued to impact on these secondary views, in particular due to their height and appearance, the Indicative Schematic Plan (Figure 6) together with the existing levels, and Indicative Final Levels Plan, show that the height of any units can be positioned in such a manner, when taken with reduced land levels, to result in a negligible visual impact and alteration to views. Furthermore, the introduction of further mitigation whether through bunding or additional planting, or a mix of both, will further reduce the potential for alteration to existing views.



### *Assessment of Impact arising from Location and Siting*

- 6.10 It can be seen that the impact arising from location and siting of the Site in relation to the Hall is of a negligible to low detriment, in particular due to the nature of the topography, and the necessary reduction in levels across the landscape to allow for development on level surface. No key views either to or from the Hall will be affected predominantly due to the existing buildings and landscaping, and although glimpses of the development may be gained from non-key areas within the domestic curtilage of the Hall, these are limited in their quantity as well as the degree to which the views are considered as contributing to the significance of the listed building. Some closing of urban form will occur as a result of the development of the Site, but the topography and additional mitigation will reduce the impact of this to one of negligible to very low minor harm. With appropriate mitigation, development can be achieved across the majority of the Site, although, as covered in more detail below, the height and scale of buildings across the Site will be a consideration.
- 6.11 Overall, it is thus considered that the impact arising from *Location and Siting* of the Site in relation to the listed building will result in a minor detrimental level of impact to the setting of the listed building. However, the degree to which this element of setting contributes to the overall significance of the heritage asset has been shown to be minimal, and thus the overall impact is identified as being a minor level of detriment (or a low level of less than substantial harm) to the significance of the Grade II listed building.

### Form and Appearance of Development

#### *Prominence. Dominance or Conspicuousness*

- 6.12 Details of any proposed buildings are not available at this stage, but in order to facilitate some degree of understanding of the potential for these elements, Figures 9 & 10 illustrate both existing sections and indicative sections across the Site.
- 6.13 It can thus be seen that, with appropriate levels of land reduction, together with appropriate parameters for the Site, the potential prominence, dominance or conspicuousness of any potential buildings can be mitigated. It is thus considered that,

whilst there is some potential for these elements to detrimentally impact on the setting of the Hall, with appropriate mitigation in place, this level of detrimental impact can be reduced to one of a negligible level, and a negligible level of harm.

#### *Dimensions, Scale and Massing*

- 6.14 Details of the dimensions, the scale and the massing of any proposed development are unknown at this time. However, the indicative final floor levels shown on Figure 10 show that with appropriate mitigation the Site has a varying capacity to allow for these factors, with buildings with larger footprints, and thus higher ridges, further to the south of the site, and the smaller buildings to the north, closer to the Hall. Utilising such placement will result in a minor level of detriment on the overall setting of the Hall, and on an area which has been shown to have minimal impact on the overall significance of the Hall. The resulting impact is therefore identified as being a minor level of detriment (or a low level of less than substantial harm) to the significance of the Hall.

#### *Materials*

- 6.15 Materials are unknown at this stage, and are likely to be subject of a suitably worded condition following the approval of any planning application. However, it is likely that elevations of buildings will either be in sheet steel or brick, or a mixture. However, due to the elevated position on the Hall in relation to the Site, it is unlikely that the elevations of buildings will be visible. It is more likely that the roofs of buildings will be considered as a more important detail when considering the impact on the Hall, and to this end it is suggested that the roofs be of a dark colour, the material of which to be confirmed, thereby reducing the potential for glare and to increase the potential for reducing the impact of roofscapes on any glimpses or views from the Hall or its immediate curtilage/ setting. The choice of appropriate dark colours is likely to result in a negligible level of impact on the setting and the significance of the listed building, equating to a negligible to very low level of less than substantial harm on the overall significance of the Hall.

*Diurnal or seasonal change*

- 6.16 There will be no diurnal change, save for the potential for additional lighting effects, which are covered separately below.
- 6.17 In terms of seasonal change, this is currently predominantly due to the existing trees and hedges in the landscape, with potentially more distant glimpses gained during winter months, due to the lack of leaf. However, due to the extent of tree cover, combined with the existing topography, these glimpses are very minimal in quantity and to the degree to which they open up views of the Site. Whilst the Bromsgrove Assessment contains photographs taken during full leaf, which shows the screening during summer months, we have included photos taken during late autumn. The two sets of photographs can be used together to assess seasonal changes.
- 6.18 This seasonal change will therefore remain, and any glimpses of proposed new development can be reduced with additional landscaping and with a reduction in levels across the Site, with a resulting negligible level of impact upon important elements of setting and on the significance of the listed building. This would result in a negligible to minor level of harm, equating to a negligible to low level of less than substantial harm.

*Assessment of Impact arising from Form and Appearance*

- 6.19 Overall, it can be seen that the *Form and Appearance* of possible development across the Site will result in a negligible to low level of detriment on the overall setting of the listed building, and specifically on an area of setting identified as having a minor impact on the significance of the listed building. The overall level of harm on the significance of the Hall is therefore identified as being of a negligible to low level of less than substantial harm.

## Other Effects of Development

### *Change to skyline*

- 6.20 There will be no changes to skyline, with views to Cotswold Hills being retained, in particular from the upper floors of the Hall facing toward the Site. Plates 1-5 show the dominance of these Hills from the upper floors, and the degree to which they form part of the skyline. They also illustrate the lack of visibility of the Site from these locations. There will thus be a negligible level of impact upon the skyline experienced from the Hall.
- 6.21 In terms of views towards the Hall, whether from the north or south, the views of the skyline will be retained, and the experience of the Hall will be largely retained as one encompassed within a belt of trees and associated buildings

### *Noise, odour, vibration, dust, etc*

- 6.22 Whilst there will be no alteration to the setting of the listed building in terms of dust or vibration, except as a temporary alteration during the construction of the Site, it is possible that there is the potential for a marginal increase in noise, arising from transport. However, considering the presence of the A435 to the east of the Hall. It is also noted that the existing hedging, predominantly consisting of *Leylandii* trees, provides good protection from the elements, and it is suggested that appropriate mitigation in the form of additional tree planting (although of species more appropriate than *Leylandii*) and potential bunding will negate the potential for such impact of the development of the Site.
- 6.23 It is therefore considered that the overall impact of these elements of setting will be marginal and will only result in a negligible level of overall detriment, equating to a negligible to low level of (or negligible to a low level of less than substantial) harm.

*Lighting effects and light spill*

- 6.24 As no details of proposed development are available at this stage, the full impact of lighting effects and light spill cannot be assessed. Furthermore, these details are likely to be considered through the submission of any full planning application, and will vary dependant on occupants of buildings and their individual requirements. It is also considered that appropriately worded conditions on any Full planning application will provide sufficient control for the Local Authorities to ensure that these elements present the least impact considered reasonable and acceptable.

*Change to general character, land use and tree cover*

- 6.25 The general character of land to the south of the Hall will alter from one of currently rural character and appearance to one of semi-industrial. Although it is possible that some single trees may be removed from the Site to enable to the development, the key features such as the brook, hedge lines, and the existing tree cover to the Hall can all be encompassed through design of the Site, as can be seen on the Indicative Schematic Site Plan (Figure 6).
- 6.26 Furthermore, additional planting can be utilised to strengthen the existing tree cover, resulting in a reduced level of impact arising from the general change in character and land use. Together with the existing topography, or with the indicative final floor levels, this can be seen to have both a low level of detrimental impact arising from the change in land use, together with a low to moderate level of positive impact arising from the retained and increase tree cover. The overall impact is therefore considered as negligible, with an overall negligible level of harm and positivity.

*Assessment of Impact arising from Other Effects of Development*

- 6.27 The overall impact of *Other Effects* has been shown to be of a negligible to very low level of harm, which in turn equates to a negligible to very low level of less than substantial harm on the overall significance of the listed building.

## Permanence of Development

### *Anticipated lifetime and reversibility*

- 6.28 The development of the Site will result in a permanent and non-reversible alteration to the setting of the listed building. However, as the Site plays a minor part in the significance and important setting of the Hall, this permanence is identified as having a low to moderate level of less than substantial harm on the overall significance of the listed building.

## Longer Term Effects

### *Changes to ownership arrangements*

- 6.29 Changes to ownership arrangements will not necessarily present any changes in potential impacts, as details of any scheme will be considered through the Development Control process, irrespective of owners.

## Overall Impact

- 6.30 The immediate setting of the Hall, formed by its gardens and defined by the trees, walling and hedging of the Hall will remain unaltered.
- 6.31 The intermediate setting of the Hall will change, with part of the existing rural character being replaced with a semi-industrial one. However, as already discussed, the Site plays a minor part in the significance and important setting of the Hall and as such its development will not detrimentally impact on the spatial or historic interest of the Hall.
- 6.32 As already discussed, the Site plays a nominal part in the visual setting of the Hall, with views from the Hall greatly limited by the contoured landscape and through the degree of planting between the two elements. The Indicative Sections show that roof levels can be kept below lines of sight and below the level of the Hall, which together

with appropriate additional landscaping will result in a low level of less-than substantial harm on the Hall.

6.33 Again, considering the potential environmental impacts arising from the development of the Site, it is likely that these will be minimal, as the landscaping and topography (both existing and as shown on the Indicative final floor levels) forming the boundary of the Site in this area will limit much of the noise attributed to industrial estates.

6.34 Although there is a very minimal degree of spatial awareness and value relating the Hall and the Site, as described, the two are not identified as a unified element. Whilst the development of the Site will impact the spatial value to some degree, the degree to which this contributes to the significance of the Hall has been found to be minimal.

6.35 It is therefore suggested that the development of the Site will have only a very minor level of detrimental impact on this spatial value, when considering this in relation to the significance of the Hall.

6.36 The historic relationship of the Hall and the Site has been described, and it is concluded that there is some limited value in this historic value, but this value has largely been lost today, in particular with the ceasing of farming activities from the Hall for over 40 years. Therefore, as the proposals form a distinct area of the historic farmland surrounding the Hall, they are retained within the defined boundaries of the landscape, which will minimise the impact of such development on the historic value between the Site and the Hall, to a low to negligible level.

6.37 It is therefore argued that, in terms of setting, the development of the Site will have a very low level of impact on those elements identified by English Heritage.

#### Significance

4.5.37 It has been shown that the Site does play some part in the evidential significance of the Hall, but this is at an intermediate and wider level, with the more important and immediate level being considered as the immediate curtilage of the Hall. Through creating part of the wider rural landscape of the Hall, the Site does contribute to

come degree, although this is identified as being to a minimal degree. The development of the Site will therefore have a minimal degree of impact, with the more important elements of the Hall being retained, and only a minor peripheral element of this significance being impacted upon.

6.38 In terms of the historic significance, the majority of the historic significance of the Hall will be retained, through the unaltered state of the building and its immediate environs. However, the wider rural environment of the Hall will be impacted upon, and as this is considered to have a moderate level of significance, the degree to which this is altered will alter the degree of impact. As the majority of the landscape will remain unscathed, and that which will be impacted upon represents only a small part of Inclosed land, this is seen as having a minor impact on the overall historic significance of the Hall.

6.39 Again, as the Hall is remaining untouched, and its associated buildings and structures also remain untouched, and considering these are the principal elements of aesthetic importance, it is only the wider environment and distant glimpses of the Site which will impact on this element of the significance of the Hall, but only to a minor extent, with the aesthetic value of the Hall largely remaining intact.

6.40 The communal value of the Hall has been increased in recent years, through the development of the Hall as a wedding and conference venue. Where previously, the communal value of the Hall was limited to the relatively high status of the Hall in the hamlet and the local immediate community, this is now on a more public basis. This communal value will remain unaltered through the development of the Site, and through possible increased patronage of the conference facilities, could be enhanced.

#### Maximising Enhancement and Minimising Harm

6.41 In terms of reducing any level of impact on this significance of the Hall, it is considered that appropriate mitigation could include the strengthening of the green buffer between the Site and the Hall, in particular along the boundary of the Site, to include species and varieties of different sizes, to replicate and model and strengthen the surrounding historic landscape.

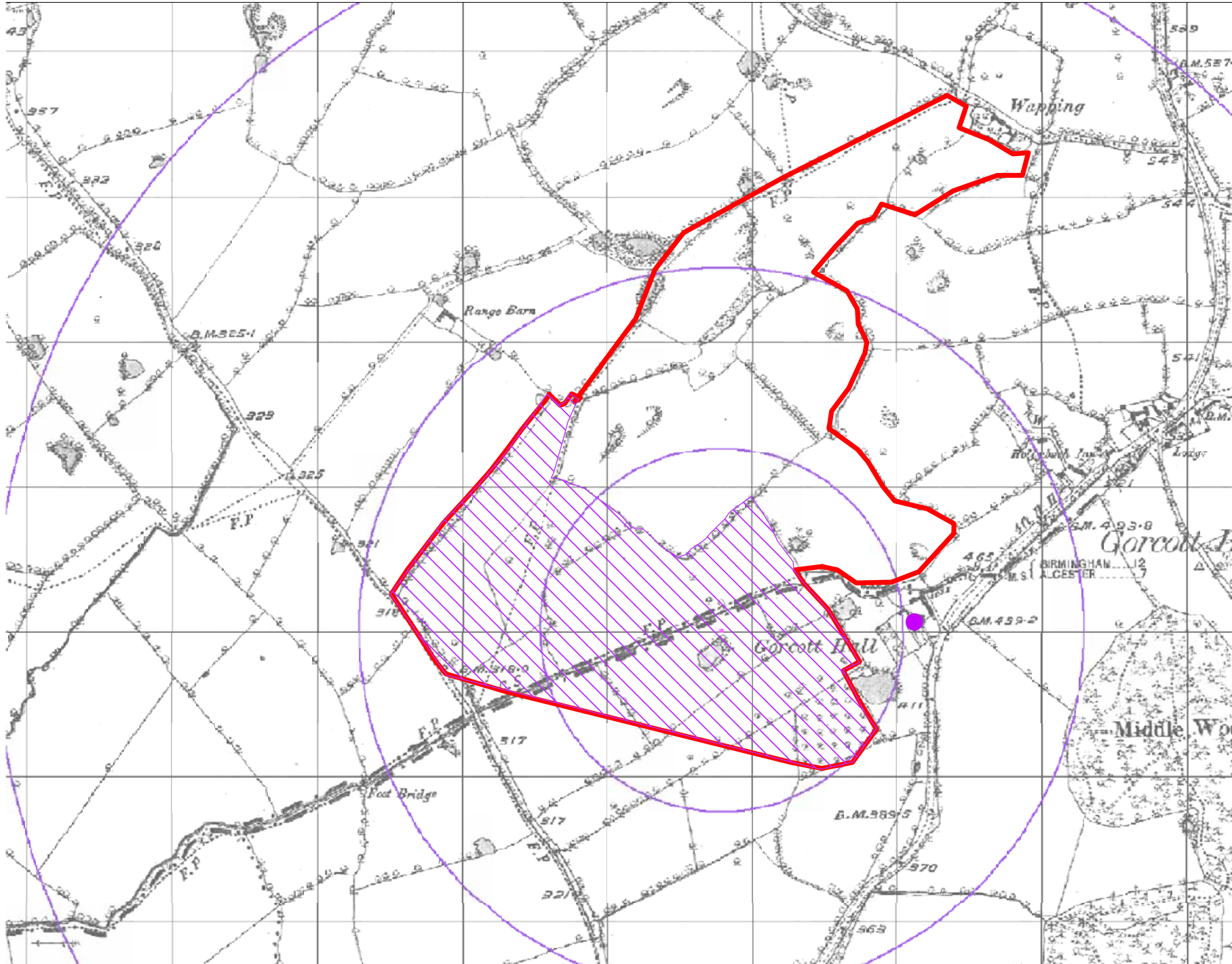


- 6.42 Early planting of such buffers should be considered as an essential part of the development, to ensure that the planting is in place and is starting its process of growing into a buffer. It is also important to consider that, the impact of the construction and initial operation of the Site will be the highest period of impact, but with the maturity of the newly planted landscape, the mitigation will grow to ensure that such protection to the Hall is increased for future generations.
- 6.43 The limitations of careful design of other elements, such as noise barriers, street lighting, etc will all also further assist in reducing any identified level of impact, and should be considered as important elements in any detailed design for the Site.
- 6.44 The scale, massing, materials and detailing and design (both internal and external) of buildings closest to the Hall will also help to considerably reduce the impact of additional environmental factors arising from the proposed use of the Site, through creating a physical and aural buffer between the Site and the Hall. As discussed above, this reduction will be emphasised and improved through time through the provision and maturity of a green buffer between the closest building and the Hall.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**




- 7.1 This report has appraised the impact of proposed development in the vicinity of Gorcott Hall, Redditch. Specifically, it has focussed on the potential impact on the setting and significance of the Grade II\* listed building, Gorcott Hall.
- 7.2 The Site does not form part of the immediate setting of the Hall, although it does form part of the intermediate to wider setting, and this is predominantly as a result of being part of the wider historic landscape.
- 7.3 There will be a negligible level of impact on the various elements of setting as discussed throughout the report, with only minor impacts occurring on the less important elements of this setting. It is anticipated that these can be mitigated through careful landscape design, in particular to the eastern part of the Site.
- 7.4 Other elements of development, including building design, planting, noise attenuation and street lighting should be considered carefully in any final design, to ensure that pollution from these environment elements does not impact any further on the wider setting of the listed building.
- 7.5 Although there is some degree of harm recognised within this report, this is considered to be of a very minimal extent, and is balanced, if not out-weighted by the provision of much-needed industrial infrastructure for the surrounding region.
- 7.6 Whilst it is recognised that there remains some discrepancy between the Bromsgrove District Council report and this report, the author of this report remains of the view that the analysis contained herein indicates that the whole site remains capable of sustaining some development, and that the development control process is sufficiently robust to consider the details of any development in order to minimise or negate any potential harm on the important elements of setting of Gorcott Hall, including scale, massing, materials, and detailed design – a view supported both by Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council.
- 7.7 To this end, it has been confirmed that Bromsgrove District Council are not seeking to alter the Proposed Policy relating to the site.

7.8 It is therefore concluded that the development of the Site is in accordance with the policy on the historic environment within the NPPF and would only present less-than-substantial harm on the wider setting and significance of the listed building. Such a degree of harm indicates that the proposals should be considered against the public benefits of any proposals, which in this case are the benefits associated with allocating the site for Industrial use through the SA process.






Additional information:

**Key**

-  Development Area for study
-  Gorcott Hall position
-  Site Location

**East Redditch 1884\_modified.tif**

**RGB**

-  Red: Band\_1
-  Green: Band\_2
-  Blue: Band\_3

N  
↑

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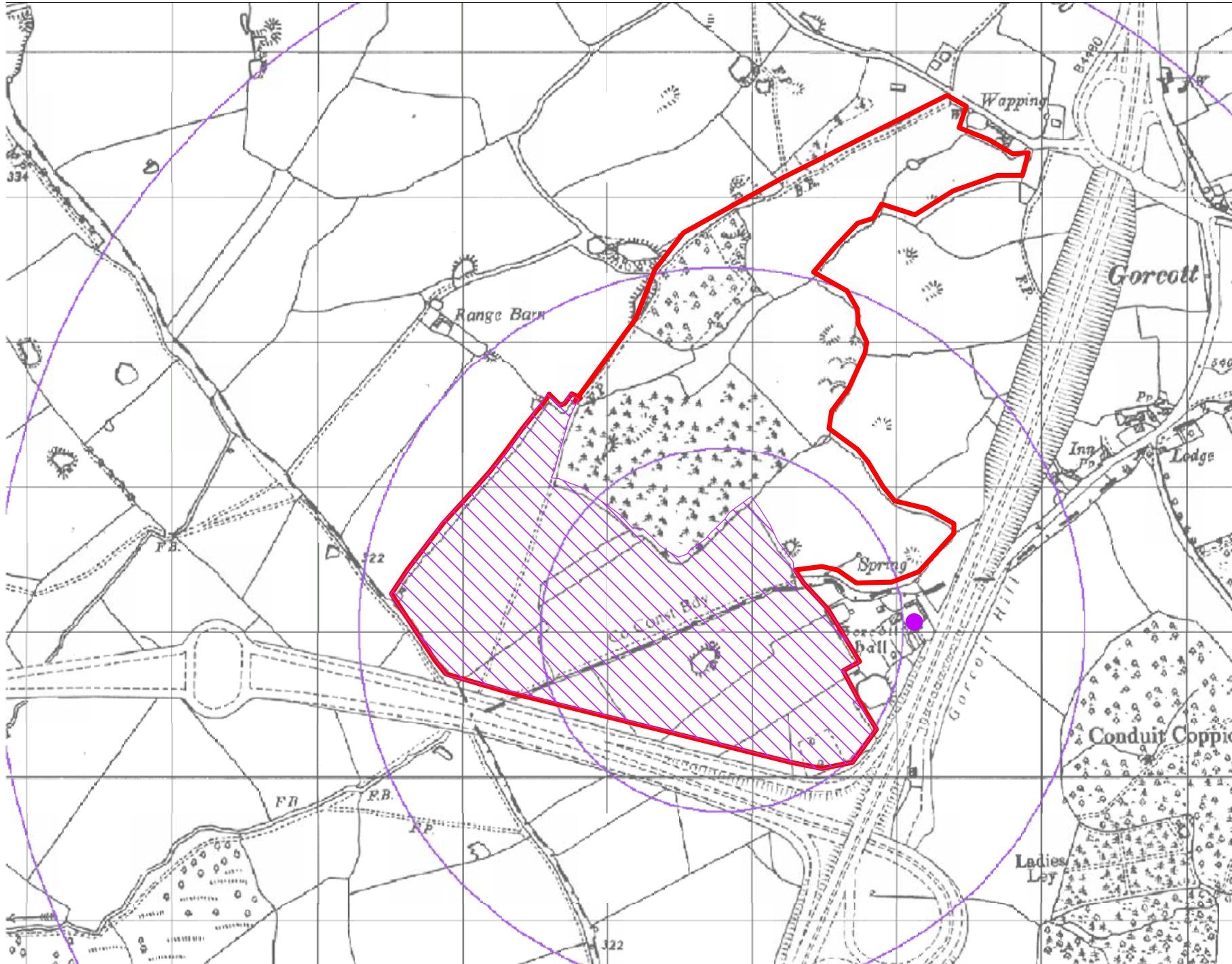
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Figure 1: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1884






Additional information:

**Key**

-  Development Area for study
-  Gorcott Hall position
-  Site Location

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**RGB**

-  Red: Band\_1
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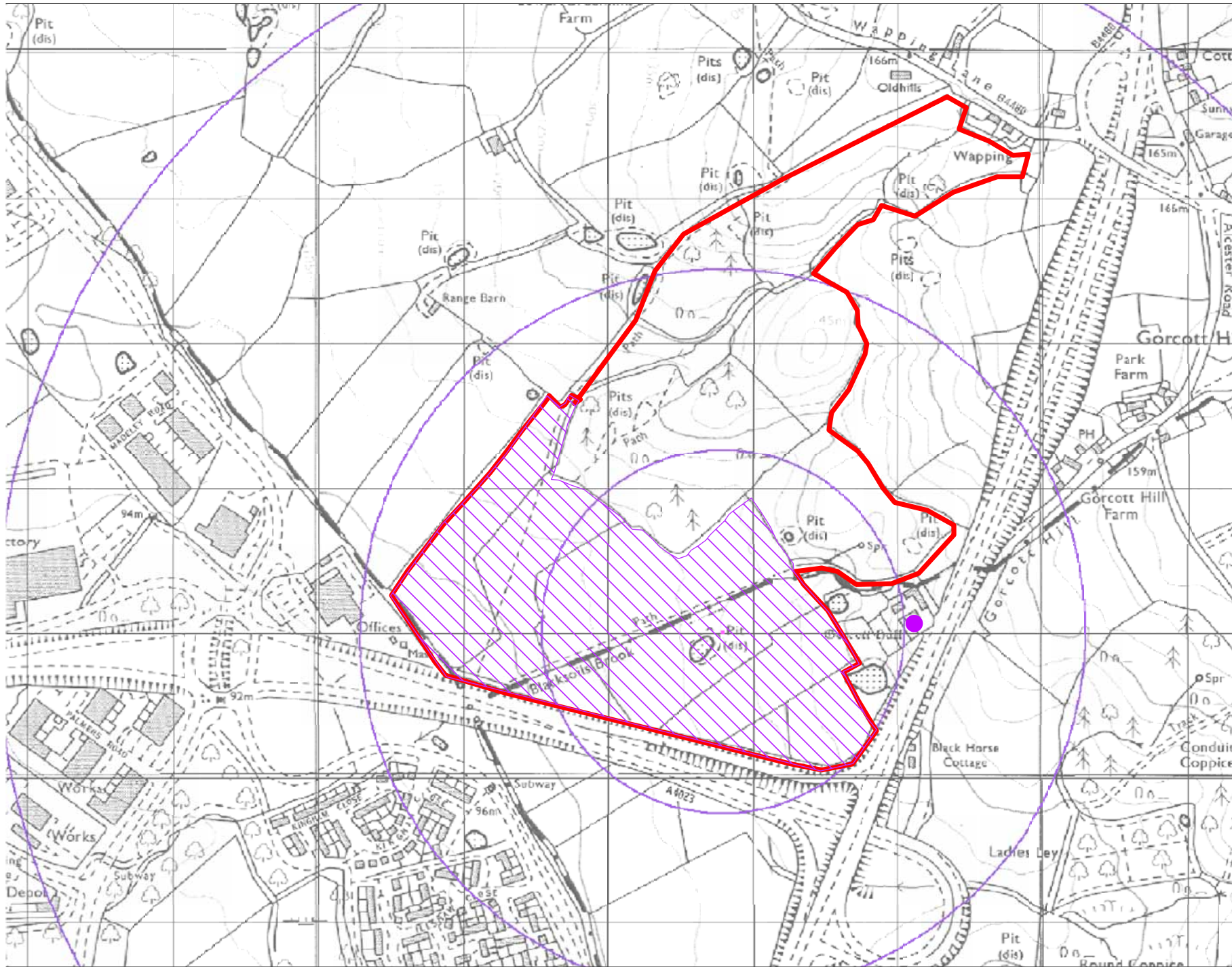
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Figure 2: Ordnance Survey 1974 showing construction of road network






Additional information:

**Key**

-  Development Area for study
-  Gorcott Hall position
-  Site Location

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**RGB**

-  Red: Band\_1
-  Green: Band\_2
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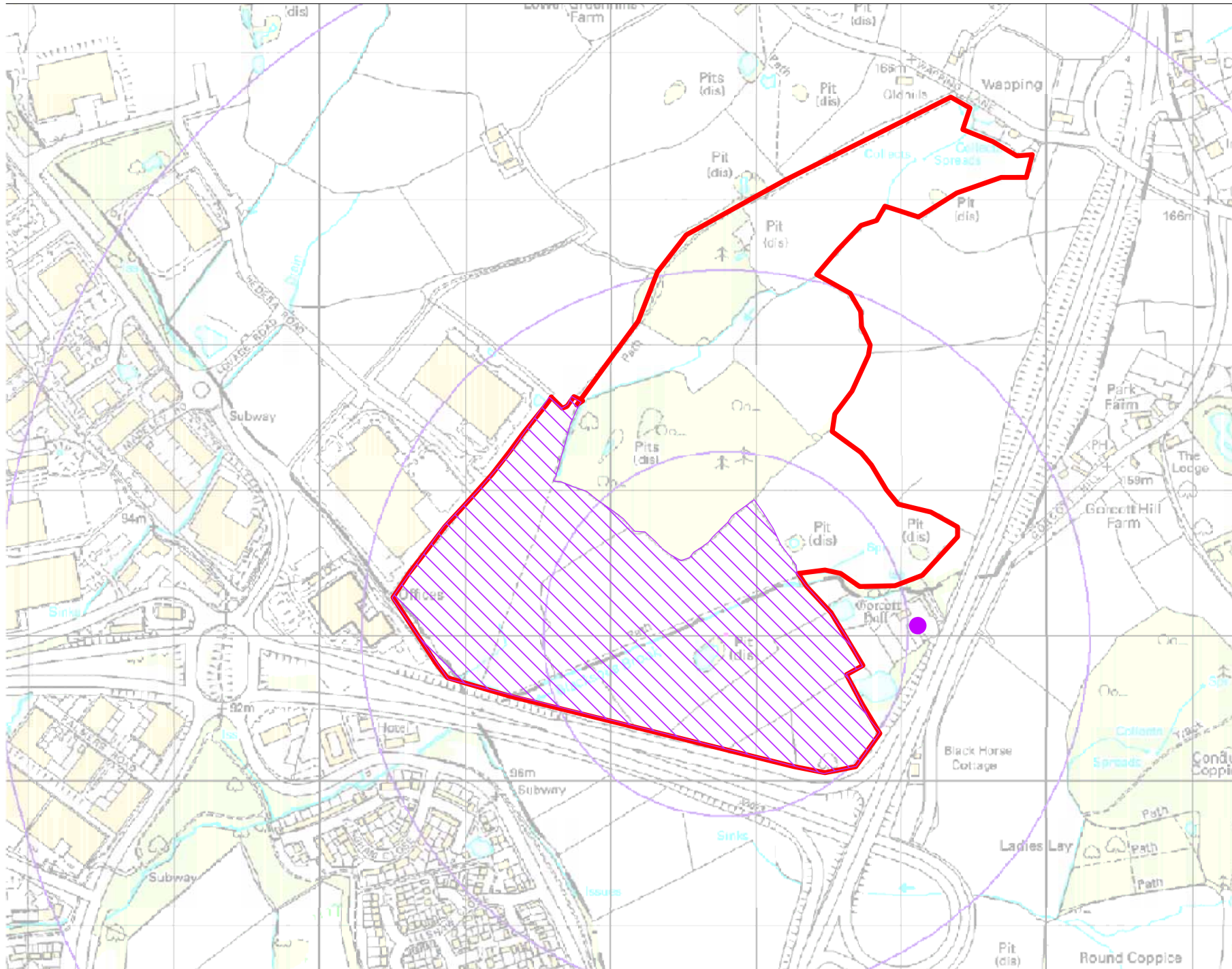


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Figure 3: Ordnance Survey 1984 showing construction of housing to south






Additional information:

**Key**

-  Development Area for study
-  Gorcott Hall position
-  Site Location


**East Redditch 2006\_modified.tif**

**RGB**

-  Red: Band\_1
-  Green: Band\_2
-  Blue: Band\_3

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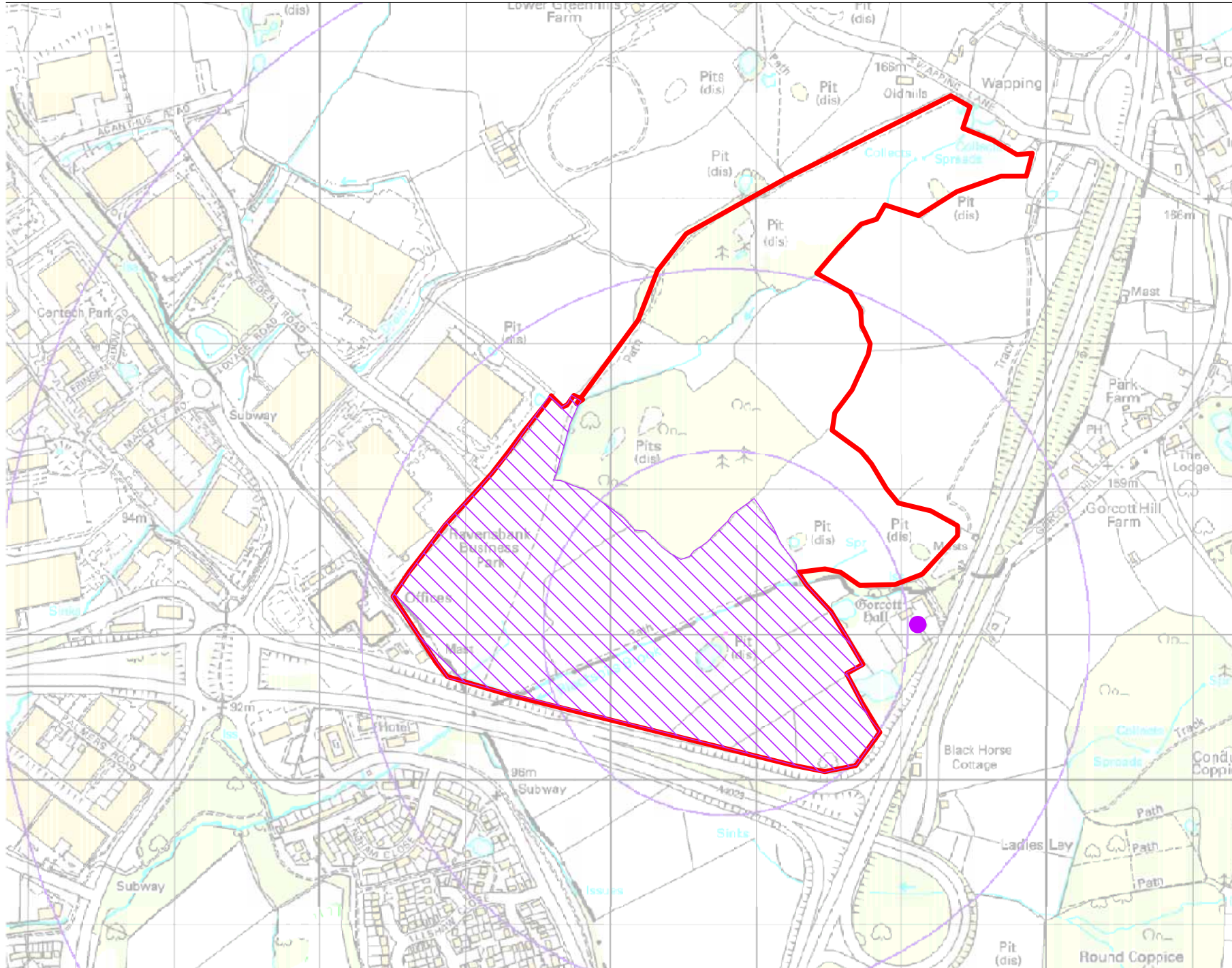
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Figure 4: Ordnance Survey 2006 showing construction of industrial estate to west



Additional information:

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**Key**

-  Development Area for study
-  Gorcott Hall position
-  Site Location

N

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Figure 5: Ordnance Survey 2013



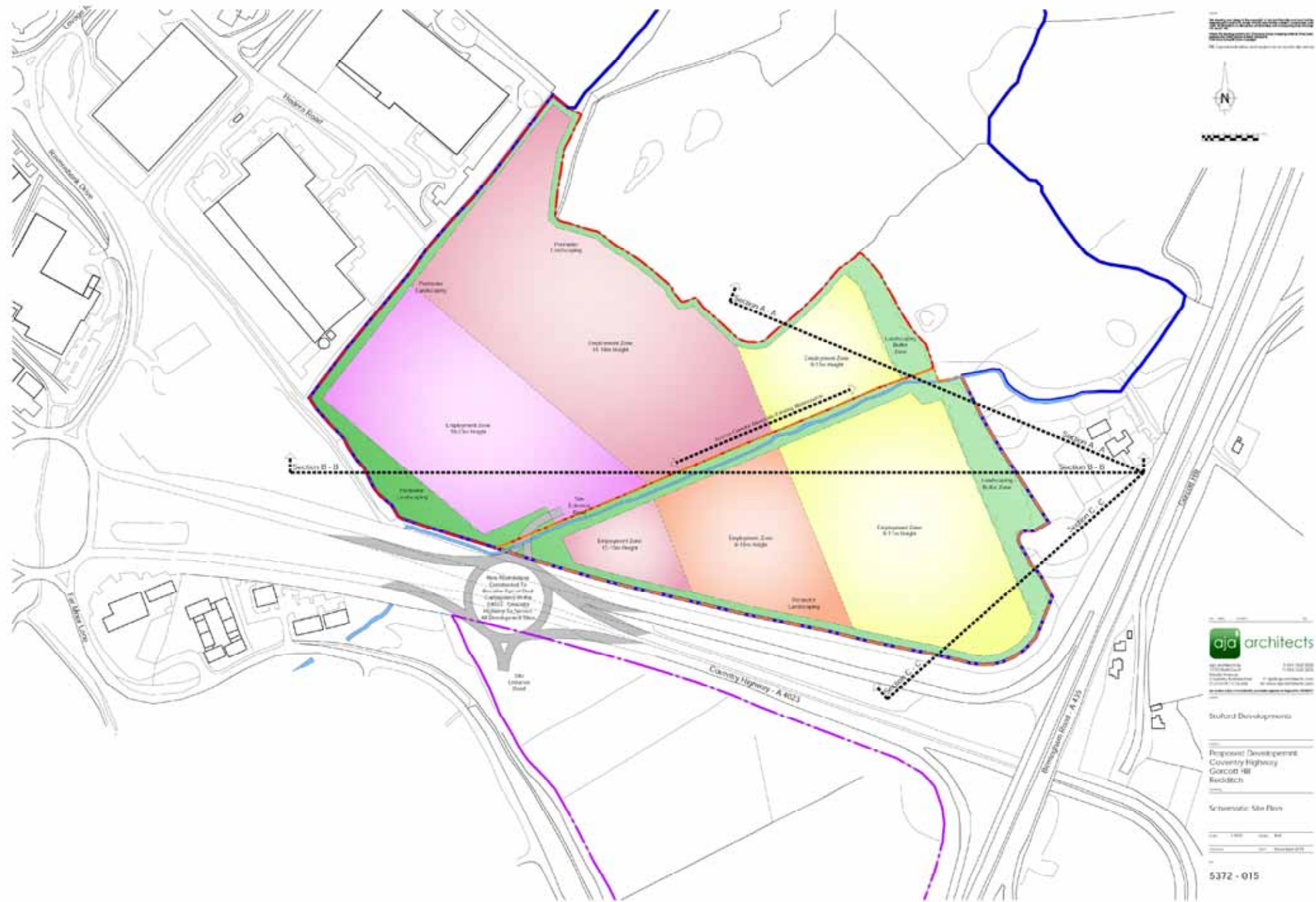
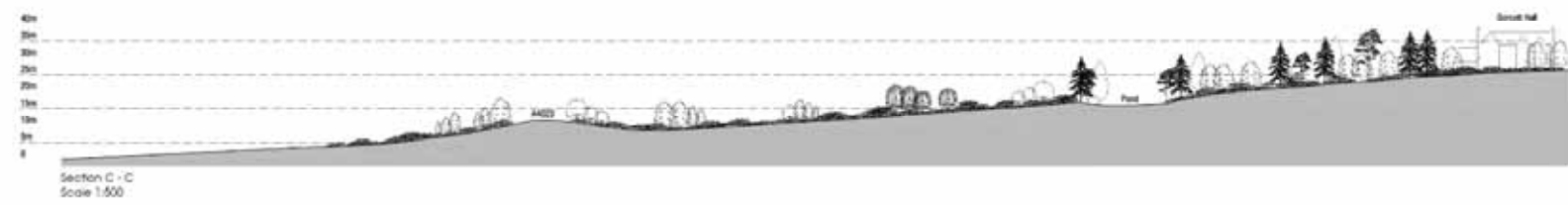
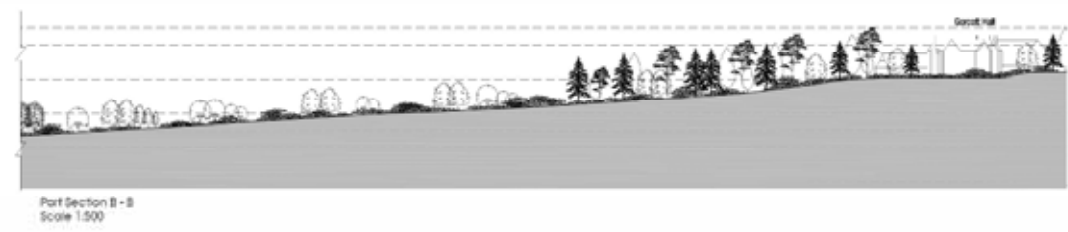


Figure 6





Section A - A  
Scale 1:500



Section B - B  
Scale 1:1000



Part Section B - B  
Scale 1:500



Part Section B - B  
Scale 1:500



Section C - C  
Scale 1:500

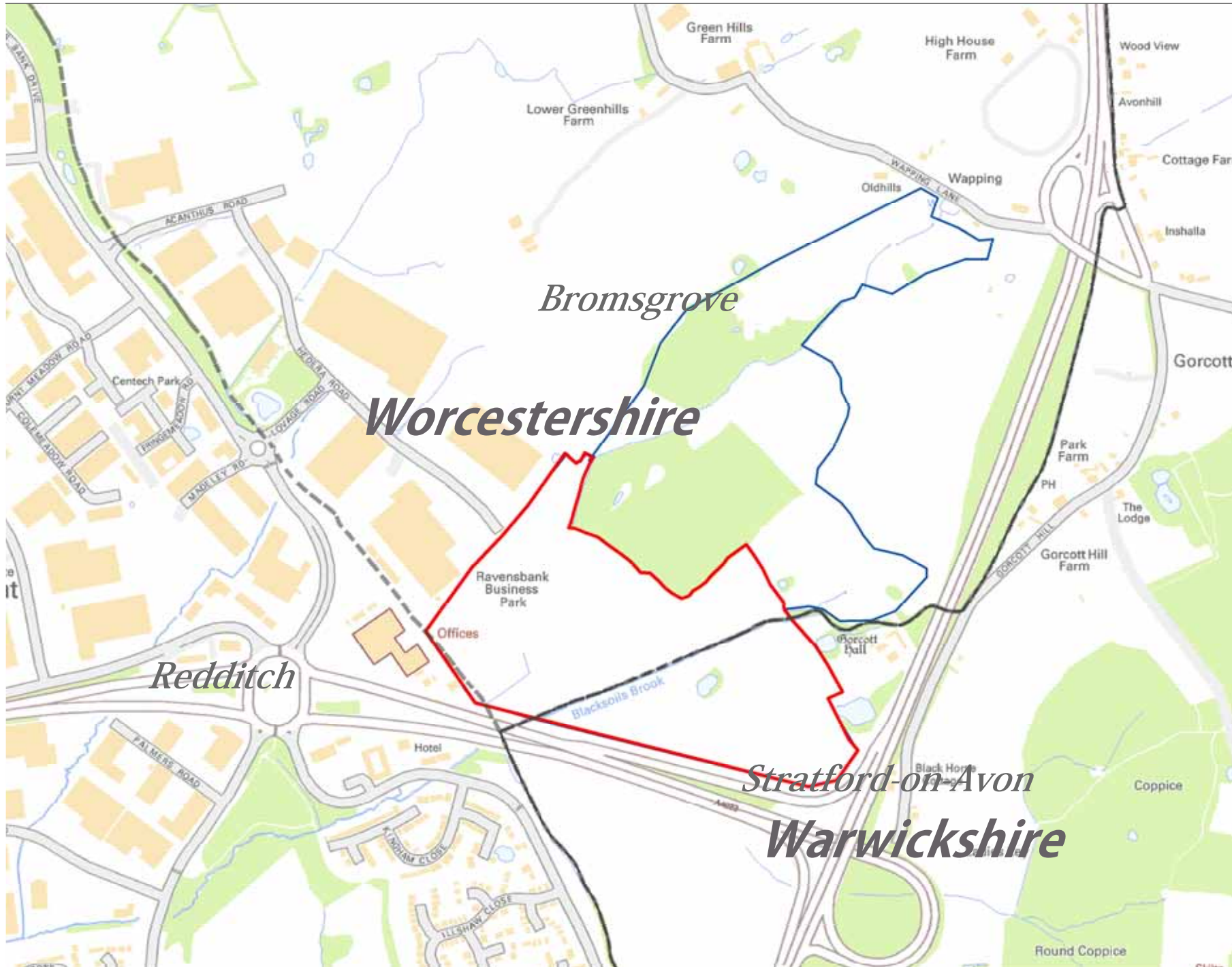
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**Stoford Developments**

Proposed Development  
Covertry Highway  
Gorcoff Hill  
Redditch

Site Sections  
Proposed

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Additional information:

**Key**

- Authority Boudnaries
- Red Line boundary
- Blue Line boundary

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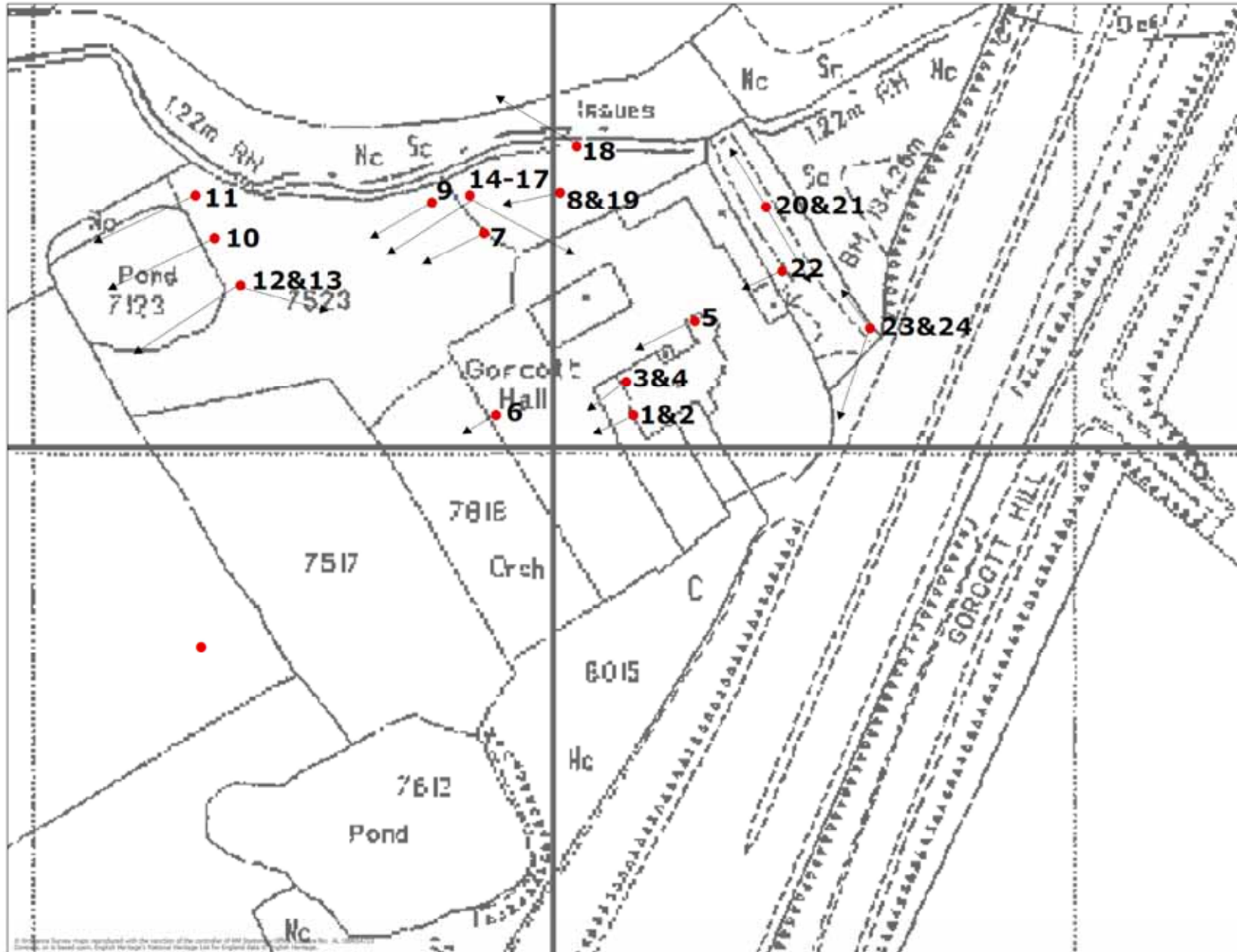
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Figure 9: Local Authority Boundaries

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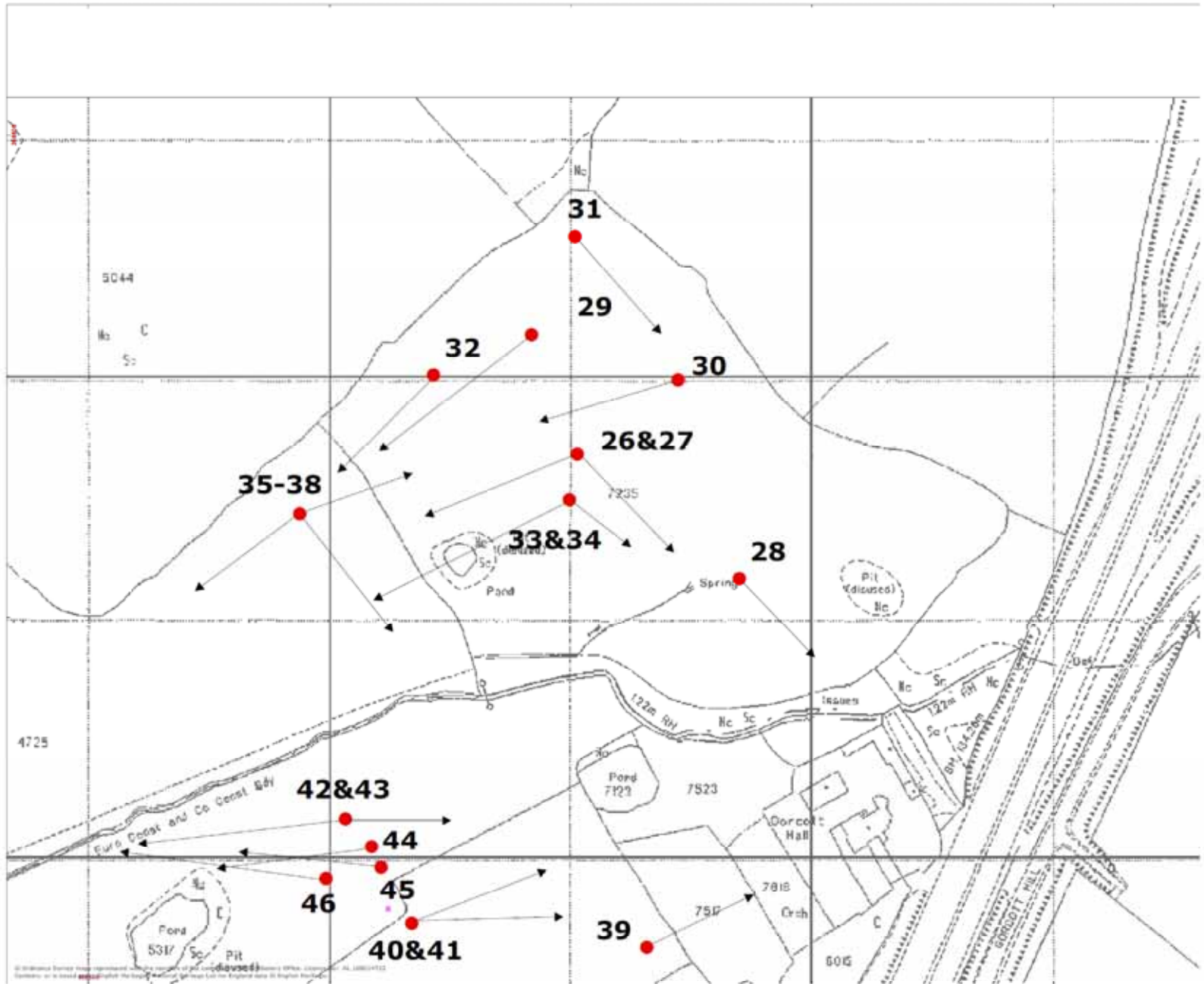
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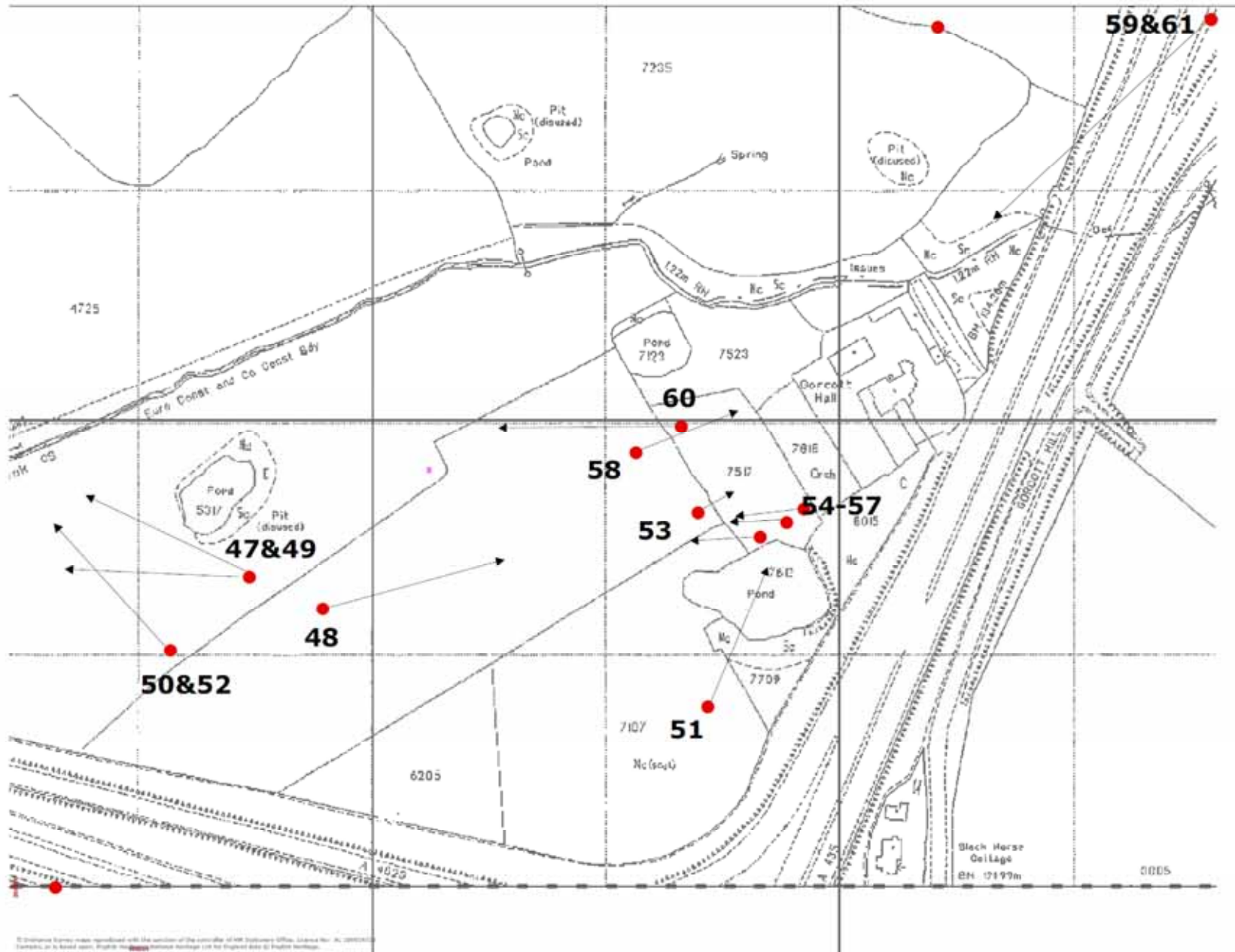
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Plate 1: View from 1st floor, Gorcott Hall



Plate 2: View from 1st floor, Gorcott Hall



Plate 3: View from 2nd floor, Gorcott Hall



Plate 4: View from 2nd floor, Gorcott Hall





Plate 5: View from 2nd floor, Gorcott Hall



Plate 6: View from garden looking west



Plate 7: View from garden looking west



Plate 8: View from hard standing looking west



Plate 9: View from garden looking west



Plate 10: View from pond looking west



Plate 11: View from pond looking west



Plate 12: View from pond looking west



Plate 13: View from pond looking east



Plate 14: View from garden looking west



Plate 15: View from garden looking west



Plate 16: View from garden looking toward barns



Plate 17:



Plate 18: View from hardstanding looking west



Plate 19: View from hardstanding looking west



Plate 20: View looking west along access drive



Plate 21: View looking east along access drive



Plate 22: View of Hall from access drive



Plate 23: View of barn from access drive



Plate 24: View along A435 from access to site



Plate 25: View looking west towards site



Plate 26: View from brow of ridge looking over site



Plate 27: View from brow of ridge looking towards Hall



Plate 28: View from brow of ridge looking towards Hall



Plate 29: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 30: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 31: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 32: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 33: View from brow of ridge looking towards site





Plate 34: View from brow of ridge looking towards Hall



Plate 35: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 36: View from brow of ridge looking towards site



Plate 37: View from base of ridge looking towards Hall



Plate 38: View from base of ridge looking over site



Plate 39: View from ridge brow looking toward Hall



Plate 40: View from ridge brow looking toward Hall



Plate 41: View from ridge brow looking toward Hall



Plate 42: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 43: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 44: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 45: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 46: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 47: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 48: View from ridge brow looking toward Hall



Plate 49: View from ridge brow looking toward Site



Plate 50: View from site looking toward existing development



Plate 51: View from ridge brow looking toward Hall



Plate 52: View from site looking toward existing development



Plate 53: Gate to Hall garden from site



Plate 54: View from site looking toward existing development



Plate 55: View from Hall garden looking toward Site



Plate 56: View from Hall garden looking toward Site



Plate 57: View from Hall garden looking toward Site



Plate 58: View from Hall garden looking toward Hall



Plate 59: View from road bridge looking toward Hall and site



Plate 60: View from Hall garden looking toward Site



Plate 61: View from road bridge looking toward Hall and site



Plate 62: View from site looking toward woodland



Plate 63: View from site looking toward woodland and existing development



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