



LAND OFF ABBAY ROAD, SANDBACH, CHESHIRE

Archaeological Desk- based Assessment



Oxford Archaeology North

December 2013

Fox Strategic Land and Property

Issue No: 2013-14/1474
OA North Job No: L10641
NGR: 374460 360500

Document Title: LAND OFF ABBEY ROAD, SANDBACH, CHESHIRE EAST

Document Type: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Client: Fox Strategic Land and Property

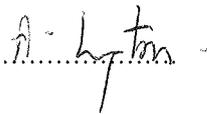
Issue Number: 2013-14/1474
OA Job Number: L10641
National Grid Reference: 374460 360500

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SUMMARY

In November 2013, Fox Strategic Land and Property commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a site to the west of Sandbach in Cheshire East (NGR 374460 360500). The principal aim of the assessment was to identify, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the cultural heritage and sub-surface archaeological resource within the study area, and to establish the impact of any future development upon this resource.

In total, 33 sites of archaeological interest were identified during the desk-based assessment, of which ten (Sites **01-03**, **05-06**, **13**, **25** and **31-33**) had been previously recorded in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER), including a Grade II listed building (Site **03**), although this lies immediately beyond the boundary of the proposed development area. The other 23 sites (Sites **04**, **07-12**, **14-24** and **26-30**) have been identified through analysis of historical maps.

The 33 identified sites comprised three Roman sites, one medieval site and 29 post-medieval/industrial period sites. Of this total, nine sites lie within the boundary of the proposed development area (Sites **10-14**, **24**, **27** and **32-33**), with a further four sites immediately outwith the boundary (Sites **06**, **23** and **30-31**). Abbeyfields, a Grade II listed house dating to *c* 1800, is situated to the south of the proposed development area, and the majority of the post-medieval heritage assets in the study area are associated with the house (Site **03**) and its associated park (Site **32**), including: two small buildings shown on a tithe map of 1841 (Site **06**); three tracks or drives (Sites **10** and **12**); field boundaries (Sites **13-14** and **23-24**); and two former ponds (Sites **27** and **30**). In addition a medieval manor (Site **32**), thought to have been replaced by Abbeyfields may be within the study area, though its exact location remains unknown, and the projected route of a Roman road (Site **33**) also crosses the study area.

A tithe map of 1841 shows a house named at this time as Abbey Field House (Site **03**), with associated grounds including a large pond, situated immediately to the south-east of the study area. The listing for this property dates it to *c* 1800, but states that it is thought to have replaced an earlier building (Site **31**). The name 'Abbey' associated with the house and the road to its west, as well as fields within the tithe award, are a result of this land having previously been owned by Dieulacres Abbey in Leek, Staffordshire. This area is likely to have been used for agriculture since the mid-thirteenth century when it first became abbey land. The area immediately surrounding the house is depicted as park by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1874, and by the time of the 1898 mapping the majority of field boundaries shown on the tithe had been removed. The field boundaries currently located within the study area are twentieth century additions, which are likely to be the result of the park land returning to agricultural use.

Recommendations are made for evaluation trenching, which should include trenches targeting the northern part of the study area to test for remains of the Roman road (Site **33**) or associated features and the former buildings (Site **06**), shown on the tithe map.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Mike Heming of Gladman Developments, acting on behalf of Fox Strategic Land and Property, for commissioning and supporting the project. Thanks are also due to Robert Edwards at the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (CHER), and the staff at Cheshire County Record Office in Chester, for their assistance with the documentary research.

Kathryn Blythe undertook the desk-based assessment, and Mark Tidmarsh produced the drawings. Ian Miller edited the report, and was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Fox Strategic Land and Property is considering the promotion of a site for residential development to the west of Sandbach in Cheshire East (Fig 1), and commissioned Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of the area. The principal aim of the assessment was to identify, as far as possible, the nature and significance of the cultural heritage and sub-surface archaeological resource within the study area, and to establish the impact of any future development upon this resource. The resource has been examined to see if it includes Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, hedgerows of historic importance, and non-designated features of regional or local archaeological or historical interest and value.
- 1.1.2 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Historic Environment Record (HER) for Cheshire, the County Record Office in Chester, and the archives and library held at OA North. This report sets out the results of the desk-based assessment in the form of a short document, outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential and significance, and an assessment of the impact of any future development of site.

1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The study area (centred on NGR 374460 360500) lies a short distance to the west of Sandbach, and to the south-east of Elworth, on the eastern edge of the Cheshire Plain (Fig 1). This region comprises a pastoral landscape that is dominated by dairying within a productive and managed agricultural area, interspersed with market towns, small villages, and hamlets (Countryside Commission 1998, 145–7). The study area, which comprises approximately 9.3 hectares, occupies a relatively level tract of land and lies at a height of approximately 60m above Ordnance Datum.
- 1.2.2 The eastern and western boundaries of the site are formed by residential properties fronting onto Abbey Road and Park Lane respectively (Plate 1). To the north the site is bounded by fields and to the south by fields, industrial buildings and Abbeyfields, a Grade II listed building (Site **03**) and associated grounds (Site **32**).
- 1.2.3 The solid geology of the area consists of Triassic mudstones, overlain by glacial deposits of sand and gravel (BGS 2007).



Plate 1: Recent aerial view of the site, showing indicative red-line boundary

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 This desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the relevant IfA and English Heritage guidelines (Institute for Archaeologists 2012 *Code of Conduct*; Institute for Archaeologists, 2011, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments*; English Heritage, 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE)), and generally-accepted best practice.

2.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.2.1 A study area that extended 0.25km outside of the red-line boundary was examined in order to gain an understanding of the historical and archaeological background of the area, and to assess the potential impact of any future development on sites of archaeological significance. The sites identified within this study area are presented in the site gazetteer (*Section 4*; Fig 2).

2.2.2 Several sources of information were consulted as part of the assessment, which have provided a good understanding of the developmental history of the study area. Archive sources that were consulted include:

- ***Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER), Chester:*** the HER is a list of all known sites of archaeological interest within Cheshire, and also holds copies of aerial photographs dating from the 1940s through to the present day. The HER is the primary source of information for a study of this kind;
- ***Cheshire County Record Office, Chester:*** the County Record Office holds cartographic and documentary sources relating to the study area;
- ***OA North Library:*** OA North has an extensive archive of secondary sources relevant to the study area, as well as numerous unpublished client reports on work carried out both as OA North and in its former guise of Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU). These were consulted where necessary.

2.3 NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.3.1 In considering any planning application for development, local planning authorities are bound by the policy framework set by government guidance. This guidance provides a material consideration that must be taken into account in development management decisions, where relevant. In accordance with central and local government policy, this desk-based assessment has been prepared in order to clarify the study site's archaeological potential, and to assess the need for any further measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

2.3.2 National planning policies on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in March 2012. The policies set out in NPPF also apply to the consideration of the historic environment in relation to other heritage-related consent regimes for which planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A heritage asset may be defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions; heritage assets may also be considered to be valued components of the historic environment.

2.3.3 In summary, NPPF provides a framework that:

- requires applicants to provide proportionate information on heritage assets affected by the proposals and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset;
- has a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated Heritage Assets, which include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, and Registered Parks and Gardens;
- protects the settings of such designated heritage assets;
- takes into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets;
- where the loss of whole or part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, provides for an appropriate level of recording.

2.3.4 NPPF states that 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'.

2.4 SITE VISIT

2.4.1 The study area was the subject of a rapid site visit to assess the information pertaining to the baseline conditions, and to relate the past landscape and surroundings to that of the present. Additional information on the sites of significance has been added to the site gazetteer (*Section 4, below*), where appropriate, and a photographic record was compiled.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The following section presents a summary of the historical and archaeological background of the general area. This is presented by historical period, and has been compiled in order to place the study area into a wider archaeological context.

Period	Date Range
Palaeolithic	30,000 – 10,000 BC
Mesolithic	10,000 – 3,500 BC
Neolithic	3,500 – 2,200 BC
Bronze Age	2,200 – 700 BC
Iron Age	700 BC – AD 43
Romano-British	AD 43 – AD 410
Early Medieval	AD 410 – AD 1066
Late Medieval	AD 1066 – AD 1540
Post-medieval	AD 1540 – c1750
Industrial Period	cAD1750 – 1901
Modern	Post-1901

Table 1: Summary of British archaeological periods and date ranges

3.2 THE PREHISTORIC PERIOD

3.2.1 ***The Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Periods (c 12,800–3500 BC)***: human occupation is known from the north of England from 200,000 BC, but there is no evidence for the Cheshire area until 12,000 BC (Crosby 1996). This evidence consists of a Cresswell point found at Carden Park, approximately 33km to the west-south-west of the study area, and represents activity during the final stages of the Devensian glaciation (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 23), at a time when the glacial climate of the region was becoming gradually more hospitable; Mesolithic material has also been found at Carden Park dating to around 6800–4300 cal BC (Matthews 2007). The later Mesolithic period is not generally evident elsewhere in the mid-Cheshire area.

3.2.2 There are no known Palaeolithic or Mesolithic sites within the study area.

3.2.3 ***The Neolithic and Bronze Age Periods (c 3500–700 BC)***: the Mesolithic was the latest cultural epoch in Britain during which people employed a subsistence strategy based wholly upon hunting, gathering, and fishing. Following the introduction of farming to the British Isles, from around 4000 BC, the Neolithic period saw a gradual increase in permanent settlement and the beginning of the widespread construction of monumental architecture, although few such structures are known from Cheshire (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 39).

- 3.2.4 Approximately 14km to the east of the study area are the Bridestones (Scheduled Monument (SM) 13500), located east of Congleton. These are the remains of a chambered tomb - a typical Neolithic communal burial monument (Carrington, 1994). A long barrow (SM 13499) is located near Somerford Bridge, 6.5km to the north east of Sandbach.
- 3.2.5 There are no known Neolithic sites within the study area.
- 3.2.6 The beginning of the Bronze Age in Britain, defined mainly by the introduction of the use of copper alloy metals, developed gradually during the mid-third millennium BC (Parker Pearson 2000, 13). The Bronze Age saw a warming of the climate, which allowed further arable farming at higher altitudes in the upland areas in the east of Cheshire. Approximately 90 burial sites are known in Cheshire, mostly from the sandier soils and well-drained slopes (Crosby 1996, 18). There is one known Bronze Age barrow in the wider area, a bowl barrow near Swettenham located 7km to the north-east of Sandbach.
- 3.2.7 There are no known sites of Bronze Age date within the study area.
- 3.2.8 ***The Iron Age (c 700 BC – AD 43):*** the most visible evidence for Iron Age activity in the region relate to the series of hillforts situated along the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge, approximately 25km to the west of the study area. These run from Helsby in the north and continue southwards to Eddisbury, Kelsborrow, Beeston, and Maiden Castle (Crosby 1996, 19). Some of these hillforts, such as Beeston and Eddisbury, may have represented social and political centres from which the trade of salt was controlled (Leah *et al* 1997, 90-1).
- 3.2.9 Aside from these prominent defensive sites, the Iron Age would have been a time when farming increased, and farmsteads would consequently have been established across the landscape, although a lack of pottery and other surviving elements of material culture from both the Iron Age and Romano-British periods in the region has led to great difficulty in identifying settlement sites (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 51–2; Philpott 2006, 59). Aerial photography has, however, revealed numerous cropmark enclosures in Cheshire (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 52) and when similar examples have been excavated, Iron Age and Romano-British occupation has been demonstrated (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 53; Philpott 2006, 61). A great deal of continuity in rural settlement has been observed between the Iron Age and Romano-British periods in the region (Leah *et al* 1997, 153; Philpott 2006, 73).
- 3.2.10 There are no known Iron Age sites within the study area.

3.3 THE HISTORIC PERIOD

- 3.3.1 **The Romano-British Period (c AD 43 – AD 410):** the general character of the region during the Romano-British period, as suggested by the nature of most of the known sites in the area, is one of military and industrial centres being interlinked by roads (Philpott 2006, 59–60; 69). Cheshire was an important area for Roman salt workings, with major sites at Northwich (*Condate*), Middlewich (*Salinae*), and Nantwich, as well as smaller sites close to salt springs such as Moston to the west of Elworth, and Tetton to the north-west (Crosby 1996, 24–5).
- 3.3.2 In this area, there is little evidence for the Romano-British villa sites found further south in Britain. Settlements would instead have taken the form of farmsteads, which would have continued on from the Iron Age settlements (*op cit*, 25). The pollen record indicates a growth in agricultural output for this time, both in land used for grazing and in cereal production (Timberlake and Prag 2005, 17).
- 3.3.3 There are three sites for this period within the study area, all of which refer to King Street. This was one of the main Roman roads in Cheshire, which linked Middlewich to Chesterton. It was first noted by Margary as a ridge in a field to the west of Elworth (Margary 1973). It is thought to be aligned east/west immediately to the north of the study area (Site **01**), approximately on the line of Middlewich Road (the A533), and turns north-westwards towards Elworth (Site **02**).
- 3.3.4 Recent investigations have found an alternate route for the road (Site **33** rather than Site **01**), having it depart Middlewich Road approximately opposite its junction with Grange Way in the north-west corner of the current study area and then head south-eastwards, passing to the east of Abbeyfields, and continuing along the approximate line of Mill Hill Lane, to the south-east of the study area. Investigations were carried out within the study area comprising an evaluation trench within which a c 8m wide layer of compacted stones, interpreted as a possible road surface, was found at a depth of 0.7m. The western part of this layer was better preserved than the eastern, which may have been due to cultivation practices (York 2010, 91–5).
- 3.3.5 **The Early Medieval Period (c AD 410 – AD 1066):** in the early seventh century, the Northumbrian Anglo-Saxon kingdom gained control over the area now known as Cheshire, which was then subsumed into the kingdom of Mercia. Mercian control of Cheshire was then succeeded by the kingdom of Wessex (Crosby 1996, 27–31). Despite Danish raids and a brief period of Danish control in the ninth century, Cheshire was part of one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms from the seventh century until the Norman Conquest (*ibid*).
- 3.3.6 Sandbach, meaning ‘sandy valley stream’ (Higham, 1993 169), is known to have been an established settlement during the early medieval period, testified by a pair of Saxon crosses (SM 23637) that stand in Market Square. The crosses date to the ninth century, and are decorated on all faces with carved figures, animals and vine scrolls.

- 3.3.7 The taller of the two crosses has biblical scenes on it, and it has been suggested that they may commemorate the introduction of Christianity in Mercia by Peada, son of Penda, the King of Mercia in 653. Fragments of a third cross from this area (SM 30396) are now in the churchyard at St Mary's, along with two fragments of tomb slabs with a shallow pitched roof shape.
- 3.3.8 The study area formed part of the Hundred of Middlewich, the south-western part of which comprised four parishes: Davenham; Middlewich; Warmingham; and Sandbach. It is likely that St Mary's church, built on a natural bluff at Sandbach, was the mother-church of these four parishes (Higham, 1993, 166-70). Higham suggests that the iconography on the Sandbach crosses sends out a strong message emphasising the power and authority of the church. This contrasts with the normal monastic context of other pre-Viking sculpture in Cheshire. St Mary's, as the most important church in east Cheshire at this time, may have been directly dependent on the Diocese, with its estate an important residence for the Bishop on route to Chester (*ibid*).
- 3.3.9 There are no known early medieval sites within the study area.
- 3.3.10 ***The Medieval Period (c AD 1066 – AD 1540)***: the Anglo-Saxon period came to an end with the Norman Conquest of 1066. The Normans introduced the feudal system, which saw significant changes to the way land was owned and managed. There was considerable opposition to this, and Norman armies marched across the country suppressing uprisings in the years following 1066.
- 3.3.11 The influence and importance of St Mary's Church appears to have diminished by the time of the Norman Conquest. In the Domesday Survey of 1086 Sandbach is described as a small manor, held by the Bigot of Loges. It seems that the parish had fragmented, with several communities paying their tithes to Davenham (*ibid*).
- 3.3.12 The medieval manor of Sandbach was probably located in the area now occupied by 'The Old Hall' (HER 1109/2/1), situated approximately 150m to the south-east of the Market Square. The manor would have been occupied by Richard de Sandbache (Sheriff of Cheshire in 1230) in the early thirteenth century (Bagshaw 1850).
- 3.3.13 Medieval Sandbach expanded from the probable Saxon settlement in the area of the Market Square. The medieval character of this part of Sandbach is reflected in the narrow winding street pattern, and the density of timber-framed buildings. An archaeological investigation on the derelict land adjacent to Hawk Street found three phases of medieval occupation. These included the remains of at least one house, probably half timbered, which may have been encased or replaced by a later brick structure (HER 1109/0/12).
- 3.3.14 A cross base, with partially surviving shaft, stands in St Mary's churchyard (SM 30395). The difference in quality between the base and the shaft indicates that the two may be of different dates. The shaft is of gritstone and is similar to the Saxon cross fragments found in the area (SM 30396); the shaft is medieval but cannot be dated more specifically than this. The base and shaft are thought to stand in their original position.

- 3.3.15 The Cistercian abbey of Dieulacres, a mile north of Leek, was founded in 1214 by Ranulph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester, who transferred the monks from Poulton (south of Chester) there. Poulton had extensive property in Cheshire, which was also transferred to the abbey. In c 1230 Ranulph granted the advowson (the right of presenting a nominee to a vacant ecclesiastical benefice) of Sandbach to the monks, and in 1254 they vindicated their right against the claim of Roger de Sandbach (Greenslade 1970).
- 3.3.16 Part of the land in Sandbach which was owned by the Abbey was at Abbeyfields, as testified by two field names in the Tithe of 1841 '*Abbey Land, Part of Bakehouse and Pear Tree Meadow*'. The land is therefore likely to have been in agricultural use since the mid-thirteenth century; however it is not known when a house was first built on this land. In 1423-4, Geoffrey de Peek sued Richard Hassall, and members of the Sandbach family, for dower of 40 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 20 acres of pasture and a water-mill in 'Hindheth' (Earwaker 1890, 21). Hindheath is located to the south of the study area, and is likely to have encompassed the land at Abbeyfields. A house named 'Field House' was associated with this estate, and is assumed to have been the predecessor of Abbeyfields (Site 31). The link with this land to Dieulacres Abbey could indicate that Abbeyfields was originally a grange (HER 7057/1/2).
- 3.3.17 Clearance of woodland continued throughout this period to make way for increased farming: the 'open field' system of farming was widespread. In addition, the fourteenth century saw a general change in land use from arable to pasture across Cheshire; the ridge and furrow earthworks evident in the landscape may have been created for drainage rather than arable farming (Carrington 1994). The extraction of marl to fertilise the fields took place across the landscape from the thirteenth century onwards, and many of the resultant extraction pits survive as features in the landscape.
- 3.3.18 The salt workings in Cheshire continued to be very important to the area. A detailed account of the industry is given in the Domesday Survey and, until the seventeenth century, salt production was based around the salt springs, particularly the towns of Nantwich, Northwich and Middlewich. Nantwich appears to have been the dominant salt-producing town in Cheshire between the eleventh and seventeenth centuries (Rochester nd, 27). Salt was taken eastwards by saltways, which crossed the hills above Macclesfield and Congleton, and headed across the Peak District (Crosby 1996, 57).
- 3.3.19 ***The Post-medieval Period (c AD 1540 – 1750)***: on 4th April 1579 a grant was made to Sir John Radcliffe, knight, of Ordsall, for the right to hold a market every Thursday in his manor of Sandbach and two fairs in each year, one to be held on the Thursday and Friday before the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary (8th Sept), and the other on the Tuesday and Wednesday in Easter week. An informal market was held prior to this (*op cit*, 49).

- 3.3.20 At the time of the Dissolution the land at Abbeyfields (Site **03**) was called Abbot's Field and was held by an old rent of £1. 4s. 6d., and the associated house (Site **31**) was called 'Field House' (Earwaker 1890, 21; Ormerod 1882, 100). In 1686, an estate named Hindheath was purchased by Ellen, widow of William Ford of Fordgreen in Staffordshire (*ibid*). The Fords were the residents of the house at Abbeyfields from 1686 until 1872, when it was sold to Robert Heath (Ormerod 1882, 100), which would suggest that Abbeyfields was part of the Hindheath estate when it was sold in 1686. During this time the house was replaced with the current building, which dates to *c* 1800. The house stands in extensive grounds (Site **32**), which are said to have been laid out by John Webb (1754-1828) (Cheshire Gardens Trust 2011, 1).
- 3.3.21 Cheshire developed an important textile industry during the post-medieval period, with flax and hemp growing, and mills producing linen and canvas (*op cit*, 64). The silk industry took off in the mid-seventeenth century when it was being hand-thrown (twisted to make a weavable thread) in several areas in east Cheshire (Calladine and Fricker 1993).
- 3.3.22 The salt industry continued to grow in this period and coal was now used as a fuel in the evaporation process, with the nearest coal pits being located in the Macclesfield area and north of Newcastle-under-Lyme. The intensive salt mining of some areas resulted in subsidence, sometimes on such a large scale that flashes (saltwater lakes) appeared in the landscape and some of these continue to grow from underground watercourses (Cheshire County Council 2003). Between Warmingham and Sandbach, to the west of the study area, are the Sandbach flashes, which have now become an important nature reserve (Crosby 1996, 110).
- 3.3.23 Enclosure of the open fields to provide pasture had begun in the fifteenth century and continued through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which sometimes resulted in the loss of hamlets and manors. The enclosure of land was largely complete by the eighteenth century (Crosby, 1996, 64).
- 3.3.24 ***The Industrial Period (c AD 1750 – 1901)***: the growth in industrial productivity during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries necessitated the creation of turnpike roads, canals and railways. The North Staffordshire Railway from Manchester to Birmingham passes to the west of Elworth and south of the study area.
- 3.3.25 Evidence that salt production continued in the Sandbach area in this period comes from a Victorian saltworks located to the south of the study area, in Wheelock (Chester Archaeological Service 1993). Brick making took place across the Cheshire, and the area north of Sandbach clearly had suitable clay for this, as several brick fields are shown in this area on mapping from the nineteenth century (OA North 2008). In the 1720s, the Italian process of mechanised silk-throwing was adopted by several mills in east Cheshire (Calladine and Fricker 1993). A silk mill was established at Wheelock in the early nineteenth century by Thomas Bull and Ralph Percival, and Brook Silk Mill in Sandbach (NGR SJ 7594 6048; HER 1109/9/1) is thought to have been established by 1825 (UMAU, 1999; Massey 1982).

3.4 MAP REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- 3.4.1 ***Burdett's Map of Cheshire, 1777***: this is the earliest accurate map of Cheshire, and whilst it was produced at a small scale Sandbach is shown as a settlement with the main roads, including Middlewich Road. The study area is not shown to have been developed.
- 3.4.2 ***Swire and Hutchings map, 1830***: this map is more detailed than Burdett's map, with roads, settlements and buildings depicted. Field boundary detail is not shown on the map, but the study area, with the exception of the north-east corner, is depicted as park land. The area is named as 'Abbey Field', and Abbey Field House (Site **03**) is depicted in the park (Site **32**) with a drive heading east then south-east from the house. A band of trees is shown on the east side of Abbey Road, which extends to the corner of Abbey Road and Middlewich Road.
- 3.4.3 ***Sandbach Tithe Map, 1841 (Fig 3)***: Abbey Field House (Site **03**) is depicted on this map, with a garden and a large pond to the south. Woods are marked to the north of the house, and to the south of the pond. A drive (Site **11**) links the west side of the house to a road a short distance to the west (now named Abbey Road).
- 3.4.4 A building (Site **06**) is marked to the north-west of Abbey Field House, and a track (Site **12**) runs eastwards from building **06** and turns southwards to run past the east side of the house and connects with the road to the south (now named Crewe Road). Building **06** is located adjacent to the north-western boundary of a field numbered 806, and immediately beyond the south-western edge of field 775; both of these fields are described in the tithe schedule as 'Abbey Land, Part of Bakehouse and Pear Tree Meadow'. It is therefore possible that Building **06** was the bakehouse mentioned in the schedule, whilst the reference to the abbey land reflects the former ownership of this land by Dieulacres Abbey. Alternatively, sales particulars from 1872 for the house and grounds list a game keepers cottage, although the location of this is not shown on the accompanying plan (CALs DJW/1/84-86 cited in Cheshire Gardens Trust 2011). It is therefore possible that Site **06** could have been the cottage.
- 3.4.5 Field 811, to the east of Abbey Field House, and field 779 in the north-east corner of the study area, are named 'Giddy Meadow' and 'Part of Giddy Field', suggesting an association with Giddy Lane, known subsequently as Park Lane, to the east of the study area. These fields, and all the surrounding fields in the study area, are listed as being owned by Charles Ingram Ford.
- 3.4.6 Several field boundaries (Sites **14-24**) are shown across the study area on the tithe map. To the east of Abbey Road, and to the south of Middlewich Road, a wide band of trees is depicted, and other small plantations are marked within the area. A property named 'The Pits' (Site **09**), comprising three buildings, is depicted on the north side of Middlewich Road.

- 3.4.7 **Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition 6" map of 1871-81 (Fig 4) and 25" map of 1874:** a significant addition to the landscape by the time the Ordnance Survey published their first edition mapping was the North Staffordshire Railway, taking an approximately north-west/south-east route to the south-west of the study area. A station (Site **04**) is marked on the south side of the railway. The area which is now Elworth comprised a small settlement named 'Boothlane Head', mostly located on the east side of the railway.
- 3.4.8 Abbey Field House (Site **03**) is marked as 'Abbeyfields', and is depicted much as it was on the tithe map of 1841. The house and immediate grounds are shown to have been encompassed by parkland, and the large pond to its south is marked as a 'fish pond'. A lodge (Site **05**) is located at the western extent of the park, on the south side of the east/west drive from the house (Site **11**).
- 3.4.9 Site **06** is shown on the 25" Ordnance Survey map to have comprised two buildings; a rectangular structure that corresponded with the building shown on the tithe map of 1841, with a small extension to the south-east. A pump is marked on the east side of the main building. The track (Site **12**) which linked Site **06** to Abbeyfields is no longer depicted, although the eastern part of the track linking the house to Crewe Road is shown. An additional drive (Site **10**) is marked heading northwards from Abbeyfields to Middlewich Road. Several ponds are depicted in the vicinity of the study area: two ponds (Sites **07** and **08**) and a group of three small ponds (Site **26**) are depicted on the south side of Middlewich Road; two ponds (Sites **28** and **29**) are depicted to the west of Park Lane; a pond (Site **30**) is marked to the north-east of Abbeyfields; and a pond (Site **27**) is marked to the east of Abbey Road. Three (Sites **17**, **18** and **24**) of the 11 field boundaries (Sites **14-24**) shown within the study area on the tithe map appear to have been removed, although a new boundary is shown on the north-east side of Abbeyfields, which heads north-eastwards from track **12** to field boundary **23**.
- 3.4.10 **Ordnance Survey second edition 25" map of 1898 and 6" map of 1899:** these detailed maps indicate that most of the field boundaries shown within the study area on the tithe map (Sites **14-24**) had been removed by the end of the nineteenth century. Only two field boundaries (Sites **16** and **23**) persist as features in the landscape, and these are partially preserved by a new east/west-aligned boundary to the north of Sites **11** and **12**. At its west end, this field boundary zig-zags south towards the lodge (Site **05**), which preserves the line of field boundary **16**, where it diverts around building **06**. Another lodge (Site **25**) is marked on the west side of the drive north of Abbeyfields (Site **10**), to the immediate south of Middlewich Road. The group of three ponds (Site **26**) and pond **08** to the south of Middlewich Road are not shown on this mapping. The wide band of trees to the east of Abbey Road and to the south of Middlewich is now much reduced.
- 3.4.11 **Ordnance Survey third series 25" map of 1909 (Fig 5):** this mapping is very similar to the previous edition, with few significant changes apparent in the study area. However, the two buildings to the north-west of Abbeyfields (Site **06**) are not marked, suggesting that they had been demolished.

- 3.4.12 **Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1911 (Fig 6):** the only differences in the detail of this map is an apparent re-naming of the local roads, with Giddy Lane becoming Park Lane and Wheelock Road becoming Crewe Road.
- 3.4.13 **Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1954 (Fig 7):** this map shows a massive expansion of Sandbach in all directions, including west towards Elworth, which had evidently experienced considerable residential developments. The area around Abbeyfields (Site **03**) is no longer depicted as park land, although both lodges (Sites **05** and **25**) are shown. Track **12** is not marked, although a new drive is shown on the east side of Abbeyfields, linking it to Park Lane. None of the ponds, except **07** and **27** are shown on this mapping. Building plots are shown to the east of Abbey Road, to the south of Middlewich Road, and to the west of Park Lane. The Pits (Site **09**) is now named 'The Grange'.
- 3.4.14 **Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1964 and 6" map of 1969 (Fig 8):** the drive (Site **11**) between lodge **05** and Abbeyfields appears to have been abandoned, and pond **27** is no longer shown, suggesting that it had been drained and filled in. New field boundaries are shown to the west and south-west of Abbeyfields. A depot is marked to the south of lodge **05**, and a building named 'Whyte House' is shown to have been erected to the east of Abbeyfields. In the surrounding area, new housing is shown to the east of Abbey Road, to the south of Middlewich Road, and to the west of Park Lane.
- 3.4.15 **Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1976:** lodge **05** appears to have been demolished, and Lodge Road constructed across its footprint. A large warehouse is shown on the north side of the road, and two additional depot buildings are shown to the south. The railway is now marked as dismantled, and the station building (Site **04**) is not named, suggesting it to have been derelict.
- 3.4.16 **Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1989:** this mapping is very similar to the 1976 mapping, though the woodland around Abbeyfields is now much reduced.

3.5 AERIAL PHOTOS

- 3.5.1 Digitally held aerial photos from the 1940s, 1970s, and 1999-2000 were examined at the Cheshire HER. By the time of the 1940s photographs, some development had taken place on the east side of Abbey Road, and on the corner of Middlewich Road and Park Lane. Housing development on the west side of the study area is also evident on these photographs. The former field boundaries **16** and **20** were visible as earthworks on all of the photographs. Pond **27** was visible on the 1940s photographs, but could not be seen on the later photographs. No new sites were added to the gazetteer as a result of consulting the aerial photographs.

3.6 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION (HLC)

- 3.6.1 The HLC provided by the Cheshire HER classifies the landscape of the proposed development area and its environs as two types. The majority of the proposed development area is classified as post-medieval (*eg* pre-twentieth century) ornamental parkland and includes not only the features pertaining to it having been a park but also ‘features associated with the pre-park landscape, such as relict field boundaries and pales associated with Deer Parks’ (Cheshire County Council and English Heritage 2007, 17).
- 3.6.2 A very small area in the north-west portion of the study area is classified as ancient field systems (*op cit*, 20). Ridge and furrow, and marl pits are common features in this landscape, which has been sub-divided according to regular, semi-regular or irregular fields. That within the study area appears to most closely fit with semi-regular sub-type, which is described as ‘a field system laid out in a manner suggestive of some form of overall organisation or plan’. The proposed development area is bounded to the north by land classified as ancient field systems, and to the south by post-medieval ornamental parkland, with one area also described as ancient field systems.

3.7 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

- 3.7.1 An excavation through the Roman road (Site **02**) was undertaken by staff and students of Sandbach School in 1966. A section was cut across the line of the road in response to building work at the site of FR Nicholls, the precise location of which is unknown. The excavations revealed a road *c* 60’ wide ‘...comprising three successive layers of decayed brushwood, white sand and humus...’ and a layer of yellow sand 1’ deep. The road metal comprised ‘...alternate layers of sand and gravel with a quantity of large stones to act as binding material. Since no traces of stone paving were found, the surface may have been cobbled with stones...’. At either end of the road was a large wad of clay, a hard shoulder 10 yards wide, and a roadside ditch 5’ deep. The latter was only established on one side of the road (Sandbach School 1966). Although the precise location of this excavation is not recorded, it is likely to be within the area of undeveloped land north of the study area through which the Roman road is marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1954 (Fig 7).
- 3.7.2 **HER Event ECH 5643:** recent investigations have been made into the location of King Street Roman road in the vicinity of the study area. A trench was excavated to the north of Abbeyfields, within which a *c* 8m wide layer of compacted stones, interpreted as a possible road surface, was found at a depth of 0.7m. The western part of this layer was better preserved than the eastern, which may have been due to cultivation practices. The possible road also had a very steep camber, the reason for which is unclear unless it is the result of subsidence (York 2010, 91-5). This gives an alternate route for the road (Site **33**, rather than Site **01** on Fig 2), in which the route of the road departs Middlewich Road approximately opposite its junction with Grange Way in the north-west corner of the current study area and then head south-eastwards, passing to the east of Abbeyfields, and continuing along the approximate line of Mill Hill Lane, to the south-east of the study area.

3.7.3 **HER Event ECH 5439:** research into the grounds at Abbeyfields was carried out in 2010 by Cheshire Gardens Trust (2011), which included a site visit. The report includes a timeline, a description of the various features of the park and garden, a map regression and an examination of primary sources including sales particulars from 1872 (Cheshire Archives and Local Studies (CALs) DJW/1/84-86). The report concluded that the structure of the walled garden and the lake remained unchanged from the original design, attributed to John Webb, and remain in good condition (Cheshire Gardens Trust 2011, 4).

3.8 SITE VISIT

3.8.1 The site visit confirmed that the study area comprises several fields that are all in agricultural use. The topography of the study area is gently undulating, presumably reflecting the glacial nature of the drift geology. There was no visible evidence for ancient agricultural practices, such as ridge and furrow cultivation. The field boundaries typically comprise hedgerows, although none of these were noted from a rapid inspection to comprise ancient species. No new sites of archaeological interest were identified during the site visit.

4. GAZETTEER OF SITES

Site Name	King Street Roman Road
Site number	01
NGR	37204 36953
HER no	436/1/0
Site Type	Roman road
Period	Roman
Statutory Designation	None
Source	HER
Description	Part of King Street Roman Road, Margary road number 70a road (SJ 7412 6145 to 7435 6115). First traced by Margary at Elworth to the west of Sandbach (Site 02) as a ridge in a field almost parallel with, and east of the present road. It is uncertain what the actual course was to the south-east, though from its general direction it is probable that the road was designed to reach the Roman settlement at Chesterton, near Newcastle-under-Lyme, and may have done so by the A533 (Middlewich Road) from Sandbach to Rode Heath, near Alsager, which follows high ground and is very direct.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Elworth Street (King Street)- Margary Route 70a
Site number	02
NGR	37418 36135 (Central Point)
HER no	436/1/9
Site Type	Roman road
Period	Roman
Statutory Designation	None
Source	HER
Description	Part of King Street Roman Road, Margary road number 70a road (SJ 7412 6145 to 7435 6115). This section is shown as earthworks on the first edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch map of 1874. Signs of this road can be seen at Elworth to the west of Sandbach, as a ridge in a field almost parallel with and east of the present road, Booth Lane. The actual course of the road to the south east (Site 01) is uncertain. Poole (in Greenwood 1986) states that the road ran parallel to the main road in the village (London Road/Booth Lane) and that it ran directly along the edge of a family garden to the rear of a house named Boothville. A section was cut across the line of the road in response to building work at the site of F.R. Nicholls (precise location unknown) by staff and students of Sandbach School in 1966. That revealed a road c 60' wide '...comprising three successive layers of decayed brushwood, white sand and humus...' and a layer of yellow sand 1' deep. The road metal comprised '...alternate layers of sand and gravel with a quantity of large stones to act as binding material. Since no traces of stone paving were found, the surface may have been cobbled with stones...'. At either end of the road was a large wad of clay, a hard shoulder 10 yards wide and a roadside ditch 5' deep. The latter was only established on one side of the road (Sandbach School 1966). A section of this road is also said to have been excavated to the rear of Brookfield (NGR SJ 7381 6174) to the north-west of the study area in Elworth. A visit to the site recorded in the HER (436/1/12) noted a slight rise in the hedge line by the railway, but no other evidence for the road. A Roman road was thought to have been found whilst laying a bowling green in Elworth (NGR SJ 7399 6155). It is noted in the HER (436/1/13) that the line of the road could be traced by the stones showing on the surface, up and beyond the railway. The road was found about 1 foot below the surface and consisted of a solid bed of gravel about 15 inches thick, and four to five yards wide.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Abbeyfields
Site number	03
NGR	374615 360427
HER no	DCH3430
Site Type	House
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	Grade II Listed Building 56250
Source	HER
Description	This house takes its name from adjoining land, which once belonged to the Abbey of Dieulacres near Leek in Staffordshire. There has been a house here for some centuries, but the present building is almost entirely a reconstruction or re-building, <i>c</i> 1800. Detached larger house; roughcast; 3/2 storeys; stone base; 2 string-courses and dressings; five sash windows in moulded stucco architraves; 3-windowed splayed bay on right-hand side, tiered over 2 storeys; doorway with part-glazed divided door and stone porch with plain columns and pilasters; 2 storey portion has octagonal end with stone pilasters on west elevation; good Regency iron trellis veranda with balcony over on south elevation. Wood eaves cornice; hipped slate roof. Extensive outbuildings on east side not included. The house stands in extensive grounds said to have been laid out by Webb. It is privately occupied.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Station on North Staffordshire Railway
Site number	04
NGR	374139 360278
HER no	-
Site Type	Station
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A station is marked on the south side of the North Staffordshire Railway on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874. On the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898-9, it is marked as a goods station. On the Ordnance Survey map of 1976, the railway is marked as dismantled. The railway building is still depicted on the current Ordnance Survey mapping, but the building is no longer labelled.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Lodge on Abbey Road
Site number	05
NGR	374111 360492
HER no	7057/4
Site Type	Lodge
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A lodge is marked on the south side of the west end of the drive (Site 11) from Abbeyfields (Site 03) to Abbey Road on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874. The lodge was still extant in the 1960s, but on the 1976 Ordnance Survey mapping it is not shown, and an south-east/north-west aligned road, named 'Lodge Road', stood in its place.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Buildings belonging to Abbeyfields
Site number	06
NGR	374362 360617
HER no	7057/3
Site Type	Buildings
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A building is marked on the tithe map of 1841 to the north-west of Abbeyfields. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 depicts two buildings and a pump in this area; with a small square building marked to the south-east of the main building shown on the tithe. The buildings are not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1909. A track (Site 12) linked the buildings to Abbeyfields. The tithe award gives no indication of the function of the building(s).
Assessment	The site lies just outwith the proposed development area and could be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the south of Middlewich Road
Site number	07
NGR	374635 360930
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the south of Middlewich Road and is still marked on the current mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the south of Middlewich Road
Site number	08
NGR	374726 360926
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the south of Middlewich Road, but is not marked on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898-9.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	The Pits
Site number	09
NGR	374642 361014
HER no	-
Site Type	House
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A house named The Pits is shown on the tithe mapping of 1841 on the north side of Middlewich Road. The site of this house is now occupied by a house named The Grange.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Drive from Abbeyfields to Middlewich Road
Site number	10
NGR	374547 360685
HER no	-
Site Type	Drive
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A south/north-aligned drive from Abbeyfields to Middlewich Road is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874. A lodge (Site 25) is marked on the west side of this drive, to the immediate south of Middlewich Road on the Ordnance Survey map of 1909. On the current mapping a path is still marked on the line of the southern part of this drive and a field boundary is located on the line of the northern part of the drive.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Drive from Abbeyfields to Abbey Road
Site number	11
NGR	374320 360469
HER no	-
Site Type	Drive
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	An east/west aligned drive from Abbeyfields to Abbey Road is marked on the tithe map of 1841. A lodge (Site 05) is marked on the south side of this drive, to the immediate east of Abbey Road on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874. The drive is not extant on the mapping of 1964 and 1969; the lodge is extant on this mapping, but is not shown on the subsequent mapping of 1976.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Track to the north-east of Abbeyfields
Site number	12
NGR	374519 360591
HER no	-
Site Type	Track
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A track is shown on the tithe map of 1841 which heads eastwards from a building (Site 06) located to the north-west of Abbeyfields. The track converges with other tracks on the north-east side of Abbeyfields and continues to head south-eastwards where it eventually meets the road (Crewe Road). The western portion of the track is not shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874. The eastern portion of the track is shown on the mapping of 1911, but not on the mapping of 1954.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Abbey Land Field Boundary
Site number	13
NGR	374390 360523
HER no	7269
Site Type	Field boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory	

Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field numbered 806 is marked on the tithe map of 1841 with a dashed boundary. The field is named 'Abbey Land. Part of Bakehouse and Pear Tree Meadow' in the tithe award. This field and all the surrounding fields in the study area are listed as being owned by Charles Ingram Ford. The field is located to the immediate north east of Abbeyfields. The name of the field 'Abbey Land', the house 'Abbeyfields', and the road to the west 'Abbey Road' are all a reflection of the fact that this area once belonged to Abbey of Dieulacres near Leek in Staffordshire. The dashed field boundary line indicates that this boundary was out of use, probably as a result of the laying out of the park land associated with Abbeyfields. However, this may have been quite recent, as the plot is quite distinct in the tithe award.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	14
NGR	374317 360704
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	15
NGR	374382 360765
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	An east/west aligned field boundary shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	16
NGR	374446 360806
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary shown on the tithe map of 1841. The boundary was aligned north/south and turned to the east around the northern side of building 06 before terminating at the plantation bounded by field boundary 14 . A field boundary is still extant on the approximate line of the west/east portion of this boundary, but the north/south boundary is not shown on mapping later than the Ordnance Survey first edition of 1874.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	17
NGR	374437 360723
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately east/west, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	18
NGR	374483 360734
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately north-east/south-west, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	19
NGR	374483 360734
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping. The boundary demarcates the south-western, north-western and south-eastern boundaries of a small rectangular field in the northern part of the study area.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	20
NGR	374649 360737
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately north/south, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	21
NGR	374751 360760
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately north/south, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	22
NGR	374790 360789
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately north-west/south-east, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	23
NGR	374755 360628
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately west/east, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874. A field boundary is still extant on the approximate line of the western portion of this boundary, but the eastern portion is not shown on mapping after 1874.
Assessment	The site lies just outwith the proposed development area and could be impacted.

Site Name	Field Boundary on Tithe
Site number	24
NGR	374349 360396
HER no	-
Site Type	Field Boundary
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A field boundary aligned approximately south-west/north-east, shown on the tithe map of 1841 and Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1874, but not shown on subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Lodge off Middlewich Road
Site number	25
NGR	374499 360961
HER no	7057/5
Site Type	Lodge
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A lodge is marked on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898-9, at the west side of the north end of the drive (Site 10) from Abbeyfields (Site 03) to Middlewich Road. A building is still marked in this location on the current Ordnance Survey mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Ponds to the south of Middlewich Road
Site number	26
NGR	374772 360930
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A group of three ponds is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the south of Middlewich Road but is not marked on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898-9.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the east of Abbey Road
Site number	27
NGR	374235 360505
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the east of Abbey Road, but is not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1964, or subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the west of Park Lane
Site number	28
NGR	374780 360636
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the west of Park Lane, but is not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1954 or subsequently.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the west of Park Lane
Site number	29
NGR	374868 360668
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the west of Park Lane, but is not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1954 or subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies outside of the proposed development area, and will not be impacted.

Site Name	Pond to the north-east of Abbeyfields
Site number	30
NGR	374666 360545
HER no	-
Site Type	Pond
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	Map regression
Description	A pond is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1874 to the north-east of Abbeyfields, but is not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1954 or subsequent mapping.
Assessment	The site lies just outwith the proposed development area and could be impacted.

Site Name	Abbot's Field and Field House
Site number	31
NGR	374000 360000
HER no	7057/1/2
Site Type	Medieval Manor (Site of)
Period	Medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	HER
Description	In 1687 Ellen, widow of William Ford of Fordgreen in Staffordshire, purchased an estate named Hindheath. An earlier document describes the estate as comprising 40 acres of land, 20 of meadow, 20 of pasture and one water mill. This estate is assumed to include Abbeyfields (called Abbot's Field at the time of the Dissolution) and included a house called Field House. Although the 1817 house (Site 03) replaced an earlier building, nothing is known of the earlier building, or if Abbeyfields always hosted the principal building to the estate mentioned in documentary sources. Given the ecclesiastical link, it is always possible that Abbeyfields was originally a grange.
Assessment	The site lies just outwith the proposed development area and could be impacted.

Site Name	Park and gardens at Abbeyfields
Site number	32
NGR	374600 360400
HER no	7057/2
Site Type	Park and gardens
Period	Post-medieval
Statutory Designation	None
Source	HER

Description	Landscape park and gardens attached to a grade II listed Eighteenth century house in Sandbach. The 1872 sales list describes park, plantation, gardens, ornamental grounds, a lake pleasure gardens and shrubberys. Walled garden and lake appear unchanged from the original design attributed to John Webb and remain in good condition.
Assessment	The site lies within the proposed development area, and may be impacted.

Site Name	King Street Roman Road, Abbeyfields, Sandbach
Site number	33
NGR	374650 360710
HER no	436/1/17
Site Type	Roman Road
Period	Roman
Statutory Designation	None
Source	HER
Description	Stones visible on the surface after ploughing indicate the line of the Roman road. Very little now remains but the site further into Abbeyfields provided a very complete picture. Excavation revealed compacted stones at a depth of c.0.7m and the width of the road appeared to be c.8m. The remains of the road were better preserved in the western section, possibly due to cultivation practices in the field. The road had a very steep camber, possibly due to subsidence. Two contiguous fragments of medieval pottery were recovered from the road surface. Possibly an alternative option for the course Margary Route 70a (King Street) (Site 01); connecting with the road reported by Thompson Watkin near Lawton Heath (see CHER 436/1/10).
Assessment	The site lies within the study area, and may be affected by any future development.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REMAINS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 In total, 33 sites of archaeological interest were identified during the desk-based assessment. Ten of these sites (Sites **01-03**, **05-06**, **13**, **25** and **31-33**) were recorded in the Cheshire HER, and 23 sites (Sites **04**, **07-12**, **14-24** and **26-30**) were identified through the map regression. Of this total, nine sites lie within the boundary of the proposed development area (Sites **10-14**, **24**, **27** and **32-33**), with a further four sites immediately outwith the boundary (Sites **06**, **23** and **30-31**). There are no Scheduled Monuments within the study area, although there is a Grade II listed building (Site **03**) in the immediate vicinity.

Period	No of Sites	Site Type
Prehistoric	0	-
Romano-British	3	King Street Roman road (01 , 02 and 33)
Medieval	1	Site of Medieval Manor (31)
Post-medieval /Industrial Period	29	Grade II Listed House, Abbeyfields (03) and associated parks and gardens (32), lodges (05 and 25), buildings shown on the title (06), ponds (07 , 08 and 26-30) and drives or tracks (10 , 11 and 12). House named The Pits (09), field boundaries (13-24), and goods station (04).

Table 2: Number of sites by period

5.2 CRITERIA

5.2.1 Where sites do not possess a statutory designation their value as a heritage asset has been determined with reference to the Secretary of State's criteria for assessing the national importance of monuments, as contained in Annexe 1 of the policy statement on scheduled monuments produced by the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (2010). These criteria relate to period, rarity, documentation, group value, survival/condition, fragility/vulnerability, diversity, and potential. The 13 sites previously listed as potentially impacted by the proposed development (Sites **06**, **10-14**, **23-24**, **27** and **30-33**) were each considered using the criteria, with the results below.

5.2.2 **Period:** Site **33** is part of King Street Roman road, which ran from Middlewich to Chesterton and therefore can be considered as significant sites due to period. The putative route of the road across the study area highlights the potential for remains of the road or associated features to be located within it.

5.2.3 Site **31**, is the site of the medieval manor, which preceded the current Abbeyfields house (built c 1800). The location of the manor is not known, but any remains of it within the study area would be considered significant due to period.

5.2.4 **Rarity:** none of the sites are thought to be significant due to rarity.

- 5.2.5 **Documentation:** the historical development of the study area from the late eighteenth century can be traced reasonably well from cartographic sources. Further documentary research may furnish additional evidence, including more precise dating of the construction of the relevant buildings, although this is unlikely to alter the outline presented in this assessment. It is possible that further documentation is available for Abbeyfields (Site **03**) and its medieval predecessor (Site **31**), which may contain information as to the use and features of the surrounding land (Site **32**).
- 5.2.6 **Group Value:** King Street Roman road, has been assigned three numbers. Site **02** is the road to the north of Middlewich Road, which has been recorded in several places in Elworth and is therefore fairly accurately mapped. Sites **01** and **33** are two alternative routes for the continuation of the road to the south-east. These three sites have a group value and indicate the presence of the Roman road within the study area.
- 5.2.7 The sites relating to Abbeyfields (Sites **03** and **31-32**) can be grouped. This group should include the lodges (Sites **05** and **25**, *nb* both outwith the proposed development area), the tracks and drives (Sites **10-12**), and the two small buildings (Site **06**). The field boundaries can be grouped (Sites **14-24**), and to some extent could be seen to be part of the Abbeyfields group. The ponds can also be grouped (Sites **07-8** and **26-30**). It could be argued that the significance of each individual site is enhanced by its being part of a group of sites pertaining to the house and grounds of Abbeyfields.
- 5.2.8 **Survival/Condition:** a recent programme of evaluation trenching (York 2010) within the current study area interpreted a *c* 8m wide layer of compacted stone as a possible road surface. This strongly suggests that King Street Roman road (Site **33**) crosses the study area on a north-west/south-east alignment, with the projected line of this route indicating that it may be present in the north-east corner of the proposed development area. The layer recorded in the evaluation trench had survived better on its west side, and was interpreted as having been impacted possibly by cultivation practices and also by subsidence.
- 5.2.9 It is not known if there are buried remains of the buildings to the north-west of Abbeyfields (Site **06**), which appear to have been demolished around the turn of the twentieth century. The below-ground survival of the former field boundaries, which were largely removed by the end of the nineteenth century (Sites **13-14** and **23-24**), is also not known. The two ponds (Sites **27** and **30**), shown on nineteenth century maps had been infilled by the mid-twentieth century, and two tracks or drives (Sites **11-12**) relating to Abbeyfields went out of use in the mid-twentieth century. The survival/condition of these features is not known. The line of Site **10**, also a drive, is partially still extant as a path and a field boundary.
- 5.2.10 The exact location of Site **31**, the medieval manor that was replaced by Abbeyfields is unknown. It has been included as a site that may be impacted by the proposed development as it is thought to have stood on the site of close to the site of the current Abbeyfields house. The survival of any below-ground remains of the manor is unknown.

- 5.2.11 **Fragility/Vulnerability:** should any remains pertaining to King Street Roman road (Site **33**) or features associated with it; the medieval manor (Site **31**); the buildings to the north-west of Abbeyfields (Site **06**); the former field boundaries (Sites **13-14** and **23-24**); or the former tracks or drives associated with Abbeyfields (Sites **10-12**), be located within the study area then they are at risk of damage or destruction by any future development.
- 5.2.12 **Diversity:** none of the sites is considered to be significant due to its diversity.
- 5.2.13 **Potential:** there is potential for King Street Roman road (Site **33**) to be located through the proposed development area. There is therefore also some potential for roadside sites, although no findspots or other associated Roman features are recorded within the study area.
- 5.2.14 There is potential for archaeological features or finds associated with the medieval manor (Site **31**) that preceded Abbeyfields and is thought to have stood in this area. Though the exact location is not known, it is clear from the documentary evidence that this land was owned and in agricultural use from at least the thirteenth century.
- 5.2.15 The two buildings located to the north-west of Abbeyfields in the nineteenth century (Site **06**) are not well understood. The buildings appear to have been associated with Abbeyfields, and one may have been a bakehouse or a gamekeeper's cottage. Should any below-ground remains of these buildings survive, there is potential to date the buildings and to understand their character and function.
- 5.2.16 There is also potential for further features or finds relating to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century use of the land as part of the park of Abbeyfields (Site **32**). Below-ground remains of former field boundaries (Sites **13-14** and **23-24**), ponds (Sites **27** and **30**), and drives and tracks (Sites **10-12**) may survive, and further as yet unknown sites or finds could be uncovered which would improve the understanding of the use of this land.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.3.1 Table 3 shows the sensitivity of the site scaled in accordance with its relative importance using the following terms for the cultural heritage and archaeology issues, with guideline recommendations for a mitigation strategy.

Importance	Examples of Site Type	Negative Impact
National	Scheduled Monuments (SMs), Grade I, II* and II Listed Buildings	To be avoided
Regional/County	Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens (Statutory Designated Sites) Sites and Monuments Record/Historic Environment Record	Avoidance recommended

Importance	Examples of Site Type	Negative Impact
Local/Borough	Sites with a local or borough value or interest for cultural appreciation Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Low Local	Sites with a low local value or interest for cultural appreciation Sites that are so badly damaged that too little remains to justify inclusion into a higher grade	Avoidance not envisaged
Negligible	Sites or features with no significant value or interest	Avoidance unnecessary

Table 3: Criteria used to determine Importance of Sites

5.3.2 Using the guideline criteria outlined in Table 3, together with further quantification (*Section 5.2*), and informed professional judgement, each of the 13 sites considered as potentially impacted by the proposed development (Sites **06, 10-14, 23-24, 27** and **30-33**) has been assessed for importance as a site of archaeological interest (Table 4). Sites **31-33** are included within the HER and have been considered to be of *regional/county importance*. Although also included in the HER, suggesting a regional/county importance, Sites **06** and **13** are rated as being of *local/borough importance*. The remaining eight sites which are likely to be affected by any future development (Sites **10-12, 14, 23-24, 27** and **30**) have been considered to be of *low/local importance*. This is based on the current state of knowledge and the subsequent discovery of additional features or evidence relating to these sites could alter their assessed levels of significance.

No	Site name	Importance
06	Buildings belonging to Abbeyfields	Local/Borough importance
10	Drive from Abbeyfields to Middlewich Road	Low/Local importance
11	Drive from Abbeyfields to Abbey Road	Low/Local importance
12	Track to the north-east of Abbeyfields	Low/Local importance
13	Abbey land field boundary	Low/Local importance
14	Field boundary on tithe	Low/Local importance
23	Field boundary on tithe	Low/Local importance
24	Field boundary on tithe	Low/Local importance
27	Pond to the east of Abbey Road	Low/Local importance
30	Pond to the north-east of Abbeyfields	Low/Local importance
31	Site of medieval manor	Regional/County importance
32	Park and gardens of Abbeyfields	Regional/County importance
33	King Street Roman Road	Regional/County importance

Table 4: Importance of each gazetteer site

6. IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 IMPACT

- 6.1.1 Current planning policy guidance for the historic environment, embodied in NPPF, advises that archaeological remains are a continually diminishing resource and should be seen as finite, and non-renewable resource, in many cases, highly fragile and vulnerable to destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition, although recognising that change is inevitable. Thus, whilst it is considered right to provide protection and support for our past, this must be managed intelligently, with an appropriate balance of priorities and an understanding of what could be gained or lost. It has been the intention of this study to identify the heritage value of the extant buildings, together with the sub-surface archaeological potential of the Application Area, and assess the impact of the proposed development, thereby allowing the advice of the NPPF to be enacted upon.
- 6.1.2 Planning guidance also considers that loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, and ‘substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance should be wholly exceptional’. The guidelines state that there should be a presumption in favour of the preservation of designated heritage assets, and that these policies should also be applied to non-designated sites of equivalent significance. Where the loss of part of a heritage asset is considered to be justified, the developer is responsible for recording and advancing understanding of the site.
- 6.1.3 The impact is assessed in terms of the sensitivity or importance of the site to the magnitude of change or potential scale of impact during any future development scheme. The magnitude, or scale, of an impact is often difficult to define, but will be termed as substantial, moderate slight, or negligible, as shown in Table 5, below.

Scale of Impact	Description
Substantial	Significant change in environmental factors; Complete destruction of the site or feature; Change to the site or feature resulting in a fundamental change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Moderate	Significant change in environmental factors; Change to the site or feature resulting in an appreciable change in ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Slight	Change to the site or feature resulting in a small change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.
Negligible	Negligible change or no material changes to the site or feature. No real change in our ability to understand and appreciate the resource and its cultural heritage or archaeological value/historical context and setting.

Table 5: Criteria used to determine Scale of Impact

6.1.3 The interaction of the scale of impact (Table 5) and the importance of the archaeological site (Table 4) produce the impact significance. This may be calculated by using the matrix shown in Table 6, below.

Resource Value (Importance)	Scale of Impact Upon Archaeological Site			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
National	Major	Major	Intermediate/Minor	Neutral
Regional/County	Major	Major/Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local/Borough	Intermediate	Intermediate	Minor	Neutral
Local (low)	Intermediate / Minor	Minor	Minor/Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Table 6: Impact Significance Matrix

6.1.4 The extent of any previous disturbance to buried archaeological levels is an important factor in assessing the potential impact of the development scheme. Although the study area is on a greenfield site, and has not therefore been impacted by previous development, any remains of the Roman road or associated features (Site 33), and the other 12 sites (Sites 06, 10-14, 23-24, 27 and 30-32), may have been impacted on by farming activities such as deep ploughing. This was indicated by an evaluation trench recently excavated on the route of the Roman road, which found that the layer of compacted stone interpreted as a former road surface had been impacted on its east side, possibly by cultivation and also had a steep camber, which may have been the result of subsidence. The below-ground survival and condition of the sites is therefore not known.

6.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.2.1 Following on from the above considerations, the significance of effects has been determined based on an assumption that there will be earth-moving works associated with any future development, and the present condition of the archaeological assets/sites. The results are summarised in Table 7, below, in the absence of mitigation.

Site Number	Nature of Impact	Importance	Scale of Impact	Impact Significance
06	Disturbance of related artefacts or features by groundworks	Local/Borough	Slight	Minor
10	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
11	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
12	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
13	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
14	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Slight	Minor/Neutral
23	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Slight	Minor/Neutral
24	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
27	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Moderate	Minor
30	Disturbance of features by groundworks	Low Local	Negligible	Neutral
31	Disturbance of related artefacts or features by groundworks	Regional or county	Unknown	Unknown
32	Disturbance of related artefacts or features by groundworks	Regional or county	Moderate	Major/intermediate

Site Number	Nature of Impact	Importance	Scale of Impact	Impact Significance
33	Disturbance of related artefacts or features by groundworks	Regional or county	Moderate	Major/intermediate

Table 7: Assessment of the impact significance on each site during development

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 In terms of the requirement for further archaeological work, it is necessary to consider only those sites that will be affected by any future development. Current legislation draws a distinction between archaeological remains of national importance, and other remains considered to be of lesser significance. Those perceived to be of national importance may require preservation *in-situ*, whilst those of lesser significance may undergo preservation by record, where high local or regional significance can be demonstrated.

7.1.2 The scope and specification of any archaeological recording required in advance of redevelopment would be devised in consultation with the Archaeology Planning Advisory Service at Cheshire Shared Services. In general terms, however, it may be anticipated that a programme of archaeological evaluation will be required, which would be targeted on the north-eastern part of the site to establish the presence or absence of the Roman road (Site **33**) or associated features. One or more trenches should also be located towards the north-western corner of the proposed development area in the vicinity of the former buildings (Site **06**) to the north-west of Abbeyfields. The primary objective of any such evaluation would be to establish the presence, date and extent of any buried remains. Depending on the findings of the archaeological evaluation, further archaeological work may be required if significant archaeological remains are discovered. This may constitute areas of open-area excavation and/or a watching brief during ground works.

Site Number	Significance	Impact Significance	Recommendations
06	Local/Borough	Minor	Targeted Archaeological Evaluation
10	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
11	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
12	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
13	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
14	Low Local	Minor/Neutral	None
23	Low Local	Minor/Neutral	None
24	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
27	Low Local	Minor	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
30	Low Local	Neutral	None

Site Number	Significance	Impact Significance	Recommendations
31	Regional or county	Unknown	Exact location unknown but the site may be within the archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
32	Regional or county	Major/intermediate	Within archaeological evaluation and/or watching brief area
33	Regional or county	Major/intermediate	Targeted Archaeological Evaluation

Table 8: Summary of site-specific recommendations for further archaeological investigation and provisional mitigation

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Ordnance Survey maps of 1911 (6":1 mile) *Sheets 50 SW and 50 NW*

Ordnance Survey map of 1954 (6":1 mile) *Sheet SJ 76 SW*

Ordnance Survey map of 1964 (1:2500) *Sheet 7460/7560*

Ordnance Survey map of 1969 (6":1 mile) *Sheet SJ 76 SW*

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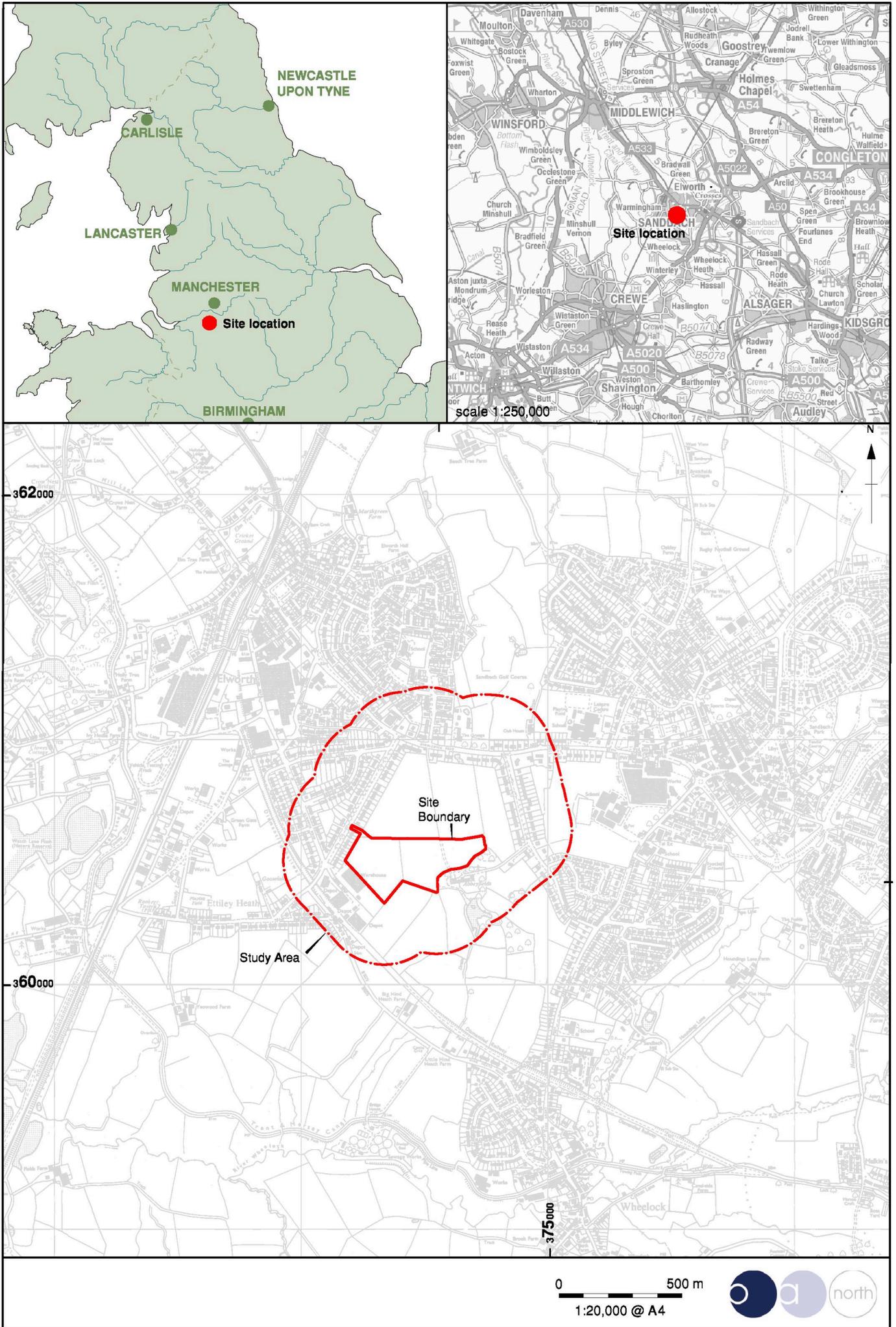


Figure 1: Site location

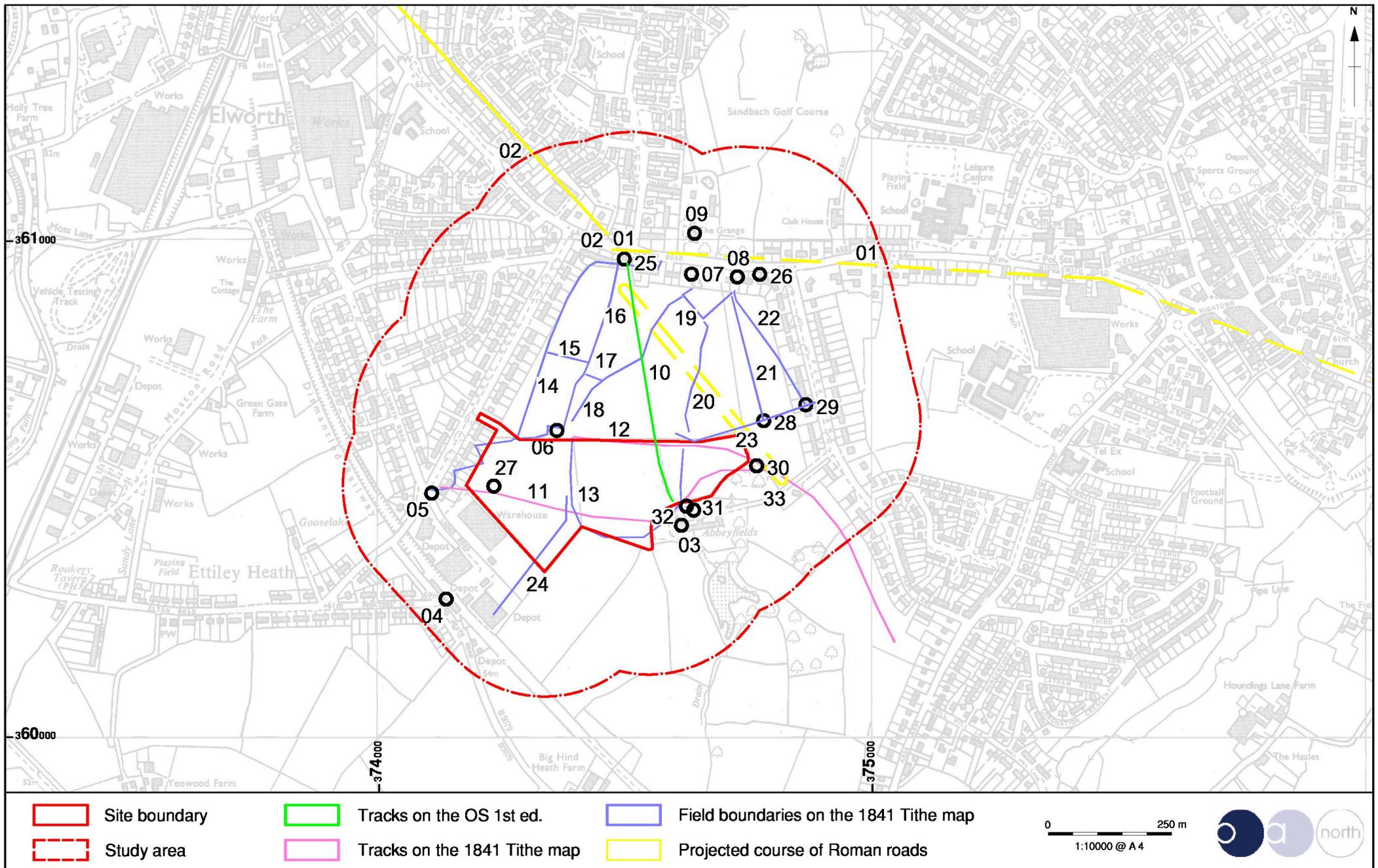
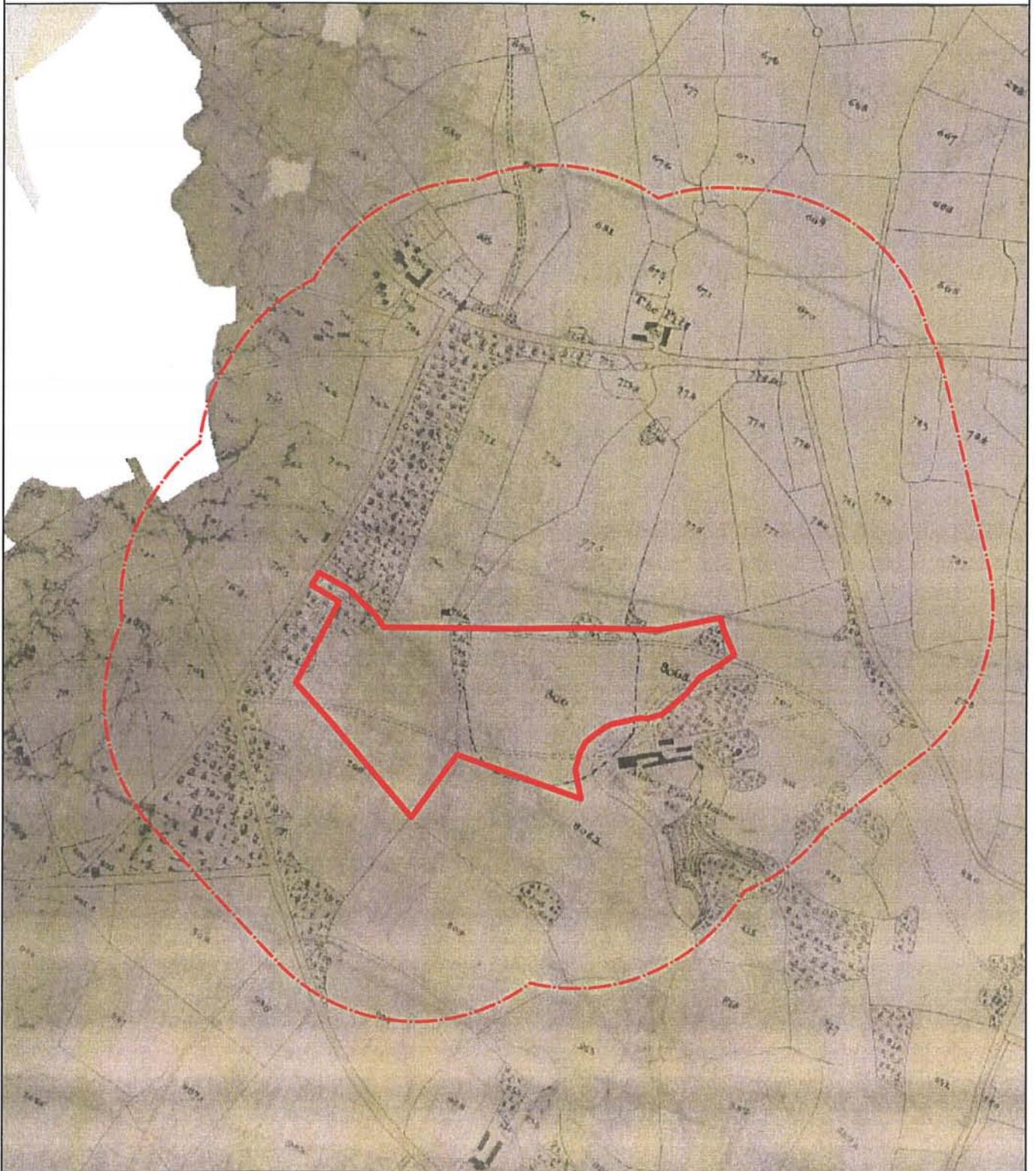


Figure 2: Gazetteer Sites



-  Site Boundary
-  Study Area

0 200 m
1:7500 @ A4



Figure 3: Extract from the tithe map of the Township of Sandbach, 1841



Figure 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile 1871-81

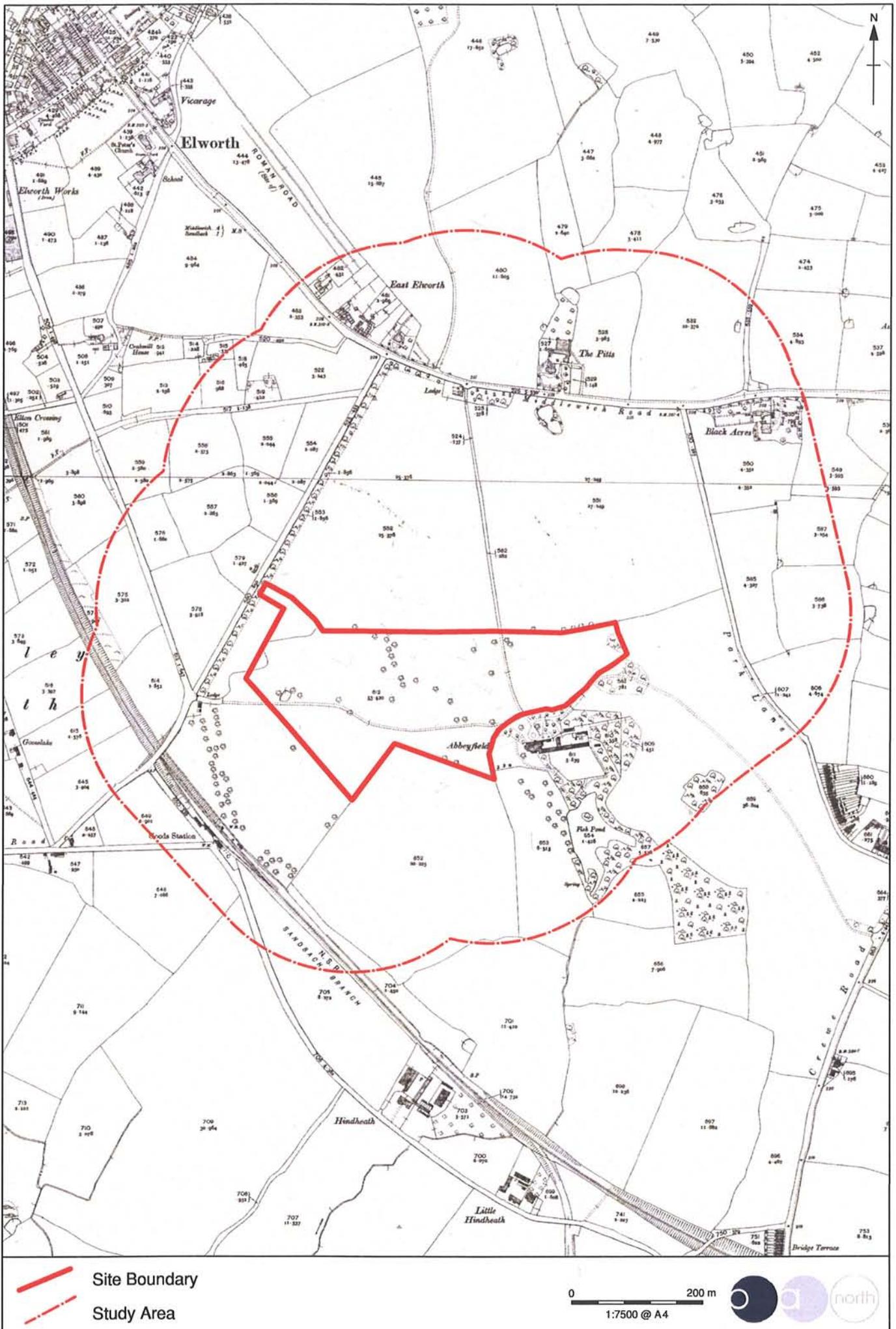


Figure 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25" to 1 mile, 1909

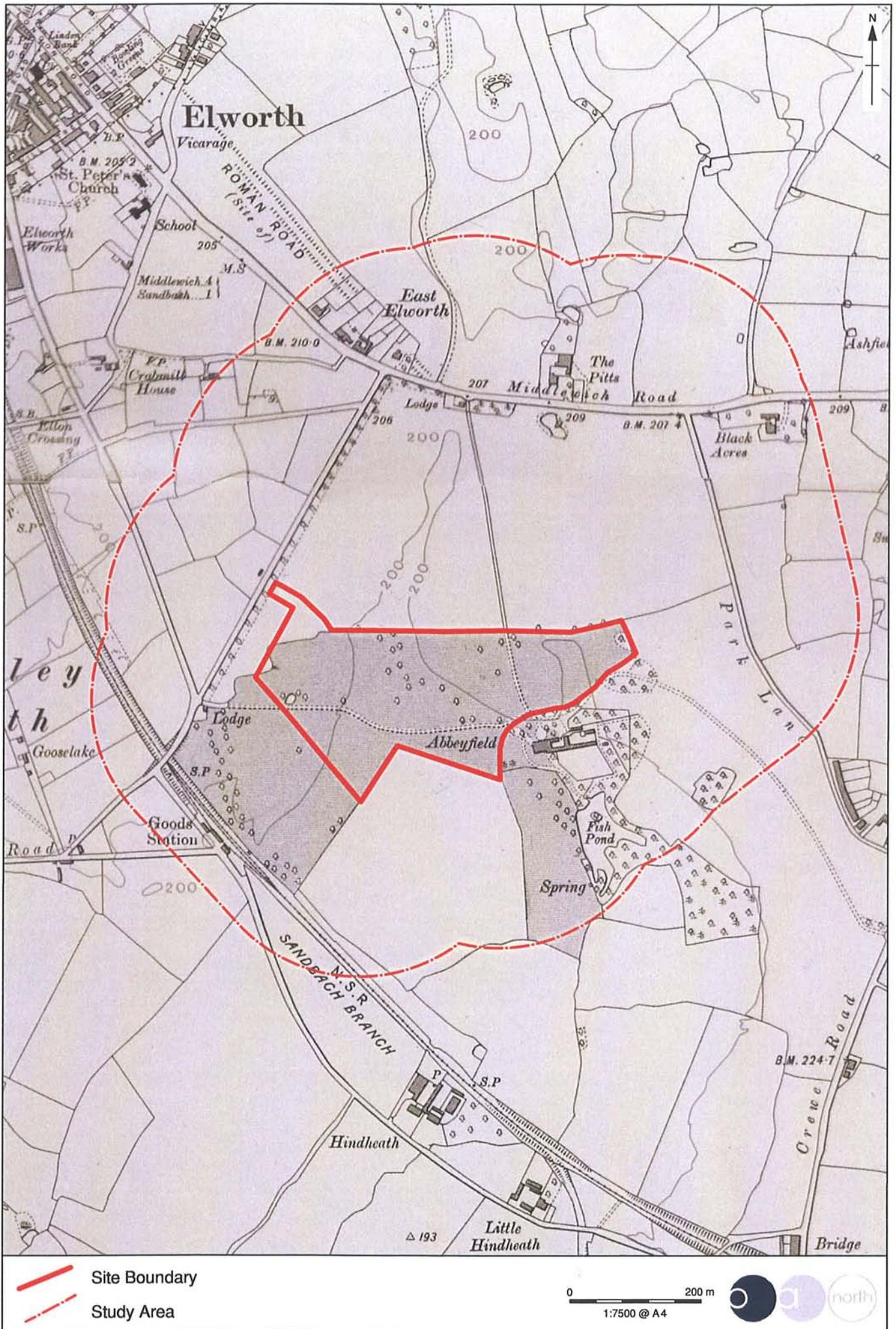


Figure 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile, 1911

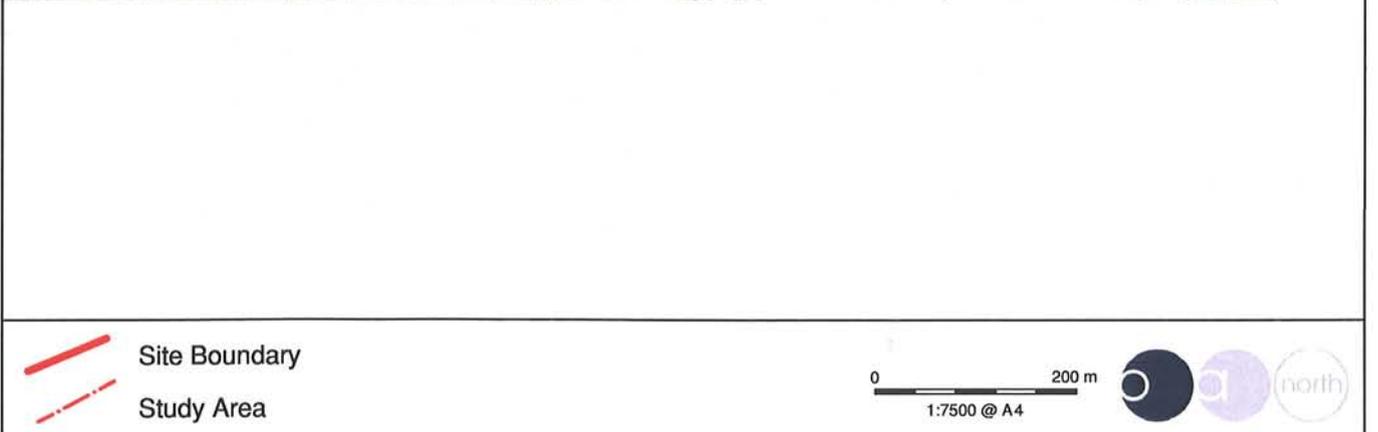
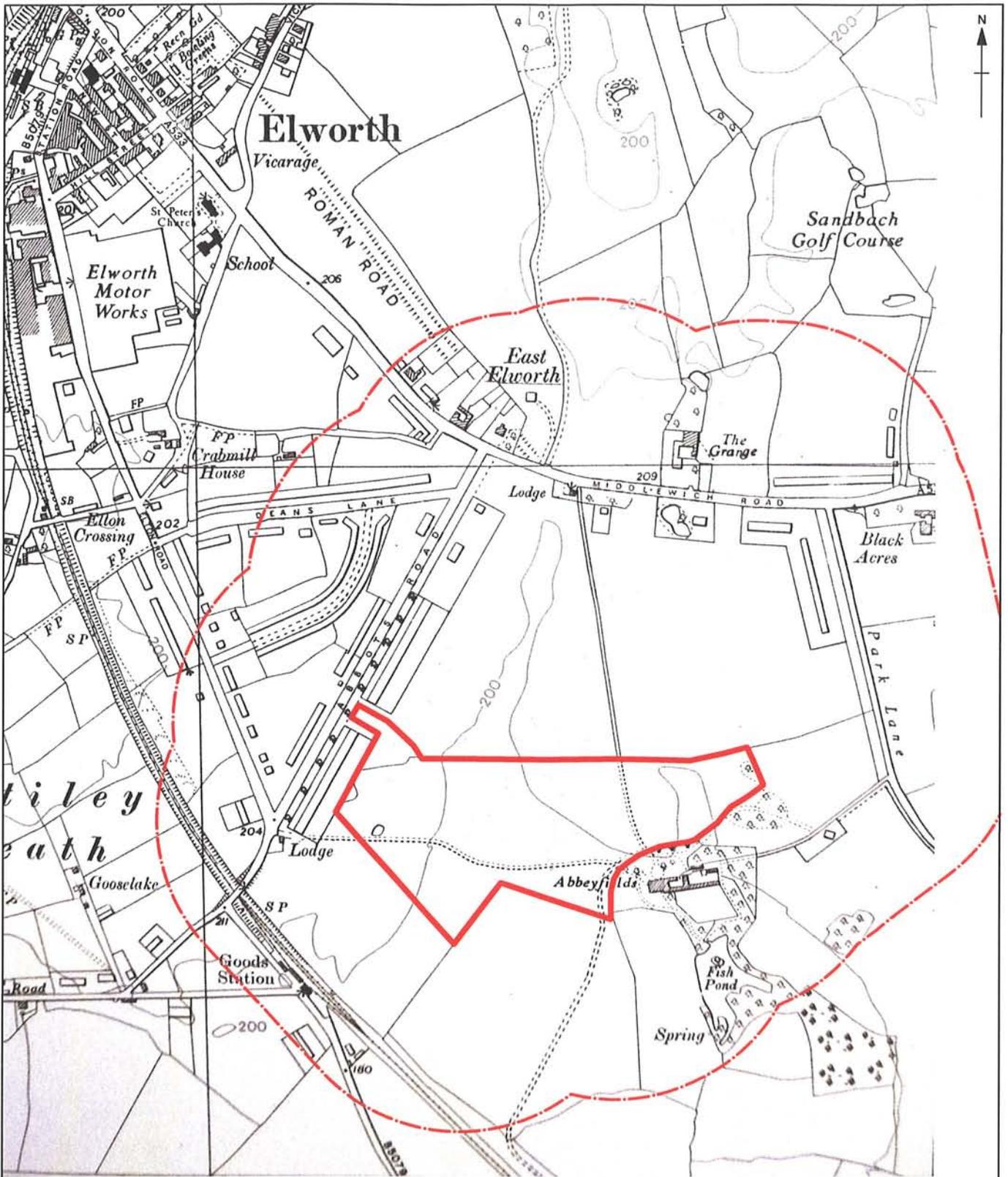


Figure 7: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile, 1954

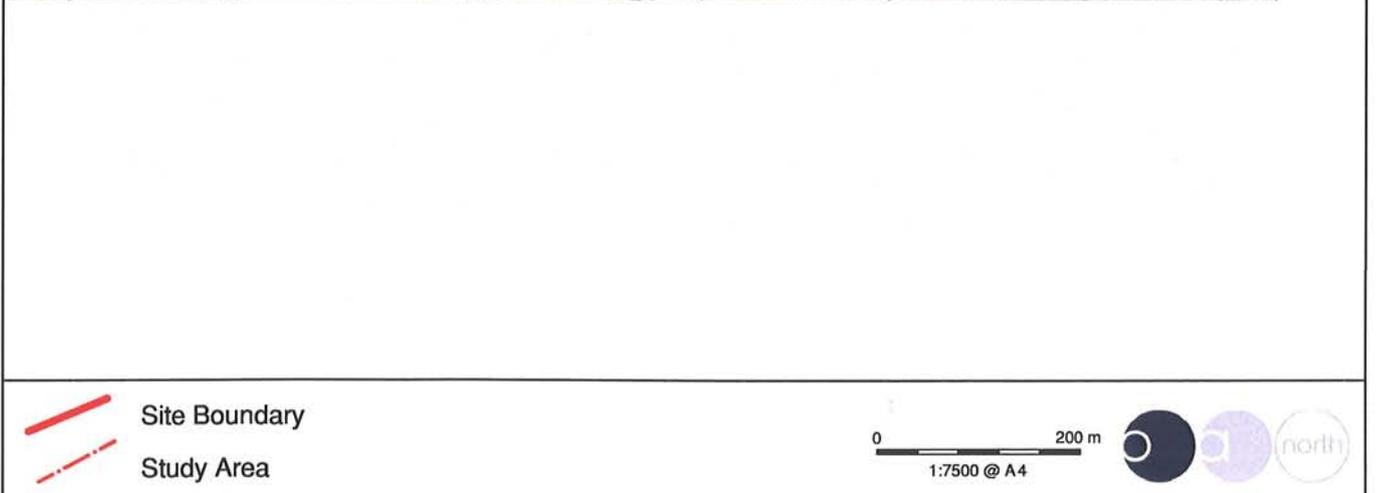
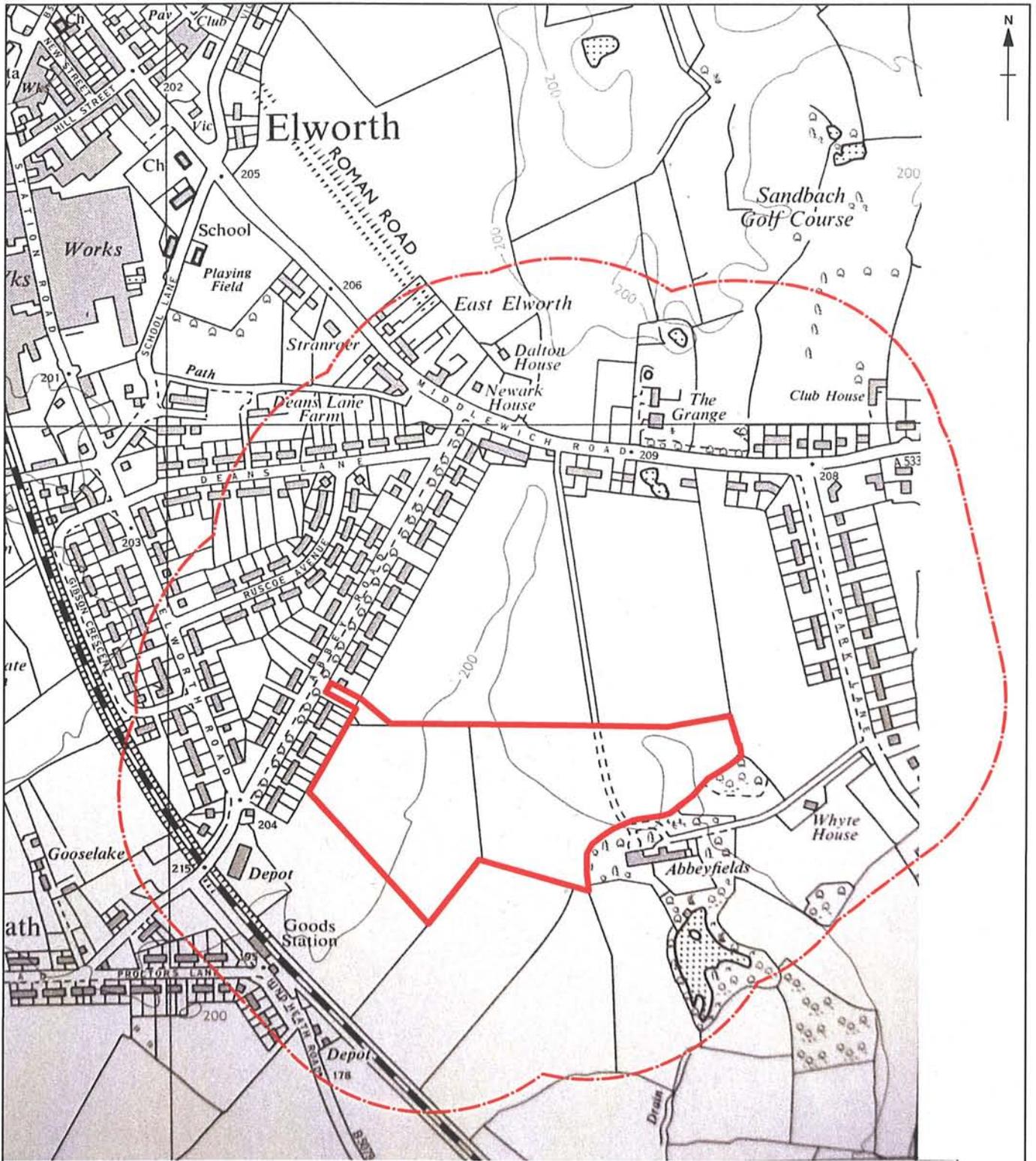
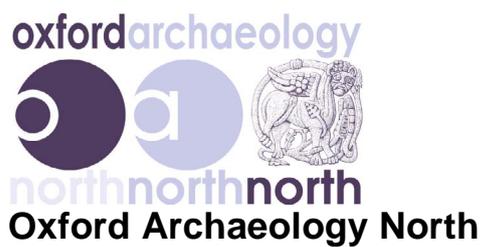


Figure 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile, 1969



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