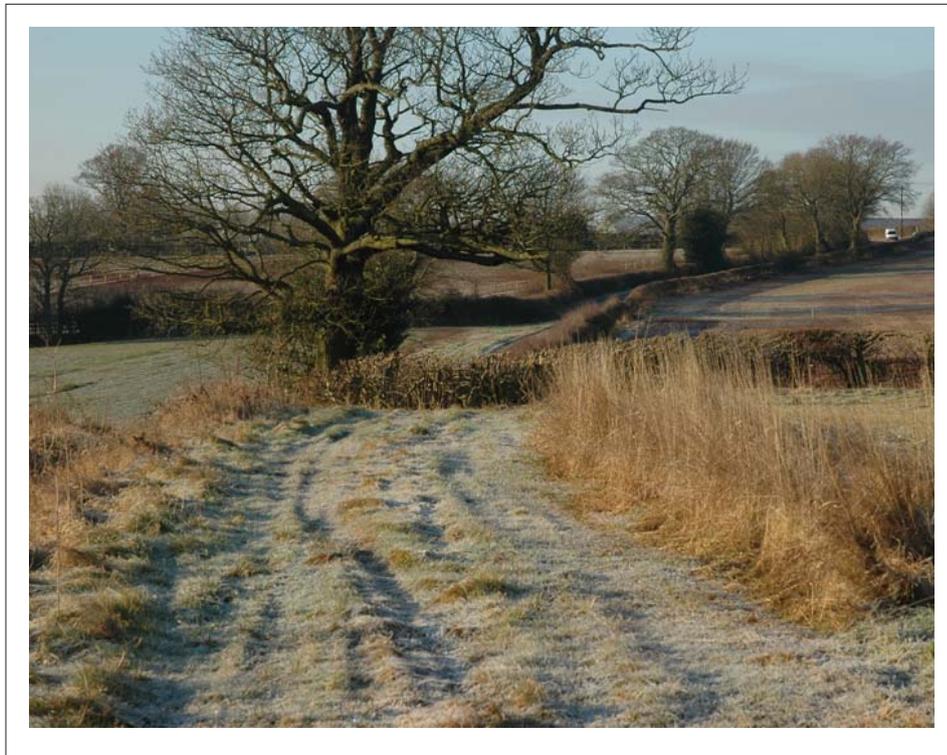


Archaeology Wales

Astley Farm, Alveley, Shropshire

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment



By
Helen Holderness &
Adrian Hadley

Report No. 2309



Archaeology Wales Limited,
Rhos Helyg, Cwm Belan,
Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6QF
Tel: +44 (0) 1686 440371
E-mail: admin@arch-wales.co.uk

Archaeology Wales

Astley Farm, Alveley, Shropshire

Archaeological Desk Based Assessment

Prepared For: Stratus Environmental Ltd

Rev. 2

Edited by: Mark Houliston

Signed: *Mark Houliston*

Position: Managing Director

Date: 7/5/15

Rev. 2

Authorised by: Mark Houliston

Signed: *Mark Houliston*

Position: Managing Director

Date: 7/5/15

By

Helen Holderness &
Adrian Hadley

Report No. 2309

May 2015



Archaeology Wales Limited,
Rhos Helyg, Cwm Belan,
Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6QF
Tel: +44 (0) 1686 440371
E-mail: admin@arch-wales.co.uk

Non – Technical Summary

In January 2015 Archaeology Wales was commissioned by Mr James Cook, on behalf of Stratus Environmental to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment and site walkover on land 2.6km to the northeast of the town of Alveley, Shropshire (NGR SO 78666 85785 centred) prior to a planning application for a solar photovoltaic farm. The site is a single large field currently used for arable farming.

The medieval moated site of Chidleys Moat, a Scheduled Monument, is located on the edge of the 1km search zone. No other designated historic sites are located within the search zone. There is one listed building, Beautybank Farm (Grade II) within the search zone, although others are scattered across the parish.

The regional Historic Environment Record lists 17 sites within the 1km search area and the National Record for the Historic Environment lists 3 sites all of which are duplicates of the HER. None of these lie within the area of proposed development but one site, moated site at Lanegreen Farm is positioned to the north of the site.

Evidence from the prehistoric and Roman periods is uncommon with only a few flints and pot sherds found in the wider area. Astley has its origins in the Saxon period when it formed part of the manor of Nordley. There is evidence to suggest that the area had significant forests until the mid 14th century with small scale fields being created on the edges of the woods which would have hindered larger scale settlement.

The area was enclosed by landowners before the end of the 18th century leaving a landscape of large, planned fields mixed with smaller, irregular fields. Two structures are shown on the 1770 map: one represents the moated site and the other is within the site boundaries. Although the moated site at Lanegreen is considered to be Medieval, the only dating evidence is a few sherds of 18th and 19th pottery.

The walkover survey observed a small quantity of handmade brick and building stone, along with a single piece of pottery in the area that corresponded with the location of one of the structure first seen on the 1809 map. Some handmade brick was also observed in one of the depressions caused by water runoff from the moated site and was interpreted as the ploughed out remains of a drain.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In January 2015 Archaeology Wales was commissioned by James Cook, on behalf of Stratus Environmental to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment and site walkover on land 2.6km to the northeast of the village of Alveley, Shropshire (NGR SO 78666 85785 centred Figure 1) in respect of a planning application for a solar photovoltaic farm. The site is a single large field currently used for arable farming.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Desk-Based Assessment is to provide Shropshire Council with heritage information in respect of the proposed development. The work is to highlight standing and buried remains of potential archaeological interest to ensure that they are fully investigated and recorded if they are disturbed or revealed as a result of any subsequent activities associated with the development.

2 Site Description

- 2.1 The site extends across approximately 12.3 hectares and covers one large irregular shaped field which is an amalgamation of fields known to have existed in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- 2.2 The site is bounded to the east by Lanegreen, currently in use as a bridleway but once it was a route separating farmland from the commons to the east. The south is bounded by mature trees with irregular broadleaf hedges. On the southwest limit the trees and hedges continue to the point where it meets the track leading to Astley Farm. The northwest limit of the site is bounded by a trackway with a 1.2m ditch edging that boundary. An established hedge, with several trees, has been planted round the Lanegreen site.
- 2.3 There are two major depressions that run north to south across the site. The eastern one leads from a spring rising on the Lanegreen moated site. The western one falls from the southwest corner of the moated site but then dog-legs to the south approximately half way along the site. Both meet at the southern limit of the site where they flow into a series of constructed ponds at Fillets Farm.
- 2.4 The site is highest in the north and falls gently to the south. Although there are some clear lines of sight across the countryside, they are generally limited by hedges, plantations or woods, and the undulating nature of the landscape.
- 2.5 The site lies on a mixture of Alveley Member Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 307 to 309 million years ago (BGS 2015). This in turn sits on Wyre Forest Coalfield deposits at a height of between 135 and 140m above sea level.
- 2.6 The Single Onshore Borehole Index (SOBI 2015), as displayed by the British Geological Survey, has been examined. Several boreholes were sunk in the area by the Highley Colliery, 3.8km to the southwest of the site, but none record the upper deposits.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 The primary objective is to assess the impact of the development proposals on the historic environment. This will help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies. The aim is to make full and effective use of existing information in establishing the archaeological significance of the site, to elucidate the presence or

absence of archaeological material, its character, distribution, extent, condition and relative significance.

- 3.2 The work includes an assessment of regional context within which the archaeological evidence rests and aims to highlight any relevant research issues within national and regional research frameworks.
- 3.3 This report provides information of sufficient detail to allow informed planning decisions to be made which can safeguard the archaeological resource. Preservation *in situ* has been advocated where at all possible, but where engineering or other factors may result in loss of archaeological deposits, preservation by record has been recommended.
- 3.4 This assessment considers the following:
- a) The nature, extent and degree of survival of archaeological sites, structures, deposits and landscapes within the study area through assessment of various readily available primary sources:
1. Collation and assessment of all relevant information held in the regional HER at Stafford, including listed building records, within a 1km radius of the assessment area.
 2. Assessment of all available excavation reports and archives including unpublished and unprocessed material affecting the site and its setting.
 3. Assessment of aerial photographic (AP) evidence.
 4. All sources indexed in the County Archive
 5. Heritage Gateway sources
 6. Records held by the developer e.g. bore hole logs, geological/geomorphological information, aerial photographs, maps, plans
 7. Map regression analysis using all relevant cartographic sources e.g. All editions of the Ordnance Survey County Series, Tithe and early estate maps (as available).
 8. Place name evidence
 9. Internet sourced satellite imagery
 10. Historic documents (e.g. Charters, registers, estate papers).
- b) The significance of any remains in their context both regionally and nationally and in light of the findings of the desk based study.
- 3.5 This work conforms to the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk Based Assessment, as produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2012).

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 Previous archaeological studies

- 4.1.1 No previous archaeological studies encompassing the site of the proposed development are recorded on the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (SHER). However, studies are recorded within the 1km search area.
- 4.1.2 There has been no recent archaeological fieldwork within the 1km search area.
- 4.1.3 A Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project was carried out in 2008 to 2010 which identified several early 19th century farm buildings within the 1km search zone.

4.2 The Historic Landscape

4.2.1 The proposed solar farm falls within the historic landscape character of Timbered Plateau Farmlands. The key characteristics are:

- Uprstanding plateau with rolling relief, dissected by valleys
- Linear ancient woodlands in valleys and dingles
- Mixed farming land use
- Ancient pattern of irregular hedged fields
- Medium scale landscape

4.2.2 The settlement pattern tends towards dispersed farms, cottages and hamlets. Much of the area was heavily wooded until the mid-14th century although irregular fields had been reclaimed from the forest prior to this. Piecemeal enclosure by private agreement between landowners occurred by the beginning of the 17th century and was completed before the end of the 18th century. The resulting landscape is a patchwork of larger regular fields mixed with smaller, irregular fields which resulted from woodland clearance.

4.3 Scheduled Monuments

4.3.1 A scheduled monument is located on the edge of the study area, some 170m south-south-east of Childleys Farm. This comprises a medieval moat and associated fishpond (*List No: 1019832*). The arms of the moat are between 7m and 9m wide and define a square island approximately 21m across. The internal faces of the moat were once revetted with stone and served as the base for a sandstone block curtain wall. The bottom course of this wall is still partly visible.

4.3.2 There is another moated site (*HER: 2822*) positioned near Lanegreen Farm, some 50m north of the proposed solar farm. The moat arms, which are between 6m and 9m wide, are visible as shallow depressions. The moat defines an island which measures approximately 22m by 28m. Although the medieval moated site represents a significant heritage asset, this moment is not scheduled.

4.4 Listed Buildings

4.4.1 There is a Grade II listed building, Beautybank Farmhouse, located within the study area (*List No: 1176507*). The farm is positioned some 575m to the north-east of the proposed solar scheme. The farmhouse dates from the seventeenth century and comprises a brick and timber house with a later wing (*HER:11431*).

4.5 Known archaeological remains and historical development

4.5.1 There are 17 sites listed on the SHER within a 1km radius of the centre point of the proposed development site. None are recorded within the bounds of the site itself. The full catalogue provided by SHER is included in the rear of this report (Figure 3, Appendix II). The sites are briefly described below, according to period, where they are incorporated in a summary of the historical development of the area.

4.5.2 There are 3 sites listed on the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) maintained by English Heritage within the 1km search area. All are duplicates of SHER records. A full catalogue if included in the rear of this report (Figure 3, Appendix II)

Prehistoric

- 4.5.3 There is little evidence of prehistoric activity in the local area. No prehistoric finds have been recorded within the 1km search zone: however, within the parish of Alveley several finds spots have been recorded. A Neolithic polished axe was found in the quarry at Butts Farm in 1919 (Nicholls 1995) and scatters of Mesolithic and Neolithic flints have been found during field walking to the west of the search zone towards the River Severn. A Bronze Age palstave axe was found in 1992 by metal detectors at Tuck Hill.
- 4.5.4 The finds give the impression that this was a relatively empty prehistoric landscape but centuries of persistent agriculture may be masking settlement sites which are likely to be ephemeral in nature. Mesolithic exploitation of river courses has been observed across much of Britain but little research has been carried out as to the extent of the practice.

Roman (AD 43 – c. AD 410)

- 4.5.5 Although some have suggested that Alveley has Roman origins there are no significant known Roman sites in the area. A temporary or over wintering Roman camp has been identified to the southwest of Quatford 5.8km to the northwest of the site and several enclosures of a possible Iron Age or Roman date have been recorded from aerial photographs.
- 4.5.6 Two Roman coins were found by metal detectors at Coton Dingle 1.3km to the northwest of the site. A sherd of possible Roman pottery was recovered during field walking in the parish.

Early Medieval (c. AD 410 – AD 1066)

- 4.5.7 A small Saxon settlement appears to have developed in Alveley and Kingsnordley by the 10th century as the parish boundaries had been established by 994. The place name of Alveley appears to derive from mixing a personal name, 'Aelfgyth' with 'Ley' which means a forest or wood clearing. There are many names in the area which end in -ley giving support to the idea that the area remained heavily wooded into the Saxon and later periods.
- 4.5.8 The parish church at Alveley is thought to be built on Saxon foundations but there is no clear evidence to support this. Carved stones found about the village, built into the walls of houses, are said to have come from the church.

Medieval (1066 – 1536)

- 4.5.9 The parish of Kingsnordley is recorded in Domesday as being in the hundred of Seisdon on the Staffordshire and Shropshire border. It was small with only nine households of seven villagers and two smallholders. Domesday also records that there was significant woodland 1.5 by 0.5 leagues as well as a mill. The lord of the manor was Earl Roger of Shrewsbury who had replaced the Saxon Earl Edwin and his brother after they had risen against William I in 1071.
- 4.5.10 Astley (Hall) Farm may have its origins in the Saxon period but the farm and hall developed in the medieval period. The manor of Nordley was granted to the Fitz Ulky or Fulky family in the reign of Henry I who then took the name of the ville (farm) as

their surname, Astley. A small settlement may have existed close to the current Astley Farm although no surface evidence now survives (*1288*).

- 4.5.11 A mill is recorded for the area in Domesday but there is no archaeological evidence as to its location. A lease issued in 1291 by John de Astley to Hugh Solrugg and his wife granted the Grantham Hulme and brook for the lives at a rent of fourteen shillings. Richard Blyke in 1492 records it as being in ruins and the last documentary evidence of it is in 1587. It is likely that this relates to a mill in the vicinity of Grantham's Mill (*8053*) which sits to the southwest of the site along Paper Mill Brook. The present mill, abandoned by the late 18th century, is upstream of a 'hulme' or island that sits in the Brook.
- 4.5.12 The area has several moated sites and these have been dated to the medieval period but few have been verified by excavation. One such site is immediately to the north of the proposed development site, Lanegreen (*2822*). It is a rectangular enclosure approximately 27m by 27m with a central island surrounded by shallow ditches, although the site has been substantially reduced through ploughing. A shallow depression to the southeast of the moat was interpreted as a fishpond (Reid 2001). A small scale excavation was undertaken in 1979 with a trench cut through the top of the north bank. The bank was found to be constructed from clay and there were limited finds which were dated to the 18th or 19th centuries. It is possible that this site is later and connected to water management as a spring rises here and there may be a connection to the pools constructed to the south of the site just north of Fillets Farm which in turn feed into Paper Mill Brook.
- 4.5.13 The area shows signs of being used by drovers to move cattle and sheep throughout the county. To the southeast of the site is a medieval earthwork which is probably a driftway between the greens nearby (*21866*).
- 4.5.14 In 1167 Osbert de Astley was fined by the Justice of the Forest for encroaching into the forest. During the 13th and 14th centuries the de Astley family continued to be fined for encroaching in some manner into the forest and in 1292, John de Astley was sued by the crown for his right to the manor. He contested the claim, won and later was named on the Great Charter of the Forest in 1301 as holding Nordley.
- 4.5.15 John de Astley settled the manor of Nordley on his son Roger, in 1339 but sold the manor of Astley, including the hall and gardens, along with a carucate of land, two meadows and an acre of pasture to his son-in-law William de Fillilode. It is possible that Fillets is a corruption of the surname Fillilode and that the land to the south of the site, and maybe the site itself, formed part of this sale. The male line of the de Astley family died out in 1376 and was survived by a daughter who then married into the Lees, another landed local family.

Post-medieval (1500 – 1899)

- 4.5.16 The forests of the Saxon and Medieval periods were still largely surviving in the early 17th century. William Camden in 1610 mentions Morse Forest to the south of Bridgenorth which was also recorded on Speede's maps from approximately the same year of both Shropshire and Staffordshire and Hollar's map of Shropshire. It's not known whether these were taken from visits to the county or drawn from other

traveller's comments but does show that the area had sufficient forest cover to warrant mention.

- 4.5.17 In 1740, Lancelot Lee II purchased the manor of Astley, which is likely to have included the proposed development site. The whole block is recorded as being owned by Harry Lancelot Lee in the 1770 although a large tract of land to the southwest of the site is marked as being owned by Mr. C Hale.
- 4.5.18 The economy was dominated by agriculture although small scale industrial activities were also carried out in the area. Brick works have been recorded in two locations near to the proposed development site (7025 and 7026) and date from the early 19th century to the early 20th century. There appears to be no structural remains and now are shown as a series of water-logged hollows.
- 4.5.19 Small sandstone quarries are dotted about the area (30090 and 30091). It is unlikely that they were exploited on an industrial scale, but more for small, domestic purposes such as a local house and road building.
- 4.5.20 Paper Mill Brook, formally The Dingle, continued to be an important site with a variety of water mills spread along its length engaged in various industries such as blast mills, paper making, corn grinding, etc. The 1770 survey of Lancelot Lee's estate mentions a mill and several fields as being connected to it.
- 4.5.21 Coton Hall and its Park (7516) lie 1.3km to the northwest of the proposed development site, although the park stretches to within the search zone. Coton Hall was the ancestral home of the Lee family who occupied the original buildings from the 14th century. The house was marked on John Rocque's 1752 map of Shropshire and the current building dates from the early 19th century. The ruined chapel near to the house is a surviving relic of the earlier building.
- 4.5.22 Although the farmsteads identified as part of the Historic Farmstead Characterisation Project were assigned a date range from the early 19th century onwards from their standing state, it is likely that the original farms date from earlier. Most maps from the 1700s onwards mark Fillets and Astley Farm (25846) suggesting they were well established by this time.

5 Map Regression

- 5.1 Several maps were produced of the counties of Shropshire and Staffordshire in the mid 17th century. These might have been drawn from descriptions from travellers like William Camden rather than surveyed by the cartographer so may not be entirely accurate.

5.2 J. Bleau c.1645 (Figure 5)

- 5.2.1 One of the earliest maps that shows the settlement of Alveley although there is no clear details. Morse Forest is shown as covering a large area and supports the evidence that the area was still heavily wooded in the mid-17th century.

5.3 Anon 1770 - field names by Foxall 1980s (Figure 6)

- 5.3.1 This map covers all of the estate of Lancelot Lee Esq. within the parish of Alveley. It is the first to show an accurate representation of the roads and fields in the area. The field names have been added by G. Foxall in the 1980s from research carried out by

him since the 1960s. There may be a question of accuracy in the layout of the northern fields but those in the south appear to be true.

- 5.3.2 The site is divided into 8 smaller fields although some of them share the same name so it is not known if they are physically separated by fences or if it is a more causal arrangement. The greater part of the site, made up from 5 fields, is Guests Ground. This covers the south and west fields as well as one in the to the north central part of the site.
- 5.3.3 The land to the west and south of the site is marked as belonging to Mr. C. Hale(y) and shows no details of the fields or the ponds which are currently to the south of the site. A dark square on the northeast field, Perry House Piece, could be a building but it is unknown if it is Lanegreen Farm or another structure.
- 5.3.4 In the wider area, Lane Green Common is marked to the east of the site. Some of it has been marked as fields but much of it appears to be open ground.

5.4 *Anon 1809 (Figure 7)*

- 5.4.1 The eight fields of the previous map have been merged to make five: Guests Grounds appear to have been combined into three fields. The structure seen in the 1770 has been recorded in the north of the site and unlikely to be Lanegreen Farm but a separate building. To the northwest, 'Round Tank' and 'Dole Meadow' have remained mostly unchanged.
- 5.4.2 The track which runs from Lanegreen to Astley Farm is marked along the north of the site. It appears to be more formal at both ends as they are drawn with a solid line but is marked with dotted lines across the width of the site.
- 5.4.3 In the wider area the land to the south and southwest of the site is recorded as belonging to Mr Hale and a couple of other landowners.
- 5.4.4 The supposed moated site to the north of the site has another structure recorded. This could be the source of the building material and pottery found during the excavation carried out in 1979. It is possible that the moated site dates from the late 18th or early 19th century, possibly to do with water management and that the structure in the north of the site is part of that arrangement.

5.5 *Stevens 1815 (Figure 8)*

- 5.5.1 The maps shows little detail as none of the separate fields are marked. The track to the north of the site is shown, again with the solid line to the northeast and southwest but the area across the top of the site is again shown with a dotted line.
- 5.5.2 The structure marked on the 1815 map is recorded again but this time has a straight track leading to the northwest where it connects with the main track. However, the structure associated with the moated site is not recorded/

5.6 *1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1833 (Figure 9)*

- 5.6.1 The map, again, shows few details across the site and no field boundaries are recorded. There appears to be two water courses running across the site from north to south which join in the area of the pools constructed to the north of Fillets Farm.

These run in straight lines and have not appeared on earlier maps so are probably constructed to take water from the springs to the north of the site.

- 5.6.2 The structure seen on the earlier map to the north of the site is not recorded but there is a structure of some sort on the moated site.

5.7 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map 1883 (Figure 10)

- 5.7.1 The field pattern has remained the same as the 1809 map and a path now runs across the fields from the northeast to the southwest. The track across the north of the site has been removed suggesting that access had been altered by a landowner and it is likely that the path was installed to maintain access between Astley Farm and Lanegreen.

- 5.7.2 Both structures from the earlier maps have been removed. Two small patches of boggy ground or ponds have been marked and are likely to be the remnants of the eastern water course.

5.8 2nd edition Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map 1903 (Figure 11)

- 5.8.1 No change

5.9 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map 1926

- 5.9.1 No change

5.10 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map 1928-29

- 5.10.1 No change

5.11 Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map 1954

- 5.11.1 No change

5.12 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map 1961

- 5.12.1 The path across the site has not been marked and one of the fence lines in the northwest of the site has been removed and the track across the north of the site has been partly reinstated.

- 5.12.2 The northern pond continues to be marked but the southern one has now become two patches of boggy ground.

5.13 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map 1971-80

- 5.13.1 The three fields to the south of the site have been merged into one larger one and the two in the northwest have also been combined. The fence line that disappeared in the previous map has been marked as the southeast boundary of the two combined fields

5.14 Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map 1991

- 5.14.1 No change

6 Aerial Photographs

- 6.1 The aerial photographs at the SHER, Sheffield Library of Air Photographs held by the University of Sheffield, and Britain from the Air website were consulted but none

covered the area. A flight was made by the RAF in 1949 but concentrates more on Coton Hall and the area to the northwest of the site.

- 6.2 Modern Google Earth satellite images were consulted (Photo 1). The 1999 image shows a single field with dark lines or depressions running from the north to the south. These depressions follow closely the field boundaries from the 1770 survey and suggest that they may have not been 'dry' but instead used the natural run-off channels from the spring to the north of the site as the method for marking out the various fields.

7 Site Visit (Photos 2-12)

- 7.1 A site visit was undertaken on the 6th February 2015. Weather conditions were clear and sunny. There had been a heavy overnight frost which had frozen the standing water over the proposed development area. The site is one large field which had been seeded with winter grain and has a public right of way cutting across from east to west (Photo 2). A headland of approximately 2.5m had been left round the entire field.
- 7.2 The field is highest in the north and drops gently towards the south (Photo 3). There are two significant undulations running north to south caused by water runoff from the moated site in the north of the field and spring in the northwest (Photo 4, 5, and 6): both marked on the 1833 Ordnance Survey (Figure 9). The channels both flow into the pond constructed to the immediate south of the site boundary (Photo 7). In the eastern channels a few pieces of broken, handmade brick were observed (Photo 8) which could be the remnants of a field drain, or part of the drainage system that took the excess water from the moated site.
- 7.3 The field is irregular in shape and there is no indication of older field boundaries on the ground, although several trees in the hedges may indicate the origin points of some of the known boundaries. Along the eastern limit it is bounded by a dense, mature hedge of mixed vegetation. For much of the north to northwest boundary, a 1.2m ditch has been cut (Photo 9). This is not marked on any maps so may have been overlooked or be a more modern feature.
- 7.4 There were no signs of previous activity across much of the site but in the northern part, a single piece of faced stone, a piece of pottery, and some handmade brick was recorded in the approximate location of the structure seen on the earlier maps (Photo 10). To the southeast of this was a shallow depression a slight boggy texture which is likely to be the location of the pond recorded by the Ordnance Survey (Photo 11).
- 7.5 There are no signs of the banks or other features from the moated site to the north of the site (Photo 12) but this may be due to the uneven ground and frosty conditions. The current track to the north of the site appears to be on the same alignment as that recorded on various maps (Photo 13).

8 Previous Impacts

- 8.1.1 Research has suggested that much of the site appears to have been used as agricultural land throughout its known history. Broken pieces of fired clay field drain which had been disturbed by plough were seen in some areas.

- 8.1.2 In the early 1970s an oil pipe was laid across the site from the gate leading from Green Lane southwest across the site at a depth of approximately 1.2m at the southwest boundary.
- 8.1.3 The runoff from the moated site falls into a deep ditch which leads into a gridded pipe under the site. It is not known if this is piped down the hill following the slope or if it soaks away from that point. Since the ground in that area was not excessively wet, it is more likely that it is piped or runs into a drain. During the walkover survey, handmade bricks were observed close to one of the depressions (Photos 8).
- 8.1.4 A structure, first marked on the 1770 Lee survey, is shown on several maps and could have a connection to the moated site. A fragment of faced stone was observed during the walkover in the general area of the site.

9 Assessment of Archaeological Potential

- 9.1 Although the village of Alveley has a documented history from the Saxon period there is little archaeological evidence across much of the parish. Therefore, there is a low potential for as yet unrecorded archaeological finds, features and deposits to exist within the proposed development area. A structure, dating from at least the late 18th century is known to have stood to the north of the site, there is a low to moderate potential of subsurface deposits relating to them surviving.

10 Potential Impact of the Proposed Development

- 10.1 A Scheduled Ancient Monument, Chidleys Moat is situated to the east of the proposed scheme, on the edge of the 1km study area. The immediate setting of this monument will not be affected by the development. In terms of visual impact of the extended setting of this monument, the moat is at least partly obscured by woodland from the proposed solar farm.
- 10.2 The Grade II listed Beautybank Farmhouse is located some 575m to the north-east of the proposed solar scheme. The farm is partly obscured from the development area by woodland. The farmhouse is located to the north of farm buildings which obscure any view of the proposed solar farm. The immediate setting of the listed farmhouse building is consequently unaffected by the proposed scheme. The implementation of additional woodland screening along the northern boundary of the solar farm is likely to mitigate any potential negative impact on the extended setting of this heritage asset.
- 10.3 Historic buildings recorded within the study area significantly include six farmhouses; notably, Lanegreen Farm, Lindridge Farm, Astley Farm, Fillets Farm, Perry House and Little Coton. These have been provisionally dated to the nineteenth century, although some of the farmsteads may have been established in the later medieval period. These farms are potentially located within the theoretical zone of visibility, but are at least partly obscured by hedgerows and woodland from the proposed scheme. The parkland surrounding Coton Hall, some 1km north-west of the development area, also appears to be screened from the solar farm by woodland.
- 10.4 Non-designated archaeological sites recorded within the study area comprise a medieval watermill, a deserted village and a moated site. Provisional analysis indicates that the watermill is not located within the zone of theoretical visibility. The remains

of the potential deserted medieval settlement appear to be at least partly obscured from the development site by hedgerows and woodland. In contrast, Lanegreen Moat is positioned some 50m to the north of the proposed scheme. The visual impact on the extended setting of this monument will be minor. The development will have no direct physical impact on the moat. The immediate setting of the monument will be unaffected as there is an existing hedgerow and trees along the northern boundary of the solar farm. Furthermore, the PV panels will be located circa 50 to 60m from the northern boundary of the site (offering a substantial buffer zone), scrub planting is proposed and an additional hedgerow will be planted along the northern boundary of the deployment area.

- 10.5 Documentary and cartographic research has not identified any specific sites or features of archaeological interest within the proposed development area. However, a structure appears to have been formerly located along the northern boundary of the development site. The latter is located outside beyond the proposed arrangement of PV arrays.

10 Sources

Published

- Camden, W. 1610 *Britain, or, a Chorographical Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes [sic], England, Scotland, and Ireland*
<http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/travellers/Camden/22> (accessed 08.02.15)
- English Heritage 2010 'Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau' *National Character Area 66*
<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/wm-area-farmsteads-character-statements/66-Mid-Severn-Sandstone-Plateau.pdf> (accessed 09.02.15)
- Foxall, D.D.G. 1980 *Shropshire Field Names*
- Nicholls, A. 1994 *The History of the Parish of Alveley, including the townships of Kingsnordley, Astley and Romsley from the documentary and written sources*
- Nicholls, A. 1995 'Archaeology of the Parish' *Transactions of the Alveley Historical Society*
- Shropshire County Council 2006 *The Shropshire Landscape Typology*

Unpublished

- Reid, M.L. 2001 *MPP Non-Scheduling Alternative Action Report*

Maps

- Anon 1770 Estates in the Parish of Alveley belonging to Lancelot Lee Esq.
- Anon 1809 Map of the Estates in Parish of Alveley, in the County of Shropshire: the Property of Harry Lancelot Lee Esq.
- Bleau, J. c. 1645 Shropshire
- Stevens, H. 1815 Kidderminster 11, Original Ordnance Surveyor Map
- Ordnance Survey 1833 First Series Sheet 61 1:63360
- Ordnance Survey 1883 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1: 2,500
- Ordnance Survey 1903 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500
- Ordnance Survey 1924 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500
- Ordnance Survey 1928-29 Ordnance Survey Map 1: 10,560
- Ordnance Survey 1954 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10.560
- Ordnance Survey 1961 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500
- Ordnance Survey 1971-80 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,000
- Ordnance Survey 1991 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,000

Archive Documents

Shropshire Archives

- 1671/14 Map of the Estates in Parish of Alveley, in the County of Shropshire: the Property of Harry Lancelot Lee Esq.

6007/45 Alveley Manor, map with other Manors 1770
PF10/2-3 Tithe map and apportionment for Alveley 1845

Databases

Regional Historic Environment Record (HER), held and maintained by Shropshire County Council

National Record for the Historic Environment (NRHE), held and maintained by English Heritage

Online Sources

Kingsnordley, maintained and displayed online by Open Domesday -
<http://www.domesdaymap.co.uk/place/SO7787/kingsnordley> (accessed 09/02/15)

Geology of Britain Viewer, as maintained and displayed online by the British Geological Survey
- <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 09/02/15)

Single Onshore Boreholes Index (SOBI), as maintained and displayed online by the British Geological Survey - <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 09/02/15)

The National Archives - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/> (accessed 09/10/14)

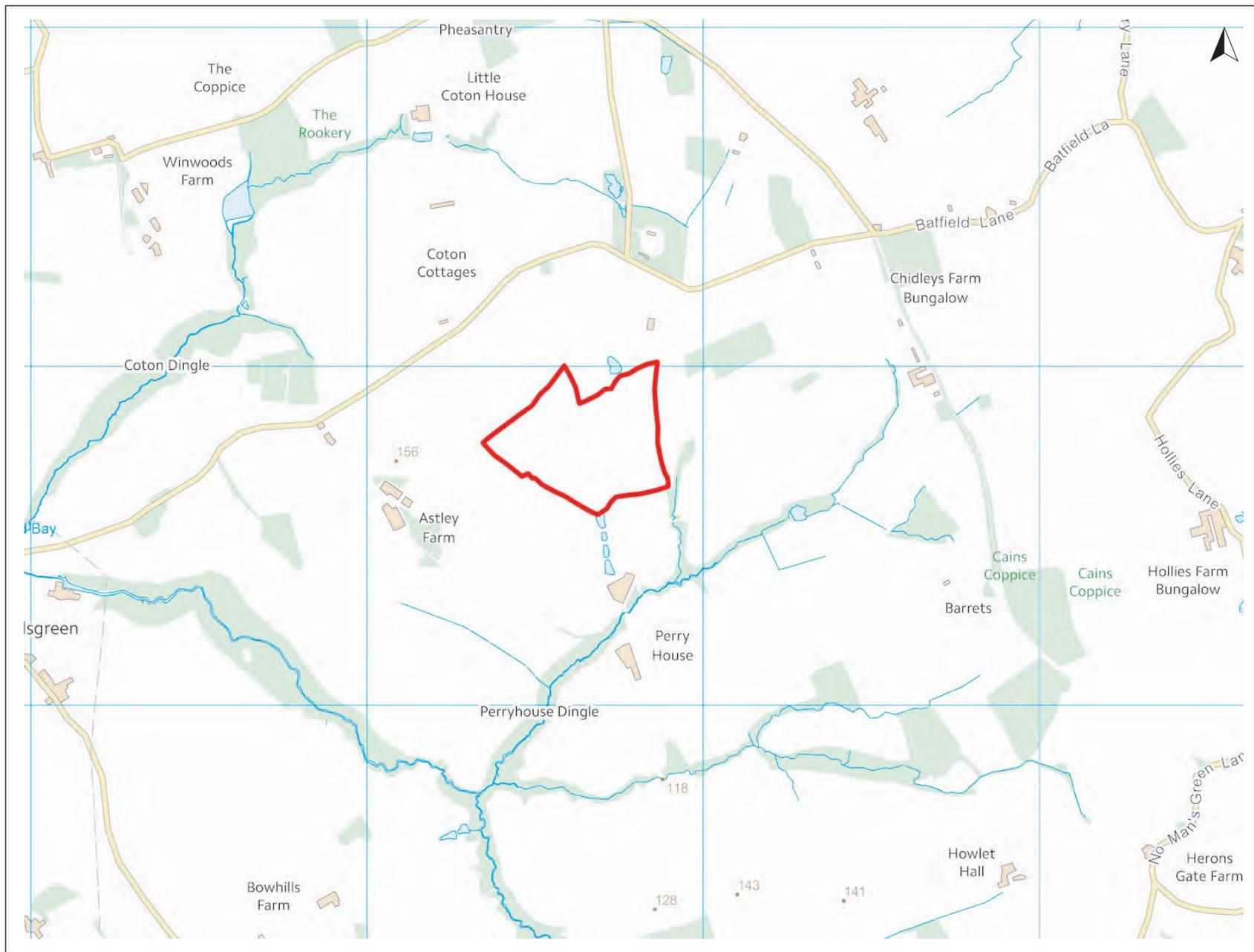


Figure 1.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

Site Location

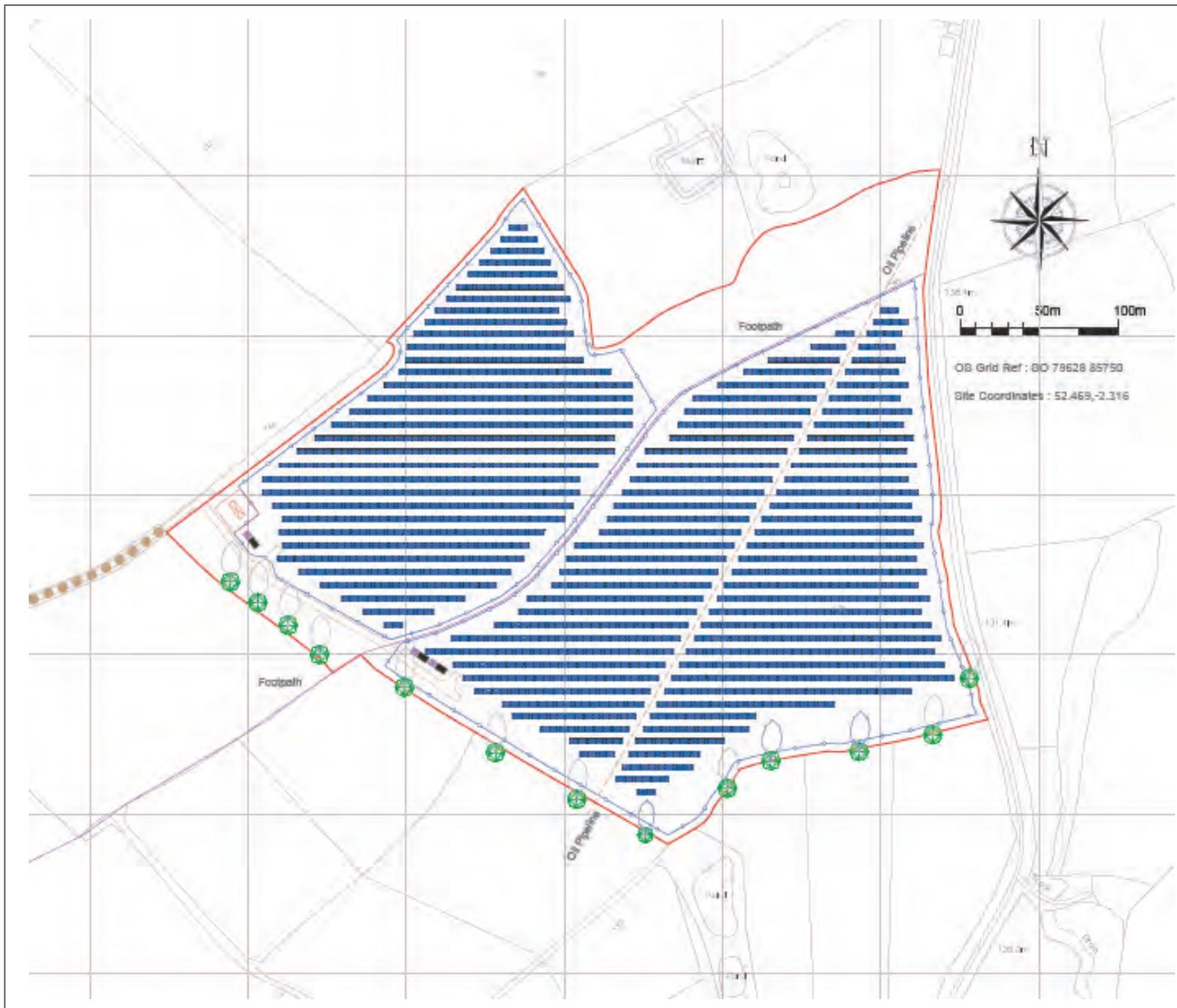


Figure 2.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

Site outline with
layout of solar
panels

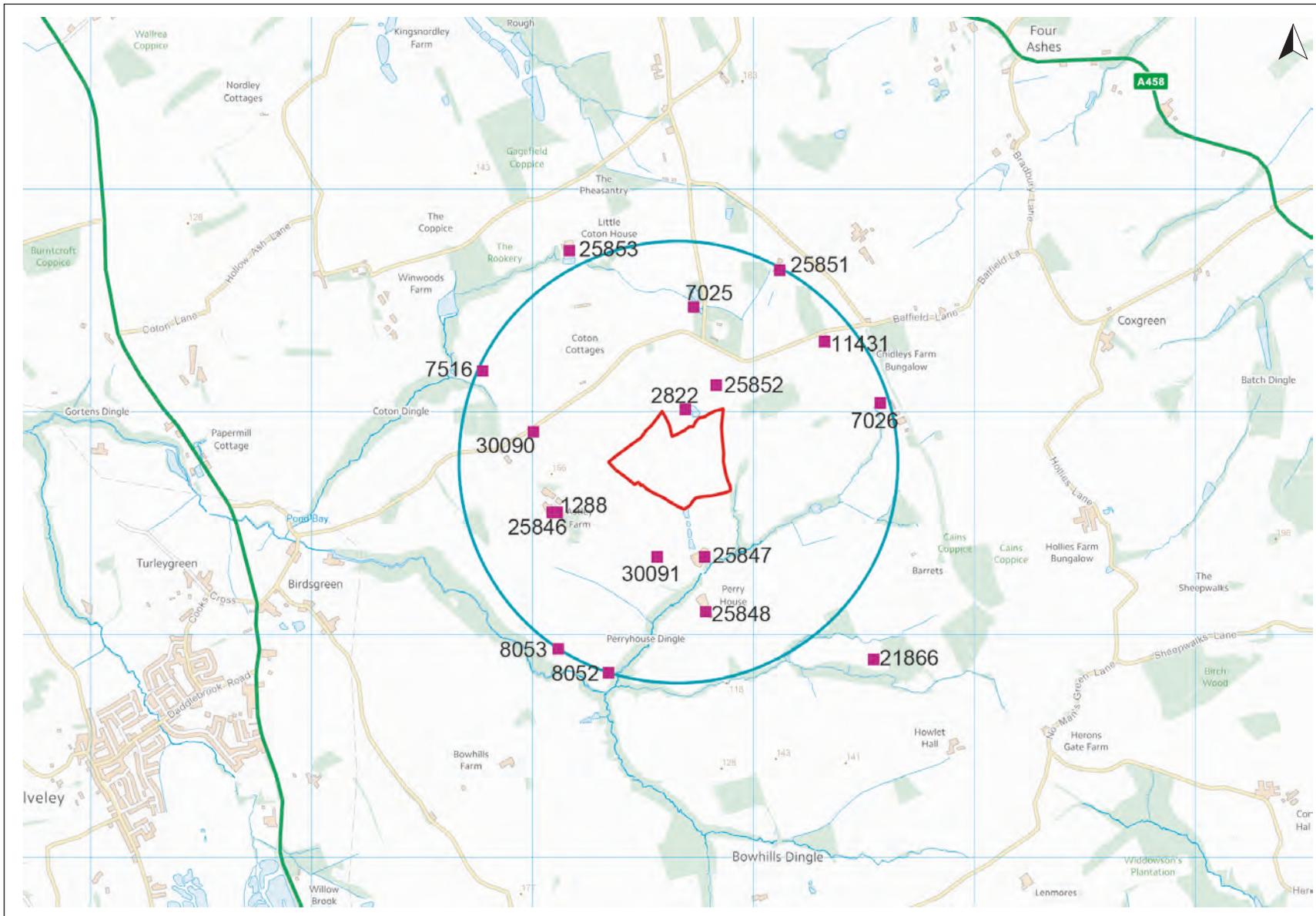


Figure 4.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

Sites recorded on the
HER and NRHE within
the 1km search zone



Figure 5.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1645 Blaeu map
of Shropshire

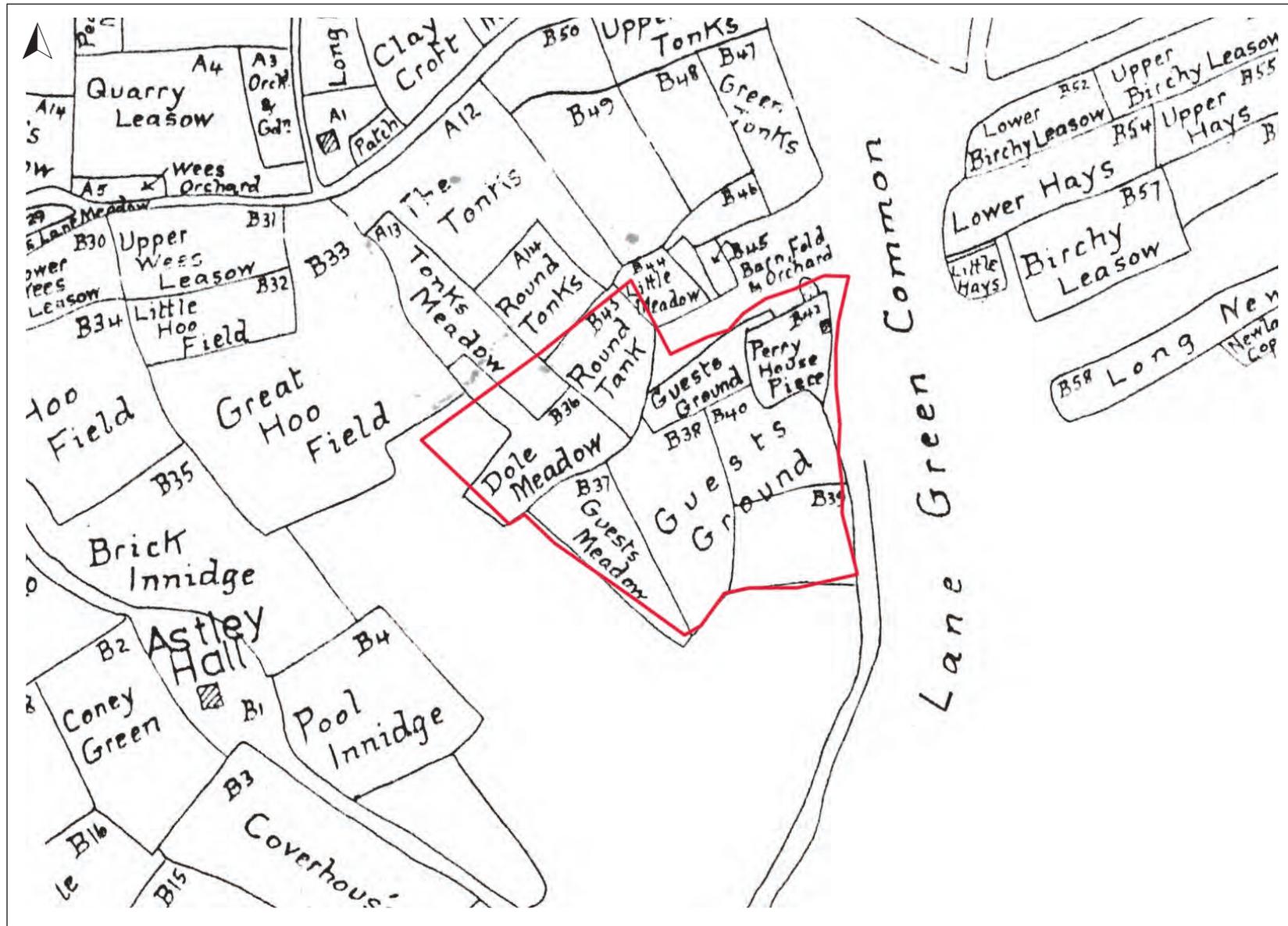


Figure 6.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1770 Survey of the
Estate of Lancelot
Lee in the parish of
Alveley



Figure 7.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1809 Survey of
Lancelet Lee lands

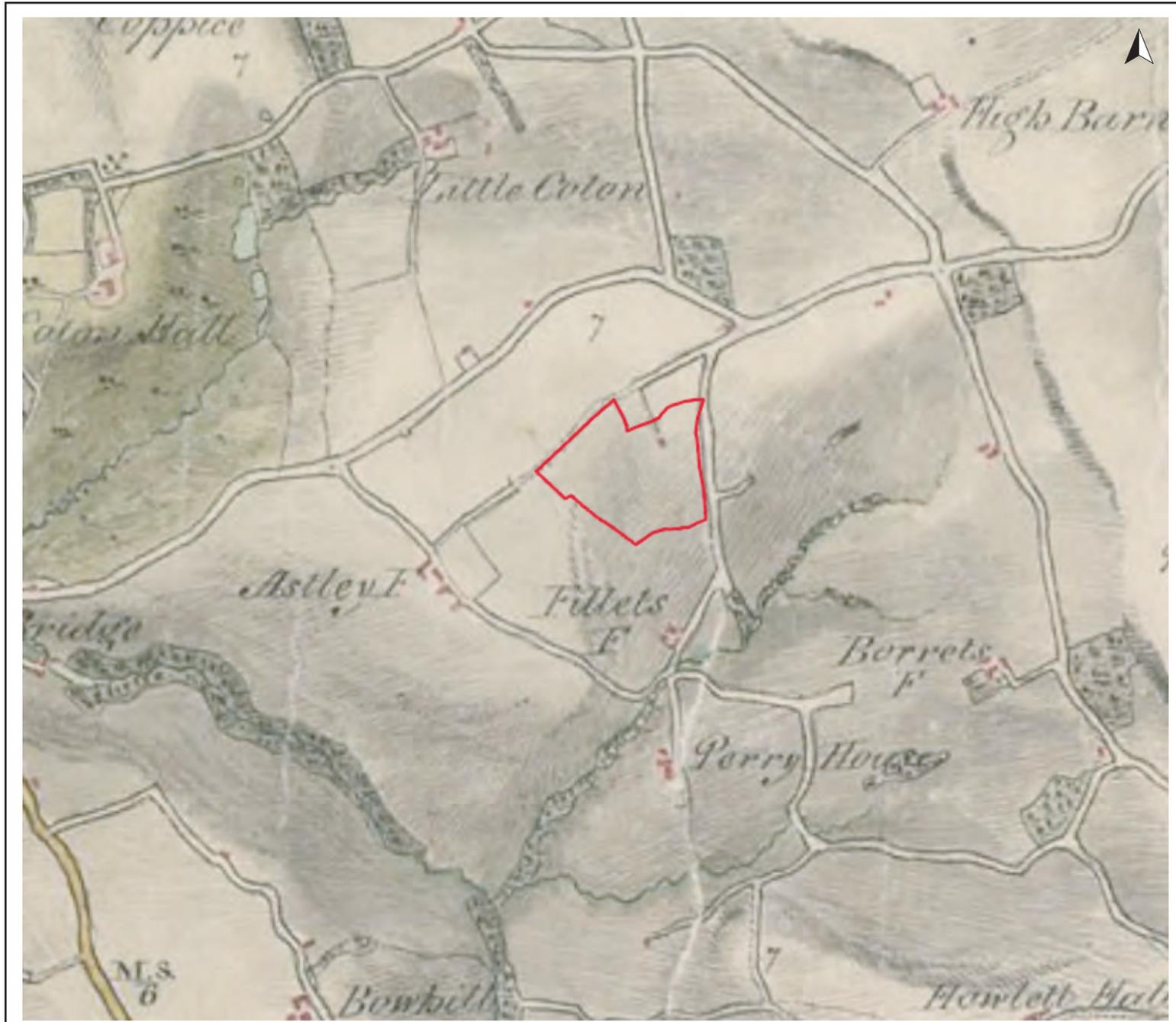
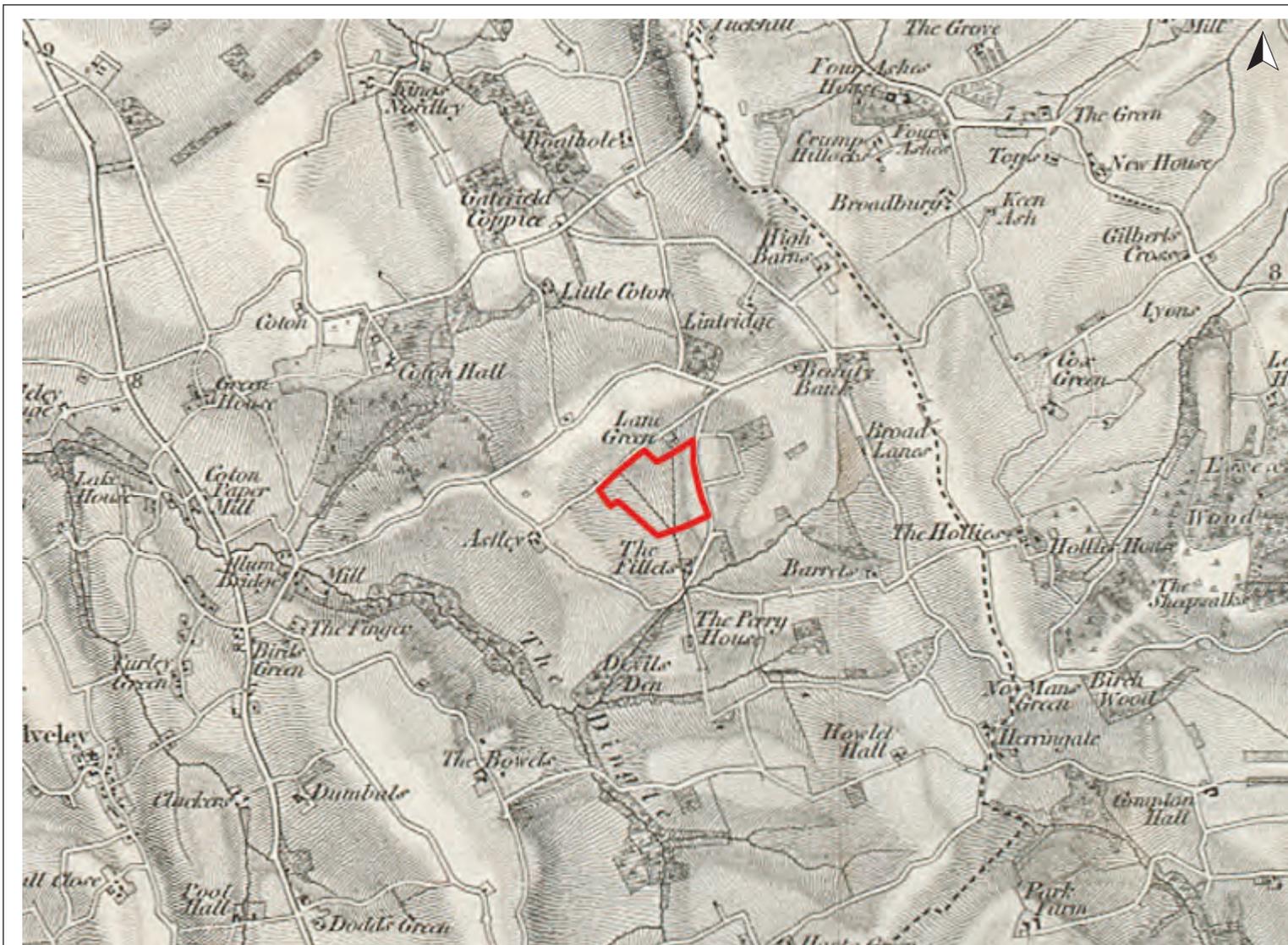


Figure 8.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1815 Ordnance
survey initial map



0 2km

Figure 9.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1833 Ordnance
survey First Series

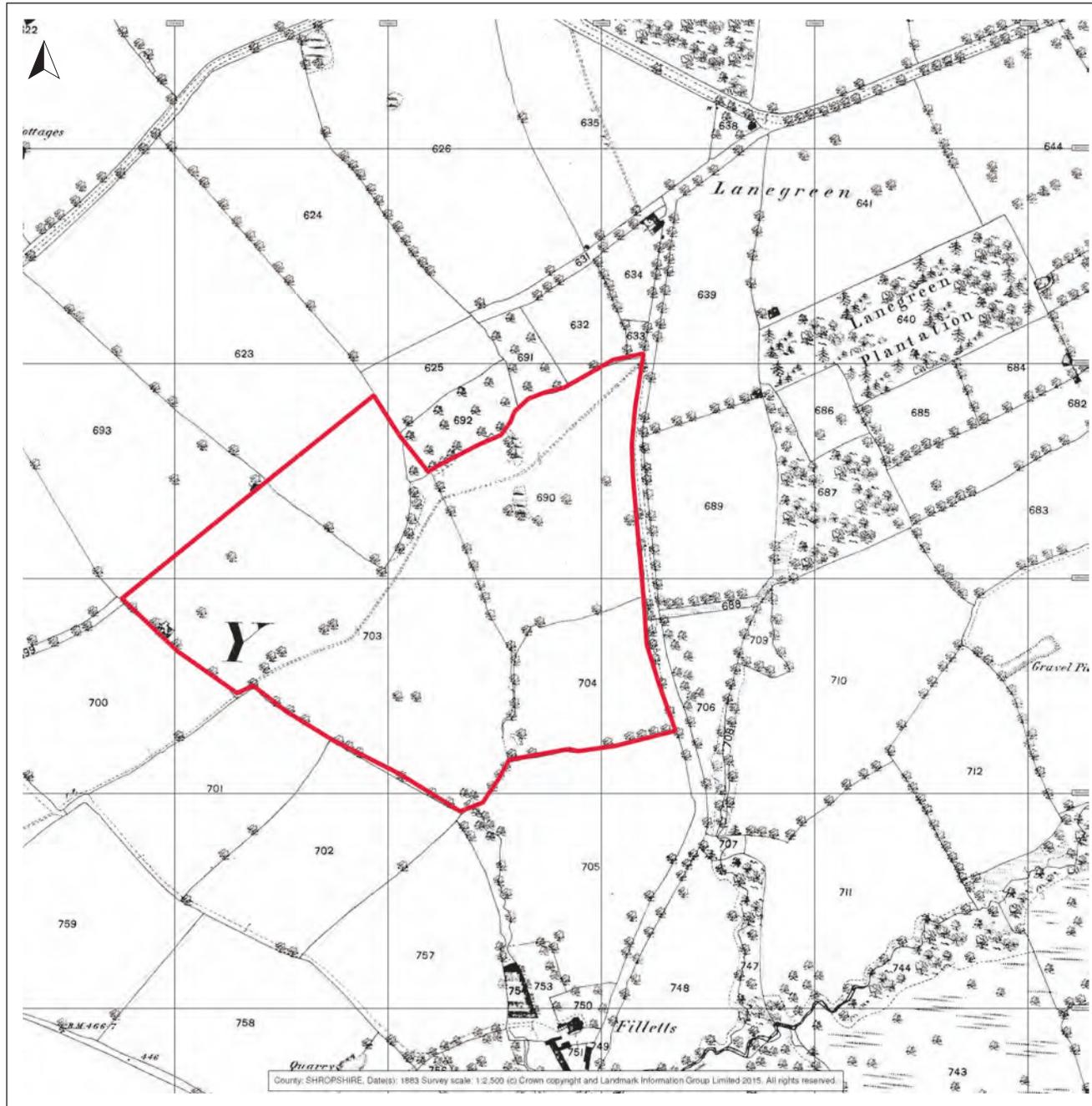


Figure 10.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth

1883 Ordnance
survey 1st Edition

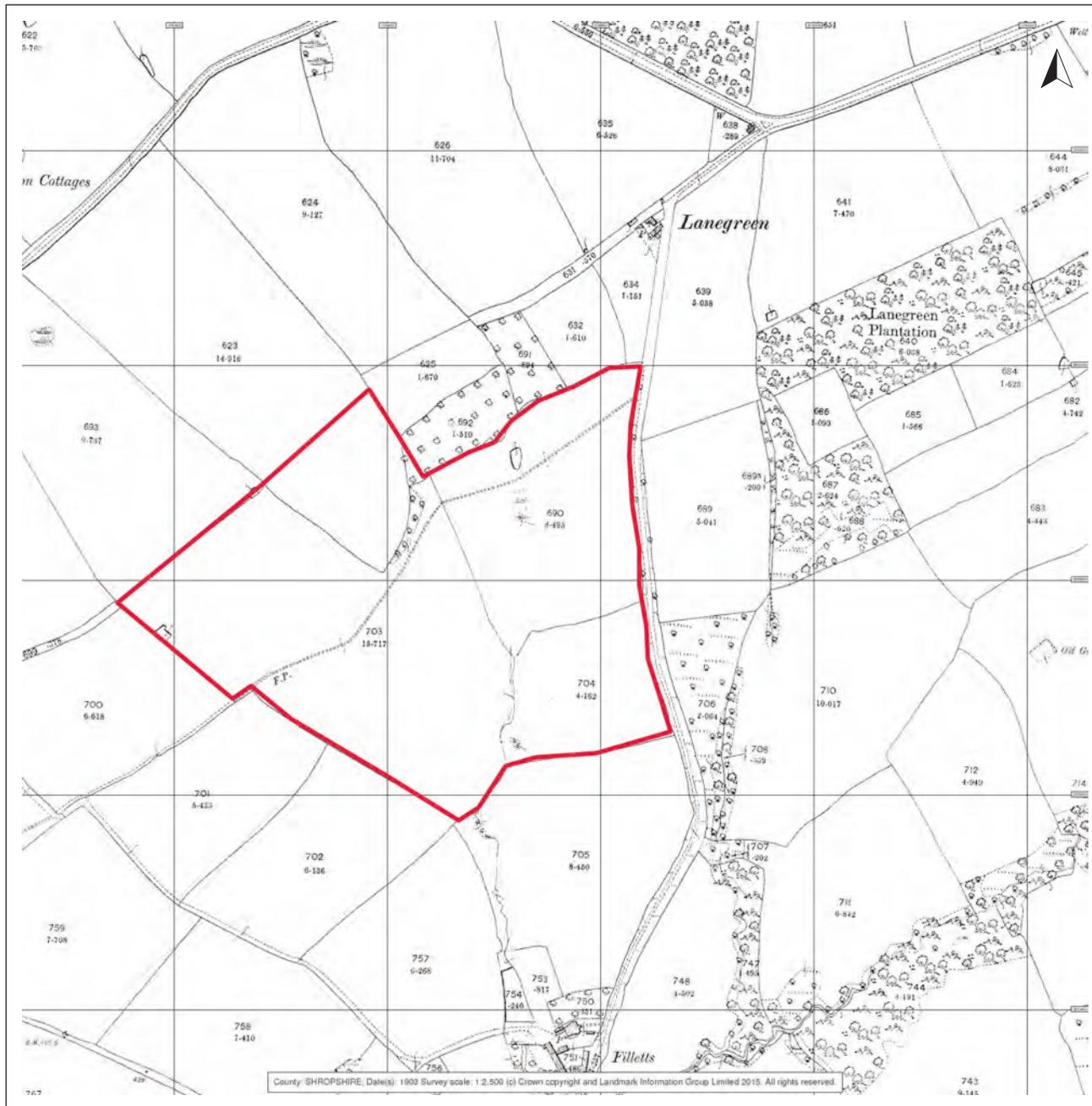


Figure 11.
Astley Farm,
Bridgnorth
1901 Ordnance
survey 2nd Edition



Plate 1: 1999 aerial photograph of the site showing dark lines or depressions which are similar to the field boundaries marked on the 1770 survey



Plate 2: Looking east with the north to south slope of the ground visible



Plate 3: Looking northeast towards the moated site with Beautybank Farm in the far distance



Plate 4: The undulations running north the south down the site



Plate 5: The eastern run off for water from the moated site looking north



Plate 6: The western run off for water from the spring that rises close to the tree on the left of the picture



Plate 7: The ponds to the immediate south of the site. The ponds were constructed during the 19th century, possibly as reservoirs



Plate 8: Handmade brick from the eastern runoff: could be the remains of drainage from the moated site



Plate 9: The ditch running along the north and northwest of the site



Plate 10: A fragment of worked stone found in the approximate location of the structure seen on earlier maps. The ground was too hard to make further investigations



Plate 11: Looking southwest across the site. In the mid-ground is a shallow depression that is the surviving remnant of the ponds first recorded by the Ordnance Survey



Plate 12: Looking south across the Lanegreen moated site in the foreground and the site further back



Plate 13: The track leading towards Astley Farm to the west

Archaeology
Wales

APPENDIX I:
Gazetteer Listed Buildings

Gazetteer Listed Buildings

SHER No	EH List No.	NGR	Grade	Name	Description
11431	1176507	SO 7933 8634	II	Beautybank	C17 with later wing on left-hand side. Timber framed and brick with tiled roof and brick stack on large breast. 2 storeys; casement windows. Two window front.

Archaeology
Wales

APPENDIX II:
Gazetteer of sites recorded on the
regional HER and on the NRHE

Monuments from Shropshire Historic Environment Record

Name	SHER No.	NRHE No.	Grid Ref	Type	Period	Description
Postulated DMV at Astley	01288	114382	SO 7810 8555	Deserted Settlement	Medieval 1066 to 1540	This site represents: a deserted settlement of medieval date. No signs of earthworks in the fields surrounding the house. In the orchard to the SE of the house some minor humps and bumps and little else. No evidence of desertion was seen in the fields surrounding Astley, which are mainly cultivated. A hollow in the paddock to the south-east of the farm may represent the site of a pond. In the orchard there are a few indefinite hollows, and a single scarp slope, probably an old garden feature or field boundary.
Moated site c200m SW of Lanegreen Farm	02822	114372	SO 7868 8601	Moat Moated Site	Medieval 1066 to 1540	This small rectangular moated site near Lanegreen Farm lies within a field of improved pasture and has been substantially modified by ploughing. The moat arms, which are between 6m and 9m wide, are now visible as shallow depressions, up to 0.5m deep, having been infilled in the last 20 years. The moat defines an island which measures apx 22m by 28m. On the NW side of the island there are the remains of an internal bank, 7.5m wide and standing up to 0.3m high. There is a shallow depression near the centre of the island, 7m across, which appears to be the result of later disturbance. Adjoining the moated site to the north is a shallow rectangular and waterlogged depression, measuring about 20m by 30m. This feature appears to be the infilled remains of a fishpond. Close to the SE corner of the moated site is another pond, which may also have served as a fishpond. The land surrounding it has been landscaped recently. In 1979 a small scale archaeological excavation was undertaken to examine the NW part of the island. The internal bank was found to be constructed of clay. Sherds of post medieval pottery and a fragment of a clay pipe stem were found in the layer overlying the bank.
Brick Works, Lanegreen Farm	07025		SO 7874 8647	Brickworks	Early 19 th century to Early 20 th Century 1800 to 1913	The site of a 19th to 20th century brick works with clay pits shown as water filled hollows

Name	SHER No.	NRHE No.	Grid Ref	Type	Period	Description
Brick Works, Childleys Farm	07026		SO 7957 8604	Brickworks	Early 19 th Century to Early 20 th Century 1800 to 1913	The site of 19th to 20th century brick works. Open space-fields. A field boundary divides the area of the former works in two
The Park at Coton Hall	7516		SO 774 861	Landscape Park	Mid 18 th century 1727 to 1760	In the mid-18th century, work had already been done to the surrounds of Coton Hall (PRN 12388). The ruinous chapel in the grounds was made more picturesque by the insertion of a gothick east window around 1765. The house was rebuilt around 1800, and the estate covered over 5,000 acres at this time. By 1827, a park stretched south-west from the Hall for over a half mile. The tree-lined sides of Coton Dingle ran up the centre of the park.
Lane from The Bowells to Perry House	08052		SO 7833 8483	Road	Medieval to Post Medieval 1066 to 1901	This site represents: a road of probable medieval to post medieval date.
Grantham's Mill and possible adjacent hopyard site, E of Bowhills	08053		SO 7810 8494	Mill Hop Garden	Medieval to Post Medieval 1066 to 1901	This site represents: a hop garden of probable post medieval date, a mill of medieval to post medieval date. Grantham's Mill is a medieval mill site in the manor of Astley in Alveley. It is the most likely site of the Domesday mill of Astley. It had vanished by the mid 18th century. Investigation of the site shows a headrace leading to the site of an overshot or breastshot wheel. Just downstream of this, the brook has been straightened; the old channel is clearly visible, creating an island.
Beautybank Farmhouse, Alverley	11431	521982	SO 7933 8634	House	17 th Century 1600 to 1699	C17 with later wing on left-hand side, which is protected by Grade II Listing. Timber framed and brick with tiled roof and brick stack on large breast. 2 storeys; casement windows. two window front
Trackway from Heronsgate to Fillets	21866		SO 7955 8489	Trackway	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Earthwork remains of a trackway of probable medieval date. Probable 'driftway' between various greens in this part of county.
Astley Farm	25846		SO 7808 8554	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Astley Farm, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. Large modern sheds on the site of the historic farmstead are either obscuring the historic buildings or may have destroyed them. Postulated DMV at Astley (PRN 01288). Possibly conversion of historic farm buildings, evidence unclear.

Name	SHER No.	NRHE No.	Grid Ref	Type	Period	Description
Filletts Farm	25847		SO 7877 8535	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Filletts Farm, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. Large modern sheds to the side of the historic farmstead suggest that the farmstead is still in use. Pigsties attached to farmhouse demolished.
Perry House	25848		SO 7879 8510	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Perry House, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. Large modern sheds to the side of the historic farmstead suggest that the farmstead is still in use. Piecemeal development to site. C20 Dutch barn to S
Chidleys Farm	25849		SO 7966 8596	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Chidleys Farm, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. Large modern sheds on the site of the historic farmstead are either obscuring the historic buildings or may have destroyed them. New farmhouse to N. Location of original farmhouse unclear, possibly an outfarm.
Lindridge Farm	25851		SO 7911 8665	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Lindridge Farm, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. No longer in agricultural use, remaining farm building converted to dwelling (Lindridge Cottage)
Lane Green Farm	25852		SO 7884 8612	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Lane Green Farm, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. Small farm historic farm building converted to dwelling. Small shed and Dutch barns to side.
Little Coton	25853		SO 7816 8674	Farmstead	Early 19 th Century 1800 onwards	Little Coton, a 19 th century farmstead first identified and classified by the Historic Farmsteads Characterisation Project, 2008 – 2010. No longer in agricultural use, farm buildings converted to dwellings. Separate hipped roofs.
Old quarry (gravel?), Astley Farm, Alveley	30090		SO 7803 8591	Sandstone Quarry	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901	A sandstone quarry first identified and classified by the Historic Mineral Workings Data Capture Project carried out by the Minerals Section of Shropshire County Council and its successor Shropshire Council. This was a desktop exercise largely utilising the digital version of the c.1900 OS large scale "County Series" mapping.
Old quarry, Filletts, Nr. Alveley	30091		SO 78563 85345	Sandstone Quarry	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901	A sandstone quarry first identified and classified by the Historic Mineral Workings Data Capture Project carried out by the Minerals Section of Shropshire County Council and its successor Shropshire Council. This was a desktop exercise

Name	SHER No.	NRHE No.	Grid Ref	Type	Period	Description
						largely utilising the digital version of the c.1900 OS large scale "County Series" mapping.

Monuments from National Record of the Historic Environment

Name	NRHE No.	SHER No	NGR	Type	Date	Description
	114382	1288	SO 7810 8555	Deserted Settlement Pond	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Astley - supposed deserted Mediaeval village, but no evidence seen during investigation. No signs of earthworks in the fields surrounding the house. In the orchard to the southeast of the house some minor humps and bumps and little else. A hollow in the paddock to the southeast of the farm may represent the site of a pond. In the orchard there are a few indefinite hollows, and a single scarp slope, - probably an old garden feature or field boundary.
Beauty Bank Farm	521982	11431	SO 793 864	Farmhouse Timber Frames House	Post Medieval 1600 to post 1699	2-storey 17th century building with a later wing added. Timber framed and brick building with a tiled roof and brick stack on large breast. The house has casement windows. The building is near square in plan with a front and rear division. Walls in small framing, 3 panels to height of house.
Green Lane Astley	114372	2822	SO 78699 86019	Fishpond Moat	Medieval to Late 20 th Century 1066 to 2000	Earthwork remains of moat and two fishponds. The moat defines an island 22 metres by 28 metres. The moat survives as shallow depressions. The fishpond to the north is 20 metres by 30 metres, and is shallow due to infill and 20 metres by 30 metres. The fishpond to the south east has been re-shaped in the late 20th century. The moat was fed by drainage from the higher ground to the northwest, and the water drainer away to the south through the length of the next field, in the direction of the farm called Fillets. Although the channel is still visible, the field has been ploughed and resown with grass, and the rig and furrow, and a feature visible on air photographs at SO 78738592, are no longer extant. The pond on the east side, referred to by Tipler, is clearly modern, and does not appear on OS 1:2500, 1959. The raised bank also noted by Tipler is a remnant of the former track from Lanegreen to Astley,

Archaeology Wales



Archaeology Wales Limited

Rhos Helyg, Cwm Belan, Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6QF

Tel: +44 (0) 1686 440371

Email: admin@arch-wales.co.uk

Company Directors: Mark Houlston MIFA & Jill Houlston
Company Registered No. 7440770 (England & Wales).
Registered office: Morgan Griffiths LLP, Cross Chambers,
9 High Street, Newtown, Powys, SY16 2NY