

*A Desk-based Heritage Assessment of Land at*  
***Mile End, Oswestry,***  
***Shropshire, 2014***

by  
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**A DESK-BASED HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF LAND AT  
MILE END, OSWESTRY, SHROPSHIRE, 2014**

by

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A report for the  
**BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE TEAM**  
**SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL**

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## SUMMARY

*There is currently a proposal to develop as a business park a site to the southeast of Oswestry, Shropshire. The proposed development site comprises agricultural land in the northeast angle of the A5 London to Holhead Road and the A483 Oswestry to Welshpool Road. The site was formerly occupied by a Second World War Prisoner of War camp. Because of the potential impact of the development on this and other heritage assets, a desk-based heritage assessment has been carried out of the proposed development. This assessment finds that the proposed development would have a direct physical impact on the remains of the PoW camp. Field evaluation is recommended in order to determine the extent and survival of any such remains. There is a low to moderate potential for features or deposits of the prehistoric to Roman periods to be present within the proposed development site. The proposed development is not considered likely to have an indirect impact on the setting of the neighbouring designated heritage assets, but will have a minor to negligible impact on the setting of a number of non-designated heritage assets of post-medieval date.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** The Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council, has been commissioned by the Business and Enterprise team, Shropshire Council, to produce a desk-based archaeological assessment of an area of land at Mile End, Oswestry, Shropshire (centred on NGR SJ 3120 2874). There is currently a proposal to develop this site as an industrial estate, the “Oswestry Innovation Park”.

**1.2** The site of the proposed Oswestry Innovation Park lies 2km southeast of the centre of Oswestry, on pasture fields in the northeast angle of the road junction between the A5 London to Holyhead road, the A483 Oswestry to Welshpool road, and the B4579 Shrewsbury Road.

**1.3** The proposed development site was formerly occupied by a Second World War Prisoner of War camp. A number of other designated and non-designated heritage assets of prehistoric through to post-medieval date lie in the vicinity of the site.

**1.4** Because of the potential archaeological significance of the proposed development site, the site owners, Shropshire Council, have commissioned the Archaeology Service to carry out an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for the scheme. This is intended to provide an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site, consider the likely impact of the proposed development on any heritage assets with archaeological interest, and present recommendations for any further investigation or mitigation.

**1.5** The scope of this desk-based assessment was agreed with the Historic Environment Officer, Shropshire Council. This assessment includes the proposed development site itself (PDS) and an area of archaeological assessment within a 500m radius around the site (the study area). An informal area of wider search for statutory heritage designations extended from the site for a distance of about 1km radius of the development site. (See Fig. 1)

## **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**2.1 National Planning Policy Framework** National policy for archaeology is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] paras. 126-141 (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012). Section 12 of the NPPF, entitled “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment” provides policy regarding the conservation and investigation of heritage assets.

**2.2** The advice given in paragraphs 128 and 129 of the NPPF states that:

128. 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.

129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

**2.3** English Heritage have also provided a commentary on the NPPF as it concerns the historic environment: "English Heritage Commentary on the National Planning Policy Framework, 27th March 2012"

## **2.4 Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy, March 2011**

**2.4.1 Core Strategy Development Plan Document** The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is the principal document of the Shropshire Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is a set of documents setting out policies relating to the use and development of land in Shropshire. The Core Strategy sets out the Council's vision, strategic objectives and the broad spatial strategy to guide future development and growth in Shropshire during the period to 2026.

**2.4.2 CS17 Environmental Networks** Section CS17 of the Core Strategy concerns the environment, including the historic environment. It states that:

"Development will identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire's environmental assets, to create a multifunctional network of natural and historic resources."

Measures to achieve this will include ensuring that all development:

- Protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural, built and historic environment, and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors;
- Does not have a significant adverse impact on Shropshire's environmental assets and does not create barriers or sever links between dependant sites;

(Shropshire Core Strategy 2006-26, CS17, p108-110)

**2.4.3 Shropshire Council's Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan** Shropshire Council's Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan sets out proposals for the use of land and policies to guide future development in Shropshire up to 2026. It is intended to sit alongside the Core Strategy, contributing to the Shropshire Local Development Framework. It covers the whole of the administrative area of Shropshire Council.

**2.5** The aim of this archaeological desk-based assessment is to provide information that will enable an informed and reasonable decision to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the area affected by the proposed development on the southern half of the Abbey Car Park.

**2.6** The objectives are:

- a) To locate any known archaeological features and deposits within the study

- area.
- b) To assess the likely survival, quality, condition and relative significance of any archaeological features, deposits and structures.
  - c) To assess the likely impact of the proposed development on the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study area (as defined in 1.3 above).
  - d) To identify and recommend options for the management of the archaeological resource, including any further archaeological provision where necessary.
  - e) To recommend a strategy for further archaeological field evaluation where the character and value of the resource is not sufficiently defined to permit a mitigation strategy or other response to be devised.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

**3.1** The methodology for this assessment is based on requirements agreed with the Historic Environment Officer of the Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council.

**3.2** This desk-based assessment aims to examine and assess all appropriate sources. These have included: archaeological databases, historic documents (including cartographic and pictorial documents), aerial photographs, geotechnical information, and secondary and statutory sources. The assessment includes an outline history of the development and land use of the study area, supported by copies of relevant historic maps and documents.

**3.3** The study area for this desk-based assessment comprises a 500m buffer centred on the proposed development site (Fig. 1). The size of the study area has been chosen to ensure that the documentary and cartographic sources provide sufficient information about the proposed development site and its setting to enable an assessment of the potential impacts on the heritage resource. All known heritage assets identified within and immediately adjacent to the boundary of this study area have been considered in this assessment. The potential impact of the development has been assessed on non-designated heritage assets within the study area of a 500m radius of the development site, and on designated heritage assets within the wider search area of a 1km radius of the development.

**3.4** The setting of the designated heritage assets within the wider, informal study area was assessed on the basis of the guidance provided by English Heritage (English Heritage, 2011: *The Settings of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance*). Intervisibility between the development site and the designated heritage assets was assessed using Shropshire Council's GIS digital mapping with Panorama contours and Get Mapping digital aerial photography, and checked during the site visit.

**3.5** A site visit was undertaken on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014 in order to identify any potential archaeological features not recorded by the documentary or cartographic sources, and to assess possible factors, such as existing or previous land use, and their effect on the survival or condition of the archaeological resource.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 4.1 Designated Heritage Assets

**4.1.1** No World Heritage Sites or sites included on the Tentative List of Future Nominations for World Heritage Sites (July 2014) are situated within the study area or its vicinity.

**Table 1: Designated Heritage Assets within 1km radius wider search area**

No	Name	Status	Ref No.	NGR (centre)	Distance from PDS
1	Wat's Dyke, Wat's Dyke: section 350m long, 540m east of Weston Farm	SAM	LE 1020562; HER 01001	SJ 3000 2815	950m W
2	Motte castle at Hisland	SAM	LE 1013497; HER 01125	SJ 3172 2748	1,005m SE

**4.1.2** There is one Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) that lies within the wider 1km radius of the study area, 990m to the southwest of the development site (Fig. 2, Site 1). This is a section of Wat's Dyke (National Heritage List Entry [LE] No. 1020562, "Wat's Dyke: section 350m long, 540m east of Weston Farm"). A second SAM lies just outside the wider search area at Hisland, 1km south of the development site. This monument is a motte and bailey castle (LE 1013497 "Motte castle at Hisland"); only the motte is scheduled, the extent of the bailey is uncertain (Fig. 2, Site 2). There are no Grade I or II\* Listed Buildings within the study area or the wider informal search area.

**Table 2: Designated Heritage Assets within 1km radius wider search area**

No	Name	Status	Ref No.	NGR (centre)	Distance from PDS
3	Lys House, Middleton Road, Grade II,	LB II	LE 1176493; HER 13065	SJ 3030 2935	757m NW
4	Milestone at NGR SJ 3154 2792, A 4083, ,	LB II	LE 1054264; HER 18740	SJ 3154 2792	554m SE
5	Middleton Farmhouse, Middleton	LB II	LE 1367358; HER 18754	SJ 3198 2870	460m E
6	Pool Farmhouse, Middleton,	LB II	LE 1177306; HER 18755	SJ 3193 2881	425m E
7	Barn approximately 25 metres north west of Pool Farmhouse, Middleton	LB II	LE 1054273; HER 18756	SJ 3190 2884	411m E

**4.1.3** There are a further 5 Grade II Listed Buildings (Fig. 2, Sites 3-7) within the extended search area around the development site (see sections 4.9.2 below). One of these, Lys House, Middleton Road (LE 1176493) lies 750m to the northwest of the development site in Oswestry's southeastern suburbs, another is a milestone (LE 1054264) on the old Shrewsbury Road 550m southeast of the development site, and the other three are farm houses, Middleton Farmhouse (LE 1367358) and Pool Farmhouse (LE 1177306) and a barn (LE 1054273) at Middleton 400m to the east of the development site.

**4.1.2** The site visit has confirmed that the majority of these assets are not intervisible with the PDA, due to the presence of intervening topography, recent development and mature vegetation.

## 4.2 Non-designated Heritage Assets (summary)

4.2.1 There is one recorded heritage asset within the development site; this is the site of a Prisoner of War camp (Shropshire Historic Environment [HER] No. 29128) used in both the World Wars (site 8).

**Table 3 Non-designated Heritage Assets within 0.5km radius study area**

No	Name	Ref No.	NGR (centre)	Distance from PDS
8	Possible Site of a Standing Stone, E of Gallowstree Bank	HER 00896	SJ 3038 2877	500m W
9	Cropmark of a sub rectangular enclosure, E of Oswestry Smithfield	HER 02286	SJ 3048 2877	337m W
10	Prehistoric and Roman Finds made in 1853 at Maes y Garreg Lllwyd	HER 02984	SJ 3040 2870	459m W
11	Rectangular enclosure c 460m NW of Cabin House Farm	HER 03974	SJ 3100 2947	475m N
12	Brick Field	HER 06655	SJ 3144 2863	1m SE
13	Pool Farm Cottage	HER 16774	SJ 3182 2898	170m NE
14	Top House Farm	HER 27055	SJ 3152 2927	279m NE
15	Cabin House Farm	HER 27056	SJ 3142 2925	207m N
16	Pool Farm	HER 27066	SJ 3191 2882	420m E
17	Middleton Farm	HER 27067	SJ 3195 2871	437m E
18	Red House	HER 27068	SJ 3175 2873	242m E
19	Mile House Farm	HER 27069	SJ 3098 2817	318m S
20	Rod Meadows	HER 27070	SJ 3047 2852	421m W
21	The site of a former Prisoner of War Camp (POW), Mile House, Oswestry	HER 29128	SJ 3106 2857	0m
22	Gravel Pits	HER 30651	SJ 3033 2881	500m W
23	White House Farm	HER 42338	SJ 3132 2910	70m N
24	Farmhouse at White House Farm	HER 42339	SJ 3135 2910	50m N
25	Threshing Barn, converted to Cartshed and Loose Boxes, with Granary over, at White House Farm	HER 42340	SJ 3132 2911	66m N
26	Cowhouse at White House Farm	HER 42341	SJ 3134 2912	69m N
27	Gig House? converted to Storage and Garage, with Granary over, at White House Farm	HER 42342	SJ 3135 2913	79m N

4.2.2 There are a further 17 non-designated heritage assets recorded on the Historic Environment Record within or immediately adjacent to the 500m study area (Figs. 2 & 3, Sites 9-25).

## 4.3 Previous archaeological work in the study area

4.3.1 There have been no recorded previous archaeological investigations on the development site itself. There have been a limited number of archaeological interventions within the study area.

4.3.2 In 1981 a field inspection (HER event ESA869 & ESA2544) was made by a Shropshire County Council archaeologist to the site of a standing stone (HER 00896) east of Gallowstree Bank and a cropmark enclosure (HER 02286). The site visit recorded a horse-shoe shaped depression in the area of the site of the standing stone, but recorded no visible features in the area of the cropmark. An annotated copy of the 1970 OS 1:2500 plan, which shows some surviving buildings from the PoW camp (HER 29128), notes that the camp site was levelled and reclaimed by 1981.



**4.3.3** In 2005 a desk-based assessment (ESA6037) of land to the west of the A5/A483 was carried out by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (Grant & Jones, 2005). This included land within the current study area immediately to the west of the proposed development site. This desk-based assessment noted a number of the known sites within the current proposed development site.

**4.3.4** In 2007 an archaeological evaluation (ESA6131), geophysical survey (ESA6132) and subsequent watching brief (ESA6133) was carried out on a development site just to the west of the study area on the site of the Oswestry Leisure Centre on Shrewsbury Road. The evaluation revealed the presence on the site of an Early Bronze Age burnt mound (HER 21414) radiocarbon dated to BC1940 - 1772 Cal. (Smith, 2007). The traditional view is that burnt mounds represent cooking sites, but many other uses have been suggested of which perhaps the most likely is bathing, or more precisely sauna or steam bathing.

#### **4.4 Geology and topography**

**4.4.1** The proposed development site lies between the 102m and 108m contours on a slight hill set in relatively flat land on the southeast side of Oswestry.

**4.4.2** The bedrock within the study area comprises Bridgnorth Sandstones of the Kinnerton Sandstone Formation. These are sedimentary rocks formed approximately 246 to 251 million years ago in the Triassic Period. These rocks were formed in a local environment dominated by hot deserts, characterised by dunes, loess and evaporates (BGS, 2014).

**4.4.3** The drift geology in the study area comprises Devensian glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel and till, formed in cold periods with Ice Age glaciers scouring the landscape and depositing moraines of till with outwash sand and gravel deposits from seasonal and post glacial meltwaters (BGS, 2014).

#### **4.5 Prehistoric (pre-43AD)**

**4.5.1** There are no known prehistoric period sites or find-spots on the proposed development site itself. The site of a standing stone (HER 00896; site 8) was marked on the 1837 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1" map east of Gallowstree Bank on the western edge of the study area. The stone is not shown on the later 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century OS maps, and it may have been removed during the gravel quarrying that took place in this area in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century (see section 4.8.3, below).

**4.5.2** A Middle Bronze Age side looped spearhead with a leaf-shaped blade is recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (LVPL107) as having been found by a metal detectorist outside the southern edge of the study area.

**4.5.3** Two cropmark enclosures marking the sites of farmsteads of probable Iron Age or Roman date lie within the study area. One (HER 02286; site 9) lies to the east of Oswestry Smithfield in the western part of the study area. In 1853 finds of a Roman republican (pre-conquest) coin of c. 45BC and a prehistoric flint flake (HER 02984; site 10) were made by a workman digging for gravel at the pits at Maes y Garreg

Lllwyd (HER 30651; site 22; see section 4.8.3 below), in the vicinity of the cropmark enclosure. The other cropmark enclosure (HER 03974; site 11) lies 460m northwest of Cabin House Farm.

#### **4.6 Roman (43AD – 410AD)**

**4.6.1** The only other Roman site or findspot from the study area comes from the vicinity of the republican coin found at Garreg Lllwyd. This other find is that of an incomplete copper alloy Colchester derivative brooch of Roman date (43-150AD) recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (HESH-CDEDE6) as having been found by a metal detectorist.

#### **4.7 Early medieval (5<sup>th</sup> century - 1066AD)**

**4.7.1** There are no recorded early medieval features within the study area. However, the early medieval boundary bank and ditch Wat's Dyke (HER 01001; site 1) runs through the western edge of the wider search area. Part of this survives as an earthwork feature, comprising a low bank, up to 0.8m high, and 5m wide at the base, with a ditch on the west side, about 3m wide and 0.9m deep, and this section of the Dyke is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (LE 1020562 Wat's Dyke: section 350m long, 540m east of Weston Farm). Wat's Dyke is a linear earthwork which stretches intermittently for approximately 65km from the River Morda at Maesbrook, near Oswestry, to Basingwerk on the Dee Estuary in Flintshire. The earthwork consists of a bank with a ditch on its west side, making full use where possible of the natural drainage and topography to present a barrier to the west. The function and even the dating of the Dyke is uncertain; it is usually held to be a boundary dyke, marking the frontier between the kingdom of Mercia and the Welsh lands to the west, and has generally been thought to date to the 8th century AD, though perhaps predating Offa's Dyke to its west. In 1997, a calibrated radiocarbon date centred on 446 AD was obtained from a small hearth immediately underlying the bank component of the Dyke (Hannaford, 1998) and in 2006 a series of OSL dates were obtained from the ditch fills and below the bank at Gobowen. The lowest sampled fill (though not the earliest fill of the ditch) produced an OSL date of between 682 AD 852 AD (Malim & Hayes, 2008, p162).

**4.7.2** The development site and most of the study area lie in the township of Middleton in Oswestry Parish. The southern edge of the study area lies in Aston, Hisland and Wootton Township, and the southwestern edge in the Liberties of Oswestry, both in Oswestry Parish. It is possible that Middleton (middle or central settlement or estate), Aston (east settlement or estate), and Weston, which lies 1.5km southwest of the development site, formed three parts within a larger land-holding in the Saxon period, as Aston and Weston are both mentioned in Domesday book. By the end of the Saxon period they were held by different subtenants, Aston by Wulfric and Weston by Siward (Thorn & Thorn, 1986, 4,3,38 & 4,6,6).

#### **4.8 Medieval (1066 – 1540)**

**4.8.1** Although Middleton itself is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, it may have formed part of the manor of Maesbury, a large royal manor of seven hides with 5 outliers that in the late Saxon period was held by King Edward the Confessor. At the time of the Domesday Survey, Maesbury was held by Reginald the Sheriff from Roger of Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury. Oswestry lay within this manor, and

it's castle ("Luvre") built by Reginald is one of the few castles mentioned in the Shropshire part of the Domesday Survey (Thorn & Thorn, 1986, 4,1,11 and notes). Aston, which in 1086 formed part of the estates held by Robert Butler from Roger of Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury. Before the Norman Conquest this manor had been held by Wulfric. The manor was 2 hides in extent with land for 4 ploughs, and was valued for tax at 10s. At the time of the Domesday Survey there were 12 Welshmen in the manor. The motte and bailey castle at Hisland (HER 01125; site 2) was probably built in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, shortly after the compilation of the Domesday Survey. (Thorn & Thorn, 1986, 4,6,6 and notes).

**4.8.2** Oswestry soon superseded Maesbury in importance and became the caput of the Barony of Oswestry. After the rebellions of 1100-2, Alan FitzFlaad was granted Oswestry and the Barony was held by his descendants, the FitzAlans, throughout the medieval period (although it was seized by Maredudd ap Bleddyn in 1110-32 before being recovered by William FitzAlan in 1155). (Thorn & Thorn, 1986, 4,3, notes). Middleton is first recorded in 1272 (Gelling, 1990, p205); in the 13<sup>th</sup> century the settlement's bond tenants had to supply eight men a day throughout the year to work on Oswestry's demesne lands and each tenant with a plough was also required to undertake four days' ploughing during the year (Baugh, 1989, p38). It is likely that the medieval settlement occupied the eastern and northeastern part of the study area, the same area occupied by the present farmsteads. The development site itself is likely to have occupied one of the settlement's common fields.

**4.8.3** A silver farthing (HESH-BC6D51) of Edward I or Edward II struck in 1301-1314, and a medieval copper alloy cast open-topped sewing ring (CPAT-3E12B5) of probable 15<sup>th</sup> century date are recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme as having been found by metal detectorists in the western part of the study area.

## **4.9 Post-medieval (1540 – 1900)**

**4.8.1** The Shropshire Hearth Tax Roll of 1672 records 13 householders paying tax in Middleton, (SAS, 1949). The Lordship of Oswestry was divided into three parts (the Liberties of Oswestry, the Manor of Dupartes, and the Trayan). The township of Middleton appears originally to have belonged to the manor of but by the early post-medieval period it seems to have been considered a detached part of the Trayan (Slack, 1951), yet the tenants were paying rents and herriot to the lord of the manor of Whittington (which lay between Dupartes and Trayan). By the 18<sup>th</sup> century Middleton formed part of the estates of the Lloyds of Aston Hall. An 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century estate survey book lists Middleton's tenants and their land holdings, and although there is no accompanying survey plan a comparison with the field-names on the 1834 tithe map shows that these land holdings tended to be scattered across the township.

**4.9.2** The farmstead at Pool Farm (HER 27066; site 16) was in existence by the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Pool Farmhouse (HER 18755; site 6) is a Grade II Listed brick farmhouse dated to 1752 (LE 1177306) and an 18<sup>th</sup> century brick barn (HER 18756; site 7) is also Grade II Listed (LE 1054273). Pool Farm Cottage (HER 16774; site 13) is a timber framed cottage of probable late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century date. The farmstead at Middleton Farm (HER 27067; site 17) also was in existence by the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the farmhouse (HER 18754; site 5) is also a Grade II Listed brick building

(LE1367358). White House Farm (HER 42338; site 23) can be dated to the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the basis of the historic mapping and its buildings (HER 42339, 42340, 42341, & 42342; sites 24-27), likewise Top House Farm (HER 27055; site 14), Cabin House Farm (HER 27056; site 15), and Red House (HER 27068; site 18). Mile House Farm (HER 27069; site 19), on the old Shrewsbury Road in the southwest part of the study area has a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse; it may possibly be the “Barthing(ren)” shown on Rocque’s plan of 1752. Rod Meadows (HER 27070; site 20) is a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead and is first recorded on the Tithe map in 1838 when it was owned by Richard Mansell and occupied by Richard Poole (Grant & Jones, 2005, p10).

**4.9.3** A brickfield (HER 06655; site 12) of 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century date abuts the eastern corner of the development site, and gravel pits (HER 30651; site 22) are recorded on the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century Tithe and OS maps on the western edge of the study area.

#### **4.10 Modern (20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries)**

**4.10.1** A Prisoner of War (PoW) camp was established near Oswestry during the First World War. The camp housed a total of around 6,000 men, including 600 officers. In 1919, Admiral von Reuter and other Imperial German Navy personnel were bought here following the scuttling of the German fleet at Scapa Flow. The last prisoner was repatriated in November 1919. (Shropshire History: Shropshire Prisoner of War Camps). This camp is described by various sources as being located at Mile End or at Park Hall (Shropshire History: Shropshire Prisoner of War Camps, <http://shropshirehistory.com/military/prisoner.htm> ; Oswestry, Shropshire: A PoW Camp <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01qmmr>). This may be just a confusion of names; Park Hall is just 1.8km to the north of the development site at Mile End, and there was a large army camp and a military hospital at Park Hall during WWI. If the PoW camp was indeed on the development site at Mile End, it may have been dismantled following WWI, as the buildings do not appear on the 1927 edition OS map (although it is also possible that this portion of the map was not revised from the 1902 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map).

**4.10.2** However, the development site was used during the Second World War as a Prisoner of War camp (HER 29128; site 21), initially as a transit camp holding up to 2,000 prisoners before they were sent to North America, subsequently as a Base Camp. There were mass breakouts from this camp, which was used until 1948. (Thomas, 2003, p19).

**4.10.3** The northwestern part of the camp was briefly occupied by squatters following its abandonment at the end of the war (Fairclough, P 2009, p11) and the southwestern corner was used for married quarters for servicemen stationed at Park Hall Barracks. The married quarters were in pre-fabricated concrete huts, whereas the squatters were in wooden huts in the former PoW section of the camp (SA 7577/11/5/1-3). These parts of the camp lie mostly outside the proposed development area, on the west side of the present A5 road. The unused buildings were allowed to decay by the War Department, and some were dismantled by civilians for their materials. The camp buildings appear to have been demolished piecemeal and the site was finally cleared by the early 1980s. The land reverted to

use as agricultural pasture land, except for the southwest corner of the former camp, which in the mid 1980s was crossed by the new A5 road and was the location for a garage and service area. Aerial photography since the 1980s shows that the foundations, floors, and roadways of the former PoW camp periodically show as parch-marks in the grass in dry summers.

## **5 IMPACT ON THE HERITAGE**

### **5.1 Direct impact**

**5.1.1 Significance of recorded archaeological features** This desk-based assessment has identified one archaeological site within the area of the proposed development site. This feature comprises the below-ground remains of a 20<sup>th</sup> century prisoner of war camp (site 21), used in both World Wars. The proposed development of the site is likely to have a severe adverse physical impact on this archaeological feature.

**5.1.2 Potential for archaeological remains** There is evidence for prehistoric and Romano-British activity within the study area in the form of findspots of prehistoric and Roman artefacts (site 10), the site of a possible Bronze Age standing stone (site 8), and the cropmarks of two possible Iron Age or Romano-British enclosures (sites 9 & 11). It is considered therefore that there is a low to moderate potential for archaeological features or deposits of these periods to be present within the proposed development site itself. The development site formed part of the medieval, post-medieval and modern agricultural landscape, and the potential for archaeological remains of these later periods is also considered to be low. Although the 20<sup>th</sup> century prisoner of war camp was cleared by the 1980s, aerial photography has shown that the potential for below ground remains of this complex are high.

**5.1.3 Survival of archaeological remains** The proposed development site was in agricultural use in the medieval and post-medieval periods and this will have truncated any earlier features on the site. In addition, the construction of the 20<sup>th</sup> century prisoner of war camp is likely to have further impacted on any such remains. On the other hand, recent aerial photography has shown that below-ground features associated with the camp itself survive.

**5.1.4 Potential impact of the proposed development** The current proposal is for the site to be developed as an industrial estate. The impact of the development on any below-ground archaeological remains by groundworks (such as the excavations required for foundation trenches, roadways, and services) would be high. The impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource is considered to be high.

### **5.2 Indirect impact**

**5.2.1** The indirect physical and non-physical (visual) impacts of the proposed development on the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study areas have been assessed as required under paragraph 128 of the NPPF based upon the standards and guidance issued by English Heritage (English Heritage 2011a & 2011b). An assessment has been made of the importance of the setting for each designated and non-designated heritage asset within the defined study areas, ranked from very high, through high, medium, low, and none/negligible. The levels of impact were assessed and the significance of the effect was determined from the importance of the resource and the magnitude of the impact upon it.

**5.2.2 Setting.** PPS5 defines the setting of a heritage asset as “the surroundings in which (the asset) is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative

contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.” (English Heritage, 2011, p3.) This definition remains unchanged for the current National Planning Policy Framework (*English Heritage Commentary on the National Planning Policy Framework*, March 2012)

**5.2.3 Significance** The Designated Heritage Assets (Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings) in the study area and wider search area are considered to be of national importance. The non-designated heritage assets in the study area are considered to be of local importance.

**5.2.4 Heritage assets and their settings.** The proposed development site does not form part of the setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Wat’s Dyke (LE 1020562) and the motte at Hisland (LE 1013497) and their setting will not be affected by the proposed development. Likewise, proposed development site does not form part of the setting of the Grade II Listed Lys House (LE 1176493), the Milestone (LE 1054264). The Grade II Listed Buildings at Middleton, which comprise Middleton Farmhouse (LE 1367358) and Pool Farmhouse (LE 1177306) and barn (LE 1054273), are set in an agricultural landscape of relatively flat fields with hedgerows and small stands of mature trees. The proposed development site lies on the edge of this landscape and is screened from these assets by the landform, existing agricultural buildings, and mature vegetation.

**5.2.5** There will be some intervisibility between Pool Farmhouse (LE 1177306) and the proposed development site. The issues related to the setting of this heritage asset has been identified as, though not strictly limited to, the following:

- Visual impact – views from and towards the heritage asset

The overall indirect impact of the development on the heritage asset has been assessed using the methodology detailed in: “The Settings of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance” English Heritage 2011, and “Seeing the History in the View” English Heritage 2011, and is set out in table 5 below.

**Table 5: Visual impact – views across, from, and towards the heritage assets**

Heritage Assets	Importance of asset	Element	Value of view	Magnitude of impact	Significance of effect
Pool Farmhouse, Middleton, Grade II, LE 1177306	High	View west from Pool Farm towards the development site	Low	Low adverse	Negligible
Pool Farm Cottage, HER 16774	Low	Views west from and east to Pool Farm Cottage	Low	Low adverse	Negligible
White House Farm, HER 42338 (inc. HER 42339 Farmhouse & HER 42340 Threshing Barn)	Low	Views south from and north to White House Farm.	Low	Medium adverse	Minor
Red House, HER 27068	Low	Views west from and east to Red House	Low	Medium adverse	Minor

**5.2.6** The proposed development site may be visible from the Grade II Listed Pool Farmhouse, Middleton (LE 1177306) when looking west across the heritage asset.

However, the development will be partially screened from these by the existing tree cover and hedgerows. It is considered that this view is of low value, and that the proposed development will have a low adverse impact on this view element of the setting of the Listed Buildings. The overall significance of the effect of the proposed development on this view is expected to be negligible.

**5.2.7** The proposed development site may be visible from the non-designated heritage asset Pool Farm Cottage (HER 16774) when looking west from the heritage asset. However, the development will be partially screened from these by the existing tree cover and hedgerows. It is considered that this view is of low value, and that the proposed development will have a low adverse impact on this view element of the setting of the heritage asset. The overall significance of the effect of the proposed development on this view is expected to be negligible.

**5.2.8** The proposed development site will be visible in views south from and north to the non-designated heritage asset White House Farm (HER 42338) including Whitehouse Farmhouse, (HER 42339) and the Threshing Barn (HER 42340). It is considered that these views are of low value, and that the proposed development will have a medium adverse impact on this view element of the setting of the heritage asset. The overall significance of the effect of the proposed development on this view is expected to be minor. Mitigation measures such as screening in the form of tree planting may reduce the impact on the setting of the heritage asset.

**5.2.9** The proposed development site will be visible in views west from and east to the non-designated heritage asset Red House (HER 27068). It is considered that these views are of low value, and that the proposed development will have a medium adverse impact on this view element of the setting of the heritage asset. The overall significance of the effect of the proposed development on this view is expected to be minor. Mitigation measures such as screening in the form of tree planting may reduce the impact on the setting of the heritage asset.

**Table 6: Historic land use of the development site**

<b>Heritage Assets</b>	<b>Importance of asset</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Magnitude of impact</b>	<b>Significance of effect</b>
Red House, HER 27068	Low	Change to the historic land-use of the proposed development site	Medium	Low adverse	Minor
White House Farm, HER 42338	Low				Minor

**5.2.10** (i) The proposed development site is on land currently used for agriculture, and has been used as such since the medieval period at least, and probably since the late prehistoric period. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the proposed development site was used for a period as a prisoner of war camp, but reverted to farmland in the last quarter of that century. It is considered that the proposed development will have a low adverse impact on the historic land-use setting of the non-designated heritage assets of Red House (HER 27068) and White House Farm (HER 42338). The significance of effect is expected to be minor.



### **5.3 Recommended mitigation including further archaeological provision**

**5.3.1** The proposed development is for a business park, whose construction is likely to have a direct adverse impact on the below-ground remains of a 20<sup>th</sup> century Prisoner of War camp (HER 29128). This heritage asset is considered to be of local significance. There is a low to moderate potential for the existence of archaeological remains of prehistoric or Roman date within the development site. The proposed development would likewise have an adverse impact on any such remains.

**5.3.2** It is recommended therefore that there should be further field evaluation of the proposed development site. The aim of this field evaluation would be to locate and assess the extent, survival and significance of any archaeological remains within the proposed development site. This in turn would enable an informed planning decision to be made regarding the archaeological implications of the proposed development and any appropriate archaeological action or mitigation.

**5.3.3** Such a field evaluation might comprise geophysical survey followed by trial excavation. The scope and composition of the field evaluation should be agreed with the Principal Archaeologist, Shropshire Council.

**5.3.4** Mitigation measures such as screening in the form of tree planting may reduce the impact that the proposed development may have on the setting of the non-designated heritage assets White House Farm (HER 42338) [including Whitehouse Farmhouse, (HER 42339) and the Threshing Barn (HER 42340)] and Red House (HER 27068).

## **6 REFERENCES AND SOURCES CONSULTED**

### **6.1 Sources**

**6.1.1** The repositories and sources consulted for the desk-based assessment included the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and Shropshire Archives.

### **6.1.2 Shropshire Historic Environment Record**

#### **Aerial Photographic Record**

Oblique Photographs (colour & black and white prints):

SJ3028/A-B; (HER 00896, 02286, & 02984)

SJ3028/C; (HER 02286)

SJ3029/A;

SJ3128; (HER 29128)

SJ3129/A-C; (HER 02435)

Vertical Photographs - Cartographic Services (Southampton) Ltd, County of Shropshire  
14th August 1983, 1:10,000, frames 5853-5 and 5878-80 (black and white prints)

HER computer files for Primary Record Numbers (PRNs):

#### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

HER 01001 Wat's Dyke: section 350m long, 540m east of Weston Farm, LE 1020562

HER 01125 Motte castle at Hisland, LE 1013497

#### **Listed buildings**

HER 13065 Lys House, Middleton Road, Grade II, LE 1176493

HER 18740 Milestone at NGR SJ 3154 2792, A 4083, Grade II, LE 1054264

HER 18754 Middleton Farmhouse, Middleton, Grade II, LE 1367358

HER 18755 Pool Farmhouse, Middleton, Grade II, LE 1177306

HER 18756 Barn approximately 25 metres north west of Pool Farmhouse, Middleton,  
Grade II, LE 1054273

#### **Non-designated sites in the study area**

HER 00896 Possible Site of a Standing Stone, E of Gallowstree Bank

HER 02286 Cropmark of a sub rectangular enclosure, E of Oswestry Smithfield

HER 02984 Prehistoric and Roman Finds made in 1853 at Maes y Garreg Lllwyd

HER 03974 Rectangular enclosure c 460m NW of Cabin House Farm

HER 06655 Brick Field

HER 16774 Pool Farm Cottage

HER 27055 Top House

HER 27056 Cabin House

HER 27066 Pool Farm

HER 27067 Middleton Farm

HER 27068 Red House

HER 27069 Mile House Farm

HER 27070 Rod Meadows

HER 29128 The site of a former Prisoner of War Camp (POW), Mile House, Oswestry

HER 30651 Gravel Pits

HER 42338 White House Farm

HER 42339 Farmhouse at White House Farm

HER 42340 Threshing Barn, converted to Cartshed and Loose Boxes, with Granary  
over, at White House Farm

HER 42341 Cowhouse at White House Farm

HER 42342 Gig House? converted to Storage and Garage, with Granary over, at  
White House Farm

**HER files for events (ESAs) in the study area:**

ESA869 1981 field observation by Shropshire County Council  
ESA2544 1981 field observation by Shropshire County Council  
ESA6037 2005 DBA of potential development sites east of Oswestry by CPAT  
ESA6131 2007 Archaeological Evaluation at the Active Lifestyle Centre, Oswestry by CAP  
ESA6132 2007 Geophysical Survey at the Active Lifestyle Centre, Oswestry by CAP  
ESA6133 2007 Watching Brief at the Active Lifestyle Centre, Oswestry by CAP

**6.1.3 Shropshire Archives**

Among the various sources consulted at Shropshire Archives, the following proved the most productive sources of information for the particular requirements of this assessment of the study area:

Documents:

MI242/1 Survey of farms in the townships of Wootton and Middleton, Parish of Oswestry  
7577/11/5/1-3 Letters and drawing regarding the former Mile End Camp, Oswestry

Cartographic sources:

Ordnance Survey 1874, 1901 & 1927 1:2500 (25") Shropshire Sheet Nos. XIX.2, XIX.3, XIX.5, & XIX.6  
Ordnance Survey 1954, 1:10,560 (6" to 1mile) Sheet No. SJ 32 NW  
Field-name maps by H D G Foxall from the Tithe Apportionment and maps

## 6.2 Other sources and bibliography

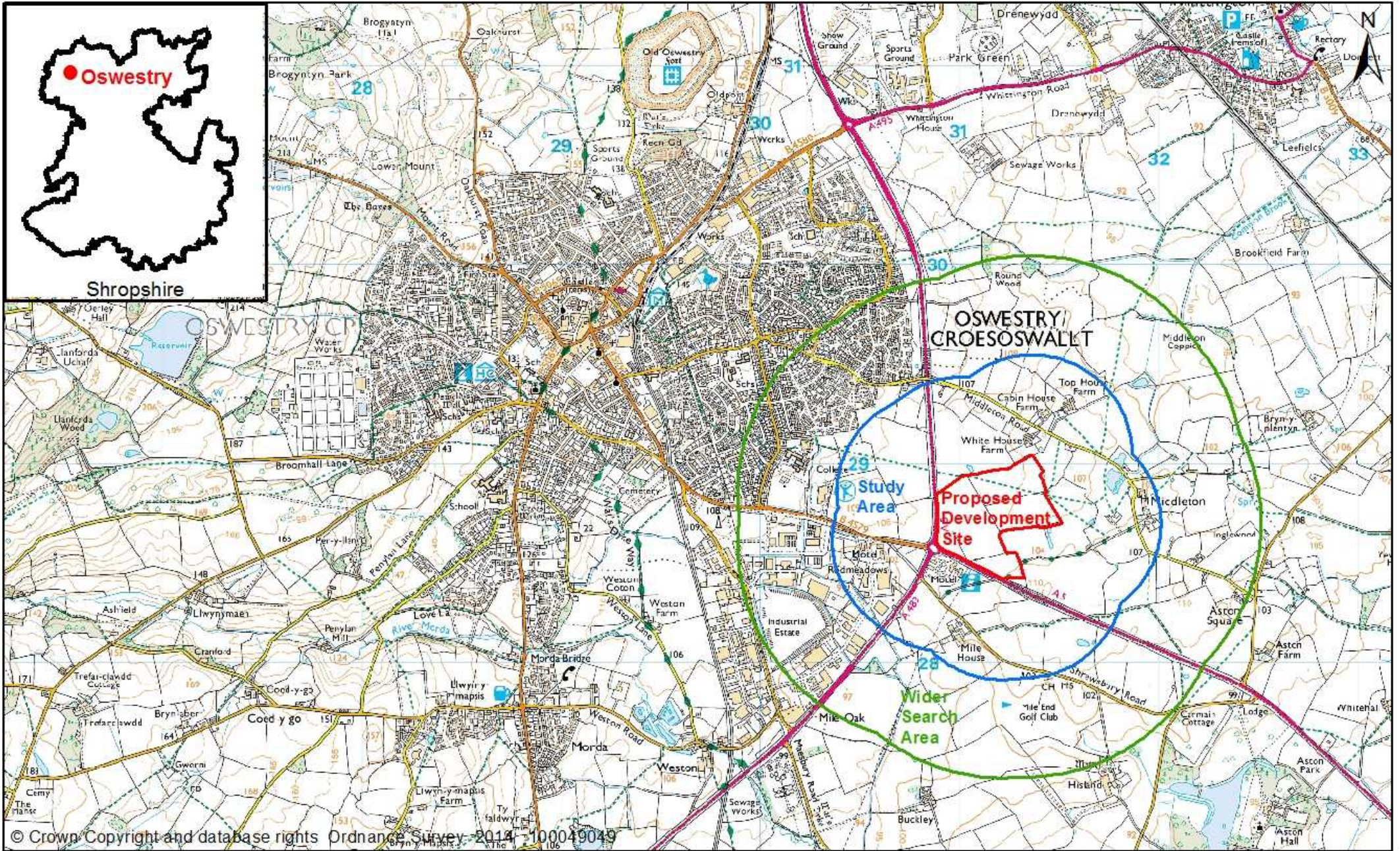
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- British Geological Survey** 2010: Geology of Britain Viewer. Online resource at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>
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- English Heritage**, 2011b: *Seeing the History in the View*
- English Heritage**, 2012: *Commentary on the National Planning Policy Framework*
- Fairclough, P**, 2009: *Homes Fit For Heroes?* Wellingtonia: Issue 4, Summer 2009, p11, <http://wellingtonhistorygroup.files.wordpress.com/2009/09/wellingtonia-issue-4.pdf>
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- Malim, T, & Hayes, L**, 2008: *The Date and Nature of Wat's Dyke: A reassessment in the light of recent investigations at Gobowen, Shropshire*, *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 15, 2008, pp147-179
- Shropshire History: Shropshire Prisoner of War Camps**, <http://shropshirehistory.com/military/prisoner.htm>
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- Thomas, R J C**, 2003: *Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948)*, English Heritage, Twentieth Century Military Recording Project
- Thorn, F and Thorn, C (eds)**, 1986: *Domesday Book, Shropshire*, Phillimore, Chichester

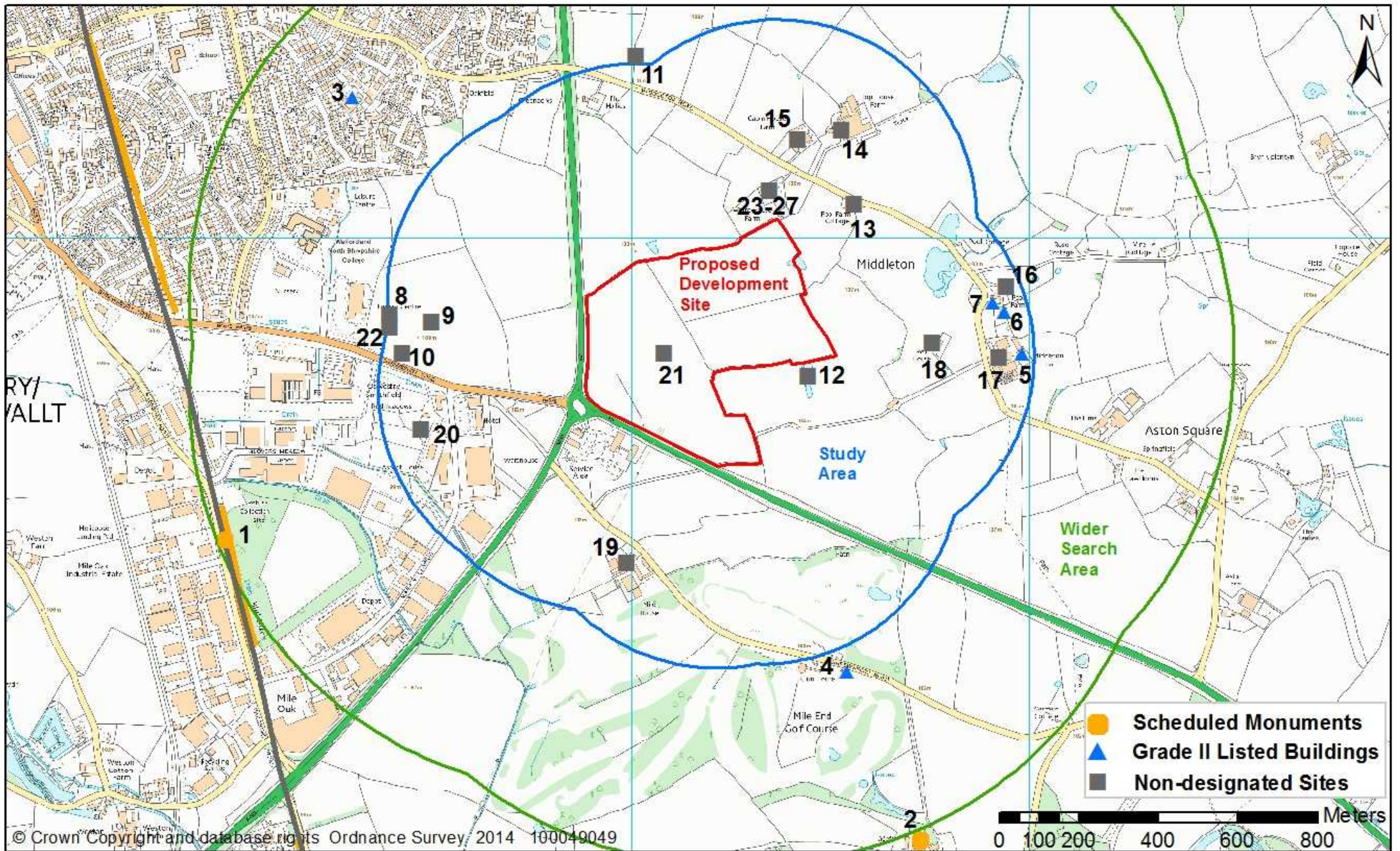
### Cartographic sources

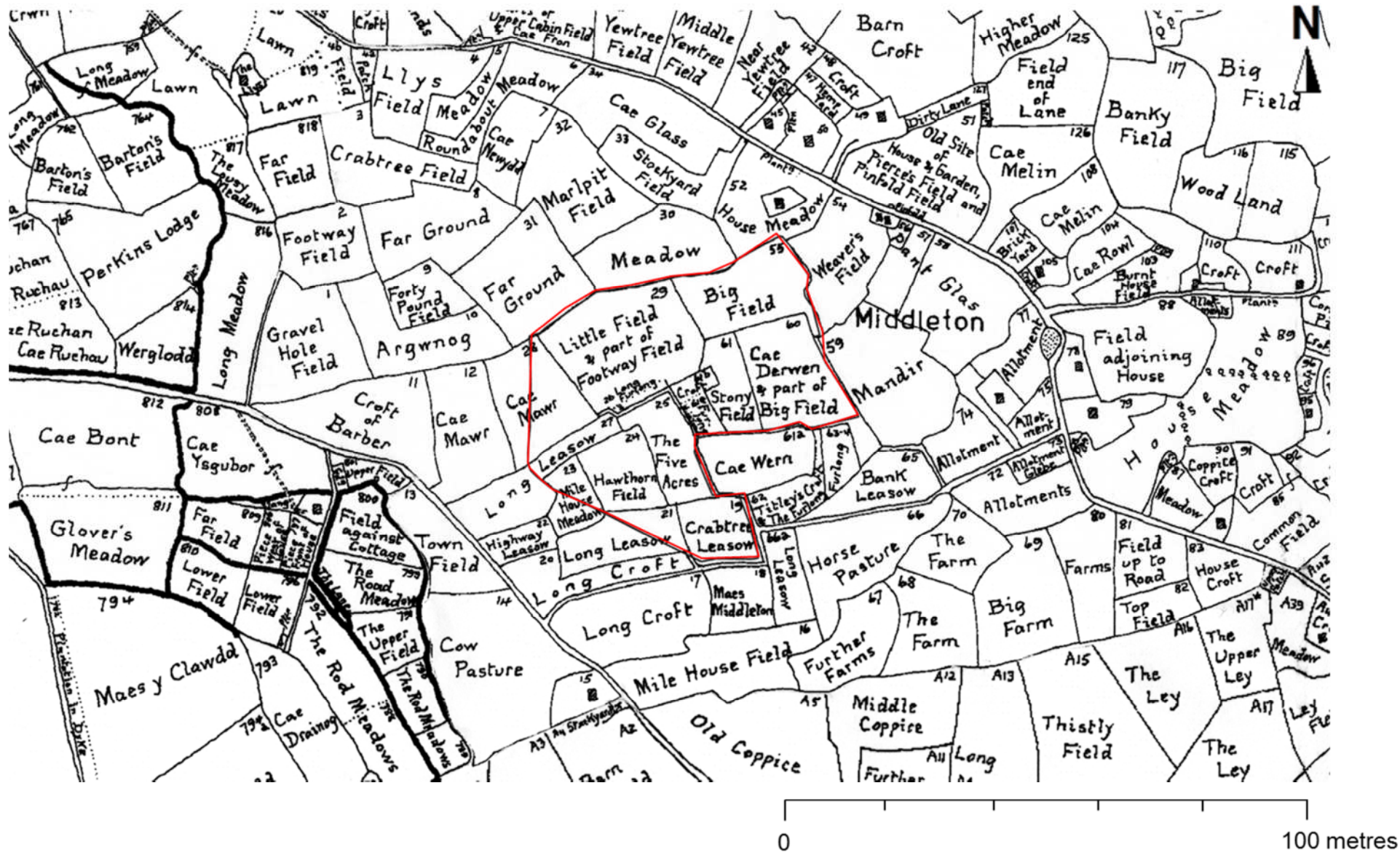
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- 1808 **Baugh, R**, 1808: *Map of Shropshire*, Llanymynech
- 1827 **Greenwood, C**, 1827: *Map of the County of Salop*
- 1834 Tithe Apportionment map for the Middleton Township, Oswestry Parish 1834
- 1834 **Foxall, H D G**, c.1980: Fieldname map based on Tithe Apportionment and Map for Middleton Township, Oswestry Parish 1834
- 1837 **OS** 1837 First Edition 1 inch Map Sheet 74 - Llangollen
- 1838 Tithe map of the Liberties of Oswestry in the Parish of Oswestry in the County of Salop (SA Ref: 7577/3/37)
- 1838 **Foxall, H D G**, c.1980: Fieldname map based on Tithe Apportionment and Map for The Liberties of Oswestry, Oswestry Parish 1834
- 1874 **OS** 1874 25" Shropshire Sheets XIX.2, 3, 6 & 7
- 1888 **OS** 1888 6" Shropshire Sheet XIX NW & NE
- 1901 **OS** 1902 25" Shropshire Sheets XIX.2, 3, 6 & 7
- 1927 **OS** 1927 25" Shropshire Sheets XIX.2, 3, 6 & 7
- 1954 **OS** 1954 1:10,560 (6" to 1mile) Sheet No. SJ 32 NW
- 1969 **OS** 1969 1:2,500 Plan SJ3028 & SJ 3128
- 1999 **UK Perspectives**, 1999 (digital aerial photography)
- 2010 **GetMapping**, 2010 (digital aerial photography)

### ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BGS</b>	British Geological Survey
<b>CAP</b>	Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd
<b>CPAT</b>	Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
<b>EPNS</b>	English Place-Name Society
<b>HER</b>	Historic Environment Record, Shropshire Council
<b>LE</b>	Nation Heritage List Entry
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>RCHME</b>	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
<b>SA</b>	Shropshire Archives, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury
<b>SAS</b>	Shropshire Archaeological Society
<b>SCAS</b>	Shropshire Council Archaeology Service
<b>SCCAS</b>	Shropshire County Council Archaeology Service
<b>TSAS</b>	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society
<b> TSAHS</b>	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society
<b>VCHS</b>	Victoria History of the County of Shropshire

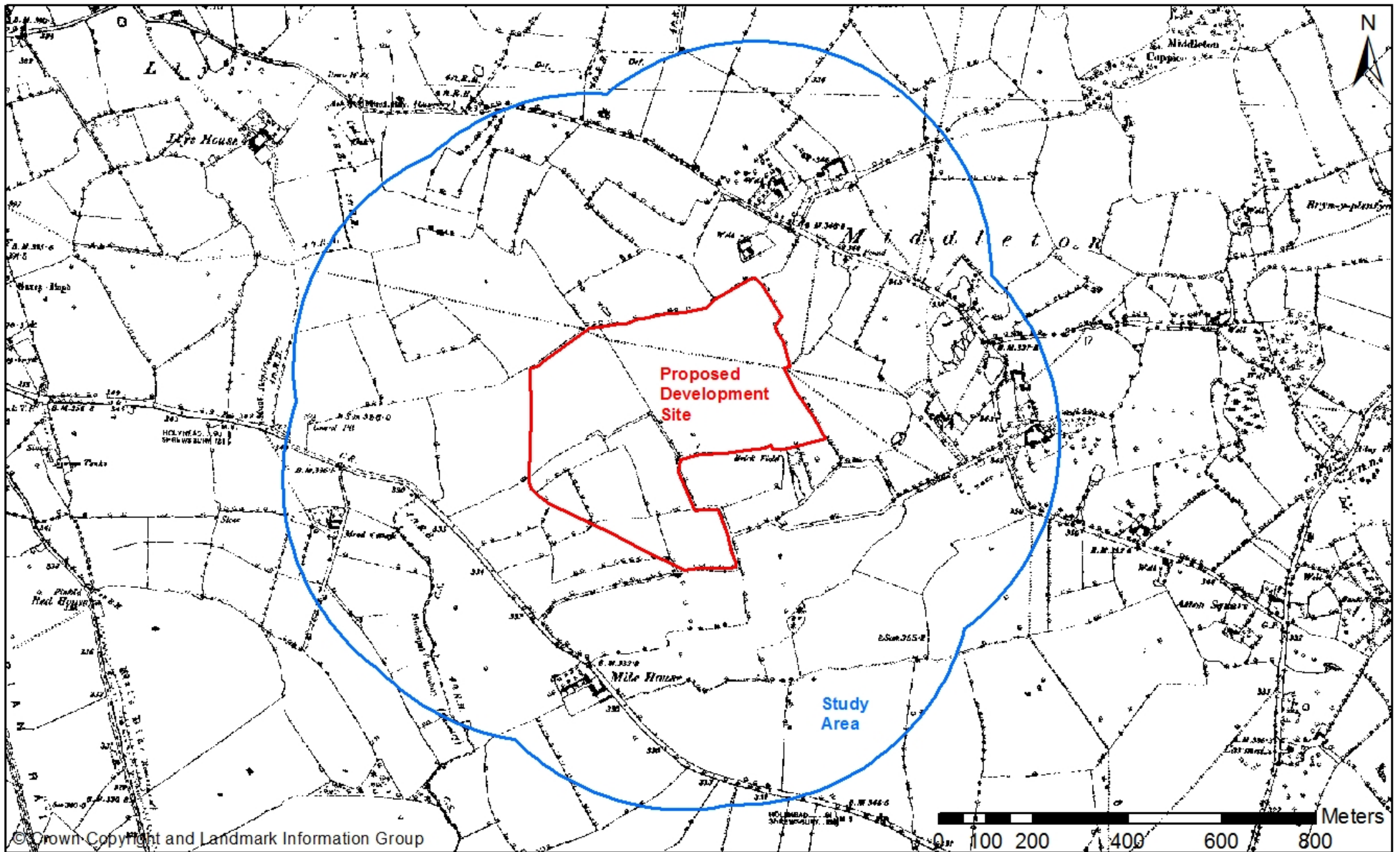






MILE END, OSWESTRY 2014

Figure 3: Extract from the Foxall field-name map for Middleton Township, Oswestry Parish, showing the proposed development site (outlined in red); 1:10,560 scale (6 inches:1 mile)



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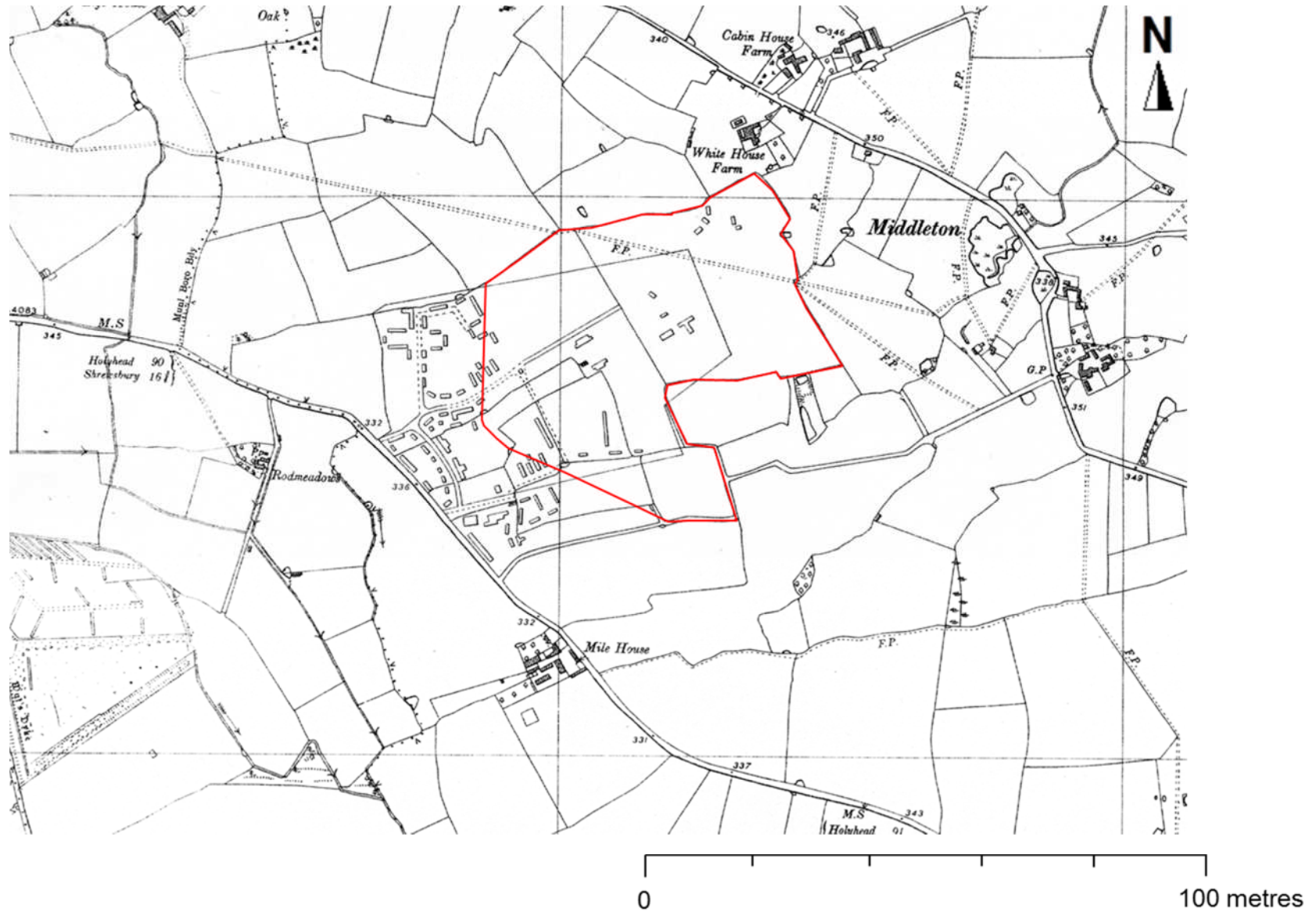
**MILE END, OSWESTRY 2014**

Figure 4: Extract from the 1888 OS 1:10,560 (6" to 1mile) map showing the study area

Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council,  
 Historic Environment Team, Business Growth & Prosperity,  
 Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Scale: 1:10,560





### MILE END, OSWESTRY 2014

Figure 5: Extract from the OS 1954 1:10,560 plan, showing the former PoW camp buildings and the proposed development site (outlined in red)