

# Land at Great Rissington Manor, Great Rissington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

## Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

NGR SP 19431 17206  
Cotswold District Council Planning Refs 20/00113/FUL and 20/00114/  
LBC

On Behalf of  
Pippa Paton Design Ltd



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**Avon Archaeology Limited**  
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## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

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ABBREVIATIONS

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 METHODOLOGY
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY
- 4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
- 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
- 6 HISTORIC MAP EVIDENCE
- 7 SITE VISIT
- 8 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC AND LIDAR EVIDENCE
- 9 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES
- 10 CONCLUSIONS
- 11 SUGGESTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION
- 12 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND PRIMARY HISTORICAL SOURCES
- 13 APPENDIX: RESULTS OF NMR TRAWL

## FIGURES

- 1 Location of Study Area
- 2 Site Plan showing red line boundary
- 3 Detailed extract from the 1815 Great Rissington Inclosure map
- 4 Detailed extract from the 1882 1st edition 25" OS map (sheet Gloucestershire XXXVII.2)
- 5 Detailed extract from the 1902 2nd edition 25" OS map (sheet Gloucestershire XXXVII.2)
- 6 Results of Gloucestershire HER trawl



- 7 Plan of previous ground works on or near the study site
- 8 Detailed extract of aerial photograph SP 1917/24, Film and Frame number NMR 18643/24, looking north-west, clearly showing ridge and furrow in the study site and fields to its immediate north and west. Unscaled

## PLATES

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Cover   | Western half of the site, looking north-west  |
| Plate 1 | Panorama of site from south-east corner, looking west to north  |
| Plate 2 | Panorama of western half of the site taken from dip running along its western edge, looking north-east to south-west. Ground undulations are slightly visible                                 |
| Plate 3 | Panorama of site from south-west corner, looking north to east  |
| Plate 4 | Detail of north-western corner of the site, showing ground undulations - running in front of the solar panels and along the western edge of the site - more clearly. Looking north-north-east |
| Plate 5 | Extract from 1914 auction entry for Great Rissington Manor (GRO D4858/2/4/1914/1)   |

## **ABSTRACT**

*Avon Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Pippa Paton Design Ltd, on behalf of the landowner, to undertake an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment at Great Rissington Manor, Great Rissington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The site is centred on OS NGR SP 19431 17206, and the postcode is GL54 2LN. It is bounded to the south by the northern boundary wall of Great Rissington Manor, to the east by the graveyard of St. John the Baptist Church, to the north by a narrow band of woodland, and to the west by further agricultural land. The site is rectangular in shape and currently in use as a spoil storage field, occupying a footprint of just over 1100m<sup>2</sup>. This report will form part of a formal planning application for the installation of a new tennis court for the manor, under the Cotswold District Council planning references 20/00113/FUL and 20/00114/LBC.*

*Substantial Romano-British and possibly earlier settlement has been proven through a variety of documentary, cartographic, aerial photographic and archaeological sources in the north-west and south-west of the parish of Great Rissington. One of these is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, SAM 455. A third such settlement is also strongly indicated in the north-east of the parish, and prehistoric remains may be present in the south.*

*The Anglo-Saxon manorial estate of Great Rissington was established by 1066, when it was held by Ulf. It is likely to have been laid out similarly to today, with the nucleated village in the centre surrounded by open field systems, which were divided into the 'North Field' and 'South Field'. However, these were gradually enclosed from the 14th century onwards, with the final open field systems divided and their rights of common extinguished in 1815. Remnants of these open field systems in the form of ridge and furrow have been extensively mapped throughout the parish through aerial photography, and appear to have extended right up to Great Rissington Manor itself.*

*The earliest documentary sources name the Tosny family as owners of Great Rissington Manor, which was almost certainly the capital messuage of Great Rissington estate, although by the later 12th century it was in the hands of the le Fleming family. During the 14th and 15th centuries, the estate was divided between the heiresses of the de Fleming*



*estate to create two moieties. These were eventually unified at the turn of the 16th century. By the late 16th century the estate had passed into the hands of the Bray family of Great Barrington, where it remained until it was auctioned to private individuals in the late 1910s. The earliest fabric of the present-day manor house dates to the 17th century, although it underwent large-scale rebuilding and extension in the 1920s, in addition to extensive garden landscaping. The manor, its outbuildings and its gardens are all grade II listed. It is clear from surviving documents that the Church also owned much of the land in the parish.*

*Historic maps dating from the early 19th century onwards show few changes to the manorial complex and outlying fields and properties, with the exception of the 1920s enlargement noted above and the construction of a handful of new agricultural and residential buildings.*

*The village of Great Rissington, including Great Rissington Manor, lies within a Conservation Area, and many of the buildings and ecclesiastical remains are listed and/or identified on the Gloucestershire HER. However, very few archaeological investigations have taken place in the parish, aside from the excavations on SAM 455. The three commercial investigations identified in the HER trawl were either archaeologically sterile or uncovered only Palaeolithic or 19th century remains.*

*None of the sources consulted suggest historic activity on the study site itself other than agricultural, demonstrated through the in situ presence of Medieval/Post-Medieval ridge and furrow seen in aerial photography. In recent years, several narrow trenches for pipes and cables related to renewable energy installations have been excavated along the western, southern and eastern boundaries of the site, although the majority of the study site appears to have remained undisturbed.*

*It is thought that the potential for in situ archaeological remains not relating to Medieval/Post-Medieval ridge and furrow are very low, and it is suggested that no more than a programme of archaeological monitoring (archaeological watching brief) is undertaken during the development's ground works.*

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## NOTES

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAL	Avon Archaeology Limited	NMR	National Monuments
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum		Record
DB	Domesday Book	OE	Old English
GRO	Gloucestershire Record Office	OS	Ordnance Survey
ME	Middle English		
NGR	National Grid Reference		



## 1 INTRODUCTION

Avon Archaeology Limited were commissioned by Pippa Paton Design Ltd, on behalf of their client, to undertake an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment at Great Rissington Manor, Great Rissington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. The site is centred on OS NGR SP 19431 17206, and the postcode is GL54 2LN (**Figure 1**). It is bounded to the south by the northern boundary wall of Great Rissington Manor, to the east by the 19<sup>th</sup> century graveyard of St. John the Baptist Church, to the north by a narrow band of woodland, and to the west by agricultural land (**Figure 2**). The site is rectangular in shape and currently in use as a spoil storage field, occupying a footprint of just over 1100m<sup>2</sup>. This report will form part of a formal planning application for the installation of a new tennis court for the manor, under the Cotswold District Council planning references 20/00113/FUL and 20/00114/LBC.

An OASIS entry has been opened for the project under number 384694, for inclusion onto the local HER.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

Searches were made of the indices of the collection of the Gloucestershire Record Office as well as a variety of online bibliographic resources, most notably COPAC, BIAB, The Archaeology Data Service and Google Scholar, which were used to identify potentially useful sources of information, whether published or otherwise<sup>1</sup>. In addition, information was utilised from a trawl of the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record, conducted on behalf of AAL by the service's staff, and the NMR in Swindon was visited to view its collection of aerial photographs of the site. A visit to the site was made by the author on the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and a digital photographic record was made, a selection from which is presented in **Plates 1 to 4**.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.copac.ac.uk](http://www.copac.ac.uk); [www.biab.ac.uk](http://www.biab.ac.uk); <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>; [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)



### 3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The site is currently grassed and used as a spoil storage field, although two solar panel arrays have been installed along its northern edge. It sits upon a gentle slope which runs east to west, with its western edge being just shy of 42maOD and its eastern edge being just under 39maOD.

The site lies above an underlying hard rock geology, the Dyrham Formation, which is sandwiched between two distinct geologies: Charmouth Mudstone Formation to the west and Marlstone Rock Formation to the east. The BGS describes the Dryham Foundation as

Pale to dark grey and greenish grey, silty and sandy mudstone, with interbeds of silt or very fine-grained sand (locally muddy or silty), weathering yellow. Variably micaceous. Impersistent beds or doggers of ferruginous limestone (some ooidal) and sandstone, which tend to occur at the top of sedimentary cycles. Sporadic large cementstone nodules.

Charmouth Mudstone Formation is described as

Dark grey laminated shales, and dark, pale and bluish grey mudstones; locally concretionary and tabular limestone beds; abundant argillaceous limestone, phosphatic or ironstone (sideritic mudstone) nodules in some areas; organic-rich paper shales at some levels; finely sandy beds in lower part in some areas.

Marlstone Rock Formation is described as

Sandy, shell-fragmental and ooidal ferruginous limestone interbedded with ferruginous calcareous sandstone, and generally subordinate ferruginous mudstone beds. Locally any of these lithologies may pass by increase in iron content into generally ooidal ironstone, and in places any of these may dominate. The iron content (as ooids, altered shell material or in the groundmass) is berthierine (dark green iron-rich layered silicate formed in low-oxygen marine conditions), altering to siderite. Fossil content variable throughout but locally abundant especially in limestone beds.

One geological borehole around 600m to the north-west, close to Dick Bridge, recorded a

depth of around 1m for overlying alluvial deposits.

## 4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Prehistoric and Roman

Documentary sources, in combination with both cartographic and archaeological sources, indicate a substantial Romano-British and possibly prehistoric presence within Great Rissington parish. Using these three sources, activity of this date is proven or possible within the north-west, north-east and south-west corners of the parish.

The presence of Romano-British remains, a large area in the north-west of the parish, spanning several fields, has been proven to be the location of an Iron Age and Romano-British site through archaeological investigations and aerial survey (**Figure 6**: HER 137; Wills 1989; Janik, Dickson, and Priest 2011, 35). The site comprises at least 4 circular enclosures; 4 hut circles; 4 rectilinear enclosures; various linear features, including at least one possible trackway; and pit alignments. It is possible that there was also Bronze Age activity in the area in the form of barrows, whose remains were damaged by later settlement (*ibid.*). The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 455), listed under the Historic England entry number 1003440. Unlike the other two areas of activity described below, it does not seem that any indicative field names are or have been assigned to the area.

To the south of this known settlement, in the south-western corner of the parish, is the remains of a Roman villa (**Figure 6**: HER 2554). This has not been intrusively investigated but has been recorded through post-ploughing fieldwalking exercises in 1975 and 2005. Collected finds include construction and domestic ceramics, glass, iron slag, tesserae and opus signinum dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD, and a slightly raised platform can be seen in the site's topography. This villa is located in a field known historically as 'Lower Chestle', identified on the 1815 enclosure map and its accompanying schedule (**Figure 3**; GRO Q/RI/116 and D182/VII/3). Abutting this field to the east is a second 'Chestle' field. This field name is highly indicative of Romano-British activity, as is the case here (see Eagles and Swan 1973; Gerrard 2007). In addition to

these Chestles fields, the 1815 enclosure map also identifies the 'Blackington quarter', immediately to the south of the Roman villa. There are regular references from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards in the Great Rissington glebe terriers to fields named Blackington Hill, Blackington Bottom, Black Furlong and Blackington Lays; an incredibly useful estate survey of 1775 places these within the historic 'South Field' of the parish (GRO D1388/box9407/21). It can be argued, therefore, that these fields were all sited within the 1815 'Blackington quarter'. Like Chestles, field names with the prefix 'black' may indicate Romano-British activity, being a reference to the dark and fertile soil created from organic remains (Brian 1997; Webster and Brunning 2007; Wessex Archaeology 2007; Williams 1982; Young 2004). If this is the case, it may be that the outlying estate lands of this Roman villa were to its south.

The 1815 enclosure map also notes a 'Long Wadborough' in this part of the parish, although further to the east. Long and Short Wadborrow field names are present in an early 18<sup>th</sup> century glebe terrier (GRO GDR/V5/249T/5), and the 1775 estate survey noted above places Wadborrow in the hill land of the South Field. These must refer to the later 'Wadborough'. The modern suffix 'borough' often derives from the OE *beorg*, a natural hillock or man-made tumulus or earthwork (Field 1972, 267); it may be, therefore, that prehistoric burials are or were present in the south of the parish.

Finally, to the north-east, there is a small area which has been suggested to be the site of a Romano-British enclosure based on aerial photographic evidence, although this has not been proven archaeologically (**Figure 6**: HER 4496). Adding extra weight to this is the documentary and cartographic evidence. Maps dating to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century identify another 'Chestles' field just north of Glebe Farm, about 400m to the south-west of HER 4496 (GRO D678/1/E4/1, Map P). In fact, this field can be traced back to the turn of 18<sup>th</sup> century, when glebe terriers name one 'Homeward Chesells' and one 'Farther Chesells' (GRO GDR/V5/249T/4); these are placed in the hill land of the North Field in the 1775 estate survey. Given that field names are prone to move slightly over the course of their lives, it is probable that these fields refer to the possible enclosure seen in modern aerial photographs.

It is worth noting here that recent academic literature regarding the layout of rural

Romano-British settlement has highlighted the substantial size farming estates needed to be in order to grow sufficient crops. McCarthy, for example, quotes a study by Branigan from 1977, in which Branigan outlines the estimated land needed to support the great villa of Gatcombe; he postulates it to be about 15,000 acres. Clearly, the known and suspected Romano-British settlements of Great Rissington were much smaller than Gatcombe; but, as McCarthy points out, Branigan's calculations do highlight the fact that Romano-British estate lands covered much larger areas than just the villa, and required a correspondingly large work force of tenant farmers or bondsmen to maintain (McCarthy 2013, 48-50 and 129). It is possible, therefore, as potentially evidenced by the 1815 'Blackington quarter', that the material remains of Romano-British tenant farmers are scattered throughout the parish.

### **Medieval and Post-Medieval**

The Domesday book of 1086 shows that by this period the study area lay entirely within the county of Gloucestershire, as part of the Salmonsbury Hundred (Moore 1982). It was held by Ulf before the Norman Conquest but was in the hands of Robert of Tosny by the date of the survey, when it consisted of 13 hides. 3 of these were in lordship and 10 in tenant ownership, suggesting a certain amount of autonomy among the lower classes. The estate also had a mill, almost certainly located within the field 'Hardys Lays', known as 'Hardesnull' in 1375, on the banks of the River Windrush (GRO D1375/50-51; Elrington 1965, 103). It is theorised that Great Rissington Manor is the site of the estate's Medieval capital messuage (Elrington 1965, 99). The name of the estate is thought to derive from *Risendune* 'hill overgrown with brushwood' (OE *hrīsen, dūn*), first seen in documentary sources dating to 1075 (Smith 1964, 201).

It is presumed that the estate of Great Rissington stayed within the Tosny family during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, but by at least 1167 it was under the ownership of Alard le Fleming (Elrington 1965, 100). It remained in this family until the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the estate was split between the two daughters of the lord of the manor. Joan de Fleming, who married Sir Henry Husee, was granted Cokesey's manor, whilst Florence de Fleming, who married Walter de Lisle, was granted Lises or Niles manor (ibid.). The moieties remained in those families until the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, although the exact locations of the manor houses are not known. Both moieties then made their way into the hands of the

trustees of Sir William Nottingham, unifying the estate once more, and from there to Sir Reynold Bray of Great Barrington at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (ibid.). Great Rissington remained part of the Great Barrington estate until 1920, when the majority was sold to private individuals in three main lots; Great Rissington Manor was sold during the 1920s (Elrington 1965, 101). Other Medieval estates within Great Rissington parish included Ten Acres, Dandoes and a grange belonging to Bruern Abbey of Oxfordshire (ibid.).

It is clear from the Post-Medieval documents discussed above that Medieval Great Rissington comprised open field systems, demarcated as the 'South Field' and 'North Field', with the manorial houses, farmsteads and other residences concentrated in the centre<sup>2</sup>. It is very likely that the estate tenants farmed strips of land within the open field whilst the rest of the field remained common land. Hence, the estate survey of 1775 lists small parcels of named land within the larger North and South Field areas (cf. Elrington 1965, 102). Although Elrington (1965, 102; but cf. 98) argues that most of this common land had been enclosed and rights of common extinguished by around 1609, we can see from the 1815 enclosure map that, in actual fact, much of the eastern half of the parish remained open pastureland until this date. It is of interest that the majority of enclosure prior to 1815 seems to have been focussed on the western half, and in particular in the south-west, and that many of the fields are known by the name of the crop growing there. The western half of the parish is also where the majority of prehistoric and Romano-British remains have been found – it may be that this area was particularly fertile, an important factor in rural settlement patterns (cf. McCarthy 2013).

Although a large part of the Post-Medieval economy of Great Rissington was based on agriculture, the village also supported many specialist trades, such as textile, clothing and shoe production, iron working, construction and hospitality (Elrington 1965, 103). Population levels fluctuated significantly between 1086 and the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, with population spikes in the 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, late 18<sup>th</sup> – late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and population drops in the intervening periods (Elrington 1965, 99).

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<sup>2</sup> Janik, Dickson, and Priest (2011, 56) have argued that this process of settlement nucleation began in the 8<sup>th</sup> century in the Cotswolds region, when 'the open field arable system meant it was probably more convenient for people to reside in the centre of their scattered holdings. Although the influence of the local lords was also thought to play a part in this nucleation, the driving factor is considered to have been the nature of the agricultural regime of the time.'

## Great Rissington Manor

Although it is highly likely that the site of the present manor house has been the seat of the estate's manorial complex since at least the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, the current set of buildings date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Records show that it was rebuilt as a farmhouse with five hearths, a large number, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century (Elrington 1965, 99). By 1914, when the manor was auctioned, the complex contained a huge array of outbuildings for a variety of agricultural uses, as well as boasting a large and well-furnished farmhouse (GRO D4858/2/4/1914/1; **Plate 5**). A number of architectural elements of that farmhouse survive, but much of the present complex dates to 1929, when the building was wholly restored, partially rebuilt and enlarged, to become the manor house of today (ibid.). During the course of this work, some of the older farm buildings, including the granary, were incorporated into the manor house (ibid.). The surrounding lands were also transformed; the terraces west of the manor house and much of the garden landscaping were designed by Falconer, Baker and Campbell, architects, in the mid-1920s, for the then-occupier, Major Marling, and the area known as 'The Ornamentals' was planted in 1965.

Great Rissington Manor farmhouse, its outbuildings and its gardens are all Grade II listed under the number 1000766, and a detailed description of the complex can be found on Historic England's website.

There is no documentary evidence to suggest any historic development of the site itself, although it has in recent years seen some activity along its boundaries in the form of the installation of pipes and cable trenches relating to renewable energy infrastructure (see **Site Visit** and **Figure 7**).

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A trawl of the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) was requested, encompassing a 500m radius from the centre of the site, and the results are presented in **Figure 6**. Many of the results refer to historic listed buildings and ecclesiastical monuments within the village, and will not be discussed in depth here. However, it is

important to note that St. John's Church (HER 46708) contains features dating to around 1200, and that many of the village's listed buildings date to at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. HER entries relating to the Sherbourne water meadows, which run north-west to south-east along the River Windrush, will also not be expanded upon, as they have no bearing on the site under consideration. The entire village of Great Rissington, including the manor, was designated a Conservation Area in 1987.

As discussed in depth in the **Historic Background**, several prehistoric and Romano-British sites have been proven or suggested to be within Great Rissington. The remains and archaeological and aerial photographic investigations of them are listed under HER numbers 137, 37346, 50971, 37347, 2554 and 4496. In addition to these is the discovery of a juvenile skeleton, probably Roman, during the ground works for the Little Rissington airfield to the north-east (Donovan 1937, 334). HER entries of later date include 51248 (Medieval ridge and furrow), 13707 (Great Rissington Manor and gardens), 14326 (a Post-Medieval quarry), and 4525 (a possible double-ditched trackway, although this is now thought more likely to be a modern feature). Additional evidence of Medieval and/or Post-Medieval ridge and furrow has been gathered from aerial photographs, which are discussed further in that section.

Outside of the excavations of the late 1980s, which focussed on HER 137 (cf. Wills 1989), surprisingly little intrusive archaeological fieldwork has taken place within the parish. Two archaeological watching brief and recording projects, HER 15692, were undertaken close to HER 137, precisely because of their proximity to the known site (Morton 1992; Vartuca 2002). However, no remains were encountered apart from a number of late Palaeolithic / early Mesolithic animal bones recovered from the earlier courses of the River Windrush. The only other piece of fieldwork identified is that of a watching brief at St. John's Church, HER 8186, which found only 19<sup>th</sup> century remains (Parry 1993).

## 6 HISTORIC MAP EVIDENCE

It is unfortunate that the earliest available map of the parish of Great Rissington is the 1815 enclosure map (**Figure 3**); this is a relatively late date in comparison with other parishes. However, the map and its corresponding schedule do provide field names, whose evolutions and etymologies are of great use to deciphering historic land uses and features, as well as identifying old enclosures in addition to the new.

As noted earlier, it is clear from the 1815 enclosure map that by this date the majority of the western half of the parish had been enclosed, whilst most of the eastern half remained open pastureland. Despite the existence of archaeologically indicative field names elsewhere in the parish, discussed under the **Historical Background**, all of the fields surrounding the study site refer to either the size or topography of the field or the type of crop grown there. Notable examples include: Oatlands (OE *āte* + *land* 'land on which oat is grown'); Barhill (OE *bēre* + *hyll* 'hill on which barley is grown'); Horse Close; Infield (ME *infeld* 'land near the homestead or village'); Laynes (ME *leyne* 'arable strip/enclosure'); and Langett (OE *langet* 'long strip of land') (Smith 1964, 201 – 202; Field 1972, 113 and 154). Bellhay, to the east of the study site, refers to who the site was used by: deriving from the ?ME? *bell* + OE *(ge)hæg* 'endowed fenced-in land for the provision and maintenance of church bells and ropes, or for the payment of bell ringer' (Field 1972, 18 and 270). The earliest reference found of this field name dates to 1683 (GRO D4431/1/B2/2/16). The study site, located in plot 2 on this map, is known as Infield, the same as the field which abuts it to the north. In conjunction with the aerial photographic evidence given below, this strongly indicates that the two fields were once one and the same; and possibly not long divided, if they are still known by the same name.

The field layout around the study site in 1815 was not hugely different to that of today. However, it is interesting to note that the majority of the footpaths in the parish were 'stopp'd up' as part of the enclosure, which indicates that there was previously freer movement through or over owned land. Great Rissington Manor seems to have comprised two main 'zones' at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – the manor house itself and a series of seemingly interconnected outbuildings to its north. The current small square

building which lies close to the northern boundary wall had also been established, and a long and narrow north-south orientated outbuilding, probably a stables, was located in the north-western corner of the complex. It may be that a second long and narrow north-south building to the south-west of the manor house, abutting the field 'Langett', was also part of the manorial estate. According to the schedule accompanying the enclosure map, Great Rissington Manor had at some point been leased to a family called Mace (as the plot is listed as 'Maces homestead'; this does not mean, however, that the family still leased it in 1815), whilst the plot immediately to the south of the manor was in the Mathews' family (for the same reason). The surrounding urban landscape was already well-developed, with many of the plots fronting the village's main roads being occupied.

No mid-19<sup>th</sup> century tithe map for Great Rissington was found in the sources consulted. One possible reason for this is that the tithes had already been commuted as part of earlier enclosure, possibly that of 1815. A second is that the land was exempt from tithe because it was owned by the Church. This could partially be the case, as 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century glebe terriers list a large number of fields as being under the Church's ownership.

There are few changes shown on the subsequent 1882 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (**Figure 4**). Bellhay field had been divided in two, and the short north-south hedge line delineating the study site from the rest of Horse Close had been removed, but very little else had changed in the way of field boundaries. In terms of the built environment, a small east-west outbuilding had been added to the northern cluster of the interconnected buildings of Great Rissington Manor; the south-western north-south outbuilding had been relocated to the eastern side of the field; the Rectory seems to have lost some of its outbuildings; and 'Mathews's homestead' had been significantly expanded. It is possible that Great Rissington Manor house itself had been enlarged, but it is more likely that the differences in its drawn size between 1815 and 1882 are due to varying surveying accuracy. Elsewhere in the village, several new properties had been built, particularly along the southern road, and a few had been demolished.

By the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map of 1902 (**Figure 5**), the only real changes in the village were the demolition of the school building immediately to the west of the manor and the school's relocation to the north-east; and the expansion of the church graveyard to the

north-west, into the plot abutting the study site to its east. The western boundary of the study site had also been reinstated. No changes are visible on the 1921 3<sup>rd</sup> edition OS map, and therefore this is not reproduced here.

Historic maps show that a wave of development had culminated in the construction of a number of new houses in unoccupied plots fronting onto the village roads by 1978, and at this date Great Rissington Manor was depicted with 'The Ornamentals', established in 1965, to its south-west ([www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk)). The manorial complex had changed little, with exception of the demolition of the two long and narrow north-south outbuildings to the north and south, and the erection of a new, fairly large barn immediately to the west of the northern interconnected outbuilding cluster (ibid.).

There is no historic cartographic evidence for development within the study site itself.

## 7 SITE VISIT

A site visit was paid by the author on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020, in sunny conditions. A selection of the photographic record made is shown on **Plates 1 to 4**.

The site is grassed and is currently in use as a spoil storage field. It is largely taken up with said spoil heap, as well as two rows of previously-installed solar panels along its northern edge. However, the most westerly part of the site remains open. Initial inspection of this area indicated a number of roughly north-south linear undulations (see particularly **Plate 4**).

During the site visit I was informed that the field immediately to the west of the study site had been subject to extensive trenching works associated with ground source heating pumps, whose pipes continued through the southern edge of the study site, parallel to the manor house boundary wall, to connect with related infrastructure housed in the stable block. I was also made aware of the previous excavation of a narrow cabling trench running along the eastern edge of the study site, which connects the solar panels with the house. All of these previous works are presented in **Figure 7**, based on technical

drawings shared by the contractor, and all were subject to planning consent. I was told that the ground works went to a depth of between 1.5 and 2.5m and that no artefacts or archaeological remains were uncovered.

As discussed in the next section, aerial photographs taken as recently as 2000 clearly show extant ridge and furrow in the study site and in the fields immediately to the west and north of it. Although the ground works discussed above would necessarily have disturbed this, they were limited to the edges of the site, and therefore it is likely that at least some of the undulations seen during the site visit do relate to the remains of ridge and furrow.

## 8 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC AND LIDAR EVIDENCE

A trawl of the aerial photographs held in the Historic England Archives in Swindon was undertaken and a visit was made to see the resulting images in person. The most illustrative and informative of the photographs is presented in **Figure 8**.

**Figure 8** is not alone in capturing the remains of ridge and furrow on and around the site. Other such images include RAF/CPE/UK/2013, Frame 4179; RAF/106G/UK/1558, Frames 3067 and 3068; SP 1916/28; SP 1917/27; SP 1917/8; SP1917/21; and SP 1917/22. These span the period between 1946 and 2000. It is clear from all of these images that the open field system originally extended almost right up to the threshold of Great Rissington Manor itself.

The ridge and furrow seen within the study site runs north-south, as does the ridge and furrow in the field immediately to the north, whilst the ridge and furrow in the field immediately to the west runs east-west. Because their ridges and furrows run in the same direction, it seems likely that the study site and the field to the north were once one and same, perhaps as part of the Medieval open field system, with the division between the two being Post-Medieval in date.

During the site visit, it was noted that a large portion of the field to the west was raised.

Aerial photographs, especially digital photograph 27594\_015, prove that this raised height is artificial, and that the entire plot is sat on top of the earlier ridge and furrow rather than replacing it. This can also be glimpsed in **Figure 8**. Although this raised area is not demarcated on any of the available cartographic sources, including modern OS maps, the course of the ridge and furrow is not interrupted in this field on aerial photographs dating to 1946 and 1947, indicating that the plateau was created in the mid-to late-20<sup>th</sup> century.

The entirety of Great Rissington has been very recently photographed as part of the Cotswold National Mapping Programme (Janik, Dickson, and Priest 2011). In addition to the Medieval and/or Post-Medieval ridge and furrow listed on the Gloucestershire HER, this NMP identified several additional areas of ridge and furrow. One of these is located about 500m to the north-west of the study site, centred on NGR SP 19192 17624, whilst another is sited about 750m to the site's north-east, centred on NGR SP 20165 17434. These are listed under the NMR numbers SP 11 NE 30 and SP 21 NW 44 respectively ([www.pastscape.org.uk](http://www.pastscape.org.uk)).

LIDAR data was consulted at a resolution of 0.5m, 1m and 2m. Unfortunately, although LIDAR data exists for the fields immediately surrounding the study site, the site itself falls within an unsurveyed area. However, the LIDAR images that were available corresponded fully with what can be seen in aerial photographic images.

## 9 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

Between March 2010 and March 2012, national planning guidelines as they related specifically to the historic environment, were outlined in the document known as PPS (Planning and Policy Statement) 5, *Planning for the Historic Environment*. However, in March 2012, PPS5, and indeed all the other Planning Policy Guidance and Statements which underpinned the operation of the national planning process, was replaced by a single, greatly simplified, overarching and integrated document known as the National Planning Policy Framework (Dept for Communities and local Government). This was revised and reissued in July 2018 and again in February 2019. Within this document,

matters relating to archaeology and the historic environment generally are dealt with in Section 16, *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (pages 54-57). A detailed examination of the implications of this framework for the specific site being reported on here, is outside the scope of this study. Section 16 of the NPPF is by definition a much shorter excursus on national planning policy, as it relates to the historic environment, than was contained in its predecessor PPS5, although it is at least in principle underpinned by many of the same basic tenets.

By far the majority of the document consists of guidance to local authorities in how they should handle matters relating to the historic environment in their own areas, and some local authorities have already chosen, as a matter of conscious policy, to take the explicit position of interpreting the provisions of the NPPF as devolving directly to them, at the local level, *all* decision-making in matters of planning as they relate specifically to the historic environment, including, of course, archaeology.

The planning policies which govern development in respect to designated and non-designated heritage assets in the Cotswold District, including any impacts on their wider setting, are set out in the Cotswold District Council Local Plan, adopted August 2016, under Section 10: Built, Natural and Historic Environment (CDC 2016, 136 - 163). The specific policies which cover heritage assets and the historic environment and are applicable to the study site include:

#### EN1: Built, Natural and Historic Environment

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset.

Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.

Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage

the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.

#### EN10: Historic Environment: Designated Heritage Assets

In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.

Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations:

- the importance of the asset;
- the scale of harm; and
- the nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal.

#### EN11: Historic Environment: Designated Heritage Assets – Conservation Areas

Development proposals, including demolition, that would affect Conservation Areas and their settings, will be permitted provided they:

- preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features;
- include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area;
- have regard to the relevant Conservation Area appraisal (where available); and
- do not include internally illuminated advertisement signage unless the signage does not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area or its setting.

## EN12: Historic Environment: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Development affecting a non-designated heritage asset will be permitted where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its features, character and setting.

Where possible, development will seek to enhance the character of the non-designated heritage asset. Proposals for demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment taking into account the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss.

Additional heritage planning policies include EN4: The Wider Natural and Historic Landscape and EN13: Historic Environment: The Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings (Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets).

## 10 CONCLUSIONS

This desk-based assessment has examined the documentary, cartographic, archaeological, and aerial photographic sources covering the site and its surrounding area.

A variety of documentary, cartographic, aerial photographic and archaeological sources have proven the existence of at least two centres of Romano-British or earlier settlement in the north-west and south-west of the parish of Great Rissington. One of these is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, SAM 455. They also strongly indicate a third such settlement in the north-east, and may indicate possible prehistoric remains in the south.

The Anglo-Saxon manorial estate of Great Rissington was certainly established by 1066. It is likely to have been laid out similarly to today, with the nucleated village in the centre surrounded by open field systems, which were divided into the 'North Field' and 'South Field'. However, these were gradually enclosed from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with the final open field systems divided and their rights of common extinguished in 1815. These open field systems, in the form of ridge and furrow, have been extensively mapped throughout the parish using aerial photography.

The earliest documentary sources name the Tosny family as owners of Great Rissington Manor, which was almost certainly the capital messuage of Great Rissington estate, although by the later 12<sup>th</sup> century it was in the hands of the le Fleming family. During the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the estate was divided into two moieties, which were unified at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 16<sup>th</sup> century the estate had passed into the hands of the Bray family of Great Barrington, where it remained until it was auctioned off to private individuals in the late 1910s. The earliest fabric of the present-day manor house dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, although it underwent large-scale rebuilding and extension in the 1920s, in addition to extensive garden landscaping. The manor, its outbuildings and its gardens are all grade II listed. Historic maps dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards show few changes to the manorial complex and outlying fields and properties, with the exception of the 1920s enlargement noted above and the construction of a handful of new agricultural and residential buildings.

The village of Great Rissington, including Great Rissington Manor, lies within a Conservation Area, and many of the buildings and ecclesiastical remains are listed and/or identified on the Gloucestershire HER. However, very few archaeological investigations have taken place in the parish, aside from the excavations on SAM 455. The three commercial investigations identified in the HER trawl were either archaeologically sterile or uncovered only Palaeolithic or 19<sup>th</sup> century remains.

None of the sources consulted suggest historic activity on the study site itself other than agricultural, demonstrated through the in situ presence of Medieval/Post-Medieval ridge and furrow. In recent years, several narrow trenches for pipes and cables related to renewable energy installations have been excavated along the western, southern and eastern boundaries of the site, although the majority of the study site appears to have remained undisturbed.

Therefore, it is thought that the potential for in situ archaeological remains not relating to Medieval/Post-Medieval ridge and furrow are very low.

## 11 SUGGESTED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

Although there is clear evidence for Medieval/Post-Medieval ridge and furrow within the study site, this has been disturbed to some extent by recent ground works around the edges of the study site. There is very little indication from the sources consulted of any earlier remains. Therefore, it is suggested that *at the very most* a programme of archaeological monitoring (archaeological watching brief) is undertaken during ground works, although the absolute necessity of this monitoring is uncertain.

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GRO D1388/box9407/21

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## **NMR**

- |      |                  |                                    |
|------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1946 | RAF/106G/UK/1558 | Frames 3067 and 3068               |
| 1947 | RAF/CPE/UK/2013  | Frame 4179                         |
| 1999 | SP 1917/8        | Film and Frame number NMR 18383/17 |
| 2000 | SP1917/21        | Film and Frame number NMR 18643/21 |
| 2000 | SP 1917/22       | Film and Frame number NMR 18643/22 |
| 2000 | SP 1917/24       | Film and Frame number NMR 18643/24 |
| 2000 | SP 1917/27       | Film and Frame number NMR 18546/20 |
| 2000 | SP 1917/28       | Film and Frame number NMR 18546/21 |



13 APPENDIX: RESULTS OF NMR TRAWL

HISTORIC ENGLAND  
Air Photographs

Customer oblique listing - Obliques, Standard Order

Customer enquiry reference number: 124571

Photo reference (NGR and Index number)	Film and frame number	Original number	Date	Film type		Map Reference (6 figure grid)	What can you order?		
							Photocopy	Laser copy	Photographic copy
SP 1917 / 3	NMR 18383 / 12		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 197170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 4	NMR 18383 / 13		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 196172	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 5	NMR 18383 / 14		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 196171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 6	NMR 18383 / 15		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 195171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 7	NMR 18383 / 16		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 8	NMR 18383 / 17		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 9	NMR 18383 / 18		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 10	NMR 18383 / 19		18 JUN 1999	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 195171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 11	NMR 18341 / 07		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 195171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 12	NMR 18341 / 08		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 13	NMR 18341 / 09		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 14	NMR 18341 / 10		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 15	NMR 18341 / 11		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 16	NMR 18341 / 12		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 17	NMR 18341 / 13		18 JUN 1999	Colour slide	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 18	NMR 18643 / 18		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 198174	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 19	NMR 18643 / 19		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 198174	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 20	NMR 18643 / 20		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 21	NMR 18643 / 21		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 193171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 22	NMR 18643 / 22		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 195172	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 23	NMR 18643 / 23		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 196175	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 24	NMR 18643 / 24		06 JAN 2000	Black & white	70mm,120,220	SP 197171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 27	NMR 18546 / 20		06 JAN 2000	Colour neg	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 28	NMR 18546 / 21		06 JAN 2000	Colour neg	35 mm	SP 193171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 29	NMR 27594 / 13		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 195171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 30	NMR 27594 / 14		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 196172	Y	Y	Y



## HISTORIC ENGLAND Air Photographs

SP 1917 / 31	NMR 27594 / 15		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 193170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 32	NMR 27594 / 16		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 194170	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 33	NMR 27594 / 17		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 34	NMR 27594 / 18		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 35	NMR 27594 / 19		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 36	NMR 27594 / 20		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 194171	Y	Y	Y
SP 1917 / 37	NMR 27594 / 21		06 SEP 2012	Digital colour	35 mm	SP 193171	Y	Y	Y



HISTORIC ENGLAND  
Air Photographs

Full single listing - Verticals, Standard order  
Customer enquiry reference: 124571

Sortie number	Library number	Camera position	Frame number	Held	Centre point	Run	Date	Sortie quality	Scale 1:	Focal length (in inches)	Film details (in inches)
RAF/106G/UK/1354	306	FV	7454	P	SP 188 174	13	02 APR 1946	A	10000	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
RAF/106G/UK/1354	306	FV	7455	P	SP 195 173	13	02 APR 1946	A	10000	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
RAF/106G/UK/1558	382	RP	3067	P	SP 193 166	1	07 JUN 1946	AC	10300	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
RAF/106G/UK/1558	382	RP	3068	P	SP 199 166	1	07 JUN 1946	AC	10300	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	RS	4179	P	SP 194 171	20	16 APR 1947	A	9800	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
RAF/CPE/UK/2013	603	RS	4180	P	SP 188 169	20	16 APR 1947	A	9800	20	Black and White 8.25 x 7.5
OS/74229	9747	V	288	P	SP 190 170	4	11 SEP 1974	A	7900	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/74229	9747	V	289	P	SP 196 170	4	11 SEP 1974	A	7900	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/75111	9781	V	22	P	SP 201 178	1	19 MAY 1975	A	7800	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/75111	9781	V	23	P	SP 201 172	1	19 MAY 1975	A	7800	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/75111	9781	V	24	P	SP 201 166	1	19 MAY 1975	A	7800	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/96018	15016	V	85	P	SP 200 175	3	03 APR 1996	A	8400	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/93608A	15444	V	134	P	SP 197 168	3	21 OCT 1993	A	8300	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/93608A	15444	V	135	P	SP 191 168	3	21 OCT 1993	A	8300	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/95141	22148	V	102	N	SP 193 169	4	07 MAY 1995	A	7500	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/95141	22148	V	103	N	SP 193 176	4	07 MAY 1995	A	7500	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/00929C	23472	V	231	N	SP 194 175	4	19 JUN 2000	A	6950	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/00929C	23472	V	232	N	SP 199 175	4	19 JUN 2000	A	6950	12	Black and White 9 x 9
OS/031089	24366	V	442	N	SP 200 168	6	30 MAR 2003	A	7500	6	Colour 9 x 9
OS/031089	24366	V	443	N	SP 193 168	6	30 MAR 2003	A	7500	6	Colour 9 x 9
OS/06017	24739	V	53	N	SP 190 176	3	03 JUN 2006	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
OS/06017	24739	V	54	N	SP 199 175	3	03 JUN 2006	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
OS/08017	24815	V	61	N	SP 198 179	2	12 MAY 2008	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
OS/08017	24815	V	62	N	SP 189 179	2	12 MAY 2008	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
ADA/617	26859	V	127	N	SP 189 174	12	15 JUN 1994	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
ADA/617	26859	V	128	N	SP 192 166	12	15 JUN 1994	A	10000	6	Colour 9 x 9
ADA/604(Z)	27266	V	224	N	SP 200 167	6	17 OCT 1993	A	12000	6	Colour 9 x 9



## HISTORIC ENGLAND Air Photographs

EA/AF/94C/722	40074	V	1182	P	SP 192 174	7	25 FEB 1994	A	3000	6	Colour 9 x 9
EA/AF/94C/722	40074	V	1183	P	SP 193 172	7	25 FEB 1994	A	3000	6	Colour 9 x 9
EA/AF/94C/722	40074	V	1184	P	SP 194 169	7	25 FEB 1994	A	3000	6	Colour 9 x 9
									Total Sorties		15
									Total Frames		30



Figure 1

Location of Study Area

Grid lines at 1km intervals

 Site location



2015 1:2500 OS map

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Figure 2

Site Plan showing red line boundary. Grid lines at 50m intervals

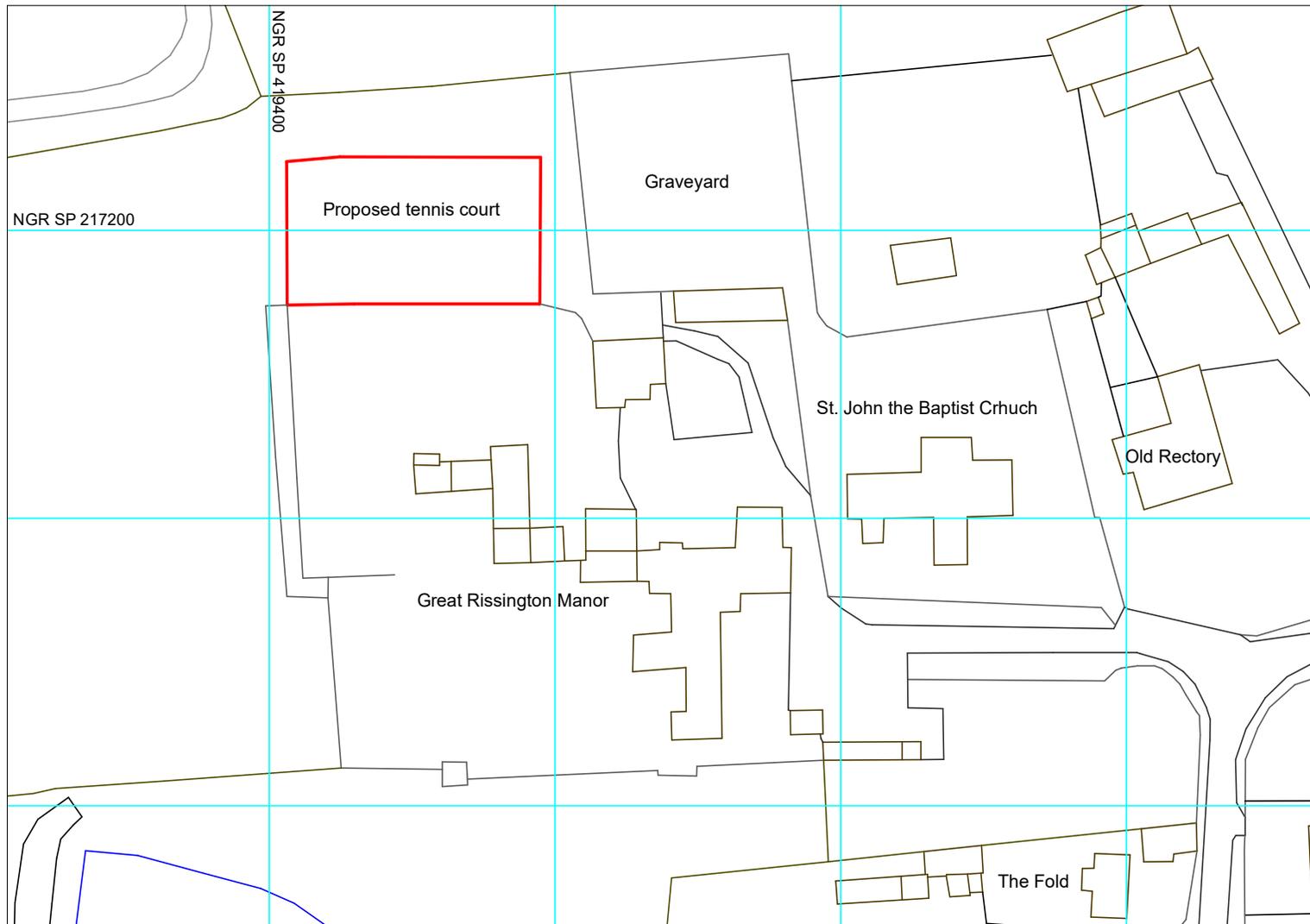


Figure 3

Detailed extract from the 1815 Great Rissington Inclosure map

Source: Know Your Place (Gloucestershire)



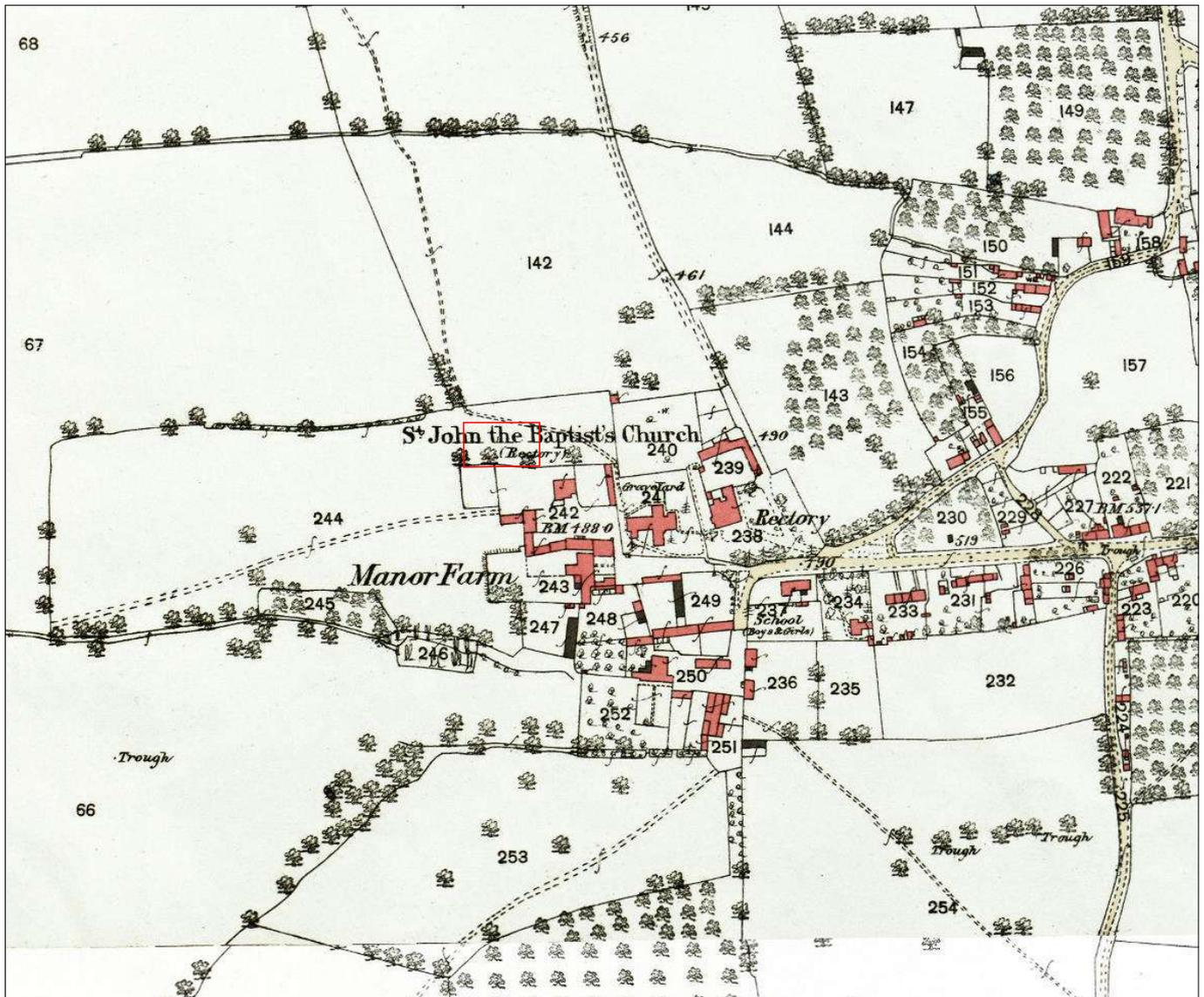
— Site boundary



Figure 4

Detailed extract from the 1882 1st edition 25" OS map (sheet Gloucestershire XXXVII.2)

Source: Know Your Place (Gloucestershire)



— Site boundary

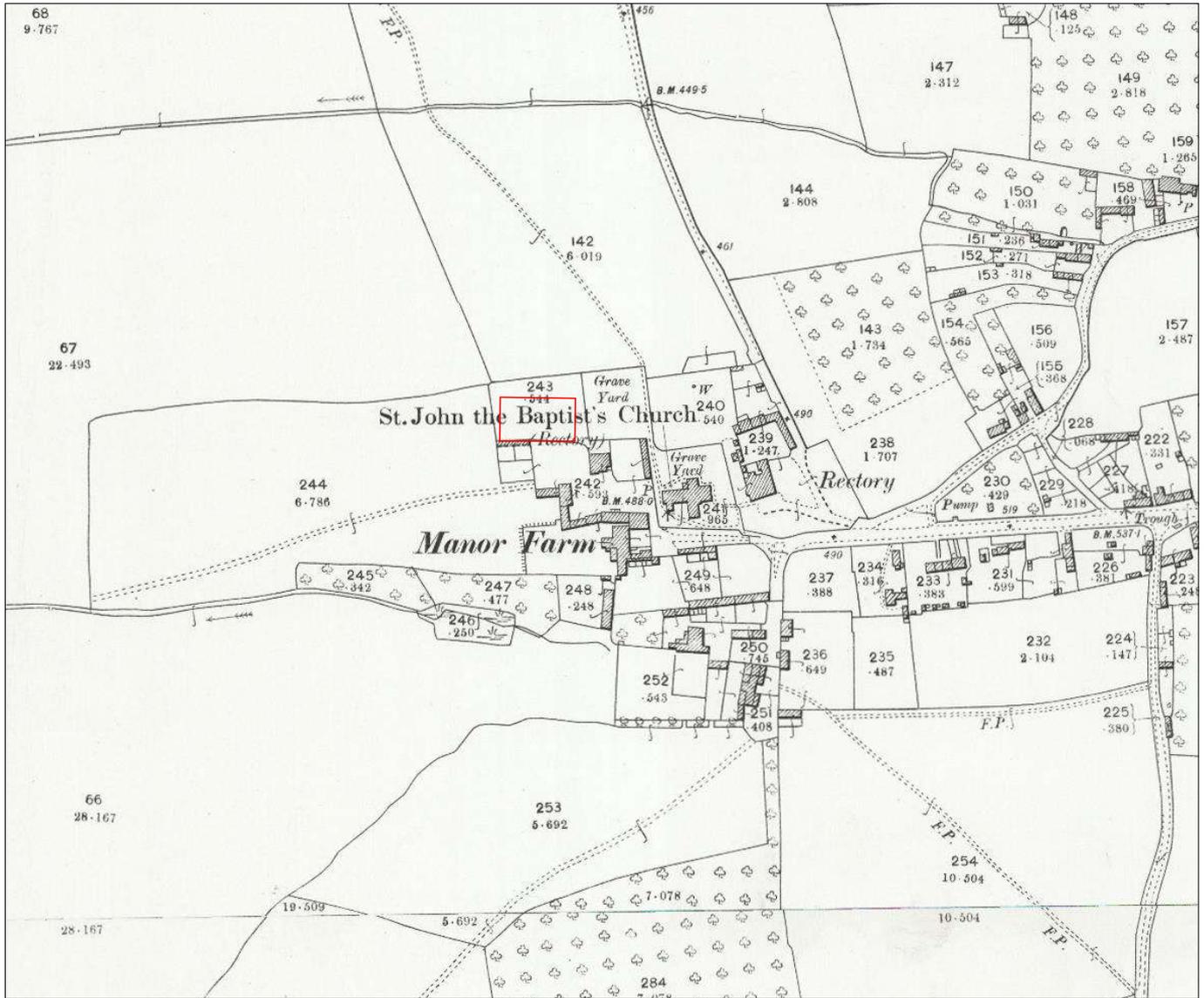
0 200m



## Figure 5

Detailed extract from the 1902 2nd edition 25" OS map (sheet Gloucestershire XXXVII.2)

Source: Know Your Place (Gloucestershire)



— Site boundary

0 200m



Figure 6 Results of Gloucestershire HER trawl

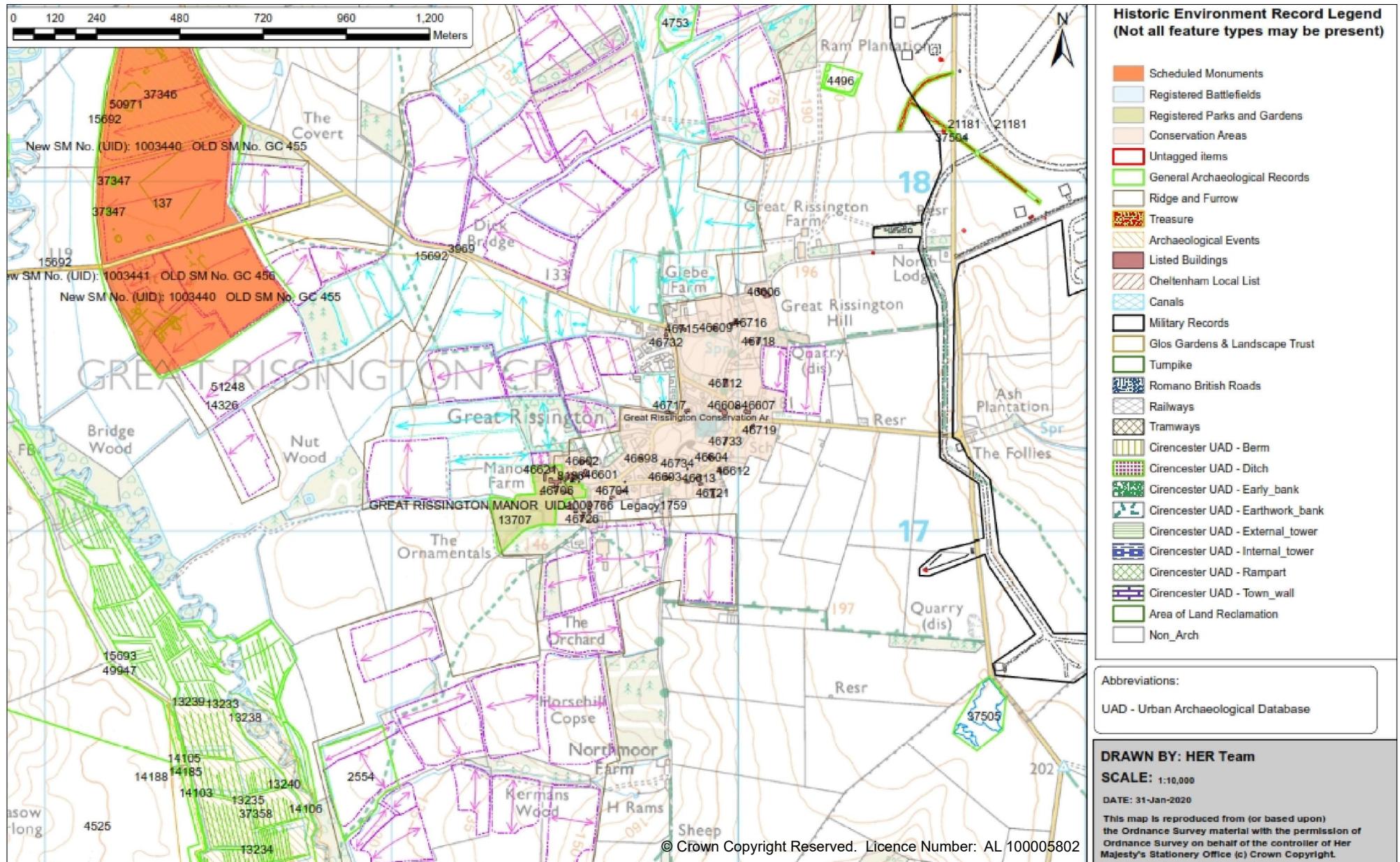
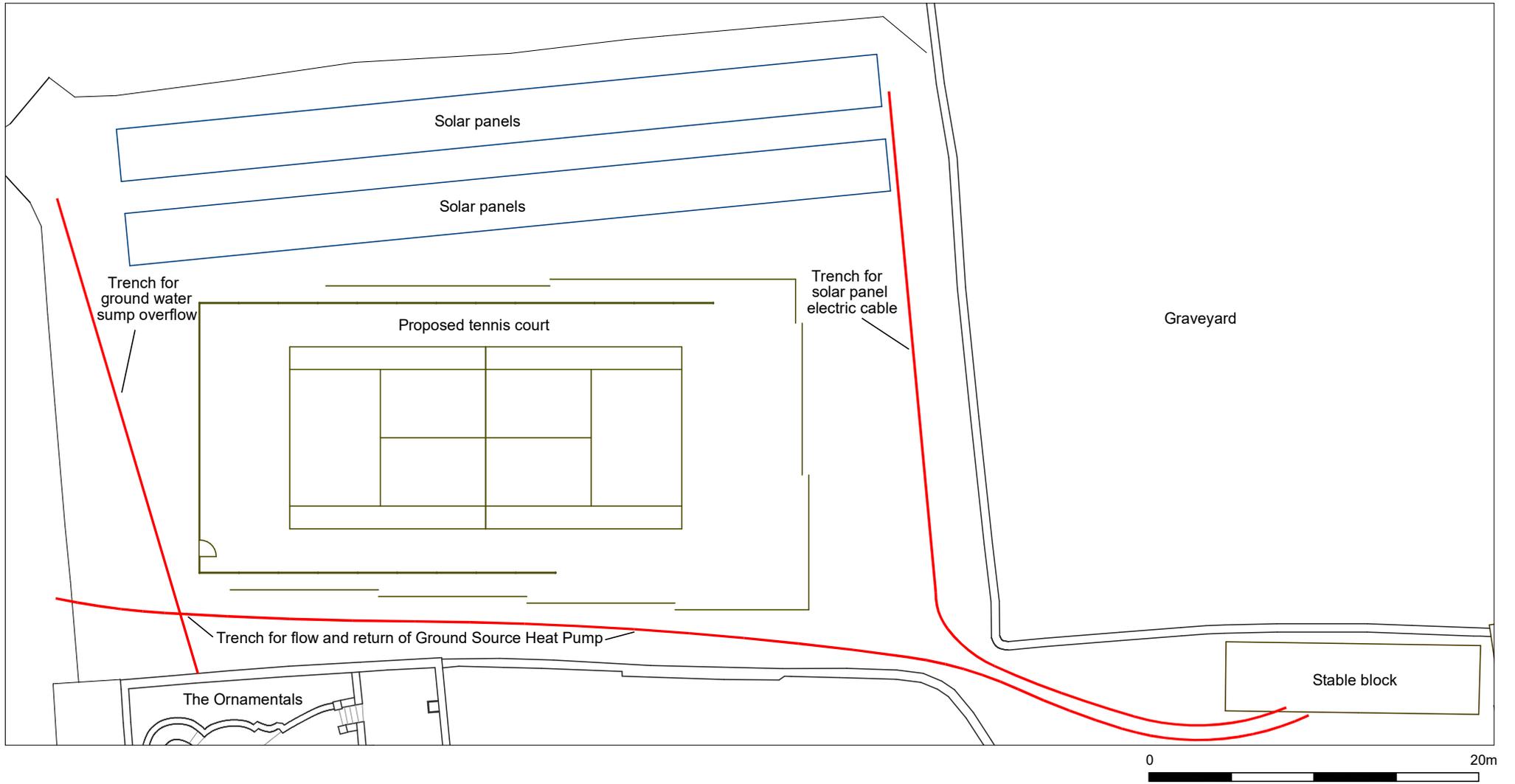


Figure 7

Plan of previous ground works on or near the study site



## Figure 8

Detailed extract of aerial photograph SP 1917/24, Film and Frame number NMR 18643/24, looking north-west, clearly showing ridge and furrow in the study site and fields to its immediate north and west. Unscaled



## Plates



**Plate 1:** Panorama of site from south-east corner, looking west to north



**Plate 2:** Panorama of western half of the site taken from dip running along its western edge, looking north-east to south-west. Ground undulations are slightly visible



**Plate 3:** Panorama of site from south-west corner, looking north to east





**Plate 4:** Detail of north-western corner of the site, showing ground undulations - running in front of the solar panels and along the western edge of the site - more clearly. Looking north-north-east



**Plate 6:** Extract from 1914 auction entry for Great Rissington Manor (GRO D4858/2/4/1914/1)

