



## *Lower Farm Barn, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire*

### *Archaeological Assessment and Earthwork Survey*

*Client: Mr. and Mrs Hancocks.*

*August 2019*

*Report No. AA/lowerfarm/AH266/30/07/19V1*

*Prepared by:*

*Helen Martin-Bacon, MCI(A)*



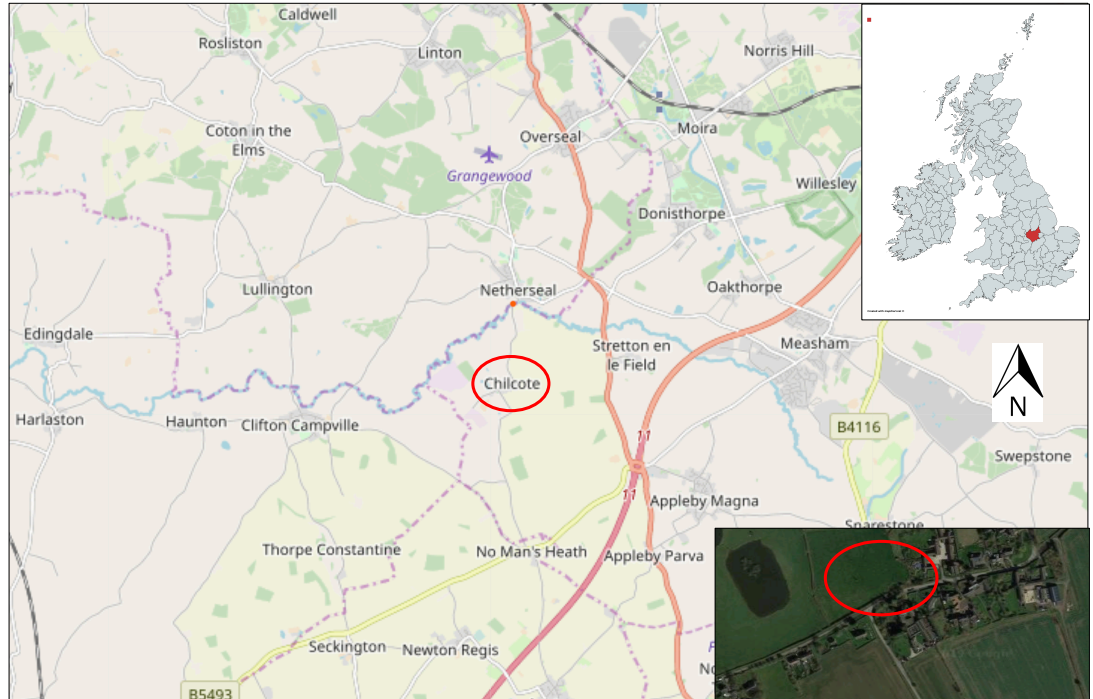
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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

**Location:** Land adjacent to Hurst Farm, Chilcote, Leicestershire NGR 428681 311601 (Figure 1).

**Oasis ref:** commerci1- 360429

**Report No:** HS/lowerfarm/AH266/30/07/19V1



**Figure 1. Location Plan**

## PART 1 INTRODUCTION

**Background to scheme:** Avalon Heritage Ltd (AHL) has been commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Hancocks (the applicants) to prepare an Archaeological Assessment (AA) to support a planning application to be submitted to the North West Leicestershire District Council (the LPA) for the construction of a three-bedroom detached residence on pasture land adjacent to the south west property boundary of Lower Hurst Farm, in the village of Chilcote in north west Leicestershire. A Heritage Statement (Heath, P, 2017) assessing the impacts of the proposal on nearby designated sites and their settings has already been completed but did not include an assessment of the potential for above-ground and below-ground archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development area (PDA). The LPA consulted the Historic and Natural Environment Team (HNET) at Leicestershire County Council who advised them that the PDA may be archaeologically sensitive. The LPA have, therefore requested the applicants to provide an AA to assess the potential for archaeological remains to be present within the PDA. The LPA also required that the AA be informed by an earthwork survey of the PDA. The results of the earthwork survey can be found in Appendix 3.

The LPA commented as follows:

*The site lies within the former historic medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of Chilcote (MLE16709), in an area of earthwork remains associated with the former village and the post-medieval park (illustrated on the 1776 plan). Buried archaeological remains indicative of the*

establishment, settlement and probable clearance of the settlement to make way for the park, may well survive in the development area and will be affected by the proposals.

The AA will contain the results of desk-based research, including cartographic analysis, a statement of potential significance, and assess the possible impacts of the proposed scheme on any archaeological resource which might be present. The AA will be used to inform upon the necessity for further archaeological investigation prior to construction works commencing.

This report has been undertaken with reference to guidance prepared by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and Historic England and following consultation of planning guidance on the historic environment published by North West Leicestershire Council. In particular, the following guidance has been used in the preparation of this report:

- *Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*, Good Practice in Planning 2 Historic England 2015;
- *The Setting of Heritage Assets*, Good Practice in Planning 3 Historic England 2017;
- *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance April* Historic England 2008;
- *Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014);
- *National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF DCLG 2012 rev, 2018*;
- *Planning Policy Guidance*, DCLG 2012;
- *North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2016*, North West Leicestershire District Council.

A site visit was undertaken by the author of this report in order to assess current ground conditions and to identify any earthworks which might represent archaeological remains.



Figure 2. PDA location.

## PART 2- HERITAGE AND SIGNIFICANCE

### Historic Context:

A comprehensive account of the history of the PDA and of Chilcote is contained within the existing Heritage Statement and relevant information from that report will be used in this section of the AA.

Chilcote is a small village near to the location where the counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire meet at *No Mans Heath*. The village became fully part of Leicestershire in 1897, having previously been in Derbyshire.

The origins of the village are likely to be Saxon given that it was mentioned in Domesday Book 1086 where the village name was spelt *Cildecote*. The place name may derive from the Old English for *settlement of younger sons/retainers or young men*. By 1195 the village name was spelt *Childecot* and in 1482 *Chilcote*. The Leicestershire HER places the historic core of the village (MLE16709) within the western side of the village, near to the Church of St. Matthew which originated in the medieval period.

The eastern part of the village is situated on elevated ground where bedrock outcrops in certain places. This is probably the origin of the name Rock Farm. In this part of the village development extends further back from the street than in the western part of the village but maintains the essentially linear form of the village.

In contrast development in the western part of the village is more dispersed perhaps arising from the fact that it lost its focus when Chilcote Hall was pulled down in c. 1778-80. A plan of Chilcote dating to 1776 (Figure 3), shows that the hall formed a strong focal point within this part of the village. Chilcote Hall was situated on the south side of the main road whilst on the north side of the road was a park of about 97 acres with ponds and avenues. There is a suggestion, therefore, that in later periods there was some shrinkage of the original village on this side of the village.



Figure 3. Extract from a Map of the Lordship of Chilcote by J. Whyman 1776. The PDA is located to the east of the parkland.

The 1776 map also depicts long narrow property boundaries fronting either side of the main road through the village suggesting a medieval origin for the layout of the village.

The Hall had been the home of the Milwards and in 1662 it is recorded that there was a tax on 16 hearths at the Hall suggesting that it was a very substantial building. By 1712 it had passed to the Clarke family but they appear to have vacated the Hall by 1763 leading to its demolition a couple of years later.

The Chilcote estate was bought by Francis Robertson of Lincoln's Inn and Kingston in Surrey for £87,000.00. He invested heavily in the estate and Bagshaw's Directory of Derbyshire 1846, notes that he had, within a few years, rebuilt the village with this rebuild being substantially completed by the time of the Chilcote Plan of 1842 (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Extract from plan of Chilcote 1842 showing changes from the map of 1776.

Notable are the considerable changes to the village by 1842 with the only traces of the Hall's parkland being the ponds shown on the 1776 map. The formally laid out avenues and plantations had disappeared. Similarly, the 1842 plan shows how Robertson's rebuilding of the village more or less concealed the earlier layout of the village through the amalgamation of property boundaries to both the north and south of the main road through the village. Many of the earlier village buildings were also rebuilt at this time although some earlier buildings survived including Rock Farm (Grade II), Lower Farm and Manor Farm.

Hurst Farm (Grade II), which is immediately adjacent to the PDA, takes its name from the hill upon which the eastern part of the village is situated. The farmhouse is stylistically a product of the Robertson rebuild of the village though the plan of 1776 shows that there was a building on this site during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the cartographic evidence shows that the PDA was in open undeveloped ground and also well outside of the 18<sup>th</sup> century formally designed gardens belonging to Chilcote Hall. However, the 1776 map shows that the PDA is located in a field which contained a pump house (and presumably piping) most likely used to transfer water to the gardens in the adjacent field, hence the fieldname reflects this *Pump-house Piece*. The small square building in the south west corner of this field, shown on the 1776 map, may represent the location of the pump house itself.

The cartographic evidence indicates that there was little or no change within and around the PDA into the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the 1955 OS map (Figure 5) depicts two footpaths crossing the field and terminating at a small enclosure in its north east corner.

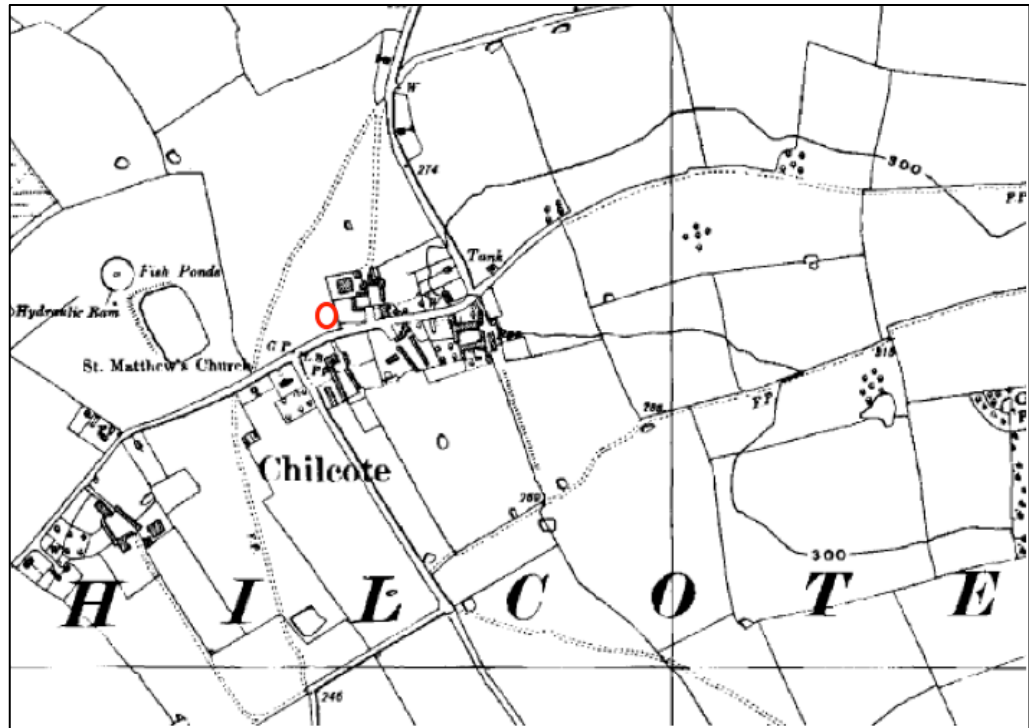


Figure 5. OS Plan, 10,560 1955.

#### HER Data:

Most of the entries on the HER (Appendix 4) relate to post-medieval buildings within the village of Chilcote. However, several of the entries relate to probable prehistoric sites and these include:

- MLE4492 Prehistoric pit alignment with parallel feature west of Gorse Spinney.
- MLE4495 Possible prehistoric cropmarks south west of Manor Farm.
- MLE6401 Prehistoric pebble hammer from near the River Mease.
- MLE20919 Pit alignment, Yew Tree Farm.
- MLE20920 Pit alignment and other features.

The HER therefore shows that prehistoric activity and settlement is well-attested in the locality, in particular the pit alignments suggest the presence of boundary features in the landscape during the prehistoric period.

Two aerial photographs supplied by the HER, one taken in 1968 and one in 1976 suggest the presence of a possible hollow way leading diagonally across the field in which the PDA is situated from the north west edge of the pond in the next field (Figures 6 and 7). The north eastern half of both fields containing the pond and that containing the PDA show traces of ridge and furrow. There are no obvious cropmark features within the PDA itself on the aerial photographs.

The HER also records two previous pieces of archaeological investigation near to the village (ELE5590 and ELE5589 Appendix 3) comprising a geophysical survey and a watching brief during works on the village drain. Neither of the investigations identified the presence of archaeological remains.

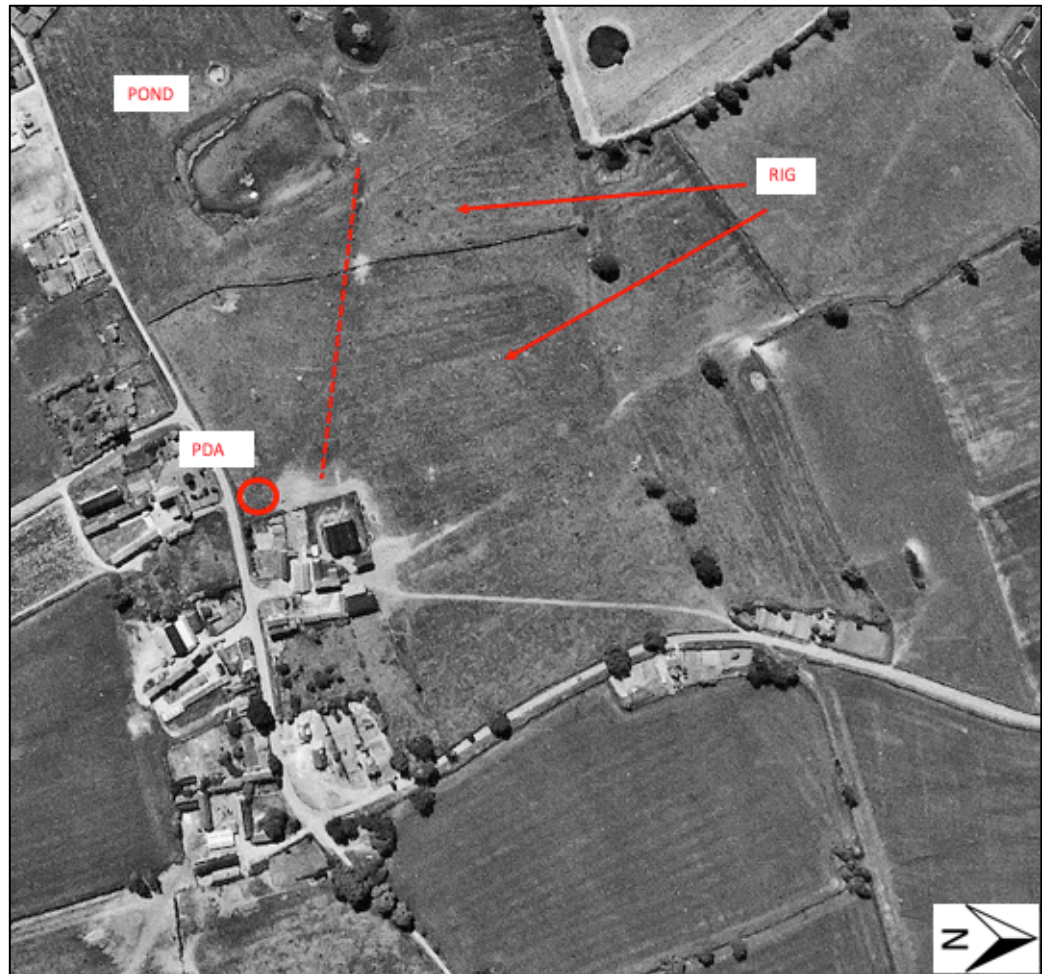


Figure 6. 1968 aerial photograph. The broken red line marks the location of the possible holloway.



Figure 7. 1976 aerial photograph.

Lidar of the area shows up some distinctive features, including ridge and furrow in the field containing the pond, the area of the 18<sup>th</sup> century designed park, and in the field containing the PDA. Some of the earthworks in the field in which the PDA sites may be due to natural slopes and hollows but others have a fairly distinct shape. A possible holloway adjacent to two rectilinear platforms is suggested in the north west portion of the field (Figure 8). It is possible that these earthworks relate to the medieval shrunken village.



Figure 8. Lidar showing possible earthworks in the field in which the PDA is located.

**The application site:**

The PDA is a roughly L-shaped parcel of ground occupying the south east corner of a large field to the north and west of Hurst Farm. Generally speaking, the ground within the field slopes down towards the west and is laid down to pasture. The ground within the PDA slopes quite steeply from its south east corner towards the south west and forms the highest point in the field (Plates 1 and 2). The ground within the PDA is uneven but does not appear to contain any obviously coherent earthwork evidence although within the larger field the possible holloway shown on the aerial photographs and lidar can be discerned. Some of the unevenness of the ground may be due to the fact that cows regularly graze in the field and have poached the surface.



Plate 1. Looking towards the PDA from the south showing a fairly steep rise in the ground within the PDA.





Plate 2. Looking towards the south west from the top of the PDA.

**Earthwork Survey:** The earthwork survey confirmed the findings of the site visit and desk-based research that the PDA does not contain any discernible or coherent earthwork features which are not naturally occurring.

**Assessment of Significance and Setting:** Historic England concedes that assessments of **significance** may be subjective, but the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that it is ultimately for the LPA to assess significance based on evidence provided by applicants. This report is primarily intended to provide that evidence and this report suggests the following for the LPA to consider when making its assessment (see Appendix 1 for detail on assessing significance).

Based upon the results of desk-based research it has been concluded that the PDA may contain archaeological and/or artefactual material. However, this would not be in the form of above-ground earthwork remains but more likely would be in the form of buried features.

Although there is ample evidence for prehistoric activity and settlement in the wider area, this is, for the most part, at some distance from the PDA and, therefore, it is considered that the PDA has low evidential value in terms of prehistoric heritage assets.

Given the PDA's proximity to the medieval core of the village of Chilcote there is higher potential for archaeological remains/artefactual evidence of this period to be present within the PDA. The western part of the village appears to have undergone shrinkage at some time in the past with the density of settlement switching to the eastern part of the village. The PDA is near to the church of St. Matthews, which has medieval origins and to the site of Chilcote Hall which most likely was the site of a manor house associated with the church during this period. Aerial photographs and lidar both suggest the presence of a holloway in the field in which the PDA is situated. The lidar, in particular suggests the presence of two possible rectilinear platforms next to the putative holloway. However, as the PDA appears to lack any of the obviously discernible earthwork features shown on aerial photographs and lidar in the field as a whole, and moreover is located on fairly steeply sloping ground, it has low potential to contain above ground or below-ground archaeological remains of medieval and/or post-medieval date.

The earthwork survey has served to confirm the conclusions of this AA that the PDA, although within an area of discernible earthworks, does not itself contain any which are due to human activity.

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In terms of significance as defined by NPPF and Historic England that of the PDA is vested solely in its potential, albeit limited, evidential/ archaeological heritage value. Should any archaeological remains be present they would most likely be represented by buried artefactual and/or archaeological remains of medieval/ post-medieval date and be of local importance.

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### **PART 3 – PLANNING POLICY, PROPOSALS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT.**

#### **Planning Policy:**

Relevant national planning policy and legislation makes clear that LPAs are under an obligation to consider not only the preservation/conservation of heritage assets but also the impacts from a proposed development on their significance and on the contribution to that significance provided by their setting. Based upon the information provided by an applicant the decision-maker must apply planning judgement to the particular facts and circumstances, having regard to the relevant policy, guidance and advice (see Appendix 2 for detail of guidance and legislation).

#### **Local Planning Policy:**

Local planning policy with regard to the historic environment is laid out in the *North West Leicestershire Local Plan, adopted 2017*. Policy HE1 – Conservation and Enhancement of North West Leicestershire’s Historic Environment states:

1. *To ensure the conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire’s historic environment, proposals for development, including those designed to improve the environmental performance of a heritage asset, should:*
  - a) *Conserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets within the district, their setting, for instance significant views within and in and out of Conservation Areas;*
  - b) *Retain buildings, settlement patterns, features and spaces which form part of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting;*
  - c) *Contribute to the local distinctive, built form and scale of heritage assets through the use of appropriate design, materials and workmanship;*
  - d) *Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits.*
2. *There will be a presumption against development that will lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset. Proposals will be refused consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss or all of the following apply:*
  - *The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
  - *No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
  - *Conservation by grant funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
  - *The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*
3. *Where permission is granted, where relevant the Council will secure appropriate conditions and /or seek to negotiate a Section 106 Obligation to ensure that all heritage assets are appropriately managed and conserved.*
4. *The District Council will support development that conserves the significance of non-designated heritage assets including archaeological remains.*

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**Proposals:** The proposal is for the erection of a three-bedroomed detached dwelling including associated gardens and parking. Given the location of the PDA on sloping ground there will likely be a necessity to cut and fill on the slope before development begins.

**Impact of Proposals:** In accordance with NPPF impacts on significance from the proposed scheme have been judged in this HS using the criteria of **no harm, less than substantial harm and substantial harm**.

Should there be archaeological remains present within the PDA any pre-construction works such as levelling, excavation of foundations and service trenches would cause substantial harm to any archaeological resource within the development area. This would be due to the fact that ground works would severely truncate or entirely remove archaeological deposits and features within the PDA thus leading to a total loss of significance.

As the PDA is located within an area of potential archaeology, as represented by the earthworks within the bigger field in which it is situated, and as represented by its proximity to the medieval core of the village where archaeological remains may also survive, the removal of any surviving associated remains within the PDA would result in an erosion of the significance of the overall archaeological resource, at least within the western half of the village.

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#### **PART 4 –CONCLUSION**

It is the conclusion of this AA that the proposed development would result in substantial harm to any undesignated, as yet unidentified, archaeological features and deposits within the PDA, should they be present. The significance of the archaeological resource within the PDA would therefore be subjected to substantial harm under the terms of the Framework.

The NPPF emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission should be no more than is necessary for an LPA to reach an informed decision and that the level of information provided needs to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected and the impact on that significance (including setting) from a proposed development. Therefore, the aim of this AA is to provide a sufficient level of information regarding the presence of undesignated heritage assets, in this case archaeological remains, and the potential impact on them of the proposed development in order for the LPA to exercise its planning judgement with regard to the planning application in question, in particular whether there is a need for further archaeological work prior to determination of the planning application.

When weighing the impact of the proposed development on the significance of any archaeological remains within the PDA the LPA should balance this against the fact that any remains are most likely to be of local/limited significance only.

In addition, there will be a concomitant public benefit from the proposed scheme for a new dwelling in the village which accords with the rural housing goals of the Local Plan. The Chilcote and Stretton-le-Field rural housing survey done in 2015 identified a need for up to two small affordable or open market homes for local people.

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**References:**

*Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England 2008;*

*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, National Planning Policy Framework DCLG 2018;*

*The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3, Historic England 2015 London.*

*Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment, Good Practice in Planning 2, Historic England 2015;*

*Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014);*

*National Planning Policy Framework, DCLG NPPF 2012 rev, 2018;*

*North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2016, North West Leicestershire District Council.*

*Land adjacent to Hurst Farm, Chilcote, Leicestershire, Heritage Statement to accompany a proposal for a new dwelling, P.E. Heath 2016.*

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# APPENDIX 1

## ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

The NPPF glossary describes **significance** as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The Historic England publication *Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA 3, 2015a)* states that an understanding of the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset is necessary in assessing how adaptable an asset may be to change, the best means of conservation and how relevant policies should be applied.

Historic England's publication *Conservation Principles* (HE, 2008) further clarifies the concept of significance as the value of a heritage asset which may be evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal.

**Evidential value** is defined as the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity and is primarily associated with physical remains or historic fabric.

**Historical value** arises from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This can derive from particular aspects of past ways of life. It can provide a direct link to the past and to notable families, persons, events or movements.

**Aesthetic value** is the way in which a heritage asset provides sensory and intellectual stimulation including design value such as of a building, structure or landscape as a whole. It may also include its physical form, and how it lies within its setting.

**Communal value** is the meaning of a place to the people who relate to it and for whom it relates to their collective experience or memory. It may be commemorative or symbolic and be associated with identity or collective memory.

The significance of a heritage asset is normally related to a combination of some or all of these values.

The contribution that **setting** makes to the significance of a heritage asset is considered to mean the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. NPPF makes it clear that *the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset (Historic England GPA 3 *The Setting of Heritage Assets*).

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from a heritage asset will play an important part, the way a heritage asset is experienced in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places (ibid).

Historic England provides guidance on approaches to assessing the setting of a heritage asset and its contribution to the significance of the heritage asset. A staged approach is advised:

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- **Step 1** is to identify which heritage assets and their setting are affected;
  - **Step 2** is to assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset and considers the physical surrounding of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets, the way the asset is appreciated and the asset's associations and patterns of use;
  - **Step 3**, if appropriate, is to assess the effect of the proposed development on the significance of an asset by considering its location/siting, form/appearance, additional effects and permanence;
  - **Step 4** is to maximise enhancement and minimise harm;
  - **Step 5** relates to making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes.

## APPENDIX 2

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Section 2 of the NPPF, *Achieving Sustainable Development* states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, described as the objective of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan, or,
- Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:
  - a. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or,
  - b. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

In this regard the NPPF recognizes that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Section 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies on the historic environment and how these are expected to be implemented. The emphasis is on planning requirements and decisions within the planning system being relevant and proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset potentially affected by a proposal.

Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (from alteration or destruction or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Where a proposed development will lead to **substantial harm** to (or total loss of significance) of a designated heritage asset, LPAs should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits (para. 195). Where a development proposal will lead to **less than substantial harm** to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (para. 196).

Where non-designated heritage assets are concerned the NPPF requires that LPAs take into account the impact of a proposal on the significance of the heritage asset in determining the application. In particular, when weighing the impact of a development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset LPAs will need to use a balanced judgement regarding the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (para. 197).

In determining planning applications, the NPPF also requires that LPAs should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to a viable use consistent with their conservation. It also encourages LPAs to consider the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.

The NPPF defines **archaeological interest** as:

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*...evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.*

All heritage assets, including those within the historic built environment, can have archaeological interest, but very often archaeological interest pertains to buried remains and above-ground remains in the form of earthworks and historic landscape features.

The NPPF emphasises that the information required in support of applications for planning permission should be no more than is necessary for an LPA to reach an informed decision and that the level of information provided needs to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected and the impact on that significance (including setting) from a proposed development.

Therefore, the aim of this HIS is to provide a sufficient level of information regarding the presence of designated and undesignated heritage assets (including buried archaeological remains) and the potential impact on them of the proposed development in order for the LPA to exercise its planning judgement with regard to the planning application in question.

The Listed Buildings Act 1990 which sets out the general duties of Local Planning Authorities with regard to the exercise of planning functions within a conservation area and the relationship of proposals to any listed buildings states:

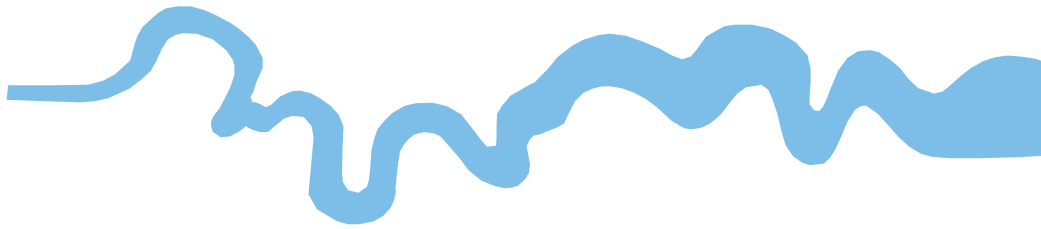
*In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Section 66).*

With regard to development affecting buildings or land in a conservation area the Act requires the LPA to pay special attention to *the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area* (Section 72).



# **APPENDIX 3 EARTHWORK REPORT**

**T V A S**



**NORTH MIDLANDS**

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,  
Chilcote, Leicestershire**

**Archaeological Earthwork Survey**

**by Helen Daniel**

**Site Code NRC 19/108**

**(SK 2851 1149)**

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,  
Chilcote, Leicestershire**

**An Archaeological Earthwork Survey  
for Avalon Heritage**

by Helen Daniel

TVAS North Midlands

Site Code NRC 19/108

**July 2019**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire

**Grid reference:** SK 2851 1149

**Site activity:** Earthwork Survey

**Date and duration of project:** 23 July 2019

**Project coordinator:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Helen Daniel

**Site code:** NRC 19/108

**Area of site:** c. 0.2 hectares

**Summary of results:** A parcel of land opposite Lower Farm House on Netherseal Road was subject to an earthwork survey which revealed two features, neither of which is thought to be of archaeological significance. In addition, LiDAR data for the site identified a number of features but none which show a coherent pattern, although there are significantly more earthworks within the immediate landscape surrounding the site.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands and will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford	08.08.19
	Steve Preston	07.08.19

# Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire An Archaeological Earthwork Survey

by Helen Daniel

Report 19/108

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological earthwork survey carried out at land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire (SK 2851 1149) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mrs Helen Martin-Bacon of Avalon Heritage Limited, Dairyhouse Lane, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PW on behalf of Mr and Mrs Hancocks of 4 Jewsbury Avenue, Measham, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 7LE.

Outline planning permission (18/02262/VCU) has been granted by North West Leicestershire District Council for the erection of a detached dwelling on a parcel of land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road, Chilcote. The consent is subject to a condition (13), which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019) and North West Leicestershire District Council's policies on archaeology. It was determined that the investigation would take the form, initially, of an earthwork survey, for incorporation into an archaeological impact assessment.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by the County Archaeologist, Mr Richard Clark. The fieldwork was undertaken by Helen Daniel on 23rd July 2019 and the site code is NRC 19/108. The archive is presently held at TVAS North Midlands, Stoke-on-Trent and will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Netherseal Road at its junction with Church Lane and No Man's Heath Road, Chilcote, Leicestershire and is *c.*8km south of the town of Swadlincote and *c.*30km west of the city of Leicester (Fig. 1). The proposed development area comprises an irregular parcel of land measuring *c.*0.2ha in area (Fig. 2), currently under pasture and situated approximately 800m south-east of the River Mease. The site slopes from 83m above Ordnance Datum along its eastern boundary down to 77m aOD at its south-western corner. The underlying geology is recorded as Helsby Sandstone Formation - Mudstone (BGS 2019).

## **Archaeological background**

The village of Chilcote is first recorded in Domesday Book as *Cildecote* (Williams and Martin 2002). At this time it was part of the county of Derbyshire, becoming part of Leicestershire in 1897 and is located near No Man's Heath, the point at which the four counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire meet. The setting of the heritage assets has recently been evaluated (Heath 2017) and is summarized below.

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of Chilcote (HER ref.: MLE16709), in an area of earthwork remains that have been associated with the former village and the post-medieval park that is illustrated on a 1776 plan, lying directly west of the site. It is possible that buried archaeological remains, indicative of the establishment, settlement and probable clearance of the settlement to make way for the park, may survive in the development area (Heath 2017).

In addition to the possible buried archaeological remains, there are also four Grade II listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. Hurst Farmhouse and Hurst Lodge (MLE10816) are located around 60m east of the site and are sub-divided from the former farmhouse which dates from *c.*1835. The original appearances of these buildings are still very perceptible and having a prominent position within the village, retain their historic relationship with the village as one of its main farmhouses. Their name is taken from the low hill upon which this part of the village is seated (Heath 2017). Rock Farmhouse (MLE10817) is situated around 80m south-east of the proposal site, dating from the 18th century and retaining many original features. St Matthew's Church (MLE10815) stands approximately 60m to the south-west of the site and although altered in the 19th century, has medieval origins with the retention of some original carved roof timbers.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the fieldwork was to determine the extent, form and possible character of any earthworks situated within the area of development, in line with Historic England guidance (HE 2017), in order to assess the potential archaeological impact of the proposal.

A topographical survey of the earthworks was undertaken using a Trimble Geo7x hand-held GNSS system with sub-decimetre accuracy. Recordings were taken of spot heights, any breaks of slope and bases of slope, along with profiles across any earthworks. Notes were taken regarding the site conditions, the earthworks and any other features worthy of comment. Earthworks were surveyed to allow an interpretation plan to be produced, illustrated as a hachure plan. The resulting data was processed with GPS Pathfinder Office and is geo-referenced.

All results will be archived. A photographic record was also made of the site, capturing images of the earthworks and site conditions at the time of the survey. The location of all photographic views was recorded and a selection of these views are included on Plates 1-4.

## **Earthwork Survey Results and Description**

This section discusses the form, possible date and function of the earthworks recorded during the course of the survey. The resulting information has been used to produce a hachured interpretation plan (Figs 2 and 3) and section profiles of the earthworks (Fig. 4).

The site conditions were good, with very warm, dry and sunny weather. The site was under grass pasture which was not mown and did not have livestock present and the western site boundary was only partially marked.

The development area contained two separate areas of visible earthworks. The most apparent of these earthwork features is an obvious slope which covers the majority of the site: a few metres from the site's eastern boundary the ground drops off quite sharply towards the west, dropping approximately 4m to the ground level of the field entrance. This feature is relatively uniform along its length and does not appear to be related to the smaller earthworks noted near the field entrance in the south-west. The position and form of this feature suggest that it is the edge of the natural low hillock upon which Hurst Farmhouse and Hurst Lodge are situated.

The other area of earthworks is located immediately inside the entrance to the field. This consists of two slight depressions sloping from north to south, with just over a metre in height between them. It was noted that the curved shape of these banks mirrored the shape of the field boundary at this point and it seems likely from the form and shallow depth of these features that they are related to livestock management and movement taking place just inside the entrance of the field.

## **LiDAR**

LiDAR data tile sk2811\_DTM\_1m was downloaded from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs website (DEFRA 2019) and added to a Geographical Information System programme, QGIS. The tile gave complete coverage of the site.

Terrain analysis was carried out in QGIS using the 'hillshade' function. Virtual shade plot files with a vertical angle of 15° from the earth's surface were created at every 45° from azimuth 0° to 315° with vertical settings varying from z=1 to z=3. A selection of the most informative plots is shown in Figure 5. It should be

noted that the mapping of features is not precise as the pseudo light source creates a 'shadow' which displaces them in a direction opposite to it. The results were compared with modern ordnance survey data to ensure that extant features were not represented wrongly as of potential archaeological significance.

The area to the west of the site is rich in broad linear trends (Fig. 6: A), probably indicative of multiphase earthworks. The area within the site has a busy appearance and some distinct lines (Fig. 6: B) but there are no coherent patterns.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

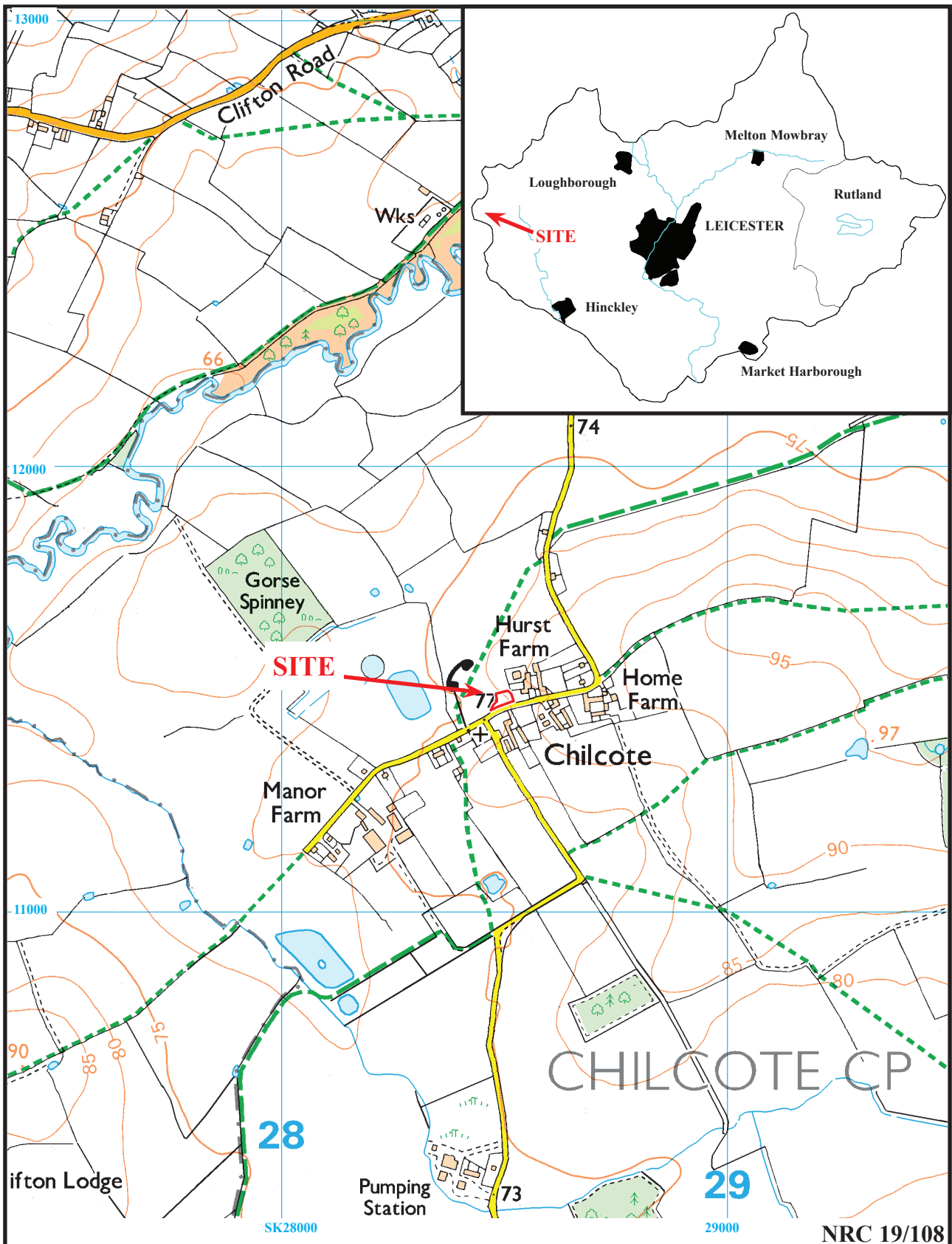
The earthwork survey results identified two features; a large sloped area and a smaller shallow slope, neither of which appears to be of any potential archaeological interest. The LiDAR data and interpretation also identified that the site has earthwork features but was unable to discern any coherent pattern within the site boundary, although the larger field within which the site sits has more extensive earthworks which may indicate a multi-phase site, possibly related to the earlier historic village core.

The site is dominated by the steep slope from the eastern boundary which appears to be natural and to be a continuation of the small prominence on which the nearby farmhouse is situated. The other features are quite shallow and do not appear to relate to any archaeological features. These shallow earthworks are located in the corner of the site, near to the field entrance, where the site narrows to less than 10m and mirror the shape of the boundary at this point. Therefore it seems likely that they are a result of livestock movement into and out of the field, which over time has resulted in rutting in this restricted area.

## **References**

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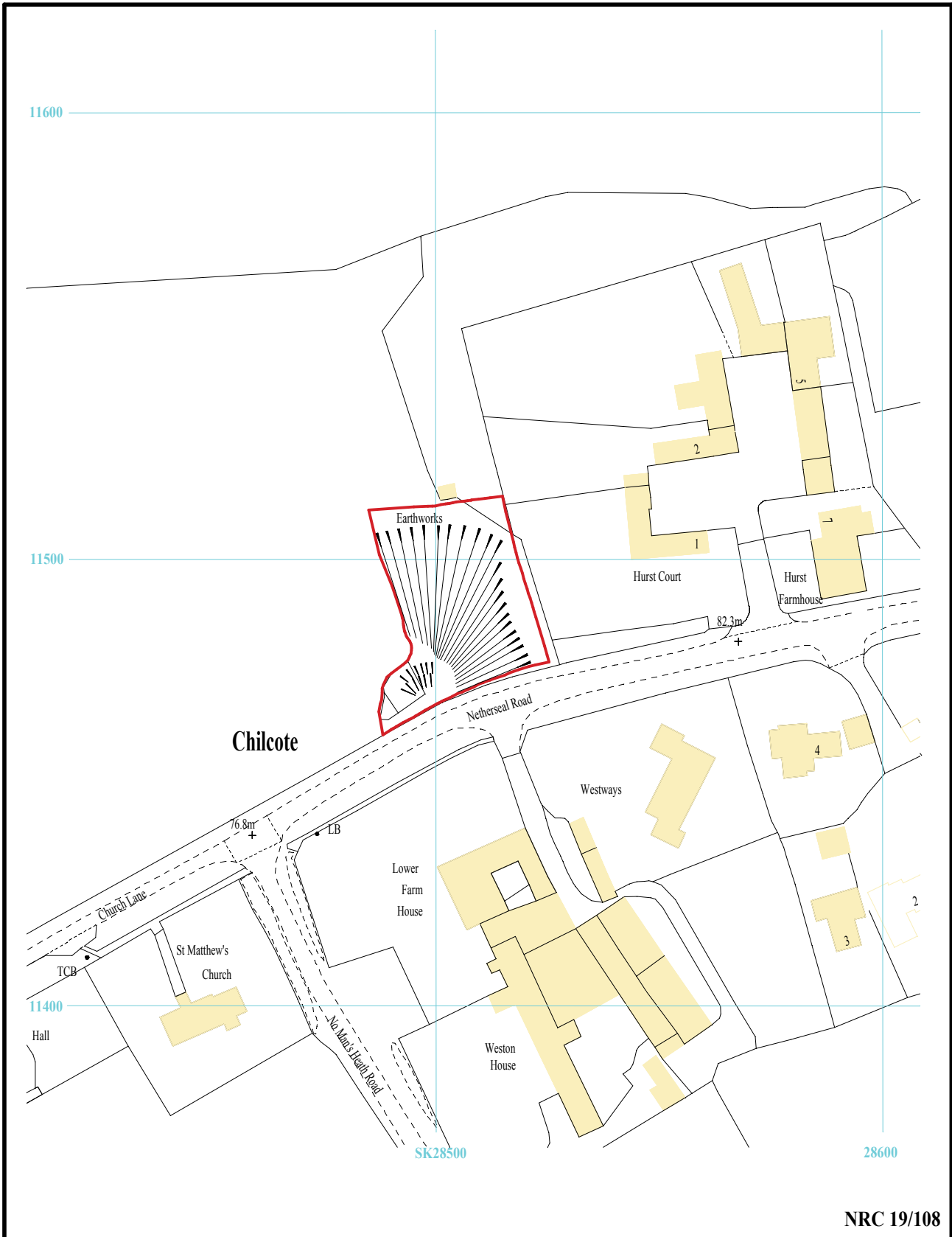




**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019**  
**Archaeological Earthwork Survey**  
 Figure 1. Location of site within Chilcote and Leicestershire.

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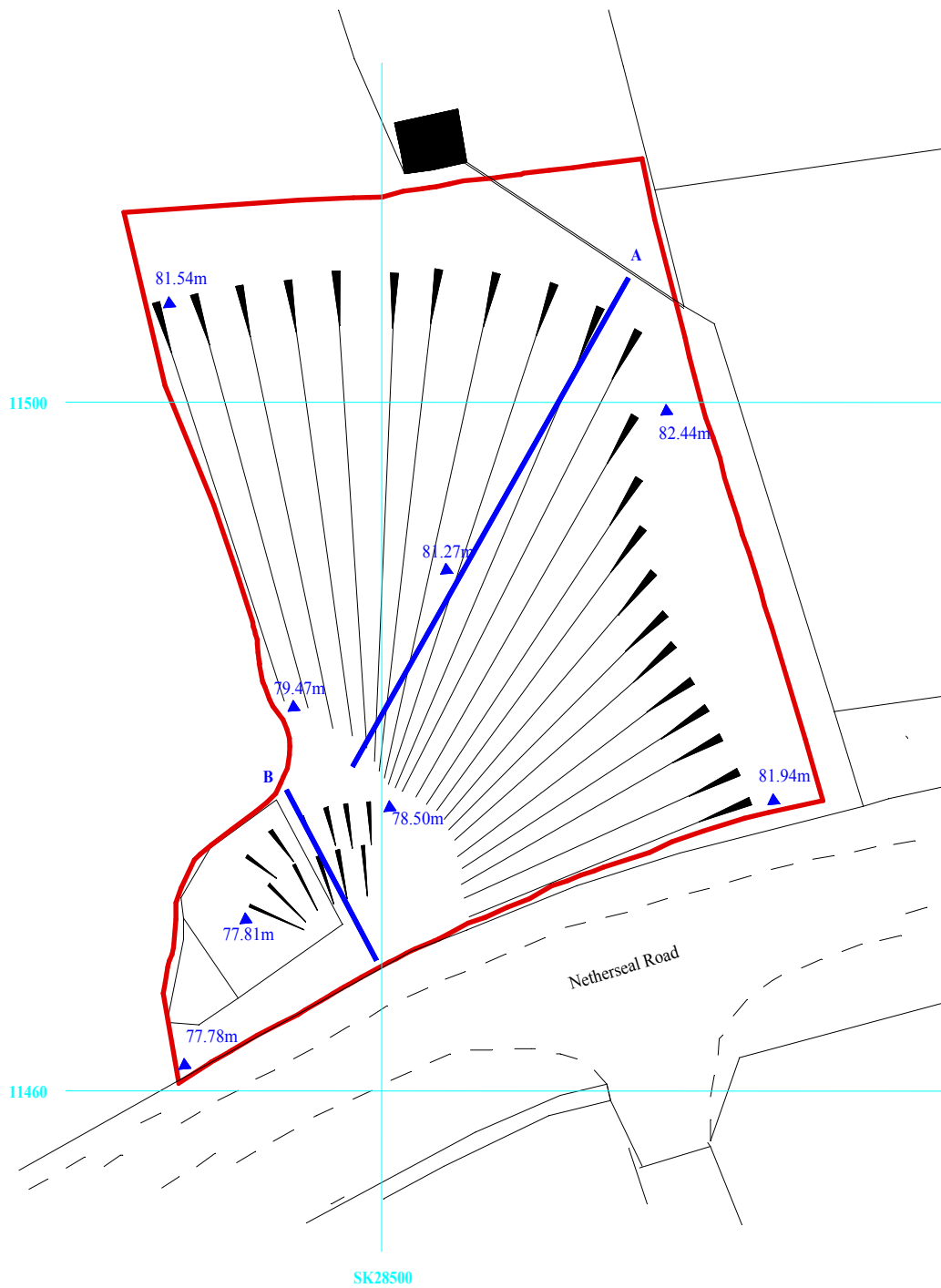


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**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019  
Archaeological Earthwork Survey**

Figure 2. Site plan with survey results.





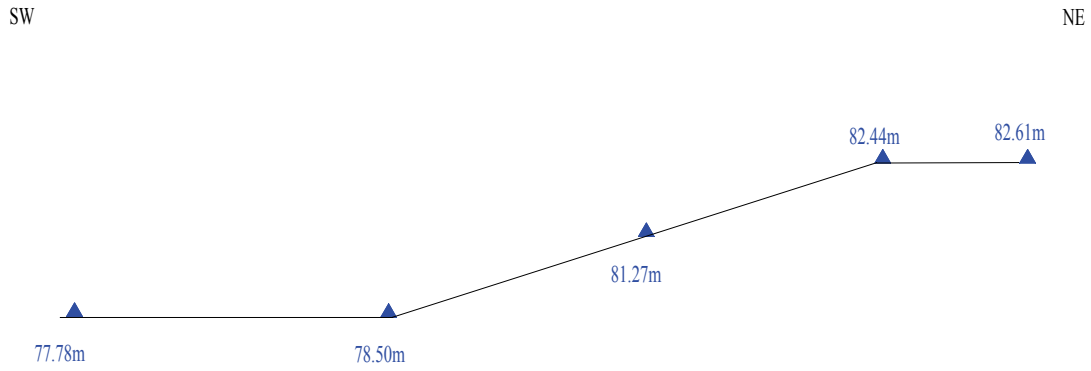
NRC 19/108

**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019  
Archaeological Earthwork Survey**

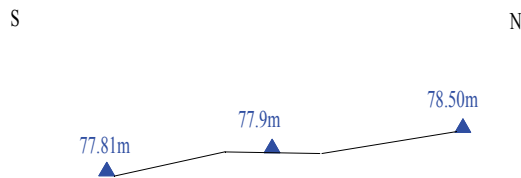
Figure 3. Detailed site plan showing earthworks, locations of profile drawings and spot heights.



A: Profile of earthwork slope in the east of site



B: Profile of earthworks in south, near field entrance

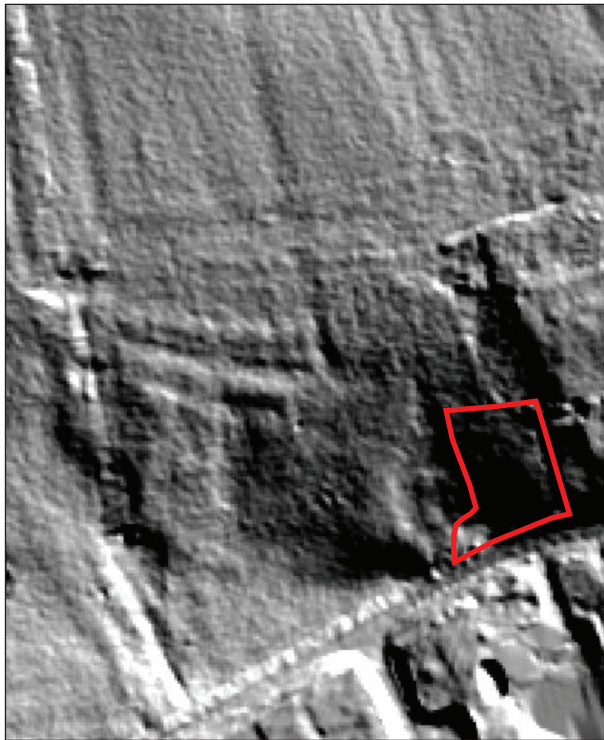


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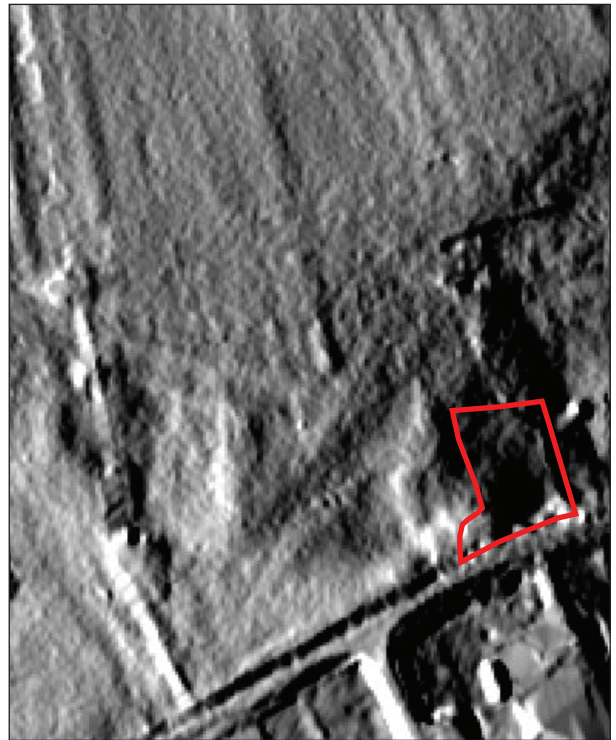
Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road,  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019  
Archaeological Earthwork Survey

Figure 4. Profile of earthworks

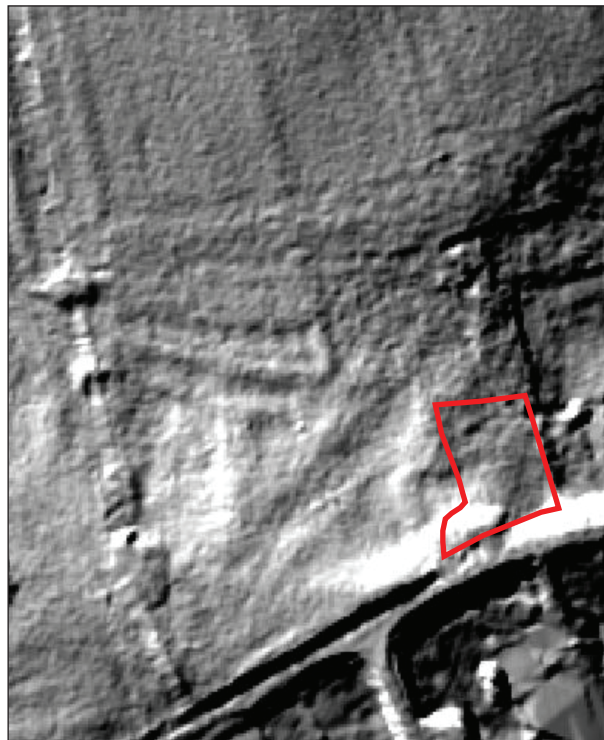




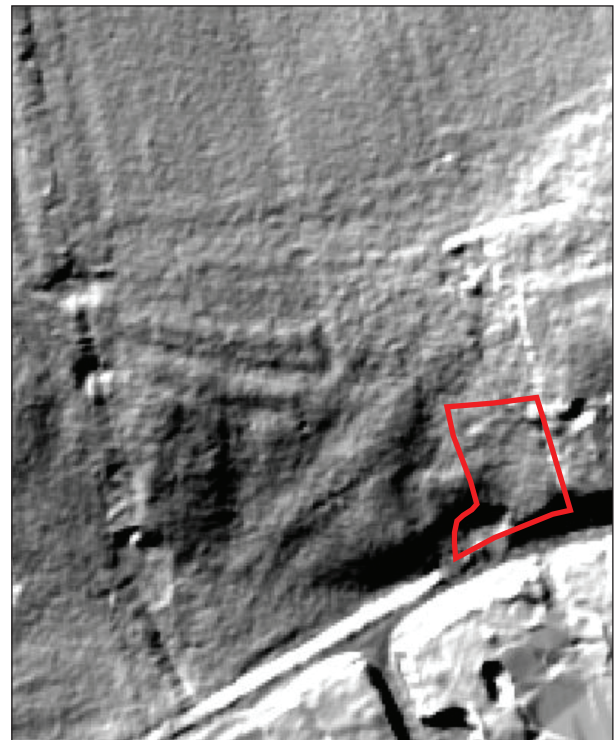
a. Azimuth 45°, vertical angle 15°.



b. Azimuth 90°, vertical angle 15°.



c. Azimuth 135°, vertical angle 15°.



d. Azimuth 315°, vertical angle 15°.

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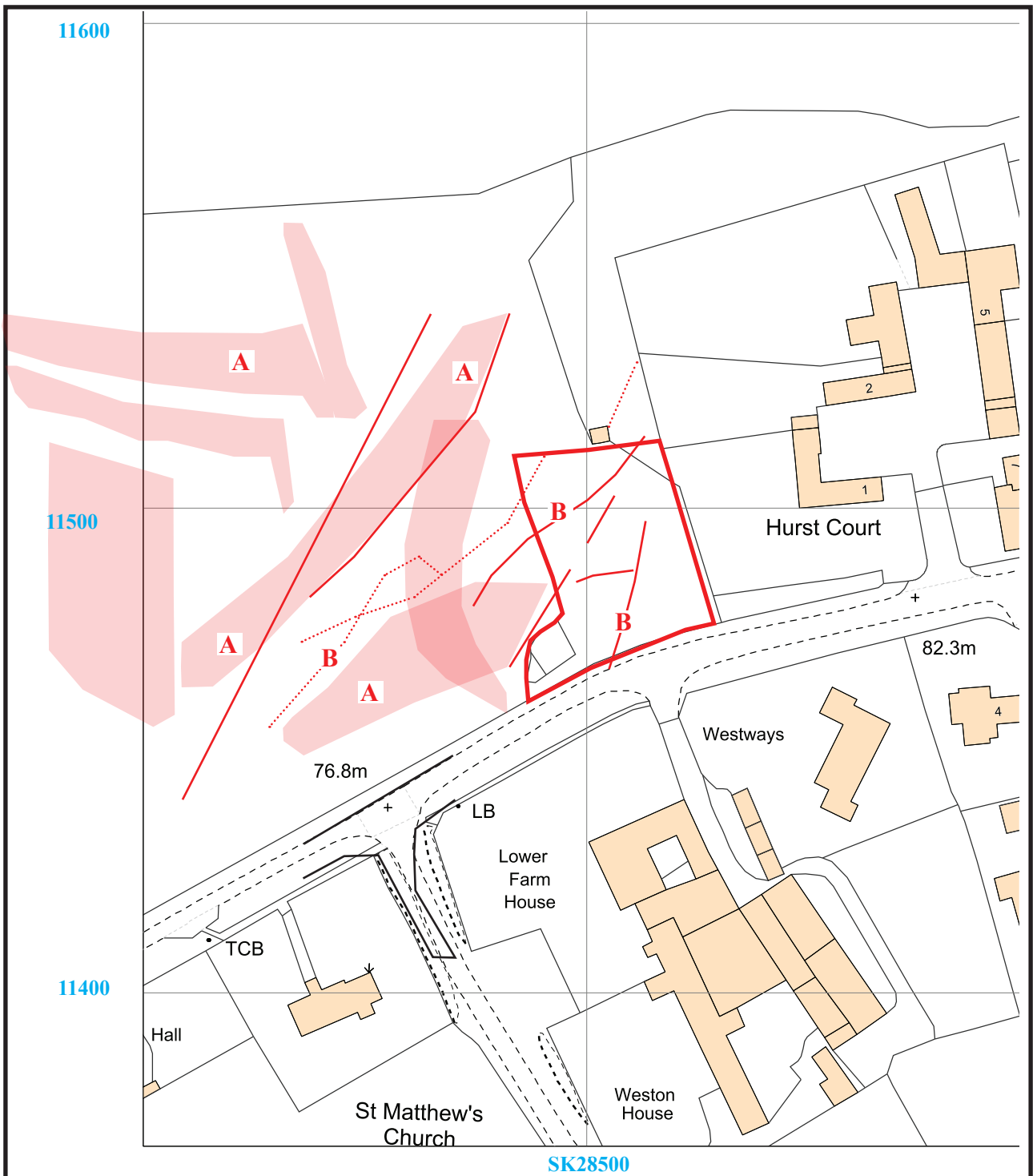


**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019**

**Archaeological Earthwork Survey**  
Figure 5. Lidar 'hillshade' gray scale plots.

No scale





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**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019**  
**Archaeological Earthwork Survey**  
 Figure 6. Interpretation of Lidar images,  
 Superimposed on Ordnance Survey Master Map, 2019.  
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Plate 1. View east towards the western boundary of the proposal site.



Plate 2. View north-east showing western and southern boundary of the proposal site



Plate 3. View west from the eastern boundary of the proposal site.



Plate 4. View south-west towards St Matthew's church.

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**Land opposite Lower Farm House, Netherseal Road  
Chilcote, Leicestershire, 2019  
Archaeological Earthwork Survey  
Plates 1 to 4.**

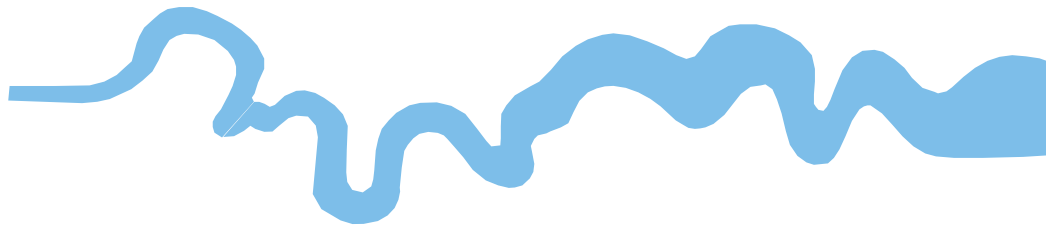
**T V A S**  
  
**NORTH MIDLANDS**

## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC







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- Setting Assessments;
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- Historic agricultural buildings;
- Desk-Based Assessments;
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