

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT  
OF  
LAND NORTH OF LAVENDON ROAD,  
OLNEY, MILTON KEYNES



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Status: Revision 1  
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Project reference: P4253  
Report reference: 2111



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## **An archaeological desk-based assessment of land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes**

Andrew Walsh

### **Summary**

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes (centred on NGR SP 8909 5235). It was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates, in advance of a proposed development for which a planning application is in preparation. This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site evaluation, is assessed.

The assessment identified there is limited potential for early prehistoric remains to be present within the proposed development site. The site is located adjacent to a scheduled Roman settlement site, which may have its origins in the Iron Age. There is high potential for the settlement and/or other activity to extend into the proposed development area. An archaeological evaluation to the west of the development site identified early medieval remains so there is a moderate potential for early medieval remains to extend into the proposed development site.

During the medieval and later periods the site appears to have been part of the wider agricultural landscape of Olney so any below ground remains are likely to be of limited heritage interest. One short section of historically important hedgerow was identified during the assessment.

The desk-based assessment identified that early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century quarrying activity has potentially truncated any archaeological remains in the western half of the site, and therefore this part of the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

It is concluded that further investigation in the form of an archaeological evaluation, should be undertaken in the eastern part of the proposed site to clarify the extent, nature and date of any remains.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes (centred on NGR SP 8909 5235). It was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates, in advance of a proposed development for which a planning application will be submitted to Milton Keynes Council. The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application.

The project conforms to a project proposal (including detailed specification) produced by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2013). The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (IfA 2012).

#### 1.2 Planning background

Present government planning policy is contained within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012), guidance for which is contained in the *National Planning Practice Guidance* web-based resource (DCLG 2014).

The Milton Keynes Core Strategy was adopted as a Local Plan in July 2013 (MKC 2013) and forms a framework for planning within the borough. The plan briefly describes some of the historic environment of Milton Keynes and states that:

*15.4 The historic environment of MK makes a fundamental contribution to the distinctiveness of the area, influencing the character of the built and natural environment and shaping its sense of place and identity. Heritage assets can provide the catalyst for regeneration schemes and the stimulus for more imaginative development solutions. The retention, preservation and re-use of heritage assets is sustainable and can contribute to carbon reduction when set against schemes of redevelopment, their sympathetic integration into regeneration schemes reinforces local identity (MKC 2013, 94).*

The plan contains the following policy relating to archaeology:

#### *Policy CS19 – The Historic and Natural Environment*

*Developments will protect and enhance the significance of the Borough's Heritage Assets, including important elements of the 20th Century New Town architecture. Development proposals must consider the character, appearance and setting of sites, buildings, structures, areas, parks and gardens and landscapes that are of historic, architectural, cultural, biodiversity or archaeological significance (MKC 2013, 95).*

### 2 Aims

The general aims of this assessment are to:

- establish the nature and extent of the heritage assets;
- assess the significance of the heritage assets within the application site and those affected by the proposed development;
- assess the impact of the application on the heritage assets
- identify any need for further assessment or mitigation strategies

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Andrew Walsh BSc MSc AIfA FSA Scot who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. The project managers

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responsible for the quality of the project were Tom Rogers BA MSc and Tom Vaughan BA MA AlfA.

### 3.2 Documentary research

All relevant information on the history of the site and past land-use was collected and assessed. Records of known archaeological sites and monuments were obtained from Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record (MKHER) and English Heritage. Copies of historic maps from the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies were studied, and online resources including A Vision of Britain Through Time and British History Online were also searched.

The results are mapped on Figures 2-8 and the details of individual features of the historic environment are given in Appendix 1.

### 3.3 List of sources consulted

#### *Cartographic sources*

- 1611, Buckinghamshire by John Speed (not illustrated)
- c1645, Buckinghamshire by Joan Blaeu (not illustrated)
- 1695, Buckinghamshire by Robert Morden
- 1770, Buckinghamshire by Thomas Jefferys
- 1798, Survey map of the Estate of the Earl of Dartmouth
- 1825, Buckinghamshire by Andrew Bryant
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey 1882, scale 1:2,500
- 1900, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:2,500
- 1950, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,560
- 1958-60, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,560
- 1975, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:2,500
- 1982-94, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,000
- 2014, Ordnance Survey, scale 1:10,000
- BGS *Geology of Britain* viewer, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, accessed 10 April 2014

#### *Documentary sources*

- Bartlett, A D H 1999 *Land at Lavendon Road, Olney, Buckinghamshire: Report on Archaeological Survey*, Bartlett-Clark Consultancy
- Cowper and Newton Museum 2014 *Cowper's Tame Hares*, [http://www.cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/mw\\_tame\\_hares.pdf](http://www.cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/mw_tame_hares.pdf), accessed 10 April 2014
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government
- DCLG 2014 *Planning Policy Guidance web-based resource* <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk> accessed 5<sup>th</sup> August 2014
- English Heritage 2011 *The setting of heritage assets*, English Heritage
- Flavell, N, 2006 *Archaeological Evaluation of Land at Warrington Road, Olney, Milton Keynes, July-August 2006*, Acc No 2006.168, Northamptonshire Archaeology

- Green, D and Beckley, R, 2010 *Olney: Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Assessment Report*, Buckinghamshire County Council
- IfA 2012 *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*, Institute for Archaeologists, updated 16 November 2012
- Institute for Name-studies 2013 *Key to English Place-names*, <http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Buckinghamshire/Olney>, accessed 10 April 2014
- Kaye, D and Cuthbert, M, 2009 *Archaeological Evaluation: Lavendon Road Farm, Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes*, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd rep 1154/OLR/2
- MKC 2013 *Core Strategy, Adopted version, July 2013*, Milton Keynes Council
- Shane, G and Rouse, C, 2010 *Archaeological Evaluation: Land at Lavendon Road & Wellingborough Road, Olney, Milton Keynes*, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd rep 1324/OLR/2
- Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983 *Soils of the Midlands and Western England, Sheet 3*
- WA 2013 *Proposal for a desk-based assessment of a site north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, document dated 25 November 2013, P4253
- Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2003 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*, Penguin Books

### 3.4 Hedgerows

The consideration of the application of the *Hedgerows Regulations 1997* is intended to be indicative rather than definitive. Searches relating to the information necessary for the regulations are restricted to those that are readily available. For instance, Worcestershire Archaeology will not usually have undertaken exhaustive searches of documents (particularly textual documents) held by a Records Office. Wildlife and landscape criteria are also beyond the scope of this report and have not been considered.

### 3.5 Other methods

Consultation has been undertaken with Nick Crank (Senior Archaeological Officer, Milton Keynes Council) to establish the key issues of importance in decision-making in response to the planning application. A site visit was undertaken on 15 April 2014 to identify any potential heritage assets not recorded by the baseline sources.

### 3.6 Impact assessment criteria

The criteria cited in Table 1 have been used.

<p><b>Major Beneficial:</b> Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset of the highest order (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. Designated assets will include scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value). It may also be in better revealing a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area's significance.</p>
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<p><b>Beneficial:</b> Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of improvement will demonstrably have a minor affect on the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value).</p>
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<p><b>Not Significant:</b> Impacts that have no long-term effect on any heritage asset.</p>
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<p><b>Minor Adverse:</b> Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably have a minor affect on the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p> <p>Partial removal of a historically important hedgerow (after the Hedgerows Regulations).</p>
<p><b>Moderate Adverse:</b> Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites.</p> <p>Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p> <p>Removal of a historically important hedgerow (after the Hedgerows Regulations).</p>
<p><b>Major Adverse:</b> Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or harm to a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p> <p>Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm or loss will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p>
<p><b>Severe Adverse:</b> Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or the loss of a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Unknown:</b> Where there is insufficient information to determine either significance or impact for any heritage asset, or where a heritage asset is likely to exist but this has not been established, or where there is insufficient evidence for the absence of a heritage asset. For instance where further information will enable the planning authority to make an informed decision.</p>

*Table 1: Impact assessment criteria for heritage asset*

## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Location and size

The proposed development site (centred on NGR SP 8909 5235) is located on the northern edge of the town of Olney, which lies approximately 13km north of Milton Keynes. The proposed site covers an area of approximately 1.6ha, and is bounded by a small stream to the north, the B565 Lavendon Road to the east and south, and the A509 Warrington Road to the west. The study area included the application site and an area of 500m around the site (Fig 1) in order to provide a broader understanding of the local context.

### 4.2 Topography, geology and soils

The proposed development site lies on agricultural land gently sloping from a height of approximately 52m AOD to the west, down to approximately 49m AOD to the north-east. The underlying geology is mapped as argillaceous rocks with subordinate sandstone and limestone of the Rutland Formation overlain by superficial deposits of sand and gravel of the Felmersham Member (BGS 2014). The soils are mapped as typical brown calcareous earths of the Moreton association (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

### 4.3 Current land-use

The proposed development site is currently an uncultivated field containing rough grassland (Plate 1) on which there has been some dumping of earth and other materials. A trench has been excavated along the southern (Plate 2) and western boundaries, and five archaeological trenches excavated in 2010 remain open and overgrown (Section 5.2.5 below).

## 5 Heritage assets

This section provides an overview of the archaeological and historical background of the study area in order to understand the context and significance of the cultural heritage resource that may be affected by the proposed development. The designated heritage assets identified by the assessment are discussed below with reference to their National Heritage List number. The undesignated heritage assets identified during the assessment are discussed with reference to their Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record number, given in **bold**. If the asset is not recorded on the MKHER an additional heritage asset number (AHA) is given (*italicised*). All identified assets are catalogued in Appendix 1. Assets are illustrated on Figure 2 and recorded heritage events on Figure 3.

### 5.1 Designated heritage assets

There are no designated heritages assets within the proposed development site. Within the wider study area there is one scheduled monument and two listed buildings.

The Roman site at Olney (NHL1006918) is a scheduled monument which is also known as Ashfurlong (**MMK239**; Section 5.2.3 below). It lies immediately north of the proposed development site, although the two are separated by a small stream which may have formed a natural barrier in the landscape. It is a complex of enclosures, parallel linear ditches and ring ditches visible across an area of 25ha as cropmarks on aerial photographs suggesting a late Iron Age/Roman settlement. Finds of wall foundations and a hypocaust identified during watching briefs plus scatters of building stone found during in field walking indicate the presence of substantial stone buildings. The site was scheduled in 1976 and is mainly arable farmland.

Dartmouth House (NHL1158109) is a grade II listed building located on Dartmouth Road, Olney, 385m south-west of the proposed site. It is a three storey 18<sup>th</sup> century building, although the upper floor is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century addition.

The Castle Inn (NHL1125265) is a grade II listed building located on Yardley Road, Olney, 440m south-west of the proposed site. It is early 18<sup>th</sup> century in date, with later additions.

### 5.2 Undesignated heritage assets

#### 5.2.1 Palaeolithic (c 500,000 BC – 10,000 BC) and Mesolithic (c 10,000 BC – 4000 BC)

The earliest recorded human activity in the region is from the Palaeolithic, although very little is known generally about occupation in region at this time. During the Loch Lomond interstadial (11,000 BC – 10,000 BC) Britain was abandoned due to the extremely cold conditions. The post-glacial landscape comprised largely a treeless tundra, but by around 8000 BC this began to give way to woodland as the climate improved. This environmental change increased the potential for human activity as the spread of woodland increased plant and animal resources. However, the nomadic nature of Mesolithic groups mean they have left few occupation remains, and archaeological evidence is often limited to flint implements. No sites or finds of a Mesolithic date have previously been recorded within the study area.

#### 5.2.2 Neolithic (c 4000 BC – 2400 BC) and Bronze Age (c 2400 BC – 700 BC)

The Neolithic period is characterised by the domestication of plants and animals and the introduction of farming. This appears to have had increasing dramatic effects on the environment as woodland was cleared and areas of grassland and cereal production increased. The period also

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saw the introduction of large ritual and funerary monuments such as henges, stone circles and long barrows. However no Neolithic sites have been identified within the study area.

The Bronze Age saw the limited introduction of metal working and a change in burial practices from collective to single burials, often placed beneath barrows. A number of ring ditches have been identified along the landscape of the River Ouse, usually located on gravel terraces (Green and Beckley 2010, 30), although direct evidence of settlement and occupation is limited in the region. No Bronze Age sites have been recorded in the study area, although possible Bronze Age monuments have been identified c 550m to the north-east and north-west of the proposed site (Green and Beckley 2010, fig 11).

### 5.2.3 Iron Age (c 700 BC – AD 43) and Roman (AD 43 – 410)

During the Iron Age evidence of settlement and occupation becomes more visible as hillforts and oppida (proto-urban settlements) are established and areas are enclosed with ditches, although funerary practice becomes even less evident. Activity in the Ouse valley is primarily represented by farmsteads. By the late Iron Age the study area was located in the tribal territory of the *Catuvellauni* who were quickly subsumed into the Roman empire after the invasion in AD 43.

Immediately north of the proposed site is the scheduled Roman settlement known as Ashfurlong (**MMK239**; Section 5.1 above). The origin and extent of this site is not fully understood (Green and Beckley 2010, 32) although it does extend to the west beyond the scheduled area (**MMK3881**). Roman finds (**MMK3857**) have also been found outside the scheduled area at Lavendon Road Farm, during the construction of a swimming pool in the 1980s. Cropmarks visible on aerial photographs (Fig 8) indicate the presence of extensive remains including sub-circular features suggesting the site may be Iron Age or earlier in origin. An archaeological watching brief (**EMK126**) undertaken in 1975 during the construction of pipe trenches alongside the stream forming the northern edge of the proposed site identified four Romano-British ditches, a gully, two pits and two inhumations.

### 5.2.4 Early medieval (AD 410 – 1066) and medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)

Following the end of Roman rule in AD 410 the former province fragmented into a number of smaller kingdoms. The study area was subsumed into the Kingdom of Mercia by the 7<sup>th</sup> century but after King Alfred's defeat of the Danes in c 879, it fell within the Danelaw. Evidence of early medieval remains have been identified 170m west of the proposed development site during an evaluation off Warrington Road which recorded sixteen stratified sherds of early to middle Saxon pottery (Flavell 2006; **MMK6239** and **EMK928**).

Olney probably derives its name from the Old English personal name *Olla* and Anglian *eg*, meaning Olla's island (Institute for Name-Studies 2013). It is first mentioned in AD 979 when King Ethelred granted ten hides of land there to Aelfhere (Green and Beckley 2010, 34). The medieval market triangle and town core is located about 1km south of the proposed development site although the exact location of the early medieval core of the settlement is uncertain. The present church in Olney is located south of the market triangle and dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Tradition states that an earlier church (**MMK3734**) was sited at the northern extremity of the town in an area known as Castle End, at the junction of Warrington and Yardley roads about 430m south of the site. This is not a new tradition as an 1861 deed of Castle Inn refers to a parcel of land called Old Church Yard and human burials were recorded in 1881 (Green and Beckley 2010, 34). The HER also records that this could be the site of an unrecorded medieval hospital with a chapel. An evaluation in 1988 (**EMK150/514**) found medieval pottery (**MMK3735**) but did not identify any human remains. A spring (**MMK3737**), located in a field known as Christian Wells Close, is also recorded.

The manor of Olney was listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086, under the ownership of Geoffrey, the Bishop of Coutances (Williams and Martin 2003). The survey records that there were thirty four households, with 10 ploughs, meadow for a further 10 ploughs, woodland for 400 pigs, a mill and the manor was worth £12 in 1086. The morphology of the settlement is an example of medieval

town planning with burgage plots laid out along High Street and serviced at the rear by two back lanes, East Street and West Street.

The proposed development site appears to have been located in the agricultural hinterland of Olney and there is no evidence of medieval remains having been identified on the site although medieval finds have been recovered at the Warrington Road allotments (**MMK662** and **MMK909**), about 350m north-east of the proposed development site.

### 5.2.5 Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800) and modern (AD 1801 – present)

During the post-medieval period Olney continued to flourish as a market town, and as the centre of the north Buckinghamshire lace making industry. Other rural industries, such as straw plaiting and tanning, were also common in the area. During this period the production of maps begins to increase, enhancing our understanding of the landscape surrounding the town. Early historic maps of Buckinghamshire by Speed (1611), Blaeu (c1645) and Morden (1695) record Olney but they only show simplistic illustrations of the town surrounded by open land.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century Olney is connected to surrounding towns and villages by a number of toll roads. The Kettering to Newport Pagnell Turnpike (**MMK5884**) was established in 1754, and ran through the town. It is now the A509 road, forming the western boundary of the proposed development site. The Bromham to Olney Turnpike (**MMK5885**) was setup in 1790 and it is now the Lavendon Road, which forms the eastern and southern boundary of the proposed development site.

Although the town developed a number of cottage industries, farming and agriculture would have still played a key role in the local economy. Post-medieval ridge and furrow is recorded in the eastern half of the proposed development site, and in the town the barns at Holes Lane Farm were built (**MMK5746**). In 1767 Olney an Act of Parliament was enacted for the enclosure of the open and common fields in the parish, although no map survives showing the awards. There is reference to a tithe map in the Historic Towns Assessment Report for Olney (Green and Beckley 2010, 34) but no record of this was found elsewhere.

The earliest available map to show the site in any detail is the Jefferys map of Buckinghamshire published in 1770 (Figure 4). Although simplistic, this map indicates that the extent and form of the proposed site appears to have changed little since this time. It is recorded as open land bounded by the stream to the north, the Lavendon road to the east and south, and the Olney to Warrington road to the west. The surrounding area is shown as open land, intersected by roads and streams which also appear to have changed little. However, immediately north of the site the map records a building or small settlement called Dropshort, located on the west side of the Lavendon road (**AHA001**). Few other references to Dropshort were identified during the assessment except for the following reference in a letter written by poet and writer William Cowper in 1780;

*That soon after he began to Run [after her] he left Tom behind him...ran right through the Town [Olney], and down the Lane that leads to Dropshort. A little before she came to the House, he got the Start and turned her. She pushed for the Town again...(Cowper and Newton Museum 2014).*

Dropshort is not recorded on a detailed plan of the Estate of the Earl of Dartmouth, dated 1796 (not illustrated), and the name only survives in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the field name of the proposed development site. It is interesting to note that the name Dropshort is associated with the Roman settlement of *Magiovinium*, also in Buckinghamshire, and a Roman villa site near Sutton Courtenay in Oxfordshire.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century Olney developed as a centre for shoe making and four workshops or factories associated with the industry are recorded within the study area (**MMK5460** and **MMK7692-MMK7695**). Bryant's map of Buckinghamshire (1825; not illustrated) illustrates the town's basic layout and the site is recorded as open land surrounded by the Olney to Warrington road and the Lavendon road although it does not record the stream to the north of the site. There is also no indication of the potential settlement of Dropshort recorded on this plan.

In 1860 the proposed development site was recorded as the probable site of the gallows of the 'Ancient Lords of the Manor' of Olney (**MMK3738**) and that a suicide was buried at the site in 1790 (**MMK3739**).

The first edition Ordnance Survey map (1882; not illustrated) shows the proposed development site as a field much as it is now, bounded by the Lavendon road to the east and south, the Olney to Warrington road to the west and the stream to the north. The map records '*A bronze Statue, Coins and other Roman relics found*' in the field immediately north of the proposed site at Ashfurlong (**MMK239**). The Bedford to Northampton railway line, which opened in 1872, is visible crossing the study area to the south of the site. The A509 Bridge (**MMK3925**), which carried the railway over the Olney to Warrington road, was about 30m south-east of the proposed site and Olney Station (**MMK3924**) was located about 250m to the south.

Later Ordnance Survey maps record no change to the site although within the wider study area the gradual northern expansion of Olney during the 20<sup>th</sup> century is visible (OS 1900; Fig 5, OS 1950; Fig 6, OS 1958-60, OS 1975, OS 1982-94 and OS 2014, Fig 1). The railway line served as a barrier to the northern expansion of Olney, although the route closed in 1962 and more recent development has encroached over the former line. Lavendon Road farm, which occupies the field immediately east of the site, is first recorded on the 1950 map and the later editions record its development. Roman finds have been recorded here although an evaluation in 2009 in advance of a proposed extension did not identify any remains.

An aerial photograph taken in January 1947 shows a large water filled pit feature in the western part of the site interpreted as a quarry pit (Fig 7). To the east is well preserved ridge and furrow, while the area around the pit appears uneven and possibly covered in scrub. The western part of the site was subject to a geophysical survey in 1999 (Bartlett 1999; **EMK338**). It did not identify any conclusive evidence for the presence of archaeological features, but it located the large pit visible on the aerial photograph using both magnetometer and resistivity surveys and showed extensive modern disturbance across the surveyed area. In 2010 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the western part of the proposed site (Shane and Rouse 2010; **EMK1109**). Five trenches were excavated focussing on the areas away from the large pit. The evaluation identified a large number of possible features although they were interpreted as the remains of quarrying activity.

A small evaluation in 2009 at Lavendon Road Farm did not identify any archaeological remains although only one 10m long trench was excavated during the works (Kaye and Cuthbert 2009; **EMK1073**). Other archaeological work in the study area has included **EMK341**, **EMK450**, **EMK650** and **EMK897** although none were in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site and they did not produce any evidence for significant archaeological remains.

## **6 Assessment of the significance of heritage assets**

### **6.1 Designated assets**

#### **6.1.1 Scheduled monuments**

One scheduled monument, Ashfurlong, lies with the study area, located to the north of the proposed development site. The monument is a settlement site dating to the Roman and possibly Iron Age periods. It lies mainly below ploughed arable farmland and its current setting does not play a significant role in its importance or the way it is appreciated. It is shielded from the proposed site by a field boundary, a house and two other small buildings (Plates 3 and 4).

#### **6.1.2 Listed buildings**

The primary significance of the grade II listed Dartmouth House is derived from its fabric, however setting also makes a contribution. There is no intervisibility between it and the proposed development site.

The primary significance of the grade II listed Castle Inn also stems from its fabric, although setting also makes a contribution to its significance. There is no intervisibility between it and the proposed development site.

## **6.2 Undesignated assets**

### **6.2.1 Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site**

An aerial photograph taken in 1947 shows a large quarry pit and disturbed ground in the western part of the proposed site. An archaeological evaluation undertaken in 2010 in this area established that most of this area had been disturbed by quarrying activity. It is considered that there is a low potential for archaeological activity of any period to survive in the western part of the site. The aerial photo also shows that extant ridge and furrow survived on the eastern half of the site, indicating that this area was not damaged by quarrying activity and that archaeological features, if present, would survive in this area.

### **6.2.2 Nature of the archaeological interest in the site**

There is only limited evidence of early prehistoric remains in the study area so there is considered to be **low potential** for remains of this date. The scheduled monument of Ashfurlong lies immediately north of the site (Section 6.1.1 above) and it is possible that features associated with the settlement extend into the proposed development site. Therefore it is considered that there is **high potential** for Iron Age and/or Romano-British activity to survive in the undisturbed eastern area of the proposed site.

An evaluation to the west of the site on land off Warrington Road identified Anglo-Saxon pottery and it is possible that the settlement at Ashfurlong extended south during the early medieval period eventually resulting in the establishment of medieval Olney. It is considered that there is **moderate potential** for early medieval activity on the proposed development site.

The proposed site appears to have been in agricultural use since the medieval period, and it is likely to have formed part of the wider agricultural landscape of Olney. It is recorded as the location of gallows and possibly a suicide, although any potential archaeological remains associated with these features were probably located close to the road in the western part of the site, and are unlikely to have survived due to quarrying activity. Ridge and furrow, recorded as earthworks on aerial photos, exists in the eastern half of the proposed site and it is considered that there is **low potential** for settlement or other significant archaeological remains dating to the medieval, post-medieval and modern periods to survive on the site.

### **6.2.3 Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site**

The proposed development site lies adjacent to the scheduled settlement site of Ashfurlong. The physical extent of the settlement site has not been established and the potential for as yet undiscovered archaeological heritage assets relating to the settlement is considered to be high in the western area where the ground is undisturbed by quarrying activity. The character and date of any potential features on the site have not been established, and it is not possible to establish the relative importance of the site in a local, regional or national context.

## **6.3 Hedgerows**

The *Hedgerow Regulations* 1997 sets out the archaeological and historical criteria for determining 'Important' hedgerows (wildlife and landscape criteria are beyond the scope of this report). The hedge must fulfil the first criterion in Table 2 and at least one of the succeeding criteria.

Hedge/criteria	Hedgerow 1 – northern boundary hedge	Hedgerow 2 – eastern boundary hedge	Hedgerow 3 – southern boundary hedge	Hedgerow 4 – western boundary hedge
Hedge has existed for 30 years or more	Yes – boundary shown on historic mapping	Yes – boundary shown on historic mapping	Yes – boundary shown on historic mapping	Yes – boundary shown on historic mapping
On parish boundary (pre-1850)	No	No	No	No
Incorporates a feature which is part of a scheduled ancient monument*	Yes – boundary of Ashfurlong	No	No	No
Incorporates a feature which is part of a site registered with the HER/SMR (pre-24 March 1997)*	Yes – boundary of Ashfurlong	No	No	No
Marks the boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor registered with the HER/SMR (pre-24 March 1997), or is visibly related to a building or other feature of such an estate or manor	No	No	No	No
Marks the boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor in a document held by a Record Office (pre-24 March 1997), or is visibly related to a building or other feature of such an estate or manor	No – none known	No – none known	No – none known	No – none known
Recorded in a document held by a Record Office (pre-24 March 1997) as an integral part of a field system predating the Inclosure Acts, or is part of, or visibly related to, any building or other feature associated with such a system (the system must be substantially complete) or part of a historic landscape characterisation adopted for development control purposes pre-24 March 1997)	No – none known	No – none known	No – none known	No – none known

\* can be wholly or partly within, or adjacent to, such sites, and must be associated with such sites.

*Table 2. Criterion for determining historically important hedgerows*





## 7 The impact of the development

### 7.1 Impacts during construction

The assessment has identified the potential for features associated with the settlement site at Ashfurlong to extend and survive in the eastern part of the development site. As the nature, extent and date of these features has not been established it is difficult to predict the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource. However, construction operations in advance of development within a greenfield site typically require piecemeal but extensive below ground disturbance. Often this will involve the excavation of trenches for building foundations, service runs, soakaways and larger areas of soil stripping for new roads and car parking. These operations can damage or remove any surviving buried archaeological remains and therefore have the potential to have a **minor to moderate adverse** effect on potential heritage assets.

Partial removal of Hedgerow 1 will have a **minor adverse** impact on this historically important hedgerow (after the Hedgerows Regulations).

### 7.2 Residual impacts

The setting of the scheduled monument of Ashfurlong does not play a significant role in its importance and therefore the development will have a **not significant** impact. There will be no impact on the setting of the other designated sites in the study area.

## 8 Recommendations

In order to establish the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource further investigation, in the form of an archaeological evaluation, should be undertaken on the eastern half of the proposed development site. This will establish the nature, extent, character and date of any archaeological features which survive and help to place them in a local, regional and national context.

Due to the nature of the recent disturbance on the site, and the results of the previous archaeological investigations, it is not considered that geophysical survey would be of use.

## 9 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*A desk-based assessment was undertaken of land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes (centred on NGR SP 8909 5235). It was undertaken on behalf of Arthur Amos Associates, in advance of a proposed development.*

*The assessment identified there is limited potential for early prehistoric remains to be present within the proposed development site. The site is located adjacent to a scheduled Roman settlement site, which may have its origins in the Iron Age. There is high potential for the settlement and/or other activity to extend into the proposed development area. An archaeological evaluation to the west of the development site identified early medieval remains so there is a moderate potential for early medieval remains to extend into the proposed development site.*

*During the medieval and later periods the site appears to have been part of the wider agricultural landscape of Olney so any below ground remains are likely to be of limited heritage interest. One short section of historically important hedgerow was identified during the assessment.*

*The desk-based assessment identified that early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century quarrying activity has potentially truncated any archaeological remains in the western half of the site, and therefore this part of the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.*

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## **10 Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, the landowner, Arthur Amos, Dave Pugh and Pippa Riddle (Arthur Amos Associates), Nick Crank (Senior Archaeological Officer, Milton Keynes Council), and the staff at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies.

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## Appendix 1 Heritage assets

Scheduled Monuments are in **Bold**

Listed Buildings are *Italicised*

Records located within the proposed development site are marked with an asterisk\*

Events are recorded after monuments

HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
<b>MMK239/ NHL1006918</b>	<b>Roman site at Olney</b> also known as <b>Ashfurlong</b>	SP 89190 52550 (point)	MONUMENT	Iron Age/ Roman	A complex of enclosures, parallel linear ditches and ring ditches as cropmarks suggesting a late Iron Age / Roman settlement of up to 25ha with a trackway of road on the western side. Finds of wall foundations and a hypocaust during watching briefs plus scatters of building stone in field walking indicate the presence of substantial stone buildings. The site was scheduled in 1976 and is mainly arable farmland.  The complex at Ashfurlong also includes MKHER entries MMK224, MMK225, MMK231, MMK240-MMK248, MMK 3881 and MMK5423.
MMK662	Allotment Gardens, Olney	SP 89200 51900 (point) (Centred on)	FINDSPOT	Medieval	Medieval finds recorded in 1970.
MMK909	Warrington Road Allotments	SP 89000 52800 (point) (Centred on)	FINDSPOT	Medieval	Medieval finds recorded in 1969.
MMK3734	near "Castle" Public House	SP 88800 52000 (point) (Approximate)	CHURCHYARD	Early medieval to Medieval	The present church in Olney dates from the 14 <sup>th</sup> century and tradition states that an earlier church was located at the northern extremity of the town, at the junction of Warrington and Yardley roads. An 1861 deed of the Castle Inn refers to a parcel of land called Old Church Yard and human burials were recorded in 1881. The HER also records that this could be the site of an unrecorded medieval hospital with a chapel.

Land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes

HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
MMK3735	near "Castle" Public House	SP 88800 52000 (point) (Approximate)	FINDSPOT	Medieval	Sixty two sherds of medieval pottery and some postholes found during an excavation at near "Castle" Public House. No human remains were identified. Also see EMK514.
MMK3737	near "Castle" Public House	SP 88850 52120 (point) (Approximate)	SPRING	Early medieval to Medieval	A pond of clear water (with goldfish in it), in a field known as Christian Wells Close.
MMK3738*	Olney (N of)	SP 89000 52400 (point) (Centred on)	GALLOWES	Post-medieval	Recorded as the site of gallows of "Ancient Lords of Olney" in 1860. It is some distance out of town, at the junction of roads to Warrington and Lavendon.
MMK3739*	Olney (N of)	SP 89000 52400 (point) (Centred on)	INHUMATION	Post-medieval	A suicide was buried at the site of the gallows in 1790.
MMK3857	Lavendon Road Farm, Olney	SP 89240 52320 (point) (Centred on)	FINDSPOT	Roman	One large storage jar rim in shelly fabric; 1 base from 2nd vessel. Found in 1987 during the digging of a swimming pool next to the house.
MMK3924	Olney Station	SP 89170 52050 (point) (Centred on)	RAILWAY STATION	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Site of Olney railway station.
MMK3925	A509 Bridge, Olney	SP 88948 52330 (point) (Centred on)	RAILWAY BRIDGE	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Remains of bridge which formerly carried the now dismantled Bedford-Northampton double-track railway over the A509 road.
MMK4492 NHL1158109	<i>Dartmouth House</i>	SP 88866 51980 (point) (Centred on)	HOUSE	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Eighteenth century, altered. Stone; slate roof. Three storeys, the top one an early 19 <sup>th</sup> century addition.

HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
MMK4586 NHL1125265	<i>The Castle Inn</i>	SP 88845 51925 (point) (Centred on)	INN	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Early 18 <sup>th</sup> century altered. Colour washed stone, modern tiled roof with coped gables, brick stacks and central flat topped dormer. Two storeys and attic.
MMK5460	Cowper shoe factory	SP 88898 52091 (point)	SHOE FACTORY	20 <sup>th</sup> century	Brick three storey shoe factory.
MMK5463	Hoppers Hill	SP 88851 52065 (point)	POND	Undated	An undated pond identified during an evaluation. Also see EMK341
MMK5737	2 Yardley Road	SP 88816 51975 (point) (Within 2m)	BOUNDARY DITCH	Undated	A watching brief in 2001 at 2 Yardley Road recorded a shallow ditch measuring 0.6m-1.26m in width filled by a light brown re-mottled sandy clay. Also see EMK450
MMK5746	Holes Lane Farmyard	Centred SP 88930 51870 (68m by 22m) (Centred on)	FARMYARD	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Two coursed stone barns and shelter sheds, now filled-in. Both barns have large doors going into the farmyard. West barn has a cart entrance onto Hole Lane and the east barn has a small door onto the lane. The farmyard probably had two yards for over wintering cattle. Also see EMK650
MMK5884	Kettering to Newport Pagnell Turnpike	Centred SP 88974 50570 (2373m by 12852m) (Approximate)	TOLL ROAD	18 <sup>th</sup> century	The Kettering to Newport Pagnell Turnpike was set up in 1754 and was to close no later than the 1st November 1878. It passes through Olney and is now the A509 road forming the western boundary of the proposed site
MMK5885	Bromham to Olney Turnpike	Centred SP 91456 52507 (4986m by 503m) (Centred on)	TOLL ROAD	18 <sup>th</sup> century	The Bromham to Olney Turnpike was set up in 1790 and tolls were still being leased in 1873. The HER records that toll road ran along the same route as Lavendon Road, forming the eastern and southern boundary of the site.

Land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes

HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
MMK6239 MMK6240	Land at Warrington Road	SP 88848 52475 (point) (Centred on)	PIT/DITCH FINDSPOT	Early medieval	Sixteen sherds of early/middle Saxon hand-made pottery were found in the fill of a ditch during an archaeological evaluation in 2006. The ditch lay beyond the immediate environs of the Romano-British settlement at Ashfurlong (MMK 239).
MMK7692	Shoe factory rear of 21 Midland Road	SP 88981 51995 (point) (Centred on)	WORKSHOP	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Two storey 19 <sup>th</sup> century workshop probably for the boot and shoe industry.
MMK7693	Workshop rear of 27 Midland Road, Olney	SP 88969 51996 (point) (Centred on)	WORKSHOP	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Two storey brick and slated workshop. Probably for the boot and shoe industry.
MMK7694	Two storey workshop rear of 13 Midland Road	SP 88934 51998 (point) (Centred on)	SHOE FACTORY	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Two storey brick and tile workshop with 1st floor door and crane on gable. Probably associated with the boot and shoe industry. Shop to Midland Road frontage was formerly Dix's boot and shoe shop and so the workshop is probably related.
MMK7695	Workshops rear of 1-5 Dartmouth Road	SP 88826 51993 (point)	WORKSHOP	19 <sup>th</sup> century	Row of 19th century single storey brick and slate workshops to the rear of premises in Dartmouth Road that may have been used for closing or other shoe manufacturing operations.
AHA001	Dropshort	SP 8922 2524	Building	Post-medieval	A small settlement, building or structure is recorded as Dropshort on Jefferys map of Buckinghamshire, published 1770. It is referred to as a house in a letter written in 1780.
EMK126	Olney Sewage Works Effluent Pipeline	SP 89108 52404 (point)	WATCHING BRIEF	1975	Two effluent pipe trenches were constructed close together on the south side of Ashfurlong (MMK 239) just north of the brook in a west-east direction. At either end were substantial infilled Victorian gravel pits and between were four Romano-British ditches, a gully, burial, two pits and two adult male inhumations close together. A metre wide strip of unmortared rubble was the only indication of a stone building.

HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
EMK150	Old Churchyard	SP 88833 51988 (point)	EXCAVATION	1988	Same as EMK514
EMK338*	Land at junction of Lavendon Road and Wellingborough Road	SP 89023 52374 (point)	GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	1999	A geophysical survey was undertaken on the proposed development site. A gravel pit and other modern disturbance extend over the majority of the west half the field.
EMK341	Hoppers Hill	SP 88836 52054 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	1999	An evaluation identified a post-medieval quarry and filled-in pond. Also see MMK5463
EMK450	2 Yardley Road	SP 88817 51976 (point)	WATCHING BRIEF	2001	A watching brief during the construction of an extension revealed a 19th century pit and an undated probable boundary ditch. Also see MMK5737.
EMK514	Dartmouth Road Farm "Old Churchyard"	SP 88833 51988 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	1988	An evaluation identified medieval pottery from mid-12th to late-13th centuries but no buildings or burials. Also see MMK3735.
EMK650	Holes Lane Farmyard (north of 128 High Street)	SP 88928 51876 (point)	BUILDING SURVEY	2002	Farmyard comprising two barns and stabling on north side of a yard. Also see MMK5746
EMK897	Olney Link Road	SP 88690 52380 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	2005	An evaluation revealed complex geology and remnants of a probable steam and ploughed 19th century ridge and furrow.
EMK928	Land at Warrington Road	SP 88830 52510 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	2006	An evaluation comprising 16 trenches. Features revealed in 5 trenches. Earliest was a backfilled possible quarry containing Anglo-Saxon pottery and a residual late Roman coin. The remaining features were mainly truncated ditches and gullies relating to a field system that pre-dates the first edition OS. A large backfilled pond was also revealed in addition to modern made ground relating to the construction of the railway in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.

Land north of Lavendon Road, Olney, Milton Keynes

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HER number and/or EH National Heritage List (NHL) number	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
EMK1073	Lavendon Road Farm	SP 89240 52310 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	2009	An evaluation comprising of one trench was undertaken within the footprint of a proposed extension. No archaeological cut features, deposits or artefacts were observed in the trench, although the remnants of a back-filled 20 <sup>th</sup> century swimming pool were encountered.
EMK1109*	Lavendon Road / Wellingborough Road	SP 89030 52370 (point)	TRIAL TRENCH	2010	Trial trench evaluation of area to immediate south of Ashfurlong (MMK239) uncovered evidence for extensive quarrying, probably dating to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century. Only modern finds were recovered and any earlier archaeological remains may have been destroyed by the later quarrying activity.

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## Plates



*Plate 1: The site looking west; note the dumped material in the left background*



*Plate 2: Trench along the southern and western boundary of the site*

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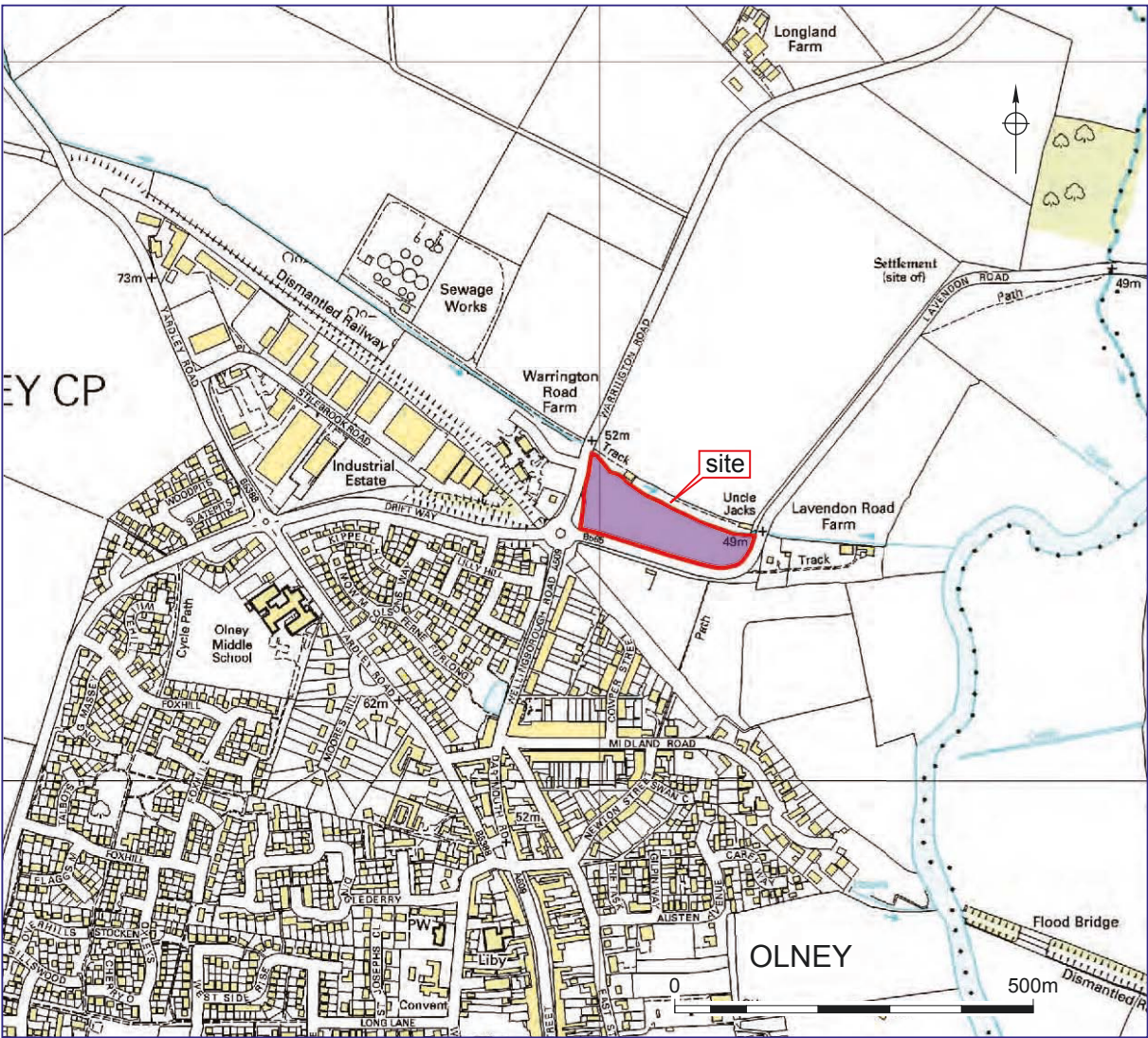


*Plate 3: Looking south-west towards the proposed site from the B565 Lavendon Road; the area in the foreground forms part of the Ashfurlong scheduled monument*



*Plate 4: Looking south towards the proposed site from the A509 Warrington Road; the arable field beyond the road forms part of the Ashfurlong scheduled monument*

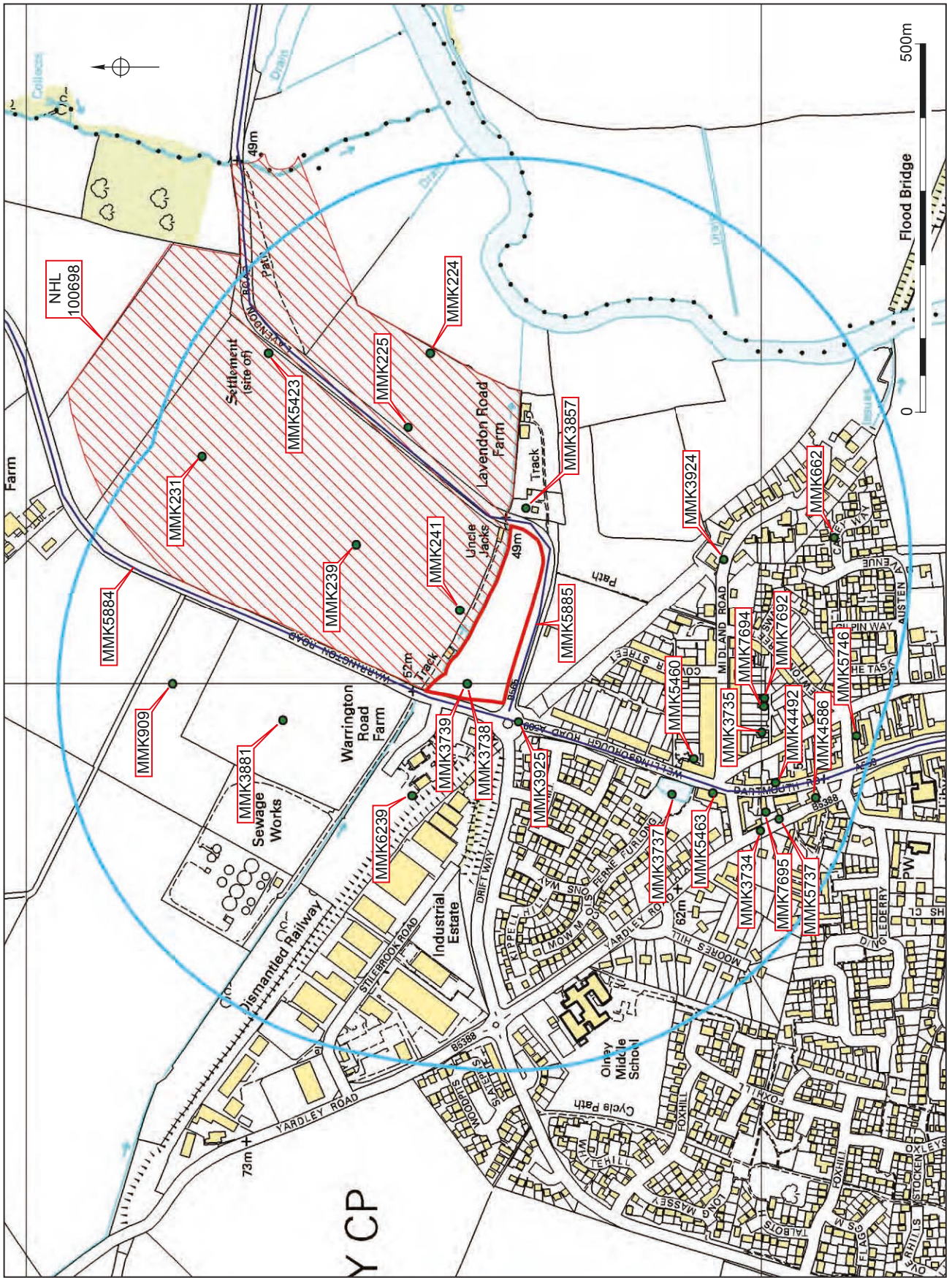
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Location of the site

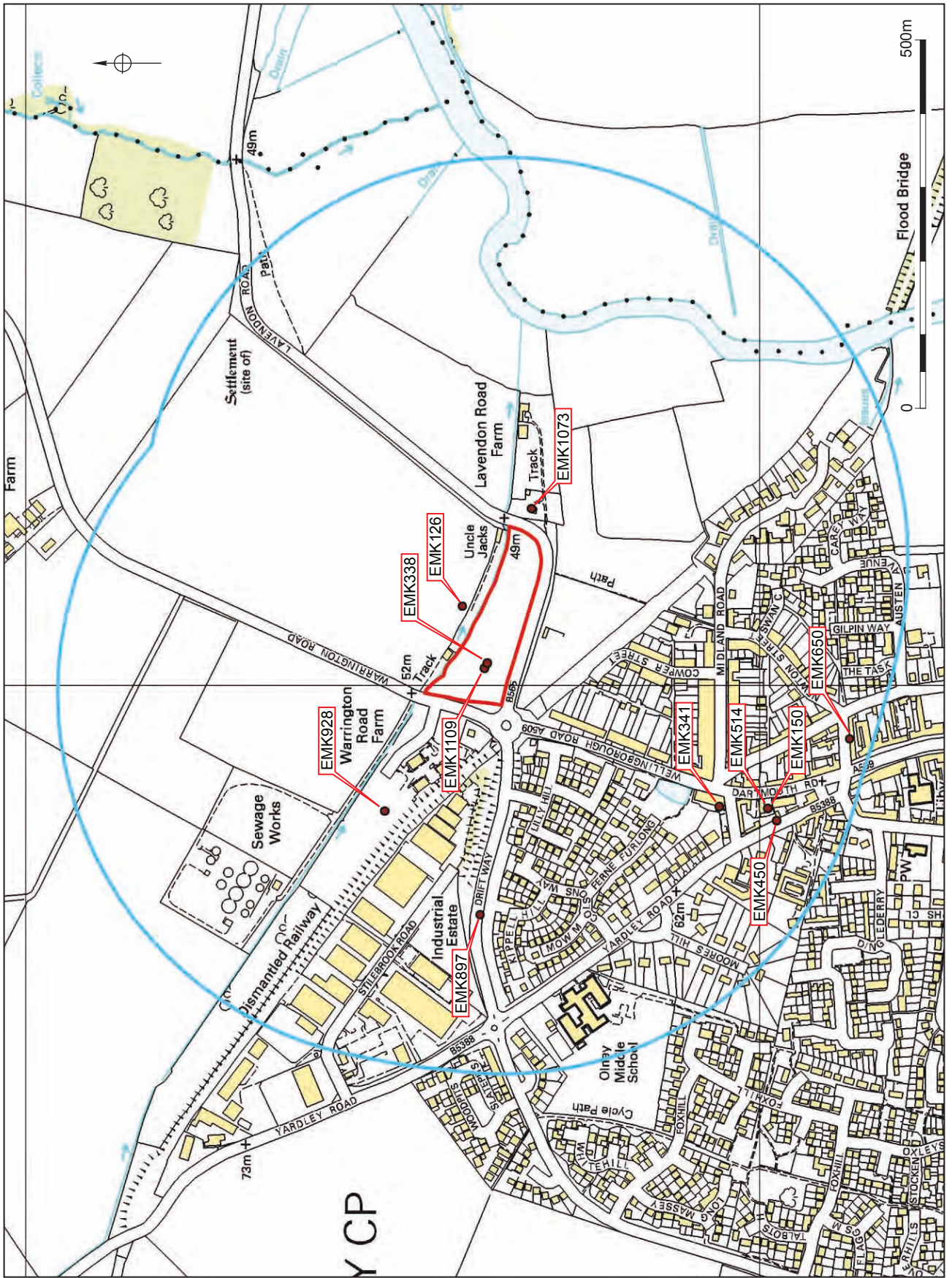
Figure 1



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Monuments recorded on Milton Keynes HER

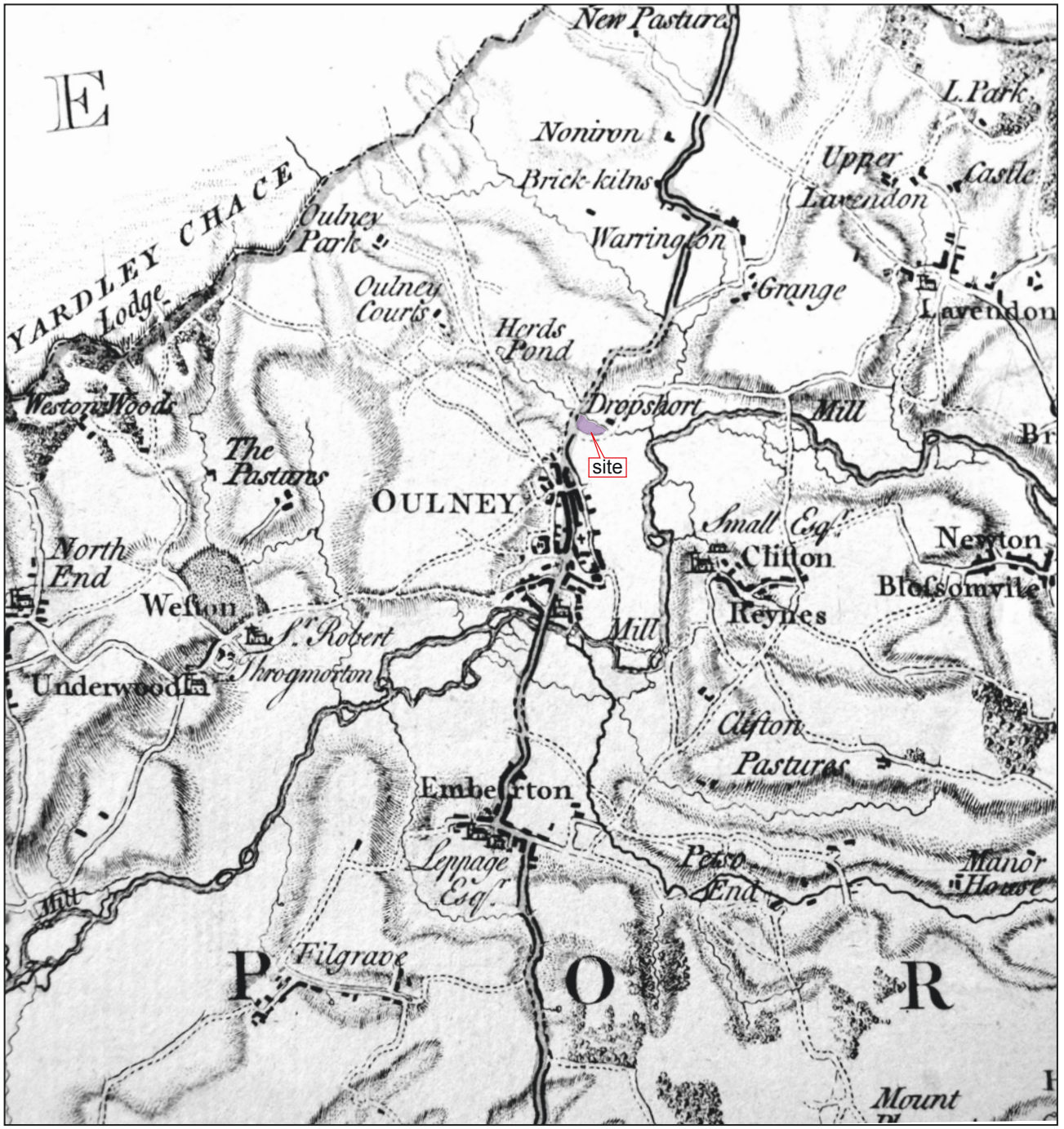
Figure 2



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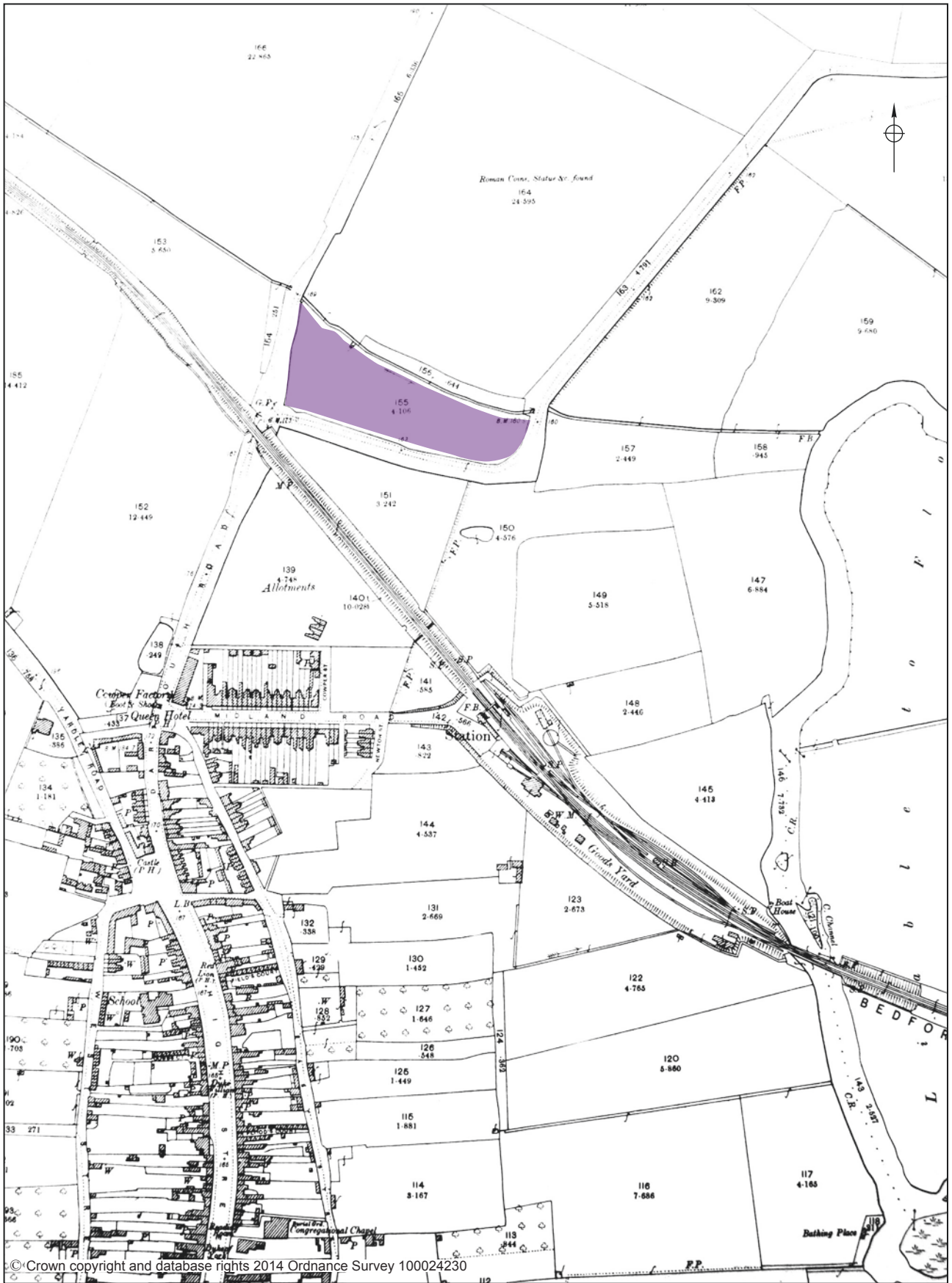
Events recorded on Milton Keynes HER

Figure 3



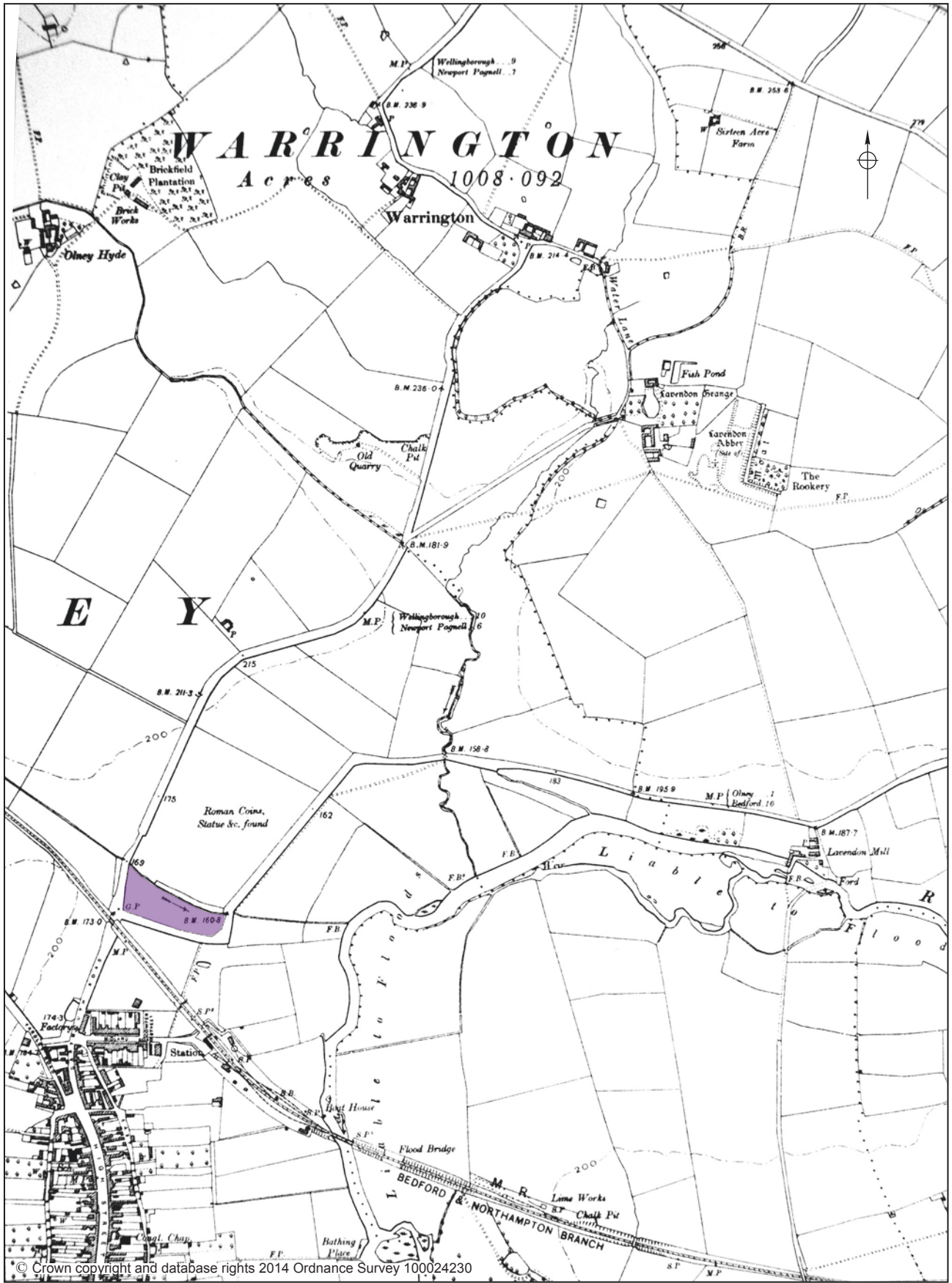
Jefferys's 1770 map

Figure 4



Extract from 1900 OS 1:2500 map

Figure 5



Extract from 1950 OS 1:10560 map

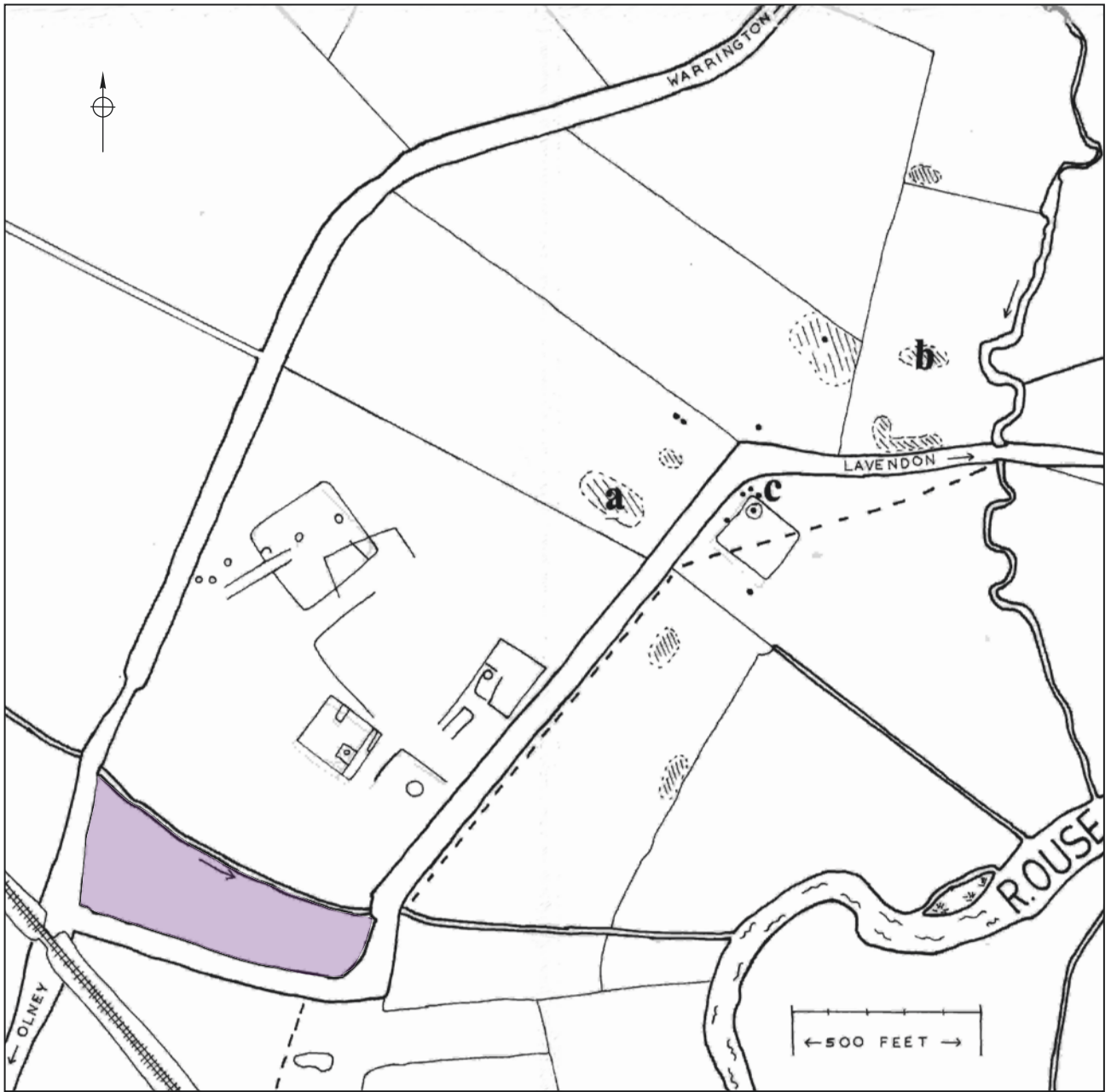
Figure 6





A 1947 RAF aerial photograph held by Milton Keynes HER  
(Ref: CPE/U.K.1926.JAN.16.47 F/36/MULTI(S) 58 SQDN)

Figure 7



An unattributed illustration held by Milton Keynes HER showing cropmarks in area to north of the site c1973

Figure 8