



**Symmetry Park
Gloucester East**

**Archaeology
Assessment**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:
Tritax Symmetry

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Non-technical Summary

- S1 This Archaeological Assessment has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Limited (EDP) on behalf of Tritax Symmetry, in order to inform the site development proposals for local plan consultation for land at Symmetry Park Gloucester East.
- S2 This report sets out the potential for the site to contain archaeological deposits and the significance of these based on the consultation of the existing archaeological record. Any effects on significance with regard to the setting of both designated and non-designated heritage assets are addressed in a separate report (edp5060_r007).
- S3 The site does not contain any designated heritage assets and the Historic Environment Record has provided data indicating that there are two records within the site. Data regarding archaeological sites and features was assessed for 1km from the site boundary to provide context, which comprised a further 188 records.
- S4 The assessment has identified that the potential to encounter finds or features of Early Prehistoric, Iron Age or early medieval date is low or very low based on the current evidence.
- S5 Recent archaeological excavations to the immediate north at St Modwen Park Gloucester and further north still at Hunts Grove have identified both Bronze Age and Roman activity, which due to its nature and intensity may extend into the site. However, the current evidence suggests that the site does appear to be on the periphery of this activity, such that the potential for archaeology to be present within the site from these broad periods has been assessed as medium.
- S6 The main period of archaeological activity recorded during excavations at the St Modwen Park Gloucester site to the immediate north, relates to medieval activity which appears to be an extension of Haresfield during that period. Examination of the reports for this work indicates that features recorded there will extend into the Symmetry Park Gloucester East site. As such the potential to encounter these and other features dating to the medieval period is assessed as extremely high.
- S7 Based on the data referenced to inform this report, there is currently no evidence to suggest that the site would contain any archaeological deposits of such significance that they might constrain the development of the site in the form proposed. Further surveys may be useful to establish if and to what extent the features recorded to the north of Stonehouse Lane extend into the site. However, the content of this report is considered sufficient to support the promotion of the site through the local plan process.

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by the Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Tritax Symmetry and presents the results of an archaeological assessment of land at Symmetry Park, Gloucester East ('the site).
- 1.2 This report has been prepared to inform the site development proposals for local plan consultation. The proposed development comprises warehousing and associated infrastructure. The site comprises three fields to the east of the B4008 measuring c.21 hectares (ha), the extent of which is shown on **Plan EDP 1**.
- 1.3 The aim of this assessment is to consider the available historical and archaeological resources to establish its likely archaeological potential in accordance with the requirements of national and local planning policy. A separate Heritage Assessment considers the potential for effects on the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets as a result of changes within their setting (edp5060_r007).
- 1.4 In accordance with professional best practice, a thorough review of the available desktop sources has been augmented through the completion of walkover surveys, which were undertaken in 2019 and June 2020.

Location, Boundaries and Topography

- 1.5 The site is located c.1.3km to the south of the southern suburbs of Gloucester, and c.800m to the north-west of the main settlement area of the village of Haresfield. The M5 and junction 12 are located c.200m to the north-east of the site boundary.
- 1.6 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 380456 210645 (**Plan EDP 1**). The north of the site is at c.23m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), falling to c.22m aOD in the south of the site. The levels however rise to the east with the north-east corner of the site at approximately 28m aOD.
- 1.7 The boundaries of the site are defined by the B4008/Gloucester Road and its roadside verges and hedges to the west. A lane forms the northern boundary which, prior to the construction of the M5, was the continuation of Hiltmead Lane. This too is separated from the site by its roadside verge and hedgerow. To the south, the site is bounded by a farm track and a property that sits at the junction of the track and the B4008 but that is within the site boundary. The track is open for the most part with the site, but the remains of an avenue of trees marks the boundary. The eastern boundary is formed by existing hedged field boundaries and ditches.

Geology

- 1.8 With regard to the underlying solid geology of the site it is located on mudstones and sedimentary bedrock of the Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone Formation deposited approximately 183–210 million years ago (www.bgs.ac.uk).

Section 2 Planning Guidance

- 2.1 This section sets out existing legislation and planning policy, governing the conservation and management of the historic environment, of relevance to a proposed application on the site.

Current Legislation

- 2.2 The *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)* addresses the designation and management of scheduled monuments.
- 2.3 Designation of archaeological and historic sites as scheduled monuments applies only to those which are deemed to be of national importance and is generally adopted only if it represents the best means of protection. The contents of the Act do not confer any protection on the ‘setting’ of scheduled monuments, just their physical remains. However, the setting of scheduled monuments is addressed within paragraph 194 of the NPPF.

National Planning Policy

- 2.4 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2019; Section 16 sets out the government’s approach to the conservation and management of the historic environment through the planning process.
- 2.5 The opening paragraph (paragraph 184) recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and 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.
- 2.6 Paragraph 189 concerns planning applications, stating that:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”

- 2.7 Paragraph 193 considers the weighting given within the planning decision with regard to impacts on designated heritage assets, stating that:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

- 2.8 Paragraph 194 considers the level of harmful effects on designated heritage assets and states that:

“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) Assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.”*

- 2.9 With regard to the decision-making process, paragraphs 195 and 196 are of relevance. Paragraph 195 states that:

“Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;*
- b) No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c) Conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.”*

- 2.10 Paragraph 196 states that:

“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.”

- 2.11 The threshold between substantial and less than substantial harm has been clarified in the Courts. Paragraphs 24 and 25 of *Bedford BC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 2847 are of relevance here in the way they outline the assessment of ‘harm’ for heritage assets:

“What the inspector was saying was that for harm to be substantial, the impact on significance was required to be serious such that very much, if not all, of the significance was drained away.

Plainly in the context of physical harm, this would apply in the case of demolition or destruction, being a case of total loss. It would also apply to a case of serious damage to the structure of the building. In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether [i.e. destroyed] or very much reduced.”

2.12 In other words, for the ‘harm’ to be ‘substantial’, and therefore require consideration against the more stringent requirements of paragraph 195 of the NPPF compared with paragraph 196, the proposal would need to result in the asset’s significance either being *“vitiating altogether or very much reduced.”*

2.13 Paragraph 196 refers to non-designated heritage assets identifying that:

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly effect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

Local Planning Policy –Stroud District Council

2.14 The Stroud District Local Plan was adopted in November 2015 for the period up to 2031. Delivery Policy ES10 (Valuing our historic environment and assets) sets out the district’s approach to archaeology and heritage matters and states:

“Stroud District’s historic environment will be preserved, protected or enhanced, in accordance with the principles set out below:

1. *Any proposals involving a historic asset shall require a description of the heritage asset significance including any contribution made by its setting, and an assessment of the potential impact of the proposal on that significance, using appropriate expertise. This can be a desk based assessment and a field evaluation prior to determination where necessary and should include the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record.*
2. *Proposals and initiatives will be supported which conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of the Districts heritage assets, especially those elements which contribute to the distinct identity of the District.*

These include:

- A. *the 68 sites of national archaeological importance (which are designated as Ancient Monuments), any undesignated archaeology of national significance,*

and the many buildings that are Listed as having special architectural or historic interest

- B. the stone, bronze, iron age and roman settlements and remains; the medieval settlements including Berkeley Castle; historic houses; historic parks; gardens and villages*
 - C. the townscapes of the larger towns such as Stroud where the industrial heritage influenced its historic grain, including its street layouts and plot sizes*
 - D. the District's historic market towns and villages, many with designated conservation areas, such as Berkeley, Wotton Under Edge, Minchinhampton, Painswick and Dursley.*
- 3. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance the heritage significance and setting of locally identified heritage assets, such as buildings of local architectural or historic interest, locally important archaeological sites and parks and gardens of local interest.*
 - 4. Proposals will be supported which protect and, where appropriate, enhance key views and vistas, especially of the spires and towers of historic churches and mills.*
 - 5. Any harm or loss would require clear and convincing justification to the relevant decision-maker as to why the heritage interest should be overridden. A full programme of work shall be submitted with the application, together with proposals to mitigate any adverse impact of the proposed development, and where appropriate, be implemented through measures secured by planning condition(s) or through a legal agreement."*

2.15 In the qualifying text that accompanies the above policy within the local plan the districts heritage assets are identified as including:

- i conservation areas; listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments;*
- ii the character of the historic cores of the market towns and villages;*
- iii landscape features, including ancient woodlands and veteran trees; field patterns; watercourses; drainage ditches and hedgerows of visual, historic or nature conservation value;*
- iv archaeological remains; and*
- v historic parks and gardens.*

A Heritage Statement will be required for development proposals which will have a potential impact on any of the assets listed in (i)- (v) or for any major development proposal.

Development proposals that involve any harm to or loss of a heritage asset would require clear and convincing justification, in accordance with the NPPF. A development proposal will not be permitted where substantial harm to an existing or potential heritage asset is likely to occur, unless there are substantial public benefits.”

- 2.16 Stroud District Council has also produced a Supplementary Planning Advice (SPA) document relating to archaeology and heritage matters entitled ‘A *Heritage Strategy for Stroud District. Valuing our Historic Environment and Assets*’ dated February 2018. The purpose of this document is to:

“...set informed priorities for the conservation, management and monitoring of the District’s heritage assets, including the effective and efficient discharge of the Council’s statutory duties and obligations.”

- 2.17 The second part of the strategy was to be an Action Plan; however, this is still at the consultation stage.
- 2.18 The plans and policies listed above have all been considered in the preparation of this assessment.

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Section 3

Methodology

- 3.1 This report has been produced in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2017). These guidelines provide a national standard for the completion of desk-based assessments.
- 3.2 At the time of writing, due to Covid-19, visits to the Historic England Archive to observe, among other data, historic aerial photographs has not been possible. Depending on the timescale of a future planning application it may be possible to access the archive at a later date.
- 3.3 At this stage, to inform the masterplanning of the site, a visit to the Gloucestershire Archive has not been undertaken. However, should the site progress then a visit will be made to access any further information that may be of relevance to the site.
- 3.4 In light of the above, the assessment involved consultation of readily available on-line archaeological and historical information comprising:
- Records of known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots, within the vicinity of the site, maintained by the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record (HER);
 - Maps and documents available on-line;
 - The Know Your Place website for Gloucestershire;
 - *The National Heritage List for England* curated by Historic England; and
 - Records made during site visits in 2019 and 2020.
- 3.5 This report provides a synthesis of the available and relevant information for the site and thereafter concludes with an assessment of its likely archaeological potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines.

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Section 4 Existing Information

Introduction

- 4.1 The Symmetry Park Gloucester East site contains no designated heritage assets such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, historic parks, gardens or registered battlefields where there would be a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ*.
- 4.2 The site is not immediately adjacent to any designated heritage assets, the closest is The Mount scheduled monument which is located c.350m to the east. In close proximity to this, is the Grade II* listed Church of St Peter and, of the monuments within its graveyard, 4 groups of monuments are listed at Grade II* and 8 eight groups of monuments at Grade II, totalling 50 listed monuments.
- 4.3 Within the 1km study area identified for this assessment there are a further 16 listed buildings, all of which are listed at Grade II (**Plan EDP 1**).
- 4.4 The potential for setting effects whereby the significance of any designated or non-designated heritage in the sites wider zone of influence (i.e. beyond the site boundary) may be affected by the development is addressed in a separate report (edp5060_r007).
- 4.5 Within the Symmetry Park, Gloucester East site, there are two recorded non-designated heritage assets and no previous archaeological interventions or events (**Plans EDP 2 and 3**), as detailed within the Gloucestershire HER. These are described in detail below. The HER has also provided information regarding the National Mapping Programme (NMP), which is the digitisation of archaeological features from aerial photography (**Plan EDP 4**).
- 4.6 Data relating to non- designated heritage assets within 1km of the site boundary has also been assessed to provide further information regarding the archaeological potential of the site. Within this area, 188 records were identified by the HER which included references to interventions, designated heritage assets duplicated from the National Heritage list and duplicated information from the Portable Antiquities Scheme (**Plans EDP 2 and 3**). These are discussed, where relevant, to the archaeological background and potential of the site below. As such not all records provided by the HER within the search area are discussed or identified on the plans.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 4.7 As set out above, The Mount scheduled monument (**SM1020655; HER 388**) is located c.350m to the east of the site boundary and comprises a square moat enclosing an island, c.1m high measuring c.50m by 48m, bounded by a slight ditch and bank.

- 4.8 The Mount is variously described within the HER as the former site of a Manor House and/or a castle, although the exact date of the monument is unknown but is likely to be medieval in origin.
- 4.9 The site was assessed as part of the NMP and no evidence is presented within the HER for any features associated with this monument to extend towards the site boundary.
- 4.10 In 2013, works commissioned by Historic England to repair and restore damage caused by badgers and works to dredge the moat, were subject to an archaeological watching brief (**HER 47227**). This work identified no archaeological finds or features although residual medieval finds were present. There is no evidence to suggest that any features associated with this monument extend towards or into the site.
- 4.11 The Grade II* Church of St Peter (**LB1090521**) is located c.400m to the east of the site with the boundary of its historic churchyard (there is also a modern extension) c.350m to the east. The church dates to the 12th century and has always been defined by its church yard within which its many listed and unlisted tombs and graves are located.
- 4.12 There is no evidence to suggest that graves were ever excavated outside of that graveyard boundary (until it was extended) such that any archaeological deposits that may be associated with the church would not extend towards or into the site boundary.
- 4.13 Within c.1km of the site boundary, there are a further 23 Grade II listed buildings (inc. churchyard monuments) which, as these are designated on their architectural merit, are unlikely to influence the potential for archaeological deposits, where and if relevant these are discussed further below in the period specific sections.
- 4.14 As set out above, the designated heritage assets in the site's wider zone of influence as defined by a ZTV are assessed in more detail in the heritage setting assessment (edp5060_r007). This will identify their significance in greater detail, and if and to what extent the site forms any part of their setting such that changes within it may affect their significance.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Palaeolithic - Iron Age (c.500,000 BC–AD 43)

- 4.15 There are no known prehistoric finds or features within the site boundary. To the immediate north of the site boundary the Gloucestershire HER records a small circular feature identified from aerial photographs (**HER 4149**). A site visit by the HER subsequently identified that there were earthworks associated with the enclosure and that the field also contained remnants of ridge and furrow cultivation and a possible former field bank. Medieval pottery was also present within the field.
- 4.16 A geophysical survey in 2016 (**HER 4149**), in the same field, detected probable prehistoric ditches in the south-eastern part of the site, which comprised an almost entire circular

enclosure ditch, with further ditches (some possibly defining the boundaries of a partially recorded enclosure) extending northwards.

- 4.17 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the same site as part of the proposed St Modwen Park Gloucester. A total of 23 trenches were excavated. A ring ditch was identified in the south-eastern corner of the site, interpreted as the remains of a possible Bronze Age round barrow, although it may have been constructed, or at least re-used, in the medieval period. The majority of features identified within the trenches were medieval in date and are discussed in the relevant section below.
- 4.18 More recently (2019), an archaeological excavation (**HER 51151**) was undertaken on the St Modwen Park Gloucester. The post-excavation assessment has preliminarily identified that the earliest remains comprised two flints, both residual within later deposits. One was only broadly dateable as prehistoric, whilst the other was identified as a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic blade. A small undated ring-ditch was also recorded which may date to the Early to Middle Bronze Age pottery, although the dating was uncertain.
- 4.19 Additional flint tools, some dating to the Palaeolithic have been recovered as surface finds c.1km to the east of the site (**GLO-36F776**).

Hunts Grove

- 4.20 To the north of the site and the M5 corridor, a large area of the former RAF Quedgeley known as Hunts Grove has recently been the subject of considerable archaeological work prior to its redevelopment, the southern edge of which is c.350m to the north of the site boundary. Those phases of work within the study area are discussed below.
- 4.21 An initial desk-based assessment in 1993 (**HER 33391**), which was subsequently updated in 1999, 2001 and 2002 (all **HER 20712**), identified the potential for both Romano British and medieval settlement, including a Romano-British cemetery, at least two Romano-British settlement sites and a large undated cropmark complex. Haresfield Lane and Shorn Brook are documented medieval features. Previously cropmarks in the area (**HER 4421**) had indicated the possible presence of buried archaeological features in the area.
- 4.22 To inform the desk-based assessments, a geophysical survey (**HER 33393**) was undertaken in 2002 targeting 13 areas, which recorded widespread ridge and furrow cultivation, but also a wide range of archaeological features including a possible settlement enclosure, hearths and kilns.
- 4.23 Further geophysical survey was undertaken in 2005 (**HER 27957**), covering 40ha. Again, large areas of ridge and furrow were recorded but also a number of rectilinear enclosures and the edge of a substantial settlement area.
- 4.24 During 2005, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken covering 97ha (**HER 33396**). A Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British double-ditched enclosure forming part of a farmstead was recorded amid undated field systems comprising ditches, gullies, pits and postholes to the east of the site. An Iron Age burial and an undated cremation were also recorded. Finds included Mid-Late Iron Age pottery, Roman pottery, a Late Iron Age/Early Romano-

British parallel piped die worked from a piece of bone from a large animal, possibly cattle, and an iron awl.

- 4.25 In 2010, an archaeological excavation (**HER42729/20712**) of 10 areas on the Hunts Grove site, targeting the lines of proposed haul roads and associated works, recorded a series of ditches, interpreted as part of a field system of possible Roman date associated with a potential settlement area indicated by preceding evaluation. During this work a quartzite hammerstone pebble was recovered (**HER 42734**).
- 4.26 Further geophysical survey was undertaken in 2012 (**HER 43925/20712**), which identified three distinct areas of complex archaeological activity, indicative of significant historic settlement activity on the site. The survey also noted that the edges of these areas of increased activity appeared to taper away rather than have a distinct edge. This would suggest that further archaeological activity may be present, possibly obscured by greater depths of topsoil or wash down. Former ridge and furrow cultivation was also evident across much of the survey area.
- 4.27 Following on from a phase of geophysical survey (**HER 33393**), a further trial trench evaluation was undertaken in 2012 (**HER 20712**). Sixty nine trenches were excavated, confirming three distinct areas of archaeological activity comprising a series of prehistoric and early Roman enclosures in the south-west (Area 1) and north-west (Area 2), with a series of regular, later Roman enclosures formed either side of a broadly contemporary trackway within the north-eastern part of the evaluated area (Area 3). The area in closest proximity to the site was Area 1; here a series of Middle Iron Age enclosures were recorded which continued in use into the later Roman period.
- 4.28 A watching brief in 2014 was undertaken on the Hunts Grove site during geotechnical test pitting (**HER 51144**); no archaeological features were recorded.

Romano-British (AD43–410)

- 4.29 Within the site, observations made during the excavations for the Haresfield to Cam water pipeline (**HER 10991**) recorded Roman pottery and sandstone fragments. Further Roman material, again predominantly pottery (**HER 7090**), was recovered from a field c.300m to the south of the southern site boundary during excavations for the same pipeline.
- 4.30 Further evidence for Roman activity was recorded c.70m to the east of the site boundary. Here also Roman pottery and sandstone tile were recovered from the grounds of a private house during the monitoring of a pipe trench (**HER 7091**). Further finds of Roman pottery area also recorded further to the east (**GLO-4CFDD7**).
- 4.31 During the excavation undertaken to the immediate north of the site for St Modwen Park Gloucester (**HER 51151**) a single Roman inhumation burial was found. The bones were in very poor condition, but radiocarbon assay produced a determination of cal. AD 125-251.
- 4.32 During the construction of the M5 motorway evidence for Romano-British settlement (**HER 4422**) was recorded c.630m to the north of the site boundary. Within the grounds of

Haresfield Court, c.650m to the south-west, a Romano-British cemetery has been recorded (**HER 3846**) although the exact location is unknown.

- 4.33 More widely, the line of the A38, c.1km to the west of the site, is on the probable alignment of the former Roman Road from Gloucester to Sea Mills (**HER 7365**; Margary's Roman Road 541). The presence of this major Roman route in the wider landscape surrounding the site highlights the potential for the use of the site and it surrounds for settlement and/or farming during this period.
- 4.34 An extensive area of land reclamation (**HER 36335**) thought to have started in the Roman period, incorporating part of the parishes of Epney, Longney and Moreton Valence, is identified by the HER extending into the north-western extent of the 1km study area. This area does not include the site.

Early Medieval (AD 410–1066)

- 4.35 There are no HER records relating to early medieval activity within the site. Evidence for activity of this date within the wider study area is limited to two Saxon grave markers (**HER 4866** and **HER 3851**) within the graveyard attached to St Peters Church c.400m to the east. The presence of these within a churchyard of Saxon origin, does not influence the potential for finds or features of early medieval date within the site..

Medieval (AD 1066–1485)

- 4.36 There are no records relating to the medieval period within the site. Documentary evidence for the Haresfield area collated by the HER (**HER 16790**) notes that:

“Potters are documented at Haresfield in the Domesday Book (1086). The vill is currently believed to have been the place of production of C11 and C12 Gloucester TF416 ware. Petrological analysis of this fabric indicates that the clay matrix was probably obtained from Middle Lias and is highly micaceous and variable in colour. The tempering, however, is probably derived from the Great Oolite and consists of waterworn fragments. The description of the likely source agrees well with the geology of Haresfield. The distribution of Gloucester TF416 vessels suggest that the industry producing it was operating on a relatively large scale.”

- 4.37 Haresfield Lane (**HER 12652**), c.420m to the east, which links the village to the A38, was in existence by the mid-13th century when it formed part of the route from Gloucester to Standish and Stonehouse. Also in existence in the mid-13th century was the road that forms the western side boundary (**HER 12651**). However, its current alignment adjacent to the site is modern with the former alignment indicated as being to the west rather than within the site.
- 4.38 A recent geophysical survey (**HER 4149/48642**) and subsequent archaeological evaluation to the immediate north of the site (**HER 4149/49229**), on the St Modwen Park Gloucester site, identified a ring ditch in the south-eastern corner of the site. Whilst this was interpreted as the remains of a possible Bronze Age round barrow, it was also stated that it may have been constructed, or at least re-used, in the medieval period. Across the

evaluation area the majority of features were medieval in date and comprised ditches that produced relatively large quantiles of locally produced medieval pottery (TF41B) dating between the 11th to the mid-13th centuries. The ceramics were attributed to the postulated Haresfield industry that is first recorded in the 1086 Domesday Survey. No evidence for the associated pottery kilns was identified. A large circular geophysical anomaly previously identified from aerial photography, was initially interpreted as a possible kiln, but was revealed to be a large modern pit containing burnt material and ironwork possibly associated with the nearby former RAF station.

- 4.39 Following on from the evaluation at the St Modwen Park Gloucester site, an excavation was undertaken in 2019 (**HER 51151**). The majority of the features recorded related to a medieval farmstead, associated with locally produced TF41b pottery dateable to the mid-11th to early 13th centuries. An enclosure containing sub-enclosures was thought to be the location of the farm buildings, but for which there was no evidence. Other features included enclosures for livestock, trackways and/or droeways. There were indications from the pottery assemblage that at least some of the sherds may be wasters from a pottery kiln; although no kiln structure was found. A large ring ditch truncated some of the earlier medieval features, interpreted as a late 13th century moat; no internal features were present. Ridge and furrow was also recorded across the site.
- 4.40 Approximately 300m to the east of the site boundary at Mount Farm works to install a water pipe (**HER 9615**) recorded pottery dating to the 12th–13th century, associated with stone and occupational debris. An archaeological evaluation (**HER 33390**) c.380m to the east of the site boundary, in advance of an extension to the churchyard, also recorded evidence for medieval activity.
- 4.41 Haresfield Court (**HER 3850**) is located c.650m to the south-east of the site boundary. According to the HER record it was known as Moat Place until 1816 and it is suggested that it was the site of a manor house belonging to Llanthony Priory. The record identifies that “*Old massive foundations were found in 1890, stretching beneath the present lawn towards the church*”. A site visit was conducted by the HER and no evidence of a moat was found. The remains of a 15th century village cross (**HER 3848**) is recorded by the HER adjacent to Haresfield Court. A neatly perforated undated stone hammer was found in a field within 0.25-mile West of Haresfield Court, shortly before 1876 (**HER 3847**).
- 4.42 A possible medieval moated site or croft is visible as earthworks on historic aerial photographs located c.675m to the north-east of the site and was mapped as part of the Severn Vale NMP project (**HER 4423**). It is unclear to what extent this was removed or covered with spoil when the M5 was constructed. The Severn Vale NMP project also recorded a possible trackway (**HER 48461**) thought to be medieval in date, c.300m to the south-east of the site boundary leading towards Haresfield Court. Three medieval coins are recorded to the west of the M5 corridor (**PUBLIC-160F95/701339/OCF2B5**).

Post Medieval–Modern (AD 1485–present)

- 4.43 There are no previously identified heritage assets from these periods recorded within the Symmetry Park Gloucester East site.

4.44 Haresfield Court (**LB1091320**) is a Grade II listed building located c.650m to the south-east of the site boundary. Now converted into flats, it was constructed in c.1676 and substantially altered in 1869 and 1893. To the immediate south of the site, is an area of unlisted former parkland (**HER 44904**) associated with Haresfield Court. The parkland was assessed in 2018 as Grade C by the Gloucestershire Gardens and Landscape Trust, which they define as ‘*Sites of special historic interest when considered in the local context*’. It is described as:

“1. Remains of small park and Victorian pleasure grounds surrounding country gentry seat. Exotic plantings remain.

2. Original approach from W (now disbanded) allows view of nearby church and house.

3. House dates back to late C17 and there are ancient oaks in park.

4. Site marred by views of recycling facilities to W and motorway noise pollution.”

4.45 The former lodge to Haresfield Court (**HER 44903**) is located to the immediate south of the site boundary. It is now a private house, within its own grounds with access onto the Gloucester Road.

4.46 Also, to the immediate south of the site and within the area as defined as former parkland by the HER, the Severn Vale NMP project identified the site of a WWII supply or storage depot (**HER 48462**). The extent of the depot is described as enclosing an area of c.83,600 square metres containing two blister hangars and associated infrastructure. The HER record note that

“...that these stores were part of the preinvasion build-up of Normandy in June 1944, or directly related to supplying the operational needs of RAF Moreton Valence, or a dispersed site for nearby RAF depot, 7 Maintenance Unit (MU) RAF Quedgeley. The military depot does not appear as a dispersed site on the Site Plans for either RAF station. The depot is not visible in aerial photographs taken in 1946 though the roadway and the blister hangar at SO 80308 10363 remains. Although that building appears to have been demolished by 1947, the roadway is still visible in aerial photographs taken in 2010.”

4.47 The activities needed to create the depot will have removed any former parkland features and as such the inclusion of this area as possessing any special historic interest relating to its former use as a park is considered to be unlikely and indeed is now an agricultural field and as such this area should not be considered to make any contribution to the significance of the former parkland even at a local level.

4.48 To the immediate west of the site is the former site of Moreton Valence Airfield (**HER 21459**). The HER describes that:

“Opened as Haresfield in 1939 Moreton Valence was used by 6 AONS Staverton for staff pilot training (Ansons). In 1941 it was rebuilt with three runways and two Blister hangars and renamed Moreton Valence. B and C flights of 6 AONS moved into the airfield on permanent detachment and on the 17th January 1942 the unit was renamed 6 Air

Observers School (6 (Observer) Advanced Flying Unit ((O)AFU) in June 1943). The Pilot Refresher Training Unit also shared the accommodation in 1942 for a few weeks before moving to Scotland.

Following a Ministry of Aircraft Production proposal, aircraft assembly sheds were built in the north east corner of the airfield for a flight test facility for Gloster who moved in in October 1943. All Gloster F9/40 and Meteor test flying was undertaken at Moreton alongside a Bell YP-59A shipped to Britain for evaluation alongside the Meteor.

(O)AFU closed in December 1944 but Moreton was taken over immediately by 3 (P)AFU South Cerney as a satellite. After VE day the AFU closed down and the station was transferred to 6 (P)AFU Little Rissington from July to December 1945. On October 13th 1946 the airfield was handed to the Gloster Aircraft Company and several experimental Meteor flights were made from the airfield. The factory area subsequently increased and a single lengthened runway was prepared for the testing of the Javelin. The last production Javelin flew in from Brockworth on the 8th April 1960 but modification work on Meteors continued. The last flight by Gloster was made on the 25th July 1962 and within days the airfield was inactive. The M5 motorway now bisects the airfield leaving only the derelict ATC tower and a piece of perimeter track still visible.”

- 4.49 The airfield comprised three runways surrounded by a perimeter track, with the M5 motorway now on the alignment of the main runway. The south end of the airfield has been mapped and contains blister hangers, Nissen huts, possible bunkers, blast pens and bomb stores. The majority of these structures were demolished by 1958. Within the area of the former airfield the HER records the site of a foot and mouth pit (**HER 15495**) excavated in 2001.
- 4.50 In advance of the construction of the Gloucestershire Energy from Waste Facility on part of the site of the former airfield, a desk-based assessment (**HER 36128**), geophysical survey (**HER 48741**) and a field evaluation (**HER 48742**) were undertaken, all of which found no evidence for the airfield or indeed any other significant buried deposits.
- 4.51 More widely within the study area the following records relate to other features in the wider landscape and whilst they do not contribute to the archaeological potential of the site, they set out the importance of the wider area in the post-medieval period for transport. **HER 21091** related to three oak trees c.150m to the north-east of the site boundary suggesting that the route they line (Stonehouse Lane) may be historic.
- 4.52 The Cheltenham and Great Western Union Railway (CGWUR) is located c.800m to the east of the site (**HER 11189**). It was authorised by an 1836 Act to provide a railway from Cheltenham and Gloucester to London by joining the broad gauge Great Western Railway (GWR) at Swindon. The site of the former Haresfield station (**HER 11269**) is also located c.800m to the east.
- 4.53 Two turnpike roads are recorded on the HER within the study area: one 600m to the north joining the Severn with the Cotswolds (**HER 41619**); and a second c.1km to the west (**HER 41848**) on the line of the A38 itself a former Roman road. A number of post-medieval

coins have been recovered from fields adjacent to the A38 (**PUBLIC-C3C31D/ACA339/A56F20/BAE837/BAA248/135BFD/65F7B4**).

Historic Mapping

- 4.54 The earliest available on-line historic mapping consulted dates to 1885. The site boundaries to the north east and west are depicted as they currently exist. However, the western boundary has at some point been realigned along with the road, as this is shown to be curving at this time and the fields would have extended into what is now the Gloucestershire Energy from Waste Facility with the original alignment of the road also passing through that area.
- 4.55 The L-shaped field that comprises the southern and western side of the site was at this time divided into three small fields. A footpath crossed the southern third of the site and a further path is annotated clipping the north eastern edge of the site.
- 4.56 The same information is detailed on later mapping, it is not clear when the Gloucester Road was realigned but this was either when the airfield was created in 1939 or as a part of the realignment of local roads associated with the construction of the M5.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 4.57 Gloucestershire is covered in part by two areas of historic landscape characterisation (HLC) data relating to the River Severn corridor and the Cotswolds AONB, neither of which include the site, therefore this information has not been made available via the HER. However, the historic character of the site itself and the fields to the east and south are that of a 19th century enclosed landscape common across the Severn Valley. To the south other than the remnants of the tree lined drive and the rare survival of a landscape tree, there is little evidence of its former use as parkland, due in part to its later use by the military.
- 4.58 To the immediate west of the site the historic landscape is defined by its former use as an airfield in the 20th century, now re developed for an energy to waste plant, warehousing and a garden centre. To the north, the former RAF Quedgeley site has also been redeveloped for warehousing and is now St Modwen Park Gloucester.

Site Walkover

- 4.59 The site was visited in June 2020 to assess the current ground conditions and topography within it, as well as to confirm the continuing survival of any known archaeological remains and to identify any hitherto unknown remains of significance.
- 4.60 The site is regularly ploughed and contained crops of beans at the time of the site visit. There were no earthworks visible across the site that might represent the remains of archaeological features and no collections of material were noted on the grounds surface

that might indicate the position of buried archaeological features, other than around gateways where material has been dumped to solidify the ground.

Section 5

Conclusions

- 5.1 This archaeological assessment comprises a preliminary assessment of the archaeological potential of the Symmetry Park Gloucester East site based on readily available sources of information and data collected via a site visit.
- 5.2 The site does not contain any designated heritage assets and the Historic Environment Record has provided data indicating that there are two records within the site. Data regarding archaeological sites and features was assessed for 1km from the site boundary to provide context, which comprised a further 188 records. However, only those of relevance have been discussed within this report and illustrated on the attached plans. The site has not been subject to any form of archaeological intervention or survey to date.
- 5.3 With regard to the potential for archaeological finds and features of prehistoric date to be present within the Symmetry Park Gloucester East site, the current record suggests that for the earlier prehistoric period the potential is very low, based on just two residual flint tools and surface finds from the study area. However, a potential Bronze Age round barrow has been recorded to the immediate north of the site. Whilst this feature itself will not extend into the site, Bronze Age barrows, as this may be, are often present in the landscape in groups or 'cemeteries' and as such, the potential to encounter further features such as this, of Bronze Age date is assessed as medium.
- 5.4 Within 500m of the site boundary Iron Age enclosures are recorded at the Hunts Grove site to the north. Whilst the distance and subsequent work in the intervening area precludes these features from extending into the site, clearly Iron Age activity is well documented in the sites wider zone of influence, although the current evidence suggests that this extends northwards and away from the site. On this basis, the potential for Iron Age activity to be present within the site is assessed as low.
- 5.5 Should residual flint tools, or Bronze Age or Iron Age buried archaeological finds and features be present within the site, the significance of these, based on the currently available information is assessed as low or of local importance only.
- 5.6 In terms of the potential for finds and features of Roman date both within the site and in the immediate area, several finds of pottery are recorded, although there is no evidence for any associated activity. As such, this material may have originated from manuring of fields during the Roman or later periods.
- 5.7 In the site's wider context, significant evidence for Roman activity has been recorded on the Hunts Grove site to the north and indeed the A38 to the west is on the alignment of a former Roman road. Roman burials are recorded to the immediate north of the site and at Haresfield Court to the south-east. As such, and based on the current evidence, the potential for Roman activity to be present within the site is assessed as medium, as the focus of this activity appears to the west and the north of the site.

- 5.8 Should Roman activity be present within the site either in the form of finds or features, the significance of these, based on the currently available information is assessed as low or of local importance only.
- 5.9 The potential to encounter finds or features of early medieval date is assessed as very low. Should early medieval activity be present within the site either in the form of finds or features, the significance of these, based on the currently available information is assessed as medium or of local/regional importance, due to the proximity of the church which may have an early foundation.
- 5.10 The current archaeological evidence suggests that there is a focus of medieval activity both to the immediate north and to the east of the site boundary. This activity appears to have focussed on the Haresfield itself but newly recorded evidence on the St Modwen Park Gloucester site to the north indicates that the village was more extensive in the medieval period than its modern form.
- 5.11 Whilst there is currently no evidence for medieval activity within the site, the proximity of the excavations on the northern side of Stonehouse Lane, suggests that the potential for encountering finds and features of this date within the site is extremely high and in the north of the site will almost certainly be a continuation of those features recorded within the St Modwen Park Gloucester site.
- 5.12 The archaeological and documentary evidence to date suggests that Haresfield was a centre for pottery production during the medieval period, although there are no records of any kilns to date. Should these be present within the site they will be of high archaeological significance. However, as is more likely, the site may contain the continuation of field boundaries, cultivation and enclosures, as identified to the north which, if present, will be of local significance only.
- 5.13 Throughout the post medieval and modern periods, the site was and continues to be in use for agriculture. The features of this wide date range within the wider area of the site are not considered to influence its archaeological potential. It is possible that former field boundaries or traces of ridge and furrow may survive as buried archaeological features but if present these will have negligible archaeological significance.
- 5.14 Based on the data referenced to inform this report, there is currently no evidence to suggest that the site would contain any archaeological deposits of such significance that they might constrain the development of the site in the form proposed. Further surveys may be useful to establish if and to what extent the features recorded to the north of Stonehouse Lane extend into the site. However, the content of this report is considered sufficient to support the promotion of the site through the local plan process.

Section 6

Bibliography

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Historic England (HE), 2015. *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*, London.

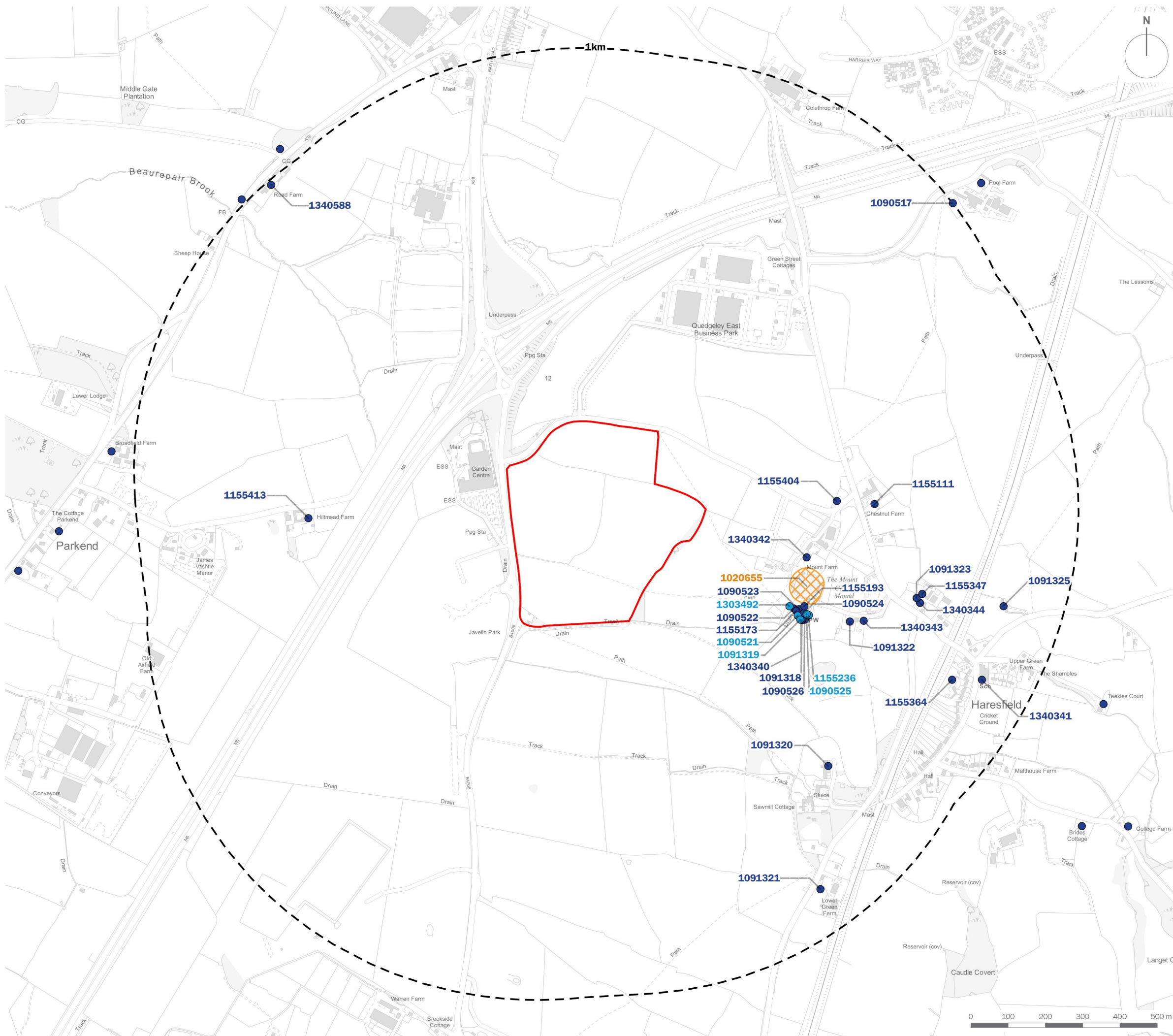
MHCLG, 2019. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

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Plans

- Plan EDP 1** Designated Heritage Assets
(edp5060_d011 04 May 2020 GY/JV)
- Plan EDP 2** Non-designated Heritage Assets
(edp5060_d012 04 May 2020 GY/JV)
- Plan EDP 3** Archaeological Event and Historic Landscape Characterisation
(edp5060_d013 04 May 2020 GY/JV)
- Plan EDP 4** Military Features, National Mapping Programme Data and Ridge and Furrow
Records
(edp5060_d014 04 May 2020 GY/JV)

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- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- Scheduled Monument
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building

client
Tritax Symmetry

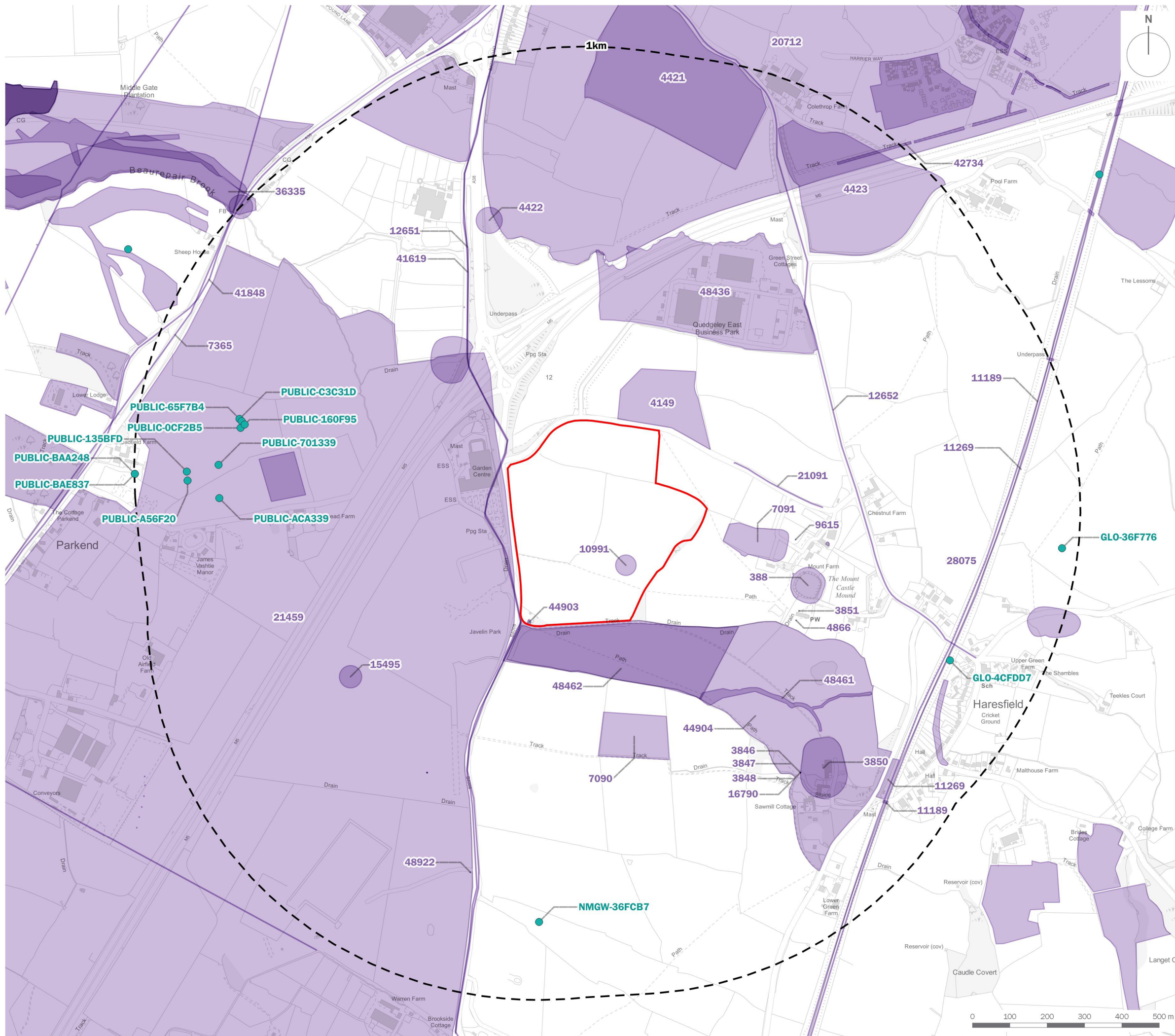
project title
Symmetry Park Gloucester East

drawing title
Plan EDP 1: Designated Heritage Assets

date	04 MAY 2020	drawn by	
drawing number	edp5060_d011	checked	
scale	1:10,000 @ A3	QA	



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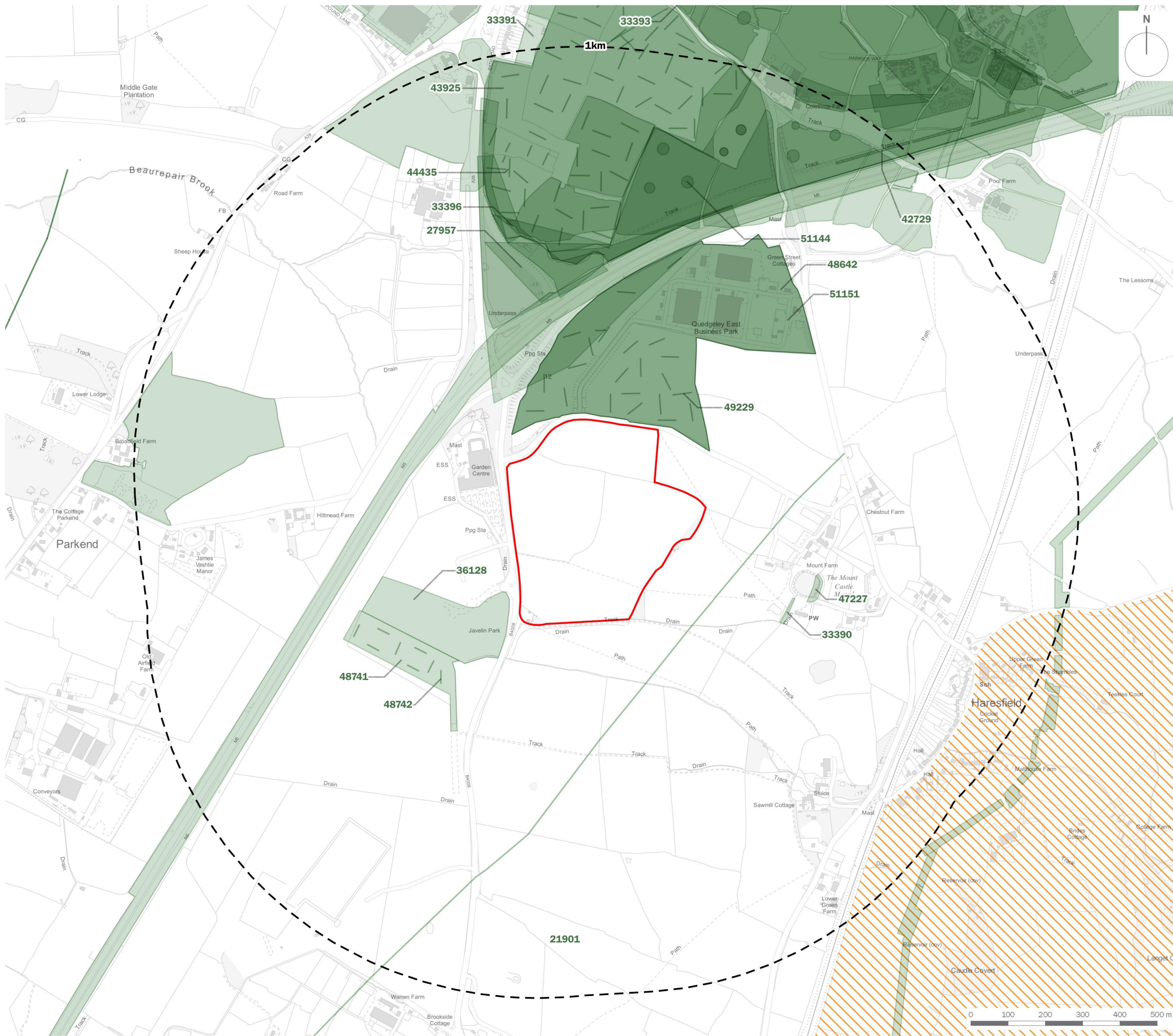






- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- SMR
- PAS

client		
Tritax Symmetry		
project title		
Symmetry Park Gloucester East		
drawing title		
Plan EDP 2: Non-designated Heritage Assets		
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-  Site Boundary
-  1km Study Area
-  Events
-  HLC AONB

client
Tritax Symmetry

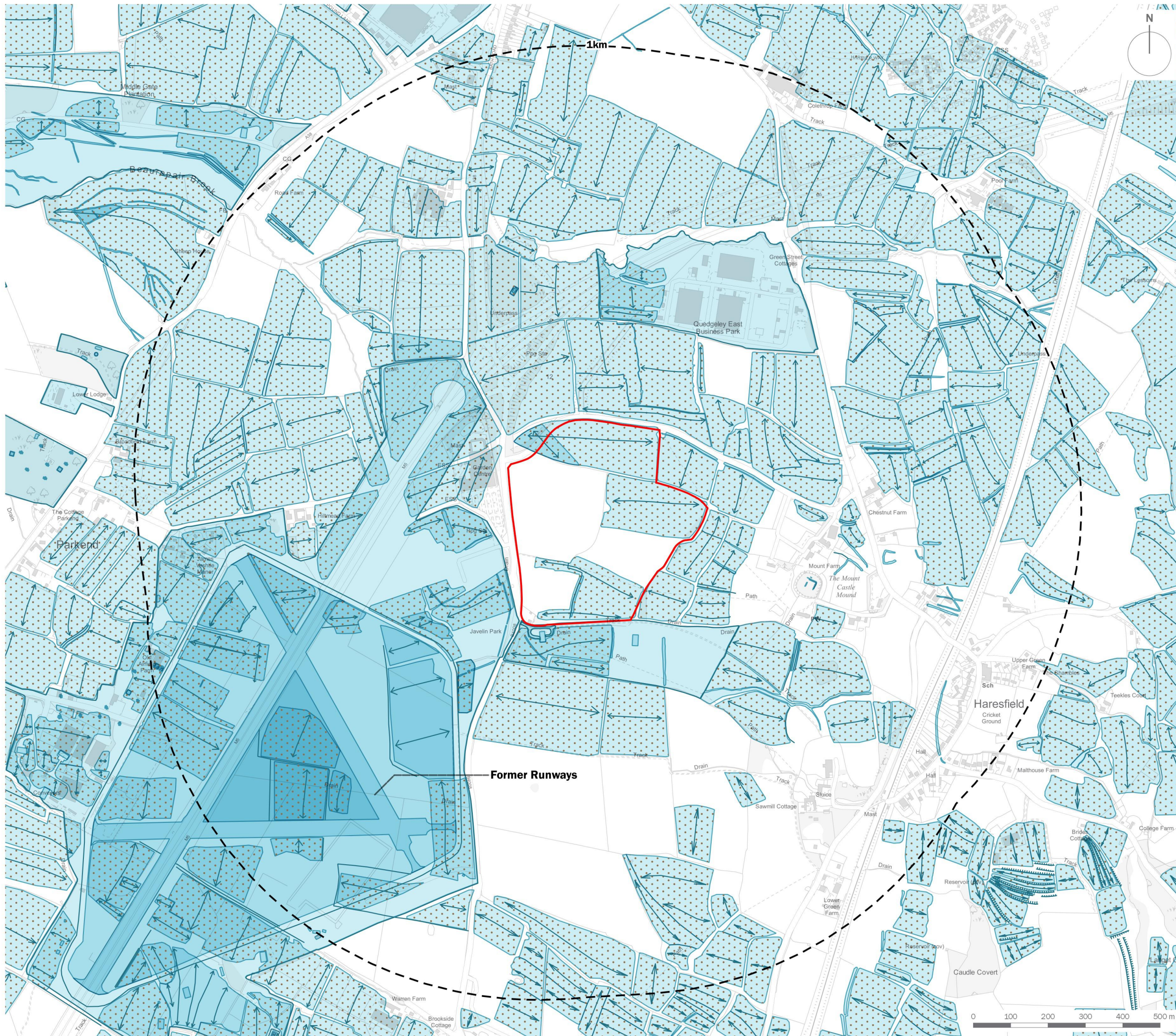
project title
Symmetry Park Gloucester East

drawing title
Plan EDP 3: Archaeological Event and Historic Landscape Characterisation

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scale	1:10,000 @ A3	QA	



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- Site Boundary
- 1km Study Area
- NMP Data
- NMP Data Ridge and Furrow
- Ridge and Furrow

client
Tritax Symmetry

project title
Symmetry Park Gloucester East

drawing title
Plan EDP 4: Military Features, National Mapping Programme Data and Ridge and Furrow Records

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Registered office: 01285 740427 - www.edp-uk.co.uk - info@edp-uk.co.uk



CARDIFF
02921 671900

CHELTENHAM
01242 903110

CIRENCESTER
01285 740427

SHREWSBURY
01939 211190

info@edp-uk.co.uk
www.edp-uk.co.uk

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