

Land off Ashley Coombe,
Warminster, Wiltshire
Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

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Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

LANDGAGE HERITAGE LIMITED

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Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster, Wiltshire – Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment

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Executive summary

This report has been prepared in relation to the land to the south off Ashley Coombe (the study site) on behalf of Rubix Land Limited. This land is proposed for residential development of up to eighty dwellings. This assessment has been produced to inform an outline planning application for the proposed development of the study site.

This report has been produced in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessments (CIfA 2020), as well as Historic England (HE) guidance on the assessment of the significance and setting of heritage assets (HE 2015 and 2017, respectively). The assessment provided in this report has been informed by a review of data from the historic environment record (HER) held by Wiltshire County Council, data held in the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) held by Historic England, a review of lidar data held by the Environment Agency (EA) and aerial imagery from available sources, as well as by the results of previous archaeological investigations in the wider area around the study site.

Heritage

The potential for the development of the study site to affect the setting and significance of designated heritage assets in the wider area was informed by a site visit, and walkover of the study site and the surrounding area. The site visit confirmed that most of the listed buildings and other designated heritage assets in the surrounding area are sufficiently screened by intervening trees, hedgerows, topography and buildings that the study site would not materially affect their significance, or require a design response. This assessment therefore found that only the following built heritage assets required detailed assessment:

- Butlers' Coombe Farmhouse (grade II listed building, NHLE 136443)
- Christ Church (grade II listed building, NHLE 1036199)

This assessment concluded that the proposed development would cause no impact in the case of Butler's Coombe Farmhouse, and a negligible impact to Christ Church as defined in Table 2.

The impacts and effects of the proposed development are therefore considered to be an acceptable outcome for the heritage assets surrounding the study site and conforms with the requirements of paragraphs 213 to 215 of the NPPF.

Archaeology

This assessment reviewed the available archaeological evidence and considered the potential for the study site to contain buried remains of archaeological interest.

This assessment found that the study site has a known potential for the presence of Prehistoric below ground remains associated with the identified ring ditch and possibly the other enclosures in the recent geophysical survey. There is also a known potential for Post-Medieval and Modern remains to be present on the study site likely associated with former field boundaries and services.

This assessment has found that there is a general potential for Medieval below ground remains associated with agricultural activities and findspots.

There is a low potential for Roman and Saxon below ground remains based on the distance of activity recorded from the study site.

This assessment has found that the below ground remains which may be present within the study site would be of no more than local significance, as defined in section 3.3.8 of this report. Any

remains dating to the Prehistoric period are likely to be associated with settlement activity identified by the ring ditch and enclosures recorded in the recent geophysical survey. Any remains dating to the Medieval, Post-Medieval or Modern periods are likely to be associated with agricultural activities, field boundaries and farming practices.

Given the local significance of the potential archaeological remains within the study site, it is considered that any impacts could be adequately mitigated by the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, secured via the planning process. Such a programme of works could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition.

The findings of this report are based on a range of evidence, including the results of the geophysical survey within the study site, previous investigations in the surrounding area, HER data, Lidar data and a review of historic mapping. While the evidence is not sufficient to allow complete certainty of the exact extent of the archaeological remains present, it has been sufficient to provide a good understanding of the likely significance and nature of the archaeological potential of the study site.

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF provides policy on the level of information required to inform a planning application with regard to impacts on the historic environment (NPPF, 2024, p.60). This report has confirmed the nature and level of the significance of the likely archaeological remains within the study site and has described the impact of the proposed development on that significance. It therefore meets the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF.

This report also describes mitigation measures to minimise and compensate for the anticipated impacts of the proposed development. The implementation of these measures would ensure the proposed development complies with the requirements in paragraph 218 of the NPPF, which requires that a record is made of heritage assets which may be lost, which advances understanding of their significance (NPPF, 2024, p.61). The archaeological works would comprise a staged programme of works which could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition.

Conclusions

On this basis it is clear that the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological potential of the study site could be adequately mitigated, and the development made acceptable in terms of potential archaeological impacts. It therefore accords with the requirements in paragraphs 207 and 212 - 216 of the NPPF and policy 58 and 99 of the Wiltshire Council's Core Local Plan.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Study Site

1.1.1 This historic environment desk-based assessment considers land to the south off Ashley Coombe (Figure 1). It has been prepared by Landgage Heritage Ltd on behalf of Rubix Land Limited. It has been prepared to address Historical and Archaeological comments formed during pre-planning application for the residential development.

1.1.2 The site (hereafter referred to as the study site) is located at grid reference ST 87115 43893.

Site Conditions

1.1.3 The study site is located on arable fields to the east of Ashley Coombe (see Plate 1 below), two overhead lines are noted to cross the study site aligned north-south and west-east.



Plate 1 Looking north across the study site, towards Christ Church, Church (55mm)

Location, Geology and Topography

1.1.4 The study site is located on the land off Ashley Coombe (see Figure 1). The study site occupies an area of 5.511 hectares (ha), with a height above ordnance datum (aOD) of approximately 137.3m. Plate 2, provided overleaf, shows a topographic model of the study site which has been generated using Environment Agency lidar data from 2018.

1.1.5 The underlying geology of the study site comprises of Shaftesbury Sandstone Member-Sandstone to the north of the study site, and Boyne Hollow Chert Member-Sandstone central and south of the study site. These sedimentary bedrocks formed between 113 and 100.5 million years ago during the Cretaceous Period (BSG geology of Britain viewer 2025).

1.2 The Proposed Development

1.2.1 The proposed development comprises seventy-seven residential units located to the south of the study site, with associated landscaping, road access and public rights of way (PRoW) enhancements. A pond is proposed at the northern area of the study site.

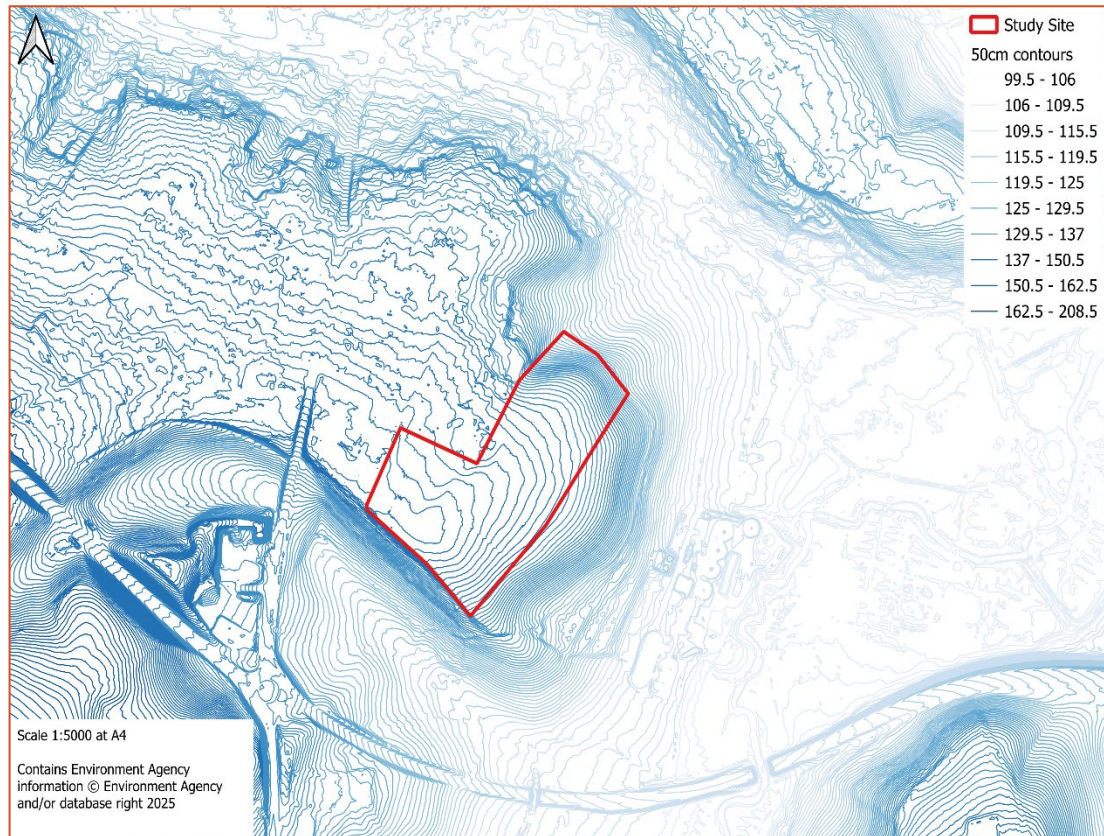


Plate 2 Contour map of the study site and surrounding area

1.3 Purpose and Scope of Assessment

1.3.1 This report assesses the effect the proposed development would have on the significance of heritage assets, both through any direct physical effects and also through changes to their setting. This assessment is made in the context of the statutory and policy framework set out in section 2. It follows best practice, and the approach to the assessment is set out in section 3. It has also been produced in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA 2020).

1.3.2 Section 4 of the report provides:

- An assessment of the potential the study site has to contain buried archaeological remains, based on available evidence;
- An assessment of which heritage assets have the potential to be affected by the proposed development, both through direct physical impacts and indirect effects through changes to their setting;
- An assessment of the setting and significance of the heritage assets which could be affected; and
- An assessment of the relationship of the study site to the heritage assets whose setting could be affected, to determine whether the study site makes a specific contribution to their significance by forming part of their setting.

- 1.3.3 Section 5 provides an assessment of the effect the implementation of the proposed development would have on the significance of the heritage assets, including a consideration of any mitigation measures and residual effects.
- 1.3.4 Finally, section 6 provides a summary of the results of the report.

2.0 Legislative, Planning and Development Plan Framework

2.1 Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979

- 2.1.1 The Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended) protects the fabric of scheduled monuments.

2.2 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.2.1 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 enacts special controls for the protection of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and their settings. Of particular relevance to this assessment are the general duties set out in relation to listed buildings and conservation areas in the exercise of planning functions in sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Act.

- 2.2.2 Section 66(1) states:

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

- 2.2.3 Section 72(1) states:

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

- 2.2.4 The Act does not make specific provisions to protect the setting of conservation areas.

2.3 National Planning Policy Framework & Planning Practice Guidance

Introduction and General Overview

- 2.3.1 Government policy in relation to the historic environment is set out in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. This provides policy for local planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on how effects to heritage assets which would result from a proposed development should be weighed and considered in plan-making and planning decisions.
- 2.3.2 The NPPF is supported by guidance provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which helps to clarify some terms and requirements within the NPPF. The PPG has a category on the historic environment, which provides specific guidance in relation to heritage policies in section 16 of the NPPF.
- 2.3.3 In paragraph 202, the NPPF describes heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource, which should be "conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations".

Key Heritage Policies

- 2.3.4 Section 16 of the NPPF contains a number of key policies in relation to decision-making and the historic environment. These are briefly described below and are referenced to the NPPF by paragraph number.

- 2.3.5 Paragraph 207 provides policy on the level of information required to inform a planning application which affects the historic environment. It states that developers must describe the significance of any heritage assets which would be affected by a proposed development, and specifies that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is required to understand the impact the development would have on the significance of the asset.
- 2.3.6 Paragraph 212 requires that decision makers give great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets when considering applications that could affect an assets' significance. It also makes clear that great weight must be given irrespective of the degree of harm which would result.
- 2.3.7 Paragraph 213 states that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset must be supported by a clear and convincing justification. It then goes on to differentiate between designated heritage assets, and designated heritage assets of the highest significance while setting policy in relation to substantial harm:

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*
- 2.3.8 The NPPF does not provide a definition of substantial harm, however the Planning Practice Guidance on the historic environment provides guidance on how to identify substantial harm in paragraph 18a-018:

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings' significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting.

- 2.3.9 Paragraph 214 then states that where a development would result in substantial harm or loss to a designated heritage asset the local planning authority should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the proposed development would provide substantial benefits that clearly outweigh the harm, or specific circumstances apply.

- 2.3.10 Paragraph 215 specifies that where a development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, then this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 2.3.11 Paragraph 216 specifies that effects of a proposed development on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in the determination of the planning application, and requires that a balanced judgement is had having regard to both the scale of any harm or loss, and the significance of the asset.
- 2.3.12 Paragraph 218 requires that developers record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner proportionate to the significance of the asset to be lost, and to make this evidence publicly available.
- 2.3.13 Paragraph 219 requires that local planning authorities treat favourably planning applications that preserve elements of the setting of a heritage asset that contribute positively to its significance, or better reveal or enhance the significance of the heritage asset.

Key Definitions

- 2.3.14 Annex 2 of the NPPF provides a number of key definitions in relation to the historic environment:
 - **Heritage Assets:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
 - **Archaeological Interest:** A heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.
 - **Designated Heritage Assets:** World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Park and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas.
 - **Significance:** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
 - **Setting:** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
 - **Conservation (for heritage policy):** The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.
- 2.3.15 In addition to the definitions provided in Annex 2 of the NPPF, the PPG also provides important definitions of what is meant by architectural, artistic and historic interest in paragraph 18a-006:

- **Architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **Historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

2.3.16 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduced the following definition of cultural heritage in Section 152(4) of the act:

“Cultural heritage” means any building, structure, other feature of the natural or built environment or site, which is of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest.

2.4 Local Planning Policy

2.4.1 Local planning policy is provided by Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) Development Plan, adopted in 2015. Policies relevant to this assessment include:

Core Policy 58 Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.

Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- (a) nationally significant archaeological remains*
- (b) World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire*
- (c) buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest*
- (d) the special character or appearance of conservation areas*
- (e) historic parks and gardens*
- (f) important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.*

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping). Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications

2.4.2 Wiltshire Councils Local Plan 2015 is currently under review, with an expected adoption date 2025. The Local Plan Review policy includes:

Policy 99 Ensuring the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment

Development should conserve or enhance the historic environment.

Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

- (a) nationally significant archaeological remains;*
- (b) world heritage sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire;*
- (c) buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest;*
- (d) the special character or appearance of conservation areas;*
- (e) historic parks and gardens;*
- (f) important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.*

Any harm to the significance of designated heritage assets which will result from development proposals will be required to be justified and outweighed by public benefits (including heritage benefits) at a level appropriate to the significance of the asset and the harm caused.

Any harm to the significance of undesignated assets which will result from development proposals must be carefully balanced considering the significance of the asset and the harm caused.

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced.

The potential contribution of heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Policy 98 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping). The sensitive reuse of historic buildings and spaces will be supported and opportunities for the historic environment to inform and shape new development and regeneration projects will be encouraged. The adaptation of heritage assets in accordance with Policy 85 (Sustainable construction and low carbon energy) using appropriate materials and techniques which conserve their fabric and significance will be encouraged.

Proposals for change affecting the historic environment (which require planning permission or listed building consent) should be accompanied and informed by an assessment of heritage significance and the impact of the proposals on this significance, making reference to the information held in the Historic Environment Record. Where a proposal includes potential archaeological interest a desk-based assessment, and if necessary, field evaluation should be carried out and submitted with the proposal.

Development proposals that improve the condition of heritage assets at risk will be supported.

3.0 Assessment Methodology

3.1 Scope of Study

For the Assessment of Archaeological Potential

3.1.1 The archaeological potential of the study site will be assessed by reviewing available relevant evidence, both from within the study site, and also from the surrounding area, and using this to assess the potential the study site has to contain buried archaeological remains. The evidence will be drawn from the following resources, where relevant and available:

- The LPA's Historic Environment Record (HER) data;
- The results of previous archaeological investigations (if available and relevant);
- The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) held by Historic England;
- The Historic England Archive;
- The Archaeology Data Service (ADS);
- Local studies and record office research;
- Environment Agency lidar data (if available and relevant);
- Aerial photography (if available and relevant);
- A site walk over (where possible and appropriate); and
- Review of historic mapping.

3.1.2 In addition, information about the topography and geology of the study site will also be collated and considered alongside the archaeological evidence.

3.1.3 These records and resources will be examined in relation to the study site, and a suitable buffer zone (the study area) around the study site. This is to ensure that the baseline information used to inform the assessment of potential for the study site includes sufficient information with which to understand the context of the evidence discussed. The extent of the study area needed to inform the assessment will depend on the quantity and quality of the evidence available, as well as the size of the study site among other factors.

3.1.4 The standard extent of the study area is usually 1km from the study site's boundary. However, this may be varied depending on the nature of the evidence available; for example in some urban settings there may be a high quantity of evidence in the immediate vicinity of the study site, meaning that the extent of the study area can be reduced and more focussed on the study site and the immediately surrounding area.

3.1.5 On this occasion, a 1km search radius from the study site boundary is considered appropriate for the study area.

For the Assessment of Setting Impacts

3.1.6 This assessment will also consider the potential effects of development within the study site on the significance of heritage assets, through effects to their settings. This will include any heritage assets within the study site, and those in the surrounding area, whose setting may be affected. The heritage assets which require assessment have been selected with reference to the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) database held by Historic England, as well as information held by the LPA on conservation areas and heritage assets.

- 3.1.7 A basic search radius of 1km from the study site boundary was used to establish which heritage assets required assessment for impacts. This is normally sufficient to ensure all assets which require consideration are properly assessed, as beyond this distance the residential development is rarely discernible to the degree that it would affect the heritage value of a view.
- 3.1.8 Designated heritage assets of the highest significance, comprising listed buildings and registered parks and gardens graded I and II*, scheduled ancient monuments, world heritage sites and battlefield sites within the whole 2km search radius are assessed for potential impacts from the proposed development. This is because such assets tend to either be prominent or have heightened sensitivity to change before their significance is affected.
- 3.1.9 Other designated heritage assets, such as grade II listed buildings and registered parks and gardens and conservation areas are assessed for impacts within a standard 1km search radius from the study site boundary. This is because assets at this level of designation tend to have a lower sensitivity to change than higher graded assets.
- 3.1.10 Finally, not all designated heritage assets within this radius will require full assessment for impacts; as set out in paragraph 207 of the NPPF, the level of detail will be sufficient to inform the nature and degree of effect of development within the study area on the significance of the heritage asset in question. When a heritage asset has been excluded, a clear justification will be provided, for example if the asset is sufficiently far, and well screened from the study site.

3.2 Methodology for assessment of archaeological potential

- 3.2.1 The available evidence will be reviewed and used to determine what potential the study site has to contain buried archaeological remains. Regard must be had to the reliability of the evidence reviewed, any limitations inherent in the methods used to generate that evidence, and to the relevance of the evidence in informing the assessment of archaeological potential of the study site. The assessment will consider the available archaeological evidence by historical period.
- 3.2.2 It is not necessary to describe all available evidence for each period exhaustively; the assessment of potential should focus on the evidence which helps to clarify the archaeological potential of the study site.
- 3.2.3 The historical periods referred to in this assessment are set out below:

Prehistoric period

Palaeolithic	900,000 BC to 12,000 BC
Mesolithic	12,000 BC to 4,000 BC
Neolithic	4,000 BC to 2,300 BC
Bronze Age	2,300 BC to 800 BC
Iron Age	800 BC to AD 43

Historic period

Roman	AD 43 to AD 410
Early medieval/Saxon	AD 410 to AD 1066
Medieval	AD 1066 to AD 1485
Post-Medieval	AD 1485 to AD 1901
Modern	AD 1901 to present

- 3.2.4 The potential for the study site to contain buried remains will be categorised as either known, moderate, general, low, limited, no potential or unknown potential, based on the criteria set out below.
- **Known potential:** where a site is known to have archaeological remains, for example from evidence provided by archaeological investigations.
 - **Moderate potential:** where the available evidence suggests there is a strong possibility for a site to contain archaeological remains, but it is not conclusive or certain. For example, an adjacent field to that being assessed has been subject to archaeological field investigations and is known to have evidence of occupation remains. But there is no clear evidence in the results of the investigations that these remains continue into the site being assessed.
 - **General potential:** where the available evidence suggests that archaeological remains may be present in the study site, but the evidence is not clear enough to determine whether the study site is likely or unlikely to contain associated buried remains. For example there may be a general potential for archaeology, evidenced by residual finds in nearby investigations and other evidence in the wider area, but no clear evidence close to the study site, which would help to determine whether their presence within the study site is likely or unlikely.
 - **Low potential:** where the available evidence suggests that the presence of archaeological remains within a site is unlikely, but this is not certain or conclusive.
 - **No potential:** where a site is known to have no archaeological remains, for example due to past mineral extraction, or when previous archaeological works demonstrate that no remains are present.
 - **Unknown potential:** where there is insufficient information to provide any assessment of the archaeological potential of a site.
- 3.2.5 The assessments of potential set out above can refer to the potential across the whole of the study site, or to only part of it. For example, potential for evidence from a particular period may be focussed in a specific part of the study site, or there may be evidence of localised mineral extraction.

3.3 Methodology for Assessment of the Significance and Setting of Heritage Assets

- 3.3.1 The significance and setting of the heritage assets considered within this report will be assessed using the methodology set out below. The methodology has been informed by Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning notes 2 and 3, which provide guidance on the assessment of the significance and the setting of heritage assets.
- 3.3.2 This section will therefore firstly summarise the methods set out in the Historic England guidance notes. This will be followed by a description of how the Historic England methods will be applied within this report.

Methodology for Assessment of Significance of Heritage Assets

- 3.3.3 Ultimately the assessment of the significance of archaeological remains and other heritage assets is a matter of professional judgement, having regard to the available evidence, including research priorities, guidance, as well as any designation the asset may have. However, assessments of significance should follow Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2, Managing Significance in Decision-Taking

in the Historic Environment (GPA 2). This sets out that, when assessing the significance of a heritage asset, the nature, extent and level of the significance should be considered.

- 3.3.4 The **nature** of the significance refers to a heritage asset's archaeological, architectural, historic or artistic interest (NPPF annex 2), and to what extent its significance is derived from one or more of these. For example, a buried archaeological site may have high archaeological interest, but limited artistic interest.
- 3.3.5 The **extent** of the significance refers to the area in which the significance resides, which includes the setting of a heritage asset.
- 3.3.6 The **level** of significance refers to the heritage asset's importance; for example scheduled archaeological remains are considered to be of the national significance. For the purposes of this assessment, the significance of the heritage assets will be assessed to determine whether they are of the highest national, national, regional, local or limited significance. The distinction between heritage assets of national, as opposed to those of the highest national significance has been made to reflect the distinction made in paragraph 213 of the NPPF.
- 3.3.7 The assessment will be made with reference to the Principles of Selection for Scheduled Monuments provided in Annex 1 of the DCMS policy statement on Scheduled Monuments, Historic England designation guidance and research priorities set out in the relevant regional and local archaeological research frameworks, as appropriate.
- 3.3.8 The levels of significance used in this assessment are briefly defined below.
- **National (highest significance)** - Scheduled monuments (and archaeological remains of demonstrably equivalent significance), protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites.
 - **National** - Grade II listed buildings, grade II registered parks or gardens and conservation areas.
 - **Regional** - Archaeological remains which have considerable archaeological interest, but which do not meet the criteria for designation. Remains which contain evidence that would make a substantive contribution to regional research objectives. A historic building with considerable architectural and historic special interest, but which does not meet the criteria for listing.
 - **Local** - Archaeological remains which have clear archaeological interest, and which preserve evidence that would contribute to local research priorities. Such remains would make a limited contribution to regional research objectives. Locally listed historic buildings identified by the LPA, for example in a conservation area appraisal.
 - **Limited** - Archaeological remains which have limited evidence that would not meaningfully contribute to local or regional research objectives. A historic building which retains limited original fabric, and/or whose historic interest has been largely compromised.

Methodology for Assessment of Setting of Heritage Assets

- 3.3.9 The setting of heritage assets will be assessed in line with Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA 3). This sets out a five-step process for the assessment of the setting of a heritage asset (Historic England, 2017, p 8):

- Step 1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.
- Step 2. Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.
- Step 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it.
- Step 4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.
- Step 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

3.3.10 This assessment will consider Steps 1 through 3 for all heritage assets which require assessment. Step 4 may be considered on a case by case basis as required. Step 5 is beyond the remit of the assessment.

3.3.11 The guidance also sets out the “twin roles” of setting in relation to the significance of heritage assets. It states that the setting can either contribute to the significance of a heritage asset, or provide an ability to appreciate that significance (Historic England, 2017, p 1 and 4).

Application of methods within this report

3.3.12 A full assessment of the potential impacts and effects of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset must incorporate the approaches in both GPA 2 and GPA 3, as it is necessary to understand both the setting and the significance of a heritage asset in order to understand what effect a development proposal would have on the significance of the heritage asset in question.

3.3.13 This report has therefore been structured to ensure that each step within both guidance notes is undertaken consistently for each heritage asset assessed. Table 1, below, sets out where each step of GPA 2 and 3 are found within this report. The table is organised around the first four steps in GPA 3, as the assessment of significance outlined in GPA 2 forms part of step 2 of the approach set out in GPA 3.

Table 1: Summary of application of Historic England guidance within report	
GPA 3 Steps	Location within report and descriptions
Step 1	- Section 3.1: Sets out the search areas used to determine which heritage assets may require further assessment. - Section 4.1: Describes any refinements to the scope of the assessment, and confirms which heritage assets require assessment.
Step 2	- Section 4.2: Contains descriptions of all the heritage assets which have been confirmed as requiring further assessment, consisting of: - o An assessment of the significance of the heritage asset, in accordance with the approach set out in Historic England’s Good Practice Advice in Planning note 2, and summarised above; and - o A description of the setting of the heritage asset, and of the role the asset’s setting plays in its significance. - Section 4.3: For archaeological remains, this process will be undertaken following the period-based evidence review and assessment of archaeological potential.
Step 3	- Section 4.2: For each heritage asset assessed, there will also be an assessment of the role the study site plays within its setting and significance, confirming whether the study site forms part of or is within the setting of the heritage asset, and whether it is a positive, negative or neutral aspect of its setting and / or significance. This helps to inform the impact assessment.

Table 1: Summary of application of Historic England guidance within report	
GPA 3 Steps	Location within report and descriptions
	- Section 4.3: For archaeological remains, this process will be undertaken following the period-based evidence review and assessment of archaeological potential. - Section 5.2: Provides an assessment of the impacts and effects of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset. This is undertaken in accordance with the approach set out in sections 3.4 and 3.5, below.
Step 4	- If appropriate, additional mitigation measures may be suggested to further reduce any harm identified in section 5.3.

3.4 Assessment of Impacts

3.4.1 As is confirmed by the PPG: “What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset” (PPG 18a-018). The NPPF uses the term “harm”, when discussing the impacts of a development on the significance of a heritage asset. The assessment of the overall impacts of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets is evaluated by taking into account both the significance of the heritage asset, and the nature and extent of the predicted impact on that significance. If a proposal would change the setting of a heritage asset in a way which is considered harmful, it is essential that clear reasoning is provided on why the change would lead to harm. That reasoning must explain how the change to the setting of the heritage asset would either affect some element of its setting which contributes to its significance or hinder the appreciation of the asset’s significance.

3.4.2 The NPPF identifies only three levels of harm, substantial harm, less than substantial harm and no harm in the wording of the policies set out in paragraphs 213-215. However, as is noted above, the PPG states that substantial harm is a “high test” (PPG Paragraph 18a-018). This means that less than substantial harm can encompass impacts that range from just below substantial harm, down to just above negligible, which is a considerable range of impacts. Furthermore, in paragraph 18a-018 the PPG also clarifies that:

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

3.4.3 Therefore, to ensure the impacts are clearly articulated, where a finding of less than substantial harm is identified it will be categorised as either medium or low depending on the degree of harm. This results in a spectrum of potential impacts on the significance of heritage assets which ranges from no impact up to substantial harm. This spectrum of impacts is summarised in Table 2, below, along with brief descriptions of the terms used.

Table 2: Criteria for determining the degree of harm on the significance of heritage assets	
Level of impact	Description
Substantial harm - high	- Total or substantial loss of the significance of a heritage asset. - Harm to a heritage asset through effects to its setting, such that the significance of the asset would be totally lost or substantially reduced (e.g. the significance of a designated heritage asset would be reduced to such a degree that its designation would be questionable; the significance of an undesignated heritage asset would be reduced to such

Table 2: Criteria for determining the degree of harm on the significance of heritage assets

Level of impact	Description
	a degree that its categorisation as a heritage asset would be questionable).
Less than substantial harm - medium	- Moderate harm to a heritage asset, such that the asset's significance would be materially affected/considerably devalued, but not totally or substantially lost.
Less than substantial harm - low	- Low level of harm to the significance of a heritage asset. - This could include the removal of fabric that forms part of the heritage asset, but that is not integral to its significance (e.g. the demolition of later extensions/additions of little intrinsic value). - Low level of harm to the heritage asset's significance through effects to its setting.
Negligible	- A change to a heritage asset or its setting that involves no loss of significance or harm.
No Impact	- No change to a heritage asset or its setting.

3.4.4 Assessments of the degree of harm on the significance of heritage assets are based on the extent to which the proposed development would affect the nature, extent and level of significance of the asset. By nature, this process is not quantitative but relies on professional judgement. However, this judgment is informed by accepted, observable facts, such as spatial relationships and designations.

3.5 Assessment of Heritage Benefits

3.5.1 There are no criteria within the NPPF or in the PPG for the assessment of beneficial effects to the significance of heritage assets. However, the NPPF does make it clear that enhancements to the significance of heritage assets are desirable (paragraph 210) and that developments that enhance the significance of heritage assets should be treated favourably (paragraph 219).

3.5.2 The National Planning Policy Guidance defines public benefits, and also provides examples of heritage benefits in Paragraph 18a-020:

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*

- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation*

3.5.3 Furthermore, there are often instances where the effects of a development on the significance of a heritage asset are multifaceted, with both harmful and beneficial effects. In these instances it is necessary to come to an overall understanding of the impact of a proposed development, which considers both positive and negative effects. To inform such a judgment, it is not sufficient to understand that an effect is beneficial, it is also necessary to understand the scale of the benefit in order to understand how a harmful effect compares to a beneficial one.

3.5.4 Therefore, where a beneficial effect to a heritage asset is identified it will be categorised as either substantial, moderate or low, mirroring the degrees of harm set out in Table 2. Where a benefit is categorised, this will be justified within the assessment. The categorisation of a benefit will follow the broad criteria set out below in Table 3.

Table 3: Scale of heritage benefits	
Level of effect	Description
Substantial benefit	- Benefits that enhance key elements of a heritage asset's significance to a substantive degree. This would include effects such as substantial repairs or restoration of original fabric of a listed building which is at risk, or works that allow a central part of an asset's special interest to be appreciated or understood where this was not previously possible.
Moderate benefit	- Benefits that provide a moderate enhancement to important elements of a heritage asset's significance. Examples would be realising the research value of remains of archaeological interest through archaeological investigation, modest repairs and restoration of key parts of the fabric of a heritage asset, and works that better reveal key elements of the significance of a listed building, either by removing unsympathetic extensions or by sympathetically modifying the building's setting.
Low benefit	- Benefits that either provide minor enhancements to important elements of a heritage asset's significance, or which benefit more peripheral elements of the asset's significance. Examples would include removing unsympathetic elements from the setting of a heritage asset which allow for generally enhanced appreciation of the asset's significance, or minor repairs and restoration of a historic building's fabric.

3.5.5 It is important to note that the descriptions and categories above are for guidance, and that assessments of benefits must ultimately be based on professional judgment which is informed by a thorough understanding of the heritage asset's significance, and of the effects of the proposed development.

3.6 Photography

3.6.1 Photographs taken to illustrate the scale of a heritage asset from a particular viewpoint have been taken with a Canon EOS 6D camera with a 24-105mm lens. The camera has a 20.2 megapixel full-frame CMOS sensor.

3.6.2 Research has found that images taken with a focal length of between 70mm and 80mm provide the most realistic representation of landscape features in terms of their scale within the photograph, with shorter focal lengths (i.e. 50mm or 60mm) found to exaggerate the distance of the object (Hunter 2012). While this chapter does not consider landscape impacts, it does consider views of heritage assets within their setting, including distant key views, in which similar considerations to those studied by Hunter's research

apply (for instance, one of the receptors considered in the 2012 study was Urquhart Castle, a scheduled monument in Scotland).

- 3.6.3 Therefore, photographs of heritage assets within this assessment, such as a church tower seen from a specific viewpoint, will be taken at focal lengths of between 70mm to 80mm, to provide an accurate representation of the scale of the heritage asset within any view presented. Lower focal lengths (which provide a more wide-angle view) may be used in certain circumstances, for example in urban contexts or for general site or location photographs, to provide better context for a view, or understanding of the setting of a heritage asset, if appropriate. The focal length of the image will be provided with all photographs.
- 3.6.4 Care has also been taken to ensure that the images presented are of a good quality. Photographs are taken in clear weather wherever possible. Finally, photographs within the body of this assessment are provided for illustrative purposes only and are not sized within the assessment for viewing to scale as is done in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). If it is necessary to provide such a scaled view, it will be clearly labelled with specific viewing instructions.

3.7 Methodology for Assessment of Lidar Data

- 3.7.1 Lidar (light detection and ranging) uses airborne laser scanning to scan the ground to provide a highly accurate set of topographic data at a high level of resolution. This data can be used to detect slight earthwork remains and other archaeological features to a degree of accuracy previously only possible through detailed field survey or photogrammetry (HE 2018).
- 3.7.2 The Environment Agency (EA) regularly collects Lidar data for England to help model flood risk, and has made this data publicly available. The EA has also completed a programme to map the whole of England using lidar to a resolution of 1m to help them better plan for the future and also so that this data can assist in other environmental studies. As such it should be possible to use lidar to help understand the archaeological potential of most rural sites across England.
- 3.7.3 Digital Terrain Models (DTM) are a surface model generated from lidar data, which shows the ground surface with buildings and trees filtered out to create a 'bare earth' effect. DTM data is regularly used to detect archaeological features, as the 'bare earth' model can assist in the detection of archaeological earthworks remains and even subtle depressions associated with ancient ditches. DTM models can also sometimes detect archaeological features which would be obscured by tree cover in aerial photographs. Therefore lidar assessments will make use of DTM data unless otherwise stated.
- 3.7.4 Generally the assessment will make use of the highest resolution data available from the EA for the study site and surrounding area, although regard will also be had to the date of the available data; some data is up to 10 years old and may not reflect the current condition of the site under assessment. The date and resolution of the data used will be noted in the assessment. Where two different datasets have been used, for instance where coverage for higher 0.5m resolution data does not cover the whole of the assessment site and 1m data is also used, the different datasets will be analysed separately, and this will be clearly stated and referenced in the assessment.
- 3.7.5 EA lidar data is processed using standard settings in the Relief Visualisation Toolkit (RVT) version 2.4 and reviewed using QGIS. The results of the analysis are then reviewed for

evidence of remains, in conjunction with other available evidence. The lidar data will only be illustrated where clear evidence of archaeological features is detected.

4.0 Historic Environment Baseline

4.1 Built Heritage Baseline

4.1.1 This assessment considers the setting of designated heritage assets in the area around the study site, to determine whether the development of the study site would affect their setting. There is a total of nineteen Listed Buildings which are grade II within 1km of the study site. There is also a conservation area within the search area and to the north of the study site.

4.1.2 The potential for the development of the study site to affect the setting and significance of designated heritage assets in the wider area was informed by a site visit and walkover of the study site and the surrounding area. The site visit confirmed that most of the listed buildings and other designated heritage assets in the surrounding area are sufficiently screened by intervening trees, hedgerows, topography and buildings that the residential scale development of the study site would not materially affect their significance, or require a design response. Heritage assets that require further assessments are discussed below.

Listed Buildings

Butler's Coombe Farmhouse, 1364463

4.1.3 Butler's Coombe Farmhouse is a 18th century farmhouse located to the south of the study site and to the east of Deverill Road. Further details can be found in the NHLE description below.

C18 altered to local 'Gothick' in mid C19. 2 storeys square and box-like. Left hand part of west front of local rubblework with large quoins, right hand part of brick. Hipped slate roof with central brick chimneys. 2 ranges of windows, 2 light casements on 1st floor, 3 light casements on 1st floor, 3 light casements on ground floor, with pointed heads and drip moulds, all with glazing bars and moulded frames. Similar 2 light windows on left and right hand ground floor returns. 'L' plan with 2 storey rear wing and glazed entrance in angle.

Level of significance

4.1.4 As a grade II listed building, Butler's Coombe Farmhouse is a heritage asset of national significance as defined in section 3.3.8 of this assessment.

Nature of significance

4.1.5 The significance of the building is primarily derived from its architectural and historic interest and is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Extent of significance, including setting

4.1.6 The Farmhouse is located to the south of the study site, within Butler's Coombe Farm. The views of the Farmhouse from the study site are largely screened by tree line and vegetation, with only limited views from the Public Right of Way (PROW) to the south (see Plate 3 overleaf).



Plate 3 Partial view of Butler's Coombe Farmhouse (55mm)

- 4.1.7 These views of the Farmhouse from the study site, provide a limited appreciation of the architectural and historical interest of the Farmhouse. It is therefore considered that due to the screening provided by vegetation and the tree line around the Farmhouse, the best place to appreciate the historical and architectural significance is from within the grounds of the farm itself.



Plate 4 Restricted view of Butler's Coombe Farmhouse amongst tree line and vegetation (65mm)

Relationship with study site

- 4.1.8 The Farmhouse is located 64m from the southern boundary of the study site. The building is contained within the extent of the 18th century Farmstead and from mapping it is shown that the northern extent of the property is bounded by extensive trees and vegetation, which was confirmed by the site visit (see plate 4, above). There is no historical association between the study site and Butler's Coombe Farmhouse and does not form part of its' setting as evidenced by the 1839 Tithe Map of Bishopstrow.
- 4.1.9 The accessible view of the building from within the study site was from PRoW WARM59 which is located along southwestern boundary of the study site. However, these views are restricted by intervening trees, vegetation and the topography of the landscape (see Plate 3 and 4). The southern end of the study site is moderately flat but the topography drops significantly at its southern boundary. The Farmhouse is located further down the hillside further obscuring any views (see Plate 2).
- 4.1.10 These views provide a limited appreciation of the historic and architectural interest of the Farmhouse, and it is considered that the study site offers a neutral contribution to the setting of the Farmhouse.

Christ Church, 1036199

- 4.1.11 The parish church, Christ Church is of early 19th century with later additions, and restorations in the early 21st century. It is located 455m northwest of the study site. Further details can be found in the NHLE description below.

Dates of main phases, name of architect: 1830-1 by John Leachman. East end enlarged by T.H. Wyatt, 1871. Porches and nave arcades by George Vials of London, 1881. Reordered, 2004-5.

Materials: Yellow brick with limestone dressings, slate roofs.

Plan: Five bay nave with aisles under the same roof, lower two-bay chancel with one-bay organ chamber (south) and vestry (north). Projecting west tower flanked by angled porches in the returns between tower and nave.

Exterior: The elegantly proportioned west tower dominates: in an E.E. style, with tall thin pinnacles, diagonal buttresses, embattled parapet, and louvred lancet bell-openings in deep splayed reveals. The middle stage has smaller lancets, and diagonally-set square frames for clock-faces north and south. The west window has Geometric Dec tracery, and a door beneath, all part of Wyatt's remodelling. Vials added the west porches with rose windows above in the west walls of the nave. The sides of the nave have insubstantial buttresses, and tall lancets, with Perp tracery added by Wyatt. The parapets are embattled, with thin pinnacles at each bay division. By Wyatt, the enlarged east end with solid parapets. The three-light east window under a four-centred arch has rather skimpy Perp tracery. The east nave gable has a small chimney stack where the medieval Sanctus bellcote would have been.

Interior: Four-centred nave arcades with shafted piers, inserted by George Vials in 1881 as the original unsupported roofspan had become unstable. He also renewed the nave and chancel roofs with open timber tie-beam trusses, and removed the 1830s galleries.

Principal Fixtures: In the vestibule, a painted board c. 1831, citing fees and rules for monuments in the church and churchyard; a fairly uncommon survival. The reredos is an opus sectile and mosaic panel with leaf border, depicting the Last Supper. Caen stone font, 1867, on four sturdy polished stone shafts. Elaborate late Victorian pulpit of alabaster and red marble, with a deeply undercut foliate cornice. In a reordering of 2004-5, the pitch pine benches of 1881 were replaced with carpet and moveable chairs.

The western bay of the nave was also glazed to create a lobby, servery and offices, etc, with gallery above. At the same time a low chancel wall topped by a good wrought-iron and brass screen (1887) was removed except for short stubs at the sides.

Subsidiary Features: Raised churchyard surrounded by a high rubble stone wall increasing in height to the south. Gates with quatrefoil headed dograils and ogival wrought-iron overthrow.

History: The vicar of Warminster, William Dalby, began to hold services at a workhouse on Warminster Common in 1826. After a Methodist chapel was opened nearby in 1827 under William Daniell, Dalby redoubled his efforts to raise money for a permanent church. A public meeting settled on the present site at Sambourne, against Dalby's wishes. Over £2,800 was raised by subscription, and a grant of £1,676 by the Church Building Commissioners covered most of the rest. William Daniell considered that Christ Church had been erected in direct competition with his own chapel.

Thomas Henry Wyatt (1807-1880) was a member of an architecturally prolific family. He was a pupil of Philip Hardwick Wyatt, became district surveyor for Hackney in 1832 and was successfully in partnership with David Brandon 1838-51. He was honorary architect to the Salisbury Diocesan Church Building Society, which brought him many commissions, including sixteen churches built or rebuilt in Wiltshire, and numerous restorations. He was elected president of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1870. His most famous church is Wilton, Wilts. (1841-5). In 1869 Wyatt was a proposer for the RIBA Associateship of George Vials, who worked at Warminster after Wyatt's death, and may have been a pupil.

Sources: Pevsner, N and Cherry, B., Buildings of England; Wiltshire (1975), 555. Directory of British Architects 1834-1914, vol. 2, 871. Lambeth Palace Library, Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS) Archive, file 07180 - www.churchplansonline.org

Reasons for Designation: The church of Christ Church, Warminster, is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Externally a characteristic example of the thin and un-ecclesiological Gothic of c. 1830.*
- * The elegant tower at a busy road junction forms a local landmark.*
- * Richer Gothic fittings of 1871-81, including reredos, alabaster pulpit and stained glass.*
- * The local historical importance of an Anglican church built to combat the inroads of Nonconformity among the poor of Warminster Common.*

Level of significance

- 4.1.12 As a grade II listed building, Christ Church is a heritage asset of national significance as defined in section 3.3.8 of this assessment.

Nature of significance

- 4.1.13 The significance of the building is derived from its architectural and historic interest and is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Extent of significance, including setting

- 4.1.14 The church is located within the churchyard and surrounding cemetery and set back from the nearby highway. This area provides a good appreciation of the architectural and historical interest of the church (see Plate 5).



Plate 5 View of Christ Church from the public entrance coming off the main road footpath (24mm)

- 4.1.15 The setting of the building consists predominantly of the experience provided from the surrounding churchyard and there is a restricted view from the cemetery of the study site, beyond the existing residential development (see Plate 6).



Plate 6 South east facing shot of the restricted view of the study site from Christ church (24mm)

- 4.1.16 Views of the upper elevations of the church roof and tower are available from the surrounding area (including from the far eastern boundary of the study site; see Plate 7).



Plate 7 North west facing shot of the upper tower and roof of Christ church (105mm)

- 4.1.17 It is therefore considered that the grounds around the church make the strongest contribution to the significance of the building and best appreciation of the architectural and historic interest of the building.
- 4.1.18 The upper elevation of the church does mark the church as a prominent feature in the landscape in the area surrounding the town of Warminster.

Relationship with study site

- 4.1.19 The site visit confirmed that there are views of the upper elevation and tower of Christ Church at the eastern edge of the study site (see Plate 7). As these views of the Church from the study site allows for some appreciation of the historic and architectural interest of the building within a wider landscape (Historic England, 2017), it is considered that the scope of the proposed development would not impact on the significance of the Church, as the views of the spires and tower could still be appreciated from within the study site.
- 4.1.20 As such, the study site forms part of the neutral setting of the church by providing appreciation of the tower and roof of Christ Church. There are some areas to the western boundary within the study site that have restricted views of the heritage asset due to nearby development at Ashley Coombe, vegetation and tree line. Therefore, the study site does provide a good appreciation of Christ Church, but it does not form a key part of the views out from the heritage asset due to residential development largely already disrupting the view to the study site. It is therefore considered that the study site is a neutral contribution towards the setting of the church.

4.2 Archaeological Evidence, Potential and Significance

- 4.2.1 The archaeological evidence considered in this assessment comprises evidence from:
- The Wiltshire Council Historic Environment Record;
 - Geophysical survey of the study site

- Previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity;
- Lidar data from the Environment Agency;
- Aerial imagery available from Google Earth, and
- Historic mapping, including OS maps and earlier tithe and estate maps.

4.2.2 The evidence provided by each of these sources is described below, together with a consideration of the reliability of the information provided by each source, and its relevance to the assessment of the archaeological potential of the study site. This will be followed by an assessment of the archaeological potential of the study site by period. Finally, an assessment of the likely significance of the potential buried archaeology within the study site will be provided.

Previous archaeological investigations

4.2.3 The HER data records several archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the 1km search area round the study site and a single investigation within the study site.

Geophysical Survey of Ashley Coombe, Warminster

4.2.4 A recent geophysical survey was undertaken as part of the proposed planning application on the study site. The data (see Plate 8 below) records strong archaeological remains predominantly on the southeastern side of the study site comprising a large sub circular enclosure, with a sub-angular enclosure and a smaller circular (Lefort Geophysics 2025). Possible archaeological discrete features are concentrated to the southeastern area, but are present across the entire study site.

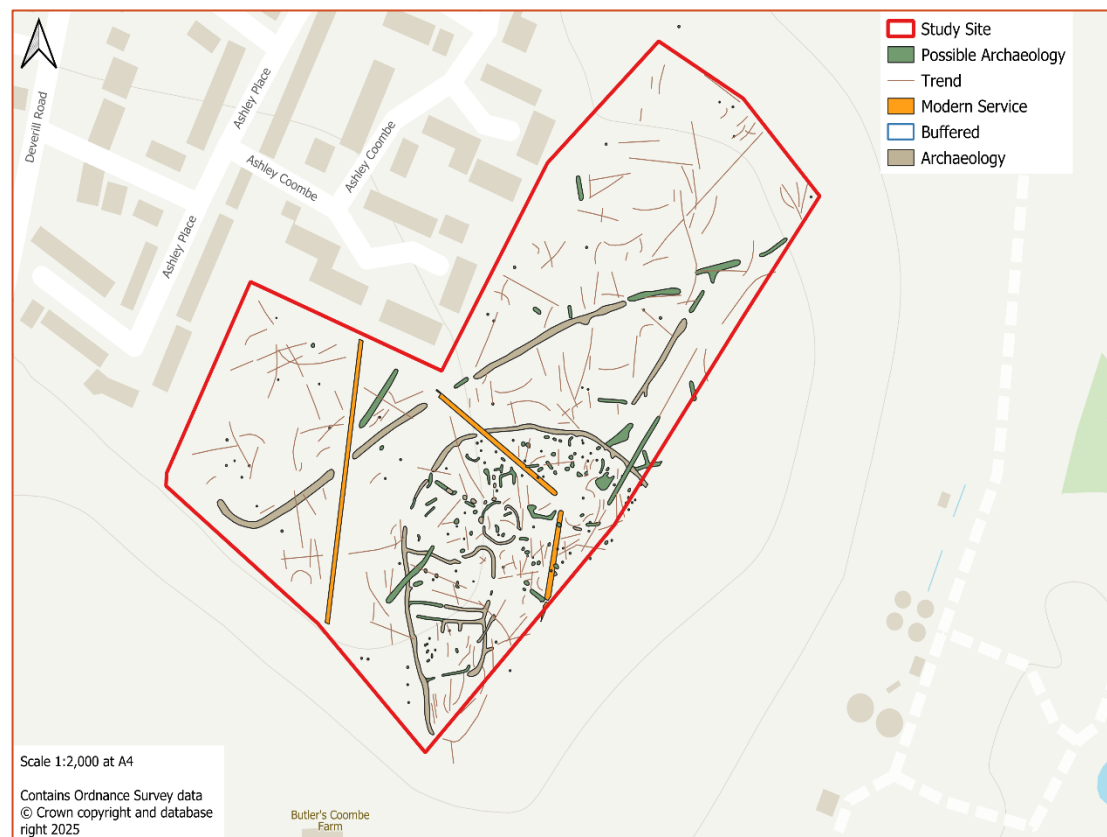


Plate 8 Geophysical survey results for the land off Ashley Coombe

4.2.5 A northeast-southwest oriented anomaly is present across a large area of the study site. A shorter linear potentially matches the undated earthworks [MW1183] recorded in the

HER, although no visible remains were evident during the site visit. Two potential modern services are also identified in the southern part of the study site.

EWI10087 Geophysical survey at Bore Hill Farm and EWI10177 Evaluation of Land at Bore Hill Farm

- 4.2.6 A previous geophysical survey (EWI10087) undertaken 120m to the west of the study site identified anomalies associated with linear ditches and pits as well as a possible ring ditch. Subsequent archaeological evaluation (EWI10177) of the site confirmed the geophysical survey results however due to conditions on the site not all features were excavated, including the possible ring ditch, and features that were excavated were either undated or were found to contain Post-Medieval remains.

EWI7110 Evaluation at land east of Damask Way, Smallbrook Lane

- 4.2.7 An evaluation, consisting of machine-excavated trenches, was undertaken in support of a planning application and following an earlier gradiometer survey 390m to the north east of the study site. Two trenches revealed archaeological activity, comprising two small pits of probable early Neolithic date. A quantity of early Neolithic pottery and worked flint was recovered from the pits.

EWI9086 Evaluation of Henfords Marsh

- 4.2.8 An evaluation consisted of nine machine-excavated trenches was undertaking 500m to the north east of the study site. Previous archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the application areas had located evidence for localised Neolithic archaeological features. Trenches were located by GPS to target a series of geophysical anomalies and areas of magnetic disturbance. A number of archaeological features were revealed comprising probable boundary or enclosure ditches and a number of pit-like features of probable Iron-Age date. A limited number of undated deposits were present, including a horizon containing a modest number of worked flint.



Plate 9 Lidar data of the study site and surrounding area rendered using simplified local relief model analysis

Lidar data

- 4.2.9 The Lidar data highlights land parcel divisions and agricultural activity across the study site (see Plate 9 overleaf). The data also highlights the extent of the slope that surrounds the site to the north and east.

Site Walkover

- 4.2.10 A walkover of the study site was undertaken on the 22nd of September 2025 (Plates 1,3,4,5,6,7) in clear, sunny conditions. Views were assessed to and from the study site to assess the setting of nearby designated assets (see Plates 1,3,4,5,6,7 earlier). There was no visible evidence of the HER recorded undated earthworks [MWI1183] within the study site, nor [MWI1184] to the immediate east of the study area.

Review of archaeological evidence by period

Prehistoric

- 4.2.11 The HER records twelve heritage assets associated with the Prehistoric period within 1km of the study site, and the geophysical survey has identified archaeological remains on the study site.
- 4.2.12 Neolithic activity is recorded 350m to the east of the study site, comprising two pits [MWI75280, MWI75282] from which Early Neolithic pottery and worked flints were recovered. The HER data records ditches [MWI76259] 80m east of the Neolithic pits aforementioned, although they are undated. Other findspots comprising two Neolithic axe heads [MWI1109, MWI1110] are recorded within 989m to the northwest of the study site.
- 4.2.13 The recent geophysical survey at the study site (see Plate 8) identified a large sub circular anomaly at the south eastern end of the study site. Within this a series of smaller sub circular anomalies are amongst a multitude of smaller pit like discretes. These findings suggests that a large settlement, with smaller enclosures; a potential Prehistoric ring ditch is present within the southern part of the study site.
- 4.2.14 Iron Age settlement activity could be potentially presented by an undated ring ditch [MWI78252] located 227m to the west of the study site which was identified during a geophysical survey of the site (EWI10087) which also recorded a series of undated ditches [MWI78253], and pits [MWI78254] which surrounded the ring ditch.
- 4.2.15 Further Iron Age evidence is represented by a pit [MWI76260] which was recorded 518m to the east of the study site at Hensford Marsh and a potential cluster of hut circles [MWI74389, MWI74390] 953m and undated field boundaries [MWI74388] to the north of the study site.
- 4.2.16 The HER clearly shows there is known potential for Prehistoric activity to be present within the search area, especially to the west of the study site where an undated ring ditch was recorded [MWI78252]. The recent geophysical survey recorded a sub-circular anomaly potentially attributed to the Prehistoric period. It is therefore considered that there is a known potential for buried Prehistoric remains to be present within the study site.

Roman

- 4.2.17 The HER attributes three findspots dating to the Roman period within 1km of the study site.
- 4.2.18 A Roman road is not recorded to run from Warminster, but the town lay on a viable route from Salisbury to Bath (British History Online, 2025). The recorded activity dated to the

Roman period comprises findspots from coinage [MWI1119, MWI1120] within the search area, with the closest [MWI1120] recorded 563m east of the study site.

- 4.2.19 The HER records a findspot of a Quern stone [MWI72746] 973m west of the study site. This asset have a broad date from the Roman period to Late Medieval period.
- 4.2.20 The recent geophysical survey undertaken at the study site has identified a strong archaeological potential for buried remains to be present. There is not an extensive record of Roman remains in the search area, however it is considered that Warminster may have been a stop between along the established route aforementioned and there is a potential for additional findspots or agricultural activity within the study site.
- 4.2.21 Therefore, whilst there is a general potential for Roman activity to be present in the wider search area based on the HER data there is low potential for buried Roman remains to be present within the study site.

Saxon/Medieval

- 4.2.22 The HER contains two records for Saxon settlement activity to the north of the study site and outside the search area; there are no records relating to Saxon activity on the study site. There are six records and two potential assets attributed to the Medieval period within the search area.
- 4.2.23 The town of Warminster began as a small settlement [MWI885, MWI894] within the loop of the Were stream, but people were living in the area during prehistoric days – the surrounding hills feature Iron Age remains, while at Pitmead, a meadow by the river Wylde near Norton Bavant, the remains of two Romano-British buildings were first discovered in 1786. The Domesday Book (1086) suggests a population of 400 in Warminster in AD 1086. A grant of a market had been made by 1204 and although the growth of the town was gradual to begin with, the corn market held here was soon successful (Warminster Council, 2025). Archaeological excavations at Emwell Street in 1979, 1090m to the north of the study site, recorded firm Saxon/Early Medieval activity from pottery recovered in drainage ditches [MWI885] that dated no later than the mid 11th century.
- 4.2.24 Warminster was a royal residence in the early 10th century, and the potential location of the Royal Manor is believed to be just outside the search area to the north; 1200m from the study site (Extensive Urban Survey- Wiltshire, 2009). Warminster owed its comparative importance in Saxon times rather to its being a royal manor than to its position on a Salisbury to Bath route (British History Online, 2025).
- 4.2.25 The HER records evidence of Medieval pottery production and findspots of pottery within the search area with a pottery kiln [MWI1142] and pottery [MWI1143, MWI1144] recorded over 360m to the north, south and east of the study site. Some of the pottery findspots are attributed with the Medieval pottery industry located in Crockerton over 2km to the south of the study site. Further evidence of pottery production [MWI1149] is recorded 851m to the south of the study site which may have continued in use to the Post-Medieval period.
- 4.2.26 The HER records one known Medieval settlement [MWI1140] 272m to the east of the study area. Further evidence of potential Medieval settlement activity is recorded as a rectangular enclosure [MWI1186] located 958m northwest of the study site and an extensive undated field system [MWI1177] 228m to the south of the study site. The HER records the field system to be in near vicinity of the deserted Medieval Village of Rodhurst and is therefore possibly attributed to the activity of this period.

- 4.2.27 The search area was likely utilised for agricultural and settlement activities relating to the royal manor of Warminster during the late Saxon period, with continued expansion in the Medieval period. It is considered that there is a low potential for Saxon, and a general potential for Medieval buried remains to be present within the study site.
- Post-Medieval/Modern*
- 4.2.28 The HER records twenty-seven Post-Medieval records, and one asset attributed to the Modern period at the search area.
- 4.2.29 The Post-Medieval period is represented in the search area with a continued presence of settlement and agricultural activities. The HER records seven water meadows [MWI31300, MWI32055, MWI32056, MWI32059, MWI32055, MWI31300, MWI1151] mostly located to the east and south of the study site, the closest being 245m to the southeast. These heritage assets are recorded with a broad date of AD1540-1900.
- 4.2.30 Two settlements and associated later farmsteads [MWI1148/MWI65662], [MWI64958/MWI1147] provide insight into the continued rural settlements of the Post-Medieval period. The 18th century farmstead Butler's Coombe [MWI71491] is the closest recorded Post-Medieval farmstead to the study site and contains the Grade II listed building (NHLE: 1364463) detailed in section 4.1.3.
- 4.2.31 The 19th century is represented by eleven farmsteads [MWI65663, MWI65671, MWI65674, MWI65675, MWI64957, MWI65665, MWI64957, MWI71490, MWI71492] located over 133m away all around the study site. The HER records four outfarms [MWI65672, MWI65666, MWI65667, MWI65668] located over 400m around the study site. A mid 19th century water garden and grotto [MWI31990] is present at the western edge of the search area, 930m from the southeastern red line boundary.
- 4.2.32 The HER records one modern settlement as a 20th century detached house [MWI76783] 424m directly north of the study site.
- 4.2.33 The earliest maps consulted for the area (John Speed 1611) clearly depicts Warminster but no further details of the area can be ascertained from the map. The beforementioned Butlers' Coombe Farmhouse first appears on historic maps from 1773 at the base of a slope to the north (Figure 5).
- 4.2.34 The 1839 Tithe Map of Bishopstrow (Figure 6) records the land contained within the study site as an arable field. This land, along with other land parcels to the east were owned by Sir John Dugdale Astley and occupied by Joseph Phelps.
- 4.2.35 The earliest detailed map of the study site is from the late 19th century (Figure 7) which shows the study site situated within large parcels of land, a footpath or trackway is shown at the bottom of the study site and running along the western edge which corresponds with the existing PRow's. An additional trackway which is no longer present is recorded north-south to the far west of the study site, which then abruptly turned and joined the aforementioned trackway. This former trackway (Figure 7) could be associated with a former farmstead, which no longer exist, such as Hillwood Farm recorded to the north west of the study site (Figure 5).
- 4.2.36 There is little change to the study site itself during the early 20th century with the exception of the removal of internal field boundaries (Figure 9) and the later construction of the sewage works to the east (Figure 10) before the encroachment of residential developments to the west in the 1970s (Figure 11). More recent aerial imagery of the study site highlights that it has continued in use for agricultural purposes up to the present.

- 4.2.37 The area of the study site was likely utilised during Post-Medieval and modern periods for continued agricultural use as highlighted by aerial imagery, lidar data and the recent geophysical survey. It is considered that there is a known potential for Post-Medieval and Modern below ground remains to be present within the study site likely to be associated with agricultural activity.

Summary of archaeological potential and assessment of significance

- 4.2.38 This assessment has found that the study site has a known potential for Prehistoric, Post-Medieval and Modern archaeological buried remains to be present in the study site based on the available HER data, historic mapping analysis and the recent geophysical survey.
- 4.2.39 Based on the distance from the known Roman and Saxon findspots in the search area, it is considered that there is a low potential for below ground remains to be present in the study site associated with the Roman period and the Saxon settlement at Warminster.
- 4.2.40 The assessment has found that there is a general potential for below ground remains likely dating to the Medieval based on the HER data from the search area, attributed to agricultural activities.

Level of significance

- 4.2.41 The significance of the potential archaeological remains has been assessed, and it has been found that any buried archaeological remains which may be present within the study site would be of no more than local significance, as defined in section 3.3.8 of this assessment.
- 4.2.42 Any remains dating to the Prehistoric period would be of local significance and could contribute to the understanding of settlement activity in the local landscape.
- 4.2.43 Any remains dating to the Roman and Saxon periods would be of local significance and likely be associated with findspots and other evidence similar to those recorded in the wider search area.
- 4.2.44 Any remains dating to the Medieval and Post-Medieval period would be of no more than local significance and could contribute to the understanding of agricultural and occupational and settlement activity in the region during these periods.

Nature of significance

- 4.2.45 Most archaeological remains will have archaeological interest, in particular the potential for further understanding the use of settlement activity during the Prehistoric period. However, they may also have other interest, particularly historic interest, for example Medieval and Post-Medieval field boundary systems and findspots in the study site could shed light on key elements of settlement activity during these periods.

Extent of significance, including setting

- 4.2.46 The below ground remains identified within the study site would likely be part of a larger system of archaeology within the wider landscape. The known potential for remains in the study site are likely attributed to Prehistoric settlement enclosures as suggested by the recent geophysical survey and any remains dating to the Medieval to Post-Medieval periods are likely to be associated with agricultural and occupational activity based on the HER data and Lidar data analysis.

Relationship with study site

- 4.2.47 There are potential remains associated with the identified ring ditches and enclosure to be present within the study site. There may be further evidence associated with these features present within the study site.

historical significance of the farmhouse. These views are further largely obscured by the trees along the southern boundary and the topography in which the study site is located. The proposed development will include a new footpath along the southern boundary which would further retain the partial views towards the farmhouse.

5.2.4 It is considered that the study site also does not form a key part of the views out from the farmhouse and any views from the farmhouse towards the study site are effectively screened by the intervening trees along the boundary of the study site. The steep topography and surrounding trees would screen the development area from the Farmhouse.

5.2.5 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in no harm as defined in Table 2 of this assessment to Butler's Coombe Farmhouse.

Christ Church, 1036199

5.2.6 The site visit confirmed that there are views of the upper elevations of Christ Church from the study site, however, these views are not visible from the current public rights of way, one of which runs along the northwestern boundary of the study site.

5.2.7 Although the upper elevation and tower of the church would be visible from the proposed development, these are designed to be visible from large areas within the landscape where they are constructed. The views from study site provide an appreciation of the architectural and historical interest of the church but does not form a key part of the views out from the buildings and is considered to offer a neutral contribution to the setting of the church.

5.2.8 The proposed development will include an established public right of way along the eastern side of the development as well as maintaining open spaces as part of the development, which would provide the local community a place to experience views of Christ Church from the study site. This assessment therefore considers that the proposed development would provide a means for residents to experience the church and appreciate its significance.

5.2.9 It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in negligible harm as defined in Table 2 of this assessment to the Christ Church. This would represent a change to the setting of the listed buildings but not one that would result in loss or substantial change.

5.3 Mitigation Measures

For the loss of archaeological remains

5.3.1 Given the local significance of the potential archaeological remains within the study site, it is considered that the impacts could be adequately mitigated by the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, secured via the planning process.

5.3.2 The archaeological works would comprise a staged programme of works which could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition and be targeted on the known remains highlighted in the geophysical survey.

For potential effects due to changes to setting

5.3.3 As it is predicted that all impacts to built heritage assets are to be no more than negligible, there are no further mitigation measures which are required than what is included within the proposed development.

6.0 Discussion and Conclusions

6.1 Discussion of findings

- 6.1.1 This historic environment desk-based assessment considers land to the south off Ashley Coombe, Warminster. The study site is proposed for residential development (see Plate 10 above).

Heritage

- 6.1.2 The potential for the development of the study site to affect the setting and significance of designated heritage assets in the wider area was informed by a site visit, and walkover of the study site and the surrounding area. The site visit confirmed that most of the listed buildings and other designated heritage assets in the surrounding area are sufficiently screened by intervening trees, hedgerows, topography and buildings that the study site would not materially affect their significance, or require a design response.

- 6.1.3 This assessment therefore found that only the following built heritage assets required detailed assessment:

- Butlers' Coombe Farmhouse (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE 136443)
- Christ Church (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE 1036199)

- 6.1.4 This assessment concluded that the proposed development would cause no impact in the case of Butler's Coombe Farmhouse, and a negligible impact to Christ Church as defined in Table 2.

- 6.1.5 The impacts and effects of the proposed development are therefore considered to be an acceptable outcome for the heritage assets surrounding the study site and conforms with the requirements of paragraphs 213 to 215 of the NPPF.

Archaeology

- 6.1.6 The findings of this report are based on a range of evidence including a recent geophysical survey of the study site, previous investigations in the surrounding area, HER data, Lidar data and a review of historic mapping. The past use of the study site was also considered. The evidence is sufficient to allow certainty of the exact extent of the archaeological remains present, it is also sufficient to provide a good understanding of the likely significance and nature of the archaeological potential of the study site.

- 6.1.7 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF provides policy on the level of information required to inform a planning application with regard to impacts on the historic environment. This report has confirmed the nature and level of the significance of the likely archaeological remains within the study site and has described the impact of the proposed development on that significance. It therefore meets the requirements of paragraph 207 of the NPPF.

- 6.1.8 This report also describes mitigation measures to minimise and compensate for the anticipated impacts of the proposed development. The implementation of these measures would ensure the proposed development complies with the requirements in paragraph 218 of the NPPF, which requires that a record is made of heritage assets which may be lost, which advances understanding of their significance. Such a programme of archaeological works could be secured via a suitably worded planning condition.

6.2 Conclusions

- 6.2.1 On this basis it is clear that the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological potential of the study site could be adequately mitigated, and the development made acceptable in terms of potential archaeological impacts. It therefore accords with the requirements in paragraphs 207 and 212 - 216 of the NPPF and policy 58 and 99 of the Wiltshire Council's Core Local Plan.

7.0 Bibliography

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Cartographic

1611 John Speed

1773 John Andrews and Andrew Drury, Wiltshire

1807-17 OS Old Series Sheet XIV

1808 Ordnance Surveyor Drawings, Warminster BL OSD 63

1820 Christoper Greenwood, Wiltshire

1839 Tithe Map of Bishopstrow

1886 County Series OS Map

1899 County Series OS Map

1923 County Series OS map

1956 Provisional OS Map

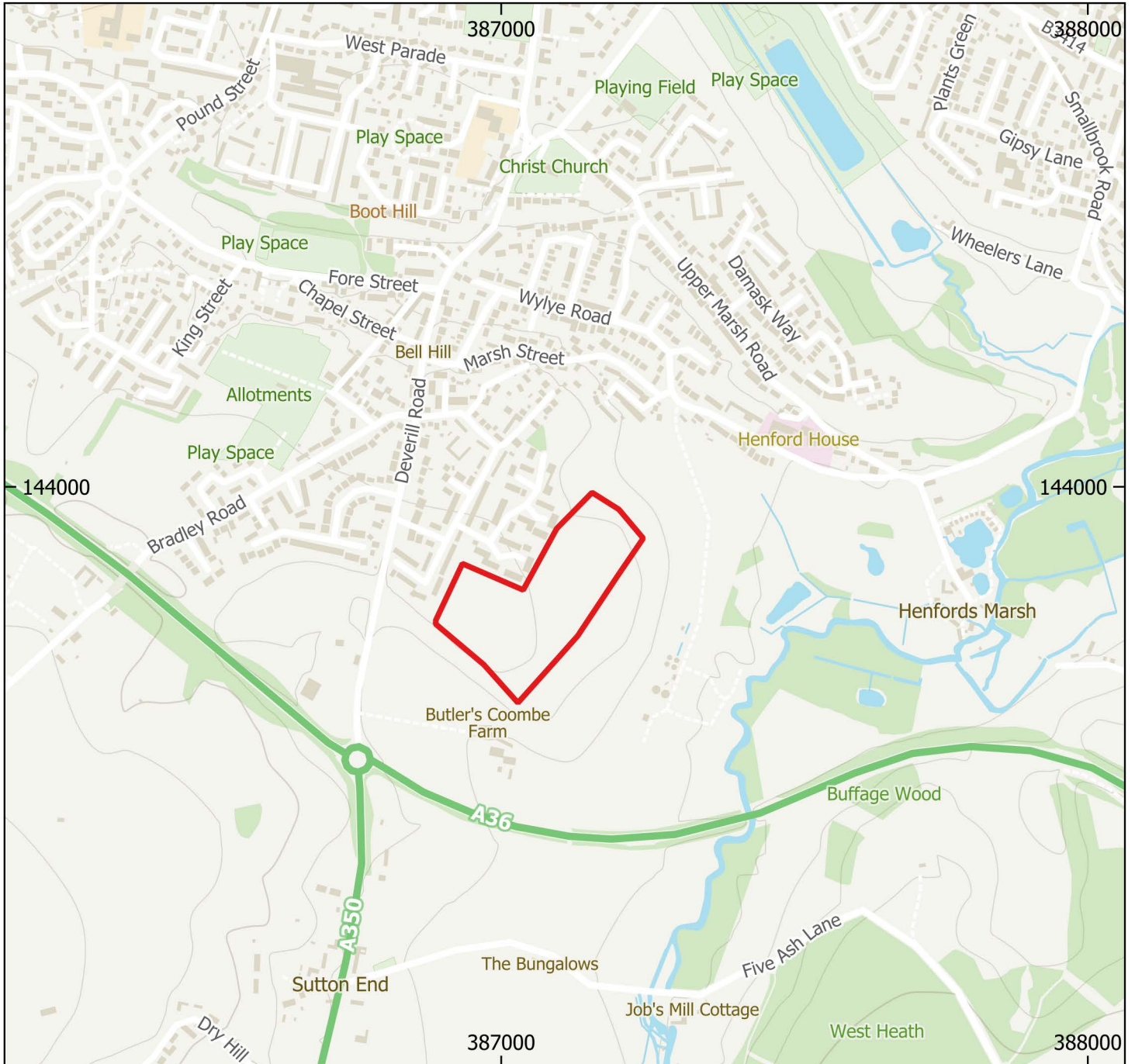
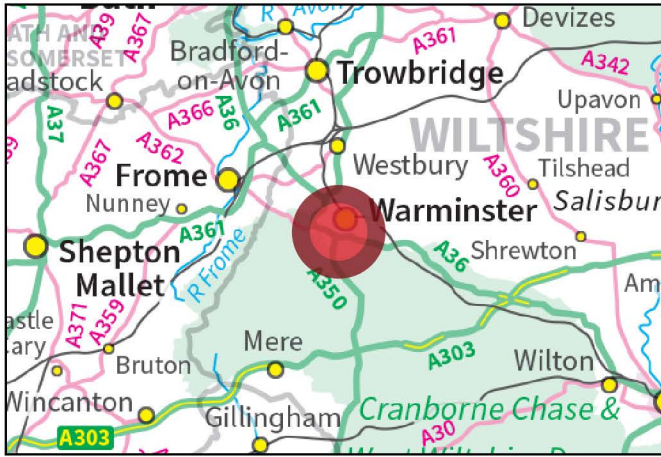
1973-1976 National Grid OS Map

1992 National Grid OS Map

Lidar

Lidar data were downloaded from the Environment Agency website in September 2025 - <https://environment.data.gov.uk/DefraDataDownload/?Mode=survey>

Tile Name	Year	Resolution (m)
ST84SE	2018	1



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 10 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-1

Legend

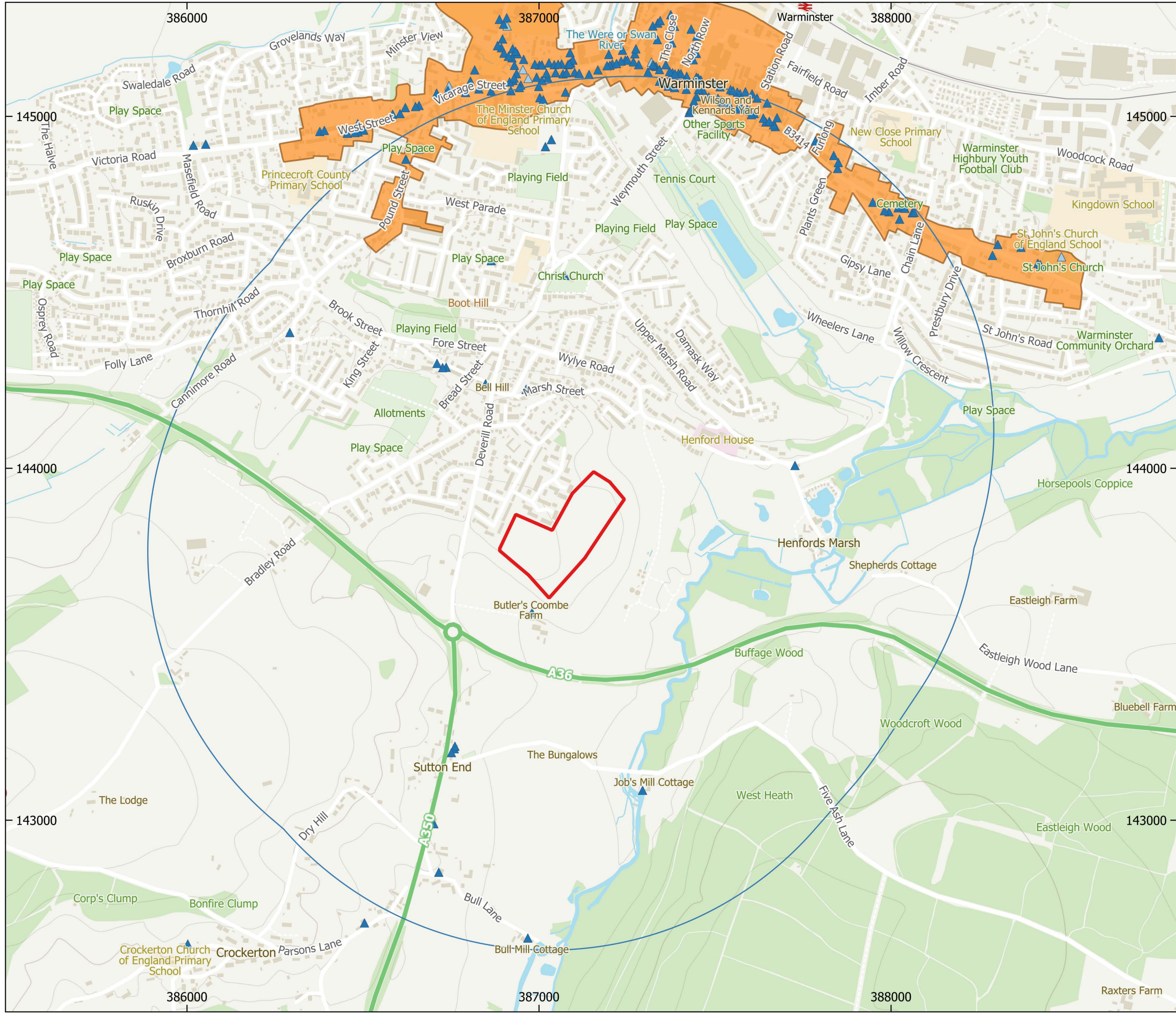
Study Site



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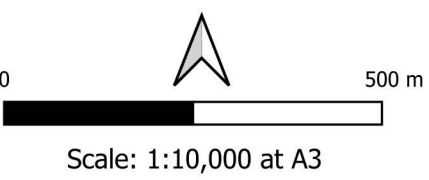
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Land off Ashley Coombe,
Warminster, Wiltshire

Title:
Figure 1: Site Location Plan



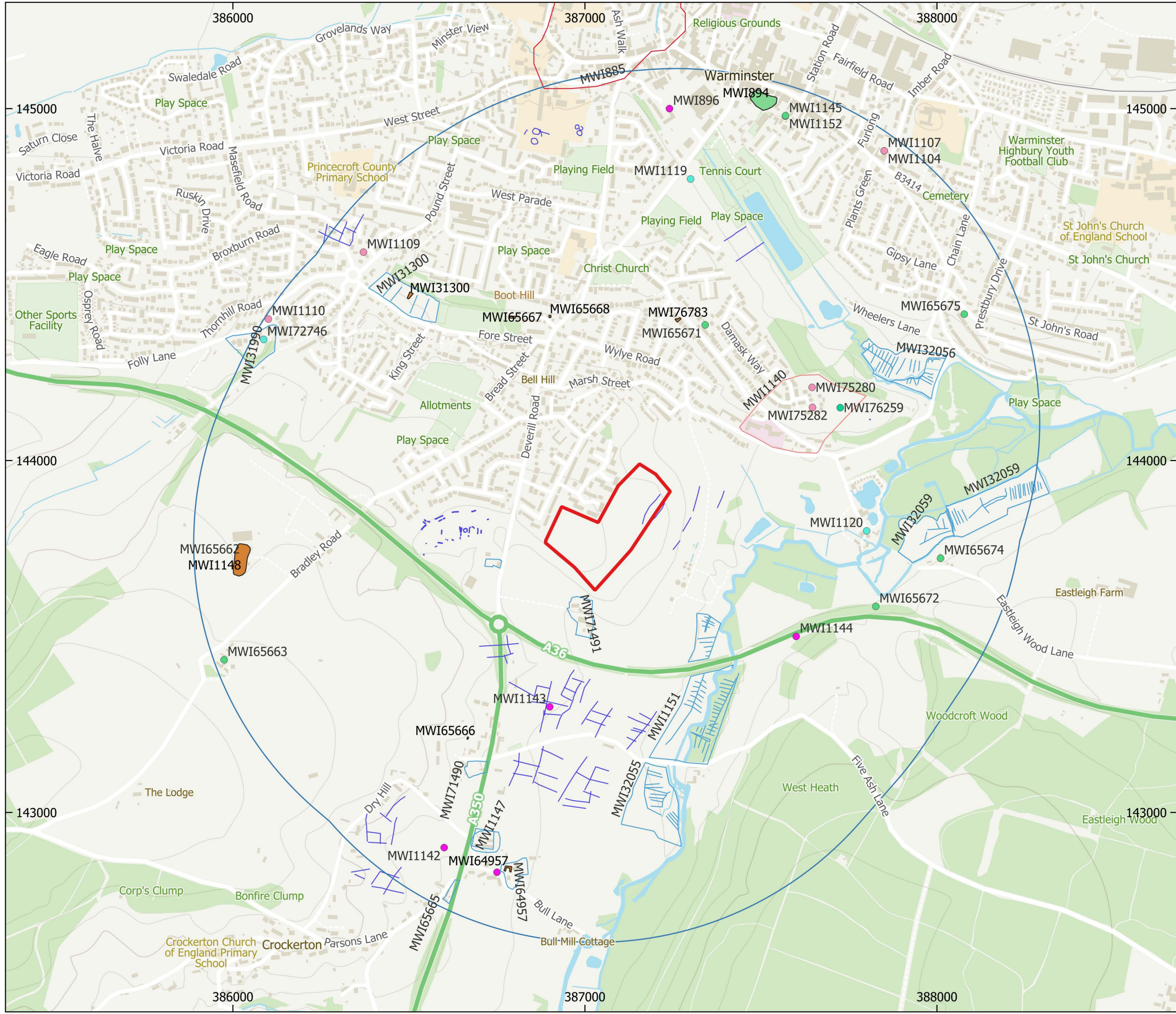
Legend

- Study Site
- 1km search area
- Listed Buildings
 - Grade I
 - Grade II*
 - Grade II
- Conservation Areas



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 10 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-2

Address:
Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire
Title:
Figure 2: NHLE data within a 1km search
area around the study site



Legend

Study Site

1km Search Area

Monuments Polyline

- Saxon
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval
- Unknown

Monuments Polygon

- Medieval
- Post Medieval

Monuments Point

- Prehistoric
- Roman
- Medieval
- Post-Medieval
- Unknown

0 500 m

Scale: 1:10,000 at A3



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 10 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-3

Address:
Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:
Figure 3: HER data with a 1km search area
around the study site



Address:
Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster
Wiltshire

Title:
Figure 4: HER events data within a 1km
search area around the study site



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-5

Legend

 Study Site

0



500 m

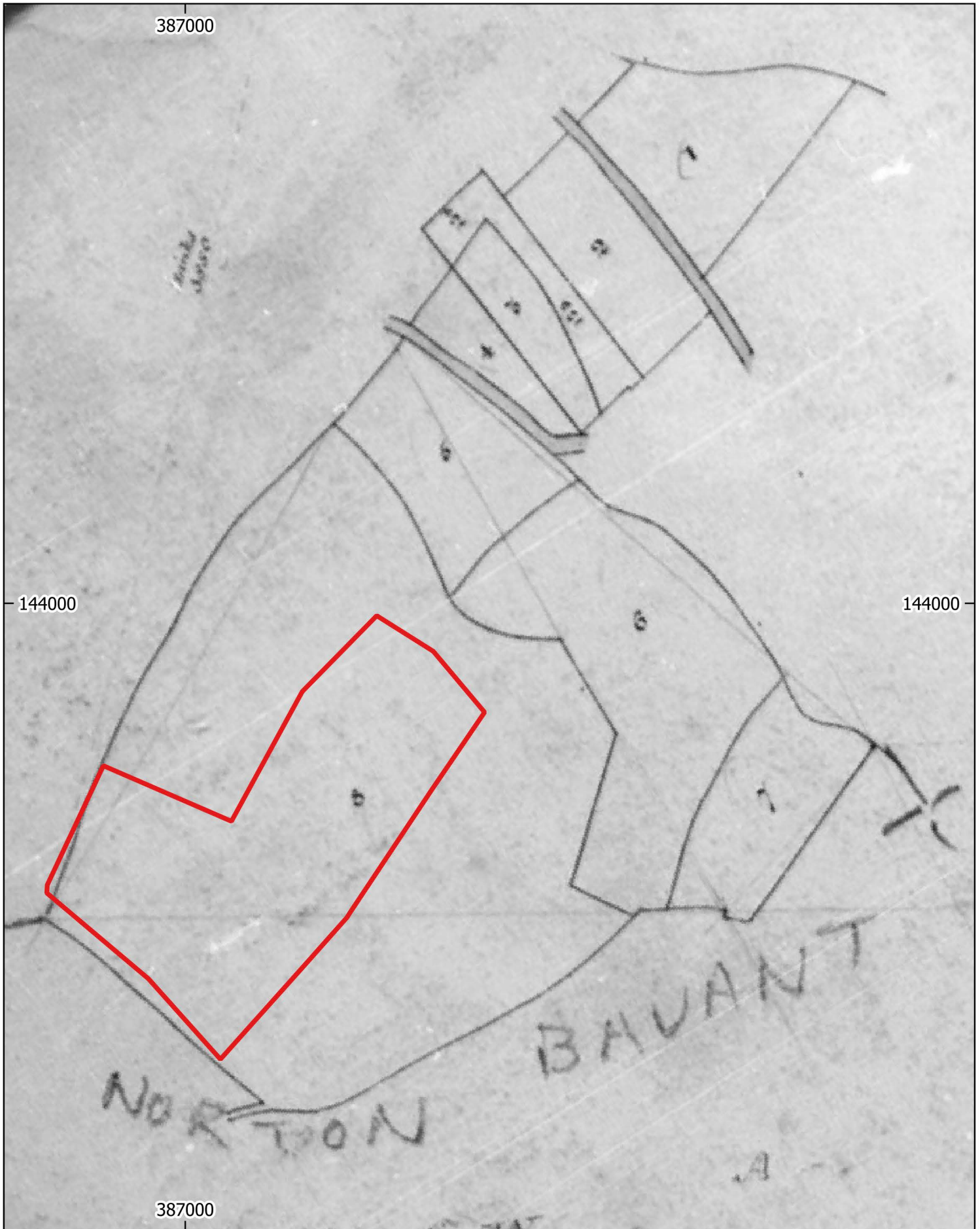
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Address:

Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 5: 1773 John Andrews and
Andrew Drury Map



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-6

Legend



Study Site



Scale at A4: 1:4,000

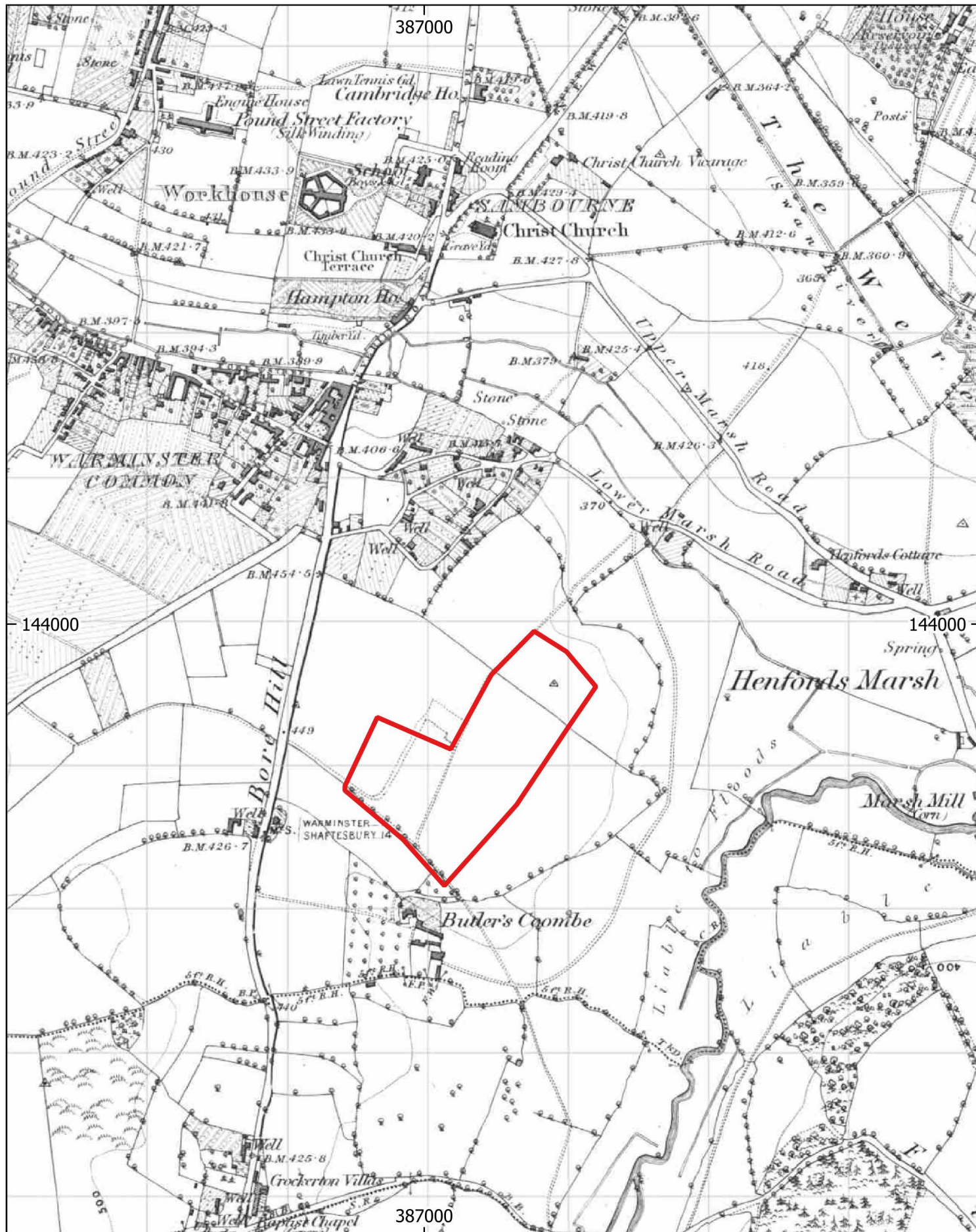


Address:

Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 6: 1839 Tithe Map of
Bishopstrow



Legend



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Scale at A4: 1:7,000

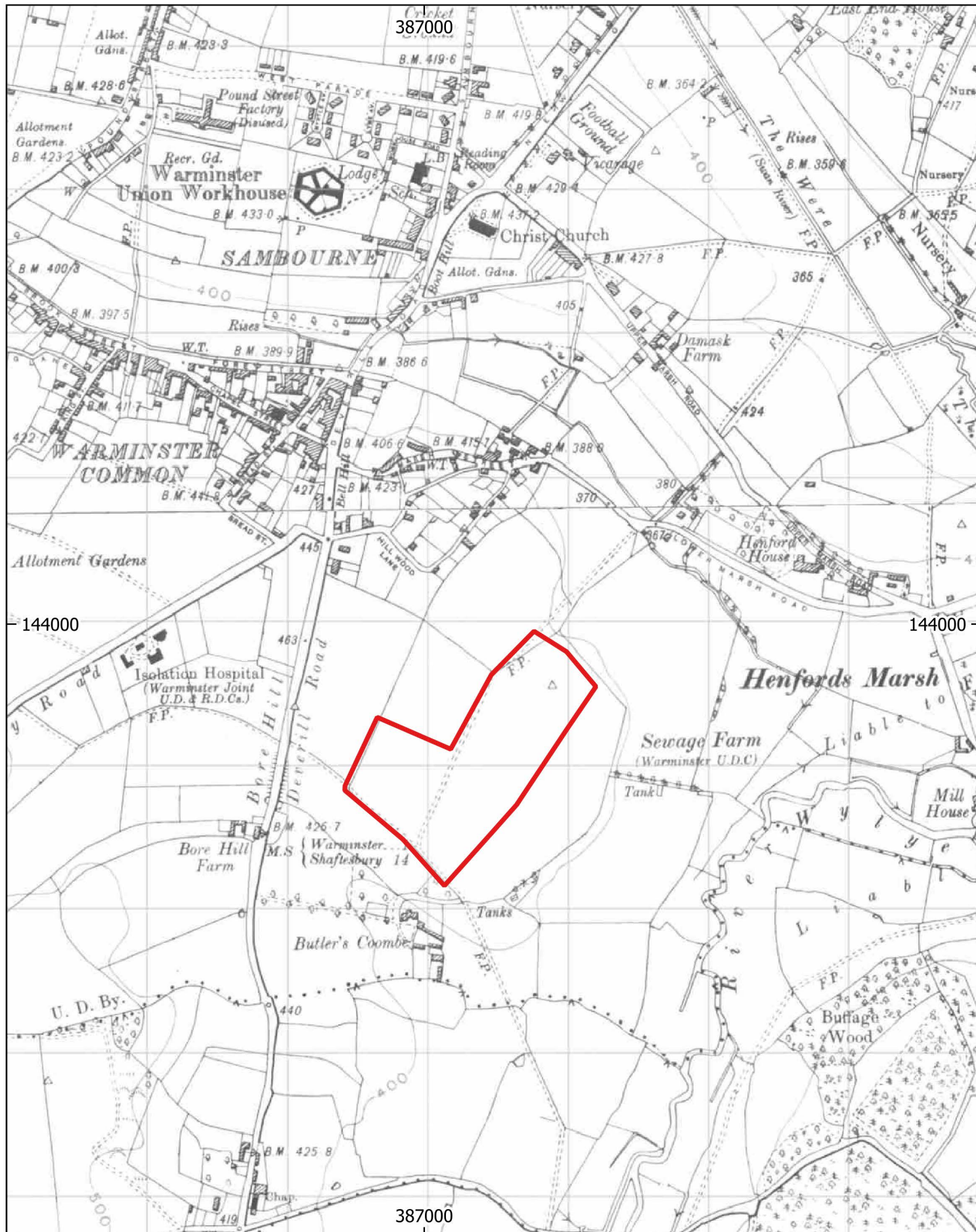
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Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 7: 1886 County Series OS Map

Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-7



Legend



0 300 m



Scale at A4: 1:7,000

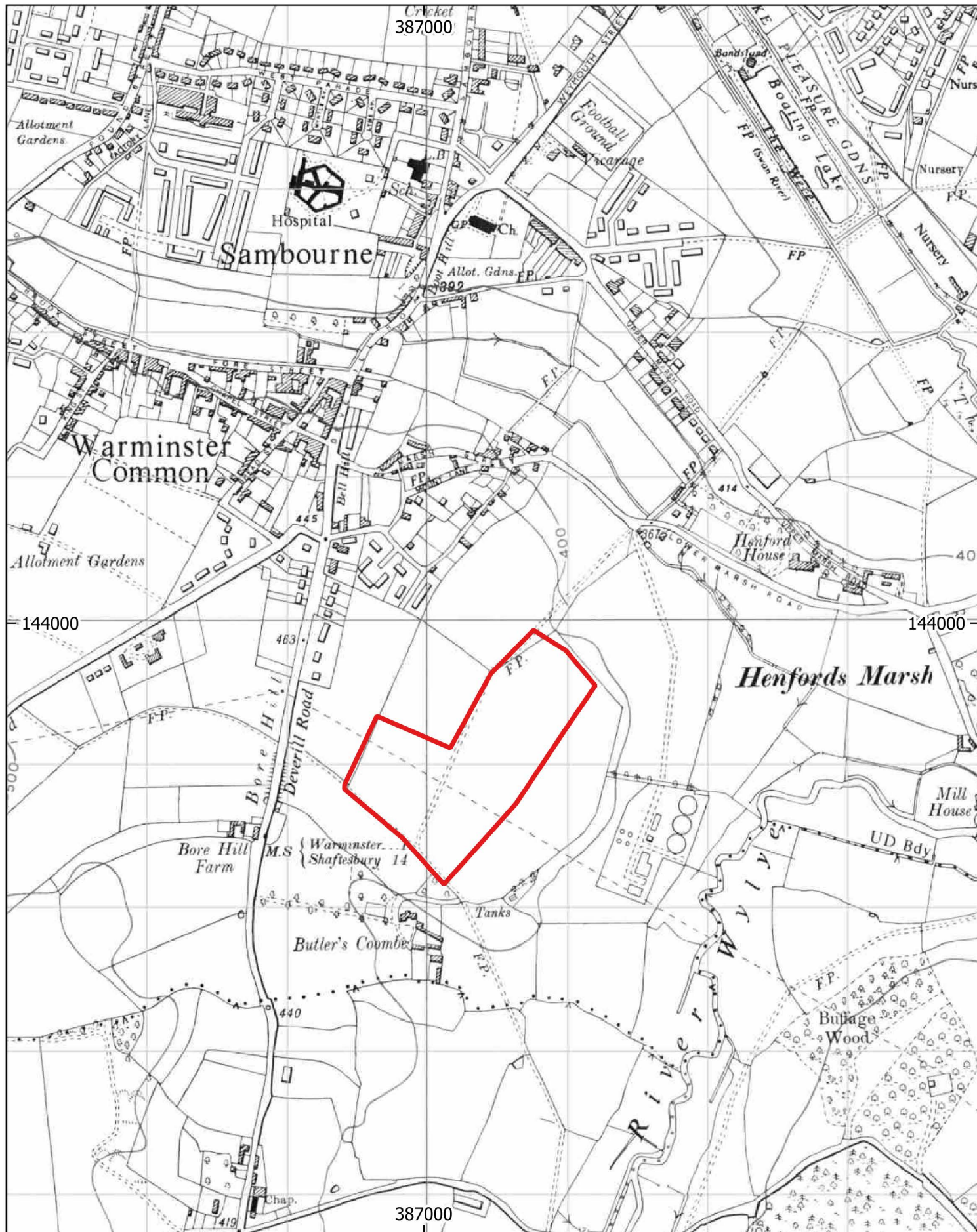
Address:

Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 8: 1923 County Series OS Map

Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-8



Legend



0 300 m



Scale at A4: 1:7,000

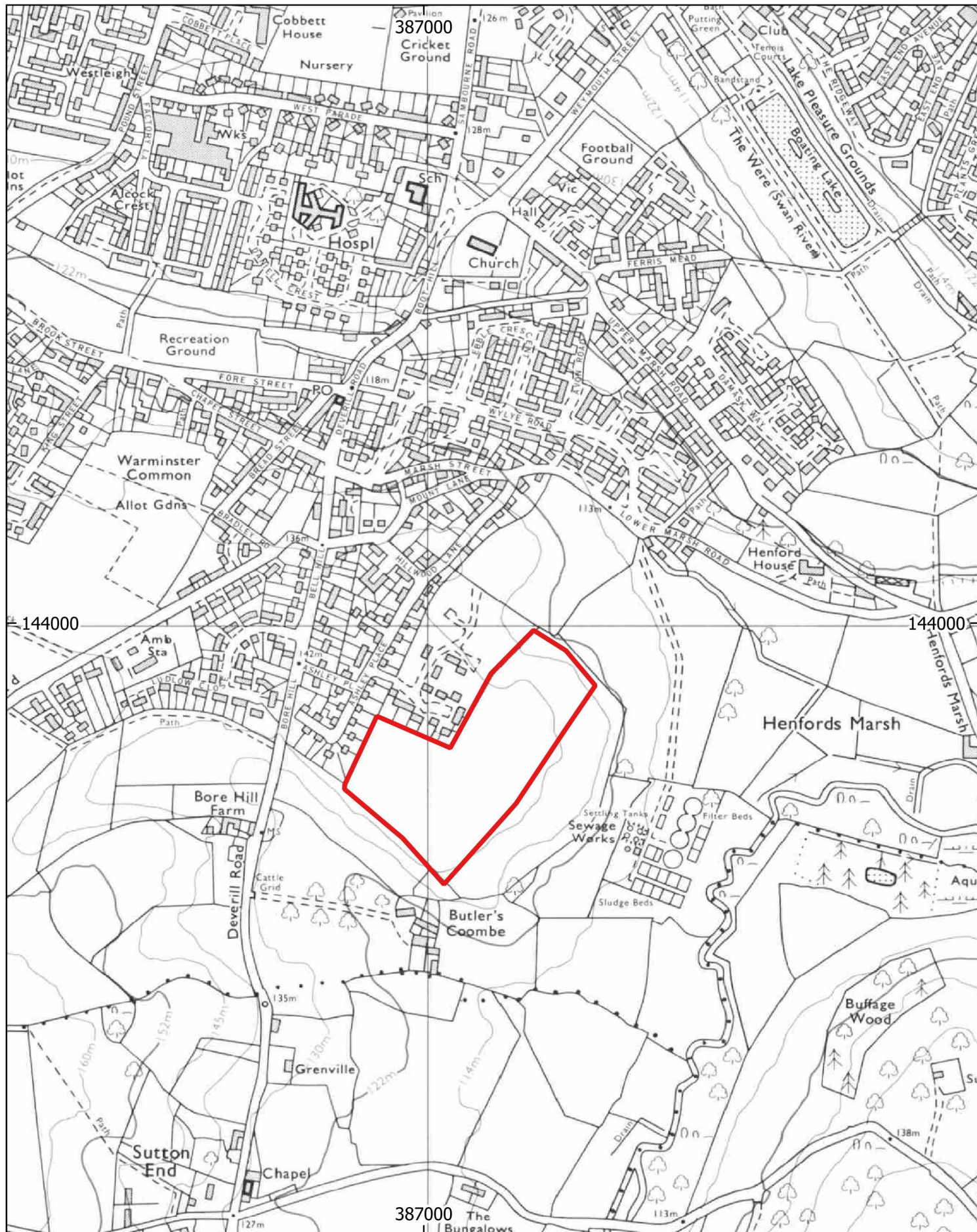
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Land off Ashley Combe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 9: 1956 Provisional OS Map

Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-9



Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-10

Legend

 Study Site

0



300 m



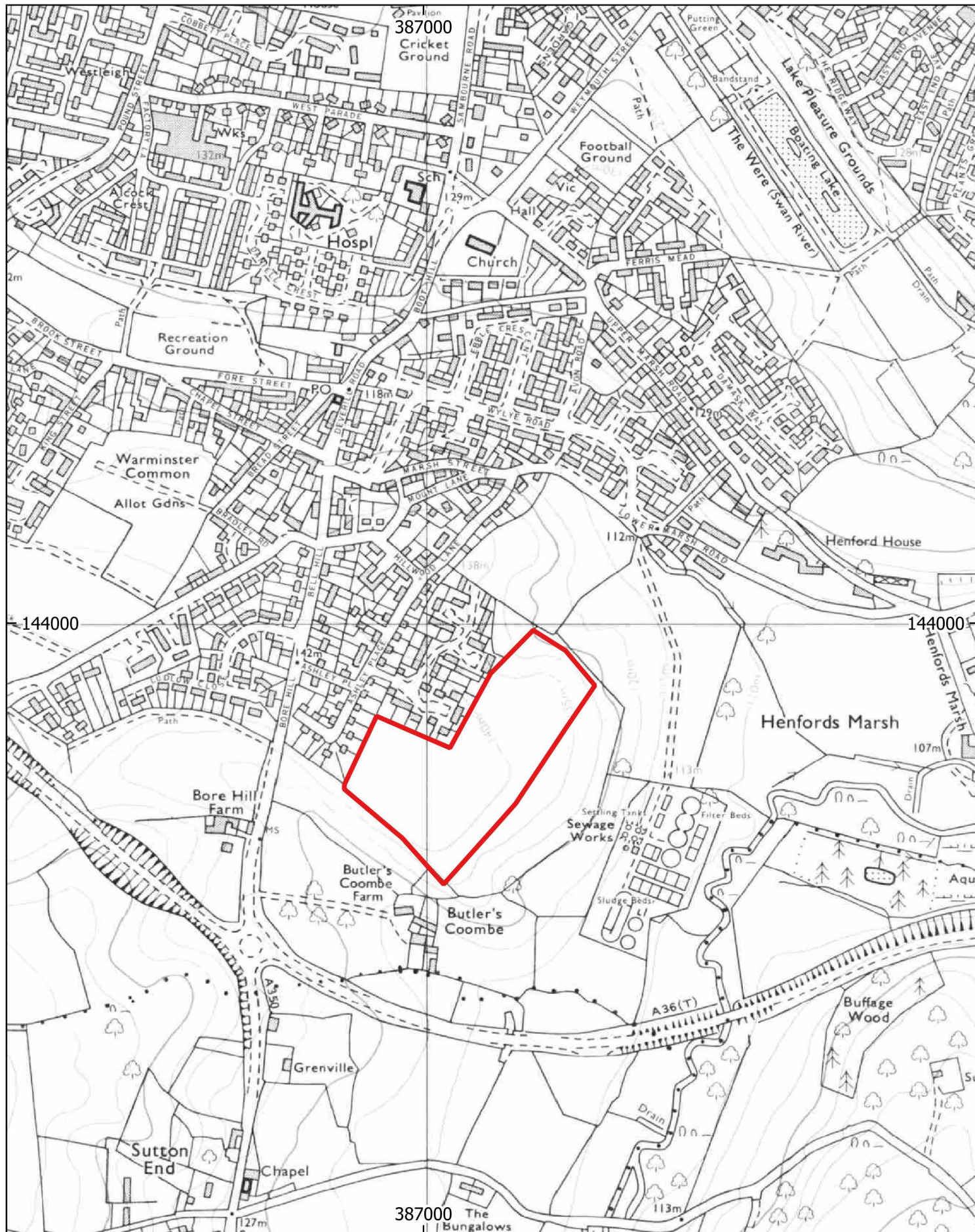
Scale at A4: 1:7,000

Address:

Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 10: 1973-1976 National Grid OS
Map



Legend



Study Site



Scale at A4: 1:7,000

Address:

Land off Ashley Coombe, Warminster,
Wiltshire

Title:

Figure 11: 1992 National Grid OS Map

Project Number: PR0316 Date: 11 DEC 2025
Drawing Number: PR0316-11