

MANOR FARM, SLOUGH

BUILT HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

794-PLN-HER-00628
Manor Farm Propco Limited
December 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Built Heritage Impact Assessment has been researched and prepared by RPS Consulting Services Limited., part of Tetra Tech, on behalf of Manor Farm Propco Limited in order to support a full planning application for a data centre campus at Manor Farm, Poyle, Slough (henceforth called the 'Site'). The Proposed Development comprises demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment to comprise a Data Centre (Use Class B8) with ancillary sub station and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with ancillary offices, associated plant, emergency backup generators and associated fuel storage, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, car and cycle parking, and new and amended vehicular and emergency access from Poyle Road.

The Site comprises two parcels of land, linked by an internal road. It is located to the south-east of Slough and west of Poyle with the proposed data centre located to the north parcel and the proposed BESS to the south parcel. The plot to south is currently undeveloped, whilst the plot to north contains various industries, including buildings supplies, metal and gravel works. The parcels are linked by a strip of land that is in part industrial usage/part green field.

To the east of the dividing strip of land, the Site plots are separated by a field containing three built structures - one of these is the Grade II listed Poyle Farmhouse. There are also four other Grade II listed structures within the vicinity. No structures feature in Slough Borough Council's local list of built heritage assets.

Designated built heritage assets are protected under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and under Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) there is a requirement for an applicant to "describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance". It is therefore necessary to ascertain any effect the proposed development may have on the settings or significance of any built heritage assets in the vicinity.

This Assessment commences with a summary of relevant legislative framework, planning policy and guidance at national and local levels, with special regard to policies and guidance relating to development within the setting of heritage assets. It provides an overview of the history of the Site and assesses the significance of the identified heritage assets, including any contribution made by the Site to that significance. The proposals are described and an assessment is made of any potential impact they could make to the significance of the identified heritage assets.



Figure 1: Location of Site in Berkshire

Figure 3: Red-line Site boundary

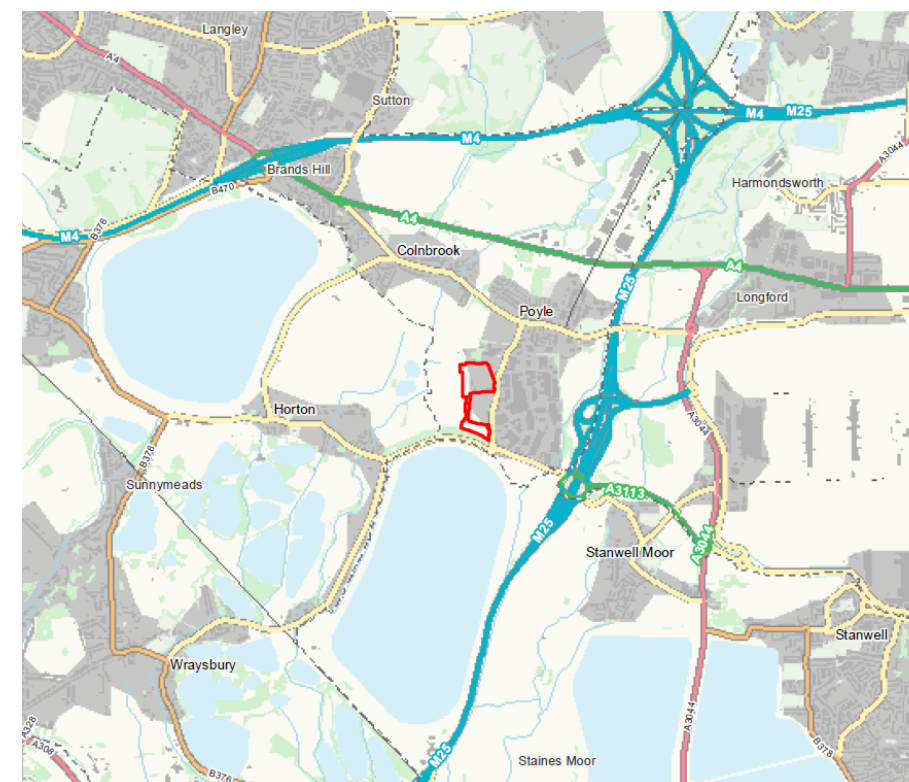
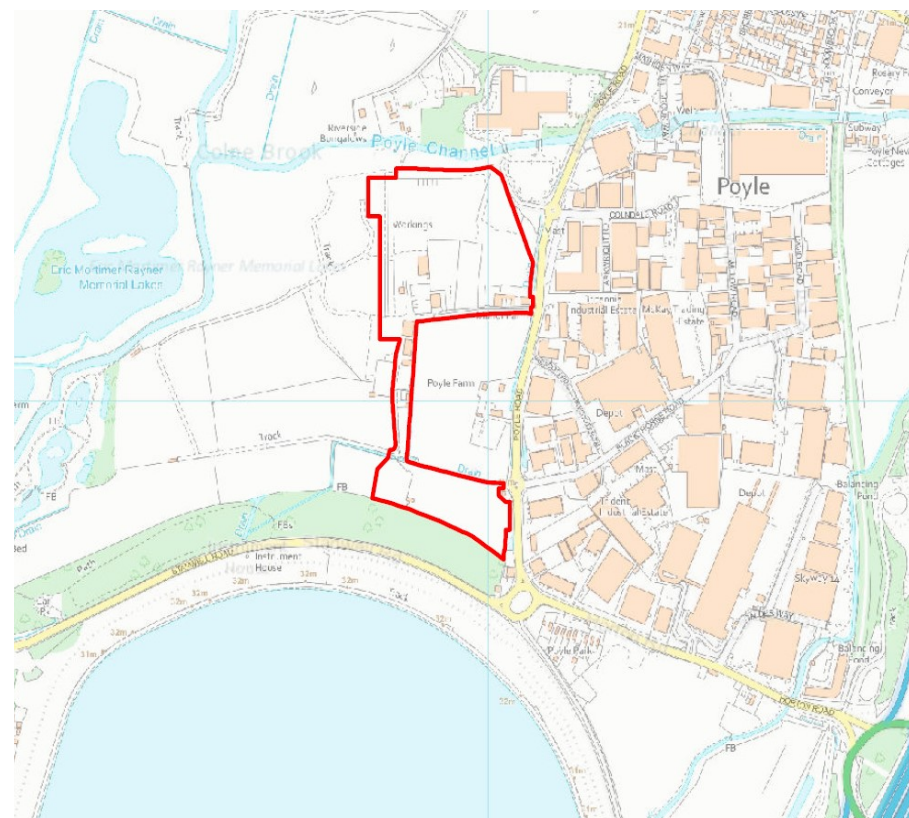


Figure 2: Location of Site in relation to local area

Figure 4: Aerial view of Site 2021



2.0 LEGISLATIVE & PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The findings of this report are based on known conditions at the time of writing and are the result of detailed historic research and the application of professional judgement. All maps, plans and photographs are for illustrative purposes only. This document should be read in conjunction with submission drawings and other supporting documents that accompany the application.

This section provides a review of relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance, at both national and local levels, with regard to built heritage assets and this particular application.

Legislation

Where any development may affect designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard to their impact on the historic environment. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions states that: “(1) 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”. However, unlike the parallel duty under section 66, there is no explicit protection for the setting of a conservation area.

The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts in recent cases, including the Court of Appeal’s decision in relation to *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council* [2014] EWCA Civ 137. The principles established in *Barnwell* confirm Parliament’s intention in enacting section 66(1) that is decision makers should give ‘considerable importance and weight’ to the desirability of preserving (i.e. keeping from harm) the setting of listed buildings.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, December 2024)

In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was most recently updated in December 2024. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online on 6th March 2014 and has since been periodically updated.

The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It defines a heritage asset as 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’*. This includes both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage assets are *‘an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance’*.

Paragraph 202. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.

Paragraph 208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

2.2 NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been adopted in order to aid the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.

Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states that substantial harm is a high bar that may not arise in many cases and that while the level of harm will be at the discretion of the decision maker, generally substantial harm is a high test that will only arise where a development seriously affects a key element of an asset's special interest. It is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed.

Importantly, it is stated harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as '*the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than the curtilage*'. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

Historic England have published a series of documents to advise applicants, owners, decision-takers and other stakeholders on managing change within the historic environment. These include Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPAs) documents and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANS).

Guidance relevant to this application are as follows:

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

This document provides advice on the numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment can be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, this document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged, stating that '*development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets*

they may affect.'

The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information, this is as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and,
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process resulting in informed decision-taking.

This document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon a heritage asset, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change.

Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary. This document also provides guidance in respect of neglect and unauthorised works.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition, December 2017)

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (March 2015) and the previously withdrawn *Seeing History in the View* (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the

setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

As with the NPPF the document defines setting as '*the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve*'. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset's setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset. Further clarification on this matter has been provided by the High Court in relation to *Steer v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Others* [2017] which stresses the potential importance and contribution of non-visual elements of setting.

This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.

The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Historic England recommend using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:

1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
2. Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a

2.2 NATIONAL GUIDANCE

contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;

- 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
- 4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and,
- 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Overview: Historic England Advice Notes in Planning

In addition to the above documentation, Historic England has published Heritage Advice Notes (HEANs) that provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented. The relevant Note here is HEAN12.

HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019)

This advice note provides information on how to assess the significance of a heritage asset. It also explores how this should be used as part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal(s).

Historic England notes that the first stage in identifying the significance of a heritage asset is by understanding its form and history. This includes the historical development, an analysis of its surviving fabric and an analysis of the setting, including the contribution setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset.

To assess the significance of the heritage asset, Historic England advise to describe various interests. These follow the heritage interest identified in the NPPF and PPG and are: archaeological interest, architectural interest, artistic interest and historic interest.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, current Development Plan Policy and any other material considerations.

The following are relevant to the Proposed Development:

Development Plan Documents

The local planning authority for the Site is Slough Borough Council and development on the Site is subject to compliance with their Local Development Documents.

Core Strategy (adopted December 2008)

Core Policy 9 (Natural and Built Environment)

Development will not be permitted unless it:

- Enhances and protects the historic environment;
- Respects the character and distinctiveness of existing buildings, townscapes and landscapes and their local designations.

Emerging Local Plan

Slough Borough Council is in the process of creating a new Local Plan to guide development through to 2036. It will update the extant Core Strategy, Saved Policies from the Local Plan (adopted 2004) and Site Allocations (adopted 2010).

3.0 ARCHITECTURAL & HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & MAP PROGRESSION

The Site lies within Poyle, a hamlet of Colnbrook, Slough. Before the Norman Conquest it lay within the borders of Middlesex forming part of Stanwell and in the early Middle Ages possessed a manor. It was part of the Staines Urban District in 1930. In 1965 it was transferred to Surrey, forming part of the borough of Spelthorne from 1974. It became part of Slough, Berkshire in 1995 when it was integrated into the Colnbrook with Polyle Parish.

The Staines & West Drayton Railway formerly connected to two stations at Poyle - Poyle for Stanwell Moor Halt (opening in 1927) and Poyle Estate Halt (opening in 1954). The latter served the proximate industrial estate. Both stations closed to passengers in 1965 and goods services were withdrawn in 1981.

There are a significant number of industrial estates within the area, including the Poyle Industrial Estate; these mainly serve the proximate Heathrow Airport.

Historical Map Progression

An understanding of historic context may reveal historic associations between heritage assets or with the site of proposed development and may be pertinent to an assessment of their settings. Therefore, this map regression exercise documents past and current development in relation to the Site area, shown by a red line on the following maps.

The first available maps, the 1754 and 1761 Rocque Maps of Middlesex, figures 5 and 6, page 9. demonstrate that the Site is in agricultural usage, with the land being divided into numerous parcels; the respective eastern boundaries of the parcels sit adjacent to Poyle Road. The surrounding landscape comprises agricultural fields with scattered farmsteads. Colnbrook is identified to the north-west.

Figure 7, page 10, the 1811 Ordnance Survey Drawing, illustrates that the Site parcels remain undeveloped. Within the surrounding area there are some small settlements, such as Poyle to east, Horton to south-west and several mill industries have been established. The listed building known today as Poyle Farmhouse has been constructed to mid-point between the two main Site land parcels and maintains a boundary hedge/wall separating this development from the surrounding land. Development has taken place in Poyle, Colnbrook and Horton.

The 1841 Tithe Map, figure 8, page 10, and the accompanying Tithe Apportionment, evidences that the northern part of the Site is owned by George Patterson and farmed by Joseph Saunders as a hay field. The southern part of the Site was owned by Edward Abbey, farmed by John Cane and was in various usages as farm buildings, a rickyard and meadows with a flower garden. The strip of land connecting the two larger parcels formed part of several plots, belonging to either Edward Abbey or

George Stone, farmed by John Cane and comprised parts of 'Five Acres/ Granary Meadow.'

Figure 9, page 11, the 1869 Poyle Park Estate Map, shows that the Site remains undeveloped. Within the proximate area the Poyle House Estate is visible to north and farmhouses and other property are located to the east of Poyle Road.

The 1935 Aerial photo, figure 10, page 11, demonstrates that the Site remains undeveloped; however, development has continued within the surrounding area. This situation has, however, completely altered by the 21st century, as is visible from the 2004, 2017 and 2021 Aerial Photographs, figures 11 and 12, page 12 and figure 4, page 3.

It is understood that the main areas of the Site (to north and south) may have been subject to extensive gravel extraction and landfill. Poyle House Estate can be seen to have been demolished to the north part of the Site with the whole of this northern area now dedicated to industrial usage, Gravel works still exist within this area.

Within the vicinity, the Hilton London Heathrow Hotel was constructed by 2011, just beyond the Site's northern boundary line and extensive industrial development has taken place at Poyle, mainly to serve Heathrow Airport. Two proximate reservoirs have also been developed.

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & MAP PROGRESSION



Figure 5: 1754 Rocque Map of Middlesex

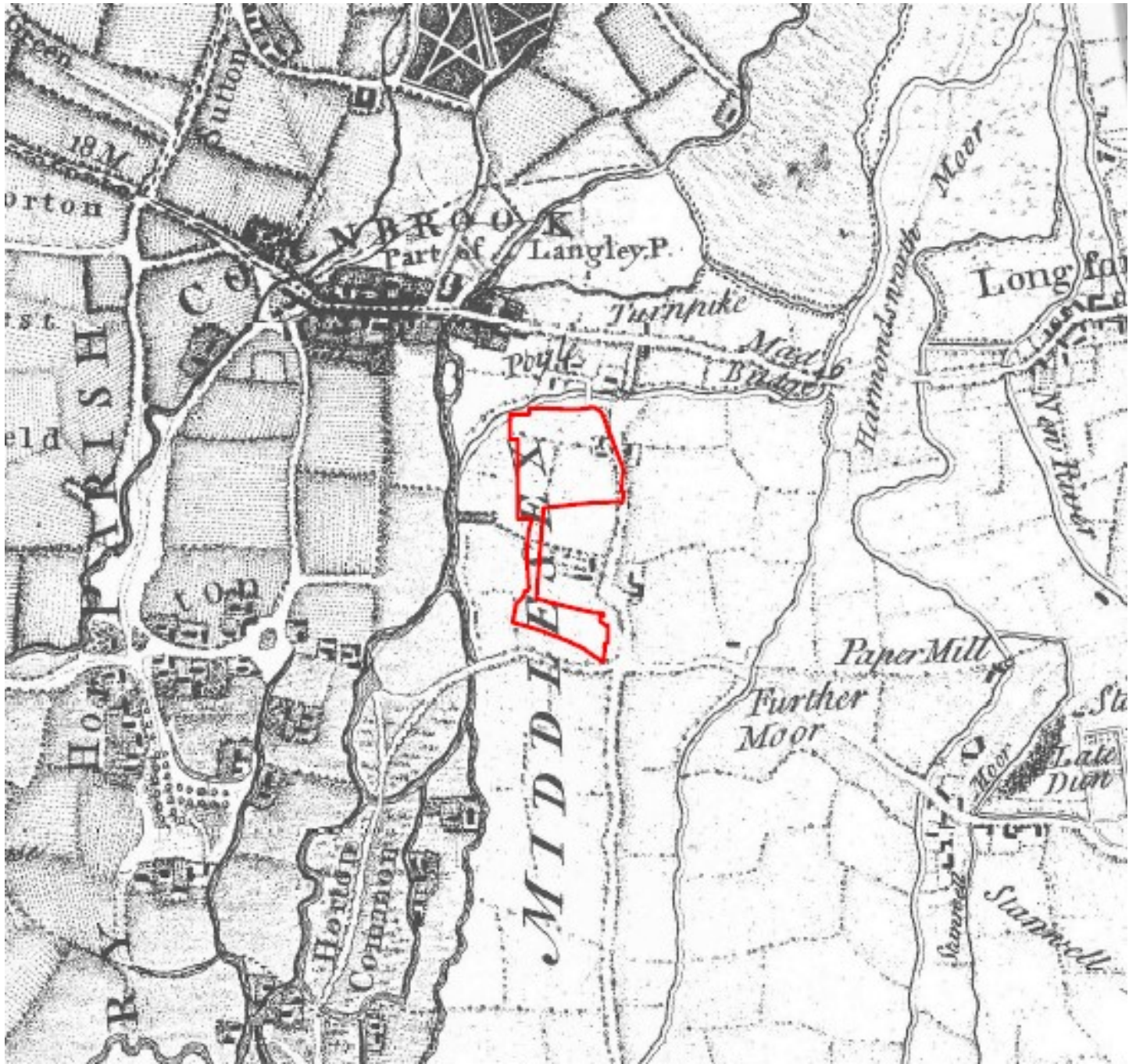


Figure 6: 1761 Rocque Map

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & MAP PROGRESSION

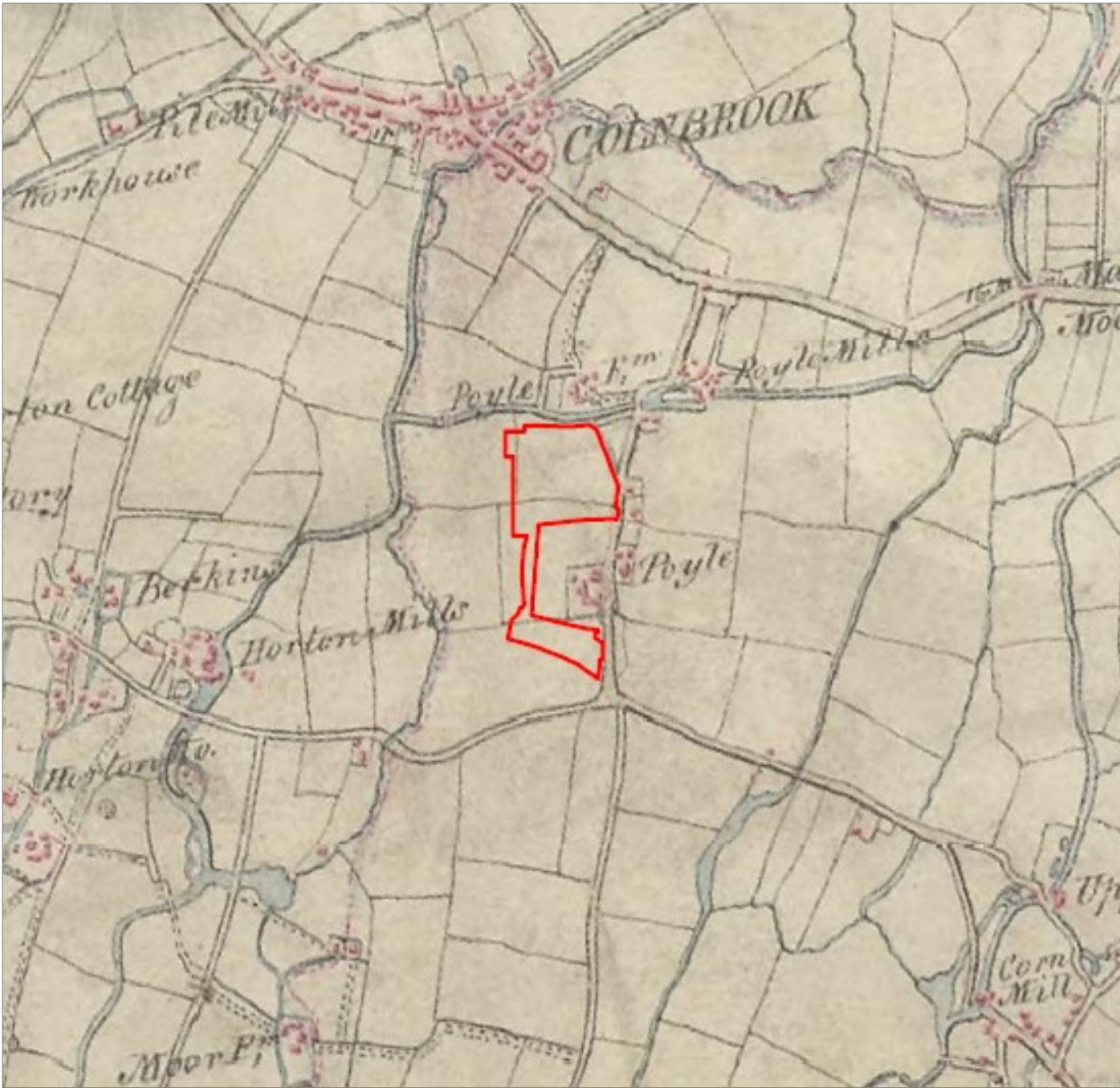


Figure 7: 1811 Ordnance Survey Drawing

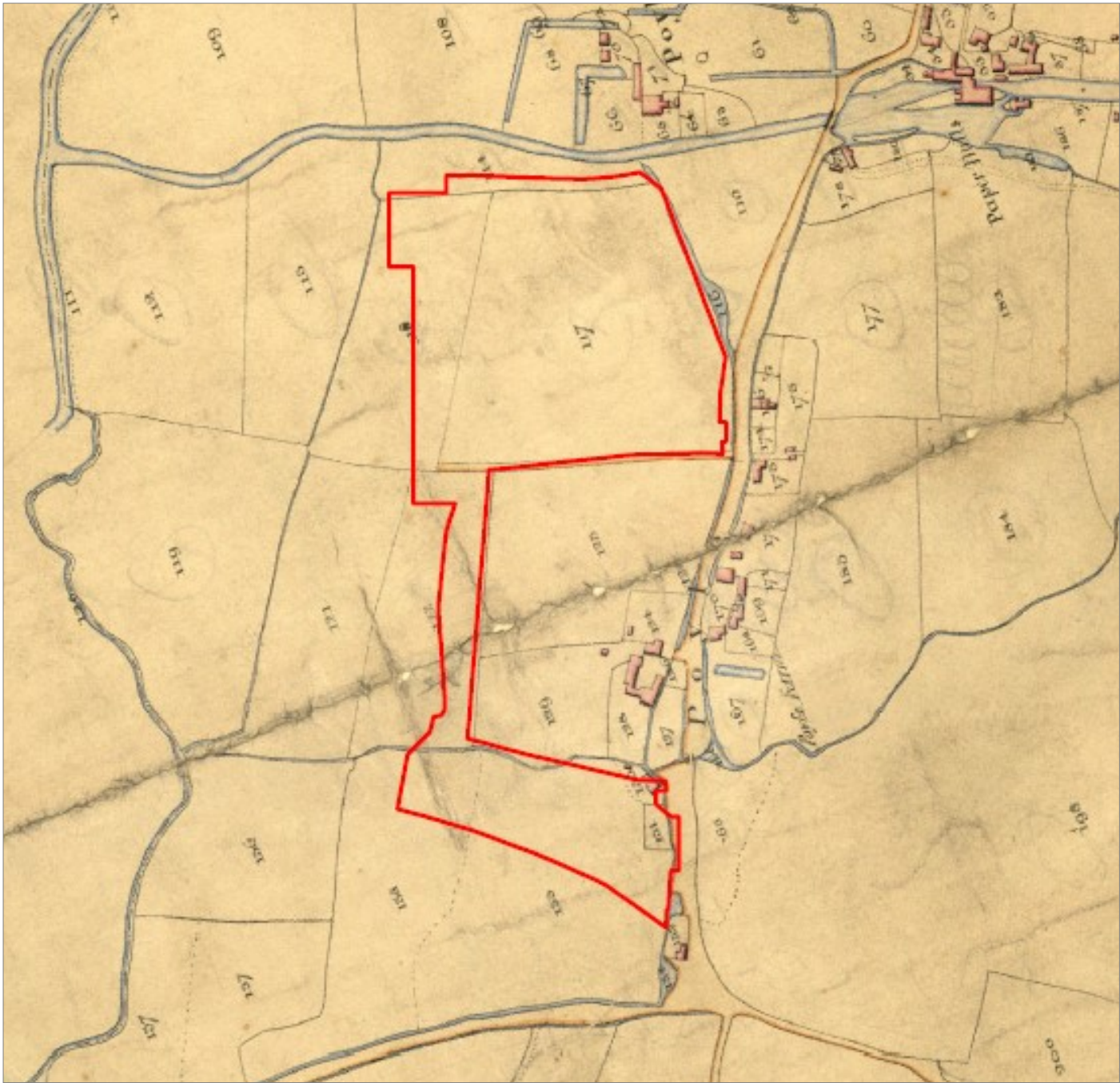


Figure 8: 1841 Stanwell Parish Tithe Map

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & MAP PROGRESSION

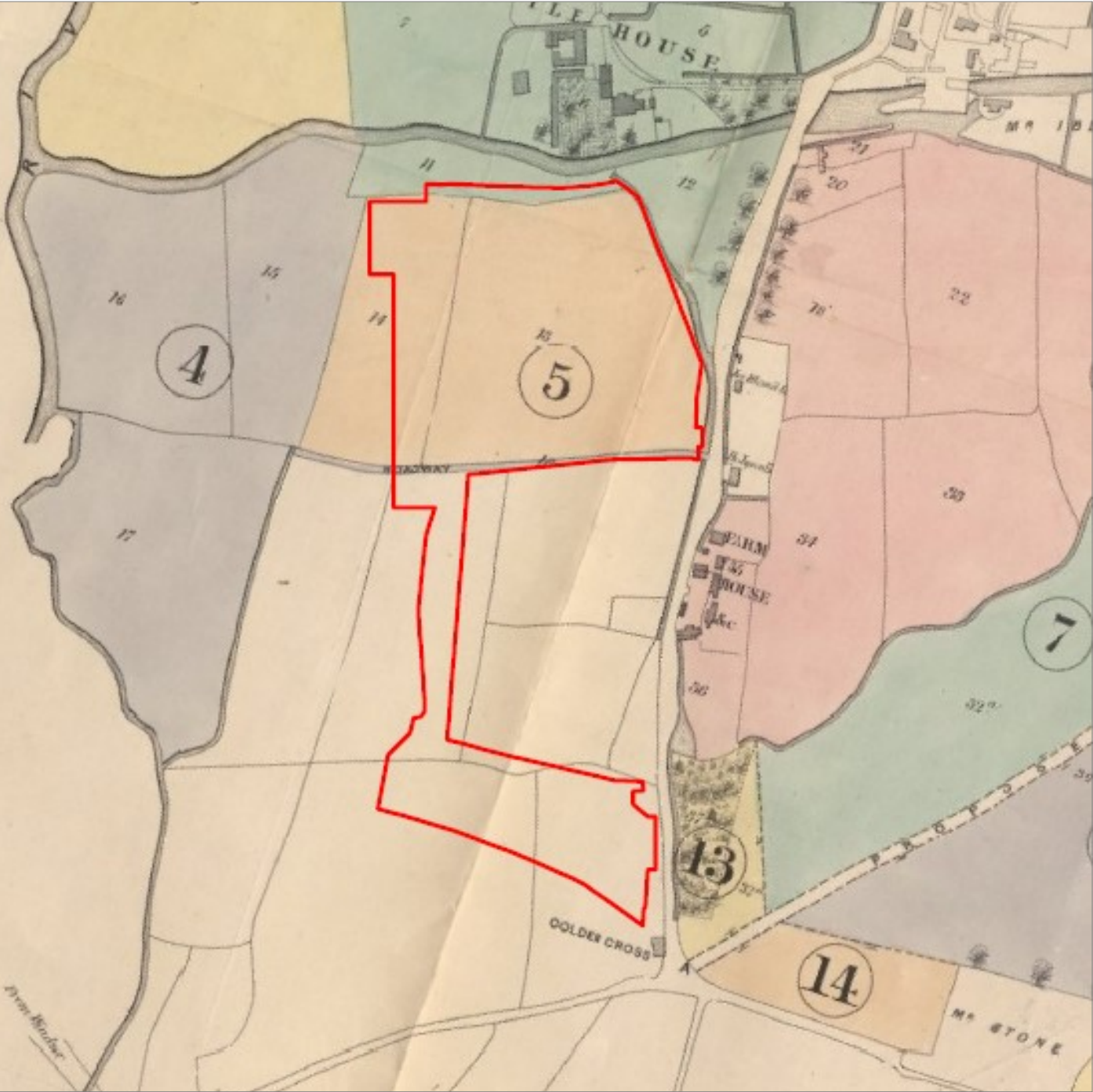


Figure 9: 1869 Map of Poyle Park Estate



Figure 10: 1935 Aerial Photograph

3.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & MAP PROGRESSION



Figure 11: 2004 Aerial Photograph

Figure 12: 2017 Aerial Photograph

3.2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

In order to assess the heritage potential of the Site and any possible impacts to the setting or significance of built heritage assets, a search radius of 250 metres was decided on. This was based on professional judgement, the extent of the planning application boundary and the scale of proposed development. The Berkshire Historic Environment Record (BHER) of built heritage assets found within the above stated radii are illustrated in figure 13, right.

Initial desk-based research, utilising the BHER and Historic England's National Heritage List for England, identified that the Site does not contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets, however within the study area there are two Grade II listed structures - Poyle Farmhouse, and The Hollies. The Grade II listed McKay Trading Estate sits just outside of this area.

Built heritage assets outside of the study area, including the McKay Trading Estate listed building, were able to be scoped out from further analysis due to the facts that their associations, settings, and thus significance, are not reliant upon the Site or because they remain well removed and/or are screened from it, so that there is a lack of intervisibility;

Listed buildings that could potentially experience some effect to their setting or significance, from the future development of the Site are detailed in Table 1, below and are assessed within the forthcoming sections.

LISTED BUILDINGS		LIST UID
Grade II	Poyle Farmhouse	1298905
Grade II	The Hollies	1187063

Table 1: Built Heritage Assets that may be affected by the Proposed Development

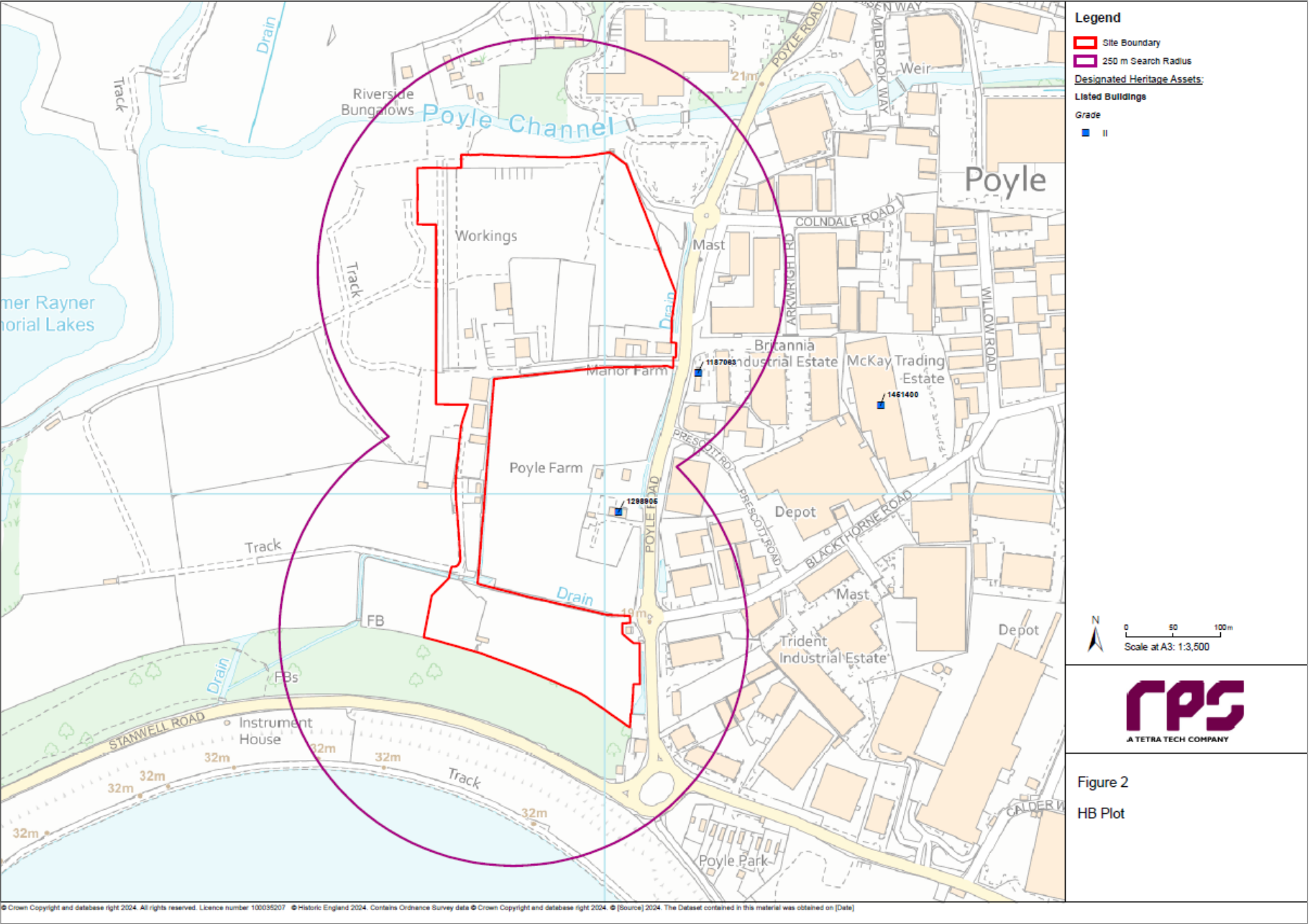


Figure 13: Summary of the Berkshire Historic Environment Record, illustrating built heritage assets in relation to the Site (outlined in red). (OS mapping: HM Stationery office and Data: Historic England and Berkshire County Council).

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 SITE ASSESSMENT

The Site lies within Poyle, Slough, Berkshire an area characterized by a combination of industrial and agricultural uses.

The northern land parcel of the Site is bounded by a combination of the Hilton London Heathrow Hotel, vegetation and industrial usages to its north; by the Poyle Road, beyond which sit the Britannia and Viscount Industrial Estates to east; by a field laid to grass and part of the Manor Industrial Estate to south and further open fields and the Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve to west.

The southern land parcel of the Site is bounded by a combination of a field laid to grass to north; by the Poyle Road, beyond which sit the Britannia and Viscount Industrial Estates to east; by a heavily wooded area to south and, further open fields and the Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve to west. The intersecting element that links the main land parcels to north and south is mostly bounded by green fields.

Beyond the various industrial estates lining Poyle Road, to east, the M25 motorway runs north-south; beyond this lies the significant Heathrow Airport complex. There are also a number of reservoirs in the vicinity, namely 'Wraysbury' and the 'Queen Mother'.



Figure 14: Manor Farm, proposed Data Centre location- looking west along access road



Figure 15: Manor Farm Proposed Data Centre location - internal view

Figure 16: Proposed Battery Storage location - east field, looking west



Figure 17: Proposed Battery Storage location - west field, looking west



Figure 18: Proposed Battery Storage location, looking north towards Poyle Farmhouse



4.1 SITE ASSESSMENT



Figure 19: Looking east along Manor Park Site access road. The Grade II listed Hollies is visible in the distance



Figure 20: View from proposed Data Centre location south-east towards Poyle Farmhouse (only part of the roof is visible as it is mostly hidden from view due to its thick vegetative screening)



Figure 21: View south along Poyle Road towards Poyle Farmhouse

4.2 DESIGNATED BUILT HERITAGE ASSETS - LISTED BUILDINGS

Poyle Farmhouse - Grade II, List UID: 1298905

The listing states that this building is “Late C17/early C18. Two storeys. Tiled roof with colour banding, one end hipped. End chimney with off sets. Five windows, flush framed glazing bar sashes. Central 6 panel door, flush lower panels, raised and fielded central panels, glazed upper panels. Modern porch. Red brick window dressings and quoins, gauged brick flat arches. Three window extension to rear with side porch.”

Significance

The heritage significance of Poyle Farmhouse is derived from its individual special interest - this lies in the architectural and historical special interest of its fabric and form.

Setting

The setting of Poyle Farmhouse relates immediately to its domestic grounds and respective gardens within which the property would be fully experienced. It maintains verdant boundary planting, with a tall hedge to fore and significant vegetation to north and south of the building; to west there is hard standing for car parking. There are some clear public views of the front elevation of the property from Poyle Road, to its east. There are two modern residences located slightly beyond its hedge boundary, to north. Beyond this immediate setting, there is a field to west, beyond which sits part of the Manor Industrial Estate, further open fields and the Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve. Further north lies the main Manor Industrial Estate, whilst to east, north-east and south-east, beyond the Poyle Road, sit several other large industrial estates. The property maintains intervisibility with a number of the buildings contained therein.

Contribution of Setting to Significance

The immediate setting of Poyle Farmhouse makes a positive contribution to its significance in respect of its immediate, private grounds. The wider setting of the building, to south and west, make a minor positive contribution to its significance only as indicative of its historic setting. The industrial nature of its wider setting to east makes no contribution to the significance of this building.

Contribution of Site to Significance

The Site has no known legible historical or functional relationship with Poyle Farmhouse apart from being indicative as part of its historical wider setting. Currently the northern section of the Site is occupied by the Manor Farm Industrial Estate that maintains extremely minimal intervisibility with Poyle Farmhouse. The southern area of the Site maintains extremely limited intervisibility with Poyle Farmhouse, even when adjacent to the hedge boundary line. Intervisibility may increase due to seasonal leaf fall. The Site is assessed as making no contribution to the significance of Poyle Farmhouse, apart from the intersecting strip of Site land that makes a minor positive contribution only to the listed building, as indicative of its



Figure 22: Grade II listed Poyle Farmhouse

Figure 23: Grade II listed The Hollies



wider historical setting.

The Hollies - Grade II, List UID: 1187063

The listing states that this building is “Late C16 and C17. Two storeys and gable lit attic. Half hipped tiled roof. Four chimneys. Four windows glazing bar sashes in flush frames, rendered parapet front over timber-frame - this probably represents a remodelling of the C18. One window lean-to to left and right. The rear is timber-framed in 2 sections, the northern end looks C17 and has a dormer over catslide section.” The property is now in use as an office for Aviation Recruitment.

Significance

The heritage significance of The Hollies derives from its individual special interest - this lies in the architectural and historical special interest of its fabric and form

Setting

Historically set within its own gardens and surrounded by agricultural land, The Hollies now lies within a heavily industrialised area. It currently maintains a strip of grass laid along its front elevation, fronted by a low brick wall and hedging. To north and rear of the property, the area comprises hard standing for car parking, whilst to south it is separated from a modern office unit to its south by tree cover. Poyle Road runs north-south close to the fore of the building, whilst to its north, south and east there are large industrial estates. Beyond Poyle Road, to west, lies a field, beyond which sits part of the Manor Industrial Estate, then further open fields and the Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve.

Contribution of Setting to Significance

Due to the largely industrial nature of its setting and the location of the Poyle Road immediately to its west, the immediate setting of this building makes no contribution to its significance. The wider setting of the property has also generally been developed, apart from the field just beyond the Poyle Road, to its west, with which it maintains some views from its front elevation. Overall the wider setting of this listed building makes an extremely limited positive contribution to its significance only, due to the field beyond the Poyle Road that is indicative of its historical setting.

Contribution of Site to Significance

The Site has no known legible historical or functional relationship with The Hollies. However, due to their proximity, there is an open visual relationship between the northern land parcel of the Site (Manor Farm Industrial Estate) and the intersecting strip of land to west with this listed structure. The northern area of the Site has been transformed into industrial usage and makes no contribution to the significance of the building, whilst the intersecting strip of Site land makes a minor positive contribution only to the listed building, as indicative of its wider historical setting.

5.0 PROPOSALS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

5.1 PROPOSALS

The proposals comprise a full planning application for development of approximately 20.16 acres of a wider 74.67 acre site:

- Demolition of extant structures and removal of hard standing;
- Redevelopment to comprise:
 - Data centre (Use Class B8);
 - Ancillary Substation;
 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS);
 - Ancillary Offices;
 - Associated Plant;
 - Emergency Backup Generators;
 - Associated Fuel Storage;
 - Landscaping;
 - Sustainable Drainage Systems;
 - Car and Cycle Parking;
 - New and Amended Vehicular and emergency Access from Poyle Road;
 - Internal perimeter road to northern site parcel.

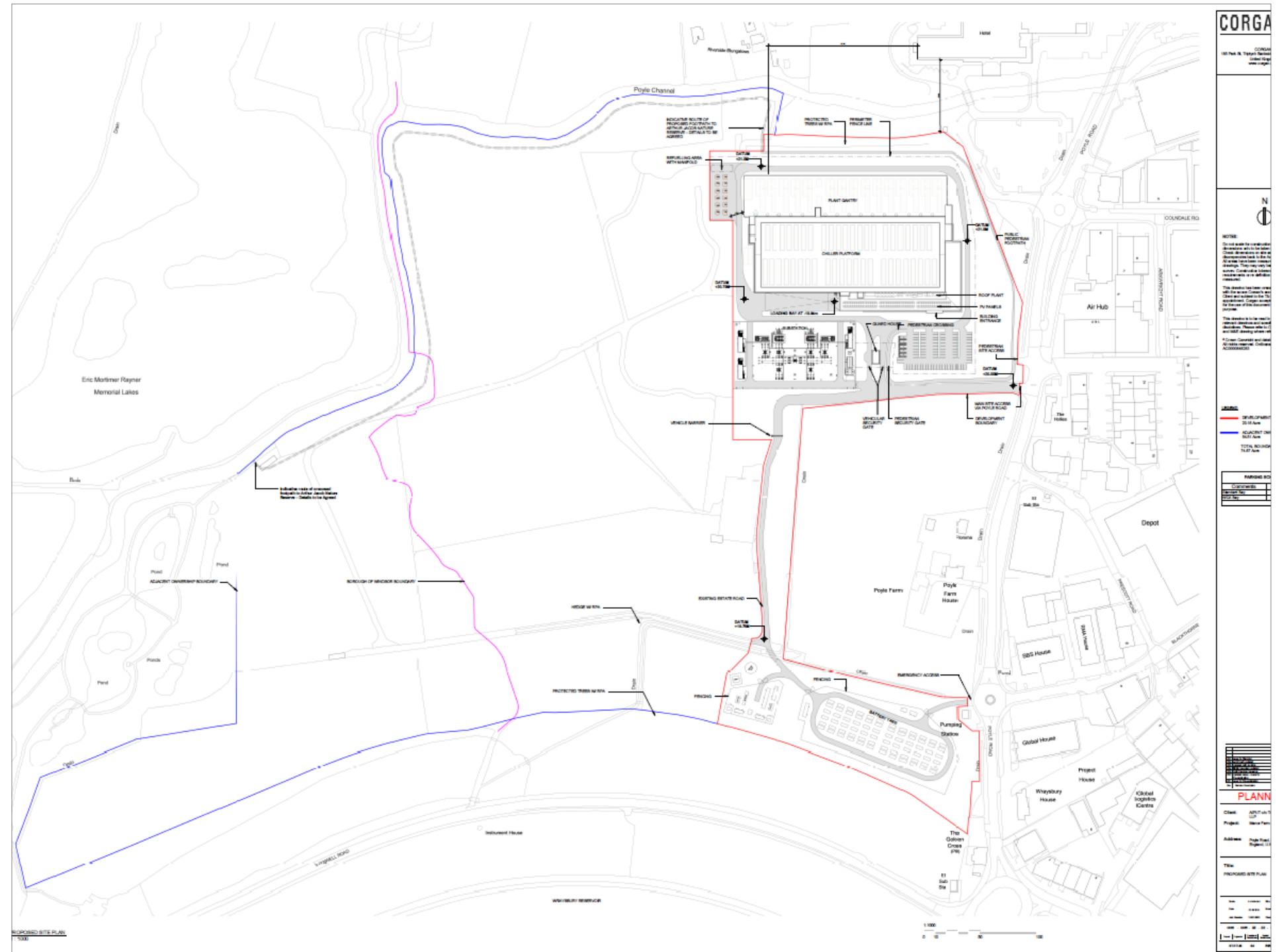


Figure 24: Proposed Development

5.1 PROPOSALS

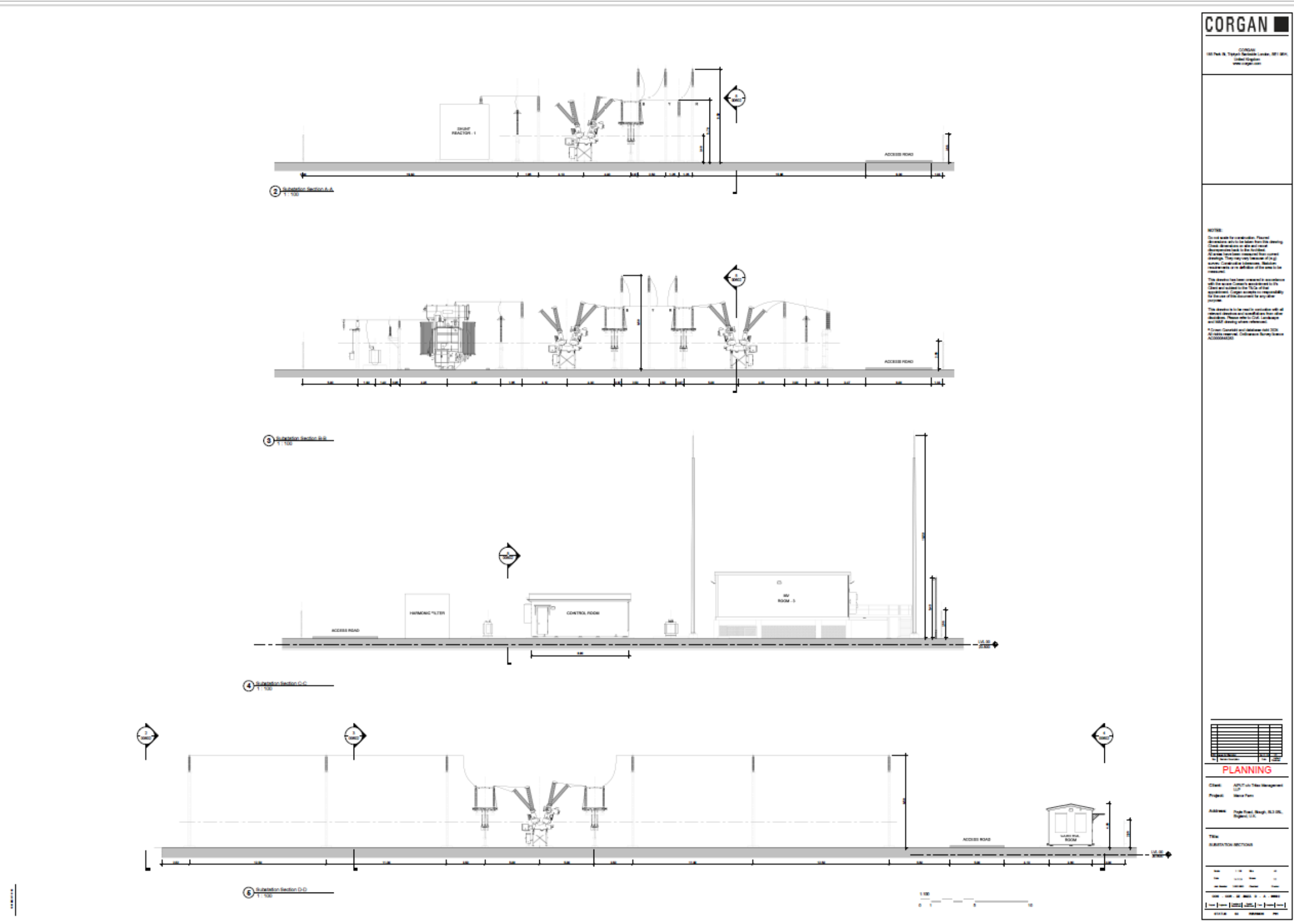


Figure 24: Proposed Development Substation Sections

5.1 PROPOSALS

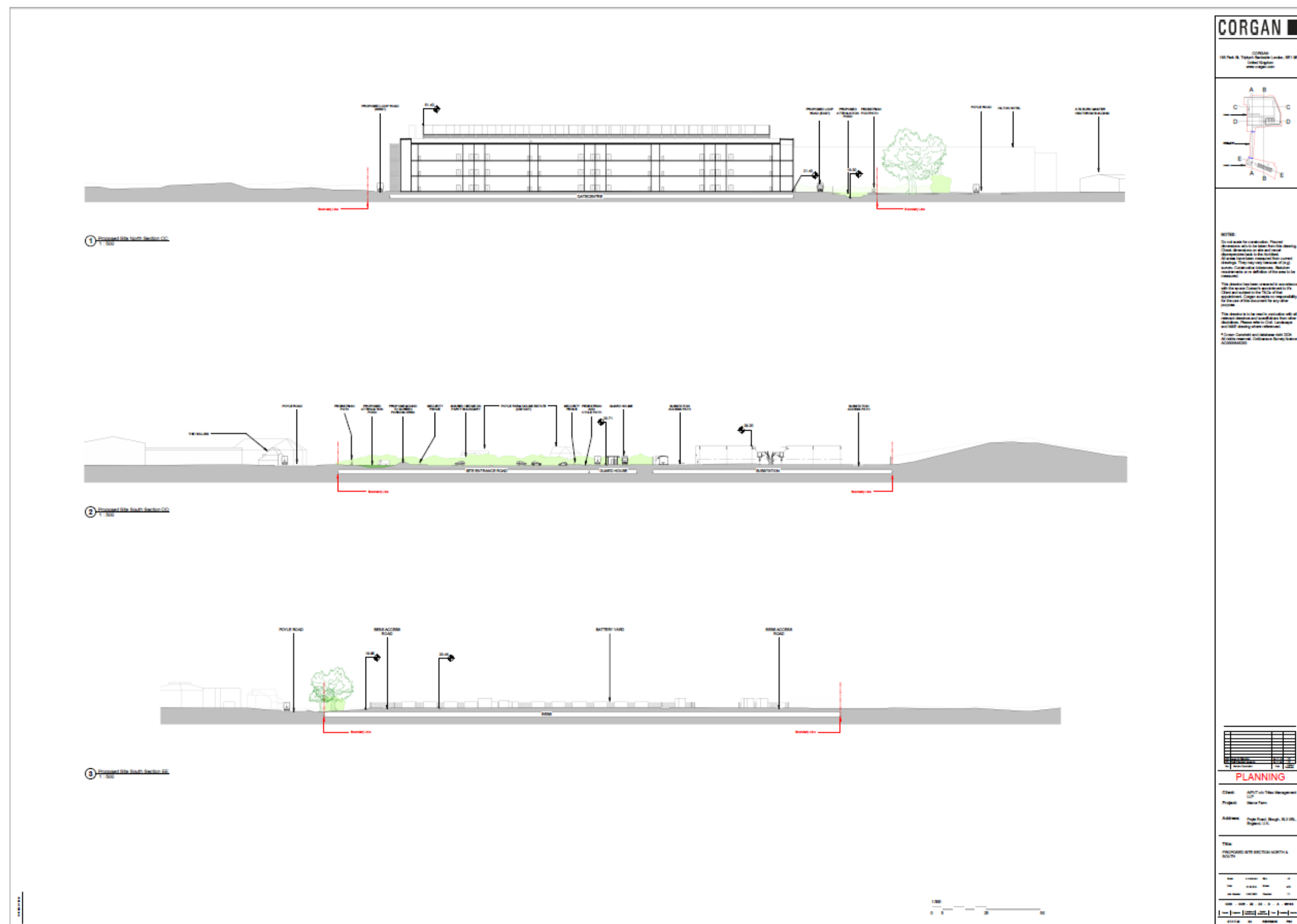


Figure 24: Proposed Development
Proposed Site sections north and south

5.1 PROPOSALS

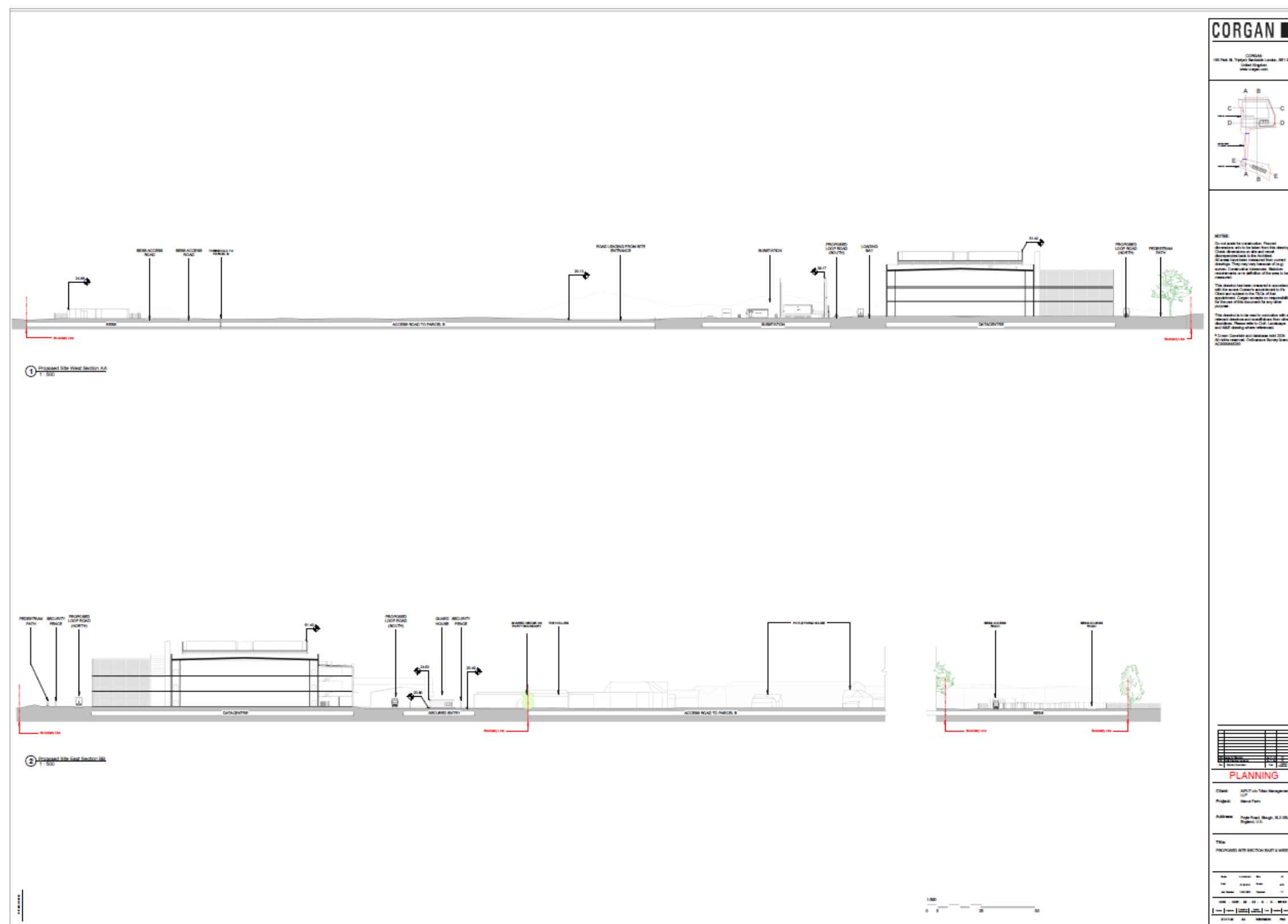


Figure 24: Proposed Development
Proposed Site sections east and west

5.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

S.66 of the 1990 Act states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the decision maker 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. Proposed development should also accord with the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework that include Paragraph 200 *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”*.

The NPPF defines ‘setting’ as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. It further makes clear that *‘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 be neutral’*.

In order to assess the heritage potential of the Site and any possible impacts to the setting or significance of built heritage assets within the vicinity, an area search of 250 metres was decided on. This was based on professional judgement and the extent of the planning application boundary. It was established that the Site does not contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets.

After further detailed examination it was established that no direct (material) harm would be caused to any built heritage asset due to the proposed development; however two built heritage assets could potentially experience some indirect effect to their setting or significance, from the future development of the Site. Other built heritage assets within the vicinity were able to be scoped out from further analysis due to the facts that their associations, settings, and thus significance, are not reliant upon the Site or because they remain well removed and/or are screened from it, so that there is a lack of intervisibility. They were, therefore, not further assessed.

The principal consideration is whether any harm could be caused to the significance of the two built heritage assets through any changes to their respective settings. Potential effects of development in this instance relate primarily to visual effects, however, historical associations were also considered as part of this assessment of impact.

The *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (HEGPA3)* (December 2017) was referred to, as it sets out a 5-step process which assesses the potential effects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of heritage assets.

Step 1 - Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

This identification was enabled through reference to the Berkshire Historic Environment Record, as illustrated in Section 3.2, page 13 of this Report, in

addition to Historic England’s National Heritage List for England. Built heritage assets that may be affected by the Proposed Development were detailed in Table 1, page 13.

Step 2 - Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

The heritage significance of the built heritage assets and the contribution that their settings make to their significance was assessed in Section 4.2, page 16. This was found to be derived from their individual special interest that lies in the architectural and historical special interest of their fabric and form.

The immediate setting of Poyle Farmhouse makes a positive contribution to its significance in respect of its immediate, private grounds and significant vegetation. The wider setting of the building, to south and west, makes a minor positive contribution to its significance only, as indicative of its historical setting. The industrial nature of its wider setting to east makes no contribution to the significance of this building.

In respect of The Hollies, due to the largely industrial nature of its setting and the location of the Poyle Road immediately to its west, the immediate setting of this building makes no contribution to its significance. The wider setting of the property has also generally been developed, apart from the field just beyond the Poyle Road, to its west, with which it maintains some views from its front elevation. Overall the wider setting of this listed building makes an extremely limited positive contribution to its significance only, due to the field beyond the Poyle Road that is indicative of its historical setting.

Step 3 - Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

The proposals comprise the demolition of existing buildings and the redevelopment to comprise a Data Centre (Use Class B8) with ancillary sub station and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with ancillary offices, associated plant, emergency backup generators and associated fuel storage, landscaping, sustainable drainage systems, car and cycle parking, and new and amended vehicular and emergency access from Poyle Road.

The Site has no known legible historical or functional relationship with either of the built heritage assets and has been assessed as making no contribution to their significance, apart from the intersecting strip of Site land that makes a minor positive contribution as indicative of their wider historical setting. This section of land is proposed to remain undeveloped and naturally landscaped.

It is assessed that there will be minimal intervisibility between Poyle

Farmhouse and the Proposed Development to either north or south, due to the significant vegetation surrounding the property to north, south and west. A visual demonstrating the location of the proposed data centre and intervisibility with this listed building is located at figure 25, page 19.

There will, however be clear intervisibility between The Hollies and the proposed data centre to north, as illustrated in figure 26, page 19. This has been considered within the proposed inbuilt design mitigation that includes:

- Retention of landscape features where possible, including most of the vegetation retained to the east boundary.
- Proposed screening to the eastern boundary of Parcel A (as a visual buffer. Parcel B is already heavily screened.
- Setting new built development back from Site boundaries as far as the development parameters allow;
- Creation of a less imposing building presence in respect of the data centre, utilising a softer transition between the building and the sky. This is achieved by breaking up the façade utilising cladding patterns to give a strong horizontal appearance and predominantly lighter tones towards the parapet, including the roof top screening;
- The materiality of the proposed office will be masonry (pre-cast and brick) with earthy tones, in response to the assessed historic buildings and the character of the area. The solid facades will have brick infill panels with brick arrangement to be a modern interpretation of the recessed texture found on Poyle Farm.

It has already been assessed that there would be minimal intervisibility between Poyle Farmhouse and the Proposed Development, due to its significant vegetation to north, south and west. However, the above proposed inbuilt design mitigation would still assist in integrating the proposed data centre and battery storage facility into the extant landscape, within the wider setting of the building. Balancing the location of the proposals in relation to Poyle Farmhouse, with the fact that there is currently significant industrial development in proximity to this building (and within the surrounding area) and the proposed inbuilt design mitigation, it is concluded that there would be a less than substantial degree of harm to the significance of Poyle Farmhouse, at the very low end of that scale.

There would be intervisibility between The Hollies and the proposed data centre. This has been carefully assessed and taken into account as reflected within the above proposed inbuilt design mitigation. These measures would assist in integrating the proposed data centre into the extant landscape to north, within the wider setting of the building, providing as much greenery to this area as possible. Balancing the proximity of the data centre to The Hollies, with the fact that there is currently significant industrial development in proximity to this building (and within the further

5.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

surrounding area) and the proposed inbuilt design mitigation, it is concluded that there would be a less than substantial degree of harm to the significance of The Hollies, at the mid-range of that scale.

Views from Windsor Castle

In the Manor Farm Pre-Application meeting of 10/09/24, the issue was raised that Historic England have looked closely at building heights in the Simplified Planning Zone (SPZ) and Slough Town Centre in respect of the setting of Windsor Castle and the Great Park.

Although the Site does not form part of these areas, it is situated in close proximity to a number of large trading estates within Polye, Slough. Therefore assessment was undertaken in order to establish whether there would be any intervisibility between the Proposed Development with Windsor Castle and the Great Park.

A Site visit undertaken on 31/10/24 in order to take images from higher points within the Castle, however it was not possible to access the East Terrace in order to capture views looking towards the Site.

However, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility has been produced by Snapshot Visuals on 15/10/24 (page 25, figure 27). They state that it illustrates the *'theoretical extent of where the development may be visible from, assuming 100% atmospheric visibility'* and that it *'takes into account the varied heights of screening features as derived from historic LIDAR surveys, and is therefore representative of the time of survey for that area.'*

Although theoretically there would be some intervisibility between the Site and the Castle/Great Park, this would be of an extremely low level. The Site is located at circa 5 kilometres distance from these built heritage assets and therefore it would be extremely challenging to identify the Proposed Development within this radius.

Conclusions

There would be no harm to the Castle/Great Park and a less than substantial degree of harm to the significance of The Hollies and Poyle Farmhouse. This less than substantial degree of harm should be weighed against the numerous public benefits of the proposal.

Step 4 - Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

A large number of inbuilt design measures have been proposed and it is considered that no further measures are required.

Step 5 - Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

This step is outside of the remit of this Built Heritage Impact Assessment.

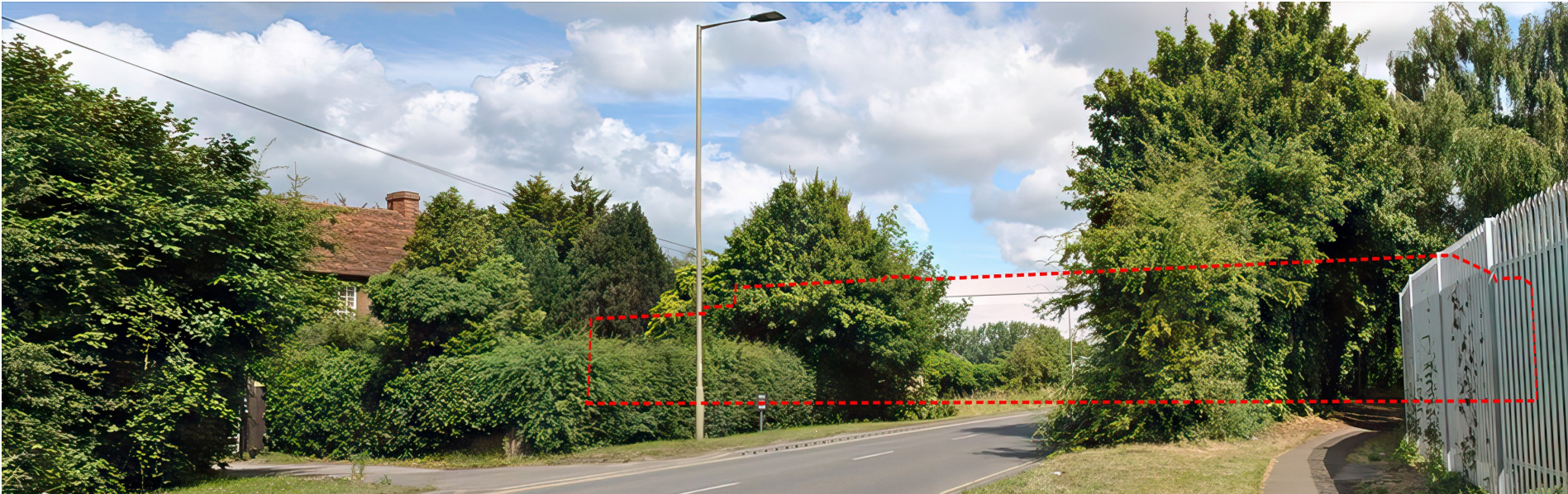


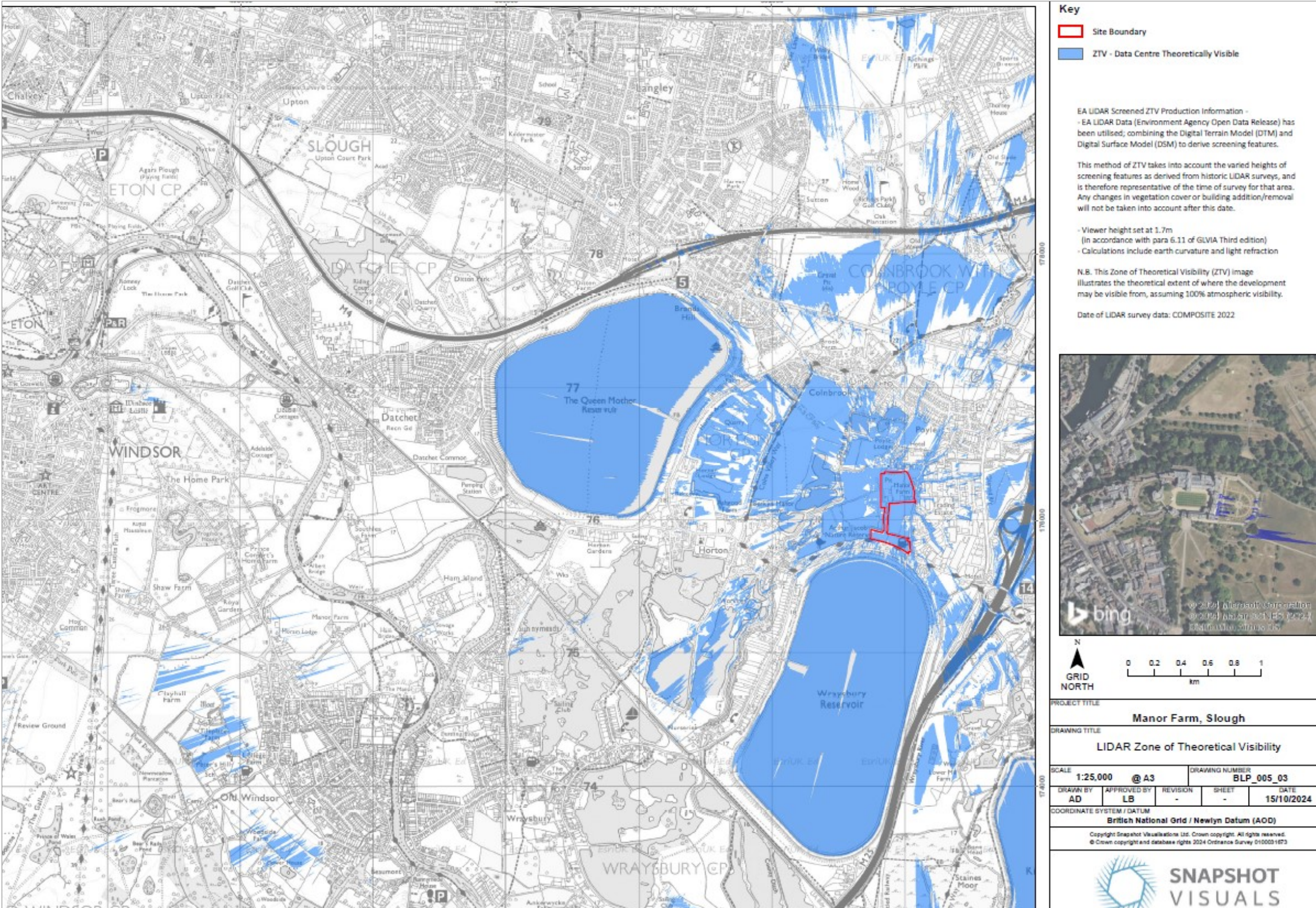
Figure 25: Visual demonstrating intervisibility between Poyle Farmhouse and the proposed data centre to the north part of the Site. This view is taken from the footpath located to east of Poyle Road looking directly towards the property.

Figure 26: Visual demonstrating intervisibility between The Hollies and the proposed data centre to the north part of the Site. This view is taken from the pavement just beyond the front elevation of the listed building, looking north-west.



5.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Figure 27: Zone of Theoretical Visibility between Windsor Castle/Great Park and the Proposed Development



6.0 CONCLUSION

This Built Heritage Impact Assessment has been researched and prepared by RPS Consulting Services Ltd., part of Tetra Tech, on behalf of the Manor Farm Propco Limited, in order to support a full planning application for a data centre campus and battery energy storage system at Manor Farm, Slough.

It was established that two built heritage assets could potentially experience some effect to their setting or significance due to the proposed development and they were further assessed. It was concluded that there would be no harm to the setting of Windsor Castle/Great Park.

Balancing the proximity of the data centre to The Hollies, with the fact that there is currently significant industrial development in proximity to this building (and within the further surrounding area) and the proposed inbuilt design mitigation, it is concluded that there would be a less than substantial degree of harm to the significance of The Hollies, at the mid-range of that scale.

Balancing the location of the proposals in relation to Poyle Farmhouse, with the fact that there is currently significant industrial development in proximity to this building (and within the surrounding area) and the proposed inbuilt design mitigation, it is concluded that there would be a less than substantial degree of harm to the significance of Poyle Farmhouse, at the very low end of that scale.

The less than substantial degree of harm assessed should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal in accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF.

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Promap

Slough Borough Council



www.rpsgroup.com