

Green Hill Solar Farm

EN010170

Environmental Statement

Appendix 12.2: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessments

(Part 6 of 7)

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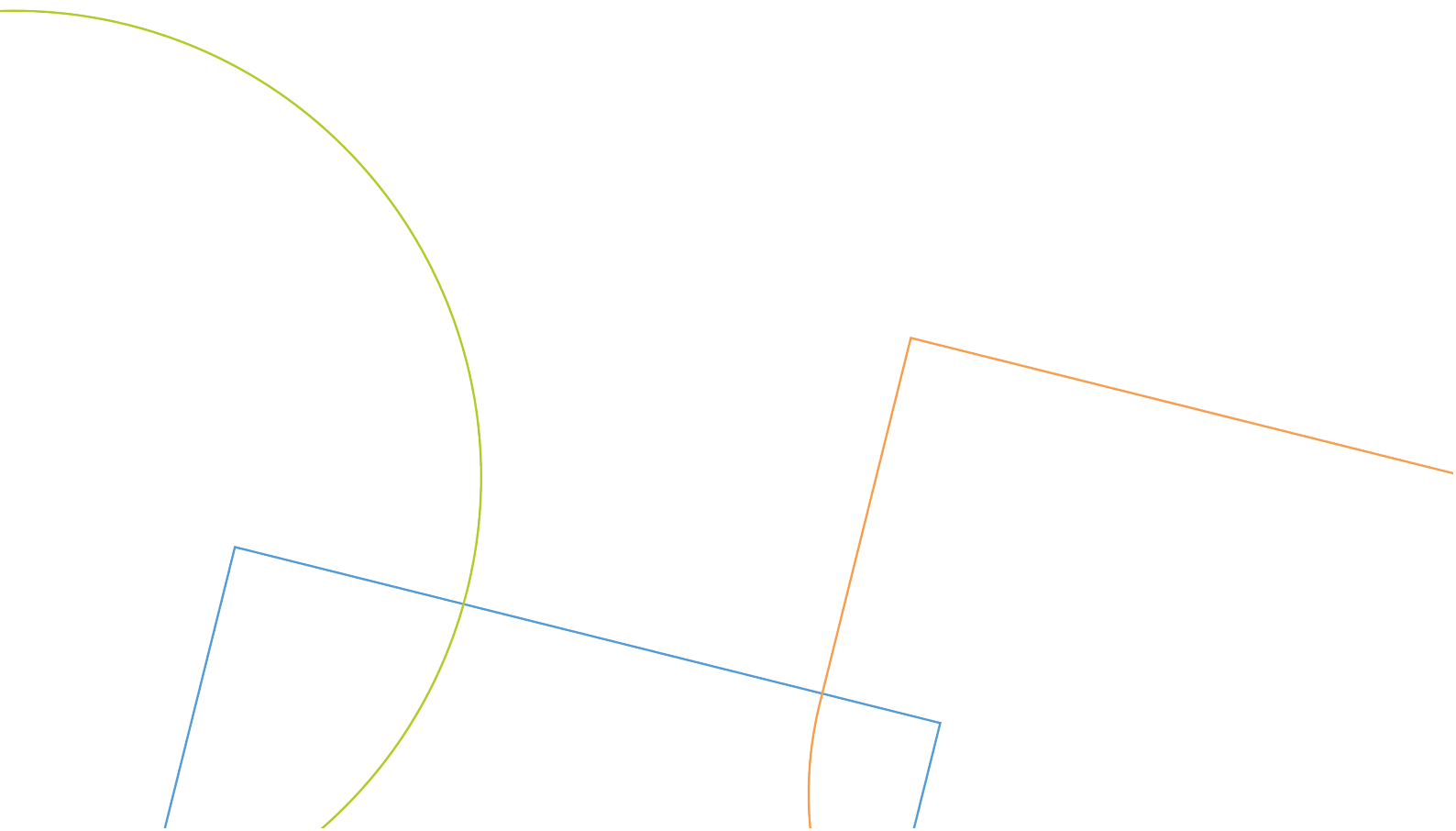
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**Green Hill Solar Farm (Cable Route)
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

Project no. 3535/H
On behalf of Green Hill Solar Farm

May 2025



Green Hill Solar Farm (Cable Route): Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Green Hill Solar Farm

May 2025

Office Locations

Cambridge

1A Clifton Court, Clifton Road,
Cambridge, CB1 7BN
01223 776740

London

Moor Place, 1 Fore Street Avenue,
London, EC2Y 9DT
020 3011 0820

Norwich

Brettingham House, 98 Pottergate,
Norwich, NR2 1EQ
01603 631319

Bath

Newark Works, 2 Foundry Way,
South Quays, Bath,
BA2 3DZ
01225 690119

Manchester

One St Peter's Square,
Manchester,
M2 3DE
01617 111740

Edinburgh

1 Lochrin Square,
92-98 Fountainbridge,
Edinburgh, EH3 9QA
01316 000319

York

Stanley Harrison House, The Chocolate Works,
Bishopthorpe Road,
York, YO23 1DE
01904 803800

Issue Sheet

Green Hill Solar Farm (Cable Route): Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Project no. 3535/H

Document Prepared for: Green Hill Solar Farm

Prepared by:

Name: Natalie Wood BA (Hons) ACIfA

Title: Senior Historic Environment Consultant

Date: April 2025

Approved by:

Name: Alice James BA (Hons) MSc MCIfA

Title: Technical Director

Date: May 2025

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APPENDIX 1 GAZETTEER

Non-Technical Summary

Lanpro Services Limited was commissioned by Green Hill Solar Farm to produce an archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) for the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm. The proposed Green Hill Solar Farm is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and this assessment has been undertaken to inform a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

Separate DBAs have been produced for all the constituent 'Sites' that form the Green Hill Solar Farm (Green Hill A, Green Hill B, Green Hill C-E, Green Hill F, Green Hill G and the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm BESS site) and this document provides an assessment for the cable route corridor (hereafter 'the study site' within this document). The study site transverse the administrative boundaries of West Northamptonshire, North Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes.

This DBA addresses the information requirements set out in the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) and provides the proportionate response sought by these. It draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the significance and archaeological potential of the study site. This assessment solely examines the impact upon potential below-ground remains, with indirect impacts to heritage assets within the surrounding area being considered in a separate Heritage Statement.

The available archaeological records and the geophysical survey suggest that there is potential for the survival of prehistoric and Roman remains within the study site.

The study site is likely to have remained in primarily agricultural use throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods and remained outside of the focus of any settlement. This is supported by evidence of extensive areas of ridge and furrow that have been recorded by the HER and mapped as geophysical anomalies, and through LiDAR interpretation. Areas of poorly preserved earthwork remains of ridge and furrow ploughing have been identified within Fields CR1b.7, CR7.6 to CR7.9, but it is considered that they are of no greater than local significance. There is potential for buried agricultural remains, such as ploughing and field boundaries, to survive within the study site, together with evidence of small-scale quarrying, but any such remains are unlikely to be of greater than negligible significance.

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This archaeological desk-based (DBA) assessment of land forming the Cable Route Corridor of the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm site (which are hereafter collectively referred to as the ‘study site’) has been prepared by Lanpro Services Limited on behalf of Green Hill Solar Farm, to inform the Environmental Statement (ES) produced to support the application stage of the DCO process.
- 1.1.1 This document provides an assessment of the potential for the survival of archaeological remains within the study site and assesses the potential impacts that the proposed development could have on these and other archaeological assets in the vicinity. This assessment solely examines the impact upon potential archaeological remains within the study site, with indirect (setting) impacts to heritage assets in the surrounding area assessed in a separate Heritage Statement.
- 1.1.2 As the Scheme is defined as an Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), the assessment has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the Overarching National Policy Statement for *Energy* (EN-1) (NPS 2024a) and the *National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure* (EN-3) (NPS 2024b), and has been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) guidelines *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (CIfA 2020).

2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 2.1.1 In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by current legislation, the policy framework set by government planning policy, by current Local Plan policy and by other material considerations.

2.2 Current Legislation

- 2.2.1 The Planning Act 2008 sets out the process for the consenting of NSIPs and the basis for the decision whether to grant development consent.
- 2.2.2 The applicable legislative framework for this archaeological desk-based assessment relates to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (AMAAA) 1979.
- 2.2.3 The AMAAA largely concerns to Scheduled Monuments (SMs) and designated archaeological areas, detailing in particular what can and cannot be undertaken on archaeological grounds.

2.3 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

- 2.3.1 This National Policy Statement (NPS) sets out national policy for the energy infrastructure and has effect for the decisions by the Secretary of State on applications for energy developments that are nationally significant under the Planning Act 2008. For such NSIP applications this NPS, combined with technology specific energy NPS where relevant (see EN-3 below), provides the primary policy for decisions by the Secretary of State.
- 2.3.2 Paragraph 5.9.3 of EN-1 defines the term 'heritage assets' and identifies what constitutes 'significance' in the historic environment: *'Those elements of the historic environment that hold value to this and future generations because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called 'heritage assets'. Heritage assets may be buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes, or any combination of these. The sum of the heritage interests that a heritage asset holds is referred to as its significance. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.*
- 2.3.3 Paragraph 5.9.9 of EN-1 outlines the requirements for the applicant's assessment: *'The applicant should undertake an assessment of any likely significant heritage impacts of the proposed development as part of the EIA and describe these in the ES ... This should include consideration of heritage assets above, at, and below the surface of the ground. Consideration will also need to be given to the possible impacts, including cumulative, on the wider historic environment. The assessment should include reference to any historic landscape or seascape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing impacts relevant to the proposed project'.*
- 2.3.4 Paragraph 5.9.10 discusses significance and proportionality, identifying the minimum requirements for assessment: *'As part of the ES the applicant should provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposed development, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum, the applicant should have consulted the relevant Historic Environment Record ... and assessed the heritage assets themselves using expertise where necessary according to the proposed development's impact'.*
- 2.3.5 Paragraph 5.9.11 discusses the requirements for archaeological DBAs and field evaluation: *'Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or the available evidence suggests it has the potential to include, heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the applicant should carry out appropriate desk-based assessment and, where such desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation'.* Paragraph 5.9.12 highlights the required

standard for any supporting documents: *‘The applicant should ensure that the extent of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of any heritage assets affected can be adequately understood from the application and supporting documents.’*

- 2.3.6 Paragraph 5.9.13 encourages the applicant to identify any opportunities to enhance the historic environment: ‘The applicant is encouraged, where opportunities exist, to prepare proposals which can make a positive contribution to the historic environment, and to consider how their scheme takes account of the significance of heritage assets affected. This can include, where possible:

enhancing, through a range of measures such a sensitive design, the significance of heritage assets or setting affected;

considering where required the development of archive capacity which could deliver significant public benefits; and

considering how visual or noise impacts can affect heritage assets, and whether there may be opportunities to enhance access to, or interpretation, understanding and appreciation of, the heritage assets affected by the scheme’.

2.4 National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

- 2.4.1 This NPS, taken together with the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), provides the primary policy for decisions by the Secretary of State on applications they receive for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure (i.e. NSIPs). *Section 2.10 Solar Photovoltaic Generation* provides guidance and policy specific to solar PV schemes, and paragraphs 2.10.107 – 2.10.119 address Cultural Heritage. Key paragraphs from this section of the NPS considered most relevant to this assessment are discussed below.
- 2.4.2 Paragraph 2.10.107 of NPS-5 states *‘The impacts of solar PV developments on the historic environment will require expert assessment in most cases and may have effect both above and below ground’*. Paragraph 2.10.108 goes on to identify that: *‘Above ground impacts may include the effects on the setting of Listed Buildings and other designated heritage assets as well as on Historic Landscape Character’*, and paragraph 2.10.109 identifies that: *‘Below ground impacts, although generally limited, may include direct impacts on archaeological deposits through ground disturbance associated with trenching, cabling, foundations, fencing, temporary haul routes etc.’*
- 2.4.3 Paragraph 2.10.110 identifies the potential for positive effects of solar developments: *‘Equally, solar PV developments may have a positive effect, for example archaeological assets may be protected by a solar PV farm as the site is removed from regular ploughing and shoes or low-level piling is stipulated’*.
- 2.4.4 Paragraphs 2.10.112 and 2.10.113 discuss the applicant assessment requirements: *‘Applicant assessments should be informed by information from Historic Environment Records (HERs) or the local authority ...Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, the applicant should submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. These should be carried out using expertise where necessary and in consultation with the local planning authority, and should identify archaeological study areas and propose appropriate schemes of investigation, and design measures, to ensure the protection of relevant heritage assets’*.

2.4.5 Paragraphs 2.10.114 and 2.10.115 discuss the potential requirement for further investigations: *‘In some instances, field studies may include investigative work (and may include trial trenching beyond the boundary of the proposed site) to assess the impacts of any ground disturbance, such as proposed cabling, substation foundations or mounting supports for solar panels on archaeological assets ... The extent of investigative work should be proportionate to the sensitivity of, and extent of, proposed ground disturbance in the associated study area’.*

2.4.6 Paragraphs 2.10.116 and 2.10.117 highlight how the results of the historic environment assessments should influence the applicant’s design and that there should be a consideration of how assets can be conserved appropriately: *‘Applicants should take account of the results of historic environment assessments in their design proposal ... Applicants should consider what steps can be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting’.*

2.5 National Planning Policy Framework

2.5.1 Section 16 of the NPPF (December 2024), entitled ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets.

2.5.2 Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:

- Delivery of sustainable development
- Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment, and
- Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance

2.5.3 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 207 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset (and any contribution made by its setting), and that 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 upon their significance’.* This is supported by paragraph 208 which states that LPAs should take this into account when considering applications.

2.5.4 Paragraphs 212-215 consider the impact of development proposals upon the significance of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 212 states that where a development is proposed that would affect 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 this weight should be)’.* Paragraph 215 emphasises that *‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits’* of the scheme, bearing in mind the great weight highlighted in Paragraph 212.

2.5.5 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF 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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)’.*

2.5.6 Annex 2 also defines ‘Archaeological Interest’ as a heritage asset which *‘holds or potentially holds, 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.

2.5.7 A Designated Heritage Asset comprises a ‘*World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.*’

2.5.8 In short, government policy provides a framework which:

- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets (which include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Conservation Areas)
- Protects the settings of such designations
- In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk-based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions.
- Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit in situ preservation.

2.6 Planning Practice Guidance

2.6.1 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG 2019) is a web-based resource which is to be used in conjunction with the NPPF. It is aimed at planning professionals and prescribes best practice within the planning sector. The relevant section is entitled ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’. The guidance given in this section sets out the best practice to applying government policy in the NPPF. It provides an interpretation for each of the interests assigned to heritage assets in understanding significance: archaeological, architectural and artistic, and historic (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723).

2.7 Local Planning Policy

2.7.1 The current Local Plan for West Northamptonshire comprises the *West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) – adopted December 2014*. The Core Strategy sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the whole of the West Northamptonshire area, and the policy relating to the historic environment comprises:

Policy BN5 – The Historic Environment and Landscape

‘In order to secure and enhance the significance of the area's heritage assets and their settings and landscapes, development in areas of landscape sensitivity and/ or known historic or heritage significance will be required to:

1. Sustain and enhance the heritage and landscape features which contribute to the character of the area including:

a) Conservation Areas;

b) Significant historic landscapes including historic parkland, battlefields and ridge and furrow;

c) The skyline and landscape settings of towns and villages;

d) Sites of known or potential heritage or historic significance;

e) Locally and nationally important buildings, structures and monuments

2. Demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their setting in order to minimise harm to these assets;

where loss of historic features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for recording and the production of a suitable archive and report

3. Be sympathetic to locally distinctive landscape features, design styles and materials in order to contribute to a sense of place

The retention and sensitive re-use of disused or underused heritage assets and structures is encouraged in order to retain and reflect the distinctiveness of the environment, contribute to the sense of place and promote the sustainable and prudent use of natural resources.

Proposals to sustain and enhance the area's understanding of heritage assets, for tourism and historic interest as part of cultural, leisure and green networks will be supported.'

- 2.7.1 The current Local Plan for North Northamptonshire includes the *Joint Core Strategy* and supporting area-based plans. *The Joint Core Strategy* adopted in July 2016 provides the strategic planning policies for the future development of the area from 2016 to 2031, and the policy relating to the historic environment comprises:

Policy 2 – Historic Environment

'The distinctive North Northamptonshire historic environment will be protected, preserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. Where a development would impact upon a heritage asset and/or its setting:

a) Proposals should conserve and, where possible, enhance the heritage significance and setting of an asset or group of heritage assets in a manner commensurate to its significance;

b) Proposals should complement their surrounding historic environment through the form, scale, design and materials;

c) Proposals should protect and, where possible, enhance key views and vistas of heritage assets, including of the church spires along the Nene Valley and across North Northamptonshire;

d) Proposals should demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on heritage assets and their setting in order to minimise harm to these assets and their setting. Where loss of historic features or archaeological remains is unavoidable and justified, provision should be made for recording and the production of a suitable archive and report;

e) Where appropriate, flexible solutions to the re-use of buildings and conservation of other types of heritage assets at risk will be encouraged, especially, where this will result in their removal from the 'at risk' register.'

- 2.7.2 The current Local Plan for Milton Keynes Council is the Milton Keynes Core Strategy: Adopted 2019 (Ref 12.9) and this is the principal spatial plan for the Borough. The policy relating to the historic environment comprises:

Policy HE1: Heritage and Development

- A. *Proposals will be supported where they sustain and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets which are recognised as being of historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic, landscape or townscape significance.*

These heritage assets include:

- 1. Listed Buildings;*
- 2. Conservation Areas;*
- 3. Scheduled Ancient Monuments and non-designated Archaeological sites;*
- 4. Registered Parks and Gardens;*
- 5. Assets on the MK New-Town Heritage Register; and*
- 6. Other places, spaces, structures and features which may not be formally designated but considered to meet the definition of 'heritage assets' as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF.*

- B. *Where appropriate, development proposals must provide an impartial and objective heritage assessment. Where necessary, the Council will require suitably qualified specialists to undertake the heritage assessment. The heritage assessment shall:*

- 1. Assess and describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, identifying those elements that contribute to that significance and, where appropriate, those that do not. The level of detail shall be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of proposals on their significance. Limited and localised alterations to an unlisted building in a conservation area need not be supported by the level of detail required to convey the impact on significance caused by development in the setting of a listed building or by proposed alterations to the built fabric of a listed building.*
- 2. Be of an analytical and interpretive nature rather than simply provide a description of the assets and the proposed works.*
- 3. Provide a sound justification for the works, based on the economic, social and environmental benefits delivered by the scheme, for example, promoting the long term care for a heritage asset and/or its setting.*
- 4. Explain how the scheme has taken account of the significance of the assets in its scope, design and detail, in order to minimise or avoid harm to the heritage assets affected.*
- 5. Assess the nature and extent of any harm or public benefit arising from the scheme.*
- 6. Where harm is caused by the proposal, the assessment shall explain why such harm is unavoidable or required to deliver public benefits that outweigh the harm caused*

- C. *Where applications seek to change the use of a listed building, evidence should be submitted to demonstrate that the proposal includes the full scope of works required to achieve that use (such as those that will be required by Building Regulations, The Fire Authority, Environmental Health etc.). Where a change of use requires a significant alteration or structural works, an engineer's report shall be submitted to demonstrate that the building is capable of conversion, set out the full extent of works and show how they have taken account of 2 a) above.*
- D. *Granting of permission for proposals that result in substantial harm to or total loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset will only be exceptional or wholly exceptional in accordance with national policy and guidance.*
- E. *Permission for proposals that cause less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset will only be granted where the harm is demonstrably outweighed by public benefits delivered by the scheme.*
- F. *Proposals that result in harm to the significance of non-designated heritage assets will be resisted unless the need for, and benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm, taking into account the asset's significance and importance, and only once all feasible solutions to avoid and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented.*
- G. *In assessing any potential harm or enhancement to the significance of a heritage asset(s) the following will be considered:*
 - 1. *Avoiding successive small scale changes that lead to a cumulative loss or harm to the significance of the asset or historic environment;*
 - 2. *Respecting the character, appearance, special interest and setting of the asset and historic environment;*
 - 3. *Retaining architectural or historic features which are important to the character and appearance of the asset (including internal features) in an unaltered state; and*
 - 4. *Retaining the historic form and structural integrity of the asset.*
- H. *Where 'enabling development' is proposed, the Council will expect the proposal to accord with Historic England's published guidance. The applicant will provide accurate evidence to establish that a 'heritage deficit' exists. It is not the role of 'enabling development' to reimburse owners or applicants who have paid above the market value of asset, that value being based on the current condition of the asset."*

Policy CS19: The Historic and Natural Environment

Developments will protect and enhance the significance of the Borough's Heritage Assets, including important elements of the 20th Century New Town architecture. Development proposals must consider the character, appearance and setting of sites, buildings,

structures, areas, parks and gardens and landscapes that are of historic, architectural, cultural, biodiversity or archaeological significance.

2.8 Professional Guidance

- 2.8.1 The ClfA *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment* (2020) provides guidelines and recommendations for best practice in undertaking archaeological desk-based research and assessment.
- 2.8.2 Guidance on the implementation and interpretation of historic environment policy has been provided by the Historic England publications *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment* (GPA2; Historic England 2015) and the *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA3; Historic England 2017).
- 2.8.3 Historic England's GPA2 outlines a seven-stage process for the assembly and analysis of relevant information relating to heritage assets potentially affected by a proposed development:
- Understand the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment,
 - Understand the significance of the affected assets,
 - Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance,
 - Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF,
 - Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance,
 - Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change, and
 - 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.
- 2.8.4 In order to understand the nature, extent and level of significance GPA2 advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in *Conservation Principles* (English Heritage 2008): *aesthetic, communal, historic* and *evidential*. However, NPPF (2023) has since provided a definition of significance dependant on the following four interests: *archaeological, architectural and artistic, or historic*. The following assessment of significance results from a combination of any, some or all of these values and interests.
- 2.8.5 Historic England's GPA3 recognises that whilst setting is not a heritage asset, 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*' (para. 4). Setting is described as being distinct to curtilage, character and context. This guidance also notes that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, although the importance of setting lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, and this can be influenced by a number of other factors.
- 2.8.6 The Historic England advice note, *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. Historic England Advice Note 12 (HEAN 12; Historic England 2019), brings together all of the above guidance in an analysis of an appropriate

approach for applicants for heritage and other consents in providing an understanding of the significance of heritage assets in line with NPPF. It emphasises the level of detail required in support of both planning and listed building consent applications, which should be no more than is necessary, i.e. proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected, to reach an informed decision.

3 Methodology

3.1 Information Sources

- 3.1.1 A gazetteer of all records held on the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER), Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record (MKHER), the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE), the Historic England National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), for within the 250m search area is provided in Appendix 1 and their locations illustrated on Figure 1.
- 3.1.2 The holdings of the Northamptonshire Archives and the Buckinghamshire Archives, together with on-line repositories for historical maps, plans and relevant documentary sources were consulted in accordance with guidelines laid down by the ClfA (2020).
- 3.1.3 Online mapping resources and GIS-based web mapping services were also consulted including current and historical satellite imagery from Google Earth, Bing Aerial and British Geological Survey 1:50 000 mapping.
- 3.1.4 The Environment Agency's National LiDAR Programme data at 1m resolution was also downloaded from the Defra Survey Data Download webpage and processed using GIS software.
- 3.1.5 GIS data produced as part of the Northamptonshire Mapping Programme (NCC 2013) was also downloaded from the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), which also hosted GIS data produced as part of the *A GIS aided study of agriculture and landscape in Midland England* (Williams *et al* 2011).
- 3.1.6 Archaeological geophysical surveys were undertaken across the whole of the study site, to support the DCO application, between September 2024 and April 2025 when the land became available (ASWYAS 2025).
- 3.1.7 A range of published and unpublished material has also been consulted, as detailed in the references in Section 9 of this DBA.

3.2 Site Visit

- 3.2.1 Site visits were undertaken between 2024 and 2025 to provide an assessment of the character of the study site and appraise the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological or heritage assets.

3.3 Assessment Criteria

- 3.3.1 Paragraph 5.9.10 of NPS EN-1 (2023) and Paragraph 207 of the NPPF (December 2024) state that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 3.3.2 It is recognised that not all parts of a heritage asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain elements could accommodate change without affecting the significance of the asset. Change is only considered harmful if it erodes an asset's significance. Understanding the significance of any heritage assets affected and

any contribution made by their setting (paragraph 207, NPPF December 2024) is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change. Assessment of significance has been undertaken in accordance with the Historic England's *Statements of Heritage Significance. Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (2019).

4 Site Description

4.1.1 The study site traverses 146 areas, totalling c. 319ha (Figure 1), of largely arable land. For the purposes of this appraisal the corridor has been divided into three sections:

- Section 1 – areas between the Green Hill Sites A, A.2, B and C
- Section 2 – areas between the Green Hill Sites C, D, E and the BESS
- Section 3 – areas between the Green Hill Bess, Sites F and G

4.1.2 The location details for each section within study site are tabulated below.

Section	Parishes	Height above Ordnance Datum (aOD)
1	Old (West Northants) Walgrave (West Northants) Hannington (West Northants) Holcot (West Northants)	124 – 127m aOD
2	Sywell (North Northants) Mears Ashby (North Northants) Wilby (North Northants) Earls Barton (North Northants)	48 – 117m aOD
3	Grendon (North Northants) Easton Maudit (North Northants) Bozeat (North Northants) Lavendon (Milton Keynes) Warrington (Milton Keynes)	47 – 103m aOD

Section 1 (see Figure 2)

4.1.3 Section 1 of the study site is distributed across four parishes within West Northamptonshire. The corridor runs south-east from Field AF24 in east of Site A to Field A2F3 in the north-west of Site A.2. From the south-western corner of Field A2F4 it runs southwards towards an unnamed woodland. At which point it turns west and runs for c.330m before turning south towards Red House Lane. After Red House Lane it heads south-east towards Kettering Road (A43). It then follows the northern edge of Kettering Road until an unnamed woodland, where it crosses the road and then runs along its southern edge. For the section running to Site B from the north of Kettering Road (A43), the route heads north-west for c.460m before turning west towards Sywell Road. From Sywell road it runs south-west-west entering Site B at the north-east of Field BF4. The section of study site heading to Site C runs for c.580m south-east before turning north-east-east

towards Sywell Wood. It then runs south-east along the western edge of Sywell Wood and north of Sywell Aerodrome to Site C, which it joins at the north-west of Field CF1.

- 4.1.4 The natural topography of the study site in Section 1 is relatively level overall. There is a gradual downward slope from 124m aOD at Site A to 109m aOD at Site A.2. Following this, the terrain rises gradually towards Sites B and C, with elevations varying between 109m aOD and 138m aOD.
- 4.1.5 The underlying solid geology of the study site in Section 1 comprises Rutland Formation – Mudstone, Stamford Member - Sandstone and Siltstone and Wellingborough Limestone Member - Limestone and Mudstone, Interbedded, as well as *Northampton Sand Formation - Ironstone, Ooidal* with younger overlying formations to the east including Whitby Mudstone Formation.
- 4.1.6 Overlying superficial deposits of Oadby Member – Diamicton cover much of Section 1 of the cable route corridor, while a narrow band of Alluvium - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel is present along a stream that passes between Site A and A.2.
- 4.1.7 Soils vary across the study site, with those identified as ‘Soilscape 9’, described as ‘Lime-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage’ being the most prevalent. Soils identified as ‘Soilscape 7’, described as ‘Freely draining slightly acid but base-rich soils’ are present towards the south of Site A.2, and soils identified as ‘Soilscape 18’, described as ‘Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils’ lie to the east of Site B (Cranfield University 2025).

Section 2 (see Figure 6)

- 4.1.8 Section 2 of the study site spans four parishes within North Northamptonshire. The study site runs eastwards from Fields CF6 and CF7 in the east of Site C to Fields DF1 and DF2 in the west of Site D. From the east of Site D it runs eastwards from DF3, crosses Highfield Road and then continues for c.330m joining the north-west of Site E at Field EF1. From the north-east of Site E, the study site runs southwards to Main Road from the south-east of Field EF4. From Main Road it runs across land to the east of Earls Barton, travelling c.1.9km southwards towards the A45, before turning westwards and travelling c.1.8km along the north edge of the A45. The study site crosses the A45 at Grendon Road and Station Road. From Station Road, the study site runs c.580m southwards before crossing the River Nene. From the River Nene it heads south and west for c.945m until reaching Station Road. After crossing Station Road, it runs for c.265m along the northern edge of Station Road before entering the north-west of the BESS2 site.
- 4.1.9 The natural topography of the study site in Section 2 gently slopes downwards from the north-west to south-east, varying in height from between 117m aOD to 48m aOD.
- 4.1.10 The underlying solid geology of the study site in Section 2 comprises Northampton Sand Formation - Ironstone, Ooidal, with younger overlying formations including Blisworth Limestone Formation – Limestone which overlies the Rutland Formation – Mudstone. This formation includes the Wellingborough Limestone Member - Limestone and Mudstone, Interbedded, and beneath this the Stamford Member - Sandstone and Siltstone. To the east

of Site E and within the southern extent of Section 2 of the cable route corridor, the bedrock geology comprises Whitby Mudstone Formation – Mudstone.

- 4.1.11 Overlying superficial deposits cover much of the northern extent of Section 2, comprising Oadby Member – Diamicton. Within the southern extent, to the north-west of the BESS Site, deposits of recent alluvium – clay and silt and River terrace deposits (undifferentiated) - sand and gravel cover the cable route.
- 4.1.12 Soils vary across the study site in Section 2, with those identified as ‘Soilscape 9’, described as ‘Lime-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage’, Soils identified as ‘Soilscape 5’, described as ‘Freely draining lime-rich loamy soils’, soils identified as ‘Soilscape 7’, described as ‘Freely draining *slightly acid but base-rich soils*’ and soils identified as ‘Soilscape 18’, which are described as ‘*Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils*’ present within the majority of the cable route.
- 4.1.13 Within the southern extent around the BESS, soils identified as ‘Soilscape 6’, which are described as ‘Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils’, soils identified as ‘Soilscape 8’, which are described as ‘Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage’ and soils identified as ‘Soilscape 20’, described as ‘Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater’ have been identified (Cranfield 2025).

Section 3 (see Figure 10)

- 4.1.14 Section 3 of the study site spans five parishes within North Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes. The study site runs southwards from the south-east of the BESS1 site, travelling c.420m south-east to Station Road. It then runs c.960m south and then south-east to Yardley Road before heading c.690m south-east to enter the north-west of Site F at Field FF15. The study site exits to the south of Field FF15, crossing Easton Land, and runs southward for c. 1.14km to Field FF30 in the south-east of Site F. The study site exits Site F for a second time in the south of Field FF31 and head south and south-east for c.2km toward the A509, which is crosses before entering Site G in the west of Field GO2.
- 4.1.15 The natural topography of the study site in Section 3 gently slopes upwards from the north-west to south-east, varying in height from between 47m aOD to 103m aOD.
- 4.1.16 The underlying solid geology of the study site in Section 3 comprises several formations including *Whitby Mudstone Formation – Mudstone* of the Upper Lias Group which underlies a series of formations of the Great Oolite Group, including the *Stamford Member - Sandstone and Siltstone, Interbedded* and the *Wellingborough Limestone Member - Limestone and Mudstone, Interbedded* which form the basal layers of the overarching *Rutland Formation – Mudstone*. Overlying this is the *Blisworth Limestone Formation*. Within the southern extent of the study site, *Cornbrash Formation – Limestone* is present to the west of Site G.
- 4.1.17 Overlying superficial deposits are present across much of study site in Section 3, with Oadby Member – Diamicton and Bozeat Till – Diamicton being the most prevalent. In addition, there are a few areas containing discrete deposits of Alluvium - Clay and Silt where these are associated with the watercourses.

- 4.1.18 Soils vary across the study site in Section 3, with soils identified as ‘Soilscape 6’, which are described as ‘Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils’, soils identified as ‘Soilscape 8’, which are described as ‘Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage’, soils identified as ‘Soilscape 5’, described as ‘Freely draining lime-rich loamy soils’, those identified as ‘Soilscape 9’, described as ‘Lime-rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage’ and soils identified as ‘Soilscape 18’, which are described as ‘*Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils*’ present within the cable route.

5 Archaeological and Historical Background

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section reviews existing archaeological evidence for the study site and the archaeological and historical background of the surrounding area, based on a consideration of evidence in the Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes HER, NRHE and the NHLE. It is not the purpose of this document to create a detailed archaeological or historical narrative of the area, but to provide an assessment of the study site's historical development and archaeological potential in accordance with the NPPF.

5.2 Designated Heritage Assets

- 5.2.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the study site.
- 5.2.2 Within the 250m search area, there are three Grade II Listed Buildings. Station Lodge (NHLE 1294156) is located adjacent to the study site, to the south-west of Station Road. Doddington Barn (NHLE 1293977) is situated c.45m to the east of the study site, near the A45. The Easton Maudit Conservation Area lies to the east of the study site. The Old Vicarage (NHLE 1040782) is located within the conservation area, and is c. 240m east of the study site.
- 5.2.3 The northern extent of the Grade I Registered Park and Garden (RPG) of Castle Ashby (NHLE 1000385) is adjacent to the cable route that runs to the west and south-east of the BESS site.
- 5.2.4 There are no Scheduled Monuments or registered battlefields within the 250m search area.
- 5.2.5 Further details of these designated heritage assets can be found in the gazetteer in Appendix 1 and are illustrated on Figure 6 and 10.
- 5.2.6 This DBA does not discuss potential impacts to designated heritage assets as this will be assessed in a separate standalone Heritage Statement.

5.3 Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 5.3.1 There are 95 Northamptonshire HER records and one Milton Keynes HER record located within the study site, the NRHE also contains entries for nine of these records.
- 5.3.2 The Northamptonshire HER records 238 'monument' records within the 250m search area, for which the NRHE also contains entries for 27 of them. In addition, the NRHE contains entries for a further six 'monuments' within the 250m search area that are not recorded on the HER. Details of all HER and NRHE records are provided in Appendix 1, with the locations of these depicted on Figures 2, 6 and 10.
- 5.3.3 There are 37 PAS records within the 250m search area, four of which were located in the study site.

5.4 Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 5.4.1 There are 82 archaeological 'event' records on the Northamptonshire HER and/or Historic England's NRHE within the 250m search area surrounding the study site. Details of these archaeological events can be found in the gazetteer in Appendix 1 and their locations are

illustrated on Figures 3, 7 and 11. Of these previous archaeological events, 28 were located within the cable route and are discussed in greater detail below.

- 5.4.2 Previous investigations within the study site in Section 1 included metal detecting (ENN100423) to the north of Kettering Road in Field CR 1a.1 and CR1a.3, which uncovered unstratified Romano-British remains and fieldwalking (ENN8802) to the south of Red Horse Lane in Field CR 1a.16 which found unstratified Saxon pottery (HER 3831/0/1).
- 5.4.3 The Empingham to Hannington pipeline runs through the northern section of the study site and a desk-based assessment (ENN105343) identified prehistoric evidence and potential Roman settlement in the area. Subsequent geophysical surveys (ENN107106 and ENN107718), in Fields CR 1a.10, CR 1a.11 and CR 1a.18, confirmed evidence of late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement activity and identified medieval or early post-medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation.
- 5.4.4 Work for the Overstone Leys Easement along Kettering Road included geophysical survey (ENN109956) and trial trenching (ENN109986), within Fields CR 1a.20, CR 1.1, CR 1.4, CR1b.17, CR1b.18 and CR2a.1. The surveys revealed a possible Iron Age settlement comprising a group of enclosures along a trackway or boundary ditches, along with medieval agricultural anomalies.
- 5.4.5 Fieldwalking near Sywell Wood for the Northampton South Trunk Main project (ENN100358, ENN101426, and ENN101427), across Fields CR2a.5, CR2a.6 and CR2a.7, uncovered significant quantities of Roman pottery and prehistoric to Romano-British finds. An earthwork survey (ENN107316) in Field CR2a.7 also recorded medieval to post-medieval banks and ditches.
- 5.4.6 Within Section 2 of the study site, a fieldwalking survey to the south of Grendon (ENN9791 in Field CR7.15) uncovered unstratified Roman-British finds and fieldwalking near Wilby (ENN9507 in Field CR5a.2, ENN9619 in Field CR5a.7 and ENN100569 in Field CR5a.18) recovered unstratified Saxon pottery and a flint scatter. An earthwork and walkover surveys (ENN9608 in Field CR5a.25 and ENN12910 in Field CR6.11) recorded settlement earthworks at Barton Thorpe, as well as unstratified Romano-British, medieval, and post-medieval pottery.
- 5.4.7 Within Section 3 of the study site, a desk-based assessment (ENN105483) for Salcey Forest and Yardley Chase identified uncertain activity, although an earthwork survey at Easton Maudit in Field CR8.2 (ENN10048) recorded the earthwork remains of a medieval settlement and associated agricultural activity.

5.5 Geophysical Survey

- 5.5.1 Archaeological geophysical surveys have been conducted across areas within the study site to support the DCO application (ASWYAS, 2025).
- 5.5.2 In Section 1 of the study site, linear and rectilinear anomalies indicative of enclosures were identified to the south of Site A in Field CR1a.3, which corresponded to an area recorded on the HER where Romano-British had been recovered (HER 8924). To the west of Site A.2 in Field CR1a.7, linear and rectilinear anomalies indicative of enclosures were identified to

the east of settlement activity dating from the Iron Age/Roman period (HER 8924), as well as earthworks of probable medieval settlement recorded on the HER (HER 3654).

- 5.5.3 To the south of Kettering Road, extensive linear and curvilinear anomalies indicative of a possible prehistoric settlement were identified in Field CR1b.17. These anomalies correspond with the results of trial trenching (ENN109986), that revealed a possible Iron Age settlement (HER 5789).
- 5.5.4 Linear anomalies were identified in the north of Field CR2a.6 that correspond with a possible undated enclosure (HER 5886). To the north-west of Site C, linear and curvilinear anomalies as well as further linear and rectilinear anomalies were identified in Fields CR2a.6 and CR2a.7 and fieldwalking within this area uncovered significant quantities of Roman pottery and prehistoric to Romano-British finds (HER 7237, 7237/0/0).
- 5.5.5 Uncertain anomalies were recorded in the northern part of Field CR1a.16, to the south of an area where ditches and unstratified prehistoric flints are recorded on the HER (HER 3830). Curvilinear and linear anomalies of a possible archaeological origin were identified in Fields CR1a.9, CR2a.5 and CR1a.19 if archaeological in nature, it is likely these anomalies relate to feature of a prehistoric or Roman date.
- 5.5.6 Geophysical anomalies indicative of former field boundaries and ridge and furrow cultivation have been identified across the study site. Those identified to the south of Site A.2 in Fields CR1a.10 and CR1a.11 and east of Site B in Fields CR1b.6 and CR1b.7 correspond with areas of ridge and furrow identified on HER (HER 2199/0/10, HER 5966/0/4 and HER 5966/0/1).
- 5.5.7 In Section 2 of the study site, to the south-east of Site E, in Field CR5a.25, numerous linear and curvilinear anomalies were recorded to the north of the Deserted Medieval Settlement of Barton Thorpe (HER 2682).
- 5.5.8 South of the A45 and Site E, a curvilinear anomaly in Field CR6.5 corresponds with cropmarks of a possible enclosure recorded on the HER (HER 3563/2/4), and near to a Roman settlement recorded on the HER (HER 3563/2). Additionally, an area of linear and curvilinear anomalies to the west of the BESS site in Field CR6.21 is likely to relate to prehistoric / Roman settlement activity, and corresponds with an area of unstratified prehistoric finds recorded in the HER (HER 6522/0/0).
- 5.5.9 Uncertain anomalies were also identified in Fields CR5a.6, CR5a.7, CR5a.12, CR5a.23, and CR6.18, which are also potentially caused by activity of a prehistoric or Roman date.
- 5.5.10 Evidence of ridge and furrow to the east of site E in Fields CR5a.4, CR5a.6, CR5a.14 is consistent with the Wilby Open Field System (HER 8310). Within the compound area west of Field CR5a.18, a possible square enclosure was also identified.
- 5.5.11 In Section 3, curvilinear and linear anomalies were identified in Field CR7.11, that extend into Field CR7.12 and Cr7.13, which correlate with undated cropmarks recorded in the HER (HER 5898).
- 5.5.12 To the south-east of the BESS site in Field CR7.7, ridge and furrow was recorded, corresponding to earthworks documented in the Open Fields Project (HER 6521/0/4).

- 5.5.13 To the west of Site G, a circular anomaly was identified in Field CR9a.6, that potentially indicates prehistoric activity. Within Field Cr9a.7, at the southern end of the study site linear anomalies of a possible archaeological origin were identified that may correlate with Iron Age and Roman features identified within the western extent of Site G.

5.6 LiDAR Interpretation

- 5.6.1 The Environment Agency's National LiDAR Programme data at 1m resolution was downloaded from the Defra Survey Data Download webpage and processed using GIS software (Figure 5, 9 and 12). In Section 1 of the study site, ridge and furrow with a north-south alignment is present on LiDAR data in Field CR1b.7 and corresponds with an area of ridge and furrow recorded on the HER (HER 5966/0/1). In Section 2 of the study site, depressions within the area of a historic lime kiln, as seen on old maps, are visible to the east of Site E in Field CR5a.9. In Section 3 of the study site, to the south-east of the BESS site, depressions marking former field boundaries and ridge and furrow align with HER records (HER 6521/0/4) in Fields CR7.6 to CR7.9.

5.7 Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 5.7.1 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Northamptonshire was completed in 2007 and provides a record of the historic character of the county for the year 2000 AD (Holmes 2007, 12). There are 77 individual HLC units mapped within the 250m search area, representing 9 of the 11 broad character types mapped across the county (*Civic; Communications; Enclosed Land (fieldscapes); Industrial Land; Orchards; Parkland and Gardens; Recreational; Settlement; Unenclosed Land; Water, and Woodland*).
- 5.7.2 Two HLC units were mapped within the study site as part of the Milton Keynes Historic Landscape Characterisation (MKHLC) project in 2004, all of which are of the 'Enclosure' Broad HLC Type.
- 5.7.3 There are 42 individual HLC units within, or partially within the study site, all but four of which are of the *Enclosed land* broad HLC type. The outliers include three *Communication* broad HLC type and one *Recreational* broad HLC type. Two of the *Communication* broad types are of the *20th century communication* primary type and the other is of the *Large modern fields* primary type. The *Recreational* broad type is of the *Modern Fields* primary type.
- 5.7.4 Of the *Enclosed land* broad HLC type, 14 units are of the *Earlier parliamentary enclosure* primary type, six are of the *Large modern fields* primary type, six are of the *Modern fields* primary type, four of the *19th century parliamentary enclosure* primary type, three of the *19th century non-parliamentary enclosure* primary type, two of the *Fragmentary parliamentary enclosure* primary type and one of the *Pre 19th century non parliamentary enclosure* primary type. The two units within Milton Keynes are of the *Enclosure (pre 18th Century Irregular)* primary type.

5.8 Prehistoric and Roman Periods (c. 9500 BC – c. AD 410)

- 5.8.1 Evidence obtained from the HER, NHLE, NRHE and PAS databases, as well as geophysical survey, has been used to identify seven concentrations of possible prehistoric or Roman

period remains within the study site. Where such remains have been identified, they presented as well-defined cropmarks or anomalies with strong patterning.

Section 1 (see Figure 2-3)

- 5.8.2 The Northamptonshire HER contains 22 records, and the PAS database contains four records for prehistoric or Roman period activity within Section 1 of the study site. There are five concentrations of potential features of a prehistoric or Roman date identified by the geophysical survey (ASWYAS, 2025).
- 5.8.3 Of the 22 HER records, 17 relate to an area of prehistoric settlement activity within the study site in Field CR1b.17, to the east of Site B (HER 5789). The features were seen on aerial photographs as cropmarks, consisting of enclosures and ditches and were also identified by the geophysical survey (ASWYAS 2025).
- 5.8.4 To the south of Site A in Field CR1a.12, evidence of prehistoric settlement activity was recorded, which included ditches and unstratified prehistoric flints (HER 3830).
- 5.8.5 At the northern end of the study site, to the south of Site A, linear and rectilinear geophysical anomalies indicative of enclosures were identified in Field CR1a.3 and CR1a.7, to the east of an area where Romano-British coins and brooches were recovered (HER 8924). Within the study site to the west of Sywell Wood in Fields CR2a.5 and CR2a.6, curvilinear geophysical anomalies were identified that correspond with a findspot of a Romano-British pottery scatter (HER 7237, 7237/0/0).
- 5.8.6 The Jurassic Way (HER 195, NRHE 1035203), runs across the search area following a band of Jurassic Limestone that forms the northern boundary of Northamptonshire. Dating from at least the early Bronze Age period, but potentially of an earlier Neolithic date, the ridgeway did not comprise a single defined track but was instead a broad set of routes following the line of the hills across the county. It is suggested that the track become clearly defined during the Iron Age period as a result of increased movement occurring between Yorkshire and Somerset. The precise location of the route within the search area remains uncertain. While the NRHE depicts the route running north-east to south-west through Site A, the HER suggests a similar orientation but places it further east, passing through the cable route and east of Site B. However, no associated archaeological activity or topographic feature has been identified through geophysical survey, LiDAR analysis, or existing mapping to confirm its exact location within the site.
- 5.8.7 Of the four PAS records discovered within the study site, two were found to the south of Kettering Road in Field CR1b.17. A Roman copper alloy barbarous radiate coin (PAS BUC-DD2FE2) and an Iron Age copper alloy ‘Thurrock’ type potin (PAS NARC-A6A128). Another two were found within the study site to the west of Sywell Wood, a worn sestertius possibly of Marcus Aurelius in Field CR2a.5 (PAS SUR-27EF25) and a sestertius of Crispina in Field CR2a.6 (PAS SUR-27D7C6).
- 5.8.8 Curvilinear anomalies of a possible archaeological origin were identified in Fields CR1a.9 and CR2a.5, and uncertain anomalies were recorded in the northern part of Field CR1a.16, to the south of ditches and unstratified prehistoric flints (HER 3830). If these

anomalies are of an archaeological nature is possible that they relate to feature of a prehistoric or Roman date. Linear anomalies were observed in Fields CR1a.19 and CR2a.6, the latter of which corresponds with a possible undated enclosure (HER 5886). To the north-west of Site C, linear and curvilinear anomalies, as well as further linear and rectilinear anomalies, were identified in Fields CR2a.6 and CR2a.7. Although their interpretation remains tentative, these uncertain anomalies may also relate to prehistoric or Roman activity.

- 5.8.9 Within the 250m search area, there are four HER records that date to the prehistoric or Roman period. The earliest evidence for prehistoric activity within the search area comprises the numerous worked flints that have been recovered during fieldwalking. These include twelve pieces of worked flint found within the west of Site C (HER 7902/0/0), which has been identified as a possible site of prehistoric activity (HER 7902). Archaeological remains comprising possible Iron Age enclosures and other features were identified within the north of Site C (HER 1524/0/1 and 1524/0/2).
- 5.8.10 There are 11 PAS records within the 250m search area, including an Iron Age harness fitting (PAS WAW-52F8F4) to the west of Sywell Wood. The remaining ten lie within the northern section of the cable route, to the south of Site A, and are of a Romano-British date. The finds recorded by the PAS in this area include five brooches, a stylus and 14 coins with date ranges from the 1st to 4th centuries (Trajan to Constantine II), indicating that there was settlement here throughout much of the Romano-British period.

Section 2 (see Figure 6-7)

- 5.8.11 The Northamptonshire HER contains four records of prehistoric or Roman period activity within Section 2 of the study site. Possible Iron Age and Roman settlement activity has been identified as cropmarks through aerial photography to the east of Grendon Road across Fields CR6.1, CR6.2, CR6.3, CR6.5 (HER 3563/2). A curvilinear anomaly was identified by geophysical survey in Field CR6.5.
- 5.8.12 Geophysical anomalies and cropmarks of an unknown date have been identified to the south of Earls Barton in Fields CR5a.25 and CR5a.26 (HER 5897/0/1), which are likely to be indicative of settlement activity. While the proximity to cropmarks related to the Barton Thorpe DMV to the south (HER 2682) may suggest these are of a medieval date, there form suggests an earlier late prehistoric or Roman date cannot be discounted.
- 5.8.13 There are two HER records of a prehistoric date to the east of Site E. These include unstratified Iron Age pottery found in Field CR5a.18 (HER 7354/0/0) and an area of Iron Age pits to the north in Fields CR5a.1 (HER 3864/0/2). Additionally, an area of likely prehistoric / Roman settlement activity was identified west of the BESS site in Field CR6.21, characterised by linear and curvilinear anomalies. This corresponds with an area of unstratified prehistoric finds recorded in the HER (HER 6522/0/0), 10m to the north of the study site.
- 5.8.14 A possible prehistoric round barrow (HER 3568/1/1) lies within the study site in Field CR6.18, to the west of the BESS site. The feature is recorded as a cropmark, 12m in

diameter on aerial photographs. The geophysical survey identified a curvilinear anomaly in this field, but the location was further east than the HER point indicates.

- 5.8.15 Uncertain anomalies were also recorded on the geophysical survey in Fields CR5a.6, CR5a.7, CR5a.12, CR5a.23, and CR6.18 that could relate to prehistoric or Roman activity.
- 5.8.16 Within the 250m search area, to the south of Site D, an area of Roman activity has been recorded within Mears Ashby (HER 6116), 140m to the south of the cable route, in close proximity to a probable Romano-British pottery manufacturing site (HER 1994/1/1), where unstratified Roman pottery was also discovered (HER 6116/0/0). The NRHE also contains two records, relating to a Roman poppy head beaker between Site D and Site E, 50m to the south of the cable route (NRHE 968644) as well as cropmarks and finds of Roman pottery, 130m to the east of the cable route, north-west of the BESS site, which indicated a possible settlement site (NRHE 345599). Possible prehistoric settlement, represented by enclosures and ditches (HER 5889), is recorded 35m to the east Fields CR5a.4 and CR5a.6. Adjacent to the study site, a possible prehistoric hut circle has also been identified to the north-east of Field CR5a.1 (HER 3864/0/1) and a flint scatter is located in Field CR5a.7 (HER 3878/0/0).
- 5.8.17 The HER contains 13 records within the wider search area dating to the prehistoric to Roman period. Four records are located to the west of the BESS site, including an unstratified Palaeolithic flake, 95m to the east of the study site (HER 3554/0/1), an unstratified prehistoric, tanged arrowhead, 270m to the south of the study site (HER 3570/0/0), a cropmark of a possible ditched trackway 90m to the south of the study site (HER 3569/0/1).
- 5.8.18 Seven records are located to the east of Site E and date to the prehistoric and Roman period, including a Neolithic/Bronze Age axe fragment, 245m to the west of the study site (HER 3866/0/1). Four records of cropmarks of enclosures and ditches of possible prehistoric date are located to the east of Field CR5a.4 (HER 5889), 140m to the east of the cable route (HER 3713), 215m to the west of the cable route (HER 3870) and 100m to the east of the cable route (HER 3557). The last of these (HER 3557) lies in close proximity to anomalies identified by the geophysical survey within Field CR5a.18. Additionally, a pipeline trench uncovered Iron Age pits and ditches (HER 3877/0/1, ENN9503), 215m to the west of the cable route. An unstratified Roman coin (HER 461/0/0) is located 30m to the north of the cable route along Doddington Road, on the outskirts of Earls Barton.
- 5.8.19 A further three records within the wider search area are located to the south of Site E, including Palaeolithic implements found in a gravel pit, 80m to the south of the cable route (HER 3564/0/1). Two records relate to cropmarks of possible prehistoric to Roman settlement activity, including enclosures, ditches, ring ditches, and trackways, 185m to the east of the study site (HER, 3545) and 175m to the west of the study site (HER 3567/0/0).

Section 3 (see Figure 10-11)

- 5.8.20 The Northamptonshire HER contains one record within Section 3 of the study site, which relates to cropmarks associated with possible prehistoric or Roman activity. Cropmarks of possible enclosures, ditches, and pits are recorded on the HER in Fields CR7.12 and Cr7.13

(HER 5898), geophysical survey has confirmed the presence of features as well as suggesting they extend further to the north in Field CR7.11. At the end of the cable route, to the west of Site G, a circular anomaly was identified in Field CR9a.6, potentially indicating a ring ditch or round barrow. Within Field Cr9a.7, linear anomalies were identified that may correlate with Iron Age and Roman features identified within the west of Site G (CFA 2025g).

- 5.8.21 Within the wider 250m search area, there are seven HER records dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods. Unstratified Roman pottery and a coin were found to the west of Grendon, 230m to the south-west of the study site (HER 3732/0/0). Cropmarks of a possible curvilinear enclosure and ditches were identified on aerial photographs, along with Roman pottery, adjacent to the study site, to the south of Grendon (HER 3296).
- 5.8.22 Within Site G, at the end of the cable route, there are five records relating to cropmarks of Iron Age trackways, enclosures, linears, and field boundaries (HER MMK8011, MMK7962, MMK8030, MMK8049, MMK8112).
- 5.8.23 The potential for prehistoric and Roman remains has been identified within the study site. In Section 1, areas of prehistoric and Roman activity have been identified in Fields CR1a.3, Cr1a.7, CR1a.12, CR1b.17, CR2a.5 and CR2a.6. Geophysical anomalies of an uncertain origin were also identified in Fields CR1a.16, CR1a.19, CR2a.6 and CR2a.7 which have the potential to be related to either prehistoric activity. Those in Fields CR1a.16 are located adjacent to the south of ditches and unstratified prehistoric flints (HER 3830) and those in CR2a.6, correspond with an undated enclosure (HER 5886) of likely prehistoric/Roman date. In Section 2, areas of prehistoric and Roman activity have been identified in Fields CR5a.1, CR5a.18, CR5a.25, CR5a.27, CR6.1, CR6.2, CR6.3, CR6.5, CR6.18, CR6.21. 5.8.13. Uncertain anomalies were also recorded on the geophysical survey in Fields CR5a.6, CR5a.7, CR5a.12 and CR5a.23 and could relate to prehistoric or Roman activity. Those in Fields CR5a.6 and CR5a.7 are located adjacent a possible prehistoric settlement (HER 5889). In Section 3, areas of prehistoric and Roman activity have been identified in Fields CR7.12 and Cr7.13, extending into Field CR7.11. Geophysical anomalies in CR9a.6 and CR9a.7 are of likely prehistoric or Roman date, and those in CR9a.7 may correlate with Iron Age and Roman features identified within the western extent of Site G.

5.9 Medieval Period (c. AD 410– c. 1540)

- 5.9.1 The majority of villages located in the vicinity of the study site are likely to have an early medieval origin as demonstrated by their etymology, which is of Old English origin (Watts, 2004), and many are documented in the Domesday Book of 1086. It is likely that villages grew and contracted during the medieval period as a result in changes in rural economies and associated agrarian administration systems. Earthworks associated with former medieval settlement activity survive at Easton Maudit, Barton Thorpe and Hannington.
- 5.9.2 The majority of the study site is likely to have been in agricultural use throughout the medieval period, as evidenced by ridge and furrow recorded on the HER. Geophysical survey has also identified extensive evidence of field systems across the study site indicating that potential buried archaeological features dating to the medieval period are

likely to primarily relate to agricultural activity, such as ridge and furrow, field boundaries and drainage.

Section 1 (see Figure 2-3)

- 5.9.3 There are four records within the study site. All of which relate to agricultural activity including three records of ridge and furrow (HER 2199/0/10, 5966/0/4 and HER 5966/0/5) in Fields Cr1a.10, CR1a.11, CR1b.3, CR1b.6 and Cr1b.7 and one record of medieval and post-medieval plough headlands (HER 5966/0/6) in Field CR1b.6. Earthworks related to ridge and furrow are present in Field CR1b.7. Further evidence of medieval agricultural activity has been identified by geophysical survey across the study site.
- 5.9.4 The village of Hannington is located 180m to the west of the study site, and the placename of the village means ‘farm/settlement connect to Hana’ (Watts 2004). An area of around two hectares (HER 3653) shows signs of a medieval settlement which appears to have consisted of enclosures or paddocks, formerly part of the village itself. Hannington was mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Survey, within the hundred of Orlingbury. The village had a recorded population of 7 households, putting it in the smallest 40% of settlements in Northamptonshire.
- 5.9.5 The HER contains an additional 10 records within the wider search area dating to the medieval period. Four records relate to earthworks of surviving ridge and furrow and medieval field boundaries (HER 8440/0/4, 8440/0/5, 2199, 2199/0/4). Additionally, there is a possible medieval moat 165m to the west of the cable route near Site C (HER 2001/0/1) and a possible medieval ditch and bank 20m to the west of the cable route near Site A (HER 3654/0/6).
- 5.9.6 **Section 2 (see Figure 6-7)**
- 5.9.7 The Northamptonshire HER contains three records within the study site dating to the medieval period, comprising an area of ridge and furrow within CR7.5 and two relating to a medieval pond and water management (HER 3483, 3483/0/1) in Fields CR3a.4 and CR3a.5. Further evidence of medieval agricultural activity has been identified by geophysical survey across the study site.
- 5.9.8 There are two PAS records within the wider 250m search area, to the east of Site E, a copper-alloy buckle (PAS BH-7F8CDE) and a cast lead alloy elliptical seal matrix (PAS NARC-750251).
- 5.9.9 The placename ‘Ashby’ is a common one, and means ‘Ash-tree farm’, the ‘by’ indicating that this is a placename with Norse origins. The Domesday Book records that at the time of the Norman Conquest Mears Ashby was part of a larger estate held by the Anglo-Saxon thegn Bondi which included Earls Barton, Great Doddington and Wilby (Callis 1991; Williams and Martin 1992, 619-620). Apart from the main two areas of medieval settlement at Mears Ashby and Earls Barton, the search area also contains parts of the medieval parishes of Wilby. The village of Wilby is located just beyond the western edge the search area, but a medieval settlement named Wilby Thorpe, is also referenced in 13th and 14th century documents, and ridge and furrow was discovered through the Wilby Open Field

System (HER 8310). The geophysical survey identified ridge and furrow in Fields CR5a.4 and CR5a.6 and further south in Fields CR5a.14 and CR5a.23, corresponding with the Wilby Open Field System.

- 5.9.10 The placename 'Grendon' derives from the Old English *grēne* and *dūn*, meaning: 'Green Hill' (Watts 2004), and this attests to the likely Anglo-Saxon origin of the settlement. Possible early medieval settlement evidence has been identified at one location within the village, c.100m to the east of the Church of St Mary at Hill Farm. The earliest documentary reference to Grendon is in the Domesday Book where it is listed under the lands of Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror. It is described as follows: '*In Grendon are 3 hides and one virgate of land. There is land for 9 ploughs. 12 sokeman have these 9 ploughs there and 3 mills rendering 3s., and 30 acres of meadow*' (Williams and Martin 1992, 620). It is possible that one of the Domesday mills recorded for *Bartone* (Earls Barton) might be located within the search area, c.100m to the east of the study site at Whitemills (HER 8792/1) on the River Nene, and similarly it is possible that one or more of the Grendon mills might have been located along this river.
- 5.9.11 Barton Thorpe DMV is located to the south of Site E (HER 2682). The DMV was identified by air photographs and possible mill buildings depicted on an 18th century map and includes numerous features such as boundary ditches and enclosures (HER 2682/0/2, 2682/0/5, 2682/0/8, 2682/0/7, 2682/0/11, 2682/0/4, 2682/0/13, 2682/0/9, 2682/0/10, 2682/0/15). Within Field CR5a.25, an area of linear and curvilinear anomalies was recorded on the geophysical survey which may in part be associated with medieval activity.

Section 3 (see Figure 10-11)

- 5.9.12 The Northamptonshire HER contains two records located within Section 3 of the study site dating to the medieval period. This includes blocks of ridge and furrow recorded by the Open Fields Project in 1995-99. One of which relates to ridge and furrow in Field CR7.9 (HER 6521/0/4) that survives as earthworks. Further earthworks of ridge and furrow are present in Fields CR7.6 to CR7.8 directly to the north of Field CR7.9. Geophysical survey has identified numerous areas of buried ridge and furrow across the study area. The Kettering to Newport Pagnell Turnpike toll road (MMK5884) lies within the study site, west of Site G. No associated remains have been identified by the geophysical survey.
- 5.9.13 Within the 250m search area, the site of medieval/post-medieval manor house and gardens in Easton Maudit also lies adjacent to the cable route (HER 1406/2/1).
- 5.9.14 The village of Easton Maudit had been established by the time of the Domesday survey in 1086, where William Peverel is recorded as holding 1½ virgates of land in *Estone*, described as 'waste', (Williams and Martin 1992, 610; 622). The placename *Estone* means 'East settlement' and may have been so named in relation to the settlements to the west at Whiston or Denton or Yardley Chase in general (Watts 2004). Fieldwalking in the area immediately to the east of the present village has identified stone rubble, traces of a road and 12th-14th century pottery (HER 1406/0/2), and to the west of the village further settlement remains survive as earthworks including a possible fishpond (HER 1406/0/2) and a hollow way (HER 1406/0/35) which may attest to the contraction of the medieval

village. Further settlement remains of possible medieval date have been identified as earthworks and/or cropmarks/soilmarks extending southwards from the village core along the western side of High Street.

- 5.9.15 The study site is situated outside any known medieval settlement focus and was likely used for agriculture throughout the period. HER data and geophysical surveys indicate extensive ridge and furrow cultivation, reinforcing the agricultural nature of the landscape. As a result, any surviving medieval remains within the site are expected to primarily relate to agricultural activity rather than settlement or industrial use.

5.10 Post-Medieval and Modern Periods (c. 1540-present)

- 5.10.1 Medieval settlements within the search area may have contracted in size from the 16th century, with areas of former settlement or associated plots transitioning to agricultural use. Earthworks associated with former medieval settlement activity survive at Easton Maudit, Barton Thorpe and Hannington. The study site runs through agricultural land in the hinterland of post-medieval settlements, as demonstrated by the agricultural features that have been detected by the geophysical survey and LiDAR data (ASWYAS, 2025).
- 5.10.2 The Castle Ashby Registered Park (NHLE 1000385, HER 3321) and Garden lies adjacent to the study site to the west of Grendon and was developed from the late 17th century, with major landscaping by Capability Brown in the 1760s–1770s. Originally designed to enhance the estate’s grandeur, it evolved from formal gardens to a naturalistic English landscape style. The northern reaches of Castle Ashby Park border the study site, including the Grade II Listed Station Lodge at the northern entrance to the park (NHLE 1294156, HER 3321/0/19), although the estate village of Castle Ashby itself and the majority of the park lie some distance to the south outside of the search area.
- 5.10.3 Several former trackways, likely providing access to post-medieval farmsteads, are shown to have formerly been located within the study site. In Section 1, the Ordnance Surveyor’s Drawing (OSD) for Kettering (1817) depicts a trackway leading from Kettering Road to a barn north of Site A.2 in Field CR1a.4 (refer to Site DBAs for reproduced maps). In Section 2, two former trackways leading to a Lime Kiln to the south of Site E are depicted on the Bryant’s map of 1825 leading from field CR5a.19. In Section 3, to the south of Site F, the Easton Maudit tithe map of 1840 shows a former trackway leading from A509 to a farmstead and woodland to the west in Field CR9a.5.
- 5.10.4 Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping from the 19th century illustrates the evolving landscape that the study site is located within, documenting the development and removal of field boundaries, ponds, and agricultural features. The 1885 OS map records ponds within Fields CR1a.1, CR1b.17, and CR5a.25, as well as buildings in Fields CR5a.26 and CR5a.27. These features are still extant on the 1900 OS map, with the addition of a building in Field CR5a.31 that is possibly related to gravel extraction. The 1926 OS map shows new ponds in Fields CR1a.19 and CR1a.20, alongside continued presence of ponds in CR1b.17 and CR5a.25. The ponds are still present on the 1958 OS map, along with buildings in Fields CR5a.26, CR5a.27, and CR5a.31, the latter of which had expanded.

- 5.10.5 By the 1975 OS map, the pond in CR1b.17 had been infilled and the building in CR5a.26 removed. A large gravel pit had been excavated within Field CR7.2, adjacent to the BESS site. The 1980 OS map shows broadly similar features, although by this time the A45 had been constructed to the south of Site E, crossing Fields CR6.1 and CR6.2, and the building in CR5a.27 had been demolished.
- 5.10.6 Within the study site, several post-medieval to modern roads cross the cable route. In Section 1 of the study site, the Northampton to Kettering Turnpike (HER 3803/2) runs north-east to south-west to the west of Sywell. In Section 2, the Wellingborough to Northampton Turnpike (HER 7381/1) and the Coventry to Peterborough Road Route (HER 622/1) run east to west to the south of Site E. While the London & North Western Railway (HER 6294/1) runs through the study site to the north of the BESS site. There is also a feature dating to the Second World War within the study site, in Section 1, a WWII search light (HER 7964/0/1) lies to the south of the A43 and Sywell Airfield (HER 8445/1) lies to the west of Site C. The HER records that a civilian airfield run by the Northamptonshire Flying Club was established to the north of Sywell in 1928 and extended in 1932. This became a military airfield during the Second World War but was closed in 1953 (HER 8445/1). Within Section 2, to the south of the BESS Site, extraction pits associated with quarrying lie with Field CR7.5 (HER 5896). These features form part of a broader pattern of mineral extraction linked to the geological resources of the Nene Valley, where extensive quarrying has been undertaken along the River Nene.

6 Assessment of Significance

6.1.1 Paragraph 5.9.10 of EN-1 and Paragraph 207 of the NPPF both state that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the archaeological asset, and that the level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.

6.1.2 It is recognised that not all parts of an archaeological asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain elements could accommodate change without affecting the significance of the asset. Change is only considered harmful if it erodes an asset's significance. Understanding the significance of any heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting (paragraph 207, NPPF December 2024) is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change.

6.2 Designated Heritage Assets

6.2.1 The study site does not contain any designated heritage assets upon which development could potentially have a direct impact.

6.2.2 A separate Heritage Statement has been produced to assess the potential non-direct (setting) impacts on designated heritage assets within the surrounding area from the proposed development.

6.3 Potential Sub-surface Archaeological Remains

Prehistoric and Roman Periods

6.3.1 The results of the non-intrusive surveys (LiDAR and geophysical survey) have identified concentrations of potential archaeological features that are likely to represent activity of a late prehistoric or Roman period date based on their morphology (ASWYAS, 2025).

6.3.2 Within the study site, south of Site A, linear and rectilinear geophysical anomalies indicative of enclosures were identified in Field CR1a.3 and CR1a.7, to the east of an area where Romano-British coins and brooches were recovered (HER 8924). Further to the south in Field CR1a.12, prehistoric flints and ditches, is recorded (HER 3830). Geophysical surveys to the west of Site A.2 identified anomalies likely to relate to prehistoric or Roman activity (ASWYAS, 2025). Further Iron Age settlement activity has been recorded east of Site B in Field CR1b.17 (HER 5789), where geophysical surveys revealed extensive linear and curvilinear anomalies, likely representing enclosures and possible trackways. While a Romano-British pottery scatter was identified in Fields CR2a.5 and CR2a.6 west of Sywell Wood (HER 7237, 7237/0/0), alongside linear and curvilinear anomalies detected in the geophysical survey.

6.3.3 Geophysical anomalies were identified in Fields CR1a.9, CR2a.5 and Field CR1a.16 that may indicate prehistoric or Roman activity. Linear anomalies are also present in Fields CR1a.19 and CR2a.6, the latter aligning with a possible undated enclosure (HER 5886). Linear, curvilinear, and rectilinear anomalies in CR2a.6 and CR2a.7 to the north-west of

Site C, also suggest potential prehistoric or Roman settlement, though interpretation remains tentative.

- 6.3.4 The Jurassic Way (HER 195, NRHE 1035203), a prehistoric routeway, follows the northern boundary of Northamptonshire. Its exact course is uncertain, with different sources mapping it through Site A or the cable route east of Site B.
- 6.3.5 Pottery finds and Iron Age pits are recorded on the HER to the east of Site E (HER 7354/0/0, 3864/0/2). An area of settlement activity was identified by the geophysical survey west of the BESS site aligning with an area of unstratified prehistoric finds (HER 6522/0/0) and a possible prehistoric round barrow, 12m in diameter, also lies west of the BESS site (HER 3568/1/1). Uncertain anomalies were recorded on the geophysical survey in Fields CR5a.6, CR5a.7, CR5a.12, CR5a.23, and CR6.18 that could relate to prehistoric or Roman activity.
- 6.3.6 To the west of Site F, circular and linear anomalies, likely representing enclosures and a possible ring ditch, were identified in Fields CR7.11 to CR7.13, which correlate with cropmarks of enclosures, ditches, and pits that are potentially of a prehistoric or Roman date (HER 5898). To the west of Site G, circular anomalies were identified in Field CR9a.6 and CR9a.7 that are possibly of a prehistoric or Roman date. Those in CR9a.7 potentially corresponding with Iron Age and Roman features recorded in the west of Site G (CFA 2025g).
- 6.3.7 If archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric or Roman periods are present in the study site, the significance of these would be vested in their evidential value and the potential contribution these could make to national and regional research agendas. There is, however, no evidence to suggest the presence of any remains of greater than local or regional significance.

Medieval Period

- 6.3.8 The only potential of early medieval or medieval settlement activity within the study site is within Field CR5a.25 where it is possible cropmarks and anomalies identified relate in part to the Baron Thorpe DMV (HER 2682), which is located to the south of the study site.
- 6.3.9 Documentary and archaeological evidence suggests that the present pattern of villages and hamlets within the search area broadly represents the pattern of Late Anglo-Saxon period settlement, and it is likely that the majority of the study site has remained in agricultural use since at least the medieval period. This is supported by geophysical survey and LiDAR interpretation, which have identified extensive evidence of ridge and furrow across the study site in Fields CR1a.10, CR1a.11, CR1b.3, CR1b.6, CR1b.7, CR7.5, CR7.8, and CR7.9 (HER 2199/0/10, 5966/0/4, 5966/0/5, and 6521/0/4), as well as a record of medieval and post-medieval plough headlands in CR1b.6 (HER 5966/0/6). Ridge and furrow earthworks survive in Fields CR1b.7 and CR7.6 to CR7.9 as low ridges, surviving in height to a maximum of only c.0.3m. No associated features such as headlands or gores were observed. As such, the earthwork remains of ridge and furrow in these fields is considered to be of no greater than local significance. Two further HER records (HER 3483 and 3483/0/1) in Fields CR3a.4 and CR3a.5 relate to medieval water management features.

While there is potential for buried archaeological features associated with medieval agricultural activity, such as ploughing, field boundaries, and drainage, these would be of negligible significance.

- 6.3.10 If archaeological remains associated with early medieval/medieval settlement activity are present in the study site, the significance of these would be vested in their evidential value and the potential contribution these could make to national and regional research agendas. There is, however, no evidence to suggest the presence of any remains of greater than local significance.

Post-Medieval Period

- 6.3.11 The study site has remained in primarily agricultural use throughout the post-medieval period as evidenced by historical maps and the geophysical survey, which detected anomalies of agricultural origin, comprising former field boundaries, ridge and furrow cultivation and modern ploughing. Across the majority of the study site, any potential buried archaeological features dating to the post-medieval period would likely relate to agricultural activity, such as ploughing, field boundaries, drainage and farm buildings, and would be considered to be of negligible significance.

7 Impact Assessment

7.1 Proposed Development

- 7.1.1 The proposed development forms part of the wider Green Hill Solar Farm Scheme which consists of a series of Solar Arrays within Green Hill A, A.2, B, C, D, E, F and G, a BESS, two 400kV substations and a number of 132kV and 33kV substations.
- 7.1.2 The Cable Route Corridor will accommodate the underground cables (or ‘cable circuits’) linking the Green Hill Solar Sites to the BESS site and subsequently connecting to grid connection point at the extant Grendon Substation. The majority of the land within the corridor is agricultural land. Other land use types that the corridor crosses include the River Nene between Earls Barton and Whiston.
- 7.1.3 Works within the Cable Route Corridor, as well as the cable circuits, include the provision of access tracks, construction laydown areas (construction compounds) and joint bays.

7.2 Previous Impacts

- 7.2.1 The majority of the study site has been subject to post-medieval and modern agricultural activity, and it is probable that there will have been truncation and/or destruction of shallowly buried archaeological remains as a result, although the geophysical surveys and evidence from cropmarks has confirmed that more deeply cut features do survive.
- 7.2.2 Several roads appear to have truncated archaeological remains, and at least two roads appear to have been rerouted during the post-medieval period. Quarrying activity, particularly to the south of the BESS Site and along the River Nene, will also have impacted archaeological remains.

7.3 Designated Heritage Assets

- 7.3.1 The proposed development will have no direct impacts upon any designated heritage assets.
- 7.3.2 A separate Heritage Statement has been produced to assess the potential impacts non-direct impacts on heritage from the proposed development within the surrounding area.

7.4 Potential Sub-surface Archaeological Remains

- 7.4.1 The assessment has established that there may be potential for the survival of buried remains dated to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval periods within specific areas of the study site that could be impacted by the proposed development.
- 7.4.2 A full impact assessment will be included in the Environmental Statement (ES) on the basis of maximum design parameters of the scheme.

7.5 Surface Archaeological Remains

- 7.5.1 Although there are preserved earthwork remains of ridge and furrow within Fields CR1b.7, CR7.6 to CR7.9, while there would be localised impacts where the route of the cable is proposed, the overall legibility of the ridge and furrow would not be significantly affected.

- 7.5.2 A full impact assessment will be included in the Environmental Statement (ES) on the basis of maximum design parameters of the Scheme.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1.1 This archaeological desk-based assessment draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information, together with the results of a geophysical survey, and detailed LiDAR interpretation, in order to clarify the significance and archaeological potential of a site proposed for development at the Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route.
- 8.1.2 This assessment addresses the information requirements set out in the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) and provides the proportionate response sought by the NPSs. It draws together the available archaeological, historical, topographic and land-use information in order to clarify the significance and archaeological potential of the study site.
- 8.1.3 A separate Heritage Statement has been produced to assess the potential non-direct impacts on heritage assets within the surrounding area from the proposed development.
- 8.1.4 The available archaeological records and results of the geophysical survey and LiDAR data suggests that there is potential for the survival of prehistoric and Roman remains within the study site.
- 8.1.5 Documentary and archaeological evidence suggests that the present pattern of villages and hamlets within the search area broadly represents the pattern of Late Anglo-Saxon period settlement. Where the cable route is situated within the vicinity of former medieval villages, it is considered that there may be some limited potential for the survival of previously unrecorded remains relating to early medieval and medieval activity, in particular where the corridor runs in close proximity to the DMV of Barton Thorpe.
- 8.1.6 It is likely that the majority of the study site has primarily been in agricultural use since at least the medieval period, supported by evidence of extensive areas of ridge and furrow that have been recorded by the HER and mapped as geophysical anomalies, and through LiDAR interpretation. Areas of poorly preserved earthwork remains of ridge and furrow ploughing have been identified within Fields CR1b.7, CR7.6 to CR7.9, but it is considered that they are of no greater than local significance. Although there is potential for the survival of sub-surface features relating to medieval and post-medieval agriculture across the site, including ploughing and former field boundaries which could be impacted by the proposed development, it is considered that such remains would be of negligible significance.

9 References

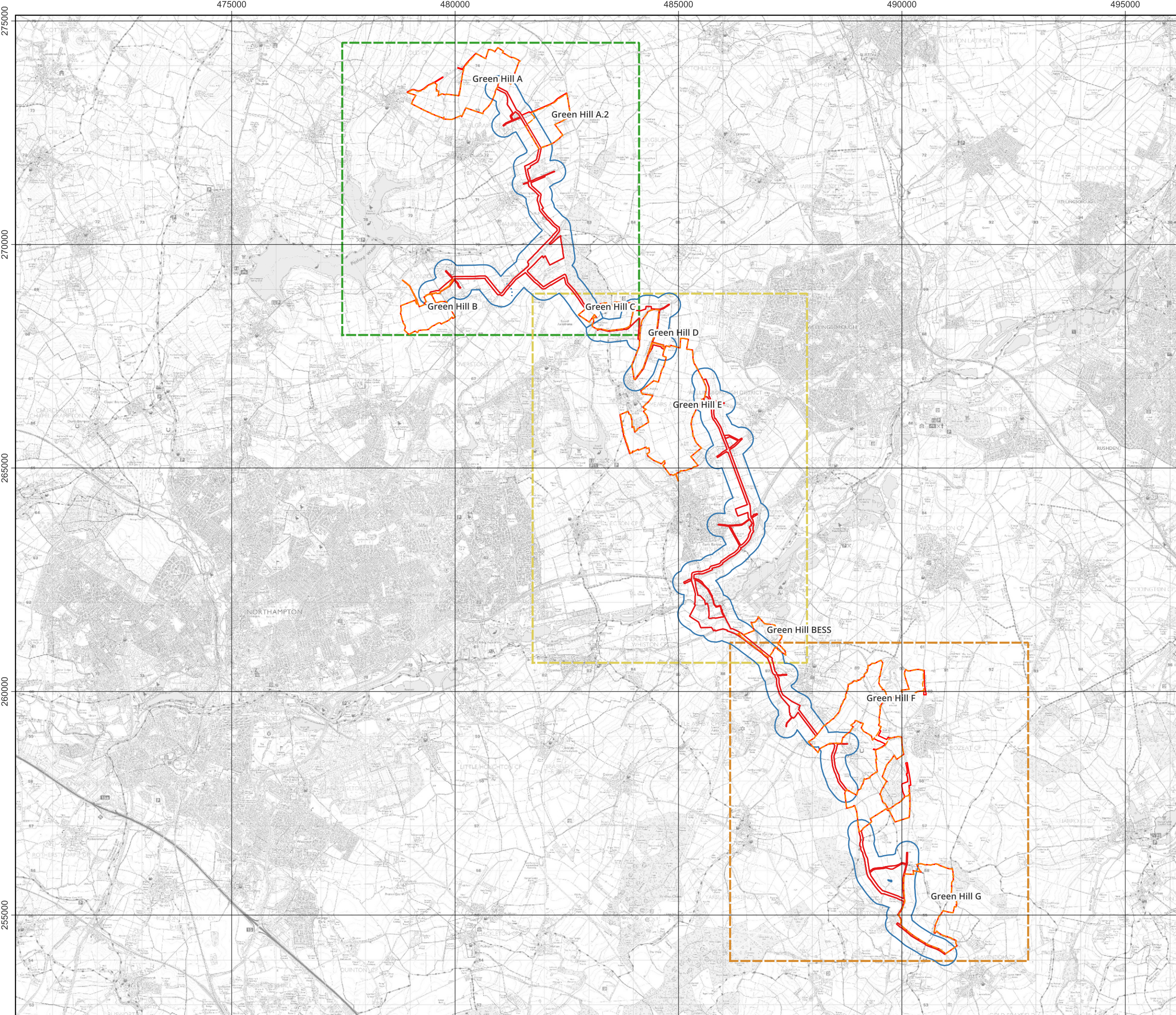
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Figures



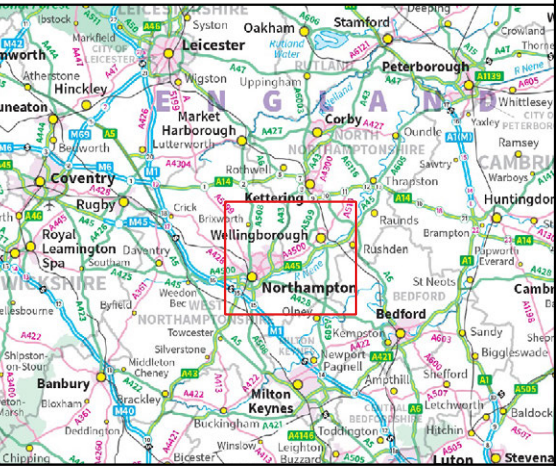
Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 1. The Green Hill Cable Route Corridor
study site and search area

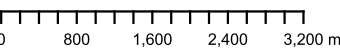
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 - Search Area (250m)
 - Proposed Solar site
 - Section 1
 - Section 2
 - Section 3

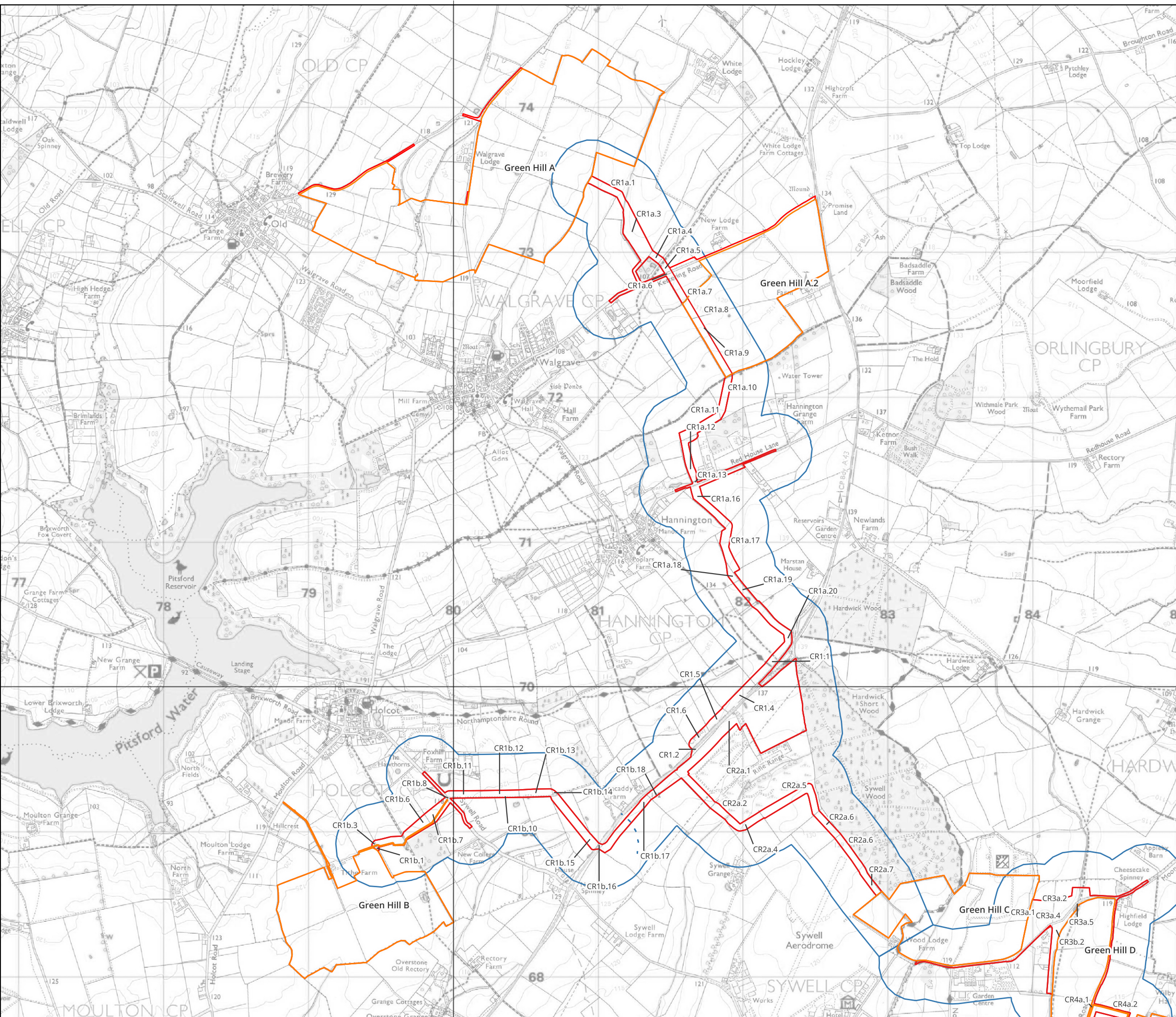
Data: © Northamptonshire Archives & Heritage Service, 2025; Lanpro, 2025; IGP, 2025
Base Maps: © Crown copyright and database rights 2025. Ordnance Survey



Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

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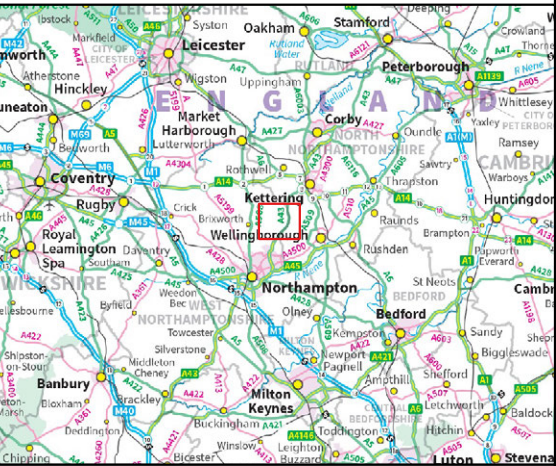
**Green Hill Solar Farm
Cable Route Corridor**

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 1.1 The Green Hill Cable Route Corridor
study site and search area

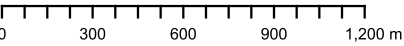
- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area (250m)
 - Proposed Solar site

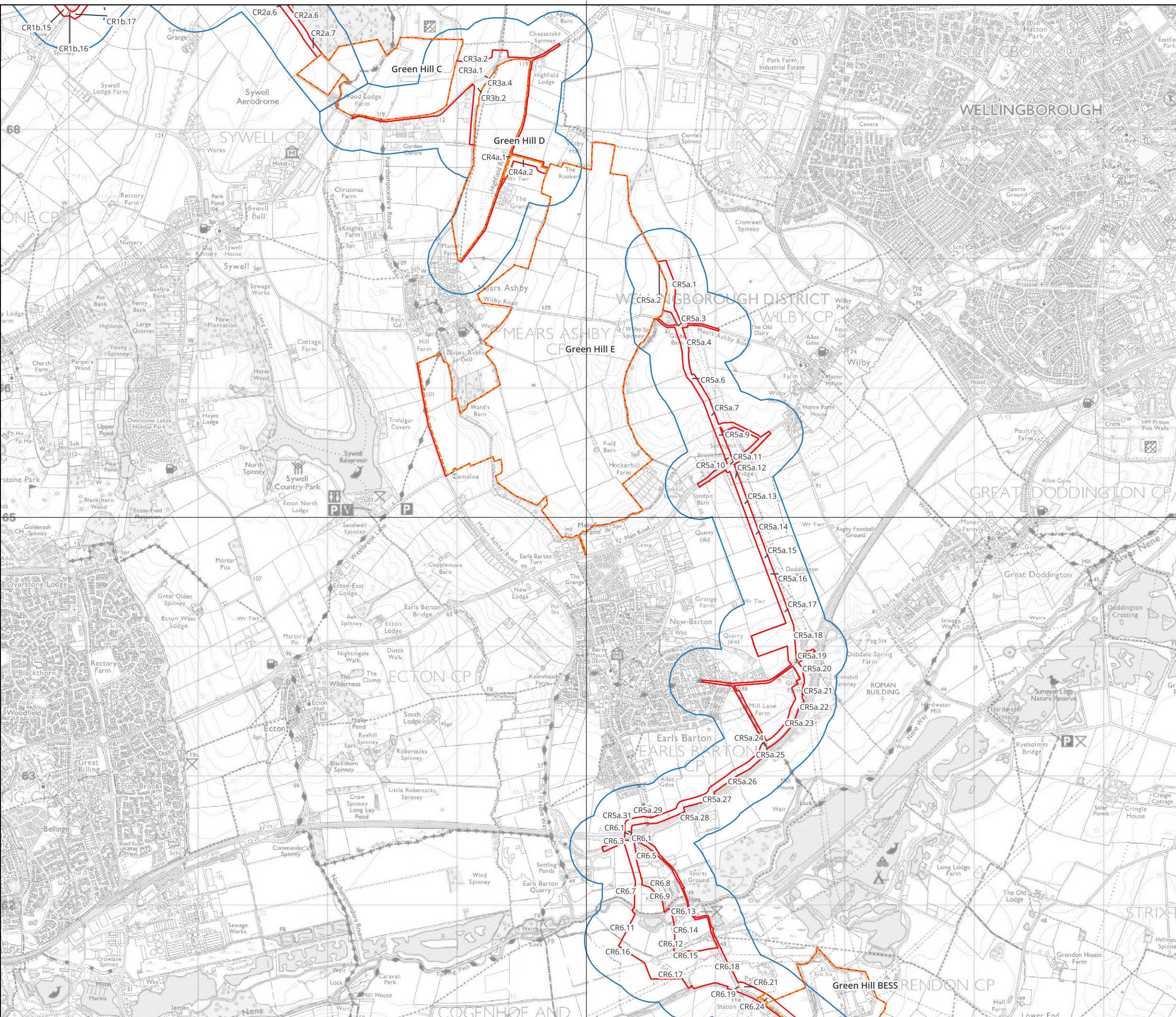
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Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:25000 @ A3





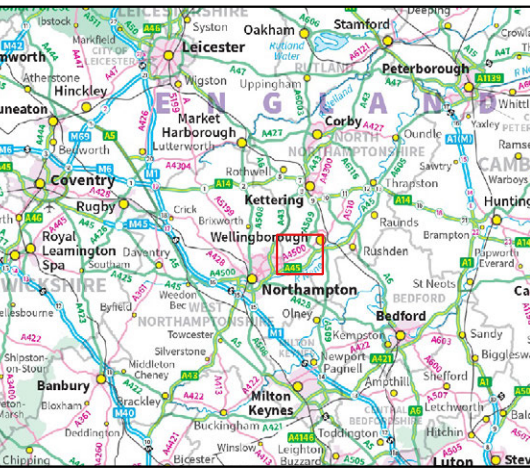
Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 1.2 The Green Hill Cable Route Corridor
study site and search area

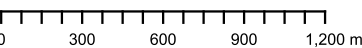
- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area (250m)
 - Proposed Solar site

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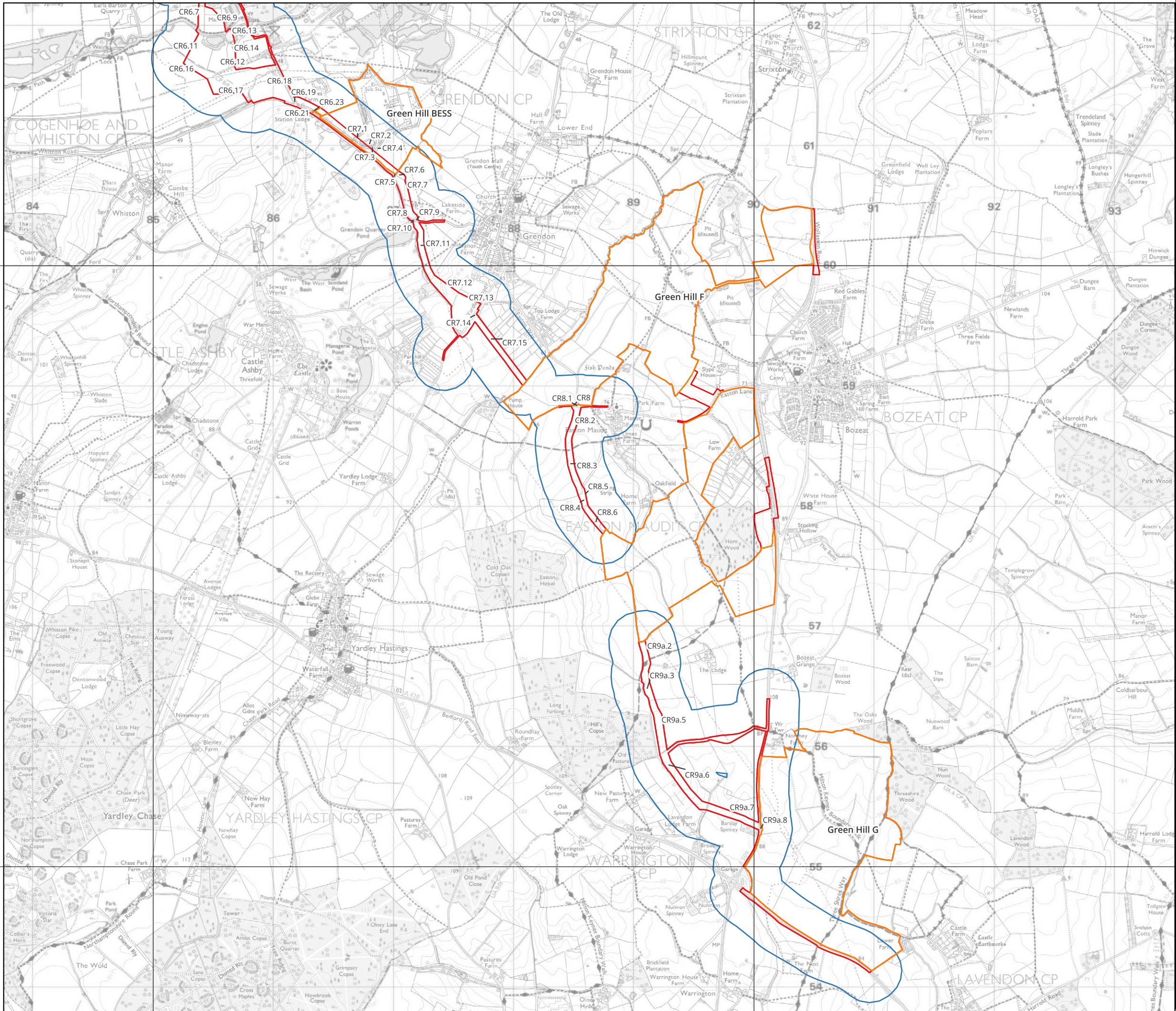
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Scale: 1:28000 @ A3



485000

490000



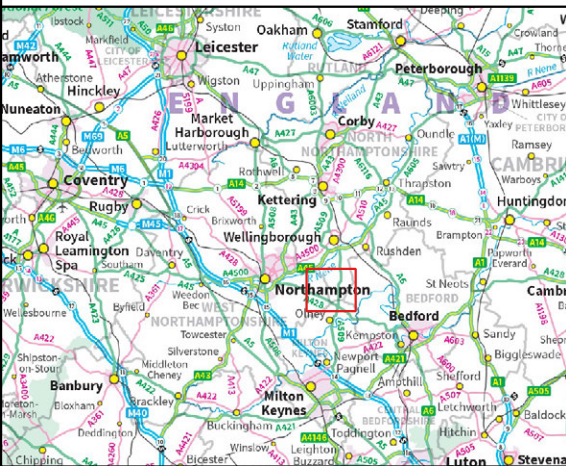
Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 1.3 The Green Hill Cable Route Corridor
study site and search area

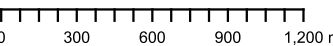
- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area (250m)
 - Proposed Solar site

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Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:30000 @ A3



Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 2. Section 1 of the study site with the
location of NRHE and HER 'monument' records

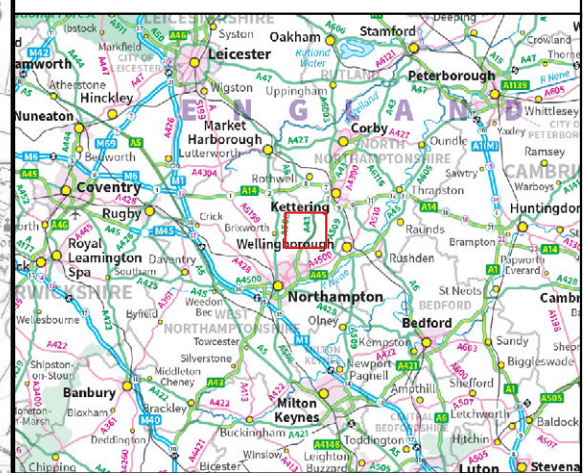
Legend:

- Study site
- Search Area
- Proposed Solar site
- HER 'monument' point
- HER 'monument' line
- HER 'monument' area
- NRHE 'monument' point
- NRHE 'monument' line
- NRHE 'monument' area

PAS records

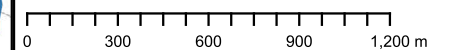
- IRON AGE
- ROMAN
- MEDIEVAL
- POST MEDIEVAL

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Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:25000 @ A3



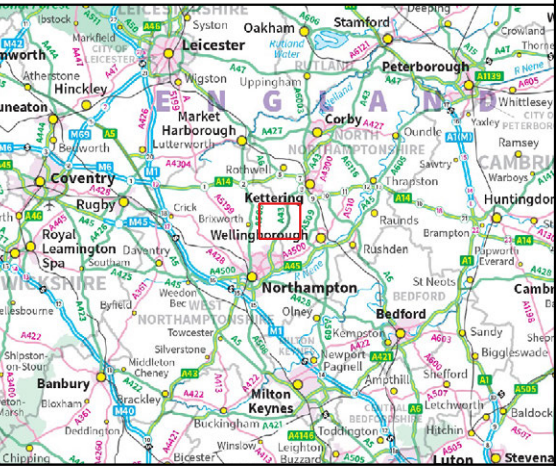
Green Hill Solar Farm
Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title:
Figure 3. Section 1 of the study site with the
location of NRHE and HER 'event' records

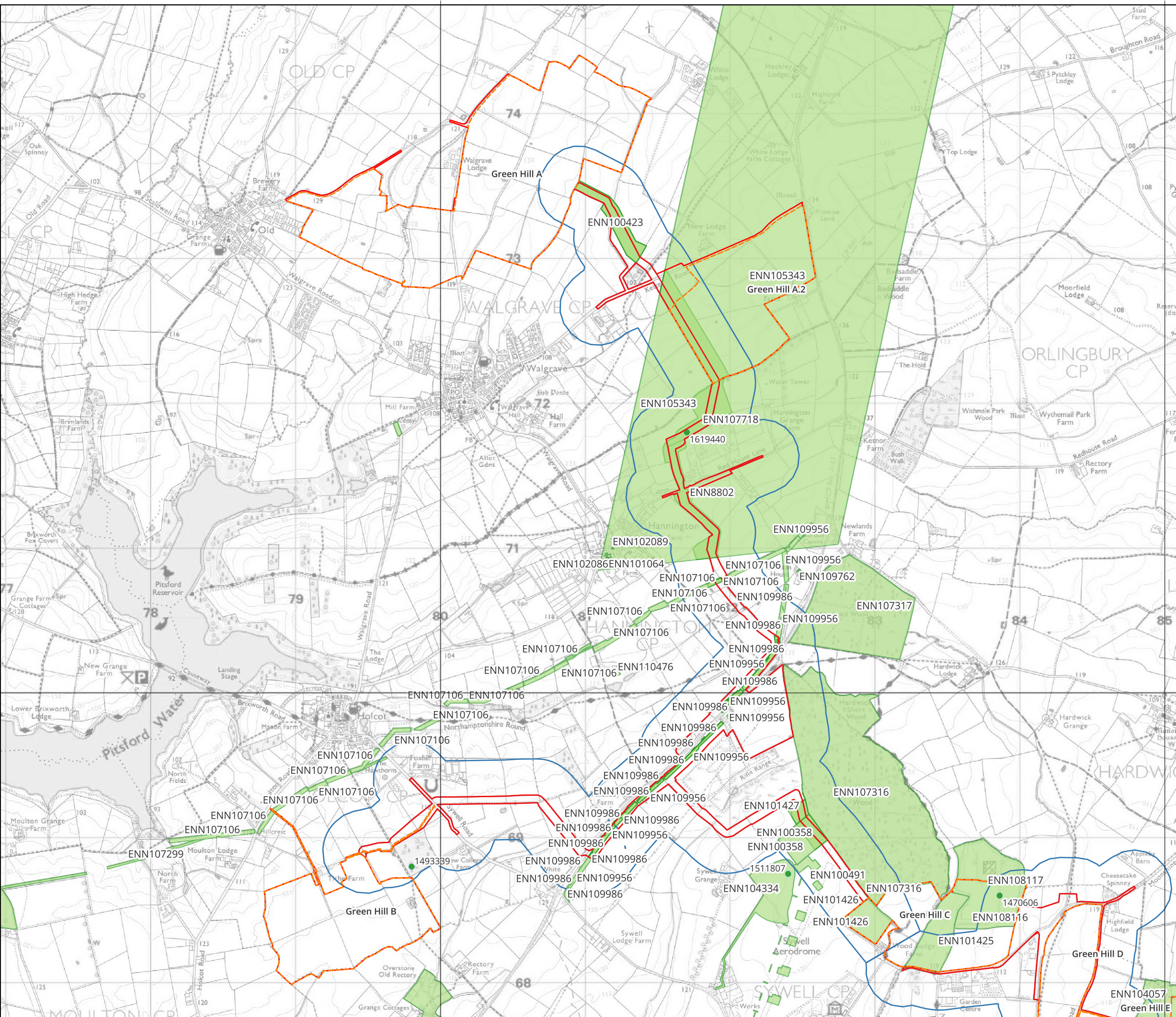
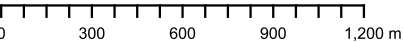
- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area
 - Proposed Solar site
 - HER 'event' point
 - HER 'event' line
 - HER 'event' area
 - NRHE 'event' point

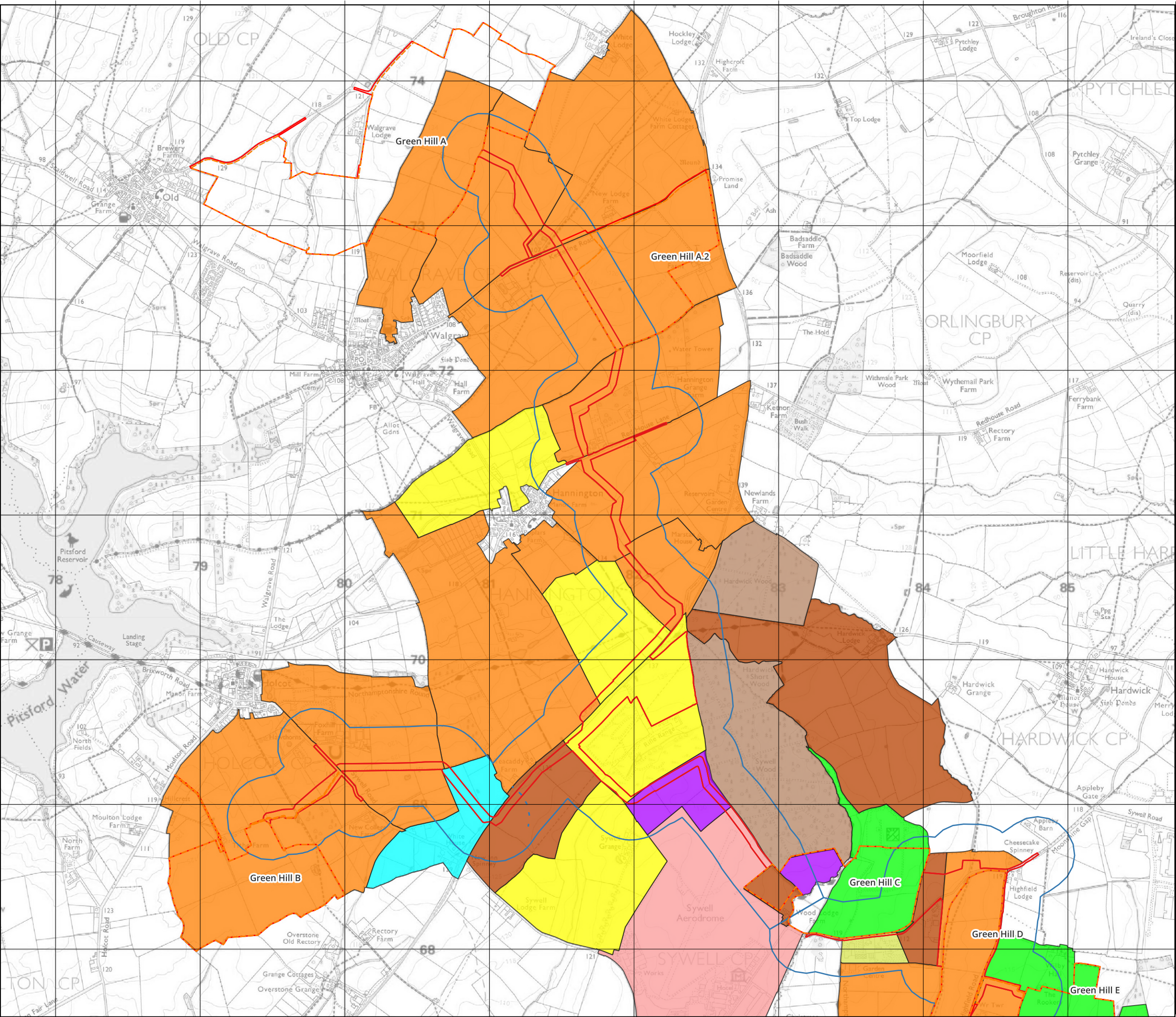
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Green Hill Solar Farm Cable Route Corridor

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

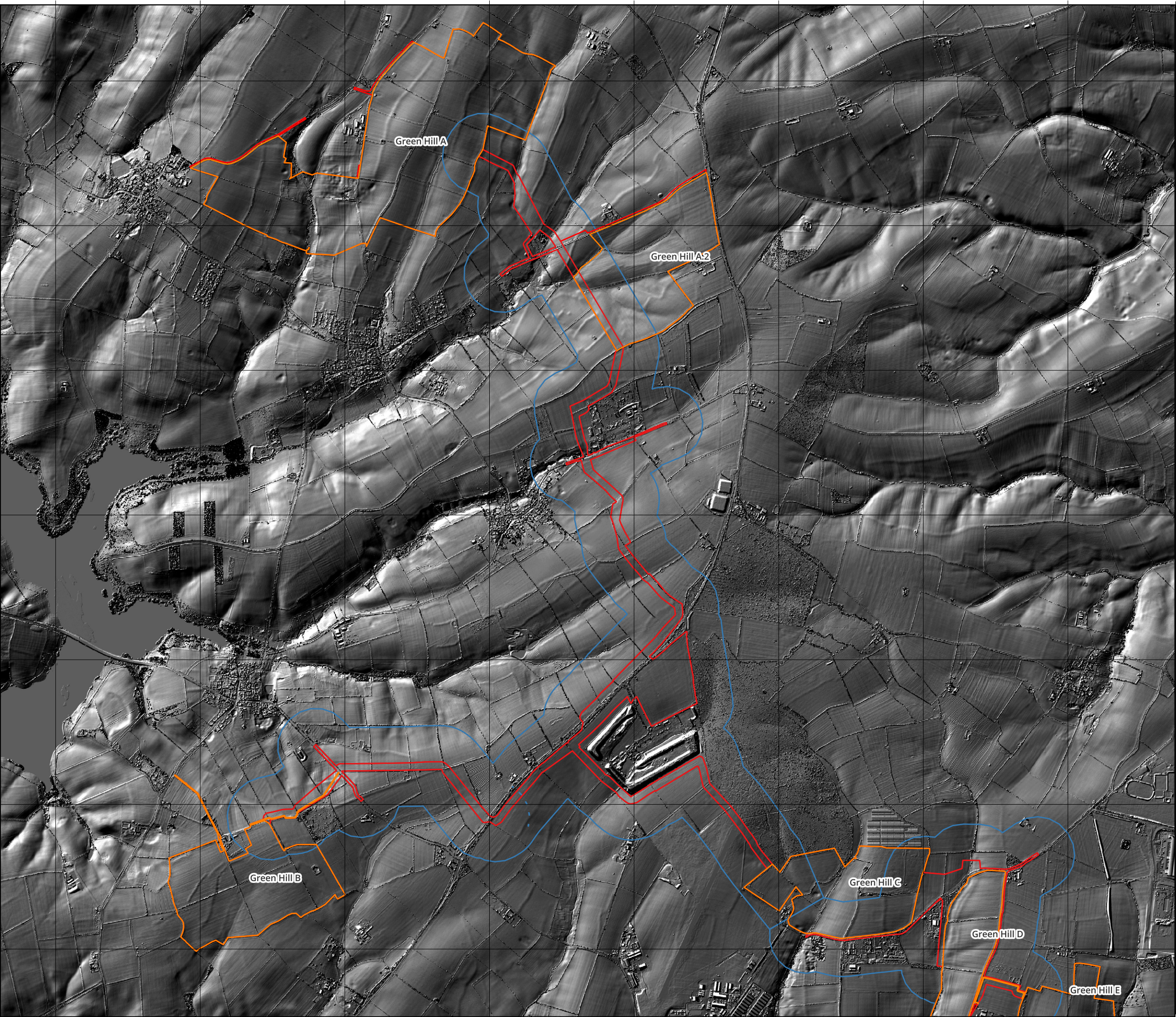
Title:
Figure 4. Section 1 of the study site with the Northamptonshire HLC 'broad types'

Legend:

- Study site
- Search Area
- Proposed Solar site
- HLC
 - Settlement
 - Earlier parliamentary enclosure
 - Large modern fields
 - Modern fields
 - Pre 19th century non parliamentary enclosure
 - Ancient Woodland
 - 20th century communication
 - 19th century parliamentary enclosure

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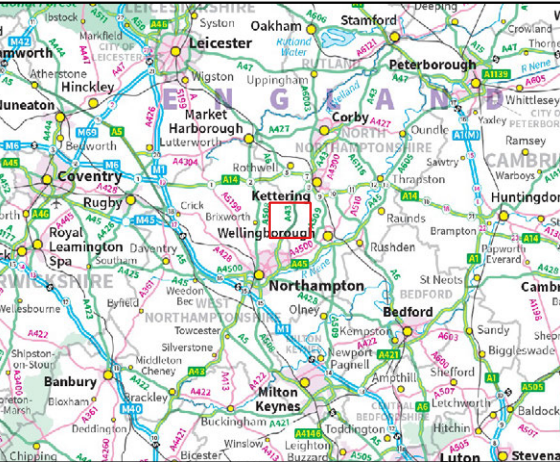
**Green Hill Solar Farm
Cable Route Corridor**

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title: Figure 5. Section 1 of the study site with
Environment Agency National LIDAR Programme
Digital Surface Model (DSM) data

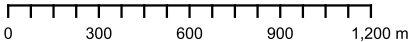
- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area
 - Proposed Solar site

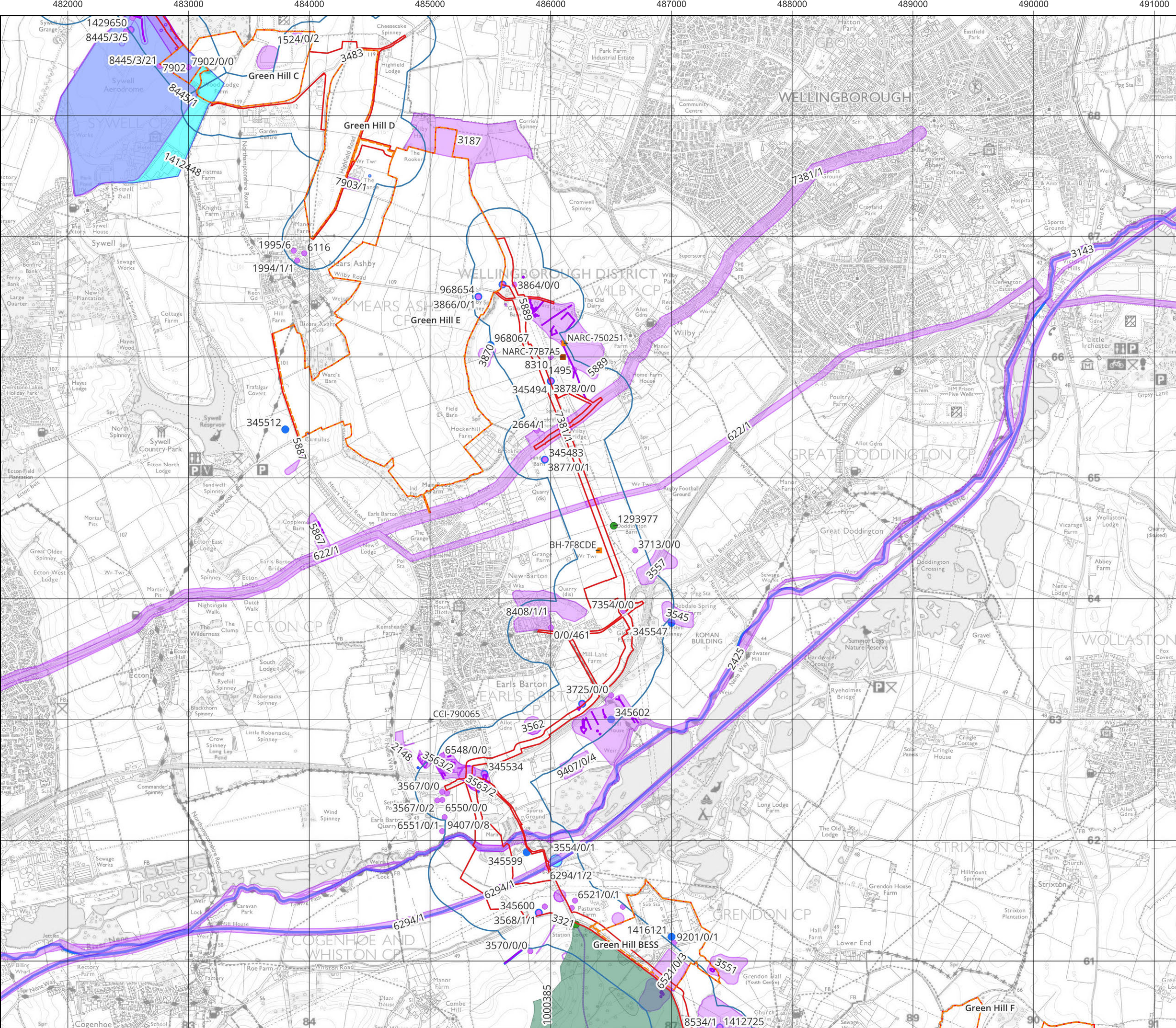
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Scale: 1:25000 @ A3





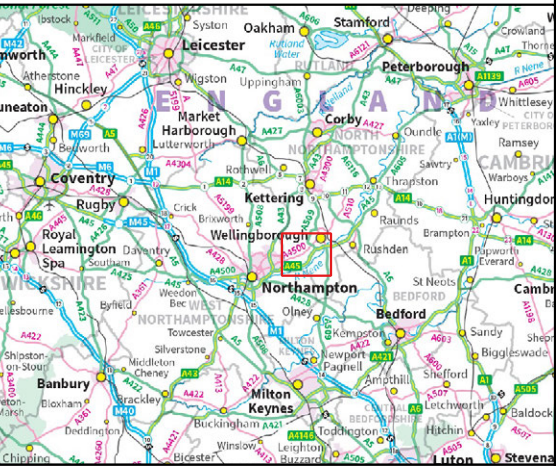
**Green Hill Solar Farm
Cable Route Corridor**

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Title: Figure 6. Section 2 of the study site with the location of NHLE, NRHE and HER 'monument' records

- Legend:
- Study site
 - Search Area
 - Proposed Solar site
 - HER 'monument' point
 - HER 'monument' line
 - HER 'monument' area
 - NRHE 'monument' point
 - NRHE 'monument' line
 - NRHE 'monument' area
 - Registered Park and Garden
- Listed Buildings
- II
- PAS records
- MEDIEVAL
 - POST MEDIEVAL

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Co-ordinate system: OSGB36 / British National Grid

Scale: 1:30000 @ A3

