

**Land at Longbridge  
Warwick  
Warwickshire**  
Centred on NGR: SP 274 631

**A  
Heritage Assessment,  
Archaeological Baseline Study,  
&  
Heritage Impact Statement**

**Text**  
Richard K Morriss *MA(Hons) MSocSc*  
**Assistants**  
R Little

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*Summary*

*Proposals have been made to redevelop land to the south of the main sewage works to the south of Warwick, close to the M40. This study was commissioned by Severn Trent plc to cover several aspects of the heritage issues involved – including a baseline archaeological assessment of the site, a heritage assessment of the site, and an outline heritage impact assessment of the proposals for development. Its overall conclusions are that the impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the study area will be negligible but that further information on the site's archaeological potential is desirable.*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 General**

Proposals have been made for some development of the land to the south of the main sewage works in /longbridge, south of Warwick town centre. In 2010 the then government replaced the existing *Planning Policy Guidelines Nos.15 and 16* (PPG15 and PPG16) with a combined *Planning Policy Statement No.5* (PPS5). This reiterated the fact that it is the responsibility of owners to understand the value of each 'heritage asset' and to produce sufficient relevant information to inform the planning making process about any impact that their proposals could have upon them. Two years later, PPS5 was in turn replaced by the next government's *National Planning Policy Framework*.

This consultancy was commissioned to produce an assessment on the possible impact of the proposals on the designated and non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity. This report is not concerned with other planning issues.

The report is divided into several sections that, in essence, involve base line information gathering in terms of documentary history and description followed by the potential heritage impact of the outline proposals.

The work was undertaken in December 2014 and carried out in the public realm with no access onto private land other than by way of public rights of way.



# Land at Longbridge Warwick Warwickshire

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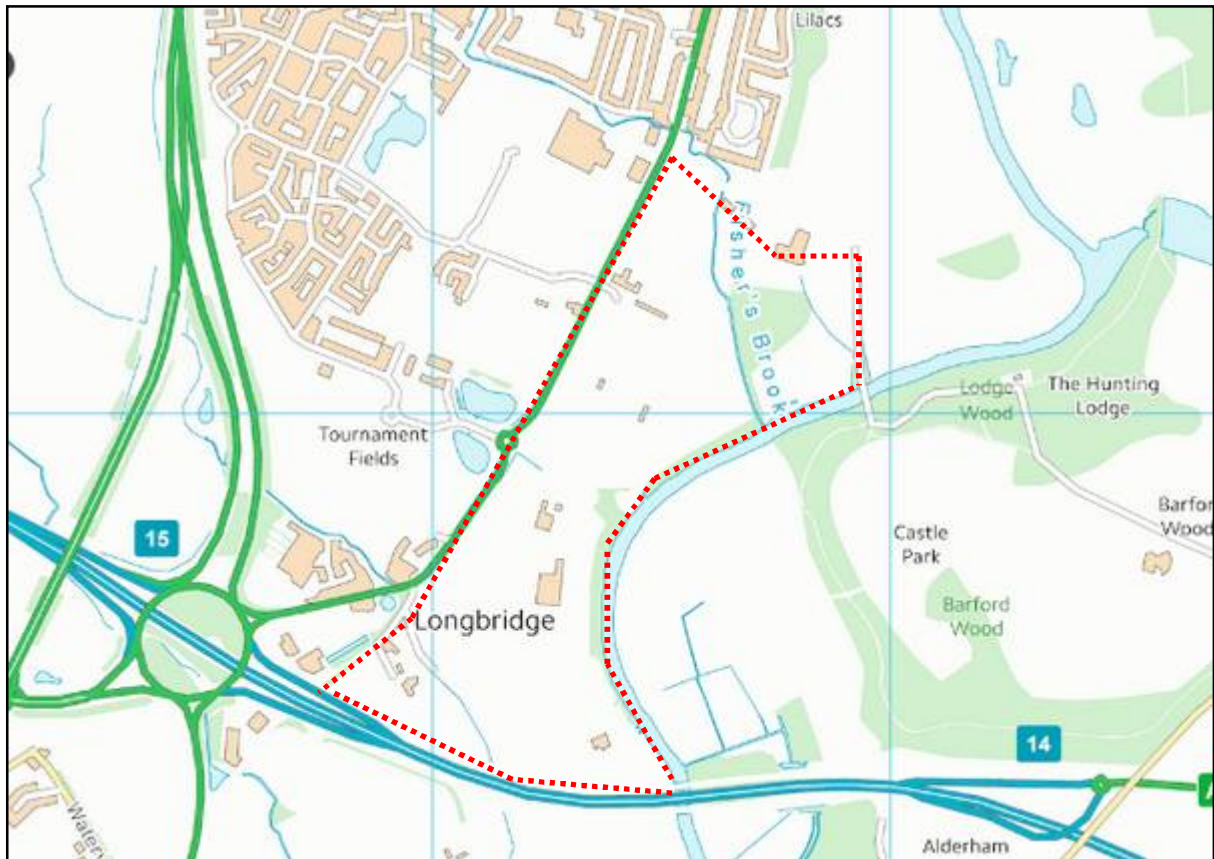


Fig.1: Location plan.

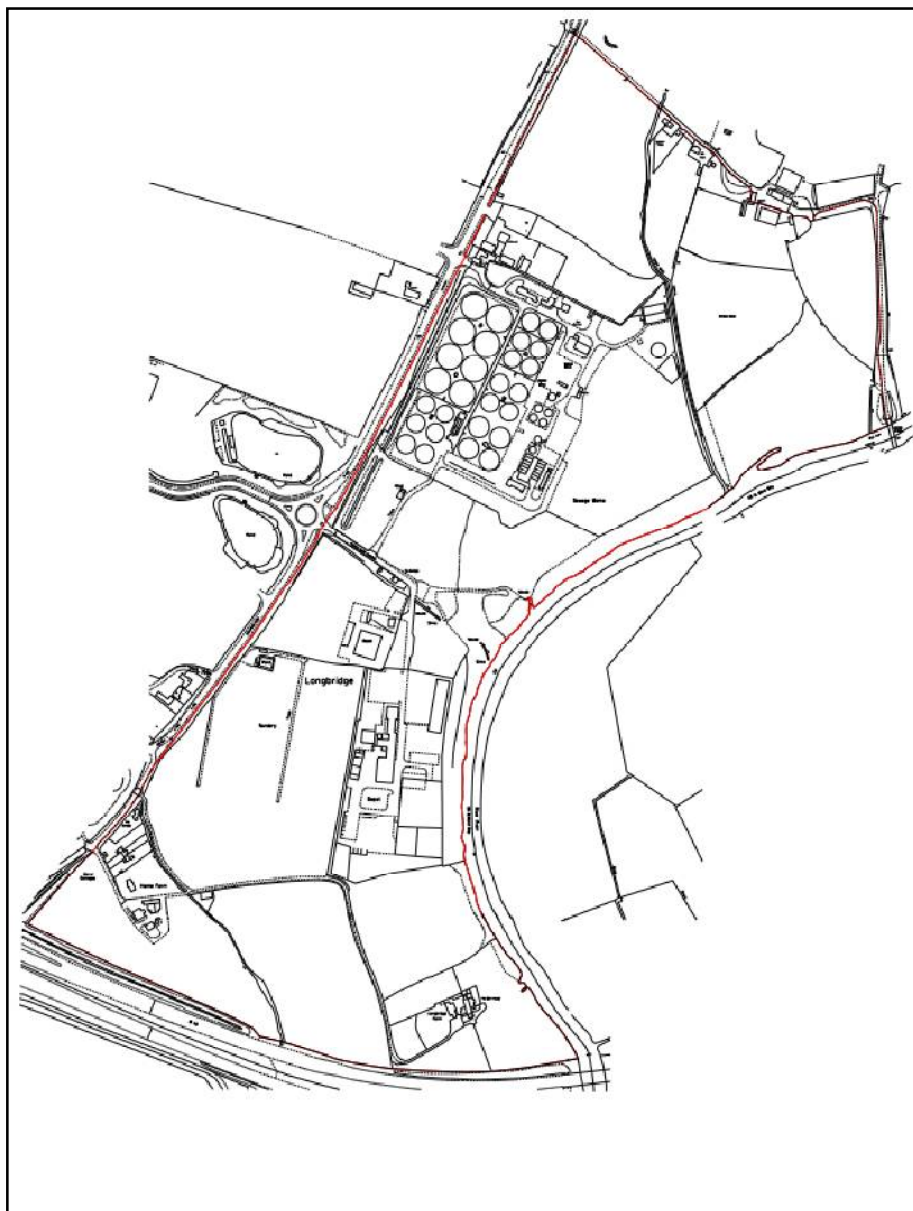


Fig.2: The parameters of the study area.

## 2. Planning Guidance

### 2.1 National Planning Policy Framework Guidelines

Government guidelines regarding listed buildings and conservation areas have changed twice in two years. In March 2010 the long-lasting *Planning Policy Guidelines Nos.15 and 16* (PPG15 and PPG16) – relating respectively to archaeology and buildings – were amalgamated into a new set of guidelines - *Planning Policy Statement No.5* (PPS5).<sup>1</sup> This introduced a new term in planning legislation – the ‘heritage asset’. This was identified in the guidance as:

*‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment’.*<sup>2</sup>

Parts of PPS5 were incorporated and regurgitated into a new *précis* of planning guidance published in March 2012 – the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) – which replaced all other separate Planning Policy Guidelines and Planning Policy Statements.<sup>3</sup> Because of the generalised nature of the new document there has been considerable confusion as to the guidance within it, but in essence, excepting the over-arching concept of presumption in favour of ‘sustainable development’, the heritage aspects have changed little.

Much of the existing advice outlined in the earlier guidelines is still deemed to be of relevance and this is summarised best in a guidance note to planning inspectors issued by the Planning Inspectorate, which states that *‘The Framework [i.e. the NPPF] largely carries forward existing planning policies and protections in a significantly more streamlined and accessible form’*.<sup>4</sup> The main relevant paragraph in the NPPF (largely based on policies HE6-HE8 of PPS5) states that local planning authorities should require applicants:

*‘...to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance’.*<sup>5</sup>

The *National Planning Policy Framework*, as a general rule, recommends approval of development unless *‘any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits’*.<sup>6</sup>

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1. Department for Communities & Local Government, 2010, *Planning Policy Statement No.5: Planning for the Historic Environment*

2. *op. cit.*, 13, Annex 2

3. Department for Communities & Local Government, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, para. 128.

4. The Planning Inspectorate, 2012, *Advice Produced by the Planning Inspectorate for use by Inspectors*

5. *Ibid.*

6. NPPF, para. 14

### 3. Heritage Impact Assessments

#### 3.1 General Introduction

The purpose of a heritage impact assessment (HIA) is to meet the relevant guidance given in the NPPF. This outlines the need to inform the planning decisions when considering proposals that have the potential to have some impact on the character or setting of a heritage asset. It is not concerned with other planning issues.

The nature of the heritage assets and the potential impact upon them through development are both very varied. The heritage assets include both designated heritage assets – such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation area – and non-designated heritage assets, a rather uncomfortable and sometimes subjective category that includes locally listed buildings, field systems and views.

The degree of impact a proposed development could have on such assets is variable and can sometimes be positive rather than negative. The wide range of possible impacts can include loss of historic fabric, loss of historic character, damage to historic setting, and damage to significant views.

Under the requirements of the NPPF, the still current advice in the notes that accompanied PPS5, and of other useful relevant guidance, such as English Heritage's *Conservation Principles* and *Informed Conservation*, it is necessary to assess the significance of the designated and non-designated heritage assets involved, to understand the nature and extent of the proposed developments, and then to make an objective judgement on the impact that the proposals may have.<sup>7</sup>

This heritage impact assessment portions of this report are designed, under the guidance of the NPPF, to assess whether the proposed development will have any impact on the *setting* of these heritage assets and, if so, the degree of such impact. In particular, it is designed to test whether or not any would suffer undue harm to the setting of these heritage assets as outlined in the NPPF.

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7. English Heritage, 2008, *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*; Clark, K, 2001, *Informed Conservation: Understanding Historic Buildings and Their Landscapes for Conservation*

### 3.2 Definition of Setting

The latest English Heritage guidance on the setting of heritage assets points out that:

*‘Setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of a heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes, pertaining to the heritage asset’s surroundings’.*<sup>8</sup>

Setting, as a concept, was clearly defined in PPS5 and in the accompanying Guidance notes which state:

*‘Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. 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’.*<sup>9</sup>

The same guidance states that setting is not confined entirely to visible elements and views but includes other aspects including environmental considerations and historical relationships between assets:

*‘The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by references to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration; by spatial associations and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places’.*<sup>10</sup>

### 3.3 Definition of Significance

In the glossary of the recently issued (March 2014) new *Planning Practice Guidance* to the NPPF, significance is defined as:

*‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.*

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8. English Heritage, 2011, *The Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance*, 7, para. 2.4

9. PPG Guidance para.113

10. *Op. cit.*, para.114



### 3.4 Definition of Harm

Whilst there is no strict definition of what constitutes harm in the NPPF, it has been defined in case law. Specifically, the manner in which the significance of a heritage asset could be harmed was summarised in the case of *Bedford Borough Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*, [2012] EWHC 4344 (Admin)(also known as Podington):

*‘Significance may be harmed through alteration of the asset, i.e. physical harm, or development within its setting, i.e. non-physical or indirect harm. Significance may be lost through destruction of the asset, or, in a very extreme case, development within its setting’.*

The NPPF and its accompanying Planning Practice Guidance effectively distinguish between two degrees of harm to heritage assets – *substantial* and *less than substantial*. Substantial harm is considered to be a degree of harm so serious to the significance of the heritage asset, usually involving total or partial destruction of a listed building, for example.

As the term suggests, *less than substantial harm* is not as serious and varies in its impact – but it still is an important consideration in assessing planning applications. In the Podington case the issue related to the impact on the setting of heritage assets and it was concluded that:

*‘In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced’.*

## 4. Setting & Outline History

Longbridge lies on the western edge of the historic county town of Warwick and, whilst until recently quite separate from it is now effectively a growing suburb, with new housing estates linking the historic core with the eastern edge of the former hamlet.

### 4.1 Warwick

Warwick, county town of leafy Warwickshire, lies in the heart of England but ironically, only seems to have achieved any great significance originally as a border town. There is evidence of Neolithic settlement in the area, including a possible cursus near Longbridge and finds of stone and flint tools, as well as some Roman activity. In the early Saxon period it was at the north-eastern extremity of the minor kingdom of the Hwicce which became subsumed in the more powerful kingdom of Mercia in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD.

There was probably a small Saxon settlement by a natural weir across the River Avon before that time, and the name *Waeric Wicum*, recorded in 1001, simply means ‘settlement by a weir’. However, in 914 AD Æthelflæda, the Lady of the Mericans – sister of Edward the Elder and daughter of Alfred the Great – chose the site for one of the ten new *burghs*, fortified towns designed to assist in the recapture of the eastern Midlands from the Vikings.

It seems to have been chosen for its defensive qualities and was not an ideal centre for a county; it was not a natural route centre and the Avon was too small for serious navigation. However, it thrived, and was made the county town of the new *scire* that took its name. The medieval defences may follow much of the line of the defences built in the Saxon period.

By the time of the Norman Conquest the town had at least 248 houses and a possible population in excess of 2,000 – a large town for the late-11<sup>th</sup> century. Although this area seems to have passed peacefully from Saxon to Norman control, and the town remained the county town, its simple street pattern was disrupted by the construction of a castle on the southern edge of the settlement which would be expanded to become one of the largest and best defended in the kingdom.

The main Saxon figure had been Turchil of Arden, who failed to fight for King Harold at the Battle of Hastings; he was allowed to keep his lands but these were then taken from his son in around 1089 and given to the *castellan* of the new castle, Henry de Beaumont, who became the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Warwick. In 1268 the earldom and the borough passed to William Beauchamp whose family dominated the affairs of the town for the next two centuries.

A masonry wall had encircled the town north of the castle by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and a bridge across the river is mentioned in 1208; on the opposite bank was one of the town’s suburbs, Bridge End. The population probably remained somewhere between 2,500 – 3,000 in the medieval period.

The eccentric antiquarian John Leland, writing in about the 1530's, stated that '*the towne of Warwike stondithe on a mayne rokky hille, risynge from est to west. The beauty and glory of the towne is 2 strets, whereof the one is caullyd the High Strete and goith from the est gate to the west, having a right goodly crosse in the middle of it*'.<sup>11</sup>

During the English Civil Wars in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, Warwick was a key Parliamentary stronghold but this does not seem to have caused the general populace too many problems after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Shortly afterwards, however, the town was devastated by fire; this broke out at the end of the hot summer of 1694 and destroyed most of the buildings within the centre of the town and badly damaged the parish church.

The town was rebuilt fairly quickly, mainly in brick; by 1697 when Celia Fiennes passed through the town, she could write that the '*stretes are very handsome and the buildings regular and fine [though] not very lofty being limited by act of parliament to such a pitch and size*'. By 1716 Daniel Defoe wrote that Warwick '*is now rebuilt in so noble and beautiful a manner, that few towns in England make so fine an appearance*'.

The town remained an administrative and market centre and industry never really took a serious hold, even after the opening of the canal in 1800. Nearby Leamington Spa grew more rapidly because of the fashion for 'taking the waters' and other centres in the county became industrialised and consequently grew far larger – especially Birmingham and Coventry.

Its population had reached around 11,000 by 1851 but despite the arrival of the railway only grew to around 12,000 by 1901. It has grown since and it continues to be the county town of a county much diminished in size due to local government reorganisation in the 1970's. It has also, since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, developed as an important and attractive tourist destination.



Pl.1: The High Street, Warwick, looking eastwards from the terrace of the Guild Chapel above the West Gate; the Lord Leicester's Hospital is on the left.

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<sup>11</sup> Toulmin Smith, L, 1964, *The Itinerary of John Leland*

## 4.2 Longbridge

Longbridge lies on the north bank of the River Avon just downstream of the centre of Warwick and its castle; the medieval castle park abutted it to the east on both sides of the river.

The name is of Old English origin, and probably Saxon – from ‘*lang brycg*’, meaning literally a long bridge and more usually a causeway; it does not appear in the surviving written record until 1123, and then in Latin as *longum pontem*.<sup>12</sup> Subsequently the name is recorded as *Longo ponte* in 1190, in English as *Longebrige* in 1250, and in Anglo-French as *Longpont* in 1262.<sup>13</sup>

The name is presumably derived from a causeway crossing the low-lying area by the river, and probably indicates that this was on the line of the old main route from Warwick to Stratford-on-Avon – which in turn formed part of the major cross country route between Gloucester and Coventry.

The earliest tangible evidence of settlement in the area is the ‘Longbridge Cursus’ – an earthwork identified through aerial photography a little to the south-west of the M40; it is a long rectangular feature, probably an enclosure, some 260m long and varying from 26 to 30m wide. It has not been identified in field walking due to the hummocky nature of the surface, but it has tentatively been identified as a Neolithic cursus (MWA1921).

Several prehistoric but unstratified flint flakes were found in field walking to the south of the route of the M40. Other early features include two small gullies thought to be of the Iron Age located in excavations on the line of the M40 prior to its construction undertaken by the Warwickshire Museum (EWA 7947). These lie immediately to the south-east of the study area close to Longbridge Manor.

Find spots of a handful of Roman coins of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, as well as Roman pottery (and possibly Iron Age pottery as well), on a site now beneath the motorway junction indicate some form of Roman settlement in the area (EWA 7873; 7879). The strategically important Roman road – the Fosse Way – passes about four miles to the south-east of Longbridge.

Potentially the most significant part of the site is the Anglo-Saxon cemetery discovered, by accident, towards the north-eastern end by workmen digging for gravel close to the new sewage works in 1875 (MWA 1982; EWA 9520).

Several skeletons - possibly as many as 30, both male and female, and some associated weapons and grave goods were found in a clearly well-used cemetery (with some bodies on top of others), and buried with them were associated finds including gold and silver bracelets, brooches, a glass, buckets, spear and javelin heads, shield bosses – generally identified as being of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> century AD and thus probably Hwiccan rather than Mercian.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> see Watts, V (ed.), 2010, *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 380

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Burgess, J T, 1876, *Archaeological Journal* Vol.33, 378-381

The site was described as being close to the confluence of the Fisher Brook and the River Avon, 'in a field one mile due west' [*sic.* – it is assumed that was a mistake for 'south'], of Warwick on the Stratford Road and adjoining the pumping station of the new sewage works. The excavations covered an area of about 50 feet by 60 feet, suggesting more of the cemetery remained undisturbed.

However, targeted excavations in 1968 failed to find any more burials or any clear evidence of a cemetery – and it may be that the original site was not accurately located at the time it was discovered. The site, therefore, remains elusive.

In the later Saxon period Longbridge was presumably closely related to the defended *burh* of Warwick and, after the Norman Conquest, to the establishment of the park of the newly founded castle in the town. That park was mainly on the opposite bank of the river but did include the northernmost part of the settlement.

Longbridge was a separate manor and had its manor house – just to the north of the study area. In the early-17<sup>th</sup> century this belonged to the Staunton family who may have held it for several generations; the oldest part of the surviving but much altered and extended medieval manor house could date back to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century but it is mostly post-medieval.

There seems to have been another medieval manor to the east called Lee – perhaps accounting for the name of the much later Leafield Bridge across the river; the deserted site of this is now within the castle park close to that bridge, though its precise location and any other details are unknown.

To the north-west of the Stratford Road and on the opposite side of the river to the study area there is some fragmentary evidence of possible medieval ridge and furrow and other earthwork features, including, in the latter case, a boundary ditch (MWA8869; WA1978). Better preserved ridge-and-furrow has been identified in the meadows on the east bank of the river, next to Barford Wood and abutting the motorway.

Immediately to the south, on the line of the motorway, a small medieval pit was located during excavations but no other significant signs of medieval settlement (WA7948). It seems possible that the low-lying nature of the study area and its proximity to the river and tributary streams mean that it was subject to inundation and unsuited to arable farming. 1977

Evidence of surviving timber-framed buildings along the main road shows that there was settlement in the post-medieval period apart from the manor house. By that time it was established as a road junction.

Longbridge is shown on the pioneering road map – *Britannia* – produced by John Ogilby in 1675 in the section on the road between Gloucester and Coventry (*see Fig.x*).<sup>15</sup> Obviously the scale of the map is far too small for details, but it does show that there was some settlement on the side of the road at a minor junction where a lane left the main road heading for Sherbourne. It also shows the courses of the small streams to the east and west of the settlement.

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<sup>15</sup> Ogilby, J, 1675, *Britannia*, pl.71

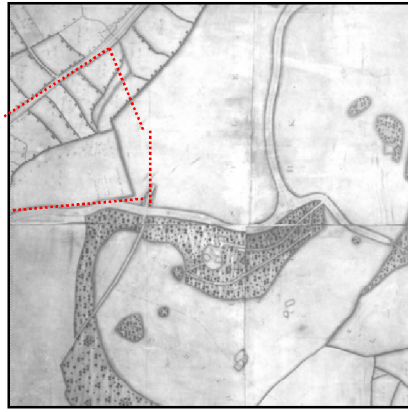


Fig.3: Extract from a 1786 estate map showing Leafield Bridge but no tree belts on the study area side (arrowed)(WRO CR1886 M24a). Northern end of study area added.



Fig.4: Extract from the original Ordnance Survey drawings of 1813 with study area superimposed; by this time trees have been planted north of Leafield Bridge.



Fig.5: Extract from the 1834 1" Ordnance Survey map.



Fig.6: Extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map.  
Warwickshire Sheet XXXIX.NW, surveyed 1885, published, 1886.  
The outline of the study area is shown.

The lane to Sherbourne was later just the start of the main road south from Warwick, heading towards Wellesbourne where routes continued in several directions, including south to Shipston or south-east towards Banbury. In 1753 the Stratford Road and the road to Wellesbourne were turnpiked and upgraded; there was a toll house in Longbridge.

Despite plans from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to make the Avon navigable from the River Severn at Tewkesbury as far upstream as Warwick, only the lower section - up to Stratford - seems to have been navigable in the medieval period and it was only on that section that locks were created as part of a scheme in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, the road passing through Longbridge was always an important transport link and remained so into the modern era.

The Leafields, in the northern part of the study area, was part of the castle estate. It is now within the part of the castle grounds improved from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown for Francis Greville, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Warwick. His son, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl, continued the task and was probably responsible for the development of the Leafield area.

The limited amount of settlement was concentrated along the road and especially at the junction and close to the manor house. The study area itself was virtually devoid of any development, apart from Longbridge Farm. That is shown on the original Ordnance Survey drawings of the area begun in 1813 (*see Fig.x*) and on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1" Ordnance Survey map of 1834 based on those drawings – by which time buildings are also shown on the site of what is now Leafield Farm within the woodland of castle park (*see Fig.x*).



A sewage farm – initially called the Warwick Irrigation Works - was established on the bank of the Fisher's Brook towards the northern end of the study area, and virtually on the boundary with the castle park, by the 1870's; it was next to that the worker's found the Saxon cemetery. This was expanded into a proper sewage works in 1885.<sup>16</sup> It was subsequently expanded considerably in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but otherwise the rest of the study area changed very little until after the Second World War.

Small scale housing was established in the southern end of the site by the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a small farmstead – Home Farm. Subsequently the general character of the area was radically altered by the construction of the M40 in the 1980's, along with the new line of the A46 by-passing Oxford to the north-west and joining the motorway at a major junction – recently enlarged and upgraded to cover an even larger footprint – at Longbridge.

The two roads now effectively form the north-western and southern boundaries of Longbridge, separating it from outlying area beyond and from the nearby village of Sherbourne. The old line of the A46 passing through the middle of Longbridge continues to be a busy route from the motorway junction into the town centre; the road off it to Sherbourne is now truncated by the M40 – carried over the motorway only as a footpath. To the north-east, the new housing has spread from Warwick to as far as the Fisher's Brook and more housing has been created, along with new hotels, close to the motorway junction.

The one part of the study area and its setting that has remained relatively unaltered is the castle park to the north-east and the river meadows on the opposite bank of the Avon that lie in between it and Barford Wood. Even here, however, within the study area, Ashbeds Wood was once more extensive and the areas around Leafield Farm and towards the river bank have been largely cleared of woodland. The park has, since the later-20<sup>th</sup> century, been curtailed on the south side by the M40 and its ever-present traffic noise.

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<sup>16</sup> Slater. T, 1981, *A History of Warwickshire*, 103



## **5. Description**

### **5.1 General Parameters**

The study area lies between the old Stratford Road on the west and the River Avon to the east; the northern boundary is formed by the track from the Stratford Road to the Leafield Bridge and the southern boundary is formed by the M40.

#### **5.1.1 The Northern Boundary: The Leafield Track**

The Leafield Track is an unadopted vehicular track that leaves the Stratford Road just south of Fisher's Bridge across Fisher's Brook. It leads to a handful of houses and Leafield Farm before changing direction sharply southwards to cross the river on the Leafield Bridge (*q.v.*). The first section borders unremarkable open fields; the second section is within the castle park.

#### **5.1.2 The Eastern Boundary: The River Avon**

The meandering Avon flows south-westwards to join the River Severn at Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire. At this point the river is on a gentle westwards meander, cutting into the bank on the study side to create a low terrace that has, in part, apparently been artificially enhanced as part of the sewage works.

#### **5.1.3 The Southern Boundary: The M40**

The southern boundary is formed by the M40, a motorway linking the West Midlands and west London. At this point it is a six-lane highway on a wooded embankment crossing the valley floor and crosses the river itself at the south-eastern corner of the study area. At the south-western corner of the study area it is crossed by the footbridge carrying the route of the Sherbourne Lane.

#### **5.1.4 The Western Boundary: The Stratford Road and Sherbourne Lane**

Most of the western boundary of the study area is formed by the fairly straight line of the Stratford Road, the former A46. This was still a main trunk road until the creation of the new bypass to the north-west and so bears signs of modernisation and upgrading. At the southern end the truncated Sherbourne Lane leaves the Stratford Road and this then forms the remainder of the western boundary.

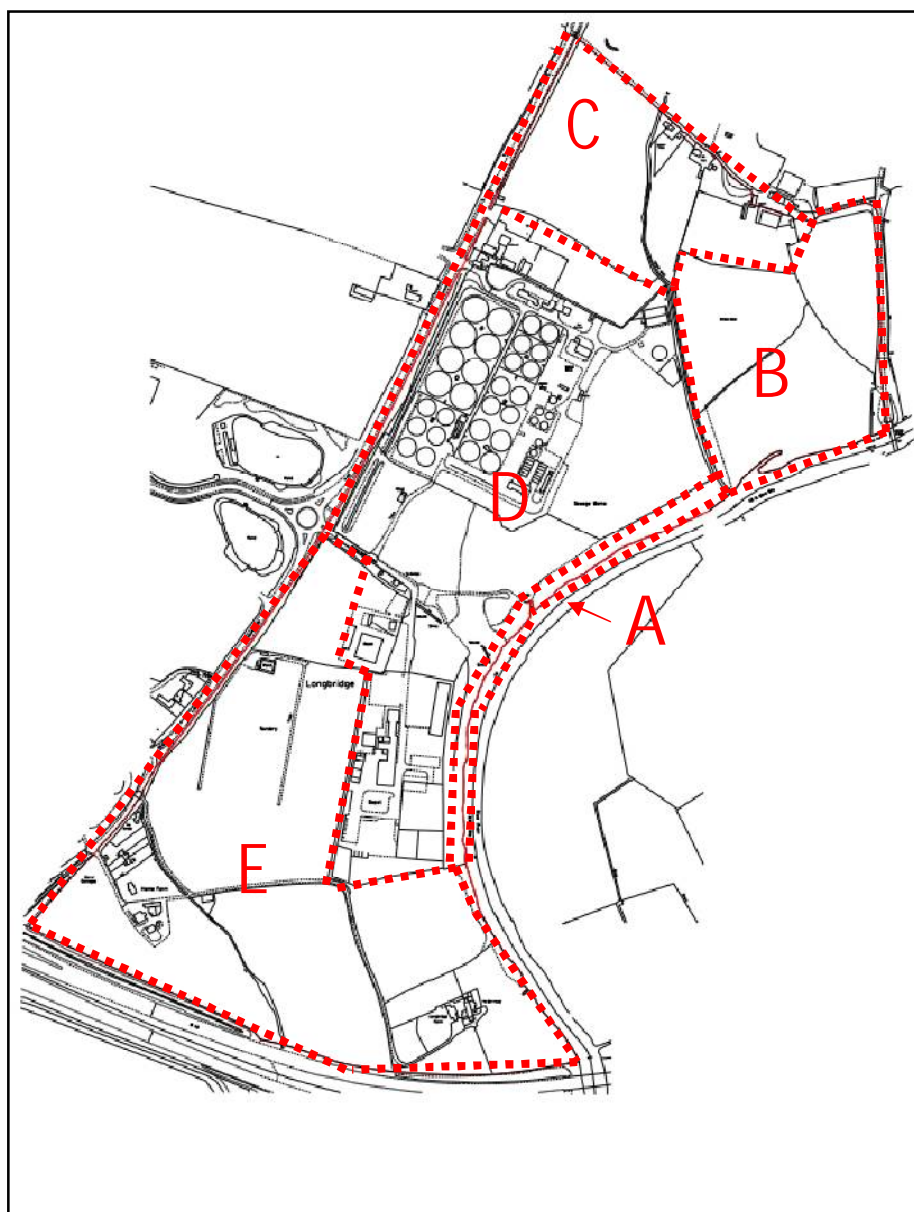


Fig.7: Outline of the basic character areas.



Pl.1: The Leaffield track forms the northern boundary of the study area. This is the view along it from the Stratford Road, with the study area to the right.



Pl.2: The more attractive eastern boundary is formed by a wide bend in the River Avon. This is a view upstream from roughly halfway along it, the study area being on the left.





Pl.3: The M40 forms the southern boundary. This is the view from the footbridge taking the Sherbourne Lane across it; the study area is on the left beyond the tree belt.



Pl.4: Most of the western boundary is formed by the Stratford Road, seen here looking south; the study area is on the left.

## **5.2 Character Zones**

Apart from identifying three farmsteads, the Warwickshire HER Historic Landscape Character map - a necessarily broad brush tool - identifies most of the study area as being of large irregular fields or taken up by utilities. This basic assessment can be refined a little further and the area broken down into character zones.

### **5.2.1 Zone A: The Riverside**

The riverside is the most attractive part of the study area and extends the full length of the eastern boundary - though the bank is virtually inaccessible to the south of the main office part of the works.

Below the terrace and all along the river bank within the study area is a fairly level area of scrub and immature woodland with trees overhanging the river at intervals. There is a rough path through this area accessing a series of fishing platforms but it is otherwise fairly overgrown and unkempt. Much of it is bordered by the security fencing of the sewage works and offices to the west but in general the river bank is visually unimpaired by the works, due to the tree cover, tree belts, and the rising terrace bank.

Superficially the riverside seems to be quite rural and attractive, matching the situation on the opposite bank. The noise - and smells - from the sewage works are quite muted; the main intrusion into the otherwise bucolic nature of the scene is the road noise from the M40 to the south. There is no access across the Fisher's Brook towards the northern end of the main section of the riverside, and the remaining part, up to the Leafield Bridge, is within the parkscape of the castle park and of slightly different character.



Pl.5: Typical section of the river bank, with the terrace rising to the left.



### **5.2.2 Zone B: The Parkland**

Towards the northern end of the site the river is joined by the Fisher's Brook, running in from the north-west; there is no bridge across the stream until it is crossed by the Stratford Road further west by the much rebuilt and widened Fisher's Bridge. Although part of the study area is to the north-east of the brook, it nevertheless marks a very distinctive boundary.

The brook is also the boundary of the designated castle park. Ashbeds Wood on the north bank, and the tree-dotted meadows between it and the river, are all within the northern part of the study area are clearly part of the parkscape and have little or no visual relationship with the rest of the site.

The main character of the castle park was created by the pioneer landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the mid-18th century and has been maintained and enhanced subsequently. This section was probably developed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl but it has been changed since.

Late-18<sup>th</sup> century maps show Ashbed woods continued to the river bank and the path to the bridge passing through woodland. Leaffield Farm was then also set within woodland and much has been cleared. The present layout and character is thus later but the park is a registered park and thus a designated heritage asset (*see below*). This area may also have a degree of archaeological potential (*see below*).



Pl.6: Part of the parkland character of the north-easternmost section of the study area, just beyond the Fisher's Brook. This view is looking eastwards; the arch of Leaffield Bridge can just be seen in the trees on the extreme right-hand side.

### **5.2.3 Zone C: The Northern Fields & Leafield Farm**

The area at the northern extremity of the study area between the Parkland section and the Stratford Road is of fairly undistinguished large fields through which runs the Fisher's Brook. Towards the eastern end is Leafields Farm whilst towards the west are much altered and extended houses along the Leafield track. Immediately to the north are modern housing estates and immediately to the south the sewage works.

### **5.2.4 Zone D: The Works**

The various elements of the Severn Trent works occupy about half the area of the study area. The main sections are separated by scrubby fields and waste land. The main sewage works with its settling tanks and processing apparatus is in a large rectangular block towards the northern end of the area, fronted on the west side by the Stratford Road. To the north are the large fields of Zone C (*see above*).

To the east of the modernised sewage works is an area of scrubby waste land bordered by the Fisher's Brook and the Riverside (Zone A). It is somewhere within this area that the Saxon graveyard was encountered in the 19th century - the precise location still unidentified.

To the south of the sewage treatment area and the main office complex is another area of open fields and wasteland stretching from the Stratford Road to the edge of the Riverside zone; towards the eastern end of this are car parking areas and within it are a few modern houses built for the works. The main access road to the works - now called Princes Close Gardens - passes through this area.

The main office complex is made up of large low modern buildings on the west side of the access road. These back onto large fields forming the western part of Zone E, Longbridge Farm. On the opposite side of the road are large areas of hard-standing for both car-parking and for tennis courts. At the southern end the works are bordered by a fence separating it from the southern portion of Zone E.

### **5.2.5 Zone E: Longbridge Farm**

The southern part of the study area appears once to have formed much of the farmland of Longbridge Farm but is now in several separate sections. As well as Longbridge Farm to the south-east, which has a degree of antiquity, there is a second much more recent and less interesting farmstead to the south-west, Home Farm. On the access track to that farm, and along the rump of Sherbourne Lane, is a handful of houses, only one of which is architecturally interesting.

The rest of the area is made up of large open flat and fairly featureless fields - some latterly used by a nursery - and evidently several hedgerows have been grubbed out. Running through the fields is the sinuous access track to Longbridge Farm itself. The southern edge of this zone is marked by the M40.



Pl.7: Looking south across the Northern Fields (Zone C) from the Stratford Road. On the left the trees marks the course of Fisher's Brook whilst in the background is the sewage works.



Pl.8: View north across waste fields in the middle of Zone D (the Works) towards the main body of the sewage works.





Pl.9: View of the main works section in Zone D looking north.



Pl.10: View from the west across the large fields in the Longbridge Farm area (Zone E).  
Trees in the background shield the main works complex.

## **6. Heritage Assets Within the Study Area**

Heritage assets are either designated – such as listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas, designated parks and gardens or battlefields – or non-designated – generally buildings or assets that do have a degree of local or lesser importance but which are not considered to be of sufficient significance to be statutorily designated.

### **6.1 Designated Heritage Assets**

#### **6.1.1 Listed Buildings**

There are no listed buildings within the study area.

#### **6.1.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the study area.

#### **6.1.3 Other Designated Heritage Assets**

The north-eastern portion of the study area is within the designated park of Warwick Castle which is Grade I listed and clearly of national significance (*see above*, Character Zone B). The park forms the setting of the medieval castle, one of the most important buildings of its period in the country.

### **6.2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets**

With the possible exception of Longbridge Farm in the south-eastern extremity of the study area, and Leaffield Barn in the north-east, there are no buildings, structures, gardens, earthworks or other features that could be considered to be non-designated heritage assets under the guidelines of the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Longbridge Farm is a farmstead that is shown on the original survey drawings of 1813 and, though clearly altered, some of the buildings could date to the later-18th century. It is a private dwelling and no access to it was attempted as part of this study - but it could be observed from the sewage works, the M40, and on aerial photographs. It is approached by a long drive off the truncated lane to Sherbourne and lies close to the side of the motorway. The main farmhouse is a three bay two storey brick building with attics and rear wings forming the north side of a quadrangular complex that probably reflects the late-18th century farmstead. It would seem that at least part of the former farm buildings to the south have been converted into a separate residential dwelling.

Leaffield Farm, formerly Barn, is private and no attempt was made to gain access to it. GoogleEarth indicates the survival of an ‘L-shaped’ range; although the HER (MWA 13155) suggests a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date, a building in this position is shown on late-18<sup>th</sup> century estate maps so the site has a degree of heritage potential.

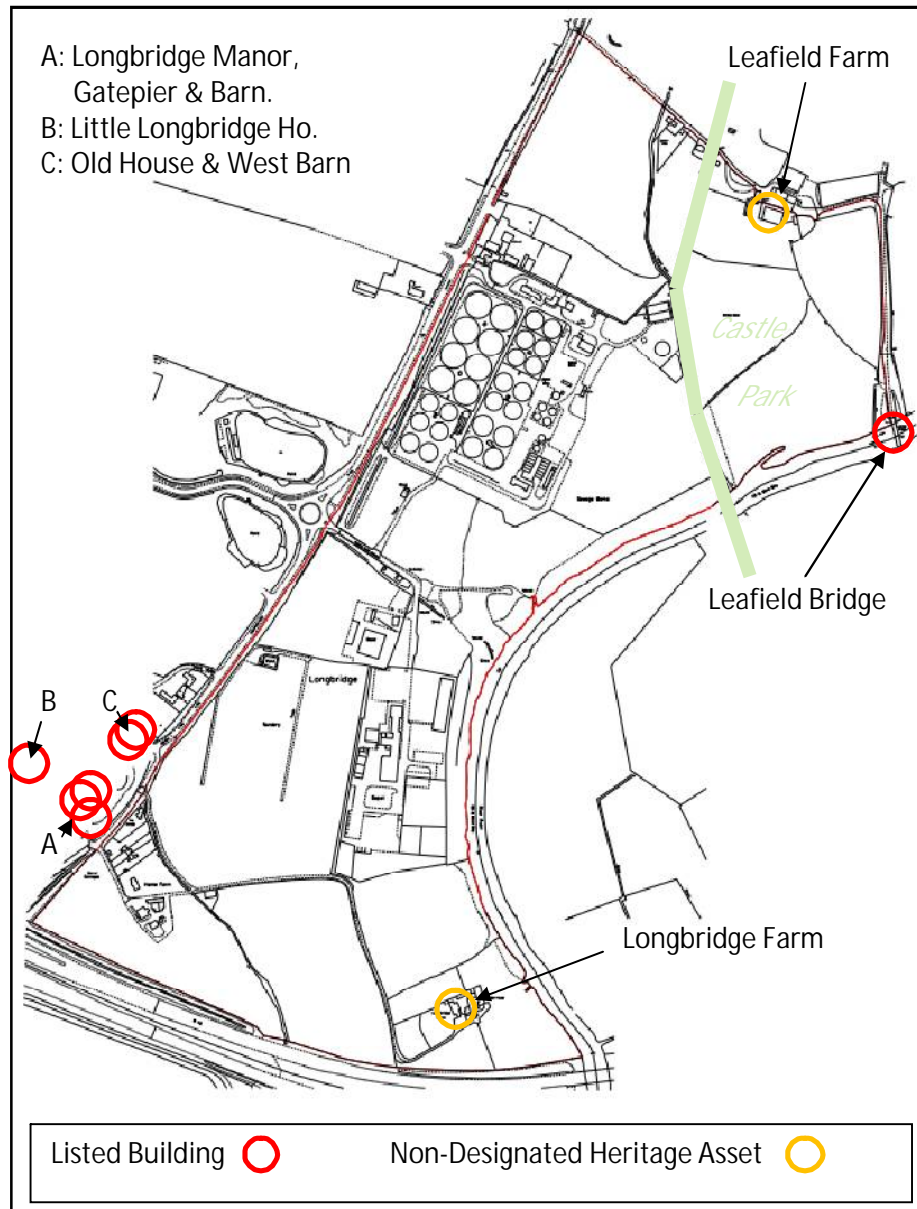


Fig.8: Location of listed buildings and potential non-designated heritage assets within and immediately adjacent to the study area.

## **7. Archaeology**

The following section on archaeological issues is based mainly on the information held in the Warwickshire HER, whose assistance in the compilation of the report is gratefully acknowledged.

References in the following section and in the rest of the report refer to those of the HER. The prefix MWA refers to sites considered to be HER monuments. The prefix EWA refers to specific archaeological events – such as field walking or find spots.

The underlying geology of the site is of Triassic era Mercia mudstones but this is overlain by a broad river terrace as well as alluvial deposits associated with the Avon and two tributaries that cut through the extremities of the site – the Leafield Brook to the north-east and the stream running through Longbridge to the south-west. It is possible that these deposits overlay early prehistoric remains as has often been demonstrated in similar situations.

Largely because of the construction of the M40, the A46 by-pass and the recent reorganisation and improvements to the junction between the two, this area has been subject to a considerable degree of archaeological investigation in the relatively recent past - though little of this has been within the study area.

The one obvious significant archaeological feature within the study area is the Saxon graveyard discovered and partially excavated in the 1870's (EWA 9520; MWA 1982) but subsequently 'lost' - despite one major attempt to rediscover it in the 1960's (EWA 9521) and a watching brief nearby in 1999 (EWA 6745). Its location is thought to be within the northern section of the present main sewage works.

Burials, around 30 in all and quite densely packed, were said to be as close as 0.8m below ground level and just into the gravels; this fact and the description of what appear to have been grave goods suggests a fairly well established cemetery of the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century and possibly pre-Christian. Quite how this would relate to any settlement in the immediate vicinity is unclear.

It seems likely that the present tanks and other infrastructure would have impacted on them if they were in this position - though why no record of burials emerged when the tanks were being positioned is unclear. Despite the lack of any subsequent traces of the Saxon cemetery, and the fact that it could have been severely damaged by the present infrastructure, the archaeological potential in this particular area of the site is clearly high.

The only other part of the study area with known archaeological potential is within Zone B and the castle park at the north-eastern corner close to Leafield Bridge. Whilst the former medieval settlement of Lee is considered to be on the opposite bank of the river (MWA 1977) there are some potentially medieval earthworks indicative of a field system within the study area (MWA 1978).

Quite how such fields would have tied in with a medieval settlement on the other side of the river is unclear; it is not a natural fording point. Within this area, at least one linear earthwork clearly relates to an earlier course of the track leading to Leafield Bridge, shown on maps until the early-20<sup>th</sup> century when more of this area was still wooded.

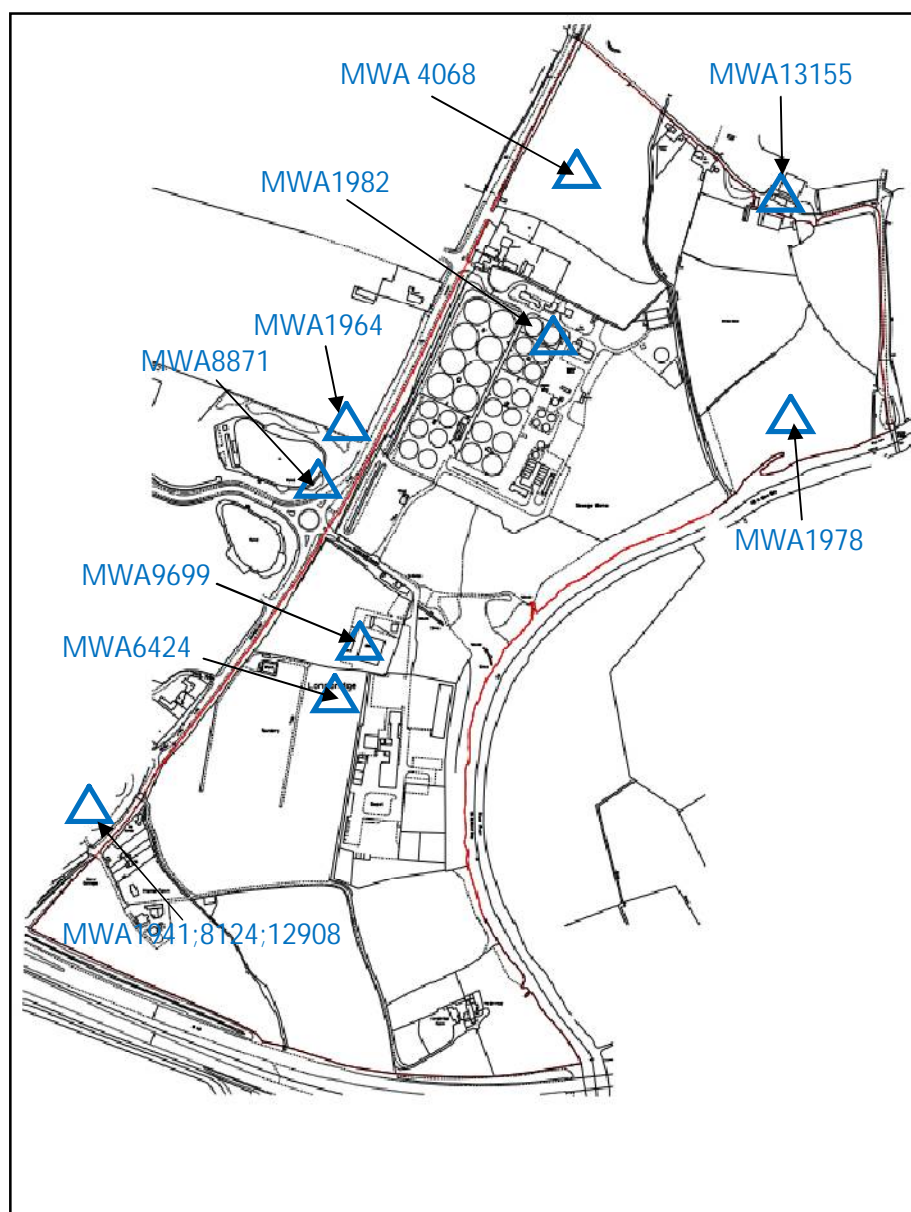


Fig.9: Location of Warwickshire Environment Record HER Monuments in and immediately adjacent to the study area.



In the rest of the study area significant archaeological finds and features have been limited – although two sides of possible rectangular crop mark of unknown date were identified by aerial photography just to west of the water board office complex (MWA 6424) – along with a re-positioned Nissen hut from World War Two (MWA9699).

Much of the extensive archaeological work adjacent to the study area associated with the construction of the M40 and the new alignment of the A46 encountered little of significance – apart from large scatterings of medieval and post-medieval pot which was taken to indicate generations of field manuring; some evidence of medieval ditches and field boundaries; and some features of uncertain date.

Other archaeological works away from the roads identified some possible Iron Age features in the grounds of Longbridge Manor (EWA 9188; EWA 9967) and on the north-west side of Stratford Road nearer to Warwick some medieval features and a single flint flake were encountered (EWA 6917).

The most interesting prehistoric feature in the vicinity is the possible cursus south of the M40 (MWA 1921, *see above*), indicating some potential for further discoveries associated with its prehistoric context.

The most dramatic recent discoveries in the area were a little further to the north-west in 2008-9 when, despite the relatively low potential encountered in trial excavations, Roman burials were encountered in deep ‘borrow pits’ excavated for embankment material for the junction improvements.

These are, however, well away from the study area and bear little resemblance to the archaeological deposits encountered in trial excavations and watching briefs associated with the construction of the M40, Junction 15 or the new line of the A46 nearer to the study area.

## **8. The Proposals**

Outline proposals are being formulated to redevelop much of the study area though at present only an outline and very provisional scheme has been produced for the southernmost section of the site – to the south of the main sewage works as far as the motorway. Nothing is as yet proposed for the sewage works site itself or the area within the study area in the northern portion of the study area.

The proposals for the southern half of the study area include a mixed use development, new access routes, and enhancement of the riverside area. The existing houses at the south-western corner of the site will be retained and the adjacent area between them and the motorway will be set aside for housing.

## **9. Heritage Impact Assessment**

The heritage impact assessment is concentrated on the potential impact of the development of the southern end of the site but will also, for completeness, allude to the potential impact of and development in the remainder as well.

It is broken down into several sections. The first is the potential impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets within the study area (Sections 9.1 and 9.2) and then adjacent to it (Sections 9.3 and 9.4). Section 9.5 assesses the impact on the registered park of Warwick Castle, Section 9.6 is a section assessing the impact on Warwick Castle, and Section 9.7 the impact on the Warwick conservation area.

### **9.1 Impact on Designated Heritage Assets within the Study Area**

There are no designated heritage assets – listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks, gardens or battlefields – within the study area, although the Leafield Bridge abuts its north-eastern corner (*see below*).

### **9.2 Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Assets within the Study Area**

With the possible exception of Longbridge Farm in the south-eastern extremity of the study area and Leafield Farm in the north-east, there are no buildings, structures, gardens, earthworks or other features that could be considered to be non-designated heritage assets under the guidelines of the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

#### **9.2.1 Longbridge Farm**

##### **9.2.1.01 Description**

Longbridge Farm is a farmstead that is shown on the original survey drawings of 1813 and, though clearly altered, some of the buildings could date to the later-18th century. It is a private dwelling and no access to it was attempted as part of this study - but it could be observed from the sewage works, the M40, and on aerial photographs.

It is approached by a long drive off the truncated lane to Sherbourne and lies close to the side of the motorway. The main farmhouse is a three bay two storey brick building with attics and rear wings forming the north side of a quadrangular complex that probably reflects the late-18th century farmstead. It would seem that at least part of the former farm buildings to the south have been converted into a separate residential dwelling.

##### **9.2.1.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

The proposed redevelopment of the study area includes the demolition of the farmstead. Clearly the resultant harm would be ‘substantial’ under the terms of the NPPF but needs to be considered in light of the overall benefits of the scheme.



Pl.11: Longbridge Farm from the north.



Pl.12: Leaffield Bridge from downstream, taken from the mouth of the Fisher's Brook.



It is suggested that there is a need for a better understanding of the buildings of the farmstead but that, unless such analysis finds that they are of more importance than they presently seem to be, and thus lead to a re-assessment of the proposals in this vicinity, a programme of 'preservation by record' be undertaken prior to their demolition.

### **9.2.2 Leafield Barn**

Leafield Barn, now Farm, is a private property with private access and was not visited during the study. The surviving 'L-shaped' brick buildings could be of the 18<sup>th</sup> century but, from the evidence of aerial photographs, the rest of the site is made up of modern and utilitarian structures of little or no merit.

The original building was set in woodlands forming part of the shelter belt around the boundary of the castle park but the area around the farm has been cleared of trees. Nevertheless, there are no clear views towards the study area because of the survival of the rest of Ashbeds Wood, so any proposed developments would not impact upon its character, setting or significance.

## **9.3 Impact on Listed Buildings Adjacent to the Study Area**

The M40 is partly embanked and has thick tree belts on either side. It forms a visual barrier between the study area and any listed buildings to the south-west – including those within Sherbourne. Similarly, the new line of the A46 by-pass to the north of Longbridge forms a barrier between the study area and any assets on the other side of that road.

As a result, and given the prevailing topography, it is considered that no proposed development within the study area could have any impact on the character, setting or significance on any listed buildings or other designated heritage assets on the opposite side of these two main roads.

There are several other listed buildings within 500m of the boundaries of the study area, but apart from one house (Old House, on the Stratford Road), none of these are in plain view from it or have direct views into it – due to the distances involved, tree cover, or modern roads.

### **9.3.1 Leafield Bridge**

#### **9.3.1.01 Description**

Leafield Bridge is Grade II listed and carries a track within the castle park across the River Avon immediately upstream of the north-eastern corner of the study area. At this point there are woodlands on the south-east bank of the river and the bridge abutment on the north side is also wooded.

The bridge is a graceful and slender stone structure with a single segmental arch over the placid river below designed by Robert Mylne for the 1st Earl of Warwick and built between 1772-6 probably to allow a full circuit through the parkland on both sides of the river. The facing masonry is of rusticated ashlar and the keystone appears to be Coade stone; there are said to be medallions on the piers of the same material.

There are clear similarities between the design of the bridge and the later and larger road bridge in Warwick itself, designed by W Eboral upstream of the medieval 'great bridge' and built between 1789 and 1793.

#### **9.3.1.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

Any development within the adjacent section of parkland within the study area would clearly have an impact on the setting of the bridge, which contributes to its significance. However, any developments further to the south would be difficult to see because of the tree cover and the general topography. The bridge is difficult to see from the main part of the study area south of the Fisher's Brook and is only readily visible from close to the river bank.

It is possible to get a glimpse of part of the arch of the bridge further downstream - but only from the edge of the river and not within the main study area. It is therefore very unlikely that any proposed developments south of the Fisher's Brook and away from the river's edge will have any impact on the character, setting or significance of the bridge.

### **9.3.2 Little Longbridge House**

#### **9.3.2.01 Description**

Little Longbridge House lies on the west side of the Stratford Road opposite Longbridge Manor and is a late-18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> century brick-built house with stuccoed detailing. It is of three storeys with sashes to the two lower floors and casements to the second floor. It has been altered but is Grade II listed; because of modern developments in close proximity its setting is no longer particularly significant.

#### **9.3.2.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

Because of the alignment of the road and the proximity of other properties and hedgerows, there are no clear views of the study area from the house and the study area forms no part of its setting. It is considered unlikely that any proposed development will have any impact on its character, setting or significance.

### **9.3.3 Longbridge Manor**

#### **9.3.3.01 Description**

Longbridge Manor is Grade II\* listed but difficult to see from either the public realm or the study area. Access to its grounds in order to view the building was not attempted as part of the study but it has clearly been impacted by modern developments which have eroded its historic setting and character.

The building has medieval origins, the oldest section considered to be a rear timber-framed wing of the 15<sup>th</sup> or early-16<sup>th</sup> century; there is also another much repaired timber-framed range dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The rest of the building is of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later and most has been covered in modern roughcast. The interior is said to have some fine features. The close setting of the house has been considerably altered.

#### **9.3.3.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

Because of the secluded nature of the building and the radical alterations made to its setting in the recent past it is not considered that any proposed developments in the adjacent portion of the study area will have a significant impact on its character, setting or significance.

### **9.3.4 Barn at Longbridge Manor House**

#### **9.3.4.01 Description**

Close to Longbridge Manor, and historically possibly associated with it, is a timber-framed building parallel to the Stratford Road. This is a much altered one and a half storey timber-framed range, rectangular in plan and, structurally, of four bays under a plain gabled and plain tiled roof. The framing is three rows high with the bays three panels wide. From the top of each corner and bay post are, or were, straight angled braces to the wall-plates. The panel infill is now mainly brick-nogging and, on the road side, all of the bay second to the right has been rebuilt in brickwork, as has the lower section of the right-hand bay.

The gables appear to have been rebuilt; the house has private grounds which were not visited and this also means that it was impossible to see the front wall of the property. The building is probably of mid-17<sup>th</sup> century date and could have been built as a barn or as a house; without more detailed inspection of the interior its origins remain unclear. The building is Grade II listed and forms part of a group with the Manor and gate piers.

#### **9.3.4.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

Whilst the building faces the Stratford Road, there are wooded grounds between it and the former lane to the south and there are no clear views of the study area – or reciprocal views from it – because of the other properties along the lane and further tree and hedge cover along the lane.



Pl.13: The entrance to Longbridge Manor from the east, showing the listed gate pier (right).



Pl.14: The Long bridge Manor Barn.

The setting has been significantly altered by recent redevelopments. As a result, it is considered that the proposed development would have no impact on the remaining character, setting or significance of this much altered Grade II listed building.

### **9.3.5 Gate Pier to Longbridge Manor**

#### **9.3.5.01 Description**

An access into Longbridge Manor passes through a gateway with a surviving ashlar stone gate pier possibly of 17<sup>th</sup> century date.

#### **9.3.5.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

The gate pier is a small survival in a much altered setting and any impact of proposals in the adjacent part of the study area will be negligible.

### **9.3.6 The Old House & West Barn**

#### **9.3.6.01 Description**

The Old House is a Grade II listed timber-framed building of two storeys with attics facing the Stratford Road on the opposite side of its junction with the Sherbourne lane. It presents a formerly half-H form to the road of central hall flanked by gabled cross-wings and is largely of close-studded timber framing on this elevation – with square framing to the rear; some of the framing, however, is later replica work in cement.

The sashes are probably of the early-19<sup>th</sup> century as is a central infill section between the wings under an equally tall gable. The building is clearly associated with the adjacent West Barn, separately Grade II listed, which is also timber framed and probably of similar date.

#### **9.3.6.02 Heritage Impact Assessment**

These two buildings are close to the western boundary of the study area and any developments close to them could have some degree of impact upon their setting. However, there has already been much change in that setting through recent new development and as a result the impact of new developments opposite, providing of a sympathetic character, should not have too great an impact on their character or significance.

### **9.4 Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Assets Adjacent to the Study Area**

There are no buildings adjacent to the boundaries of the study area that are deemed to be of sufficient architectural or historical merit to warrant being considered as non-designated heritage assets under the terms of the NPPF.



Pl.15: The Old House and West Barn (left) from the east.

## **9.5 Impact on the Designated Park**

### **9.5.1 Description**

As outline above, the park of Warwick Castle in its present form dates from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and has been developed and maintained constantly ever since. It is a Grade I designated park and thus considered to be of high national significance.

A section of the park is within the north-eastern part of the study area (Zone B) and the south-western boundary of the main park overlooks the river meadows on the opposite bank. The boundary of the park is formed on that side of the river by a thick and mature tree belt – part of Barford Wood - running south-eastwards from the river bank just opposite the confluence with the Fisher's Brook until it is cut by the M40.

This tree belt forms a virtually impermeable boundary between the riverside fields and the open parkscape to the north and north-east – and was clearly designed to do so. It formed part of a whole circuit of similar woodland around the park established by the late-18<sup>th</sup> century and clearly shown on estate maps of that period. This woodland ensured the privacy of the space and also afforded the opportunity for a carriage ride away from public view through the boundary belt.



As outlined in the English Heritage guidance – and reiterated in the draft of a recent consultation draft, the importance of setting ‘*lies in what it contributes to the significance of a heritage asset. This depends on a wide range of physical elements within, as well as perceptual and associational attributes, pertaining to the heritage asset’s surroundings*’.<sup>17</sup>

Because of the introverted nature of the design of the park its setting makes little real contribution to its heritage value, other than as a direct contrast to it and the fact there are no views into it from the public realm. The private character of the views within the park are reflected in a recent assessment by the local authority on another area close to its boundaries which states ‘*views within Warwick Castle Park are largely restricted to those within the park itself*’.<sup>18</sup>

The assertions in the same report that ‘*The impermeability of Warwick Castle Park at present is a particularly defining element of the public experience of the Castle Park from Banbury Road and also from the Towers of Warwick Castle itself*’ is equally applicable to the views from the study area and the meadows immediately adjacent to it.<sup>19</sup>

Even views into and out of the portion of the park within the study area southwards are limited in extent. At present views even from the outer edge of the boundary woods towards the study area are not enhanced by the sewage works and the main office complex and, to the south, are terminated by the M40.

The setting of this edge of the park is, therefore, not as attractive or quiet as it once was and is not critical to the appreciation of its heritage values other than as a direct contrast of open fields in front of its designed and tree-encircled landscaping. This aspect, however, is only appreciated from the river bank and the M40 motorway and not from the main part of the study area or on the approach along the main road into Warwick.

### 9.5.2 Heritage Impact Assessment

The proposed changes in the study area will, notwithstanding the remaining tree cover, clearly have an impact on at least the setting of the registered park. However, much of this setting has already been compromised by the creation of the M40.

Much of the impact will be the result of change from a large utilitarian office complex to a more organic mixed development with the potential for improvements to the status quo in some areas. With good design and layout, new permanent structures within the proposed development would not adversely impact on the wider setting of the park. There is already a degree of light pollution from the existing works and, particularly, from the adjacent motorway.

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17. English Heritage, 2011, *The Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance*, 7, para. 2.4;  
English Heritage, 2014, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Consultation Draft 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014*, para. 8

<sup>18</sup> Warwick District Council, 2014, *The Setting of Heritage Assets - The Asps – Draft (6.2.14) from Users/USER/Downloads/The\_Setting\_of\_Heritage\_Assets\_The\_Asp DRAFT%20(1).pdf* accessed 19.1.15, 2.2.2

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

There will be some loss of open land immediately above the river terrace within the study area but this is presently either scrub or car park and tennis courts – apart from that section towards the south-east close to Longbridge Farm, presently a field.

Given the fact that any development on this side of the river will be largely screened by the river bank and its trees in front of the river terrace, any impact on the general setting of the boundary of the park will be minimised.

Overall it is considered that there is a sufficient buffer of river meadow on the opposite bank between the study area and the wooded edge of the park boundary to further reduce any impact of these proposals provided use is made of the natural asset of the river bank zone (Zone A) within the study area and the flank of the terrace rising above it. That side of the river is also more significant in terms of setting in the contrast between the open fields and the tree-belted boundary of the park beyond.

Carefully design and planting will help in minimising the visual impact of any proposed development from the edge of the park's woodland – which is, in any case, not a planned viewpoint bearing in mind the inward-looking nature of the parkscape. The impact on views from within the main body of the registered park towards the study area is considered to be negligible because of the density of the tree belt.

Given that the study area, in any case, contributes little or nothing to the setting of the heritage asset, it is considered that the impact of the changes on the character or significance of the designated park would be negligible. The open lands on the opposite side of the river adjacent to the tree belt around the park, which are part of its setting, will not be changed.

## **9.6 Impact on Warwick Castle**

### **9.6.1 Description**

Although the park forms the setting of Warwick Castle, one of the most important medieval buildings in Britain, if not Europe, the castle itself is some distance from the study area and there are no clear views to or from it that could be impacted by any developments within the study area – and particularly in the southern portion of it which clearly is not part of its setting.

The castle is one of the finest medieval castles in Europe, despite much of the interior being remodelled after a major fire in 1871. It originated as a standard post-Conquest motte-and-bailey castle and the motte survives; the basic parameters of the later medieval stone castle reflect the former bailey.

The transformation from simple timber castle to one of the most important masonry castles in England was largely begun by the Beauchamps, who acquired it in the late-13<sup>th</sup> century, and continued until the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Further changes were made subsequently as it evolved from military stronghold to large family home – although it has not been lived in as such since 1978. Since then it has been a major tourist attraction.



The castle overlooks the Avon on the edge of the medieval portion of Warwick, with the Bridge End suburb on the opposite bank – and the ruined medieval bridge in between. The grounds and the wider park are well kept and an important part of its significance and setting.

### 9.6.2 Heritage Impact Assessment

The castle is over a mile from the proposed development site and is well screened from it by the suburbs of Warwick and the extensive tree planting of the parkland on this bank of the Avon.

From ground level with the castle site there are no views south-westwards towards the study area because of the trees and parkscape. As it is a castle, there are several elevated parts of the site from which wider views may be had – and in particular, Guy's Tower and Caesar's Tower.

However, even from these high vantage points the degree of tree growth in between and the distances involved mean that there are no clear views of the study area from the castle, and especially of its southern section.

This is reflected in the heritage assessment of the Asps already referred to which states that *'Views of Warwick Castle Park are to be had from the Castle grounds but these are to private areas of the Park itself. These views show the strong tree belt which defines the edge of Warwick Castle Park to the south and west and to the east...'*<sup>20</sup>

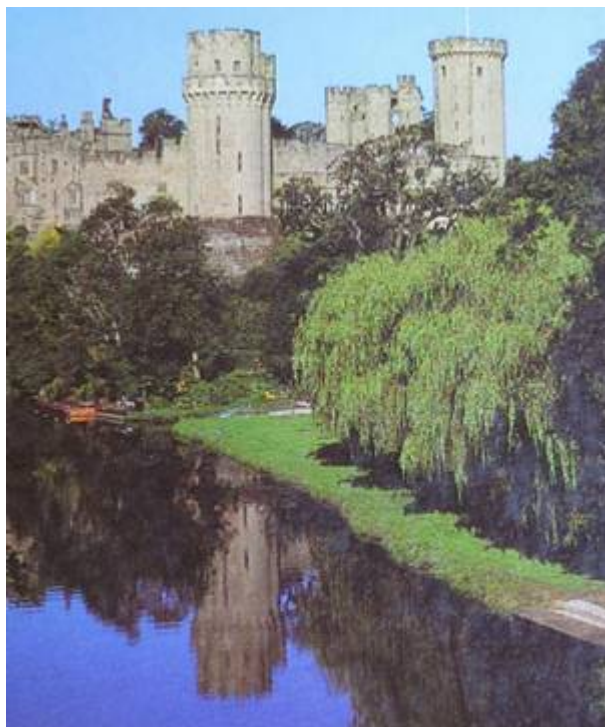
As a result it is considered that any development within the study area would have little or no impact on the character, setting or significance of the castle. The proposed development of the southern section will have none.

### 9.7 Impact on Conservation Areas

The centre of Warwick and its conservation area is some distance to the north of the study area and only visible from its north-western extremity along the Stratford Road. The study area is not really visible in reciprocal views from the town centre. As a result any proposed development within the study area would have no impact on the character, setting or significance of the conservation area.

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<sup>20</sup> Warwick District Council, *op. cit.*, 2.2.10



Pl.16: Warwick Castle from the north-east.



Pl.17: Warwick, viewed along the Stratford Road close to the northern extremity of the study area - through a telephoto lens; in the centre is the tower of St. Mary's.

## 9.8 Impact on Buried Archaeology

The archaeology has been discussed above in Section 7. The evidence from the extensive excavations undertaken in the recent past on the M40, Junction 15 and the A46 suggests that the archaeological potential of the site is relatively low.

However, that needs to be put into the context of the known Saxon burial ground to the north of the study area and the 'Longbridge cursus' a little distance to the south and on the opposite side of the motorway.

The burial site is in the northern section of the study area and probably beneath the sewage works. It seems highly unlikely that it could have extended as far south as the area presently being considered for development.

There has been little else of obvious archaeological import identified within the study area outside of Zone B, the area within the park at its north-eastern end which is highly unlikely to be redeveloped.

Nevertheless, considering the location of the site and the fact that there have been other archaeological discoveries in the vicinity, it is recommended that an appropriate degree of additional research be undertaken and advice obtained from the county's archaeological advisors.

This could be, in the first instance, a programme of non-invasive geophysical survey across the study area, followed, if the results seem to warrant, by targeted archaeological trial excavations.

The results of this work would enable a better understanding of the archaeological potential of the area. This would then help in the formation of appropriate mitigation strategies that may be needed to ensure that any potential loss of archaeological features or associated information is suitably recorded and understood during the development process.

## 10. Conclusions

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that the impact on designated and non-designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the study area, or their settings, through the development of the southern part of the study area will be negligible, but that further information on the site's archaeological potential is desirable.

The National Planning Policy Framework, as a general rule, recommends approval of development unless '*any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits*'.<sup>21</sup> On the available evidence there appear to be, in heritage terms, no such adverse impacts.

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21. NPPF, para. 14

## **11. References**

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### *The Consultancy*

*Richard K Morriss founded this Consultancy in 1995 after previously working for English Heritage and the Ironbridge Institute of the University of Birmingham and spending eight years as Assistant Director of the Hereford Archaeology Unit. Although Shropshire-based the Consultancy works throughout the UK on a wide variety of historic buildings for clients that include the National Trust, the Landmark Trust, English Heritage, the Crown Estates, owners, architects, planning consultants and developers. It specialises in the archaeological and architectural analysis of historic buildings of all periods and planning advice related to them. It also undertakes broader area appraisals and Conservation Plans.*

*Richard Morriss is a former Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, a Member of the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists, archaeological advisor to four cathedrals, occasional lecturer at Bristol and Birmingham universities, and author of many academic papers and of 20 books, mainly on architecture and archaeology, including *The Archaeology of Buildings* (Tempus 2000), *The Archaeology of Railways* (Tempus 1999); *Roads: Archaeology & Architecture* (Tempus 2006) and ten in the *Buildings of* series: *Bath, Chester, Ludlow, Salisbury, Shrewsbury, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, Winchester, Windsor, Worcester* (Sutton 1993-1994). He was a member of the project team responsible for the restoration of Astley Castle, Warwickshire, winner of the 2013 RIBA Sterling Prize.*