

Land at Meeting House Lane  
Balsall Common  
Solihull  
Warwickshire

*Settings Assessment*



*Report prepared for:*  
Greenlight Development

CA Project: CR0182

CA Report: CR0182\_1

September 2019



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## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Land at Meeting House Lane  
**Location:** Balsall Common, Solihull, Warwickshire  
**NGR:** 424462 276706

Cotswold Archaeology was commissioned in August 2019 by Greenlight Developments to undertake a settings assessment for land on Meeting House Lane, Balsall Common, Solihull. The assessment has been commissioned to inform the proposed allocation of the land for residential development through the plan-making process and addresses any potential impacts on the extant built heritage in the surroundings of the Site as a result of change within their settings.

The proposal would preserve the majority of the Grade II Listed Buildings and their settings within the environs of the Site. The Site does not contribute to the significance of these assets and, consequently, the proposal would not impact upon their significance in any way.

However, the development would introduce a new built element into the surroundings of three Grade II Listed Buildings along Meeting House Lane and two Grade II Listed Buildings at Barretts Lane Farm, which would change the setting of these assets to some degree. However, the key contributors to the setting and significance of these assets would be preserved, and this change, seen in the context of extant modern development, would be very limited.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In August 2019, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) was commissioned by Greenlight Developments to undertake a settings assessment for land on Meeting House Lane, Balsall Common, Solihull, Warwickshire (NGR: 424462, 276706, Figure 1), hereafter termed ‘the Site’. This assessment considers the potential impacts on the significance of designated heritage assets both within the immediate and wider environs of the Site through development within their setting, informing the proposed allocation of the land for residential development through the plan-making process and a potential forthcoming planning application for the Site.



Fig. 1 Site location plan



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## *The Site*

- 1.2. The Site is situated on the south-eastern extent of the village of Balsall Common (NGR: 424462, 276706, Fig. 1). Approximately 3ha in extent, the Site comprises five parcels of land, three of which comprise undeveloped scrubland. Defined and enclosed by dense vegetation, limited internal access was afforded to several parts of the Site (Photos 1). Within the remainder of the Site the fieldscape in the south is utilised for agricultural activity (Photo 2), and no. 73 Meeting House Lane and its associated grounds are encompassed to the west. The Site is bounded to the north-east by the course of Barretts Lane, beyond which lie open agricultural fields associated with Barretts Lane Farm. Further agricultural fields bound the Site to the south-east. To the north-west lies an area of open green space known as Meeting House Lane Park, whilst gardens plots and houses along the north-eastern side of Meeting House Lane lie adjacent to the south-western boundary of the Site.



**Photo 1** View across the Site towards the north-west

## *Objectives and professional standards*

- 1.3. A heritage appraisal was originally produced by CA for the Site in 2017 identifying likely heritage considerations in association with the Site and recommending the need for further assessment to support any future planning application. In 2019 a Heritage Impact Assessment report produced by David Burton-Pye, Historic Environment Consultant (hereafter referred to as HEC) for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council,

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encompassed the Site as part of the proposed Barretts Farm housing allocation site at Balsall Common (Burton-Pye 2019). The assessment concluded that development within the Site would result in harm to the wider setting of the Grade II Listed Barretts Lane Farm complex c. 130m east of the Site.

- 1.4. This assessment has been undertaken to provide an independent review of the potential impacts on the surrounding designated heritage assets, including Barretts Lane Farm, should the Site be allocated for residential development.



**Photo 2** View across the Site towards the south

- 1.5. Cotswold Archaeology (CA) is a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). This report has been prepared in accordance with appropriate standards and guidance, with reference made to both CIfA guidance and Historic England's 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015).

***Statute, policy and guidance context***

- 1.6. The Site is located within the local authority of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). The principal planning document used in this area comprises the Solihull Local Plan: Shaping a Sustainable Future (December 2013) which replaced the saved policies of the Solihull Unitary Development Plan.



- 1.7. The Local Plan sets out the vision and strategy for the development of Solihull for the future. Within the Local Plan there is specific policies relating to the historic environment and several sites in Balsall Common have been identified for further development.
- 1.8. Berkswell Parish Council produced the Berkswell Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2033 which is expected to be formally made by SMBC in September 2019. Setting out the vision for the future of the parish, the Plan also includes advice relating to the historic environment and forthcoming development proposals. The Site is not identified as an area for development and no area-specific heritage advice relates to the Site or its surrounds. Reference is, however, made to the framed barn conversion at Barrett's Lane Farm.
- 1.9. This assessment has been undertaken within the key statute, policy and guidance context presented within Table 1.1. The applicable provisions contained within these statute, policy and guidance documents are referred to, and discussed, as relevant, throughout the text. Fuller detail is provided in Appendix 1.

Statute	Description
<b>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)</b>	Act of Parliament placing a duty upon the Local Planning Authority (or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State) to afford due consideration to the preservation of Listed Buildings and their settings (under Section 66(1)), and Conservation Areas (under Section 72(2)), in determining planning applications.
<b>National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002)</b>	One of four Acts of Parliament providing for the protection and management of the historic environment, including the establishment of the Historic Monuments & Buildings Commission, now Historic England.
<b>Conservation Principles (Historic England 2008)</b>	Guidance for assessing heritage significance, with reference to contributing heritage values, in particular: <i>evidential</i> (archaeological), <i>historical</i> (illustrative and associative), <i>aesthetic</i> , and <i>communal</i> .
<b>National Planning Policy Framework (2019)</b>	Provides the English government's national planning policies and describes how these are expected to be applied within the planning system. Heritage is subject of Chapter 16 (page 54).
<b>Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015)</b>	Provides useful information on assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

Statute	Description
<b>Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets, Second Edition (Historic England, 2017)</b>	Provides guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.
<b>Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Solihull Local Plan: Shaping a Sustainable Future (2013)</b>	Comprises the local development plan (local plan), as required to be compiled, published and maintained by the local authority, consistent with the requirements of the NPPF (2019). Intended to be the primary planning policy document against which planning proposals within that local authority jurisdiction are assessed. Where the development plan is found to be inadequate, primacy reverts to the NPPF (2019).

**Table 1.1** Key statute, policy and guidance

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1. This assessment has been informed by the significance of identified heritage assets and any potential development effects. This approach is in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF (2019) and guidance issued by ClfA and Historic England.

### *Research*

- 2.2. The assessment has been supported by a level of research on the historical development of the Site and its surroundings from publically available sources, including the Historic England's National Heritage List for England (NHLE), Envirocheck, Genealogist, National Library of Scotland, and other online sources available on the LPA's website, including local planning policy information.

### *Site visit*

- 2.3. A site visit was also undertaken on 20 August 2019 as part of this assessment. The primary objectives of the Site visit were to assess the Site's historic landscape context, including its association with any known or potential heritage assets, and to facilitate an assessment of their nature, condition, significance and potential susceptibility to impact. The wider landscape was examined, as relevant, from accessible public rights of way.

### *Assessment of heritage significance*

- 2.4. The significance of known and potential heritage assets within the Site, and any beyond the Site which may be affected by the proposed development, has been assessed and described, in accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF (2019), the guidance issued by ClfA (2014) and 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2' (Historic England 2015). Determination of significance has been undertaken according to the industry-standard guidance on assessing heritage value provided within 'Conservation Principles' (Historic England 2008). This approach considers heritage significance to derive from a combination of discrete heritage values, principal amongst which are: **i)** evidential (archaeological) value, **ii)** historic (illustrative and associative) value, **iii)** aesthetic value, **iv)** communal value, amongst others. Further detail of this approach, including the detailed definition of those aforementioned values, as set out, and advocated, by Historic England, is provided in Appendix 1 of this report.

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### *Assessment of potential development effects (benefit and harm)*

- 2.5. The present report sets out, in detail, the ways in which identified susceptible heritage assets might be affected by the proposals, as well as the anticipated extent of any such effects. Both physical effects, i.e. resulting from the direct truncation of archaeological remains, and non-physical effects, i.e. resulting from changes to the setting of heritage assets, have been assessed. With regard to non-physical effects or 'settings assessment', the five-step assessment methodology advocated by Historic England, and set out in the Second Edition of GPA3 (Historic England, 2017), has been adhered to (presented in greater detail in Appendix 1).
- 2.6. Identified effects upon heritage assets have been defined within broad 'level of effect' categories (Table 2.2). These are consistent with key national heritage policy and guidance terminology, particularly that of the NPPF (2019). This has been done in order to improve the intelligibility of the assessment results for purposes of quick reference and ready comprehension. These broad determinations of level of effect should be viewed within the context of the qualifying discussions of significance and impact presented in this report.
- 2.7. It should be noted that the overall effect of development proposals upon the designated heritage asset are judged, bearing in mind both any specific harms or benefits (an approach consistent with the Court of Appeal judgement *Palmer v. Herefordshire Council & ANR* Neutral Citation Number [2016] EWCA Civ 1061).
- 2.8. In relation to non-designated heritage assets, the key applicable policy is paragraph 197 of the NPPF (2019), which states that:
- 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the **scale of any harm or loss** and the **significance of the heritage asset** [our emphasis].'*
- 2.9. Thus with regard to non-designated heritage assets, this report seeks to identify the significance of the heritage asset(s) which may be affected, and the scale of any harm or loss to that significance.



Level of effect	Description	Applicable statute & policy
<b>Heritage benefit</b>	The proposals would better enhance or reveal the heritage significance of the heritage asset.	Enhancing or better revealing the significance of a heritage asset is a desirable development outcome in respect of heritage. It is consistent with key policy and guidance, including the NPPF (2019) paragraphs 185 and 200.
<b>No harm</b>	The proposals would preserve the significance of the heritage asset.	<p>Preserving a Listed building and its setting is consistent with s66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).</p> <p>Preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area is consistent with s72 of the Act.</p> <p>Sustaining the significance of a heritage asset is consistent with paragraph 185 of the NPPF, and should be at the core of any material local planning policies in respect of heritage.</p>
<b>Less than substantial harm (lower end)</b>	The proposals would be anticipated to result in a restricted level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset, such that the asset's contributing heritage values would be largely preserved.	<p>In determining an application, this level of harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, as per paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019).</p> <p>Proposals involving change to a Listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, or change to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas, must also be considered within the context of Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the 1990 Act. <i>The provisions of the Act do not apply to the setting of Conservation Areas.</i></p>
<b>Less than substantial harm (upper end)</b>	The proposals would lead to a notable level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset. A reduced, but appreciable, degree of its heritage significance would remain.	<p>Proposals with the potential to physically affect a Scheduled Monument (including the ground beneath that monument) will be subject to the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979); <i>these provisions do not apply to proposals involving changes to the setting of Scheduled Monuments.</i></p> <p>With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the scale of harm or loss should be weighed against the significance of the asset, in accordance with paragraph 197 of the NPPF.</p>
<b>Substantial harm</b>	The proposals would very much reduce the heritage asset's significance or vitiate that significance altogether.	<p>Paragraphs 193 - 196 of the NPPF (2018) would apply. Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the Planning Act (1990), and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), may also apply.</p> <p>In relation to non-designated heritage assets, the scale of harm or loss should be</p>

Level of effect	Description	Applicable statute & policy
		weighed against the significance of the asset, in accordance with paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

**Table 2.2** Summary of level of effect categories (benefit and harm) referred to in this report in relation to heritage assets, and the applicable statute and policy.

### *Limitations of the assessment*

- 2.10. This assessment is principally a desk-based study and utilised secondary information derived from Historic England’s National Heritage list and PastScape, which have been directly examined for the purpose of this assessment. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate.
- 2.11. A review of online historic aerial photographs of the Site and study area was excluded from the scope of this assessment, given that the assessment focuses on non-physical impacts upon designated assets. This also applied to HER data and LiDAR imagery available for the Site. Historic sources have been consulted, where associations between the Site and designated assets have been assessed. There may be other relevant material held by the National Archives, other local repositories, and in private collections; which were not visited as part of this assessment.
- 2.12. A walkover survey was conducted within the Site, which was undertaken in dry and clear weather conditions. Access within the Site was limited to areas closest to Barretts Lane and the southern extent (Photos 1 and 2), with access not permitted beyond those plots. Dense vegetation populated the Site boundaries and enclosed it from the surrounding landscape. There was sufficient access to the surrounding landscape from Public Rights of Way, although due to location of the Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the Site within private properties, no access was afforded to their immediate grounds. As such, an assessment of the likely impacts upon the significance of the assets due to changes to their setting was taken from the adjacent footpaths, roads and agricultural fields.

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### 3. OVERVIEW OF HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. This section provides a summary of the landscape context and historical development of the Site in order to provide a robust understanding of the Site's context and its contribution, as part of the setting, to the significance of several designated heritage assets discussed in the subsequent chapters.

#### *Landscape context*

- 3.2. The Site is situated on the eastern extent of the village of Balsall Common, on the periphery between agricultural landscape to the east and settlement to the west. The village is situated within an undulating landscape, on the watershed between streams draining to the River Tame and Trent in the north and the River Avon and Severn in the south. A large rural settlement, situated c. 13km east of Solihull and 12km west of Coventry, the village of Balsall Common comprises several different character areas, identifiable by the extant development. The village lies within a wider agricultural landscape, interspersed by modern transport infrastructure including the West Midlands Railway, a former railway line of which lies c. 690m north-east of the Site.
- 3.3. Within the Site boundary, the historic landscape character is planned inclosure (rectilinear fields with straight boundaries), likely to have been enclosed during the 18th to 19th century. Two historic farmsteads lie in the vicinity of the Site, Pool Orchard c. 160 to the north (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, **E**) and Barretts Lane Farm c. 130m to the east (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, **A**). The surrounding landscape is gently undulating, with the Site lying c. 124m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

#### *Historical context*

- 3.4. There is very limited evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity within the wider landscape, and it is suggested that the wider landscape was once heavily wooded with limited settlement and minimal land use. Small scale woodland clearance and seasonal use of the woodland is likely to have occurred from the prehistoric period onwards, and the first evidence of known settlement in the wider landscape dates from the Neolithic or Bronze Age.
- 3.5. In the early medieval period, this area formed part of the Hwiccan kingdom which extended over what is now Worcestershire, western Warwickshire and large parts of Gloucestershire (except for the Forest of Dean). Later forming part of the kingdom of Mercia, the village of Balsall Common is likely to date from this period, with name

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suggested to have originated from the Anglo-Saxon word '*Baelle*' referring to a corner (or angle) of land and '*heale*' suggesting a sheltered place.

- 3.6. By the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086, the wider landscape formed part of the county of Warwick which included settlements and manors, such as Berkswell. Situated within the manor of Berkswell, the Site was located on the historic boundary between Berkswell to the east and Hampton in Arden to the west. Woodland clearance continued during the medieval period, with much of the ancient Forest of Arden, which covered parts of Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham, converted for agricultural use. Agricultural activity became the primary economic activity during this and later periods, with the landscape witnessing a rise in arable farming and construction of isolated farmsteads (Department for Transport 2013).
- 3.7. The period between the 16th and 19th centuries witnessed a fundamental re-organisation of farming practices and of the countryside. This led to the almost universal abandonment and inclosure of the medieval communal open field system and the consolidation of private and tenanted farmland as discrete farmsteads with associated field systems.
- 3.8. Settlement continued to develop during the post-medieval and modern periods, often witnessed as an expansion of the existing manors. Whilst Berkswell survived largely unaltered, the character of Hampton-in-Arden to the west changed significantly. Major changes in Berkswell during the modern period are associated with residential expansion, the Inclosure Act of 1802 and the introduction of the railway running from London to Birmingham through the Blythe Valley in 1838.
- 3.9. In 1863 the village of Balsall Common was made a separate ecclesiastical parish from Hampton-in-Arden, and from the mid-20th century onwards it expanded as a result of post-war development (BalsallCom.Com n.d.; Salzman 1947).

#### ***Archaeological potential***

- 3.10. The heritage appraisal produced by CA in 2017 presented an initial high-level review of the known heritage resource that may potentially be affected by development within the Site. With regard to the archaeological potential of the Site, it did not identify any recorded non-designated heritage assets within the Site. Current evidence suggests that the Site has remained largely in agricultural use since at least the 19th century, and possibly earlier with evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation



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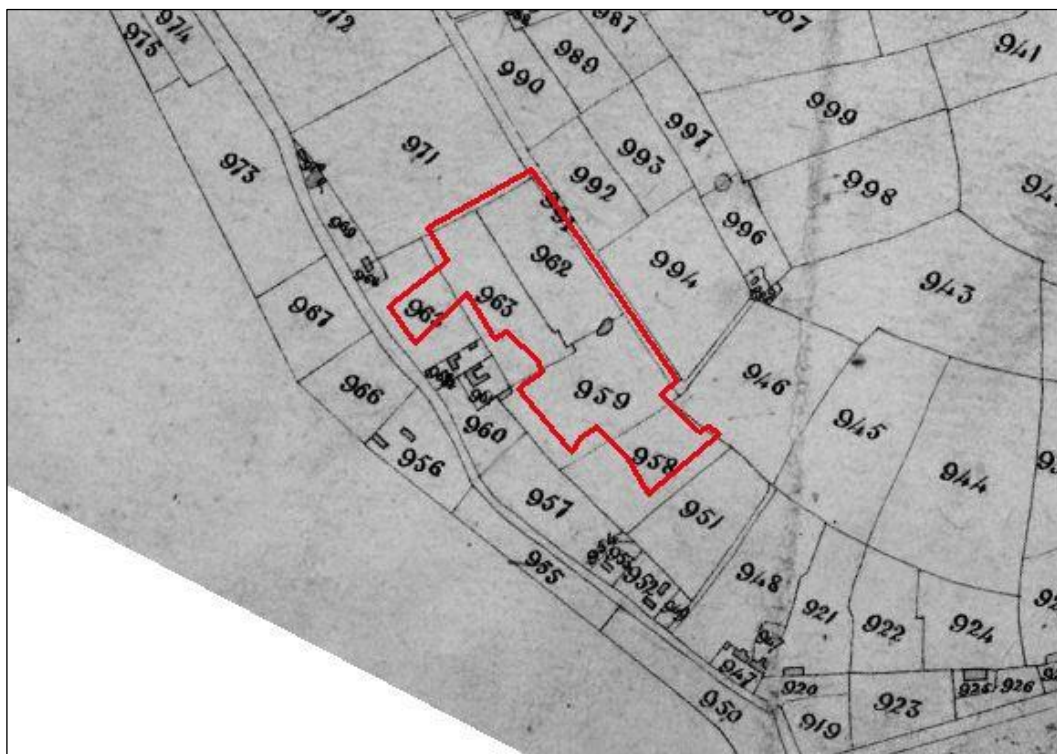
earthworks, recorded from aerial photographs, in the vicinity of the Site. The appraisal notes the Site has been subject to little disturbance across the Site.

- 3.11. As this assessment focuses solely on the potential impacts on the significance of designated heritage assets through development within their settings, it is recommended that advice from the Local Authority's archaeological advisors is sought to determine whether any additional works are required in respect of potential buried archaeological remains. This could include an archaeological assessment, geophysical survey and/or archaeological trial trench evaluation.

#### *Development within the Site*

- 3.12. This section provides a brief overview of the historical development of the Site from the 16th century onwards and should be read in conjunction with the historic maps published in the Heritage Impact Assessment produced in 2019 for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, and those reproduced below.
- 3.13. A series of maps dating from the 16th to 18th century were consulted as part of this assessment, including Saxton's Map of Warwickshire (1577, not produced), Speed's Map of Warwickshire (1676, not reproduced) and Cary's Map of Warwickshire (1787, not reproduced). Whilst these maps illustrate the surrounding areas of historic settlement, the Site appears to have comprised part of the immediate agricultural landscape east of Balsall Common (recorded as 'Bals hall' and 'Balsall'). No detailed depiction of the Site is afforded.
- 3.14. The earliest available cartographic reference which clearly depicts the Site is the 1802 Inclosure Award for Hampton-in-Arden, Berkswell (not reproduced; Burton-Pye 2019, Fig. 6). This map illustrates the Site encompassing part of five parcels of land held under 'The Heirs of James Dockers' Land', 'William Reeders Land', 'Catherine Barretts Land' and 'Job Findon'. Whilst the composition of the Site, likely associated with agricultural activity, the land-use is not detailed in this source. The map illustrates a pond to the east, remaining present today, and the extant hedgerows follow the north, south and western boundaries shown on this map. As such, they may warrant consideration under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations (Appendix 1). Within the immediate environs of the Site, Meeting House Lane to the south-west appears to have comprised a private road during this period.
- 3.15. By the mid-19th century, the Site and its environs had been subject to planned enclosure with the subdivision of former larger open areas of land into rectilinear

fields with straight boundaries. Illustrated on the Parish of Berkswell Tithe Map dating to 1841 (Fig. 2) the fieldscape within the Site was subdivided into five parcels of land with most of the existing field boundaries established by this period. A description of the land parcels, as recorded in the Tithe Apportionment, is summarised in Table 3. Below and these indicate whilst the Site continued to be utilised for agricultural activity, it had been subject to a change in ownership with the majority of the fieldscape owned and occupied by Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates by 1841. The field name 'Barn Field' is likely to derive from the barn situated in the western corner of Parcel 959, now designated as a Grade II Listed Building (now known as no. 85a and/or Emscot Barn; Fig. 4, C).



**Fig. 2** Extract from the 1841 Parish of Berkswell Tithe Map

Parcel	Name	Cultivation	Occupier	Landowner
958	Jar Close	Mown and Grazed	Henry Hyatt Bates	Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates
959	Barn Field	Mown and Grazed	Henry Hyatt Bates	Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates
962	Further Lane Close	Mown and Grazed	Henry Hyatt Bates	Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates
963	White Yard and part of Little Pleck	Mown and Grazed	Henry Hyatt Bates	Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates
965	Pleck	Mown and Grazed	Thomas Ledgley	James Taylor

991	Lane	Pasture and Roadway	Joseph Gilbert	Joseph Gilbert
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**Table 3.1** Extract from the 1839 Berkswell Tithe Apportionment

- 3.16. The Site and surrounding landscape remained in agricultural use throughout the early modern period, as suggested by 19th century Ordnance Survey mapping. Subsequent Ordnance Survey mapping from 1887-1888 onwards, illustrates limited development within the Site, with a pond adjacent to the south-western boundary and no. 85 Meeting House Lane, now designated a Grade II Listed Building (Fig. 4, **B**), having direct access into the south-western extent of the Site.
- 3.17. By the early 19th century alterations to property/field boundaries removed no. 85 Meeting House Lane's access into the Site, and the Grade II Listed barn (Fig. 4, **C**) to the south of the Site was enclosed within its own grounds. During the post-war period Balsall Common witnessed a rise in the construction of residential dwellings, including ribbon development along Meeting House Lane. The former agricultural fields adjacent to the roadside were subdivided into linear parcels of land, orientated north-east/south-west, with the houses set back from the roadside.
- 3.18. By the mid-20th century the south-eastern boundary of the Site was established and by the c. 1960s no. 73 Meeting House Lane, recorded as Canford Close, was built in the western extent of the Site. Ordnance Survey mapping from 1986-1988 (not reproduced) illustrates further alteration in the Site, with field boundary alterations and the establishment of two buildings possibly associated with agricultural activity, to the rear of no. 85 and 85a (Emscot Barn) Meeting House Lane. Visible on Google Earth imagery for the Site, these buildings were removed by c. 2003. Due to the limited access available for the Site, this area was unable to be subject to a walkover. Google Earth imagery for this period records the continued character of most of the Site as undeveloped grassland, with the southern extent utilised for agricultural activity. From c. 2010 onwards the majority of the Site, excluding the southern (an agricultural field) and western (no. 73 Meeting House Lane) extent, converted to disused scrubland overgrown with vegetation.

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## 4. THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS

4.1. This section considers potential non-physical effects upon the significance of susceptible heritage assets within the Site environs. Non-physical effects are those that derive from changes to the setting of heritage assets as a result of new development. All heritage assets included within the settings assessment are summarised in the gazetteer in Appendix 2 and shown on Figure 3. Those assets identified as potentially susceptible to non-physical impact, and thus subject to more detailed assessment, are discussed in greater detail within the remainder of this section and illustrated on Fig. 4.

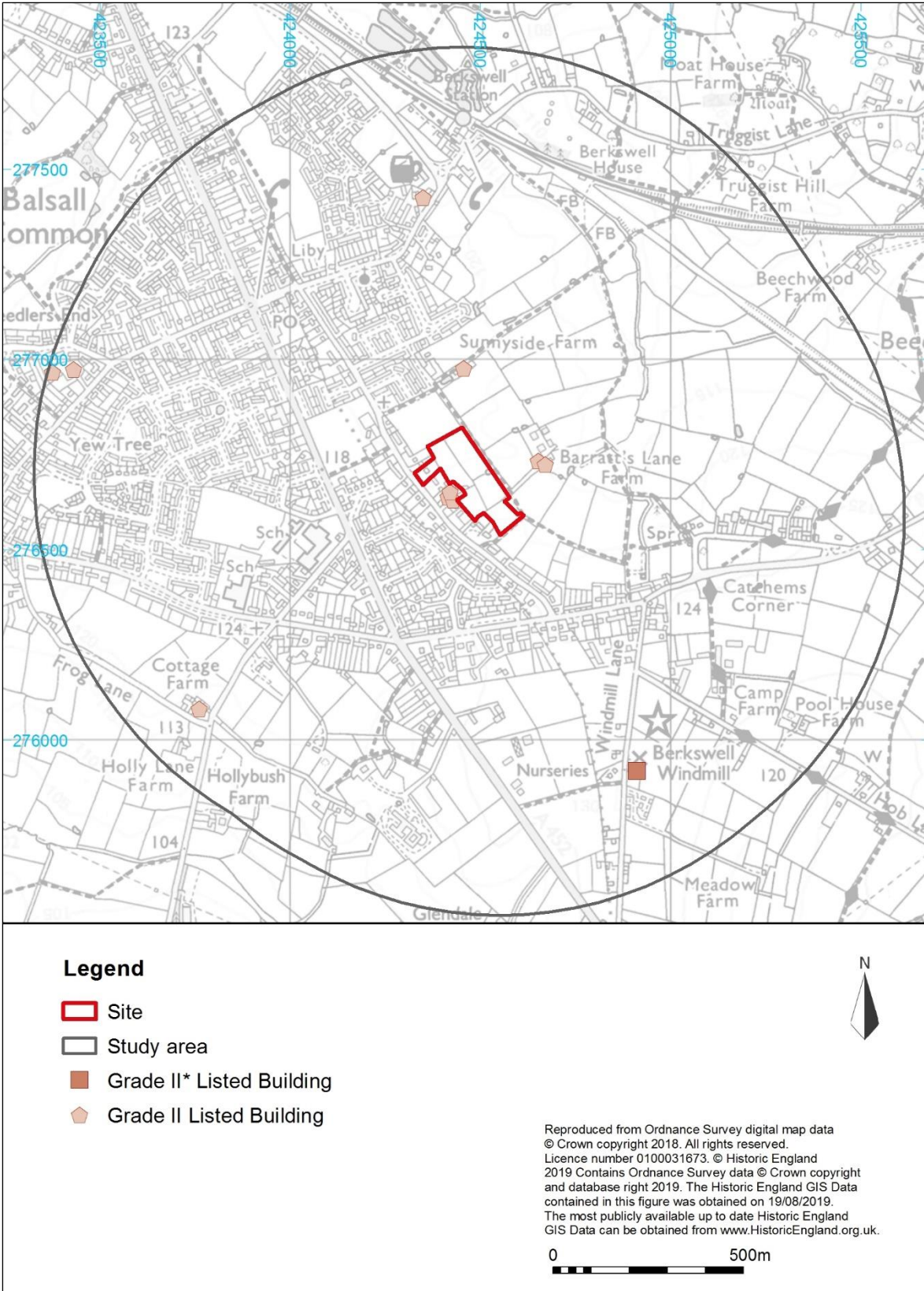
4.2. Throughout the assessment below direct reference will be made to the Heritage Impact Assessment produced for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council in March 2019. This settings assessment will address some of the comments made in relation to the surrounding designated heritage assets and the aim of this chapter is to provide a more detailed consideration of these assets, taking into account information from the HEC.

### *Step 1: Identification of heritage assets potentially affected*

4.3. Step 1 of the Second Edition of Historic England's 2017 'Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3' (GPA3) is to 'identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected' (see Appendix 1). GPA3 notes that Step 1 should identify the heritage assets which are likely to be affected as a result of any change to their experience, as a result of the development proposal (GPA3, page 9).

4.4. Step 1 entailed undertaking a map-based search of the NHLE and the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council website to identify all designated heritage assets within the 1km study area. Several heritage assets were identified as part of this step, as potentially susceptible to impact as a result of changes to their setting. These assets have been identified using a combination of GIS analysis and field examination, which has considered, amongst other factors, the surrounding topographic and environmental conditions, built form, vegetation cover, and lines of sight, within the context of the assets' heritage significance.





**Fig. 3** Designated heritage assets (identified as part of Step 1)



**Fig. 4** Designated heritage assets (identified as part of Step 2)

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- 4.5. This exercise concluded that there was no direct visibility between the Site and the one Grade II\* and four Grade II Listed Buildings in the wider environs comprising:
- Grade II\* Listed Berkswell Windmill located c. 720m south-east of the Site;
  - Grade II Listed the Brickmakers Arms Public House located c. 610m north of the Site;
  - Grade II Listed Templars Croft located c. 990m north-west of the Site;
  - Grade II Listed the Homestead located c. 940m north-west of the Site; and
  - Grade II Listed Cottage Farmhouse located c. 880m south-west of the Site.
- 4.6. Located at a sufficient distance from the Site to suggest they have no historical or functional relationship with it, these assets are also effectively screened by local topography, existing vegetation and intervening built form. From this exercise it was established that for these designated heritage assets the Site does not comprise a part of the setting that contributes to their significance; as such, they are not sensitive to any forthcoming proposed development and were excluded from further assessment. These five Listed Buildings are listed in Appendix 2.
- 4.7. Five Grade II Listed Buildings within the immediate environs of the Site were subject to further consideration as part of Step 1 (Fig. 4, **A-E**) and a more detailed assessment has been developed in Steps 2-3 below.

### ***Steps 2 – 3: Assessment of setting and potential effects of the development***

- 4.8. This section presents the results of Steps 2 to 3 of the settings assessment, which have been undertaken with regard to those potentially susceptible heritage assets identified in Step 1. Step 2 considers the contribution that setting makes to the significance of potentially susceptible heritage assets. Step 3 then considers how, if at all, and to what extent any anticipated changes to the setting of those assets, as a result of development within the Site, might affect their significance.

#### **Barretts Lane Farm (Fig. 4, A)**

- 4.9. Barretts Lane Farm comprises two Grade II Listed Buildings, Barretts Lane Farmhouse and an associated barn, situated c. 130m east of the Site (Fig. 4, **A**; Photo 3). Designated in July 1976, the farmhouse is of 17th century origin and comprises a two-storey timber framed structure with whitewashed brick nogging and a machine tiled roof. The farmhouse has been subject to alterations and extensions in the early 21st century and has recently been renovated to provide quality modern accommodation.



- 4.10. The barn, designated at the same time as the farmhouse, dates from the 17th or 18th century and comprises a timber framed building with red brick nogging and a half hipped tiled roof. Planning permission has also been granted for its renovation and conversion to residential use, which during the time of the walkover survey had yet to be undertaken. Changes within the immediate environs of these buildings are discussed in further detail below.



**Photo 3** View towards Barretts Lane Farm from the south

- 4.11. The Listed Buildings principal source of significance are the evidential values inherent in their physical form, which will remain entirely unaltered by any residential development in the Site. As an example of 17th and 18th century vernacular architecture, the fabric of the structures has the ability to inform our understanding of construction techniques of the period and the buildings retain historical (illustrative) and group values relating to their status as remnants of the local post-medieval landscape and historic farm complex. Being of a functional design, the farmhouse and barn have limited aesthetic value aside from some incidental value as attractive historic structures. The architectural and historic interest of the heritage assets, inherent in their physical fabric, is recognised in their statutory designation.
- 4.12. Sharing similar setting, and within close proximity to each other, the two Listed Buildings form a key element of each other's settings, contributing to both their overall

significance and group values. As they share this common setting, any effects resulting from potential development within the Site are considered together.

*Physical Surrounds – ‘What Matters and Why’*

- 4.13. The Listed Buildings are situated within Barretts Lane Farm, which now comprises a residential complex of converted former agricultural buildings and modern development. Information boards at both the entrance to Barretts Lane and the former farm complex refers to ‘a collection of beautifully designed barns built to the highest standard and quality’ (Photo 4). As a result of the modern development, the former farm complex has been divided into five separate dwellings with associated gardens and car parking centred on a pond. Large 21st century portal frame farm buildings, converted to residential dwellings, lie to the north and north-east of the farmhouse, with a timber framed garage to the south.



**Photo 4** Barretts Lane Farm sign

- 4.14. Historic mapping from 1802 indicates that the farmhouse, recorded as ‘Dockers in the Hole’, was historically associated with the wider agricultural landscape to the north and west of the property. Situated within a large open agricultural field, the farmhouse was held under the same ownership as parts of the proposed development Site, ‘The Heirs of James Dockers’ Lane’. Despite this historic link between the Listed Building and Site, later changes in ownership, the inclosure of agricultural fields and establishment of the farm complex have affected this. During



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the mid-19th century the farmhouse and barn was enclosed as a separate parcel of land, described as 'The Homestead and Garden' occupied by William Rynell and held under the ownership of the Trustees of Berkswell Charity. The layout illustrated on the 1841 Parish of Berkswell Tithe Map would have been integral to the functionality of the farmhouse, with it comprising an enclosed complex within a wider agricultural landscape.

- 4.15. Very little of the original setting of Barretts Farm survives today. As illustrated by historic mapping, the farm complex was subject to alteration and extension during the late 19th and 20th centuries with the establishment of the portal framed buildings by the c. 1980s. This assessment has concluded whilst this contributes to our understanding of the historic development of the farmstead, its developmental form is not sympathetic to the historic farm complex portrayed in the early 19th century. In addition, the recent conversion of the agricultural farm complex into a modern high-quality residential complex makes a limited contribution to the appreciation, understanding and significance of the Grade II Listed buildings. These alterations have resulted in a loss of function of the farmhouse, and whilst it does appear as a farm complex during glimpsed views from the wider landscape (discussed further below), the converted agricultural buildings exhibit modern design elements. Their establishment has also resulted in a change within the former farm complex, with the subdivision of land to create gardens and car parking. This, along with the conversion of the agricultural buildings and loss of function of the farmhouse and barn (subject to its conversion as a residential dwelling), has compromised the ability to appreciate and understand the Listed Buildings within their immediate historical and functional context, and has greatly reduced the overall contribution of setting to the significance of the asset.
- 4.16. As a surviving element of the historic farm complex, the barn and farmhouse do retain a historical and visual relationship with each other, contributing to the historical illustrative value. This relationship is therefore considered to be a key aspect of the setting and will not be adversely affected by the proposed residential development.
- 4.17. In terms of the immediate setting the agricultural fields, including those adjacent to the Barretts Lane Farm, are considered to contribute to the significance of the two Listed Buildings as they maintain historical landscape context within which the farmhouse and barn were constructed. Such context was highlighted by the HEC, who reflected upon the associative link between the farm and agricultural landscape

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by the time of the Tithe Map in 1841 (Burton-Pye 2019). As discussed in Section 3, whilst the Site did form part of a wider agricultural landscape on the south-eastern extent of the village of Balsall Common during the early to mid-19th century, this assessment has concluded that it did not form part of the landscape directly associated with the farm. A review of the available cartographic sources indicates that although the Site and farm were held under the same ownership in the early 19th century, later alterations including the inclosure of land and transfer of ownership affected this, resulting in the historic relationship now being best appreciated on historic and cartographic sources.

- 4.18. Whilst this assessment agrees with the HEC comments that *'this landscape constitutes a 'valued' landscape'*, with the fields and hedgerows contributing to an appreciation of the agricultural origins of the farm complex, a review of the available historic mapping indicates that the Site retained its character until the late 20th century, the majority of the Site has fallen into disuse which affects the appreciation for the former agricultural function (Burton-Pye 2019). During the walkover survey it was noted that the landscape to the north, east and south-east of Barretts Lane Farm continues to be utilised as agricultural land and is good example of surviving post-inclosure landscape. Views towards the farming complex from these areas allow for it to be experienced within its surrounding rural landscape, but this is not afforded from the proposed development Site. As such, this assessment has concluded that this landscape, in comparison to the Site, makes a greater contribution to the setting and significance of the Listed Buildings.

*Experience – 'What Matters and Why'*

- 4.19. Whilst the Listed Buildings, in terms of their form and appearance inherent within the historic and architectural features, retain the character, the restoration and development work has resulted in a loss of the former function of these buildings.
- 4.20. The two buildings can be best experienced from within their immediate environs which allow for the key contributors to the evidential and historical values retained within the historic fabric of the building to be appreciated, and the buildings to be viewed in association with each other (Photo 3) and other former agricultural buildings. It is worth noting, however, that in such views, especially in those from the entrance to Barretts Lane, encompass the historic structures against a backdrop of modern development (Photo 3).

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4.21. Glimpsed long-distance views of the farmhouse and barn are afforded from several locations, including from along Barretts Lane through breaks in the vegetation (Photo 5), Public Rights of Way through the wider agricultural landscape and the south-eastern corner of the Site (Photo 6). Whilst the historic structures are partially screened at points due to the presence of intervening vegetation, such views encompass the adjacent converted agricultural barns. At this distance these views do not allow for an appreciation of the historic structures, they do however allow for the farming complex to be experienced in association with the surrounding agricultural landscape, notably those fields to the north, east and south-east. No similar views are afforded from the proposed development Site due to the presence of intervening vegetation.



**Photo 5** View towards Barretts Lane Farm from the west

4.22. Due to the presence of intervening vegetation both within and along the Site's boundaries, no clear views of the Listed Buildings from the west (Photo 7) were noted during the walkover survey. It is likely that seasonal views of the proposed residential development within the Site could be afforded from the farmhouse, although such views could be offset by landscaping along the Site's north-eastern and eastern boundary.





**Photo 6** View towards Barretts Lane Farm from the south



**Photo 7** View towards Barretts Lane Farm from the west

4.23. Beyond the fact of this visibility itself, the remainder of views from the wider agricultural landscape (to the north, north-east and east) make no contribution to the significance of the Listed Buildings. The presence of large barn conversions of modern design dominates any glimpsed views of the Listed Buildings (Photo 8), and

these views do not allow for the architectural and historic interest of the buildings to be experienced and appreciated.



**Photo 8** View towards Barretts Lane Farm from the north-east

#### *Summary of development effects*

- 4.24. Any proposed residential development within the Site would have no impact upon the physical characteristics of the Listed Buildings, from which they derive their primary evidential and historic values inherent within the architectural and historic interest. Additionally, the proposed development would also leave unaltered the relationship between the post-medieval farmhouse and associated barn.
- 4.25. Whilst the Site historically forms part of a wider agricultural landscape within which Barretts Lane Farm was situated, this assessment has concluded that the key elements that contribute to the setting comprise the immediate surrounds (i.e. the former farm complex) and the surviving agricultural landscape to the north, east and south-east. As the proposed development Site falls outside of these key areas and has largely fallen into disuse affecting the former agricultural function, it is not considered to contribute to the significance of the Listed Buildings.
- 4.26. Whilst development within the Site would change the character and function of the Site and could potentially change views from Barretts Lane Farm to the north-east, this assessment has concluded that potential residential development should be



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considered in relation to the ongoing conversion of the farm complex and would represent an extension of settlement on the south-eastern periphery of the village of Balsall Common. Any views could be restricted by the presence of intervening vegetation and could be softened through the application of appropriate design, materials and layout.

- 4.27. Any proposed development would not affect the principal components of the assets' significance, comprising the evidential and historical values retained within their physical fabric, and nor would it result in any adverse impact on the key elements of the setting contributing to the significance of the farmhouse and associated barn. Whilst the proposed residential development would result in a change to the wider landscape, this assessment found that the level of change to the setting of Barretts Lane Farmhouse and barn posed by the development was acceptable, particularly in light of alterations to the setting of the Listed Buildings which have, and continue to, occur.

#### Listed Buildings along Meeting House Lane (Fig. 4, B-D)

- 4.28. Three Grade II Listed Buildings are situated along the northern side of Meeting House Lane located adjacent to the southern boundary of the Site. These include:
- no. 85 Meeting House Lane, c. 30m west of the Site (Fig. 4, **B**);
  - a barn at no. 85 (now no. 85a and/or Emscot Barn) Meeting House Lane, c. 5m west of the Site (Fig. 4, **C**); and
  - an outbuilding approximately 5m east of no. 83 Meeting House Lane (not included in designation), c. 20m west of the Site (Fig. 4, **D**).
- 4.29. No. 85 Meeting House Lane is an early 17th century single-storey timber framed and brick building, with early 18th and 20th century alterations and extensions. It is set on a stone plinth with a single central brick chimney stack. The entrance comprises a 20th century brick gabled porch. The gabled walls show evidence of 17th century timber framing.
- 4.30. An early 17th century barn is situated to the immediate south of no. 85 Meeting House Lane. Converted and extended for residential use (now known as no. 85a and/or Emscot Barn) in c. 1986, the barn has been subject to several later alterations and additions during the late 20th and early 21st century (Hasker Architects 2018). Constructed with a timber frame, brick nogging and thatched roof, the building follows

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a three-bay box framed plan with a 19th century extension to the south. The entrance is partially blocked and has a small plank doorway.

- 4.31. To the immediate north of 85 Meeting House Lane is a further outbuilding, now a garage, of 17th century date with later alterations. This building is also timber framed with brick infill. The right end has been rebuilt in brick with a garage doorway. The interior roof structure is of queen-post trusses with braces, trenched purlins and wind-braces.
- 4.32. The significance of these Listed Buildings is derived primarily from their physical fabric. The evidential and historical values of the Listed Buildings are embodied within their historic fabric, displaying the architectural and historic interest, and will not be harmed by the proposed residential development. In addition, the buildings important historical and group values derive both from them historically forming part of a complex of buildings along Meeting House Lane and as examples of post-medieval dwellings in the village of Balsall Common.

*Physical Surrounds – ‘What Matters and Why’*

- 4.33. The Listed Buildings are situated along Meeting House Lane. Meeting House Lane is characterised by mid to late 20th century ribbon development set back from the roadside. The residential dwellings along this street are of varying design and scale, enclosing the Listed Buildings to the north, east and south. Set within their own grounds, the outbuilding 5m east of no. 83 Meeting House Lane lies on the boundary with no. 85 whose principal elevation faces towards the south-west overlooking a garden enclosed from the road by boundary treatments and dense vegetation (Photo 9). Several 20th century buildings are situated in the rear garden of this property, including a pool which lies adjacent to the south-western boundary of the Site.
- 4.34. Set within its own grounds, separated from no. 85 by intervening vegetation, Emscot Barn has a garden to the north-east and a 20th century garage to the south-west (Photo 10).



**Photo 9** View towards no. 85 Meeting House Lane from the south-west



**Photo 10** View towards no. 85 Meeting House Lane from the south-west

4.35. Historic maps show this complex once lay within a wider agricultural landscape on the north-eastern side of Meeting House Lane. Whilst it is not clear on the Inclosure Map of 1802 whether the buildings from part of 'The Heirs of James Dockers' Land' or were owned by 'Job Findon', the later 1841 Berkswell Tithe Map illustrates the



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barn clearly divided from no. 85 recorded as 'Three Cottages and Gardens'. Situated within an agricultural field (Parcel 959) suitably named as 'Barn Field', the barn lay directly south of the proposed Site boundary. The cartographic evidence illustrates a direct historical relationship between this part of the Site and the Listed Buildings, held under the ownership of Henry Hyatt Bates and Mary Ann Bates. This layout would have been integral to the function of these buildings, and Ordnance Survey mapping from the late 19th and early 20th century illustrates no. 85 having direct access to the fields (i.e. the Site) to the rear of the building.

- 4.36. Very little of this original setting survives today. Field boundary alterations and post-war development along Meeting House Lane resulted in changes from the mid-19th century onwards, severing the link between the Listed Buildings and agricultural landscape to the north. Whilst the Site historically formed part of the immediate setting of the Listed Buildings, it continued to comprise part of the agricultural hinterland of the village of Balsall Common before reverting to undeveloped grassland. The current character and appearance of the field parcels abutting the south-western boundary of the Site (i.e. scrubland with no access) makes no contribution to the appreciation, understanding or significance of the Listed Buildings. This along with the conversion of the former barn and outbuilding for residential and ancillary use has comprised the ability to appreciate and understand the historical and functional content, reducing the overall contribution of setting to the significance of the assets. As such, the original function of the Listed Buildings and their historical relationship with the proposal Site can be best appreciated on historic and cartographic sources.
- 4.37. As surviving elements of a former historic complex of buildings, these Listed Buildings do retain a historic relationship contributing to their historical illustrative value. However, due to the subdivision of land for development and conversion of the former barn for residential use, the original function of no. 85 and Emscot Barn has been somewhat affected. Despite this, the relationship between these buildings is considered to be a key aspect of the setting and this will not be adversely affected by any proposed residential development within the Site.
- 4.38. In terms of the immediate setting, the current situation reflects the gradual erosion of the setting of the Listed Building which has occurred over the late 20th and early 21st century. The wider landscape to north-east and east does, however, make some

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contribution to significance, by way of illustrating the historically rural context of the buildings and village of Balsall Common.

*Experience – ‘What Matters and Why’*

- 4.39. With regard to the garage and Emscot Barn, the character of the buildings themselves, in terms of their form and appearance inherent within the historic and architectural features, marginally display the character of a former agricultural building and outbuilding. All three Listed Buildings have been subject to alterations which illustrate their developmental sequence and change in use. These buildings can be best experienced from within their immediate environs, i.e. the gardens, which allow for the key contributors to the evidential and historical values retained within the historic fabric of the buildings to be appreciated, and the buildings to be viewed in association with each other.
- 4.40. Situated away from the roadside, views towards the Listed Buildings from Meeting House Lane are restricted due to the presence of intervening built form and vegetation. Whilst no clear views of the outbuilding are afforded from the roadside, glimpsed views of no. 85 principal elevation are seen through breaks in the vegetation and at the entrance drive to the property (Photo 9). Whilst Emscot Barn is encompassed within these views, it is partially obscured behind the late 20th century garage and adjacent boundary treatment (Photo 10). The presence of intervening built form of varying design and scale, intervening vegetation and plot locations (development) screen the Listed Buildings from its surroundings and there are limited opportunities to appreciate them from the wider landscape, including Meeting House Lane (Photo 11).
- 4.41. Whilst access to the field parcels abutting the south-western boundary of the Site was not afforded as part of this assessment, the HEC notes that *‘they can only be glimpsed, intermittently, from the gardens of adjacent properties or through the hedges of the fields beyond’* (Burton-Pye 2019). This assessment has concluded that there are unlikely to be clear views of the Site from the Listed Buildings due to the presence of intervening vegetation both along the internal field (Photo 12) and property boundaries. No clear views of the Listed Buildings were afforded from elsewhere in the Site or from Public Rights of Way in the landscape to the north-east due to the presence of such vegetation.





**Photo 11** View along Meeting House Lane towards the north-west



**Photo 12** View towards the Listed Buildings from the north-east

#### *Summary of development effects*

- 4.42. The proposed residential development would have no impact upon the physical characteristics of the Listed Buildings, including the evidential and historic values

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inherent within the architectural and historic interest and group values between the Listed Buildings.

- 4.43. Whilst the Site retains a historical link with the Listed Buildings, this assessment that concluded that such relationship, and the original function of the barn, can be best appreciated on historic and cartographic sources. The current setting makes little contribution to the overall significance, due to the wholesale alterations to the immediate and wider setting of the structures from an agricultural landscape to one dominated by residential development. The Site, as undeveloped scrubland, makes no contribution to the significance of the Listed Building. Any proposed residential development within the Site would introduce a new built element but would not alter the general character of the area in which the buildings are now perceived, dominated by modern dwellings of varying design and scale.
- 4.44. Whilst any potential seasonal views from the Listed Buildings towards the north-east could be changed as a result of the development, any impacts could be softened through the application of appropriate design, materials and layout and retention/strengthening of vegetation along the south-western boundary.
- 4.45. The proposed residential development would not affect the principal components of the Listed Buildings significance, and it would not result in any adverse impact on the key elements of the setting contributing to the significance. This assessment found that the level of change to the setting of the Listed Buildings along Meeting House Lane posed by the development was acceptable, particularly given the alterations to the Listed Buildings and their setting which had already occurred and the current character and appearance of the Site. As such, this assessment agrees with the conclusions of the Heritage Impact Assessment produced for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (Burton-Pye 2019).

#### **Pool Orchard (Fig. 4, E)**

- 4.46. A Grade II Listed Building, Pool Orchard is situated c. 160m north of the Site (Fig. 4, E). The building comprises a 17th century rectangular two-storey house subject to later alterations. Constructed with a block timber frame and colour washed plaster with brick nogging, the house has a machine tiled roof. The modern cross wing to the north-eastern end of the building dates to the late 20th century and is constructed with colour washed brick to the ground floor, and tile hung on the upper-storey.



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- 4.47. The significance of this Listed Building is principally derived from the important evidential and historic values inherent in its physical form, as an example of a post-medieval vernacular dwelling.



**Photo 13** View towards Pool Orchard from the south-west

#### *Physical Surrounds – ‘What Matters and Why’*

- 4.48. The primary aspect of setting of the house which contributes to its significance comprises its immediate surroundings, including gardens and paddock, and enclosed via gate and private driveway off Barretts Lane (Photo 13). These elements of the building’s setting have a strong relationship with it and provide a context within which the asset can be best appreciated and understood. The key aspects of the setting of the Listed Building will not be altered in any way by development within the Site.
- 4.49. The Listed Building is located on the residential south-eastern periphery of the village of Balsall Common (i.e. Barrett’s Lane and Sunnyside Lane). This location, with residential development to the north and west connected via Barretts Lane, contributes to the significance as it illustrates the context within which the building developed.
- 4.50. As part of the HEC’s assessment it was noted that the *‘change of use of the building from a farmhouse to residential dwelling has altered the character of its immediate surroundings as experienced by the gardens that now surround it’* (Burton-Pye 2019).

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These conclusions stem from a review of cartographic sources which illustrate the Listed Building historically being associated with the fieldscape immediately to the south-east. Recorded as part of one large rectilinear field 'Hannah Loe's Land' on the 1802 Inclosure Map, subsequent field boundary alterations and changes in ownership resulted in the subdivision of land and separation of the former farmhouse from the immediate agricultural landscape. This separation resulted in a loss in the historic function, with the building recorded in the 1839 Berkswell Tithe Apportionment as a 'House and Gardens', occupied by William Riley and held by Joseph Gilbert. Despite these alterations, this assessment has concluded that the landscape immediately surrounding the former farmhouse illustrates the historic landscape context within which the building developed and functioned. As the Site was situated outside of the landscape historically associated with the farmhouse, this assessment has concluded that it provides a more limited contribution to the setting and significance of Pool Orchard.

*Experience – 'What Matters and Why'*

- 4.51. The heritage significance of Pool Orchard is best experienced from within its surrounding gardens, paddock and private driveway. Views of the Listed Building are also afforded from the entrance to the property from Barretts Lane to the south-west, although these views are partially restricted due to the presence of vegetation and boundary treatment (Photo 13). It is from these locations that the historic fabric and heritage values of the Listed Building can be best experienced and appreciated. The location of the property on the south-eastern periphery of the village also allows for some appreciation of the historic context in which the house was constructed.
- 4.52. Any views of the Listed Building from the wider landscape are limited, due to the combined effects of screening. Due to the presence of intervening built form along Sunnyside Lane and Barretts Lane to the north-west, and vegetation along Barretts Lane to the south-east (Photo 14), views towards the Listed Building are prevented.





**Photo 14** View towards Pool Orchard from the south



**Photo 15** View towards Pool Orchard from the north-east

4.53. Glimpsed views of the roof of the Listed Building are afforded from the Public Right of Way which runs through the field to the north of the Listed Building, and intermittent views from within the fieldscape to the north-east (Photo 15). It should also be noted that as a vernacular dwelling, this Listed Building was not constructed with designed



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views in mind and partial or glimpsed views of the building from the wider landscape do not enhance one's appreciation of this historic structure.

- 4.54. Due to the presence of dense vegetation along the existing boundaries of the Site (Photo 16), no clear views were noted during the walkover survey.



**Photo 16** View towards Pool Orchard from the Site

#### *Summary of development effects*

- 4.55. Overall the significance of Pool Orchard, located c. 160m north of the Site, is derived from its evidential and historic values inherent in its physical fabric, and the elements of setting which contribute to the significance derive from the surrounding gardens, paddock and driveway. Its position on the south-eastern periphery of the village of Balsall Common, connecting by Barretts Lane, and its location with both the immediate and wider agricultural landscape, also contribute to some degree.
- 4.56. The proposed residential development would not affect the key contributors to the significance of the Listed Building embedded in the physical fabric and architectural form of the building.
- 4.57. It is considered that due to the presence of intervening vegetation, and the distance from, the proposed residential development will not alter the setting of the Pool Orchard. Although the Site would undergo a change in character, the land does not

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comprise a key part of the setting of this Listed Building, due to limited intervisibility resulting from intervening vegetation.

*Summary*

- 4.58. To conclude a detailed assessment of those assets identified as potentially susceptible to non-physical impact has been undertaken. Reference has been made throughout to an assessment undertaken by a HEC for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, and whilst the conclusions correspond with the HEC for the Listed Buildings located along Meeting House Lane (Fig. 4, **B-D**), this assessment found whilst any proposed residential development within the Site would result in a change it would not harm the significance of Barretts Lane Farm and Pool Orchard (Fig. 4, **A** and **E**).

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## 5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. This assessment has considered the potential impacts of proposed residential development upon land at Meeting House Lane on the significance of surrounding designated heritage assets located in Balsall Common. The effects of the development proposals on the known and potential heritage resources within the Site and its surroundings will be a material consideration in the proposed allocation of the land for residential development, and determination of any future planning application.

### *Barretts Lane Farm*

5.2. The Site is located c. 130m to the south-west of Barretts Lane Farm, which includes two Grade II Listed Buildings. It has been identified that development within the Site would not affect any of the principal contributors to the significance of these designated heritage assets, namely the evidential and historical values retained within their physical fabric. Whilst changes in the function and immediate environs have significantly affected the setting of these assets, this assessment has concluded that the fields which continue to be in agricultural use surrounding the farm complex to the north, east and south-east contribute to the significance of the Listed Buildings. These would be unaffected by the proposed development.

5.3. Whilst the Site forms part of the wider agricultural landscape of Barretts Lane Farm, due to the change of use of the buildings and disused character of the Site, any change introduced by potential residential development would not affect the significance of the Listed Buildings.

### *Listed Buildings on Meeting House Lane*

5.4. The detailed assessment has established that the proposed development would introduce a limited degree of change into the immediate surroundings of the three Grade II Listed Buildings situated along the northern side of Meeting House Lane through the introduction of new built form. However, the key contributors to the significance of these assets would be preserved, and this change needs to be considered in the context of the extant modern development clearly conspicuous within the surroundings of these assets, and the substantial changes that had occurred within the properties themselves. As concluded within this assessment any potential visual effects could be softened through the application of appropriate

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design, materials and layout, including retention and improvements to the vegetation screen.

- 5.5. As any potential development would not alter the general character of this area nor detract from the appreciation of the special interest of Listed Buildings, the level of change is considered acceptable in light of alterations to the setting of the Listed Buildings which have already occurred.

***Listed Buildings in the wider landscape***

- 5.6. Within the surrounding landscape, there are six Grade II Listed Buildings. It is concluded that while the proposed residential development would introduce a change in the Site, it would not impact upon the significance of the Listed Buildings.

***Summary***

- 5.7. This assessment has concluded that whilst any residential development within the Site would result in a change and introduce new built form into an undeveloped plot of land, it would not impact on the designated heritage assets located within the surrounding landscape and would be in keeping with the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national and local planning policy.



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1964-1967 Ordnance Survey map, 1:25,000 scale

1986-1988 Ordnance Survey map, 1:25,000 scale

Ordnance Survey maps viewed at: [www.promap.co.uk](http://www.promap.co.uk) <http://www.envirocheck.co.uk/> and [www.maps.nls.uk/geo/find/](http://www.maps.nls.uk/geo/find/)

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## APPENDIX 1: HERITAGE STATUTE POLICY & GUIDANCE

### *Heritage Statute: Listed Buildings*

Listed buildings are buildings of ‘special architectural or historic interest’ and are subject to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (‘the Act’). Under Section 7 of the Act ‘no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.’ Such works are authorised under Listed Building Consent. Under Section 66 of the Act ‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’.

### **Note on the extent of a Listed Building**

Under Section 1(5) of the Act, a structure may be deemed part of a Listed Building if it is:

- (a) fixed to the building, or
- (b) within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1<sup>st</sup> July 1948

The inclusion of a structure deemed to be within the ‘curtilage’ of a building thus means that it is subject to the same statutory controls as the principal Listed Building. Inclusion within this duty is not, however, an automatic indicator of ‘heritage significance’ both as defined within the NPPF (2019) and within Conservation Principles (see Section 2 above). In such cases, the significance of the structure needs to be assessed both in its own right and in the contribution it makes to the significance and character of the principal Listed Building. The practical effect of the inclusion in the listing of ancillary structures is limited by the requirement that Listed Building Consent is only needed for works to the ‘Listed Building’ (to include the building in the list and all the ancillary items) where they affect the special character of the Listed building as a whole.

Guidance is provided by Historic England on ‘Listed Buildings and Curtilage: Historic England Advice Note 10’ (Historic England 2018).

### ***National heritage policy: the National Planning Policy Framework***

#### **Heritage assets and heritage significance**

Heritage assets comprise ‘a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its

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heritage interest' (the NPPF (2019), Annex 2). Designated heritage assets include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas (designated under the relevant legislation; NPPF (2019), Annex 2). The NPPF (2019), Annex 2, states that the significance of a heritage asset may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' looks at significance as a series of 'values' which include 'evidential', 'historical', 'aesthetic' and 'communal'.

### **The setting of heritage assets**

The 'setting' of a heritage asset comprises 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral' (NPPF (2019), Annex 2). Thus it is important to note that 'setting' is not a heritage asset: it may contribute to the value of a heritage asset.

Guidance on assessing the effects of change upon the setting and significance of heritage assets is provided in 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets', which has been utilised for the present assessment (see below).

### **Levels of information to support planning applications**

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF (2019) identifies that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'.

### **Designated heritage assets**

Paragraph 184 of the NPPF (2019) explains that heritage assets 'are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'. Paragraph 193 notes that 'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Paragraph 194 goes on to note that 'substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building...should be exceptional and substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance (notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites,



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registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites)...should be wholly exceptional’.

Paragraph 196 clarifies that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

### **Development Plan**

#### **Solihull Local Plan**

Relevant policies of Solihull Local Plan: Shaping a Sustainable Future (2013) comprise Policy P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness which states that:

*‘The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough’s local character and distinctiveness, its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits and the effect this has on civic pride.*

*The Council considers the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough and where applicable, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these characteristic have been conserved:*

- i. The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;*
- ii. The historical development and variety of architectural styles with the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;*
- iii. The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlement including Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle;*
- iv. Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and*
- v. The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.*

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*Development will be expected to preserve or enhance heritage assets as appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness and create or sustain a sense of place. In Solihull, heritage assets include; Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets; buildings monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or landscapes positively identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List.*

*All applications and consents that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to inform the design of the proposal. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.*

*Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset or its setting.'*

Elsewhere within the Solihull Local Plan: Shaping a Sustainable Future (2013), heritage is referred to in relation to Resource Management (Policy P12) and Minerals (Policy P13). It is also mentioned in relation to planning and development proposals, of which the following extracts are relevant to this assessment:

Policy P15 Securing Design Quality: *'All development proposals will be expected to achieve good quality, inclusive and sustainable design, which meets the following key principles: (i) Conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensures that the scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment....Development proposals will also be expected to contribute to or create a sense of place. Such measures may include; reflecting heritage assets and their setting in the design process, integrating landscape into the development, promoting diversity through a mix of uses within the site, or the incorporation of public art....'*

### **Berkswell Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Relevant policies of the forthcoming Balsall Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan include:

Policy B3: Protecting Local Landscape and Built Character:

#### **1. Landscape Character**

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- a. The location, design and layout of new housing development should respect local character within the Neighbourhood Area as set out in the Solihull Borough Landscape Character Assessment.
  - b. Landscape features of heritage or wildlife value (as identified in the Historic Environment Summary Report and the Preliminary Ecological Report) should be conserved according to their significance. Where mitigation measures are appropriate the evidence based proposals should include for locally-appropriate features such as tree-planting, hedges and ponds.

## 2. Built Character

- a. Designs should respond positively to the distinctive local and historic character of individual settlements and character areas of the parish.
- b. Scale, massing, density and layout should relate to the surrounding built form.
- c. The use of traditional materials used locally is encouraged such as traditional red brick and render for elevations and tiled roofs.
- d. Innovative design and materials to achieve enhanced environmental performance are encouraged.

## 3. Heritage Assets

- a. Development proposals that impact upon the character and significance of the parish's heritage assets and their setting will be expected to demonstrate how this impact has been assessed to avoid or minimise conflict with the heritage asset's conservation.
- b. The Parish's heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Proposals will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal as appropriate; it should be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find new uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset; and whether the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long term use of the asset
- c. All applications that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used, as a minimum, the evidence in the Berkswell Historic Environment Record to inform the principle and design response of the proposal.

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- d. Scheduled monuments and other non-designated archaeological sites of equivalent importance should be preserved in situ. In those cases where this is not justifiable or feasible, provision should be made for excavation and recording with an appropriate assessment and evaluation. The appropriate publication/curation of findings will be expected.

#### 4. Non-Residential Buildings in the Open Countryside

- a. Proposals for large agricultural, commercial, and infrastructure developments in the countryside should be sited, designed and landscaped with sensitivity, taking into account the characteristics of the Arden landscape of the rural area of the parish.
- b. Prominent, metallic or bright colours should be avoided in buildings or parts of buildings which are highly visible from or located within sensitive landscape areas. Natural and earth colours and materials are preferred wherever possible.
- c. Boundary treatments should be designed taking into account the Landscape Character design criteria under this Policy and Policy B6, and obtrusive security / palisade type fencing should be avoided
  - a) *Do not increase the risk of flooding, including that from surface water, within the village or exacerbate foul drainage capacity problems; and*
  - b) *Be preceded by an appropriate archaeological assessment to ascertain the implications of development on below ground heritage assets.*

#### **Good Practice Advice 1-3**

Historic England has issued three Good Practice Advice notes ('GPA1-3') which support the NPPF. The GPAs note that they do not constitute a statement of Government policy, nor do they seek to prescribe a single methodology: their purpose is to assist local authorities, planners, heritage consultants, and other stakeholders in the implementation of policy set out in the NPPF. This report has been produced in the context of this advice, particularly 'GPA2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' and 'GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets'.

#### **GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment**

GPA2 sets out the requirement for assessing 'heritage significance' as part of the application process. Paragraph 8 notes 'understanding the nature of the significance is important to understanding the need for and best means of conservation.' This includes assessing the



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extent and level of significance, including the contribution made by its 'setting' (see GPA3 below). GPA2 notes that 'a desk-based assessment will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area, and the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment, or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so' (Page 3).

### **GPA3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets**

The NPPF (Annex 2: Glossary) defines the setting of a heritage asset as 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced...'. Step 1 of the settings assessment requires heritage assets which may be affected by development to be identified. Historic England notes that for the purposes of Step 1 this process will comprise heritage assets 'where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way)...'.

Step 2 of the settings process 'assess[es] the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated', with regard to its physical surrounds; relationship with its surroundings and patterns of use; experiential effects such as noises or smells; and the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated. Step 3 requires 'assessing the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s)' – specifically to 'assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it', with regard to the location and siting of the development, its form and appearance, its permanence, and wider effects.

Step 4 of GPA3 provides commentary on 'ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm'. It notes (Paragraph 37) that 'Maximum advantage can be secured if any effects on the significance of a heritage asset arising from development liable to affect its setting are considered from the project's inception.' It goes on to note (Paragraph 39) that 'good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement'.

### ***Heritage significance***

Discussion of heritage significance within this assessment report makes reference to several key documents. With regard to Listed buildings and Conservation Areas it primarily discusses 'architectural and historic interest', which comprises the special interest for which they are designated.

The NPPF provides a definition of 'significance' for heritage policy (Annex 2). This states that heritage significance comprises 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or

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historic'. This also clarifies that for World Heritage Sites 'the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance'.

Regarding 'levels' of significance the NPPF (2019) provides a distinction between: designated heritage assets of the highest significance; designated heritage assets not of the highest significance; and non-designated heritage assets.

Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' expresses 'heritage significance' as comprising a combination of one or more of: evidential value; historical value; aesthetic value; and communal value:

- Evidential value – the elements of a historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including physical remains, historic fabric, documentary/pictorial records. This evidence can provide information on the origin of the asset, what it was used for, and how it changed over time.
- Historical value (illustrative) – how a historic asset may illustrate its past life, including changing uses of the asset over time.
- Historical value (associative) – how a historic asset may be associated with a notable family, person, event, or moment, including changing uses of the asset over time.
- Aesthetic value – the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a historic asset. This may include its form, external appearance, and its setting, and may change over time.
- Communal value – the meaning of a historic asset to the people who relate to it. This may be a collective experience, or a memory, and can be commemorative or symbolic to individuals or groups, such as memorable events, attitudes, and periods of history. This includes social values, which relates to the role of the historic asset as a place of social interactive, distinctiveness, coherence, economic, or spiritual / religious value.

### ***Effects upon heritage assets***

#### ***Heritage benefit***

The NPPF clarifies that change in the setting of heritage assets may lead to heritage benefit. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF (2019) notes that 'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably'.

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GPA3 notes that ‘good design may reduce or remove the harm, or provide enhancement’ (Paragraph 28). Historic England’s ‘Conservation Principles’ states that ‘Change to a significant place is inevitable, if only as a result of the passage of time, but can be neutral or beneficial in its effects on heritage values. It is only harmful if (and to the extent that) significance is reduced’ (Paragraph 84).

Specific heritage benefits may be presented through activities such as repair or restoration, as set out in Conservation Principles.

#### **Heritage harm to designated heritage assets**

The NPPF (2019) does not define what constitutes ‘substantial harm’. The High Court of Justice does provide a definition of this level of harm, as set out by Mr Justice Jay in *Bedford Borough Council v SoS for CLG and Nuon UK Ltd*. Paragraph 25 clarifies that, with regard to ‘substantial harm’: ‘Plainly in the context of physical harm, this would apply in the case of demolition or destruction, being a case of total loss. It would also apply to a case of serious damage to the structure of the building. In the context of non-physical or indirect harm, the yardstick was effectively the same. One was looking for an impact which would have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced’.

#### **Effects upon non-designated heritage assets**

The NPPF (2019) paragraph 197 guides that ‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

#### ***Extract from the Hedgerows Regulations 1997***

Extracted from Statutory Instruments 1997 No. 1160 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997, Schedule 1: Additional criteria for determining ‘Important’ hedgerows;

#### **PART II**

##### **CRITERIA: Archaeology and history**

1. The hedgerow marks the boundary, or part of the boundary, of at least one historic parish or township; and for this purpose, “historic” means existing before 1845.
2. The hedgerow incorporates an archaeological feature which is-

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- a. included in the schedule of monuments compiled by the Secretary of State under section 1 (schedule of monuments) of the Ancient Monuments and Scheduled Areas Act 1979 **(g)**; or
  - b. recorded at the relevant date in a sites and Monuments Record.
3. The hedgerow-
    - a) is situated wholly or partly within an archaeological site included or recorded as mentioned in paragraph 2 or on land adjacent to and associated with such a site; and
    - b) is associated with any monument or feature on that site.
  4. The hedgerow-
    - a) marks the boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate or manor recorded at the relevant date in a Sites and Monuments Record or on a document held at that date at a Record Office; or
    - b) is visibly related to any building or feature of such an estate or manor.
  5. The hedgerow-
    - a) is recorded in a document held at the relevant date at a Record Office as an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure acts **(a)**; or
    - b) is part of, or visibly related to, any building or other feature associated with such a system, and that system-
      - i. is substantially complete; or
      - ii. is of a pattern which is recorded in a document prepared before the relevant date by a local planning authority, within the meaning of the 1990 Act**(b)**, for the purposes of development control within the authority's area, as a key landscape characteristic.



## APPENDIX 2: GAZETTEER OF SELECTED RECORDED HERITAGE ASSETS

Ref	Description	Designation	NGR	HE ref.
<b>A</b>	<i>Barretts Lane Farm:</i> Barretts Lane Farmhouse Barn at Barretts Lane Farm	Grade II Listed Building	424652 276734	<b>1045801</b> <b>1075970</b>
<b>B</b>	85 Meeting House Lane	Grade II Listed Building	424416 276639	<b>1076672</b>
<b>C</b>	Barn at no. 85 Meeting House Lane	Grade II Listed Building	424429 276631	<b>1076673</b>
<b>D</b>	Outbuilding approximately 5m east of no. 83 Meeting House Lane (not included)	Grade II Listed Building	424421 276652	<b>1253080</b>
<b>E</b>	Pool Orchard	Grade II Listed Building	424474 276970	<b>1343233</b>
-	Berkswell Windmill	Grade II* Listed Building	424912 275920	<b>1054782</b>
-	The Brickmakers Arms Public House	Grade II Listed Building	424350 277426	<b>1367067</b>
-	Templars Croft	Grade II Listed Building	423376 276967	<b>1075992</b>
-	The Homestead	Grade II Listed Building	423431 276975	<b>1187144</b>
-	Cottage Farmhouse	Grade II Listed Building	423762 276082	<b>1054081</b>

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