

Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited

## **HINCKLEY NATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE**

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### **The Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order**

Project reference TR050007

### **Environmental Statement Volume 2: Appendices**

### **Appendix 13.1: Archaeological Assessment**

Document reference: 6.2.13.1A

Revision: 05

**9 January 2024**

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Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009  
Regulation 5(2)(a)

The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017  
Regulation 14

**This document forms a part of the Environmental Statement for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange project.**

Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited (TSH) has applied to the Secretary of State for Transport for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI).

To help inform the determination of the DCO application, TSH has undertaken an environmental impact assessment (EIA) of its proposals. EIA is a process that aims to improve the environmental design of a development proposal, and to provide the decision maker with sufficient information about the environmental effects of the project to make a decision.

The findings of an EIA are described in a written report known as an Environmental Statement (ES). An ES provides environmental information about the scheme, including a description of the development, its predicted environmental effects and the measures proposed to ameliorate any adverse effects.

**Further details about the proposed Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange are available on the project website:**

<http://www.hinckleynrfi.co.uk/>

**The DCO application and documents relating to the examination of the proposed development can be viewed on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website:**

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/hinckley-national-rail-freight-interchange/>

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## Appendix 13.1 ◆ Archaeological Assessment

### NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1. This Archaeological Assessment has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited to inform a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) (the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange) on land north-east of Hinckley (hereafter referred to as 'the HNRFI'), which is to be the subject of a Development Consent Order (DCO) application.
- 1.2. The Proposed Development within the DCO Site includes a new rail terminal, warehouse buildings and access road in the Main Order Limits, as well as off-site highways works beyond the Main Order Limits.
- 1.3. The report has confirmed that neither the Main Order Limits nor the locations of off-site works contain any designated heritage assets such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or listed buildings, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.
- 1.4. The potential impact of the proposed development on the settings of surrounding designated heritage assets, and the built form within the DCO Site, is assessed in detail in a separate Heritage Assessment (Appendix 13.2; Document Reference 6.2.13.2).
- 1.5. In terms of the archaeological potential of the DCO Site, which is the focus of this assessment, there are relatively few non-designated heritage assets or archaeological events previously recorded within the Main Order Limits and its immediate area.
- 1.6. The two previously recorded non-designated heritage assets within the Main HNRFI Site comprise an undated cropmark of a possible ditch recorded in the northern portion of the Main HNRFI Site, and a late 19th century barn at Hobbs Hayes farm in the south.
- 1.7. Two areas of ridge and furrow earthworks, deriving from medieval agricultural practice, were also identified during the course of this assessment within the Main HNRFI Site.
- 1.8. Historic mapping indicates that the extant farmsteads within the Main HNRFI Site were established variously in the late 18th or early 20th centuries, while the landscapes within the Main Order Limits are predominantly characterised as reorganised piecemeal enclosure or planned enclosure originating in the late post-medieval period.
- 1.9. The surrounding area has produced evidence for archaeological activity dating from the early prehistoric period through to the medieval period, although this is predominantly evidenced by records relating to chance finds of artefacts rather than conclusive evidence of settlement.

- 1.10. The scarcity of archaeological information for the Main Order Limits is likely to be reflective of a lack of systematic investigation in the wider area, rather than the actual absence of archaeological remains. Indeed, evidence for archaeological activity in the wider area (albeit limited), coupled with the extensive size of the site, suggests that there is inevitably some potential for it to contain hitherto unidentified buried archaeological remains relating to the prehistoric, Roman and later periods.
- 1.11. A programme of geophysical survey and trial trenching across the Main Order Limits has identified two discrete areas of archaeological potential in the Main HNRFI Site, comprising a ring ditch (and associated features/finds) immediately west of Hobbs Hayes Farm and a separate Roman settlement site defined by field enclosures located to the north of Aston Firs/Elmesthorpe Plantation. No significant archaeological features are recorded by the Historic Environmental Records (HER), geophysical survey or trial trenching in the A47 Link Road Corridor, located west of the Main HNRFI Site.
- 1.12. None of the known archaeological or landscape features identified within the Main HNRFI Site to date is considered to represent an 'in-principle' constraint to development.
- 1.13. Within the locations of off-site works within the DCO Site, while a number of these are located in proximity to areas of archaeological potential, such as highways works within the historic cores of the settlements of Stoney Stanton and Sapcote, in reality, the proposed changes within these areas are so limited; involving only additional signage, occasional road calming measures and minor adjustments to the existing highway or railway network, that there is considered to be no potential for any works in these areas to interact with significant archaeological remains.

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.14. This Archaeological Assessment has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP), on behalf of Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited to inform a proposed Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) (the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange) on land north-east of Hinckley (hereafter referred to as 'the HNRFI'), which is to be the subject of a Development Consent Order (DCO) application (see Figure 13.1; document reference 6.3.13.1).
- 1.15. The aim of this assessment is to consider the available historical and archaeological resources for the DCO Site, and to establish its likely potential in accordance with the requirements of the National Networks National Policy Statement (NPS), and other industry standard best-practice guidance.
- 1.16. Desktop sources have been augmented through the completion of a series of site walkover surveys, which were undertaken between 2017 and 2022.
- 1.17. A separate Heritage Assessment report (Appendix 13.2; document reference 6.2.13.2), assessing the likely impacts of the Proposed Development upon the settings of surrounding designated heritage assets and the built form of the structures within the

Main Order Limits has been undertaken to compliment this assessment.

### Location, Current Land Use, Boundaries, Topography and Geology

- 1.18. Figure 13.1 (document reference 6.3.13.1) illustrates the extents of the DCO Site. The Proposed Development comprises the following main components and is described in full within Chapter 3: Project Description (document reference 6.1.3) of the accompanying Environmental Statement (ES).
- 1.19. The Main Order Limits of the DCO Site, is located approximately 5 km to the north-east of Hinckley town centre, in a broadly level area of mixed farmland to the north-west of M69 Junction 2, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 446407, 294607.
- 1.20. The Main HNRFI Site within the Main Order Limits falls between the Hinckley to Leicester railway to the north-west and the M69 motorway defining the south-eastern edge. To the south-west are blocks of deciduous woodland, including Burbage Wood, Aston Firs and Freeholt Wood. To the north-east lies the village of Elmesthorpe, a linear settlement on the B581 Station Road. Also forming part of the Main Order Limits are the extents of the A47 Link Road Corridor north-west of the railway, which comprises enclosed, low-lying arable farmland, which is bounded by mature hedgerow on its southern edge with Burbage Common Road, whilst the northern edge is partially open.
- 1.21. The Main Order Limits lie almost wholly within the Blaby District, Leicestershire, with a small section near the B4668 falling within the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, Leicestershire.
- 1.22. The British Geological Survey (BGS, 2017) records the underlying solid geology of the Main Order Limits as sedimentary bedrock of the Mercia Mudstone Group. In terms of superficial geology, a narrow band of diamicton enters the site from the east, tracking along to the west of the railway line, whilst Bosworth Clay Member comprising of clay and silt are recorded in the centre of the site, heading down to and cover the south of the Main Order Limits is further diamicton. There are no superficial deposits record in the north of the Main Order Limits.
- 1.23. The highest aspect of the Main Order Limits is along the centre, which sits at c.108m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with the landform falling to c.90m aOD at the far northern, eastern boundaries and c.80m aOD at the southern boundary.

### Proposed Development

- 1.24. The Proposed Development within the DCO Site comprises the Principal Development across the Main Order Limits, including includes a new rail terminal, warehouse buildings and access road, as well as Associated Development, which includes off-site highways works beyond the Main Order Limits. description of the Proposed Development is set out comprehensively in Chapter 3: Project Description of the accompanying Environmental Statement (document reference 6.1.3).

## LEGISLATION AND PLANNING GUIDANCE

- 1.25. This section sets out relevant legislation and planning policy, governing the conservation and management of the historic environment.

### Current Legislation

- 1.26. Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* set out the duties of Local Planning Authorities (LPA), in respect of the treatment of listed buildings and conservation areas through the planning process.

- 1.27. Section 66(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* sets out the statutory duty of the decision-maker, where proposed development would affect a listed building or its setting. It sets out the statutory duty as follows:

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

- 1.28. This ‘special regard’ duty has been tested in the Court of Appeal and confirmed to require that ‘considerable importance and weight’ should be afforded by the decision maker to the desirability of preserving a listed building along with its setting. The relevant Court judgement is referenced as *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants DC English Heritage and National Trust [2014] EWCA Civ 137*.

- 1.29. However, it must be recognised that s66(1) of the 1990 Act does not identify that the local authority or the Secretary of State *must* preserve a listed building or its setting. Neither is it the case that a proposed development that does not ‘preserve’ is unacceptable and should be refused. It is for the decision maker to evaluate and determine.

- 1.30. The discussion of ‘harm’ is of relevance in the judgement in respect of *R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks District Council [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin)* which also makes this clear at Paragraph 49 when it states that:

*“This does not mean that an authority’s assessment of likely harm to the setting of a listed building or to [the character or appearance of] a conservation area is other than a matter for its own planning judgement. It does not mean that the weight the authority should give to harm which it considers would be limited or less than substantial must be the same as the weight it might give to harm which would be substantial. But it is to recognise, as the Court of Appeal emphasised in Barnwell, that a finding of harm to the setting of a listed building or to [the character or appearance] of a conservation area gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted. The presumption is a statutory one. It is not irrebuttable. It can be outweighed by material considerations powerful enough to do so. But an authority can only properly strike the balance between harm to a heritage asset on the one hand and planning benefits on the other if it is conscious of the statutory presumption in favour of preservation and if it demonstrably applies that*

*presumption to the proposal it is considering.”*

- 1.31. This key point is also made in Paragraph 54 of *Forest of Dean DC v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWHC 4052; i.e.:

*“...Section 66 (1) did not oblige the inspector to reject the proposal because he found it would cause some harm to the setting of the listed buildings. The duty is directed to ‘the desirability of preserving’ the setting of listed buildings. One sees there the basic purpose of the ‘special regard’ duty. It does not rule out acceptable change. It gives the decision-maker an extra task to perform, which is to judge whether the change proposed is acceptable. But it does not prescribe the outcome. It does not dictate the refusal of planning permission if the proposed development is found likely to alter or even to harm the setting of a listed building.”*

- 1.32. In other words, it is up to the decision maker (such as a local authority) to assess whether the proposal which is before them would result in ‘acceptable change’.

- 1.33. Furthermore, insofar as conservation areas are concerned, Section 72(1) of the 1990 Act identifies the following: *“In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”*.

- 1.34. In addition to the case law discussed above, it must be recognised that, as established by the Courts (*South Lakeland DC v Secretary of State for the Environment*, (1992) 2 WLR 204): (1) there is no statutory duty to enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area – the Courts have confirmed that development that ‘preserves’ them is acceptable; and (2) the statutory duty only covers development that is within a conservation area – the ‘setting’ of a conservation area is addressed by planning policy.

## **National Planning Policy**

### **National Policy Statement (NPS) for National Networks**

- 1.35. The NPS for National Networks, December 2014, sets out the general policies in accordance with which applications relating to national networks infrastructure are to be decided. The NPS recognises the need to consider heritage assets within the planning process as the construction and operation of national infrastructure has the potential to result in adverse impacts on the historic environment, as stated in paragraph 5.120. The historic environment section of the statement emphasises the need for local authorities to set out a clear strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, where heritage assets are recognised as a finite and irreplaceable resource, to be preserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- 1.36. Paragraph 5.127 addresses applications, stating that:

*“The applicant should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset’s importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of*



*the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant Historic Environment Record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, the applicant should include an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”*

1.37. Designated heritage assets are addressed in Paragraph 5.131, which states that:

*“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Secretary of State should give great weight to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced, and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Given that heritage assets are irreplaceable, harm or loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II Listed Building or a grade II Registered Park or Garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated assets of the highest significance, including World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, grade I and II\* Listed Buildings, Registered Battlefields, and grade I and II\* Registered Parks and Gardens should be wholly exceptional.”*

1.38. With regard to non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 5.125 states that:

*“The Secretary of State should also consider the impacts on other non-designated heritage assets (as identified either through the development plan process by local authorities, including ‘local listing’, or through the nationally significant infrastructure project examination and decision making process) on the basis of clear evidence that the assets have a significance that merit consideration in that process, even though those assets are of lesser value than designated heritage assets.”*

1.39. The provision made for the protection of heritage assets will be fully addressed within this assessment.

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

1.40. Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (MCHLG 2021) sets out the government’s approach to the conservation and management of the historic environment, including both listed buildings and conservation areas, through the planning process in more general terms. The opening paragraph, 189, recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner proportionate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

1.41. Section 16 of the NPPF mirrors the policy contained within the NPS, which is set out above. In that sense, Paragraph 194 of the NPPF mirrors 5.127 of the NPS, while Paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF, which consider the weighting given within the planning decision with regard to impacts on designated heritage assets, aligns with 5.131 of the NPS. Paragraph 203 concerning non-designated heritage assets aligns with 5.125 of the NPS.



## Local Planning Policy

- 1.42. The DCO Site falls across four LPA areas, albeit the Main Order Limits are located within Blaby District and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. A single off-site junction within the DCO Site is also located on the boundary of Harborough District and Rugby Borough.
- 1.43. The relevant adopted local statutory planning documents for the Main Order Limits include:
- Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) (adopted 2013);
  - Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (adopted 2019);
  - Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2009); and
  - Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2016).

### *Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) (adopted February 2013)*

- 1.44. The Blaby District Local Plan 2013-2029 (Core Strategy) provides the strategic planning policy framework and sets out strategic site allocations for the District to 2029. The core strategy forms part of the spatial plan and provides the basis for decisions on land use planning affecting Blaby District.
- 1.45. Policy contained within the adopted Local Plan, relevant to the historic environment, includes:

*“Policy CS20: Historic Environment and Culture*

*Blaby District has a number of important buildings, sites and areas of historic value including Scheduled Monuments (SMs), Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, archaeological remains and other heritage assets. These (including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats) will be preserved, protected and where possible enhanced.*

*The Council takes a positive approach to the conservation of heritage assets and the wider historic environment through:*

- a) Considering proposals for development on, in, or adjacent to historic sites, areas and buildings against the need to ensure the protection and enhancement of the heritage asset and its setting. Proposed development should avoid harm to the significance of historic sites, buildings or areas, including their setting;*
- b) Expecting new development to make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the local area;*
- c) Ensuring that development in Conservation Areas is consistent with the identified special character of those areas, as well as working, where appropriate, to identify other*

*areas of special architectural merit or historic interest in designating additional Conservation Areas;*

*d) Securing the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through uses that are consistent with the heritage asset and its conservation; and*

*e) Promoting heritage assets in the District as tourism opportunities where appropriate.”*

1.46. In addition to policy CS20, Paragraphs 7.20.1 to 7.20.4 of the Local Plan make the following points:

*“The East Midlands Regional Plan indicates that ‘the historic environment should be understood, conserved and enhanced’ in order to ‘contribute to the Region’s quality of life’. The above policy aims to meet this objective by protecting (and where possible enhancing) archaeological sites, historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and other cultural assets.*

*The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises the importance of Local Plans setting out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and its heritage assets, and places a heavy emphasis on the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.*

*Blaby District contains a number of important archaeological sites (including 14 Scheduled Monuments). In addition there are numerous areas of known archaeological interest and the potential for other unexplored areas to contain important archaeological artefacts.*

*The District of Blaby has nine conservation areas and some 200 listed buildings. Development proposals that affect listed buildings or fall within Conservation areas need to be of very high design quality taking into consideration the principles of good design set out in Policy CS2.”*

### **Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (adopted 2019)**

1.47. The Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document contains the development management policies that apply across the District, with the following of relevance to cultural heritage:

*“DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICY 12*

*Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets*

*All new development should seek to avoid harm to the heritage assets of the District. Development proposals that conserve or enhance the historic environment will be supported.*

*All proposals affecting either a designated or non-designated heritage asset and/or its setting will need to submit a statement which includes the following:*

- a description of the heritage asset and its setting, proportionate to its significance;

- a clear identification of the impacts of the development proposal on the heritage asset and its setting;
- a clear justification as to why the impacts could be considered acceptable; and
- demonstrate how the proposal is consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS20.

*The Council will consider the submitted information having regard to the importance of the heritage asset(s) as follows:*

*Designated heritage assets*

*Designated heritage assets and their settings (including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas) will be given the highest level of protection to ensure that they are conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment.*

*Where substantial harm is identified, proposals will only be supported in exceptional circumstances in accordance with national planning guidance. Where a less than substantial level of harm is identified the scale of harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.*

*Non-designated heritage assets*

*A balanced consideration will be applied to proposals which may impact non-designated heritage assets. Proposals will be supported where the benefits of the scheme are considered to outweigh the scale of any harm or loss, having regard to the significance of the heritage asset.”*

**Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2009)**

- 1.48. The Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2009) contains the following spatial objectives of relevance to cultural heritage:

*“Spatial Objective 10: Natural Environment and Cultural Assets To deliver a linked network of green infrastructure, enhancing and protecting the borough’s distinctive landscapes, woodlands, geology, archaeological heritage and biodiversity and encourage its understanding, appreciation, maintenance and development.*

*Spatial Objective 11: Built Environment and Townscape Character To safeguard, enhance and where necessary regenerate the borough’s distinctive built environment including its wider setting particularly that associated with Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and historic industries.”*

**Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2016)**

- 1.49. The Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Site Allocations and Development Management Policies contains the development management policies that apply across the Borough,

with the following of relevance to cultural heritage:

*“DM11 Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment*

*The Borough Council will protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment throughout the borough. This will be done through the careful management of development that might adversely impact both designated and non-designated heritage assets. All development proposals which have the potential to affect a heritage asset or its setting will be required to demonstrate: setting; and a) An understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its b) The impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset and its setting, including measures to minimise or avoid these impacts; c) How the benefits of the proposal will outweigh any harm caused; and d) Any impact on archaeology in line with Policy DM13.*

*DM12 Heritage Assets*

*All development proposals affecting heritage assets and their setting will be expected to secure their continued protection or enhancement, contribute to the distinctiveness of the areas in which they are located and contribute to the wider vibrancy of the borough.*

*All development proposals affecting the significance of heritage assets and their setting will be assessed in accordance with Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment and will require justification as set out in this policy.*

*All development proposals will need to accord with Policy DM10: Development and Design.*

*Listed Buildings*

*Proposals for the change of use, extensions and alterations of listed buildings and development affecting the setting of listed buildings will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposals are compatible with the significance of the building and its setting.*

*Conservation Areas*

- Development proposals should ensure the significance of a conservation area is preserved and enhanced through the consideration and inclusion of important features (as identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan) including, but not limited to the following: materials which are characteristic of the conservation area; and out of the Conservation Area; with those of the same or similar species;
- Appropriate boundary treatments which reflect the local style;
- The preservation and enhancement of key views and/or vistas in;
- The replacement of dead or dying important trees and hedgerows;
- Reinforce or mirror the historic street pattern and plan form where feasible;

- The use of sensitively styled street furniture;
- The use of natural building materials, preferably locally sourced; and
- The retention of key spaces within the conservation area.

*Proposals which seek to improve identified neutral and negative areas inside designated conservation areas, which also lead to the overall enhancement of the conservation area, will be supported and encouraged.*

*All applications which include the demolition of buildings and means of enclosure within a Conservation Area must propose an adequate replacement which enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area. Conditions will be imposed to ensure demolition does not occur until immediately prior to the redevelopment or remediation.*

#### *Historic Landscapes*

*Proposals affecting historic landscapes, their features or setting should have regard to their significance and be justified in line with Policy DM11.*

*Development proposals within or adjacent to the historic landscape of Bosworth Battlefield should seek to better reveal the historic significance of the area.*

*Proposals which adversely affect the Bosworth Battlefield or its setting should be wholly exceptional and accompanied by clear and convincing justification. Such proposals will be assessed against their public benefits.*

*Particular regard will be had to maintaining topographical features, archaeological remains or to the potential expansion of the Battlefield.*

*Proposals which seek to enhance the educational or tourism provision associated with the Bosworth Battlefield will be encouraged where they comply with other policies in the Local Plan.*

#### *Scheduled Monuments*

*Proposals which adversely affect a scheduled monument or its setting should be wholly exceptional and accompanied by clear and convincing justification.*

#### *Locally Important Heritage Assets*

*Assets identified on the Locally Important Heritage Asset List should be retained and enhanced wherever possible. The significance of the assets illustrated in the List and the impact on this significance should be demonstrated and justified in line with Policy DM11."*

#### *DM13 Preserving the Borough's Archaeology*

*Where a proposal has the potential to impact a site of archaeological interest, developers should set out in their application an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where*

*applicable, the results of a field evaluation detailing the significance of any affected asset.*

*Where applicable, justified and feasible the local planning authority will require remains to be preserved in situ ensuring appropriate design, layout, ground levels, foundations and site work methods to avoid any adverse impacts on the remains.*

*Where preservation of archaeological remains in situ is not feasible and/or justified the local planning authority will require full archaeological investigation and recording by an approved archaeological organisation before development commences.”*

- 1.50. A single off-site junction within the DCO Site is also located on the boundary of Harborough District and Rugby Borough. Therefore, this assessment has also had regard to the relevant adopted historic environment policy within these LPA's, which includes Policy HC1 of the Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 and Policy SDC3 of the Rugby Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 1.51. The policies and guidance listed above have all been considered as part of this assessment.

## METHODOLOGY

### Archaeological Assessment Methodology

- 1.52. This report has been produced in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa, 2020). These guidelines provide a national standard for the completion of desk-based assessments.
- 1.53. The following best practice guidance has also been considered:
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance published by English Heritage 2008;
  - Annex 1 of ‘Scheduled Monuments: Identifying, protecting, conserving and investigating nationally important archaeological sites under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979’ that sets out a series of criteria against which the national importance, or otherwise, of any recorded archaeological remains can be judged;
  - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic England Guidance published 2015;
  - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic England Guidance published 2017;
  - Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019);

- Historic England’s ‘Heritage: The Foundation for Success - Modern Infrastructure and the Historic Environment’ (November 2019);
  - Historic England’s ‘Piling and Archaeology Guidance and Good Practice’ (March 2019); and
  - Historic England’s ‘Preserving Archaeological Remains: Decision-taking for Sites under Development’ (November 2016).
- 1.54. The assessment principally involved consultation of readily available archaeological and historical information from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information comprised:
- Information held by both the Leicestershire City Historic Environment Record (HER) and Warwickshire HER on known archaeological sites, monuments and findspots, within c.1km of the Main Order Limits, as well as the location of off-site highways works in the DCO Site;
  - Maps and documents held by the Record Office of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland and online repositories;
  - The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) curated by Historic England; and
  - Aerial photographs held at the Historic England Archive in Swindon.
- 1.55. This report provides a synthesis of relevant information for the sites derived from a search area extending up to 1km from the Main Order Limits, hereafter known as the ‘study area’, to allow for additional contextual information to be gathered.
- 1.56. With regard to the locations of other off-site works beyond the Main Order Limits; i.e. including the highways works beyond the Main Order Limits; given the limited nature of many components of the intended works and the pre-existing transport character purpose they occupy (i.e. existing roads, signs, railway infrastructure etc), these have been considered on a case-by-case basis in terms of their potential for effects on heritage assets, rather than adopting the wider 1km study area that applies to the Main Order Limits.
- 1.57. The information gathered from the repositories and sources identified above was checked and augmented through the completion of a series of site visits and walkovers. These walkovers considered the nature and significance of known and/or potential archaeological assets within the DCO Site, identified visible historic features and assessed possible factors which may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets.
- 1.58. The report concludes with an assessment of the DCO Site’s likely archaeological potential, made with regard to current best practice guidelines.



## EXISTING INFORMATION

### Introduction

- 1.59. The DCO Site does not contain any designated heritage assets, such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens or registered battlefields, where there would be a presumption in favour of physical retention or preservation in situ.
- 1.60. There are no registered parks and gardens or registered battlefields within 1km of the Main HNRFI Site. However, there is one scheduled monument, 31 listed buildings and three conservation areas, within 1km, as shown on Figure 13.2 (document reference 6.3.13.2) and Figure 13.4 (document reference 6.3.13.4).
- 1.61. As outlined previously, this assessment is concerned with the DCO Site's archaeological potential and it is beyond its scope to assess impacts upon the significance of designated heritage assets beyond the DCO Site (including the scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas) due to change within their settings. As such, their significance, and the contribution made to it by their settings, is not discussed within this report, unless of relevance to the DCO Site's archaeological potential.
- 1.62. This section of the assessment is structured to address firstly the baseline information in respect of the Main Order Limits, before going on to address in turn the known baseline in respect of the other parts of the DCO Site, which largely relates to the locations of off-site highways works.

### Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 1.63. Searches returned by the Leicestershire County Council (LCC) HER Records have identified limited non-designated heritage assets within the Main Order Limits. These comprise findspots of artefacts dating to the Iron Age, Roman-British and medieval periods, and a 19th century barn.
- 1.64. In the study area, there are a large number of records dating from the prehistoric to modern periods, and those of relevance to this assessment are discussed by period in the following sections. The locations of non-designated heritage assets are shown on Figure 13.4 (document reference 6.3.13.4).

### *Palaeolithic - Iron Age (c.1,000,000 BC-AD 43)*

- 1.65. The HER identifies only a single prehistoric asset being previously recorded within the DCO Site. This comprises an Iron Age/Romano-British beehive quern (MLE6552) which was found during the preliminary work for the M69 motorway, the location of which is now occupied by the motorway itself.
- 1.66. Within the study area, there are prehistoric records recorded by the HER dating back to the Palaeolithic period through to the Iron Age. Dating to the palaeolithic are a number of flints (MLE6043) identified in a quarry site between Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. Further flints have been identified which date from the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze

Age periods across the study area, including south of Sapcote where a scatter of Bronze Age flint was found during fieldwalking in 1913-17 (MLE287). Fieldwalking in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century also identified flints close to Home Farm at Elmesthorpe (MLE74).

- 1.67. Cremation burials dating to the Bronze Age (MLE2811) have previously been identified north of the Church of St Mary in Barwell.
- 1.68. An Iron Age/Romano British activity site (MLE23429) has been identified through trial trenching in 2017 (ELE10485) on the western fringes of Sapcote, with a number of ditches and pits thought to reflect agricultural activity in the late prehistoric period.
- 1.69. Many of the records within the HER are dated more generally to the prehistoric period. These comprise of a number of find spots of flint artefacts, occupation/activity sites and potential earthworks, which together attest to the presence of communities exploiting or moving across the landscape of the study area throughout the prehistoric period.
- 1.70. The existing evidence from the HER therefore indicates the potential for prehistoric activity to be identified within the Main Order Limits. Indeed, the archaeological investigations completed across the Main Order Limits to inform this assessment (see Appendices 13.3 – 13.6; document reference 6.2.13.3-6) have confirmed the presence of discrete settlement and agricultural activity dating to the late prehistoric to Romano-British period. This activity comprised a ring ditch (and associated features/finds) immediately west of Hobbs Hayes Farm (MLE23779) identified as a roundhouse gully, containing material of late Prehistoric to Roman date and a separate settlement site defined by pits and shallow gully features, possibly representing foundation cuts for structures, within a focus of shallow agricultural boundary ditches dated from the Late Iron Age to Roman period, located to the north of Aston Firs/Elmesthorpe Plantation. Both of these sites of archaeological activity are located in the Main HNRFI Site between the M69 and railway.
- 1.71. These late prehistoric remains identified in the Main Order Limits are considered to be heritage assets of low to medium importance, albeit they are not considered to represent prehistoric activity of such significance to warrant preservation in-situ.

### ***Romano-British (AD43 – 410)***

- 1.72. The HER identifies only two records of Romano-British date within the Main Order Limits, each representing the find spots of Romano-British material. They comprise the previously mentioned Beehive quern stone (MLE6552) and the findspot of a single piece of mortarium rim (MLE9329), north of the railway.
- 1.73. More widely, the Fosse Way Roman Road (MLE1390) is located to the south-east of the study area. The road connected Leicester with Lincoln to the north-east and Cirencester and Exeter in the south-west. Within the fields south of Sapcote between the Fosse Way and the Main Order Limits, metal detecting has identified the findspots of several Roman coins (MLE9895-8).

- 1.74. In terms of settlement activity, several possible villa sites have been identified within the study area. The closest in proximity to the Main Order Limits is located at Park House (MLE2834) within the extents of Hinckley Golf Course to the west, where investigations in 1982 (ELE898) identified various Roman finds including pottery, tile, tesserae and querns. In 2013 (ELE9475) an additional watching brief identified additional pieces of slate roof, pottery, rooftile including evidence for a hypocaust.
- 1.75. To the south of Barwell, Romano-British settlement evidence (MLE2812) has been identified at High Close, where the HER notes the examination of a sand pit in 1935 produced a possible floor, pot sherds, brick, tile, tesserae and a whetstone of Roman date.
- 1.76. To the east of Sapcote records of a Roman villa (MLE283) in the area start as early as 1770 with the discovery of a tessellated pavement along with building foundations with the quarry. The HER notes that during the 20<sup>th</sup> century additional features were identified during fieldwalking and excavations. Further structural remains were discovered during excavations in 1976 and recorded a tesserae workshop with over 3,000 unused red-tie and limestone tesserae, along with uncut material, pottery and coins.
- 1.77. Therefore, once more, the existing evidence from the HER indicates the potential for Romano-British activity to be identified within the Main Order Limits. As previously set out, the archaeological investigations completed across the Main Order Limits to inform this assessment (see Appendices 13.3-6; document references 6.2.13.3-6) have confirmed the presence of discrete settlement and agricultural activity dating to the late prehistoric through to the Romano-British period. This activity comprised a ring ditch (and associated features/finds) immediately west of Hobbs Hayes Farm (MLE23779) and a separate settlement site defined by shallow agricultural boundary ditches and pits dated from the Late Iron Age to Roman period located to the north of Aston Firs/Elmesthorpe Plantation.
- 1.78. These late prehistoric to Romano-British remains identified in the Main Order Limits are considered to be heritage assets of low to medium importance, albeit they are not considered to represent activity of such significance to warrant preservation in-situ.

### **Medieval (AD 410-1485)**

- 1.79. By 1086 Hinckley had been established as a large village known then as Hincá's Leah (Leah meaning a clearing in the wood). It held a popular market once a year where people from all over Leicestershire and Warwickshire would come to buy or trade. The Main Order Limits are located c.3.5km to the east of the medieval church of St Mary and hence the probable village centre at that time. The villages of Barwell and Elmesthorpe to north of the Main Order Limits, Burbage and Aston Flamville to the south, and Sapcote and Stoney Stanton to the east were similarly established in the medieval period, with their surviving parish churches evidencing their medieval origins.
- 1.80. The scheduled monument which designates the buried remains of Sapcote Motte and Bailey castle (101301) is also located within Sapcote to the east of the Main Order Limits. The monument is one of three castles in south-west Leicestershire, with Earl Shilton and Hinckley, which immediately post date the Norman Conquest. Excavation has shown that

the castle contained many stone buildings and the potential for survival of further buried features is high within the designated area. The adjoining moat demonstrates that occupation of the castle site continued well into the medieval period.

- 1.81. There are no medieval assets recorded by the HER within the Main Order Limits, albeit, there are numerous records in the wider study area that attest to the presence of medieval settlement in the core of each of the surrounding modern settlements and the agricultural exploitation of the landscape between these settlements.
- 1.82. The Main Order Limits are situated predominantly within the parish boundary of Elmesthorpe, a small village for which there is documentary evidence from the medieval period onwards. The development of the village is discussed in W.G. Hoskin's *The Deserted Villages of Leicestershire* (1941) and further in a provisional list of deserted medieval villages in Leicestershire, compiled by the Deserted Medieval Villages Group in 1963 (DMVG, 1964). The settlement is not mentioned in the Domesday survey, but by 1332 the population was large enough that the parish included 15 taxable individuals (DMVG, 1964). Hoskins considered the centre of Elmesthorpe to have been located south of the church. The village is thought to have been the site of a windmill (MLE78). No earthwork features have been recorded as surviving around the windmill site and Hoskins' source, the 18th century Antiquarian John Nichols, recorded that tenant farmers were responsible for ploughing out the remains of the village before 1800, finding the walls of several buildings in the process (Hoskins, 1941; Nichols, 1811).
- 1.83. The most notable medieval records in the immediate vicinity of the Main Order Limits are perhaps the locations of large, former medieval fishponds, identified north of the railway and south of Elmesthorpe, between the Main Order Limits and the putative location of the deserted medieval village. The Billington Rough (MLE73) and Reed Pool fishponds (MLE74) were previously a Scheduled Monument, but these former ponds were de-scheduled in 2005 and now form part of a commercial fishery or survive as infilled slight earthworks, having been radically altered, so now retain limited archaeological interest.
- 1.84. The findspot of a single medieval penny (MLE10250) is also recorded from the field to the east of Bridge Farm, north of the railway.
- 1.85. Sources indicate that what had once been a system of open fields associated with the medieval village at Elmesthorpe was enclosed at the end of the fifteenth century and given over to pasture, the village no longer being a viable source of taxable income due to depopulation (Hoskins, 1941). From the sixteenth to early 18th century the land around Elmesthorpe is recorded as having been given over to pasture; only with the demolition of the old manor house (located north of the church) and its replacement by a tenanted farm in the late eighteenth century was arable agriculture re-established (Hoskins, 1941: 254).
- 1.86. The presence of the remains of ridge and furrow earthworks within the Main Order Limits, as illustrated on Figure 13.4 (document reference 6.3.13.4), north of Woodhouse Farm and in a field south of Freeholt Farm, highlights the agricultural character and land use of the Main Order Limits throughout the medieval period and on into subsequent centuries.
- 1.87. Geophysical survey of the Main Order Limits (Appendix 13.3 and 13.4; document

reference 6.2.13.3-4) identified evidence of the truncated remains of the former ridge and furrow in the fields across the Main Order Limits. Further ridge and furrow has been identified in previous archaeological investigations in the wider environs. In the northern portion of the Main HNRFI Site a ditch is recorded in the HER (MLE68) as being potentially of earlier origin than the ridge and furrow remains though is also thought to be associated with former agricultural land use.

- 1.88. Based on the evidence for medieval settlement activity around the Main Order Limits and the distance from known foci of medieval settlement in the wider area i.e., Elmesthorpe village north of the former medieval fishponds, it is likely that it was exploited for agriculture or woodland during the medieval period. Consequently, while there is a high potential for medieval remains to be present, they are likely to be limited to remains of agricultural activity, such as field boundaries and plough soils, and accordingly of negligible importance.
- 1.89. The archaeological investigations completed to inform this assessment (see Appendices 13.3 – 13.6; document references 6.2.13.3-6) have confirmed the presence of the remains of agricultural furrows across the Main Order Limits and no evidence for the presence of any settlement activity during this period. Based on the analysis of documentary evidence (Hoskins, 1941), the one thousand, four hundred and twenty-six (1426) furrows recorded across the Main HNRFI Site south of the railway, should date to the early fifteenth century and earlier, or the mid eighteenth century and later.

### *Post-Medieval to modern (AD 1485 – Present)*

- 1.90. Hinckley was a bustling post-medieval town with weekly markets and a booming stocking industry. The Atkin Brothers founded the Hinckley hosiery factory in 1722, now the oldest hosiery manufactory in the world.
- 1.91. In contrast, on paper, Elmesthorpe was almost completely abandoned by the mid-16th century. No families were recorded in the parish in 1524; by 1670 three households were registered for the hearth tax, suggesting that the parish had been re-occupied, albeit on an extremely limited scale (DMVG, 1964). Analysis of the historical record led Hoskins to argue that the parish land was rented out to yeomen for pasture during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, household income may therefore have largely depended on animal husbandry during this period.
- 1.92. Nichols records that the old manor house was demolished, and a new tenanted farm constructed 'at some point in the 18<sup>th</sup> century' (Hoskins 1941). This is likely to have been one of the small farmsteads in the vicinity of the Main Order Limits. This tenant was apparently responsible for ploughing-up what remained of the deserted medieval village at Elmesthorpe to the north of the former fishponds. Other small farmsteads were subsequently constructed and added to across the parish over the next hundred years, including the farmsteads at Hobbs Hayes Farm and Woodhouse Farm within the Main Order Limits.
- 1.93. A single record in the HER is recorded within the Main Order Limits from this period. This

comprises a 19th century barn at Hobbs Hayes Farm (MLE20555) positioned along Smithy Lane, in the south of the Main HNRFI Site.

- 1.94. Aerial photographic evidence demonstrates that a number of the historical field boundaries established in the post-medieval period have been removed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and since have been heavily truncated as a result of the modern ploughing regime.
- 1.95. North of the Main Order Limits, the HER identifies the presence of the ‘Elmesthorpe Estate Land Settlement Association’ (MLE24345), which covers much of the modern extents of the settlement and agricultural land south to the railway line, formerly the land holding of Church Farm. The first land settlement associations were set up in the early 1930s, providing smallholdings to enable industrial workers from depressed areas to start a rural life and be self-sufficient, working off their land. The HER notes that few examples of the original Land Settlement houses now remain in the settlement itself, the association having ceased recruitment to the scheme at the outbreak of World War II and dissolving the Elmesthorpe association by the 1960s. The DCO Site does not include any notable elements of the former land settlement area.
- 1.96. Within the study area the HER records numerous features dating from the post-medieval to modern periods. This includes the surrounding settlement cores, buildings, including residential dwellings, farmsteads with adjoining farmhouses and outbuildings, or religious or schooling buildings, many of which are listed, and transportation links including tolls roads, bridges and railways. Together these assets evidence the well-developed settlement patterns in the surrounding landscape as well as the agricultural exploitation of the hinterlands beyond the settlement cores since the post-medieval period.
- 1.97. The known records indicate a high potential for post-medieval to modern remains to be present within the Main Order Limits, specifically focussed on the remains of agricultural activity, such as field boundaries and plough soils, and accordingly of negligible importance.
- 1.98. As previously noted, the archaeological investigations completed to inform this assessment (see Appendices 13.3 - 13.6; document references 6.2.13.3-6) have confirmed the presence of the remains of one thousand, four hundred and twenty-six (1426) agricultural furrows across the Main HNRFI Site south of the railway. The evidence of widespread agricultural activity across the Main Order Limits is likely to date either to the early fifteenth century and earlier, or the mid eighteenth century and later.

### Cartographic Sources

- 1.99. No tithe or enclosure map exists for the area to the east of Hinckley that includes the Main Order Limits.
- 1.100. The earliest map consulted dates to 1887 and comprises the First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map (not reproduced). In this, the Main Order Limits are shown as in agricultural use, with the railway following the northern boundary. Burbage Common Road is shown on the mapping leading to Woodhouse Farm.



- 1.101. Woodhouse Farm and Hobbs Hayes are the only buildings to exist in the Main Order Limits at this time. Woodhouse Farm consists of the main farm building as it stands today with what appears to be a surrounding barn complex – none of which are obviously surviving in the present day.
- 1.102. Hobbs Hayes consisted of the main farm building as it continues to exist in the present day; no associated buildings had been constructed at this time.
- 1.103. The Second Edition OS map of 1903 is reproduced in Figure 13.5 (document reference 6.3.13.5) and this shows minimal changes from the First Edition, consisting only of new buildings to the north of the Main Order Limits (including the Wentworth Arms) and a new residential building in the west of the Main Order Limits, along Burbage Common Road.
- 1.104. The next OS mapping to show the site is from 1955. Again, the Main Order Limits and its environs are little changed, aside from the addition Langton Farm and one other building to the east along Burbage Common Road. This map records the addition of two new smaller buildings at Hobbs Hayes. Woodhouse Farm appears largely unchanged, aside from the loss of an earlier outbuilding to the north of the main house was demolished and its replacement with a larger structure. The majority of the Main Order Limits continued in agricultural use on this map.
- 1.105. Changes to the Main Order Limits on the 1968 OS mapping include the expansion of Woodhouse Farm complex and further developments to the north of that farm, along Burbage Common Road. Aside from this, no further changes are evident.
- 1.106. The available maps demonstrate little change within the Main Order Limits from the late-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, other than the introduction of the M69 and the establishment of the modern properties along Burbage Common Road, throughout which the Main Order Limits has remained in agricultural use.

### Aerial Photographs

- 1.107. Aerial photographs within the collection maintained by the Historic England Archive in Swindon were consulted to inform an un understanding of the Main Order Limits.
- 1.108. The available images span the period from May 1948 to September 2004 and show the agricultural use of the Main Order Limits from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. They also detail the progression of Hobbs Hayes and Woodhouse Farm farmsteads. It is evident from the aerial photography that the 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuildings associated with Woodhouse farm, to the east of the main building, were demolished between 1973-1976 to make way for larger newer structures. It is also noted that the larger northern outbuilding associated with Hobbs Hayes was not constructed at the point of the 1995 aerial photography.
- 1.109. The standout features noted comprised ridge and furrow earthworks and historic field boundaries, which were clearly observable on photographs dated 1948-1973 across parts of the Main Order Limits north of Woodhouse Farm in particular. These features become very faint after this date, suggesting significant reduction due to intensive modern ploughing.



1.110. The available photographs support all that can be seen on the historic map regression, as mentioned above. No further archaeological features or cropmarks of potential features were identified through the analysis of aerial photographs.

### Historic Landscape Characterisation

1.111. The Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data for the Main Order Limits is available via the archaeology data service and identifies that the Main Order Limits formed part of areas HLE5028 (re-organised piecemeal enclosure), HLE5123 (planned enclosure), HLE5026 (piecemeal enclosure), HLE5119 (very large post-war fields), HLE5027 (major road junction) and HLE5029 (farm complex).

1.112. Therefore, this is considered to be a 'low value' landscape character, mainly of 19th-20th century origin.

### Site Walkover

1.113. The DCO Site, including the Main Order Limits was subject to a series of walkovers between 2017 and 2022 to assess the current ground conditions and topography, as well as to confirm the continuing survival of any known archaeological remains and to identify any hitherto unknown remains.

1.114. At the time of the visits the eastern portion of the Main HNRFI Site was generally under pasture, while the western extents were under arable cultivation.

1.115. While undulations within the fields north of Woodhouse Farm and in a field to the south of Freeholt Lodge were identified as representing reduced ridge and furrow earthworks, beyond these features no evidence for archaeological remains was noted within the Main Order Limits.

### Geophysical Survey

1.116. A programme of geophysical survey was conducted across all accessible land within the document reference 6.2.13.3 over two phases of survey, the first in spring 2018 (Appendix 13.3; document reference 6.2.13.3), and second in spring 2021 (Appendix 13.4; document reference 6.2.13.4).

1.117. The results of the survey indicated the extensive application of green waste as soil conditioner over much of the Main Order Limits. This had resulted in a widespread elevated magnetic background against which any low magnitude anomalies of archaeological potential, if present, may be masked. For this reason, the archaeological potential over the affected fields was uncertain, although it is thought that any extensive areas of enclosed settlement, if present, would have been detected, at least in part, over the majority of the geophysical survey area.

1.118. A single localised ring-ditch was identified by the survey at Hobbs Hayes Farm, in an area unaffected by green waste. This anomaly was ascribed high archaeological potential and interpreted as indicating activity of prehistoric date. No further anomalies of

archaeological potential were identified over the fields where green waste had not been applied and, in these fields, the archaeological potential was assessed as low, aside from the identification of the remains of agricultural furrows.

### Trial Trench Evaluation

- 1.119. A programme of trial trench evaluation was conducted across all accessible land within the Main HNRFI Site in late summer 2018 to spring 2019 (Appendix 13.5; document reference 6.2.13.5). Further trial trench evaluation was undertaken across the accessible areas of the A47 Link Road Corridor in October 2022 (Appendix 13.6; document reference 6.2.13.6).
- 1.120. The results of the survey confirmed the presence of activity ranging from the late Iron Age to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries within the Main HNRFI Site. This included evidence for a dispersed late Iron Age to Roman rural settlement focused on a probable roundhouse to the west of Hobbs Hayes Farm, with associated features including pits and post holes. A separate settlement site defined by pits and shallow gully features, possibly representing foundation cuts for structures, was also identified to the north of Aston Firs/Elmesthorpe Plantation, where the settlement evidence was located within an area of shallow agricultural boundary ditches dated from the Late Iron Age to Roman period.
- 1.121. The late prehistoric and Romano-British activity was overlain by the remains of a medieval landscape consisting of ridge and furrow which was superseded in turn by an enclosed system of 18<sup>th</sup> century fields focused on a newly constructed farmstead and the alignment of Burbage Common Road. The final episodes of significant change evidenced by the results of the trial trench evaluation occurred with the construction of the railway between Hinckley and Leicester in the 1860's, and the M69 Motorway in the 1970's.
- 1.122. The late prehistoric to Romano-British remains identified in the Main HNRFI Site are considered to be heritage assets of low to medium importance, albeit they are not considered to represent prehistoric activity of such significance to warrant preservation in-situ.
- 1.123. The trial trenching in the A47 Link Road Corridor was completed in the northern extents of this area of the Main Order Limits in October 2022 (Appendix 13.6; document reference 6.2.13.6). The results identified the presence of a paleochannel (former watercourse), but no archaeologically significant features or deposits were recorded. There is therefore considered to be limited potential for adverse impacts on any archaeological features or deposits of significance through the implementation of the Proposed Development in the A47 Link Road Corridor.

### Proposed Development Areas beyond the Main Order Limits

- 1.124. In addition to the Main Order Limits, the DCO Site also includes land to accommodate modifications to roads, railway level crossings and PRoW proposed in connection with the HNRFI development, as set out on Figure 13.1 (document reference 6.3.13.1).

1.125. The known baseline in respect of the development areas beyond the Main Order Limits is set out for each location in the paragraphs below. Given the limited nature of many components of the intended works and the pre-existing transport character purpose they occupy (i.e. existing roads, signs, railway infrastructure etc), these aspects of the Proposed Development been considered on a case-by-case basis in terms of their archaeological potential and the potential for the Proposed Development works to result in impacts on heritage assets, rather than adopting the wide-ranging study area that has been applied to the Main Order Limits. For each location, reference is made to the relevant stand-alone plans which show the heritage context of the specific off-site mitigation location. Where necessary, the text is also accompanied by an inset plan to show the proposed off-site highway mitigation or level crossing location and its immediate heritage context.

### ***M69 Highway works***

1.126. The DCO Site incorporates seven discrete segments of highways land on the M69 motorway, as depicted in Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.3); with two locations to the north of M69 Junction 2, and five to the south of Junction 2. In each case, the Proposed Development in these areas is located wholly within the extents of the existing motorway land and its engineered embankments.

1.127. Only one of the southern segments of the seven discrete segments of proposed development on the M69 has any interaction with known heritage assets. As illustrated on Figure 13.4 (document reference 6.3.13.4), this segment is located close to a recorded find spot of Roman pottery (MLE7935), which the HER records was subsequently destroyed by the motorway construction.

1.128. Given that, in each case, the Proposed Development in these areas is limited to the provision of new signage within the existing motorway extents, and that none of these locations could be expected to have any potential for the presence or survival or archaeological remains, there is considered to be no potential for any impacts on any heritage assets as a result of these elements of Proposed Development being implemented.

### ***Highway Improvement No. HB1 (Ashby Road/A47 Normandy Way)***

1.129. This off-site junction, located west of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1 and 13.2 (document references 6.3.13.1 and 2), and Image 13.1.1 below, is a crossroads in a suburban setting forming the junction of A47 Normandy Way and A447 Ashby Road, on the northern edge of Hinckley. The Proposed Development comprises kerb works on most arms of the junction to widen the carriageway and introduction of formal signal-controlled pedestrian crossing points within the extents of the existing highways boundaries.

1.130. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this junction. The HER records only the alignment of the post-medieval turnpike road (MLE20915) on Ashby Road.

1.131. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed

Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.



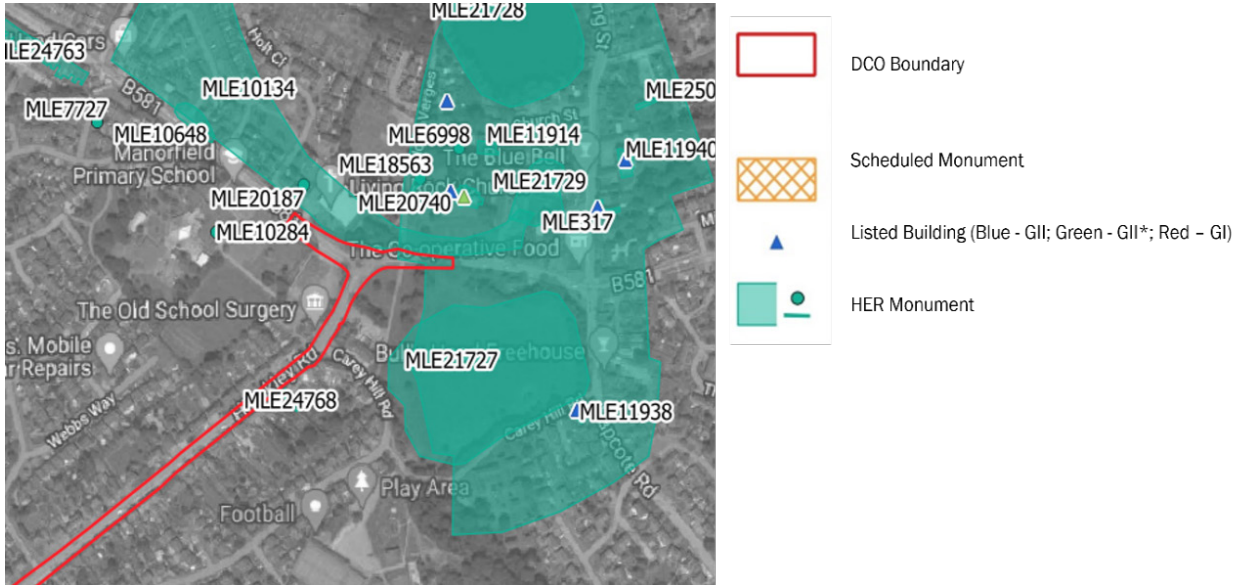
**Image 13.1.1: Off-site Highway Improvement No.HB1.**

**Highway Improvement No. B1 (Hinckley Road/New Road/B581 Station Road)**

1.132. This off-site junction, located within Stoney Stanton, to the east of the Main Order Limits as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.4), and Image 13.1.2 below, is a mini-roundabout at the junction of B581 Station Road/New Road and Hinckley Road, Stoney Stanton, adjacent to the Living Rock Church to the north and Stoney Stanton Social Club to the south. The Proposed Development comprises the replacement of the existing mini roundabout by traffic lights with signalised crossings for pedestrians within the highway land.

1.133. There are no designated heritage assets in immediate proximity to this junction. The HER records that this junction is located to the west of the extents of the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core (MLE317) of Stoney Stanton, with the alignment of the 19<sup>th</sup> century railway to north (MLE10134).

1.134. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the provision of new signals within the extents of the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.



**Image 13.1.2: Off-site Highway Improvement No. B1.**

**Highway Improvement No. B2 (B4669/Stanton Lane)**

- 1.135. This off-site junction, located east of the Main Order Limits comprises the junction of B4669 Hinckley Road and Stanton Lane, is a T-junction adjacent to Sapcote Garden Centre, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 (document references 6.3.13.1 and 6.3.13.2), and Image 13.1.3 below, where the Proposed Development comprises the provision of new signals within the highway land and a temporary access track around the corner of the field north-west of the junction.
- 1.136. There are no designated heritage assets in immediate proximity to this junction. The HER records only the alignment of the post-medieval turnpike road (MLE21284) following the B4669.
- 1.137. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the provision of new signals within the extents of the modern highway and a temporary access track on the margin of the adjacent field, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.





**Image 13.1.3: Off-site Highway Improvement No. B2.**

### **Highway Improvement No. B5 (Coventry Road/B581 Broughton Road)**

- 1.138. This off-site junction, located east of the Main Order Limits, comprises a T-junction opposite the Mill on the Soar pub and restaurant at the junction of B4114 Coventry Road and B581 Broughton Road at Soar Mill, Broughton Astley, south-east of Stoney Stanton, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.4), and Image 13.1.4 below. New traffic lights are already scheduled to be introduced as part of the Broughton Astley S278 works (Planning Ref: 19/00856/OUT).
- 1.139. Should the above committed scheme not come forward in advance of the opening of the HNRFI access infrastructure, the applicant proposes to undertake a mitigation scheme. This would include signalisation of the ghost island junction with the Broughton Road with separate right and left turn lanes and connecting to the existing signalled junction at Coventry Road on the B4114. This layout differs from the S278 proposals by removing the Coventry Road widening, the traffic levels forecast do not require improvements on this arm.
- 1.140. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this junction. The HER records the Fosse Way (MLE1380) and a Bronze Age burnt mound (MLE9634) to the north of Coventry Road (MLE21284), albeit there is no evidence for the presence of archaeological remains relating to either the Roman road or the Bronze Age activity in the location of the Proposed Development within the modern highway.
- 1.141. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the extents of the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.



**Image 13.1.4: Off-site Highway Improvement No. B5.**

### **Highway Improvement No. HB2 (The Common Barwell/A47/B4668 Leicester Road)**

- 1.142. This off-site junction, located north of the Main Order Limits comprises, a roundabout at the junction of A47 Normandy Way/Leicester Road, the B4668 Leicester Road and The Common, adjacent to the Leicester Road Stadium south-east of Barwell, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.3), and Image 13.1.5 below. The Proposed Development comprises widening of the entry arm on the B4668 Leicester Road which will affect the existing footway within the highway boundary.
- 1.143. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this junction. The HER records only the alignment of the post-medieval turnpike road (MLE20567) on the B4668.
- 1.144. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.





**Image 13.1.5: Off-site Highway Improvement No. HB2.**

**Highway Improvement No. H1 (A5/A4303/B4027/Coal Pit Lane)**

- 1.145. This off-site junction comprises the Cross in Hand roundabout at the junction of the A5 Watling Street, A4303 Coventry Road, B4428 Lutterworth Road and Coal Pit Lane, adjacent to the Magna Park South distribution centre west of Lutterworth. This junction is located over 8km south of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1 (document reference 6.3.13.1), and Image 13.1.6 below, where the Proposed Development comprises increased roundabout radius and widening of the lane entries to the existing roundabout, which will be contained to the highway boundary.
- 1.146. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this junction. The HER records the Watling Street Roman Road (MLE1388) on the alignment of the modern A5, in addition to the record for a post-medieval turnpike road (MLE20827) to the east.
- 1.147. There is no evidence for the presence of archaeological remains relating to either the Roman road or the post-medieval road in the location of the Proposed Development within the modern highway.
- 1.148. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.



**Image 13.1.6: Off-site Highway Improvement No. H1.**

**Highway Improvement No. B6 (Coventry Road/ Croft Road)**

- 1.149. This off-site junction, located east of the Main Order Limits comprises the B4114 Coventry Road and Croft Road T-junction next to the Esso filling station, south-west of Narborough, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 (document references 6.3.13.1 and 6.3.13.2), and Image 13.1.7 below. The Proposed Development comprises some limited widening of the carriageway on junction approaches, which will be contained to the existing highway boundary.
- 1.150. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this junction. The HER records the Fosse Way Roman Road (MLE21284) on the alignment of the modern Coventry Road, albeit there is no evidence for the presence of archaeological remains relating to the road recorded in the location of the Proposed Development.
- 1.151. In light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to the modern highway, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.



**Image 13.1.7: Off-site Highway Improvement No. B6.**

**Highway Improvement No. B4 (B4669 Hinckley Road/ Leicester Road, Sapcote)**

1.152. This highway improvement location is focussed on the B4669 Hinckley Road/Leicester Road, Sapcote - a single carriageway two-lane road that forms the main east-west route through the village, which is located to the east of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1, and 13.2 (document references 6.3.13.1 and 6.3.13.2). The Proposed Development comprises traffic calming features and creation of public realm with junction improvements, bus stop relocation and inclusion of a pedestrian crossing at junction of Church Street with the B4669.

1.153. In terms of designated heritage assets, as illustrated on Figure 13.4 (document reference 6.3.13.4), the alignment of the highway that is the focus of the highway improvements passes to the north of the scheduled monument which designates the buried remains of Sapcote Motte and Bailey castle (1010301), albeit no development works are proposed on within the highway adjacent to the scheduled monument.

1.154. The HER also records that the DCO Site boundary passes through the extents of the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core (MLE292) of Sapcote.

1.155. However, in light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to minor alterations to the existing infrastructure within the modern highway extents, there is considered to be no potential for this element of Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

**Highway Improvement No. B3 (Hinckley Road/Stanton Lane; Stoney Stanton)**

1.156. This off-site works location is focussed on Stanton Lane/Hinckley Road, south-west of Stoney Stanton, a single carriageway two-lane road that runs through linear suburban development into countryside, located to the east of the Main Order Limits as depicted on Figure 13.1 and 13.2 (document references 6.3.13.1 and 6.3.13.2). The Proposed

Development comprises changes to the existing road layout to provide traffic calming features to enable reduction of the speed limit to 40mph from the national speed limit.

- 1.157. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this part of the DCO Site and neither does the HER record any records or non-designated heritage assets that interact with the existing highway.
- 1.158. Therefore, in light of the limited development proposed in this location, which will be confined to minor alterations to the existing infrastructure within the modern highway extents, there is considered to be no potential for this element of the Proposed Development to impact on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

### **Level Crossings**

#### **Outwoods Railway Crossing (Grid Ref: SP442941)**

- 1.159. This off-site works location is focussed on the Outwoods pedestrian level crossing (Footpath no U8/1) on the Leicester to Hinckley railway to the west of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.3). The Proposed Development comprises the replacement of the level crossing with a pedestrian footbridge, with associated public rights of way diversions.
- 1.160. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this railway crossing and neither does the HER record any records or notable non-designated heritage assets that interact with the existing level crossing or footprint of proposed new infrastructure.
- 1.161. Therefore, in light of the nature of the Proposed Development, focussed as it is on the existing railway infrastructure, and its location away from any known heritage assets, there is considered to be no potential for any impacts on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

#### **Thorney Fields Farm Railway Crossing (Grid Ref: SP480959)**

- 1.162. This off-site works location is focussed on the Thorney Fields Farm pedestrian level crossing (Footpath U17/1) on the Leicester to Hinckley railway to the north-east of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.3). The Proposed Development comprises the level crossing closure and PRoW diversion to connect into adjacent tracks.
- 1.163. There are no designated heritage assets in proximity to this railway crossing and neither does the HER record any records or notable non-designated heritage assets that interact with the existing level crossing or footprint of the proposed PRoW diversion (aside from recording the alignment of the railway itself as MLE16084).
- 1.164. Therefore, in light of the nature of this element of the Proposed Development, focussed as it is on the existing railway infrastructure, and its location away from any known heritage assets, there is considered to be no potential for any impacts on any significant

archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

### **Elmesthorpe (Grid Ref: SP471958)**

- 1.165. This off-site works location is focussed on the Elmesthorpe pedestrian level crossing (Footpath T89/1 on the Leicester to Hinckley railway to the immediate north-east of the Main Order Limits, as depicted on Figure 13.1, 13.2 and 13.4 (document references 6.3.13.1, 6.3.13.2 and 6.3.13.3). The Proposed Development comprises a Public Right of Way diversion with pedestrian traffic rerouted to an existing bridge over the railway at Station Road.
- 1.166. In light of the nature of this element of the Proposed Development, there is considered to be no potential for any impacts on any significant archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

### **Barwell (Grid Ref: SP457952) and Earl Shilton (Grid Ref: SP460954)**

- 1.167. These off-site works locations are each focussed on pedestrian level crossings where the Proposed Development comprises the permanent closure of the crossing, meaning that each level crossing would have no future purpose.
- 1.168. In light of the nature of these elements of the Proposed Development focussed solely on the crossing on the railway, there is considered to be no potential for any impacts on any archaeological remains or any other heritage asset.

### **Summary of Proposed Development Areas beyond the Main Order Limits**

- 1.169. The consideration of development areas beyond the Main Order Limits has established that there is considered to be no potential for any works in these areas to interact with significant archaeological remains. A number of these off-site works are located in proximity to areas of archaeological potential, such as highways works close to the historic cores of the settlements of Stoney Stanton and Sapcote. However, in reality the proposed changes within these areas are so limited; involving only additional signage, occasional road calming measures and minor adjustments to the existing highway or railway network confined overwhelmingly to the existing infrastructure boundaries; that no adverse impacts on archaeological features or deposits is expected.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- 1.170. This archaeological assessment concludes that the DCO Site does not contain any world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or listed buildings, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ.
- 1.171. Potential impacts upon the settings of the designated heritage assets in the wider study area have not been considered within this assessment, rather a standalone Heritage Assessment (Appendix 13.2; document reference 6.2.13.2) considers all issues of this

nature.

- 1.172. The Leicestershire HER records two non-designated heritage assets within the boundary of the Main HNRFI Site and these comprise an undated ditch and a 19<sup>th</sup> century barn. Both assets are of low importance and are not thought to inhibit the Proposed Development.
- 1.173. Two post-medieval farmsteads are located within the Main HNRFI Site. The significance of these farmsteads can be attributed primarily to the standing remains of the principal farm buildings and barns of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, rather than their archaeological potential. Even so, these structures are considered to be, at most, of low importance, and are assessed more fully in a separate Heritage Assessment (Appendix 13.2; document reference 6.2.13.2).
- 1.174. Two areas of truncated ridge and furrow earthworks, deriving from medieval agricultural practice, were also identified in the Main HNRFI Site during the course of this assessment and are assessed as of low importance.
- 1.175. Historic mapping indicates that the extant farmsteads within the Main HNRFI Site were established variously in the 18<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the fieldscapes within the Main Order Limits are predominantly characterised as reorganised piecemeal enclosure or planned enclosure originating in the late post-medieval period.
- 1.176. The surrounding area has produced evidence for archaeological activity dating from the early prehistoric period through to the medieval period. The scarcity of previously recorded archaeological information for the Main Order Limits itself is likely to be reflective of a lack of systematic investigation in the wider area, rather than the actual absence of archaeological remains.
- 1.177. Indeed, the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation has confirmed the presence of activity ranging from the late Iron Age to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries within the Main Order Limits. This included evidence for a dispersed late Iron Age to Roman rural settlement focused on a probable roundhouse to the west of Hobbs Hayes Farm, with associated features including pits and post holes. A separate settlement site defined by pits and shallow gully features, possibly representing foundation cuts for structures, was also identified to the north of Aston Firs/Elmesthorpe Plantation, where the settlement evidence was located within an area of shallow agricultural boundary ditches dated from the Late Iron Age to Roman period.
- 1.178. This was overlain by the remains of a medieval landscape consisting of ridge and furrow which was superseded in turn by an enclosed system of 18<sup>th</sup> century fields focused on a newly constructed farmsteads and the alignment of Burbage Common Road. The final episodes of significant change evidenced by the results of the trial trench evaluation occurred with the construction of the railway between Hinckley and Leicester in the 1860's, and the M69 Motorway in the 1970's.
- 1.179. The late prehistoric to Romano-British remains identified in the Main HNRFI Site are considered to be heritage assets of low to medium importance, albeit they are not considered to represent archaeological activity of such significance to warrant



preservation in-situ.

- 1.180. None of the known archaeological or landscape features, or indeed built form, identified within the Main Order Limits to date is considered to represent an ‘in-principle’ constraint to development. Nonetheless, the Proposed Development is expected to result in the complete destruction of the identified archaeological features and deposits across these parts of the DCO Site.
- 1.181. As such, consultation with the Leicestershire County Council Archaeologist has agreed an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (Appendix 13.7; document reference 6.2.13.7) for further archaeological investigation and mitigation in respect of the identified heritage assets across the DCO Site.
- 1.182. While significant archaeological remains have been recorded in proximity to a number of the locations off-site works beyond the extents of the Main Order Limits, the nature of the Proposed Development within these areas is such that it is considered that there is no potential for significant archaeological remains to be adversely affected. In each case, the changes within these areas are so limited; involving only additional signage, occasional road calming measures and minor adjustments to the existing highway or railway network confined overwhelmingly to the existing infrastructure boundaries; that there is considered to be no potential for any works in these areas to interact with significant archaeological remains or result in any adverse impacts in this respect.

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