



Heritage Baseline Assessment

On behalf of Richborough Commercial

January 2024



Introduction

- 1.1 Marrons were commissioned to undertake a Baseline Heritage Assessment to support the promotion of land to the north of Thurlaston, adjacent to the South West Rugby Strategic Urban Extension (SUE) and Symmetry Park.
- 1.2 Sources consulted include the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record, the National Heritage List for England, Thurlaston Conservation Area Appraisal (Rugby Borough Council, Undated) and other relevant documentary sources.
- 1.3 A site visit was undertaken on the 25th January, 2024.

Baseline

- 1.4 No known designated or non-designated heritage assets lie within the Site which is composed of a pair of agricultural fields lying to either side (east and west) of Main Street, the only vehicular access road into the village of Thurlaston to the south.
- 1.5 Heritage assets surrounding the Site are mostly located within the Thurlaston Conservation Area. Outside the conservation area and to the north of the Site is the candidate non designated heritage asset of Holly Tree Cottage, Coventry Road.

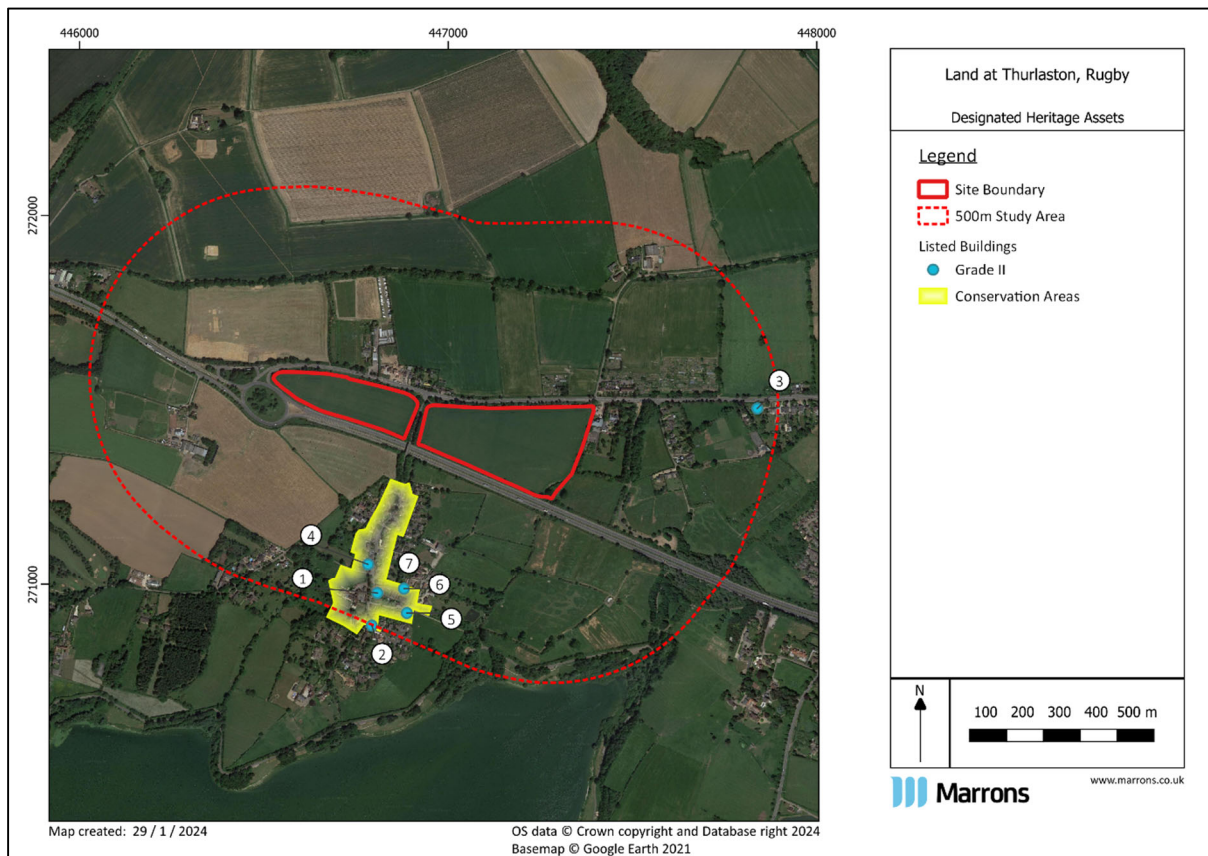


Figure 1 Designated heritage assets within the search area

Map Ref	NHLE Ref	Name	Type/Grade
1	1034924	Stanleys Farmhouse	Grade II Listed Building
2	1034925	Pipewell Cottage	Grade II Listed Building
3	1034969	Lavender Furlong	Grade II Listed Building
4	1116482	The Old Forge	Grade II Listed Building
5	1319932	Church House Church of St Edmund	Grade II Listed Building
6	1365061	The Windmill	Grade II Listed Building
7	N/A	Thurlaston	Conservation Area

Assessment

Thurlaston Conservation Area

- 1.6 The Site lies c.95m to the north of the Thurlaston Conservation Area boundary, and is separated from it by a slender buffer of agricultural land and the busy highway corridor of the M45, which runs in a roughly east-west orientation.
- 1.7 At the northern end of the conservation area is a group of late 20th century residential development identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) as 'Area 1: Modern buildings in the north'. The buildings in this area are not of any architectural or historic interest but, as stated by the CAA, together with mature trees and landscaping they 'create a neutral gateway to the older core of the village' and act like a buffer between the historic village core and the M45 corridor, limiting the impact of the latter on the setting of the former.
- 1.8 From the northern boundary of the Site's eastern field there are incidental views towards the skyline of the conservation area. Looking across the Site from this point, the uppermost parts of the Grade II listed buildings of The Windmill and the Church of St Edmund in the south-eastern part are observed on the horizon. While these private views help to locate the conservation area within its rural landscape setting, there are no notable reciprocal views towards the Site from the public domain within the historic core of the conservation area.
- 1.9 To the south of the conservation area is the reservoir of Draycote Water. Relative to the village, the reservoir is lower lying and in views from its eastern banks, Thurlaston appears as a settlement on a hill. In these views the Site and the conservation area cannot be seen in the same context and it is highly unlikely that the proposed development would be seen from the same vantage point.

- 1.10 The Site's makes a minor positive contribution to the rural setting of the conservation area, but this is severely tempered by the intervening course of the M45, the topography of the village and the lack of strong reciprocal views between the two. As a result the degree of harm that would arise from the Site's development would be less than substantial, at the lowest end of the scale. Subject to appropriate landscaped buffering along the southern boundary of the Site and the central corridor of Main Street, the impact of the proposed development could be adequately mitigated.

The Windmill

- 1.11 The Grade II listed brick tower of the village's late-18th century windmill is the tallest structure in Thurlaston. It is located c.375m to the south of the Site. The surrounding agricultural landscape makes a positive contribution to the building's historical significance as a mill which is a prominent landmark in longer distance views of the village.
- 1.12 The Site, although physically separated from the village by the M45 corridor and not visible from street level from the immediate surroundings of the Windmill, forms part of the wider rural landscape around it and makes a very minor positive contribution to its setting and significance.
- 1.13 Uppermost parts of the sail-less windmill can be seen in views across the Site from the north-east along Coventry Road and these views maybe interrupted and curtailed by the proposed development. Interruption of these private views could result in less than substantial harm at the lowest end of the scale to the setting and significance of the Grade II listed structure. It may not be possible to fully mitigate this impact through a landscaping scheme and it will therefore be necessary to balance the negligible degree of harm against the public benefits arising from the proposed development.

The Church of St Edmund

- 1.14 The Grade II listed Church of St Edmund dates to 1849 and was constructed as a chapel-school to be used as a school during the week and a church on Sundays. It is the second tallest structure in the village after the windmill and is located c.450m to the south of the Site. As a rural parish church, its village and wider agricultural landscape setting makes a positive contribution to its significance. Like the windmill the church is similarly prominent in wider long distance views of the village.
- 1.15 The Site, although physically separated from the village by the M45 corridor and not visible from street level from the immediate surroundings of the church, forms part of the wider rural landscape around it and makes a very minor positive contribution to its setting and significance.
- 1.16 The Church of St Edmund can be seen in views across the Site from the north-east along Coventry Road and these views maybe interrupted and curtailed by the proposed development. Interruption of these views would result in less than substantial harm at the lowest end of the scale to the setting and significance of the

Grade II listed structure. It may not be possible to fully mitigate this impact through a landscaping scheme and it will therefore be necessary to balance the negligible degree of harm against the public benefits arising from the proposed development.

Holly Tree Cottage

- 1.17 The Site lies c.38m to the south of Holly Tree Cottage. This building is of indeterminate age and presents as a traditional pair of timber framed cottages. However, the timber framing may simply be sham detailing applied to a more modern building and further investigation will be required to determine whether or not the property should be considered a candidate non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).
- 1.18 The Site currently contributes positively to the rural outlook and context of the Holly Tree Cottage and is located on the opposite side of Coventry Road from it. If the cottage is found to be of sufficient interest to qualify as a NDHA the development would have the potential to result bring about a degree of harm to its significance through development within its immediate setting. As such the cottage is a minor constraint to the development of the Site. Accounting for landscape mitigation at the junction of Coventry Road and Main Street, the development would likely have a neutral impact upon its significance.
- 1.19 Any future application for planning permission would need to be supported by a Heritage Impact Assessment to determine the significance of heritage assets that may be impacted upon, inform the detail of any mitigation scheme, and evaluate the impact of the proposed development in order to identify the degree of weight that should be afforded to their conservation so that it can appropriately weighed in the planning balance.

Archaeology

- 1.20 Analysis of information drawn from the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record indicates a series of undated cropmarks within both the eastern and western parts of the Site. Although undated, on morphological grounds the cropmarks could relate to rural land use and potential sedentary activity from the early Bronze Age or Iron Age, with potential (again undated) evidence for similar contemporary activity to the north and south-west of the Site. Evidence for earlier activity in the surrounding area is limited to chance finds of prehistoric flints at some distance from the Site. Evidence for roman activity in the surrounding area is markedly limited.
- 1.21 Located north of the medieval settlement of Thurlaston, the Site certainly formed part of an active medieval agrarian landscape, as evidenced by many windmills in the area and potentially the eastern parcel of the Site. The Site was almost certainly ploughed during this period and continues to be in the modern day, which may have impacted upon the survival of earlier remains of archaeological interest should they exist.
- 1.22 Overall, based on the available information, there is a fair likelihood that remains of local to regional archaeological interest survive within the Site. Where found they

are likely to be associated with isolated settlement activity and rural land use from the Bronze Age onwards.

- 1.23 No evidence suggests that the archaeological potential of the Site would undermine the principle of its development in full or in part. Any future application for planning permission would therefore need to be supported by a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey and a programme of trial trenching.

Key Points

- No designated or known non-designated heritage assets would be directly impacted upon.
- The Site makes a minor positive contribution to the setting and significance of the Thurlaston Conservation Area, Thurlaston windmill and the Church of St Edmund (both Grade II listed). As such they are a potential constraint to development.
- The proposed development would likely bring a less than substantial degree of harm, at the lowest end of the scale, to the setting and significance of the conservation area. The impact could be mitigated by an appropriate landscaping scheme along the southern boundary of the Site and to either side of Main Street.
- By curtailing incidental views from the north-east, the development would likely bring a less than substantial degree of harm at the lowest end of the scale to the setting and significance of the Grade II listed buildings of the windmill and the Church of St Edmund. It may not be possible to mitigate the negligible degree of harm through a landscaping scheme, and the impact would therefore need to be balanced against the public benefits of the development.
- The impact of the development on the setting of Holly Tree Cottage, as a candidate NDHA, is a potential constraint to development. However, further investigation is required to determine the property's significance and the weight, if any, that its conservation should be afforded in the planning balance.
- The potential to encounter archaeology is moderate to high, but evidence suggests that it is unlikely to be of such significance that it would undermine the principle of the Site's development, in full or in part.

