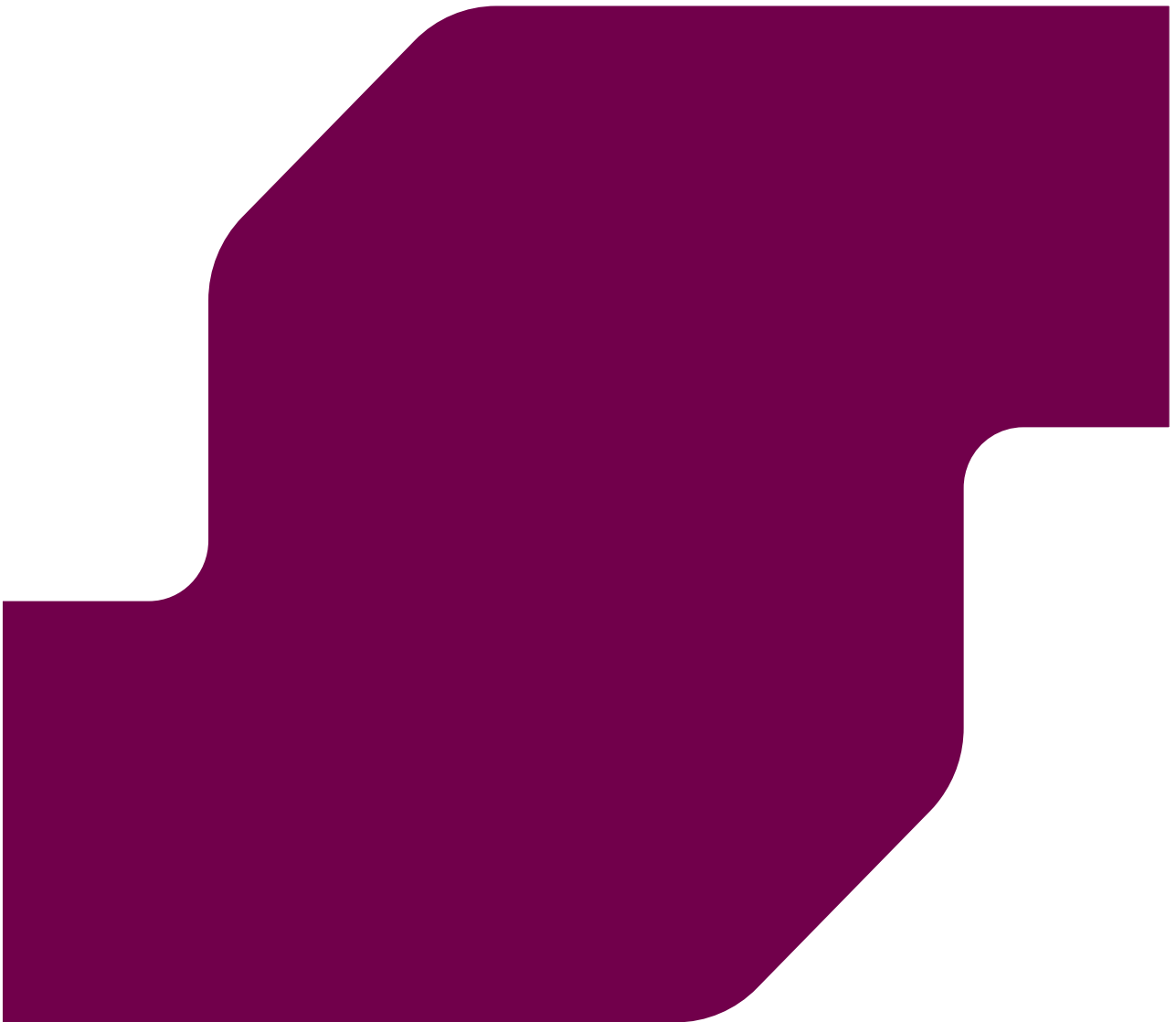


CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Great Barr Conservation Area



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10 September 2024

REPORT

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TC

10 May 2024

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- Appendix B 1841 Tithe Apportionment Information: Historic Buildings still extant in the Great Barr
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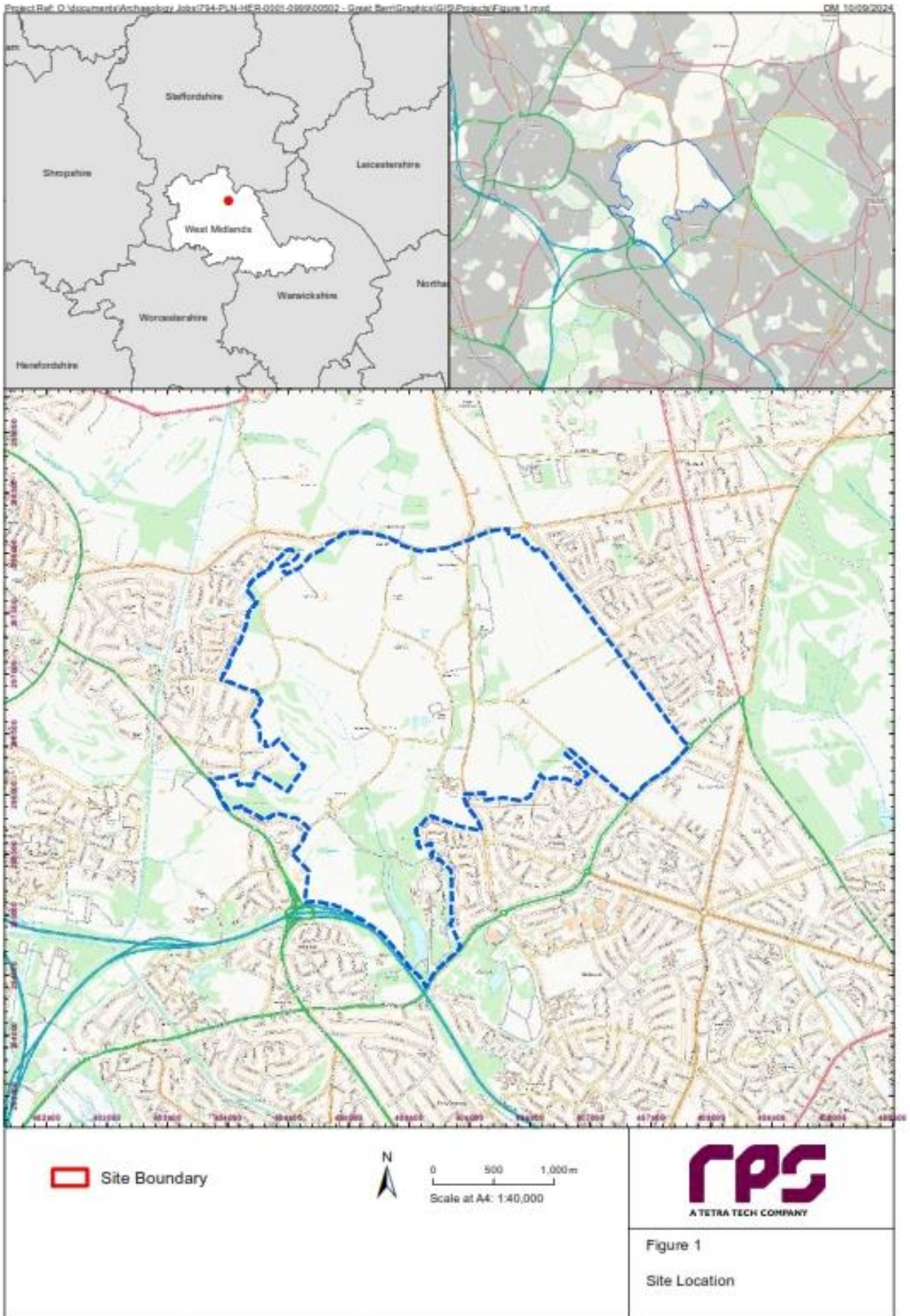
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SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- I. The Great Barr Conservation Area derives its special architectural and historic interest from its character and appearance as the remains of a Hall and associated landscaped parkland, historically owned and developed by the Scott family. The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the many phases of development to the Hall and landscape which occurred across its lifetime, from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. The area has historic interest through association with the renowned landscape designer Humphry Repton, and architectural and historic interest through its associations with Repton, John Nash and George Gilbert Scott, all of whom worked on various phases of the development of the Great Barr Hall and Estate.
- II. The historic core of the Conservation Area contains the Grade II Listed remains of Great Barr Hall, and the surrounding landscape, designated as a Grade II Listed Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden (GBH RPG). The historic core also contains the site of the manor of Great Barr and a number of buildings on Chapel Lane, all of which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, the designed landscape of the estate has been eroded through neglect and later insensitive additions. Furthermore, the Grade II Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden at the core of the Conservation Area is currently in extreme disrepair and included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register and considered to be highly vulnerable.
- III. The Conservation Area was extended in 1996 to encompass much of the surrounding agricultural landscape and the nearby hill of Barr Beacon. While this landscape has historic links with the Scott Family and the Great Barr Hall Estate, the extent of these links is not appreciable today. Following the assessment undertaken in this appraisal it is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary be revised to its pre-1996 extents.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Walsall Council in relation to the on-going appraisal and conservation of the Great Barr Conservation Area ('the Conservation Area', see Figure 1). Ryder Landscape Consultant were commissioned to produce a Landscape Review which has informed this report and is attached as Appendix F.
- 1.2 The Great Barr Conservation Area was first designated by the council on 17th December 1976. The size of the Conservation Area at the time of its original designation was 774.42 hectares, covering much of the same area as the later designated Grade II Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden, (NHLE ref: 1001202) designated in 1986). The Registered Park and Garden comprises the remains of an eighteenth century landscaped park surrounding the ruins of the Grade II listed Great Barr Hall and Chapel (NHLE ref: 1076395).
- 1.3 Following review and public consultation, the boundary to the Conservation Area was amended in January 1996. It was extended to cover much of the surrounding countryside to the north, east and west. No appraisal has been sourced for either iteration of the Conservation Area.
- 1.4 This appraisal provides an appraisal of the Great Barr Conservation Area in line with relevant Historic England guidance and recommends changes to its current boundaries.



2 BACKGROUND TO THE APPRAISAL

Reason for this Appraisal & Management

- 2.1 The Historic Environment section of the *Planning Practice Guidance* (PPG) emphasises that ‘*local planning authorities must review their conservation areas from time to time*’ as per Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Historic England guidance *Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)* suggests that the ideal frequency of this review is every 5 years.
- 2.2 No Conservation Area Appraisal is currently available for the Great Barr Conservation Area. As such, this appraisal and subsequent management plan has been prepared to provide a detailed assessment of the character and appearance, and special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 2.3 This report builds upon a draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan prepared by Place Services in early 2020. Much of the research utilised within this report is drawn from the extensive historical research undertaken by Place Services, and in many cases the conclusions are similar.
- 2.4 This report however provides a full assessment of the Conservation Area as it exists today, with the appropriate methodology referenced elsewhere in this report. Subsequently, recommendations have been suggested that draw upon this assessment as part of a Conservation Area Management Plan.

Previous Conservation Area Review and Assessment

- 2.5 The Great Barr Conservation Area was first designated in 1976 and included the Great Barr Hall Estate and the historic centre of the settlement of Great Barr. Its boundary was expanded in 1996 to encompass much of the surrounding agricultural landscape.
- 2.6 Following public consultation to extend the Great Barr Conservation Area in 1995/6, a report was prepared by Peter Field, the Strategic Services Manager, for consideration of the Aldridge South Area Planning Committee on 2nd January 1996 and the Main Planning Committee on 12th January.
- 2.7 This report recommended (further to noting the views of the Aldridge Planning Committee) not to extend the boundary of the Great Barr Conservation Area.
- 2.8 The report noted that public opinion gathered from consultation supported the expansion of the Conservation Area to its full proposed extents (to encompass Areas A, B, C and D), with the second most supported option being retaining the original boundaries of the Conservation Area (Area A) with revised management policies. The report notes that Area B (the golf course) has some historic interest which could reasonably justify its inclusion in the Conservation Area, and Area C (Barr Beacon) “*is less suitable for operational reasons though it does possess the sort of historic interest that could back up a further potential extension*”. It was also noted that the comments from the public justifying extension of the Conservation Area to its full extents reflected a public desire to preserve the open green land, rather than an area of special architectural and/or historic interest (para 8.2).
- 2.9 The report therefore recommended no change in the boundary, or only a minor extension. This was overruled at the committee meeting held on the 11th January 1996 and the Conservation Area subsequently extended to its current extents (see Figure 1) above.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 This appraisal will use a methodology taken from *Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition): Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second Edition* (February 2019), *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments* (April 2017).

3.2 This will include the following methods:

- Survey and Research (including local history studies, architectural reviews, historic area assessments character studies and the local historic environment record, historic photographs and maps);
- Map regression
- Community owner consultation and involvement (where appropriate); and
- An assessment of the special interest of the Conservation Area, presented in an easily accessible format.
- Management proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the area informed by an understanding of positive features to preserve, negative features to be enhanced.

4 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

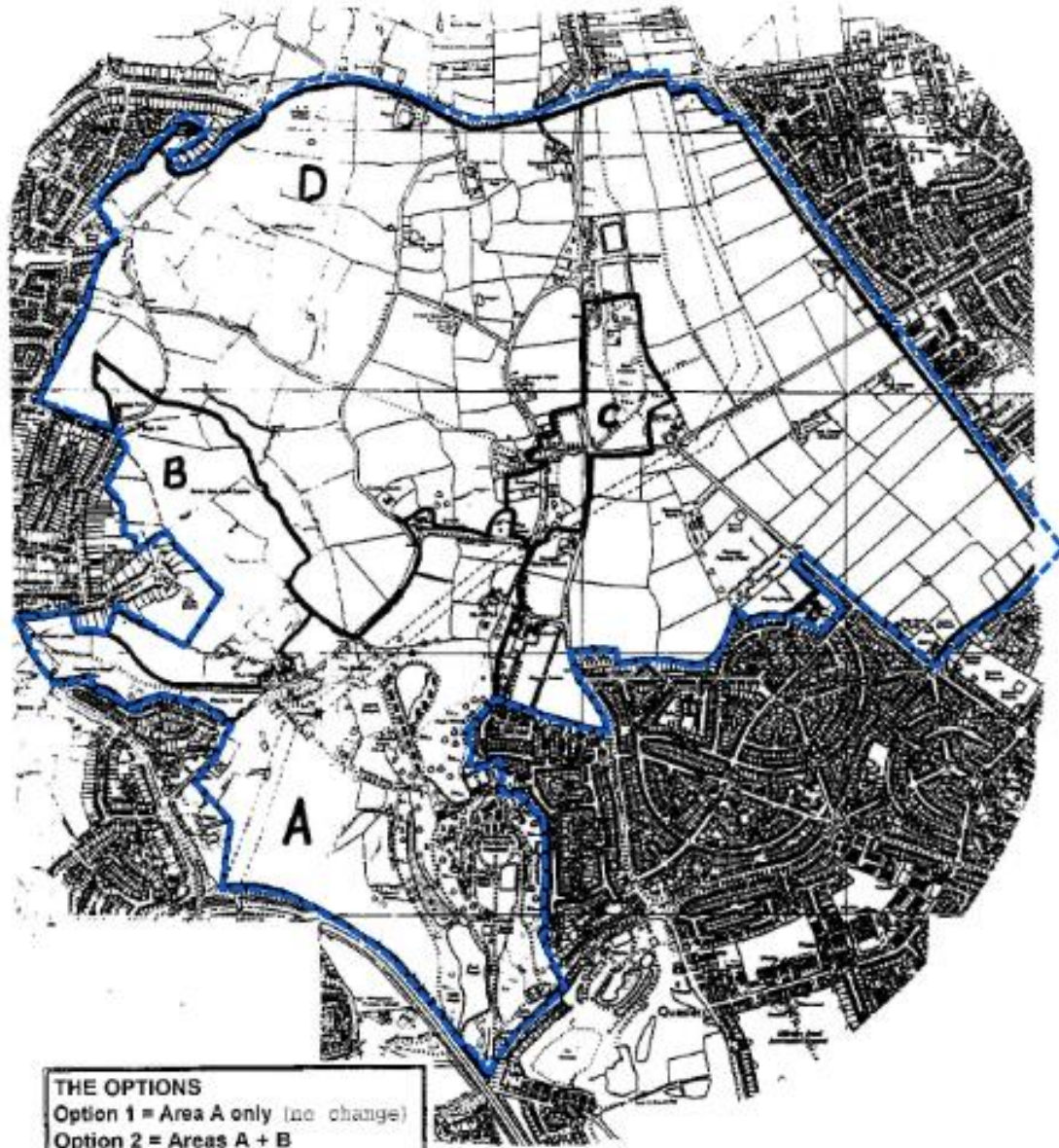
Introduction & Historical Overview

- 4.1 The Great Barr Conservation Area comprises the historic core of the estate of Great Barr Hall, together with a large area of the surrounding agricultural landscape. It sits between a number of sub-urban areas of twentieth century housing and busy roads, with the elevated M6 lying to the south. First designated in 1986, the original Conservation Area boundary encompassed much of the same area as the later designated Grade II RPG of Great Barr Hall, the historic centre of medieval Great Barr at Chapel Lane and a number of other farmsteads to the north. Following boundary revisions in 1995/6, the Conservation Area was extended to encompass a large amount of agricultural land to the north and the hill of Barr Beacon.
- 4.2 Great Barr Park is fortunate that each of the three major phases of its development seemed to have been carried out by the leading gardeners and architects of the day; There is evidence for the influence of Shenstone in the middle of the eighteenth century, the influential partnership of Repton and Nash in the 1790s and for Gilbert Scott in the middle of the nineteenth century.
- 4.3 The site covers approximately 105 hectares and has undergone various phases of design and construction over the years.
- 4.4 The Sections below outline the relevant history of the Conservation Area, with specific focus on the estate around Great Barr Hall. A historic map progression, illustrating the development of the area, is contained in Figures 2 – 14 of this report).



Picture 1 - Great Barr Hall in 1890s (www.birminghammail.co.uk)

GREAT BARR CONSERVATION AREA CONSULTATION: THE 4 OPTIONS



THE OPTIONS
Option 1 = Area A only (no change)
Option 2 = Areas A + B
Option 3 = Areas A + B + C
Option 4 = Areas A + B + C + D

 Great Barr Conservation Area



0 250 500 750m
Scale at A4: 1:25,000



Figure 2
1976 Original Conservation Area Boundary

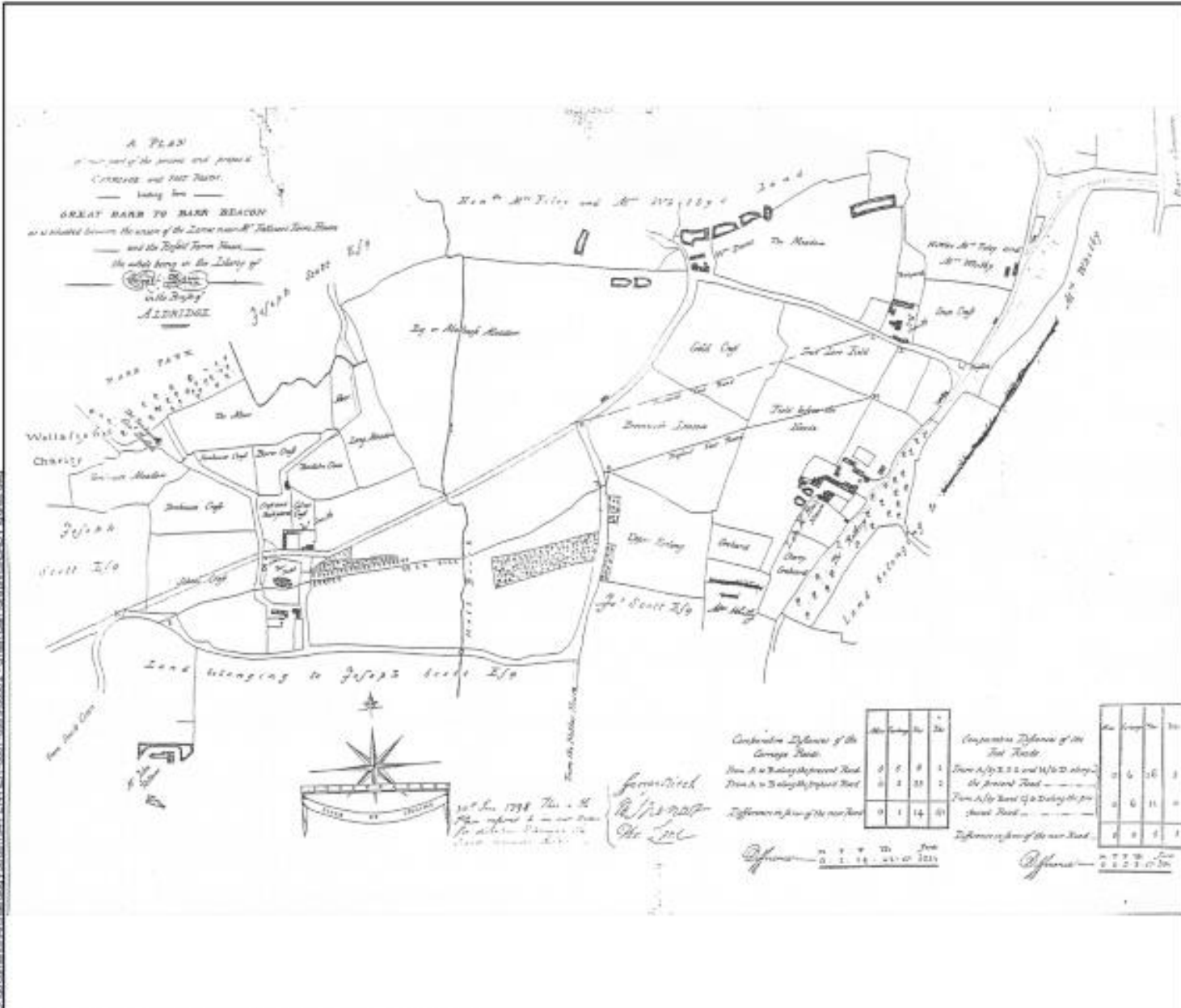
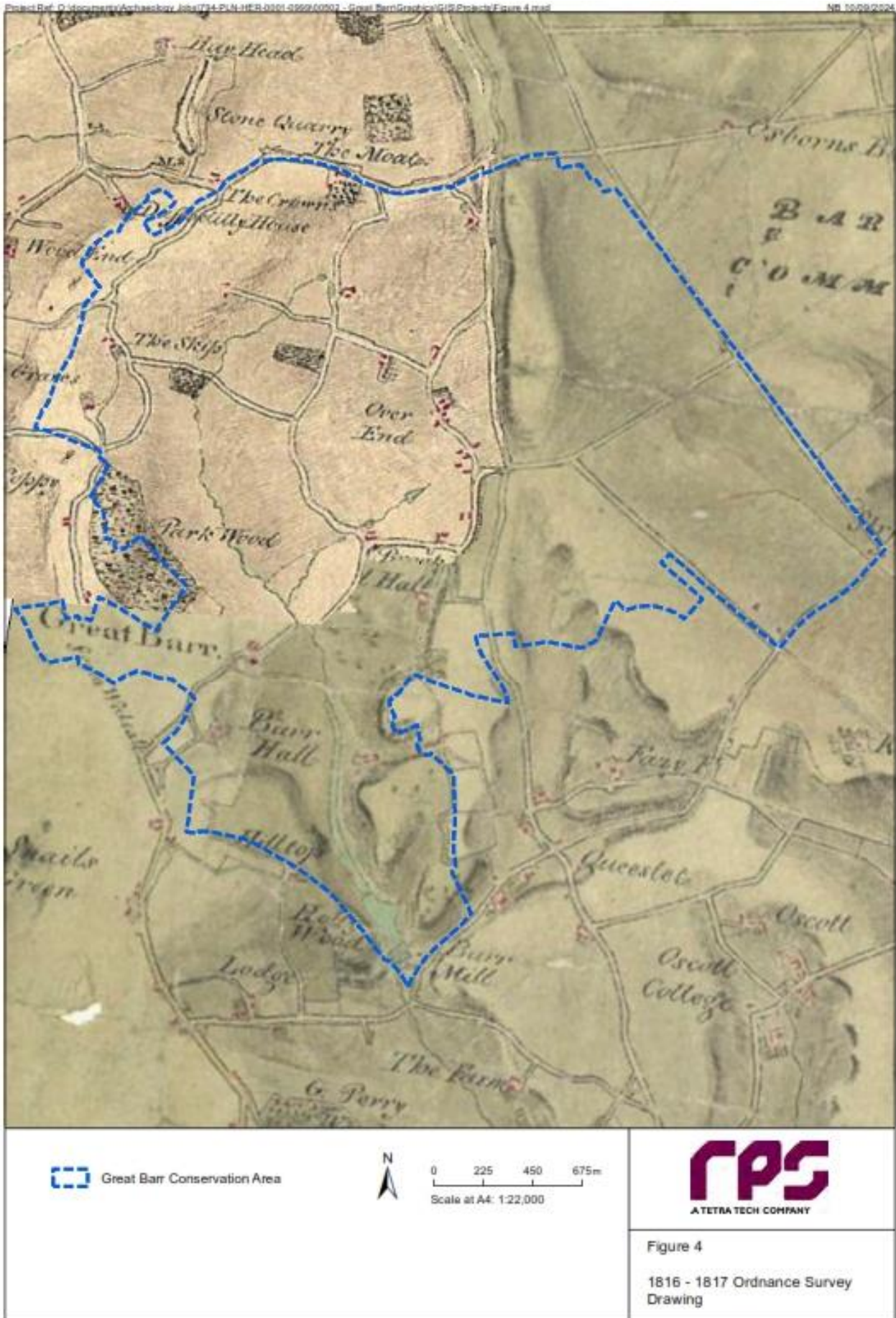
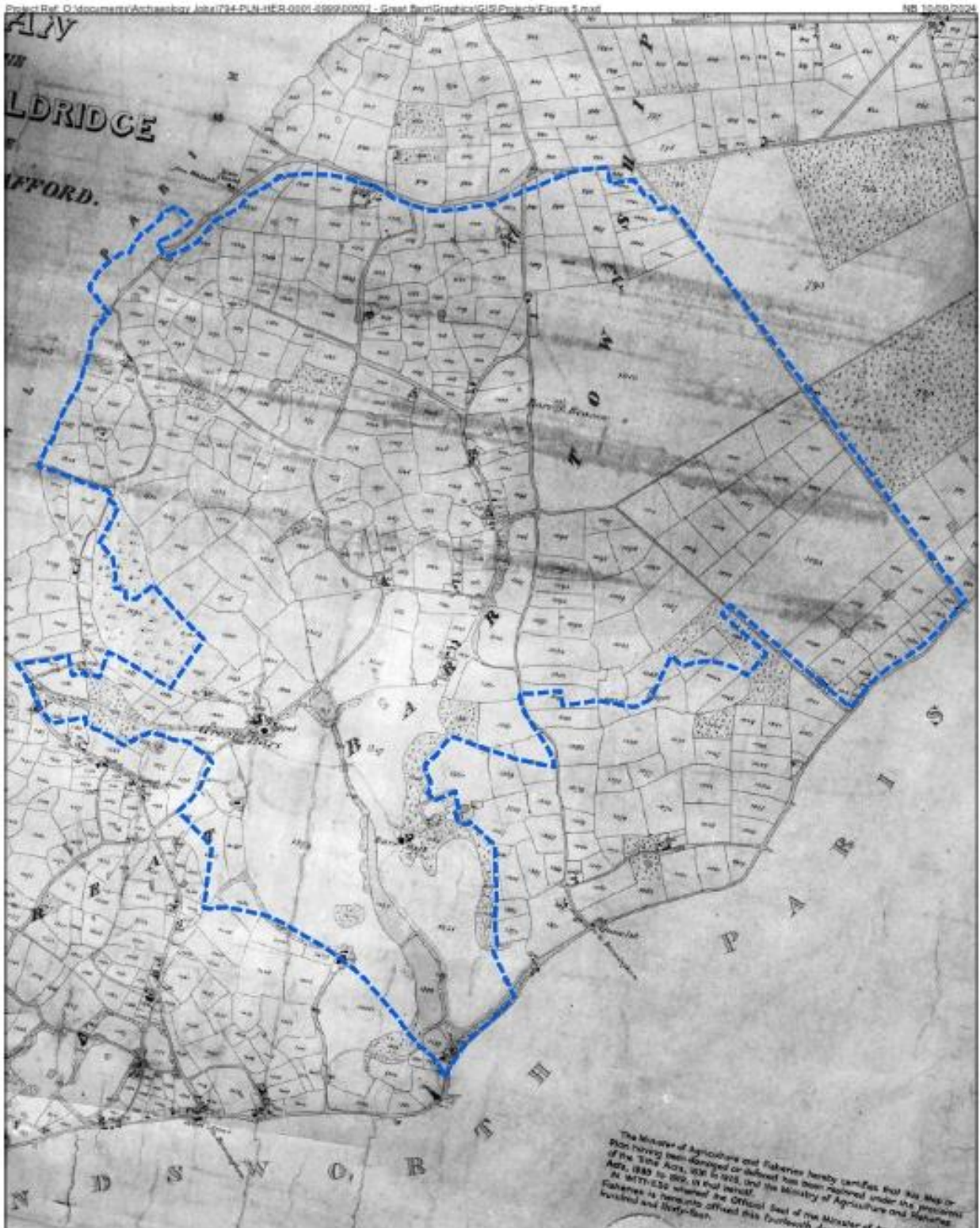


Figure 3
1798 Map

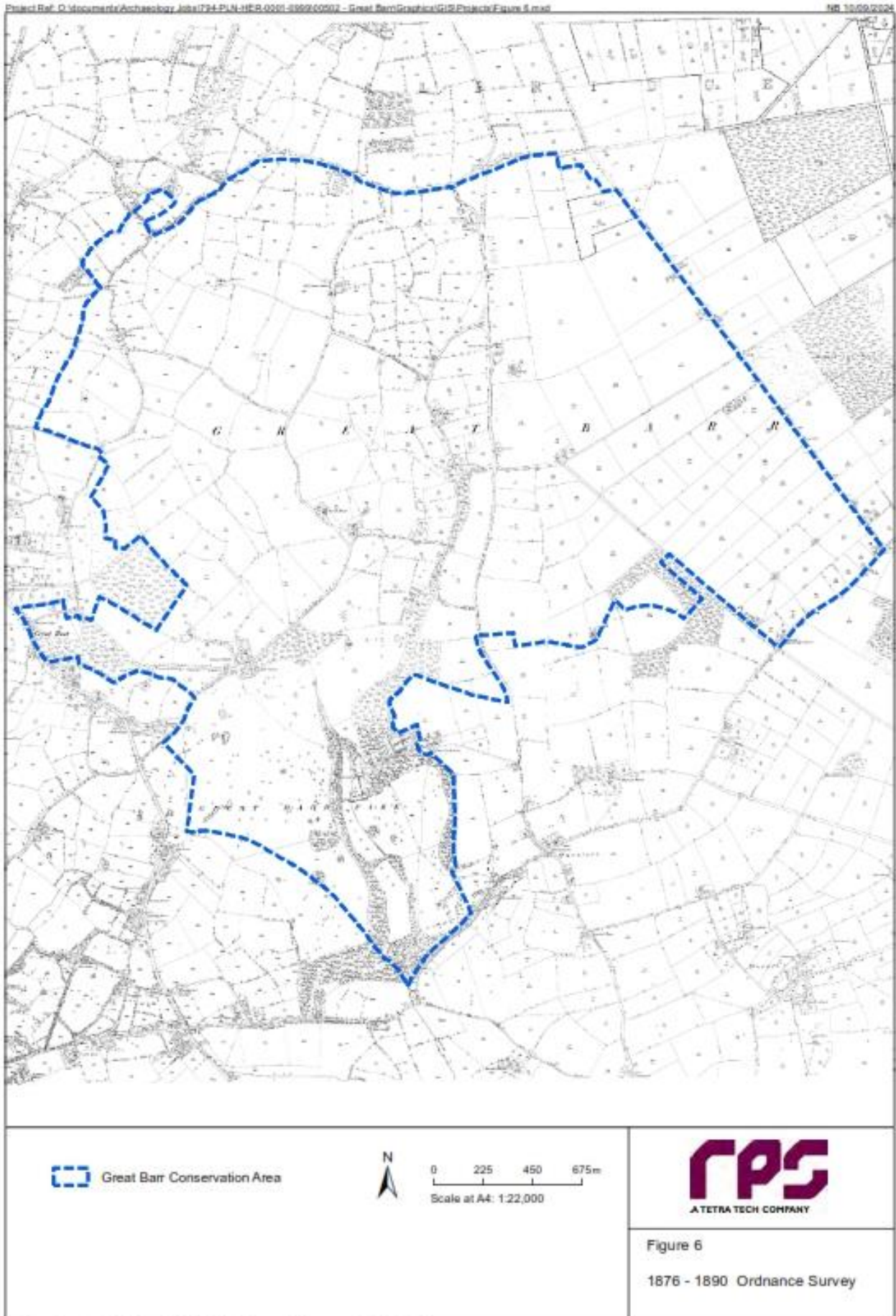
C:\Documents\Archives\Archives\1798\PLN-HER-00502-1-11-1798-0001-00000000-1-Great Barr Courtyard and Fat Road Plan.dwg

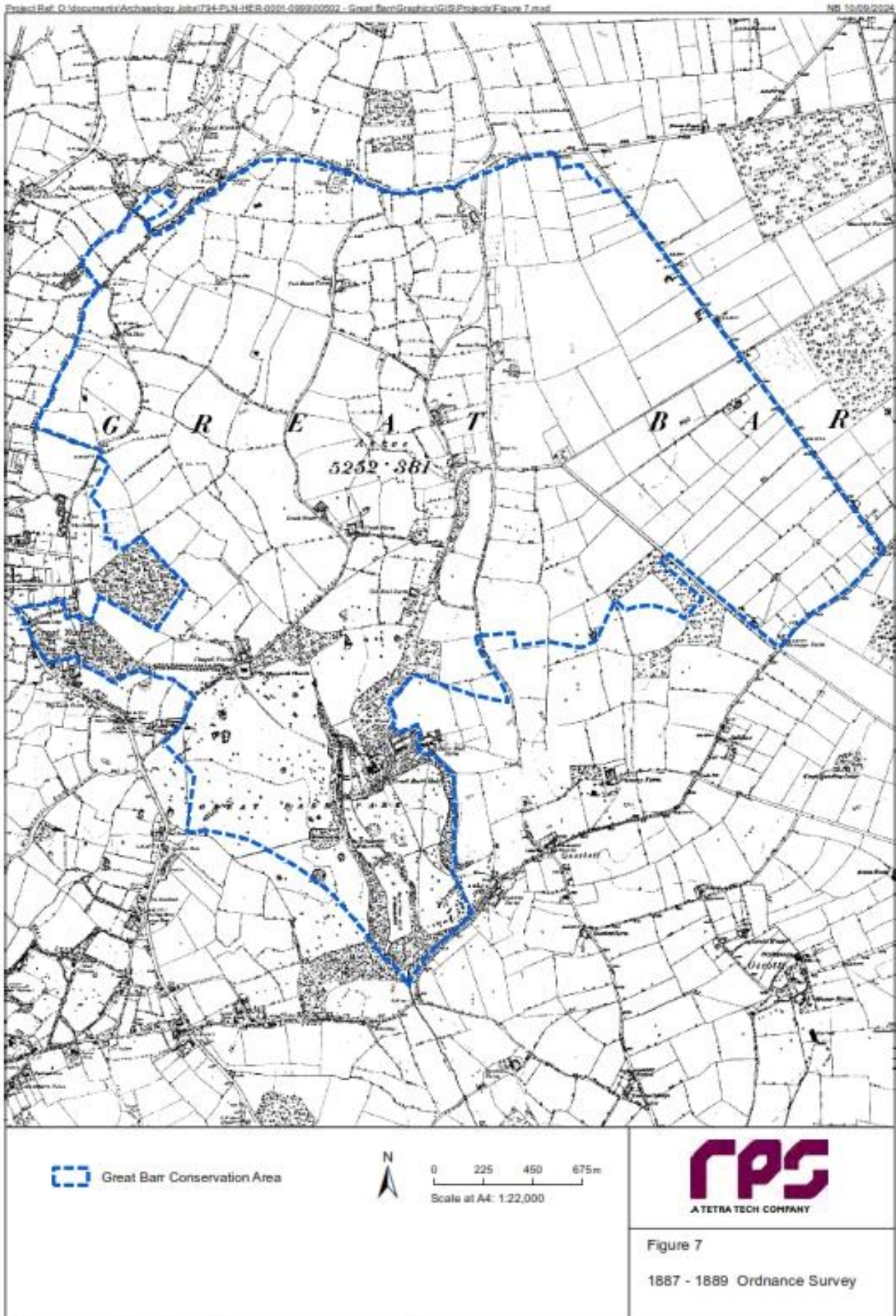


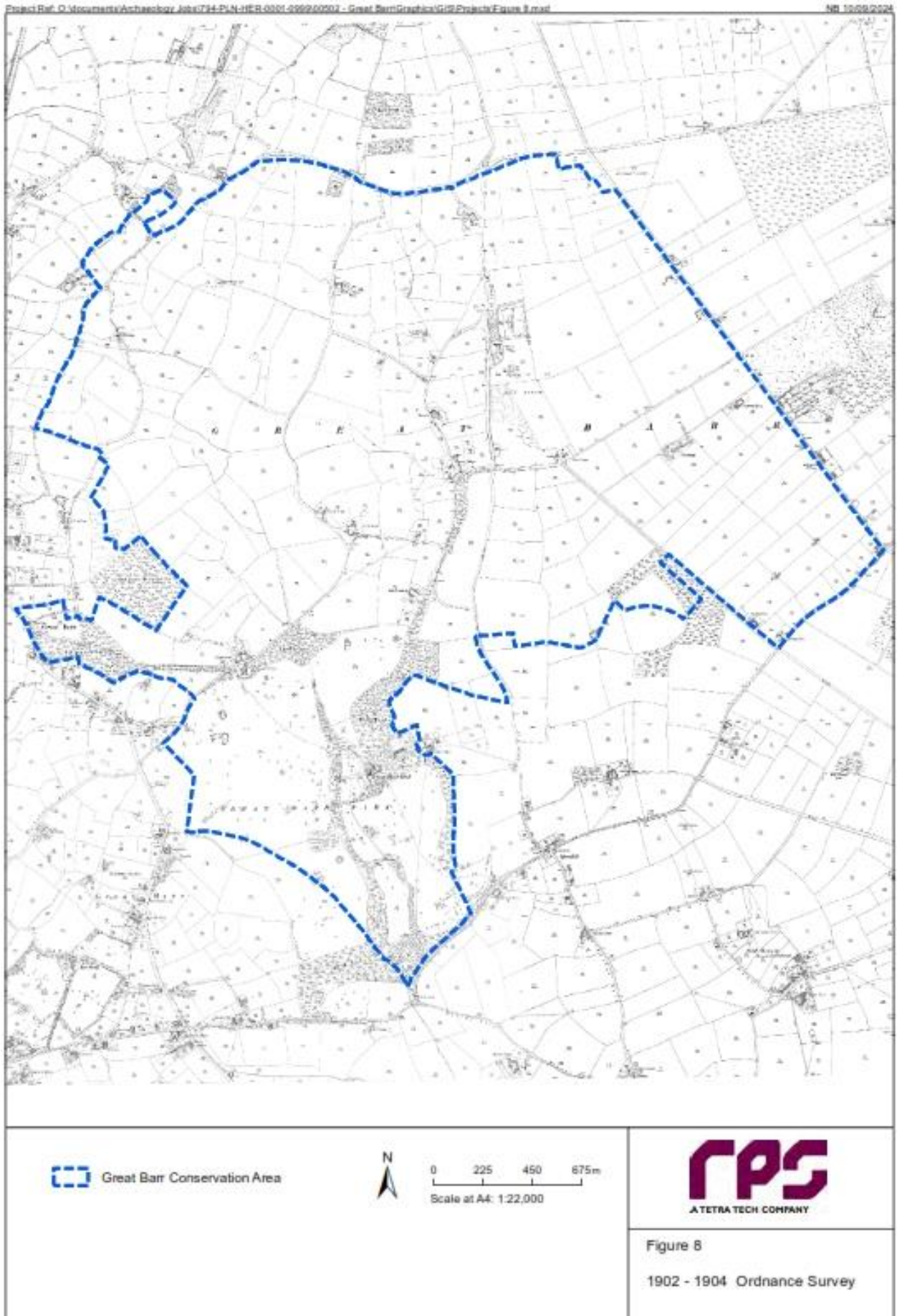


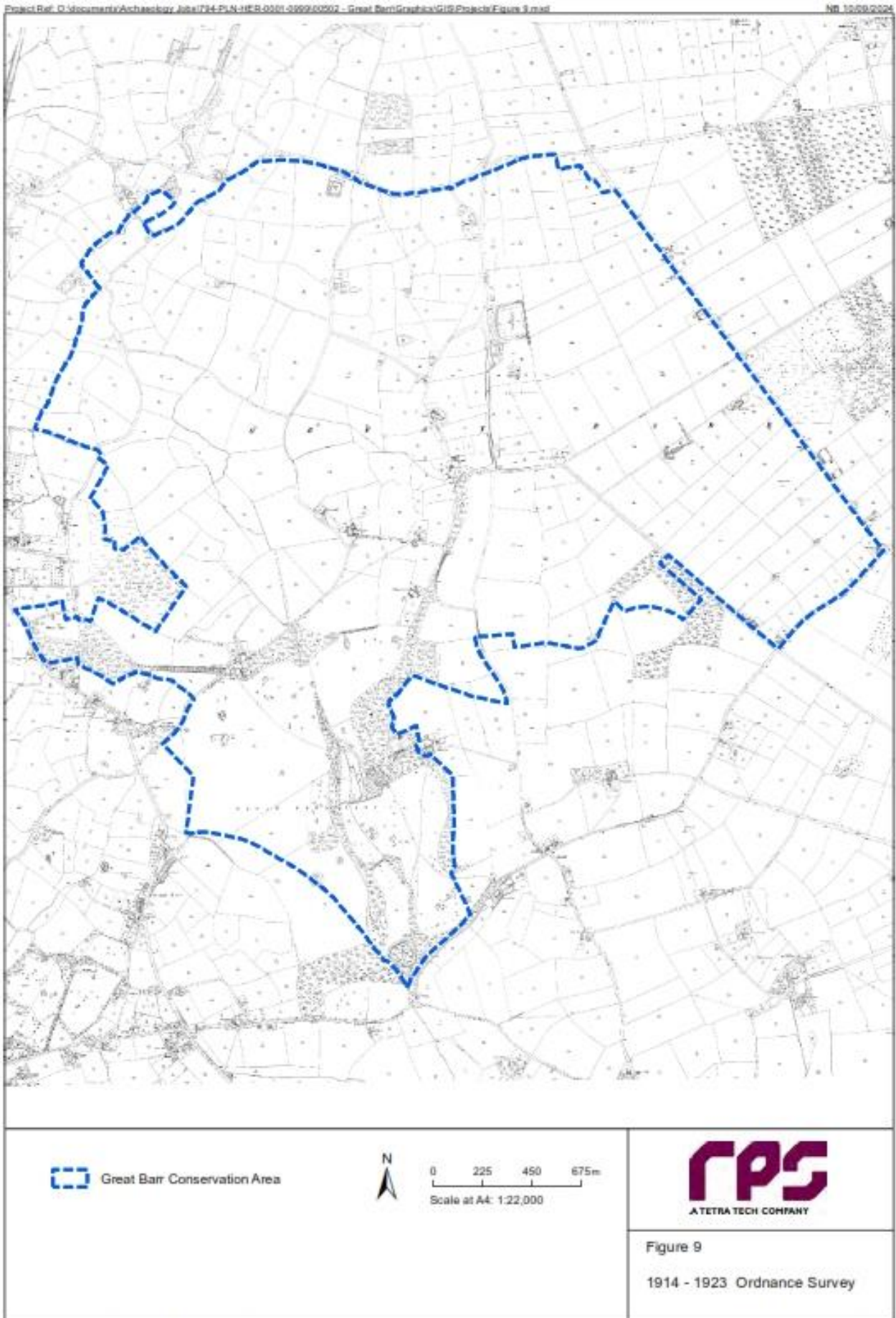
 Great Barr Conservation Area	  Scale at A4: 1:22,000	 A TETRA TECH COMPANY
Figure 5 1841 Aldridge Tithe Map		

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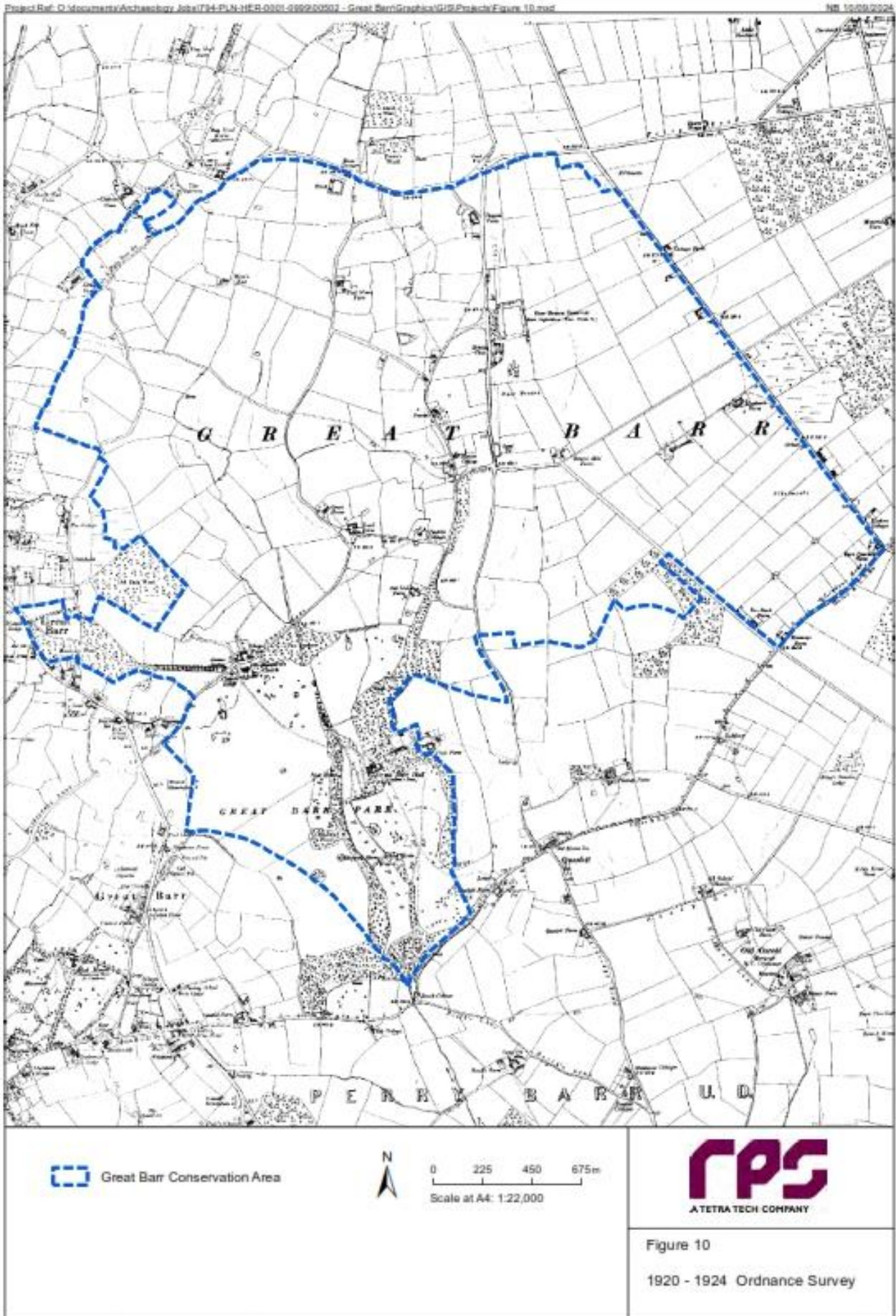




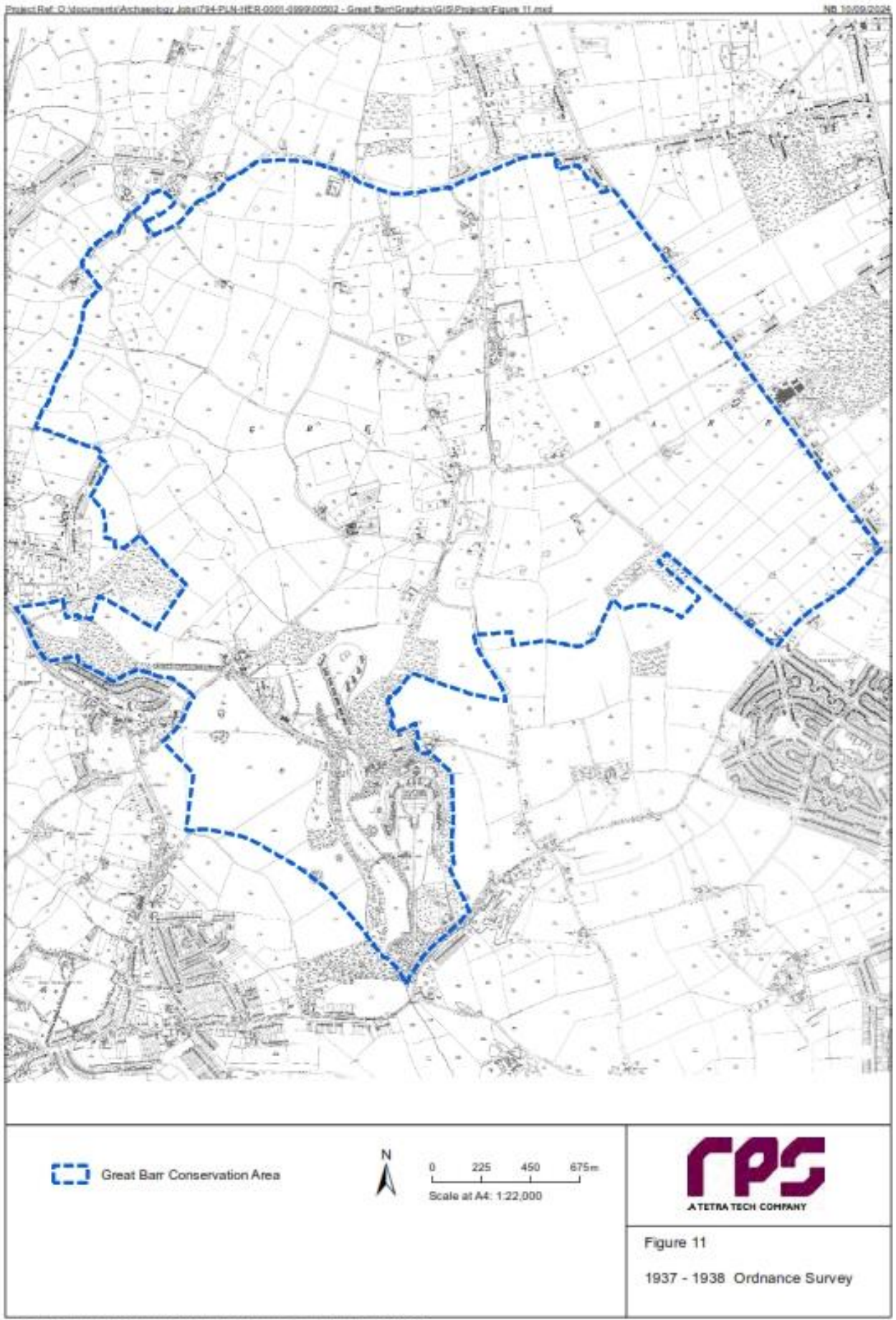


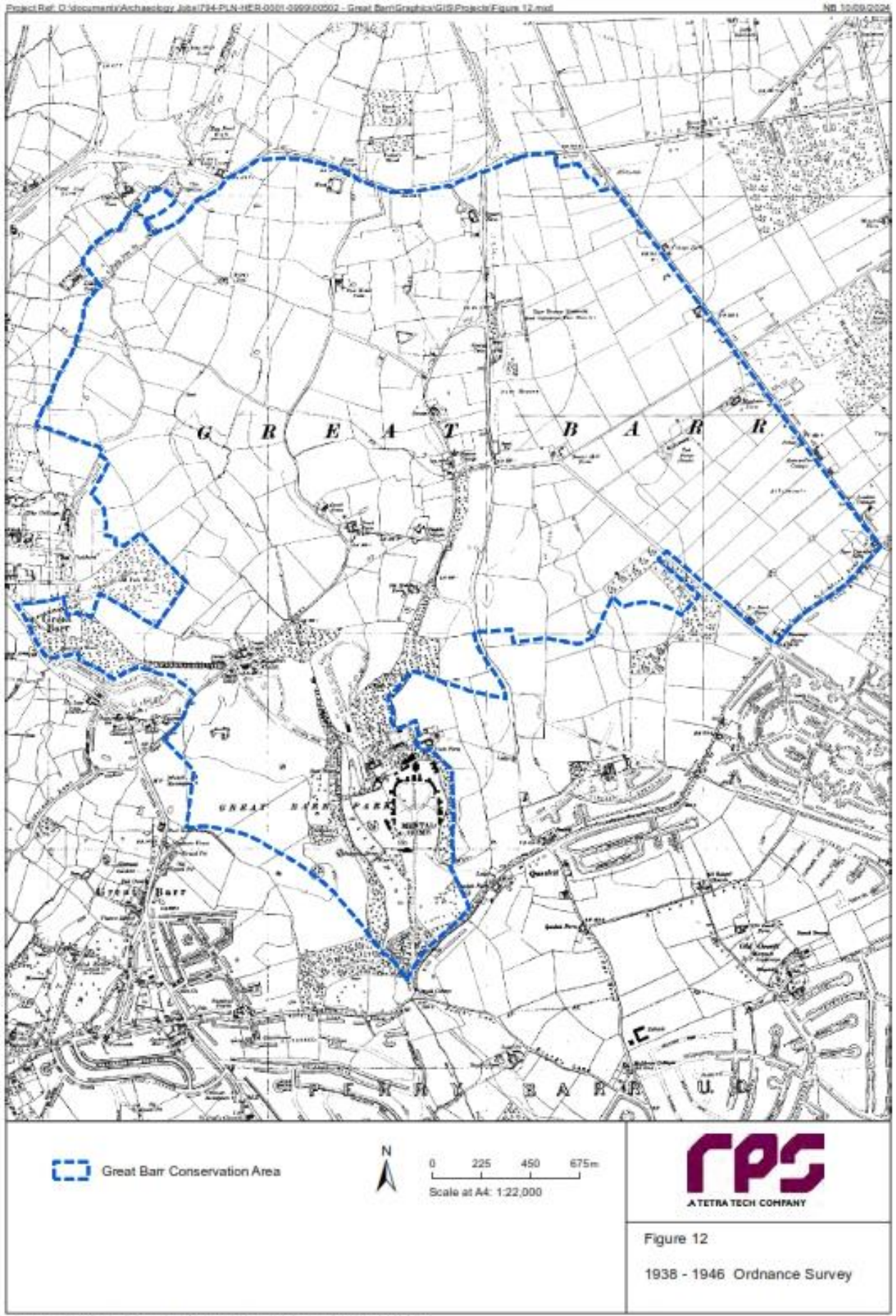


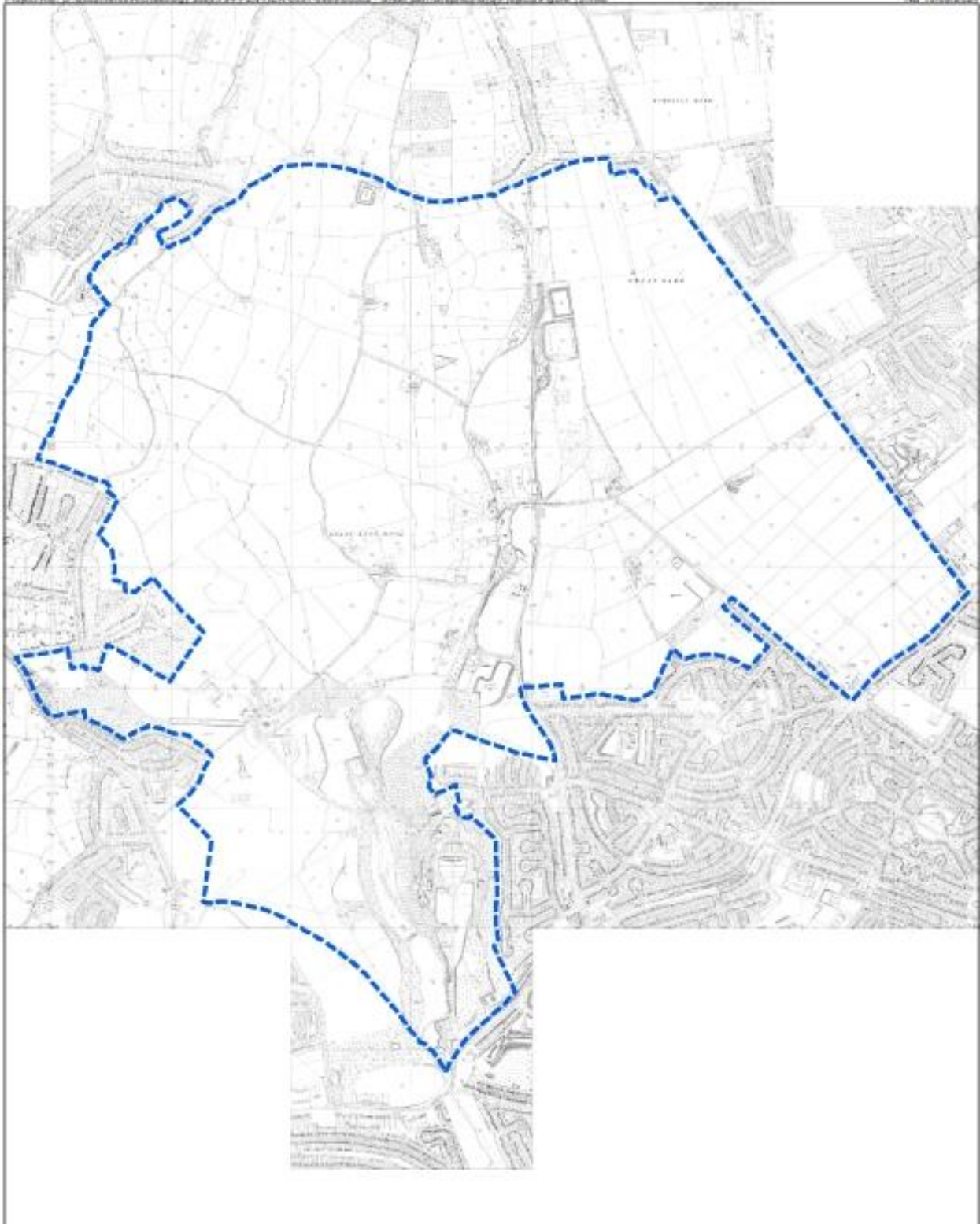
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 Great Barr Conservation Area



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Scale at A4: 1:22,000



Figure 13
1954 - 1977 Ordnance Survey



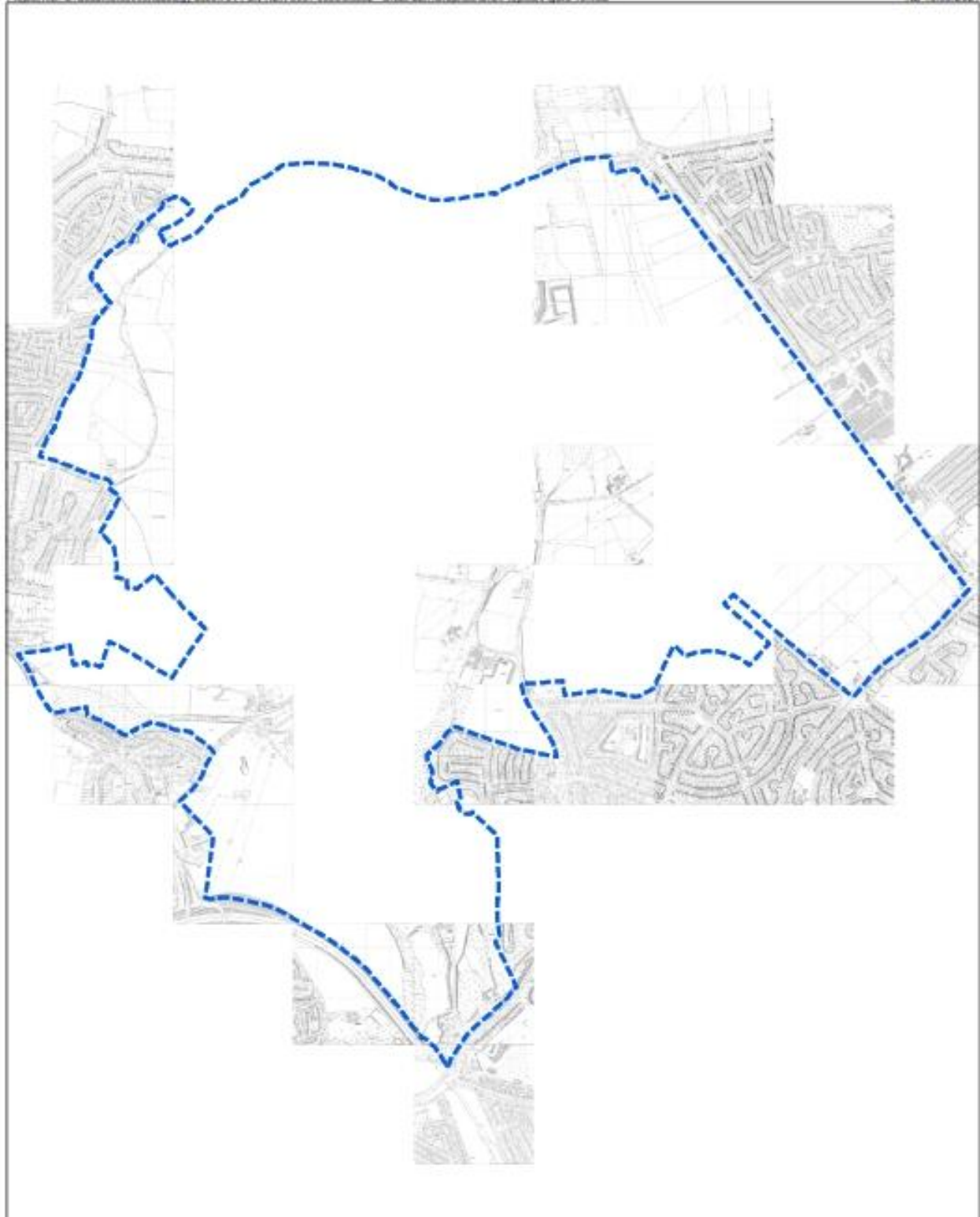
 Great Barr Conservation Area



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Figure 14
1954 - 1990 Ordnance Survey
Drawing



 Great Barr Conservation Area



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Scale at A4: 1:22,000



Figure 15
1960 - 1992 Ordnance Survey
Drawing

Origins and Medieval Great Barr

- 4.5 Barr is not an Anglo-Saxon name but a rare Ancient British survival in this area which means 'hill top' and clearly refers to Barr Beacon. Recorded as Baerr in a charter of 957 AD and as Barra in the Domesday Book, this highest point in the West Midlands County is recorded from Anglo-Saxon times as a beacon hill and was certainly a Celtic site before that. While, the majority of English placenames are of Anglo-Saxon origin this a rare example that illustrates the interaction between the incoming Anglian settlers and the native Celts (Dargue, 2010).
- 4.6 The Great Barr Hall Estate can trace its history back to the Chapel and Manor House of Great Barr, first referenced in 1257. The Chapel is thought to have stood where the Church of St Margaret is located today, and the original site of the Manor was located to the south. The remains of a moated site within the parkland to the south of St Margaret's Church is thought to be the location of the original Manor (Ramsey, 2007). The Scott family, long associated with Great Barr, were first recorded in the area in 1332.



Picture 2 - NE View of Barr Chapel (Source; History of Aldridge by Jim Gould)

- 4.7 By 1335, a medieval deer park had been established for the manor-house in Great Barr. This deer park covered an area that included what is now occupied by the golf course and surrounding lands to its north for the Manor of Great Barr (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985). The deer park is shown in **Appendix A**. The medieval deer park may have fallen out of use by the mid-sixteenth century. The land was still apparently imparked in 1541 but had been disparked by 1553 (Wolverhampton City Council, n.d.). Deer parks were the most common features of the medieval landscape. Deer parks were fashionable in the 12th and 13th centuries. *“At this time, deer were the property of the king or queen and a lord wishing to establish a deer park had to get permission (through a royal charter) in order to do so”* (Walsall Countryside Services (Cheryl Bailey), n.d.).
- 4.8 While much of this is lost today, the boundary of the extents of this park are visible as the line of Skip Lane. Other medieval elements in the landscape include the ridge and furrow remains, which have been covered by the Great Barr Golf Course.
- 4.9 The Conservation Area contains a number of landscape features from this time. This includes the scheduled monument moated site to the north of the Conservation Area, which was once reached by Crook Lane, a track which is still extant today.
- 4.10 In the fourteenth century, day parks were fashionable, but the Lords of the Manor seldom resided in Great Barr. Before the middle of the sixteenth century and the park may have soon been divided

into fields. However, it seems to have retained its rough park like character at least into the nineteenth century.

- 4.11 During this time much of the land located to the east of Holbrook, which is now part of the park, remained undeveloped, surrounded by woods to the south and east. Hall Brook is now known as Holbrook . The Holbrook is the tributary of the Tame that rises on the Aldridge- Great Barr border before passing westwards through Walsall" (Gould). (Awaiting a date from archive. On the western side of the brook and in the valley area, it appears that land clearance had taken place by the fourteenth century, if not earlier. Some remnants of the moat that once encircled Moat Farm still exist, as moats were a popular feature during that time (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985).

Great Barr Before the Eighteenth Century

- 4.12 In the mid seventeenth century **Richard Scott** (d 1675), tenant of Old Hall (or High House), the manor house of Great Barr, built Nether-house Farm sometime between 1641-1660, roughly 1km to the south-west near the bottom of a wooded valley (Historic England, 1986). It was probably at this time that the fields shown on some of the early maps were laid out to create a mixed farm of about 120 acres, with fields of about 5 acres.
- 4.13 The Lord of the Manor, Edward Stamford, had his estates sequestered during the Civil War. From the middle of the seventeenth century until the end of the eighteenth century, the Scotts were the most important family in Great Barr, Old Hall or High House was their principal seat. By 1675, the year of Richard Scott's death Nether-house itself consisted of a parlour. Old parlour day house, kitchen, buttery, best chamber, little chamber, cheese chamber, parlour chamber, chamber and a kiln house (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985).

Great Barr 1715-1752

- 4.14 The Nether-house (later referred to as "Great Barr Hall") was originally a large farmhouse with associated agricultural buildings.
- 4.15 It is with **John Scott** (1685-1755) of Nether-house that this minor branch of the family began to rival and outshine the Scotts of High House. In the middle of the eighteenth century the building was substantially extended by John Scott. This was to be the beginning of a number of extensions to the Hall and alterations to the wider landscape. Considerable changes to Nether-house are indicated by its description as a 'Handsome and commodious dwelling-house' in Aris's Birmingham Gazette.
- 4.16 The De Bois Landscape Survey provide a helpful timeline of works, available at Appendix B. John Scott's work at the Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden (GBH RPG) in the mid-eighteenth century involved various landscaping projects such as;
- North end of Coxit Hill planted as a nursery
 - South end of the High Wood planted as a nursery
 - Great Meadow created
 - Gilbert's Wood planted as a nursery.
 - North end of the High Wood planted as a nursery
 - Garden laid out behind Nether-house Farm
 - Alcove built on Flower Garden site
 - Walled Garden built
 - First cascade built at Sutton's Bridge location

- Botanic Garden laid out
- Creation of Big Pool
- Firs planted on Barr Beacon
- Planting along the Sheep-path to Old Hall

- 4.17 This comprehensive list demonstrates Scott's commitment to improving his entire landscape rather than focusing solely on specific areas like Nether-house. His approach reflects the concept of *Ferme ornee*—a fusion of farm and ornamental garden—pioneered by William Shenstone.
- 4.18 William Shenstone is believed to have designed some of the landscape features at Great Barr during this period. While no direct contemporary reference to his involvement has been found, lots of circumstantial evidence has been found to support the idea. For example, Shenstone is likely to have known Great Barr, was a contemporary of John Scott's eldest surviving son, William (who died before his father and before Shenstone in 1753) and became a kinsman of the Scotts through marriage. In addition, the improvements at Great Barr are in his style and most of them seem to have been carried out shortly before or after 1744 (The year of his marriage which linked him to the Scott family (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985).
- 4.19 At the time Shenstone was an amateur landscape gardener who embraced Romantic notions of composed landscapes, rather than the previously fashionable formal, classical compositions. He is now known for his part as one of the influential figures who shaped English gardening practices which had a lasting impact on landscapes across the Western world for two centuries.
- 4.20 The picturesque style introduced at this time to Great Barr Hall influenced the early creation of the surrounding parkland. At this time, field boundaries were removed to the west of the Nether-house, to create "the Great Meadow", a large grassy open space with strategically placed trees and planting that still exists today (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985). The 1798 Map (Figure 3) depicts the location of 'Big Meadow' in relation to Great Bar Hall.
- 4.21 The estate was described in 1800 in Cooke's Warwickshire:

The hospitable mansion of Sir Joseph Scott Bart. is surrounded by a park of considerable extent wherein there is the greatest variety of undulating hills and dales, woods and water, together with such extensive views as can only be found in this part of the kingdom. To this park there are three entrances, and at every avenue the worthy proprietor has erected an elegant lodge, from which there are capacious carriageways to the mansion... On entering the park a circular coach drive leads to the holly wood, through which you proceed by a serpentine road nearly half a mile when a beautiful sheet of water presents itself to view, along whose banks you pass near a mile before you arrive at the mansion.

The situation of the building is low in front of the water, but being screened by rising ground and lofty trees, it must be very warm in winter. On the left of the house, a walk leads you to the flower garden which is laid out with great taste, containing flowers and small shrubs of the choicest and rarest kinds, together with a fountain in the centre. From here there are delightful views and among others over the adjacent country, Birmingham is distinctly seen. At a distance of about two miles further towards Walsall, there is another lodge which is the entrance from Walsall, and leads you by a spacious serpentine road through Marrion Wood which is composed of various shrubs and evergreens and conducts you to a most elegant chapel . . .

There is another lodge at a place called the Queslet . . . where a spacious road conducts you for a considerable distance by a plantation of oaks and so through the park wherein there are fixed numerous seats which command delightful and comprehensive prospects (Dargue, 2010).

Great Barr 1755- 1828

- 4.22 **Joseph Scott** was born in 1752 as the son of William Scott. Tragedy struck the family when William passed away in 1753, followed shortly by his father's death in 1755. Subsequently, Joseph's mother

took him to reside with her family at Great Haywood while Nether-house Farm was leased out. In 1777, Joseph married his cousin Margaret Whitby and reclaimed Nether-house Farm from its lease. At his marriage his wealthy great-uncle Joseph Scott, the linen draper, bestowed his estate upon him which he spent rapidly as he dedicated himself to improving the property to a standard that reflected his societal ambitions, (He was eventually honoured with a baronetcy in 1806). At this time, he re-fronted the Hall in the Gothick style and built the stables which necessitated some landscape changes (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985).



Picture 3 - Engraving by Stebbing Shaw of Great Barr Hall after the renovation of Nether-house into Great Barr Hall (Source; History of Aldridge by Jim Gould)

- 4.23 The renovation of the old Nether-house into the Strawberry Hill Gothick style in 1777 following his marriage marked one of the earliest examples of Gothic Revival architecture. The house, now known as Great Barr Hall, resembled Horace Walpole’s Strawberry Hill at Twickenham and became a significant symbol of the Gothic Revival movement that would shape architectural styles for generations to come. The construction of a stable block in a similar fashion further enhanced the estate.
- 4.24 The enhancements to the landscape primarily involved expanding the garden behind the Hall and constructing a rabbit warren in the walled garden, no longer visible. The extensive renovations to both the house and estate must have incurred significant costs, leading to a reduction in the estate size to approximately 70 acres by 1781. Despite facing financial challenges that necessitated advertising the property for rent, Joseph Scott persisted in investing in beautifying his landscape. He successfully regained land, increasing the acreage back to 120 acres. Notable additions included the walk, providing access to the park from Queslett in the southeast, and Fox’s Plantation running alongside it. The plantation was likely named after Charles James Fox, a revered politician whom Joseph Scott admired and who possibly visited Great Barr around 1784 or 1785. Works stopped in 1785 due to financial worries resulting in the Scott family leaving the country. (De Bois Landscape Survey Group, 1985). Fox’s Plantation can be seen on Figure 6 – 1876-1890 OS Map, to the south of Barr Hall Farm)

- 4.25 The Galton's were a Quaker family, with Samuel Galton being a prominent Birmingham banker and gunmaker. They were influential members of the Lunar Society, a renowned group that gathered at Great Barr Hall in the West Midlands between 1785 and 1796 (Historic England, 1986). This society comprised some of the most intellectually gifted men of their time, including luminaries such as Matthew Boulton, James Watt, Joseph Priestley, Erasmus Darwin, and Josiah Wedgwood. The Lunar Society made significant contributions to the advancement of the Industrial Revolution and played a crucial role in enhancing the nation's prosperity (Schofield, 1963).
- 4.26 Subsequently, Samuel Galton Jr. leased the property in 1786. During the Galton's tenure little was carried out in the nature of landscape improvements, although in 1793 there is record (without any detail) of Joseph Scott having spent the substantial sum of £1,000.00 on the land.
- 4.27 It seems that by the end of the 1780s, if not earlier, Joseph Scott returned from Europe and settled with his family in Ashwood in Kingswinford, next to his relative and co-heir to estates in Great Barr, Edward Foley. The Foleys were a wealthy family from Herefordshire, close friends of James Fox and part of his political and social circle. Edward Foley was known to have engaged the services of landscape gardener Humphrey Repton on his properties during this period, as well as the architect John Nash. It is probable that Joseph considered employing these individuals around this time, possibly even meeting them in person.



Picture 4 - Engraving of Great Barr Hall, 1831 (DiCamillo Companion, Ltd.)

- 4.28 In his book *Humphry Repton (Landscape Gardening and Geography of Georgian England)*, Stephen Daniels details "*Humphry Repton (1752 – 1818) set out to be the leading landscape gardener of his time. He embarked on a career in 1788, aged thirty six*" Daniels also explains Repton's passion and social ambitions; "*Landscape gardening of Repton was never merely a business about the grounds, or the vocation concerned with portraying an improving the countryside. It was a profession that gave him an entrée to the company of best circles, and the opportunity to fame their cultural concerns in terms of his art*" (Daniels, 1999).
- 4.29 The Scott family returned to Great Barr Hall in 1797, and it was at this time that Merrion's Wood became a part of the estate. Repton and Nash were both asked to advise on the park's development immediately. Stephen's provides details of their partnership; "*By 1796 Repton's career had reached a further threshold. His partnership with Nash began promisingly. 'Our homes were ultimately united- whether in Town or Country', he recalled, 'our carriages – our offices (in which my sons assisted) were the property of both'*".

- 4.30 Extensive projects commenced promptly; a detailed timeline is outlined in Appendix D.
- 4.31 In terms of Repton's design there is no evidence what can be attributed to him at Great Barr. Stephen Daniels provides information about his style; *"What distinguishes Repton's designs is the prominence he gave to routeways, to their extra traffic, direction position, size, shape, construction and management, to their precise role in articulating the landscape, both in views from roads or pathways and views that incorporated them. Repton was impatient with drives or paths that ran around the grounds with no apparent purpose, but he never took a severely utilitarian view of routeways or vehicles"* (Daniels, 1999).
- 4.32 Laua Mayer expands on this in her book *Humphry Repton*; *"Repton had immense confidence on his own abilities and saw himself as 'gifted with the peculiar faculty of seeing almost immediately the way in which [a place] might be improved', in other words, as the natural descendant to Brown, the man able to recognise an estates capabilities' after only a brief circuit on horseback. His Red Books were the means in which he communicated this talent, 'delivering my reports in writing, accompanied with maps ...and sketches'. The books followed standard format, comprising a flattering dedication and general sections listed under the 'Situation' and 'Character' of the country estate, the 'Approach' to the house and 'Views' from the house, before closing with specific questions about the surroundings, including 'Pleasure Ground', 'Walks', 'Water' and 'Plantations'."* (Mayer, 2014)
- 4.33 The landscape design exhibits several Reptonian features, such as long approaches leading to Lodges, Lake and Cascade, picturesque gravel woodland walks, groups of trees in open parkland to draw they eye to a particular view, and belts at the park perimeter. The Belt along the west side of Joseph Scott's Park would have created a charmingly enclosed setting for the Hall. Although not entirely typical of Repton's work due to the Hall's sheltered position at the foot of surrounding hills, these elements were necessitated by its location.
- 4.34 The Scott family returned to Great Barr Hall in 1797, and it was at this time that Merrion's Wood became a part of the estate.



Picture 5 - Great Barr Hall, 1801 (Stebbing Shaw)

- 4.35 The continuation of the agricultural landscape around Old Hall throughout the history of Great Barr can be understood from Repton's thoughts on agricultural land use; *"Repton emphasised that he was in favour of farming and of agricultural landscapes: the maintenance of small tenant farms, the development of model home farms and the making of money from farms; the pleasure farmers took in surveying their fields, and the pleasant land owners took in walking or riding to look over their farms; and the limits on the size and expense of parks to allow this rural economy to flourish."*



Picture 6 - Great Barr Hall 1890s

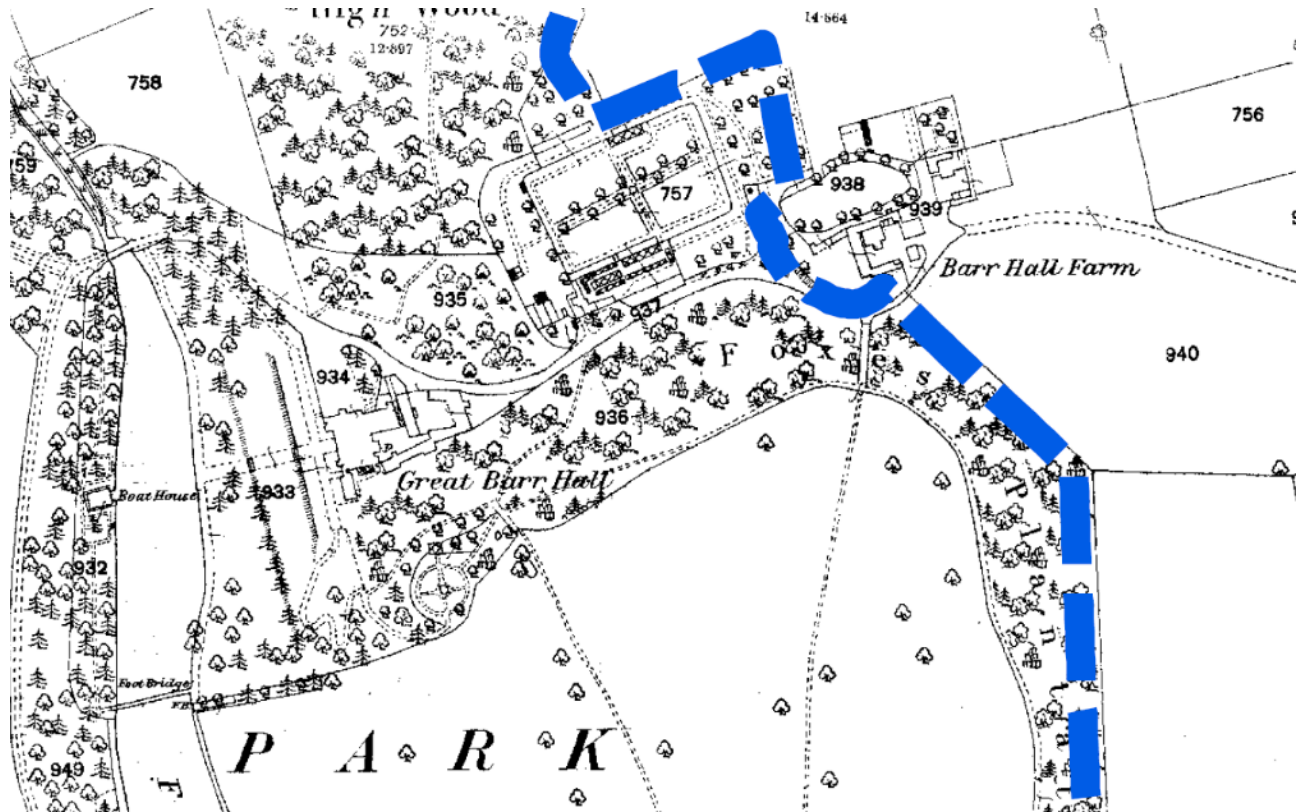
4.36 To summarise the works carried out by Joseph Scott;

- Renovation of Hall into Gothick style
- Stable Block
- The Belt planted
- Walsall (or Merrion's) Lodge built
- Walsall Approach laid out
- Road from Chapel to Old Hall moved
- Most of Fir Avenue to Old Hall felled and remainder bulked up with new planting
- Enclosure of Barr Beacon
- Flower Garden laid out
- Old Handsworth Approach laid out
- Various groups of trees planted in the park
- Beeches planted around the Chapel
- Upper Lake built
- Cascade constructed
- Dam below Big Pool built

- High Wood doubled in size
- Mixed plantations north of High Wood planted
- Chapel fields acquired by Joseph Scott
- Sunken fences on northern boundary installed
- Chapel Lodge built
- Queslett Lodge built
- Walk through the southern half of High Wood laid out
- Queslett Approach with associated planting laid out
- Sunken fence south of Queslett Approach excavated
- Parkland plantings carried out, especially west of the lakes
- Walks west of the lakes laid out
- East side of Fox's plantation planted
- Spur of woodland east of the Flower Garden planted
- Duckery dug and planted
- Walk through the northern half of High Wood laid out
- Horse Chestnut Avenue from Merrion's Wood was planted

Great Barr 1828- 1851

4.37 Sir Edward Scott inherited the Great Barr estate in 1828 after the death of his father, Joseph Scott. In contrast he was more reserved with his spending. Most of his spending was done in the 1840s. The most significant works were made to the gardens around the hall and included the terracing and the zig-zag drive to the Flower Garden. This coincided with re-modelling of the Hall to include a conservatory. In the estate Sutton's Bridge and approach were built along with Handsworth Lodge and approach. These additions are visible on Figure 6, 1876-1890 OS Map. An extract of the area around Great Barr Hall is copied below for reference.



Picture 7 - Extract of 1876-1890 OS Map, the area around Great Barr Hall

- 4.38 Works by Edward Scott include;
- Gardens on west bank of Upper Lake laid out
 - Terraced gardens created
 - Zig-zag drive to flower garden laid out
 - Sunk fence South of Garden dug
 - Sutton approach and bridge constructed

Great Barr 1851 – 1863

- 4.39 Sir Edward Scott died in 1851, during this time his son Sir Francis Scott was in Venice where he met Gilbert Scott. By 1854 Sir Gilbert Scott was carrying out improvements on the estate. many buildings and features were rebuilt according to designs by Gilbert Scott. This phase marked a significant period of redevelopment within the park and the gardens were brought to their most elaborate. The works are visible in Figure 7 – 1887-1889 OS Map. .
- 4.40 Sir Francis Scott married Mildred Anne Hartopp, the eldest daughter of [Sir William Edmund Cradock-Hartopp](#). Together they had three children, two sons and a daughter.
- 4.41 The De Bois Landscape Survey Group provide praise for his achievements and ambition; “In some ways, Sir Francis had more talents and a greater ambition than his predecessors. His early death put an end to the fulfilment of these, but it is typical of the man that in his time at Great Barr he probably accomplished more than his father or grand father before him.”
- 4.42 Works carried out by Sir Francis Scott include;
- Walsall (or Merrion's) Lodge rebuilt

- Queslett Lodge rebuilt
- Holly Wood extended and new drives added
- Handsworth Approach planted
- Plantings added to Queslett Approach
- High Wood extended to north and west
- Older woods replanted
- Tree planting in the park
- Spur of woodland east of Flower Garden felled
- Duckery drained
- Avenue Lodge built
- Chapel Lodge rebuilt
- Park Farm built
- Farm Approach laid out
- Maze planted
- Chapel/billiard room added to the Hall
- Boat House built
- Wooden post-bridge built
- Gardens refurbished
- Summer House rebuilt
- Boat House on Big Pool rebuilt
- Pets cemetery established
- Park wall commenced



Picture 8 - Church and Avenue Lodges (<http://greatbarrhall.b43.co.uk/lodges.html>) Provided by Peter Allen



Picture 9 - Walsall Lodge (<http://greatbarrhall.b43.co.uk/lodges.html>) Provided by Peter Allen



Picture 10 – Barr Hall Farm (with pond in front and barns in the background ([a clickintime web site](#)))



Picture 11 - Beacon Lodge (<http://greatbarrhall.b43.co.uk/lodges.html>) Provided by Peter Allen

Great Barr Nineteenth Century

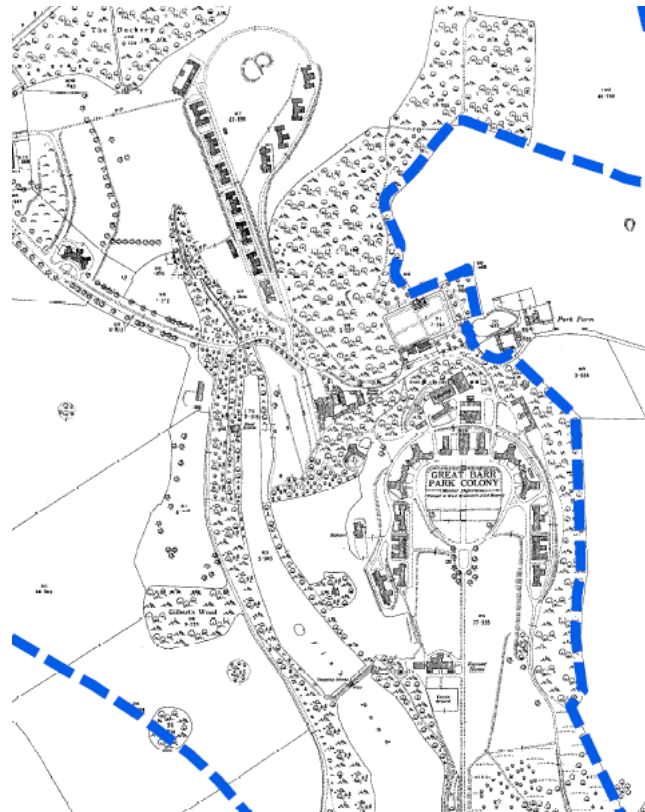
- 4.43 Sir Francis Scott passed away in 1863, aged just 39. He left behind several unfinished projects at his estate which his wife, Lady Scott took it upon herself to complete. Notably, the park wall was finished, a drive was laid from Queslett Lodge to the Flower Garden, Keeper's Cottage was constructed, and an accompanying drive was put in place to connect it to Park Farm.
- 4.44 The work to the parkland at this time has been met with some criticism, De Bois Landscape Survey Group say; *"However, as was all too often the case in granting of this period throughout the country, the design seems to have been extraordinarily clumsy: engulfing the park trees on the west side of the High Wood, and the Flower Garden, spreading the park pointlessly away to the west, and concealing the lakes and valley bottom with belts of trees, thus obscuring the simple eighteenth century design of Sir Francis' grand-father. It may be that the intention here was to create a more appropriate, shady, and melancholic back-cloth for the buildings, all of which were now in some form of gothic architecture."* Lady Scott was the last Scott to reside at Great Barr Hall, her two sons; Sir Edward William Dolman Scott and Sir Arthur Douglas Bateman Scott died before marrying and her daughter Catherine married William Farnham and lived in different households (Lewis, Anthony).



Picture 12 - Upper Pool from Hall, 1911 sales particulars

Twentieth Century Alterations and St Margaret's Hospital

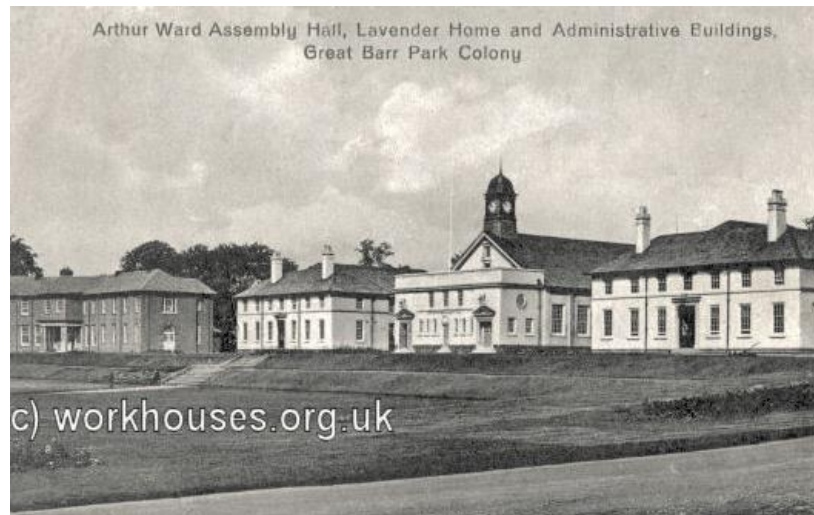
- 4.45 After the death of the final Scott family member, Lady Bateman in 1909, The Great Barr Hall Estate passed through a number of tenants throughout the late nineteenth century. After her death the building was locked up for a couple of years before the Hall and its surroundings were auctioned and bought by the West Bromwich Board of Guardians.
- 4.46 The West Bromwich Poor Law Union used the Site as a children's home, and briefly, to house tuberculosis patients. In 1912, development began on what would become known as Great Barr Park Colony for Mental Defectives, eventually rebranded as St Margaret's Hospital. It was from this point that Great Barr Hall's sad demise was set in motion. From 1918 the site was developed as a mental health hospital (at the time called 'colony for mental defectives' and later St Margaret Hospital).
- 4.47 It was during this time that additional buildings were constructed in the grounds of the Hall to cater for the expanding hospital. The primary phase of this project involved the creation of a distinctive elevated horseshoe layout of buildings, which was envisioned by renowned Birmingham architect Gerald McMichael. (Historic England, 1986). A horseshoe of houses for females south of the Hall was completed by 1930 and a row of males houses for females to the north of the Hall was completed by 1937. This layout was designed to accommodate the strict segregation of the sexes in the hospital. Figure 11 – 1937 OS Map shows this development. An extract is included below for ease of reference.



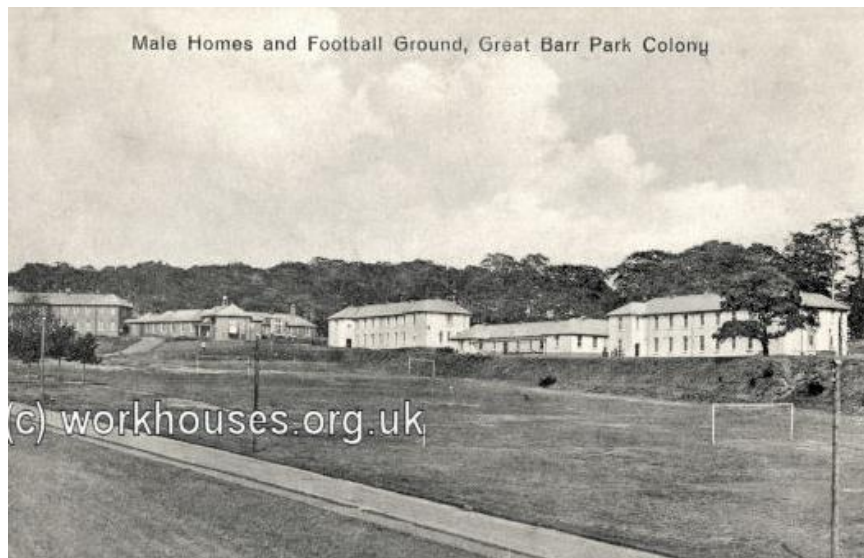
Picture 13 - Extract of 1937 OS Map



Picture 14 - Females Homes from the south (workhouses.org.uk)



Picture 15 - Arthur Ward Assembly Hall, Lavender Home and administrative Buildings at Great Barr (workhouses.org.uk)



Picture 16 - Male Homes and football ground

4.48 The layout of the Hospital and associated buildings:

- The Hall along with an unsympathetic extension to the rear was used as the pathology department.
- ‘Male Homes’; a group of buildings on the northern part of the site.
- ‘Female Homes’; occupied the central part of the site, together with the main hospital buildings, and consisted of several separate buildings arranged in a formal symmetrical horseshoe layout, with a long straight driveway leading from the south towards the central focal point of the hospital clock tower situated at the highest point, overlooking an open space.
- The Queslett Centre, Nurses Accommodation, and Holly Wood were located in a wooded setting in the south-east corner of the site. The Queslett Centre, which was constructed around the 1970s, functioned as a training centre until roughly the early 2000s.



Picture 17 - Great Barr Park Colony Early 20th Century. The image showcases three scenes of female inmates engaged in various activities aimed at promoting self-sufficiency and skill development. (Mary Evans / Peter Higginbotham Collection)



Picture 18 - The Sewing Room, 1938 (Programme by Walsall and West Bromwich (Barr Colony) Joint Board)



Picture 19 - Historic photograph of the Nurses' Home at Great Barr (Workhouses.org.uk)

4.49 Also during this period, Colonel J H Wilkinson of [Ashfurlong](#) House in Sutton Coldfield bought Barr Beacon to create a public memorial for the soldiers of the Staffordshire and Warwickshire regiments who had been killed in World War 1. The dome on Barr Beacon was erected in Wilkinson's memory in 1933.



Picture 20 - Photograph of Barr Beacon Memorial

Decline and Twenty-first Century Development

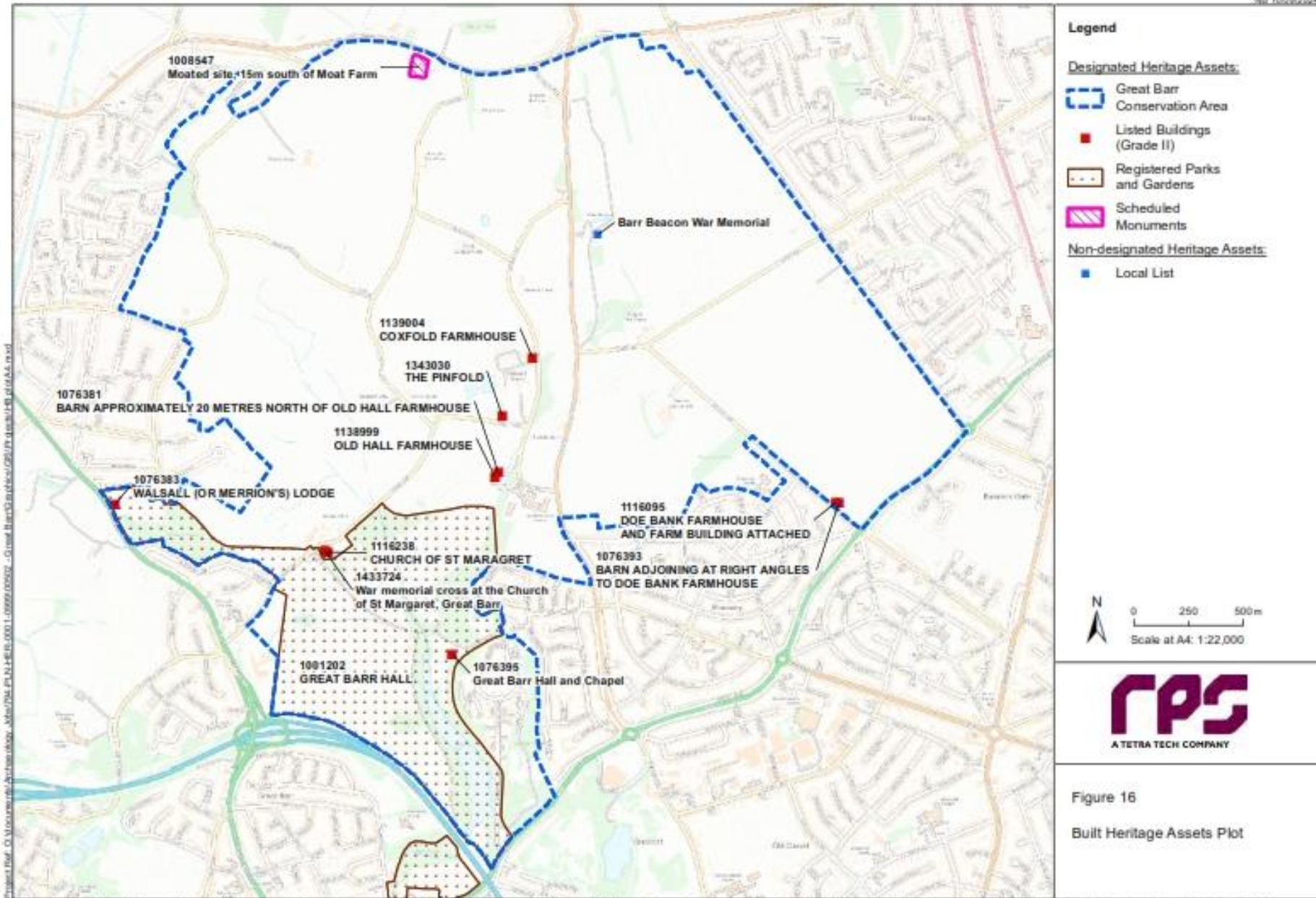
- 4.50 The gradual decline began in the 1970's following national changes in mental health treatment, leading to the site's gradual disuse. From this time the NHS proceeded to dispose of various parts of the site, including Great Barr Hall and the "Southern Parkland," which were sold off in the 1970s/early 1980s.
- 4.51 As time progressed into the 1990s, a significant portion of the original hospital infrastructure fell into disuse and were abandoned. Select clinic services continued to operate from more modernized facilities such as the Queslett Centre (Historic England, 1986). The Hospital closed its doors in 1997, although the hall itself had been abandoned in the late 1970s.
- 4.52 The Hall was subjected to internal stripping before its owner allegedly faced bankruptcy. For over a decade, the property was under the ownership of administrators (HSBC). In 2000, West Bromwich Albion FC submitted a planning application (BC59707P/C) to use the site and Hall as a training ground. However, this application was withdrawn in December of that year. In 2002, Bovis secured planning permission (BC63007P/C) to transform the Hall into 11 apartments as part of an extensive package of applications for planning permission, listed building consent, and Conservation Area approval. These approvals were not only for this section of the site but also for the St Margaret's Hospital area that Bovis later acquired from the NHS (Walsall Council, 2016). The Hall has been subject to vandalism including fire and is currently surrounded by security fencing.
- 4.53 The final phase of development in the grounds of the estate came in the early twenty first century, when Bovis Homes redeveloped the hospital buildings that made up the Male and Female Homes. Planning permission for 446 homes (application 02/2417/OL/E2) was granted to Bovis by the Secretary of State on appeal in 2004 (the Council refused permission on highway grounds). This development was completed in early 2016. The housing development has involved redeveloping the footprint of the Female Homes. The Female Homes sites had some gaps in the formal arrangement of buildings, but these have been taken up by floorspace transferred from the Male Homes site. The housing development uses about 85% of the former combined footprint of the Male and Female Homes (Walsall Council, 2016).
- 4.54 The site of the Male Homes to the north of Sutton's Drive was cleared and landscaped, including the removal of the culvert between the Duckery and the area north of the bridge; whilst the Female Homes to the east of the Hall were redeveloped as the "Netherhall Park" residential development. The new development has a greater density than the former Female Homes, but the removal of the Male Homes means that the total footprint of the new buildings is less than the old ones.
- 4.55 The Hall and parkland were acquired from the administrators in 2004 by Manor Building Preservation Trust (MBPT) following the grant of planning permission to Bovis. MBPT subsequently sold the site to the current owners, BCG Lakes Ltd, in 2014 (sale dates are approximate).
- 4.56 Great Barr Hall itself has been derelict since the late twentieth century and is currently owned by a consortium of private individuals. As various proposals for the Hall have not come to fruition, the Hall has fallen into a very dilapidated state, and was placed on Historic England's Buildings at Risk Register in 2008.
- 4.57 As a result of neglect and stripping of its interior Great Barr Hall was downgraded by Historic England from a Grade II* to a Grade II listing in 2016 following various attempts to revive its fortunes. This led to the removal of the Listed Building from the Heritage at Risk Register as only buildings which are Grade II* and I are placed on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register. The surrounding Grade II Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden however remains on the Register. Today, the Hall is completely enclosed in safety fencing and continues to deteriorate.

5 DEFINING CHARACTER AREAS

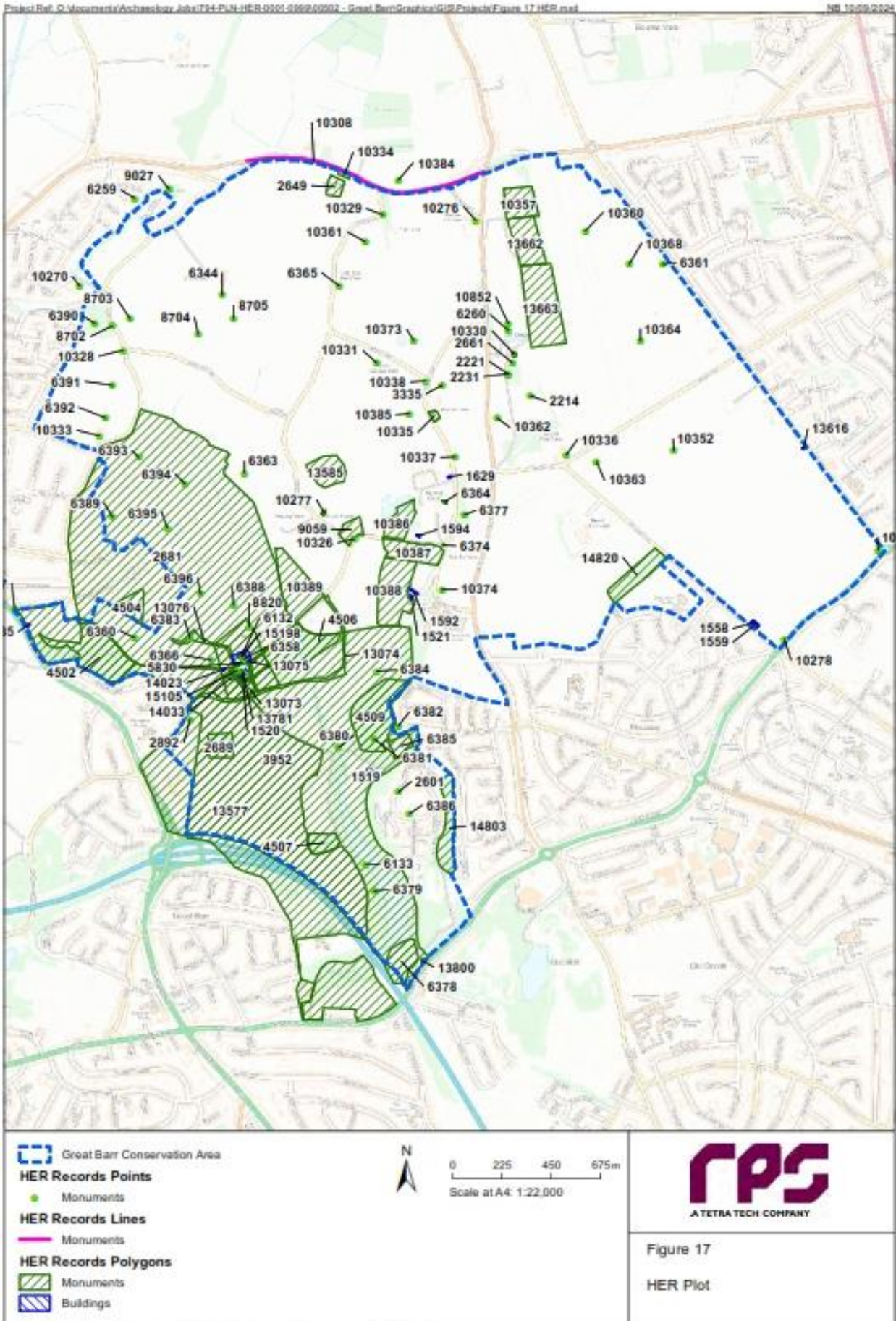
5.1 The Great Barr Conservation Area can be divided into four character areas, each derived from the options put forward of extending the Conservation Area in 1995/96 (see Figure 18). Following a review of the available documents and a Site visit, these have been further broken down into sub-areas as referenced below.

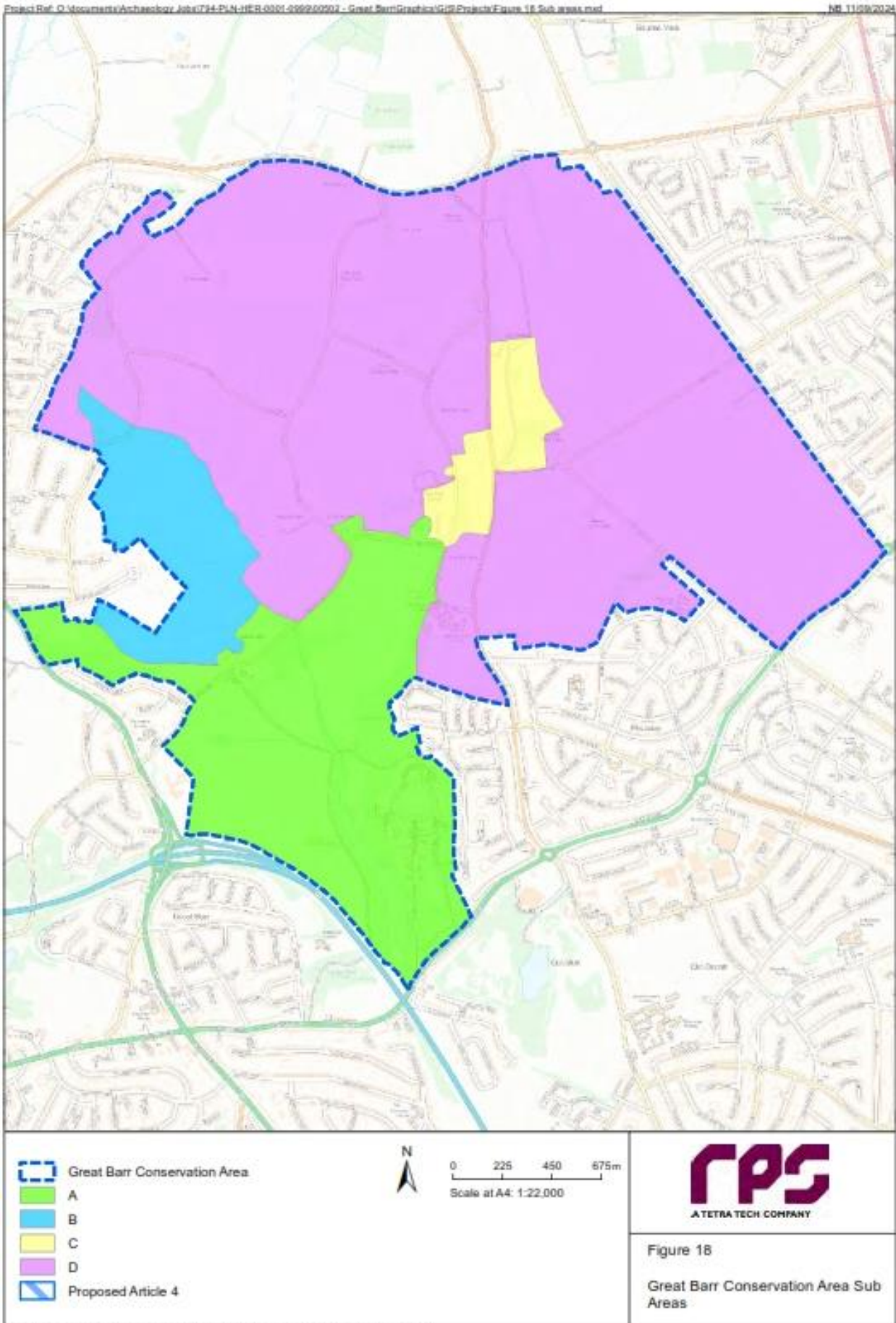
- Character Area A – Historic Core of the Great Barr Hall Estate
- Character Area B – Great Barr Golf Course
- Character Area C – Barr Beacon
- Character Area D – Surrounding Countryside

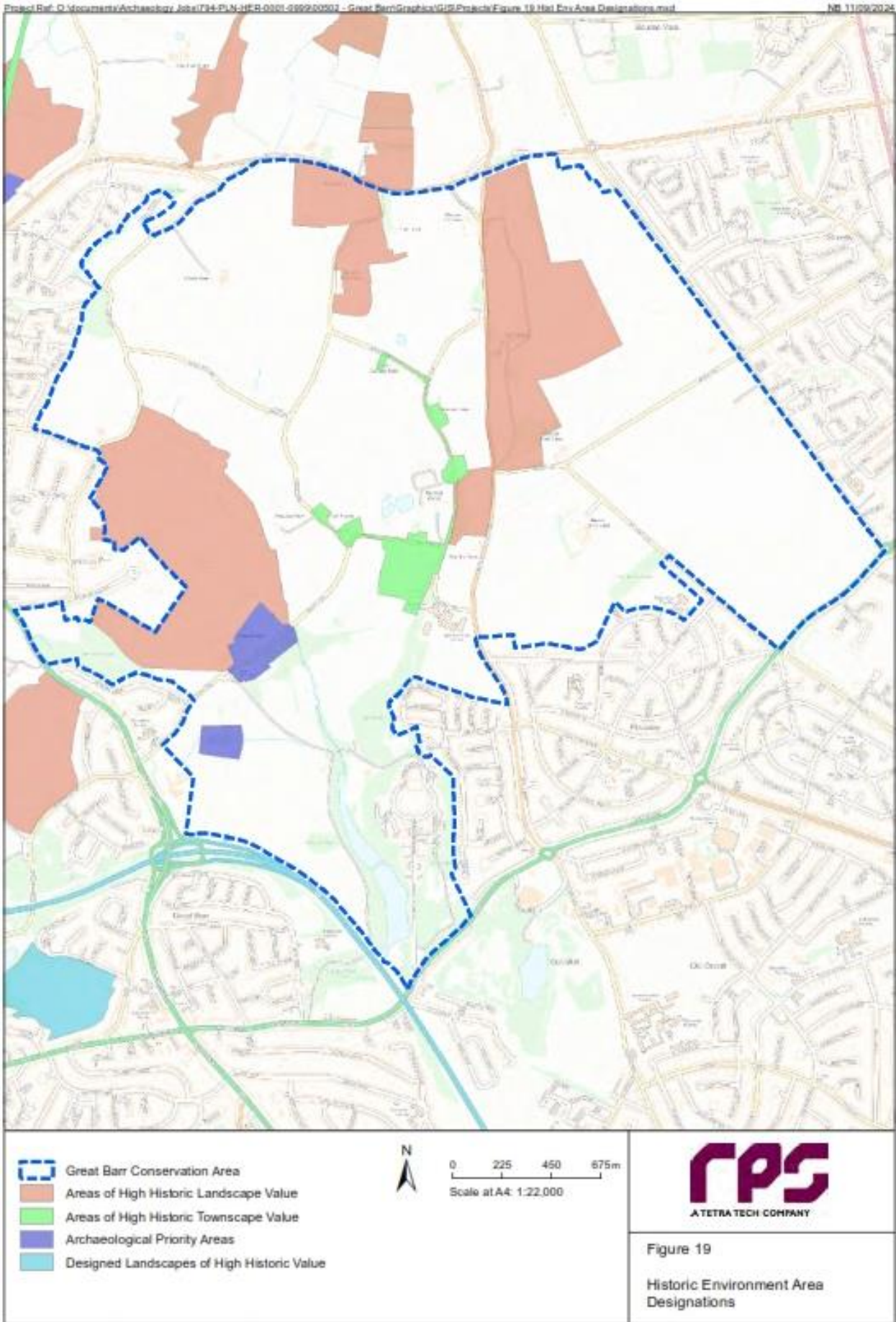
5.2 The character areas are subsequently assessed below in line with relevant Historic England guidance.



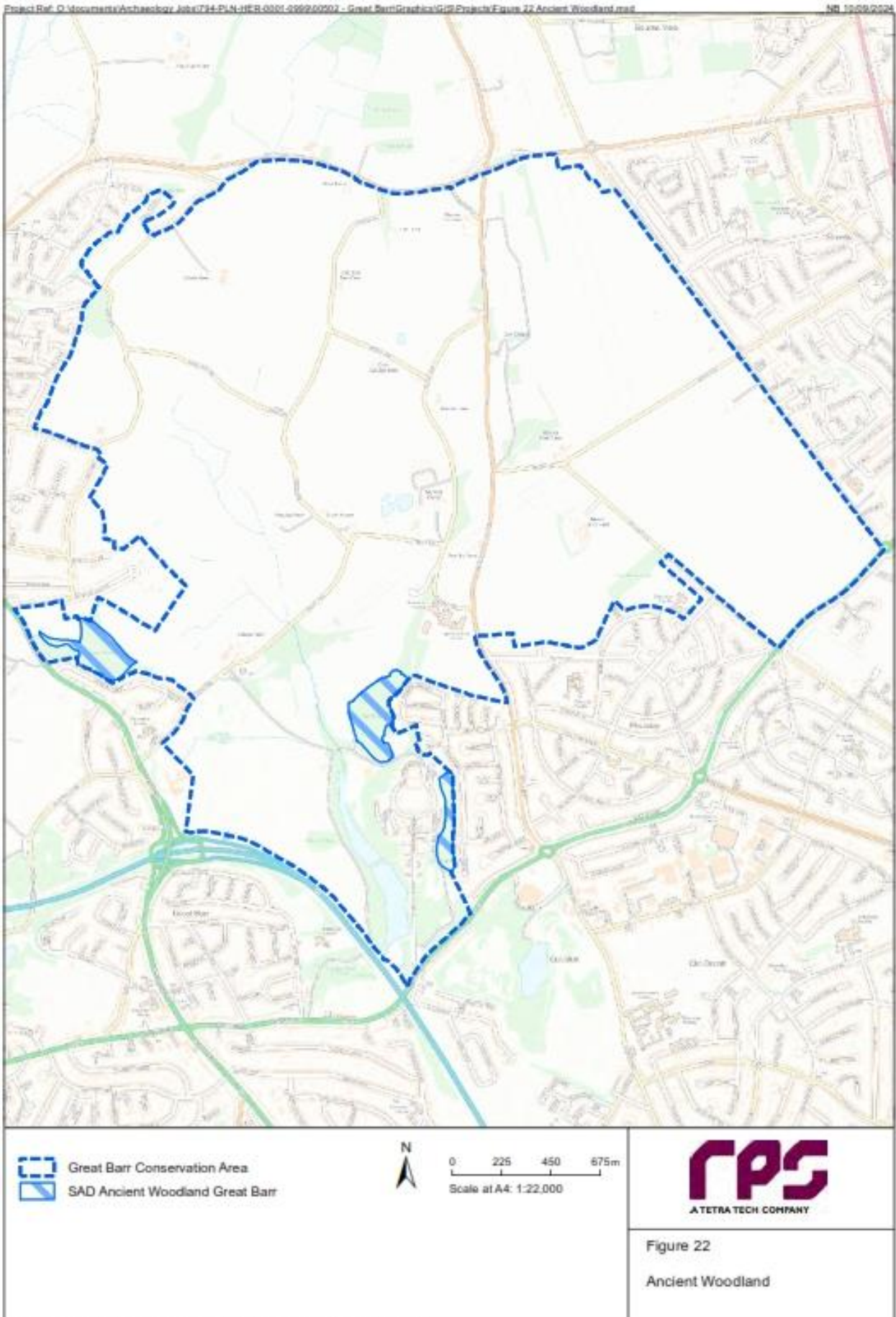
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Character Area A – Historic Core of the Great Barr Estate.

Description of Character, Location and Uses

- 5.3 This includes Grade II Listed Great Barr Hall (NHLE; 1076395) and encompasses the original boundary of the Conservation Area and largely follows the later established Great Barr Hall RP&G (NHLE ref: 1001202). It includes the core of the landscaped estate developed by the Scott family over the eighteenth century, Merrion's Wood, and two Archaeological Priority Areas (including the Site of Great Barr Medieval Settlement). The northerly part of Merrion's Wood (to the left of the carriageway on the approach from Walsall Lodge) once formed part of a medieval deer park. A deer park was an enclosed piece of private land used for keeping deer. It would typically have consisted of an area of woodland or open country, enclosed by an earth bank with an inside ditch, surrounded by a fence called a park pale to stop deer escaping. (Walsall Countryside Services (Cheryl Bailey), n.d.). The area partially contains Chapel Lane, which was constructed by the Scott family in the late eighteenth century. The north of the sub-area also contains the part of the locally designated Area of High Historic Landscape Value "Scattered Settlement at Over End," the remains of a linear settlement of farmsteads (see Figures 18, 21 & 22).
- 5.4 Following a site visit, historic analysis and detailed discussion this sub-area has been subdivided further into:
- 5.5 Sub-area A1 – The historic core of the original the Conservation Area and Merrion's Wood
- Great Barr Hall
 - The Lakes
 - Lodges entrances and approaches
 - Registered Park and Garden (woodland, walled garden)
 - St Margaret's Church
 - Chapel Lane, Pinfold Lane & Crook Lane
 - Old Hall Farm
- 5.6 Sub-area A2 – Netherhall Park housing & related landscape to the east
- 5.7 There is a section of the Great Barr Hall RP&G, south of the M6, that falls outside of the local authority boundary and is not part of the Great Barr Conservation Area. This is not assessed within this report.

Sub Area A1a: Great Barr Hall & The Historic Core

Overview

- 5.8 This part of the character area contains the Hall and its immediate grounds, the walled garden to the north and the former terraced lawn lying to the west of the Hall. The Hall is located under an outcrop of the Barr Beacon ridgeline and would have originally had views across the landscape and, across terraced gardens lying to the west of Great Barr Hall.
- 5.9 Great Barr Hall is recognised nationally for its architectural and historic interest as a Grade II Listed Building. The Historic England Official List Entry gives the following reasons for designation; *"Architectural interest: despite unsympathetic alterations made during its use as a hospital and subsequent damage caused by neglect and vandalism, the hall has special interest as an example of C18 Gothick architecture which was later altered and extended to form a picturesque Gothic-revival country house; *Historic interest: the lengthy ownership of the Scott family, their development of the house and landscape and the tenancy of Samuel Galton and his affiliation with the Lunar Society, and documented meetings of the group at the house, combine to give distinct historic*

*interest to the hall; * Group value: Great Barr Hall, together with its surrounding landscape, which is registered at Grade II on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, and related heritage assets, form an integrated grouping which has special interest.” (Historic England, 1971, 2016)*



Picture 21 - View down Handsworth Drive

- 5.10 Built form is sparse, comprising only the Hall buildings. The Hall lies at the crux of three former approaches, Sutton's Drive from the West, the original approach from the South (also named Handsworth Drive), and the service approach from the east, which today is a continuation of Sutton's Drive.



Picture 22 – Great Barr Hall from Sutton’s Drive

- 5.11 Today, this eastern approach links Great Barr Hall to the Netherhall Park residential development and would have once included “Farm Approach” past the now demolished Barr Hall Farm. The eastern approach would have then swept southeast towards Queslett Road, with a further branch continuing east towards the now demolished “Beacon Lodge” on Beacon Road.
- 5.12 The Hall itself has been surrounded by Heras fencing for safety purposes, which detracts from the character of the area; an effect enhanced by the overgrown scrub and trees that tightly hem in and contain the area. This part of the Sub-area has been heavily affected by neglect, vandalism and the encroachment of vegetation.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.13 The former open space of the terraced gardens is now wholly overgrown and not legible from within the historic core. Traces of previous intended planting are partly legible when informed by documentary sources. These include a line of conifers located to the east of the Sutton’s Approach Bridge planted to screen the house from this approach.
- 5.14 The remains of the original terraced gardens to the west of the ruined Hall are completely overgrown, but were originally Italianate terraced gardens, surrounded by a later Victorian pleasure ground. Including the boat house, footbridge and paths. The boat house has been lost and the survival of paths is unclear due to the overgrown nature. Later, thick woodland that has not been managed surrounds these areas closing of the previous open views and character.
- 5.15



Picture 23 - Surviving steps that formed the terrace west of Great Barr Hall

- 5.16 There are a number of routes through the historic core of the Conservation Area. Most of these are the remains of the original, planned routes. These include Sutton's Drive from the west, Handsworth Drive from the south and an eastern approach that may once have included "Farm Approach".
- 5.17 Handsworth Drive would have been the original primary approach to the Hall, set out by Repton and Nash in the late eighteenth century and running to the west of the lakes. Today, this remains in the form of a track with a dead end at the southern end just before the M6.
- 5.18 Sutton's Drive was a route formalised in the late eighteenth century, and runs from the west, through's Wood and historic parkland, then over Sutton's Bridge to the Hall.



Picture 24 - The Remains of Sutton Drive, looking towards Merrion's Wood



Picture 25 - The remains of Sutton Drive looking east

- 5.19 The remains of the eastern approach run from the Netherhall Park housing development in the east, down the slope, to the Hall.
- 5.20 The historic core of the Conservation Area also contains a number of informal routes. These have been created by those who have used the park over time. Some of these are based on previous routes, such as the informal path to the east of the lakes and the path through the parkland to the north. This last route follows the line of the “Male Homes” constructed in the twentieth century to service St Margaret’s Hospital, but later demolished.

Sub Area A1b: The Lakes

Overview

- 5.21 The two, long lakes run north to south, to the west of Great Barr Hall, and once formed an important part of the designed landscape and southern approach. These are fed by a stream which runs from the north and passes underneath Sutton’s Bridge. The first of these lakes was formed in 1744 and lies to the south (Lower Lake) and was purportedly fed by a cascade.



Picture 26 - Cascade to Lower Lake

- 5.22 The northern lake (Upper Lake) dates from 1799 and was likely laid out by Repton and Nash as detailed in Section 4. Today, this is overgrown and silted in its northern reaches and cannot be experienced beyond the immediate shoreline due to heavy planting.



Picture 27 - View from the eastern shore of the Upper Lake

- 5.23 Two tracks lead along the eastern and western shore of the lakes; however, these are heavily overgrown and poorly defined.
- 5.24 No trace now exists of formally planned buildings in this area. Previously, the area was the location of a boathouse dating from the nineteenth century however, a weir separates the two lakes, which was likely refaced in concrete in the twentieth century.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.25 Due to the dense planting and overgrown trees that line both shores of the lakes, open space is limited to the area above the open water. The remains of the original parkland trees either side of the lakes are now interspersed with bracken and later scrub, which erodes the legibility of the historic parkland. A hard edge to this planting is still however visible to the west.



Picture 28 - Upper Lake looking north

5.26 Once through the dense planting, the lakes open up to a magnificent vista, the cascade between the upper lake and lower lake is appreciable in this location but the full extent of the lower lake is not as it is so silted up.



Picture 29 - Lower Lake looking south from Cascade

Sub Area A1c: Lodges, Entrances and Approaches

Overview

- 5.27 An integral part of the planned landscape in all phases of its development was the lodges and entrance routes to Great Barr Hall. These are still legible today as two long routes east and west of the Hall, while the remnants of a further approach to the south is only partly appreciable when the Conservation Area is experienced on the ground.
- 5.28 The approaches are defined by built form at their extents: the remaining gate lodges. Of the original gate lodges, only three now survive (see Figure 21 for the remains of the approaches);
- Merrion's Lodge, also known as Walsall Lodge (Grade II listed) rendered over polychrome brickwork in a diaper pattern.
 - Handsworth Lodge (Grade II listed, but lying outside of the Conservation Area and within Sandwell); and Strawberry Hill Gothick one
 - Avenue Lodge (identified within this report as a non-designated built heritage asset).brick built.
- 5.29 The lodges are an important group of surviving 19th Century lodges forming the visual and physical divide between public roads and the private grounds of the Great Barr estate. During this period entrance lodges were a prominent feature serving a functional purpose to establish land ownership and an aesthetic purpose. The lodges at Great Barr Hall were built in a range of different styles reflecting the fashions during the period. Handsworth Lodge (Picture 30) was built in the Gothic revival style, this style evoked a sense of nostalgia for medieval architecture. Church Lodge (now demolished) and Merrion's Lodge (Picture 31) were built in the Tudor Revival Style which drew inspiration from English medieval architecture featuring steep gables, tall chimneys and in the case of Church Lodge timber frame detailing.
- 5.30 Merrion's Lodge has been accredited to Sir George Gilbert Scott and was built in 1854.



Picture 30 - Handsworth Lodge (within Sandwell Council boundary)



Picture 31 - Merrion's Lodge



Picture 32 - Surviving gates and piers at Merrion's Lodge

5.31 Merrion's Lodge was rebuilt by Sir Gilbert Scott in 1854. A third lodge, on the east side of Chapel Lane opposite Avenue Lodge, has been lost. This is named "Church Lodge" on the OS mapping from 1902-04, Figure 8.



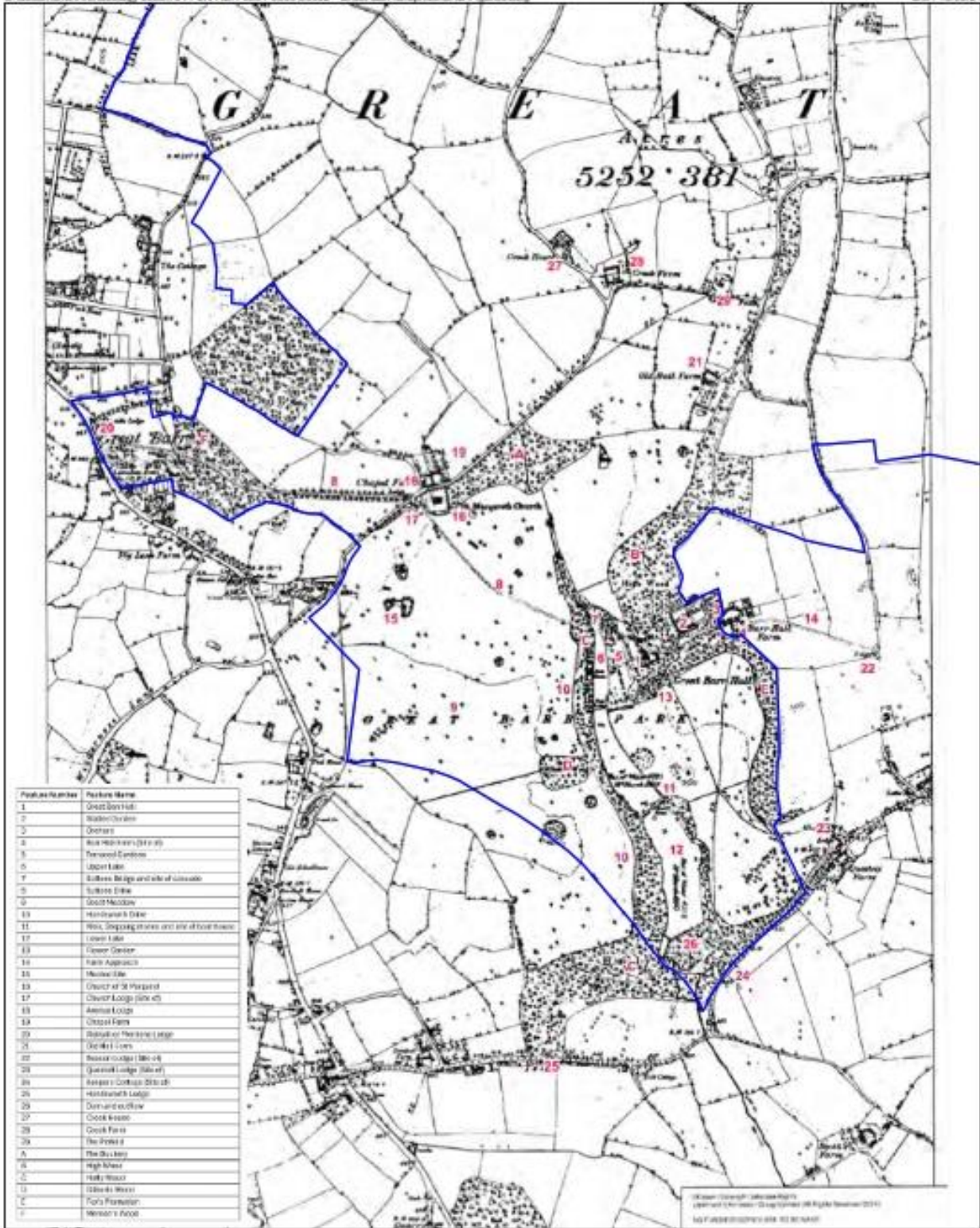
Picture 33 - Avenue Lodge, Chapel Lane

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.32 This element of the character area is defined by the designed nature of the original approaches to Great Barr Hall. These approaches vary in terms of their original purpose, original design, and how they are experienced today.
- 5.33 The ornamental approach from the south was laid out by Repton and Nash in the late eighteenth century and named Handsworth Drive and entered from the south near Handsworth Lodge, running past the lakes, allowing designed views to Great Barr Hall. Today this route is only partially complete, and the regenerated scrub woodland that has occurred over time has obscured the original design intent.
- 5.34 The 1790s also saw the formalisation of the approach from the northwest, which is still legible today. This route was known as Sutton's Drive, and passed through Merrion's Wood, through the historic centre of Great Barr, and through the "Great Meadow" (discussed below) laid out by Repton and Nash. This route is most legible today and exists as a footpath running from Merrion's Lodge at the western edge through Merrion's Wood then due east to Chapel Lane where Avenue Lodge survives. Both lodges retain some of the original iron gate piers, they survive more intact at Merrion's Lodge. Avenue Lodge is a red brick building probably designed by George Gilbert Scott and dated to around 1856.
- 5.35 Finally, a third route was formalised from the east at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The remains of this route are still legible today but have been severely eroded by the creation of Netherhall Park housing in the twentieth century. This route was originally likely a service route to the site, running near to the Hall and between the Walled Garden and the Site of the former Barr Hall Farm and part of it was named "Farm Approach". The eastern approach was actually the conjunction of two routes. One of these originally ran from what is now Beacon Road to Park Farm, and then beyond to Great Barr Hall. This dates from around the mid nineteenth century and was terminated by "Beacon Lodge" which has now been demolished. A second arm of this eastern route

ran from Great Barr Hall to Queslett Road to the south east. This route was terminated by Queslett Lodge (now demolished) around 1800. Figure 23 Shows the Lodges that have been demolished.

- 5.36 A further Lodge, Keeper's Lodge (or Cottage) was constructed to the southern edge of the historic core in the late nineteenth century. This was never intended as a formal lodge but was built to accommodate the new game keeper. The lodge became part of the St Margaret's hospital development, but was later demolished as part of the Netherhall Park development.



Great Barr Conservation Area



Figure 23
Lodges that have been lost

Sub Area A1d Registered Park and Garden (Woodland, open parkland, walled garden)

In this section you have not reference the pylons in the RP&G and that the M6 cuts through the RP&G with a small section in Sandwell. Please elaborate. This also needs to be covered in the 20th section.

Overview

- 5.37 Great Barr Hall, together with its surrounding landscape, which is registered at Grade II on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, and related heritage assets, form an integrated grouping which has special interest.
- 5.38 The core of the Conservation Area also contains a number of areas of mature woodland which were planned as part of the landscaped park of the eighteenth century. These include Merrion's Wood, High Wood, Holly Wood, the Duckery, and Gilberts Wood (see Figure 22 for the remains of the woodland).
- 5.39 The open, grass-land elements of the Great Barr Hall Estate were an important feature of the designed landscape as laid out by Repton and Nash. These include the area to the south of the western drive (Suttons Drive), which was referred to as "the Great Meadow". The Estate also once included open grassland to the north of the drive, but today this has been altered with scrub and small trees. At one point, this area also housed a group of twentieth century buildings constructed as part of St Margaret's Hospital. These were constructed by 1937 and were arranged in an E Shape, comprising at least 13 buildings, each of a "dumbbell plan" with a central range.
- 5.40 While the landscape is in a poor condition because of its abandonment since the 1980s the surviving park features have been left untouched.
- 5.41 The entry description in the Historic England List Entry (NHLE; 1001202) is divided into categories of interest which provide a useful basis for an analysis of the condition of the surviving features here.
- 5.42 Pylons run through the GB RPG RP&G in the area of the Duckery. The M6 cuts through the GB RPG to the south and a small section in Sandwell.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.43 The best surviving area of woodland is Merrion's Wood, which lies to the west of the main body of the estate This area became part of the estate in 1797 and was incorporated into Repton's previous designs by Joseph Scott. Today, the wood is now a local nature reserve managed by the Local Authority through a trust.
- 5.44 High Wood and Fox's Plantation lie to the north of the Site, High Wood was established in the mid eighteenth century by William Scott, with Fox's Plantation being planted later (and potentially named for Charles James Fox, a notable politician.) These areas were heavily altered following the construction of the hospital buildings of St Margaret's Hospital in the 1930s and later the construction of the residential Netherhall Park development. Today, Fox's Plantation is not experienced as part of the historic core of the Conservation Area due to the severance created by the Netherhall Park development.



Picture 34 - View from track next to High Wood looking to the Duckery

5.45 Holly Wood was formalised by Repton and Nash as part of the southern approach to Great Barr Hall and runs along the western side of the Lakes. However, today the breaks and viewing corridors established in this woodland have been lost due to scrub woodland which has occurred across the twentieth century.



Picture 35 - High Wood from the west

- 5.46 The Duckery lies to the north part of the character area, and until the mid-nineteenth century was a large pond, surrounded by woodland. The pond appears to have been drained in 1855, but the name has survived to the present day.
- 5.47 Gilbert's Wood was planted in 1798 as a tree nursery. The wood, planned by John Scott, would have formed an eyecatcher in the landscape, lying close to the original southern drive of the Estate and bordering the open Great Meadow.

Gardens and Pleasure Grounds

The paved terrace and steps leading from the Hall to the formal lawns still survive although they are very overgrown with grass (picture 36).



Picture 36 - Surviving steps to terrace at Great Barr

- 5.48 The formal lawns and beds leading down to the Upper Lake from the paved terrace are no longer legible, the lack of management means they are very overgrown, and the definition is now lost.

The Walled Garden (Kitchen Garden and Orchard)

- 5.49 The walled garden is to the north east of Great Barr Hall and is now part of the Netherhall housing.. The Walled Garden, A condition was placed on the permission for Netherhall housing (condition 33(c) of application ref;02/2417/OL/E2) to repair and restore the walled garden at Great Barr. As part of these works the walls are now a uniformed height and capped with coping stones. They were either rebuilt using bricks salvaged from the site in areas (where they had been wholly or partially lost. The footings of the glass house in the northern part of the walled garden have (grammar check)

been consolidated and retained. The extent and enclosure of the Walled Garden remains legible and the network of paths within the Walled Garden reflects the historic division of the space into quadrants. There are no traces of the rabbit warren. This is now a public space accessed from gates to the north and south.

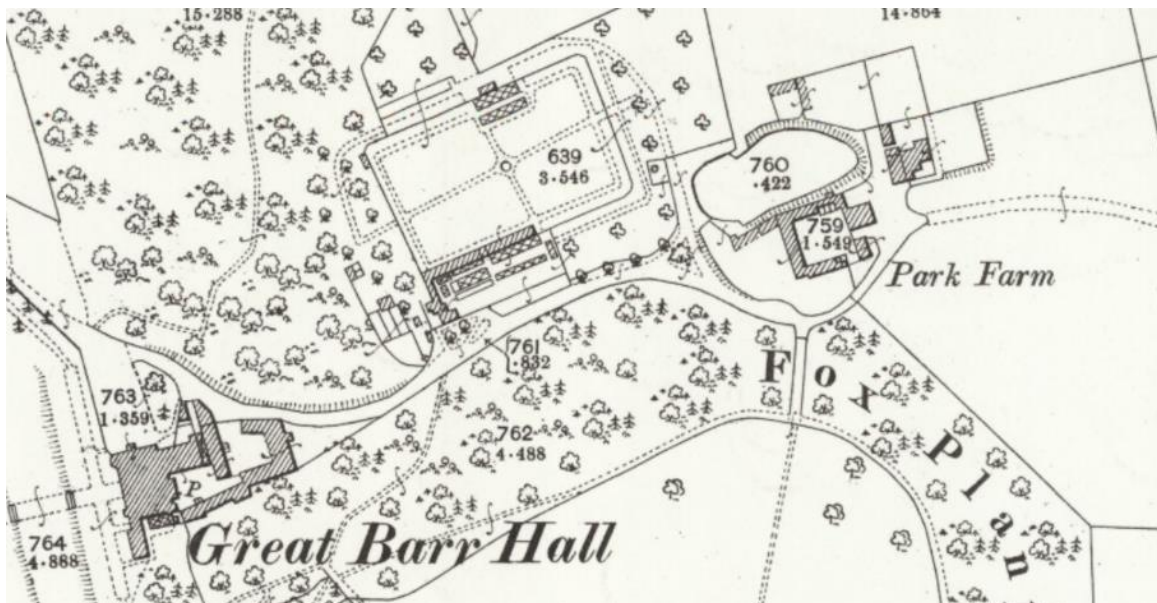


Picture 37 - Restored Wall Garden, View looking north, Netherhall housing visible to the left



Picture 38 - Remains of the glass house in the Walled Garden. Historic Orchards visible in the background

- 5.50 The historic orchard lies to the east of the walled garden. The features within the orchard have been divided into; boundary tree lines, an open area in the north section, a tree line running horizontal through the centre of the site and an area of dense wooded vegetation in the southern section.
- 5.51 The boundary tree (of the orchard?) line is present along the northern and eastern boundaries consisting of mature hazel, which had been originally coppiced, along with laurel, holly and sycamore. Along the eastern boundary (of the orchard?) in one area three semi-mature pear trees remain. Due to their age, it is unlikely these were present while the orchard was in use, potentially these were planted when the adjacent residential development was completed. However, this has not been confirmed.
- 5.52 The northern open area, due to the lack of management, has become overtaken by tall ruderal species including cow parsley, rosebay willowherb and common hogweed with scattered bramble. These species show that the area is subject to natural succession and should the lack of management continue this area will become woodland in time.
- 5.53 The tree line running across the centre of the site (orchard?) consists of four mature oaks with holly, flowering currant and hawthorn. At the western edge of the central tree? line lies a cluster of 5 fruit trees consisting of apple and pear trees. Due to the age of the trees being around 100 years, they potentially could have been planted when the orchard was under management.



Picture 39 - Extract from 1903 Staffordshire LXVIII.4, showing the relationship of the Walled Garden, Orchard and Park Farm

- 5.54 The southern section of the area the orchard contains frequent hazel, oak and hawthorn. However, the self-set holly and laurel has become extensively dominant within the understorey.
- 5.55 Overall, the area consists of a canopy of apple, sycamore, pear and oak, with an understorey of hazel, laurel, holly, hawthorn, honey suckle, myrtle and blackthorn. The field layer comprises bramble, cow parsley, flowering currant, ivy, cleavers, broad leaved dock, wood avens, creeping buttercup, wild rose, common hogweed and Spanish bluebell.
- 5.56 When the survey area is compared to the description of a traditional orchard outlined within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) priority habitat or UK Habitat Classification (UKHAB) AB27 traditional orchards descriptions, it meets none of the qualifying criteria, due to the high proportion of non-fruiting and nut bearing tree species and the lack of management currently present. While hazel was found frequent to occasionally present throughout the area, fruit bearing trees were located in very localised areas. From the survey, the area appears to meet the description of a broadleaved woodland. It should be noted, however, that a bank and raised area was noted within the central and southeastern area potentially suggesting that the site was used as part of the levelling process for the infilling of historic pond associated with Park Farm. The ages of the trees on the raised areas were semi-mature to immature supporting this theory and suggesting the trees were likely not present when the historic orchard was being utilised.

Sub Area A1e: St Margaret’s Church

Overview

- 5.57 This element of the character area includes buildings around the junction of Sutton’s Drive and Chapel Lane and includes the Church of St Margaret. The majority of the buildings along Chapel Lane and are included within Sub Area A1f: Chapel Lane and Pinfold Lane & Crook Lane.
- 5.58 The location of the original medieval settlement at Great Barr is thought to be centred on St Margaret’s Church and Chapel Farm and is known to exist from reference in the Domesday Survey.

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- 5.59 Chapel Lane runs along the north boundary of the Church, the Duckery woodland to the north east, of the church. The Church's spire is the tallest landmark and can be seen from some distance, the steep pitches of the nave and aisle.
- 5.60 St Margaret's Church is a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE;1116238) The brick tower is the oldest surviving element dating from 1677, a spire was added in the 18th century. The body of the Church was rebuilt in 1862 to designs by Griffin ((Historic England, 1986)).



Picture 40 - Churchyard boundary wall



Picture 41 - St Margaret's Church from Chapel Lane



Picture 42 - View of Church Spire from Chapel Lane

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.61 A low brick wall defines the historic extent of the churchyard with graveyard beyond. Within the church yard the trees are tall and established. The churchyard forms an attractive large setting around St Margaret's Church. As you travel north the ground drops dramatically and the land opens up with little planting within the cemetery and tree lined borders.
- 5.62 There is a lane to the south-east of the Church can we clarify whether this track is within the cemetery which meets Sutton's Drive. Looking south along this track the twentieth century dwellings are visible.
- 5.63 Trees enclose the immediate boundary along this track to the east and there is a heavy tree line along Chapel Lane which obscures immediate views of the Church. Importance glimpses of the church are gained from some distance along Chapel Lane
- 5.64 The landscape opens up as the land falls to a valley in the north-east parkland, Pylons are in the middle ground view and as the land rises High Wood is visible in the background.



Picture 43 - View to High Wood from graveyard

- 5.65 Beyond the Duckery the fields form an important historic agricultural landscape which has been associated with Old Hall Farm. The 1841 Tithe Map shows the Farm and fields were tenanted by Edward Allen and Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott, owner of Great Barr Hall.

Sub Area A1f: Chapel Lane and Pinfold Lane & Crook Lane

Overview

- 5.66 This area covers Chapel Lane, Pinfold Lane and Crook Lane. The area around Pinfold Lane forms part of the historic core of the Conservation Area, and historically fell within the boundaries of the pre-1996 Conservation Area.
- 5.67 It includes the Former Agricultural Buildings of Chapel Farm, including Chapel Farmhouse.
- 5.68 This part of the Conservation Area includes the dispersed linear settlement of farmsteads of the Pinfold, a Grade II Listed Building located on the north side of Pinfold Lane, and the historic farm buildings of Crook Farm and Old Hall Court on the corner of Pinfold Lane and Crook Lane.
- 5.69 The landscape has an agricultural character with ancient landforms including pastures, field ponds and species rich hedgerows.



Picture 44 - 2022 Google Earth image of Chapel Lane, Pinfold Lane and Crook Lane



Picture 45 - Crook Farm

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.70 The cluster of buildings are centred around the junction of Sutton's Drive and Chapel Lane, this includes the Church, Chapel Farm and dwellings. The buildings orientate themselves along the routes. The routes are lined with mature hedges and trees; however, the buildings of Chapel Farm are constructed close to the road edge.
- 5.71 Open spaces in this part of the character area include the important historic agricultural land north of the Duckery, east of Chapel Lane and south of Pinfold Lane which is associated with Old Hall Farm. Two lines of pylons run along this land.



Picture 46 - Open fields associated with Old Hall Farm

- 5.72 There is open green space to the west of Chapel Lane which extends the agricultural open character. This includes the Bronze Cricket Club which has a low profile and is unremarkable in the landscape.
- 5.73 The only other small open space of note is the Church car park, located on the north side of Chapel Lane and fronted by the residential buildings historically associated with Chapel Lane farm.
- 5.74 The built form of this part of the character is centred around the straight route of Pinfold Lane, which runs east to west and rises to a junction with Old Hall Lane. Pinfold lane is enclosed by mature planting and trees to its boundaries, which rise either side of the road. A large field gate at the north east corner of Pinfold Lane provides long views across the valley from the north across to the golf course.

Sub Area A1g: Old Hall Farm and its setting

Overview

- 5.75 The area around Old Hall Farm lies to the north of character area. This element of the character area is bounded by Chapel Lane and Pinfold Lane, and includes the historic buildings of Old Hall Farm, thought to have been the original seat of the Scott family before Great Barr Hall was constructed to the south.
- 5.76 This area comprises two Grade II Listed Buildings (Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE;1138999) and barn north of Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE;1076381)) set within a wider agricultural landscape. The footprint of the buildings was determined by the evolution of a historic farmstead and is an ad-hoc array of buildings constructed to the west of Old Hall Lane.
- 5.77 The farmstead is prominent in the landscape due to its elevated position and the open nature of the fields surrounding it. The quality and status of the buildings is clear and can be appreciated from Pinfold Lane where the farmstead of Hall Farms sits on higher ground.
- 5.78 The farmhouse contains a combination of timber-framing and brick construction with a tile roof. The framing of Old Hall Farmhouse consists of square panels with diagonal bracing, except for a band of close studding above the former jetty. A notable feature is the chimney with multiple diagonal shafts situated behind the ridge in line with the entrance. The construction methods and architectural style of the building demonstrates its age and evolution.
- 5.79 The barn at Old Hall is a multi-phased building, Historic England's list description dates the barn as; *"Probably mid-C19 and c1800, with remains of timber-frame, probably C17, Brick with tile roof. The right-hand part of the south wall appears to be earlier and is in Flemish bond."* (Historic England, 1951). It is the dominant feature from Old Hall Lane, with the full length of the range visible. It appears to be redundant and in need of repair.



Picture 47 - Old Hall farmstead from Old Hall Lane

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.80 As noted above, the area surrounding Old Hall, particularly to the west, north and south is defined by farmland enclosed by Chapel Lane to the west, Pinfold Lane to the north, Old Hall Lane to the east and modern woodland to the south (between the historic woodland of The Duckery and High Wood).
- 5.81 Chapel Lane runs to the west of Old Hall Farm and its surrounding fields. While this lane is bounded on both sides by mature hedgerows and trees, gaps in the hedgerows to the east and the topography does allow for views across the setting of Old Hall Farm to the east.
- 5.82 The large traditional barn that stands to the north of Old Hall Farmhouse is currently surrounded by greenery in the form of fields to the west, south and north, trees to the east, these are an important part of the open agricultural character of the Conservation Area, especially when viewed from Chapel Lane.
- 5.83 Mature trees around the farmhouse shelter some views of the impressive timber framed farmhouse from some views on Chapel Lane.

Sub Area A2: Netherhall Park Housing Development

Overview

- 5.84 The sub character area also contains Netherhall Park, a residential development constructed between 2004 and 2010 on the grounds of the former St Margaret's Psychiatric Hospital. The development is predominantly constructed of red brick dwellings with white render, and contains number of different house types including terraces, semi-detached buildings and standalone houses and apartment blocks.
- 5.85 The urban form of the sub area echoes the previous footprint of the St Margaret's Hospital, and is arrayed around a central road, with a series of arcades and crescents to the northern part of the development around a larger central block of apartments.
- 5.86 The existing approach route to Netherhall Park Housing Estate was developed from the main drive to the St Margaret's Hospital, it reflects the earlier footpath from Keeper's Cottage to Great Barr Hall. This was likely a service route within the estate.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.87 The formalised approach to the residential development from Queslett Road is broad and green in character, with grass verges and planted trees, with secondary streets running in parallel to the central spine avenue towards the large open space at the centre of the development. Many of the secondary and tertiary streets are brick rather than asphalt, and are shared space.

Historic Interest of Character Area A

- 5.88 The historic interest of Character Area A is derived from its history as the historic core of the Great Barr Hall Estate. A more detailed history of the Estate can be found at Section 4 of this report, with the area containing a multiphased landscaped park historically related to Great Barr Hall.
- 5.89 The area covered by Character Area A is a rich landscape that has been added to and re-worked by successive generations of the owners at Great Barr Hall. The choice by each generation to add to rather than obliterate has created legible layers and intensified its historic interest.
- 5.90 The historic interest of the landscaped park and hall is recognised by the status of much of the character area as Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden, Grade II, and the remains of Great Barr Hall and Chapel as a Grade II Listed Building.

- 5.91 The parkland was influenced by designers such as William Shenstone, Humphrey Repton, John Nash and George Gilbert Scott. The character area contains the remains of many features that are indicative of this historic interest and the historic associations with key eighteenth century figures. This period was at a time when the gentry and new middle-class were emerging from the new industrial Britain and those at Great Barr were heavily involved in important intellectual and artistic circles. In addition, it is thought that Nash may have been responsible for the late eighteenth century expansion of Great Barr Hall, but there is little evidence of this today.
- 5.92 The character area also has minor historic interest in legible remains of the historic centre of Great Barr including the non-designated moated site to the east of the character area, and the proximity of the Church of St Margaret. The character area also contains the remains of the 1863 chapel, adjoined Great Barr Hall which was constructed for the Scott family by George Gilbert Scott in a crisp Victorian Gothic.
- 5.93 In summary, the historic interest of the character area is derived from its history as the centre of the Great Barr Hall Estate. However, the legibility of this historic interest today is marred by alterations, vandalism and neglect which has occurred to the buildings and landscape of the Conservation Area over time.

Architectural Interest & Built Form of Character Area A

- 5.94 This area comprises two Grade II Listed Buildings (Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE;1138999) and barn north of Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE;1076381))set within a wider agricultural landscape. The footprint of the buildings was determined by the evolution of a historic farmstead and is an ad-hoc array of buildings constructed to the west of Old Hall Lane.
- 5.95 Located at the centre of the Historic Estate, Great Barr Hall is a nationally important mansion, recognised by its Grade II Listing. Its architectural interest stems from the 1777 reconstruction of the historic hall, which included many additions and alterations in a form of the Georgian Gothick style. The next main phase of development of the building was in the first part of the nineteenth century, when a clocktower was added to the east service wing and the southern elevation extended. Sadly, the buildings on the Great Barr estate have suffered neglect, demolition and other alterations, The clock tower and service wing have since been demolished. Today, the architectural interest of the building is severely eroded due to its current poor condition.
- 5.96 The Chapel at Great Barr Hall is part of the listing of Great Barr Hall. It is an important survival of work by notable Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott. Sadly, it has been severely damaged by fire. This has eroded the architectural interest of the building, which is derived from its restrained Victorian Gothic form and detailing, designed by noted architect George Gilbert Scott in 1860.
- 5.97 Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE; 1138999) and Barn approximately 20 metres north of Old Hall Farmhouse (NHLE: 1076381) are Grade II Listed Buildings located to the north of Great Barr Hall. Dating from the early seventeenth century, Old Hall Farm derives its architectural interest from being a farmhouse, with architectural detailing and methods of construction indicative of the local vernacular and era of its construction. These include timber framing, seventeenth century panelling and inglenook fireplaces. The associated barn has minor architectural interest in illustrating construction techniques from its many phases of alteration and expansion, and in allowing for an understanding of the barn typology common in the area.
- 5.98 The Church of St Margaret has architectural interest in derived from its typology as a purpose built Christian place of worship with a brick tower, which dates from 1677. The building has architectural interest in its gothic detailing and red sandstone dressings.
- 5.99 More broadly, the architectural interest of the buildings of the character area is limited to allowing for an understanding of the era of construction and building typology used, and therefore more indicative of historic interest. In addition to those Listed Buildings described above, elements of the

character area with minor architectural interest include Chapel Farm, the Avenue Lodge, and to a lesser extent, Sutton's Bridge.

Positive Contributors to the Character Area

Listed Buildings in the Character Area

- 5.100 As the historic core of the Conservation Area, the character area contains a number of Listed Buildings that make a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through their special architectural and historic interest (see Figure 16). A full list of these designated heritage assets is found in the "Audit of Heritage Assets" below, however of note are Great Barr Hall itself, and the Church of St Margaret, as described above.
- 5.101 The character area also includes the listed agricultural building of Old Hall Farm which allow for an understanding of this part of the Conservation Area as historic farmland with links to the Great Barr Hall estate and the Scott family.

Other Buildings that Contribute Positively to the Character Area

- 5.102 Other Buildings identified as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within its boundaries will also be classified as non-designated built heritage assets.

Crook Farm & Crook House (Old Hall Court)

- 5.103 The buildings of Crook Farm lie to the north of Character Area A and are located at the junction of Crook Lane, Pinfold Lane and Chapel Lane. The buildings are of minor architectural interest in their features indicative of their agricultural, utilitarian use, but predominantly contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through their historic interest. The buildings sit on a prominent corner position on the rise of Chapel Lane, and act as a visual terminus to the lane at this historic junction.
- 5.104 Located on Crook Lane, Crook Farm is the former main farmhouse for the surrounding Crook Farm. whilst no longer being the centre of a working farm, it contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its historic interest.



Picture 48 - Photograph of Crook Farm

Chapel Farm

- 5.105 Chapel Farm sits at the centre of the historic core of Great Barr, located near the junction of Chapel Lane and Sutton's Drive. The small complex of agricultural buildings, they are not listed, but make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its minor architectural and historic interest. The former farm buildings are now a mix of residential and commercial uses (some are part of the Great Barr Hall Golf Club) but are still legible as former farm buildings, constructed around two courtyards and of red brick and clay tile roofs. The buildings themselves likely date from a variety of eras from the nineteenth century and earlier, and contribute to the rural character of the centre of the small settlement.



Picture 49 - Chapel Farm

Avenue Lodge

- 5.106 Avenue Lodge is located on the remains of Sutton's Drive and Chapel Lane and dates from the mid nineteenth century. Originally one of a pair, the building was constructed to service the gateway between Merrion's Wood and the rest of the estate, and is situated to the north of these remains. The red and black brickwork of the building, along with its polychromatic Victorian Gothic revival detailing, is similar to Gilbert Scott's Chapel at Great Barr Hall.

Sutton's bridge

- 5.107 Constructed in 1852, the structure known as "Sutton's Bridge" connected the western and southern drives. Built of stone piers with cast iron railings, the bridge contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its minor architectural and interest, but predominantly contributes to the surrounding character of the Conservation Area through its historic interest. The bridge is representative of the mid nineteenth century improvements made to the landscaped estate and forms part of the designed approach to the Hall.



Picture 50 - Suttons Bridge

Surviving Gates and Piers

5.108 Gates and piers survive at the entrance to Merrion's Wood at both Merrion's Lodge and Avenue Lodge.

These are attractive ornate iron work and have been attributed to Sir Gilbert Scott. There is an opportunity to repairs and restore these to their former glory.



Picture 51 - Surviving gate piers adjacent to Avenue Lodge

Surviving railings to the park on A34

5.109 Original park railings survive on the eastern side of the A34, near Merrion's Lodge.



Picture 52 - Original Railings for Great Barr Park

The Cascade/ Weir

- 5.110 The weir was created in the late eighteenth century to connect the existing lower lake with the new upper lake, and thus is part of the picturesque improvements made to the estate at this time. It has since been rebuilt and demonstrates the original intent. Whilst of no architectural interest, and much repaired and altered with concrete additions in the late twentieth century, the weir makes some contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its historic interest.
- 5.111 .



Picture 53 - The Weir

The Walled Garden

- 5.112 Originally constructed in 1744, the walled garden sits to the north of the eastern approach to the Hall, which was once also adjacent to Barr Hall Farm, which today no longer exists. While the remains of the walled garden are very dilapidated the former extents of the garden are still visible. The garden has no architectural interest but makes some contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its historic interest.



Picture 54 - Walled Garden

Moated Manor Site

- 5.113 The likely location of the former Great Barr Medieval Manor, this non-designated archaeological heritage asset makes a contribution to the character of the Conservation Area through its historic interest. The site itself is not wholly appreciable today, located within the open parkland to the south of Sutton's Drive and covered with mature trees.



Picture 55 - Open Parkland to the south of the moated site



Picture 56 - Remains of the moat

Negative Contributors to Character Area A of the Conservation Area

Self-seeded Trees in Registered Park and Garden

- 5.114 As a result of the abandonment of the landscape a number of trees have self-seeded within the landscape. This has added to additional woodland areas and spread into previously unplanted areas, including the formal gardens of Great Barr Hall.
- 5.115 These self seeded trees dilute the legibility of the designed landscape, they are particularly harmful in previously unplanted areas such as the formal lawns.

Nether Hall Park Housing

- 5.116 As discussed above, the Netherhall Park housing development of the early twenty first century makes a negative contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Its dense residential character and later urban form no architectural and historic interest. The layout, coupled with the location of the development within an area of woodland, does not allow for an understanding of the conservation area as the landscaped grounds of a former Hall.

Dwellings on Sutton's Drive

- 5.117 Located on the edge of the Conservation Area, these buildings were constructed in the late twentieth century and more recently renovated. Whilst their orientation and layout mean they respond to Sutton's Drive, they do not allow for any greater understanding of the route as a former principal drive to a grand house.

Pylons

- 5.118 Pylons run through the landscape and detract from the agricultural character. The large and industrial appearance is incongruous to the appearance of the landscape.

Litter

- 5.119 There is a general problem with litter, especially along the busy route of Chapel Lane and Pinfold Lane.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity

- 5.120 The historic core comprises all of the Registered Parkland features with Great Barr Hall itself set at its centre. The Land Parcels it has been sub-divided into reflect many of the parkland features but do not follow all the specific areas defined in the CAAMP. There are ten Land Parcels in total with five set within the Registered Great Barr Park listing and the other five set as its immediate context with historic links back to the wider Great Barr Estate.
- 5.121 The ten Land Parcels identified within the historic core are listed below along with the landscape and visual sensitivity assigned to them by the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment conducted by Ryder Landscape Consultants in Summer 2024. It is unsurprising that the majority of Land Parcels have High ratings for both landscape and visual sensitivities given the value of the historic core and the remaining quality of some of its original parkland features.
- A1 – Great Barr Hall and Environs – Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High.
 - A2 – The Lakes - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High.

- A3 – The Great Meadow - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High
- A4 – St Margarets Woodland - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High
- A5 – Northern Parkland - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High
- A6 – Chapel and Pinfold Lanes - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- A7 – Old Hall Farm and Setting - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- A8 – Great Barr Village - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High
- A9 – Merrion’s Wood - Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High
- A10 – Nether Hall Park Housing - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium

5.122 Appendix F contains illustrated sheets for each Land Parcel summarising their particularly characteristics, value and suggested management strategies.

Archaeology

5.123 Within Character Area A the following sites of archaeological interest have been identified. More information is available from the Wolverhampton & Walsall Historic Environment Records;

- Chapel Lane; NW of Streetly (HER ref:10326) – Road laid out by Joseph Scott in 1798
- Ridge & Furrow; N Of Chapel Lane; Nw Of Pheasey (HER ref; 10386)
- Ridge & Furrow; S Of Chapel Lane; Nw Of Pheasey (HER ref;10387)
- Ridge & Furrow; W Of Old Hall Lane; Nw Of Pheasey (HER ref;10388)
- Ridge & Furrow; Chapel Lane; N Great Barr (HER ref; 10389)
- Farm, Great Barr (HER ref; 13073)
- Early road line, Great Barr (HER ref; 13074)
- Lane, Great Barr (HER ref; 13075)
- Lane Great Bar (HER ref; 13076)
- Chapel (Site); Chapel Lane; Great Barr (HER ref; 13781)
- Chapel Lodge (site of), Great Barr Park (HER ref; 14033)
- Fox Plantation; Gt Barr (HER ref; 14803)
- Rectangular enclosure near Chapel Lane, Great Barr (HER ref; 15319)
- Scattered Settlement at Over End - Area of High Historic Townscape Value (HER ref; 15374)
- Great Barr: Archaeological Priority Area (HER ref; 15410)
- Hammerhead; St Margaret’s Hospital; Gt Barr (HER; 2601)
- OLD BARR DEER PARK; GT BARR PARK - Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 2681)
- Moated Site: within Great Barr Park: Archaeological Priority Area (HER; 2689)
- Med Pottery ; Nr Chapel Lane Moat; Great Barr (HER ref; 2892)
- Great Barr Park (HER ref; 3952)
- Merrions Wood (HER ref; 4502)

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- The Duckery; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 4506)
- Gilberts Wood; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 4507)
- High Wood; Great Barr Park (HER ref; 4509)
- Settlement; Great Barr (HER ref; 5830)
- Ice House; Great Barr Hall; Great Barr (HER ref; 6133)
- Manor House; Chapel Farm; Gt Barr (HER ref; 6358)
- Pound; Pinfold Lane/Old Hall Lane; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6374)
- Barr Mill; Great Barr Park; Great Barr (HER ref; 6378)
- Earthworks; Holly Wood; Great Barr Park; Great Barr (HER ref; 6379)
- Mill Close; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6380)
- Gravel Pit Leasow; N Of Gt Barr Hall; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6381)
- Brickworks (Site); N Of High Wood; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6384)
- Walled Garden; Rabbit Warren; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6385)
- Earthwork; N Of Chapel Farm; Gt Barr (HER ref; 8820)

Character Area B – Great Barr Golf Club

Description of Character, Location and Uses

- 5.124 Lying to the north of Merrion’s Wood, this area contains the remains of the Great Barr Deer Park and areas of ridge and furrow landscape underneath the golf course. The area contains no listed or locally listed buildings, but does include a locally designated Area of High Historic Landscape Value – “Great Barr Deer Park”. It borders Merrion’s Wood to the south (see Figures 16 & 20).

Spatial Analysis

Overview

- 5.125 The character area comprises three main elements: the Great Barr Golf Course, a small area of farmland near to Skip Lane, and buildings closer to the historic centre of Great Barr which belong to the golf course. In the main, the area is dominated by the twentieth century landscape of the golf course, including sporadic planting.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.126 The character area therefore is constituted by a network of landscaped open spaces – all private and predominantly in recreational use. The golf course itself does however contain an area of open space which borders Merrion’s Wood, providing relief to the historic woodland and allowing for some understanding of its historic special interest.
- 5.127 The green golf course does however provide some relief to the boundary of the former western drive (Sutton’s Drive) of the Estate and Merrion’s Wood.
- 5.128 Beyond this the planting belts of the golf course erode the legibility of the historic landscape. This can be seen in the aerial image (Picture 57) below. The surviving element of Sutton’s Drive is the diagonal avenue of trees leading to Merrions Wood from Chapel Lane.



Picture 57 - 2022 Google Earth Image of Great Barr Golf Club and Merrion's Wood

Historic Interest

- 5.129 Character Area B includes an Area of High Historic Landscape Value which is the ridge and furrow area under the Great Barr Golf Course and remains of the Great Barr Deer Park. Although this is of some historic interest, it is not specifically related to the designed landscape of the Great Barr Hall estate and is not an obviously visible feature on the ground today.
- 5.130 The buildings within the character area are of no historic interest.

Architectural Interest & Built Form

- 5.131 There is very little built form within the character area, with the few buildings located to the south east corner of the character area in the historic core of Great Barr. These buildings are of late twentieth century origins and are part of the Golf Club. They are of no architectural interest.

Positive Contributors to the Character Area

Listed Buildings in the Character Area

- 5.132 There are no Listed Buildings within the character area.

Other Buildings that Contribute Positively to the Character Area

- 5.133 Other buildings identified as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within its boundaries will also be classified as non-designated built heritage assets.

Negative Contributors to the Conservation Area

Great Barr Golf Club

- 5.134 The dominant built form of this character area, the buildings of Great Barr Golf Club (with the exception of those which were formerly of Chapel Farm) make a negative contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. The buildings do not reflect the historic uses of the Conservation Area and are dominant in terms of their footprint and massing. The buildings themselves are of no architectural or historic interest, and present an incongruent form when viewed from Chapel Lane and Sutton's Drive.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity

- 5.135 The golf club was formed to the west of Chapel Lane and Great Barr village in 1935 and was initially called the Calthorpe Golf Club and played over agricultural fields still grazed by sheep. Through a process of amalgamation and refinement the golf course took its current form in 1983. It is a parkland course in the sense of considerable tree planting on the course between fairways and given its wider setting in a rural location. It is serviced by a modern club house, contemporary work sheds and car park without impinging on the character of the Conservation Area's historic core and Registered Historic Parkland.
- 5.136 There are just two Land Parcels identified within the Great Barr Golf Club character area and were selected based on their original land use. The main golf course still traces its roots back to agricultural fields albeit with the original field pattern formed by hawthorn hedges now lost to the course improvements and re-modelling in the 1960's. The second, smaller Land Parcel is B2 and its origins can be traced back to being part of the Great Barr Hall's original parkland but like its larger counterpart there are no discernible traces of its original land use left on the golf course and within the car park that it has now become.
- B1 – Main Golf Course – Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity High.
 - B2 – Southern Golf Course - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity High.
- 5.137 Aerial photograph B1 indicates the twin Land Parcels at Great Barr Golf Club.
- 5.138 Appendix F contains illustrated sheets for both Land Parcels summarising their now very similar characteristics as parts of the same parkland golf course.

Archaeology

- 5.139 Within Character Area B the following sites of archaeological interest have been identified. More information is available from the Wolverhampton & Walsall Historic Environment Records;
- Lane, Great Barr (HER ref; 13076)
 - Great Barr: Archaeological Priority Area (HER ref; 15410)
 - Cropmark, north of Great Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 15565)
 - Old Barr Deer Park; Gt Barr Park - Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 2681)
 - Great Barr Park (HER ref; 3952)

- Merrions Wood (HER ref; 4502)
- Settlement; Great Barr (HER ref; 5830)
- Ridge & Furrow 9; N Of Merrions Wood; Great Barr Park (HER ref; 6360)
- Ridge & Furrow 8; W Of St Margarets Church; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6366)
- Tannery (Site); Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6383)
- Ridge & Furrow 11; N Of St Margarets Church; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6388)
- Ridge & Furrow 10; W Of Golf Course; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6389)
- Ridge & Furrow 6; Cottage Farm; Gt Barr (HER ref; 6392)
- Ridge & Furrow 4; Gt Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 6393)
- Ridge & Furrow 3; Gt Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 6394)
- Ridge & Furrow 2; Gt Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 6395)
- Ridge & Furrow 1; Gt Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 6396)

Character Area C – Barr Beacon

Description of Character, Location and Uses



Picture 58 - Barr Beacon Memorial

5.140 Lying to the centre of the Conservation Area, and to the northeast of the historic core of the Great Barr Hall Estate, this area is an Area of High Historic Landscape Value (AAHHLV, a local

designation. The area has historic links to the Scott family (a stylised Beacon forms part of the Scott coat of arms). Barr Beacon contains a coppice of trees planted by Joseph Scott in 1799 following enclosure. Today, a monument to the fallen of the First World War sits atop the hill. It is an octagonal structure with a dome roof sat on columns placed at each corner. It is built from Portland stone. The materials and design give it a classical quality appearance. It was constructed by Colonel Wilkinson in 1933, who purchased the land from the Scott family and returned it to the public as part of the war memorial. This area also includes a number of farmsteads that may be of pre-twentieth century origin (see Figures 16 & 20).

- 5.141 Barr Beacon is a Geosite within the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark, it is a geological site of exceptional importance due to its location next to one of the great geological faults that runs through the Black Country

Spatial Analysis

Overview

- 5.142 The character area is dominated by the rise of Barr Beacon, which sits at the centre of the Conservation Area. This is open space atop the hill, fringed by trees and reached via “Beacon Way”. At the centre of this open space sits the historic plantation planted by Joseph Scott, and to the north, the standalone building of the Barr Beacon War Memorial.
- 5.143 The character area is defined by three roads – the central route main road of Beacon Road, the older, curvilinear form of Pinfold Road (which retains elements of a sparse rural settlement), and Beacon Way road and footpath, which rises to the top of Barr Beacon.
- 5.144 There is very little built form within the character area, although it does contain part of the sparse linear development along Pinfold Lane. These are clusters of farms and associated agricultural buildings along this route.
- 5.145 Barr Beacon is also home to the Barr Beacon reservoirs, operated by South Staffs Water, which lie to the north of the memorial.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.146 Beacon Road and Pinfold Lane run through the character area, with a further important shared pedestrian and car route. Beacon Road runs north to south, and lies to the west of the peak of Barr Beacon. This is a busy road, and due to its rising nature, broad do you mean the roadway is wide? roadway and pedestrian and cycle paths allow for views to the countryside to the east and the city of Birmingham to the south. The road only becomes enclosed as it passes Barr Beacon. The character area also includes a stretch of Pinfold Lane. At this point, the Lane is enclosed to the east by the wooded slopes of the Barr Beacon ridge, and to the west by grassy verge and planted hedge that reveals some views to the verdant landscape beyond. Beacon Way is the name of both a metalled road and a separate footpath, both of which rise in parallel to the open space atop of Barr Beacon.
- 5.147 The open space atop Barr Beacon is an important contributor to the character area. The space has been historically open, with the plantation at its centre.

Historic Interest

- 5.148 Area C contains Barr Beacon, an area of High Historic Landscape Value, and is therefore of some historic interest. There is an historic relationship between this sub-area and the Great Barr Hall Estate, although this is not apparent today. Barr Beacon itself is also not appreciable from within the historic core of the Conservation Area, however parts of the Great Barr Hall RPG (its fringes) can be glimpsed from the top of Barr Beacon, an indicator of historic interest.

Architectural Interest & Built Form

- 5.149 The character area contains very little in terms of architectural interest. The monument atop Bar Beacon is of minor architectural interest due to its classical features and construction, and its recent restoration.
- 5.150 The character area also contains Coxfold farmhouse, a Listed Building that dates from the seventeenth century. The twentieth century additions and alterations including the modern render have reduced its architectural interest. Positive Contributors to the Character Area

Positive Contributors to the Character Area

Listed Buildings in the Character Area

The character area contains one Listed Building, the Grade II listed Coxfold Farmhouse (NHLE; 1139004). This contributes to the character and appearance of the character area through its special architectural and historic interest. Coxfold Farmhouse

- 5.151 The building is simple vernacular design typical of the seventeenth century. Its timber-framed structure, steeply pitched roofs and large chimneys epitomise the style of the era. This demonstrates its architectural interest. The building's architectural interest is demonstrated as a well-preserved example of a vernacular seventeenth century design and construction. It has historic interest as the surviving remains of a historic farmstead linked to the Great Barr Hall Estate (see Figure 16).

Other Buildings that Contribute Positively to the Character Area

- 5.152 Other Buildings identified as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within its boundaries will also be classified as non-designated built heritage assets.

Beacon Farm

- 5.153 Noted as "Beacon" on historic mapping available, the complex of a barn and farm has some historic interest as a relatively intact centre of a historic farm, with much later additions and alterations. The buildings themselves look to date from the early nineteenth century and appear on the tithe map of the area from 1841, Figure 5. The farmstead therefore makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through providing evidence of the dispersed settlement of agricultural farmsteads along Pinfold Lane.

Beacon Cottage

- 5.154 Beacon Cottage appears on the 1841 Tithe Mapping and was owned by the Scott estate. It was not possible to visit the cottage due to it being on private land, however it is considered to make a minor contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its historic interest.

Barr Beacon War Memorial

- 5.155 Located at the top of Barr Beacon, this memorial was constructed in the early twentieth century in memory of the First World War, later re-dedicated to the fallen of all conflict. The memorial is a cupola supported by simple Doric columns, which stands elevated on a plinth.

Negative Contributors to the Character Area

Pylons

- 5.156 Pylons can be seen in the landscape around Barr Beacon and its memorial and form the back drop to the Memorial in views to the north, east and south-east. They are a modern intrusion and detract from the rural character and historic landscape.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity

- 5.157 The notion that Barr Beacon is just the highest part of this landform disregards the larger feature that runs south towards Pheasey forming a local ridge that visually separates areas of the Borough and Conservation Area from each other. Great Barr Hall itself is set to the west of this ridge's tail. The highest part of the beacon is set at an elevation of 236m AOD and provides panoramic views out across the surrounding landscape. On a clear day 11 counties are visible from its summit and as far as Powys in mid-Wales. Its elevation and wooded upper parts means that many of the views within the overall Conservation Area have it forming a backdrop or skyline. The beacon's height has been used to locate a Greek tholos styled war memorial to commemorate the fallen of the First World War and is also utilised to allow gravity supply of water from a covered drinking water reservoir set to the north end of its summit.
- 5.158 The character area has been split into two Land Parcels as considered by the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment conducted by Ryder Landscape Consultants. They are C1 – Upper Barr Beacon which is the recreational land set to the east of Beacon Road consisting of the beacon's higher ground, car park, war memorial and amenity facilities. C2 – Lower Barr Beacon is the former quarry site that stands to the west of Beacon Road that has reverted to woodland and is now part of the Forest of Mercia Community Forest. The list of 17 Land Parcels within character area D – Wider Countryside and their assessed landscape and visual sensitivity is given below.
- C1 – Upper Barr Beacon – Landscape Sensitivity High and Visual Sensitivity High.
 - C2 – Lower Barr Beacon - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium.
- 5.159 Aerial photograph C1 indicates the Land Parcels' locations and extents around the higher part of Barr Beacon.
- 5.160 Appendix F contains illustrated sheets for the two Land Parcels summarising their particularly characteristics, value and suggested management strategies.

Archaeology

- 5.161 Within Character Area C the following sites of archaeological interest have been identified. More information is available from the Wolverhampton & Walsall Historic Environment Records;
- Ridge & Furrow; W Side Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10362)
 - Cropmarks, north east slopes of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10363)
 - Barr Beacon Beeches (HER ref; 15292)
 - Barr Beacon: Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 15337)
 - Scattered Settlement at Over End - Area of High Historic Townscape Value (HER ref; 15374)
 - Hammers; Nr Barr Beacon (HER ref; 2214)
 - Barr Beacon Standing Stones (Site) (HER ref; 2221)
 - Rb Coin; Barr Beacon (HER ref; 2231)
 - Barr Beacon (HER ref; 2661)

- Quarry; Old Hall Lane; Gt Barr Park (HER ref; 6377)

Character Area D – Wider Countryside

Description of Character, Location and Uses

- 5.162 Character Area D comprises open countryside used as agricultural land, sparsely populated with farmsteads and other sporadic residential development of twentieth century date. In general, field boundaries have formed through the amalgamation of smaller parcels of land since the land was enclosed in the eighteenth century, with further changes undertaken in the twentieth century. This is most obvious in the land to the east. Land to the west however also includes the twentieth century “Beacon Heights” a static home settlement. The area now has large elements of horse paddock, with associated buildings and stables. This area also includes the northern portion of the locally designated Area of High Historic Townscape Value “Settlement at Over End”, lying directly north of the core of the old Great Barr Estate (see Figure 16 for designated built heritage assets, Figure 12 for Historic Landscape Characterisation information, Appendix C for a full breakdown of this information, and fig. 21 for local landscape and townscape designations).
- 5.163 Following a Site visit, the large sub-area has been further subdivided into:
- Sub-area D1 – Land to the West*
 - Sub-area D2 – Land to the East*

Spatial Analysis

Overview

- 5.164 The character area is defined by a network of lanes, with small clusters of agricultural or former agricultural buildings along them. These buildings are separated by their surrounding related agricultural landscape, As a result the clusters of buildings are experienced individually, not as a collective whole across the character area.
- 5.165 The Historic Landscape Character of this character area has informed the below assessment. This is included as fig. 18 and Appendix C of this report.

Sub-Area D1

- 5.166 To the west in sub-area D1, the network of lanes and field boundaries dates from likely the eighteenth century, although these have undergone amalgamation and further alteration of the years. The older origins of this part of the Conservation Area when compare to the agricultural land to the east are evident in the more organic routes and tracks which cross the landscape.
- 5.167 Sub-area D1 also has the remains of a historic linear settlement pattern, with small farmsteads located along the curvilinear form of Pinfold Lane.

Sub-Area D2

- 5.168 Sub-area D2 is defined by field boundaries dating from the nineteenth century, road layouts dating from the middle of the nineteenth century. Routes are straight, predominantly around the perimeter of the open agricultural space, and built form is sparse and collected along these roads. Aldridge Road, to the east, forms a hard edge to the Conservation Area, with twentieth century suburban development beyond.

Streets and Open Space, Parks and Gardens, and Trees

- 5.169 The character area is defined by large open agricultural spaces, with field boundaries comprised of leafy green hedgerows. The character area has no specific “streets” but a network of quiet lanes and roads which thread between farmsteads. In general, these lanes are experienced as enclosed, with breaks to views across the agricultural land provided by entrances to fields and other agricultural plots. In sub-area D2, views are permitted from higher ground to the hard edge of the suburban residential development of Streetly to the east.
- 5.170 Sub Area -D1 contains small clusters of trees, for example to the west of Skip Lane. This cluster is however a result of twentieth century planting and has no connection with the designed landscape of Great Barr Hall Estate.
- 5.171 Sub-Area D1 contains part of the route of Chapel Lane (western side), which was constructed by the Scott family, likely in the eighteenth century, to link farmsteads along Pinfold Lane to the historic centre of Great Barr. Due to its topography, falling and then rising again as one moves north east along it, and its straight nature, this route is marked out from the landscape as a clear later addition, and also permits views to the surrounding area.

Historic Interest

- 5.172 Some of the historic farmsteads within these areas of agricultural land may be of marginal historic interest due to sharing historic links with the estate of Great Barr Hall. The majority of these buildings have not been included on Walsall’s Local List or the National Heritage List for England.
- 5.173 In order to establish a greater understanding of the historic interest of the area, full assessment of the historic links of the remaining farmsteads to the Scott estate has been undertaken. This is included as Appendix B of this report and draws upon tithe apportionment information from 1841. While many of the farmsteads within the area were owned by Sir Edward Dolliman Scott at the time of review, this connection is today only legible through documentary sources.
- 5.174 Buildings which may be considered as candidates for the forthcoming Walsall Local List are described in section 4 of this report.

Sub-Area D1

- 5.175 Sub-area D1 (to the west) contains an Area of High Historic Landscape Value (Potters Wood and Moat Farm Ridge and Furrow) and a Scheduled Monument to the north (Moated Site, 15m south of Moat Farm, list no.1008547). This Scheduled Monument is of some historic interest in its own right. However, this is not historically connected to the Great Barr Hall Estate, and thus makes little contribution to the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area. The area also maintains a greater proportion of earlier field boundaries than Sub-area D2 (see below) and is therefore of marginally more historic interest. However, today the character area is experienced as separate to the historic core of the Conservation Area due to interceding planting, topography and development.
- 5.176 There is one Grade II Listed Building along Chapel Lane, The Pinfold (NHLE; 1343030). The route of Chapel Lane has historic interest in being part of the nineteenth century improvements to the estate by the Scott family.
- 5.177 Sub Area D1 also contains five farmsteads that were historically linked to the Scott Estate (see Appendix B). However, these buildings have been heavily altered over time. Additionally, due to changes that have occurred within the surrounding area, any legible historic link with the surviving core of the Great Barr Hall Estate has been lost.

Sub-Area D2

- 5.178 Sub-area D2 (to the east) contains two Listed Buildings to its southern boundary (Doe bank Farmhouse and Farm Building attached (NHLE;1116095) and Barn adjoining at right angles to Doe Bank Farmhouse (NHLE; 1076393). The sub area is otherwise agricultural land with field boundaries dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.
- 5.179 The rise of Barr Beacon to the west physically separates much of this sub-area from the rest of the Conservation Area and its historic core. The area is otherwise unremarkable, containing field boundaries likely laid out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Sub Area D2 is of very little historic interest.
- 5.180 The Sub area also includes a number of farms, which contain two farmsteads that appear on the tithe mapping and apportionment information and were linked with the Scott family (see Appendix B). These include Old Hall Farm, Crook Farm, Chapel Farm, Coxfold, Beacon Hill Farm, Moat Farm, and Doe Bank Farm. These buildings have been heavily altered over time. The sub area contains farmhouses and multiple agricultural buildings which are of very low historic interest. While the buildings form small groupings of farmsteads, these buildings do not retain a legible historic or functional connection with the Great Barr Hall Estate.

Architectural Interest & Built Form

- 5.181 The character area is of very low architectural interest. In general, the very limited architectural interest of the character area is derived from the partial intactness of its sparse farmsteads. This very low architectural interest is found in the typologies present, of free standing farm houses constructed next to ancillary agricultural buildings.
- 5.182 Sub-area D2 is even more sparsely populated with built form than D1, however it retains some buildings of minor architectural and historic interest, including the listed Doe Bank Farmhouse and attached Farm Building and listed barn (NHLE ref: 1116095 and 1076393). Any link that these buildings had to the Great Barr Hall Estate has been totally eroded through the construction of twentieth century residential built form of Pheasey.
- 5.183 The character area contains A contains a number of the farmsteads which have historic links to the Estate. This historic link is only fully legible today through documentary sources and is not apparent for those experiencing the area first hand. In general, these are historic farmsteads, and allow for an understanding of the character area as an historical agricultural region.
- 5.184 Many of the uses of these buildings have changed, but their previous agricultural use is often understandable through their retained typology and some minor architectural features. Otherwise, these buildings are largely of no architectural interest and very low or no historic interest.

Positive Contributors to the Character Area

Listed Buildings in the Character Area

- 5.185 The character area contains two Listed Buildings that make a minor positive contribution to the Conservation Area. These are Doe Bank Farmhouse and Farm Buildings Attached and the related Barn (NHLE ref: 1116095 and 1076393). While of special architectural and historic interest themselves, today these are experienced as wholly separate from the historic core of the conservation area due to the construction of twentieth and twenty first century residential built form to the west. It is also noted that they were not in the ownership of the Scott family at the time of the tithe apportionments, and so have no known historic or functional connection with the historic core of the Conservation Area.

Other Buildings that Contribute Positively to the Character Area

- 5.186 Other Buildings identified as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the conservation area within its boundaries will also be classified as non-designated built heritage assets. These include:

Little Oak Barn Farm (historically Pool House Farm)

- 5.187 Lying within sub-area D1 to the west of Barr Beacon, this farmstead is now known as Little Oak Barn Farm. The building is a central farmhouse with agricultural buildings arrayed in a courtyard formation to the south. The buildings likely date to the early nineteenth century, although the brick formerly agricultural buildings are now in residential use. The visible agricultural character of the buildings, and their position as part of a dispersed linear arrangement of farmsteads, contributes to the character of the Conservation Area.

Aldridge Road Tabernacle

- 5.188 Located to the eastern side of Aldridge Road is the Tin Tabernacle, a prefabricated building, likely constructed of a timber frame with corrugated roof and walls. The building would have been constructed by the church and is first referenced on OS mapping from 1888. The building has architectural and historic interest in its prefabricated construction methods and materials, and its links to the ad-hoc, prefabricated swathe of ecclesiastical buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century to cater for growing communities. Further research is required to ascertain a more detailed history of the tin tabernacle.



Picture 59 - Aldridge Tin Tabernacle

Negative Contributors to the Conservation Area

Large Span Modern Agricultural Buildings

- 5.189 While the sub-areas D1 and D2 are rural in character, and agricultural buildings contribute to an understanding of the historic uses of the area, many of these are now large in form and dominate certain views. Some of these buildings are linked to historic farmsteads that may once have had a connection with the Great Barr Hall Estate. However, their modern form, architectural expression and modern agricultural uses detract from the ability to understand any historic connection. As such, they are considered to make no contribution, or in some cases a negative contribution, to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Barr Beacon School

- 5.190 The mid and late twentieth century form of Barr Beacon School sits atop a rise in the landscape and is visible from much of the surrounding area. The buildings are of no architectural interest, and do not contribute to an understanding of the historic interest of the Conservation Area. As such, it is considered that the buildings of Barr Beacon School make a negative contribution to the conservation area.

Beacon Heights Static Homes Park

- 5.191 Constructed in the late twentieth century, the Beacon Heights Static Homes Park detracts from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as an insensitive later addition. The dense urban footprint, poor architectural quality of the static homes and incongruent plan form when compared to the dispersed farmsteads of Pinfold Lane.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity

- 5.192 The wider countryside is the largest of the four character areas and comprises predominately pasture farmland that was previously part of the wider Great Barr Estate. There are 17 Land Parcels in total and they use the names of local lanes or recognisable features in the rural landscape to differentiate one from another.
- 5.193 Many of the Land Parcels identified contain similar elements such as pasture land use, hedgerow field boundaries, hedgerow trees and Barr Beacon as a skyline. There are also more detracting features common to many such as overhead power lines, pylons and fly-tipping. Near to certain lanes such as Pinfold Lane, Skip Lane and Bridle Lane there is a frequent flow of traffic but away from the busier routes, or on one of the footpaths that run through the fields there is a surprising degree of tranquillity and sense of separation from the large scale urban form that is Walsall to the north and the outskirts of Birmingham to the south.
- 5.194 The list of 17 Land Parcels within character area D – Wider Countryside and their assessed landscape and visual sensitivity is given below.
- D1 – Bronze Cricket Club and Environs – Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium.
 - D2 – Pinfold Small Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium.
 - D3 – Beacon School and Environs - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium
 - D4 – Holbrook Valley Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium.

- D5 – Crook Lane Large Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium.
- D6 – Beacon Heights Mobile Home Park - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium
- D7 – Boden Lane Business Area - Landscape Sensitivity Medium/Low and Visual Sensitivity Medium
- D8 – Beacon Road Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- D9 – Skip Lane Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- D10 – Skip Lane Heath - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium/Low
- D11 – Barr Lakes Lane Large Mixed Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- D12 – Crook Lane Hedged Fields West - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium.
- D13 - Crook Lane Hedged Fields East - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- D14 – Doe Bank Mixed Fields - Landscape Sensitivity High/Medium and Visual Sensitivity High/Medium
- D15 – Aldridge Road Regular Fields - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium
- D16 – Bridle Lane Regular Fields - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium
- D17– Beacon Mixed Fields - Landscape Sensitivity Medium and Visual Sensitivity Medium

5.195 Aerial photograph D1 indicates the Land Parcels' locations predominately to the north and east of the Registered Historic Parkland.

5.196 Appendix E contains illustrated sheets for each Land Parcel summarising their particularly characteristics, value and suggested landscape management strategies.

Archaeology

5.197 Within Character Area D the following sites of archaeological interest have been identified. More information is available from the Wolverhampton & Walsall Historic Environment Records;

- Sutton Rd; South of Aldridge (HER ref; 10308)
- Barr Lakes Lane; West of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10328)
- Crook Lane; W of Barr Beacon (HER ref;10329)
- Moat House; Moat Cottages; Sutton Rd; Great Barr (HER ref; 10334)
- Test Range; Sw of Streetly (HER ref; 10352)
- Ridge & Furrow (HER ref; 10357)
- Cropmark; Building ?; w of Aldridge Road; Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10360)
- Ridge & Furrow (HER ref; 10361)
- Ridge & Furrow (HER ref; 10363)

- Enclosure? (HER ref; 10364)
- Cropmarks, East Of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10368)
- Brickworks/Field System (HER ref; 10373)
- Sub Circ Ewk (HER ref;10374)
- Ridge & Furrow; Pinfold Lane; W Of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 10385)
- Ridge & Furrow; N Of Chapel Lane; Nw Of Pheasey (HER ref; 10386)
- Ridge & Furrow; Chapel Lane; N Great Barr (HER ref; 10389)
- Barr Beacon Reservoirs (HER ref; 10852)
- Enclosure N of Crook House Farm, Great Barr (HER ref; 13585)
- Cropmarks, north east slopes of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 13662)
- Cropmarks, north east slopes of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 13663)
- Doe Bank Wood (HER ref; 14820)
- Undated linear feature, Queslett Road East (HER ref; 15326)
- Moat Farm Moated Site - Archaeological Priority Area (HER ref; 15330)
- Potters Wood and Moat Farm Ridge and Furrow: Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 15336)
- Barr Beacon: Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 15337)
- Scattered Settlement at Over End - Area of High Historic Townscape Value (HER ref; 15374)
- Great Barr: Archaeological Priority Area (HER ref; 15410)
- Cropmark, north of Great Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 15565)
- Infilled watercourse, north of Great Barr Golf Course (HER ref; 15566)
- Civil Bombing Decoy C4c at Great Barr (HER ref; 15586)
- 'Lead balls with tails' in the general Barr Lakes Lane area (HER ref; 15587)
- Moated site, 15m south of Moat Farm (HER ref; 2649)
- Old Barr Deer Park; Gt Barr Park - Area of High Historic Landscape Value (HER ref; 2681)
- Rb Coin; Nr Pinfold Lane; Barr Beacon (HER ref; 3335)
- Perforated Macehead; N Of Barr Beacon (HER ref; 6260)
- Cropmarks; S Of Wrens Nest Farm (HER ref; 6344)
- The 'Colefield'; Barr Beacon/Streetly; Great Barr (HER ref; 6361)
- Ridge & Furrow 7; W Of Skip Lane; Great Barr Park (HER ref; 6390)
- Ridge & Furrow 5; W Of Skip Lane; Great Barr (HER ref; 6390)
- Ridge & Furrow; South west Of Wrens Nest; Great Barr (HER ref; 8702)
- Cropmarks; South west Of Wrens Nest; Great Barr (HER ref; 8703)
- Ridge & Furrow; Wrens Nest; Great Barr (HER ref; 8704)
- Enclosure; South east Of Wrens Nest; Great Barr (HER ref; 8705)

6 SETTING AND VIEWS

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (glossary) describes setting as; *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*
- 6.2 The setting of a Conservation Area contributes to its overall significance by enhancing its interest. The surroundings in which the Conservation Area is experienced can provide meaning and understanding to its architectural, historic and archaeological interest. It provides a visual and cultural context, allowing visitors and observers to understand its place in history and appreciate its role within the landscape. Changes to the setting can impact the ability to appreciate heritage significance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3 Setting is an important consideration as it helps preserve the unique character and heritage of a place, safeguarding it from inappropriate development or alterations that could compromise its character and appearance.
- 6.4 Historic England have produced guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets in one of their Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPA) documents. GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017)
- 6.5 GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017). This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG.
- 6.6 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as *'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'*. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 6.7 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset's setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.

Setting

- 6.8 There are a number of views within the Conservation Area that allow for an appreciation of elements of its character and appearance. These are mainly found within the historic core of the Conservation Area.

The Setting of Great Barr Hall

- 6.9 Great Barr Hall were designed to allow views across the landscape and the Hall which would have once appeared prominent within its setting. Formal views would have been afforded west from the terrace across the formal gardens and lake to the boat house. Medium range views would have been afforded from the kitchen gardens looking south-west. Longer range views would have been gained from the Fox's plantation to the east..

- 6.10 The modern development of Netherhall Estate has interrupted and obscured views out from Fox's plantation. The modern development is visible from the footpath on the east side of the upper lake. This makes a negative contribution to the hall's setting.



Picture 60 - Great Barr Hall, March 2024

- 6.11 Over time the open views have been lost due to the growth of self-seeded trees and the building's prominence in its setting has been diminished. Active management of the landscape could reinstate these views and restore the Halls prominent character in the landscape. Removal of trees from the formal garden area would re-instate views down to the lake.
- 6.12 Designed approaches that survive form an important part of the Hall's setting, these include Sutton's Drive both from the west and east (walled garden) and Handsworth Drive.



Picture 61 - Self-seeded trees around the Hall

The Setting of Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden

- 6.13 Historically the setting of the Registered Park and Garden (RP&G) was dominated by farmland and have an agricultural character.
- 6.14 It is now partially bound by Chapel Lane to the north, A4041 to the south, M6 motorway (built 1958) to the west, and the lakes to the east and located between Great Barr and Pheasey and Queslett housing estates.
- 6.15 Holly Wood and part of Fox’s Plantation fall outside of the RP&G but make a significant contribution to its significance due to their historic association and contribution to character and appearance of the RP&G’s setting. Holly Wood can be appreciated from Netherhall Avenue alongside lower lake to the west.
- 6.16 Old Hall Farm sits just north of the northern boundary of the RP&G, the farmstead and its associated farmland make a positive contribution to the RP&G’s setting, through their contribution to the rural character and their historic association with the Great Barr Estate.
- 6.17 Barr Beacon College to the northeast makes a negative contribution to the RP&G’s setting, particularly when seen from Chapel Lane and Old Hall Lane.
- 6.18 The fields to the west of Chapel Lane contribute to the agricultural character of RP&G’s setting and its legibility as a rural estate.



Picture 62 - Fields to the west of Chapel Lane

- 6.19 The majority of the eastern side of the park is surrounded by modern housing, including the Netherhall Estate. Some of this has a green buffer, particularly the central section where St Margaret's Hospital buildings stood. Holly Wood borders the south-eastern section and provides legibility along with an attractive green buffer.
- 6.20 The north-western arm of the RP&G which features Merrion's Wood is enclosed by housing to the north and south, golf course to east and the highway now known as the A34 to the west. These modern intrusions do not contribute the RP&G's setting in contrast they detract from its rural character and appear incongruous to the designed landscape.
- 6.21 The Holiday Inn on the A34 can be seen as one travels along Sutton's Drive, it appears at the end of fields with the A34 visible beyond. The building is large and incongruous in the predominantly rural setting. Both the A34 and the Holiday Inn make a negative contribution to the RP&G's setting.
- 6.22 The parish Church of St Margaret borders the northern edge of the RP&G. Not only does this form a visually pleasing part of the setting, it contributes to the historic significance of Great Barr Hall through its association, making up an important positive part of its setting.

The Setting of St Margaret's Church

- 6.23 St Margaret's Church is a medieval semi-rural church. The church yard forms an attractive large setting around St Margaret's Church demarcated by a low red brick boundary wall to the north east (shown in picture 59 below). Beyond this is to the northeast is a graveyard. Both add context and important open space to the setting of the church, making a positive contribution to the significance it derives from its setting.
- 6.24 A track to the south-east meets Sutton's Drive. More grave markers are to the east of this, denoting a further extension to the graveyard. Mature trees enclose immediate boundary along the track to

the east. Beyond this there is a dip in the valley with High Wood in the background. The treeline and High Wood contribute to the Church's rural setting, but the pylons are visually intrusive and alien within its setting.



Picture 63 - Brick boundary wall to St Margaret's Church

- 6.25 The Duckery woodland borders the north east boundary of the graveyard. This forms an attractive setting to Church and demonstrates the close historic relationship between the parkland and Church. This historic relationship is also reinforced by the avenue to Merrion's Wood that terminates at Avenue Lodge and creates a vista to St Margaret's Church. Views of the church spire are appreciated from the field to the north of the Duckery.
- 6.26 Chapel Lane encloses the churchyard to the north-west with Chapel Farm to the immediate north-west. The routes are lined with mature hedges and trees; however, the buildings of Chapel Farm are constructed close to the road edge. The former farm buildings are now a mix of residential and commercial uses, but the historic farmstead is still legible and contributes to the setting of the church through the context it provides to the semi rural parish church.
- 6.27 The open landscape on both sides of Chapel Lane contributes to the rural character of the Church's setting. Views of the spire can be appreciated from the foot path that runs across the fields to the west of Old Hall. Immediate and long distance views of St Marget's Church are possible from Chapel Lane while middle distance views are not due to the vegetation. Long distance views are limited to

the spire. These long views from the northern end of Chapel Lane provide an important context and understanding to the Church and medieval settlement.

Barr Beacon College forms part of the Church's setting to the north-east. The scale and massing of the college buildings are prominent and incongruous in the rural landscape and detract from the Church's setting.



Picture 64 - Barr Beacon College (Circles in yellow) visible to the right across the agricultural fields. When the trees are in full leaf, the very top of that school would not be seen.

The Setting of the Conservation Area

- 6.28 The setting of the Conservation Area is predominantly sub-urban, with the Conservation Area located between a number of early 20th Century, interwar housing estates of nearby towns (as shown in Figure 1). To the west lies the urban area of Walsall, with the Conservation Area bounded by the twentieth century residential development of Daisy Bank and buildings to the north of Birmingham Road. This edge to the Conservation Area is curvilinear and broken by planting.
- 6.29 To the east, the Conservation Area is bounded by the straight line of Aldridge Road, and beyond this the twentieth century residential buildings of Streetly, a triangle of development that separates the open space of the conservation area with the historic landscape of Sutton Park (withing the boundary of Birmingham) beyond, Aldridge Road forms a hard edge to Conservation Area, however there is slightly earlier built form to its north east corner.
- 6.30 To the south, the Conservation Area boundary is defined by the busy routes of the M6, an elevated motorway, and the A4041 (Queslett Road) beyond which lies the built-up residential area of Hamstead, Great Barr (within Birmingham City Council's boundary). To its southern boundary, the Conservation Area is also bounded by the twentieth century residential development of Pheasey which encroaches on the area separating the western and eastern halves of the Conservation Area.

- 6.31 To the south-west edge the Conservation Area abuts the Holiday Inn and the A34 Birmingham Road. To the north the setting of the conservation area is more rural in character, with fields and planted area of woodland leading to the residential area of Aldridge and beyond.
- 6.32 Overall, the setting of the Conservation Area contributes very little to an understanding of the architectural and historic special interest of the conservation area, as the historic core of a nineteenth century landscaped park and estate.
- 6.33 The surrounding area, characterised by twentieth century residential urban expansion, has altered the character of once agricultural land and hemmed in the remaining green space of the conservation area. This surrounding area does provide relief to the historic agricultural land and parkland of the Conservation Area, but the surrounding residential built form is not intrinsically linked to the special architectural or historic interest of the conservation area.

The broader landscape, only appreciable from Barr Beacon, the high point at the centre of the conservation area, does make a minor contribution to the special historic interest of that area by allowing an understanding of the hill as a historic viewpoint and beacon. There are also historic routes in the immediate setting of the Conservation Area that allow for some understanding of the development of historic Great Barr and later the Great Barr Hall estate. This includes the line of Skip Lane, to the west. Skip Lane preserves the alignment of the park pale of the medieval deer park. Near 135 Skip Lane there is a surviving section of the park pale within the woodland.

Important Views

- 6.34 In general, these views are focussed across surviving elements of the planned landscape of Great Barr Hall Estate, and the important built form of the surrounding area. These views allow for some understanding of the remaining historic landscape features of the Great Barr Estate, and where possible, an appreciation of the buildings of architectural interest.
- 6.35 There is little opportunity to appreciate the historic core of the Conservation Area, and its special architectural and historic interest from the surrounding area.
- 6.36 Long views within the Conservation Area can still be afforded in places, and many of these were originally integral to the design of the landscaped park. However, today many of these have been compromised by increased later self set planting and the erosion of the historic landscape features such as drives and built form of Great Barr Hall and associated structures.

The conservation area has a number of unfolding views that allow for an appreciation of its character and appearance. These can be found along Sutton's Drive and to the west of the lakes. These are compromised by the erosion of the surrounding designed landscape.

Views towards the Hall and out from the Hall

- View from Sutton's Bridge to the Hall
- View across Upper Lake to and from the Hall – While this is not currently visible it is an important view which could be restored.
- View from Sutton's Drive near the Walled Garden to the Hall.



Picture 65 - Painted postcard from 1907 of Great Barr Hall and Chapel looking across the lake (image from Birmingham Conservation Trust)

Views in and out from Registered Park and Garden

- There are fine views from the elevated parkland, looking both north and south.
- There is a fine view from the Merrion's Wood footpath looking east towards the church
- High Wood to Old Hall Farm?
- Netherhall Avenue into lower lake
- Views out from the RP&G on Chapel Lane across the fields.
- Views from Chapel Lane back to the RP&G and its wooded areas
- View into RP&G at the entrance into Merrion's Wood near Merrion's Lodge

View within the Registered Park and Garden (not including Hall)

- Fine views across the lakes, cascade/ Weir and stepping stones.
- Views along Handsworth Drive to Gilbert's Wood
- Views from Sutton's Drive south across the Great Meadow and north to High Wood and open landscape.
- Views from timber footbridge across to High Wood
- Views along the avenue to Merrion's Wood into the wood and out to Merrion's Lodge
- Views within the Walled Garden

Important Views of Church, including Tower and Spire

- Short views from Chapel Lane
- Long View from Chapel Lane of the church's spire, even in winter
- View from the Merrion's Wood footpath looking east towards the church
- View of the Church from Sutton's Drive

Important Views in and out of CA

- View from Netherhall Avenue into Lower Lake
- Views from Merrion's Lodge into Merrion's Wood.
- Crook Lane into Conservation Area
- Looking out from the Conservation Area to the junction of Pinfold Lane and Old Hall Lane with Barr Beacon seen in background
- View from Netherhall Avenue to Holly Wood

Audit of Heritage Assets

Listed Buildings

6.37 Please see Figure 16 for a map of the designated built heritage assets within the Conservation Area.

Character Area A

6.38 Character Area A contains the following Listed Buildings:

- Great Barr Hall and Chapel, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1076395;
- Church of St Margaret, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1116238;
- War Memorial Cross at the Church of St Margaret, Great Barr, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1433724;
- Walsall (or Merrion's Lodge), Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1076383;
- Old Hall Farmhouse, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1138999;
- Barn Approximately 20 metres north of Old Hall Farmhouse, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1076381; and
- The Pinfold, Grade II Listed Building, NHLE ref: 1343030.

Character Area B

6.39 Character Area B contains no Listed Buildings or other designated heritage assets.

Character Area C

6.40 Character Area C contains:

- Coxfold Farmhouse, Grade II listed, NHLE ref 1139004.

Character Area D

6.41 Character Area D includes:

- Doe Bank Farmhouse and Farm Buildings Attached, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1116095; and
- Barn Adjoining at right angles to Doe Bank Farmhouse, Grade II listed, NHLE ref: 1076393.

Scheduled Monuments

6.42 There is one Scheduled Monument within the Conservation Area:

- Moated Site 15m south of Moat Farm, NHLE ref: 1008547.

Registered Parks and Gardens

6.43 There is one Registered Park and Garden in the Conservation Area:

- Great Barr Hall Grade II Registered Park and Garden, NHLE ref: 1001202

The Local List

Currently, only one building within the Conservation Area is included in the “Walsall Local List of Buildings with Architectural or Historic Value.” This is the Memorial on top of Barr Beacon.

7 LEGISLATIVE AND PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 7.1 The current national legislative and planning policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that applicants should consider the potential impact of development upon 'heritage assets'. This term includes: designated heritage assets which possess a statutory designation (for example listed buildings and Conservation Areas); and non-designated heritage assets, typically identified by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and incorporated into a Local List and/or recorded on the Historic Environment Record.

Legislation

- 7.2 Where any development may affect designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard to their impact on designated heritage assets. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 7.3 The relevant legislation in this case extends from section 66 of the 1990 Act which states that special regard must be given by the decision maker, in the exercise of planning functions, to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting.
- 7.4 The meaning and effect of these duties have been considered by the courts, including the Court of Appeal's decision in relation to Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council [2014] EWCA Civ 137.
- 7.5 The Court agreed within the High Court's judgement that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) was that decision makers should give '*considerable importance and weight*' to the desirability of preserving (i.e. keeping from harm) the setting of listed buildings.
- 7.6 Section 69(1) of the Act requires LPAs to '*determine areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*' and to designate them as conservation areas. Section 69(2) requires LPAs to review and, where necessary, amend those areas '*from time to time*'.
- 7.7 For development within a conservation area section 72 of the Act requires the decision maker to pay '*special attention [...] to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*'. The duty to give special attention is considered commensurate with that under section 66(1) to give special regard, meaning that the decision maker must give considerable importance and weight to any such harm in the planning balance. However, unlike the parallel duty under section 66, there is no explicit protection for the setting of a conservation area.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities, December 2023).

- 7.8 The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 7.9 It defines a heritage asset as a: '*building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest*'. This includes both designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.10 Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment relates to the conservation of heritage assets in the production of local plans and decision taking. It emphasises that heritage

assets are *'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'*.

- 7.11 For proposals that have the potential to affect the significance of a heritage asset, paragraph 200 requires applicants to identify and describe the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected. This is supported by paragraph 201, which requires LPAs to take this assessment into account when considering applications.
- 7.12 Under *'Considering potential impacts'* paragraph 205 states that *'great weight'* should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether any potential impact equates to total loss, substantial harm or less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets.
- 7.13 Paragraph 207 states that where a development will result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met. Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 208 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.
- 7.14 Paragraph 209 states that where an application will affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement is required, having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.15 Paragraph 212 notes that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. It also states that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the asset should be treated favourably.
- 7.16 Furthermore, paragraph 213 states that not all elements of a conservation area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. When determining the impacts arising from the loss of a building or element that does positively contribute, consideration should be given to the relative significance of that building and the impact to the significance of the conservation area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

National Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (DCLG)

- 7.17 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been adopted to aid the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.
- 7.18 The PPG defines the different heritage interests as follows:
- archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
 - architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
 - historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for

communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

- 7.19 Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states that substantial harm is a high bar that may not arise in many cases. It also states that while the level of harm will be at the discretion of the decision maker, generally substantial harm is a high test that will only arise where a development seriously affects a key element of an asset's special interest. It is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed.

Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

- 7.20 Historic England have published a series of documents to advise applicants, owners, decision-takers and other stakeholders on managing change within the historic environment. These include Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPAs) documents and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANS).

GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015)

- 7.21 This advice note focuses on the importance of identifying heritage policies within Local Plans. The advice echoes the NPPF by stressing the importance of formulating Local Plans based on up-to-date and relevant evidence on economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area, including the historic environment.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

- 7.22 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and
6. Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition; December 2017)

- 7.23 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the

2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

- 7.24 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as *'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve'*. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.25 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset's setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.
- 7.26 This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.
- 7.27 The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.28 Historic England recommends using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:
1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 2. Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
 3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
 4. Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition): Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second Edition (February 2019)

- 7.29 This advice note provides information on conservation area appraisals, designation and management and how historic environment legislation, the policy of the NPPF and the related guidance given in the PPG can be implemented. The second edition updates advice in the light of the 2018 NPPF. It provides additional information on the relationship with local and neighbourhood plans and policies and highlights the staged approach to the appraisal, designation and management of conservation areas. It has also been updated to give more information on innovative ways of handling conservation appraisals, particularly community involvement beyond consultation, character assessment and digital presentation

- 7.30 The advice note emphasises that evidence required to inform decisions affecting a conservation area should be proportionate to the importance of the asset. It also states that LPAs should identify opportunities where conservation can help to deliver wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits, particularly in the light of the statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
- 7.31 The document sets out how to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of historic areas and stresses that conservation areas can contribute to sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.
- 7.32 Conservation Area Management is described as a staged approach following the sequence of 'Appraisal', 'Designation', 'Management' and 'Review'. It deems the appraisal process as the vehicle of understanding both the significance of an area and the effect of negative changes that may affect this significance. The identification of significance of an area is seen as a precursor to the appraisal process and the guidance proposes key elements in aid of defining the special interest of a conservation area. These include:
- Still-visible effects of the area's historic development on its plan form, townscape and architectural style;
 - Architectural built form and quality;
 - The contribution to the special interest by its setting (it thereby refers to 'The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (2nd Edition);
 - Elements of local distinctiveness that makes the area unique;
 - How a place is experienced by people;
 - The design and use of green and open spaces;
 - Designation and other heritage assets and their contribution to the townscape, which includes the identification of non-listed Buildings that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area.
- 7.33 Under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local planning authorities have a statutory duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. The guidance outlines mechanisms for the management of conservation areas. These include the production of generic plans, design guidance, managing areas of archaeological interest and applying building regulations.
- 7.34 It further refers to the requirements of the PPG that requires local planning authorities to review their conservation areas (section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). It recommends an interval of five years, but stresses that review frequency will vary according to the development pressures in the local area.

Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments (April 2017)

- 7.35 This guidance was prepared by Historic England and explains how to undertake Historic Area Assessments. It is supplementary guidance to *Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)*, and assists in methods of understanding historic places and defining significance. Sections 2-4 of this report are directly relevant to this report, and explain the practical issues underlying Historic Area Assessments and how to carry them out at different levels.

Strategic & Local Planning Policy

- 7.36 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

Black Country Core Strategy (February 2011)

- 7.37 This adopted Local Plan document was prepared by the four Black Country Authorities (including Walsall) to cover the period 2011-2016. It sets out a strategic vision for the four local authorities. It is expected to be replaced by the Black Country Plan which is currently in preparation. Within the Core Strategy, the following policies are relevant to the Great Barr Conservation Area:

- ENV2: Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness
- **Policy ENV2 Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness** which requires all development proposals to preserve and where appropriate enhance an area's local character and special historic and townscape qualities and their setting.
- **Policy ENV3 Design Quality** which aims to ensure that high quality design is an essential part of placemaking and reflects the distinctive character of an area.

Walsall Site Allocation Document (January 2019)

- 7.38 This document (SAD) was adopted by the council in January 2019, following independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate. It forms the second level of Walsall's Local Plan, below the Black Country Core Strategy, and allocates sites for different uses, protects land to ensure the needs of Walsall are met, and protects important assets and the wider environment.
- 7.39 Within this document, the following policies are directly relevant to the Great Barr Conservation Area.

SAD Policy EN5: Development in Conservation Areas

- 7.40 This policy supersedes Walsall UDP Policy ENV29, and is as follows:
- a) *The Council will seek to ensure that development preserves or enhances the significance of conservation areas, including their setting, character and appearance, in terms of the requirements set out in national guidance, and will encourage sustainable new development opportunities that enhance or better reveal this significance in line with the NPPF. Consideration will also be given to the following:*
- i. *The degree of harm, loss of or alteration to buildings, structures or features that make a positive contribution to the character and significance of the conservation area.*
 - ii. *The impact of any new, extended or altered buildings, structures or features on the heritage assets, special townscape and landscape features within the conservation area.*
 - iii. *The scale, massing, siting, layout, design or choice of materials used in any new or altered building, structure or feature.*
 - iv. *The nature of any proposed use and the likely provision of parking, infrastructure, utilities and other paraphernalia, and the anticipated levels of traffic and other activities that would result.*
- b) *Where a building, structure or feature makes a positive contribution to the significance of a conservation area or its setting, the Council will not grant planning permission for demolition unless the following criteria are met:*

- i. it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss of significance caused by the demolition is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss*
 - ii. all reasonable alternatives that would avoid harmful adverse impacts have been fully explored and are not feasible or viable;*
 - iii. the proposed development is of high quality and designed to reinforce and enhance local character and distinctiveness;*
 - iv. all options to secure the future of the asset have been fully explored, including grant funding and disposal to a charitable organisation or community group; and*
 - v. a mitigation strategy has been prepared to minimise harm and provide for an appropriate level of salvage and / or recording.*
- c) The Council will not permit development within conservation areas that incrementally erodes those special features which the Council wishes to protect and enhance.*

7.41 Once adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, the forthcoming Great Barr Conservation Area and Management Plan will contain specific development management policies to ensure the preservation of the character, appearance and setting of the conservation area. These policies may be area specific or specific to types of development.

7.42 The area covered by the Great Barr Conservation Area (revised boundaries) is also the subject of a number of policies within the Walsall Local Plan (comprised of the Black Country Core Strategy, UDP, SAD).

7.43 The management strategy in this conservation area works in tandem with policies within the local plan, specifically:

SAD Policy EN7: Great Barr Hall and Estate and the former St. Margaret's Hospital

a) The area of Great Barr Hall and Estate and the former St. Margaret's Hospital is shown on the Policies Map.

The Council will ensure that the issues and constraints relating to the future of this Estate are considered in a comprehensive and long term manner. Any proposed works within this boundary will need to take the following in to consideration:

Overall estate

b) All proposals must provide for and / or demonstrate the following:

- i. An assurance that the linkages and relationship between the Hall and the park and garden are retained, including key views both within the park and the wider landscape;*
- ii. Functionally, visually and environmentally satisfactory arrangements for vehicular access from Queslett Road; the Council will require the developer to meet the costs of necessary off-site highway improvements. Any access from Chapel Lane should be minimised for environmental and traffic management reasons;*
- iii. The preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of the Great Barr Conservation Area;*
- iv. The protection of the areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land 48 where possible;*
- v. Evidence of how they will contribute and relate to the aim of achieving a comprehensive approach towards the future use and management of the Estate;*

vi. Sensitively designed and located development in order to be in keeping with, and minimise the impact upon, heritage assets and / or historic landscape and their settings in line with the NPPF;

vii. The contribution the proposal makes to the aim of achieving a comprehensive approach to the conservation of the significance of the site of Great Barr Hall, the historic landscape of the Registered Park and Garden and the wider setting of the Conservation Area (where applicable).

c) The Council promotes good design that respects the character appearance and quality of the area, it will seek to resist development where any of the following occur:

i. Where buildings are no longer extant and the use has been abandoned;

ii. Poor design that fails to take account of the opportunities available for improving the character, quality and appearance of the area and the way it functions;

iii. Development causing harm to environmentally sensitive areas;

iv. Development that negatively impacts on the openness of the Green Belt or setting of the heritage assets, and has a footprint and height exceeding that of the buildings to be replaced. Replacement development shall be designed so that it has less environmental impact than the buildings it replaces.

Enabling development

d) Enabling development will be justified only insofar as it is necessary for the restoration and maintenance of the heritage assets and where the likely impact in terms of the Listed Buildings, Registered Park and Garden, Conservation Area and Green Belt policies are outweighed by benefits for securing the future of the estate's heritage assets. If any scheme for enabling development is proposed it should address all of the following:

i. Follow the guidance in the Historic England's Policy Statement 'Enabling Development and the Conservation of Significant Places'49, or any further up to date guidance from Historic England;

ii. Consider whether the enabling development could be provided off site

iii. Ensure the economic viability of the proposal is properly tested and market driven.

The applicant(s) should make sure that the Council can also test these figures as necessary through the provision of a Financial Assessment. Enabling development must be justified by the inherent lack of viability of the significant place, not the owner's inability to fund a commercially viable scheme; and

iv. Be able to provide for the ongoing maintenance of the hall and the park and garden.

Park and Garden

e) The Grade II Registered Park and Garden is a unique feature in the Black Country and provides the setting to Great Barr Hall; any proposals within the park and garden should consider the following:

i. The potential for alternative forms of ownership such as a trust;

ii. The preservation, enhancement and management of the historic landscape, which includes areas of the UK BAP Priority Habitat – Wood Pasture and Parkland; Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and other areas of nature conservation value, as well as key views;

iii. The reinstatement and re-use of key parkland buildings, structures or features where supported by historic evidence such as:

- The lakes, boat house, bridges and associated structures*

- *The walled garden*
- *The park pale or wall, other walls of the estate, gateways and historic pathways*
- *The reinstatement of planting*

f) *Where historic evidence has not demonstrated the details of historic buildings, structures or features, an innovative approach to their design should be adopted in accordance with BCCS Policy ENV2 and other relevant policies of the Local Plan.*

g) *Applicants must demonstrate how schemes will provide for controlled public access to Great Barr Park without detriment to the heritage assets, nature conservation interest, landscape quality, amenity of the site and areas of archaeological interest.*

Great Barr Hall and Chapel

h) *This is a Grade II Listed Building which forms the focal point of the park and garden. In considering development of the Great Barr Hall and Chapel any harm caused must be 'exceptional' in line with the NPPF; and should consider the following:*

- The potential for alternative forms of ownership such as a trust;*
- The long-term viability for the retention and restoration of the Hall and Chapel;*
- Any development or restoration should be in accordance with the policies of the BCCS, ENV2, ENV3 and UDP Saved Policies ENV27, ENV33;*
- The range of potential new uses and an assessment of harm upon the Hall's significance utilising Historic England's 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'⁵⁰;*
- An assessment of the impact on biodiversity in accordance with SAD policy EN1, relevant UDP Saved Policies, BCCS policy ENV1 and the NPPF.*

This site is affected by the following Assets and Constraints (see SAD Chapter 2): ACCESS, AW, CA, F2, F3. GB. LB, lb, lnr, MSA, NO2, NOISE, OS, PG, SINC, SLINC, prow

Saved Policy ENV18: Existing Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

(a) The Council will ensure the protection, positive management and enhancement of existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows. Development will not be permitted if it would damage or destroy trees or woodlands protected by Tree Preservation Order, in a Conservation Area or identified as Ancient Woodland, or hedgerows of significant landscape, ecological or historical value unless:-

- the removal of the trees or hedgerows would be in the interests of good arboricultural practice and there would be no unacceptable adverse impact on wildlife;*
- the desirability of the proposed development significantly outweighs the ecological or amenity value of the woodland, trees or hedgerows.*

(b) Where developments are permitted which involve the loss of trees or hedgerows developers will be required to minimise the loss and to provide appropriate planting of commensurate value; wherever possible, this should involve native species of local provenance.

Policy ENV25: Archaeology

(a) The Council will maintain and enhance a database of all known archaeological sites and monuments within the Borough, as part of the Black Country Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

(b) Proposals for development which affect archaeological sites will normally need to be accompanied by an evaluation of the archaeological resource. An evaluation will normally comprise a deskbased assessment and fieldwork. The scope of the work will be set out in a brief

prepared on behalf of the Council. It should be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist or professional organisation.

(c) Development adversely affecting monuments of national importance, whether scheduled or not, or their setting, will not normally be permitted.

Policy ENV27: Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest

(a) Alteration, extension or any other form of development involving a listed building or its setting will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated by the applicant that the internal and/or external appearance, character and value of the building, its curtilage and the contribution the building makes to the surrounding area in which it is situated are not adversely affected by the proposals. This would include the permanent removal of any part or feature that contributes to its special architectural or historic interest, whether or not specifically mentioned in its listing description. The submission of full details of any changes that materially affect the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building and/or its curtilage will be required as part of any Listed Building Consent (LBC) application.

(b) The change of use of a listed building will only be permitted if there will be no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the building and/or its setting.

(c) The Council regards the demolition of a listed building as a matter of last resort. LBC for the demolition of a listed building will only be granted where the applicant can demonstrate that:-

I. The building would be unviable in its existing (or last permitted) use, all reasonable efforts having been made to sustain it.

II. There is no alternative use to which the building can be converted, all reasonable efforts having been made to identify such an alternative.

III. The building cannot be practically incorporated within the proposed development scheme.

(d) Where there is no other option available, the Council will require the applicants to undertake a detailed building recording scheme, to a specified standard, prior to any demolition taking place.

(e) Listed Building Consent and planning permission for “enabling development” - that is, development intended to provide funding for the reinstatement and re-use of a listed building - will only be granted where:-

- The reinstatement of the Listed Building is guaranteed. This may require some or all of the reinstatement works to take place as part of the first phase of the scheme.
- Such development will not harm the building’s architectural or historic value, or the building’s immediate setting.
- A full justification is provided to show that the proposal is both necessary and capable of producing the desired result. The development does not compromise other policies of this Plan, including protection of the Green Belt.

Policy ENV28: The ‘Local List’ of Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest

The Council will not grant planning permission (or Conservation Area Consent, where applicable) for a development scheme which proposes the demolition or adverse alteration of a ‘local list’ building. Should it be demonstrated, for any reason, that it is impractical to retain a ‘local list’ building, in whole or in part, then the Council will require that the developer provides for the appropriate recording of the property, to a recognised standard, prior to demolition taking place.

Saved Policy ENV32 Design and Development

Proposals: which require development proposals to take proper account of their context or surroundings and is flagged as being particularly significant in conservation areas.

Saved Policy ENV30: Registered Parks and Gardens

The Council will seek to protect the Borough's registered parks and gardens from the effects of inappropriate built development and insensitive alteration. The special character and features contained within the park or garden will be considered when assessing development proposals, with particular reference to the area's origin, design, history, landscape, flora, fauna, management and environmental quality.

8 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Managing Change

- 8.1 This management plan has been prepared in line with Historic England guidance, in order to offer proposals to preserve and enhance the significance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Section 71 of the 1990 Act.

Involving Others

- 8.2 As part of any revisions and re-designations, the proposals within this management plan will be submitted for consideration to the general public. This will allow for the plans to be the subject of effective consultation. As per Historic England guidance, plans “developed as a process of consensus building are more likely to gain support and momentum.”
- 8.3 Walsall Council’s Statement of Community Interest states for consultations on Conservation Area Character Appraisals that we should consult on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for a minimum of 3 weeks. Public consultation will ensure
- all the properties within the Great Barr Conservation Area, and those residents within a 100m buffer of the boundary of the conservation area are notified. Public consultation will be undertaken with some residents within Sandwell boundary, those that immediately adjoin the boundary of the conservation area.
 - notice is placed in the local press
 - the consultation is publicised on the Council’s website and social media.
- 8.4 The draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will be made available for the public to view in libraries across the Borough and in community centres in Great Barr where public consultation events will be held. Consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders and interested parties will be undertaken.
- 8.5 In 2021, the Council has previously undertaken public consultation on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. Comments that were received were taken into account and additional information was added about the RP&G and the history of the Great Barr estate, in response.

Control Measures Brought About By Designation

- 8.6 The continued designation of parts of the Great Barr Conservation Area will allow for continued development control measures within and without its boundaries. As defined within *Historic England Advice Note 1* (Second Edition), these include:
- *“the requirement in legislation and national planning policies to preserve and/or enhance, as discussed further in the NPPF and the PPG*
 - *local planning policies which pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area*
 - *control over demolition of unlisted buildings*
 - *control over works to trees*
 - *limitations on the types of advertisements which can be displayed with deemed consent „*
 - *restriction on the types of development which can be carried out without the need for planning permission (permitted development rights)*

- *support for the use of article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights where avoidable damage is occurring*
- *clarification of archaeological interest, thereby assisting its protection”*

Identification of Issues

- 8.7 The Conservation Area faces significance issues which have eroded the ability to appreciate the character and appearance and special architectural and historic interest of the elements affected. with modern development . These include:
- The large and boundary of the Conservation Area which encompasses much of the wider rural landscape. This wider rural landscape while attractive it does not reflect the special interest of the Great Barr Hall Estate;
 - Later housing development and poor quality built form within the Conservation Area that has eroded its character and appearance; This includes the housing on Suttons Drive, the Holiday Inn to the west of the Great Meadow, Barr Beacon School and Netherhall Estate.
 - The derelict and decayed condition of Great Barr Hall and Chapel, Grade II;
 - Neglect of the wider landscape which has eroded the original designed landscape features of the Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden, Grade II on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk register.

The Walsall Local List

- 8.8 The Local List is a list of buildings within Walsall that are considered to have local historic and architectural interest and value, they are not statutorily listed. The Conservation Area currently contains one Locally Listed Building, the War Memorial on Barr Beacon.
- 8.9 The Conservation Area contains standalone buildings of some architectural and historic interest. While these do not meet the high bar required to be added to the National Heritage List for England, some of these may be given extra protection through being added to the “Walsall Local List of Buildings with Architectural or Historic interest and value.”
- Chapel Farm, Chapel Lane (Character Area A Sub Area C)
 - Avenue Lodge, Chapel Lane (Character Area A, Sub Area C)
 - Crook Farm (Character Area A, Sub Area F)
 - Beacon Farm (Character Area C)
 - Tin Tabernacle Aldridge Lane (Character Area D2)

Design Guidance

Great Barr Hall Design Brief & Conservation Management Plan

- 8.10 Great Barr Hall and Chapel is the historic centre of the Conservation Area, and the reason for the development of the surrounding RP&G and the wider Great Barr Hall Estate. As discussed, today the Hall is in a very poor state of repair, and despite previous attempts, no scheme for its repair and reuse has been agreed upon.
- 8.11 As such, it is considered that it may be appropriate to develop a design brief and Conservation Management Plan for the heritage asset once a feasible way forward has been established for its optimum viable use and retention. This may also sit within a wider landscape heritage strategy for the area, based upon the principles of SAD Policy EN7, EN17 and EN18.

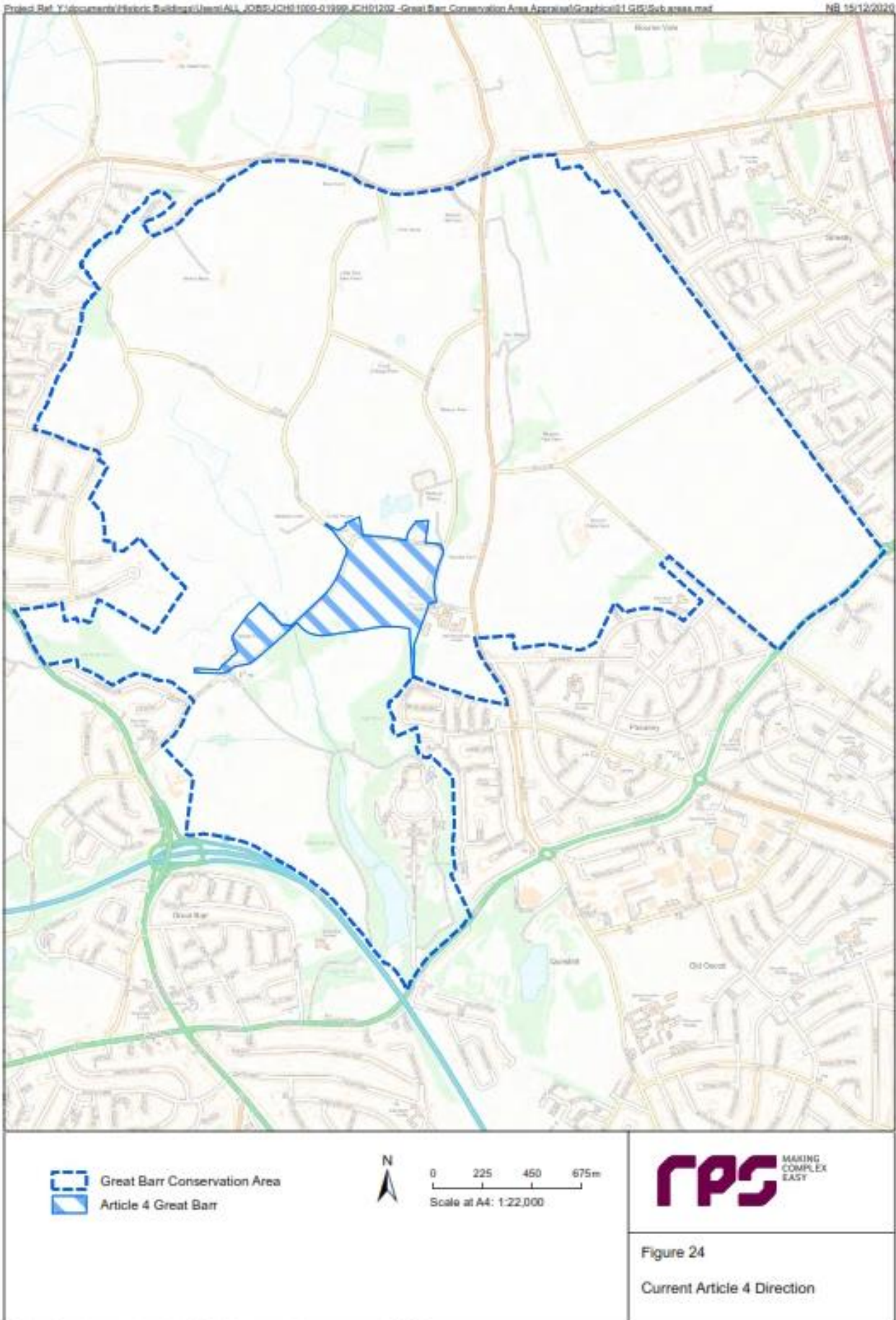
Reducing Planning Burdens & Applying Building Regulations

- 8.12 Historic England Guidance *Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)* suggests that “Councils may wish to use planning measures that actively encourage development and investment that will contribute to an area’s conservation and harness the contribution its character and distinctiveness can make” Of these, a number of options are possible including:
- Local Development Orders
 - Listed Building Consent Orders
- 8.13 However, these interventions are more suitable for dilapidated urban areas which require regeneration through change of use in order to preserve their character and appearance, not dispersed buildings in a semi-rural landscape.
- 8.14 Guidance also notes the flexibility within building regulations for the retrofit of historic buildings. In this case, the main area of focus would be the reconstruction and adaptive re-use of Great Barr Hall and Chapel, which is currently in a ruinous state.

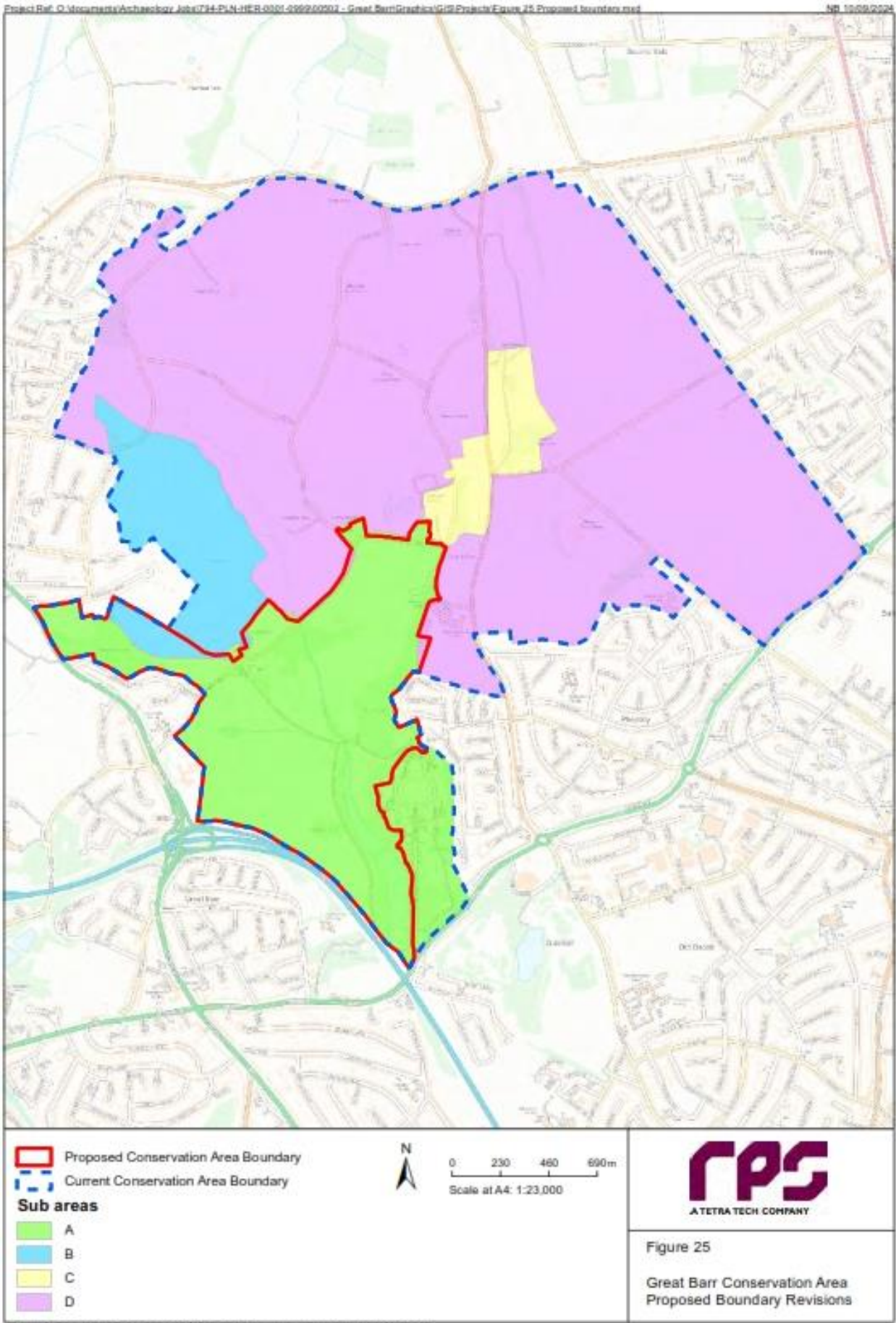
Recommended Boundary Revisions

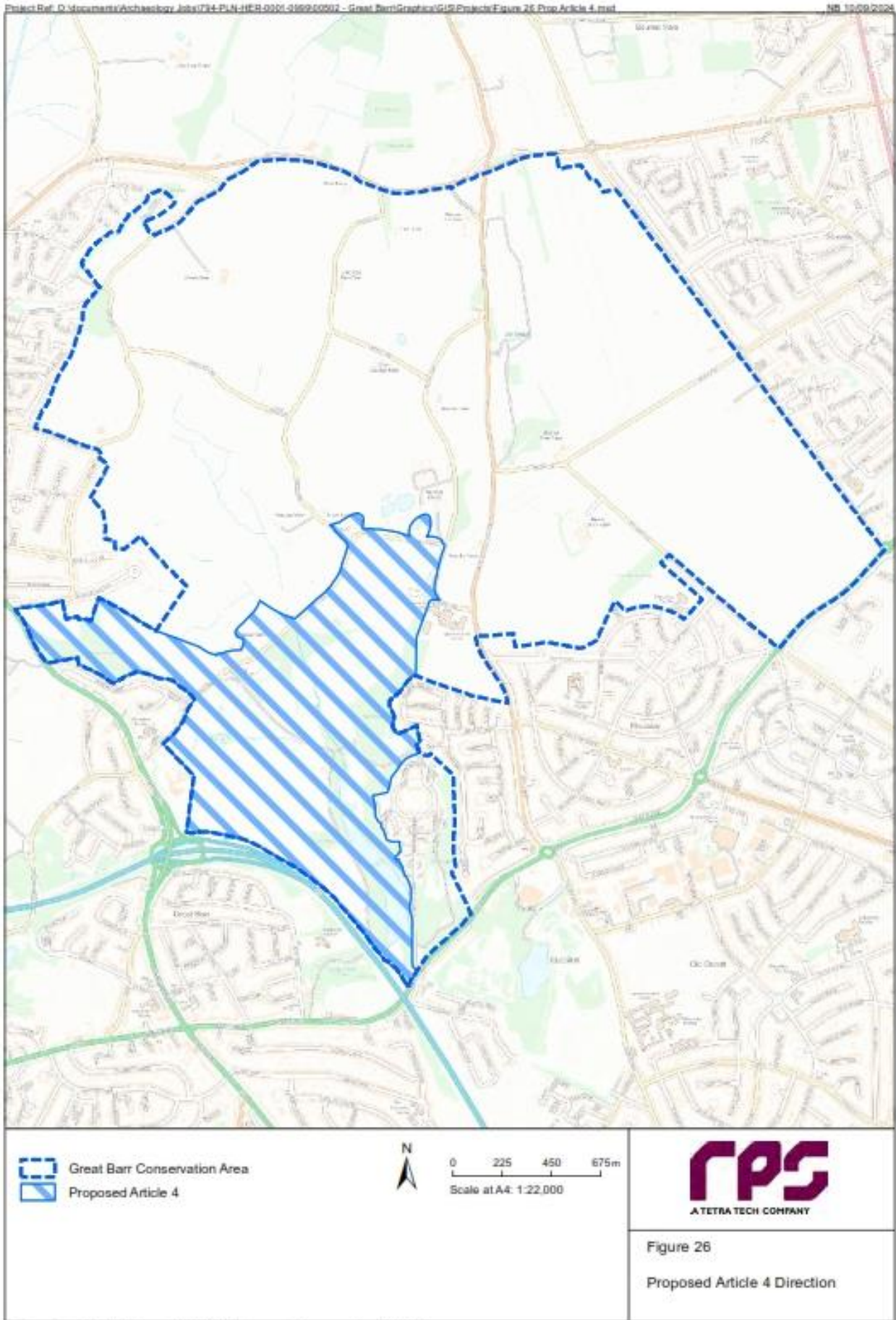
Recommendations on Conservation Area Boundary Revisions

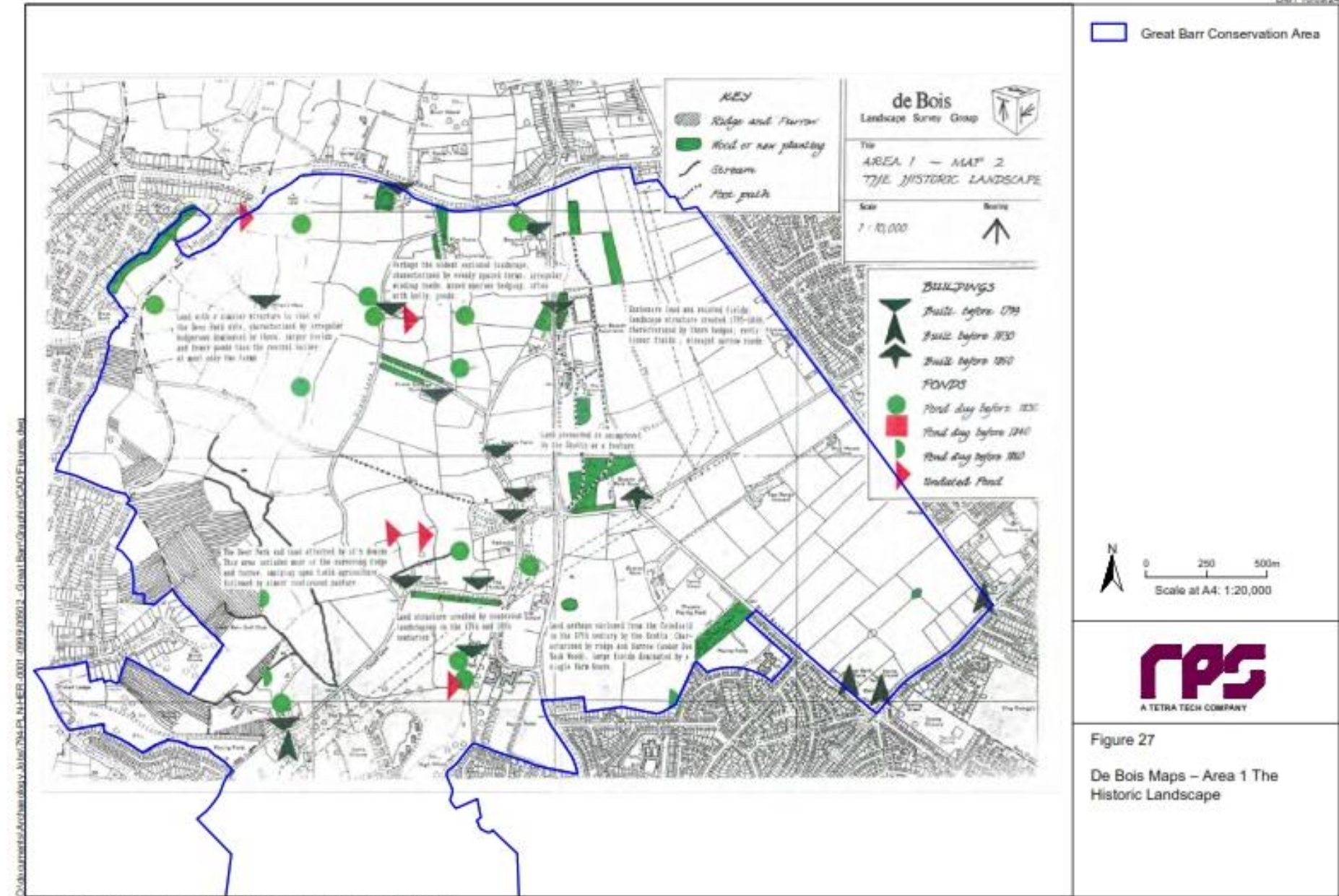
- 8.15 The Great Barr Conservation Area derives its special architectural and historic interest from its character and appearance as the remains of a Hall and associated landscaped parkland, historically owned and developed by the Scott family. The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the many phases of development to the Hall and landscape which occurred across its lifetime, from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. The area has historic interest through association with the renowned landscape designer Humphry Repton, and architectural and historic interest through its associations with Repton, John Nash and George Gilbert Scott, all of whom worked on various phases of the development of the Great Barr Hall and Estate.
- 8.16 The historic core of the Conservation Area contains the Grade II Listed remains of Great Barr Hall, and the surrounding landscape, designated as a Grade II Listed Great Barr Hall Registered Park and Garden (GBH RPG).
- 8.17 Following the Conservation Area Appraisal undertaken above, it is considered that the following boundary revisions are appropriate. These are addressed by character area, to best correspond with the assessment undertaken in Section 4 of this report. Please see Figure 24 for a map of the character areas referenced below and Figure 24 for the proposed boundary change.



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Great Barr Conservation Area

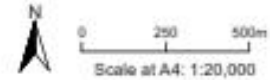
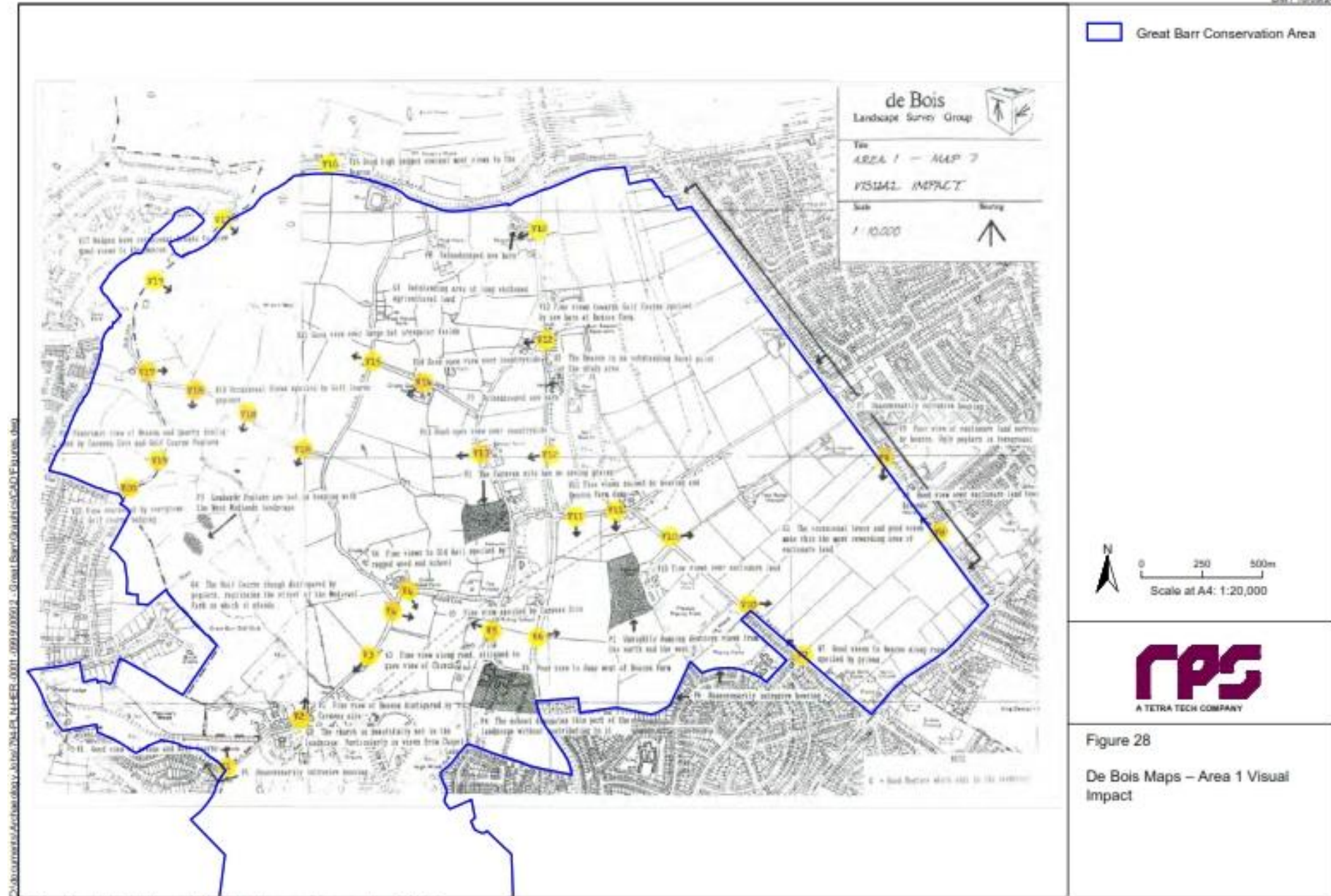


Figure 27
De Bois Maps – Area 1 The
Historic Landscape

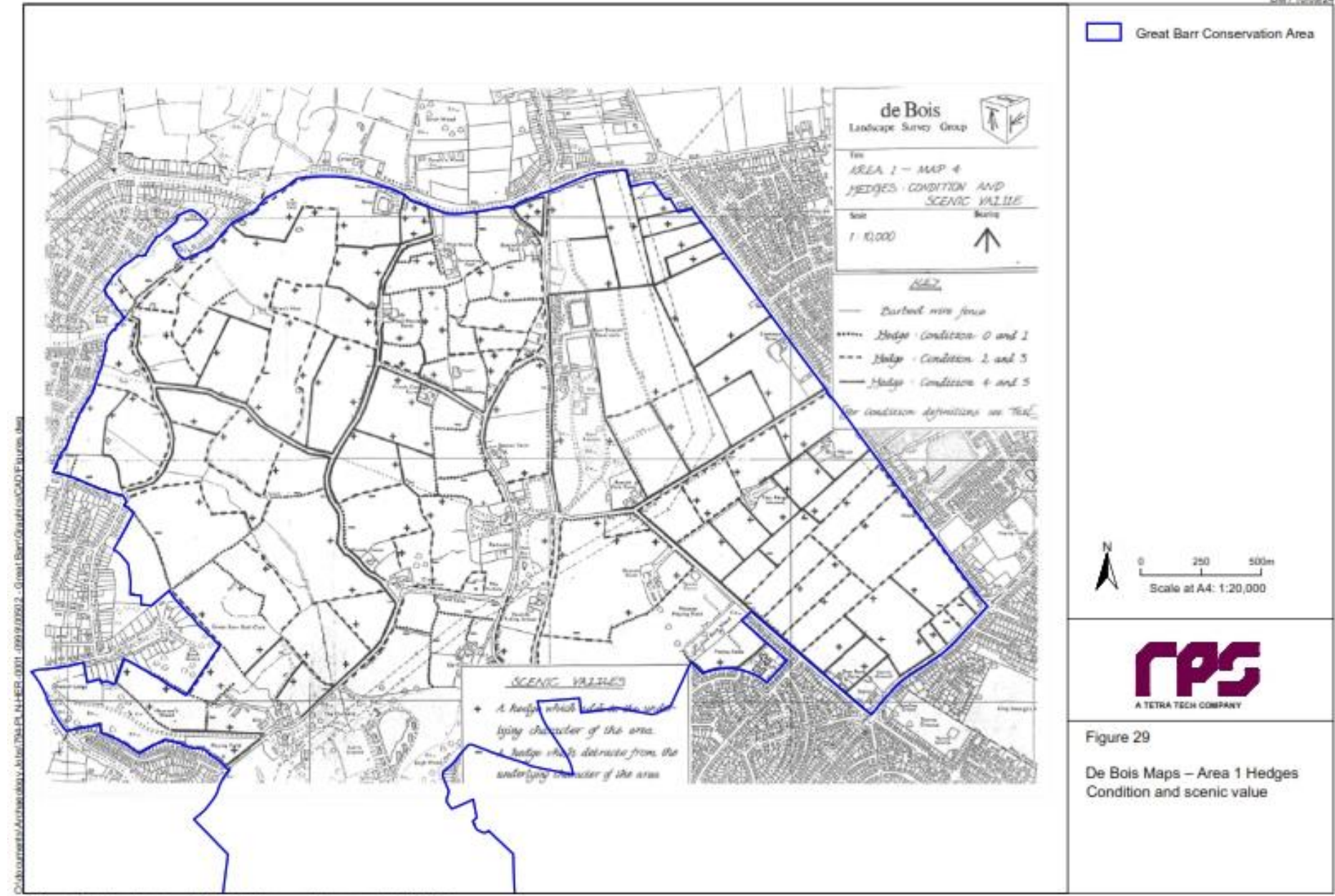


Great Barr Conservation Area

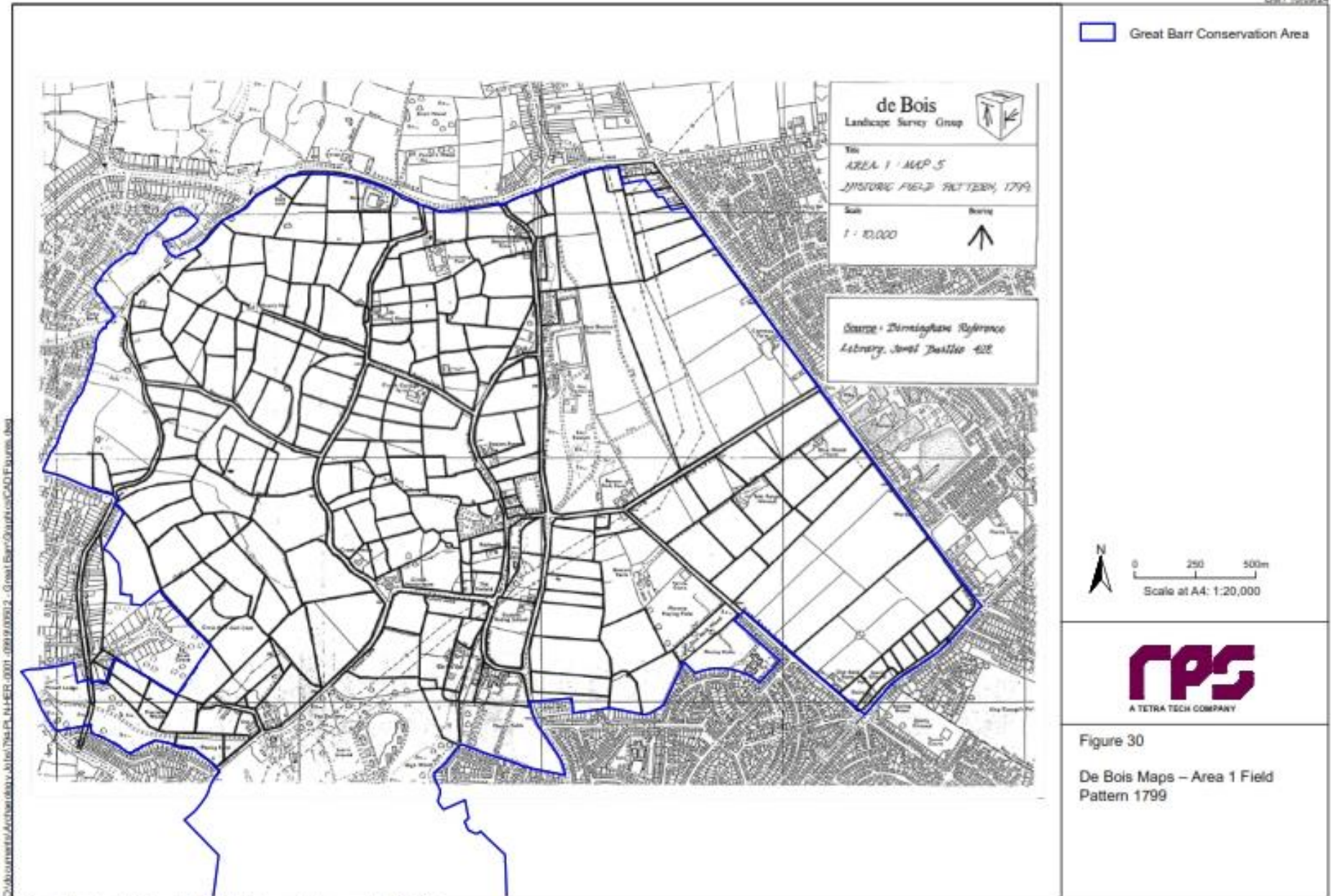
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Figure 28
De Bois Maps – Area 1 Visual Impact

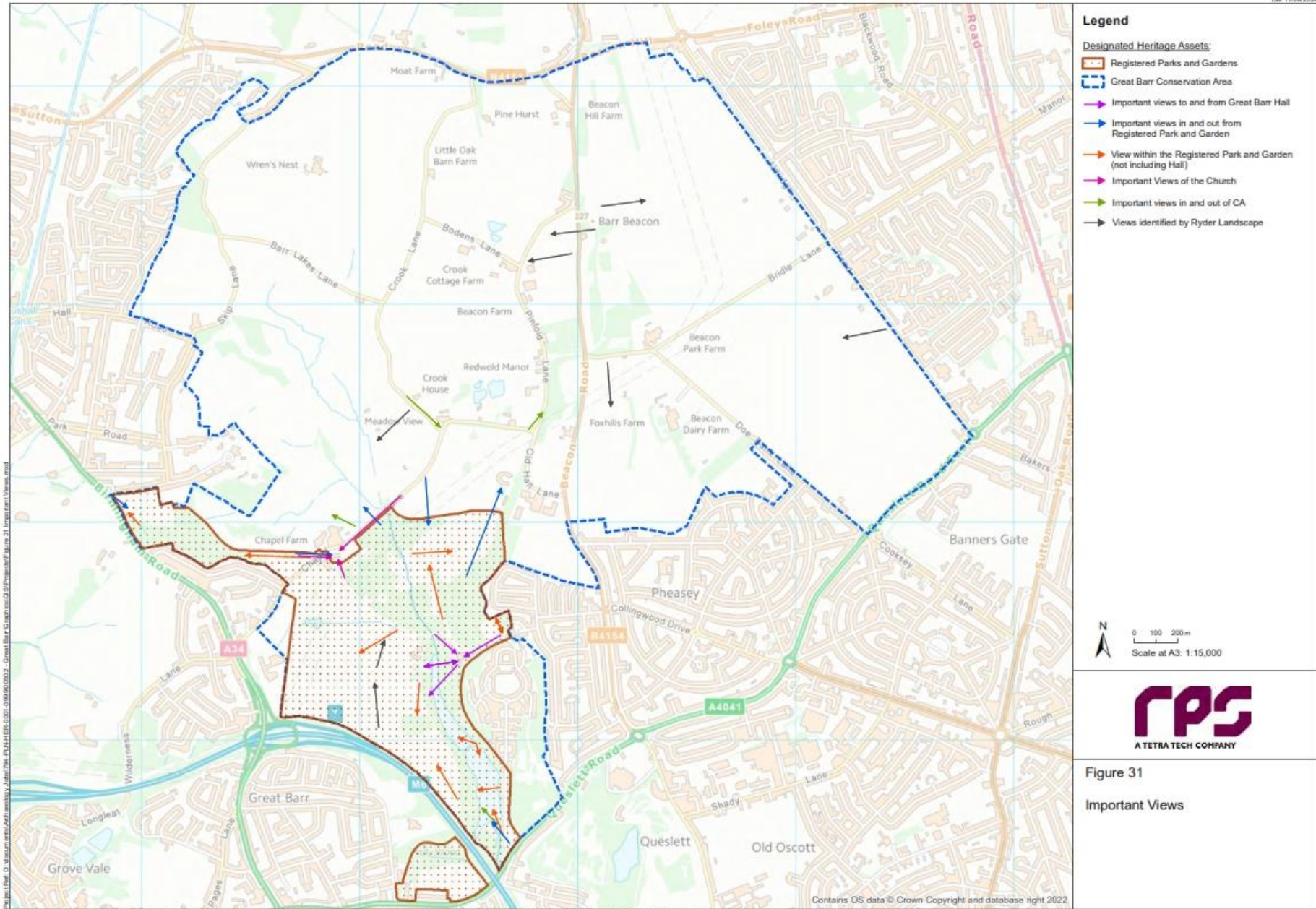


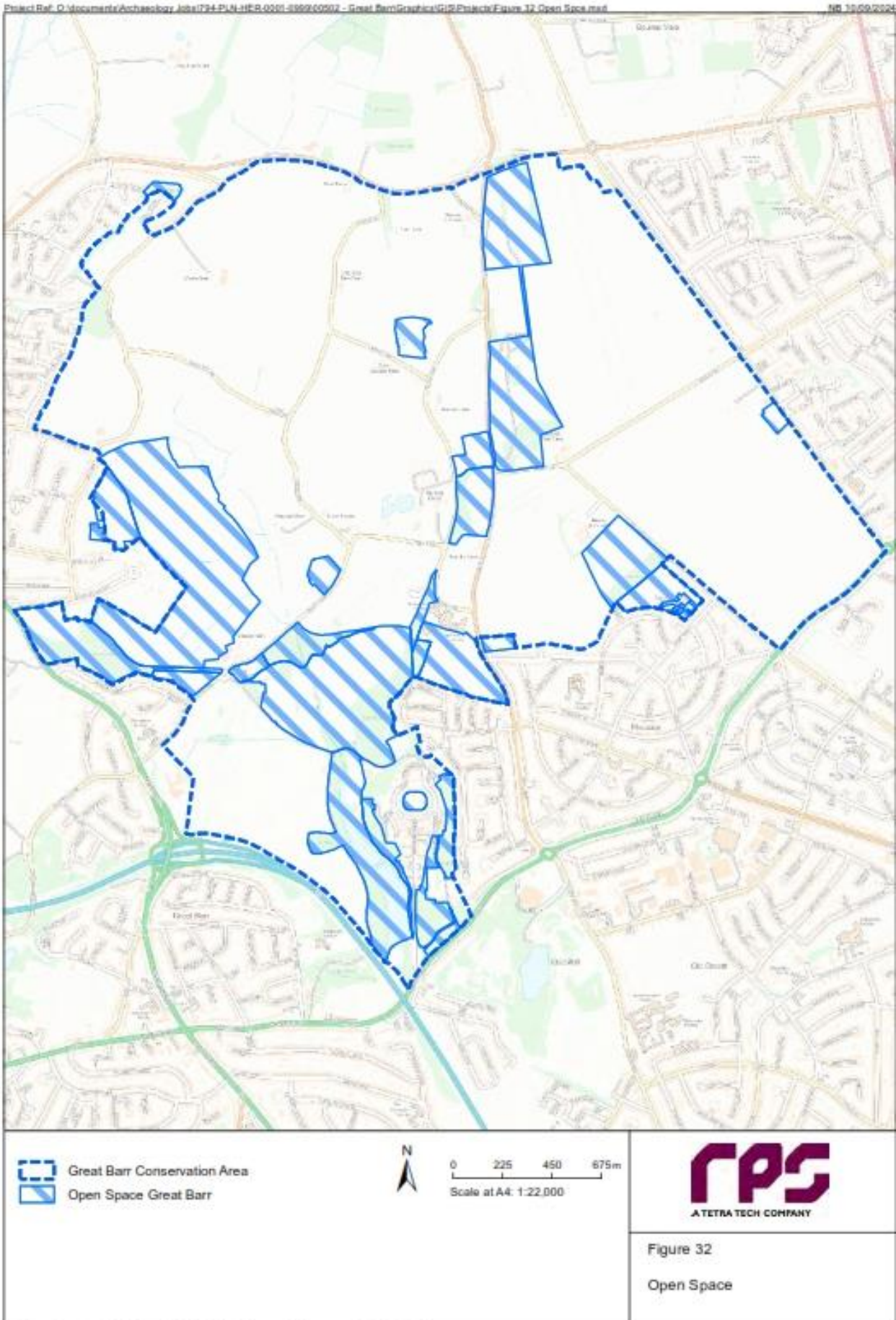
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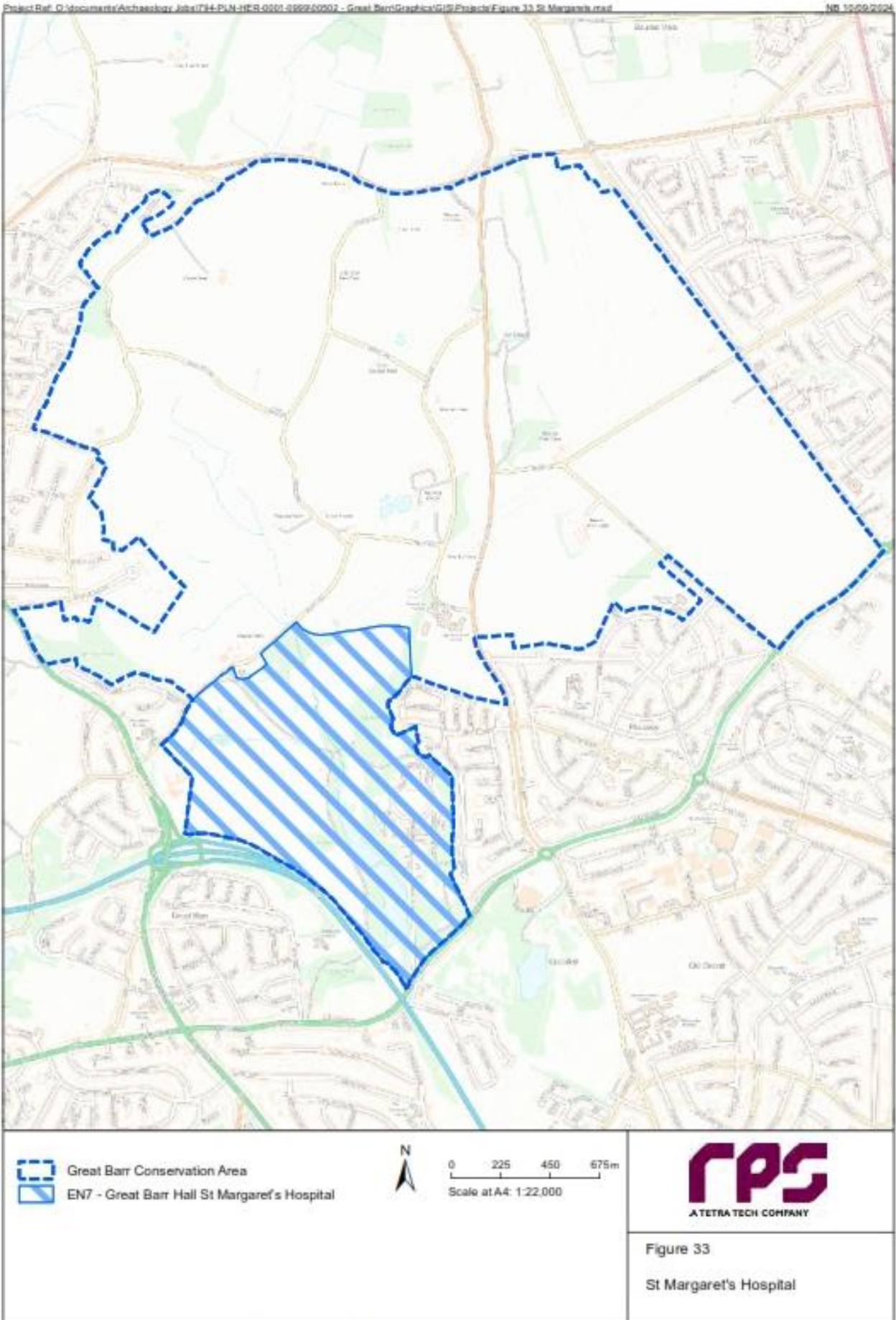


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Area A – Include with revisions

- 8.18 Character Area A includes the historic core of the settlement of Great Barr and the area around Chapel Lane. It is recommended that Area A is retained as the core of the Conservation Area, due to its intrinsic architectural and historic interest. Following assessment this area includes the farmsteads on Pinfold Lane, which form part of the historic linear settlement of farmsteads historically related to the Great Barr Hall Estate.
- 8.19 The exclusion of the club house for Great Barr Golf Club from the conservation area is recommended as this building is of twentieth century date and does not contribute to the character and appearance of the historic core of the Conservation Area.
- 8.20 Netherhall is a modern housing estate which does not contribute to the character and appearance of the Great Barr Conservation Area. As a result of the housing the site's historic association with Great Barr Hall is illegible. It is therefore recommended that sub-area A2, the Netherhall Park residential development and landscaping to the east, be excluded from the Conservation Area.

Area B – Exclude with minor revisions

- 8.21 The area covered by the Great Barr Golf Course is of some historic interest, although it mainly possesses archaeological interest. This area is also experienced as separate from the core of the conservation area due to its differing use and planting. As such, the majority of this area may be deemed of insufficient architectural and historic interest to be included within a revised Conservation Area.
- 8.22 It is considered that the revised Conservation Area boundary should include the fringe of this area along Merrion's Wood and the former western drive (Sutton's Drive) in order to provide the historic edge of Merrion's Wood with an open landscape.

Area C – Exclude

- 8.23 This includes the area around Barr Beacon. Although this has a historic association with Great Barr Hall Estate and the Scott family, today this is not apparent from within the core of the Conservation Area and only marginally apparent from atop Barr Beacon. Through its designation as a War Memorial and Public Open Space the area has additional planning protections.

Area D – Exclude

- 8.24 The Conservation Area includes two large areas of agricultural land to the east and west of Barr Beacon, and north of the original Conservation Area. These areas include some elements of low historic interest, such as the remains of a linear settlement and some historic farmsteads and fields.
- 8.25 Following assessment, it is considered that the sub-areas to the east (D2) should be excluded from the Conservation Area in any future revision due to a lack of architectural and historic interest, and because they are experienced as separate from the core of the Conservation Area due to interceding topography, development, and planting.
- 8.26 The agricultural area to the west (Sub-Area D1) has marginally more architectural and historic interest and includes part of an area of "High Historic Townscape Value" but is still mainly experienced separately from the historic parkland of the core of the Conservation Area. Greater research is required to establish whether there are any further historic links between this area, its Listed Buildings, and the historic core of the Great Barr Hall parkland.

Summary

- 8.27 Our recommendation is that the boundary should be amended to align with its pre-1996 form (Figure 2 – Original 1976 Boundary) with the further omission of the residential area around Netherhall Park and Fox's Plantation. However, it is recommended that the Conservation Area boundary also include an area alongside Merrion's Wood, to maintain its visible edge.

Recommendations on Alternate Conservation Areas

- 8.28 Subdividing the current Great Barr Conservation Area into multiple Conservation Areas is not considered to be an appropriate means of seeking to protect or enhance the architectural and historic interest of the wider area. The rural parts of the conservation area, populated by sporadic historic farmsteads, are today experienced as standalone buildings or as part of an agricultural landscape. There is little to link them to the former heart of the estate within the RP&G, and little to describe this landscape as an area of special architectural and historic interest.
- 8.29 Targeted measures of inclusion of individual buildings on the local list, are more appropriate than blanket measures, rather than their inclusion within a large Conservation Area. As stated in paragraph 197 of the NPPF, it is important that areas are designated due to their special interest and that the concept is not devalued by the designation of large areas of more limited historic or architectural interest.
- 8.30 The historic links between Barr Beacon and the RP&G are no longer fully legible today as described within the previous section of this report. Whilst having some historic interest, the sub-area of Barr Beacon itself (and the linear settlement it shares with other sub-areas) has very little architectural interest, and none as a coherent whole. It is not recommended that this area becomes a separate Conservation Area.

Summary

- 8.31 As such, our recommendation is that following the proposed boundary revision, no other Conservation Areas are required to be designated.

Interventions and Investment

- 8.32 It is proposed that a comprehensive regeneration and remediation strategy is prepared concerning the revised conservation area. This would work with this Conservation Area Appraisal and SAD Policy EN7, referenced above. The prevailing problems of the Conservation Area are outlined within this report. The preparation of this Strategy could involve an urban design framework, but it should include economic, valuation and viability advice.
- 8.33 Central to this will be the availability of grants and exploration of different funding streams. These include:
- Historic England Grant Scheme
 - Heritage Lottery Fund Grants
 - Heritage Alliance Heritage Funding Directory

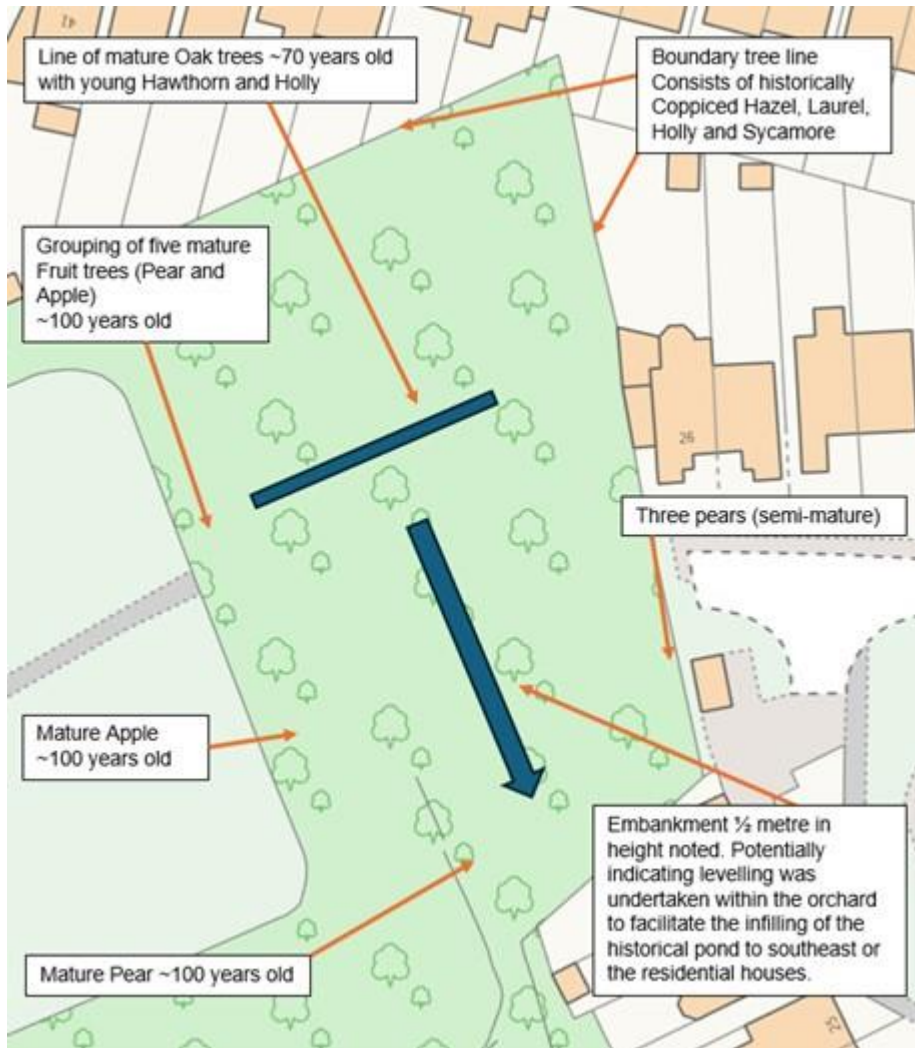
Enhancement Schemes & Site Specific Advice

- 8.34 The disparate and poor quality of the remains of the Great Barr Hall Estate within the Conservation Area contain many areas which would benefit from enhancement. These are broadly outlined within the above Conservation Area Appraisal, but include:

- The restoration and re-inhabitation of Great Barr Hall and Chapel including its adaptive re-use if appropriate; A Conservation Management Plan should be drafted to inform these proposals and help manage the estate.
- The reinstatement of landscape and garden features within the Conservation Area, including removing later planting to restore the original planned features;
- Repair and restoration of gate piers to Merrion's Lodge and Avenue Lodge
- Look for opportunities to create public access through the RP&G.
- Installation of a Conservation Area legibility network, including trails and interpretation boards, like those in Merrion's Wood. If access is created through the RP&G these measures could be implemented within the RP&G, reinstating / better demarking historic routes through the Conservation Area. If not trails could include the Lodges and St Margaret's Church. Expanding this to the entirety of the RP&G and Conservation Area and.
- Removal of silt from the north lake to restore both the historic character and natural habitat.;
- Improving key historic entranceways and restoring the approaches, especially Suttons Drive and the connection with the Netherhall Park development;
- Improving the visual character of the area on Chapel Lane, including the Church Car Park and traffic island.
- Old Hall Farm is due to change ownership and is likely to come forward for development. The successful reuse/ adaption of any farmstead or farm building depends on the level of understanding of their significance, relationship to the wider landscape setting along with their sensitivity to and capacity for change. Historic England's Guidance; *Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings; Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse, 2017* should help guide proposals coming forward. Specific thought should be given to the landscaping treatment around the farmstead and the important contribution the current arrangement provides to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Additionally, the treatment of openings (retain the existing and introducing new ones) and materiality will be important to any proposals coming forward.
- Litter picking scheme initiation in the Conservation Area
- Historic Orchard: Restoration and management recommendations (detailed below)

8.35 In respect to restoring the orchard, due to lack of management and possible alterations to the area from adjacent works, the area has now come a distinctive broadleaved woodland. To restore the orchard, it would involve the removal of numerous semi-mature trees and considerable amounts of clearance. While management that included thinning works and the control of the laurel and holly would be beneficial to the site, the removal to the level required as part of the restoration would remove significant numbers of healthy trees, which would not be supported by the Council.

Should management be secured, that sympathetic management was undertaken of the area as suggested above, with the in planting of new tree species to increase species diversity. As a nod to its heritage, it is suggested native fruit and nut bearing species were chosen. These could be planted in a position linked to its historic nature, while the thinning and control of competitive species would open the woodland up to allow more public usage of the area. The open area to the north could be retained as an open glade potentially planted with native herbs and woodland species to create a woodland edge effect to bring greater aesthetics to the area.



Picture 66 - Restoration and management recommendations

Co-ordinating Proposals

8.36 It is important that any forthcoming strategy for the Conservation Area takes a comprehensive approach in order to preserve and enhance its character and appearance. As suggested by Historic England Guidance, co-ordination can take the following forms:

- Highway signage and street furniture: It will be important to provide a legibility framework for the public realm within the Conservation Area. If Great Barr Hall is to be restored and reused, it will be important to ensure vehicular access gives priority to pedestrians and is appropriately detailed to respond to the character of the surrounding landscape park. This will involve using a sympathetic materials palette and carefully designed signposting (where required) which will be crucial upon the historic approaches to the Hall.
- Traffic management: It will be helpful to engage with Highways Departments to identify traffic management interventions that will preserve the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Tree strategies: Any future strategy for the Great Barr Hall Conservation Area should incorporate an arboricultural assessment and potentially a tree management plan. This needs to be a combined approach as part of the RP&G is in different ownership. The RP&G is a designed landscape and will require assessment to inform management and proposals.

- Open space and green infrastructure strategies: The open space and planting of the Great Barr Hall Estate is a key element that contributes to its character and appearance. In addition to much of this being protected as an RP&G, a comprehensive approach should be considered to ensure the sustainable management and development of the surrounding landscape.
- Conservation Management Plans: It would be useful to develop a conservation management plan or design brief for Great Barr Hall, as discussed above.

Enforcement and Monitoring

8.37 The above appraisal will form a catalogue of the appearance and condition of the Conservation Area. This baseline should also allow for the creation of an enforcement and remediation strategy by the council, which will give priority for action and repairs to parts of the Conservation Area currently at risk, including monitoring and enforcement within the article 4 direction area.

8.38 An example of works that can be undertaken by the Local Planning Authority under statutory powers in order to secure the special interest of an area involve dialogue with the building owners, and steps include:

- Section 215 Notices;
- Urgent Works Notices;
- Repairs Notices;
- Compulsory Purchase orders;
- Empty Dwelling Management Orders
- Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 “acquisition of land for housing purposes”
- Enforce Sale Procedure
- Dangerous Structures Order
- Emergency Measures under Section 78 of the Building Act
- Ruinous and Dilapidated Buildings and Neglected Sites – Section 79 of the Building Act 1984

As highlighted in Historic England Guidance GPA2, *“the potential to exercise these powers as an alternative means of conserving a heritage asset could be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications”* (para. 46).

Article 4 Directions

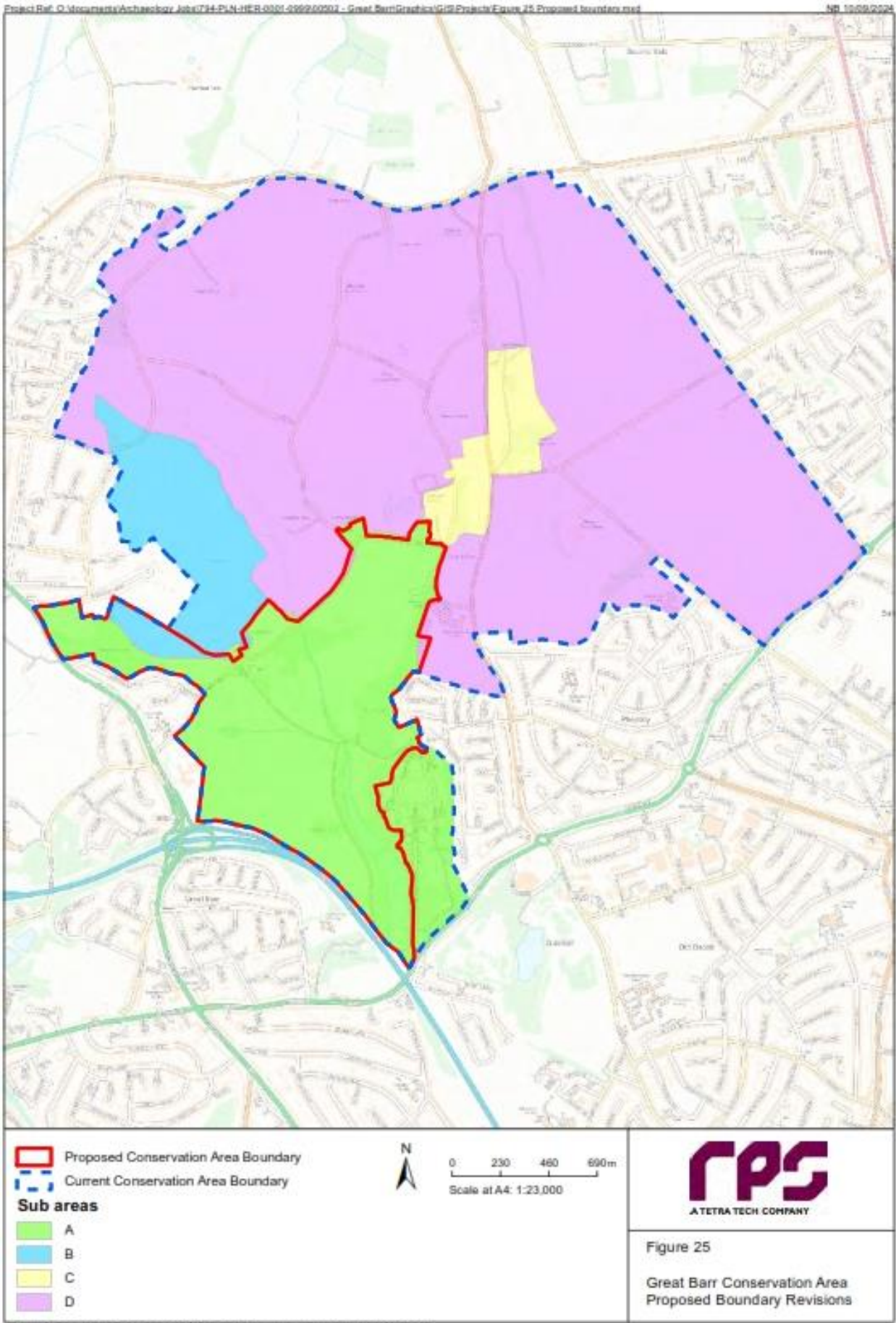
8.39 Article 4 Direction are issued by the local planning authority in circumstances where specific control over development is required, primarily where the character of an area of acknowledged importance would be threatened.

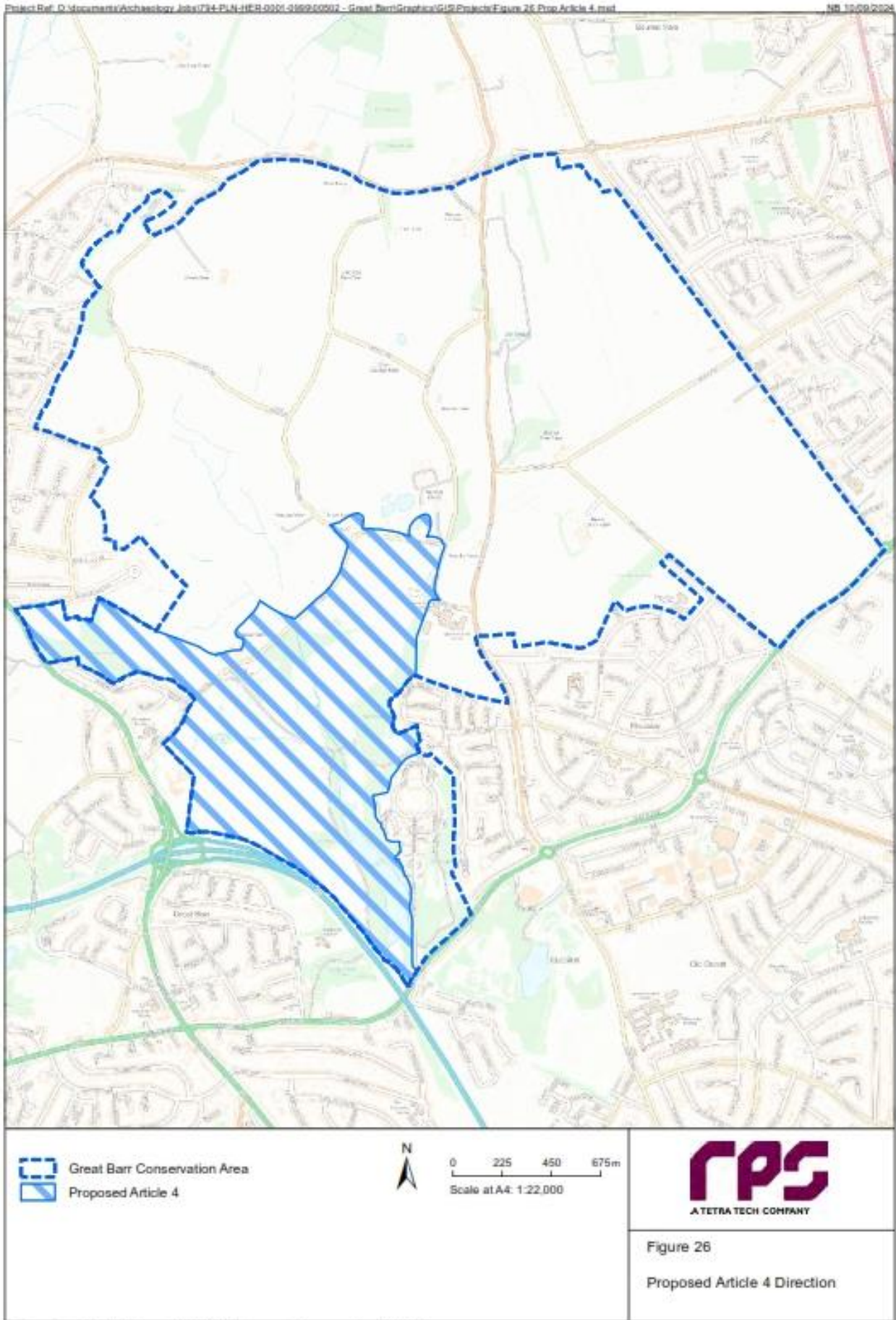
8.40 The impact of cumulative change can have a significant adverse impact on the character of historic buildings within the Conservation Area. Article 4 Direction Orders can be made by a local planning authority to restrict certain permitted development rights.

8.41 Further development controls will be considered within the Conservation Area boundary. These include Article 4 (2) directions which would restrict the scope of permitted development rights in a particular area. The existing Article 4 (2) direction for Great Barr Conservation Area is shown on fig. 19.

8.42 Following assessment, it is proposed to implement Article 4 directions across the whole of the revised Conservation Area to protect original windows and doors, front garden walls, chimneys

and the obscuring or removal of original materials and finishes to front walls and roofs: (shown on Figures 25 and 26).





Future Review

Review of the Conservation Area should be undertaken, ideally, every 5 years (as stated within *Historic England Advice Note 1 (SECOND EDITION)*). However, this is dependent upon the resources of the Council and the rate of development within the Conservation Area.



APPENDICES

Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, Place Services, 2020: Historical Development Section (Pages 14-24)

Barr, is an ancient British place name meaning 'hill-top'. A name with such early origins is less common than the more usual Anglo-Saxon place names, but it seems that in this case the incoming Anglian settlers adopted the existing name, which refers to Barr Beacon. The hill of Barr Beacon is the highest point in the West Midlands and was therefore a prominent feature in the ancient Romano-British landscape¹⁵. The adoption of the earlier name by the Anglo-Saxons perhaps indicates some level of contact and interaction between the settlers and the indigenous Romano-British population. Barr Beacon is recorded as 'Baerr' in an Anglo-Saxon charter of 957 AD. It appears again as 'Barra' in the Domesday Book of 1086. The Manor of Great Barr probably dates to the Anglo-Saxon period and there may have been an early preaching cross at Barr, as later records refer to 'Richard ad Crucem (Richard at the Cross), who lived at Great Barr¹⁶. It is possible that if a preaching cross was present at Great Barr, it would have been visited by St Chad (died 672), or his followers. St Chad was the first bishop of Lichfield, and he is credited with the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia to Christianity in the seventh century. St Chad and his followers made Lichfield their centre in 669 AD¹⁷ and from here they set out on many preaching tours.

There two entries for 'Barra' in the Domesday survey, one refers to Great Barr, the other to Little Barr, which became part of Perry Barr in the fourteenth century. The Latin words for great ('magna') and little ('parva') appear in documents around 1200¹⁸. In the early twelfth century Great Barr was located within the Royal Forest of Cannock, but by 1125 it was being used by Roger de Beaumont, 2nd Earl of Warwick as a private hunting chase, forming part of Sutton Chase. The wider landscape was probably lowland heath, characterised by open areas of bracken and occasional oak woodland. Charcoal burning and clearing of land for agriculture were undertaken in the thirteenth century.¹⁹ Ancient, semi-natural woodland survives at Merrion's Wood in the western part of the Conservation Area.

A chapel and manor house are first referenced at Great Barr around c 1250 AD, though it is highly likely that a place of worship had existed there for over a century before. It was a 'Chapel-of-Ease: which would have served the local Manorial residence²⁰. This early Chapel was sited where the Church of St Margaret now stands, while the original site of the medieval manor house was to the south of the chapel, where there is a moated manor site (SMR 2689). Twelfth to fifteenth century pottery has also been found in this area.²¹ During the medieval period, the landscape of what was to become Great Barr Park was probably a mixture of pasture and arable fields, based around the small settlement of the manor and chapel.

By the 1335 a deer park had been established for the manor, located on the site of what is now the Great Barr Golf Course. The Scott family were first recorded in the area in 1332 and they were later to become wealthy landowners, residing at Great Barr Hall.²² The medieval deer park may have fallen out of use by the mid-sixteenth century.

In the wider landscape, medieval, fields, roads, buildings and earthworks are evident within the landscape at Barr Beacon, including Crook Lane which would have originally led directly to the moated site on the southern side of Moat farm on Sutton Road. In the fourteenth century the moated site was known as Heygate Moat and was in the possession of the Alrewich family. A timber framed structure survived within the moated island until the 1870s when it was demolished. There is evidence of ridge and furrow field systems in the area, particularly to the west of Great Barr Beacon, while Barr Lakes Lane is considered to be of the oldest lanes in the area, based on the evidence from an analysis of the hedgerows. A quarry site to the south of Barr Beacon is also medieval in date, while medieval ridge and furrow field systems were established on Barr Beacon's western slopes.²³

It has been suggested that a burning beacon on top of Barr Beacon would have been lit to announce the arrival of the Spanish in 1588, while during the Napoleonic Wars, poles and an iron basket were installed on the summit to announce any invasion of French troops. ²⁴

Richard Scott was a tenant of Old Hall (also called High House or Over House), in the Manor of Great Barr in the early seventeenth century. Scott went on to buy the manor of Great Barr, including an area of land near the bottom of a wooded valley to the south of Great Barr, where he built Netherhouse in the mid-seventeenth century.²⁵ This was to become Great Barr Hall, the seat of the Scott family. In 1666 Richard Scott's Netherhouse is listed in a hearth tax return as having five hearths and an inventory of 1675 mentions both an old and new part of the house.²⁶

The house known as Netherhouse, built by Richard Scott in the mid seventeenth century, is later described in inventories of 1709 and 1715. It is essentially a large farm house with a barn, cockloft, buttery and dairy. The house was later extended by John Scott (died 1755) in the mid eighteenth century and the embellishment of the surrounding landscape began at this time. William Shenstone (1714-63), who later married into the family, is thought to have helped lay out these early landscape improvements for John Scott.²⁷ By 1760 it was described as "a handsome and commodious dwelling house, and had stables, a coach house and a walled garden ²⁸

With Shenstone's influence, John Scott removed the field boundaries and hedgerows in the western part of the estate to create the Great Meadow. This resulted in a wide-open vista from the hall, with a landscape of open grassland, punctuated by selected trees, either trees that were retained or specimens which were planted.

From 1777, under the occupancy of Joseph Scott, the hall building also underwent another transformation. Spacious rooms were added, while the exterior was given a symmetrical frontage, with a central doorway, turrets at the corners and a crenellated parapet. There is the possibility that Joseph Scott invited his friend and acquaintance, the statesman Charles James Fox to Great Barr in 1784 or 1785 and that Fox planted what became known as Fox's Plantation.³⁰

The embellishment of Great Barr Hall had left Joseph Scott bankrupt and he and his household left the country in 1785, leasing the house to Samuel Gaitan, a Quaker, banker and gun manufacturer. Samuel Gaitan used the house as a venue for meetings of the Lunar Society, which was a dinner club and informal learned society of prominent figures in the Midlands Enlightenment, including philosophers, intellectuals and entrepreneurs. Members included the engineer James Watt, entrepreneur Matthew Boulton and the industrialist Josiah Wedgwood. The society met each month, on the Monday closest to the full moon to discuss and debate various topics and explore how science could be utilised to benefit all in society. The society is considered to be an influential force in eighteenth century scientific and societal development.

Galton's lease of Great Barr Hall ended in 1797 and Joseph Scott and his family returned. Scott began to reinvest in his estate, purchasing Merrion's Wood the same year. The following year, in 1798, a plan was drawn up showing a new proposed new carriageway and footpath. The northern extent of the Great Barr Hall Estate, with fields along the bottom of the plan being labelled as 'Fields belonging to Joseph Scott Esq'. The foot path, which is still visible today, branched north-east from Chapel Lane, ran across fields to link up with Pinfold Lane. The proposed foot path is shown as a dotted line, with an earlier, existing foot path to the south as a solid line. To the east, Old Hall Farm is shown, which is labelled as the 'Late Mr Hoo's House'. Mr Hoo may have been a tenant of Joseph Scott, renting the house and barn along with the adjacent fields and orchards and he is known to have lived to the age of 72 from 1719 to 1791. The plan was drawn up one year before the enclosure of Great Barr Beacon Hill.³¹

A further point of interest relating to the 1798 plan is the small enclosure and building shown in the bottom left hand corner. A small building is depicted partially surrounded by an enclosure. This enclosure feature is on the site of what is thought to be the medieval moated manor, while the building shown within the moat is probably an eighteenth-century farm building.

In the late 1790s Joseph Scott commissioned the landscape designer Humphry Repton (1752-1818) and the architect John Nash (1752-1835) to work at Great Barr Hall and its grounds. The upper lake was created in 1799, separating the hall from the wider parkland and John Scott's Great Meadow. Along with the landscaping, Nash and Repton probably constructed the icehouse at this time. Gardens were laid out along the western side of the upper lake, separating the hall from the Great Meadow view still further.

Humphry Repton was from a well-to-do background but rejected a mercantile career and set himself up as a landscape designer in 1788. His clients were generally gentlemen of means, rather than the landed gentry.

Part of his success was due to his abilities as a landscape painter and once commissioned he would produce his signature piece, the Red Book. This contained views of the existing landscape, painted on flaps, which could be folded out to reveal his vision of what was possible beneath. The whereabouts of the Red Book Repton produced for Great Barr Hall is unknown and without it is hard to deduce his complete plans for the estate.

His work became very popular, and he was often commissioned by clients to produce a Red Book, simply to have it on display for visiting guests, as a sign that they had the vision to improve their estates, though perhaps not always the money. Despite having wealthy clients, Repton was socially aware and, in his writings, he would often include cutting comments on the difference between rich and poor. He was particularly angered by the enclosure of land and the detrimental effect it had on the lives of ordinary people. He said of enclosures: "This is a common consequence of all enclosures; and we may ask to whom are they a benefit? Adding to riches an increased store, and making poorer those who are already poor"

Repton's landscapes were often modest in size and thickly planted. He designed a gradual transition from house to grounds, via terraces, balustrades and steps. Similar in philosophy to Shenstone, Repton admired the simplified, wild or natural landscape. Many examples of Repton's landscapes survive, such as Uppark in Sussex and Sheringham Hall, Norfolk. These are examples designed by Repton and their current accuracy is guaranteed by the existence of Repton's original plans in the Red Books he produced.

Repton initially tried his hand at architecture but found it more convenient to work in association with architects with the necessary professional qualifications. At Great Barr Hall he worked with John Nash but later the two quarrelled, as Repton claimed Nash stole the idea of Mughal style of architecture for the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. 32

The date of Nash's work at Great Barr Hall is significant, as in this period he was evolving a Gothick style, which he applied to a number of Gothick castles around the country, such as Luscombe Castle in Devon and Caerhays Castle in Cornwall, both of which are Grade I Listed buildings.

The extent of Nash's contribution to the appearance of the hall is uncertain, but it seems likely he extended the frontage towards the lake and added some of his signature architectural features, such as crenellations on the roof and the tops of the projecting towers, along with hooded Elizabethan-style windows.

In 1828 Joseph Scott died and was succeeded by his son Sir Edward Scott (1793-1851), who became M.P. for Litchfield in 1831³. In the 1840s Sir Edward undertook further improvements with terraced gardens and a conservatory added to the hall. His successor Sir Francis Scott (1824-1863) also made improvements to the house and park after he inherited it in 1851 and it was Francis who probably introduced deer into the park. As a young man Sir Francis had met George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) in Venice, and he commissioned him to work at Great Barr. George Gilbert Scott is thought to have built the chapel in 1863, which was added to the south west corner of the hall. However, the building was never consecrated and after the death of Sir Francis the same year, it was used as a billiard room. In addition to the chapel, George Gilbert Scott probably designed other estate buildings, including lodges and a boat house.³⁴

After the death of Sir Francis Scott his wife Lady Mildred Anne Bateman-Scott left the hall. The hall and estate were tenanted to a Captain Lane in 1867 and a further advert for the hall to be let, and a sale of furniture dates to 1869.³⁵ In 1873 it was let to a Mr. J.R. Carpenter, but in 1877 Lady Bateman Scott returned to Great Barr Hall after the death of her second husband. She lived there as widow until her death in 1909 with her sister and a household of thirteen servants. The Ordnance Survey map of 1888-1913 shows the Great Barr Hall and estate in its last few years as a private residence.

Following the death of Lady Bateman-Scott part of the Great Barr Hall Estate, together with the Hall were put up for sale. The West Bromwich Poor Law Union purchased the estate and hall for £28,000 in 1911 with the aid of a loan from the Local Government. In 1912 the Hall building was used to house orphaned children under five years of age. A new timber building called Darby Home was built in 1914 behind the Hall and housed TB patients from the Poor Law infirmaries, before it was annexed to the children's home and later served as staff accommodation. By 1918 the site had begun to be used to house the mentally ill and work soon began to

convert the hall and part of the estate into the 'Great Barr Park Colony for Mental Defectives: which was later renamed St Margaret's Hospital'.³⁶

The first major construction phase for the new St Margaret's Hospital was completed by 1930 and took the form of an elevated crescent of buildings to the south of the hall, designed by the Birmingham Architect Gerald McMichael. These were used to house female patients and the crescent of buildings was accessed from the south via a long drive. By 1937 a group of buildings had been built to the north of the hall, to house male patients, built around a cul-de-sac, between High Wood and The Duckery.

Bovis Homes bought part of the former estate and applied to develop 603 dwellings which would have included conversion of the hall, but planning permission was never realised. The proposed scheme was scaled down and the number of dwellings reduced to 445, focussing only on the 'female' area of the former hospital. This reduced scheme was approved in 2004. The Hall was acquired direct from the receivers of the former owner. By the Manor Building Preservation Trust.

The Trust announced plans to bring the hall and estate back into viable use, but no scheme materialised, and the hall and estate began to fall into disrepair.³⁸ In 2012 the remaining estate and the hall were bought by a group of private individuals and in consultation an Architectural practice, solutions were explored to ensure the sustainable, long term survival of the historic site.³⁹ By the end of 2012a consultation programme had been undertaken and plans were proposed to restore the hall and its estate. Plans were submitted to turn the hall into a hotel, wedding and conference centre with a restaurant, while lawns would be restored, and two new gatehouse lodges built. In addition, a 57-home luxury gated development on the adjacent green belt Land at Great Barr Park was proposed

Due to increasing dilapidation of the Grade II* Listed building, Great Barr Hall had been added to the Heritage At Risk register by 2008. In 2015-16 Historic England undertook a review of the listing, prompted by the possibility development within the Registered Park and Garden to enable the raising of funds to restore the Hall.⁴⁰ Historic England subsequently consulted with local interest groups and Members of Parliament before reaching their decision. It was found that even though the building continued to have historic and special interest, with influences from Nash and with elements by GG Scott and that the later associations with the Lunar Society also added considerable historic interest, on balance, the losses to the fabric meant that listing at a higher grade could no longer be justified, and the building was subsequently downgraded to Grade II. This had the result of removing the building from the Heritage At Risk register.

No action has yet been taken as part of a viable scheme to consolidate, or restore the hall and its estate, they have been allowed to enter a state of severe decline and decay. However, Paragraph 191 of the NPPF states that, 'where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account of any decision'. Therefore, the historic significance of the structure will remain as a primary factor in any decisions regarding its future

1841 Tithe Apportionment Information: Historic Buildings still extant in the Great Barr Conservation Area

Sub Area	Name of Building	On the National Heritage List Today?	Historic connection with Great Barr Hall (plot no. in brackets)
A	Great Barr Hall	Grade II	Seat of the Scott Family
A	Church of St Margaret (Site of)	Grade II	(1396) In the ownership and occupancy of the Rev. Henry Harding. Surrounding land Owned by the Scott family. At the time of the Tithe Map this was a Chapel. The Church was Constructed in the 17 th Century.
A	Walsall (Merrion's Lodge)	Grade II	(1262) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott. Former Gatehouse
A	Old Hall Farmhouse	Grade II	(1343) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott Previous seat of the Scott Family
A	Old Hall Barn	Grade II	(1343) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott. Associated with the above
A	The Pinfold	Grade II	(1163) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
A	Crook Farm	No	(1170) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
A	Chapel Farm	No	Unclear from tithe – Likely owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott

REPORT

Sub Area	Name of Building	On the National Heritage List Today?	Historic connection with Great Barr Hall (plot no. in brackets)
A/D1	Crook House	No	Not on title
C	Coxfold Farmhouse	Grade II	(1154, unclear) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
C	Beacon Farm (Beacon on historic mapping)	No	(1105, unclear) Owned by Thomas Day, no known connection to the Scott Family
C	Beacon Cottage (Beacon Trees in Historic Mapping)	No	(1337) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D1	Moat Farm (Moat Cottages)	No	(1214) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D1	Beacon Hill Farm (Beacon Farm on Historic mapping)	No	(1123) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D1	Buildings on Bodens Lane (inc. Crook Cottage Farm)	No	(1142) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D1	Little Oak Barn Farm (Pool House Farm on historic mapping)	No	(1134) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D1	Wrens Nest	No	(1190, unclear) Owned by Sir Edward Dollman Scott
D2	Doe Bank Farmhouse	Grade II	(1027) Owned by Robert Scott
D2	Barn Adjoining Doe Bank Farmhouse	Grade II	(1027) Owned by Robert Scott
D2	Buildings on eastern fringe	No	Not on title

Historic Landscape Characterisation Gazetteer

HLCUID	Broad Type	HLC Type	Name	Period
HBL4717	Commercial	Public house	Farmer Johns Public House	Modern
HBL293	Commercial	Public house	Red House Inn, Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4649	Commercial	Shops	Tremayne Road	Modern
HBL4684	Commercial	Public house	The Foley Arms, corner of Aldridge Road/Beacon Hill	Modern
HBL4723	Commercial	Public house	The Queslett Public House	Modern
HBL5409	Commercial	Public house	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL6123	Commercial	Public house	Old Horns Public House, Pheasy	Modern
HBL813	Communications	Canal (Used)	Rushall Canal	Post Medieval
HBL4736	Extractive	Disused quarry	Rear of Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4597	Field System	Planned enclosure	Between Pinfold Road & Beacon Road	Post Medieval
HBL4606	Field System	Piecemeal enclosure	Between Skip Lane & Crook Lane	Medieval to Post Medieval
HBL4626	Field System	Irregular enclosure	West of Skip Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4680	Field System	Irregular enclosure	North of Park Hall Lane & West of Skip Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4589	Field System	Planned enclosure	East of Barr Beacon	Post Medieval
HBL4721	Field System	Planned enclosure	Between Aldridge Road & Doe Bank Lane	Post Medieval
HBL4603	Field System	Irregular enclosure	North of Bodens Lane & south of Sutton Road	Medieval to Post Medieval

REPORT

HBL6079	Field System	Irregular enclosure	Between Crook Lane & Pinfold Lane, Great Barr	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6080	Field System	Other enclosed fields	Between Crook Lane & Pinfold Lane, Great Barr	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6082	Field System	Other enclosed fields	Between Old Hall Lane & Beacon Road, Great Barr	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6087	Field System	Other enclosed fields	Between Beacon Road & Doe Bank Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6092	Field System	Piecemeal enclosure	Between Chapel Lane, Pinfold Lane & Old Hall Lane	Medieval to Post Medieval
HBL6130	Field System	Paddocks & closes	Rear of Skip Lane	Modern
HBL6131	Field System	Piecemeal enclosure	North of Barr Lakes Lane	Medieval to Post Medieval
HBL6132	Field System	Other enclosed fields	Between Barr Lakes Lane & Chapel Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL296	Field System	Irregular enclosure	Land between Rushall Canal & Longwood Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4817	Field System	Planned enclosure	North of Foley Road West	Post Medieval
HBL4868	Field System	Planned enclosure	Corner of Little Hardwick Road & Erdington Road	Post Medieval
HBL5404	Field System	Other enclosed fields	Around Hay Head Farm	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6039	Field System	Planned enclosure	Between Longwood Road & Erdington Road	Post Medieval
HBL6067	Field System	Planned enclosure	North of Beacon Hill	Post Medieval

REPORT

HBL5408	Field System	Irregular enclosure	North of Sutton Road	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6068	Field System	Other enclosed fields	North of Beacon Hill	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6100	Field System	Irregular enclosure	South of Birmingham Road	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4711	Industrial	Depot	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4714	Industrial	Works	Enterprise Way	Modern
HBL4732	Industrial	Works	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4734	Industrial	Works	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4591	Open Land	Ancient unenclosed pasture	Barr Beacon	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4592	Open Land	Rough grassland/scrub	West of Barr Beacon	Modern
HBL4593	Open Land	Rough grassland/scrub	Between Pinfold Lane & Beacon Lane	Modern
HBL4594	Open Land	Rough grassland/scrub	South of Beacon Hill	Modern
HBL4607	Open Land	Derelict land	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4616	Public Services	School	Three Crown Special School	Modern
HBL6083	Public Services	School	The Barr Beacon School	Modern
HBL6088	Public Services	School	Doe Bank Junior & Infants School	Modern
HBL6096	Public Services	Medical facility	St Margaret's Hospital, Great Barr	Modern
HBL6097	Public Services	Medical facility	St Margaret's Hospital, Great Barr	Modern
HBL4692	Public Services	School	Blackwood School	Modern
HBL4697	Public Services	School	St Anne's RC School	Modern
HBL4730	Public Services	School	Lindens School	Modern
HBL4726	Public Services	School	The Streetly School	Modern
HBL6113	Public Services	School	Pheasey Junior & Infant School	Modern

REPORT

HBL6119	Public Services	School	Collingwood Primary School, Pheasey	Modern
HBL4718	Recreational	Sports ground	South of the Farmer Johns Public House	Modern
HBL6086	Recreational	Sports ground	Doe Bank Park, Doe Bank Lane	Modern
HBL6093	Recreational	Private parkland	Great Barr Park	Post Medieval
HBL6125	Recreational	Sports ground	Chapel Lane, Great Barr	Modern
HBL6128	Recreational	Golf course	Great Barr Golf Course	Modern
HBL6127	Recreational	Sports ground	Chapel Lane, Great Barr	Modern
HBL4645	Recreational	Public open space	South of Wood End Road	Modern
HBL4689	Recreational	Public park	Blackwood Park	Modern
HBL4729	Recreational	Sports ground	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL6099	Recreational	Sports ground	West of Birmingham Road, Great Barr	Modern
HBL6094	Religious	Anglican church	St Margaret's Church, Great Barr	Post Medieval
HBL4624	Religious	Anglican church	St Michael's Church, Wood End	Modern
HBL4866	Religious	Cemetery	Streetly Cemetery, Little Hardwick Road	Modern
HBL6118	Religious	Anglican church	St Chad's Church, Collingwood Drive, Pheasey	Modern
HBL4588	Settlement	Farm	Beacon Park Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4595	Settlement	Farm	Beacon Hill Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4596	Settlement	Farm	Beacon Farm	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4598	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Pinfold Road	Modern

REPORT

HBL4599	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Pinfold Road	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL4600	Settlement	Country house	Pinehurst, West of Barr Beacon.	Modern
HBL4601	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Pinfold Lane	Modern
HBL4602	Settlement	Farm	Pool House Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4604	Settlement	Farm	Moat Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4605	Settlement	Farm	Wren's Nest, Great Barr	Modern
HBL4679	Settlement	Farm	Cottage Farm	Modern
HBL4681	Settlement	Farm	Barr Common Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4682	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4716	Settlement	Farm	Blue House Farm	Post Medieval
HBL4719	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Corner of Aldridge Road & Queslett Road East	Modern
HBL4720	Settlement	Farm	Doe Bank Farm	Post Medieval
HBL6072	Settlement	Caravan/mobile home site (permanent)	Beacon Heights, Pinfold Lane	Modern
HBL6073	Settlement	Farm	Redwold Manor & Barr Pound Farm	Modern
HBL6074	Settlement	Large, detached housing	The Pinfold, Pinfold Lane	Post Medieval
HBL6075	Settlement	Farm	Crook House Farm, Pinfold Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6076	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Crook House, Crook Lane	Post Medieval
HBL6077	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Pinfolds Lane	Post Medieval
HBL6078	Settlement	Farm	Crook Cottage Farm,	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6081	Settlement	Farm	Foxhills Riding School, Great Barr	Modern
HBL6084	Settlement	Farm	Beacon Dairy Farm	Modern

REPORT

HBL6091	Settlement	Farm	Old Hall Farm	Post Medieval
HBL6095	Settlement	Country house	Great Barr Hall & walled garden	Post Medieval
HBL6126	Settlement	Farm	Chapel Farm, Great Barr	Post Medieval
HBL6104	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Skip Lane	Modern
HBL290	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL291	Settlement	Farm	Wood End Farm	Post Medieval
HBL295	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4609	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4610	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Sutton Road & Skip Lane	Modern
HBL4611	Settlement	Mixed medium detached & terrace housing	Elmstead Close & Downham Close	Modern
HBL4612	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4613	Settlement	Medium detached housing	North of Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4614	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Longwood Lane	Modern
HBL4615	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Skip Lane	Modern
HBL4617	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Elstead Close & Fallowfield Road	Modern
HBL4618	Settlement	Medium detached housing	South of Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4619	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL292	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL289	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4620	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4621	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL4622	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Fallowfield Road & Long Meadow Road	Modern

REPORT

HBL4623	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Long Meadow Road, Daffodil Road, Appledore Road etc	Modern
HBL4625	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Fallowfield Road	Modern
HBL4643	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Daffodil Place	Modern
HBL4644	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Daisy Bank Road & Wood End Road	Modern
HBL4646	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Bodmin Rise & cul de sacs off	Modern
HBL4647	Settlement	Medium detached housing	St Austell Road, Newquary Road, Redruth Road etc	Modern
HBL4648	Settlement	Apartments/maisonettes	Camborne Road, Walsall	Modern
HBL4678	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Daisy Bank & other houses	Post Medieval
HBL4683	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Corner of Beacon Hill & Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4685	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Foley Road West	Modern
HBL4686	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Limetree Road & Beechcroft Crescent	Modern
HBL4687	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4688	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Elmtree Road & Hazelwood Road	Modern
HBL4690	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Larchwood Crescent	Modern
HBL4695	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Maxholme Road	Modern
HBL4696	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4709	Settlement	Apartments/maisonettes	Corner of Aldridge Road & Bridle Lane, Walsall	Modern
HBL4710	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Old Lindens Close	Modern

REPORT

HBL4712	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4713	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4694	Settlement	Mixed small semis & terrace housing	Oakwood Drive & Lilac Avenue	Modern
HBL4715	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4722	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4724	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Off Qeslett Road East	Modern
HBL4725	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Queslett Road	Modern
HBL4728	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4731	Settlement	Mixed small semis and detached housing	Corner of Aldridge Road & Hundred Acre Road	Modern
HBL4733	Settlement	Small terrace housing	Aldridge Road	Post Medieval
HBL4735	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Aldridge Road	Modern
HBL4737	Settlement	Mixed small semis and detached housing	Compton Drive	Modern
HBL4740	Settlement	Small terrace housing	Moss Way	Modern
HBL4738	Settlement	Small terrace housing	Compton Drive	Modern
HBL4742	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Hundred Acre Road	Modern
HBL4749	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Hundred Acre Road	Modern
HBL4727	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Hundred Acre Road etc	Modern
HBL4741	Settlement	Medium terrace housing	Valentine Close	Modern
HBL4739	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Hundred Acre Road & roads off	Modern
HBL4762	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4763	Settlement	Large semi-detached housing	Blackwood Drive	Modern
HBL4764	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Bridle Lane	Modern
HBL4768	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Mayfield Road etc	Modern

REPORT

HBL4816	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Foley Road West	Post Medieval
HBL4867	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Erdington Road	Modern
HBL6066	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Erdington Road	Modern
HBL6069	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Sutton Road	Modern
HBL6070	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Longwood Road	Modern
HBL6071	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Longwood Road	Modern
HBL6089	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Frampton Way & Hillingford Avenue & cul de sacs off	Modern
HBL6102	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Between Calthorpe Road & Skip Lane	Modern
HBL6103	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Woodlands Avenue	Modern
HBL6105	Settlement	Apartments/maisonettes	Newmore Gardens	Modern
HBL6106	Settlement	Mixed medium semis and detached housing	Canning Road	Modern
HBL6107	Settlement	Medium detached housing	Burnside Gardens & Lodge Close	Modern
HBL6108	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Lonsdale Road	Modern
HBL6109	Settlement	Medium semi-detached housing	Between Birmingham Road & Park Road	Modern
HBL6110	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Brackenwood, Great Barr	Modern
HBL6111	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Park Road & Beacon Road	Modern
HBL6112	Settlement	Large, detached housing	Park Road & Lodge Road	Modern
HBL6114	Settlement	Mixed small semis & terrace housing	Chantrey Crescent, Romney Way & Collingwood Drive etc	Modern
HBL6117	Settlement	Small semi-detached housing	Hillingford Avenue, Pheasey	Modern

REPORT

HBL6121	Settlement	Medium terrace housing	Constable Close	Modern
HBL6124	Settlement	Mixed small semis and detached housing	Stonehurst Road & Park Farm Road etc	Modern
HBL4750	Settlement	Mixed small semis & terrace housing	Sunnymead Way	Modern
HBL4590	Utilities	Reservoir	Barr Beacon Reservoirs	Post Medieval
HBL6085	Woodland	Mixed woodland	Doe Bank Wood, Doe Bank Lane	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6090	Woodland	Mixed woodland	High Wood, Great Barr Park	Unknown to Post Medieval
HBL6098	Woodland	Mixed woodland	Fox Plantation, Great Barr	Post Medieval
HBL6101	Woodland	Deciduous woodland	Merrion Wood, Great Barr	Post Medieval
HBL4608	Woodland	Deciduous woodland	The Spinney, Great Barr	Post Medieval
HBL4693	Woodland	Mixed woodland	Foley Wood	Modern
HBL5406	Woodland	Mixed woodland	Potter's Wood & Birch Wood	Post Medieval
HBL5405	Woodland	Deciduous woodland	The Dingle, East of Hay Wood Farm	Modern
HBL6129	Woodland	Mixed woodland	Remains of Old Park Wood, Great Barr	Unknown to Post Medieval

De Bois Landscape Survey Group's Chronology

Abbreviations;

- A. Shortly before
- B. Shortly after
- C. Circa
- ?) A particularly speculative date

Date		Event
	1125	Great Barr made part of Sutton Park.
B	1335	The mediaeval park established.
C	1650?	Richard Scott builds the Nether house.
C	1650?	Woodland clearance on the site.
	1675	Death of Richard Scott.
C	1680?	Beaches planted.
	1685	Birth of John Scott of the Nether house.
	1686	Birth of Joseph Scott., Linen Draper.
C	1700	Dutch Garden and 1st avenue laid out at Old Hall.
	1712	Birth of William Scott of the Nether house.
	1714	Birth of William Shenstone.
C	1719	Birth of Thomas Hoo
	1735	Shenstone comes into the. Leasowes
B	1744	North End of Coxit Hill planted as nursery.
B	1744	South end of the High Wood planted as nursery.
B	1744	Great Meadow created.
	1744	Marriage of William Scott and Mary Whitby.
A	1744	Gilbert's Wood planted as nursery.
A	1744	North End of the High Wood planted as nursery.
A	1744	Garden laid out behind Nether house farm.
A	1744	Alcove built on flower garden site.
A	1744	Walled garden built.
A	1744?	Fields on High Wood site laid together.
A	1744?	Planting near sheep-path to Old Hall.
A	1744?	First cascade built.
A	1744?	Botanic Garden laid out.
A	1744?	Creation of big pool.
A	1744?	First planted on Barr Beacon.
	1749	Birth of Charles James Fox.
	1752	Birth of Joseph Scott.
	1752	Firth of Humphrey Repton.
	1753	Death of. William Scott.
	1754	Death of Mary Dolman
	1755	Death of John Scott.

REPORT

C	1755	Mary Scott moved with family to Great Haywood
	1760	Nether House advertised to let.
	1763	Death of William Shenstone.
C	1773	Birth of Robert Lugar.
	1777	Marriage of Joseph Scott and Margaret Whitby.
	1777	Never House fronted in Strawberry Hill Gothic.
	1777	Stables at the hall built in Strawberry Hill Gothic.
	1777?	Rabbit Warren built in walled garden.
	1780	Garden behind hall extended.
	1781?	Nether House Farm reduced to circa 70 acres.
	1781	Death of Joseph Scott, Linen Draper.
	1781	Valuation of Joseph Scott's property.
	1781	Meeting of Joseph Scott's creditors.
	1781	Nether House advertised to let.
A	1781	Nether House Farm. Increased to circa 120 acres.
	1785	East side of Fox is plantation put in.
	1785	The walk by Fox's Plantation put in.
	1785	Windows added to Chapel.
	1785?	Seat put in below. Fox's Plantation.
	1785?	Flagpole erected in Barr Beacon
	1785?	Joseph Scott Abroad.
	1786	Joseph Scott in Boulogne.
	1786	Nether house leased To Samuel Galton Jnr.
	1787	Joseph Scott Still abroad.
	1790	Joseph Scott and family moved to Kingswinford.
	1790	The Lunar Society meet at the Hall.
	1790	Repton worked at Prestwood for Edward Foley.
	1791	Death of Thomas Hoo.
	1793	Further work done on the Hall
	1793	Birth of Edward Scott.
	1794	Repton worked at Stoke Edith for E. Foley.
	1795	Death of William Scott's wife, Mary.
	1795	Wrapped in landscaped Warley for the Galtons
	1796	Merrions Wood purchased.
	1796	Partnership between Repton and Nash formed.
	1797?	Ice house built.
	1797	Joseph Scott brought Galton's lease to an end and moved back to Great Barr.
	1797	The Belt planted.
	1797	Walsall Lodge built.
	1797	Walsall approach laid out.
	1797	Beeches planted around Chapel.
	1798	Road from Chapel to Old Hall moved.
	1798	Most of Fir Ave to old Hall felled, Reminder bulked up with new planting.
	1799	Enclosure of Barr Beacon
	1799	Flower Garden laid out.
	1799	Old Handsworth approach laid out
	1799	Various groups of trees planted in the park.

REPORT

1799	Upper Lake built.
1799	Present cascade put in.
1799	Dam below Big Pool built.
1799	High Wood doubled in size.
1799	Mixed plantations north of high would put in.
	New steeple built on Chapel.
	Chapel Fields acquired by Joseph Scott.
	Sunk fences on north boundary put in.
	Chapel Lodge built.
	Queslett Lodge built.
	Walk through south half of Highwood laid out.
	Queslett approach laid out.
	Sunk fence south of Queslett Approach dug
	Parkland plantings, especially West of the lakes.
	Walks west of the lakes laid out
	Death of Mary Whitby, Joseph Scott's mother-in-law.
	Plantings by Queslett approach put in.
	Walk through north half of High Wood laid out.
	East side of Fox's plantation put in.
	Spare of woodland east of flower garden put in.
	Duckery dug and planted.
	Joseph Scott became MP for Worcester.
	Joseph Scott received Baronetcy
	Death of Charles Fox.
	Horse-Chestnut Avenue from Marion's Wood planted.
	Death of Gilbert Scott.
	Marriage of Edward Scott and Catherine Bateman.
	Roads moved West of Moat Farm.
	Robert Lugar worked at Warley for Galtons
	John Glover painted the park.
	John Allport painted the park.
	Death of Joseph Scott's wife, Margaret Scott.
	Birth of Francis Scott.
	Greenhouse built in Flower Garden.
	Joseph Scott Suffered a stroke.
	Death of Joseph Scott in Leamington Spa.
	New Road laid out.
	Edward Scott became MP for Lichfield.
	Skip Lane closed through Merrions would.
	Gardens on the West Bank of upper lake laid out.
	Major alterations to the Hall.
	Conservatory added to Hall.
	Death of Edmund Robinson.
	Lydia Robinson moves to Great Barr.
	Death of Branwell Bronte
	Terraced gardens created.
	Zigzag drive to flower garden laid out.

REPORT

	Sunk fence South of Garden dug.
	Marriage of Edward Scott and Lydia Robinson.
	Death of Branwell Bronte (repeat noted, copy from the original document)
	John Rider painted the park.
	The Sutton Approach and bridge constructed.
	The Mill out of use.
	Handsworth Lodge built, Old lodge taken down.
	Handsworth approach laid out.
	Death of Sir Edward Scott.
	Francis Scott met Gilbert Scott.
	Walsall Lodge rebuilt.
	Queslett lodge rebuilt.
	Death of Robert Lugar.
	Holly Wood extended and new drives added.
	Handsworth Approach planted.
	Plantings added to Queslett approach.
	High Wood extended to north and West.
	Older woods replanted.
	Various group of trees planted in park.
	Spare of woodland east of Flower Garden felled.
	Duckery drained.
	Avenue Lodge rebuilt.
	Chapel lodge rebuilt.
	Park farm built.
	Beacon Lodge built.
	Farm approach laid out.
	Maize planted.
	Chapel-like billiard room added to hall.
	Boat house built.
	Wooden post bridge built.
	Gardens reworked.
	Summer house rebuilt.
	Boat House on big pool built.
	Death of Francis Scott.
	Pet cemetery established.
	Park wall built.
	Deer brought into the park.
	Captain Lane, tenant of the hall.
	Death of Gilbert Scott.
	Drive from Queslett Lodge to Flower Garden.
	Keepers Cottage built.
	Drive from Keepers Cottage to Park Farm.
	Flagpole still stood on Barr Beacon.
	Death of Lady Bateman-Scott.
	Sale to West Bromwich Poor Law Union.
	McMichael starts work on hospital.
	Summer house converted.

REPORT

		Extensive felling in park.
		Lavender and James Homes completed.
		Gilbert Scott's wooden bridge taken down.
		Prince Edward and Wells Homes completed.
		Sanders Home Built.
		Four further homes built.
		Hospital Farm built.
		Male side built.
		Extensive felling in the park.
		Trust takes over Merrions words.
b	1970	Activity units etc. built on female side.

Appendix E

Official List Entries

Great Barr Hall – Registered Park and Garden

Heritage Category: **Park and Garden**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1001202**

Date first listed: **01-Jul-1986**

Location

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Sandwell (Metropolitan Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

District: **Walsall (Metropolitan Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SP 04800 95482, SP 05375 94417**

Details

An C18 landscape park associated with a country house; associated with Humphry Repton and John Nash and George Gilbert Scott, and possibly with William Shenstone.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT In the mid C17 Richard Scott (d 1675), tenant of Old Hall (or High House), the manor house of Great Barr, built Nether-house Farm c 1km to the south-west near the bottom of a wooded valley. In the time of John Scott (d 1755) Nether House was apparently rebuilt or greatly extended and the ornamentation of the landscape begun. An early C19 tradition states that William Shenstone (1714-1763), later a kinsman of the family, helped lay out these improvements. The house was then tenanted until 1777 when his grandson Joseph Scott came to live there following his marriage. Over the next six years he ran through most of his fortune, much of it on rebuilding the house, thereafter known as Great Barr Hall. Some was also spent on its grounds. By c 1785 the Scotts' financial plight had driven them abroad, and Great Barr was leased to the Galton family, Birmingham Quakers. Samuel Galton junior was a member of the Lunar Society, the unofficial scientific body whose members did much to advance the Industrial Revolution, and this met occasionally at Great Barr between 1785 and 1796. The Galtons' lease was terminated in 1797 and Scott immediately called in Humphry Repton (1752-1818) and John Nash (1752-1835) to work on the park. He had presumably become acquainted with them through his

kinsman Edward Foley, of the well-known Herefordshire family. Joseph died in 1828 and was succeeded by his son Sir Edward Scott (d 1851), who in the 1840s commissioned considerable improvements at Great Barr. His second wife Lydia Robinson, whom he married in 1848, was an associate of the Brontes; Branwell was supposedly infatuated with her. Sir Francis Scott (d 1863), Sir Edward's son and heir, undertook many changes to the house and park, which have been attributed to the architect George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), whom he had met in Venice. In 1911, following the death of his widow in 1909, the house and park were sold to West Bromwich Poor Law Union. Three years later work began on Great Barr Park Colony for Mental Defectives, later renamed St Margaret's Hospital. The first phase, an elevated horse-shoe of buildings, was designed by the Birmingham architect Gerald McMichael. In the 1990s most of the extensive older hospital buildings were abandoned, although some clinic services continued to be provided from buildings of c 1990. Recently (2008) the hospital buildings were demolished and replaced with a new housing estate (not part of the area registered).

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Great Barr lies c 5km south-east of Walsall, the former Great Barr park forming a green valley corridor between the housing estates of Great Barr to the west and of Pheasey and Queslett to the east. The north boundary of the site is formed by Chapel Lane, and that to the south by the A4041. The west boundary now follows the line of the M6 motorway, which truncates the south-west tip of the park. The east boundary follows the line of the lakes. It bounds a housing estate built in the early C21 on the horse-shoe shaped site of the hospital buildings that occupied this former part of the park (not included in the registered area). The registered site comprises c 105ha.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Since the C17 there have been numerous approaches contrived to the Hall, some direct and others designed to show off the park. The Hall is approached from the north-west down Sutton's Approach, lined with later C20 horse chestnuts. This drive was laid out in the 1840s, at the same time Sutton's Bridge being built at the north end of the Upper Lake. The drive enters the grounds off Chapel Lane, the public road past Great Barr church; Chapel Lodge (c 1856) which stood on the west side of the drive has been demolished. Opposite the lodge site, on the north side of Chapel Lane, is Avenue Lodge, a red-brick lodge with blue diaper work of c 1856, probably by Gilbert Scott. Iron gate piers of the same date stand at the end of the Walsall Approach drive of 1797, now a footpath, which runs for 1km west through Merrion's Wood. At the end of that path is the mid C19 Walsall (or Merrion's) Lodge of 1854 (listed Grade II); it too has iron gate piers to one side.

Sutton's Approach leads to the north side of the Hall and to its west front. From here a rough drive continues south, down the east side of the lakes. The present lodge on

the centre of the south side of the park dates from the mid C20. A more important approach from the south was the drive through the woodland above the west side of the lakes, from the mid C19 Handsworth Lodge (listed grade II) at the south-west corner of the registered area. Laid out c 1799 the drive survives as a track.

From the stables on the east side of the Hall the Farm Approach of 1856 leads east past the site of Park Farm (built in 1856 on the east side of the walled garden); it originally ran to Beacon Lodge 500m beyond, now subsumed in the dense suburban housing of the 1960s and 1970s which abuts the east side of the registered area.

In the early C18 there was an ornamented walk to High House, past the west wall of the kitchen garden. This was done away with in the 1790s when Repton and Nash reworked the approaches to the Hall. As well as those noted above a further drive was constructed at that time from the south-east corner of the park, where the Queslett Lodge was built c 1800.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Great Barr Hall (listed Grade II*) stands central alongside the east boundary of the registered park, and has since the closure and demolition of St Margaret's Hospital been vacant and in poor condition. Built in 1777 for Joseph Scott, it is a rendered, gothick style building. It is set on relatively low ground, facing west towards its lake, and with a wooded bank rising immediately behind it. The main part of the Hall has a nine-bay front, with ogee-headed windows, buttresses done as octagonal turrets, and battlements. At the south end of the Hall is a red-brick with blue diaper work building of 1863 attributed to George Gilbert Scott, constructed as a chapel but never consecrated and used subsequently as a billiard room.

The Hall occupies the site of the mid C17 and later Nether-house Farm.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS West of the Hall is an overgrown lawn, laid out as the Great Meadow in the 1740s and reworked more formally with two low terraces and a central axial path in the 1840s. This lawn extended c 80m west to the Upper Lake, now silted up and overgrown.

On the bank above the Hall and c 150m to the south is a roughly circular grassed area, the site of the late C18 Flower Garden. On its north side is a two-storey brick range, the surviving element of the gothic greenhouse built c 1825 by Robert Lugar and illustrated in his *Villa Architecture* (pl 5) of 1828.

Creation of pleasure gardens around the Hall began in the early C18 under John Scott who created features including the Great Meadow, a shrubbery, and a summerhouse on the site of the Flower Garden.

PARK Merrion's Wood, the western arm of the park, is between 50m and 200m wide and 1km long. It comprises mature deciduous woodland through which runs a broad footpath along the line of the former drive, the whole managed as a public amenity by the local authority via a trust. Merrion's Wood was added to the estate by purchase in 1796.

Occupying the high ground down the high, eastern border of the park is mature deciduous woodland: High Wood to the north, and Fox's Plantation to the south. Tradition states that the politician and statesman Charles James Fox (d 1806) had a hand in the laying out of the latter, and there is some evidence that Fox may have visited Great Barr in 1784 or 1785, about the time the Plantation was put in.

The main feature of the park is the two lakes which lie along the valley bottom. The more southerly, Big Pool, was formed c 1744. It is c 400m long and 100m wide. A dam at its north end retains the Upper Lake, which is narrower. Constructed c 1799 and once somewhat longer than Big Pool, its north end, west of the Hall, is now silted up and overgrown. Opposite the axial path west from the Hall is an embayment wherein stood a boathouse built in 1863 to a design by Gilbert Scott (now gone). The lakes are screened on the west by Holly Wood and beyond it the park (partly ploughed) with Gilbert's Wood at its centre, rises in the direction of the M6 motorway. From this part of the site there are views of Great Barr Hall (now partly obscured), situated on the other side above the lakes. Formerly there were also views from the Hall and the lakes of this part of the park. The western part of the site had been imparked by 1830 (see estate map of that date), probably by Joseph Scott who owned Great Barr Hall from 1777 until 1828.

As with the garden, the wider landscape around what was still then called Nether-house Farm began to be ornamented in the mid C18 by John Scott (mostly c 1744) and by the 1750s there was a cascade on the stream 200m north-west of the house and close to that cascade a botanic garden, while Big Pool had been created 500m to the south of the house. An early C19 tradition states that William Shenstone (1714-1763), later a kinsman of the family, helped lay out these improvements.

The work undertaken to the designs of Humphry Repton and John Nash in c1797, included laying out new approaches from the north (Walsall), south (Handsworth), and south-east (Queslett), constructing the Upper Pool, and making or enlarging the park's woodland, which was cut through with walks: High Wood, Fox's Plantation, and that down the west side of the lakes. The next and last main phase of work took place in the later 1850s when many buildings and features in the park were rebuilt to designs by Gilbert Scott.

KITCHEN GARDEN The walled garden, standing above and 150m north-east of the Hall, was built in the 1740s. The brick-walled compartment, partly collapsed and overgrown in 2008, is c 100m east/west by 60m north/south, and slopes markedly down from north to south. A rabbit warren was built in the garden c 1777.

REFERENCES Great Barr Park: A Survey of the Landscape, (De Bois Landscape Survey Group 1985) Reilly, R, Josiah Wedgwood (1992), 194, 198

Maps Estate map of Great Barr, 1830, by G Weddal Tithe Map for Adridge, 1839/40 OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886 2nd edition published 1918 1937 edition

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION Great Barr Hall, Walsall, West Midlands, an C18 landscape park, is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * Group value: the C18 landscape park is contemporary with and provides the setting for Great Barr Hall (listed Grade II*). * Design interest: C18 and C19 design work by Humphry Repton, John Nash and Gilbert Scott, and possibly William Shenstone. * Intactness: the overall layout, boundaries and features of the park remain mostly intact and it retains strong visual links with Great Barr Hall.

Description written: 1997 Register Inspector: PAS Edited: October 1999 Amended: February 2009 Amended: June 2010

Great Barr Hall and Chapel

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1076395**

Date first listed: **15-Jun-1971**

Date of most recent amendment: **21-Sep-2016**

List Entry Name: **Great Barr Hall and Chapel**

Statutory Address 1: **Great Barr, Walsall**

Location

Statutory Address: **Great Barr, Walsall** The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Walsall (Metropolitan Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SP0546295377**

Summary

A country house which was converted to use as a hospital in the early C20. Part of the fabric is C17 with additions and alterations of c.1777, the early C19 and a chapel building of c.1856, probably designed by George Gilbert Scott.

Reasons for Designation

Great Barr Hall, Walsall, a former country house of the C17 – C19, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

* Architectural interest: despite unsympathetic alterations made during its use as a hospital and subsequent damage caused by neglect and vandalism, the hall has special interest as an example of C18 Gothick architecture which was later altered and extended to form a picturesque Gothic-revival country house; * Historic interest: the lengthy ownership of the Scott family, their development of the house and landscape and the tenancy of Samuel Galton and his affiliation with the Lunar Society, and documented meetings of the group at the house, combine to give distinct historic interest to the hall; * Group value: Great Barr Hall, together with its surrounding landscape, which is registered at Grade II on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, and related heritage assets, form an integrated grouping which has special interest.

History

The building was initially known as Netherhouse and a hearth tax return of 1666 records Richard Scott as living there with five hearths in the house. In an inventory of 1675 there is reference to both old and new parts of the house and it is possible that the house was divided amongst two households, according to Richard Scott's will of the same year. It may have been a large farm house according to the evidence of inventories prepared in 1709 and 1715 with a barn and cockloft, buttery and dairy. By 1760 it was described as a “handsome and commodious dwelling house” with stables, a coach house and a walled garden. According to Stebbing Shaw in his ‘History and Antiquities of Staffordshire’ of 1798, “The present possessor [Joseph Scott], about the year 1777, began to exercise his well known taste and ingenuity upon the old fabric, giving it the pleasing monastic appearance it now exhibits ... and has since much improved it by the addition of a spacious dining room at the east end, and other rooms and conveniences”. Shaw’s book shows a depiction of the house with a symmetrical entrance front of 11 bays, having a central doorway, turrets to the corners and battlemented parapet. This is assumed to be the present west front and

the flank, or south front, appears to have had three bays.

These alterations left the Scotts in financial straits and they went abroad from 1785 and let the house to Samuel Galton junior, the Birmingham Quaker, banker and gun manufacturer. In his time the house was used as one of the venues for meetings of the Lunar Society, a group of entrepreneurs and intellectuals from the area around Birmingham, many of whom were Fellows of the Royal Society and who included Matthew Boulton, James Watt, Erasmus Darwin and Josiah Wedgwood. Meetings of this illustrious group at Barr are recorded in The Scotts returned to Great Barr in 1797 and more alterations to the house followed. The reason may have been given by Galton's daughter, Mary Anne, who published an autobiography in 1858 under her married surname of Schimmelpennink. She lived at the Hall between 1786 and 1797, and wrote that 'There were four or five different halls, and as many different staircases. It was more like an assemblage of several houses under the same roof, than the unity of one dwelling'. It was Mrs Schimmelpenninck who provided the only eye-witness accounts of meetings of the Lunar Society at the Hall, but other meetings are referred to in letters between participants. Joseph Scott was made a baronet in 1806, having been MP for Worcester 1802-06. The second campaign of alterations which was instigated after 1797 appears to have been intended to address the problems which Mrs Schimmelpennink outlined, as well as to celebrate the family's new status.

It is not clear if it was Joseph or his son, Edward Dolman Scott (who inherited the baronetcy and house in 1828 and lived until 1851), who undertook this second phase of redevelopment. The central, top-lit, staircase hall was constructed at this time, and its complex arrangement of flights of stairs with landings at several different levels seems to have been devised to solve the problems which resulted from the earlier piecemeal development of the house. At the same time the ground floor plan was altered to provide an inter-connected group of reception rooms and the exterior was changed to create a more dynamic composition than the existing, slightly block-like, outline which would have looked old-fashioned by the tail end of the C18. The alterations include the three bays which project at the centre of both floors on the west front, and which replace the former five bays which were more closely spaced. At the same time the ground floor projections at either side of the centre were added, with their canted bay windows. What remained of the former façade appears to have been the three first floor windows at either side which also incorporated corner turrets (since demolished, in the early C20) that extended upwards to form an attic floor. A depiction of the earlier form of the house in Stebbing Shaw's 'History and Antiquities of Staffordshire' shows these turrets and would also seem to indicate that the earlier Gothick treatment may have had ogee heads to the windows. Mary Anne Schimmel penninck wrote of the house having being built in the 'Ogee Gothic style'

(which would place the house amongst the early examples of Gothic Revival taste in England) and it may well be that the early-C19 additions respected the existing style of c.1777. Unifying the front and adding interest across it are a series of octagonal buttresses which terminate in flat or battlemented caps which were also added at this time.

Between 1830 and 1848 major works included the addition of a clock tower, together with the extension of the south face of the hall and the removal of the entrance to the north elevation from its previous place on the west side. A chapel was added to the south west corner of the building c. 1856, apparently to the designs of Sir George Gilbert Scott who added other estate buildings including two lodges, a bridge and a boat house for Francis Scott, the patron and his architect having first been introduced by Ruskin. Advertisements in the Staffordshire Advertiser and Wolverhampton Chronicle of February 1856, naming Scott as the architect, invited builders to tender for the erection of a new 'church' at Great Barr and to respond to Sir Francis Scott at the Hall. Sir Francis died in 1863 and the chapel was never consecrated and was turned into a billiard room. Following the death of Lady Bateman-Scott in 1909 the hall was bought by the West Bromwich Poor Law Guardians, initially to house orphaned children.

From 1918 it served as a hospital for those with learning disabilities. The auction catalogue of 1911 refers to the large eastern service yard having a laundry, brewhouse, coal and wood houses, and to extensive carriage houses and stables. In 1925 a two-storey extension was added to the north elevation which encroached on the service yard and in 1955 the clock tower, stables and part of the east wing were demolished to make way for a further extension to the hospital facilities. Alterations in the 1960s included the insertion of load-bearing steel beams and the removal of the oriel windows on the north front and their replacement with metal casements (now, in turn, removed).

The house ceased to be a hospital in 1978 and was in a state of some disrepair when it was reassessed at Grade II* in 1986. In 1989 the building was bought by a private individual and they stripped out plasterwork and woodwork in order to stem an outbreak of dry rot. The owner became bankrupt and the receiver sold a part of the surrounding landscape to a property developer. The remaining land, together with the hall, was sold to another individual in 2003. The listing of the hall at Grade II* was confirmed in an assessment of 2008. The property was offered at auction in 2011 and bought by a consortium which is the present owner. In the later C20 and early C21 vandalism across the building and fire damage to the chapel has meant that the house has now lost much of its roof and internal fittings. Water penetration has also caused further damage and loss.

Details

A country house which was converted to use as a hospital in the early C20. Part of the fabric is C17 with additions and alterations of c.1777, the early C19 and a chapel building of c.1856, probably designed by George Gilbert Scott.

MATERIALS: the early C19 part of the building is of rendered brick with a slate roof and the chapel of c.1856 has red brick walling with blue brick diapering, stone dressings and a slate roof.

PLAN: the house is of two storeys with a basement. The garden front faces west and is raised by two terraces above a lake. The entrance front is to the north. A top-lit staircase hall, together with a small entrance hall at the north end, form the central spine of the building with reception rooms set to the west side, overlooking the landscape. Former service rooms are positioned to the east.

EXTERIOR: the building is in a state of dilapidation. At the time of survey (March 2016) the roof has been almost entirely removed; some details such as mouldings and areas of the upper walls have been lost where stucco render has fallen; brickwork has spalled and sash windows across the building have, with few exceptions, been removed. C20 additions to the eastern side of the building have been demolished. The garden front has nine bays at first floor level with ogee heads to all openings, with square hood moulds and blind tracery to the spandrels. The central three bays project forward from, and above the level of those to either side and the lateral bays at ground floor level also project forward and have canted bay windows (the northern bay has now largely collapsed). These projections appear to date from the early C19 alterations, and the recessed bays at first floor level mark the previous building line of the front. There are polygonal buttresses to the angles with battlemented caps (some incomplete) and battlements to the tops of the walls. The north front has two slightly-projecting bays at centre, in front of which is a projecting, single-storey porch with three-light casements to its flanks. At either side are ogee-headed windows with panels of blind tracery above their heads and, between them, the lower portions of polygonal brackets, which formerly supported first-floor, oriel windows which were then replaced by C20, metal-framed casements (now removed). Extending to the left of this front and set lower, is part of the walling of the service wing which has now been largely demolished. Following the demolition of large parts of the service wing and the additions and alterations made to the house by the National Health Service and its predecessors during the use of the building as a hospital in the C20, the east side of the house now largely consists of exposed internal walling.

INTERIOR: plasterwork, joinery (including fireplaces, doors and their surrounds) and

floorboards have largely been removed from the building as a result of dry rot. To the centre of the plan is a rectangular, top-lit staircase hall. This connects at its northern end to the entrance hall and doors from it lead off to the three principal rooms along the west front; a central drawing room, with a doorway out to the terrace, a library at the north end and a dining room at the south end. A short passageway from the dining room leads to the chapel. The staircase hall had a central imperial staircase which started as two flights, rose to a central T-shaped gallery and then split again into two flights which climbed around the walls of the hall to a top landing on the west side. The staircase is now lost. To the upper walls are a series of pilasters which are inset with strapwork decoration. To the heads of these are projecting capitals which support depressed arches. These divided the hall into a series of bays; three to each of the shorter ends (which largely survive) and nine to each of the longer flanks (which are now fragmentary). Plaster vaulting ribs spring from the corners and sides to create an interlacing pattern. Set at the centre of the hall are three octagonal lanterns, with incomplete strapwork decoration to their drums. A further, first-floor landing has a similar octagonal skylight to its ceiling. A stretch of walling at ground-floor level on the eastern side of the house has stone footings and may be a part of the fabric of the C17 house, as may the circular well shaft, which is lined with bricks. C18 cellars with brick barrel vaults lie under the centre of the house. One has barrel stands to either side and a wine cellar has arched storage bays. The vault of one cellar room has partially collapsed.

CHAPEL BUILDING: attached at right of the west front of the house, and projecting slightly, is the mid-C19 chapel building. This is of red brick with blue brick diapering in a lattice pattern. A lower, linking, corridor joins the house and chapel. This has a doorway with moulded ashlar surround. The western flank of the chapel has three bays and a projecting plinth with blue brick moulding and a flush ashlar sill band. Each window is set beneath a gable and has two lights with Carnarvon arches to the lower windows and a very generous transom, which hides the sill beam supporting the roof structure and which is set with two quatrefoil panels of foliage carving. Immediately above this are the upper arches and these rise into the gable. The heads to the windows had cusped lights and trefoils to the apex and dogtooth ornament to the outer arches, but these upper portions of the windows have now collapsed and are lying on the floor of the chapel or nearby. At the time of survey (March 2016) the central archway and window had been removed. At either end of the walling are elaborately-carved kneelers and the gables across the building have ashlar copings. The east side of the chapel is similar. The southern gable end (ritual east) has lost the majority of its upper walling, including the former window of five lights with cusped heads and quatrefoils and trefoils to the apex. The north gable end (ritual west) has a rose window with deeply-carved ashlar surround and a series of six quatrefoils surrounding a central polygon.

The building has suffered from fire damage and the roof covering of the chapel has almost entirely gone. The two charred roof trusses remain and consist of a tie, supported by arched braces, which carry a moulded king post and two ranks of purlins. There are ashlar posts connected to the common rafters. To the floor are plain tiles and the internal walls carry the same trellis pattern of diapering seen on the exterior.

MAPPING NOTE: The outline shown in blue on the map which accompanies this listing indicates the historic extent of the house as it existed prior to its conversion to hospital use in the early C20 and does not show buildings and their foundations added to the eastern and southern sides of the house which were constructed after the change of use in 1918.

This entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 20 January 2017.

Appendix F

Ryder Landscape – Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Appendix G

Ryder Landscape - Sheets

Appendix H

All Figures

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