
MARLINE VALLEY, CROWHURST, EAST SUSSEX

CULTURAL HERITAGE APPRAISAL
FOR
MOTT MACDONALD LTD

22ND OCTOBER 2008

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) has been commissioned by Mott MacDonald Limited to undertake a cultural heritage appraisal of an area of land known as the Marline Valley, near Hastings in East Sussex (Figure 1). The Marline Valley is referred to in this document as the 'Site' and consists of *c* 70 hectares of farmland to the west of Marline Wood and east of Park Farm, centred on NGR TQ 7772 1226.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 The purpose of this appraisal is twofold:

- (1) to inform a broader planning appraisal of the Site as a location for a compensation area associated with the proposed Bexhill to Hastings Link Road (BHLR);
- (2) to make recommendations for further work in the context of the curation of the cultural heritage within the planning framework.

1.3 Scope

1.3.1 This appraisal has used the following data-sources:

- Information on Listed Buildings from English Heritage (GIS shapefiles and attached data);
- Information on archaeological monuments and activities from the National Monuments Record (NMR), maintained by English Heritage (GIS shapefiles and attached data);
- Information on Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Ancient Woodlands from the MAgiC internet resource (<http://www.magic.gov.uk/#>);
- Previous studies undertaken by OA on the BHLR scheme (summarised in Chapter 14 of the BHLR Environmental Statement 2007);
- Aerial photographic images available on the internet (*eg* <http://maps.google.co.uk>);
- Historical maps available on the internet (*eg* <http://www.old-maps.co.uk/> and <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/map>).

1.3.2 The sources noted above have been examined for a wider Study Area surrounding the Site, centred on a 1.5 km radius from NGR TQ 7772 1226.

1.4 Topography and Geology

- 1.4.1 The Site lies on the west side of a reentrant (or side valley) off the larger Combe Haven Valley. The side valley is roughly aligned north-east to south-west and is drained by a stream that feeds the Combe Haven *c* 1.5km to the south of the Site. The stream drops down the side valley from *c* 55m OD to *c* 20m OD over a distance of *c* 1.35km. The Site therefore represents a slice through the landscape, climbing from the base of the side valley west to the top of a ridge where it is bounded by a road running along the top of the ridge (Breadsell Lane). The east edge of the Site is an arbitrary line drawn through a complex of woodland at the base of the side valley known as Marline and Park Woods. The highest point within the Site is the north-west corner at *c* 105m OD, whilst the lowest point is at *c* 20m OD, at the base of the railway embankment on the southern edge of the Site.
- 1.4.2 The base of the side valley is underlain by Cretaceous deposits of the Ashdown Beds and by deposits of Wadhurst Clay (British Geological Society map no.320/321, 1980, Solid and Drift). The latter also extends west from the base of the side valley up onto the ridge where it includes patches of Sand in Wadhurst Clay. Although no alluvium is shown on the BGS map it is possible that small pockets of alluvium may exist within the Site, associated with the stream. It is very unlikely that the side valley has been subject to the marine inundations that occurred lower down in the Combe Haven (BHLR ES Chapter 14 2007).

2 IDENTIFIED CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES

2.1 Designated Sites

- 2.1.1 There are no Scheduled Monuments, Historic Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within the Site or the broader Study Area.
- 2.1.2 There are two nationally designated sites within the Site: the Grade II Listed Stonebridge Farmhouse (Figure 1, **B1**), and the Grade II Listed Stonebridge Cottage (Figure 1, **B2**). The latter is at the south-west corner of the Site, on Breadsell Lane.
- 2.1.3 There are a further nine Grade II Listed Buildings in the broader Study Area, including Park Farmhouse, *c* 120m west of the Site.
- 2.1.4 There is a complex of blocks of English Nature designated Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland within and adjacent to the Site (Marline and Hoads Wood, Park Wood). Although primarily an ecological resource, these also have a historic landscape value and should be regarded as historic landscape assets

2.2 Archaeological Sites

- 2.2.1 There are two recorded archaeological features within the Site: both refer to possible archaeological deposits associated with the Listed Buildings B1 and B2 noted above (**A1** and **A2**, Figure 1). This is a common means of identifying archaeological potential and does not refer to previously known and specific archaeological finds or features at these locations.
- 2.2.2 The Site is partly bounded to the west by the railway line opened in 1852 as the Tunbridge Wells and Hastings branch line. It is recorded in the NMR as an archaeological feature (Feature **A3** on Figure 1) but is in itself not of high archaeological significance.

2.2.3 There are a further ten archaeological features in the broader Study Area, the majority of which refer to potential archaeological deposits associated with historic or Listed Buildings. Two features are of particular relevance as they indicate the potential for this landscape to contain similar but currently unidentified features:

- **A4** - An extensive area of former earthworks on a south-west facing slope *c* 450m west of the Site. These had been ploughed out by 1973 and appear to represent a former field system of possible Later Medieval or early Post Medieval origin.
- **A5** - A reference to a possible archaeological excavation on land in the vicinity of Park Farm, *c* 350m west of the Site, as shown on modern OS mapping. The reference is to a possible Iron Age and Roman bloomery (iron-smelting site) that was excavated in the 1930s. The reference in the NMR may not be correct and may refer to a site outside of the Study Area.

2.3 Historic Buildings

2.3.1 With the exception of the two Grade II Listed Buildings **B1** and **B2** noted above (2.1.2), there are no historic non-Listed buildings currently recorded within the Site.

2.4 Historic Landscape

2.4.1 In addition to the complex of Ancient Woodland noted above (2.1.4), the Site includes a complex of established hedges that are very likely to be covered by the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations as 'Important Hedgerows' on historic value, and thus would be regarded as historic landscape features.

3 POTENTIAL FOR UNKNOWN CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES

3.1 Archaeological Sites

3.1.1 The Ordnance Survey First Edition Six Inch Map of 1878 shows a brick and tile works within the Site, opposite the Park Farm complex. Remains of this industrial facility may survive within the Site. The works may be the origin of some of what appear to be quarry pits within the Site, one at Brickyard Shaw and another just to the south of Breadsell Lane. However, these may also be iron-ore quarry pits and thus potentially of Later Medieval or possibly Roman origin.

3.1.2 A number of earthworks were noted in the southern part of Park Woods during the walkover survey undertaken in 2006 for the BHLR ES. These may extend further north and into Marline Woods and are likely to be of Later Medieval or Post Medieval origin. There are several earthwork features and small ponds within the Site either shown on historic OS mapping, current OS mapping or aerial photographs. These are most likely to be of Later Medieval or Post Medieval origin.

3.1.3 The landscape in which the Site is would have been attractive to exploitation from the Prehistoric periods onwards, as it includes natural water-sources (including springs), woodland resources and, possibly, deposits of iron ore. The Site therefore sits in a landscape which has an uncertain but probably moderate to high potential to include previously unknown archaeological deposits of the Later Prehistoric and Roman periods, and a high potential to include previously unknown archaeological deposits of the Later Medieval or Post Medieval periods. The Site has an uncertain potential to include previously unknown archaeological deposits of the Early Prehistoric and Early Medieval periods.

- 3.1.4 Where archaeological deposits survive within woodland, then they are likely to survive in better condition than similar features in open farmland, which may have been subject to intensive cultivation over a prolonged period. The Ancient Woodlands within and adjacent to the Site may therefore include relatively well-preserved archaeological deposits. In addition, the woodlands may include distinctive forms of archaeological features related to their exploitation and management in the Later Medieval or Post Medieval periods.

3.2 Historic Buildings

- 3.2.1 The brick and tile works shown on the Ordnance Survey First Edition Map of 1878 includes a complex of buildings, one of which may survive within the Site. If so, then this may be regarded as of local significance as a non-Listed historic building.
- 3.2.2 The same OS map also shows several buildings at Stonebridge Farm that appear to be extant on recent aerial photographs. Stonebridge Farm thus has a high potential to include several non-Listed historic buildings.

3.3 Historic Landscape

- 3.3.1 Both Stonebridge Farm and Park House Farm are shown on the Ordnance Survey First Edition Map of 1878 and may thus have some landscape value as historic farmsteads.
- 3.3.2 The Site straddles the boundary between the historic parishes of Crowhurst to the west and Hollington to the east. Features associated with the boundary (*eg* boundary stones) may have an enhanced value as elements of the historic landscape.

4 POTENTIAL IMPACTS, MITIGATION AND FURTHER WORK

4.1 Potential Impacts

- 4.1.1 Potential impacts to the cultural heritage from a woodland-creation scheme can be divided into two forms: physical and setting/visual. Each may occur during the construction phase and operation phase, for want of a better terminology.
- 4.1.2 Potential impacts in the construction phase include physical impacts to archaeological and historic landscape receptors from the digging of tree-pits, the movement of plant or off-road vehicles over such features, and the construction of compounds or similar facilities. Impacts to settings in the construction phase include noise and visual effects to Listed or historic buildings and to elements of the historic landscape. This is especially so where such receptors can be accessed from public rights of way, for example, or form key parts of viewsheds.
- 4.1.3 The 'operational' phase of woodland-creation schemes may lead to further physical impacts to archaeological and historic landscape receptors where woodland maintenance is carried out, for example through tree-thinning, and ultimately, through the growth of roots into archaeological deposits (see Darvill. T 1987 *Ancient Monuments in the Countryside: an archaeological management review*, HBMC, London)
- 4.1.4 Although the changes in setting that may result from the slow growth and maturation of woodland may be regarded as generally positive effects, this would depend entirely on the species of tree to be planted, the extent and scope of the planting, the pattern in which they are planted and to a certain extent, the means of woodland management.

Species that did not match the existing mature trees in the Ancient Woodland or hedges would be visually intrusive, as would linear, regular blocks or pattern of planting. If trees within the Ancient Woodland are currently managed by means such as coppicing or pollarding, then not to use these regimes would impact upon the visual quality of the new woodlands.

4.2 Mitigation Measures

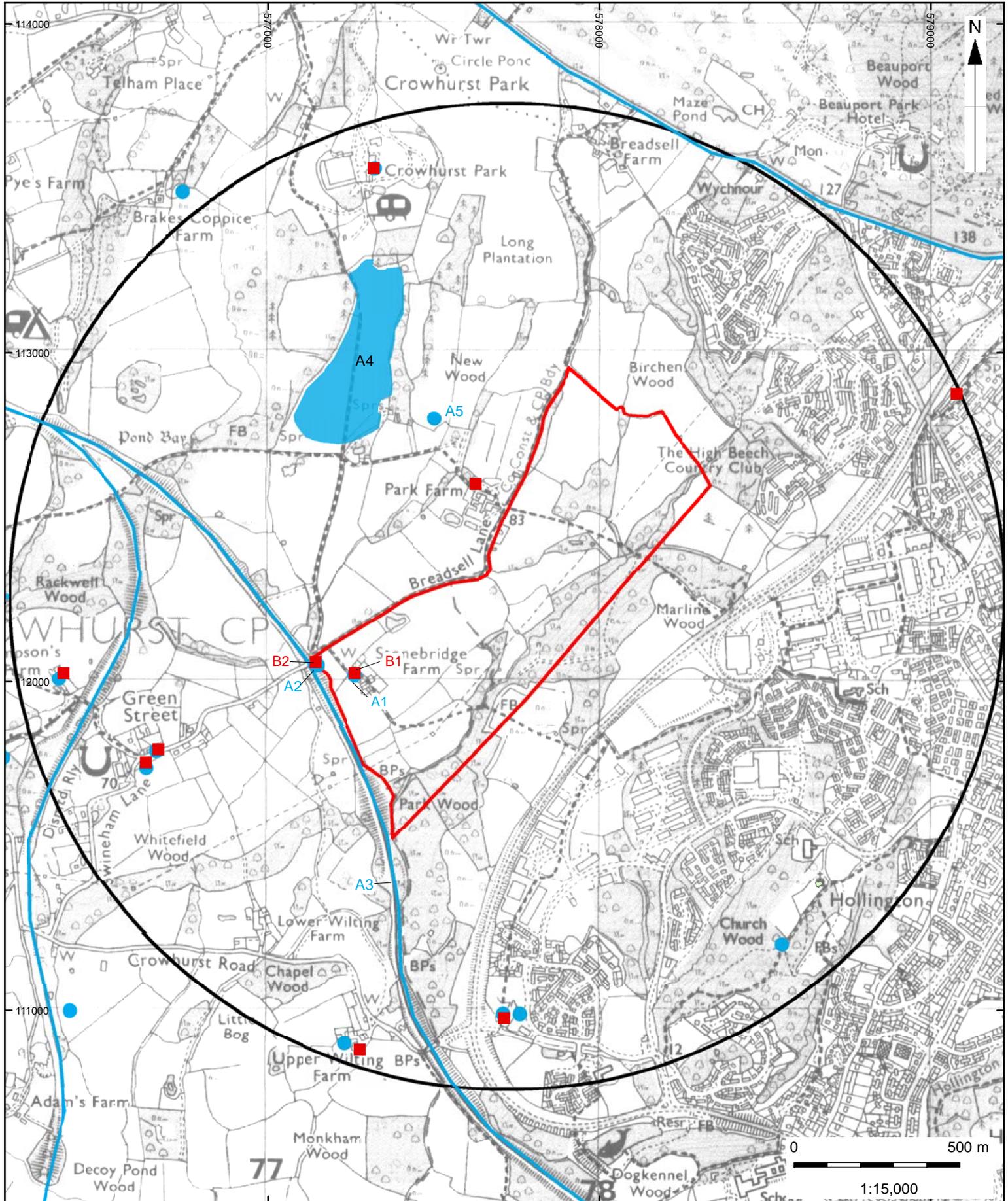
- 4.2.1 The most effective mitigation measure against potential effects to the cultural heritage arising from the proposals would be mitigation by design. The type and density of trees will be important and planting areas should respect the settings of current landscape features and buildings.
- 4.2.2 It may be possible to reduce or eliminate the physical impacts of tree planting by adopting a methodology which will not disturb underlying archaeological deposits (planting small saplings which require limited pits for planting etc).
- 4.2.3 Planting can also be avoided on areas of ground where sensitive archaeological deposits have been identified, or where there is a high potential for such deposits to survive.
- 4.2.4 If the planting methodology to be adopted is assessed as having a potential impact on below ground deposits then a mitigation scheme in line with that approved for the existing road scheme should be adopted. Namely, that evaluation, including trial trenching should be undertaken to establish the potential of the specific areas affected. If deposits are present these could be mitigated by excavation and preservation by record. However, due to the nature of the proposals it is highly likely, and preferable, that mitigation could be achieved by relocating proposed planting to areas with no potential and preserving archaeological remains 'in situ'.

5 SUMMARY STATEMENT

- 5.1.1 This cultural heritage appraisal has identified that the Site does not include nor is in close proximity to any Scheduled Monuments, Historic Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens. The Site includes:
 - Two Grade II Listed Buildings;
 - Two archaeological features associated with the Grade II Listed Buildings;
 - A complex of English Nature designated Ancient and Semi Natural Woodlands; and
 - A complex of established hedges that are very likely to be covered by the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations as 'Important Hedgerows' on historic value, and thus would be regarded as historic landscape features.
- 5.1.2 The Site has the specific potential to include:
 - Remains of a Post Medieval brick and tile works, possibly including quarry pits;
 - Iron-ore quarry pits possibly of Roman or Later Medieval origin;
 - Later Medieval or Post Medieval earthworks possibly relating to exploitation of the woodlands;

- An extant non-Listed historic building associated with the former brick and tile works;
- Several non-Listed historic buildings in the environs of Stonebridge Farm;
- Features marking the historical boundary between the parishes of Crowhurst and Hollington;
- A historic farmstead locale at Stonebridge Farm

5.1.3 The Site has the potential to include previously unknown archaeological deposits. This may be summarised as an uncertain but probably moderate to high potential for archaeological deposits of the Later Prehistoric and Roman periods, a high potential for deposits of the Later Medieval or Post Medieval periods, and an uncertain potential to include previously unknown archaeological deposits of the Early Prehistoric and Early Medieval periods.



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Key:

- Study Area
- Site
- Listed Building
- Archaeological Site
- Linear feature
- Archaeological area

Figure 1: Features Mapping