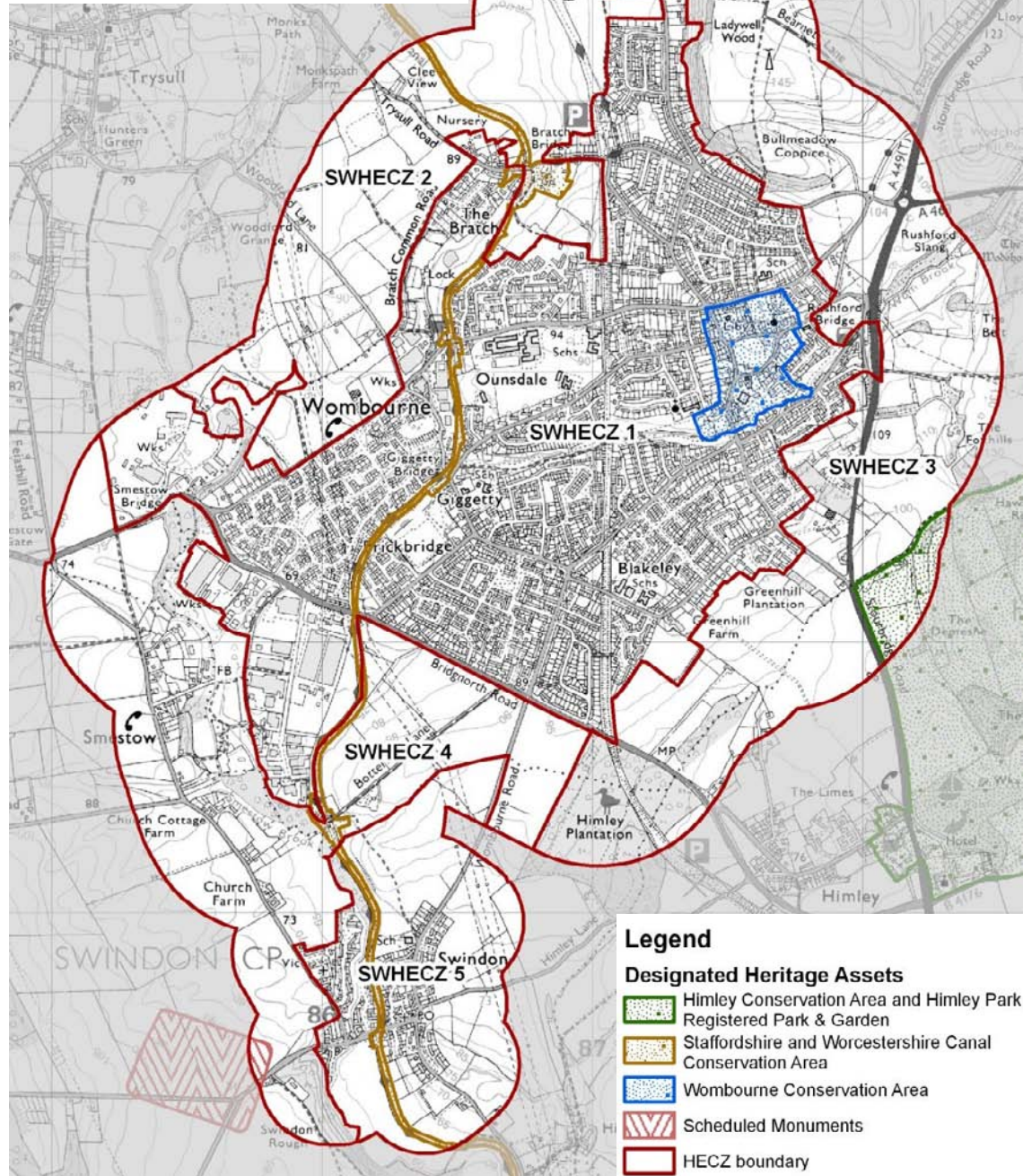


APPENDIX 6: Swindon and Wombourne and Wheaton Aston

1. Swindon and Wombourne

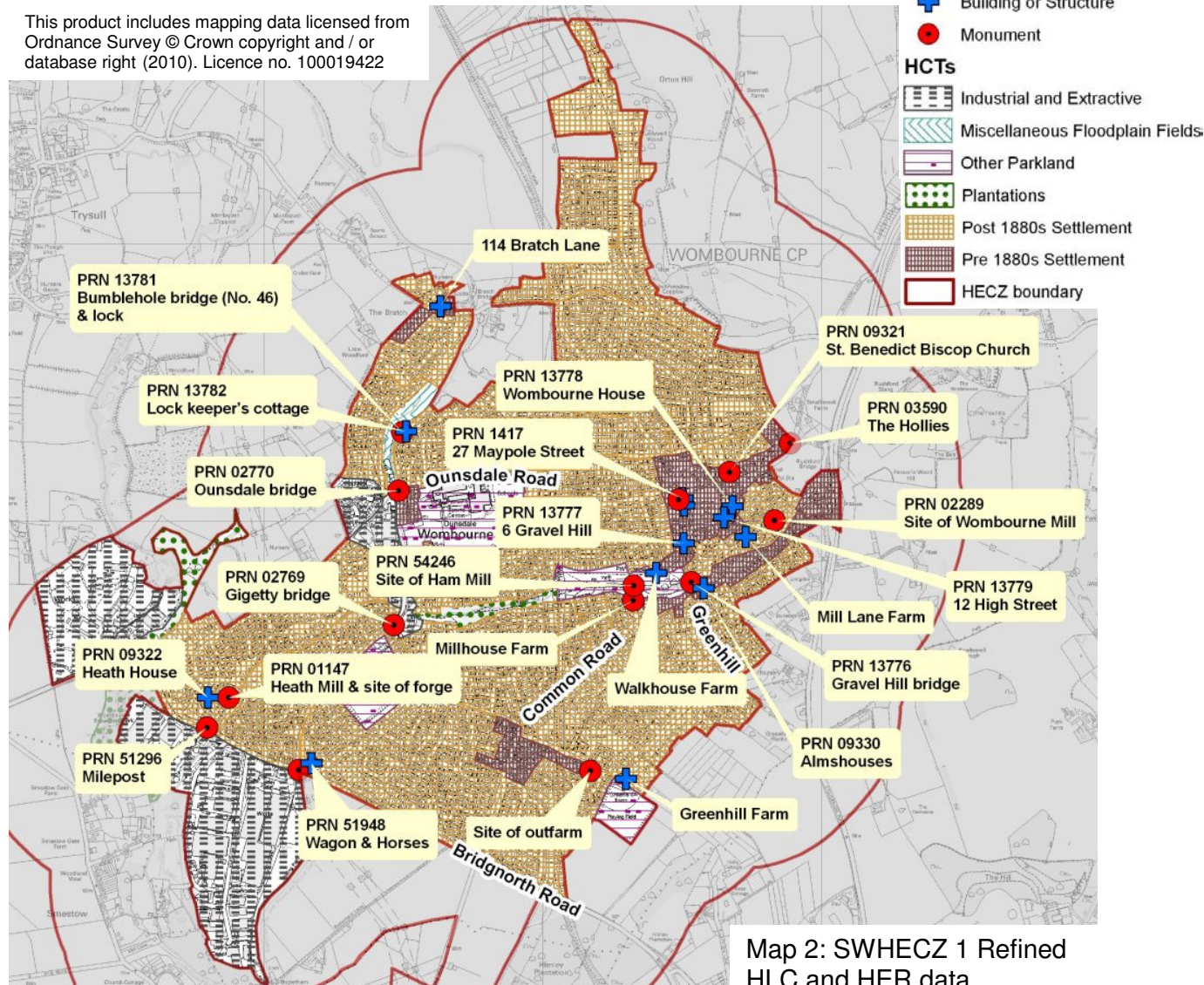
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Map 1: Swindon and Wombourne
HECZ and Designated Assets



1.1 SWHECZ 1 – Wombourne

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1.1.1 Statement of heritage significance

The historic landscape character of the zone is dominated by the mid to late 20th century housing expansion of Wombourne, which includes areas of 'Other Parkland' which largely represent playing fields, although the largest area relates to the playing fields belonging to the schools on Ounsdale Road (cf. map 2). The main area of industry, of contemporary date, is located to the west and south west of the zone (cf. HCT 'Industrial and Extractive' on Map 2). Individual historic buildings survive within the areas of mid and late 20th century development across the zone.

Four areas within the zone have been identified as having been settled prior to the late 19th century (HCT 'Pre 1880s Settlement' on map 2). The largest of these lying

in the eastern portion of the zone represents the historic core, which is largely contiguous with the Wombourne Conservation Area (038). Wombourne was mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) with 17 households and eight slaves¹. By at least the mid 12th century Wombourne lay within Kinver Forest, but was one of several settlements claiming disafforestation in 1300 and which had been granted by the mid 14th century (cf. 5.3 in main report)². The modern village is defined by the large open centre ringed by mature trees at its core which is the site of a cricket ground. This may relate to the 'green' recorded in 13th and 14th century documents, however, by at least the late 18th century this was in private ownership³.

The Grade II St Benedict Biscop Church dominates the northern side of the central open space⁴. The majority of the building was rebuilt in the late 1860s, but the tower dates to the 14th century. Domesday Book makes reference to a priest, which is generally taken to suggest that a church existed within the manor prior to the Norman Conquest (1066) and a church is specifically recorded in a document dated 1150⁵. It is likely that the church stood on the site of the extant building and that the earliest settlement was located in this vicinity.

The earliest known building in Wombourne is the Grade II Listed 12 High Street which is a 17th century timber framed property with later alterations⁶. There are a further five Grade II Listed buildings within this area which have so far been dated to the 18th century, including two lying in Rookery Road on the south side of the Wom Brook in the southern area of 'Pre 1880s Settlement' shown on map 2. Unlisted buildings, which have been identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, are concentrated along High Street, Maypole Street and Gravel Street⁷. These have not been closely dated but there is the potential for any of the historic buildings within the area to retain earlier fabric behind later facades.

The most northerly of the HCTs 'Pre 1880s Settlement' on map 2 relates to the settlement of Ounsdale which is shown on the first edition 1" OS map of the mid 19th century. Two historic buildings pre-dating 1880 survive in this area, including the Round House public house which lies within the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area (073). Other historic buildings lying along Ounsdale Road in this area were redeveloped in the mid to late 20th century. The earliest reference to settlement in the Ounsdale area is to a house built in about the mid 17th century⁸. The name probably comes from one of Wombourne's medieval open fields which is first recorded in 1314⁹. The final concentration of 'Pre 1880s Settlement' lies at Blakeley, which lies around the junction of Common Road, Sytch Lane and Giggetty Lane. A number of historic properties, single and rows of cottages, survive along Common Road and Chapel Street. These properties include a Methodist Chapel built in 1894 to replace one originally built in 1850 in Chapel Street¹⁰. A row of

¹ Hawkins and Rumble 1976: 12, 8

² Cantor 1968: 46 and figure 3

³ Greenslade et al 1984b: 199

⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 09321

⁵ Hawkins and Rumble 1976: 12, 8; Greenslade et al 1984b: 217

⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 13779

⁷ South Staffordshire Council 2010a: Townscape appraisal map

⁸ Greenslade et al 1984b: 199

⁹ Horowitz 2005: 424

¹⁰ Greenslade et al 1984b: 222; Staffordshire HER: PRN

cottages in Giggetty Lane are known as Nailers' Row, is a reference to the origins of this settlement as a late 18th or early 19th century squatter settlement whose economy was based upon nail making combined with subsistence farming (see also below). In 1841 19% of the nailers' in Wombourne parish resided in Blakeley¹¹. Yates' map confirms that this area lay on the edge of Wombourne Common, which was enclosed following an Act of Enclosure passed in 1825¹². Blakeley was also the name of one of Wombourne's open fields, which existed by 1612 and presumably lay to the north of this area¹³.

Nail making in Wombourne parish appears to have had its origins in at least the 17th century and may be associated with the number of iron works which operated along the River Stour and its tributaries notably the Smestow Brook¹⁴. These included the watermill known as Heath Forge which lay in the south western portion of the zone on the Wom Brook¹⁵. This site had apparently been converted from a corn mill circa 1600 and continued to be operated in this capacity until 1814¹⁶. The mill was apparently rebuilt circa 1827 by the Wrottesley family, who had owned the manor of Wombourne since the 17th century. From this period it was operated as a corn mill until circa 1930, but was not demolished until the late 20th century when houses were built across the site of the watermill and its large mill pond¹⁷. The Grade II Listed early 18th century Heath House had stood adjacent to the watermill and may have been associated with it¹⁸. An early 19th century nailer's workshop and cottage survive, although much altered, on Smallbrook Lane near the village centre on the eastern boundary of the zone¹⁹.

Two other watermills existed along the Wom Brook within the zone just to the south of the historic core. Wombourne Mill stood on Mill Street by the late 18th century when it was operating as a corn and blade mill, but by 1816 it had reverted to being a corn mill²⁰. Its earlier history is not entirely clear, but it may be one of the two watermills mentioned in Domesday Book and in a document dated 1483²¹. Ham Mill, which lay to the east of 18th century, Grade II Listed, Gravel Hill Bridge, was first mentioned by this name in 1815²². However, it may still represent the site of an earlier watermill, but further research and archaeological work would be required to determine this.

Two historic lines of communication pass through the zone. The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal lies to the west on a roughly north-south alignment and was opened in 1772²³. The importance of the canal to the history and landscape of Staffordshire has been recognised in its designation as a Conservation Area (073).

¹¹ Greenslade et al 1984b: 214

¹² Staffordshire County Council 2004

¹³ Greenslade et al 1984b: 209

¹⁴ Ibid.: 214

¹⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01147

¹⁶ Greenslade et al 1984b: 212-3

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 09322

¹⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 03590

²⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02289

²¹ Greenslade et al 1984b: 212

²² Ibid; Staffordshire HER: PRN 54246 and PRN 13776

²³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 05171

Several heritage assets associated with the canal lie within the zone and include the Grade II Listed Bumblehole Bridge, lock and lock keeper's cottage²⁴. A canal bridge carrying the Ounsdale Road over the canal is also probably contemporary and the Round Oak Public House was probably constructed to serve those working on the canal²⁵. The bridges carrying Gidgetty Lane and Bridgnorth Road over the canal were probably replaced in the 20th century during road improvements²⁶. The Bridgnorth & Wolverhampton Railway crosses the centre of the zone on a similar alignment to the canal²⁷. The line only had a short history having been completed in 1925 it only carried passengers until 1932 and closed in 1965; its structures survive and it is maintained as a walk/cycle path.

1.1.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: There is the potential for below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the zone relating to previous settlement activity. Such evidence would contribute to an understanding of the developmental history of the settlement over the medieval and post medieval periods. Archaeological deposits may also survive associated with the three watermill sites within the zone, although those associated with Heath Forge are likely to have been impacted by the later development. There is the potential for the historic buildings within Wombourne to hide earlier origins within their fabric and so further contributing to an understanding of the development of the settlement. There is also the potential for historic buildings to survive relating to the nail making industry across the zone.	Medium?
Historical value: The legible heritage assets relate to the historic built environment and include the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and its structures including the Grade II Listed Bumblehole lock, bridge and lock keeper's cottage. A further eight Listed buildings are located within the zone including the Grade II St Benedict Biscop Church. The legibility of the heritage assets within the two Conservation Areas and across the remainder of the zone enables the community and the public to understand the development of Wombourne and also contributes significantly to the sense of place. This is despite the mid to late 20 th century expansion across the majority of the zone.	High
Aesthetic value: The importance of the historic character of the village core of Wombourne, as well as the contribution of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal to the wider landscape of Staffordshire, have been identified in their designation as Conservation Areas. The historic character of the majority of the zone is represented by mid to late 20 th century development.	Medium?
Communal value: Both the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, a Conservation Area, and the Wolverhampton and Kingswinford Railway are important public leisure amenities. There is the potential for an interpretation of the history of Wombourne, or specific aspects of it, to be accessible upon these routes, although this would be enhanced by further research.	Medium

²⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 13781 and PRN 13782

²⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02770

²⁶ Google UK Maps 2010: viewed 08/12/2010

²⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 51951

1.1.3 Recommendations

Wombourne was a large manor in the period prior to the Norman Conquest and its economic importance was enhanced from the 17th century onwards by the increasing importance of the industrial sites located upon the local brooks. The importance of the history and character of the village has been identified in the designation of the Wombourne Conservation Area, where the majority of the Listed buildings lie. The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal has also been designated as a Conservation Area and several heritage assets survive which are directly associated with it including two Grade II Listed structures. Undesignated historic buildings also survive across the zone.

- The Listed buildings, Conservation Area and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10²⁸. Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy HE 6) and South Staffordshire's Conservation Section should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions²⁹.
- The incorporation of distinctive and well preserved historic buildings onto a local list could assist in the long term conservation of the local distinctiveness of the zone and to the sense of place.
- The promotion of the re-use of historic buildings to contribute to sustainable development. High quality design which is sympathetic to the historic built fabric is the key to retaining the local character of the area and reference should be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials as well as to their Conservation Management Plan for the Conservation Area³⁰.
- There is a high to moderate potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the historic core of Wombourne; across the remainder of the zone this is low to moderate. There may also be the requirement for building recording on historic buildings dependent upon the nature of any planning applications. Archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12 dependent upon the location, nature and scale of works³¹.

²⁸ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

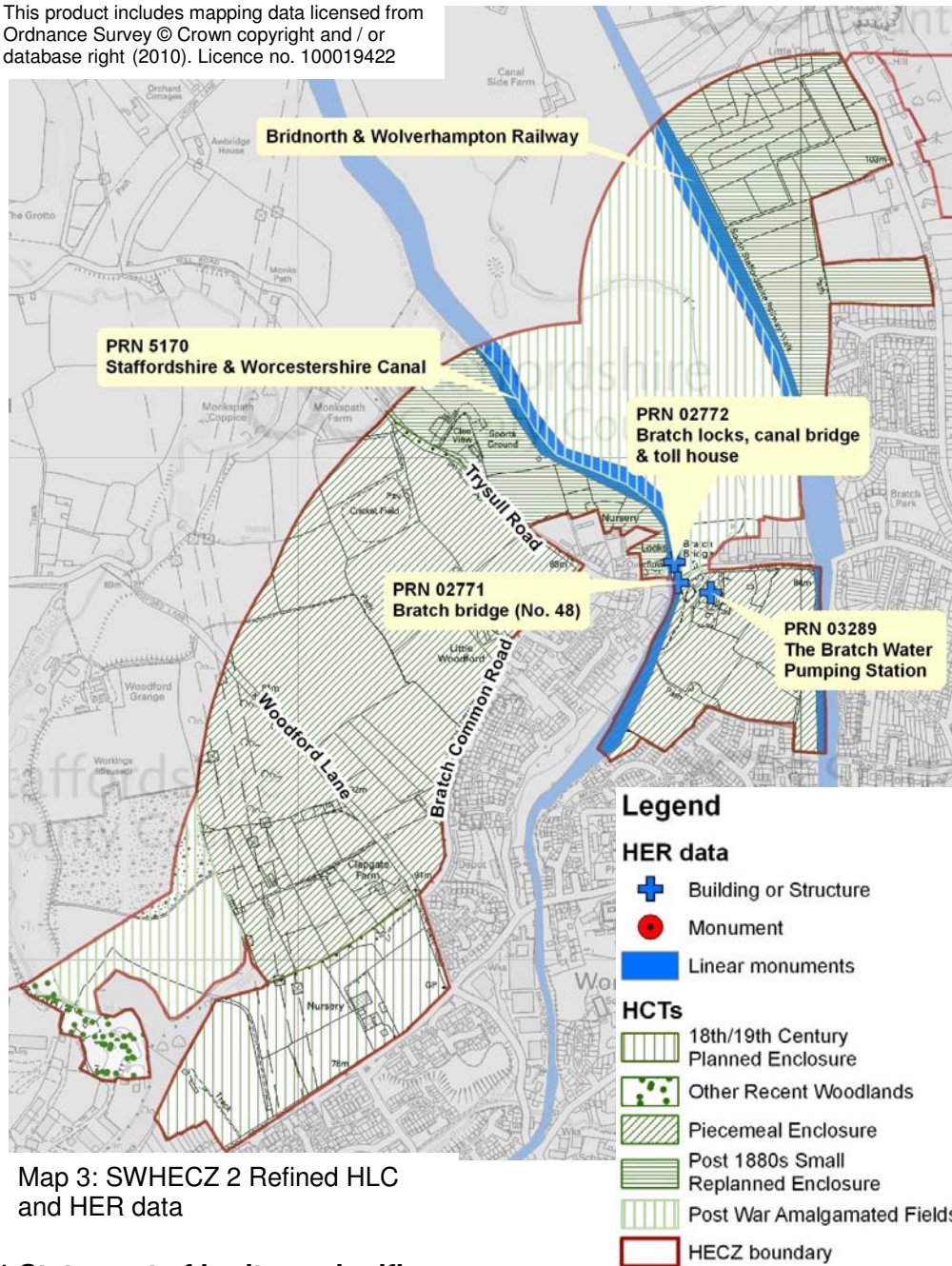
²⁹ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

³⁰ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 52-53 and Section 6 94-130; South Staffordshire 2010a

³¹ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

1.2 SWHECZ 2 – West of Orton Hill and The Bratch

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1.2.1 Statement of heritage significance

The landscape to the north east of Trysull Road has been impacted by the removal of field boundaries and the re-planning of fields during the mid to late 20th century (cf. 'Post War Amalgamated Fields' and 'Post 1880s Small Replanned Enclosure' on map 3). This landscape had probably originated as part of an open field system belonging to Orton Manor during the medieval period.

The land lying to the south west of Trysull Road has been identified as ‘Piecemeal Enclosure’ (cf. map 3). This field pattern may have originated in at least the medieval period as part of an open field arable system. Open fields were usually farmed on a rotational basis between arable, fallow and other crops. The fields were divided into strips which individual landholders held across the various fields. The open fields were often enclosed incrementally as ‘Piecemeal Enclosure’ during the post medieval period. ‘Piecemeal Enclosure’ is typified by reverse ‘S’ and sinuous field boundaries some of which appear to be discernible within the field pattern. However, this landscape appears to have belonged to Woodford Grange, which lies to the west beyond the zone. During the medieval period this manor was owned by Dudley Priory who established a grange here³². There is little evidence of settlement within the zone associated with Woodford Grange during the medieval or post medieval period. The exception is what is likely to have been a small property at Clapgate recorded in 1666 and which may therefore be associated with the site of the extant Clapgate Cottage³³. However early 15th century documents suggest that 80a of the manor were under arable and the ploughing techniques are likely to have produced a similar patterning to that found in the open fields associated with settlements. The overall pattern has seen little alteration since the late 19th century, although some sub-division of the enclosure to create horse paddocks has occurred around Clapgate Farm to the south of the zone.

The ‘Piecemeal Enclosure’ at The Bratch had probably originated as one of the open fields belonging to Wombourne known as ‘Pottelith’ field in the 13th century³⁴. This field, known later as Putley Field, was apparently still open in the early 18th century, so this field system was probably created later in this century³⁵.

The extant overall settlement pattern is light and dispersed in nature. It has not historically formed a feature of the zone with the exception of Clapgate Cottage which may date to the late 18th/early 19th century. The 20th century settlement includes Little Woodford Farm and Clee View to the north of the zone, but the majority of buildings across the zone relate to agricultural or equine outbuildings.

The landscape identified as ‘18th/19th Century Planned Enclosure’ on map 3 lies within Wombourne parish. Until the early 19th century this landscape had formed part of Bratch Common, which also covered the housing estates to the south east of Pool House Road in **SWHECZ 1**. The enclosure of the common was the result of the granting of an Act of Parliament to enclose the wastes and commons of Wombourne parish in 1827. It was laid out by a surveyor creating a landscape of straight boundaries and the straight alignment of Pool House Road may also be the result of this enclosure. Since the late 19th century a few field boundaries have been moved, but the overall planned character of the field system has been retained.

Two historic lines of communication pass through the zone. The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal lies to the west on a roughly north-south alignment and was opened in 1772³⁶. The importance of the canal to the history and landscape of

³² Staffordshire HER: PRN 01148; Tringham 1984: 225

³³ Tringham 1984: 225

³⁴ Greenslade et al 1984b: 209

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 05171

Staffordshire has been recognised in its designation as a Conservation Area (073). A group of Grade II Listed buildings are associated with the canal within the zone at The Bratch including the bridge, toll house and the flight of three locks³⁷. The Bridgnorth & Wolverhampton Railway crosses the centre of the zone on a similar alignment to the canal³⁸. The line only had a short history having been completed in 1925 it only carried passengers until 1932 and closed in 1965; its structures survive, notably the station and goods yard at Wombourne, and it is maintained as a walk/cycle path.

To the south east of The Bratch flight of locks, and within the Canal Conservation Area, stands the imposing Grade II* Listed The Bratch Water Pumping Station which was built in 1895³⁹. The pumping station has been replaced by modern equipment which stands within the same grounds. However, the two steam engines which powered the pumping station survive within the structure and one of them was restored to working condition from 1991 onwards. The pumping station provides specific open days to provide public access to this rare survivor.

There is currently little evidence for human activity during the Prehistoric period in the parishes in which the project area lies (Trysull and Seisdon, Wombourne, Swindon and Himley). The exceptions of a number of cropmarks, including a ring ditch, lying to the south west of Seisdon and documentary evidence of four barrows recorded as lying on Wombourne Common during the late 18th century⁴⁰. The remaining evidence comes from stray finds particularly from the east of Wombourne and to the south of Swindon. There is substantial evidence for activity in the Roman period when Roman camps and forts, five of which are Scheduled Monuments, were established around Greensforge and linked to the wider area by at least three Roman roads. A further camp was established to the east of Swindon village which is also protected as Scheduled Monuments (cf. **SWHECZ 4**)⁴¹.

1.2.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: There is some evidence for human activity during the prehistoric and Roman periods in the wider area although much of the landscape appears to have formed part of the open field system from the medieval period with the exception of the area identified as '18 th /19 th Century Planned Enclosure'. Any evidence for human activity which may survive within the zone would contribute significantly to our understanding of the history of the settlement.	Low
Historical value: The most prominent legible heritage assets are the two linear communication features, the Bridgnorth & Wolverhampton Railway and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. The latter is designated as a Conservation Area and is associated with the Grade II Listed buildings which include the flight of three locks at The Bratch. The Grade II* The Bratch Pumping Station also lies within this Conservation Area. These features make an important contribution to the local distinctiveness of the zone. The only other	High

³⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02771 and PRN 02772

³⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 51951

³⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 03289

⁴⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04024 and PRN 01913

⁴¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00214

identified historic building within the zone is Clapgate Cottage. Many of the field systems have been impacted by the removal or addition of field boundaries during the 20 th and early 21 st century. This includes within the area of 'Piecemeal Enclosure' although the overall historic character is retained in many of the extant hedgerows. The planned enclosure to the south of the zone has also retained its overall character despite the realignment of a few of the boundaries.	
Aesthetic value: The completeness of the historic landscape has varied across the zone. The greatest loss of integrity is to the north of the zone, but the historic character is still identifiable to the south with the survival of mature hedgerows with the areas of 'Piecemeal Enclosure'. The importance of specific heritage assets to the wider historic environment and landscape character has been identified in their designation as Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings.	Medium
Communal value: Both the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, a Conservation Area, and the Wolverhampton and Kingswinford Railway are important public leisure amenities. The Bratch Pumping Station also provides important access to a specific aspect of the historic environment. The history of the area could be present along these features, although further research would enhance our understanding of the contribution of the zone to the wider history of the area.	Medium

1.2.3 Recommendations

The heritage values reveal that the historic landscape character is strongest to the south of the zone, but to the north it has been impacted by large-scale 20th century alterations. However, several important heritage assets cross into the zone, the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, and its associated Grade II Listed buildings, and the Bridgnorth & Wolverhampton Railway, both of which provide important public amenities. The Grade II* The Bratch Pumping House also provides occasional public access to the heritage asset.

- The Listed buildings, the Conservation Area and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10⁴². Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy 6) and South Staffordshire's Conservation Team should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions⁴³.
- The enhancement of the historic landscape character through the re-establishment of the historic hedgerows along their original alignments is desirable.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to complement the low settlement density and the conservation of the fabric and legibility of the historic landscape character as stated above. Such development should

⁴² Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

⁴³ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

also be designed to enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)⁴⁴. Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials⁴⁵.

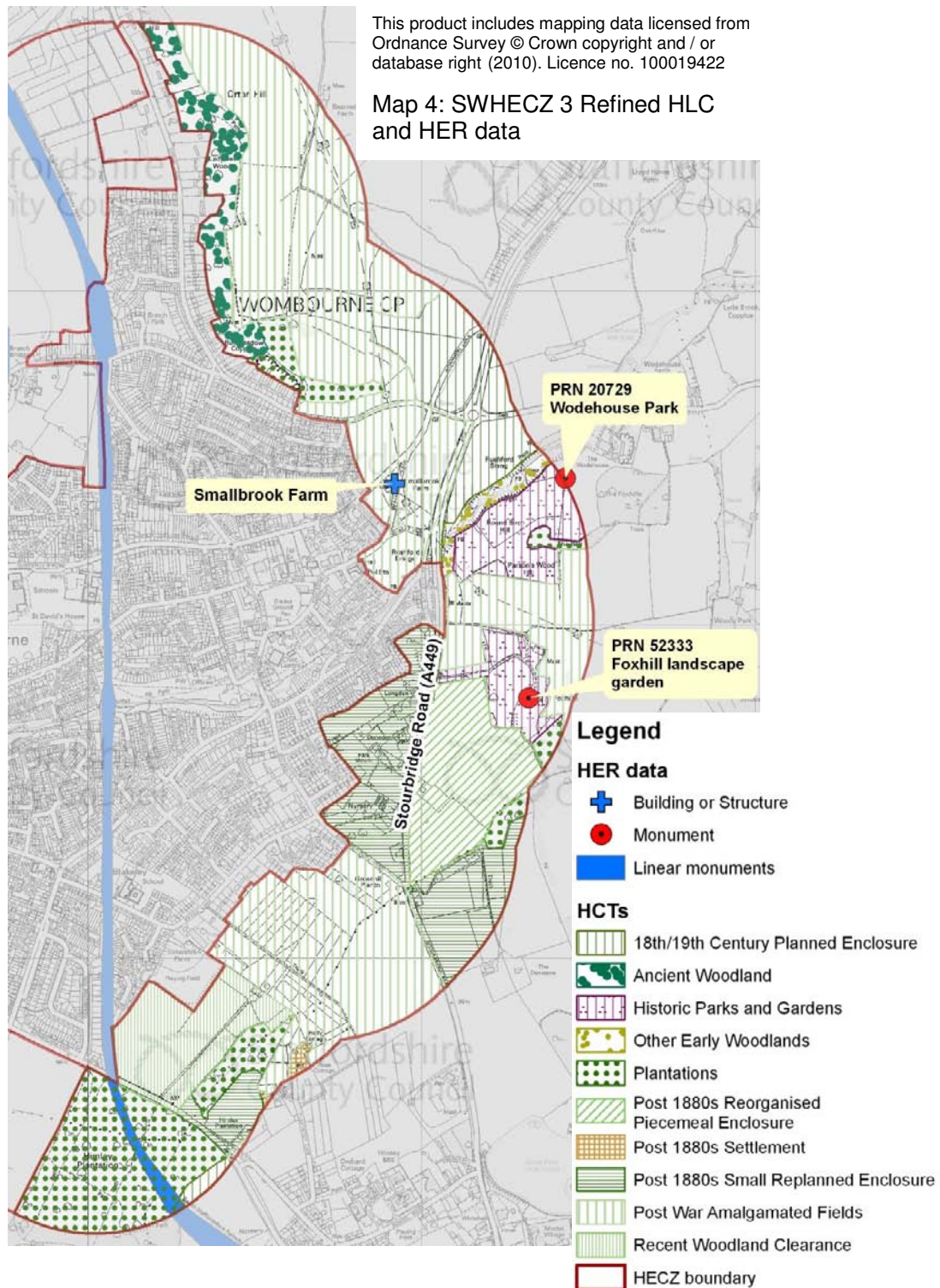
- There is a low potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone. However, archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12 dependent upon the nature and scale of works⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35

⁴⁵ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 80-81 and Section 6 94-130

⁴⁶ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

1.3 SWHECZ 3 – Orton Hill to Himley Plantation



3.3.1 Statement of heritage significance

The zone is dominated by field systems which have seen substantial alteration in the mid to late 20th century (cf. map 4). However, some historic field boundaries have

survived as mature hedgerows across the zone. This vegetation complements the areas of woodland which are also a key feature of the zone, the largest area of which is represented by Himley Plantation to the far south (cf. map 4). However, the latter had once lain on both sides of the Bridgnorth Road, but the majority now only survives to the south. This part of the plantation had been established by the late 19th century, but that to the north had existed by the mid 19th century⁴⁷.

To the east of the zone the woodland is mostly associated with the 'Historic Park and Garden' at The Wodehouse and is in two blocks known as Rushford Slang ('Other Early Woodland' on map 4) and Round Birch Hill ('Plantation' on map 4)⁴⁸. Much of the late 19th and early 20th century planting within the parkland survives with the exception of a few individual trees⁴⁹. The estate had medieval origins and a pleasure garden was laid out within the modern plantation 'The Foxhills' which lies beyond the project area, in the late 18th century⁵⁰. A second smaller landscape park also lies within the zone, associated with a small country house also known as 'The Foxhills'; this parkland appears to have been created in the mid to late 19th century⁵¹. A small gate lodge to the country house survives on the A449 Stourbridge Road.

Part of the Grade II Registered Himley Hall Landscape Park lies within the south eastern portion of the zone. This part of the landscape has been subdivided into paddocks during the late 20th century, probably associated with the property known as 'The Demesne' lying just beyond the project area boundary (cf. 'Post 1880s Small Replanned Enclosure' on map 4). However, part of a shelter belt of trees survives which lines the Himley/Wombourne parish boundary⁵². This shelter belt formed part of the designs for Himley Park which was drawn up by the famous landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the late 18th century⁵³. A gate lodge belonging to Himley Park survives on the A449 Stourbridge Road. It stood adjacent to a carriageway which takes a circuitous route through Himley Park to Park Farm and then onto Himley Hall survives on the A449.

The gentrification of the landscape of the zone was furthered in the mid to late 19th century by the construction of two gentleman's residences which stand within their own wooded grounds on the western side of the A449 Stourbridge Road near opposite 'The Foxhills' landscape park (within HCT 'Post 1880s Small Replanned Fields' on map 4). Little is currently known about these two properties, but it is possible that they were built for local industrialists or professional people from one of the local towns such as Wolverhampton. Four other properties have been built in this area since the early 20th century, although the woodland character of the gardens is still legible.

An historic farmstead, Smallbrook Farm, existed on Smallbrook Lane by at least the early 19th century, although only the farmhouse survives⁵⁴. The farmstead had been

⁴⁷ First edition 1" OS map (mid 19th century); 1st edition 6" OS map (circa 1880)

⁴⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 20729

⁴⁹ Staffordshire County Council 1994: 4

⁵⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 20729

⁵¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 52333

⁵² Staffordshire HER: PRN 20730; English Heritage ref: GD2289

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Greenslade et al 1984: 207

identified as exhibiting a regular courtyard plan form and from 1818 formed part of an estate belonging to the Marsh family of Lloyd House, which lies approximately 1.3km to the north east⁵⁵. The farmstead may be associated with the enclosure of Putley open field at some point following the early 18th century⁵⁶.

There is currently little evidence for human activity during the Prehistoric period in the parishes in which the project area lies (Trysull and Seisdon, Wombourne, Swindon and Himley). The exceptions of a number of cropmarks, including a ring ditch, lying to the south west of Seisdon and documentary evidence of four barrows recorded as lying on Wombourne Common during the late 18th century⁵⁷. The remaining evidence comes from stray finds including three flints found in the vicinity of Smallbrook Farm within the zone⁵⁸. There is substantial evidence for activity in the Roman period when Roman camps and forts, five of which are Scheduled Monuments, were established around Greensforge and linked to the wider area by at least three Roman roads. A further camp was established to the east of Swindon village which is also protected as Scheduled Monuments (cf. **SWHECZ 4**)⁵⁹.

1.3.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: There is some evidence for human activity during the prehistoric and Roman periods in the wider area and three flints were found within the zone. Any evidence for human activity which may survive within the zone would contribute significantly to our understanding of the history of the settlement.	Low
Historical value: The form of the historic parklands, which lie within and adjacent to the zone, make an important contribution of the development of this landscape from at least the 18 th century onwards. They play an important role in understanding the social and economic history during this period and the survival of the gentlemen's residences also form part of this narrative. Himley Park in particular is associated with a particular important historic figure in the landscape gardener Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.	Medium
Aesthetic value: The integrity of much of the historic landscape has been impacted by changes made in the mid to late 20 th century in the removal and addition of field boundaries. However, woodland and the surviving mature hedgerows still make an important contribution to the character of the zone, particularly where the woodland is associated with the historic parklands. The importance of Himley Park, which lies adjacent and partly within the zone, has been recognised by its inclusion as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. The shelter belt planting was probably designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. The Wodehouse parkland forms the setting to six Listed buildings which lie adjacent and are closely associated with it. These include three Grade II* buildings; The Wodehouse itself, its stable block and coach house as well as the Wodehouse Mill.	High

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Greenslade et al 1984b: 209

⁵⁷ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04024 and PRN 01913

⁵⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01871 and PRN 01872

⁵⁹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00214

Communal value: Two Public Rights of Way cross the zone providing some limited access to the historic landscape for the community and visitors. Further research and interpretation would enhance the understanding of the role of the owners of the country estates (Himley, Wodehouse and The Foxhills) on the landscape and their association or attraction for the construction of the gentleman's residences.	Low
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1.3.3 Recommendations

The heritage values acknowledge that much of the zone has been impacted by mid to late 20th century changes to the historic field patterns, which have reduced their legibility within the landscape, although some mature hedgerows survive. There are also few other legible heritage assets and little potential for further, currently unknown heritage assets to survive. However, the woodland still makes an important contribution to the character of the historic landscape and especially where it is associated with the historic landscape parks. The zone forms the setting to the historic landscape park, particularly the Grade II Registered park and garden of Himley Hall and to the group of Listed buildings associated with The Wodehouse.

- The Listed buildings, the Registered park and garden and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10⁶⁰. Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy 6). South Staffordshire's Conservation Team and the Garden History Society should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions⁶¹.
- The enhancement of the historic landscape character through the re-establishment of the historic hedgerows along their original alignments is desirable.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to complement the low settlement density and the conservation of the fabric and legibility of the historic landscape character as stated above. Such development should also be designed to enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)⁶². Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials⁶³.
- There is a low potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone. However, archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12 dependent upon the nature and scale of works⁶⁴.

⁶⁰ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

⁶¹ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

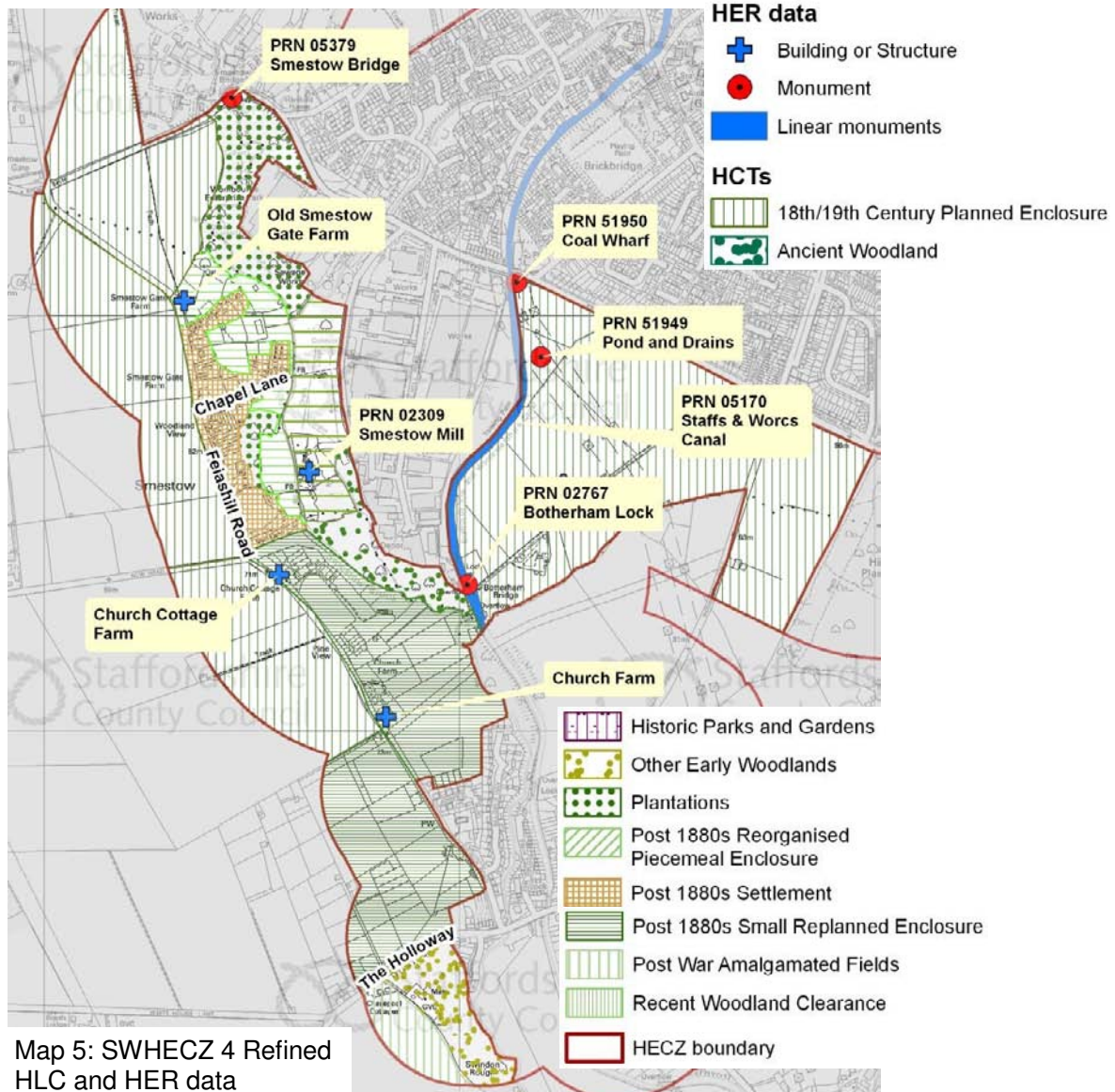
⁶² Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35

⁶³ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 80-81 and Section 6 94-130

⁶⁴ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

1.4 SWHECZ 4 – Smestow

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1.4.1 Statement of heritage significance

The majority of the field systems within the zone continue to exhibit the character of a landscape created anew during the late 18th/early 19th century (HCT '18th/19th Century Planned Enclosure' on map 5). These landscapes extend westwards beyond the project area and whilst their overall planned character has been preserved there has been some loss of field boundaries across the wider area. The fields were created using hedgerows; in areas of 'Planned Enclosure' this was generally done using a single species usually hawthorn. The field system of 'Post 1880s Small Replanned Enclosure' to the west of Church Road was created in the

early 21st century when the earlier 'Planned Enclosure' was sub-divided with fencing into pony paddocks. The creation of the 'Planned Enclosure' with its distinctive straight hedgerows within the zone was created by surveyors following two Acts of Parliament. The earliest was that for Swindon parish passed in 1796 which resulted in the enclosure of a large part of what had probably been Chasepool Hay, within Kinver Forest, in the medieval period⁶⁵. This lay to the west of Feisahill Road and Church Road. The area of '18th/19th Century Planned Enclosure' lying to the east of the zone (south west of Bridgnorth Road) represents the enclosure of Wombourne Common, also by a surveyor, following the passing of the Wombourne parish Act of Enclosure in 1825⁶⁶. A large number of field boundaries have been removed from this area since the late 19th century.

The landscape immediately east of Feisahill Road and Church Road, and effectively lying between the areas of former common land now represented by the 'Planned Enclosure', represents a mix of largely 20th century woodland and housing expansion. However, some of the field patterns, albeit rectilinear in nature, have earlier origins (cf. HCTs 'Early Small Rectilinear Fields' and '18th/19th Century Semi Planned Enclosure' on map 5). To the south of these there is an area identified as 'Post 1880s Small Replanned Enclosure', where the re-alignment and addition of field boundaries has significantly altered the historic character of the enclosure pattern since the late 19th century. This field system had probably originated in the Post Medieval period having a similar character to the 'Early Small Rectilinear Fields' (cf. map 5). These field systems are associated with three historic farmsteads none of which suggest that they had been created as part of the agricultural improvements beloved of the large landed estates during the late 18th/19th centuries (cf. 5.5 in the main report and Appendix 5 particularly PKHECZ 4 for an example). Two of these complexes, Old Smestow Gate Farm and Church Cottage Farm, may have originated as small farmsteads by people involved in industry and subsistence farming. It is possible that the location of these farmsteads and the earlier field systems in the area represent squatting on the common land which may have begun in the 17th century onwards relating to the proximity of the iron industry which concentrated along the Smestow Brook. This location lies within 1km of both Heath Forge (to the north in **SWHECZ 1**) and Swindon Forge (to the south in **SWHECZ 5**), both of which originated as iron works in the early 17th century⁶⁷. Several properties are indicated in this area as common-edge settlement on Yates' map (1775), which may include one or both of these farmsteads.

Other historic cottages survive within the area of 'Post 1880s Settlement' along both Feisahill Road and Chapel Lane, which may relate to the nail making known to have been established at Smestow by the early 19th century; five nail shops were recorded for the settlement in 1816⁶⁸. Some of these properties represent properties indicated on Yates map (1775). The 'Post 1880s Settlement' relates to the expansion of settlement in this area in the mid to late 20th century and especially the semi-detached properties lying along the southern side of Chapel Lane and into Feisahill Road.

⁶⁵ Staffordshire County Council 2003; Cantor 1968: fig.3; Greenslade et al 1984b: 212

⁶⁶ Staffordshire County Council 2003

⁶⁷ Greenslade et al 1984b: 213

⁶⁸ Ibid: 214

The third historic farmstead, Church Farm, appears to have been a larger farm with more than one yard area. The red brick historic plan form survives intact although it has been converted to dwellings⁶⁹. The origins of the farmstead are unknown, but historic mapping suggests that it dates to at least the early 19th century; further research may reveal more about its origins⁷⁰.

The origin of Smestow Mill, which is a Grade II Listed building, is similarly obscure⁷¹. It has been suggested that the extant mill dates to the early 19th century and the earliest reference to it comes from 1816; it retains its machinery (dated 1839).

The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, opened in 1772, lies adjacent to the zone south of the Bridgnorth Road and passes through it for a distance of approximately 100m⁷². The importance of the canal to the history and landscape of Staffordshire has been recognised in its designation as a Conservation Area (073). Botterham Lock just lies within the zone⁷³.

The south western portion of the zone included part of the Scheduled Roman camp (cf. map 1)⁷⁴. The site was identified on aerial photographs as a very large marching camp. A relationship with the Roman complex at Greensforge approximately 1.5km to the south has yet to be established. The Greensforge site incorporates two Roman forts and several marching camps, five of which are Scheduled, as well as evidence for settlement and which was linked to the wider area by at least three Roman roads⁷⁵. However, its presence raises the potential for further, unknown Roman sites to survive in the area. There is limited evidence for Prehistoric evidence from the wider area.

1.4.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: The presence of the Roman marching camp raises the potential for currently unknown Roman sites to survive within the zone. The camp itself has been identified as being of national importance and no works can take place within this area without Scheduled Monument consent. There is also the potential for the historic buildings within the zone to inform an understanding of their origins and function. This information may contribute significantly to an understanding of the economic history of nail making in particular within the parish and Staffordshire more widely.	High??
Historical value: The legible heritage assets mostly relate to the built environment; the farmsteads and cottages which survive within the small settlement of Smestow, although many of these have been subsequently altered. The historic built environment includes the Grade II Listed Smestow Brook. The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, particularly Botterham Lock, also lies partly within the zone. The legibility of the planned enclosure within the zone also contributes to an understanding of the development of the landscape	Medium

⁶⁹ Google maps UK 2010: viewed 13/12/2010

⁷⁰ Ordnance Survey 1" OS map of circa 1840

⁷¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02309

⁷² Staffordshire HER: PRN 05171

⁷³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02767

⁷⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00214; English Heritage SM no. 228

⁷⁵ Staffordshire HER; Jones 1994: 12-27

in the late 18 th /early 19 th century, although a number of field boundaries have been lost.	
Aesthetic value: The late 18 th /early 19 th century 'Planned Enclosure' still forms an integral part of the historic landscape of the zone, although there has been some field boundary loss. In other areas of the zone the historic field systems have been substantially altered in the mid to late 20 th century to create small paddocks often enclosed by fencing. Two of the historic farmsteads have seen alteration to their plan form, but the buildings at Church Farm are unaltered although no longer in agricultural use. The importance of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal to the historic landscape has been acknowledged in its designation as a Conservation Area. The historic importance of Smestow Mill has similarly been identified in its designation as a Grade II Listed building. The character of Smestow as a small dispersed settlement, possibly originating as a squatter settlement, has been impacted by the insertion of housing in the mid to late 20 th century.	Medium
Communal value: The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, a Conservation Area, is an important public leisure amenity. The history of the area could be presented along the canal, although further research would enhance our understanding of the contribution of the zone to the wider history of the area.	Medium

1.4.3 Recommendations

The heritage assets identifies that the zone has seen some alteration during the mid to late 20th century in the field and settlement patterns, although the planned nature of the majority of the fields is still legible. Three sites have been designated for their historic importance: the Scheduled Roman camp, the Grade II Listed Smestow Mill and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.

- The Scheduled Monument, Listed building and the Conservation Area and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10⁷⁶. Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy 6). South Staffordshire's Conservation Team and English Heritage should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions⁷⁷.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to complement the planned nature of the field system as well as the conservation of its fabric and legibility within the historic landscape. Such development should also be designed to enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)⁷⁸. Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials⁷⁹.

⁷⁶ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

⁷⁷ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

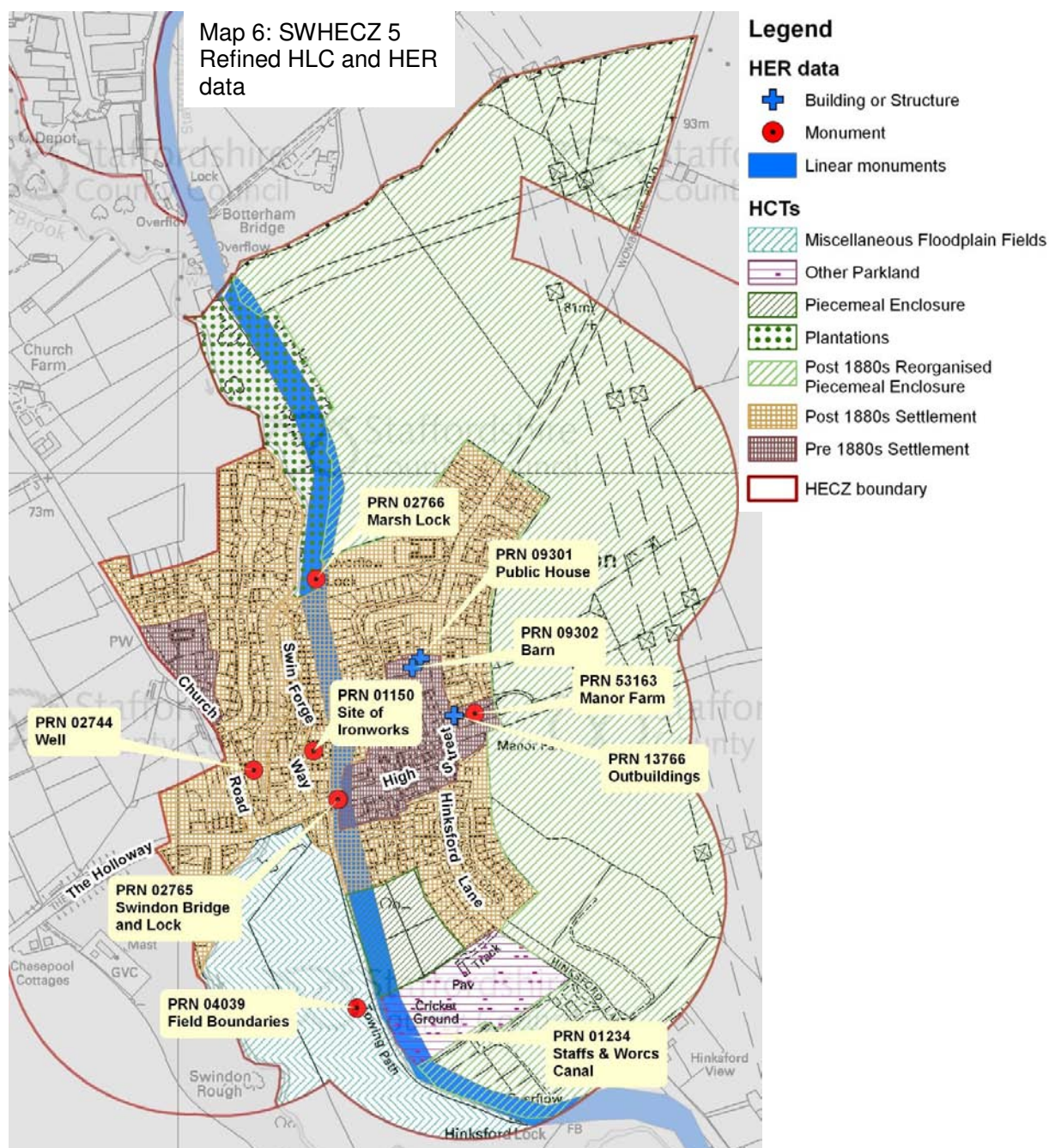
⁷⁸ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35

⁷⁹ South Staffordshire Council 2009: Section 6 94-130

- There is a high potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone. There may also be the requirement for building recording on historic buildings dependent upon the nature of any planning applications. Consequently there may be a requirement for a Heritage Statement to be submitted as part of any planning application and archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12⁸⁰.

⁸⁰ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

1.5 SWHECZ 5 – Swindon



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1.5.1 Statement of heritage significance

In Domesday Book (1086) two settlements appear to be recorded for the manor of Himley and the smaller of these, with five householders, is believed to be a reference to Swindon⁸¹. The settlement, along with Himley, was owned by the Lords of Dudley

⁸¹ Hawkins and Rumble 1976: 12,13; Greenslade et al 1984b: 200

and was recorded as a manor in its own right by the late 12th century⁸². A bridge over the Smestow Brook was recorded in Swindon in the early 15th century⁸³.

Yates' map (1775) suggests that the historic core of the settlement lay to the east of the Smestow Brook along the present High Street (cf. 'Pre 1880s Settlement' on map 6). It is in this area where the majority of the historic buildings survive which includes three Grade II Listed properties. The Greyhound Inn was originally constructed as a house in the 18th century, whilst the adjacent red brick barn dates to the early 19th century⁸⁴. The property had been converted to a public house by the late 19th century. The farm buildings associated with Manor Farm are also Grade II Listed and date to the 18th and early 19th centuries⁸⁵. The farm exhibits a regular courtyard plan form with more than one yard area (multi-yard)⁸⁶. The regularity of the plan form, supported by the date of the farm buildings, is typical of farmsteads which were built in the 18th/19th century to conform to the agricultural improvements of this period. Such farmsteads are often associated with large estates and its construction could therefore be associated with the Dudley family who were lords of the manor until 1947⁸⁷. There is currently no documentary evidence to suggest that there was a manor house within Swindon and the name of the farm may merely be affirmation of its association with the Dudley estate.

Other historic buildings lying on High Street include the early 19th century Congregational Chapel and two red brick cottages; the frontage to that lying adjacent to the chapel has been considerably altered⁸⁸. 'The Old Bush' public house on the corner of High Street and Hinksford Lane is shown by this name on the late 19th century ordnance survey map. The remainder were rebuilt during the mid to late 20th century during a period of expansion which resulted in the HCT 'Post 1880s Settlement' across the zone. The population of the settlement grew between 1841 and 1861 from 419 to 540 people; many of the earlier properties which were replaced may have dated to this earlier period of expansion⁸⁹. The absence of medieval and earlier post medieval buildings with the settlement may be due, at least in part, to a serious fire which occurred in the early 17th century which was said to have damaged seven houses and other buildings⁹⁰.

The second area of 'Pre 1880s Settlement' shown on map 6 relates to St John the Evangelist's Church which was built as a chapel of ease in Wombourne parish in the mid 19th century⁹¹. The old school building, which was built in 1864, survives to the south of the church, although it had closed as a school in 1968⁹².

By the mid 19th century the economy of the settlement was reliant upon the large ironworks which had been established as a water-powered forge by at least the early

⁸² Greenslade et al 1984b: 200 and 207

⁸³ Ibid. 200

⁸⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 09301 and PRN 09302

⁸⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 13766

⁸⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 53163

⁸⁷ Greenslade et al 1984b: 208

⁸⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 54252

⁸⁹ Greenslade et al 1984b: 200

⁹⁰ Ibid: 213

⁹¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 54251; Greenslade et al 1984b: 221

⁹² Greenslade et al 1984b: 223

17th century⁹³. The iron works continued operating until 1976 and a housing estate was built upon the site in the 1980s⁹⁴. The site is bounded to the west by the Smestow Brook, which once fed a large mill pond that powered the watermill, and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal⁹⁵. It is possible that the 17th century iron works had been established on the site of a medieval watermill that operated as a fulling mill owned by Halesowen Abbey by the mid 13th century and which was converted to a corn mill in the mid 16th century⁹⁶. The mill pond appears to have been largely infilled by the early 1960s and houses were built upon the site in the 1980s/1990s. However, the outline of the millpond, particularly to the north and east, has been respected by the housing development and is therefore still legible within landscape⁹⁷.

It is likely that the route of the late 18th century Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal through Swindon parish was dictated by the requirements of the owners of the Swindon iron works⁹⁸. The importance of the canal to the history and landscape character of Staffordshire has been identified in its designation as a Conservation Area (073). To the north of Swindon the canal is bounded by a plantation which was probably created in the 20th century. Just to the north lies Botterham House (partly within this zone and partly within SWHECZ 4) which appears to have originated as an inn, known as The Boat Inn in the late 19th century, presumably to serve the needs of the boatman working the canal⁹⁹.

Throughout its history Swindon's economy was also reliant upon agriculture and the fields lying within the zone form an important part of that history (HCT 'Post 1880s Reorganised Piecemeal Enclosure' on map 6). The majority of the field boundaries within this field pattern have been removed in the mid to late 20th century those that survive within the zone are those which line the two lanes which cut through the zone: Wombourne Lane and Himley Lane. The agricultural origins of this landscape can be traced to at least the medieval period as part of the open field system which was farmed by the inhabitants of Swindon. The arable open fields were usually farmed on a rotational basis between arable, fallow and other crops. The fields were divided into strips which individual landholders held across the various fields. Documentary evidence suggests that there were three open fields belonging to Swindon, although it is not currently possible to be sure which of these may have been concurrent with the area covered by this zone¹⁰⁰. However, it appears that from at least the late 17th century the open fields were being gradually enclosed to form the 'Piecemeal Enclosure' which is shown on the late 19th century OS map. The form of this enclosure pattern fossilised the course of the medieval plough across the open field in the reverse 'S' field boundaries within this zone. A cricket ground has been created within this field pattern to the south of Swindon (HCT 'Other Parkland' on map 6).

⁹³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01150; Greenslade et al 1984b: 213-4

⁹⁴ Ibid; Ibid

⁹⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 54256 and PRN 01234

⁹⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01150; Greenslade et al 1984b: 214

⁹⁷ Staffordshire HER; PRN 54256; Hunting Surveys Ltd 1963: Run 8, 5648; Google Maps UK 2010: viewed 14/12/2010

⁹⁸ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01234

⁹⁹ First edition 6" OS map circa 1880

¹⁰⁰ Greenslade et al 1984b: 210

Field boundaries have also been removed from the ‘Miscellaneous Floodplain Fields’ lying to the west of the canal (cf. map 6). However, the location of these boundaries has been identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs¹⁰¹.

There is currently little evidence for human activity during the Prehistoric period in the parishes in which the project area lies (Trysull and Seisdon, Wombourne, Swindon and Himley). The exceptions of a number of cropmarks, including a ring ditch, lying to the south west of Seisdon and documentary evidence of four barrows recorded as lying on Wombourne Common during the late 18th century¹⁰². The remaining evidence comes from stray finds including three flints found in the vicinity of Smallbrook Farm within the zone¹⁰³. There is substantial evidence for activity in the Roman period when Roman camps and forts, five of which are Scheduled Monuments, were established around Greensforge and linked to the wider area by at least three Roman roads. A further camp was established approximately 200m to the east of this zone which is also protected as Scheduled Monuments (cf. **SWHECZ 4**)¹⁰⁴. Consequently, currently unknown Roman sites may exist within the zone.

1.5.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: There is the potential for archaeological deposits to survive within the historic core of Swindon relating to earlier settlement activity (from at least the medieval period onwards). There is also the potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive associated with Swindon Forge and its mill pond, although this is likely to have been impacted by the extensive late 20 th century housing development on these two sites. There is some evidence for human activity during the prehistoric and Roman periods in the wider area although much of the landscape appears to have formed part of the open field system from the medieval period onwards.	Medium
Historical value: The legible heritage assets are largely concentrated upon the historic built environment within the settlement, which includes the Grade II Listed buildings at The Greyhound and associated with Manor Farm. A number of other unlisted historic buildings also survive within the historic core and along Church Road, which includes the mid 19 th century St John the Evangelist’s Church. All of these properties contribute to the local distinctiveness of Swindon, which otherwise is dominated by mid to late 20 th century housing and associated services. The alignment of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal through this zone is likely to have been historically associated with the location of the iron works, which in turn had formed an important part of the local economy from the 17 th to late 20 th century.	Medium

¹⁰¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 04039

¹⁰² Staffordshire HER: PRN 04024 and PRN 01913

¹⁰³ Staffordshire HER: PRN 01871 and PRN 01872

¹⁰⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 00214

Aesthetic value: The integrity of the historic landscape around the village has been impacted by the removal of field boundaries. The settlement itself exhibits a strongly mid to late 20 th century character in its built form with the exception of the key historic buildings mentioned within the text all of which make a contribution to the individual character of the settlement. The importance of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal to the historic landscape has been acknowledged in its designation as a Conservation Area and it makes an important contribution to the local distinctiveness of Swindon village.	Medium
Communal value: The canal provides a key local public amenity and provides an opportunity to interpret its relationship with the Swindon ironworks in particular and to the village more generally. This would enable the community and visitors to understand the social and economic history of the settlement and its role in the wider landscape of Staffordshire. Further research would enhance any such presentation.	Medium

1.5.3 Recommendations

The heritage values reflect the fact that heritage assets exist within the zone and that they make a contribution to the historic character of the settlement. At the same time it acknowledges that this character has been affected by rapid change within the mid to late 20th century to both the settlement itself and to the landscape lying within the zone. The overall historic aesthetics of the zone are enhanced by the presence of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal.

- The Listed Buildings, Conservation Area and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10¹⁰⁵. Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy 6) and South Staffordshire's Conservation Section should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions¹⁰⁶.
- The incorporation of distinctive and well preserved historic buildings onto a local list could assist in the long term conservation of the local distinctiveness of the zone and to the sense of place.
- The promotion of the re-use of historic buildings to contribute to sustainable development. High quality design which is sympathetic to the historic built fabric is the key to retaining the local character of the area and reference should be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials¹⁰⁷.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to enhance the historic landscape character. Such development should also be designed to

¹⁰⁵ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

¹⁰⁶ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

¹⁰⁷ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 82-83 and Section 6 94-130

enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)¹⁰⁸. Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials¹⁰⁹.

- There is a high to moderate potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the historic core of Wombourne; across the remainder of the zone this is low to moderate. There may also be the requirement for building recording on historic buildings dependent upon the nature of any planning applications. Archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12 dependent upon the location, nature and scale of works¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁸ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35




¹⁰⁹ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 82-83 and Section 6 94-130

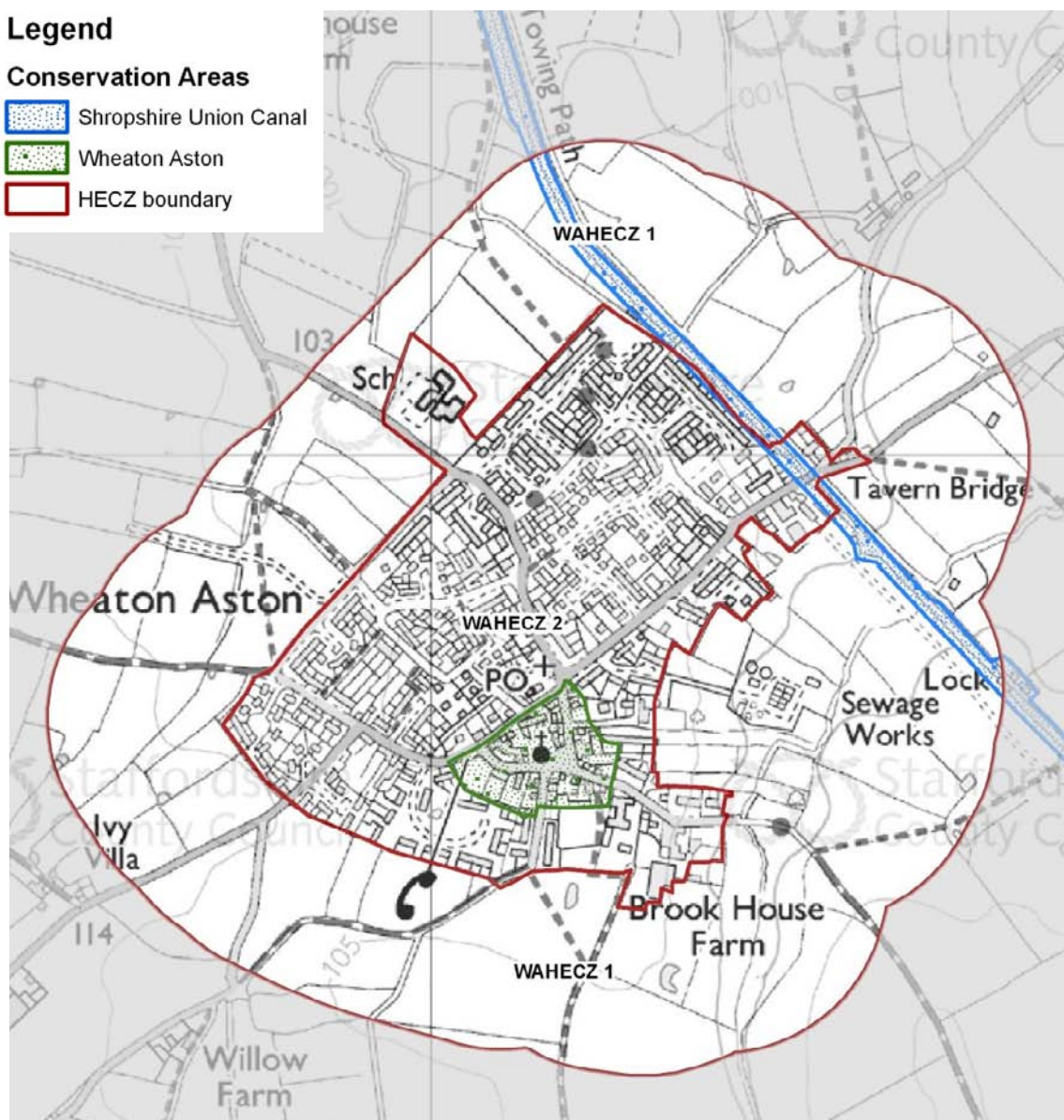
¹¹⁰ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

2.Wheaton Aston

Legend

Conservation Areas

-  Shropshire Union Canal
-  Wheaton Aston
-  HECZ boundary

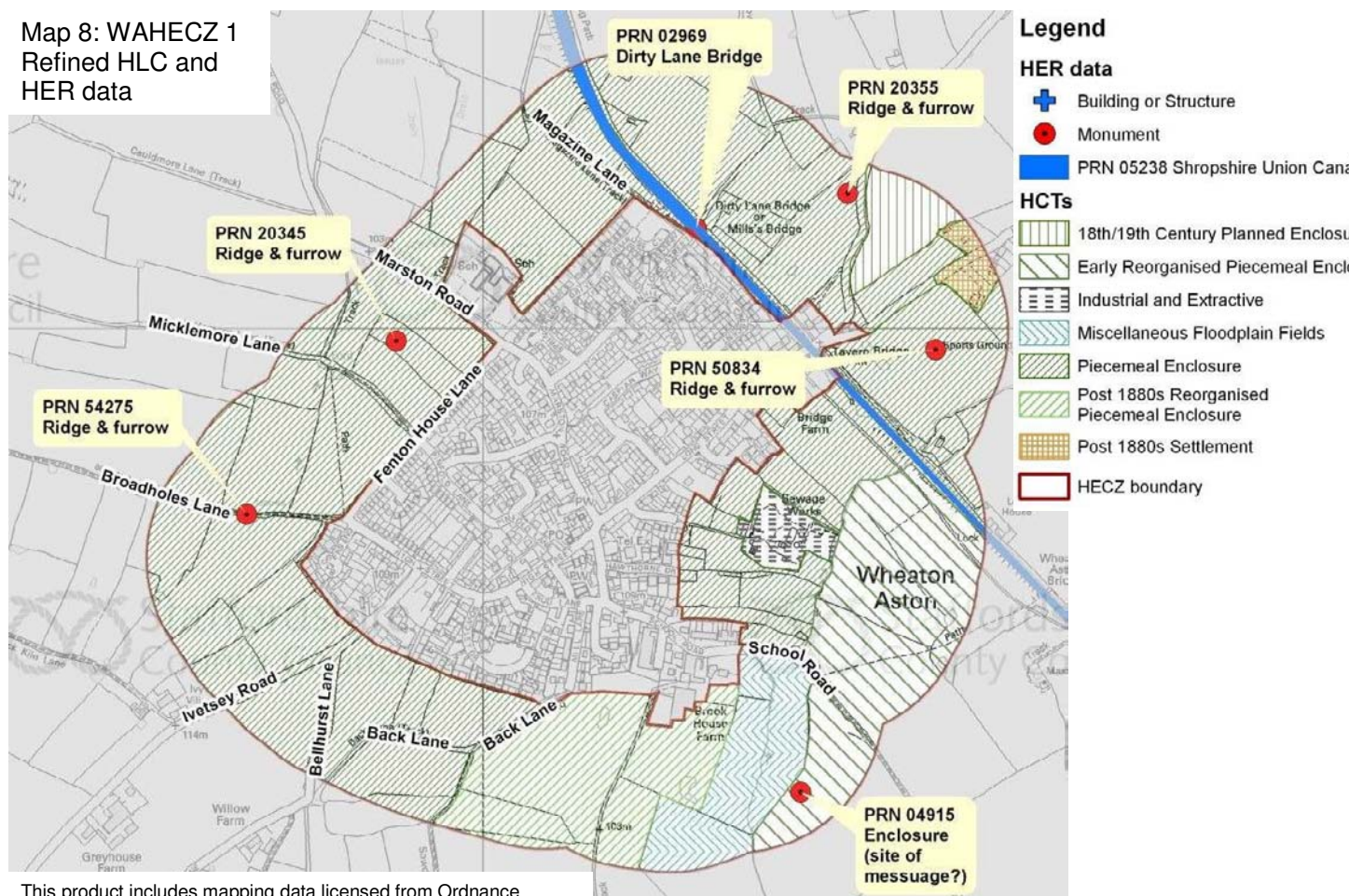


Map 7: Wheaton Aston HECZ and Conservation Areas

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2.1 WAHECZ 1 – Hinterland

Map 8: WAHECZ 1
Refined HLC and
HER data



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2.1.1 Statement of heritage significance

Wheaton Aston is almost entirely encompassed by field systems that were probably created incrementally in the post medieval period (HCT 'Piecemeal Enclosure' on map 8). The morphology of the field system and the extant earthwork evidence within the zone affirms that this landscape had been dominated by arable open fields by at least the medieval period. These fields were usually farmed on a rotational basis between arable, fallow and other crops. The fields were divided into strips which individual landholders held across the various fields. The strips survive in various fields around the village as earthworks known as 'ridge and furrow' particularly to the west and north east¹¹¹. There has currently been little documentary research carried out upon the manorial records and so it has yet to be established how many fields Wheaton Aston had and at what date they were enclosed. The extant 'Piecemeal Enclosure' across the zone is typified by the reverse 'S' field boundaries which followed the course of the medieval plough across the original open field reinforcing the fact that it was enclosed gradually over a period

¹¹¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 20345, PRN 20355, PRN 50834 and PRN 54275

of time. The mature hedgerows which form the field boundaries within this area are a further clue to its early origins and also contribute to the sense of place within this landscape. Only a few hedgerows have been removed in the period since the late 19th century.

The HCT ‘Early Reorganised Piecemeal Enclosure’ suggests that these fields followed the same origins as the remainder of the zone, but there are straight boundaries present within this area, particularly beyond the zone, which suggested that some hedgerows were re-laid or new boundaries were formed probably in the 18th or 19th century. This is likely to be associated with the activities of a particular landholder; further research may be able to enhance the current understanding. The HCT ‘18th/19th Century Planned Enclosure’ to the north (and which extends north eastwards beyond the project area) probably has a similar origin.

To the south of the zone there is an area identified as ‘Post 1880s Reorganised Piecemeal Enclosure’ where the historic field pattern has altered since the late 19th century. By the end of that century there were few field boundaries within this area, which may suggest that it was still being operated as an open field. Further research would clarify this supposition.

Further key components of the landscape around Wheaton Aston are the narrow lanes and trackways. Many of the latter, including Micklemore and Broadholes Lanes, lead into the surrounding field system and are likely to have originated in the medieval period taking the inhabitants out into the open fields. Their survival is likely to be due the fact that the majority of the farmsteads in the local area continued to be concentrated in the village itself into the 20th century (cf. WAHECZ 2).

To the north east of the zone the field pattern has clearly been cut by the construction of the Shropshire Union Canal by Thomas Telford between 1827 and 1835¹¹². The importance of the canal to the history and character of the landscape has been identified in its designation as a Conservation Area (081) (cf. map 7).

A rectilinear enclosure, which apparently survived as a series of earthworks in the early to mid 20th century, was visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs taken circa 2000¹¹³. This site has not been investigated, but it has been associated with the site of the Prior of Lapley’s house within Wheaton Aston, known from 14th century documents as ‘Le Mote’¹¹⁴. Only archaeological research would be able to confirm whether this is a medieval, or possibly earlier, feature.

There is currently little evidence for human activity during the Prehistoric period from within the parish. The exception is a possible ring ditch, suggesting it was the site of a Bronze Age barrow, identified as a cropmark on aerial photographs along with linear features some of which may represent enclosures¹¹⁵. This site is located approximately 4km to the south east of the project area. The enclosures may form part of the Roman complex of forts and camps which lie to the north of the Roman settlement of *Pennocrucium* (cf. 5.2 in main report). The project area lies

¹¹² Staffordshire HER: PRN 05238

¹¹³ Davies 1958: 148; UK Perspectives 2000

¹¹⁴ Ibid: 148; Staffordshire HER: PRN 04915

¹¹⁵ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02031

approximately 1.2km to the north of the Roman road Watling Street, which crosses through Pennocrucium further east. A second Roman road intersects with Watling Street approximately 800m west of Pennocrucium and heads in a north westerly direction towards Whitchurch, Shropshire; it runs approximately 700m to the north of the project area. Given its location between these two Roman roads there is the potential for currently unknown evidence of Roman activity to exist within the project area.

2.1.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: The ridge and furrow earthworks, along with the subsequent field pattern ('Piecemeal Enclosure') contribute to an understanding of an important aspect of Wheaton Aston's social and economic history and its development from at least the medieval period onwards. The rectilinear feature to the south east of the village also has the potential to inform the history of the settlement, particularly if it proves to be the site of 'Le Mote' as suggested. There is also the potential for currently unknown archaeological sites to survive from the Roman period, although the zone had clearly formed part of the medieval open arable field system.	Medium
Historical value: The legible heritage assets comprise a historic landscape of well preserved post medieval fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and associated with probably medieval field lanes leading out from the village. These heritage assets are closely associated with the social and economic history of Wheaton Aston. The landscape is enhanced by the survival of the ridge and furrow earthworks, which provide further evidence of the history of this landscape from at least the medieval period onwards. The Shropshire Union Canal, a Conservation Area, can also be seen to be cutting across the field pattern adding a further dimension to the legible heritage of the zone.	High
Aesthetic value: The integrity of the historic landscape character of the zone is strengthened by the well preserved historic field system with its mature hedgerows and the association within the legible ridge and furrow. The rural lanes and trackways also contribute to the historic character as does the Shropshire Union Canal which has been designated as a Conservation Area (081).	High

Communal value: The Shropshire Union Canal is an important public leisure amenity which meanders through the historic landscape and this importance is reaffirmed by its designation as a Conservation Area. The public amenities of the zone are reinforced by the presence of the nine public Rights of Way which cross through the historic landscape; the majority represent the historic trackways. These amenities provide opportunities to interpret the history of the zone and its contribution to the story of Wheaton Aston.	High
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2.1.3 Recommendations

The heritage values reflect the importance of the historic landscape surrounding Wheaton Aston and its role in the history of the village. The post medieval enclosure is well preserved and evidence for its early history is preserved in the ridge and furrow earthworks which survive in various fields. The Shropshire Union Canal also provides an important public amenity and tourism opportunity.

- The Conservation Area and its setting are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10¹¹⁶. Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy HE 6) and South Staffordshire's Conservation Section should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions¹¹⁷.
- The conservation of the fabric of the historic landscape, which comprises the historic field pattern of mature hedgerows and the ridge and furrow earthworks, is desirable to retain the legible associations with the medieval settlement of Wheaton Aston.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to complement the low settlement density and the conservation of the fabric and legibility of the historic landscape character as stated above. Such development should also be designed to enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)¹¹⁸. Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials¹¹⁹.
- There is a high potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone. Consequently there may be a requirement for a Heritage Statement to be submitted as part of any planning application and archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12¹²⁰.

¹¹⁶ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

¹¹⁷ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

¹¹⁸ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35

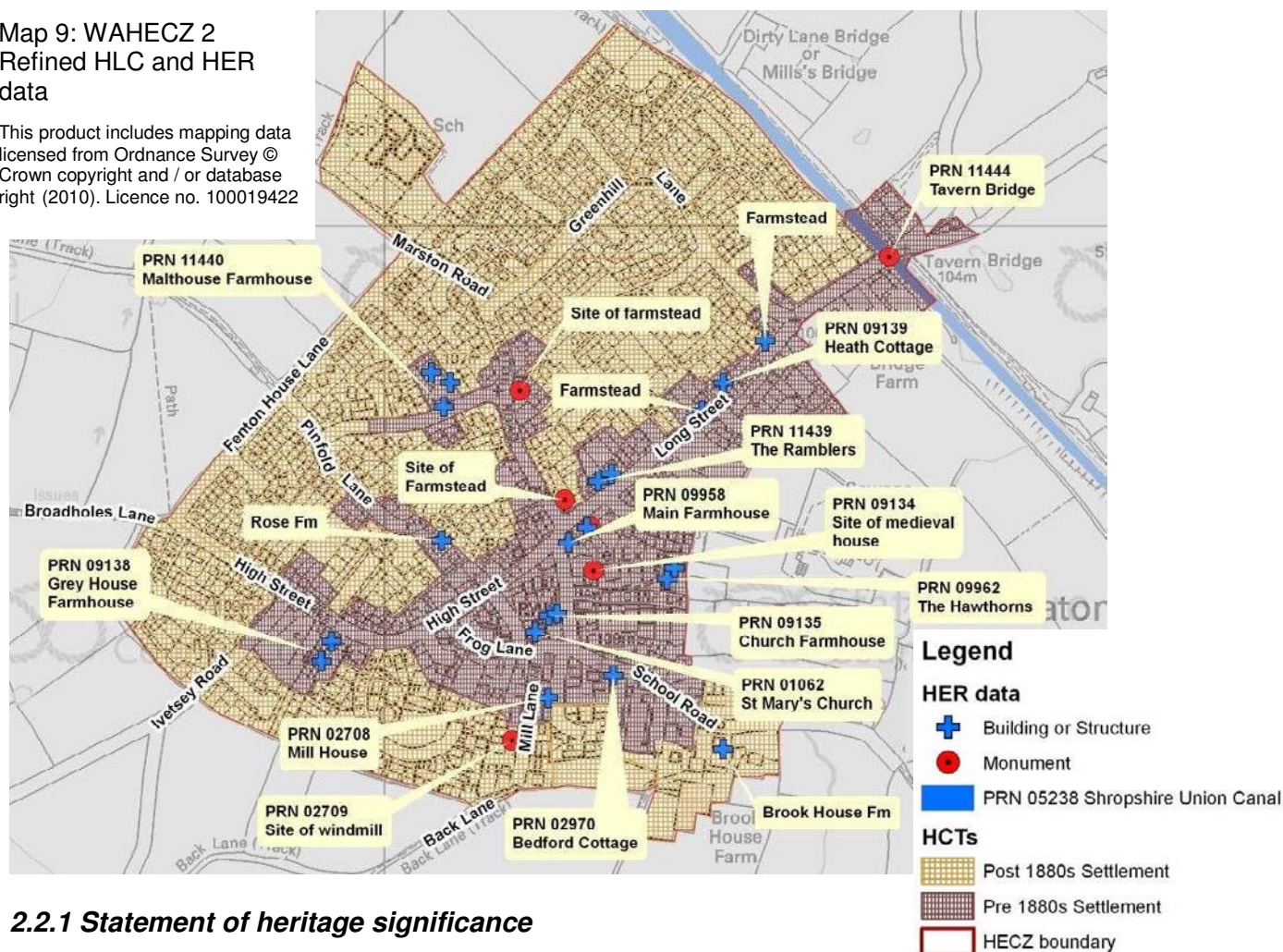
¹¹⁹ South Staffordshire Council 2009: and Section 6 94-130

¹²⁰ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

2.2 WAHECZ 2 – Wheaton Aston

Map 9: WAHECZ 2
Refined HLC and HER
data

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2.2.1 Statement of heritage significance

The zone is comprised of two character types 'Pre 1880s Settlement' and 'Post 1880s Settlement' (cf. map 9). The former relates to the historic core where the majority of the historic buildings survive including nine Grade II Listed buildings and one, St Mary's Church, which is Grade II*. The Wheaton Aston Conservation Area (108) only covers a small area of the identified historic core (cf. map 7).

The settlement was not recorded in Domesday Book (1086), although it may be one of the estates mentioned in the entry for Lapley¹²¹. These two settlements were both owned by St Remy's Abbey in Normandy by the mid to late 12th century and Wheaton Aston was said to belong to Lapley manor from the late 13th century¹²². A chapel of ease had been established in Wheaton Aston by the early 14th century, which was subordinate to the parish church of All Saints at Lapley¹²³. The chapel was apparently rebuilt in 1770 whilst the extant Grade II* St Mary's Church was built in 1857¹²⁴. The origins of the chapel may be associated with the granting of a

¹²¹ Hawkins and Rumble 1976: EN, 1

¹²² Davies 1958: 148

¹²³ Ibid: 152

¹²⁴ Ibid: 153; Staffordshire HER: PRN 01062

market charter in 1292 to St Remy's Abbey¹²⁵. A market place has been identified within the road system at the entrance to the church. The market place has been postulated as having been established in the area of what is now the village green lying to the south east of the church¹²⁶. This has been fossilised within the street plan shown by the open extant triangular area, although it may once have been much larger¹²⁷. It appears that during the medieval period there were two distinct parts to Lapley manor; the spiritual focused upon Lapley village associated with the priory and the economic based upon the market in Wheaton Aston. The presence of the market clearly made the latter settlement more attractive and it is clear in documentary records from the 14th century onwards that Wheaton Aston has always been larger than Lapley¹²⁸. A tax record (1327) records one smith, one tailor and two cooks perhaps indicating the economic diversity of the settlement at this date¹²⁹. However, the market had apparently ceased by 1500, although fairs were still being held during the middle years of the 19th century¹³⁰.

Five of the Grade II Listed buildings date to the 16th or 17th centuries and all have some timber framing visible externally. Two of these are cottages; Heath Cottage, on Long Street, and Bedford Cottage, on School Road¹³¹. A number of other timber framed houses were demolished during the expansion of the settlement from the 1960s onwards including Oak Dene, which had stood to the west of Grey House Farm and was also timber framed probably dating to the 17th century¹³². Two earlier properties were suggested to have dated to circa 1500, both being timber framed. The one stood, gable-end onto Long Street, but which was partially derelict by the late 1950s and the 'No. 1 Post Office Cottages' was demolished following a fire in 1981. It was suggested that this property had formed the solar to an earlier, possibly 15th century property¹³³. The Mill House, also retains timber framing of probable post medieval origin. It had lain adjacent to a windmill of at least 18th century date, which was extant in 1912 but demolished soon afterwards following a fire.¹³⁴

Other historic buildings survive throughout the zone even within the mid to late 20th century housing estates. These include the early 19th century chapel on Marston Road and the Coach and Horses public house on High Street. The greatest concentration survives within the Conservation Area along Hawthorne Road, Frog Lane and School Road. The properties are mostly red brick, but there is the potential for evidence of earlier origins to be encased behind later building works.

By the early 20th century there were fourteen farmsteads within the settlement of which nine survive in some form (cf. map 9). The buildings of five, possibly six, of these farmsteads have been suggested to date to the 16th or 17th century, although

¹²⁵ Palliser and Pinnock 1971: 51

¹²⁶ Slater 2007: 35

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Davies 1958: 143 and 148

¹²⁹ 'Staffordshire Lay Subsidy, 1327: Cuttlestone hundred'

¹³⁰ Palliser and Pinnock 1971: 51; Davies 1958: 144

¹³¹ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02970 and PRN 09139

¹³² Davies 1958: 146

¹³³ Davies 1958: 145; Staffordshire County Council 2003: Post Office Cottages photograph viewed 15/12/2010

¹³⁴ Staffordshire HER: PRN 02708 and PRN 02709

three have since been demolished in their entirety¹³⁵. Of these Main Farmhouse and Malthouse Farmhouse are Grade II Listed buildings dating to the 17th century with visible timber framing¹³⁶. A further four extant complexes, although altered, have been identified as small loose courtyard farmsteads suggesting incremental development from earlier origins¹³⁷. Of this group, Church Farm and The Hawthorns include Grade II Listed buildings dating to the early and mid 19th century respectively. The number of farmsteads within Wheaton Aston makes this settlement unique within the projects under consideration for the HEA, particularly as many survive albeit often already converted to domestic dwellings. The number of farmsteads and their survive is due to the fact that the land around the village had not formed part of a large estate by the early 20th century and so remained in the hands of small individual farmers¹³⁸. This probably also explains the good survival of the Piecemeal Enclosure around the village as the consolidation of holdings took longer to achieve¹³⁹ (cf. **WAHECZ 1**). This is in contrast to the situation identified for Pittingham, Perton and Penkridge. Bridge Farm, established in the mid 20th century, and Brookhouse Farm are the only working farmsteads remaining in the village.

A small portion of the Shropshire Union Canal, opened in the early 19th century, crosses the north eastern edge of the zone¹⁴⁰. Its historic importance and its contribution to the landscape have been identified in its designation as a Conservation Area (081). The Hartley Arms Public House lies adjacent to the Conservation Area; its origins are unclear but in 1884 it was known as the Canal Tavern suggesting it was constructed to serve the boating community.

2.2.2 Heritage values:

Evidential value: There is a high potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone relating to settlement dating from at least the medieval period. The historic buildings of the zone also have the potential to retain earlier elements behind the later facades which could also contribute to an understanding of the development of the settlement.	High
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¹³⁵ Extant: Main Farm, Malthouse Farm, Brook Farm (not yet closely dated, but originally timber framed; Demolished: Meadowcroft, Provident Farm and Whitehouse Farm; Davies 1958: 145

¹³⁶ Staffordshire HER: PRN 09958 and PRN 11440

¹³⁷ Bowling Green Farm, Church Farm, Farmstead on Long Street and The Hawthorns.

¹³⁸ Peters 1969: 29

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Staffordshire HER: PRN 05238

<p>Historical value: The historic street pattern incorporates the medieval market place adjacent to the Grade II* church. The historic built environment continues to dominate the historic character of much of Wheaton Aston and the extant farmsteads are of particular importance. The latter are particularly important to understanding the history of the settlement. The historic importance and local character of the area around the church is reflected in the designation of the Wheaton Aston Conservation Area. The legibility of the heritage assets enables the community and the public to understand the development of Wheaton Aston and also contributes significantly to the sense of place. This is despite the mid to late 20th century development to the north of the historic core and along parts of the High Street/Long Street. The Shropshire Union Canal also contributes to the local character; again this is reflected in its designation as a Conservation Area. The Hartley Arms Public House is probably closely associated with the importance of the canal in the 19th century.</p>	High
<p>Aesthetic value: The importance of many of the heritage assets within the zone have been identified through the designation of the Wheaton Aston Conservation Area and the presence of ten historic buildings and structures identified as being of national importance (Listed buildings) including the Grade II* St Mary's Church. Other historic buildings survive within the zone, beyond the Conservation Areas, which also contribute significantly to the local character of the settlement. Also of importance are the extant historic farmsteads and farmhouses which are particularly characteristic of Wheaton Aston.</p>	High
<p>Communal value: The Shropshire Union Canal is an important public leisure amenity which meanders through the historic landscape and this importance is reaffirmed by its designation as a Conservation Area. The zone includes the Church which is a public place of worship and the church yard is also accessible to the public. There are also at least two historic public houses within the settlement including one which is closely associated with the canal.</p>	High

2.2.3 Recommendations

The heritage values reflect the fact that the historic core of Wheaton Aston, including that within and beyond the Conservation Areas, dominates the historic character of the zone. There are several early, timber framed properties, all Grade II Listed as well as several historic farmsteads, although only one is still in agricultural use.

- A Heritage Statement will be required to be submitted as part of any planning application within the zone due to its historical and archaeological importance in line with PPS 5 policy HE 6.1¹⁴¹.
- The Listed buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings are covered under PPS 5 policies HE 9 and HE 10¹⁴². Where development may impact upon designated assets or their settings a Heritage Statement would be required as

¹⁴¹ Communities and Local Government 2010.

¹⁴² Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 27-35

part of the planning application (PPS 5 policy 6) and South Staffordshire's Conservation Section should be approached for their considerations in any pre-application discussions¹⁴³.

- The incorporation of distinctive and well preserved historic buildings onto the local list to assist in the long term conservation of the local distinctiveness of the historic character of Wheaton Aston.
- Should land within the zone be allocated in SSC's SHLAA and Sites Allocation Document any proposed development should seek to complement and conserve the fabric and legibility of the historic character of the settlement. Any such development should also be designed to enhance the local distinctiveness and respect the local vernacular in terms of its scale and architectural form (PPS 5 policy HE 7.5)¹⁴⁴. Reference should also be made to South Staffordshire's Village Design Guide for guidance on the local vernacular and building materials as well as to their Conservation Management Plan for the Conservation Area¹⁴⁵.
- There is a high potential for below ground archaeological remains to survive within the zone. The historic buildings may also retain information relating to their earlier history. Consequently archaeological evaluation and/or mitigation may be required to fulfil PPS 5 policies HE 6 and HE 12¹⁴⁶.

¹⁴³ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 23

¹⁴⁴ Communities and Local Government 2010; English Heritage et al 2010: 26 and 35

¹⁴⁵ South Staffordshire Council 2009: 52-53 and Section 6 94-130; South Staffordshire 2010b

¹⁴⁶ Ibid; English Heritage et al 2010: 23 and 36-41

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